

INTO THE RIDE #48

A Single-Track Ride

by Randy Schlitter

Want a CF that really can do the single track trails on par with an upper cut mountain bike? The Dynamik Pro may be your ticket back to off-road adventure.



The Dynamik Pro is even dressed for the part, with tasteful decals available in three colors.

The Dynamik Pro is our entry into the world of single track riding. It is intended to be a fairly equal match to similarly equipped mountain bikes. It weighs in at 26 lbs, making it level with other hard tail off-road bikes. What makes the Dynamik Pro special is the Crankforward design, bringing to mountain biking a new level of seating comfort. But seating comfort is not all that the Pro offers. The lower seated position evokes a stable platform that begs to be cornered hard. Using the same body English

you would use on a standard MTB you will find the Pro a very friendly bike to push around a corner or charge down a steep incline. The longer wheelbase combined with the low seating makes even the steepest descents less challenging. Just how on par with a regular mountain bike is the Dynamik Pro? In comparison riding against a standard hard tail shock forked bike I was able to do the same trails without any real trouble. The longer wheelbase caught me a few times on crank clearance, but I was surprised how little it affected handling in tight places. The down hill confidence factor was awesome, making it fun diving over a steep ridge. That long wheelbase loves speed too, so letting it rip downhill seemed natural, as the bike is rock solid in handling. At InterBike: Almost every one who took the Pro on the single track came back with two comments: 1. The low CG and long wheel enhanced downhill handling and reduced “header factor” when making steep descents. 2. The long wheelbase did not impede handling through tight quarters as expected, the extra length was not that noticed. All were pleasantly surprised at how capable the bike really was. Climbing: with practice I learned to go anywhere the other MTB’s could go. On our test track all climbs were made with either bike, and done repeatedly. The track is known for a good cardio workout with several steep but short climbs as it laces back and forth through a very large ravine. What was hard to learn was that just sitting back and climbing works for most the climbs. But with time standing and pedaling timed right enhanced performance up the really steep hills, and was natural after some time on the bike. If the grade was not too steep standing could actually lose traction as you un-weighted the rear wheel. You learn pretty quickly when to stand or stay seated. I think the stand and pedal feature will be enhanced with the curved riser options discussed below, since it allows a bit more bar movement, which at low speeds will be nice to maintain balance as you granny gear up a slope. Being light has really helped bring this bike into its own, and was the missing ingredient needed to become really prone on the single track. Our previous attempts were in the 35-pound range, ugh, we lugged them up, but it is nice at 9 pounds less, you can feel that, and since a lot the weight was in wheels and fork, it is very noticed. Note: The Dynamik Trail at 30 Pounds is a tad heavy for me, but still markedly more fun to off road at 5 pounds less over the steel framed Dynamiks with the Judy Shock fork, and less than half the cost of the Pro. Both the Pro and Trail use the same 7005 alloy frame. What we wanted in the Dynamik Pro was a CF with a full MTB nature. To accomplish this there is always a few trade offs, but for those spoiled by recumbents seeking a very comfy off-road rider that will hit the high 90% in matching what most mountain bikes can do, the Pro accomplished the goal.

More CF Riser Options



Add a retro look and a set of B-37 bars with this new curved riser, also in matt black.

After this summer testing the Alba bars, using a forward bent riser, we decided to offer them in two finishes, polished aluminum and black matt anodized. The riser is useful in optimizing the fit for the longer armed rider, or when used with the B-37 “Modern Paper Boy Bars” opens the cockpit a bit, but still allows the grips to be more aft than the flat bar with the straight riser.

For the longer armed as in the case of our purchasing agent Ric, he found the best fit using the curved riser with the standard Dynamik flat bars. He was making tight circle off the end of the shipping dock, and found it gave him lots more room when he stood to ride. My experience with this riser was with the Alba bars and I found the curved riser allowed more tuck. In fact at the Demo Days at InterBike I was surprised how much of an aero advantage this produced as I zoomed to the front of the pack, topping out at 47 MPH. For the Alba bars never made it into the finals, even after several hundred miles of riding I found myself craving the old familiar flat bar for the great handling, and climb.





I also liked the flat bar with curved riser, as I am a bit long in the arms or torso, either way that body shape will allow you more options in handlebar and riser setups on our CF's. As with the Alba bars the flat bar and curve riser will allow more room to tuck. It also allows you to bring your body a bit more forward which for some seems to make the difference between being easy to stand and ride or not. More on this later, but the real magic of the curved riser happens when you add a B-37 bar to the mix.





Curved riser with B-37 bar looks retro and handles really sweet, placing the bar 2.54" forward over the stock straight riser, opening the cockpit and increasing stand and pedal room.

The B-37 is what we call "Modern Paper Boy" bars, reminiscent of the big crescent shaped bars popular on 1950's era balloon tired bikes. The bars were well suited for holding the bags for newspapers. We like them not only for the cool looks but how versatile they are. For the short person even with the curved riser they are 2.54" back over the straight riser with the flat bar. This could mean the difference between a shorter rider being nicely fitted on the Dynamik or Zenetik series CF's. The risers will be in stock any day, in both the polished and matt black. Both risers feature the laser etched RANS "R".

Stand to Ride

The dynamics of standing to pedal on the our CF's are different from a regular bike in the fact you have to move your body more forward to accomplish the effect. In both cases you are standing straight up over the cranks. On a regular bike you merely stand up a bit, on our CF's you have to stand and pull yourself forward to the point your chin is right over the front axle, or when you no longer feel your arms having to support your weight. That is the optimum point. One important note: There will be less weight on the rear wheel, use stand riding with caution, avoid it on loose traction surfaces, otherwise ride happy!

A Feather-Edged CF Seat



The seat on our line of Crankforward bikes has been highly successful in bringing comfortable cycling to most. But there is never a 100% score when it comes to seating in anything: cars, planes, couches, and so on. There is always someone who is not happy with how some device feels against their posterior. Some have experienced interference or chafing of the seat against the backside of the thighs. Our advice has been to tilt the seat enough to eliminate the contact, but for some the seat feels tilted to far down, resulting in a sliding off feeling. A simple idea we tried was to make the front edge of the seat feather soft and compliant to the leg movement. This was done by drilling a series of 1/8" holes about 1/2" apart all along the front side of the web. Look at the bottom side of the seat, you will see the web along with several short crossing webs. You can modify your seat yourself using just a drill, band saw (the preferred cutting tool, but a hack saw will work fine) and a pair of side cutters or Dremel tool. First disassemble the seat from the post and pivot angles. It will be easier to hold the pan into the band saw; if you do not have a band saw, and are using a hack saw, skip this step. In fact you can use the seat post clamped into a rubber jawed vice as a way to secure the seat while cutting. I did not even measure off the locations of the 1/8" holes, I simply took a marker and drew lines where the cut would be made about every 1/2". I drew them on the seat top-side starting at the web to the edge. You can see where the web lies underneath due to "sink" marks in the plastic molding. Once marked, drill holes through just on the front side of the web. The holes serve as stress relief for the saw cuts. Use a saw to cut up the holes. Note you will be cutting through a couple of the cross webs, and for the particular "finger" to flex the same as the others you will need to flip the seat over and cut a relief notch in the

affected webs. I used sharp side cutters, but a Dremel tool maybe the better option. Clean off the fuzzies from cutting, assemble and ride. You will notice the edge will flex nicely, but the seat will still provide support. With this modification you will be able to adjust the seat flatter if desired.

Happy Holidays...and a big thanks! Have a great holiday season. My staff and I hope you have enjoyed the past year of riding as much as we have at RANS. 2006 provided us with a chance to make many new cyclist friends who have become avid riders of either our recumbents or Crankforward bikes. We really do get a kick out cycling and sharing the passion and making the products. Without the wonderful feedback and smart suggestions from everyone it would not be nearly as fun, so a big thanks from all of us, and here is to hoping for a 2007 that brings many fun rides and healthy happy days! Until next month ride safe and stay into the ride!

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