



RALEIGH TAMLAND 2

BY PATRICK O'GRADY

→ THE RALEIGH TAMLAND 2 and the Novara Mazama look a lot alike — in the same way that I look a lot like Bruce Willis if you catch a glimpse of me from across a crowded tavern deep into happy hour, with your glasses on top of your head and a third pint on top of your empty stomach.

But that's pretty much where the resemblance ends — casually, at a distance.

Like the red and blue Mazama, which I reviewed in the April issue of *Adventure Cyclist*, the red, white, and blue Tamland 2 is a steel gravel bike, and Raleigh is keen to remind you of that, dropping the word “gravel” eight times in its online description.

But the Raleigh is a much racier machine than the Novara, no doubt because gravel-racing guru Mark “Guitar Ted” Stevenson played a role in its design.

There's no pump peg, for starters, and only two sets of bottle bosses (but a chain keeper clamped to the seat tube just below the front derailleur). The geometry is comparable to that used in Raleigh's Record Ace road bike — slightly longer in the top tube and chainstays, with a bit more bottom-bracket drop — while both use main triangles of Reynolds 631 chromoly tubing.

And, although category manager Brian Fornes says the Tamland 2 is not strictly for banging bars in gravel

SPECIFICATIONS

RALEIGH TAMLAND 2

Price: \$2,500

Sizes available: 52cm, 54cm, 56cm, 58cm, 60cm, 62cm

Size tested: 56cm (for riders 5-9 to 5-11)

Weight: 24 pounds (without pedals)

TEST BIKE MEASUREMENTS

1. Seat tube (center to top): 53cm

2. Top tube (virtual): 56cm

3. Head tube angle: 71°

4. Seat tube angle: 73°

5. Chainstays: 440mm

6. Bottom bracket drop: 75mm

7. Crank spindle height above ground: 289mm

8. Fork offset: 50mm

9. Wheelbase: 1048mm

10. Standover height: 800mm

11. Frame: Reynolds 631 chromoly butted. Two sets of bottle bosses; downtube cable routing for derailer cables/rear brake cable; rack and fender mounts at seat stays, dropouts, and seat stay/chain stay bridges; chain hanger

12. Fork: 4130 chromoly. Fender mounts at dropouts and crown

13. Rims: Weinmann Kmax Pro double-wall, 32-hole

14. Spokes: 14g stainless with alloy nipples

15. Hubs: Novatec, 32-hole, D711SB (front), D712SB (rear)

16. Tires: Clement X-Plor MSO, 700c x 40

17. Crankset: Shimano Ultegra FC-6800, 52/36, 172.5mm



18. Cassette: Shimano Ultegra CS-6800 11-speed, 11,12,13,14,15, 17,19,21,23,25,28

19. Chain: Shimano Ultegra CN-6800

20. Shift/brake levers: Ultegra STI, 11-speed

21. Front derailleur: Shimano Ultegra FD-6800

22. Rear derailleur: Shimano Ultegra RD-6800

23. Brakes: TRP Spyre mechanical discs

24. Rotors: TRP, 160mm

25. Pedals: n/a

26. Seat post: Raleigh 2014 alloy, 31.8mm, two-bolt clamp

27. Stem: FSA Energy Compact, 100mm, 6° rise, four-bolt faceplate

28. Handlebar: FSA Energy Compact, 42mm, 80mm reach, 125mm drop

29. Bar tape: Raleigh cyclocross

30. Headset: FSA Orbit MX

31. Saddle: Prologo Kappa Evo

GEARING IN INCHES:

	52	36
11	131.9	91.3
12	120.9	83.7
13	111.6	77.3
14	103.6	71.7
15	96.7	67.0
17	85.3	59.1
19	76.4	52.9
21	69.1	47.8
23	63.1	43.7
25	58.0	40.2
28	51.8	35.9

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epics like the 300-mile-plus Trans Iowa, the bike does come equipped with an 11-speed Shimano Ultegra STI group that would not look out of place on some weekend warrior's Sunday screamer.

I borrowed a 56cm Tamland 2 with an assist from Stephen Newhall of Rob and Charlie's, a Raleigh dealer in Santa Fe that I remembered fondly from my leg-shaving days. And I'm glad I pulled my 21-year-old road-racing bike off its hook in the garage for a short spin around memory lane before starting to log miles on the newcomer.

The Tamland 2 weighs 24 lbs. without pedals, about four lbs. less than the bikes I've been riding lately. But those machines mostly featured leg-friendly gearing. The Raleigh's low end of 36x28 (35.9 gear inches) is only slightly more accommodating than the 34x25 (36.4 GI) on my 1994 DBR Prevail TT, a bike that weighs just over 19 lbs. — including pedals.

Okay, so it's probably an unfair comparison. The titanium DBR is the kind of bike I don't buy anymore — a beautiful piece of work and well suited to its intended purpose, but tough to redirect into some other line of service like riding to work, touring, or even racing on any road that isn't smoothly paved.

The \$2,500 Tamland 2 can do all of these things, and for slightly less money than I paid for that DBR two decades ago.

"This bike was inspired by gravel racing in the heartland," Fornes said. "But with its relaxed manners and overall versatility, the Tamland can do much, much more — everyday commuting, light touring, adventure riding, all of it."

Every ride is an adventure in Albuquerque so off we went. My new test track, a hilly blend of suburban streets, commuter arterials, bike paths, 50-MPH highway and sandy, rocky trails, starts with a climb that's about a mile and a half long. The Tamland's low gear was

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plenty gentle enough for this 10-minute warm-up. It's not unlike the low end on my cyclocross bikes, which were grinding gravel long before it was cool. With the bike unloaded, I felt right at home.

Also, while I appreciate the many advantages of bar-end shifters, it was refreshing to be able to change gears from the lever hoods again, especially while negotiating the neighborhood singletrack, which rises and falls like the Dow Jones. Ultegra STI is my favorite Shimano road component group — I own eight- and nine-speed versions on road and cyclocross bikes — and the 11-speed edition shifted briskly and accurately throughout its range.

Braking on fast descents was equally solid. Like the Mazama, the Tamland comes with TRP Spyre mechanical discs. The dual-piston brakes have a good feel at the lever and plenty of power, and they're easily tweaked on the fly with a barrel adjuster and/or 5mm and 3mm Allen wrenches.

"They are the best mechanical disc brake we've ridden to date," said Fornes.

Also like the Mazama, the Tamland rolls on 700c x 40 Clément X'plor MSO tires. Big tires with small knobs, they don't make a lot of racket on pavement, and once off it they grip nicely, even when muscling a too-big gear up a too-loose slope at 60psi or drifting around a sandy corner.

Unlike the Mazama, which sports a radically flared handlebar intended to provide better control on gravel descents, the Tamland has a regular drop bar, in this size an FSA Energy Compact whose short reach and shallow drop were easy on the back and neck. I've used this bar before and appreciate its flattened tops, which are easy on the hands during long rides, especially when enhanced by tape developed for Raleigh's cyclocross bikes. But the 42cm bar felt crowded when I added a handlebar bag (the Tamland doesn't get a 44cm bar until size 60cm).

The tall gearing makes the Tamland impractical for carrying significant weight through hilly country. But it does have eyelets for fenders and a rear rack so I bolted on a Tubus Cargo

evo and filled a pair of Arkel Dry-Lites with a nine-pound load suited to an overnight credit-card getaway: shoes, jeans, shirt, underwear, socks, toothbrush; cycling jacket, tights, winter cap, and gloves; plus an iPad and its accoutrements. A Jandd handlebar bag held snacks, off-the-bike eyeglasses, my iPhone, and a Canon point-and-shoot camera. Tools and spare tubes went in the usual Jandd saddlebag.

With the additional weight, I went straight to the 36x28 for my starting climb despite a strong tailwind, and I stuck pretty close to the fat side of the cassette, even on gentler rises. Handling was fine with this light load, even on breezy descents, and the chainstays — a hair longer than those on the Record Ace — helped keep the small panniers well clear of my size 9 heels.

The Tamland 2 proved to be a solid all-rounder — and a lot of laughs in the dirt. It's not ideal for a long, self-supported tour, but it would make a good choice for a strong cyclist who occasionally leaves the pavement behind and wants to take a top-shelf road group along for the ride.

Expect to do more light touring than gravel grinding but like the idea of having one reasonably light, speedy, versatile bike? Check out the \$1,850 Tamland 1.

The better seller of the two, the Tamland 1 also comes with 11-speed Shimano componentry — the more affordable 105 STI — and with the lower price, you get a slightly lower gear of 34x28 (33.8 gear inches), thanks to an FSA Gossamer compact crankset. I also prefer the Tamland 1's black and blue color scheme, which mirrors the livery of the Raleigh-Clément cyclocross team.

Hey, if you're going to be mistaken for someone, it might as well be someone famous, right? Yippie-ki-yay! **AG**

Patrick O'Grady has written and cartooned about cycling since 1989 for VeloNews, Bicycle Retailer & Industry News, and a variety of other publications. To read more from Patrick, visit maddogmedia.wordpress.com.