



□ Since virtually pioneering the sport of bicycle motocross with its novel Sting Ray, the Schwinn Bicycle Company has been rather adventurous when it comes to BMX. And why not? After all, they practically invented the sport!

After the popular Sting Ray, Schwinn began its march to a different drummer by hand brazing its lightweight chromoly frames rather than hell-arcing them. Then came the legendary Sting model with its radical, double-butted, "tri-oval" frameset—again hand brazed, this time in Schwinn's Paramount assembly room. Then Schwinn, which always seemed one step ahead of the comp, went overseas to reduce its costs. This time they came home a winner with their tremendously popular Predator line of BMXers. As you know,

# SCHWINN PREDATOR FREE-FORM EX

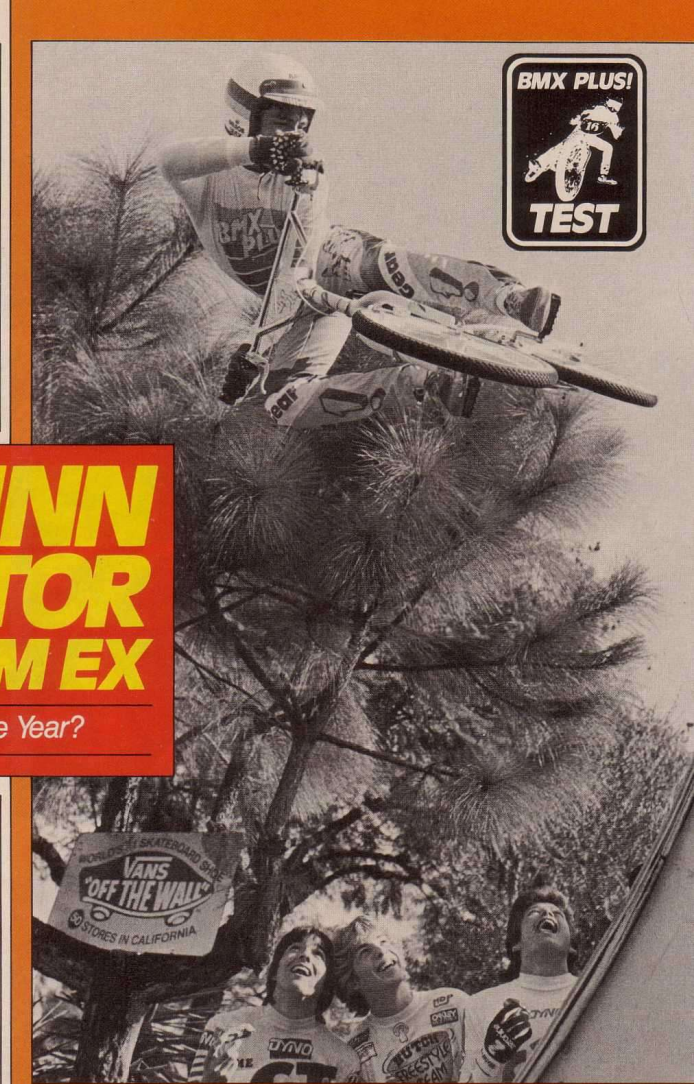
*Freestyle's Bike of the Year?*

today almost everybody has a bike or two from Taiwan in their line. Schwinn was one of the first. In fact, Schwinn always seems to find itself on the forefront of BMX trends. Sure, others may beat them to the punch occasionally, but the Big S always comes out on top. Case in point is its brave new Predator Free-Form EX: very possibly the best production freestyle bike we've ever set our buns on.

#### FREE-FORM FRAME AND FORK

First we've got to start off with the incredible Free-Form frame and fork. Believe us, you've simply never seen anything like it! Especially when you consider that the whole EX ball of wax retails for under 200 bucks!

Up front the EX frame starts off with a set of tapered 4130 chromoly forks complete with inner cable routing. Inner cable routing? That's right. While the current trend of routing the front brake cable down through the stem bolt is definitely trick, the EX fork takes it one step further. Instead of the cable exiting the fork steering tube and having to be zip-tied to the side of the leg, the EX fork allows for the cable to actually run inside the fork leg, popping out in the perfect spot and continuing into the adjusting barrel of the front caliper. Very, very trick indeed—as is the recessed front caliper center bolt. No more catching



Dave's aerial assaults were impressive on the Schwinn. Our celebrity audience of Eddie Fiola, Mike Dominguez and Martin Aparijo wanted to ride during the shoot but Dave never wanted to leave the ramp. Fortunately, the gang had as much fun watching the Predator in action as Dave had riding it!

your shoe on the backside of the bolt. Where the nut and bolt used to be is a super-sano recessed Allen fastener. Also worth mention is the EX's front-axle-retention system on the forks. A washer simply goes on the front axle and clips into a slot in the fork when the axle nut is tightened. If the axle nut were to ever come loose, the wheel could not fall out. Nice feature.

As far as the frame goes, it's more of the same: more trick tapered tubing, more attention to detail (like the routing of the rear brake cable inside the top

tube, the seat-stay foot platform, the coaster brake arm mount, the serrated rear dropouts, the capped rear stays and the outstanding graphics). To show you just how strongly we feel about the Free-Form EX frameset, we'd be willing to pay \$200 for the frame and fork alone! It's that trick!

#### PREDATOR PARTS PACKAGE

If the super-specialized frame and fork aren't enough to convince you that the Free-Form EX is a hard-core freestyler, then perhaps the parts package Schwinn equipped it with will. Take for

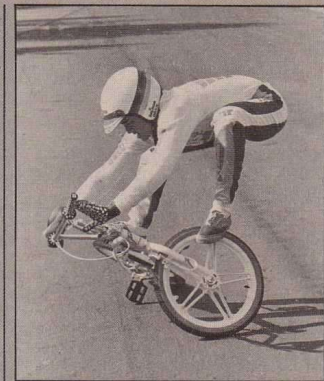


## FREE-FORM EX

example the mag wheels complete with SunFour coaster brake. Or the tough ACS stem complete with Potts Modification for tweak-proof cable routing. Or maybe the unique brake setup comprised of an MX-900 sidepull up front and an inconspicuous 750 centerpull in the rear. Just throw in a set of Cheng Shin's new freestyle skinwall tires, tough Sugino one-piece chromoly cranks, Victor plastic platform pedals, and chromoly bars and seatpost, and you've got one parts package tailor made for the rigors of freestyling.

One real nice touch on the EX is the color-coordinating on the parts: white mags, white Tech 4 levers and Dia-

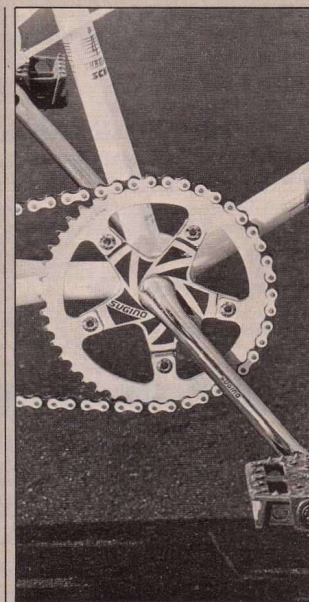
*Fluid moves like the Itson Invert require a perfect blend of power and predictability—something that Dave Ruz found plenty of in the Free-Form EX. ▶*



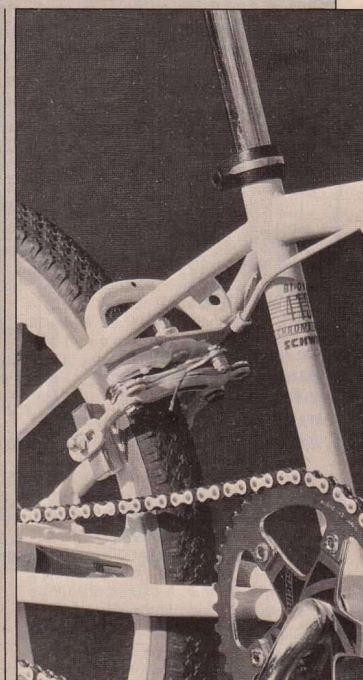
*If a freestyler has a hard time getting in sync with his bike, delicate balance moves like this Track Stand are almost impossible. The Schwinn didn't offer any problems when Dave asked it to perform—its ground maneuverability was flawless.*



Schwinn did its homework when they specked out the front end of the Predator Free-Form EX. The front brake is Dia-Compe's new MX-900 freestyle unit. It is identical to the BMX brake except for the relocated cable adjuster and cable pinch bolt. With these two parts in their new positions, it's a lot easier to set your bike up with the cable-through-the-stem Potts Modification. Thanks to Schwinn, that setup is easier too. The ACS stem that comes stock on the Free-Form EX already features the Potts Mod. The only problem with the whole setup is that easy stem adjustments are impossible. The front brake cable runs directly through the Allen bolt hole on the stem bolt. To tighten your stem, you have to take the inner cable out of the housing and pull the housing far enough inside the stem to allow an Allen wrench to fit in the bolt's head. We know it's a hassle, 'cause our stem loosened up about three times during the test and we had to fix it.



Many companies that build bikes which sell for under 200 bones cut corners on the construction of the frame. Schwinn took a different approach. Price savings on the Predator Free-Form EX were made in certain areas on the components, like here in the drive train. Whereas most bikes in this price range have a chromoly spider and alloy sprocket, Schwinn decided to use steel units from Sugino. If this were a racing bike, the steel parts would increase the spinning weight too much, thus hindering performance. Since dead-stop acceleration and high speed aren't top priorities in trick riding, these parts are fine. Good move, Schwinn.



This is trick! To offer an uncluttered area for framestanding maneuvers, Schwinn incorporated a Dia-Compe centerpull brake and mounted it upside down on the Predator Free-Form EX brake bridge. This move opened up the area behind the seat clamp, where conventional brakes are, and provided room for a clean, sleek, stand-on attachment. The result is one of the most advanced standing and braking modifications available in freestyle today.

RARELY UNDERSOLD!

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2820	Zeronine Superflow Plate	BLUE/WHITE, RED/WHITE or BLACK/WHITE.	7.99	1/2	
2821	Dyno Stadium Plate	BLUE, RED or BLACK CHECKER BORDER.	5.89	1/2	
2830	Zeronine Airflow Stadium Plate	BLUE/WHITE, RED/WHITE or BLACK/WHITE.	5.68	3/8	
2840	Haro Tech Number Plate	BLUE/RED or BLUE/SILVER. 3 BLACK TECH NUMBERS ADD: \$3.90.	5.89	3/8	
2870	Haro Color Plate	BLUE ONLY.	2.64	1/2	
3260	GT BMX Handlebars	CHROMOLY, CHROME-PLATED, 6 1/2" (Std.)	16.48	1 1/2	
3292	Red Line Handlebars	CHROMOLY, CHROME-PLATED, VEE CROSSBAR STRAIGHT CROSSBAR ADD: \$2.00.	14.99	1 1/2	
3410	Oakley F-1 Grips	YELLOW ON BLACK, YELLOW OR BLUE, YELLOW ON RED, BLUE ON BLUE, GRAY ON BLACK, WHITE ON RED.	2.99	1	
4455	Alloy Seat Post	7/8" x 12" or 13/16" x 12". RED, BLUE, GOLD, BLACK or SILVER. CHROME ADD: \$1.00.	2.00	1	
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4900	Skyway Freestyle Platform Kit	CHROME ONLY. AXLE STANDERS ADD: \$9.00/PAIR.	31.99	2 1/2	
5460	Tioga Ultra Dyno Crankset	170mm ALLOY COMPLETE WITH TWO CHAINRINGS. BLUE or RED ONLY.	17.99	3 1/2	
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5820	KKT-AMX Pedals	1/2" or 3/16". RED, BLUE, GOLD, SILVER or BLACK. CHROME ADD: \$2.00.	4.99	2	
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6612	Alloy Special Wheels 1 1/2"	ARAYA 7X RIMS. 20" x 1 1/2". MATCHING FW HUBS. RED, BLACK, BLUE or GOLD. SILVER or PRO CLASS ADD: \$5.00. BULLSEYE HUBS ADD: \$50.00.	36.99	6	
6613	Alloy Special Wheels 1"	ARAYA MODULAR RIM. 20" x 1". MATCHING FW HUBS. SILVER ONLY. BULLSEYE HUBS ADD: \$50.00.	52.99	6	
6621	"Z" Wheels Special 20"	MATCHING ALLOY FW HUBS. UN-GLUED SPOKES. YELLOW, RED or BLUE ONLY. BULLSEYE HUBS ADD: \$50.00.	42.99	6	
6700	Skyway Tuff II Wheels	BLUE or RED COASTER BRAKE, or YELLOW FW. BLACK GRAPHITE WITH CAMPY HUBS ADD: \$10.00.	51.99	9	
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## FREE-FORM EX



1. Bike: Schwinn Predator Free-Form EX, 20-inch, complete bike.
2. Age range: 10 years old and up.
3. Country of origin: Taiwan.
4. Intended use: Freestyle.
5. Wheelbase: 36-1/4" to 36-3/4".
6. Bottom-bracket height: 11-3/8".
7. Chain stay length: 15-1/2".
8. Steering head angle: 75.5°.
9. Seat tube angle: 69.5°.
10. Frame: Schwinn Predator Free-Form EX, 100-percent chromoly throughout. Features: Bi-Oval tubing, 1-1/8" top and down tubes, seat stay top platform, cable route through top tube, serrated rear drops, coaster brake arm mount, 4" head tube, American bottom bracket, white painted finish.
11. Fork: Schwinn Predator Free-Form EX, 100-percent chromoly throughout. Features: 1-1/8" tapered Bi-Oval legs, leading-axle design, drilled for caliper, white painted finish.
12. Rims: Schwinn mags, plastic. Rear equipped with SunTour coaster brake.
13. Spokes: NA.
14. Hubs: Loose ball front, coaster brake rear.
15. Tires: Cheng Shin skinwall, 20" x 1.75" front and rear, 35 psi.
16. Cranks: Sugino, 1-piece, chromoly, 175mm.
17. Pedals: Victor plastic platform with chromoly spindle.
18. Chain: KMC 1/2" x 1/8" white/chrome.
19. Bottom bracket: Steel, retained ball.
20. Front sprocket: 43T, steel with steel spider.
21. Freewheel: None.
22. Brakes: Dia-Compe MX-900 front, Dia-Compe 750 centerpull rear, SunTour coaster brake rear, Dia-Compe Tech 4 levers front and rear.
23. Headset: Steel, retained ball.
24. Stem: ACS, alloy with chromoly shaft, Potts Modification.
25. Handlebars: Schwinn, CW type, chromoly, 27-1/2" width, 8" rise.
26. Grips: Schwinn, vinyl.
27. Seating: Viscount Dyna, plastic with fluted chromoly post and alloy post clamp.
28. Miscellaneous: Set of 3 safety pads, C.P.S.C. safety equipment.
29. Overall weight: 27-1/4 lbs. without pads or plate.
30. Approximate retail price: \$199.95.
31. For additional information contact: Schwinn Bicycle Co., 1856 N. Kostner Ave., Chicago, IL 60639; (312)292-2900.



Compe calipers, white cable housing—even a white front sprocket and white and chrome chain! Combine these trick color-coordinated parts with the Free-Form's fab safety pad set, flashy graphics and checkered grips, and the EX emerges as one of the best-looking bikes on the market. The look of the Free-Form EX is strictly Beverly Hills. But we'll remind you again—the price is strictly the Bronx—\$199. Amazing!

**HOT HANDLING**  
 So what's the lowdown on the handling? For whom is this bike best suited? Again, all the data points to serious freestyle use—the super-steep 75.5-degree head angle and the laid-back 69.5-degree seat tube angle. Or how about the clearance-to-spare 11-3/8-inch-high bottom bracket? Yep, on paper the Free-Form has all the makings of a great freestyler, but how it works in real life is the question.

The first thing you'll notice aboard the EX is that ergonomically (and that means the bike's handlebars/pedals/seat relationship to you), Schwinn set it up for riders from about 11 to 16 years old. The CW-style bars are tall and wide, and, combined with the forward offset of the ACS stem and the laid-back 69.5-degree seat angle, there's plenty of room to move around. That's good. You'll need every inch of it for freestyling. Next thing you'll notice is the weight. The EX is no featherweight racer. At 27 1/4 pounds, the Free-Form is every bit the sturdy freestyler we've made it out to be. Notice we didn't say sluggish. The EX is far from sluggish! The reason why, of course, is its steep steering head angle and its slightly raked forks.

The ride of the EX is admittedly quick but not too quick. A true freestyler should be quick steering, and

the EX is exactly that. Rock walks, curb endoes and kick turns come easy for the Free-Form. Combine the quick steering and the average-to-short wheelbase, and the EX is extremely nimble on the ground. For ground tricks this scoot is tough to beat, but beware, it'll take some getting used to at first.

We should mention Cheng Shin's new freestyle tires. Good tread design, great traction, slow wearing. Don't look now, but freestyle is about to be bombarded by tons of new tires—Cheng Shin is only one of the first. Great tire nonetheless.

**FREE-FORM FINALE**  
 So what's the final word on Schwinn's new Free-Form EX? How about "rad," "bio," "gnarly," "burly" and "fully shreddable" for starters. No, seriously now, the EX is way ahead of its time. The frame and fork are so innovative that alone they're worth the price of the entire bike. The brakes are awesome. Combine the smooth action of the SunTour coaster with the tucked-out-of-the-way efficiency of the centerpull caliper in the rear and the outstanding stopping power of the MX-900 up front, and you've got binders that'll stop on a dime with change to spare.

And the gearing? Spot-on. The Victor plastic platforms? Sticky like glue. The Schwinn mags? Idiproof. Or how about the deluxe ACS stem, Sugino cranks or Viscount plastic saddle? By now you should all know that you don't need to ask; they're trick, they'll last, and they look hot. In fact, that's the story with the whole bike: style and performance to spare at a price that is truly hard to believe. In the case of the new Schwinn Free-Form EX, \$199.95 buys a ton of bike. The EX is a freestyle heavyweight that's worth its weight in gold trophies. If we had to cast our vote for Production Freestyle Bike of the Year right this minute, the new Free-Form EX would win hands down. Enough said. □