

Cruising Season, Traveling Large

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With the weather warming and the streets drying the cruising season is upon us, a needed addition to any quiver is a long board cruiser a deck setup for the boardwalk and rolling through the street just letting a massive plank of wood carry the momentum. Nothing feels like pushing on a deck as long as some people are tall. The sun is shining the weather is warming it's cruising season. This is the season to take your time getting where you are going and enjoy every minute of it. In this review we will take a look at 2 decks the local Chula Vista company Phat Cruise Boards & "Big Gun" and Hollywood Based Afroman & "The Big Worm". A pair of decks that carry speed like style and make great 4 person benches.

Phat Cruise & "The Big Gun"; I got this deck from Eider of Phat Cruise Boards of Chula Vista a recently re-emergent board company with unique style and a range of boards from 36" to 4'11" it came to me as a blank letting me try my hand at stencil art and gripping a deck almost as big as my coffee table (note to self have more than one razor). The deck has become one of the favorites of my quiver and I look forward to seeing the direction that this deck company goes in. Dimensions Wide 11.5"

Long 4'11"
 Wheel Base 44"
 Deck Height 4 1/2"

Construction Baltic Birch
 11 ply
 Wheel well cutouts
 Tapered nose and tail

Setup R150
 Krypto Classic K
 Stock Bearing
 Bones Soft Bushings

Conclusion

I don't think I have ever ridden a deck that I underestimated this much. I have ridden a few planks but this deck with it's 150 wheel cutouts is one versatile deck, far more carve capable than I expected and solid as a rock at speed. The ability to drop the edge with no concern for wheel bite is a huge advantage this deck has. Layback and drop knee carves just spill out on the hill as you slash your way down with the ability to pull full 360z in two lanes of traffic this deck feels like a full grown Newfoundland that thinks he's still a puppy.

The deck at speeds has the common to large decks attribute of making it feel like you are going slower than you are. The stability lends a confidence that enables you to charge hills and let the tail drift out on hard carves with control and yet still pushing yourself as well as the deck, dropping hard on a heel side carves round a turn and feeling the mild flex of the soft edges drop as you dig in with hand raised and feeling the wind whip of a well carved hill.

The wheel wells also have an interesting affect on the center line of the deck, the center line feels more taught than the edges giving a sort of hammock like feeling when dropping edges for carves. The deck does have a good amount of flex and pushing into or out of carves does feel far more energetic at speed. Pumping is responsive for such a big deck however the torque involved will give you diesel legs in no time.

On the beachfront or in seamless parking lots board walking is fun, there is little fear of stepping on wheels due to the number of ply's. Stepping on the holes directly can be accomplished with no loss of life or limb which was my main concern when I started board walking the deck. The lack of wheel bite makes me more confident when trying new things and the mild flex of the deck absorbs most miss steps giving you a chance to correct. I have actually been working on pushing fakie more often with this deck as the taught center line gives you a tactile response to where your foot is in relation to the edges.

The main obvious advantage of the Big Gun has is the wheel cut outs, no fear of wheel bite allows you to push the deck hard. The agility is another and the mild flex gives a really nice cruiser an extra push. I have had a good number of people try it out and the general opinion is that it's lots of fun. As with all big guns the best part is the ride but the view is from the top. Take your time getting there because the rides always worth it when you are cruising. Get in touch

with Eiderskater on silverfish for more information.

Afroman “The Big Worm”

I picked this deck up from Afroman team rider Bret Roper at Eastcoast Board Co. I had been looking for a shop that carried them and he said he would get it for me, within a week or so I got the call. Picking it up and putting it together was a blast it was the first deck of this size I had ridden and the stability and comfort such a massive board provides is great for the accentuation of style and understanding of edge weight. With the wheels on the deck being rather large I had to stack it up which reduces the chance of bite.

Dimensions Long 59"

Wide 12"

Wheel Base 40.5"

Deck Height 5"

Construction Wood, a big piece of wood
11 ply with no concave and minimal flex
Elongated coffin board
wheel wells
Comes gripped with an eye catching graphic

Setup Randal 180
Sector 9 Luge Wheels
Lucky Bearings
½ inch stack
Conclusion

Dropping knee on this beast or blowing through a heel side carve is awesome. The deck size and weight softens even some of the roughest terrain. On glassy pavement or boardwalk concrete it’s a smooth roll a constant rolling carve with the feel of nothing beneath you until you drop a hand and feel the earth rushing past. The size may be a factor but speeds feel more confident on this deck although the setup itself limits the ability to carve extremely hard higher speeds feel stable and instill a feeling of confidence. With a higher duro wheel drift would be more pronounced however even with drift it still affords a secure ride.

The ability to stop and control speed is just as if not more so essential with larger decks. This deck on a runaway run downhill heads out like a black bear after a honey baked ham. Foot breaking is actually quite easy due to board stability and laying a toe off the rail works quite well. At higher speeds the need to weight the rail in a slide is critical. The deck weight itself is carried with such momentum that with deep carving and sliding you are almost a spectator on this deck just along for the ride an observer of the madness that is big wood.

The minimal flex makes it a great deck for board walking and practicing well linked carves. One of my favorite things is just dropping a knee slow and just reaching out feeling the deck carve deep. As a garage bomber it’s a blast stable enough just to point and go hitting corners hard and just locking into the deck and feeling the G forces tug you to the outside. Parking lots are given life cross stepping and riding the crest of banks. The beauties of beachfront boardwalks or campus back alleys come alive when you are rolling large.

The deck came with a crazy multi colored panel shot of what appeared to be a pimping scene of some sort. After many curb drops and deck flips from pulling rail too hard and figuring out big wood slides I had severely thrashed the finish on it. So I spent a week sanding, marking and then wet sanding a layer of varnish to give it a deep protective layer with more of the beautiful wood showing through. It was my first try at varnishing. So remember kids I am not a professional so please try this at home.

The upsides of the deck it is solid, sturdy and formidable. The downside it’s heavy and makes for a long walk uphill. The Afroman website prescribes this deck for cruising and picking up chicks. As essential as both of those are in life I think they are cutting this deck a bit short.

You can check out the full line of Afroman longboards

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