

EASTERN WOODS RESEARCH OWB 29ER

TESTER: Karl Rosengarth
AGE: 52
HEIGHT: 5' 10"
WEIGHT: 150lbs.
INSEAM: 32"
VITAL STATS
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: U.S.A.
PRICE: \$1395 (frame and seat post clamp)
WEIGHT: 5.65lbs. (frame, medium)
SIZES AVAILABLE: M (tested), L (S and XL coming soon)
CONTACT: www.ewrbikes.com



PHOTOS: MAURICE TIERNEY

During its first incarnation from 1991 to 1998, Eastern Woods Research cranked out nimble bikes that were a radical and lively departure from the NORBA-standard geometry bikes that ruled the day.

ready to ride, but the folks at EWR Bikes tell me the medium frame weighs in at 5.65lbs. As I type, the OWB29er is available in medium and large sizes, with small and XL frames on the drawing board for planned spring 2009 availability.

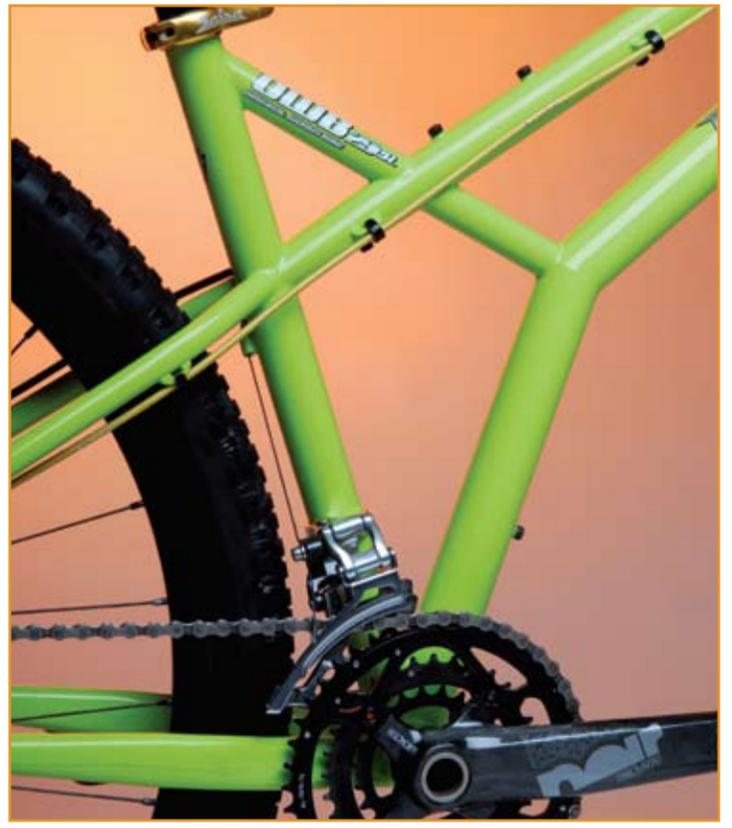
The first-generation EWR designs involved steep head angles, which resulted in twitchy handling, at times. Jay recognized this quirk, and gave the OWB29er a relatively-slack 70.75° head tube angle. (This and the rest of the geometry measurements are designed around a 100mm suspension fork, and the quoted angles are "sagged" geometry numbers, with rider on the bike and the suspension properly sagged).

The stock "hot lime" paint job is so sweet that I find myself reaching for the Pedro's Bike Lust after most every ride.

visually stunning silhouette. The unique-looking front end is made from True Temper Supertherm heat-treated and double-butted tubing, and the rear end is made from Dedacciai A.B.T. double-butted stays. For frame production EWR handed the torch to Bilenky Cycle Works, who have been hand-building bikes in Philadelphia since 1983.

RockShox Reba, the bike feels responsive, but not twitchy, at the handlebars. The OWB29er provides a sense of stability while ripping downhill, yet it responds with predictability whenever a high-speed course correction is required.

With the provided 100mm-travel fork and Kenda Karma 29"x2.2" L3R Pro tires, I measured a wheel-



base of 43.25" and a bottom bracket height of 12.25". The OWB29er's 17.43" chainstay length is on the shorter end of the spectrum, as far as 29ers go. The short rear end makes it a snap to get my weight over the rear axle, which really helps when I'm wheelie-dropping off a ledge and/or hopping over a log that sits taller than the bottom bracket.

Jay continued with his original EWR compact front-end design because it provides generous standover and knee clearance for applying body English. That sort of thinking is evidence of Jay's BMX and trialsin background showing through.

nit to pick, but the top mount is working fine for me. I have not bothered with the lower mount position. Also note that the frame has guides for running full-length cable housing from the shifter to the rear derailleur (it does not have conventional cable stops for running split-housing routing).

The OWB29er "ride feel" is classic chromoly hardtail. By that I mean that the frame has just the right amount of springy compliance. I was not able to actually measure frame deflection, but I'd say that the frame flex feels on par with other chromoly hardtails that I've ridden.

Compared to the other 29ers that I've ridden, the EWR has a decidedly sporty nature. The OWB29er's handling is well-mannered, yet there's a playful streak that's available when you choose to tap into it.



PHOTOS: MAURICE TIERNEY

frisky, the bike seems to say "Bring it on." I envision the OWB29er making a fine racing hardtail, though I never had the chance to test that theory, as the bike came to me after racing season. However, I did enjoy my share of "fun rides" atop the OWB29er.

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