



Unlike Chipps I'm very fussy when it comes to bike set up, I know exactly what my seat height is (33 inches from the centre of the bottom bracket to the top of the saddle since you ask...) and I am also fussy about and can tell if things like cleat position, saddle levelness and arm reach are wrong. When testing bikes it takes me ages to get the bike to feel just so and I usually end up swapping stems and seatposts around to get it right and I figure that this is vital if I am to give an honest review. So this means that I prefer to ride my own bikes as I know that I can jump straight onto any of them and they will feel right.



Bikes: Retrotec rigid singlespeed, Soma hardtail singlespeed, Spot 29er singlespeed, OnOne Tinbred geared hardtail, Cove Hustler FS bike, Jake the Snake cyclo cross bike, De Rosa road bike (with Campag of course)

I don't have a favourite bike as such but the one that is dear to my heart is the **Retrotec**, it's a custom build that a good friend went to a lot of trouble over getting for me. The builder of the frame, Curtis Inglis, is almost the cliché frame builder, he lives in the back of beyond and doesn't really do much in the way of modern living, don't think he has a beard though.

I first saw pictures of Retrotecs on the web and instantly fell in love with those sexy curved tubes, some time later I had the great luck to find myself at the back of a race with Curtis (SSWC02) and had a real good close look, it was then that I determined to get myself a Retrotec.

Fast forward two years and guess what? My work place want to reward me for my 25 years of loyal service with a gift of my choice, well it was a no brainer really, just place the order with aforementioned friend and sit back and wait, and wait, and wait, and wait some more.

The frame eventually came and at first sight I thought it looked far too small for me, despite telling Curtis that I am the same height as him, but once built up all my doubts disappeared, it did in fact fit like a glove, and still does despite some component changes that were forced upon my beauty after a certain derby incident.

If the conditions and my mood are in synch it's the first bike I choose because of the various associations I make with this bike and also because the frame is painted in my favourite baby blue colour.

