

Building a Featherlastic Part IV

In Part III, I shipped the featherbed frame to Alternative Motorcycle Repair in Tucson, Arizona for the owner, Mike Haracourt (top photo), to work his magic. With the mods complete I then headed out West to give the frame a good look-over, and take a ride on a Featherlastic or two.



You may know AMR for its Nortech anti-wet sump conversion for Commandos. This involves adding a check valve to the timing cover to minimize oil draining back into the crankcase over time.

Take your pick... decisions, decisions



I arrived in Tucson early Saturday afternoon and went directly to AMR which is conveniently near the airport. There I met Mike and Randy Ullery (bottom photo) who together have developed the Featherlastic concept. After looking over my frame and talking shop, our attention turned to the morning ride where I'd get to experience two different approaches to the Featherlastic.

Since we had to drive down south a ways to meet up with Randy for the ride, Mike took me to one of his top customer's place to select my interim wheels. From eight 850 Commandos I chose a bright red roadster which Mike had restored to perfection. Life is tough. We met up with Randy where I then traded bikes with Mike. Mike's Featherlastic utilizes a Combat 750 engine and 5 speed pre-unit Triumph gearbox (now I want a Quaife 5 speed cluster for my AMC, ouch!).

The front end is also twin-disc Triumph. The next 20 mile stretch of road was the biggest thrill I've ever experienced on a motorcycle - one turn after another, up and down hills with positive and negative



850 F'lastic with Norvil single disc front end



Some of the special mods: Clockwise from top - rear isolastic mount; chain guide; isolastic head steady

G's galore.

On a Sunday

morning about the only thing out there besides us were the Border Patrols. Mike's F'lastic was extremely smooth and responsive, and the isolastics worked to perfection. This was my first ride on a featherbed frame and all I can say is that it felt like I was on rails.

At a favorite watering hole at the end of the trail we met up with Mike's wife and business partner, Kas, who was on her neat Triumph TR-6R. I took the return trip on Randy's 850 Commando-driven machine. Its wide

power-band and solid handling made this ride a blast. My trip was too short but Mike, Kas, Matt (Mike's son and chief assembler) and Randy extended great hospitality and made every minute count. Muchas gracias amigos! Bob Cox

