

MTB Essentials Workshop

August 30 2020

Attendance:

- Guillermo Castro (workshop leader)
- Liana Engie
- Perle Knauss
- Theo Van Straten
- Michael Medina
- Arun Ahuja
- Daniel Ochoa
- Jude Nejmanowski

Pre-check

ABCs!

A for Air

- People are picky about their PSI
- Tire set up:
 - Two primary options: tubes or tubeless, mainly. Highly recommended: tubeless. Most people on this chat right now are running tubeless and everyone has experience with it already. Don't go above 45. Soapy water helps it sit in the bead properly, just before pumping it up all the way. 30-40. With tubeless though, the sealant is mostly around the base of the tire but the walls are not really protected, which
 - "Bacon strips" to repair walls and allows the sealant to do its job, basically a sponge. Carry a spare tube just in case, because fixing tubeless on the trail is not really possible.
 - Wider rims are better. You risk fewer side wall punctures because the triangular cross section of the tire as opposed to bulbous. At least a 30 some mm

B for brakes

- Are your levers firm?
- Check your brake pad thickness
- Bent rotors on your brake, can cause calipers to leak

C for chain

- Lube your chain before you ride. If you don't a kitty dies.
- Dry lube here in SoCal or the dust will build up. There are applicators too, to not make a mess if you're in your room etc

Protection

Helmets!

- Trail helmet (open faced) similar to road but has a visor and has good ventilation and airflow.
- Put it on, tighten the back, buckle up and make sure it's tight.
- Shuttling or lift access parts you want a helmet with a chin. No ventilation, so sucks for climbing. Some people take the helmet off during the climb, but you're unprotected which is very bad.
- Skate/dirt jump/BMX helmets. Extreme is nonventilation, but lots of protection. Called "brain buckets" and we don't usually use them. Unless you're in a jump park or something.
- MIPS sticker: plastic plate that goes around the head, designed to take impact from all angles as opposed to straight on the top of the helmet, takes away some of the energy from the rotational impact.
 - Go for that in all cases
- Helmets are one-crash-only. Even if there isn't a crack
- Theo recommends Bontrager helmets, they do best on tests

Masks are also required right now.

Also recommended: kneepads. Almost required! Highly recommended, that is.

- Look for one that has protection on the sides as well as kneecap

Elbow pads are optional.

Recommended: gloves. 1) palms get sweaty, so better for grip. 2) crash instincts are to put your palms out

Recommended: eye protection. For wind, branches

Some people wear body armor, neck braces, etc. A good idea. When in doubt, wear more.

Carrying

Mandatory: Water! Nutrition. Your phone. Road ID! Cash.

Multitool, spoke wrench, first aid kit (more to clean than to patch), tire levers.

Lights, charged if you are going at night/dusk.

When someone crashes

1. Don't move them. Let the adrenaline fade, assess physical & other injuries
2. Move the bike out of the way
3. Move them to a safe place when you can.

Bike set up

- Bike needs to fit you. Know your size. Two measures are important: reach (horizontal distance between stem and bottom bracket), length of the seat tube (length of legs when pedaling).
- Get on your bike. Extend your dropper post if you have it. Stand on the pedal with your heel. Your legs should be extended all the way, completely straight, so when they're in the normal position they are slightly bent.
- No rule for stem sizes, Gui likes a short stem because he likes wheelies.
- Dropper posts come in many sizes. 150 = lowest position to upper position there's a difference of 15 cm. Smaller = easier to manipulate the bike.

Suspension is complicated. It's important to set up correctly.

- Most are air suspensions now, not steel coils, so you need a shock pump (not a tire floor pump etc). High pressure low volume.
- Your sag = normal amount it goes down when you sit. Use your riding weight, water packs etc. In SoCal conditions, 25% of full compression. The valve lets air in and out

- Compression. He keeps the valve all the way open.
- Rebound how stiff if the suspension when it is coming back up. Close the valve a bit so it doesn't spring load you off the bars when you jump. Sit on your bike, drop from a curb, bike shouldn't rebound much. Compress and go up and that's all, if it oscillates when you need to fix it.

Other

If you are looking for some item and we don't have a sponsor in that area, message Liana (engie at usc dot edu) to check. Request specific companies or that she look into it and chances are she might be able to arrange something.

If you pay dues, you have discounts at our local stores. Even if you're not in the LA area, you can get discounts and shipping direct to you from Honeystinger, Fox, Race Face, Marzocchi, and Easton. We're discussing details with Northwave (shoes) and you can get a saddle from Union Sport as well (free if you're really active or racing).