

BIKE FEATURE

HEY, JESSE STEWART!

Where the heck are you?



A classic American hot rod of the two-wheeled variety.

I met Jesse last April, in Las Vegas. We hit it off pretty well, but his black and blue Shovel stopped me dead in my tracks. I like long bikes as much as anyone, but, well, take a look at the pictures and most of you will understand why it's here in Performance Times. Unfortunately, though, details will be scarce. Jesse has moved on since these pictures were taken, and we haven't been able to find him to ask questions. I'll just tell you what I know, and let the pictures handle the rest.

Nifty "Kustom" touches include the one-piece riser/top triple-tree assembly that Jesse welded up, the fender struts, oil tank sight-glass, AN oil tank fittings, and modified H-D fenders. The fender tips and '66-'71 tank emblems are misappropriated factory items, and we believe the front end to be a 35 mm Ceriani road-race unit, possibly intended for an XR-750.

That's all I know but, wherever you are, Jesse, here's to you and that fine motorcycle. May you both live long and prosper.



The Speed-E-Shift looks a tad complex, doesn't it? Watch your fingers there, boys and girls – it bites!

The way-out contraption dominating the bike's left side is a Speed-E-Shift, known less affectionately as "The Transmission Buster." It was developed by an aftermarket firm in the 1940's or early '50's to convert Harley's hand-shift transmissions to foot-shift operation. The Speed-E-Shift actually went one better, as I understand it, by providing clutchless shifts. The clutch was required only for starting and stopping. Jesse uncovered his at The Shop, in Ventura, California, and restored it.

He chose a Harley-Davidson cradle-leg rigid frame as the bike's foundation. The engine is a Pan-Shovel built on a straight-bearing Pan lower end. The carb is (Ahem!) a British SU, swept forward with an aftermarket elbow.



The one-piece riser-triple-tree is very nice indeed. The gas tank with the built-in ignition switch is a '50's H-D Hummer piece that Jesse found on E-Bay.

The sexy little Speed-E-Shift clutch lever is used only for starting and stopping.



Ok, ok – so it needs oil.



Here, Jesse's buttoning up one of our 96-in. engines with an Xzotic Panhead conversion.