

OFFICIAL TEST

# BIKE TEST

THE NATION'S  
TOP BMX TEST TEAM  
CHECKS OUT THE ...

# Malvern Star Turbo

AUSTRALIAN  
BMX  
PANCAKE

◀ The cronbag position was a little cramped for our over-sized riders.

Shaun trying (!) to hang on as the Turbo kicks in. ▼



# Malvern Star Turbo

Hand up those of you who have heard of the brand Malvern Star. OK, now all of you with your hands still in your pockets should be hanging your heads in shame — if you don't know who Malvern Star is you either just stepped off an aircraft or you were literally born yesterday.

Why so? Well, it just happens that, for the past 50 years, the brand name has been synonymous with cycling in Australia thanks largely to the efforts of the former mayor of Surfers Paradise, the late Sir Bruce Small who ran the company for many years and from it branched out into the huge real estate land tracts that was to become one of the countries leading tourist resorts — near which is Ashmore where the 1983 Australian BMX Nationals will be staged.

When BMX first started to show signs of life in Australia Malvern Star was one of the first



The head tube gusset bears resemblance to the Redline gusset.

to sit up and take notice. The companies first effort was the Maxi, a low-budget bike that came with either Tuff wheels or alloys.

Later came its full-on effort, the SuperMax CrMo which is the bike Malvern Star's extensive factory team ride.

Now the company has released a kind of limited special called the Malvern Star Turbo which is based on that popular SuperMax CrMo.

The main differences between the two bikes are the rims — the Turbo has Araya Aero rims while the SuperMax uses TX Araya. The head stem and handlebars are also upgraded on the Turbo.

Other differences lie in the seat, brakes, pedals and hubs — all of which also are improvements over the CrMo. The extra

trick bits and pieces take the price of the Turbo to \$50 over that of the CrMo.

Probably the real lure of this bike is the fact that it is a true limited edition, as only 500 or so are going to be made. It's sort of like owning a Porsche Turbo (drool, drool) in that there's not going to be too many around.

Besides being limited in availability the bike is very attractive. The show-chrome frame with black components and striking graphics make it a really eye-catching piece of machinery.

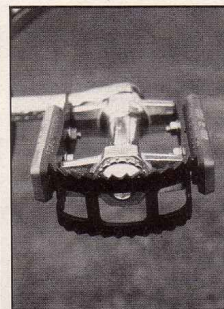
We've got to admit that, before we even got to test it, we broke something — an A-cable anchor bolt for the brakes. It wasn't any big deal, only about 60 cents worth, caused by one of our over-fed gorilla bicycle testers. It doesn't look like it's going to be a common problem.

The SuperMax frame is very close in appearance to the Redline MX2. It was apparently based on the Redline with a few angles altered to suit Malvern Star specifications. The greatest similarity is the small triangular gusset between the bottom of the down tube, head tube and the rear drop-outs.

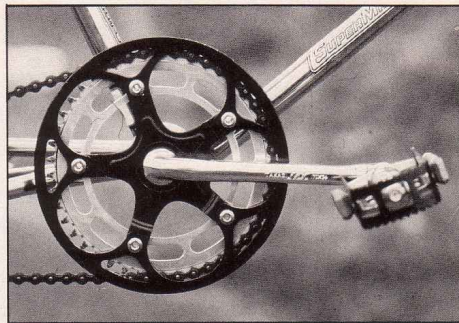
Conversely, the main difference between this and the Redline is that Malvern Star decided to use a one-inch diameter top and down tubes instead of the popular 1 1/2 inch tubing used on the Redline.

The forks are, in fact, Tange TRX units with Malvern Star stickers on them, so there's not going to be any problems with these. The welding on both the frame and the fork are definitely A-1, one of the best jobs we've seen.

The beads of weld are nicely



Tioga pedals offered maximum traction.



The cranks, chainring, spider and the ugly chainguard are all by Takagi.

layered and the penetration is excellent. You can tell by looking in the head, bottom bracket or seat tube where the tubes are welded. Nice work.

As mentioned previously, the rims on this bike are the brand spanking new Araya Aero rims — aerodynamic rims which, while stronger than its brother, the 7X, are also a little heavier.

The Turbo comes with front and rear brakes called Polygons. These are very similar to the MX-1000s by Dia Compe which seemed to have turned up on most of our test bikes. The rear brake is a quick release type to allow easy removal of the rear wheel.

In keeping with the Turbo/Aero scheme of things the seat is a Kashimax Aero model — and, boy!, is it hard on your buns. However, in saying that, we must remember that whenever you race you must never sit down.

The bars and stem are made by Nitto in Japan. The stem has a CrMo mast with an alloy 4-bolt clamp so we don't see any problems with possible slippage there.

The bars themselves are CrMo and the cross bar has a funny bend built in it which protrudes



These units are really Tange TRX in disguise.

forwards. Now, this is quite interesting for it is designed in to allow the crossbrace to flex instead of putting a lot of stress on the crossbrace welds. It's a good idea for the up-to-15s.

Pedals are by Tioga which is a virtually unknown brand in Australia at present but you can expect it to pop up more in the future.

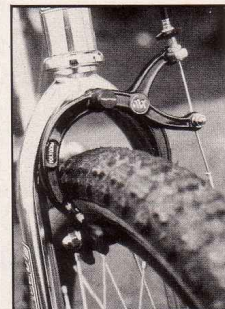
The cranks are Takagi 170mm CrMo which are suited to the age range and seem virtually unbendable.

Takagi chain ring, a DID chain, Suntour E2-off clutch and Suzue hubs complete the drive train of the Turbo.

The standard 44-16 gearing is a good choice for it is good for both racing as well as street use. However, if you're really serious about racing you should have in your kit a whole collection of different sized chain rings.

When we finally stopped looking at the bike and pondering its design and construction a few things became apparent during our riding tests.

The seat pole is very laid back, which makes the bike very comfortable for riding around the streets. It provides a lot of room between the knees and handlebars. However, once you



Front brakes are similar to Dia Compe MX-1000.



Striking graphics on the pads look really great.

stand up, and because of the bottom bracket positioning, it brings you right up close to the bars.

We let some 13-14 year olds ride the bike and they all reported it to be bearable and said they wouldn't have much trouble getting used to it.

So we can safely assume that this bike is definitely out for people over 5ft 6in or over the average-sized 15-year-old.

The Turbo uses DX-type levers to apply the brakes, which we found are very efficient.

Handling proved to be a problem, more so the handling characteristics at low speeds. Because of the 70-degree head angle, and the large amount of rake on the forks (the offset) it tended to be a bit waxy in the slow turns, not too bad, just a little waxy.

On the street was another story. A comfortable riding position and good handling became apparent in this different environment. It seems the geometry is more suited to fast riders and the bike always seemed to stick better in fast situations.

All in all, the Turbo is bitches. Nice appearance and good components make it a bike which will probably have a large demand. However, it's going to be limited, so best you place your claim quickly or you will miss out!

**Performance at a glance**  
 Handling: A little bit slow, tends to wash out in tight corners, great for street use.  
 Componentry: To the Max, excellent.  
 Value for money: Very good.  
 Age range: Up to 14, or 15 at a pinch.  
 Quality of finish: Excellent.  
 Test riders: Shaun McEvoy and 'Jive'.  
 Manufacturer: General Accessories.

Pancake Bike Test Team uniforms by Peddle Power. Helmets from Bell.



Nitto stem has a streamlined look about it.

## Malvern Star Turbo Specification

Frame: 4130 Chrome-Moly tubing, heli-arc welded.  
 Fork: 4130 Chrome-Moly tubing, heli-arc welded.  
 Stem: Nitto Aero CrMo stem, alloy 4-bolt clamp.  
 Handlebars: Nitto CrMo tubing.  
 Headset: Tange-MX  
 Cranks: Takagi 170mm CrMo.  
 Bottom bracket: Tange Sekai.  
 Pedals: Tioga, alloy cage, CrMo shaft.  
 Wheels:  
 Rims: 20 x 1.75 Aero Arayas.  
 Spokes: 14g, 3-cross pattern.  
 Hubs: Suzue small frame, screw-on free wheel.  
 Tyres: Comp 3, 20 x 2.125 front, 20 x 2.125 rear, 20 x 1.75 rear.  
 Freewheel: 16t Suntour, Ez-off.

Front chain ring/spider: Takagi Chainring 44t alloy, chainguard, alloy spider.  
 Chain: DID.  
 Seat Post clamp: Tange BMX.  
 Seat Post: Tange fluted CrMo.  
 Seat: Kashimax Aero.  
 Grips: Grab-on type, foam rubber.  
 Pads: Nylon with lightweight inners, all 3 pads.  
 Brakes: Polygon quick-release Dx-type levers f/r.  
 Brake pads: Polygon black.  
 Weight: 24 1/2 lbs.  
 Frame weight: 4 1/2 lbs.  
 Fork weight: 1lb 10oz.  
 Bottom bracket height: 11.8in.  
 Steering head angle: 70 deg.  
 Seat post angle: 63 deg.  
 Wheelbase: 34 3/4 - 35 1/4 in.  
 Bottom bracket to rear axle: 14.87in.  
 Top tube height: 21.69in.  
 Purpose: High performance street and full-on racing.  
 Finishes available: Chrome/black.  
 Recommended retail: \$352.



The seat post and the clamp are both by Tange.

Shaun just 'droppin' in'.



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