

TRIED & TESTED

MCN STAFF RATE THEIR RIDING KIT

★★★★★



TEN MONTHS

Oxford Premium Paddock Stands £69.99 (front), £69.99 (rear)

'They're rock-solid and feel totally secure'

Tested by Richard Newland for 10 months

There have been three occasions in my life when I've watched bikes gracefully keel over and land like beached whales on their sides thanks to collapsing paddock stands. I don't ever want to see it happen again. Thankfully, I'm confident it won't happen with these front and rear paddock stands from Oxford. The all-steel construction is inspiringly beefy and while you do have to assemble them yourself, there's no loss of rigidity (so long as you bolt them together properly!). The long handle section gives good leverage to hoik even the heaviest bikes off terra firma, and once lifted the bike feels rock-solid and secure. Crucially, they also use double

wheels per arm, ensuring there's less torsional twist when the mass of your bike is bearing down on them. The rear is supplied with both prongs and L-cups so that you can use them with bobbins, or without, and the adjustable square-section arms mean the spacing is always right for your bike, and with no risk of the sliders rotating in the mounts. Great value for money.

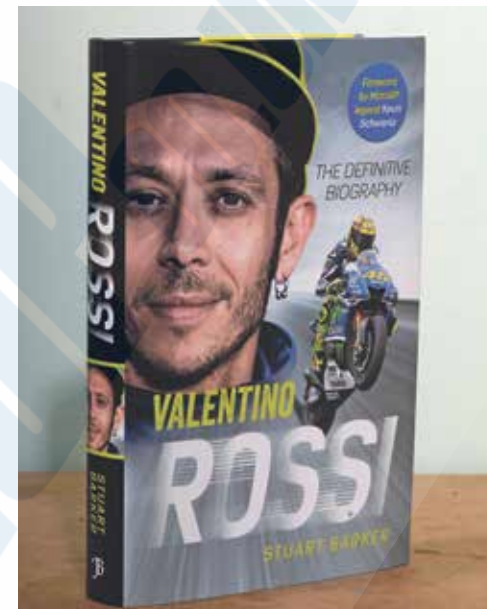
Quality ★★★★★
Value ★★★★★
www.oxfordproducts.com

PROS & CONS

- + Super-secure, well-made, adjustability
- Nothing really... Would prefer them in black



Your bike will be in safe hands with these stands



Valentino Rossi, The Definitive Biography £18.99

'A right rollicking Christmas read'

Tested by Richard Newland for 3 days



It's not often that I choose to read biographies of famous racers – largely because I prefer to watch them on track. But this new Rossi biography by ex-MCN journalist Stuart Barker grabbed me by the eyeballs. It's a decent tome at 330-odd pages of reading matter with a flurry of glossy photos in the middle, and covers everything from early life in the race paddocks of the world with father Graziano, through to his karting beginnings, switch to two wheels and ascendance to GOAT status via 125s, 250s, the vicious 500s that he labels 'dangerous' and on into the four-stroke MotoGP rollercoaster. It's an unapologetic in-depth dive into his life, and doesn't shy away from his mistakes, or what those around him offer as their perspective on his talent and stardom. This is the story of his life – and the volume of sources ensure that it really does feel definitive, rather than just one man's homage. Great read.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.amazon.co.uk

3 DAYS

AlcoSense Elite 3 £69.99

Tested by Emma Franklin

Designed for 'the morning after the night before', the makers of this home breathalyser claim the highest level of accuracy available at this price (+/- 0.2%). An at-home test (in the name of science) revealed it's frighteningly easy to still have alcohol in your system in the morning following a fair few spirits so serves as an invaluable reminder not to take to the road. It's extremely well made and straightforward to use. Comes with a few blow tubes (which should only be used once) so you'll need to buy more (£4.99 for 20).

Quality ★★★★★
Value ★★★★★
www.alcosense.co.uk

