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Unintentionally on Purpose

Chris Rose's 1998 Dyna Low Rider Custom

story by Michael Camillo
photos by Stephen Berner

When Chris Rose of Caveman Custom Cycles bought this 1998 Dyna Low Rider back in 2006, his original intention was to clean up the bike, make some mild modifications, repaint it and put it up for sale at his shop in Warwick, Rhode Island. As the old story goes, one thing led to another and the bike was moved to and fro around the shop where it finally settled into a corner and sat for nearly two years. Then, on a mission to put a bike together to ride to Bike Week 2008, Chris cobbled the machine together by custom fabricating components and using parts from around the shop, unintentionally building a favorite bike that became his daily rider.

"I had plans to flip the bike to start another project, but that never hap-

pened. I took on a couple of other projects instead. A couple of years went by, and the Dyna was just sitting over in the corner. Bike Week was coming up and I decided not to take my rigid chopper this time and tore into the Dyna." In approximately two weeks, Chris had transformed the stock Dyna into the bike you see here, a rough, ready, custom machine—clean and gritty at the same time with a touch of a "club bike" attitude and understated styling. And it's a daily rider, to boot. Chris, his Dad and brothers opened Caveman Custom Cycles in 2004, a full service shop with in-house fabrication, welding and machine shop capabilities. That helps out a lot when you have a short timeframe for a build. There's no one to hold up or slow down the process—only yourself. The only outsourcing was the paint and powder coating.

The Dyna frame houses a 96-cubic





inch Screamin' Eagle Evolution motor with S&S Cycle flywheels. Chris ported, polished and flowed the heads and installed a 565 Crane cam for a little extra pep. An S&S E carburetor fitted with a Thunderjet circuit was a thirsty addition and a Crane HI-4 ignition system sparks the whole shootin' match. Chris said; "It's not the original motor from the bike. I had just rebuilt this motor and decided it would be perfect. Dynas are great bikes. You can flip them around effortlessly, they're nimble and handle the best." Chris replaced the stock 6-speed transmission with an H-D 5-speed and linked the motor and transmission together with an H-D primary drive setup and a BDL lock-up clutch. The final drive chain conversion was a must for Chris. As he put it, "Belts are for holding up your pants."

On the front end of things, Chris used a 2"-under, 39mm Mid-Glide setup with Pro-1 billet trees, and custom fabricated a set of 20" apes that fit perfectly, pieced together with the original 1" diameter H-D handlebars and powdercoated black by Ocean State Hotcoat in Warwick. Reproduction classic grips and stock H-D levers give the handlebars an understated look and feel. Stock H-D dual-disk brakes complete the front end. Dual Laser Star lights on a custom fabricated mount are a modern twist

and a retro-style Tedd's taillight are about it for electrics.

The 18" front and 16" rear wheels are aluminum Excel rims laced to H-D hubs. The 130-width front and 160-rear Metzlers make handling that much more aggressive. The rear of the frame was widened to accept the 160-rear tire.

Chris modified a 2007 EFI Sportster gas tank to fit on the Dyna backbone by relocating the frame mounts and adding a petcock bung. "I like the shape of the '07 Sportster tank—it has an old Mercury hot rod feel to it." An Independent 200 rear fender blank was trimmed to fit the 160 tire and both the gas tank and rear fender were painted by Bob Dutra in Warwick. A reworked LePera seat flows seamlessly to meet the gas tank.

As for the bling factor, there's not much. Actually none—and that's on purpose. The stock trim on the gas tank and battery box is all you really need on this machine and it's refreshing. There's just enough attitude to complete the look of a bike that was built, unintentionally, to be the favorite daily rider of this builder. ■

Resource

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