

De Rosa Planet

Ratings	
Bike	
Frame	7.0
Fork	7.75
Wheels	9.25
Groupset	7.75
Components	8.25
Looks	6.75
Weight	6.5
Value	8.5



Performance

Climbing	7.5
Descending	8.25
Cornering	7.75
Sprinting	7.75
TOTAL AVE	7.75

De Rosa frames have only risen to prominence recently in South Africa ?the IBM/Lotus team rode them with distinction in 2001 ? but have held high international regard for decades.

Like Tommasini, De Rosa has a limited annual production probably for the following reasons: The Milan?based, family?owned business employs just two welders to work on their aluminium frames.

Apparently there is no need for speed as the De Rosa staff knock off at 3pm each day and take long lunches! Mr De Rosa refuses to hire more staff or work longer hours, instead maintaining his company's focus on quality, not quantity.

The De Rosa boasts carbon seat stays, which, when mated with the full carbon fork, takes the edge off the normally sherp aluminium ride. The seat stays join the seat tube via a wishbone - design link ? a break from traditional seat?stay design, emphasising De Rosa's willingness to incorporate modern developments to produce top class frames. The top and down tubes have a soft?triangular cross section which is responsible for reducing frame flex and the integrated headset beefs up frontal rigidity and strength. The red and blue point job is certainly bright and eye?catching and less busy than the work found on some Italian bikes, which is not to everyone's taste. All welds are seamless, making for a very smooth finish. The De Rosa was the only test bike that was fitted with a Shimano groupset. It was unanimous that the Ultegro system was noticeably smoother than its rival Campagnolo on the other three bikes. While this didn't seem to have an effect on ride performance, the Ultegro groupset cracked the top marks for the test. Unlike the other bikes, which all had 175mm length cranks, the De Rosa sported 172,5mm leg levers, which no doubt contributed to its excellent responsiveness when sprinting and climbing.



The completely slick blue, red and white Michelin Tour de France (Axial Pro) tyres lived up to their good reputation in the corners and added to the bike's good looks. The 40cm handlebar was generally regarded as too narrow, reducing leverage that could have improved the bike's feel when sprinting and climbing out of the saddle.

Verdict:

A light, responsive bike that produced a refreshingly smooth ride. A solid performer in all departements, the De Rosa combines old world Italian craftsmanship with modern design and materials.

