

RICHARD HAMMOND

# Personal touch is Shaw to impress

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**DIFFERENT** Fraser rides the custom, based on a Blackline FXS Softail

Photos: XAVI DOM BUENDIA

## BESPOKE BUILDER'S BIKE FOR EXTREMISTS

BY FRASER ADDECOTT

**LET'S** get this straight right from the outset - this bike is not going to appeal to the traditional Harley-Davidson rider.

The type of guy who likes gleaming paintwork, acres of chrome, a big, comfy seat and leather panniers.

Nor will lovers of retro-styled machines be clambering to get their 40s deerskin gauntlets on it.

And that was never the intention.

In fact, the team at Shaw Speed and Custom, in East Sussex, had a new generation of H-D riders in mind when they created this custom and their inspiration was extreme sports.

Team principal Steve Willis explains: "We wanted to create something which would look at home in any X Games arena - motocross, BMX, surfing, snowboarding or skateboarding."

And first impressions are that they have certainly achieved that aim.

The bike is based on a standard Blackline FXS Softail.

However, despite minimal chopping of the main frame, the shape has been completely altered.

In fact, the Shaw technicians added a second spine or top tube, which sits neatly between the two fuel tanks - they took a standard tank and cut it in half, and lowered it by a couple of inches.

The suspension was also lowered, adding to the overall look and giving a super-low riding position.

The radical front end was heavily influenced by the world of cycling.

The "wet white" painted forks are reminiscent of the RockShox found on top-end mountain bikes, especially with the addition of the painted detailing of the bike's



**CYCLE** The front end is influenced by a mountain bike, with its RockShox-style white forks

name down the sides. The theme is further enhanced by the gold nitrate fork inners and the white Hope mountain bike handlebar and gold stem.

The gold detailing is picked out and highlighted on other sections of the build, such as the rear shock, the hubs and the brake calipers.

Spoked wheels by Performance Machine with RSD Black Ops rims - split and anodised by Shaw - add to the mountain bike theme.

The distinctive engine casings are by Roland Sands, alongside the PM breather.

Twin exhausts either side were created in-house and culminate in heat shields which double as number boards. Their raised position allows the detailing below to shine through. The front carbon number board, as

well as the carbon rear fender and seat, were hand made at Shaw.

What's it like to ride? Climb on board and the position is low and relaxed.

The "cockpit" consists of a tiny, but very cool digital LED clock.

Fire her up and the big V-twin rumble sounds extra meaty.

This is not a machine I would want to ride all day on. However, it is surprisingly comfortable, with your hands up quite high and wide and your boots forward.

Acceleration is smooth and powerful, although the rather shiny seat meant I was in danger of sliding off the back - Shaw is addressing this with a new, more grippy saddle cover.

How about a nice leather Brooks bicycle saddle to main-

Despite minimal chopping, the shape is altered

### THE FACTS

#### Shaw HD 110 LE

Engine: 1,690cc V-twin

Transmission: Six speed

Price: circa £45,000



tain the theme guys? Handling is stable, with no surprises and the stopping power is excellent from the front and rear discs.

I loved it.

If you've ever considered getting a custom ride, I highly recommend it. You don't necessarily need to go the whole hog, as with this example. You could opt for some more reasonably-priced add-ons to personalise your bike and get as involved with the design as you like.

Either way, it's a great feeling riding a unique machine, especially one as eye-catching and lovingly crafted as this one.

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### A STYLISH LEARNER

Yamaha is adding to its range of learner bikes with this new MT-125.

Sharing the same chassis as the extremely popular YZF-R125, the MT-125 features similar styling to the MT-07 and MT-09 middleweights

The bike should go down a storm with new riders who don't want the sporty image and riding position of the YZF machine.

The MT-125 goes on sale in July but Yamaha hasn't released any prices. The YZF costs £4,349, so we can assume the MT-125 will be less than that.



### Rolls will keep V12

Word is that Rolls-Royce will continue to use German-built V12 engines for its cars rather than set up a new engine manufacturing plant at its factory in Goodwood, West Sussex, even though it uses more V12 engines than Munich-based manufacturer BMW.



### AT YOUR SERVICE

Skoda is the latest manufacturer to come up with a fixed-price servicing plan for its older models.

Owners of Skodas between three and eight years old can make a one-off payment of £349 to cover one major and one minor service, plus two MoT tests.

Skoda says that the deal will save customers £107 over the price of booking the services separately when they are needed.