

EDITORS' CHOICE AWARDS:
THE BIKES & PRODUCTS THAT MADE THE GRADE

ROAD BIKE ACTION MAGAZINE

CCC 02985
JANUARY 2018

**TECH
ROUNDUP:**
Welcome
to 2018



**ELITE
TRAINERS:**
Stay Indoors
& Stay In Shape

**MUST-SEE
INTERBIKE:**
First Look At
The Fast Bikes

**POWER TO
THE PEDALS:**
Garmin
Vector 3

Attn. retailer:
Please display until Jan. 18
roadbikeaction.com





ON THIS PAGE: Just another day at the workbench inside the Favalaro factory

86 With Love From Lake Garda
Up close with Michele Favalaro
and his CX Art





FROM GARDA WITH LOVE

Michele Favalaro is a new name in the Italian frame game

By: Zap

Michele Favalaro is no Ernesto Colnago. He is half the age of the Italian master and has nowhere near the international recognition. Still, there are traits found with the young Italian frame builder that certainly drive some comparisons. Both are fascinated with the bicycle and how to make it perform better. Both are steadfast in their work ethic, consumed by a desire to produce one more frame each day.

And, perhaps most fitting with Favalaro, whose small frame factory in the town of Polpenazze del Garda overlooking Lake Garda is located some 70 miles east of the

vaunted Colnago factory in Cambiago, the similarity extends to the fact that like Colnago, Michele's daily commute to work requires nothing more than a short walk downstairs from the kitchen where the family meals are served.

A NEW NAME

Michele Favalaro is a custom frame builder who happily toils away in his cramped frame factory day after day. Back in 2001 he was a mountain bike enthusiast who decided to start building his own aluminum mountain bikes. Three years later he began experimenting with carbon fiber, and he's been committed to the material ever since.

We had the chance to visit Michele last year where he took us through the step-by-step process of building a frame. He starts each day at daybreak, making sure to be out on the bike from 10 to 11:30. "The bicycle is part of my life," he says. "This is what I am, this is what I am able to do and riding the bike always pushes new ideas."

For Michele, it was the chance encounter with a local sailor who made carbon masts for sailboats that truly opened his eyes about the potential for carbon fiber. "His tubes made me realize that with carbon fiber you could design oversized tubes that did not weigh so much like aluminum. I loved the oversized tubes and how you could create them in so many different shapes to suit the needs of a bicycle frame."



Michele Favaloro is like a younger version of Ernesto Colnago in that, after his family, bicycles are his greatest passion in life, and he spends as much time as he can designing and building them in the small factory that is located in the basement of his home overlooking Lake Garda.



From mild to wild, Favaloro builds custom bikes in all shapes and sizes. Each one enjoys a quality finish.

WHAT ABOUT THE ARC?

The CX Arc is a cyclocross-specific frame with clearance to fit up to 35c tires and the ability to run mechanical or electronic drivetrains. Favaloro ensured that the Arc is UCI compliant, so more dedicated racers will be able to compete at the highest level without any issues from their equipment. Each frame kit comes with a tapered fork, integrated seat mast and headset with the option for custom geometry.

The Arc uses high-modulus 3K Toray micro-weave carbon with a very clean and refined finish. Favaloro uses a split, one-piece, curved top tube that connects the head tube to the rear dropout, which Michele told us was inspired a few years back when he watched famous Italian (throttle twisting) road racer Valentino Rossi aboard the trellis-framed Ducati MotoGP bike. "I think the

way it ties to the head tube to the rear dropouts is very good for the handling and supports rider weight more effectively," says Favaloro.

THE RIDE

The Favaloro has a smooth ride quality on groomed sections of dirt and pavement—although who's kidding who here? Over the washboard bumps the massive Raptor fork was not the definition of compliant. At high speeds the Favaloro felt comfortable in the rider compartment and exhibited handling traits that could only be described as confident and consistent. Out of the saddle on steep climbs the stiff frame rewarded out-of-the-saddle efforts with impressive leaps forward.

THE VERDICT

The sweeping top tube and refined

carbon fiber weave are about as clean as any other high-end bike that's rolled through the *RBA* office. The level of quality and attention to detail is obvious as you pore over every inch of the frame.

Michele says that he builds about 150 frames each year and that he has plans to slowly increase the number, but not by much. "With my name on each bike, it is important that I have to make the frame," he insists, "not somebody else. It is only from building each frame that I learn how to improve. Although the neighbors sometimes complain about the bikes, my mother doesn't mind." ■

STATS

Price: \$3990 (frameset)

Sizes: Custom

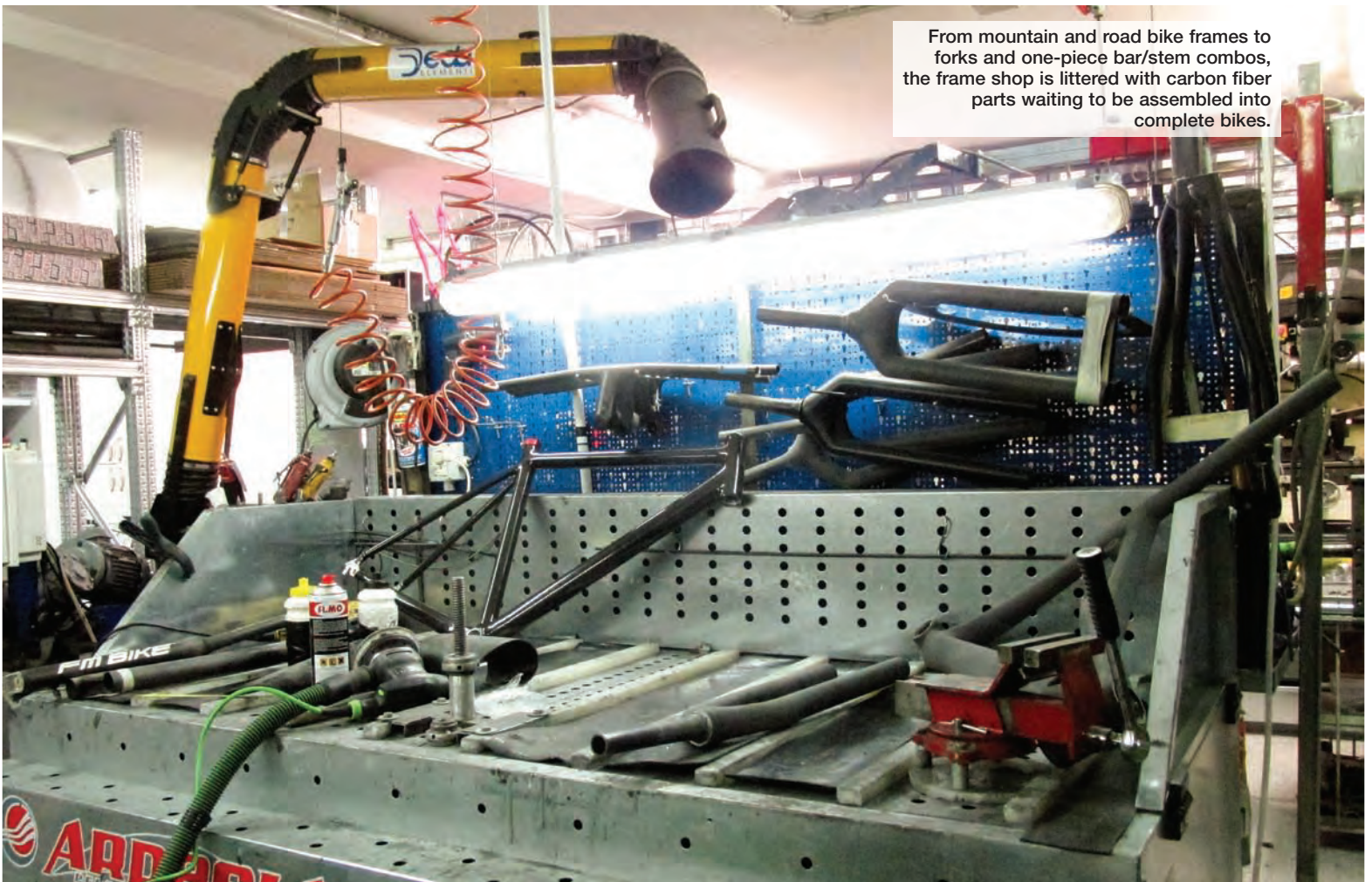
www.albabici.com



Each bike begins with the hand selected tubes being measured and cut before being placed in the jig where they are glued.



The amount of hands-on fabrication that goes into each frame is the reason that each bike bears the Favaloro name.



From mountain and road bike frames to forks and one-piece bar/stem combos, the frame shop is littered with carbon fiber parts waiting to be assembled into complete bikes.



In addition to building his custom road bikes, Michele also has a handy business building mountain bikes as well.



Michele had his first official introduction to the American market at last year's North American Handmade Bicycle Show. The bike on the left was in the running to win the award for the best Campagnolo-built bike, but was beat out by the carbon/titanium bike from No. 22 Bicycle Company.