

First Annual North American Handmade Bicycle Show a Success

By Christian Williams Photos by Chuck Kichline & Jonathan Greene

The First Annual North American Handmade Bicycle Show was held in Houston over January 15-16. The event brought frame builders from all over the country (and one from Italy) to display their works, but more importantly, to discuss ideas with other builders and cyclists.



Best Track Frame - Richard Sachs

Approximately 700-800 visitors attended the show to see over 20 exhibits ranging from custom frames, to raw tubes, to tooling and jigs. Exhibitors included the legendary frame builders Richard

Sachs, Skip Hujsak, Peter Weigle, Brian Bayliss, and Mike DeSalvo. Also showing their craft and incredible skills were young builders such as Darren Crisp, Nick Crumpton, and Sacha White.

Along with the typical trade show theme of having booths to show the goods, the North American Handmade Bicycle Show also hosted seminars presented by experts in the field. These seminars included bicycle fit, tooling, carbon fiber, lug carving, general frame building, painting, TIG welding, and tubing.

Besides being able to talk to builders in person and get close up views of the finest custom bicycles around, attendees could

also touch and even ride some of the bicycles.

Don Walker, a frame builder himself, spearheaded and directed this first of what will be an annual show. Typical trade shows focus on the big companies, who have budgets for huge set ups and marketing departments, but this show focuses on the craft and the craftsman. The North American Handmade Bicycle Show isn't about how many units are sold, but instead, it is about how each bike is built and who built it.

When asked about his thoughts of how the show went, Walker said, "It went better than I even hoped it would. The crowds were great. The enthusiasm in the room was incredible and it seemed to just not let up...from the doors opening at 9 AM on Saturday until after the awards ceremony on Sunday, every exhibitor was busy chatting with attendees and the locals who came to gawk and support our effort."

In some cases, many of these frames may be seen as "retro," but the reality is that these bicycles are designed for the particular rider and his or her exact needs. But this wasn't simply a show for modern day



Best Off-Road Frame - Nick Crumpton

vintage bikes, not at all. Calfee was there showing his carbon frames as was "Best Carbon Frame" and "Best Off-Road Frame" winner Nick Crumpton of Crumpton Composite Cycles. Another Carbon builder showing his skills was Alex Morgan of BCD Racing, with his National Championship jersey and downhill bike displayed.

Darren Crisp, winner of "Best Titanium Frame," showed his skills with that metal, but even other steel frames had modern designs and tubing on display. Compact frames

with the most advanced tubing out there, such as True Temper's S3, were available for hands on inspection. Don Walker's frames hardly look "retro," even if they are made out of steel tubes. And Richard Sachs won "Best Road Frame" and "Best Track Frame" with his lugged steel frames.

Renown builder, Richard Sachs, said, "...though hindsight is 20/20, it was a mistake for anyone to miss this event." He was speaking of the builders themselves, but it goes for the customer, cyclist, and general bike fan as well.

- Best Road Frame: Richard Sachs
- Best Track Frame: Richard Sachs
- Best Tig Welded Frame: Mike Desalvo
- Best Paint: Brian Baylis
- Best Lugged Frame: Brian Baylis
- Best Titanium: Darren Crisp
- Best Newcomer: Bill Rider
- Best Off-Road: Nick Crumpton
- Best Carbon: Nick Crumpton
- Best Fillet Brazed: Sacha White—Vanilla Bicycles
- Best Tandem: Don Walker
- People's Choice: Craig Calfee (The Bamboo Bike)
- Best of Show: Sacha White—Vanilla Bicycles



Best Titanium Frame - Darren Crisp