

Tim Davies'

Alpinestars

TI MEGA



Tim Davies tells JUSTIN LORETZ about his Ti Mega. Pics by PETER CANNING

Seventh place at the 1991 World XC Championships proved Welshman Tim Davies' ability to mix his mountain biking skills with the best in the world. His hectic 1992 schedule had him competing on his Alpinestars in BMBF, Grundig, NORBA and other events that have taken him as far afield as Singapore.

Frame

At a time when most mountain bikes look pretty much the same, the curved seat tube and ultra short (15.9in) elevated chainstays make Alpinestars stand out as producing something a little different, though 1993 models have switched to a straight seat tube.

Tim rides Alpinestars' flagship, the *Ti Mega*, fabricated in the US by Litespeed. "Because the back end is short, people assume the bike will climb brilliantly but be skittish on fast downhill. This really is a bit of a myth that is put about by people who can't build a good short rear end."

Fork

Tim has just taken delivery of a new Manitou 2 fork. "The elastomer system is far less complex to strip and service, and requires less maintenance and care than an air/oil fork. You can literally strip them down in the field if you have to. The ability to adjust and fine tune the preload on the new model gives the

rider far more control over the ride characteristics."

Gears

Tim uses a stock XTR gear system - 26/36/46 XTR chainrings on 175mm XTR crankarms, 12-32 standard XTR sprocket range, XTR Rapidfire Plus shifters, an XTR chain and XTR mechs.

"Once the gears have been set up I have to do very little to

keep them running smoothly. Keeping the bike as clean as possible is most important, but also correctly lubricating and checking the condition of the components regularly helps prevent rather than cure transmission problems. But it's expensive if you prang a component."

Wheels

Shimano XTR 32-hole hubs are



Tim Davies' bike looks a bit out of the ordinary. Oversized, elevated or curved, the *Ti Mega* has it all.



A complex CNC programme was required to lighten the Manitou fork.



The front end has a stout, no-nonsense feel which Tim likes.

laced using double butted WheelSmith stainless spokes to Mavic M231 rims.

"This wheel package is light as well as being highly dependable and strong. It is essentially the same combo that comes on the production bikes."

Ritehey WCS Z-Max 2.1 tyres provide the traction.

Pedals

SPD is the pedal choice for Tim. "Clipless pedals just make so much sense as you become part of the bike, and the double sided nature of SPDs makes them a natural choice for mountain biking. The extra comfort is a benefit in long races."

Brakes

Tim uses Shimano XTR levers and cantis, describing their stopping power as "awesome". He reckons the pads wear very quickly but they do provide more braking surface.

"The nice feature about the XTR units is the ease with which you can adjust them. They are very user friendly."

Bar and stem

An extremely long (160cm) Alpinestars 3Al/2.5V titanium stem holds a 20.5in wide Alpinestars *Mega Lite* 7005 aluminium bar. OnZa Porcupais pad the bar and Control Tech Team Issue bar ends provide extra hand holds. "The long, narrow shape of the steering controls is a personal thing and it fits me perfectly."

Saddle and post

Avocet's new titanium-railed Air 40R saddle cushions the ride and is attached to an XTR seatpin. "Titanium rails add to the comfort and subtract from the weight which can't be bad." **O**

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