



# mtbmag

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#younggun #jaden

#streettrail #ningbo

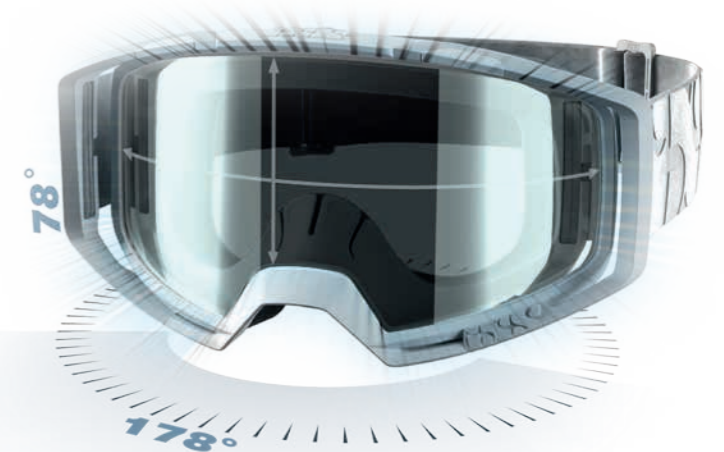
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# YOUNG GUN JADEN IMMANUEL



IN ASIA, BIKING IS STILL PRETTY NEW IF YOU COMPARE TO EUROPE. NOT ONLY TEENAGERS AND YOUNG ADULTS LIKE TO JOIN THE BIKING COMMUNITY AND GO RIDING IN THEIR SPARE TIME, BUT MORE AND MORE KIDS ARE ALSO STARTING TO RIDE MOUNTAIN BIKES, OF COURSE WITH GREAT SUPPORT FROM THEIR PARENTS. WE WANT TO SHOW YOU THE VERY TALENTED YOUNG GUN JADEN IMMANUEL.

Born in Chennai / India, but living in Singapore since 2012 and currently studying in primary 3, Jaden is now 8 years old. He got into biking as his dad gave him a 16" bike when he was 3.5 years old. After only the fourth ride, he could ride without training wheels, and was immediately in love with cycling and two wheelers.

Since 2019, he started formal training in MTB and also picked up BMX riding and





riding. Late in 2019, Jaden was very interested in trying BMX racing, but due to COVID and travel restrictions he could not participate in any 2020 events. Despite there being no races, he still continued to go for training sessions every weekend.

Jaden also rides roller blades if he is not training for BMX races. He tries to ride every day but with the loads of school work it becomes a challenge. Still, every

week he gets out for 2 or 3 rides, each time about 1 to 2 hours on the saddle, mostly riding the pump track, but also the MTB trails and park connectors. Beside training on the bike, he does daily exercises to improve his strength.

In the morning, when the weather is good, it's not too hot and it feels fresh, that's the time Jaden loves to ride his mountain bike. He is particularly into the winding





single track descents. Of course, like every young boy, he likes to jump with his bike. Rock gardens and technical climbs he likes too, but he says: "I get tired too quickly and my arms feel heavy." The pump track gives him a thrill and besides improves his bike handling, which is why he also loves to ride the pump track with the BMX.

Jaden has watched MotoGP since he was young, and found it interesting to go for

racers. He participated in a few MTB races in Singapore in the kids category. Winning is the thing which motivates him to do more races and win more races. "It's very exciting during a race and it gives me a thrill when I ride my bike even faster," he says, describing why he likes racing so much. Now in Singapore the MTB races have resumed, and Jaden just had a race in the beginning of February and he won the MTB/BMX Sprint 7-9 category. Another win, and a boost to his competitive spirit,





and he can't wait for the next races this year.

Jaden wants to get into motorcycling too, and wants to do races. He wishes to participate in both cycling and motorcycling races, and in typically Jaden style, he wants to win those races.

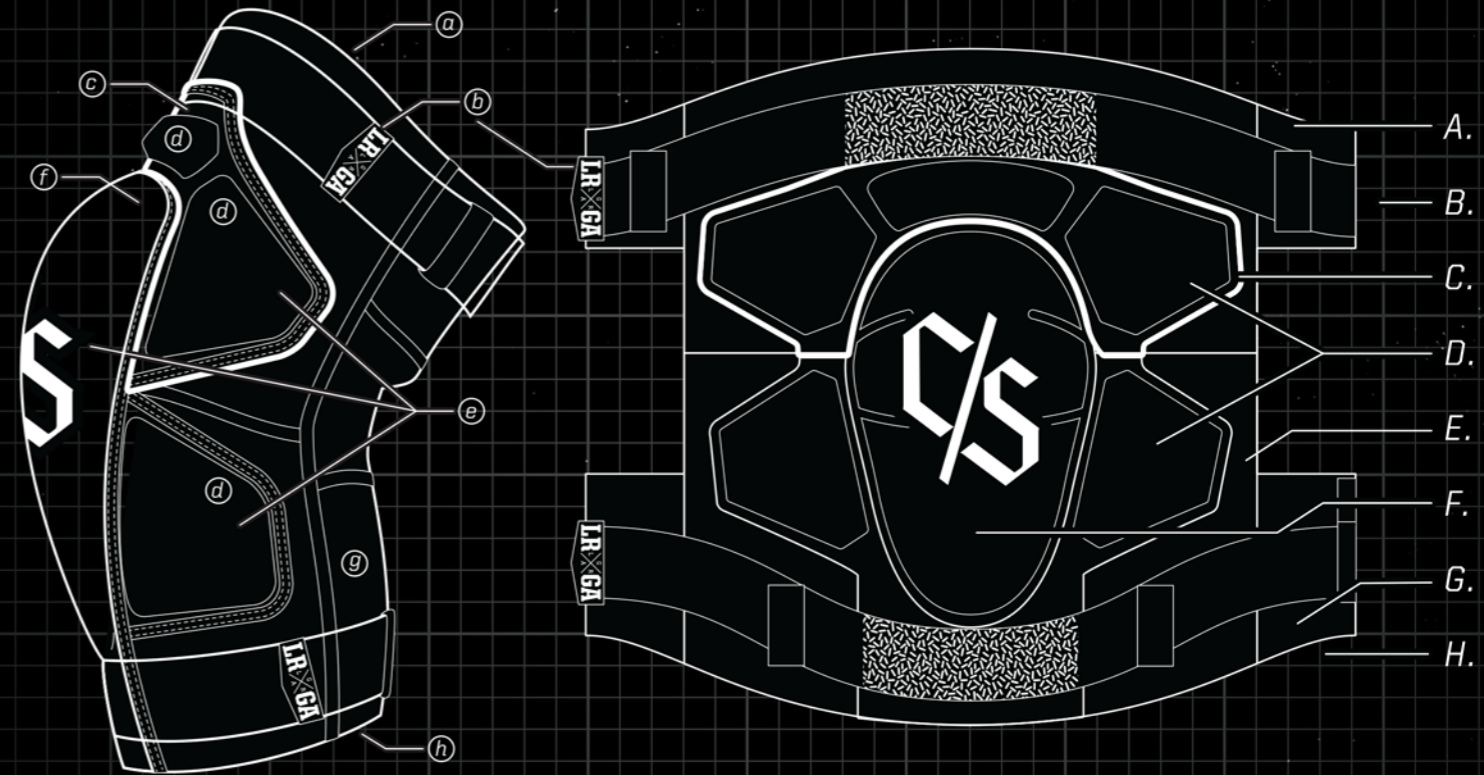
*We wish Jaden all the best, and we can't wait to see how his future will be with „the two wheels“ Ride on!*

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Aurelius Satlow

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STREET  
TRIAL  
NINGBO  
CHINA  
街攀在宁波






Two years I'm living in China now. After arriving here in 2019, someone added me into the wechat group of local riders of Ningbo, and soon after that one of the group members sent me a friend request. That's how the friendship with Zhiqiang began.

During the last two years, my friend and I had a ton of fun riding together Downhill, Dirt Jump and Street Trial. The Street Trial Sessions in the city always fascinated me, since one is directly surrounded by all the impressions of Chinese lifestyle and culture. So the idea came to me to document one of our Street Trial Sessions and put him into focus, since I'm still a bloody beginner in terms of Street Trial. We made a plan for different spots and so our little adventure begins!

Zhiqiang lives pretty in the centre of

A person in dark clothing is performing a wheelie on a red bicycle on a paved plaza. In the background, there are several tall buildings, including a prominent yellow one with a grid of windows and a blue glass skyscraper. A red banner with Chinese text is visible behind a metal railing. On the left, a black silhouette of a traditional Chinese building with a pointed roof is overlaid, containing two paragraphs of text.


Ningbo, a Chinese city of 8 million, located at the south east coast of China. It was a sunny morning during the spring festival period when I picked him up from his home. Not even 10 minutes later, we arrived at the first spot, where Zhiqiang told me that far back in the 1990s this has been the former city centre, with the first shopping malls and the very first high-rise apartment houses.

We took the bikes out of the car and started our tour! Even though I'd often passed that area by car, neither I was aware of that fact nor I noticed the old beautiful traditional building just beside that place. With bikes we weren't allowed in, but Zhiqiang didn't mind and had fun pulling a manual for warm up in front of that meeting hall for officials of the city administration centuries ago.



Then Zhiqiang revealed to me that he really needed the warm up, since he hadn't ridden for 2 weeks. The day and night before he had been travelling back from Jiangxi, a 15 hour car ride due to the huge distance and traffic jam during the spring festival. It's a typical thing for the Non-Ningbonese residents to travel back to their families, especially the grandparents, to celebrate the Chinese New Year with them.

Just by crossing a broad street we'd already reached the riverside, near one of the new city centres. Two large rivers flow from west and south-west and emerge into the broad stream of the Yong-River, which finally leads into the East China Sea. Seeing these rectangle shaped huge stones at the promenade Zhiqiang



couldn't wait to hop onto them.

We went on, and shortly after that I spotted a pretty high edge, and I was hesitating a bit to ask my friend whether he wanted to do something on that. But he dispelled my worries immediately by climbing up on it, hopping around on it on his back wheel and finally jumping down as if this was nothing.

I asked Zhiqiang to show me one of Ningbo's typical scenic spots. Rolling down a broad avenue for 15 minutes we found ourselves among crowds of tourists, but unlike cities like Shanghai, they were all Chinese visitors. All of them came to see the Drum-Tower, one of the city's "must see" sightseeing spots.

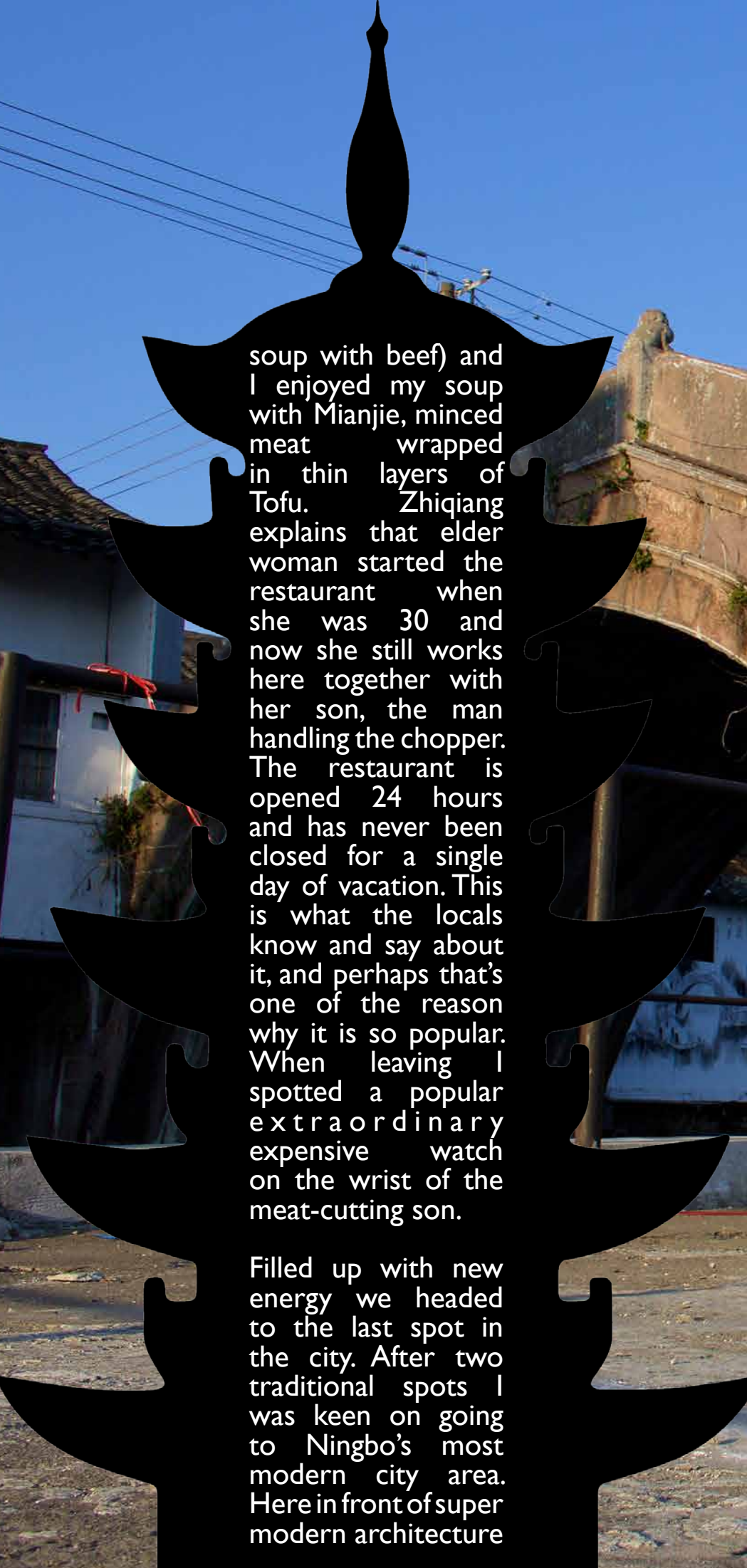
All those tourists made us feel a bit uncomfortable, so we were about





to leave that area, when right at that moment we passed that narrow side blocked with railings. Of course Zhiqiang had to stop here and play with that toy the city offers to every passionate street trialer!

After that three hour morning session, we were really hungry, and Zhiqiang asked me if I knew the city's most famous noodle soup restaurant? Nope! So let's go there! From the outside the restaurant stands in sharp contrast to the broad modern avenue on whose corner it is located. Entering, the contrast still remains! An elderly friendly-looking woman fills up steaming bowls with fresh self made long noodles. A man in its thirties is cutting huge chunks of meat with a big Chinese chopper. Zhiqiang had a bowl of Niuroumian (noodle



soup with beef) and I enjoyed my soup with Mianjie, minced meat wrapped in thin layers of Tofu. Zhiqiang explains that elder woman started the restaurant when she was 30 and now she still works here together with her son, the man handling the chopper. The restaurant is opened 24 hours and has never been closed for a single day of vacation. This is what the locals know and say about it, and perhaps that's one of the reason why it is so popular. When leaving I spotted a popular extraordinary expensive watch on the wrist of the meat-cutting son.

Filled up with new energy we headed to the last spot in the city. After two traditional spots I was keen on going to Ningbo's most modern city area. Here in front of super modern architecture






Zhiqiang tried to improve his footjam tail whip technique.

I was kind of fed up with such a modernistic environment, and decided to change our location back to the more rural outskirts of Ningbo. We went 40 minutes by car, and Zhiqiang let me listen to some German music he knew but didn't understand, so I translated their messages and made some reverse cultural exchange. Then we reached Yinjiang Town, which is well known among the locals since the historical beginning of Ningbo City is here. We found the beautiful 700 year old bridge, and of course we had to roll it down at least!

Though the day had already turned into dusk, we felt we were missing some proper jumps! So we took the foldable wooden kicker out of the car.

A person wearing a helmet and a patterned shirt is performing a bicycle jump over a traditional Chinese wall with a tiled roof. The person is in mid-air, with the front wheel of the bike higher than the back wheel. A wooden structure, likely the 'kicker' mentioned in the text, is visible on the ground to the right. The background shows some trees and a clear sky.

My friend carried it like a backpack while riding to a small street where I knew there was a slight down-slope. After 3 minutes assembling we had a ton of fun jumping that kicker and working on our table top style.

Zhiqiang, 23 years of age, studied engineering and then worked for two years in a company that produces molds for car chassis, but then decided to quit that job and started working as a bike trainer for Street Trial and Push Bikes, as well as producing parts for bikes and E-Motorbikes.

That wooden kicker we were using here is a project he started with me one year ago. He did all the design, construction and production, and I tested it and gave him my feedback and advice for improvement.



SPEED RACE WHITE



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GLOVES RAD RED

Hiroyuki Nakagawa

Gill Harris



## Japan's MTB evangelists race Atherton Bikes to the top step

Hiroshi Ato and Keiko Tomita live together in Minoh City, Osaka prefecture, Japan. They are the proud owners of Atherton Bikes 16 and 17 and within 6 weeks of delivery Hiroshi had raced his new bike to its first victory on Japanese soil.



**Keiko** was born in Nara city and started riding mountain bikes as a 20 year old university student; she can boast 3 National Series wins. With Hiroshi she co-runs the Acciarpone race team, and distributes Deity, Ellsworth and Topknot products. They designed and manage Up MTB Park in Kannabe.

**Hiroshi** grew up in Osaka hooked on Dirt Bros movies and magazines. He discovered mountain-biking when he was 12 years old; riding in parks with his friends and making jumps in the street. He entered his first DH race on his GT hardtail in 1997, and now has a National Series win and several podiums to his credit, he has raced World Cups at Maribor, Mont St Anne and Wyndham.

**The power-couple chat to us about their big ambitions for the Japanese MTB scene, bikes and baked goods!**

**Keiko:** The race team is named Acciarpone for my bakery. I lived in California for 6 years after university and it got me thinking, "I could live anywhere in the world if I could make bread!" Most Japanese bread has additives, Acciarpone does not, I bake what I want to eat, concentrating on wholesome ingredients simply presented...

I close Thursday and Friday so I can ride and also when I go racing but customers still come, they cheer me on at the track!

**Hiroshi:** I run the race team and distribution full time. We've won the National team victory every year since it was established - at times we've had 5 riders on the team, at the moment it's the 2 of us - It can be difficult to manage young guns!

Instead of running a traditional race team Acciarpone supports different types of riders because they all have different roles in expanding MTB. We work with some great people – racers, trail builders, Yujiro who works in a bike shop and inspires loads of beginners to give MTB a try... I want MTB to be a major sport in Japan. We're both passionate about increasing the number of riders so it runs through everything we do.

**Hiroshi:** During the summer season we race all over Japan, from Hokkaido to Kyushu island. In 2020 Covid really messed things up, we had only had one official race, but usually we have 5 Japan Nationals and 1 National Championships. We also have a 7 race Downhill Series. Numbers are building, slowly, about 250 boys race but maybe 10 girls... we want to change that.

**Hiroshi:** I love racing because I get to push the limits. Taking the win at Syobudani on the Atherton bike only weeks after the frames landed in our living room was very special, especially the way that run made me feel onboard the bike.

**Keiko:** Outside of racing Japan has a lot of trails but most of them are illegal, kind of a secret for people who've been riding for a long time or have riding





friends. Or they have a lot of hikers.

That's why we started our bikepark at Kannabe, we didn't have a big bike park on the west side of Japan and we wanted to give beginners an easy, official place they could go and ride. It's been a ski resort for 100 years but it's getting less snow so they were keen to work with us.

**Hiroshi:** It's close to the city and we can use the chairlifts...we have special trails for ebikes – we both think ebike is going to be huge. We're building a paradise!

**Keiko:** During the off-season we'll ride secret trails all over the country but in summer we ride local trails close to our house. Minoh city has mountains even though the city is very close! It takes 20 minutes to pedal to the trails.

**Hiroshi:** I've wanted an Atherton Bike from the very start. I remember reading about the Atherton family joining forces with the Robot engineers and thinking "Yes, that it! No doubt, that's the bike we should ride!"

The technology is very important for us, especially the intersection of speed with a feeling of safety and security. I was looking for bikes which have DW link with the unit vertically attached. I loved the PIVOT aluminum 26 inch Fenix and had some great results on it. The combination of titanium lugs, the engineering expertise and the huge experience that the Athertons bring won me over straight away.

We bought frames, HA is 177cm and KT is 164cm – we both chose

standard sizes at the smaller end of the recommended range for us and they feel great.

We built up our bikes with components from our sponsors : Fox suspension, Deity cockpit, Magura brakes, TRP drivetrain, Profile Racing hubs, Revers rims and Kenda tires.

**Keiko:** We've both ridden a lot of bikes over the years, Atherton bikes is different from the others.

**Hiroshi:** I've never felt like this when I'm riding before, For the first time I felt a sense of unity between myself and the bike. The feeling and speed of repulsion, after the frame bends and comes back, is very different from the feeling of 100% titanium frames and 100% carbon frames.

**Keiko:** The feeling is not too soft, but I feel soft on the bike; I don't feel too stiff but it's not limp. It's perfect.

It took us a while to get our suspension settings right. Honestly at National Champs they weren't perfect. Hiroshi was riding 3 or 4 times a week but with a 500 pound spring he couldn't find his rhythm on the bike, I crashed... Hiroshi believes that Dave Weagle's linkage system is the best in the world... so we knew if we found the perfect setting we would be invincible! He tried a 475-545 pound spring but it felt worse, making the rear suspension hard just didn't work on this bike.

So we watched a classic DVD -





Ironhorse Sunday. We pulled out an article and found a picture of Sam Hill's rear spring... Hiroshi changed his spring from 500 pounds to 425 and mine changed from 425 to 300.

We'd cracked it! The feeling was amazing and race times started to improve. Hiroshi won at Syobadani with the 425 pound spring and he felt "this is DW link! this is the DW6. The traction was great and changing lines felt really easy, no pitching, no bobbing when you pedal, Hiroshi said that he felt like his body got stronger. We can't wait to hit the racetrack in 2021.

**Hiroshi:** Before we built our bikes the main driver for us was the technology and the DW link, just seeing photos we thought maybe the look was a bit too simple but once the frames were in our hands we were blown away.

**Keiko:** Other riders are very interested in the simple design. Everyone wants to come close and have a really good look because they didn't expect to see Atherton bikes in Japan. Even riders we don't know will talk to us and ask where they can buy one, It's always slimmer than people expect, they say "This is so cool!! It looks like the forefront of design!

**Hiroshi:** People who understand bikes and machines are interested in the DW6. It's the evolution of the link system, it is the future bike! We'd encourage anyone to ride Atherton Bikes!

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WELCOME

ANISSA

LAMARE



Hello, my name is Anissa D Lamare, also lovingly called “Suri” or “Aniss”. I was born and brought up in a small and humble city, Shillong, in Meghalaya, India. I live with my mom, sister, aunt and uncle in the suburbs of the city. Though my family is small, my dogs, cats and hens add to the relatively quiet environment. Before delving into my riding life, let me tell you a little more about me.

I spent most of my life in my hometown. It wasn’t until after graduation that I left home for two years to complete my Masters in Bengaluru. Education was and will always be an important aspect of my life. I say this because while academics held me back in many ways, it also gave me a lot more. Not a single day goes to waste in a good book, but neither does a day watching The Shawshank Redemption.

While most girls in my locality during my childhood played with Barbies and tea sets, I somehow always found myself on the street. Years went by; cycling became a favourite hobby - there’s no doubt about

that. My life was like any other student, but it wasn't long until the thunder struck. The year 2013 was when the world of biking changed for me. A coloured poster on the front page of the paper read "2nd Northeast CycloBhp Racing 2013." Under it were the particulars of the race; the categories, prizes, location and date. My friends and I quickly registered. We painted our BMX bikes, used scooter helmets and honestly went in blind with no knowledge of mountain bikes, let alone downhill races. The first race was one hell of an introduction to what is now an important part of my life.

Through the years, I raced in the Northeastern States and gradually in other parts of India. Racing has opened new paths in life for me - even personally. Ten years ago, I would've never thought cycling would be the constant push and pull throughout my life. But today, even while writing this, I am confident of the life that cycling has given me and will continue to give. In one way or the other, it will surround me in the best of ways. For this, I think I and the world will be



forever grateful for its invention.

Born in the year 1997, so at the moment, I just turned twenty-four. I'm at the peak of my life, where life decision-making comes into play every single day. I just completed my post-graduation in Journalism in 2020 from Bengaluru. The sole purpose of the degree is the simple love for writing and fusing it with the world of cycling. So today, while I'm still uncertain about the racing world and where it may take me in India, I know that a desk-job would eat the life out of me. So, here I am, done with academics for now and moving on with a new chapter in life. A chapter I hoped to live to see, writing about people, bikes, travelling, racing and making just enough to build and take care of my home.

As I said, cycling has opened paths in my life; I do not wish to unsee. Whatever the future holds, I know cycling will be a part in one way or the other. Today, it is an honour to announce the start of my career as senior editor in MTB Mag Asia. While this has been a





long wait, I feel blessed for getting a chance to build my future with the magazine under Mesum Verma. Looking forward to one hell of an experience in the years to come.

Today, I ride a Nukeproof Mega (2014) and I will forever be that person with 26" inch wheels and a small frame.

To end my introduction, I would like to share my all-time favourite quote, "Hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things and no good thing ever dies".

*„We are really happy to have Anissa on board at the magazine. We started from India, and it's a pleasure to again have somebody from India working with us! Anissa is no stranger to us, we know the girl from the Himalayas, riding fast a bike and going a way other than the usual path that women would go. We featured her some years back, and who thought then that she would one day be a part of the family! Welcome Anissa!!“ - Mesum Verma*

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