

Hi, I'm Mike, I suck at technical Mountain Biking



You can see Steve coming up fast on the guy rockin' it on the technical descent through the rocks. You're thinking yeah, that guy better move out of the way or Steve's going to run him over! Team Chain Reaction schooling the world! Yeah!

No, this is not the first step in a 13-step program, because that would imply I'm going to get better. Ain't going to happen. I just can't suspend my disbelief, the idea that I can ride over rocky terrain and not crash and burn and maybe look like a human tumbleweed rolling down the hill.



Well, um, sure, like that's gonna happen. I was hoping to get a more-impressive photo, before Steve unclipped. This might not be his area to shine, but trust me, I suck even more.

It's not as if my brother Steve was a lot better. But I think he sucked less, and that's a good thing. He's at least getting out on a mountain bike fairly often, but obviously in very different terrain than what we experienced today.

Obviously, we didn't travel all the way to Arizona to do two short mountain bike rides! This was the "fun" part of a 3 day program called the IBD Summit, one of those things where you get together with a bunch of the best dealers across the country (70 shops represented) and a lot of distributors (they outnumbered us 2 to 1) and discuss what can be done to make cycling better for everyone. We're facing some significant issues in this industry, with the number of brick & mortar bicycle retailers dropping fast, especially in more-rural areas. What people are noticing is that bicycle retailers are actually part of the infrastructure that enables cycling, and that areas without many shops are in decline, participation-wise. Why? Because not everything can be done on-line, like fix a flat, make a bike fit better and ride more comfortably, even help choosing the right type of bike for a given area.

The message to the industry is that it's not fair that the brick & mortar retailers get charged more than the on-line players (we do, this is honestly true!) and it's especially not fair that our end of the business ends up incurring the costs and time of dealing with warranty issues that arise, regardless of where purchased. Things may finally change for the better.

But enough of that. Enjoy making fun of my incompetence, and yes, it really could be that the purpose of my life is to serve as a warning to others. As in, if your technical mountain biking skills are like mine, when you get out on the trail, you don't want any witnesses. --Mike--

