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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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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 merrymakers, 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!
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