



TEST
Road Bike Saddles

PARTNER SEARCH

For some cyclists, finding the right saddle is like hoping to win the lottery. What many cyclists don't know, is that most saddle producers now offer computerized selection programs designed to facilitate their search. TOUR tried out the programs offered by seven manufacturers

For many cyclists, choosing the perfect saddle seems just as difficult as finding one's partner for life. Some relationships fail after a few kilometers, others last maybe one summer, and there are only a few that one would want to ride for the rest of one's life. One of the reasons finding the one saddle that fits is so difficult has to do with the vast number of saddles available in the marketplace. Selle Italia and Specialized, for example, have 36 and 21 bike saddles on offer, respectively. They include saddles that are wide, narrow, thickly-padded, hard as a board, with holes and without, black, colorful, with rails of metal or carbon. It's hardly possible to try them all. Or is it? Many manufacturers offer help in the form of a virtual partner agency for saddle-seekers. You usually use them online, and they provide concrete suggestions for certain saddle models. These programs can be a solution for cyclists who exactly know their anatomical data and their personal preferences. Other vendors supplement the virtual pre-selection process by following it up with a dealer consultation.

HIT LIST

Currently, seven manufacturers offer search systems which query from two (SQ-Lab and Fizik) to eight (Ergon, Selle Italia) criteria. At the core of the questions asked are those pertaining to gender, type of bicycle, the flexibility of the rider and his or her sit bone distance. Occurring somewhat less frequently are questions having to do with the desired thickness of the padding or the pressure sensitivity of the rider's pubis or ischium. Fizik provides the simplest selection procedure. The Spine Concept mainly determines how flexible the cyclist is. If you can easily touch your toes with your fingers, the program identifies you as a "snake". If you can

only bend your back with difficulty and your hands only reach knee height, then you're a "bull". The "chameleon" is between these two extremes. In the second step, the program asks whether you ride in a more competition-oriented or in a comfortable position. Done. The analog counter-example comes from Selle Italia and calls itself idMatch. This selection process takes place only at qualified dealers and includes a 15-minute body measurement. By using calipers, a tape measure and an electronic spirit level, the width of the pelvis, the thigh circumference and the maximum flex of the spine are measured. Together with other parameters, the proprietary software calculates which one of six saddle families from S1 to L3, each consisting of four to nine saddle models, offers the best fit. So whereas Fizik's program seems like a form of speed dating, Selle Italia requires significantly more time and, when you including traveling to the dealer, ends up including a rather intensive getting-to-know-you phase. In the chart on page 23, you will find a list of the relevant criteria employed by the individual saddle finder programs.

Utilizing six saddle testers - four men, two women - we went through the seven different programs offered by saddle manufacturers. The programs recommended a total of 27 different saddle models, which are illustrated on pages 24/25 in the complete overview. Our testers rode their seven test saddles for a period of two weeks in an alternating manner. They documented their impressions and named their three personal test winners. Due to different individual anatomies and to differing preferences, we did not grade the saddles with our usual grade system. After all, you wouldn't want to give your partner a school grade either.

TEXT
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SHORT & SWEET

With selection programs, many saddle providers try to narrow the huge range of saddles down to those that reflect the individual needs of a given cyclist. For experienced cyclists, online configurators, coupled with dealer advice and sometimes even test saddles rentals, lead to good results. Beginners, however, can have problems filling out online forms because some questions cannot be answered without specialised knowledge. Fizik provides the simplest selection procedure, but neglects the very important sit bone distance. Selle Italia relies exclusively on personal consultation at your bike store. SQ-Lab is the pioneer in the field of adjustment programs. The system is easy to understand and the saddles on offer correspond to the system.

Best concept
SQ-LAB

Biggest saddle selection
SELLE ITALIA

Best value
for money
PRO



THE SADDLE TESTERS

THE COMMUTER Matthias Borchers



Size meters/feet 1.80 / 5'11"
Weight kg/lbs 80 / 176
Sit bone width 12.5 cm
Position stretched
Flexibility normal
Saddle problems none
Annual kilometers 3500

TEST SADDLES

- **ERGON** SRX3-M Pro
- **FIZIK** Antares R3 Kium
- **PRO** Turnix Ti 142 mm
- **SELLE ITALIA** SLR Super Flow L (L3)
- **SELLE SAN MARCO** Regale Flat Narrow
- **SPECIALIZED** Toupé Expert Gel 143
- **SQ-LAB** 612 Road 14

MEIN PODIUM



SPECIALIZED Toupé Expert Gel 143



SQ-LAB 612 Road 14



FIZIK Antares R3 Kium

RIDER PROFILE

I ride most of my kilometers on my way to work, which is 12 kilometers for the round trip. Depending on the weather and my mood, I extend that distance to 20 to 60 kilometers per day. Since my weekend routes are seldom over 100 kilometers, I don't sit on the saddle for more than three hours at a time. Despite my relatively stretched out posture, I don't really have a problem with pain in the perineal area or numbness.

MY PODIUM

I put the Toupe Expert Gel from Specialized in first place because this saddle with its minimal indentation can easily be ridden without any adjustment period. Pressure peaks are not noticeable, the small spoiler at the rear and the non-slip surface stabilize the pelvis, and my thighs have enough room while pedaling. As far as the silver and bronze rankings are concerned, it's a close contest with the 612 by SQ-Lab just winning second place. It offers the sit bones maximum support,

has a grippy, non-slippery surface, and the central indentation relieves the perineum in a noticeable manner. I would also ride the Fizik Antares, but towards the back it widens out quite early, so that every now and then I would scrape the back of my thighs on the saddle's edges.

WHAT BOTHERED ME

Although the width of the Ergon SRX-3 M Pro fits, its saddle cover is too inflexible and the high middle section does end up pressing in the perineal area. On the SLR Superflow, the edges at the transition to the cutout pinch into tissue too much. I wouldn't want to ride this saddle for more than one hour at a time. Selle San Marco's Regale is a bit too hard for me. I could get used to the Pro Turnix, but after about one and a half hours of riding, I could feel my sit bones. Due to its rounded form, its effective sit bone width is less than would normally be indicated by its 142 millimeter overall width.

RIDER PROFILE

For me, road cycling is a way of letting off steam and clearing my head. Accordingly, I don't follow any particular training plan and sometimes, when I feel like it, I do wild and crazy things. Despite a tight time budget, I try to ride regularly, whether by myself or with a friend. I am rarely in the saddle for more than three hours. I am definitely sensitive to pressure in the perineal area.

MY PODIUM

For me, the SQ-Lab 611 Active Race 13 wins first place. It's the kind of saddle you simply sit on, and it feels comfortable. And, given the saddle's many steps and troughs, I was very skeptical. No pressure points and a good sense of grip, what more could you want? In second place, I put the Selle Italia Flite Kit Carbonio Flow (L2). This was not love at first sitting, but after a slight correction of the saddle's position, is also resulted in a comfortable, supple ride. Even after a long ride, there were no pressure points at the edges of the

cutout, which is usually the case for me. For me, the Ergon SR3-M wins the bronze. From the very start I had a comfortable feeling, without risk of slipping and without any pressure points. Only the edge of the seating area rubbed against the insides of my thighs in a somewhat unpleasant manner while riding.

WHAT BOTHERED ME

The Selle San Marco Mantra Flat Wide is too hard for me, and the feeling of pressure on the inside of the sit bones is a bother. The Specialized Avatar 143 is too soft for me and feels too vague, it causes pain in the sit bones and perineum. The edges of Pro Griffon AF Ti 132's cutout lead to the pain and numbness all the way into the legs that I am familiar with. The Fizik Aliante feels good at first, but after a short time it starts to create a feeling of pressure on the inside of the sit bones, until numbness sets in.

THE SPURTER Wolfgang Papp



Size meters/feet 1.88 / 6'2"
Weight kg/lbs 84 / 185
Sit bone width 10.5 cm
Position moderate
Flexibility low
Saddle problems pubic bone
Annual kilometers 2000

TEST SADDLES

- **ERGON** SR3-M
- **FIZIK** Aliante R3 Kium
- **PRO** Griffon Ti AF 132 mm
- **SELLE ITALIA** Flite Kit Carbonio Flow (L2)
- **SELLE SAN MARCO** Mantra Flat Wide
- **SPECIALIZED** Avatar Comp
- **SQ-LAB** 611 Active Race 13



SQ-LAB 611 Active Race 13



SELLE ITALIA Flite Kit Carbonio Flow (L2)



ERGON SR3-M

THE BEGINNER Sandra Maar



Size meters/feet 1.84 / 6'
Weight kg/lbs 73 / 161
Sit bone width 14.5 cm
Position moderate
Flexibility high
Saddle problems pubic bone
Annual kilometers 1500

TEST SADDLES

- **ERGON** SRX3-M Pro
- **FIZIK** Arione R3 Kium
- **PRO** Griffon Lady 152 mm
- **SELLE ITALIA** Max SLR Gel Flow (L3)
- **SELLE SAN MARCO** Mantra Flat Narrow
- **SPECIALIZED** Ruby Expert Gel 155
- **SQ-LAB** 611 Race 15



Selle Italia Max SLR Gel Flow



PRO Griffon Lady 152



SQ-Lab 611 Race 15

RIDER PROFILE

I came to road cycling through my interest for triathlon. As a beginner, I undertake training rides of 60 to 80 kilometers on weekends, but sometimes I also ride the 20 kilometers to work or university during the week. On average, I sit on the saddle between one and three hours, rarely longer. My riding position is moderate, during a triathlon I will also sometimes go into a more athletic, stretched position. I often have saddle problems and am quite familiar with pressure, pain and numbness.

MY PODIUM

I selected the Selle Italia as my favorite because I have the least amount of discomfort with this saddle. It feels the most comfortable to me, and this feeling doesn't change during the ride. Pressure in the sit bone area is low. Following closely behind in second place is the Griffon Lady from Pro. This saddle also presented me with hardly any problems and provides comfortable support. Third place goes to the

SQ-Lab. Although it's also comfortable, it took me a while to get used to its wide shape. As far as width is concerned, all three models fit; they offer good support, don't cause any chafing and allow plenty of room for the legs.

WHAT BOTHERED ME

The Selle San Marco Mantra Narrow Flat was the saddle I was able to cope with least. It is pretty hard, which quickly caused pressure discomfort for me - and it is slippery, so I wasn't really able to sit on the saddle in a stable manner. I also found the Ergon SR3X-M Pro to be too slippery and inflexible; it gave me little support and caused strong pressure pain. The same applies to the Fizik Arione, which is just too narrow for me. On it, I ended up sitting on the edge of the saddle, and this made itself felt at the inside of my sit bones. Due to its narrow support area, the saddle immediately caused pressure in the pubic area. The Ruby Expert Gel was initially good, but after 30 kilometers, I felt my sit bones.

RIDER PROFILE

During training laps or one-day races, my behind isn't really very sensitive. I'm capable of sitting up to four hours on uncomfortable saddles, only rarely does numbness become a knockout criterion. If I'm able to ride for a week or more on a daily basis, for instance during a stage race, training camp or on a bike tour, the saddle choice becomes important. Generally, I can already feel on the first day whether a saddle will go on to cause more severe symptoms, such as back pain and pressure, starting around the third day.

MY PODIUM

My favorite out of the test is the Turnix Carbon from Pro. Its width fits my sit bones the best and the saddle supports the perineum with a relatively soft cushion without pressing against it. With the slightly raised tail, it also supports the pelvis in a stretched posture and prevents lower back pain. Following very closely in second place, the Specialized Romin has similar properties, only that I sometimes felt

the edges of the cutout. Following at a small distance in third place, the Fizik Arione is very comfortable on day trips. On longer rides, though, its flat shape offers too little support. From my experience, I can say that another saddle from the same manufacturers fits me better.

WHAT BOTHERED ME

On Selle Italia's SLR Superflow, the huge cutout is counterproductive. The small area of the remaining thin sides presses into the perineal area and impairs circulation. A similar thing, though not quite as bad, happened to me with the Aspide Waved Narrow. With its stepped shape, the SQ-Lab 612 Road only supports my sit bones. On longer rides, I feel my butt more and more and its shape and very grippy surface hardly allow for any variation of my seating position. I also found the Ergon SR3-S Pro to be inflexible. The central indentation is well intentioned, but too short. That leads to pressure in the least favorable place.

THE STAGE RIDER Jens Klötzer



Size meters/feet 1.79 / 5'10"
Weight kg/lbs 65 / 143
Sit bone width 10 cm
Position stretched
Flexibility high
Saddle problems none
Annual kilometers 5000

TEST SADDLES

- **ERGON** SR3-S Pro
- **FIZIK** Arione R3 Kium
- **PRO** Turnix Carbon 132 mm
- **Selle Italia** SLR Super Flow S
- **SELLE SAN MARCO** Aspide Waved Narrow
- **SPECIALIZED** S-Works Romin 143
- **SQ-LAB** 612 Road 12



PRO Turnix Carbon 132



SPECIALIZED S-Works Romin 143



FIZIK Arione R3 Kium

THE SADDLE TESTERS

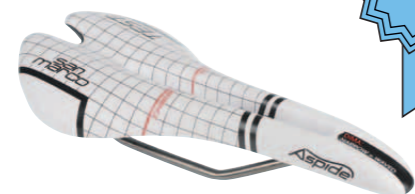
THE ALL-ROUNDER Sandra Veith



Size meters/feet 1.69 / 5'7"
Weight kg/lbs 55 / 121
Sit bone width 11.5 cm
Position stretched
Flexibility high
Saddle problems none
Annual kilometers 4000

TEST SADDLES

- **ERGON** SR3-M Pro
- **FIZIK** Arione R3 Kium
- **PRO** Griffon Lady 142 mm
- **SELLE ITALIA** SLR Lady Flow (S3)
- **SELLE SAN MARCO** Aspide Waved Narrow
- **SPECIALIZED** Oura Expert
- **SQ-LAB** 612 Road 13



SELLE SAN MARCO Aspide Waved Narrow



SQ-LAB 612 Road 13



FIZIK Arione R3 Kium



RIDER PROFILE

My highlight was the TOUR-Transalp a few years ago, long ascents such as those in the Alps are no problem for me. Since I had my children, my normal route now only takes between two and three hours. At the beginning of the season, I do sometimes feel my sit bones, but the problem quickly subsides after I've done some kilometers in training. Fortunately, I otherwise have no saddle problems - I apparently have a fairly resilient behind.

MY PODIUM

I chose the narrow Selle San Marco Aspide as the winner because it is comfortable to ride right from the start in my usual seating position. It gives me a lot of freedom of movement while pedaling and the cutout in the pubic area fits me perfectly. The indentation relieves pressure and I don't feel the edges. Because of its tight padding, it's best suited for those who have ridden a few kilometers, which is why it would be the ideal saddle for the behinds of experienced cyclists.

The 612 Road 13 by SQ-Lab is very soft and distributes the pressure over a wider area. A great saddle at the beginning of the cycling season and well suited for sensitive behinds; despite its width, it doesn't restrict my freedom of movement. Fizik's Arione made third place. The narrow saddle is ideal for my stretched out seating position, but on longer journeys it presses on the sensitive ischial area (sit bones).

WHAT BOTHERED ME

With Selle Italia's SLR Lady Flow, I couldn't cope with the edges of the cutout, and my sit bones were subjected to adverse pressure as well. I experienced similar problems with the Specialized Oura Expert. I felt the edges of the Ergon SR3-M Pro too much in the seating area, and it also pressed against the backs of my thighs. Technically, the Griffon Lady saddle is unremarkable, but when it was mounted, the screw of saddle clamp pressed into the plastic cap of the indentation.

THE BREVET RIDER Manuel Jekel



Size meters/feet 1.81 / 5'11"
Weight kg/lbs 68 / 150
Sit bone width 13 cm
Position moderate
Flexibility normal
Saddle problems ischium
Annual kilometers 10,000

TEST SADDLES

- **ERGON** SRX3-M Pro
- **FIZIK** Antares R3 Kium
- **PRO** Falcon 142
- **SELLE ITALIA** SLR Super Flow S (S3)
- **SELLE SAN MARCO** Mantra Flat Narrow
- **SPECIALIZED** S-Works Toupé 143
- **SQ-LAB** 611 Race 14



SPECIALIZED S-Works Toupé 143



PRO Falcon 142



FIZIK Antares R3 Kium



RIDER PROFILE

Somehow it's strange: The older I get, the more I love to ride long distances. My highlight of 2011 was Paris-Brest-Paris, which consists of 1200 kilometers in one stretch. Since I've started riding such distances, I have changed my seating position from stretched out to more moderate. Since I now tend to sit more on the sit bones, the best saddle for me must be especially flexible and precisely match my sit bone distance.

MY PODIUM

That was close. Actually both the Pro Falcon 142 and the Specialized S-Works Toupé would have earned first place for their comfort. Both saddles fit perfectly under my sit bones, with Specialized offsetting its hard padding through the flexibility of the saddle shell and frame. The Pro is slightly softer, but is less flexible. In the end, ease of installation was decisive. The Pro is very flat, so that could become a problem with high seatpost clamp heads. In any case, I would pick both saddles to go for a spontaneous 200

km (124 mile) ride. The Fizik Antares reaches third place on the podium. In this saddle, when I try to shift my seating position towards the rear, my legs can't pedal 100% freely because of the saddle's broad form.

WHAT BOTHERED ME

The SQ-Lab 611 Race 14 would have also made the podium, if not for the problem with its step-design, i.e. the lowered nose section. As soon as I slide forward, the saddle nose immediately causes pressure. What I didn't like about the Ergon SRX3-M Pro from the beginning was its inflexible form. I already felt pressure peaks and edges of the saddle after ten kilometers. A few kilometers later, riding the Selle Italia SLR Super Flow S, the edges at the transition from the seating area to the indentation makes themselves unpleasantly noticeable. The Mantra Flat Narrow by Selle San Marco caused me pain. Its shape is simply too round, my sit bones found no support on it.

THE SADDLE FINDERS

The selection processes offered by the seven brands differ significantly in scope and application. With Fizik and SQ-Lab, it's easy, whereas Selle Italia relies on consultation at the bike dealer's

	ERGON	FIZIK	PRO	SELLE ITALIA	SELLE SAN MARCO	SPECIALIZED	SQ-LAB
Name	Saddle Selector	Spine Concept	Saddle Selector	idMatch	DIMA	Sattelberater	Active System
Web	ergon-bike.com	fizik.com	pro-bikegear.com	selleitalia.com	sellesanmarco.com	specialized.com	sq-lab.com
CRITERIA							
Bicycle type	●		●	●		●	
Gender	●		●	●		●	
Age	●		●	●		●	
Size				●	●		
Weight				●	●		
Pelvis width				●	●		
Thigh circumference				●			
Seating position	●				●	●	●
Saddle form/padding			●			●	
Flexibility	●	●	●	●	●		
Sit bone width	●		●	calculated value			●
Pressure sensitivity	●				●		
Mileage	●	●					
SUGGESTIONS	1 model + variants	1 model + variants	1 model + variants	4 to 8 saddles	1 model	1 model + variants	1 model + variants
Conclusion	Functioning seat width analysis; alternative saddles are also suggested by the program; the dealer has saddles that he can loan for free; recommended for cyclists who know what they're doing	The concept neglects sit bone distance; it's all about flexibility, classifies the user in one of three seating categories; good selection up to 13 cm sit bone distance; for more experienced cyclists	The Saddle Selector has two weak points: the question pertaining to the saddle's shape and that it always recommends wide saddles for women, regardless of their sit bone distance; only for experts	idMatch is only offered by trained dealers; how the programs uses pelvis width and leg circumference to determine saddle width is unclear; when in doubt, it's necessary to try out many models	The program doesn't ask for sit bone distance; instead, saddle width depends upon body weight; the question of the saddle's form can't be answered by laymen; not for beginners	The question of padding is not self-explanatory for non-experts; though Specialized has a device to measure sit bone width, this question is not asked; therefore, beginners should go to a dealer	Pioneer in the field of saddle adjustment; two parameters are enough; simple and easy to understand; very clear result; separation between Road and Race is somewhat unclear; suitable for everybody

● Spaces marked in blue correspond to the criteria queried by the individual manufacturers.

OVERVIEW OF ALL TEST SADDLES

MANUFACTURER	ERGON	FIZIK	PRO	SELLE ITALIA	SELLE SAN MARCO	SPECIALIZED	SQ-LAB	MANUFACTURER
Web	www.ergon-bike.com	www.hartje.de	www.paul-lange.de	www.paul-lange.de	www.sellesanmarco.com	www.specialized.com	www.sq-lab.com	Web
Service	Test saddle at the dealer's total of 2758 dealers	Test saddle at the dealer's D: 600, A: 200, CH: 200	30 days money back total of 1000 dealers	30 days money back 150 idMatch dealers	Test saddle at the dealer's not specified	30 day coupon total of 420 dealers	not specified not specified	Service
Dealer network in D, A, CH (Germany, Austria, Switzerl.)								Dealer network in D, A, CH (Germany, Austria, Switzerl.)
Model, price in €/S/£*	SR3-S/-M Pro, 140/174/110	Aliante R3 Kium, 169/210/133	Falcon 142, 130/162/102	Flite Kit Carbonio Flow(L2), 200/248/157	Aspide Waved Narrow, 145/180/114	Avatar Comp Gel 143, 70/87/55	611 Race 13/14/15, 100/124/79	Model, price in €/S/£*
Weight	220/230 grams	225 grams	160 grams	165 grams	180 grams	300 grams	265/275/280 grams	Weight
Adjustment range/height	65 millimeters, 25 millimeters	70 millimeters, 25 millimeters	60 millimeters, 15 millimeters	50 millimeters, 25 millimeters	65 millimeters, 28 millimeters	75 millimeters, 25 millimeters	70 millimeters, 25 millimeters	Adjustment range/height
Width (manufact. specs)	S, M, L	one width	132, 142 millimeters	one width	narrow, wide	130, 143, 155 millimeters	12, 13, 14, 15 centimeters	Width (manufact. specs)
Colors	white, black	black-red, white-black	black, white-black	black, white, black-green	white, black	black	black	Colors
Image								
Model, price in €/S/£*	SR3-M Pro, 130/162/102	Antares R3 Kium, 169/210/133	Griffon Lady 142/152, 90/112/71	Max SLR Gel Flow (L3), 130/162/102	Mantra Flat Narrow/Wide, 145/180/114	Oura Expert Gel, 120/149/94	612 Road 12/13/14, 120-180/149-224/94-141	Model, price in €/S/£*
Weight	225 grams	200 grams	220/230 grams	250 grams	200 grams	280 grams	185/250 grams	Weight
Adjustment range/height	60 millimeters, 25 millimeters	70 millimeters, 25 millimeters	60 millimeters, 18 millimeters	75 millimeters, 28 millimeters	65 millimeters, 25 millimeters	65 millimeters, 30 millimeters	60 millimeters, 25 millimeters	Adjustment range/height
Width (manufact. specs)	S, M	one width	142, 152 millimeters	one width	narrow, wide	143, 155, 168 millimeters	12, 13, 14, 15 centimeters	Width (manufact. specs)
Colors	black-grey	black-white, black-blue, black-grey	white, black	black, white	white, black	white, black	black	Colors
Image								
Model, price in €/S/£*	SR3-M/-L, 100/124/79	Arione R3 Kium, 169/210/133	Griffon Ti AF 142, 90/112/71	SLR Lady Flow (S3), 140/174/110	Regale Flat Narrow, 139/173/109	Ruby Expert Gel 155, 120/149/94	611 Active Race 13, 150/186/118	Model, price in €/S/£*
Weight	250/270 grams	205 grams	215 grams	190 grams	205 grams	226 grams	260 grams	Weight
Adjustment range/height	60 millimeters, 25 millimeters	70 millimeters, 22 millimeters	60 millimeters, 18 millimeters	70 millimeters, 25 millimeters	65 millimeters, 23 millimeters	65 millimeters, 30 millimeters	65 millimeters, 25 millimeters	Adjustment range/height
Width (manufact. specs)	S, M, L	one width	132, 142 millimeters	one width	narrow, wide	143, 155, 168 millimeters	13, 14, 15 centimeters	Width (manufact. specs)
Colors	black	black, black-white, black-yellow	white-red, black-white	white, black	white, black	black, white	black	Colors
Image								
Model, price in €/S/£*			Turnix Carbon 132, 130/162/102	SLR Super Flow 130/L, 200/248/157				Model, price in €/S/£*
Weight			150 grams	185/190 grams				Weight
Adjustment range/height			60 millimeters, 25 millimeters	70 millimeters, 25 millimeters				Adjustment range/height
Width (manufact. specs)			132, 142 millimeters	S, L				Width (manufact. specs)
Colors			white-black, black	white, black				Colors
Image								
Model, price in €/S/£*								Model, price in €/S/£*
Weight								Weight
Adjustment range/height								Adjustment range/height
Width (manufact. specs)								Width (manufact. specs)
Colors								Colors
Image								

*GERMAN PRICES. THE PRICE IN YOUR COUNTRY MAY VARY

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HOW OUR TESTS

The test crew In order to represent a wide range of road cyclists, we selected four men and two women who engage in cycling to varying degrees. All testers were measured before the test and asked about any saddle problems that they might have. We also determined the exact position of each tester on their road bike in order to be able to reproduce this position with each of the test saddles.

Testing the configurators Our six subjects had to click their way through the

various selection programs offered by the seven saddle brands without any assistance. Only in the case of Selle Italia's idMatch were all testers personally measured by a professional. This process was documented, possible ambiguities or problems that turned up were taken into account in the evaluation. Then the saddles were ordered according to each tester's selection. In general, we chose the models with metal rails to simplify installation. In the case of inconclusive results, such

as two or more eligible saddle models, we selected the model with the best possible matching characteristics in consultation with the manufacturer. Because of this, some of the presented test saddles may vary from those suggested by the configurators. This doesn't have to constitute a disadvantage, since most makers rely on their dealers giving additional advice to prospective buyers.

The test rides The saddles were tested over a period of two weeks, with each

tester riding their normal route in a rested state in order to collect neutral riding impressions without the influence of exhaustion. All findings were documented and ultimately led to the personal evaluations of each tester.