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TREADLIE



MIXTE EMOTIONS
ONE FOR EVERYONE

FOR THE LOVE OF CYCLING
THE BICYCLE FILM FESTIVAL

A RIDE TO REMEMBER
CELEBRATING THE SOLSTICE

HARD YARDS
NAVIGATING NZ

STRENGTH TO STRENGTH
BUILDING A BASTION BIKE

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FOUNDED BY BEN SCHULTZ, JAMES WOOLCOCK AND DEAN MCGEARY, BASTION CYCLES IS THE MELBOURNE-BASED BESPOKE FRAME-BUILDING COMPANY USING INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES TO CREATE A PERSONALISED, HIGH-QUALITY PERFORMANCE BIKE UNLIKE ANY OTHER.



ABOVE Bastion Cycles' Road Disc – the first commercially viable 3D-printed bike in the world.



ABOVE From the frame geometry to the paint design, Bastion works with clients to design their dream bike.

Like most bike enthusiasts, Ben Shultz's love of cycling was instilled in him from a young age – entranced early on by the feeling of freedom that two wheels can provide a young child. However, unlike most, Ben is the first to admit that as he got older, his passion shifted to cars.

"I rode my bike everywhere, but I never considered myself a cyclist," says Ben. "I was very into my cars when I was younger ... I built my own car when I was 18, used to do all my own work on it, and progressively began building more and more expensive models."

With his dreams focused solely on creating motorised wonders, Ben soon started working as an engineer for Toyota. And strangely enough, it was while there that his love of bikes was rekindled by fellow engineer and one of Bastion Cycles three co-founders, James Woolcock.

"In 2011, James Woolcock, who had always been a cyclist, got me into cycling as part of the Toyota riding group," explains Ben. The small crew would go out "once or twice a week" and Ben, perched upon a borrowed bike, soon found that not only did he enjoy

the feeling and exercise of cycling itself, but he also loved the social aspect, the deep "sense of community and friendship".

Having already lost his heart to the sport, it wasn't long before Ben's mind caught up. "I started to think, 'Well hang on, maybe I could do something with this one day,'" says Ben. Then, in 2014, Ben, James and another Toyota engineer and cycling enthusiast, Dean McGeary, hadn't been explicitly been told, but they all had an inkling that Toyota's Australian manufacturing would soon be discontinued.

For Ben, it was the perfect excuse to combine his new passion with a long-held desire to start his own business, so he began looking into how he might be able to build a sustainable bicycle brand. After some extensive research, he decided that frames would be ideal – so he and his team would have a chance to "play with all the engineering techniques and processes that we never got to use designing [Toyota] Camrys," says Ben.

At the time, titanium 3D printing and carbon fibre were really just starting to become a viable option, but Ben knew it was the way he wanted to go and, after



ABOVE Bastion Cycles' founders Ben Schultz, James Woolcock and Dean McGeary.



TOP The finishing touch, a customised paint job.
ABOVE Frame-building allows Ben, Dean and James to play with all the special engineering techniques that they never were able to at Toyota.



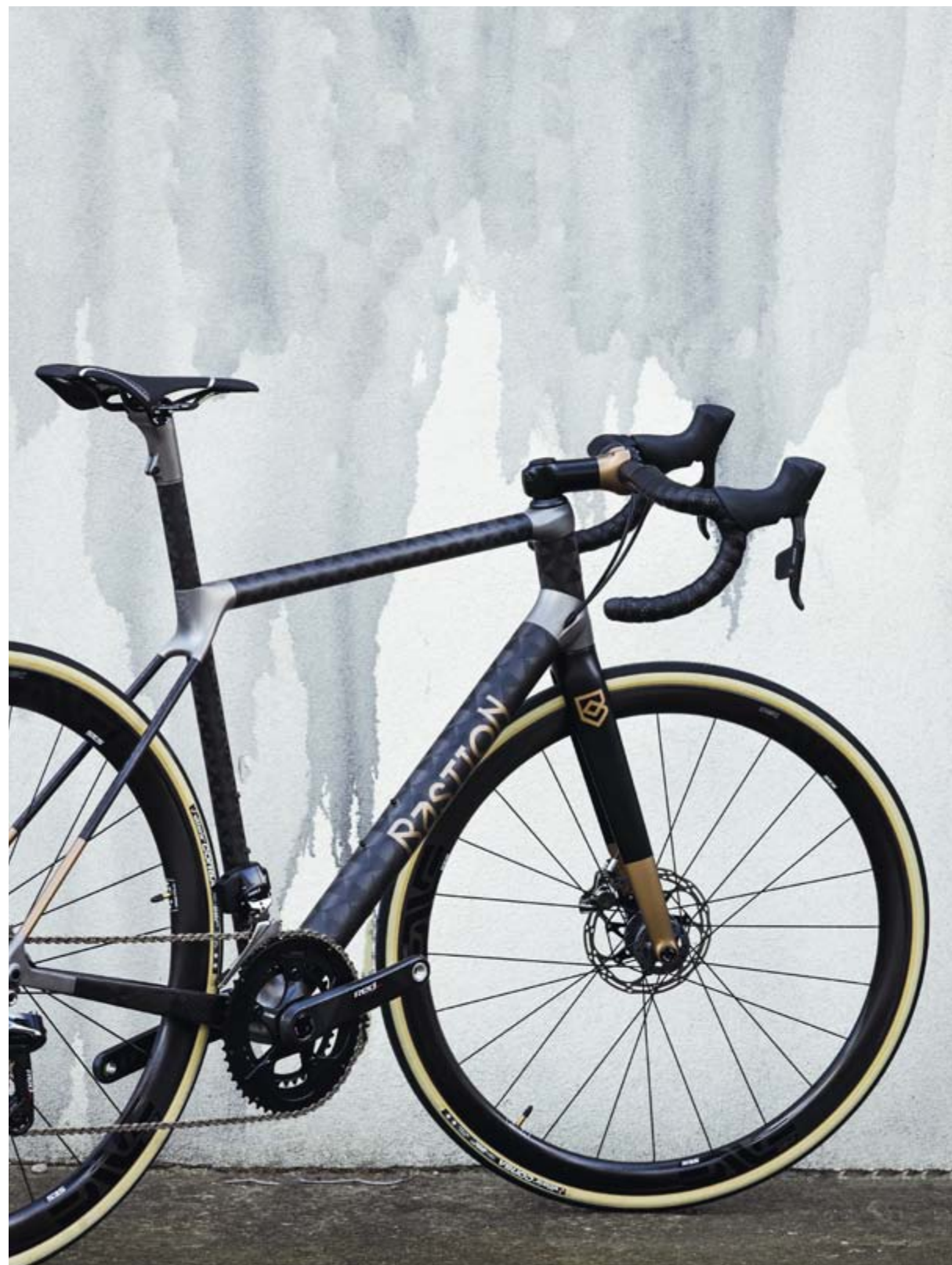
ABOVE RIGHT The lugs are 3D-printed and made up of a honeycomb structure that's 96 per cent air.
ABOVE LEFT A titanium frame ensures maximum ride comfort.

roping in Dean and James (the latter of whom had already been working on a design with a similar idea in mind), they were finally able to get started. They launched their first prototype in 2015 and now, three years later, are making more than 100 frames a year for customers all over the world. “We made the first commercially viable 3D-printed bike in the world,” says Ben. “It’s the rider’s holy grail – a frame that blends the torsional stiffness and performance of a carbon fibre ... with the ride comfort of a titanium frame.” Each bike is generated using the measurements of the rider, while the lugs are 3D printed using titanium powder and a honeycomb structure that’s 96 per cent air (but still makes the part about 20 to 30 per cent stronger) – then the two are fused together. The result is stunning; a sleek powerhouse that, if the customer is inclined, can be created with their input every step of the way. The name Bastion reflects this innovation keenly. “It comes from that phrase ‘the last bastion of strength or resistance.’ We wanted to give the impression of something that really stands for something,” says Ben.

“It’s that concept of a tower ... high up and being able to see far into the future, which really represents us trying to be at the forefront of technology and using our engineering skills.” Having grown out of their initial space in Kensington, Ben, James and Dean are now moving Bastion’s workshop to the “location they always wanted to be in” – which is in Fairfield, about seven kilometres north of Melbourne’s CBD, right by the boathouse ... and close to some solid riding trails. And they won’t be alone, sharing the space with Prova Cycles, Bikes by Steve, Riderfit, and Lumil Design, some of which Bastion already works with regularly. For Ben the shift is particularly poetic. His initial draw back to the world of cycling was in large part due to community, and now Bastion is making a permanent one. “It’s amazing how much you feed off each other ... it kind of brings a lot of the benefits of a bigger company to a bunch of small companies,” explains Ben. “It’s very exciting ... we’ll have a little café in the front and hopefully it’ll become a bit of a cycling hub.”

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bastion-cycles.com



ABOVE The Bastion Road Disc represents one of the lightest bikes in its class, coming in as light as 6.5 kilograms.



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