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Transition Bike's TransAm Review

by [Brad Walton](#)

Mar 27, 2009

Like 15

"In the woods this bike is like a Swiss Army knife with only one tool, and it just so happens that that tool fits nearly everything."

What has dual 26" wheels and requires no more than a bit of chain lube for a full tune up? If you're thinking a singlespeed hardtail, you're right on the money. For years I've knocked singlespeeds for mountain biking anywhere that has fast trails with steep climbs and descents. I've watched good riders painfully struggle on climbs only to spin out and slow down when the trail points downhill, so I always questioned the point of it. To my surprise this bike has it's place, which just so happens to be the tight, technical trails in my backyard, which are so wet 6 months out of the year that I find myself picking rocks out of the corners of my eyes at dinner two nights later.

-all photos and text by Brad Walton



Transition TransAm

New from [Transition Bike Co](#) this year is the [TransAm hardtail](#). Transition has become a big name in the industry in the past couple of years, with several full suspension models to choose from. Their bikes are designed around the way they want to ride, so the TransAm was their answer to a light, quick all-mountain hardtail with simplicity being the foundation for a bike reliable enough for multiple rainy days in the saddle with no maintenance. TransAm is short for "Transition All Mountain", and to be labeled "all mountain" a bike should be extremely versatile, light enough to handle several thousand feet of climbing in a day, with a comfortable geometry for climbing yet relaxed enough for technical descents, able to handle some drops and jumps, and it's got to be reliable for when the ride turns epic. If "all mountain" means riding everything the trail has to offer, the TransAm lives up to it's name.





First night ride on the TransAm



Cam Burnes ripping some dark pacific northwest singletrack on his TransAm

A decade as a mechanic taught me there is **A**)light, **B**)durable, and **C**)inexpensive, and you can only have two out of three. Well for me I only settle for one and I prefer a durable, reliable bike over anything else. I hate wasting my biking time fixing mechanicals, so my goal with the TransAm was to build a burly winter assault vehicle that never lets me down. That means it's a bit heavy and I'm fine with that. I weigh 200 lbs and ride pretty hard, so at 30 lbs this TransAm is the lightest bike I've had in 10 years, yet I still feel comfortable hitting some of the bigger stuff on it. It rains a lot here in the Pacific Northwest this time of year, enough to where some days I end up with a case of swamp donkey bad enough to justify diapers. That means my bikes get hammered, with bearings taking the most abuse in these conditions. The main idea behind a singlespeed hardtail is to eliminate many of the moving parts such as rear suspension and gearing mechanisms to make the bike less susceptible to mechanical wear, and this theory works well on the TransAm.

83 Comments



Obviously stoked, these are the trail conditions this bike excels in



TransAm can handle some of the bigger moves too

You may have heard the saying "steel is real" and the TransAm's 4130 cro-moly is no exception. Although I primarily ride big bikes, I usually keep a hardtail kicking around for a backup bike. That changed last year when I decided aluminum hardtails that are built tough enough to handle the rigors of riding everything are so stiff that they're just not that fun on long rides. Don't get me wrong, the TransAm is not the bike of choice for riding some of the bigger trails on the North Shore and isn't sized to be a great dirt jumper, but on fast flowy trails with the occasional drop or jump it's a heck of a lot smoother than a multi-gusseted aluminum jackhammer. If there's one trait that I like best about the TransAm it's that it's silent. I've never really felt like any of my other bikes were loud; they all sound the same. A singlespeed hardtail has no chain slap or cable slap or suspension-induced derailleur noises, and the steel frame is so smooth on the trails that it dampens sound vibration. Don't believe me? Try one.



TransAm is smooth through rougher sections

The TransAm feels lively, responsive, and precise, and on rugged fast trails it offers a lot of forgiveness in the back end compared to all the aluminum hardtails I've ridden. There is no question that a hardtail makes you a smoother rider, and a singlespeed setup takes that one step further and encourages finding rhythm in the various peaks and dips of a trail. No more monster-trucking the gnar, you have to be more conscious of line selection and to be smooth you have to pump the bike into the terrain to carry momentum. It's been good for me to change it up with the TransAm on some days and a big bike on other days. However, this being the lightest bike I've had in years I do notice that now my DH bike feels heavier and slower, on the same trails that is.



Slicing singletrack is the bike's forte

Pedaling a singlespeed takes some getting used to. I never tried singlespeeding before because I figured I would have to use clipless pedals to do it. I gave that up 10 years ago and wasn't about to go back. I guess Transition is taking this into account with the all-mountain genre and assuming that this style of rider will have their own choice of pedal, so there were no pedals included. Good thing, since I wouldn't trade my Axiom Road Gap flats for a gold brick, except that for a brick of gold I could probably buy several thousand pedals, so I guess I would. Anyways, sometimes you just have to man-up and deal with it. As with

anything, you get used to it over time and now I don't think twice about singlespeeding with flat pedals. There are a few places where it gets tough to pedal, but it's nearly as difficult being clipped in, so just deal with it or switch to the low gear. What, you thought this thing only had one gear? Well there are actually two: riding, and walking. I still reach for a shifter every now and then, and usually when that happens I feel like I'm going to break a chain when my back is in knots and smoke is coming out of my ears trying to summit a steep climb. Sound like fun? Yeah, uphill is the new downhill. Seriously though, you wanna get smoother and stronger for downhill, try a singlespeed.



Hardtails excel in the tight stuff

With my TransAm setup as a singlespeed, I don't spend much time in the saddle. This has its own set of trade-offs such as I don't need to adjust my seatpost height very often but I also don't get much of a rest. Luckily the large TransAm feels a bit long in the cockpit so I don't feel cramped when standing for long periods. It's not long as in reachy and difficult to handle, but it's long as in comfy and makes me want to spend all day riding. The Transition spec'ed stem is a 70mm, but I opted for a 60mm, and eventually ended up on a 50mm. Now with a 50mm stem and a 6" fork, the long-ish top tube length coupled with a generally short wheelbase gives me room to move around on the bike and keeps my weight over the front end for climbs, while maintaining the nimble handling characteristics of the bikes I'm used to on technical terrain. A gusset at the top tube/seat tube junction allows for a more sloped top tube and lower standover height. 16.6" chainstays and a low bottom bracket keep the bike feeling quick in the corners and the front end easily manageable.



Short chainstays can handle tech moves with ease

A lot goes into selecting parts for your singlespeed, with gearing being an obvious priority. I received a 32t front ring and a 18t rear. Having never ridden a singlespeed before, it feels good to me. Yes, it's hard at times, and yes, it's easy at times, but overall this gearing works well. But gearing isn't the only choice that determines ride-ability of the bike. The 175mm cranks are helpful. Especially with 2.5 DH tires. I don't like getting flat tires, so the DH casing is key, even at the weight penalty. Revolution 32 wheels are a good compromise between ultimate strength and weight. The T-bar 30 handlebar is wide; we're approaching a meter here. I cut mine down a bit to 28.5" just like all my other bars and it's just enough length to really get leverage and dig deep when grunting over the top of some steep pitch of gravel road.



Fear not thy snowy XC trails

About the only part I worry about wearing out on the TransAm is the fork seals, but the 2009 Fox 36 Float R has proven to be one awesome fork thus far. I was very hesitant with an air fork since I am a bit on the heavy side and I'm building the bike for ultimate reliability, but Kevin at Transition spec'ed it and it definitely does not disappoint. I took the fork out of the box, bolted it on, and went riding. At a non-adjustable 160mm (6") travel, the bike feels all-around very balanced and isn't too tall at the front end. I've put in about 80 hours on it and haven't touched it other than dialing in two clicks of rebound adjustment. No air pressure adjust, no

sag adjustment, no maintenance. Obviously this isn't going to be the case for everyone as we all weigh in differently, but man that's impressive in this particular coincidence. This Fox fork is one of those really good bike parts that you just don't even think about, with one exception. On big drops, the fork sounds like a line drive to a kickball. I'm not worried about it, just notice it. This may be where the upgrade Float RC2 model shines with its adjustable high and low-speed compression, but I like the simplicity of adjustment on this Float R model. Other than the sound from heavy hits, the fork works great in all situations and I never have to mess with it at all. In high-speed sections of trail, it's completely smooth and supple; very surprising for an air fork. Big 36mm stanchions track straight as an arrow. The bike goes where you point it with no exception.



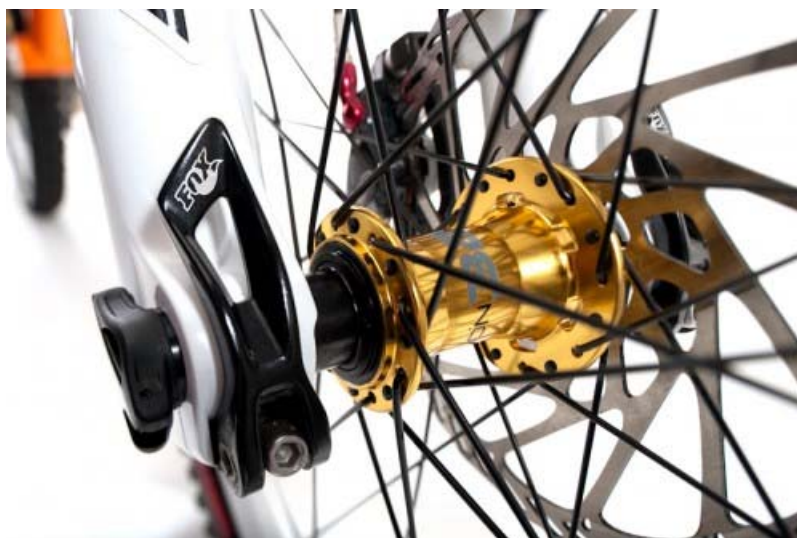
2009 Fox 36 Float R

The fork sports an 1-1/8" steer tube that is mated to the TransAm through an integrated Campy-style headset. The head tube of the frame is flared on both ends to accommodate the headset bearings. This setup works great and looks really clean.



The TransAm's Campy-style internal headset

Avid's new Elixir CR brakes are the best Avids to date. 8" front and 6" rear disc rotors are a good match to the weight and purpose of the TransAm, although for most riders a 6" front would probably suffice. The Elixir's are powerful and have modulation similar to Avid's downhill model Code brakes. Tool-free adjustment of lever reach and pad contact are incorporated into the lever body in a unique fashion where the entire barrel of the lever body leading into the brake line rotates to adjust pad contact. Lever reach is recessed into the lever body and can be spun via a knurled nut even with gloves on. If you're a rider that likes to have both levers with identical pull and tool-free adjustment, this is your brake. The rear brake has some squeal that feels like vibration from somewhere but I haven't narrowed it down yet. The brakes are staying in adjustment and haven't required any maintenance. The pads still have about 85% of their life left after a few months of rain soaked abuse.



Transition Revolution hub and Fox tool-less 20mm axle

Transition's wheelsets are a real bargain. I opted for the Revolution 32 wheels which are a bit heavier than the stock AM32 wheels, but as mentioned I'm kinda heavy and plan to rally the bike pretty hard. The wheels look great and I haven't had to turn a spoke wrench yet on these. Rear hub engagement is fast. When I first got the bike, it made a loud pop noise from somewhere in the rear hub about 5 times. It has since gone away, but it was weird because it was always on a stiff climb yet I couldn't feel it.

When hammering a singlespeed, chains stretch faster than normal and require adjustment occasionally. It doesn't require precise adjustment, but it would be easier if the TransAm had some sort of chain tensioners for its horizontal dropouts, and may not require so much torque on the rear axle. A 15mm closed-end wrench is key for getting this setup tight enough to where the rear wheel doesn't move. When you think the axle is going to break, it's almost tight enough. Rear wheel removal is no problem with Transition's rear hub, as the axle slides right out of the hub whether using the bolt on 10mm axle or 10mm quick release axle.



15mm wrench is key to getting this axle tight

Pricing for this TransAm as tested is about \$2,500 USD/ \$3,000 CAD, but the bike is available in [several configurations and component specs](#), with the bare frame costing less than most current suspension forks. Some extras on the bike included a quick-release seat post collar, bar end caps, and a derailleur hanger dropout set for running a 10mm quick release axle and standard 9-speed mountain bike rear gearing.



The Transition TransAm, coming to a mountaintop near you

Frame and Size	Transition TransAm (Orange) •Large (19.5") Frame •double-butted 4130 cro-moly steel
Fork	2009 Fox 36 Float R •20mm Tool less axle removal •160mm Travel •Air Positive pressure, Rebound adjustment
Headset	Transition Campy-style integrated 1-1/8" headset
Crankarms	TruVativ Stylo, 175 mm

Bottom Bracket	TruVativ BB, 68/73mm
Chainring	FSA 32t alloy
Rear Cog	Shimano 18t steel
Chain	Z-chain
Handlebar	Transition T-bar 30,7075 Butted(31.8mm) •762mm width
Stem	TruVativ Holzfeller (31.8mm) •60mm reach
Grips	Cross Trainer lock-on, Transition bar-end caps
Brakes	Avid Elixir CR, 8" Front Rotor, 6" Rear
Wheelset	Transition Revolution 32, 32 spoke/32mm width, 20mm front axle, bolt-on 135x10mm rear axle
Tires	Maxxis Minion F&R 2.5 double wall
Tubes	Maxxis welterweight
Saddle	Transition Park'n'ride AM, crommo rails
Seatpost	TruVativ Team double clamp, 30.0mm



Transition TransAm

In summary, this bike rips. Steel, no shifters or derailleurs, and a true all-mountain geometry make this rigid frame a go-to rig amongst my quiver of dualies. It's secretly the bike I've always wanted, although far from the configuration I expected. So after a few months of testing in the exact environment this bike is designed to excel at, I don't think I could ever go back to not having it.



Eric Brown aboard his TransAm proves the smooth line is in the air



Transition owner Kevin Menard's TransAm on a convincing all-weather, all mountain ride



So much precipitation this winter that the roads are washing out, no shuttles means you gotta ride up!

Links of interest:





-www.transitionbikes.com


-www.bradwaltonphoto.com


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Must Read This Week


1. [Norco's Prototype DH Bike Explained On Video](#) 38186 reads
 2. [3 Steps to Faster Corners](#) 33057 reads
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 4. [Lapierre Canada 2011 Team](#) 17011 reads
 5. [POM-CAM](#) 16408 reads
 6. [Elite Men's Statistics - Australian Nationals](#) 14866 reads
 7. [Red Bull Dirt Pipe 2011: The Highlights](#) 13711 reads
 8. [Where It's At - Episode 1](#) 12563 reads
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- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
|  bikrboj (Mar 27, 2009 at 0:13)
Looks like a pretty burly ht build | + 0 Show |
| <hr/> | |
|  RM-Flow2Rider (Mar 27, 2009 at 0:46)
i think both bikes look amazing! | + 9 Show |
| <hr/> | |
|  webber123 (Mar 27, 2009 at 5:12)
Although i had no intention of buying the bike, or even a huge intrest in it, i really enjoyed the read. A really well written artical! Look forward to more from you. | + 8 Show |
| <hr/> | |
|  suicidedownhiller (Mar 27, 2009 at 8:06) (Below Threshold) show comment | - 35 Show |


 [webber123](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 8:29) + 6 [Show](#)
Steel frame, its a much stronger matirial then alu therefore needing less of it. It would bend long-before it snapped giving waring to get it sorted. But the chance of that is low.

 [AustinSedz](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 10:41) + 6 [Show](#)
alot of bmx bikes dont have head tube gaussets and those things are taken off 30 sets to flat running a ridgid fork. The transition is using that construction with a nice forgiving fox 36 on the front so its almost impossible to destroy this frame on an allmountain track. Maybe if youu were pinning it on a decent and wrapped it around a tree but youd be more likely to bend rims and forks than the frame and surely you would snap before it does.


 [mcrippa](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 11:33) - 1 [Show](#)
Cromo Dirt-jump style frames like that run internal frame reinforcements... Like the put the gusset on the inside of the tube joints.


 [viatch](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 12:57) + 2 [Show](#)
i agree that was one of the more interesting articles in a long while, no bs, no pat on the back. nice


 [fr112358](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 17:54) + 0 [Show](#)
Yeah man Wil, there actually is a gusset and steel is stronger than Aluminum...by a lot. If you had two bikes with same tubing size but one Al, and one Steel; the steel would be waaay stronger. HOWEVER, its heavy so thats why its not popular.


 [pasales](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 20:08) + 0 [Show](#)
If anyone knows the answer to this I would love to know.


I heard that bikes with gussets can actually be weaker if not designed properly because the welds weaken the steel. anyone with some welding experience know?

 [mtnbykr05](#) (Mar 28, 2009 at 1:05) + 1 [Show](#)
If you know Brad, you would know he is nothing but gentle on his bikes. From a hardtail to a 8" travel bike, he beats on them as much as possible, and then some. I completely have faith in whatever Brad reviews so highly, for how talented of a rider he is, and for his no BS take. Excellent read, and look forward to more!

 [fr112358](#) (Mar 28, 2009 at 8:38) - 3 [Show](#)
To pasales, I do know a bit about welding. Basically every weld is a reshaping of the metal, if done properly the metal is not weakened in anyway. However, if you screw that up and not get a good joint what you said is most definitely true. Transition bikes in in the same state as me, CA, and its a small bike company. Not some Chinese sh*t. So the owner himself probably supervises the making of these things and I would not worry about the frame breaking. Wouldn't mind getting one myself.


 [ttidders](#) (Mar 28, 2009 at 12:05) + 0 [Show](#)
I Think there should be some truvativ hammersmits on there


 [hockeydavey](#) (Mar 29, 2009 at 20:20) + 2 [Show](#)
Sorry to break it to you fr112358, but Transition bikes is based up in Washington. Their frames come from Taiwan where they use skilled labor (albeit a bit cheaper than the United States). That being said, I love the company and what they stand for. I own a Vagrant and it is amazing.

 [fr112358](#) (Mar 29, 2009 at 21:10) + 0 [Show](#)
Whoops. I knew it was SOMEWHERE here on the west coast lol. They do weld some of their frames though.

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [gooieshred](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 0:15) + 1 [Show](#)
that looks like a pretty big fork for that bike.

 [cruelty-and-the-beast](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 10:26) + 0 [Show](#)
not at all, i slapped a totem on my .243 and i would bet this one could handle that much travel.


 [AustinSedz](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 10:44) + 1 [Show](#)
its not about how strong the head tube is its about the head tube angle. Alot of allmountain frames are moving up from 130 to 160+ travel because the newer technology is alot lighter and it allows you very little pedal bob, some even having

lockouts. This frame has been designed with a freeride headtube angle and fork in mind because as said in the article, it needs the mobility of a am bike with the capability of light freeride descents. Even though i am more of a full suspension freeride guy when it comes to trails, i compliment transition on their new addition to the lineup

 [gooieshred](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 12:42) + 0 [Show](#)

no i know it can take it, i just said it looks pretty big.

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [szfetbb](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 0:28) + 2 [Show](#)

Great bike great review! Its pretty amazing when you roll the with bike like trans AM on the trails U knew from the deck of UR Dh rig, and U realize that its not a bit less fun, and actualy Ur not that much slower! Now can Dh rigs go up, can they even go horizontal?

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [ddddhhh](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 0:29) + 0 [Show](#)

huuummm ss i duno about that

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [callumm](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 0:38) + 0 [Show](#)

Looks like a very fun piece of kit 😊

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [singlespeedtoday](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 1:00) + 0 [Show](#)

Awesome, I want one now!

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [Coburn](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 1:19) - 2 [Show](#)

i 3 fr hardtails.

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [yorntjefreerider](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 4:27) + 0 [Show](#)

that might just be the bike i've been looking for so long! i want one

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [hobbzc](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 4:35) + 0 [Show](#)

so do I, but just a little smaller so you can really do gnarly freeride sections on it.

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [krazy-downhiller](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 5:01) + 1 [Show](#)

i think they should have done a video Review on the bike

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [cameronbikes](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 5:08) + 0 [Show](#)

Weren't the Bottlerockets 3500 last year? 2500 seems a bit to pay when it is just a fork, cranks and frame basically. Is transition becoming a "big" bike company with the big bike company price tags now? Or am I wrong?


 [brule](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 10:00) + 0 [Show](#)

YOu are wrong and bikes have gone up in price everywhere. Just price out the parts on their own and you will see that at approx. \$2500, he got a great deal.

 [bradwalton](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 11:13) + 1 [Show](#)


There's more to it than fork, cranks, and frame. How about brakes, a wheelset, and all the other parts that make up a bike? Think about the cost of shifters and derailleurs; pretty minimal really. You can buy this frame and fork for about \$1250 USD, or for another \$1250 have a high-end build to go along with it. I'm not saying the bike is economical off the showroom floor, but what is gained in terms of long-term durability makes a singlespeed hardtail very economical. \$1000 more for a Bottlerocket is about right for rear suspension and a rear shock, but that bike has a totally different purpose than a TransAm. Apples to oranges...

[\[Reply\]](#)


 [fullbug](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 6:16)

+ 6 [Show](#)

I don't think they're in any danger of becoming "big" their prices seem to be competitively lower for what you get and having dealt with them on my bikes, the customer service is something you couldn't even pay for or offered with the "bigs". The Tr. guys I think have great products with a crew that looks pretty involved in representing themselves really well. I think they just spent a few days digging with a local group...I've got to Trannys and I love 'em both.


 [northshorerider7](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 11:40) (Below Threshold) [show comment](#)

- 11 [Show](#)


 [fullbug](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 13:23)

+ 2 [Show](#)

i think you bought your bike cuz you thought it was "cool" and it fit your style, budget, etc. Having worked in the bike industry for over 15yrs I think everybody love/hates for whatever reason whatever brand. Blogs and mid life crisis...the industry is FULL of that! The blonde or sports car is a a new DH rig or a new pair of 40s or boxxers! Barely win?
who gives a shit? Talk about buying into an IMAGE...you're cool because you race? You race because you're cool? WTF?! I know everybody's broken shit from every mfg big or small and it seems riders like them enough. I'm just going by what I've experienced. Don't tell me my vanilla ice cream sucks cuz you like chocolate! BlueBell HagenDaz it's all ice cream,man.

 [northshorerider7](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 14:06) (Below Threshold) [show comment](#)

- 4 [Show](#)

 [fullbug](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 15:04)


+ 2 [Show](#)

thanks for posting up. no offense taken at all. undies are twist-free. i was responding to "transition sucks" which means they might have twisted your undies at one point to hate on 'em like you do. I dont like vanilla anyway...it's cool to read a post reply that says more than "that's sick!", though so thanks for that. we can agree that ice cream is good and some flavors suck, right? Cup or Cone? Have a good ride.....peace and dirt..

 [bradwalton](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 15:41)


+ 1 [Show](#)

In regards to Transition losing to a range of competitors models, they have received "bike of the year" awards multiple times from various credible mtb magazines. Besides, even if they didn't, how 'credible' are these magazines, and how do you know that? In the auto industry, the cars that win awards are the ones that pay for advertising. I admire Transition for keeping their bikes affordable by not sinking money into advertising campaigns. I'm not loving or hating, just stating facts.

 [northshorerider7](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 15:54)

+ 0 [Show](#)

Thanks for being such a good sport fullbug.

 [fullbug](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 19:22)

+ 1 [Show](#)

no worries, same to you..hot chicks on a night ride awaits!!!

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [nastynick42](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 8:32)

+ 1 [Show](#)

Just because it doesn't have a bunch of gusset patches welded all over it, doesn't mean its weak. Its a Chromo frame, not aluminum; and its been designed and ridden by the dudes at Transition, I feel like I don't need to say anymore.


[\[Reply\]](#)

 [hardtaildh08](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 9:12)

+ 0 [Show](#)

them bikes look beautiful


[\[Reply\]](#)

 [trailchef](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 9:21)

- 1 [Show](#)

nice looking ride, however single speed and all mountain is kind of an oxymoron. maybe all urban would be a more suitable label.


[\[Reply\]](#)

 [veggiemaster](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 9:57)

+ 0 [Show](#)

If you've ever ridden a Transition Chromo hardtail (read: Trail or Park) you would know you have NO REASON to question its strength or durability. They are very light, very strong and very rigid. Makes for one of the most fun bikes out there.

[\[Reply\]](#)


 [HM78](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 10:01)

+ 0 [Show](#)


hmm wonder what the exact price is frame - only.. looks nice , believe the steel alu comparison about the steel being more comfier and stronger.. too bad i just build a new geared alu one.. maybe next year..

 [veggiemaster](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 10:02) + 1 [Show](#)
Approx \$570 - MSRP.


[\[Reply\]](#)

 [Hombre3000](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 10:22) + 0 [Show](#)
Great review. Sounds like an awesome bike. Makes me miss my stolen singlespeed.

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [dirtbagluvin](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 10:32) + 1 [Show](#)
Excellent review Brad!! Your writing style brings out the points that real shredders would ask. The pics are as always top notch. I can't remember reading a more succinct bike review anywhere!! More to come I hope!!?! Ya hear that Kevin/Kyle?!!

[\[Reply\]](#)


 [bottlerocket84](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 11:00) + 0 [Show](#)
I've been waiting for someone to come out with an all-mountain hardtail ever since Specialied had the Enduro HT back in 01/02.

 [Hombre3000](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 12:29) + 0 [Show](#)
Oh yeah. Those are really sick.


Ever heard of the Santa Cruz Chameleon?

 [brule](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 13:24) + 0 [Show](#)
There are actually several great options out there. Chromag, Surly, etc. If you do some looking, you will find.


[\[Reply\]](#)

 [chuk2rs](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 11:43) + 0 [Show](#)
I think every one should have a single speed trailbike. Mine has made me a better, stronger rider.

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [pipes10](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 11:55) + 0 [Show](#)
great write up and pics....thanks for sharing....the tranAM caught my interest a little while ago and will eventually find its way into my stable

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [nickf](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 13:46) + 0 [Show](#)
isn't there a conversion kit for to run gears? i seem to remember that when the frame was introduced. maybe that was for their new 4x frame

 [veggiemaster](#) (Mar 29, 2009 at 20:54) + 0 [Show](#)
Yes - the dropouts are modular and can run a a derailleur hanger.


[\[Reply\]](#)


 [shore106](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 14:43) + 0 [Show](#)
awesome review!

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [blackdot](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 14:53) (Below Threshold) [show comment](#) - 4 [Show](#)

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [sixpointzero](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 16:12) + 1 [Show](#)
Would a truvativ hammerschmit work with a SS setup?
If so, throw one on and then you have the ultimate trail hardtail

 [bradwalton](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 16:21) + 1 [Show](#)
great idea- I asked about this as well. The current TransAm does not have ISCG tabs, so no, but the next version of the frame they say will have ISCG, so you can run a Hammerschmidt. That would be a cool setup, depending on how the Hammerschmidt proves itself in the durability department.

 [sixpointzero](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 17:03) + 1 [Show](#)
For sure

[Show](#)

 [crewsdawg](#) (Mar 28, 2009 at 6:54) + 0

the hammerschmit seems like it would work if the transam had the ISCG tabs, but chain tension could be a concern. wouldn't the chain be susceptible to being thrown off the rear cog because of super-slack chain tension in granny ring?

 [bradwalton](#) (Mar 28, 2009 at 9:00) + 0 [Show](#)

there is only one ring on a Hammerschmidt crank, it works based on internal planetary gearing

 [iamamodel](#) (Mar 28, 2009 at 10:33) + 0 [Show](#)

Try Schlumpf instead of Hammerschmidt. It doesn't need ISCG tabs, just the BB needs a 45 deg internal chamfer. You shift with a button on the crank axle with your heel so there is no cable or pods messing up your clean look. I've ridden Schumpfs on SS and fixies and they rock. Similar price to H'schmidt. Been around fifteen years. Swiss made. I'm putting one on my XC bike.

 [crewsdawg](#) (Mar 28, 2009 at 14:06) + 0 [Show](#)

yes, now i remember. well damn, as long as the chain tension isn't affected by the hammerschmidt gearing mechanism than it would be great for this application

 [collin7](#) (Oct 7, 2009 at 14:15) + 1 [Show](#)

Hammerschmit would work great on any single speed as long as there are iscg tabs. There is no difference in chain tension. My only question would be exactly how different would the two gears be? would it be practical i bet it would.... but dont know for sure.

 [bradwalton](#) (Nov 2, 2009 at 10:13) + 1 [Show](#)

not real practical for anywhere that a singlespeed works for, but if the trails in your area are too steep for SS, then it would work well. The difference between the two gears is pretty vast; the easy gear is far too easy for a SS setup generally speaking

 [collin7](#) (Nov 2, 2009 at 12:42) + 1 [Show](#)

Thanks Brad, that is kinda what I was thinking but like you said, if you have pretty hilly trails it could be an advantage.

BTW, I really appreciate your write up on these bikes! Just got notification that mine shipped out today! I (unfortunately) am running gears because of the fact that this bike will be my XC and AM bike that I need to pedal anywhere. If I end up with other bikes though, this will go straight to single speed.

I am so stoked about getting this frame in and building it up... do you think a 36 Van RC2 is too much fork? I really want the Tallas but ran outta cash for my build!

 [bradwalton](#) (Nov 10, 2009 at 19:53) + 1 [Show](#)

glad it helps! you'll like the 36 van just fine- anywhere between 140-160mm is ideal.

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [mirdad](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 17:50) + 1 [Show](#)

Singlespedd hardtails rock for real, the trans am is sick, and you can do ANYTHING on a hardtail. I rode a Kona scrap with a single speed conversion over, through, and on a lot of gnar, having a bike like this Trans AM will give you much bigger balls when you hop back on you dual suspension mistake eraser. I love my Stinky but I will always love the hardcore experience of singlespeed hardtails. Great review Brad.

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [advorak](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 17:50) + 2 [Show](#)

The 36 looks soooooo good on that bike!

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [Rattsl](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 21:22) + 0 [Show](#)

That looks sweet overall and I love the whole Singlespeed trail riding...I myself have been doing it for over 6 months and I think it's the greatest way of riding and more people should do it..keeps things in check, lighter and a lot easier to maintain.


[\[Reply\]](#)

 [mooseduck13](#) (Mar 27, 2009 at 21:54) + 0 [Show](#)

Me too

[\[Reply\]](#)


[Show](#)

 [almightybeners](#) (Mar 28, 2009 at 1:48)

- 1

soo this is basically the old ns bitch right?

and single speed ftw both my bikes are ss at the mo and i wouldnt have it anyother way 😊

 [collin7](#) (Nov 2, 2009 at 12:44)


+ 1 [Show](#)

I don't think so, it is really the new Covert. Isn't the Bitch a DJ bike?

 [almightybeners](#) (Nov 6, 2009 at 11:52)

+ 1 [Show](#)


the OLD bitch, it is a long travel dj bike now but the old one was more similar to the current surge (but with horizontal dropouts) and was warrentied for use with up to a 180mm fork, it is now only for use with up to 130mm fork

 [collin7](#) (Nov 6, 2009 at 12:53)

+ 1 [Show](#)

cool, I don't know much about NS so I probably shouldn't speak about them lol. BTW, I didn't mean the Transition Covert, I meant Vagrant. Which was their old version of the TransAM.

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [MatthewCarpenter](#) (Mar 28, 2009 at 11:46)

+ 0 [Show](#)

if it ain't fixed, it's broken!

(okay, I got a 18-gear all-mountain-bike as well, but I just love my fixie)

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [pajamasam](#) (Mar 29, 2009 at 3:01)

+ 0 [Show](#)

nice article, enjoy the bike

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [bacon-buster](#) (Mar 29, 2009 at 20:47)

+ 0 [Show](#)

to all the people saying steel is stronger you are simply WRONG, steel may hold up better then your normal 6061 or 7005 alloys but it is not stronger. steel is very flexxy and weak BUT it does not wear at the same rate as 6061 and 7005 alloy. pretty much every time your aluminum frame hits a small or large bump or hits a drop or jump it gets weaker, THUS THE NEED FOR GUESSTS, a steel frame will not weaken much IF ANY inless it is a major hard hit, i have a 2003 .243 racing frame with no headtube guesset and its still running strong and ive well, BEAT AND HACKED THAT BIKE UP and she still runs like new, this is coming from some one that has cracked many norco frames and a evil imperial frame as well. a cromo frame will last a life time of pretty stupid riding as long as it does not become really stupid riding like hitting trees at 30km or some thing along those lines. i hope that every one that said cromo is so strong realized its not that strong but it does not wear and that more bikes should be made out of it 😊


[\[Reply\]](#)

 [mooseduck13](#) (Mar 30, 2009 at 17:04)

- 1 [Show](#)

Freak!!

[\[Reply\]](#)


 [sngltrkmnd](#) (Mar 31, 2009 at 14:47)

- 2 [Show](#)

Hardtail? Zzzzzzzz.

Nice pics, though.

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [dh0023](#) (Mar 31, 2009 at 20:29)

+ 0 [Show](#)

any transtion is good


[\[Reply\]](#)

 [thesaint360](#) (May 4, 2009 at 13:41)

+ 1 [Show](#)

bike looks good but the guy riding it looks werd if you ask me. boy ya ant from around here are ya! Don't forget your frinds back in little old NC home of some of the best riding around but don't tell anyone! See ya soon wild willy! Good to see ya doing what you love!


[\[Reply\]](#)

 [lr-mtb](#) (Dec 20, 2009 at 6:22)

+ 1 [Show](#)

How much are these in the UK? and If you can't get them, what alternatives are there? Thanks

[\[Reply\]](#)

 [eurospek](#) (Dec 17, 2010 at 22:06)

+ 1 [Show](#)

How tall are you Brad? I'm 6'4" and thinking of picking up a large size frame for aggressive singletrack/AM riding.

[\[Reply\]](#)

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