



Reviewed by: mantel.com
Published: July - 2019

RIDING HARD UPHILL, DOWNHILL AND THROUGH THE POLDER: SCOPE R4D

It has become common sense that good race wheels are an essential piece of equipment if one wants to go fast. But good race bike wheels not only ensure to keep one at speed, with a bit of luck they are also nice and light, so one can also get up the mountains a lot easier.

The race bike wheels of the Dutch brand Scope are lightweight, available in various depths and since a couple of weeks also available at Mantel. A good reason to review them. We reached out to Scope and they agreed to send us a set.

We didn't know which set we'd receive. Would it be the shallow R3d, the deep R5d or the intermediate model, R4d? I was happy to see that it were the R4d that I was going to review. Measuring 45mm in depth, it's a disc brake wheelset with an average height, something I simply just like.

Besides the Scope R4d road bike wheelset I also received a set of quick release skewers, and fitting end-caps. However, I didn't need them since I was going to review the wheels on my Scott Addict Gravel.

WELL-DEVELOPED RACE BIKE WHEELS

Scope collaborated with the TU Delft and the TU Eindhoven to develop a wheel set with an optimal stiffness and an advanced carbon layup.

Thanks to their collaboration with tire manufacturer Schwalbe, all Scope wheels are optimized for tubeless tires. It seemed just fitting to set the wheels up with a pair of 28mm Schwalbe Pro One tires.

That mounting is as easy as one could wish for. Within half an hour I set up both wheels tubeless, mounted the disc brake rotors and the cassette. Ready to get going!

BEAUTIFUL, AND PERFORMING GREAT

Once I had put them into my bike I noticed how

beautiful they look. Normally, I'm not a big fan eye-catching logos on my wheels. But I have to say that the white Scope decals looked great in my Scott.

For anyone that prefers their wheels more subtle, Scope also offers them with black decals. But enough on their appearance, let's look at how they perform.

A ride of around 80 kilometers in fairly varied terrain around Nijmegen seemed like a good idea to get a first impression. I pumped the tires up to comfortable 5 bar. Not too hard and not too soft. Perfect for a comfortable ride.

I have ridden various high-end wheels in the past, and I have often been enthusiastic. Also this time, I was completely sold after only a few kilometers. These are great wheels! They feel very solid and roll just wonderful.





SUPER STIFF

After a few sharp corners I noticed that the wheels are very quiet, apart from the buzzing of the tires on the road. The disc brake rotors didn't touch the brake pads at all. That was the first time that I experienced such a positive behavior with disc brake race bike wheels.

It was time for some proper sprints. I stopped at a traffic light and once the light turned green, I put the power down. With the road going slightly uphill I was able to put down a lot of power.

I could hear a slight whisker for around twenty meters, but that was it. The lateral stiffness of the Scope R4d was great, really optimal.

The Scope wheels felt great both uphill and downhill.

Traveling at more than 35 kilometer per hour they buzz a little louder, but I liked that as well. And in moments, when I didn't spin, I could hear the lovely sound of the ratchet. Not too loud, but not too quiet either. Exactly how I like it.

PAUSE AND DROOL ON THE SCOPE R4D

During a short coffee break three riders walked over to my bike, with their coffee cups in their hands. They liked the bike but also took notice of the wheels.

In fact, they had just walked over to the bike to take a closer look at the wheels. They hadn't heard of Scope and when I mentioned that these super-light carbon race wheels are made in the Netherlands, they became even more curious.

I took the rear wheel out of my bike to show it to them. They were almost immediately hooked. Nice and light, with a sleek finish and perfectly fitting tires was their joint conclusion.

JUST A QUICK TRIAL

"Are they also available for rim brakes", one of the guys. "They are", I answer.

Their price for the wheels is reasonable. Yet when I mentioned it, the guys waved conversation goodbye. It wasn't the last time we saw each other, though.

Only half an hour later, I met them again on a climb. "Need", shouted one of them when I rode past them.

It was a great first ride out on the R4d. The wheels look great and the riding impression even topped my expectations. It only took that one ride to notice that these are top wheels.

ALL IN ONE RIDE

It didn't take long until my second ride, the Tour of Nijmegen. That's a long distance ride that combines roads with smooth and not so smooth asphalt. And with the wind, the challenge was guaranteed.

The first 35 kilometers feature a bit of climbing and a fair amount of polders. The wheels felt nice when climbing. I could only really let go when descending. Without really making any effort I caught up with quite a few people. And that is also what one would expect from good aerodynamic wheels. The higher the speed, the better they can do their job.

But also in the polders I could easily keep up with the high pace. The speed in the group was around 40 kilometers per hour. However, it felt effortless. Especially my speed in and after the corners was noticeably higher. I had to brake a few times in order to not get too close to the rider in front of me.



TUBELESS COMFORT

There were not issues for the rest of the ride. Due to the low tire pressure, the badly surfaced German roads became slightly more comfortable. Yet, I felt the real difference during a longer descent. While the other riders had to ride with a lot more care, I could just simply keep going at full speed.

At all times, the Scope wheels provided very stable and safe feeling. They felt very agile and reacted very directly.

After that longer descent there were some smaller climbs and then a long crosswind section. Also there, the R4d did exactly what I had hoped for. The group had fallen apart, but together with a friend I was able to hang on.

FRESH AND RELAXED

To my great surprise, he was completely exhausted at one point while I still felt fairly fresh and relaxed. Time to keep challenging! It was absolutely no problem to keep it up in the wind. The wheels felt really stable.

After 160 challenging kilometers it was time for the well-deserved beer at the finish. It was then that a few people took notice of the bike and the wheels. They also seemed to like their look.

Over the following weeks I rode the Scope R4r in various conditions and a variety of terrains. I even put some Schwalbe gravel tires on it to ride in the forest. There too, the wheels performed well. Gravel, trails in the forest, nothing kept the wheels from doing their job perfectly.

REVIEWING THE SCOPE R4D

Of course, even after that, I wasn't nearly finished reviewing the wheels. Since I knew that I had to return them at some point, I kept riding them as much as I could. In total, I was able to enjoy them for almost two months.

And during those two months I never had any reason to doubt the Scope R4d. They felt good from day one and kept on feeling good for the remainder of the test, under all circumstances. From long and fast

descents to steep, challenging climbs.

In total, I spent around 1.700 kilometers on them. And the last kilometers felt as smooth as the first ones. Due to their optimized tubeless compatibility, I only had to reinflate the tires once a week, only 0,5 bar at most.

Lastly, for the gram hunters; without tires, disc brake rotors and a cassette, the rear wheel weighs 838 grams and the front wheel 719 grams. The R4d are nice and light wheels and a set to consider if you're looking for 45 mm deep aerodynamic race bike wheels.

Simply put, a must-have!