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APRIL 5, 2011

Bikes to Like: Titanium One-Off

Whenever I ride my bike, I try to:

1. follow of the rules of the road;
2. take a panda photo; and
3. keep an eye out for bikes that interest me.

Sometimes all three of these things happen, and sometimes only one of them does. However, one morning commute after taking my regular panda shot I came across a rider on an eye-catching steed. I liked it so much I stopped to talk with him about it. Check this bike out.



(<https://chasingmailboxes.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/dsc00557.jpg>)

Paul's One-Off

Because of the wheel size and general frame shape, I initially thought the bike was a Moulton (<http://www.moultonbicycles.co.uk/>), a bike rarely seen in Washington, D.C. (unless I'm missing something). Paul, the owner, informed me that it was not a Moulton, but a One-Off.

Until this day, I had never seen or heard of One-Off. Paul informed me that his custom One-Off was made by Mike Augspurger, who is also one of the founders of Merlin Bicycles. Augspurger left Merlin and started One-Off (<http://www.oneoffhandcycle.com/>) in 1989. A little on-line research revealed that One-Off now focuses on making custom off-road titanium handcycles.

Here's another shot of Paul's bike. The chainrings are gigantic! I think the big ring is an 82. I love how the small wheels allow for the giant chainring look. It makes you look extra tough! And are those Paul brakes? I'm not a full-on gearhead so I am not sure. Sorry if I got your hopes up and I'm wrong.



(<https://chasingmailboxes.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/dsc00553.jpg>)

Another look at the One-Off

I was so happy to see this bike, and that Paul was kind enough to take some time to chat with me. One-

Off has an interesting story and a unique product. Learning about it made for a fulfilling commute.

1. Rules of the road followed? Check.
2. Panda photo taken? Check.
3. Interesting bike sighting? CHECK!!

📁 BIKES TO LIKE 📁 ONE-OFF

📌 MERLIN 📌 ONE-OFF

12 comments

1. **Geof Gee** says:

APRIL 6, 2011 AT 1:05 PM

Interesting ... thanks for sharing.

Originally, I thought that the chain ring could not be that big from comparing it to the front derailleur and that the small wheels with 50.4 BCD spider would distort our estimate. But then again, the front derailleur could be custom and I see the "82" imprinted on the chainring. So I guess that is as good of a guess as any.

Mind you, that is a wickedly high gearing ... $82/11 \sim 7.5 * 20" = 150"$!!!!!!!!

REPLY

- **MG** says:

APRIL 13, 2011 AT 10:32 PM

Geof, you have incredibly good eyesight to have noted the 82. !!

REPLY

2. **Pierre le Grand** says:

APRIL 11, 2011 AT 5:04 PM

It reminds me of Jose Meiffret bike which was mounted in 130x15 . This bike was used to set a record for riding while drafting a motorized vehicle: 204,778 km/h .

For a picture of the bike, see <http://usrehoncycolo.wifeo.com/ils-ont-laisse-leur-empreinte.php> .

REPLY

- **Pierre le Grand** says:

APRIL 11, 2011 AT 5:07 PM

For the US, I should have written 204.778 km/h . This is a difference between USA and Canada.

REPLY

- **MG** says:

APRIL 13, 2011 AT 10:33 PM

WOW, that is huge!!! Cool, thank you for the link.

REPLY

3. **Mark** says:

JUNE 7, 2014 AT 7:56 AM

You don't see many One Off bikes, each one is true to its name, a unique creation. I am fortunate to have a One Off titanium road bike that I purchased from the original owner in St. Louis MO. It is the pride of my fleet! Pictures (sorry, no panda...) <https://onedrive.live.com/?cid=C52959B56673790E&id=C52959B56673790E%213550>

REPLY

o **MG** says:

JUNE 9, 2014 AT 4:36 PM

It's beautiful!

REPLY

o **MG** says:

JUNE 9, 2014 AT 4:39 PM

Also, the integrated rack = wow!

REPLY

o **mark** says:

JUNE 9, 2014 AT 9:57 PM

Not to mention the Ti water bottle cages. 😊

4. **Nakre** says:

JULY 26, 2014 AT 2:07 PM

Those are vintage Scott / Mathauser road brakes (from the 80'ies). Very cool bike, thanks for sharing.

REPLY

5. **ericpmoss** says:

JUNE 28, 2015 AT 3:49 PM

That's the twin of the bike I commissioned after seeing a Moulton Speed that was used by Dave Bogdan in the 1988 RAAM (<http://www.dorotheum.com/blog/bicycles-from-the-embacher-collection/>). I thought, "What could be cooler than that, except for one in titanium?". Moulton wasn't interested ("What's with you Americans and exotic alloys?"), but Mike Augspurger, who had an ad in the back of the same Bicycle Guide where the Speed was featured, was. A couple years and all my savings later, there was the suspended space frame and fairing. IIRC, there was another customer of his who wanted one, or something similar, but Moulton wouldn't allow a second "prototype", so that one was unsuspended. I think it's just as cool as mine was. I had to sell mine back in 2008, and it just sold at auction for 30,000 euros. Ah, the rich get richer. 😊

REPLY

6. **Moulton Bikes** says:

JUNE 28, 2015 AT 6:00 PM

[...] Somehow I missed this thread the first time around. I refurbished a 1965 F-frame Moulton into a single speed, and had a One-Off titanium prototype made (Bicycles from the Embacher Collection | Dorotheum Blog). The prototype was modeled on a Speed (?) owned by Chris Igleheart, and/or the Speed used by Dave Bogdan in RAAM 1988. The F-frame was a ton of fun, but had problems with the rear fork cracking due to under-spec'd steel and thickness. Not so great going up hills due to

suspension bob up front (rear was fine), but a joy downhill and on crappy pavement such as cobblestones. Very stable and could turn crazy-sharp corners. I'd love one as a town/towpath/rails-to-trails bike if it were made with up-to-date steel or CF. The low center of gravity was a joy wrt to lightness of handling at the same time as it felt stable. The racks that were part of the suspended frame were great for carrying, as loads on them didn't affect steering at all. The prototype, closest to a pre-NewSeries Speed, accelerated very quickly, was great in corners, awesome downhill, great on cobbles even if the tires were pumped to max rating, and very comfy. Not great on uphills, and sprinting was a no-go, again due to the front suspension bobbing. This characteristic was euphemistically described as "rewarding to the smooth pedaler" rather than as "destroyer of mashers". It was also hard to get the gearing right, as chainrings topped out at 62T for anything affordable, and small cogs were expensive and heavy and not Hyperglide smooth. I've seen a NewSeries in person but haven't ridden one. The owner told me the suspension was head and shoulders above the old style leading link style of the Speeds. It can be soft-locked out with a lever reachable while riding, and even if not locked out, doesn't dive nearly as much as a hard front-braking on the Speed would do. The rear is also better, with the BB as part of the rear triangle rather than the front triangle, and the suspension involving rubber, fluid and tunable-pressure air. While a bit inconvenient, one can quickly lock out the front and bang it up a hill. If I had the \$\$(\$\$\$\$) again, I'd get the new Double Pylon Moulton, or if licensing weren't an issue, get the NewSeries suspension parts and commission a carbon fiber NS/F-frame hybrid — NS fork, carbon fiber F-frame main/seat tube, carbon fiber NS rear triangle/BB. BTW, here's the unsuspended twin of the prototype built for me. It's cooler than what I got in some ways: [Bikes to Like: Titanium One-Off | chasing mailboxes](#) [...]

REPLY

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