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TRAILHUNTING



Trailhunting - a thought every mountain biker has in mind. Nothing nicer than riding a trail, knowing you were the first one. We went to Tibet, and it was exactly like this. It's hard up there, everything is huge, the landscape, the mountains, the time you push up the bike. In Nepal, Chris Keeling, the 15-year-old rider, goes out every day, riding his bike to hunt for trophies at the races, like in France when he came 3rd last year at MegaAvalanche in the junior category.

The Atherton team weren't at home for winter training, in England, but they were in New Zealand for a month. Riding freestyle mountainbike is big in India, trailhunting on the ghats in Varanasi, it doesn't get better than this! The trail was different every day on the International downhill race in Changxing, once super dry, slippery, once super wet, different kind of slippery, and Sunday was just perfect conditions. For Trailhunting, it is good to have some small tools with you, to fix your bike. So we also reviewed the Spank VIBROCORE 800Race handlebar, which in our opinion is very good for enduro bikes. Go out and hunt some new trails! Ride on!

Mesum Verma



Mesum Verma - Editor in Chief



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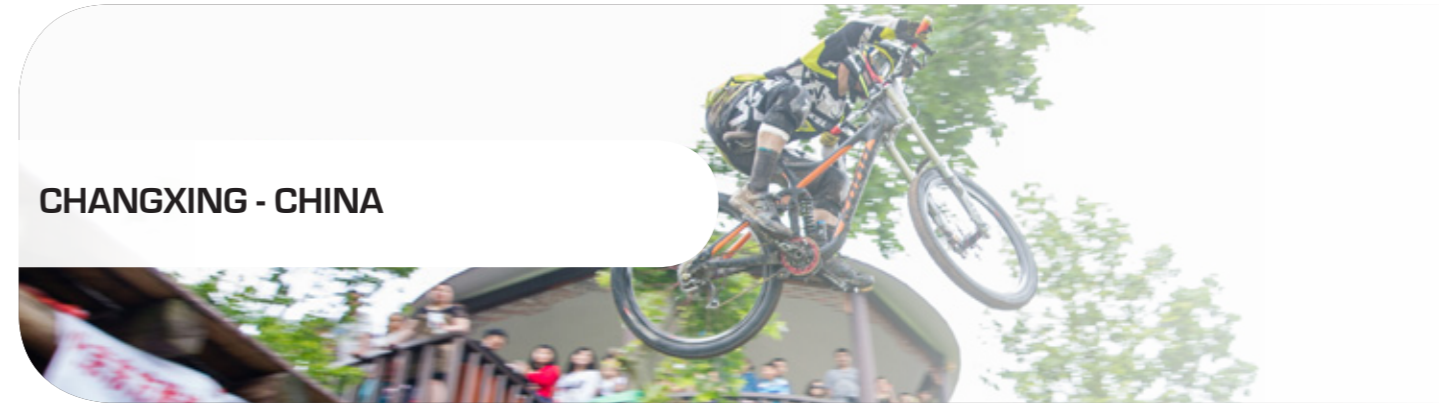
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**ARAVALLI
TRAILHUNTERS**



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mesum verma photography





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TIBET

DAOCHENG

This road trip should be the occasion to take the time, enjoy quietness, landscapes, hiking without having to show „the menpaio“ (entrance ticket).



Guenole Debost



Guenole Debost
Mesum Verma

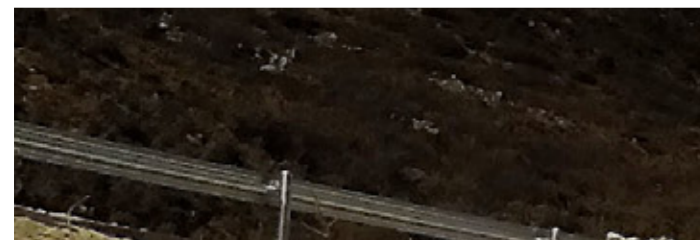


For a long while already we've been speaking of it: a road-trip far from here. Far from cities, from yellow scary smog, from gaojias (highways). Far from population basically.

This road trip should be the occasion to take the time, enjoy quietness, landscapes, hiking without having to show „the menpaio“ (entrance ticket).

Of course we would bring the bikes! Aim was also to go riding, exploring new places, trails where nobody ever rode MTB before.

China is giant country. Where to go? Mountains were a must; Mesum and I are both living in Jiangsu, and we miss the mountains everyday here. The plain is depressing, we had to get high! Therefore, it would be



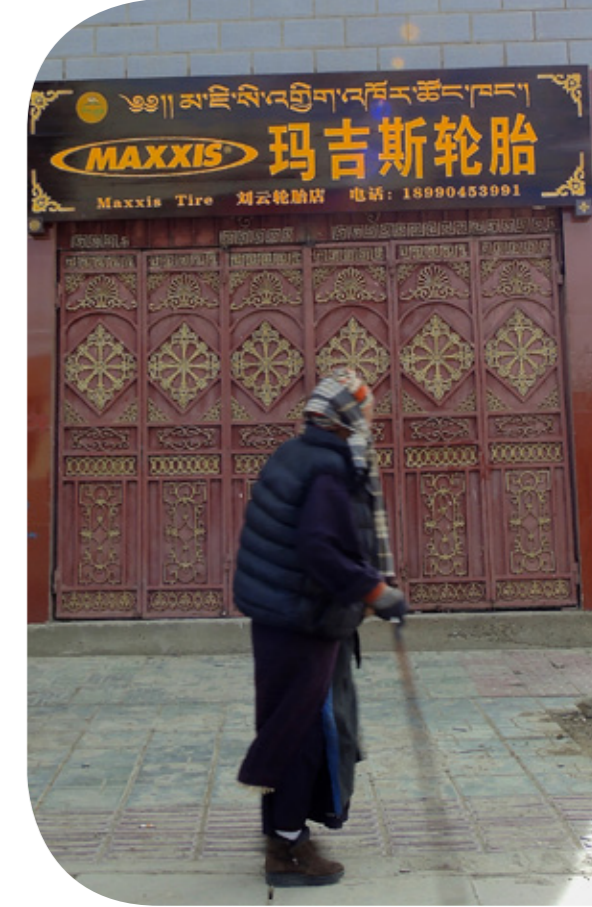
in China's southwest, a place where high mountains can be reached easily, where we can spend the maximum of our time in nature and not wasting too much in transits.

Sichuan, from Chengdu - Sichuan's capital - the plain runs for a hundred more kilometers then you hit the mountains, and within fifty kilometers at most you climb to 2000m.

Then heading west, the road won't stop climbing, up to more than 4000m. Big downhills and beautiful landscapes ahead!

After getting to Chengdu (with the 35kg bike bags and gears...), it was time to deal with the car: not always easy to get what you want here. We finally got one: dear Chevrolet Cruze, you will be our transportation for





these two weeks, enjoy the trip and good luck!

No time to spend in Chengdu, still gaojias and cars everywhere here. It's not for us. Just one thought about we have what we should do here: buy some ammunition in Metro! Cheddar, ham in promotion, tuna, oatmeal, etc. Extra ammo: a bottle of Jameson, a

bottle Ballantines and few cans of Belgian beer.

The plan was: from Ya'an - where the plain stops - follow more or less the G318 National road to the west and stop as often as we see possible riding spots. After long tunnels and low valleys, we arrive at the first stop on the road: Kangding, biggest town around



and the last urban area before the road gets really high. There is no sun reaching Kangding in the morning as it's surrounded by high massifs, but soon the road climbs and sun warms up the car. The airport pass is 4000 meters. Stupa and first prayer flags, here we are: Tibet is not far. The road follows long valleys, everything is very dry here: almost no water in the streams, grass fields

are completely yellow, it's a superb contrast with the blue of the sky.

Road is getting more rough on some passes: last pass of the day is 4300m, road is now more crazy bumpy! SUV would indeed have been a good option, as we'd thought. Still our dear Cruze does a good job. We've been here for two days but still no ride, and



we want it badly now. At the pass we make out a trail going a bit higher; why not? Stop the car, assemble the bikes, and in 10 minutes we are riding up already! Such a good feeling: here we are, nobody around, beautiful surroundings.

Yiejiang, not easy to find a hotel in such a town! We will finally find something, not so

bad actually, and with breakfast included (real meaning: a bowl of porridge and two peanuts). This is a crazy city: middle of the mountains, no activity here. But still, the streets are full of people, just roaming around. And military forces showing muscle.

Hotels next days will be more basic standards: in Litang, it ices on windows on



morning but it ices on the inside of the window. There is not much to do in Litang, we drove our car outside of town, but there it was just totally plain, mountains far away. Nice to see, but not, for us, to ride a bike. We decided to drive further, actually to our destination we where thinking to go: Daocheng.

In Daocheng, the high-tech bathroom was

not really convincing. But at least was some water on tap.

We will stay for few days in Daocheng: the scenery is really nice around the city, perfect place for going out with the bikes, and the town is small enough that you can easily get in and out for rides. Riding ridges, drinking yak butter tea with monks in old monasteries



freeriding down sandy slopes. Daocheng is a place where you could easily stay a week. Seated in a wide valley just under 4000 m, it offers a lot of riding possibilities.

Checking the maps, it seems there is a possibility to go south from here and reach the north of Yunnan and the area of Shangri-La. Let's try it, see if it's feasible. Now the road

is heading south, fewer and fewer cars on it - good. Soon the road turns in a track, a dusty track! Now the car is not red anymore. View is completely crazy here: the track hangs on the side of the mountain, a stream flows 200 m down in the bottom of the valley. Almost only motorbikes on the track. We are going through several ghost towns: a few hairy black pigs crossing the road and



grandma sitting beside the road watching the car in the dust. Soon we had to stop: a young man and woman are loading wood piles on their tractor. Hard to believe that so many of those will last in the skip more than ten meters on these crazy roads!

Now road is going down to the river, and we can see we need to cross the river.

And that's where planning a road-trip with Google Maps shows its limits in this country: on maps you make no difference between a bridge and a 1.5m deep water river crossing! There used to be a bridge here but the river took it away in a fury one day. So, there is no way to link south west Sichuan with Shangri la, except driving a 5 meter high truck





As we can't make a complete loop with the road as we planned, the only solution is to take the same road back which actually is a good thing to hunt for riding trails: taking the road backward gives you another perspective. Hunting for trails in this kind of desert area might seem an easy task, but it's harder than it looks: without any trees, on the yellow pasturages, you can easily track the

lines coming down the side of the mountains. But without even a bush or anything else you have absolutely no idea of the distance and the height of the trail.

On the way back, in one of the high valleys taken by the G318, we make out a bright line going up the hill; this would be a nice trail for sure! Seeing from bottom of the valley, it



always looks easy... Pushing up a DH bike at 4200m is very quickly exhausting - you are short of breath in few meters so if you want to enjoy the downhill, you'd better push slowly! It will take us 50 minutes to push up to the top. It's always great feeling arriving at the top of downhill like this, all riders know it: you just saw all the curves, stones, tricky places of the trail you are about to ride, close to full

speed... Arriving at the top, the excitement rises: that's gonna be awesome! A few shots from the top and it's time to go: High five and enjoy Bro! Braabraa-Braaaa!!

We are now enjoying the last hundred kilometers. Almost two weeks on the high plateau, foothills of the Himalayas, we went very far from the over-populated eastern China





and drove about 2000km here inside Tibet. The return to the "civilization" is gonna be hard, but we are trained.


We are flying back to our sweet and flat Jiangsu. Soon we will start checking maps for next trips, dreaming about elevation and godforsaken riding spots!



नेपाली स्पीडिङ

INTERVIEW

Mesum Verma 

Gaurav Man Sherchan
Stephen Keeling 

Chris thank you for taking time to do this interview. Tell us about yourself - who is Chris? Where do you come from? Where you live? What is your age?

I'm Christopher Keeling and I am 15 years old. I'm half British— half Nepali and have lived my whole life in Kathmandu, Nepal. I'm a co-factory rider for Commencal bikes, and Funn and Kali protective. They all make awesome products.

When you were young, how did you get infected with the biking virus? When did you start to ride a bike?

I started to ride bikes at the age of four after my Dad bought me a Spiderman bike. I was in love with the fact that you had two wheels and that you had to pedal. I rode this bike nearly every day in the football field outside my house. I started to hang out with the local kids and taught them how to ride bikes. By age 7 my Dad had bought me three bikes, of course cheap ones as I grew out of each one. So we would make a circuit and just race with these three bikes, whilst my Dad timed us. Childhood was all about fun, just playing with my bikes and friends. I remember riding one bike down the slope in my garden with four of my friends balanced on it! The main factor for my interest was my Dad. And when I was about 10 years old I started to go on longer rides with my Dad. I remember two rides we did



Chris on his Spiderman bike, age 6





Chris and Max Commencal



Mega youth category podium

of more than 150 km over two days. Thanks Dad for spending a lot of time with me when I was young.

At what age did you get interested in bike racing? How did it become important to you to attend races? Which was your first race? Can you remember your feeling to be at the starting line?

When I was about nine years old I went to see the Asian MTB Downhill Championships, which was held in the Kathmandu Valley. I was stunned by what I saw with the jumps and fast mountain bikes descending the steep hill. After this race I started to take personal BMX training sessions at a pump track, with one of the best local riders — Kumar Pun. He is the nicest guy I have ever met, always smiling and joking around. He made learning fun. In the beginning he would ride around and say that this is what you will look like if you improve your technique. I wanted to look like him, it seemed very cool. I trained with him for about a year and learned the basics well, but struggled to master bigger things such as bunny hops, as I wasn't so strong then. I was unable to bunny hop properly when I was younger. But my pumping and turning and ramp jumps were good. This really helped me out in the future with downhill.

Racing wasn't really on my mind at this age. I first took part in a downhill race when I was 13 years old and

then took part in the Megakids race in France. The great feeling I got from racing really fuelled my interest in racing and winning. I am quite competitive at school and so is my Dad's family. But they are runners and I am a rider. At the start line I always feel nervous, which makes me feel drowsy and weak... but after the first minute of racing I always feel better and give it my all.

What was your first proper racing bike and what do you ride now?

My first proper mountain bike was a Commencal Ramones CroMo hardtail with Rockshox Revelation 150 mm, Elixir brakes, a steel frame (which was awesome) and a 2 by 9 drivetrain. I won my first race in France with this bike and it was a great bike for a hardtail. After that I moved on to a 2013 Meta AM v3 Factory with Fox 32 Kashima fork (150mm) and rear fox Kashima (150 mm), with Formula RX brakes, a 2 by 10 drivetrain and a hydraulic seat post, which I love for enduro riding. I rode this bike for the 2014 season, won the national downhill championships race in Nepal and came third in the Megavalanche youth category, which was made possible with the help of Commencal. For the 2015 season I am riding my new Commencal Meta AM v4 which rides so nicely. The frame is spot on perfect for me. It's equipped with the Pike 160 mm solo air shock, which is absolutely amazing; and in the rear





the Monarch plus is so smooth and plush. It has SRAM Guide RS brakes and the sweet 1 by 11 SRAM X1 drivetrain and of course a hydraulic seat post (I couldn't ride without that). I am also running Funn's new hard anodized Fatboy supreme handlebars, grips and saddle, which are all so comfortable. Well yeah, that's my race bike for this summer (I am booked for three races in France and one in the UK this July).

**Beside biking, what you are doing?
We guess you go still to school?**

Yeah I do go to school and am doing my GCSEs. One of my hobbies is playing computer games. So I ride all day then play games at night. I mostly play Dota 2 and sometimes Left 4 Dead 2 — both awesome games. I do some simple training such as push ups and crunches at home for about 30 minutes a day which helps on the trails.

How do you manage with racing and school?

The thing is I only race in Nepal when I have school and in France and UK in the summer so I don't miss much school. So far I have missed about a week of school going to races outside Kathmandu. Most races are on weekends, downhill or cross country. Most are in the Kathmandu Valley and a few are further away. My school lets me have a few days off to get to the race venue if needed.

You were in France for the Mega Avalanche race, and came third in the youth category, and 247th out of all 1400 competitors. In 2013 you were top on the podium at the Mega Kids race. Can you say what the atmosphere is like for races in France and in Nepal?

The Megavalanche is a really big race in France with hundreds of competitors. We usually have about 20-30 people in a downhill race in Nepal and only the top 10 are experienced and the rest are new who have been riding downhill for only a year or so. Right now the competition is between three guys, me, Shakar and Rajesh. In France I am racing with new people, which is good and different, and most of them are better than me. As it's international I feel more pressure and get more nervous before the race. I get to represent Nepal in this race, which is awesome and would love to race for Nepal in enduro or downhill one day. Racing in Nepal is getting better by the year, this year we have three more races and I am excited to do them all.

How often are you on the bike per week? Do you do special training, like technical parts or train your stamina? What does your 'biking week' look like?

I'm not really training that seriously right now. I do training every day for about 30 minutes at home to help





with my strength for cycling. I ride after school two or three times a week for two hours X-C style with my Meta AM — school finishes at 3:30 so it's perfect. I also cycle the 20 minutes to school every day and have been doing this alone since I was 11 years old. So that's on week days.

On weekends I go with my great friend Buntay Panday downhill shuttling with his pickup truck. We go up in the truck and down on the bikes. It may sound lazy, but we manage to fit in 7-10 downhill rides in one day and these rides are up to 15-30 minutes long so by the end of the day we are knackered. On Sunday I sometimes go for a 3-4 hour ride with a nice 15 minutes downhill.

How is your riding style?

Well I usually feel in control of my bike even on the most difficult terrain and other people say that I look this way. I also don't mind slippery tracks and think that it is one of my strong points that I can still ride fine when it is steep and slippery. think this is the main reason why I won the Palpa Urban Downhill race last September. It was a steep and technical track and then it rained before the race.

Beside biking, what you do else in your spare time? Or is it all about biking?

My studies are quite average but my

parents are really nagging me right now, so yeah I am trying to get better grades.

What is your dream? What you want to accomplish, and does it lie on the mountain bike, or somewhere else?

My dream is to become a pro mountain biker racing either the Enduro World Series or the downhill world cup. I want to be the Enduro World Series champ one day like Jerome Clementz and Jarred Graves. The reason I want this is because you travel a lot, experience different cultures and ride different kinds of trails throughout the year, which is sick.

Who is your idol, who you look at up to, and get excited to get on the bike and try out the things you see from him?

My Idol is Jerome Clementz. His aggressive yet smooth style gets me excited to ride bikes; so when I ride I try to be as aggressive yet smooth as him.

There are great trails in Nepal, and the scenery is outstanding, but if you could build your dream trail, where would it be?

Yes there are amazing natural trails in Nepal that we ride all the time. I would probably build my own trail in Timpani jungle which is about 1 hour





drive/2 hours ride away from my house. Amazing jungle with nice wet dirt and natural features, and I would love to add some gaps and berms.

Do you have something to say to kids, why they should pick up the bike rather than the Play Station?

Kids should pick up their bikes rather than playing Play Station all day, it keeps you healthy. Even better if you ride to school every day like I do. They can play Play Station when it's dark but in the day time they should ride with their local friends in the garden and experiment and play around.

The last words are yours!

Thanks for Interviewing me MTBMag and to everyone reading this, RIDE ON!

We wish you all the best, success in whatever you do! Ride on! Keep it real! Thanks

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Race to the Top of the World – Manali - Khardungla Cycling Championship 2015



Anil Uchil
Gaurav Schimar



“Tough! Tough! Tough! Hard as rock! But there is something in those magnificent mountains and hour long climbs that make one enjoy the hardship. Just when you think it is hard to go any further, the soul is pulled by yet another breathtaking view. Come prepared that it is going to hurt you. While

unforgiving, the Himalayas are completely captivating”. These words of the fastest rider of MKCC 2014, Nakul Singh, from Team Lifecycle Racing (Pune), perhaps best describes the experience one can get at the Manali-Khardungla Cycling championship (MKCC). The Race to the Top of the

World’ is back with its 2015 edition, this time more exciting, power-packed and challenging.

This year, the championship is set to commence on 26th July, 2015 from Manali and finish on 3th August, 2015 at Khardungla. Endurance cyclists from India and abroad will compete

against each other in what can be called the most challenging conditions and terrain, to win not only the coveted title but also the pride of having raced up to Top of the World! If the events of last year are anything to go by, one can look forward to a show of tremendous courage, endurance, grit and determination.

The 2015 Edition of the MKCC offers two categories, to suit every type of cyclist, be it a racing aficionado, an adventure freak or a cycling enthusiast. The 8-Day Stage Race - MKCC's ultimate, high voltage drama is designed especially for the long-distance endurance cyclists, who will race on a carefully charted route spanning terrains of varying difficulty levels. The Ultimate Cycling Adventure Tour, is designed especially for cycling enthusiasts who wish to ride on the World's Highest Road at their own pace, and experience the sheer brilliance and challenge of the terrain.

Since the region opened up for travellers in the 1970's, the Manali-Khardungla route has been on the must-do list of every serious cyclist. The interest in the circuit of the cycling community has been on the rise since a decade and the number of cyclists undertaking the journey has increased exponentially over the past few years. While hundreds of individual and group cyclists have been undertaking the gruelling journey every year, with MKCC 2014, it was the first time a race was

organised on the circuit. The Manali-Leh-Khardungla highway stretches over 500 km of predominantly paved roads, with stretches of sand, gravel and rocky terrain thrown in for good measure. MKCC takes the riders through the ever-changing and incredibly dramatic landscapes, while ascending and descending continuously. The race passes through the world's highest passes, with five of them above 15,000 ft including its grand culmination at the World's Highest Motorable pass - Khardungla - at 18,380 ft. The stages of the race have been designed to help the riders acclimatise to the rarefied conditions in a phased manner. MKCC 2015 is all set to be powered by the Indian Army, which will be coming in with vital medical and logistic support required in the demanding high-altitude trans-Himalayan cold desert. Competition this year is going to get tougher with the Army planning to send its top cyclists to compete in the race. There will be support vehicles spread in the race across all stages. Mobile hydration and refreshments for the riders will be provided regularly. Experienced race marshals will be keeping an eye on every racer. There will be a host of support crew moving with the race, including brilliant chefs who will prepare sumptuous food with high nutritional value. The diet plan has been prepared with expert inputs from dieticians and fitness experts,



keeping in mind the high energy requirement of the riders and the particular environment of the region. There will be advanced medical support and ambulance to take care of any health concerns. The race will have a mix of organised and camping accommodation. Northern Escapes founder,

Gaurav Schimar says, „Borne out of sheer passion and love for the region, MKCC gives you the chance to compete in the highest race on the planet. With MKCC, we plan to wedge India firmly on the world endurance cycling circuit”. Race Director Anil Uchil adds, „The Manali-Khardungla route is highly

inspirational for the global cycling community. MKCC will be something that every participant will be extremely proud to be part of and compete in, for all of their lives. And a word of advice for all riders: the route is not so much about physical capability, it is more of a mind game to be won!”

SPANK

What is hand/arm numbness, and why is it such a problem for MTB riders?

The phenomenon of hand and arm numbness and fatigue from holding onto vibrating equipment is not new to mountain bikers. In fact as modern development of MTB components has led to stronger and stiffer components, we have amplified this effect to the point that

perception of a firm grip, which in turns triggers a reaction to grip harder, leading to fatigue. With today's high performance riders and bicycles demanding the utmost in stiffness and light weight out of all their components, what is the answer? Surely few of us would accept a highly „flexible“ handlebar. Wide diameter, soft grips and padded gloves can reduce some of the



„arm pump“ is prevalent problem for gravity riders world wide. For those of us who suffer from impulse and vibrational fatigue, it can seem like a losing battle. Gripping a vibrating handlebar leads to hand numbness, which can reduce the

impulse energy delivered to hands, but often result in squeezing harder to get the same perceived grip on the bars, and do little to reduce the vibrational energy that travels through bars to hands.

Reports from the world's top riders indicates that recent trends in over-sized handlebar diameters, such as 35mm, have actually amplified the issue of hand/arm fatigue, and efforts to make these bars more compliant (flexible) may in fact bring them too close to critical wall thicknesses, reducing both safety and performance.

Some competitors have combated this effect by turning to carbon, which offers a higher level of vibrational dampening than alloy and low overall weights, but at the cost of environmental responsibility and affordable prices.



www.enduro-mtb.com

Mike Dutton / Spank
Mesum Verma
Spank Industrie
Markus Seitz

What is VIBROCORE?



At Spank Industries our goal was to produce a solution which offered the best of all worlds, in any handlebar diameter, with a focus on a standard diameter that works, 31.8mm. After all it was Gavin Vos, the founder of Spank Industries, who first introduced the 31.8mm standard to the industry years ago, after careful study into strength to weight ratios and critical wall thicknesses. It was fundamental in the development of the VIBROCORE

system, to provide the stiffness and responsiveness that our World Cup Dh and Enduro Racers demanded, but at the same time to reduce the impulse and vibrational fatigue that had already put some of our pros under the knife...and do it with a system that kept the overall weight of the bars competitive at any level. It was also imperative to us to achieve this with a recyclable material, and at a reasonable price. In conjunction with Spank's Dual XGT Taper technology, which sees alloy handlebars butted up to seven times.

The VIBROCORE Team Edition Spike 800Race Handlebar weighs in at just 335g, going head to head with carbon alternatives, at half the price.



How does VIBROCORE work?

The theory behind Spank's VIBROCORE Impulse and Fatigue Dampening System is simple. First it's important to understand that like all forms of energy, the vibrational energy that is transmitted through your bars to your hands, is made up of waves, which can be measured in amplitude and frequency. The more dense a material, the higher its ability to transmit these energy waves. Alloys have a very high density, and in turn transmit vibrational energy very effectively. VIBROCORE is a complex, low density material which fills the core of the handlebar, reducing the frequency, amplitude, and duration of energy waves traveling through the handlebar.

Not only does the low density of the VIBROCORE impede the transfer of energy, but as energy waves cross material boundaries from high density to low density within the bar, they are refracted and reflected (basically bounced in different directions), reducing their ability to build on one another (resonate) or sustain vibrational frequencies. Spank's VIBROCORE system also acts to reinforce the handlebar from the inside, making it stronger and stiffer, resulting in a more responsive performance and improved sensitivity. The result is a handlebar that feels incredibly strong and rigid, and acts to reduce impulse and vibrational fatigue.

VIBROCORE on the trail?

We tested the Spike 800Race VIBROCORE handlebar (rise 15), mounted with a Spank Spoon stem on an enduro bike (Scott Voltage Fr20, 170mm / 160mm). It would be a lie to tell you now, we felt a difference to the normal Spank Spike 800Race handlebar, which was mounted before on the bike. But we think, it will surely help

to avoid hand/arm numbness for longer rides. We think the VIBROCORE fits really well for enduro or freeride bikes. They have shorter travel than a downhill bike, but ridden same hardness but on much longer trails. We will tell you sure more about the VIBROCORE after the longterm test.





SPATCKE

SPATCKE | PILOT MICK HANNAH



Team Varanasi Riders is a MTB Freestyle Stunt Riding team known mostly for its MTB Freestylers originated from Holy City Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India.

Freestyle Stunt Riding, commonly it is organized or participated in foreign countries like USA, UK, Russia and the hub of Freestyle Stunt Riding Poland, where riders of different categories like (BMX, MTB) participate in competition and present themselves and there skills as peace of art.

But unfortunately our country is far away from Freestyle Stunt Riding culture and Freestyle Stunt Athlete. Freestyle Stunt riding in India is mostly treated as road circus people are entertained a lot but they didn't except Freestyle Stunt Riding as a profession. We are separated from community and society some time they complains to police stations and cops catch us and put a huge amount of charge on us some time they punish us by making our ride puncture or sometime more than this.

We had suffered a lot by the past 5 years Freestyle Stunt Riding is the only chase or goal for us we are aware of the society and cops so we started to find some places like Old Schools, Hospitals and Basketball courts etc where we started practicing mostly in nights and before sun set the darkness is our only friend which help us to hide from the civilization we respect our ride as a child respect there parents they are worth us a lot.





We collect our pocket money to get our ride any kind of because our family had protest the Freestyle Stunt Riding from beginning. We have to maintain our secret in home at of kind we are a sports man according to the U.S government because stunting is an X Sports in European states or European country alter an

great evolution and revolt. Freestyle Stunt Riding is more famous between teenagers and adults but then also there is no one who treat us like Freestyle Athlet they treat us as a showman of circus who just entertain the audience but we are not treating Freestyle Stunt Riding as hobby or any times it will be





occurred for everyone to hear that we are taking Freestyle Stunt Riding as a profession not only for us for the whole Freestyle Stunt Riding group belongs to any kind of ride operated by human power and under the rules and regulation. We want to make Freestyle Stunt Riding as a legal sports in India where anyone can participate and show his/her talent and nominated for the trophy and prize money for there talent.

Team Varanasi Riders
Its the dream of millions please don't break it, make it!



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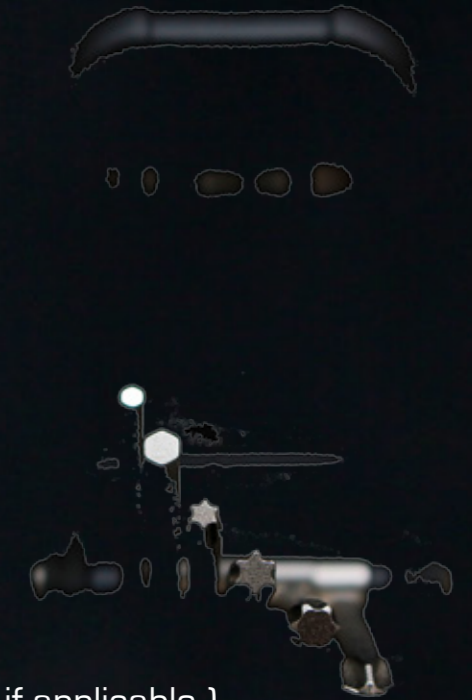


Rakesh Oswal

mtbmag

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| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Weight | 87g |
| Number of Tools | 12 |
| Chain Tool | NO |
| Features | Extruded bits 35mm bits, enable to reach smallest areas |
| Dimensions | 62x39x20mm |
| Standard | 2/2.5/3/4/5/8 Torx T10/20/25/30 Screwdriver PH2/FLAT |



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CHANGXING - CHINA

INTERNATIONAL DOWNHILL RACE

2015

The second edition of this international race was held in Changxing on May 2nd and 3rd. As with the first edition last year on October 1st 2014, lots of international riders attended this race. Dan (Chiang Sheng Shan) from Taiwan was also again here, one of the top riders in Asia, and he was recently in Lourdes/France racing at the worldcup. Unfortunately he did not make it into the final, but it is good to know how high the level is on a worldcup, to ride with the best of the best riders in the world.

Riders from Taiwan, Hongkong,

France, England, USA, Russia, China found a slightly modified trail than last year. The trailbuilder (No Name) from Taiwan made the top part wider, so there was more flow in it, and more space for the 800mm handlebar we ride on a downhill bike. After the big jump, they had to change the trail completely, to not interfere with people walking at the scenic spot. The new trail at the end had lots of wooden bridges in it, like north shore style. The whole trail got a bit shorter, but was still very very interesting and still one of the best trails in China!



Dan



Mesum Verma



Deng Yu
Mesum Verma



May 1st is also a holiday in China, so most riders arrived Thursday evening. This means there was an extra day for training instead only Saturday morning. Markus Ruchti (Switzerland), Gueno Dubost (France), and I went early Friday morning for the track-walk. We walked up the whole hill, at the stairs, we know, later we will push our bikes up!

The weather was nice, almost too hot, the trail was super dry, and we found out, when we walked down the trail, it's slippery but will be good. We also knew from the weather forecast that there would be rain Saturday, and maybe also Sunday. We all ride in the elite group, which means we have a qualification Saturday afternoon to see what time we will race at the final on Sunday. Knowing that, we had a bit of concern about the wooden bridges - we knew, if it's raining, we can't even touch the brakes, otherwise we would crash.

We went back to the Hotel, got the bikes, and pushed the bikes up. The trail is technical, and gets more technical if you go very fast. When Gueno and I went down the first time, we were too busy braking, but still it was good, we had a good time.





Second time, we tried to touch the brake a little bit less. In a 90 degree corner full of dust, my front wheel washed out on a small stone and then I went down pretty hard. Only bruises, nothing hurt really much. All good, took the bike, and full speed down the finish line.

Friday night, we woke up. It was raining and a thunderstorm was going on, the trail condition will be still be slippery Saturday, but how worse will it be? The first training run we had Saturday morning, was not so bad, I went down twice, more because I used the brake to much, not biggies, and it was pouring down, as if it never wanted to stop again. We went up for a other run, no rain at the moment, which we figured out was even much worse than before. There was a soap trail from the top till the end. Gueno and I had a difficult time to stay on the bike, and we both went down several more times.

At lunchtime, we had a riders' meeting, to decide if we should have the qualification for the elite group or not. All foreigners where ok to do the qualification, even during the rain, but we saw also, we were almost the only ones on the trail, so we decided



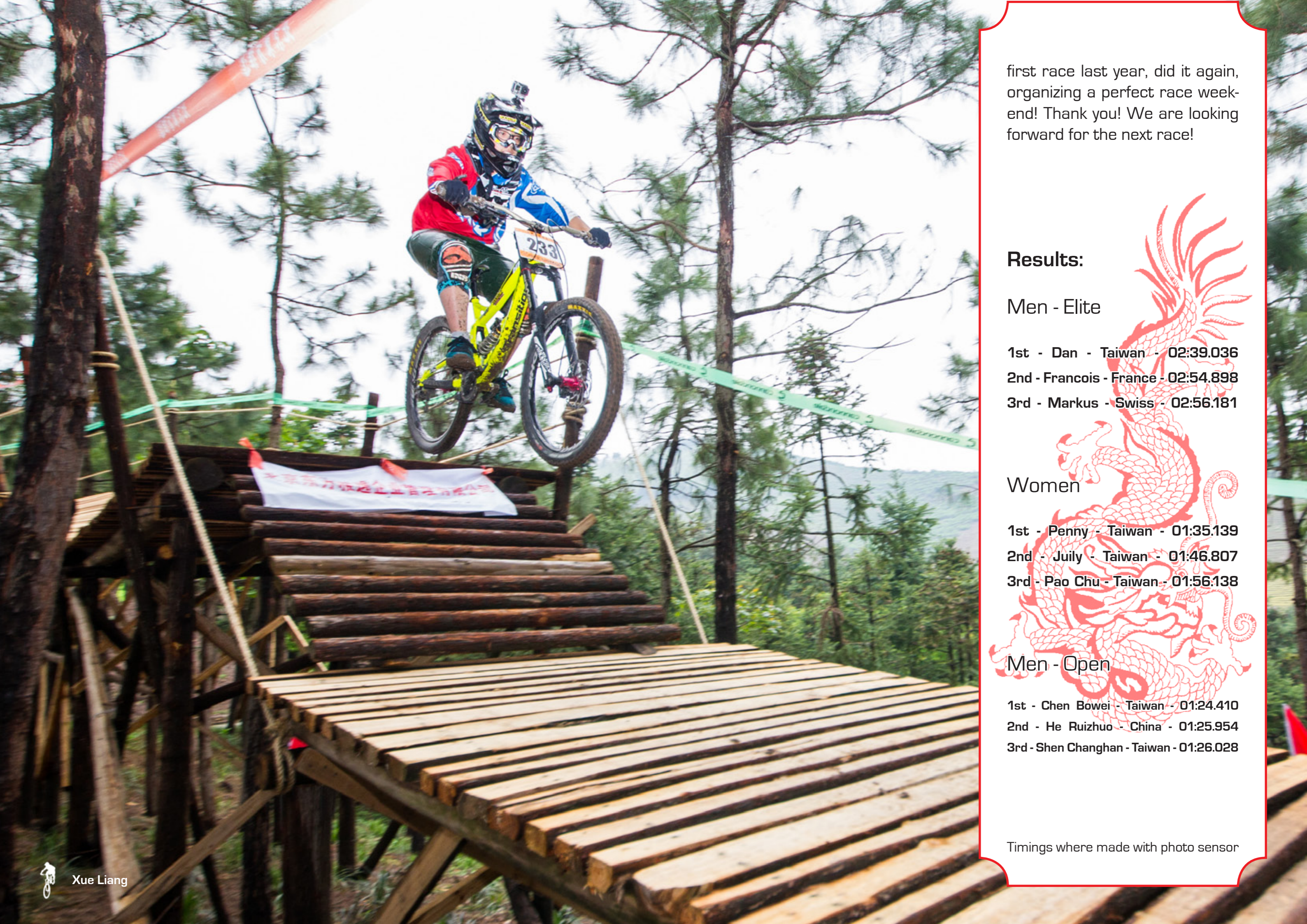
to sign to cancel the quali, and go for free training. Another run, and we called the day. Cleaned the bike, and made it ready for the Final run on Sunday.

Sunday, they changed the schedule a bit, the elite group had to race first, instead of in the afternoon as first planned. The trail was much better than Saturday, not so loose anymore, but still slippery. Some riders faced some crashes, including Markus Ruchti (Switzerland - Devinci/DeCharme/mtbmagchina) but he still managed to climb the podium! Very impressed by him, he got his new bike just only 4 days before the race. Myself, I had more of a fight with my sickness. I'd just gotten a bad cold before the race, and was still sick during the race. My bike rode me, then I rode the bike, but I had no power to control the bike, as I normally do.

Afternoon was the final for the open category, 60+ riders had to battle it out, to decide who will be staying at the podium in the end. The trail conditions were now perfect, not dusty, not wet, just super grippy, perfect to go full speed.

John Watt & Winnie, after the





first race last year, did it again, organizing a perfect race weekend! Thank you! We are looking forward for the next race!

Results:

Men - Elite

- 1st - Dan - Taiwan - 02:39.036
- 2nd - Francois - France - 02:54.898
- 3rd - Markus - Swiss - 02:56.181

Women

- 1st - Penny - Taiwan - 01:35.139
- 2nd - Juily - Taiwan - 01:46.807
- 3rd - Pao Chu - Taiwan - 01:56.138

Men - Open

- 1st - Chen Bowei - Taiwan - 01:24.410
- 2nd - He Ruizhuo - China - 01:25.954
- 3rd - Shen Changhan - Taiwan - 01:26.028

Timings where made with photo sensor



Dan, 20 (Taiwan - Giant, Xfusion, Novatec, Shimano, XForce, HT, Spank, Ranger's MTB, KMC, EVOG, MAXXIS, Frontier, LEZYNE, Kronos)

Took to the stairs, step by step experiencing the local culture, beauty greeted on the ground. From the starting point, along the road through the woods, there are many bends, wood, etc ... plus a narrow gap track so that players feel more challenged. (When we focus on the shuttle in the woods, only has eyes for the track.) Then out of the woods, directly to the boundary of tea, then I only have eyes in addition to outside the track, you'll see neat tea, and can vaguely see distant views, but slightly fragrant smell of tea, which is only a short period of a few seconds, turn into the chicane in front and slowly disappear. Re-entered the woods a short, characteristic of this paragraph is that there are three large wooden crosses on a bend, testing the reaction of the players, then After a few bends, through the peach trees, in the middle a hidden platform of 2.5 meters, you. Interesting too, in front of a wooden bridge across a road, turn into the other side of the track, followed by an S-shaped wooden leap into the woods, when they reached here, the end is not far away, so put your mind fully absorbed in this period! This is short but very exciting, with ramps and roots, steep slope micro, test your line selection and manipulation techniques, at the same time you did not react, followed by the stone steps. This can mess your rhythm, try down the center of gravity. Coming the last 50 meters and then a wooden bridge to the opposite, convergence is a right turn lead angle, speed, then you can jump into the curve, the speed of the speed continued unabated out, and finally burst into a slope platform end. A whole track, very challenging, but also very characteristic, though it began before a rain, but does not affect the enthusiasm of our ride, and this is the spirit of downhill! Great event, make persistent efforts.





Francois, 27

(France - DeCharme, Supertrails, ForbikeClothing, McflyWatches, mtbmagchina, HT, Smith Optic, MAXXIS)

For me Changxing is the paradise, No Name is the best organization I have ever seen, they worked hard on the track and take care of every rider! I came here for relaxation and to meet my friends. Every day the ground was different, over dust on Friday, over mud on Saturday and perfect grip on Sunday. I didn't ride fast as I can but I didn't make any mistakes, so I finished 2nd. It's a good result for my new Team : DeCharme Supertrails Special thanks to my sponsors!



Markus Ruchti, 33 (Switzerland - Devinci, DeCharme, mtbmagchina, HT)

What should I tell you guys? What a sweet weekend in Huzhou. My first ride on a dh bike after two years and six years after my last race in Switzerland. We had everything. Hot weather that dried the track for the Friday practice and made the dirt loose and dusty. After a good trackwalk with Gueno & Mesum I had a good feeling how it will be to ride. Drifts the whole way down to the finish line. I like that. Saturday the total opposite. Rain rain and more rain. Still slippery but so different. The track needed way more skills from all the riders and we saw a lot of crashes. After the qualification was canceled, I took my bike up to the start and had one easy run in the mud. Good to see how the track changed. More confidence for the race run.

On Sunday. After that I had a good race run without any risk on a difficult track. Different conditions in every corner. In the end a stupid mistake in the second corner, which ended up in a crash. A super smooth run down the hill after this situation, putted me on a 3rd place in the end. These facts gives me a good feeling for the next races here in China. Many thanks goes to John and Winnie who organized a beautiful event. De-Charme Devinci, mtbmagchina, Smith optics and Ht for their support. Thank you to my girlfriend who supports me every time and all the friendly local riders here in China. We see us soon on the track. Until than, ride hard, ride free.





Penny, 31

(Taiwan - SPECIALIZED TAIWAN, X-FORCE, X-FUSION, DAKINE TAIWAN, SUPACAZ, IXS, RACING PRO, PRO COMPRESSION, FMA, SCHWALBE)

Hi I'm Penny. I was happy to participate in the race at Changxing! This was the most special time ever, because I live by the track, I can practice with my bike immediately when I wake up, very special experience! Because we used to take a long bus trip to the track! We don't have steep incline in mountains of Taiwan, tracks are more plentiful here than Taiwan! When we first got here the track was extremely dry and slippery! But the next day it rained heavily, I still practiced in the rain - actually it feels quite good, because back in Taiwan we seldom practice in the rain! The sun was out shining the next day when the race begun, the track was just right in the right humidity! The track wasn't slippery any more, I felt great to ride on it, racers and spectators are both enthusiastic, I was the champion of female group! I was really happy, and hope to join the race here again soon!

July Tsai, 31

(Taiwan - SANTA CRUZ /
DECHARME)

I just got my new bicycle SANTA CRUZ V10 and new shoes 510 before the race day. In this technique downhill track, I am happy to be able to steady play in the final. Whatever the outcome, we are much profited by this trip. I will keep going, and be a happy rider with friends from all over the country to ride together and progress. Don't forget your original goal.(Never forget the first love of DH.)





Pao Chu, 40

(Taiwan)

I did not make it for the gap last year. This year I finally conquered my fear on the gap, made it through the dirt jump and finished off with the last wood area this time! I am so excited and so proud of myself! Unfortunately I wasn't able to hold my speed when I did my first jump! I went straight into the wood.

My results would be better without that mistake during that section! I need more training on the technical skill for improvement.

I go biking whether it's on sunny or rainy day! I enjoy sweating, drying out my energy and shredding in the mud! The best thing is to enjoy with your friends together, share the happiness! I am aging but my passion towards biking is forever!!"





WORLD RECORD WITHIN REACH

GWin find the perfect line in the new track of Lourdes!!

The downhill World Cup 2015 is restarted! We left in 2014 with the fantastic final of the all Championship victory by Josh Bryceland (Santacruz Bike) but then in the last meters of the world championship race in Norway (won by Gee Atherton) landing from a jump he had a foot injury forcing the young "Rat-boy" for a long period of inactivity and a difficult rehabilitation.

In this season, however, there are the premises for a great show, many contenders including in pole position we find Aaron Gwin (Specialized Bike), second last year in the overall World Cup and still with the poisoned tooth. Also in contention is his young teammate Troy Brosnan (Specialized Bike) who was extraordinary in the first half of the



Giulio Bisio





season and then lost a little in the second part of the same. Last but not less important indeed, Loic Bruni (Lapierre Bike) still chasing the first World Cup victory but fresh winner of the first stage of Crankworx in NZ and particularly on fire for the new French stage where plays at home.

Among the last-minute absentee because of injury, we find Sam Hill (Nukeproof Bike) who was particularly in form in the latter part of the 2014 season, and the legend Steve Peat (Santacruz Bikes) waiting for an operation on his leg.

The first round of this WC 2015 is been in Lourdes from 10-12 April in a brand new track, prepared specially for the occasion; in reality, the track was already present for several years and was tackled in the French championship for this reason. Ragot, Bruni, Thirion, to name a few of French guys, are the only ones that have tried a good part of that, even if the 2015 version has been made much more spectacular and difficult.

The track is located at the Pic du Jer, an isolated hill that rises on the left side of the city looking toward the Pyrenees; the top is easily





reachable with a spectacular funicular dug in the rock, that can transport more less thirty athletes at a time and the journey takes approximately 15 minutes.

How is the track ... technical, fast, with lots of different lines to choose !!

Moving on to the description of the track, the departure is situated just outside the end of funicular, and the first 100m are characterized by a double pass under the funicular itself through a series of arches; then starts the first and spectacular spot (my favorite), an extended rock garden characterized by beautiful rocks covered with green moss where the rider had to face a change of direction, and then a long curve to the right that goes with a final jump. After the rock garden, there is a series of double jumps and a bridge crossing. Past the bridge, comes the so-called „wall“ - the name says more or less everything: one big and impressive step-down made particular from one row of rocks that riders had to jump, before they were able to support full speed on a parabolic outside curve that brought them into the flowing section below.



A long enough section where we never touched the brakes, made of a succession of jumps while the track narrows and becomes a small trail between a dense forest of conifers that were grazed with the shoulders and the legs of the riders to an average of 50 km/h !

After that a part, the course is much more open, with excellent visibility for the many fans coming to support their heroes, characterized by a series of parabolic curves and jumps, two road gaps one longer than the other - no word to describe these big jumps, except "oh my god!!"

At the landing of the second road gap, the riders entered in the pine forest where there is a net change of surface, more crumbly and slippery that induced the runners to many errors (it was here where Gee Atherton (GT Bike) fell during his qualifying run, and he was not the only one).

Leaving the pine woods we arrived in the final section with stones and compact tarmac where, after a curve to the left, there is the section more particular where you could see so many different lines: some riders followed the easy line trying to be as





smooth as possible, while others tried to jump to avoid the obstacles and keep the line the straightest possible by taking some nice risks but firing up fans (it was here that Oscar Hanstrom crashed, just in front of me... The staff wishes him a speedy recovery).

The track then concludes with section of open brake, consisting of a series of double jumps and a sharp curve at 90° degrees; ending finally after having passed the last bridge place at 50 m from the arrival.

Qualifying Time.... The French guys fix the time !!

The weather conditions for the qualifying rounds were the best, sun , track entirely dry and a not bad forecast.

The program started with junior men's category and Greenland Laurie(Trek Bike) from UK marked the reference time 09.3.063 with almost 3 seconds ahead of the Australian Andrew Crimmins (Kona Bike) and the amazing Spanish Alex Marin Trillo (Giant Bike) at + 6.3 seconds. In the women's category, a great performance from the Australian Tracy





Hannah (Polygon Biking) which set a time of 3.29.785 with an advantage of more than 5 seconds accrued in the last section of the track; behind her, the ever-present Rachel Atherton (Gt Bike) followed by the young French Myriam Nicole (Commercial Bike).

Heavy removal to the favored and local hero Emeliene Ragot (Mondraker Bike) far at + 8.6 seconds; worse than that for the world champion in charge and the dominator of the WC 2014 Manon Carpenter (Sarcen Bike) that accused finished, well, 12.6 seconds behind the leader.

In qualifying, the more interesting male one is the local idol Loic Bru-ni (Lapierre Bikes) who marked the best time, stopping the chronometer on 03.3.908 and confirming the suspect for the victory of the race the next day.

In the second position, confirming the best knowledge of the track by the French, is Remi Thirion (Commencal Bike) that accused 1.8 seconds from the compatriot; while it is excellent for Josh Bryceland (Santacruz Bike) to obtain the 3° position and earn his first important points for





championship.

The ranking is an orphan of two great names : Gee Atherton (GT Bike) who fell in the section of pine forest with an injury his hand, and Aaron Gwin (Specialized bike), who fell and exited the track without returning to the track at the same point where he came out, and so he was disqualified. However, having been in the top 20 riders of the WC 2014, they are protected (P) and they are both included among the starters in the race list on Sunday.

Many outsiders figured well in qualifying. Just to mention a few : 5th time of Lucas Dean (Devinci Bike) , and the 13° Cabirou Rudy who started with the race number 127!

Unfortunately the run of the novice rider from Taiwan, Dan Sheng- Shang (Giant Bikes) failed to qualify but he will try to do that in Leogang (AUT).

Race time... now is nothing or all !! Who will be the first winner on this track?

On Sunday the weather improved, summer temperatures and no clouds in the sky, perfect conditions for



bringing thousands of spectators on track, ready to support their countrymen who have well figured in qualifying.

Among the junior category is Grimmins (Kona Bike), who overtook Greenland (Trek Bike). Greenland made some mistakes and was not able to confirm the time reported on Saturday. The Australian in fact won the race in 10.3.159, approximately 1.1 seconds more than the young English during the qualifying. In third place the South African Frew, with +1.6 seconds behind the winner.

At the end of the day this category will prove to have been the most fought with short separations between the riders.

In the women's category is an extraordinary Emmeline Ragot (Mondraker Bike), winning with a time of 3.32.625 approximately 6 seconds less than her qualifying time, but 3 seconds more than the time of Tracey Hannah (Polygon Bike) who fell disastrously in the last part of the track, reporting an injury to a clavicle but still managing to reach the finish line and finish 5 °.





In the second position, an excellent performance for the championship of Rachel Atherton; 3rd place for the other French Myriam Nicole (Commencal Bike) who was able to confirm her good done in qualifying. Only 4° Manon Carpenter (Saracen Bike) who returned home with a good haul of points, ready to make the best already for the next race in Fort William where she will feel more at home.

Between the men, all happening and at the end the ranking is quite unexpected ... Aaron Gwin (Specialized Bike) drew a perfect run and not replicable, stopping the time to 2.58.692 - almost 6 seconds better than Bruni (Lapierre bikes) in qualifying!

The young Frenchman, however, made his best and in the end he was second, improving approximately by 1 second ; in third position one extraordinary Michael Jones (Nukeproof Bike) followed by a reborn Danny Hart (Mondracker Bike) and Sam Dale 5° (Saracen Bike).

Bad luck for Neko Mulally (Scott bikes), who after the 4° place in qualifying was looking to be a protagonist but he had to retire after a puncture in the first rock garden; the same



thing for Andrew Neethling (Polygon Bike).

For the other top riders running for the final victory of the world cup, we have to evidence the bad performance by Gee Atherton (GT Bike) that probably influenced by the crash of the day before, at the end only 48 °; limiting the damage, Byceland (Santacruz bikes) and Brosnan (Specialized Bike) finished respectively 7° and 8 °.

Excellent performance instead for Brendan Fairclough (Scott Bike) with a brilliant 6°, Luke Shaw (Santacruz Sram Bike), in his first race in the elite men's category, finished 11 °.

The greatest applause, however, it should be to the French Cabiru, who finished the race in the top ten (10 °)!

Next race will be in Fort William from the 6 of June; last year it was Troy Brosnan who took the win, and according to what we have seen in France, even in Scotland there will be lots of fun!!



SHARP!

HOW AN INTENSE WINTER OF TRAINING ENSURED THAT THE 6T FACTORY RACING TEAM ARE ON THE FORM OF THEIR LIVES AS THEY HEAD INTO THE 2015 SEASON.

Gill Harris



Sven Martin





Dan Atherton, big brother of the team admits “ There’ve been quite a few weeks this winter when we’ve all been completely knackered”

Coach Alan Milway had presided over one of the most progressive winter’s trainings ever, beating the five-strong team for four solid weeks at a training camp out in California before bringing them home to Wales for more riding and more gym work. Then it was on to Fox testing in Malaga, up to 15 DH runs a day, replicating runs, tweaking set-ups, improving on those runs, going faster, going better...The icing on the cake for the Winter’s effort was a 4 week trip to New Zealand based in Queenstown and Rotorua where the team concentrated on riding off road – and their first races of the 2015 season.

Rachel said “The Cali camp was probably the hardest we’ve ever done, but the New Zealand section of our training was all about being on the bike. For me, Gee and Tay that’s riding Downhill, a lot of Downhill (though Milway still tortured us with some killer sprints and gym sessions!”

The consistently good weather around the team’s base in Queenstown allowed the team to dramatically increase the duration of their

rides. The vast majority of rides were off-road, with the team's GT Grade road bikes used more for spinning out tired legs and recovery.

Alan Milway explained "For the Downhill riders it's not about turning them into Enduro riders it's about making them as efficient as possible over a 5 minute downhill course."

In the first days of the trip the team based themselves at the Skyline Bike Park, concentrating on bike set-up and race simulation exercises - as well as having a brilliant time just shredding! Moving across to the Coronet Mountain, Alan shifted the team's focus to building their individual required strengths at another great selection of tracks. Rachel was challenged to ride a flat, very pedally and physical trail at race speeds, top to bottom, the Enduro riders were dispatched to rack up some hard miles while Gee and Taylor worked on their technical skills.

Alan said "Even gym time in Queenstown comes with amazing views so the team have been motivated to get in there and train hard. All of them appreciate that being physically strong is vital for the repeatable power that they need as well as to keep them out of trouble on the track."





At tailored sprint sessions Rachel took the day's glory smashing out some amazingly consistent max-effort hill climbs.

Reigning World Champion Gee Atherton said "Of course getting away from the Welsh winter is a big bonus for us. At this time of year we want to be riding all the time, this year especially. Last year Dan and I were both out for part of the off-season with injuries, treatments, rehab... it's mint to be able to put all of that behind us and just ride!

Rachel agrees. "The riding here in New Zealand is awesome, there's such a great mix of terrain and micro-climates so we get to tackle an endless variety of tracks. It's been invaluable for us to hang out as a team, putting in some mellow days on the hill with the Enduro boys, shredding Skyline with Tay and Gee. It's just such a special place that we're all energized to ride and train harder, faster, better."

Alan appreciates that the boys on the team would mostly be happy if they could just ride their DH bikes and get buff in the gym! Rachel needs more than that so she's been taking time out to watch the sun set over the lake or practicing yoga on the cliffs.

The team all raced "season

sharpeners” in New Zealand.

Dan and Martin were delighted with their 1,2 at the small Queenstown Coronet 7 Enduro but disappointed in the first round of the Enduro World series at Rotorua. Dan had been in 7th when he crashed onto his head and, given his previous C1, C2 fracture he retired to hospital for scans. Thankfully no lasting harm was done and we're all excited to see what Athy can produce this season. Martin must be overdue his first EWS win but likewise Rotorua was not his weekend, the young rider reported that his fitness felt good but he felt he couldn't produce the necessary power on some of the more physical climbs. He finished 18th overall.

Taylor took a crash during training which resulted in a fractured thumb and had to sit out the first race of the season but Rachel and Gee both raced Crankworx Rotorua DH. Rachel took the win and earned herself a valuable confidence boost but a heavily bruised Gee could only manage 9th after an accident in practise when a rider lost his balance on a slippery wooden bridge and came off right in front of Gee.

Five riders in the form of their life, will that translate into 2015 results? We'd very much like to think so but in racing anything can happen!



Gueno Dubost



Gaurav Man Sherchan



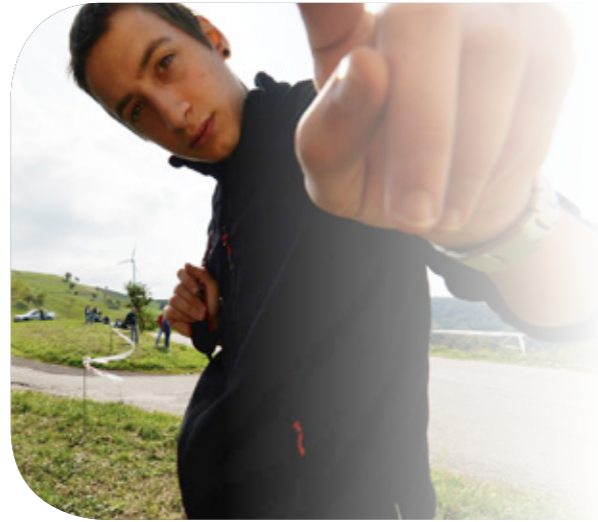
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