RACING BICYCLES
100 YEARS OF STEEL

DAVID RAPLEY

Photography by Susie Latham
Le vainqueur du Tourmalet, le Luxembourgeois Diderich, a gravé les pentes des Pyrénées, la volonté tendue pour s'imposer, et n'a pas eu le loisir de contempler le cadre impressionnant qui dominait : la vallée majestueuse et verdoyante et le ruban sinuex et argenté du genre au particular aux beaux paysages des Pyrénées.
The Cycles of Cycling

Like everything in life, the popularity of cycling as a mode of transport or social leisure activity, moves in cycles. Initially it belonged to the domain of the wealthy, but eventually it became apparent that this plaything offered a simple and efficient way of travelling for the general population – if it could be made in sufficient quantities and cheaply enough. The industrial revolution perfected mass production and in the late 1800s it applied to the bicycle in dramatic fashion. Now the working class could travel easily beyond walking distance, far more economically and conveniently than by horse, and with a freedom of direction not offered by the railroad track. Most importantly it was probably the first time women could have independent means of personal transport. It has been said that the bicycle had more effect on the liberation of women than anything else.

By the 1930s, with the increase of personal wealth and the development of motorised transport, the car gradually eroded the bicycle’s popularity as the primary means of transport. However, it would take another 30 years before the working class completely abandoned the bicycle for the car. As the bicycle slowly diminished in terms of consumer appeal, so did the fashion for using it at all, judging by the Australian experience. During the mid-1960s, the majority of the adult population had virtually given up cycling. Children still rode to school and used them until they were old enough to drive a car. This decline was delayed in countries with shorter travelling distances and better public transport systems, but to a greater or lesser extent it happened in Europe and North America.

The big manufacturers, not wishing to lose their market, fought back. For example, Peugeot introduced a new range under the slogan of ‘The Freedom Machine’ in 1970, attempting to lure the young and active back into cycling. In Australia, as in other countries, they successfully worked to establish and revive their market. The company assembled knocked down bikes in their own Melbourne factory and sought out a new network of dealerships. At this time Australia still had a traditional small bike shop in every town and suburb, struggling to survive and serving principally the teenage and children’s market. Some shops were still making their own frames but mostly were assembling bikes from bought-in parts, augmented with cheap, fully assembled Asian import models.
Bullock

Owner: Cliff Mitchell

Bullock was a Champion bicycle before WWI and having been acquired by Taylor's Cycle Merchants it was well placed to start this business and to behold with considerable success and becoming a signature South Australian make both in volume and quality. The racing Brembo model was extremely popular and Bullock, with their extensive pipeline and experience, manufactured the frameless US Sport Champion. William Smith and Fonso Avice wrote to Frank Berry's account on America where they saw the Bullock Australia.

1912

Ixion

Owner: Warren Meehan

A rare surviving plant and trade record from the early period of racing bicycles, there were many of the original geometry but this bike had been chosen as racing day. Pedals are wood parts from the post 1908 US catalogues. Ixion used a front brake on the fork and through the factory, a better wheelbase. The bike had a drop bar and Kickstands are the same west of the PRA image designed to place p Block and copyright and allow the rider to take further over the machine is not used. The brake and kickstand are also with much of the original parts minus a gear in a different style of what a truck box at the period really look like.

Endings bike demonstrates the value of following leads. The owner's name is on the rear of the seat stays, a "Taylor" rear shrouds on the "V" frame with the side "V" frame with the seat stays and the kickstand.
Roosmore

Owner: Addio Zevenbergen

Hugh Ros, who had been building his Rosmore bikes in Geelong, Victoria since 1935, provided his 1923 model, a long and lightweight one. It was in his time, a great product of Melbourne engineering. In 1937, at Goolwa, South Australia, this bike was entered in various competitions, where it showed off the bike's speed and efficiency. This bike was ridden by the rider, who won the event. The bike was eventually sold to a customer in Melbourne, including the registration fee.

The high point came in December 1937 when he made the famous Hubert Opperman a challenge at the Geelong Show. This was the start of a fruitful period, where many great events took place, and the bike was marketed. It was named the Hubert, and the same maker, the firm, the New South Wales Champion, gave the bike a new identity, Hubert Opperman, the Victorian Champion for 1937.

This bike was the one which was recognized as the bike, which won many races, and it was also used by the famous cyclist, Elton, who rode it and won several races.

This Rosmore is in excellent condition and features the original 1937 model mark and a new service station sticker. The bike was sold to a customer in Melbourne, where it was used by a famous cyclist.
**Russell Mockridge**

During the 1955 season, Russell Mockridge was recognised in Europe as a world class sprint bicycle. He had become the best known and loved style rider in the world, and in only a few years, he was able to overtake the professional limit of 70 mph, and with the help of his team, he was able to finish the Tour de France, winning the points classification and the Tour de France since 1951.

With fellow Australian John Bleay, Russell scored a place in the renowned Tour de France team for 1956. The Tour de France was the premier event of the season, each year drawing thousands of time-trialists in search of an Australian rider to be the first to finish the Tour de France, winning the points classification and the Tour de France since 1951.

At the end of the Giro d'Italia, the Tour de France was 4th in place. Russell finished 10th and two minutes out of the time, and the leading group in the Tour de France. Russell was able to set his sights on the Tour de France, but he was also aware of the time trialists. Steve's retiring problems caused the rider to retire, and Russell is seen riding at the Tour de France, finishing 10th in place. The Tour was won by a time trial, with Russell finishing 10th, leading the group of the best classified riders.

**Frejus/Hillman**

Owner: David Reay

Frejus/Hillman was a bike made by Frejus, where the famous rider was sponsored. He was able to compete with the best riders in the world. The Frejus/Hillman was a bike made specifically for Frejus, and it was the best bike made by Frejus. The bike was able to compete with the best riders in the world, and it was the best bike made by Frejus.
**Bianchi**

Owner: Peter Hempenstall

Bianchi supplied frames for their own and other notable teams from a separate department known as Commissario Magistrali. This was off to a great start in a frame made for the 1979 World Championship. Apparently the frame was built for a rider who had dislocated his shoulder during the Tour de France and did not take delivery of the order. It was instead made and restored there — only one was left and by some miracle the right frame for the right rider was there.

When the Bianchi arrived it was to be painted and delivered and it was fitted with the best of every last part, except for the handlebar; it was added in the 1980s. The frame to Virenque held a similar weight at 1.5 kilograms for the following year's team in the same year. It only ever been used — one was used for training, and a slightly more conditioned one, a factory bike came more or less ready to go. It doesn't get much better than that and a corner at the Tour.

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**Baum Cycles**

Owner: Darren Baum

Judging by the number of orders coming through the main Baum factory in Sunshine, Victoria, in early 2012, there is a steady growth in the number of customers who order custom frames, and there is a clear benefit in the quality and personal touch of a custom frame. The company has a reputation for high-quality, personalized service, and their clients are often satisfied customers who return for future orders.

Baum offers a range of custom frames, each tailored to the individual customer’s needs and preferences. They take a hands-on approach to the design and construction process, ensuring that each frame is made to the highest standards. Customers can choose from a variety of frame designs, including road, mountain, and hybrid bikes, and they work closely with each customer to create a frame that meets their specific requirements.

Apart from the production of custom frames, Baum is also involved in the design and development of new bike models. They are constantly looking for ways to improve the performance and style of their bikes, and they work closely with their customers to ensure that each model meets their needs. Baum’s commitment to quality and customer service is what sets them apart from other bike manufacturers, and they are proud to offer a range of products that are designed to meet the needs of every rider, from the casual cyclist to the competitive athlete.

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*Image of a frame made by Baum Cycles*
Racing Bicycles: 100 Years of Steel
by David Rapley

*Racing Bicycles: 100 Years of Steel* depicts racing bikes from the turn of the 20th century to the modern era, and features spectacular photography of racing machines from the Tour de France, the Olympics and World Championships, as well as bikes for everyday use.

The breathtaking new compilation gathers a hand-picked selection of bicycles from Europe and Australia, and documents developments in technology and style over the past century. Racing bikes integrate form and function and the results are often surprisingly elegant, as well as practical, whether for cycling in competition or for pleasure.

The racing bikes contained in this book range from unused models to well-ridden but lovingly restored machines – from early 20th-century models made entirely from steel to the latest in carbon-fibre and titanium technology.

Features leading brands from the past hundred years, including:

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