



# GENESIS CORE 1.0

£449.99 The cheapest on test, but a superb performer

## WORKSHOP WISDOM



### MBUK'S MECHANIC SAYS...

#### UK origins

Once upon a time lots of mainstream bikes were built in the UK, but these days it's rare. Almost no frames are built here now and most complete bikes arrive fully assembled from the Far East. However, a few brands (such as Genesis and Claud Butler in this test) are designed and equipped with the UK market in mind. Crud Catcher bosses on the down tube are always a giveaway, as are mud-friendly tyres.

**W**hen Ridgeback brand developers/distributors Madison Cycles decided to launch Genesis as a separate entity, it was a wise move. For a start, it's a great name for a brand. They were able to develop a UK-centric range of bikes that would reach far beyond the imagery or brand identity confines of their other house brand, Ridgeback. We've been impressed with every Genesis we've tested.

The Core 1.0 looks good and rides like a serious trail bike when the going gets rugged. It's also remarkably well equipped for a £450 bike. Is there a downside?

### The chassis

It makes a nice change to see a frame that's simply designed for the job, rather than relying on oversizing in places where it's not necessary. The Core's tapered 6061 double-butted tubes are gusset-reinforced where it matters, but otherwise formed to create a mix of suitable strength and enough forgiveness on the trail. Coffin shaped top and down tubes make for a slimline look and Crud Catcher bosses bring attention to the fact that Genesis frames are

designed in the UK. There are two sets of bottle cage bosses but no rack mounts, although it's not easy to fit a rack on a disc brake-equipped bike such as this anyway. Most riders liked the battleship grey paint job, and the 'Do Not Tumble Dry' seatstay graphic is a nice touch.

We really like the wishbone seatstays – like the chainstays, their curviness provides foot and mud room plus some vibration deflection at the back end. The frame's standover height is generous and the extended seat tube has a forward facing seat clamp, out of the spray. The Suntour XCR fork offers a well controlled 100mm of travel with superb rebound damping control but a not very effective preload dial. We have no long term experience of this fork, but its performance impressed, apart from a little untraceable clunk at the start of each rebound stroke.

### The detail

Genesis distributors Madison Cycles are Shimano UK distributors too, so it's no big surprise to find a full Shimano drivetrain here. The rear mech is from the Deore group, the shifters

are eight-speed Alivio (other bikes on this test are nine speed but you'll be lucky to find a nine speed model at £450), the front mech is a clunky but still efficient Acera model and the crankset is Shimano's low budget steel-ringed Octalink offering. The chain jumped under pressure on the middle ring during the first couple of rides then it seemed to wear in.

The Hayes Sole hydraulic disc brakes performed well throughout the test and the Core wheelset is excellent for a bike at this price: Alex DP17 rims, Shimano hubs and big, grippy Continental Gravity treads. A Genesis branded four-bolt stem, skinny 26in riser bar, strong seatpost and comfy saddle all meet their required function and we like the soft file-surfaced handlebar grips – often an area that's overlooked on lower budget bikes. The seatpost was long enough to allow our 19in test bike to fit riders up to 6ft 2in.

### The ride

Most frames on £450 bikes offer a sound basis for a quality bike these days, but wise component choices are still critical. The Core is a good example of a bike designed by someone who knows



**IT OFFERS SHARP, LIVELY HANDLING WITHOUT EVER FEELING NERVOUS**

what he or she wants from a bike. It's well put together, far better finished than most, well suited to muddy UK conditions, and the geometry is ideal for riders who want to really attack cross country trails rather than just riding along admiring the views.

The fork is buttery plush and a better ride than forks we often find on sub £500 bikes. Big profile, quality tyres, which give

a lot of comfort as well as grip, add to the confidently neutral ride feel, boost the fork and give the Genesis the edge over many of its rivals. A decent 100mm travel fork is a big confidence and control plus when you enter a rough section of trail fast, either by mistake or on purpose.

This bike is at its very best on fast, challenging singletrack. It offers sharp, lively handling

without ever feeling nervous and the fork, the frame geometry and the sensibly high bottom bracket allow you to really attack the bumps, pedalling more into and through rough sections than you might on a more conservative bike. The 29.6lb weight makes its presence felt on the climbs, but it's average for the price and the downhill performance more than makes up for it. »

**✓ SO GOOD**

- A much better fork than most offerings on £450 bikes
- Crud Catcher bosses are a nice UK-friendly touch
- Excellent tyres make a big difference to comfort and control

**✗ NO GOOD**

- You'll have to pay a little more if you want a nine-speed cassette
- Chain jumped on the middle ring on the first two rides



Nice tube profiling and good reinforcing behind the head tube



The full Shimano drivetrain will be a big selling point for many



SR Suntour's XCR fork is far better controlled than most forks on bikes at this price

**MBUK VERDICT**



**9**

**One of the best put together £450 hard riding trail bikes we've ever tested**

	<b>GENESIS CORE 1.0</b>	<b>FELT Q720</b>	<b>CLAUD BUTLER CAPE WRATH D27</b>	<b>MERIDA MATTS SUB 60-D</b>
<b>PRICE</b>	£449.99	£500	£499.99	£520
<b>DISTRIBUTOR</b>	Ultimate Pursuits www.ultimatepursuits.co.uk	Saddleback 01454 299965 www.saddleback.co.uk	Falcon www.falconcycles.co.uk	Merida Bikes UK 0845 600 8218 www.merida-bikes.co.uk
<b>WEIGHT</b>	12.2kg (29.6lb) without pedals	14.3kg (31.5lb) without pedals	13.5kg (29.8lb) without pedals	13.4kg (29.5lb) without pedals
<b>FRAME</b>	Core-Series 6061 DB aluminium	6061 hydroformed aluminium	6061 alu hydroformed	6061 double-butt aluminium
<b>FORK</b>	SR XCR-DA 100mm (4in) travel	RST Gila 80mm (3.25in) travel with lockout	Suntour XCR-LO 100mm (4in) with lockout	80mm (3.25in) travel with lockout
<b>HEADSET</b>	TH Industries 848	Integral Aheadset	Integrated	Integrated
<b>WHEELS</b>	HUBS Shimano Disc RIMS Alex DPI7 Disc 32h black SPOKES Black stainless WHEEL WEIGHT F: 2.17kg R: 2.79kg	HUBS Shimano RIMS WTB SX24 disc specific SPOKES Black stainless WHEEL WEIGHT F: 2.44kg R: 3.02kg	HUBS Shimano RIMS Ritchey Mountain Pro Disc OCR SPOKES Black stainless WHEEL WEIGHT F: 2.11kg R: 2.76kg	HUBS No name RIMS Alex DPI7 disc specific SPOKES Stainless WHEEL WEIGHT F: 2.18kg R: 2.76kg
<b>TYRES</b>	Continental Gravity 2.3in	Rocky Wolf 2.1in	Tioga Factory XC 1.95in	Cheng Shin 2.1in
<b>CRANKSET/ BOTTOM BRACKET</b>	Shimano M341 Octalink 22-32-42T/ Shimano cartridge	Truvativ Isoflow 22-32-42T/Truvativ	Truvativ Isoflow 3.0 22-32-42T/Truvativ	Truvativ Five D 22-32-42T/Truvativ
<b>DERAILLEURS</b>	F: Shimano Acera R: Shimano Deore	F: Shimano Deore R: Deore LX	Shimano Deore front and rear	Shimano Deore front and rear
<b>SHIFTERS</b>	Shimano Alivio Rapidfire	Shimano Deore	Shimano Deore	Shimano Deore
<b>CASSETTE/CHAIN</b>	Shimano eight speed 11-30T/Shimano	Shimano nine speed 11-32T/Shimano	Shimano nine speed 11-32T/Shimano	Shimano nine speed 11-32T/Shimano
<b>BRAKES</b>	Hayes Sole hydraulic discs	Hayes Sole hydraulic discs	Quad QHD-1 hydraulic discs	Hayes Sole hydraulic discs
<b>BAR/STEM/GRIPS</b>	Genesis alu low rise 26in/Genesis 85mm/ Genesis	Felt 24in riser/Felt 95mm/Felt	Truvativ 25in riser/Truvativ 100mm/Tioga	Mission 23.5in riser/Mission 95mm/Mission
<b>SADDLE/SEATPOST</b>	Genesis/Genesis T6 al	Felt/Felt	Tioga/no name	Mission Speed/no name
<b>PEDALS</b>	Flats	Flats	Flats	Flats
<b>FRAME ANGLES</b>	 HEAD 71° SEAT 72°	 HEAD 69° SEAT 71°	 HEAD 70° SEAT 72°	 HEAD 70° SEAT 73°
<b>MBUK VERDICT</b>	 <b>9</b>	 <b>8</b>	 <b>9</b>	 <b>9</b>

## The verdict

One thing that's clear from this test is that it's definitely worth paying close to £500 for a mountain bike if you can afford to. The biggest plus compared to lower budget bikes is the fork performance. All the forks on these bikes have decent rebound damping and the only one without a lockout option is the cheapest one, the £450 Genesis Core 1.0. That's also the only bike in this group with

'only' 24 gears too, but that doesn't detract from its superb ride. Up against a different trio of £500ers, it could easily have emerged as the outright winner. But there's stiff competition here.

Unfortunately, the £500 Felt Q720 was a little let down by some parts compromises and its weight, but a few pre-purchase dealer upgrades could make it competitive again. It rides superbly and the frame is well worth the expense of component upgrades.

### And the winner is...

That leaves the £500 Claud Butler and the £520 Merida. It was a close

call between these two. The Merida Matts SUB D-60 is noticeably the fastest bike on test, mainly because of its low-profile tyres. But it costs more than the Claud Butler, which will undoubtedly attract extra attention with its big brand finishing components. So, we'd say go for the Merida if speed is of the essence, but otherwise our winner this month is the Claud Butler Cape Wrath. With a faster set of tyres fitted, it's as fast as the Merida, and it's far better equipped than most other £500 bikes we've seen. ⚙️

## Next month Hardnut trail tamers

Jump-ready bikes that also do the business on cross-country trails

