

Velo Vision Sample Article

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peter@velovision.com

I hope you enjoy the read.



Peter Eland
Editor and Publisher,
Velo Vision

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Small print

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Velo Vision is published quarterly by Velo Vision Ltd. Subscription details, news and updates can be found on www.velovision.com

ISSN 1475-4312

Velo Vision Magazine
York Environment Centre
St Nicholas Fields
Rawdon Avenue
York, YO10 3ST, UK
Tel/Fax +44 1904 438 224
(from UK, 01904 438 224)
Email peter@velovision.com
Website www.velovision.com

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER: Peter Eland
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT: Sue Archer
PHOTO ASSISTANTS: Debz Butterworth and John Isles
ART DIRECTOR: Brian Holt
WEB PROGRAMMER: Simon Ward
PRINTER: Stephens & George Magazines Ltd

PUBLISHING SCHEDULE:
Issue 31: September 2008
Issue 32: December 2008
Issue 33: March 2009
Issue 34: June 2009

Velo Vision is a member of INK, trade association of the alternative press in the UK. www.ink.uk.com

VELO VISION AND VELO-VISION
We weren't first with the name. *Velo-Vision* is a bike shop in Körten, near Bergisch-Gladbach, Germany. *Velo Vision* magazine exists in friendly harmony with *Velo-Vision* in Germany.

Velo Vision is printed on paper produced from sustainable forests to Nordic Swan standards.



COVER: Paul on the Challenge. We'd shortened the boom, but not the chain, hence the rear derailleur position. Photo: Peter Eland

OPPOSITE: Great placenames on the way to Ilkley. Photo: Debz Butterworth

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ALL ABOARD!

It was great to meet such a varied bunch of readers for the *Velo Vision* coach trip over to the SPEZI show at the end of April. The coach is already booked for next year, and we'll open up for bookings soon – watch the website for details.

And talking of long, multi-seat vehicles, you may have noticed a bit of an upswing in the amount of tandem-related content of late. I'll try to keep it in check, but it has been fun discovering the ins and outs of

a new way of riding. It's almost like back when I first came across recumbents: new technology to read about, frame layouts to debate, tyre choices to ponder... and yes, a recumbent tandem has crossed my mind. It's just finding somewhere to put it...

Finally, with apologies for the advert, I should mention our new *VeloVisionary* T-shirts! All the details are on page 53, and we should have them in stock by the time you read this. I hope you like them!

Peter Eland

Shine a light

Schmidt hub dynamos have long been regarded as the finest around – and now there's a matching state of the art headlight. We review the *Edelux*, perhaps the ultimate dynamo headlight to date...

Launched at the SPEZI show in March, Schmidt's new headlight has been eagerly awaited as a perhaps overdue complement to their E6, a competent and stylish light, but using now-outdated halogen bulb technology.

The *Edelux* is designed to work with hub dynamos – ideally also Schmidt-made, but any will work. We powered ours from the Sturmey-Archer X-FDD unit as reviewed in Issue 21.

I also re-used the switch system as described in that issue to switch the hub dynamo's output between the *Edelux* and the Lumotec Oval Senso Plus light, which I've been using since the VV21 review. That's not the *Edelux*'s natural competitor, as we'll see, but it makes an interesting comparison nonetheless.

Our review sample is marked 'Prototype' on the bezel but I was assured that this is the only difference from production models.

The *Edelux* is built around the same LED and reflector unit as the Busch & Muller IQ Fly, which Wolfgang Grabmer reviewed for us last issue. As with that light, the latest-generation LED points downwards, so that the reflector can direct the entire output forwards in a carefully shaped beam pattern. It's designed to produce maximum

illumination of the road ahead, with a clearly defined top edge to the light field so that oncoming cyclists and motorists aren't dazzled.

A quick look at the two lights reveals that the mirror unit (and some electronics) is about all that they share. The *eDelux* is a mirror-polished, bullet-shaped light (it's also available black-anodised) while in comparison, the B&M light seems

utilitarian in black plastic. And while the B&M has that neat three-position 'tilt' feature, the Schmidt has a solid aluminium mounting bracket.

There are also considerable internal differences: Schmidt have

made a number of modifications to boost the light output. They use a different LED with a more greenish hue, as they've found that matches human night vision better. They've also added a large copper heatsink to conduct heat away from the LED. Apparently, as the LED heats up, light output can drop by up to 30%, and this avoids that problem. The front lens is made from scratch-resistant glass, rather than the IQ Fly's plastic, and they say this lets through 6% more light. The result should be a noticeably brighter beam from the *Edelux*.

The whole unit seems very robust and solid, and it's completely sealed



for waterproofing. The switch (for auto, on, off modes) is a black plastic ring which slides around a groove in the body, with a magnet operating an internal reed switch – so no openings to let in moisture. The engraved black ring around the

The Edelux (to the right of this picture) has a greener hue to its light than the Lumotec, especially at lower speeds.

lens is designed, they say, to prevent dazzle from the intense beam, especially in fog. The flexible co-ax cable (60 cm long with connectors fitted, or 140 cm with loose connectors) exits in a protected location under the front of the mounting tab, and there's also a connector there for a rear light. You can of course run the *Edelux* alone, as we did, and use a battery LED rear light.



Weight is just 85 g, and Schmidt offer a five year guarantee.

So how does it perform? First, the light output is exceptional, and I can easily believe the Schmidt claim that it's at least three times as bright as the best halogen front light. Compared to the Lumotec (at least a generation behind in LED technology) it's also leaps ahead. At very slow speeds the *Edelux* light has a distinct greenish quality, but then as you speed up it tends towards more natural white – distinctly less cold than the Lumotec, which seems rather blue in comparison.

It's almost uncanny how much light these new LEDs can produce. I've been riding up the back alley to my current house for years now, progressing from cheap halogen to good halogen, to early LED to the Lumotec, and now the *Edelux*. The level of illumination the latest light produces, compared to the first, is extraordinary – not only is the cobbled roadway lit up, but the sides of the alley too. This, compared to peering for the potholes in a dim yellowish light puddle from a halogen bulb....

Back to the *Edelux*! The 'auto' mode uses a light sensor to switch the light on whenever darkness falls. This worked well and I ended up just leaving it in this mode most of the time. The sensor seemed to be calibrated rather more sensitively than the Lumotec's, so the SON would usually switch on first as evening fell.

Another nice surprise is the standlight feature. It kicks in even after just a few seconds of rolling your bike along on foot – but better still, once you've ridden for just a short distance and stopped, the beam remains at full power for around a few seconds, then drops to a still-bright level more sparing of power. In this mode it runs for several minutes – more than long enough for even the most sluggish traffic lights to change.

This brings me to perhaps the only chink in the *Edelux*'s armour. In my view, it's perhaps the best light yet when it comes to seeing where you're going, illuminating the road ahead. But other lights may be more functional (if less sexy, perhaps), when it comes to being seen by other road users. For most around-town riding the roads are lit, so I mainly want the front light to make my presence clear to other traffic.

In that role, the Lumotec (and, I suspect, the IQ Fly) have the edge. Light spill around the plastic lenses

on these lights makes the light (even if there's less of it) visible from the sides as well as the front, and they've also got built-in reflectors. An add-on reflector for the *Edelux* should be available later this year.

This, however, is about the only qualification I'd put on my recommendation. For riding on unlit roads, audax riding, or even as stylish dynamo lighting on a bike you don't want to disfigure with a black plastic blob of a light, the *Edelux* rules.

Peter Eland

AVAILABILITY

I haven't seen a UK price for the *Edelux* yet, but in Europe the RRP is €119, translating to around £95. That's quite a premium over even the IQ Fly (UK price £60), but it's such a desirable and functional piece of kit that as we go to press a notice on the SON website reads that because of high demand, new orders should reckon with a waiting time of 19 weeks! In principle, any SON dealer will (eventually) be able to get hold of the *Edelux*: see the list on their website at www.nabendynamo.de

Green Oil



Green Oil: Tel 020 8313 9074 or see www.green-oil.net

Cyclists like to take the ecological high ground, but we need lubrication, too, and even if the few drops of oil we use won't make a massive difference to anything much, every little helps. So it is that Green Oil are promoting their 'environmentally aware' chain oil for cyclists.

They certainly tick pretty much every conceivable 'green' box. The oil is petrochemical free, so it's made from plant extracts (not including palm oil) rather than fossil fuels. It's biodegradable. It also contains nothing that is harmful, irritant, or environmentally hazardous. It's made in Kent, UK, reducing 'oil miles'. The company banks with an ethical bank. And it comes in a reusable, recyclable container, with the label printed on recycled paper of course. When you run out the container can be refilled at a 20p discount.

I've used Green Oil on a variety of bikes since early this year, so it's seen off the tail end of winter and the start of the summer. It does what it says – it works as well if not better than the gear oil I usually employ. It's not quite as tacky as some branded lubes I've tried, but it's just a good consistency to flow well into the chain without washing out at the first rain.

I must admit I've never found different lubes to make all that much difference – so long as your chain's not dry and rusty, it'll be fine. Then again, I'm not a racer, mostly ride hub gear bikes (though it also worked well on our derailleur-driven tandem), and I rarely clean my chain. So you may as well use Green Oil – the product is just as good as anything else, and it deserves your purchase for the efforts the (small) company behind it has made to minimise its environmental impact.

You can order direct online, or via many dealers. A 100ml container costs £5.20 including postage, but that should last for ages, and refills are just £5 if you return the old bottle.

Peter Eland