

## Twitter Thread by [Pulp Librarian](#)



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Today in pulp... I look back at Raleigh bikes: the most exciting bikes on the planet!  
#ThursdayMotivation #cycling



Raleigh was the all steel bike that defined a generation of cyclists: for many it was their first introduction to the joys - and perils - of cycling!



Sept 8 1928

# RALEIGH



The brand was named after Sir Walter Raleigh - inventor of the cigarette. And it was built in Nottingham - home of the cigarette. So obviously everyone who rode one smoked...



# RALEIGH





Now of course British cycling has a long and noble history...

BE MODERN-RIDE A RALEIGH

**RALEIGH**  
THE ALL-STEEL BICYCLE

THE RALEIGH  
NOTTINGHAM  
ENGLAND



...but you didn't come here for that! You want a big fat hit of nostalgia, so let's get right to it.



Let's start with the good stuff: the 10 speed Mark I Raleigh Chopper! Possibly the most dangerous - and therefore best - bike any child could own. I mean, look at it!!

# RALEIGH CHOPPER<sup>®</sup>

**Wilder...Tougher and more fun for 1970...Puts 'em all Down!**

Really beefed-up for 70 the new Choppers are built tougher with Raleigh's patented advance design wedge chassis *modified* for this year . . . the L-Bucket dragster Saddle now sits on a Spring suspension rig that gobbles up bumps to make your ride the smoothest . . . Geared for fast starts and easy pedaling, Choppers give you the go with rugged Huret gear clusters or famous Sturmey Archer hubs . . . all fitted with new-design power consoles featuring exciting controls from Split T-Bar, and Ball Shifters to Stem shifters for the gals . . . most every thing you need in hardware to put you out in front and keep you there.

You're sure to find loads of wanted "extras" that are standard equipment on all Choppers at no extra cost . . . like Raleigh red-line Vinylon tires both slick and studded, chromed roll bar and fenders front and rear, sure-stop caliper brakes and built-in kick stands . . . these plus other way ahead features so you can put 'em all Down!

Choose from a full array of Wild Chopper dragster models and colors . . .

## **Deraillleur Ten Speed**

Fitted with rugged Huret 10-speed gear and Twinshift power console with split T-Bar control plus tension lever to lock in Speed . . . padded oversized sissy bar is standard equipment. *Boys Model* in Black, Blue, or Orange.

## **TCW Three Speed**

Fitted with 3-speed Sturmey-Archer hub with front and rear caliper hand brakes. *Boys Model* in Black, Blue, Orange, or Yellow. *Girls Model* with new Stem Shifter in choice of Blue or Orange with Black or White Seat.

## **Deraillleur Five Speed**

Fitted with Huret 5-speed gear and power console with T-Bar controls. Padded oversized sissy bar is standard equipment. *Boys Model* in Black, Blue, Green, Orange, or Yellow.

## **AW Three Speed**

Fitted with Sturmey-Archer TCW hub (3-Speeds and coaster brake) and New Sportshift with Sport-thrust Ball Shifter . . . Equipped with front caliper brake. *Boys Model* in Black, Blue, or Orange. *Girls Model* in Blue or Orange.

## **CST Coaster Single Speed**

Same fine Chopper construction and styling . . . fitted with coaster foot brake. *Boys Model* Blue or Orange. *Girls Model* in Blue or Orange.

(Not Illustrated)



10-Speed console

5-Speed console

3-Speed console



Deraillleur Ten Speed

Bizarre wheels, an unbalanced banana seat and a frankly lethal gear lever placement made the Mark I Chopper a bike that required strong nerves to ride!





Junior Chopper options were available: the Budgie and the Tomahawk let you slowly build up your confidence, along with your bruises, blisters and minor fractures.





By 1976 Raleigh had released the Mark II chopper: less unbalanced but still next to impossible to ride safely in flares. Couldn't they give us a chain guard or something?



**originality**

Once there were ships. Then there were aircraft. Now there is Hovercraft, a whole new way of zipping across the sea – at high speed. It's this sort of original thinking that puts Raleigh out in front too, with innovations that really take off.



## CHOPPER II

A fully-integrated design featuring hi-rise bars with height limiter; T-bar gear shift with visual indicator panel; 3-speed Sturmey Archer gear; and Raleigh cable brakes. Also foam-filled 'polo' saddle, prop stand and wide studded tread rear wheel tyre. Colours: Fizzy Lemon, Infra Red, Ultra Violet.

The Chopper was the bike of the '70s that's for sure. But times they were a changing, and as the Summer of Punk came around so did a new, tougher kind of bike for the nation's youth...





The Raleigh Gifter was made of pig iron and could withstand a direct nuclear blast. Never was a bike so heavy to ride or so unforgiving on the cobbles...



...but it looked boss! With a three speed twist-grip gear shifter and a mean padded crossbar this is the bike Bodie and Doyle would ride to school. It was mean. And very heavy.





## Grifter XL

The fabulous new Grifter XL will be available from Summer 1981. All the rugged style and exciting looks of the Grifter plus useful built-in rear carrier and studded Redline tyres. A great-looking bike with its satin chrome handlebars on a black double-clamp stem and a sporty red handlebar cushion pad. There's also a new narrow, padded and quilted saddle and super 'Laser Light' graphics on the frame.

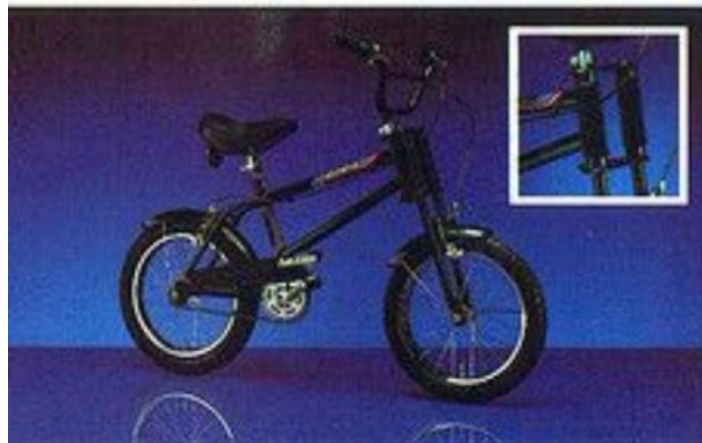
**Colour:** Gloss Black with Hot Red guards.



## Grifter

The original Raleigh Grifter, the toughest there is. Low-slung frame, triangulated for maximum strength with built-in propstand. Unique moulded foam saddle and matching handlebar pad. Tough studded tyres and flared mudguards rugged enough for rough country. Now with the all-weather protection of Raleigh Raincheck brakes.

**Colours:** Infra Red with Matt Black forks, Horizon Blue or Silver. All with Matt Black guards.



## Strika

Another winner from the same stable, scaled down to size. The handlebars have the unmistakable Grifter feel. Tubular front fork that takes all the rough treatment you can hand out with its 'mock shocks' that make it fantastically rugged. Twin caliper brakes with all-weather Raleigh Raincheck blocks.

**Colours:** Gloss Black, Silver or Hot Red. All with Matt Black trim.

## Boxer

Last in line, the Boxer owes a lot to the Grifter. Like its saddle, its handlebars and its studded tyres. This is a tough, sturdy bike for the younger rider, with its distinctive flared mudguards. Twin caliper brakes with Raleigh Raincheck for safer stopping in the wet.

**Colours:** Yellow or Space Blue with Matt Black trim.

Grifter Gangs soon sprung up across the country: ITV-watching toughs who smoked Bensons and knew the lyrics to Sham 69 songs! They probably read Battle Action too!





But nothing - genuinely nothing - could compare to Raleigh's next triumph: the Burner!



# BMX+ RALEIGH 'BURNERS'

**BURNER**  
**£89<sup>99</sup>**

**A**

**MINI-BURNER**  
**£77<sup>50</sup>**

**B**

ALSO  
AVAILABLE  
IN BLUE

SUITABLE FOR  
INSIDE LEG  
22 to 30 ins

SUITABLE FOR  
INSIDE LEG  
18 to 22 ins

**BURNER II  
TUFF**  
**£135<sup>00</sup>**

**C**

IMPORTANT!  
PLEASE CHECK  
INSIDE LEG  
MEASUREMENT  
BEFORE  
ORDERING

IN A CHOICE  
OF BLACK  
OR SILVER

**ULTRA  
BURNER**  
**£149<sup>00</sup>**

**D**

SKYWAY  
TUFFWHEELS

SUITABLE FOR  
INSIDE LEG  
22 to 30 ins

SUITABLE FOR  
INSIDE LEG  
22 to 30 ins

- DIA-COMPE  
BRAKES
- COMPETITION  
MACHINE
- TANGE 1200W  
FRONT FORKS
- SUGINO CRANK  
WITH DETACHABLE  
ALLOY CHAIN RING

**J** Boys' glove in quality leather.  
Elasticated wrist and padded  
back for extra protection. Red-black.  
JW 228 Gloves

Size 7 (ages 7 to 9 yrs) £9.99  
Size 10 (ages 10 to 12 yrs) 20 wks  
Size 13 (ages 13 to 15 yrs) 50p

**A** The BMX 'Burner' has a high tensile tig welded frame with matt black BMX front forks, spoked wheels with chrome rims and yellow tyres. One-piece forged crank with rat-trap pedals, gold-coloured chain, alloy brakes with 45° bend levers. 'V'-pattern matt black handlebars with foam grips. Sakae 4 bolt stem. BMX racing style saddle fitted with crash pads, rear reflector and chain wheel disc. Red or blue. Delivery normally within 28 days from receipt of order.

UL 509 Cycle £89.99 20 wks £4.50; 38 wks £2.37

**B** Mini burner BMX-style cycle with 16-in wheels. BMX front forks, spoked wheels, crash pads, rear reflector and chainwheel disc. Padded seat. Twin caliper brakes. Red. Delivery normally within 28 days from receipt of order.

UB 688 Cycle £77.50 20 wks £3.88; 38 wks £2.04

**C** BMX 'Burner' II Tuff - has all the features of the BMX 'Burner' but with yellow skyway Tuff wheels. Blue. Delivery normally within 28 days from receipt of order.

UL 696 Cycle £135.00 20 wks £6.75; 38 wks £3.56; 50 wks £2.70

**D** The BMX 'Ultra-Burner' has a high-tensile tig welded frame with Tange TX-1200W BMX front forks. Features include spoked wheels with alloy blue rims and blue gum-wall tyres. Sugino one-piece chrome moly crank with alloy BMX pedals, Sugino MX2 detachable alloy chain ring, Dia-Compe alloy brakes with 45° bend levers. Also alloy V-pattern handle bars with foam grips, Suntour 4-bolt stem, BMX racing style saddle, Crash pads, rear reflector. Silver-colour or black. Delivery normally within 28 days from receipt of order.

UL 725 Cycle £149.99 20 wks £7.50; 38 wks £3.95; 50 wks £3.00

**E** Special 'BMX' helmet by Toptek, a fit all sizes. Louvered front. Special ventilation cool when competing thermoplastic. Red.

AK 516 Helmet £16.99

**F** Team BMX decorative prints front and back. Foam elbows and shoulders. Royal-gold. AH 601 Jem To fit chest 26/28, 30/32 £7.99 20 wks 40p

**G** Team BMX trouser trimmings repeating BMX logo. Belt at front, back. Foam padding knees. Fibre: nylon. Ray AH 605 Trousers

Waist 24, 26, 28 ins £8.99 20 wks 45p  
Waist 30 ins £10.99 20 wks 45p

**H** Dunlop boot with and sturdy sole. blue. JX 200 Boots  
Sizes 13, 1, 2 £4.50 20 wks 45p  
Sizes 3, 4, 5 £4.99 20 wks 45p  
Sizes 6, 7, 8 £6.99 20 wks 45p

SUITABLE FOR  
INSIDE LEG  
22 to 30 ins



BMX fever gripped Britain in 1980, and only one bike would do for the country's bunny-hopping youth. The Burner had it all...

**R-11XL**  
Reynolds 531  
Heavy-duty crash tubing



**R-10 Tuff**



**R-10 Super Chrome**



**R-10 Chrome**



**BMX**  
We're burning up the track with a full line of superfine BMX models. For more details, ask for our full-color BMX brochure. It's chock full of exciting BMX action machines and accessories.



**R-10 BMF**



**R-10 MKII**



**R-10 Mite-Y-Mite**



**BMX Accessories**  
Everything a BMXer needs to make a bike a tough machine.



The Mark II version in sky blue and banana yellow, with tuff wheels and dipped crossbar remains a thing of beauty to this day. Why it's not in the Tate Modern is beyond me. Raleigh had reached its peak...



...and it was all downhill from there. The Bomber? The Maverick? Please! Raleigh failed to really get the mountain bike craze of the mid-80s and as BMX sales slumped so did the company's fortunes...



# CUSTOM BUILT FOR CRUISING

This is the ultimate street machine. The Raleigh Bomber. With its new curved frame and giant 26in x 2½in. wheels with chunky, deep tread gumwall tyres, the Bomber really is the big one.

When it comes to ride, the Bomber delivers in a big way. Its deep foam sprung saddle, wide-rise bars and black foam rubber grips make the rider feel part of his machine.

As for performance, the Bomber is one bike that gives you more than you'll ever need. There's a choice of single or 3 speed with trigger control and, with those awesome wheels, if you've got the legs, the Bomber's got the speed.

But what clinches it for the Bomber is its sheer, eye-catching, head-turning style. The bike's distinctive shape, striking gloss black finish and graphic scheme are guaranteed to make it the envy of the street.

**Colour:** Gloss black with exciting Bomber and searchlight graphics.

**Bomber**

It's last radical idea was the Vectar: a computerised bike designed by a man with a ruler. It was cycling's answer to Street Hawk, and lasted about as long.

# VECTAR

MACHINES BY RALEIGH



9.9  
THREE

12

22  
TWO

559





Raleigh bikes were crazy, energetic and innovative in their own British way. For example the 1970s Raleigh Strika anticipated the front fork shock absorber concept decades before other manufacturers...



And there is still a frisson of excitement to be had every time you grab a vintage Raleigh and go bombing around the local park. That feeling will never leave us. Nor will the minor concussion from falling off it and hitting a tree. Happy days!

More stories another time...

