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#ISSUE79

#SEP2021

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150mm	31.6mm	440mm	573g	07561

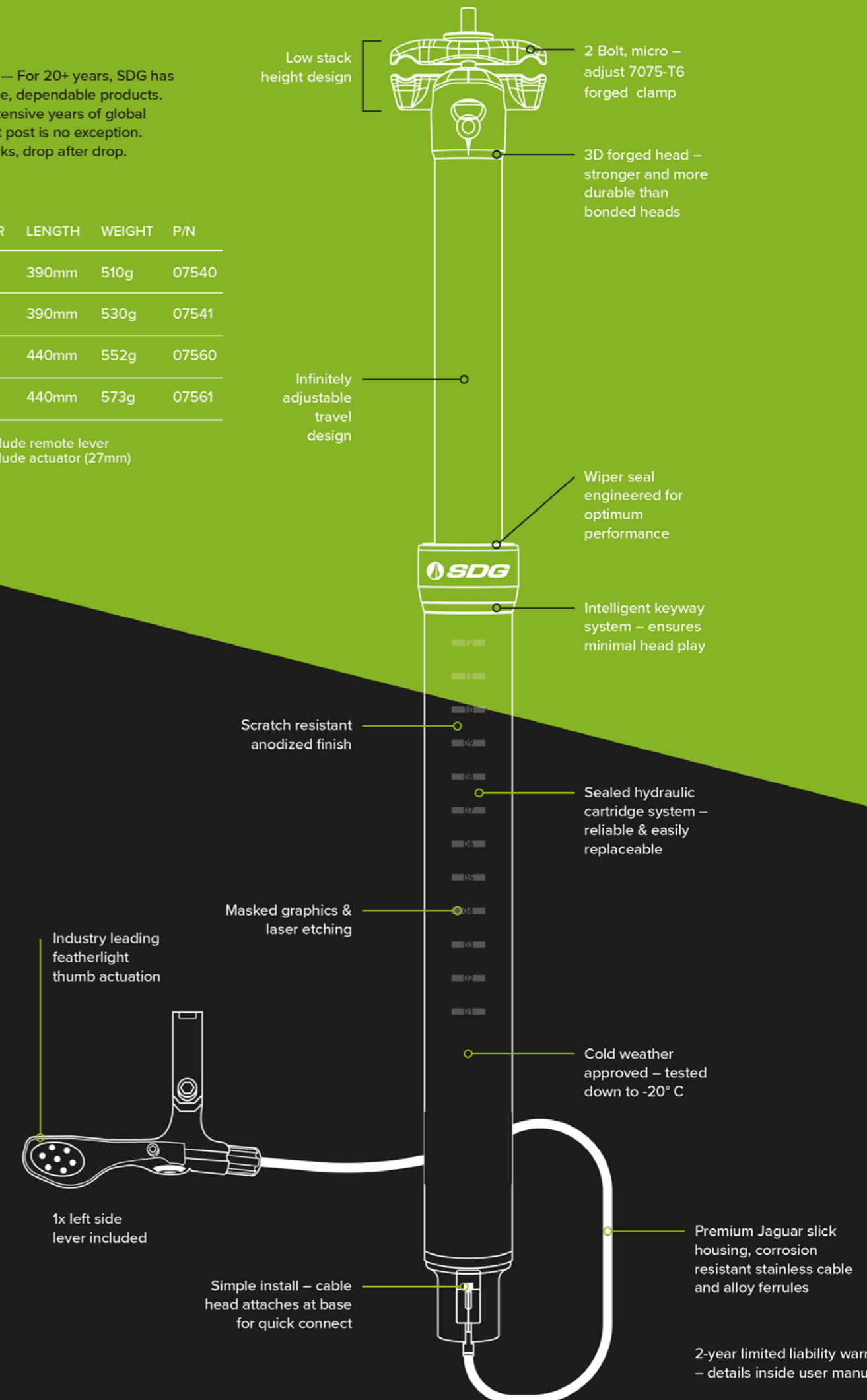
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# Ariana DORMITORIO



**A CUP OF COFFEE WITH ARIANA FROM THE PHILIPPINES**



**IN THIS magazine we've quite often TOLD STORIES about Mountain Biking in Japan, India, China and other Asian countries, BUT HOW ABOUT smaller Asian countries, for example mountain biking in the PHILIPPINES! I guess not many know how riding is in this state with its 100 million people and 7000 islands. So this chat with Ariana is a start to find out more about that, and at the same time get to know to an interesting and pretty famous female mountain biker from the PHILIPPINES.**





It took a while till Ariana had time for a video chat with me (and a cup of coffee of course), but I was all the more happy when she one day suddenly messaged me and asked if I'm free for a chat. Ariana, surname Dormitorio, now 24 years of age, is a full athlete in the Cross Country discipline and looks back not only on numerous 1st place trophies from local races in the Philippines but also gained 4 gold medals of the Philippines national MTB championships in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021 in the women's elite category. Hearing these amazing successes, I was really curious about Ariana's background in riding and her story.

Ariana born in Iloilo. She started riding mountain bikes at the age of 12, cruising around the village with a kid's hardtail mountain bike. At that time her parents coincidentally saw an announcement for a mountain bike race on the internet, found it interesting and decided that Ariana should take part. When they realized Ariana's potential on the bike, they decided to support her development in with mountain biking and racing. Ariana was aware of that unexpected direction her life could

take, and she is super happy about the opportunity her parents gave her.

When thinking of the Philippines, a lot of people probably couldn't imagine there is much going on in terms of mountain biking. Surprisingly, Ariana told me that riding a mountain bike is actually quite widespread, it's about 70% riding MTB and the rest is road bike. When people in the Philippines buy a bicycle, it's pretty common to choose a mountain bike, owing to the geographical and infrastructural circumstances there: it's mountainous with lots of non-tarmac gravelly roads. So, for commuting, a mountain bike is more convenient and even cheaper - a pure road bike would be less appropriate. However, during and after the pandemic, riding a mountain bike became even more popular, the number of cycling people grew, and quite a lot of people are able to afford a bike.

Doing mountain biking as sport in the Philippines is easier than one might think. There are enough trails that are in general free to access. Trails in the Philippines





often lead through parts of tropical forests and are in general mostly grassy and hilly, but there are also rocky sections. There's even a bike park, the Guimaras Island, but this one is too far to go there for Ariana. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic led to the closing of some trails and biking areas where normally small races had been held. These smaller races are important for Ariana to gain practice that is beneficial and necessary for participating in world cup races, which is her goal.

In the years after Ariana started riding MTB, most of the trails weren't very technical. In 2016 and 2017, when she went to several XCO races abroad, and at her participation at the UCI Training Camp in Switzerland in 2019, were the only times where she felt exposed to really difficult and technical demanding tracks. That's why, when she participated in the XCO Olympic Test Ride in Tokyo in 2019, she found it to be a quite tough but good experience.

Ariana grew up in Fairview, Quezon City , where her play- and practice-ground were

the Timberland Heights MTB Trails (which was shut in 2019). After moving to Cubao within the metropolitan area of the capital city Manila, she still finds enough trails to ride and improve her skills. You can mostly see her chasing the trails in the Sierra Madre mountain range, although it takes her a long ride just to get there. Speaking more deeply about the riding, Ariana tells me that for her it's not just an exercise: "Riding my mountain bike takes me to places that I never imagined before; thus it is something special for me; of course going into rock gardens, on slippery ground, that all is always thrilling for me and a kind of escape of reality as well."

After graduating Highschool as a valedictorian, Ariana made the decision to become a professional full athlete. She pedals the bike 6 days a week, 4 to 5 hours a day, and does interval training on road bike and mountain bike to improve her power, endurance and bike control. This all is flanked by gym and running sessions. Since she started MTB riding she first rode on a KTM, then Specialized and since 2019 rides a TREK 9.9 Super Caliber. There is a rainy season in the Philippines, but for





Ariana there is no off-season to ride. For her especially rainy conditions are a good practice for races, and during our talk she points out how crucial consistent practice is for demanding tracks abroad, especially the world cup tracks. For her future training Ariana wants to add Enduro to her repertoire. By incorporating Enduro riding she hopes to enhance her overall biking skills.

Ariana isn't the type of racer who is chasing the adrenaline kick by blasting down tracks. I more got the impression of a smart, reasoning young woman. She told me she needs "to plan out" and prefers not to ride alone. Of course, nobody likes to ride alone, but for a woman in the Philippines she describes riding alone as "not really safe". So, she often sets off to the trails or streets together with her two male team partners from the Philippines National Team and describes the advantages of that: "They not only push me more than female riders would, and the routes they ride are definitely tougher and longer, but also they give me peace of mind and that's why it's really good training."

Ariana is member of the Philippines National Team in Mountain Biking, and looking through her Instagram one might wonder who “Team Ariana” is. In fact, it’s the group of people who directly support her for the Olympics. In 2019 Ariana took part in the Olympic Test Ride in Tokyo together with about 40 other female riders. The race day turned out to be a a little drama. At the start she had a small crash with a Japanese rider that damaged her rear derailleur. She was forced to go to the technical zone to get that fixed by her team. After losing a lot of time and with the chain always on the biggest sprocket she speeded along the track and finally ranked 36st.

Although that misfortune made her really sad of course, Ariana is a positive thinking woman and still calls that day a “great opportunity”. Even in the face of all the ongoing restrictions due to the pandemic, she finds ways to ride and practice. “The pandemic gave me time to reflect and made my mind up again for all the small wins. Since a lot of things changed, it’s more about doing what I can.” Her attitude, strong mind and training discipline seem to pay off, and so she recently won the 2021






Philippines MTB National Championship in the Elite group. “I feel lucky to have good sponsors, and after transitioning to a new coach I now look forward to the 2022 and 2023 international races, to get more UCI points.” As she further tells me, getting enough sponsorships and budget for training to ride as a full athlete in the Philippines is pretty hard, especially for participation at world cup races. However, Ariana’s big dream and goal of all training is participating in the Paris Olympics in 2024.


If you’re curious about Ariana’s riding, her bikes, her past and upcoming races, or if you just want to know more about how it is to ride mountain bikes in the Philippines, you can check out her Instagram or youtube channel, which she has been running since 2019 and has already gained nearly 37K followers.

Follow her on **YOUTUBE**



# PHOTO RECAP

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Daniele Molineris, Marco Guber

 Mesum Verma, Val di Sole Bike Land



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ITALY



## Short Track



1 - Sina Frei  
2 - Evie Richards  
3 - Pauline Ferrand-Prévot



„In the beginning of the race I was waiting. In the last lap I decided to go and try to take the front, but I wasn't really sure if I could make it. I went all out, but the finish was super tight with Evie, so I was happy to win that sprint“ - Sina Frei

## Short Track

“ I grew up doing short tracks, and I've been dreaming of this race for a few years. I didn't know what chance I had against these guys, so I just tried to stay composed and wait for the finish. I did surprise myself a bit; it was an incredible ride”, - Christopher Blevins

1 - Christopher Blevins  
2 - Henrique Avancini  
3 - Maximilian Brandl





**Four  
Cross**

- 1 - Michaela Hajkova
- 2 - Mathilde Bernard
- 3 - Anna Sara Rojas

# Four Cross



1 - Tomas Slavik  
2 - Adrien Loron  
3 - Hannes Slavik





1 - Evie Richards  
2 - Anne Terpstra  
3 - Sina Frei



XCO

“ I  
can't believe it. I  
wasn't sure I could win  
such an important title, but  
today my moment has arrived.  
After the Olympics, without the  
quarantine, I managed to do the  
things I like with the people I love,  
as well as training hard. When I  
am happy, my legs are stronger.  
Today I think I have proved  
it.” - Evie Richards

XCO

“ I have started doubting myself, to be honest, after a year in which I was unable to perform as I expect from myself. Now I don't know what I will do yet: I was confident that with a perfect race I could get back to win and having done it at the World Championships puts me in a better condition for any decision I could make in the future.” - Nino Schurter

1 - Nino Schurter  
2 - Mathias Flückiger  
3 - Victor Koretzky



## Down Hill



1 - Myriam Nicole  
2 - Marine Cabirou  
3 - Camille Balanche



"When I won the World Championship in Mont Sainte-Anne, I didn't have any pressure on me. This time I had a lot of pressure, and I'm stoked at how I managed to handle it, riding smooth and relaxed, especially in the central part. Last year I could wear the jersey for just one month, this time I want to enjoy it in full. Having won the World Championship here, where I took my first World Cup stage, on a track that is the essence of Downhill for me, really means a lot." - Myriam Nicole

## Down Hill



1 - Greg Minnaar  
2 - Benoit Coulanges  
3 - Troy Brosnan

“ I  
knew a victory  
was possible,” said the  
South African, “I knew that  
by giving everything I could  
make a great run, but until the  
end you never know if it will  
be enough.”

- Greg Minnaar



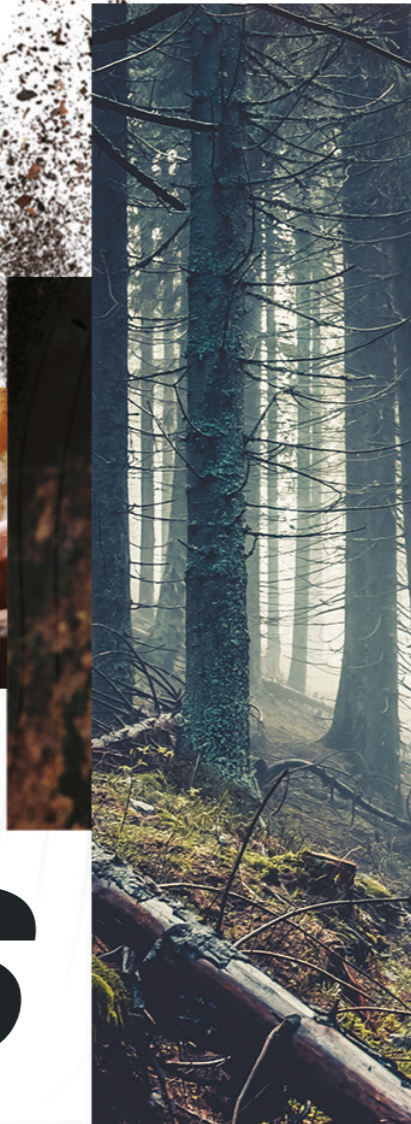


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## #SPECIALTHANKS

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