

J.LAVERACK

R J.ACK

 £4,125

Boutique-built beauty

SPEC

FRAME:
3Al/2.5V titanium frame,
carbon forks

GROUPSET:
Shimano Ultegra

BRAKES:
Shimano Ultegra

CHAINSET:
Shimano Ultegra, 52/36

CASSETTE:
Shimano Ultegra, 11-30

BARS:
PRO PLT, alloy

STEM:
PRO PLT, alloy

SADDLE:
PRO Falcon

SEATPOST:
PRO Vibe, carbon

WHEELS:
Aera Rd30


TYRES:
Schwalbe Pro One,
700 x 28

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ABOUT THE BIKE

The R J.ACK is a slightly different animal to the other three bikes we've tested: the makers say that it 'thrives on speed and inspires confidence.' Our J.Laverack titanium machine is designed for fast rides, whether that's the summer evening chaingang, rapid Sunday outings or walloping the sharp end of a sportive.

THE RIDE
First impression We've never been so conflicted: a bike that looks good enough to mount on your living room wall yet which you can't help but take out on the road at every opportunity to experience the sheer exhilaration on offer. In short, its aesthetic beauty is easily matched by its performance. Our one initial misgiving is that we couldn't bear to think of it picking up a scratch or getting it dirty...
On the road The inherent qualities of titanium are evident as the R J.ACK veritably zips up the road, seemingly alert to every input like it's straining on a leash. While frame comfort is there in spades, the responsiveness waiting to be exploited is clear: oversized tubing where it matters and the shortest chainstays (and therefore wheelbase) on offer here, make this bike eager to jump up short inclines out of the saddle, and the rapidity with which its package punches along exposed lanes is eye-opening. Yes, it's a smooth old ride, but it's always willing to excite. Vibrations from the road become less of an intrusion, more of a communication; the transmission of feedback through the titanium frame making this an engaging ride at all times. The level of equipment fitted to the R J.ACK is up there with the best of this bunch, and the 11-28 cassette married to a 52/36 Ultegra chainset is a decent suit-all set-up that will allow 

you to maintain momentum on climbs, yet hammer out some serious watts to make blistering progress on tarmac of the more rolling variety. This is the lightest bike on test, bettering the Enigma on the scales despite being a larger frame size. 8.32kg might not sound lightweight when compared to the mid-6kg bulk of the most svelte carbon racers, but a small weight penalty is a price we'd gladly pay for the sheer levels of comfort and feedback we experienced here.

Handling If this bike piles on the thrills by allowing you to accelerate hard at will, this sensation is multiplied the moment you tip it into a corner. Have faith in the grippy Schwalbe Pro One 28c tyres, and the direct front-end feel afforded by the Enve carbon forks becomes noticeable when sprinting uphill in a straight line, and unmissable when tracking a downhill sweeper at a speed in excess of what we'd normally consider safe for December. A fractionally shorter bottom bracket drop to our other three bikes supplies us with more confidence to turn the pedals mid-corner for a headstart on power transfer when jumping out of turns. It's not often we're blown away, but the overall package on



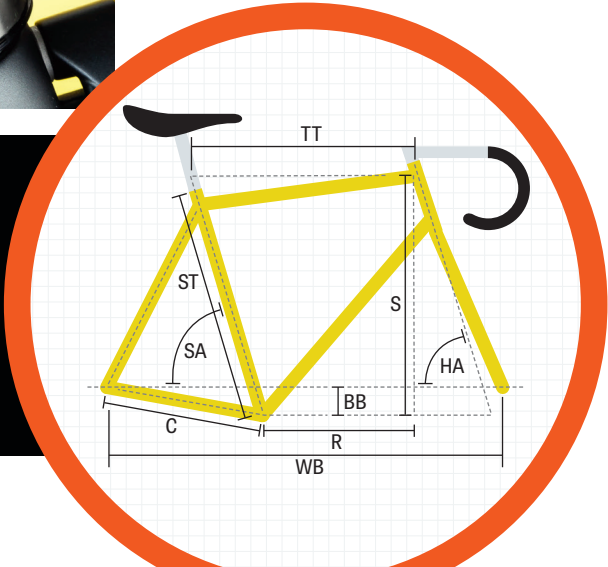
offer with the R J.ACK comes without compromises; no comfort is sacrificed in the pursuit of speed and handling, while no performance is held back in order to cosset the rider. This is titanium at its best. A bike that glides over most surfaces, supported by high-quality rubber, appointed with sensibly specced components, yet which welds a maniacal grin on your face each time you ride it. The fun, the thrills, the adrenaline, the comfort, and the sheer happiness in imbues you with make J.Laverack's R J.ACK so good that you should be able to get it on prescription. Sadly, it comes with a hefty price tag, and there's the rub. Although if tarmac is the only surface you ride on, this is the one bike you need: sell everything else in your garage and buy one.

THE SPEC

Frameset The R J.ACK combines its 3Al/2.5V tubing with a threaded bottom bracket whose strength is upped with a higher aluminium content.

GEOMETRY

Size tested	54	Reach (R)	384mm
Weight	8.32kg	Chainstays (C)	415mm
Top tube (TT)	548mm	Head angle (HA)	72.4°
Seat tube (ST)	515mm	Seat angle (SA)	73°
Stack (S)	538mm	Wheelbase (WB)	986mm
		BB drop (BB)	68mm



RATING

FRAME

It's built for speed but doesn't sacrifice comfort

COMPONENTS

Shimano Ultegra is deployed throughout.

WHEELS

Very capable in-house hoops with great tyres

THE RIDE

We loved it. It's the epitome of cycling joy!

OVERALL

9.1/10

Neat bead-blasted detailing abounds, from the date of frame manufacture on the rear of the seat tube to the number on the downtube (ours is No7 of 50 R J.ACK frames). Although standard frameset sizes such as ours are available off-the-shelf, J.Laverack specialise in custom builds, offering in-house bike-fitting appointments to determine custom tube lengths. The tyre clearance is at a maximum on our test bike, with a 28c fitted; however, a 32c is claimed to fit the rear of the bike. Also of note is the fact that this bike is available with two differing geometries (much in the same way as Trek operate): Race and Classic. Ours is a Race version, with a measured 72.4° head angle, and is altogether longer and lower, for aerodynamic efficiency from a lower riding position. Although a slightly

shallower angle than the 73° of the Kinesis, the R J.ACK's carbon Enve forks provide more direct steering feedback. All cables, and their outers, are routed through the frame. **Groupset** The R J.ACK's moving mechanical parts come courtesy of Shimano's latest Ultegra equipment. It shares its chainset with that of the Kinesis GTD, with a 52/36 arrangement working on an Ultegra 11-30 cassette. Ultegra rim brakes offer all the stopping power you need, with the exception of perhaps emergency stops in standing water. **Finishing kit** J.Laverack offer a number of finishing-kit options for their builds. Our bike comes equipped with a PRO PLT cockpit. 400mm alloy handlebars feature a flattened bar top designed for aero performance, but also providing a particularly

relaxed riding position, embellished by incredibly soft bar tape. A 100mm stem makes for the ideal front end set-up. A PRO Vibe carbon seatpost at the rear is topped by a PRO Falcon saddle which allows for both aggressive and laidback riding. **Wheels** J.Laverack's in-house brand Aera supplies the 700c alloy rims, with spokes laced to Hope hubs. They're by no means the lightest alloy wheelset but ably coped with everything we demanded of them throughout our testing. Schwalbe's Pro One tyres are the widest the frameset will accommodate, but are near-perfect for the type of riding this bike provokes. They're impressively grippy, comfortable, remained puncture-resistant on autumn roads, and inspired sky-high cornering confidence. 