

NINER ROS 9

£899 (frame only) / 29in / jungleproducts.co.uk

A steel hardtail that rides like a full-susser? Bullsh*t. Actually, no... Ride Over Sh*t!

NEED TO KNOW

- Durable steel hardtail 29er with modern angles
- Designed around 120-140mm-travel forks
- ROS is short for 'Ride Over Sh*t'
- BioCentric II bottom bracket system allows for geometry fine-tuning

Niner only makes 29er mountain bikes, and the steel ROS 9 is the latest addition to the US brand's big-wheeled hardtail family. Designed as a hardcore trail-riding bike aiming for a fun, responsive ride, the low-slung frame certainly looks the part.

The 4130 steel tubing used is a less common, more forgiving material choice than aluminium, and Niner welds it into a beautiful frame that sports all of the latest standards, including an oversized 44mm head tube, 142x12mm bolt-thru Maxle dropouts, and cable guides for a full-length gear outer that should keep the gears shifting seamlessly through the worst of our wet, muddy UK conditions.

A really neat feature on the ROS frame is the BioCentric II bottom bracket, where the off-centre BB assembly can be positioned within the BB shell. This offers a simple chain-tensioning solution for singlespeed set-ups while also allowing riders to fine-tune the geometry. In fact, with the BB set to the lowest, most rearward setting, the ROS 9 has mega-short chainstays and a super-low BB.

This attribute, together with a curved seat tube that allows the rear wheel to sit far forward, means the frame design overrides any potential sensation of being a cumbersome big wheeler, making it very agile and manoeuvrable on the trail. The ROS 9 is heavier than most aluminium frames, but this is offset by the noticeable benefit of the steel tubing taking some of the harshness out of the terrain without eating into pedalling or climbing efficiency.

Flicky, aggressive through turns and quick to accelerate, the ROS 9 defies its 13.2kg (29.2lb) build weight (even with the lightweight, high-end SRAM X01/Revelation kit here). The well-balanced angles, forgiving, zingy ride and big wheels means it just keeps on trucking over rough ground.

A 1x11-speed SRAM drivetrain complements the hardtail simplicity perfectly, and only on proper, full-on



Eccentric BB allows for chain tensioning with a singlespeed set-up



The Niner comes with just one instruction...

steep downhill tracks did the Niner feel out of its depth — and that was more down to the lack of travel and flex in the 29er-specific 130mm Revelation fork than any issues with the frame.

The rigid rear-end on the ROS 9 jiggles you around a lot more than a full-suspension rig, but equally, this bike encourages you to ride it in exactly the same way as a full-susser. Thanks to the big wheels and dialled geometry it can take almost everything in its stride. I even grabbed the ROS 9 over full-suspension bikes on multiple occasions — which is a pretty big deal, given how rocky my local trails are. That cheeky acronym has it about right.

Mick Kirkman

SPECIFICATION

Frame Niner 4130 cro-mo

Fork RockShox Revelation RCT3 130mm

Wheels Hope Pro-2 hubs, WTB Frequency Team i23 TCS rims, Maxxis High Roller II 2.3in tyres

Brakes Shimano XT 180/160mm Ice-Tech rotors

Drivetrain SRAM X0-1 chainset, shifter, mech and 10-42 cassette

Components Niner alloy 780mm bar, Niner trail stem, KS Integra seatpost, WTB Volt saddle

Weight 13.2kg (29.2lb)

Sizes S, M, L, XL

GEOMETRY

Size ridden M

Head angle 67.5°

Seat angle 73.5°

BB height 335-342mm

Chainstay 418-423mm

Front centre 698mm

Wheelbase 1,120mm

Down tube 690mm

Top tube 597mm

Reach 406mm

mbr 1ST IMPRESSION

✓ WE LOVE

The perfectly poised geometry and ride-anything attitude.

✗ WE HATE

It's not cheap (or light) when supplied with a high-end custom build.