

KUWAHARA SURVIVOR

IS IT TOUGH ENOUGH TO SURVIVE THE NURD HERD?

Testing bikes is DEFINITELY one of the more outrageous parts of working for Mighty BMX. Imagine having a totally trick, sparkling new bike delivered to your door every month so that you can blissfully try to pound it into oblivion. Just the thought of it kinda gets the ol' blood cookin'. Besides, we're just like anyone else. We'd rather be out having fun riding instead of sittin' in the office wailin' away on the typewriters.

Of course, our veteran test technicians, R.L. Osborn and Mike Buff, claim that they're just doing their civic duty to the BMX community by ampin' out on these new machines to see whether the bikes will hold up under "normal" use. We know better. They CRAVE doing dastardly deeds to test vehicles. They should be charged with felony bike brutality.

When we checked with Kuwahara to see what kind of bike they had for us to test, and we heard they had one called the Survivor, you KNOW R.L. and Buff were drooling. They had to



WAHOO! You gotta believe R.L. was haulin' buns when we shot this photo! You also gotta believe there is no way the Nurd Herd would have ridden the Kuwahara on the downhill at Craters if its handling had not been perfecto-mundo.



The Kuwahara Survivor is a gas to ride. And isn't that what we're all in this for in the first place?

KUWAHARA SURVIVOR

see if it could survive the kind of punishment only they can dish out.

Before we let the Nerd Herd loose on it, let's check it out.

WHAT HAVE WE GOT HERE?

What Kuwahara is trying to do with the Survivor is build a qual bike that's competitive for racing, able to handle lots of off-track thrashing, and priced so that it doesn't cost you an arm, leg, and two or three fingers off your OTHER hand.

It checks in at a couple cents less than 300 frogskins, which is pretty cool. And even though the Survivor is \$150 less than Kuwahara's TOTALLY zoot-capri Laser Lite, the quality isn't circling the drain. It shares a BUNCH of the same componentry — frame, fork, bars, tires, seat, seat post, seat post clamp,

grips, and . . . well, you get the idea.

Let's scan the Survivor from top to bottom and scrutinize its highlights.

At 27 inches wide, the handlebars are just a bit narrow in light of current handlebar width trends (even though 28 inches is supposedly the widest you can LEGALLY use), but the bends feel good.

(Psst! Don't tell anyone we told you, but if you WANT to make this or any brand of bars wider for some more pulling power, Buff's brother Steve, who owns The Bicycle Source, mentioned that those Galindo Bar End Pro-Tectors also make good bar EXTENDERS.)

The grips? Yecch. They're hard vinyl. Kinda lame shape, too.

The Elina Aero Turbo seat is comfortable and durable.

The Kuwahara chrome-moly lay-back seat post, pro-size bars, and fairly long wheelbase of the frame combine to give you the feeling that this bike is sized for dudes in the 14 and over range. But the Sugino alu-

minum and chrome-moly stem is a tad short for that age group. Yeah, it works just fine, but everything on this bike is full-size and this stem is sort of a mid-size component.

The frame and fork are Kuwahara's KZ-84 units which are pretty spiff indeed. The top and down tubes of the frame are ovalized, and use triple-buttet tubing. That means the wall thickness of these tubes varies in three places along their lengths to supply maximum strength at the stress points while keeping weight to a minimum. The tubes are thickest where they meet the head tube, thinnest in the middle, and somewhere in between in the rearward third where the tubes join at the bottom bracket and seat tube.

Braking is done with a great Dia-Compe Tech 3 lever and what would be a standard Dia-Compe caliper, except that it has a Centron centering adjuster added to it.

This adjuster is GREAT at keeping the brake shoes off the rim and



This is one of the hottest photos we got all year of little guys. We've been looking for an excuse to run it and now we've got one. Is 11 year old Deric Garcia unreal, or what? Photo taken in St. Louis last summer.

Photo by Bob Osborn

PRICE & SPECS

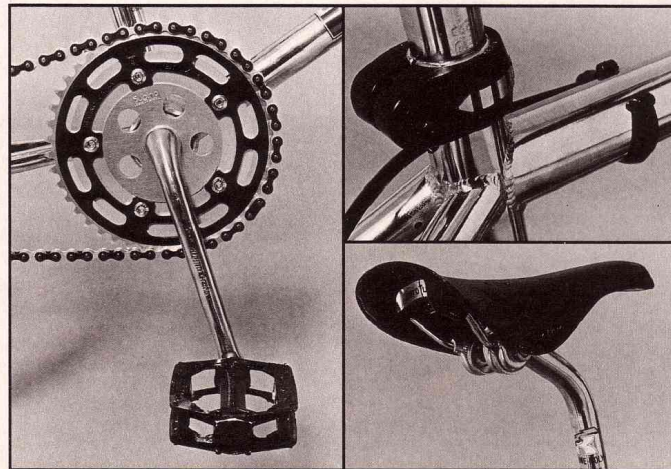
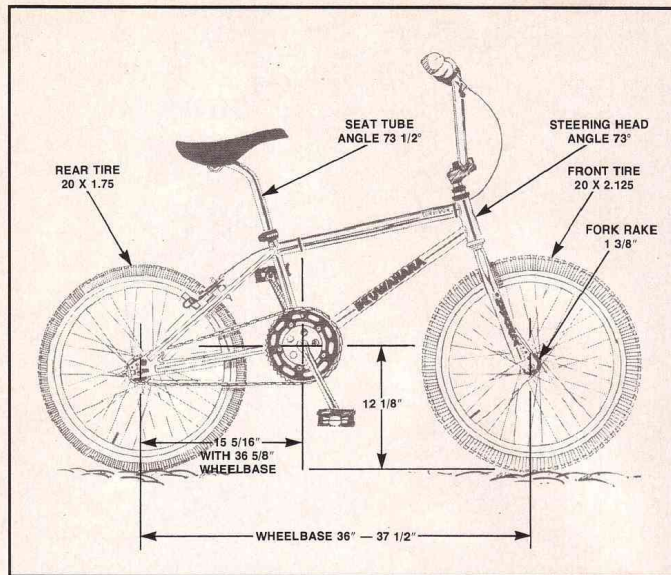
COMPLETE BIKE PRICE: \$299.98.
FINISHES AVAILABLE: Chrome frame and fork with black components, or black frame and fork with silver components.
COMPLETE BIKE WEIGHT (without pads or plate): 24 pounds, 3 ounces.
FRAME WEIGHT: 4 pounds, 4 1/2 ounces.
FORK WEIGHT: 1 pound, 10 ounces.
STEERING HEAD TUBE LENGTH: 4 inches.
HANDLEBAR RISE (C/L of stem clamp to C/L of grip area): 8 3/4 inches.
HANDLEBAR WIDTH: 27 inches.
TOP TUBE O.D.: 1 3/8 inch, oval.
DOWN TUBE O.D.: 1 3/8 inch, oval.
FORK LEG O.D.: 1 inch, oval with flat front and rear.
BOTTOM BRACKET SIZE: Large.

COMPONENTS

FRAME: Kuwahara KZ-84, chrome-moly.
FORK: Kuwahara KZ-84, chrome-moly.
HANDLEBAR: Kuwahara Laser Bars, chrome-moly.
HANDLEBAR STEM: Sugino, aluminum and chrome-moly.
GRIPS: O.G.K. Cobra, vinyl.
HEADSET: Hatta MX-II.
RIMS: Ukai, aluminum.
SPOKES: 36, .080.
HUBS: SunTour, aluminum, low-flange.
TIRES: IRC.
BRAKE: Dia-Compe with Centron centering adjuster.
BRAKE PADS: Dia-Compe.
BRAKE LEVER: Dia-Compe Tech 3.
BRAKE CABLE: Dia-Compe.
PEDALS: KKT SMX, aluminum and chrome-moly.
CRANK: Sugino, one-piece forged chrome-moly, 180mm.
BOTTOM BRACKET SET: Hatta MX-II.
FRONT SPROCKET: Sugino aluminum chainwheel, 44 teeth.
SPIDER: Sugino powerdisc, aluminum.
FREEWHEEL: SunTour, 16 teeth.
CHAIN: Izumi, 1/8 inch.
SEAT: Elina Aero Turbo.
SEAT POST: Kuwahara Laser Post, lay-back, chrome-moly.
SEAT POST CLAMP: SunTour Arrow, aluminum.
ACCESSORIES: Chain adjuster on drive-side rear dropout.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

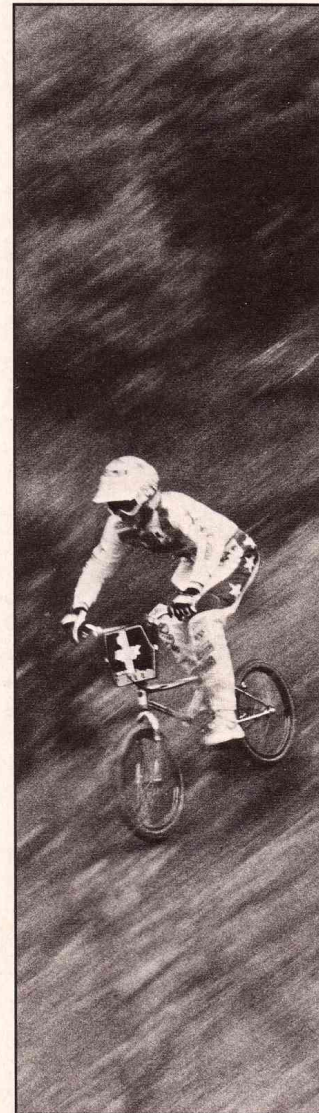
PURPOSE: Racing (up to and including expert), quality street.
AGE RANGE: 14 and over racing, 13 and over street.
QUALITY OF FINISH: Excellent.
QUALITY OF WELDING: Excellent.
QUALITY OF COMPONENTRY: Good to very good.
GEOMETRY: Excellent.



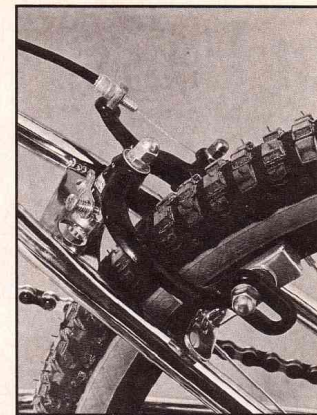
HANDLING: Totally neutral in cornering and jumping . . . Slides great . . . Speed jumps fine . . . The IRC knobs worked fine . . . All-around good handling bike.
MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS: Slotted brake bracket and long dropouts give you lots of wheelbase adjustability . . . The chain adjuster on the drive side of the rear axle is a nice touch . . . The headset cups fit perfectly . . . The bottom bracket cups fit a little too snugly, and the chrome was starting to flake slightly around the outside of the bottom bracket shell . . . The front wheel fits perfectly in the forks and the rear wheel can use about 1/8" spacing to fine-tune the alignment . . . The nut for the cable pinch bolt on the caliper is made from aluminum and strips out easily — replace

it with a steel one from a Dia-Compe MX caliper . . . Your hands will thank you if you replace the grips.
TEST INPUT: R.L. Osborn, Mike Buff, Steve Giberson, Bob Osborn, and a little bit from Deric Garcia and Scott Clark.
DISTRIBUTOR: Everything Bicycles
 23145 Kashiwa Ct.
 Torrance, California
 90505
 (213) 325-6300

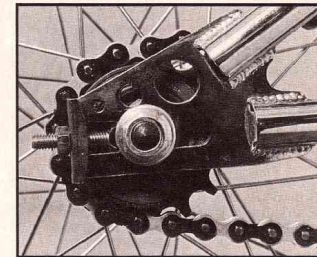
KUWAHARA SURVIVOR



This is Mrs. Buff's fave son on the mind-boggling downhill at Craters. You get going so fast down this thing that sometimes the G-forces at the bottom will cause a tire to blow. Had there been ANY handling problems with the Kuwahara, we would have heard from Buff and R.L. IMMEDIATELY! We guessed that they were hitting over 50 MPH at the bottom. Holy chrome-moly, Batman!



The Centron adjuster keeps the Dia-Compe caliper centered so the brake shoes do not drag on the rim.



The Kuw comes with a chain adjuster on the sprocket side of the rear wheel. It keeps the rear wheel from moving out of line when you're powering out of the gate.

it's totally easy to use. Just fiddle with the Phillips screw till the caliper is centered where you want it. Viola! Braking action is good, though not up to par with the beefier Dia-Compe MX caliper.

Wheels are built-up using SunTour low-flange, free-ball hubs, Ukai rims, .080 spokes and IRC tires. All qual goodies.

A nice addition is the chain adjuster on the sprocket side of the rear wheel. It helps keep the rear wheel from moving out of line when you're torquing out of the gate.

There's some trick stuff in the bottom bracket area. Let's see, there's the KKT SMX platform pedals, which have lots of foot support and good gripion, Sugino's 180mm one-piece forged chrome-moly cranks, and a Sugino powerdisc.

By now you're probably wonderin' if the Survivor is also a performer. Read on, buckaroos. R.L. and Buff



CHECKERBOLTS

The latest, hottest pad of all. If you can't get 'em, write us: ZAP PADS, 3000 Commonwealth Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32303.

ZAP PADS

THE INCREDIBLE LIGHTWEIGHT ELINA U.L. JUST GOT LIGHTER.

How do you make one of the lightest seats in BMX even lighter? Put it on a lightweight high-strength glass fiber seat post. Well that's exactly what we did to the Elina U.L. and now it tips the scales at a mere 12 ounces. But this new Elina U.L. isn't a lightweight when it comes to performance, the glass fiber post is practically unbreakable and is permanently mounted to the seat in a heavily reinforced bracket to provide a rigid solid one-piece unit.

The Elina U.L. is available in blue or black with the glass fiber post with checkerboard graphics or on a chrome plated cro-moly post.

Elina U.L.



Distributors contact:
Teel, Inc.
550 Commerce St.
Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417

Outside United States:
Circle Corp.
405 Wakabayashi Bldg.
1-1-22, Kaino Cho West
Sakai, Osaka, Japan

KUWAHARA SURVIVOR

are licking their chops and ready to go.

THE DOWNHILL DEMOLITION TEST

We jammed down from our mist-shrouded mountaintop headquarters to "Craters," a place that's a little ways down the street from Oz's personal castle. Craters used to be a rock quarry, but now it's been taken over by BMX'ers, ATC riders, and motocrossers. It's got tons of trails, berms, some killer hills — just about anything you'd care to name. Scott Clark went along with us 'cause he'd just moved from Northern California to So. Cal. so he could get REALLY serious about his racing career, and he wanted to check out some of our hot riding places.

When we got there, everyone started scouting around for a really hot place to shoot photos. Scott hiked up to the top of the biggest hill there, which looks something like a takeoff ramp for ski jumpers. After catching his breath, Scott hopped on his scoot, jammed at mega-warp speed straight to the bottom, shot up the hill on the other side, and then laid the bike over into an awesome speedway slide. Whooo-ee! We were in business!

Believe us, that downhill was the GNARLIEST! Flying down it was almost like free falling nine stories. Let's put it this way — we can talk Buff into going for almost ANYTHING, but it took us a while to coax him into trying this 'un.

Standing at the bottom of the hill, all you would hear was this big whhhooosshhh as Scott, R.L., and Buff took turns blazing past. One time Scott caught so many G's at the bottom, his tire blew when it bottomed out and pinched the tube.

If there had been the slightest flaw in the geometry of the Survivor, it would have become IMMEDIATELY evident.

Not one showed up. Buff mentioned that the Survivor was real easy to get used to, and that it didn't take hardly any time at all to work up his confidence on.

R.L. said that it felt like a good all-around bike, like it'd be cool for both racing AND freestyle.

We don't have to tell you that it



With a few minor mods, like adding a front caliper and rear coaster brake, the Kuwahara would make a primo trick bike. Curb endo by Raccoon Lips.

handled berm shots with no prob. All you have to do is check out the photos in this test to confirm that.

Cornering is neutral. It won't give you any static if you decide to change lines in the middle of a corner.

Jumping is totally predictable. Absolutely no surprises.

There's mucho ground clearance, so pedal forever going into corners and over jumps.

Power position is good, but older, gorilla-sized dudes will prefer a stem with more forward reach. Guys in

the 13-14 range won't need to make the switch.

SHOULD YOU BUY ONE?

Let's see. Nothing got thrashed, so it's definitely poundable. The Survivor's got lots of qual componentry, so it's really nice for the price. But probably more than anything else, it's a good bike whether you're into racing, dabbling with freestyle, or just out thrashing around.

Mostly the Survivor is a gas to ride. And isn't that what we're all in this for in the first place? ■

FREE FLITE BMX

MAIL ORDER SPECIALIST

Fast Service • Super Prices
C.O.D. Orders Accepted
Visa & Master Card



SEND \$1.00 FOR 1984 MAIL ORDER CATALOG TO:
FREE FLITE BMX
1950 Canton Rd.
Dept. BMXA
Marietta, GA 30066
(404) 422-5237

SHIMANO • SKYWAY • MONGOOSE
MCS • CYCLE PRO • HUTCH • GTI BMX
BULLSEYE • HARO • UNI • ZAP • CW
CLIFFSIDE CYCLE CENTER
PHONE ORDERS ACCEPTED
VISA • MASTERCARD
SEND \$1.00 FOR THE ALL NEW 1984 CATALOG
FOREIGN REQUESTS \$2.00
FAST SHIPPING
CLIFFSIDE CYCLE CENTER
669 PALISADE AVENUE
CLIFFSIDE PARK, N.J. 07010
(201) 943-8835
P. K. RIPPER • REDLINE • DIAMOND BACK



LIGHTNING

We'll supply the lightning. You supply the thunder. If you can't get 'em, write us: ZAP PADS, 3000 Commonwealth Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32303.

