



Radical-looking RoundTail bike claims radically smoother ride



HTC Sensation 4G takes HTC flagship mantle



Hauppauge PCTV Broadway 2T - wireless TV transmission to iPhone, iPad, Mac & PC



Google invests US\$168 million in world's largest solar power tower plant



Virgin Oceanic's ambitious plans to explore Earth's last frontier

[MORE TOP STORIES »](#)

URBAN TRANSPORT

## Radical-looking RoundTail bike claims radically smoother ride

By Ben Coxworth  
13:34 April 13, 2011

3 Comments  
7 Pictures



The Tortola RoundTail bicycle replaces the frame's traditional rear triangle with two shock-absorbing joined rings (All photos courtesy Lou Tortola)

[Image Gallery \(7 images\)](#)

Ads by Google

- Solar Panels for MI Homes** - [www.astrumsolar.com](http://www.astrumsolar.com)  
Price out your home install online. Expert residential solar installer.
- 2011 Intense Bikes** - [www.BikeBling.com/Intense\\_Cycles](http://www.BikeBling.com/Intense_Cycles)  
We stock all Intense Bikes Buy Online Discounts Available
- Ottawa Bikes** - [www.FreshAirExperienceBicycles.ca](http://www.FreshAirExperienceBicycles.ca)  
Stop By Our Bike Shop For Sales, Repair & More. Call 888-632-9328.
- Electric Bikes On Sale** - [www.cabbikes.com](http://www.cabbikes.com)  
Electric bikes 50% sale. In Stock. Free shipping offer ends Tues 11PM.

If you banged a pole and a hoop against the road, which one would transmit more vibrations to your hand? Given that the flexing action of the hoop would absorb some of the energy, it's probably safe to assume that the pole would give you a numb hand quicker. Well, Canadian cyclist Lou Tortola applied the same sort of logic to the frame design of his Tortola RoundTail road bicycle. Where most other bikes would have a rear triangle consisting of straight seat stays, chain stays and a seat tube, the RoundTail simply has two shock-absorbing joined rings.



Tortola came up with the idea last year, after noticing that many of his fellow long-time cyclists had to quit the sport due to discomfort or injuries caused by riding. Already possessing a background in metals and fabrication, he proceeded to build some sample rings to put his concept to the test. After establishing that there was something to his idea, he got custom bike builder Paul Taylor to create a prototype RoundTail.

The frame was then sent to Boulder, Colorado's Microbac Laboratories, where it was tested for horizontal and vertical loading durability fatigue, and impact strength – on all of which it receiving a passing grade. It was also reportedly found to have ten times the vertical flex of a traditional frame, and over sixty times the shock absorption. Lou additionally suspects that the rings will prove to be more aerodynamic than the straight tubes that they replace.



Of course, road-riding speed freaks don't necessarily want a lot of flex, as any frame that absorbs road vibrations also has a way of soaking up pedaling power. While the RoundTail undoubtedly involves some trade-off in this area, Tortola insists that his bike retains the lateral stiffness and pedaling efficiency of regular bicycles.

The rings do add some weight to the frame, although it's reportedly a negligible amount. "The bike you see in the image weighed in at 17.2 lbs [7.8 kg]," Lou told us. "Material for the RoundTail might weigh 250 grams more than a traditional diamond frame... But at the end, the benefits outweigh that difference for certain."

There's no word on pricing or availability as of yet, although Tortola plans to have titanium, carbon fiber, mountain and hybrid versions of the bike ready for the Interbike trade show in Las Vegas this September. The prototype was officially unveiled at the San Diego Custom Bicycle Show last week.

Via BikeRadar

Ads by Google

- Bikes** - [www.PhysiqueFitness.com](http://www.PhysiqueFitness.com)  
We Offer a Wide Range Of Bikes. Give Us a Call At 780-436-0409.

Share

1 | [Share](#) 8 | [Tweet](#) 23

Like | 51 likes. Sign Up to see what your friends like.

Recent popular articles in Urban Transport

- Sections
- Aero Gizmo
  - Around The Home
  - Automotive
  - Baby Gizmo
  - Childsplay
  - Digital Cameras
  - ecoGizmo
  - Electronics
  - Games
  - Good Thinking
  - Health and Wellbeing
  - Holiday Destinations
  - Home Entertainment
  - Inventors and Remarkable People
  - Laptops
  - Military
  - Mobile Technology
  - Motorcycles
  - Music
  - On the Water
  - Outdoors
  - Personal Computing
  - Pet Gizmos
  - Podcasts
  - Research Watch
  - Robotics
  - Science and Education
  - Sports
  - Spy Gear
  - Telecommunications
  - Urban Transport
  - Wearable Electronics

Find us on Facebook