



# VELOVISION

Carry Freedom Info Sheet 013\_21/9/04: Velo Vision Magazine City Review

## Velo Vision Magazine September 2004

Product Review written by Peter Eland

### THE TRANSFORMING TRAILER

Carry Freedom's City trailer is certainly clever – but is it practical? We tested one to find out...

#### FIRST IMPRESSIONS

The City is neatly manufactured in 'sparkle anodised' aluminium tube. The main frame is a simple rectangle, and the brackets which support the 12" wheels swivel on the frame tubes – and also slide along, allowing them to fit neatly side by side when folded. Two Cateye reflector mounts are built in, and there are little trolley wheels at the bottom.

The drawbar mirrors the shape of the frame, swinging around to be locked in place against an elastomer bumper by a pair of neat curly aluminium 'handcuffs'. A 70-litre courier bag in heavy duty black fabric fits into the frame, its strap running right underneath and locking with large snap-fasteners. There are plenty of mesh pockets inside, and a large mesh pocket under the lid, plus straps on the top to hold a helmet or other extra items.

The angle of the drawbar can be adjusted so the trailer runs level whatever the wheel size of the towing bike. The adjustment is achieved by rotating the 'handcuffs' when the trailer's folded: they're on a screw thread, and this moves the yellow elastomer down between drawbar and trailer frame to set the angle.

All is nice quality and seems built to last. It's nice to see good tyres in this small size – Schwalbe City Jets rated at 4.5bar/65psi – which roll well and should be robust and puncture-resistant. It's also lightweight, at around 5kg (11lb). Load capacity is 45kg (100lb).

Folding takes 'seconds' according to the manufacturers and after a bit of practice I could manage it in under 30. There are just a few points where it can go wrong – sliding the wrong wheel along the frame, for example. Fitting a collar to keep the non-moving wheel bracket in place might be a good idea. I won't attempt to describe the

process in detail – see the pictures, and if you buy one there's a comprehensive instruction leaflet to explain all.

The Carry Freedom City trailer retails at £350 in the UK through dealers or direct from the manufacturer.

#### IN USE

How does the City do as a straight load-hauler? Not bad at all. Lightly loaded, you'd hardly know it was there. With around 50kg on board (four bundles of mags), just under the City's rated capacity, the handling remains perfectly predictable. At that weight you're just starting to see a little drawbar flex under acceleration and hard braking, but nothing to be concerned about, and much better than most I've tried.

That's weight – how about volume? The black bag is reasonably capacious if your load can adapt to its shape, and it seems quite waterproof, too – there's a flap covering the zip, and while they're not taped, the seams are tight. If your load doesn't conform to the bag – a big cardboard box for example – strap it over the top. The frame tubes provide natural tie-down possibilities, although the size of the trailer does set a limit on what's realistic.

When you get to your destination by bike, it's great to be able to unhitch the trailer and then just lift up the drawbar and trolley the trailer along, still fully loaded. It's narrow enough to get through most doors, and can go up or down stairs with care.

Combine the City with a folding bike, though, and you can start to exploit its full potential. It's becoming ever more difficult to carry big loads by train and bike nowadays: most UK trains ban trailers, and taking a loaded full-size upright bike is becoming harder and harder. For years now I've taken a folding bike simply to avoid the hassles. But there's only so much you can load onto a folder and still be able to carry it all between platforms.

The City offers a solution: instead of struggling to carry several heavy loose panniers and a folded bike, you end up instead with the load in a single bag on your back, the folded bike in one hand and the folded trailer in the other.

Or, if you have some way to go on foot, a single well-placed bungee cord will strap your folded bike to the trailer frame (with the bag in place, if it's not too bulging) allowing it to be rolled along effortlessly.

In practice, this all works well and certainly saves some straining. For weaker riders who struggle to carry their folded bikes the trolley idea could be a godsend. But for me at least, journeys with heavily luggage by folding bike are relatively rare. With somewhat less load it's altogether simpler just to use a pannier, or to carry a rucksack the whole way.

However, the flexibility offered by folding is always welcome, not least for storage. As well as taking up less room at home, it means the trailer can be taken to work and tucked neatly and safely beside my desk. Might be useful for shopping after work, for example...

#### SUMMARY

The City does what it's designed for very well indeed. At the price and quality it's almost too good for utility use: a cheap plastic box on wheels is perhaps more suitable for supermarket haulage. But as a high-value travel system to go alongside a quality folding bike it could prove very useful indeed. Space-strapped urbanites will also appreciate its folding qualities and nimble performance.

Visit [www.carryfreedom.com](http://www.carryfreedom.com) or phone 845 456 0928 (international +44 (0)1560 600 369) For more information on the City trailer.



Velo Vision Magazine is published quarterly by Velo Vision Ltd [www.velovision.co.uk](http://www.velovision.co.uk) Tel: 01904 438 224 (international +44 1904 438 224)



© Carry Freedom 2004.  
All correspondence to: High clunch farm, Stewarton, Ayrshire, KA3 5JT.  
[www.carryfreedom.com](http://www.carryfreedom.com) 0845 456 0928 (international +44 (0)1560 600 369)

innovative trailers **carry freedom**