

Expert advice

Q&A

YOUR TECHNICAL, LEGAL, AND HEALTH QUESTIONS ANSWERED. **THIS ISSUE:** COMPENSATION, ROHLOFF HUBS, LOWER GEARS, KICKSTANDS, AND MORE



Knocked off? Call the Cycling UK Incident Line



MEET THE EXPERTS



DR MATT BROOKS
Cycling GP {Health}



RICHARD HALLETT
Cycle's Technical Editor
{Technical}



RICHARD GAFFNEY
Principal Lawyer,
Slater + Gordon Lawyers
{Legal}

Left: Getty

Legal

KNOCKED OFF – WHAT NEXT?

Q I've been knocked off by a driver, escaping with grazed knee and bruised shoulder. The driver pulled out in front of me, then tried a U-turn. I hit the rear car door and came off.

I managed to hobble off the road to safety. I was shaken and didn't take the driver's insurance or ring the police. I left the scene after being helped to my feet by the apologetic driver. There was a witness, who has the driver's registration.

So to clarify: I have the driver's registration but didn't call the police; I have a witness; I visited the doctor today and he recorded my injuries. Can I pursue this?

Jamezy, via the Cycling UK Forum

A I am glad that you have managed to escape the incident with what seem from your description to be relatively minor injuries.

You are allowed to pursue a civil personal injury claim against the driver up until the third anniversary of the incident. In order to pursue a successful claim against the driver in this situation, you would need to establish that the other party was at fault or was negligent in their actions, and that you suffered injury/loss as a result.

The fact that you have a witness who can support the circumstances of the incident, and the fact that the driver seems to have acknowledged he was at fault, bodes well in terms of your position.

Other evidence will then be required to determine the extent of your injuries and loss. This is usually in the form of a medical report from a suitable medical expert, dealing with the extent of your injuries, how they have affected you and may affect you into the future. One would also look to recover any

expenses, such as damage to your bike, any loss of earnings, treatment costs, etc.

The other matter in most people's minds is how they will afford to pursue a claim. The usual rule in the courts is that the loser is responsible for the winner's costs, including most of your legal costs (some costs are not recoverable). However, lower value claims (under £1,000) dealt with in the Small Claims Court will not permit you to recover any solicitor's fees. If you were to instruct a solicitor in such a situation, it is likely that the costs of so doing would outweigh the value of the claim. For higher value claims (above £1,000), legal fees are recoverable, and it is advisable to use a specialist personal injury solicitor to ensure that you receive the most out of your claim.

Cycling UK members have the benefit of no-cost personal injury support and a 100% compensation pledge, backed by Slater and Gordon, to support their personal injury claims. Contact the Cycling UK Incident Line on 0844 736 8452 or visit our website, slatergordon.co.uk, for further information. [Richard Gaffney](#)

Technical ROHLOFF OIL CHANGE

Q I have a Rohloff-equipped Thorn tourer, which I use in summer along with my ICE recumbent and Brompton. (I use a mountain bike in winter.) The small amount of mileage that I do on my Rohloff hub surely doesn't necessitate changing the oil every year. It doesn't evaporate, does it?

David Preston

A According to Rohloff, the mandated oil-change interval, which is performed annually or every 5,000km, whichever comes first, ensures that any oil lost to leakage is replaced, and that any moisture that finds its way into the hub either through condensation or as a result of immersion during, for example, a stream crossing, is rinsed out. The hub contains only about 25ml of oil, and although it should remain lubricated even by the small amount that clings to internal parts when the hub is drained, insufficient oil can lead to the formation of rust on internal steel parts. Water mixed with oil may hamper shifting and add to internal drag.

Rohloff note that a universal prescribed method is needed to ensure that all owners, operating in all conditions, can maintain their hub without voiding the warranty (i.e. the hub is guaranteed to work as designed). An owner who chooses a longer service period may be lucky and experience no problems, but could be faced with a hefty bill should a problem needing repair arise that can be attributed to extended or neglected oil-change intervals. The service kit costs about £17 and an oil change can be done in less than an hour. Your call.

Richard Hallett



A Rohloff hub should have an oil change after 5,000km or one year

Health STIFF LITTLE FINGERS

Q At the end of August, I returned from a three-month, 4,000-mile tour. The grips I used were the ergo type, and my gears were twist-grip Rohloff. During the last month of the tour, I found that both my little fingers were becoming painful and difficult to bend, at their worst becoming stuck in the bent position.

My left hand has since improved but my right hasn't. I visited the doctor, followed by a specialist appointment, during which I was given an injection of cortisone at the base of the finger. If this doesn't work, I can opt for an operation.

Could you explain what this condition is and whether there is anything I can do to avoid it? I'm planning another long tour next year.

Chris Parkinson

A This sounds like trigger finger, a condition where one of the fingers (or thumb) may click or become stuck as you bend it towards the palm. It is often painful, and sometimes the finger becomes locked in

a bent position and can only be released manually using the other hand.

Trigger finger is caused by a swelling or nodule on one of the flexor tendons, the tendons on the palm side of the hand that bend each finger. This then catches on the tendon's covering sheath as it moves to bend (flex) the finger.

In most cases, it is unclear why certain people develop trigger finger, and there is usually nothing you can do to prevent it occurring. In milder cases, avoiding exacerbating activities may reduce the symptoms. Rather than giving up cycling though, it might be worth trying different grips to alter the position of your hands on the handlebar, just to see if this helps. If it doesn't, other options for treatment include a local corticosteroid injection (which you have already had on one side), or surgery to release the affected tendon sheath.

Steroid injections are usually worth trying first as they are often effective and are generally safe. They work by reducing the swelling. However, it may take several weeks to see the full benefit. If a steroid injection is unsuccessful then a simple surgical procedure to release the tendon is the most likely 'cure'. This is usually done as a day-case procedure under local anaesthetic, but it would be likely to stop you cycling for several weeks afterwards.

Matt Brooks

Technical FLATS TO DROPS

Q I have arthritis in my left thumb. Riding either of my flat-bar bicycles, I develop a bad pain in my thumb joint. I also have a drop-bar tourer and get little pain when riding this bike. Converting my flat-bar bikes to drops seems expensive. One suggestion I have had from a bike shop is to try bullhorn bars. The other alternative is to buy another bike.

Peter Hunt

A Try a pair of bullhorn bars and see how you get on. If they cure your problem, then it's job done at much less cost than a new bike. If not, then you should find converting to a dropped handlebar more cost-effective than buying a new bike.

Without knowing the existing spec it is hard to give specifics, but the major expenses are likely to be the handlebar, brake levers, and shifters. Down-tube or bar-end shifters make inexpensive alternatives to dual-control levers, while low-cost drop-bar brake levers are available for linear pull, cantilever, sidepull, and mechanical disc brakes.

Richard Hallett



Trigger finger can lock bent fingers in place



Right: ridgeback.co.uk



FWE Kickstand from Evans Cycles

in conjunction with a rear disc calliper, so your best bet may well be to sell the MultiPlex and look for a stand that will either work without modification or can be more readily adapted to your requirements. The FWE Kickstand from Evans Cycles (evanscycles.com) looks like it will work with a chainstay-mounted disc brake. Failing that, the Click-Stand (click-stand.com) will certainly work, but it's not a kickstand in the traditional sense.

Richard Hallett

Technical SEEKING A SMALL SPIDER

Q My new bike is fitted with an Alfine 11-speed hub and a TA Carmina double chainset with 7½-inch cranks and 34-40 tooth chainwheels; 34 is the smallest that can be fitted on this spider. On trial in hilly Bristol, I find I need a lower bottom gear. Can you tell me if there is such a thing as a 30-40 tooth double chainset with 7½-inch cranks? If so, where can I find it?

David Miller

A Double chainsets with a PCD smaller than 110mm are rare, and those available with really long crank arms vanishingly so. Only one option immediately presents itself: TA, distributed in the UK by Chicken Cycle Kit (chickencyclekit.co.uk), make a five-arm 94mm PCD double spider that will fit your existing cranks and allow you to fit a 29t or 30t inner chainring (also made by TA). RRP is £69.99.



Richard Hallett

Richard Hallett

Cycling UK forum
Need an answer to a question right now? Try forum.cyclinguk.org

A The Ridgeback Panorama tested in Cycle October/November 2017 fits your

specification almost to the letter, with a lowest gear ratio of 21in thanks to its 26t inner chainring and 34t largest sprocket. The Dawes Galaxy Excel tested in the same article has similar gearing but is equipped with cantilever brakes.

Richard Hallett

Technical I CAN'T STAND IT

Q I recently bought a new Ridgeback Panorama and discovered that my double-legged Pletscher kickstand would not fit behind the bottom bracket; it fouled various cables. I then invested in a Pletscher MultiFlex rear kickstand but foolishly did not allow for my Spyre disc brake, which prevented me fitting the stand in the right place. The only answer I can see (apart from investing in a new stand) is to get or make an extension for the seatstay clamp, to allow positioning of the stand clear of the rear calliper. Does such a piece of kit exist?

Graham Tait

A Does it already exist? Probably not. The Pletscher MultiFlex is designed to be clamped to the seatstay and chainstay of a cycle not made with an integral side-stand mounting boss. The design of the stand does not look easily adapted for use

Technical LOWER-GEARED TOURER

Q I want to buy a new touring bike but I am struggling to find one that has gearing low enough to allow me to climb hills when loaded up. Currently, I tour on an old 26in-wheel mountain bike with a triple, with 44/32/22t chainrings and an 11-32t 9-speed cassette. Lowest gear works out a little under 18in.

I'm looking for a disc-braked drop-bar bike with a similarly low gear but I'm drawing a blank. Even with a road triple (typically 50/39/30t) and a wide range cassette (e.g. 11-32t), the lowest gear (30/32) works out a shade over 25in with a 700C wheel. It's significantly higher, and there is no way I am getting up some hills on that. I'd prefer STI-type brake/shift levers, not bar-ends. All solutions gratefully received.

Marie E Convery



Contact the experts

Email your technical, health, legal or policy questions to editor@cyclinguk.org or write to **Cycle Q&A, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ**. We regret that Cycle magazine cannot answer unpublished queries. But don't forget that Cycling UK operates a free-to-members advice line for personal injury claims, tel: **0844 736 8452**.