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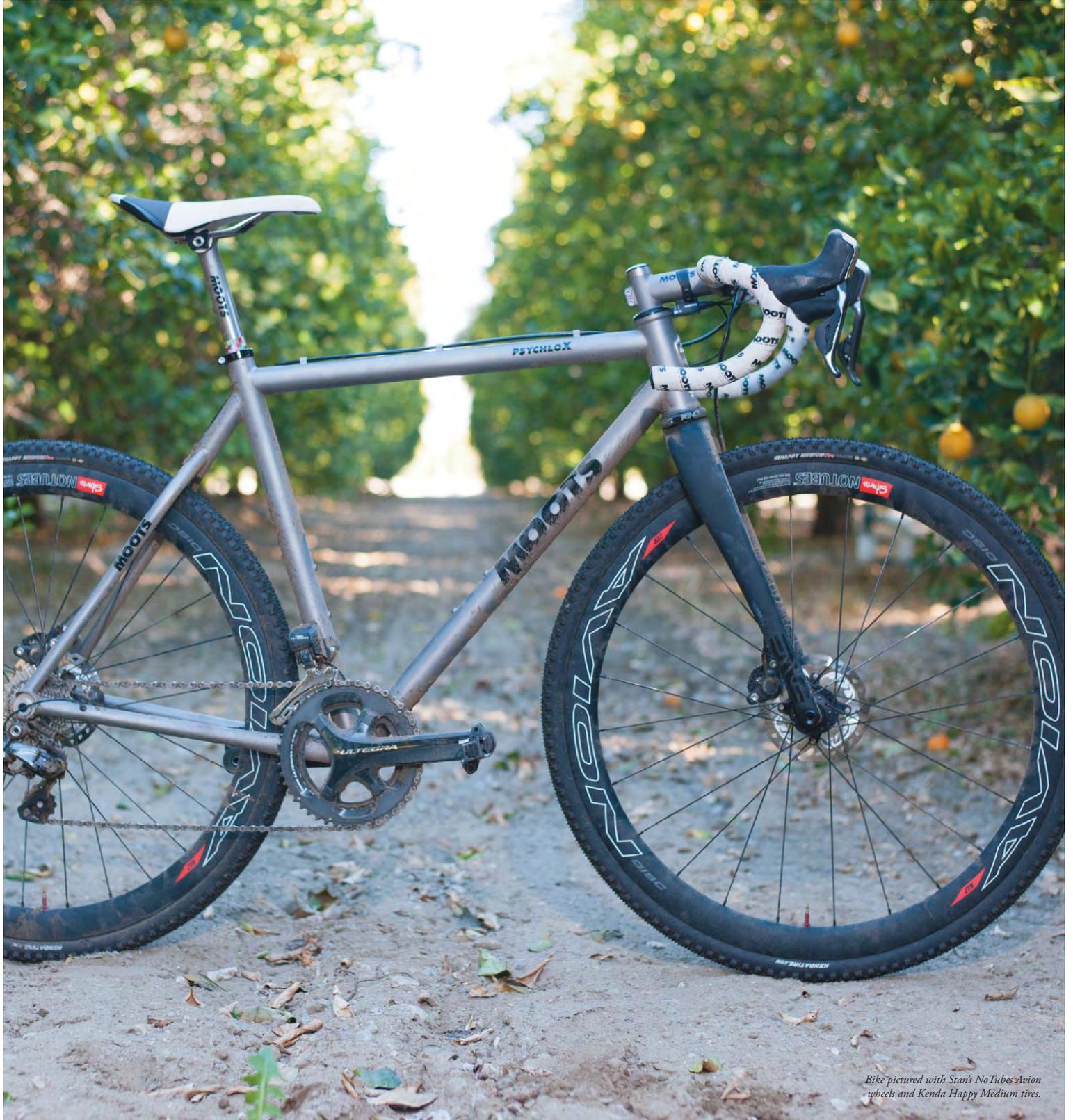
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Bike pictured with Stan's NoTubes Avion wheels and Kenda Happy Medium tires.

MOOTS PSYCHLO X

By Jeffrey Stern // Photos by Tyler Leicht

Fifteen miles south of Santa Barbara sits Rincon, a world-renowned surf break. Four years ago I took part in an off-road triathlon that included a half-marathon run at low tide almost all the way to this famed location. Never before had I thought that on an extreme low tide I could also ride all the way there, but I'd also never been on the Moots Psychlo X. Moots bikes are hand-built in Steamboat Springs, Colorado, and the titanium frames are the objects of lust for many an avid cyclist. You wouldn't think a bike designed and built in the Rocky Mountains would devour the beach like a bulldozer, but it glides cleanly through deep off-camber sand while swerving to avoid being washed away by the incoming tide. Aboard Moots's redesigned 'cross bike, I made the sandy spin from my home all the way to Rincon Point.

The titanium frame is dressed with a Shimano Ultegra Di2 drivetrain and the corresponding R785 hydraulic disc brakes along with tubeless ready Mavic Ksyrium Pro Disc wheels. A titanium Moots stem and seat post are elegant touches especially considering their combined aftermarket price tag of 780 dollars. The stock build certainly provides a fast and joyous first ride dodging the incoming waves, but I knew immediately the bike needed to be set up tubeless—and fast. There is nothing worse than running 40 PSI on your 'cross bike and carrying two tubes knowing that you still might get stranded with the dreaded triple flat. It also sucks to run such high tire pressure when lining up for a 'cross race as it detracts from the true potential of the bike. After two flats in one race, I decided to mount some tubeless tires on the tubeless ready rims. Oh what a difference it makes! Running 22 PSI on the Psychlo X really brings out the excellent ride qualities of the titanium frame. When the terrain turns treacherously bumpy, the material really soaks up the chatter.



Geometry (55 Centimeters)

Top tube (Horizontal)	560 millimeters
Seat Tube Angle	73.5 degrees
Headtube Angle	72.5 degrees
Chainstay	423 millimeters
Wheelbase	989 millimeters
Bottom Bracket Drop	61 millimeters
Reach	390 millimeters
Stack	577 millimeters



On the 'cross course, the rear end feels maneuverable even in tight, technical corners. Additionally the wishbone seat stay makes lateral support on the Psychlo X quite impressive. The bike really excels in technical turns, like those with off cambers or diminishing radii. The tight wheelbase makes it easy to thread the needle while looking around the bend for the next line or obstacle. While the frame is not as snappy as a stiff carbon 'cross rig, the bike holds momentum well once rolling. As the first rain drops of the season started to fall in California, I sought out the muddiest muck I could find. The flared chainstays and wishbone seat stays have exceptional mud clearance and the sandy soil doesn't clump on the wheels and rub the fork or frame.

The bike is also capable on longer gravel grinding rides, though the 36/46 cross gearing has its limits on super steep ascents and descents. Throw a compact crank on, and this bike is good to go for a big adventure. While seated the Psychlo X climbs smoothly—almost with a road bike feel. Should you find yourself staring down any rock gardens on your big adventure, rest assured the bike can pick its way through with confidence.

At 18.8 pounds without pedals, the bike won't win the lightest set-up award on the start line of a race, but the smooth ride and sound handling will have you carrying momentum and flowing through the most technically demanding courses. The price tag is the major obstacle for this bike, as there are many other similarly spec'd bikes for considerably less money. However, the premium price is for a titanium frame built in the Rocky Mountains that can schralp everything from sandy ruts to sloppy fields. 

Moots.com / \$4,500 (Frame Only),
\$5,070 (Frameset), \$8,699 (As Tested)