

# Fat Tire Flyer

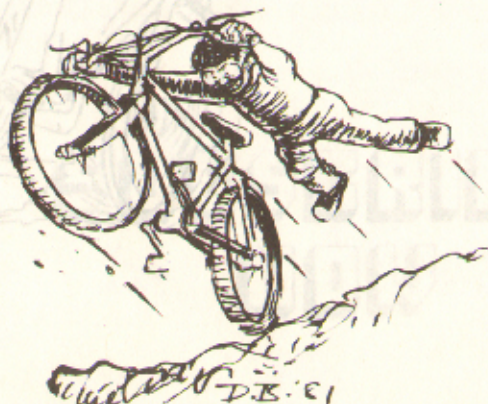
BOX 757 FAIRFAX, CA. 94930

Sept 7 Oct

## SEVEN THE HARD WAY

As those who have learned to interpret our headlines can clearly see, this is our seventh big issue, and this is the paragraph where we usually brag about living through another deadline. Astute readers will notice that we got our typewriter repaired.

Astute readers will also note that this isn't the expanded format we were looking forward to presenting. Don't bother checking, it's just like all the others. We had such high hopes, but they've been dashed for at least another issue. Stay in the saddle and don't shift gears, metaphorically, euphemistically and optimistically speaking, because we'll get it together.



TECHNICAL ANSWERS WITHOUT BENEFIT OF  
QUESTIONS

Some of our reader feedback has indicated that a few technical articles would be well received. Well, we hope you have your receivers on, because you want technical, we give you technical.

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Our first interminable discussion will be on the subject of brakes. Aside from being obsolete on every other level, coaster brakes are also incompatible with derailleur gears. The available options are: caliper brakes, drum brakes, and cantilever brakes.

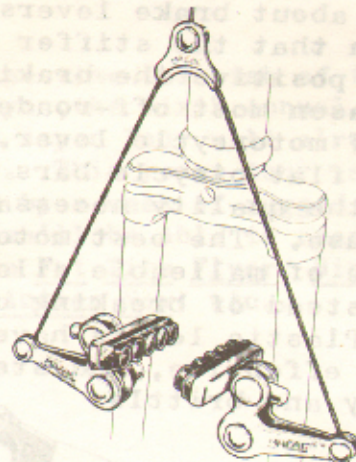
Caliper brakes are the easiest to install, the cheapest, and on the less expensive bicycles, the commonest type. While these work well for racing bikes, the ones made for balloon tire bicycles are not of racing quality, and in addition the extra-long arms necessary to reach around the famous Fat Tire introduce flex to the whole system. In wet conditions on steep terrain, and especially with plated steel rims (fortunately, these are nearly extinct), caliper brakes can even be dangerous.



Drum brakes present an interesting alternative. They have decided advantages in some terrain, particularly swampy or other reasonably level and wet terrain, since they are relatively unaffected by wetness. Also, they can be mounted on most bicycles with little or no modification to the bike.



There are also disadvantages associated with drums: they are expensive, heavy, and not especially sturdy. They have a tendency to fade on long descents, and for that reason are not recommended for mountain touring with heavy loads. Wheel removal can be more difficult with drums because of the two extra connections at the hubs (brake cable and brake arm), and reconnection when installing the wheel involves some precise adjustment. Drums are complicated, and none of those on the market were built with off road (ab)use in mind, so they are subject to damage. Replacement parts are hard to get or improvise.



Cantilever brakes are popular among the custom-bike crowd for several reasons. They are light and simple; the most positive rim brake on the market. Rim brakes aren't subject to heating problems since the rim is capable of absorbing much more heat from braking (the energy has to go somewhere) than the much smaller drum brake. Cantilevers aren't subject to fouling as are calipers in mud, and they let the rider choose whichever high-quality hub best fits the purpose.

On the negative side: cantilevers project out from the frame and can cause problems with some framesets, particularly those made with curved tubing or diamond frames with short seat tubes (17" or so). On these frames the distance between the brake arm and the end of the crankarm can be so short that the rider's heel hits the brake arm at the rear of the pedal stroke. Also, the fact that cantilevers must be brazed on means that they must be installed by a professional. They must be precisely aligned, and there are a few tricks to putting them on. Then, of course, the frame must be painted (or repainted).

Now a word about brake levers. It stands to reason that the stiffer the lever, the more positive the braking, and for this reason most off-roaders use some form of motorcycle lever. The levers made for flat bicycle bars are not usually of the quality necessary for heavy-duty use. The best motorcycle levers are of malleable alloy, so they bend instead of breaking on heavy impact. Plastic levers have too much flex to be effective, and steel levers are heavy and brittle.

motorcycle lever →



O.K., that's enough for the equipment freaks. As the above article shows, no braking system is right for all bikes or applications. We hope this will help some of you decide what is right for your own bike

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TENTATIVE DATE: 18 October 1981

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By the time this ish of the Flyer reaches you, the Sixth Annual Crested Butte to Aspen Tour will already be underway. This years tour is to be preceded by a week of rugged riding and races. You'll be able to read all about it in the Fat Tire Flyer, Bicycling!, Powder, Action Now, etc...

#### CRESTED BUTTE-ASPEN-CRESTED BUTTE

After waiting weeks for a break in the Colorado monsoon, on a crystal clear Sunday, July 19, the Cook brothers, Don and Steve, decided to go for the max, a trip to Aspen for a beer and back in time for dinner. The feat as we presently know has never been accomplished on a non motorized vehicle.

Don, on a 15 speed Littlejohn cruiser, and Steve, on an 18 speed Cook Brothers bike, chose to pedal to Aspen via the infamous Pearl Pass (12,700'). That in itself can be quite an adventure, as veterans of the annual C.B.-As-en tour can attest. From Crested Butte to the top of the pass took Don and Steve 2 hours and 40 minutes and a total of four and a half hours to reach the Aspen city limits. The return trip was over the less difficult (a little less bur more scenic East Maroon Pass (11,800')). Total miles racked up were approximately 95, of which three quarters were totally rock and dirt and rough.

The boys departed at 7:75 AM and returned at 8:15 PM and had plenty of time in Aspen to play around!

-Kay Petersson

The following account of the  
TOPANGA SUN TOUR  
was excerpted from:

TOPANGA RIDERS' BULLETIN

August issue

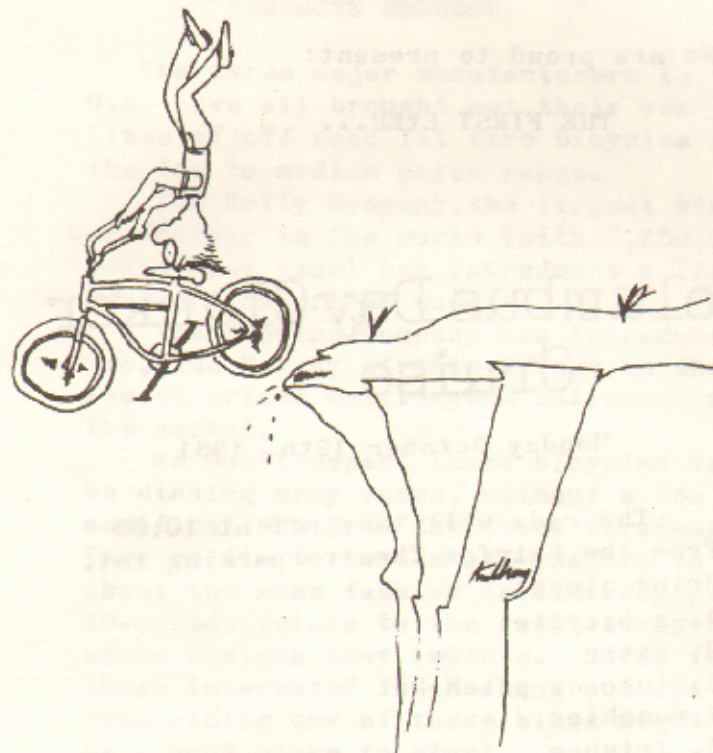
## CLARK ROBERTS BLAZES IN THE SUN,

BURNS OFF THE ENTIRE FIELD,  
OUTSHINES ALL!

THE HOTTEST HUMAN-POWERED, SOLAR-HEATED MACHINE on these sun-baked, bone-dry, powder-dusty mountain roads in the Santa Monica Mountains, mostly along the ridge overlooking the region of Topanga, and dipping down into the picturesque Red Rock Canyon for an authorized passage through Boy Scout Camp Slauson (thanks!), then climbing back up to the Summit-to-Summit road for the final bake to the finish (no place to drop your water bottle!).

Note: A supply of local well water was acquired for the first VVA Red Rock Brew.

- 1 Clark Roberts
- 2 Jim Harlow
- 3 Dan Duffy
- 4 VVA
- 5 Kurt Brown
- 6 Kye Sharp
- 7 Garry Tourtillotte
- 8 Tom Waldner
- 9 Mark Hall
- 10 David Siefert
- 11 Dave Waldner



On August 6th 1981, Charles Kelly and Mark Edwards joined 800 or so other riders for a Sunday bicycle ride in the Dublin, Ca. area. The other riders were on skinny tires, and they were impressed.

The Annual Dublin Century Ride sponsored by the Valley Spokesmen entailed an 8000' climb in 105 miles. Many skinny tired folks made vain attempts to hang onto those fat wheels. Only three were said to pass. That could be because so many had to deal with that common skinny tire hang-up...flats!

The following account of the  
TUPANGA SWY TOUR  
We are proud to present:

THE FIRST EVER...

## Columbus Day Clunker Cruise

Monday October 12th, 1981

The ride will take off at 10:00  
from the Fairfax Theatre parking lot.

Bring along:

1. a bicycle
2. water
3. tube or patch kit
4. munchies
5. frisbee
6. party supplies
7. your friends



All but the first item are optional

## PRODUCTS ROUNDUP

The three major manufacturers in the U.S. have all brought out their own lines of off road fat tire bicycles in the low to medium price range.

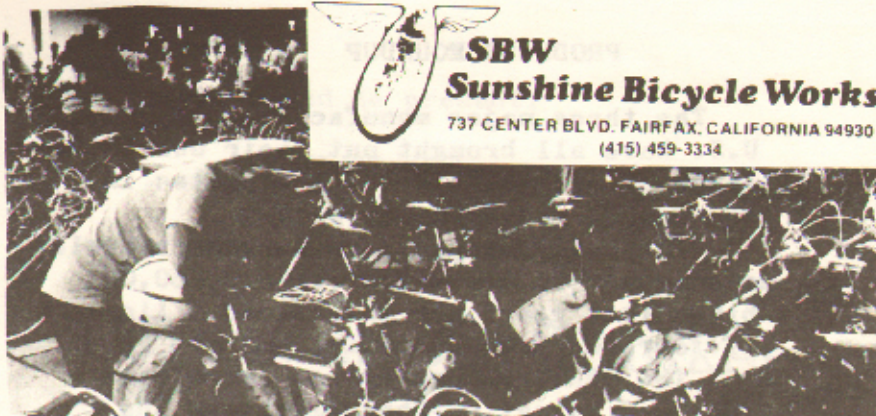
The Huffy Company, the largest bicycle manufacturer in the world (with 2,750,000 bikes last year) has introduced a line of four low priced models.

The Schwinn Company has introduced two, and Murray of Ohio brings us the lowest priced multi-speed balloonner on the market.

We don't expect these bicycles to be winning many races, without a few modifications from the stock versions. They relate to custom off-roaders in about the same fashion as simiarly priced 10-speeds relate to the real racing bikes, whose designs they immitate. Still for those interested in checking out off road riding one of these bikes might be a good place to start.

## COMP. III TIRES

The newest tire on the market is the Comp. III which is available in 1.75 and 2.125. This new tire features a deep lugged thread and a round cross section. This looks like a great tire for racing because it's light and has gription to spare.



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