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Double take: even Roland Sands had to look twice at this replica



Springer front-end and period headlight add to the vintage look



Custom bars replace ape-hanger originals. Note No.1 fuel filler cap

From LA to the UK

► Shaw Harley builds faithful replica of Roland Sands vintage Softail custom

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This Roland Sands replica is so close to the original that it even took Roland Sands himself by surprise when the Californian customiser was over in the UK recently. At first glance he mistakenly thought it was the bike he built, which his father now owns and rides regularly. But this one was built in Sussex not California.

Multiple award-winning, and 2010 'world champions of custom bike building', Shaw Harley-Davidson have based this modified Cross Bones on a bike built by Roland in LA. The original, the 'Junk yard dog', was a restoration project by Roland when he found a crashed, damaged 2003 Softail and worked his magic ending up with a unique bike fashioned with parts he had lying around his workshop. He nicknamed the bike Dusty. This modern Cross Bones is a Shaw replica of

that bike, using original RSD parts with a few added personal twists.

The Springer front is different to the original but the rest of the bike has been heavily modified using parts shipped from the States. The huge wheels look amazing and are from Roland's father's company, Performance Machine. They're 21-inch front and 18 rear and cost over £2300 for the pair.

The vintage look has been achieved with a new seat and rear fender kit – or mudguard, to us. The rear has then been lowered further with a lowering kit. The nostalgic period-headlight and Hollywood bars really gives the bike an old-school look. What we really like are the details. Check out the new Softail round oil tank with copper lines. Yes, actual copper lines. It took a full day and a highly skilled mechanic to plumb the whole system in, but the results are very eye-catching, and very trick.

Switchgear is standard, but thumb-

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MCN'S ADAM CHILD

ing the starter is where the familiarities end as the Vance and Hines 2:1 pipe barks into life. Thankfully it's not one of those ear-bleedingly loud Harleys, but it still sounds good. The footboards are a bit of a stretch for my little legs but the riding position is otherwise really comfortable. While bouncing steadily along an A-road, the Softail suspension combined with the vintage, sprung seat

makes you feel like you're riding on a magic carpet. However as soon as you hit some undulations and bumps, it's a little too soft and bouncy. A few times I was propelled out of the seat or the suspension bottomed out jolting my spine. But I'm sure it's nothing a little suspension tweak wouldn't sort and was my only complaint.

Personally I love the vintage look – but it also works as a motorcycle. You could take it on a long weekends touring, no problem, as long as you avoid really bumpy unlisted back roads. The 1584cc engine has more than enough grunt, the Vance and Hines pipe has added some extra grunt and character. The single disc brake is just about good enough and the handling is, well, typically Harley. New bars and much larger front wheel (17-inch to 21) makes the steering a little heavier than standard but I still prefer the custom old-school bars to the mini ape bars on the standard bike.

Verdict

The standard Cross Bones is an excellent bike. In fact, personally I believe it's the best machine in the Harley range. But what Shaws have done is personalise an already good looking girl, and for me it really hits the spot. Thankfully they've not gone over the top, which they could easily have done. The main thing is it's still rideable and could be used as a weekend or every day bike, as long as you have £25,000 to spare and don't mind it getting dirty.

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Shaw cafe racer revealed

Shaw have also come up with this 1200 Sportster which has been given some attitude and aggression with a cafe racer feel complete with dropped bars and high pegs. In black it looks stunning, and is very different from anything in the Harley range.

Although the tank looks higher than stock (or is the engine lower?) Shaw have simply tidied up the area between engine and tank to give the bike a really aggressive and distinctive look. The higher Vance and Hines pipe bolsters its attitude further, and the headlight is a very sweet, almost British-looking unit. Very 'cafe racer'.

The switchgear is slightly confusing as it's an aftermarket Roland Sands item with three identical buttons.

But once you've figured out which is the starter it fires into life with some aggression. The riding position, hunched over the tank to the cafe racer bars, feels unusual at first, and with your feet on the RSD pegs it's all a bit bizarre: you're hunched forward, with high pegs and dropped bars – all very un-Harley. But you get used to it. Blatting down some quiet back roads, the bike bordered on sporty. But soon after, though, it starts to become uncomfortable again. This may well be down to my short stature as it's a real stretch to the bars for lil' ole me.

Shaw hasn't thrown the accessories book at this Sportster – it's still relatively standard. I really like some of the smaller details, too, like the side-



High pegs and dropped cafe racer bars, on a Harley?!

mounted number plate. But I'm also not sure how long I could put up with the riding position. After a long day's

ride I'd need a visit to a chiropractor. But if you want to simply look cool it certainly ticks that box.

SHOPPING LIST

RSD VINTAGE SEAT KIT BARE STEEL	£550
RSD VINTAGE 200 REAR FENDER KIT	£825
RSD NOSTALGIA TOP MOTOR MOUNT	£201
RSD VENTURI AIR CLEANER BLACK	£387
RSD NOSTALGIA SPRINGER HEADLIGHT REL	£91
PM DOMINO 21" X 3.5" CONTRAST CUT WHEEL	£1151
PM DOMINO 18" X 5.5" CONTRAST CUT WHEEL	£1151
11.5" DOMINO CONTRAST CUT BRAKE DISC	£304
1.5" DOMINO CONTRAST CUT BRAKE DISC	£276
PM BELT SPROCKET DOMINO CONTRUST CUT 66T	£533
AVON COBRA 120/70/21	£91
AVON COBRA 200/55/18	£174
BOLT SET FOR SINGLE DISC	£13
BOLT SET FOR MAG WHEEL	£16
PM CHROME SPROCKET BOLT SET	£22
VANCE & HINES RSD TRACKER 2:1	£745
NIGHTRIDER.COM X-IED CABLE	£112
SOFTAIL REAR LOWERING KIT	£93
SOFTAIL ROUND OIL TANK, RAW COPPER LINES AND FITTINGS	£247
HOLLYWOOD OFFSET BARS BLACK KIT, SPEEDO/TACH ALUM, MPH	£468
KIT, MIRROR, DOME BILLET STYLE	£187
NO1 FUEL CAP COVER BLACK	£18
DERBY COVER, DARK CUSTOM	£121
SMOKED LENS TURN SIGNAL	£35
TIMER COVER, DARK CUSTOM	£56
BATTERY SEALED 12 AH	£104
BURLY FRONT LOWERING KIT	£138
SPARTO TAILLIGHT BLACK	£35
TRACKER HANDLE GRIP SET BLACK	£110

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