

REVIEWS

Xmas Special

ALL THE GEAR AND EVERY IDEA...
EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR THE MONTH AHEAD

PRICES CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS,
SUBJECT TO CHANGE

MEREO PERFORMANCE WEAR T SHIRT

When someone tells us they've created a T-shirt that you can wear to the gym every day for four or five days without it walking off on its own, we listen. Mereo Performance wear is built from a blend of bamboo, cotton and spandex and it's the bamboo's unique qualities that make the T-shirts so special. As well as being superbly soft and comfortable to wear, bacteria doesn't like to live on bamboo so you can give it your all in the gym and then travel home in it without emptying the train carriage. Naturally wicking, the shirt performs as well as any sports gear you already own when you're pushing yourself to a new personal best but also feels good and warm close to your skin in everyday wear. Why bamboo? Well, several reasons – a grass rather than a tree, it can be cut for use rather than uprooted, it needs ten times less land than cotton to cultivate and it's the fastest growing plant on the planet, so its sustainability credentials are top-notch. Currently available in five styles, there are plans to launch a series of limited edition prints as well as female racerback vests early in 2015.



Price: £25

From: mereoperformancewear.co.uk



YURBURDS LEAP WIRELESS EARPHONES

How many times have you been for a run or workout and spent most of your time adjusting your headphones? Either they slip out of your ear or the lead gets caught while you furiously pump huge weights with embarrassing ease. Well, the clever folks at yurbuds have created the 'Leap Wireless', which let you move with freedom. You get the signature sweat-proof, comfortable fit offered by all their products only without the wires. They also feature a healthy sound system, with JBL Signature Sound, plus one-touch audio control and visible battery alerts. Awesome.

Price: £79.99

From: yurbuds.com

WEIGHT BENCH AND 100KG VINYL WEIGHT SET

Baby it's cold outside, so why not train at home? Gorilla Sports no-nonsense, Weight Bench and 100Kg Vinyl Weight Set combines everything you need to get hench in the comfort of your home. This great value set comes with an adjustable padded bench, which can be folded down for sit ups, barbell rack and a full set of weight plates and barbells, including dumbbells and a curl bar. This Christmas you can pick up this whole package for just £199.99 including free, next-day delivery, www.gorillasports.co.uk.

Price: £199.99

From: gorillasports.co.uk



ORGANIC WHEY PROTEIN

We're big fans of products free from chemicals and nasties at BESTFIT and The Organic Protein Company's whey protein powder is exactly that. GMO and gluten-free, the silky powder is also without any artificial sweeteners and flavourings. Not only does that make it a far better proposition to put into your body, it also makes it incredibly versatile. Put a scoop in your post-workout drink of choice (shaken into coconut water is a personal favourite) or take advantage of the neutral natural flavouring and use it in any recipe to supplement your protein intake. The whey comes from specially selected farms from the Schleswig-Holstein area of North Germany, where the free range cows chow down on grass all year round ensuring a superbly natural product. The company is also keen to give back and do so in the form of passing on 25p of the cost of every pack of Organic Whey Protein to Compassion In World Farming and planting a tree for every pouch sold.

Price: £22 (400g), £63 (1.2kg), £100 (2kg)

From: organicproteincompany.com

THERAPEARL SPORTS PACK

This handy little doohickey is related to the gel packs that you can put in the microwave or the freezer for a hot or cold compress, but it's a very different beast. You see the difference straight out of the freezer. Whereas the gel packs come out rock hard and take a while to return to pliability, this bad boy can be bent and moulded to the required body part instantly. The reason for the ease of shaping is the pack contains hundreds of individual gel pearls that move independently of each other. You don't suffer from any loss of performance either, the pack stays cold for just the doctor recommended 20 minutes and you get no annoying drips. As a hot pack, it works just as well, heating up in seconds and staying at temperature for enough time to treat your everyday sporting stresses and strains without scalding the skin. As soon as they build a full-body version, our Sunday afternoons will be complete.

Price: £7.99 From: lloydspharmacy.com





NIKE BAMBOO SAFARI PACK

It's Christmas, you need some new kicks... how about dropping some hints for Nike's new Bamboo Safari pack? This latest collection from the sportswear big hitters includes three of their iconic silhouettes, an Air Max 90, Air Huarache, and an Air Max 95 which have been executed in Cool Grey, black and Medium Ash, with contrasting Hyper Punch accents throughout. They've got the premium materials you'd expect, so sport mesh, nubuck, suede and textured leathers and they look immense.

Price: Released as we went to press, so prices may vary
From: Various stockists

BRAUN COOLTEC CT5CC

There are many things that test our patience. Clingfilm that gets caught wrapped around the roll, for example, or socks that go missing in the wash, traffic... Shaving shouldn't be one of them, so if there's a product that's going to eradicate the irritating feeling you get when dry shaving, we're going to be interested. Braun's CoolTec range claim to take the heat out of your shave and the CT5cc feels fresh on the skin. Rather than allow warmth to build up in the head of the shaver a cooling bar cools the skin to minimize redness, burning and itchiness. It works without gels or lotions too, so you'll save you a few quid in unnecessary accessories. Plus, it comes with an alcohol-based cleansing fluid that kills bacteria.

Price: From £115.99
From: boots.co.uk



DHB FLASHLIGHT HIGHLINE WATERPROOF JACKET/DHB FLASHLIGHT BAGGY SHORT

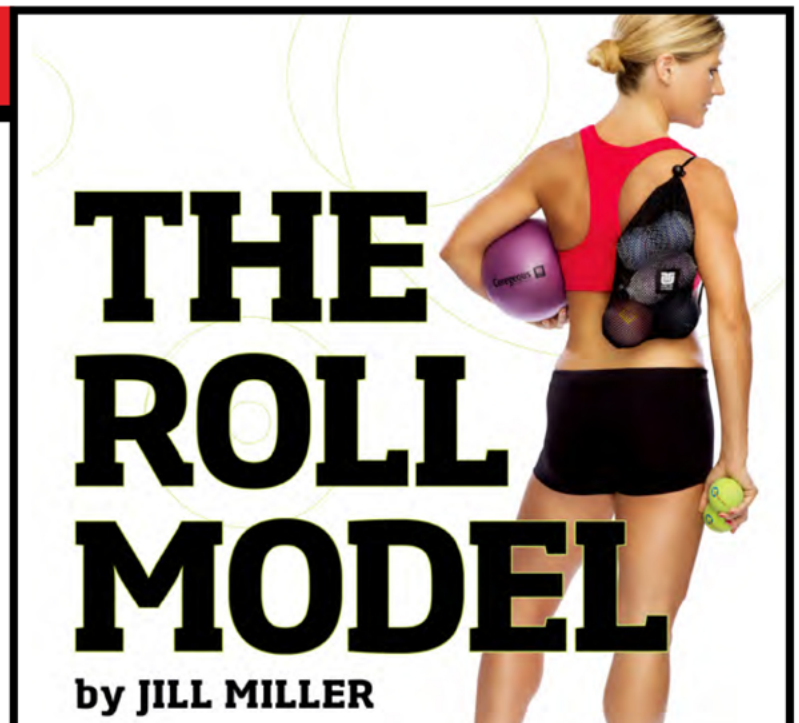


If you're a hardcore bike commuter, you'll know that this time of year comes with its own special feelings – the damp bum combined with the chill that seems to take until lunchtime to abate. Should you know exactly what we're talking about, you'll want to stick this combo on your Christmas list. Wind and waterproof, the dhb Flashlight Highline jacket and baggy shorts are built to handle the very wettest of the autumn and winter weather. Their unique feature is their Flashlight markings. Clever hexagonal reflective shapes pepper the shorts and jacket in key areas to afford your four-wheeled commute-mates a better view of you on the road in the dark mornings and the gloomy evenings. So they'll keep you dry and help keep you a bit safer on your daily race to and from work.

Price: £84.99 Jacket, £44.99 Shorts
From: Wiggle.co.uk

THE ROLL MODEL – JILL MILLER

Jill Miller has been involved in the study of anatomy and movement for over 27 years and is the creator of the corrective exercise format Yoga Tune Up. And it's correction or resetting that is where The Roll Model begins. The subtitle of the book is A Step-by-Step Guide to Erase Pain, Improve Mobility and Live Better in Your Body and it does exactly that. Written to help athletes and average Joes improve their posture and rid themselves of their nagging aches and pains, The Roll Model starts out with an in-depth but easy to understand guide to the body. For example, Miller uses the segments of an orange to demonstrate the make-up and workings of fascia, the outer skin of muscles. We're then walked through some basic anatomy before being shown the tools of The Roll Model's trade – four different kind of balls, from tennis ball size up to a kids' football size and the simple techniques to use them. Superbly detailed and diagrammed, each exercise is easy to follow and the book is full of inspiring case studies on how the techniques have helped ease or cure sufferers of asthma, chronic pain and scar tissue. It's hard not to be impressed with the sense of fun and eye for detail that shines through in The Roll Model. Whether you've been naughty or nice, let Santa know you'd like a copy.



Price: £24.99 From: [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)



FINBERRY

Wild berries grown in the cool, clean Nordic air in the nutrient-rich soil are among the healthiest, most potent in the world. If only there was some way to get your hands on those berries without jumping on a flight to Finland every few days. What's that? There is? Sensational. Finnberry Wild Nordic Super Berries offer just that opportunity. The stars of the range are the lingonberry, bilberry and sea buckthorn. Lingonberry is said to help fight fat and has been used throughout history for its anti-inflammatory properties. Bilberry is the wild version of the industrially grown blueberry and is packed with bundles more nutrients than its cousin as well as three times the antioxidants of the goji berry. Finnberry's berries come in the form of dried berry powders, which are great to add a nutrient punch to your favourite breakfast cereal, porridge, smoothie, milkshake or yoghurt. And (you didn't hear this from us) they're extremely handy to slip into the diet of any kids that aren't fans of fruit.

Price: £22 (400g), £63 (1.2kg), £100 (2kg)

From: [organicproteincompany.com](https://www.organicproteincompany.com)

LONSDALE CORE BAG

Having carried this on two buses, a tube ride and two long walks to get it home, we can vouch for the functional workout this Lonsdale Core bag can provide. But if the Public Transport Training System™ isn't for you, you could use it in a more traditional way. Perfect for building that explosive strength and power, the bag is a great workout tool. Treat it as a normal weight and use it to front squat, work through a lunge matrix, sumo squat, or for explosive presses. Use it like a medicine ball and work in your Russian twists, crunches etc, or do your explosive press-ups over it, changing your landing hand. But you can also use the handles to mimic the work of a cable machine and do chops and explosive rotational movements. Coming in weights from 5kg to 25kg, the bag is built tough enough to be thrown around indoors or outdoors and the double-stitched handles can cope with all the punishment you can dish out.



Price: £18 (15kg) From: [Lonsdale.com](https://www.lonsdale.com)