



# mtbman

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ISSUE 011 - JUL / 2014

## "THE LEAP OF FAITH"



## “THE LEAP OF FAITH”

Faith is what makes us humans, from the sunrise in the morning, to the unknown drop on the trail which we hit, it's faith that makes us strong enough to do it. This issue we see a rider regaining his faith in life through his love for riding his bike in the mountains. From riding in the shadows of the mighty Kanchenjunga, to being blessed by a monk. We bring you

an interview with Axel Brunst as he talks about his photography and the stories behind them. Young Gun Cheyann is out there progressing everyday and riding bikes like nobody's business. We have news from the WC at Leogang as well as young freestylers from Kolkata showing off their skills at BMXtreme and much more. So, ride your bike, have faith in yourself and read on for more exciting stories.

*Mesum Verma*

Mesum Verma – Director, mtbmagindia





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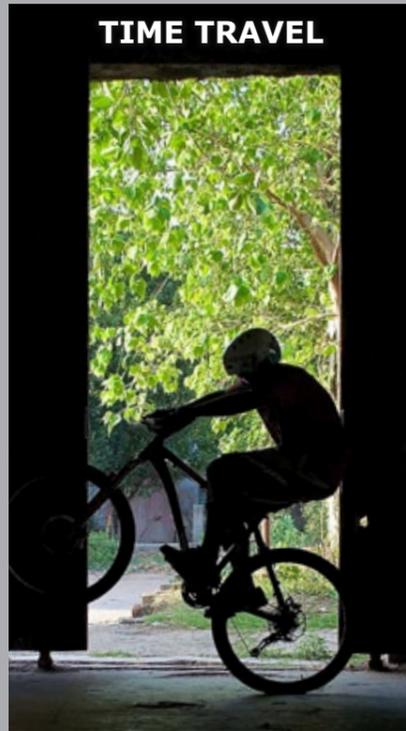


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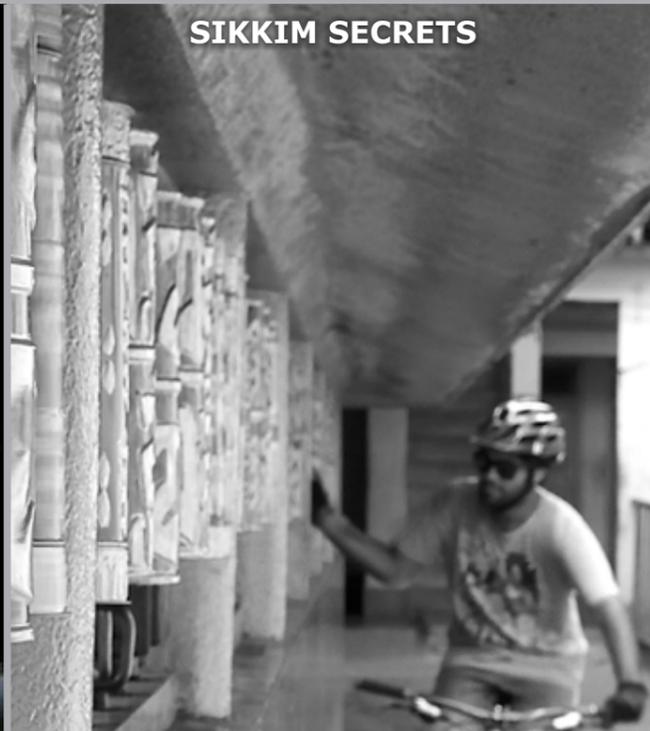
issue 11

cover

RIDER : Will Schönbuch  
PHOTO : Axel Brunst



TIME TRAVEL



SIKKIM SECRETS



BMXTREME



26TRIX



UCI DH LEOGANG



Cheyann Wyeth Nongrum - YG



GALLERY



AXEL BRUNST INTERVIEW



ROLLING KASAULI

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# rasoulution

*mesum verma photography*



# THE SECRETS IN THE SHADOW OF THE KANGCHENJUNGA



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Martin Buber once said, “All journeys have secret destinations of which the traveler is unaware”; and it’s true. I am a mountain biker and I love to travel around with my mountain bike. April and May were hot in Kolkata and moreover all the work I had did

not include travelling to a new place. Depression began setting in. Life had become mundane and nothing can be more fatal to a man’s spirit than routine. To add to the pain, I had a trip scheduled for North Sikkim in May which got postponed due to

certain circumstances. Come June, I got a call from my sponsor saying I had to go to Gangtok in Sikkim to help him run mountain biking tours around the capital of Sikkim. At that instance it seemed boring and more of work but in agreed regardless as at least I

was going to be in the hills with my bike. Along with me I took the madman Shivam Roy as he wished to shoot in the hills and this was a nice opportunity for him.





June 3rd , 10.00 A.M. I am woken up by my sponsor calling me and my phone buzzing beneath my pillow. I had drank quite some the night before and was having a slight headache. I picked up the phone and he asked me to pack up my bike and said,

“You leave today evening”. So, I called Shivam, asked him to pack and leave. I packed my bike, he packed his camera and lenses and we hopped on to the next bus to Siliguri, from where it’s a four hour drive to Gangtok through the lesser Himalayas.

Once we were there, it seemed pretty boring, as Gangtok is a town, not very remote, at 6,300 feet is not very high either. Nothing really to get a mountain biker really stoked. We asked around the local taxi stands for fares to the nearest dry deserts and they were too high for our pockets and something our bosses would not agree with as we had to run the office in Gangtok. Both me and Shivam only consoled ourselves saying at least we were out of home and in the mountains and of course by going to Café Live and





Loud, the best hangout place in the town of Gangtok.

After a couple of days, we went down to the office site near the Waterfalls and a local said he knew of a trail. We did not take him seriously at first,

but then we decided to ride down there and have a look. The trail culminated in a vast rocky riverbed, with the river still flowing in a corner. A local told us they called it the fox land, or the land where not many go. Trucks go there to steal rocks

and nothing more. Riding around this location was pure bliss, small trails, overhangs, rocks, river, old rickety bridges. As the light was fading we headed back. We had a long hike up to the site where we were greeted with steaming pork momos and local

milk tea. I like it how these people treat you, like you are a valued guest to them. Nothing beats a good tea in the cold, damp weather (except rum).

We were getting in the flow now. Mornings used





We were getting in the flow now. Mornings used to be at the Himalayan Trailways office, followed by exploring a new location around the city, after which we used to head back to the office, shut things down and head to Café Live and Loud for some good

old chilled beer and hookah, and of course dinner.

But soon I realized, this was also becoming mundane. Was it true, had I fallen for the tricks of society, had I become one of their minions who was caught

in the vicious cycle of routine? I had reached the breaking point, I looked at my bike and said to myself, "this is the only way out of this". I shut down the office as business was slow and redundant. I packed my backpack with all that I needed and left.

The weather was rainy, damp and cold. I climbed and descended through snaky trails. I rode up all the way expecting a view of the mighty Kangchenjunga, the third highest mountain in the world, but the clouds showed not respite. This was disheartening.





I looked down at my bike, covered in mud, so much that there was mud in the rotor holes. I sat there, staring, hoping to catch a glimpse, but in vain. I smoked a cigarette and wondered what my life had come to. I could not feel the freedom. What is moun-

tain biking if not freedom, if not life? I rode down the same trail through clouds, rain and half a foot of mud and slush. I took the bike back to the office for a service and I myself needed a change of clothes.

That night I had a realization, a monk came to me in my dream and told me, the wise words of Lord Buddha, "What you think, You become" and he disappeared. The rest of the dream is still hazy in my mind.

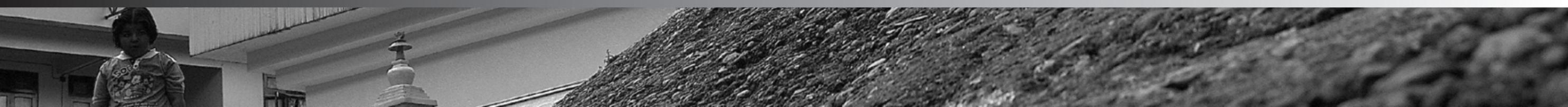
The next morning, I woke up early and pushed Shivam out of his sleeping bag as I was having a good feeling. I looked out of the window and could see a clear sky. I rode up 1800m to a trail called Bhulbhulay above Gangtok. Shivam took a cab as he was in





no mood to climb. Once I reached there, I could not believe my eyes, the clouds had cleared and there glowing in all its glory was the mighty Kangchenjunga. I explored the entirety of that trail overshadowed by the mighty peaks. As I rode down, I lost my

way and as Shivam was following me, he got lost with me. We ended up at a monastery where we received blessings from a monk who also blessed my bike. On the way back, me and Shivam sat on the edge of a trail sipping on a cold beer looking out into the



world, deep thoughts on our minds when suddenly Shivam sprang up and begun shooting something on the ledge below. He had spotted the most elusive red pandas munching on bamboo shoots and leaves. I looked up and was so content. I looked at my bike and it seemed as though it was smiling at me. I had finally broken the vicious cycle of routine. Life had found its way back in, and all it





needed was to be forgotten in its entirety and the blessings of a mighty mountain. It was time to pack up the bikes and the bags and to head back to that City of Joy as many refer to it. I shall stay here until the next time I begin to crack.

SPANK



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TRACEY HANNAH

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## ***Axel Brunst is a German based action sports photographer specialized in mountain biking.***

A few years ago Axel started riding mountain bikes (dirt jumping) with his friends. Soon he also started documenting the lifestyle and progression of riding skills with the camera. A old a point-and-shoot-camera. As time progressed he spend more and more time behind the camera and not riding his bike and invested in some solid photography gear. The background in the scene and knowledge about the sport helped him to step up his photography quite fast. His photography skills Axel learned through books and the web, but mainly by trail and error. He also started to shoot various other sports (such as slacklining, surfing, and many more) and other subjects such as

landscapes and architecture. Most of the photographs he produces are of riders, he calls friends, dudes that he doesn't has to shoot photos with, but he wants. At the end it is not only about the trail and the riding. It's also about what is going on besides that. - The landscape, the riders, the culture. He doesn't see maintain biking as just a sport. - It's a lifestyle. For his future Axel wishes to do much more travel and landscape photography. His trip to Kenya last spring opened his eyes for different countries, landscapes and cultures. One of his dream destinations would be Iceland. Maybe it's also possible to mix it up with some bike riding. There should be some nice trails that may have never been ridden before.

**BRUNST**  
p h o t o g r a p h y

**AXEL**



*This shot I took about two years back and there is just something about this image that describes what mountain bike and action sports photography is all about: "Capturing intensive moments of athletes doing what they can best!" This image was shot at 16mm focal length so you can imagine how close the rider was. Those images are only possible if you trust the rider 100% and the other way round! Otherwise you better not try this at home.*

*Until the year 2013 I hadn't been outside of Europe. Sure I travelled around here a lot and saw 12 countries. So my trip to Kenya was a huge experience: First ever flight, first time outside Europe, first time in Africa, first time... To say it short, a lot of new stuff for me. I went on safari there and would have been happy with simply seeing a few animals in the distance, maybe snapping some photos and just enjoying the new. It all came different: I had*

*the feeling I was seeing every single animal in existence. And not just in the distance, but a few meters away. However, it was this one moment, when a cheetah mother and her cub jumped onto our Land Rover to observe the landscape surrounding us, and then jumped off in pursuit of an antelope some time later. During the time the cheetahs stayed on the car I took this image at 24mm focal length so you can imagine how close he was!*





*Oftentimes I try to bring my background in landscape photography into my action photography to draw a bigger picture and show what is ,really' going on there. This stunning background and light was enough of a reason to go for a wide shot and include the environment into the image.*

*This image I took at a place 5 minutes away from my home. And you can learn three things from it: First Interesting and stunning things are just in front of your door. You absolutely don't need to travel the world. Second The right moment is crucial for a good image - not only for action photos is timing super important. Landscape images need timing, too: When is the best light, where will the sun be, etc.*

*Third Composition is way more important (and difficult) than you think it is. There is a road going through this image, so I had to go low to make it invisible, the horizon needed to be leveled, the foreground needed to be placed nicely and the sun needed to be in the right place.*





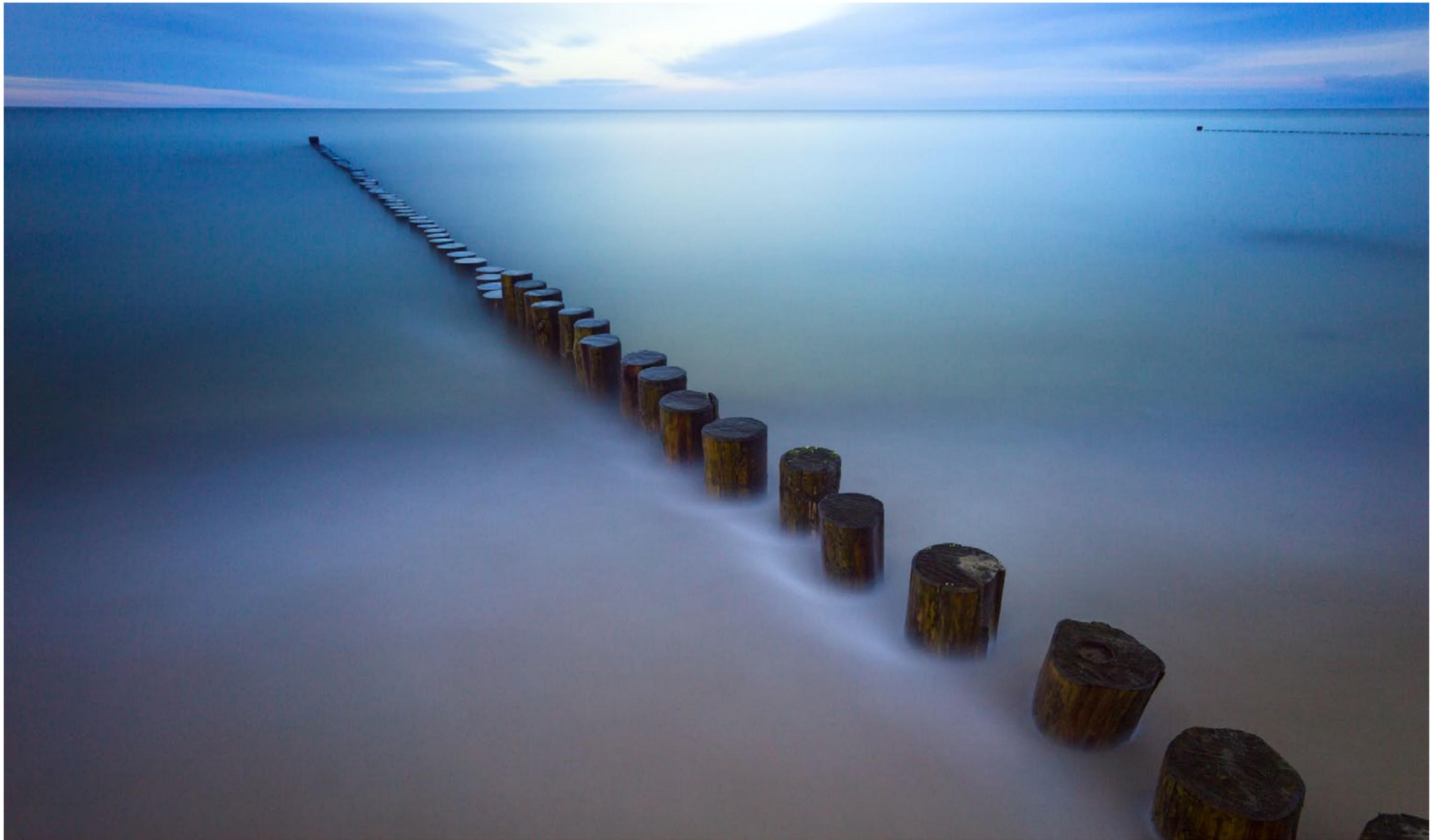
*In the world of action and adventure sports photography, the photographers mostly participate in the sport they are taking photos of. I started with surfing 3 years back and fell in love with it. The time on the ocean and the contact with all the other surfers gave me enough*

*of a background to try taking photos of surfing. This image was taken last summer in France. My goal was to give the viewer a sense of the place and at the same time show some rad action (the young French local just killed it).*

*Autumn 2012. We were out in the woods. It rained the night before and we found this huge and deep puddle. We instantly knew we needed to make something out of it. Like you may all know, water is made visible by back-lighting it. The only question was how? A tripod with*

*a strobe would have been in the frame. I found the plastic bag (where I stored my snacks) in my camera bag, put the flash into it and the entirety in the water. - Since then I always bring a plastic bag with me on a shoot.*





*Oftentimes I get asked how it fits together, shooting action on the one hand and landscapes on the other. And I have to admit; it's quite a contrast. However both fields have something in common, that I need - being outdoors in nature, exploring. For me taking landscape images is a way to slow down a bit while still being creative.*

A good book is something awesome, but reading it under a beautiful night sky at the beach. Especially knowing that there will be a good surf waiting the next morning. This is an image I took during a surf trip in France. There is not much to say about this image, except that good times make for good images.



**AXEL** / **BRUNST**  
p h o t o g r a p h y

# HIMALAYAN TRAILWAYS

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a rhododendron trail in Sandakphu, North Bengal  
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# CHEYANN WYETH NONGRUM

mtbmag  
YOUNG-GUN

# CHEYANN WYETH NONGRUM

Hello Cheyan! Where are you from? Tell us something about yourself.

Hey there MTB MAG!!! I'm a Sixteen year old dude, soon going to be seventeen in November. I am from Shillong, Meghalaya. I'm currently in the 11th grade. Will be staying in boarding school for the next two years. I'm an adrenaline junkie and have tried sports from Mountain biking, Road biking, Free running, and Cliff diving. With a little more training in the field i would like to challenge myself with Pack rafting.

Being an student, How did you get interest into biking?

I had lots of influences which got me into biking! First and foremost I AM an adrenaline junkie. Secondly, I had a lot of friends who were into the sport and the stuff they did seemed pretty awesome! So I thought I'd give it a try! I'm hooked into biking now. I think im so hooked I could tell which rider is which by the clothes they wear and the way they ride!!

How important is biking in your life?

Biking is really really really important in my life. It has really engraved itself into that it's like a drug. It helps keep me calm, composed and ready to face anything life throws at me! It's one of those things that are really Helpful, mentally and physically. Just a little ride down the street can make my day!!

Do you have any dream about biking?

Well I have a few dreams, all of which I wish to fulfill before I die. One of which is Winning a podium at Red-Bull Rampage, the Gnarliest Competition ever! If not winning then completing the whole run would be satisfying enough! The second dreams is to Ride for GT Factory, and competing in the UCI World Cups. The third is having a bunch of really good friends who know how to ride and have

a good time with each other!

Which bike did you ride or which do you ride now?

I'm currently riding a Btwin Subsin Tasty which i recently bought. It's a 24" Dirtjump bike. It's one of those bikes which are perfect! It's light, it's strong, and most importantly it's fun! It's Made to get thrashed! but I also handle it with care after every ride, giving it a nice, clean wash.

Where do you see your future in biking?

I see myself on the top of Podiums, traveling around the world, competing with new racers, and also having lots and lots of fun!! For now it's just the thoughts. I'm working hard to make it the reality!!

Who is your idol?

My idol would be my fellow biking buddy! Piyush Chavan. He's the guy who has really helped me progress and help me lift up my skill level. The first time I saw him ride I was like „Whao. I'm gonna be like him some day“ and here I am answering an interview for an MTB MAG!!!! Only to realize that, I've reached that level that people start recognizing me for what I love to do most. It's all thanks to my idol, my friend, Piyush Chavan.

If you are said to survive without biking, would you survive? Why?

NO WAY!!! I wouldn't survive without biking!! I spent countless sleepless night's thinking how i'm going to survive in boarding school without riding my bike!! There was one point of time in my life where i had broken my bike in two and had to borrow my friends bikes cause I didn't have one!! Worst few months of my life!!! I will never, ever survive without my biking!! I'd ride a bike made out of wood if i had too!! At least that will keep me happy!!



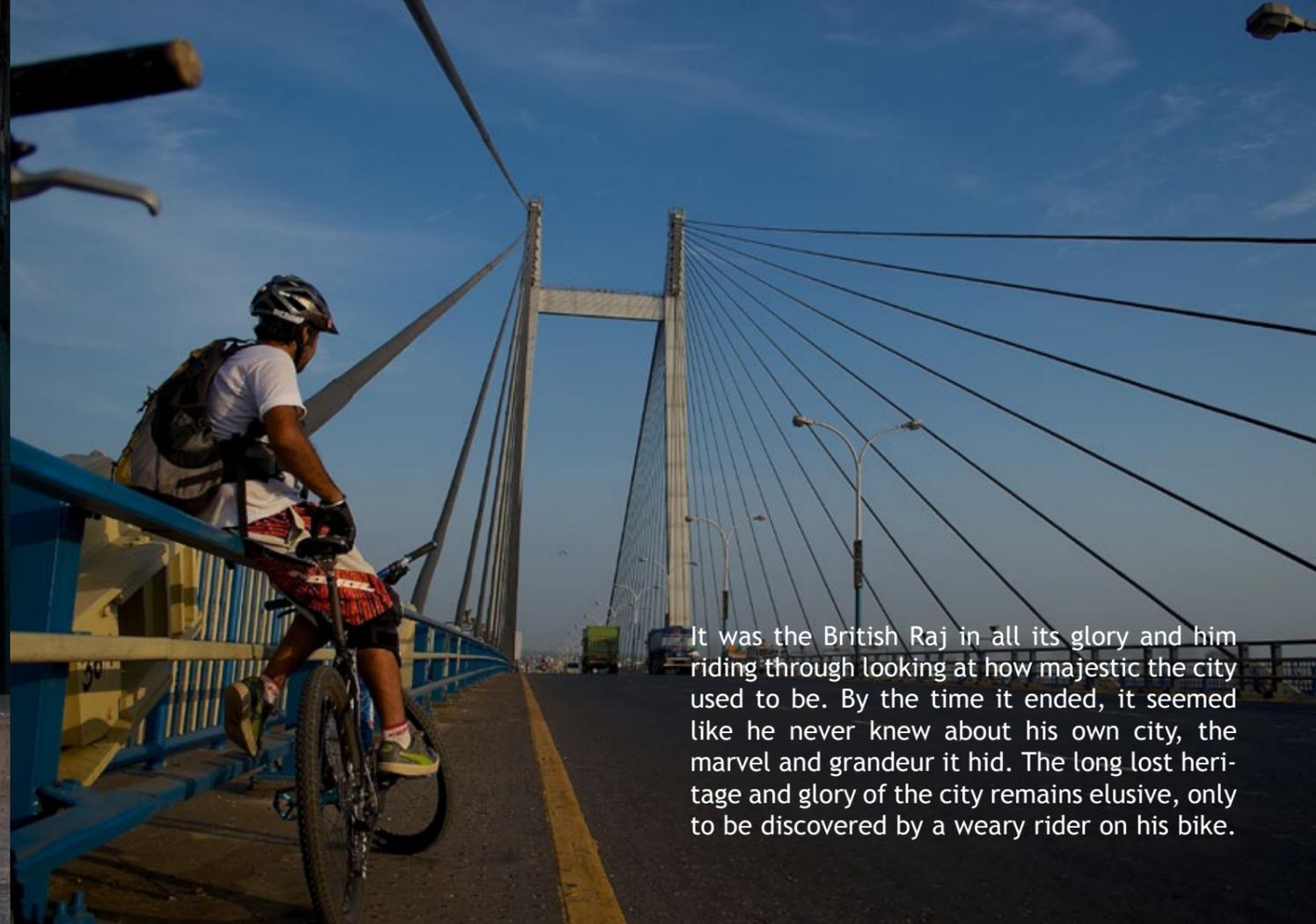


# time travel

Time travel is the concept of moving between different points in time in a manner analogous to moving between different points in space, generally using a theoretical invention, namely

a time machine. It has a commonly recognized place in philosophy and fiction, but has a very limited application in real world physics, such as in quantum mechanics or wormholes.

Never did one think a bike could work as a time machine. After a month long riding trip high in the Himalayas, our rider was back in his home-town of Calcutta and decided to go on a spin through the City of Joy. Riding solitary through the mundane streets, he suddenly realized he had travelled back in time.



It was the British Raj in all its glory and him riding through looking at how majestic the city used to be. By the time it ended, it seemed like he never knew about his own city, the marvel and grandeur it hid. The long lost heritage and glory of the city remains elusive, only to be discovered by a weary rider on his bike.

PILOT.  
RICHE SCHLEY

# TRAIL RS



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# GRILLERY



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rider: akshay chaudhary | photo: shashank moitra



rider: dhruv sharma | photo: jeewan jeet singh





rider: mesum verma | photo: laurent gravier





**WHATS UP??!!**

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**a peek into what's  
going on  
in the biking world,  
national  
and worldwide ...**

**racing and events**





Late in March, a group of college students came together to create The Scene, an initiative aimed at promoting independent arts in the city and bringing together talented members of the youth circuit under one banner. Poila Scene, held on 12th April 2014, was the first in the series of four events that will be spread out over a span of eight to ten weeks, the last one being a Young Achiever's Symposium where fresh and young talent will be felicitated. Keeping in mind the time of the year, Poila Scene had Bengali-ness at its core, despite fusing it with certain elements of the modern-day youth.

The second event of The Scene was all about promoting street art. Right from graffiti artists and fire poi to BMX stunts, this had it all. The BMX event saw a total of six participants from all over the city, all under the age of sixteen, who displayed some pretty cool moves with their bikes and left the audience stunned.



# BMXTREME

IN KOLKATA

# @ THE SCENE

photo: SHIVAM ROY  
text: DISHA RAYCHOWDHURY



The evening began with upbeat music playing and young spirited heads moving here and there, crowding around the most happening event, the BMXtreme where the kids from Infinity Riders Kolkata performed some gravity defying tricks on their bikes and wooed the crowd. Their favourite was the circle of death where two riders stand up on their bikes backwards, hold hands and ride in a circular motion in an almost infinite loop.

The riders kept the crowd wooing and cheering for them as they kept us entertained with new tricks they had up their sleeves at all times.

The evening ended at a good note with all the riders being satisfied of putting up a good show and more of the youth of Kolkata being aware of the freestyle scene in the city.



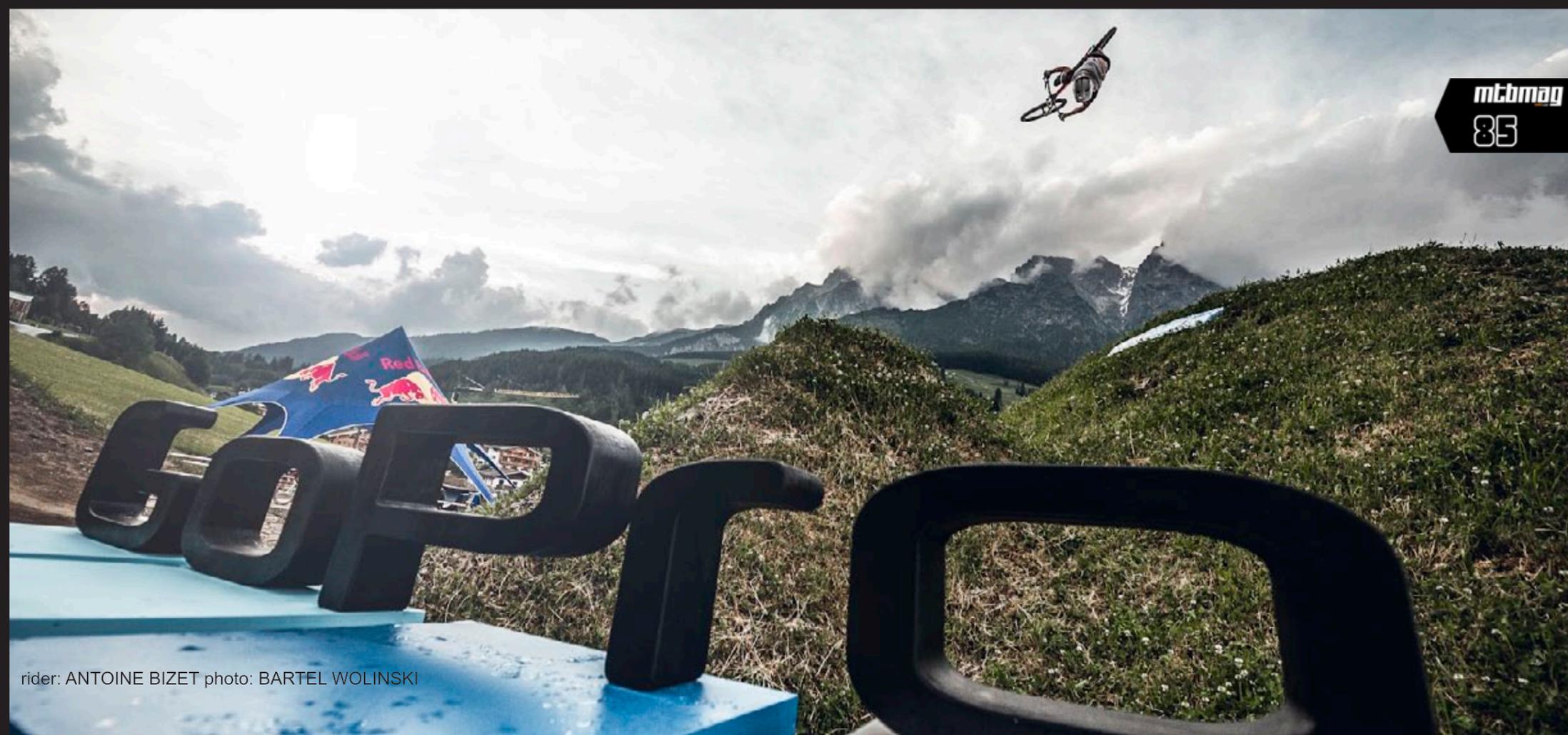
rider: NICHOLI RAGOTKIN photo: BARTEL WOLINSKI



Saalfelden Leogang in Salzburger Land, Austria, June 14th, 2014 - Banger tricks filled Leogang's evening air on Saturday. Riders showed combos, which are hard to describe, close to impossible to ride but simply amazing to watch. Two of the tricks were never even seen before! Young guns Nicholi Rogatkin (1st) and Matt Jones (3rd) made it clear at 26TRIX that they mean business this year. Top dawg Thomas Genon usual precision and consistency landed him in second. Just missing the podium, Antoine Bizet

bagged the prize money for the Go-Pro Best Trick.

Absolutely amazing tricks were being thrown down all along the Bikepark Leogang dirt jump course. 18-year-old American, Nicholi Rogatkin took the crowds breath away and left the judges with no choice but to award him his first ever FMB World Tour Gold event victory. His move over from BMX to mountain bike paid off big time. He started his winning run with the signature Cashroll, a move only a handful of riders have in their repertoire. A one handed superman seatgrab, followed by his famous lazy front flip made it clear this was a podium run.



rider: ANTOINE BIZET photo: BARTEL WOLINSKI

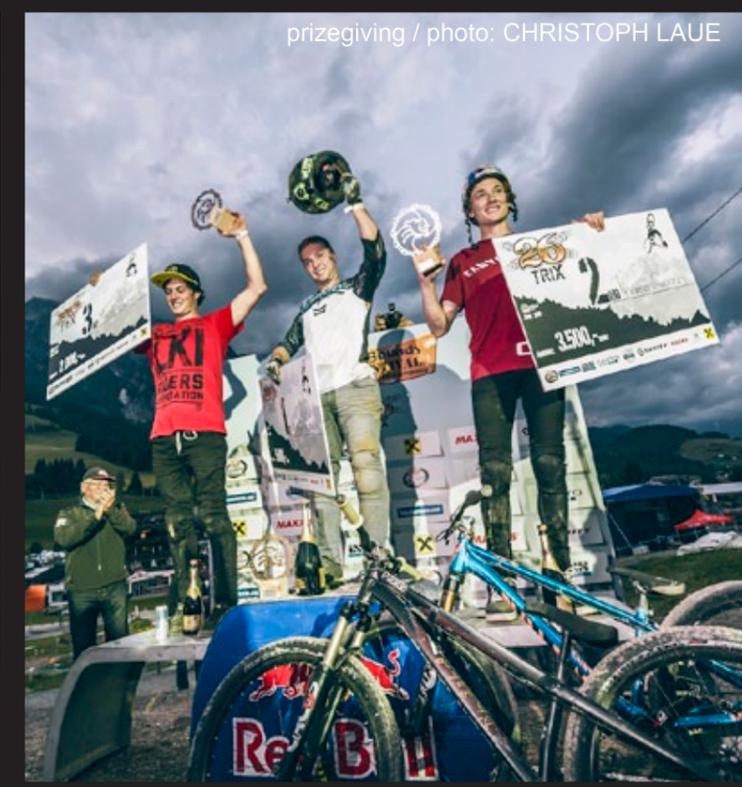
A double tailwhip, a barspin at the hip and a frontflip tuck nohand at the last jump sealed the deal and earned him the top spot on the podium. Following close behind was Thomas Genon. In 2014, the Belgian has already three FMB victories to his name and his experience showed in his flawless performance. A frontflip nohand, 360 seatgrab indian air and a 360 downside whip were the highlights of his run. Matt Jones, the British wonderkid, won over the spectators with a 360 tuck nohand to barspin as well as a huge backflip superman seatgrab. His run placed him third.



rider: MATT JONES photo: BARTEL WOLINSKI



rider: PETER HENKE photo: BARTEL WOLINSKI



prizegiving / photo: CHRISTOPH LAUE

- 1 - Nicholi Rogatkin / USA / 96.67
- 2 - Thomas Genon / BEL / 96.00
- 3 - Matt Jones / GBR / 95.67

# UCI DH Leogang

Brits make it a double: Manon Carpenter and Josh Bryceland are Leogang's new speed kings.

Saalfelden Leogang in Salzburger Land, Austria, June 15th 2014 - The final runs of the UCI Mountain Bike Downhill World Cup stop topped off a legendary Out of Bounds festival in Bikepark Leogang. Bright sunshine accompanied the victories of Manon Carpenter and her fellow countryman from England Josh Bryceland, who celebrated his first world cup win ever. French Pierron



rider: MANON CARPENTER photo: MICHAEL MARTE

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rider: PODIUM WOMAN photo: MICHAEL MARTE

Amatory took the win in the junior's category.

History is repeating itself as France and Great Britain once again battle for glory in the women's elite. After the qualifying, the top 5 spots were occupied by three Brits (Tahnee Seagrave, Rachel Atherton and Manon Carpenter) and two French athletes (Nicole Myriam and Emmeline Ragot). It was up to these five riders, to leave their mark in the grand finale. Seagrave set the first benchmark by putting over four seconds into the rest of the field. But she didn't have time to make herself comfortable in the hot seat, because Nicole Myriam was already on track and crossed the line four seconds up.



rider: JOSH BRYCELAND photo: MICHAEL MARTE

1	-	Josh Bryceland	/	GBR
2	-	Troy Brosnan	/	AUS
3	-	Greg Minaar	/	RSA



flower ceremony men photo: MICHAEL MARTE

The track in Leogang best fit the young Brit Josh “Ratboy” Bryceland. He celebrated his first ever UCI World Cup victory with a flawless run in front of 11,000 spectators. His honest comment says it all: “I actually always do the same - ride down the hill as fast as I can. Sometimes it works good, sometimes not. Last weekend in Fort William was similar, besides the fact that I got 26th. This is a week to celebrate.” Before Bryceland put down his winning run, several favorites hit trouble on the track. Gee Atherton (GBR) didn’t have a great day and crossed the line in 12th place. Last year’s world cup overall winner Steve Smith (CAN) left Saalfelden Leogang after several time-consuming mistakes, resulting in an 11th place finish.



rider: GREG MINAAR photo: MICHAEL MARTE



# **montra**

*Performance bicycles*



photo, text & rider: DHRUV SHARMA & JEEWAN JEET SINGH

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# ROLLING IN KASAULI

• PB 27 •  
C 1702

A mountain biker wearing a red helmet, black jacket, and black shorts is riding down a rocky, dirt trail. The rider is leaning forward, and the bike is tilted. The trail is composed of loose rocks and dirt. In the background, there are large, leafy trees and a clear sky. The overall scene is outdoors and appears to be a mountainous area.

Finally Jeewan and Dhruv have woken up once again to their trail and DH fantasies, driven more than ever with better bikes and higher spirits. So, finally after nagging and pushing each other daily for the rides to start, they managed to get a couple of them chunky

tires on their favorite trails in Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh. It's an hour and half of drive to get to Kasauli from Chandigarh where you will start finding a trail wherever you point your eyes at. Only connecting them is the issue here. The first upcoming Himachal Downhill race

in Manali, Himachal Pradesh has pushed these riders even more to get back on the saddle and ride the trails as hard as they can to their known limits. Jeewan Jeet Singh - 38 is an avid MX biker and manages a local bicycle shop in Chandigarh. Dhruv -27 is a Professional tattoo

artist, well versed in his fields of both mountain biking and art.

Riding after such a long time definitely showed its affects on their bike control but it didnt take much time for them to adapt to their well known trail and



A mountain biker wearing a black and red jersey, black pants, a white helmet with a camera, and goggles is riding a full-suspension mountain bike on a dirt trail. The rider is in a dynamic, slightly off-balance position, leaning forward. The trail is surrounded by tall, thin trees and dense green undergrowth. The ground is covered in pine needles and small rocks. The background shows a steep, wooded hillside.

shoot past all the sections. It's never too late to get back on your saddle and ride it down after all. The trail starts where the city limits end and is a good 1.5 hours of gravity assisted grins if ridden nonstop till it ends at a small town named Kalka, where the first corner of

Himachal begins while going from Chandigarh. So, they have managed 2 sweet rides in their first week of getting back on their Big bikes with Dhruv getting nailed down on a rocky stair section at the trail, as if that would stop them with less than a week left for the Downhill



Himachal begins while going from Chandigarh. So, they have managed 2 sweet rides in their first week of getting back on their Big bikes with Dhruv getting nailed down on a rocky stair section at the trail, as if that would stop them with less than a week left for the Downhill

championship, they are working hard for sure and trying to keep away from any bike less air time and keeping their limbs safe and sound. Bikes are set, the riders are well, almost prepped up for riding in one of the most demanding terrains in the country and the world.





SHIVAM ROY



AXEL BRUNST



SHASHANK MOITRA



LAURENT GRAVIER



JEEVAN JEET SINGH



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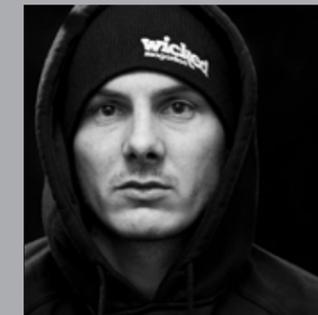
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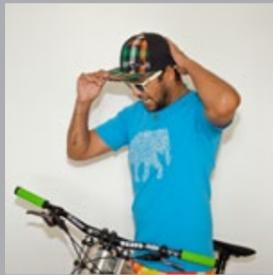
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COULD BE YOU



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