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IronWorks®

KIRK TAYLOR'S JOHNNY CHOP TRIBUTE BIKE HONORING TIME WELL SPENT



IW SPOTLIGHT
MILWAUKEE'S COOK CUSTOMS

METAL DRAGON
A FIRE-BREATHING SOFTAIL

DREAM RIDES BAGGER
ABLE AND STABLE

STEADYMATE CHOCK • MAD JAP CUSTOMS • **SAM KANISH** • ROAD GLIDE BLACKOUT • **BERT BAKER**
ANDREWS CAMS • **SUSPENSION EXPLAINED** • ROAD GLIDE UPGRADE • **POSIE ON HP & TORQUE**
1961 PANHEAD • CTEK CHARGERS • **PROJECT XR1200** • HOW IT'S MADE: MUSTANG SEATS





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ON THE COVER

Volume 21 • Number 6 • Our 176th Issue

Tribute bikes are nothing new but most of us would agree that forging rolling art from metal alloy and honest sweat is a righteous way to honor someone we cared about who is no longer among us. Motorcycles that claim this genesis are always more than the sum of their parts and it's the story behind those parts—and how the builder assembled them—that enhances the bike. Kirk Taylor's tribute to Johnny Chop, photographed here by Stephen Berner, hits all the high points: born from a genuine connection, handled in a respectful manner, and producing a striking result.

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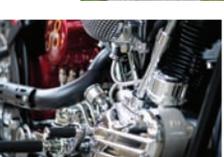
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SPOTLIGHT: Cook Customs

Dave Cook is a guy who's been around the block a few times—and sometimes he takes that lap of the city block on his motorized couch! But no matter his mode of transport, you can bet that any vehicle bearing the Cook Customs stamp will have its share of visual appeal and functional dependability with a spark of astonishing cleverness tossed in. That's because Dave's been on the scene for some time now and he's here to stay. Visiting with Dave at Cook Customs on Milwaukee's east side, and meeting with his band of merry-makers, convinced us of that. Join us on page 24.



Choices

Sitting in the Editor's chair requires making a lot of choices. Part of making choices is explaining yourself, and I get to do a lot of that, too: the usual why this and why that. Selecting bikes to run in the magazine is one specific area we get asked a lot about. How do we select bikes for features? How do we select shops and builders for spotlight stories?

So to keep on track and on point, we use a guiding principle applied to identifying the bikes for *IronWorks*, described thusly: "bikes worth celebrating." Okay, I can see eyes rolling, but bear with me. I describe a bike worth celebrating as the sort of machine that has handmade, thoughtful touches, a machine that is uncommon in its design, function, manufacture, collection of parts and appearance, and stands out in a crowd for the right reasons. These are machines you have to get down on your knee to appreciate fully, that draw you in and beg to be understood, carefully scoped out, and ridden.

Ultimately, "bikes worth celebrating" are fun to look at. This is about the pursuit of fun, right?

A machine worth celebrating is a platform for ideas and for showcasing the artist/builder's talents. This is how a builder reflects an understanding and a respect for the functionality of the two-wheeled art form, as the machine must work and perform the duties of a motorcycle. And they need to be fun to look at.

So do the bikes that you and I hose down in our driveways, ride daily, and keep in our sheds, garages and living rooms in general and for the most part qualify as bikes worth celebrating? Well, we as owners certainly celebrate our own machines and rightly so, but in the world of media, not so much.

We love our personal machines and we lavish attention on them and honor them as family members, and that is what keeps our passion propelled forward. But alas, when it comes to what appears in a printed publica-

tion, we strive to find the top-shelf gems that you are not going to see at most local bike nights. Isn't that the point?

It's a hustle, ferreting out and telling the stories behind these cool machines that are for the most part off the radar. But it is our responsibility to bring you the very best that's out there. For the record, it matters not one whit if a bike rolls from a shed, bedroom, or pro's shop—cool is cool and if the machine in question is, we want to know about it, we want to feature it.

Another choice: do we use our valuable pages to showcase reader's letters and reader's rides or do we bring you more unusual and high quality machines you've probably not seen before? We choose the latter. Really good reader's rides (and we have fea-



tured many) become bike features anyway, as we contact the owner to make a shoot and story happen.

As moto-consumers we buy stuff and make lots of choices nearly every day. There is a lot of gear designed for V-Twin enthusiasts and to help navigate the waters of choice we choose to use as much of the best, relevant product as is reasonable. We also endeavor to report back on how the gear we got worked—a check-back, if you will. It takes time to bring a product out and that is why the check-back is important. We weave product usage into much of our editorial so over time you get a sense of how things are performing as we travel about using and abusing our stuff.

Tech is an area that is always up for discussion. Do we show splitting cases and ground up engine builds or do we show the

type of work that most modern machine owners are contemplating? While I have to admit a personal fascination with seeing connecting rods and pistons on scales, I am pretty sure—based on what I've heard and been told—that talking about stage 1/2/3 upgrades and the options therein (cams, intake, exhaust, tuners) is a little more along the lines of what most long riding, aftermarket supporting owners want to learn about, so that is where we focus our attention. Not to say we won't be cracking cases in the future...

As the TC population gets more miles under its collective belt, we will be delving further into the maintenance issues encountered and that is where things will get juicy, as the aftermarket always comes up with

good solutions and enhancements to keep us on the road. Keeping older (pre-TC) machines on the road is also on the agenda, so we will have the bases covered... hopefully.

IronWorks Spotlight, the single shop/multi-bike feature we've developed, has turned out to be successful, with readers and builders alike being pleased at this innovation. So we are going to keep it up. Finding the shops that we feature hasn't been a challenge, and to boot, there

are many talented folks that we know about which we just haven't had the time to visit with, but we will. We are always on the lookout for talented shops we haven't featured so if you know of one clue us in.

Having choices, choices, choices: it's a part of what is so great about being an American and a big part of what makes owning a V-Twin so much fun and interesting. We want you to know the fact that you made the choice to read *IronWorks* means a lot to the *IronWorks* team and we hope that you choose to let us know what's on your mind. Check us out at ironworksmag.com and on FB and if you want to save a few bucks, choose to subscribe.

Ride safe, long and like the wind!
Stephen Berner
steveb@steveb.biz



Big, Burly, Black, and Good to Go

Dream Rides resuscitates an aging 1995 Road King

Story and photos by Stephen Berner

Some people are consistent in what they do and in what they like and other folks are more mercurial, bouncing from one thing to the next. What we know of John Jessup is that he is of the former flavor. He delivers a pretty consistent end result when left to do to a big V-Twin what he does best: make it affordable to his customers' budgets, look good, be comfortable and safe, and go like stink—able to take non-stop punishment as if it might live its life at a dragstrip.

On a cold, kind of rainy day in March, while visiting Stockton in scenic Northern California I stopped by Dream Rides to learn the story of this machine, a 1995 Road King. John had sent me a picture of it and I liked the story behind the bike of a dedicated owner taking a machine that had seen a ton of miles and served its master well and giving it a total and complete refreshment. From a monetary standpoint it makes no sense: taking a clapped out Evo and putting a bunch of cake into it if your intention is to flip it for something else.

Nope, it's a special owner that makes the investment and that investment is generally from the heart as much as it is from the wallet, although in this case the big beautiful parts didn't come too cheaply. Like we said, it's about commitment, not just fiscal reward. Starting off as a handlebar job, one thing led to another and the snowball was put in motion. Can you believe such a thing could happen to you? Heavens no! Having a competent shop like Dream Rides at your beck and call to help you indulge your whims and realize your two wheeled vi-





sions can be tough on the budget!

The owner of this mean machine had feelings for this bike. It was the first H-D he'd bought new, he rode it stock for many, many years, and it served him well. He had no complaints. It had accompanied him through thick and thin. After years of duty it was tired and worn and it was a dream of his to reward the bike for its loyal service with a makeover, Dream Rides style.

"I do a lot of Baggers," states head of operations, yard sweeper, bike tuner, dog feeder, and test rider for Dream Rides, John Jessup. By doing a lot of baggers, we've come to know that basically he takes tired, frumpy looking machines and—depending on the budget—rebuilds as much and as far as the customer can go. Sometimes it's big mills, lots of bling, and hand-made custom touches. And sometimes it's





the pay as you go plan; these are the builds that take time. I've seen some of the full-out bling machines roll out of Dream Rides' shop, but taking a customer's long time machine and turning it into a fun, relevant, modern-era hot rod is the bread and butter work that regular customers can swing, and that's what John likes to do best.

Two years from start to finish working as fast as payments allowed, this bike got done. The Ultima 127 is a big boy motor; it works well as a crate unit and looks great when polished. Decisions made included adding Sinister Wheels (located in Turlock, CA) and a 10-row Jagg oil cooler mounted low to keep fluidy things cool. (This is a performance machine and as such puts out some heat.) The swingarm is a Dream

Rides trick using a late model FLH swingarm in place of the wonky stocker; a brilliant amendment accomplished using OEM parts and some knowledgeable machining work. All vital organs, systems, and components were rebuilt, and to keep the bike reliable and low maintenance a wet clutch—beefed up of course—was kept in place, and a 530 O-ring added out back.

Controls are courtesy of Jay Brake. The gas tank is a Drag Specialties unit, straight out of the catalog. Some of the modifications to the frame and seat area are courtesy of TPJ. The Vance & Hines pipe is a go-to unit at Dream Rides and looks at home here on the bulldog bagger. Big motor, big power, big exhaust that flows like mad, and a big sound. A 40-amp

Cycle Electric charging system was bolted in for good measure and to keep systems charged and worry-free.

When asked what he likes most about this machine John relates: "The look. I am really happy with the way the bike came out." Nothing gaudy or fancy, just a hard riding machine that can take the day to day. Steve Turnbow contributed the paint to the project and the customer was a happy guy. Nuff said, end of story. **IW**

*RESOURCE

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