

KUWAHARA E.T.

DOES THE E.T. REALLY FLY?

Unless a weird lookin' squiggly toad has just kissed you full on the lips — yucch — waking you from a super-long enchantment, you probably already know about Elliott and his extra terrestrial buddy. The *E.T.* movie may do for BMX what *Urban Cowboy* did for honky-tonkin' and dressin' up down-home like. You better believe we're gonna be seein' a bunch more kids on BMX bikes.

BMXA grabbed the first available Kuwahara E.T. to reach our shores for an exclusive first look.

Here's a quick recap of what went down in coming up with the bikes that went up, up, and away in the movie. In June of 1981 the producers of the movie, Steven Spielberg (who also directed) and Kathy Kennedy had picked a particular bike model to use. They asked for an opinion from the 12 year old nephew of a staff member. He told them they made a lame pick. When they asked him what he would suggest, he said Kuwahara. The producers then polled about twenty kids. Kuwahara won the poll.

Universal Studios decided to track down Kuwahara. They called the factory in Japan. Those guys told 'em to call Everything Bicycles, the American distributor and designer of Kuwahara bikes. The studio requested a special model bike for the movie. Everything Bicycles' Howie Cohen took about three milliseconds to think it over and say yes.

The film company laid a ton of art boards on Howie and said be fruitful and multiply or something like that. Howie scooped up about 100 bare frames and hired a paint shop for a

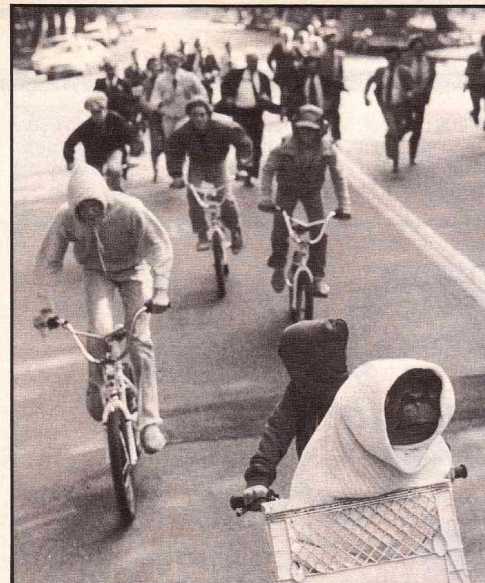


Your basic everyday movie star bicycle. How 'bout an autograph?

day. That netted him 25 different variations of the red-and-white scooter the producers were after. The studio said: "Ah, yes, this is exceedingly fine. Let's roll." Then Universal entered into an exclusive licensing agreement with Kuwahara and Everything Bicycles for E.T. model bikes.

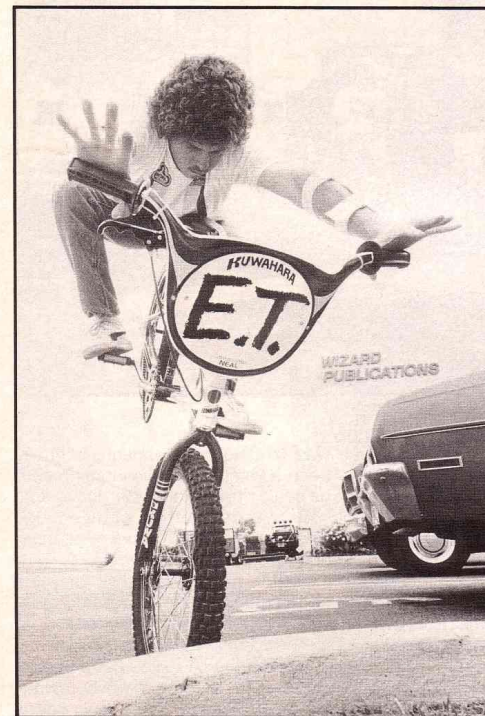
The E.T. project began with a KZ

chrome-moly frame. However, the production E.T. isn't a red and white KZ. Kuwahara decided to give the bike more mass market appeal — a lower price. They went with less expensive high-tensile steel (which has a higher carbon content than mild steel). Kuwahara also decided on a loop-type rear end on the frame to reduce welding costs. The KZ's

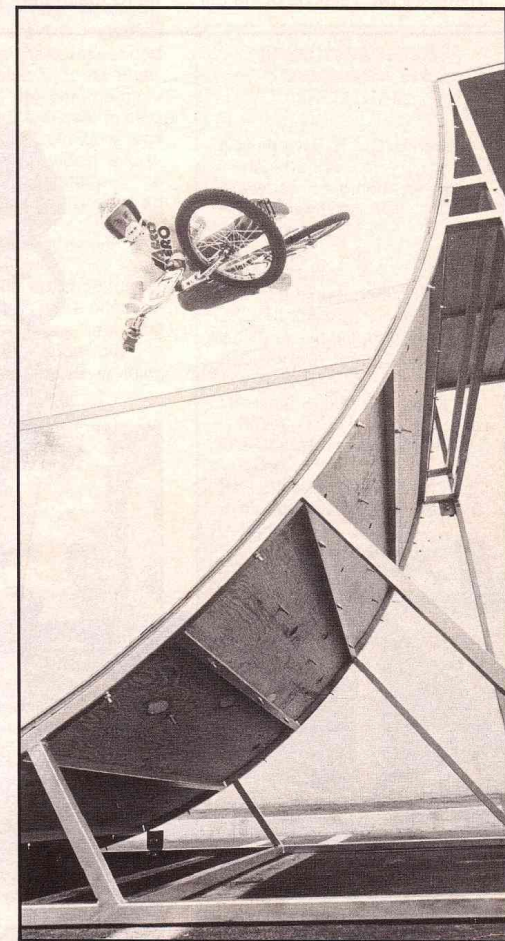


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If you don't know what happens next, you're in for a big surprise when you see the movie.



An Exceptionally Trick finger lifter curb endo on the E.T. . . . Get it?



Kuwahara's street bike got stratospherified in a hurry on the new super-huge quarter-pipe ramp the Trick Team calls "Kong."

race-proven geometry was virtually duplicated. However, the front section was shortened slightly to widen the bike's age-range appeal.

SunTour helped a bunch in getting the bike ready for marketing. Some component changes were made after the film was shot in August and September of 1981. Dia-Compe Tech II levers weren't available then.

KUWAHARA E.T.

Neither were the KKT AMX pedals. Both of these items appear on the production unit.

There are two versions of the E.T.

The high-tensile E.T. is a DP bike. Dual purpose. Street and dirt, just like Elliott used it in the movie. And its KZ-based geometry makes it a

They fit the new axles, made sure everything was bolted down tight, and returned the bike. Buff went out and tried to bend the axle again. He



Can the Kuwahara E.T. really fly? Yup.

The aluminum-wheeled E.T. Original shown in this article sells for about \$260. There's also a steel-wheeled E.T. Replica that goes for about \$225.

The E.T. joins two other new models in the Kuwahara lineup. The KY Thrasher and the KE, a tri-moly (chrome-moly front triangle) econo-racer that sells for under \$300. The KZ-1 (aluminum crankset) and KZ-2 (chrome-moly crankset) are the two totally 4130 chrome-moly racers in the lineup. There's also a KM-1 Mini, a pint-sized chrome-moly 20-incher.

suitable beginner/novice racer.

The first thing R.L. and Buff did when they climbed on the E.T. was street it. Of course, to them, street means hauling the ramps outside and lettin' loose.

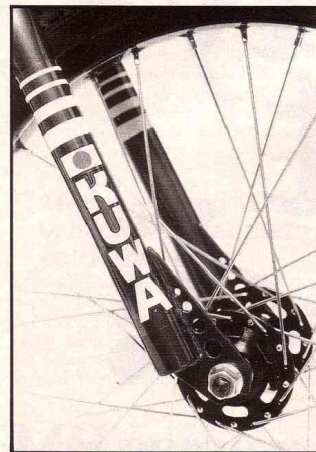
Naturally, with our gang, testing means taking it to the limits. After the fifth jump off the ramp, E.T. was standing for essential trubs. The rear axle bent.

Upon hearing the news, Kuwahara decided to go with heat-treated axles (front and rear) in the production units.

was landing hard enough to finally bend a tough Ukai aluminum rim, but he couldn't tweak the rear end again.

But another trub showed up. Choppered forks. They were bending out from the jump landings.

At this point Everything Bicycles began considering a chrome-moly fork. Kevin McNeal was hired to test the new fork. His instructions: If you can break the bike, you get a bonus. Big Key (all 200 pounds) borrowed the Trick Team's ramp and spent a couple of hours going berserk. Nothing broke. That clinched it. The



As a result of our testing, the E.T. will be marketed with an all chrome-moly fork.

chrome-moly fork was ordered for production.

Admittedly, ramp jumping is a pretty harsh test for what is essentially a dirtable street bike. However, all you rad readers out there benefited because Kuwahara responded to our input by going with the heat-treated axles and the chrome-moly fork. As a result, we feel safe in saying the Kuwahara E.T. can take tons of punishment — provided everything is bolted together tightly.

Our riding sessions produced comments like:

"Basically, it's a great design."

"It's a neat street bike."

"It's fine for a kid up to about 15.

Put a gooseneck with more offset on it and maybe a bentback seat post and it'd be perfect for larger guys."

"I'd change the grips. Everything else is fine."



We wanted to restage one of the scenes in the movie, so we had an E.T. look-alike contest to see who would ride on the bars. Buffy won.

After testing, we tried dreaming up new meanings for the E.T. initials. How about Extra Terrific? Buff may have paid it the ultimate compliment.

SPECIFICATIONS: KUWAHARA E.T. ORIGINAL

Kuwahara E.T. high-tensile steel frame
Kuwahara chrome-moly fork
Kusuki handlebar
Sugino stem
OGK grips
Hatta headset
Ukai aluminum rims
36/.080 spokes
SunTour aluminum hubs
IRC skinwall tires (2.125 front, 1.75 rear)
Dia-Compe 890 rear caliper brake
Dia-Compe Tech II brake lever
KKT AMX (chrome-moly shaft, studded aluminum platform) pedals
Sugino one-piece, high-tensile steel crank, 178mm
Hatta bottom bracket set
Sugino 44T steel chainwheel
Sugino chrome-moly spider
SunTour freewheel
Tahei Elina seat
Nagaoka fluted aluminum seat post
SunTour forged aluminum seat post clamp
Optional E.T. number plate (by Neal)
Optional E.T. safety pads (by California Lite)
Bicycle weight (without pads or plate) 27 pounds, 5 ounces
Approximate retail price: \$260
For more info: See your Kuwahara local dealer or have your dealer contact Everything Bicycles.

He suggested that E.T. really stood for Exceptionally Tact.

We can't guarantee that you can fly on an E.T., but for plain ol' everyday (this is reality) streetin' and messin' around, the E.T. looks Exceptionally Tempting. ■