

# SWOOP 170 9.0

BIKE OF THE YEAR TEST - MOUNTAIN BIKING UK MAY 2018



„Whittling our shortlist of „enduro“ bikes down to just three was a monumental task, involving lap after lap on the trails and some agonisingly sleepless nights. Things felt more closely matched this year, with a marked jump in performance across the board. It seems brands are pushing their budgets as far as they dare to snare the very best components they can, in order to deliver bikes that can handle everything you throw at them from day one, without needing changes before their tyres even hit the trail. Then there’s the constant evolution in geometry and suspension to throw into the equation, with every advancement potentially dishing out more traction and stability without dulling the fun these bikes deliver. We can confidently say you’ll be pleased with any of the 10 bikes here, as they’re all good at what they do. Of course, none of them can excel in every single area, so they’re all compromised in one way or another. It’s how that compromise is managed that makes the truly outstanding bikes rise above the rest. We’d put in enough saddle time on each of the bikes in the UK to confidently choose our top three, so our time in San Remo simply helped to validate our findings. The final running order did take a little head-scratching, though, along with a few runs on some brutal Ligurian rock.

## ONLINE AND ON POINT

There’s no hiding the fact that our top three bikes are all „direct-sale“ models that are available online instead of in shops. While you’d expect them to have the edge when it comes to value, it was the performance and feel of these bikes on the trail that helped separate them from the rest. Buying direct normally means you can’t go and sit in the bike before you purchase it, unless you can get along to a demo day, so it does have its downsides. [...] While each and every one of our top three bikes shines brighter in certain areas, they all deliver something serious special on the trail. Yes, if we’re being picky, none of these bikes is totally perfect, but they’re all pretty damn close.

## FORM AND FUNCTION

Last year’s winner, the RADON SWOOP 170, continues to impress, though it feels like the competition have really stepped things up for 2018. Its geometry remains superb. The 18 inch frame has a 46mm reach, which feels roomy yet manoeuvrable when out of the saddle and gives a confident feel at speed. The super-slack 64.4-degree head angle (in the lowest setting) only enhances this feeling further. If that sounds a little too extreme, the SWOOP has three geometry settings to choose from, thanks to the triangular chips on the lower shock mount. While we felt more than at home on the lowest setting, not everyone will sync well with the 323mm BB height, even if it does make the RADON a complete demon through the turns. It still climbs with plenty of spring in step, thanks to its steep seat tube angle – 75 degrees in the slackest setting – and the lockout lever on the rear shock. [...]

## SCORES ON THE DOORS

All three of these bikes will have you grinning from ear to ear, no matter where you ride or how fast you’re willing to risk going. The RADON is the lightest and feels sharp and responsive when snaking through tight turns and picking your way through nadergy tech sections. It’s comfortable and composed too, and it feels accurate and precise when you most need it to. [...]

<b>FRAME</b>	Alu: 16" / 18" / 20" / 22"
<b>FORK</b>	Fox 36 Float, Performance Elite
<b>SHOCK</b>	Fox Float DPX2, Performance Elite
<b>WHEELSET</b>	e*thirteen TRS
<b>BRAKES</b>	Magura MT5
<b>GROUPSET</b>	Sram GX Eagle
<b>CRANK</b>	Sram Descendant Eagle 7k
<b>HANDLEBAR</b>	Race Face Atlas, 35 x 800 mm
<b>FRONT TIRE</b>	Schwalbe Magic Mary, 27.5" x 2.35"
<b>REAR TIRE</b>	Schwalbe Hans Dampf, 27.5" x 2.35"
<b>SEATPOST</b>	Fox Transfer Performance
<b>WEIGHT</b>	13,70kg (without pedals)
<b>PRICE</b>	3.299 €



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