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PLUS! MAGAZINE PRESENTS

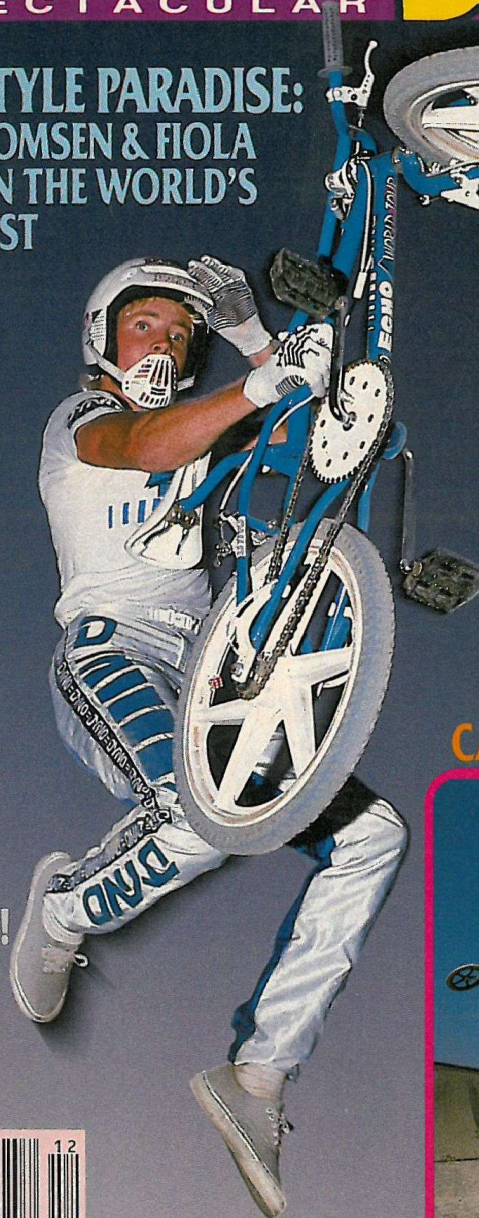
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# freestyle

SPECTACULAR

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GREATEST  
SKATE-  
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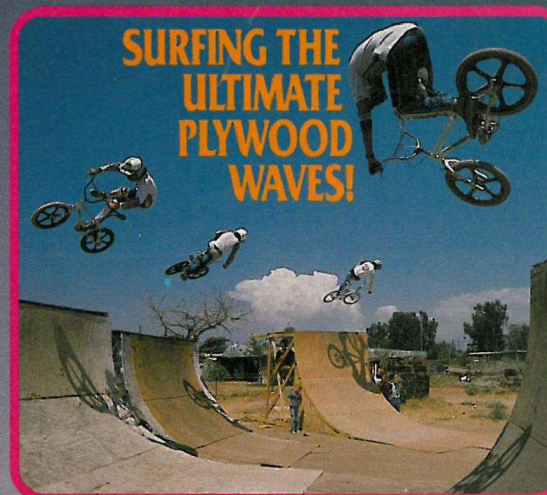
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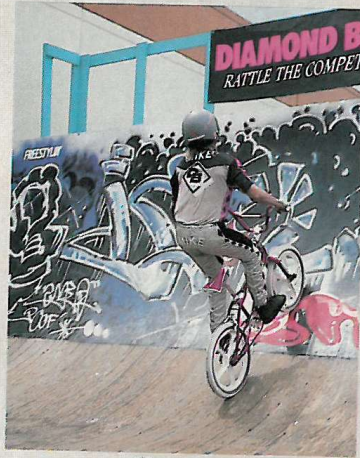
**CALIFORNIA'S RADDEST RAMPS:**



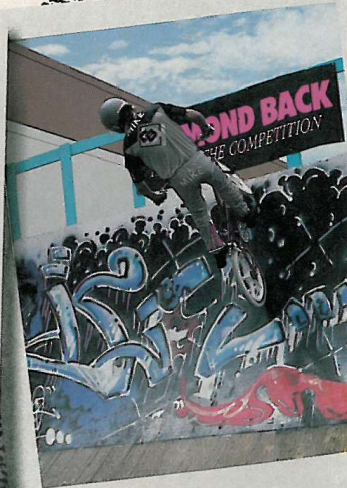
**SURFING THE  
ULTIMATE  
PLYWOOD  
WAVES!**



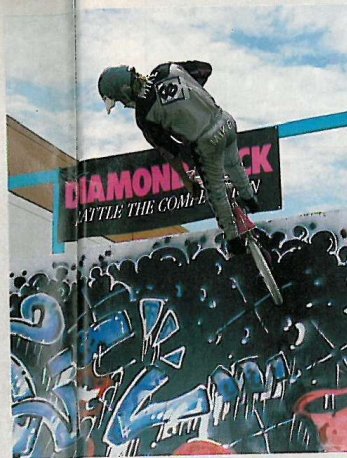




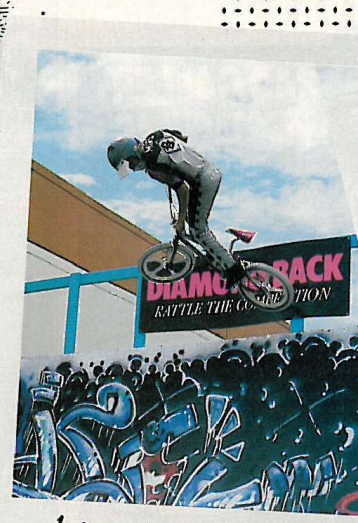
Mike Dominguez



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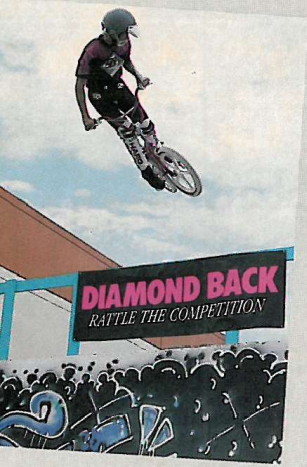
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model "Strike Zone"



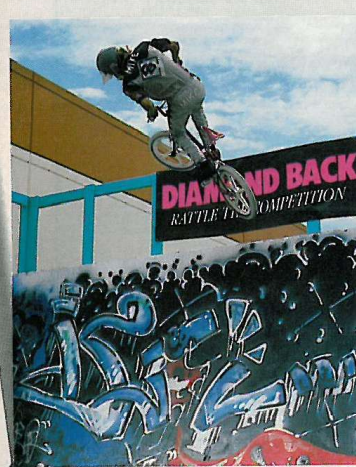
Diamond Back



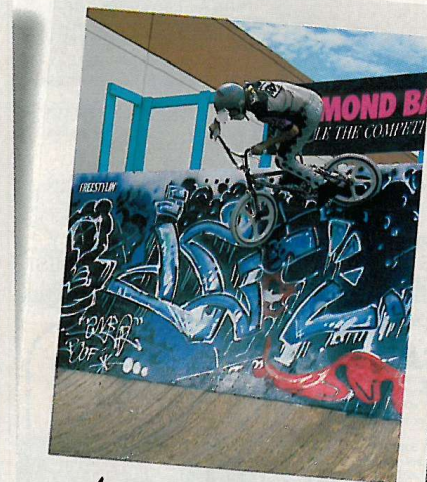
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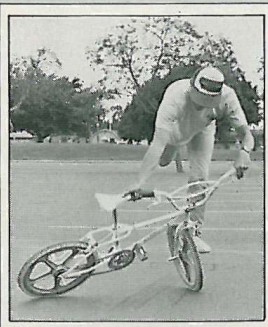
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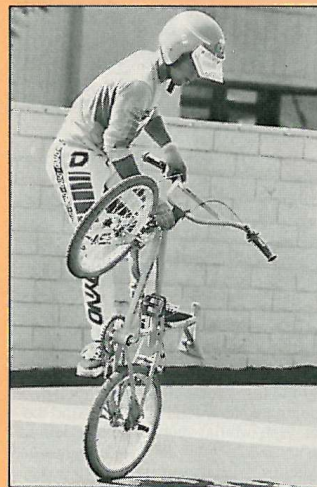
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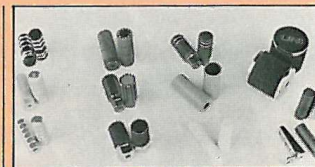
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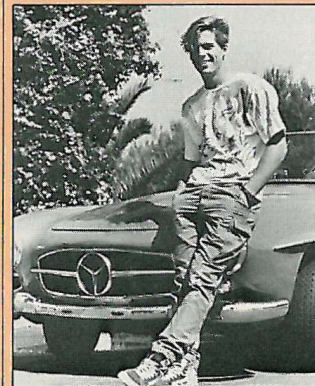
**6 TEN HOT HOW-TOS**  
The newest, coolest tricks



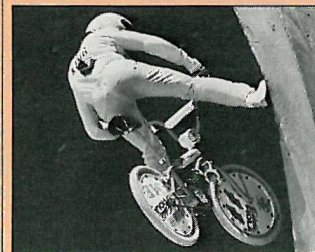
**16 PLYWOOD PARADISE**  
Wooden wonders of the world



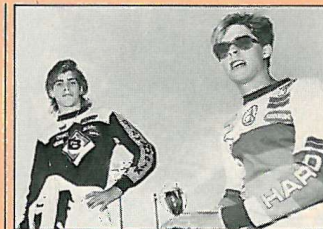
**28 THE AXLE PEG SHOOTOUT**  
Freestyle accessories face the music



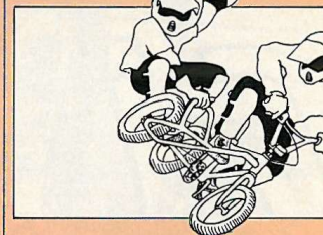
**40 WAY-OUT WARDROBES**  
Casual wear for that added flair



**48 THE GREAT SKATEPARKS**  
Pools, bowls, pipes and snakes



**60 SECRETS OF LANDING A FACTORY FREESTYLE RIDE**  
Tips from the guys who know



**66 THE BEST OF READER ART**  
Radical renderings from our readers

ON THE COVER:—David Voelker balls into the twilight sky. Scotty Freeman trips the light fantastic in New York City. Formation flying at Tony Adams' ramp complex in Santee, California. Voelker photo by John Ker. Freeman photo by Mike Carruth. Adams photo by Jon Peterson. DeSign by DeWest. Separations by Valley Film.

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# 10 HOT NEW FREESTYLE MOVES

Work your way to the head of the class



Story & photos by Steve Giberson

□ By this time of year you're probably settled back into your daily school routine (impatiently waiting for the second hand on the clock to cover the final seconds of last period, and looking forward to the weekend), and the idea of additional study time doesn't sound too hot. Well, we have a home study course we know you can live with—ten new freestyle how-tos. A sure cure for the back-to-school blues.

## FREESTYLE DEGREE

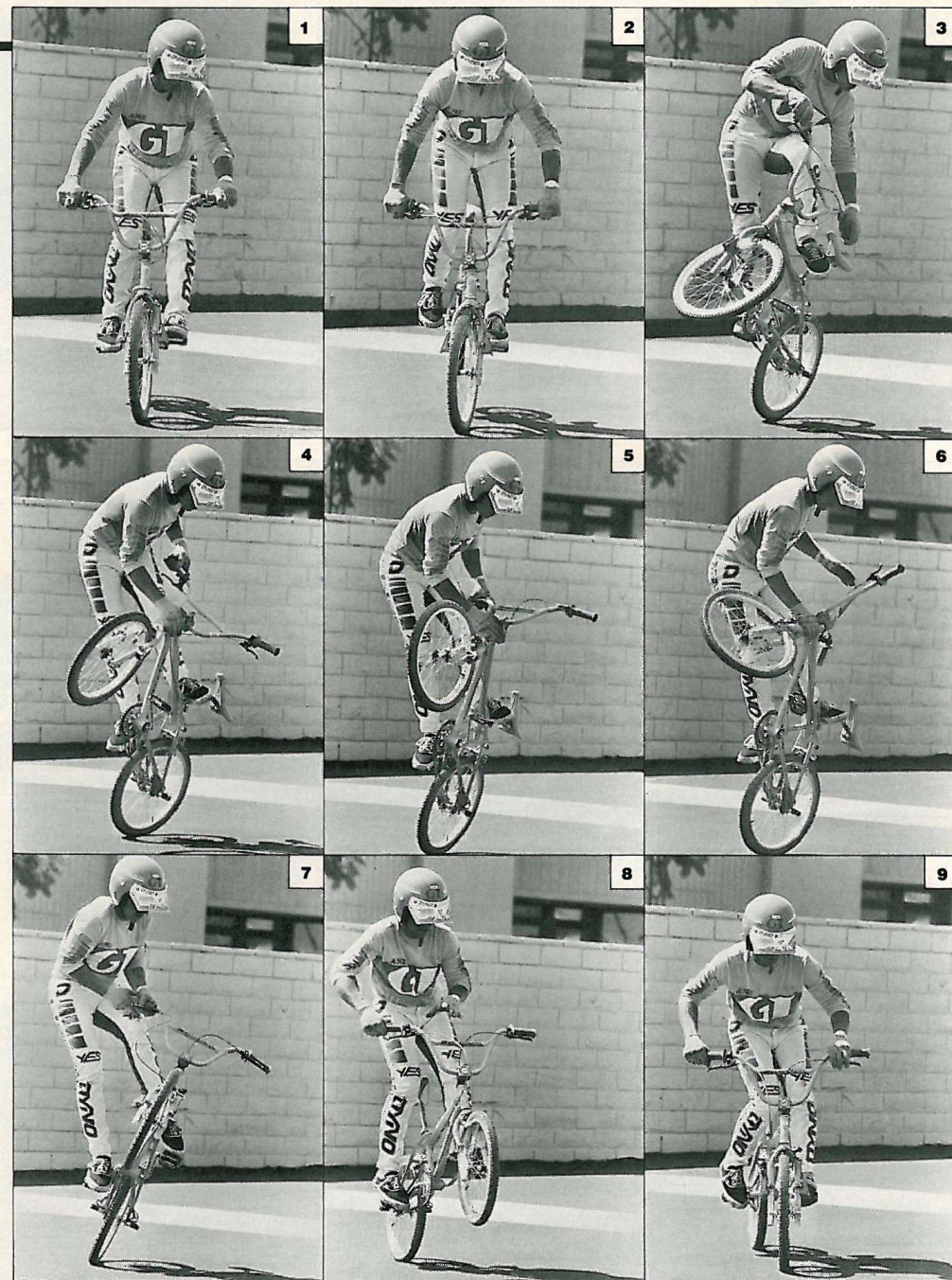
Yes, it's true. You won't get any extra credit for this work, but if you get all these moves wired, you'll be well on your way to a Master's Degree in Mechanics of Flatland Freestyle.

Prerequisites for these new courses include basic study in self-preservation—aka, full safety gear. We don't want you to suffer *shindentation*, or perform at-home brain surgery. Good luck, and keep yourself healthy.

Also, we can't let you leave without a quick pop quiz. Don't worry, you can't fail this one (unless you don't reply, that is). All we want to know is what kind of how-tos you wish to see. More flatland? Do you prefer air? Which will it be? Your responses will determine the ratio of flatland to air in future issues. Send replies to *BMX PLUS! Freestyle Pop Quiz*, P.O. Box 9502, Mission Hills, CA 91345-9502.

## ONE-HANDED SWITZERLAND

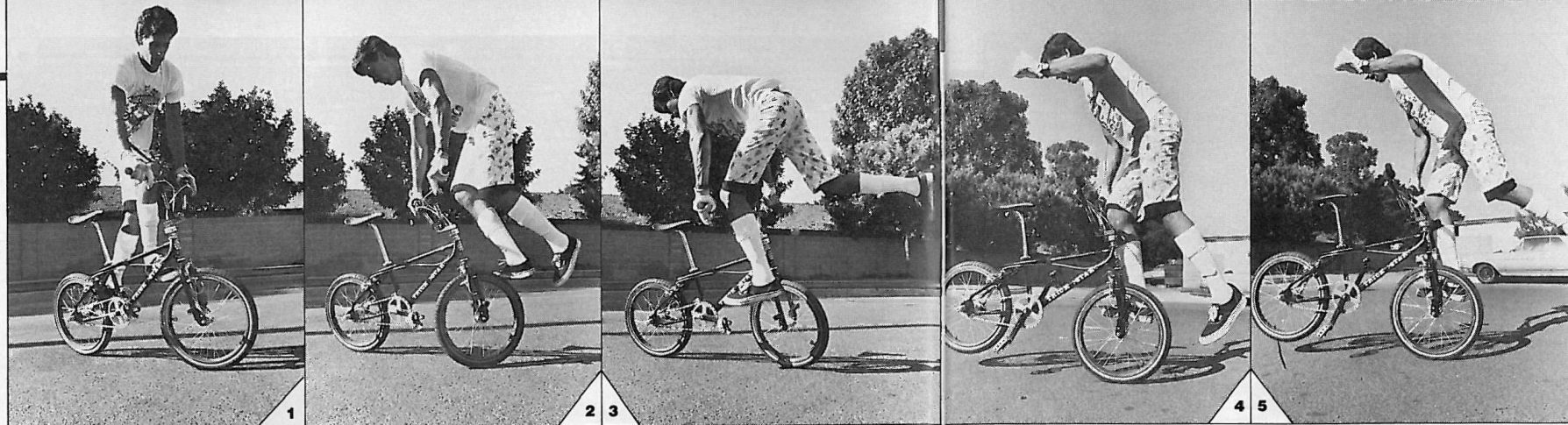
**SQUEAKER.** Rider: Billy Swoope. "You do front hops on your pegs and use one foot to propel yourself backwards while pumping your front brake to keep from ending. Once you're going good and steady, take one hand off, maintain your backward motion, and when you're ready, drop the back end down and ride away." Note how Billy uses his seat between his legs to help stabilize his bike.



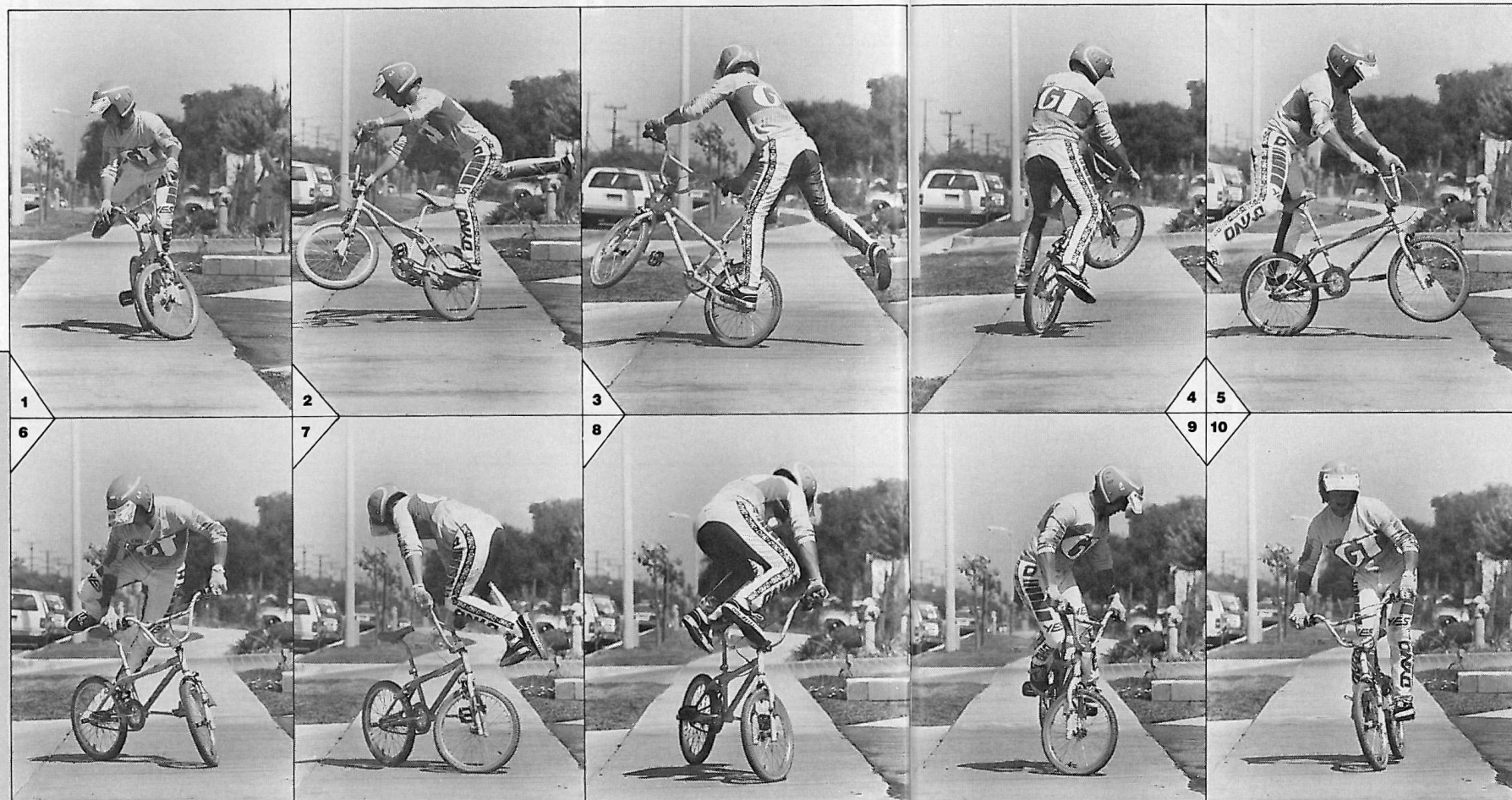
**BAR-SPIN POWER MOWER.** Rider: Jess Dyrenforth. This power mower variation definitely requires a coaster brake for successful completion. "This is basically a power mower, performed while standing on your rear coaster brake. Bring up the front end like a regular power mower, grab the head tube, and spin the bars through one rotation (Jess doesn't use a rotor, that's why he's limited his instruction to one rotation), grab the bars again and come out of it like a regular power mower."



# 10 FREESTYLE MOVES



**◀FORK WHEELIE.** Behind the controls: Woody Itson. "I always start by putting my left foot on top of the left crank arm, wedging my right foot in between the fork and the front tire. I spin a 180 like a half boomerang till I'm in the front of the bike, like a fire hydrant, except I go straight instead of turning. Now I push off the front tire with my right foot to keep my momentum going, and I land my right foot on the fork pegs. Once I get rolling backwards at a moderate pace, I lean back and lift up the front end of the bike. My left foot is hanging out away from my body—directly behind me. This guides me in the direction I'm going and counterbalances to keep the back end up in the air. Then I take my hand off. All my balance is in the handlebar and my right foot. My right hand on the bars and my right foot are what controls the whole bike. When I'm done, I put my hand and foot back in place and simply hop out."

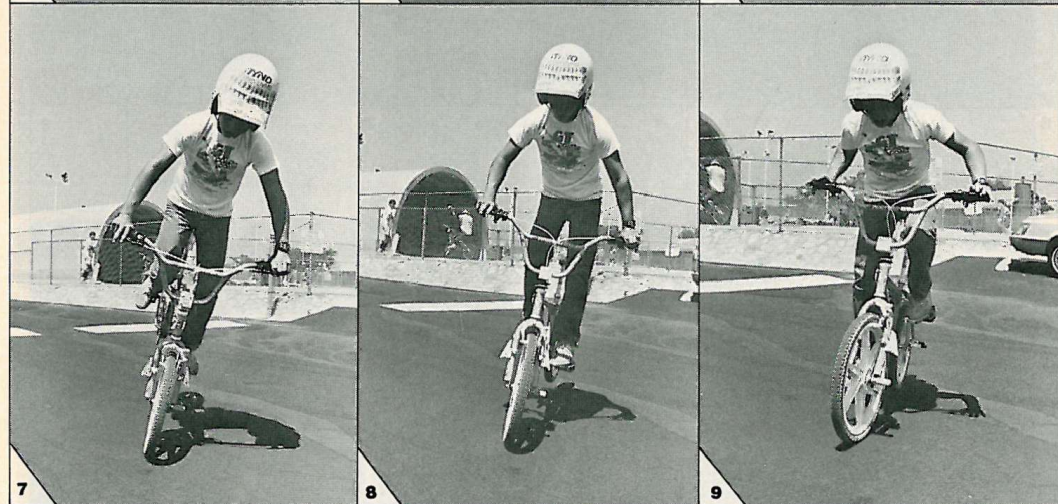
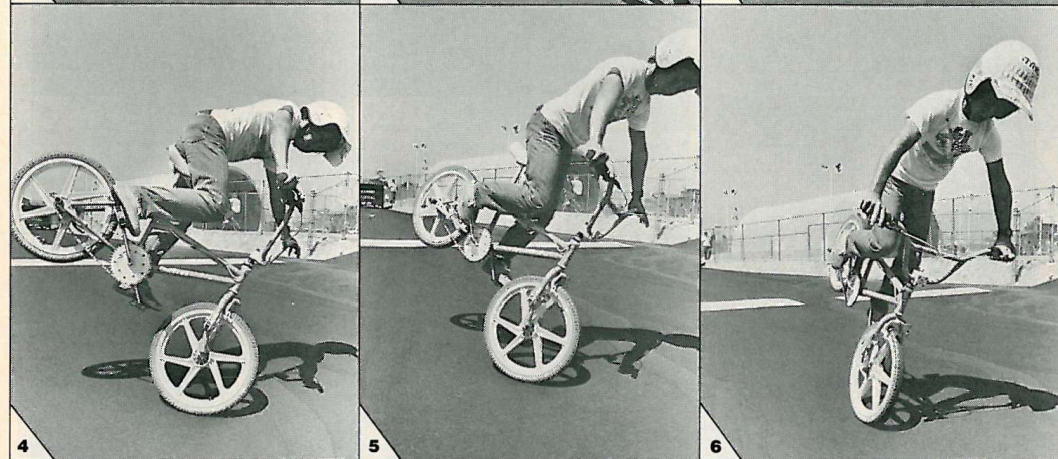
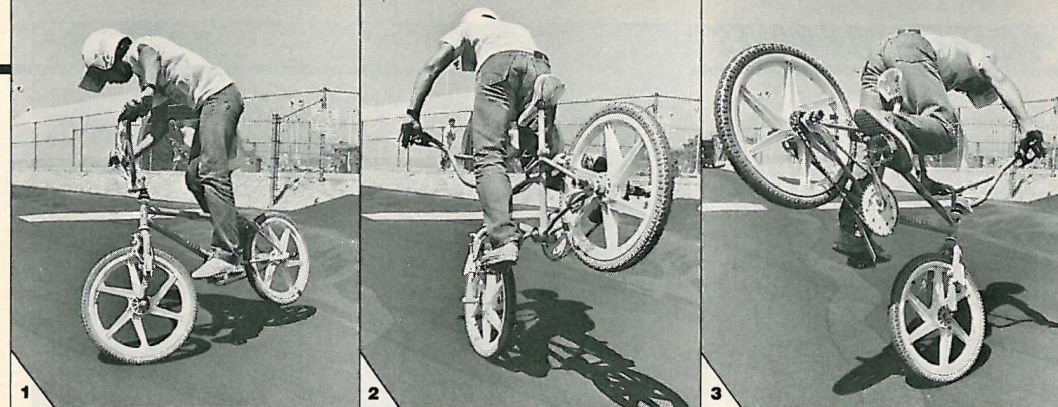
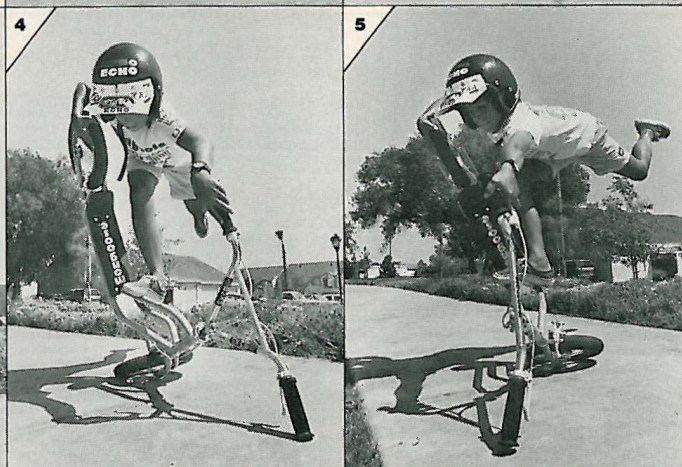
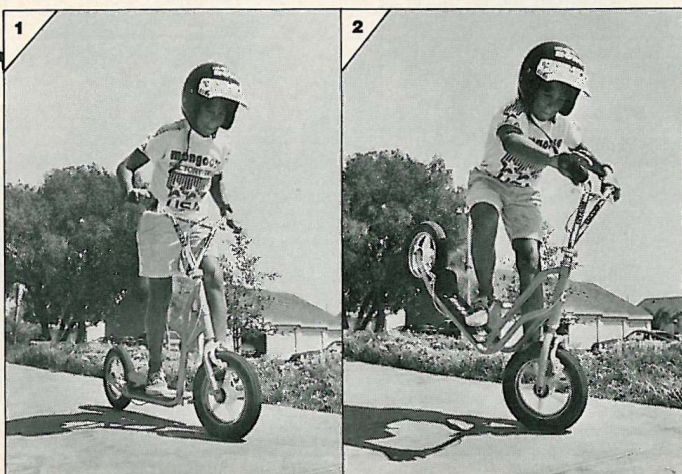


**◀SLAP-SPIN BOOMERANG.** In the saddle: Jeff Dyrenforth. Jess is GT's imported English skatepark and freestyle star who spent the summer touring America with his U.S. teammates. "In England they call rear standers 'slappers.' What I'm doing is a 360 spin on the slappers and then moving into a boomerang. Slowly ride forward, standing on your rear slappers. With your leg, pump yourself around into a 360. When you land, grab your front brake and pump your body around the front of the bike till you complete your boomerang, and then ride away."



# 10 FREESTYLE MOVES

**SCOOTER MIAMI HOPPER.** Teacher: Trevor Hernandez. "Ride forward at a slow speed and put your right foot on your front peg. Hit your front brake and do an endo. While you're going forward, turn your handlebars so the end of the bar will hit the cement, and reach with your right hand to grab the back end and hold it up. Also, lean back so you can hold your position when the bar reaches the ground. To pull out of it, hold your back tire, hold onto your brakes tightly, and with all your weight, lean back and pull up the front end."

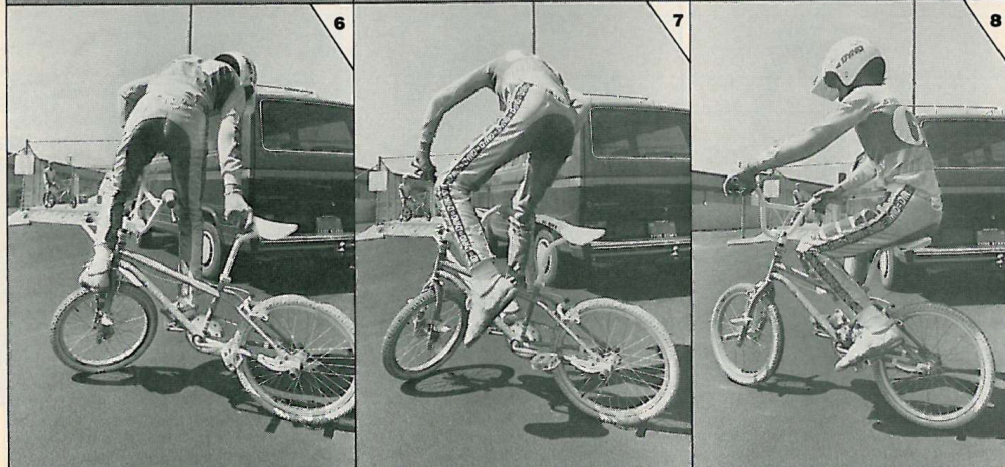
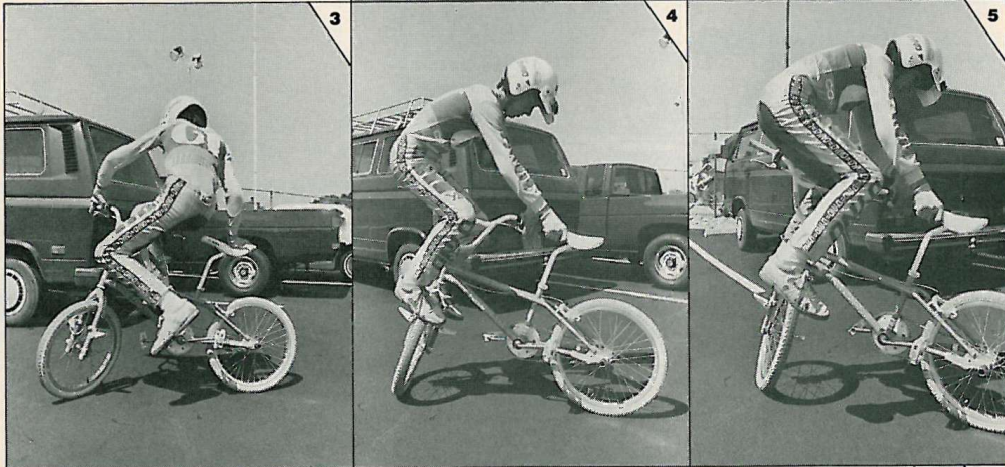
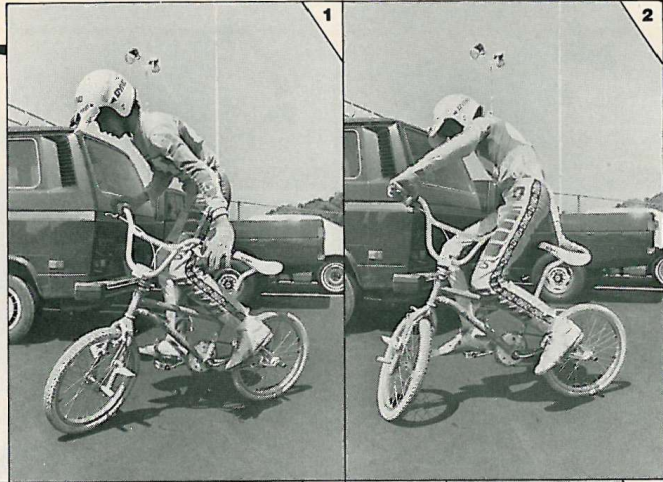


**G-TURN.** Rider: Brett Hernandez. "Get going at a moderate speed and do a front-wheel 180 using your front brake. When you get about halfway through the 180, lean slightly into the direction you're spinning, and ease off the front brake so you can continue carving backwards on the front wheel. Lock your arms, push down on the bars, and lean forward to push the front end around to help carry your momentum. When the back end comes down, do a roll-back out of it, or come to a stop and ride forward."

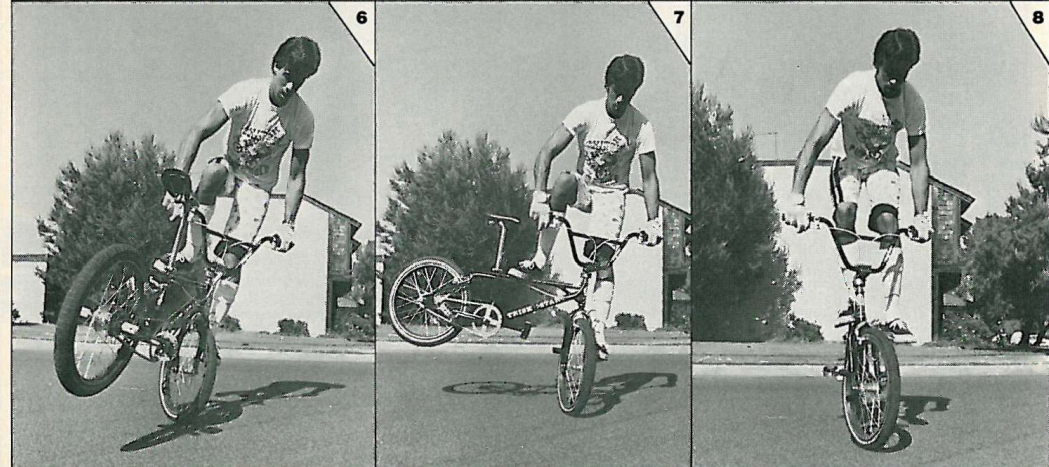
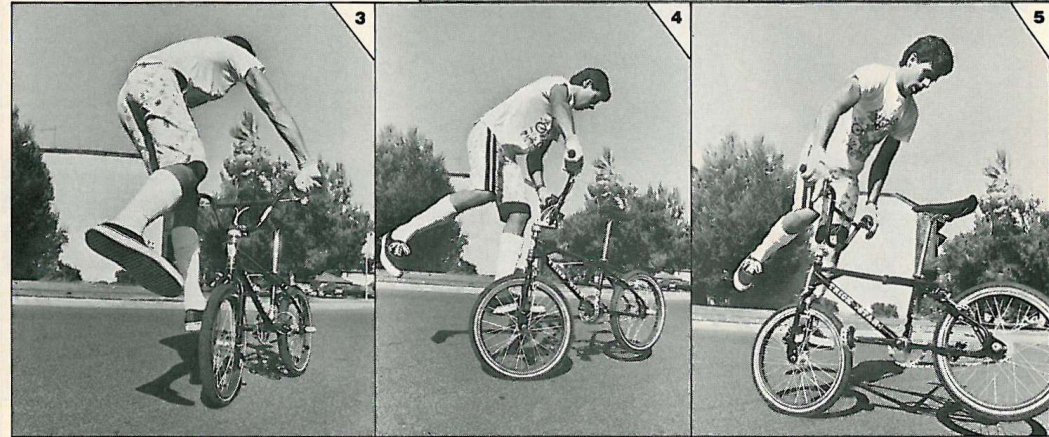


# 10 FREESTYLE MOVES

**FAKIE WHEELSTAND.** Demonstrated by: Billy Swoope. "You hit the brakes to stop yourself, turn your bars 90 degrees, lock your front brake and move forward so you're sitting on the crossbar. Put your left foot on the left side of the front tire and rotate yourself 180 degrees. When you get there, put your right foot on the right side of the tire. Then put your right foot on the frame and rotate on the bars until your right foot hits your right pedal. Get off the bars and ride away."

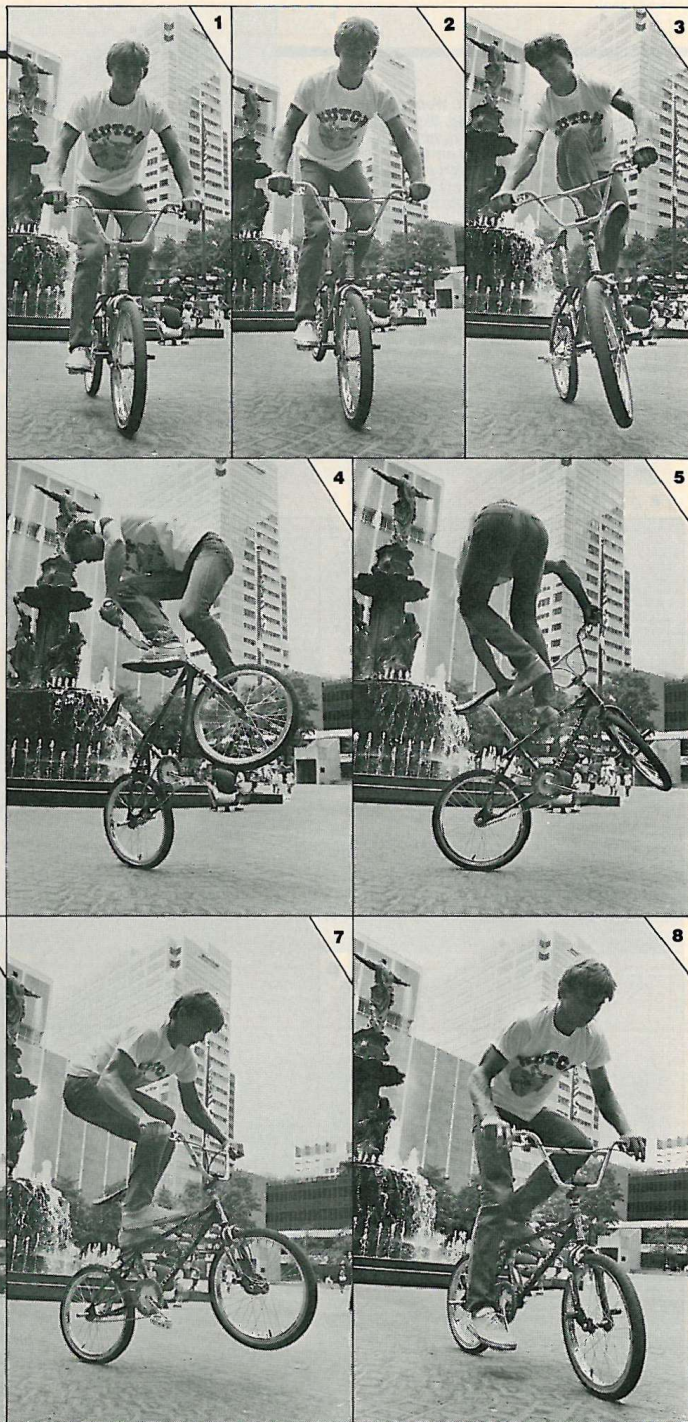


**FIRE HYDRANT.** Instructor: Woody Itson. "I roll forward at a moderate speed, like cruising, and step off the pedals, put my right foot on the left rear standing platform, and my left foot on the left front fork peg. Then I start to lean into the direction I'm going to spin my body. What I'm going to do here is spin a 180 on the forks while still rolling forward. I want to do this in a smooth motion, not hitting my brakes, or I'll ruin the whole trick. I push off with my right foot, keep my body close to the bars, and lean to the left. This swings my body into the 180. From this point, I continue leaning and start to roll in a carving circle. I lean my body weight back, which lifts the rear wheel off the ground. Because of the way I whipped my body, and the arc of the turn, the back end is going to be brought around and will pass the front end. From this point, once it gets within about three feet of my body, I tap the front brakes, and the rear end swings around and comes to a complete stop on the ground. Then I catch the frame with my foot, get back on and ride away."





**BACKSIDE JUMPOVER.** Ridin': Rick Mollerno. Trick creator: Joel Lamothe. "This is basically a walkaround, except instead of taking off from the bike, you take off from the pedal. Roll forward with your left crank set almost parallel to the seat tube—you want it up in the air. Hit the front brake and do a small front-brake endo. Rock back onto the rear wheel with your left foot on your coaster brake. Bring your right foot over the top tube—almost like a cancan, except it leads over the top of the head tube. Now jump with your left foot. At this time both feet will be up in the air, and you'll be over the front end of the bike, but your butt will be facing the head tube. Once you start the jump, make a full commitment, 'cause if you back off, you're gonna fall. You have to jump full-on. Also, while you're up around the front of the bike, have the back caliper locked dead-on. When you start coming down on the other side of the bike, your body's going to turn a 180 and land with both feet on the top tube. Your front end will come down. Put your feet back on the pedals and ride out of it."



## 10 FREESTYLE MOVES

**BACKWARD GUT LEVER.** Demo and instruction: Brett Hernandez. "Stand on the front pegs with the handlebars backwards, and roll forward. Reverse your hands from the normal way you grab your bars, stick your elbows into your chest, and lift up your feet. It's easier to balance if you first learn a forward gut lever. Try not to move your legs too much. Keep them straight and together so you don't fall over. Lean your weight over the seat." □





DROP IN TO...

# PLYWOOD PARADISE

Great ramps of the world

By the Staff of FSS

□ It's no secret that concrete skateparks are almost extinct. The rising cost of liability insurance has been the leading factor in the demise of these concrete playgrounds. With that in mind, skaters and freestylers alike are left out in the cold, so to speak. With no more skateparks to speak of (Del Mar, the Pipeline and Kona are existing public skateparks), something has to be done.

## RAMPANT RAMPS

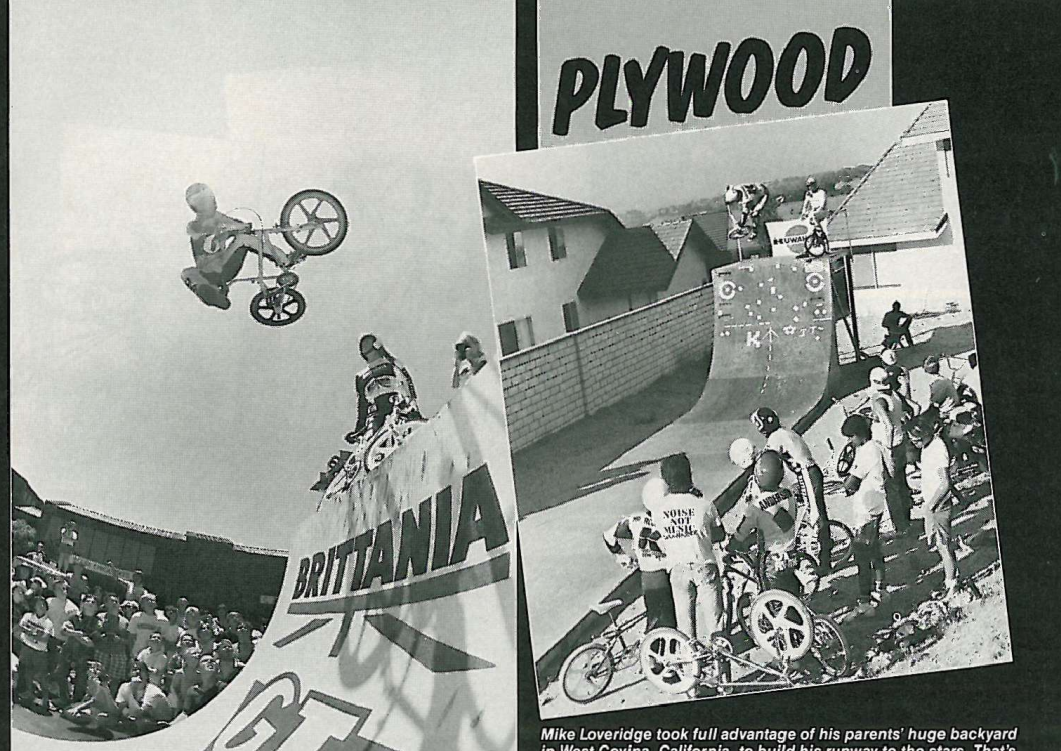
The youth of America needs vert to shred! Ramps were, and are, the most logical answer. Wooden quarterpipes and halfpipes are relatively inexpensive (compared with skateparks) and are reasonably easy to construct. They aren't, however, hassle free. People still get hurt on them (giving rise to liability problems), and neighbors and cities tend to complain about them—not to mention the fact that they rot and collapse with time. If you do construct a ramp and can maintain your cool with the local citizens, you're dialed in.

Ramps are alive and well all over the country, and new ones are being built every day. Skaters and freestyle dudes are ripping away as you read this, and they're having a blast! If you have the bucks to build one (and the guts to ride it), then have at it!

*Freestyle heaven! Tony Adams' ramp complex in Santee, California, is a dream come true. The local lumber company must like Tony a lot!*







# PLYWOOD

This is GT's travel ramp and one of GT's travelers: Jess Dyrenforth from England.

Mike Loveridge took full advantage of his parents' huge backyard in West Covina, California, to build his runway to the stars. That's Mike in the air. When you have a ramp this good, friends tend to congregate.

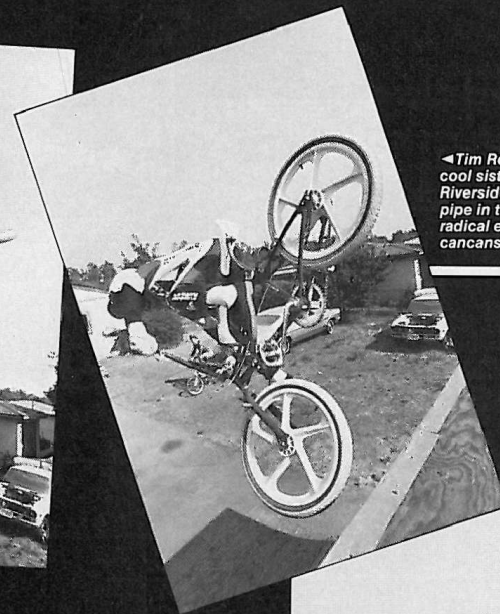


Marc McGlynn's ramp in Solana Beach is one of the best-constructed and smoothest ramps on the SoCal scene. Here, Marc's Haro teammate Jon Peterson dangles a leg above this fine wooden structure.

◀Mike Loveridge's ramp in West Covina is one hot place to ride in the summer. Here Todd Anderson blasts a top-sid cancan during an afternoon session.



# PLYWOOD



◀Tim Rogers is lucky. He has a cool sister and brother-in-law in Riverside who let him have a half-pipe in their backyard. Tim is radical enough to do no-footed cans on it.

Todd Anderson drove about 100 miles (one way) just to try out the Loveridge ramp this day. Was it worth it? Oh yeah! ▼

Dave Voelker may be the shyest ramp rider in Southern California, but he can rip with the best of them. Footplant insanity at the Adams' complex. ►



Mike Dominguez drops a foot at Brian Blyther's ramp in Ontario, California, circa 1984. This ramp used to be state of the art, but now nobody even wants to bother with it.







Ramp by Randazzo and friends. Frenzied lookback by Todd Anderson. They use this handy pole to measure height above the coping, but it doesn't do any good when you fly above it—Todd Anderson has done just that. Guess it's time to add a few feet to the pole.



Todd Anderson is rad. And smooth. And sponsored by Red Line. Todd Anderson is gifted.



A healthy launch pad, lots of flat bottom, nearly perfect transitions and a foot of vert. That's what you might call a perfect ramp. Doug Randazzo's fits those specs to a T.



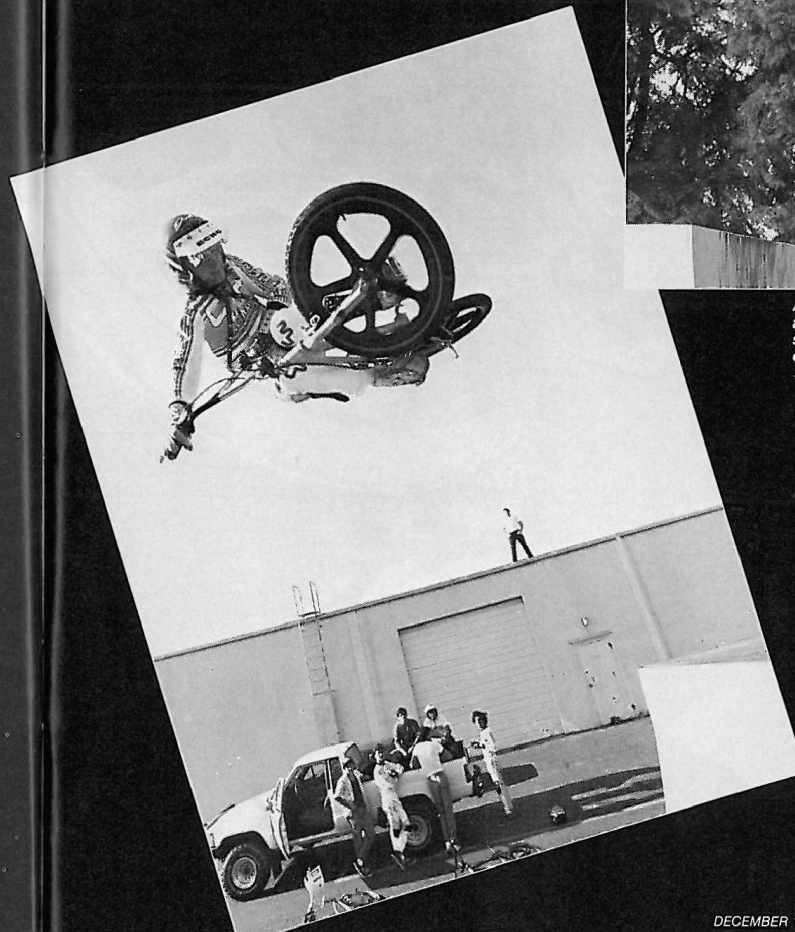
Full-factory Mongoose rider, part-time BMX PLUS! tester and Camarillo ramp local: Ladies and gentlemen, it's Steve Broderson! Give him a hand—he's one rad cowboy.



# PLYWOOD



Although Dino DeLuca spends half his time away from home touring for Dyno/GT, he still likes to get rad at home. Here he rips on Brian Scura's ramp at GT.

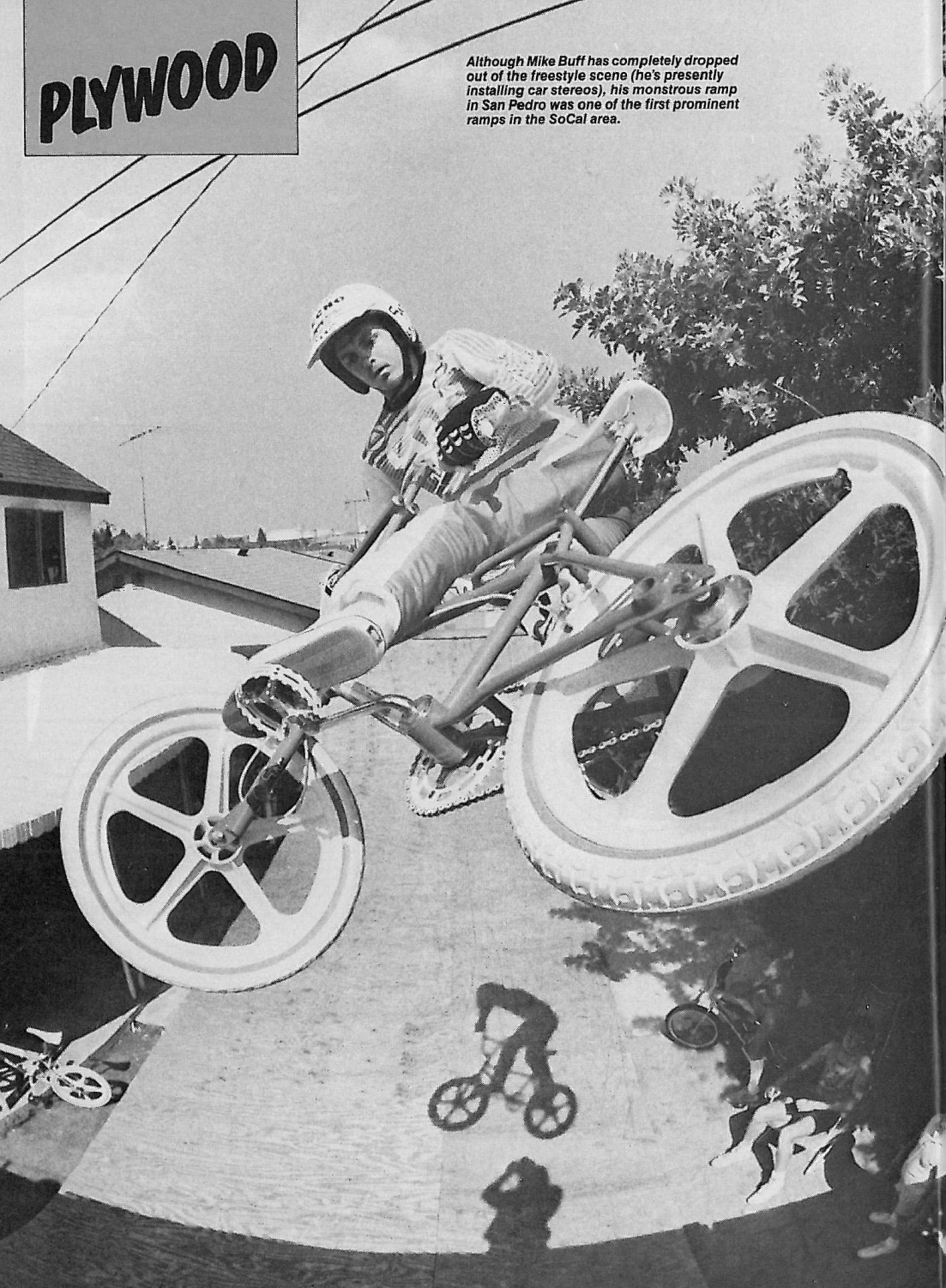


◀CW's office in Placentia, California, doubles as a practice area (with the aid of a quarterpipe), and as a hangout for Dizz, Ceppie, McGoo and the rest of the team. Here Dizz maximizes his practice time.

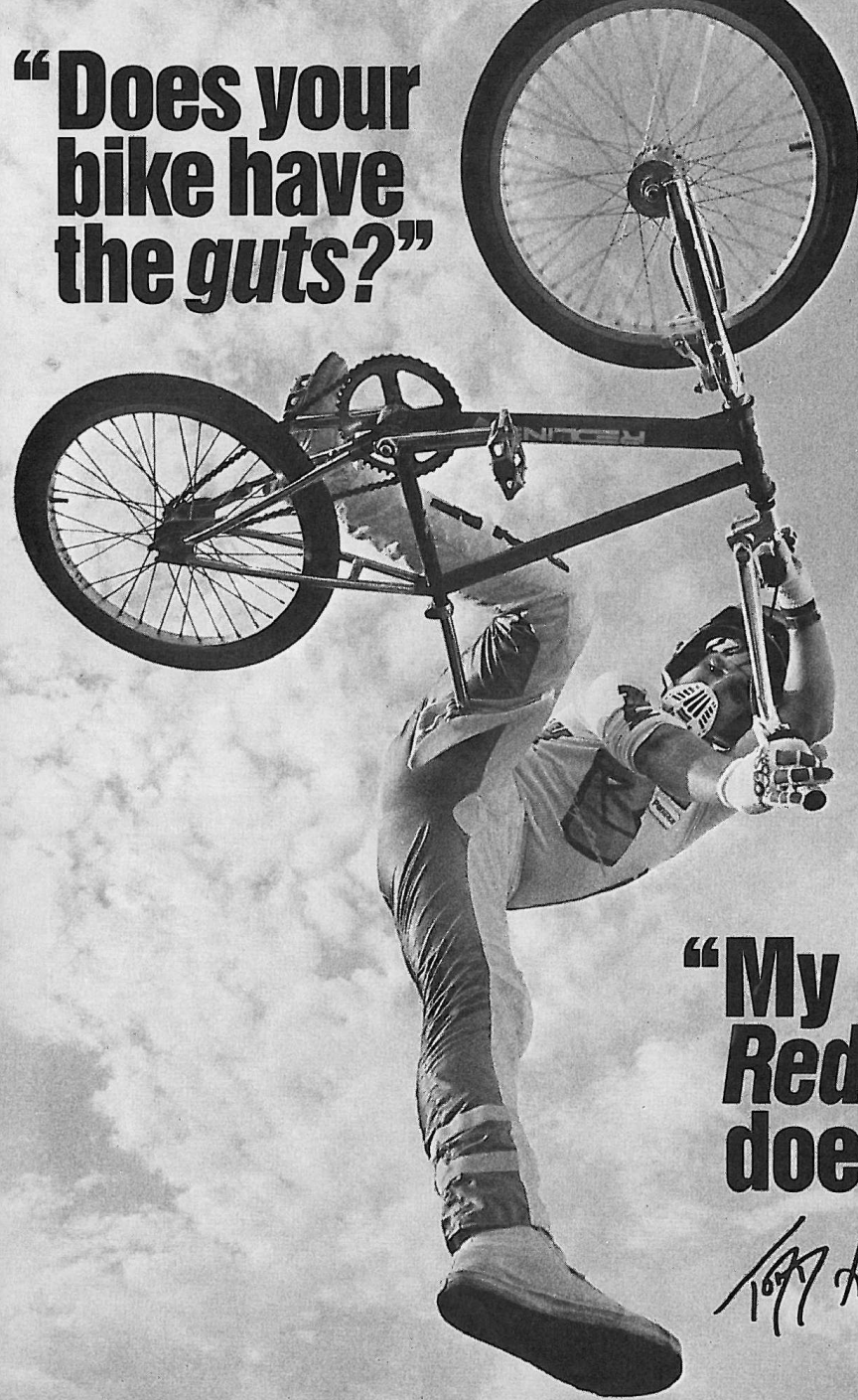


# PLYWOOD

Although Mike Buff has completely dropped out of the freestyle scene (he's presently installing car stereos), his monstrous ramp in San Pedro was one of the first prominent ramps in the SoCal area.



## "Does your bike have the guts?"



## "My Red Line does."

*Rocky Rendon*

**REDLINE**

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# PLYWOOD



Doug Randazzo's ramp in Camarillo, California, is not exactly a carpenter's dream come true, but it does serve as the practice grounds for some of the raddest guys around. Besides Doug, Todd Anderson, Dino DeLuca and Steve Broderson are all full-time locals.



GT has at least three ramps we know of: One stays at the factory in Huntington Beach, and two are used for shows. Who knows which one this is? All we know is that Fridie Fiola's ragin' it.



Tony Adams and the lookback of doom. Tony's plywood playground in Santee, California, is one of the best we've ever seen.



Diamond Back, as of yet, doesn't have a ramp for Mike Dominguez to ride, so he goes elsewhere. Cancan at Kuwahara's team ramp in Compton. □

# Tangle-Free TRICKERY

## ROTOR 45 STEM

At ACS we have become known for our consistently new and innovative products. The Rotor 45 Stem is no exception. Designed and developed for use with the ACS Rotor, the Rotor 45 Stem is a most awesome unit with more than just a standard built-in Pott's Mod. Features include an adjustable cable stop that puts the rear brake cable

directly over the Rotor anchor bolt, a stylish high strength-to-weight ratio stem design that offers an extra reach 45 millimeter handlebar extension in a super tough forged aluminum alloy head, and an aircraft quality chromoly shaft. The Rotor 45 Stem is essential equipment for every freestyler in the know.

## R.L. OSBORN

"Whether it's hectic ramp riding or basic street stylin' I use the ACS Rotor System because it makes a difference. Not only are the possibilities for new tricks mind boggling, there is a real advantage in not having to sweat the details like how to exit a trick so my rear brake cable survives. Take it from me, you're into pushing the limits of traditional freestyling and setting pace for others to follow, the ACS Rotor System definitely makes easier."

## WOODY ITSON

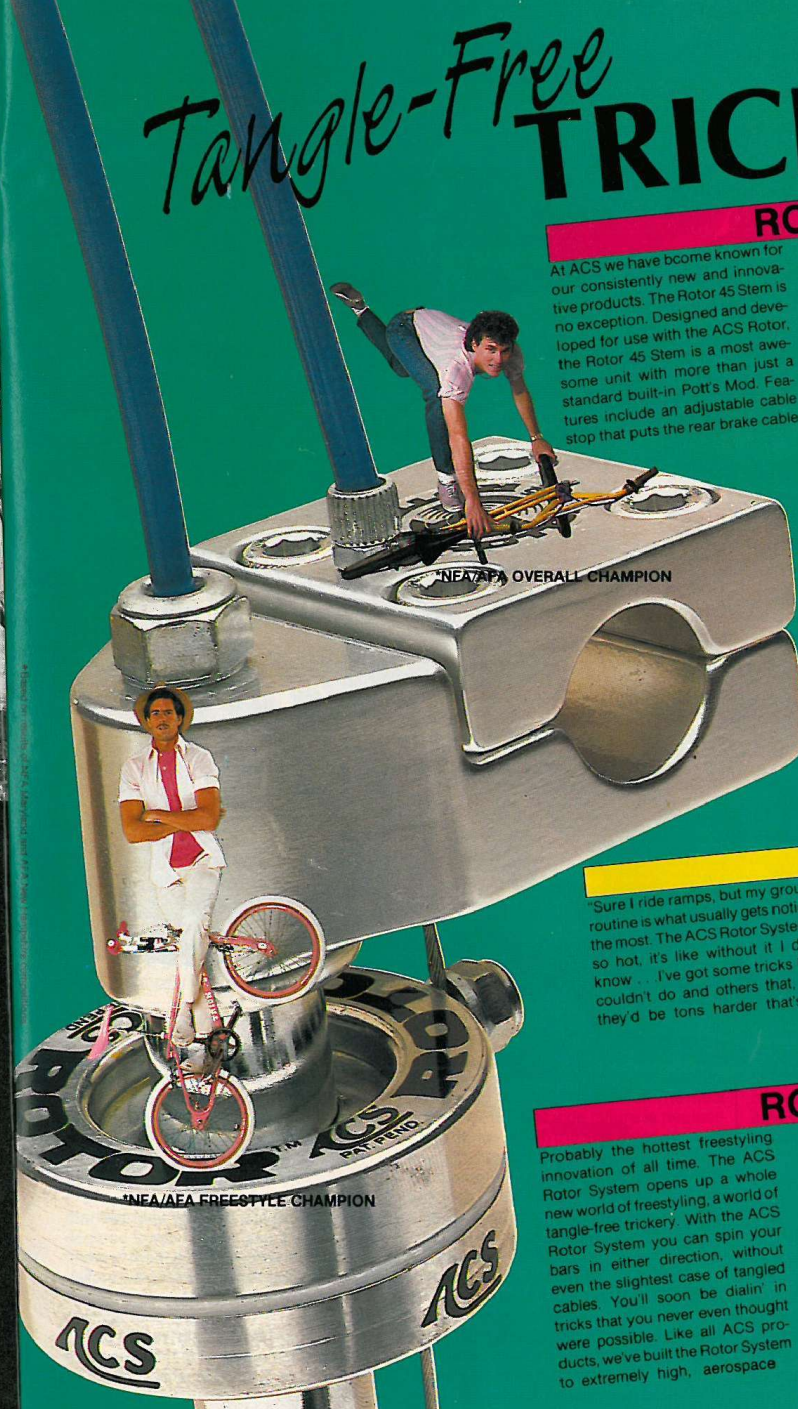
"Sure I ride ramps, but my ground routine is what usually gets noticed the most. The ACS Rotor System is so hot, it's like without it I don't know... I've got some tricks I flat couldn't do and others that, well they'd be tons harder that's for

sure. No matter what level or kind of freestyling you do I'd strongly suggest you run an ACS Rotor System. You'll discover how good you really are, and when you feel like thanking me don't send flowers, just send money."

## ROTOR SYSTEM

Probably the hottest freestyling innovation of all time. The ACS Rotor System opens up a whole new world of freestyling, a world of tangle-free trickery. With the ACS Rotor System you can spin your bars in either direction, without even the slightest case of tangled cables. You'll soon be dialin' in tricks that you never even thought were possible. Like all ACS products, we've built the Rotor System to extremely high, aerospace

type standards so your stylin' time won't become down time. The ACS Rotor System now features the exclusive ACS Ball Cup rear brake cable stop plus the hardware to fit most any BMX or Freestyle stem. However, if you're a no compromise kind of guy, we suggest you run the Rotor System with our specially designed Rotor 45 Stem to discover the full advantage of ACS innovation.





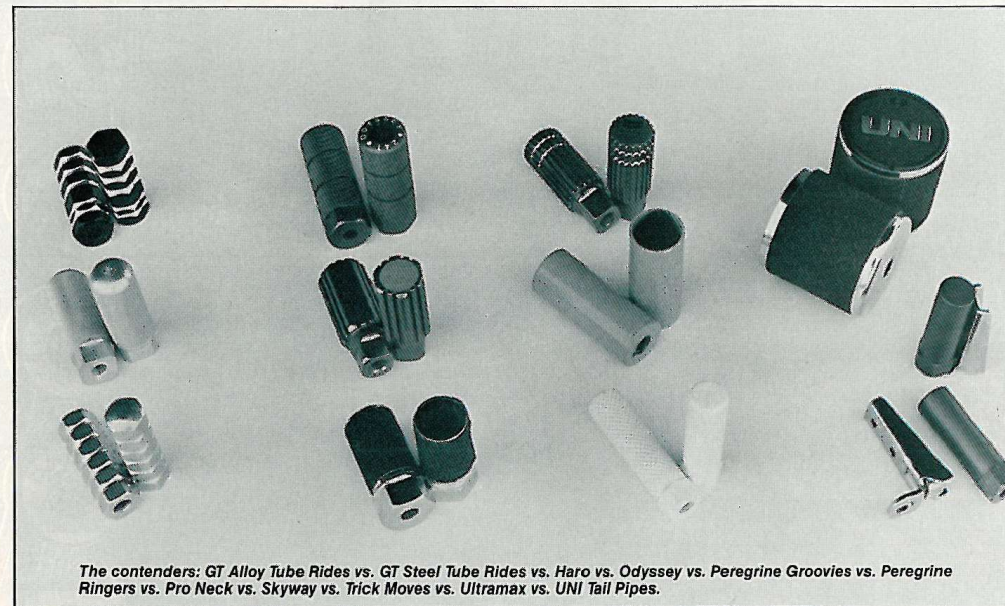


# AXLE EXTENDERS

SHOOTOUT

Rating the good, the bad & the ugly

By the Staff of FSS



The contenders: GT Alloy Tube Rides vs. GT Steel Tube Rides vs. Haro vs. Odyssey vs. Peregrine Groovies vs. Peregrine Ringers vs. Pro Neck vs. Skyway vs. Trick Moves vs. Ultramax vs. UNI Tail Pipes.

□ Axle extenders are the least expensive but most useful bolt-on items you can buy for freestyle. At a cost of less than \$20 for two sets of axle pegs, even the most mild-mannered street or race bike can become a super-styler.

There are so many axle pegs on the market today, we at *Freestyle Spectacular* decided it was time to take a look at some of them and see how they compare. Before we get into the evaluation of these freestyle goodies, we'd like to pass on a few tips for using them.

The biggest disadvantage of using axle extenders is that if you don't install them properly, it's like playing Russian roulette

◀Even when a bike comes with platforms, a good pair of pegs like Skyway's will open up possibilities that wouldn't exist without them.

with your bike—you can bend an axle in five minutes if you're not careful. The most common cause of axle failure is neglecting to tighten down the axle extender hard enough. Net result—a bent axle! To avoid such problems, be sure that at least one-half inch of axle is covered and that the extender is firmly wrenched down, using a large washer to ensure full contact with the frame (or fork).

A factor that has added to axle problems in the past is the fact that the stock axles on many bikes are made of mild steel. Check with your local bike shop to get dialed in on some chromoly axles if your stock ones start to bend. Enough lecturing, here's the lowdown on the ace axle pegs we tested.

## SKYWAY AXLE EXTENDERS

Skyway was one of the first companies

to produce axle extenders. Constructed of aluminum, they are available in two axle sizes—24 and 26 threads per inch (as are all threaded pegs). The unique extruded six-sided stock is machined down to provide a good standing surface. A class act from the Tuff Wheel team!

## UNI TAIL PIPES

UNI Tail Pipes are by far the largest axle extenders in our group. In fact, they're more than twice the diameter of any of the others in our shootout. The increased surface area provides a stable standing surface. Installing the Tail Pipes is relatively easy—simply take off your axle nuts, remove your wheel, install the Tail Pipes as shown in the directions, replace the axle nuts, and use a socket wrench to tighten down the nuts. First of all, with certain frames, the Tail



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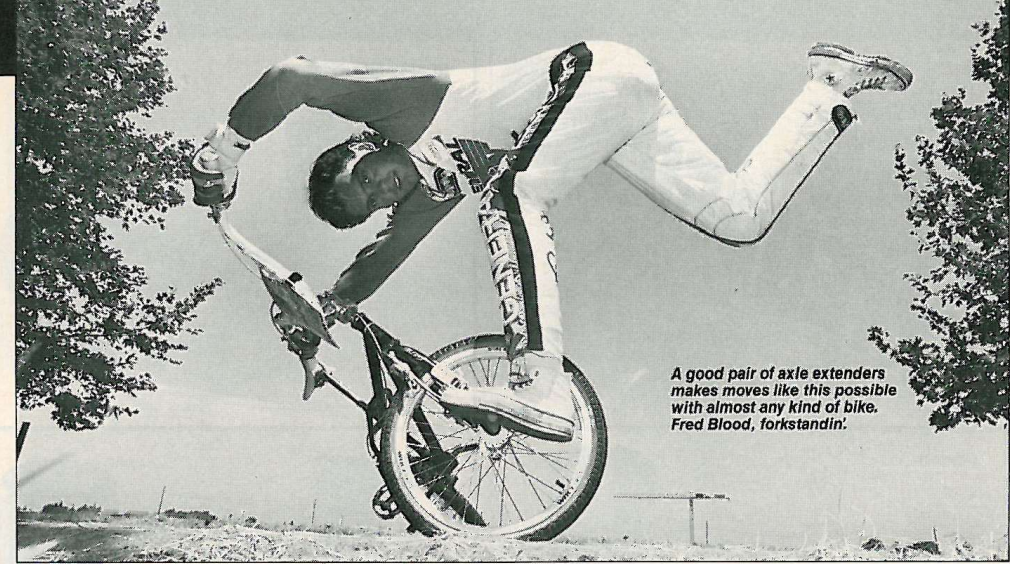
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A good pair of axle extenders makes moves like this possible with almost any kind of bike. Fred Blood, forkstandin'.

## AXLE EXTENDERS

Pipes can limit chain adjustment. Secondly, at 19.5 ounces, they are more than twice the weight of any other item in our shootout. The best aspect about the design is that the large area contacting the frame minimizes the risk of axle bending. We rate the Tail Pipes as the axle extenders least likely to tweak your axle.

### GT TUBE RIDES

GT Tube Rides are the only steel screw-

out on pegs in the shootout. The use of a one-inch-by-one-half-inch base nut with a steel tube welded on provides a very comfortable peg, and, at the same time, the large base nut is about the best friend a poor defenseless axle has. The increased surface area where the nut contacts the dropout is the key to the Tube Ride's success. These units are highly unlikely to tweak an axle or strip

out. The "TRs" come complete with grip tape, so there's no post-purchase diallin'-in necessary.

### GT ALLOY EXTENDERS

GT Alloy Extenders offer near-perfect length and a large, comfortable diameter. Another nice touch about the design is that the end of the knurled aluminum peg is rounded off, eliminating sharp edges. The cross-cut, knurled foot area gives

### AXLE EXTENDERS: SPECIFICATIONS

	MATERIAL	LENGTH (In Inches)	DIAMETER (In Inches)	WEIGHT (In ounces)	APPROX. RETAIL COST
GT ALLOY TUBE RIDES	Aluminum	2-5/8	1	5-1/2	\$11.95
GT STEEL TUBE RIDES	Steel	2-3/8	1	8	7.95
HARO	Aluminum	2-3/8	1	4-3/4	9.95
ODYSSEY	Aluminum	3	1	2-3/4	N/A
PEREGRINE GROOVY	Aluminum	2-1/2	1-1/8	5-1/8	9.00
PEREGRINE RINGER	Aluminum	2-3/8	7/8	4	6.00
PRO NECK	Aluminum	3	3/4	3-3/4	8.95
SKYWAY	Aluminum	2-1/2	3/4	3-1/2	9.95
TRICK MOVES	Alum./Steel	2-1/2	3/4	6-3/4	5.95
ULTRAMAX	Steel	2-3/4	1-1/8	6-1/4	14.95
UNI TAIL PIPES	Steel	2-1/2	2-3/8	19-1/2	20.00

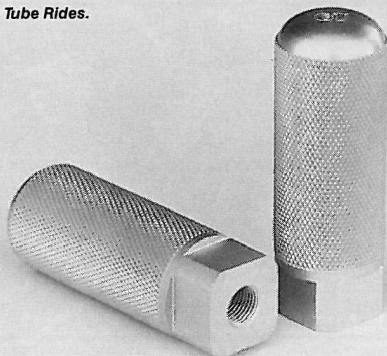
### AXLE EXTENDERS: RATINGS

	AXLE PROTECTION	COMFORT	TRACTION	APPEARANCE	OVERALL RATING
GT ALLOY TUBE RIDES	Very good	Very good	Excellent	Excellent	Very good
GT STEEL TUBE RIDES	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Fair	Very good
HARO	Good	Very good	Good	Very good	Good
ODYSSEY	Very good	Excellent	Very good	Very good	Very good
PEREGRINE GROOVY	Good	Good	Fair	Good	Good
PEREGRINE RINGER	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
PRO NECK	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
SKYWAY	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
TRICK MOVES	Very good	Fair	Poor	Poor	Fair
ULTRAMAX	Very good	Very good	Fair	Fair	Good
UNI TAIL PIPES	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Fair	Good

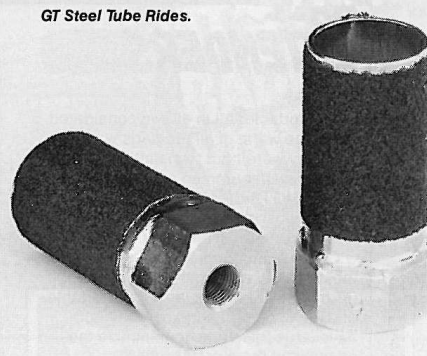


# AXLE EXTENDERS

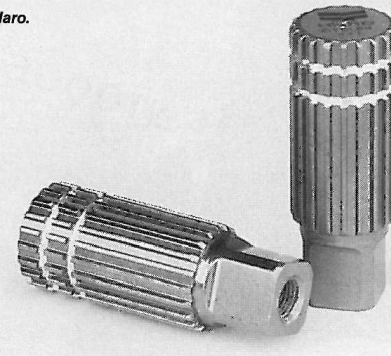
GT Alloy Tube Rides.



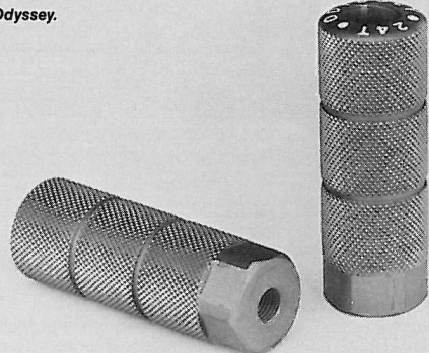
GT Steel Tube Rides.



Haro.



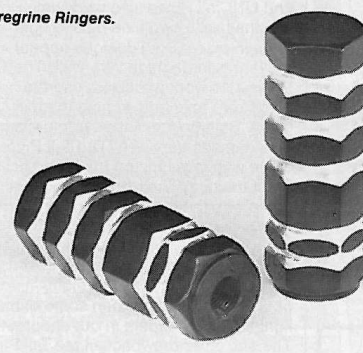
Odyssey.



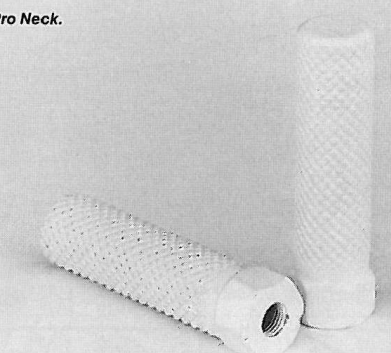
Peregrine Groovies.



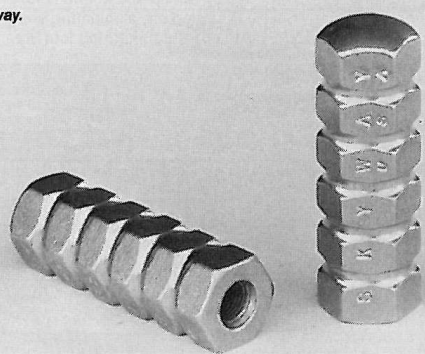
Peregrine Ringers.



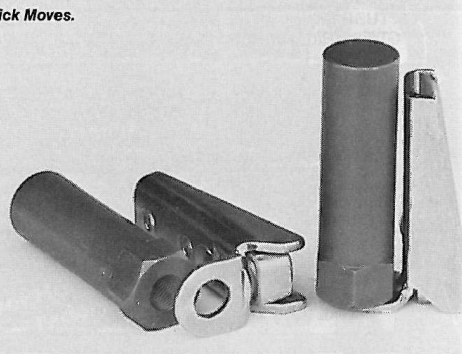
Pro Neck.



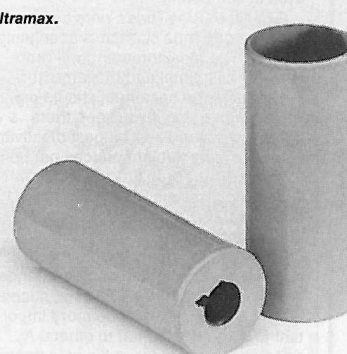
Skyway.



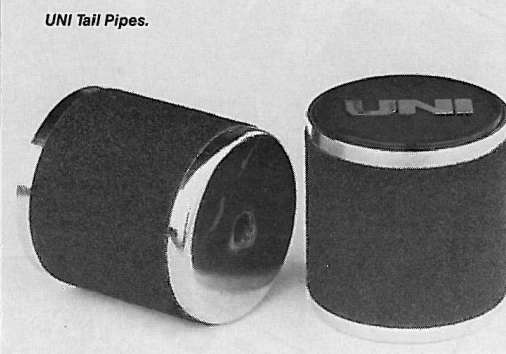
Trick Moves.



Ultramax.



UNI Tail Pipes.



good traction without the need for grip tape. As for appearance, these are probably the best-looking axle extenders available.

## HARO AXLE EXTENDERS

Haro axle extenders use a single, deep-cut, straight-knurl pattern. This type of pattern provides very good traction for your feet without the use of grip tape. Smaller feet will enjoy these pegs. As is typical of Haro products, the looks are great, too.

## TRICK MOVES

Trick Moves' axle extenders approach the problem of axle bending in a different way. Included with the extenders are a pair of support brackets that bolt on under the pegs to provide support. They work okay, but none of our riders were really crazy about them. Traction was bad, and the sharp edges on the ends of the pegs were judged uncomfortable.

## PEREGRINE RINGER

What has six sides, is made of alumi-

num and comes in many colors? The Peregrine Ringer! The peg is anodized and then machined to provide a two-color appearance. The short peg design may be an advantage for the rider with small feet. The design is very similar to Skyway's Axle Extenders.

## PEREGRINE GROOVY

Peregrine Groovy axle extenders use a six-sided aluminum design that is deep-grooved lengthwise for traction. At 2-1/2 inches, the Peregrines are a bit

short for large-footed riders. Unfortunately, the threads on our sample pair stripped out during testing. This may have been due to the fact that our sample pair had a 26-thread-per-inch design. None of the other aluminum pegs stripped out during our evaluations, but they all had 24-tpi patterns.

## ULTRAMAX

Ultramax uses an approach similar to UNI's for fastening the axle extender to the bike. By using the existing wheel nuts,

Ultramax eliminates the possibility of accidentally buying pegs with the wrong threads. Longer and wider than most of our samples, the Ultramax pegs are very comfortable. There are, however, two minor shortcomings: one, they require an extended socket wrench for installation, and two, the grip tape provided with them is slippery!

## ODYSSEY KNURLED

The Odyssey Knurled extenders are similar to the GT Alloy Extenders in size

and construction. They're long and large and offer very comfortable footing. They're also very good looking.

## PRO NECK

Pro Neck's axle pegs are knurled aluminum. They were the second skinniest of all our samples. At three inches in length, however, they tie with the Odyssey's as the longest pegs in the shootout. The drawback to the Pro Neck's skinniness is that your foot tends to wrap around the peg, which can be very



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## AXLE EXTENDERS

uncomfortable. All in all, we considered these the worst of all the pegs we tested. They were hard to install, and the threads were gummed up with paint. **SUMMING IT UP**

All the pegs we tried worked. Some, however, are real standouts.

Of the aluminum extenders, we were most impressed with the Odyssey and GT models. They are large, comfortable and look good. In addition, they both have large base nuts to minimize the chances of the axles bending.

The steel Ultramax Freestyle Pegs and UNI Tail Pipes also work well. Both use the bike's own axle nuts to hold them in place. Both designs appear to prevent axle damage very well. The Tail Pipes also work well. Both use the bike's own axle nuts to hold them in place. Both designs appear to prevent axle damage very well. The Tail Pipes come with grip tape on them and have great traction. The Ultramax models come with the lamest imitation of grip tape we've ever seen. Put on some good grip tape, and the traction will be very good or excellent. The biggest drawback of the UNIs is their weight—over a pound more per pair than some of the lighter axle extenders in our shootout. The one other drawback of the Tail Pipes is that they look goofy, at least in the eyes of our testers.

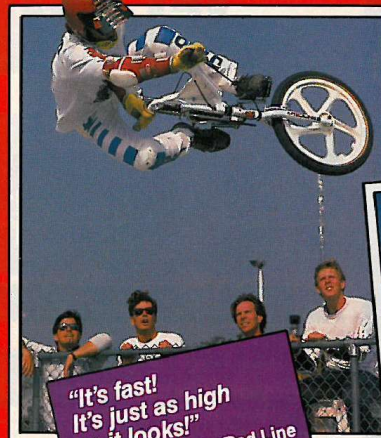
GT's steel Tube Rides were our favorites. The grip tape surface is absolutely non-slip. The steel threading will probably last a lifetime, and the large surface area of the base nuts should prevent axle bending if you keep them tightened down. Their biggest disadvantages are weight (eight ounces per pair) and looks (they aren't too stylish looking), but our testers were willing to overlook those drawbacks in view of the advantages.

There are too many factors involved to say that any one model of axle extender is the best for all riders. Factors, such as weight and length, may be more important to some riders than to others. A rider who wants to leave his axle pegs on while doing aerials may find weight to be the most important consideration for him. A rider who needs short axle pegs for doing Miami hoppers may not want any of the longer pegs we generally preferred.

Some riders may find that bolt-on frame platforms and folding fork pegs will suit their needs better than axle pegs for the tricks they have in mind. Consider our charts and evaluations as a guide. Your opinions could differ from our own. We can't make the best choice for you. □

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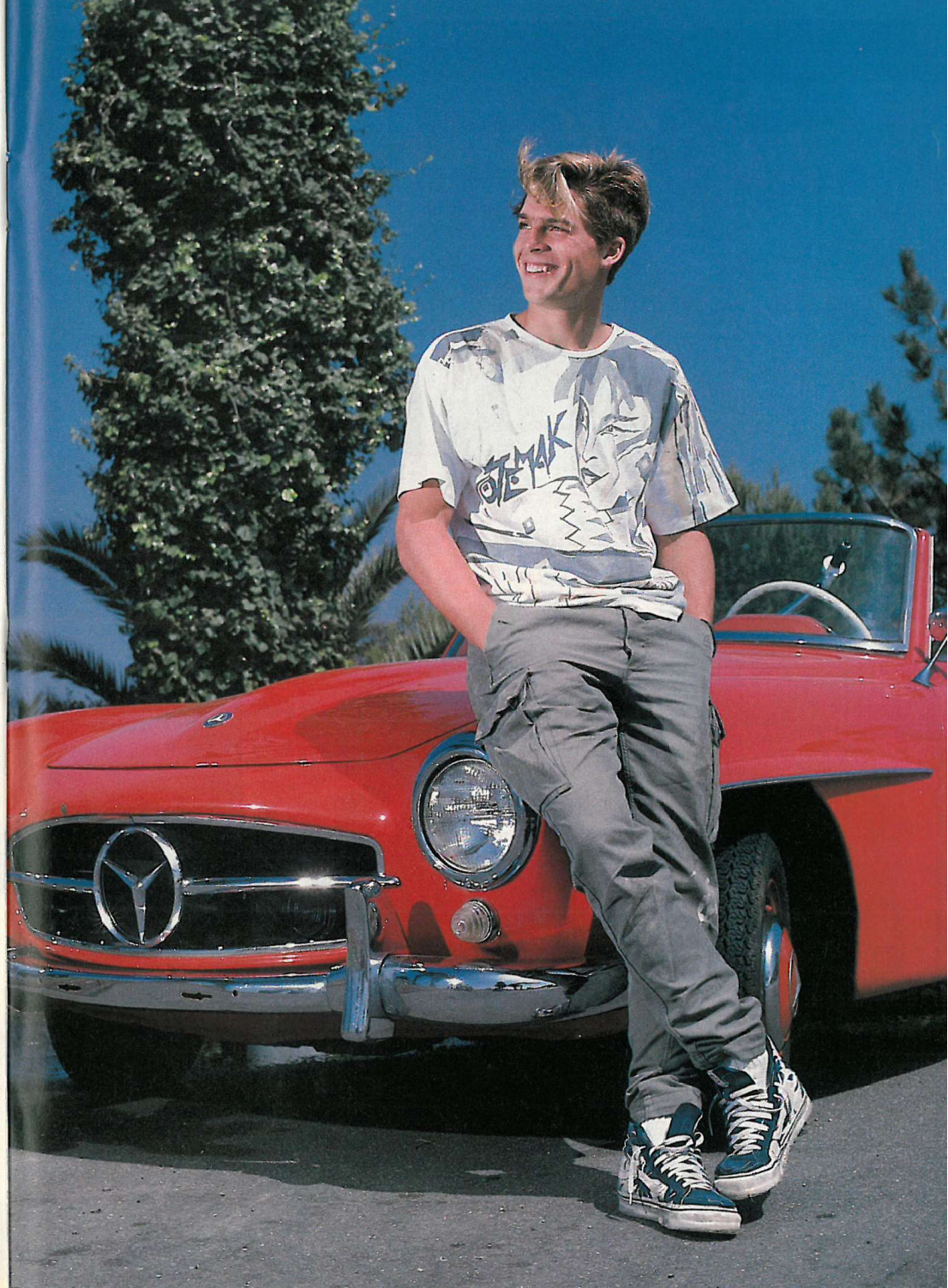
# WAY-OUT WARDROBES

The oldest obsession  
By Mike "It's a fashion statement" Carruth

Ron Wilkerson kicks in with a little ground work in Corona Del Mar. He's wearing a Quick-silver tank top and shorts, Haro knee pads and the ever-popular Vans high-top shoes.

□ I'll bet you expected this article to start with something witty and wordy about fashion. Well, didn't you? Fact is, there's nothing witty or wonderful to say about fashion that hasn't already been said a million times by GQ, Elle, Vogue, or whatever you read to keep yourself dialed. Let's face it, though, to us in the fast-paced, ever-changing world of freestyle, a stylish image is almost as important as blasting the highest air in the neighborhood. Keeping up to date on all the newest trends in fashion is mission impossible.

Wilkerson was cruisin' Newport Beach the day of our photo session. Ron is such a style monger we had to capture him in his kicked-back, I'm-glad-to-be-home-from-tour outfit by Moustache. ▶





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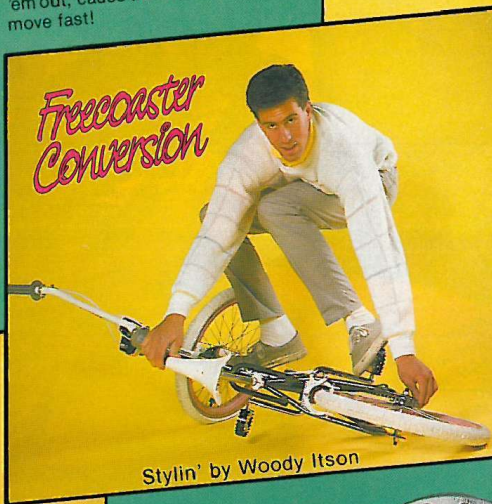
THIS is Hot! We are talkin' MAJOR FREESTYLE INNOVATION here. The ACS FREECOASTER, an awesome combination of both Coaster Brake and Freewheel into one primo little unit. Gone are the days of bein' stuck spectatin' instead of doin', because a certain trick required a coaster brake and you JUST equipped your trickster with a freewheel. With an ACS FREECOASTER equipped scooter you'll discover a world of limitless trickery. Whether it's a freewheel for aggro ramp work or a coaster brake for intense flatland routines the ACS FREECOASTER can be either one, in a matter of seconds! In fact, it's so easy to make the conversion, you can do it in the middle of many basic ground tricks. So about now we figure you're sayin' to yourself; THIS is cool, no more luggin' around two rear wheels means I can blaze both ramps and flatland in the same routine with NO compromise! But wait! There's more. The ACS

FREECOASTER is designed with an Exclusive Anti "Back-Pedal" Feature. Ever notice how when you roll backwards with a freewheel the pedals "pedal" backwards? Well, say adios to that pain. The ACS FREECOASTER "freewheels" backwards as well as forwards, so where you set your pedals is where they stay! Now there's only one thing left to do: race on over to your local bike shop (try to keep it under \$55), and check 'em out, 'cause these pups are gonna move fast!



Coaster Brake Radness

Freecoaster Conversion



Stylin' by Woody Itson

Just a few twists of the two Spring Loaded Chromoly Locking Mechanisms convert the ACS FREECOASTER from coaster brake to freewheel (or visa-versa). Built by Suntour of Japan for ACS, the FREECOASTER is a result of tons of product research and development, extensive product redesigning, and new production tooling. What does that mean to you? Well, can you say BULLET PROOF? The ACS FREECOASTER will be available in ACS Z-Mags, ACS Z-Wheels, a complete hub (as pictured), or as a kit to convert Suntour, Bendix, or Shimano coaster brakes to an ACS FREECOASTER.



ACS FREE COASTER



Freewheel Madness



The Freestyle Connection

## WAY-OUT WARDROBES

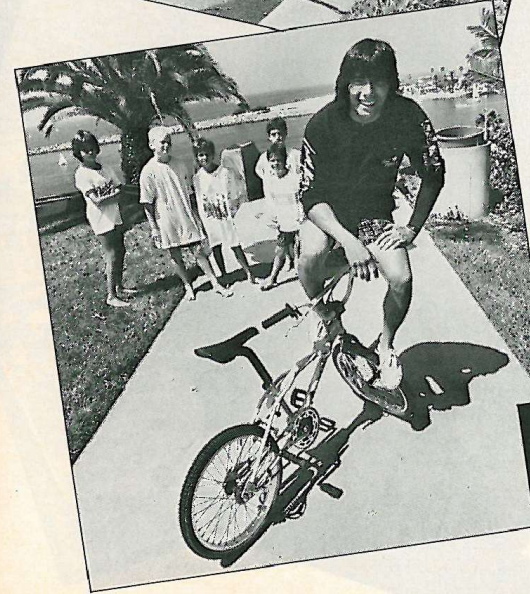


You'd never guess that these are two of the world's top freestylers by seeing them like this. But even they have social lives with which to contend. Ron is sporting his favorite khaki pants, designer shirt and, of course, Vans. Eddie is wearing Life's a Beach pants and hat, Vans, and a GT World Tour T-shirt.

### STYLISH BARGAIN HUNTING

If you're not into trends, you can bop on down to the local Salvation Army, AmVets, or plain ol' thrift shop, to pick and choose off the rack for next to no cash. You might even see a few notables in the process. Ceppie Maes is the most notorious bargain hunter in freestyle.

We'll be runnin' short fashion features in upcoming issues of Freestyle Spectacular, so if we didn't touch on your look this time, don't sweat it, we'll get to it sooner or later. This month we went to the beach and caught some of the hottest SoCal beach fashions. Remember what they say about a picture being worth a thousand words? Well, here are a few thousand for ya. Until next time...



Eddie Fiola—survivor of countless aerial incursions and the only man in freestyle too famous for an American Express commercial. His duds are from Local Motion.



# WAY-OUT WARDROBES



◀ Who is this man? Is he a secret agent for the FBI? Nope, he's a journalistic agent for BMX PLUS!, sporting a Life's a Beach Gunslinger coat and a pair of Ray Ban's Wayfarer II sunglasses. With this stuff, any Arnold Average can achieve the look of the rich and famous.

A card-carrying member of the Bad Boy Club, Scott T. dons the official club jacket by Life's a Beach. The Bad Boy Olympian Series shades give him that "cat man" look. For a more casual look, go back to basics with a plain ol' tank top and walking shorts combo—lammy gets basic without the blahs! ▶



What time IS it anyway? Wearing two watches has become "in" for people who live on one coast and work on another or who just want to prompt others into asking, "Hey, why do you have on two watches, anyway?" Coca-Cola Clothing showin' that they're "the real thing" in whatever they do, be it watches or soft drinks. ▼



## WAY-OUT WARDROBES



◀ Swatch is certainly the company to watch if you're into creating an image for yourself. Tammy Fiola, the Fiola family's resident fashion fanatic, gets in some freeze-frame action while decked out in Swatch's Coat of Arms series.



For casual cruisin' Eddie goes Hawaiian in a Local Motion shirt and shorts (one of his sponsors) and Ray Ban sunglasses. He's one stylish dude, for sure. ▶

## The Rad Squad

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SOLO

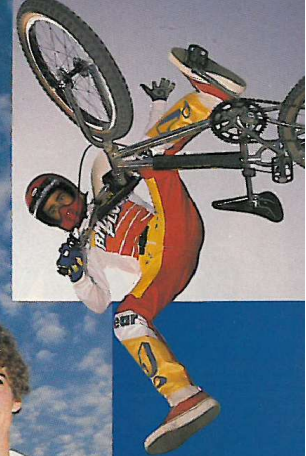


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LIFE IN THE  
CONCRETE JUNGLE

# THE GREAT SKATEPARKS

From then till now  
By John Ker

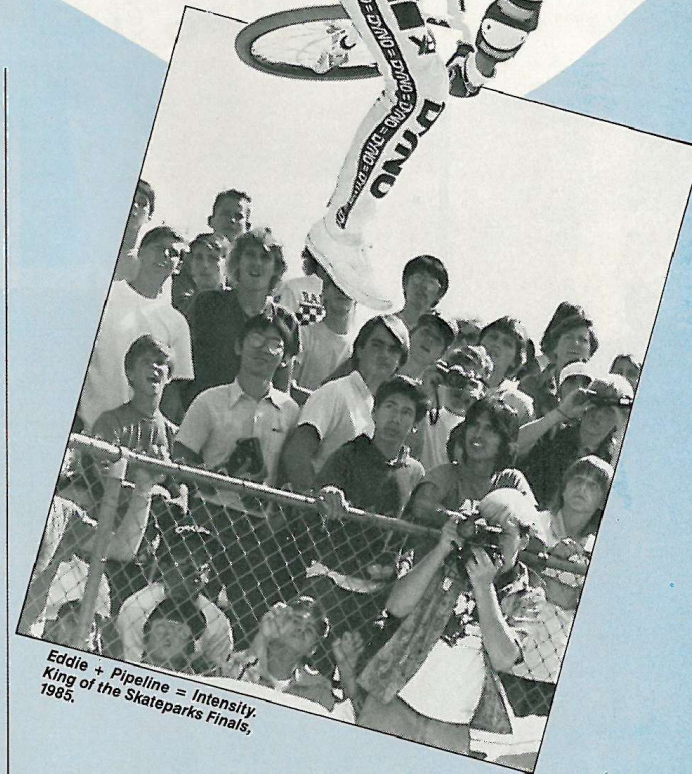
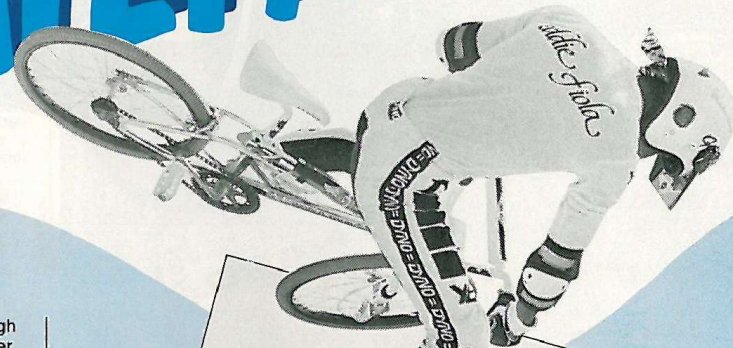
□ In their heyday it seemed as though there was a skatepark on every corner. Now there are almost none.

The first skateparks opened in Southern California around 1975 or '76. Skateboarding was booming at the time, and the latest rage was riding banked walls in drainage culverts and empty swimming pools. Somebody got the bright idea to build a concrete park that could be used for the same purpose, and the Carlsbad Skatepark was born. The skatepark era began. Numerous others opened within months. Denise Barter Leary (the wife of BMX pro Harry Leary) was in the skateboard industry at the time. She recalls, "The first ones opened and then closed almost immediately. They weren't very good. They were bumpy and had runs instead of pools. One of the problems with skateparks was that nobody knew how to design them until they'd built about 12, so the early ones went out of business because they weren't any good."

## THE GOOD TIMES

By 1977, skatepark building had become a fine art. That was the year Stan and Jeanne Hoffman opened the Pipeline Skatepark in Upland, California. It was the first park with truly vertical walls and a full pipe, and it was immensely popular.

◀The Skate Ranch, in Del Mar, saw some radical action over the years. If concrete could talk, it would probably talk about Marc McGlynn for a long time. King of the Skateparks contest, 1985.



Eddie + Pipeline = Intensity.  
King of the Skateparks Finals,  
1985.





Dean Bradley



Freestyle's flamboyant forefather Bob Haro works the Marina Skatepark in Marina Del Rey to its fullest extent. In 1980, Marina was one of Bob's favorite stomping grounds.

Pro BMX racer Stu Thomsen was one of the first guys to ride a bike in a skatepark, and, considering the fact that this was 1978, he was gettin' rad! According to Russ Okawa of Mongoose, this photo was probably taken at the Skatercross skatepark in Reseda, California. We're not sure. What we do know is that Stu is riding for SE Racing on a Mongoose bike with Motomag wheels, and we hope no one ever went over the top of that wall!►

Russ Okawa



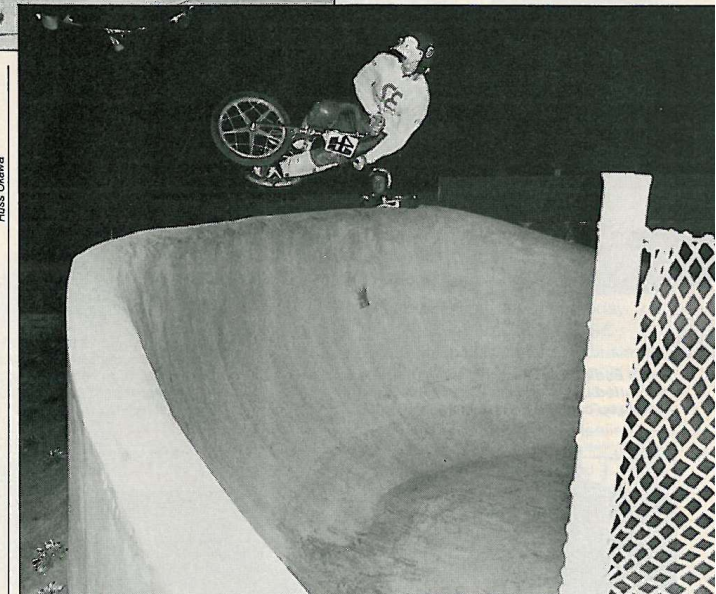
Controlled lunacy by Pipeline local Jeff Carroll. Jeff was the first guy we ever saw do no-handers at the Pipe, and they were so rad we wouldn't be surprised if he is the last.

◀The last of the dinosaurs, the Pipeline. Rich Sigur lofts above the Pipe bowl, the bike riders' favorite.

# SKATEPARKS

make a mark for himself in the world of skateparks, but he was hardly the only one. Greg Hill, Harry Leary, Perry Kramer, Byron Friday, Scott Clark and Stu Thomsen all became denizens of the skateparks—at least for a while.

The parks were plentiful back then. There was the "Runway" in Gardena, the "Big O" in Orange, "Lakewood" in Lakewood, the "Ranch" in Colton, "Skate City" in Whittier, "Marina" in Marina Del Rey, "Skatercross" in Reseda, and "Paramount" in Long Beach. And those were just some of the parks in the Los Angeles area. There were more toward San Diego and some farther north, as well. In fact, they were all over the country. Heck,



It had a full acre of gunite (a concrete-like substance used in the swimming-pool industry). The park was laid out with seven bowls, a banked slalom run, and the giant pipe—enormous at 20 feet in diameter and 40 feet long.

Was the Pipeline the best park back then? Maybe, maybe not. There were a lot of good ones built between 1977 and 1981. Which one was best depends on who you ask. The Pipeline was certainly among the best. At one time there were 58 skateparks registered in the United States, according to Mrs. Hoffman, and all had their devoted following. Skateboards, of course, were the preferred vehicles in the parks, but BMX bikes were an acceptable alternative.

Tinker Juarez, a top racer of the era, was probably the first BMXer of note to

there were at least five that we know about in New Jersey.

The skatepark era began to come to an end sometime around 1980. The popularity of skateboarding was declining sharply, and by 1982 most of the parks were out of business. One factor that contributed to the demise of the parks was the increasing cost of liability insurance. With diminishing business on one hand and increasing costs on the other, most skateparks found themselves in a financial squeeze from which there was no escape.

Scott Clark was the Number One BMX Pro in the NBA in 1979 and 1980, and a skatepark rider as well. He recalls one park in Oakridge, California, near his home in San Jose (not far from San Francisco), that got caught in the liability





One of Eddie Fiola's first thrashing grounds was the now gone-and-buried Lakewood skatepark. This photo was shot in 1981, and as you can tell, he was rad even then.

James Cassinus



Skatopia skatepark was another early California park. We didn't have any BMX photos from there, but we did have this skater (from our photo files) rippin' the blue tile. J.K. shot it for the now-defunct "Skateboarder Magazine" back when he used to free-lance for them.



The deepest, gnarliest bowl in existence? Possibly. This monster was part of the Paramount Skatepark in SoCal. Incidentally, this photo is of past BMX star Dennis Dain, and it was taken by none other than Stu Thomsen circa 1980. These guys were both early skatepark riders. This bowl measured around 15-feet deep, and from the looks of it, half of it was purely vertical! Imagine hanging up your back wheel at the top and endoing all the way to the bottom!

crunch before the park was even finished. The builders of the park suddenly learned that they weren't going to be able to get insurance, and they stopped the construction of the park before they covered the dirt bowls with gunite. The would-be park sat in that state for six months, much to the delight of Scott and the other BMXers in the area who would sneak in at night for secret runs when no one was there to stop them.

Similar tactics were necessary at many other parks of the same era. Many didn't allow BMXers at all. Stu Thomsen says he was a skatepark devotee of the first order. "I used to ride them more than anybody else," Stu remembers. "Half the time I had to jump fences 'cause they wouldn't let us in." Stu rode the parks in the mornings before they opened and in the evenings after they closed. He rode with his partner in adventure, Dennis Dain, one of the other top racers of the era.

Stu was a dedicated skatepark rider from 1978 to 1981, but he finally gave it up because he was afraid he might get hurt in the parks and ruin his racing career. The year 1981 was the best in



## SKATEPARKS

Stu's career, and he was finally starting to make some big money in racing. When that development was coupled with the fact that most of the parks in the area were closing down, the combination was enough to make Stu finally turn his back on the joys of bowl riding. It was too bad, because in his day, Stu may have been the best BMX skatepark rider of them all. "I even entered a contest out at Whittier once and tied for first place with Fred Becker," Stu remembers.

In early 1985, Stu tried riding a skatepark again. He was at the Pipeline with Brian Blyther and decided to give the park a try. Blyther was blown away by the fact that Stu could get three or four feet of air in his first time riding the park. Blyther reportedly told his friends later that Stu could be the best skatepark rider of them all in three or four months if he wanted to be. If Stu thinks that, he isn't saying so. He says of today's top riders: "They're nuts. What they can do now goes far beyond anything we ever imagined." At his peak, Stu was capable of five- and six-foot aeriels; today's top stars do nine-foot aeriels as a matter of course.

Stu's best trick in 1981 was a one-hander; today's top stars practice moves like no-handers, one-hand one-footers, and no-footed cancans. Stu's tricks were rad for their time, but not for today.

### WHY THE PIPE DIDN'T CLOSE

By 1982 the skateboarding business was so weak that almost all the parks had closed. The Pipeline in Upland and the Skate Ranch in Del Mar (near San Diego) were exceptions. Even the Pipeline came close to shutting down for good. The number of riders dropped to as few as two or three a day on weekdays and five to ten a day on weekends, according to the Hoffmans. The price of insurance went up to \$12,000 a year (plus 50 cents per rider) at the same time.

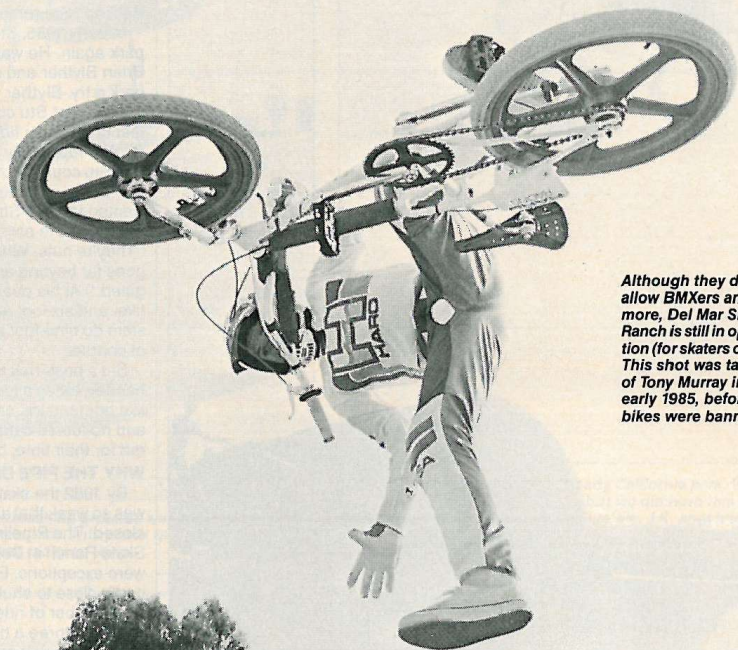
The Hoffmans decided that the logical thing to do was to shut down. When they found out that if they shut down the park, they'd also have to bulldoze it in order to avoid any chance of liability, that drew the line. Mrs. Hoffman felt a deep sense of loyalty to the kids who rode at the park, and she refused to have it torn down. She and her husband decided to run the park without insurance and simply tell patrons they were riding at their own risk if they chose to ride. If somebody got hurt and tried to sue them, they'd find out that the only thing they had which was worth anything was the Pipeline business, and that wasn't worth much of anything, since business was

◀The King of the Skateparks, Eddie Fiola, has been shredding his kingdom, the Pipeline Skatepark for years. Historic action from a few years back by James Cassinus.





Stan and Jeanne Hoffman—nice people, freestyle supporters and owners of the Pipeline Skatepark in Upland, California.



Although they don't allow BMXers anymore, Del Mar Skate Ranch is still in operation (for skaters only). This shot was taken of Tony Murray in early 1985, before bikes were banned.

# SKATEPARKS

This is the only guy ever to take the throne of King of the Skateparks away from Eddie Fiola. Mike Dominguez did it in 1984. Eddie had it for '82, '83 and '85. No-footed cancan in '85, Dominguez style.



so bad they were losing money. If somebody won a lawsuit against them, all he'd get would be the park. Then he could try running it. The gamble paid off. The riders were willing to take their chances, and attorneys who looked into the possibility of collecting damages for an injury soon realized their efforts would be a waste of time, because there wasn't any money to be had.

## THE BMX ERA

Bike riding in the bowls was at the height of its popularity in the years 1982 through '85. Stu was already ancient history. A rider named Jeff Watson enjoyed a brief spate of popularity at the start of the decade, but he had pretty much disappeared from the scene by 1983. Steve Giberson remembers Watson's riding at the Ranch, in Colton: "He used to get air, but he'd land like a boulder. He was the bike mangler of all time. If there was any part that could be broken, he'd break it."

The hot new guy in the bowls was Eddie Fiola, who is now 22. Eddie started riding parks on a skateboard at age 14, he recalls. "Either I took him or he'd go with friends," his mother remembers. It didn't take long for Eddie to switch to riding bikes, however. Lakewood was the first park to allow bikes in the bowls, according to Mrs. Fiola, and that was Eddie's home park. It also didn't take long for him to start gaining some recognition for his abilities. Steve Giberson was an avid skatepark skateboarder in 1980 and '81, and he says simply, "Eddie was awesome."

Mrs. Fiola used to sit at home worrying about the phone call she might get from a hospital emergency room, but she never got one. Eddie did get injured occasionally, but he always came home to have his mother look at the injury first. He'd come home and say to her, "Mom, take a look at my wrist," and she'd look at it and take him to the hospital for a cast. She remembers one time he came home and asked her to look at his nose. It was all swollen and looked terrible. She took him to the doctor for X-rays. The doctor looked at the film and told the Fiolas that Eddie's nose was broken, but it had already been perfectly set into place again. It turned out that after the crash that broke it, a friend had told Eddie his nose was on the side of his face. Eddie had gone into the bathroom of a nearby restaurant, checked it out in the mirror, put both hands around his nose and pushed it back into place before going home. The doctor never even had to touch it.

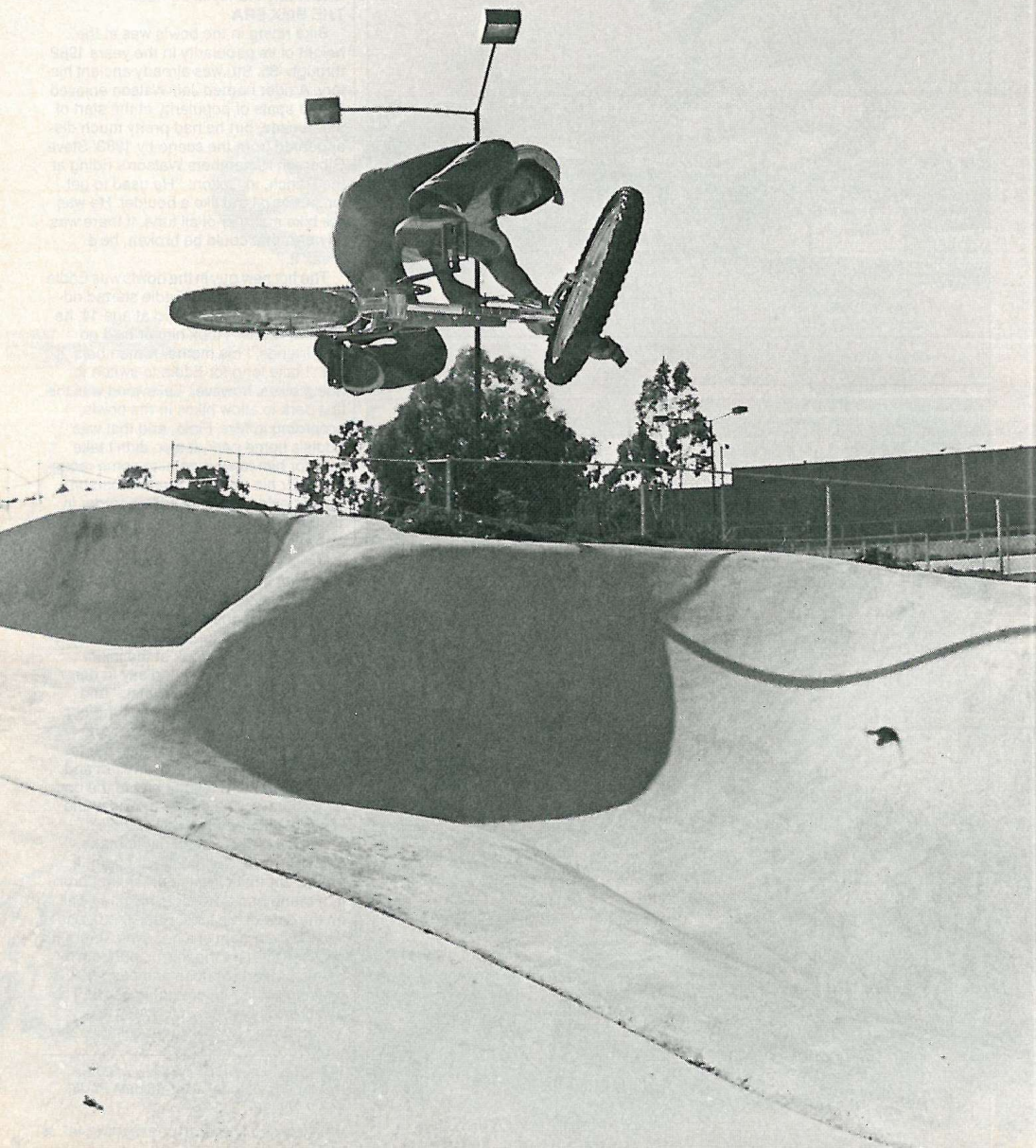
Undaunted by a history of injuries that



◀A short spectator's-eye view of Eddie (through the fence). May '86 BMX PLUS! video filming.



Racer Tinker Juarez earned fame in the magazines with his antics at Lakewood park. Tinker quit riding the parks, and Lakewood went out of business, but we still have photos of his activities to prove his stature as an early ripper.



The semi-legendary Jeff Watson was one of the original BMX skatepark radsters, and he could probably hold his own if he were still riding today. Unfortunately, Jeff was forced to quit riding because of knee problems encountered from too many "ton of bricks" landings. Colton Skatepark action from 1980.

# SKATEPARKS

could support a doctor and his family in fine style for a year, Eddie soon became the top skatepark rider in Southern California. When Lakewood closed, Eddie moved on to the Pipeline in Upland, and even greater fame. With his incredible skill and photogenic style, he became a regular feature of the BMX magazines.

Other riders also came on the scene, of course. A rider from the Whittier skatepark by the name of Mike Dominguez was so hot in 1983 at the age of 14 that some people began to say he was even better than Fiola. Maybe he was, maybe he wasn't, but he was awfully good, and he became a superstar almost overnight. It certainly didn't hurt matters

that he made the cover of *BMX Plus!* in January, February, and April of 1984.

Brian Blyther was another rider who came into prominence in the spotlight of attention now focused on the Pipeline. Soon the battle for supremacy at the Pipeline was three-way, between Eddie, Michael and Brian. Even today they are still the main men in the realm, and each has beaten the others at least once in the concrete confines of the King of the Skateparks series, a group of contests designed to settle the question of who really is the raddest rider on the face of the earth—at least in Southern California.

There's no question who "the king"

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☐ 8. FLYIN' FOUR-SIXTY-FIVES





Hawaiian Andy Shohara kicks a no-footer at one of Del Mar's last King of the Skateparks contests, 1985.

# SKATEPARKS

has been. Fiola won the title in 1981 (for 1982), and every year since, except one. In 1984 Mike Dominguez won the right to the title for 1985.

The final series ended in the fall of 1985, and it's unlikely that there will be another in the foreseeable future. Pipeline owner Stan Hoffman is dead set against the idea. He has the only concrete skatepark in the country that allows bike riders, and he has said there won't be any more contests. Period.

## TODAY

Despite Mr. Hoffman's ban on competition, the Pipeline is still going strong, fueled by the tremendous popularity of skateboarding. The summer of '86 brought 100 to 150 riders to the park on most days, of which maybe ten or 20 percent were on bikes. Although Mr. Hoffman had been considering closing the park at the end of the year, he and his wife now plan to keep it open longer, at least until the current skateboard boom dies down.

The Skate Ranch in Del Mar, California, is also doing well. It opened in 1978 and has been popular ever since, although it, too, has had its close calls. It shut down

for a few weeks last year when the park lost its insurance carrier. It opened up only after it became a Boy Scout Explorer post so it could qualify for low-cost Boy Scout liability insurance. The only drawback to the deal is that BMX bikes are no longer allowed in the park, only skateboards. The insurance company wouldn't cover the bike riders.

The Pipeline managed to stay open mainly because they had dealt with their own insurance crisis much earlier, when they made the decision to run the park without it. Because they no longer had insurance, they had nothing to worry about with regard to that subject.

## THE FUTURE

Business has been great at Del Mar and the Pipeline this year. That means the parks will probably remain open. If skateboarding takes another dive in popularity, the two parks could go down for the last time. If so, they will probably be destroyed. As long as the parks are making money, they are likely to remain open. If they go, their passing will mark the end of an era. It will be like the demise of the dinosaurs. There almost certainly won't be any others after these. □

## OTHER SKATEPARKS

- The Pipeline is the only concrete skatepark in the United States that allows BMXers to ride it at all times. The Skate Ranch in Del Mar, California, and Kona Skatepark in Jacksonville, Florida, are both open to skateboarders but currently closed to BMXers.

We have heard about skateparks that utilize ramps instead of bowls, but there is apparently no official register listing them. The National Skateboard Association can be reached at (714)882-3406. They may be able to supply information on the subject, but they were on a two-week vacation when we called them, and their recorded message notifying us of that fact failed to include the information.

Working strictly from the rumor mill, we can report that there are said to be ramp parks in Houston, Texas ("The Houston Skatepark"); Minneapolis, Minnesota ("Ramp City"); Virginia Beach, Virginia; and Mobile, Alabama. Contact a skateboard shop in those areas, and they may be able to supply additional information about such parks if they do, in fact, exist.

There is one freestyle ramp center in Connecticut that is apparently thriving. That is the Route 5 BMX Rampriders Club, at 585 John Fitch Blvd., South Windsor, Connecticut. It's open to both BMXers and skateboarders. The phone number is (203)289-3401. The ramp is a large halfpipe, and it's open Thursday through Sunday each week, weather permitting. Membership is \$30 per year and the riding fee is \$3 per day. •

# MOUNTAIN BIKE ACTION

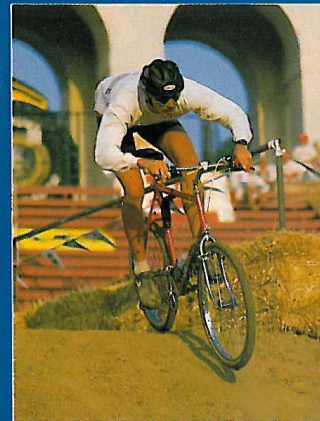
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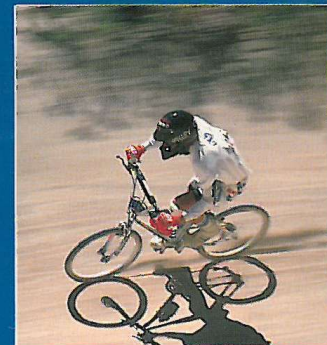
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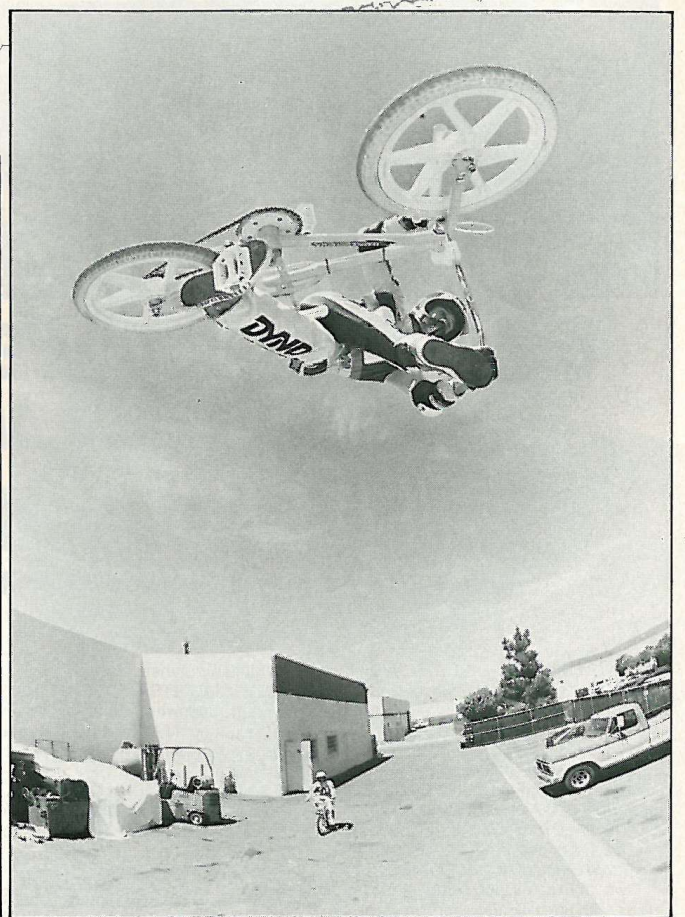
☐ Frankly, you won't find this ad in your local paper's "Help Wanted" section. That doesn't mean such positions aren't available, but the companies looking for people to fill those spots don't have to advertise. They already get plenty of applicants.

How do you get a job as a pro freestyler? Hey, let's face facts: We're talking about the coolest job on earth. How do you get it?

We decided to talk to the guys who recruit new riders for six of the top teams and ask them, straight out, what they look for when they want to add somebody to their freestyle teams. We called CW, Diamond Back, GT, Haro, Hutch and Kuwahara to get the answers.

**WHAT'S THE MAIN THING YOU LOOK FOR IN A RIDER?**

If you think incredible talent is at the top of the list for all these teams, you're



◀Ah, the life of a factory freestyle star: Free bikes, free clothes, free trips, free food and lots of money. Sound good? It is! But, Ron Wilkerson (in the air) and Dave Nourie (on the ramp) can tell you, it isn't easy to come by.

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### THE CLASSIFIEDS

## WANTED: FREESTYLE RIDERS

wrong. You have to be good, of course, but the quality that ranks highest in the minds of most freestyle team managers is attitude. GT team manager Shawn Buckley, Hutch team manager Woody Itson, and Kuwahara assistant team manager Mike Loveridge told us that the rider's attitude is the most important factor in their consideration.

Shawn, from GT, put it this way: "In the beginning, I looked for capability. Now I look for attitude. There are a lot of guys with great ability. I get video tapes every week, and there are a lot of talented riders out there. I need riders who get along with people. Travel is a big part of our business. Things don't always go right on tour, and we need guys with the maturity to handle that."

Woody Itson had this to say about the subject: "We want riders the local people can look up to as the 'town hero.' We don't want guys who smoke or do drugs."

Another important aspect of attitude is the rider's desire to succeed. Mike Loveridge, assistant team manager of Kuwahara, stressed that he looks for a rider with "the determination to be the best—a guy who will do almost anything to get to the contests and get coverage in the magazines."

### HOW GOOD DO YOU HAVE TO BE?

You might think you have to be a superstar to get signed to a freestyle team, but that's not the case. Most of the teams we spoke with said they're looking for good riders with the potential to be big stars. Surprisingly, five out of six teams we questioned said they're looking for relatively unknown riders to add to their teams. The sole exception is Diamond Back. Diamond Back, right now, is looking for two established riders to add to its team for 1987, according to team manager Al Stonehouse. The other companies are looking for riders on their way up.

Mike Loveridge said Kuwahara is looking for riders who are in the intermediate-to-expert ranks and on their way up in the sport.



The Haro team prefers riders who can rip on both ground and ramps. Brian Blyther (top) is a specialist, however. Ron Wilkerson (bottom) is the generalist—and a great one, too. Mike Dominguez once told us that he considers Ron to be the top all-around pro in freestyle. That's a pretty good reference in the sponsorship sweepstakes.



# WANTED: FREESTYLE RIDERS



There's no better way to get noticed by sponsors than to enter a big contest and beat some of the top stars in your class. Besides, whether you win or lose, it shows a potential sponsor that you're not afraid to get out in front of a crowd and put on a show.



Life on the road is what it's all about for most pro freestylers. If you can get along with a lot of different people, you'll be much more likely to get picked for such a plush assignment.

Shawn Buckley says a primary consideration for his team is that the rider already have a GT bike. That indicates the kind of commitment they want on the part of the rider. He also has to be good, of course.

## HOW IMPORTANT ARE CONTEST RECORDS?

"Very important," according to Diamond Back. "Important," according to GT, Haro and Hutch. "We look at that pretty closely," Haro's Bill 'Billy Hop' Hawkins told us. "It's a great way to

determine how good a rider may be in a pressure situation."

Shawn Buckley says GT carefully examines a rider's contest record. "I think it's important," Shawn told us. "It's one way to judge a rider you've never seen. If I were a rider doing well in contests, I certainly wouldn't leave that info out of my resume. The experience of getting in front of people at a contest is the first step toward being comfortable in front of the public. How they've done in contests isn't all that important, either. The level

of competition is so high that nobody is going to be able to finish first, second or third all the time. We don't expect it."

Does that mean nobody has a chance to get sponsored if they don't have a good contest record? Not quite. Woody Itson says it's important, but the Hutch team will make an exception if the guy is "totally amazing."

## HOW IMPORTANT IS APPEARANCE?

It's important. Haro and Hutch stressed that they're looking for "clean-cut" riders for their teams. Shawn Buckley says that looks are not the primary concern for him, however, especially in the case of the Dyno team: "I don't care how long or how short their hair is, or if they're into heavy metal, or whatever."

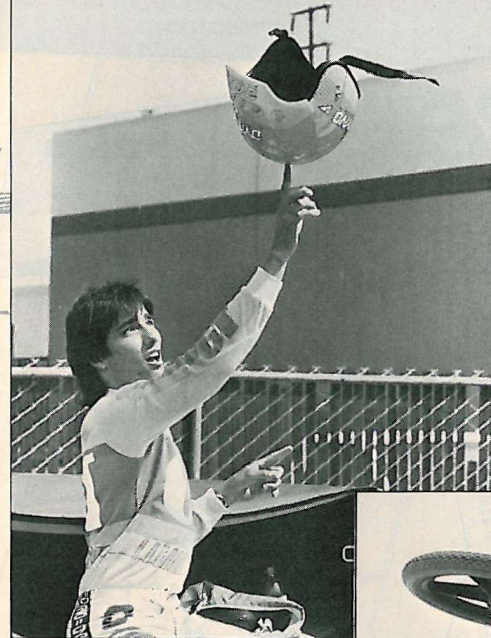
CW, of course, is the home of Dizz Hicks and Ceppie Maes. Obviously, the clean-cut look is not the key to getting on that team. Rich Osborne, of CW, says the key things they look for in riders are "showmanship," "personality" and "crowd appeal." You know from looking at their team that if Billy Idol were a freestyle star, CW would be the team that would be trying to sign him. They want guys who can generate interest just by walking across a parking lot. That's not the only consideration, of course. Hot up-and-comer Gary Pollak got picked up by the team because he's a red-hot rider and was doing well in contests. We don't know how much excitement he'd cause walking across a parking lot, but when he rides across one, people's chins scrape the asphalt.

## ARE YOU BETTER OFF SPECIALIZING IN ONE CATEGORY OF RIDING OR BEING AN ALL-AROUND RIDER?

Either one. Bill Hawkins says Haro prefers well-rounded riders who can do well on both ramps and flatland. GT and Hutch, however, usually look for specialists. Why? Shawn, at GT, says that when two riders are traveling on the road doing shows, they usually get along better if one is primarily a ground rider and the other is primarily a ramp rider. That's not to say that none of their riders can do both, of course. Shawn pointed out that Eddie Fiola and Josh White are both primarily ramp riders, but they're both extremely good on the ground, too.

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Talent counts, but there's more to getting a sponsor than just getting radical. Whatever it takes, Eddie Fiola obviously has it.

Some sponsors prefer riders who can do it all; others prefer riders who specialize. Mike Dominguez is an aerial specialist par excellence.

## IS A RIDER'S HOME STATE IMPORTANT?

In a word, no. All the teams we spoke with emphasized how diverse their teams are. Woody Itson pointed out that most of Hutch's team comes from outside California now. Woody, of course, lives in Southern California, and Karl Rothe lives in Northern California, but Rick Moliterno lives in Missouri, and their two newest riders, Mitch Collins and Joel Lamothe, live in Florida and Georgia, respectively. Although most teams seem to try to have at least one top rider handy in Southern California (for magazine photo sessions), the other riders can live almost anywhere within the continental United States. In fact, if they live in another country, they may be able to find a chapter of their favorite factory team there, too. GT, for example, has factory teams in Spain, Holland, Chile, Denmark, Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong—just to name a few.

## WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO FIND A SPONSOR?

Contact the company or companies you'd like to ride for. Send a video if you have one. Try to meet their riders at a show or contest, if you can. Write the company a letter telling them you'd like to join their team and include a resume of your accomplishments. Compete in contests. Practice a lot. Write more letters to the companies you've already written to. Most people will only write once. If you write a company four times in a few months, they'll start to recognize your name. That's half the battle. If you have talent, desire, "a good attitude,"



and the personal push to pursue a career in freestyle, you might make it.

## IF I DO GET A SPONSOR INTERESTED, HOW MUCH MONEY CAN I EXPECT TO MAKE?

Most of the companies we queried said their riders don't make much money when they first start. Don't expect to make a fortune when you land your first sponsor. Just be happy you got your foot

in the door, so to speak. If you're good, the money will eventually come to you, but if you ask for too much at the start, you may never get anything at all.

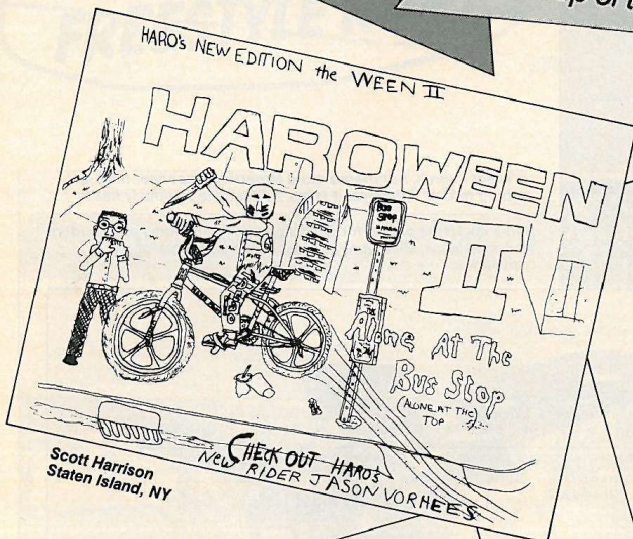
The very top riders in freestyle usually make between \$30,000 and \$100,000 a year, but keep in mind that many of them started out with little more than a handshake, a new frame and fork, and a uniform. □



By our talented readers

# READER ART

The tip of the iceberg



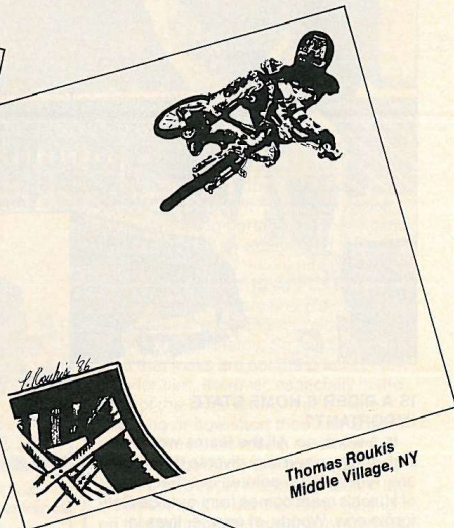
Scott Harrison  
Staten Island, NY



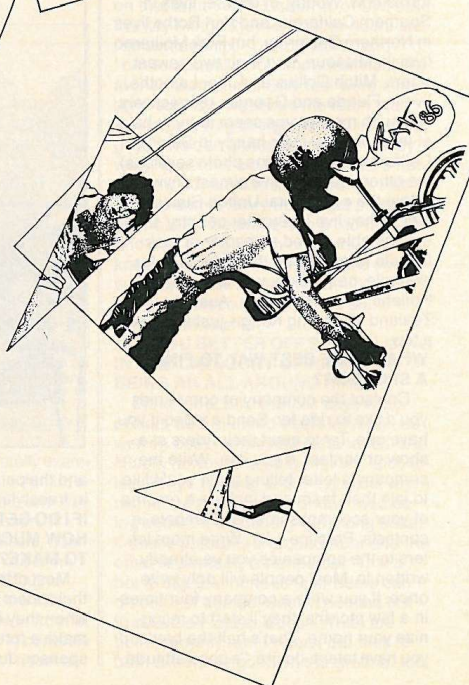
Darren Kraft, Newton, NJ



Donnie Platt, Longwood, FL



Thomas Roukis  
Middle Village, NY



Jun M. Felipe  
Marianas Island, Guam



Donnie Platt  
Longwood, FL



Brian Botley, Dublin, OH



Jay Silber, Raytown, MO

□ Since we started the "Reader Art" section in *BMX Plus!* a few months ago, we have been swamped with drawings and photos from artistic readers everywhere. This presents a small problem. There simply isn't enough room in *Plus!* for all the great stuff we have. With all these great works lying around, we had to find some place to exhibit them. This mag is the perfect place, so here it is—the best of "Reader Art!" □



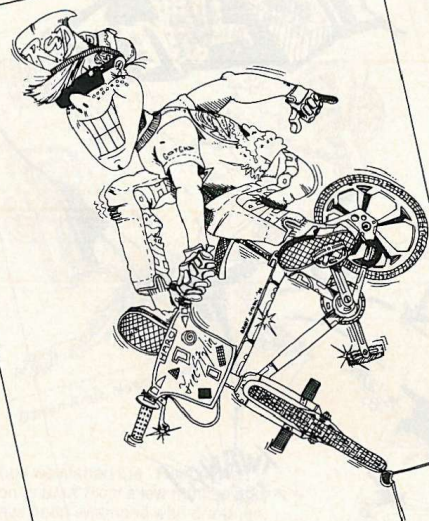
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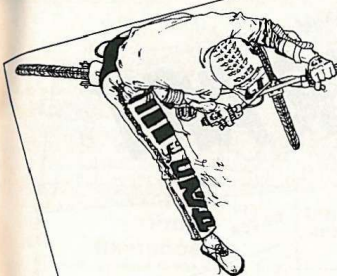
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Phoenix, AZ



Brady Smith, Houston, TX



Paul Wallace  
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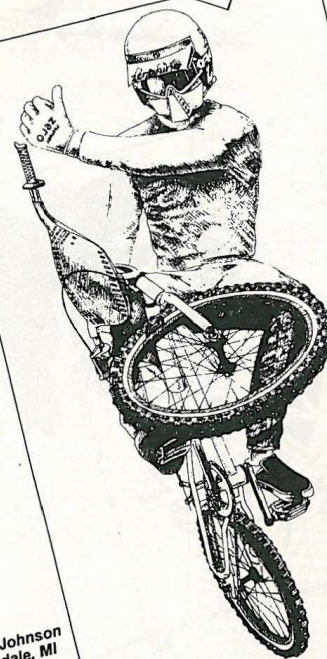


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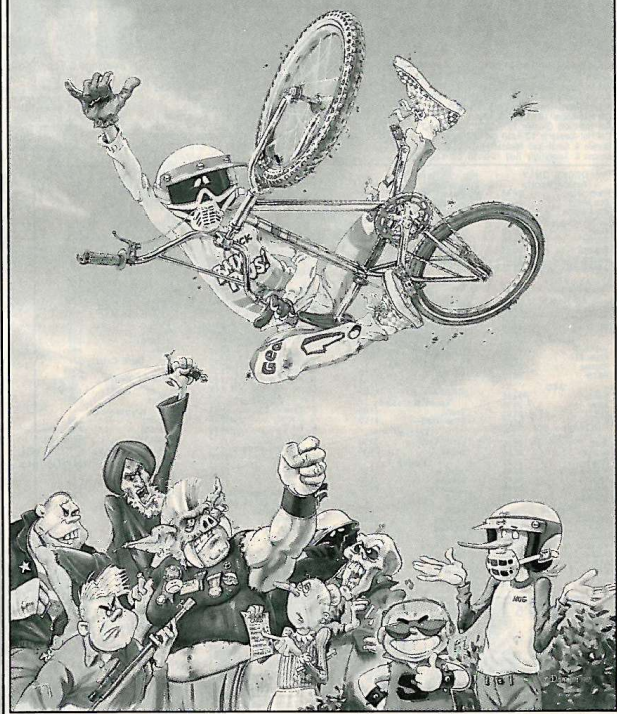
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AMERICAN CYCLE SYSTEMS	27,42,76
BMX PLUS! BACK ISSUES	71
BMX PLUS! BUYER'S GUIDE	62
BMX PLUS! JERSEYS	47
BMX PLUS! STICKERS	4
BMX PLUS! SUBSCRIPTION	74-75
BMX PLUS! VIDEO	35
BMX PRODUCTS (Mongoose)	30
CAL HOT PRODUCTS	25
DIAMOND BACK	2-3
FREESTYLE BACK ISSUES	73
FREESTYLE SUBSCRIPTION	36-37
LIFE'S A BEACH	34
MCS	34
MOUNTAIN BIKE ACTION	59
RAD GALLERY SPECTACULAR	4
RADICAL RICK POSTER	72
VINTAGE POSTERS	57



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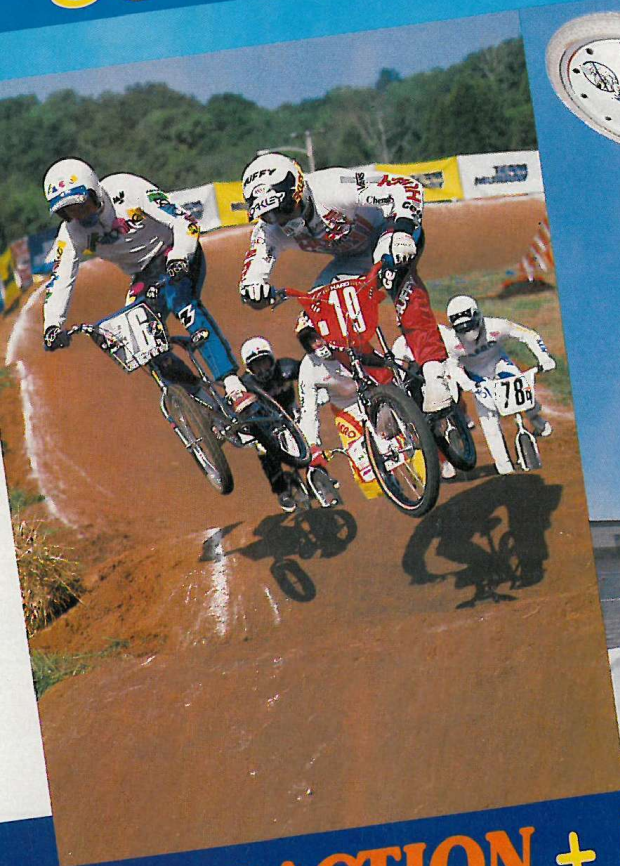
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