



From (clockwise) Bruce Bundy, Geoff Fleming and Beau Hoover road riding, Santa Cruz. Photo by Norman Hoover

"We can stop on a dime, go backwards, spin on one spot, hop up stairs and curbs," Foss enthuses. Essentially a unicycle operates in a 360-degree groove."

singletrack but inefficient over long distances. Then, in the late '90s, Coker Cycling Company released a 36" unicycle, which greatly improved their suitability for long distance trail riding (and helped to make up for the fact that unicycles don't have gears). The enormous wheel allows riders to cruise long cross-country distances and still roll over reasonably rough terrain.

With their new cross-country rigs, Hoover and Bundy joined the small but growing trend of unicycle touring. Recent trips include pedaling the Great Wall of China, the Swiss Alps, Laos and

the Mediterranean. Locally, many of the riders have pedaled the circumference of Lake Tahoe.

But unicycle touring isn't what's garnered the most attention for the sport. "People realized they could use the unicycle to hop over things and trials emerged," Dunn says. "Next, people decided to combine trials and freestyle riding to (become) street riding."

Physics and equipment limits unicyclist from performing some of the tricks we're used to seeing bicyclists perform. "People won't be riding uni's on huge skateboard half pipes and getting five to 10 feet of air," Dunn says.

"The unicycle doesn't have a freewheel and so we can't physically get enough speed to do enormous amounts of road air."

But then unicycling has never been about copying others. It's about individuality and

mastering its unique challenges. As Dunn says, "To really appreciate some of the things that are done on a unicycle, one must first be a unicyclist." ■■■

## 12<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CALIFORNIA MOUNTAIN UNICYCLING WEEKEND SANTA CRUZ • OCTOBER 12-14

The appeal of mountain unicycling (MUUni) has grown large enough to draw in people like famous climber and writer John Long. However, loyal mountain unicyclists still comprise a small crowd—only around 65-70 MUUni riders are expected to participate in the 12<sup>th</sup> annual California Mountain Unicycle Weekend in Santa Cruz this year. What they lack in numbers, they make up for in enthusiasm.

"MUUni Weekend, so far, is pretty much on the down low," says event founder John Foss. "We're just a bunch of MUUni enthusiasts who get together once a year to ride some trails."

Participants and spectators alike should be wowed by the event this year. Los Gatos MUUni rider Corbin Dunn has been building an extensive trails course on his property in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The Street Corp course, a combination of Northshore and trials features, will give riders like Beau Hoover, Spencer Hochberg and Dan Henton a chance to show off their skills on 20" and 24" unicycles. Additionally, unicycling legend and YouTube star Kris Helm will be making an appearance.

Last year, a crowd turned out for the Tahoe festival. This year the event swaps the granite

and alpine air of the Sierra for the rolling singletacks and sandy beaches of Santa Cruz.

For the first time in the event's history, there will be a choice of Coker big-wheel (36") unicycles or traditional wheel (24" or 26") rides.

The event begins Friday at De Laveaga Municipal Park with both MUUni and Coker races. Later, participants can participate in a MUUni ride in Wilder Ranch. Saturday rides include Nisena Marks and Sequoia Demonstration Forest rides with the Street Corp at Darr's house winding up the MUUni activity for the day. Sunday's events will include another Nisena Marks ride and the cap-off event that will draw in even unsuspecting spectators: a trials competition at the Sanbright Beach jetty (west side of the harbor entrance).

There is no cost for participants or spectators. However, everyone must buy their own dinner and beer at select Santa Cruz breweries over the MUUni weekend. Apparently, tough love produces strong riders.

For more event information:  
[www.unicycling.com](http://www.unicycling.com)

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