





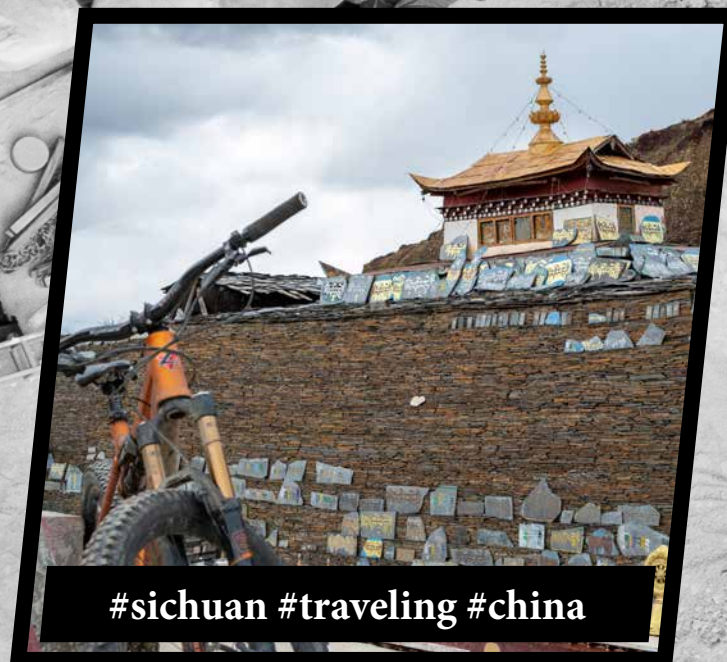
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#sichuan #traveling #china



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150mm	30.9mm	440mm	552g	07560
150mm	31.6mm	440mm	573g	07561

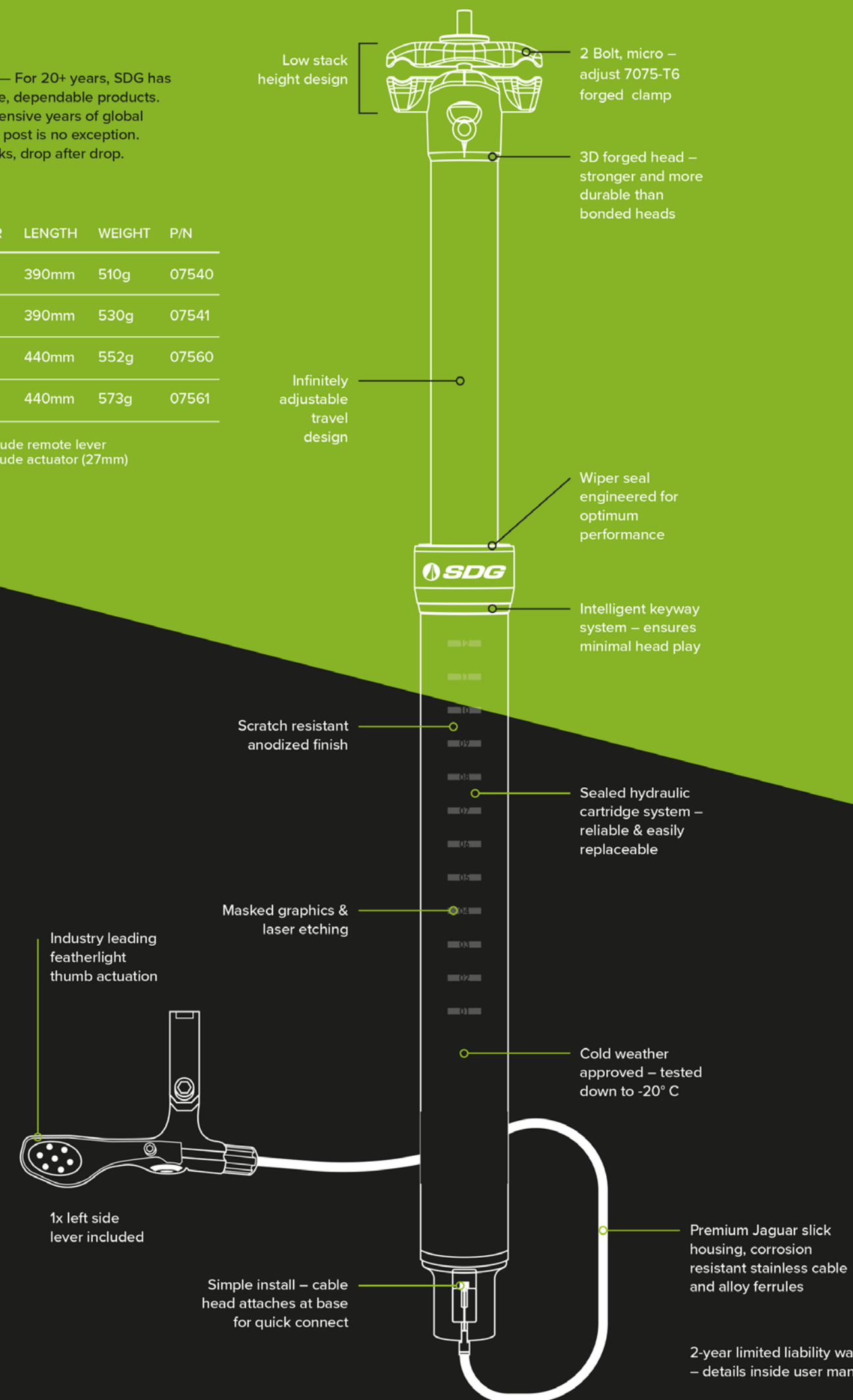
* Weight does not include remote lever
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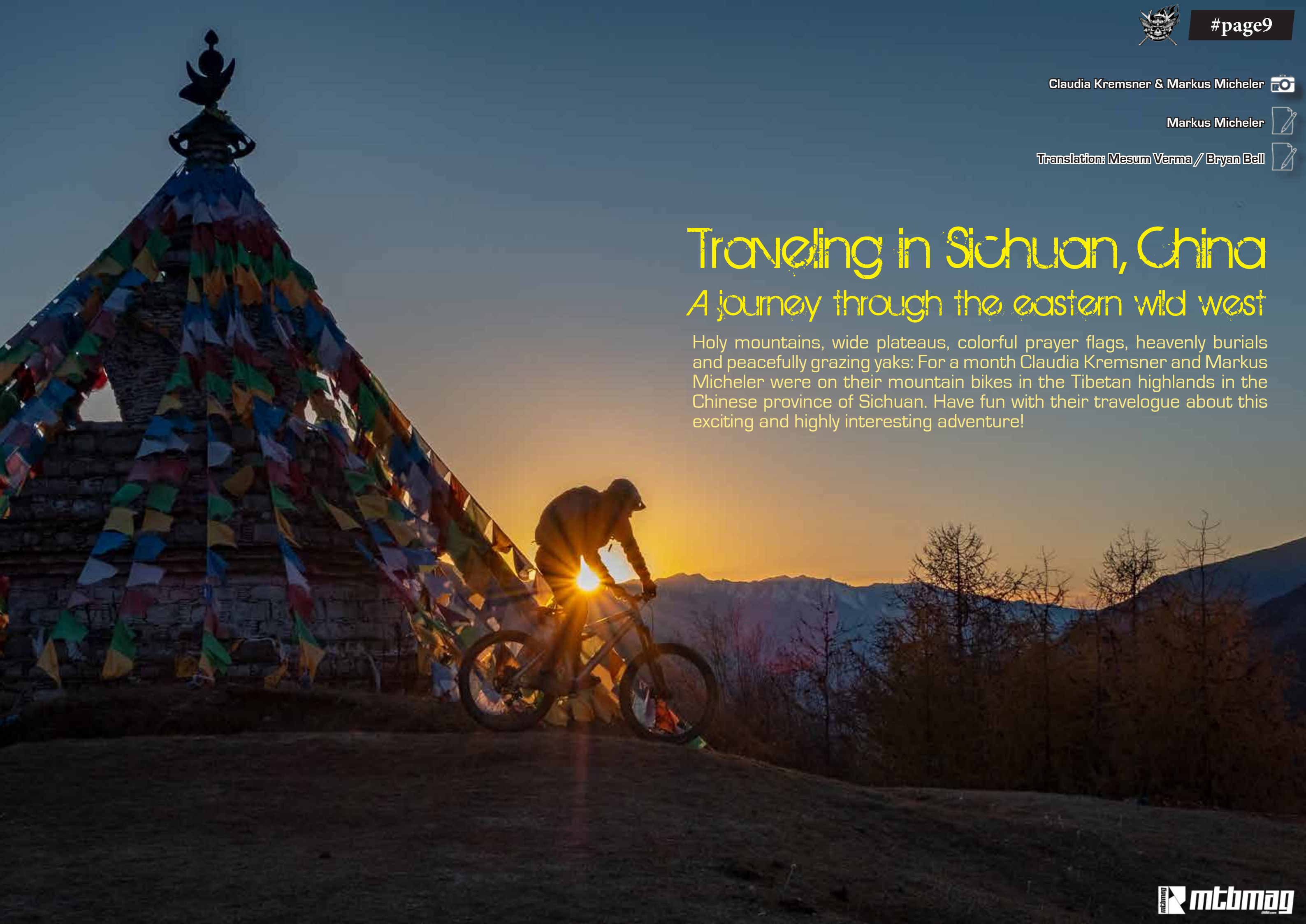
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Claudia Kremsner & Markus Micheler Markus Micheler Translation: Mesum Verma // Bryan Bell 

Traveling in Sichuan, China

A journey through the eastern wild west

Holy mountains, wide plateaus, colorful prayer flags, heavenly burials and peacefully grazing yaks: For a month Claudia Kremsner and Markus Micheler were on their mountain bikes in the Tibetan highlands in the Chinese province of Sichuan. Have fun with their travelogue about this exciting and highly interesting adventure!





Chengdu

On arriving in the provincial capital of Chengdu, our first adventure is a culinary one. Getting acquainted with Sichuan's world-famous spicy cuisine boosts our metabolism, initially without any physical exercise. The soup, which has plenty of chili and Sichuan pepper, drives the beads of sweat over our foreheads. With each spoon, however, our taste buds get used to the pungency and the Sichuan cuisine will turn out to be a delicious delicacy for us in the coming weeks.

One of the reasons we love traveling to distant countries is, among other things, to get to know a foreign culture, to discover new landscapes and to meet the tingling magic of the "unknown," the thing we do not know, be it the eating habits, the life of the locals or the cultural differences. It is always fascinating and indescribable for



us to be hospitably welcomed as a foreigner in these countries. It's a sustainable, beautiful feeling that always amazes us. Sichuan Province is located east of the Tibetan Plateau on the upper reaches of the Yangtze River. For our tour we chose four main starting points. We will spend a few days at each and take day trips to the Tibetan Plateau.

Very early in the morning and in light drizzle we start our adventure China. First of all, it is important for us to find the most conclusive route from the city of Chengdu (500m above sea level), which has a population of 14 million. We are surprised how green and amazingly clean this city presents itself. It is considered the most livable city of the "Middle Kingdom," with an excellently developed road network. We are making good progress. Industrial districts alternate with huge tea plantations where field workers are busy harvesting the leaves.



We are on the road for three days until we reach the “Gate to Tibet,” the city of Kangding.

Kangding

Kangding is about 327 km from Chengdu. The bustling, vibrant city is 2600m above sea level and is surrounded by striking, white-capped mountain peaks. We enjoy the clear, fresh mountain air and make few day trips and walks from here for gradual acclimatization, before we continue our journey into the highlands.

After our bodies have adapted well to the altitude, we tackle the first major challenge from Kangding. We first have to pass through a 4500 meter high pass to get to our next destination.

Endlessly, the serpentines screw up and we reach the edge of the snow line. Due to the thin air, which demands a lot of strength

from us, we need more time for the climb than originally planned. Finally we are at the highest point. A colorful sea of prayer flags flutters loudly in the wind and we enjoy the fabulous views of the mellow hills of the grasslands of Tagong.

The breather is relatively short. After all, we still want to go to Tagong today and there is still a long way to go.

Tagong

The homeland of the Tibetan Khampa nomads lies at 3700m above sea level in the midst of a fascinating, endlessly wide, hilly highland grassy steppe. In this charming landscape, we spend the following days exploring some remote villages and visiting their magnificent monasteries. Tagong is a highly spiritual place. At any time of the day you can observe locals praying in the temple, turning their rounds at the many prayer wheels, always in a clockwise direction.

A view beautiful beyond words is obtained from the hill above the Golden Mayan Pagoda with the holy Mount Yala in the background. Mount Yala (5820 m.a.s.) is one of four sacred Tibetan mountains and we will take the opportunity to see this sacred mountain up close. But we'll come to that later! We discover the surroundings with our mountain bikes in this endless grassland and enjoy the fantastic freeride runs.

Every peak that we climb is decorated with colorful prayer flags and always offers us a fantastic view of the imposing Mount Yala. The air gets very thin at this altitude, breathing is no longer easy, and carrying or





pushing the bikes is very tedious. Yet we are noticeably filled with happiness and with a big smile on our face we look forward to every next descent.

At the end of the day, the final highlight will be pure delectation with delicious Momos or a juicy Yak burger.

Mount Yala

After five intense days in Tagong, we move on to explore the far side of Mount Yala, which faces away from us. We find a changed landscape. The leafy forests where we now pass are now shining in their autumn robes, magnificent and in all imaginable colors. After we have climbed a 4700-meter-high pass, it opens up before us onto a breathtakingly beautiful valley, through which we will get directly into the National Park Mount Yala.

Further and further we follow

the path that meanders along a mountain river. Blue sky, colorful woods and on the horizon the snowy mountain. The natural scenery presents itself to us almost like a cheesy postcard. Finally, the sun is slowly leaving for the day, and the fading light that diminishes with every passing moment dips the mountain ridges into a wonderful, gentle red. Fascinated, we observe and enjoy the setting of the sun until dusk sets in. At the foot of the mountain we find a nice place for our tent and make ourselves comfortable. Bright Mount Yala shines in the light of the moon and we are overwhelmed by its imposing size. Magical! Tired but happy, we finally crawl into our sleeping bags and fall asleep in a night when temperatures will fall far below freezing.

Danba

The next day in the morning, after we can move our bodies suffering





from frosty stiffness, we follow the road that leads us out of the valley again. Along a wild river it runs 60 kilometers downhill and ends in the city of Danba at 1800m above sea level. In the afternoon we visit one of the characteristic Tibetan villages. We're amazed at the typical architectural style and are enthusiastic about the color scheme of the many small houses. As everywhere else, we are received here with much curiosity and extraordinary hospitality. A particular challenge for us on this journey is communication. Only very rarely do we meet people who speak English, and because the national language is completely foreign to us, we are forced to use the most varied gestures and signs of communication with great imagination.

The area around the town of Danba is known far beyond the region and is particularly popular because of the many ancient

traditional Tibetan villages such as Zhonglu, Suopo and Jiaju. These attract many Chinese tourists for sightseeing. The whole thing is a bit too much for us, and to avoid the hustle and bustle we decide to drive further inland to look at the small, remote, less well-known Dangling. Good decision! Already the drive there is particularly attractive.

A relatively new (and beneficial for us) road winds through a beautiful, sometimes steeply sloping gorge. Again and again we pass inhabited mud houses with their typical flat roofs, on which the farmers have set harvested corn cobs and chili pods to dry.

The main attraction of Dangling is a holy lake for the Tibetans with the name “Hulu Hai” which sounds bizarre to us and which is located at 4500m above sea level. But we have to earn the sight first. The bikes shouldered, we follow the trail stamped by horses as it first climbs steeply upward through some very beautiful birch forests.

Finally, at the top, a fantastic panorama awaits us. In front of us, the blessed lake with its crystal-clear water, in which the towering, snow-covered peaks reflect magically.

We strengthen ourselves with a typical noodle soup, and, neatly heated by the hot chilli, we start our descent. We follow the challenging trail, which leads through a kind of mystical fairytale forest. Close to us the most curious root and stone passages challenge us. What an experience to ride these trails!

The trail spits us out at the entrance to the village, with big smiles on our faces and full of happiness. Back in the house





of our host family, the fire is already flickering in the wood stove and again we are served local delicacies by our hosts. Just delicious! We spend a few more days exploring typical Tibetan villages around Danba, before moving on to the next highlight on this journey.

Rilong

The city of Rilong lies at 3200m above sea level and is mainly known due to the nature reserve Mount Siguniang or "Four Sisters Mountain," a massif dominated by four peaks, each between 5025m and 6250m. For the time being, we do not know what will be possible with the bike in this terrain technically. We first explore one of the valleys only on foot, to get a picture of possible navigable paths and trails. In fact, we can visualize a few variants, with the attempt to try Mount DaFeng with its 5025 meters. We are now quite well



acclimatised and know that we tolerate the altitude well. Since it will be a very long tour, we leave our camp very early. Initially, it is still quite possible to ride the bike or push it in sections. Bewildered, the grazing yaks watch us for a few moments, but then they can hardly be bothered.

The way to base camp is a dream. The view of the best trails, beautiful landscapes and, above all, the perfect weather let us progress well. Due to the similarities in the landscape, we are also reminded of one or the other experienced bike adventure in Nepal. Finally, we reach the base camp at 4,300 meters. Some stone huts are here, but unfortunately there is no catering available. Neck and the lower back already feel very stiff from the long portaging of the bikes, and the thin air is consuming our forces.

Claudia decides to leave her bike here and continue the missing seven hundred vertical meters without a bike, while I continue to shoulder my bike. Steep now it goes up. Our legs feel like lead and the rocky, partially snow-covered ground calls for extreme concentration on each step. As is usually the case with such actions, once you have arrived at your destination, all your hardships are immediately forgotten. The view is awesome! The mountain panorama is indescribably beautiful. From high and steeply towering peaks, we can not get out of amazement.

For a while we let the whole thing just affect us, then we turn our eyes back to the valley and look forward to an exciting descent. Gently, I tackle the first stone passages and am completely surprised by the perfect grip.

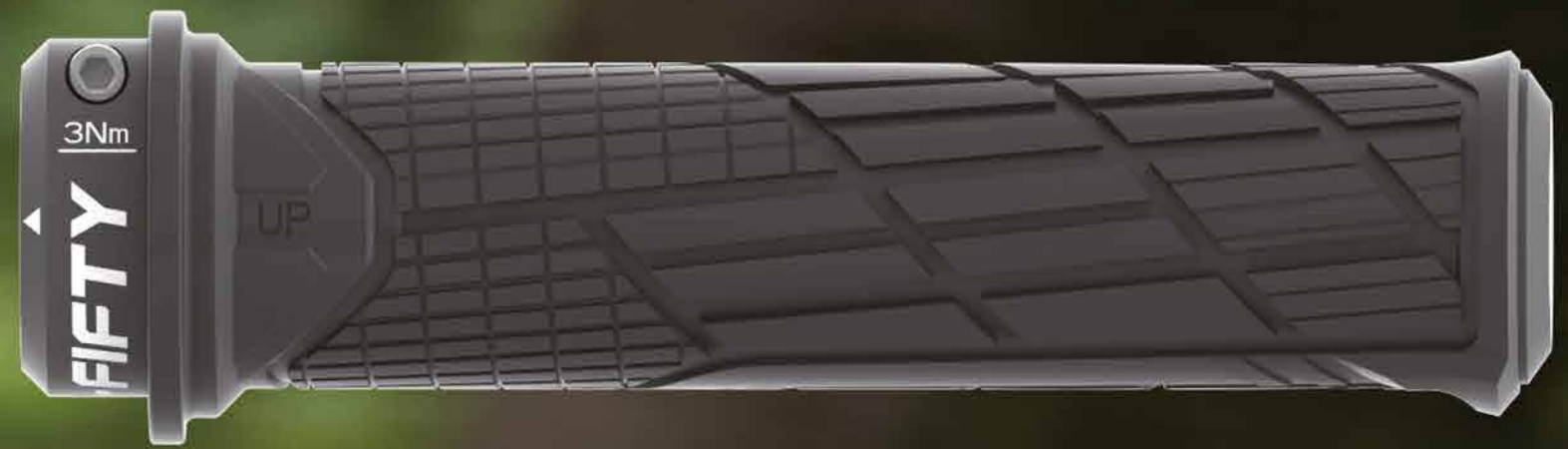
As in the intoxication, it's downhill for us. Definitely one of the most beautiful and longest trail runs we have ever experienced. The sun is already slowly sinking behind the mountains as we turn into the last switchbacks. Completely exhausted but satisfied and just happy about the successful tour, we roll back to Rilong.

In the evening, we refill our discharged energy storage with a hot pot - a typical Chinese "power food" that will give us the strength we need to master our final stages back to Chengdu tomorrow. Once again we have to pass a 4700 meter pass before we finally arrive back at the starting point of our journey.

Packed with incredible impressions and experiences, the remaining few days pass by in a flash before we start our return journey. We are very impressed with Sichuan and the expectations of this trip were far exceeded. Thank you for the hospitality and hopefully see you soon!

Markus Micheler, born 1979 in Meran (South Tyrol), lives in Kirchberg in Tyrol, and is a certified mountain bike riding technique trainer and guide. Travel and adventure on the bike are his great passion. Highlights include cycling through Uzbekistan, Iran, Morocco, Patagonia, Namibia, Bolivia, Lesotho, South Africa and Nepal. Markus lives for bike sport, his passion he leads riding technique courses and guided tours in the Kitzbühel Alps and in the Meranerland.





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SPECIFICATIONS

Material:	Custom Rubber Compound
Size:	145mm total length / 31mm diameter
Color:	Black Grey Yellow Red Orange Purple Blue Turquoise Green
Clamp:	Single clamp
Weight:	approx. 122g/pair



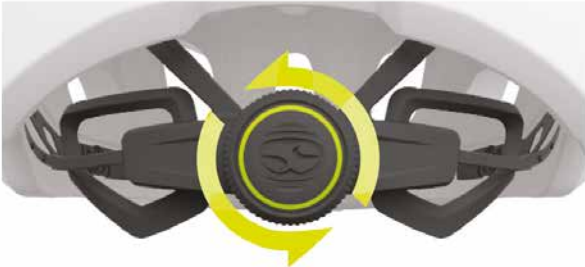
REVIEW
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REVIEW**TRIGGER AM**
TRAIL/ALL-MOUNTAIN

The Trigger AM is based on the successfully introduced and world famous Trail RS helmet. It features state of the art technology and properties. The Trigger AM is designed alongside the characteristics of a modern open face helmet with a lower back and a 3-level adjustable visor to secure space for goggles. It's featured Vortex™ molded aeration system provides consistent airflow and cooling. The integrated Fidlock™ magnetic closure system provides easy handling and proper safety. An ergonomic padding system ensures comfort without inhabiting the airflow. For improved fit and adaptability the Trigger AM comes with the iXS specific ErgoFit Ultra™ retention system allowing horizontal and vertical adjustment with precision interlocking.

All-Mountain and Trail helmet. The high-end in-mold construction and its large integrated venting system provide the highest safety level and unrivalled comfort. The 3-level visor adjustment allows you to rest your goggles and adjust the visor to a preferred position while the magnetic fastener system provides a super easy way to secure the helmet strap.



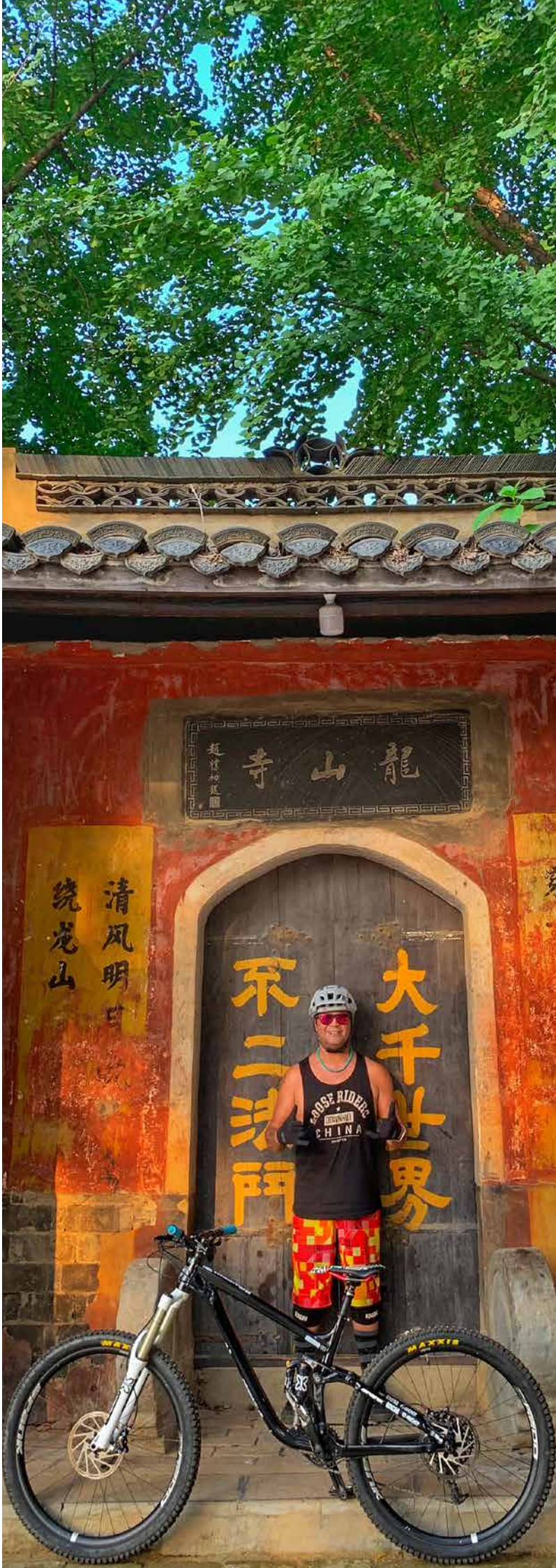
FIDLOCK®
Innovative, user-friendly fastener system that combines the advantages of a magnetic fastener with those of mechanical locking functionality. (Source: fidlock.com)



PRECISION INTERLOCKING
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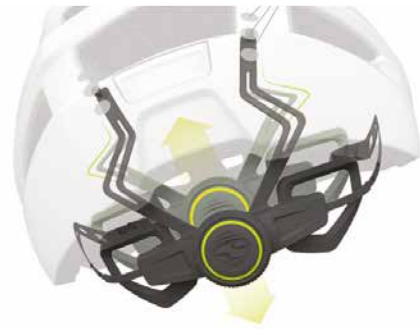


3-LEVEL VISOR ADJUSTABILITY
Allows space to rest goggle and to adjust visor to preferred position.









ERGO FIT ULTRA™

Lightweight Flexible cradle keeps the helmet securely in position without causing heat build up or discomfort.



- *double in-mold shell technology*
- *external and internal ventilation channels*
- *goggle compatible adjustable visor*
- *precision interlocking*
- *ErgoFit Ultra™ system for horizontal and vertical adjustment*
- *magnetic closure*
- *EN1078, CPSC, KC*

Product description: iXS Trigger AM helmet

Item Code: 470-510-9110

Weight: +/- 350g

Certification: EN1078, CPSC, KC

Sizes: SM 54-58cm, ML 58-62cm

Colours: black, Ocean, Reseda, Camel, Grey

MSRP: EUR 129.-



169 Reseda

803 Camel



003 Black

009 Grey



050 Ocean







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„ARE YOU KEEN TO GO TO CHINA FOR A RACE ON THE WEEKEND OF THE 24TH AUGUST?“ THAT’S THE START OF ONE OF THE STRANGEST AND CRAZIEST STORIES I’VE EVER HAD A CHANCE OF TAKING PART IN. THE MESSAGE WAS SENT BY FLORIAN KULIKE, TEAM MANAGER AND MECHANIC OF THE CARBOCAGE FACTORY RACING TEAM – A UCI TEAM THAT COINCIDENTALLY I AM RACING FOR AS WELL.



A friend of another friend is somewhat active in the Chinese community and knew that the organizers of the “TDRY – 2019 Guide National Geopark International Downhill Cycling Race” -and yes, that’s the real name of the race – were still on the hunt for some international riders to take part in their race. So we downloaded WeChat and got in touch with the guys.

It was 2 days prior to departure and we still didn’t have visas; the bikes were not ready and, to be honest, I couldn’t quite believe that all of this was actually going to happen. But I was proven wrong. Forty-eight hours later we arrived sweating and as the last guys at the gate of a plane to Beijing that had already boarded. Another 15 hours later we found ourselves and our bikes waiting for a pick-up at the airport of Xining in central China. The

中华人民共和国国土资源部

二〇〇九年八月二十日

Qinghai Guide

National Geo

Ministry of land





race was slightly outside of Xining, at least in Chinese terms, so we drove another 1.5 hours to the Guide National Geopark – you could have crossed the Netherlands in that time.

For us, already the trip from the airport to the location was worth the long flight. So many differences to home, so many new experiences just on this small drive. Once we got there, we were stunned by the landscape, but also by the fact that people were already training. Turns out, there was a slight communication error, and everybody had been training for two days already. Originally, we had planned to get dinner and then go to bed ASAP, but the training loss made us change plans. So with 30h since we left bed the last time, we build up our bikes and went up the hill. The challenging terrain made it impossible to shuttle, so pushing it was, to be honest, not a real problem with those views





- and it might have even been an advantage to push two days less.

Luckily, the track wasn't too long either and it didn't have too many line choice options on its 1:20 minutes, so the adjusted training time wasn't a huge disadvantage. However, knowing the track very well was crucial, because it had a 25m cliff right next to it sometimes. But once you were able to blend out that surrounding risk, the track was really fun and flowy, something you wouldn't expect in that kind of terrain.

The next morning, we squeezed in a couple of laps before breakfast and the opening



ceremony. Yes, that's right, the race had a opening ceremony. I'm not sure if that's common in Asia, but for us Europeans that was something very new and felt kind of weird with all the officials, the epic music and national flags and so on. After the ceremony it was time for another short practice session, or at least that's what we were told – once again, you guessed it, a small communication error. The training session was the seeding run, so not a big problem for us and I guess aa seeding run is some kind of training as well, right?

It did go pretty well for us anyway, with Florian Kūlike (DE) finishing second in front of Yutaka Tamaru (JAP) in third and myself setting the benchmark for everybody else. But, as we all know, a seeding run doesn't mean anything and so, things got serious after lunch.

Quite a few people and enough photographers to shoot every bit of the trail at the same time had shown up in the meantime, the weather was quite perfect too and things got heated up quickly. The Chinese rider went first, and it was Song Jia Yi, who took the win and the 30 000 RMB back home. Our "International Group" started and right away the rider gave everything and sprinted to the very line. The first serious time was brought down the hill by Yutaka but he didn't seem too happy as I was told. Apparently he had made quite a big mistake at the bottom and so his time was beaten right away by my teammate Florian.







As the last man on track, it was up to me to go even faster. With the sandy ground and not many technical sections, I knew it was almost impossible to make up a lot of time, so the plan was to ride consistently and not to lose time in the first place. As it turned out, that was just what it needed and I crossed the line in first place and 4 seconds up.

The next day we faced another race, this time a dual slalom one, a beloved 1-against-1-format, that unfortunately has lost popularity over the last few years in Europe. After a qualifying round, the best 32 riders faced each other in many exciting heats and funnily enough, at the end, we had the same podium as the day before.

After all the racing was finished, we had another few days left to play in the desert





and holy shit, that made the trip even more unforgettable. Freeriding at its very best. Spectacular ridges, dusty slopes with several hundred meters of elevation – we do have good downhill tracks in Europe, but I haven't been to better place to freeride yet.

All in all, it was an absolutely amazing trip and I can't thank the organizers enough for inviting us and to make all of this happen. Xie Xie.





ELITE INTERNATIONAL

1st:	Maximilian Jakubowski	/ DE	01:15.502
2nd:	Florian Kulike	/ DE	01:19.488
3rd:	Yutaka Tamaru	/ JAP	01:21.655



ELITE DOMESTIC

1st:	Song Jia Yi	01:17.347
2nd:	Ye Zheng Wu	01:17.942
3rd:	Zhou Xiao Long	01:18.106



OPEN DOMESTIC

1st:	Zhang You Lun	01:19.837
2nd:	Nong Zheng	01:24.790
3rd:	Song Yan Xi	01:24.931



DIRT JUMP CONTEST

1st:	He Jun Yuan
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EDITOR IN CHIEF

FABIAN
MITTERHAUSER
RIDER
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Mesum Verma, Markus Micheler, Claudia Kremsner, Bryan Bell, iXS Sports, Guenole Dubost, Frank Meyer, Maximilian Jakubowski

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#special #thanks

Bryan Bell, Claudia Kremsner, Jo, Maximilian Jakubowski, Florian Kulike

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