



Jamis Dakar XAM **\$4,975**

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THE LATEST ITERATION OF THE JAMIS DAKAR XAM IS EVEN MORE GRAVITY-ORIENTED THAN ITS PREDECESSORS.

Jamis's Dakar XAM all-mountain bike was first introduced in 2007—and it's been significantly reworked every year since. When asked why, Jamis mountain product manager Craig Hoyt said that Jamis felt the changes would improve the platform and the ride.

The Changes: A long list

According to Hoyt, the following changes were made to the 2009 XAM to further "progress the platform." There's now a stiffer one-piece shock link, a stiffer and stronger upper stay, a stiffer and lighter lower stay, stiffer down-tube shock mounts, new suspension hardware and updated spec—including a Crank Broth-

ers Joplin Remote seatpost and SRAM's much anticipated HammerSchmidt two-speed crank. (This was our first opportunity to ride a production HammerSchmidt. See the details, below.)

The Ride: For the Punisher in all of us

Simply put, the XAM feels at home while charging through punishing terrain, finding new lines down hairy descents, and even enjoying a bit of lift-accessed riding. The handling is confident when speeds are high or pitch is steep, the bottom bracket is on the low side for the category (for a lower center of gravity), the reach is short, the bar is high and the triangles are compact, so they're out of the way when you need to apply heavy English.

As for the impact of the "small ring only" design of HammerSchmidt on the XAM's pedaling and suspension performance: We didn't notice any. However, testers did notice a dropoff in efficiency when using the overdrive setting. For a heavier, gravity-oriented all-mountain bike like the XAM, that efficiency loss isn't a huge deal compared to the benefits HammerSchmidt delivers.

Bottom line: If you're seeking an all-mountain bike with serious downhill capabilities, the XAM can deliver. —Matt Phillips

SIZES: 15, 17 (tested), 19, 21 in. **WEIGHT:** 33.50 lb. (17 in.) **GEOMETRY:** (size 17 in.) TT length: 22.56 in.; ST length: 14.64 in.; head angle: 68.5 degrees; seat angle: 73 degrees; bottom bracket drop: 0 **FRAME:** 7005 aluminum; FOX DHX Air 5.0 shock; 150mm travel **FORK:** FOX 36 Talas RC2 w/100-160mm travel **COMPONENTS:** SRAM X.0 rear shifter, rear derailleur; Truvativ HammerSchmidt AM two-speed crank, front shifter; Avid Elixir disc brakes; Crank Brothers Joplin Remote seatpost; Mavic XM317 rims; Syncros FR disc hubs; Kenda Nevegal 2.3-in. tires

We're HammerSchmidten Shifting with HammerSchmidt (HS) is so fast and precise that it will blow you away the first time you try it, no matter how prepared you think you are for it. Shifting without delay, without pedaling, is a welcome feature on a bike that you're riding through demanding terrain. The chain retention is a huge plus, too. HS has a slightly wider Q-Factor and reduced ankle clearance compared to SRAM's Stylo three-ring crank, but that didn't bother our testers. —M.P.

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