

# IN DEPTH GEAR REVIEW

## J.Laverack J.ACK

cost: £4,250 website: [jlaverack.co.uk](http://jlaverack.co.uk)

Tool up for the very worst that British roads and weather can throw at you with this head-turning titanium road bike

### Specification

Buying a bike in this rarified price category means the freedom to specify every component from top to toe. Our test bike featured mechanical Ultegra gears, with a 50/34 chainset and 11-32 cassette, came to a halt thanks to Ultegra hydraulic disc brakes, and rolled on Hunt 4 Season wheels, set up with 28mm Schwalbe One tubeless tyres. The saddle is a Brooks Cambium and the finishing kit is PRO LT. It's also possible to tick the box for mudguard and rack mounts.

### Fit

The J.Laverack selection process starts with a meticulous bike fit in the company's workshop. There are eight standard-sized frames, from 48cm to 62cm, but customising these further is possible. Likewise, buyers can choose crank length, handlebar width and stem length. There's nothing off-the-shelf about this bike.

### Comfort

Swapping the Brooks saddle for my own well-worn Fizik perch, the J.ACK proved exceptionally comfortable. An alchemic combination of titanium's smooth riding qualities, the curved chain and seat stays, and the hovercraft cushion of air in the wide tyres makes for a dreamy ride, even

on the most pockmarked road surfaces. Long days in the saddle passed without aches, pins or needles; it's easy to imagine a bike tour on the J.ACK.

### Handling

Stiff where it needs to be, especially at the front end, thanks to its wide head tube and thru-axle fork, the J.ACK's steering is remarkably sharp, and there's a huge amount of grip from the 28mm tyres' generous contact patch. After a couple of rides, I was leaning aggressively into tight corners with full confidence.

### Ride

The J.ACK felt heavier than my normal flyweight carbon machine when I lifted it out of the garage, but on the road, it's surprisingly and thrillingly brisk. I felt at no disadvantage in either my regular chaingang or interval session with a local racer, and the magic carpet ride makes keeping speed a cinch. The stiffness of the titanium frame helps sharp acceleration and climbing, and my only gripe is with the disc brakes, which continue to rub lightly for about 30 seconds after stiff braking. Perhaps it's the pads heating up under friction, or dust squeezing into the tightest of tolerances, but I'd prefer never to lose a single watt.



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### VERDICT

The elephant in the room, of course, is the price. It's always tricky assessing a bike worth more than my family car, but here's the thing. As I face a birthday next year with a zero in it, my attitude to possessions has changed.

Bling is out, and craftsmanship is in. I want shoes that can be resoled, a watch that can be repaired, and a leather armchair that will be going strong long after I've dribbled through my last 'Cash in the Attic' matinee. The J.ACK fits the bill perfectly — it's exquisitely designed and manufactured (the welds and internal cable routing are flawless); handsome yet beautifully understated — and the stunning titanium frame will only ever need a quick wash and wipe with baby oil to return to its full glory.

On the road, the ride adjusts seamlessly to whatever cycling challenge lies ahead. In short, it's all the bike one could ever need and it will last forever.

### J.LAVERACK J.ACK

Frame: 3Al-2.5V titanium

Groupset:

Shimano Ultegra

Wheels: Hunt 4

Season disc

Tyres: Schwalbe One

Finishing kit:

Shimano Pro LT

Saddle: Brooks Cambium

Price: £4,250

W: [jlaverack.co.uk](http://jlaverack.co.uk)

