

**Max Hirshberg's  
Ride**

by  
Max R. Hirshberg

# MY BICYCLE TRIP DOWN THE YUKON

In January 1900, I secured a dog team and an outfit to go over the ice, down the Yukon from Dawson to Nome. I sold my share in a roadhouse and my mining claims in Dawson. My partner, Hank West, did not believe the reports about the gold strike in Nome were authentic. I did, so we parted.

In Dawson I got my outfit and dog team, and I stayed at the Green Tree Hotel. About midnight I was awakened by the smell of smoke; the hotel was on fire. I jumped into my clothes and rushed outside. Hundreds of people had formed a bucket line from the Yukon River to the hotel. I joined the line, and we passed buckets of water to quench the fire and to wet blankets on adjoining buildings. The fire department was helpless because the fire hose froze in the extreme cold. Every available man joined the bucket line, but the building burned to the ground.

Broken boards were scattered over the snow. It was pitch dark and I stumbled on a board that contained a rusty nail. I went to the hospital with blood poisoning. It was March before I was up and around again, too late to get to Nome by dog team. With the spring thaw under way, the Yukon would be unfit for travel on the ice. I knew the news of the gold strike at Nome would bring thousands of people from the States to Nome by boat, so I had to get there quickly. I decided to travel by bicycle. I had been an expert bicycle rider for years, and I figured I could reach Nome before the Yukon became unfit for travel.

Many dog teams, driven in single file, had preceded me down the river, and had made a hard trail about two inches wide where the sled runners cut deep troughs in the snow. I rode this narrow road, stopping at Indian villages or roadhouses.

The day I left Dawson, March 2, 1900, was clear and crisp, thirty degrees below zero. I was dressed in a flannel shirt, heavy fleece-lined overalls, a heavy mackinaw coat, a drill parka, two pairs of heavy woolen socks and felt high-top shoes, a fur cap that I pulled down over my ears, a fur nosepiece, plus fur gauntlet gloves.

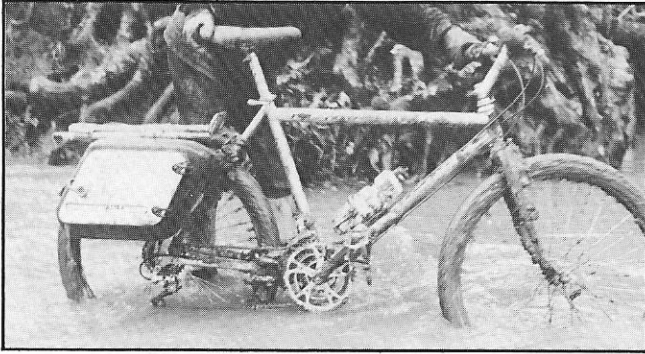
On the handlebars of the bicycle I strapped a large fur robe. Fastened to the springs, back of the seat, was a canvas sack containing a heavy shirt, socks, underwear, a diary in waterproof covering, pencils, and several blocks of sulphur matches. In my pockets I carried a penknife and a watch. My poke held gold dust worth \$1500 and my purse contained gold and silver coins. Next to my skin around my waist I carried a belt with \$20 gold pieces that had been stitched into it by my aunt in Youngstown, Ohio, before I had left to go to the Klondike.

A number of friends, including my old partner, Hank West, waved goodbye.

The road out of Dawson was broad and well packed, the air was cold and exhilarating, and the sky was clear and calm. There were numerous dog teams headed for Forty Mile, Circle City, and points farther down the Yukon. Whenever

**Editor's note:** The following is reprinted with permission from ALASKA Magazine. The author, Max R. Hirshberg, wrote the story down in the late fifties. He died in 1964, and is as far as we know, the only person to have ridden a bicycle down the Yukon River.

# REVIEW



Dan Woodward

*The Astra Pannier, in its element.*

they are extremely water tight with a seal around the access hatch. The clasp feature is a sturdy stainless steel structure that hooks the side rail of the pack. The lower fastening is accomplished by a rubber strap and hook.

While the packs sway and bounce during extreme pounding, I was only able to launch the packs at speeds approaching competition velocities. A backup strap isn't a bad idea.

The rubber strap that loops over a hook for closure was adequate to resist vibration or shaking, but it is in a perfect position to be brushed open by a leg or a bush while pushing. A more secure strap here would also help keep out scavenging raccoons around the campsite. Although reasonably rugged and utilitarian, the full-dress-Harley-type bags add plenty of style. Capacity is 2600 cubic inches.

Astro Nautics Company, Inc.  
1075 Memorex Drive  
Santa Clara, CA 95050



**Madden Roughriders**

The Madden Roughriders are the



Don Merite

*The Mega-Mid floorless tent (l.) with its predecessor (r.) in a literal field test.*

latest version of a respected off-road bag. Madden's Rob Lewis claims that the Cordura he uses is less prone to unravelling at the seams than ballistics cloth, which was also considered. The bags are attached by hooks and rubber straps, a fairly typical arrangement, but it is reinforced by an added safety strap which keeps the bags from getting away even when the primary hooks bounce off or are improperly secured. The safety strap is a little awkward to reach, but it prevents extra stops to refasten stray saddlebags.

The top rear section doubles as a daypack with stowaway shoulder straps, a bonus for basecamp operations deep in the wilds. The long zipper down the side of the bag simplifies groping into the depths of one's provisions; the large pockets on the rear bags will hold large fuel bottles or extra water bottles accessably and separate from other gear.

Madden USA  
2400 Central Avenue  
Boulder CO 80301

## Patagonia Mega-Mid Floorless Tent

The new, larger Patagonia floorless Mega-Mid has an adjustable length pole for quick setups. It's not only bigger, but also easier to use than the original on the right. The curved cut of the panel seams ignores big winds, and the whole kaboodle knocks down to a small and lightweight package.

Our field tester documents its functionality thusly: "You don't need to worry about tracking mud inside--you just take your shoes off before you put your feet on the ground cloth."

Chouinard Equipment  
245 W. Santa Clara P.O.Box 90  
Ventura CA 93002

## Sportscovers

We recently checked out one of those "Timbercache" devices, a combination bike cover/rain poncho, ground cloth, and so on for a total of thirteen uses according to the manufacturer. Some of the possible uses require a partial suspension of credibility; for example, while it is listed

*Continued on next page*



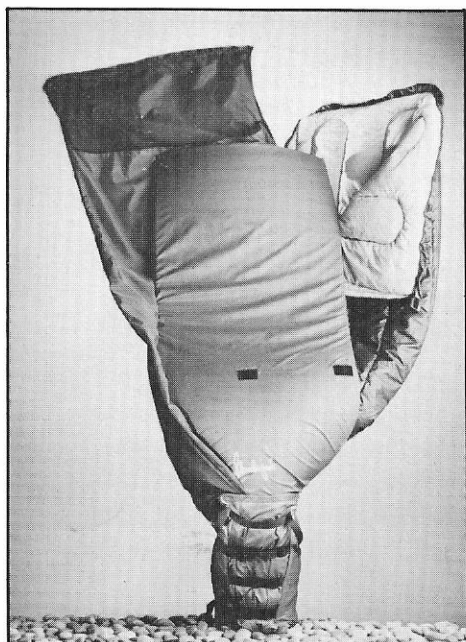
*Above All Else...*

## Be Tenacious!

Wherever you go, Phil's frame-mounted green oil is there when you need it. Available now at your local bike shop.

**Phil Wood & Co.**

153 West Julian St. • San Jose, CA 95110  
Phone: (408) 298-1540



## Slumberjack Tight Wad™

This unique compression stuff bag is shown disgorging Slumberjack's lightweight Cocoon sleeping bag, bivouac protective cover and Happy Back™ Pad. When repacked and compressed, it makes for a tidy package that really knows how to get small. Kind of like a camping hide-a-bed that comes in its own lace-up corset.

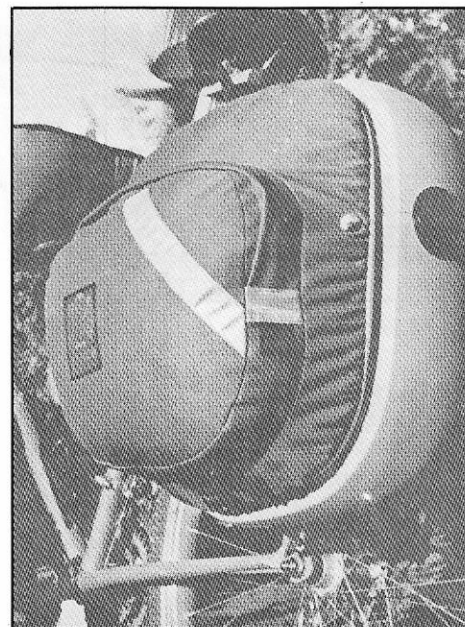
Slumberjack  
P.O. Box 31405, 2103 Humboldt St.  
L.A. CA 90031-0405



## Front Mountain Rack

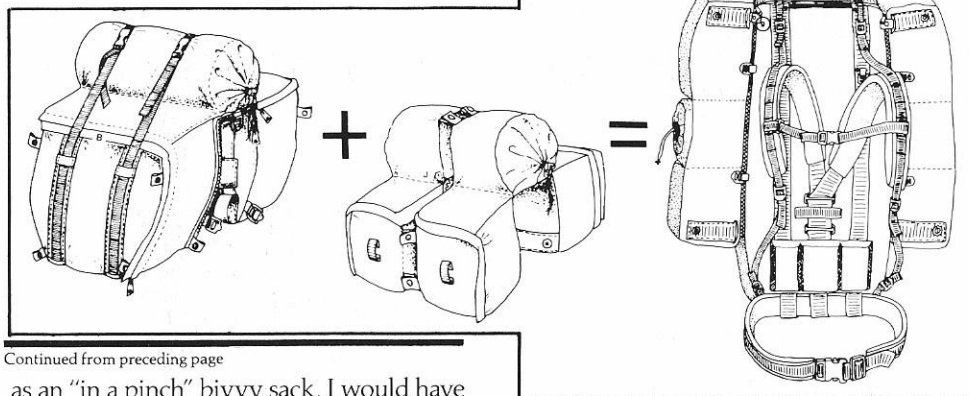
The new front rack from Blackburn Design doesn't need a fork crown hole and clears any brake mechanism.

Blackburn Design  
75 Crisich Ln  
Campbell CA 95008



These polyethylene vessels with fabric exteriors have outside pockets for modular access.

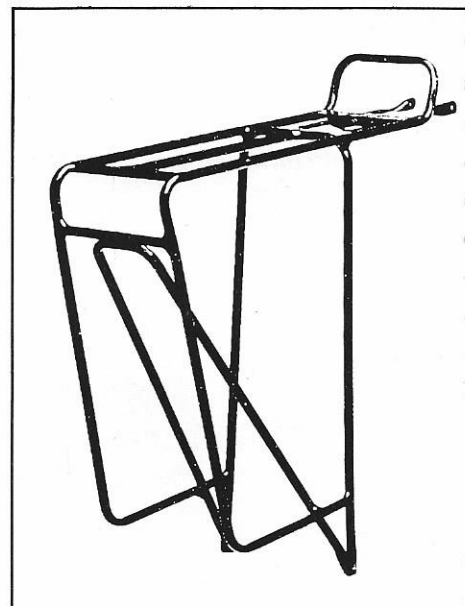
Kanuk  
134 W. 32nd Room 602  
N.Y. NY 10001



## Convertible Pannier/Backpack

This idea is not exactly original, since several designs of the pannier/backpack concept have hit the market in past years. Despite the soundness of the idea, none of the previous efforts is making waves yet; here's the latest version, from Richard Jones Convertible Backpacks of Fort Collins, Colorado.

Convertible Backpacks  
Box 919  
Ft. Collins CO 80522-0919



## Cannondale Rear Rack

The extra rear strut on the Cannondale rear rack keeps stray packs out of the spokes.

Cannondale Corp.  
Dept. B2, 9 Brookside Place  
Georgetown, CT 06829

Continued from preceding page

as an "in a pinch" bivvy sack, I would have a hard time getting my entire body into it. The other obvious problem with thirteen different uses is that you can only do one at a time; if you're using it for a ground cloth, you can't cover the bike with it.

If you try to design a product that does a lot of things adequately, it probably won't do anything really well. Still, the Timbercache makes an adequate rain poncho and a better ground cloth. It's handy on a long trip to have some kind of waterproof cloth, but we're not sure that a tarp doesn't make more sense.

address: see page 24



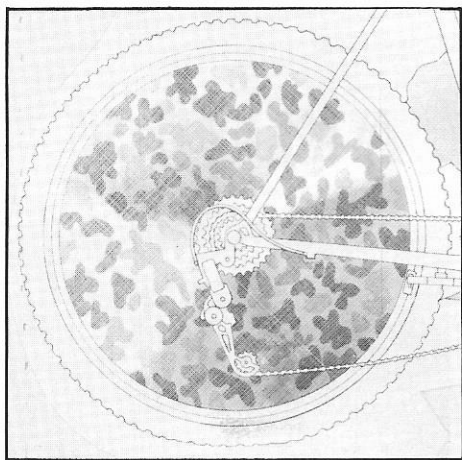
# PRODUCT REVIEW



## Fat Ware Frame Pads

The commonly accepted method of making a bicycle easy to carry is to place a webbing sling in the frame angle at the seat cluster, either with braze-on fastenings or with Velcro and a stiffener, as in the Jungle Pad or the Specialized pad. Fine, if you're close to six feet tall. But the sling doesn't work as well with smaller frames, because the space between the strap and the bottle cage is reduced in some cases to about two inches, too small for even a skinny arm. The Fat Ware product is two pads, loosely connected to keep them in position, that fit on the top and seat tubes and don't slip around. Simple. Elegant. It works. FIND THAT TRAIL

Fat Ware  
Rumney Survivals  
P.O. Box 31  
Rumney NH 03266



## UNI Wheel Covers

When I first saw these on a bike at the Long Beach bike show I had to have them. UNI discs are cloth covers that attach to the spokes of a wheel and simulate the aerodynamic wheels used by fanatic

skinny-tire racers.

Since I installed the camo-discs I have become quite an object of attention. Maybe they don't make me any faster, but they sure make me popular. There is a practical purpose to the covers aside from reducing wind drag .002%; the company claims they keep you from getting sticks jammed in the spokes. I guess that's true, but it hasn't been much of a problem to date.

Although the manufacturer recommends against it, I tried a matched set, front and rear. It didn't take me long to understand why they aren't a good idea on the front wheel. All of a sudden you're driving a glider, and every gust of wind sends you in a new direction. No matter how cool it looks, you only want UNI discs on the rear.

Postscript: As I ambled down the street on my mountain bike with disc rear wheel, a pretty girl in full roadrace drag cycled up. "Do those really help you?" she said, indicating the disc.

"Sure. They got you to talk to me."

UNI  
3815 S.W. Murray  
Beaverton OR 97005

## Toe Flips

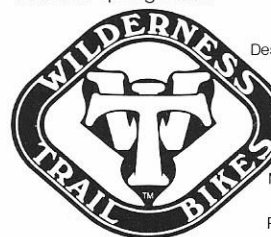
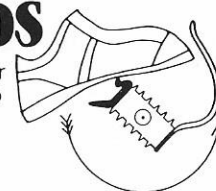
Reviewed by  
Don Mertle

One of the sacred decisions a Fat Tire rider must contemplate is whether or not to use toe clips and straps. Lots of people can't hack the straps, but they were my choice from the start. Clips and straps are supposed to give more muscles the chance to participate in the chain gang, but I think energy saved not fumbling for the

Continued on next page

## NO HANDS

TOE FLIPS rotate your pedal for easy toe clip entry, every time. Installs in seconds. Durable spring steel.



Designed by and available only from WTB. Send \$9.95 plus \$1.00 for postage and handling to: Toe Flips, Mountain Transport, Inc. P.O. Box 362, Point Reyes, CA 94956

# NEW PRODUCTS!



## The Original Quick Release CamCover

The CamCover helps keep those ex-

posed mechanisms clean and greasy-- by putting clothes on 'em. Whips right off for easy tire repairs or cleaning.

C&K Mfg.  
Box 82  
San Anselmo CA 94960



## Fisher Tire

These large profile tires follow the More Air-Less Rubber School of Design.

Fisher MountainBikes  
1421 Francisco Blvd  
San Rafael CA 94901



Continued from preceding page

pedals is at least as important as the upstroke power. For me the most important function that the clips perform is keeping the bike from losing contact with my feet while I am bounding down a crucial stone staircase. Many an abrupt and unforeseen launch has caused a rider to lose more than his footing. Nothing is worse than getting caught between the bike and the ground.

Clips and straps were designed for the road, so it's no surprise many off-road riders have problems and reject them for use in the dirt. Boots and shoes not intended for cycling are common Fat-Tire footwear, and these contribute to problems encountered in penetrating the strap zone. In adverse situations including mud, steep hills, darkness, competitive frenzy or bikes loaded with touring gear, toeclip function is critical. When things aren't working it seems that anything would help, but I refuse to put those little counterweights on my trick aluminum bike, and greasing my shoes seems extreme.

Toe Flips are the ticket to easier insertion of toe to strap. I liked the idea, so I took the opportunity to see if they would ease that transition from pushing to hopping into smooth riding. I tried them in the most trying ways, on some steep local climbs where there is just enough traction

# MOUNTAIN BIKING... ALASKA STYLE!

by  
Dan Bull

One of the benefits of living in Alaska is the right to be "Johnny-come-lately." We have the unique privilege and position of watching the sporting world's fads, fashions and farces bombard the "lower 48" market. Some make it, others don't. We on the northern frontier watch with patient intensity. "Do I need that \$99 pair of Air Jordans? Is that polypropylene and Goretex clothing worth its weight in gold? Is an aluminum frame mountain bike worth the additional expense?"

Don't get us wrong. With today's satellite communications technology, we heard of the space shuttle tragedy exactly when you did. We watched the Chicago Bears do it to the New England Patriots on *live* television. In fact, our store owners and pharmacists probably pulled their Extra-Strength Tylenol off the shelves before yours did!

The point is this: we are not behind the times, but we have a right to be.

A group of seven mountain biking enthusiasts sat around, bouncing off each other their views of what a mountain biking organization should be. Even though it was mid-January and we were experiencing another mild winter, we all had extreme cases of cabin fever. Our winters in Anchorage are not super cold; they are so blasted long!

## ALASKA STYLE!

continued on page 35

to entice one to try and mount, but where the road is too steep to permit any false starts. The sticky clay of Blue Ridge in Solano County was next, then the rain and mud of a drizzling Pine Mountain ride in Marin. The skeptics wondered about the absence of my usual fumbling. The final Word is: yes, they make it easier to get into the clips (simple stainless stampings slide slickly so sporting cyclists save sweat). Designer Charlie Cunningham suggests another modification, moving the strap loop on the clip forward about 1/2" or so and refastening it for a more open strap.

Wilderness Trail Bikes  
Mountain Transport  
P.O.Box 362  
Point Reyes CA 94956  
Sportscovers  
P.O.Box 729  
Breckenridge CO 80424



### MARIN'S MOUNTAIN BIKE HEADQUARTERS

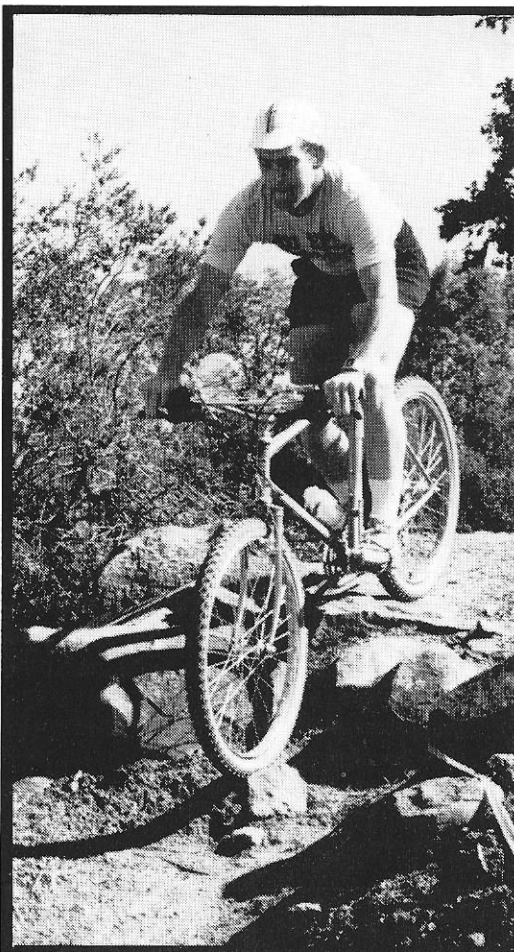
## Village Peddler

featuring:  
RITCHEY ASCENT  
CANNONDALE  
ROSS ★ SEKAI  
SPECIALIZED  
CYCLE PRO ★ K.H.S.  
DIAMOND BACK  
MONGOOSE

plus  
**CRUISERS**  
Prices start at \$199.



1141 Magnolia  
Larkspur, Calif.  
(415) 461-3091

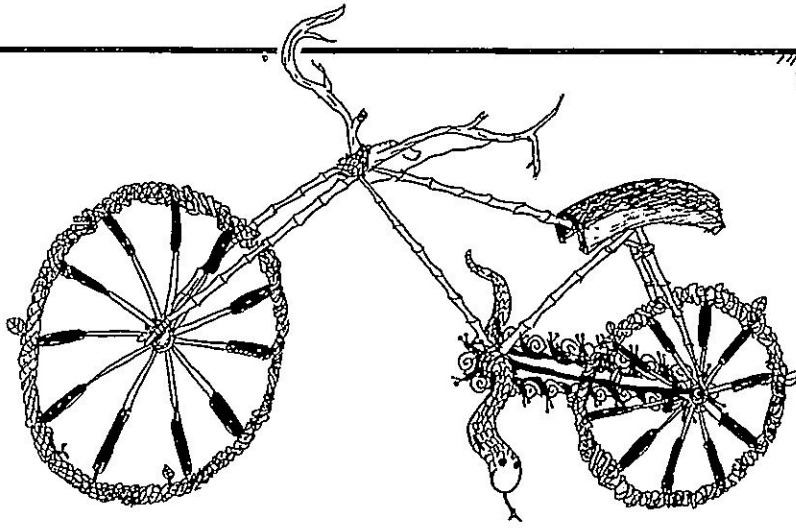


## World's finest touring packs

If you're serious about touring  
there is only one choice,  
NEEDLE WORKS, off-road and on.

For information on the panniers  
that bicycling magazine features  
and test comparisons have rated  
as "the finest in the world", "the  
Rolls Royce of bikepacks" and "in  
a class by themselves" write:

Needle Works  
769 Monroe St.  
Eugene, OR 97402



Ya say a gator gotcher goat (Mountain or cart-pullin') and yer schlogged in a bog? Jist build y'self a swampbike and ride out. Made with 100 percent re-cycled swamp stuff. (Snake and snail training manuals, extra).

-from Charlie Read

-from Don Palermini II

## SUBTOUR

ALL TERRAIN

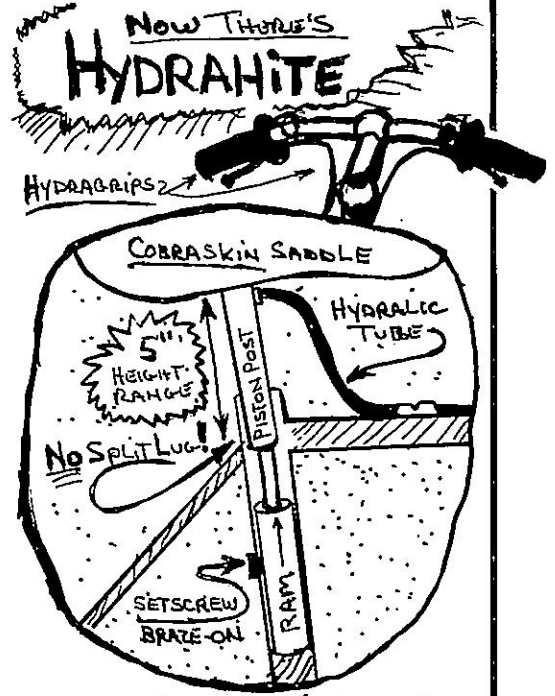
## UNDER-WATER

COMPONENT GROUP INCLUDES:

- 2 LEAD KNOBBIE
- TIRES 26x2.0 (27lbs)
- RACK MOUNT AIR
- TANK AND REGULATOR
- MASK OPTIONAL
- BULL MOOSE
- SHARK REPELANT



ALL THIS FOR \$ ONLY 6400<sup>00</sup>



1. Push the pressure release button to go down.
  2. Twist the hydra grips to pump you back up.
- from Tom Payne

# UNCOMMON OPTIONS

## Reader Response

## NEW ALL-TERRAIN BEAR TRAP

1/2 & 9/16 PEDALS

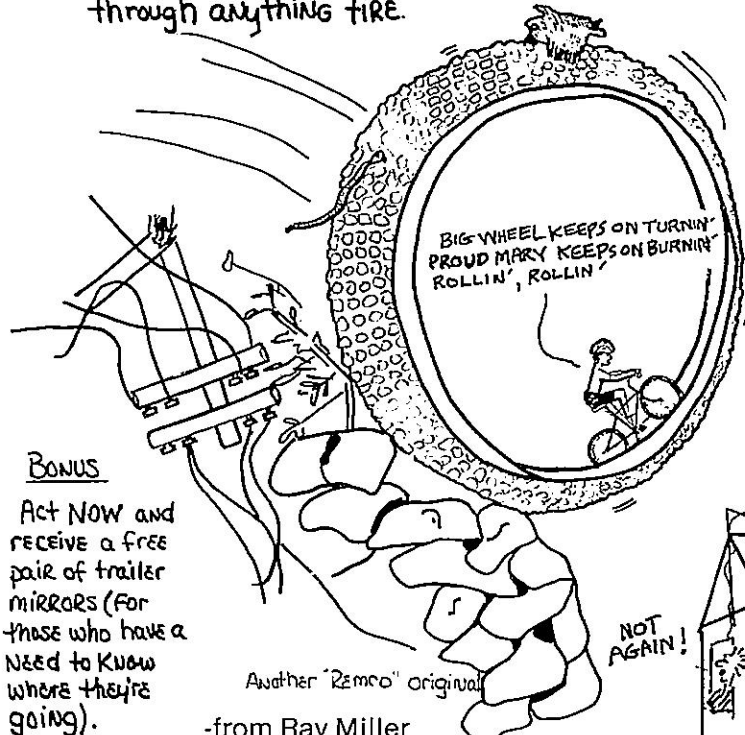


A HIGH TENSION SPRING HAS ENOUGH POWER TO CLAMP ANY FOOT.

B 1/4 INCH TEETH DIG INTO ANYTHING FOR A SURE HOLD.

C ELIMINATES THE NEED FOR EXPENSIVE ALL-TERRAIN SHOES - TRY EM TODAY AND YOU'LL NEVER SET FOOT ON A DIFFERENT PAIR.

## MEGA-KNOBBY - The go anywhere through anything tire.



3 SIZES  
26' x 2.125'  
26' x 1.75'  
AND  
COMING SOON  
20' x 1.75' for  
you BMX'ers

Also ask about our complete line of Mega-Knobby storage hangers.

Another "Remco" original

-from Ray Miller

# Leaping Lizard Freefall Championship

*The steepest, most technical downhill race in the World!*

by  
Teo Anderson

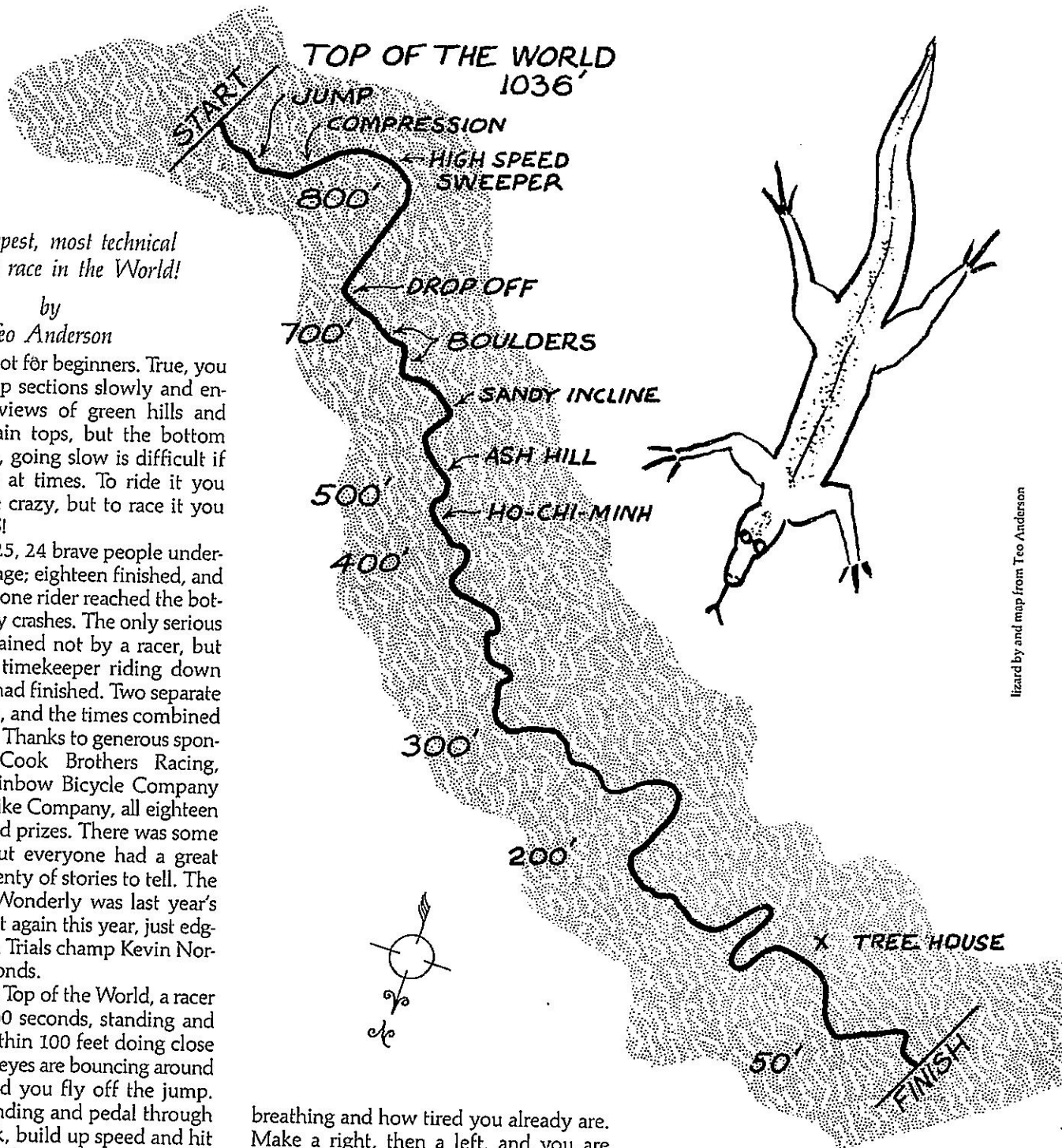
This race is not for beginners. True, you can ride the top sections slowly and enjoy beautiful views of green hills and snowy mountain tops, but the bottom half is so steep, going slow is difficult if not impossible at times. To ride it you must be a little crazy, but to race it you must be NUTS!

On January 25, 24 brave people undertook the challenge; eighteen finished, and of that number one rider reached the bottom without any crashes. The only serious injury was sustained not by a racer, but by the official timekeeper riding down after everyone had finished. Two separate runs were made, and the times combined for a total score. Thanks to generous sponsorship from Cook Brothers Racing, RADS Ltd., Rainbow Bicycle Company and the Irvine Bike Company, all eighteen finishers received prizes. There was some missing skin, but everyone had a great time and had plenty of stories to tell. The amazing Dave Wonderly was last year's winner and did it again this year, just edging out NORBA Trials champ Kevin Norton by two seconds.

Starting at the Top of the World, a racer released every 60 seconds, standing and cranking and within 100 feet doing close to 40 mph. Your eyes are bouncing around in your head and you fly off the jump. Make a clean landing and pedal through a little sand, tuck, build up speed and hit the compression. Using just enough brakes you make it through the high speed sweeper, and with your eyes watering, zero in on a six-inch wide line that takes you straight to the dropoff. Lock your rear brake, throw the bike sideways, and slow from 40 mph to almost nothing in fifteen feet. With brakes locked you slide down the dropoff and let off the brakes just in time to slam up and down ten-foot sandstone boulders and hit the narrow sandy trail below. The trail turns into a slight incline and you realize how hard you are

breathing and how tired you already are. Make a right, then a left, and you are sliding down the ash hill. Bear to the right, then a sudden left off the trail and into the bushes. The locals call this trail the Ho-Chi-Minh. Now survival, not speed becomes the rule. Most of the Ho-Chi-Minh is so steep your rear brake is locked and you're sliding around turn after turn, weighting and unweighting like a skier in deep powder. Careening down a tunnel with bushes and branches grabbing at your handlebars and steep, off-camber switchbacks begging your front tire to slide over the edge, you arrive at

the treehouse. This is where the spectators are, because this is where the spectacular crashes occur. Take the right by the treehouse and slide all the way around the banked left by the finish if you can make it. I made it, but I'm having a difficult time keeping my bloody elbows off the table as I write.



lizard by and map from Teo Anderson

# GLOSSARY

We don't repeat ourselves very often. Get that? We don't repeat ourselves very often. But some articles are too good to relegate to history, so we have dragged this one from the obscurity it probably deserves, dusted it off, added a few ideas to it, and now we're trying to pass it off as originality. This piece first ran in March-April 1983. After all, you can't plagiarize yourself, can you?

Every sport or activity develops its own slang, and Fat Tire Flying is no exception. We could quit there, because the statement stands by itself, but any reader of specialty magazines knows what is coming next: The Glossary. In our typical meddlesome way we have gathered some of the expressions inspired by clunking (an intransitive verb meaning [in the infinitive form] "to ride a Fat Tire bike on poor road surfaces") into something that isn't an article although it resembles one.

**Airborne:** *adjective*; good or bad maneuver, depending on whether performed with or without the bike.

**ATB:** *noun*; a bike that looks like a mountain bike, but is owned by a yuppie. The origin of the initials is obscure.

**Bail Out:** *intransitive verb*; 1. to give up on the thought of ever again controlling the machine; 2. to empty boots and/or backpack after unsuccessful stream crossing; 3. to be released from temporary incarceration following a minor infraction such as I didn't even see the "No Trespassing" sign.

**Bio-Rad:** *adjective*; bionically radical.

**Boge** (bogue): *adjective* (from root bogus); Not as advertised, as in, "Hey, this (brand name) derailleur (brake, wheel, tire) is boge..."

**Brand X:** *noun*; any type of bike other than your own. This noun has been slightly compromised since a small manufacturer has designated his bike "Brand X."

**Bullmoose Bars:** *noun* (pl.); watering holes and social gathering establishments for the Bullmoose, a large ungulate living in the Northern U.S. and Canada. If you find yourself in one of these places, do not suggest to a bullmoose that his mother is an ungulate or even a ruminant, as they have limited vocabularies and short tempers.

**Cha Mon:** *interjection*; all-purpose greeting or departing statement, as in "Cha, mon."

**Clunk** (see introduction): *intransitive verb*; to ride a bike in the hills.

**Clunk:** *noun*; refers to sound made by any number of mechanical difficulties, e.g. derailleur falling off, wheel collapsing, etc.

**Clunker:** *noun*; a Fat Tire bike usually composed of surviving fragments of three old one-speeds and two ten-speeds.

**Clunquer, clunquette:** *nouns*; from the French, meaning one who clunques.

**Cross-Up:** *transitive verb*; 1. to steer in the opposite direction of the turn while sliding; 2. to promise to meet the gang at eleven at the bike shop, then show up an hour late and stand on the wrong corner.

**Cruisen:** *adjective*; describes a state of Fat Tire euphoria, usually used with the word "be," as in "always be cruisen."

**Dirt:** *noun*; the surface of most good roads. Has been shown in many instances to be stronger than bikes.

**Face Plant:** *noun*; 1. any cycling maneuver that ends up looking like an attempt to hypnotize an earthworm; 2. any vegetation growing between chin and hairline.

**Eat It:** *intransitive verb*; to make a sudden and close inspection of the road surface, and use the opportunity to have lunch.

**Flat Tire:** *noun*; an incredible inconvenience because you probably left your pump home.

**Fork:** *noun*; 1. part of the bicycle holding the front wheel; 2.

a place where two roads join and that must be where we got lost.  
**Gnarly** (knarly, narly, etc.): *adjective*; describes a situation so difficult that it must be fun.

**Granny Gear:** *noun*; knitting paraphernalia.

**Jungle-Cross:** *noun*; any route so overgrown that it requires carrying the bike while hacking a trail. See "gnarly."

**Mulch:** *transitive verb*; to restore any bicycle component to the elemental state it occupied just before the final manufacturing step; "I mulched my derailleur."

**Nose-Wheelie:** *noun*; see "wheelie;" precursor to "face plant."

**Rad:** *adjective*; when uttered by a bicyclist it means "exciting;" when uttered by an atomic scientist it means "head for the hills."

**Sideways:** *adjective*; defines one of the outer limits of Fat Tire fun, the good ol' white-knuckle cornering technique.

**Single Track:** *noun*; 1. a narrow trail; 2. the mental processes of a Fat Tire rider.

**Skinny-Tired:** *adjective*; defines an exhausted victim of anorexia.



Charles Kelly

**Tire:** *intransitive verb*; to feel exhausted before a ride is even half over.

**Tire:** *noun*; the interface between the bicycle and the road. Usually used with the adjective "fat."

**Tire pinch:** *noun*; a five-finger discount on new knobs.

**Traction:** *noun*; 1. the amount of adhesion between tire and road; 2. treatment for some sporting injuries.

**Transpo:** *noun*; method of travel such as a "clunker."

**Wheelie:** *noun*; a maneuver with few practical applications.

## FISHER MOUNTAINBIKES

### 1986 MT. TAM

We've taken the roughness out of off-road riding.

American hand-crafted and fillet brazed. Tange Prestige tubing.

For specifications on our complete line of bicycles, send \$2.00 to:

Fisher MountainBikes

1421 E. Francisco Blvd., San Rafael, CA 94901 415/459-2247

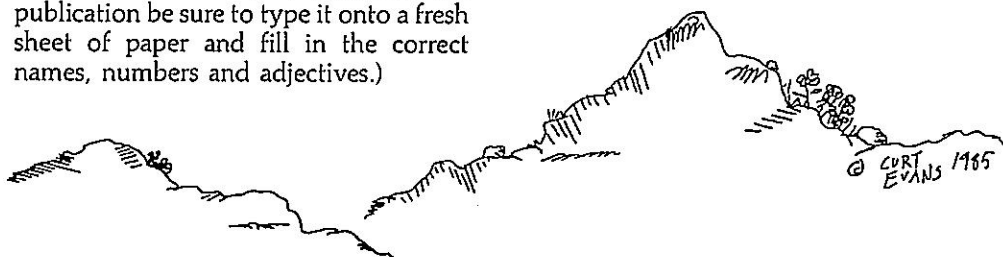


# UNIVERSAL BIKE

by  
SeeKay

# REVIEW

Everyone wants to see bike reviews in bike magazines, but after reading a few dozen of them one begins to realize that they are all the same review with only a few elements changed, such as the name of the bike and the specific angles of the geometry. As a public service we are printing the **Universal Bike Review**, which has several uses. First, by plugging in all the right information, you can find out as much about any bike as most magazine reviews will tell you. Second, by filling in your name and address at the top of the **Universal Bike Review** and sending it to a mainstream bicycle publication, you will become a published writer and forever afterward acknowledged as a Bicycle Expert. (Before submitting the **Universal Bike Review** to a magazine for publication be sure to type it onto a fresh sheet of paper and fill in the correct names, numbers and adjectives.)



## AT LAST, THE UNIVERSAL BIKE REVIEW

No doubt about it, when the engineers at **Interplanetary Conglomerates** designed the **You-Name-It All Planet Bike** (APB), they meant business. The first glance reveals a pair of wheels and sundry other parts attached to a sturdy diamond frame with an excellent paint job and attractive decals. Looking closer, we observed that one of the decals on our test bike was slightly off-center, but this was the only flaw in the finish work, and later tests revealed that the asymmetry didn't affect handling.

The frame is (choose one) *brazed, lugged, T.I.G.-welded, M.I.G.-welded, heli-arc'd, glued together*, which is by far the strongest method of construction, good for years of reliable service. Tubing is (choose one) *Reynolds, Tange, Columbus, True Temper, aluminum*, which has a reputation for excellence. The frame is light enough to race, yet heavy enough to take the abuse of long-distance touring. Frame geometry is (choose number between 67 and 73) degree head angle, (choose number from 65 to 74) degree seat angle, (choose number from 11 to 14)-inch bottom bracket, (choose number from 17 to 21)-inch chainstay. These dimensions

are a radical enough to get high performance for racing, but conservative enough for comfort. The fork offset of (choose etc. from 1 to 3) inches, coupled with the conservatively radical head angle (see above) gives (choose two adjectives) *solid, predictable, brisk, positive, nimble, lively, responsive* steering, without sacrificing (choose two) *comfort, stability, performance, handling, traction, or high-speed tracking*. Our testers took this bike over the toughest ground

they could find, and the bike came back asking for more.

When it comes to really riding the bike, the **You-Name-It** has performance to burn; the only word that describes it adequately is (choose one) *interesting, amazing, radical, indescribable*. The fine balance of aggressive yet conservative geometry and componentry challenges the novice rider to give his best but won't get him in trouble, while at the same time it is advanced enough for the expert without holding him back. The geometry gives excellent traction for hard climbing out of the saddle on uncertain surfaces, and provides stable handling for those insane downhill that should only be attempted under controlled conditions by experts wearing helmets.

The component group is the well-known and nearly universally respected **Sumbichi** gruppo, which, like many of the finest bicycle components in the world, is imported. The shifting was crisp and positive, the brakes worked, the cranks didn't break or fall off, while the saddle and seatpost held us up admirably and the handlebars appeared to steer the bike perfectly. The pedals, hubs, bottom bracket and headset were well-greased, and had (choose only one) *sealed cartridge bearings requiring no maintenance, conventional loose-ball bearings which allow easy maintenance*.

To be sure, the bike isn't perfect, and in addition to the misaligned decal we thought the end plugs on the handlebars were an icky color. But this is nit-picking, and these can certainly be replaced easily enough. When **Interplanetary** decided to build this bike, they were serious about the project and the bike shows it. When the going gets tough, the tough will get **You-Name-It!**

(For more information about this wonderful product, please see the four page full-color ad they just happened to take in this issue.)



*Interplanetary*  
**Rack Mate**



**Rack Mate**

**PROTECTS YOUR GEAR AND YOUR REAR FROM MUD AND WATER SPRAY!**

**GREAT** for mountain bikes, touring, and commuting.  
**SNAPS ON** Blackburn, Vetta, and similar racks.  
**STRAPS ON** Pletscher and others with enclosed straps.  
**SLOTS** for panniers and topbags.  
**LIGHTWEIGHT**, only 110 grams.  
**MADE IN U.S.A.** of quality, U.V. protected Hopolymer.

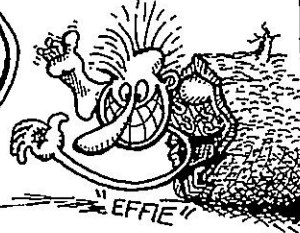
Available now ...  
**Splash Mate**  
for the front!

**\$4.95**  
Suggested Retail

AT QUALITY  
CYCLE SHOPS  
NATIONALLY.

**Rack Mate** P.O. Box 410187 • San Francisco, CA. 94141-0187 • (415) 626-1316

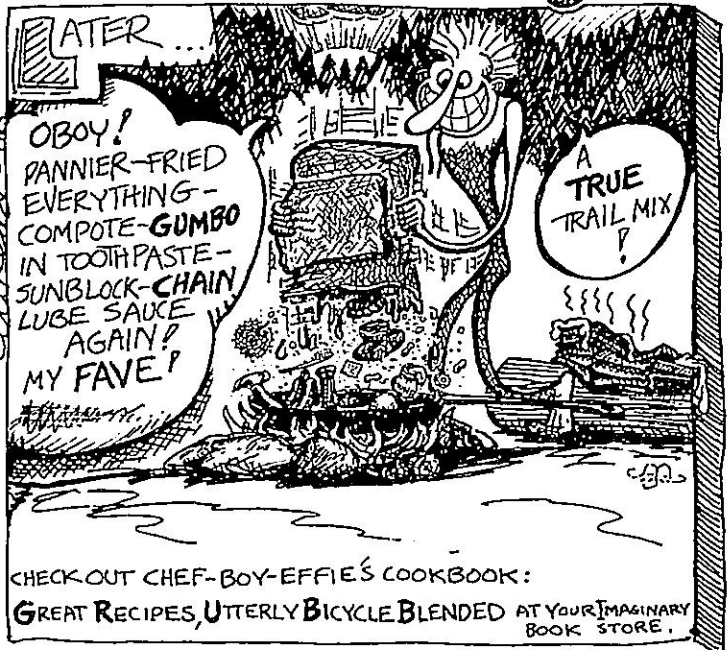
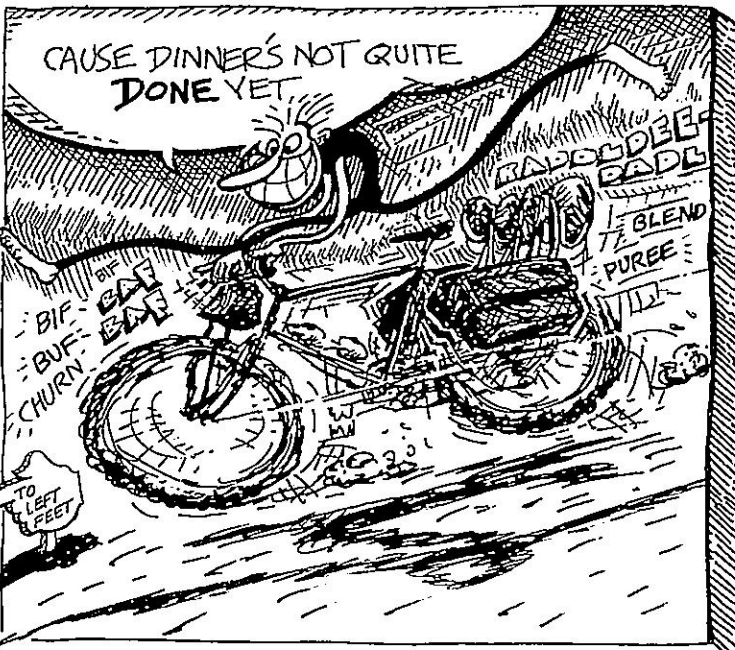
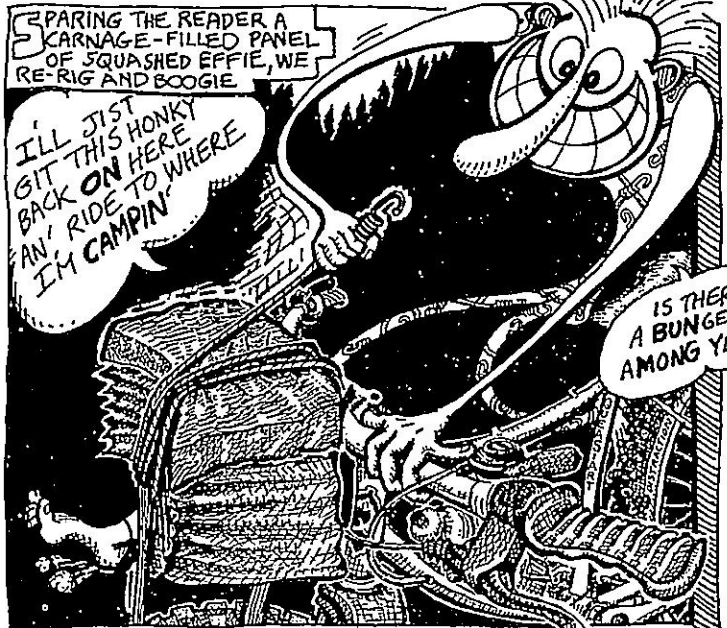
# WRECK TIPS



PERVERSE VERSE AND  
BULLDOZED PROSE FROM  
THAT CRASH-CURSED HOSE-NOSE



Thanks to Don Martie for the tip



CHECK OUT CHEF-BOY-EFFIE'S COOKBOOK:  
GREAT RECIPES, UTTERLY BICYCLE BLENDED AT YOUR IMAGINARY BOOK STORE.





(All the Dirt on Fat Tires)

or

(All the Poop That's Fit to Scoop)

We notice a proliferation of clubs out there in FatLand, and we're willing to make a deal with any Fat Tire Clubbers who are sufficiently organized to put out a newsletter. If you put us on your mailing list, we'll return the favor. To make things simple, we'll put you on our list as soon as we receive a copy of whatever it is you print. And if you have any back issues we don't already have, we'll trade one for one with our own backs.

## READING OTHER PEOPLE'S MAIL

In a letter to a British cycling publication which will remain nameless so we can prevent any further embarrassment, one of our British subscribers took them to task thusly: "I feel as (magazine X) has progressed, it has compromised more and become just another cycling magazine. Why? I feel you can learn a great deal from the **FAT TIRE FLYER** . . ."

To their credit, the British editors saw the error of their ways and have promised to do better.

## WHO CARES ABOUT APATHY?

Everybody complains about the rules, but hardly anyone ever does anything about them. The National Off-Road Bicycle Association is not set up as a democratic institution, but Honcho Glenn Odell knows that if he is to succeed he had better pay attention to his constituency. His latest attempt to involve NORBA members in their own organization consisted of a membership review of proposed rule changes for 1986. All proposed changes came from suggestions tendered by anyone who could shout loud enough at a meeting held in conjunction with the National Trials Championship and the Reno bike show last October.

The proposed changes were listed in the December/January issue of the NORBA Newsletter, and Glenn solicited comments from his readership. Apparently reading, thinking and responding are activities beyond the abilities of most Fat Heads, as all across the country a total of two, count

'em two typewriters (including this one) kicked into gear in response, which means that two members along with Glenn chose the direction of the organization. Considering that you've all had your chance, let's not hear any complaints about the rules this year.

## TIBET TOUR

Got a note here from Akos Szoboszlay (yes, that is his real name), which we will run verbatim.

"Ladakh is just west of Tibet. It's politically in India, but culturally Tibetan. Only road in is a single-lane dirt which often gets closed to 4WD vehicles due to landslides. Once in this area, only way to get around is by trail. Elevation is on the order of 12,000 feet with 18,000 foot passes. Local transport is by yak caravan. I'm planning to mountain bike tour this summer for six weeks (it's the best season to visit), and need companions. Write Akos, 1348 Sierra Avenue, San Jose, Ca, 95126, or call 415/249-3574."

. . . And when you do, tell 'em the **FLYER** sent ya.

## RESEARCH LAB DEVELOPS NEW ADJECTIVE

While perusing the want ads looking for a real job, we ran across the name of Bio-Rad Labs, no doubt short for Bionically Radical Laboratories. We don't know what they test at Bio-Rad, but it sounds like fun. "Bio-rad" gets our vote as adjective of the month.

## VIDEO BIKE WEEK

Anyone who attended Fat Tire Bike Week in Crested Butte in 1985, or anyone who is thinking about going there in 1986 should check into the 24 minute video that was shot there by Margie Lester, imaginatively called "Fat Tire Bike Week '85." Participants will remember Ms. Lester's huge glass eye—the one on the camera, that is—which seemed to be everywhere during the festivities.

If you want a copy, check with:  
Margie Lester  
Purple Sky Productions  
2800 Buchanan Avenue  
Ogden, UT 84403  
801-392-2911

## HINAULT MT. BIKES?

According to a report in another publication, the booth at the Paris Bike Show displaying Bernard Hinault's line of bikes (built by Lejeune) also included a mountain bike. Perhaps when he's through with the Tour de France, Bernard will take on the fat tire sport.

At the Long Beach Bike Show, Italian builder Pinarello had a mountain bike on display, which turned our head so fast our collective neck still hurts. After we administered a few painful but non-lethal holds on him, the salesman admitted that the bike on display was a one-of, and he didn't know if it would be in production.

Which allows us a lead in for our next note, which otherwise has nothing to do with fat tires.

## TORTURED SYNTAX

The Italian bike companies have wrenched the Tortured English title from Taiwan with a single press release from Campagnolo. The following is extracted verbatim from a press release concerning a special trophy presented to Bernard Hinault. This is really (sic) English.

"For the year 1985, the special AIJC commission has chosen Bernard Hinault because of his sympathy, his extraordinary disponsibility to meet the journalists and, of course, for his magnific carrier."

## TWO BIKES IN ONE

It's worth noting that the Montaneus bike with the adjustable head angle makes a pretty good observed trials model with



**RONCO**  
**MOUNTAIN BIKE SERVICE**  
**REPAIRS**  
**CUSTOM WHEEL**  
**BUILDING**  
phone (818) 763-7244

the steering cranked vertical. This shortens the wheelbase, handy for trials, and Dave Wonderly of the Laguna Rads demonstrated by taking a stock Montaneus over all the obstacles used for the trials demo at the Long Beach show. So if you can only afford one bike for the three-stage event . . .

### UNBIASED OPINIONS?

We notice that in another publication that shall remain nameless, unsigned reviews of mountain bike products are written by a person whose company either designed or builds some of the items tested. It isn't surprising that the reviews of said products are glowing, but we question the impartiality. You know who you are . . . and now the Shadow Nose.

### STADIUM FAT TIRE RACE

For the first time that we know of, mountain bikes have been brought to a stadium as a spectator sport. Much in the manner of the short mountain bike races that have been held between motorcycle heats at Carlsbad Raceway, a Fat Tire race was held on the motorcycle track laid out for an indoor event in the Los Angeles Coliseum in front of 40,000 spectators who paid up to \$40 a seat. It's all part of the show, folks, fat tire bicycles on the motorcycle track. The field included a mixture of mountain bikers, BMX riders

stacked on the jumps designed for motorcycles traveling three times as fast. First casualties were BMX pro Stu Thompson, who injured his shoulder in practice. Nelson Vails of recent racing notoriety on skinnier tires also bumped his nose on the track in practice, but stormed back to a seventeenth place in the real race.

### THIS IS NOT A BOOK REVIEW

Although there are several (four) books on the market about Fat Tire bikes, it just goes to show you that the bikes are moving along faster than the books. For example, perusing all four, we find no mention of Roller-Cam brakes, which are standard on umpteen models. For the scoop on that product, you'll have to get our June-July '85 back issue. If you didn't read it here first, it's not our fault.

### FLATTERY WILL GET YOU A SUBSCRIPTION

We see here in this Aussie bike publication FREEWHEELING that there is a club in Melbourne called the Fat Tyre Flyers. Hmmm. Shouldn't it have been Fat Tyre Flyres? Anyway, careful observers will note the vague similarity in the club's name, which almost rhymes with our own. We consider ourselves sincerely flattered.

### THIS SPACE FOR RENT

One of the interesting events of the Long Beach Bike Show was the marketing of some of the top riders, both of them. For those who might be interested, there is space for rent on this year's jerseys worn by Joe Murray and Jacquie Phelan. Also, according to the handout, race testing of your hand-built titanium aerospace componentry under the hardest pound for pound pounder on the race circuit (for a nominal fee).

**MANTIS**  
 BUILDERS OF THE FINEST  
 ALL TERRAIN RACING  
 AND TOURING BICYCLES

---

MANTIS BICYCLE COMPANY  
 350 E. ORANGETHORPE, # 27  
 PLACENTIA, CA 92670  
 SEND \$2.00 FOR BROCHURE

and even a few motocross pros, and when the dust had settled after three laps including a couple of times up and down a ramp that went straight up across the stands, the winner was a BMXer, followed by a motocrosser, followed by a mountain biker.

Especially impressive were the BMX pros showing their jumping ability on the steep descent ramp down the stands. Hitting the edge at full speed, they would pull bikes up for even more air, and land halfway down the long ramp after nearly achieving orbit.


Even under controlled conditions the course took its toll, as practicing riders

**Moots**  
 CYCLES

- CYCLES • FENDERS •
- PORTAGE PADS •
- ROAD HANDLES •
- MULTI MOUNTS •

P.O. BOX 2480 1136 YAMPA  
 STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, CO. 80477  
 (303) 879-1675

**NEW!**  
**FAT**  
**SHIRT**  
 The Only  
**AUTHORIZED**  
**FatTireFlyer**  
 Magazine T-Shirt



PRINTED  
 W/LARGE BLACK  
 & RED LOGO ON FRONT.

\$11.00 PLUS \$1.95  
 FOR SHIPPING  
 & HANDLING.

SIZE(S) S  M  L  XL   
 SEND CHECK  
 OR MONEY ORDER (U.S. CURRENCY ONLY)  
 TO: FAT TIRE FLYER "T'S"  
 P.O. BOX 757 FAIRFAX, CA 94930  
 ALLOW 4-6 WEEKS DELIVERY.

### SUBSCRIBE!

MORE FUN THAN A BARREL  
 OF CLUNKIES!

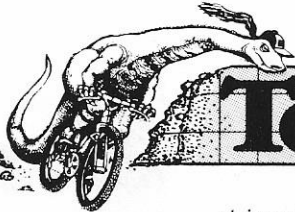
Please see page 2 for details

### PUT UP OR SHUT UP

Again at the Long Beach show, Erik Jones of San Francisco was looking at the Campagnolo exhibit. When the salesman bugged him, Erik showed him product identification he could really understand, rolling up his sleeve to display a tattoo of the Campagnolo logo. We hardly recognized Erik with brown hair. Last time we saw him one side of his head was shaved and dyed green, and the other side was a blue crewcut with pink checks. Erik is a bicycle messenger. But I repeat myself.

### CORRECTIONS

In our list of bike and parts builders last time on page 15, we routed a few concerns through Mountain Transport of Point Reyes. Two of these should have shown their own addresses. These were: Specialized, 15130 Concord Circle, Morgan Hill, CA 95037; and Mountain Goat Cycles, P.O. Box 3923, Chico, CA 95927. Also, the skid plate shown on the Mountain Goat on page 16 is now commercially available; not just a one-of-a-kind as indicated on the bash plate page.



# Tech Tips

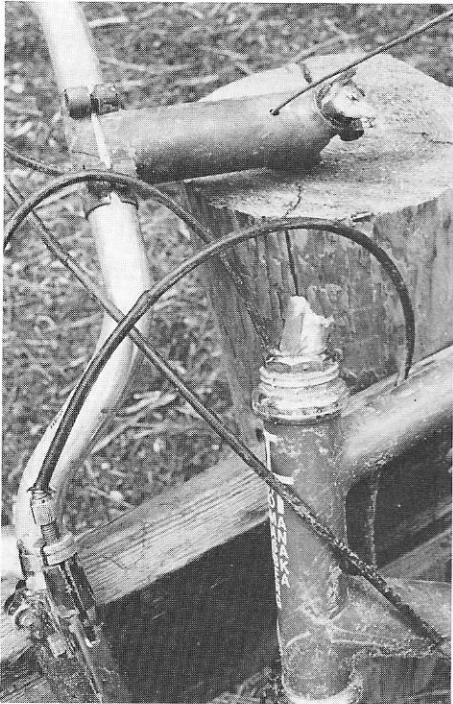
by SeeKay

## THIN AIR REPAIRS

by  
SeeKay

Let's talk about repairs. Off-the road, on the trail repairs. Mountain bike repairs. Not the kind of repairs where the guy in the magazine says, "Always carry a bunch of tools including . . ." and then he lists ten pounds of tools that you should never leave home without and will fix anything but the kind of things that really happen out there.

I'm talking about cave-man repairs, using a rock and a fire-hardened stick, the way mountain bikes were originally repaired. In



Charles Kelly

*In a fix, who walks,  
when there's sticks and rocks?*

stripped, and where's your fancy tool kit now? A pair of Vise Grips would either unscrew or break off any offending component. And in the case of significant damage, such as frame failure, often the whole thing could be clamped together again to get the rider home (or in some cases, it is rumored, back to the top for one more run). And where are you that there isn't a handy rock that works about eighty percent as well as the fanciest ball-peen you can buy or rent?

Most mountain bikers have a tale or two of miraculous repairs. Here's my best.

I was riding down a pleasant dirt road with my friends Larry and Howie, some five or six miles from town, when we noticed that Larry had lost the little allen-keyed axle screw out of one side of his Phil hub. His wheel was held on only by one fork blade, which affected the steering as well as placing a severe strain on the working blade.

We stopped to ponder the problem and looked around for some raw materials with which to improvise a repair. Let's see...barbed wire fence, fence posts, rock, scrubby pine trees with funky unusable wood. Nothing looked good, until I espied an old broken end of a shovel handle lying some five or six yards off the road. The top end of the handle, it was about eighteen inches long, the toughest piece of weathered, seasoned ash anyone could ask for.

Howie got to work with his Swiss Army knife, whittling the splintered end smooth, then tapering it to a cylindrical projection the same size as the missing screw. Next he screwed it into the hub, the hollow axle actually threading the tough piece of wood perfectly. The last step was to saw the new screw off the rest of the handle, which had been used as the screwdriver to force it in. Once again the Swiss Army knife came into play, the small wood saw being perfect for the job.

The repair got Larry home, and the wooden screw now occupies a small plaque on his mantel.

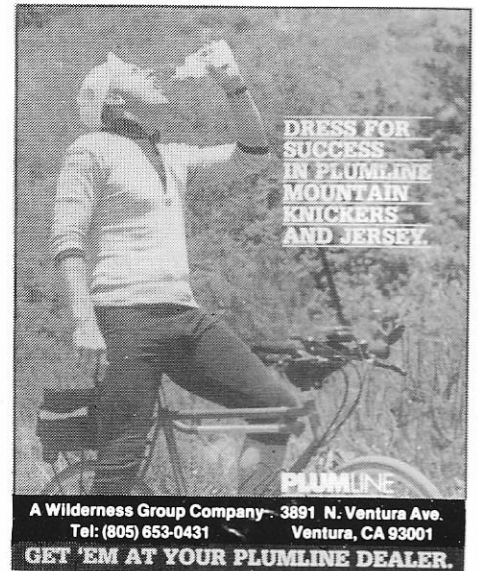
## TWO, TWO, TWO VALVES IN ONE!

by  
Mike Flanagan

How many times have you been out on the trail and had a flat, and had everything

you needed except a way to blow it up. The law of averages says that the first pump you find will be schrader if you have presta valves, or vice versa.

Here's the fix: locate a tube with the valve opposite from what is on your tire (in usable condition). Remove said valve. With tube out of wheel assembly, cut a small hole directly opposite the working valve. I use a paper punch and pinch the




**NEW!**

# FAT SHIRT

The Only  
**AUTHORIZED**

## Fat Tire Flyer

Magazine T-Shirt



PRINTED  
W/LARGE BLACK  
& RED LOGO ON FRONT.

\$11.00 PLUS \$1.95  
FOR SHIPPING  
& HANDLING.

SIZE(S)  S  M  L  XL  
SEND CHECK  
OR MONEY ORDER (U.S. CURRENCY ONLY)  
TO: FAT TIRE FLYER "T'S"  
P.O. BOX 757 FAIRFAX, CA 94930  
ALLOW 4-6 WEEKS DELIVERY.

tube, cutting a half-circle and leaving a neat hole when unfolded. If you only have a blunt screwdriver, practice first on a used tube. Unscrew the backing plate on the valve and assemble in tube, being careful to keep the cupped washer in the proper direction. Tighten by holding with a pair of pliers and a piece of inner tube wrapped around the valve stem to protect it. Check for leaks.

Next, fabricate a hole in the rim at a location matching the new valve hole. If you aren't sure of the diameter, start with small holes and work up until it just fits. Remember to clean up burrs on the hole. Mount tire in conventional manner, with both valves in place. Now, wherever you are, you may blow it up using the valve of your choice. Another advantage to this arrangement is that it prevents tire creep at low pressures.

## MODIFYING A BIKE FOR OBSERVED TRIALS

by  
Tom Hillard

Observed trials is little more than riding the hardest part of the trail without putting down a foot. After all, bikes were designed to be ridden, not carried. When I started promoting observed trials four years ago we used stock bikes for riding over small rocks and logs, around tight turns, and down steep slopes. Of course my friends and I attempted to modify our bikes in order to tailor them to the sport. Now there are four classes in NORBA trials competition. The novice class is for stock bikes, while the expert class is exclusively modified or custom machines that are hopped sideways as well as ridden forward. The classes for most entrants are the intermediate and advanced, where modified bikes are permitted but where a special trials bike isn't necessary.

Perhaps you want one bike that will work for general riding as well as trials, or perhaps you want a trials bike to go along with your traditional mountain bike, but can only afford a cheap second machine. I fit into the second category, and here's how I solved the problem.

When the cheaper Taiwan bikes hit our shores I started measuring bottom bracket heights, head angles and wheelbases. At that time the Univega Rover Sport was perfect for my purposes at \$300, and had a 13" bottom bracket height. I suggest you get the smallest available frame, no matter how tall you are. The bike will be ridden from a standing position most of the time, and the seat should be down all the way for clearance.

To increase bottom bracket clearance we did two things. First, we took off the two larger chainrings leaving the small inner, and moved the front derailleur down as a chain guide to keep the chain from bouncing off. Next, we shortened the chainstays by one inch. If you're ready for this kind of surgery have a frame builder do it, and don't worry about the tire clearance. Just move the tire all the way

**"...perhaps you want a trials bike, but can only afford a cheap second machine."**

forward, deflating it for removal of the wheel if necessary. The closer your rear axle is to the bottom bracket, the fewer ground clearance problems you will have; also, you will have more control going uphill and are less likely to go over the bars on descents. Maybe all bikes should be modified in this manner.

Next, the handlebars; the common triangulated style puts the rider too far forward for trials. See if the shop will swap for a BMX stem and straight bars. Ideally you want the bars as low and close to you as possible, which gives you more control going downhill and for wheelies over rocks and logs.

I use a 28-tooth chainwheel and a wide range six-speed freewheel with "ultra" narrow spacing. 13-32 is about right, giving a high of 56 and a low of 23 inches.

Tires and rims should be on the strong and heavy side, with lots of rubber on the tread, with strong, heavy rims, and thorn resistant tubes. Heavy wheels don't spin so readily on muddy uphill, and the thorn resistant tube protects me from flats, since I run pressures as low as ten pounds.

Use the cheapest pedals and rear derailleur available, since they always break no matter how much you paid for them.

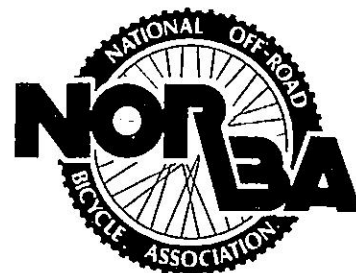
A bike like the one I've described is a good starter bike for trials up to advanced sections, as well as a good joyriding bike for narrow trails, although it is a little heavy for the expert moves such as hopping the bike sideways up a hill. Don't stop with these suggestions; every observed trials competition sees something new in bikes, and that's part of the fun.



**SUBSCRIBE!**

**MORE FUN THAN A BARREL OF CLUNKIES!**

Please see page 2 for details



**NATIONAL OFF-ROAD BICYCLE ASSOCIATION**

2175 HOLLY LANE  
SOLVANG, CA 93463  
(805) 688-2325

- ADVERTISEMENT -

**F. Ewe Bailout says:**

IMAGINE:  
NO ADS!  
NO LOGOS!  
JUST SOME OL'  
"FLIRT WITHE DIRT"  
PROPAGANDA  
AND ME!  
...RIDIN' HARD  
AN' STUPID DOWN  
YER CHEST! HOW FUN!  
ASK ABOUT MY BACK-  
POCKETED AN' MY  
SLEEVELESS SHIRTS  
TOO!

\*ALL COTTON  
\*SHORT SLEEVE  
\*SEND \$13.00  
AND YER (MEN'S)  
SIZE TO:  
EYE OF THE WHEEL  
P.O. Box 7254  
SANTAROSA, CA 95407 PHONE: (707) 575-8989  
OR SEE YER LOCAL BIKE SHOP - DEALER INQUIRIES WANTED

- ADVERTISEMENT -

Wide Open Spaces . . .  
The Call of the Wild . . .

**BACK  
COUNTRY  
BICYCLES**

**Off-Road Cycles  
for the Enthusiast**

**FISHER • STUMPJUMPER  
RITCHEY • Your regional  
source for FAT CHANCE  
Rentals by Reservation**

**916-644-5271**

*A thousand miles of dirt  
at our doorstep!*

**6110 PONY EXPRESS TRAIL  
POLLOCK PINES, CA 95726  
(Off U.S. 50 East of Sacramento)**

found the foolproof system that defies any bushwhacking, repels any intrusion of moisture, and can be mounted easily by dirty, wet, cold fingers.

With a little judicious control on the rider's part, the worst hazards of brush and bounce can be conquered with most rugged panniers. A few stand out as the consumer's choice. Racks are the link to the frame, but the various designs may not all fit on any given frame; I have two bikes and I had to get two different rear racks. Roller-Cam brakes can block the mounting point for fork crown-mounting front racks. Here you need a blade-mounting setup like the Bruce Gordon front rack, Blackburn Low Riders or their (hopefully) available soon new front Mountain Rack.

In general, front bags and racks should be high for obstacle clearance. The better balance of lower packs is easily ignored in the face of snagging, shredding bushes. Another consideration in the back is the rigidity of the pannier's stiffeners. If they are marginal, something like the new Cannondale rack with its wheel-guarding extra strut could be a big help. Handlebar bags and frame pouches can be used with good results to get some of the weight forward in lieu of front racks.

What one carries in the bags is the most flexible feature of the touring rig. If native vegetable matter, fish, fowl or beast are your sustenance, your load can be reduced according to your optimism in exploiting nature. Taking a tip from the proven ways of the Native Tribes it is reasonable to expect more benefit from gathering some of the greenery than from chasing wild boars with heavy cannons. While most riders I know are more interested in observing nature than exploiting it, bikes are equal-

ly good for reaching the old fishing hole or the base of a technical mountain climb.

Groups should pool hardware such as pans, stoves, tents, tools, shovels and tarps. Menu planning is worth the time it takes. Shelter is not usually available as needed in the wildlands, but there may be some back country huts or cabins, to ease the burden of a tent.

Fuel is the item most likely to be available along the way. It may be the leftover coals of your campsite neighbors, bundles of firewood sold by a concessionaire, firewood gathered according to local rules, or fuel for your stove from someone's vehi-



Martha Hoch


cle or other reserves. The brotherhood of the outdoors is a broad and deep thing so don't be afraid to share coffee or conversation with hikers or jeep drivers. Everyone appreciates the outdoors in his own way; those people in the Winnebago might have just the trail information you seek or the tools you need.

The right equipment and plan for a tour could be a bed roll and a fishing pole, or it could be a bulging mass of raingear, provisions and tepee for an epic alpine adventure. The degree of preparedness makes the difference between ordeal and enjoyment, so plan ahead, cover the essentials, and leave the rest at home.



ibis

cycles



**IBIS RIDER DARYL LICKT**

**IBIS** builds limited production custom mountain bikes. Each bike is unique, built for the customer. We sweat the details; like custom sizing, components, paint, braze ons, and alignment. This means the bike you receive is truly custom.

**TRIALS** The IBIS Trials bicycle is a truly versatile machine. Although designed primarily for trials use, this bicycle will perform beautifully in virtually any off-road situation. The departure from conventional geometry yields a bike that is extremely nimble, and climbs like no other bike.

**NEW ITEM! CYCLE OPS**

**NIGHT VISION™**


The finest Lighting System available for off road (or road) riding. Cycle Ops is a lightweight, helmet mounted, rechargeable halogen light with a unique quick release mount. Mounts on any helmet. Comes complete with charger. Daryl Lickt sez "ya gotta get one."

**Imprinted Sportswear** (Tee shirts, etc.)  
Our very popular 6 color design. Beautiful artwork.

<b>Short Sleeve</b>		<b>Long Sleeve</b>	
Heather Grey	\$10	White	\$12
White "cycling tee" with rear pockets	\$15	Silver Blue	\$12
all shirts available S,M,L,XL			

Please indicate 2nd choice. CA residents add 6% tax. Add \$2.00 for shipping.

**IBIS CYCLES, P.O. Box 275, Sebastopol, CA 95472**  
**(707) 829-5615**      **Send \$2.00 for Brochure**



## Descend with Conviction



**SEAT LOCATING SPRING**

- Adjust seat instantly and easily while riding.
- Push down for control on rugged terrain.
- Springs up to your most efficient height for cruising.
- Seat always remains centered with frame.
- Mounts quickly. • Prevents seat theft.

**Available at better bicycle dealers in the USA and Canada.**

Standard equipment on Fisher MountainBikes, Ritchey USA, Fat City Cycles, Jamis Dakar and many more!



**BREEZE & ANGELL**  
P.O. Box 5401-F, Mill Valley, CA 94942 USA  
(415) 388-1217

# MOUNTAIN BIKING... ALASKA STYLE!

continued from page 24

The organizing group of bikers had various backgrounds. A few were ex-racing buffs transplanted from California with one too many wrecks under their belts. They had come to Alaska simply to "mellow out." A few were local professional people, who in recent years had rediscovered the kid in themselves. One was an avid outdoorsman who discovered a few years ago that a fat-tire bicycle could get him to that fishing hole or that happy hunting ground a little bit faster and fresher than his own two feet. One was a woman determined that the ladies not be left out. And one was an entrepreneur who happened to be a mountain bike lover and dreamed of the Mountain Bikers of Alaska.

Thus was our beginning.

As we passed around the circle the FAT TIRE FLYER, NORBA News, BICYCLING, and a few other mountain biking publications, we were forced into creativity. How could we adapt these proven mountain biking principles and practices to Alaska?

That beautiful picture of those butterflies dancing among the bikers on a Napa Valley tour would be correctly translated to helicopter-shaped mosquitos of the same proportions in our Alaskan setting. That romantic skinny-dip in the Colorado mountain lake after a hard day of riding would mean a flirt with death in our glacier-fed lakes, with pneumonia and hypothermia posing as real threats. That late August thunderstorm in Yellowstone Park which caught the mountain biking tour by surprise, causing the group to scurry to the public campground for an enjoyable game of UNO, could mean a foot of fresh snow in the Alaska Range. Our game of UNO would have to wait until we renewed our training in building

snow caves. And then, of course, those ever-present encounters with the anti-biking people over the trail usage issue would translate to the possibility of encounters with "creatures" that stand on two legs only when they're mad! They would much rather take a few bites out of your hindside than take you to court!

With those issues before us, the founders of Mountain Bikers of Alaska remained undaunted. Each of us knew that we were not the true bicycling pioneers of the last frontier. History tells us that during the gold rush at the turn of the century a fellow named Max Hirshberg rode from Dawson, Yukon to Nome, Alaska—in the middle of winter! The crazy sourdough bought the only new bicycle the local mercantile had in stock, and rode the fat-tired deluxe model to wealth, down the frozen Yukon River!

For years bicycles have been utilized by ingenious natives to travel their trails during the season when the sled dogs were out of commission. The vast river systems made excellent freeways from the time of freeze-up until the heavy snows came. And more recently, some of us sourdoughs began seeing strange fat-tire tracks on our favorite trails during the last decade. Could they have belonged to true mountain biking pioneers, vacationing from Vermont, Colorado or California?

It was on these premises that the Mountain Bikers of Alaska was born. On the back burner for a couple of years, in the serious planning stages for the last two, this is the year we are really beginning to see our efforts and membership multiply. Our main emphasis is on tours, events and fellowship. The racing aspect is low-key, although we sponsor a trail race in the summer, and we are planning a winter race during Anchorage's annual Fur Rendezvous. We do not as yet have any organized resistance to mountain biking in Alaska, and we sure hope to keep it that way.

Our tours are unique. Our major overnighter is the Hatcher Pass Equinox

## MY BICYCLE TRIP DOWN THE YUKON

continued from page 7

Near Norton Bay was a roadhouse, where I dried off and had lunch before continuing. The boys at the roadhouse warned me that the ice would shift in Norton Sound but I started across it anyway. Just as I was nearing the opposite shore, the ice shifted, leaving about eight to ten feet of open water between the ice and the shore. I took a chance and leaped to the shore, where I picked up a piece of driftwood, jumped back on the ice floe and poled myself and my bicycle back to the shore, and went on my way. Just east of Nome, I skidded on glare ice. When I picked up my bicycle, I discovered that my chain had snapped and broken.

There was a fair wind blowing toward Nome, so I picked up a stick, put it on my back inside my mackinaw coat, and began sailing for Nome. At times the wind was so strong that I was forced to drive into some soft snow in order to stop my wild flight. Without my chain I could not control the speed of my bicycle. However, I finally arrived in Nome, May 19, 1900, without further incident. I had my twentieth birthday on the trip.



(longest day of the year). We literally "bike the night away." Our Kodiak Island tour is different in that it includes a round trip ferry ride to the island, and centers on the attractions of this historic fishing community. (Money back if it doesn't rain!) Our adventure tours into Denali and the Wrangells are recommended only for

continued on page 37

**Cycling** IN THE SHADOW OF **SHASTA**

48 PAGES  
\$4.00 INCLUDES TAX - PLUS 1/2 SHIPPING

INCLUDES 21 MAPS FOR BIKING IN FAR NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

TO ORDER MORE COPIES OF EITHER SEND CHECK TO: **BODFISH BOOKS**  
801 MAIN ST. CHICO, CA.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY / STATE / ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

CYCLING IN THE SHADOW OF SHASTA

CYCLING THE CALIFORNIA OUTBACK

48 PAGES

\$4.00 INCLUDES TAX - PLUS 1/2 SHIPPING

66 PAGES

\$5.50 INCLUDES TAX - PLUS 1/2 SHIPPING

FOR INFORMATION ON AUTHOR AVAILABILITY TO SPEAK OR AUTOGRAPH BOOKS PLEASE CONTACT US THROUGH PULLINS CYCLERY 801 MAIN ST. CHICO, CALIFORNIA 95726 1-916-342-1055

CYCLING THE **CALIFORNIA OUTBACK**

WITH **BODFISH**

national forests

21 MAPS FOR FAT TIRE CYCLING





Continued from page 13

Our first night's camp was at a tiny cabin Sam had built from the telephone poles that had once stood by the road but had fallen years before from the action of the permafrost. Other materials came from the remains of washed out bridges, since there were no trees of any kind in the valley. Before we could enter the cabin we had to remove the 'bear boards,' nail studded, iron bound boards that were bolted over the door and window to keep out curious grizzlies. One corner of the cabin had been clawed by a bear seeking entry, and Sam had told us that it was because it had smelled the chainsaw oil inside. "They seem to love petroleum products," he said, "They'll drink motor oil if they can find it."

Sam had laboriously delivered a food supply and some firewood to the cabin a few days before, and a bush pilot named Bud Hall had flown a cache out to our next camp. Accordingly we ate very well with Nancy putting together excellent dinners, and breakfasts of "bannock," a staple of the north. Bannock is flour, water and salt, fried in oil and washed down with "camp coffee," made by dumping grounds into boiling water and drinking the result. There are two schools of drinking such coffee. Some strain the grounds through teeth or moustache,

while others chew them thoughtfully while expounding on what fun they are having.

The next day was as clear and warm as the one previous, and it seemed hard to believe that this country lies under ice and snow most of the year. As we followed the valley of the Ekwi the road deteriorated, until we found ourselves struggling down a canyon with sheer sides and no trace of the road. Ironically, the track of Archie's Honda assured us that we were headed the right direction. Now we started river crossing in earnest. The slippery rocks and the deep, cold rushing water made it quite a chore to carry a bike loaded with touring gear across, but removing panniers and ferrying everything across in several loads would have taken far too much time considering how many times we would need to cross. Since the women couldn't lift their bikes high enough to keep gear out of the stream, each of the men first carried his bike across and then returned for one of the women's, not out of any displaced chivalry, but for reasons of efficiency.

As we struggled down the canyon, a grizzly perhaps a quarter mile away on the other side of the valley ran into the brush and disappeared. High above on the barren ridge, a lone bull caribou profiled his

magnificent antlers against the sky.

It took until late in the day to cover the 35 miles to our next camp, but during the Arctic summer the sun is up nearly all day. Finally we spotted the small landing strip and hunting outfitter's cabin where our food was stashed. Sure enough, next to the strip was our padlocked barrel, so we loaded our panniers with enough supplies for dinner and breakfast, leaving the rest to be retrieved later.

We spent the next day exploring, hiking and fishing in the area, and we were surprised to meet several more people. Although there aren't many in the region, those who are here concentrate their activities around what's left of the Canol. The first to run across our camp were a German couple, hiking on their way to Oldsquaw from Norman Wells. The news they brought us of a river too deep and wide for us to cross meant that we had gone as far as we could get without a raft, so we cancelled our plan to strike farther up the road.

A little later a helicopter followed the road past our camp, and the pilot circled and settled in for a landing a few hundred feet from us. The visit was strictly social, and we gave the three men from the chopper coffee. The pilot asked if some of us would like a quick flight, and we jumped

at the chance. An arial touring service, in the middle of nowhere!

Our thrilling ride lasted only a few minutes, but covered more territory than we could have in a week on bicycles as we swooped over rugged peaks whose heights rarely if ever see humans. Then suddenly we were back on the ground saying goodbye. In half an hour the helicopter would be at Oldsquaw, two cycling days away.

When we turned back on our path for the return trip we found the going much easier because we knew what to expect. Still, it took until late in the day to reach our first campsite at Caribou Pass some 35 miles away.

As we stopped for lunch next to the river, we were surprised by the sight of a bull caribou running unsteadily down the middle of the stream. A large and recent wound on his neck showed that he had only moments before escaped a hungry predator, probably a wolf. We theorized that the long-legged animal had eluded pursuit by running down the stream, which would have been more difficult for a smaller wolf.

We spent another day exploring the Caribou Pass area, and we had a few anxious moments when two of our party were long overdue on a hike. It turned out that they had encountered a bear, and had gone a much longer route than originally planned in order to avoid him. From our camp we could see Dall sheep on the high ridges, and tracks in our camp indicated that a parade of fauna had passed in the night, including moose, wolf and wolverine.

The weather held until our last day of riding, when skies turned leaden and a cold wind whistled down the valley. Accordingly, we didn't waste any time getting back to Oldsquaw. There is an amazing difference between wet feet on a warm day and wet feet on a cold day. The sauna at the lodge was a magnet.

By late afternoon we were all back at the lodge, clean, warm, well fed, beers in hand, and ready to match bear stories with any local citizen. The next day we would begin the three-day trip back to our civilized haunts.

The Oldsquaw Lodge only sleeps ten people, and the expense and rigor of getting there is likely to make the Canol experience nearly inaccessible to the average rider, but for those who can get there, it is the ride of a lifetime. Anyone with a little money, a bike, and time off next August is advised to contact:

**Oldsquaw Lodge**  
Bag Service 2711  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Canada Y1A 4K8



## MOUNTAIN BIKING... ALASKA STYLE!

continued from page 35

the experienced and crazy.

Rentals play an important part in our organization. Because many members have friends and relatives flying up during the summer, we offer a wide range of mountain bikes for rent, from the lower priced models to custom aluminum bikes.

Mountain biking in Alaska, another example of "Johnny-come-lately." We have watched the evolution of the sport from our seats on the 60th parallel, and have nodded our approval. We want to thank our mountain biking comrades for developing this craze, which fits our lifestyle perfectly, and we would like to invite you to visit us . . . on a mountain bike.

**Editor's note:** Dan Bull is the director of the Mountain Bikers of Alaska. For more information on Alaskan mountain biking, contact:

**Mountain Bikers of Alaska**  
4107 Charing Cross  
Anchorage, AK 99504  
(907) 337-1962



## Bicycle Trafficking in Bolivia

continued from page 15

possible to walk up to 20,000 feet. The bicycle exercise allows me to do that, but the other tourists who came by car are sick with "soroche," altitude sickness. The remedy is coca-leaf tea, which can be purchased at the store without a prescription.

I pedaled up to Chacaltaya with another French cyclist, riding his girlfriend's bike, a fifteen-speed. Yes, don't laugh, Rossinante is only a five-speed . . . but at least I don't shock the locals. One day in Bolivia when Raymond, Charlotte and I were pedaling through La Paz, we came upon a 20% grade, and like every other local cyclist I stopped and walked my bike. But Raymond and Charlotte just geared down and continued pedaling up. The whole street froze. In Bolivia there are only one-speed bicycles, and a cyclist pedaling up a 20% slope is the sight of a lifetime. Also, in a country where only men dare to ride bicycles, a girl pedaling up this same grade, that is some kind of mystical event, like E.T. flying his bicycle over the moon . . .



## Mountain Bike in China

Boojum Expeditions announces two exploratory trips to the mountains of western Sichuan. Each trip includes 9 days cycling in high alpine terrain. Average distance 20-25 miles per day. Stay in local hostels and some camping. Mountain bikes and sag wagon provided.

**HONGYUAN GRASSLANDS:** At 12,000 ft. elevation the grasslands are summer home to nomadic Tibetan herdsman and their yaks. Gradual terrain surrounded by snow capped peaks. Friendly people, spectacular scenery. July 30-August 22.

**DADU RIVER:** Biking down the valley of the Dadu River along the route of the Long March. Day hiking and camping near Four Sisters Mountain (21,600 ft.) and visit Wolong Panda Reserve.

**BOOJUM EXPEDITIONS** • Box 2236, Leucadia, CA 92024 • 619/436-3927

**DOWN TOWN and UP the Canol**

The San Francisco Bay Area's  
**PRO MOUNTAIN BIKE SHOP**  
Pro Service, lots of parts, clothes,  
and accessories too!

**GRAND OPENING**  
Special Offer  
FREE NORBIA membership  
w/EVERY New Bike

**MOUNTAIN AVENUE**

BIANCHI  
BONTRAGER  
BREEZE  
CANNONDALE  
CUNNINGHAM  
FISHER

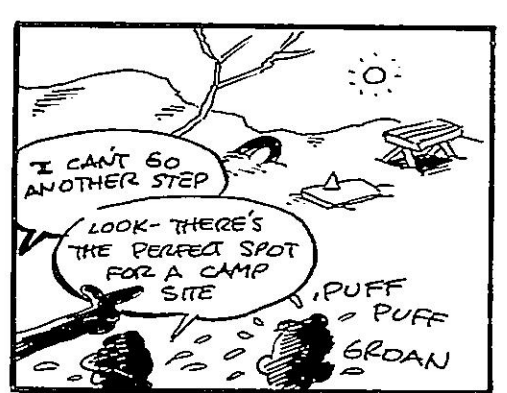
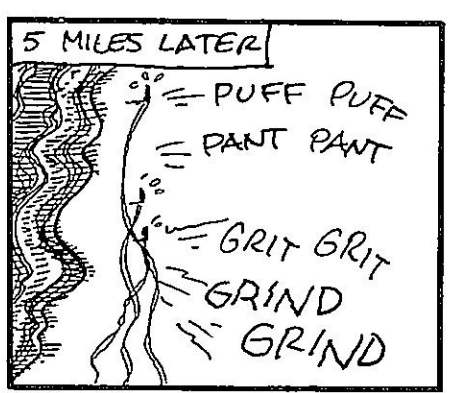
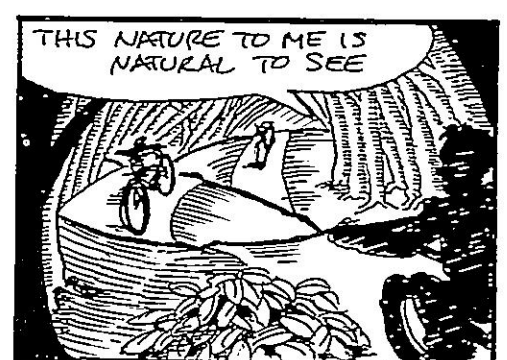
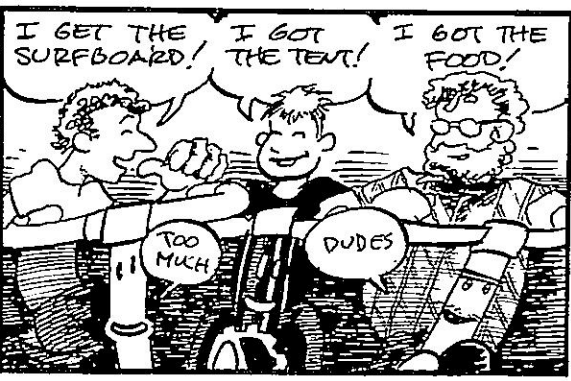
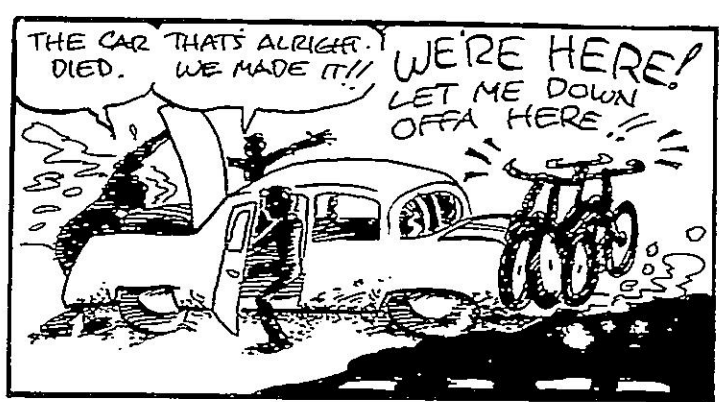
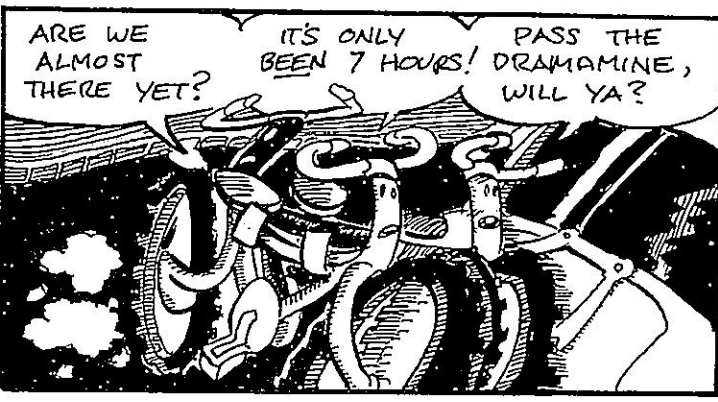
IBIS  
MIYATA  
PANASONIC  
POTTS  
SPECIALIZED

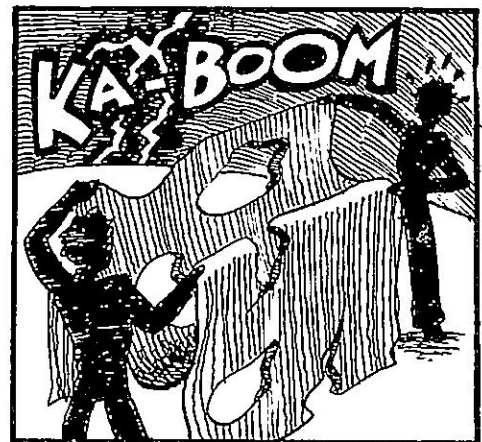
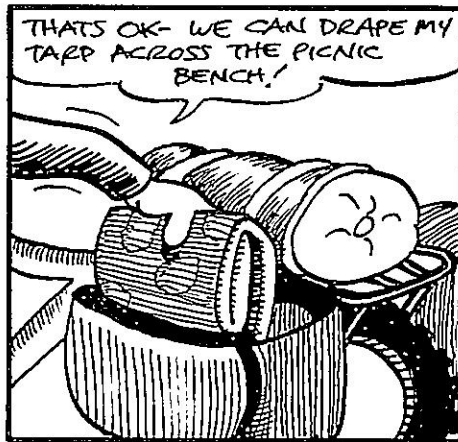
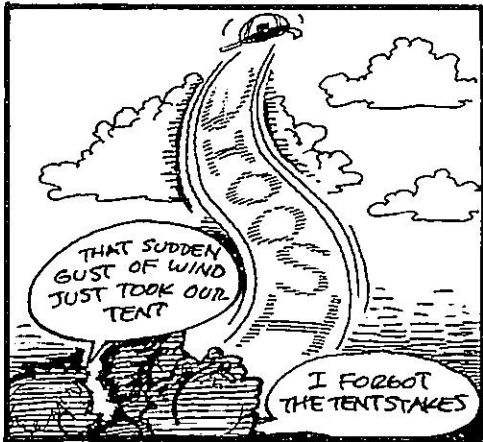
1065 HAIGHT ST. ★ SAN FRANCISCO ★ 415.221-6630

FAT TIRES ONLY

FAT TIRES HERE

# MUDPUP'S MIDNITE CAMPOUT





SPECIAL THANKS TO D.M., G.G. AND B."SB"K.

Kevin Coffey