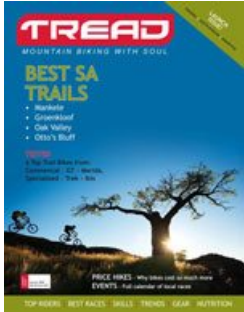


# Mountain biking mag launches

There's a new mountain biking magazine on the trail: *Tread* went on sale for the first time on Tuesday, 31 March 2009. While the publication adds to an already crowded South African cycling marketplace, the publishers are confident that they are targeting a niche market.



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According to editor Sean Badenhorst, it's a carefully planned project aimed at filling the gaps in a market thirsty for quality, insightful South African content that's relevant and original. At a time when publishers are cutting back on costs, and even titles, he believes that the niche title, catering only for mountain bikers, will hit its target market in the sweet spot and at just the right time.

## Shift to mountain biking

"Cycling in general is maintaining its popularity, but there's a big shift in focus from road cycling to mountain biking as road safety concerns, and boredom with the same old road races week in and week out, begin to take their toll," he says.

"Five years ago, the domestic cycling market saw six mountain bikes being sold to every one road bike. Now that ratio stands at 25 mountain bikes to one road bike. And interesting mountain bike events, catering for all levels of rider, have gone from punctuating the race calendar to filling it."

*Tread's* payoff line is "Mountain Biking With Soul", which is the consistent theme throughout the publication, independently published by a bunch of media-savvy mountain bikers. They include Badenhorst, former editor of *Ride* magazine and founding editor of the SA edition of *Bicycling*, and Donovan Jackson, a highly respected business and technology writer and avid mountain biker.

The magazine's editorial pillars are: trails (where to ride), bikes (what to ride) and people (top riders and interesting figures within the growing industry), with a smattering of practical nutrition, skills and technical advice, all of which is delivered in a

fresh, easy-to-navigate format.

## Contributors

Badenhorst's group of contributors includes world-class photographers Gary Perkin, Sven Martin and Aubrey Jonsson and former *Men's Health* editor Andy Ellis, an award-winning writer.

"The plan was to get the best writers and photographers I could. But the prerequisite was that they had to be mountain bikers in order to secure the depth and texture, which is missing in other titles. Mountain biking seems to attract talented, creative people, which made it a relatively easy task to assemble such a high-quality group of contributors that all love mountain biking," explains Badenhorst.

His point is confirmed by the recent third-place finish in the ladies category of the Absa Cape Epic by the publication's creative director, Nolene Saunders.

*Tread* is available at more than 80 bike shops nationwide and at selected mountain bike events, with plans to expand the distribution from Issue 2 to newsstands. The magazine will be quarterly in 2009 and likely to increase frequency to bimonthly in 2010. The cover price is R36.95.

For more information, go to [www.treadmag.co.za](http://www.treadmag.co.za).

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