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LOOK 576

SHIMANO ULTEGRA

LOOK was one of the pioneers of carbon frames and has remained on the forefront of the technological curve with a series of innovative framesets. In recent years, the company has focused on component integration to separate themselves from the flood of mass-produced carbon offerings. Heading up the effort was their 695 race machine, 696 triathlon and 920 mountain bike. For 2013, LOOK has expanded their integration with the release of the 675 performance road bike.

The 675 is constructed from a new manufacturing process. The three most stressed areas of the frame are first draped on mandrels before being placed inside the mold with the rest of the frame for the final molding process. According to LOOK, this results in an increase in stiffness and a stronger

frame. With the LOOK 675 being a performance frame, the geometry and frame are designed for the dual purpose of performance and comfort. For this reason, it features a fairly tall head tube for a comfortable position and uses LOOK's second-generation Dual Comfort and Stiffness Concept (DCSC). This concept is based on flattening the tube sections without reducing their diameter. The lateral rigidity is improved, as is the vertical compliance. The fork is designed to dampen vibrations, while the chain and seat stays use a carbon composition and a shape that result in a 25-percent increase in vertical compliance.

The LOOK 675 is heavily sculpted, with the top tube angling dramatically downward from the head tube to house the internal rear brake cable.

The most striking feature of the LOOK 675 is the

front end that features an integrated stem that merges seamlessly into the top tube. This gives the bike a clean and futuristic appearance. As well as the aesthetic impact, this integration allows LOOK to apply their Direct Drive concept to "optimize all the cockpit parameters." By integrating the stem, LOOK is able to use a short head tube that tapers from 1.5 to 1.125 inches, without the use of spacers. With a shorter steerer tube, oversized bearings and integrated stem, the front of the bike is in theory stiffer, and will provide more precise steering. The LOOK A-stem uses spacers to set length and several options are available for a range of 80 mm to 120 mm, with 0-, 5-, 10- and 15-degree rise options in all lengths.

The down tube is oversized with an aero profile that matches the bike's aggressive front-end appearance.



The LOOK 675 has integrated cable passages in the down tube and removable cable stops. By changing these stops, mechanical groupsets can be mounted as easily as the Shimano (Di2) or Campagnolo (EPS) electric groupsets. To keep things stiff when laying down power, LOOK outfits the 675 with a PressFit bottom bracket. The only tube in the front triangle that is not oversized is the seat tube, which houses a small-diameter 27.2-mm seat post. This, combined with a short seat tube length, allows for the seat post to flex slightly for added comfort. All of LOOK's efforts to stiffen the front are then mated to the DCSC rear triangle and full carbon fork to smooth out the road.

More Race, Less Fondo

On the road, the ride is noticeably smooth. Not as stiff as LOOK's 695 race machine, it is more than stiff enough for big power riders and aggressive efforts. The LOOK 675 tracks true through corners and power put to the pedals was transferred efficiently to the rear wheel. The LOOK 675 rolls down the road effortlessly with the quickness of a race machine. The frame is light and stiff, with enough vertical compliance to make a noticeable difference when the road gets rough.

The LOOK 675 is equipped with a complete Shimano Ultegra group and comes outfitted with a compact crankset. Our LOOK 675 rolled on Ultegra wheels with 25c Hutchinson Intensive Long Distance tires. A Fizik Arione saddle rounds out the setup. On the scale, the LOOK 675 registered 16.1 pounds. We like the mix of durable, lightweight and performance-oriented parts. Our bike came equipped with 170-mm crank arms; for a bike intended for people 5'10" and taller, a 172.5 mm or 175 mm would be a better choice.

The LOOK 675 frame has a short seat tube and long top tube, so make sure to test ride in order find the right size. Our large featured a short



50.2-cm seat tube length mated to a 55.4-cm top tube. The 72.5-degree head tube angle gives the LOOK 675 a stable and predictable feel, while the 73.5-degree seat tube puts the rider in a neutral position over the machine. As with most bikes in the performance bike category, the LOOK 675 features a taller head tube and longer chain stays when compared to its race-inspired counterparts. The head tube measures 172-mm while the chain stays measure out to 410 mm.

The size and fit of the LOOK 675 is in contrast to the bike's intended purpose of endurance riding. With the integrated stem, the range one can adjust the handlebar height is limited. The wide range of different stem angles helps, but fine-tuning to the millimeter is difficult. The other issue is standover height. With the short seat tube, tall head tube and integrated stem, the top tube is very high. If one rides with only a small height difference between



descending technique with less entry speed and a greater exiting arch.

The Rider

The LOOK 675 rider is looking for a beautiful machine that artfully combines performance and comfort. They want ride quality, but a bike that has the capabilities found in the realm of race machines. The LOOK 675 delivers an exciting, beautifully sculpted package of performance and comfort. The unique frame design and resulting sizing restrictions are something to consider, but if it fits, the 675 is a formable machine.

Builds

LOOK offers the 675 with the same build as our test machine but with Mavic Ksyrium Elite wheels and Mavic Yksion tires. The LOOK 675 is also available as a frameset.]p[

the saddle and handlebars, as most endurance riders do, there is virtually with no standover height. This can be compensated for with a smaller frame and an A-stem with some rise. However, this can have adverse effects on the handling and truly upsets the aesthetics of the bike, which in our opinion is a major selling point of this machine.

On climbs, the LOOK 675 delivers solid performance on the level of a race machine in terms of lateral stiffness. The integrated front end creates a stiff and stable front end that aids in tackling steep pitches out of the saddle. The LOOK 675 ascended best in the saddle with the rider ticking over the pedals at a high cadence. This allows the rider to take advantage of the bike's compact gearing and vertical compliance, giving the impression the bike is gliding over the road's surface. Out-of-the-saddle efforts are greeted with smooth acceleration, but one area of the 675's climbing performance that left us wanting was at the bottom bracket. While plenty stiff, it lacked responsiveness and gave the 675 a muted feel while putting power to the pedals.

Descending on the LOOK 675 is stable and comfortable. The slightly longer wheelbase and the frame's vertical compliance allows the rider to let go of the brakes and carve smooth, arching lines. A lot of the high-frequency vibrations that are felt at higher speeds are reduced, and while sharp impacts are felt, they are dramatically softened. This results in an added sense of control and confidence. When the road gets tight and technical, the LOOK 675 will lose ground when pitted against more aggressive race machines. The longer wheelbase, taller head tube and less aggressive head tube geometry result in the LOOK 675 requiring a

The Bottom Line.

lookcycle.com

PRICE: \$5,650 (complete)

\$3,000 (frameset)

SIZE TESTED: Large

WEIGHT: 16.1 lbs

DETAILS: Shimano Ultegra groupset, Shimano Ultegra wheelset, 3T ERGONOVA handlebar, LOOK seat post, fi'zi:k Arione saddle

