



# Cannondale SR2000

## Still the Leader Among Big-Tube Bikes

BY FRED ZAHRADNIK

EVERYONE IS BULLISH ON FRAMES WITH OVERSIZE TUBES, BUT Cannondale has managed to stay ahead of the herd since pioneering heat-treated aluminum alloy construction 9 years ago. From the beginning, the company ignored charges that fat tubes were ungainly and welding wasn't as good as using lugs. It just kept making (and selling) bikes while former critics began introducing oversize aluminum frames to their lines.

Cannondale's Pro Series road racing models showcase the refinements the company has made through the years. As we'll see, however, this doesn't mean it has achieved perfection.

We tested the top-end SR2000, complete with Shimano Dura-Ace STI components. But while this bike lists for \$2,240, keep in mind that: virtually the same frame and fork (sans some cosmetic attention) is used for all models in Cannondale's road racing line, beginning with the \$675 Shimano RX100-equipped SR400—a BICYCLING best buy.

### THUMBNAIL



Rigid frame puts power directly to the road.  
Light, carbon-print frame.  
Super stable at speed.  
Superb finish.



Rigid frame puts road directly to the rider.  
Anatomic handlebar.  
Short crankarms.



Cannondale offers 2 versions of its road frames. The SR designation indicates road racing geometry and diameters, while SC means criterium-style. There are 4 models of each.

When Cannondale changed to its 3.0 frame design in '89, it boosted the down-tube diameter from 1.75 to 2 inches, the top tube from 1.37 to 1.5 inches, and the chainstays from 1 to 1.12 inches. In addition, the head tube angle was steepened and the chainstays shortened. The result was the most rigid frame ever measured on our Tarantula frame flex machine, and it weighed just 3.4 pounds (58-cm size).

The SC version retains this design, but Cannondale recognized the need for a more classic road geometry with added comfort.



**Cannondale cantilevers the chainstays for rigidity and less weight.**

Thus, last year it developed the SR version with help from its sponsored racers. The down tube was pared to 1.6 inches in diameter. The fork rake was increased, and the head angle was slackened to 73 degrees (vs. 74.25). This, along with longer chainstays and wheelbase, mellowed the handling. Also new on both versions is a bolt-on derailleur hanger. It can be re-

placed if damaged in a crash, saving the frame.

How well does Cannondale meet its goal of making the SR "fast, comfortable, and stable over long distances"? If you define fast by a direct, unyielding link between your power stroke and the pavement, fast it is. If you're the big, strong type who worries that frame flex during a sprint or climb might cause an unwanted shift or sloppy control, fear no more. The larger the size, the more superior Cannondale's rigidity compared to conventional frames.

How about comfort? For a 145-pounder like me, ultra stiffness is overkill. Though I hate whippy frames, I don't need the most rigid production bike on earth to harness my horsepower. But even though the SR has a more Spartan ride than many frames I've tried, Cannondale's aluminum fork provides more smoothness than the steel one it formerly used. And remember, changing to slightly fatter tires can soften a bike's ride more than a change in frame material.

There could be an even better solution to the needs of lighter riders. Over the years, BICYCLING editors have wished (in print)

that Cannondale would produce an aggressive-geometry road bike, a mountain bike, a tandem, and a track bike. All but the last have come true, so now we're asking for an "SL" road frame with thinner-wall, more resilient tubing.

One nice benefit of a super-rigid frame, however, is absolutely no shimmy or other handling quirks at high speed. The SR2000 gave me complete confidence when plunging down the 3 gnarliest descents I ride. In fact, the bike's handling is spot-on for its intended purpose: fast recreational riding and road racing. I wouldn't even feel disadvantaged at a criterium if I lined up next to a guy on an SC version.

Cannondale's component selection for the SR2000 is good, with a few exceptions. This is the third time in 2 years I've complained about so-called anatomic handlebars, so I don't want to overdo it. But this design is a particularly bad match with STI Dual Control brake/shift levers. The bar increases the distance to them, requiring extra maneuvering to shift. This would be extra troublesome for a rider with small hands. Also, a 53-tooth chainring paired with a 39T makes a nice-looking gear chart, but on the road it requires upshifting or downshifting 2 or more rear cogs each time you change the front. This might be worth the trouble if you ride in mountains where the 39T's lower gears are needed, but otherwise a 42T is better. Finally, the bike's 170-mm crankarms are too short for a 58-cm performance bike. Cannondale should install 172.5s and offer 175s as a no-cost option.

We've discussed 8-speed STI several times this year. The system is proliferating among pro racers, who value the ability to shift while standing to climb or instantly find the right cog in a sprint. You'll also shift more often and never stay in the wrong gear for long. However, STI is 6 ounces heavier than conventional brake levers and down-tube shifters. Another disadvantage is the tendency to brake slightly when shifting (especially the front derailleur), but experience and a little concentration solve this. Then STI with Hyperglide provides the quickest and quietest gear changes of any system, and does it under full power should the pack catch you napping. Braking requires only a light touch, but is predictable and powerful.

Cannondale specifies an excellent pair of wheels and tires: Mavic's Open 4CD clincher rims with double eyelets are strong yet reasonably light, and 32 spokes is right for this bike. Michelin's 700x20C Supercomp HD tires are the next best thing to tubulars and are even being raced by pros. The only thing I'd change is the spokes, using butted rather than straight gauge. They cost more, but hey, this is a 2-grand bike.

Saving the best for last, the SR2000's gray/silver/white metal-flake fade paint is the finest we've seen on a Cannondale. It harmonizes perfectly with the polished aluminum components and their gray and black accents, giving the bike the poised look of a Teutonic supercar. It won admiration from everyone. ■

## CANNONDALE SR2000

**Distributed by:** Cannondale  
9 Brookside Pl.  
Georgetown, CT 06829  
800/VIKELUSA

**Country of Origin:** U.S.

**Suggested Retail Price:** \$2,240

**Sizes Available:** 46, 50, 53, 54, 56, 58 (tested),  
60 and 63 cm

**Weight:** Frame, 3.6 lbs.; fork, 1.20 lbs.; complete bike, 21.6 lbs.

**Frame:**  
Wheelbase 38.6 in.; 98.0 cm  
Seat tube 22.6 in.; 58 cm  
Top tube 22.0 in.; 56.2 cm  
Head angle 73.0 degrees  
Seat angle 73.1 degrees  
Chainstays 56 in.; 40.6 cm  
Bottom bracket height 10.5 in.; 26.9 cm

**Fork rake** 1.4 in.; 3.6 cm  
**Trail** 2.5 in.; 6.35 cm

**Wheels:**  
Hubs Shimano Dura-Ace cassette  
Spokes quick-release, 130-mm rear axle spacing  
32, 14-gauge D7 stainless steel, 3-nipples  
Rims Mavic Open 4CD clincher  
Tires Michelin Supercomp HD, 700x20C 110 psi

**Drivetrain:**  
Derailleurs Shimano Dura-Ace SR with STI Dual Control levers  
Chain Shimano Hyperglide 7401  
Crankset Shimano Dura-Ace Superglide alloy rings, 170-mm crankarms  
Bottom bracket Shimano Dura-Ace 7400  
Freewheel Shimano Dura-Ace 8-speed cassette  
**Components:**

**Brakes** Shimano Dura-Ace Super SLR Dual Pivots  
**Pedals** Shimano Dura-Ace clipless  
**Headset** Shimano Dura-Ace  
**Seatpost** Kingstern USA  
**Saddle** Selle Italia Turbo, leather  
**Barstems** Novato X-Times alloy anatomic, 40 cm/adjust, 12 cm

### Gear Inches

	39	53
12	x	119
13	81	110
14	75	102
15	70	95
16	66	89
17	62	84
19	55	75
21	50	x