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Bicycle Maintenance And Repair For Road & Mountain Bikes



Synopsis

378 pages.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I got this book in anticipation of receiving a bicycle purchased off the internet, as I knew the bike would need assembly and a good amount of adjusting. A careful reading of this book provided all the info I needed to get the bike up and running, and it included many vital tips I would not have known otherwise. Basic stuff like how to adjust seat and handlebar position and angle were well explained. The more involved instructions on lubrication and derailleur adjustment were much more helpful than the manufacturer's bare bones instructions. But what was truly a saving grace for me was the chapter on disc brake assembly, adjustment, and care. I would never have known how properly mount a disc to a hub (use a star pattern, gradually increase screw tightness, and never touch the disc with your hands) or that you should never pull a brake lever without something (the disc or a spacer) in the hydraulic brake caliper. My own curious excitement with my new high-end bike would surely have caused me to do that. That chapter alone was worth the book purchase. The book is also full of pictures (although it's impossible to have a photo of every possible manufacturer's component) which help greatly. Since the book fully covers modern bike innovations as well (fancy suspension, disc brakes, external bearing bottom brackets and two piece cranksets), it may seem to owners of department store bikes to cater to people with high end bikes. This is NOT the case at all -- the book covers low-end components as well. In actuality the book is quite comprehensive, and covers of the full range of bike components available today.

I looked at Zinn's book on road bicycle maintenance, but opted for this book based on comments by other reviewers and on examining this book in a bookstore. Zinn uses line drawings, but Downs uses excellent black and white photographs I find more helpful than drawings. The photographs help me envision what is foreground and what is background better than a line drawing does. When I bought my first road bike in 1970 I read Eugene Sloan's "Complete Book of Bicycling" and it was very helpful for special procedures. But, bicycles have changed a lot in the last twenty years. This is a good guidebook for anyone with a new bicycle, no matter their previous level of experience. This book discusses each system on a bike in text. Then comes a near repetition with step-by-step photographs. Finally, there is a troubleshooting section listing problems and their solutions. I was surprised by two things. Fine new bicycles use metric hex key cap screws and some plastic collars. It is important that these are not tightened too much. Yet, a torque wrench reading in inch pounds was not mentioned in the list of essential tools. (I made my own for five dollars from a steel bar ten inches long and a fisherman's scale.) And, 700C tires are the new norm for road bikes, but the inch gear chart for road bikes is based on 27 inch wheels. I wondered if it would be a problem to treat both road and mountain bikes in the same book, but it works just fine. Both get adequate treatment. There are a lot of little hints about things that are not directly necessary for fixing a problem, but which will add continued good performance to your bicycle.

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