

# Mighty lightweights

From trailer tents to compact caravans weighing less than 1,090kg, these prestigious awards were keenly contested. Judge Danny Cobbs has the results

**W**ith the number of entrants for this competition growing at an unprecedented rate, it was felt that the

trailer tents should be categorised slightly differently this year. So, we had three price bands instead of two, as was the case in previous years. The other classes remained the same, with a minor adjustment of 10kg

to the upper weight limit in the second caravan class (1,090kg this year, compared with 1,100kg in the 2012 competition). This year, the competition attracted 35 entries – read on to find out the winners.

## CLASS 1 Trailer Tents Under £6,500

### Winner Camp-Let Concorde Price: £6,020

This perfectly balances the needs of a modern-day family yet still doesn't price itself out of the market. A very clever design maximises floorspace while making the assembly a single-handed and easy affair. So much so, that the main cabin can be erected in a matter of minutes. Simply unfasten the trailer clips, then pull the tent section up and over. This forms a good-size living area with two bedrooms, complete with foam mattresses.

Additional space is provided by a 18m<sup>2</sup> awning with removable side panels.



There's a generous amount of storage too, with a crude, yet effective wardrobe fashioned out of the void between the two beds. There is further space under the beds for larger items. The kitchen has no frills, but it does have a three-burner hob

and sink served by pumped running water. This trailer tent is light enough to be towed by most cars and can easily be stored on its side if garage space is at a premium. The luggage rack on top of the trailer is another useful feature.

### Runner-up Trigano Olympe GL Price: £5,995

Featuring an integral frame system, the Olympe GL has an all-in-one cabin and awning which makes it quick and easy to set up on site. Once erected and pegged out, the Olympe provides spacious 25.7m<sup>2</sup>



living accommodation in which you'll find two double beds and a comfy seating area.

The cotton coverings are treated to prevent mildew and decay, while seams are stitched with a strong and high-quality thread to withstand most weather conditions. The bedrooms have an inner roof to regulate temperature and flyscreen windows to allow air circulation.

A 'lift-off' kitchen is part of the standard package of this trailer, which can be stored on its side when not in use.

### Third place Trigano Odyssee GL Price: £4,795

Like the Olympe GL, the Odyssee has an easy-to-assemble integral awning design. It is a six-step process to set-up this four-berth trailer tent and it shouldn't take more than 20 minutes to complete. Two double beds, a wardrobe and a lift-off kitchen unit are just some of the standard features included in the £4,795 price tag.



## CLASS 2 Trailer Tents £6,500-£10,000



### Winner Trigano Alpha Deluxe 2013 Price: £6,995

Trigano's new flagship model, the Alpha Deluxe 2013 is based on an Al-Ko galvanised



chassis and has a laden weight of 695kg. The hard top in travel mode becomes the floor once the Alpha is erected on site, and even though it offers two-berth accommodation as standard, the living space/berths can be extended by an additional awning annexe.

Thanks to a system of telescopic poles, the Alpha takes no more than five minutes to set up, and standard equipment includes mains hook-up, a battery-operated water pump and a gas regulator.

### Runner-up Camp-Let Concorde Plus Price: £6,869

New model Camp-Let Concorde Plus uses the same basic components as the standard Concorde but comes with an Isabella awning. Considering the compact size of the trailer in travel mode, Concorde Plus unfurls to expose a huge sleeping and living area. It's an easy, one-person operation to set up, too, taking a matter of minutes.

In standard trim, Concorde Plus offers four-berth accommodation in the shape of



two double beds, but it can be extended to offer a further two berths. A swing-out kitchen with a three-burner hob, sink, two storage cupboards and a 12V water system are also standard features.

### Third place Camp-Let Premium Price: £8,663

This well-designed, four-berth trailer tent uses the same type of simple folding mechanism as the runner-up in this class, although the Premium's trailer is deeper, providing greater storage when travelling. Once set-up on site, the acrylic awning extends to over 18m<sup>2</sup>. It comes with a pair of double beds with foam mattresses as well as a detachable kitchen.



## CLASS 3 Trailer Tents Over £10,000



### Winner Holtkamper Kyte XL Price: £14,195

There were only three entries in this class, all of them from Dutch company Holtkamper. The most expensive of the trio, Kyte XL took top honours as it was deemed the most versatile. It is also more technically advanced than any other trailer tent currently on the market.

In addition to a king-sized bed and a well-finished portable kitchen, the Kyte is equipped with a patented ventilation, insulation and condensation governing system. Other innovations include a no-rope, pole-free awning which Holtkamper claims has been tested to withstand

gale-force winds.

On the move, the entire Kyte trailer can be filled with luggage, while a 'Pack-N-Go' system makes it possible to access this gear without folding out the tent. Very handy.



### Runner-up Holtkamper Flyer Price: £12,295

The people at Holtkamper claim the Flyer takes only 32 seconds to erect once you're familiar with its system (which has not a tent peg in sight). In situ, it opens up to reveal a vast amount of living space which is divided into pod-like rooms. The main sleeping area houses a generously-sized double bed with a further area devoted to a set of sturdy bunks. There is also a portable kitchen which has been ingeniously designed to incorporate a cooker, fridge and shelving. The Flyer is suitable for year-round use.



### CLASS 3

Trailer Tents Over £10,000 cont



### Third place

Holtkamper  
Cocoon  
XL MTT  
Price: £11,695

Despite being the cheapest model in the Holtkamper range, the Cocoon XL MTT retains many of the attributes found in its more expensive stablemates. Its integrated frame allows for automatic pitching of the front extension. It is another no-tent-peg procedure which takes just a matter of minutes to set up.

### CLASS 4

Folding Campers

### Winner

Conway Crusader  
Price: £12,195

The Crusader wins gold in this class for the second successive year. It is easy to see why – it's a brilliant piece of design which folds away neatly into a small, fibreglass trailer that can slot into the narrowest of driveways. Being so compact and light means it can be towed by most cars, too.

Setting up is a simple task which takes about 20 minutes. Once the clips of the



trailer have been loosened, the high-tech, all-weather fabric covering majestically unfurls to reveal a large floorspace. You get a spacious lounge area, a well-equipped kitchen and a pair of double bedrooms. If needed, lounge seating can be converted into two further berths. The Crusader also benefits from having a combined shower room and loo, a hot water and heater system and an abundance of storage space.



### Runner-up

Opus Camper  
Price: £10,999

A good-looking unit, four-berth Opus is quick and easy to erect and, although the living area is slightly cramped, it is well appointed. A very comfortable horseshoe-shaped sofa takes up most of the floorspace, while you'll find a double bedroom at each end – you have to climb over the sofa to get to one of them, though. On the plus side, it offers class-leading headroom and is light and airy. A simple kitchen, a smattering of cupboards and a heater system make up the other standard Opus features.



### Third place

Pennine Pathfinder Q6  
Price: £13,390

The Pathfinder Q6 can sleep four comfortably or six at a squeeze by utilising the U-shaped seating arrangement. The two main double beds are housed at either end in their own separate 'capsules'. Although there's not a great deal of interior living space it does have a useful awning which extends to give a large covered area.



### CLASS 6

Caravans 750kg and Under

### Winner

Freedom  
Microlite  
Bijoux  
Price: £6,995

The Bijoux is a very honest little caravan. It doesn't pretend to be anything other than a budget-priced, compact, three-berth tourer. Sitting on a galvanised chassis and with a one-piece GRP bodyshell, it measures just 2.82m long and tips the scales at a bantamweight 680kg, which means it can be pulled behind the smallest of cars.

Light parquet wood-effect flooring and beech wood furniture give the interior an airy ambience that magically disguises the fact that this is one of the smallest caravans on the market. It may be small in stature (and price), but Bijoux still comes with the sort of equipment normally found in larger and more expensive caravans.

You get a two-burner hob, three-way fridge and plenty of storage units, including a full-length wardrobe. All windows are double glazed and the pop-up roof is fully weatherproof.

The Bijoux is very much a case of 'what you see is what you get', but what a lot you get for your money. A very worthy winner.



### Runner-up

Zone Classic  
Price: £9,750

The Zone Classic isn't so much a caravan, more a funky two-person pod. Interior space might be limited, yet it has been cleverly arranged so that the foam seats simply fold out to make a good-size double bed (or two singles) and it still incorporates life's little luxuries, such as a built-in TV.

At the rear of the Zone sits a small kitchen with a two-burner hob and chest fridge, which can be accessed either through a hatch just behind the seats or via the tailgate.

This stylish teardrop is aimed firmly at the fashionista who wants their very own chill-out space and Zone is more than willing to personalise it to a customer's exact specifications from a wide and varied pallet of colours and soft furnishings.



### CLASS 5

Folding Caravans (incl Pop-Tops)

### Winner

Eriba Troll 530GT  
Price: £17,799

It's folklore how the designer of the original Eriba, Erich Bachem, used his aeronautical knowledge to build his first caravan. More than 50 years later, the same tubular steel construction technique is still employed.

The Troll 530GT is a small yet beautifully-crafted three-berth which uses only the finest materials. The layout may be a little conservative, with two facing bench seats at the far end and two further seats at the front, yet it leaves a surprisingly spacious living area.

The furniture exudes the sort of finesse which wouldn't seem out of place on an oligarch's multi-million-dollar yacht. Also, because all the furniture is solidly attached to the skeleton of the structure, every locker door and drawer closes with a purpose. The same attention to detail is



lavished on the washroom and kitchen. With the multi-layer pop-top fully raised, it not only increases headroom but also provides good ventilation. A low centre of gravity and a light MTPLM means the Troll can be towed by the smallest of cars.

The initial investment may seem a little on the expensive side but Eribas have a reputation for longevity – indeed, it's not unusual to see 20 or 30-year-old models still being used today.

### Runner-up

Eriba Triton 430GT  
Price: £16,699

The mid-range Triton 430's body may be just 4.2m long, yet it still provides sufficient space to house full-size double and single beds – both with sprung-interior mattresses. However, it does feel slightly cramped inside, which is not helped by the dark Toscana cherry wood used for Triton's



furniture. The washroom encroaches on the kitchen space and only when the pop-up roof is fully raised does the living area feel less claustrophobic.

Built in the same way as the class winner, the 430GT's body sits on top of a fully-galvanised chassis. As a result, this little Eriba is supremely robust, its well-insulated walls and floor making it suitable for year-round use. Standard features include a three-burner hob and 70-litre fridge/freezer.



### Third place

Eriba Familia 320GT  
Price: £14,869

Don't be fooled by the Eriba Familia 320GT's diminutive size – it is a fully-functioning two-berth tourer that manages to shoehorn-in a washroom (with toilet) and well-appointed galley kitchen. It shares the same high standards of workmanship and simple pop-up roof as its bigger brothers and completes a well-deserved clean sweep for Eriba in this class.



### Third place

Dub Box Shortie  
Price: £9,250

Another cool little caravan, Shortie's retro fibreglass body is rustproof. Living accommodation includes a small kitchen, with two-burner hob and tiny fridge, as well as seats that convert easily into a good-size double bed. It may not be the most practical touring unit out there, but Shortie is certain to turn heads wherever it goes.



**INFORMATION**

**LIGHTWEIGHT LEISURE TRAILER AWARDS 2013 ENTRANTS**

**Class 1: Trailer Tents Under £6,500**

- Camp-Let Concorde
- Trigano Galleon
- Trigano Odyssey GL
- Trigano Olympe GL

**Class 2: Trailer Tents £6,500-£10,000**

- Camp-Let Adventure SE
- Camp-Let Concorde Plus
- Camp-Let Premium
- Trigano Alpha Deluxe 2013

**Class 3: Trailer Tents Over £10,000**

- Holtkamper Cocoon XL MTT
- Holtkamper Flyer
- Holtkamper Kyte XL

**Class 4: Folding Campers**

- Conway Countryman
- Conway Crusader
- Opus Camper
- Pennine Fiesta Q2+2
- Pennine Pathfinder Q6

**Class 5: Folding Caravans (incl Pop-Tops)**

- Carousel 12/2TD
- Dub Box
- Eriba Familia 310 GT
- Eriba Familia 320 GT
- Eriba Triton 418 GT
- Eriba Triton 430 GT
- Eriba Troll 530 GT
- Pennine Artemis DL
- Trigano Silver 310TDL

**Class 6: Caravans 750kg and Under**

- Danbury Teardrop
- Dub Box Shortie
- Freedom Microlite Bijoux
- Zone Classic

**Class 7: Caravans Between 751kg and 1,090kg**

- Bailey Orion 400-2
- Elddis Xplore 304
- Lunar Ariva
- Sterckeman Alizie 370 CE
- T@B 320 Off Road
- Venus 380/2

**CLASS 7**

**Caravans Between 751kg and 1,090kg**

**Winner**

**Venus 380/2**

**Price: £11,292**

Venus 380/2 is a worthy winner of this title. Meticulous attention has been given to every part of this caravan and, despite being less than 4m long, it never feels cramped or claustrophobic.

At the rear sits a deceptively-spacious washroom which houses a separate shower, cassette loo and washbasin. The galley-style kitchen may be simple in its layout but it has been brilliantly executed in its design to include a Thetford Duplex oven/grill, a three-burner hob and a domestic fridge/freezer. The high impact work surfaces perfectly complement the oak-coloured furniture, while the lounge has aluminium-framed seating and full-size overhead locker storage.



Standard equipment includes Whale's underfloor space heater and Grade 3 thermal insulation, enabling this two-berth to be used all-year round.

This is an ideal starter caravan that has been lovingly bolted together and, at £11,292, is competitively priced.

**Runner-up**

**Bailey Orion 400-2**

**Price: £12,995**

Bailey's baby Orion failed to retain its class title by the smallest of margins. The 400-2 is a remarkable lightweight caravan, chock-full of innovations and maximising every available inch of floorspace.

The Bailey's aerodynamic body is said to enhance towing stability and improve towcar fuel economy. Offering two-berth sleeping accommodation, the 400-2 boasts a well-appointed kitchen which is finished to a very high standard indeed. You'll also find a surprisingly spacious washroom with



a separate shower cubicle.

Priced at just under £13k, this Orion represents outstanding value for money.



**Third place**

**Elddis Xplore 304**

**Price: £11,799**

At just 1,044kg, the compact Xplore 304 is the lightest four-berth caravan currently available on the UK market. Beds are made up from the L-shaped lounge up front and the dinette in the rear offside corner, the latter in the form of a pair of bunks – the upper of



which is only suitable for children. Completing the layout is a well-equipped central kitchen and rear washroom.

