



Scott RC e-Ride Addict 30

A bike this expensive had better be good.

And it is. A beautiful piece of engineering, described by Sarah Graham of Arragons Cycles, Penrith in Cumbria, England as a work of art. Ooh. Steady on.

I don't see much point in duplicating what Scott and Mahle have on their website. Facts and figures are there in lavish abundance, along with generous helpings of marketing baloney -

“If we decided to make an Addict eRIDE it wasn't to make things easier. No, we wanted to make things tougher.”

If I wanted to make things tougher I would save a fortune and simply point out the errors in my wife's political views to her. During mealtimes.

I bought it because I'm 73 and was getting reluctant to ride where there were too many hills that were taking the fun out of cycling.

I live in Cumbria in England, which specialises in hills designed to take the fun out of cycling.

This bike does exactly what I wanted an electric bike to do plus a lot that I didn't expect and am delighted by.

I wasn't looking for a bike anywhere near this price range - I was thinking of pushing the boat out and treating myself to something like a Boardman ADV 8.9E or a Bianchi E-Impulso, both still expensive but not THIS expensive.

I tried an E-Impulso and was bitterly disappointed to find that I didn't take to it although it was in as new condition and had a big lump knocked off the retail price. It's a very smart bike and I had high hopes, but I found it heavy, ponderous and a bit lifeless. Rather like my spirits when I realised I was going to have to pass up on a bargain.

I haven't tried the Halfords Boardman - I couldn't find one to try, as Halfords were unable to provide one for a test ride. I see that it is over 16 kg, which is more, I believe, than the Bianchi. Bianchi are a bit coy about the weight of their bikes.

To each his own, and either one of these excellent bikes could be right up your street. However for me the Scott was The One.

The Scott weighs 11.9 kg. This means that it weighs about the same as my Genesis Equilibrium Disc 20 which is adorned with mudguards and rear pannier.

From the moment I rode the Addict I knew it was good. After about 100 yards I knew I was going to buy it, even though I spent that night wondering what on earth I was doing spending that much on a bike. At my age. I really should know better.

Then I realised how lucky I am - maybe even blessed. A lot of people my age are contemplating more utilitarian electric transport options. Like a mobility scooter. Or a stairlift.

The Scott takes the tiresome grind out of ascents with a gentle push, a determined shove or almost removing any effort completely. You control the amount of assistance you want. Fairly soon you get the hang of prodding the button on the crossbar without taking your eyes off the road. This button, or HMI to give it its proper name, with its multicoloured LED strip, gives you a remarkable amount of info, showing the three levels of assistance - green, orange or purple - plus cyan for no assistance. The length of the LED bar shows how much charge is left. Other colours relate to communication, charging and errors.

Which brings us to a feature of the bike that I am surprised and delighted by - how fast it is. Most of the time I seem to be thrumming along above the UK speed limit for e-bikes. On level one you get up to speed remarkably quickly, then gently go faster and faster. The assistance diminishes gradually as your speed builds past 15mph, in such a subtle way that you only know you are now under your own power because it goes all quiet down there in the engine room, which is a small black drum on the back axle similar in size to a Sturmey Archer gear hub. You might drift back down occasionally as you hum along and eventually a polite whirr assists you back over the limit. At first I wondered why I was not getting assistance when I should until I glanced down at my speed and realised that I had indeed slowed down a little but was still doing over 18 miles an hour.

The ride is smooth and has that whippy, flexible feel that a good carbon frame delivers along with a reassuring sure footed grip.

The hours and the miles roll happily by.



When I slow down, either due to a gradient or the wind, a gentle whine announces the X20 motor gently spooling up and joining in. As your speed drops further the motor becomes slightly more vocal but on Level 1 it isn't at all intrusive. On level 3, the strongest level of assistance, it is certainly noticeable but still not unduly loud. I find the strongest assistance, level 3, to be almost unbelievable - if you want to you can climb vicious gradients with such minimal effort that it starts to feel as if you're cheating. Pedalling gently up a severe incline, wafting gently to the top, you might perhaps peel a clementine one handed as you nod affably as you pass racing snakes straining mightily. Once at the top it's an odd sensation as you quickly build your speed back up when the dramatic assistance falls away, as if a someone has attached a bungee cord to your seatpost. Then the racing snakes hurtle past, vanish over the horizon and you're rumbled.

As I get more used to the bike I switch the assistance level down to zero more often. According to the app, more of which later, I used 56% of the capacity over 32 miles of hilly terrain. So I won't be splashing out on the extra battery when 60 miles on one charge seems perfectly attainable. On a 50 mile ride I still had 42% of battery left.

The Mahle X20 motor and drive system connects to my Garmin Edge 530 so I can see how much power I have left on the display rather than squinting down at the multicoloured LED situated on the crossbar. There is a dedicated display unit, the PulsarONE, available. They cost about £100. I

will stick to my Garmin Edge, an absolute pain to configure but it tells you how much power you have in the Mahle battery and how far you can expect it to take you. Plus lots of other stuff depending on what you want to know and how much screen space you want to cram up.

Which brings us to the Mahle Smartbike app.

This is an app which will work on either IOS or Android, with the X20 and its predecessor the X35.

At first the app seemed woefully underdeveloped and buggy. It could shut down the system completely if it lost contact with the bike, without any notice. This often occurred on a steep hill which I did not appreciate at all. Stamping on the pedals and snatching the chain down onto the big cogs can get very expensive and I don't see Mahle or Scott footing the bill for a new chain and cassette. Neither does the app yet live up to the promises made by Mahle regarding motor mapping and configuring the system to your preferences.

However since the firmware update to the charger and X20 system in early August 2022 the app is behaving itself much better, apart from draining the battery on my iPhone 13 pro from 100% to 4% after about 30 miles. That limits its usefulness severely and quickly drove me back to relying on the Garmin.

I had better mention the brakes before I finish up. The Shimano hydraulic disc brakes are very good, giving a progressive, determined, reassuring reduction in speed which is just as well as the bike is deceptively quick. They do a great job, as does the 105/Ultegra derailleurs. There's loads of info on them so there is little point in me banging on about them here.

One other discovery that I am chuffed by is Smoove. Its a drive chain lubricant which is a pain to put on - your chain has to be spotlessly clean and completely dry before you apply it but it cured an annoying rattle and is amazingly quiet. Once applied it lasts for ages and doesn't wash off like ordinary lubes. Definitely worth checking out.

My other bikes are a Look 566 which I have loved since I got it from Palace Cycles in Carlisle in 2016, and a 2017 Genesis Equilibrium Disc 20 which I bought from Arragons.

In spite of the astonishing pleasure of new horizons and conquering of nasty gradients I won't be parting with either of them soon because the Scott is making me fitter and the hills are becoming less daunting. The Look is much lighter and is glorious fun but can be skittish with its skinny tyres and love of speed. The Genesis is sturdy, dependable and altogether more relaxed. They both have a character of their own and the love I had for riding them is still alive and kicking.

But the Scott. God it just eats miles. It's fast, comfortable and fun, and comes with only a teeny bit of guilt that it's not all your own effort that's letting the good times roll.

