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SWEET 'N' LOW



Rebuilding a Classic.

1980 The first time I remember seeing what is now my motorcycle, was when I awoke one morning to find the coolest looking toy I had ever seen sitting right in my kitchen. Being only five at the time I thought I'd jump right on that was until my dad came running out yelling get off that bike. Very quickly my dad laid the ground rules of no kids aloud on his new bike.

Later that day I watched my dad as he ramped the bike out of the house. He started it up, put on his helmet, and sunglasses to set out for a ride. Looking on with excitement he asked if I'd like to go. I put on my plastic army helmet and a pair of my dad's sunglasses and off we went. It was truly the most exciting ride that I had in my five years.

1996 Throughout those sixteen years my dad had several offers on the bike and always seemed to turn them down. I assumed he was saving it for me, so I took him up on the challenge. Having had only dirt bikes and a three-wheeler I didn't know where to start. So I tore every last piece from the frame. I thought this would be a good starting point being that the frame had lacquer crack throughout it. I remember taking the frame to local shops and getting some crazy looks and some high quotes. I was looking to keep the original nostalgic paint job that it had. After





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months of searching I found a guy that agreed to a fair price and allowed him the job.

1997 With the frame being painted it was on to figuring out the rest of the mess back at the garage. A friend stopped by and saw me working sorting out the parts and mentioned that I should talk to a guy at his work that used to work at the local Honda dealership. I got his number, and it turns out that this guy not only worked for the Honda shop, but he also drag raced a 750cc back in the late 70's.

Our conversation brought back many memories for him. He also agreed to help with the engine rebuild.

Weeks later I stumbled upon a local parts and service shop named Cycle Stop of Norristown, PA, that seemed to be interested in my project. I took some of my parts down to them and we sorted through the mess. As we sorted through the parts they named off companies of the parts that I had, saying that those companies had gone out of business years ago. As time went on Cycle Stop was able to guide me in the right direction for re-chroming shops and replacement parts.

Jan. 1998 Almost a year later and several trips to the paint guys shop, I still did not have



my frame back yet. I decided to take a visit one more time to see the progress of my frame.

He happened to be there and had my frame as well. Although, I found out to my surprise he did not have the type of paint job I was looking for. The colors were not as brilliant as before, and the pin stripping lines were not crisp. Not to mention that he hardly did any body work to the frame. What a major set back, having had all the major parts re-chromed already to be bolted back onto the bike, not to mention a year of time gone by.



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My search started again to find someone to do the frame work as well as painting.

Having visited many of the local "custom" cycle shops already, I turned toward the custom street rod shops to get their perspective on where to go. A few referrals here and there and I found someone who restored street



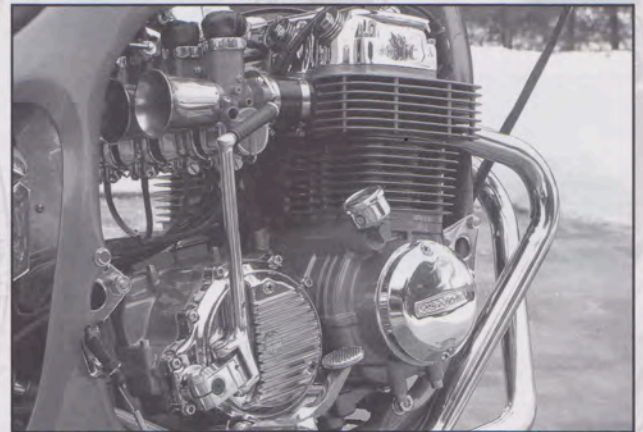
rods for a living. Talking to the owner of the shop, Ted Munsel of Trick Works, he took a liking to my story and offered to do the job. This time Ted recommended having the frame stripped down to bare metal and starting from scratch. Having had the frame sand blasted twice to get rid of all the putty, I was on my way again. Ted being an excellent welder, re-welded all the seams and welded plates in areas of molding, rather than filling the hell out of the frame with bondo, as previously done. My skeleton shooter was then assembled to make sure the engine and everything would fit in its place. Once the bike was assembled we noticed that the gas tank cap and fuel hole were not centered, so off it went. A new recessed cap was welded in place and a hinge and lid were put in place. Not liking the 6" flat fender andissy bar we decided to order a heritage softtail fender and widen the front part of the fender to match the frame width, the sides were skirted to the radius of the wheel, a 1939 Ford tail light was fringed into the fender as well. Rear mounting was welded in place under the fender to support the new fender, and provided a floating fender look. The bike was then disassembled and more grinding and sanding was needed before primer and paint was applied. At about the same time the engine and carbs were disassembled and prepped for painting as well.

Feb. 1999 Nearly another year gone by and my frame was once again painted, this time having only one solid paint color to help bring out the detail in the framework, was ready to be picked up. The engine cases and carb bodies were painted as well and ready to be reassembled. The engine with the help of Steve Peterson was rebuilt and reassembled. Having everything back in my garage ready to be assembled I remember thinking how am I going to assemble this thing without chipping or scratching the paint. The hardest part would be getting the engine in the frame. I figured the best way would be the same way I got it out of the frame three years ago. Although this time I'd have couple guys to help guide the frame over the engine. A couple of friends came over to help and the engine fit like a glove. A couple weeks went by and I now had a rolling chassis. I cut the original king and queen seat pan down and went off to have the seat padded and covered. Having had several more trips to Cycle Stop for misc. parts, (bolts, nuts, and washers) my project was assembled and ready to be wired. A custom bracket and cover were made to house the main electrical components, and all other wiring was hidden as best as possible.

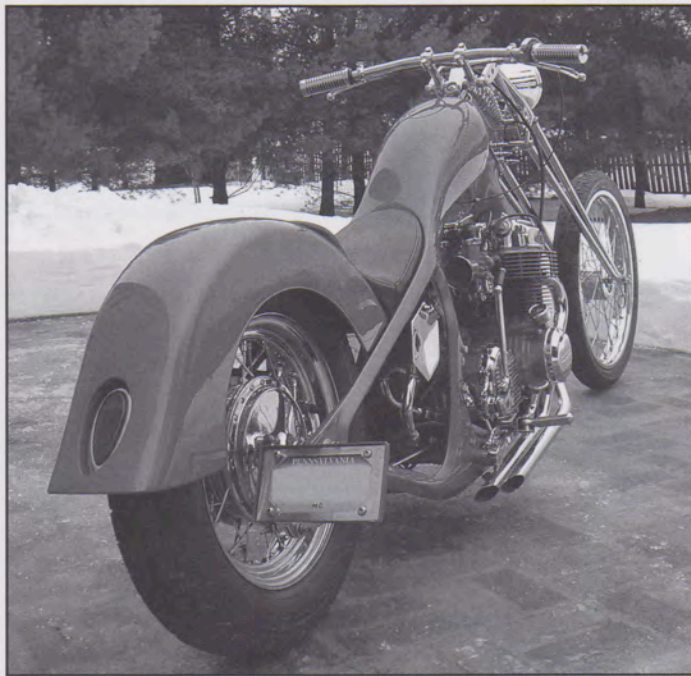
My new seat was finished and installed. I was now ready to fire

it up so I called Steve down to help fine tune things. Steve came down and we put some gas and oil in, hit the starter button and she fired up immediately. Being surprised at how quickly it fired Steve hit the kill switch. We both looked at each other and I hit the starter button again and she fired up again running like a champ. A few adjustments to the carbs. and it was time to go for my first ride on my new bike. I hopped on, pulled in the clutch, put it gear, gave it some gas and let the clutch out and nothing happened. The clutch was not disengaging, so we tried to adjust it with no luck. A small set back, but I was glad to have herd the engine running. A couple of days later it was back to Cycle Stop for a new clutch. I put the new clutch in fired it up and Pulled the clutch in put it in gear and released the clutch and had movement. The new clutch did the trick. It was time to go for a ride, and at this time I was filled with excitement and well as nervous as hell. I had never rode a bike that long before or that nice, with so much time invested. I put my helmet on started it up and off I went. It handled very well and had a good balance to it as well as some kick ass power. I returned home with a grin from ear to ear. It was an incredible experience to have come this far with this much time gone by, to finally just sit back and stare at my completed bike. It was far better then I had expected it to look, which made it that much of an accomplishment. The next day my dad stopped by to check out the bike as he had done throughout the build. I asked if he wanted to take it for a ride and he said yes. Again I became very nervous as he had not ridden the bike in about 20-years. Off he went as though he had just ridden yesterday. He returned saying that I need to get mirrors and a speedometer, I just smiled and said OK.

The spring and summer of 2000 and 2001, I entered my bike in several local shows. Competing against some bikes three times the cost of mine in different classes. I had great results having gotten, Best of Show Import Class, Best Hand Crafted Parts, Mayors Choice, as well as several first place finishes. Although, getting these prizes was great, I still like seeing the crowd's reaction and comments about my bike much better then the monetary awards.



These days I have been riding my bike more than just showing it. Having done trips through the Smokey Mountains, to daily rides with local friends I've meet through the Hondachopper web site. I now look forward to building another bike hopefully having the same experience as I have had with this bike. This has truly been a great first ride.



OWNER: Sean O'Neill
LOCATION: Lansdale, Pennsylvania
BUILDER: Sean O'Neill
ENGINE: 1972 Honda CB750 w/ Mac 4-2 Shorties
FRAME: Stock, with weld-on hardtail of unknown origin
-work done in mid 70's. Tank welded to frame,
1/8" stock welded to frame to achieve desired
shape then skinned with sheet metal, Custom gas
door with hidden fill cap, hidden rear fender
braces, Entire frame molded

COLOR: 2000 Prowler Orange
PAINTER: Ted Munsell of Trick Works
FORKS: 18" over girder - Mfr unknown, built early 70's
BARS: 7/8" Drags
FENDER: Modified 1990 Heritage Softail
TAILLIGHT: 39 Ford Frenched into rear fender
SPEEDO: None
ELECTRICS: Custom made box with all wiring hidden
OIL TANK: Hexagon with Battery Box - Chrome Plated
SEAT: Custom fitted seat pan, black leather
WHEELS: Front: 21" Hall Craft Mini Drum
Rear: 16" Harley laced to Honda Hub