



{Bike Test}
DIAMONDBACK
"LUCKY 18"

Little ride, big moves

Diamondback bikes have been a staple name in BMX for longer than you have been alive. One of the most important factors when searching for that perfect bike is knowing that the company will stand behind their product. Diamondback does just that, as they have for more than 30 years, and the new 2009 "Lucky 18" is the end result of three decades of research and product testing. Having a bike that is too small for you is not good, and having a bike that is too big for you is even worse. That is where the 18-inch category comes in. It is the "in between" bike for

riders who are too tall for a 16-inch but aren't quite tall enough for a 20-inch. Now is the time to start putting together that list of nice things that you have done lately and show it to your parents; once you're done reading this, of course.

LET'S SEE WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF...

The silver and brown color scheme is unique and the graphics are simple but stylish. The all chromoly frame is the base of this shredding machine. The Lucky 18 comes equipped with an 1-1/8 inch head tube, a threadless FSA head-

set, detangler tabs and a mid bottom bracket. It also has top and downtube gussets for added strength and stability. The two-piece bars are 24 inches wide, giving you something solid to hold on to and more control in the front end. They are clamped down with a four-bolt alloy, top load stem. Braking power comes from a 907-U Brake, two-finger Tektro lever, SST amplifier and soft compound brake pads. Three-piece tubular cranks, 28-tooth sprocket and a one-piece ten-tooth driver make up the micro drivetrain. You will be rolling in style with front and rear 36-hole hubs laced to Alienation rims wrapped with Kenda Kontact tires. The Diamondback jump seat is padded and comes equipped with rip stop sides to hold up through your bails. Your feet will stay in place with the Diamondback "sound" pedals with replaceable pins and a chromoly axle.

WHAT WE LIKED...

The bike felt great overall. Looks wise, it is on point and will definitely get some jealous stares at your local riding spot. Going from a 16-inch bike to an 18-inch bike might sound like it won't make that much of a difference but just having that extra bit of room to move around helps out a lot. The frame design and geometry felt right on. Our test rider quickly adapted to this bike and a few things that stood out to him were how dialed the brakes were even with a detangler, thanks to the soft pads and DC amplifier that bit right into the rim. Another gem was how comfy the padded seat was which comes in handy when pinching it with your legs for certain tricks like barspins, and of course sitting. He also mentioned how good the tires gripped on all different surfaces once they wore in a bit. Along with all of those features the Lucky 18 was nothing but fun to ride and took no time at all to get used to, making it that much more likeable.

Quality wise, you can tell that they spent a lot of time researching components, making smart and functional changes to the geometry, and they didn't take any short cuts, combining it into one great package. It makes us feel good knowing that companies like Diamondback are out there providing options for riders of all sizes.

WHAT WE DIDN'T LIKE...

Our main thing was simply a concern with the weight of the bike. Twenty-six pounds can feel quite heavy to a small rider (under five feet) making it a little hard to whip around. Typically weight is only an issue until the rider gets used to it, then it is forgotten about, so we wouldn't worry too much

about it. This bike also offers many ways to kick weight for cheap, so it's not without options. The bars slipped a little bit due to the paint where the stem clamps down, but after resetting them and tightening them for a second time, they never budged again. While talking about the bars, we can't say that we are huge fans of their bends. Their wide curves are more appropriate for a bar on a 20-inch than an 18-inch. While our test rider didn't have any issues with them, we would have preferred a set of bars with a smaller box area to better suit the bike's otherwise flawless, scaled-down appeal and performance.

END OF STORY...

If you are in that "in between" stage that we talked about earlier and nothing seems to fit, then the Lucky 18 is just what the bike doctor ordered. It will carry you through plenty of sessions without forcing you to try and handle a bike that is too big for you or ride around looking goofy if you

have outgrown your 16-inch. The bike is dialed and has some quality components that are built to last. The Lucky 18 is a bike you can feel good about investing in. Now comes the hard part; mowing lawns, taking out the trash, not picking on your little brother and getting good grades. All of those things will hopefully lead you straight to the bike shop to pick up one of your own. We had a hard enough time explaining to our test rider that we had to give the bike back at the end of the test. Nothing is perfect, and sure, the Lucky

18 could be a little lighter but come on now; this thing is shred-ready and competitively priced. Do you really need anything more? ●

HITS:

- Chromoly frame
- Three-piece cranks
- Mid Bottom Bracket
- Alienation Rims

MISSES:

- Fairly heavy
- Bars slipped



HEAD TUBE: 73°
 SEAT TUBE: 70°
 TOP TUBE: 17.75"
 CHAINSTAY: 13.25"
 WEIGHT: 26 lb.
 PRICE: \$330