

SCHWINN



Information Bulletin

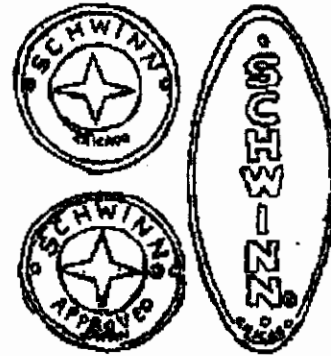
Consumer Relation Department Schwinn Sales Inc. 1856 North Kostner Ave. Chicago Ill. 60639.

Bulletin Number 23: SCHWINN BICYCLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS*

Product serial numbers offer a precise method of identifying, registering and recovering stolen personal property. Consumers are encouraged to keep a permanent record of all serial numbers placed on TV's, stereos, bicycles and other items. Local or statewide bicycle registration is also recommended where service is available.

IDENTIFYING SCHWINN BICYCLES

The easiest way to tell that a bicycle frame is of Schwinn origin is by the nameplate and decals—the trademark names “SCHWINN” or “WORLD” have appeared on every Schwinn bicycle made. A close examination of bicycle frame construction details by a knowledgeable bike dealer will also identify most Schwinn models by the unique building methods used.



Schwinn bicycles can be classified into three groups: (1) MASS PRODUCED in the United States, (2) LIMITED PRODUCTION in the United States and, (3) IMPORTED

from either Japan or Taiwan. The mass produced models have an oval nameplate with block-lettered “SCHWINN” reading down and mounting screw holes at the top and bottom. Limited production and imported bicycles have a circular nameplate with mounting holes on either side. Serial number sequences and locations are different for various models.

SERIAL NUMBER LOCATION

MASS PRODUCED Schwinn bicycles had serial numbers located under the pedal crank housing until 1952. They were then stamped on the left rear fork end until 1971, at which time they were moved to present head tube position, below the oval nameplate.

LIMITED PRODUCTION Schwinn models have serial numbers stamped on the left rear fork end, where the rear wheel is attached on the opposite side of the drive chain.

IMPORTED Schwinn bicycles have serial numbers either under the pedal crank housing or on the left rear fork end. Models imported from Taiwan (1979- 1981) have the serial number on the left rear fork end (as usual) and a separate date code number on the right rear fork end, -- all other Schwinn bicycles have date-coded serials.

SERIAL NUMBER CODE SYSTEM

Schwinn serial number sequences, while appearing to be confusing on first sight, follow several general rules. If the first letter is "A" through "M" it refers to production month (A= January, B = February, etc.). The letters "I" and "O" are not used, to avoid mistaking them for numbers. If there is only one letter in the first two positions, the first number or two numbers refer to production year. Date codes occupy the first two, three or four positions in a serial number.

MASS PRODUCED Schwinn bikes have been date-coded since 1965 by the first two letters in the serial number. The first letter tells production month, the second tells production year:

Jan AA 65	Jul GG 71	-N 77
Feb BB 66	Aug HH 72	-P 78
Mar CC 67	Sep JJ 73	-Q 79
Apr DD 68	Oct KK 74	-R 80
May EE 69	Nov LL 75	-S 81
Jun FF 70	Dec MM 76	-T82

Examples: GH504362 = July 1972

KR123456 = Oct. 1980



SCHWINN SERIAL NUMBER LOCATIONS

LIMITED PRODUCTION Schwinn bikes include Paramount, Letour, and Sting model names produced in the United States. The Paramount serial numbers (1970-1979) include a production month letter followed by two numbers indicating production year (70 = 1970, etc.). The sequence was changed in 1981 when facilities were moved to Wisconsin, to include the letter "W" followed by production month letter and several numbers, the first two signifying year of production (81=1981, etc.). Examples: D72130= April 1972, WB8237 = February 1982. Letour (and Super LeTour) numbers (1978-80 and 1982 on) include the letter "S" with a production month letter followed by a series of numbers, the first one telling the year of production (8=1978, 0=1980). Example: SC94653= March 1979. Sting 20" racing bikes have a production month letter followed by a number indicating production year (9=1979, etc.) and the letter "T" signifying that it is a tri-oval frame (with three frame tube ovalized). Example: F1T20404= June 1981.

IMPORTED Schwinn serial sequences depend upon country of origin. Bicycles from Japan have a production month letter in either the first or second position and a production year number in the other (first or second) position. Examples: J677123= September 1976, 6J77123 = September 1976. Taiwanese imports have a separate date code on the right rear fork end (near rear wheel sprocket) that includes the letter "G" followed by two-digit month code (01=January, 02= Feb.) and two more digits for the production year (80= 1980, etc.). Example: G04813= April 1981. Remember, this is not a serial number. In each case, the date code tells when production of the bicycle frame began, not when it was assembled into a complete bicycle or when it was sold at wholesale or retail levels. Consequently, a frame with last years sequence could easily be used on a new bicycle built this year. Knowing the date coding systems, though, can be helpful in approximating the age of a bicycle.

DETERMINING SCHWINN BICYCLE VINTAGE PRIOR TO 1965

It is not always easy to tell the exact year of bicycle manufacture. Even today (except for serial number records) many models look the same from one year to the next. The following information will be helpful, considering the possibility that equipment on an old bicycle (like the spring fork) can always be retrofitted to an earlier bike and that older parts are often used for repair purposes. A bicycle with Schwinn wheels is not necessarily a Schwinn bicycle!

I. Serial number location:

- A. Pre-1948 serial records were destroyed in a 1948 office fire.
- B. Serial numbers were stamped under the crank hanger until 1952.
- C. 1952 - 1971 numbers were stamped on the left rear fork end.
- D. 1972 - present numbers are stamped on the head tube below the nameplate.

II. Serial number dating:

- A. Pre-1948 numbers are not available.
- B. 1948 - 1957 numbers in no sequence
- C. 1958- 1964 serials included one letter followed by six digits.
 - 1. the letter indicates month (A is Jan., B is Feb.)
 - 2. the first digit indicates year (8 is 1958, 9 is 1959)
 - 3. following five digits are in sequence for each month
- D. 1965 - present serial sequences are described in Bulletin 23.

III. Frame design:

- A. Cantilever frame patented in 1938.
- B. Rear fork ends:
 - 1. track slot (to the rear) until 1945
 - 2. fish hook (to the front) since 1946
- C. Flash welding (butt welds on head and hanger projections) since 1958.

IV. Parts innovations:

- A. Balloon tires since 1933 (with separate inner tube).
- B. Cyclock (front fork steering lock) from 1936 to 1957.
- C. Fore-wheel brake, 1937.
- D. Spring fork, 1938 (also introducing Paramount, Superior Lightweights)
- E. Cycle Truck introduced 1939
- F. Middleweights introduced in 1956.
- G. Sting Ray introduced in 1963.