

# MONTANEUS

## The Mountain Bike with the "Adjustable" Head Bearing Unit!

Montaneus represents the leading edge of a bold new technological breakthrough in bicycle design and human factor engineering. A design that offers the best of both worlds; stability and quick handling, all in one handcrafted bicycle. The patented adjustable head unit allows the Montaneus to adjust to any terrain condition or rider characteristic.

The head unit is a foolproof system; loosen the Allen bolts, twist the bearing cups to your desired angle; allowing fork angle change, tighten the Allen bolts and go for it.

All components on the Montaneus are individually selected for the best all around performance. Durability and design of the Montaneus and its adjustability, are due to the adjustable head unit, making the Montaneus a "riders" bicycle.

Ride the new Montaneus and see what you've been missing.

### It's a tough road to the top....

That's why our rear dropouts are made of the same 6061-T6 treated Aluminum that the rest of the frame is made of; 20% lighter than chrome-moly, yet just as strong.

The best and only the best was chosen for the Montaneus.

### SPECIFICATIONS:

Sizes available: 19, 21, 23 (21 inch bike specified)

Weight: 28 pounds complete; frame 4 pounds 11 ounces, fork 1 pound 12 ounces.

**FRAME:** Aluminum 6061 T6 heat treated after welding.

**Headset:** ABM adjustable sealed.

**Fork:** Unicrown, tig welded chrome-moly, tapered tubular.

**Braze-Ons:** 2 water bottles, rear rack, fenders, cable stops, 2 rear drop outs eyelets, (Riv-nuts for Braze-Ons)

**Wheelbase:** 42.15 to 43.85 inches adjustable

**Top tube:** 23 inches

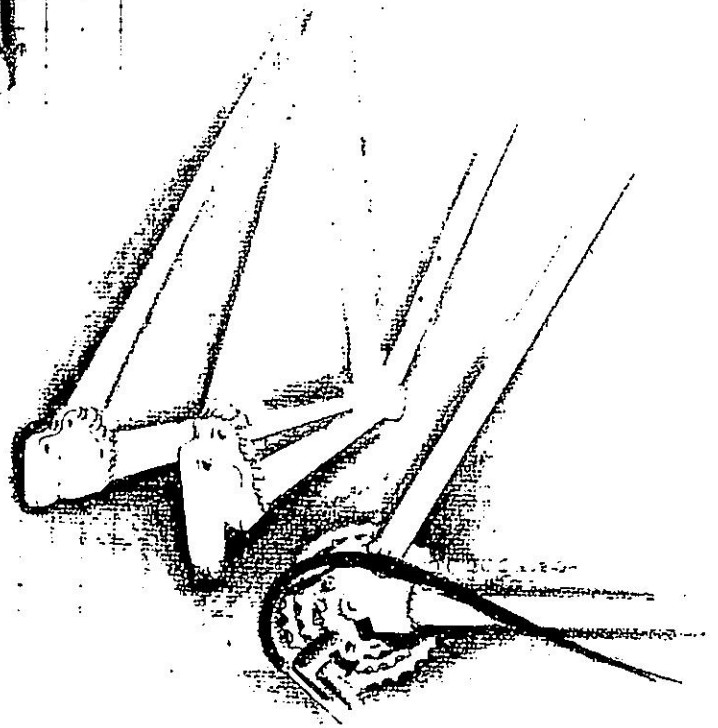
**Chainstays:** 18 inches

**Head tube angle:** 66.4 to 71.6 degrees adjustable

**Seat tube angle:** 71 degrees

**Bottom bracket:** 11½ inches

**Fork rake:** 2 inches



Call or write for a **FREE BROCHURE:**

# AMERICAN BICYCLE MFG.

Box 1245 • St. Cloud, MN 56302 • (612) 251-1641

Continued from preceding page

● Only "Huffy Class" bicycles will be allowed;

● Bicycle not to weigh less than 32 pounds.

● Bicycle not to have more than two aluminum parts.

● Bicycle not to have aluminum rims or crank.

● Bicycle must be of American or Canadian manufacture.

● All bicycles must be in original stock condition, i.e. no modifications.

● Bicycles must be completely operational (or as close to operational as the manufacturer intended).

● Pit crews will be restricted to the use of vise grips and oversized, dull screwdrivers (to be used for prying and changing tires only).

● Any competitor caught using a helmet will be disqualified.

### COMPETITION

● Rider will begin at a signal, ride his or her bicycle approximately 100 yards, dismount, and throw his or her bicycle into a designated scoring zone.

● Points will be awarded on the basis of overall time, length of throw, number of parts lost on impact, and style.

### PRIZE LIST

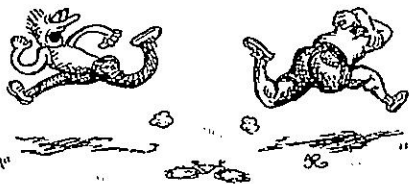
1st Place - The Coveted Huffy Throw Trophy.

2nd Place - The Wald 17th Anniversary Gruppo.

3rd Place - A Department Store 10-Speed Racer.

4th Place - Two Department Store 10-Speed Racers.

We understand that in pursuit of the ultimate in Huffy launches, conspirators at the Fat Chance factory have built a catapult and achieved impressive hang times along with uncertain landing zones. "I shot a bomber in the air, it fell to earth, after a satisfying interval, I know not where..."



### CORRECTION DEPARTMENT

In the June July issue we ran a couple of pictures from the Himalayas that were incorrectly attributed to Greg Vann. Forget it, Greg, Craig Moffat took 'em. You can't believe anything you read, especially here.



# USCF NORBA



(Colorado Springs) The National Off-Road Bicycling Association and the United States Cycling Federation have concluded an agreement to cooperate in the development of mountain bike racing. Serious negotiations began in January between USCF Technical Chairman Les Earnest and NORBA president Glenn Odell. The agreement was concluded with the approval of the Articles of Alliance by the USCF Board of Directors at their April meeting, and their subsequent signing by Odell and USCF president Phil Voxland at their meeting.

♥ "The alliance provides for USCF race permits to be issued for NORBA events, so that USCF riders may freely compete in these races and still be covered by USCF medical insurance while doing so."

The Alliance provides for USCF race permits to be issued for NORBA events, so that USCF riders may freely compete in these races and still be covered by USCF medical insurance while doing so. The NORBA events will continue to be run under NORBA rules. In other respects this agreement parallels existing Articles of Alliance between the USCF and the International Human Powered Vehicle Association, concluded in 1980.

#### Articles of Alliance

These Articles of Alliance between the National Off-Road Bicycle Association and the United States Cycling Federation were approved and signed by both parties on April 13, 1985.

1. Purpose. The United States Cycling Federation (USCF) and the National Off-Road Bicycle Association wish to cooperate in the development of the sport of bicycle racing and to ensure the fair treatment of individuals who participate in the activities of both organizations.

It is understood that each party to this alliance sanctions, or issues race permits to, different forms of bicycle racing not handled by the other. USCF bicycle racing typically permits a high level of technical support to riders while in NORBA bicycle racing no technical support is permitted.

2. Participation. The USCF desires to maintain the welfare of its membership. A benefit of that membership is medical insurance, which is available only in races with a valid USCF race permit. The USCF requires a valid race permit to be in effect at any event in which its licensees compete. The USCF agrees to accept its minimum race permit fee for NORBA events regardless of its prize list. The USCF acknowledges that USCF licensees will abide by NORBA rules at NORBA events.

3. Amateurism. For athletes who claim to be amateurs, both parties to this alliance shall be guided by International Olympic Committee Rule 26 for evaluating and maintaining their amateurism, including IOC Bylaws to that rule, subordinate Technical Regulations of the International Amateur Cycling Federation, and the amateurism regulations of the USCF. The value of prizes in excess of the USCF maximum earned by USCF licensees at NORBA events will be forwarded for processing to the USCF National Office by the NORBA event promoter through the NORBA National Office.

4. Releases. NORBA agrees to indemnify and hold harmless USCF from any and all liability, claims, costs, and expenses, including reasonable attorney's fees, arising directly out of any NORBA sanctioned event or events for which a race permit has been issued by NORBA. NORBA will also require each applicant for a sanction or race permit to sign a statement releasing USCF from these liabilities, claims, and expenses.

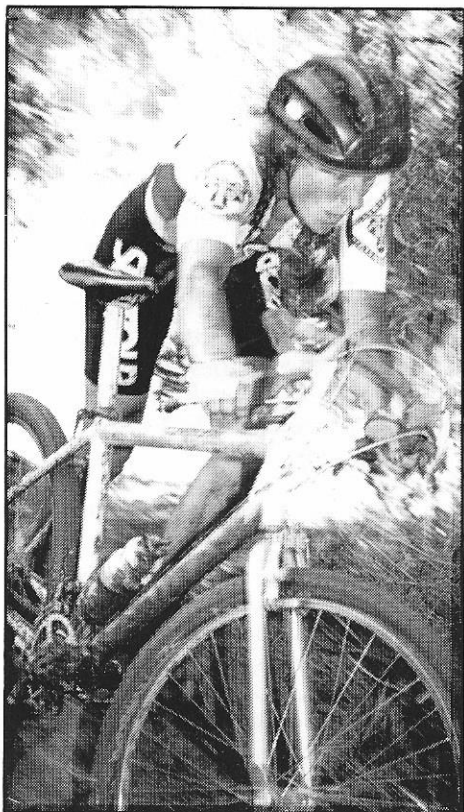
5. Liason. Each party to this alliance

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# RACE WARP

## BIG WINNERS

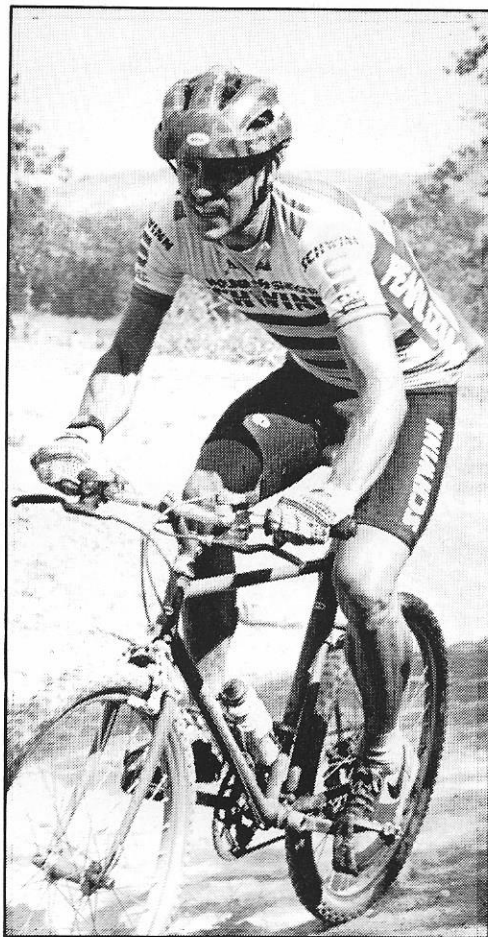
Congrats to **Jacquie Phelan** and **Ned Overend** for their twin killing in winning the WINNING Magazine Super Prestige Trophies. The trophy and associated prizes were awarded on the basis of points garnered in a series of specified races across the country, including the Rockhopper, Pacific States Series, Rocky Mountain Series, and Atlantic States Series; the NORBA National Championships, New England Stage Races. No doubt, the awards took a liberal travel budget to pick up, so perhaps we should also congratulate their sponsors, respectively Sun-tour/Wilderness Trail and Schwinn, for picking up those plane tickets.



photos by Alan Degassis

← Jacquie Phelan

↓ Ned Overend



## JACQUIE AND JOE REPEAT AS CHAMPS

To no one's surprise, **Joe Murray** and **Jacquie Phelan** repeated as National Champions at the NORBA championships held September 29 in Santa Barbara. Joe was challenged considerably harder than Jacquie, taking the lead for the first time on the eighth of the ten laps. Principle rivals **Ned Overend** and **Max Jones** were both out of the action early with mechanical problems, and **Roy Rivers** led most of the distance until caught by Murray.

## TNT TANDEM TERROR

Lake Tahoe in the Sierra is a great place for races, and the locals are enthusiastic. This year has seen a number of events in that area, some of them noteworthy. The TNT is held on a fast course, and the 1985 winners, plural, rode a fat-tire tandem. **Roy Rivers** and **Joe Peterson** blistered the field and beat local **Max Jones** by two and a half minutes.

## ATTACK OF THE WESTERN RINGERS

You can take mountain bikes out of California, but you can't take California out of mountain bikes. Scanning the results of the New England Fat Tire Stage Race, we see only one rider in the top ten who isn't from the Golden State. The one exception is **Max Jones**, and he lives only ten miles across the line in Nevada and breathes California air. According to the P.R. over three hundred riders took part. This is a good argument for keeping the Championships Out West.

## MAMMOTH MEMORIES

Close Finish of the Year goes to **Roy Rivers** and **Joe Murray** at the Plumline 7500 50 mile race. After climbing and dropping 7500 feet over the distance, they arrived at the finish together and had to sprint it out across fifty yards of lawn. Rivers took it by a tire width, his first big win and one of Murray's infrequent losses. Because the big prize was for performance in observed trails, downhill and distance, overall winner **Scot Nicol** took it without a stage win, showcasing his expertise in all phases of the sport. Nicol isn't a big name in racing, but the field included a bunch who are.

## NO HANDS

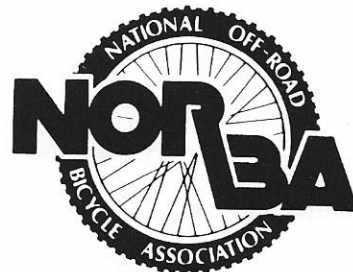
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## WE WUZ FRAMED

Frame designs for mountain bikes exhibit a much wider variety than the designs of their skinnier cousins. Road bike design has a long history, and it has settled into a well defined pattern, a reasonably standard geometry that in custom bikes is modified only slightly to fit individual riders or to perform under special conditions, such as criterium or cyclo-cross. For the purposes of this discussion we'll ignore the radical new bikes designed only for time-trials.

Mountain bike design evolved through the efforts of a number of custom builders, each with his own ideas, terrain, method of construction and riding style. With little to go on in the way of "traditional" geometry, builders have experimented with different sized wheels, a variety of geometries, handlebar designs, forks, and so on ad inFatitem. Imported bikes do not generally show radical treatments because they reflect trends rather than establishing them, and it is inefficient to commit large production runs to untested designs.

.....  
**"With little to go on in the way of 'traditional' geometry, builders have experimented with different sized wheels, a variety of geometries, handlebar designs, forks, and so on..."**

*"Hey! I just said that!"*

.....  
 Road frame builders usually use lugs for construction, but during the infancy of mountain biking the available lugs were unsuitable for experimentation because they were made only for the limited possibilities of road bikes. Lugs come with specific angles which can be modified only slightly, and if the builder wishes to use other angles or sizes of tubing he must find another way of joining the tubing. The two methods commonly used were lugless bronze welding ("brazing") and Tungsten Inert-Gas or T.I.G.-welding. (In the interest of keeping things simple, this discussion ignores the use of

aluminum tubing, since it represents a very small percentage of custom frames. This should not be considered an indictment of the use of aluminum tubing for bicycles.) There are lugs now for mountain bikes in the most popular sizes and angles, which admits a third possibility to the modern builder who is satisfied to work within these modest limitations.

Some of the first American moun-

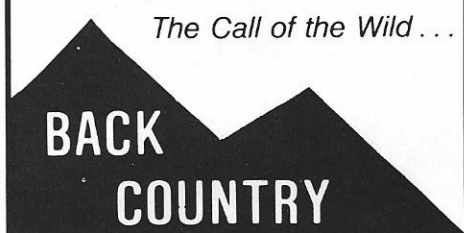
tain bike builders used as a starting point of design various models of old Schwinn balloon frames, one popular model being the legendary "Excelsior X." The Excelsior had a fairly slack head angle of about 68 degrees, 70 degree seat, 12" bottom bracket and overall wheelbase of 44-45". Exact wheelbase was always subject to how hard the forks had been pounded, and had a tendency to get longer. Now American mountain bike builders have designs with head angles from 67-72 degrees, 69-74 degrees seat, all kinds of wheelbases, different fork offsets, non-level top tubes, different sized wheels, you name it and they'll build it. For comparison, typical road frame geometry would be 72-74 degrees head and seat angles, 10 1/2-11" bottom bracket and 39-40" wheelbase.

One reason that mountain bike designers have created such a variety of products is the fact that bicycle performance is impossible to quantify; there is no way to hang numbers on it for comparison. Automobiles and airplanes can be subjected to tests which show exact measures of performance, but the same bicycle may perform differently under different riders because of the variety of riding styles, skill levels or body dimensions. Even measurements can be misleading and there may be subtle differences between bikes that look the same on the tape measure. For example, two bikes with identical wheelbases, bottom bracket heights, head and seat angles, may differ in fork offset or chainstay length and thus feel completely different.

Some builders believe that unique local conditions demand a unique approach. In general this takes the form of a complaint about the "California style" mountain bike, which is the style of most mass produced bikes. Regional adaptations include the preference in Crested Butte for drop handlebars, or Angel Rodriguez' contention that because the trails in his area of Washington are exceptionally tight and littered with logs, a bike must have a 14" bottom bracket and very short wheelbase, making it in effect a trails bike.

Now and then a manufacturer will claim that his new design "climbs better," "has more traction," or is "...is more stable at speed." The implication

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is that you can improve one area without affecting the others, but bicycle design is all a series of trade-offs. Short of introducing different methods of construction or exotic materials, in order to improve performance in one area the designer will usually have to give something up in another. A bike built for lightness may lose something in durability, a bike built for quick climbing may be less stable in descents. For most riders the ideal is a bike that is balanced in its characteristics, one that is adequate for all types of riding. Now, if we could only agree on what that meant...

## THE INNER CIRCLE

There are a few tips that you have to repeat now and then just because they can surprise people who haven't dealt with them before. Such a tip is the Rule of the Inner Chaining.

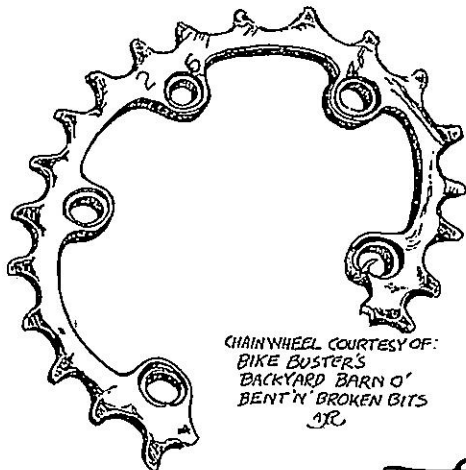
Depending on riding conditions the inner chaining may wear quickly. Riding conditions that would produce this are found in areas with steep hills and lots of mud or sand with an appetite for metal products. The wear can be insignificant and almost invisible to the inexperienced eye, so don't bother

.....  
**"...inching my experienced hand down her seat tube toward her bottom bracket, I noticed that her inner ring had totally lost its composure..."**

*"Wait! I never said that!"*

to inspect. If there is a problem, it will introduce itself. Thus:

You will be grunting up a steep little pitch in your lowest gear, your only company the cheerful chirping of your



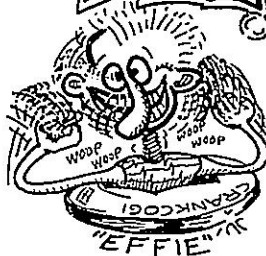
CHAINWHEEL COURTESY OF:  
 BIKE BUSTER'S  
 BACKYARD BARN O'  
 BENT 'N' BROKEN BITS  
 JR.

un-oiled chain, when suddenly the chain will catch on one worn tooth of the small chainring and ride around, jamming into the chainstay and bringing your pedaling and your ride to an abrupt halt. Smart riders will confine this experience to one time per inner chainring, replacing the little beggar on first warning. Others will think it is just a fluke, and it won't happen again.

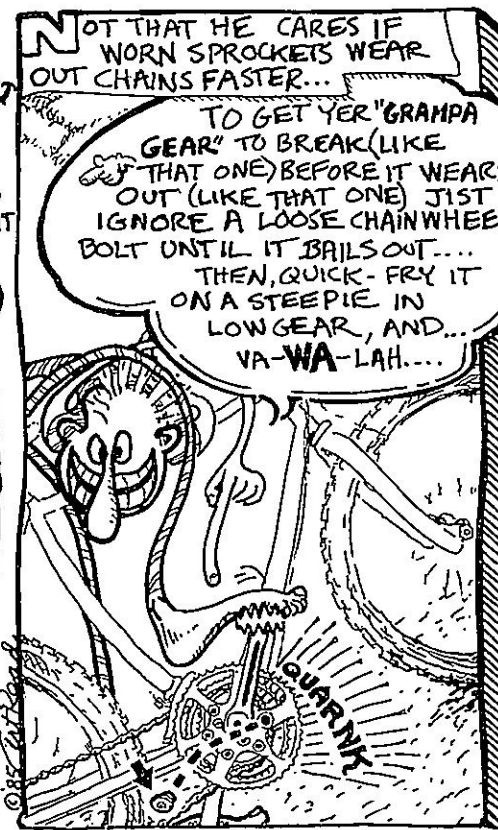
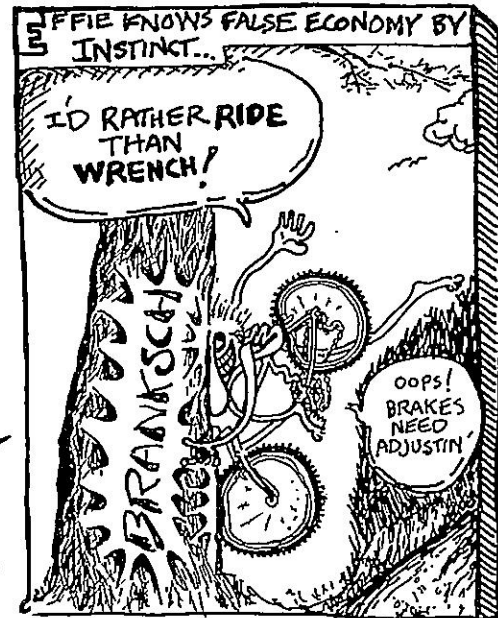
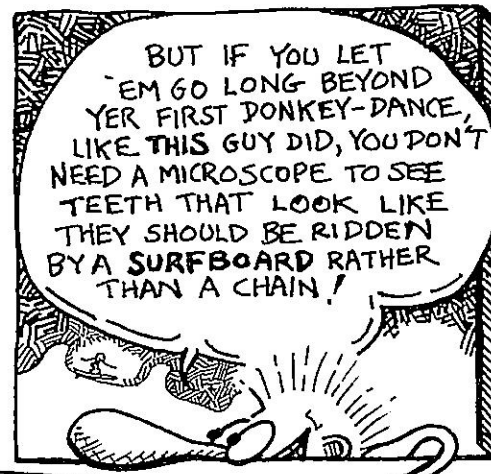
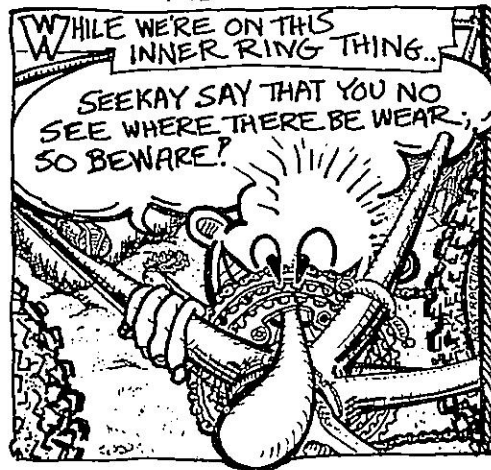


# WRECK TIPS

BY  
**FEWE BAILOUT**



SPENT 'MENTS  
 THAT DIDNT WENT  
 FROM THAT  
 BENT GENT



by Todd Campbell

Up on the sun-seared slickrock domes behind southeastern Utah's town of Moab there is what appears to be the work of road crew highway-striper who succumbed to paint fumes. This Mobius center strip of line rock is called the Moab Slickrock Bike Trail. For mountain bikers willing to hazard the entire 10.3 mile loop, this sensuously contoured rockscape offers the ultimate in precision gruntwork.

Once the exclusive haunt of enduro motorcyclists, it has also seen use by endorphin-crazed skateboarders. Now it seems to have become a sort of initiation rite among the local bikeheads. Laid out somewhat like a rollercoaster, the route is physically gruelling enough to humble the strongest rider. The rider is in perpetual confrontation with kneebusting knob climbs, which get progressively more demanding on waning energy. The cumulative elevation change seems to make the course half again as long as it would if ironed flat.

# Moab Slickrock

Situated 500 feet above and a couple of miles northeast of Moab, the trailhead is a good warm-up ride's distance from Main Street. By following Sand Flats Road past a cemetery, then a dump, and up a switchback, the rider arrives on Bureau of Land Management property, where a sign just off the side of the gravel road states:

## MOAB SLICKROCK BIKE TRAIL

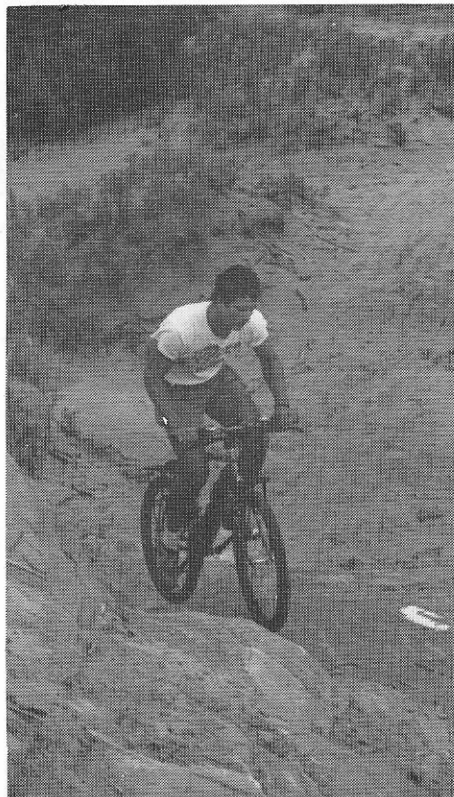
- Experienced riders only
- Do not travel alone
- Please register

Good advice, intended for motorcyclists, it is especially relevant to mountain bikers. It is also imperative to carry repair tools, as well as two or three quarts of water, the nectar of the desert.

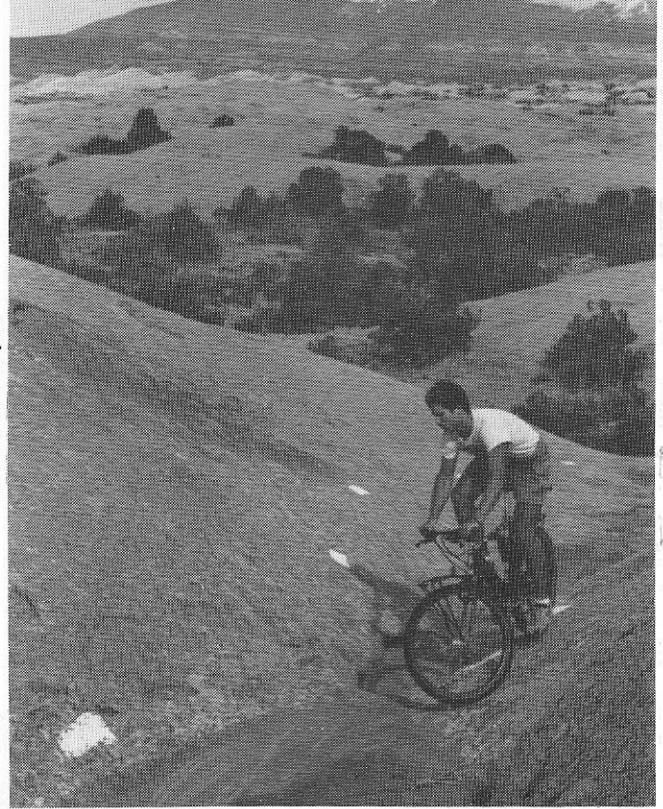
The rumples mesa which the Slickrock Trail winds over is almost entirely an exposed sandstone surface. Its easily eroded (for rock), yet abrasive texture is networked by deepened runoff channels. Some of the more resilient sandstone layers cause draining water to carve gorgeous pothole basins, and some of these natural cisterns support aquatic plant and animal life. In one pool at Shrimp Rock, a designated feature along the

route, there are fairy shrimp which look like a cross between a horseshoe crab and a catfish. You may also see the eyes and digestive tract of a transparent fish, a tiny freeswimming clam, or flies that walk on algae floats like logrollers on a lake full of timber. The grass spears lining the basin make a nice foreground for a view of the nearby Colorado River.

From several vantage points both along the trail and on trail spurs, the Colorado River can be seen meandering along its ancient path. Too thick to



photos by Todd Campbell



drink, too thin to plow, the sediment-laden water, which flows a sheer 500 feet beneath the edge of the trail, is the lifeblood of the Colorado Plateau and of the countless creatures downstream. Other grand overlooks include a view into a sheer chasm called Negro Bill Canyon, and another into the Moab Valley, where both portals of the Colorado can be seen as it bisects the valley. Still another viewpoint offers the opportunity to scamper down to a pothole arch. Visible from any of the trail's higher elevations are the nearly 13,000 foot La Sal Mountains to the south, and the magnificent rock playgrounds of Arches National Park 180 degrees opposite.

But these are only idle amenities, compared with the trail's unique ride. With 2.125" knobbies deflated to as little as 20psi, the slickrock affords total traction. Even these petrified sand dunes, which in places slope steeper than 30 degrees, are ascendable. On the steep climbs the rider's knees nearly hit the handlebars, and the eyes can sight-line the bottom bracket through the head tube. On some climbs slight traverses may be necessary, as a straight route may slow the rider to a track stand. After all, the course was designed for motorcycles. So riders cheat a little, widen the course, and taste the success of perseverance. In a sport which is capable of marring the very land we marvel in, it's refreshing to be able to choose any line without



environmental consequence. The skid marks will dissolve, and the painted lines will peel up and blow away. Only the memories of fun will remain.

Although the panorama of slickrock humps looks as smooth as the various stages of melting ice cream, there are tiny ridges and fractures along its surface, and navigating these correctly is crucial on steep descents. You find yourself nearly sitting on your rear tire, chest on the saddle, arms fully extended, brakes cranked hard. When descending these modest steps a delicate lessening on the brake pull is necessary in order to keep the rear tire on the rock.

The paint can be slippery, especially if you're really grappling for traction. There is always room to avoid a stripe, but if you hit one on a steep climb, the adrenaline rush from spinning in place is usually sufficient to bolt you back onto clean rock. Since the course is a collection of short hills, the rider soon learns how to conserve downhill momentum for the uphill approach immediately following. Similarly, each person finds his own steepness limitations, learning when to traverse and when to portage. Gear changes are kept to a minimum, because it is often hazardous to take a hand away from the vicinity of the brake. The gears most commonly used are the smallest chainring with the two largest freewheel sprockets, along with limited use of the middle chainring.

In a few places along the course the white lines are accented with yellow paint. What resembles a steamrollered fried egg is in fact the signal to exercise caution. Here the trail skirts the side of some steep draws. With a narrow, yawning slot on one side and a wall rising on the other, it is best to feign indifference to fear as you tightrope across in the most cavalier fashion. Ignore the angling treachery and have faith in friction; it's what got you here in the first place.

Yet there are places where friction is not a factor. Occasionally the trail dips into short corridors of deep sand. In these recessed gullies is deposited the sum fragmentation of an immense rock sculpture, channeling an impoverished sandy soil into basins which support sparse plant life; watch for the cacti and yucca if you have to dismount in one of these sand runways. With momentum, cadence, and balance you may be able to spin through to the rock ramp exit. When the sand is moist these runways can be ridden, but when

it is dry and fluffy, three of these stretches can neither be rocked, floated, nor powered through...at least with a bike. Or can they?

The critical moves on the trail occur when the sand gives way to rock. These ramps are steep and ridge-

■ ■ ■  
**"You find yourself nearly sitting on your rear tire, chest on the saddle, arms fully extended, brakes cranked hard."**

■ ■ ■  
ridden, and the already winded rider can only attempt precise lunges from the tractionless sand to climb out. The transition between such diverse elements can pose a hazard as well as a challenge. When knifing into deep sand

from a fast, steep rock slope it is important to keep weight back, or else the sudden loss of momentum will airmail you.

A series of extra-harsh climbs starts about halfway through the course, where the fatigue accumulates, the momentum slows, and the legs cramp. After this section the trail tops out with a view over Moab, then it's an easy ride back to the intersection with the first leg of the trail. By taking the loop in the direction opposite the arrow, you can avoid the most strenuous climbing, but those who are looking for a challenge can take two short spurs out to Colorado River overlooks, which offer some of the most challenging riding on the course.

Riders unsure of ability or strength may want to ride the practice loop at the beginning of the trail. Those seeking a more intimate communion with

Continued on page 23

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AND JERSEY.**

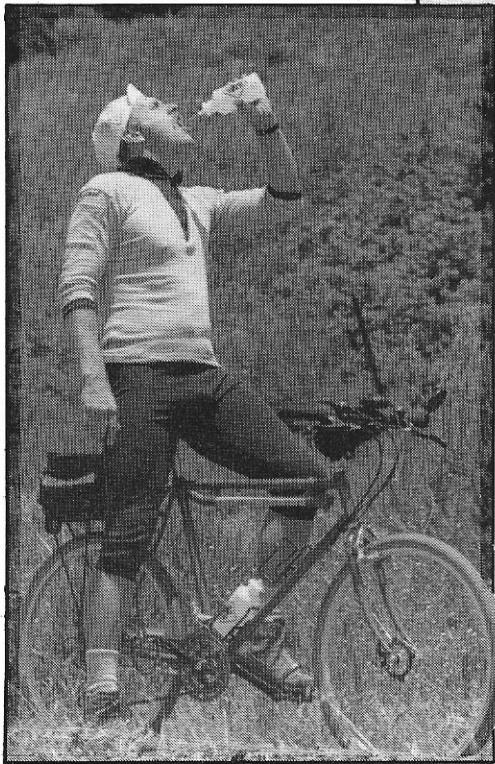
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# NEW PRODUCTS!

## Clothing from Plumline



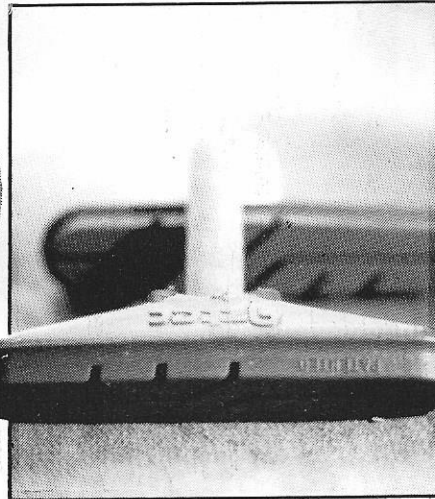
Off-road clothing looks like the next big aftermarket for mountain bikers, and Plumline offers this version of mountain bike jersey with pockets on the 3/4 length sleeves. 100 percent polypropylene, with padded elbows and shoulders. The knickers are 85 percent polypropylene and 15 percent Spandex (tm), with padded knees and polypro crotch liner.

## Mountain Bike Handlebars and Stem

Ohio-based D K Products has a solution for those who find that the factory handlebars on their bikes are too low. The D K handlebar has a 4" rise and 28" width. Material is chrome-moly in the standard 7/8" diameter, and the weight is given as less than eight ounces. Although the handlebar can be used with any stem with a 7/8 clamp, D K also supplies a stem made of aluminum alloy, complete with a threaded hole with adjuster for the front brake cable. Stem sizes are available in both standards, .833" (American) or 22.2 mm (the rest of the world.)



## Aztec Brake Shoes



These brake shoes are one-piece bonded units designed as replacements for most cantilever sets. Although we saw these a year ago, the first models had a problem with durability in the post. This has now been solved, and from personal experience we can say that they give a very solid feel to the brakes.

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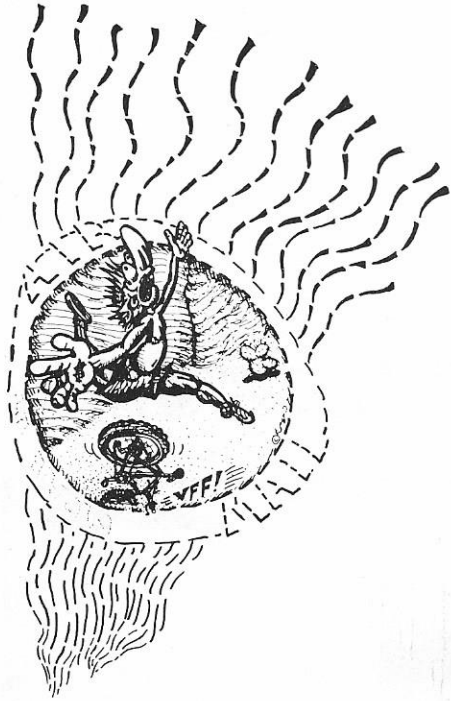
Call or write for brochure

# Moab Slickrock

Continued

the desert canyonlands can try two National Parks, using multitude of jeep trails on these and other unheralded B.L.M. lands in the immediate area. Here the mountain bike's best use is as a satellite vehicle for transport to hiking trailheads where more extensive explorations begin. Those without bikes can rent them at Moab's only bike shop, Rim Cyclery.

“...the sudden loss of momentum will air-mail you.”



Upon the completion of the Slickrock Bike Trail it is a downhill coast all the way back to Moab. The tribulations of the ride are very much worth it, especially in retrospect when discussed over the foam of one of Utah's cold ones. The experience is a well-spent 4-5 hours, an investment in spiritual weath. It tests the design limits of both the mountain bike and the human frame. Your knobbies may be sanded down to nubs, but you'll be riding high.

Todd Campbell works for the Resource Management Division of Canyonlands National Park. He is the author of a study of the impact of mountain bikes in the Santa Ynez mountains of California, entitled "Mountain Bicycles: A Management Dilemma."



photo by Todd Campbell



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**USCF** Continued

shall appoint a liaison to maintain communication with the other party and to call the attention of his or her organization to any problems that may arise under this alliance.

6. **Disagreement.** In case of a disagreement between the parties to this alliance regarding any issue covered by these articles, it shall be submitted to three arbitrators, one ap-

pointed by each party and one by mutual consent.

7. **Adoption.** This alliance shall take effect when approved by the USCF Board of Directors and the NORBA Advisory Committee and when signed by the Presidents of both organizations.

8. **Termination.** This alliance may be terminated by either party with 60 days notice to the other.

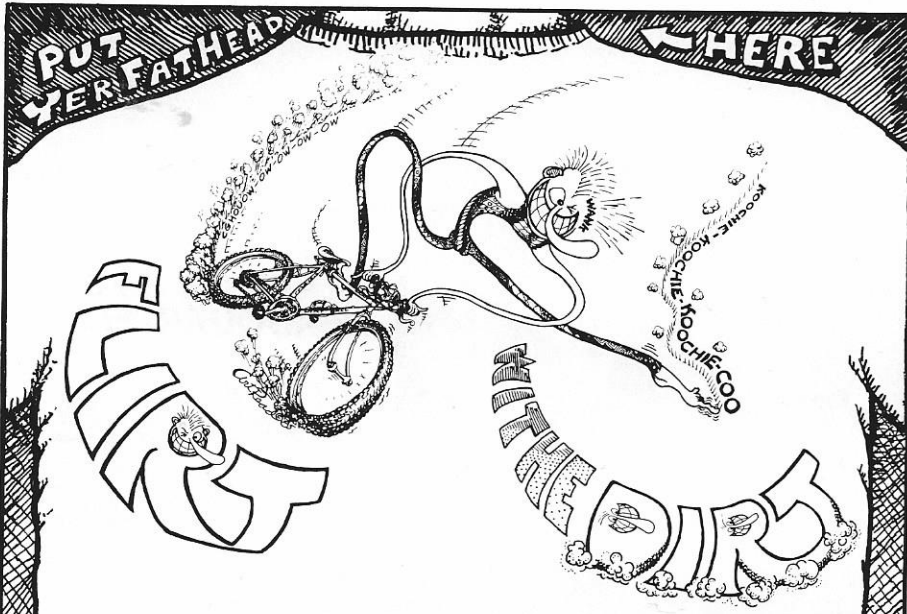




photo by Charles Kelly



High carb warm-ups



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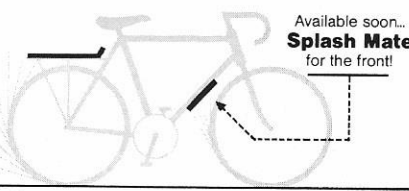
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This is from the lyrics of "The Wheelman's Song," which was composed in 1883, before "Off-Dirt" was invented, and I take it from "The Wheelman," the magazine of The Wheelman, whom you probably know as a group that collects and restores very old bicycles, memorabilia, etc.

**Erik Jensen**

### The Wheelman's Song

Roll, roll, roll  
Over hill and dale  
By the gleaming river,  
Through the winding vale.

Roll, roll, roll  
'Til the day is done.  
Then for home we'll journey  
With the victory won.

# BACK ISSUES

We couldn't possibly take the time to answer everyone individually 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. Price is **\$2.50** per copy. Outside the U.S., add **\$1.50** (U.S.) for each copy.

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(Cyclo-Cross, Ricky Cha, MudPup)

#### May-June 1982

(Resenda-to-the-Sea, Coyote Derby, San Anselmo Race, Ricky Cha, MudPup)



#### July-August 1982

(Race Reports, Carmel Valley Clunker Tour, Here Come the Kids, Ricky Cha MudPup)

#### January-February 1983

(The Wheel Thing, Crested Butte Tour, Las Vegas Show, Tech Tips, Fat Tires Explode in America)



#### March-April 1983

(Gearing, NORBA, Glossary, Balmy the Frog, TechTips, Products)

#### July-August 1983

(Of Bikes and Men...and One Crazy Lady, Brake Review, TechTips, Frames...Why Custom?, MudPup, Shimano Grand Prix, Poetry Corner)



#### January-February 1984

(Crested Butte, Race Results, NORBA vs. USCF, Wreck Tips, TechTips, Race Reports, Trail Etiquette, MudPup)

#### July-August 1984

(Joe Murray Interview, Mudpup, TechTips, Wreck Trips, Whiskeytown Downhill, Tecate to Ensenda, Book Review)



#### September-October 1984

(Flyer Jets to Japan, Mulga Bill's Bicycle, Chequamegon Fat Tire Festival, Get Thee Behind Me, Mudpup, TechTips, To The Top Down Under)

#### November-December 1984

(An Elder of the Off-Road Tribe, Mountain Bikes in Mountain State, Uncommon Options, Point Reyes Update, TechTips, NORBA Nationals)



#### February-March 1985

(Call to Perspective, Poetry Corner, Race Reports, Tecktips, Uncommon Options, FatNotes)

#### April-May 1985

(Fat Tire Touring, Al Farrell, Guest Opinions, Products, Uncommon Options, Punk Bike Enduro, FatNotes)



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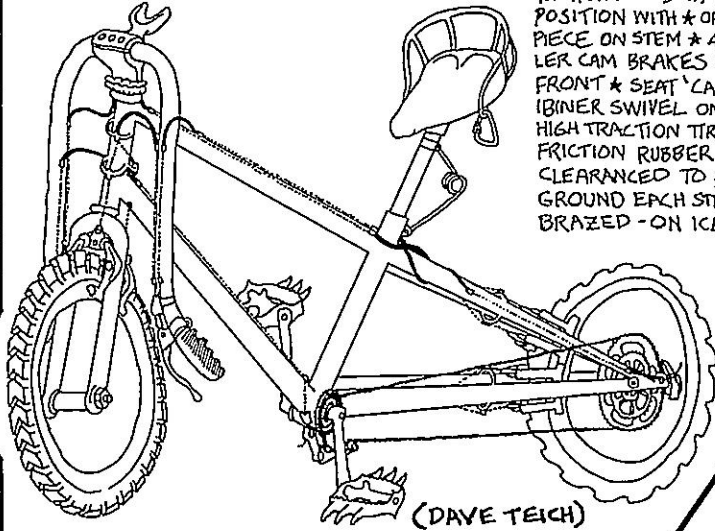


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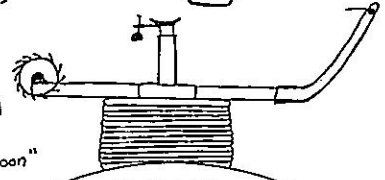
(DAVE TEICH)

5 mode bar mount control

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- cliff jumps
- logs + rocks



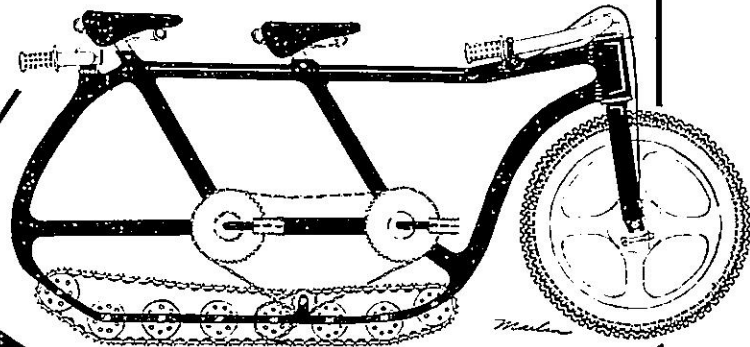
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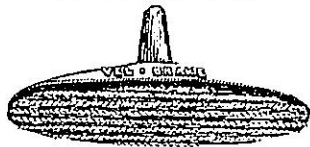
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(= 1000 WORDS)

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(MARK CHANDLER)



GGHAGGH!  
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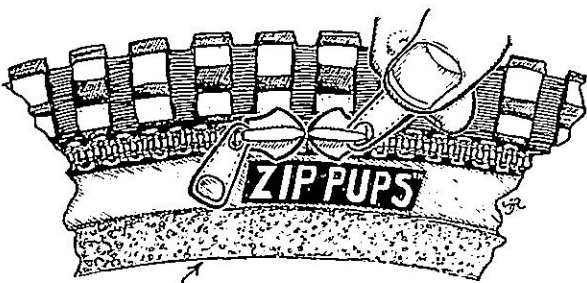
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(DON PALERMINI II)

Don II



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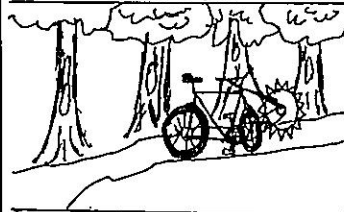
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# SPORT RACIN'



photo by Charles Kelly

by Don Mertle

In a class of 200 sport riders the top places are a realistic goal of only the fittest and fastest. The rest of the motivated mass of dust at the starting line seek some private personal accomplishment: bettering one's past record, beating a friend or enemy, or not being last-one-in. Some take the tourist approach, kicking back at an opportune spot to enjoy the day. Most have a noncategorizable inner emotion that draws them for scattered moments of fulfillment, to be part of it, to be there. Whatever the reasons, people are driven to great lengths to appear at some roadhead and plunk down their cash with the expectation of rewards physical, mental or otherwise.

Once enveloped by the massive start and traffic mayhem the rider is part of a group ritual. Shouts and whoops punctuate the inevitable foulups. With riders three and four abreast, fifty rows deep, a missed shift can be a major traffic jam; a thousand pounds of flesh behind is pounding forward on the assumption that you will be out of the way.

Separation and stratification soon stretch out the pack. The furious

weave and wind ahead, the faltering fall behind. The survivors begin to recognize and acknowledge each other with nods of the head or wave of a hand. Progress through the course becomes a shared journey with the stranger at your level. Private duels, passing in the rough, taking the hard line and making the corner better than the other guy, these are the instants of glory that are there for everyone.

The Rockhopper is one of the older Fat Tire events and is also the largest such race to date. Popular with experts and newcomers alike, the course is well suited for riding in general as well as racing. The long level start and gradual first climb make it easy to get muscles and joints warmed up. The steady climb leads past a scenic lake and changes from a smooth fire road to a rock strewn track that gives the course its name. By this time the riders are more spread out than the tight column that left the parking lot, and now a missed shift doesn't immediately bring curses from a dozen pursuing pedalers who are gridlocked by the hesitation. The rough ride continues downhill to a paved section of the course which climbs a little and winds behind the hill

that is the final obstacle.

After crossing the barrier from the paved road to the dirt, the race continues up a narrow trail into an area that seems to have been thrashed by a bulldozer or logging. The powdery dust is four to twelve inches deep, and this soft footing eats up dwindling energy as the tires slip, wallow and plow through. The grit kicked up in the process quickly coats the chain. As I grind along the 14th mile is a welcome signpost.

I reason that there should only be a mile or so of hard uphill before the five mile downhill to the finish. The last ascent is the steepest and I push ahead on foot, passing riders steadily. Oxygen debt dizzy, muscles stiff with lactic acid, now is my chance to use riding skill instead of strength of wind to pass a few more. One wild off-the-trail pass launches me off my rig momentarily but I jump back before losing a place. As the trail turns to road again I have some of my wind back and start pushing hard on my big chainring. On the final flat to the finish one rider is in view. I pump hard to pass in high gear, but I can't maintain the sprint and downshift two notches to keep my cadence. I cross the line about 45 minutes better than last year, although most of the improvement is due to the absence of the flat tires that plagued me before. Other riders rated the dust section as a 5-10 minute handicap, and starting in the back row is another 5-10 minutes as the leaders are a quarter mile up the road before the back row moves at all and must be twice that far before the tail end gets up to speed.

The most certain reward in an off-road race is the experience. It is the University of Practical Bicycling if you want a detailed lesson about every component on your bike, whether it works, how long it lasts, and what the alternatives are. A race is a chance to see what everyone else is riding, what is good and what is junk. If you want to feel every part of your body and know how much you can take and what is right for you, a race will test you on every level. Races are a meeting ground where the newly initiated can meet the seasoned masters. Mountain bike races are cultural events for those who recognize the importance of the practical designs that are evolving; the evolution of production bicycles that rival hand-made ones may grow out of competition. If you want to be in on the action, try a race. Everyone else is already there.

