



The Cervélo Soloist Carbon takes on flats, climbs, races and centuries with equal aplomb.

FAST IN ALUMINUM, EVEN FASTER IN CARBON

CERVÉLO SOLOIST CARBON

In August 2004 we tested an aluminum Cervélo Soloist and loved its eager-beaver sprinting and climbing mien. Not one to rest on its laurels, Cervélo has been quietly working on a carbon Soloist since 2001, but didn't debut the bike until this year's Tour de France—and under only select CSC team riders.

Geometry is exactly the same as the aluminum model, with parallel 73-degree seat- and head-tube angles, but the Soloist's optional, reversible seatpost offers a 76-degree seat angle for time trials or triathlons. Look at the Soloist Carbon's frame and you'll see that the company's design priorities lie in aerodynamics and bottom bracket stiffness. Each carbon tube is shaped to slice through the air; even the head tube is more aero, with a slightly oval profile.

PRICE: \$6,150 (as tested); \$3,200 (frame, fork and seatpost) **HIGHS:** Light, stiff, lively, aerodynamic, and comfortable; equally at home in the Tour or Thursday-night club ride **LOW:** We love the clean, aero looks of the internally routed cables but the lack of barrel adjusters makes mid-ride tweaks impossible—in-line adjusters will solve this **WEIGHT:** 14 lb., 11 oz. (56cm, w/o pedals) **SIZES:** 48, 51, 54, 56 (tested), 58, 61cm **FRAME:** Cervélo Smartwall-C carbon **FORK:** True Temper Alpha Q Sub 3 **COMPONENT HIGHLIGHTS:** (as tested) Shimano Dura-Ace shifters, derailleurs, brakes; Zipp 303 Z3 wheels; Vittoria Corsa Evo-KS tubular tires; FSA SLK MegaExo cranks, RD 250 alloy handlebar and OS 140 stem; Cervélo carbon seatpost; Selle Italia SLR XP saddle **CONTACT:** 866/CERVELO; cervelo.com

But don't pigeonhole the Soloist as a flatlander; our test rides showed that the bike is just as happy in the mountains. We were initially put off by the bulky look of the bottom bracket area, but after the first few stomps on the pedals we quickly forgave the oversized look. Even the hardest out-of-the-saddle efforts yielded no perceivable BB flex, just a feeling of our legs being connected directly to the rear wheel. Despite this speed, there is still a lively feel to the frame, a trait not all carbon frames share. Blows from expansion cracks and cattle guards are felt, but without sting. In the context of this bike's predilection for racing, it's a comfortable ride, and hardy cyclists might even break it out for a century. The geometry let us drink comfortably at warp speeds, yet still cut underneath others in tight criterium corners. For two grand more than the alloy model, the advantages of the Soloist Carbon are lighter weight, refined ride quality and better aerodynamics, qualities both CSC pro Bobby Julich and the weekend warrior can appreciate.—R.K.