

Mekk Primo 6.2 **£2,200**

Serious looker goes more aero for 2016



About the bike

In a similar vein to Scott's Foil, Mekk has altered its Primo 6.2 for 2016, but where the Foil has evolved gradually, Mekk has introduced some sizeable changes, most noticeably to the rear triangle. The brief was the same – to increase the overall stiffness of the package while retaining enough comfort to keep you cossetted over longer distances and iffy road surfaces. On paper, it's the most purposeful of our bunch, with 50mm deep-section rims and 'attack position' frame design, but how does that translate into on-the-road feel?



SPEC

FRAME
High Modulus carbon Toray T800 frame and fork

GROUPSET
Shimano 105

BRAKES
Shimano 105

CHAINSET
Shimano 105, 52/36

CASSETTE
Shimano 105, 11-28

BARS
Saturae HB-3038TB, alloy

STEM
Saturae DA-269, alloy

SADDLE
San Marco Era Start Power

SEATPOST
Saturae Carbon Aero

WHEELS
Saturae C50 50mm full carbon clinchers

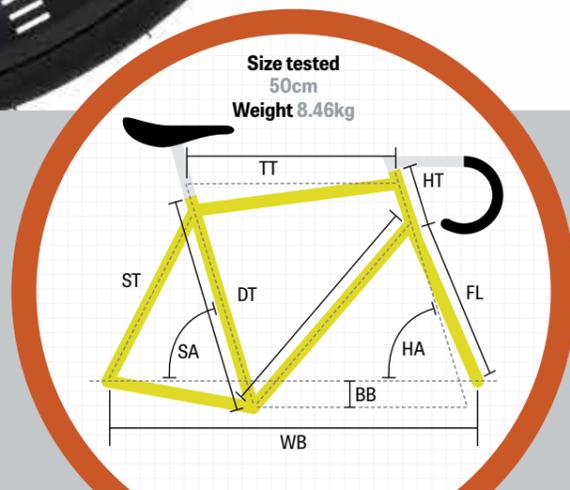
TYRES
Continental Grand Sport Race, 23c

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GEOMETRY

	Claimed	Measured			
Top tube (TT)	530mm	530mm	Head tube (HT)	115mm	115mm
Seat tube (ST)	500mm	502mm	Head angle (HA)	72.5°	72.9°
Down tube (DT)	N/A	614mm	Seat angle (SA)	72.5°	73.1°
Fork length (FL)	N/A	375mm	Wheelbase (WB)	968mm	970mm
			BB drop (BB)	86.5mm	85mm



The ride

First impression A few laps around the block (think of it as a one-man criterium) to check bike set-up revealed surprising composure for a bike with a wheelbase of just 970mm. Two miles later, we were giving it full, out-of-the-saddle attacks and the Primo responded immediately with zero twitchiness. In short, it feels like a race bike should.

On the road The more we rode the Primo, the more the impression of instant response to rider input

was compounded, but it also became clear that this bike is packing more in the way of comfort than you'd imagine possible for such a taut and squat package. The compact cockpit, thanks to narrow bars and a 90mm alloy stem, puts you right over the front wheel, ready to attack at a moment's notice. On small climbs, the whole package willingly hauls itself skyward in a way you wouldn't expect. We only had recourse to use the 28-tooth cog on a couple of

occasions, perhaps because the attitude of the bike was willing us to positively attack hills on the drops. Yes, the 50mm deep-section rear wheel does have enough flex in it to rub the rear brake blocks when you properly give it the heave-ho, but the amount of comfort the redesigned rear triangle offers at all other times makes this a trade-off we'll gladly accept. So, while this is a bike you could definitely turn up to a crit on and take your chances in



£2,200 aero road bikes

The Shimano 105 brakes are excellent – the only issue is the old chestnut of wet weather performance on carbon rims

the bunch sprint, it offers a good amount of comfort, too. Would we rock up to a sportive with 50mm carbon clinchers, though? It depends whether you have the riding ability to back them up, we say.

Handling That steep head angle of almost 73° lends the Primo considerable flickability in the twists and turns, yet not the unforgiving flightiness of a full-on race bike. It certainly has all the bum-up, head-down attitude you'd demand of one, though. Our downhill section was despatched swiftly and assuredly, the only real niggle being the reaction of those deep-section wheels on exposed corners where crosswinds cause slight buffeting. Although the wheels are a little heftier than the usual alloy clinchers you'd expect on a bike at this price, they're incredibly willing, and by the time we were rolling on open country roads, they'd won us over. The only real issue with the full-carbon clinchers is the old chestnut of wet weather performance.

The spec

Frameset Mekk has adjusted the frame of the Primo for this year, with the intention of lowering the overall weight and increasing the stiffness of the bottom bracket and chainstays, all the while keeping (if not improving) the comfort of the previous model. The rear triangle is shrunk for a more taut set-up – the seatstays now meet the seat tube 110mm below the seatpost, with the rear brake moving below the bottom bracket. Both the carbon fork and chunky down tube feature a trailing edge design, while the super-stubby, 115mm head tube on our size 50 bike puts you low over the front before you've even thought about playing with the four 10mm spacer stack on the steerer. The top tube is pretty lengthy, but the wheelbase is kept short by increasing the cutaway section in the seat tube, bringing the rear wheel closer to the frame. The carbon seatpost works well to soak up any harshness in the ride, even while its steep angle cants you forward, giving a riding position that speaks of racing more than all-day sportives.

Groupset Shimano's 11-speed 105 groupset is employed across the build. It's a proper joy to use, and for our money represents the best value groupset available. The 105 brakes are perfectly acceptable, the BB-mounted rear stopper the best of all the rear brakes on test. However,



they're not perfectly suited to the full carbon braking surface of the bike's deep-section wheels.

Finishing kit The Primo's finishing kit is all from Mekk's in-house brand, Saturae. Bars and stem are workaday alloy components and do their job admirably. The carbon seatpost is topped with a deeply padded San Marco Era Start Power saddle – we'd happily spend many hours in this saddle, although it might not suit riders who like to feel a direct connection to the road beneath them.

Wheels The real stars of the show are the 50mm carbon Saturae wheels. They're fairly basic as carbon wheels go but still offer a noticeable benefit above 20mph. They don't enjoy crosswinds, but the real bonus is that you won't need to fork out for a racing wheelset the moment you get this bike home. They'd be even quicker when treated to a tyre upgrade from the Conti Grand Sports on our test bike. 🚲



RATING

FRAME

Light, stiff and responsive, yet very comfortable, too

COMPONENTS

Faultless 105 and decent own-brand finishing kit

WHEELS

Full carbon wheels at this price? Astonishing!

THE RIDE

Begs you to make out-of-the-saddle attacks on hills

OVERALL



The Primo 6.2 employs a full 105 groupset (above); seatstays join the seatpost well below the top tube (right), while a cutout allows a very short wheelbase



A bike you could turn up to a crit race on, and hold your own in a bunch sprint