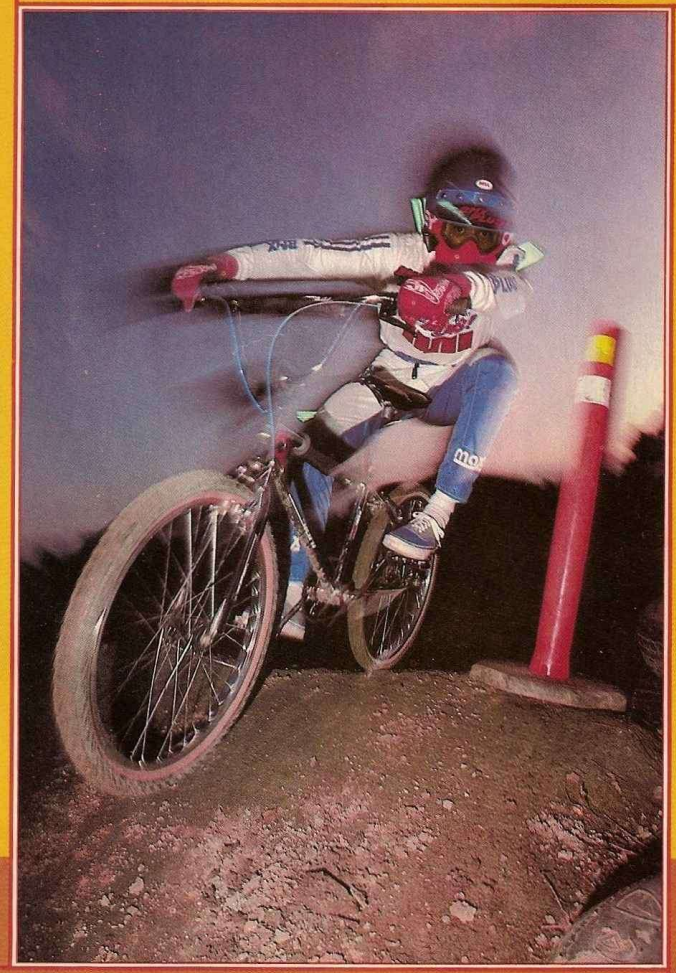
# PROSIGHT 24 TEST

## Bombsight or Outta Sight?

by Bob Hadley Photos by John Ker



*(Left) What style! What form! What's that guy's name? Martin Aparijo, he's BMX Plus's newest test rider and World Almanac record-holder of the BMX long jump. (Above) We took the Prosight complete with IRC's Racer X-1 tires, Araya's 7X rims and SR's new cold-forged hub set and punished them. Neither torturous firecoading, brutal BMXing, or bearing-burning road riding could keep them from their appointed duties. Martin again.*

***We took a little longer than normal to bring you this Prosight test, but it was worth the wait. Chronologically, the bike got to us in late August of 1982, and this report is being completed in November. The bike was delivered to us by Barry Nelson, who is an agent in Australia for Capricorn Imports. The Prosight bike, he explained, is made in Japan to their specs, for market primarily in Australia, but they are also looking to the U.S. and Europe for potential sales. The way Barry figures it, if you've got something good, spread it around.***

***After about a week of having the bike on our own, another gent from Australia arrived to see how the test was going. He was Lawrie Ward, who is Capricorn's managing director. We figured it would be fun to invite both Barry and Lawrie to hang out with us on a typical testing day to see how we do things. They agreed. Also joining us was Barry's son who rides on the Prosight factory team.***

# PROSIGHT 24

First on the agenda were a few high-speed runs. For this we used some really steep streets that would get us up into the 40 mph range with no trouble at all. Unless, of course, the bike were to develop high speed wobbles, in which case we would have had nothing but troubles. The Prosight? At sheer speeds it was a beaut. The bike was stable and easy to control. High speed runs are also convenient for checking out braking efficiency and control. Since the Prosight has Dia-Compe 890's front and rear, we expected good things. We weren't disappointed. Hauling the bike down from top speed was no problem. Full squeeze on the Dia-Compe Tech-2 levers brought a smooth but powerful braking response. The Prosight didn't pull to one side or twitch in the slightest.

From the streets we moved back to the dirt for the next three riding procedures, all of which were combined into one run. The first part consisted of uphill climbing, the second was wide open fireroading, and the third part simulated radical BMX track conditions: about a mile and a half of speed jumps, berms, Europeans, and off-cambers.

Riding uphill for extended distances can tell you a lot about a bicycle's "power position," which is the relationship of the bars to the cranks, and how your body can adapt to their positioning. You also can feel out the bike's low-speed maneuverability. This part of a test run is always brutal, but on this particular day (September 2, 1982) the temperature was over 100 degrees! We made it up the hill, but barely. While resting at the top and between curses at the weather we discussed the Prosight's stock handlebars. The bend was fine but the eight-inch rise was way too tall, even for large riders. Later we switched to a pair of six-inch rise handlebars and they worked fine but would still be a bit tall for riders under 5'8". According to Lawrie, a new, shorter-rise bar will replace the tall ones on all new Prosights.

The ride down the fireroad was a welcome relief from going uphill, especially for Lawrie who wasn't used to the heat. Luckily, we were fortunate enough to run into a group of people launching their hang gliders from the same trail we were on. Their stock of Gatorade no doubt saved the ride for us. Replenished, we set off again and about one hundred turns later we came to the end of stage two.

Perhap's what's most impressive about the way the Prosight handled the fireroads was the way it combined agility and stability. It has quick steering yet is controllable, especially in turns with big ruts where you have to flick the bars from one side to the other in order to change lines instantly.


BRADLEY

*Unfortunately for the comp, when Prosight builds a new model like their new 24-inch, they get it right on the first try. It's big and it's bad, with all the right stuff for the right price. Almost anyway you cook at it, it shines.*

BRADLEY

*The Prosight features Tange's slightly ovalized TRX chrome-moly forks, 1-1/8" top and Dia-Compe 890 calipers front and rear, SR stem, Takagi cro-mo cranks and KKT pedals—winners circle stuff.*

*The stock 8-inch rise bars are too tall for most guys. Don't sweat it—they'll be changed to a lower rise bar. Whether on fire roads or narrow cow trails, the Prosight sets its sights and steers clear.*

*Did we jump the Prosight? No, we didn't. And if you believe that we've got a choice piece of oceanfront property for you in Arizona.*

## Back to the Fireroad

Cutting over the ridge drops you onto "Devil's Trail," the last, and technically the most demanding run. The trail is fast and narrow, strewn with rocks, and often at the edge of cliffs. To ride it takes 100% concentration. Everything was jim-dandy until about half-way down, then blam! A blow-out. End of test riding. That was okay: we had found out what we wanted to know. The Prosight had handled Devil's like a dream. Even though it was quick, it didn't oversteer like many two-four racers do. It's much easier to predict and, even though it doesn't have as long a wheelbase as the Mongoose 2/4, which tops the class in stability, it's nice and stable even when getting lashed over a rockbed.

While wrapping up the riding session the only thing besides the bars that caused any concern were the Tech-2 levers. For racing they're great if you prefer their position to that of a pro-style lever. But on long runs if you have to squeeze them constantly, like on Devil's Trail, you may find they cramp your wrists and hands.

Back at the lab we all got a good chance to go over the construction of the Prosight frameset for Barry's video camera (there is something unnerving about having a video camera on you at all times). The frame is constructed in Japan by Hattori. As far as we know, this is the first frame that we have ever seen that was made by them. Surprisingly though, their work is very similar to what you'd find on a Kuwahara. In other words, the fitting of tubes and alignment is topnotch. The welding, although not as clean as you'd find on an American-made frame, is consistent, and the penetration and fillets are good. The rear dropouts are amazingly thick and a thick bead surrounds both sides. They look cumbersome and heavy to the point of being overbuilt. Surely you'll never have any problem with them.

You find no tricky tubing on the Prosight frame, just simple round tubes. The main tubes are one and one-eighth inches in diameter and the stays are double-loop style, five-eighths-inch diameter. The fork blades are the slightly-oval TRX style.

## Component Fit

With the exception of the rear brake mounting tube being slightly high, we found everything to be in perfect order. From the headset fit to chain alignment, you couldn't ask for anything better.



Aside from the high handlebar, as we mentioned, there is only one other change that would be necessary before racing this Prosight. The stock gear was 42 x 16, which is way too tall. We finally switched to a 40 x 18 for most of our riding. When we mentioned this to Lawrie, he said the new bikes should be coming out with an alternate ratio as well.

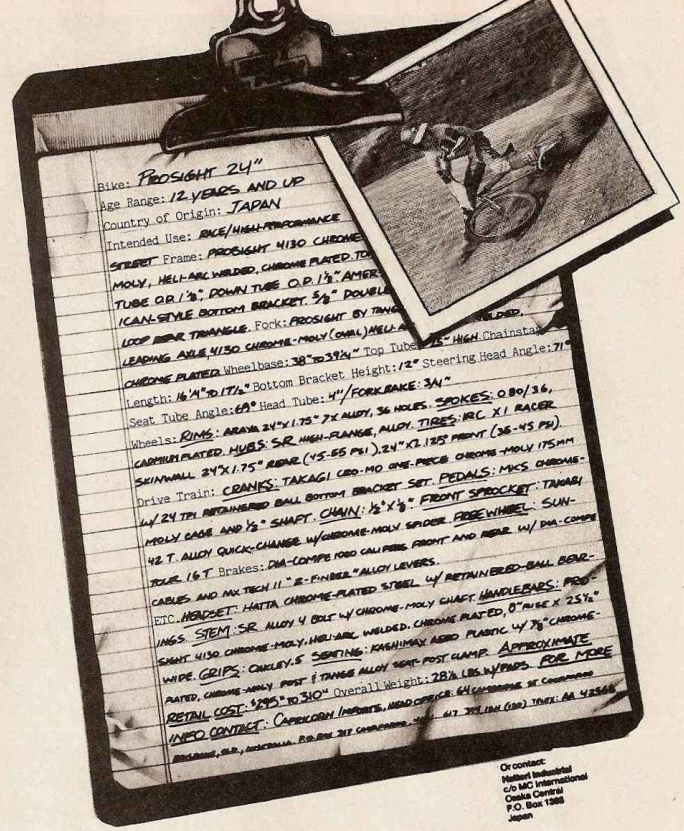
## New Items

The wheels on the Prosight had all the latest new stuff, like IRC Racer X-1 24 tires, new SR cold-forged hubs with plastic dust covers, and Araya 7X rims. The rims themselves weren't new but they were the new cadmium-plated rims that Araya is offering as an option to chrome plating. Cadmium plating isn't nearly as shiny as chrome, but it's very durable as a working surface for brake shoes.

The IRC tires are interesting in that, aside from their blocky tread which worked very well in loose dirt and loamy surfaces, they are smaller overall than their Comp III competitors. The front 24 x 2.125 is smaller in width and height by almost a quarter of an inch. On the front, that means just a smaller tire to get used to, but on the back 24 x 1.75's, that same quarter-inch difference is just like having a little easier gear to pull—not much, but it's there. Both tires worked best at around the 50 psi setting.

At the center of both wheels are the new SR hubs. They are traditional loose-ball units, but what sets them apart are their soft-plastic dust seals. Granted, they aren't the first hubs we've seen with plastic dust covers. Shimano has had them for quite a while now, but these ride flush like a steel cover would. Shimanos fit over the bearing cavity like a lid or something. The SR seals are also made of a bit softer plastic than Shimano's seals. Although we're not sure who has the best plastic cover, we're sure the plastic seals protect the bearing better. In addition, you won't need to be replacing them as often as you would steel covers, simply because they won't bend or distort permanently when you remove them.

Although the SR hub design is basic, it is well made. The races aren't up to the precision quality of a track hub, but they're very nice anyway. As with all "touring"- or "BMX"- quality loose-ball hubs, we suggest disassembly at the time of purchase for cleaning and repacking with a good grease for a better break-in period. All hubs like these could use about a ten-hour break-in period to allow the bearing surfaces to wear in. A repeat cleaning and repacking after ten hours eliminates the metallic particles that come off during the break-in period. Believe it, that ten-hour rebuild can add much life to your hubs.




## Forging

One of the minor things that Prosight did to keep the price down was to use one of the melt-forged SR stems. SR also makes a cold-forged stem which is stronger (and costs more), but the cheaper model has proven to be very reliable. What's the difference between *cold* and *melt* forging?

Melt forging is a process where molten aluminum is poured into a die then pressurized to make sure the mold cavity is uniformly filled. Melt forging is simply a modified way to cast things. It's cheaper than cold forging because the tooling and material are cheaper. Not incidentally, it also makes parts that are not as strong as cold forged parts.

In cold forging, a solid billet of aluminum is put into a huge punching machine. With a loud crunch, the machine mashes the material into the desired shape.

Melt forging, because it is still basically a casting process, produces parts with no uniform molecular structure or "grain." In cold forging, the billit starts out with all its molecules strongly aligned in the same direction. After it is struck by the forge the grain stays fairly uniform, giving the part very good strength. With both processes, a certain amount of "clean-up" machining is needed to finish the part.

## Conclusion

By now it is becoming confusing with so many bikes being named "Pro-*whatever*." We've got Pro-*Line*, Pro*craft*, Pro *Thunder*, Pro *Lightning*, Pro*file*, and, don't forget, Pro *Neck*. So you don't get your Pro's mixed up, just remember the Prosight is the Australian one, made in Japan, that they're trying to sell over here and in Europe. It may just be easier to remember that, at around $300, it's plenty affordable, performs great, and for racing in the 24" class, it's one of the best investments around.