

# ENDURO

MOUNTAINBIKE MAGAZINE



## THE FUTURE OF MOUNTAINBIKING

— *Evolution & Revolution* —

# WE ARE ENDURO

*MAG41 becomes Enduro Mountainbike Magazine*

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COVER: *Sven Martin*

FLTR: *Nicolas Lau, Rémy Absalon, Anka Martin, Dan Atherton, Manuel Ducci, Enrico Guala, Jerome Clementz, Andrea Bruno, Nicolas Vouilloz.*

# THE FUTURE IS CLOSER THAN YOU MIGHT THINK.

THE BEST PART IS THE DOWNHILL.  
AND THE WAY THERE, TOO.  
PURE ENDURO – CANYON STRIVE.



# CANYON

PURE CYCLING

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**You don't actually have to be a fortuneteller to predict the future.** Instead, you need to monitor current trends and developments. Or simply go into your own bedroom to determine that you cannot exist with-out a smartphone, iPad, or Facebook. Digitalism is on the increase – even here. So be prepared! Let's just mention this in advance: "IT comes along sooner than you might expect."

Nevertheless, in order to get your desires to come true, you should not only consider them thoroughly, but also act eventually. And that's what we did: Voilà. *Mag41* becomes *Enduro*, representing progression, solidarity, and future. In the end, no other discipline is growing as rapidly, is more social, or is able to embody the initial idea of a mountain bike more nicely than enduro does. However, the topics will not be limited to categories like all-mountain, enduro, or freeride. That's because we consider fun and emotion more important than being able to categorize it – and that's what it's all about, right!? Next to racing, of course! So be inspired by the variety of riding enduro and by this new magazine.



Enjoy the reading, learning, and discovering!

*Robin Schmitt*

DIRECTOR ENDURO MOUNTAINBIKE MAGAZINE

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# LA DOL CE VITA

*Italian enduro riders know  
how to live life.*

*Text Daniel Häberle • Photo Matteo Ganora  
Translation Michaela Jammers*





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# DOLCEAQUA. ENDURO GONE ASTRAY?

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**Over the years, the Ligurian coast has blossomed into one of the most famous mountain bike spots in Italy and has been much talked about world-wide. Some even call it European California. The ideal and constant conditions found there throughout the year can hardly be found anywhere else. With the Mediterranean Sea always in the background, the nearby mountains offer an enormous variety of trails. Unsurprisingly, it is the hatchery of Italian top racers.**

Manuel Ducci is one of these top racers hatched on the Ligurian coast. He lives in San Remo, close to the historic race track of San Romolo. San Romolo is a village filled with history where racers from all over the world

travel to in order to train and ride. Several trails embellish the sight of the Monte Bignone. On the one side is hectic urban life, while on the other is the fabled Italian sociability and the contrasting solitude of the countryside. Trails en masse: tight, fast and wide-open, curvy, rocky, jumpy – it seems like there is nothing they can't offer. No wonder that Manuel found enduro to be his master discipline some time ago. For him, enduro mountain biking is the highest perfection. Extremely fit and possessing a massive skillset, Ducci is pressing his Ibis Mojo HD, seemingly without any sort of effort, over the sandy trails spiked with rocks. Always on the roll, with a massive cloud of dust trailing his rear wheel. >>



CITY LIFE AND  
IDYLIC COUNTRY  
SIDE, THAT IS  
ENDUÑO!



# DOES ENDURO ALWAYS HAVE TO BE ON TRAILS AND IN THE FOREST?



Semi-slick tire and 160-mm disc at the rear wheel? Absolutely Manuel's gusto. Signore Ducci has wanted to make the philosophy of enduro and its lifestyle more accessible to the public for a long time now. Founding his own team was merely a conclusion which offers him the perfect opportunity to unite the adrenaline of racing with the fun and joy of riding. His team, including James McKnight, Simone Lanteri, Alessandro Sadaui, Ducci himself, and girlfriend Valentina Macheda, is competing in the majority of current international races. Every single

rider is a potential winner. With the needed professionalism, everyone is open-minded, helpful, and offers riders that are on the road with their own material, the opportunity to ride under the "Life Cycles" flag. MercenaryArmy? Noteven close. Moreso, Life Cycles is a group that represents the already highly-developed sport of enduro with passion and wants to increase the public's level of awareness in Italy. Preserving local trails is as important as helping to organize the SuperEnduro race in San Remo. Training together is as fun as the racing itself. >>



Dolce Vita – good food, red wine, and one’s corresponding happiness are all necessary! After all, Liguria offers great cuisine.

A trip to Dolceaqua is just right for a little relaxation. Close to the French border, the small town offers variety and trails of a special kind. Beyond the culinary highlights and sociability, there is the perfect Italian flair that seems to be omnipresent here.

Narrow alleys between the urban canyons are the perfect playgrounds. Ducci and his team don’t hesitate for a second and accept the challenge. The tires bite into the pavement; steps replace fields of stone and are used for jumps under the skeptical looks

of the locals. The full-face helmets almost seem alien-like in between the peaceful urban scenery. But why?

Does enduro always need to be on trails and in the forest? Is enduro frowned upon in city-life, or simply unfamiliar? And is enduro over with as soon as you take your helmet off? No, not at all.

The day in Dolceaqua is mainly meant for relaxation and fun. For that – god help me – there is no measurement. This is exactly what enduro is all about! If you are there, you should seize the opportunity to drink a few glasses of the fabulous wine they offer. So long! **Alla salute!** 🍷



**XX1**

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**UNSTOPPABLE**

JÉRÔME CLEMENTZ—WINNER OF MOUNTAIN OF HELL ON XX1

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**ONE. AND ONLY.**



# FIRST RIDE

ROCKY  
MOUNTAIN  
ALTITUDE

*Text Robin Schmitt • Photo Dennis Stratmann  
Translation Lisa Gretemeier*

The gossip usually begins when something new is released on the market. This occurred with 24"-wheeled bikes and is occurring again now: the current subjects of discussion are 26", 27.5", or 29". Which one is the best to go with? Most bike magazines try to empirically prove or disprove the truth with the help of pseudo-analyses and laboratory tests. However, they sometimes fail to see the essential point: there is no absolute truth. Each system has its benefits and drawbacks. It's not the size of the wheels that's important, but rather their functionality.





**HANDLEBAR**, 725 mm – OK for most trail riders, but we want more: 750mm would do!

**TELESCOPIC SEATPOST**, this century's innovation, but we are missing out on it. Why?

**RIDE-9-SYSTEM**, nine different geometry and chassis settings for adjusting riding style and weight. Make use of it!

**DRIVE TRAIN**, 2x without chain guide is OK for trail riders – not for us though. We'd rather have a bashguard or guide come stock.

# 150 MM

5 MODELS

## 650B WHEELSIZE

WWW.BIKES.COM

That's why we don't raise the question of whether the Rocky Mountain's 650B wheels ride well, but rather whether the (entire) bike excels on the terrain for which it is designed.

Thus we have a subjective bike test, exclusively concentrating on the functions – without focusing on single parameters or geometry data without context. What really counts is the bike. Not the size of the wheel as part of an overall concept!

End of discussion! Right? At the bike presentation in a small village in Austria, we were able to give the aluminum version of the Altitude 750 a first try.

Apart from state-of-the-art technology such as a 142 mm rear through-axle, internally routed cables (including the Stealth solution for Rock Shox Reverb), ISCG05 mount, and seat clamp protection, the Ride-9-System at the forward shock mount seems to be its highlight.

Nine different settings via a dual insert arrangement allow riders to adjust geometry and suspension spring curve for the 150 mm of travel according to their own riding style and weight. This is a useful adjustment you would usually just do once during basic setup, because it would be too elaborate to change on the trail. Unfortunately, there is no mark or explanation on the frame.

Uphill, the steep seat angle is evident: >>



We found ourselves positioned quite close to the front, offering an efficient pedaling position while climbing. At the same time, this position brings more pressure to the handlebar, which effectively prevents the front wheel from lifting on steep climbs. The grip – thanks to the sizeable contact patch of the tires – is great even on gravel or loose surfaces. Having reached the top, we prepared for the downhill.

The centered position above the bike provides confidence from the beginning. Despite the 650B wheels, you feel inside the bike. Thanks to very short chain stays (428 mm), the Rocky seems pretty agile and is easy to get onto its back wheel. It is also easy to turn and handle in curves – there are definitely some less agile 26” bikes out there. Another advantage is the great rolling on square-edged terrain. The rear suspension feels very firm at the beginning of the travel and there is only minimal bobbing while pedaling. The mid-stroke, on the other hand, is pretty plush, providing some good bump absorption. The only drawback is the resulting undefined compression feeling – you sometimes

get the mushy sensation of having a flat tire. On the other hand, we love the progressive end-stroke.

We missed having a height-adjustable seatpost (which is standard on the pricier models) and a chain guide (which can be added easily).

**Bottom line: All in all, Rocky managed to design the new Altitude as a very convincing trail bike – clearing out any doubts about 650B. However, you should be prepared to customize it depending on your purposes. 📍**

All-rounder: Fabian Scholz speeds through any kind of terrain with the new Altitude – even on wood.



## EVOLUTION? REVOLUTION? THE NEW SRAM XX1.

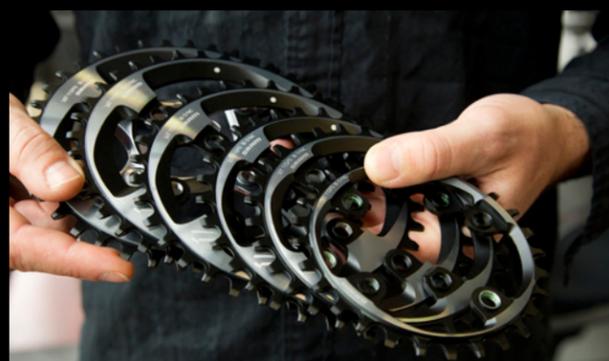
In Italy, we met Blackbox rider Jerome Clementz. We didn't hesitate to swing ourselves onto his XX1 racing bike for a short test ride.

Until now, 1x10 was – due to its simplicity – our first choice for racing. However, not only was the gearing too limited on steep downhills, but chain line issues and the increased friction due to the chain guide were also problematic. In theory, the XX1 drivetrain remedies the mentioned problems. With the gradation of the 10-42t wide range cassette, as well as light and exchangeable chainrings (28t-38t) in the front, there is sufficient transmission range available for a broad range of use. The chainring provides a precise tooth profile with alternating widths of the teeth which are perfectly adapted to the chain's inner and outer links to allow precise guidance. This brings along a great advantage: thanks to the

chain management with special X-Sync chain rings, a chain guide is needless for most situations.

As a matter of fact, Jerome's racing bike is not equipped with a chain guide and it works just fine. No bouncing and (almost) no rattling: the chain only hits the chainstays every now and then when set to the smallest cog, a result of the chain length. The shifting occurs precisely and fast. It remains questionable how the performance drops when a cog is bent or other smaller damages occur, because an 11x gradation definitely needs more precision than a 9x rear derailleur. Overall, we are euphoric after having had our first rides and are eagerly waiting for some extensive tests on regular production XX1. The only potential drawback for many prospective buyers might be the price of the drivetrain: 1,299 Euro

[www.sram.com](http://www.sram.com)



R

iding.  
Racing.  
Relaxing.

We are riding towards Sauze d'Oulx, a place we only know from hearsay, with excitement. Our expectations are high. The only thing separating us from the high mountain village in the Italian Alps is eight hours in a car. By now, it is 3am. The windshield wipers push aside the rain. We are pushing aside our extreme tiredness. Silence at our arrival. Everything and everyone is asleep; we are without a clue, but awake. Not a single soul to be found.

# Sauze d'Oulx

# SUPERENDURO

*Text Daniel Häberle • Photo Matteo Cappé  
Translation Michaela Jammers*

# A fter

a short night with only three hours of sleep, we enjoy the refreshing effects of a caffeinated breakfast. Well-known faces like Remy Absalon, Enrico Guala (organizer and Enduro prophet), Manuel Ducci, and Anka Martin greet our sleepy and still half-asleep faces.

We enjoy short moment of reflection in the morning before the lift transports us up to the mountaintop in no time. Six stages with over 3000 meters of downhill are waiting for an estimated 300 SuperEnduro racers. With up to 15 minutes of riding, these stages demand a great deal of strength and concentration. >>

Up and down, again and again,  
shredding along the mountain scenery  
of Sauze d'Oulx.



**"Sauze is not just a mindless bike park race on artificially created obstacles, but rather a maximum flow from the top of the mountain down to the valley. In addition to that, if you take time for the breathtaking panoramas, you'll have the best day of your life."**

Daniel Häberle, racer & ENDURO-editor



**T**he

participants have to race again on Sunday. At that point, they will have to finish off the last two stages (plus a mass start race for the top 100) as well as possible.

Competing will be the crème de la crème of enduro royalty: Vouilloz, Clementz, Bruno, Lau, Absalon, Ducci, Atherton, and Barnes are only a small group of many listed top racers that have gathered here. After all, in Sauze it will be about the race of nations as well. Each nation will be represented by

three chosen racers. The later the time of day, the dustier the trails become, demoralizing the riders. Meanwhile, the field of racers is still on top of each other. The top rankings in the race are a battle between the big names. Sometimes it's Jerome Clementz, sometimes Nicolas Lau, or Remy Absalon. Every single one of them has got the potential to win this because the addition of all race times is going into the final valuation. In the end, the time total adds up to forty-five minutes!

Dan Atherton was able to turn the mass start on Sunday to his advantage. However, Jerome Clementz won the overall score. Over the course of the weekend, he was the most constant and fastest rider, ahead of Vouilloz and Nicolas Lau. France, an enduro-pioneering country, is leading the way. Organizer Enrico Guala, who screamed into the microphone like a virtuoso, was talking for a perceived time of 48 hours. >>

# B

ut

all racing aside – in Sauze, everyone will be getting their money's worth. Real "free-time-millionaires" are offered a seemingly never-ending variety of trails in this region. Thanks to gondola and lifts, you'll be in the neighboring valleys in no time.

Together they form the Alpi Bike Resort. Flowing, curvy, rugged, fast, full of jumps, and technically challenging... this area offers it all, for beginners to pros.



Mass start is war on two wheels.  
Elbows out and from the very beginning  
«on the Edge».



Jerome Clementz pushes hard and takes speed wherever he can. The reward was waiting for him at the finish line.



Strong female power: Anka Martin from South Africa made sure she was going to win again. With her speed, even some guys need to watch out.

**Being on the bike yourself is better than just watching and wishing.**

Said and done. We make good use out of the next two days by extensively exploring the already-mentioned trails. Every minute is used and squeezed of life. As if in a trance, we run towards the lift, enjoying one ride

after another. We realize that the founders of the Alpi Bike Resort know exactly what the ambitious modern rider demands. Due to wide-ranging terrain, the mass of bikers disperses fairly quickly. In other words, there are no lines at the lift, and no traffic jams on the trails. >>



Luca (4Guimp)  
in paradise.

A free-time-millionaire's devotion to life: Sauze, Bardonecchia, Cesana, Sestriere, Prali, Pragelato, Chiomonte – everyone wanting to explore the area of Alpi Bike Resort should bring plenty of time.

# A high

Good times in the Alpi Bike Resort. Sunset ride, beer, friends and the finest cuisine. That's how life and biking should always be.



percentage of the trails here run alongside untouched terrain, and that is part of what gives all of this the quintessence of flow. Only a few modifications, a few artificial obstacles, or wooden elements are installed – or desired. We haven't seen a bike park like it.

Before a trail is created, its path is precisely planned. First, you'll see a slight trail cut into the lush green grass by a lawn mower... no additional work is needed. This may be one of the reasons why riding a mountain bike in this region is so special. Also, you

can count on the hospitality of locals. Due to high-frequency tourism in the winter, everyone knows how to treat guests well. Comfortable lodging, the finest Italian cuisine, and hospitality are virtues over here. After a total of four days, our horizon has been broadened immensely.

Sauze d'Oulx is not only a station of the SuperEnduro series, but also an absolute "must" on the bucket list of every biker. Thank you very much, Enrico & Luca from 4Guimp, for guiding us and for these great days we had! **Sauze d'Oulx – any time!** 🍷

# UMF

## WELCOME HOME

Welcome Home, UMF! Since their introduction at Eurobike 2004, the "UNITED MERIDA FREERIDERS" have not only established themselves internationally as an exceptionally successful team: In addition, the experienced UMF engineers with their countless exciting development concepts have also accounted for the actual bikes' annually growing and impressive success. Now it's time to bring the offspring back to the renowned family again – thus from MY 2013, MERIDA proudly presents an own attractive "UMF Series" with top-class dirt and long-travel bikes while continuing this successful development work on premium level.



TANJA HENDRYSIK Team Rider

MERIDA

**SOME** LOOK AT ENDURO AS A MOUNTAIN BIKE LIFE-STYLE THAT INCLUDES UP- AND DOWNHILL JUST AS NATURALLY AS A COLD BEER FOLLOWS THE RIDE.

**OTHERS** THINK THAT ENDURO IS A DISCIPLINE WITHOUT COMPROMISES THAT COMBINES THE STAMINA OF A MARATHON RACER, THE TACTICS OF XC, AND THE SUPERLATIVE TECHNIQUE OF THE BEST DH RIDERS.

# AND NOW?

*Text Robin Schmitt & Daniel Häberle  
Translation Michaela Jammers*

*ESSAY*

*comments  
to the  
collective  
perception  
of  
enduro*



## IS ENDURO EVEN A DISCIPLINE?

**Enduro is a term, originating from the word endurance, describing the following performance characteristics: a mixture of technique, diversity, and stamina.**

To a certain degree, transferred to a mountain bike, this stands for the original idea of mountain biking — particularly getting up and down the hills under your own power. Is enduro a discipline? Discipline

derives from disciplina (Latin: training, discipline) and stands for a certain classification with rules for self-regulation and specialization — the best examples are disciplines like XC and DH that have specialized over the years, narrowing in on everything from race terrain to clothing styles and bike technology. However, enduro is still counting on polyvalence, diversity, and variability. And here it comes...



## THE ENLIGHTENMENT

**Enduro is not the same as enduro.** It cannot be put into a simple definition. Riders, race organizers and institutions have different perspectives and opinions on it and will continue to have them, because...



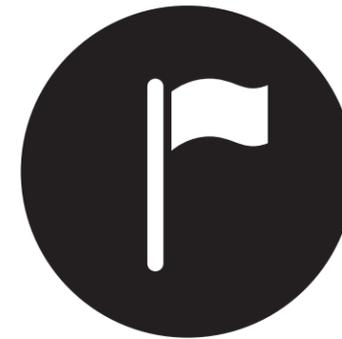
## THERE IS NOT 'THE' PERFECT SOLUTION

**This is not because theoretically there couldn't be a possible consent, but rather because of the diverse,**

**global topographies with regional differences.**

While you possibly take the 130-mm travel twenty-niner to Slickrock in Utah, in alpine terrain you might prefer 170 mm of rear travel and other bike specifications to be

able to adapt to the local conditions. Therefore, every terrain (depending on your own preferences) demands a different solution. There is no right or wrong in that case. The problem isn't finding a solution, because...



## THE JOURNEY IS THE DESTINATION

**While some worry about the unbelievable amounts of enduro solutions and categorizations, they lose track of what is really important – the reason why we ride enduro in the first place – because it's fun!**

Technique gimmicks and categorizations, seemingly imposed by the authority of the media landscape, seem to be switched up every single day. For every millimeter of rear travel, an even better term seems to be needed. The superlatives are being exhausted. Riding will soon be an UltraEnduro with 210mm rear travel? Nonsense! What really counts is the attitude and what I want to do with my bike. At that point, it doesn't matter if it is a 160-mm full-suspension with telescopic seatpost or a hardtail. In the end, what really matters is the effect and experience! In the long run, you want to be able to do anything with one and the same bike – starting an adventure in nature and ending it. Therefore, strict enforcement of standards and categorizations are the wrong aim. The journey and individual experience are what's most important! That's where we need to apply...



## DIVERSITY AS A MAXIM

**Trails and racing series are different these days and – by all means – should stay that way.**

Diversity calls for excitement, variety, and adventure. If you are not up for one format, you can stay away from the event, even though other riders might love it. Or you just take in an enduro credo, which shouldn't only apply to bikes... >>



## THE ART OF ADAPTATION

In this context, variability does not only stand for the technical ability of your bike to adjust to each and every trail. Whether it is adjustable rear travel, height-adjustable seatpost, suspension platform systems, or a different choice of tires, variability is good. Often, however, something substantial is being overlooked...



### NOT EVERYTHING IS BETTER SOMEWHERE ELSE

**Enduro riders come to races with expectations and experiences that are based on the trails back home.**

People training in the flatter areas of the low mountain ranges may be overwhelmed with the steep and long uphill and downhill of the Alps, because this terrain demands a different approach. The variability we expect from our enduro bikes is not enough. Instead, enduro asks us to be more flexible and train our adaptability towards the given circumstances, because...



### SIMPLE WOULD BE UNINSPIRING

**Enduro does not limit itself to an adjustable bike, but rather requires an open mind towards new things, being adventurous, and having the needed stamina.**

That is the only way to have fun on

every trail and be truly free on your bike. Absolutely independent: no gondolas, cars, or other technical support. Enduro requires you to do everything – not just adequately, but as well as possible. These are a lot of requirements – technically, as well as physically and psychologically. But simply “simple” would be too easy. Enduro – there is a reason for the “duro” in it. Spanish for hard. 🇪🇸



## IMPROVE CONTROL FOR ANY CATEGORY



Mondraker presents a new geometry concept with a clear emphasis on longer top tubes compensated by extremely short stems with a key focus to obtain a more advanced position of the front wheel axle. The new Forward Geometry offers new sensations for just any category. It enhances the overall control and provides more stability, reactivity and confidence allowing you to carry more speed. You can find the Forward Geometry concept on the new Factor XR, Foxy XR and Dune XR.

Just try it out at one of your nearest Mondraker stores. You'll be amazed!

# IT'S TIME

**IN CONVERSATION WITH MERIDA**  
ABOUT LIFE BEING A NEVER-ENDING  
PROCESS OF LEARNING AND  
CHANGE, AS WELL AS  
CORRECT TIMING.



THE COURAGE TO MAKE A CHANGE, A SENSE FOR THE RIGHT TIMING, AN APPRECIATION FOR THE MARKET'S FUTURE. WHETHER IT'S A RELAUNCH OR A FUSION – IT SHOULD BE WELL-CONSIDERED AND WELL-PREPARED.



**Time is money: some have simply too much of it, of one and the other. Some move with the time, others work against it, and yet others are ahead of time. Simply put, it is not always easy to find the right timing.**

The same applies to Merida – the second

largest bike producer in the world. After Wolfgang Renner took over the sales department of Merida Germany in 2001, he continuously built up one of the best XC racing teams around the world. Cross-country was – and still is – a huge segment, no doubt about it. However, around the time the

millennium turned, after movies like *New World Disorder*, terminology like “Dirt” and “Freeride” suddenly arose. Without further ado, there was an internal decision to create a mountain bike team that was supposed to be called UMF later on – United Merida Freeriders. Why?

Well, there are two answers to this. The more exciting one, however, arrives later.

**Answer 1:** Because the Badass-Freeride-Image didn't exactly conform to the rather grown-up Merida brand, this team was supposed to go by a different name. >>



“A PRODUCT IS MORE PERSISTENT THAN MARKETING”.

Reynaldo Ilagan, product manager Merida



**ALSO SHREDS UP**

WE WANTED A BIKE TO RIDE LIKE A TRAIL BIKE AND DESCEND LIKE A DH BIKE. SO, WE LIGHTENED UP THE ENDURO, BOOSTED ITS TRAVEL TO 165MM AND MADE IT PEDAL AND CLIMB EVEN BETTER THAN BEFORE, MAKING SURE THE ENDURO KEEPS EVOLVING. IN BOTH DIRECTIONS. SEE THE FULL ENDURO RANGE AT [SPECIALIZED.COM](https://www.specialized.com)



**Answer 2:** Because the dirt-team title “You Motherf\*\*\*\*\*” (short UMF), which actually arose during a night out at a bar, did not really get the approval from the “bosses” in Taiwan. Back at that time, with the given circumstances, it was not really necessary to offer a self-developed high-end-product – especially not if you planned on selling “Everyman’s Freeride Bikes.” But then, one day, quality and internal development gained more and more importance – just like the gravity and enduro segments. However, “one day” came up faster and bigger than expected. One thing was obvious: the need for a structured change. In the middle of 2012, UMF was eventually integrated in Merida: first of all, to offer a

wider range of products to the customers, and second of all, to share the use of the development-know-how. The first product of the joint R&D Department is, for example, the Merida One-Sixty, developed on the basis of the UMF Freddy. It seems like we can not only expect an image change at Merida, but also a few triumphs in the gravity segments. The best current example would be Merida team rider Thomas Genon, who recently won the Red Bull Joy Ride in Whistler, its non-official slopestyle championship. Or reigning Cross-country Eliminator Worldchampion Ralph Näf who decided to compete in some enduro races on his One-Sixty, scoring impressive results. In our opinion, it was about time! 🍀

**GAME OF CHANCE? NO.  
GAME OF CONTESTS?  
MAYBE.**

**GAME OF SKILL?  
DEFINITELY!  
PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT WORK  
IS A SERIOUS MATTER,  
BUT ALSO REQUIRES  
SINCERITY FOR  
SOMETHING NEW AND  
A CHILDISH INSTINCT  
TO CONSTANTLY  
EXPERIMENT AND  
RESEARCH.**

# EVOLUTION

## IDEAS & IDEALISM

INTERVIEW WITH CANYON'S CHIEF DEVELOPER, LUTZ SCHEFFER,  
ABOUT DEFINING A DISCIPLINE, SUCCESS, CREATIVITY,  
AND THE FINEST SOLUTION.

*Text Florian Storch • Photo Canyon  
Translation Lisa Gretemeier*

**Enduro races are the supreme discipline in mountain biking.** There is no other discipline that requires an even more extreme balancing act between up- and downhill performance. In enduro, extreme downhill stress is just as common as steep climbs. At the same time, the bikes need to be as versatile, light, and sturdy as possible. More than any other bike category, enduro is the one for technical refinements: telescopic seatposts, suspension platform systems, and adjustable spring rates guarantee superior riding enjoyment, and a quick rate of advancement.

Some additional aspects are tuning by weight, sophisticated kinematics, and a well-balanced geometry.

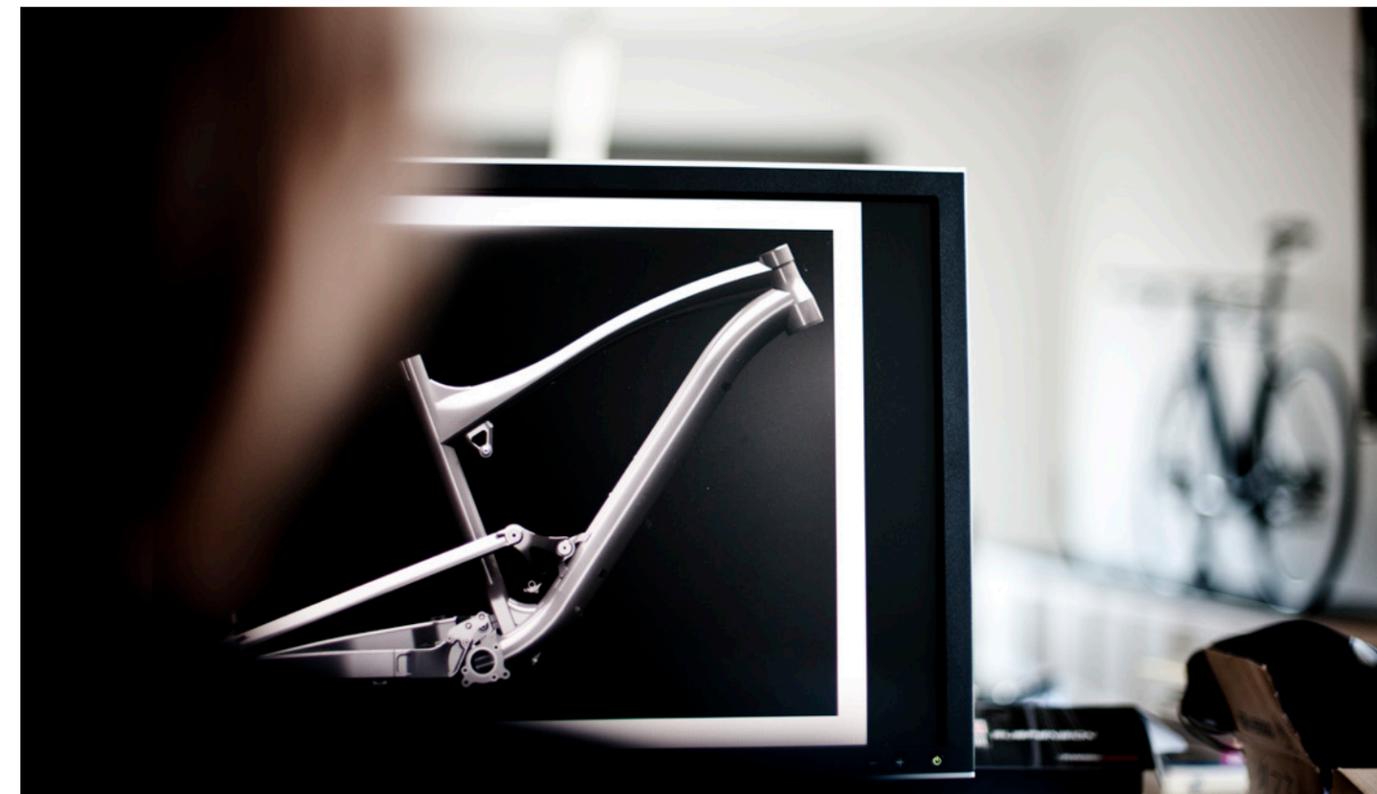
**What current enduros have to offer is what we elaborated on the trails, riding the Canyon Strive. But before we get to that, here's an interview with Canyon's chief-developer, Lutz Scheffer.**

**ENDURO:** Lutz, where do you begin when developing a new bike? When does it make sense to adapt a new design?

First of all, it is important to see the single model in context with the evolutionary growth of a model range. The models form a sort of ecosystem. And as soon as an eco-niche opens up within the system, that's when a new model will be introduced.

produces ever-new impressions and therefore creates a new setting. This is what makes it possible to consider various thoughts, rather than being tied up with a single one.

As a matter of fact, just like nature generates thousands of mutations of a single principle, the technical world offers indefinite processes and ways to a solution.



Who takes up the mentor role for the designer during development?

It all starts with the desire for a new function or a better adaptation to the mutated "environment" of the rider, even before the actual idea rises. The "environment" is defined by lines, the trails one is riding on.

My ideas arise when I am riding my bike. Biking is perfectly suitable for this mentor character, because you are in a kind of "state of flow," which means every thought is possible! The surrounding landscape

This also means that despite the fact that there are many very good solutions, there is not a unique "best" solution.

Due to the triangle of high "Downhill performance – stability – versatility," enduro bikes claim high demands towards the development department. Where is the greatest development potential located?

It's located in leaving out all the unnecessary! Too many options let the biker grow apart from the enduro-thought of forming a >>



unified whole with the bike and feeling comfortable in every riding discipline.

Is there an ideal amount of rear travel for enduro?

The rear suspension's characteristic curve and adjustment will always be a compromise between uphill, trail, and downhill qualities. It is crucial to get the best benefit from the lowest amount of travel. I think an ideally usable 160 mm is better suitable for enduro than too progressive 180 mm.

Large 29"-wheels for Enduro – is this a serious option?

Large wheels actually do roll astonishingly well over tough hazards, even though the drawbacks of more weight and less stiff-

ness will always remain. However, long-travel 29er-bikes only feel really great if they are trimmed to be extremely light. A rather irrespective facet: the higher the wheel axle is located, the harder it is to create a dynamic wheel-load distribution. Also, due to its high pivot, the 29er is harder to mount to the back wheel, which is also partly due to the longer chain stays. My advice: The 27.5" wheel "intermediate size" will gain more and more importance within the 120 to 160 mm travel range. Alternatively, a combination of different wheel sizes is pretty exciting in enduro.

Do you think the enduro sector needs more market division with upcoming all-mountain 29ers?

26" enduros and 29" All-Mountains with a spring rate of 140 mm have, no doubt about it, an overlapping area. However, I think the upcoming 27,5" bikes will push the 29" All-Mountains back to a CC core area of 100 mm. In the future, there will be extremely light and expensive 29er AMs for professionals.

Which part of the Strive chassis has taken up most of the time?

The stiff formation of the chain stay-fork and the bearing of the knucklebox.

What does a Strive have to withstand in a test laboratory before being released for sale? All the common external standard assessments, like for instance the EN one (EN =

European standard, added by author). Additionally, we assess the internal criteria, which takes place after successfully having passed the official tests. With an enduro like the Strive, extremely high stresses on jumps and cradle steps are common.

With the Strive, you go for a carbon strut – why not simply an entire carbon chassis?

The seating-strut-fork is only the beginning. Carbon is going to spread throughout the enduro sector, as it is a versatile material. Synthetic material enhanced with carbon fiber reduces the weight, but at the same time it also reduces the unsprung mass, including the rear swing arm. If the quantity requests increase, I am sure an entire carbon chassis will come out. >>



What do you consider a “successful” bike design?

A bike is successful, if it has been understood and doesn't act destructively towards itself, its rider, and the environment. Therefore, philosophy and argumentation behind the product need to have a mutual consent. In addition, it has to be integrated into ethics. Which still needs to be shaped for enduro.

Who gets the final say in the developing department? Designer, engineer, or marketing manager?

The most important decision level and therefore “owner” of the final say is the board of management. Other than that, a good company is marked of respect towards different opinions, also including criticism. A long-lasting and successful product functions the same way among Designers as it does among engineers or marketing personnel.

Creatives are said to be kind of out of touch with reality – is that a must?

If “out of touch with reality” describes some kind of shelter, then I agree. To encourage new products, there is a need of two things: sensitivity and independent thinking. 



**FOR A SUCCESSFUL BIKE  
THE PHILOSOPHY AND DEBATE  
BEHIND THE PRODUCT NEED TO BE  
IN AGREEMENT.**



# Test Report Canyon Strive ESX 9.0 LTD

*Text Robin Schmitt • Photo Christoph Laue  
Translation Lisa Gretemeier*





160 mm of front and rear travel – that’s what clearly makes the Strive a representative of enduro. Its weight, however, is not as standard as the travel – with its light weight, it tops the bill of its companions by far. The terrain doesn’t care, for sure, enduro stays enduro. So, how can the Strive stand out?

The climb to the trail turns out to be quite relaxing. Thanks to a travel-adjustable fork in the front, the low overall weight, and light, fast-spinning wheels, the Strive accelerates efficiently, almost playfully. To achieve an efficient pedaling position, we moved the seat a little to the front to center our weight better. When the Propedal is on, the bike seems keen on the uphill – and even with the suspension open, the rear bobs only marginally.

Reaching the downhill, only a push of the button is needed to lower the Reverb telescopic seatpost. The trail is steep, full of turns, partly fast and rough – just what aggressive enduro is like. Among other things, thanks to the short chain stays (425 mm), the Strive manages turns brilliantly and feels very maneuverable. The rider is positioned centrally above the bike, creating a feeling of having everything under control. The only drawbacks affecting the downhill fun are the Formula Oval brakes.



Even though they provide flawless braking power, the leverage isn’t ergonomic; despite our average-sized hands, we couldn’t get the reach close enough to the handlebar to be truly comfortable. The chassis works

sensibly and harmoniously with the terrain. On roots we felt that the Canyon is a little less plush than some of its competitors, and that more bump absorption on rough terrain would be desirable. However, the Strive

does provide sufficient cushion for riding mistakes. The Shadow Plus rear derailleur was definitely wound up to a high tension, and in combination with the dual-ring chain guide, we were able to speed free from worry. 🚴



#### Bottom line:

All in all, the ESX 9.0 LTD offers a consistent and well-thought-out concept. It is not THE ultimate racing bike, but it does its job perfectly on less-extreme trails. Thanks to its outstanding light weight, it is also perfectly suitable for all types of trail-riding– and all that at a current sale price of only 4,199 Euro (instead of 4,999)!

**Canyon Strive ESX 9.0 LTD** WEIGHT: 12,7 Kg PRICE: 4199 EUR INFO: [www.canyon.com](http://www.canyon.com)



#### Suspension system: 270° Box, linkage-driven single-pivot

With its efficient and progressive spring curve, the Strive's single pivot with linkage offers great support for trail-riding. However, we wanted better bump absorption on aggressive trails.



#### Gold and silver, as far as the eye can see...

Only the best of the best – whether it is XTR, carbon wheels by DT Swiss, or the top-shelf Fox suspension with Kashima coating and more settings than an average customer can make use of.

# OPEN YOUR MIND: MORE THE CUBE ACTION TEAM THAN ENDURO

*The "Cube Action Team," initiated in the beginning of 2012, is already able to list several triumphs as their own. Unlike other teams, the Action Team combines unbelievable diversity with different types of riders and is especially active in the enduro division.*

*Text Daniel Häberle • Photo Rommy Kiaulehn  
Translation Michaela Jammers*



FLTR: Julia Hofmann, Laura Brethauer, Valerie Priem-Schandene, André Wagenknecht, Nicolas Lau, Ludwig Döhl

**The Cube Action Team couldn't be more diverse. Instead of one homogenous mass, as we know it from many other teams, every Cube rider originally competed in a different discipline.** Four-crosser, downhill, XC-racer, or just a talent in moving around – “Stick to your roots!” If you throw everything together, you'll end up with a team of six, focused mainly on enduro racing. Nevertheless, none of them has lost touch with their original discipline.

“In the end, the idea of mountain biking is exactly what keeps us strong and together!”, claims (ex-) downhiller André Wagenknecht.

Another striking and positive aspect of the team is the percentage of females: 50%. Cube is leading the way here as well, and they filled team roster with Valerie Priem, Laura Brethauer, and Julia Hofmann next to the gentlemen Wagenknecht, Lau, and Döhl. Just like that? >>





SEBASTIAN SCHECK (1)

“Of course we see a rapidly growing market with the women on our team. Let’s be honest though, men are deeply impressed if women are riding faster downhill than them, no?” says Claus Wachsmann (Marketing & Team Manager).

That Cube sees a lot of potential in enduro is also very apparent through the merchandizing of the whole concept. Beginning with advertisements in magazines promoting the team, over to uniform team sponsors, right up to stellar race support with their own truck, they are professional from the inside out! Claus Wachsmann is confident and draws a balance among his goals.

Not only does success in racing make him happy, but also the feedback and advertising effect that the “Action Team” receives. More importantly, the riders’ feedback influences the products. The most recent baby is the new Stereo with 160 mm of rear travel, developed in close cooperation with the team riders.

By the way, the team’s success has been so convincing that Cube is thinking about adding another two international riders to the team. We can all be curious about what the team of 2013 will look like.

Good luck from our side – may enduro keep flourishing! 🍀



# HEROES OF WORK

THE PEOPLE  
BEHIND THIS ISSUE



## ROBIN SCHMITT

*Lots of plans & ideas that have to be schemed and carried out ... that's not how you win races. Next stop: Barcelona. A lot is going to happen with the creative cluster around the Blackmedia Crew and Cero Design this winter! Stay tuned!*



## MAX-PHILIP SCHMITT

*The organizing and planning brain of Downtown and Enduro is going to be busy this fall. Two exhibitions, countless shootings and negotiations – he's going to have his hands full.*



## DANIEL HÄBERLE

*Daniel is one of the all-rounders. He likes to ride fast, is not afraid of any uphill, and you better get out of his way downhill. The same applies to his duties in our editorial office: creating layouts, brainstorming texts, & doing research – is that why he loves enduro?*



## FLORIAN STORCH

*New job, new home, but the same smile. Flo, aka Storchi, is hopefully going to keep treating us with his awesome stories.*



## AARON STEINKE

*Our online specialist is irreplaceable. Apart from his editorial work he does all the nerd-stuff, like programming our website and making new plans for the future. Great job!*



## CHRISTIAN LÄMMLE

*For our graphic designer Chris you would have to find a new superlative for "motivated." He creates the finest layouts in no time and makes post-production look like no hustle at all!*

[WWW.LAEMMLEDESIGN.COM](http://WWW.LAEMMLEDESIGN.COM)



## JORDAN BAUMANN

*The fast Frenchman from the Alsace is also known as "Jürgen Baumarkt" since our SuperEnduro Sauze trip. At the sunset shooting, he got shooed around by Robin to get the perfect shot. And again... and again...*



## CHRISTOPH LAUE

*Christoph doesn't make excuses. He doesn't prefer summer and sunshine for his shoots. For the Canyon story, he got right down and dirty.*



## MATTEO GANORA

*Without a doubt, the Italian photographer has got an eye for the extraordinary. With his lens he caught the finest Italo-flair with the Lifecycle Team and Manuel Ducci. We like!*



SPECIAL  
THANKS TO:  
BASTIAN DIETZ

### AMERICA



### AFRICA



### ASIA



### EUROPE



*Enduro is a free digital mountainbike magazine which comes out six times per year.*

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