


Intricate and highly finished, although tyre clearance is tight



The carbon flex stay removes the need for a seatstay pivot

THE SPEC



FRAME Tomac 6061 T6 alloy
SHOCK Fox RP23
DRIVETRAIN Shimano LX shifters and cassette, XT mechs and Truvativ Stylo crank
WHEELSET Ringle Disc Jockey with Kenda 2.3 Nevegal tyres
BRAKES Avid Juicy 5 185mm rotors
BAR/STEM FSA bar and stem
SEATPOST/ SADDLE FSA, WTB Rocket V

Photo: Russell Burton

FIRST RIDE!

Tomac Snyder 140 Two

- 5.5in rear travel
- Perfect trail bike geometry
- Great value for money

My goodness – has it really been over a year since we first heard the news that Tomac bikes were going to make a comeback into the international mountain bike market? As with the performances by the man John Tomac himself, our expectations have been running at sky-high levels over the last 12-plus months. So were we right to get so excited?

First out of the trap is the all-mountain 140mm (5.5in) travel Snyder. Set in its manufacturer's sights are the thousands of regular riders who are still looking for the elusive holy grail of modern mountain biking – the 'one bike' that can go uphill like a scalded cat, and down dale faster than an Aussie with bushy eyebrows. Can the Snyder hit the bullseye with its first shot?

The frame

The heart of every trail bike – the frame – is forced to walk a constant tightrope. On the one hand, it has to be burly enough to ward off the hard landings and full throttle rock garden attacks that the long suspension eggs you on to do. Yet at the same time the frame must be light enough that riders get the feeling they're gliding along the trails and up the climbs.

Joel Smith, the overseer of the Tomac range, has really nailed it here. The Snyder 140 Two comes with a 6061 T6 alloy frame that uses oversize thin-wall tubes, which have been worked and hydroformed to create a chassis that's both stiff and light. Smith has added carbon seatstays into the rear end to help drop weight and allow an amount of

flex, negating the need for a pivot at the dropout.

The Snyder is a single pivot bike which uses a swing link to drive the Fox RP23 rear air shock and isolate it from any lateral loading. In concept, this is similar to the excellent Yeti 575 rear end. Tyre clearance isn't huge at the chainstay bridge with the Kenda Nevegal 2.2in tyres fitted, however.

The detail

The Snyder is specced with a solid selection of parts that place trustworthiness over weight. FSA seatpost, bar and stem, Truvativ Stylo cranks and LX/XT transmission and full Ringle Disc Jockey wheels mean that the ride only ends when you get to the finish.

Of course, this conservative approach means that there's room to go nuts if you want to shed some weight, and we reckon we could easily shed a good 3lbs (1.36kg) on this spec without having to remortgage the house.

The ride

The proof of the pudding is always in the riding, and even a short blast on the Tomac Snyder will confirm that this is a real rider's bike.

The chassis is comfortably stretched and it rolls along keenly, yet true to its shaped-by-the-man-whose-name-it-bears nature, it lights up when ridden hard and aggressively, attacking the trail full bore both up and down.

It enjoys a crisp feel and feels lighter in its ride than its 13.15kg (29lb) weight would suggest. It also manages to walk the fine line between whipping along at XC speeds, slaloming through the singletrack and having the resonance and poise to be able to deal with drop-offs and balls-out downhill sessions. It does the lot.

THE ESSENTIALS

PRICE £2,199 complete, £1,159 frame only

CONTACT Stif www.stif.co.uk

WE SAY... A killer trail bike that's ready for any challenge you can throw its way