



## FOX FLOAT SHOCK XV AIR CAN

ADD SOME PLUSHNESS TO YOUR RIDE.

Fox's Float line of rear air shocks have long lead the way when it comes to cross country and trail suspension. But on some bikes, the naturally rising rate provided by a Fox Float shock can make it difficult to obtain full travel. In these instances a larger volume air can is often just the ticket. We recently fitted a Fox Float RP23 shock to our Scott Spark test bike, but struggled to use the last 20% of our travel without running excessive amounts of sag. After speaking to Fox we decided to try fitting their larger volume XV (Xtra Volume) air can. The larger volume of air housed in the bigger air can is designed to deliver a far more linear suspension rate, making it easier to use all of your travel.

Fitting the new air can is well within the realm of any reasonably competent mechanic. After

letting all the air out of the shock, the air can simply unscrews by hand. Grease the threads on the new can, lube the seals with a little Float Fluid (included with the new air can), slide the new can on and screw it up tight. It's worth noting too that the XV air can comes with a full complement of new seals, so you're essentially giving your shock a full seal overhaul as well (which makes the price tag pretty attractive!).

The difference the XV can made to the bike was pronounced. We ran less air pressure - which in turn places less demand on the seals - and with the recommended 25% sag we were finally able to obtain full travel. Previously we were running over 30% sag in an attempt to get the full shock stroke, which compromised pedalling performance and made the bike wallowy. Now free of the overly firm ramp up we'd experienced with the smaller volume air can, the bike could hold more pace through choppy terrain and felt more planted. It took the Spark's ready to rumble nature to the next level.

If you're considering fitting an XV air can, it's worth checking with your bike's manufacturer first. On some bikes the larger volume air can will lead to too soft a suspension rate, causing the bike to bottom out harshly, which can be damaging. But on the right bike, it's a worthy upgrade that can make a nervous bike into a sure-footed trail shredder. CS

**PRICE:** \$129.00

**CONTACT:** Sola, [www.netti.com.au](http://www.netti.com.au)



## MRP MRP XCG SINGLE BASH GUARD

LIGHTWEIGHT, UNOBTRUSIVE, TOUGH - A GREAT CHAINRING PROTECTION SOLUTION.

Trashing chainrings and damaging chains is just part of mountain biking, right? Well, no actually - fit a bash guard and save your expensive running gear! The XCG range of bash guards from MRP are a neat solution, we tested the singlespeed specific XCG Single on our dirt jump bike.

Available in either ISCG or bottom bracket mounted versions, the XCG Single can be mounted to just about any bike (barring bikes which use an integrated bottom bracket and have no ISCG tabs). Our bottom bracket mounted version was quite simple to fit - remove cranks, remove bottom bracket, fit XCG, re-install bottom bracket minus one spacer, fit cranks - done! The whole process took around five minutes. Once fitted, the XCG protruded out past the lower edge of our 32 tooth chainring by around a centimetre, which is just enough to save the ring from damage but without reducing clearance excessively. The XCG will work fine with up to 36 tooth ring and, at 100g, adds negligible weight to your rig.

The bottom bracket mounted XCG has a knurled inner surface that is designed to prevent it rotating when you give it a good whack. At first it slipped a little under impact; I reinstalled it, thoroughly cleaning off any grease from the bottom bracket surface and tightening the buggery out of the bottom bracket cup, and have experienced no movement since. Durability-wise, it's top notch. Three months of use, street riding at least a couple of times a week, has barely marked the XCG. It hasn't bent or twisted despite a lot of hard landings onto concrete ledges, and the actual skid-plate may be scuffed up but it hasn't cracked or busted. If you do happen to terminally smash your XCG, the skid plate component can be replaced separately (\$27.95). Tidy, tough and with MRP's characteristic quality; a great way to save your chain and chain ring. CS

**PRICE:** \$79.95

**CONTACT:** [www.stevecamrproducts.com.au](http://www.stevecamrproducts.com.au)



## HUTCHISON PYTHON ENDURO MRC 2.30 TUBELESS

AN OLD FAVOURITE; NOW BACK IN A BIGGER SIZE, DELIVERING GOOD DRY WEATHER PERFORMANCE AND GRIP.

Once only a tyre for the cross country racer, the recent release of a 2.3" version has expanded the Python's spectrum of use to the enduro and trail riding scene. The 2.3" version has a 66 TPI casing, and using the MRC Medium compound, are reinforced on the sidewalls and under the tread for puncture protection. At 870g for the UST version they're pretty heavy for an endurance oriented tyre, but thankfully they still roll quickly thanks to a continuous centre ridge. The Pythons have a big bag for their size (and are a tight fit in some

frames), and offer excellent traction in hardpack corners, but be aware of the tread edges becoming soft and flexible quickly. Outside of dry hardpack they aren't so inspiring; if the ducks are happy you'll want to change treads as they are terrible in the wet with the next to no mud clearance. SMITHY

**PRICE:** \$105.00

**CONTACT:** PACIFIC BRANDS (03) 9235 0027