



CO-MOTION DEMON

Tester: Andy Bruno, Age: 39, Height: 6'0", Weight: 180lbs.
Inseam: 32", Country of Origin: Eugene, OR, USA, Price: \$3925
Weight: 20.28lbs., Sizes Available: Custom, Contact: www.co-motion.com

There are "cross" bikes and then there are 'cross bikes. The former is a do-almost-anything bike that can be a commuter, touring machine, city ride, trail bike, etc. that you can also ride in your local cyclocross race. The latter is a lightweight racing bike, specifically designed for mounts, dismounts, shouldering and hopping barriers all in the pursuit of making your way to the front of the cyclocross pack. While the Co-Motion Demon with the Co-Pilot option fits squarely in the second category, it is also incredibly versatile for many reasons including the fact that it fits into a suitcase.

Now celebrating their 20th year, Co-Motion Cycles has a long history of making fine, handcrafted tandems out of their factory in Eugene, Oregon. About two years ago the infernal serpent somehow persuaded the Co-Motion crew to branch out into the cyclocross market with the Demon and Lucifer. Not surprisingly, Satan is a big cyclocross fan.

Our test Demon included the Co-Pilot option, which means it

was built specifically as a travel bike with S&S couplers. It showed up packed away in its travel case and within about 30 minutes, I was ready to roll. The bike comes with a BTC (Bicycle Torque Coupling) spanner for the couplers that also includes a pedal wrench.

The only other tools necessary for assembly are 4, 5, and 6mm Allen wrenches.

Inside the case, the bike is carefully arranged to ensure a snug fit. Custom pads cover the frame and most metal parts. You don't need to be a bicycle mechanic to assemble the Demon—I'm not—but if you need a little help it comes with easy to follow detailed instructions, also available on the Co-Motion website.

The S&S couplers are very easy to use. Once they're together you almost forget they're there. The manufacturer recommends that

you check the couplers daily or more often with hard use. I noticed the coupler on the down tube loosened slightly after my first few days of riding, but that's probably because I didn't tighten it up enough



in the first place. Maintenance on the couplers is simple: keep the threads clean and add pure Teflon grease when necessary.

The Demon is svelte Reynolds 853 chromoly steel tubing, while the Lucifer is aluminum. All of Co-Motion's single (non-tandem) bikes are custom made although they do offer standard sizes with stock geometry. Stock or custom, the price is the same. My Demon was a "stock" 56cm frame with 73.5° head and 73° seat tube angles, a 56.5cm top tube and 26.5cm bottom bracket height. Some of the miterers and welders at the Co-Motion factory race cyclocross and they designed the Demon and the Lucifer around the geometry that works for them.

Being a custom shop, there are a number of componentry options to choose from. Our test bike came with the Shimano Ultegra 10-speed kit, Alpha Q CX-20 carbon fork and seat post, FSA Energy Compact crankset, a Chris King threadless headset, and a Reynolds Solitude wheelset in addition to other high quality bits and pieces. All that, and braze-ons for two water bottle cages.

Riding the Demon felt solid with very good energy transfer. I didn't notice any lateral flexing or movement from the S&S couplers. The cockpit is aggressive and racy, giving the rider a good platform for mounts and dismounts. The shorter top tube and higher bottom bracket of the cyclocross geometry give the Demon a compact feel. The Alpha Q carbon fork is stiff with good tracking, but supple enough to take the edge off rough road and trail sections. At a little over 20lbs., shouldering and running with the Demon was about as easy as it gets. Weight-conscious racers will appreciate Co-Motion's attention to detail in putting together a lightweight racing package. Compared to other 'cross bikes I've ridden, the Demon felt very light and quick. It took almost no time for me to feel comfortable riding over obstacles and through the twists and turns in the mud and snow of the 'cross course. On the road with slicks, the compact frame felt a bit more squirrely than your standard road bike, but that's to be expected.

There are two issues I had with the bike that are worth mentioning. The first is that I experienced a good bit of toe overlap with the front wheel—especially in winter riding boots. I wear a size 12 shoe, so I'm use to that on other bikes, but because of the compact frame, the overlap was more pronounced. The second issue is that my chain broke one morning on my way in to work. Apparently that's not uncommon for 10-speed chains. Within minutes I took out the bad link and was back on the road. I even raced with that same chain and didn't have any other problems.

A travel bike should travel, so I took the Demon to Chicago for one of the Chicago Cyclocross Cup races. Packing was a bit tricky because there isn't much extra room in the case—which is a good thing for the bike. Once you figure out where everything fits into the case, it's not a problem, but it does take a little practice. You can fill in the gaps with riding gear for additional padding. Just be sure not to put too many other things in the case with your bike to put you over the airline luggage weight limit.

The travel case is 26"x26"x10", just big enough to fit a 700c wheel, and falls within the maximum airline size for free checkable luggage. Co-Motion offers three different types of cases: hard shell, backpack (soft case), and hybrid. Our test bike came in the hybrid case that is a combination between the hard and soft shell cases. It has wheels and a telescoping handle to help with mobility.

Traveling with a bike could be an article on its own, but I'll just include a couple things I learned in the process. Make sure the per-



son picking you up at the airport has a big enough car for you, the bike, your travel companions and everybody's luggage. The case is small for a bike, but big for a suitcase. It's also a good idea to pack an extra towel or rags in order to clean off your bike after the race. You don't want to pack up a dirty bike.

Yes, the Demon is a solid cyclocross race bike, but with the Co-Pilot option, I can see using it for much more than racing. Throw a set of road tires in the case with your bike, and you're ready to ride almost anywhere. All you need is a plane ticket.