

APRIL / MAY 23

WELCOME TO THE FUTURE...

Yes! Issue 75 is live! We had a chat with Phil Atwill, on cars, hard enduro races, bikes and life in Greece. We explore the similarities of miners in the mid 1800's and mountain bikers in Otago NZ. Technology is everywhere, but how can we use it to find good trails? We took a deep dive for you to find out.

In this issue's Trail Guide we give the word to Doug to share his favourite trails in the Pyrenees with us. Of course there is another Technique with Clive, many products on test and the pro athlete makes his entry as the Angry Insider.

Enjoy!

ENJOY THE LATEST ISSUE!



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- INTERVIEW PHIL ATWILL -

MINING FOR TRAILS IN OTAGO / DIGITAL NAVIGATION
TRAIL GUIDE PYRENEES / GETTING DIALLED / TECHNIQUE, TESTS & MORE!

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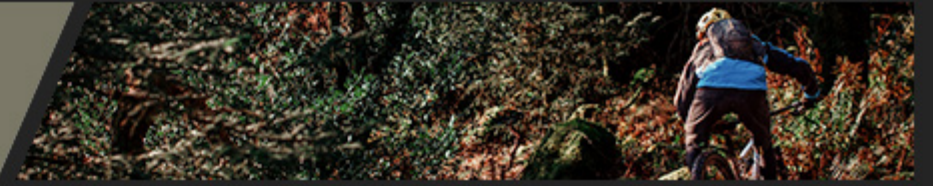
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COMPETITION



TECHNIQUE -
RIDING RUTS



EDITORIAL



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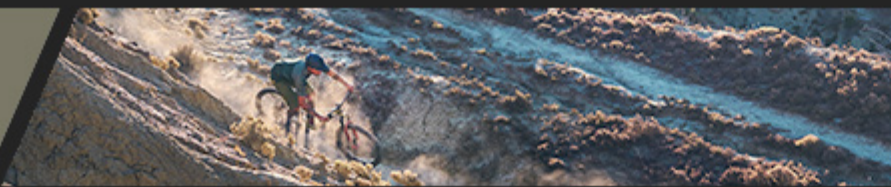
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**PUBLISHED ON THE
WEB BY**

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RIDER NICOLI ROGATKIN
PHOTO FLORIAN BREITENBERGER



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- 1x Chain Breaker
- 1x Cutting Tool
- 1x Tire Lever
- 1x Tubeless Plug Tool
- 3x Replacement Tire Plugs
- 1x Slide-on Strap Clip (add pump or tube)
- 2x Chain Link Storage
- Spoke tool

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ISSUE 75

The End of Reality?

Unless you have been living under a rock, you can't help but notice that the world has just sped up a notch or two. With the arrival of ChatGPT the AI technology has arrived, and I say we have about a decade before the human race is decimated to servants of Boston Dynamics Robots.

Ok, ok, that might be a bit too much of a bleak outlook on life. Yes the new tech is impressive and it's improving rapidly, but after playing around with it for a bit, I still don't fear for my job as Editor of IMB. For sure there will be some jobs cut left and right. Customer service agents will move on to just doing the more difficult tasks and for those looking for a

cheap non imaginative logo design or stories you can have 10 options in 10 seconds done.

No matter how disruptive this new technology is going to be, I think it will create a craving for true human interactions. Conversations with real people told in a creative and entertaining way only a truly creative person can do. Furthermore I think it will spark a new renaissance of creativity and storytelling.

Will it affect the way we work? Possibly. Sourcing facts and details will be made easier for example. But even after playing with OpenAi's latest toy I still think the style and content of writing is in a monotone boring way that is easy to recognize. Besides, I am sure no

robot or computer will ever be able to put into words the rush of riding pristine alpine singletracks or the thrill of dropping into a road gap for the first time.

So, this issue of IMB is still an artisanal piece of manual labor. It contains an interview with one of the most human of humans, Phil Atwill and a great story on the parallels of mining for gold and mining for singletrack creates the same rush. We dive into the tech behind finding good trails and of course have a rant from the Angry Insider, product tests, sick images and lots more! Enjoy!

Jaruo Hoogland
Publishing Editor



WORDS JARNO HOOGLAND & PHIL ATWILL
PHOTOS PROPAIN POSITIVE RACING

THE INTERVIEW PHIL ATWILL

For this issue's interview we managed to track down Phil Atwill. The British born Greek residing wildman that loves riding, drifting and hucking anything in sight. We sat down with him for a chat on bikes, cars, moto adventures and future plans. Enjoy!



"THE WEATHER'S GREAT AND THERE ARE BEACHES AND MOUNTAINS EVERYWHERE."

Phil! Thanks for taking the time to answer a few questions for us! How's life treating you these days?

Good thanks, busy as always but can't complain.

You've been based in Greece for quite some time now, still liking it?

Love it, yeah. So much freedom. You can ride the moto for the day and no one cares, the weather's great and there are beaches and mountains everywhere. I don't think I could move back.

How are you dealing with the language barrier, or have you gotten fluid yet in Greek?

Not easy, that's for-sure but my Greek is definitely getting better.

Is there anything in particular that you miss from the UK?

Yeah, it's always good to go back and catch up with friends and family.

How's the beamer doing? I see you have a nice big dent in the back of it these days!

Haha good question. You can blame a cheap set of parts and my Mrs Kat for that but it's an absolute work horse!

How many miles has it done?

She's still a baby. 160 thousand k's only.

If Musk would drop you a message for a Tesla sponsorship, would you be up for it?

100 percent, I think the Electric Vehicle market is missing someone like myself. I'd love to strap some bikes to the back of a Tesla and go roast it round some gravel car parks!



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"DOING COOL STUFF FOR YOURSELF IS ONE THING BUT DOING THINGS FOR OTHER DESERVING PEOPLE IS SO REWARDING YOU CAN'T BEAT IT!"

You think a Model X would withstand the Atwill driving style?

I'd very much like to find out, haha.

So you've kicked off with a new team this year, care to tell a little bit about that project?

Yeah man, year number 3 and things are

starting to look pretty legit thanks to the help from Mal Finnie, my Mrs Kat and Paul from Network. Stoked to give these young greek lads an opportunity like this and excited to see how everyone gets on. Doing cool stuff for yourself is one thing but doing things for other deserving people is so rewarding you can't beat it!

I bet you're pretty stoked to be back with Propain? I've been back with Propain for 3 years now but it's cool yeah. Top bunch of humans making and selling bikes that actually want to ride!

You've already been on a sick trip to Valpo Chile, and managed a sweet top 10 result. Are you happy to kick off the season this way?

Oh mate Valpo was a sick race. I didn't know what to expect but it was proper cool. Took me back to when I used to hack round the streets of Berkhamsted on my old GaryFisher. Crowd was mental too. I'd definitely like to go back.

Do you have any set goals for the upcoming season?

Plan is to keep hitting my marks with riding, training and self well being and if I'm a happy Phil then I'm sure I'll be a fast Phil haha. So far so good.



" I'VE NEVER HAD SO MUCH CRAMP IN MY LIFE. UTTER MOST RESPECT TO THEM HARD ENDURO BOYS, THAT IS NO EASY FEAT! "

I've seen you've been back at racing moto again too. Do you have any high aims for that or is it just for fun and good training?

Yeah good question. I'd love to go to Italy to do some race's at some point but at the moment I'm happy following the Greek championship and generally just riding for fun and training.

How was the Sea to Sky race? It looked like one of the toughest things you can sign up for on a moto!

Brutal! I could just about blagged my way through most bits technically, but no way was I ready fitness wise. I've never had so much cramp in my life. Utter most respect to them hard enduro boys, that is no easy feat! I've got a little documentary style vlog from Sea to Sky uploading on Youtube some time soon.

Talking about tough races, will we see you again at the Red Bull Hardline? It was a bummer not being able to see you race there...

I know, I've been plagued with mechanical's and crashes both times I've been. It's a hell of an event but I'm not too fussed about massive jumps on a windy welsh hillside but you never know I might head back at some point.

With Propain being a big sponsor of the Freeride Fiesta, I thought you might make a guest appearance...

I Know I was meant to go but I had a broken wrist at the start of the year.







" THE ENERGY AND LOVE THEY HAVE FOR RIDING GETS ME FIRED UP AND REMINDS ME WHY I STARTED RIDING IN THE FIRST PLACE! "

What about other race formats like Enduro for example. Will we see you at the startline for one of those anytime soon?

Hmm not on the calendar but I wouldn't say no.

If you could pick three riders to join you on a day of uplifts. Who would you choose and where would you ride?

Hard to say too many people out there I'd love to do some laps with! But if you push me for an answer, I'd pick Hype man Soc aka Soc Zotos, Marco Lamaris and George Panagopoulos because the energy and love they have for riding gets me fired up and reminds me why I started riding in the first place! As for where we'd ride, I guess some Bulgarian loamers would be ace.

If you could force all our readers to buy one product, watch one movie and listen to one song, which would you pick?

A Honda CRF 100

Sprung 4 still goes hard.

Love me some Black Eyed Peas - Monkey Business

Last but not least, anyone in particular you want to say thanks to?

Thanks to mums and dad for supporting me and taking me to all the races back when I was a kid I wouldn't be here without them <3

AN ODE TO THE PROSPECTORS

'Same dirt, different reward'

Christopher Reily drags himself out into the brisk kiwi morning, puts a pan of water in the fire and gets himself ready for the day. It's 1862 and he's a little late to the Otago gold rush, but he sees what others don't and is confident he can find his share of the spoils. "Today's the day" he proclaims aloud in a self-motivating yell, "today is the day all this bloody effort pays off"



" HIS BODY HURTS BUT EVERY TIME HE STRIKES GOLD THAT PAIN IS WASHED AWAY IN THE SLUICING. "

The past few days of breaking trail into his new found stashes in the Dunstan area have taken their toll, but Reily wouldn't have it any other way. His body hurts but every time he strikes gold that pain is washed away in the sluicing. There's no better feeling than seeing results from a good day's graft.

Reily was a visionary, a creative who was both tough and practical. Through stubbornness

and experience, he found gold in the dirt of Central Otago at a time when the boom was thought to be over. He saw something different in Dunstan and he set the tone that started an influx of activity into the area of others looking to get rich off the harsh Otago terrain. He is a prime example of what can happen when determination and imagination combine with human endeavour.

The fabled route that now resembles the Dunstan Trail, was once an inhospitable and treacherous shortcut to the goldfields. People were met with treeless, brutal mountains and

a scorching hot climate, but undeterred they forged on in the search of Reily's riches.

160 years later and the rugged rock of the area is still as harsh and wild as ever, but now there's a different kind of intrepid explorer trying to find their own riches, this time however, the gold IS the dirt.

What those early prospectors did was lay the foundations of how we now interact with the mountains. The shanty towns that sprung up have stuck around, the work shifted from gold to fruit and farming and the mountains developed into a playground for those on two wheels looking to create their own slice of trail riding Valhalla.



The skill of a miner was in their ability to read the land and find minerals in the earth through perseverance and resilience, the modern-day biker has adapted the same passion and sprinkled it with a little adrenaline in order to seek out the best trails in the same desolate landscape. The exploratory, goal-driven mindset is the same, just the reward is slightly different.

Otago mountain biker Pete Miller and his mates are a modern-day tribute to those old timers.

"THE MODERN-DAY
BIKER HAS ADAPTED
THE SAME PASSION
AND SPRINKLED IT
WITH A LITTLE
ADRENALINE"

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"THERE'S NO BETTER FEELING THAN CRACKING A BEER AT THE END OF THE DAY AND HAVING A YARN AFTER SWEATING IT OUT ON THE TRAIL"

Whilst the extreme hardships aren't on the same level, the willingness to push themselves to the max for the sake of some hero dirt harks back to the attitudes of Chis Reily and the trails that he put in all those years ago.

Pete knows the area like the back of his hand after years of searching. It would be all too easy to go ride some perfectly sculpted berms and jumps, and so with a group of mates they have been exploring the Central Otago backcountry for years, getting their hands in the dirt and bikes on tussock, rock slab and anything else they can find in search of the regions best terrain. And they've found it, away from the crowds these dedicated riders have taken on the Otago area as their own playground.

Just like a prospector surveying the land in front of them for dig sites, Pete looks at a chunk of inhospitable terrain and creatively figures out how to ride it. Sometimes it's through experience gained over the years, or maybe it's a gut feeling and the 'knack' of knowing where to go, either way it's not done the easy way. One trait that will always continue, and Pete will be the first to agree, is that there's no better feeling than cracking a beer at the end of the day and having a yarn after sweating it out on the trail, and I'm sure Reily would have been right there with him.

Central Otago has a unique geology that my inner child is convinced fell straight from Mars, and a climate that goes from scorched desert to tropical lushness.







Its rolling flat top mountains are mostly made up of loose schist covered in tussock and fragrant thyme that, conveniently, hides the smell of sweating bikers. Look close enough and a whole world of winding trails snake their way into the depth of the mountains where these hardy bikers are riding technical trails to the subtle tones of the setting sun over the Pisa range.

"A WHOLE WORLD
OF WINDING TRAILS
SNAKE THEIR WAY
INTO THE DEPTH OF
THE MOUNTAINS"

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MAGURA



" TRYING TO FIND THESE CREATIVE SECTIONS AMONGST THE CHALLENGING TERRAIN IS PURE ADRENALINE FUELED FUN "

According to Pete, the central goldfields make for amazingly unique riding due to the steep rock slabs and super technical sections that require maximum commitment to find and ride. He goes on to say that "it's building trails with his mates in places that a lot of people wouldn't fathom a bike can be ridden that motivates us. Trying to find these creative sections amongst the challenging

terrain is pure adrenaline fueled fun and is our way to doff the cap to the history of the region".

Bikes are more than metal and rubber, they are tools that connect us to the earth and allow exploration and fun to combine through expression. They bring people together, encourage escapism and will take you to places otherwise unreachable. To quote a storyteller from back in the day, "Nothing is impossible when it's a matter of finding gold" and that determined attitude still lives on today through those who play in the mountains.

There was a term used for miners who were struck by gold fever and couldn't tear themselves away from prospecting in the mountains. Known as Hatters, they would spend a lifetime on the dirt road, drifting along in search of gold. In some way I feel that a lot of those who move to the mountains become Hatters, always looking for that next trail or place to explore, unwilling to leave the all-consuming beauty of the mountains.

They were colourful characters whose efforts live on through their creative naming of areas such as the 'Knobbies' and 'Raggedy Mountains', not to mention Roaring Meg, so named after a fiery grog shop owner you didn't want to get on the wrong side of.



" THESE TOUGH BUGGERS NOT ONLY LAID THE PHYSICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR US TO ENJOY THE MOUNTAINS BUT ALSO THE MINDSET TO PUSH OURSELVES PAST WHAT'S COMFORTABLE "

The mountain biking community honours this humorous legacy to this day with the equally imaginative names given to bike trails in the area....' Angry possum' and 'Rockapotomus' are a favourite of Pete's.

So here's to the pioneering adventurers like ol' Chris Riley. These tough buggers not only laid the physical foundations for us to enjoy the mountains but also the mindset to push ourselves past what's comfortable and seek out new challenges in the great outdoors in pursuit of progression...

The miners have gone, but their spirit lives on through two-wheeled explorers such as Pete and his mates.


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A wide-angle photograph of a mountain biker riding a trail. The rider is a small silhouette on a grassy ridge, pedaling towards the right. The background is a vast, hazy mountain range with several sharp, snow-capped peaks under a clear blue sky. The foreground shows the rugged, rocky terrain of the trail.

WORDS JARNO HOOGLAND "PROPER PHOTOS" MELODY SKY / LUDO MAY OTHER PHOTOS JARNO HOOGLAND

DIGITAL NAVIGATION

HOW TO FIND SINGLETRACK GOLD IN THE DIGITAL ERA

Finding an amazing trail in a new spot. It's one of those things that makes riding mountain bikes special. The feeling of entering a new trail, narrow and snaking down the hill, mysterious and unknown. This is how a lot of the routes used to get explored. Just jump on the bike, pedal away and dive into every trail that has a whiff of being worthwhile. Paper maps were the hand book and the odd written guidebook were the tools for the job. Hit and miss were part of the game and when you did strike gold, a euphoric day went into the books.

"COUNTLESS TIMES I ENDED UP DOING RIDES MUCH LONGER THAN ANTICIPATED ARRIVING HOME WELL AFTER DARK"

Finding good trails to ride has always been a more adventurous part of mountain biking, especially in pre cellphone times. You could actually get lost, hurt or end up miles from where you thought you were going and without a way to call for help. If you really got in trouble, you could always ring a stranger's doorbell (if you made it to civilization somehow) and call one of the few people who's phone number you knew by heart. Countless times I ended up doing rides much longer than anticipated arriving home well after dark (sorry parents!).

Nowadays these scenarios are quite hard to imagine, in the digital era with 5G coverage, signposted routes and gpx files. But still it has taken quite some time for mountain bike trail knowledge to be available online, and even to this day there is a bit of effort involved in finding where to go and how to get there. With the GPS devices getting better and better and information more accessible by the month, we decided to do a dive into the state of things when it comes to finding trails and how to use the digital tools we have at the moment.

INTERNET AS A SOURCE FOR SINGLETRACK

Besides the local tourist office and bike shops, a great place to scout for some good trails to ride is the good old interwebs. With a plethora of magazines, route finding apps and forums to browse through you can spend many rainy days planning your next adventure. Some websites are better than others, but the nicer ones provide pictures, a proper description on how technical the trail is and if you're lucky even a POV video and the holy grail, a GPX file.





" IDEALLY YOU WOULD HAVE TO USE BOTH SERVICES TO COVER THE BIGGEST AMOUNT OF TRAIL AND ROUTE OPTIONS. "

Trailforks and Strava are great tools to find some singletrack gold, but it does require some tinkering and luck. Some parts of the world are totally covered in properly named and documented trails, while others just have a few options available. Also, even though both websites/apps offer a free of charge version to use, the real functionality starts when you subscribe.

Pricing is reasonable, but the new trick of the modern world is subscriptions. Where first you were able to buy a paper map for 15 Euros / GBP / Dollars and enjoy them for a lifetime, we're now condemned to paying a fiver a month for the rest of your life. Of course if you really want to, you can spend a rainy autumn month researching and downloading all the rides you plan to do for the next year and make use of the 1 month free trial to spend as little as possible.

Trailforks pro sets you back 4.99 USD a month, while Strava hussle's 11.95 USD out

of your pockets monthly. It is true that they provide a lot more than just a map service, with training logs, training plans, club rides, events etc. But we will dive into the pro's and cons of these services in a future article. Depending how many new trails you want to explore, ideally you would have to use both services to cover the biggest amount of trail and route options.

There are a few ways to create a nice route from these platforms. One option is just to pick a route from the ones listed, as there are some really nice filters that you can apply. Another great option in Strava is to find a segment in an area where you want to ride or that looks promising on the map.



" THE SOFTWARE GIVES YOU GREAT DATA ON HOW LONG AND HOW MANY ALTITUDE METERS THIS RIDE PUTS INTO YOUR LEGS "

By using the altitude lines you can get a gist of how steep the run is and how rideable the terrain might be for you.

Using the Strava Segment Explorer function (1), I found a segment called "Portail Fully descent" that looked like a nice high alpine trail. From there you can check out the segment leaderboard (2) and pick a rider to see how he ended up on this segment and what the rest of his ride looked like. Now not all riders share all their data so you might need to check a few profiles. Bronze Olympic medallist Christoph Sauser in spot number 7 has his profile set to "public" and we can click and see his ride of that day (3).

After checking out his ride overview, we can either download the GPX file directly, or save the route to our own profile. When you save the route to your profile, you can edit it to your liking to match your starting point or shorten it if you don't have the same legs as Christoph. The software gives you great data on how long and how many altitude meters this ride puts into your legs (4).

Now in Trailforks (5), we have another method to find this same route. You can search for Routes within a certain area, like here you see the similar route listed as in Strava but with a different ending. The good thing about the Trailforks option is that there are more images and a better route description, but by combining the information from both platforms you can actually reach the best route result.

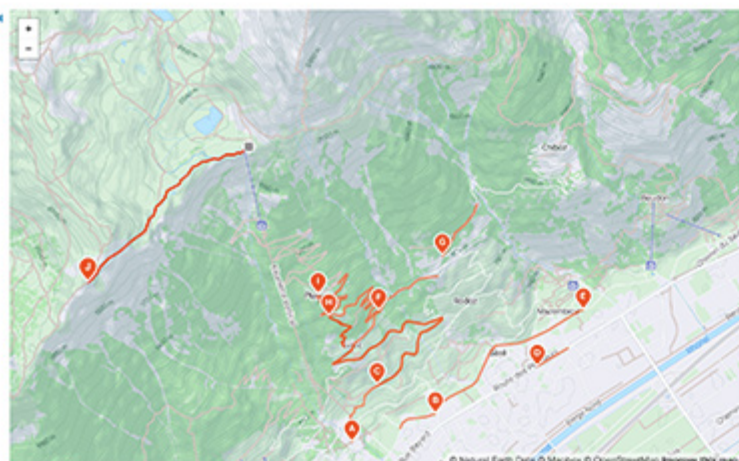
1

Segment Explore

Sion, Valais, Switzerland

Segments

- Belle Upline - Euloz 2.92 km 9.1%
- Sprint lancé de Châtela... 0.35 km -2.2%
- Rte d'Euloz 3.32 km 9.6%
- Sprint Mazembras 0.30 km 0.7%
- Mazembras - Savat - Châ... 1.55 km 0.4%
- Planuit forestière LP 2.72 km 10.5%
- Le mur de Bulthoz 0.57 km 19.7%
- DH Fully 0.63 km -24.5%
- DH Les Garettes 1.04 km -28.5%
- Portail de Fully descent 1.95 km -10.3%



2

Leaderboards

- All Time
- This Year
- My Results
- People I'm Following
- By Age Group
- 45 to 54
- See All
- By Weight Class
- 54 kg and under
- See All

Overall

Rank	Name	Date	Speed	HR	Power	Time
1	Jean-Yves Bruchez	29 Jul 2020	16.9 km/h	-	-	7:02
2	Flo Bruchez	24 Jul 2018	14.9 km/h	140 bpm	49 W	7:57
3	sébastien nicollier	24 Nov 2021	12.6 km/h	105 bpm	-	9:24
4	Olivier Brand	26 Jun 2018	12.2 km/h	142 bpm	41 W	9:43
5	Virgile Lecloutre	3 Jul 2015	11.8 km/h	125 bpm	40 W	10:06
6	Bastie Ançay	30 May 2020	11.7 km/h	-	29 W	10:10
7	Sauser Christoph HORIZONTE COFFEE ROASTERS	17 Nov 2018	11.3 km/h	-	35 W	10:29

3

Overview

Analysis

Subscription
Est Power Curve
Est 27% Distribution

See More

Sauser Christoph HORIZONTE COFFEE ROASTERS - Ride



Saturday, 17 November 2018 - Dorinaz, Valais
Fahrt am Nachmittag

Distance: 29.37 km Moving Time: 2:33:28 Elevation: 1,973 m

149 W Estimated Avg Power 1,369 kJ Energy Output

Speed: 11.5 km/h Avg 11.5 km/h Max: 64.1 km/h Elapsed Time: 3:26:20

Garmin Edge 1030

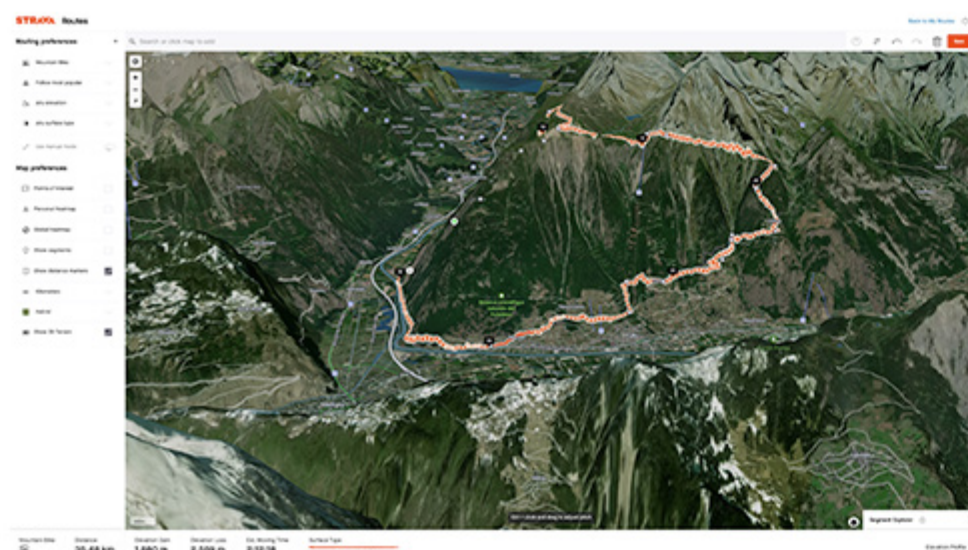
TOP RESULTS

View all

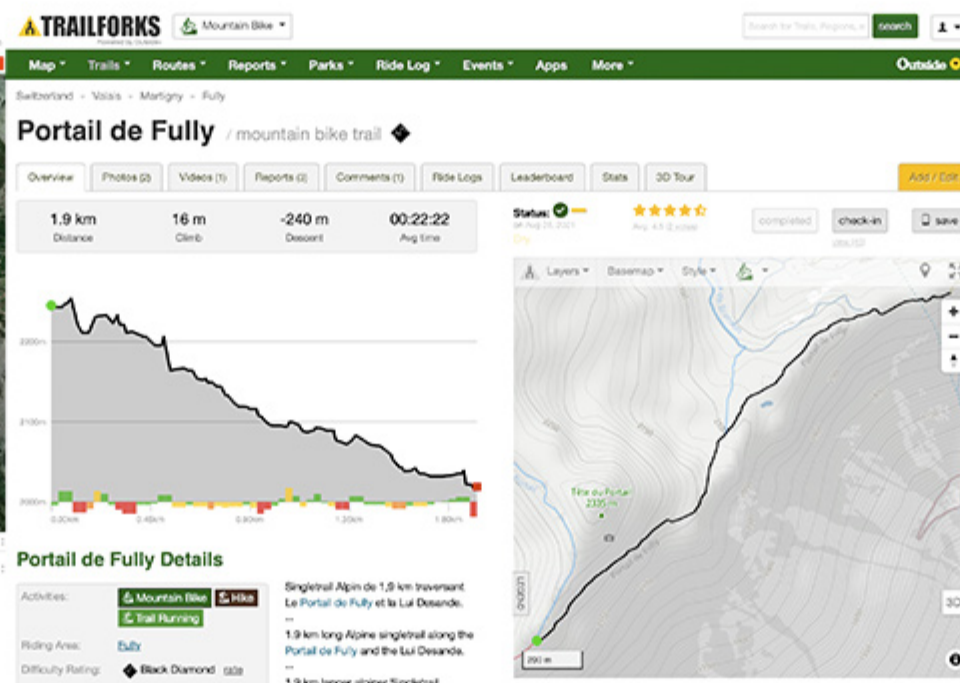
- 4th overall on Portail de Fully descent (10/26)
- 6th overall on Rte de l'Eré - Chiboz directissima (10/6)
- PR on ENHAUTENBAS (1/30)
- PR on L'Eré panorama trail (6/4)



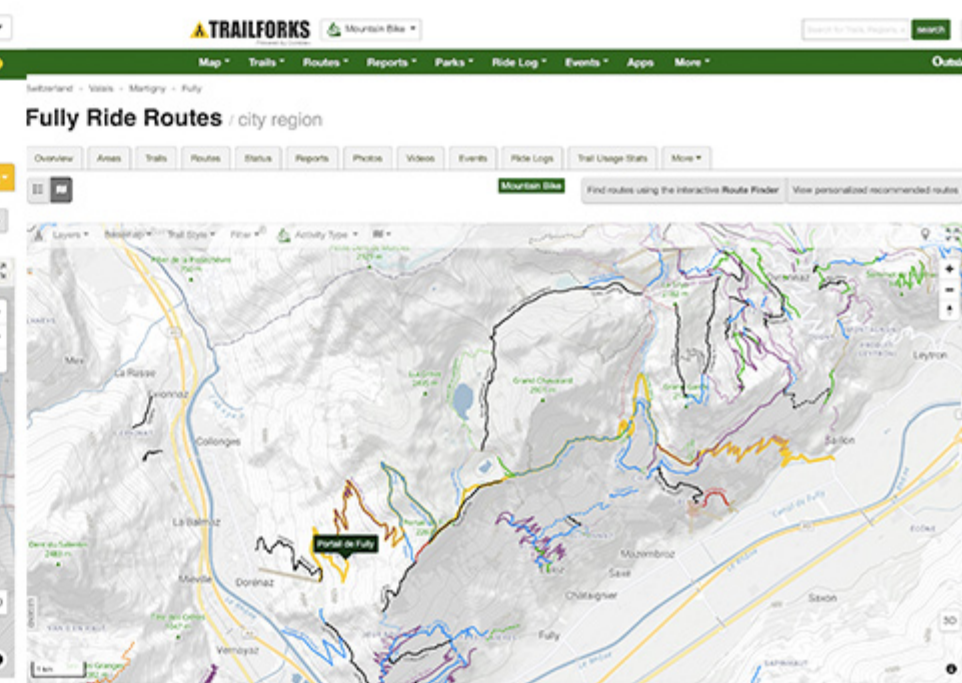
4



5



6



" BATTERY LIFE LEFT A LOT TO DESIRE AND MAINLY THE ACCURACY OF THE DEVICE WAS NOT ON PAR FOR PROPER MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS. "

TAKING IT TO THE TRAIL

Now that we managed to get a GPX file, the next challenge is how we read this information while hurling ourselves down a rocky singletrack. When the first GPS devices came out in the mid 2010's the devices were far from usable. Battery life left a lot to desire and mainly the accuracy of the device was not on par for proper mountain bike trails. It would lose connection, not have any details on the map itself and place you in a different spot altogether at times. Oh and they cost an arm and a leg to buy too.

Where do we stand now? Well these days we have a few options, let's start with the budget one, your phone. Combined with the right app, most modern smartphones can be transformed into your personal guide for the day. Gpx files can be imported easily, but there are definitely some drawbacks by going this route.

First of all, when using your smartphone the battery life can go quite fast as the device is doing a lot of other tasks in the background. If you run out of juice, you also cannot call anyone in case of an emergency. Also the device is fairly bulky and not to mention pricey and fragile. One over-the-bars excursion and you could be looking at a 800 Euro replacement bill. Technically you could go and get a second cheaper phone just for mountain bike navigation, but while you're at it why not go for a dedicated device instead?





"EVEN IF YOU HAVE SOME CRAZY MISSIONS PLANNED A SMALL BATTERY BANK WILL WORK GREAT AS BACKUP."

Next up is the smart watch. If you're doing multiple sports and want to track health, recovery and other biometrics this could be a great option. Most of these devices have a great navigation option, but when it comes to mountain biking the requirements are a little different. Mounting it to your handlebars can be a bit tricky and checking where to go with the device on your wrist is not ideal.

The best option is getting a dedicated device. Lately I have been using the Element Roam V2 device with Dual Band GPS, this technology makes a big difference in accuracy and with 32Gb of storage there is plenty of room for more maps than your legs can handle. It doesn't come as a surprise to you that battery life is no longer an issue. Most devices last 15+ hours or more and allow USB charging while being in use, so even if you have some crazy missions planned a small battery bank will work great as backup. Besides recording your rides and linking them to Trailforks or Strava, you can also do

the reverse and load any route onto the bike computer through the app on your phone. Need to abort the adventure? No problem, just click on return to the starting point and the device will find the best way back for you.

DO YOU STILL NEED A PAPER MAP OR A MTB GUIDE?

Can we bin all the paper maps and do all guides need to rebrand themselves as influencers? Definitely not. Paper maps are still a great backup for any big adventure. Although the technology has become functional, having a backup paper map is still no luxury especially on multi day trips in far away places.



" BATTERY LIFETIMES WILL INCREASE, ACCURACY WILL BE IMPROVED BUT WHAT OTHER FEATS WILL WE SEE IN THE FUTURE? "

Besides, some people find more pleasure in staring at a paper map on the kitchen table searching for good looking wiggly lines that could potentially be the trail of the year.

And the guides? Well, they do a lot more than just showing the way. They take away the work of planning the adventure, which for some is a burden. Also, a good guide will alter and fine tune the day according to the riders skill and fitness. With a ton of options in his mind, the guide will make sure you get back before dark and in one piece. Safety is a big aspect of guiding and the requirements of risk assessment, first aid and emergency repair skills will be hard to replace by technology.

WHERE DOES IT GO FROM HERE?

So it's safe to say that using digital tools to create a proper singletrack adventure is doable with modern technology. There still is some mystery to it all, but with some time spent you can plan and execute your adventure. Of course battery lifetimes will increase, accuracy will be improved but what other feats will we see in the future?

After a quick chat with some people in the industry it is clear they have plenty of projects in the pipeline. Safety is one of the pillars where they see opportunities for improvement. Already you can share your exact location with your friends or partner, but things like crash detection and weather warnings are on the horizon.

" YOU CAN THINK OF HYDRATION AND NUTRITION REMINDERS AND PERSONAL RIDING LEVEL ROUTE SUGGESTIONS BASED ON YOUR PHYSICAL ABILITIES. "

Another item is biometrics. Not only for those taking training seriously, but also for people that just want to pedal and forget. Already you can link your blood glucose monitor to your GPS device, albeit at a hefty cost. But you can think of hydration and nutrition reminders and personal riding level route suggestions based on your physical abilities. The main aim however is improving the user experience. Making it intuitive to find and upload routes with as little distraction from riding bikes as possible.

This sounds like a great ideal to me, and we will make sure to keep you updated on this tech in the future!



WORDS DOUG MCDONALD PHOTOS BASQUE MTB

THE PYRENEES

True, the Pyrenees is quite a broad description of an area for a trail guide but when I was prompted to create a shortlist of singletrack goodness I had the biggest trouble narrowing things down. After all, I have spent the past decade and a half exploring the region, filtering out the best bits to share with clients as a professional guide. How did I end up here? Well, here's some background information for you.



15 years ago I was living and working in Scotland, where I was born, lived and learned to ride bikes when my Basque girlfriend suggested a move to just outside San Sebastian on the Basque Coast. I jumped at the chance and for the last 15 years I have been working, riding and living on the western edge of the Pyrenees mountains. This article isn't about me though, rather it is about where I moved to, the Pyrenees.

When I first arrived there was limited quality mountain biking on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees. Actually, there were lots of singletracks but none of them were made for or adapted to biking. Bit by bit mountain biking gained traction and we were lucky enough to be there and be part of it.

If we fast forward to the present day the area around me has converted from an area which had amazing potential, to one where mountain biking is thriving. We have whole networks of government approved and maintained trails as well as the usual network of unofficial trails which spring up wherever there are passionate bikers. With this much trail goodness around I'd thought to cut it up in various zones and give you some pointers to get you in the right direction.

ZONE 1: THE BASQUE COAST

The Basque Coast is where I live. It is the greenest part of the Pyrenees, and has a more humid climate. People say it rains a lot, and it is true but it is also true that we have amazing seasons and that the climate in summer is much drier and we don't suffer so much from the heat compared to the rest of Spain.

“ FOR THE LAST 15 YEARS I HAVE BEEN WORKING, RIDING AND LIVING ON THE WESTERN EDGE OF THE PYRENEES MOUNTAINS. ”





“ WHEN THE TECTONIC PLATES COLLIDED TO FORM THE PYRENEES THE ENERGY OF THE COLLISION ALSO SENT RIPPLES THROUGH THE EARTH TO THE SOUTH. ”

With the climate comes forests and dirt; proper dirt which makes for amazing, flowing trails. The Basque Coast has a great mixture of natural trails and handbuilt enduro trails. I think that this is the area which has the hardest trails, with lots of steep trails with man-made features. Certainly the hardest trails I know are on the Basque Coast but there is a lot of variety for people looking for easier trails.

Places to Stay: The best base if you want a bigger town is San Sebastian. Of course accommodation is

harder to get to and more expensive. Another option is to stay in one of the smaller villages, such as Lesaka, or Hondarribia where you will waste less of your time getting to and from the good biking.

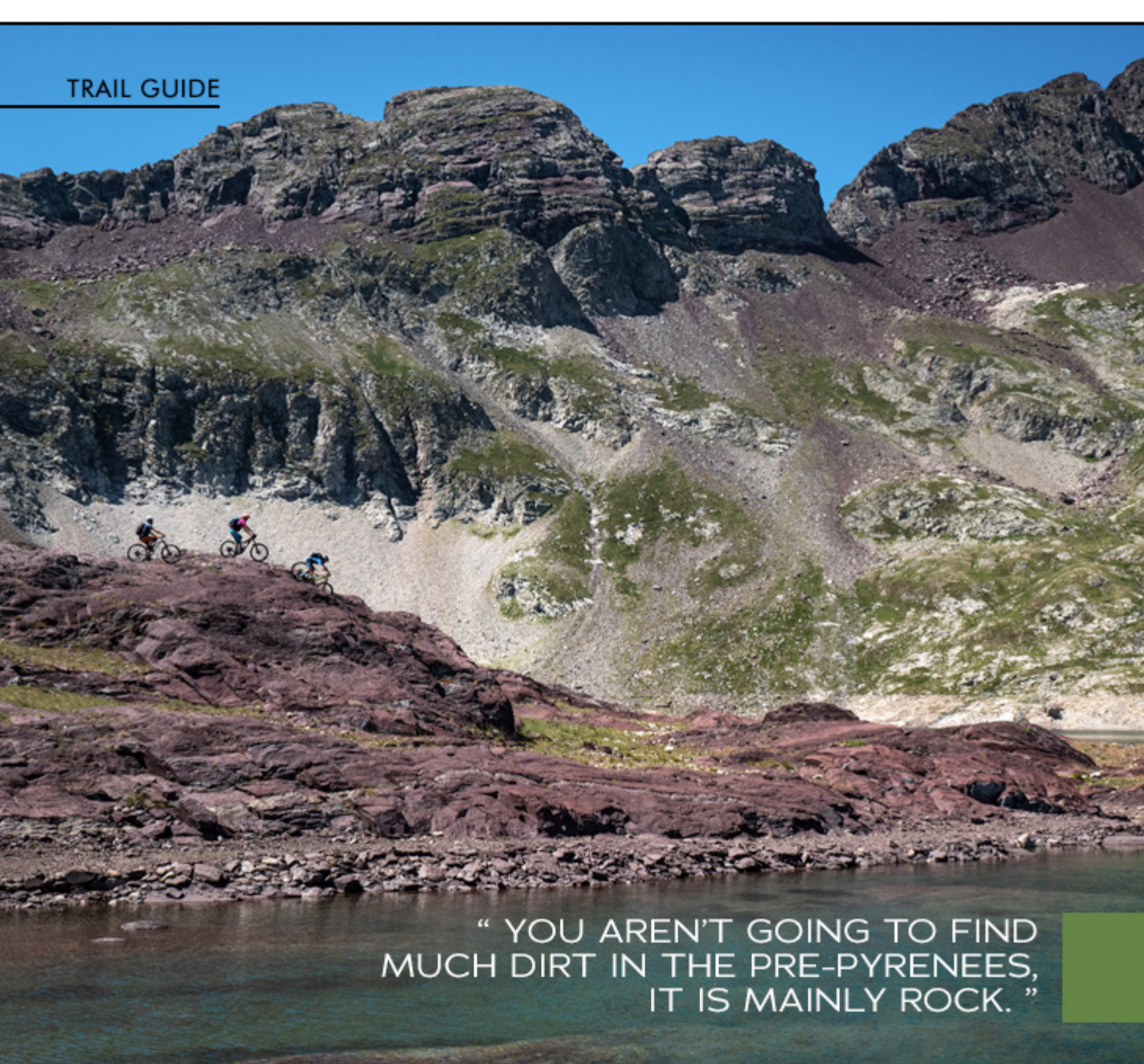
Where to Bike: The trails just north of Pamplona, Eramua, are great for a couple of days. Here you have lots of options. Then you have another amazing area around Landa which has a lot of trails in a small area. Finally the trails around Bera and Lesaka are great, they are better with uplift, but here you can find some of the

hardest trails you will ride, such as El Cerro and M8121 which is definitely only for the brave. Bring those pads!

ZONE 2: PRE-PYRENEES

When the tectonic plates collided to form the Pyrenees the energy of the collision also sent ripples through the earth to the south. Those ripples form the pre-Pyrenees, a range of mountains on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees which rise up to between 1500 and 2000 metres high. This area offers amazing rock formations, and fun, rocky trails.





“ YOU AREN'T GOING TO FIND MUCH DIRT IN THE PRE-PYRENEES, IT IS MAINLY ROCK. ”

The most known area here is Ainsa, or Zona Zero as people know it, which has the highest density of trails around. It is also the busiest and is where you will find the most riders. You aren't going to find much dirt in the pre-Pyrenees, it is mainly rock. There are a couple of trails which have earth on them but I'm keeping those as secret and for the privileged! Main reasons to come to ride here are for the wilderness and for the technical, physical rocky trails.

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PHOTO TROY LEE DESIGNS

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“ AINSA IS THE EASIEST PLACE TO FIND TRAILS AND THERE ARE ENOUGH TRAILS FOR A WEEK OF RIDING. ”

Places to Stay: Here it is harder to recommend a single town other than Ainsa. Here you can find bike shops and plenty of bars and restaurants. Don't miss L'Abrevadero where Carlos will pour you the best beer in the Pyrenees.

Where to Ride: Ainsa is the easiest place to find trails and there are enough trails for a week of riding. The climbing can be quite tough but there is some great riding. There are some local uplift options, however they are a bit limited. To experience some Zona Zero trails which few non-locals ride, check out the Sierra de Arbe, particularly the Tinidad descent which you can find on route 86. Of course you can also reach out to me, I'd be happy to take you along on our Ainsa Enduro trip that unlocks the best trails here with full uplift support to make the most out of your days.

ZONE 3: HIGH PYRENEES

When the weather gets warm, and when the snow disappears (which is later than you think!) then the time is perfect for getting high (I'm talking about altitude here). With peaks reaching up to 3000m it is not as high as the Alps, but while over there the highest areas are generally reserved for mountaineering adventurers, here it is possible to ride the trails to almost 3000m in many places. This makes the average descent between 1000m and 2000m D-. Not too shabby for an afternoon of fun!

The areas around Benasque, to the north of Ainsa, Val d'Aran, Biescas or Bergua are great places to start to explore these high trails. Expect to ride high, way above the treeline, and be prepared to be self sufficient (food, water, maps, sun protection etc) and ride in a manner appropriate to these wild places.



These are some of the most remote mountains on the European continent and it can definitely be a while before mountain rescue can reach you.

Places to Stay: Benasque or Viehla are the two obvious places with several B&B's and Hotels to choose from.

Where to Ride: The trails around Benasque are spectacular, with big descents and the biggest mountains in the Pyrenees all around you. My personal favourite is the Enduro Mes area in Val d'Aran where you can find endless perfect corners and plenty of steeps. Bring extra brake pads for this one.

Shameless Plug: Check out our Pyrenees Odyssey trip where we link the trails in all of these valleys, crossing the tops, over 5 days with around than 17,000m descending.

ZONE 4: THE FRENCH SIDE

The French side of the Pyrenees also offers some amazing possibilities. This was the area which originally started offering mountain bike trails back when mountain biking was all about neon colours, cantilever brakes and toe clips. It was in places such as Luchon where the French DH team used to come to train on the steep, technical trails before going on to dominate the world cups.

Then it seemed like the French government lost interest, and for whatever reason there was a period when the French trails were neglected. Now the French are back on it and the French side of the Pyrenees is offering some brilliant options.

“ WHERE THE FRENCH DH TEAM USED TO COME TO TRAIN ON THE STEEP, TECHNICAL TRAILS BEFORE GOING ON TO DOMINATE THE WORLD CUPS. ”





“ A MIXTURE OF BIKEPARK STYLE TRAILS AND NATURAL RIDING AND IN MANY PLACES THERE ARE UPLIFT SERVICES RUN BY BIKERS. ”

Places such as Luchon, Loudenville, Saint Larry and Lourdes are offering a mixture of bikepark style trails and natural riding and in many places there are uplift services run by bikers.

Places to Stay: France has lots of camping sites, around Loudenvielle or Luchon for example. A great spot to stay budget friendly, but you can obviously splash out and grab a hotel.

Where to Ride: Loudenville has lots of great trails for enduro bikes and hosts the Enduro World Series regularly. Or if you want some of the steepest trails around then check out Luchon, just be careful if it is wet!

THE WRAP UP

So there you have it, the tip of the iceberg but a great basic guide on the what and where of riding in the Pyrenees. For more information or to join me on one of our trips, you can of course reach out to me at <https://www.basquemtb.com/> or give me a follow on the good ol' Gramm: <https://www.instagram.com/basquemtb/>

See you on the mountain!

Doug McDonald

TECHNIQUE

RIDING RUTS

How to get in the groove

Love or hate them, ruts and deep-scoured sections of the trail are something that we are likely to encounter at some point in our mountain bike experience. If you ride fall-line wild trails on soft ground or lap race courses in the wet then that narrow groove cut in the dirt will be a familiar nemesis that can end a good run of luck. Whether you are an in or out kind of rider, ruts present us with all sorts of decisions to make, they can also nudge you in a plethora of unsavoury angles and typically when you don't need that helping hand.



Ruts and scoured sections are the quintessential trail condition that forces your hand into making decisive line choices, if you are not in tune with making conscious line choices then now is the time to start doing so, without them you will always be working against the trail and not with it. The groove in the trail has another sneaky trick up its slippery sleeve, and that is to do with vision. The groove will beckon you in, especially when there is clear evidence of tyre tracks, however, this can result in you dropping your head and staring into the groove as it swallows up your rubber. If you have ever mimicked a bulldozer with your front tyre then this is often the result of you having neglected to look through the section of trail.

**" WHAT TYPICALLY HAPPENS IS YOU
PINBALL BETWEEN THE SIDES OF THE RUT
WRESTLING FOR CONTROL "**

Another tricky thing that we have to deal with is the lack of ability to steer the bike from the bars, something that we should only be doing at very low speeds anyhow. If you think about the mechanics of steering you will appreciate what I'm talking about, to give you a better idea of our conundrum take your bike to the nearest kerb or log and place your tyre so the sidewall is scuffing the object, now turn the bars and watch the back edge of your front wheel push-off the object. It is impossible to take a right turn (away from the bulldozer moment) when the left sidewall is in contact with the hard edge of a rut (and vice versa). When you get this scenario what typically happens is you pinball between the sides of the rut wrestling for control, lean into the side of the rut too hard and you bulldoze the edge of the rut with the front of the tyre.



" SIGHT YOUR LINE AS YOU THREAD THE NEEDLE INTO THE GROOVE, AND DON'T FORGET TO KEEP YOUR HEAD UP AND LOOK THROUGH THE SECTION. "

So how do we avoid these common mistakes and how can we negotiate ruts without the tyre clawing its way along the edge? For starters we need to consider if there is an alternative line, do you need to drop into the rut or can you sneak along the edge of the worn groove? In some situations, you will be

presented with just another rut! But in many situations, there is room outside of the worn groove to get on good ground. When trails are tight in the trees or there are other features like big rocks at the trail side that prevent you from riding out of the rut you will have to roll the sleeves up and get stuck in.

Vision is key as you line up, sight your line as you thread the needle into the groove, and don't forget to keep your head up and look through the section. With the wheels in

the groove stay limber and resist over-steering or leaning into the edges of the rut. When corners have become rutted you can use that outer edge as a mini berm, lean the bike and use minimal steering input. This is a situation where you need to bring the legs into play and steer with the rear, something that modern geometry bikes have enabled us to do.

The steer with the rear technique involves us thrusting the bike through the legs below us, we go from being centred above the BB to bringing the bike through under the body so we end up in a position where the backside is hanging out behind the BB.



The legs drive downwards pushing the bike into the trail while the feet kick the bike through below us. As the bike is exiting the turn the body has to catch up so we are centred again. The arms help to keep the front on track and will become stretched out in the process, this will take a bit of weight out of the front wheel which is a positive.

The above is all well and good when you have the choice of rut or no rut, but what about situations where there are a few options? Things are not so clear cut when you have multiple rut options, the common most worn line may be the best option, but it may also be the line that leads you astray.

" THINGS ARE
NOT SO CLEAR
CUT WHEN
YOU HAVE
MULTIPLE RUT
OPTIONS "

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Try to remember that vision is the key, look through the section, and where vision is limited by vegetation, etc obstructing your view try and visualise what happens further along the trail. Look for other indicators in the land to help you make your rut choice, that commonly worn groove could put you in trouble and you may visualise another less used option taking you on a better trajectory, or at least onto better ground with grip and cambers to lean into.

" TO DO THIS YOU WILL HAVE TO HAVE MASTERED THE BUNNY HOP WHERE YOU LIFT THE WHEEL INDEPENDENTLY FROM ONE ANOTHER "

When the terrain is steep and water has scoured the ground a different approach may involve hopping from the good ground on one side of the scoured-out section to the other. To do this you will have to have mastered the bunny hop where you lift the wheel independently from one another, the manual hop enables you to move from side to side while you hop. These scenarios evoke the Bruce Lee mantra of thinking like water, where will it run and will I need to transfer from side to side again? Typically the water rut is found in low-lying areas of ground and there may be some added jeopardy in the mix thanks to camber, you will need to work with this to maintain traction in climbs as best you can. In descents, your well-timed and placed transfers should take into account the camber, look to use it to your advantage by turning it into a berm to give the wheels some support as you navigate the higher ground to either side of the rut.





" YOU CAN DRAW ON PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE AND SCENARIOS TO GEAR UP FOR THE RUT THAT LIES IN WAIT. "

The trail surface can vary greatly in the areas that we ride, the harder ground will rut less, but when it does the definitive hard edges are far less forgiving from those trails in softer ground. The soft ground may dry and the remaining ridges offer support, in very organic ground this seemingly hard

edge may just break away and therefore offer no support at all. In snow and icy conditions, the same can be said, the icy ground will hold up, offering support moving you away from any hard edge, the fresh powder will move as you push into it and soft wet snow will pack up and then give support. The more variety you get to surface types the larger your database will become, you can draw on previous experience and scenarios to gear up for the rut that lies in wait. Many places that I ride change rapidly and go from

one end of the scale to the other, such varied terrain keeps you on your guard and keeps you honest.

Another weapon you can deploy in rutted situations is a cool calm and collected nature, you must remain relaxed and flexible through these scenarios. The bike may move around in the rut and get nudged from side to side, try to stay loose and go with the flow rather than fighting it, and stay a little lower on the bike by relaxing the knees and pushing the elbows out. Hanging loose will help you resist the temptation to overcorrect little movements, and the hips can help to influence the direction that the bike is travelling,



like your head where they point you will go. Terrain like this is another reason I write about learning to ride 'switch stance' (with your non-favored foot leading). You may need to hop from side to side and if you point the hips in the desired direction of travel then you work with your body and not against it, hip direction driven from foot position can also help you stay on track through long ruts.

" TAKE SOME TIME OUT FROM YOUR NORMAL RIDING AND GO SESSION SOME RUTTED TRAILS. "

As with all skills and techniques practice makes permanent, if you lack confidence in rutted situations then take some time out from your normal riding and go session some rutted trails. Until next time, keep the rubber side down.

Clive Forth

mtbskills.co.uk

TRIED AND TESTED

WORDS AND PHOTOS IMB TEST TEAM

PHOTO THIS PAGE JULIA BIGIO

Spring has sprung and soon we'll be razzing around in shorts and T shirts again! With what kit you might ask? Well, we put quite a few cool products to the test for this issue.

Millkit's Hassle'off multitool is sleek and lightweight, but how does it perform? We put it to the test. Winter riding requires some decent shoes, we check how the Fizik Terra Arctica's are in the worst weather.

Outdoor brand Rab enters the cycling market and we try out their Cinder jacket, and we give our opinion on the Tannus tire inserts. Last but not least we want to highlight an interesting book on Singletracks, poetry and life on two wheels by Albert FlynnDesilver. Enjoy!

ACCESSORIES

- 01 ACS - Millkit Hassle'off
- 02 ACS - Fizik Terra Arctica GTX Shoes
- 03 ACS - Rab Cinder Jacket
- 04 ACS - Tannus Tire Inserts
- 05 ACS - Singletrack Mind book review



"A LIGHTWEIGHT
AND EASY WAY
TO CARRY ALL
THE ESSENTIALS
RATTLE FREE ON
YOUR BIKE."

TO VISIT THEIR
WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



AT A GLANCE

Brand: Milkit

Model: Hassle'off

Price: 99.95 Euro

The Hassle'off is Milkit's brand new bike stored multi tool. It has 20+ functions and weighs just 139 grams.

THE PRODUCT

So where do we start? The Hassle'off is made up of a sleek waterproof casing that easily bolts onto your bottle cage bolts. You can of course still run a bottle cage and it comes with a removable strap to hold your pump, a tube or some snacks.

Besides the obvious hex keys (2-2.5-3-4-5-6-8 and T25) that interlock beautifully with magnets, there is the tire lever that also holds the chain breaker which doubles as a spoke wrench and valve core tool. In the mid section of the tire lever there is space for two chainlinks, held in place by magnets.

If you do get a flat while running tubeless, you can use the plug tool to plug the hole using one of the several tire plugs that are stored inside the tool.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

BRAND FIZIK MODEL TERRA ARTICA GTX SHOE YEAR 2023

"YOU WILL GET A SUPER HIGH QUALITY SHOE THAT WILL LET YOU RIDE THROUGH ANY WEATHER IN COMFORT."

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



AT A GLANCE

Brand: Fizik

Model: Terra Artica GTX

Price: 259 Euro

The Terra Artica is an off-road winter / bad weather mountain bike shoe featuring a waterproof GORE-TEX membrane and insulating, breathable fleece lining for better warmth and comfort on cold-weather MTB and Gravel rides.

THE PRODUCT

The Terra Artica GTX is a shoe aimed at the person that doesn't let sub zero temperatures or some horizontal rain stop them. Fleece lining, GoreTex membrane and a Boa closure system show there is a lot of technology going into this, which justifies the 259 Euro price tag.

The sole is made for SPD style cleats, has plenty of grip and the option to add two extra spikes for added grip when things get muddy and slidy. The neoprene ankle cuff keeps the crud out and a velcro ankle strap lets you adjust the support to your liking.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)

BRAND RAB

MODEL CINDER PHANTOM JACKET

YEAR 2023

"THE CINDER PHANTOM IS IN OUR OPINION SOMETHING THAT SHOULD BE IN EVERYONE'S PACK."

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



AT A GLANCE

Brand: Rab

Model: Cinder Phantom

Price: 220 Euro / 180 GBP

The Rab Cinder Phantom is a featherlight, stash-and-forget waterproof shell, boasting a low-volume pack size with frame attachment, and stretchy Pertex® Shield fabric which breathes as well as deflecting persistent rain.

THE PRODUCT

When it comes to outdoor products, the British Rab is a staple brand and can be found on the backs of many athletes, high mountain guides and alpinists. Their recycled down jackets and sleeping bags have won many awards and we were thrilled to see them jump into the cycling market with an impressive range of products this year.

The Cinder Phantom jacket is one for the minimalists out there. A jacket that packs as small as your fist and weighing in under a 100 grams is an impressive feat, you can clearly see their 40 years of outdoor clothing manufacturing experience here.

[CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE](#)



BRAND TANNUS

MODEL ARMOUR TUBELESS INSERTS

YEAR 2023

"THEY PROVIDE A GOOD AMOUNT OF SUPPORT AND I NEVER MANAGED TO BURP THE TIRE."

TO VISIT THEIR WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



AT A GLANCE

Brand: Tannus

Model: Armour Tubeless Inserts

Price: 54,95 Euro

Tannus Tubeless Armour is a multi cell foam tire insert that has a unique wrap around design offering protection against impacts and an improved ride feel when cornering.

THE PRODUCT

After reviewing their Armour Inserts for tires with innertubes in IMB (<https://www.imbike.com/reviews/tyres/tannus-armour-2019/>) it was about time that we put their tubeless version to the test. In the same funky red look, the inserts are available for 27.5" 29" and 700C Gravel tires. A set costs just about 110 Euros which is on par with other insert manufacturers.

In terms of design, they use their patented Aither multi-cell foam to provide protection. What sets these apart from other designs, is their shape that closely follows the contours of the tire. On the sidewalls, the insert is slightly thinner, while in the middle of the tire it is at its thickest providing puncture protection.

CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE



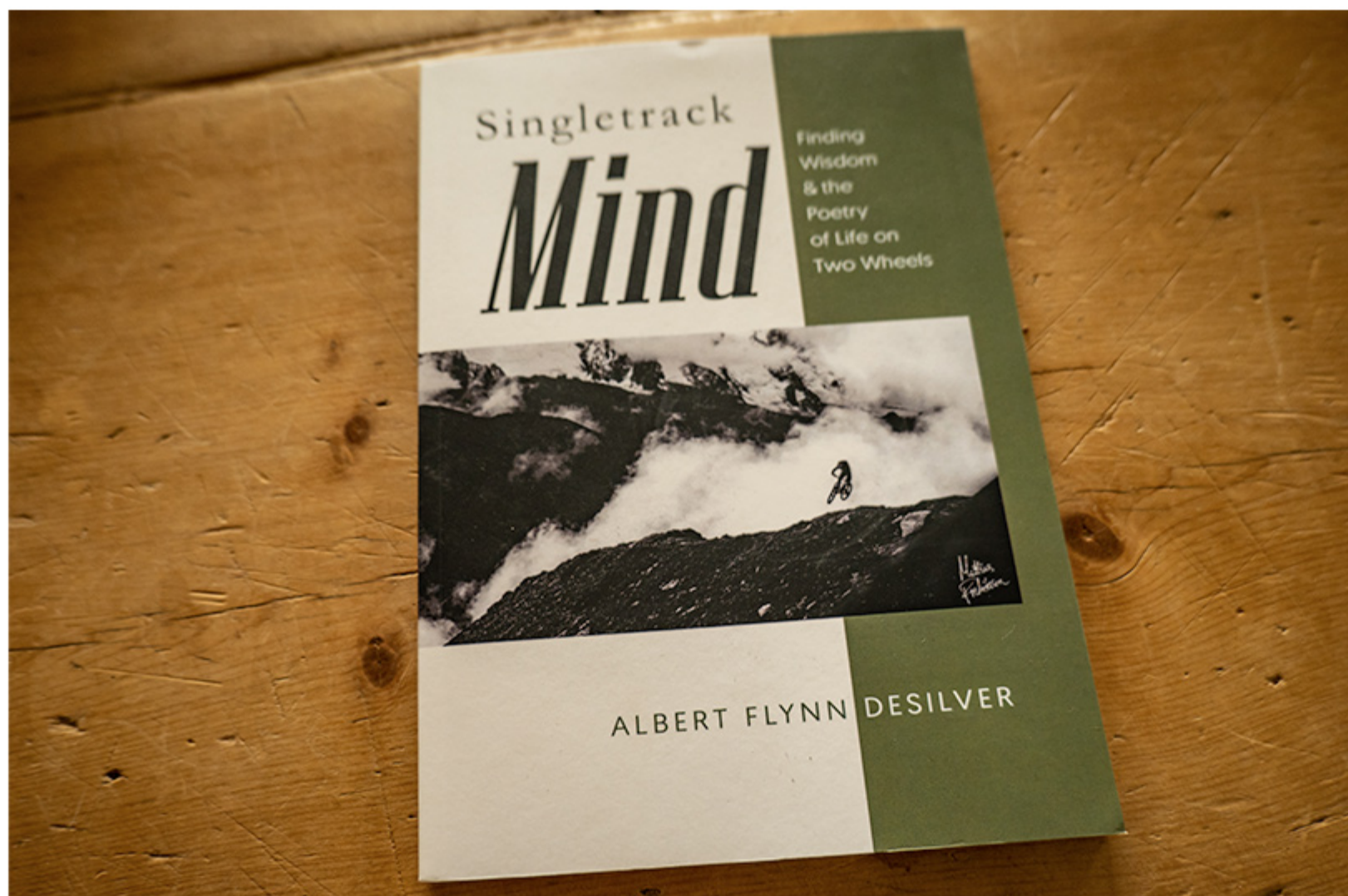
BRAND ALBERT FLYNN DESILVER

MODEL SINGLETRACK MIND BOOK REVIEW

YEAR 2023

"A GREAT TOOL
TO LET YOU
EXPLORE A
MORE POETIC
SIDE OF RIDING
BIKES."

TO VISIT THEIR
WEBSITE, CLICK HERE



AT A GLANCE

Brand: Albert Flynn Desilver

Model: Singletrack Mind

Price: 20 USD

"Singletrack Mind: Finding Wisdom & the Poetry of Life on Two Wheels" is about the spirit of mountain biking in wild places. This is a mountain biking adventure travel book that leans into earth wisdom, spirituality and includes a sprinkling of poetry.

THE PRODUCT

Albert Flynn Desilver's paperback book has 58 pages and was published at the end of last year. It features images of the renowned Matthias Frederikson and endorsements from Hans "No Way" Rey among others. It is a nice collection of essays that explore the writer's early beginnings into the sport and how riding overlaps with community, nature and exploration.

OUT ON THE TRAIL

In a time of TikTok clips and YouTube Shorts, it is refreshing to return to a proven classic format of paper and ink.

CLICK OR TAP TO READ MORE



THE ANGRY INSIDER



WORDS & PHOTOS: THE ANGRY INSIDER

PRO ATHLETE

Ride bikes for a living, who doesn't dream of that? I can still see myself dreaming of it two decades ago. I still remember the day I signed my first pro contract too. I was so stoked to get free bikes, kit and even some money if I made it to the podium or into a magazine! How little did I know about the lack of professionalism, meager payments and inequality in this sport.



**" BEING A PRO IS 24/7 ALMOST ALL YEAR
ROUND. ALL THAT ADDED PRESSURE DIDN'T
MAKE RIDING AND RACING MORE FUN "**

Riding bikes always was an escape for me. Every day you'd find me in the woods building jumps, smashing berms and razzing around till the sun set. No need for training schedules, no lifting weights or dipping in ice baths, let alone paying attention to diet. Heck, it was fizzy drinks and cheeseburgers all day with a healthy mix of Haribo's thrown in for extra boost power.

After entering a competition I figured out I was quicker than the average person and I found myself dreaming of being paid to ride all over the world. I put in the hours, I maxed out the credit cards and did double shifts working at UPS in order to finance the summer full of racing. While friends went to parties I doubled down and ditched the alcohol and raves for the gym and supplements.

As I moved up in the ranks, I owed a lot to the people around me. My parents purged part of their savings into supporting me and my girlfriend had to deal with my eternal training regimens and calorie counting at dinner dates. While with some jobs you're taken from 9-5, being a pro is 24/7 almost all year round. All that added pressure didn't make riding and racing more fun, I can tell you that.



But hey, I made it this far, and after scoring my first pro deal I was stoked beyond belief. Some of the team's sponsors however were brands I really didn't like. The tires, the brakes, the geometry, all were suboptimal in my eyes but it turns out not too many engineers listen to rider input. Can't offend my employer, so I guess I have to get used to it.

Training camps were something I always dreamt of. Swap the mud and single digit temps for some sun, dust and testing different setups against the clock.

**" AFTER SCORING
MY FIRST PRO
DEAL I WAS STOKED
BEYOND BELIEF. "**

CHECK OUT OUR INCREDIBLE
5 STAR RATED APP
IT'S TOTALLY FREE TO USE!



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App Store



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CLICK THE LOGO
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"THEY ALSO KEEP PUSHING FOR RIDICULOUS RACE SCHEDULES AND THREATENING ME WITH BANS AND FINES"

Turns out it's more about media creation than anything else. We didn't even have all the bike parts ready, so some had to ride last year's bikes.

Team managers are a whole story in itself too by the way. It's nice to have someone

help with logistics and finding proper accommodation and all. But there's some weird dictator style stuff happening out there. Determining my bedtime, what food I eat and if I can run tire inserts or not, the control is crazy. I even got yelled at for calling my girlfriend too long one time and at training camp I came to the conclusion the size S frame felt too short and asked if I could get the M for the season. Not possible was the answer!

Then there's the UCI with their general bullying all year round. Determining the length of my jersey sleeves, banning me from representing my sponsors at the world champs and even restricting me from competing after signing my first decent sponsorship deal in my career. Somehow they also keep pushing for ridiculous race schedules and threatening me with bans and fines if I race non UCI races. In the meantime those Bobo's earn triple what I manage to scrape together in a year.



" TO KEEP UP AND STAY IN THE GAME FOR A TOP SPOT THERE'S QUITE SOME INVESTMENT ON A DAY TO DAY BASIS. "

Talking about pay, don't get me wrong. I am still stoked to get paid to ride and race bikes. It would be nice that it's a little more though. To keep up and stay in the game for a top spot there's quite some investment on a day to day basis. Personal trainers, massage therapists, physiotherapy to deal with injuries, the gym, the supplements, class A organic food and let's not forget the 200 a month on supplements and vitamins. The base salary is ok, but the truth of the matter is that I'd be classified as under the poverty line if I don't make any bonuses or podiums in a season.

I've never lost the love for riding bikes, and I don't think I ever will. But after all the hardship, injury and stress I might have been better off if I'd settle for a better paying job. Become a dentist on a part time basis. Plenty of time to ride, I can choose to ride any bike I want and don't suffer the stress of having to push through injuries to get prize money in order to be able to buy dinner and fuel for the trip home....

***disclaimer** - the Angry Insider is a fictional character. None of the above is based on true stories and any similarity is purely coincidental.

LIGHTBOX

THROWING UP SOME DUST!

Lightbox

More shots with no particular place
to go this issue, feast your eyes!

LIGHTBOX

MATT JONES ONBOARD THE NEW MARIN RIFT ZONE



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SUNSET DROPS IN THE BIKEPARK



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JULIEN FULL DRIFT IN CRANS MONTANA



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DUSTY WYGLE STYLING IT UP

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MATT FAIRBROTHER BY JAMES VINCENT



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FOREST ACTION AT BIKEPARK PETZEN

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PATRICIA DRUWEN AT THE NINES

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KILIAN BRON HIKING UP THE DUNES

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BIKEPARK SÖLDENS MASSIVE WALLRIDE BY CHRISTOPH BAYER

The IMB website is crammed with news and videos every day, we only show the best videos, so to make it onto the site is an achievement in itself.

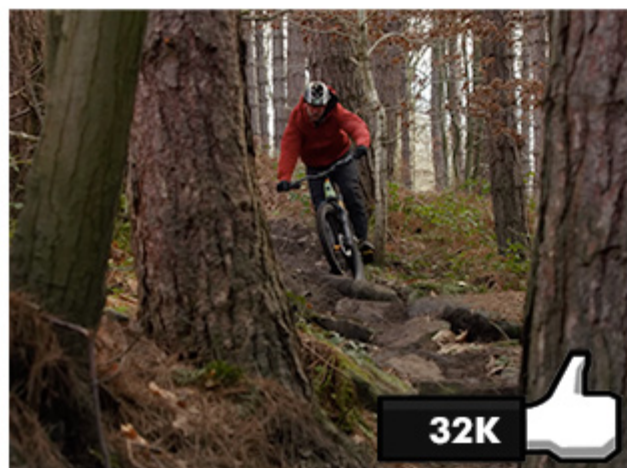
These are the 4 most popular videos that have been viewed on the site as voted for by you with your thumbs up likes in the last 2 months! Check out the full list [HERE](#), and if you see a video you like on the site, give it the thumbs up, it might just help to push it onto this page!

MOVIE NIGHT

#1

CARRY ON HECKLING

Watch mountain bike legend Steve Peat take two (almost) identical Hecklers out for a day of timed hot-laps in Wharnccliffe Woods. Peaty vs Peaty, MX vs 29". Watch the OG legend tear his way down on both bikes. Which is faster? Let's find out!



32K


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#2

CAM ZINK EXPLORES BC

Vancouver local Steve Vanderhoek is used to the lushness of BC. Cam Zink, who spent most of his life in the Nevada desert, not so much. Watch Cam get a feel for the place by taking on some of the gnarliest moves in the Sea to Sky!



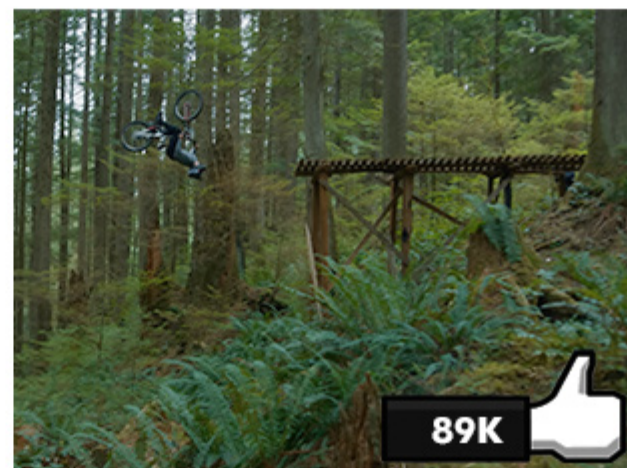
58K


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#3

IN THE KNOW

Caleb Holonko grew up on Mt. Fromme, one of three mountains that make up the legendary "North Shore". He would dedicate every spare minute of sunlight to building and riding the trails. Caleb's knowledge now serves as a platform for him to push himself.



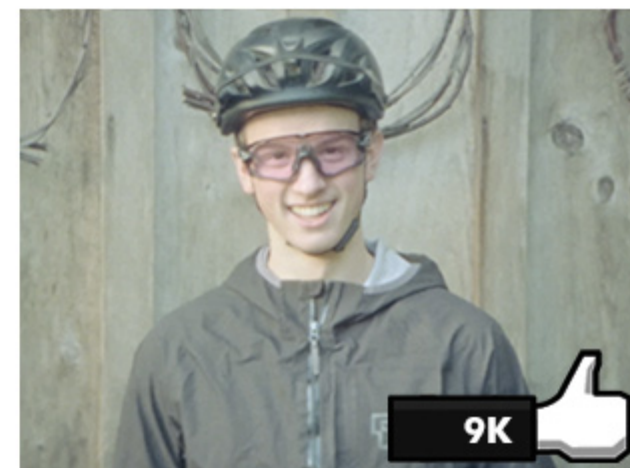
89K


[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO](#)

#4

SOMETHING IN THE WATER

The Comox Valley is exceptionally wet, with about 1157 mms of water per year. However, somewhere along the way, something has gotten into the water. Whatever it is, it has produced an abundance of very talented mountain bikers like Zach Rebitt.



9K


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