BIKE TRIALS MAGAZINE

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Danny Butler... "learning from the best"

US

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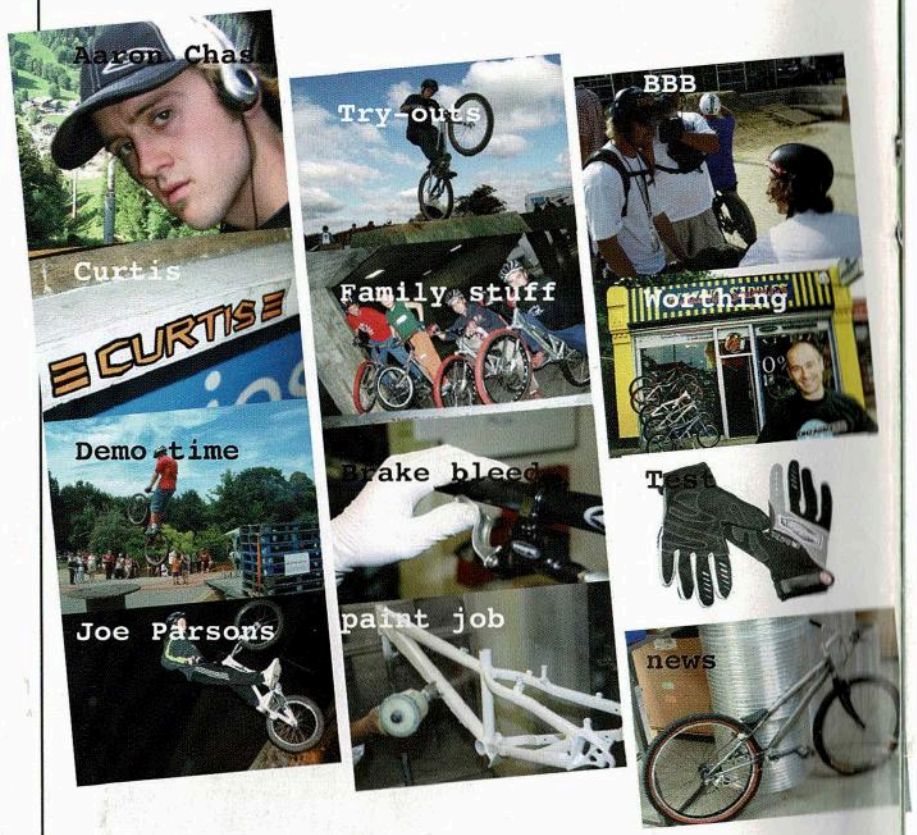

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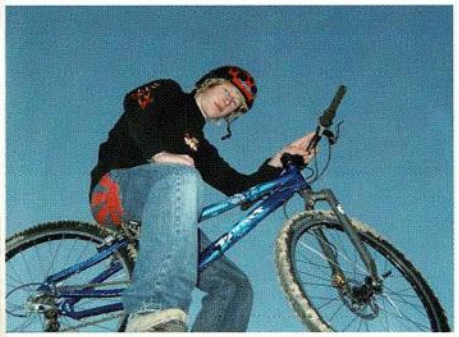
Sidehop record broken (again)

Spanish genius Benito once again smashed the world sidehop record set by himself at Interbike in 2002. The record came in Lorca, Spain, at a world championship round when he set a new height of 135cm, 4 more than his previous best. If he carries on at this rate could he sidehop the moon?





Danny leaves Planet X

Our Danny's on the move from Planet-X.
At the end of the year he will be under the watchful eye of Martyn Ashton hoping for a more relaxed sponsorship deal.....We got hold of Danny to find out why the change of scenery

Why the move to team Ashton Danny?
"I was just looking for something a bit more relaxed to be honest, and i like the thought of riding for a 'riders' team".

You prefer the Ashton bikes then?
"I'm currently riding the new ET 24' frame and it's great, it's very different to the Zebdi. I'll also be riding the Justice really soon. There's also the possibility of a new signature frame but i can't say any more than that at the moment!"

So, are you planning to change you style to fit in with the team layout?
"I'll hopefully be riding a few more comps next year, but apart from that i guess i'll be riding pretty much the same".

Your putting a video together at the moment, how's that going?
"Almost done, i'm off the Canada at the beginning of the year to get some footage so hopefully it will be out around March all going well.

You can check the progress of his new video by logging on to www.streettrials.co.uk



Atom Z find Uk importer

French rider owned company Atom Z have finally decided to make their frames available in the UK through MerseyTrial.co.uk. Their latest frame and fork, the Evolution3, retails at £400 for the frame, £115 for the fork or both for £500. Orders are being taken now. www.merseytrial.co.uk

BIU announce british world round

The BIU have just announced that after years of campaigning, Britain will finally be hosting a round of the world championships in 2005.
The venue will be the popular Addingham Moorside in West Yorkshire on July 23rd/24th 2005. The delegates have been working towards hosting a round for a long time so this is great news for Bike trials in the UK. If you want to compete at next years world championships you will need to do the following:

1.Hold a current BIU License
2.Have applied to the British Delegate before the application closing date (application form will be sent automatically to every BIU License holder)
3.Have been notified of selection as a member of the British Team for that year
4.Agree to abide to strict rules - you will be representing your country (no 'lager-louts' or 'Brits abroad' allowed)!
5.Attend the formal parades/presentations wearing the British Team Uniform

Visit www.biketrialuk.co.uk for all the info

GT Back with the goods

To say GT have been off the boil recently with their trials line would be an understatement. Hans Rey's life long sponsors seem to be neglecting the roots that they had in those early years, until now that is. Although both bikes are far from going into production, these give us some indication that GT are getting it back together. Both bikes belong to Hans and have been designed with the help of fellow team mate Petre Kraus. The most obvious difference in the 26' aluminum frame is the lack of the synonemous GT rear triangle tube layout that features in most other GT frames. It's a fairly typical US styled stock frame with a front end that looks like it was designed around having a permanent suss fork, although the chainstays do look a lot shorter than the previous which would suggest Hans has been listening closely to Petre's design ideas. The 20' is looking much the same as it's predecessors, with not a bent tube in sight. Both of these frames aren't likely to be out until late next year, but it's comforting to know that GT have seen the light and are making a much welcomed come back.







It's Ryan's moment

Contact: www.alpinebikes.co.uk
Price: £400-500

Ryan's trusted steed, the 'Ryan Leech signature frame' has been doing the rounds for some time now so how appropriate that Norco and Ryan got their heads down to bring us something new. We managed to get a few words from the man himself on the reasons behind the new 'Moment' frame.

Why is it called 'moment'?
I actually wanted to downplay my name on the bike. I didn't want my signature running all over the top tube, and decided to throw my initials only on the seat tube. This is a performance rig and I want top level riders on it; and honestly, when you get someone at my level who wants my job, they want to be on a frame that has my name all over it! I didn't want to tag it as a trials frame only too. Although it was designed specifically with trials in mind, a bunch of underground folk seem to really like it for street mtb. Also, this is the first time in 5 years that I've significantly changed the riding geometry, so a name change was also appropriate.

What changes does it have over the Signature frame?
Top tube is 1/2' longer to 21.56", chainstay's are 15.9" down from 16", head tube angle is 72 instead of 71 degrees, dual underside chainstay protectors, shorter seat tube for a lower top tube height, and of course new colors and graphics.

Is it all your input?
Yup! Although my input is based on all the trials forums from around the world, and the hundreds of e-mails I get from kids suggesting what they like and don't like!

Are you riding it in your new video?
For about 1/5 of the video I'll be riding it.

Check out www.ryanleech.com/hardware



Leeson Clear 660 P3

Contact: www.leesonbikes.co.uk
Price: £500

Clive Leeson has been keeping son Chris busy with the latest Leeson prototype. Based on their tried and tested Clear 660 model, the P3 has some very trick new features. They've opted for a double top tube and a double down tube setup which looks kinda weird but also has a rather 'i want one' quality about it. The brake setup is also worth taking a closer look at as it sits on the chainstay. Speaking to Clive about the idea behind the P3 he told me "We're just playing at the moment, seeing what works and what doesn't, we've tried this brake position to see if we can reduce flex that you find in their brakes regular position, At the moment we are far from going into production, we might even lose the double top tube because we need a seat" Clive also let slip about the latest Leeson BMX and 2 new forks, 20' and 26'.

Ashton Bikes ET frame

Contact: www.ashtonbikes.co.uk
Price: £364

Edd Tongue's new 24' signature frame is finally out and available under the Ashton Bikes flag. ET has put a lot of effort into his 'in between' frame and secretly I think he's hoping both 20' and 26' riders may take a liking to the thrills that 24's can bring. Could we have a new class on our hands?
Also fresh from Ashton Bikes is the next installment of the raved about Justice frame. Nothing has changed on the geometry front but it gets nice new decal's all over.



On another PLANET X

If your a regular to the Trials Forum then you probably would have heard the surprising news that Planet-X, as of the 1st of January will be stopping sales of the popular Zebdi within the UK. It has come as a bit of a shock seeing as how in demand the Zebdi frame has been but i spoke to Brant and he confirmed that this was indeed the case, asking why, he told me they had just decided to slop it! The good news if you were planning to get your hands on one is that shops are likely to have some remaining in stock, so if you're gonna get one, get it now!
On a slightly different note, the Mk 5 Zebdi is around the corner and the first punters to see it will be residents of Canada as Brant is planning on releasing it there before it hits our shores....if at all.



X-Street new importers for BT Raven

Contact: 01305 823714 www.x-st.co.uk
Price: £279

It's been a busy year for Tim Hargrave, Resurrecting X-Street from the grave but he's now firing on all cylinders since dropping the exclusive Echo dealership. Tim's just announced that he will be the sole importer for the BT Raven frames. The Polish frame maker has got strong connections within Polish Bike Trial association and is set to become a big contender in the sales of Trials frames in Poland.
That my well rub off over here. BT will also be producing a range of other bits that Tim will no doubt be getting his hands on to sell direct to the British public. You can check out what MT thought of the Raven in this issue.

New from Middleburn

Contact: www.middleburn.co.uk
price: Ally body £110, Ti £140



The RS7 has probably become the most popular trials crank in use today. The reason? Quality material, well designed, well built....
The phrase 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it came to mind when Mike Starey, Middleburns top brass, told me about the advent of an all new trials crank that could possibly replace the RS7 as we now it. Although details are sketchy, the jist we got was that the crank arms would take on a more 'flowey' appearance, 'smoother' to me and you, and the arm will be wider rather that thicker to give a bit more life span for the heavy grinder. The new arm will fit the old guard as they're not planning on revising that just yet. As far as a date goes, we could be looking at next spring but i'm sure there'll be news flowing in before then. You will also be able to get hold of the new 48 tooth rear hub before Christmas. Their current model only has 24 tooth setup so this new addition will score them a lot of points with the ever faithful Hope bulb users. The hub will be available with an ally body for £110 and a bling Ti body for £140.

MONTY
The 2004 range is now complete at

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Theme | Mission Impossible | 15889 | 75889
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Base T20

Contact: Base Bikes 01723 507332
Price:£329

The T20 is the replacement of the TA20 from Base Bikes. The TA20 was launched over 2 years ago so it was only a matter of time before we saw a fresher model.The first noticeable feature on the T20 is the lack of the square section down tube found on the TA models this time sticking to a more conventional elliptical tube. The second difference is the Truvativ Husselfelt crank the TA used a Base branded crank. Also noticeable are slightly thicker chain stays but the 14mm bolt thru axle looks familiar. Which leads me to the price, £329....£70 cheaper than the TA on it's first release!
We're not testing the T20 in this issue but we will be looking forward to working out how Base can let this go for such a small cost! Base have also released the T.10 which uses a 19' wheel at the rear.



Base TA26

Contact: Base Bikes 01723 507332
Price: £229

Hot off the press from Base is the new and improved Mk2 TA26 which we are told will replace the Mk1 TA26. If you ever rode or owned the original Mk1 you would know that it's geometry wasn't purely trials orientated because at the time, Base were making the transition from jump frames to trials frames. This frame however, gives us a feel of what Base see as a 'pure' trials frame. First looks are impressive, from the oversized tubing, to the neat new finish, this is more in keeping with what we expect a trials frame to look like. The Mk2 comes with a sump plate which is an interesting choice for what seems to be a street themed frame but if your not a sump plate lover then it's easy enough to remove.The chainstays have been shortend and there's plenty of tyre clearance because of the rounded yokes on the rear triangle. It comes with disc and v-mounts and in a selection of colours. This is the frame our team will be throwing around next year. Expect a full test in our next issue.



Pashley Ghz

Contact: www.pashley.co.uk

Price: £450

It's coming...not long to wait now until the first frames roll off the line. The revolutionary hand built frame designed by Matt Tongue is due early next year. The final prototypes have been approved to go into full production after long periods of testing and honing to make sure everything about the frame meets the high standards set by Pashley's Mhz. If you want to be one of the first punters to get your hands on this carefully crafted beast, drop Pashley an email via their website.

Cannodale Chase bike

Contact: www.maliceonline.com
Price: Chasse I £1799
Chase II £899

Not exactly falling into the trials category but more than usable for street are the 2 new models from Cannodale named after primo rider Aaron Chase(incidentally interviewed in this issue!)Both bikes use the 'Chase frame' which uses oversized tubing and serious welds for street abuse. The Chase I is the more pricey one because of the specced Jake Lefty fork, the Chase II is specced with Dirt Jumper III forks and has slightly lower spec bolt ons. It's most definitely got 'Made in America' written all over it, in fact, i could see Jeff Lenosky and co riding one of these.I'm also wondering if this is in some way the Beast of the East's reincarnation!Probably not for every day natural rider but maybe worth a look if you're turning into a street rebel.





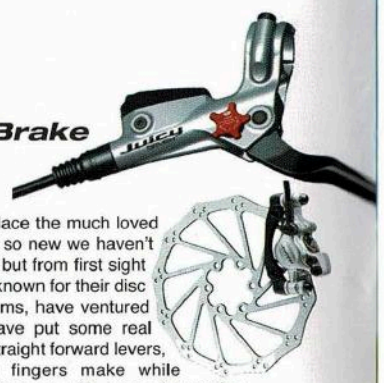
Zoo Pitbull

Contact: EZtrials 0871 2502026
Price: £450

A lot of controversy has surrounded the Zoo Pitball and the very similar Team Coustellier frame. I'm not here to bitch about who produced it first or where the design came from. Lets just concentrate on what we have before us, something even more wacky than Ashton's Justice. The whole idea of top tube/seat tube tube combo is to get the frame lower for increased ride over height, which lends itself to more control and stability on the rear wheel. Since Ashtons Justice came on the market, the frame has been reinventing itself the whole time, a new yoke here and a new double seat tube there, either way it's a unique new design that seems to be the basis of a new wave of competition frames. The Pitbull is one of these.

Juicy Seven Disc Brake

Contact www.avidbike.com
Price £TBA



Could this be it? the disc brake to replace the much loved Magura Julie? who knows, not us. It's so new we haven't managed to get our hands on one yet but from first sight it does look a bit good. Avid, not really known for their disc brakes and more at home with their rims, have ventured into unknown territory but look to have put some real research into it's design. Rather than straight forward levers, they've analyzed the motion your fingers make while compressing the lever and have come up with some interesting results. They claim that most other brake levers don't work in harmony with the movement of your fingers as the pivot point is too far away fro the bar so they've moved the pivot point in to maximize the finger force on the lever. Rather than your fingers wanting to slip off the ends, their new lever pulls back flush to give full compression with no outward movement. The brake also features fully adjustable pads from the comfort of your brake lever, ala HS'33 and the levers are ambidextrous so you can spin them over to work on the other side.



Batch Ti 20'

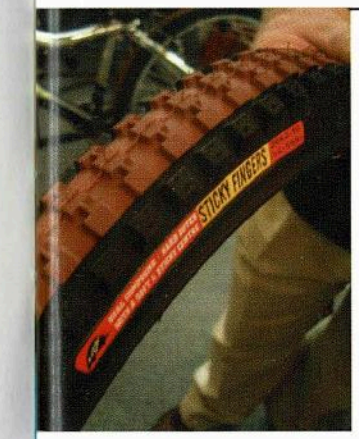
Contact: www.batch.org
Price: £SH*t LOADS

Those guys at Batch are up to their old tricks again....producing frames that most riders would sell their left bollock for. Their latest creation borrows heavily from Ashtons Justice (can't see many differences) but is shrunk into a 20' skeleton and for the final piece de resistance, they've crafted it from Ti tubing! If your making something from Ti, you need a paint job to go with it and what a work of art, i'm guessing they based the colour scheme on the effect of heat treating, or it's just a coincidence.
You can place you orders now but i'll bet they won't come cheap, time to reach for the scalpel....

NEW BITS FROM ONZA

Onza have had a busy run up to the Christmas holidays, what with the ominous task of building tons of bikes, they are also working on some new gear for release early in 2004.

We managed to get a look in at the Cycle Show back in September when Chris and Mike Poyzer were testing the water.



Sticky Finger tyre

Also on the Onza product list is the Sticky finger tyre range which as the name suggests, is designed to stick to what ever it's touching. This works with a very soft rubber compound running around the centre of the tyre and a harder compound around the outside. The softer compound is designed to grip a lot better due to it's high compression qualities and the outside is a regular hard wearing compound. It's a very neat design, as the centre of the tyre is where most contact happens. They have just been put on sale and are priced Between £12 for the 19' £16 for 20' and £20 for 26'. They also come in a range of widths.



Onza Woodstock 26'

We put the question to Mike Poyzer, head of Supercycles

What's the deal with the WoodStock?
It's the culmination of a couple of years work, Chris Akrigg was actually riding it at the Bike Show back in 2002. We've got a few changes to make before it goes on sale but generally what you see is how it will look in production. It's not an 'off the shelf frame', It's made by the same guy who makes our T-Lite and Chris Akrigg has had a lot of input in the geometry so its a frame that you won't see anywhere else, unless someone copies it of course!

The frame is due to sit neatly between the existing comp styled T-Raptor and the street feel of the T-Rex, taking in a bit of both worlds in it's overall design. It's Made predominantly from AN6 Ally tubing but does use a few other 'top secret' tube materials and is expected to tip the scales at around the 4lb mark. It will be available as a fully built bike which will include limited edition gold levered Mag 33's, Onza's new Tensile cranks and other Onza branded bits. It will also come as standard with Onza's new Sticky Finger tyre (below).
They have only just received the final prototype so the predicted release date will be early 2004. The price tag will be around the £700 to £800 point but check the Onza site early next year for exact prices.







Onza T-Raptor

Not much has changed for the 2004 T-Raptor apart from the funky new colour scheme. Chris Akrigg loves it but it's open for debate! Should be on sale for Christmas, comes with Sticky Finger tyres and Tensile crank. Expect a price of around £500.

Onza T-pro

The new Onza T-pro takes on a new form with a much shorter seat tube and Levelboss appearances. This has to be the first sub £200 'Koxx' styled frame anywhere on the planet. Chris Poyzer pointed out that it was very much a budget frame but was more adaptive to comp riding over the older model T-Pro, Although, they have no plans to discontinue sales.





Coustellier St. Blaze

Contact www.trialsrider.co.uk
Price £600 est

A lot has been said about the similarities between this frame and the Zoo Pitbull. After having a long chat with one of it's designers Dave Butler, I was a firm believer that the Coustellier was the first to hatch. Although, you could say that both frames are a copy of the Justice....
Either way, it's an amazing piece of design that has natural comp written all over it. This frame has had 2 world champions behind it so i think we can expect some unique performance characteristics. The seriously low stand over height is the first clue to it's intended use and all the other angles seem to follow suit. The prototype is constructed from T6 but the production run may use something different, possibly a little heavier. As for weight, as it stands it's around the 2KG mark but production models may differ. Having seen this thing ride and having heard some feed back from the lucky few who have ridden it, this frame supposedly has some of the best geometry in any trials bike today. They have named the model St. Blaze, after a familiar training ground in the south of France, Dave told me the name needed to mean something, not only to it's new owners but to the Coustelliers themselves, "the name St. Blaze brings back a lot of memories of our training day's in France"
I'm sure this frame will be aimed at the higher level rider because of it's pedigree and rather steep price (£600 est) but if you want the best then you have to pay for the hours that went into designing it. You can expect to see a full version early next year.

Carbon Trials Fork

Contact: www.trialsrider.co.uk

Price: £500+

You won't have failed to miss the sexy looking forks that the Coustellier/Butler clan are using. Yes, they are carbon fibre with an alloy double crown. For the weight watchers out there, they come in at 465g, about as light as it's sensible to go. Even if you have got the £500 asking price, it's unlikely you'll be getting your hands on these until at least summer next year. You'll just have to dribble until then!

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Echo Pure frame (long)

Contact: EZtrials 0871 2502026
Price: £375

Echo's follow up from the popular ES4 is the Pure. The aim of this frame seems to be much the same as the ES4 but from first looks it does have a more urban feel about it, this is given away by the much chunkier octagonal to oval down tube and the straightened top tube. Other changes are the straight seat tube over the bend in the ES4 and it has an extra 50mm or 70mm of length in short and long versions respectively. It uses Ultra 6 alloy tubing over the ES4's T4 which gives for a stiffer feel and less flex in the stays.The back end is as short as you can reasonably go and still has good clearance with a 2.5 tyre. The front end, as mentioned, is longer than the ES4 but a complaint that some ES4 owners made was that it was a bit short so this may well have reflected in Echo's decision to go longer rather than shorter.The gusseting is fairly sparse all over, only existing in the obvious stress points like the gear side rear triangle and behind the top of the seat tube. Due to the oversized down tube, the gusset plate has gone all together where it meets the head tube and top tube. The finish of the frame is clean, with tidy welds and a buff machined finish with minimalist decal's, although they were a touch'scrappy', but not the end of the world! The ride itself is very sweet, easy to get on the back wheel and great for holding manuals. It has a very similar feel to the Koxx Levelboss with it's slack 71 degree head angle and performs as well, if not better. The great touch on this frame over the ES4 as that it wants to be chucked at street sections as much as is does as natural and it does the business on both. The Pure comes in 4 bolt only so no 'snappy disc mounts' to deal with (ES4 owners will know what I mean) On the whole, the Pure is a step up from the ES4 and it's predecessors. Echo have listened and leaned from their past experiences and come up with a frame that exceeds in ridability and fills the gap of Urban and natural styles. The price is slightly steep but I think it's worth paying extra for a frame that actually works for trials. It's too early to call the shots on the lastability of this frame but I hope they don't suffer as they did before. Only time will tell.

GOOD
ridability
little flex
ultra short rear end
looks

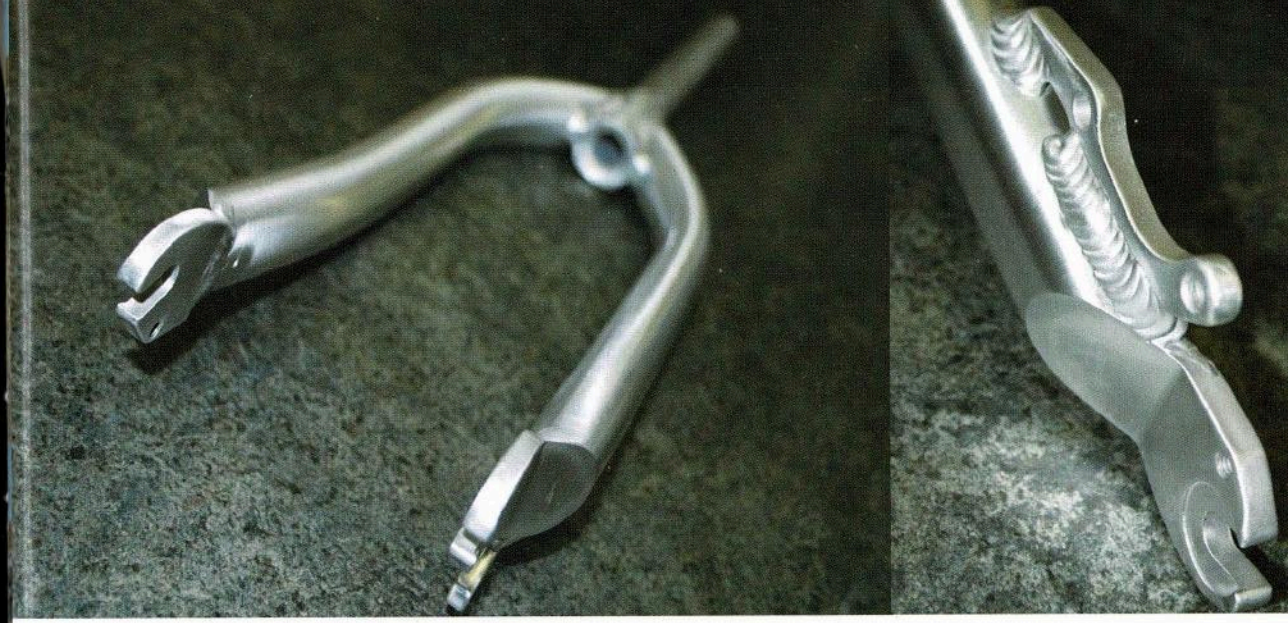
BAD
scrappy decal's
strength?

9/10









Echo Pure Fork

Contact: EZtrials 0871 2502026
Price: £75
Material: Ultra 6 Alloy
Weight: 740g

To compliment the Pure frame are these carefully named Pure forks. They use the same Ultra 6 alloy as the Pure frame in the fork legs and steerer which puts them into the 'rather light' category. Saving weight at the front is a good thing but the lighter the fork, the more flex and strength become an issue. Fortunately, these forks have just enough beef to dabble on the urban side as well as the natural and flex doesn't seem to be a major issue. The only strength issue for me is the Alloy Steerer. Although it looks well welded from underneath, the demons in the back of my head tell me that this is likely to be the area where things could happen! Those thoughts aside, if your a careful or smooth rider then these forks will do you fine. The disc mount has plenty of weld and the drop outs are nice and thick and they look the dogs. Just don't treat them like full on street forks. They come as disc only or disc+V mount and a polished finish.

GOOD
Light
little flex
good welds
nice looks

BAD
Alloy steerer tube
Strength

8/10



Echo wheel build

contact: EZtrials 0871 2502026
Price: £250

The deal consists of a 19' rear and 20' front. The rear has a 40mm drilled and ground rim with eyelets, that's attached to a TX Quando single speed fixed hub. The front consists of a 30mm drilled and ground rim laced to a Joytec fixed hub with Disc mount. As a package, you couldn't ask for much more. The tyres are soft and have thick side walls, the rims are pre ground and drilled for weight saving. The only thing you could make a fuss about is the quality of the rear hub. And even that ain't all that bad. It's a great combination that works for street as much as it does for throwing around on rocks. They're not the cheapest wheel builds available but if your upgrading from a budget build, these can do you no wrong.

GOOD
Good for street/natural
tough rims
grippy tyres

BAD
below par rear hub
bit pricey

7/10

ON TEST

Diamond Back Moto1 RMX glove

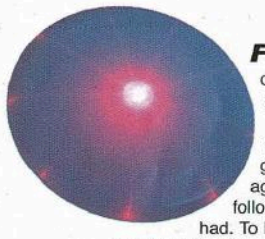
Contact: www.diamondback.co.uk
Price: £19.95

I'm liking this glove, the stitching is clean, it has a snot absorbent finger for those cold rides and a pretty reflective trim running around the each finger. The pad material is up for the job as it gives plenty of grip but don't expect them to keep your hands warm during the winter, if you want warm hands, buy thermal gloves. As a glove for trials use, you seriously won't find much better out there. Ian Drummond swears buy them (yes, he rides for DB!).



GOOD
good grip
snot thing
well made

BAD
cold...



Flash flight

Contact: Burton McCall 0116 234 4644
Price: £19.95

Basically a frisbee with lights. It's one of those gadgets you can't believe wasn't thought of years ago. We got our hands on this one and took it out the following evening to see just how much fun could be had. To light the thing up there's a switch on the underside and the effect is very UFO like. It throws like a regular frisbee and doesn't weigh any more, even with a long life battery on board. It uses fibre optics to send light across the top and down to the edges so when its spinning it does look rather cool. Best played at night time, otherwise the novelty is lost.

GOOD
strong
bright

BAD
not so good in daylight

Chain Reaction 4

Contact: www.maliceonline.com
Price: £21.95 (inc Chain Reaction 1)



If like me you love the Chain Reaction series then you're gonna love this. Easily their best yet. Again, it's not really trials but the street riding is supreme. It's also got a wicked sound track and the whole thing just flows along perfectly. There's also a bit of Boston Bike Battle in there, keep your eyes open for our very own ET. If you haven't tried any of the Chain Reaction series then I suggest you start with this one.

GOOD
exceeds Chain Reaction 3
a riders video

BAD
if you don't like DH maybe not for you



Killing Time DVD

Contact: www.maliceonline.com
Price: £19.95

Aaron Chase produces and stars in this 'Jack Ass' style movie. In His first solo project, Aaron takes to the US in the back of his 'shit' van picking up the action along the way. From the outset this movie does make you giggle, basically, young guys on tour filling up time by jumping off bridges and annoying the local constabulary, the riding is pretty good but Anti skate park riders may not take to it. There are some appearances from Jeff Lenosky and Kyle Ebbett thrown in there some where but be prepared for more street than silky trials. Its not a vid you will want to put in slow-mo to learn from but probably worth having for your collection all the same.

GOOD
Good featured riders
funny

BAD
too much Jack Ass
not enough riding



Mud & Blood street wear

Contact: www.mudandblood.co.uk
07967 020432
Price: T's £19 Long T's £22 Hood's £30

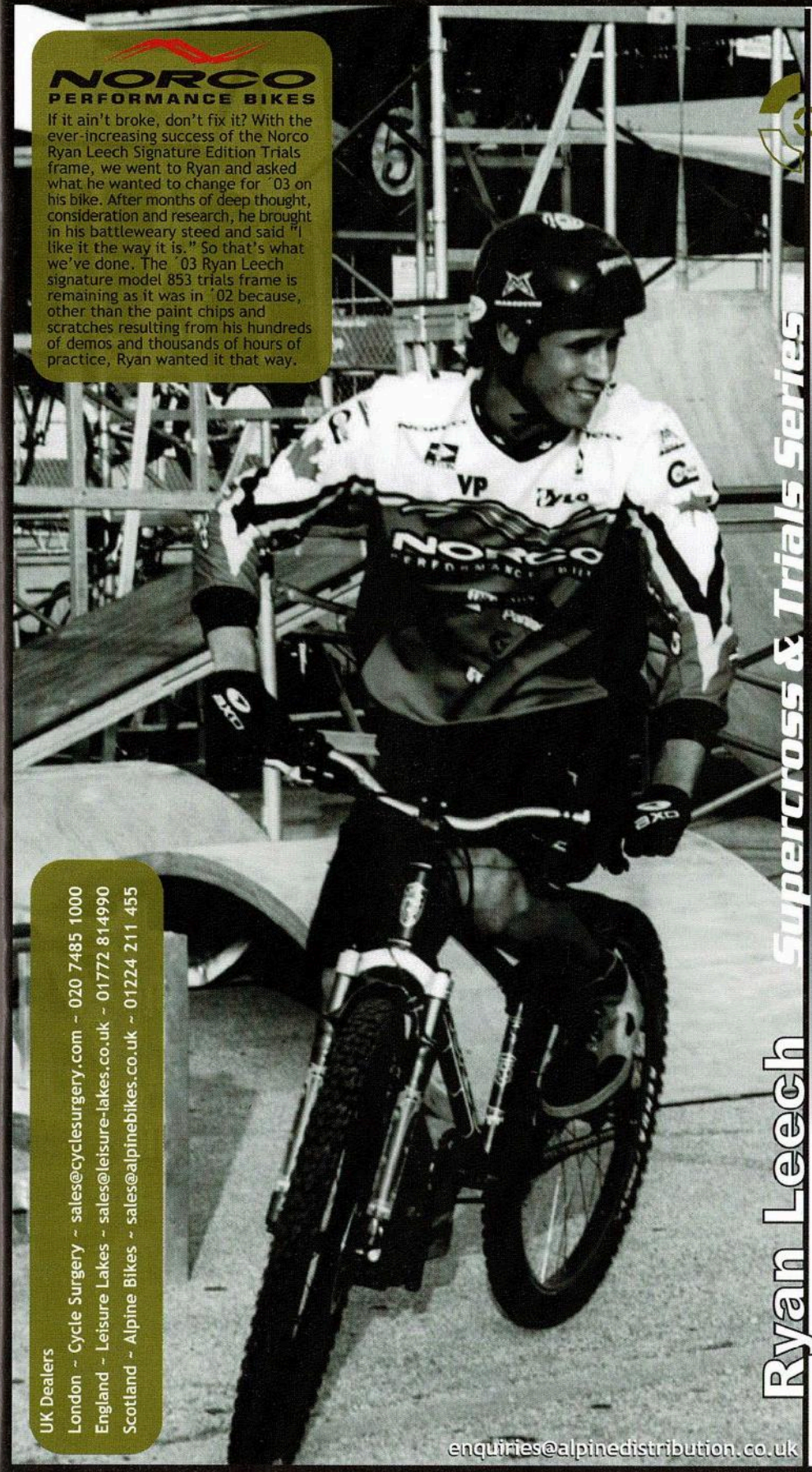
Fresh from new clothing company Mud & blood is this tasty variety of wears for the discerning trials rider. Well, there not trials specific but wouldn't look out of place by any stretch. The T's are all made from top quality material and feature a variety of catchy decal's as do the hoodies. As far as street wear goes, it's a small market so this new range is a breath of fresh air and well worth spending some dosh on if you've thinking of updating your used and abused wardrobe.

GOOD
nice quality
clean decal's

BAD
not much

NORCO
PERFORMANCE BIKES

If it ain't broke, don't fix it? With the ever-increasing success of the Norco Ryan Leech Signature Edition Trials frame, we went to Ryan and asked what he wanted to change for '03 on his bike. After months of deep thought, consideration and research, he brought in his battleweary steed and said "I like it the way it is." So that's what we've done. The '03 Ryan Leech signature model 853 trials frame is remaining as it was in '02 because, other than the paint chips and scratches resulting from his hundreds of demos and thousands of hours of practice, Ryan wanted it that way.



Ryan Leech Supercross & Trials Series

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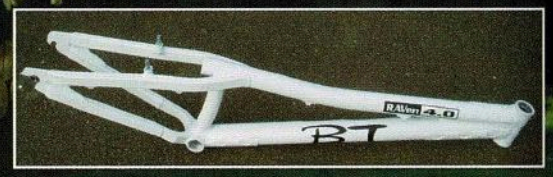
ON TEST



BT Raven 4.0 Frame

Contact: X-Street 01305 823 714
Price: £279

The BT Raven 4.0 is a brand new trials frame on the UK scene. It is manufactured in Poland and imported to the UK via X-Street in Dorset. Visually the frame is similar to many other new-breed European trials frames with a super low top tube and standover height. Where the Raven 4.0 differs from the opposition is price. Whilst other manufacturers are charging £300 plus, the Raven 4.0 is going to retail at just £279 – a bargain price. The aluminium frame features box section chain and seat stays and an oversized down tube. Vulnerable areas are reinforced with the striking wrap gussets that should help resist even the heaviest impacts. So where's the catch? – As you'd expect the Build quality isn't as good as you might find on a Koxx XTP but then it's hardly bad and not likely to ever effect your riding. You also get v bosses where a more expensive frame might have 4 bolt mounts – but again this shouldn't hold you back. Once the bike was built up we were pleasantly surprised. The super short back end (just about the shortest ever tested at 381mm) makes the bike really sit up nice and easy on the back wheel. Its so stable it almost takes some getting used to. The head angle is reasonably steep as well which all adds up to a very responsive ride. The downside of the short chainstays is reduced chainring clearance. We were running a Middleburn 16T (as small as you'll find) on the test bike, which was fine but there wasn't much room for something larger like a more common 22T ring. In all - a fine piece of budget trials hard ware.

GOOD
value for money
short chainstays
low standover height
heavily gussetted

BAD
not the best Build quality
no 4 bolt Magura mounts
minimal chainring clearance

8/10





Club Roost Stinger XP Frame and Fork

Club Roost have released a new trials specific frame and fork named the Stinger XP. Designed to be used together, this frame and fork are aimed squarely at the hardcore street market. The build quality and finish are excellent and the graphics are surprisingly nice too. The frame is pretty much gusseted all over at every tube junction making a super stiff and strong rig. The forks feature the 'plum blossom' cross section legs which we have seen on the Onza lite guys which is supposed to add rigidity and strength. As if they weren't rigid enough already club roost have also added two folded plate gussets on the insides of the fork legs to give what must be the hardest ride ever!
The frame and fork both feature V bosses as well as disc mounts. Once we got our frame built up with Middleburn RS7s and Echo Bar/stem we took it for a test ride. Initially the front end feels very high – probably due to the forks making room for all that gusseting. Once you get used to it though its fine. The back end isn't the shortest but it rides well for street moves and doesn't feel at all like a heavily reinforced street bike. Possibly the most eye catching thing about the frame are the rear dropouts – that has to be a world record! Simply Huge. These machined plates add to the rigidity and uniqueness of the frame and include a replaceable hanger. Surprisingly they are not as heavy as they appear. The forks too are only 1240g. A Lovely little street frame and fork combination at an affordable price.

GOOD
well gusseted
affordable price
burly dropouts
great finish

BAD
low BB if you use a smaller fork

9/10





Onza Tensile Cranks

Contact: Supercycles 0115 941 11 33
Price: £109 (available in 170mm and 175mm lengths)

The latest budget trials componentry to come from Onza are these new Tensile cranks. The trials specific cranks feature a threaded mount which allows you to screw on the dual material bashguard. The dual material means that the overall weight is low whilst keeping a hard wearing surface at the edge with the steel outer section. This means that the part of the bashguard which takes all the abuse is easily swapped if it becomes too damaged.
Like most other cranks these days the Tensiles feature the ISIS spline system. Onza intend to sell the cranks in kits as well, which will include a bottom bracket with either CroMoly or Titanium spindle. Like the bashguard the alloy crank arms feature a steel insert, which will allow any stripped threads to be simply replaced at a much cheaper cost than replacing the whole chainset.

GOOD
replacable outer bash ring and inserts, price

BAD
not much

9/10



Echo Bar and Stem

Contact: EZ Trials 0871 250 20 26
Prices: Stem 20" or 26" £35 Bars £25

These bars from Echo have been around for a while now and are well worth a mention. Most comp / natural style trials riders are using straight bars these days. The Echo bar and stem is designed specifically for these type of riders. The geometry is tweaked to give maximum feel and control. The bars are super wide at 720mm (28.3") and are made from 7075 butted aluminium tubing with a wall thickness of 2.8mm in the centre and 1.5mm at the grips. At 380g they should be just the right balance of weight and strength for most riders. They are available in black or Ti finish and like many similar bars they also feature the increasingly common over sized clamping zone (31.8mm diameter). The stem is designed to accompany these bars and is available for both 20" and 26" bikes.

GOOD
good geometry,
oversized for strength

BAD
not for street

9/10



Zoo Boa Frame

Contact: EZ Trials 0871 250 20 26
Price: £295

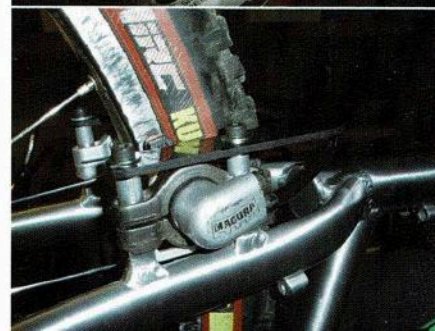
The Zoo Boa is marketed as both a street or competition frame. The frame we have on test here is the version with four bolt Magura mounts and no seat – possibly aimed slightly towards the comp scene. Firstly the build quality of the 'Ultra 6' aluminium frame is pretty good. The welds are neat and the brushed finish is perfect. The hype says that the frame is designed to have a rigid front end and a flexible rear end. As the frame on its own you could really see the stays flex, however, this wasn't as noticable once it was built up.
As you would expect the frame includes a replacable mech hanger. The only gussets are on the top tube and downtube, helping to keep the overall weight down to an impressive 1.825 kg. The only other reinforcing is a small bridge plate between the seat and chain stays on the drive side.The short chainstays (385mm) give a responsive ride. The Boa manages to provide this short back end as well as acceptable chainring clearance by using two machined plates as a yoke. Having no seat takes a bit of getting used to, but once you get it into your head not to sit down its fine. The geometry as a whole is spot on and is definitely trials specific. The only downside is the flexible rear end, which might not be to everyone's taste.

GOOD
light
good finish
good build quality
short rear end
4 bolt mounts
good value

BAD
flexible rear end not for everyone

9/10





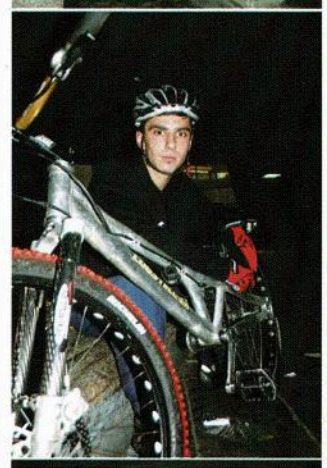
The Coustellier brothers have found a home from home..... And Dave Butlers in trials heaven!

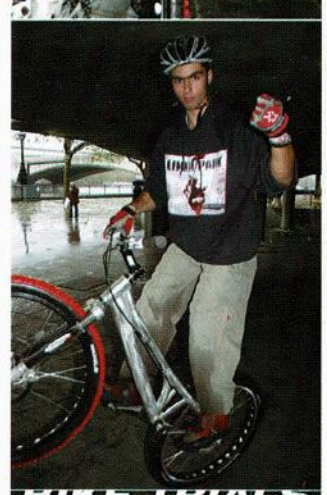
World Trials Champions Gilles and Giacomo have found a new way to mix business with pleasure as they become the Butlers closest allies in the world of trials....













The last time I bumped into Dave Butler was last year at the French round of the world UCI championships when he was part of team Koxx and his son Danny Butler was riding 20'. A year on and things are a lot different. For a start, Dave has severed all connections with Koxx and Danny has taken a leap into the world of 26' riding. But the biggest change of all is the rather unlikely new alliance with former Koxx brothers, Gilles and Giacomo Coustellier. The Butlers have almost become a surrogate family to the coustelliers. It all came about when the Coustelliers decided to move on from the Koxx team and together with their father, ride under their own brand 'Coustellier' bikes. Fortunately, the Butlers and the Coustelliers got talking and Gilles and Giacomo became best mates with Danny and the family. Initially, they concentrated on their training program, with Danny being flown over to France to learn the world class technique that the brothers had mastered to give them years of glory. In turn, the bro's would come over to blighty and stay with the Butlers and ride the local spots.

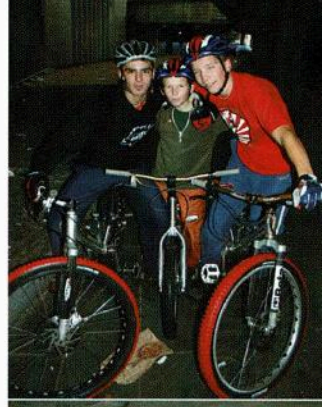
As all 3 riders bonded and became even closer, the decision was made to get to work on a 'radical' new frame that would be the first installment for the Coustellier team. 'Radical' was taken to the extreme when Dave and the boys set to work on producing what you see before you. Despite rumor to the contrary, the frame was designed from the ground up and took a year of to-ing and frow-ing to get the frame geometry up to the spec that was demanded by the riders. So, if you see frames looking similar to this, you'll know they ain't been designed by said company! Anyway, the guys are happy with the frame and we could expect a production run as early as January next year.

As the team takes shape, new products are also in development. Danny is currently feeding back information from prototype front and rear hubs he's testing for GoldTec and their also hard at work helping White Industries create the perfect free wheel. As well as this, Gilles and Giacomo have just agreed to be the sole distributer for Onza in France.There's a lot going on at camp Coustellier.

Although there is a lot of business going down and money flying through the air, Dave Butler isn't letting it all go to his head. His number one priority has always been the riding, watching his son progress to the dizzy heights of masterdom and maybe one day becoming world champ, that's what Dave wants more than anything, way above business running and money making. And Danny is doing just that, his change to 26' has been, in my view, a very clever move. Having spent his earlier years riding 20' this new wheel size has only improved his skill level and he can throw the bike around like it was a 20'. As I mentioned before,I last caught up with Danny at the French round last year and at that point he was picking up tips from his then guru, Vincent Hermance, now he is under the watchful eye of the Coustelliers his riding really is pushing to new limits. It's hard to compare Danny to some other top UK riders as his style is very different, but for 'big back wheels' and large gaps, he has to take the crown.

Gilles and Giacomo, both young and very into what they're doing, they treat the sport as a serious business and you have to if you want to make your mark on the world. Their training is intense and every time they balls up a move they give themselves a harsh talking to, to put their minds back on the job in hand. Some riders looking from the outside may see this phsyche out thing as taking the trials thing too seriously, but what I say is this, when you get to this level, the moment you take your foot off the gas is the moment your title is under threat, and at the end of the day, when these guys pull off some of the sick shit, you'll be too caught up in what they're doing to bitch about how hard they take it when it goes wrong.

Can we talk about 'big back wheeling'? Being UCI style riders, Danny, Giacomo and Gilles don't believe in using the bash guard for assistance, it's all about clean moves. Most British riders follow the BIU style and are happy to use a bash guard if it helps in their plight, but for most Europeans, using the bash is "just plain lazy" (not my words) If you've never seen these guys back wheeling 5 feet plus and you think it's all rumor, then I suggest you think again. They use the fairly well known front tap method, but have increased the explosiveness 10 fold. Even from short runs in's, the heights they achieve are all to do with power and precision timing. If you video the motion and slow it down, it's almost inconceivable that they can pull the move off. The front tyre hammers into the wall and bounces up while the rear wheel is flicked in and up instantaneously.









.....every time they balls up a move they give themselves a harsh talking to, to put their minds back on the job in hand

This technique is one that is, in fact, essential in a natural event, and the shorter run in space you have available the more you need that explosive power to get the height you need. I sometimes wonder if there's a limit to 'how high'. Maybe future riders could be touching 6 feet or more. At the end of the day it's all about technique!

With next years championships in sight, Dave is ready to take on the big boys at their own game, he knows he has 3 of the worlds best riders under him and with that kind of fire power you can't help but think that team Coustellier will be upsetting a few camps come show time.You can check out the official Coustellier website www.vttcoustllier.com which gives you all the latest on the frame and all future products as well as videos, pictures and results from competitions. Dave and Danny will be taking care of the UK sales of the Coustellier frame and all details on ordering and prices will be on their site www.trialsrider.co.uk very soon.

Reader Profile

Joe Parsons

Age: 13 ½

Trialsin time: 1 ½

Bike: Onza T-Mag

Biggest Drop: 5ft

Favourite move: Rock walk 180



Why Trials?
Because it's different and challengi

Do you look at any pro rid's for inspiration?
Ben Savage and Nelson Reis

Why did you choose 20' ove 26'?
I started with a 20' because i'm not t big! I have tried 26' but i didn't get on as well with it, plus i prefer t ave a bash plate.

What's your next bike gonn be?
I've started saving already, i really l the Koxx Levelboss 20'.

What are your all time fav rite trials video's?
Evolve and Zero Tolerance, it push trials to it's limits and gives me inspiration to ride.

Although your only a youn chap, have you suffered from any bad injuries?
One of the worst was when i hopp on to a bench, the back slipped out and i landed on my back acros he bench seat. This stopped me riding for about a week. No fun!

What kind of advise would ou give to someone just starting in trials?
Keep at it and learn from those wh an do it.

Are you planning to get i olved in any competition riding?
I have joined the EBTC and have s ted doing some comps. I haven't done much natural riding but i ca joint 6th and joint 4th in the 2 comps i have entered. Also, i came st in the beginners section in the MAD comp at NASS in Peterboroug

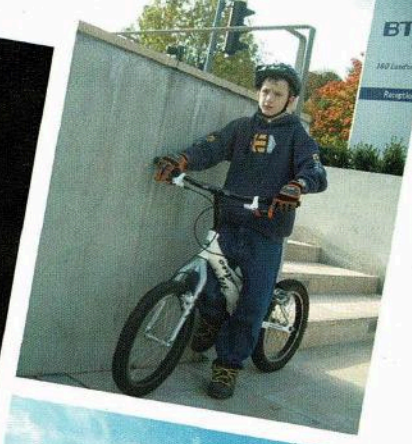
What's do you get out of r ding?
It's great when you've been trying d trying to do a move and you finally nail it.

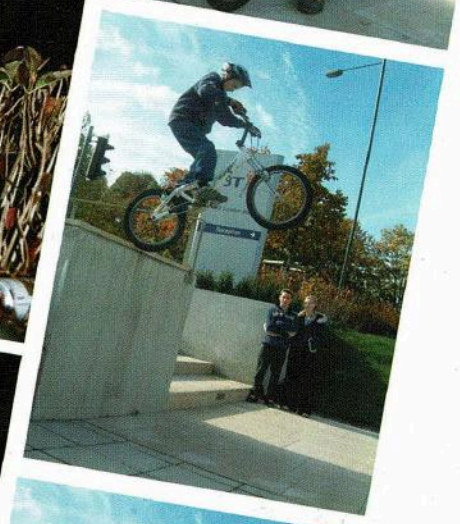
Do you watch your diet wh your riding?
No!

Do you get any kind of encouragement from your family?
Everyone, especially my dad. Also y sisters boyfriend, James, has just got a T-Pro so we ride together e's been riding about 3 years.

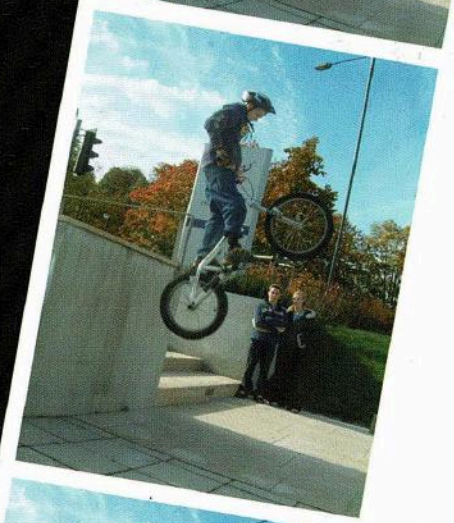






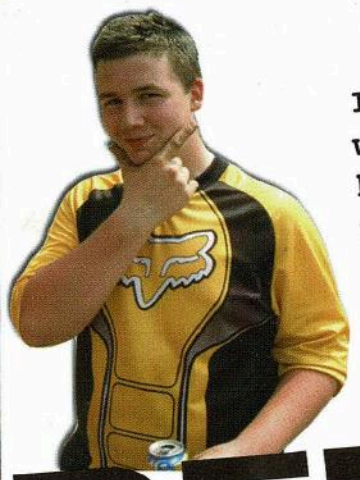












If you love trials and want to spread the word to the common man then there's no better way to do it than by setting up your very own demo team!

Here's our step by step guide to becoming famous.

DEMO TIME

Choosing your team

It isn't hard to pull a good team of riders together, just spread the word amongst your mates and fill them in on the idea, if they like it there in if they don't there out. Once you have your candidates make sure they have a descent grasp of trials and they are fairly punctual, then give the team a name. Team Frimley/Biketrials-uk use there website URL's to give themselves an identity and at the same time they promote their sites at the gigs they perform at. You could do this or just come up with a wackey name of your own but make sure it isn't offensive otherwise you won't get booked!

Sorting a rig

Obviously you can't expect the person who booked you to supply your rig so you've got to get it yourself. It's easier than you think to bosh together a useful looking stage set. First of all ask your folks if you can borrow that old picnic table that's been sat in the back garden for the last 10 years and anything else they may care to part with. Then ask your mates to ask their folks if they have any hoppable garden furniture. Don't stop there. Pop to a local builders yard and see if you can blag some bits like wooden cable reels etc. If there not forthcoming tell them what your intending to do with it and suggest you splatter their logo on it for promotional payment. This usually works! By now you should have the basics but if you want to jazz it up a bit your going to need a car or van of some description. This could be a bit harder to blag as the said vehicle is likely to take a bit of a beating. But if you are persuasive enough you may be in luck. You could even spray it up in your team colours? You will probably need to get hold of some wood beams to link between objects to add some variety, these can also be blagged from a builders or if your a bit of a tea leaf you could rob a few from your next door neighbours fence.

That's a very basic setup. If you want to really go for it then you could get your very own rig crafted just the way you want it. Extreme Sports UK or Newton's Rig builders can help you out but it will set you back a pretty penny. You can then have the whole thing packed into a trailer ready to go to your first demo.







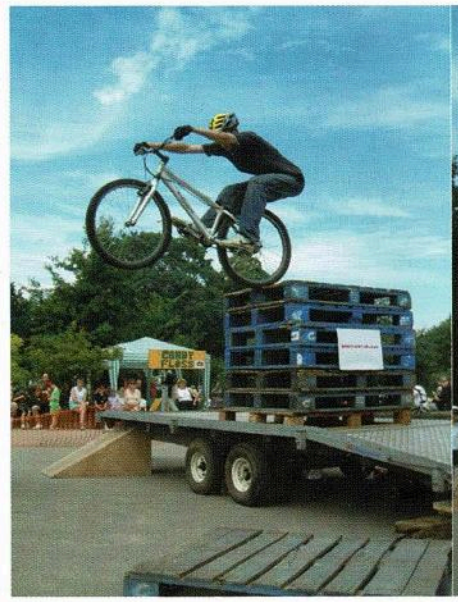
Gigging

Once you've completed the first 2 steps you can now book yourself a venue. As with any trials demo team, if your not sponsored by any of the big guns like Onza or Giant then chances are you'll have to do a lot more convincing to get your first gig. But it can be done. Starting small is the way to go and keep it local. Find out if there are any fete's or carnivals in your area and get hold of the organiser and tell them what your about. Don't be to cool when your chatting, let them know that you can get the job done and you can impress the punters. Basically, make them think your the boy's to entertain their crowds! Once you've signed the contract (not literally) your on the home straight towards stardom. Obviously the whole idea of being in or running a demo team is to have a laugh, but you still have responsabilities to uphold otherwise people aren't gonna take you seriously and people won't be rushing to book you! Make sure that you check out the venue well in advance and do some measuring to work out where everything will go. When the day comes for your appearance be there well before time and get set up asap. Let the riders have a good warm up and that they know their routines off by heart. Then your ready to go!

Mixing it up

To get the most out of your crowd you need to gauge some reaction for the best tricks. The first few demo's will probably be finding out what get's the crowd going, work on these things and make them the longer parts of your routine. Big drops usually do the trick. A good little crowd pleaser is a big drop comp. Each one of the riders takes turn in dropping from a certain height, as they land it the height goes up until you've got the audience eating out of your hand. Another way to raise the temperature is to pretend one of the riders is out of control. Get them onto a lofty object and build up a commentary that leads the audience to believe that if he drop's from the object he'll probably kill himself. You could word it something like "This is Barry, he's only been riding a few weeks and we've told him not to go to mad because he's not that experienced and he might hurt himself, up he goes onto the top of that van, be careful Barry, what are you doing Barry, get away from the edge, your gonna fall" At that moment Barry drops off and obviously lands perfectly. That will have 'em eating there shorts!

You will also need to work out a routine for the riders to stick to, perhaps send them out in pairs for a couple of minutes and let them do their own thing or you can get more technical and work out every move in advance. It depends on how much effort you want to put in. Just make sure you keep it varied as your bound to have some cockey kids that will spot if your doing the same move again and again.





Old players

Bike Trials Magazine met up with the Frimley.tk and Biketrials-uk demo team at the Grove Primary School Summer Fair in Frimley, Surrey. This was their 3rd year doing this venue so they knew what had to be done. The team of the day was made up of 8 riders although there were more if they needed them. Most of these guys happened to be good mates or just mates of mates, either way they were drafted in for their demoing expertise.





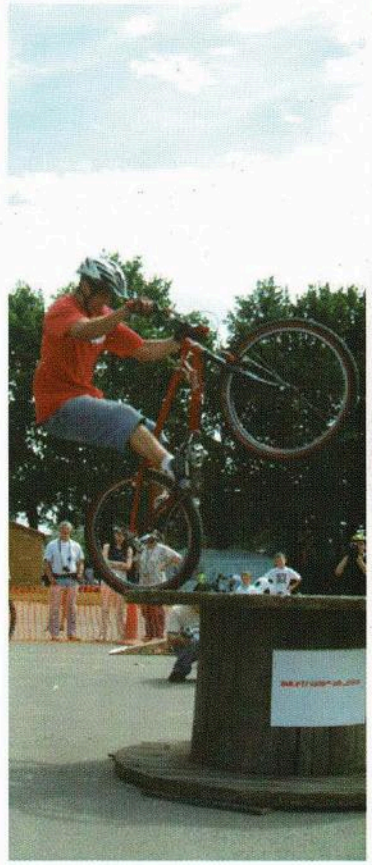
The line-up

Jonny Jones
Craig Firth
Adam Rose
Sam Hewitt
Ben Jordan
Leo Farnon
Dean Walker
elliot Firth









Demo Demons

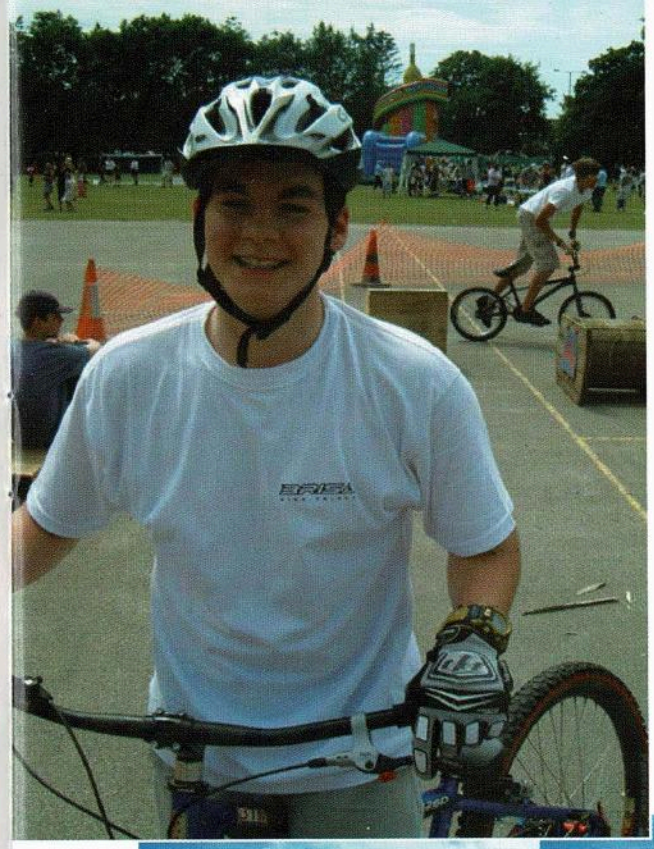
When we arrived, the team had already set up their rig which consisted of a good variety of objects such as cotton reels, logs, beams, ramps and a trailer. I asked Jonny where he got the gear from, "We went round and asked a couple of local builders if they could donate anything that we could use to ride our bikes on, and they were happy to let us have pretty much anything we wanted!" The trailer is my mates dad's so we've got to give that back."

They'd made full use of the space that they had to maximize the moves they could pull off in their display. Most of the morning was spent warming up and making sure everything was secure enough to ride on. All of the loose objects such as logs, beams and pallets were either nailed into position or tied down using rope. The last thing you want in a performance is to face plant because something isn't tied down properly! When all the riders where happy with what they were doing the show was ready to commence. The commentary was courtesy of the local radio station that was hosting the fate although they usual do it themselves.

The format of the demo was for 2 riders to enter the arena at the same time and put together as many tricks as possible in a 2 minute period until all the riders had been out. The commentator had been given the names of the riders before hand so he knew when they would be up although he did find it tough to keep up with the action, but he ain't a trials rider so fair play! The first 2 out were Dean and Sam who quickly let the crowd know what trials was all about. A few gasps from the audience that had gathered gave the riders an instant boost of confidence. That seems to be what demoing is all about. Knowing that your showing fairly ignorant folk what your life is all about.

Sam is a fairly experienced rider and seemed to be at home in front of onlookers. Dean was also out there to impress and was lapping up the attention by pulling some nice tidy moves. With 2 minutes up, the next 2 riders are called up to the start line. Again, both riders looking at home on this man made course and the crowd looking intrigued as to how these 'youths' managed to 'throw their bikes around'. Once all riders had had their moment in the spot light is was time for the finale.





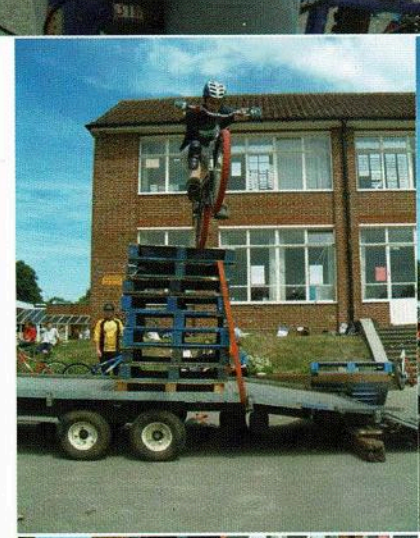
The high drop comp

As mentioned in our Mixing it up section, it's always good to give the crowd something a bit different. In this case it was a dropping contest between the riders. Pallets were stacked on the trailer and each rider took it in turn to drop to terra firma. They started nice and low with a couple of pallets just to build up the crowd, and as each rider successfully made the landing they upped the height with another pallet. This was great for the audience and the riders because they were geeing each other on to go bigger and bigger. At it's peak there were about 8 pallets which equated to about 8 feet, not amazingly high you might think but when you consider that most of the crowd had never experienced anything like this before, for them it was breathtaking!

Leo was mixing in some variety with his drops, placing a can on the floor and hitting it square on first time. A great show of accuracy.

Elliot also made his drops a bit different, instead of a straight drop he gapped over to a cotton reel 4 feet lower and at least 6 feet away. Elliot definitely knew how to keep it original.

As the show came to an end the crowd showed their respect by giving all the riders a clap and for some of them, a pat on the back.









As far as demoing goes, this one, in my eyes, was a success. The riders enjoyed it and the crowd loved it. An afternoon of bringing trials to the masses!

www.frimley.com
www.biketrials-uk.com

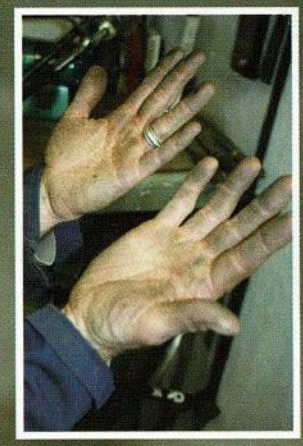
CURTIS BIKES

When someone says "my frame is hand made" do you really believe them? If they have a Curtis, you'd better start!

'British built' and 'designed in the UK' are common phrases used to market a bike or frame to appeal to those riders who appreciate the qualities of owning something that has the word British or UK in it but neither of these can substitute for a frame that doesn't even exist at the time you place your order.

Name: Gary Woodhouse
Age: 38
Occupation: Frame builder
Advertising Manager
Marketing Manager
Tea maker
Team Manager
rider

Children: 3 kids



From the moment you pick up the phone and post off your Cheque, Gary Woodhouse will be picking out the tubing for the frame that you've specced. The choices that Gary offers at the moment are the T1 Comp,T1 Elite and the T1 Street, all have the same geometry and use the same T45 steel tubing but the Elite uses a slighter thinner 20 gauge tube as opposed to the Comps 18 gauge. The Street has thicker chain stays. This means the Elite comes in at 4.4lbs, which is a pound lighter than the T1 Comp at 5.5lbs and the Street at 5.7lbs. The Elite is geared for pro use and the comp is more for the intermediate rider. The street is for anyone who wants to play rough.

Nothing is pre built in the Curtis work shop, all the tubing sits up high on long racks around the workshop and the head tubes and other shiny bits are stacked neatly on shelves, waiting to be hand picked.

When I turned up at the door, Gary was setting about reinforcing a customers bike that looked like it had been to hell and back. The rear left chain stay was almost ground to dust, it looked like it's owner was a heavy wall grinder. So, the solution in Gary's mind was to weld on some stainless steel rods along the length and also a couple on the underside of the BB. Each rod was carefully cut to length and filed for a perfect fit. In some ways it was improvisation but definitely 'professional' improvisation as Gary has been building frames for a long time.

Gary was keen to point out that T45 tubing is one of the strongest materials in use in frame building and that cracks were a rare sight. He even went as far to tell us that not one single frame had been sent back with ovalised head tube syndrome, something Gary is very proud of.

Curtis was the brain child of Brian Curtis who in his day was a top class motocross rider. He built and tested his own bike frames and rode them to victory on many an occasion. Gary Woodhouse, a young up and coming BMX rider, worked for Brian as soon as he left school, learning the skills of frame building and testing the frames for performance and strength before they were offered to customers. Some years down the line Gary was getting more and more involved with the day to day running of Curtis and eventually took over as master frame builder after picking up the necessary skills along the way. In 1996, Gary had the thought of venturing into the MTB market and came up with some XC models which were well accepted amongst hard core XC'ers. The Elite frame came about in about 1999 when Gary spotted a local rider by the name of Mark Wicks performing 'Trials'. Gary offered to make him a trials geometry bike and the rest is history!

4 years down the line and the Elite and Comp are still taking plenty of orders from sensible thinking trials riders looking for the ultimate in hand built luxury, built to their very own specification and that's exactly what Curtis are all about.

You know how 'pimp' it is to have a personalised bike and so do Curtis. You get to have your name or initials stamped into the drop outs, you get to choose the seat tube width, mini seat or normal seat. You get to choose the finish, satin black, matt black, British racing green, Howies blue, White, Red...

Although Gary bends the rear stays, cuts and shapes each tube to exact tolerances and jigs every piece into place, he still uses the immence welding skills of Brian to keep the whole thing together. Once Gary has set the frame into the specially made jig, he only 'tacks' the parts into place using braising rod (which incidentaly is used to repair busted teeth in gear boxes, so, 'ard as nails!) When he's happy the frame is tickety boo he shoots down to Brian where he works his magic as a welder with over 30 years experience. Gary has been learning to weld and does weld his own projects but as he told me "there is an art form to 'fillet' braising and it takes a long time to be able to make a clean join. I've been doing it for more than 5 years and i'm still not confident in welding a frame to send to a customer"

Gary has also been working on a new stamping technique, this is where the frame is punched with your initials. He punches the letters in as normal but rather than leaving it at that he fills in the grooves with Braising rod and then files it down flush to a smooth finish and the end result is well pimpin'. Gold letters! If he perfects this technique he may well offer it as an optional extra very soon.

When Gary's not hard at work fulfilling customers orders he will be found building his own Hybrid inventions. His current model is a BMX cruiser for some serous 4X racing. Again, it's pretty much improvisation but the finished product is likely to have some well thought out lines and angles. That seems to be the great thing about using steel, the way you can just weld one piece to another and create the ultimate geometry.

Hooray for the British builder, there's not much better in life than a hand built frame. Take my word for it!

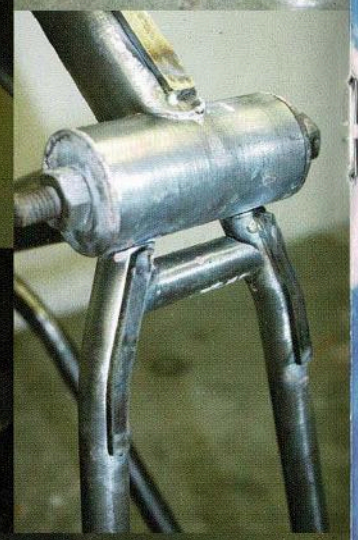
If your interested in what Gary does then give him a call or visit the website.
www.curtisbikes.co.uk















WWW.EZTRIALS.CO.UK

ECHO



TALENT SPOTTING

It was gonna happen some time,
it was just a case of when!

TEAM TRY-OUTS

BTM teamed up with Base Bikes to collect together a team of the finest trials talent and it all went down at the Hop Farm Country Park in Kent.

It's true, we have been talking about the 'team' for a long time so I finally got my arse in gear and pulled the whole concept together.
Base Bikes are the guys we decided to pair up with, with 3 new models just released and with the intention of taking the trials world by storm, it seemed to be the natural choice. I got asked the question "What will the team have to do?" I had to think hard before answering and here's what I came up with, Photo shoots, Demos, shows, performing at Natural events....the list goes on, what it all boils down to is promotion, spreading the word in any way we can.We put together our list of entrants and came up with a figure of 16 to fight it out on the try-out day. The Hop Farm Country Park in Kent was the venue and it took a day of building to get the course ready in time for the show down. Fortunately the forecast was for fine weather so everything was looking good for a rather nice day. The judges, hand picked by me, were the world renowned DB rider Ian Drummond, Dave Sproat, accomplished rider and Wildside bike mechanic, Section 7 creator and general all round nice guy Chris Ratcliffe and me, obviously. We would be looking for 3 things in our judging, Ability, i.e. how good is the rider?, Performance, i.e. use of objects/variation and finally showmanship, i.e are they pleasing the crowd?. A simple set of parameters, could our huddle of riders hit the right notes? Only time would tell.

The course was put together by yours truly the day before the gig and every object was completely blagged from local leccy's and builders yards (check out DEMO TIME in this issue). We had Cotton reels, Skips, scaffolding planks, and pallets all arranged in a way that the riders could gap around if they found the right lines. Ian D also very kindly bought his DB rig down to add to the variation.

With everything in place it was time to get the show on the road. As the competitors for the day turned up one by one I had time to tweak the course layout and iron out any wonky cotton reels and check for slippy pallets. Once happy, I actually got round to checking the guys in first of all to make sure they were suppose to be there and secondly making sure they had the right kit, bike, helmet and common sense. Every rider was given the chance to have a play around on the set to give them a chance to work out lines and combinations. We decided to send the riders out in pairs to give the judges a chance to analyse their individual strengths, I know how tough it is to comment on a rider when they're riding with 4 other people!
The format I came up with was 2 at a time for 2 rounds each, each round 2 minutes long, scores added, then top 8 through to one more round and then pick 6 winners, easy....
The first 2 riders out were Ben Jordan and Leo Farnon, both riders I had seen ride in the past so I had a fair idea of what they were about but they would have to impress not just me but the other 3 judges. The make-shift hooter was sounded (horn on the hire van) and the boys were off. Both riders had been out on the course before hand so they seemed to know the routes they would take. Leo made good use of the cotton reels, pulling off some nice gaps under control at all time. Ben was going for some of the bigger moves involving the 2 skips which he also found comfortable, meanwhile the judges having to take it all in.

When your out riding even 2 minutes feels like an age, both riders finished and well out of breath, it's amazing how intense you have to make your run to fit as much in as you can.



Next 2 up and they had got an idea of which parts of the course were working and which ones weren't worth looking at. The Pallet stack was an entity of it's own, set at about 4 1/2 feet high it was one of those heights that was just reachable for an expert rider but tough for a good rider, so during the 2 minute session it wasn't really attempted as it used up to much time at failed attempts. Jo Granger and Fredd Judd were also up for it riders who proved they could make use of what was on offer, the DB rig also came in to play, scaling slowly to the top and then finishing with a big 8 foot drop. The cotton reels were beginning to see some wear, so we took a minute out to get them wedged up to stop them from rocking like horses. So far, thing's were going well, the course was doing its best not to fall apart and we were getting through the riders pretty quickly.
David Jones was an eye catcher, with a nice bonnet of hair and a riding style to match, his ride was without a doubt the best of the day so far, very smooth gapper and had time to throw in some party pieces like X-ups and 360's, a definite crowd pleaser, one of those riders that seems to go un-noticed but has a silly amount of skill. Darren Hill was another rider i'd had the fortune of meeting a while ago and I knew he was up for the job (the fact he was already riding a Base is pure coincidence). Darren is one of those riders who will go for anything no matter how big and 8 times out of 10 will pull it off first time round and this became clear in his use of the 2 minute run. No problem with the skips, even having time to make it look good by pulling off neat 360 drop offs, another one for the judges to tag.

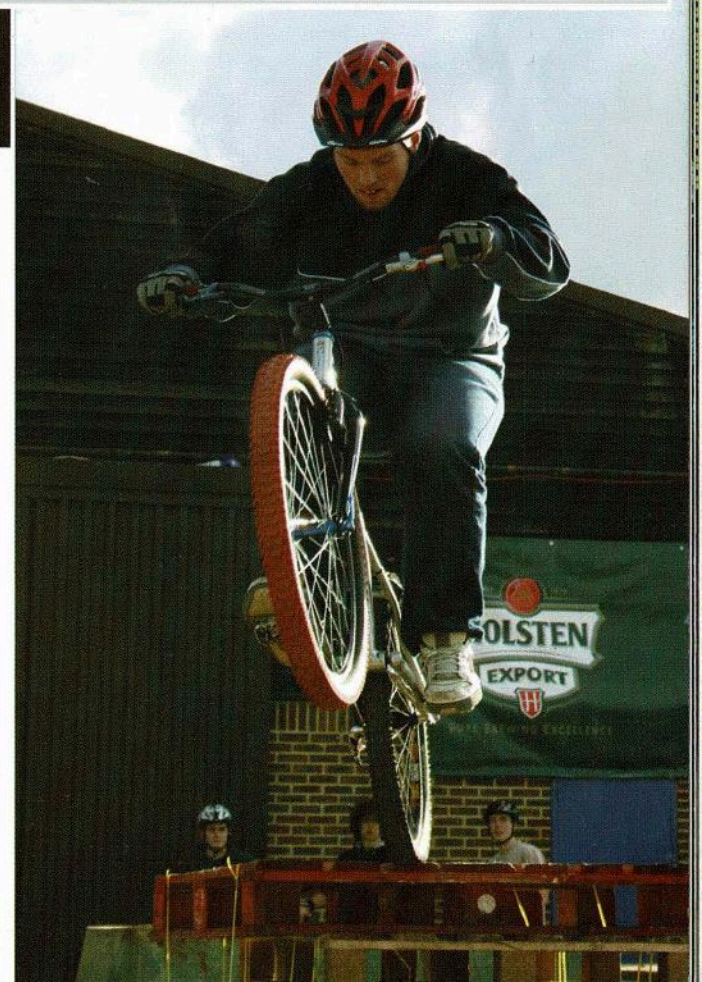
Up next probably one of my favorite riders to watch going by the name of Elliot Firth. A man on his own mission and a hugely talented rider, amazing really that he hasn't been snapped up by another team already. Anyway, he was here and up for the challenge and he didn't disappoint, taking the whole course at ease and just going one further than most other riders. With Elliot, it all seems to be about variation and that's something he can do well. Nice manuals down sloped 3' wide rails and Switzerland sqeekers to 180 off's are just two thing's he can do in his sleep.
Chris Ratcliffe even pulled me aside to ask WHO the hell that was, I think he was impressed.

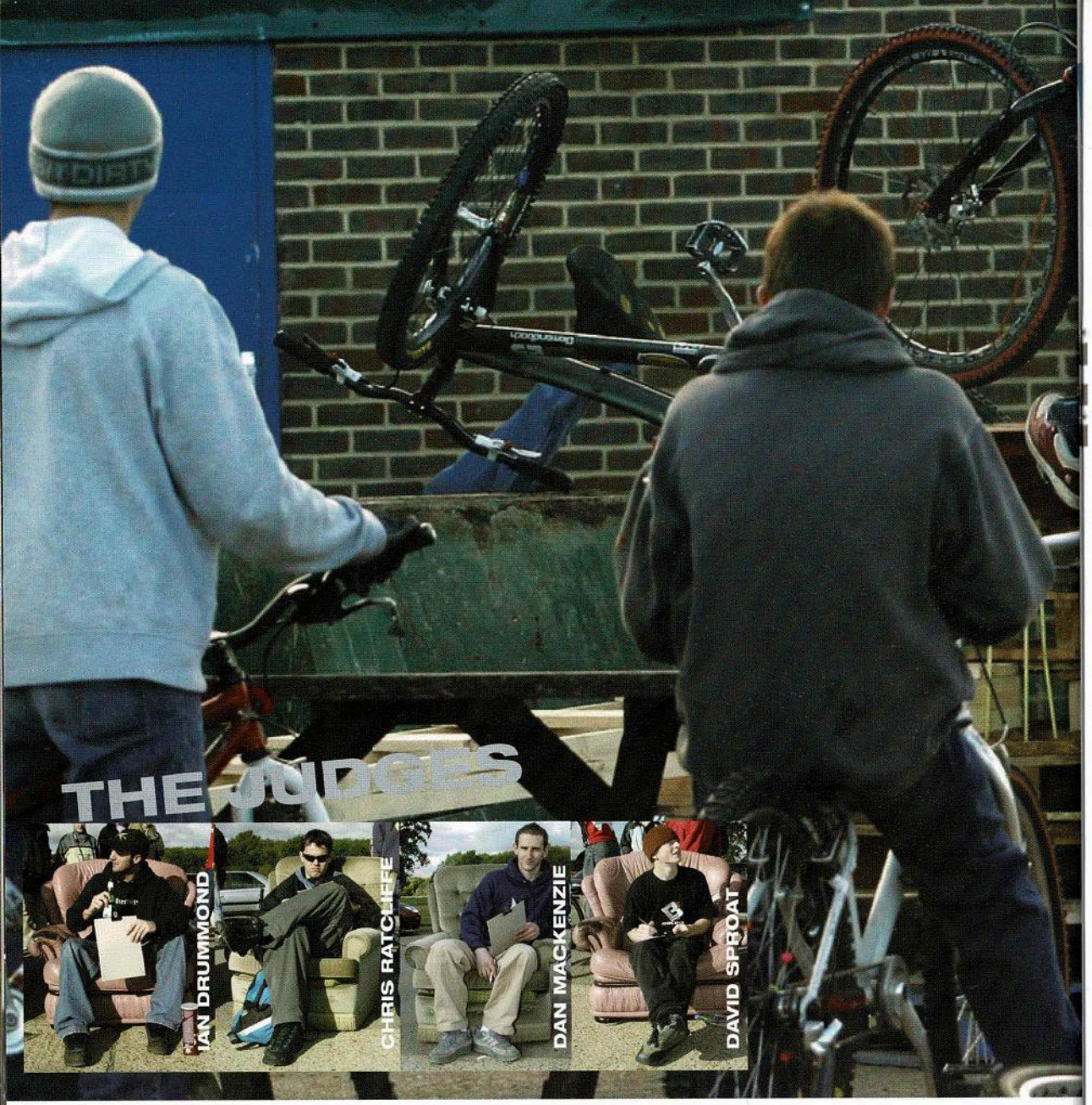
Getting through them at a rate now and things still looking good, plenty of talent and no real injuries to speak of, although our judge, Dave Sproat, came off earlier while testing the set up and gashed his arm, that aside, I was happy I didn't have to call 999.

The last few riders were up and our youngest competitor was one of them, Jo Parsons aged 13 and riding an Onza T-pro. I wasn't to sure if he could handle what was there as he was such a small fella but I think I was pleasantly surprised.
For a small guy with only a year of experience he did very well indeed, gapping like a pro and making some fairly big climb's and adding some neat controlled drops made his run well worthy of a respectable score from the judges.

With the first round over, me and the rest of the judges took some time out to chew over what we had just witnessed. Checking out the scores we had a pretty good idea of who was doing it for us and who wasn't. Elliot was ahead on his performance closely followed by David Jones or 'DJ' as he's known to people that know him, and then Austin Wright the natural rider from the Midlands. We gave the riders a chance to have another free session before we commenced with the second round. A quick check of the cotton reels revealed some major wobbling in a few of them but with care they were still ridable so I left them where they were.

The format was the same as the first round, a 2 minute run but this was potentially the riders last chance so it would have to be something with all the stops pulled out if they stood a realistic chance of getting through to the final 8.
The judges were looking especially for originality and showmanship to set any rider apart from the rest of the crowd, use of the DB rig would be a good start and some flat land always goes down well. Ben and Leo kicked it off again, Leo definitely putting in a last burst of effort and Ben once again eating up the skips and showing some fine originality. The pallets were still being neglected but the DB rig was finally getting some attention, riders building the confidence to put in some moves on the top of the tower.





Austin Wright came up for his second attempt paired with Fred Judd, and Austin's natural background really shone through, a very precise rider, not blessed with out and out style but amazingly confident in placing his back wheel where ever he wanted it to be and not an inch out of place. I've always noticed that with the naturalists, accuracy is everything and style has to come second when your riding to clear a section, your not expected to pull an x-up mid run.

Daniel Jones was one that slipped mine and the other judges gaze on the first run but suddenly out of no where we noticed just how good he really was, another accurate rider who wasn't afraid to go big to get attention. His smoothness was also an asset, kind of like Eddie Tongue, but all done on a Identity Judge. We were down to the last few riders and the judges were in readiness to put a close eye on Elliot's final run, and once again, not a disappointment.

The other riders seemed to pay more attention when Elliot was letting loose, oh so smooth and pulling moves that most other riders probably never even dreamt of combining. He just stuck one move with another and hoped for the best and 9 times out of 10 it worked out.

Luke Taylor, backing up the bottom of our list of riders also caught us out, talented and upping the stakes the whole time, one of the riders happy to negotiate the DB rig and pull it off with maximus styley. With the 2 runs over, the judges once again sat down and this time the scores were totted up and added to the first round scores to give us a total for each rider.

So, through to final run were, Austin Wright, David Jones, Darren Hill, Elliot Firth, James Croughton, Leo Farnon, Daniel Jones, Luis Morgan.For the final run we knocked the time to 90 seconds as the riders were feeling the strain from the previous 2 rounds. Very kindly the guys who didn't make the final 8 stayed around to support those you did, very touching.

We would be scoring the final round as we did in the first 2 and then adding those scores on top. We were looking for 6 riders from the final 8 so 2 riders would be knocked out (not literally).

With the light drawing in we got things moving with the first pair of finalists taking to the stage. Austin Wright, although physically tired, still managed a tidy run as did David Jones, clarifying that he was in fact a shit hot rider.

Darren Hill and Elliot Firth both excelled again, Elliot still showing us his amazing smoothness and variety and Darren pulling some neat tricks.

James Croughton and Leo battled it out with what they had left, both deserving their final 8 selection. Daniel Jones and Luis Morais kept up their end of the bargain by putting in some tasty performances to end the try outs.

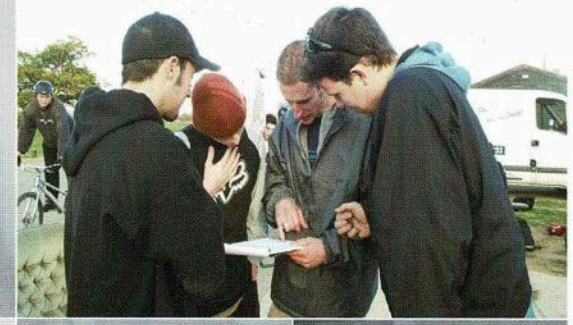


The judges now had to analyse the scores and pic out the top 6 riders to join the new team. The performances all round were great, so well done to everyone that turned up and made the day a success. Here are the lucky punters that made it....expect to be seeing alot more of them in the very near future!

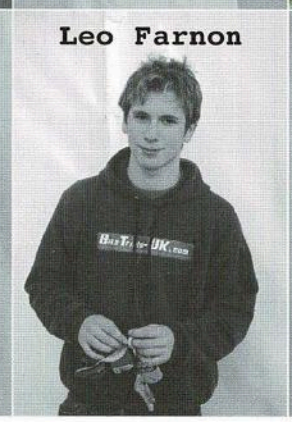
THE TEAM

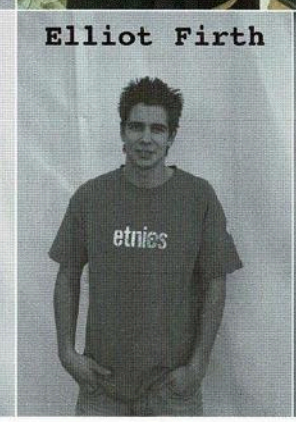










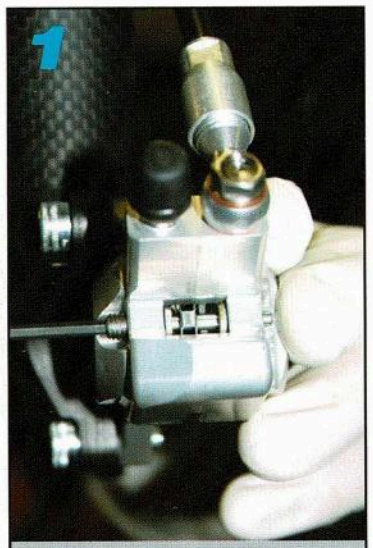




Well done to our winners, expect a full interrogation in our next issue....

DO IT YOURSELF

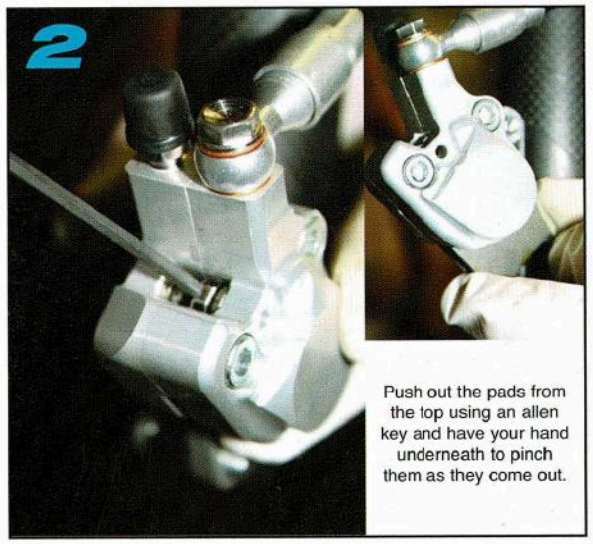
Bleeding a Hope Mini system



Remove the R clip from the end of the retaining pin and then unscrew the retaining pin and remove it from the caliper.

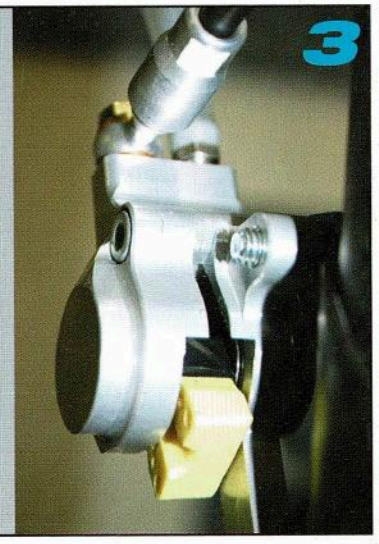
stuff for the job

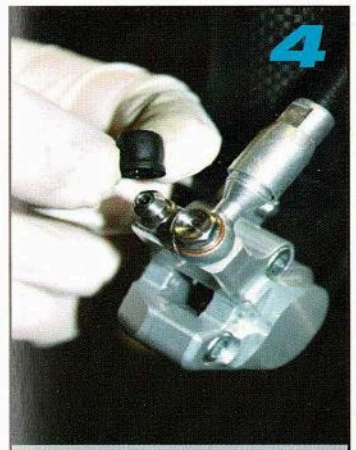
2.5mm/2mm allen key
8mm spanner
5.1 brake fluid
clear tube
plastic block



Push out the pads from the top using an allen key and have your hand underneath to pinch them as they come out.

Insert a block into the caliper (you can use a Lego brick or similar). Make sure its a tight so there's no gap between the block and the piston heads





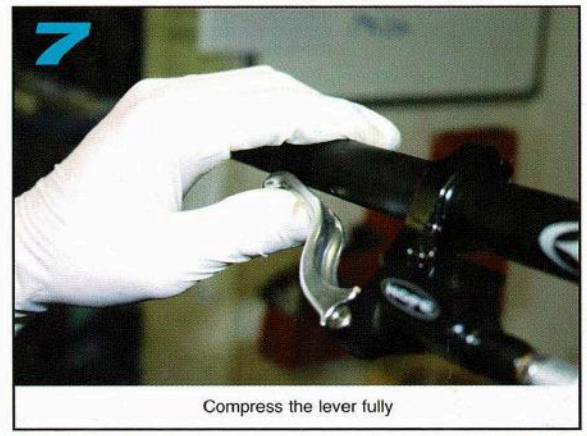
Remove the bleed nipple cover.



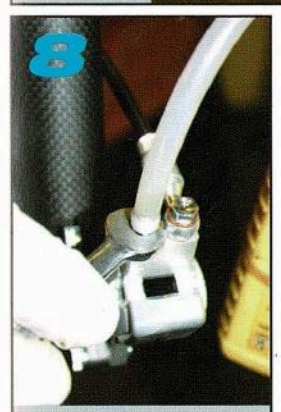
Unscrew the resovoir cap and remove. Make sure the resovoir diaphram comes with it.

Attach a waste bottle to the other fork leg using an elestic band and connect the tube to the bleed nipple.

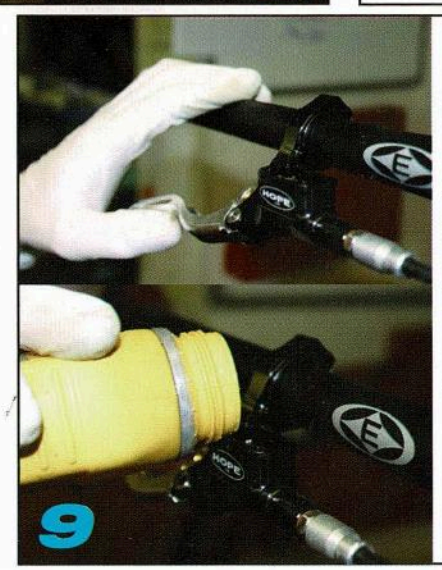




Compress the lever fully



Using the spanner, turn the bleed nipple a 1/4 turn anti clockwise to open the valve. Oil will appear in the tube. Turn the nipple back to close the valve again.



Release the lever. Check resovoir level, if its low top it up with 5.1 brake fluid. Repeat this cycle until the lever feels responsive and solid and check bleed tube for any signs of air bubbles.



Remove bleed tube and replace bleed nipple cover.



Replace resovoir cap and make sure diaphram is properly inserted before tightening.

....BLEEDED

As always, thanks goes out to Wildside for their support.

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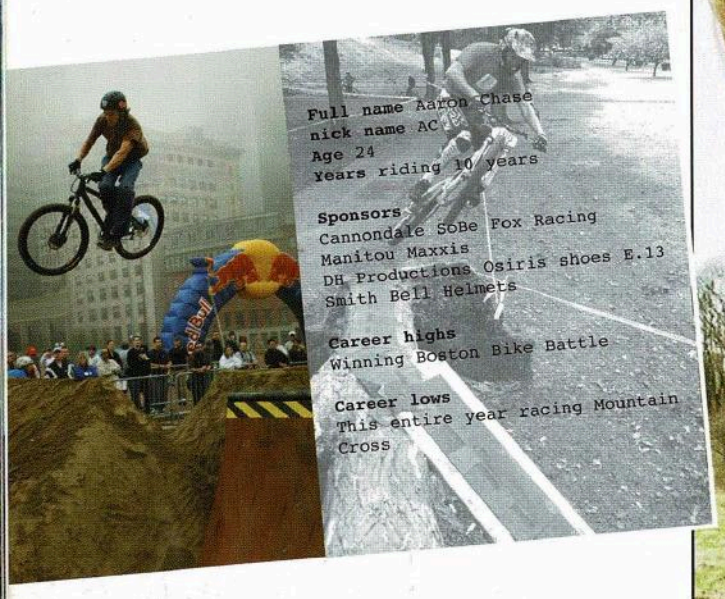
THE MAN OF MANY FACES

The American jack of all trades Aaron Chace or 'AC' on what its like to be him

A guy that downhills as well as he trials and streets as well as he jumps and man of the moment after taking the win at the Bike Battle in Boston, we thought it best to find out about the man behind the faces



Full name Aaron Chase
nick name AC
Age 24
Years riding 10 years

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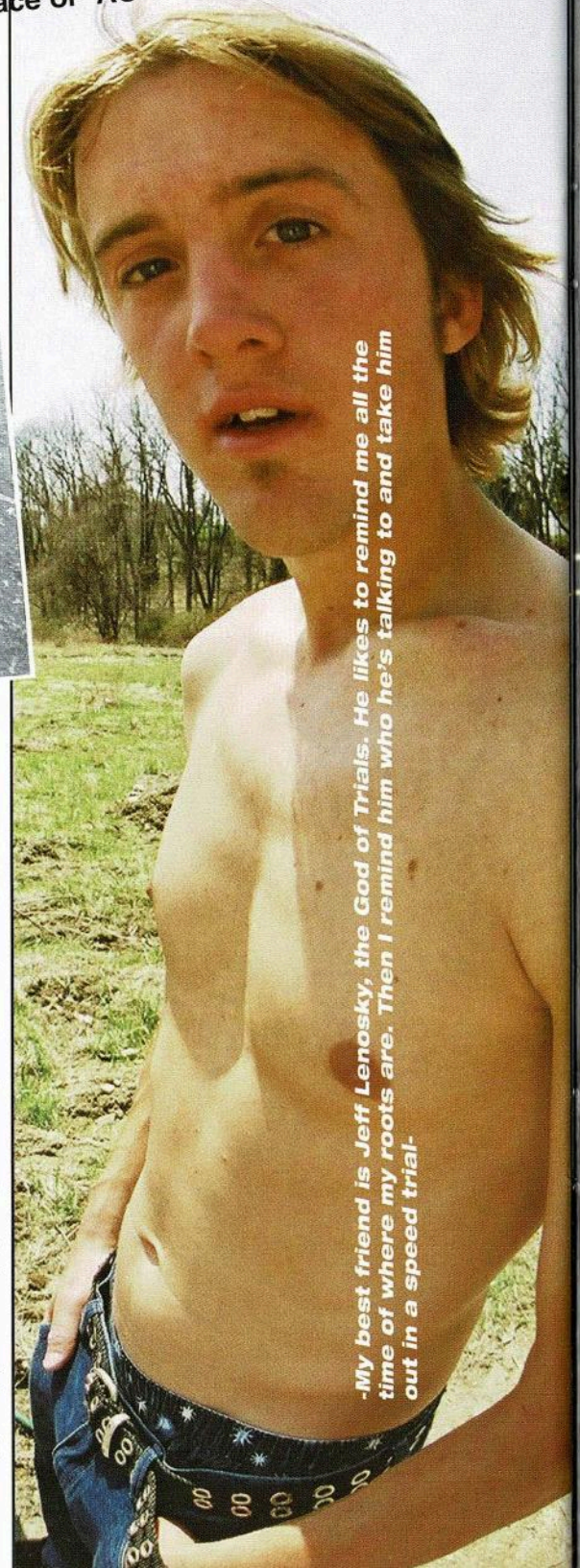
Career highs
Winning Boston Bike Battle

Career lows
This entire year racing Mountain Cross



What or who got you into biking?

My dad always rode. I was a little A.D.D when I was younger so the doctor told my mom to find something to channel my energy, so she bought me a bike.

How would you describe your style of riding?

I like to ride smooth and calculated. I try to think out every move. I usually have a chance of landing it.

You American's love your sus forks, have you tried a rigid?

I rode 20 for a long time so I definitely can ride rigid, but I really like some suspension.

How familiar are you with 'Trials' as an individual sport both in the USA and Europe?

I rode trials for years both modified and stock. I'm pretty familiar with it considering my best friend is Jeff Lenosky, the God of Trials. He likes to remind me all the time of where my roots are. Then I remind him who he's talking to and take him out in a speed trials. As for Europe, not that much. I know some of them Petr Kraus, Eddie Tounge, Chris Akrigg and Martin Hawyes. They are awesome riders. We rode together after Bike Battle, They are really talented.

Have you ever entered into a 'natural trial'?

Yes, I did once...never again, too much work.

Your notorious for pulling off the back flip to manual, how about a forward flip to manual?

Wow. That sounds tough. Are you kidding? I hope so.

Would you say you base your style on anyone in particular?

No, I just ride what feels natural.

If you weren't a full time pro what do you think you might be doing now?

I do not even want to think about it. I used to deliver pizzas and build houses before this gig.

How did you get involved with Cannondale?

This is actually a funny story. It was career day at my school which meant that after classes were done we would go and sit in these seminars and learn about jobs in the "real world". I was like, "no way I'm outta here, like I am going to stay after school. I am going riding." One of my friends told me that some guy from a bike company was in talking about what he did. So I thought cool, so I went to check it out. His name was Dave and he worked for Cannondale as a graphic designer. I told him I rode and we chatted. He asked me if I was going to the Mount Snow NORBA National, which was the following week and I said that I was. He said cool, see you there. So as usual I had not registered for Mount Snow, I got there and the expert slalom was full. They told me my only option was to race Pro. Well, whatever, I did not really care. So I did. Well, I ended up qualifying 10th in PRO Slalom. Dave approached me and said "hey you're that kid from the high school. Send me your resume, we should get you a bike to ride." (I was riding this Azonic frame that was 3 years old at the time.) Resume, what is he talking about? I did not have a resume. So I drafted what I thought a resume should look like, sent it in, got a bike and here I am 7 years later with a signature frame. So, my advice....go to career day. It might pay off. Who would have thought I'd have found my career as a pro mountain biker at my high school career day?

Do they give the support you need to enjoy your riding career?

Cannondale, Fox, SoBe, Manitou, Maxxis, Smith, Bell and DH Productions are awesome. They support me 100%.

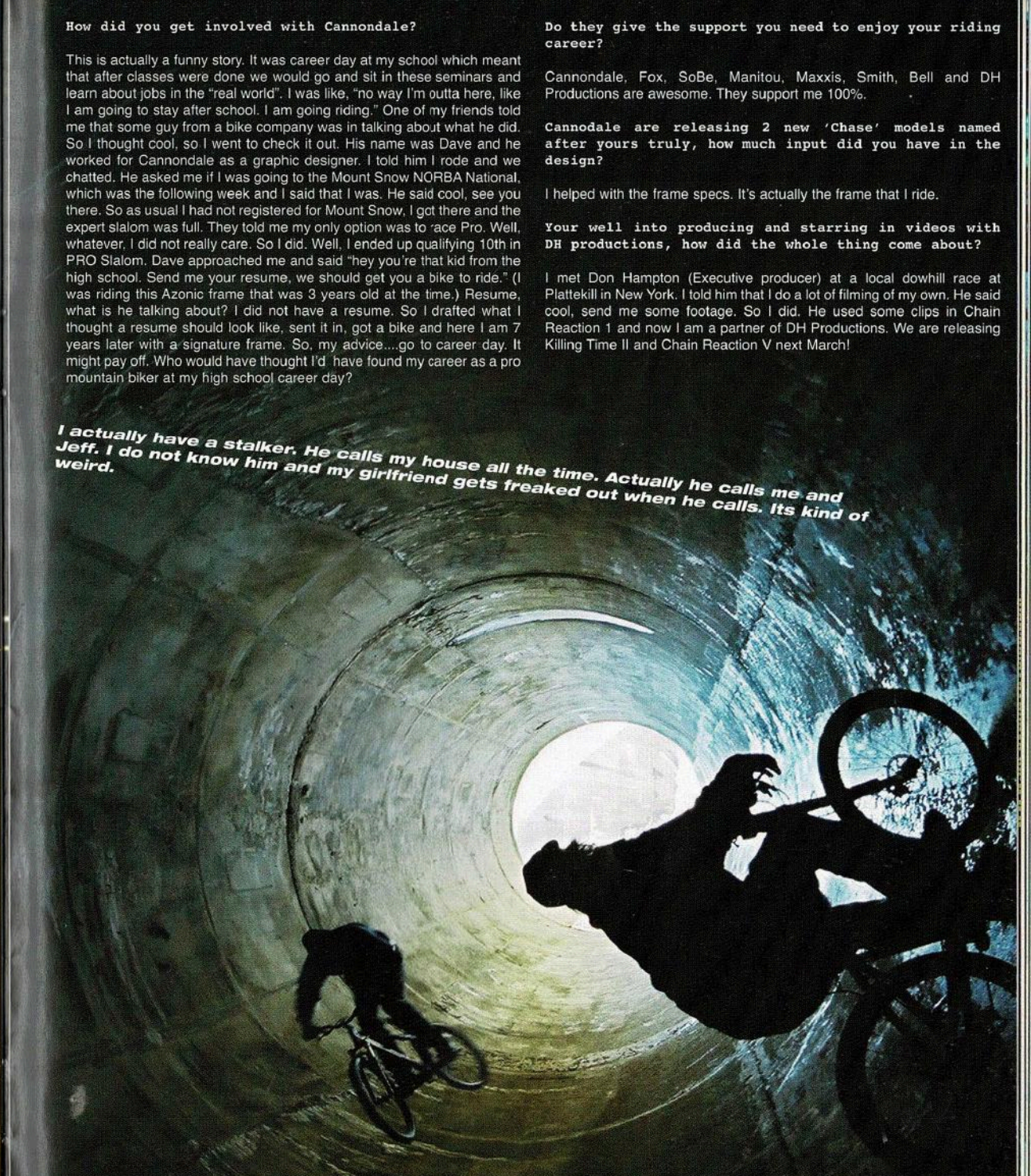
Cannondale are releasing 2 new 'Chase' models named after yours truly, how much input did you have in the design?

I helped with the frame specs. It's actually the frame that I ride.

Your well into producing and starring in videos with DH productions, how did the whole thing come about?

I met Don Hampton (Executive producer) at a local dowhill race at Plattekill in New York. I told him that I do a lot of filming of my own. He said cool, send me some footage. So I did. He used some clips in Chain Reaction 1 and now I am a partner of DH Productions. We are releasing Killing Time II and Chain Reaction V next March!

I actually have a stalker. He calls my house all the time. Actually he calls me and Jeff. I do not know him and my girlfriend gets freaked out when he calls. Its kind of weird.



Looking at the footage of some of your antics, have you actually spent a night in a prison cell because you went to far?

I was arrested once for stealing ply wood, but it was for a mini ramp in my back yard. I was 16. Hey, at least it was for a good cause. I did not spend the night though. My girlfriend bailed me out. My bail was $20, she still reminds me that I owe her the $20 for the bail.

Do you make any cash from it?

I make enough to live happy. I do not live in Beverly Hills California in a mansion. I live in a condo in Vernon, New Jersey and drive a Toyota Tacoma. I do all right for a guy that makes a living riding his bike.

Who would you say are your closest buddies in the biking world?

Jeff Lenosky, he convinced me to move to New Jersey. We ride together every day. Also, Don Hampton from DH Productions. He and I work so well together on the videos. Also, Kyle Ebbett, we have known each other for over 10 years. I have a crew from coast to coast. They are all awesome.

You must have some enemies, or just people you try to avoid?

I actually have a stalker. He calls my house all the time. Actually he calls me and Jeff. I do not know him and my girlfriend gets freaked out when he calls. Its kind of weird.



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Gary Mac
Bikedock Team

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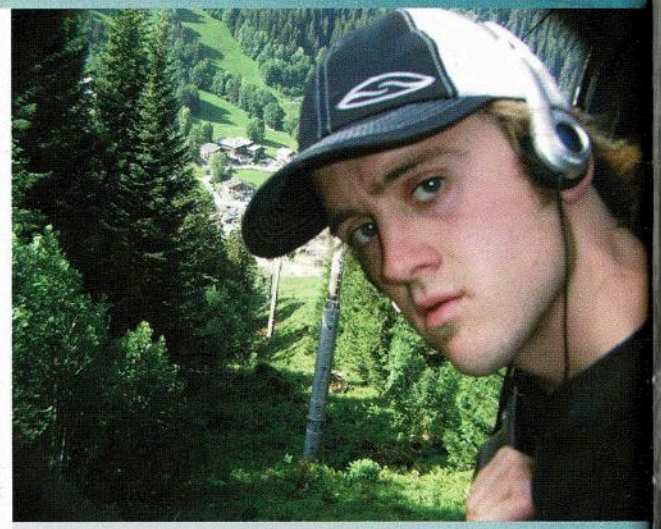
What happens in the average day for Aaron Chase?

I wake up when Kara (my girlfriend) leaves for work (9am) I eat breakfast, check email, watch a bike video and call Lenosky and the rest of the crew to see where we are riding. I ride until dark, come home, eat dinner, watch more videos, Kara makes me do chores because she thinks that all I do is sit around all day and do nothing while she goes to work. Then, I talk on the phone, check emails, surf the web, and go to bed. That is when I am home. Which is not that often lately.



With your busy schedules, I guess you don't spend much time at home?

I'm never home. Right now I am on a road trip for Killing Time II. Then home for 2 nights, off to Moab for the weekend, home for 1 night then off to Japan for 2 weeks.

What do you do when your not riding, do you drink as hard as you play?

I am not a huge drinker, anyone that was at the Bike Battle can tell you that. I spent the entire day after lying in bed puking my guts out. I do enjoy skating, snowboarding, editing videos, playing Playstation, hanging out with friends and cooking on the BBQ.





What advice could you give anyone out there looking to make a career out of riding a bike?

Stick with it. All my friends dropped out when they got their driver's license. Have fun and be dedicated to it.

Do you think you will ever reach the fame and fortune of riders like Matt Hoffman or are you already there?

Mat Hoffman is awesome. I will never reach what he has, but it would be nice. Our sport has a lot of growing to do but I think it is on its way in right direction.

Aaron's latest DVD 'Killing Time' is available from www.maceonline.com

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PLANET X

HOPE

Photos by Sid Jackson contact at samuelljackson@hotmail.com

CAPTURING THE MOMENT

Chris Ratcliffe's guide to the perfect pic

Prints of riders hang on the walls and a pile of slides is about to fall over on the edge of the desk. The CD playing has long since finished, and Chris Ratcliff has just finished his latest four hour Photoshop session.

The reason we're here is to see what's in store when Section7.co.uk launch their new photo gallery area soon. "It struck me that I've taken literally hundreds of photos over the years. A few have been published, but otherwise they're just sitting in a box in the spare bedroom. Why not scan them in and share them?" It's quite a collection too, showing both current riders and some who have since left the competition world, it's almost funny looking at some riders when they were younger and the bikes they used to ride. "Also the pictures aren't always worse from back then either. There's so much luck involved in getting good photos. Some days you're just luckier than others!" Looking through Chris's collection of photos from trials over the past few years, it is very extensive, but also made up entirely of competition photos. "I took up trials photography in 1999 when I started writing for MBUK. They wanted photos to go with the competition reports and I was there with a camera, so why not?"

Chris's background wasn't one of photography, but it's something he's had to learn along the way. "There aren't many people taking good photos of trials, but I'm lucky to have people like Steve Behr, Jonny Gawler and Steve Bardens to learn from. Early on though I had to try a lot of stuff which didn't work. The best way to learn is definitely to try and match a picture in a magazine, then try it with your own twist. That's how my style has developed." Chris isn't alone in taking photos though. "My Dad is a keen photographer and has been lending me cameras, lenses and so on. It's amazing when you look at how good the picture quality is and then you realise the camera is around ten years old." Just goes to show the latest technology isn't always needed! "Camera shops have such a good second hand market that you can pick up some bargains which have been well looked after with great build quality for very little money. For starting out you can't really do much better!"



With all this talk of old technology, why hasn't Chris moved onto digital? "It's simple really. Until recently you couldn't buy reasonably priced digital SLR cameras, and the quality from some digital cameras isn't really good enough for magazine publishing or large prints. Some of the images on the site are from a little Nikon compact digital camera which produces really good images, but for action stuff I prefer the handling of an SLR." Though not for much longer it seems. Chris has finally bitten the bullet and is going digital. "Yeah, you heard! This winter I'll be investing in a high end digital camera because it improves the final image quality and it means I'll be able to get pictures up on the site so much quicker. At the moment it takes a week to get the slides back from fuji, then an evening per roll of film to scan in. I look forward to that being compressed into 30 seconds of copying files!"

With Photoshop open on the screen, it seems obvious to ask how much different it is working digitally. "It makes a big difference, but it depends how you use it. For me Photoshop is just another tool to help bring out the best in an image, not to make a bad image good. There's only so much it can do after all, it's not magic!"

Earlier this year, Chris took a collection of work out to a couple of rounds of the Nationals where it was well received. "People liked the shots, but kept saying the same thing 'let me know if you've got any good ones of me and I'll buy them' so by exhibiting online I can show off a lot of shots and people can buy the ones they want. I'll hopefully still take a few out to competitions so people can see what I can do, but I can do a lot more one-off orders for people when they see themselves on the site."

Just as good riders improve year after year, does Chris feel the same? "Absolutely, I'm still learning about photography, how to get the best from a camera, which angles work well. It's good that I'm still surprised by some of the images I get back from Fuji and I'm still improving." Ultimately it seems that photography is just like trials. "Totally. It's all about practice and repetition. If something doesn't work, then you have to keep trying and adapting until it does. I think it's good for riders to stand back and actually watch a trial instead of riding them once in a while. You become so concentrated on watching riders pick lines, ride them, the differing techniques and so on, you learn a lot, both about taking pictures or video and tips you can apply to your own riding."

Top Tips

1. Read the manual

The biggest mistake people make when using a camera is not understanding what the camera is doing when it takes a picture. As a result they find it hard to take the pictures they want to take. Reading the manual shows what the different modes do, how to activate the flash and so on which makes it easier to achieve the results you want.

2. Eyes for the prize

If you're taking a picture of a rider, the eyes make the picture. Some riders have really expressive faces or stick their tongue out when they concentrate, and this makes the image more human. Seeing someone's back gapping away does not make a good picture...

3. Learn from your mistakes

If a picture is not as you would like it, work out why. As in riding, this is the best way to improve!

4. Spend money well

Lots of money spent on a camera will not make you a good photographer. Digital cameras are getting cheaper and cheaper every year meaning a year old digital camera may be half price or less if a new model has come out, but the technology is moving on so fast that the cheap camera you've bought will soon be out of date. For good quality prints, 35mm film is still a great way to go and you can pick up entry level camera and lens packages from the major manufacturers for around £200. A good single lens reflex (SLR) camera allows you to see through the lens before you take the picture, and even a cheaper model will improve your picture taking no end!

5. Watch out for riders

In my time I've almost been hit by riders several times, but I've also moved when I think they're distracted by me. At the end of the day I'm there to take photos, not to make the riders lives more difficult. Respect the riders and they'll be happier about you taking photos.

6. Look for the unusual

If you see a whole group of photographers lining up to take the same photo, then move away and look for a different angle. Having different pictures from everyone else will help your pictures stand out. Try odd close ups, weird lighting or even close ups of riders and kit.

7. Preserve quality

One great advantage of 35mm film is the high quality. It's the best choice if you want very large prints for your wall. You can often change the quality level on digital cameras too, but some people turn the quality down to increase the number of shots you can fit on one card. Keep the quality high and get better images!

8. Visualise the image

If you can picture the final image in your head, you can then work out how to position the camera to get that photograph. It will make your life a lot easier. Sometimes though it can work far better than it looked in your head, and sometimes it's not even close, but either way you'll get closer the image you want!

9. Anticipate

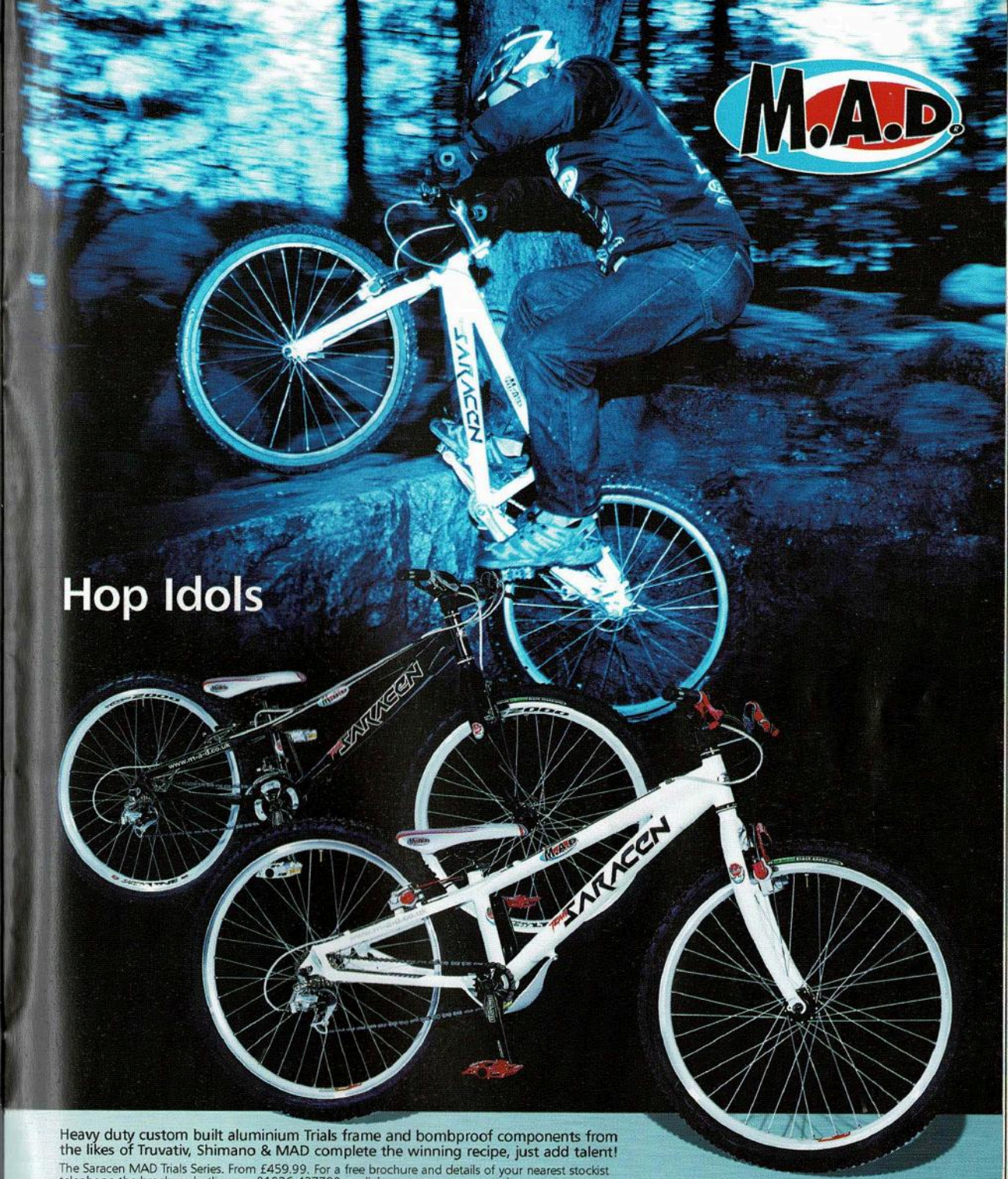
A rider will always have an advantage when shooting trials as they know when a rider will move and when they will be almost stationary. On most cameras half-pressing the shutter button will lock the autofocus onto the rider so that when they're when you want them, just press the button fully. The better you know the rider the easier this will be, but I've found that I just take better images of some riders than others.

10. Forget the rules

Sometimes the best images are ones that shouldn't work at all, but manage to look good all the same. Art is subjective, so if you like it then great.



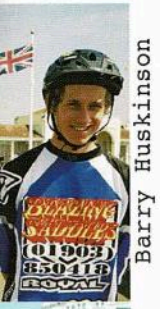




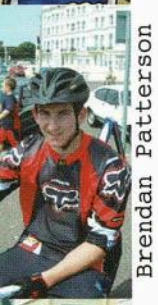
Seaside sessions

Words & Pics: Richard Dean

The sleepy south coast town that ain't so sleepy... That'll be Worthing



Barry Huskinson



Brendan Patterson



Dez Pearce



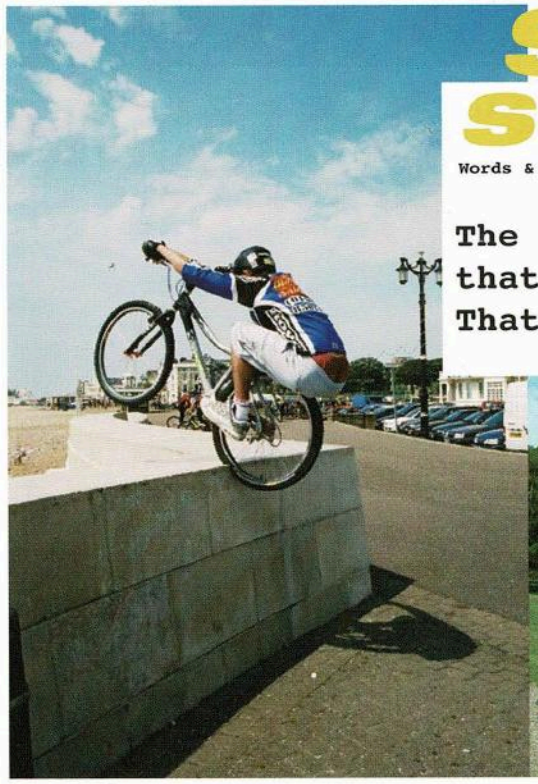
Lee McCaw



Darren Rawlings



Paul Munday







A blue sky with doted clouds allowed temperatures to climb into the mid twenties along the famous seaside town. Old age pensioners, two point four families and the occasional rat like mutt scurried around the promenade by the ocean. Why is it that as soon as the sun shows itself the average Brit heads for the beach at full speed for sunburn? The usual wind, rain or shine Worthing beach crew started to filter out of the greasy spoon cafe's scattered along the side allies of the main sea front drive.

With very little sleep Dez Pearce (Blazing Saddles/Onza) and Paul Munday were the first two to the required riding spot 'Splash Point'. Dez's dad (Derek Pearce, Confused? Yes Dez's name is Derek Pearce and his Dad is Derek Pearce [and his grandfather!]. Yes it's confusing!) Ever supportive arrives soon after, food in hand to wake up his son. Dez sees fit to drop this on the floor; good start.

Soon after Lee Mccaw (MAD/Saracen) and Brendan Patterson rolled along pointing and laughing at the weary Dez.Barry Huskinson (Blazing Saddles/Onza) came rolling in and immediately started to bounce over the mass of rocks placed to act as sea defences in true competition style. With Barry's competition experience, Baz is leading the national points series, a small crowd of people buzzing the beach stopped and stared in awe.

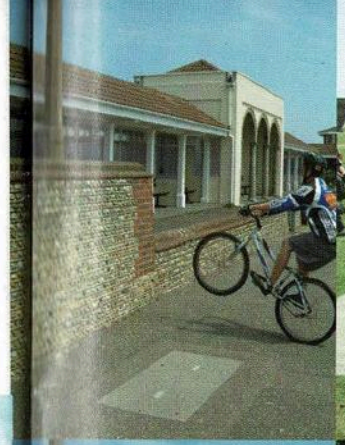
Lee's team mate Tim Pratt (MAD/Saracen), winner of 'Hop Idle' arrived with Nick Goddard, to beat off Darren Rawlings (Team Chainreaction) award-winning sounds from his modified based up van. After parking up Darren was quickly onto is team issue Giant and everyone went off against each other.

The usual four-foot wall surrounding made for the usual warm up, riders launching up the full height with the aim of making it the smoothest. Tim nearly claimed it with some aggressive front wheel taps; however Dez took the cookie by gliding directly up to his back wheel. Once on top an array of dismounts were displayed, from Baz once again dominating the rocks, to Paul front hopping neatly to the edge, rear wheel hovering mid air to 180.

Once everyone was sufficiently warmed up on splash point's wall and rocks. The group moved spitting distance away to a six-foot or so high flint wall, which Baz had been eyeing up for a while. After ten or fifteen minutes Baz, Dez and Tim launching off of it as high as they could at the wall decided that it wouldn't happen today, though the frays "I'll 'av that one day!" was uttered. Dez along with Tim and Lee, not ones to be beaten by stones and cement then decided to conquer it from the other side, which wasn't quite as high.Moving East from 'Splash Point' the promenade becomes a raised walkway with lovely views, Ooo Er! The walk way is approximately sixteen feet high. Tim spied a double flight of stairs at the top with an interesting handrail attached. Tim's plan was to drop from the walkway to the handrail approximately five or six feet below and then to a grass slope four foot'ish below that. All riders voiced their concerns about the idea; however, Tim was adamant that it could be done. Lining up, Tim boldly went for it, only to slip violently from the rail and to then tumble down the grass slope entangled in his bike. A short while later Baz escorted Tim to the hospital as a lump the size of a melon had come up on Tim's leg.

The group headed towards a small park, on the way a bench with a low wall caught Darren's eye. Rolling up to the bench in a few well-placed hops Darren was on top of the bench and sailing between it and the wall. With cheers the group carried on to the park. At the park there was a well-bricked pond in a small-bricked area. Brendan wanted to 180 across the width of the pond with a little encouragement from everyone. Lee decided to support his friend by simply gap jumping from one side to the other. After lining up, Lee applied the power and launched upwards to the other side of the pond. As soon as he did Lee's chain gave way, sending him straight down into the murky waters of the pond. With the ice broken and everyone in hysterics all that was left was for Brendan to spin from one side of the eight-foot gap to the other.

With the two MAD/Saracen riders out of action. Dez fading away to sleep somewhere or other. Baz waiting with Tim and the day pressing on people decided to call it a day well spent and moved off their separate ways. But they'll be back, their not fussy if it is sunshine or the normal British weather.

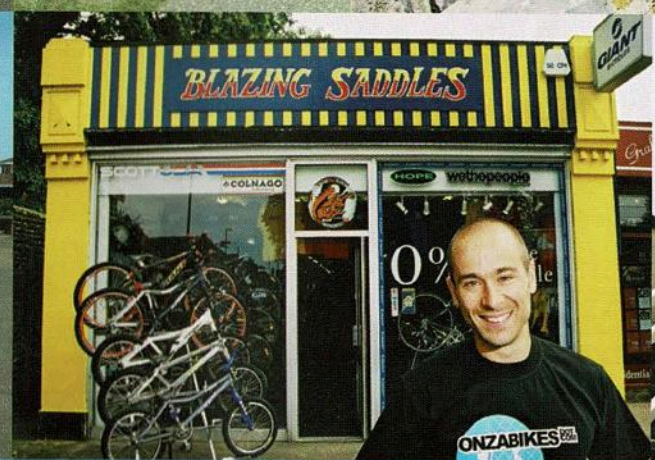




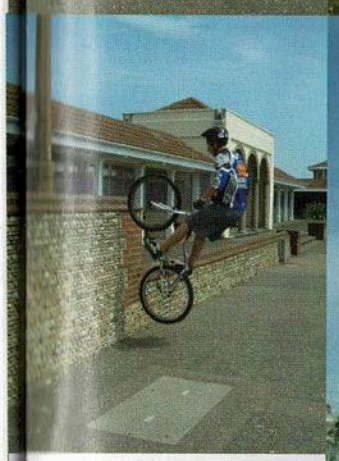


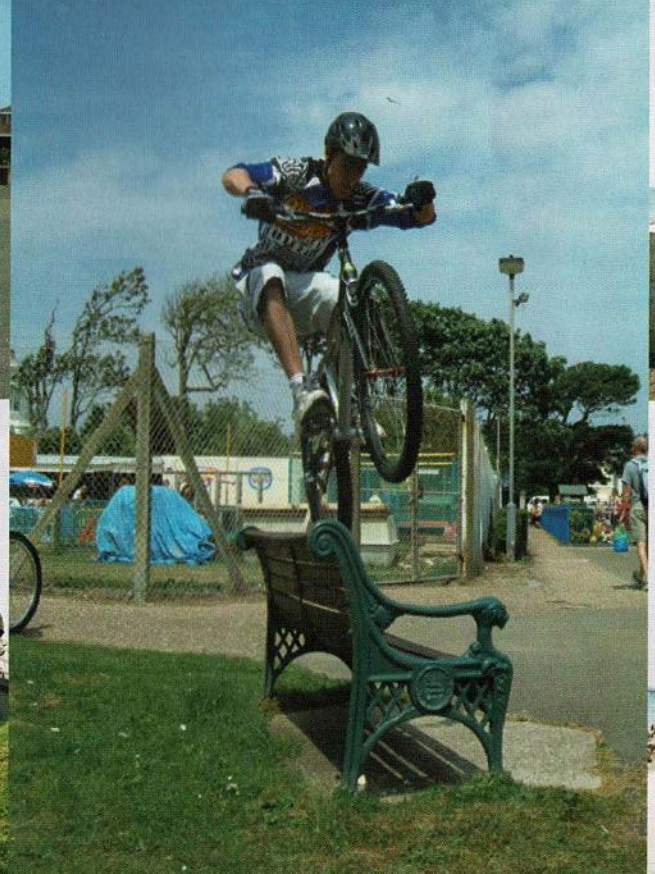


















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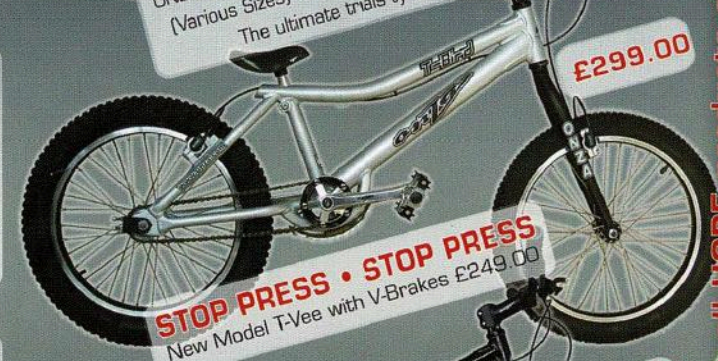

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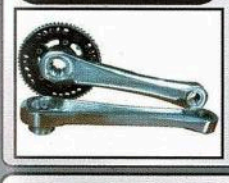

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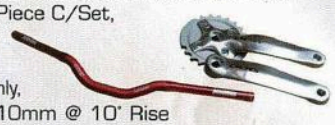





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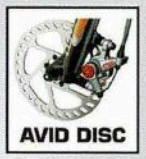





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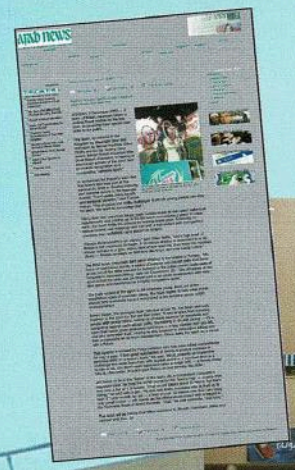
Kings of Madness

If there was ever a country in the world that you wouldn't expect to see a MAD demo, it would probably be the oil baron's paradise of Saudi Arabia...

Giles Wolfe managed to work a deal promoting the popular caffeine based fizzy drink Mountain Dew which happens to be owned by none other than the Pepsi corp who incidentally have an 85% share of the soft drinks market place in Saudi, so as you can imagine, money is no object for these guys. Out of the four riders on the job, 3 have pretty much been resurrected from the grave, Jez (old School) Avery, Si (new MAD rider) Sagar, Craig (mouse) Lambton and new boy, Ian (Twat) Drummond. Mountain Dew even had a new rig made for the 3 week stint which see's them travel from east to west, demoing at shopping stores and theme parks along the way.

As the MAD van is stuck at home, the team have been treated to their own chauffeurs and VIP handling for the whole trip. Accommodation is laid on in the form of the most plushest hotel in the capital, Riyadh, with it's own swimming pool, but alas all isn't as fairy tale as you might think....Saudi law states, no booze, no birds, period. But, as you can imagine, MAD will make their own fun.
As it looks at the moment, this could be a new opening for MAD and the direction that they follow in the future. Pepsi are a huge player and Giles is more than happy to promote trials on a global basis.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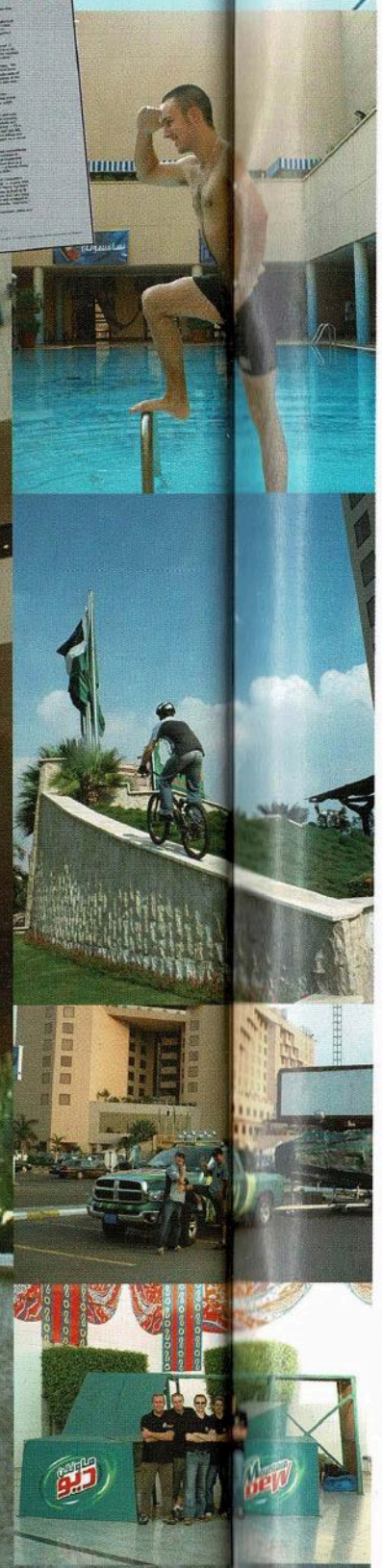
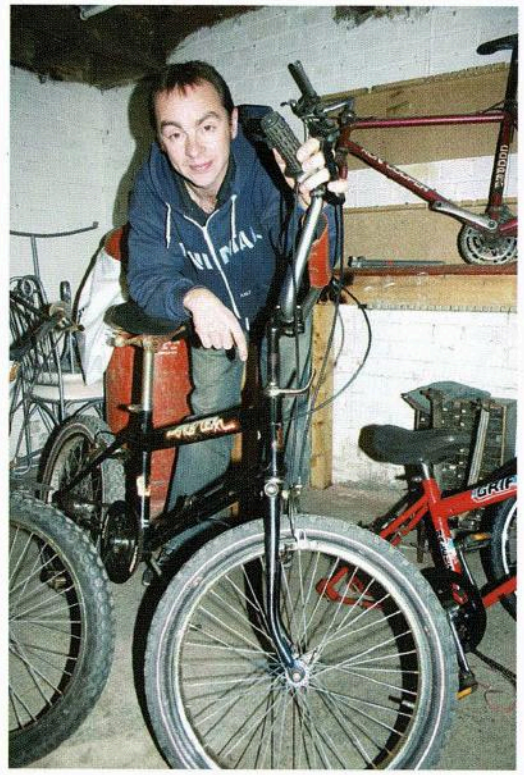
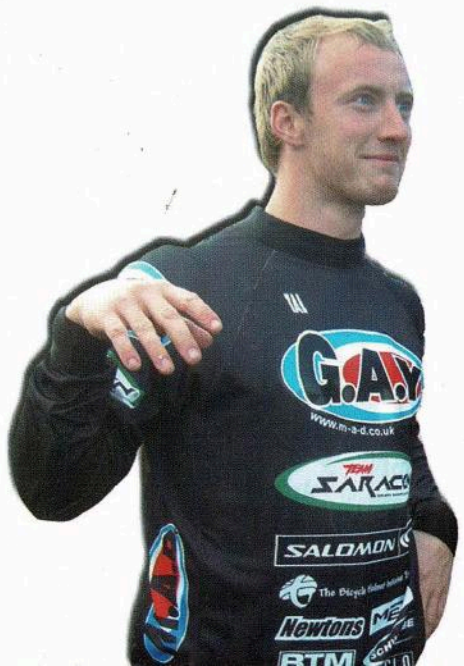




Look who's coming out

MAD's 2001 search for a star winner Tom Newbold has finally handed in the gloves after a happy and successful career with the MAD team. Tom earned himself a bit of a party animal reputation and became the linch pin behind the scenes, almost rising to the dizzy heights of right hand man, but not quite.
His last day was announced at the Cheddar Challenge where MAD had put on a semi display. Giles couldn't let him walk away empty handed so he had a rather fetching limited edition 'Gay' team top made. We managed to get a few words before he left the stage for the final time.



So, you're leaving MAD, has it all been worth it?
"Absolutely yeah, i've been to some good places, met some good people, most enjoyable"

Why are you doing the off's?
"Err, personal reasons really, i'm taking over my dad's business so I need to be around to do that, also i've been doing this shit for 7 years now, i've got to the top of the game and need a new challenge so i'm gonna do motorbike trials".

Have you done motorbike trials before?
"I had a motorbike when I was young but never did trials, my dad did and we used to go out a lot, but I went straight into moutain bike trials. I got a bike about 2 years ago but haven't had any time to go on it so I think i'll have a crack now".

If Giles needed you to fill in for a demo would you tell him to stuff it or go help him out?
"Definitely yeah, if he needs me i've still got the bike, i'll be a bit of back-up".

What, if anything, will you miss most about being with MAD?
"mmm, stuff like this really, all the events have been quality, such a good laugh, I just like showing off a bit and entertaining the guys, I won't miss the bastard kids though!"

Do you feel like you've given something to the public?
"No not really! I'm an alright rider but there are people a lot better than me, I just enjoy riding and if i've exposed a few people to it then great It all helps if people know about trials really".

Giles is 'Raleigh' on to a winner

If you weren't a 70's kid then you probably have little memory of the old raleigh classics which pretty much started BMX. The Chopper and the later Grifter models were all the hype from the early sixties to the mid 80's and every house hold that owned a bike was likely to have had one of these. As the years roll on so the rarity of these once state of the art bikes increases as they get thrown out with all that other crap in the garage. As with anything that becomes rare`, the price increases....to a point where early specimens in good nic can fetch over £3000. Giles has been keeping his eye on the this particular market and through the advent of the super web has been snapping up as many Grifters as he can get his hands on and then spending time buffing them up to their original condition. At the moment he has no intention to sell them on, instead he plans to open a museum to put them on show, could this be the beginnings of geekdom for Giles? or has he just got a smart head on his shoulders?
I guess we'll find out sometime!

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Red Bull Boston Bike Battle

words + pics Matt Tongue

Saturday the 28th September saw the third Red Bull Bike Battle take place in Boston's City Plaza. The whole Bike Battle series is gathering pace now and this one was probably one of the most anticipated events in the trials calendar.

The format was changed slightly from the previous two events (Boston last year and Nottingham UK this summer). Instead of riders taking it in turns Boston would see a head to head knock out style event with 32 starters being whittled down to an eventual champion. Red Bull also decided that the course needed a bit of a revamp. Instead of predominantly using trials obstacles the course designers had thrown in two massive sets of dirt jumps, a wall ride and a spine. To make full use of this course the organisers had also thrown in a whole load of new riders, many of whom were from a dirt/freeride background. The result was a completely mixed field of riders and riding styles. This was easily the most diverse of the three events and potentially the most explosive.

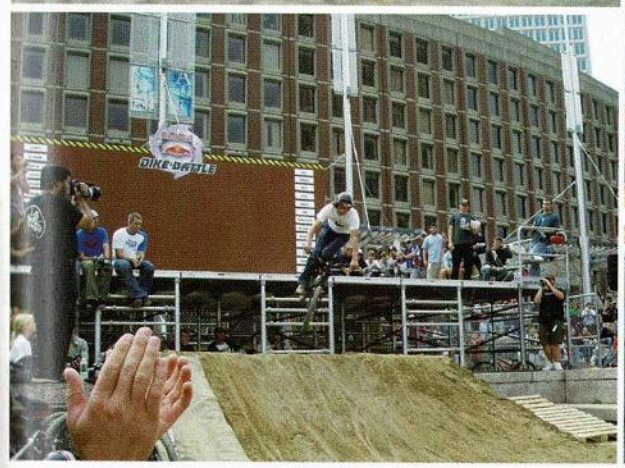
Making the trip from the UK were three riders; Chris Akrigg, Martin Hawyes and Eddie Tongue. After checking out the course and competitors the boys were feeling a little apprehensive on the start ramp. All three Brits had a huge amount of experience in competitive trials but all that seemed somehow irrelevant in this new environment.

As the comp began it became clear just how intense this type of format could be. For two and a half minutes the riders had to go and ride flat out against each other in front of thousands of spectators. Chris put in a great first round ride to go straight through to the second. Unfortunately for Martin Hawyes he got drawn against the number one seeded rider and although he put in a good performance it wasn't enough. Eddie then went Head to head with Shaums March and things were going well until he messed up a tyre tap and fell into the only ditch on the course, full of stagnant foul looking water. Eddie got up fast but couldn't find his composure again whilst his shoes and bike were covered in filth. In a last ditch attempt he went for a tail-whip over the dirt jumps but again it ended in a stack. Eddie was out in the first round.





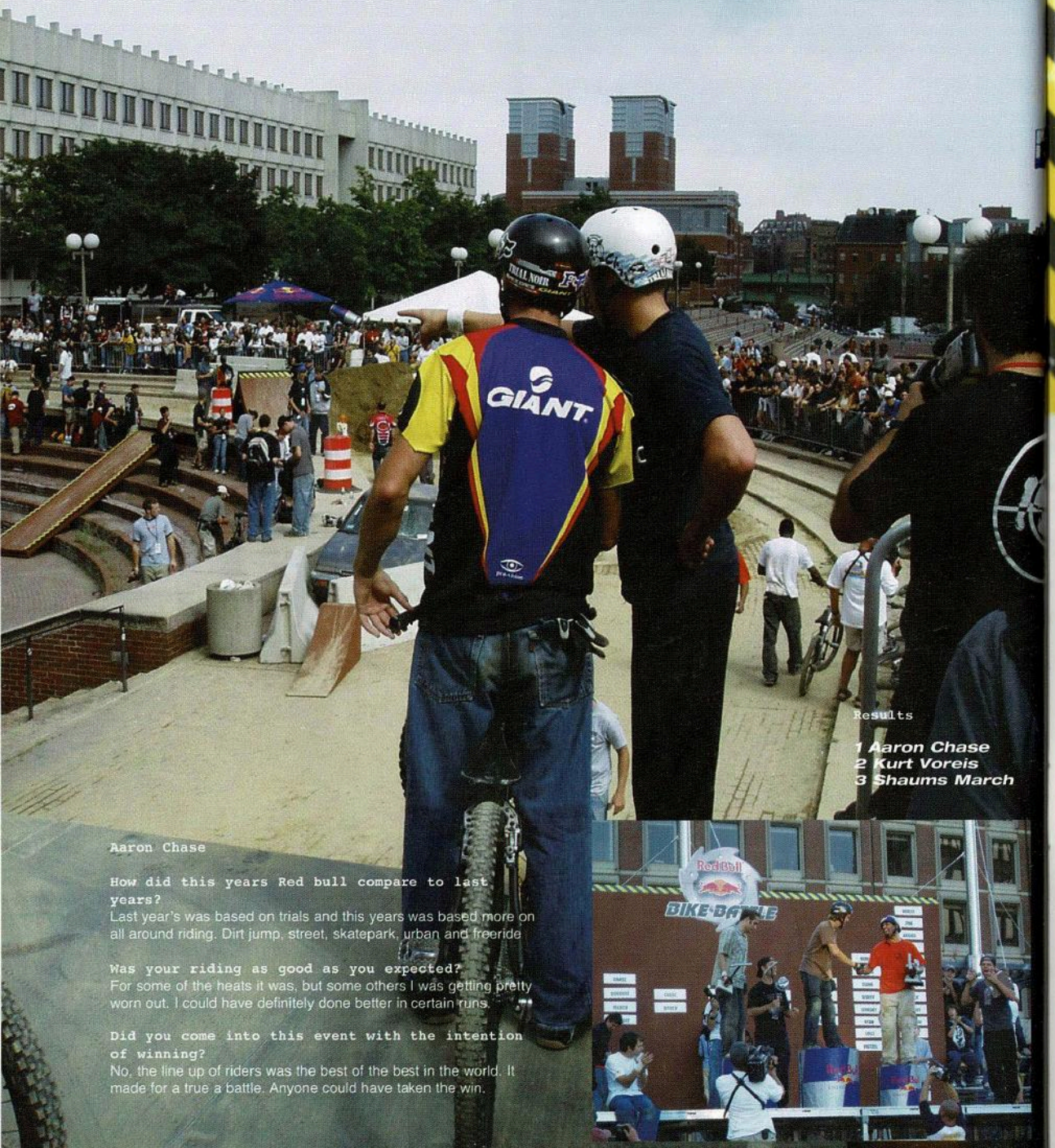






Chris was left to battle it out for the Brits and although he rode well, even fitting in some backwards manuals, it was hard to compete against the more flamboyant dirt jumpers with traditional street trials moves. In the end it was jus: Jeff Lenosky and Mike Steidley (both USA) who made it through into the last eight who were trials specialists. Both went out. The Semis were made up totally of dirt jumpers/freeriders and this made for a great finale, although some trials riders were left wandering if this was anything like the previous two events that had been essentially trials orientated.

Eventually Aaron Chase took the win and the $2500 first prize, beating Kurt Voreis in the final run of the day.



Results

1 Aaron Chase
2 Kurt Voreis
3 Shaums March

Aaron Chase

How did this years Red bull compare to last years?
Last year's was based on trials and this years was based more on all around riding. Dirt jump, street, skatepark, urban and freeride

Was your riding as good as you expected?
For some of the heats it was, but some others I was getting pretty worn out. I could have definitely done better in certain runs.

Did you come into this event with the intention of winning?
No, the line up of riders was the best of the best in the world. It made for a true a battle. Anyone could have taken the win.

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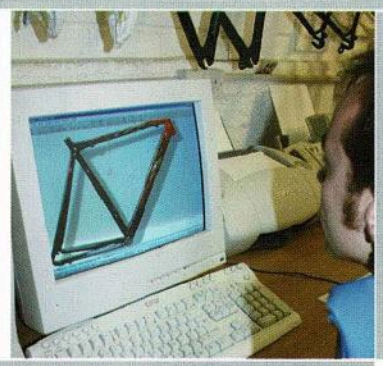
Fineline Sprayco

I think it's safe to say that 90% of bike owners couldn't tell you exactly how their frame was spayed if at all, that's why we decided to take a sneak behind the scenes at MAD's favorite spray supremo.

I've often found myself analysing frames wondering how the hell the designs were attached. You can understand the process of a straight paint job but when you start dealing with intense patterns it's easy to be completely ignorant. As Giles needed a new paint jobbie, we kindly borrowed a MAD team frame to find out how it's all done.

Steve Tomkins, aged 51 and not a day over, is the man behind FineLine SprayCo and has been mastering the art for over 20 years now. From his road racing days, Steve bought out the company he worked for in the early 80's called Omega who at the time had a big presence on the road race leaderboard, and set up shop and has been designing and spraying frames for some top names ever since. Some of you his customers you will no doubt have heard of, Saracen, Raleigh, Authur Cagyill and even the late Linda McCarty race team.





Step 1

Choosing your design

It's up to you how far you take your design, just remember, the more complex the colour schemes, the more it will hit your wallet Fineline has a database of designs which are easily viewed via a computer. We have chosen a flame affect running down the top tube and down tube with MAD decal's to finish it off.





Step 2

Shot blast, rub down and etch frame

To start the painting process you'll need to strip all the old paint off using a sand or shot blaster. Once all the paints off, go over it with a fine sand paper to remove any burrs. Once your happy, using a spray gun, apply Zinc Tertrox Chromate(etch primer to me and you) in controlled and even stokes. This gives a good base coat and stops steel frames from corroding. Let it dry for 5 mins in an oven set at 50 degrees.





Step 3

Prime frame

Using a white metal primer (stoving primer), thin down using paint thinners so it becomes less viscous and spray even coats over the whole frame making sure you don't build up in the joints, otherwise the paint will run, which you don't want. Stick in oven for 20 mins at 135 degrees, remove when finished and let it cool.



Step 4

Adding white enamel paint

De-nibble using a fine emery cloth and clear of any dust. Using the spray gun, add a layer of white enamel paint in very controlled and smooth motions, taking extra care not to layer on too thickly causing runs. 'Flash' in the oven at 50 degrees for 10 mins, remove and leave to cool.

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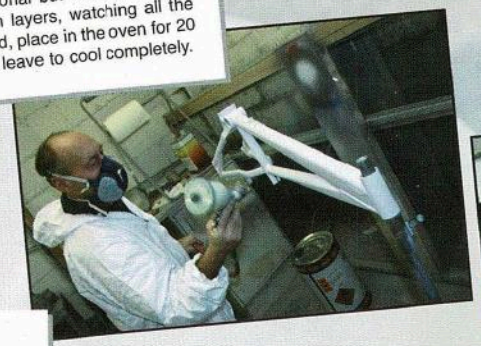
Step 5

Adding Pearlescent affect

This is a kind of lacquer with glitter to create a sparkle look when it hit's the sun light. It's optional but looks the dogs. Again, spray to frame in thin even layers, watching all the time for any drips. Once fully coated, place in the oven for 20 mins at 135 degrees, remove and leave to cool completely.



Step 6

Cutting the vinyl stencils

Using special software and a vinyl cutting machine the stencils are sized up by measuring the circumference of the tubes and then cut from a large sheet of vinyl, they are then ready to be applied to the frame.

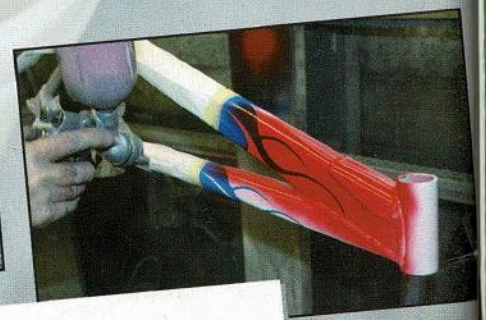


Step 7

Attach stencil and mask off

Remove the bits of the vinyl that aren't needed, remove the back cover and stick carefully in place. In this case there are 2 vinyl stencils, one for the top tube and a larger one for the down tube. Using either plain paper or newspaper, cover up the areas that won't be sprayed and attach with tape. Make sure you cover every last inch.







Step 8

Adding red paint around stencil

To get the flame effect, a red enamel paint is used and thinned down to a very liquid consistency. Apply using smooth, consistent strokes all the way up to and over the stencil itself. Chuck in the oven for another flash dry of 10 mins then remove to cool.



Step 9

Adding flame outline

Using a black enamel paint also thinned out, apply carefully around the edges of the flame lips using a pencil spray gun, this is a much finer spray and is controlled by adjusting the air flow to allow more or less paint through the nozzle. Flash again for 10 mins and remove.



Step 10

Removing mask and stencils then adding decal's and lacquer

Very carefully remove the masking paper and ease off the stencils. All being well, the outline should be clean and sharp and you have your final look. MAD have their own decal's so a MAD logo and email address are stuck in place and given there first coat of lacquer. The frame is Flash dried again before a second coat is applied in the same way. It's zapped once more for the last time.

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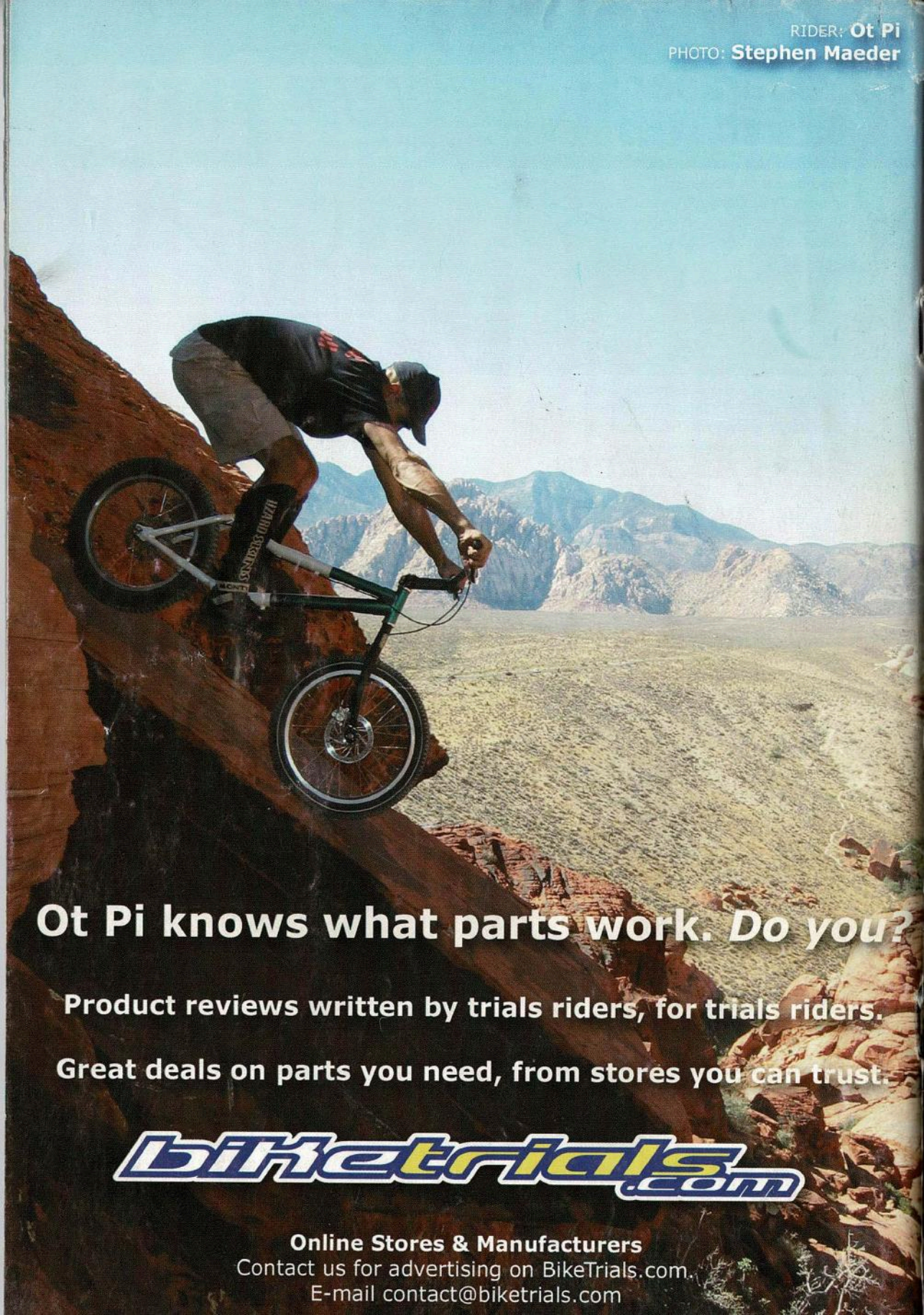
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