

Durango

Results of 1986 NORBA Championships

Men's Pro-Am

1. Ned Overend	Durango, Colorado (Schwinn)	1:56:49
2. Max Jones	Incline, Nevada (Ritchey U.S.A.)	2:01:40
3. Mike Jordan	Chico, California (Ross)	2:01:40
4. Casey Kunselman	San Luis Obispo, California (WTB/Trek/TrueTemper)	2:01:55
5. Mike Kloser	Vail, Colorado (Fisher)	2:02:08
6. Rishi Grewal	Aspen, Colorado (CCC/Moots)	2:05:07
7. Joe Sloup	Sherman Oaks, California (Ross)	2:05:38
8. Dave Meyer	Gunnison, Colorado (Specialized)	2:07:05
9. John Loomis	San Luis Obispo, California (Ross)	2:07:17
10. Roy Rivers	Larkspur, California (WTB/Trek/True Temper)	2:07:28
11. John Weissenrieder	Boulder, Colorado (Schwinn)	2:08:23
12. Ron Andrews	Somerville, Massachusetts (Fat Chance)	2:08:56
13. Jeff Norman	Durango, Colorado (Schwinn)	2:11:01
14. Duwayne Fritz	Las Cruces, New Mexico (Bicycles Unlimited)	2:12:15

15. Joe Peterson	Stinson Beach, California (WTB/Trek/TrueTemper)	2:12:40
16. Tracy Smith	Crested Butte, Colorado (Ritchey U.S.A.)	2:12:52
17. Todd DeAngelis	Los Angeles, California (WTB/Trek/True Temper)	2:12:59
18. Russel Worley	El Cajon, California (Yeti)	2:13:30
19. Mark Anouk	Olympic Valley, California (Ibis)	2:15:46
20. Bob Gregorio	Durango, Colorado (Miyata)	2:16:26

Women's Pro-Am

1. Cindy Whitehead	San Diego, California (Schwinn)	1:01:01
2. Jacquie Phelan	Fairfax, California (Cunningham)	1:01:19
3. Mary Lee Atkins	Durango, Colorado (Schwinn)	1:10:47
4. Lisa Muhich	Durango, Colorado (Durango Wheel Club)	1:16:31
5. Karen Woodford	Breckenridge, Colorado (Zinn Cycles)	1:17:04
6. Jeri Reed	El Prado, New Mexico (Brand Eks)	1:10:51
7. Christine Culver	Santa Ana, California (Mantis/Sea Schwinn)	1:21:19
8. Carmen Carrouche	Camarillo, California (Mantis)	1:16:23

ly, trying to close the fifteen second gap. Her only real chance was to attack on a climb, but before the opportunity presented itself they ran out of race, and Cindy Whitehead crossed the line only eighteen seconds ahead, almost in tears from elation with the culmination of her year-long quest.

Rookie John Tomac had established himself as a main contender in the men's race with a couple of outstanding performances. In the New England Stage Race two weeks earlier Max Jones and Ned Overend tried to team up against him, and the result was that Tomac gobbled both of them up in a three-up sprint. Okay, he can sprint, but can he climb? The day before the Nationals, Tomac took second to Overend in the hillclimb, losing by a margin of only six seconds. The consensus was that Tomac could climb nearly as well as Overend, and enjoyed a considerable advantage on the descents from his BMX background. Tomac's fifth place finish in the Sierra 7500 fifty mile race had long since quieted those who said BMXers couldn't go the distance, and if there was any doubt left about his bike handling, he won the wheelie contest in Durango also.

After all that, the leader on the

first lap was Joe Sloup, feeling good, looking good, and riding like a maniac—until the end of the first lap, where he crashed and moved quickly from first to seventh. Bruised and mentally shaken, Sloup was no longer a factor. Tomac took over the lead, chased hard by Max Jones followed by Overend, with defending champ Joe Murray in fourth place and in position to pick off anyone who faltered. Tomac opened a thirty-second gap on lap three, and Overend moved past Jones into second place. As Ned closed the gap, it looked like the race was turning into a showdown between the 31-year-old veteran and the kid... and then, on the fourth lap, things started unraveling for Tomac.

Since he was fifteen years old and competing in BMX, Tomac has ridden for Mongoose, a bicycle importer, and although his bike has custom geometry, it is assembled just like an off-the-shelf standard store-bought model, not a \$1500 custom unit like the ones under his competitors. Tomac's bike is heavier by several pounds than the lightest bikes in the race. The key statistic for his season was the two frames he had already used up, and now he finished off another one, pulling the dropout out

of the chainstay. Tomac was forced to retire, and his first stop when he got home was likely to be the drawing board for a little more R and D.

From the point of Tomac's retirement on, it was all Ned's race, to the delight of his hometown crowd. Second place rider Jones had fallen and bruised his leg, and now he was doing all he could to hold off Mike Jordan, who was nearly in jersey-pulling range. While riding in third position, Joe Murray had fallen victim to the attrition rate when his downtube separated, and like Tomac he was forced to retire with a broken frame. Steve Cook lost his chance when his saddle came loose, although he gave it the old Cindy Whitehead try by riding a couple of laps with the seat dangling.

If there were an award for verbal abuse, Rishi Grewal, brother of Alexi, would have taken it easily while carrying on a family tradition. No matter how hard he rode, and he picked up sixth place, he always had the breath to abuse the crowd, the other riders, features of the landscape ("...-5&?ing mountain...?"), and his bike in precise anatomical and geneological terms.

Off-Road Classics

In European road racing some of the one-day races are dubbed "classics," signifying that a win in such an event is a real jewel in the rider's crown. In addition, riders earn points in the classics toward a cumulative trophy at the end of the season.

The Europeans have strict criteria as to what constitutes a classic, but it's hard to apply such requirements to off-road racing. There are a few off-road events which qualify as genuine "classics" for different reasons; of course, some of our reasons are either very subjective or even made up.

One major difference between European classics and our mountain bike "classics" is that anyone can enter most mountain bike classics, and most of them do. Mountain bike racing is for everyone who likes to ride a good bike on an enjoyable course, even those who are just in it for the "cruise."

It should be no surprise that the majority of our classics are in the West, because that's where most of the racing is. We don't mean to slight anyone, so we're open for suggestions as to other races that should be on our list and why they should be there. Here's our vote for the list of "Classic" events.

Punk Bike Enduro, Santa Rosa, California.

The PBE has been going on informally since 1975 or thereabouts. Its beginning predates mountain bikes, and stems from rivalry between cyclo-crossers and BMXers, but now it's strictly moto-mountaineers. Invitational only, unofficial, limited to those who Need to Know, run in a secret location.

The PBE is conducted as a series of stages, short point-to-point races, mass starts, over a variety of dirt roads and narrow trails, points awarded for order of finish. Stages vary from one to three miles, conducted in a crowd at sprint velocity, and advanced elbow work is as important as traction. Tremendously hard on bikes and personnel, helmets not required. Part of the PBE tradition is rider rebellions which often change the promoter's half-baked planning in mid-race.

Central Coast Clunker Classic, San Luis Obispo, California

History now, the CCCC was an early fixture on the California racing circuit. From 1980 to 1983, when it was declared illegal because the route crossed land closed to bicyclists, this race delivered a great ride through magnificent hills, during a period when only fifty people were likely to show up at a mountain bike event. The entrepreneur who annually lost his shirt was none other than our friend Glenn Odell, who went on to better things.

Not many off-road races will rival the Clunker Classic for total number of stream crossings, at least two dozen, some thigh-deep, in cold, refreshing water. Some "racers" were known to abandon reasonable placings just to go swimming.

Whiskeytown Downhill, Redding, California

The brainchild and annual tax writedown for Bonnie and Gary Larson, the Whiskeytown Downhill is held on one of the more demanding and beautiful courses on the circuit, 35 miles long. A couple of thousand feet of climbing separates things before the downhill, with 4000 feet of total elevation loss. Road conditions vary from year to year depending on how recently repairs have been made and how much runoff

damage has accumulated. Large washouts are traditionally one of the hazards of the Downhill.

One classy and classic aspect of Whiskeytown is the number of volunteers and marshalls who take care of corners and aid stations. The artistic and imaginative trophies are some of the best ever to grace a bedroom shelf.

Chequamegon Fat Tire Race, Cable, Wisconsin

A little young at Fourth Annual this year, the Cable Classic rates a mention because it is the biggest Midwest race, with nearly 300 entries in 1985. The route is the rolling but not hilly cross-country ski route that is the scene of one of the biggest winter races of the year, the American Birkebeiner. In addition to point-to-point, the two day race features a mountain bike criterium.

Repack Downhill, Fairfax, California

Now extinct, this race has earned a reputation all out of proportion to the number of people who have participated, no more than 200 individuals between 1976 and 1984. Part of the reputation is due to the fact that this underground event was the most visible expression of the rapidly emerging mountain bike in Marin County, as well as being the proving ground for designs, components, and riding theories. Repack was the meeting place of many whose names are now familiar to mountain bikers.

Repack drops 1300 feet in 1.8 miles, and anyone who has raced there will agree that it is a more than adequate test of downhill skills. Because of the velocities attained, racers were timed individually on the course; until 1983 helmets were not even required. Since the county has expressed official disapproval of racing there, it no longer appears on the schedule, but if you get up early some Sunday morning, you just might catch a dozen guys up there at 7:00 a.m. with a stopwatch . . .

Wendell State Park, Wendell, Massachusetts

Ross Bicycles is the main impetus behind the Wendell Park race, the biggest in the East and one of the biggest in the country. Each year something new is added, and it is now a stage race with observed trials, time trials and several lap races of varying distances.

One aspect that makes the New England Stage Race a classic is the fact that it is the biggest gathering of off-rovers east of Colorado, and draws most of the best racers from the western part of the country. The top ten riders in the 1985 event all lived west of Reno. For this reason it is an important spectator event for many eastern riders who otherwise get few opportunities to see this level of racing, conducted by riders who are otherwise nothing but names in the magazines.

Fat Tire Bike Week, Crested Butte, Colorado

For an event with so much potential, the trend in Crested Butte has been disappointing over the past few years, especially in light of the fact that the best racers in the country make an annual pilgrimage to this isolated town in the middle of some of the finest riding country anywhere. With this much talent in town it behooves the race promoters to look polished, but it doesn't come close to happening.

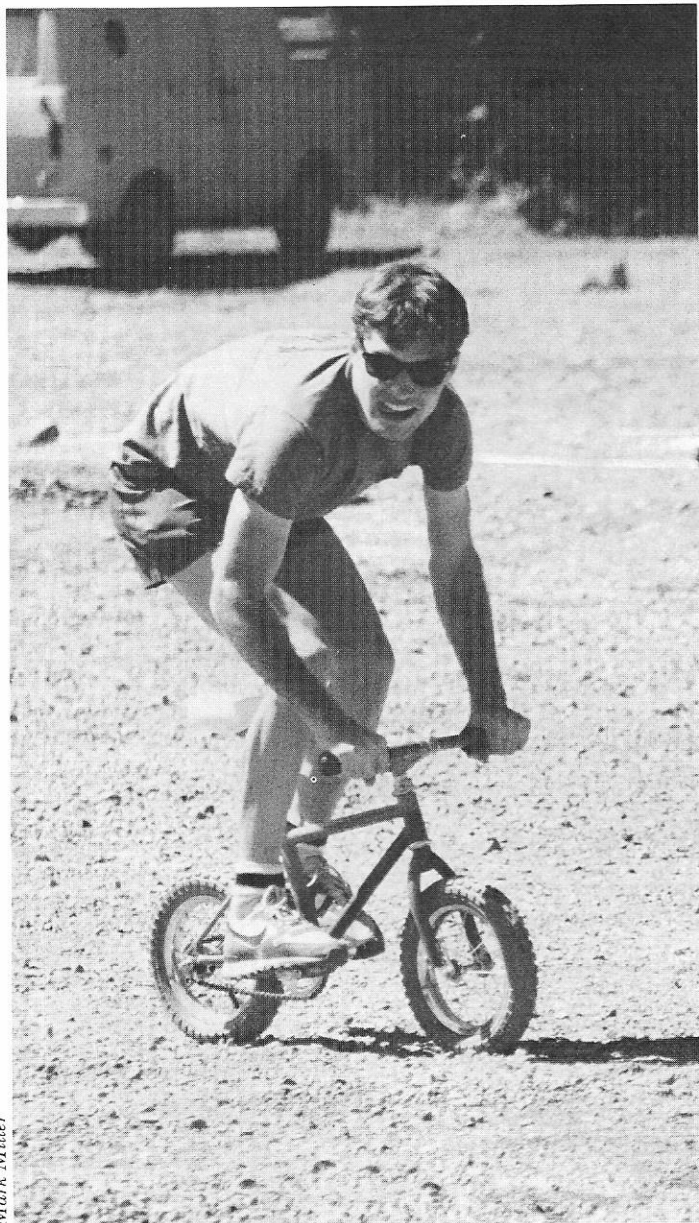
Compared to skiing, the annual bicycling party makes a minor ripple in the town's economy; still, it comes at an otherwise slow season and Crested Butte has come to enjoy the annual Fat Tire invasion. Yet there is so little agreement or volunteerism among the natives that visitors find themselves

assuming roles in the production, which seems to have another patch installed every hour. Racers hungry for action get events that don't match the potential of the surroundings. Perhaps the biggest problem is officiating; in the downhill race last year the results were posted and changed several times before the "final" version was announced—a day and a half after the race.

Because it has outgrown its venue, the annual Pearl Pass tour which started the whole week has become an unsupported trickle rather than a sponsored migration. Considering that limits had to be imposed eventually, this seems the most equitable way to do it. Those who can drag their stuff over the pass deserve everything they get.

Of course the level of promotion can't stop anyone from riding in great surroundings with a lot of other fat tire fanatics who are also in town, and from that standpoint it is truly a classic. It is simply one of the best gatherings of mountain bike talent that takes place anywhere, and you should not attend unless you're ready to talk fat tires and nothing else for a week.

Continued on page 24



Mark Miller

Joe Murray changes sponsors, declares, "I can win on anything."

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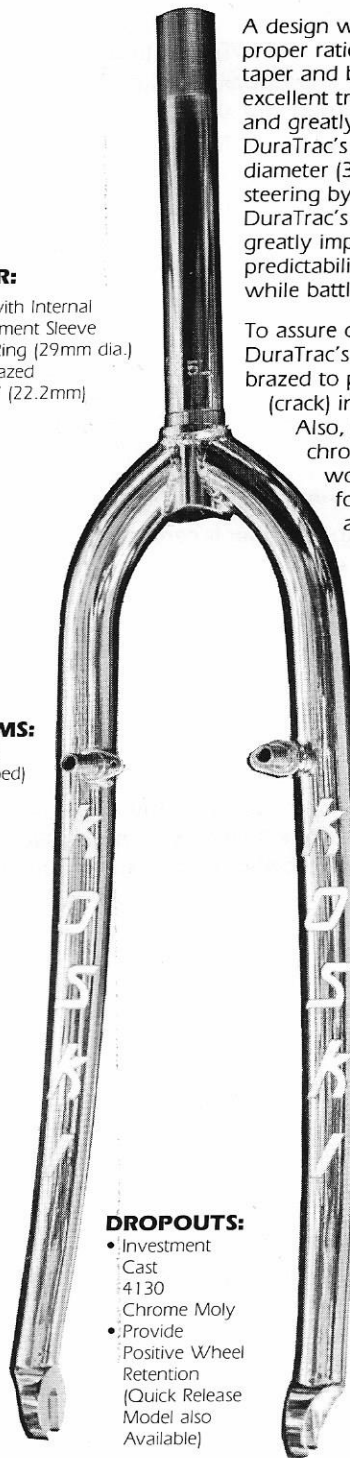
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Fat Tire Flyer 23

Mammoth Kamikaze, Mammoth Lakes, California

This event began in 1985, and this year split into two events, the Ultimate Kamikaze/Sierra 7500 Stage Race and the Kamikaze Downhill/Mammoth Stage Race; the two events were held two weeks apart this year.

The Ultimate Kamikaze/Sierra 7500 qualified as tough racing, a 16 mile and 6000 vertical foot downhill, plus a 50 mile off-road race that climbed up to 11,000 feet, a good candidate for the toughest race of the year.

The 1986 Mammoth Kamikaze and stage race held just a few miles away had big crowds, a great setting, well-choreographed logistics, big sponsors, and a ski lift ride to the start of the downhill. Not as long as the Ultimate at four miles and 2000 vertical feet, the Mammoth downhill still has to be reckoned as the best event of its kind because of the velocities that can be achieved.

Rockhopper, Santa Rosa, California

Dating to 1982, the Rockhopper is certainly one of the most well-attended races; it even got a bike named after it. This year registration was limited to the first 400 entrants and quite a few late arrivals were disappointed, although many rode the course anyway. The 20 mile course is fast, and not particularly technical except for a few trail descents. Joe Murray has owned the race since late 1983, picking up his fourth win there this year.

What makes the Rockhopper a classic is not the toughness of the course, it's the attendant party and the sight of 400 bicyclists hitting a section one bike wide. Those who start at the back of the field leave the starting line some five minutes after the leaders.

Reseda to the Sea, Reseda, California

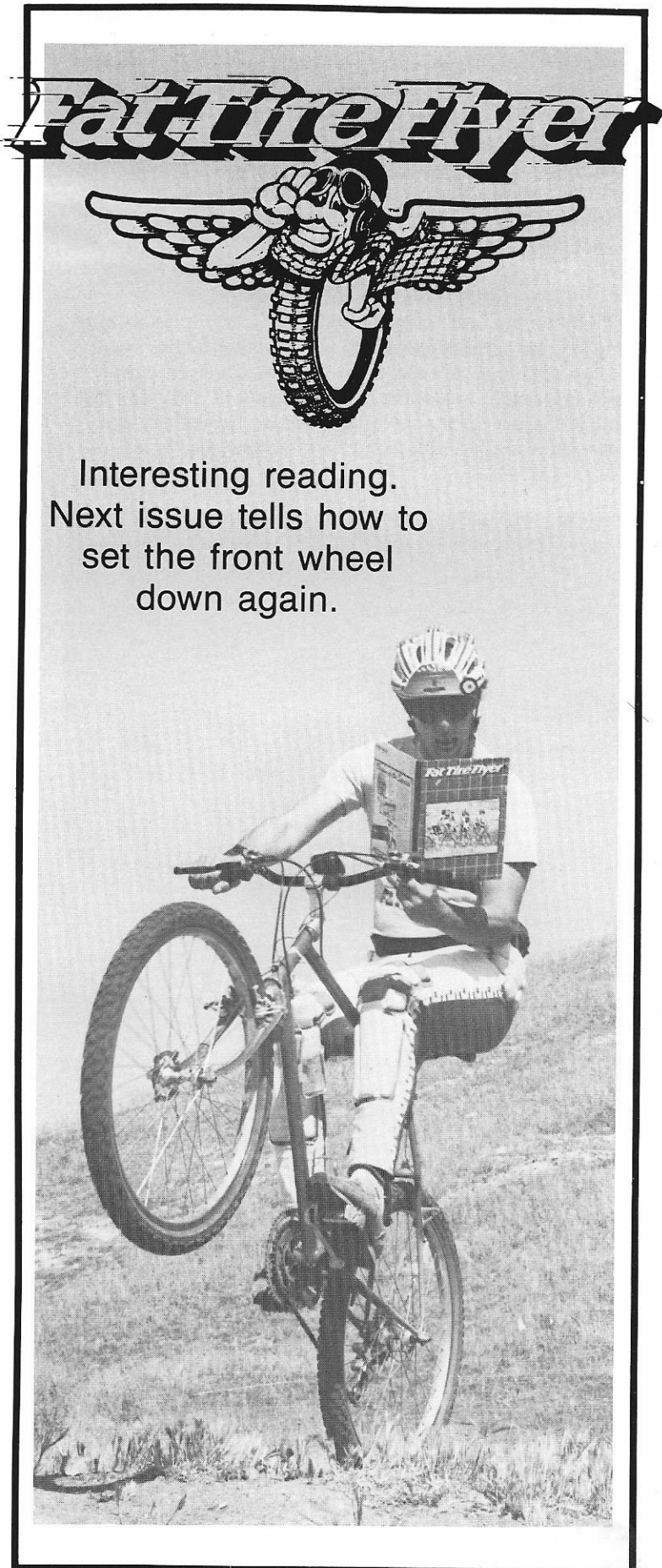
The Reseda to the Sea race was one of Victor Vincente of America's first promotions, and drew riders from the Bay Area 400 miles north as early as 1979. A study in informality and non-sanctioned behavior, the race was on occasion started in the middle of a busy intersection, with no warning given either to drivers or local authorities. Prizes included the giveaway of a complete "Topanga" bicycle during the early years, the first known major race prize.

Coyote Derby, Redlands, California

First run in 1981, the Coyote Derby was promoted by Wile E. Coyote, A.K.A. Jim Harlow. This race has served as the launching point for several memorable off-road careers, and has helped end others. A desert race through the mountains, the Derby featured unrelenting heat as one of the riders' major obstacles. Other obstacles have included very ripe dead sheep on the road.

Puerco!, Malibu, California

Billed as the California Downhill Championships, the Puerco(!) race is another VVA production featuring casual rules and no sanctions. Even in recent runnings helmets have not been a requirement, although some riders have been known to wear them.



Interesting reading.
Next issue tells how to
set the front wheel
down again.

Truth in Packaging

We tried subtlety, but it didn't work. A couple of issues back we ran a piece entitled "The Universal Bike Review," a lampooning of the average bike review as seen in most other cycling rags. The idea behind the article was that by pointing out that all bike reviews are basically the same, we would show that none of them means anything. And yet, people still want us to tell them what bike to buy.

Okay, the gloves are off now. Here's the straight stuff, sans subtlety or any other French words: "Bike Reviews" are bullpoo. They don't mean anything. No two "experts" have ever been able to agree on how a bike performs, so reviews are couched in meaningless, unquantifiable terms, such as "responsive," "stable," or "nimble." About the only things any two experts will agree on, aside from the price, are the angles and dimensions of the frame geometry, although they will then disagree on what that information means. And you could find the price for yourself.

The primary purpose of a bike review, dear reader, is not to inform you. The purpose of a bike review is to sell ads to the manufacturer of the reviewed product. For this reason no bike is found to be a terrible product and not worth riding, although some might deserve such treatment. Bikes that are not worth owning are often described as good products "in their price range," e.g. under \$200. Any findings by the reviewer that might affect ad sales are hedged, blunted, edited out, or otherwise disinfected. Keep in mind that the advertiser puts constant pressure on the publisher to include a review of his product, since it is a foregone conclusion that the review will put a positive light on even the worst aspects. ("Although the brochure does not mention the quick-release handlebars, we found that they were easily separated from the frame . . ." ". . . The brakes slowed the bike gently and gradually, with none of the abrupt deceleration usually associated with panic stops...")

The second reason for bike reviews, after the ads have been sold, is to sell magazines to you. By promising the straight scoop on the new Widget Mountain Exxtra, usually in red letters on the cover of the magazine, the publisher hopes you will purchase and take the rag home before you find out that you haven't learned anything about the bike in question that you couldn't learn by visiting a bike shop that sells them.

The foregoing should not be construed as a blanket indictment of all product tests. Other than bikes themselves, there is much in the cycling world that can be tested in terms that mean something. Components can certainly be tested for ease of use, for durability, or for various other qualities that can be reduced to numbers for comparison. Frank Berto, the well-known gear wizard, built a testing device that compared derailleurs in a number of areas. Even in framesets, stiffness can be tested by deflection measurements, fatigue strength can be tested by repeated stresses, and absolute strength can be tested by destruction under controlled conditions. Of course, none of this has anything to do with the way a bike handles or how comfortable it is after six hours. For that matter, this information probably has nothing to do with how long the bike will last you.

By now you are asking yourself, "How do I find meaningful information on bikes I might purchase?" There is only one expert who can tell you the truth, and that is yourself. No matter how limited your cycling background may be, your opinion is worth more than any number of published opinions.

First, establish what amount you plan to spend, and then do not, under any circumstances, ride a bike more expensive than that, unless you are in a position to spend more than you had planned. In almost every instance a more expensive bike will be more fun to ride, or faster, or feel better in some undefineable way.

Having established your price range, ride everything you can find within it. "But what am I looking for?" you wail. That depends on what you are looking for. Do you want a race bike? Buy the one that feels the fastest. Do you want a comfortable bike? Buy the one that feels most comfortable. No one but you can decide what is comfortable or fast, (or stable, or agile, or any other undefined quality) since no one else on the planet is built exactly like you or has the exact same applications for the bike. In short, forget what the paid experts say about a bike and get the one that you like. Remember, if you are unsatisfied with any of the componentry, that is subject to change, and the bike shop might even throw in or change components once the deal is set. Just find the bike that you like, and buy it.

WHAT GOES AROUND

What goes around sometimes loses its inflation. **Joe Murray**, who has been the recipient of a few breaks when opposing riders suffered from flat tires, has hit the other end of the odds and has been put out of contention in two recent races by ill-timed flats. (The only well-timed flat is

the one that happens just as you wheel the bike into the garage.) Looking like sure winner at the Whiskeytown Downhill, he pulled up with a flat two miles from the finish. The same thing happened to him two weeks later at the Rockhopper South like a recurring nightmare.



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LETTERS

Dear Fat Tire Flyer;

In order to further promote amateur sport mountain bike competition and to afford the amateur sport proper exposure, we propose that sport competition teams be recognized by team affiliation when publishing race results in the NORBA News, and that NORBA encourage race directors to so indicate sport team affiliation in race results being sent to racing participants.

It seems apparent that the bulk of private monies raised for individual racing events comes from the sport classes, and there are many groups of mountain bike racers who train and race as teams. However there is no formal recognition of these teams or their placings in mountain bike races.

Why spend the extra time to recognize these sport teams? The main reason is that we sport teams support the mountain bike industry and NORBA with our dollars and participation in local racing events, and we deserve the recognition.

Also, we believe that this type of publicity would foster improved competition on the sport level. Recognition of sport racing teams by NORBA might encourage individual mountain bike riders to consider forming their own teams. We feel that team affiliation provides many positive advantages to the individual competitor. These include group training, encouragement, as well as financial and ecological benefits of carpooling to racing and training sites. Team organization also allows the individual the opportunity to learn the art of group dynamics in a more relaxed setting.

Unfortunately, many in the sport classes will never be promoted to the Pro ranks with sponsored team affiliation. We can, however, enjoy some of the same benefits if NORBA will adopt a sport team recognition policy. We urge you to consider this as an addition to rule 5.9 of the *NORBA Rules and Procedures*.

The Recon Riders:

Mark Evenson John Johns

Chuck Holt Clay Rossman

Fat Tire Flyer;

I've got some tech tips for all those techno-rats.

Tip #1: While at your neighborhood drug store ask for 5/16 surgical tubing. Buy a foot of it. Spit on the fingers of your right hand, wiping the slippery stuff on your right brake lever. Breathe into the tubing two full breaths. Finger the tubing onto the wet lever. Cut 1/4-inch past the end of the brake lever. Repeat on left lever and thumb shifters as necessary. Allow to dry.

Tip #2: Use an old tube to: Cover your chain stay (Use Barge Cement). Make Rubber bands to hold patch kit and spoke wrench to frame. Cover end of pump. Shoot water balloons.

And now for another episode of "Impossible Repairs."

Riding 1.5-inch tires on a rental bike in the first of eight

stages of a local summer series of contests, I flatted the front tire three miles out. Remove tire with no tools and find a snake bike.

Pump only, no tools. The pack passes. Dead last.

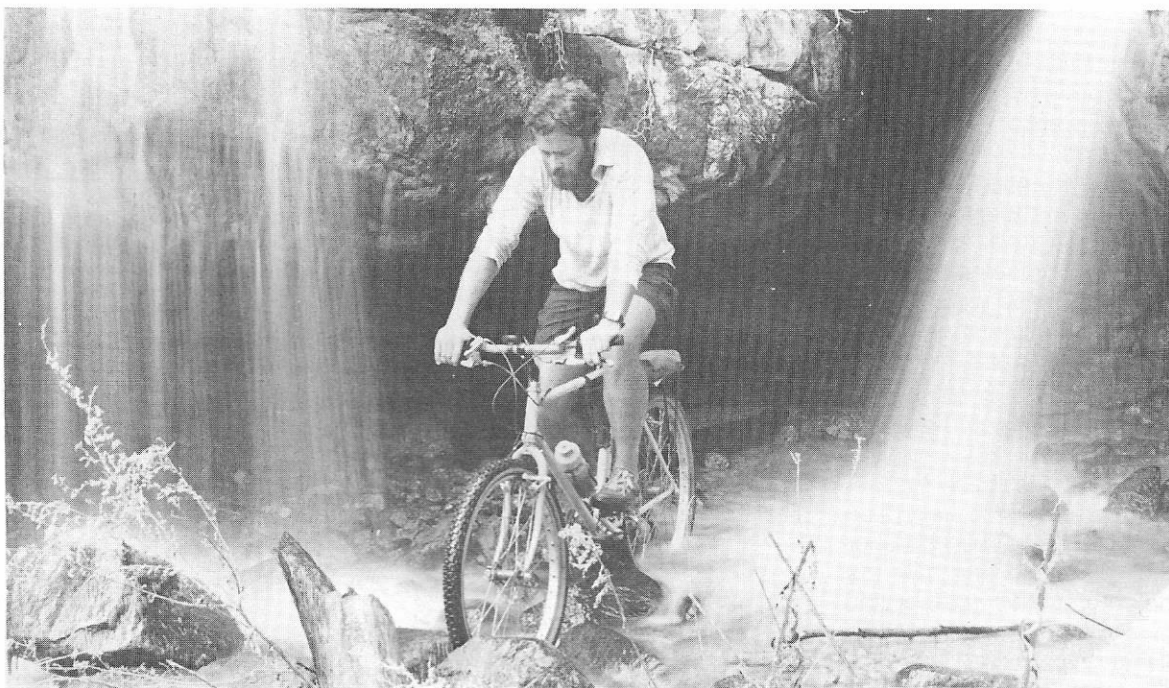
Word was The "Witz" was out on a moonlight ride with a lady. Had a flat and found no glue in the patch kit; so he found a stick and twisted it around the tube. Insert into tire, pump and pedal.

Flash back..And it works! I finished the race, passing another while he waited for his second patch to dry. Flats can be fixed with only a pump, no tools.

Stay tuned for other "Impossible Repairs."

Harley Parson

Ketchum, Idaho



Downhill Race Timing

by
SeeKay

The timed downhill race originated on the now-closed Repack racecourse. As the promoter of this event I was faced with the challenge of timing dozens of riders accurately, without benefit of radio contact between start and finish lines, and without alerting those governmental bodies who might have objected to this use of public land. In spite of these limitations, and in spite of the fact that we made up our method as we went along, we managed to deliver accurate results, handing out prizes within fifteen minutes of the last finisher crossing the line. Now just ask yourself, when was the last time that happened at an event you attended?

If I hadn't already done better, I might not have taken exception to the handling of two downhill races I attended last year. At both these events computers and volunteers were available, radio contact was in place . . . but the wait for results was interminable, and in one case the "official" results were changed several times. I don't believe riders should be subjected to this ridiculous situation when it is demonstrably easy to handle results without any more complex device than a pen, two stopwatches and a stack of index cards.

Here is the system used at Repack. It may be modified to fit local conditions, but it forms the basis for quick, accurate reporting of results.

Before the two official watches (plus backups) are started, the order of riders is selected. Each rider is assigned a starting time; at Repack the first rider would start at ten minutes on the watch, because both clocks were started at the top of the course and the finish timer carried his clock down. Copies of the list are made for each end of the course, *with starting times included*. An index card is filled out for each rider listing his or her starting time and color-coded for category, either with a felt marker or a colored sticker.

At the starting line, the starter bears the responsibility of getting each rider off at the assigned time; without radio contact it is essential that riders leave precisely on time. This is actually helpful, since each rider knows his or her assigned time, and has no excuse for missing it.

At the finish line the finish timer notes the finish time of each rider, then writes it on the index card. A simple subtraction gives the elapsed time, which is checked, and then the card is filed with the

other finishers', in order of elapsed time, fastest time on top. To prevent ties, times should be recorded to 100th of a second.

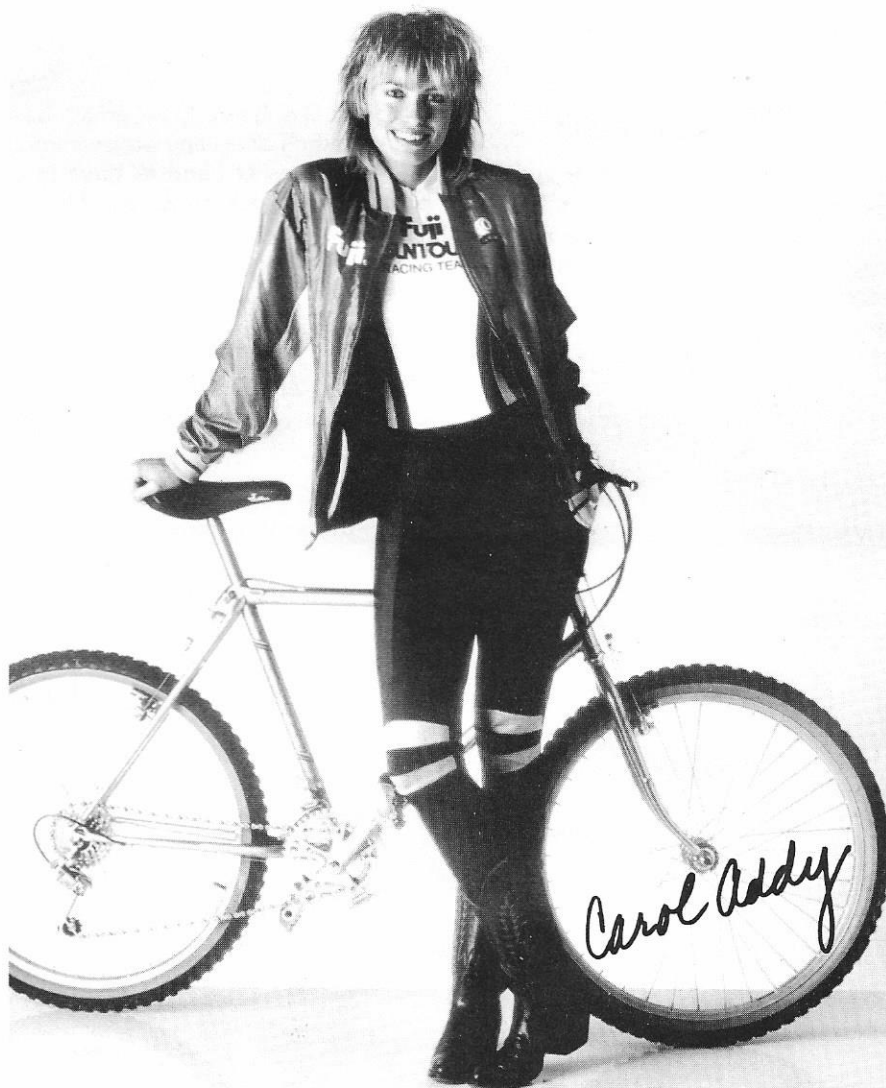
When the last rider crosses and his card is filed, the results should already be in place. The winning rider has the top card, and a quick sort through the stack will pull the top rider of each category by the color code. What could be easier? The system is so simple that it takes a third-generation home computer to screw it up.



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Shown: the Fuji
Suncrest, one of 35
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"When good enough just isn't good enough"



SPEEDWAY RACING

We have a note here from a group that might be regarded as distant British cousins. In England they have a sport called "Cycle Speedway," which is now celebrating its fortieth year. Developed immediately after WWII, speedway is a bicycle version of short-track motorcycle racing.

No doubt the early speedway racers

were just like the early mountain bikers, a rude bunch of cycling outlaws utilizing the conditions at hand to have fun. In post-war England, those conditions included a certain amount of bomb-cratered territory that had not yet been reclaimed.

As the craters were filled and the landscape restored, speedway racers developed their own tracks, which are small by anyone's standards, about 80

meters around. A photo from the sport's magazine, the Cycle Speedway Spokesman, shows a track set up on a basketball court! Riders have become much more refined, and today the sport is taken seriously by the participants, who line up into several hundred local clubs. Races average 40 seconds, and then everyone lines up again for the next heat.

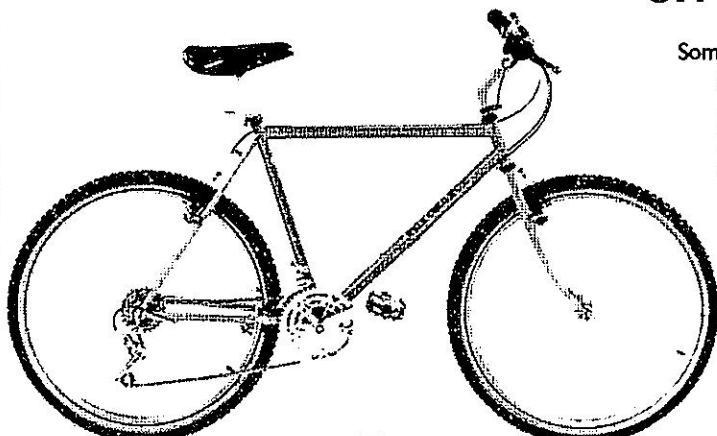
Bikes are specially designed one-speeds with freewheels and no brakes. Tires are a little narrower than the typical fat tire, and are made in a knobby pattern for the dirt tracks or smoother for indoor action. Speed is controlled by pitching sideways. If that sounds primitive, remember that the point is to go fast, not to slow down.

According to a press release from the Cycle Speedway Council the boys in Britain have a World Championship of Speedway coming up next year, to be held on tracks throughout England, Scotland and Wales, and they're hoping to see an American team. You can start practicing by rolling up the living room rug and riding laps around the couch.

Anyone who wishes to take part in the championships, or anyone who wants to know more about the sport is invited to write to:

Martin Gamble, Press Officer
Cycle Speedway Council
60 Broad Inge Crescent
Chapelton, Sheffield, S30 4RU
England

American Handbuilt



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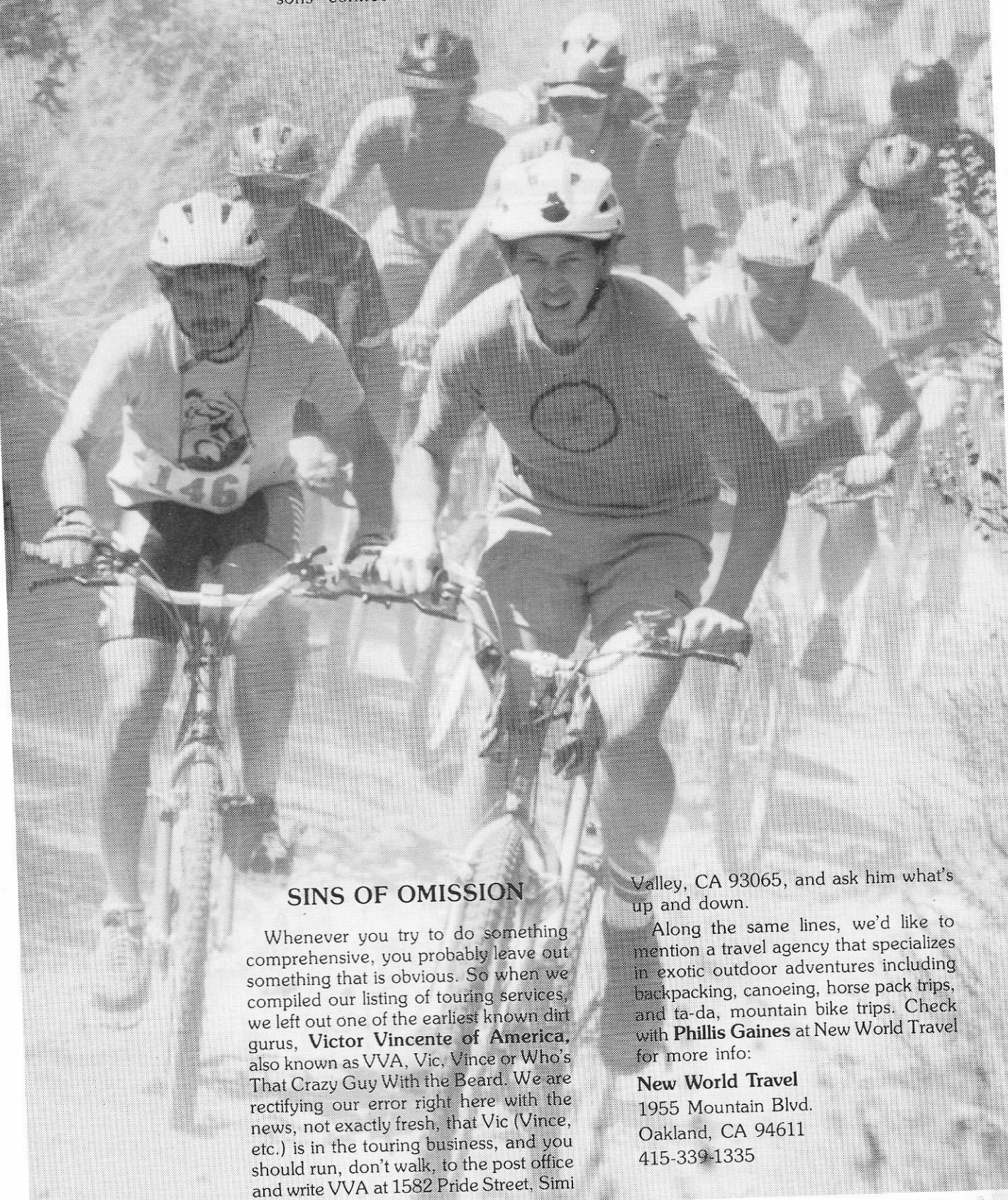
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SHADOW NOSE BLOWS IT

In a deliberately vague paragraph a couple of issues back we suggested that some mountain bike products were being reviewed in another magazine by persons connected with the company

responsible for the manufacture of said products. Further research, stimulated by a phone call from a Person who wondered if we meant him or her, has shown such accusations to be as groundless as instant coffee. Now aren't you glad we didn't Name Names? We are.



SINS OF OMISSION

Whenever you try to do something comprehensive, you probably leave out something that is obvious. So when we compiled our listing of touring services, we left out one of the earliest known dirt gurus, **Victor Vincente of America**, also known as VVA, Vic, Vince or Who's That Crazy Guy With the Beard. We are rectifying our error right here with the news, not exactly fresh, that Vic (Vince, etc.) is in the touring business, and you should run, don't walk, to the post office and write VVA at 1582 Pride Street, Simi

Valley, CA 93065, and ask him what's up and down.

Along the same lines, we'd like to mention a travel agency that specializes in exotic outdoor adventures including backpacking, canoeing, horse pack trips, and ta-da, mountain bike trips. Check with **Phillis Gaines** at New World Travel for more info:

New World Travel
1955 Mountain Blvd.
Oakland, CA 94611
415-339-1335

Puma Mountain bike shoe

Puma has introduced their version of the mountain bike shoe with the "Touring S," and the company has thoughtfully provided us with a sample pair in the hopes we would have an opinion. We do.

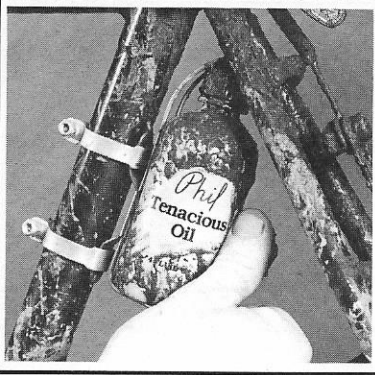
This is a great shoe for a somewhat narrow range of activities. Like racing. For racing it is probably the best piece of footwear, leaving something to be desired as soon as the rider steps off the bike. Even for touring it can be used effective-

ly, but the rider will want a pair of sandals or other shoes handy.

I'm willing to go along with the all-leather upper. My experience with Gore-Tex shoes is that they don't keep your feet any drier. When I mentioned to the sales rep that the upper looked like a soccer shoe, he admitted that they had "borrowed" part of the design from that area. I noticed that the bottom was slightly convex, and I asked whether they thought it might lead to twisted ankles walking on rough ground. From the sales rep's

answer, I could tell that the question had not been explored. Besides, these aren't made for walking at all, except as might be necessary during a race. The stiff one-piece insole backed by a steel shank is definitely stiff enough to be comfortable on the bike for hours, but you might as well change shoes when you get off the bike.

On the bike I found that the rounded sole slips around on my "bear Trap" pedals, despite the rippled rubber half-sole. The Pumas work best when used with clips and straps. Such as you might use for racing.




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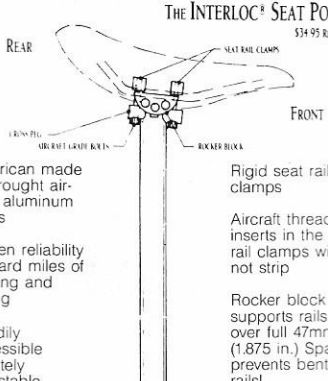
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Mountain Gear Tool Kit

Mountain Gear of Kings Beach, California sent us a nifty little tool kit to try out. It contains most of the tools necessary to make repairs during a ride, and it is certainly one of the most compact kits we've seen yet. Contents include a set of allen keys in the common sizes, but they are cut down to take up less space in the kit. The whole thing, allen keys, chain tool, screwdriver, patch kit, adjustable wrench and tire tools, fits into a small pouch that can be attached to the seatstays by a Velcro strap. The kit is so compact that it is helpful to read the instructions before attempting to fold it all up.

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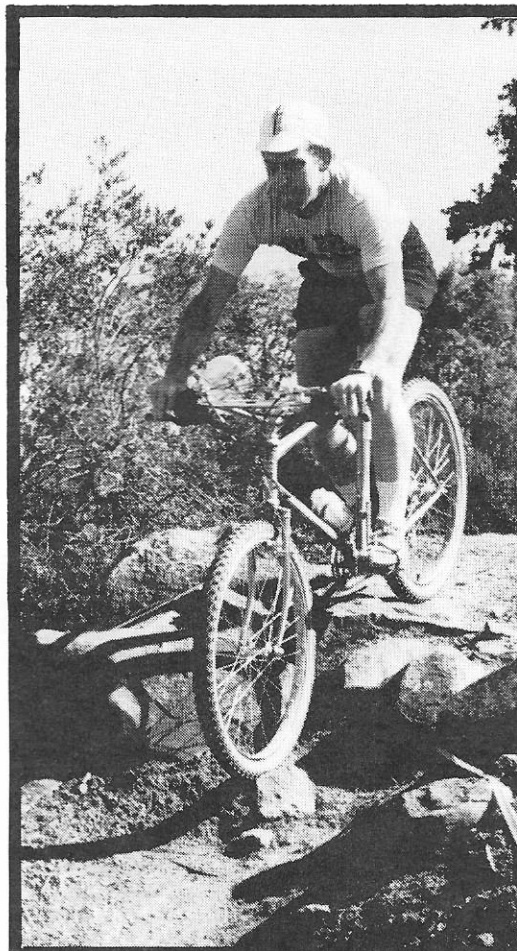
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BURGER BITS

We don't really dwell on the aspect of mountain biking that deals with getting off the bike unexpectedly and at high speed, but in order to save our readers the trouble of duplicating some of the more outrageous crash-and-burn scenarios, we have gathered a few accounts that illustrate the lighter side of heavy landings.

The Surgical Strike

by

Joe Breeze

Back in 1974 I was riding down the mountain with Otis and Marc, on a road that got steeper as it descended. Somehow, Otis and I got ahead of Marc, so we stopped at the bottom of a steep part and waited. We saw Marc approaching, going fast to try to catch us, apparently unaware that the road got steeper and steeper. He hit a section where a number of exposed roots had given us a hard time, even though we had been going slower. First, his left foot came off the pedal. Then the right foot. Then one hand.

He was still holding on with the remaining hand when the bike hit the log obliquely, and was removed cleanly from his grasp.

Marc continued on his original course, and we panned him across 180 degrees of our field of vision as he sailed by in a perfect ballistic trajectory. We had thought he was in big trouble as we watched him approach from the right, but as we scanned him to the left, we realized that he had sailed out of the flying pan and into the Flyer, so to speak, headed over a cliff.

I remember riding with Marc. Only a year before he had turned me on to my first Schwinn Excelsior, which I bought for five dollars in Santa Cruz at an ancient bike shop. Riding his 1945 Schwinn inspired me to refurbish the newly acquired Excelsior. I painstakingly chiseled off many layers of paint, finally exposing the original royal-blue-with-ivory-ram's-heads paint job.

Marc's attitude toward original old stock equipment, e.g. Morrow coaster brakes, Arnold-Schwinn front drum brakes, Troxel sprung saddles, "longhorn bars" with coke-bottle grips, fork braces, and "heart" chainwheels, was nearly religious. Even at this early stage of fat tire riding, my life had already been profoundly influenced by his introducing me to it, although at that time it didn't even qualify

as a sport. In fact, it didn't yet have a name.

Meanwhile, back at the cliff, our beloved Marc Vendetti was headed for oblivion and history, a footnote at best. But fortunately for him, some 175 years before the log jerked the bike from his grasp, give or take a decade or two, some unknown vector, a bird, a deer, a raccoon perhaps, or even a furry gray squirrel, had conveyed to this very site the seed of a Douglas fir. Whatever the vector, the seed arrived in the nick of time, since in the intervening years the tree had grown to a stately height of some 75 feet and a diameter of three feet. More importantly, it had grown a horizontal branch of

stout diameter some six feet from its base, the very branch which now represented the only object interrupting Marc's trajectory for some distance.

The branch found its Marc with unerring accuracy, taking him amidstships and bisecting his angle with Euclidian precision. Several seconds of silence followed the sound of the impact as Otis and I stared stunned and speechless at an equally silent and unmoving Marc draped over the branch. The next sound from any of us was from Marc, as first he gasped for his knocked-out breath, then as soon as he had received enough air, laughed hysterically as the three of us collapsed into celebration of the continuation of our trio.



Charles Kelly



Love Among the Ruins

by Jacquie Phelan

Every cliché has a silver lining. A stitch in the side saves time. 'Tis better to have ridden and lost it, than never to have ridden at all. Wasted not, wanted not. A ride goeth before a fall. Better late than sorry. What goes up, must come down in a big hurry. Everybody loves a clone. There have to be clones. You know, that red-nosed thing in a test tube? Bozo the clone? But I digress. We must forge ahead with my tale. Or you can turn the page.

You've probably been in straits so horrible you don't quite know what to do, and someone reminds you that somewhere down the line, everything's gonna work out, and there's probably even a *positive aspect* to the whole affair.

It was one of those magic full moon nights, the kind that becomes deeply ingrained in the hearts and minds of clunkerphiles everywhere. How was I to know that emergency room doctors also brace themselves for these warm, magical

summer evenings?

It was not your standard recipe for mush pie. Take a handful of sweaty starving riders, dump in a few beers and stuffed grape leaves, and send them back down the mountain to certain death or at least dismemberment. Me and Charlie Cunningham and Sandy Hague raced down the mountain, but owing to the lack of available light in the shadowy places under the trees, we had to stick with one another—only Chas had a lamp.

Before long we'd developed a pattern of scatter, then regroup, which meant that somebody would be in the dark some of the time. It was Sandy's turn when we rounded the last corner into Deer Park, and he met with considerable resistance from a fallen log. We must've waited forever for him after we heard a telltale thud, but he never arrived. We found him holding the bike with one hand. His other hand sagged way below where it shoulda. Half of him looked as though it were sliding off a hanger.

It was midnight and we were still a mile

from where Charlie lived. So now we could talk, instead a tryna drop each other like we had been previously doing.

Well, at least me and Charlie could talk. Sandy was mute from the combined effects of beer, moonlight downhill, and excruciating pain. He was, in fact, in shock. Although Charlie was supposed to be wrapped up in concern for his friend and that friend's poor clavicle, I couldn't help but detect some other concern around the edges of his eyes. That did it. I was hooked, lined and sinking fast. Ol' Sandy's collarbone managed to bring out the best in Chas that evening: why, even the ancient pick-up truck, which hadn't been turned over in years, got a ride out of the deal, bringing the number of times driven in seven years of Charlie's ownership up to a whopping fifteen.

Love must conquer pain, because I never thought any more about Sandy. Since that night Charlie and I have been apart about as far as you can measure the points on a distributor.

Back Issues

We couldn't possibly take the time to answer everyone who has asked about back issues, so we'll do it here. Some issues are out of print and out of stock, never to be seen again except by those who subscribed early. We do have available copies of some of our back issues. You will be interested to know

that the price indicated includes postage, which costs us more than the bulk rate we use for subscription copies. Price of back issues is \$2.50 per copy. Outside the U.S. add \$1.50 (U.S.) per copy.

Since we know you would never cut your copy of the Fat Tire Flyer, especially if this ad interests you, duplicate this page to order your back numbers.

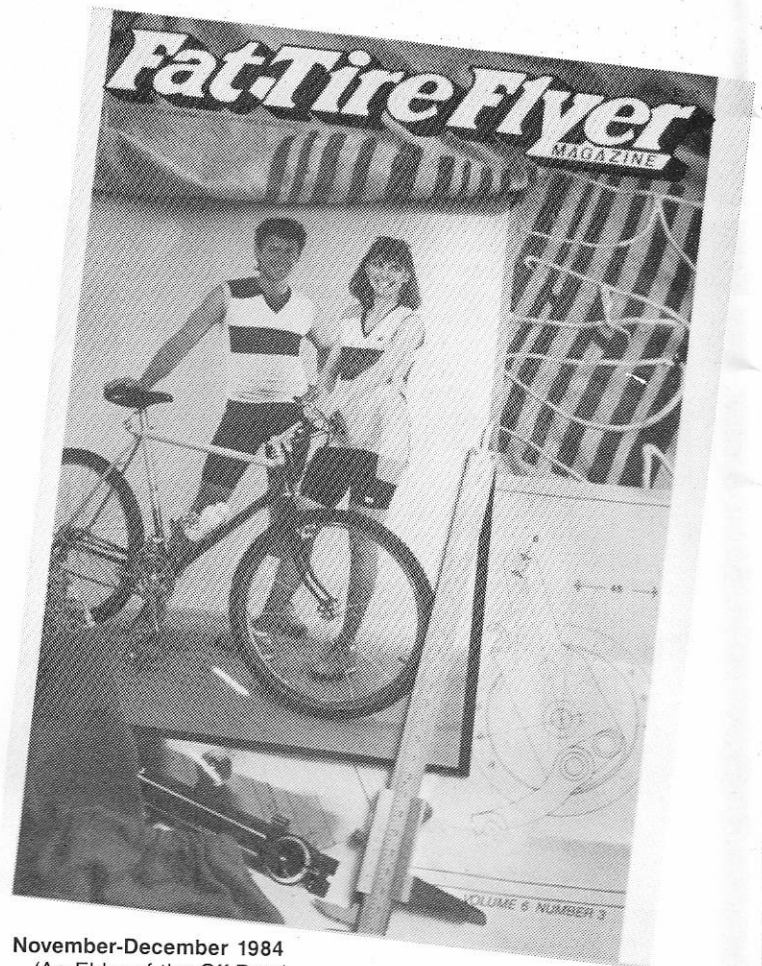
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March-April 1982

(Cyclo-Cross, Ricky Cha, MudPup)

May-June 1982

(Reseda-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, TechTips, 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, Trail Etiquette, MudPup)

July-August 1984

(Joe Murray Interview, MudPup, TechTips, Wreck Tips, Whiskeytown Downhill, Tecate to Ensenada, 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, TechTips, Uncommon Options, FatNotes)

April-May 1985

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

June-July 1985

(Biking in Brooklyn, Mountain Bike Anecdote, FatNotes, Fat Fotos, TechTips, Products, Minority Opinion)

November-December 1985

(Kamikaze, Flume Trail, Bodfish, Moab Slickrock, TechTips, Wreck Tips, Sport Racin', USCF/NORBA, Race Warp)

January-February 1986

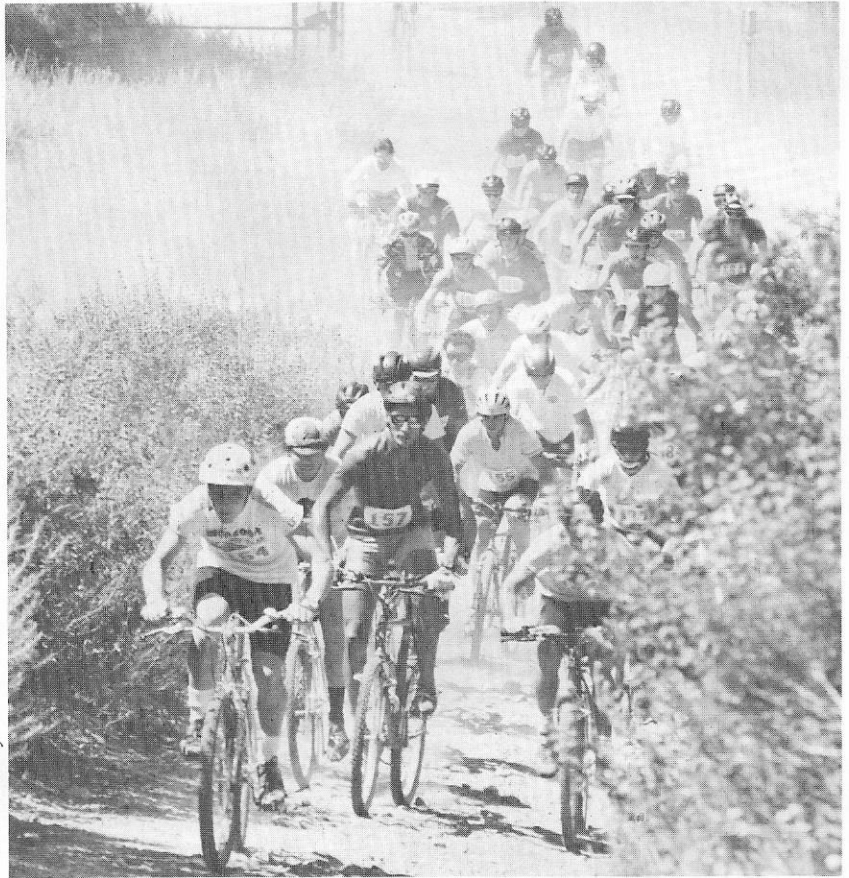
(Trials Issue: Nicol, Norton, Earley, TechTips, Out to Launch, Ice and Snow, Wreck Tips, Bodfish, MudPup, Mountains in Missouri, Fastest Fat Chances, Ratios)

March-April 1986

(Touring Issue: Max Hirschberg's Yukon Ride, The Arctic Cycle, Bicycle Trafficking in Bolivia, Tour Roundup, Uncommon Options, Universal Bike Review, Uncommon Options, Products, MudPup, Bodfish, Wreck Tips, Leapin' Lizard Downhill)

May-June 1986

(Fashion and Design issue: Hite-Rite Story, Fatanium Chance, Clothing, Beating the Drums, Fat Tire Femininity, Designers, F. Ewe Bailout, MudPup)



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Dave Wonderly

Doit Jerte

Observed Tribulations

Kevin Norton is the 1986 NORBA Trials Champion. He and several other riders were invited to the national Championship event in Durango held in conjunction with the Off-Road Championships. This date replaced the event scheduled for October 25 in Reno, Nevada.

The competition was heated, and not a giveaway. The course was tough. Unfortunately, some riders did not get a personal contact in time to make the event. The obvious question which arises is what are the consequences of an event which was announced by invitation only. A National Championship would seem to be an event open to all qualified riders, but most of the top riders had only received a personal call from promoter Tom Hillard announcing the event. Last year's fifth place trials rider Jim Deaton did not know of the event until he arrived in Durango for the racing—without his trials bike. Anyone else who wasn't informed and who was planning to compete at Reno should contact Don Mertle at the Fat Tire Flyer. Maybe we can get you a shot at the "champ."



NORBA National Observed Trials Championship Results

1. **Kevin Norton** Corona Del Mar, California 26 points
2. **Ryan Young** Willimasport, Pennsylvania 40 points
3. **Andy Grayson** Santa Rosa, California 42 points
4. **Dave Wonderly** Laguna Beach, California 48 points
5. (tie) **Dave Arbogast** Oakland, California 51 points
- Peter Delaney** Los Gatos, California 51 points
7. **Morgan Kavanaugh** Steamboat Springs, Colorado 55 points
8. **Mike Augsberger** Wilmington, Massachusetts 59 points
9. **Scot Nicol** Sebastopol, California 61 points
10. **Russ Weber** Alpine, California 68 points



Ryan Young



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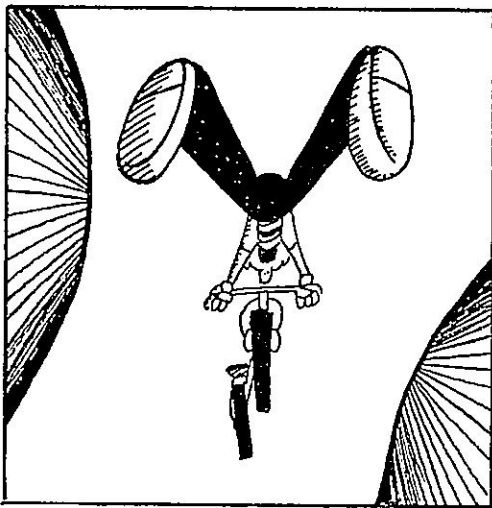
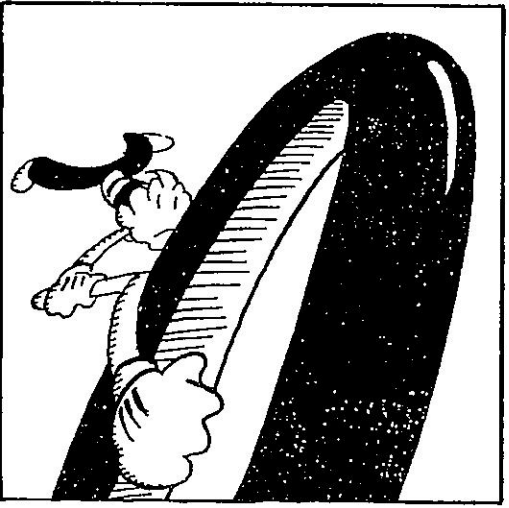
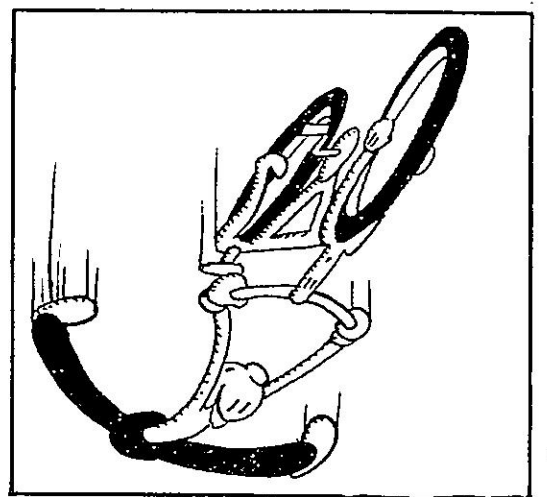
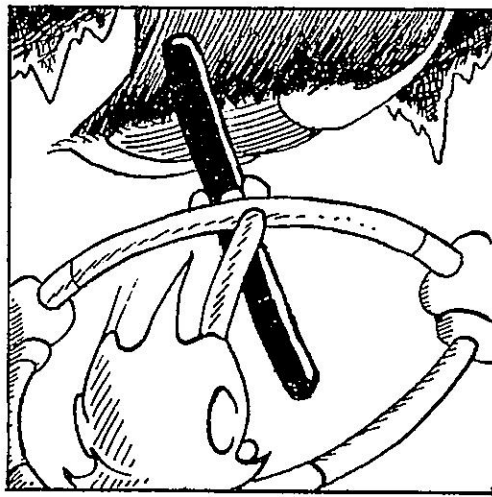
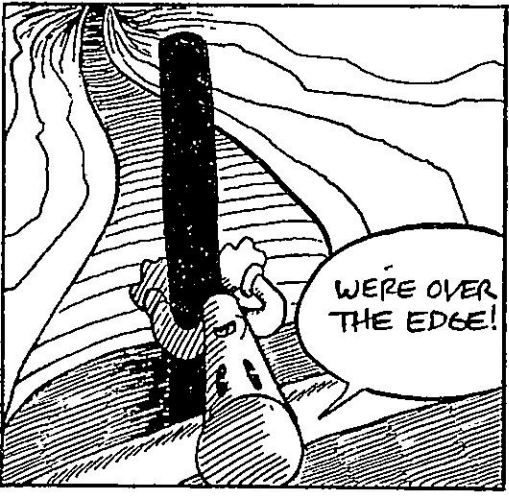
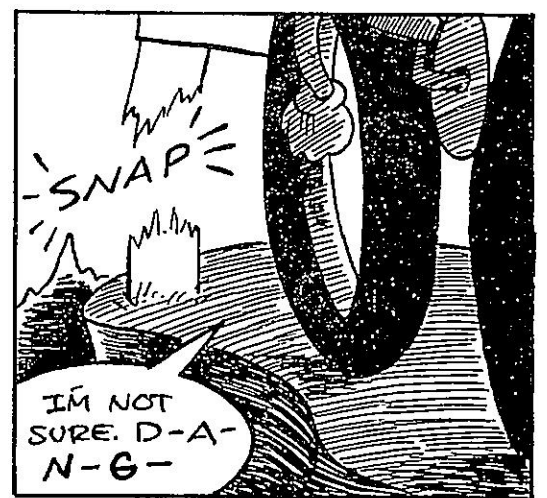
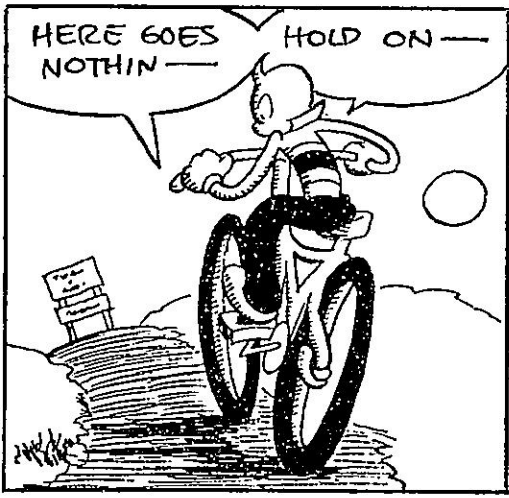
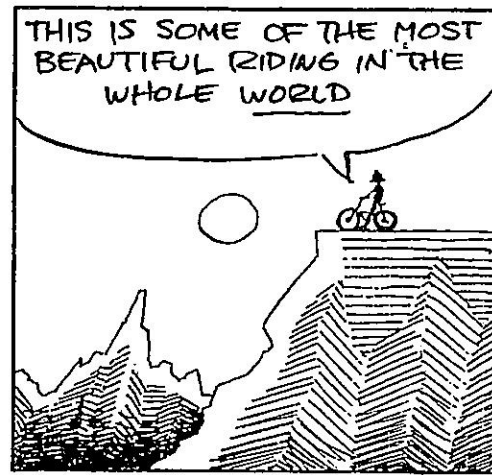
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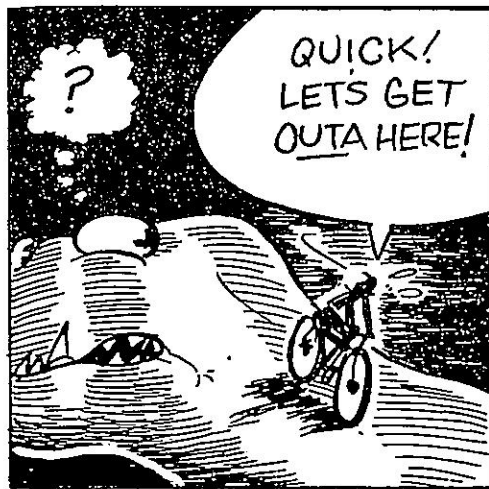
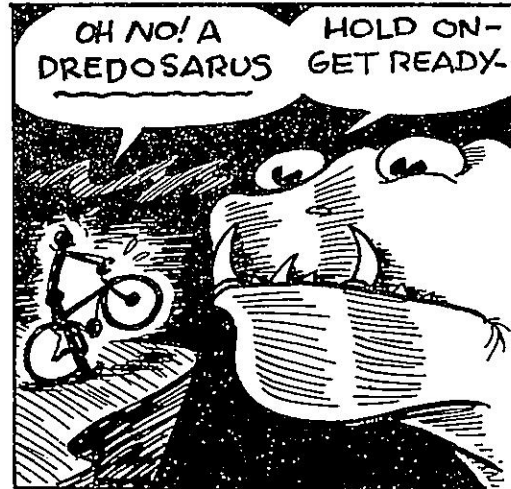
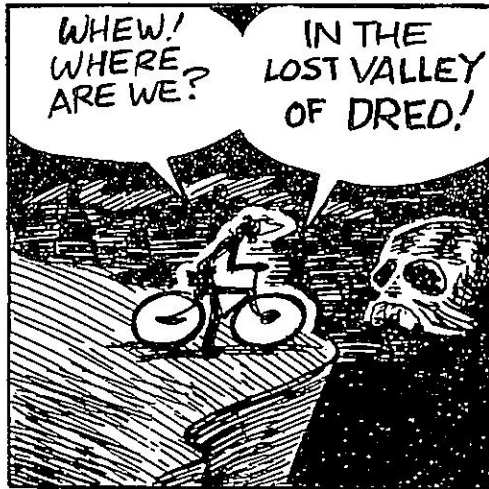
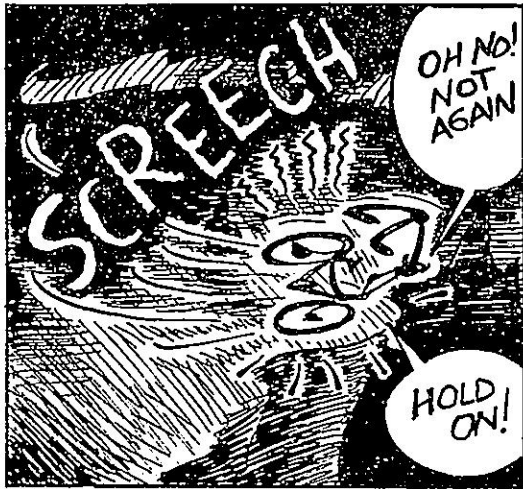
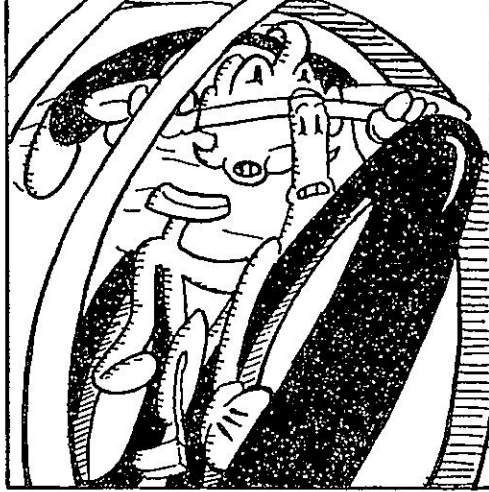
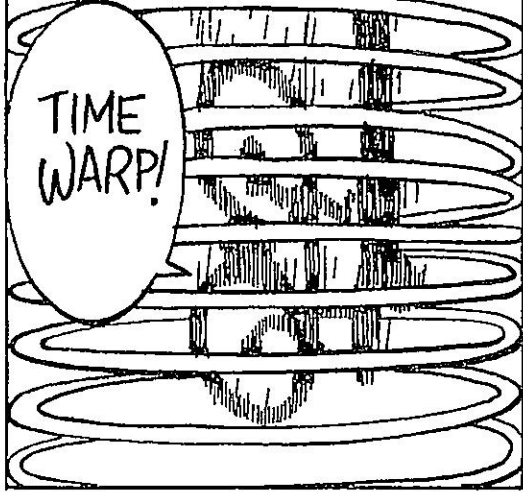
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