

PRODUCT REVIEW

POWERED BICYCLE



EVS 'Sherpa' Power Ped Electric Bike

Electric Vehicles PTY LTD, or EVS, are based in Melbourne and have a national network of dealerships.

They have a very large range of electrically powered bicycles and scooters. I tested their Sherpa Mk3 electric bicycle. It's a foldable model, so it's perfect for RVers to use. Folded, it measures just 800mm x 300mm x 700mm. It's powered by a lightweight, 36V, 10Ah, lithium ion battery that will last up to 50kms on just one charge. The battery can be charged from mains, or using an inverter in your caravan or motorhome (500W min inverter size).

It's best to think of the Sherpa as a power-assisted bicycle. It's a fair-dinkum bike that happens to supply some virtual muscle courtesy of the electric motor. You ride it just like an ordinary bike, but when you want some oomph, instead of standing on the pedals and adopting your Lance-Armstrong-Climbing-The-Pyrenees expression,

you just crank the throttle. Since the battery can last for up to 50km, I'd say it would be hard to resist having the power assistance on for your whole ride.

I'm one of those insane lycra-clad nutters, so I've done a lot of riding on a lot of different bikes. I have to say, the Sherpa was very, very nice. It took no time to get used to, it's smooth and comfortable to ride, and handles and corners extremely well (the smaller front wheel makes cornering at speed a little trickier, but that's probably not going to be a problem for its intended market!). The 6-speed Shimano gears were wonderful, changing effortlessly and precisely – even when changing rapidly across multiple gears at a time.

Over ruts and bumps, the Sherpa just sailed through, and it took kerbs in its stride. Gravel paths and rough roads should pose no problems. The front brakes are very respectable Tektro v-brakes and pull up admirably.

The bike weighs about 20kg. This is actually very good for a bike that has a battery and a motor (my mountain bike weighs about 14kg), and the extra kilos give it a very planted, stable feeling. It rides lighter than it is, which is testimony to a well thought out frame.

This is a quality bike with quality components that's great to ride with or without the electric power. ■

For more information (and there is a lot more to consider, like solar re-charging!), go to www.evehicle.com.au, or phone (03) 9763 6271.

