

On Sale Until 08/16/2011

WWW.IRONWORKSMAG.COM

AUGUST 2011

Volume 21 Number 6

# 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





# 8

### 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.

### FEATURE BIKES

<b>In Tribute to Johnny</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<i>Kirk Taylor calls in favors</i>	
<b>Frisco Ron's</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<i>Freak'n Pan-A-Rican</i>	
<b>Dream Rides Bagger</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<i>Keeping the good ones roadworthy</i>	
<b>Mad Jap Customs</b> .....	<b>36</b>
<i>A viewpoint from north of the border</i>	
<b>Metal Dragon's Matte Dragon</b> .....	<b>44</b>
<i>Tipping the attitude scales</i>	

### IW GARAGE

<b>Made the Mustang Way</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<i>Project FLHX takes a seat</i>	
<b>All About</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<i>Vanson: Highly constructed gear</i>	
<b>Horsepower and Torque</b> .....	<b>48</b>
<i>Posie tells all</i>	
<b>Buell Brothers</b> .....	<b>49</b>
<i>The Jet-sons fly again</i>	
<b>Electric</b> .....	<b>50</b>
<i>The simple complexity of field coils</i>	
<b>CTEK Battery Charger</b> .....	<b>51</b>
<i>Charging done smart</i>	
<b>All About</b> .....	<b>52</b>
<i>Race Tech defines suspension</i>	
<b>Modern Battery Tech</b> .....	<b>54</b>
<i>Maintenance and performance tips</i>	
<b>Andrews Explains</b> .....	<b>56</b>
<i>The right cam matters</i>	
<b>Dave's FLTR</b> .....	<b>60</b>
<i>Adding soul for riding comfort</i>	
<b>Road Glide Blackout</b> .....	<b>64</b>
<i>All dressed up and ready to ride</i>	
<b>Project XR1200</b> .....	<b>68</b>
<i>FTF addresses better breathing</i>	
<b>Steadymate Wheel Chock</b> .....	<b>80</b>
<i>Tried and tested</i>	

### DEPARTMENTS

<b>Buyer's Guide</b> .....	<b>70</b>
<i>Performance parts</i>	
<b>IW Eye</b> .....	<b>82</b>
<i>Worth a thousand words</i>	
<b>REGULARS</b>	
<b>Steve B</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<i>Making choices</i>	
<b>Sam Kanish</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<i>Ride in the rain, get wet</i>	
<b>Bert Baker</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<i>Predictable ambiguity</i>	
<b>Marilyn Bragg</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<i>Lost and lovin' it</i>	
<b>Margie Siegal</b> .....	<b>76</b>
<i>Screaming yellow Panhead</i>	



# 24

### 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 wring 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](http://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](mailto:steveb@steveb.biz)



# Matte Dragon: A Top Shelf Softail

*Jim Schloffel has a style he's working hard*

*Story by Jim Schloffel and Stephen Berner  
Photos by Stephen Berner*

**B**rowsing the bike show at this year's Custom Chrome Dealers Show (held in Santa Clara, CA) before the event opened was the best way for me to get a sense of the machines that were on display.

Although the event is focused on dealers and manufacturers, the addition of a world-class bike show makes it even better for those attending the show. It is nice to have something to look at, which brings home the passion, even when you are knee deep in talking the business of V-Twins.

The first day of the two-day affair was a

"trade-only" day with dealers in attendance; on day two, the general public was invited. It was really cool to split the weekend and doing so added a level of energy that I enjoyed. Being an East coaster I got to see what was what in the Nor-Cal scene and I came away impressed.

Early on, a bike that stood out to me



## Matte Dragon

**Owner:** Matt Skilton  
**Builder:** Jim Schloffel, Metal Dragon  
Hayward, CA 94541  
metaldragon1@sbcglobal.net  
510-885-9471 shop, 510-219-2613 cell

## GENERAL

**Fabrication:** Metal Dragon  
**Year, Make & Model:** 2011 H-D 240 Softail  
**Assembly/Builder:** Metal Dragon  
**Timeline:** 6 months

## FORKS

**Builder:** SJP Engineering  
**Type:** Hydraulic  
**Triple trees:** Billet, black anodized

## ENGINE

**Year/Model:** 2003 H-D "B" Motor 106HP, 105TQ  
**Rebuilder & Lower End:** Metal Dragon  
**Displacement:** 95 c.i.  
**Balancing:** No  
**Pistons:** JE Forged 3-7/8" pop-ups



was this super sano Softail. I wasn't sure what it was exactly but the more I looked, the more I liked. It's burly without being cartoonish; the proportions are natural. So clean, so right, it is obvious that the frame is not a stock piece—the bike just sits more confidently. This is a machine so clean that it appears like an OEM build but it is, in fact, a ground up custom finished to a point where it looks—heavens forbid – completely done.

The bike is almost jewel like in its precision and restraint. I admit it; I am probably not the first character who asked Jim, "No front fender?" To which he responded, "No." Ha! I liked this man as well as his



**Cases:** Harley-Davidson  
**Heads:** H-D castings  
 Port & Polish, Hannan's Machine, Hayward CA  
**Cams:** T-Man Performance, TR590C  
**Lifters:** Feuling HP+  
**EFI/Carb:** H-D OEM Delphi Inj., tuned w/TTS Mastertune

**Air Cleaner:** Performance Machine  
**Pipes:** Vance and Hines, modified by Metal Dragon

### TRANSMISSION

**Year/Modifications:** Machine Open Belt  
**Secondary Drive:** Belt 132T

### FRAME

**Year:** 2010  
**Designer/Builder:** Rolling Thunder  
**Type:** 240 Wide Tire Softail  
**Material/Diameter:** 1.5" steel  
**Rake & Stretch:** 32 degree, 3" backbone stretch

### ACCESSORIES

**Hand Controls:** Performance Machine  
**Fenders:** Big Dog rear & struts, modified by Metal Dragon  
**Headlight:** Arlen Ness  
**Taillight:** Badlands "Stogie"  
**Speedo:** Dakota Digital



style and I asked him to explain himself:

"I have been wrenching and building bikes for 20-plus years as a hobby in the garage," he said. "Friends and clients constantly asked me why I didn't open a shop. In 2007 I got tired of the normal job and gave up a good salary, benefits, and a company vehicle to follow my dream and open up a shop. He we are almost four year later running strong."

With niceties out of the way, I asked Jim to talk to me a little about the bike and how it came together. Here's his explanation:

"In late 2007 I met Matt Skilton (bike owner and customer) through

CVOHarley.com, a website dedicated to the CVO models from Harley He had us do some custom work to his new 2008 CVO Ultra. Matt Later sold that bike and always told me he'd be back. In September of 2010 Matt contacted me to build a bike for him out of a bike he purchased from a friend that lost his battle with cancer.

"The goal was a 'murdered out' 240 wide tire Softtail with an attitude. What Matt wanted, compared to the bike he purchased, were too far apart so we decided to start from the ground up and use what we could from the donor bike. Basically, engine, tranny, and electrics were all that were retained from the donor.

"For the frame we chose Rolling Thunder in Canada. They were able to build the frame for us to our specs. The SJP front end was picked by Matt, as it had the blacked-out inverted fork look that he was going for. The wheels were next and after some time looking through the books we decided on Performance Machine Rivera Contrast Cut wheels with the platinum polish.

"We got the rotors and pulley to match along with the drive side brake system. Matt chose the Battastini foot controls with the holes so we carried the "hole" theme through the bike with Battastini grips, shift linkage, and horn cover. To take it further



#### ACCESSORIES (cont)

**Electrics & Gas Tank:** OEM H-D, modified by Metal Dragon  
**Oil Tank:** Rolling Thunder  
**Seat:** Custom made by Corbin Saddles  
**Foot Controls & Pegs:** Battastini's forward controls +2" stretch

#### WHEELS

**Tires:** Metzeler ME 880  
**Front/Size:** 18x3.5 **Rear/Size:** 18x5.5  
**Front & Rear Hubs:** Performance Machine  
**Front Brakes:** Performance Machine  
**Rear Brakes:** Performance Machine drive side brake

#### PAINTING

**Painter/Bodywork/Molding:** Tim & Rory, Unforgotten Customs, Hayward, CA  
**Color:** Hot Rod Black, gloss black pinstripping  
**Powdercoating:** Gloss black powdercoating, Melrose Metal Finishing, Oakland, CA

we added holes in the heat shields and fender struts. When it came time to assemble I showed Matt the PM primary system as it was a perfect fit for the look we were going for, so on it went.”

So friends and fans, here's another story of a talented shop and builder/designer/fabricator collaborating with a customer who had a good idea of what he wanted and wasn't afraid to make his wishes known. Sometimes buying parts for a ground up construction as the customer is a sure fire way to screw up your builder and throw them the unintended curve ball. But in this instance it worked beautifully. When a theme is followed throughout a bike as cleanly as in the case of the Matte Dragon, you can't help but step back and take notice that the team involved was laser focused on an idea and not chasing its tail. **IW**

### \*RESOURCE

Metal Dragon  
Hayward, CA  
510-885-9471  
email: metaldragon1@sbcglobal.net



## All New HI-4N Ignition From Crane Cams®

Introducing the new Crane Cams® HI-4N ignition system for 1970-'99 Harley-Davidson® big twin and 1971-'02 Sportster®. This new multi-function ignition module is built tough for great performance and reliability.

- All New Version of an Old Favorite
- Rugged All Metal Construction and All New Electronics
- Four Rotary Switches for Precise Repeatable Settings
- Single/Dual Fire, Multi/Single Spark, Race/OE, Electric/Kick Start Modes
- 1970 – '99 Big Twin & 1971 – '02 Sportster®

Visit us on the web for more information.



# CRANE Cams®



TOLL FREE 866-584-3750  
[www.cranecams.com](http://www.cranecams.com)

Reader Service No. 24