

# SPORTS

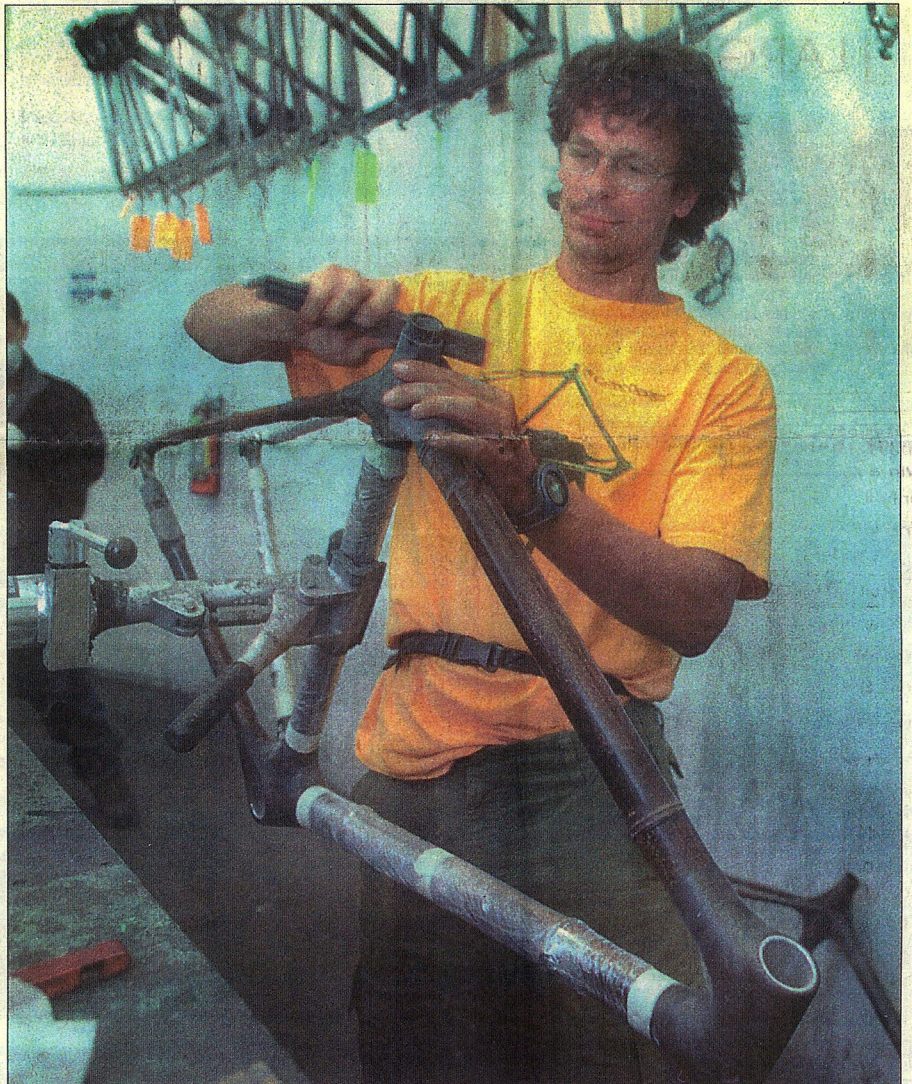
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SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL  
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*'Craig is taking a high-tech approach to one of the world's lowest tech materials.'*

WADE HALL, CO-OWNER, THE SPOKESMAN BICYCLES



Dan Coyro/Sentinel photos

Craig Calfee works on the bamboo bike frame headed for the Ironman race in Hawaii.

## Homegrown bamboo bike will race in Hawaiian Ironman

By **KAREN KEFAUVER**  
SENTINEL CORRESPONDENT

At 4 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 6, Karl Ko'omoa will rise from his bed and begin preparations to race in the Ironman Triathlon World Championship, one of the world's most grueling endurance events. The Kona, Hawaii resident is not daunted by the distance — a 2.4-mile ocean swim, followed by a 112-mile bike ride and 26.2-mile marathon run.

"I listen to some music, stretch and stay relaxed," Ko'omoa, 45, said. "I don't get caught up in the hype."

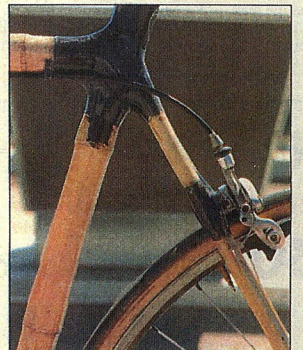
That's hard to do considering 1,500 hardbody competitors from 50 countries (and at least six from Santa Cruz County) come together to compete in this invitation-only event on the Kona coast of the Big Island.

Ko'omoa has raced the Hawaii Ironman seven consecutive years (1992-'98) until a car accident set him back the past two years. For his triumphant return to Ironman this fall, Ko'omoa has planned something special: He will ride a bamboo bike designed and built by Santa Cruz's Craig Calfee.

"I expect it to be a comfortable ride," said Ko'omoa. "The bike was designed to my specifications with similar geometry to what's on my other bikes."

The owner of 14 bikes has discovered through trial and error what works.

"The frame will be a little heavier, but I expect it to be comfortable, and that means very fast," Ko'omoa explained. "Bamboo is a natural material and I expect it to flex more subtly."



Calfee's errand bike shows the construction of the bamboo frame.

Please see **BAMBOO** on Page D2