

SCOPE R5C REVIEWED

SCORE
★★★★★

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Reviewed by: Road.cc
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VERDICT: SOLID DURABILITY AND IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCE, ESPECIALLY THE BREAKING, BUT LET DOWN BY WEIGHT

Scope Cycling's debut R5c carbon fibre clincher wheels provide a high level of performance, with good durability and very impressive braking performance, but they're heavier than their rivals at this fiercely contested price point. Scope are a young Dutch brand specialising in wheels, with a range of three models at launch. The wheels are identically priced at £1,199 (€1398), leaving you the simple choice of a 30, 45 or 55mm rim depth. We picked up the latter to test, and have been putting them through

their paces for the past few months, and they've come out shining.

The rims are constructed from unidirectional carbon fibre with 3K carbon used in key areas, such as the tyre bed and around the spoke nipples. The profile is an on-trend U-shape, made popular by the bigger names in the carbon wheel market in recent years as aerodynamic thinking has evolved. Their 55mm depth combines with a 24mm external and 16.4mm internal width.

Scope have also developed their own hubs, with sealed cartridge bearings and a reinforced 7075 aluminium freehub body to prevent the cassette biting into the slotted grooves. The wheelset is available in Shimano and Campagnolo versions. The Sapim CX Ray spokes – 18 front, 21 rear – have a radial lacing pattern in the front wheel and a 2:1 rear lacing pattern, similar to a Campagnolo wheelset. I've been riding these wheels for the past few months, putting them through a thorough long-term test in a range of weather and riding conditions. Through it all, they've impressed. There is no getting away from that weight discrepancy, but the wheels haven't proved to be tardy in the way they accelerate from a range of speeds.

It's tricky testing aerodynamic products, but they

felt noticeably faster than some regular box section clincher wheels, and compared with a Mavic CC40 wheelset, the Scopes were definitely the quicker wheel. The rims display very good stability in windy conditions, making them easy to live with through a wide range of weather conditions. What makes them especially easy to live with as a daily wheelset is the superb braking performance. This is where carbon wheels usually fall down. Much progress has been made in recent years and the Scopes are among the best I've tested for the simple fact that the braking is consistent and predictable, and good in all weathers.

Scope developed their own brake blocks and they've gone with a soft compound. That sacrifices longevity (I've nearly worn down the blocks) but the upshot is fantastic lever feel and plenty of power. There's a hint of squealing when you really put some heat



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into them but they're mostly well-mannered and outperform many other carbon wheels.

It's a stiff wheelset, but not the stiffest I've tested. The wheels are comfortable over cracked roads and on long rides, making them ideal for tackling the sort of roads you might not want to take a super-stiff carbon wheelset down.

Another highlight of this long test has been their superb durability and reliability. I've been riding them as every-day wheels and I've hammered them, racing them regularly, using them in the local chain gang, and taking them along some of the most rotten roads I could find. They've survived the punishment. The spokes have remained well tensioned throughout the test, highlighting the excellent build quality.

Despite the higher than advertised weight, the braking and aerodynamic performance of Scope's debut wheels won me over. In a hotly contested market where people are buying on price, these are definitely worth a closer look. They don't have the brand recognition of some, but they look good and, importantly, have the performance to justify the price tag.

"Really impressive in this department." "Top marks for durability, really impressive."

"Build quality is excellent, the rims are strong and robust, and the spoke tension has been good throughout this extended test."

"With so much choice in the carbon clincher market, making an informed choice is tricky. These score well on the important criteria that a carbon wheel should: build quality, aerodynamics and braking performance."