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# WORLDMETAL

For Dave Cullinan it was as much a battle of nerves as it was a battle against the clock. Prior to his downhill run for the gold at the World Championships in Bromont, Quebec, he had yet to secure a timed run that would tell him what he was capable of on the circuitous, slippery course. "I had crashed in my qualifying run, so by the time I got to the finish I was the 30th-fastest rider," he remembers. "I had no idea what I was capable of, and as I was sitting on top of the mountain I kept hearing the times fall as one rider after another went down the hill before me. Finally, just as I was getting ready to enter the starting block, I heard Jimmy Deaton's time of 4:33, which was four seconds faster than Tomac-it blew me away! I just told myself that Deaton couldn't beat me, and the last thing I said to NORBA Rider Rep Jim Sullivan just before I went was, "They haven't seen anything yet!"

No one at the bottom of the hill had. Traversing a technical bridge crossing that had most riders nervously keeping their wheels on the ground, Dave instead soared over the wooden structure's entire length totally crossed-up. Shocked at the completely unexpected sight, the mass of spectators screamed in delight. Cullinan blasted down the 2.2-mile course to best Deaton's fast time by five seconds! It was a fantastic victory for the former BMX rider, who has already enjoyed a wonderful year on the circuit along with his first-year sponsor, Iron Horse Bicycles. Less than a month prior to winning his World Championship title, "Cully" had also swept the NORBA National Finals in Durango to claim the National title as well.



The Champ in action: Despite a slow qualifying time that sent him off in 30th place. Dave wasted no time in working his way to the fastest time of the day by attacking the course as soon as he left the starting block.



Alloy buddies: Since Cullinan's rigid bike is made from Easton ProGram tubes, he kept the relationship warm on the fullsuspension bike by running a pair of Eas ton handlebars. Dave prefers a short stem to keep his weight behind the front wheel and his bars swept upwards.



Italian combo: The Verlicchi factory in Italy first used the FS Works frame design in collaboration with Marzocchi, which needed a frame to test its suspension products with. Verlicchi is also making frames for a variety of other European bike brands, as well as Diamond Back and Haro.

#### CHOOSE BETWEEN TWO

All season long, Cullinan has been relying on two different aluminum bikes, depending on the nature of the course. For smooth downhills that require a lot of sprinting like the Mammoth Mountain Kamikaze, Dave pulls out his Iron Horse Stallion A-frame with a rigid rear end. For bumpier courses like Durango and Bromont, he relies on a fully suspended bike that was made at the Verlicchi factory in Italy, Like his Stallion A-frame, the FS Works bike relies on Marzocchi XC400 forks up front and uses a Marzocchi air shock in the rear. Personal setup items favored by the

Champ are the short, 120mm Answer A-Tac stem and Mavic ceramic rims. "I like the short stem for better handling," Dave says. "It keeps me from being too far out over the front wheel." As for the rims, "They make an unbelievable difference,

especially on wet courses. They do eat up brake shoes, but I've seen nothing that works anywhere near as well for downhill racing."