

Tech Briefs

Device Powers Electronics with Wind and Sun

NEW YORK, NY—Do your customers ride their bikes to offset their carbon footprint? Then a product that allows them to charge their iPod, PDA, cell phone or camera while they ride using wind and solar power might sound appealing. Mini Wiz's HYmini is a hybrid device that includes a small internal 5-volt battery and a compact wind turbine (an external solar panel also can be hooked up). "Spend an hour at a breezy outdoor café with HYmini and you'll get enough power for two full hours of MP3 playtime. Ride your bike for an hour, with HYmini mounted on the handlebars, and you'll have enough power for over 50 digital photos or about 15 extra minutes on your cell phone," said Mona Finston, Mini Wiz's public relations manager. The internal battery can also be wall-charged, and it keeps its charge for two weeks. The base unit, available in a variety of colors, includes a multi-plug phone USB adapter, wall plug adapter and tabletop holder. It sells for \$50. Accessories, including a portable solar battery attachment, hardware for mounting the device to a bike or car, and an armband that securely holds HYmini for sports enthusiasts, are sold separately. For more information, see www.hymini.com.



Tranny Packs Easily into Suitcase for Travel

SCOTTS VALLEY, CA—It really rankles Ibis' Scot Nicol when he gets charged to fly with his bike while golfers fly free with clubs. So he was ecstatic when his company designed its new hardtail Tranny, which allows easy switching between geared and single-speed use, because the design also makes the bike packable in a large suitcase. "We didn't like the look of sliding dropouts and we were almost going to go with eccentrics when we hit upon the possibility of a sliding tail," Nicol said. A sliding joint just behind the bottom bracket, which is secured with a bolt, and a pivot point above the wishbone seatstay provide chain adjustment. "One day I wondered if by pulling out one of the pivot bolts it would be possible to fold the backend over the front triangle. Well, it works," Nicol said. Pulling the bolt from the sliding joint at the bottom bracket and the bolt from the seatstay wishbone breaks down the Tranny's rear triangle for travel. Rubberized paint reduces scratches from stuffing the Tranny in suitcases. And it still tips the scales at only 19 pounds, which suggests that the Tranny's extra features didn't add weight. A Tranny frame sells for \$1,400.

Off-Road Thudbuster Post Appeals to Roadies

FLETCHER, NC—Cane Creek developed its short-travel \$153 Thudbuster four years ago for dirt road tourists who spend long hours in the saddle on rough roads. But its design is appealing to road riders. "I think it was Magnus Bäckstedt and others training on them for Paris-Roubaix that really launched the market in Europe," said Josh Reddoch, marketing director at Cane Creek. "We have never really pushed the product to road riders, but demand is really taking off in the UK and Germany." Road riders have had access to telescoping suspension posts before. But Reddoch said the parallelogram Thudbuster design keeps the saddle-to-pedal distance constant—a big issue with road riders.

"I've used telescoping posts, and it's very easy to suck the saddle down when you are really pulling up on the pedals. But a Thudbuster rocks back around the bottom bracket so you don't get those inline problems," he said. A 27.2 by 301 millimeter long post weighs 389 grams, about 150 grams more than a road post. Reddoch said the post's boost in comfort means most people can move to a non-gel saddle, saving enough weight on the saddle swap to end up with a lighter seatpost-saddle package.

