

Trials Tales



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Tales of the Seatless

“Hey mate, your bike hasn’t a seat!” *Yes, my bike doesn’t have a seat. “What’s happened to it?”*

I’ve been in this trials caper for five years or so and if I had a dollar for every time someone has asked what has happened to the seat? Well, you know, I’d be in gravy.

OK fair enough, if looking upon a trials bike as an outsider, they are more than a little strange looking. Skeletal comes to mind, really only an engine with wheels. A banana bike, I’ve heard them called. Perhaps somewhat like a greyhound is to the dog world: slender, gangly and even frail looking?

And then there’s the seat or the lack of it.

At first my replies as to the whereabouts of the seat were pretty lame. *Seats are for sissies. * Only real men stand on the pegs. * It’s a newly developed prototype invisible seat. * My greyhound ate it.*

My second attempts at explaining away the seat tended to regale the innocent questioner with the technical reasons and history of the disappearing seat. *In the 90’s manufacturers painted the seat on as a token, before dispensing with the seat altogether, then the full advantage of seatlessness allowed a higher level of technical difficulty and quite likely instituted the whole indoor trials movement, or somesuch.* Of course in this case the questioner is either fast asleep or contemplating suicide midway through my tirade.

I have tried totally ignoring question about my indiscernible seat, but it is a question or in some cases, a gibe, that is hard to be oblivious to.

Lately, I have come to embrace my imperceptible seat and spend much time sitting on my cold hard fender. From this unpadded position I take up the challenge of finding witty responses to the questions that must inexorably come my way.

“Mate, where has the seat gone?” *It has gone to London to visit the Queen. * Gone, gone... oh my, can you help me find it? * Gone...again? They warned me that this would happen. I turn my back on that thing for a minute and off it goes.*

“Hey, there’s no seat on that thing!” *Haven’t you heard of the global economic crisis, which has hit the neoprene and foam rubber manufacturers especially hard? * Yes, that’s what you get when you upset the bike dealer. He said I could have a seat when I deserve it. * New science has emerged to say that long periods of seat-plastic contact cause cancer of the buttocks. * I am reducing my carbon footprint by limiting the use of high-energy consumption items such as vinyl.*

“It looks funny without a seat.” *Yes, but as an eccentric, I am quite used to embodying the oddball in society. Funny looking is my creed. * Funny? I never noticed. I wonder what a bike would look like with a seat? * Haven’t you heard? Not having a seat is the new black.*

“Isn’t that uncomfortable without a seat.” *Yes, but as a committed sadomasochist I love it. Sometimes I put little pointy things under my backside to make things really exciting. * Uncomfortable? Why, yes it is. Want to see my bruises? * And my all time favorite: *Why do you think I’m standing all the time? Dub.**

Let’s be honest here: our funny looking bikes are being noticed. We love to get people ask the questions however inane. We love the fact that our bikes, seatless as they may be, are standing out from the crowd. So next time you get asked that inevitable question about the undetectable seat, smile and take up the challenge of a quick and humorous reply. I look forward to hearing some of your better ones.