

# WINNERS



SRAM'S DUB CRANKS ARE IMPRESSIVE  
CONTENDERS, BUT PROVEN DURABILITY IS  
CRUCIAL, AND THAT SWINGS THE WIN DMR'S  
WAY FOR THE THIRD YEAR RUNNING



Winner  
MBLJK

Weight 661g  
Arms 165mm, 170mm, 175mm  
Rings 26-36t

## DMR Axe £180

**It's definitely been** a closer competition this time around, but DMR's Axes take our 'best all-round trail cranks' award for the third year running. They're outstandingly stiff and now have the World Cup DH credentials (courtesy of Brendan Fairclough's Scott Velosolutions team) to prove that they're as strong as an ox, but weight and cost are still very reasonable. The 'M30' 28/30mm axle and Praxis BB are a giveaway to their origins, and the high-volume, hollow-forged arms are similar to – but even stiffer than – those of the Girder cranks. They're not so fat that they'll knobble your ankles with every revolution, though, and your feet will only start complaining about their rigidity on really long descents. The rest of the time, there's just loads of useful

traction feedback, powerful drive delivery and a sense of the unbreakable underfoot. Despite this excess strength and stiffness, they still come in at a reasonable weight for trail use. The 'Blade' chainrings are a straightforward narrow-wide design that we've no complaints with. They're sold separately though (£40), and as the cranks (£140) use a SRAM-style three-bolt fixing, you can fit whatever compatible rings you want, including SRAM X-Sync 2 rings for the ultimate in transmission smoothness. Praxis BBs can be harder to find and need a specific fitting tool (£15) but they last well once fitted and the press-fit version is particularly clever and secure.

[www.upgradebikes.co.uk](http://www.upgradebikes.co.uk)

MBLJK ★★★★★



Value  
MBLJK

Weight 699g  
Arms 170mm, 175mm  
Rings 30-34t

## Shimano SLX M7000 £134.98

**If you only** want conventional axle and ring options, the SLX cranks pack in most of the bombproof, durability-boosting features of XT at a bargain price. The steel 24mm axle and ingenious hollow-forged arms give them the same solid feel and bombproof strength, but the slightly convex shaping and the finish are far more scuff-proof. Durable steel teeth are sandwiched between alloy shoulders for increased chainring stiffness, and the latest profile tweak

seems to have solved previous chain-drop and noise issues. There are inner chainring mounts on the chunky external spider in case you want to go 2x, and arms (£99.99) and rings (£34.99) are sold separately, allowing custom combinations. Ring size options are limited though, and durability adds weight as well as long-term value.

[www.madison.co.uk](http://www.madison.co.uk)

MBLJK ★★★★★



Most  
wanted  
MBLJK

Weight 441g  
Arms 170, 175mm  
Rings 24-42t

## Race Face Next SL G4 £449

**The G4s are** even lighter than the standard Next SL cranks, but still outstandingly stiff and surprisingly tough. Reshaped hollow carbon arms with lighter alloy pedal inserts and drilled-out splines on the 30mm axle keep mass to a minimum. Race Face still clear the cranks for enduro use though, and that toughness claim is backed up by our own experience. They're impressively stiff when driving the pedals round or carving corners and off-cambers, too. Black

tip protectors are included, and coloured tips and graphics are available to keep them looking fresh. The wave-splined 'Cinch' system lets you switch axles to fit different bikes and there's a vast range of direct-mount rings, from 24-42t. Ring security and BB durability are sorted too, adding proven practicality to Next level performance.

[www.silverfish-uk.com](http://www.silverfish-uk.com)

MBLJK ★★★★★