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Lowrider Bikes History

By Alastair Hamilton

Lowriding began as a cultural element of Chicano Americans, part of the street culture of the

American barrio where Mexican immigrants maintained a lively urban culture. Lowrider bikes, one of the most splendid and unique products of this culture, are a cross between the Harley and the cruiser bike, decorated with paint and chrome and streamers, found in any all-American hometown parade.

As you might surmise, lowriding bikes hug the ground. The highest points on a lowrider bike are almost always its two hand grips, just like you might find on its motorized cousin, the Harley motorcycle. The seat of a lowrider bike is down at wheel level and its pedals are sometimes higher than the seat! These bikes are typically a highly individualized creation. Most of them are ridden with enormous pride by their creators, although you can buy some standard models and a few elaborate models in a good bike store, especially in cities of the American West.

Despite the fact that these bikes originated within the poverty of the barrio, lowrider bikes are anything but cheap. Makers of these one-of-a-kind creations regard their bicycles as much as an artwork and a mechanical marvel as a means of transportation, though part of the joy of creation has always been parading them down the street when completed—these are not pieces of art meant for life in dusty museums, for the most part. Each part is usually carefully selected for its utility as well as its beauty, with the resulting bike a breathtaking example of technical and artistic ingenuity.

Lowrider bikes are becoming a presence in more and more cities, perhaps made more "respectable" among the affluent bicyclists who drive the market by the increasing popularity of their cousin, the recumbent bicycle. As the baby boomer generation ages and feels increasing twinges of back pain riding on the dropped handlebars of road bikes, expect to see more and more lowrider and recumbent bikes alike.

And once you get your first basic lowrider bike, don't be too surprised if you find yourself flipping through the real or online pages of a lowrider parts catalog musing, "Hmm. I wonder how that golden sprocket would look on my bike?" Lowrider bikes have a tradition of creative embellishment and technical improvisation that calls out the artist and the inventor in many of us.

Lowrider Bikes History

What, really, could be better to evoke, especially if you're already a bike rider?

Find further information on lowrider bikes at

<http://www.bike-cycling-reviews.com>

, your online resource

on road and mountain biking reviews, the hub of cycling information.

The Street Legal Question

By Ted Belfour

One of the most common questions to pop up from people looking to purchase a pocket bike for the first time is whether or not they are street legal. The general answer is no, and pocket bike racers point out that pocket bikes were never designed for street use, they were designed for track racing. Because of the diminutive size of pocket bikes, they are dangerous to use on public roads because many drivers can not see the bikes. Yet, because of the speed they can reach, too many people either assume they are legal to use on public streets, or just ignore the rules.

Pocket bikes are legal to own and race, but they are designed for private property or race tracks. Some states have gone to extreme measures to reinforce this point. Pocket bikes became major political issues in both Utah and Pennsylvania after individuals were badly hurt after an accident on a public street. Both states passed laws specifically banning those vehicles from public streets. Sections of California have taken the same steps.

Part of this response is due to the large increase in pocket bike sales. There are so many more pocket bikes around then even a few years back. Unfortunately, with the increase in pocket bikes, there is also a rise in the improper use of pocket bikes. These were designed for private property, and for racing, and are perfectly acceptable for both, but public streets were meant for basic transportation.

So the long and short of the street legal question is that pocket bikes are not street legal. Even in states where the rules are not specifically stated, pocket bikes are still technically not street legal because they are not designed for license plates, turn signals, and lights. Even if your state has not specifically passed laws banning their use on public streets, it is still a good idea to use the pocket bikes properly. Because of their small size and large speed, the pocket bikes can lead to bad accidents if used improperly, or even if there are used properly, accidents happen and it's better to be with the ground than with a car. Play it safe, and pocket bikes can be a fun, accident-free fun.

Dave is the owner of

<http://super-pocket-bike-sale.info>

a website that provides information on pocket

bike racing



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