



THE SUSPENSION SPECIALIST



Tel: +27 (0)83 4026049

Email: hilton@haywardsuspension.co.za

- ★ Professional Service and Suspension Set-up
- ★ Official Distributor of Fox Racing Shox
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How The Pros Do It PART 1

I guess many of you out there wonder what suspension the Pro's use and why it works so well. Having worked with many Pro riders overseas I can try explain a little about what goes on as well as give some insight into how you can achieve similar performance according to your budget.

Works factory suspension is very rare and to be honest it is really trick! (Around R250 000 and up trick). Probably only the top 5 riders in each category in the world champs will have access to that stuff. It consists of high tech materials and engineering way out of reach of us normal riders.

Having said that the internals of this super trick suspension (valves and shims) are often almost identical to what is in the production bikes. It is the metals used, the surface plating as well as the contours that are special. The contours, surfaces and materials ensure optimal stiffness and maximum friction reduction - the key characteristics of good suspension. Technicians like myself are then responsible for testing with these riders and teams to ensure the best valving (settings.) This is still critical to get the most out of the trick stuff. Valving adjusts the suspension to fit the rider like a perfect glove according to his riding style, weight, personal preferences etc. This personal testing is always done pre-season at test tracks and is the key to their success. Once comfortable with the personalized setting we

usually leave them alone for the whole season and only ensure that the units are serviced very often and carefully too for optimal and constant performance. Click changes are done at different tracks by the technician to adjust the suspension for track conditions and to keep the rider happy and confident. Changing a setting once a rider was satisfied at the beginning of the season is seldom done. Such big changes in suspension set up between races will lead to difficulties for the rider to reach his peak performance and, in consequence, undermine his confidence in the material and possibly in his team as well.

Next month we will look at 3 practical ways in which we here in SA can affordably "pimp our suspension".