

BMX ACTION OFFICIAL test

Does it surprise you that R.L. liked the GHP best? He wasn't alone, though—it came out on top in every category except looks.

24 WARS

EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT CRUISERS*

PHOTOS BY WINDY

Cruisers are cool too.

Did you know they're faster than the 20s? Fact. Sure 20s might smoke 'em outta the gate, but when 24s get up to speed, they're like a runaway freight train. Unstoppable. And there's nothing like riding a cruiser when your friends are on 20s. Imagine a Mack truck tailgating a Honda Civic. You get the idea.

The last couple of years, 20 inchers have been grabbin' all the glory, and we thought it was about time to give cruisers a fair shake. Presenting a full-on test on the eight hottest frame and forks and complete bikes on the market. The participating factories were asked to either send one of their complete 24s or build up one using their frame and forks. After scoping out, measuring, and charting all the vital data on each machine, we turned the eight over to our test crew—R.L., Dave "Culligan Man" Cullinan, and Capt. Kirk Chrisco—who bashed 'em into oblivion before giving us their final comments and ratings.

Here's what we found out:

CW CRUISER

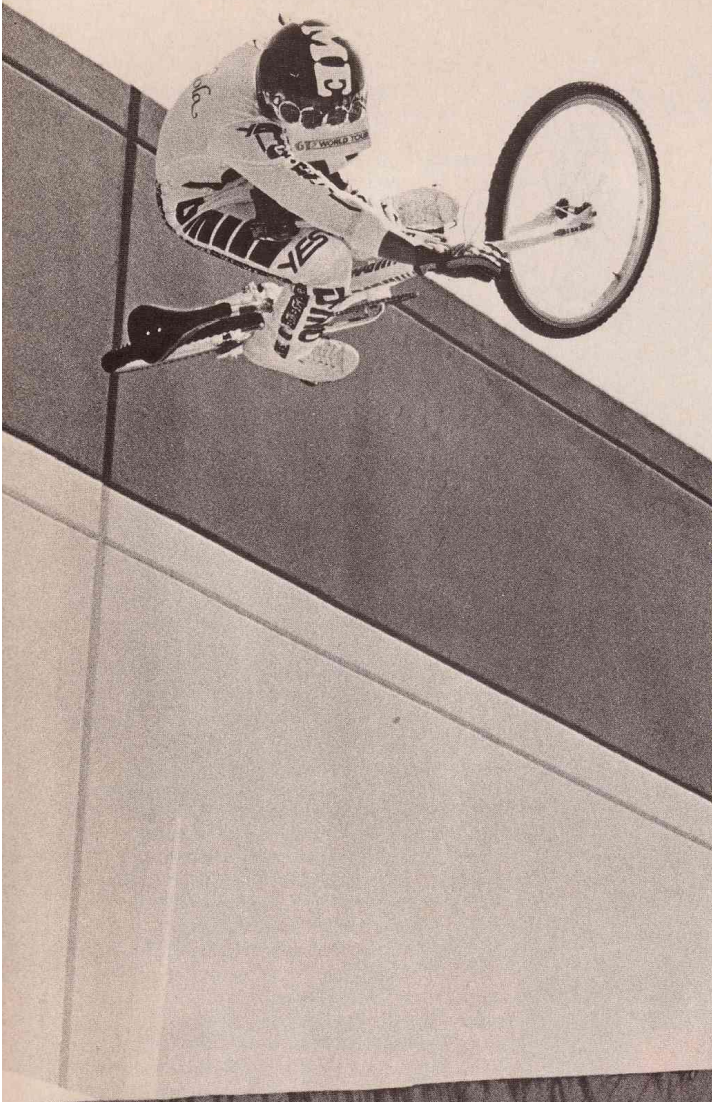
The CW has the oddest cruiser dimensions of the eight bikes, with the most choppered head tube angle (69 degrees), and the lowest bottom bracket height (10 7/8 inches). But wait. Don't start thinking it's a bog. Not even. This 24 incher is built strictly for racing, and it does the job. All you weight watchers, take note: the CW has the lightest frame of all, which, like all the frame and forks in this test, is chrome-moly.

Basically, if you're seriously into racing the cruiser classes, CW has what you need. The comments below tell the rest of the story . . .

Dave: "The first pedal feels good." . . . "Them NEON colors (on the rims and pads) are great." . . . "It's definitely made to ride in a straight line." . . . "When you jump it, it just flops. It doesn't want to jump." . . . "If you just want to race, and stay low and in a straight line off jumps, then it's excellent."

R.L.: "It's okay when you're totally on the gas, but when you're going slow, it's squirrely." . . . "It felt awkward in the air." . . . "It's strictly for racing." . . . "You do need a little air control, 'cuz you're not always on the ground, and that it doesn't have. It was like a drag racer." . . . "It definitely looks cool."

*AND A FEW THINGS YOU DIDN'T



Kirk (before munching and trashing his elbow): "I like it A LOT." . . . "When you first get on it, it feels kinda slow, but you adjust real fast."

Kirk (after munching): "It needs better grips."

RED LINE PL-24

We did take into consideration that R.L.'s comments might've been slightly biased on this bike, but he didn't claim that it was the best, and we put him through a lie detector test, sooo . . .

The PL-24 is sold mostly as a frame and fork set, but Red Line does have a few complete bikes left, so if you want the whole deal you'd better hurry. As you know, the Red Line sports its famed five-inch head tube, which is an inch taller than traditional head tubes. The five incher does affect its riding characteristics; check R.L.'s comments for the lowdown. You'll have no choice but to run Red Line forks on it, which were the heaviest tested (but they're longer).

The PL-24 was the cruiser of choice when it came to riding the company half-pipe. The front cover will give you a hint of what it can do in the air. Of course, you know how rad the half-and-half chrome/paint finishes look.

Overall, this Red Line means business, especially if you're a bigger than average dude or dudette.

Dave: "It felt tall; it's for a bigger rider." . . . "The Red Line was totally comfortable . . . you can trust it."

R.L.: "It's totally well balanced." . . . "Right when you get on it, it feels safe. It's right where you expect it to be." . . . "It doesn't feel too light or too heavy." . . . "It's bitchen because of the head tube. The front tire is always closer to the ground than you think. You don't have to be so tucked and you hit the ground sooner than you think. At first, I went, 'Whoa!', but after I got used to it, I was thinking, 'Hey, this is kind of cool.' It changes your cranking position a bit though, so it has its advantages and disadvantages." . . . "It wasn't quite as torquey as some of the others" . . . "A tad high with the five inch head tube, but the overall feel is excellent, a lot like the GHP."

Fiola, loftin' some GNARLY air! The GT wasn't too bad for 'stylin'. The broomstick handlebars didn't bother him a bit.

WE'RE NOT kind to these bikes. The "Culligan Man" was flying 20 FEET off of the first berm and landing in the real nice hillside garden at the Devonshire track (at least it WAS nice). The Hutch parts survived the best. The cranks and back wheels on most of the cruisers were hatin' life after this jump.

GHP 24" CRUISER

The GHP was a total surprise. It's not that we expected it to be a dog, but it does look like your Joe Average cruiser. Its frame weight is in the five pound territory, but it's not the heaviest. The head tube angle is 74 degrees—the steepest tested. But when it came to riding it, the GHP proved to be the favorite. All that R.L. and Dave could do to it was bend the seat post, which is besides the point—GHP only comes in a frame and fork.

The GHP did good. No, better yet, it did GREAT!

Dave: "The GHP was so smooth. The smoothest." . . . "Feels consistent in the air. It just lands like nothing. Just SSSHUUUU (smooth landing noise) and you're gone!" . . . "The bar bend was a little much. I like straighter bends." . . . "Quick out of the gate. All these bikes were quick for some reason."

R.L.: "I like the fat forks." . . . "This bike feels real tall when you first get on it, but when you ride it, it's cool." . . . "It's got room. Medium height. Quick. You can call it consistent and radical. A little consistent, but not too much, and radical, but not too rad. It's RADSISTENT." . . . "I totally dig these bars. They weren't too far away" . . . "I screwed up and it didn't flop on me." . . . "I like the steep head angle. Real bitchen." . . . "It had total torque whenever you needed it. You can wind that thing as hard as you want, and it's got room." . . . "In the air, it was there when I needed it. It'd follow me." . . . "I just wanted to keep riding it. With the GHP, if it was a boring day and I had it in the garage. I'd go, 'All right, I think I'll go riding.' With other bikes I'd say, 'Nawwww, I'll stay home.'"

PATTERSON PR-240

Because of short notice, Brian sent

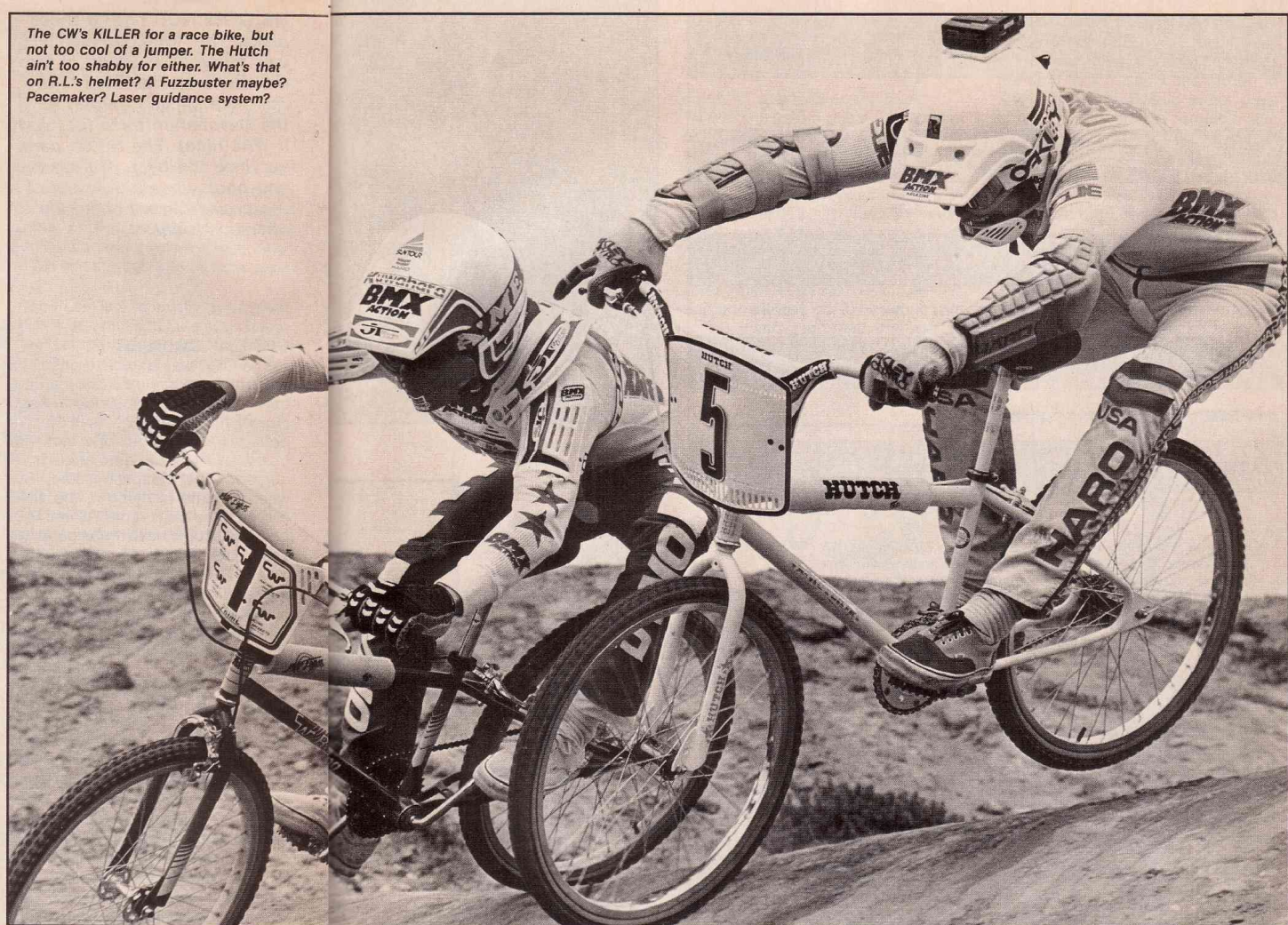


CRUISER VITAL STATISTICS

	Retail Price	Frame Weight	Fork Weight	Colors
GT	\$149 f/f	4.8 lbs.	2.0 lbs.	White & Chrome
CW	\$189 f/f	4.3 lbs.	1.1 lbs.	Lt. Blue, Lav., Grey, White & Chrome
RED LINE	\$286 c/b \$201 (ch.) f/f \$173 (wh.) f/f \$209 (1/2) f/f	5.1 lbs.	2.1 lbs.	Chrome, White, Turq/chrome, Yel/chrome & Wn/chrome
PATTERSON	\$193 f/f	5.8 lbs.	1.3 lbs.	Chrome only
HUTCH	\$189 f/f	4.6 lbs.	1.5 lbs.	White & Chrome
GHP	\$15395 f/f	5.2 lbs.	2.3 lbs.	Chrome, Red & White
MONGOOSE	\$350 c/b \$200 f/f	4.1 lbs.	2.1 lbs.	Chrome only
POWERLITE	\$195 f/f	4.1 lbs.	1.2 lbs.	Lt. Blue, Red Plum, Chrome & White



The CW's KILLER for a race bike, but not too cool of a jumper. The Hutch ain't too shabby for either. What's that on R.L.'s helmet? A Fuzzbuster maybe? Pacemaker? Laser guidance system?



us his own personal race cruiser. It WAS dialed! Perfect gearing (41-18), 185mm Flights, Mathausser brake shoes with Dia-Compe MX 1000s, turned-under cruiser Pro Neck, and so on.

The Patterson was a lot like the Red Line. In a word—BIG. As far as handling and all of those things go, the Patterson was killer! The frame

Since we told R.L. that his opinion wouldn't count on the Red Line (could be biased, you know), he decided to show us what he thought of it. All-purpose, no doubt. High points in the looks department, too.

was THE heaviest we tested, but the forks were THE lightest. Either way, it didn't make a bit of difference. This 24 finished close to the top of the heap.

Dave: "It felt big up front, which gave it some minus points, but it jumps bitchen." . . . "The first pedal is quick. Felt like my Kawie 125 in first gear. Wide open! It's fast. I mean the Patterson is." . . . "Full-on racing bike, and a good thrasher."

R.L.: "The Patterson felt really quick, probably because of the longer cranks." . . . "Comfortable. The gearing is easy, so it felt snappy" . . . "Real

stable. Good handling, but it's big. It fit me really good." . . . "It had a little bit of a strange feeling to it. Like if you have a totally radical car, then you have to think about it more and be careful with it. This felt the same way." . . . "Real torquey!" . . . "Bar position was a little bit too high." . . . "Strictly a race bike."

HUTCH XL-24

Hutch knows how to make an impression. Our test frame and fork was white with purple and chrome componentry—most of it top-o-the-line Hutch. A real looker, for sure.

The XL-24 frame and fork missed being the lightest by ounces. Even though "Destructive Dave" claimed it was more of a racer and not much of a jumper, it would jump if you wanted it to.

What'd we conclude about it? It ranks in the top three of the cruisers we tested. Who knows? It could just as easy be your No. 1.

Dave: "The best racer in my opinion. It wasn't made for high air jumping, it's more of a speed jumper. You could just wheelie . . . BURRR (wheelie noises)." . . . "The bars feel high." . . . "It's light and handles

	WHEELBASE (in inches)	HEAD TUBE ANGLE	SEAT TUBE ANGLE	B.B. HEIGHT (in inches)
GT	39 1/2 to 40 1/2	73°	67°	12 1/2
CW	40 to 41	69°	70°	10 7/8
RED LINE	40 to 40 3/4	73°	68°	11 3/8
PATTERSON	39 to 40	71.5°	67.5°	12 1/4
HUTCH	38 1/2 to 39 1/2	72.5°	74°	11 1/2
GHP	38 1/2 to 41	74°	71.5°	11 7/8
MONGOOSE	38 to 40	72°	71°	11 7/8
POWERLITE	40 1/2 to 41 1/2	70.5°	69.5°	11 3/4



This Gatorade's for you! What a selection of 24s to choose from, huh? (Poor Windy, she had to put up with these clowns.)

MONGOOSE PRO CLASS 24" CRUISER

The bike is CLEAN. You can't beat the spiff lookin' show chrome on it. The Pro Class IS sold either as a frame and fork or as a complete bike totally tricked out with front and rear Dia-Compe MX 901 brakes and those cool Mongoose Pro Class chromo cranks. The bars are 27 inches wide, which are the shortest of 'em all, so that'd be about the only thing to change on it.

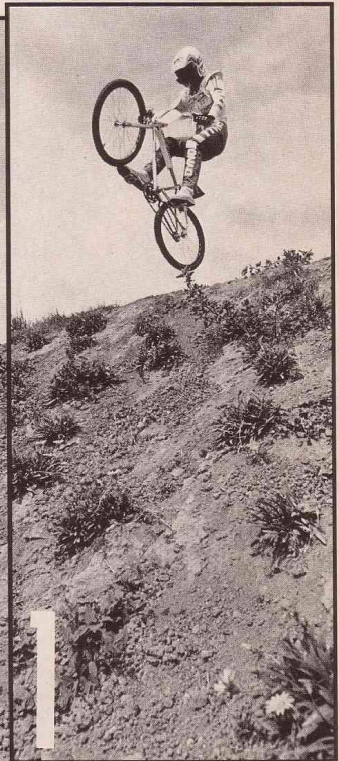
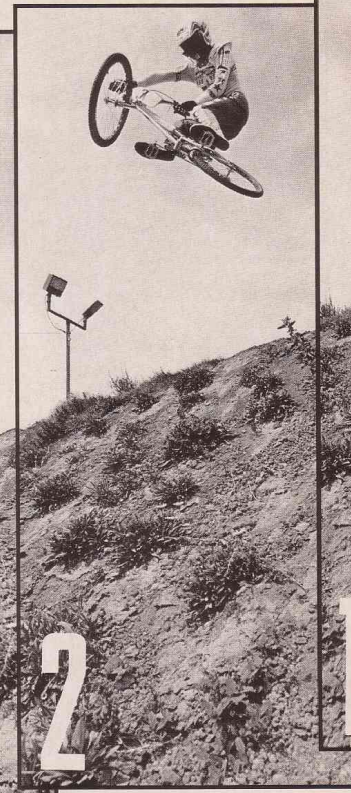
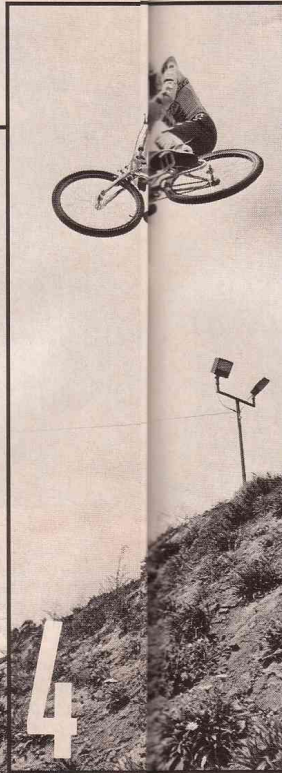
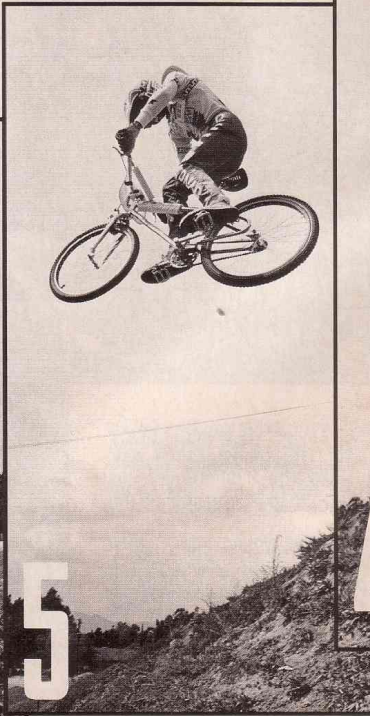
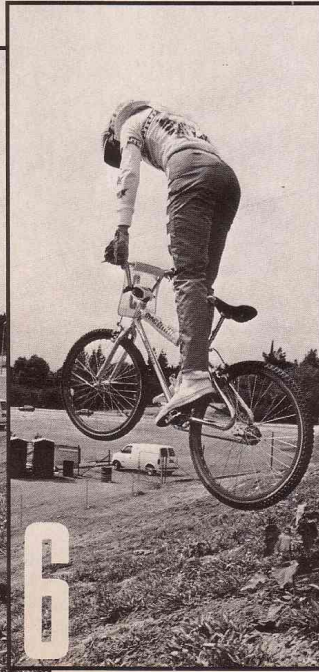
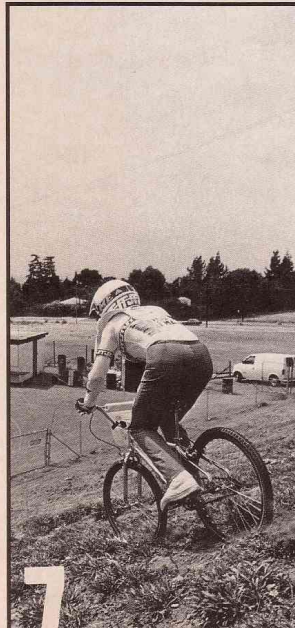
Of course, then there's the spindle. You MIGHT want to switch it if you're intending to do 30 foot cliff jumps like the Culligan Man (check the photo sequence), otherwise forget it. The spindle snapped upon landing and

quick." . . . "It held up the best." . . . "Hutch cranks are good. The stem is bad to the bone! These bars just seem to have that special something." . . . "It's fast."

R.L.: "It was smooth and quick. A good racer." . . . "It handled really good, except for being a little tall for me. It's right there with the Red Line." . . . "It felt very torquey. Sometimes when a bike feels quick, like this one, something's got to be wrong with it. This Hutch is too light! After you get off it, you think something's going to be bent, but it's not. It feels excellent."

This was the third—and last—jump on the 'Goose. On impact, as you can see, Cullinan landed HARD—so hard that the spindle snapped off and the right crank arm went into orbit. We must point out that

this was the ultimate test, far beyond the limits of the sane human beans and even the best machinery, so you probably won't encounter such breakage. The rest of the Mongoose? PERFECT!





Cullinan calls this a "Miranda." Mike taught it to him. Miranda calls it a "Ricky" after Ricky Johnson. We call it RAD!

the crank arm ended up in the next county. Mongoose is looking into it just to be on the safe side, and they'll have it taken care of by the time this mag comes out.

The 'Goose 24 is compact, which makes it an excellent bike for younger dudes. You could even mistake it for

a 20 incher. Gork loved it for street thrashin', and Dave was kinda neutral about it and tweaked it before R.L. got a chance to test it. Check into it and make up your own mind.

Dave: "The bars are too narrow, that's probably why it steers a little funny. Also, the steering may be weird

because the axle/dropout is below the fork, instead of out front like on most bikes." . . . "The bars do have a good bend to 'em, though." . . . "That's SOOO fun (referring to breaking the spindle)."

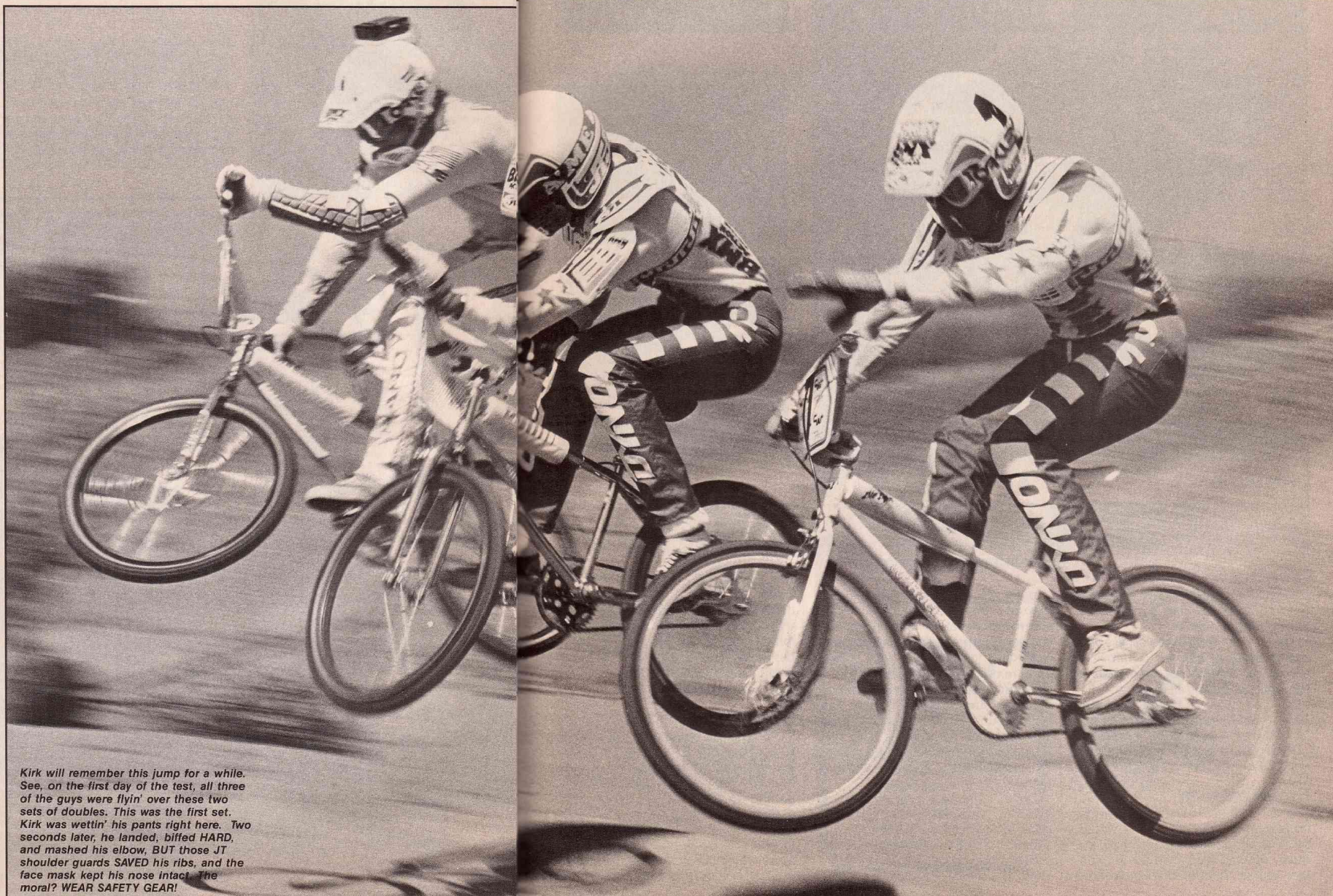
R.L.: "Didn't ride it. Dave broke it first."

POWERLITE S24

You couldn't help but feel sorry for the Powerlite. Cull'nan the Destroyer was FLYIN' on it—getting the highest air of any bike. But when he decided to come back down to earth . . . ouch. The chrome-moly SR cranks were massively bent and the back rim

tacoed. But it doesn't really matter anyways—the Powerlite only comes in a frame and fork, which held up great during the punishment. A major accomplishment.

Simply put, we liked it. According to our testers, there wasn't much it couldn't do. Translation: if you like to



Kirk will remember this jump for a while. See, on the first day of the test, all three of the guys were flyin' over these two sets of doubles. This was the first set. Kirk was wettin' his pants right here. Two seconds later, he landed, biffed HARD, and mashed his elbow, BUT those JT shoulder guards SAVED his ribs, and the face mask kept his nose intact. The moral? WEAR SAFETY GEAR!

CRUISER BAR COMPARISON		
Make	Width (in inches)	Rise (in inches)
GT	29	5
CW	28	6 1/2
RED LINE	29	5 1/2
PATTERSON	28 1/2	8
HUTCH	29	7
GHP	29	6 1/2
MONGOOSE	27	6
POWERLITE	28 1/2	7

GT 24" Cruiser.



CW Cruiser.



Red Line PL-24.



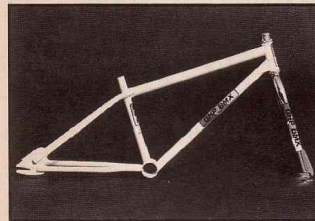
Patterson PR-240.



Hutch XL-24.



GHP 24" Cruiser.



Mongoose Pro Class 24" Cruiser.



Powerlite S24.



PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

	STEERING/ HANDLING	LOOKS/ FINISH	TORQUE/ POWER	OVERALL FEEL	STABILITY IN AIR	OVERALL BIKE
GT	●	●	● to ●	● to ●	●	●
CW	● to ●	● to ●	● to ●	● to ●	●	● to ●
RED LINE	● to ●	● to ●	●	● to ●	●	● to ●
PATTERSON	● to ●	●	●	●	● to ●	●
HUTCH	● to ●	● to ●	● to ●	●	● to ●	● to ●
GHP	●	● to ●	●	●	●	●
MONGOOSE	●	● to ●	●	●	●	●
POWERLITE	●	●	●	●	●	●
RATING:	● Lame	● Semi-Bogus	● Normal	● Cool	● Killer	

thrash, jump, 'style, or race, the S24's got you covered. Just don't let the Culligan Man near it.

Dave: "Felt good in the air, like you would toss it around... throw it anywhere. That's what I did. Toss it flat! I guess I tossed it too much..." "Ugly red tires..." "The bars are hard to get used to with the bends..." "It was a blast while it lasted."

R.L.: "Dave broke it before I got to ride it. I got gyped!"

GT 24" CRUISER

If we had to name the average cruiser out of them all, the GT would be it. It performed capably, nothing more, nothing less. The frame won the highest bottom bracket award,

and the seat tube angle was the most relaxed of any bike tested, which was surprising because GT installed a layback on it. The GT also gets bonus points for being the least expensive frame and fork tested.

To sum it up, it's like at one time the factories started off with a GT and built around it, some making their cruisers better, some worse. This bike resides in the middle ground. Eddie Fiola said it best: "Heck, what'd you expect? It's built for Fehd!"

Dave: "The bars are like broomsticks... very different. They need a little bend to 'em; they're too straight..." "It's THE average racing cruiser. Everything is average..." "With a straight seat post, this bike

would be rad..." "It feels good overall. It's a racin' machine."

R.L.: "The bars didn't have a comfortable bend..." "Snap is bogus, but it had hard gearing..." "It's just a real basic bike—normal handling and normal looks."

WHAT'S LEFT?

Don't let all this info go to waste. Check out some of these 24s for yourself—we guarantee you'll be hooked. We had a blast messin' around on ours.

And you wanna know the best reason for getting a cruiser? You get to ride TWICE as much as you normally would. Or something like that.

Let it be known... cruisers are crit!

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