

Fat Tire Flyer™

JULY/AUGUST 1984 • VOLUME 4, NO. 4

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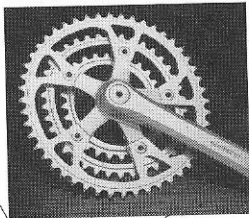
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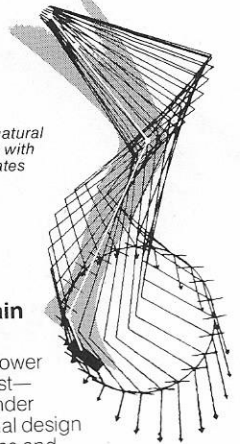
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COVER

Mark Slate and Matt Heberd
show how to have twice as
much fun on REPACK.
Photo by Tim Thulin



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Gordon Bainbridge

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Editorial

Flash! Fat Tire Flying takes over the world!

New York City taxi-cab drivers have given up their yellow and blacks for more efficient 2.125's. The Metro has come to a grinding halt as off-roaders swarm the tracks. Camels are obsolete in the Sahara... well, almost.

Our mail is coming increasingly often in those lightweight red and blue envelopes that indicate a transoceanic journey. Fat Tire races are being staged in England, France and Japan. Tours are being conducted through Machu Picchu, Red China, and the Himalayas. Fat Tires are taking over the world, and remember: you heard it here first. 

Machu Picchu, Peru

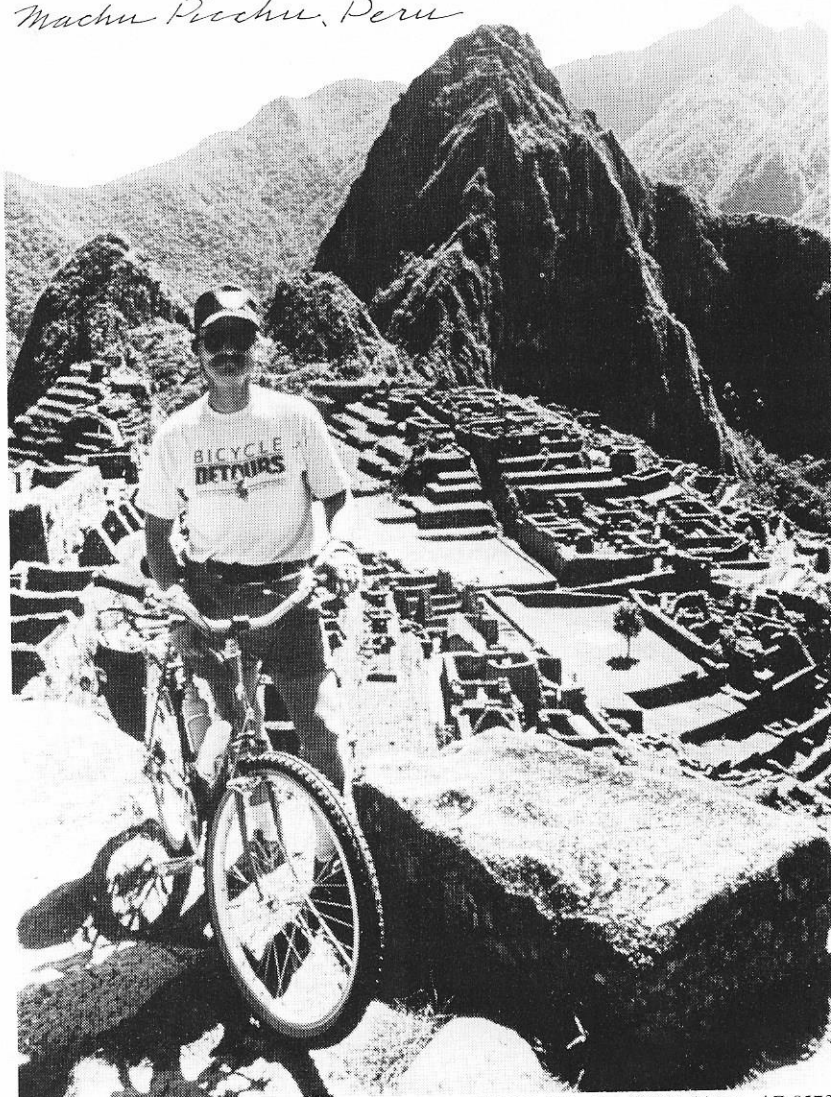


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BACK ISSUES

We couldn't possibly take the time to individually answer everyone who has asked about back issues, so we'll do it here. Some issues are out of print and out of stock, never to be seen again except by the fortunate few who subscribed early. We do have available copies of some of our back issues. You will be relieved to know that the price indicated includes postage, which costs us more than the bulk rate we use for your subscription copy. Outside the U.S., add \$1.50 (U.S.) for each copy.

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Fat Feedback

Dear Flyer,

In regard to the "EAT THEM WORDS DEPARTMENT" [Fat Notes Vol. 4, #3] the "mutant" class (no offense meant) must be a United States Cycling Federation licensed competitor, because normally their tremendous leg muscles [make them look as if they are mutants].

Respectfully Submitted

A U.S.C.F. licensed competitor (Cat. III) in the Fat Tired sport

Dear Denise and Charlie:

I feel compelled to respond to FTF's coverage of the 1983 NORBA National Championship.

The coverage of the first National Championship is a milestone that deserves a broader view than that previously provided by Richard Knox [Vol. 4, #3]. The article infers that I abbreviated the race without any consultation. Nothing could be further from the truth. I personally polled a majority of those dropping out regarding course conditions and inspected their equipment (many of these people were not strangers to me). I consulted the six course marshalls by radio regarding course conditions (the marshalls were people I ride with on a regular basis through world-class terrain, people I trust). I consulted with the event sponsors, Suntour and Specialized. I consulted with all available team managers... Because of unanimous agreement that conditions had so deteriorated that serious injuries were likely, I was compelled to shorten the race.

In addition to personal safety, resource damage was a major concern. It should be noted that NORBA is a dual function association serving the needs of the recreational rider as well as the racer. As a lobbying organization, our advocacy on behalf of off-road cyclists (recreational riders and racers alike) is based on environmental responsibility. The event route was primarily on U.S. Forest Service land. A special use permit was required which had provisions for monitoring resource damage as a result of the event. Sierra Club members were also present. Our credibility with these entities is important to NORBA being able to accomplish its major goal of securing access to public lands for cyclists and reopening areas recently closed.

The little griping that occurs at the

end of any race was silenced by Gary Fisher's challenge to finish the remaining two laps and be recognized champion. There were no takers.

I can assure you that from the start to finish Steve Tilford never asked for any change from the original format. I think his first effort on a fat bike indicates the quality of athlete he is.

Happily, our sport is not bound by the traditions of the "world history of bicycle racing." Ours is a new sport and growing pains are to be expected while this unconventional form of racing becomes established. But we will be guided in all circumstances by a commitment to the well-being of the membership and the responsible use of the environment.

Glenn Odell
President-NORBA

(Editor's note: "Richard Knox" is a pseudonym. Any resemblance to persons living or dead is coincidental.)

Greetings!

This letter comes to you via Cosmic Cruiser. I do my cruising in Central Park, mainly on the dirt/crud/gravel road that circles the big reservoir; it's about a mile and a half around. Very good for the next NORBA Nats! You got to go fast--can't let our famous muggers get you... What does the mayor care? He has his book and is on TV more than in City Hall...

Does this sound familiar? About a year ago the "powers that be" passed a regulation making it illegal to ride a bike on Central Park's bridal path, and that reg is enforced by C.P.'s recently imported Urban Park Rangers (on horseback and complete with 'Smokey the Bear' hats). Remember, this is 1984!

Speaking of Fat Tires... been reading the FTF for two years plus. Denise, you and your staff do a great job. I have seen some reactionary letters regarding off-road riding in a large bicycling magazine. Boo! We know better.

Oh yes. The old C.-C.C.C.C. is a mystical organization with a small membership. We go all the way back to the invention of the wheel! Believe it or not!...

Carl Silverman
Crazy Carl's Cosmic Cruiser Club
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Crested Butte / 1st King of Mountain
1st Downhill, 1st Overall (tie), 1st Criterium
Rockhopper / 1st
Prairie City / 1st
Mountain Mania / 1st, 2nd

NORBA Championships / Most Finishers
3rd, 5th, 7th, 8th
Repack Downhill Recordholder / 4:22.14

1984
Mountain Anguish / 1st
Coyote Derby / 1st
Spring Runoff / 1st, 2nd

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WHISKEY TOWN downhill

BY JOE BREEZE

ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER EPIC Whiskeytown Downhill. This June 3, 275 riders amassed in the notch at Buckhorn Summit (elevation 3200') in the 7 a.m. coolness of Northern California's Trinity mountains to partake in what must be the toughest mountain bike race in existence. Don't let the name fool you; this is no pure downhill burn. Yes, there is a lot of downhill, in fact a lot of net downhill, but you have to work hard for it. In its 36.5 miles there is a total of 4140' uphill and 6360' down on the wildest roads and trails this planet has to offer.

We have all arrived at the summit, having been transported by bus up Highway 299 from the finish area of Shasta City. Those "in the know" were busy warming by riding furiously up and down 299. We are told to line up for the start by race organizer Gary Larson. First Pro-Am, then Expert, Novice, and Vets, all waiting on the steep starting slope. But wait; we were facing uphill!

From the sound of the starter shouting, "Go," it was uphill for a total of 1800 vertical feet in 3½ miles before it tops out at 5000' at Buckhorn Bally. By this time I was an unhealthy way back from the leaders, coughing and gasping for air. I was shot, but being at the top gave me new strength, for now began what I came here for: the downhill.

The Fun Begins

I figured I was in about fortieth place at the top, but now, to make up a few places. I quickly passed five riders as I went over the top, seeing a riderless gap ahead without undue interference. Where just a couple of minutes earlier as I was agonizing on the ascent I was asking myself, "What am I doing this for?" now on the descent I was answering it with, "Because I'm having a hell of a good time." This descent was a virtually pure 2000 feet of the most technical downhill comprehensible (almost, that is). The road surface was of Decomposed Granite which was poorly recemented by a recent rain. The dreaded D-G. It initially gave me the front wheel damming confidence of sand, but I was caught unaware at one point having "too much fun."

After finding my way out of a brown-out of dust, I continued in hot pursuit. Down another mile or so of passing riders I was well into the realm of the Ross and Specialized pro riders. I was now experiencing dices of a more challenging nature. The road was also becoming seriously channeled with in-line ruts, making for some attentive eyeball work as some of the roadway of long peninsulas between the ruts ended abruptly into chasms, some jumpable, some not. It was a kind of linear maze; we were the rats and the cheese was flesh and time. For awhile we went five-up, hitting the turns at a pretty good clip with our front wheels in one rut and the rear wheels in



Joe Breeze

Joe Murray & Whiskeytown Trophy

another, slideways around we went, eyes peering through the spokes and dust of the rider ahead. I was second in the bunch, just behind Laurence Malone, when the dreaded D-G struck, spitting him into an adjacent chasm just deep enough so I floated over him, clearing him with a slight lift.

On down the road went, until finally, relief: uphill. Oh well, so much for me passing people. There goes Clark Roberts. There goes Alan Ott.

This too was a hefty climb, almost a thousand feet and a good deal of walking before the top, then a downhill in even worse shape than the previous, with big lateral erosion control ditches, many without obvious crossing points. This was where some pre-race reconnoitering might have paid off. Regardless, I was back to picking off riders again. Hello, Clark. Ouch, look at his derailleur. The course was hard at work on its annual feeding frenzy. As I remember, Clark served up some tasty morsels in last year's race, too. So generous. This stretch of road is no

longer maintained and in years to come will get hungrier yet.

Farther down the road I had made up significant time and was sitting in about seventh place overall, second expert, feeling pretty amped with this downhill business.

I had come well prepared with my 2.125" IRC tires and 1.75", full-strength IRC inner tubes, with 40 psi rear and 35 psi front. A few "I-told-you-sos" had crossed my mind when I passed the 1.75ers on the side of the road. This was Fat Country!

PSSSS, PSSSS, PSSSS. THERE GOES another. Hey wait...that's me! I don't believe it. It had to happen sometime, my first flat in a race. A snakebite pinch. Ahhhh! Where's my spare wheel? Back at my last road race in 1979, that's where. It wouldn't have been so bad if my hub wrench hadn't hopped out somewhere back up the road. Never did get around to installing that QR set on the rear.

I was in a bit of a daze (this downhill is hard work), but I managed to find my patch kit and make things right again. It only took fifteen minutes. Oh, well. By then most of my morning friends had passed me, leaving me out of the trophies. I headed off at a more relaxed pace, saving myself for the downhills to come.

The day was warming up and I was getting thirsty, so as I rode through the next stream crossing and made an error, I didn't fight it; I fell in. Racing has this capacity for making water taste great. I drank until I heard the next rider approaching and moved along to make room for the upcoming splash, repeating the process at the next stream. And the next.

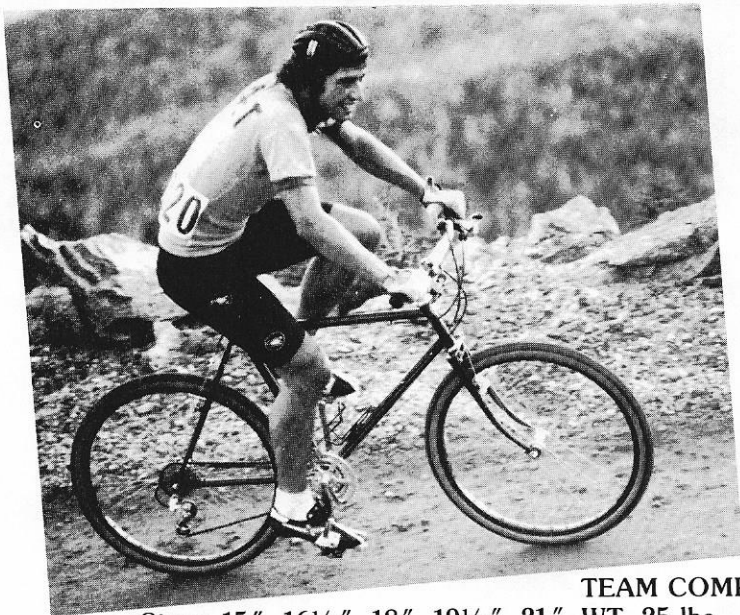
One plus from all this lollygagging was the opportunity to ride with Kye Sharp of Topanga, California, a notorious downhill who also had some trouble earlier on in the day which made it possible for me to match up with him on a couple of great descents, one with him leading, one with me leading. It brought back some good memories of great runs back home with my friend and downhill partner Otis Guy, ten years ago before my deeper understanding of the body/dirt-interface.

THE DESCENTS WERE THE KIND where you fly from rock to rock, howling and laughing. Good to be young again, mainly because I didn't crash on these two downhills with Kye.

Kye dropped back with a leg cramp on the next climb, and I figured that was the last I would see of him. From this point the course rolled through the foothills around Whiskeytown Reservoir, at

Continued next page

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WHISKEYTOWN *continued*

times on tight, tricky trails. I passed five or six riders in this section, drawn onward by the strong magnet of the beer keg at the finish. (Racing also does wonders for the taste of beer.)

Near the top of the last climb before the finish I heard a rider coming up behind me; I pulled over to let him pass. It was Kye, who seemed to have dealt successfully with his cramps. I watched him fly over the rise, and I knew I wouldn't see him again before the finish.

Last downhill . . . I put the controls on autopilot, and let the beer keg beam me down. No intelligent life here.

A large banner across the road marked the finish. As I crossed the line the race official ripped off my number and recorded my time. The race was over for me. I flopped my bike on the ground, and asked no one in particular who had won. The answer was Joe Murray, a surprise because it seemed to me his streak of five straight wins was bound to snap eventually. He had been in danger of coming in second, but a timely flat to the leader, Steve Cook, put him in the lead to stay.

I thanked Gary and Bonnie Larson for another successful promotion; another year, another epic Whiskeytown Downhill. Now, where's that beer?



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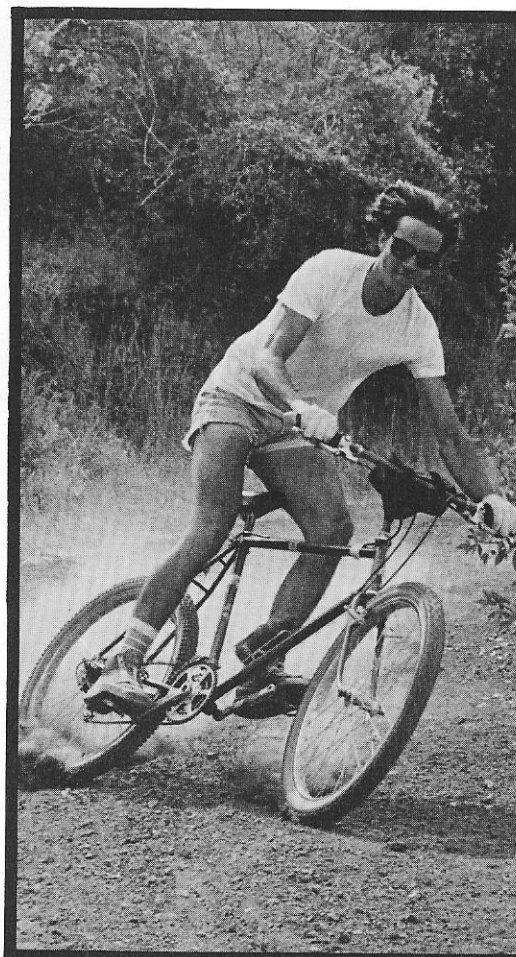
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The publicity release modestly proclaims it to be "the greatest book on fat tires," but since **THE MOUNTAIN BIKE BOOK** (clever title) is the first on the market to deal with this subject, the alternative is also true. Notwithstanding the facts that Mr. Van der Plas has contributed to the **FLYER**, the overall effect is that this first word on the subject is far from being the last word. Hopefully future printings will clear up some of the typographical errors (which may be just a sign of haste), but it seems a little sloppy to misspell the names of some of the most influential people in off-road cycling.

Although printed in the United States, **THE MOUNTAIN BIKE BOOK** was written in Europe, and the author seems a few steps removed from the forefront of the fat tire world. The description of racing, for example, seems to have been researched in a library rather than from a bicycle. Another phrase describes Marin County, California Fat Tire originators (ahem) thus, "Not only did they ride their mountain bikes to the trailhead, they also rode them to the supermarket, the massage parlor and the health food store (remember: this is Marin County?)." Hmmm. Who are those guys? And what does all that have to do with bikes?

There is some solid information in Mr. Van der Plas' work; for example, this is the first book to specifically treat the subjects of 26" rim sizes and fat tires, and the more complex wide range gearing found on off-road bikes. These subjects are obvious, however, and every other fat-tire author will also deal with them. In between the solid nuggets there are discussions which by rights belong in a general cycling manual, such as tips on riding in traffic (!). There is also at least one discussion that has no place at all in a book, a put-down of Glenn Odell and NORBA; since Mr. Van der Plas has never been a member of this organization nor attended any of its meetings, this comment seems out of line: "Personally I don't care to be a member of any organization that isn't interested in my views." Glenn Odell has told us that he was never contacted by the author, and thus never had an opportunity to be interested in Mr. Van der Plas' views. (Some may point out that the FTF has not always supported Odell, but our periodical format permits rebuttals and continuing discussions; Mr. Odell's views are expressed elsewhere in this issue.)

Our final opinion: if you are desperate for technical information, buy **THE MOUNTAIN BIKE BOOK**, but be warned; you'll probably buy the next one that comes out too.



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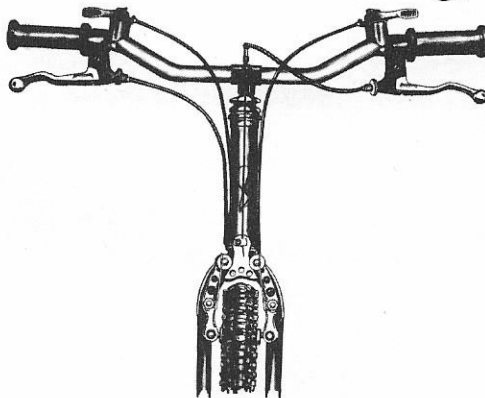
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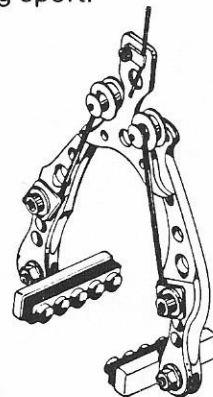
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Tecate to Ensenada

By HDR

Ken down at Fisher MountainBikes was exactly right when he sold me those one and a half inch tires and tubes. They turned out to be perfect for adapting my Fat Tire bike for a rugged road tour. And I was getting ready for Tecate-Ensenada, a migration of over eight thousand cyclists seventy five miles across Baja California.

5 A.M., SUNDAY, MAY 21. Near the border there were cars with bicycles on them backed up for miles. We crossed southeast of San Diego about twenty minutes' drive over a dark, foggy winding mountain road from Tecate. As we drove through the rugged Sierra Juarez moun-

tains we realized we would be riding over elevations just like these in a few hours. Tecate is located in a valley, and as we descended out of the peaks we could see on the far side the mountains we would have to climb.

Our driver dropped us off in downtown Tecate and took off for Ensenada where he would meet us at the finish. There were long lines for registration and temporary "bathrooms" in Tecate's central plaza. We signed up and after noticing numerous other mountain bike riders, purchased our first beer of the day. It looked like a hot one coming up. Earl and I took off early to take pictures of the start,

amongst a couple of thousand other riders. The sight of the incredible glut caused by thousands of riders and machines was all I needed as an excuse to get out of town.

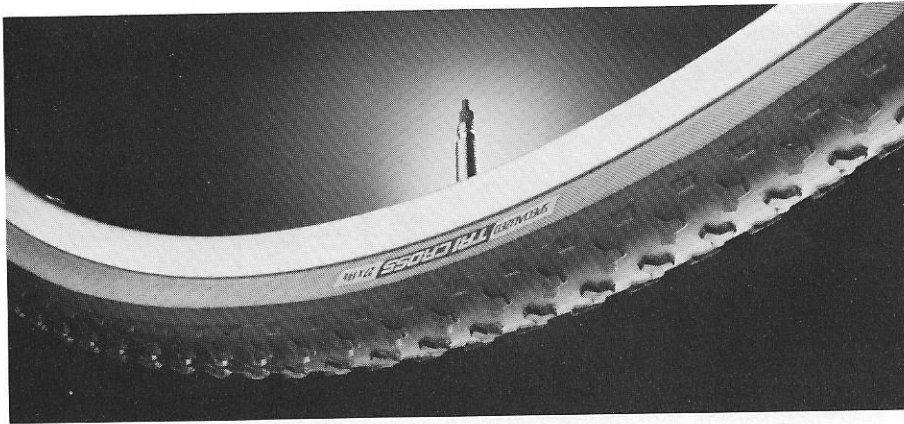
9 A.M.--THE START. Yahoo! As we rode up the first rolling climbs and descents the left side of the road was a stream of fast-moving cyclists passing, with slower traffic to the right. Somebody was always screaming, "This isn't a race!" while others would yell, "Get out of the way!"

Soon all I could think about was getting my shirt off, and I could hear John Lee Hooker singing, "Pot's on, gas on high," in my brain. Other riders were showing signs of heat, and we started to see the beginning of what became a continuous sight: people on the shoulder with flat tires. Our middleweight tires gave us no trouble, and at 70 psi they rolled down the road as fast as anyone else's. Earl had a bike computer that he bought especially for the trip, and on one downhill he clocked us at 63 mph! We smoked past the skinny-tire riders as if they were heading the other way on most of the long downhills. I hadn't been wearing my helmet because of the heat, but after one blazing run down a steep hill, I put it where it belonged.

THE TOTAL DISTANCE is seventy-five miles, but it seems longer because it includes long, baking climbs and stiff headwinds the second half of the ride. In the first twenty-five miles the route climbed and dropped 4500 vertical feet. Rest and aid stations were spaced every 10K, but not all had water. Ambulances rushed out a couple of casualties of the fast descents and each of the four shade trees along the route was crowded with riders gasping or patching tires.

AMONG THE ALMOST 9,000 RIDERS I would estimate there were several hundred mountain bikes, and we never saw any of them with either a breakdown or a flat tire! The road surface was a combination of every kind of bad pavement; on the downhills you could hear a continuous din of rattling bike parts and loose touring gear, and the attrition was high among the skinny-tire set. As I watched one after another of them pull over for repairs I thought to myself that I would never, under any circumstances ride this on smooth-pavement-only machine. After all, why bust ass climbing if you have to hold back on the descents to keep the bike from falling apart or going out of control?

THE HALFWAY REST STOP was a madhouse with people lining up for water and apple tarts. My water bottle had been empty for miles and I was never so hungry. Someone said, "Apple pies," and I jumped at the back of a truck and snagged three of the little beauties, which I slammed down and chased down with a quart of water. Earl came over and said, "Come over here and check out these bikes." I just gave him a look and kept stuffing pie.



LEANER, BUT MEANER.

Our Specialized TRI-CROSS raises off-road standards with a more efficient trim profile and superior traction.

SIZE	GRAM WT
700x35C	411 g.
27x1 3/8	435 g.
26x1.75	529 g.
26x2.125	780 g.

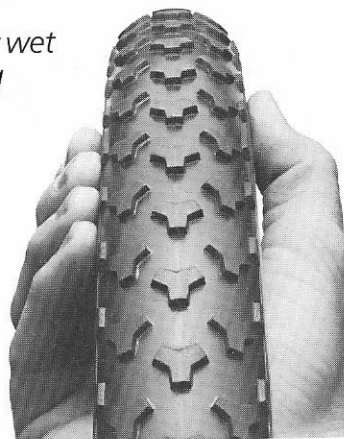
Patented, triangular knobs give more bite in loose dirt and mud, yet offer a surprisingly smooth ride on hard surfaces.

And they're perfectly spaced to reduce mud, dirt and slush buildup.

Fully 75 grams lighter than conventional knobbies, the TRI-CROSS was refined with the aid of a computer for both 10 speed frames and fat tire bikes.

Perfect for touring on dirt, gravel or wet roads, the TRI-CROSS offers outstanding traction for **all** types of riding.

In fact, the TRI-CROSS has been chosen by members of the US National Cyclocross Team for use in the World Championships in England this year.



© 1983, Specialized Bicycle Components





Photos by David Ross

After lunch we made a long descent where we saw frequent trees and vegetation for the first time on the ride. The road, which was closed to vehicles, began to include semi trucks and families in old sedans among the cyclists. Lunch had revived me for only a short time. After all, this was about to be the longest bike ride of my life, and I was doing it on very few hours of sleep. Halfway didn't seem far enough to be that tired.

We entered an area of vineyards and rolling hills and met for the first time the sea breeze. It seemed as though we were going in a more westerly heading and the cool wind was directly in our faces. No

more coasting here, I had to earn every inch. My legs were letting me know that if I gave them any opportunity, they would cramp up. There was what seemed to be an unofficial rest stop at a roadside cantina and I was tempted to slug another beer, but I resisted and settled for pear juice that was so thick it gave me a cramp later.

THE HEADWIND KEPT getting stronger as we rolled along. There appeared a rise next to the road where a carload of supporters were telling riders that it was all downhill from there. For the first time we could see the ocean, and all that was left was one long descent and a

few miles along the coast to Ensenada. By now I was in the mood for the last downhill, and we glued our noses to the handlebars and passed everything in sight. Cyclists who thought they were descenders were just a blur receding behind us. No one was pedaling downhill at this speed, but we still coasted away from all the other bikes!

I'M BEAT. Earl reminded me of the last little downhill into the city along the coastal beach and the downhill. We hit the fish-factory bouquet that signals the city limits of Ensenada, which fed my system one more shot of adrenalin. We began to sprint to the finish line. The road near the finish has speed bumps that seriously slowed the "off-dirters," we just flew over them, resplendent in our accomplishment and ready to deal with an overwhelming urge to party.

AT THE FINISH LINE amid cries of "Slow down, it's over," from the officials, we were handed paper, an amulet, and a drink ticket which signified that it was time to go to the Tecate tent. After checking in at the hotel, cleaning up, and returning to town that evening, we stopped and watched more cyclists coming in through the darkness to the finish line after twelve hours.

DO IT AGAIN? Absolutely. Next time my Ritchey will have braze-ons for another water bottle, higher bars, lighter wheels, and a cluster with road gearing. Otra cervesa, por favor!



Tough enough to take it, smart enough to grace it - Bluemels Mountain Range™ Fenders.

Gleaming silver, light-weight, as rugged as your mountain bike, featuring Bluemels unique patented 'quick-fit' twin braces.

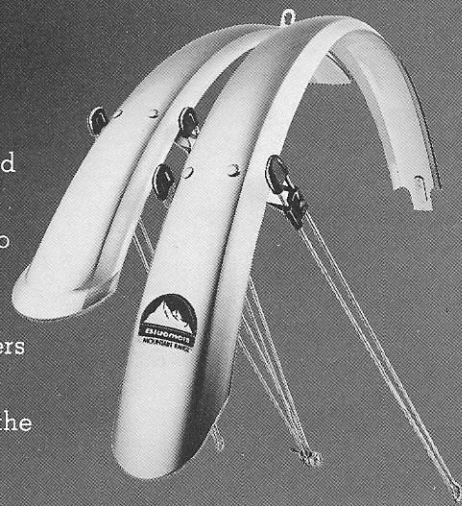
Designed by all-weather experts to protect you and your bike with consummate ease.

Bluemels Mountain Range™ Fenders are custom designed for your bike.

Go treat yourself today and enjoy the great outdoors even more.

BLUEMELS LIMITED
Wolston Coventry CV8 3FU England
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Bluemels



Repack Downhill

THIS DOWNHILL EVENT is notorious far out of proportion to the number of people who have taken part in it. To date there have been a total of 21 races held here since the beginning of recorded times (October, 1976). No more than 200 racers have taken part, about half that number in the last two events held late last year and this year on May 20.

Part of its notoriety lies in the fact that it was one of the first contests staged exclusively for fat-tire bicycles, but the real reason this otherwise ordinary stretch of dirt road is well known is the fact that anyone who rides it, no matter what their home-turf allegiance, agrees that it is the world's gnarliest downhill run, deserving the title of "unofficial championship of downhill dirt." Perhaps the greatest single reason, however, that this event is being reported in such tiresome detail, is that the recent contest was a production of this same publication and we had the opportunity to scrutinize it in detail. (We might as well admit all this now, rather than have anyone accuse us of it.)

REPACK REPRESENTS the roots of off-road racing. For those who haven't read this a hundred times already, the name comes from coaster brake days when a single run down the 1300-foot-drop in under two miles cooked the grease in a coaster brake requiring that it be...well, you know. This is one place that evens all advantages. Equipment doesn't matter; all that matters is how fast you can ride what you have over a twisting, off-camber, loose-surfaced, steep, rutted road with cliffs and overhanging trees ready to punish errors. This is not a safe thing to do, this race. People get hurt. There have been at least three broken bones among participants, and a concussion or two. Crashes are so frequent that they are expected, and the crowd gathers like, uh, sports fans at key corners with major consequences. Among riders there is a euphemistic attitude toward forced dismounts and unhappy landings; anything that only dirties the clothing is a "slide-out," but if it draws blood a rider will admit to a "crash."


THE BRIEF DURATION of the race adds to its intensity. Participants spend weeks contemplating what they are going to do for five minutes on a Saturday morning. Anyone could negotiate the course at a cruising velocity, but the element of having a clock running changes everything. A perfect run is one in which the rider is close to the edge of control all the way down, and manages not to crash. Simply, the race is to be who hangs it out the farthest, successfully. On such a short course there is no possibility of making up

for a time-wasting mistake, and the rider's attention is focused like a laser beam on trying to grab a second here over some bad bumps, or cutting the perfect fast line through a blind corner, getting "all of it" by riding into that speed zone where any obstacle that turns up on the road around the corner is going to be hit full speed, and there better not be any.

The rider's first mistake is usually just serious enough to lose him the race, but it sets up the second mistake as he tries to make up time. The second crash is generally more spectacular, and since it is conveniently located further down the course, a delight for the spectators who are watching near the bottom.

THE LIST OF WINNERS at the May 19 Repack reads like a "Who's They" of off-road cycling, because converted roadies need not apply. The guys who win the long cross-country events make token appearances here, but Repack winners are blue-collar bombers with a few hundred hours of air time under their tires. On May 19 the first four places went to one-speed riders. Jim Deaton of Roseville, a 21-year old former BMX pro, showed that the home court isn't everything by repeating his 1983 win with the best time recorded on the course since 1979, 4:34.2. Deaton's

timed run was only his ninth ever on the course, his third this year. (By contrast, several riders practiced on the course for several days before the event.) His strategy was simple; ride cautiously into the corners to avoid crashing, then use his BMX acceleration to cover the distance between corners. Deaton made part of his time on the easiest part of the course, a rolling and level 200 yards from the starting line to the first drop-off. Over this distance he was three seconds faster than average, and a second faster than his nearest competitor. For the record, Deaton's bike was a one-speed, 26" Powerlite cruiser. "Nothing on it to go wrong."

Aside from the record field of 94 riders, the race drew some strange vehicles. For the first time the course was assaulted by two two-person bikes, a tandem and a side-hack. The tandem, chaired by Mark Slate and Matt Heberd, rode a respectable 5:11; the side-hack broke its mooring and flatted its tire, but made the distance. Brian Skinner brought his unique monoshock "Descender" bikes to the race that inspired them, and the dirt proved to be stronger than the bikes. Problems with his chain kept Skinner from getting the run he wanted, and he lost his chance to improve on his fine previous run of 4:57. 

Race Reports

Tim Thulin



Rockhopper

JOE MURRAY is the hottest off-road racer in the country this season, and on Sunday, May 20 he ran his string of victories to five straight with a win at the Rockhopper, a production of the American Lung Association and California's biggest race. Although Murray is accustomed to taking control early in his races, he ran into formidable opposition at the Santa Rosa, California race where he met Gavin Chilcott and Steve Cook for the first time this season.

CHILCOTT IS A TWO-TIME winner of the Rockhopper and holder of the old course record; he has plenty of racing experience including a year on an Italian professional team and a couple of rides in the Coors Classic. As the local favorite on his home territory he looked to be the best bet in this race. The Rockhopper was his first off-road race this year for his new sponsor, Specialized, but he had spent the spring road training competing in the Tour of Texas and he was ready.

COOK, COLORADO CYCLO-CROSS champ and one of the toughest off-road riders in the country, was visiting the west coast specifically for this race, but an accident during road training the week before had shaken him up and left him with dozens of sutures in his face. Still, he hadn't come this far just to watch.

Although the total entry list in the Rockhopper ran to 320 riders, most were entered in the novice category and rode a short course of 18 miles. The Expert group consisted of 37 riders riding an extra loop for a total of 36 miles, and this group included strong teams from Ross, Specialized, and Fisher MountainBikes, Murray's sponsor. The total climbing for the expert course was 1200 meters.

Murray, Chilcott and Cook rode to the front of the group at the start and together

pulled away on the first climb, followed by a pair of Chilcott's Specialized teammates, Mark Michel and Dave McLaughlin. Although Murray is known as a strong climber, Chilcott attacked near the summit and opened a gap of 100 meters on Cook, who led Murray by a similar margin. At this point Chilcott looked thoroughly in control, and Cook said later that he expected him to win easily, but this was not to be Gavin's day. Chilcott had broken a toe clip and it was distracting him to the point where he stopped on the descent to remove it. Cook caught him here and Murray joined seconds later, and once again the trio shared the lead. As the three rounded a sharp corner a spectator wandered out on the road into Chilcott's path, and Gavin crashed heavily. Cook and Murray immediately slowed to see if he was all right, and Chilcott was back on his bike quickly to join them, but the damage had been done. A few minutes later Chilcott retired with deep bruises and left the other two to share the lead.

Cook and Murray stayed together for several miles, but then Murray began to pull away and it was Cook's turn for a bad break. A flat tire had him beside the road frantically changing tubes while Murray rode away and McLaughlin and Michel came past. Despite being in what could have been a tight race, Murray once again made it look easy, defeating the best in the west with a winning margin of nearly three minutes. Second place went to McLaughlin, third to Michel another five minutes back, and a disappointed Cook finished fourth nearly ten minutes behind Murray.

JACQUIE PHELAN of Fairfax dominated the women's event as she has all year with an easy win by over ten minutes in the expert class. In the men's novice category Jeffrey Blaine upgraded himself with five minutes clear.



High Road to Drama

THE HIGH ROAD TO CHINA CAMP race held on June 10 in San Rafael, California, provided those fortunate enough to be in the vicinity of the finish line with some of the highest drama ever seen in mountain bike racing. The principal adversaries were Joe Murray, Steve Cook and Gavin Chilcott, arguably the best three in the west. Murray is having a miracle season though, while Cook seems to be snake-bit and Chilcott has yet to get going and win anything. Murray had won six straight races going into this one and Cook especially wanted to break that string, haven fallen victim to flat tires while in contention at the two previous contests, Whiskeytown and the Rockhopper.

COOK LED from the start of the race, which for experts was four laps of a five mile circuit with a thousand feet of climbing each lap. The road is steep going up and down, and good handlers could make up a lot of time on the descents. One pitch was so steep that several of the novice category walked down it, although the experts barely slowed down. Cook increased his lead each lap, pulling out 20 seconds on the first, and increasing it to a minute on the second. His lead was so comfortable that it cost him, as well-intentioned spectators shouted out his margin, because the information he heard was one lap old, while his rival, Murray, was getting up-to-the-second times. Thus, on the last lap he was told he had two minutes in hand, his lead from the previous lap, and he understandably relaxed and concentrated on not crashing. Meanwhile Murray was closing the gap ferociously, hearing from spectators that Cook was just up the road.

Down the last steep hill, then a quarter mile on flat gravel road to the finish. Murray describes it, "I saw a rider just up the road going around a corner. I couldn't

Continued on next page



STEVE BOEHMIKE & KYE SHARP SIDECAR AT REPACK



RITCHEY, COOK, GUY, DAVIS, MICHEL, AND MALONE AT ROCKHOPPER.

Kathy Silva

RACE REPORTS *continued*

believe it was Steve, he was going so slow; I thought it was just some spectator that was riding on the course." Murray put his mettle to the pedal though, and realized in seconds that it was indeed Cook, and that he could still catch him, because Cook didn't even know he was anywhere around.

AT THE FINISH LINE all the spectators let out a simultaneous yell as both riders came in sight around the last corner, Cook riding casually and Murray charging like a runaway truck ten yards behind. Seventy-five yards to go, and Murray steams past Cook, who for the first time realizes that there is a sprint finish on. It is to Cook's credit that he recovered enough from the biggest surprise he has had in his entire life to make a contest of it, and he quickly wound up his own tempo, even gaining on Murray. Twenty yards to go, and Murray had only half a bike of him, but Cook forgot where the finish line was and mishandled his bike for an instant and Joe crossed the line showing him a foot of daylight. Everything happened so quickly that of a dozen or so photographers standing near the finish line waiting for the winner, not one thought to raise his camera and record the finish.

Nothing tests a competitor as much as a bitter defeat, and for Steve Cook the descent was too dizzying to understand. In the space of five seconds a brilliant ride had been turned to ashes; he had led the race for all but seventy five yards and the most important inch, the finish line. Steve wandered into the woods and spoke to no one.

MURRAY SEEMED STUNNED by his win, which while more pleasant, was just as much a surprise to him as it was to Cook. As the crowd surrounded him, he kept looking around for Cook, who was nowhere near.

When the prizes were handed out Steve Cook walked up and accepted his second place award. He smiled and shook hands and thanked the promoters, an exceptional act of sportsmanship.



Tim Thulin



Repacker Flying Low!

Coyote Derby, Redlands, CA March 25, 1984

1. Joe Murray (Fisher MtnBikes)	1:48:21	1st PRO
2. Laurence Malone (Team Stumpjumper)	1:48:58	2nd PRO
3. Jim Harlow (Ross Indians)	1:49:28	3rd PRO
4. Mark Michel (Team Stumpjumper)	1:51:38	4th PRO
5. Kye Sharp	1:52:50	5th PRO
6. Joe Sloup (Mantis)	1:55:00	6th PRO
7. Dave McLaughlin (Team Stumpjumper)	1:56:26	7th PRO
8. Todd DeAngelis	1:56:28	1st M EX
9. Greg "Iron Man" Dres	1:56:50	1st 1-SP
10. Alan Ott (Team Stumpjumper)	2:01:53	8th PRO
21. Matt Pim	2:24:34	1st M NOV
22. Victor Vincente of America	2:24:41	1st VET
48. Casey Patterson (Cunningham/Suntour)	3:20:20	1st WOM

Koenig's Mountain Madness Observed Trials

APRIL 8, 1984

1. Tom Meyer
2. Dean Cathcart
3. Mark Kapula
4. Charlie Carnes

APRIL 15, 1984

1. Tom Meyer
2. Jonathan Guest
3. Janet Lawson
4. Dave Sclater

We apologize to anyone who was inconvenienced by the published date of the "Spring Runoff" race in Placerville, California, which was held on April 29. This race was originally scheduled for May 20, but the date was changed to prevent a conflict with the "Rockhopper-4-Lungs." Unfortunately, the news came to us after press time, and the original date of May 20 was published in the March-April issue.

Spring Runoff, Placerville, CA April 29, 1984

MEN (27 miles)

1. Joe Murray (Fisher MtnBikes)	2:09:47	1st PRO
2. John Loomis (Fisher MtnBikes)	2:13:46	2nd PRO
3. Mike Jordan	2:17:13	1st M EX
4. Peter Lewendal (Fisher MtnBikes)	2:20:55	3rd PRO
5. Bob Hammond	2:22:08	2nd M EX
6. Jeff Kausch (Fisher MtnBikes)	2:22:09	4th PRO
7. George Theobald	2:23:50	3rd M EX
8. Tom Hillard (Bike Peddler)	2:24:10	1st VET
9. Don Davis (Ross Indians)	2:24:46	5th PRO
10. John Lee Stein	2:26:45	4th M EX

WOMEN (18 miles)

1. Jacquie Phelan (C'ham/Suntour)	1:42:16
2. Liz Nilsen	1:54:48
3. Barbara Edelston	1:56:12
4. Heather Cupp	2:03:35
5. Lenore Chancellor	2:06:11

Repack May 19, 1984

1. Jim Deaton/Roseville	4:34.2	1st EX
2. Erik Westerhoff San Rafael	4:39.5	1st NOV
3. Joe Peterson/Stinson Bch	4:40.7	2nd NOV
4. Roy Rivers/Larkspur	4:46.8	2nd EX
5. Joe Breeze/Mill Valley (Breeze Industries)	4:47.0	3rd EX
6. Dirk Denny/Novato	4:53.2	3rd NOV
7. Rob Nilsen/San Anselmo (Fisher MtnBikes)	4:53.8	4th EX
8. Noel Agajan/San Anselmo	4:47.9	5th EX
Tie Peter Lewendal/San Rafael	4:57.9	4th NOV
10. Mark Johnson/Laguna Bch (Cook Bros Racing)	5:01.7	5th NOV
46. Jacquie Phelan/Fairfax (C'ham/Suntour)	5:33.8	1st WOM

Rockhopper, May 20, 1984

MEN'S EXPERT (36 miles)

1. Joe Murray (Fisher MtnBikes)	2:32:34
2. Dave McLaughlin (Specialized)	2:35:39
3. Mark Michel (Specialized)	2:40:48
4. Steve Cook (C'ham/Suntour)	2:41:57
5. Laurence Malone (Specialized)	2:42:26

WOMEN'S EXPERT (22 miles)

1. Jacquie Phelan (C'ham/Suntour)	1:40:42
2. Heather Cupp	1:51:46
3. Barb Edelston	2:00:14

MEN'S NOVICE WINNER: Jeffrey Blaine 1:36:57

MEN'S VETERAN:

Charlie Cunningham (C'ham/Suntour) 1:32:35

MASTER'S: Bill Best 1:42:20

WOMEN'S NOVICE: Susan Kleinberg 1:57:32

ONE-SPEED: Greg Dres 1:36:48

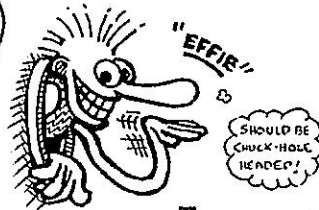
4th Annual Whiskeytown Downhill June 3, 1984

1. Joe Murray (Fisher MtnBikes)	2:54:56	1st P/A
2. Steve Cook (Cunningham/Suntour)	2:55:55	2nd P/A
3. Gavin Chilcott (Stumpjumper)	3:05:06	3rd P/A
4. Todd DeAngelis (Earthtones)	3:05:58	1st M EX
5. Mark Michel (Stumpjumper)	3:08:55	4th P/A
6. Dave McLaughlin (Stumpjumper)	3:09:38	5th P/A
7. Joe Sloup (Mantis)	3:10:35	6th P/A
8. Charlie Cunningham (C'ham/Suntour)	3:13:41	1st VET
9. Jim Harlow (Ross Indians)	3:14:18	7th P/A
10. John McCormick (Ross Indians)	3:14:46	8th P/A
11. Shawn Storm (Ross Indians)	3:15:03	9th P/A
12. Alan Ott (Stumpjumper)	3:17:37	10th P/A
13. John Durst (Earthtones)	3:19:03	11th P/A
14. Dan Mackey	3:19:31	2nd M EX
15. John Stein (Chain Gang)	3:19:32	12th P/A
16. Laurence Malone (Stumpjumper)	3:20:48	13th P/A
21. Jeff Gilmore (United Bike)	3:24:10	1st M NOV
24. Tom Hillard (Bike Peddler)	3:26:45	2nd VET
29. Jamie Lynn (The Bike Shop)	3:30:00	1st JR
42. Bill Best (Fisher MtnBikes)	3:38:27	1st Master
54. Jacquie Phelan (C'ham/Suntour)	3:51:53	1st W EX
57. Paul Blodgett	3:55:14	1st SS
95. Lynn Cooper	4:31:16	1st W NOV

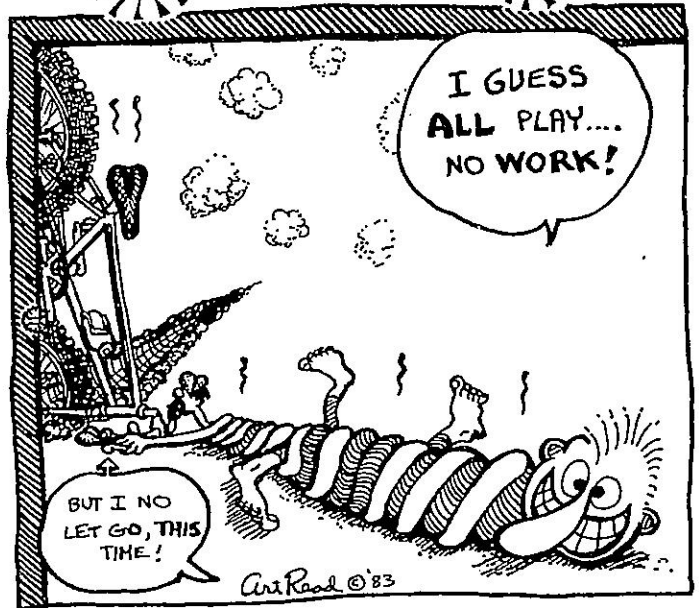
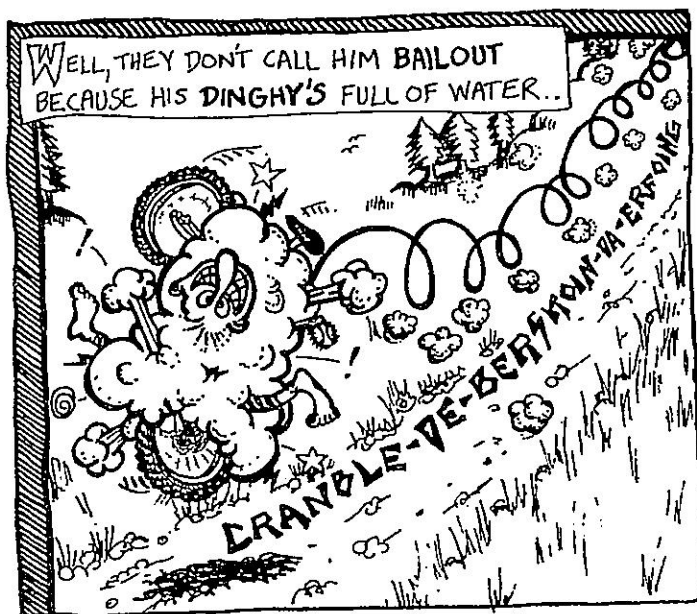
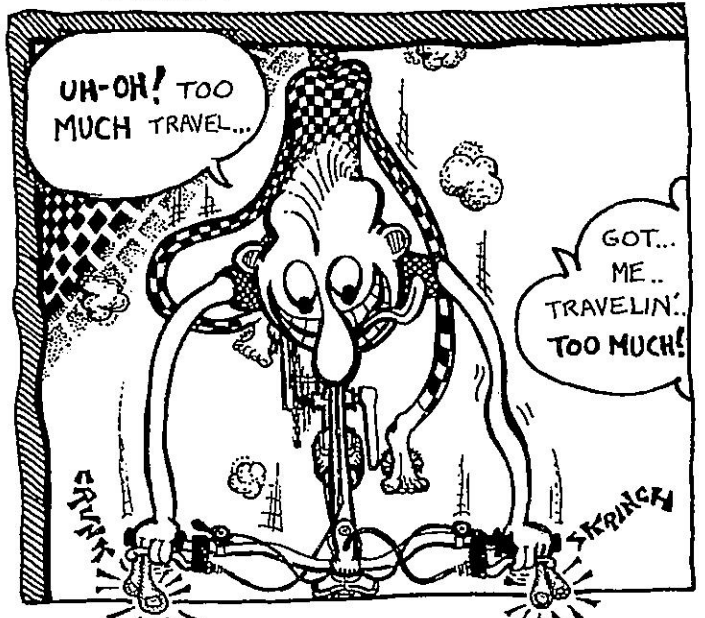
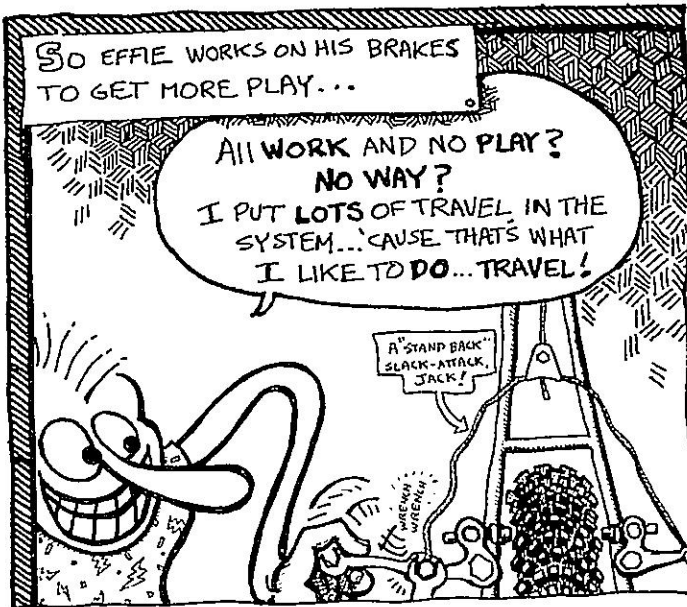
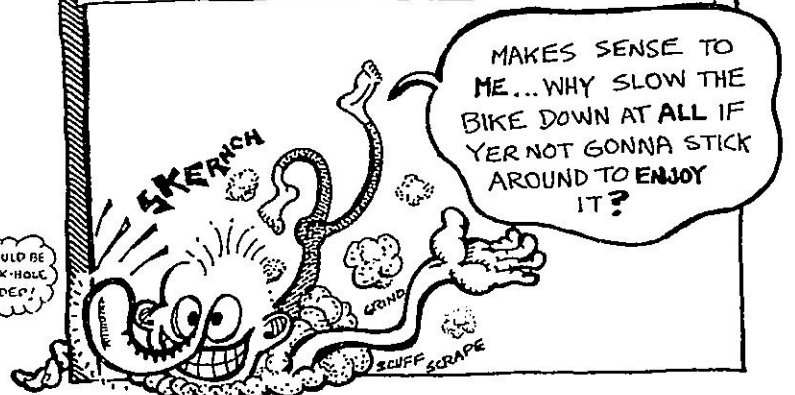
WRECK TIPS

BY F. EWE
BAILOUT

TWISTED TIPS
FROM THAT
CHUCKLE-HEADED CHATTERBOX



OUR DO-IT-YERSELF OVER-THE-BARS LOBOTOMY PATIENT READ SOMEWHERE THAT HE OUGHT TO HAVE ENOUGH PLAY IN HIS BRAKES TO LET HIM BRAKE & HANG ON AT THE SAME TIME!



Fat Notes

Anyone planning to off-road tour in the Southwest should check in with the Arizona Rough Riders. They have an eight-page booklet that describes several rides for riders of different abilities, and gives as well a few tips on riding in the area. The cover price is 50 cents, exclusive of mailing, so send them a S.A.S.E. too.

Arizona Rough Riders
P.O. Box 22322 Flagstaff, AZ 86002
Gary Kuchel or John Parsons
at 602-774-4353

Event Schedule

The event schedule this year is crowded from March to October with so many events that it's getting hard to keep them straight. The possibility of conflicting events has been realized, either forcing changes of date or making participants choose between equally attractive events. Both these hurt the sport by cutting at the root, which is the promoter who sticks his or her neck out to put together an event. No matter what, promoters of conflicting events will lose attendance. If the date of an event is published and then changed, all publicity previous to the change is counterproductive.

Part of the resolution of this problem

rightly belongs to the National Off-Road Bicycle Association, and we suggest to them that they point out to promoters as quickly as possible any conflicts that arise. The promoters have a responsibility also to schedule next year's events now or as far in advance as possible, and to work together to augment rather than divide the participants.

Fat Tire Tours

Last issue we ran a list of Fat Tire tour companies. Here are some additions to that list:

Bailey and Dennis Stenson
MYSTIC WHEELS BICYCLE TOURS
2820 W. Elizabeth
Fort Collins, CO 80521
303-482-3488

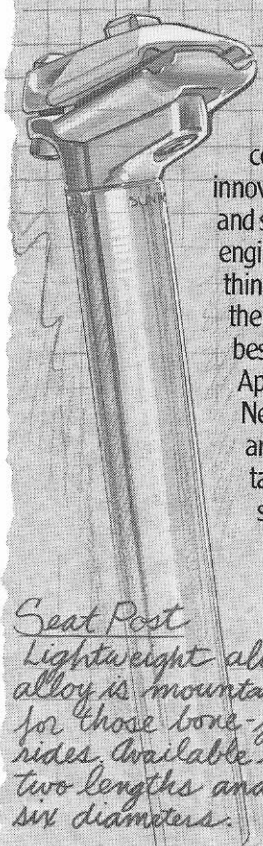
Two-to-six day tours in the Colorado Rockies. Prices \$110 to \$240.

Greg Vann
NEPALESE MOUNTAIN BIKE TOURS
P.O. Box 76007
Washington, DC 20013
202-543-2004

Tours in Himalayas. \$500 per week (not including travel), bikes provided, meals included.

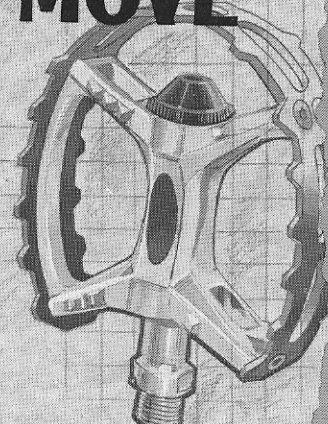
Last issue we mentioned that off-road cycling is becoming more popular in England. Preliminary reports are that 71 riders turned out for the London Mountain Bike Spectacular on a rainy day, and there are seven more events planned for the summer.

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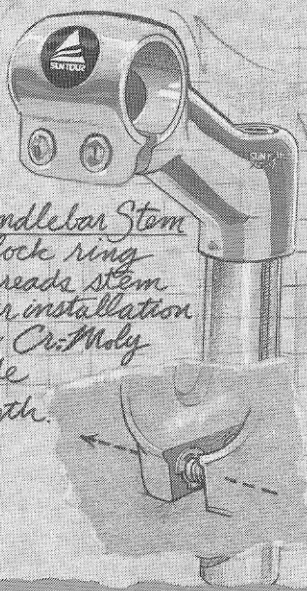


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Joe Murray

The mountain bike racing story in the far west this year might just as well be entitled the Joe Murray story, because this 20 year old off-road racer has dominated the competition in the early part of 1984. Four straight wins over the best in the west make him the man to watch for in races and a solid contender for the national off-road crown this fall. We were fortunate enough to interview Joe for this issue, and although this was his first interview for publication, it will certainly not be his last.

Joe was born in Marin County, California, where he now lives, but he spent the years from 1972 to 1978 in Mendocino. Moving back to Marin in 1978, he took up off-road cycling on a Schwinn Spittfire Five, one of the first commercially produced "clunker" bikes. At the same time he took up road cycling, although with limited success as a junior racer; his best finish on asphalt was a second place in a time-trial.

Riding in the "Zero's Notch" race in 1978 (one of the first off-road cross-country events) as a novice on his Schwinn, Joe finished 13th overall and seventh in novice. From that time until last year he confined his racing to the road, but with the emergence of off-road racing as a real sport he turned his attention to dirt, with spectacular results.

Joe is currently employed as a bike mechanic by his sponsor, Fisher MountainBikes. At 5'8" and 145 pounds he is a good size to be an excellent climber, which is his principal weapon. His legs are unshaven and not particularly stump-like, and at first glance he does not look like a bike racer to those who are used to polished and tanned legs. Quiet and soft-spoken, he is clearly happy with his recent success, but one is unlikely to hear about it from him without asking to.

FTF: How was your season last year?

JM: Pretty good. I was fourth in the Rockhopper in May, and finished second by eighteen seconds (to Gavin Chilcott) in the Briones Race. I won the Mountain Mania in September, and took fifth in the Nationals down in Santa Barbara. I was in a real good position at the Carlsbad race, but I dropped my chain. At the Mount Tam Hillclimb (a road event) I was 18th, riding on a mountain bike.

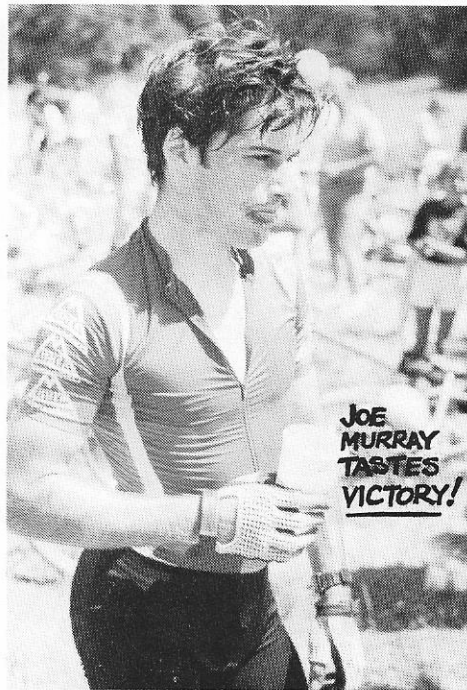
FTF: You've won everything in sight. What was your closest finish?

JM: At the Coyote Derby I beat Laurence Malone by thirty seconds. All the others were two or three minutes.

FTF: Have you collected any big prizes?

JM: Nothing huge. I won \$100 at the Nationals, and \$75 at the Coyote Derby.

FTF: How did you get to be such a good cyclist?



Charles Kelly

JM: I had a heavy bike, and I lived up a steep hill. I guess I just got fit going home.

FTF: How do you train?

JM: I like to get up early and ride for a couple of hours before work. I have some favorite rides in the hills I take regularly. Then there are group rides after work.

FTF: Do you use any tactics when you race?

JM: I always try to pre-ride the course. You can plan your ride much better if you know how long the hills are. At the start I just try to stay near the front and not get knocked down. There are a lot of guys who try to get a hole-shot and jam out early, and I don't try to stay with them. When things start getting tougher on the climbs I just try to get them there. Strength is really the most important thing in mountain bike racing, but handling is important too, and if you pre-ride the course you'll have a better idea of what to do on the downhills. Handling adds up, so you can't afford to ignore it. I pre-rode every course this year except Coyote Derby, and it really paid off at Carissa Plains, because I could pace myself on the climbs. One thing I read in the FLYER is really true; if you pace yourself on the less steep parts of the climbs, you can conserve the energy to speed up over the steep or difficult sections.

FTF: What about equipment?

JM: Last year I rode a Stumpjumper, but now I'm sponsored by Fisher MountainBikes. My race bike is a comp with 70 degree head and 73 degree seat. It's great for climbing, but it's a little squirrely on the descents because of the short wheelbase. I use 1.75 tires and light wheels, so my bike weighs in at about 25-1/2 pounds. One thing, I don't

use toe clips. I even move my feet around on the pedal, and sometimes I pedal with the middle of my foot rather than the ball because I can get more leg extension that way.

FTF: When did you become sponsored?

JM: My first sponsored race was the Rockhopper in October last year

FTF: What about the future? Are you committed to Fisher MountainBikes or would you race for another team?

JM: I feel that I'm in a good position right now, because I'm only 20 years old, and there'll be a lot more money in the sport over the next few years. As far as racing for anyone else, there are a few teams I wouldn't care to be on, and besides, I work at Fisher MountainBikes right here where I live, but if an offer looks good, I'd consider it.

FTF: Do you have any interests besides racing?

JM: I played trumpet in the high school band. I like to paint and draw (some of Joe's cartoons appeared in the FLYER in 1980), and right now I'm starting to build bike frames, so I guess you could call me an apprentice frame-builder. I just built my first frame, and I'm using it for all-around riding.

FTF: Do you consider yourself a "natural"?

JM: No. I think anyone with a good physique and good health can be just as good.



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NEW PRODUCTS

Suntour XC-V Handlebar Stem

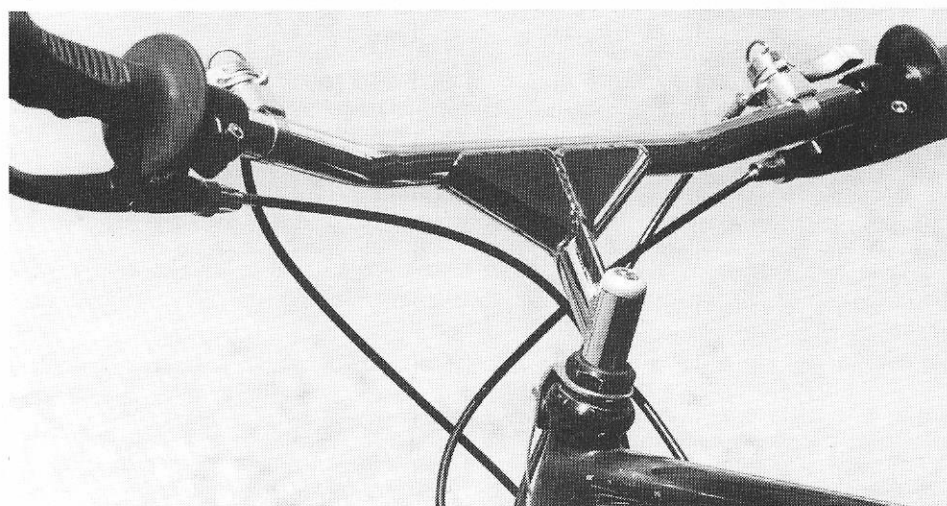
The XC-V stem is specially made for off-road handlebars, which are usually around 22.2 mm but may vary slightly. Backing out the two clamping bolts for installation spreads the clamp open to accept oversize bars. Note from the photograph that the stem slants upward to raise the handlebars slightly from where a road stem would place them.



Escape Goat Handlebars

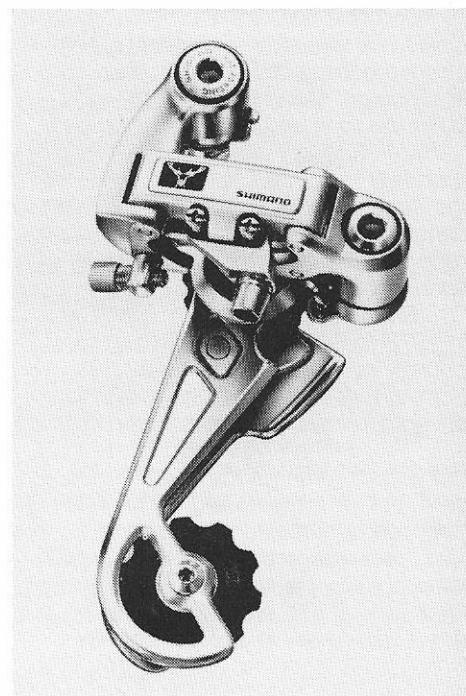
Another approach to handlebars comes from Jeff Lindsay of Mountain Goat[™] Cycles. These are heli-arc welded together

from 4130 chrome-moly and then chrome plated. The one-piece handlebar has a total width of 27.5" and a rise of 4". The stem diameter is 22.2 mm.



Shimano Superplate Derailleur

The Superplate represents the next step in rear derailleurs from the very successful Deore XT. Although similar in appearance to the old Deore, the Superplate features a new steel cage with a twin pivot. The "Centeron" feature has been discarded, and the spring tension has been increased to keep the chain secure on rough descents. The Superplate will handle up to a 34-tooth cog, and has a take-up capacity of up to 42 teeth difference between front and rear sprockets.



PRODUCT REVIEW

By SeeKay

Ever since the introduction of the seatpost quick-release, riders have been wishing for a way to raise and lower the saddle while riding. Several innovators have come up with solutions, most involving coil springs either inside the frame or wrapped around the seatpost. Joe Breeze and Josh Angell have come up with a radical design, the kind that makes you say, "Of course, that's obvious." A torsion spring attaches to the seatpost with a collar clamp and to the end of the quick-release skewer by a loop. By presetting the collar on the seatpost the rider can select a seat height that the saddle will always rise to, and the attachment to the skewer keeps the saddle lined up with the frame. Best of all, the whole thing bolts on in a few minutes to just about any bike.

I tested a pre-production prototype of the "Hite-Rite[™]", and after the test Breeze and Angell were in no danger of getting it

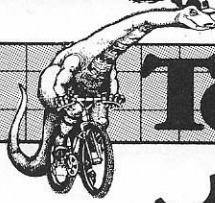
back. This is permanent equipment; it's staying on my bike.

The Hite-Rite makes it so convenient to change the saddle height that now I even lower it when descending hills on paved roads. And when it's time to go back to efficient road height, the saddle pops up to the perfect place, aligned with the frame. I had long since ceased lowering the saddle for any but the most critical descents because the time lost putting the saddle back to the (approximate) right height (did I really say that?) was more than I lost leaving it up. From hardly using the QR on my seat at all, I went to using it often; the act of lowering or raising took only a second.

I talked with Joe Breeze about the product and he mentioned a few details that should be covered here. The kit comes with a pair of adaptor nuts that replace the nut on the end of the QR skewer; they are

made for the 6x1 mm QR skewer that is standard on most Japanese products. (We had to find some smaller nuts for my Campagnolo QR, which is 5 x .8 mm.) There is an adaptor sleeve in the kit that can be used if the hole in the frame clamp is 8 mm; by getting a snug fit in the frame the spring keeps the saddle aligned. The clamp for the seatpost is 26.8 mm, the size most commonly used, but provisions are made for frames with smaller seatposts (usually cheaper frames with thicker tubing in the seat tube). Foil tape is included that can be used as a shim. It comes with a peel-off backing and can be stuck down on the seatpost.

We noticed that on cheaper bikes the fit on the seatpost was not as precise as on more expensive frames, and for this reason the Hite-Rite didn't work as smoothly on these bikes as on a custom frame that had the seat tube reamed to perfect roundness and the right size. The Hite-Rite retails for about \$28.50.



Tech Tips

by SeeKay

Brake Levers

Several issues back we mentioned that is really a matter of personal choice as to which sides the brake levers are on, i.e. front/right or front/left. Since that time we have received a little feedback on the subject.

An English rider points out that in England bikes are commonly set up with the front brake on the right, which is opposite from the way bikes are usually set up in the U.S. The reason, he speculates, is that English riders signal with their right hands, and having the rear brake on the left side allows them to control speed with the left hand without running the risk of "stuffing" the front wheel in a hole.

Although we feel that is immaterial which side your brakes are set up on, a recent incident illustrates the fact that is important to know how they are set up. At a recent race a rider borrowed his brother's bike because of a mechanical problem with his own. The brakes on the borrowed bike were set up in reverse fashion from what the rider was accustomed to, and on a critical jump he grabbed a tight fistful of front brake, thinking it was the rear. You can imagine it out from there; he stacked, breaking his clavicle and ruining his day.

In the event you use a bike other than your own with a reverse setup from what you are used to, it only takes a minute to switch the cables. The adjuster and the knut on a brake lever both have slots, and if you line them up with the slot on the handle, the cable pops out easily. When you return the bike, remember to switch the cables back.

Rear Fat Tire Folks;

I'd like to respond here to a blurb entitled "Chain Stuff" on page 17 of the January-February issue. My response time was often this slow.

My Univega Alpina Pro has a 26-36 chainwheel with a 13x34 freewheel but I haven't yet had to use the 26x34. In fact the small chainring and the large chainring seem to be redundant. I'm left using the gears--off the same shifter--with a range from 72 gear inches down to 27.5 [inches].

I do quite a bit of riding but not as much as you folks, I'm sure, but I haven't been able to figure out why all terrain bikes have so many gears.

Here in Rhode Island it's kinda flat but I have ridden in New Hampshire, which ain't.



My road bike has a range of eighteen speeds from 100 [inches] down to 22 [inches] and I use the entire range basically because I sit down and spin to maintain cadence. The off-road technique of standing on the pedals for almost all riding makes the saddle a nice place to sit after the ride is over and all those gears get in the way.

Tom Pavitt
Ashaway, RI

Tom:

In the areas where mountain bikes first became popular, California and Colorado, there are real reasons for using the extreme range of gears possible with your triple chainring, and the saddle sometimes comes in handy also. If in your off-road cycling experience you have never found a hill so steep that it forces a dismount, you might not need those low gears, but at high elevations where oxygen is scarce no gear seems low enough for climbs, and on the descents it is easy to spin out a 100 inch gear.

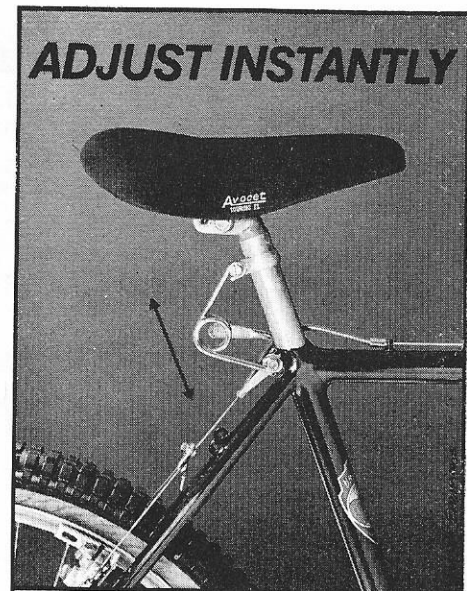
There are two factors which limit what the rider can climb, assuming he or she is reasonably strong; these are traction and the ability to keep the front wheel on the ground. On a steep hill with a loose surface the rear wheel will spin and lose traction if the rider attempts to ride out of the saddle in a relatively high gear. By sitting down he puts enough weight on the rear wheel to keep it from spinning, and by using a very low gear, around 20 inches, he eliminates the power peaks that occur in a higher gear. By spinning a low gear the rider applies power more smoothly and reduces his chances of breaking the wheel loose.

If you never plan to ride the Rockies,

you might consider switching your bike to a six- or seven-speed by removing two of the chainrings. An alternative to removing the large chainring is to grind the teeth off it and use it for a skid-plate. Since a New Winner Ultra-seven-speed cluster will accept a 12-tooth small cog, you can get a high gear of 78 inches with this combination. One advantage to this setup is that it eliminates gear overlap and crossover shifting; also, you can use a shorter chain and save a few more ounces.

Even if you don't plan to use the front derailleur, it's a good idea to leave it on the bike in order to keep the chain from dropping off when you are bouncing down a rough road. By tightening the setscrews that control its travel you can lock the derailleur into position and discard your shift lever. If you can find it, Suntour makes a "re-reilleur," essentially a front derailleur cage without the shifting mechanism, which acts as a guide and keeps the chain in place. The place to look for this part is any shop that sells cyclo-cross equipment.

Continued on next page



ADJUST INSTANTLY

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RITE**

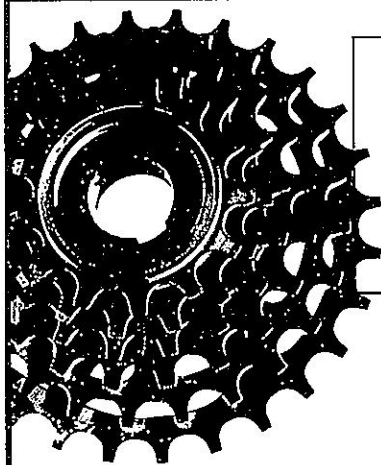
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Several of our readers have asked if we would do a gear chart for mountain bikes. Standard gear charts are useless because they don't cover enough range and because they are for a different wheel size.

At first we were reluctant to print

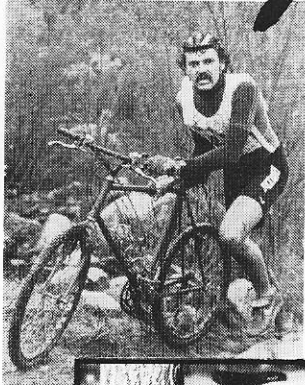
the chart because it uses up a lot of space, but as deadline approached we decided that this was just the kind of hard information available from no one else but us, and we owed it to our readers. So here is the first published Fat Tire gear chart. 

WIDE-RANGE GEAR CHART

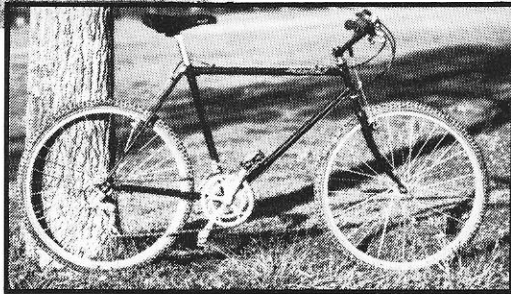
To Calculate a Gear: Front sprocket teeth divided by rear sprocket teeth times outside diameter of wheel.

CHAIN RING TEETH	REAR SPROCKET TEETH																			
	38	36	34	32	30	28	26	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12
24	16.4	17.3	18.4	19.5	20.8	22.3	24.0	26.0	27.1	28.4	29.7	31.2	32.8	34.7	36.7	39.0	41.6	44.6	48.0	52.0
26	17.8	18.8	19.9	21.1	22.5	24.1	26.0	28.2	29.4	30.7	32.2	33.8	35.6	37.6	39.8	42.3	45.1	48.3	52.0	56.3
28	19.2	20.2	21.4	22.8	24.3	26.0	28.0	30.3	31.7	33.1	34.7	36.4	38.3	40.4	42.8	45.5	48.5	52.0	56.0	60.7
30	20.5	21.7	22.9	24.4	26.0	27.9	30.0	32.5	33.9	35.5	37.1	39.0	41.1	43.3	45.9	48.8	52.0	55.7	60.0	65.0
32	21.9	23.1	24.5	26.0	27.7	29.7	32.0	34.7	36.2	37.8	39.6	41.6	43.8	46.2	48.9	52.0	55.5	59.4	64.0	69.3
34	23.3	24.6	26.0	27.6	29.5	31.6	34.0	36.8	38.4	40.2	42.1	44.2	46.5	49.1	52.0	55.3	58.9	63.1	68.0	73.7
36	24.6	26.0	27.5	29.3	31.2	33.4	36.0	39.0	40.7	42.5	44.6	46.8	49.3	52.0	55.1	58.5	62.4	66.9	72.0	78.0
38	26.0	27.4	29.1	30.9	32.9	35.3	38.0	41.2	43.0	44.9	47.0	49.4	52.0	54.9	58.1	61.8	65.9	70.6	76.0	82.3
40	27.4	28.9	30.6	32.5	34.7	37.1	40.0	43.3	45.2	47.3	49.5	52.0	54.7	57.8	61.2	65.0	69.3	74.3	80.0	86.7
42	28.7	30.3	32.1	34.1	36.4	39.0	42.0	45.5	47.5	49.6	52.0	54.6	57.5	60.7	64.2	68.3	72.8	78.0	84.0	91.0
44	30.1	31.8	33.6	35.8	38.1	40.9	44.0	47.7	49.7	52.0	54.5	57.2	60.2	63.6	67.3	71.5	76.3	81.7	88.0	95.3
45	30.8	32.5	34.4	36.6	39.0	41.8	45.0	48.8	50.9	53.2	55.7	58.5	61.6	65.0	68.8	73.1	78.0	83.6	90.0	97.5
46	31.5	33.2	35.2	37.4	39.9	42.7	46.0	49.8	52.0	54.4	57.0	59.8	62.9	66.4	70.4	74.8	79.7	85.4	92.0	99.7
47	32.2	33.9	35.9	38.2	40.7	43.6	47.0	50.9	53.1	55.5	58.2	61.1	64.3	67.9	71.9	76.4	81.5	87.3	94.0	101.8
48	32.8	34.7	36.7	39.0	41.6	44.6	48.0	52.0	54.3	56.7	59.4	62.4	65.7	69.3	73.4	78.0	83.2	89.1	96.0	104.0
49	33.5	35.4	37.5	39.8	42.5	45.5	49.0	53.1	55.4	57.9	60.7	63.7	67.1	70.8	74.9	79.6	84.9	91.0	98.0	106.2
50	34.2	36.1	38.2	40.6	43.3	46.4	50.0	54.2	56.5	59.1	61.9	65.0	68.4	72.2	76.5	81.3	86.7	92.9	100.0	108.3
51	34.9	36.8	39.0	41.4	44.2	47.4	51.0	55.3	57.7	60.3	63.1	66.3	69.8	73.7	78.0	82.9	88.4	94.7	102.0	110.5
52	35.6	37.6	39.8	42.3	45.1	48.3	52.0	56.3	58.8	61.5	64.4	67.6	71.2	75.1	79.5	84.5	90.1	96.6	104.0	112.7

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IDAHO Georges Lightweight Cycles-Boise, The Elephants Perch-Ketchum, Spoke & Wheel-Twin Falls, All Bikes-Pocatello

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MASSACHUSETTS Nauset Cycle-Orleans

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Coming Events Events Events

July 21, tour; "Crystal Canyon Tour," Crested Butte, CO. Contact: Neil Murdock 303-349-6761

July 21 and 22, race; "Canaan Mountain Series," Davis, WV. Contact: Laird Knight 304-259-5606

July 22, race; "SUNTOUR Pacific States Championship," San Francisco, CA. Contact: Glenn Odell 805-688-2325

July 22, "Timed Trials," Plymouth, NH. Contact: John Rankin 603-536-3655

July 22, race; "Topanga Cross," Los Angeles, CA. Contact: Brian Skinner, Mountain Cross Racing 213-347-0116

July 26, race; "Bartlett High Race," Anchorage, AK. Contact: Jay Johnson 907-279-3039

July 28, race; "Peavine Hillclimb," Reno, NV. Contact: Tom Webb 702-323-1221

July 29, race; "TNT Off-Road Classic," Reno, NV. Contact: Casey Weks 916-583-9530

July 29, trials and race, Sugar Loaf, CO. Contact: Ted Dexter 303-447-8931

August 4, 5, race; "Arts Fair Stage Race," Crested Butte, CO. Contact: Neil Murdock 303-349-6761

August 10, tour; "Rocky Branch Trail," Jackson, NH. Contact: John Rankin 603-536-3655

August 11, race; "Wolf Creek Hillclimb/Downhill" Bike Rodeo, Moonlight Ride, Winthrop, WA. Contact: Ted Reese 509-996-2411

August 12, race; "1st Annual Wolf Creek Race" (25 miles) Winthrop, WA. Contact: Ted Reese 509-996-2411

August 12, race; "Short Cut," Los Angeles, CA. Contact: Brian Skinner 213-347-0116

August 17-19, Bike Festival; "Mountain Bikes in Mountain State" Buckhannon, WV. Tours, Races, Observed Trials. Contact: Steve Wereley 304-472-8644

August 18 and 19, race; "New England Stage Race," Wendell State Park, MA. Contact: John Kirkpatrick (Ross Bicycles) 1-800-221-6764

August 18 and 19, tour; "Peeler Lakes Tour" Crested Butte, CO. (Supported tour) Contact: Neil Murdock 303-349-6761

August 19, trails and race, Sugar Loaf, CO. Contact: Ted Dexter 303-447-8931

August 25, race; "Mount Alyeska Downhill," Anchorage, AK. Contact: Jay Johnson 907-279-3039

August 26, race; "Farris Creek Challenge," Crested Butte, CO. Contact: Neil Murdock 303-349-6761

August 26, race; "Storm Stage," Fort Collins, CO. Contact: Thom Parks 303-221-2869

August 26, race; "Cascade Cruise," Bend, OR. Contact: John Byfield 503-389-4224

August 31-September 3, Off-Road Festival; Winthrop, WA. Guided Tours, Observed Trials, Hillclimb/Downhill, Moonlight Ride, 75 Mile Relay Race (1 bike, 3 riders). Contact: Ted Reese 509-996-2411

September 4-9; "Fat Tire Bike Week East," Jackson, HN. Contact: John Rankin 603-536-3655

September 9, race; "2nd Annual Mountain Mania," Sacramento, CA. Contact: Bob Edwards 916-739-6931

September 9, race; "Gunsight Pass Race," Crested Butte, CO. Contact: Neil Murdock 303-349-6761

September 9, race; "Gant Challenge," Seattle, WA. Contact: Joe Sailing 215-967-5171

September 9, race; "Gant Challenge," Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN. Contact: Joe Sailing 215-967-5171

September 16, 16; "Chequamegon Fat Tire Festival," Cable, WI. Races, orienteering. Contact: Michael Cooper 715-794-2577 or Daniel Hunt 715-774-0353

September 16, race; "Gant Challenge," Denver, CO. Contact: Joe Sailing 215-967-5171

September 16, race; "Poplar Stump Hillclimb," Helen, GA. Contact: Joe Koenig 404-878-2851



Gordon Bainbridge

September 16, race; Norwalk, CT. Contact: Michael Greenberg 203-846-3666

September 17-23, tour and races; "Fat Tire Bike Week," Crested Butte, CO. Contact: Neil Murdock 303-349-6761

September 22, 23, race; "Canaan Mountain Series," Davis, WV. Contact: Laird Knight 304-259-5606

September 23, race; "Gant Challenge," Chicago, IL. Contact: Joe Sailing 215-967-5171

September 23, triathlon; "Tri-Cross Off-Road Triathlon," Santa Rosa, CA. Contact: Lynn Woznicki 800-556-6650 or 707-527-5864

September 29, 30, race; "N.O.R.B.A. National Championships" (Site to be announced). Contact: Glenn Odell 805-688-2325

September 30, race; "Gant Challenge," Los Angeles, CA. Contact: Joe Sailing 215-967-5171

September 30, race; "Gant Challenge," New York City. Contact: Joe Sailing 215-967-5171

September 30, "Road Apple Rally," Farmington, NM. Contact: Clifford Clark 505-327-0376

October 6, tour; "Ruff Stuff Rendezvous," Missoula, MT. Contact: Norm Gibat 406-721-0090

October 6, 7, tour; "Buffalo Stampede," Fort Collins, CO. Contact: Dennis Stenson 303-482-3448.

October 7, race-tour; "Tour de Bluff," Groton, CT. Contact: Bob Harrington 203-443-8250

October 7, race; "Gant Challenge," Atlanta, GA. Contact: Joe Sailing 215-967-5171

October 13, race; "Gant Challenge," Miami, FL. Contact: Joe Saling 215-967-5171

October 14, race; "Gant Challenge," Tampa, FL. Contact: Joe Saling 215-967-5171

October 14, race; "Rock Hopper 4-Lungs," Santa Rosa, CA. Contact: Lynn Woznicki 800-556-6650 or 707-527-5864

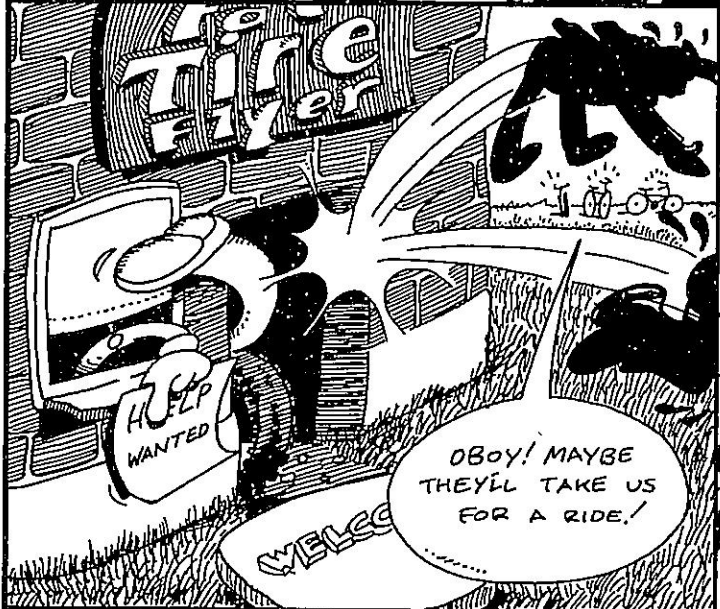
October 14, race; "Kelly Flats Ain't Flat," Fort Collins, CO. Contact: Thom Parks 303-221-2869

October 21, race; "Mount Lowe," Los Angeles, CA. Contact: Brian Skinner 213-347-0116

Observed trails series; "Koenig's Mountain Madness," Helen, GA. Contact: John Keonig 404-878-2851

Dates: June 17, July 22, August 19, September 23, October 21, November 18

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