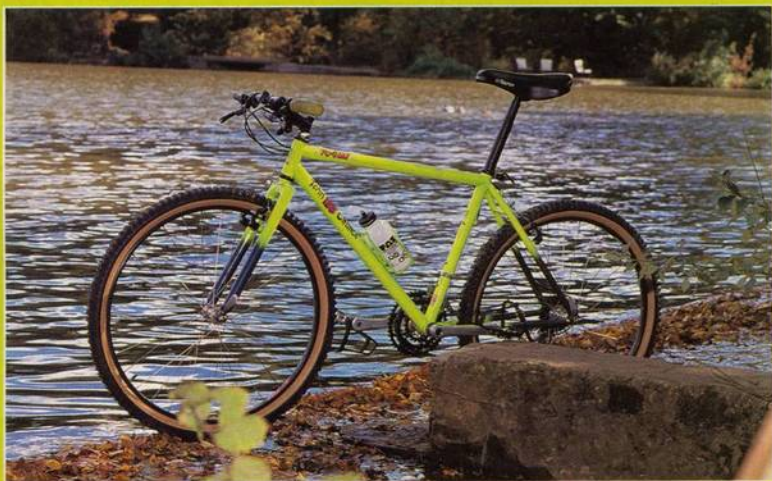


TEAM
FAT
CHANCE

Yo-Eddy



The graphics say fun, the adverts say fun - even the colour says fun.

When Neil Elmore took Fat Chance's Yo Eddy out to meet the mud, he found a bike designed for serious fun too.

Pics: Geoff Waugh

Elevated chainstay bikes may well have cornered the market in terms of radical appearance, and recent developments in suspension systems, both front and rear, offer a completely new set of parameters to riders looking for that 'something different'. Add to this a whole gamut of different frame materials and bonding processes, all of which offer ride characteristics all their own, and you'll realize just how far the basic structure (i.e. the frame) of the mountain bike has developed in recent years.

In the face of such stiff competition, any bike relying on the more standard diamond shaped layout and constructed in steel has to be a bit special if it's going to hold its own in a market constantly offering new alternatives.

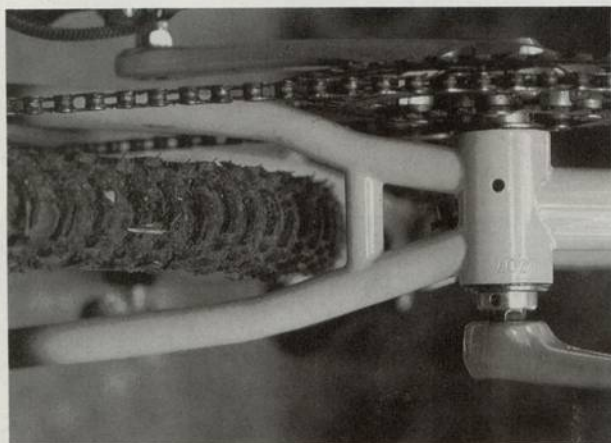
Chris Chance of Fat City Cycles seems to have it licked. Based on the east coast of America, Chance has carved out a strong reputation as a designer of straightforward, no-nonsense bikes with a high performance factor. His latest design, the Yo Eddy, puts a very tasty icing on an already succulent cake.

CHEWING THE FAT

Chris Chance works in close collaboration with Campagnolo and though the Eddys so far shown in America have come with the complete Centaur groupset including Bullet Shifters, for the purposes of this test, my Eddy had been beautifully set up with a Suntour XC Comp groupset and the new 986 Superlight cantilever brakes. The performance of the former has been well documented elsewhere and the performance of the latter deserves a test report in its own right (look out for it in a future issue of *Mountain Biker*). Suffice to say that if you bought a Yo Eddy and specced it with this set up you wouldn't be far off the mark.

The bike also came supplied with massive Specialized Ground Control Extreme tyres. With a huge 2.5" profile these are now the fattest tyres on the market and were included to demonstrate the fact that Fat Chance are designing to accommodate future developments. Any bike offering sufficient clearance around tyres of this immensity (and the Yo Eddy did) is impressive indeed and what I got when I

Yo Eddy



Sufficient tyre clearance + short stays = chain misalignment? Not so, on the Yo Eddy an 'S' bend in the right hand chainstay pulls the chain back on line providing powerful, direct drive from the pedals



The forks used on the test bike are the forerunner of the upcoming Fat Chance 'Tears of a Crown' forks. Why the pun on the old Smokey Robinson song? Because the fork blades will be ovalized - tear-shaped - at the crown. They will eventually include a rear gusset for maximum strength and weigh in at a very respectable 1lb 12 oz

▷ swapped the Extremes for 1.95s or even my Hardpack 2.25s was the kind of clearance you only see in dreams.

The frame itself is True Temper's latest lightweight oversize tubing, made to Fat Chance Specification and ranging in diameter from $3/4$ " (chainstays) to $1\ 1/2$ " (downtube). Utilising larger diameter thin walled tubing gives a larger weld area and therefore a more even distribution of stress at the joints resulting in the 'stiff' ride which is characteristic of steel frame bikes.

Double bottle bosses adorn the frame in standard down and seat tube positions, two triple slotted guides channel the cables mud-free along the chaining side of the top tube and a pulley wheel sits at the bottom rear of the seat tube for the front mech cable.

The frameset is supplied complete with a newly engineered beefy, butted straightblade fork (available separately) with Campag drop-outs and threaded brake mount posts, a great idea which allows complete replacement of the post in the event of damage. Instead of an expensive brazing job, a replacement can simply be screwed in. A bottom bracket featuring a push in cartridge that is compatible with the grease injection systems now available, also comes supplied.

The frame itself is finished in a durable bright 'Grelow' - a combination of green and yellow, geddit? On the test bike, this faded into dark blue at the bottom though I've heard that eventually the frames will be imported in four colours.

Graphics are superb and their cartoon feel reflects a Fat Chance marketing policy which puts the emphasis on FUN!

FAT CAN DANCE

As expected the bike's performance was flawless. Slightly more 'sporty' than the Wicked Fat Chance from which it has evolved, the Yo Eddy has shorter chainstays (a fraction under 17") and a longer sloping top tube (23"). These combine with a 41 1/2" wheelbase and a low flat stem to give a no holds barred all-action riding stance.

The handling characteristics are something to experience, the bike manages to feel both extremely stable and maneuverable. Weight is a significant factor here. John Matthews, importer of the Yo Eddy, told me that it weighed 26lbs. I smiled disbelievingly. I then took it round my mate's house who owns a set of sea-fishing scales. With the big tyres it weighed in at just under 26lbs. I couldn't believe it. With narrower tyres and some weight saving that could be made in a couple of other areas, you're looking at a steel framed bike with oversize tubing which weighs in at around 25lbs. That's up there with the best of 'em.

All of this adds up to a bike of extremely high performance which makes riding the quick technical stuff a doddle. A significant 'kink' in the right hand chainstay has alleviated the chain alignment problem that sometimes occurs when combining big rear-end clearance with short stays. This Fat Chance provides powerful direct drive from the pedalling action, and combined with the lack of lbs makes the bike extremely quick off the mark and an effortless cruiser.

Critics of Fat Chance often accuse their bikes of being overpriced. They're not overpriced, they're merely expensive in the same way that primo caviar or champagne is expensive. And every now and then you've just gotta treat yourself. The Fat Chance frameset will cost around £900 and we think it's as good as any steel framed bike we've ever had the pleasure to ride.

*Fat City Cycles and accessories are imported to Britain by Cadence Distribution, 91 Baldwin Rd, Kidderminster, Worcs DY10 2JD.
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