

BMX
ACTION
OFFICIAL TEST

**IT MAY BE
ECONOMICAL BUT
IT'S DEFINITELY NOT
YOUR PLAIN-WRAP,
GENERIC SCOOT**

1984 looks to be the year of the high-qual, low dollar, mass market BMX bike. Scads of manufacturers are working on durable, raceable, low budget but high performance scoots, and the bikes that are showing up are nothing less than unbelievable. MEGA performance for minimum bucks.

At this point, unless something TOTALLY incredible and earth-shattering hits the market, it looks like Red Line's 500a is the king of the budget-minded moto machines.



RED LINE 500A

Imagine owning a legendary Red Line, complete with a chrome-moly frame and fork, a fairly hefty sprinkling of qual components — we're talkin' a bike that you could ride out of your local bike shop and onto a track — for right around \$200. UN-REAL or what?

ONE SWEET DREAM CAME TRUE TODAY

You read right. Chrome-moly frame and fork. And Red Line geometry and design, which adds up to Red Line performance.

Construction for these particular bikes is done in Taiwan. Red Line isn't the first, and definitely won't be the last, to have their budget bikes made there.

The construction is pretty good. You can't expect perfectly precise weld beads like on the Carrera, but you don't get seagull poop welds, either.

The size of the Series-Three frame is about perfect for dudes in the 11 to 14 range. It fills the gap between the Micro-Line and the Pro-Line quite nicely, thank you.

The bars have a good power bend and Red Line's famous V crossbar, which in case you didn't know, is engineered so the crossbar will flex slightly and take a little of the stress off the welds. They're constructed from high-tensile steel.

WELCOME TO COMPONENT COUNTRY

Considering the low price, there are some incredible goodies on

Swick gettin' slick. Kickin' out over the doubles at his local neighborhood practice track.

here. Like the new Red Line Forklifter stem. This replaces "The Brute," Red Line's old pro stem. It's a little slimmer, which also means less weight. It has four bolts doing the clamping, but instead of being split top to bottom with the bolts coming in from the top, this one clamps from the front. Materials used for its construction are cold-forged aluminum and chrome-moly.

Some of the early production bikes came equipped with a stem that wasn't as zoot as the Forklifter, but by the time you read this it'll be a standard item.

Let's see, there's also Ukai aluminum rims, and Suzue high-flange hubs. Not too shabby.

A real live Dia-Compe standard caliper handles the braking. Surprisingly well, too — at least after you engineer a power bend into the standard straight brake lever. Some gentle persuasion with a hammer and vice will do the trick.

The cranks are hardened steel Sugino units. They won't stay true as long as chrome-moly cranks, but they're a BIG step above non-heat-treated cranks.

There's a chrome-moly Sugino quick change spider. It makes life much nicer when you start racing different tracks and have to start changing gearing.

The Victor pedals don't give you tons of surface area, but what they do give is plenty of traction. They also have a chrome-moly spindle so you can expect some reasonable life out of 'em.

You even get a set of Red Line pads. Thank you, Red Line.

HANDLING REPORT

Legendary Red Line from the word go. \$400 of performance for a \$200 price tag! It's fairly light; only 24 pounds, 13 ounces. Thus, it's responsive. Blast out of the gate. Throw it into corners. Kick out the jams over the jumps. All no problem.

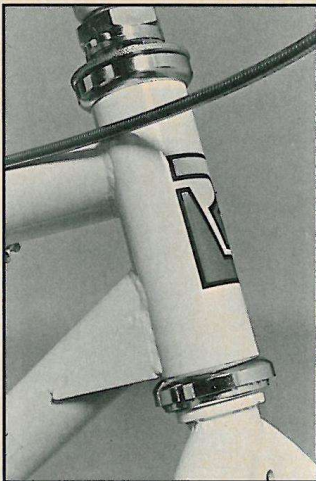
For racers in the 11 to 14 age range, we'd give it a 10.

NIT PICKIN' DEPT.

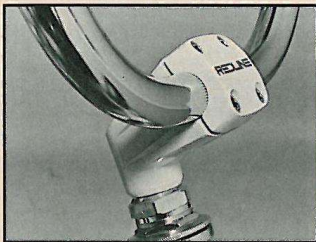
For the price of this bike this list is pitifully short. In fact, shorter than a few bikes we can think of that carry MUCH higher price tags.

We hated the straight brake lever. At least 'till Gibey artfully engineered a new bend into it.

For some reason, our bottom bracket was short one ball out of its



Ah yes, the often copied Red Line head tube mini-gussets are in place.



The new slimmer, trimmer Red Line Forklifter stem. Check out how the bolts come in from the front instead of the top like the old Red Line Pro stem.

left cage. Trivial, and probably one-in-a-million, but something to check — just in case.

The grips were passable. Keep 'em around 'till you lurch 'em and then look for a pair of more comfortable rubber units.

That's it.

LOOK OUT FOR GREAT WHITE

This bike will inspire thousands of desirous drools across the country, and for good reason. If you're thinking about getting into racing, this is the ultimate entry level machine. There's plenty enough performance to keep you competitive for a long time to come. Actually, even if you already have a mega-buck factory replica racer, you might just want one of these to thrash around on and ride to school so you can keep your race bike absolutely pristine.

Red Line, you done good.

R.L. workin' out on a power move in front of a crew of Wiz Pubs staffers and visitors. Eagle-eyed readers will notice that this isn't the same bike that's in the photo on the spec page. That's 'cause we had two 500a's for this test. One production prototype (the one that R.L.'s riding), and a production model that was WAY cooler. The bars on the production bike had a much better power bend. It was also fitted with the new highly zoot Red Line Forklifter stem.



RED LINE 500A



PRICE & SPECS

COMPLETE BIKE PRICE: Painted \$199.00, chrome \$209.00. (West coast, plus tax and dealer set-up charges.)
FINISHES AVAILABLE: White and chrome with black, chrome, and silver components.
COMPLETE BIKE WEIGHT (without pads or plate): 24 pounds, 13 ounces.
FRAME WEIGHT: 4 pounds, 1/2 ounce.
FORK WEIGHT: 2 pounds, 1 1/2 ounces.
STEERING HEAD TUBE LENGTH: 4 inches.
HANDLEBAR RISE (C/L of stem clamp area to C/L of grips): 8 3/4 inches.
HANDLEBAR WIDTH: 27 3/8 inches.
TOP TUBE O.D.: 1 1/4 inches.
DOWN TUBE O.D.: 1 1/4 inches.
FORK LEG O.D.: 1 inch.
STEERING HEAD ANGLE: 71°.
SEAT TUBE ANGLE: 66°.
FORK RAKE: 1 11/16 inches.
BOTTOM BRACKET HEIGHT: 11 inches.
WHEELBASE: 35 3/16 inches to 36 5/16 inches.
BOTTOM BRACKET TYPE: Large.

COMPONENTS

FRAME: Red Line Series-Three, chrome-moly.

FORK: Red Line Series-Three, chrome-moly.
HANDLEBAR: Red Line V-bar, high-tensile steel.
HANDLEBAR STEM: Red Line Forklifter, aluminum and chrome-moly.
GRIPS: Fuan, vinyl.
HEADSET: Heat-treated cups, Japanese ball-bearings.
RIMS: Ukai, aluminum.
SPOKES: 36, .080, with brass nipples.
HUBS: Suzue, high-flange, aluminum.
TIRES: Cheng Shin, 20 X 1.75 front and rear.
BRAKE: Dia-Compe caliper, rear only.
BRAKE PADS: Dia-Compe.
BRAKE LEVER: Dia-Compe.
BRAKE CABLE: Dia-Compe.
PEDALS: Victor, aluminum and chrome-moly.
CRANK: Sugino, heat-treated, 177mm.
BOTTOM BRACKET SET: Heat-treated cups, Japanese ball-bearings.
FRONT SPROCKET: Sugino steel chainwheel, 44 teeth.
SPIDER: Sugino, chrome-moly.
FREEWHEEL: SunTour, 16 teeth.
CHAIN: KMC, 1/8 inch.
SEAT: Velo.
SEAT POST: Fluted aluminum.
SEAT POST CLAMP: Cast aluminum.
ACCESSORIES: Red Line pads.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

PURPOSE: Racing (up to and including expert), econo-qual street machine.
AGE RANGE: 11-13 racing, 10-14 street.
QUALITY OF FINISH: Good.
QUALITY OF WELDING: Good to very good.
QUALITY OF COMPONENTRY: Good to excellent.
GEOMETRY: Excellent.
HANDLING: Comfortable — no quirks . . . Speed jumping is simple . . . Air time doesn't unnecessarily raise any pulse rates . . . Good all around . . . Steering is neutral — just keep your weight centered in the corners.
MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS: Unbelievable . . . Lots of bike for not much money . . . Paint chips off fairly easily . . . Put on a number plate and go racing.
TEST INPUT: R.L. Osborn, Mike Buff, Steve Giberson, Bob Osborn, Andy Jenkins.
MANUFACTURER: Red Line Engineering
 830 Tourmaline Drive
 Newbury Park, California 91320
 Tel: (805) 498-6783



Our guest celeb for the 500a test – factory Red Line heavy and the pride of Elsinore, Robert Swick, gettin' WAY down over a jump.