

NOT YOUR DAD'S SCHWINN

BY ROB D'AMICO

Since the Schwinn craze of the '70s, bikes, especially racing bikes, have advanced by leaps and bounds. We asked Wiley Mosley of Specialized Bicycle for the lowdown on one of the premier racing bikes in the field, the S-Works Tarmac SL3, which starts at \$6,700. In fact, Mosley will be keeping a close eye on the Tour de France this month because two-time champ Alberto Contador of Spain will be riding the bike as he goes head to head with local boy Lance Armstrong. Here's a detailed look at what makes the SL3 so high-tech.

→ FRAME

THE CARBON FRAME is feather light. So light, the entire bike clocks in at a mere 13.8 pounds—that's the same weight as your average 2-month-old baby. It's also less than half the weight of a vintage Schwinn, which was made out of aluminum or steel. Another notable feature is the bike's extreme rigidity. Any rider will tell you that all bikes "flex," or twist slightly as you pedal, which reduces your speed. A rigid bike allows you to go faster.

→ HANDLEBARS & COMPONENTS

THESE CLASSIC-BEND carbon handlebars are lightweight yet durable. And the front derailleur, or gear-shifter, and brake levers are from SRAM, a company known for its high-tech engineering. The components are SRAM Red, which is pro level, and "is what everything else is judged against right now," Mosley notes.

MORE FEATURES

1 SADDLE

You select the seat that best fits your body

2 STEM

Adjustable for even weight distribution

3 BRAKES

Ultralight, extra stopping power

4 REAR DERAILLEUR Pro-level, quick shifting



→ CRANK & BOTTOM BRACKET

THE BIKE'S DRIVETRAIN (where the pedals connect to the axle) runs on a crank system that Mosley says is extraordinarily light while also being stiff. An oversized bottom bracket and spindles also increase the bike's stiffness.

→ WHEELS

THE DEEP-DISH WHEELS also use the structural carbon, which makes them lighter and more aerodynamic while also increasing the rigidity. And bladed spokes, instead of the round ones used in old Schwinn models, also reduce drag.

(BIKE PURELY FOR FUN? SEE PAGE 44)