

SEKAI Dating / Identification Guide

Archive-URL: <http://search.bikelist.org/getmsg.asp?Filename=classicrendezvous.11101.0916.eml>
Date: Sun, 16 Jan 2011 12:56:24 -0800 (PST)
From: gillies(AT)ece.ubc.ca (donald gillies)
Subject: Re: [CR] Curious about Sekai Professional 4000

Thomas & Brian,

I believe that in earlier years the Sekai 4000 was mass produced of Tange #1 tubing, by Michi frame shop while the Sekai 5000 was a handmade superlight frame made by a guy named S. Higashigawa:

<http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~gillies/sekai/SEKAI.txt>
http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~gillies/sekai/77_06_custom.jpg

I don't know of any database of serial numbers for SEKAI. If your bike has some original paint you can estimate the time period from the badging:

HEAD BADGE

Swirly Blue Badge (pre-78) [Sekai77] [Gillies2011]
http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~gillies/sekai/SEKAI_bigbadge.JPG

Hexagonal Multicolor Badge (78-onwards) [Muzi2011]
http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~gillies/sekai/Sekai_2700_about79_2.jpg
http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~gillies/sekai/sekai2700_79front.JPG

DOWNTUBE

SEKAI(big, alone) Downtube, Model name (toptube), 73-76
<http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~gillies/sekai/sekai709.jpg>

SEKAI(big) + Model number + Model name(stacked) Downtube, 77-79(?)
with black pin striping around the whole thing
http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~gillies/sekai/Sekai_4000_about79_leftside.jpg

SEKAI(big) + Model number(big) Downtube, 1980(?) -onwards
http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~gillies/sekai/sekai2700_79downtube.JPG
http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~gillies/sekai/Sekai_Decals_YellowJersey.jpg

TANGE DECAL

CHAMPION Green (written horizontally), 73-78
http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~gillies/sekai/Sekai_4000_about79_seatcluster.jpg

CHAMPION Green (written diagonally, like 531 in reynolds), 79-onwards?
http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~gillies/sekai/Sekai_4000_champion_decal2.JPG

TANGE (yellow decal with blue oval), pre-1980.
http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~gillies/sekai/Tange_Sekai.JPG

On the 4000 (I have 2x), I have seen long-point italianesque chromed lugs throughout the 70's, and prugnat lugs often unchromed (later, maybe 1980+). The frame was painted in "lacquer over chrome", for a deep translucent color. Comparable bikes are the Wilier Triestina (mid 1970's), Fuji Finest (1971), Rampar Superbe (1980), and all of the "Achrillichrome" Carlton bikes.

The Sekai 4000 fork has a light mass-produced Tange fork with stamped and welded crown so it is normal for the fork dropouts (Tange TF) to mismatch the Shimano rear dropouts (Shimano SF).

The 4000 model was a lightweight frameset, see the comparison table of weights below. The Sekai 4000 at 24 inches (c-t) weighs 2934 grams with fork crown race installed and is fully chromed; This is probably lighter than my early 531 Raleigh-Ilkeston Team bike at 2996 grams

with BB routing and a bottle braze ons, and fully chromed fork.

In the 1970's both the 4000 and 5000 models were offered as frame-only. There would be no standard build for a 1970's frameset-only offering.

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forkL weight frameL weight total fork braze-ons etc
===== 23.5 FRAME =====
1973 Raleigh Comp 8 868 23.5 2082 3050 crownr tt, arch; bent toptube.
===== 24.0 FRAME =====
1977 SEKAI 4000 blk 9 794 24.5 2140 2934 crownr -
===== 24.5 FRAME =====
1975 SB310 ilkeston 9.125 816 24.5 2180 2996 - bb, 1 waterbottle
1971 Raleigh Internat. 9.5 832 24.5 2150 2982 - tt, arch, pump umb(stuck)
1968 Raleigh Pro 9.5 835 24.5 2142 2977 - tt, arch, bb
===== 25.0 FRAME =====
1977 SEKAI 4000 red 10 802 25.5 crank-stuck crownr headset cups
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- Don Gillies
San Diego, CA

REFERENCES

[Muri2011] SEKAI (Web Page) at Yellow Jersey, available at :
<http://www.yellowjersey.org/sekai.html>

[Muri2011b] Rentals (Web Page) at Yellow Jersey, available at:
<http://www.yellowjersey.org/rentals.html>, retrieved 1/20/2011.

[Freeman2011] Sekai History (email on Web Page), available at:
<http://search.bikelist.org/getmsg.asp?Filename=classicrendezvous.11101.0874.eml>

[SEKAI77] Sekai 1977 partial catalog (jpegs : cover, 2700, custom), at:
<http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~gillies/sekai>

[SEKAI75] Sekai 1975 catalog (1 jpegs), available at:
http://www.ece.ubc.ca/~gillies/sekai/75_full_catalogue.jpg

[Gillies2011] Don Gillies (personal communication).

Classicrendezvous mailing list
Classicrendezvous(AT)bikelist.org
<http://www.bikelist.org/mailman/listinfo/classicrendezvous>