

# SCOPE R3C REVIEWED



**CYCLETYRES**



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## SCOPE R3C TESTED

I personally prefer the lighter tubular wheels over full carbon clincher wheels. However, I have to admit that full carbon clincher wheels are becoming more and more popular. This generalization is associated with wider rims supporting wider tires, which provide a higher comfort and lower rolling resistance. As you know, the tire bed of full carbon clincher wheels are hooked, and relatively thin on the brake track. Since the introduction of 24mm wide rims (or even more like Zipp with 26mm!), new carbon layers and a unique resin are applied in order to overcome the overheating and thus eliminate the risk of breakage at this level as on older generations of full carbon clincher wheels. So, it was thanks to my partner

Cycletyres.com, that I had the opportunity to have this pair of wheels for a few days, to present it to you and to give you my impressions.

The company was founded in 2014 by two Dutch guys who, after ending their professional racing careers, were shocked by the price of bicycle equipment and especially wheels. After two years of product development, they launched the brand and a first line of products. All Scope Cycling products are developed at their own research and development (R&D) department based in the Netherlands.

Scope Cycling has specific test procedures and test devices to put its products to test. Currently only 3 different wheelsets are offered. Their names are directly related to their profiles. There aren't many variations, just what works for Scope will end up in production. Therefore, they developed one pair of hubs which can be found in all three wheelsets. The wheels are standardly equipped with SKF bearings, but can be upgraded with ceramic ball bearings from CeramicSpeed. 18 radial laced spokes are used in the front wheel. The rear wheel features 21 spokes, making use of a radial, double crossed spoke pattern. All spokes come from Sapim CX-ray's (good choice). The unique spoke pattern makes it possible to obtain equal spoke tension on both sides of the rear wheel. As a result, the wheel will be better balanced and

more reactive. I got to experience that during the road test.

At first glance, it's easy to see that the spokes aren't g-bend, but straight pull, similar to Bontrager or Fulcrum. Having a further and much closer look, though, I realized that the brake track is reworked and treated for better efficiency. Additionally, Scope provides its own brake pads for its wheels, developed in-house. So, no more excuses when you say "a carbon rim doesn't brake in the rain!" It is only necessary to associate the right wheels and make use of the correct brake pads.

As mentioned earlier I took the R3c out on the road. Advertised as a lightweight pair of wheels with a profile intended for climbing, I headed into the hills. Announced at 1380g per set (I found that light



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enough for a pair of carbon clinchers. Weighing them myself, the scale showed 644g (615g in the catalogue) for the front wheel, and 806g (765g in the catalogue) for the rear wheel. That sums up to 1450g. The difference of 70g can be caused by the rim-tape, or variations of the carbon lay-up, since that part of the production remains to be a manual process. The spoke holes are individually drilled in order to provide a greater radius tension. Speaking of tension, I measured the different tensions, and in accordance with their design, the rear wheel stands at around 1190Nm. A fairly stiff wheel. At the front wheel, I measured 1000Nm, using a Park Tool TM-1 tension meter.

The outside width of the rim is 24mm, the inside 19mm. It is the same rim width as one can find on Bontrager wheels. The R3c can be equipped with

tubeless tires. To test them, I mounted a pair of 23mm Hutchinson Atom tires. I put the wheels in my Focus Izalco Max in order to concentrate only on the Scope wheels. From the first pedal strokes I could the smoothness of the bearings in the hub. The freewheel provided a sympathetic sound, very similar to the one of the new Campagnolo.

I approached the first climb, which had a gradient of around 10%. Getting out of the saddle, nothing moved, no power “disappeared.” The wheels responded and didn’t bend. The climb steepened, but the wheels stayed unimpressed. I rode a fairly large gear at a low cadence for a bit, but then changed back to a lighter one for a higher cadence (at around 80rpm out of the saddle, and 85-90rpm in the saddle). The R3c reacted very well and kept stable in all situations.

When accelerating, the wheels react immediately. This is due to the equal spoke tension on each side of the hub. A nice surprise. I approached the descent. The descent featured two hairpins and on fairly tight chicane. On purpose, I tried to brake late. The braking was powerful and progressive. The cornering of the Hutchinson Atom was also very good, so I took the risk and went a bit faster through the second corner. Inflated at 7 bars at the front and 7.2 bars at the rear, I must admit that wide rims tolerate cornering at

speed better than narrow ones. And even more so if you pair the rims with 25mm tires!

The rest of the descent doesn’t require much braking. The Atom rubber offer a low rolling resistance and excellent grip. The radial laced front wheel and the equal spoke tension in the rear wheel make the R3c quite stiff, and lovely to ride on.

To conclude, for less than EUR 1.400 one gets a wheelset without many limitations, one that shines on whatever the terrain will be. The smoothness of the bearings is another plus. I think that pairing the wheels with 25mm tires would have given me an even better feel and a little more comfort. The only negative point is that the weight somewhat exceeds the weight of carbon tubular wheels that I normally ride on.

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