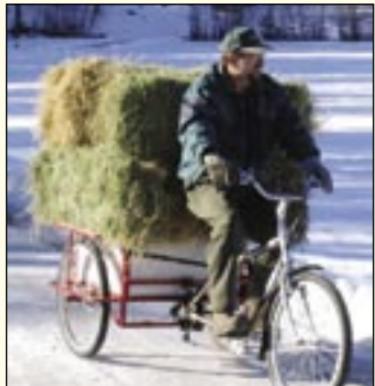


Tech Briefs

Extension Turns Mountain Bikes into Haulers



DARBY, MT—Lightfoot Cycles' Trike Cargo Extension adds a 500-pound capacity pickup bed to the back of any hardtail 26-inch mountain bike. The cargo rear end takes about a half-hour to attach and comes with disc brakes on both rear wheels. "Most of the trike extensions we have sold have gone to delivery companies, like a paper products delivery company in New York City," said Rod Miner, who co-founded Lightfoot Cycles with Martha Stomberg. The trike extension can be built to any width, though 42 inches is standard. It can be outfitted with optional two-wheel drive for extremely slippery or loose surface conditions. The extension accepts Lightfoot's electric or gas engine power-assist options. "It's just like having a pickup box behind your saddle. Throw tools, firewood or stack hay on its wide platform," Miner said. Trike extensions range from \$900 for a simple flatbed to \$1,600 for a pickup box with fender load extensions. The company is also selling a complete recumbent pickup version for \$3,500.

Bikesmith Design Re-Machines Cranks to Size

MINNEAPOLIS, MN—When retailers need help fitting a customer, they turn to Mark Stonich. He has funneled his interest in bicycle fit and his skill as a machinist into Bikesmith Design, a company that specializes in re-machining cranks to shorter lengths. Stonich offers cranks down to 90 millimeters long. "Most of my shorter cranks go to recumbent cyclists who find turning shorter cranks easier. And quite a few go to cyclists recovering from knee injuries," Stonich said. Cyclists who find it hard keeping up with the cadence of experienced captains like shorter cranks because they can spin faster. Single-speed mountain bikers find that shorter crank lengths keep them from spinning out their gear. Stonich estimates he's modified close to 700 cranks in the past five years. Most of Stonich's business is crank shortening, though he stocks complete cranksets in lengths from 90 to 153 millimeters based on Truvativ Isoflow cranks. The packages are priced from \$50 for arms to \$350 depending on ring choice. He has a list of the cranks he can adapt on his Web site, www.bikesmithdesign.com. Stonich also makes a crankset cotter remover that was highly popular last year.



Vibram Sticky Rubber Bites Wet Rocks, Pedals

CONCORD, MA—Vibram, the Italian outer sole company, has a new sole compound called IdroGrip, which brings the high grip of Vibram's climbing rubber into a compound moldable into lugs. "We make great climbing rubber compounds but they have to remain viscous enough to mold to a rock face. This low viscosity climbing rubber is great for its intended use but it is not moldable into lugs. IdroGrip combines our climbing technology with our lugged expertise," said Lawrence Anastasi, Vibram's national sales manager. The rubber caught the attention of Shimano, which integrated an IdroGrip sole



into its Enduro all-mountain platform shoes. The super sticky compound allows users to walk and even run safely on wet rocks, roots and matted grass.