



FROM NOVICE TO NUTTER?

**MTB GURU DAVE YOUNGS REVEALS HOW TO
RIDE MUD WITHOUT LANDING IN IT, AND
TACKLES CORNERS FOR BEGINNERS...**

Pictures: Jake Samuels

NOVICE / BEGINNER: CORNERING

THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF LINES AND LOADS OF WAYS TO APPROACH CORNERS AS THEY ARE ALL DIFFERENT. IN THIS ISSUE WE ARE GOING TO DEAL WITH A SLIGHT GRADIENT COMING DOWN THE TRAIL ON A SIMPLE FLOWING LINE WITH NO OBSTACLES ON THE TRAIL AND CLEAR FIELDS OF VIEW. TIPS LIKE OUTSIDE WEIGHTED FEET AND PEDALS WILL BE TAUGHT IN A LATER ISSUE.



1 APPROACH

Look at the corner from your approach. Whilst you are learning walk the lines you want to try, and look for your braking and turning points. Similar to driving a car you don't want to be braking mid corner and unsettling the bike and suspension. Keep your weight in the middle third of the bike with heels down, knees bent and your body supple on the bike. Pedals centred with your outside foot forward depending on the corner. The approach speed will be determined by the sharpness of the turn. Look at the surface and choose the smoothest line.

2 OBSTACLE

Start on the outside of the turn. Aim to hit the apex - look where you want to go and the bike will follow. Scrub off any speed. Think about it logically, your front wheel cannot track and follow a line if you have the front brake locked on tight. Move your hips as you look through the corner and the bike will follow. Keep low on the bike and watch out for cut-off tree stumps and large rocks if you couldn't see through the corner on your approach route. Keep your front forks weighted so the tyre has an even contact patch with the ground. This will stop the front end washing away.



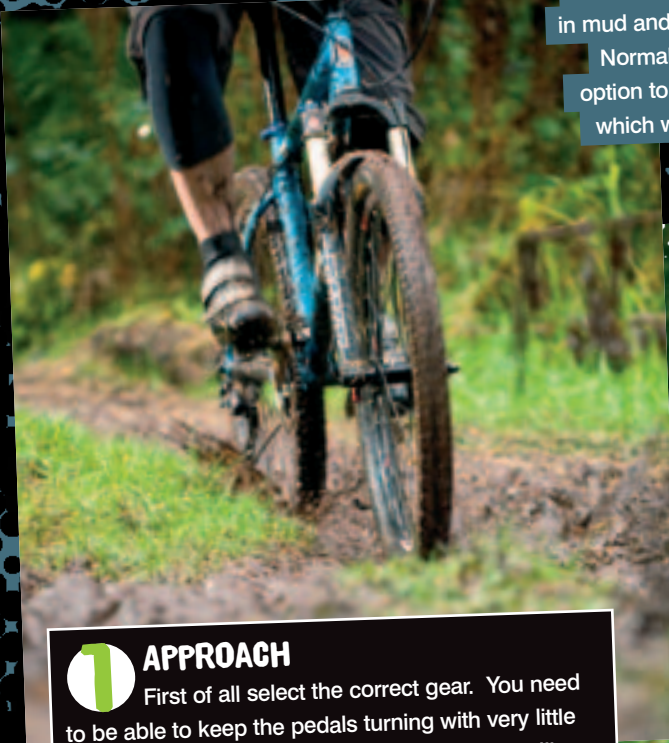
3 EXIT

As you exit the corner you are going to either hook up another corner or send it on the fast flowing single track. If you are hooking up another corner, adjust your feet and speed, look through the corner and adjust your body weight. If you are moving onto the fast flowing singletrack look forward to the next issue!

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ADVANCED: MUD

Continuing on from the last article where we learned to master the wet roots we are now going to look at MUD! Considering it seems to rain all year round on our lovely Island this skill will come in very useful. Places like Helens Tower seem to stay muddy most of the year. You will find yourself up to your wheel axles in mud and over the bars if you don't keep an eye on your lines and route selection. Normal, every day riders, will ride the same tyres all year round. If you have the option to run summer and winter tyres, go for something with a wide tread pattern which will clear the mud better. Lower your tyre pressures, by 5-10 psi. This will give a greater contact patch with the ground...



1 APPROACH

First of all select the correct gear. You need to be able to keep the pedals turning with very little resistance. Too much pressure on the pedals will make the rear tyre spin in the mud. Pick your line and stick to it. If you are unsure of the depth of the mud check it first. Not with your feet, try a stick!

Keep your arse on the seat if you need to pedal. This will assist with the traction in the mud when you apply pressure through the pedals. Keep the front end light and move your weight in to the back third of the bike. Approach at a fast walk. Look for grip and any gravel in the mud to give you a bit of traction.

2 OBSTACLE

As your front wheel hits the mud keep all your weight off the bars, try and stay in the channel or rut until you are clear of the obstacle. Sudden changes in direction will make the bike wash out from under you. Stay seated and keep a steady pedalling motion. Don't pull on the brakes. If the rear starts to spin, move your arse back on the seat. Don't try and lean the bike to the left or right or again it will wash away as you have no weight in the side of the tyre wall. Keep the pedals turning.

3 EXIT

Look for your exit and any grass or gravel to give you traction. Keep the pedals turning as you need the forward momentum. Remember, once clear look at your line and read the trail as taught in previous articles. Once you are a few metres once clear of the mud the tyres will be trying to shed all the mud so don't get to excited and change back to your normal trail riding.



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BIKE SADDLE ADJUSTMENT

A few simple adjustments on your bike will alter your riding and the improvements will be unreal. The adjustments are simple.

- MOUNTAIN BIKERS need to ensure they use the full pedal stroke to save energy. Most people have their saddle at the wrong height and waste too much energy. You can lower the saddle for descents.
- WITH the crank arm at the 6 o'clock position and you sat on your bike you should have an inch bend in your leg. The ball of your foot should be on the pedal.



- THE SADDLE can be moved backwards and forwards on the rails depending on your personal preference. Be aware, this will effect your body position and centre of mass on the bike.
- YOU can also move the saddle angle. Most people ride with it horizontal or slightly nose down.
- TIGHTEN all the bolts and try your new adjustments

The correct position



PRODUCT REVIEW

NOMAD 18V CORDLESS PRESSURE WASHER

RRP £179

THE NOMAD holds 14 litres of water and will clean 2-3 bikes. Far from a one trick pony I have used it to wash the car, sea kayaks, muddy biking kit before it goes in the washer and the windows at home when the wife tells me off!

The tank is detachable and has a filter to stop the main tank filling up with mud and debris.

The hose and attachments are stored in the neat little front neoprene pouch. The nozzle has the full range of adjustments from jet spray to fine mist.



The battery pack will last for a good few washes and the mains charger is included in the package.

The whole unit takes up very little space and truly is a portable affair best used as a standalone unit.

In summary: You get what you pay for, simple to use and truly portable.

For all the geek information take a look at the NOMAD site, www.nomad2go.com



■ Ireland's most qualified coach and guide, Dave Youngs has over 15 years experience in the field. Dave holds the MIAS Level 6 Coaching Qualification, endorsed by the CTC and Association of British Cycling Coaches and is a qualified First Aid and map reading instructor. Youngs MTB Instruction have recently been working with a number of high profile European holiday companies and local activity centres to ensure mountain bike standards are maintained and Dave has also been training local Down Hill champions wanting to make the transition to coaching and guiding.