



THE MOUNTAIN BIKE FORUM

# DIRTRAG

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**MOUNTAIN BIKE REDEMPTION:**  
TWO TRUE STORIES OF SECOND CHANCES



ISSUE 157 \$4.95



KEEP ON RACKIN' UNTIL 8.8.11  
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## SPECIALIZED MOTODIVA SHOES

The \$150 Motodiva is an upper-midrange women's shoe that compares to the men's Comp model. I've ridden on a similar pair of Specialized men's shoes for six years or so and they've held up great; these fit so much better, and have some improvements to boot (no pun intended). The heel cup is narrower, the toe box has less volume, and the straps are narrower as well, resulting in that coveted glove-like fit. Having three straps was nice for adjusting the fit for different situations. Specialized has been using their Body Geometry shoe structure and insole for some years now, and they do make a difference—the metatarsal “button” (raised area just under and behind the ball of the foot) prevents hotspots for me as advertised, and the arch support is plenty. Specialized also offers insoles with more support and add-on shims to adjust the side-to-side tilt of your feet.

The nylon composite sole is quite stiff and has enough aggressive, not-too-hard treads to get around. Optional spikes for nasty days are included. The replaceable, ratcheting buckle works reliably in mud and grit, which I really appreciate, after struggling to get my old shoes off after a muddy ride. The synthetic leather upper's mesh patches provide a pleasant amount of air circulation.

These are great shoes for the money, and it's nice that Specialized offers a range of four mountain bike models for women. Lifetime warranty against manufacturers defects. Made in China.

[www.specialized.com](http://www.specialized.com) —Karen Brooks



## LOADED PRECISION COMPONENTS

When the orange Ventura needed a cockpit, Loaded Precision came through with an offer of a seatpost, stem and handlebar. What color goes with orange? How about a nice anodized green? OK, not a combo for everyone, but black and silver can get boring.

All Loaded Precision components are available in seven colors to match (or clash) your preferred colorway. Black, gray, silver, gold, red, green, or blue should keep just about anyone happy, save for those idiots trying to bring back '90s purple. Leave that crap in the dustbin with 150mm stems and elastomer forks.

First up, the AmXc bars. Am for all mountain, Xc for cross country, this 299g bar is a good fit for modern day trail and all mountain rides. The AmXc has 8° of back sweep, 4° of upsweep, is 710mm wide and has 25mm of rise—all great middle of the road (or should I say trail) numbers. I had no complaints about the ergonomics. Plenty stiff too, something I really like in a handlebar.

The stem and seat post are from Loaded's Xlite line-up of XC compo-

nents. All of Loaded's aluminum stems and seatposts are near net forged and finished via CNC machining, combining the strength of forging with precision of machining.

The stem is a super light 110g with carbon faceplate—lighter than a full carbon stem sitting around the office—and can drop to 99g grams with a Ti bolt upgrade. Four lengths are available 90, 100, 110 (tested), 120 all with a 5° rise.

The seatpost is probably my favorite of the set. 400mm long, no offset and the head is forged as part of the post, no welds or bonding. It even includes oversize M6 Ti bolts. The lower clamp supports the seat rails for a full 35mm to help prevent the bends. Available in 27.2mm, 30.9mm and 31.6mm diameters.

Any one of these fine components will set you back \$80, not shabby at all. One-year warranty. Made in Taiwan. [www.loadedusa.com](http://www.loadedusa.com)  
—Eric McKeegan