

MARCH 1969 60c

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# Bicycling!



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The World's Greatest Bicycle Magazine

# ROAD TEST: Raleigh Professional



One of the newest of the better made lightweights which is available in most sections of the country is the Raleigh "Professional." This model was designed as a racing machine, but, in the absence of any substantial quantity of touring bikes in the United States, the Professional will undoubtedly see double service.

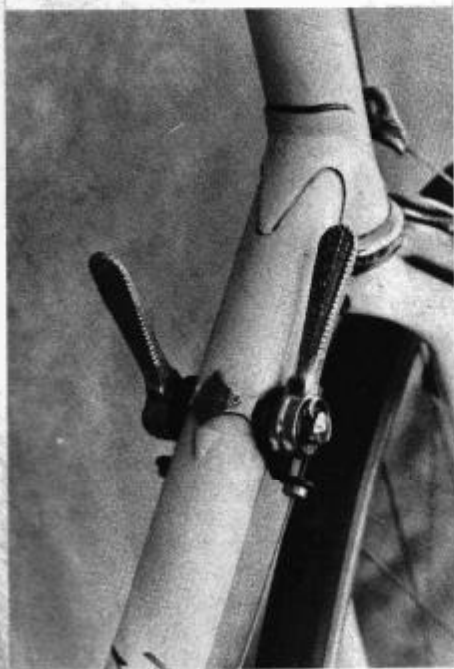
The Raleigh name has been a hallmark of quality for many years; the firm's reputation built mainly on their dependable 3-speed models which were among the favorites in the United States over a long period of time.

When variable gearing became widely popular here in the late 1950's, Raleigh tried to update their line by adding variable gearing to their basic three speed design. This approach proved unsatisfactory, and in the years that followed Raleigh suffered a variety of setbacks.

A complete reorganization took place when Raleigh merged with Phillips, another well known English bicycle manufacturer, and the Raleigh name was retained because of its established reputation. Acquisition of many of the independent British bike makers followed, including the highly respected Carlton firm, making Raleigh one of the largest bicycle manufacturers in the world. With revised marketing concepts a completely new line of lightweights were introduced, of which the Professional is at the top of the list. The Professional, as are all of Raleigh's quality lightweights, is built at the Carlton plant in Worksop, England.

The first thing that strikes you about the Professional is its simple, clean lines. These are achieved in part through the use of plain cut lugs of Italian design (a bit rough in finish), and a solid white enamel paint job with an absence of any chrome. The Brampton aluminum handlebars on the model tested were wrapped with black tape, and with brake and gear cables of the same color, the contrasting result is a sharp, neat appearance. A red, orange, and black decal adorns the seat tube, and although attractive when new, it will surely flake off in short time. A minimum of striping has been attempted which would better have

*Detail of brazed-on gear lever bracket stop, lug work, and striping.*







**Specifications:**

Tubing: Reynolds 531 butted throughout  
 Lugs: plain cut Italian design  
 Frame tips: Campagnolo road  
 Color: white  
 Derailleurs: Campagnolo Record front, Campagnolo nuovo Record rear  
 Freewheel: Atom (14-16-18-21-24)  
 Cranks: Campagnolo 170mm with 47 and 52 chainwheels  
 Bottombracket: Campagnolo

Headset: Campagnolo  
 Seatpost: Campagnolo standard, 27.2mm  
 Saddle: Brooks Professional  
 Handlebars: Brampton aluminum  
 Handlebar stem: GB aluminum  
 Brakes: Weinmann Vainqueur center-pull  
 Hubs: Campagnolo Record large flange quick-release  
 Rims: Weinmann aluminum for tubulars  
 Tires: Pirelli Leggero/L  
 Pedals: Campagnolo road

been left undone entirely. In any case, the Professional is a handsome machine.

Tubing is Reynolds 531, butted throughout, with Campagnolo frame tips which have the fender eyelets omitted. The absence of the eyelets is a big disadvantage, making the use of fenders and certain types of carriers impossible. At the same time, the clearance between tire top and frame is more than ample for the fitting of fenders, and if fenders were not anticipated, this clearance might have been reduced to obtain more favorable handling qualities.

Cranks are Campagnolo, 170mm (the new model designed to take a 42 tooth chainwheel), with 47 and 52 tooth chainrings. A Campagnolo Record derailleur is fitted to the front, with the nuovo Record on the rear. An Atom freewheel (14-16-18-21-24) provides a spread of 53 to 100. Riders in hilly sections will probably find this inadequate. The Campagnolo gear levers are the frame clamp type, and the Professional has a small brazed on stop to eliminate clamp creepage -- a nice feature.

Brakes are Weinmann Vainqueur center-pull. Raleigh is sometimes inconsistent in equipping identical models, and the bike tested did not have quick releases, although a similar model on display was so fitted. A bridge, brazed to the rear stays, supports the rear brake cable housing stop just above the brake, eliminating the traditional positioning at the seat tube bolt. This is a good idea, but the bridge needs to be of a heavier gauge steel to prevent bending.

For racing, the Brooks Professional saddle employed has no fault, but if touring is contemplated, the Brooks B-27 with saddlebag eyelets would be the better choice. Also, the Professional is not equipped with a pump, a necessity with tubular (sew-up) tires.

Although the Raleigh Professional is not as stiff as some of the popular Italian machines, it is comfortable and responsive. Equipped with all the latest Campagnolo equipment, it is, at \$220 plus or minus, the least expensive of the "all-Campy" bikes on the market, making it one of the best buys at today's skyrocketing prices.

*A bridge, brazed to the rear stays, supports the rear brake cable housing stop.*



