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Review

Featuring: The Raptor 18

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I'll be the first to admit having a bag problem. Over the course of a season of mountain biking, I'll cycle through an embarrassing number of bags in search of the perfect combination of fit, capacity, and features. Though I do have a handful of standbys that I rely heavily on, when word of Osprey's first mountain bike specific range of packs began popping up last fall, I had to have a look. The Raptor range (6, 10, 14 and 18) has a whole bunch of shared features that makes the bags stand out from the large number of 'me too' hydration packs on the market. Excited by the Raptors' potential and positive early reviews, I managed to get my hands on a Raptor 18 for review.



When all is said and done, the Raptor 18 is not just a great *first* mountain bike pack, but a great pack altogether. My long list of small complaints does little to take away from the overall package, which is one of the best I've used. Rather than considering the Raptor 18 a 'big day out' pack, I would suggest that riders consider it an everyday pack that can be expanded to carry a lot of stuff in a pinch. The company's Manta series (one of which we will be reviewing next spring), with its proper suspension system, large-volume compartment, and rain cover looks like a better tool for really big days. Organization fanatics will find a place for everything and never have to wonder where their CO2 cartridges ended up. The dripping bite valve is a bummer, but I'll probably just make lemonade and order the magnet delete kit from Osprey. At \$120, the Raptor 18 isn't cheap, but the price isn't out of line with bags of similarly high quality.