Many interesting developments during Taipei Cycle 2018 pre-show media tour

From the 21st until the 24th of May, Bicle was invited to join the Taipei Cycle pre-show media tour. During this event, hosted by the Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA), 22 trade media representatives were shown the richness of the Taiwanese land: bikes. The self-declared “Kingdom of bicycles” had us, the media, take a look into their kitchen. It was an honor that Bicle got invited as well. During these days, Bicle has seen many interesting things. To include as many people as possible into this experience, Bicle has put it down into words.

It is not a complete surprise to hear the declaration - “Taiwan is the kingdom of Bicycles” - from Walter Yeh, President and CEO of TAITRA. On the one hand it is good PR, but on the other, it is not untrue – when looking at the brands originating from this island in the Eastern-Chinese Sea. It is the home of brands such as Giant, Merida, KMC, Bryton, BESV and Alexrims – to name but a few. All these brands develop and produce their (high-end) products in Taiwan. During the first day’s product-presentation, Bicle got a look at some those. From new e-MTBs to savvy tech accessories; it all passed the revue. In this article Bicle will highlight a couple of eMTB developments as well as some disruptive and tech savvy products.

What became clearly visible was that brands invest a lot of time and resources into e-mobility solutions, especially when it comes to the sport’s segment – MTB and even road cycling. This may not be a new development anymore, however, it really seems to push on a global scale. The German market for e-MTB, for instance, is growing fast. The same could be said for other European Countries and the US. In China and Taiwan, however, e-biking is still in its very early stages. Therefore, we see that brands who produce such products usually aim for the European and Northern American markets. And although a careful skepticism in the corridors is noticeable – it would take away the soul out of the sport, since it is not always seen as pedal assist, but rather a motorized bike –, its popularity is growing vastly. In that respect, Giant, Merida, and BESV introduced to the press their latest e-MTBs, or motor systems.

E-MTBs

Giant has developed ‘hybrid cycling technology’, which is able to cover three types of terrain: urban, road and off-road. Key feature is the high performance of the motor: it has a quick response and no power loss at high cadence, which is ideal when used for sports purpose. Moreover, it is relatively light and smaller than its predecessor, and also lighter than the motors of some of Giant’s competitors.

The second product highlighted here is the Merida eOne-SIXTY. This full suspension bike is the motorized brother of the One-SIXTY, and should perform practically the same, but with a motorized system supporting the rider for when it gets really tough uphill. The eOne-SIXT comes with the Shimano steps E8000 system, which is specially developed for MTB and weighs just under 3Kg, has a battery of 500Wh and has three assist modes.

Lastly, Bicle shortly discusses the BESV TRB1 and the JR1. The TRB1 looks like a beasty eMTB and comes with a 756Wh battery, delivered by Brose. With this animal mountain biking enters a whole new driving spectrum. As big as the TRB1 looks, as small and rigid looks the JR1. This e-road bike almost looks like a conventional one, but when having a closer look, the pedal assist system becomes visible. It is neatly put away into the downtube of the bike, making it almost invisible. Moreover, it ‘only’ weighs 15,7Kg. It would not be a surprise if this bike will become successful in the market.
Clever and disruptive solutions

We all have that same thing: we want to enjoy cycling in the best way possible. In addition to that, we want to know where we are going, have a connection to our phone and be able to see how fast we go, and preferably this should be manageable with one device. In the sport cycling segment, these devices exist already for some years, but for the commuter such a product has yet to hit the market. That is where Cyqlo saw an opportunity: a device that can easily be mounted to the steer. This device has seven functions: bike navigation, cycle computer, camera, anti-theft alarm, frontal light, bell and power bank. Although the Cyqlo is still fairly big, it is well possible that this could become a success.

A cycling computer which is significantly different is the new Bryton-generation. With their new line - the, Aero 60, the Rider 450 and the Rider 410 – Bryton competes with brands such as Garmin and Wahoo. For this generation of computers, Bryton focused on user experience: their GPS-system became more accurate, the rider displays have become slightly bigger and three more buttons were added to lessen the amount of function per buttons. This should help in completing their goal to make a more complete and user friendly device.

A third clever solution does not come from a tech savvy device, but a tech savvy service. ‘Commuter’ has declared itself as “the IKEA of bikes”. By that they mean that they offer the customer to order their bicycle online. What makes this special is that the bike is completely customizable. Every component or detail can be chosen separately. Commuter integrates great bike component manufacturers in Taiwan, modularize and simplify bike structure into 5~10 standard components, enabling customers to easily online-customize and DIY-assemble their ideal bikes. By shipping straight from factory, Commuter provides a disruptive price. Afterwards, customers can order components and tools online to change, repair, and upgrade their bike (according to the DIY-concept). This start-up has just started in Taiwan, but is aiming to enter the European market, starting in Germany, by the end of 2018. They are, however, still looking for European marketing partners.

During this week full of experiences and conversations at the Taipei Cycle pre-show media tour, Bicle has seen many brands and spoken with many of them. We have tried to cover as many as we could in this report. Nonetheless, Bicle will certainly see and hear from them and write about them in the near future. So, whatever you do, stay tuned at Bicle.com, because a lot more is coming your way!