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CEEPO MAMBA

A race-ready road bike built for pure speed

PRICE: £2,500

CONTACT: velotechservices.co.uk

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You wouldn't be alone if you hadn't heard of the Ceepo brand before, but it isn't a new company. Founded in 2003, Ceepo specialises in bikes for triathlon – middle and long distance in particular. When we found ourselves coerced into entering a duathlon (run-bike-run), it seemed like the perfect opportunity to test a bike from a company with proper multi-sport heritage.

Previous Ceepo bikes have been tri-specific, so have never needed conform to UCI regulations regarding aerodynamics and rider position. The Mamba attempts to be more of an all-rounder, combining aerodynamic design features you'd expect to see on a specialist wind-cheating triathlon or time-trial bike with more traditional drop handlebars. It's UCI compliant too, so you could use it to enter a road race – or a sportive, or anything else that requires a fast bike.

Key to the Mamba's do-it-all ability is the reversible seatpost that offers the rider two



Multiple bottle cage positions hint at Ceepo's triathlon heritage

The tubing is shaped for aerodynamics but still UCI compliant



Oval chainrings will make you as fast as Chris Froome... possibly



The shaped seatpost is reversible for a choice of riding positions

Frame: Ceepo Mamba with integrated, reversible seatpost, full carbon fork, PF30 BB

Groupset: Shimano 105 5800, Rotor 3d chainset with 53/39 Q-ring chainrings, 11-25 cassette

Bars: PRO Vibe

Stem: PRO PLT

Saddle: Fizik Arione

Wheels: Mavic Ksyrium SLS

Tyres: Mavic Yksium, 23c

Contact: velotechservices.co.uk



positions. Set backwards, it mimics a normal road bike, but set forwards, it gives a very aggressive riding position designed for use with clip-on aero bars (see our review on page 84). In use, the Mamba immediately feels different to a standard road bike. The steep seat tube angle gives a shorter reach and puts you in a lower, more aggressive position. This geometry is mirrored by the ride, offering fantastic stiffness and power transfer, while the 1,100g frame weight is competitive for an aero road machine and means a light overall bike weight is easy to achieve.

The short reach does affect climbing out of the saddle, with less room to the cockpit out front, but the Mamba wasn't designed for climbing alpine cols and while sat in the saddle, climbing performance is fine.

With the Mavic Ksyrium SLS wheels and 23mm tyres, the ride is firm but switching to a set of deeper, carbon fibre Reynolds Attack wheels improved comfort while also boosting performance. Our test bike came fitted with a mid-spec build of Shimano 105 and PRO components. The Rotor chainset, fitted with 53/39 oval Q-Rings is another nod towards what it was designed for: going fast.

The Mamba proved fast, helping us set the fastest bike split on The Pig duathlon

The Mamba really comes into its own when fitted with a set of clip-on aero bars and set up in the forward seatpost position. A low stack height on the head tube gives plenty of scope to improve fit, allowing even shorter riders to achieve an aerodynamic position.

On the road, when used in this position the bike handles well and doesn't feel fidgety or nervous. It takes wide sweeping corners with ease, although tighter, more technical cornering and descending takes a little more effort. We used the Mamba to take part in 'The Pig' (brutalevents.co.uk), which claims to be the toughest duathlon in the UK, set in the Welsh mountains with a 105-mile bike section featuring a whopping 3,300m of climbing. The course was constantly rolling, with several prolonged climbs, but also flatter sections along the beautiful North Wales coast. The bike proved more than able, being

comfortable and fast, helping us to set the fastest bike split. Ceepo makes a big point about the far forward position making the transition from bike to run easier and we'd agree. Expecting to be slow after the arduous cycle leg, we found we could run as normal from the very beginning, with no 'jelly legs'.

The Mamba's versatility makes it ideal for people looking for a bike that can adapt to different types of riding quickly and easily. It's great for multi-sport events, where it can perform at a similar level to triathlon-specific bikes, and would be a great choice for anyone dipping a toe into time trialling too. Ultimately, the Ceepo Mamba clearly isn't designed for long-distance cruising, but if you're addicted to speed and want a bike that can perform well – with or without aero bars clipped on – it's well worth considering.

BikesEtc Rating

PROS
Aggressive geometry and aero design

CONS
Tricky handling on technical courses

OVERALL
8/10

Words: Matt Page

RESOLUTE BAY CORDURA DENIM JEANS

Smart and functional, on or off the bike

PRICE: £110 CONTACT: resolutebayclothing.com

Considering it's the wardrobe staple for everything from leisurewear to prison uniforms, denim fails to cut much of a dash when it comes to cycling. In fact, even getting on a bike in slim-fitting jeans is beyond the voluminous quads that occupy the *BikesEtc* office.

Luckily, the last decade or so has seen a proliferation of bike-friendly jeans, complete with stretch so you can not only get your leg over but pedal relatively freely too. That's exactly what you get in these jeans from Resolute Bay – a hard-wearing denim/

Cordura hybrid with a bit of stretch and some quality detailing, including zip-up reflective panels across the bum and on the turn-ups. Unlike some reflectives, the stuff used by Resolute Bay is unnoticeable until you shine a light on it, at which point, your backside lights up like Blackpool promenade at Christmas.

Cut, colour and features are good, and they're made in the UK, so that £110 doesn't look too bad (it's what you'll pay for premium pants from Levi's, Nudie or Diesel). Also worth checking out are the limited edition in Japanese denim. 🚲

