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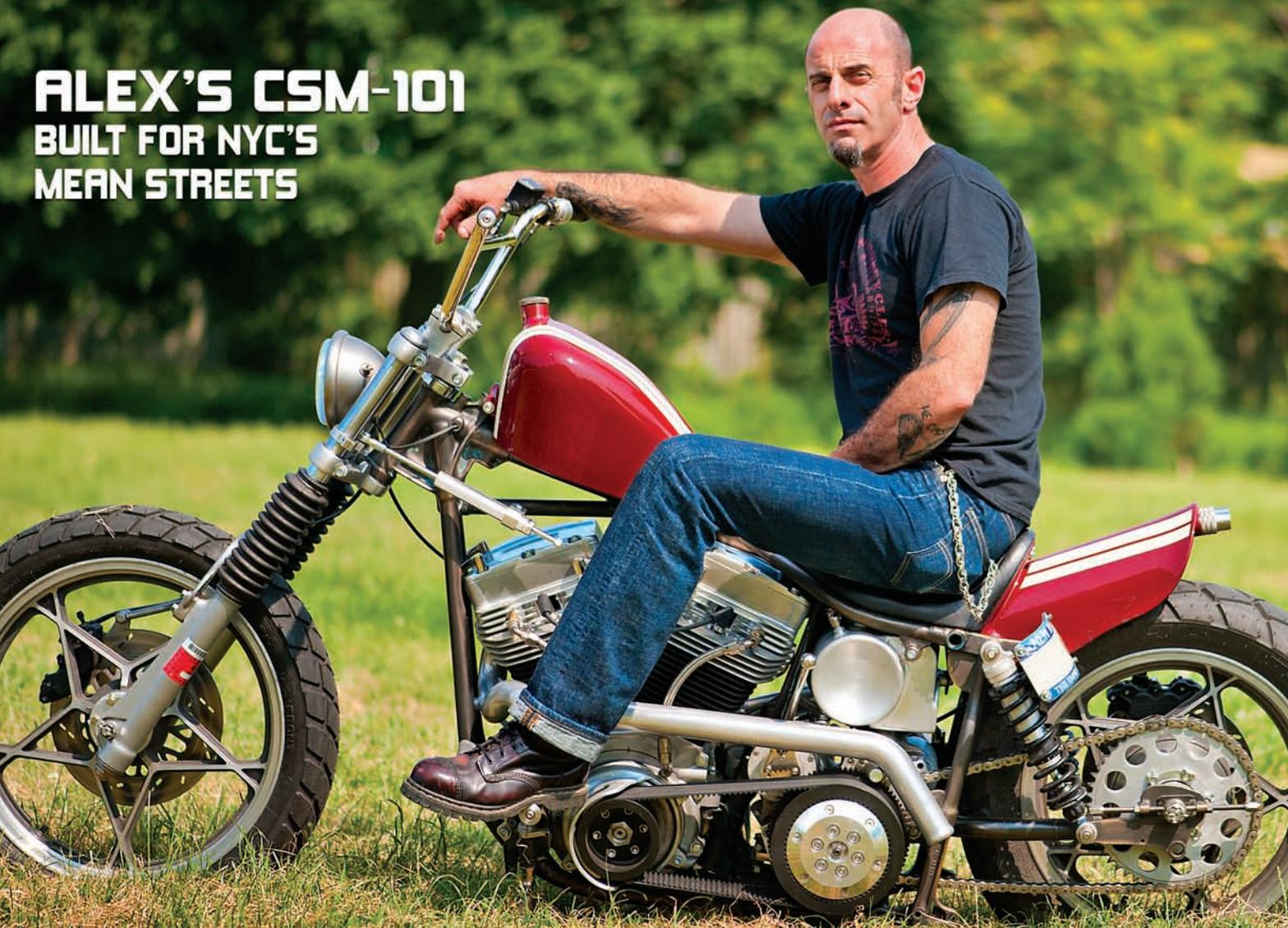
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Volume 21 Number 8

# IronWorks®

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## ON THE COVER

Volume 21 • Number 8 • Our 178th Issue

Taking on the urban jungle via two-wheels requires a certain attitude. Confidence behind the bars is a must for the pilot but the bike, too, must demand its space and roll with presence. This isn't news to Alex Lerner whose builds exemplify a savvy grasp of the places where they'll clock up their miles.



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## SPOTLIGHT: Salinas Boys

Cole Foster's Salinas Boys style was distinctive from the get-go; the slim, lithesome bike he built in 2001 for CCI stood in stark contrast to the fat-tired behemoths so popular at the turn of the millennium. But keeping focused on what he wants to build isn't a problem for Cole, a builder whose organic themes flow from within, not prompted by current fads or trends. Let's be frank; that's why his work gets our attention.



## The Life

The next month (I am writing this just before leaving for Sturgis) is going to be a busy one, just as the last one and the one before that have been. There is so much going on event wise, all over this big country of ours, that putting a calendar and a dance card of events together can be tough. I don't recall ever having so many options.

Let me further qualify, I don't recall ever having so many *good* options, many of these new events, runs, rides, shows, and other experiential drama look pretty cool and relevant, not simply opportunities for carneys and cheap accessory guys to pick my already thin wallet clean. I see lots of smaller bike and rod shows, rides and runs popping up and widely attended with characters from near and far. It's pretty cool when guys from the east head west, northerners head south, and vice versa for runs, just to hang out and make friends and to put faces with names.

I think we can thank our favorite appliance—the Internet—for providing the connective tissue allowing us the ability to reinvent and connect individually on a grand scale instantaneously. It used to be that you had to actively scout local 'zines and sheets, and bulletin boards of shops to see if there was an event happening. Or, if the organizers had their act together and had some cake, they'd advertise on regional radio, maybe even advertise in national magazines like *Easyriders*, *Supercycle*, or maybe *Street Chopper*—or better yet, get some editorial coverage (with weenie bites and boob shots, of course), from Michael Lichter, Rip, Marla (and Scooter), Frank Kaisler, and of course, Bandit. There were fewer events. They were mostly regional and usually had little to do with commerce. Rather they were about the simplicity of enjoying each other's company, usually in a small town or in the woods at a remote location. It took years for the word to get out as op-

posed to today where it just takes one tweet to build a substantial presence.

I see lots of small events springing up, which are throwbacks to this hankering for earlier simpler times when camping, coolers and creeks were the staples of a "run." I think that's cool; it's good to see things get back to grass roots, that's the seed of new growth. Lots of seeds mean some will stick and thrive.

Personally, I am not so big on camping. I did my time in tents, quite a bit of it actually. At this point, after a long day on the bike, I like to get a room with AC, take a



shower, check my messages and email, look for dinner, maybe a place I can walk to and have some adult beverages, plug my electronica in to recharge, and call it a day. I think this may be a sign of softening (valuing comfort), and of ah, maturing (taking work seriously). I don't know when I got soft. I can't put my finger on the date—I wish I could. Something happened and I'm not sure what precipitated it. Now, don't get me wrong, I don't apologize for this condition. I am just a little surprised that it happened to me... ha!

I've been watching this softening for a while now. I think it was around the time when we somehow got permission for dressers to be considered cool. When I

got my first dresser, Big Blue, they were definitely *not* cool. No sir, no way.

Dressers were great for travelling, they were utilitarian, made sense, and handled great. Owning a dresser was the outward commitment to travelling or riding with a partner, otherwise why would you buy something so comfy, big, slow, ugly, and well... uncool? I finally gave up trying to explain my bike and just ignored the haters.

The desire for achieving greater distances drove me to consider a touring bike. Having a fairing allowed me to triple my daily travelling mileage. Putting in 750 miles a day on the big bike is easily accomplished and you still feel like you've earned your Hungry Man Breakfast with Meat...patties not links, please. Anyway my point is the slope is slippery once you start down the "comfortable is smart" path. Backrests? Not cool, but they sure are nice on a long day. Cup holders? You decide! You get the point. My POV is that baggers are not inherently cool but man are they great for travelling with a bunch of stuff at locomotion speed—in style, safely and comfortably. Ironically, the custom bagger enthusiasts of today are the same folks that called 'em garbage barges and sh\*t wagons just a few years ago Funny how things turn.

So I look at some of the longriders in the current chopper culture and I feel a little soft, unworthy, a mite jealous, and maybe a little in awe to be honest. I mean these folks, more than any others the way I see it right now, are living the dream—they own the scene. Riding their handmade slim and sleek machines, sleeping in the dirt, camping with their bedrolls near an open fire—the ultimate and perfect epic David Mann image. *This* is why we were initially attracted to the culture; to get some of that, right?

If we got into this Harley thing when we were younger, we sure didn't get into it for dressers and cheap motel rooms (ala SteveB style as of late). At least I sure as hell didn't. I wanted some adventure; I wanted some of "that." I wanted a tough



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Reader Service No. 14

guy Dick Allen style chopper with a long front end sporting a spool hub and a rear car tire. "Hell yeah, sign me up. I am not interested in meeting nice people on Hondas." I wanted to be camping with my pals in the dirt sharing lies and good times, like the guys I saw in *In the Wind*. I saw those images and I was hypnotized. I wanted to get out there in the worst way. I wanted to see this place, America, where I was from, that I knew nothing of. I wanted to see it from the fringe, not from a tour bus or station wagon.

I'd like to think guys and gals get into the H-D culture and ride their bikes in an attempt to capture a bit of the rustic and rougher time gone by; simpler times, dirtier times, times of real friends, times of hands-on maintenance, times of wild rides spent in community, sharing the same experience, and reveling in it. No going to hotel rooms at the end of the night to chill to the sound of your own air conditioner and *Housewives of Hideous County*. "Sit your ass down by the fire NOW, where do you think you're going? It ain't bedtime yet."

Hang by the fire, drink and tell stories until you nod. Wind up sleeping in the open, heckled by your friends as you pass out. If you are lucky you have a tent to crawl to and you make it. Some wiseass with a camera can't help but capture the scene. Hope it doesn't rain. If it does, the bike will be a bitch to start tomorrow. But if it does rain and it doesn't matter; eventually it'll stop, it'll dry.

Mornings are slow, smoky from the fire, and filled with the scent of cowboy coffee. Sit on the ground or log, have a smoke, amused by the antics of those freed from the expectations of a "normal" and well-behaved morning. You eschew the comforts of a hot shower, cable TV, and wireless connection, followed by the ubiquitous and indigestible continental breakfast, where afterwards your electric leg insures you get 'er going reliably, quick and easy—not that there is anything wrong with that.

Good times, living the life, moment by precious moment. Whatever your style. Peace. See you out there.

Stephen Berner  
steveb@steveb.biz

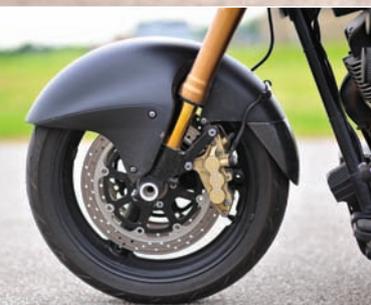
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# Scott Sjovall's X-Glide

*More than the sum of its parts*

Story and photos by Stephen Berner

**B**urying the speedo for the *n*th time that day crossing Iowa was getting boring, as was shifting at redline. Taking this machine to its limit was taking a toll on me... and forcing poor Holdsworth to watch me pull off into the distance. Rolling on at 100 wasn't as fun as it had been the day before.

The X-Wedge was debuted to the V-Twin press during 2007, heady times in the V-Twin industry indeed. It was a new engine designed for the blossoming OEMs who were looking for an EPA-compliant workhorse; a worry free high performance engine made in America from a name they could trust. That in and of

## GENERAL

**Year, Make & Model:** 2009 X-Glide, Homebuilt  
**Assembly/Builder:** Scott Sjovall  
**Timeline:** 9 months

## FORKS

**Builder:** 2005 Suzuki Hayabusa  
**Type:** Hydraulic, inverted 43mm titanium-nitride coated tubes  
**Triple trees:** 2005 Suzuki Hayabusa, aluminum  
**Extension:** No

## ENGINE

**Year/Model:** 2009 S&S X-Wedge  
**Rebuilder:** Scott Sjovall  
**Displacement:** 132"  
**Lower end:** Stock S&S forged & nitrided one-piece X-Wedge, 4.375" stroke crank

**Balancing:** Yes, S&S  
**Pistons:** Forged 4.375"  
**Heads:** S&S CNC ports/chambers/0.650" conical springs/2.2" stainless intake valve/1.675" inconel exh valve/roller rocker arms. Decked 0.030" to give 10.5:1 CR



itself had value and leverageable brand equity. “It is powered by an S&S X-Wedge engine, you know.”

Well things being what they are and history being what it is, looking back we obviously are much wiser, smarter, and a hell of a lot more conservative in how we spend our hard earned cash now. But if it weren't for the boom the X-Wedge might not have been developed. And friends, I can report that it is indeed a well-developed engine.

*Cycle Source* had a review of sorts some time ago of a bike that at the time really intrigued me. The bike was a prototype mule owned and built by Scott Sjoval, VP and Product Development guru at S&S Cycle. Basically the machine was a pur-

pose built Road Glide derivative that had enough room to house the big X-Wedge engine and a 6-speed transmission. I'd seen pictures of the bike and thought that it looked like a platform for durability testing—big, black, and menacing, my kind of machine. I was interested and wanted to know more, but then things happened, more magazines came into the house, I had jobs to do, and things got in the way—and you know the deal, I forgot about it...kind of.

Fast-forward two years and boy how things have changed. Spending habits for one are one of the behaviors that certainly have been modified since those “spendy” days, yesiree. Ground up builds are increasingly rare. A whole slew of OEMs

have fallen by the wayside and so has the shiny future for the X-Wedge engine. It was designed and built for a customer that, for the most, part doesn't exist—aftermarket OEM's.

But let me tell you, this is a great engine; a responsive power plant that can go to a whole 'nother level of V-Twin riding. A 56-degree cylinder configuration, a wider configuration than a 45-degree engine layout. It is this characteristic that prevents us from simply sticking this beastly strong S&S engine in our stock framed machines. The front cylinder and exhaust pipe won't fit a stock configuration and the back cylinder would be crowded.

But Scott's X-Glide is not a stock framed machine. Rolling Thunder, (thanks

**Cams:** S&S 618 w/easy start compression releases  
**Lifters:** S&S hydraulic  
**EFI/ Carb:** S&S EFI/dual 58mm S&S throttle bodies/independent runner manifold/closed loop control

**Air Cleaner:** Tuned runner intakes and filters  
**Pipes:** 2:1 system with SPO can  
**Ignition:** S&S VFI

#### TRANSMISSION

**Year/Modifications:** 2009 S&S 6-speed in S&S X-Wedge XW-R rubber mount case  
**Engine sprocket:** 25-tooth w/H-D compensator  
**Trans sprocket:** S&S 34-tooth  
**Wheel sprocket:** H-D 65-tooth w/custom pulley carrier

**Primary Drive:** Chain drive w/S&S 11-plate clutch  
**Secondary Drive:** S&S Carbon cord 1.5" x 136 tooth belt



pension offers tons of braking power and visually looks like it belongs. With a little more in the way of spring preload this front end could be the absolutely perfect mate to the stump-pulling engine. Brawn (HP) and smarts (handling) and lets not forget storage capacity, this machine offers the touring rider a sweet deal.

You can see the spec sheet; this is an impressive engine that just kicks ass and is built like a tank. But what all the specs, numbers, and descriptive speak don't tell you is just what this engine is like to live with day in and day out.

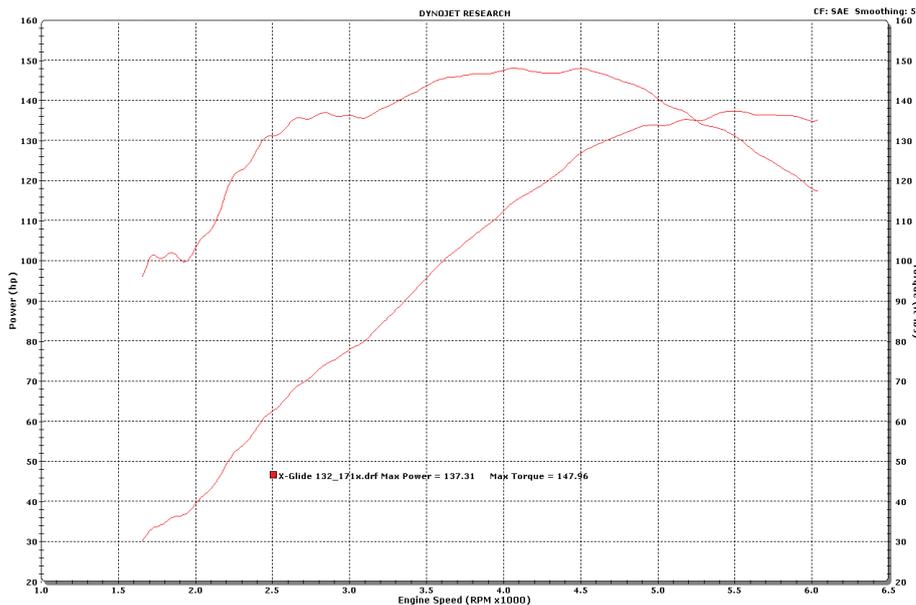
What is it like to road trip with and jam with? I didn't get the sense from anything I'd read about this engine what it would be like to spend time with it in a chassis I could relate to and was familiar with. Well, the bike Scott generously loaned me for a week was in a chassis I was familiar with (Road Glide) albeit a bit different in terms of geometry to accommodate the engine, and so I got my chance: trying the X-Wedge in a chassis I, for the most part, knew.

So how did I come to spend a week living with Scott's X-Glide, road tripping across Wisconsin and Iowa with Meddling Editor Holdsworth? Well, I just asked, to tell the truth.

J&P was having their 32nd open house in Anamosa, Iowa, and as I was scoping the map, getting a sense of distances, the locations of friends and folks I knew, of opportunities and such, a scheme came to mind seeing and understanding the location of S&S in Wisconsin versus Anamosa.

I'd ask Scott to borrow his bike and would use it for a week: back and forth from Viola to Anamosa, a visit to S&S HQ, and a bit of sight seeing in Wisconsin. The goal of this activity would be to spend time with the bike, participate and work with J&P on their ride-in bike show held during the open house festivities, and get some riding time with my esteemed associate, Paul Holdsworth, who was piloting his ever faithful 1985 FXRT. Well lo and behold, Scott said yes to this kooky scheme and the next thing I knew I was in Viola, WI, packing my junk on Scotts kooky bike. Far out, lets roll!

Now this is an unusual pairing of ma-



to our good friend Sam) in Canada supplied Scott with the chassis he was to hang a variety of hardware upon, namely all of the "appearance parts" of a stock H-D Road Glide. All of the OEM bodywork is

accommodated with this frame. Brilliant.

A singularly nice touch, and it is one that calls attention to this "ultra-sleeper," is the Hayabusa front suspension and fender. This well tuned (and tunable) sus-

## FRAME

**Year:** 2008  
**Designer/Builder:** Rolling Thunder  
**Rake & Stretch:** Stock 28° rake, no stretch

## ACCESSORIES

**Bars:** Heritage bars from H-D, re-bent  
**Risers:** Stock FL risers attached to Hayabusa top plate  
**Fenders:** Front: stock Hayabusa, Rear: Klock Werks 2" stretched  
**Gas tank:** 2008 H-D 6-gallon take w/H-D fuel pump

**Oil tank:** Rolling Thunder steel, extended to hold 5 quarts  
**Oil system:** No oil cooler, just extra capacity  
**Headlight:** H-D FLT  
**Taillight:** Six Custom Dynamics LEDs, custom aluminum frames  
**Speedo:** 2008 H-D white-faced gauges

**Pegs:** H-D FLT floorboards  
**Seat:** Le Pera Villain for '07 FLT w/1" added  
**Oil and brake lines:** Goodrich  
**Electrics:** H-D

chines, the Stealth Black X-Glide bomber and Holdsworth's happy-go-lucky red and cream, happy as a clam FXRT. When we'd pull in for gas, it'd become obvious who knew something about bikes. They'd come right over, look at the X-Glide in all its matte/flat black unwashed glory, not understand it, and go right over to Paul's bike and smile like they'd found home. It was when they'd come over, stare at the X-Glide and ask, "What the hell is this?" that I knew a fish was on the line. School is in, pay attention.

And so every once in a while a knowledgeable enthusiast would typically ask three questions: the first was "What am I looking at?" The second, "What's it like to ride?" And the third, after hearing my answers, was "Where can I get one?"

So, this is how I answered those queries.

**What is this?** This is a 132-inch, S&S X-Wedge-powered, Rolling Thunder frame'd Road Glide derivative owned by Scott Sjoval, VP of Product Development at S&S Cycle. The front end is off a Hayabusa. All the running gear/bodywork is a blend of S&S and H-D for the most part.

**What's it like to ride?** It's a lot like a Harley but it spools up faster, goes longer, is stronger, has more torque and doesn't run out of breath. The engine seems unflappable and doesn't mind redline/rev limiter shifts through all the gears, all the time. It never complains. At slow parking lot speeds, you can feel the longer frame but in every other situation the bike is like a locomotive; strong, straight in terms of handling, and has seemingly boundless enthusiasm for the task at hand. Sixth speed is ridiculous—a total "you're gonna collect autographs" gear. Put it this way: you are doing 75 MPH at 2900 RPM in 5th and the engine is barely breathing. What are you planning on doing in 6th gear? Getting tickets, uh huh.

**Where can I get one?:** Unfortunately you can't get one. Well, let me rephrase that: you can't buy one "baked." You will need to connect with a builder who can put the bike together or you can do it yourself if you are a crafty hands-on type that has done work like this before. Working with a frame manufacturer like Rolling Thunder insures you'll have what you'll

need in terms of tabs and mounts, and S&S has some real patient tech support folks that can work with you to answer fitment questions and make recommendations. The bodywork and accessories are available most anywhere. Put it this way: S&S wants you to succeed.

In closing, as you can tell I really liked this machine. It went like stink, did every single thing I asked it to do in a totally unflappable manner, and I like the fact it wasn't a bauble or showpiece and could live in a parking lot full of bikes and not draw undue attention. I could use junky pump gas (what passes for premium, ha!) and the bike didn't bitch once. And it's a 132". I ran it up to redline repeatedly (never a whimper), buried the speedo a half dozen times (blame this behavior on James Simonelli challenging my manhood with a, "What, you didn't shut it down in every gear? Ya puss."), and still had plenty more left. Totally stable and well mannered at walking speeds as well as mach one. What more could you ask for?

One last note. When I picked up the bike Scott was busy plugging a flat tire on this machine, the rear of course. (Auspicious start, thought I.) Looking around his shop I spied a Tourpak under plastic, up on a rack. I looked at the rear of the X-Glide and realized there were quick release brackets installed. Like a snake I struck and asked Scott, "Does an H-D Tourpak fit on the bike? (Duh.)"

Being an honest Wisconsin kind of guy, Scott answered honestly. "Of course it



does." So I begged that he put it on so I could carry my camera junk, protected and such, alleviating me having a crippling week of wearing a backpack filled with electronica and fancy glass, and he acquiesced. Honestly, I promised that I'd take the beastly burrito maker off before I shot the bike for this feature. Ha! Oops. The specter of being miles from anywhere and not being able to wrestle the damn thing back on was simply too much to bear so I shot the bike with the Tourpak on.

As Scott said when he saw the images, "What? The bike isn't ugly enough? You had to leave the Toupak on?"

Ah, yeah, sorry 'bout that pal. **IV**

## WHEELS/TIRES

**Tires:** Continental Road Attack  
**Front/Size:** 120/70 x 17 **Rear/Size:** 180/55 x 17  
**Wheels:** Stock Hayabusa, cast aluminum  
**Front/Size:** 17" x 3.5" **Rear/Size:** 17" x 6"  
**Brakes/Calipers/Rotors:** Stock Hayabusa

## PAINT

**Painter:** Yours truly, cheap and fast!  
**Color:** Flat black  
**Plating/Powdercoating:** By S&S Crew

