



long
term test

Radical Lights

RAD 3L & PODDA 4L

\$749 (RAD 3L) \$949 (PODDA 4L)

AS YOU'D KNOW IF YOU'VE READ THE LAST ISSUE OF ENDURO, OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS I'VE PUT A FAIR FEW HOURS INTO A LONG TERM TEST OF THESE RACING LIGHTS FROM AUSSIE LIGHT MANUFACTURER RADICAL LIGHTS. THE LIGHTS FEATURE LIGHTWEIGHT (120GRAM) ALLOY LIGHT UNITS COUPLED TO A LITHIUM POLYMER BATTERY (200GM). THE STANDOUT FEATURE OF THE LIGHTS IS THEIR BLISTERING POWER – 1130 RAMPAGING LUMENS OF IT.

WORDS BY DAN MACKAY

You haven't seen a lumen? Think about it this way: 1130 lumens is roughly equal to a 75 watt bulb, or about 200 small red LEDs. A top-shelf HID bulb produces around 1000 lumens. Now these lights from Radical may look different because of their wider beam, particularly in the medium beam pattern, but believe me – these suckers are bright!

The first prototypes were great but suffered from some wobbling in the helmet mount due to the large distance (about 3 cm) between the light body and the helmet. The broad and even beam pattern meant that visually this wasn't a problem but the shake on the helmet was irritating. The updated units feature a dedicated helmet mount that drops the light almost flush with the helmet. While this prevents any vertical adjustment of the light once it's mounted, it does effectively deal with the shake. In prac-

tice I found the new mount fitted perfectly to my helmet and the lack of adjustment was quickly forgotten. The combination of a light weight and secure mount meant that the only reminder I had that I was running a helmet light was the blazing beam that followed my gaze.

The bar mounted light has also undergone some mounting changes – this time the old alloy mount has been replaced by an upgraded carbon unit. While the new mount is similar to the old in design, the shape of the rubber o-ring clips do seem to make setup a little easier.

When used in combination with the helmet light, the lighting power is simply superb. The broader ('medium') beam pattern of the bar mount lights the near trail well and provides excellent depth, while the narrower helmet light provides the gaze-centred lighting for corners and obstacles.



Downsides? The only issue I've encountered with the lights is a small amount of play that's developed in the lead connector for the extension cord of the helmet mount. It's not proved to be a problem on the trail but I wonder whether a firmer fitting connector (like a headphone jack) might be better in the long term.

In summary: these lights are bright, offer an excellent beam pattern and solid engineering. The updated helmet mount really improves the performance of the helmet unit. The whole lighting system is typical of a system designed by people who ride themselves. The light includes plenty of thoughtful features and all the little things, like a Velcro strap to secure the helmet cord. If you're in the market for a high-powered set of lights, check out Radical Lights.

www.radical-lights.com