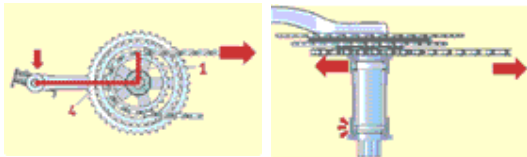


A Surprising Solution: the new BB-sets from SKF.

For many people in the bicycle industry it came as a surprise, when SKF introduced a new line of BB-sets at the IFMA and the Taipei Cycle Show.

Although SKF is widely known as the worlds largest maker of bearings and seals, the expectations of most potential customers for such a product line where initially not too high. The bicycle industry has seen too many large companies failing. The reasons for such failures might be found in the development of products, which don't meet the demands of the cyclists, but also in underestimating the level of technology and innovation. But SKF with its wide experience knows about these dangers and decided that at first they need to understand the market and find out if they can offer an appropriate product. So two years ago they asked I.D.M./Bernd Müsing for a market study and for ideas to improve the „old“ line of BB-sets or for something completely new.

The market analysis came to the conclusion that the BB-sets of today have a very high fail rate, especially in Mountain Bikes. With bearings that are too small to carry the stress resulting from the chain pull and seals that do not keep water and dirt out safely, the life expectance of most BB-sets would be less than 2 years of intense use. It was decided that the SKF BBs shall be designed to last the life of a bike: 10 years or 100.000 km.



SKF developed a solution for the highly stressed bearings with the use of rollers instead of balls on the chain side. Rollers can carry a much higher load than balls of similar size and also do not require a groove in the spindle at the most critical place. It was also clear that only a one-piece steel shell is an acceptable solution, because it will support the bearings much better than thin rings. This one-piece shell can not only provide an ideal, stable environment for the bearing, but also protects against water, dirt and mud from inside the frame.

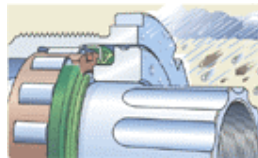
SKF GmbH

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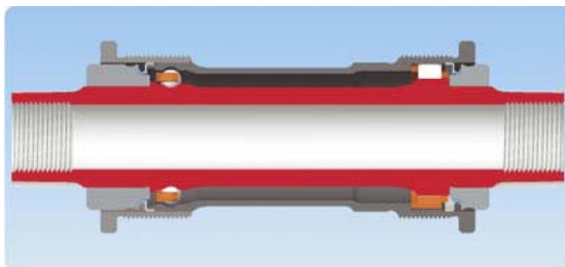
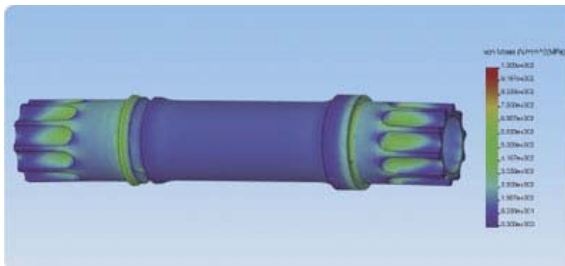
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For a perfect sealing of the unit we adapted a solution that was developed for automotive applications: The patented SKF axial seal provides low friction under normal circumstances but its lids close tight under pressure.



Naturally the whole design was subject to an intense optimization process, in which the stiffness and the strength of the spindles could be brought to unmatched performance.

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Finally it was agreed to use stainless steel for the rollers, balls, spindle and shell for the top model, but offer a CroMoly version with the same bearing design and sealing system at a very competitive price point.

While the main focus for OEM business lies in the ISIS-drive BBs for mountain bikes, there is also a full line of BBs for road bikes and the aftermarket with square ISO and JIS spindles.

With the new product-line SKF offers an absolutely unique solution for mountain and road bikers that ask for a truly reliable BB-set.

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