

SMOOTH DH

The silky smooth F4 is nothing short of purebred, top-shelf DH engineering.

▶ CHUMBA RACING F4

Price \$4250 (frame), complete from \$8030 **Contact:** Plush Rides, www.plushrides.com.au
Intended use



From humble beginnings in a Californian garage, Chumba Racing grew to be the force behind some of the fastest racers in DH history. The F4 is truly indicative of Chumba's heritage – it is a balls to the wall downhill racer.

RIDE

8.5" of travel through a Fox DHX 5.0 is always going to be smooth, but this bike achieves another level. Over small and medium-size hits momentum is maintained and it allows you to pump swiftly through choppy terrain. The rising rate linkage made things a little spiky on big hits at first, but once we spent some time getting the shock dialed, with plenty of sag and a nice soft compression stroke, the frame came alive. With this linear shock setup, the linkage driven suspension gives a bottomless feel the whole way through the stroke. The DHX 5.0 shock is a good 'un too – the pro-pedal lets you firm up the ride with a quick dial tweak. The head angle (65°) feels a little steeper than other bikes, but helps carve the sharper corners and boost front wheel grip. On the flipside it requires you to get your weight right back in the gnarly stuff. You also need to set your fork up to avoid the front-end diving under brakes. Front to rear balance in corners is exceptional and it has great small bump suspension response. Its stable and predictable due to a super-low bottom bracket. The F4's rear floating brake ensures good suspension action under brakes in rough terrain, but flex and vibration in this setup evokes some brake howl, which is off-putting.

FRAME AND BUILD

The F4 places the rider smack in the middle of the bike with its short front-end and steepish 65° head angle. Lateral stiffness plays a big part in cornering confidence and the beautiful swingarm (which houses two monster bearings) keeps this bike tracking straight and true. Oddly, Chumba hasn't used a replace-

able derailleur hanger.

RockShox Boxxer Team forks give the bike a relaxed upright feel, but may be too cruisy for some downhillers who will opt for a lower bar height. The intricacies of the machining and the number and quality of welds demonstrate a serious dedication to top-grade work.

SPEC

This bike is nicely specced from the Boxxer Team fork to the Sun MTX rims and Hadley hubs. This build kit is one you could race a couple of seasons with and never have to worry about a thing.

VERDICT

The F4 offers a silky smooth and controlled ride and can attack corners and carry momentum like few other frames out there. It may be a tad soggy in the pedalling department but you'll more than make up the time in the corners and over rocky ground. Racer-heads will love it.

QUICK SPECS

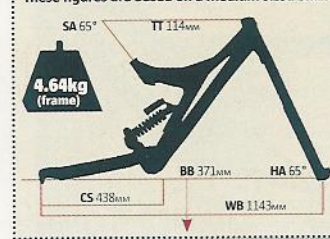
- Frame:** 6061 Aluminium
- Fork:** RockShox Boxxer Team
- Brakes:** Avid Juicy 7
- Bar/Stem:** Easton EA 70 DH
- Cranks:** Truvativ Holzfeller
- Rear Derailleur:** Shimano XT
- Shock:** Fox DHX 5.0
- Wheels:** Sun MTX, Hadley hubs
- Tyres:** Maxxis Minion

AT A GLANCE

- Handling** ★★★★★
- Build Quality** ★★★★★
- Pedal Efficiency** ★★★

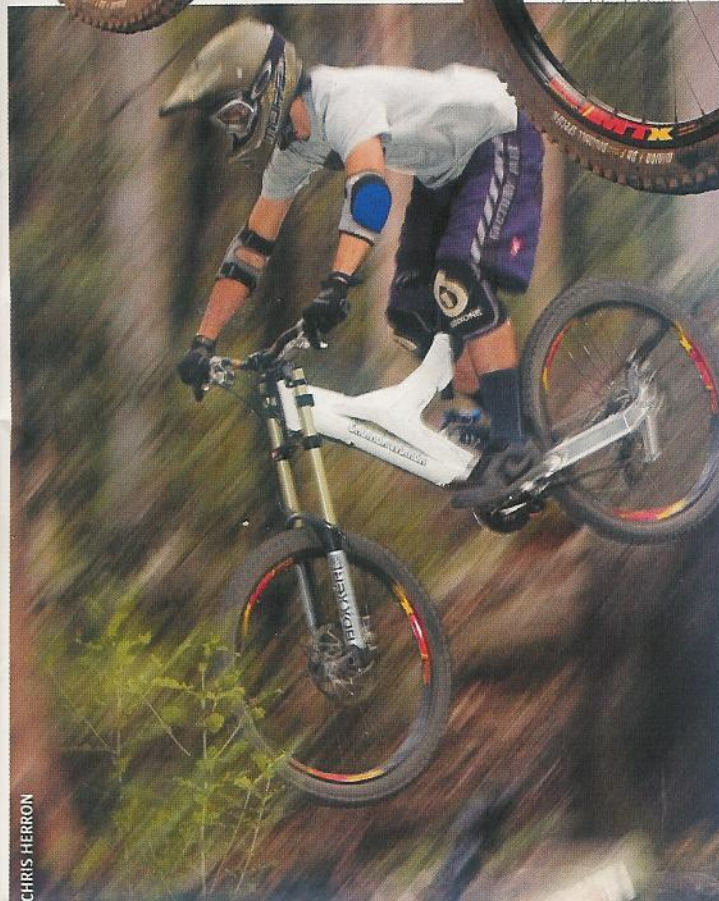
GEOMETRY

These figures are based on a medium-sized bike.



AMB

RATING
8.5



CHRIS HERRON