



**PINARELLO
FP QUATTRO
ON TEST**

**V02V-PRO: CARBON
PERSONALISED**

HIGH-END RACERS

They're ultra stylish, versatile and, at £3,000, should be a seriously fast addition to your tri armoury. **Nik Cook** puts an Italian classic and an English upstart to the test in this road bike face-off →

© JONNY GAWLER



The Pinarello provided one of the best descending performances we've experienced

PINARELLO FP QUATTRO

£2,869.00 www.pinarello.com

It boasts the pedigree and looks of a true Italian master but how does the Quattro rate when out on the tarmac?

Based in Treviso, Italy, and having lovingly crafted top-end racing steeds since 1952, Pinarello is one of the most venerated performance bike brands around. Currently the ride of choice of Bradley Wiggins and the rest of Team Sky, this Italian brand is fast developing strong British fan base.

THE BUILD

Whether you opt for the Team Sky/British Cycling paint job our test bike came with or one of the other colour schemes Pinarello offer, the FP Quattro is a bike that's going to turn heads. The oversized

head tube and bottom bracket, asymmetric frame, splashes of bare carbon weave, and uniquely curved forks and stays scream speed and style. The wavy Onda fork – a trickle down from the Quattro's more illustrious sister, the Paris – gives an almost Dali-esque quality to the front end.

The groupset is Shimano Ultegra throughout – what you'd expect of a bike at this price point. It'll never let you down and, for almost identical performance and only a minuscule weight penalty, I can't see (unless you've money to burn) how the spend for Shimano's top-end Dura Ace groupset can ever be justified.

For such a racy bike, the choice

of a compact chainset is curious and is probably there as an enticement to the burgeoning sportive market. Stem, bars, seatpost and saddle are all Pinarello's 'Most' own brand. The bars are alloy but the carbon and alloy combination for the seatpost and stem scores a few points. The Most wheels look a bit agricultural compared to the rest of the build and, although the Continental tyres are a solid choice, they could be a significant weak link.

THE RIDE

Throwing your leg over the Pinarello you immediately feel faster than you are, and you know that fellow cyclists will give you an approving nod.

For a bike with racing geometry, when we hit the tarmac it felt strangely sit up and beg. But once we removed some spacers beneath the stem, we soon achieved the aggressive feel we were after. The position was still comfortable and, with frame geometry trickling down from the

top-of-the-range Dogma (which the pros ride on a Grand Tour), this isn't surprising.

The frame was ultra stiff and responded brilliantly to injections of power. There was absolutely no flex and the Pinarello positively thrived on rough treatment. This made for a fantastic and exciting ride on flat and rolling roads and, throwing the Pinarello into sharp turns, the handling was razor sharp. The only negative was running out of gears with the compact chainset. Despite the stiffness and racy position, overall comfort was good and road buzz almost nonexistent.

Sadly, climbing was a big disappointment. Such a stiff bike should've produced great things on the ups but it was just sluggish and uninspiring. The finger of suspicion was pointed at the Most wheels, as a key factor guaranteed to scupper climbing performance is excessive rotating weight.

Once the climbs were crested, the Pinarello surged back to life and gave one of the best descending and cornering performances we've experienced. Efficient handling, 100% braking confidence and good rubber allowed us to really push and, even on wet and gravelly roads, the Pinarello was sublime.

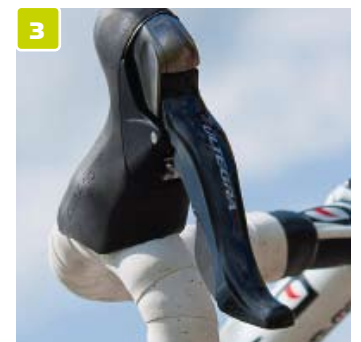
VERDICT

HANDLING Incredible everywhere but climbing	80%
SPEC Ultegra excellent; Most wheels a horror	72%
VALUE You should expect better spec wheels.	70%
COMFORT Excellent for a genuine racing bike	88%

220
Triathlon

78%

“THE ULTRA-STIFF FRAME RESPONDED BRILLIANTLY TO INJECTIONS OF POWER AND POSITIVELY THRIVED ON ROUGH TREATMENT”



1 The wavy, 'Dali-esque' carbon forks certainly turned heads while radiating both speed and style
2 Possibly included with the sportive market in mind, the compact chainset had us running out of gears
3 The Ultegra componentry was ultra-reliable and provided 100% braking confidence



The VO2 proved equally adept at descending as it did when hitting the climbs

VO2 V:PRO:CARBON

£3,000.00 www.vo2cycling.co.uk

A personalised service, SRAM Red and £1k carbon wheels – would the homegrown VO2 prove too good to be true?

Established in 2009, British brand VO2 offer a personalised service. From component choice to fit and frame colour, you're guided through the whole process by ex-pro cyclist and GB age-grouper, company founder Jimmy George. Bespoke service at an affordable price... what more could you want?

THE BUILD

With active input into the build throughout the process, including colour scheme and decals for frame and wheels, the only limitations are your budget and your tastes. The length of VO2

stem, width of stealthy-looking VO2 Carbon Comfort bars and frame size are all determined by a comprehensive set of measurements you send in, so you can be sure the fit will be spot on.

The VO2 frame and fork certainly looks the part with bulges in all the right places and super-skinny rear stays that are reminiscent of the Cervélo R3.

The SRAM Red groupset, minus the brakes, on a £3,000 bike is staggering. It's not for everyone, though, and the double tap shift tends to inspire a 'love it or hate it' reaction. Braking will have to be overlooked as, although our build came with SRAM Red brakes, budget Tektros are the standard

for the build at this price point and are decent enough – plus a saving had to be made somewhere. Our build also came with a San Marco saddle but standard spec is a cheaper, but still decent, Ritchey Stream. The wheels are the crowning glory rather than a make-do afterthought of the build. VO2's own carbon 50mm V Race wheels, with an RRP of £999, are a breathtaking addition. You get a weight-friendly pair of titanium QR skewers and fast, potentially fragile, Michelin Pro 3 tyres.

THE RIDE

Sometimes a bike just feels right from the moment you get on it and this was the case with the VO2. The 55cm frame-size caused a few raised eyebrows as we normally ride a 59cm but, with the seat tube fully extended, the saddle height was spot on and there was no sense of being cramped. There was no doubting the aggressive feel of the position – especially on the drops – but it was remarkably comfy. The seven

body measurements sent through to VO2 had delivered the goods.

There was no gentle warm-up as it cried out to be ridden hard. Every pedal stroke was rewarded with an instant snap of flex-free acceleration and it flew over rolling power climbs. The deep-section wheels cut through the air and holding a fast, rolling speed felt easy. The stiffness of the frame and wheels reminded you of bumps in the road but this didn't detract from performance.

It was when the gradient kicked up that the VO2 really shone. It fizzed uphill and elicited that special feeling of assisting you on climbs. In the saddle we were able to push a couple of gears bigger than usual and, when standing on the pedals and shifting up, the responsiveness of acceleration was stunning. You can't argue with the clock and it set PBs on two of our regular test climbs. Great climbing bikes are often flighty descenders, but the VO2 was blisteringly fast, especially accelerating out of bends.

Our only gripes about the VO2 were the two punctures we suffered on the first ride that necessitated changing the Michelins for beefier Conti tyres and, secondly, that we've got to give it back.

VERDICT

HANDLING 96%

One of the best climbing bikes we've tested

SPEC 94%

Only the brakes are out of place

VALUE 97%

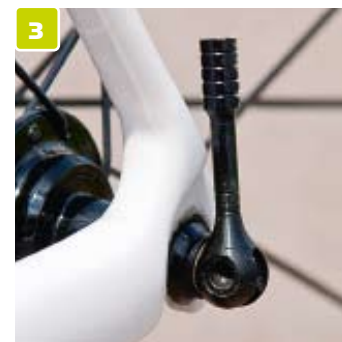
Great for frame, groupset and wheels

COMFORT 85%

Aggressive but occasionally harsh

220 Triathlon 93%

“YOU CAN'T ARGUE WITH THE CLOCK AND THE VO2 SET PERSONAL BESTS ON TWO OF OUR REGULAR TEST CLIMBS”



- 1 The inclusion of a SRAM Red groupset on a £3k bike is nothing short of staggering
- 2 The stiff, lightweight carbon wheels from the VO2 stable are also a gobsmacking addition
- 3 Titanium QR skewers were another neat touch that highlighted the care gone into the build

BIKE TEST

OVERALL VERDICT

Looking at the scores it's clear that the VO2 has given the Pinarello a thrashing. Coming in £131 cheaper, the Pinarello (except for the wheels) isn't a bad bike. It's a massive 'except' though as, even with a frame as good as the FP Quattro's, low-spec wheels are always going to drag it down. It's a matter of sticking the rolling stock (wheels, tyres, inner tubes, rear cassette and QR skewers) on a pair of scales. There's a 460g difference between the Pinarello and the VO2, and even before you consider the superior stiffness and aerodynamics, this inequality in rotating weight is huge.

If you spent the £131 you saved on upgrading the Pinarello's wheels, you still wouldn't come close to the V:Race:50s and, if you're forking out the best part of

£3,000 on a bike, should you be thinking about upgrades? It's impossible to get an exact price for the Most Wildcat F3 wheels as they're an in-house brand but, with a spec and weight similar to Campag's Vento G3 wheels, a £150 price isn't far off the mark.

After the frame, wheels contribute most to performance so attributing 5% of the build price to them is madness. But it's not just Pinarello. Many of the big bike manufacturers lure you in with a quality groupset and then stick on a set of wheels that just aren't up to scratch.

VO2 has produced a bike that might not have an iconic name on the downtube but, more importantly, it has a stunning frame, top-end groupset, race-ready wheels and a bespoke feel for an amazing price. **220**

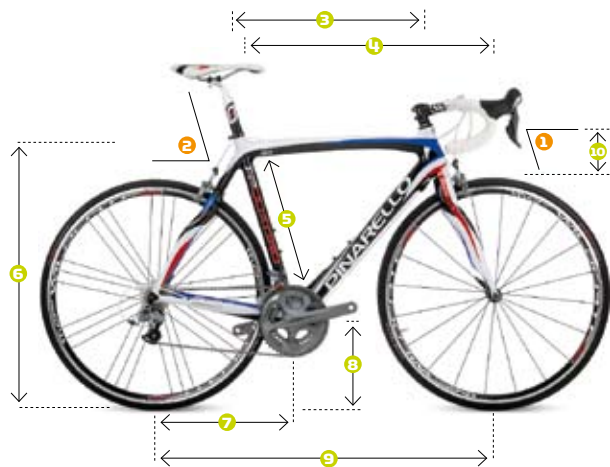


With top-end components and a stiff frame, the Brit trumps the Italian in this duel

BIKE SPEC PINARELLO VS VO2

PINARELLO FP QUATTRO

£2,869.00 www.pinarello.com



Size tested 57.5 cm Overall weight 8.34kg (without pedals)

FRAME AND FORKS

Sizes 50, 51.5, 53-56, 57.5, 59.5cm
Frame Carbon 30HM12K
Fork Onda Carbon

TRANSMISSION

Chainset Shimano Ultragra 6700 Compact 50/34t
Bottom bracket Most Croxover Oversized
Cassette Shimano Ultegra 6700
Chain Shimano Ultegra
Derailleurs Shimano Ultegra 6700
Shifters Shimano Ultegra

WHEELS

Front Most Wildcat F3
Rear Most Wildcat F3
Tyres Continental Ultra-Sport

COMPONENTS

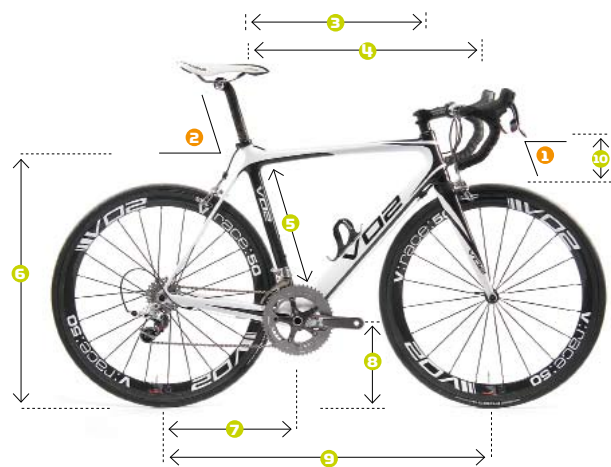
Stem Most TigerMax 3K alloy-carbon
Bars Most Xylon aluminium
Headset Pinarello
Saddle Most Ocelot
Seatpost Most Tail C
Brakes Shimano Ultegra 6700

DIMENSIONS

① **Head angle** 73.7°
② **Seat angle** 73°
③ **Top tube** 57.5 cm
④ **Cockpit** 86cm
⑤ **Seat tube** 57.5cm
⑥ **Standover** 81 cm
⑦ **Chainstay** 40.8 cm
⑧ **Bottom bracket** 26.6cm
⑨ **Wheelbase** 100 cm
⑩ **Headtube** 18.4 cm

VO2 V:PRO:CARBON PERSONALISED

£3,000.00 www.vo2cycling.co.uk



Size tested 55cm Overall weight 7.50kg (without pedals)

FRAME AND FORKS

Sizes Bespoke
Frame Ultra Lightweight 3k Carbon
Fork 3k Carbon

TRANSMISSION

Chainset SRAM Red 53/39t
Bottom Bracket SRAM Red
Cassette SRAM Red 12-27t
Chain SRAM Red
Derailleurs SRAM Red
Shifters SRAM Red

WHEELS

Front VO2 V:Race:50
Rear VO2 V:Race:50
Tyres Michelin Pro 3

COMPONENTS

Stem VO2 Ally
Bars VO2 Carbon comfort
Headset VO2
Saddle Ritchey Stream
Seatpost VO2 Carbon
Brakes Tektro R320

DIMENSIONS

① **Head angle** 73°
② **Seat angle** 73°
③ **Top tube** 57 cm
④ **Cockpit** 79cm
⑤ **Seat tube** 55 cm
⑥ **Standover** 77.5 cm
⑦ **Chainstay** 40.8 cm
⑧ **Bottom bracket** 24.5 cm
⑨ **Wheelbase** 98 cm
⑩ **Headtube** 17.5 cm