



Best of 2010: Mountain Bikes, Components and Accessories

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As we look back on 2010 and prepare for a great 2011, there was a lot of new and exciting releases within the mountain bike industry. However, who was at the top spot in performance and innovation in different categories of the mountain bike industry according to the editorial team here at Bike198? Let's take a look...

Best Full Suspension Race Bike of 2010



Specialized Epic 29er S-Works: With riders like Jaroslav Kulhavy leading the charge for Specialized, it is hard to argue the success the Epic has seen in the UCI XC World Cup. 2010 saw this new 29er from Specialized take podiums and pop up at local trail heads making you wonder why they didn't start with the Epic on the larger wheel platform.

Best Hardtail Race Bike of 2010



Niner Air 9 Carbon: Garth Weinberg took the SS worlds on arguably one of the sexiest bikes released in 2010. The Air 9 Carbon brings the first carbon bike to Niner's bike lineup and it hit the market selling out almost instantly. If you have ever seen one of these bikes in person, you can attest to the beauty in simplicity even if you are not a 29er zealot. Matched with the new carbon Niner fork, this hard tail is the best looking carbon frame on the market today.

Best 29er Trail Bike of 2010



Niner RIP 9: As 29ers continue to gain momentum, the RIP 9 from Niner Bikes continues to lead the pack. Arm with rock solid geometry and high quality construction, the RIP 9 rips up trail while still being efficient enough to get you to the top of the hill. The RIP 9's hydro-formed tubing and tapered head tube continue the progression as Niner consistently performs at the top of the 29er platform.

Best Trail Bike of 2010



Turner 5.Spot: Known for superior customer satisfaction and build quality, Turner Bikes continues to put out one of the best trail bikes ever made...the 5.Spot. This 5.5" travel mountain bike is one of the most versatile mountain bikes on the trail as you can lighten it up and rip fast and flowy trail or build it up burlier and enjoy the technical side of mountain biking. When we look for one bike that can do it all, the 5.Spot is the first we grab. You can see our review of the.

Best All Mountain Bike of 2010



Santa Cruz Nomad Carbon: The Santa Cruz Nomad has been a fixture in the all mountain category of mountain biking for a long time. With Santa Cruz consistency and loyal fan base, this 160mm VVP suspension mountain bike can be seen around the globe. With the introduction of the carbon model in 2010, we are seeing the peak of the light, all mountain bike trend as more companies pursue lighter materials to get the heavier bikes to higher peaks. The Santa Cruz Nomad Carbon is the best looking and one of the top performing out of this new crop of light 160mm travel mountain bikes.

Best Downhill Bike of 2010



Specialized Demo 8: 2010 was an incredible year for the Demo 8 as every time you turned a corner it seemed another team was picking up the Demo platform. As featured in numerous videos and races from Follow Me to the UCI World Cup Championship with Sam Hill, the Specialized Demo 8 dominated 2010 in the downhill segment.

Best Component Group of 2010



SRAM X9: 2010 was the year of 10 speed mountain bike components and the SRAM X9 package does not disappoint. With top level performance at a more reasonable price, the X9 component group is being seen in the aftermarket as well as original equipment on factory bikes. SRAM really started the whole 10 speed mountain bike component set with the XX group, so the trickle down effect into X9 finds a rock solid shifting option for mountain bikers looking to add that one more gear and jump onto the 2x10 bandwagon.

Best Non-Shifting Component of 2010



KS i950r Telescoping Seatpost: What used to be a component/accessory for the larger travel crowd is now seeing more utilization in the shorter travel market as riders are seeing the real benefit of being able to get the saddle down and out of the way on the fly. In 2010, we saw a remarkable increase in sales on telescoping seat posts and this i950r from KS was at the top of many riders "must have" list as it became an online forum superstar almost overnight. The solid construction, remote trigger and lack of any saddle play make this i950r a top performer in this market.

Best Mountain Bike Accessory of 2010



[GoPro Hero](#) HD: Technology in wearable HD camcorders is rapidly evolving. The multiple mounting options, high quality video and strong social backing of the [GoPro Hero](#) HD has brought more video of rides to the net than all other wearable camcorders combined. Never before have we been able to see what it is like to ride different trails around the world thanks to this little device.

Biggest Hit of 2010 Voted by You



29ers: According to the Bike198 readers, 29ers were the biggest hit of 2010 and that is hard to argue with the large increase of the 29er wheel platform at the trail head. 2010 saw a lot of new releases in support of the larger wheel and we do not expect to see that slow down any time soon. The mountain bike industry officially has two wheel sizes to fit the needs of mountain bikers around the world.