## 29,565 DAYS OF BICYCLE KNOW-HOW

☐ A long, long time ago (1916 to be exact), in a land far, far away (Osaka, Japan), a company was founded. Not just any company, but a bicycle company. It humbly started out selling bikes to neighbors and nearby bike shops. As time progressed the company grew, and 62 years later, ventured into the fastgrowing BMX market. With the help of bicycle experts R.L. Osborn, Frank Post, Kevin McNeal and Bob "Trash Can" Morgan, it introduced its first race bike, the top-of-the-line KZ 1 in December of 1979. Now, nine years after that first race bike, it's still in the thick of the BMX biz. The name of its top-notch race bike has changed over the years, but the name of the company hasn't . . Kuwahara! Introducing . . . the Laserlite

### BIT BY BIT

This year's Laserlite comes in either a green-white-and-chrome combo or the pink-white-and-chrome version that we had. A brief rundown of the parts includes Ukai rims laced to Sansin

It's not pretty,

# KUWAHARA

but it's good

sealed-bearing hubs, a SunTour seatpost clamp, a Kuwahara laidback post, Dia-Compe Nippon brakes in the rear, 28-1/2-inch wide Kuwahara bars with imitation A'ME Tri grips slipped on, an Anlun stem with the Kuwie logo emblazoned on the clamp, and 180mm Anlun three-piece chromoly cranks with a sealed bottom bracket. This bike was definitely set up with the bigger rider in mind! We hadn't had much experience recently with Anlun cranks, so we were anxious to see how they'd hold up under some heavy thrashing. Based on looks alone, we figured that the Laserlite was in for a long day of testing. In other words, we were skeptical of a few of the components. It's a good thing for us that we make our living as magazine editors and not as psychics. Otherwise we'd be living in boxes in a grungy alley!

TESTING, 1, 2, 3, TESTING

The official BMX Plus! Test Force of the day included Scott Towne, Todd Britton, and Mike Miranda. Miranda's back

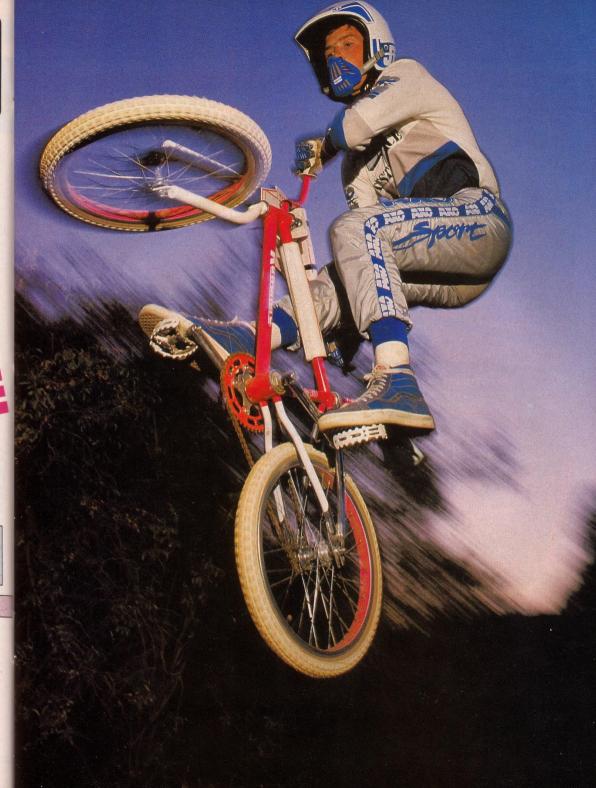
and was ready to loft some style for the cameras (as were Scott and Todd)!

After taking the bike for a few quick laps, we lowered the stem as far as it would go. The front end seemed to be a little high, but it was fine after the minor stem adjustment. (We told you it was a big-guy's bike.) Getting speed on the Laserlite was no problem at all! The gearing was 44-16, but this thing accelerated fast! The overall light weight

BMX funnyman, CW Freestyle's team manager and this month's guest Test Force rider Mike Miranda. He may be semi retired, but this picture proves he can still jump with the best of them.

Todd Britton, associate editor and bikethrasher extraordinaire, lofts the Laserlite through the twilight at "Roscoe." The bike took all the abuse our Test Force could nive it ▶







# **KUWAHARA**

definitely didn't hurt the bike's need for speed. One problem, however, was the Cheng Shin tires. They would not grip! That made cornering and landing extremely difficult. Switching to some real Comp Ills is the best wish you could grant the Laserlite.

Even with the not-so-hot tires, the guys had no problem jumping for their lives. The handling in the air was great! It was totally neutral in the air. It didn't endo and it didn't loop. In fact, Scott pulled off his first no-hander ever! He wouldn't have even considered it if the bike didn't handle. The head honchos at Kuwahara told us that this year's Laserlite has the same geometry as the bikes Gary Ellis and Clint Miller rode to World Championship titles in 1983. World Champs are very particular when it comes to the bike they ride, so that says a lot for the Kuwie.

The Anlun stem kept slipping on us. Not a lot, but just enough to bother the riders. We gorilla-tightened the stem, and it held for a while. Considering the altitude the guys were getting and the sometimes not-so-smooth landings, then it wasn't so bad. Greasing the threads would help. The big surprise of the day was the Ukai rims. After an entire day of testing, the rims were still totally straight! Rims are usually the first things to head south when we test a bike, but not on the Kuwahara. These rims are strong! Whoever builds the wheels for these bikes should be given a raise! Another A-plus on the Kuwahara report card went to the Dia-Compe Nippon brakes. Even after the rims became dusty, dirty and grimy, the brakes could still stop on a dime. The lever was a little too long and straight for our tastes.

If you're a proud Laserlite owner, just make sure you grease the threads on the stem before you ride. Once you've done that, you shouldn't have to mess with it.



■ Before the test began, we would have bet money that the laidback seatpost would bend after only a few jumps. But it's a good thing we weren't in Vegas, or we would have loot!

though. Bending the lever is a quick and painless cure to hitting your knuckles when pulling in the lever.

Although tons of bikes have them, including the Laserlite, the fake A'ME grips are the worst! We can't understand why so many bikes have them. All of our



I. FRAME AND FORK
Type: Racing, age range 13
and over.
Frame design: 1-1/8" O.D.
top tube, 1-1/4" O.D. down

top tube, 1-1/4" O.D. down tube. Frame construction: 4130 chromoly.

chromoly.

Fork construction: Chromoly, tubular, leading-axle design, 1-1/8" O.D., fork legs.

Wheelbase: 36-1/4" to 37-3/4".

Bottom bracket height: 1'
(center of bottom bracket to
ground).
Chain stay length: 15-1/4"
(center of bottom bracket to
midpoint of rear dropouts).

II. WHEELS
RIms: Ukai Silversides.
Hubs: Sansin, sealed.
Tires: Chen Shin, 20">

front and rear.
Freewheel: Sunfour chromoly.
III. DRIVE TRAIN
Pedals: Victor, bear

9/16" chromoly shaft.
Cranks: Anlun, 3-piece,
180mm, chromoly.
Front sprocket: Kuwahar
447, alloy, with Anlun allo spider.
Bottom bracket: Anlun, s

Bottom bracket: Anlun, s ed bearing. Chain: KMC, 1/2" ×3/32" IV. STEERING

IV. STEERING Grips: A'ME Tri type. Handlebars: Kuwahara, 28-1/2" by 8-1/2" rise. Stem: Anlun, alloy clamp, chromoly shaft. SEATING Seat: Viscount Dyna. Seatpost: Kuwahara,

Seatpost clamp: SunTour.
VI. BRAKES
Callpers: Dia-Compe Nippon
(rear only).

(rear only).
Levers: Tech 6.
VII. ACCESSORIES
Kuwahara padset

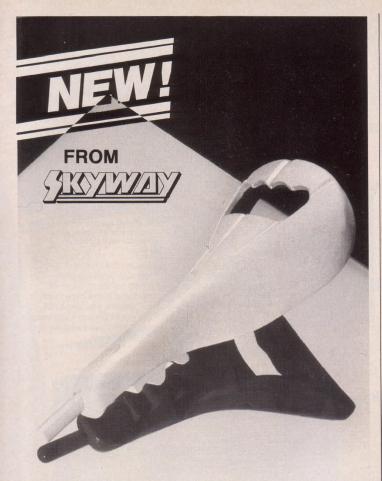
23-1/2 lbs. IX. PRICE

\$360. X. COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Japan.

XI. ADDITIONAL INFO
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# KUWAHARA



The Anlun cranks held up great considering the pounding they took. The spindle bent slightly, but the arms and bottom bracket stayed tight the entire day.

testers were wearing gloves and still couldn't keep a grip on the bars. Highquality grips are the only way to go.

The Anlun crank arms held up great. They didn't loosen, bend or twist during the entire day of testing. However, the spindle twisted after a few harsh landings. We were not kind to this bike, but it took our abuse in stride. One of the best things about the bike is the attention to detail. The welds were nice and even. with no glops. Another cool doo-dad is the dropouts. Both the rear dropouts and fork dropout are knurled for nonslippage, ridged for strength, and stamped with the Kuwahara logo for good looks. Impressive! The paint scraped off kind of easily but was still pretty durable for a painted finish. THAT'S A WRAP

At the end of the day, we were satisfied that we could do no more damage. But the fact is, we did hardly any! A twisted spindle, a slipping stem and a couple flat tires were all we could do. The tires wore out pretty fast and didn't grip worth a darn, but after telling Kuwahara how lame the tires were they told us next year's bike would come with different tires. The super jumping capabilities and cool frame more than make up for the tires and grips, though. At \$360, it isn't cheap. But considering almost everything held up, and that it went fast and jumped high, it's definitely worth it. What else would you expect from a company that's been around for 81 years?! □

### OFFICIAL BMX PLUS! TEST BIKE PRO AND CON LIST

Attention to detail on the frame and fork is great Nice welds Handles good Jumps great Felt fast Light weight Wheels stayed straight Pad set included

CONS Spindle twisted slightly Tires don't grip, and wear out quickly Grips are lame Colors are ugly Stem slipped

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