Yamaha XS1B Restoration
Part 2

Riding with RetroTours

Building a Bitsa Bike Café Racer
From the President

Fellow VJMC Members,

This is my first letter as the new President of the club today, January 1st, 2008. First and foremost, I would like to thank Pete Boody for his dedication to the club. He has made the VJMC better with his leadership and we all should thank him for his tenure as President.

I was flattered to be asked to run for President by Pete this summer at the National Rally. Never saw that one coming…I was blindsided but said sure, why not?! I have been a member for nearly 20 years (where did all that time go so fast?) and have been showing, collecting, restoring, and talking shop with anyone willing to listen. The thing I love the most about the club is its members and the bike meets where we gather.

I grew up with Honda motorcycles in my life. My first one at age 13 in 1965 was a red Sport 50. Later I got an S-90, then a CL175 and finally a CB 350 in my last year at Georgia Tech. I left school to pursue a rock and roll career as a drummer in a band and left motorcycles behind until the mid-80s. I don’t know what caused my renewed interest but I know the exact moment it started: I found a red CA95 (AKA wet dream) for cheap, built a protective slot to pack it into the back of the band’s truck and thus had a vintage bike to ride around in all the towns we played.

Then I deliberately started looking for old Hondas…and boy did I find them, CHEAP!

My first goal was the get the “toaster tank” models, then I started getting into the larger models. I was getting some amazing bikes for $100-$500.

In the late 80s I was turned on to the VJMC and signed up immediately. I then met President Jim Townsend at the White Rose meet in Pennsylvania. The connections you make and the people associated with this club are fantastic. The rallies have all been very fulfilling and we have made lifelong friendships from these get-togethers. The “we” I speak of is my fantastic wife Elizabeth, who is a trooper and loves going to the shows with me. And she “lets” me collect motorcycles as well!

I have been promoting the club and the hobby for years now. I have a trailer that will haul six bikes and went to seven shows last year. Up here in New England we have a bunch of great guys and gals who support us at the regional shows. I have sponsored three annual barbecues at my house in August for people who enjoy seeing my collections of Hondas, American Flyer trains, Ed “Big Daddy” Roth memorabilia, and musical equipment. Photos of my collection can be seen at http://picasaweb.google.com/stuartcovington/honda. I will sponsor my fourth annual barbecue again this August.

As the new President I will do my best to make the club better than I found it. The club has new people in several key positions and I thank all of those who recently stepped down and welcome our new people to the fold. We are motoring on in a forward direction with the wind at our backs and the future upon the horizon.

My goals for the VJMC are to keep pushing the brand name and to increase awareness of the club and membership and to see how we can build local chapters for get-togethers and rides. I think we should have a VJMC store on the web site for caps, tee shirts, coffee mugs, etc.; it would be another way to generate a bit of revenue and could be a self-perpetuating thing. Maybe hook into some charitable events for more exposure. One of my fantasies is to have our bikes in a parade so people can see them running and take a step back in time. I see period movies with cars from the ‘60s, but never motorcycles…well it is about time they used some of our members’ machines in a Hollywood film too! (We have to dream big! Or have a big Dream Parade!)

I am open for and welcome comments and suggestions from all our members and officers and from anyone with a good idea. I would like to see more people support the events and rallies we attend as well. I know that I will. Last year we did a great job spreading the word and making old and new events a big success.

So to all of you from me, happy New Year…let’s make it a great one for the VJMC!

—Stuart Covington
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The Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum congratulates the 2007 Concours d’Elegance Jim Davis Best in Show award winner Peter Callas with his 1971 MV Agusta 750 Sport. Callas will take the Jim Davis traveling trophy home to keep until October 4, 2008.

Do you own the Japanese vintage motorcycle that will take home the trophy next year?

13515 Yarmouth Drive
Pickerington, OH 43147
(614) 856-2222
www.motorcyclemuseum.org

The Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum’s Concours d’Elegance is a juried show. To find out how to participate in the October 4, 2008 show, e-mail images of your Japanese vintage motorcycle to: mmederski@motorcyclemuseum.org.
XS1B Restoration
Part 2

by John Patterson

If something seems too good to be true, get ready for a disappointment...sometimes” This might be the case if you shop on eBay for parts regularly. Most of the pictures taken by sellers don’t show the items for sale very clearly, or the flash and/or reflection in the item may make it hard to determine if the item is in pristine shape or rummage-sale quality. In addition there may be “sins of omission” by the seller in the description, so do your part by asking questions.

Chromed items are extremely difficult to shoot; they are not usually photographed in a way that you can tell how good they really are, so you need to rely on the seller’s honesty. Case in point: I found a rear fender on eBay for the XS1B - the ad read as follows:

1971 Yamaha XS650 rear fender: Excellent Condition - Must See

I sent a note asking if by “excellent” that meant no dents or wrinkles; the seller replied “correct”. Imagine my surprise when I received the fender and it had two dents in it, one which actually punched all the way through the fender. In addition the previous owner had drilled a small hole in the lower lip of the fender. When I sent an email to the seller she stated she was “Selling it for a friend.... and didn’t see [the defects] prior to shipping”. Yeah, right! I’ve heard that story before and it doesn’t wash. I sent the fender back - not useable at all. I’ve since seen it relisted on eBay and the description is much more realistic and it has quite a few pictures showing the defects. No one is buying!

That said, about 99% of my eBay transactions have been great and in a few cases I got an exceptional deal because the seller didn’t know what they had. You need to rely on a combination of the pictures, the seller’s feedback rating, and their answers to any questions you ask. My buddy Dennis said “eBay” should be re-named “potluckBay,” and in some cases he is right, but I’m still convinced this is the best place to find rare parts.

I can guarantee that at some point in looking for items on eBay you will have a “fall out of your chair” moment when you stumble onto something you had given up on ever being able to find. I had one experience like this myself when I located some NOS saddlebags for my 1975 XS650B. It was the final item I was looking to purchase in order to complete my XS650B. As soon as I picked myself off the floor I sent an email to my wife Tammy saying, “I am so happy - look at this” with the link attached. I won them for about 10% of what I was willing to pay. As you can see in the photo above they really complete the look of the bike.

If you decide to use eBay as a source for parts make sure you take advantage of the customized searches in “My eBay.” For instance, I currently have the key words “XS1B Switch Handle” set up as one of a few different search criteria. Anytime an item is added with those words, I receive an email notifying me with a link to that new listing.

You can also add a seller to your list of “favorite sellers” and you will be notified each time that seller adds new items to eBay. So, watch the listings, scrutinize the pictures, ask lots of questions and hope for the best, but don’t be surprised if you have an occasional disappointment.

One last point: don’t forget to factor all the shipping charges in as part of the total cost so you’ll really know if you are getting a deal or not. If the part is large (like a fender) the UPS charges will be steep even for the cheapest delivery method. Items shipping from outside the country will be expensive as well. I constantly compare what I am bidding on eBay (plus shipping) against where I know can get the part at a set price.

The key to finding places that will do specialized work is to network, network, network...then if you have time network some more! “I know this guy who has this friend who knows this guy, whose brother had this work done by...” You get the idea ...you really need to establish a decent library of competent craftsmen to get your project moving in the right direction. Starting out on your first project is not continued on page 6
easy so save yourself some grief and network with people you know or contact competent businesses and ask for references. Chances are that by the time you start a second project you'll already have a pretty good idea of who you will use and who you would never use again. Sometimes you end up with a list of "This guy can do W, X, and Y really well but I would never trust him to do Z again." I've been burned a number of times so I know who to go to for my mechanical work. For the XS1B I will be taking a chance on the painting and chroming, but I feel pretty good about the places based on the recommendations I've received. An industrial plating company actually recommended the shop where I am taking the parts for re-chroming. One of the employees’ sons (at the industrial plating company) has had a lot of chrome work for his motorcycle done there and he was very pleased. I called and had a 30-minute conversation with the owner and am going to give them a try. I also took the opportunity to look at the chrome work he is doing for his customers and it is all beautiful, so the work speaks for itself.

Once you have a list of strong players in each area, make sure that you keep a record of who they are and what their specialty is. This is good not only for your next project but will also serve to help other folks who will inevitably ask, “Where did you have that done?” You should also include parts shops; you would be surprised how fast you can forget about some out-of-the-way spot where you found a critical part, so write everything down.

The grab rail, fork tubes, front fender, and chain guard are all cleaned up and ready for shipping. I took the rear fender along as well. These six pieces will not be ready for six or more weeks, which is fine at this point since the powder coating still needs to be done.

Like a fine wine, some things improve with age — but the rubber pieces on the XS1B are not one of them!

I'm not sure there is any part on a motorcycle that improves with age. While certain parts might by valuable in themselves for someone looking to restore a bike, this bike as a whole would not be worth much, at least in the condition in which I found it. Time has been particularly unkind to the rubber grommets, most of which have degraded to the point where they fall apart at a touch. This became obvious as I was disassembling the front fender for chroming. Every rubber grommet was rotted. Wiring sheathes, cables, and large rubber dampers can also be degraded so give them the once over too. If they have perished, see if you can get new old stock items, or even better, new replacements. On some of the older motorcycles rubber dampers play a key role in reducing vibration so replacing these has the dual advantages of visual appeal and comfort. Engine seals are another topic altogether and will be discussed during the engine breakdown in a future article.

As I mentioned earlier, one really big challenge for anyone restoring a motorcycle is to keep track of the parts they are ordering. Tons of little rubber grommets coming in over the months tend to get overwhelming quickly and you might start asking, “Gee, did I order that yet?” or “Gee, what’s this for?” Once again, keep tight records of what you order and where on the motorcycle it fits. All to often suppliers will include their part number, not the one you are familiar with, so take note and cross reference with your order.

When New Old Stock (NOS) parts are not good enough, there is a balance that needs to be struck between originality and safety! Let’s face it, sometimes even if you can find NOS parts, they might look nice but may no longer be functional. In this case I’m talking about the rear shocks on the XS1B. Even NOS shocks that have sat in a warehouse for 36 years are probably no longer worth installing. Don’t get me wrong, I really am a purist for the most part, and would probably buy the NOS shocks if they were available somewhere but I would be awfully apprehensive about driving at highway speed with 36 year-old shocks. It has long been rumored that the infamous wobble on the old 650s was due in part to premature failure of the original shocks. I don’t really want to find myself trying to correct a sudden wobble while cruising along a country road at 60 MPH. Fortunately I won’t have to make the “NOS vs. Original” decision on the suspension since there are no NOS shocks available. However I did find some shocks for vintage bikes that have an upper shroud which can be painted, so I can maintain the original look of the bike. These are from Hagon once the cap is painted it should look really close to the originals.

Empty Nest Syndrome has arrived in my garage! I must admit, I fitted Progressive Suspension shocks to my 1975 XS650B and I haven’t regretted it; they take the bumps on the highway better than my 2004 Suzuki Intruder. Since my vintage saddlebags on the 650B hide the Progressive shocks, the fact that they look different than the stock shocks really doesn’t matter.

There have been a lot of upgrades to the bearings and bushings on the 650s over the years as well, so why not take advantage of better engineering while you have the bike apart. In my mind it just makes sense to replace the old ball race-style bearings with sealed units as well as changing the old fiber-type swing-arm bushings to the stronger bronze units, both of which are superior to the originals.

Empty nest syndrome has arrived in my garage!

There’s really not much of the bike left in my garage at this point; everything is pretty much farmed out. There is a bucket of nuts and bolts that need to be cleaned/polished but that’s about it. The wheels are at the shop having tires mounted and bearings put in. The chrome parts are being plated. The frame and associated parts are out for powder coating.

In the meantime, there are a few things I can do, like repair the cobbled wiring of the switch handle. An NOS switch or even an old used unit would cost over $200; I saw one sell on eBay recently for $265.00. The supplies for repairing the old hacked switch were approximately a tenth of that cost (including the soldering iron since I didn’t have one). With the switch repaired, it’s still a faith

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**XS1B Restoration continued from page 5**

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trip hoping that it will work (since I have no idea if it even worked prior to my purchasing the bike). So now it’s a matter of crossing my fingers and hoping the internal workings of the switch are still good. If worse comes to worse I’ll source a NOS or used switch but I think this one will probably work just fine.

This project is the second time I’ve powder coated motorcycle frame and parts. Seems like only a short time ago I was laying all the freshly powder coated parts of the XS650B on the garage floor, later discovering that some were missing. Although they were found back at the shop (up front under the counter), that taught me a lesson about taking inventory before and after submitting them for coating. If you don’t count your parts you have only yourself to blame if you don’t get them all back. “The Blast Shop” in Kenosha, Wisconsin, did my powder coating, as well as for the XS650B last year, and I have no complaints whatsoever. Everything is accounted for and looks good. Whether you want to go with powder coating or painting is a personal preference. A “purist” (as I am on most things) would say, “Go with paint - that’s how it was done at the factory.” On the other hand, as most people will tell you, powder coating is almost bulletproof. I have this funny aversion to rust (probably from living in Wisconsin where winters make just about everything rust) so I decided to powder coat everything. Realistically, using regular paint would probably have been just fine but I was very impressed with the durability of the powder coating on the XS650B, so that’s the direction I decided to go. In any case, it sure is nice to see everything turn out so shiny and new.

Although I promised myself everything would go in properly-labeled bags, I did deviate a bit towards the end of the tear down process. Why, you may ask? Two problems...1) I think I am smarter than I actually am, and 2) I think my memory is better than it actually is. The result: parts of the forks and the kickstand/center stand assemblies ended up loose in my toolbox. Surprise surprise - I can’t find the kickstand bolt even though I emptied out my complete seven-drawer toolbox, and most of the garage. I finally gave up and ordered one - it just wasn’t worth the frustration any longer. Of course I kicked myself over and over again while I was looking. “Oh gee, there’s the kickstand spring...can the bolt be far behind?” Must have been real far behind as I never located it.

Then I thought, “Maybe the bolt was never there - maybe it was cobbled together with a makeshift bolt.” Wrong again; looking at the photos I took during the tear down process and there it was. Note to self: EVERYTHING goes in a baggie with a note. Actually, speaking of baggies, I have a better idea now, which is to staple the baggies to an exploded view of the part stored within them. There are a couple of advantages to this method: 1) there’ll be no confusion as to where the parts belong (it’s sometimes hard to interpret my writing on grease stained Post-Its), and 2) it will save time over writing everything on a Post-It and putting it in the bag. Let’s face it: you’re going to need the exploded views for re-assembling the bike anyway, because over time parts go...

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**Editorial**

**See You Down the Road!**

Well folks, the time has come to step down from the Editor position. It’s been a great two years here at the helm of your favorite magazine, and I thank you all for your support and the praise that I’ve received for this, my labor of love. I am moving on to pursue new opportunities in moto-journalism with other classic bike publications, most of which I’m sure many of you already know and/or subscribe to, so you may yet be subjected to my ramblings – fair warning!

Some notable moments and people during my term: In January 2006 I fell and broke my leg; fortunately our former webmaster, Beth Braun, was there to step in and help get out the next issue. Then in December of that year my Suzuki and I had a violent encounter with a PT Cruiser that left me in hospital for nearly a month, and stuck in a wheelchair for several months afterwards. At that point Mr. Erik Ness kindly took over the reins for February/March 2007 issue while I recovered. I owe both Erik and Beth a lot, and if we ever meet, the beer’s on me!

Kudos to Nadine Messier, our excellent layout person (also leaving with me, unfortunately) who brought the magazine from a rather primitive layout into the new century. Thanks Nadine!

I’d also like to thank the many contributors who’ve sent in stories, tips, and pictures. Without you there’d be no magazine, and indeed no VJMC at all. I encourage all of you to keep up the great work, and whenever you have something to say or share, don’t hesitate to send it in to the new Editor, the effervescent Brendan Dooley.

Finally, thanks to the Club’s Board of Directors, who tolerated me as Editor for so long.

I wish you all the best of luck with all your motorcycle projects and acquisitions...see you down the road!

I still have a few of the Suzuki GT-750 DVDs available for anyone interested. The DVD is an awesome resource, with a spotter’s guide for each of the five years the GT750 was produced, lots of photos, and a how-to video on rebuilding the three-cylinder two-stroke engine that’s worth the price ($25) alone. The DVD is produced in the UK and while it is in PAL format, it seems to play just fine on most US-spec DVD players. Any interested Water Buffalo-heads out there are invited to email me at motoboy@earthlink.net for details. ☺
missing that need to be ordered and no matter how good your memory is, you aren’t going to remember how everything fits back together.

In any event the missing kickstand bolt gave me an opportunity to buy some more parts I needed. I try to maximize every order to avoid paying too much for shipping. This can get precarious when you are down to the last few items you need, and usually happens as an “Oh s**t!” moment as in the case of the kickstand bolt. Then you start to look for other items you need to reach an economical order point so you can avoid freight charges or get a quantity discount. Always, and I mean always, beware the minimum order quantity! You’ll sleep so much easier knowing you got the best deal possible.

As I mentioned above, the other problem you will encounter as you start reassembling your project is that parts that have gone missing, are wrong, or were assembled incorrectly. Case in point: the XS1B’s steering assembly, for which two parts went missing and the spring was installed in the wrong order. All this will be corrected, though it means more time spent on ordering more parts. Also, don’t forget that when you upgrade your components (like replacing the ball bearings with tapered roller bearings), the assembly will be slightly altered. One last warning about wrong parts that you may find slightly amusing (or not, depending on which side of the transaction you are on): I found that certain part numbers sometimes remained the same even though the part itself changed significantly. Yamaha used the same part number even as they moved to a totally different part configuration, one that unfortunately won’t work with the XS1B. I ordered four of these dampers because the old ones were hardened with age. The ones that arrived were the right part number (Shown on both the 1971 and 1975 exploded views) but absolutely the wrong part for the job. Ah yes, the fun of returning merchandise continues.

The time came to bring the engine to the machine shop – I know it’s hard to believe but I lifted the lump myself into the back of the Durango, with some choice words as it made the trip up over the fender. This engine suffers from, at the very least, low compression in one cylinder. Once at the shop I just told them to write “Rebuild” on the slip; they will take care of whatever it may need, including drilling out the broken front engine stay bolt. As you can see I used some straps to hold it securely into place and it’s resting on about two inches of Styrofoam to protect the carpeting.

Now that we are entering the “non-riding” months in Wisconsin, there is really no rush on the engine work – it’s just good filler for the shop in the off months. I know for a fact that I am missing some odds and ends for the engine (like the screws that hold the brushes in), so the shop will call me to source parts if they are unavailable from their suppliers. It sure would have been nice if the exploded views in the manual had given the thread sizes and lengths on the bolts and screws. Most of hardware for the electrical components is unavailable but probably easy enough to buy at Ace Hardware if you know what you’re looking for. When I dropped by Ace the other day I took a chance and picked up some 6mm screws to see if they would work for securing the voltage regulator to the battery box. I lucked out as these were the right thread size, just a little too short but at least I know what I’m fishing for now. The hardware will probably end up being much cheaper anyway; two screws with washers were $1. I can tell you from experience that if I found the same thing with a Yamaha label it would be about $6 per screw and $2 per washer.

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2008 DAYTONA BIKE WEEK
ANTEQUE & CLASSIC
MOTORCYCLE AUCTION
March 5th through March 7th, 2008 ~ Stetson University in Deland, FL
FEATUREING VINTAGE TRADE SHOW~SWAP MEET
BIKE SHOW~SEMINARS AND MORE

Wed ~ March 5th ~ Japanese Day ~ Sponsored by Vintage Japanese Motorcycle Club

Thursday ~ March 6th ~ American/British/European Day ~
Sponsored by AHRMA & Antique Motorcycle Club of America
Parts Auction at 2:00 pm ~ Featuring Items from a British Motorcycle Shop

Friday ~ March 7th ~ 1:00pm ~ Motorcycle Auction

Our 21st Year at Daytona Bike Week
The Nations Oldest Annual Vintage Motorcycle Auction
2007 Sales Rate Over 96% with Selling 1.3 Million Dollars
Over 75% Consigned at NO RESERVE
INSIDE & OUTSIDE VENDOR SPACES AVAILABLE
MOTORCYCLE CONSIGNMENTS NOW BEING ACCEPTED
Shipping Available Anywhere ~ All Major Credit Cards Accepted

Visit our Website for the Consignment List, Photos, Past Results, Forms and Additional Information
www.jwoodandcompany.com
email: jwoodauction@gmail.com
Phone: 352-795-8895 for Motorcycle Information
407-831-4331 for All other Information
Our Service Doesn’t Cost ~ It Pays!!
**XS1B Restoration**  
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The other thing you may want to do if and when you re-build or just polish your engine, is to replace all the old corroded/rusty metric hardware with brand new shiny bits. All this hardware is available from www.Mikesxs.com and it is very reasonable. I dropped off all the new hardware at the same time I dropped off the engine. As it turns out the owner of the machine shop has a brother who polishes engine covers and other metal parts as a side job. I looked at some of his work and it really was outstanding. Quite a few of my parts are already polished but I figured I could run them through for a final polish and the small metal parts and the side cover in the picture above could be done to save me some wear and tear on my joints. My plan is to do a clear powder coating over these parts when they are done so I don’t need to polish them every year.

So at this point the bike began to take shape again although very, very slowly. The lift has taken its place in the back of the garage and the frame has been secured with four tie downs. I’ve already installed part of the wiring harness and have fastened down the battery box. The swing arm axle has new bushings, shims, grease seals, and new modern grease fittings installed. I also took time to purge all the old grease out of the axle. A gauge mounting plate I purchased on eBay turned out to be wrong for the XS1B; it was probably for an XSI as the holes for the handlebar clamps did not line up with the holes in the upper triple tree. Fortunately, the eBay seller stood behind the part even though I purchased it a few months ago. Not being sure if he would have the correct gauge plate I decided to just have the other one powder coated - the cost was only $8.00 and as you can see it looks as good as new. In addition I decided to powder coat the air boxes because they were very rusty, so they went to the shop along with the seat hinges. Might as well get all the painted stuff looking good, right? It only took about three days before the parts were ready for pick up and I am really pleased with how the air boxes turned out.

Some of the parts sent for re-chroming (the rear grab rail, chain guard, and the lower fork tubes) have also been completed, although the fenders will not be ready for about five more weeks. There was so much pitting that we both decided they needed to be redone with a good copper plating underneath to hopefully fill in all the small pits. The good news is that now I can begin to assemble the forks and the front end of the bike. I can also install some of the smaller stuff such as the grab rail and taillights. However, the problem I’m having with this restoration is that nothing is following my work plan correctly. In other words, step 15 is being completed before step 10, and step 16 cannot be completed if step 10 has not occurred. This is not due to my planning but is a result of issues that are cropping up like the fenders needing to be re-done, so things are delayed.

For example, I can’t adjust the steering head bearings yet because the forks are not finished, I want to have the tire mounted before I try adjusting those bearings, which is impossible without the forks. Even once I have the forks completed I still won’t have the front wheel hub plate (which is going through a final polish and then a clear coat process), but I can temporarily put the wheel on to adjust the bearings. All this jumping back and forth doesn’t make for a smooth process flow. The only way I could smooth things out at this point is sit back and wait for everything to be finished and delivered before I continue - but I’m up against Mother Nature too and I really want to get to a rolling chassis stage this fall so I can free up some room in my garage. I’m still about three or four steps away from that happening.

I’ve never had anything chromed before, and never read anything about it either (probably my first mistake), but I have seen TV shows where parts are re-chromed and they don’t fit correctly anymore. Now I can identify with those shows. Since the fork tubes were re-chromed I’ve had two issues: 1) The top of the outer tubes had about 3/4 of an inch of chrome plating on the inside preventing the bushings from being installed. I had to use a razor blade to scrape as much out as I could so the bushings could be inserted. This is a horrible issue to deal with - there should have been a plug inserted in the top to prevent seepage of the plating to the inside area. 2) The lower left outer tubes have an opening for the wheel axle that should not have been chromed - now I can’t get the axle in and spreading the gap wider only caused the chrome to flake off, this should have been plugged as well. So I had to remove the fork, tear it apart, clean it, and ship it back to the shop. The plater is going to re-do it to my satisfaction, but like everything else on this project it has become just another source of frustration.

So, what did I learn? Don’t assume that the shop knows what should and shouldn’t be plated. Make sure you tell them “Don’t chrome here and don’t chrome there” otherwise you will be in the same position I am. Even if they claim “Well we’ve done a hundred of these and never had a problem”, you don’t know what models they have worked on (in this case they had not done Yamahas), so it doesn’t mean the clearances/specifications on the others they have done are the same as yours. Go over everything in minute detail - better safe than sorry.

I have a lot of “outstanding” parts, or parts that are somewhere other than in my garage right now. Given how everything is coming back to me out of order, my guess is that the bike will stay on the lift this winter. I have already winterized my 1975 and 1976 XS650s and put them into storage, and I have all the motorcycle batteries on the battery tender so that they are ready to go in the spring.

Here’s a list of parts that are currently out:

**Engine:** the shop reports that the rings had seized on one of the pistons, causing the low compression; they said this was due to the long period the bike sat without running. He also showed me the cylinder walls...you could see the spot where the pistons had sat over time. The work they are doing on the engine is nothing short of great...they are bead blasting the outside of the cases as they go along and the engine now looks brand new. The owner Tony is taking the cases to a body shop to have the yellow clear coat removed and the top of the engine painted as it would have looked new. I realize there will be some rough spots on the engine covers that won’t look new, but I’m convinced it will turn out really, really nice.

Various metal parts being polished, i.e. engine case covers, which will be clear coated afterwards.

The chrome parts (and the re-chroming of parts), as described above.

To be sent out yet - all the parts to be painted. The carbs are back from being rebuilt and they are ready to go.

To be continued....
Building a Bitsa Bike Café Racer

by Larry “Iceman” Ice

Ok, so for some time you’ve hankered to build a café racer! You have seen many nicely tricked-out examples and have concluded that you just have to build one of your own.

In my case I remember sitting in 10th grade drama class, hiding a motorcycle magazine behind my textbook and reading about Brit café racers. I was mentally deep into transforming my 1960 Triumph T20 Tiger Cub into a café racer and resented the occasional intrusion of my attention by the Drama class. Fast forward forty-some years to my friend Mark Anthony and I discussing the nice 650cc Yamaha dirt tracker bikes he builds. During our conversation he mentioned that he was throwing out a 1971 Honda CL100 bike he had lying around his shop, and he jokingly suggested I make a café racer out of it. Much to his surprise I took him up on his offer. One of my favorite mottos is “Never Pass Up A Free Motorcycle.” However, as many of you have found out, there is really no such thing!

Now I am enjoying building my “Bitsa Bike” café racer so much that I’d like to pass along my humble account of the construction process. Don’t interpret my advice to mean this is the only way to build a café racer; this article is just to give you some ideas about what to incorporate into your own unique machine.

A quick glance at the adjacent photos will show I slightly overestimated my mechanical abilities when I chose the Honda CL100 as a donor. You can see there was not much to begin with. Basically, I got a frame, front wheel, front fork assembly, a swing arm and bunches of small parts.

I chose to use a combination of bikes and parts to achieve the effect I wanted, hence the “Bitsa Bike” name – bits from here and bits from there. Because I used so many different bikes parts and made many of the parts myself, the bike was built with no particular order in mind. This allowed me the flexibility to search for parts and while working on the sub-assemblies. Fabricating parts is what I like to do; to me that’s half the fun of building a project such as this. I decided to go for a “racer wannabe” look by drilling holes in some of the parts I fabricated to lighten them.

Ebay is, of course, a great resource for parts, as are the swap meets at Barber Motor Sports Vintage Days and Mid-Ohio Vintage Days. My timeframe for completion was open so I didn’t try to rush the project. You could probably complete your own Bitsa Bike in a couple of months with no problem. It would make a nice winter project if you can’t ride anyway. I’m sure

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Bitsa Bike Café Racer
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you will get as much of a kick out of your project as I do working on mine.

Although I decided to build a small displacement bike, you can use the same process to build or customize your café racer using whatever donor bikes you prefer. I have seen café racers built from 50cc to 1200cc machines. Your budget will determine how extensive your project will become. Obviously if you do most of the work yourself it will greatly reduce the cost, or you can farm out most of the work and create a high-end machine. Either way, you’ll end up with a uniquely individual design for your bike. That individualism seems to be inherent in all bikers. Don’t forget to allow for “Detail Creep” or special parts which may end up busting your budget.

Don’t forget to allow for “detail creep” or special parts which may end up busting your budget.

Starting the project!

Time and fate had finally come together and I was ready to go. As luck would have it, I had purchased a Chinese-made Lifan 150cc engine off of eBay a month or so before and was wondering what I was going to build with it. If you read the story “A Tale of Two Tondas” in the VJMC magazine (July 07), the 150cc Lifan engine is a larger version of the Lifan 125cc engines I worked on while in Baghdad. I was pretty impressed on the quality of these engines and thought they would make a good match of engine to frame. I enjoy riding small, light, high-reving bikes, so this combination was a natural choice for me. The clincher came when seller said it would fit many small Honda frames.

The Lifan engine specs are:

- **Engine Model:** 162FMJ
- **Type:** 4-Stroke single-cylinder
- **Over Head Cam:** air cooled
- **Bore & Stroke:** 62.0 x 49.5mm
- **Compression ratio:** 9.0 : 1
- **Displacement:** 149.4cc
- **Max. HP:** 13.5 HP @ 9,500 rpm
- **Max. Torque:** 8.25 ftlbs @ 7,500 rpm
- **Starter:** Kick Start & Electric Start
- **Ignition system:** CDI (Capacitive Discharge Ignition)
- **Lubrication:** Pressure/Splash
- **Measurements:** 14”x13”x 17.25”
- **Weight:** 63 Pounds

The engine cost around $350 including shipping, and it came complete with the coil, CDI, solenoid and carburetor. I thought that was a good buy; I couldn’t have rebuilt a 100cc Honda engine for that money.

The first project was to strip everything and take stock of all usable parts. Cleaning the grime of 35 years took several nights of steady work, scraping away dirt, tar and grease with a screwdriver and putty knife until I got down to the paint. Surprisingly enough much of the original finish was still intact under the grime, a tribute to Honda paint quality. I still had to remove a good quantity of rust and grime before I could determine whether the frame was usable, but luckily the rough-looking frame was only cosmetically rusted. If at this point you discover your frame isn’t in good shape, you might as well discard it and begin looking for another bike, as bent, deeply rusted or damaged frames will probably be too expensive to repair. No sense throwing good money after bad!

After the initial cleaning, I separated the parts into five basic groups: wheel, frame, forks, swing arm, and “other.” The “other” stuff I put in a box for possible later use. I decided the original forks and triple clamps were unsuitable for the bike I envisioned and so they joined the “other” parts. The front wheel assembly (with disk) was usable but not great looking, so it was a “keeper” for now.

I wanted the bike to look like a racer, so I used an angle grinder to remove the tabs and lumpy weld spots on the frame and swing arm. The angle grinder became an indispensable tool in this project. I dare say you can build your bike without one but it sure makes it easier and is well worth the expense.

I brought the parts to my good friend Duke Marley, where I was to spend much of the time it took me to build the bike. Duke has a well-equipped shop and I have access to his lathe, welders, drill press and a host of other machines I did some of the design and parts fabricating myself.

On examining the swing arm I discovered the bearings were unbelievably sloppy. I couldn’t believe someone rode this bike with the swing arm bearings in such bad shape! I don’t see how...
All of the decent old bikes are either in Ohio, Florida, or way out West." With that generalized kick to a buddy from Idaho, this saga starts.

As a middle-age baby-boomer hankering to get back into motorcycling after an absence of several decades, I serendipitously happened upon the proverbial little two-stroke. My imagination conjured up a friendly 1960s road bike needing only a bit of TLC and a lot of country road on a sunny Saturday afternoon. But every time any reasonably-priced classic Kawasaki, Suzuki, Bridgestone, or Yamaha caught my eye on eBay, the darn things were always tanks and tanks of gas away from my upstate New York home. Even a "Wanted" ad in the local papers yielded nothing but one longwinded message from a guy who misconstrued that I possessed such machines for sale. Seeking old bikes via the local edition of Craigslist.com also came up dry.

My Idaho pal expressed genuine surprise at this shortage. He’d recently been inundated with requests after running a similar “Wanted” blurb in his local classifieds. “Four Hodakas, a cute Tohatsu twin, and a pretty nice Suzuki 250," he tallied the haul, all effortlessly netted for about $150 apiece from anxious sellers bent on cleaning out their garages. "Oh, and, I’ve already registered and ridden the X-6 Hustler," he noted, not meaning to add insult to injury. There was a long pause in our telephone conversation.

Out of pity, my compatriot volunteered to run an ad for me on the evidently bike-rich Spokane, Washington/Coeur d’Alene, Idaho Craig’s List. Of course, with the help of the World Wide Web, I could have done that myself from northern New York. Seconds later, envy reigned as I watched the computer screen indicate that his section of country seemed absolutely pregnant with vintage Japanese iron. The site’s first motorcycle listing confirmed it. “For Sale: Older Yamaha 80cc, and some other bikes from the 1960s”, it simply stated. Still on the horn, I announced my findings in a dejected "I told you so" tone.

You’re Kidding Me!

“What’s the guy’s number?” my friend asked with a hint of planning in his voice. I was promised a quick return call. When the phone rang twenty minutes later, my benefactor began matter-of-factly, “You owe me eighty bucks.” This surprise debt was connected to a faded red Yamaha YG5T Trailmaster that my associate confirmed had a clean gas tank, good compression, straight frame, and almost no rust. I fired off a check, though couldn’t really picture ever getting the bike from such a distant locale. Over the next few months, as if sprinkling a line of bread crumbs to attract birds to a cage, my buddy sent me the seller’s signed bill of sale, a photocopied owner’s manual, a colorful magazine spread on a restored YG5T, and finally a tattered Clymer service booklet covering the little Yamaha 80. Unfortunately, some three thousand miles still separated this would-be biker from his desired two wheels.

As the prospect of actually touching my nominal acquisition dimmed to a virtually burnt-out possibility, an acquaintance men-

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the chain stayed on the sprocket. My first project would be to rebuild those bearings. I turned new bronze bearings, pressed them in the swing arm, and made sure the swing arm was tight on the pivot bolt. The renovated swing arm now pivots very nicely with no slop at all.

After much scrubbing and scraping the major parts were ready for bead blasting. Never attempt to bead blast dirty or greasy parts. They will blast clean but it takes longer and the grease will quickly contaminate the blasting media, which will then spread a thin coat of grease/oil on the bare metal which makes them difficult to paint.

Using a bead blast cabinet for the smaller parts and blasting the larger parts in the yard with a portable sand blast canister, everything was pretty much stripped down to bare metal. To remove any remaining oil contamination I wiped the parts with paint prep cleaner purchased from my local PPG dealer. This assures the primer coat will adhere firmly to the bare metal. After the parts are wiped cleaned you should quickly apply primer or the parts will begin rusting. I like to use PPG SMP181 industrial primer for my first coat. SMP181 is high in solids for good fill, sands easily, and is compatible with a wide range of finishes. It is available in spray cans or by the gallon. After the primer coat was applied, the parts were ready for assembly. I discovered that I needed a rear stand to hold the bike upright for ease of assembly, so I built one from scrap I had around the shop...not pretty but it works! You will find a rear stand makes the project much easier to work on.

As mentioned earlier I was looking for a more robust front fork frame and other major parts were primed. The front forks were installed as was the front wheel, rear sets attached. The holes in the adapter were carefully aligned to bolt up to the fabricated braces welded to the frame. The frame adapter supports are only tacked to the frame until I’m certain the assembly is where I want it. Once I’m satisfied everything fits, and more importantly fits me, I will dissemble the bike for a final sand blasting and then paint it.

I hope this starts you thinking about your own “Bitsa Bike” café racer project. In future articles I will go into more detail on the frame work, motor installation, making a wiring harness to run the engine, building a battery box, and mounting fenders. I will also describe how to lengthen a tank. Happy wrench swingin!
Eighty Dollars Worth of Trouble
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problematic were the sliced-off, color-coded wires protruding from a hopelessly broken throttle/switch assembly formerly secured to the handlebars. There was more copper spaghetti vomiting out of the lens-less headlight shell, and another tangle hanging from the battery box. And where was the ignition key and the unique plastic nut that secured the battery cover to the main switch? Dang! Both the rider and buddy seats were undeniably ripped. Is that dent in the headlamp assembly indicative of a crash that bent one of the front forks? Oh man! I should have known this was too good to be true.

May I Make A Suggestion?

“What this 1968 Yamaha 80 needs most,” a seasoned motorhead friend pensively suggested during his inspection of my motorcycle reentry project, “…is another 1968 Yamaha 80.” Sudden rain prompted me to roll the bike back into its tight corner of the garage. We went into the house and searched eBay. At the top of the short list containing the characters “YG5T” appeared my Trailmaster’s twin. The bike – black rather than the red of my Idaho 80 – looked to be a compatible donor as it had been retired due someone having removed and dissected the engine at approximately 1500 miles. Reportedly, everything else was in good shape – even the ignition key. Another positive feature: the seller was located in a New Jersey town near where my motorhead mentor was headed the following month. For some inexplicable reason, nobody else bid on the black bike, thus paving the way for my $110 offer to be accepted. Though my friend pledged to transport it for free, his Jersey area “contact” required a couple of twenties as incentive to grab the Yamaha in a timely fashion from the seller and store it for a few weeks.

Eventually, this “donor” Trailmaster arrived shoehorned into a Subaru station wagon.

My imagination conjured up a friendly 1960s road bike needing only a bit of TLC and a lot of country road on a sunny Saturday afternoon.

From of my previous experience, I imagined it being worse than described on-line, but discovered the machine was well enough preserved to be considered “OK.” As the two Yamahas stood side by side in the garage, I entered the numbers on a calculator. “Three-hundred and twenty bucks so far,” I admitted silently, and then took another hard look. “So now what?” echoed through the garage. 🕵️

To be continued...
A Perfect Weekend at the Barber Motorsports Park

by Jim Townsend

I think that if I were to design a motorcycle road race track, I would put it in a bowl shaped piece of land where there was good visibility from any location around the track. The grandstand area would be a multi-story building facing the track. I would use some of the surrounding ground to build reasonably close parking lots and a multipurpose area that could be used for swap meets or trade shows. Also in my dream park there would be a large building to store and display my motorcycle collection, complete with a restoration workshop.

As long as I’m dreaming, I’d pave a road all around the outside of the track to offer easy access to anyone wanting to leisurely tour the area. My dream track would have to have a pit area for the racers that was readily accessible, especially for the racers with their trailers.

Like the old Amish saying, “Too soon old and too late smart,” I am just too late to do this, but fortunately someone else already has! Down near Birmingham, Alabama, not far from the small village of Leeds, George Barber has built my dream track, and one of the finest facilities for motorcyclists in the world. The Barber Motorsport Park incorporates all these niceties that make the place a “must visit” for motorcyclists everywhere and especially those of us that enjoy antique and vintage bikes.

For the past three years there has been a special weekend in mid-October at Barber especially for vintage and antique motorcycle buffs. There is a fair-sized swap meet area, a space for the Antique Motorcycle Club of America and for the Vintage Japanese Motorcycle Club. Last year the Bridgestone club had a nice display also.

The VJMC area is right inside the gate where everyone passes by unless they head straight for the pit area or grandstand; there are numerous shuttles taking people around the entire area free of charge. If you are in the grandstand area, hop a shuttle and go around to the museum. From the museum you can get on a shuttle and go to the VJMC display or walk down the hill a bit to the AMCA display. It is a short hop over to the swap meet and then a fairly long ride around to the grandstand again.

The VJMC has been there since the first vintage weekend three years ago. I can’t begin to estimate the number of members that attended, but I can tell you there were almost 100 bikes in our 2007 show. Kent Myers was there from Arizona and Ed Moore from Texas. I met AHRMA racers from Michigan, and there were even guys from Birmingham!

Tom Kolenko, Director and Georgia Field Representative, and Mike Baker, the Alabama Field Rep were there and did all the ground work with able assistance from Lloyd Blythe and his family. Treasurer Bill Granade his wife Kathy and daughter Holly came up from Florida as did Field Reps Norm Smith and Paul Enz.

All in all, we signed up 50 new members and renewed a lot of memberships as well. Tom brought the club regalia and almost sold completely out of everything including back issues of the magazine. He purchased black coffee mugs with the VJMC logo and name on them and every person who entered a bike in the show received one.

Fall in Alabama must be seen to be appreciated. The curvy (but not too tight) roads with the colored fall leaves makes one just want to putter along and let the warm breezes blow. Mike Baker arranged a ride for Friday evening and I didn’t hear of anyone breaking down or getting lost. Even if they did get lost, they could still wander around in the hills enjoying the scenery. The weather this year was perfect, with bright blue cloudless skies all weekend and temperatures in the 80s most of the time.

Saturday morning Lloyd Blythe and his crew put on a pancake breakfast and furnished everything. The money raised went to the Make A Wish Foundation. Lloyd’s employer, Wachovia, matched part of the expenses and the total donation fund came to around $1,300.

I hope this becomes an annual event for us as it was quite popular. The pancakes were good and we had people from all over the swap meet there as it was close by.

Saturday night Mike Baker arranged for a meal to be catered for the members and workers there at the VJMC display and a barbeque was enjoyed by many of us on the site. ☕️
Looking over the RetroTours “fleet” during the winter of 2004, I realized that Kawasaki, certainly one of the movers/shakers, was not represented. Researching their product line of the 1970s revealed two likely prospects. The KZ750, a very Universal Japanese sort of motorcycle from 1977 or 1978, seemed too bland and modern. At the opposite extreme was the W1 series from the start of the decade which seemed much more interesting and classic.

In 1937, Meguro began producing motorcycles to satisfy the burgeoning demands of the Japanese military. Having little time for drafting their own original designs, Meguro’s research and development consisted of purchasing European machines and “reverse engineering” (i.e. copying) their designs. Their most successful rip-off came in 1951, a high-performance 500cc four stroke twin bearing more than a passing resemblance to the BSA A7. This later evolved into a 650 which carried the company forward until 1962, when Meguro was absorbed by Kawasaki.

The 650cc Kawasaki W1 came on line in 1965, and was introduced in the States in 1967. The single carb 400 lb bike featured neo-British styling, complete with oval instruments mounted inside the headlight case and gaudy chrome side panels on the fuel tank. During the next few years, a twin carb version was released, producing 53 HP – substantially more than its BSA rival. By the time this model became the W2, Kawasaki realized that US sales were never going to live up to expectations, and the model pretty much disappeared by the 1970-71 season.

I spent months waiting for a W1 to come up for sale. There just aren’t very many around. Eventually, I found a ’67 in the back of a Pennsylvania dealership; a trade-in that was driven in a few years before, it was very tatty, though 90% complete. I was able to get it running in a day, and put a few tentative miles on it before making a list of the parts and procedures needed to make it roadworthy. I began watching eBay regularly and collecting parts for the resurrection, but based on my test ride, I was having second thoughts. I felt I had made a mistake; this machine was just too primitive. With a motor design from the 1950s, the bike’s suspension, brakes, and electrical system all seemed too primitive to comfortably cope with modern traffic conditions. This was looking like one tough project.

Then, quite by accident, in the January ’05 issue of Walneck’s Cycle Trader, I spotted two 650 W3s on offer by a gentleman in California, one whole, and one in pieces. The W3 was never imported to the US, but Kawasaki sold lots of the big twins in Japan and Australia, and the model line was upgraded until around 1975. These later models featured improved forks and electrics and a twin disc front brake – all of my concerns addressed. The
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whole bike was imported to the US from New Zealand, and the basket case was brought back from Japan by a US sailor. Suddenly, I had three Kawasaki 650s.

At this point, I have heard the 1974 model run, and it sounds healthy. Furthermore, the machine has been fitted with an obscene number of brand new NOS parts. It appears as if someone cleared all the obsolete 650 bits out of Kawasaki’s parts warehouse and bolted them to this bike. In the course of the work so far, it has become obvious that the external resemblance to the old British twins is just superficial. The castings exude quality, and the fit, finish, and attention to detail is much more Japanese than British (that’s a good thing). With a bit of luck, and as always, patience, this will become a stunning runner, and a great addition to the fleet. Watch this space for further developments.

The History of RetroTours

RetroTours began as a private collection. Sometime ago, after middle age set in, I began purchasing some of the big twin cylinder motorcycles that I had ridden and loved in the 1970s. Soon, I added bikes that I wished I had owned. Finally, I decided to assemble a collection of every big twin from the 1970s. I always felt that these motorcycles should be ridden, not just collected and stored, but at a certain point it became apparent that I would need help...I had more bikes than I could ride. So, in 1998 I organized a trip for eight or ten friends. They drove, rode or flew into town, loaded up some bikes and we headed south. Over the years, this routine evolved into three or four tours per year, and we experimented with group sizes of three to twelve and distances ranging from local jaunts to cross country adventures, and even international rides.

The next great step in the evolution of RetroTours came with the realization that I could not afford to sponsor these rides indefinitely. Doug and I have now taken the lessons learned over the years and applied them to a business plan that will enable us to share our unique touring experience with others. While we may never grow rich, at least we will now grow poor somewhat more slowly, while continuing to enjoy and share the adventure, the thrill and the camaraderie of retro-touring.

Joel Samick

I was a rotten kid. At fifteen, I ran away with my friend Steve. We jumped on Steve’s Lambretta 200 scooter one summer and headed north from Boston. I called home from Montreal days later. Mother was not pleased.

In 1969, I was one of scores of young Americans who bought a Norton Commando at Elite Motors in London. One hundred days later, I had seen most of Europe and a bit of Asia. I took more than that Norton home with me that summer. I also took home the realization that motorcycles and touring would always be a part of my life.

Back at home, this translated into an entry level position as an apprentice technician at a Honda shop. My career took me to several dealerships, a job with American Honda, a moderately successful road racing venture and many more wonderful motorcycle trips all over the world, including Spain, Portugal, Hawaii, New Zealand, the Isle of Man, Venezuela and Mexico, to name a few.

Finally, in 1985 my wife and I opened a motorcycle dealership in Delaware. I retired in 1998 to pursue my passion: restoring, riding and maintaining classic bikes. I consider myself to be one lucky SOB.

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W-3: Further Developments Upshift to 2007.....

I have had some good luck with the 1974 Kawasaki, and yes, patience has been necessary along the way. Once the purchase was finalized, I needed to get the machine from California to the east coast. What with fuel costs driving shipping costs ever upwards, it seemed that simply consigning the task to a shipper might cost nearly half as much as the actual purchase; not good. Luckily, the seller and I both work in the motorcycle industry, with plans to attend the dealer show in Cincinnati. My good friend and riding buddy Todd loves road trips, so I rented a long van and we planned to drive non-stop through the night to pick up the bike and (lots of) boxes, then to immediately retrace our route to minimize any disruption to our daily schedules.

Mike, the seller, meanwhile, had arranged to put everything on the tail of a tractor trailer that was transporting the display materials for an accessory manufacturer from the west coast to Cincinnati. We arrived at the conference center early in the AM after driving all night...tired, but on schedule, and soon hooked up with Mike.

"I have some bad news," he said, "the truck with your stuff was involved in an accident, and a second truck had to be sent to take the load to its destination."

Well, so much for minimal disruption of daily routines! We got passes to the show from Mike, and spent the day viewing the displays being set up. This enabled us to see pretty much the entire show, which consists of hundreds of vendors, in just one day. Normally, once the crowds are present, it’s not possible to cover everything in less than two long days. Our patience was tested as the second truck still did not show. We got a cheap motel room, then made the best of the situation, enjoying dinner in a fine restaurant, followed by a choice cigar.

Finally, the next morning, our goods arrived, and we quickly loaded everything into our van. While doing so, a pick-up truck wearing North Carolina tags pulled in next to us and a familiar-looking face asked us to watch over the truck for a moment. I just couldn’t remember where I knew that face from, but it became obvious when he returned and we helped unload two antique bikes from the back of the king cab. I recognized Dale from the Wheels Through Time Motorcycle Museum in Maggie Valley, NC as we untangled a fabulous old Harley and a Traub (actually the only one known to exist) which he had somehow shoehorned into the cab where the back seat used to be.

Loading completed, we hightailed it back to Pennsylvania, where boxes were opened, labeled and stored, and the mostly complete W-3 placed up on the lift. A quick inspection revealed that many of the parts had been rechromed and assembled loosely. The motor turned over and had good compression, but the inner workings represented a major unknown. I began by cleaning out the fuel system and tightening up fasteners all around. I basically needed to be sure that the wheels would not fall off, assuming that the engine would run. Many of the rechromed parts became problematic as the thick plating made round holes too small and square pegs too big; many things simply would not fit. Also, bolts that should take a 17mm wrench now needed an 18 mm or maybe 17 1/2. A lot of time, and careful tapping, filing and even grinding was needed to get everything together. Where necessary, I was able to tap into my parts bike for better parts, so I essentially assembled one bike from two.

Within a few weeks, including several very late night wrench-fests, I was able to start the machine and check oil circulation, and insure that there was no knocking or exces-
sive oil consumption. Then came a very short test ride, followed by progressively longer rides, each followed by a serious session of “fettling.” Hand and foot controls were adjusted. Carbs were rejetted. The seat and one fork tube were swapped with components from the parts bike. Oil leaks were chased down and corrected. Loose parts were tightened and retightened. Eventually, I felt confident enough to try a 300 mile one-day run. Aside from the expected minor glitches, I discovered that the factory gearing was quite low. Due no doubt to its antiquated design, this motor is no road burner. Acceleration is further compromised by the four-speed gearbox, which was fine in the Sixties but decidedly dated by today’s standards. Sure, it’s pleasant enough, but the quarter mile times must have been an embarrassment to Kawasaki, so I’m guessing that it was geared very low so that a credible ET could be used for advertising purposes. At seventy miles per hour, the tachometer indicated 5500 RPM. It didn’t seem to mind, but it felt busy…real busy.

Now that I knew that the motor and gearbox were basically sound, I began to upgrade the machine for RetroTours. Certain upgrades are desirable for regular use in today’s traffic conditions, and if they are easily reversed, they do not adversely affect the machine’s vintage status. The K70 tires were replaced with modern Metzler rubber, and more aggressive brake pads, listed for an early Z1, were fitted. A quartz headlight conversion was a big improvement, especially since the original lens was focused for driving on the left. The stock horn was replaced with very compact, very loud relay-controlled dual horns from a late Toyota Tundra, and Hagon rear shocks were installed. Spare cables were tucked away in various on-board hiding places, and the MPH speedo from the parts bike went on in place of the KPH clock. To correct the gearing problem, a rear sprocket with four less teeth was made up by Sprocket Specialists. This gave much more reasonable engine RPM at highway speeds, at the expense of a bit more clutch work needed to get underway.

The upgraded machine was subsequently tested thoroughly on a RetroTour to Canaan Valley, West Virginia. During this three-day, 600 mile run, four or five different riders experienced the machine, and we ran all day in a driving downpour. The W3 performed admirably, keeping a respectable pace on all types of road. The front end, which was basically lifted from an early Z1, included vastly improved forks (compared to the W1) and an early double disc set up, allowing the machine to be ridden deep into corners. Speed can then be scrubbed off quickly with hard braking. This late braking technique allows the rider to compensate for the engine’s very soft state of tune. The higher gearing allows the engine to relax at highway speeds, and gives better fuel economy. The ride is very comfortable, relaxed and classic, and the exhaust note defines the term “ear candy.” One fault that became apparent in the rain was the loss of front braking when the discs become wet, which was typical of Japanese disc brakes of that era. Several thousands of miles later, the machine is still going strong. If the British had built their bikes this well back then, the world of motorcycles might be a very different place today.
The Joy of CX(s)

by Jim Laman

Vintage Hondas have always interested me, but only in the past few years did I decide to act on my interest. In all honesty, the bikes were new back in my teenage years when I worked at the local Honda dealer (on bicycles), but not until I got into my 40s did I decide that I finally wanted to actually buy one. So these “vintage” Hondas don’t seem old at all to me, and relating to them is a lot easier than the current plastic-covered sportbikes that are so popular. Many of you can probably relate to this feeling!

A ‘93 750 Nighthawk (almost vintage!) and then my current ‘76 GL1000 fueled my interest, in addition to giving me increased confidence in maintaining and even modifying the bikes. Since I sold the 750 and was riding the Wing on a daily basis, I began yearning for a second, smaller bike, something cheap but reliable...maybe a “rat bike” project? Lots of Internet searching and reading, including this magazine, led me away from Honda CBs to the Honda CX model range, a bike not at all familiar to me. Glowing reports of the CX’s longevity and reliability caught my interest.

First appearing in US showrooms in 1978 as the CX500, the CX models began life as the CX350 prototype, sporting a 90-degree V-twin with liquid cooling. The CX was the first V-twin that Honda had ever built, and Honda’s plans included competing with BMW and Moto-Guzzi in the mid-sized standard market, but the company never released the CX350 to the public after it was developed in the early ’70s. Refinements and subsequent changes to the 350cc prototype led to the 500cc 80-degree V-twin, with the heads rotated inward at the rear by 22 degrees to avoid the carburetors interfering with the rider’s knees. This basic engine configuration stayed with the CX models through the life of the line, and led to their outstanding reputation for reliability, ease of service and capability for accumulating tens of thousands of trouble-free miles.

The CXs were, and in some cases still are, favorites of the dispatch [courier] riders in the UK, as they could roll up very high miles under adverse conditions. The fact that the bike featured a water-cooled V-twin and shaft drive, both rare back then, were big factors in this reliability. Electric-only starting, tough modular Comstar wheels and CV-type carburetors helped define the CX and set it apart from the more common bikes of the day. At the risk of offending the CB/CL and SL fans, from what I have read and heard it appeared that the CX would last far longer than a similar air-cooled CB or CL. The shaft drive is one of the features that originally attracted me to the GL1000, and CXs offered that as well – no worries about chain stretch, sprocket replacements, and lubing. Further research led to a plethora of “fan sites” for these tough little V-twins, with glowing stories of daily use, long trips, and of course lots of maintenance tips and modification ideas. The hook was set!

Now the trick was to find one, and eBay was a big help here. There are usually a few offered there on almost any day, but I managed to find one just an hour from me at a good price, and it was a “runner.” In addition, it was the first-year ’78 (known as the “Z” model), which is a bit less sophisticated than later models but later became my “favorite” year due to its simple styling. The bike was mine the auction told me, so a rental truck and $500 later, I had my first running and rideable CX, and it even had a title and key! Typical of the CXs, my bike had a soft single-front disc brake (North America got one front disc, the rest of the world got two...what was Honda thinking?) and an operable rear drum. Several careful rides around my area found that the bike really did not need any major work, outside of the front brake.

The one common theme you will find when reading about CXs is that, after durability, most people agree that they are awfully darned ugly. Is it the odd headlight nacelle of the early bikes, the grossly-oversized (but comfortable) seat, or the ungainly proportions of the rear end, with its huge (but very visible) taillight and extra-long fender? In the UK, perhaps because they were so ugly, the CXs became known as the “plastic maggot.” But like an early Saab (my other obsession), the CXs were built for durability, practicality, and comfort, not for sporting looks and performance. The current owners loved them, as they could be modified for a variety of uses, from cafe racers to mini-GoldWings (which Honda developed as the SilverWing Interstate version later in the model run), and a few owners even built their own CX-based “adventure” and “rat” bike models. A project like this is in the works in my garage at the moment.

Many owners toured and commuted on them, from Europe to North America and Australia, where there is still a big CX following. The CXs were loaded up with bags and fairings, and took riders and pillions on many happy journeys. One couple even took one around the world, dismantling the bike to store in a sailboat for a long period of time, and then reassembling and riding it again. Talk about taking abuse! There are tales of dispatch riders clocking up 300,000 miles on the little engines, through all kinds of weather. The engine even went on to be a popular powerplant for the JZR 3-wheel kit cars sold in the UK. In the early 80s, Honda developed the high-revving (10k rpm!) pushrod engine into the very advanced Turbo series, the CX500T and CX650T. With a top speed of about 140 mph, the 650 Turbo was not just a dispatch riders bike any more. Sadly, after so many good years, the CX range was discontinued, presumably so that Honda could concentrate on its then-new V4 range of bikes, the last remaining incarnation which is now known as the VFR800.
Interceptor. The little CX is also said to have been an influence on Honda's later ST1100 and ST1300 “Pan European” models, which feature transverse engines with shaft drive, but with four cylinders rather than the two of the CX.

**Buying Tips**

First, a disclaimer: Not having owned the CXs for all that long, I cannot speak from vast experience with each model (although I have supplemented that with extensive research in motorcycle literature and on a wide variety of websites). I do, however, currently own three CXs (two '78 CX500s and a Canadian-spec CX650E “Eurosport”). It is generally accepted that they are well-built, durable bikes that are available quite inexpensively, and are therefore a good choice for a handy first-time buyer or a collector of “vintage” Hondas. With a network of websites, suppliers and clubs, one could presumably keep a CX on the road for many years to come. I have had very good luck so far with the '78 model CX500s that I own, but others prefer the Custom model (perhaps due to styling or comfort), the later GL models (due to their improvements) or even the Turbo models. However, if you are on a tight budget, for somewhere south of $1000, you can usually find a pretty solid '78-'79 CX. The one thing to watch for is the cam chain tensioner, the Achilles Heel of the first-year CXs, which has usually been updated on any 78 model. This is evidenced by three punch marks on the left side of the engine case, next to the serial number. The '78s had a serious problem with these coming apart, and it nearly ended their popularity before it started. However, Honda dealers long ago retrofitted most of these models with a revised tensioner and bolt, indicated by the three punch marks.

That being said, there are three other potential problems with the CX to watch for, depending on the model year you are looking at. The stator, the CDI box and the water pump seal all deteriorate with age. The CDI units (used in the '78-81 models) are generally available used from folks on the CX boards, or off eBay, usually in the $50-100 price range. Attempts are being made to reproduce them, both in the US and reportedly in South America. Later models had a transistorized ignition system, so are considered much more reliable. The stator not only charges the battery but also provides 90-plus volts to the CDI box. These are located at the back of the engine, in a very warm place, and accessing them necessitates removing the engine. Stators are not all the same across the CX model range either, so often are not interchangeable. It's said that the stators run cooler in the later (transistorized or non-CDI) models. Lastly, the water pump seal, typically an engine-out procedure to replace, is easily available from the usual outlets for around $20. These deteriorate when a bike sits for a long period of time or through, some say, the use of coolant with silicates added. Regardless, it's not an expensive fix, just not a lot of fun.

**Model Range**

For North America the following is what was offered (European, Australian, and Japanese models had variations on the CX theme that North America never saw).

### 1978

The first year, the “Z” or Zero model, 500cc, offered in black and red with contrasting tank striping. Wheels are the silver Comstars and are 19” in the front and 18” in the rear. The mini-fairing (with a tiny windscreen on UK models) found on this model possibly led to the term “plastic maggot” that became popular in the UK. The '78 models can be identified by a round brake fluid reservoir.

### 1979 - 1980

CX500A/B model, nearly identical, reverse (black) Comstar wheels, new colors. This “standard” model was now known as the “Deluxe”. The brake fluid reservoir was now square. CX500C, the “Custom” model was introduced in 1979, for those who wanted a “cruiser”-style motorcycle. A smaller teardrop shaped tank, higher “buckhorn” handlebars and round gauges (similar to the Deluxe) gave it more of a “Sportster” look. Turn signals were moved to the fork tubes, and the rear tire was now a smaller but beefier-looking 16” diameter. The CX500 Custom was made until 1982.

### 1981

Previous models continued with minor changes. GL500 SilverWing model added to lineup. The engine was similar to the CX500, continued on next page
The Joy of CX(s)  
continued from previous page

but with the addition of the transistorized ignition system, a major improvement in reliability. The GL500 also offered the Pro-Link rear suspension and was available as the Deluxe (naked) version or the Interstate, which bore a close resemblance to a GoldWing. The frame on the GL was slightly longer than a CX, providing a more stable ride for its intended use as a tourer.

1982

1982 brought huge changes to the CX model lineup. One of the most notable was the use of a fully-transistorized ignition system across all models except the Custom. It was the last year of the CX500 model in any form. CX500T 1982 is also notable in that it was the first and only year of the complex and very collectible Turbo model for the USA. In addition to its turbocharged and fuel-injected engine, the Turbo featured a Pro-Link rear shock, Trac anti-dive forks, three twin-pot disc brakes all around and sportier frame geometry. Prized among collectors and very hard to find, it is the worlds first production turbocharged motorcycle. About 5500 of these gems were built worldwide.

GL500 SilverWing and Deluxe models were continued. The GL500 was technically offered from 81-82, but was overproduced so that some were sold new as late as 1984. CX500C popular Custom model continued. CX500E only sold outside of the USA, the “E” or “Europsport” model looked more like an 80s sportbike with a CX engine. It featured the same frame and styling similar to the Turbo model, but was less complex.

1983

CX650C this one-year-only custom was a laid-back cruiser-style bike with a blacked out engine. The CX650 could not compete against the comparatively-priced but much more powerful VF750 Magna, and was dropped the following year. CX650T 1983 also saw the introduction of the most powerful CX, the 97 hp, 140mph CX650 Turbo. Only about 1700 of these models were made (1000 for the USA), so excellent used ones are bringing high prices these days.

The CX650T was reportedly sold in Europe through 1986, but I could only find sketchy information on this. CX650E like the 500E, only offered outside the US, and sold in 1982 to about 1984. A very few of these have been privately imported to the US via Canada. Same engine as the 650 Custom from what I know.

GL650 once again, a faired model came out as a mini-GoldWing, this time with the 650cc engine, in both Interstate and Deluxe versions. A very nice mid-sized touring bike, only offered in 1983. Like all 650s, the GL had an electric cooling fan that replaced the former mechanical unit, contributing to an increase in gas mileage.

I might note that, 25 years on, some of these bikes have suffered modifications and from interchangeability of parts, and so could be a combination of any number of bikes. A link to verify the VIN number is below, and I look at this as the definitive answer as to the age of a bike in question.

Certain CX models were also offered for other markets. The Japanese and European market saw 400cc versions of the CX and GL, aptly named the CX400 and GL400. In Japan the GL650 SilverWing Interstate was released as the Limited Edition GL700 Wing Interstate, although it used the same 674cc engine that was used in the GL650. Also in Australia, the 1980-1982 CX500 ‘standard’ models were known as the “CX500 Shadow”.

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Join the Club!

To participate in club events and place want ads bikes must be 35 years old.
Both Tammy and I have been motorcycling for over 30 years now. Shortly after we were married in 1978, I thought buying a motorcycle would be a great way to park closer to my classes at University of Wisconsin – Madison. Little did I know that this new mode of transportation would become a real hobby for both of us; soon we began traveling cross-country on our 1975 Yamaha XS650B. Once our children came along we gave up motorcycling for a few years, which meant selling our pride and joy Yamaha.

I later purchased a 1985 Gold Wing Aspencade, then moved on to a 2004 Suzuki LC1500. Tammy has also owned a series of bikes, including a 1980 Yamaha Maxim, a 2002 Suzuki Volusia, and her current cruiser, a 2007 Suzuki C90T Boulevard.

Although we enjoyed our modern bikes, I always missed the XS650B so I began looking for one back in 2005. I finally found and purchased one on eBay in the early spring of 2006. Due to its poor condition I ended up restoring it from the ground up. About the same time I also found a 1976 XS650C for Tammy, which was running like a brand new bike with only minor work needed to make it look absolutely great.

We like these bikes so much we actually had a painting made of them in our backyard. Shortly after buying the XS650B I somehow stumbled onto the VJMC (during some sort of a rabid hunt for information on the restoration I’m sure), and was thrilled to see that there are other people out there with the same desire to preserve and enjoy these beautiful old bikes. I’m sure that I don’t need to tell those of you with similar stories how many memories are evoked by just getting on and riding your “first bike.”

Currently Tammy is bearing with me through another restoration (she refers to this as my “therapy”), this time a 1971 Yamaha XS1B [see page 5]. I just couldn’t bear to see this bike on the scrap heap so I’m pouring a lot of time and money into returning it to its former glory. Thirty-six Wisconsin riding seasons have not been kind to the XS1B but given how the restoration is proceeding it may end up being the nicest looking bike I own.

Tammy and I live in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin along with our two dogs (Kaela and Hannah), Pionus parrot (Mati) and cockatiel (Baby). Both of our adult children (Jennifer and Jeff) live in the area.

When we aren’t riding our bikes, you will find us at vintage VW shows (I own a 1966 Beetle) or towing our RV somewhere with our two dogs for some camping.

We are excited to be a part of such a great organization and are looking forward to meeting other members and building memories. Feel free to contact us through the website we have created for the Wisconsin VJMC at www.vjmcofwisconsin.org

Happy Riding!

John and Tammy
**PLINK!**

The Sound of Fear...

by Vince Ciotti

I’ve collected about a half-dozen old Hondas, and I love them to death. I try to ride each of them frequently to keep the gas fresh and seals lubricated, etc. Unfortunately, my “love” may really be the death of them yet as I occasionally cause more damage on my periodic rides than Old Man Time!

Here’s an acronym I’ve dreamed up as a “pre-flight” checklist to try and stop myself from hurting my poor old bikes during my rides: “PLINK.” Each letter stands for one of my past dumb mistakes, most of which are exacerbated by driving older bikes:

**P:** I’m ashamed to admit how many times I started up one of my old beauties, motored on down the road for a mile or two, and then started to hear the gas sputter, lost speed, cylinders missing worse and worse, and eventually pulled over the side of the road in terror thinking the old bomb has finally broken down and left me stranded. I usually start digging for my cell phone wondering who in the world I could call to come get me at this weird hour and location. After a few minutes of panic, either while dialing my wife or checking out the plug wires, I finally realize: I left the damn petcock closed! Duh! So “P” is for Petcock!

**L:** In this day and age of distracted car drivers dawdling with cell phones or paying more attention to their GPS than the highway, riding any motorcycle is a decidedly risky business, and we riders of old machines are at even more risk than “squids” on their fancy new bikes with brilliant HID bulbs that switch on automatically with the ignition. To help me live longer and avoid damaging my bikes, I always ride with the headline on to increase my visibility. My greatest fear is for a car to pull out from a side street, or an approaching car to make a left hand turn in front of me. Whenever I approach such a situation, I usually rock the light switch on my bike from high to low to off and back, to make sure the car sees me. However, many times I discover to my chagrin that I forgot to turn the headlight on in the first place! “L” is for lights!

**K:** Most of my old bikes have their ignition key switch located in a hard-to-reach spot under the gas tank. Realizing this is an awkward place for the key, Honda and other Japanese manufacturers moved the kill switches to the handlebars so in case we dropped a bike, we could kill the ignition without reaching under the bike. Well, every now and then, one of my aging beauties is hard to start; choke, twisting the throttle, nothing I try ever seems to get it to run. After having it towed to the local dealer or calling one of my (frustrated) friends over, I have found the damn kill switch in an awkward position while the bike was on its mainstand, which somehow lowered to the down position while the bike was on its mainstand, digs into the asphalt and dumps you on your ass! So “K” is for kickstand!

I hope I’m the only dork in the VJMC who needs such an acronym for avoiding brain farts like the above, but if any of you are as old as I am and keep forgetting the basics, I hope the sound of “PLINK” will help you avoid some of the above boners and keep your babies on the road.

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**The Joy of CX(s)**

continued from page 28

The CX500 and its variants met with a good degree of success. They proved to be reliable, economical and one of the least-expensive shaft-drive bikes of their time. As a result, many examples still exist today and along with their GL “cousins,” are fast becoming collectible. There are owner’s clubs throughout Europe and the rest of the world, so with any luck, parts and advice will be readily available for many years to come.

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**Resources/Links**

| Swedish club (members are scattered all over) | http://cx500.gobinet.se/ |
| UK based web resource | http://www.elsham.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/cx500/index.html |
| MSN group | http://groups.msn.com/CX-GLTradingpost/_whatsnew.msnw |
| JZR kit cars | http://www.geocities.com/jzrpa |
| CX tech tips | http://www.tholt.com/cxtip.html |
| Check the CX VIN | http://www.elsham.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/cx500/whichcx.html |
| Marty from Ireland’s observations on a few CX models | http://www.mourneman.co.uk/motorbikes/bikes/honda_cx500a/index.shtml |
| SilverWing owners group | http://www.aegeansoft.com/silverwing/phorum/index.php?f=0 |
| Honda First Turbo Club (Netherlands) | http://www.hftc.nl/indexGB.htm |
| Honda Twins photo site | http://groups.msn.com/HTAofAmericapicturesite |
| Try this if you want nothing but turbo talk. | http://www.hftc.nl/ |
| Around the world on a used CX500 | http://www.motoryclistoneline.com/escape/epicrides/122_0104_moscow/ |

**Note:** Links can be emailed if preferred. If you have additional CX questions, or a CX/GL for sale (and won’t tell my wife), email me at lamanjim@juno.com
Soon or later you are going to buy or sell something on eBay. Right now, almost 80% of VJMC members are on line and use email. eBay is one place to find many of those elusive parts or sell something another person might need. However, there are some pitfalls which you can avoid while enjoying the benefits.

Buying on eBay
First of all you need to register with eBay. They will ask for some rather private information, like your bank account numbers. If you really feel uneasy with this, just open a bank account you will use exclusively for eBay. They will withdraw seller fees, if you sell at a later date. I have registered and have experienced no problems with confidentiality. However, DO NOT give any information to ANYONE claiming to be with eBay who sends you an email. If you receive a message like this, contact eBay at spoof@Ebay.com immediately and DO NOT answer the email; it is probably a scammer. eBay only sends messages through the “Your Messages” section on their site and no other way.

The next thing to do is register with PayPal, which operates like an online bank and is handy for paying for your eBay purchases. PayPal will also ask for your credit card and bank account information. As long as you contact them via their secure site, it is OK to send this information. However, just like eBay, there are scammers out there with look-alike sites pretending to be PayPal. If you receive a message on your email account claiming to be from PayPal and asking for any – ANY – information, forward it to spoof@paypal.com just like you would do for eBay. If the message is legitimate, you will be notified. Neither PayPal or eBay ever ask for personal information in emails.

Now that you are registered with eBay and PayPal you are ready to bid and buy. You will notice listings on eBay with normal bidding, with a “Buy It Now” (or BiN) option, and with a price listed and a “Make an Offer” request. Let’s follow a possible auction and see how they normally work.

Bidding in Auctions
Here’s where the game starts. Remember, your bid says you are willing to pay that price, if yours is the highest bid at the end of the auction. If you see a part you need, go ahead and bid what you are willing to pay. However, your bid is not necessarily the price at which the auction will end. What this means is that if you think the part is

continued on next page
Buying and Selling on eBay
continued from previous page

worth $45, your bidding will stop at that price. For example, if the opening bid is $3, when others bid over $3, eBay will automatically increase the minimum amount over the last bid, until it reaches your $45. If others are only willing to bid up to $32.00, eBay will bid the minimum amount over that for you and you will win the auction at around $33.00, at which point eBay will notify you.

Beware that sometimes you can get “auction fever” and become swept up in the moment and bid something up way too high. I usually do not put in any bids until the last day or two of an auction and then I watch it often if it is something I really want or need so I can place a higher bid, if necessary and within reason.

But it Now Auctions
Buy it Now auctions are not really auctions, if the opening bid is very close to the BiN price. For instance, the item on offer has an opening bid request of $9.99 and a BiN price of $10.00. Your opening bid of $10 wins the auction. This is a case of first come, first served.

Many Buy it Now auctions have a rather high BiN price, even though the bidding starts much lower. For instance, a rare exhaust pipe for a 1962 Tohatsu is put up for auction. The owner may have a starting bid request of $5 knowing it will go much higher, but put a $150 Buy it Now price on it. The bids may go up to $50 the first few days, but someone who really needs that pipe may accept the $150 BiN price, at which time he wins it and the auction ends, even though there may be several days remaining in the auction. In fact, there may have been a $99 reserve price placed on the item. That means the persons who bid the pipe up to $50 would not have won it anyway unless they bid over $99. Reserve prices are usually only set on expensive items because the owner must get that as a bare minimum and would rather not sell it if the price is lower than the asking reserve price.

Who pays the cost of auctions? On eBay, the seller does. eBay charges a listing price and adds costs on to that depending on the number of pictures, auction running time, the final price, and other elements on the listing.

Paying for Your Purchases
I really like PayPal. You can use it to pay for your purchases immediately at the end of the auction, it is safe, it is FREE for buyers and best of all, it is very easy to use. If PayPal has your bank account numbers, they will electronically withdraw the funds from your bank account, or alternately you can set it up so they charge your credit card. I sell a lot so I just keep the proceeds in my PayPal account, and when I buy something, the money goes from my account directly to the seller. Whichever way you choose, it is fast, free (they do withdraw 4% on received money for sellers however), safe as a bank AND easy. Some sellers even specify payment by Pay Pal only. Sometimes they will also take money orders and even personal checks, but using those methods slows down the process considerably. Besides, money orders will cost you and then you have to mail them. Occasionally there are Luddites who don’t take PayPal, but there are very few of them nowadays.

If you have any questions, feel free to email me your questions at imvjmc@kconline.com.
Meet the New Guy
Brenden Dooley

The Vintage Japanese Motorcycle Club of North America proudly announces Brendan Dooley as the new editor for the club’s bi-monthly magazine for members. Brendan was the founding editor of Vintage Motorcycle Price Guide, (which became Vintage Motorcycles), from Krause Publications.

“Though I’ve spent the past year away from motorcycles on a professional level, I’ve still got vintage Japanese bikes in the garage as always,” Brendan said. “I look forward to getting back to producing a quality vintage motorcycle publication for an enthusiastic group, and hope that I can continue the VJMC’s rise and magazine’s role in that process.”

Brenden has more than a decade’s worth of experience in journalism, including editor positions at daily newspapers and weekly, monthly, bi-monthly and quarterly magazines for hobbyists and business-to-business publishing. He is currently the editor of Professional Tool & Equipment News and Professional Distributor, magazines for professional mechanics and tool jobbers.

“I have known Brendan for several years and have seen his work as the Editor of the Price Guide,” said Pete Boody, former VJMC President. “When the opportunity presented itself to consider another Editor for our magazine, Brendan was nominated to fill the position by a fellow VJMC Board member, Roger Smith, from Michigan. Since Jason Roberts, our current Editor, is leaving the post in March of ’07, the Board of Directors asked Brendan to join us.” “Brendan has graciously accepted and also proposed many wonderful things for our magazine and I for one am looking forward to providing our readers with his exceptional talent.”

“The VJMC thanks Jason for his hard work and contributions to the magazine’s development.”

Brendan will take the reins of the VJMC publication beginning with its April/May 2008 issue.

Regalia Order Form

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Remember that, a 'Vintage Japanese' motorcycle is 20 years or older and, of course, Japanese. We will still embrace 1990, 1989 and 1988 until then. Please be aware that ads may/will be edited to conserve space. Don’t feel reluctant to use punctuation and proper case on emailed ads. Don’t forget the publication deadlines. Ads are due by the 20th of the month in which a magazine is issued for the NEXT release. For example, ads for the April 2008 magazine will be due to the editor by February 20th. If you have business related ads, please consider taking out a commercial ad. Contact me for details and rate information.

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1960/70s Honda keys. Just call or email me with the number from your old key, ignition switch or seat lock. The number will start with a ‘T’ or ‘H’. Example: T7646 or H3032. $10 for two original Honda keys. Mark Troutman, (503) 703-8511, Portland, Oregon, mark@foss.com

1965 Honda Super 90. Not running but way too nice to part out. Complete but wiring is removed. Engine turns with good compression, shifts ok. Very good tank, chrome panels, original plastic badges, rear fender. Has hard to find Mikuni carb, $599. www.classicjapanesemotorcycles.com David Helliard, (614) 975-4488, Columbus, Ohio, david@classicjapanesemotorcycles.com

Honda Sport 65. OHC. Four bikes. $700. Pat Guagenti, (847) 328-5789, Evanston, Illinois

Honda CB77 305 Super Hawk. This motorcycle last ran in the ‘80s and the engine turns over. Note the incorrect handle bars, tank and side covers. The air cleaners are missing. Currently there is no title but I have a bill of sale and the last reg, and should be able to obtain a Virginia title if needed. See http://picasaweb.google.com/~ikur-fis/MotorcycleSale for pictures and details. Buyer must pick up. No shipping. Make a reasonable offer. Larry Kurfs, (540) 937-8240, Amissville, Virginia (near Warrenton), leksmk@comcast.net

For 1965/69 Honda, parts for sale or trade. New and mostly used Honda CB/CL/CA160, CA95, S65, CT90, CL/SL70. Also CB400A, VT500, NOS pistons, piston kits and rings. No lists of parts. Paul Enz, Titusville, Florida, penz@cfl.rr.com

1966 Honda CB160. Completely restored and modified to look like a vintage road race bike, but legal for the streets (headlight & tail light), museum quality, only 16 miles since restoration, everything new, many, many NOS parts, one of a kind, nicest one you will ever see. www.losaengineering.com for pictures. Asking $8,000. Jay LaRoss, (562) 899-8389, Long Beach, California, sporttrucks@hotmail.de

1968 Honda SS125A. Too big of a project. Gave up. Rough and in pieces, all there but needs reassembly. No title. Will take what I’ve invested, $200. Carl Young, (330) 923-2725, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, rdavl@yahoo.com

1968 Honda CL125A. Red, 4800 miles, very good condition, runs, perfect, can email photos, can ship. Steve Shelton, (803) 287-1108, North Augusta, South Carolina, sgssg@comcast.net

1968 Honda CD175. Sloper Motor. Serial CD175107820. Totally original condition down to the mirrors: shows 7300 miles on a bright faced odometer. Seat like new. Chrome side panels excellent, badges excellent, side covers and body paint are excellent. Fenders near perfect, Tank excellent with some sun fading on top. Problems: engine is locked up, I have no idea why, and I have not taken anything apart to check. Clutch works and shifts in and out of neutral to a gear ok. Ends of both mufflers have bad cancer, rest of mufflers and head pipes are fine. I have the original title but it was not properly signed off in Ohio. I can send close up digital pictures if interested. If you are mechanical, this might be an easy fix and an excellent value. $850 or best offer. David Helliard, (614) 975-4488, Columbus, Ohio, david@classicjapanesemotorcycles.com

1968/82 Honda. 1968 CB160 (2 Cyl). 1972 CB350 (2 Cyl). 1973 CB350F (4 Cyl). 1982 CB750 Custom (4 Cyl. Converted to 1000cc). All bikes have titles, not running, parts, motors, misc. parts for a restorer. Will sell the total inventory only. Buyer will supply transport portion. $1750 firm. Contact: (708) 385-1746, Chicago, Illinois area, cmsscroll@netzero.net

1968-76, Genuine Honda NOS parts for sale. For CB250/350, Supersports mufflers and a camshaft (first generation, up to model no. 1004622 - extremely hot and extremely rare), For CB250/360G mufflers, down pipes and a speedo. Not cheap. Contact me for further details and pictures. Otto, +49-2225/7116, Germany, otto.alf@t-online.de

1968 Honda CL77. Brand New Scrambler. This is not a restoration. Has three miles. Original, orange/chrome fenders. Consigned to J Wood Daytona auction 3-7-08. John Scanlan, (815) 874-9841, Rockford, Illinois, John@ExecutiveLogo.com

1969 Honda SS125. 8000 miles, limited production, original owner, runs good, stored inside, original paint. $1750. George, (586) 286-3793 Macomb, Michigan

For Honda CB750 single cam, parts. Complete overhaul gasket set, ignition switch with square connector. 31700-30000 rectifier, rider foot peg rubber, front and rear sprockets, chain adjusters with bolts, headlight outer rim, tach and speedo cables, brake hoses, also braided throttle cable, extended clutch cable and brake hoses. Front brake pads, mini tach, tweek bar, handle bar set backs, tach drive, twisted chrome extended kickstand, K&N air filter that fits stock air box. Tail light fits until 1970, tail light lens that fits until 1970. Many CB750 used parts such as rear fender in excellent condition, stock black kickstands, stock type chrome kickstand, chrome rear brake stabilizer, kick start levers, shifter levers. CB750 FOUR side cover emblem. Many Honda tank emblems, starter solenoids, etc. I also have points for most old Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki and Yamahas including hard to obtain CB/CL160, CS/CT90, SS/SL125, CD125, A112, CM91, CB73, CB/CL/72/77, CB350-4, CB400, William Mack, (865) 983-4204, Louisville, Tennessee, willeimack33@cs.com

For Honda CB750 single cam, parts. Complete overhaul gasket set, ignition switch with square connector. 31700-30000 rectifier, rider foot peg rubber, front and rear sprockets, chain adjusters with bolts, headlight outer rim, tach and speedo cables, brake hoses, also braided throttle cable, extended clutch cable and brake hoses. Front brake pads, mini tach, tweek bar, handle bar set backs, tach drive, twisted chrome extended kickstand, K&N air filter that fits stock air box. Tail light fits until 1970, tail light lens that fits until 1970. Many CB750 used parts such as rear fender in excellent condition, stock black kickstands, stock type chrome kickstand, chrome rear brake stabilizer, kick start levers, shifter levers. CB750 FOUR side cover emblem. Many Honda tank emblems, starter solenoids, etc. I also have points for most old Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki and Yamahas including hard to obtain CB/CL160, CS/CT90, SS/SL125, CD125, A112, CM91, CB73, CB/CL/72/77, CB350-4, CB400, William Mack, (865) 983-4204, Louisville, Tennessee, willeimack33@cs.com

1971 Honda CB175. Blue bike is in pretty good shape and runs great! Has a couple of small dents on the tank and one on the fender. Right side cover is cracked. Has 5500 miles. Cash as is. Must be picked up. Asking $900. Nancy Creech, Detroit, Michigan Area, Creecherteacher@aol.com

1972 Honda CL450 Scrambler. Good condition. Sat for a year or so, runs and rides, but needs tune up. $2000 obo. Robbie Myers, (281) 455-2972, Houston, Texas, skywrench@comcast.net

1973 Honda CR250M. I have a large collection of 1973 CR250Ms. Everything from a nice restored bikes, to riders, or nice original bikes, also some rough ones as well. However, all have very nice tanks. Greg Owen, (617) 470-9454, New Hampshire, gowen2@comcast.net

1973 Honda CB350F. Carb cleaned, new battery, new chain. Pa bike approx 13k miles. Starts right up with kick. All original except exhaust, has like new four into two system. Great bike for serious restoration $1350. Robert Boyd, (407) 327-1035/(407) 415-7515 call before 9 pm Winter Springs, Florida, bobbybob@yahoo.com

1974 Honda CB750. Japanese domestic-tastic model. Paint not original, has Hooker 4-1 exhaust. Never dropped. Engine was removed to repair small oil drip. Repairs never completed. Bike is complete. Contact: Kent, Ft. Worth, Texas, kscroggins@bellhelicopter.textron.com

1975 Honda CT90. Carb cleaned, easy starter, new tires, chain all original, color is orange, $875. Robert Boyd, (407) 327-1035/(407) 415-7515 call before 9 pm Winter Springs, Florida, bobbybob@yahoo.com

1975 Honda Gold Wing. 1000cc. Nice original, one of first 200 made, complete but non-runner, will need some electrical work but has good compression, some resto work already done, great mufflers, seat etc., no rust or...
1987 Kawasaki ZL1000. High Performance 140 hp. Totally restored to immaculate condition, beautiful black pearl metallic paint with ghost flames. Over $6000 in performance upgrades will make this a one of a kind tire smoking beast of epic proportions. This bike is beautiful, totally unusual, rare, and turns heads everywhere it goes. $4850. Kirk Johnson, (262) 622-1358, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, kmjohnson@onlyinternet.net

Suzuki

1964 Suzuki T10. Parting out. Mostly complete, missing seat and engine is locked up from sitting. Nice headlight bucket and speedo, gas tank has no dents but chrome side has surface rust. Many good parts left. Mike, (920) 265-7562, Green Bay, Wisconsin, punkap73@yahoo.com

1968 Suzuki KT120. This bike was owned by an elderly gentleman who bought it brand new in 1968 and used it for one hunting season. He drained the fuel and let it sit for 30 years. He died in the mid 90s and it sat until I bought it off of his grandson last spring. The only thing it needed was a new petcock, battery and tires. The paint in some places is faded slightly from age. It runs superb and is street legal. http://kansasicity.craigslist.org/mcy/466122691.html Bob H, (816) 587-0006, Kansas City, Missouri, banzaibob@bobharvey.com


1970 Suzuki T500. Under 40,000 mi. Pampered by original owner for decades. Mildly neglected by me for last several years. Low compression in one cylinder. Love the bike, but can’t give it the home it needs. Dan Kaplan, (914) 400-5762, Cortland Manor, New York, dbk2006@gmail.com


1975 Suzuki GT500. See please my web site, page 3, for details, pictures and price. Very nice bike and ready to ride! RecycleCycleOne.com Todd Ritter, (231) 773-5442, Muskegon, Michigan, hotrodtod@webtv.net

1978 Suzuki TS250. Great resto or parts bike, no title. Engine turns freely. Photos available on request. Make
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offer. Hank Baumann, (920) 683-9462, Manitoowoc, Wisconsin, Hank.baumann@kohler.com

For 1980 Suzuki GS1000, set of 4 carbs. Also have carbs for XS1100 and X650 Yamaha. No use to me so I’m selling for reasonable prices. Len Nolan, (250) 743-1647, B.C., Canada, tiacint@telus.net

1982 Suzuki GS750 TZ. Excellent condition. Color Red. 31k miles, new front and rear tires, oil changed every 3k miles, garage kept. Asking $1500. Carlos Valenzuela, (940) 447-4050, Wichita Falls, Texas. gs750trider@yahoo.com

Yamaha

1966 Yamaha Catalina. Very good condition, blue & white, all original, 12,000 original miles, $2500. Robert Pineault, (647) 237-6602, Toronto, Canada, eatherley@rogers.com

1967 Yamaha YDS3 Catalina Twin. 250cc. Red/White. Ready for restoration. All there. Good compression and transmission shifts like it should. Found stored in a school basement where it had been for years. 12405 mi. Good WJ title. Pics and more info upon request. $750obo. Gary Mick, (414) 427-7321, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, g.a.mick@sbcsglobal.net

1968 Yamaha DT1. 250cc. Father bought bike new. Thought the rear fender and headlight ears would look better in black and had them painted early on. Low miles, runs great. Email for pictures. Jeff, (209) 606-3515, Modesto, California, jjeff@lifeondw.org

1969 Yamaha DS6C. 250cc. All original down to the tires. 3300 miles, California orange in color. For the serious collector. $10,000 firm. Stuart Smith, (954) 561-0202, Ft Lauderdale, Florida, stuart_stuart@bellsouth.net

1975 Yamaha RD350. 2 bikes. One is all original except mirrors, one has a recovered seat. Email for more info. Lou Underwood, (717) 347-7342, York, Pennsylvania, louand@aol.com

For 1977 Yamaha XS650, brand new front caliper, RT side, for 1977 and newer XS650. Just paid $99. Thought it would work on my XS500. Make a reasonable offer and own it. Contact: Rick, (603) 918-6231, New Hampshire, rickchoreban@hotmail.com


MISC. ITEMS FOR SALE

Clearing my garage have 4 bikes to sell. Honda CL77E, 1968 Honda CL175, and a Suzuki T250. All need work. Contact me for more details. May trade for Ducati single, 250 up, or Bridgestone. Try me. Stewart Readman, (352) 637-1496, Inverness, Florida, stewartgina@tampabay.rr.com

1965/73 Honda and Yamaha 90-450cc. CL160, CB77, CB450, YSC1C, misc. parts. Complete bikes, rolling & disassembled baskets, parts, etc. Contact me and I can send pictures, descriptions, etc. I can do this route or eBay the stuff, but would rather see it go to VMJC members & enthusiasts. Ron A. Smith, (858) 270-3805, San Diego, California, rsmith24@sanrr.com

Points and condensers for most Honda, Yamaha, Suzuki and Kawasaki. Carb Kits for Honda CB500 Four, and 214-27413-00 passenger foot pet rubbers for old Yamahas. Right handlebar switch for Kawasaki KZ400. Rear crash bars for single cam CB750 Honda. William Mack, (865) 983-4204, Louisville, Tennessee, williammack3@cs.com

Voltage rectifier/ regulators for 1979/82 Honda CB750 C/K/F/SC, 1980/82 CB900 C/F, 1979/82 CBX, 1983 CB1000C and CB1100F. 1981 CB500 custom, chrome head light case with rims and retainers, also front brake light switch. Chain adjuster bolts for Kawasaki Z1, Honda CB/CL450, CB350F, CB/CL175 and 350 twins, CB/CL77. 1974/78 Honda CB550K, metallic brown frame side covers. Honda CB/CL175/350/450/etc lower clutch side handlebar switch repair parts with lever mount, mirror mount and horn button hole; same but brake side and throttle mount. Suzuki and Yamaha old model brake and clutch lever perches with mirror mounts, etc. Honda/CB/CL have some NOS/Mint brochures. Most are from the ’60s-’80s and the brochures are ’70s-’80s. These are what I have left from working in dealerships and on bikes. If you email me with what you’re looking for I might have it. I will answer all emails the same day or next at latest. Bob Skelton, (352) 341-5790, Citrus County, Florida, rskelton@vivacess.com

WANTED

Honda

1962 Honda Cuby. Looking for 19cc engine and any parts or literature. Tom Kolenko, (770) 427-4820, Atlanta, Georgia, tkolenko@kennesaw.edu

For Honda CA200 90cc, need exhaust pipe. Should be NOS or in very good condition. Bob Shields, (207) 346-6791, Mechanic Falls, Maine

For Honda CA110 50cc, motor parts or good used motor. Also top end parts for 55cc C105 Honda, piston, cylinders, etc. Pat Guagenti, (847) 328-5789, Evanston, Illinois

For 1965 Honda C100 50cc, I am looking for parts seat, exhaust, etc and would welcome any advice of where to look. Philip O’Reilly, Ireland, foreilly00eircom.net

1965+ Honda S65. I am looking for a complete S65 in blue. Robert Harper, (905) 717-8292, Newmarket, Ontario, Canada, bmwbob@sympatico.ca

1965/69 Honda Dream. Looking for original, low miles or restored. Also interested in Buco saddlebags any color. Buy or trade for original 305 Scrambler. Call anytime. Bill Feley, (843) 260-6895, Bill@RMGRehab.com

For Honda C77 Dream, need crash bars. Also misc. other parts. Furl Smith, (260) 925-3124, fkkks@wmconnect.com

For 1966/1967 Honda CL77 Scrambler, seat. Condition of cover not important but would like decent pan with trim strip not broken. 1965 uses different front mounting bracket. E-mail photo of pan along with price or call. Denny Stehr, (612) 968-5576, dastehr@integra.net

For 1967 Honda CL77, I’m looking for the chrome seat trim and hardware for a scrambler seat. Anyone have one they’ll part with or know of one? Teddy, (843) 665-7083, Florence, South Carolina, tduhome@hotmail.com

For 1967 Honda CL77, front chrome fender and stays. George Fickett, (804) 541-6264, Prince George, Virginia, berundcamp@aol.com

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100/125 ignition switch. Old CB750 ignition switch with square connector. Kawasaki KZL250 ignition switch. Kawasaki KX1300 gas tank and right frame cover in original green, Complete 1986 Yamaha XV700 Virago engine minus carbs. Other parts available. William Mack, (865) 983-4204, Louisville, Tennessee, williammack33@cs.com


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For 1968 Honda CB125S, looking for side covers. No need to be perfect but need to work. Any possibilities?? Chris, (612) 743-3335, Minnesota, freedoming@yahoo.com

For 1968 Honda CL175 Scrambler. Need NOS or perfect mirrors and turn signals. Alan Singer, (904)262-8991, adsinger@aol.com

For 1969 CB160 Honda, exhaust pipes, mufflers, chain guard, mirrors, manuals, seat cover. Call or write. (leave message) and I will mail you the money for the call or postage (sorry, no computer). Dave Smith, (519) 273-2294, 223 Wellington St. Stratford, Ontario, Canada, N2A 2L7.

For 1970s Honda CB750, left side cover. Prefer complete with emblem, will take a pair if necessary. James Nold, (432) 889-8607, Odesa, Texas, cafejamess@yahoo.com

For 1971 Honda CL450 K4, need nice original seat or seat cover. Jack Krepps, (405) 550-1101, Edmond, Oklahoma, jkrepps@cox.net

For 1971 Honda CB450/K4, I am looking for original air box set up with mounting hardware. Also need the rubber grommets for the side covers. Any help is appreciated. Rooster, (772) 631-7244, Stuart, Florida, srossii@aol.com

For 1972 Honda CL175, need a plastic right side air cleaner cover with or w/o ‘75 emblem. Blue would be nice but any color will do. Contact: James Heverin, (530) 701-6684, Pensacola, Florida, jgrypo44@yahoo.com

For 1973/77 Honda TL125, used gas tank Grey & Candy Sapphire Blue colors. No dents or few. Lagueux, France, pascale.laguens@wanadoo.fr

For 1973 Honda CB350 twin, fuel tank moldings to restore my CB350. Part numbers are 17521-317-670 and 17522-317-670. Need New or very good condition. Any help appreciated. Doug Smith, -64-3-3745716, New Zealand, doug@transportlogistics.co.nz

For 1974 Honda 360E, need Honda part #06031-369-000 Tensioner Kit and part# 14611-369-000 Guide, Cam Chain. These two pieces make up the cam chain tensioner. Good used parts acceptable. Robert Stewart, 325-646-6313, Blanket, Texas, stewartr.55@gmail.com

For 1976 Honda Gold Wing, set of 4 carbs. These don’t have to be perfect but have to be rebuildable. Len Nolan, (250) 743-1647, BC, Canada, tiacint@telus.net

For Honda GL1000, one good owners manual, Haynes manual and tool kit. Also need fork brace for 1977 Gold Wing. Contact: Bob, (651) 731-6832, Maplewood, Minnesota


1985/86 Honda VF1000R. Looking for parts or complete bike. Please e-mail with details. Contact: James D. Nold, Sr., (432) 889-8607, Odessa, Texas, cafejamess@yahoo.com

Suzuki GS1100E. In good condition. I love these bikes and will be willing to pick up. Kirk Johnson, (260) 622-1358, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, kmjohnson@onlyinternet.net

For 1968 Yamaha DT1, would like to purchase a DT1 in restorable condition. Does not have to be running, but it would be better if bike is complete. Rufus Palmer, (205) 477-9767, Mc Calla, Alabama, rp23@hotmail.com

For 1972 Yamaha R5, need cylinders and pistons or complete good R5 engine or complete good RD350 engine. Harold C Peter, (254) 853-3109, Moody, Texas (near Waco), haroldpeter@peoplepc.com

Yamaha RD400, I am looking for a rolling frame. Do not need the engine, seat, or ties. Mark Morrison, (309) 662-5371, Bloomington, Illinois, mmron26407@aol.com

1975/78 Yamaha DT400, Looking for a DT400 enduro, project or runner, titled would be nice. Any leads call me. East coast preferred. Voddy Neal, (843) 409-2998, Florence, South Carolina, vneal1@scrr.com

Yamaha XT500 (all years), In excellent or VGC. No projects. Let me know what you’ve got. Contact: Phil, philip@karbonmoto.com

MISC. ITEMS WANTED

Wanted biker(s) interested in staying at the beautiful Resort on Cocoa Beach during Bike Week, March 5-7. Call or phone for details. George Bingley, (815) 937-4456, Gbingly@aol.com

Back issues of VJMC newsletter/magazine. Contact: Kirk Johnson, (260) 622-1358, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, kmjohnson@onlyinternet.net

For 1960-80s Honda, looking for Japanese dealer memorabilia from the 1960s-80s...shop signs, banners, ashtrays, lights, clocks, toys, promo items, hats, etc...please call. Tom Kolenko, (770) 427-4820, Atlanta, Georgia, tikenlo@kennesaw.edu

Honda wall clock or any original display item. 1983 or older. Gary Behling, Sahuarita, Arizona, garyfishing@aol.com
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