

2010 RideOn new product announcement conference

Text & Photos: Daphne Chen

Now in its third year, the RideOn new product announcement conference (for OE manufacturers) was held December 6-10, 2008 in Taichung. The 17 brands displaying new products consisted of Crankbrothers, Fizik, Fox, FSA (FSA, Gravity, Vision), Hayes Group (Hayes, Manitou, Sunringle, Wheel-smith, Answer), Hutchinson, Magura, Mavic, Vittoria (Vittoria, GEAX), and Gore RideOn. Participants at this event included numerous bicycle assembly plants in Taiwan and abroad, trading companies, and parts and accessories manufacturers.

Crankbrothers (CB), which introduced unique eggbeater pedals eight years ago, rolled out a titanium version weighing only 167 grams, and also offered the modestly-priced NT\$500 Smarty OE pedals and Mallet and 5050 pedals for DH and FR applications. In addition, CB further introduced a 15 mm axle wheelset with no spoke holes, an adjustable height seat post, and a light-weight quick release.

In order to achieve the lightest possible weight, Fizik has introduced saddle rails made from the exclusive alloy "K:ium," which is 8% lighter than titanium. According to brand manager



▲General Manager Douglas Chiang of Tien Hsin introduces FSA's newest products.

Nicola Rosin, after the company introduced its top-end "Aliante" and "Arione" road bike saddles, it also developed the third Grade A ultra-light saddle Antares, which combines the advantages of the two other saddles and weighs a mere 145 grams. Fizik, which has enjoyed annual sales of 12 million euros, manufactures 99% of its products in Italy. Sales grew by 20% in 2008 compared with the previous year. Fizik's largest market is the US (25%), followed by Japan (10%).

Fox introduced a suspension fork for bikes with 29" wheels, the new 40 DH front fork, the QR 15 quick release axle, and, most importantly, its 'FiT' shock absorber technology. FiT provides a better compression platform: Oil is contained in the inner cylinder, the oil



▲Fizik Brand Manager Nicola Rosin noted that many more OE manufacturers attended the RideOn new product event this year.



▲Fizik's brand-new Antares saddle.

cartridge is lighter, and the overall shock is even cleaner. Also, rear FiT shocks use brand-new 'BoostValve' valve technology to keep the shock weight to a minimum.

FSA's many new products built on the company's compact design concept, and it introduced products designed specifically for cyclocross bikes, including brakes and headsets. FSA is busy building a new plant in Taiwan's Wufong Industrial Area, that it expects to be completed in June 2009.

The Hayes Bicycle Group boasts five major brands: Hayes, Manitou, Sunringle, Wheel-smith,



▲ Fox Europe GM Christoph Ritzler-Dillier expressed that Fox's sales were up 30% in 2008 compared with the year before.



▲ The Hayes Group's OE Sales Manager Mark Hillam is fluent in Chinese.



▲ Mavic's OE GM Christian Baldessin expressed that his company's sales were flat this year, and also noted that the OE market accounted for 33% of sales, with the aftermarket accounting for the remaining 67%.



▲ Fox's newest quick release axle can be taken apart and assembled easily without tools.

and Answer. Manitou introduced the novel 'MILO' (Manitou Integrated Lockout) integrated lockout technology; Hayes' 'Stroker' is lighter than its predecessor and also offers more color choices; all Wheelsmith products are manufactured in the US from materials from Japan, and are mainly intended for the aftermarket; Answer plans to introduce new products in 2009 after redesigning its product line.

Hutchinson's newly-introduced 'Atom' tubeless tires for road bikes boast light weight and excellent safety and performance. Its 'Cobra' MTB tires offer superb tracking and outstanding traction.

Magura's newest masterworks include the 'Marta SL' ultra-light magnesium hydraulic disc brake, which weighs only 295 g, and the 'MD100SL' ultra-light XC competition-grade suspension fork, which employs a 'smart' fixed compression damping module. In addition, Magura also introduced an e-bike control system (with an integrated hydraulic valve) meeting the EU's new EN 15194 safety standards.

According to Mavic OE GM Christian Baldessin, Mavic has introduced a new wheelset specifically tailored to 15 mm quick release axle specifications. To meet the needs of riders who aren't used to clipless pedals but want clipless functions, Mavic now offers the patented 'EZ Ride' pedal system. EZ Ride pedals use powerful magnets, and are easy to engage and disengage; they must be used together with Mavic's specially-designed shoes, however.

Gore introduced two types of low-friction cable systems under its 'RideOn' brand. These cable products can provide the

advantages of low-friction cable on ordinary bicycles, and are used with SRAM's Red shifters. Gore also offered a sealed low-friction cable specially designed for harsh environments.

Vittoria introduced its brand-new 'Nylon 150TPI' tires, which offer a wider range of color options, as well as its most up-to-date 'E-Rando' e-bike tires. Vittoria's novel 'Corsa EVO Tech' technology offers a removable valve for even easier filling.

After its first three years, the RideOn activity has started attracting a very enthusiastic response from the industry, and attendance was up dramatically this year. RideOn and another new product announcement meeting for other brands held at the same time at the Landis Hotel were the headline events of Taichung Bike Week. Taichung Bike Week has attracted favorable notice from the Taichung City Government, which will provide more assistance in 2009.

