

A Grom's Dream TRANSITION RIPCORD

THIS MONTH WE BROUGHT IN A SPECIAL TESTER

TO HELP US EVALUATE A BIKE THAT WAS JUST A TOUCH SMALL FOR US. ARLIE CONNOLLY IS A BEND, OREGON LOCAL, HE'S NINE YEARS OLD AND A LITTLE RIPPER WITH A GOOD ATTITUDE. AFTER MEETING UP WITH ARLIE'S DAD AND FELLOW RIDER NATE, WE GOT THE RIPCORD IN ARLIE'S HANDS AND LET THEM TAKE OVER. WE IMAGINE THIS WAS LIKE A FATHER AND SON SCHOOL PROJECT, BUT A LOT MORE FUN. NATE WROTE THE REVIEW USING ARLIE'S FEEDBACK AS BOTH A COST-CONSCIOUS FATHER AND MOUNTAIN BIKER. HERE'S WHAT THEY THOUGHT.

THE TECH

The Ripcord isn't the average kid's bike with outdated technology, crappy parts, and the weight of a boat anchor. The Ripcord is a fully slung trail sled that looks, feels, rides and turns heads like the newest big-boy bikes. The attention-grabbing blue frame, classic Transition graphics and blacked out parts set it off. We spent a lot of time riding it on the trails around Bend. Arlie put in three days of lift service at Mt. Bachelor, some long cross-country epics that ranged from 20-30 miles, tons of laps on the local flow trails and lots of time at the local dirt jump parks. My son, Arlie was the test rider and the following are his thoughts on how it rides.

Boasting 100 mm of front and rear travel the Ripcord is spec'd with a no-nonsense build, no matter your age. A Rock Shox Monarch R shock and Recon Silver fork handle the hits while a SRAM GX 1x10 drivetrain deliver the power. Shimano Deore brakes are a highlight of the build and give even the smallest hands the ability to safely control speeds. This 30-pound bike comes with ISCG 05 tabs, a 22.7-inch standover height, a 12.5-inch seat tube, and an effective top tube length of 20.1 inches.

THE RIDE

The Ripcord is a snappy bike that eats up hard technical trails and flow lines. The frame is compact with a low standover height, but not too small giving it the feel of a BMX bike. The 100 mm of air-sprung travel is really tunable for riders of all weights. After a short time playing with shock pressures, we were able to dial in a sweet spot for each type of riding we were doing. A little softer for downhill and technical stuff and slightly higher for flow and jump trails. The softer set up lets the bike eat up bumps better while ramping enough to handle the hard hits. The stiffer set up was very noticeable and makes the bike feel totally different. It really came alive on jumps and berms. The Ripcord is very stable and tracks well on even the roughest corners. The front end is slack enough to instill confidence and keep kiddos from going over the bars





CHASSIS

FRAME: Aluminum, 100 mm
FORK: Rock Shox Recon Silver TK, 26-in, 100 mm
SHOCK: Rock Shox Monarch R

COCKPIT

BRAKES: Shimano Deore
HANDLEBAR: Race Face Ride
HEADSET: FSA Orbit ZS-4D
SADDLE: WTB Volt
SEATPOST: Race Face Ride
SHIFTER: SRAM X5, 10s
STEM: Race Face Respond, 45 mm

WHEELS

HUBS: SRAM MTH 406
RIMS: Jalco DD28
TIRES: Kenda Kinetics, 24x2.35

DRIVETRAIN

BOTTOM BRACKET: SRAM
CASSETTE: SRAM PG1020, 11-36t
CRANKS: SRAM 1000
REAR DERAILLEUR: SRAM GX



while the rear feels stout and tucked under the rider, making manuals easy and cornering fast. Basically, this bike likes to go fast. To control the speed, the Deore brakes are very powerful and might be the best part of the build. They fit younger rider's hands and make it so they have complete control of their speed with a single finger. This breeds confidence and confidence leads to progression. The benefits of a great set of brakes on a kid's bike can't be overstated. A SRAM GX 1x drivetrain helps Arlie put the power down when he needs it. There was little-to-no chain slap on the rough stuff and even without a guide he almost never dropped the chain. The shifting was crisp and Arlie felt he could rely on it under all conditions. The spread of gearing was sufficient, but Arlie really did want one more granny gear. Adding a Wolf Industries 42 tooth cog as a climbing gear would really help the little guys with longer or steeper climbs. That's one addition that would help everyone in the family. The blacked out wheels were stiff and durable and the Kenda tires delivered great traction while still rolling fast.

DAD'S TAKE

As a parent, these are things we value: durability, performance and strength. So, this bike is rad, but it may be hard for some to justify buying a kid's bike for \$1,700. It's true that's a lot of money, but this is a lot of bike, so I broke it down based on my past experiences.

A crappy kids bike is \$400, they ride it for two years and it's junk. It's not something I could sell to anybody with a good conscience. Now we're down to \$1,300. Bikes like this haven't been around long; therefore the used market will be really strong when your little shredder outgrows it, after two seasons, I bet you could still get some decent coin out of it. Bottom line, that's not a terrible investment to make your kid super stoked, more skilled, healthy and give them a huge jumpstart to a life long passion. That's money well spent as far as I'm concerned.

OVERALL

Arlie's other bikes have been getting dusty since the Ripcord showed up. His riding has improved and his stoke is sky high. He's been asked about his rad bike multiple times at the trailhead and has sent some of his biggest lines on it. My son loves bikes and riding fast on dirt. This bike made him better and more importantly made him love it more. Check out the video trailer for the Ripcord on the Transition website. It's kinda funny, but if you buy this bike there's a good chance you'll be working to keep up with your little ripper. I know I was. [📺](#)

Price: Frame - \$999, Complete - \$1,699;
Weight: 29.9 lbs; **Country of Origin:** Taiwan;
Contact: transitionbikes.com