

# ROCKY MOUNTAIN BLIZZARD



## The ultimate all-around ride

During your next great riding trip up to British Columbia's ski destinations, stop by Rocky Mountain's headquarters in Delta and show off your dual-crown-fork-equipped, full-suspension ride. The Rocky crew will feign interest and uphold Canada's distinction as the land of the happy-go-lucky, but eventually they will chuckle over your new interest in the "free ride" movement. "Heck, we've been building these free ride bikes for 15 years," screams a bearded Rocky Mountain welder. "We were there first," he bellows. "Our free ride bikes rule on singletrack, dual-slaloms, vert slopes and, best of all, they can be competitively raced in cross-country. Try that with your overengineered, 32-pound, dual-suspension free ride bike."

That is the standard-issue introduction to the Rocky Mountain Blizzard.

### MY WAY ROCKY MOUNTAIN BLIZZARD HIGHLIGHTS

- We must warn you that we promised that burly welder that we would not use the term "free ride" in the presence of his handiwork.

"Please," he asked over the glow of his TIG torch, "refer to the Blizzard as a trail bike."

"Okay, boss," we agreed. "We'll tell them what a real trail bike is." So, without further adieu, this is what the Blizzard is all about:

**Steel frame:** Rocky Mountain wisely chose to build the Blizzard frame using Ritchey Logic chromoly. Steel is cool because it's relatively dentproof and provides—if ever overstressed—fair warning that a crack is developing. Every tube in

the frame features custom butts to reduce weight to a still-slightly-porky 4.4 pounds.

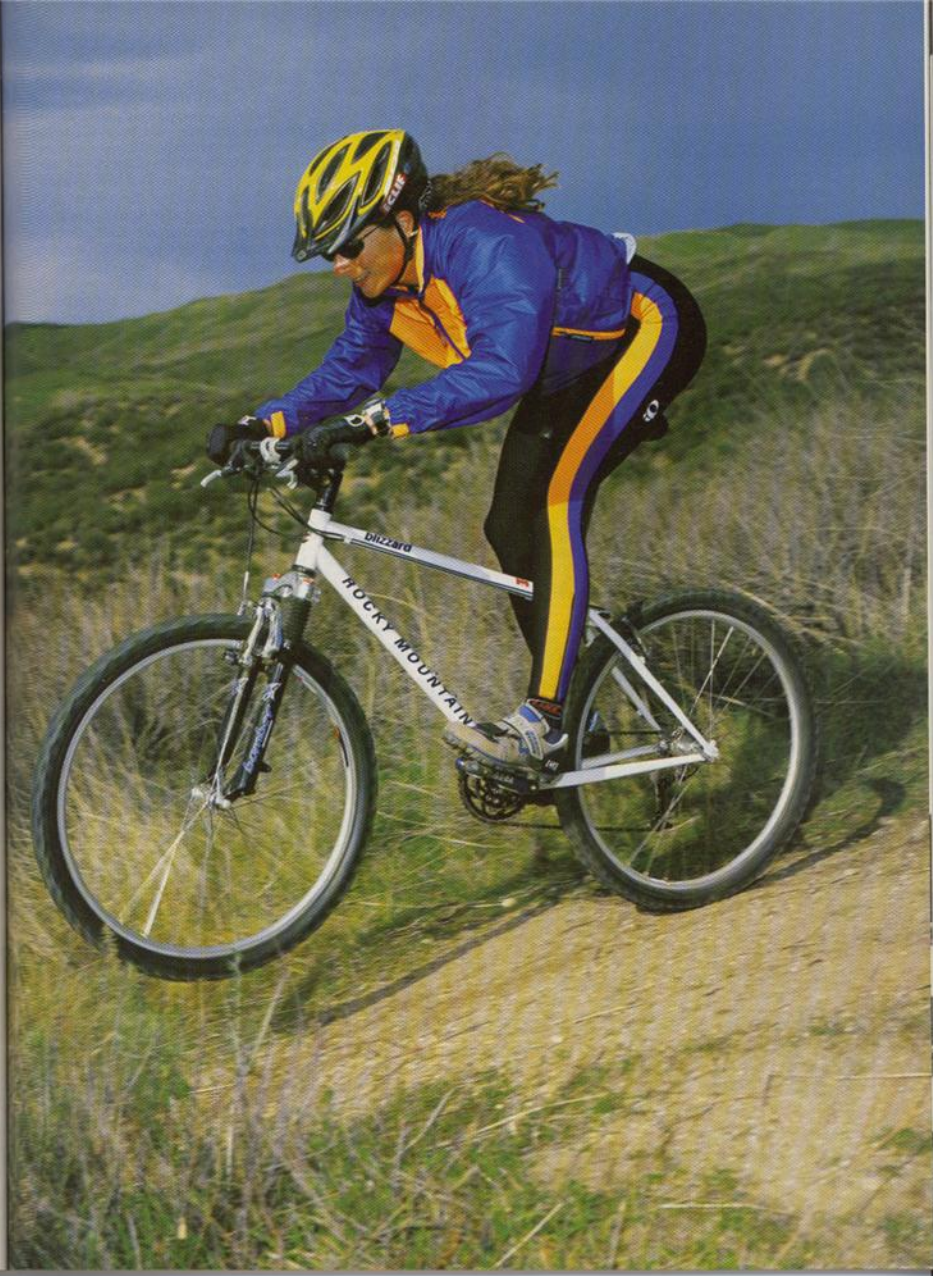
**Aesthetics:** The Blizzard is, naturally, white. Each Blizzard touts a signature seat tube emblem telling where in the line the frame was built and by whom. Ours reads frame number 97 of 708 and was signed by "pit-bull" John.

**Competition look:** Rocky Mountain chose to power the Blizzard with a compact Race Face LP crankset. The forged and machined arms drive 22/32/44 Race Rings. The rings are also machined from 7075 with shift ramps contoured on the inner surface of the big and middle rings.

**Warrior legs:** A coil-sprung Marzocchi Bomber Z.2 fork graces the front of the Blizzard. The regular Bomber uses cast alloy sliders and 30mm Easton stanchions, but not the same lightweight materials as the high-end BAM model. The right leg features an open oil-bath

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Down with heavy components: We could no longer wheelee the Blizzard as soon as we found out that the "light-weight" Marzocchi Z.2 still weighs an incredibly heavy 4.35 lb. Action is great, but that would be true if we mounted a motorcycle fork, too. ►



damping cartridge. Rebound is externally adjustable, and travel is 2.5 inches.

**Pilot's cockpit:** The Syncros bar exemplifies Easton's best taperwall technology. A Syncros TIG-alloy stem clamps the bar with a broad, 55mm grasp that negates stress risers associated with the bar leaving the stem of narrower, more conventional designs. Removing the bottom two 5mm bolts allows the clamp face to swing open for bar removal.

**Cool tires:** Rocky Mountain covered the Sun CR17A rims with two-inch, WTB 44/50 VelociRaptors. These are lightweight, full-knob tires that edge well on hardpack turns and hook up over loose soil. Tire weight is 580 grams. ●

### HARDTAIL RIDING THE BLIZZARD

● Rocky Mountain promotes the Blizzard as the ultimate do-everything ride. To test the truth of this assertion, we first took the snowy tempest on the slopes, then raced cross-country, hit a few training rides, grabbed a shovel and built a giant series of doubled rhythm sections to test its flying habits.

**Low standover height:** Blizzard

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# serfas

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"I love the way these hook up in the bends, but it's on fast corners where they really excel."

Mountain Bike Feb 1998, [www.mountainbike.com](http://www.mountainbike.com)

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Mountain Bike Action Feb 1998

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Soft	0000 0000 0000 000	0000 0000 000 000	0000 0000	0000
Mud	00 00 0000 0000	0000 0000 000 000	0000 0000	0000
Sand	000 000 0000 0000	0000 0000 000 000	0000 0000	0000
Powerful	0000 0000 00 00	0000 0000 000 000	0000 0000	0000

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**An ounce of prevention:** Joe, one of Rocky Mountain's frame builders, wisely chose to include a threaded, anti-suck boss below the stay. Run one because the thin makeup of the Logic tube can be easily ground through after repeated sucks. ▶

frames are measured to the top of the seat tube, and the radically sloped top tube on our 18.5-inch test frame featured an outstandingly low standover height of 29 inches. This makes the bike easy to straddle through perilous terrain and an absolute joy to flick over BMX jumps.

**Upright ride:** Somewhat of a Canadian tradition, the Blizzard positions the rider vertically and in an upright cycling position. It's a seating position that naturally shifts the rider up and forward, providing ultimate climbing power to the rear wheel.

**Nimble at the bars:** The upright stance and short feel centers the rider over the Blizzard and in the perfect spot to nimbly maneuver through serpentine singletrack. While the Rocky Mountain is whippier than the standard-issue, stretched-out, cross-country bike, it can't be blamed for cutting your race pace. Also, your back will feel much better at the finish.



**Steel is real:** It's sad that fewer and fewer builders are using commercial iron for their frames, because there is something about the feel of steel. It would be hard for Rocky Mountain to find a frame material that could provide the same degree of impact forgiveness, energetic power delivery and overall coolness as the Ritchey Logic tubest.

**The BAM-BAM:** The overweight Marzocchi 22 fork offers firm but linear compression that makes the most of its 2.5 inches of travel. High-class damping keeps the fork active over successive

hits. The fork felt laterally stiff and kept the wheel pointed in the intended direction under severe steering loads. The 22 is not light.

#### MBA RATING

Many of you might guffaw at Rocky Mountain's claim that the Blizzard is the ultimate trail bike—but it could be. At 25.5 pounds, the Blizzard is light enough to be a competitive cross-country racer, nimble enough to make a great play bike and durable enough to pass a severe downhill test—all of this without changing one thing on the bike! □

# MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

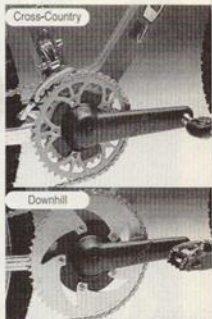
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