

INTO THE RIDE #19

SCREAMER MODS THAT ADD ZOOM!

By Randy Schlitter



Tandems are inseparable fun. You roll along with your partner at an arm's length sharing the same scape and easy conversation. Many a couple has found great solace riding tandems and the performance is always the combined sum of the team. To enhance that performance is the not-so-simple matter of reducing drag, weight, and rolling resistance. An engine tune-up is always a given, but sometimes having neat new mods to check out encourage just that.

The first mod was to do the APE mod to the bars as per a previous article, ([Informative Articles](#)). APE stands for Arm Position Extended, and opens the cockpit. Some may not prefer this steering arrangement, but I find it very control enhancing, and easy for getting in and out of the bike. In this configuration the pivot point of the bar is extended ahead of the fork pivot axis, that means with different inclinations of the handle bar grips, there will be greater or lesser dampening. My arms are extended a bit, but I can still get a full turn at low speeds, this should be the setting you strive for. If you find the handling too quick, you can dampen it by rotating the bars to be more level increasing the distance aft of the pivot point.



Next we look into seat options. There are three distinct seat options in the offering at RANS. The stock seat is what comes on the Screamer. A lighter version of this same seat, called the Formula seat, saves about a pound and half by swapping the injection molded pan for a carbon unit, and a light cushion for the standard. Both changes are worth .7 lbs reduction. Keeping your thick cushion and not going with the featherweight will net a 1.4 pounds reduction in weight.



Our new Zephyr seat is finding its way onto Screammers. Riders like its low weight and tilting seat pan. The stock Zephyr seat is used on the front, but the stoker seat requires a special lower frame to allow the addition of handles and mounting of the brake lever. To get the stock captain seat to work a special set of sprint braces are used. We call them S-braces, since they are shaped in an S bend to straddle the 2" frame tube, and widen to meet the seat. If you go for the Zephyr seat and featherweight cushions, your bike will be almost 5 pounds lighter. It is 2.48 pounds per seat, for a whopping 4.96 total.



Omitting the Flip-it will yield only a small weight reduction of .076, since you must use a stem to attach the riser. The point about omitting the Flip-it is to provide a slight change to the steering geometry. I like the solid feel of the bars minus the Flip-it. It improves climbing since I tend to pull on the bars, and the install seems sturdy enough to handle the effort.



Idler mods were covered in ITR #15. We showed mods you could make to the front and rear idlers that will reduce friction, noise and weight. Check it out and see if the mods are a good fit for your Screamer.



The weight savings alone is worth considering either seat choice. If you are steadfast to the comfort of our standard seat, the Formula option with standard cushions will yield 1.4 less weight to crank up a hill. The idler may reduce another .25 pounds, and free up some energy. In all cases if you like to tinker as much as I do, hot-rodding an already hot bike is fun in itself. The most fun part for me has been the APE bars, I love the open cockpit and the ability to pull into the climb more. Handling with the APE set up is great, lively but with enough dampening it is not a handful. Enjoy the ride, and stay into the ride until next month!

INTO THE RIDE