



The Bike:

Transition Syren

Size: small

Rear shock: Fox DHX 5.0 Air

Fork: 2006 Marzocchi 66 sl set at 6.25" travel

Wheels: DT-Swiss 240's

Cranks and Handlebar: RaceFace Deus XC

Brakes: Hayes Mag with 8" rotors

Drivetrain: Sram X9

Stem: Transition Temple Stem

Tires: Maxxis Minion 2.5 (I've had bad pinch-flat luck with the single-ply tires)

Review:

Being friends with the Transition crew, I had the opportunity to test-out the new women's specific freeride bike, the Syren. Let me start by saying that I am not an amazing freerider throwing suicide no-handers off of cliffs. I am an average mountain-biker with cross-country roots who is gradually learning to do drops, jumps, and ride some skinnies. I am used to riding a 5.5" travel bike set up lightweight for cross-country and light freeriding. Where I was living in Idaho last year, this set up was great. After moving to the Northwest and learning to ride North Shore trails and Whistler, I realized that I would really like to have a bike with more travel and a slacker head-tube angle to make the tough stuff a little more manageable and fun. On the same note, I also need a bike that I can pedal up the mountain to get to the trails. So, I started the process of looking for bikes that would work and ran into a big problem...or a small problem I guess.

I am a pretty small female. I'm barely pushing 5 feet and weigh 127 lbs, so finding a longer travel bike with enough stand-over height for such a small person proved difficult. At first, I put a bigger fork on my bike. This helped, but the geometry of my tiny frame made it so where the crown of the fork smashed in to the downtube of my frame if I tried

to turn too tight or if I crashed, and there was still the problem of the steep head-tube angle. I researched and test rode another bike that I thought would be the one and had trouble bailing off of skinnies, because my leg was getting caught on the top tube and I felt like I was lugging around a bus. I realized it was going to be hard to find a longer travel bike for a small person without feeling like the bike was taking me for a ride instead of the opposite.



As I lost hope, the guys at Transition received a Syren prototype in a size small. The first time I took out the Syren I pedaled it up our local mountain and descended some smooth and flowy trails. The pedal up was harder than with my cross-country bike, but definitely manageable since the complete bike only weighs approximately 32 pounds, the seat can be fully raised and lowered with no interrupted seat-tube, and it's easy to fit dual rings on the bike. The descent was the most fun I had ever had on a mountain-bike. Period. I was immediately comfortable on the bike with no weird adjustment time needed. I was able to move the bike around easily. The shorter top tube and shorter wheel-base made pulling up the front and dropping effortless. I was able to go way faster with less pedaling just pumping through the trail. The bike accelerates and corners very well. Not only that, but I could sit on it and put both feet flat on the ground! Sweet! For the first time, I felt like I was able to ride a longer travel, burlier bike and feel comfortable.

When it was time to return the prototype, I felt like I was going through some terrible and emotional break-up. One of the girls I ride with had to listen to me gripe about how

inferior my current bike was to the Syren for an entire ride afterwards. Out of the kindness of their hearts, Transition let me take the bike to the Shore a couple of times and to Kelowna, BC. The slack head tube made the steep rollers on the shore way less intimidating and it handled really well on skinnies. The bike is easy to maneuver around slow tight rocky corners and sucks up rough and fast trails like Ned's with ease. The highly active suspension progresses smoothly and ramps up to prevent bottoming-out. Landing drops never felt so smooth. I had a BLAST on the bike in Kelowna. I rode some small gap jumps at Power's Creek with confidence. The Syren pops off of jumps really well and accelerates after landing like a rocket! Oh yeah, and there's no interference between the frame and the fork crown like my previous bike. So, I'm good to go for X-ups and tail-whips when the time comes...the bike could do it anyways. I am a perfect fit for the size small. Usually I can only ride XS frames, so if you are usually a small in frames, you may want to consider getting on a medium, which is available for demo at Drop N Zone in downtown Bellingham, WA. The Syren is an awesome bike for smaller riders looking to really progress their riding!

Overall View:

The Syren is an excellent versatile freeride/downhill/all-mountain bike with the best stand-over height that I have encountered on the market. The highly active suspension, shorter top-tube, shorter wheel-base and relaxed head-tube angle make this bike a perfect fit for rough North Shore trails, smooth and flowy singletrack trails, and jumps and drops at Whistler. If you like to pedal your way to the top of Fromme or your local mountain, the Syren has a fully adjustable seat, dual-chainring capabilities, and doesn't feel like you're trying to pedal a pile of steel. The Syren is an awesome bike for smaller riders looking to really progress their riding!