

[Ellsworth Handcrafted Bicycles](#)

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Mtbr was very busy at the Handmade Bike Show this year...since it was the first year that we decided to do video interviews with as many of the builders as possible. Given our resources, we're pretty happy with the way things turned out. We took a ton of photos and videos, but even better, we got to meet a bunch of great people. The Portland bike scene is just incredible, and it is no wonder that it is the city that many others are trying to emulate, when it comes to bicycle commuting, riding, safety and awareness.

Unfortunately, not everything was perfect...some of the videos ended up on the cutting room floor due to technical difficulties (sorry Steve and Sean!) and we were not able to meet with everyone. There were also some big names there, that were hard to nail down...Bruce Gordon and Sacha Whilte (Vanilla Cycles) were probably the two busiest guys IMHO.

We also just flat out missed a couple of opportunities...one of these was Ellsworth Handcrafted Bicycles. Now, it may seem a bit odd that a company like Ellsworth would be at the North American Handmade Bicycle Show...I got a chance to ask Tony about this after the show, via email.

Mtbr.com: "Tony, it's interesting to see such a "big" brand (big compared to the average bike builder at the Handmade Show, that is), at this show...what is the goal or intention of Ellsworth being here at the show?"

Tony Ellsworth: "Wow-LOVE that Question-there's so much there! Thanks for asking that.

If Ellsworth is a "Big Brand" it's only because we have been an industry bench mark for innovation and performance so consistently for so long.

Ellsworth currently makes just 15 bike frames a day in our Vancouver Cottage Fabrication Facility.

These 15 frames are handcrafted by a team of 7 men and women, lead by Mike Hagstrom, the world's leading bicycle frame craftsmen. Mike started with Gary Klein and together they pioneered large diameter, Shaped, Tapered tube bicycles that Cannondale, and other Big Brands built empires on-then exported the look, but not the art of that overseas to cut costs. Notably, all going bankrupt racing each other to make the cheapest products... Not good for the industry or the US economy. Certainly not good for their investors who enthusiastically invested in cycling, in the United States.

Quite a shame. So for this reason, I dislike being compared to a Big Brand.

Mike Hagstrom and two other key associates, Dan Paris, and Troy Garza in Vancouver comprise the “Three Musketeers of Ellsworthia”.

Last year, we sold approximately 3,000 frames globally. Including the Project Pink bikes (show photo) which we contribute \$50 per unit to women’s cancer research. That’s how we personally support women’s cycling and the fight against cancer. and we challenge the Big Brands to contribute \$50 per unit sold of their women’s models too.

Every suspension innovation is based on the system originally drawn by me on a napkin over dinner with a mechanical engineer buddy. That today is the only internationally patented bicycle suspension in the world.

Each bike design is the obsessively efficient and optimized brain child of me, with contributions from the other 15 members of my staff who all ride, and enjoy cycling and the outdoors, and the environment.

We make everything in the USA, and we do it in environmentally conscious ways. Our facilities are clean green powered with the Sun, and soon with Wind power.

We believe in making things in our country instead of exporting the environmental irresponsibility and the expense of improving the human condition of workers to China—where there is no environmental responsibility, and workers earn less than \$70 a month—with no benefits.

We believe in keeping it clean green and friendly right here in our own neighborhood, and believe this is the ultimate statement to the environment, the people who comprise the “big brand” that Ellsworth has the image of being, and to the trade deficit that weakens our dollars here domestically, and long term weakens our economy and standard of living.

By Big Brand..you mean we TAKE ON A LOT?! Yes. We set our goals lofty and do our best to achieve them—you bet. “Go BIG or go HOME!”—we live by it! But each bike frame is unequivocally designed by me, a passionate cyclist since I was 12 years old, and the each design meticulously handmade by experienced bicycle craftsmen right here in the United States, a handful per day. We’re tiny man! But we hope to leave big foot prints for the big guys to fill with regard to environment, and contribution to Cancer Cures, Curing rather than contributing to the Trade Deficit, and improving the general health of the US economy— All with a product that has set the industry standard for over 17 years. Be sure to let the Big Guys know what is expected of the BIG BRANDS...”

Some Photos from the Show:

Oscar Winner Robin Williams owns an Ellsworth Truth and stopped by The Ellsworth Handcrafted Bikes booth to share a few laughs with Ellsworth's Aimee Rocheleau.



Ellsworth's momentum in the industry continues to climb as Tony Ellsworth's desire to produce the best quality bike in both craftsmanship

and scientifically proven increased efficiency for the rider.

