

Avast, ye landlubbers! Fire the depth charges! Blow the ballast! And get the Tide out, momma . . .

# POWERLITE THRASHER



The Powerlite PL-1 Thrasher. If you're up to about 12 years old and want a hot thrasher that is just your size, this is it.

## BOONDOCKIN' MACHINERY FOR SHORT PEOPLE ONLY

Good afternoon, sports fans. From high atop the rolling ridges of Entradero Park, former site of the infamous Entradero BMX track, this is WIDE WORDS OF WHEELS. I'm Boris Bland, your host. Also, handling local color commentary today is former bicycling great . . . Trash Can Leapin' Smith, who retired after an unsuccessful attempt to jump his bicycle over the Golden Gate Bridge. Say a few words, Trash.

"Uuumph, drogg, werppp."

Today WIDE WORDS OF WHEELS will be covering a test of the Powerlite Thrasher by the staff of the Most Factory Magazine. We have the staff

# POWERLITE

and riders wired for sound, and we'll be listening in.

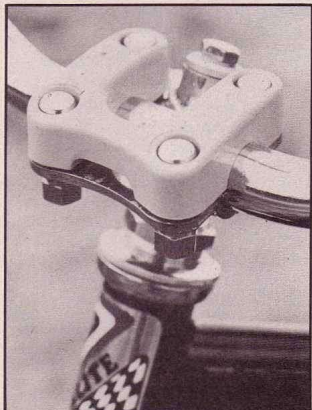
"Uuujumph, drogg, werrp, one foot."

What Trash Can is saying, folks, is it never rains in Southern California; it just pours. The test crew for BMXA, Buff and R.L., will be piloting that Powerlite around the track as carefully as a mine sweeper in troubled waters. One false move and it could mean muddy shorts. Shoot, it could mean muddy everything. Goo galore, for sure.

And now, with some background commentary on the Powerlite, here is Honest Gifford. He used to be frank, but now he's totally honest.

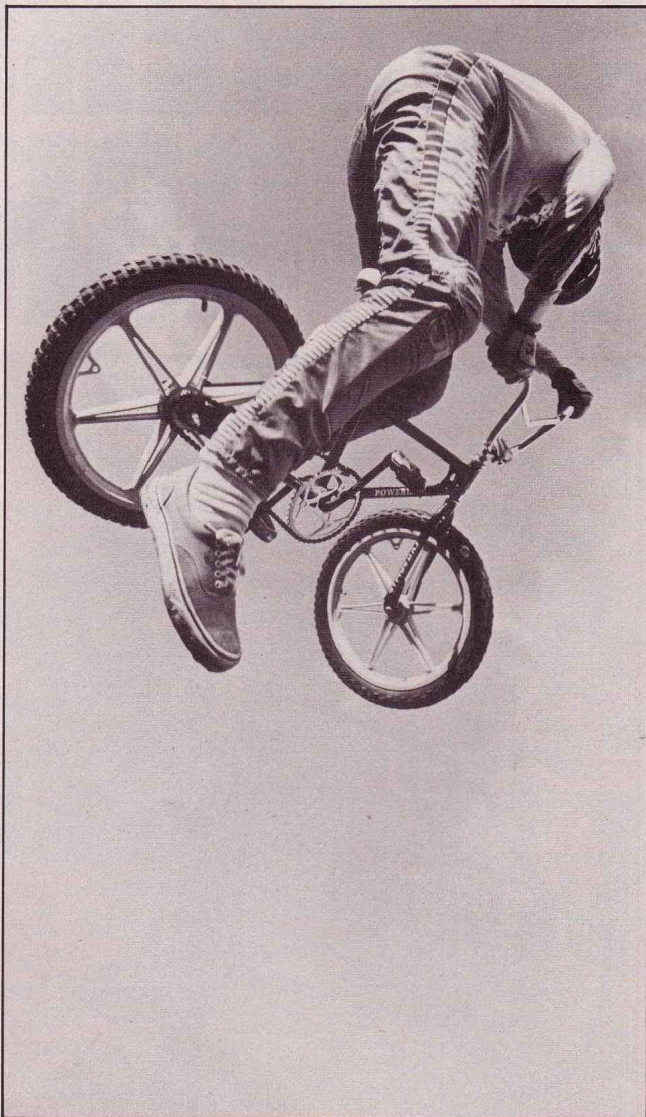
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"Thanks, Boris. The Powerlite dates



The Kusuki double-clamp gooseneck; chrome-moly stem and platform, forged aluminum top clamp.

back to those thrilling days of yesteryear when BMX was in diapers and Western Sports-A-Rama was the hot spot. One of the hot scoots then was the Peddlepower bike, a double-tuber. John Johnson, not to be confused with Ray (or you can call me Jay or you can call me Johnson) Johnson, made it for Steve Rink of Peddlepower. Eventually Johnson and Rink went their separate ways. The original Peddlepower bike picked up a lower profile and became, basically, what is today's Torke. At the same time, Rink, who always seems to come up with super equipment, built a new bike, a single top-tuber, and put the Peddlepower name on it. Then he noticed that there was another



The ACS wheels took a lot of aerial bombardment and kept right on tickin'.

company back East with the same name. So Rink began calling his Peddlepower a Powerlite."

Thanks, Honest, for that mighty bit of insight into Powerlite. You've really put us right. Now, let's cut to our on-the-track test microphones.

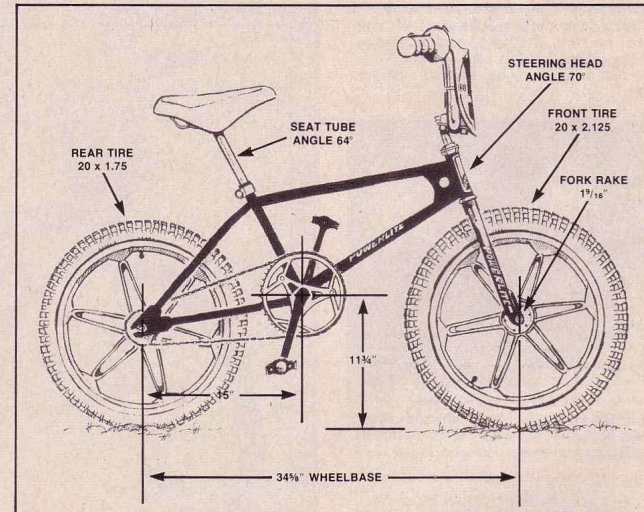
"Here, Buff, you're shorter than me. Why don't you ride it for awhile."



Because this bike is a shorty, the rear end just loved to come up to visit the front.

## POWERLITE THRASHER SPECIFICATIONS

**FINISH:** Electrostatically applied powder epoxy  
**COLORS:** Red, blue, black, or white  
**WEIGHT:** 29 pounds 10 ounces  
**RETAIL COST:** Approximately \$225, West Coast  
**FRAME:** Powerlite mild steel frame with chrome-moly head tube  
**FORKS:** Powerlite chrome-moly  
**HANDLEBARS:** Steel V bars  
**GRIPS:** Finish Line vinyl  
**STEM:** Kusuki chrome-moly stem with aluminum top-clamp  
**WHEELS:** ACS Zytel, available in red, blue, or yellow  
**FRONT HUB:** ACS  
**REAR HUB:** Bendix 76 coaster brake hub  
**TIRES:** Cheng Shin knobblies  
**PEDALS:** MKS BM-1 with chrome-moly shafts  
**CRANK:** Ashtabula black heat-treated 6 1/2 inchers  
**FRONT SPROCKET:** Steel 44T  
**REAR SPROCKET:** Bendix 16T  
**SEAT:** Padded plastic  
**FOR MORE INFO:** See your local Powerlite dealer  
**MANUFACTURER:** Powerlite Products  
 345 E. Grove  
 Orange, CA 92665  
 Tel: (714) 998-3535  
**DISTRIBUTOR:** Everything Bicycles  
 15000 Staff Court  
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"Okay, R.L. Wow, this is really low."

"And short, too. I've tried it standing up and sitting down, and it doesn't seem to work either way for me."

"Yeah, but you're 16."

"It sure looks good. Maybe I'll take some Incredible Shrinking Man pills."

"I think they built this for the younger guys, like about 8 to 13. Lil' Robert would feel right at home on this bike. Hey, watch this 'Henderson' I'm gonna do."

"Yeah. Let's see ya."

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"Howard Boldsell here for WIDE

WORDS OF WHEELS. Yes indeed, sports aficionados, the Powerlite was indeed indubitably designed for the younger generation, as is so effusively evidenced by the low Kusuki stem and low V-bars. These structural ramifications, and here we must tell it like it is, are incontrovertibly substantiated by the fact that Powerlite also fabricates a larger, more expensive, chrome-moly frame for older contestants.

"Thus we can only elucidate, midst this tumultuous trackside topography, what is so eloquently apparent, unctuous undercurrents notwithstanding, that . . ."



With its low V bars and forward slant Kusuki stem, the Powerlite was too small even for Buff, who hasn't quite started to really sprout yet. This bike would be perfect for anybody up to about 12 years old.



R.L. and Buff, tellin' each other lies about how high they can jump the Powerlite, or how they are gonna do a one-footer.

This is Boris Bland again. Howard has just been called to the emergency verbal surgery ward. And now, over to Trash Can Leapin' Smith.

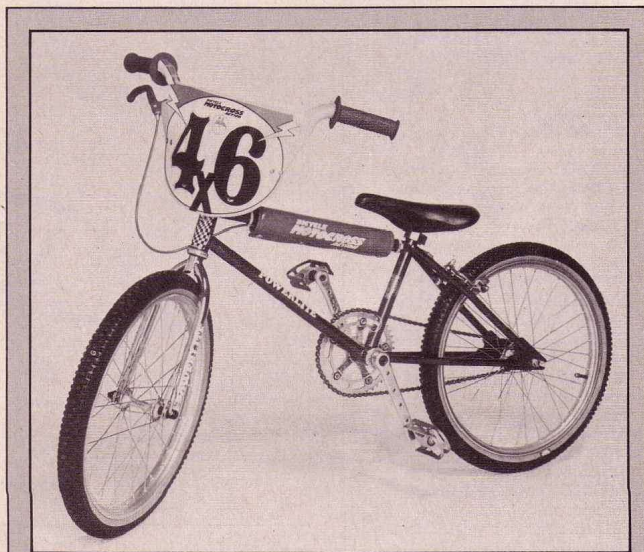
"Frimpp. Wheeeelie. Ripppp. Tabull topp. Clumpppph."

As you can tell, these comments by Trash Can once and for all dispute Howard's claim that former athletes don't make good sports announcers. Now, let's listen in on the conversation of the staff and test crew for BMXA.

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"... and so the Mongoose said to the Panda, well, whatever you say lady, but your sign just fell down."

"Hey, shape up, guys. I think the cameras are on us."



## ROBERT'S ROCKET

This Powerlite hot rod belongs to our own ace-racer factory shorty, Lil' Robert Emrich. It has a short chrome-moly Powerlite frame with Powerlite Junior forks, O.M.A.S. hubs and bottom bracket set, Competition II skinwalls, modified Dura-Ace 170mm pedal arms, a few titanium odds and ends, and stuff like that. With pads and plates, ready to race, the whole enchilada weighs 17 pounds.

Robert and his Pop chose the short Powerlite because the handling and power geometry are perfect for Robert, who is 8 years old and about average in size (but tougher than barbed wire).

Actually, Robert has two complete Powerlite race bikes, as do most really serious racers, which should give you some kind of idea of how hot this bike is for little guys. Or at least, how hot Robert and his European mechanic think it is. ■



"You know, Buff and R.L., you were right about this bike being short. The wheelbase is 34 1/2 inches."

"It'll turn on a dime. Most bikes only turn on a quarter. It's really set up nice for a younger rider, with the low bars and the short wheelbase."

"Yeah, and it really looks hot with the yellow seat and stem, and yellow ACS Zytel wheels."

"It's really quick in the corners, like a Fokker triplane at a tango contest. But the rear end will whip right around if you don't watch it. Riding it is like being a bumblebee jockey."

"Sure, it turns quick but I like the neutral steering. See these numbers on the gommertee, uh, jammertree ..."

"Geometry?"

"Yeah, that's it. The steering head angle is right at 70 degrees. That and the 1 3/16 inch fork rake give it just about neutral steering."

"It won't crab or wash out in the turns at all. It's just about the right length for the younger guys."

"Check out the bottom bracket. That location makes for a real good power position for shorter legged guys. And it has slightly shorter cranks too. The smaller guys should really be able to pull down into the pedals. Me, I felt like King Kong on a tricycle."

"You look like King Kong even when you're not on it."

"You know what surprised me? It handled good in the air. I thought because it was short it would feel like it was going to flip or loop, but it didn't."

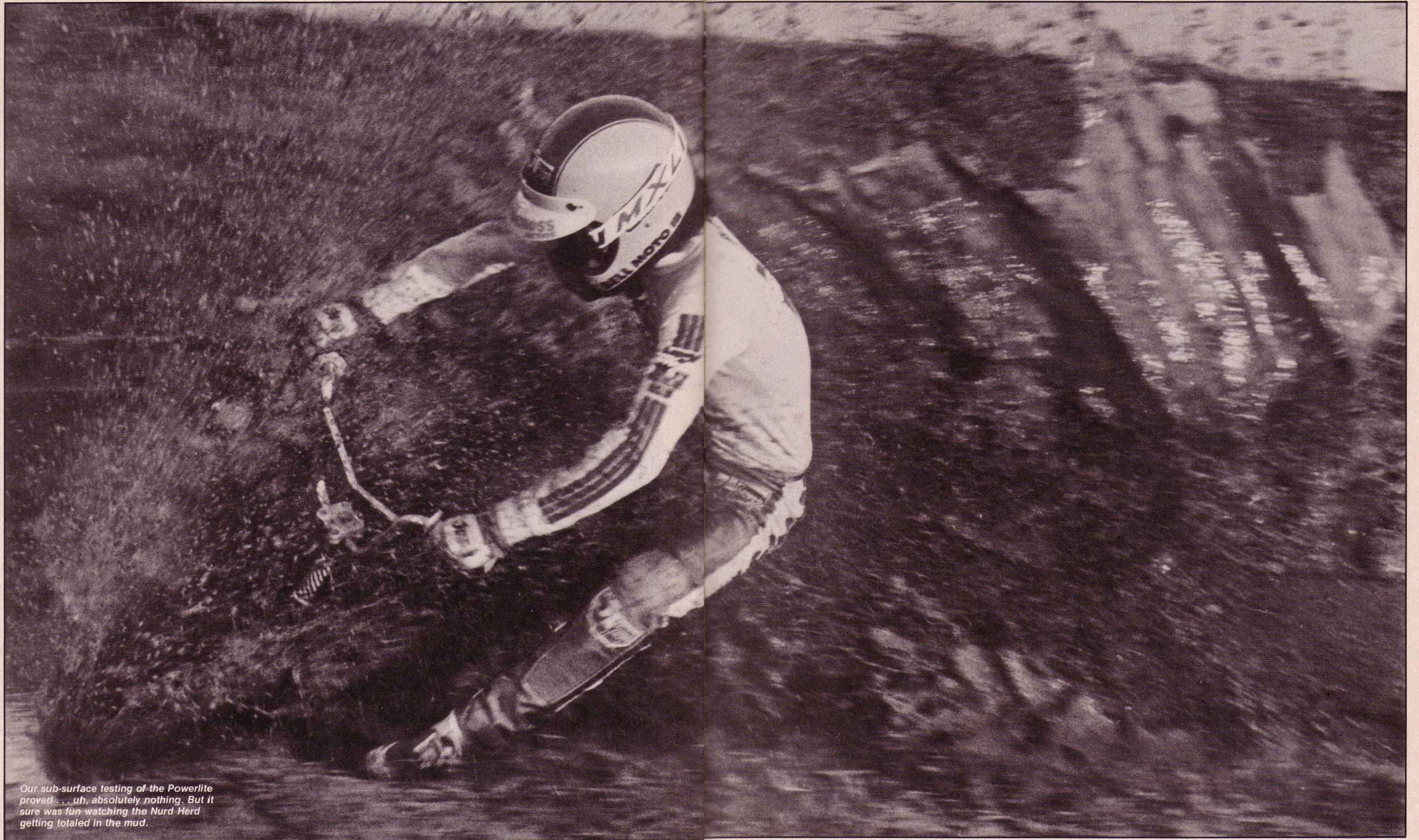
"One thing, though, when you take off, it'd probably be a good idea to shift back a hair to get some weight away from the shorter front half of the bike. The crank to rear axle measures about the same as the bigger bikes."

"This Powerlite is a swell thrasher. It already has the ACS wheels, they're great for bashin' and mashin' and splashin'. They should last just about forever. And that heat-treated Ashtabula crank. You just can't bend those."

"Yeah, I think it'd be really good for vacant lots and back yards. Maybe even some disco too."

"And the weight's under 30 pounds. Look at some of the things you get with the bike. A Bendix 76 rear coaster brake, Cheng Shin tires, MKS

Despite its short wheelbase, the Powerlite handles well in the wild blue ... as long as you hang some weight aft to compensate for the light front end.



*Our sub-surface testing of the Powerlite proved... uh, absolutely nothing. But it sure was fun watching the Nurd Herd getting totaled in the mud.*



The north end of R.L. flyin' south.

pedals with chrome-moly shafts, the chrome-moly Kusuki stem, chrome-moly fork, and a chrome-moly head tube on the frame."

"I think the Powerlite would be a fine racing bike for a Novice. He could thrash it and race it and race it and thrash it."

"What about Expert racing?"  
 "Probably have to go to alloy rims and 80 gauge spokes, add longer cranks and some lighter pieces here and there. It would be good on a tight

track. With that wheelbase it has more turns than a berserk bumper car . . ."

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Back here, Boris Bland, high atop the media tower at Entradero. It looks like the test session is just about over, folks. What's this? Buff, R.L., and Trash Can are making some more passes at the muddiest, goopiest, most water-infested berm in sight. There goes Buff. SPLOOOSH! He made it! And now,

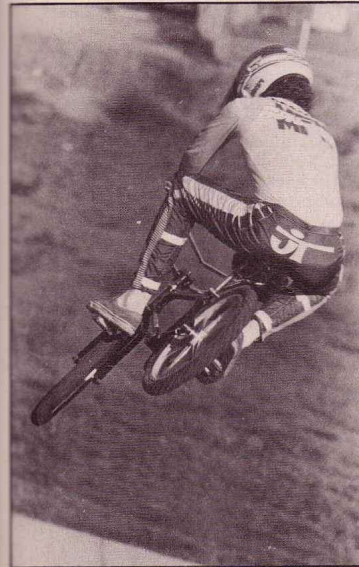
R.L. WAHHH SPLUMPPH. Boy, that Powerlite is just pumping right through there like a rabid rhinoceros. Here comes Trash Can Leapin' Smith. KAAAWAAHHH SPLUNKKK!

IIIIIEEEEE!! Nice try, Trash Can, but next time remember to wait for the bike.

This is WIDE WORDS OF WHEELS returning you to your local network. Be sure to tune us in next month when we delve further into what's new and exciting in the world of BMX. Good night. ■



Ah yes, Buff . . . this testing biz is a tough game.



The Powerlite Thrasher is for small to mid-size dudes. R.L. looked like a gorilla on a tricycle.

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