

Tech Briefs

Sidi Offers Heated Insoles for Winter Cyclists

RENO, NV—Have you ever hopped in a sub-zero car, seen the electric heat-seat button and said, 'Nah, I don't need that?' Sidi thinks winter cyclists who are given the option of toasty, electrically heated insoles will find them just as irresistible. "We just got the insoles and there's no doubt they are going to be popular," said Sara Ecclesine, product manager of the Sidi brand at Veltec Sports. Sidi's Toasters heat the front part of the foot up to about 100 degrees Fahrenheit. A lithium battery inside the insole powers a flexible conducting polymer—the colder the insole is, the more power is used to heat it. As the insole comes up to temperature, the draw on the battery lowers automatically. The product is designed to replace Sidi's 39 to 48 sized insoles in men's, women's, Mega and narrow size shoes. Toasters can also replace insoles in other shoes. Included in the \$300 Sidi Toaster package are a pair of heated insoles, a battery charger with double outlet and a remote control to turn the insoles on and off.



Plugs Work Better, Are Lighter than Rim Tape

WYOMING, MI—When using Velocity's Velo Plugs on rim spoke holes there is no need for rim tape. The plastic plugs are pliable and oval in shape. They feature four prongs that pop into a spoke hole to hold them in place. "Velo Plugs don't hold water like cloth stick or rim tape. They're handy when you ride a lot in the rain or numerous stream crossings," said John Black, Velocity USA's general manager. "Water eventually causes the rim strips to lose their adhesive and start moving around, exposing the rim holes," he added. A set of Velo Plugs can be a third of the weight of tape, depending on spoke count. And whereas rim tape increases the effective diameter of a rim, making tires hard to mount, the plugs don't. To replace a spoke, a user only needs to pop out one plug—no need to peel tape away. Velo Plugs cost \$14.95 for a packet of 72. They fit rims that have eight-millimeter holes and are reusable.

Pacenti 29er Tubes Are Built for Hard Riding

CHATTANOOGA, TN—Pacenti Cycle Design's inaugural product was a new lugset design, but now the company is getting into self-branded tubing with the launch of Heavy Mettle tubes. The 29er-specific tube set, custom made by Reynolds, is beefy enough for extreme riding. "The original design intent was to be a 29er-specific tube set, basically longer downtubes. Because the downtube is very long, I also felt it should be beefed up a bit to endure the more technical and abusive riding common today," said Kirk Pacenti, Pacenti Cycle's president. "It seems to me that what was considered extreme just a few years ago is novice-level riding today." Pacenti pegs cost at \$99 to \$109 for main triangle tubing. He figures frames will weigh in the mid-four pound range. Pacenti designed enough butt length into the tubes that they can be cut to build strong 26-inch-wheeled dirt jumpers and park-style bikes. The butts are also longer on one end, giving builders greater tunability.

10-Speed Cassettes Bring Options Off-Road

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, CA—They may not be standard on mountain bikes just yet, but plenty of people are hankering to upgrade their off-road drivetrains to 10-speeds. So IRD has expanded its 10-speed cassette offering beyond last year's 12-28 cassette. It now offers 12-32, 11-32 and 11-34 versions. "Originally a request from the tandem community, we see possible crossover use into other types of cycling.

Cyclocross and loaded touring are possibilities, and we know one elite cross-country racer using our 11-34 tooth as part of a one-by-10 setup," said Stanley Pun, marketing manager at Merry Sales. Cassettes of this range require mountain bike derailleurs, and Pun said Shimano's nine-speed mountain derailleurs work just fine over the 10-speed cassettes. The IRD cassettes sell for \$150.

