

# PRODUCT ANALYSIS



The Charger, second only to the Pro-Am in the Panda lineup.

# PANDA CHARGER FRAME

## READY FOR TOTAL PANDA- MONIUM

What we have here is a brand new Panda frame called the Charger. 'Course Panda already has a Charger-2 frame. But this new Charger shares the top-of-the-line Pro-Am's geometry.

Panda refers to the Charger as a mid-range class BMXer. Natch-lee, there's upper and lower mid-range. The older Charger-2 is a mild steel frame with pre-Pro-Am geometry while the brand spankin' new Charger has Pro-Am geometry and

### PANDA CHARGER FRAME SPECIFICATIONS

**DESCRIPTION:** Tri-Moly frame. Space-welded, fish-tailed steering head gussets, welded on the shear. Chain stays double gusseted at the bottom bracket. Long slotted dropouts.

**MATERIALS:** 4130 chrome-moly (top, down, and seat tubes) and mild steel (chain and seat stays).

**CONSTRUCTION:** Heli-arc TIG welding.

**FINISH:** Electrostatic powder coating. Red, blue, black.

**WEIGHT:** 5 pounds, 8 ounces.

**SUGGESTED RETAIL:** Approximately \$65.

**OPTIONS:** Three different bike packages are offered using the Charger frame: Charger, Charger-T and Charger-A.

**GUARANTY:** 90 day warranty on materials and workmanship.

**FOR MORE INFO:** See your local Panda dealer.

**MANUFACTURER:**  
Panda Bike Company  
1450 Franquette Avenue  
Concord, California 94520  
Tel: (415) 798-3950

a tri-moly frame. The top tube, down tube, and seat tube are 4130 chrome-moly. The rear assembly is mild steel. That ups the weight a bit, but helps keep the price down.

Another price-shaver step was the use of a one inch diameter down tube rather than the 1 1/8 incher found on the Pro-Am.

The Charger slips into the Panda lineup just one notch below the Pro-Am (tested in the March issue). The Supercross-3, Supercross-4, Charger-2 and Pacer-1 round out the model line. These four bikes all have mild steel frames.

Panda's radical-but-it-works "competition geometry" has been utilized for the Charger frame. On paper, that geometry seems peculiar with its long 37-inch wheelbase and quick 73-degree steering head angle. However, the long wheelbase seems to "de-quicken" the steep steering head angle. Or perhaps the steep head angle quickens the slowed-down turning characteristics of the long wheelbase. Whatever, the magic numbers work.

Panda claims their competition geometry frame can be ridden like a motorcycle, allowing the rider to

throw the rear end around and head through a corner with his feet up on the pegs . . . ah, make that pedals, pumpin' away.

The motorcycle reference isn't accidental. Panda listed a whole bunch of things they wanted when they got ready to build the Pro-Am's frame. A front end that wouldn't pop up. A frame that would be durable and last. A frame that would let the rider go in deeper and keep his feet up pedalling.

Then Panda consulted with Boss Motorcycles, an outfit with a reputation for building highly specialized motorcycle frames for the flattrackin' dudes. The end result was their long wheelbase, steep steering head design.

About the only real difference between the Pro-Am and Charger frames is in the seat post tube angle. The Charger tube has been moved forward two degrees. The Pro-Am seat tube angle is rather layed back. The changed Charger frame should mean a better fit for smaller riders.

Frame construction is top notch. There are gussets where the chain stays join the bottom bracket. The



Space welded gussets fortify the steering head juncture. Ignore the Charger-2 decal. It should read Charger.

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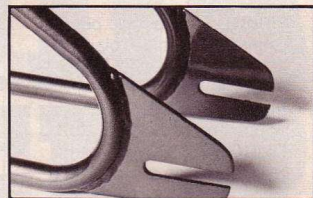
**PRODUCT ANALYSIS**



A double gusset bolsters the chain stays.

beefy dropouts are neatly welded to the rear of the assembly.

In our description of the frame you may notice a trans-continental phase—space-welded, fish-tailed steering head gussets, welded on the shear. That's what happens when you've been out in the sun too long taking photos. What that mouthful refers to, to us anyway, is a nifty method for transferring and dissipating the stress created at the juncture of the steering head and down tube. The interrupted



Beefy dropouts are TIG-welded to the mild steel rear assembly.

welding acts to spread the stress over the entire down tube rather than allowing it to gang up on one spot.

All in all, the black-and-white fuzzies from up north have done it again. The new frame is just about appealing enough to make a body hop out of hibernation and go charging out, looking for bear. ■

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