

SportsterPaul's 1979 Sportster chop

My 79 Sportster came with a burned front piston courtesy of a leaky O-ring.



I paid 900 dollars for the stock bike. I've chopped it a little more each time I've rebuilt her. The starter pocket is cut off and the sprocket cover is replaced with a steel bracket to support the kick starter. The right side foot peg is a '74 to '76 cable rear brake unit with a Softail rear master cylinder fabricated to it. The reservoir is on the frame just under the seat and behind the oil tank. It runs an electronic ignition. The battery is front-mounted.

The beautiful Sumax oil tank has been installed three ways. For several years it was resting on split rubber hose pieces on the frame with a giant hose clamp that would hold it down. Then I "improved" it by welding a big steel bar across the frame under the seat and hard-mounted the bag to it. It took a couple hundred miles to rip the mounts out of the bag. Now I use the rubber mounts from the Shovelhead kit to 2 brackets. Note the trick front brake where I used drill rod to stabilize the calipers.



With no starter pocket, the left side of the bike is as clean as a 1960s Sportster.



Here is an older picture with the rubber hose to mount the oil tank. I put and FX tank on it for more range.



I liked Bates headlights since they are a handy place to hang your helmet. I was never a fan of the "eyebrow" style headlamp mount for this reason.



To me a Sportster should be narrow and sleek, and this bobber/chopper is surely that.



This picture was after the FX tank above but before the blue tin it sports now. That is the great thing about Sportsters, you can get factory take-off fenders and tanks for cheap, and the paint is much better quality than even a custom paint job. It might not be as pretty, but the paint won't chip or peel when you balance a grocery bag on the tank on the way from the store.



I still use these saddlebags, funky suede ones I got at a swap meet for dirt cheap. The smaller size suits the chopper theme, but they are big enough for a spare liter of gas, some tools, and some bungee cords.

The seat is the original that got shred up from a lot of use, this was a daily driver. My buddy Jerry Alvarado (RIP) gave me the identical seat he had for a '79 Sportster, then up and died on me. My be be living good at the United Airlines machine shop in heaven. So it is his seat I have on the bike now, And I think I tossed this original seat.