



**TEST PHOTO**

# SCHWINN SX-2000 TEST

By the **BMX PLUS!** Staff

**Poor Carl Burris. Our veteran test rider and all around good guy (why do nice guys finish last?) had been waiting for two months for his SX-2000 to show up at our offices. When the bike finally did show up, we decided not to let him have it. Nope! Instead we kept it for ourselves, so we could all ride it and test it. Poor pitiful Carl had to wait another two months before he finally got his bike.**

*There were a couple of reasons we decided to keep the bike for a test. First off, it is a mid-price range model. It's not the cheapest and not the top of the line Schwinn. It's the kind of bike that the bulk of the racing establishment spends their hard earned cash on. Second, this was the first opportunity for Editor, Bob Hadley, to compare this production Schwinn against the original factory bike he rode for the Schwinn Team in 1977.*

## **THE FRAME**

The construction techniques that Schwinn uses on their BMX frames are a world apart from most bikes. While many manufacturers use heli-arc or TIG welding to glue their frames together, Schwinn prefers to use low temperature brazing. There are several advantages to brazing. The most important is the lower temperature that the tubing is exposed to reduces the chance of weakening the tubing at the weld. This method is quite beneficial at critical stress areas such as the head tube. Schwinn went one step farther and gave us the expanded oval tubing which allows more contact area at the welds at the front triangle. The expanded oval tubing is combined with the five inch head tube to distribute the stress well enough to eliminate the need for a gusset.

Other features incorporated into the frame include the heavy duty track style drop outs and the large diameter seat post tube. The heavy duty drop outs insure that the wheel will seat properly and will not slip, and that the drop out slots won't spread with repeated use. The large diameter seat post tube is a necessity on the Schwinn SX-2000. The frame has a fairly low profile, so larger riders have to raise their seat up higher. The combination of a larger rider and the longer leverage would wreak havoc on a normal post. By the way the frame is 4130 Chrome Moly throughout.

## **THE FORKS**

Schwinn forks are basically similar to Pro Lines or several others, the main difference being the trick tapered fork legs. The fork legs are smaller in diameter at the tabs and have the biggest diameter at the stem, where the stress and flex are the biggest problem. The forks are not as light as some, but to date, we have yet to hear of any problems with them. You would have to run head-on into a brick wall at first turn speed to bend them.

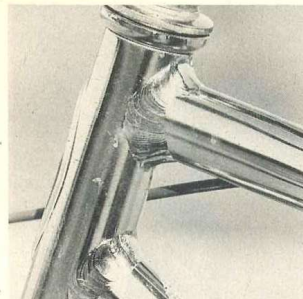
## **THE EQUIPMENT**

As a mid-price range bike you would expect that some corners might be cut to keep the price down in the mid-price range.



This is your classic feet-up power drift.

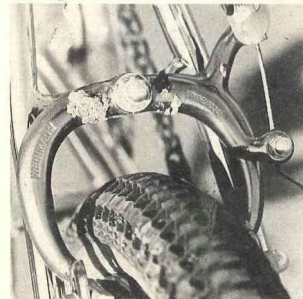
Steel cranks, instead of alloy save bucks and increase reliability—An important factor in a bike in this price range. The only sub-standard parts on the entire bike are the hubs, pedals, and the grips. The hubs are actually OK, but they aren't up to the standard of the SX-2000. You can live with them if you have to. The grips are the usual plastic trash that mass production bikes always seem to end up with. Chuck them and buy something that won't chew up your hands. The pedals are the worst part of the whole bike. They



The brazing looks gnarly, but it's a strong and efficient way to bond the frame.



The gooseneck held the bars fine, but wouldn't tighten into the fork adequately.



The Weinmann calipers and pads are among the best we've evr tested.



are the old Union rattrap jobs that bend and tweak like pot metal. First the shafts bend, then the cages tweak, and finally they get so twisted you're afraid they are going to break—which they do—just when you least expect it. Ours hit the trash in less than two weeks. We replaced them with a set of KKT Lightning pedals that have good chrome-moly shafts.

The bars are a chrome-moly unit that has a modified crossbar so you can use your brake lever on either side and still have the proper position. The bars are chrome plated to match the frame and fork. The bend is as comfortable as any bar we've tried recently.

The most surprising thing to us about the Schwinn SX-2000 was how good the Dia-Compe brakes worked. Two fingers could lock up the rear wheel with ease, and this was with the *stock* brake pads. The calipers have a cable quick-release that makes maintenance and wheel removal a snap. The lever stayed put, even against the chrome bars. We never had to retighten it once we set it up.

The Araya rims roll with perfection and held up to all the cliff dives and endoes. These rims would outlast *TEN* pairs of Union pedals.

## RIDING

It doesn't take long to get used to the Schwinn SX-2000. The balance and layout are almost naturally suited to most riders. The bike *does have* its' individual handling characteristics, some of them particularly good. The SX-2000 shares the same basic geometry as the Sting so you would expect a nimble handler. It is, except that the SX we tested is a little mellower than the Sting. It is possible that with the extra weight the SX-2000 smooths things out a bit.

The stance of the SX is perfect for two-pedal starts. You can set up and balance easily. Shifting your weight feels so natural that you find yourself going faster because you are able to make minor weight shifts more easily, almost without having to think about them. The low profile is what allows this kind of maneuverability.

When you are sliding, the top bar is just the right height for you to put your leg against to initiate the slide and still be able to shift your weight back to maintain proper drift. On many other bikes it is impossible to slide straight up the way you can on the SX-2000.

Our jumping portion of the test of the Schwinn SX-2000 took us to a variety of environments. The first was a long downhill with two short drops in a row, then a small launcher jump, followed by a quick left-hander.

We blazed the bike as fast as it would go, blitzing the downhill to the drop-offs. The first one you can hit full blast and float over the deep ruts, get a quick run at the next drop, where you must crest and shoot to the left just a hair to line up for the jump/turn combo. The Schwinn SX-2000 left the ground and drifted precisely into place in mid-air. It hit the flat and lighted right on target. Over the jump and you grab the brakes in mid-air going for the ultimate dive into the turn. No sweat for the SX. After repeated runs the bike never failed to respond precisely.

Drop-offs and Jump-turns are OK, but what about the gnarly sky-shots? We tucked the SX and all our safety gear over to our favorite Bonzai jump... A total sky-shot across a 20-foot wide ravine. Jeff Kosmala holds the record across this baby; over 50 feet. We couldn't match the Kos' distance, but we got some pretty respectable height of it. The Schwinn SX-2000 took it all in stride. Cross-ups, endoes (more

# Schwinn Test

than one), and bail outs. The only problem that cropped up (besides the crummy pedals) was with the gooseneck. It wouldn't tighten up real tight in the forks. No matter how hard we tightened the wedge bolt we could still twist the neck in the stem. Check this before you buy one.

We also had the opportunity to ride the Schwinn SX-2000 under some pretty foul weather conditions. Rain, mud, and slop, can bring out the worst in a bike. All decent handling characteristics go down the drain in the mud. All you can do is lean back and go for it. So-lean back and go for it we did and the SX was able to slither its way around the mud remarkably well. again, you can attribute this to the low profile of the top tube. In the mud you need body lean more than anything.

The Schwinn lets you lean your body over while leaving the bike upright for maximum traction.

Generally speaking, the Schwinn SX-2000 is a perfectly neutral handler with good weight distribution and thoughtful layout. You can find other bikes that handle "different", or maybe as well as, but none handle better than the Schwinn SX-2000. Not bad for the price. The SX-2000 is not for everyone, but it fits more people than most other BMX bikes on the market.



- In flight the SX-2000 was smooth and predictable

Left: The bike turns with forced aggression or (far right) berm bashing techniques.

## THEN...and Now...

by Bob Hadley

When Schwinn first jumped into the full-blown race market in 1977 with a new team and factory bikes, they expected to turn some heads with their efforts. They certainly did that. The bikes were very impressive looking. The one-off frames were works of art, all hand-made and polished with a beautiful chrome finish. They looked impressive but the geometry was very conservative and the bottom brackets were very low to the ground. They were equipped with Mongoose-type forks, a far cry from the production forks that are a part of the frame today. The handling was a bit on the shaky side, not real good for going fast, and not too good for going slow either.



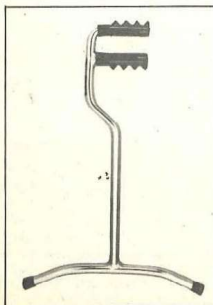
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(frame, fork, bars, crank, seat, brakes, tires, grips)

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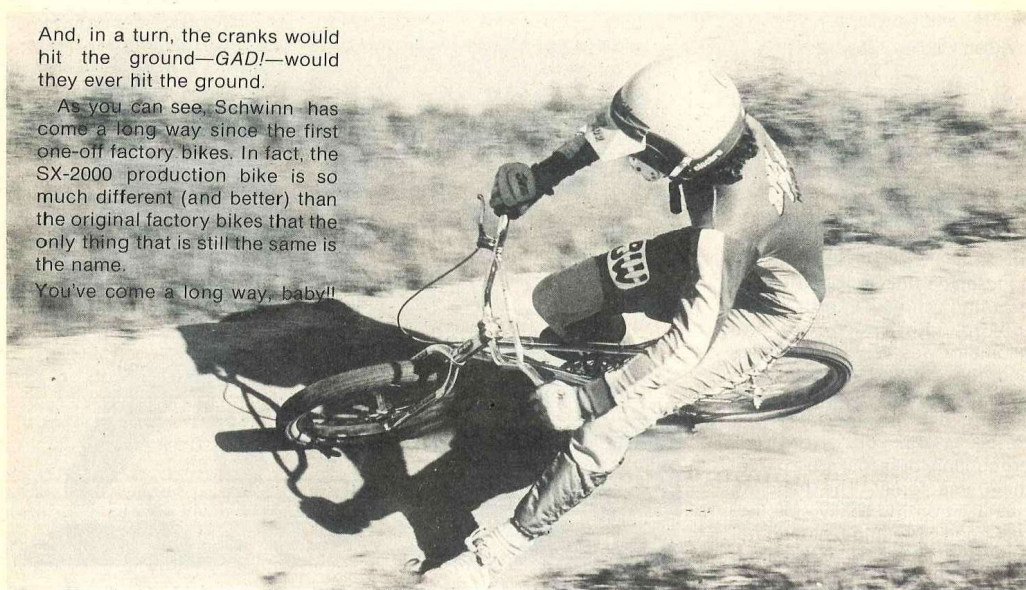
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And, in a turn, the cranks would hit the ground—*GAD!*—would they ever hit the ground.

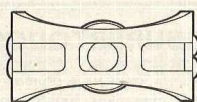
As you can see, Schwinn has come a long way since the first one-off factory bikes. In fact, the SX-2000 production bike is so much different (and better) than the original factory bikes that the only thing that is still the same is the name.

You've come a long way, baby!!

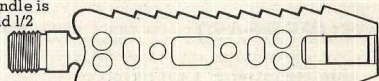


## DESIGNED TO PERFORM

KKT Lightning Pedals for motocross competition.

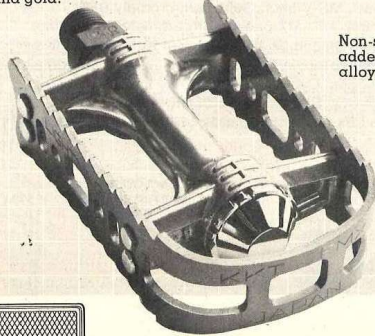


Superlight chromoly spindle is available in both 9/16 and 1/2 inch sizes.

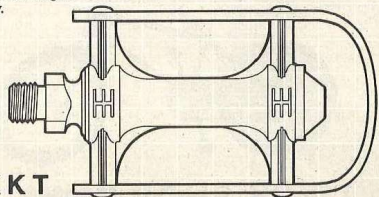


Special Lightning-profile cage-teeth are directionally angled for positive gripping action at the gate and out of the berms.

KKT's light alloy cage is anodized in three brilliant colors: blue, red, and gold.



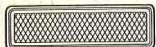
Non-skid gripper bars provide added traction to cast light alloy frame body.



Kyokuto Manufacturing Co., Ltd. Osaka, Japan

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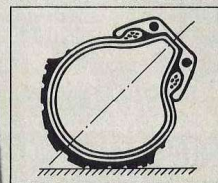
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