

# The Ritchey Mountain Bike...

## 1/TOM RITCHEY

TOM RITCHEY has been dedicated to the sport of cycling for nearly fifteen years. His interest in bicycle racing and frame construction began almost simultaneously. As a junior road racer, he was a peer of Jacques Boyer, and represented the United States in the 1974 Junior World Championships. Bicycle racing has continued to be one of Tom Ritchey's main interests. He is still a contender on the mountain bike racing circuit.

However, the design and construction of bicycle frames became Tom Ritchey's passion, and soon, his profession. As a specialist in unusually sized road racing framesets, Ritchey became an expert in the field of lugless construction. Using unique solutions like ovalized seat tubes and oversized tubes to address special problems, he became renowned for the beauty, strength, and performance of his framesets. He continued to ride regularly on the paved and dirt roads of the hilly countryside around his Palo Alto, California home, so the development of Mountain Bikes was a natural progression. Since 1978, the RITCHEY name has become synonymous with Mountain Bikes. In fact, every off-road bicycle uses elements introduced by Tom Ritchey.

Today, Tom Ritchey still lives with his family in the hills above Palo Alto. He still designs and builds bicycles acclaimed for their distinctive quality, but most important, continues to dream and design new bicycles and components for tomorrow. RITCHEY MOUNTAIN BIKES: The Evolution Continues...

## 2/THE BUILDER

TOM RITCHEY is acknowledged as one of the world's finest builders. He is responsible for pioneering, developing, and popularizing the technique of lugless fillet brazing. Ritchey has built frames, handlebars, and stems for thousands of racing, touring, tandem, and mountain bikes in more than fifteen years of framebuilding, including the most balloon tire bicycles made by any domestic custom builder.

Years of development in technique and tooling by Ritchey has enabled him to be the most prolific builder in the industry while continually improving the quality of his framesets.

When you buy a fillet brazed RITCHEY, you ride the creation of Tom Ritchey. Every single perfectly radiused joint, every braze-on fitting, every dropout has been brazed by Tom himself. Two assistants work closely with Tom preparing and finishing framesets and handlebars.

Quality and reputation are areas jealously guarded by Tom Ritchey, and that will never change.

A new dimension for RITCHEY bicycles began in 1985 with the introduction of the ASCENT. With a hand-crafted TIG welded frameset, it was the first bicycle to bear the RITCHEY name without being personally manufactured by Tom Ritchey himself. Several years of design, research, and testing were carried out before the RITCHEY decal could be applied to the most affordable RITCHEY yet.

Two new models have been introduced in 1986, the ASPEN and ULTRA, but that doesn't mean you'll see a RITCHEY on every street corner. In fact, we purposely chose an experienced builder with limited production capacity. Believe it, this is not another generic mountain bike with a name plastered on it. The ASPEN, ASCENT, and ULTRA remain consistent with the RITCHEY tradition, giving you high quality at a value packed price. Find a RITCHEY and prove it to yourself ... Riding is believing!

## 3/THE DESIGNER

Since 1978, TOM RITCHEY'S original designs have been incorporated into the mountain bike industry. TWINSTRUT handlebars, unicrown forks, oversize tubing, slotted cable guides, and 130mm spacing are only a few examples. Key frame design features introduced by Tom Ritchey are reinforced seat collars, ovalized seat tube at the bottom bracket, and single bend chainstays. These innovations and Tom Ritchey's individual control over every frameset means a line of bicycles that continue to set an unequalled standard

in the industry. Tom Ritchey also leads the way in the field of frame geometry. Years of racing, touring, building, and engineering experience have brought the original RITCHEY MOUNTAIN BIKE designs from 70° seat and 68° head angles to the current standards. Over the years, seat angles have progressed on RITCHEY framesets to the new 73° and 74° angles. As a result, riders are positioned further forward to approximate the position of a road racing bicycle. The rear triangle has been tightened up to make for a rigid design that gives positive acceleration and climbing. Head angles have been increased to 69°, keeping the RITCHEY trademark of sure-footed control on all types of terrain. This head angle plus a fork rake of 1.8" ensure stable tracking without compromising handling performance.

While some builders have experimented with variation in angles and geometry which require extraordinary skill in staying upright, Tom Ritchey's geometry is still the perfect balance of performance and control. Geometry has been a controversial subject in mountain bikes regarding its theory and function. Since the introduction of the TEAM COMP in 1983, the "RITCHEY" geometry has been largely accepted by importers and high-end domestic builders alike. If imitation is the highest form of flattery, Tom Ritchey acknowledges it, while at the same time developing new designs and products that distance him from the competition.

RITCHEY designs are based on a sound knowledge of industry experience, along with a respect for the history of bicycles. The RITCHEY designs of the eighties fulfill the needs of modern cyclists without ignoring the lessons of one hundred years of bicycle construction.

## 4/RITCHEY FRAME TUBING

How can steel tubing be used to manufacture a frame as light as most aluminum versions?

The answer for Tom Ritchey lies in many years of collaboration with the world's leading frame tubing manufacturers: TANGE and COLUMBUS. The result is Tom Ritchey's unique selection of tubing sets.

Years of testing and development have gone into the creation of a perfect blend of tubing for each of the nine different RITCHEY bicycle models.

Many bicycle manufacturers are merely satisfied with the standard tubing sets offered by tubing makers. Often, tubes are too heavy or too light for each application, creating poorly balanced or inappropriate framesets. A painstaking analysis of gauge, tapers, butting, and diameters was needed to arrive at the final product. TOM RITCHEY 4130 double butted chromoly tubing is used in 7 models, with variations in fork blades, down tubes, steering columns, and seat stays based on the intended use and size of each frameset.

COLUMBUS RITCHEY DESIGN OR tubing is a further refinement of COLUMBUS SP double butted tubing used since 1983 on the TEAM COMP. The TEAM COMP has served duty in an ongoing test of new materials, most recently with the new TANGE PRESTIGE tubing. A superlight, heat-treated, oversize version of PRESTIGE will be used in the new ULTRA.

The heart of the bicycle is in the frameset, and quality of its construction is critical. Tom Ritchey goes the extra step to guarantee the best choice of materials for each and every RITCHEY bicycle.

## 5/PAINING

When it came time to select the finish for RITCHEY built bicycles and framesets, the choice was easy. The standard by which all paint finishes are compared to is DUPONT IMRON. It is a polyurethane coating that is one of the most difficult to apply, yet one of the most durable finishes made. It has earned the reputation as "the wet look that lasts". The high lustre look, available in a wide selection of metallic and primary colors gives the final touch to our (and we hope your) pride and joy.

