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Are E-bike riders cheating?

If you are one of the many riders of e-bikes these days, you will no doubt hear the “cheating” criticism at some point. Unless you are much wittier than I, it is best to have thought about your response and have a little ‘cheat sheet’ of answers prepared for the accuser. Here are some suggestions that I call the GET rule. It stands for green, efficient, and thrifty.

1. Green and clean. An e-bike gets people on zero-emission vehicles. While there are advantages to push-bikes, having one but not commuting on it is the norm, whereas most e-bike owners love riding and commuting with its aid. That equates to significant carbon reduction, is healthy, and cleans our air.
2. Efficiency. Using a e-bike is about 100 times more efficient as a people mover than a conventional small car. That means for a similar commute, if you drove your car for 3.5 days you could drive every day the rest of the year for the same energy. It’s just phenomenally more efficient to move you around.
3. Thrifty. While the purchase cost of an e-bike may seem high to some, the operational cost is so low that it makes it a very thrifty ride indeed. No registration, WOF or petrol makes the charging of the batteries (about 14 cents) inconsequential. The cost per kilometer is very low, and coupled with the other key advantages of the e-bike (efficiency and emissions), this makes the choice easy and attractive to the thinking person.

Unfortunately, most of the detractors do not know what an e-bike can do for their lives, are resistant to change, and often have never ridden on one. That is their right, but when they are spilling irrational objections to you about your e-bike, you have the GET rule to aid your response.

Did you know?

The world’s fastest trains, and increasingly the world’s sportiest cars, are electrically propelled.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Hoons on E-bikes*
- *22 amp hour battery available*
- *eZee Cargo e-bikes in award.*
- *WW. Ching makes NZ tour.*

Interview with W.W. Ching. E-bike visionary and designer

Wai Won Ching has been an award winning, central figure in the development of the modern e-bike. To demonstrate their potential, he rode across Africa and Asia on stock eZee Torqs, his ground-breaking electric touring bike. The purpose-built e-bike factory that he built and its quality controls is also a first. He is a celeb in the e-bike world.

Q. I understand the Torq was your first commercial e-bike. Did you make others before that?

A. We started off with late 90's models with brushed motors that weighed over 6 kgs and lead acid batteries at 14.5 kgs. Today we have that same capacity for about 370 Wh at 3.1 kgs with Li+ battery, and 3.5 kgs for the motor. We have come a long way since those early days.

Q. The Torq is now famous in the e-bike world. What about it was so revolutionary when you invented it?

A. In yr 2000 when we started, e-bikes in Europe and Japan were only for senior citizens, and all the frames were designed with low step thru' or ladies types, with modest performance.

But I realized from day 1, that the electric bikes are for everyone who wishes to commute by cycling or even for recreation. In here lies a huge difference in my design concepts - 1) Power and energy capacity 2) frame designs. From the beginning we installed the largest battery packs possible on a bicycle, like 36V 10Ah of Lead acid battery, then we moved to NiMH of 36V 9Ah battery in 2003 when we introduced the Torq with a standard diamond frame and 700c (28") wheels. We introduced LI+ battery in 2005. In Sept 2005, Ian Seager took part in the British Legion London to Paris Charity ride, 19 hrs covering 277 miles in 4 days,

but he was still in the cast and braces for his shattered knee from Rugby, and rode with one leg. Our competition still had bikes with 24V and 5 to 8Ah. Seager dominated the race.

Q. How have you kept the Torq one of the best selling e-bikes today?

A. Business is just like cycling, you must move forward to stay on. We are innovating and continuously improving. We have introduced sophisticated cycling components as they are developed by the cycling industries, such as the Alfine hub gears and the continuous variable hub gears from Fallbrook Technology - NuVinci 360, and better quality batteries and electronics for the battery management system. All of our sub-components have improved too.

Q. Now that eZee Is a global brand, are you still innovating with new products?

A. We try to make our ebike design universally acceptable, and market it worldwide, although we have various performances to fit the regulations in each country. We have sold bikes in Iceland and Alaska to New Zealand and South Africa, from Miami to Prague. We don't have all the answers, of course, so we collaborate with others that have innovations as well, like with Grin Technologies in Canada with the world's most advanced electric cycle computer (interface and display console) and NL Tek in Korea with most advance LED lights. We have more exciting things in the works.

Q. Justin Limere is a remarkable member of your design team. How were you so fortunate to get him working with eZee?

A. I believe success comes with 60% hard and clever work, and 40% from luck. I had a chance meeting

with Dr. Limere in Vancouver and I recognized immediately the talent that is there, and we came together as underdogs in the e-bike world to help each other out. Justin spends about 4 weeks a year with us in Shanghai on product development/quality control.

Q. At this point is China the only place to competitively manufacture e-bikes?

A. Maybe not only, but certainly one of the most competitive. China has tremendous advantages in e-bikes, starting with the rare earths that China controls 95% of the supply used to make magnets used in the motor. Because of this material there are lot of manufacturers for rare earth permanent magnets in China. The next important thing is the battery. Battery manufacturing is in fact very labour intensive, although they are moving forward with automations. 3rd, as manufacturing of bicycle and cycling components; it is probably the largest in the world as well.

But then I also wish to inform everyone, eZee bikes are of global origin. The al. and copper could be from Australia or Chile, some of the electronic components come from USA or US companies operating in Mexico, or European companies operating in Morocco, Shimano parts and bearings from Japan, Axa Basta locks from France, and kick stands used on our Torq from Pletscher in Switzerland, and tyres made in Indonesia for Schwalbe that is German, and adhesive we use for the magnets in the motor are from the UK, and etc, etc.

Q. You plan to visit New Zealand and meet the shops that sell eZee. We must be tiny compared with your bigger countries. Does our country really fit into the eZee distribution scheme?

(finished on last page.)

In the E-bike news; eZee in NZ awards, new battery, Palmerston N. update

Ezee cargo bike recognition

The eZee Yuba electric cargo bike was the second finalist of the Sustainable Business Network design and innovation award in Auckland last month. Mayor Len Brown spoke eloquently and a host of business leaders chose from about twenty impressive entries to award the eZee bike the second finalist finish.

Meanwhile, market acceptance has been good, and sales of the Yuba are up.

The 22 amphr. is out

eZee has the new 22 amp hour maxi-battery available in early January. I am excited about this development because everything a battery should do will just get better with the 22 AH. Greater distance, better climbing, and longer life are all attributes of a bigger battery. The 22 has all this and slides right into our existing eZee brackets. Check for pricing.

Palmerston e-fleet update

Tom Croskery of Palmerston council reports no problems with the eZee fleet of Sprints that is doing daily service all over town. This is not a sometimes operation, but a daily service fleet. The bikes are part of the delivery fleet that is projected to remove several cars from service and save the ratepayer lots of money. The health and traffic benefits are just an added bonus, as the main interest is cost saving.

Hoons on e-bikes; report the abuse

My conversation with the hoon went like this.

Hoon: "hey, I want to put 64 volts on my 1000 watt e-bike motor, can you help me do this" **Me:** "Are you using this for an off road jump-bike?" **Hoon:** "No, me and my friends go out at night and see how fast we can go on our e-bike wheels. My friend goes 80!" **Me:** "That would be very dangerous to you and the pedestrians. Are you aware how illegal that is." **Hoon:** "The cops haven't stopped us yet. They can't test our bikes, because we look just like bikes, so there's no problem." **Me:** "Do you realize the criminal offence of hitting someone on an unregistered, uninspected moped?" **Hoon:** "You don't get it, do you."

E-bike riders, we have a problem on our hands. The NZ law is lenient and makes our bikes very useful, but there are hoons that are threatening all the good that the adoption of e-bikes can do. If you



know someone that is running their bikes at 40 kph or more, they are surely over-amping their bikes. To do nothing is

to imperil the public and imperil the good deal we have with the Transport Ministry.

Imagine the news headlines when the first person is seriously injured by one of these hoons. 'Silent Killer e-bike Maims Granny'. 'Ministry Backtracks on 300 Watt Rule.' It would not be fair, but we all will be branded by the hoons on e-bikes.

I encourage you to report abuses to this law. When we turn a blind eye to people running unregistered mopeds in the bike lanes and mixed use paths, we are negligent in our civic duty of protection of others. It's not being a snitch; it's protecting the public and our transportation option.

EZOOMERS NZ
NEWS AND VIEWS
ON ELECTRIC BIKES

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*Your next bike could
be an e-bike*



*We encourage submissions about Ebikes and issues surrounding Ebikes for publication
in subsequent issues of EZoomers. Simply drop an email to Jace Hobbs at the return
address and your ideas or article may well find its way to the many who want opinion
and information about Ebikes in NZ.*

W.W. Ching visits NZ and interview

WW. Ching to visit New Zealand. In the e-bike world, Mr. Ching is a celeb. President of the eZee Kinetic Company and developer of many firsts in the e-bike marketplace since his first English introduction of the Torq. "I will work with anyone who has a passion to promote sustainable and sensible transportation such as the e-bike. Besides, I have been a frequent visitor to New Zealand before on business as well as for vacations and now I am more than happy to have the opportunity and reasons to visit NZ again. "

(continued from page 2)

A. A big part of my activity in this business is to meet our representative and dealers, and with customers and potential customers visiting the shops. I get a feel of what they experience and what they are looking for. Many people have told me I have more passion for this than business sense, they quite easily recognize that.

eZee is small compared to some brands, but we have a larger global presence than anyone. Volume and size is not important.

Q. Why produce your new 22 ampr. battery? Aren't the 14's big enough?

A. There is never enough battery storage energy. I recognized this very early. If a 100 Ah could be fitted on a bicycle and the cost permits, it would be great to fit it on the bike.

Q. Are you motivated by environmental necessity for zero emission transportation, or are e-bikes just a business?

A. The e-bikes we produce make so much practical sense to ride, and it represent a tremendous challenge and opportunity to produce. In a sense I am not a true environmentalist, because I am having fun producing and distributing the eZee products.

