



# HUFFY SIGMA

*Economical radness for the masses*

■ If you've ever owned a Huffy bicycle, raise your right hand. A lot of people won't admit it, but the fact is, almost everyone has owned or at least ridden a Huffy at some point in their life. This popularity stems from Huffy's reputation for making dependable bicycles at very affordable prices; a prime example is the Huffy Sigma.

Each month we get letters saying, "I would like to start freestyling, but I can't afford a \$300 bicycle." Well, for those readers, the Sigma is the answer. At only \$99 it's no wonder this is the best-selling BMX bike of all time, so this month we're going to run the gauntlet with the Sigma to see how it applies to the beginning freestyler. Now, we're not going to tell you the Sigma is the bike to buy if you plan on hitting the AFA national scene; however, if you want to get started, it could be the hot ticket.

#### GRAPHIC GREATNESS

As soon as we had our Sigma assembled, we began receiving comments on its killer looks. From the bold, futuristic lettering to the space-age plastic wheel covers, this bike is definitely an attention getter. Our bike had a glossy gray paint job, complete with contrasting pink, lavender and white decals. The bike also sports a semi-Euro look with all-white components from the Fukong grips right down to the Cheng Shin knobbies. As neat as they are, the wheel covers aren't a necessary addition for a freestyle scoot, so you might want to remove them to avoid a lot of extra noise and vibration.

#### THE WHO, WHAT AND WHY

When we first set out to evaluate the Sigma, we noticed the huge distance between the rider and the sweptback handlebars. This was due mostly to the 64-degree seat tube angle used in conjunction with a laidback seatpost. In order to accommodate

◀ *The Huffy Sigma is not designed for this. It's better off cruisin' to the 7-Eleven. Larry Manayan tweakin' the Huffy for fun and profit.*



our test rider, we had to turn the post around and narrow the gap. Once our thrash session got under way, we found the Huffy to be somewhat limited in the number of tricks that could be performed. Since the bike has a slow 69 1/2-degree steering angle, any type of move that places emphasis on the front wheel feels a little weird. After a short time

*Balance maneuvers are the one thing the Huffy handles pretty well. Because of some weird frame angles, it could take a little time getting used to, but with the addition of a few trick bolt-ons, the Sigma could be a decent beginner bike.*

on the bike, test monkey Larry Manayan mentioned that the Huffy responded pretty

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Mongoose factory radsters Chris Lushua, Karl Rörthe, Trevor Hernandez and Tony Laurent of Jeff Kutash's Splash.

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well to some of the more basic tricks, such as roll-backs, front-brake endos and track-stands. The bike, which comes equipped with both front and rear hand brakes, as well as a coaster brake, has the potential to perform several ground tricks if set up with the proper accessories and better brakes. During our testing, we found we couldn't exactly rely on the Polygon calipers to repeatedly carry out their rim-grabbing duties.

### THE BIG LETDOWN

Or, in this case, the big drop-in. With two days of torture under its belt, the Huffly was beginning to show a lot of wear and tear. This was due mostly to a lack of quality components, but for 99 bucks what do you expect? At this point, damage was still minor—a bent rim here, a busted reflector there—but now it was time for the final test. After going through the same ol' test routine, we began searching for a new, radically uplifting thrash zone. Then it dawned on us! The same five-foot-high concrete wall we had been using as a backdrop for our ground photos would also make a perfect perch for an aerial



Although limited to flatland antics, the coaster brake on the Sigma allows you to do some pretty stylish stuff. ▶

### SPECIFICATIONS:

### HUFFY SIGMA

**angle:** 69-1/2°  
**Seat tube angle:** 64°  
**Bottom bracket height:** 11" (center to ground)  
**III. DRIVE TRAIN**  
**Pedals:** Shimano PD-S300.  
**Cranks:** Generic, steel, 165mm.  
**Bottom bracket:** Generic, steel.  
**Chain:** Generic, 1/8".  
**IV. WHEELS**  
**Rims:** Generic, steel.  
**Spokes:** Steel, 80-gauge.  
**Hubs:** Generic, steel body, steel axle.  
**Tires:** Cheng Shin, 20" x 1.75".  
**Coaster brake:** Sun-Tour 19T, chromoly.  
**V. STEERING**  
**Grips:** Fukong.  
**Handlebars:** Generic, mild steel.  
**Headset:** Mild steel.

**Stem:** Mild-steel shaft, alloy head.  
**VI. SEATING**  
**Seat:** Permaco, nylon saddle.  
**Seatpost:** Mild steel.  
**Seatpost clamp:** Mild steel.  
**VII. BRAKES**  
**Calipers:** Polygon MX (1000 type).  
**Levers:** Polygon (Tech-4 type).  
**VIII. EXTRAS**  
**Wheel covers:** Generic.  
**CPSC equipment included:** Yes (reflectors and chain guard).  
**IX. MISCELLANEOUS**  
**Weight:** 31 lbs.  
**Sugg. retail price:** \$99.  
**Country of origin:** Taiwan.

**X. ADDITIONAL INFO**  
Huffy Corp.  
P.O. Box 171082  
Dayton, OH 45401-1082



### I. FRAME AND FORK

**Type:** Freestyle.  
**Frame design:** Single top and down tubes.  
**Frame construction:** Mild steel.  
**Diameter of top tube:** 1-1/8" O.D.  
**Diameter of down tube:** 1-1/4" O.D.

### Diameter of chain stays:

5/8" O.D.  
**Fork construction and design:** Tubular steel, 1-1/8" O.D.  
**Diameter of fork blades:** 1-5/8" O.D.  
**II. GEOMETRY**  
**Wheelbase:** 35" to 36".  
**Steering head**

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assault. As we started toward the top of the wall, our fearless test rider began mumbling something about how he didn't trust the pedals and how he had hoped to someday have a family. With this in mind, we kept encouraging him to remember all the fame and fortune that goes along with being a member of the Test Society. This, of course, brought a new-found sense of bravery into Larry's head. With the bike now balanced on the edge of the wall, everyone said a few Hall Marys and grimaced in anticipation of the upcoming destruction. To our surprise, the bike targeted ground zero, and with a few straining maneuvers, continued on its way. After close inspection, it appeared the Sigma hadn't quite survived as well as first thought—bent forks, tweaked cranks and two pancaked rims headed the list of damages.

## NO NAME CALLING HERE

Keep in mind, this was cruel and unusual punishment for a bike whose intended purpose is that of a street beater. We don't recommend this zooter for competitive uses, but if you're the average ten- to 15-year-old urban guerrilla, the Sigma will probably last until you can save enough for a better bike. If the Sigma is all you have or all you can afford right now, use it with caution. The brazed-together frame and single-thickness steel rims won't take a great deal of serious abuse. ■



Most of the componentry on the Sigma is regular dime-store issue. The sweptback bars and hard-rubber grips are not among the bike's finer features.

## HUFFY SIGMA MAKING DO

• For those of you who already own a Sigma, here are a few bolt-on ideas that could greatly add to the versatility of your bike.

1. Rear standing devices. Both the axle-peg-type and the full-on platforms work great. Without rear standers, tricks such as lawnmowers and backwards wheelies are virtually impossible.

2. Front standing devices. Since the Sigma comes with a smaller-than-normal front axle, you'll want to get the bolt-on-type standers.



3. Detangling system. This could involve a series of improvements ranging from a hollow-bolt stem and reverse-mounted front caliper, to a high-zoot front and rear detangler which would include some type of rotor.

4. Frame stand platform. This item will make it possible to do the famous frame-stand. Although not the most complex of tricks, it's always a jaw dropper to those who have never seen it performed.

All these accessories can be added for a small investment, or you can pick them up one at a time. The best part is, if you become a more serious stylist, you can take the add-ons with you. •

During a quick warm-up, Larry started throwing the Sigma into some Miami hopper variations; however, after just a few attempts, the generic steel rims began cringing with unhappiness.

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