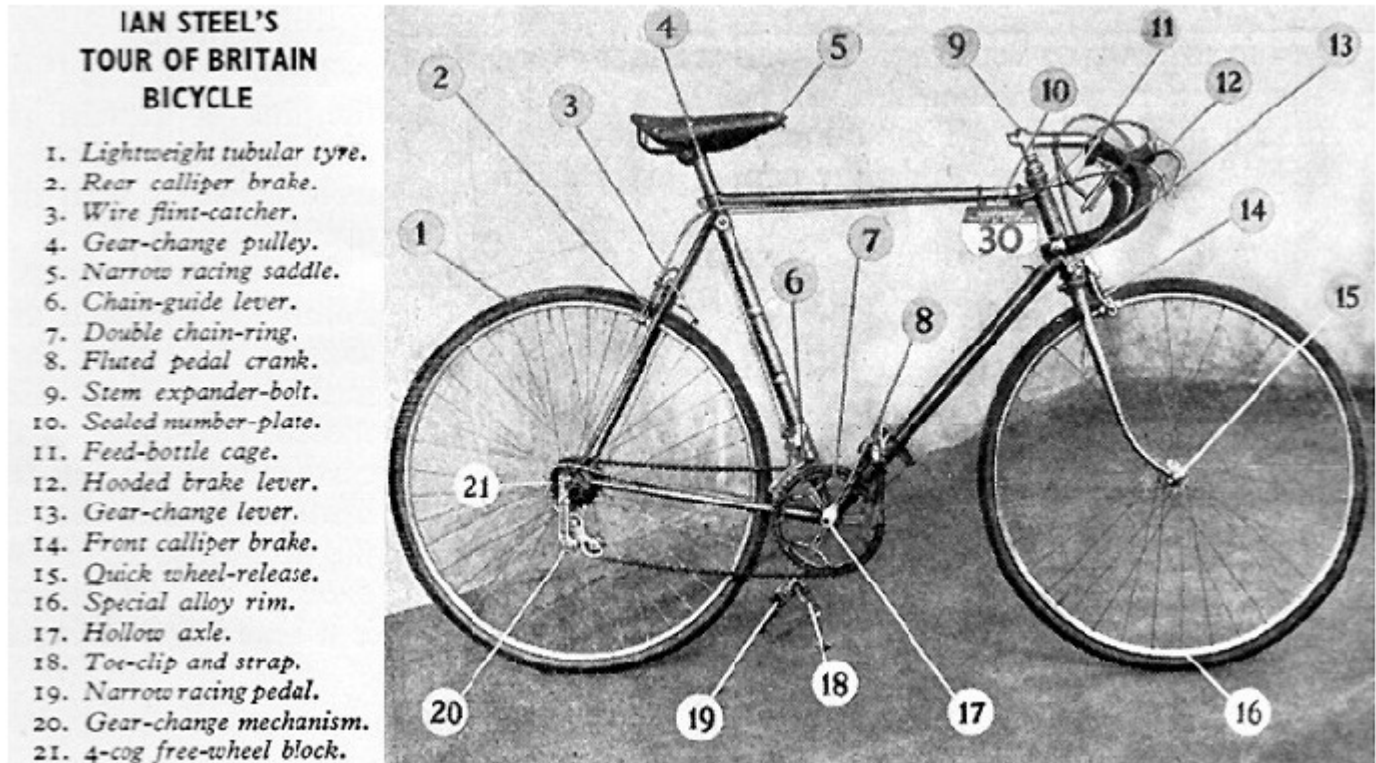


## 1951 Ian Steel's Tour of Britain Bicycle

[EDIT]



It is fairly certain that this is Ian Steel's 1951 Tour of Britain bicycle – it carries the same number and the equipment and appearance are all in accord with pictures taken during the race, except that in this picture it has the rear derailleur cage the wrong way up (fortunately it was correct during the race).

The following picture from the British Pathe news film of the event raises the following questions:



Were the 1951 team frames based on production bicycle frames? I had always assumed that they would be based on the Severn Valley, introduced in 1950 specifically as a road-racing frame, but my early (circa 1951) Severn Valley frame has quite different tops to the seat stays. On the other hand, I have details of 2 Master SS frames from the same era that have the same seat stay tops. But then the head lugs on the Master SS and Severn Valley frames circa 1951 that I know about do not match the lugs in this photo. Could they be Nervex Pro lugs? They look rather like it to me, but there was no catalogue model available with Nervex Pro lugs until the 1952 Tour of Britain model was introduced to capitalize on Ian Steel's 1951 Tour of Britain victory. So, if they are Nervex Pro lugs, that would indicate that the team was provided with specially built bikes rather than off-the-peg production bikes

### **Specification:**

This is my current best estimate of the specification of Ian Steel's 1951 Tour of Britain winning bike (with a bit of input

from others and hopefully more to come if you see any errors):

- Serial No: —
- Frame: Assumed Reynolds 531 or Accles & Pollock Kromo butted frame tubes, forks and stays; Seat Tube: 24" ctt; Head Angle: -deg; Seat Angle: -deg; Wheelbase: -cm; Brazed-on top tube brake cable stops, down tube pump pegs, rear gear cable bottom bracket pulley and chainstay cable stop; Colour: Likely black or purple (the jersey colours were purple and gold, later team bikes are known to be purple with yellow/gold contrasting head tube)
- Crankset: Stronglight steel 3-arm, cottered, with Simplex double chainrings
- Pedals: Unknown
- Front Derailleur: Cyclo chain pull with cable routed through Sturmey Archer top-tube cable stop and over Sturmey Archer pulley at top of seat tube; Cyclo Benelux handlebar control lever.
- Rear Derailleur: Cyclo Benelux Sport (?) – 4-speed; shift lever may be Cyclo Benelux, but the wingnut looks like a Simplex part; 4-speed freewheel
- Wheels: Unknown sprint rims on Gnutti quick-release hubs; likely 32 spoke front (but looks like 36 to me in above picture), 40 spoke rear.
- Brakes: GB Coureur callipers operated by LAM levers
- Handlebars and Stem: Unknown bar on GB Forged Hiduminium stem.
- Saddle and Seatpost: Unknown – likely Brooks saddle on aluminium alloy seat post.