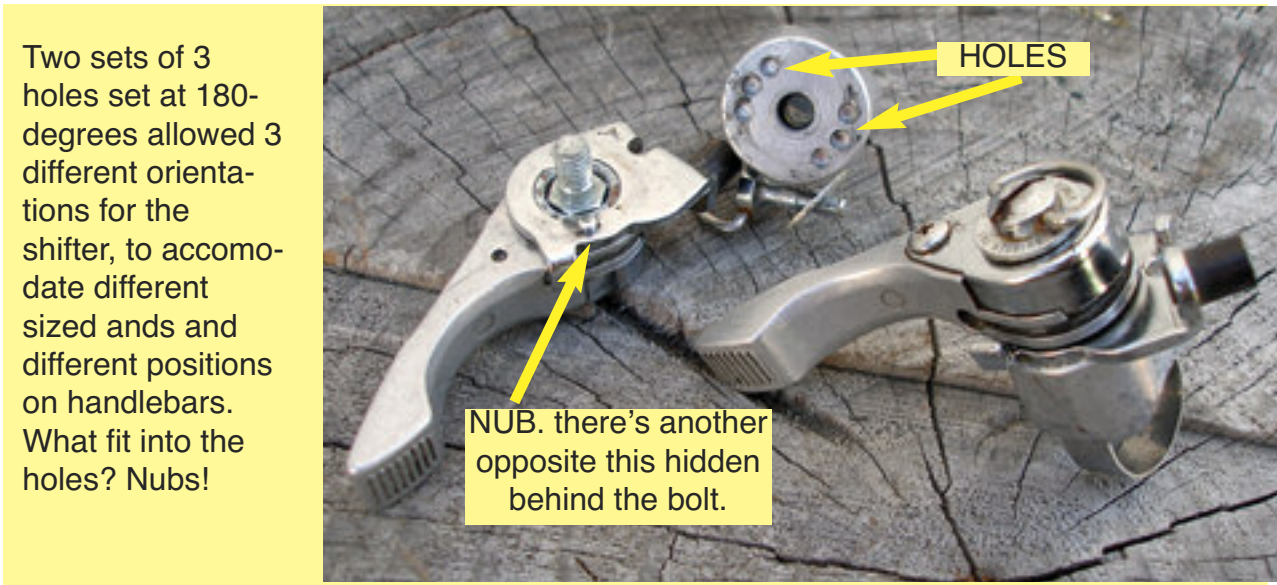




SunTour was at the top its world (the bike world) in the early ‘80s, when its XC mountain bike group (not “gruppo”, the Italian way, and especially not “groupo” the too-weird-for-words combo way) was the preferred batch of parts for any top mountain bike. The XC shifters were especially good, and you can still see ‘em you know I can’t write or ever even say “see ‘em” without thinking of the Bob Dylan line from about 1962---“You can take Madison Square, gimme the Coliseum/So if I wanna see the gladiators, man I can always see ‘um.) The Coliseum is the famous outdoor sports arena in Rome, and was used mainly to exhibit human/animal carnage. Slave gladiators killing slaves, lions killing Christians (who were considered weird cultists at the time), lions fighting gladiators, lions, rhinos, hippos, elephants, giraffes, panthers, leopards, bears, tigers, crocodiles, and even the odd ostriches. They can kick, and don’t think they don’t. They’d often have theatrical productions, with real people getting killed gruesomely, including but not limited to animal mauling and fire. The Coliseum was not just a cool old amphitheater, and the Romans weren’t just good architects and builders. You can still see the original XC shifters on even mid-priced and lower mtn bikes from 1982-3, parked on streets in bad parts of town, about 20-inches in front of super cheap vinyl quilted cracking saddles spilling their foam. Gladiators killed more than 50 animals a day every day for the first 100 days the Coliseum was open. Most of the gladiators were slaves, and women paid money to spend the night with them. Those times were as wild for Rome as they were good for SunTour in the early 1980s, about 1900 years later. The XC shifters had the guts shown above, and it is still, and always will be, the Most Magnificent Mechanism ever



to grace the guts of a shifter. SunTour called it the “Power Ratchet”. The power part probably comes from the ease of shifting, the light action required to pull cable. If something is powerful, it’s easy. The ratchet you can see up there. Those old crummy bikes have shfters on them better than the shifters on the most expensive contemporary mountain bikes. Shimano was a sleeping giant, but woke up around 1983.5, and used its

size to kill SunTour with indexing. That’s a slight simplification of what happened. One of the early Readers tells the whole story (written by Frank Berto, who, I love this guy, but he says “groupo). So...que lastima! for SunTour. Bad timing. We try to not do things we’re ashamed of, and on the opposite end of that, bringing back the Power Ratchet, with SunTour’s help, in the Silver shifters, is one of the things we’re all here proud of. Also que lastima that you can’t see the magic, like one of those clear fancy watches. That’s why the photo here.

We have medium low stock now of the Silver Shifters with power ratchets, but more are coming in. You can put ‘em on the down tube, bar-ends, or in front of grips, or the groovy quirky way on drop bars, with Paul Thumbies next to the center sleeve. They’re many peoplezez first choice, but even if they’re you’re second choice, or even third—THIRD?—theyotta be on one of your bikes. Not only are they super shifters, but they also represent a rare brief spark of fantasticness in the evolution of bike parts. Indexing is a boon for many, works good, the pros use it etc....but it is a crude, dumbed-down way to make a shifter. The best riders in the world shift by indexing, no doubt about it, but the best riders in the world don’t always use the best gear in the world.