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JAMIS CODA WOMAN

When Jamis announced a woman's version of its excellent Coda series (Bicycling voted the \$540 Coda Sport, one model up the line, as a Best Buy of 2004 for comfort-oriented road bikes), we took notice. Then we learned that, other than the paint scheme, the woman's version is identical to the standard Coda. What gives?

"We've been building female-friendly bikes for years, but we've never marketed them as woman's bikes," says Greg Webber, vice president of product development for Jamis. "All of our smaller flat-bar street bikes, like the Coda, have been designed from the beginning to feature the shorter handlebar-to-saddle lengths that many women prefer." In response to customer requests for woman's products, Jamis devised a new paint scheme and label.

On the road, our women testers gave the Coda a thumbs up. Adjustable components, such as a four-position stem and brake levers that adjust up to 10mm inward for an easier reach, made finding the right rider position easy. Handling was confident and snappy, even during New York City commutes (that is, until the rear wheel was stolen), and Reynolds steel frame and Hutchinson 28c tires delivered a smooth ride. The big challenge for the Coda is longer fitness rides. The steel frame and value parts make the bike heavy (nearly 26 pounds), and even with the triple chainring, hills are a chore. One tester installed clipless pedals and took the Coda for a rolling road-and-rail-trail spin of 20 miles, fun but long enough to make her wish for a lighter bike. Still, if you're new to cycling, or an experienced rider looking for a quality commuter, the Coda Woman is a sweet, affordable choice.—Loren Mooney

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