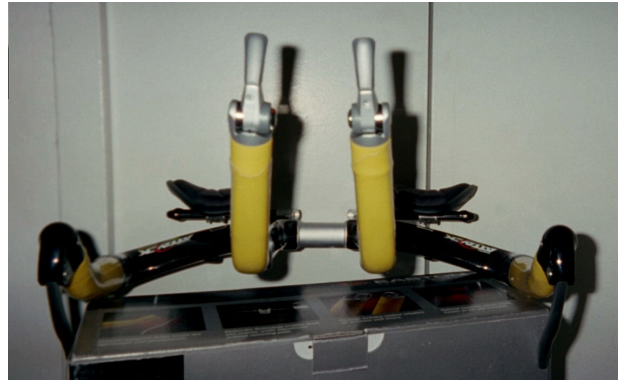


Product Review for Easton (Easton Attack Tri bars)

Easton Attack Tri Bars – A Carbon masterpiece (review from M Hanson, Mar 2005)
www.easton.com

When I removed the Easton Attack bars from the packaging, it was clear I was in the presence of a piece of bike equipment that could easily find a home in the Museum of Modern Art. The Attack bars possessed finely polished one-piece carbon arms and extensions, gentle angles and slopes, rubberized grips already fitted positioned in place, and the weight - my god, I have never held something so light! The Easton Attack are easily the nicest looking aero-bars within the very crowded universe.



Unlike some of the competition, the Attack bar does not come with an integrated stem so you can choose any type or style stem you like (like Vision Tech or the Cinelli Angel which offer only a few sizes to choose from). What it does come with is its very own sleek bar end brake levers, which are ultra-compact, yet offer extremely positive braking action when applied. The rubberized grips are comfortable and include small indentations for the fingers on the outside bars. The arm rests are full sized and offer more than enough padding for the forearms. The Attack bars come in two sizes (small and medium) with the only difference being the length of the center extensions. As for the weight or what there is of it, the Attack bars alone weigh in at a mere 650 grams or about 900 grams with the brake levers and roughly 1065 with my ITM carbon stem. How does that stack up to the competition? The Profile Carbon X bars (includes a stem) and brake levers tip the scales near 1180 grams, as does the HED Aero bar (which also has its own integrated brake levers). The Vision Tech Pro (includes an integrated stem) plus brake levers are a bit heavier at 1300 grams which is close to the Cinelli Angel. The edge goes to the Easton Attack bars.

So I've oozed over the finer aesthetics of the Easton Attack bars - now for some reality. First, there is the small detail of the price - a cool \$599 (verses about \$500 for both the HED and Vision Tech bars and \$360 for the Profile Carbon X), however the \$550 plus crowd will get some new additions in 2005 with the ITM Nivola and Cinelli BAT. My opinion? What is a few extra \$\$ if it nabs you those extra precious seconds on the bike? Secondly, there is the fact that the Attack bars are not as adjustable as some of the others. The center extensions cannot be shortened, but I found them comfortable to grip at any point along the bar. The arm rests do move right or left and can get very narrow for those of us who like to get as skinny as possible up top. However, the arm rests do not go forward or back and I have found that the knee comes very close to the arm rests when climbing out of the saddle (all the more reason to stay in the saddle on those climbs)!



My last small concern with the Attack bars was the fact that some assembly was required. Being of Norwegian descent I assumed setting up the bars was a task I could do in the privacy of my own home. The arm rests and shift levers were a snap, however it was the brake levers that proved to be my Everest. The tiny internal brake spring was the main culprit as was the daunting task of trying to feed the cable housing thru the bottom of the bars and out the proper hole at the end. After 60 minutes of prodding, pulling, and of course ample swearing, I got the first brake set up and there was much rejoicing! My advice - if you are spending the money to buy the Attack bars, spend a few extra \$\$ to have your local shop set them up - you might save a Sunday afternoon.

BOTTOM-LINE: If money is not a concern and you want the lightest and very best, the Easton Attack bar is the perfect compliment for any Triathlon machine!

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