

MORBID OBESITY-THE FINAL CHAPTER

ESTARTTECH CYCLE'S ELECTRIC START KIT INSTALLATION

David "Englishman" Gregory

It was time to part ways with this bike. A veteran of two Horse Smoke Outs and a bunch of trips to work and back, I really needed the money and the bike space for upcoming and ongoing projects, not to mention the depreciation that a bike like this will face after a while. So it was with a heavy heart that I reluctantly put the bike on eBay and hoped for the best.

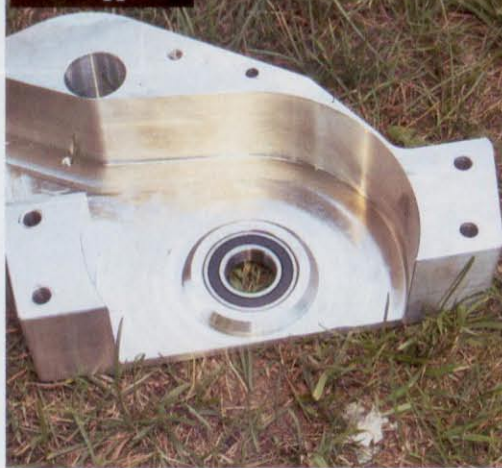
Gennaro had warned me that I would have trouble trying to get a decent price out of a kick only hundred-inch engine bike, but I knew it was a pretty easy kick over and besides, only weenies would worry about that, right? The seven days of the listing dragged by like a six year old looking forward to Christmas in October and when it failed to meet reserve I felt a combination of relief and disappointment. I really like this bike, it rides great and goes great, if I could have won the lottery or something I would never have let it go.

This was when I determined that I should go ahead and install an electric start setup on the bike. Fortunately I had resisted the temptation to hack off the starter flange on the S&S transmission case I had utilized, so at least it was a possibility. Every Exile bike I had seen that wasn't kick only, had that little 'cone' thing sticking through the bottom of the oil tank. I had added a link on The Horse website (www.thehorsebc.com) for Tech Cycle, and when I was testing the link I saw the starter conversion kits they sell which includes the 'cone' starter jackshaft support, so that looked like the one to use!

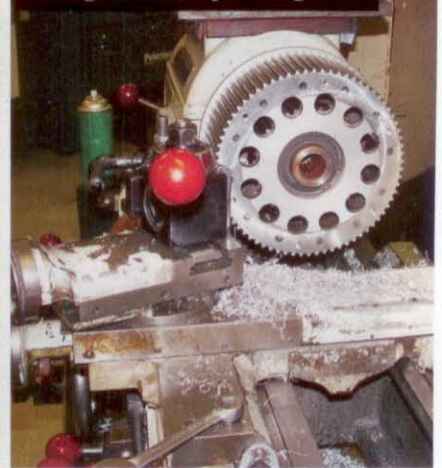
I got hold of the guys at Tech Cycle and explained what I wanted to do. I had the BDL kick only rear pulley on the primary drive, and so Tech Cycle told me they would be able to machine the rear pulley and install the starter ring gear in house for me. The next morning I went out to the old shed and removed the rear pulley and boxed it up to send to Tech Cycle over in PA.

They were good enough to take a couple of pictures of the process for our edification, and I shortly received the pulley back via the ubiquitous UPS. The workmanship was very good, and the actual open primary conversion kit arrived the same day. This consists of a chunk of billet aluminum that includes the mainshaft support bearing, the needle bearing containing 'cone' that supports the starter jackshaft,

Billet Support



Cutting clearance for Ring Gear



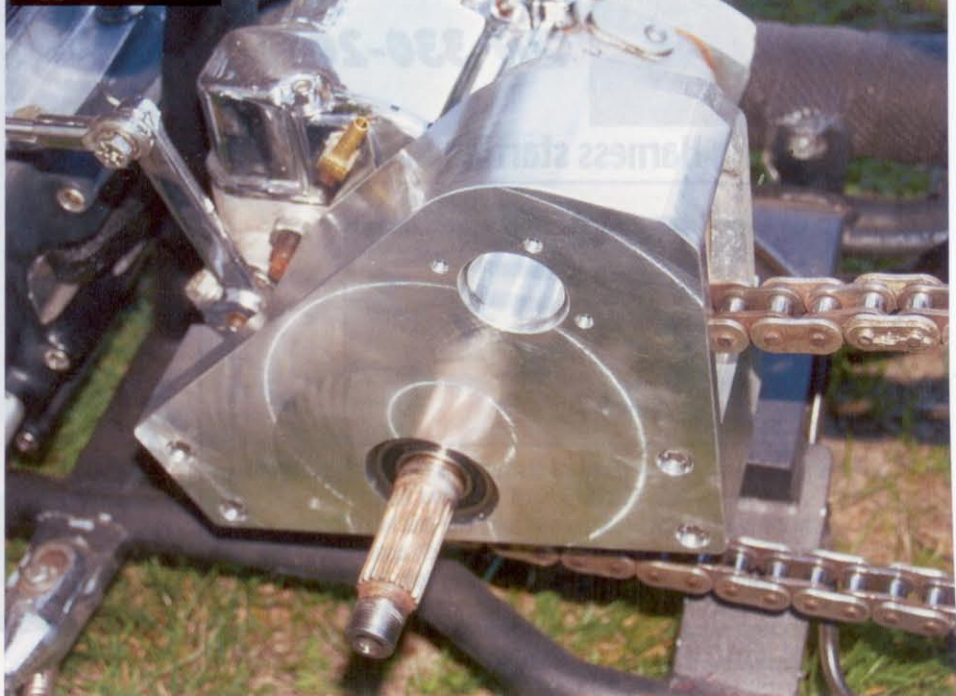
Ring Gear in Place



After Machining



Support in Place



and the starter jackshaft. Since I'm an E-start newbie, I didn't order a starter motor to go with it (duh) but a quick call back to Tech Cycle fixed that.

I had already pulled the Exile oil tank to facilitate the conversion and the old mainshaft support plate was off. The new piece fit right on, and I used the supplied Allen bolts to snug it down, that was easy... too easy. In the Speed Channel TV show "Build Or Bust," "contestants" trying to build a bike from scratch in 30 days often have to clear an Exile oil tank for the Tech Cycle cone, so at least I was familiar with that operation. I reinstalled the oil tank without the cone on the support, used a marker to draw the guide for what material I needed to remove and then got the cutting wheel out and started hacking. I have to tell you, I think the Exile oil tank is probably the best looking oilbag ever and I was more than a little nervous about attacking it with power tools.

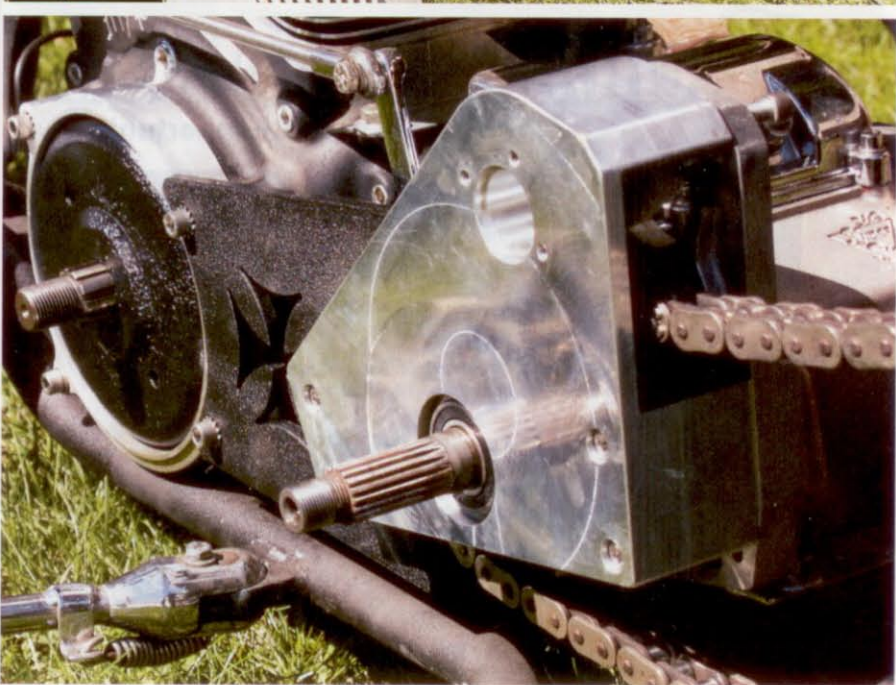
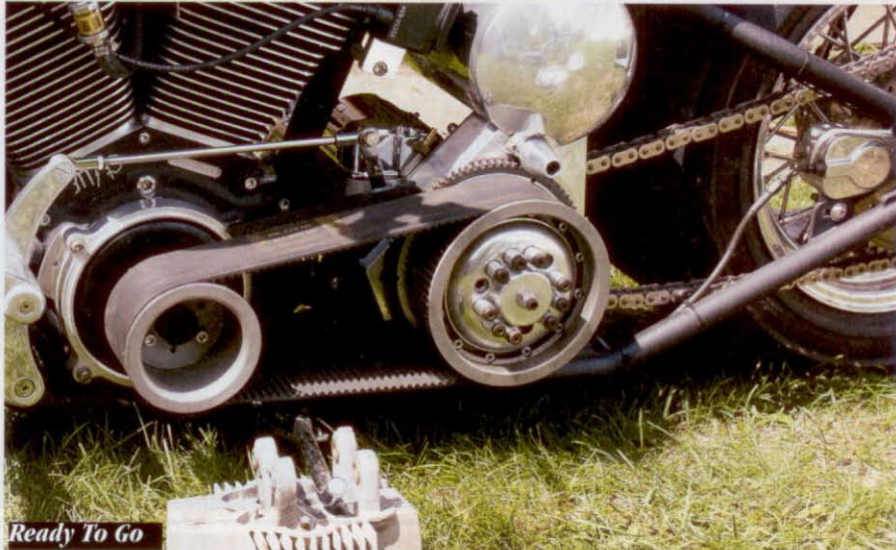
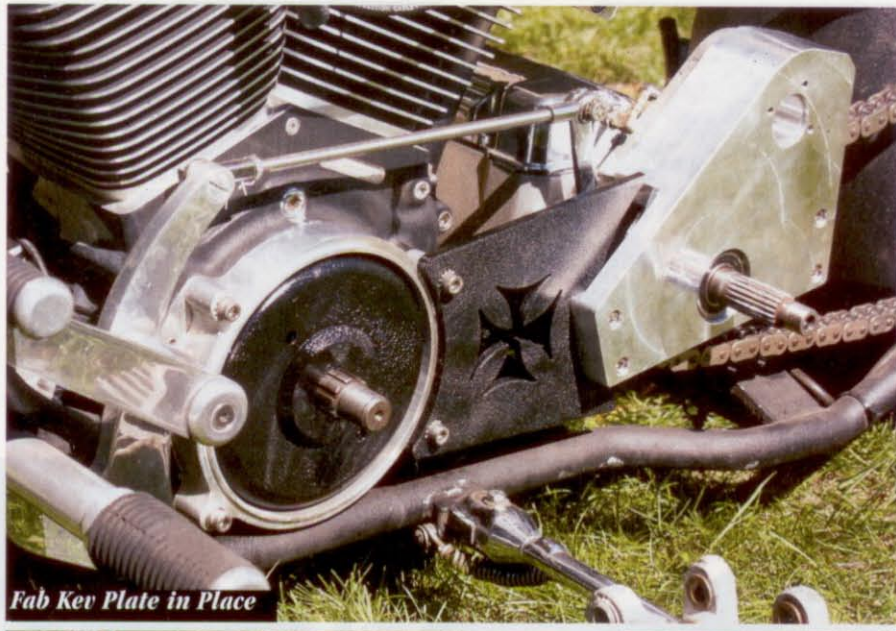
After a few fitments, removals and reshaping, I had enough clearance for the cone. So, we're good to go, right? I made sure the Fab Kevin motor plate was spaced out correctly to match the level of the support plate and bolted it into place. It was a little farther out than before, but I figure it would work okay. Then the rear pulley goes back on and... Uh-oh. The starter ring gear hit the bolts for the Fab Kevin plate; the rear pulley would not even go all the way onto the mainshaft splines! I thought it was going too quickly.

I got hold of Tech Cycle once more. They explained to my dense self that the conversion kit was designed as a stand alone setup, the use of motor plates was optional, and in fact they have a selection on their site. So the way to do it, was to figure out the optimal position for the motor plate, then have the support machined off at the forward position, then a spacer behind that to make everything as it was, so to speak. Or in my case, a quarter inch gap needed to appear in the front mount.

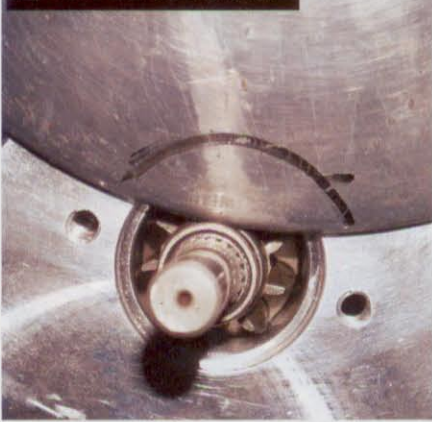
So back to Tech Cycle went the support, and they did a great job in record time in zipping off the material and making me a spacer. I'm not sure they were wild about me using the Fab Kevin plate and not one of theirs, but I thought it an essential part of the bike's character.

This time, everything went back together nicely, and soon was all bolted and loctited down. I had previously ordered a keyswitch with a 'start' position from Lee at broadwaychoppers.com (support your HORSE advertisers!) and the installation and wiring went surprisingly quickly for one of my attempts. I refilled the oil tank and called Trina outside to witness the "OCC moment" of hitting the starter for the first time.

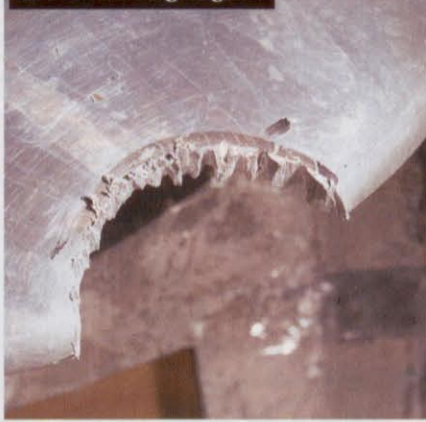
Deep breath and...(drum roll...) It started! In less than half a revolution in fact, I



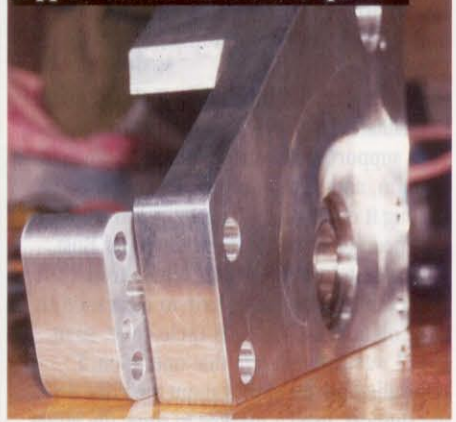
Oil Tank Cut-Out Marked



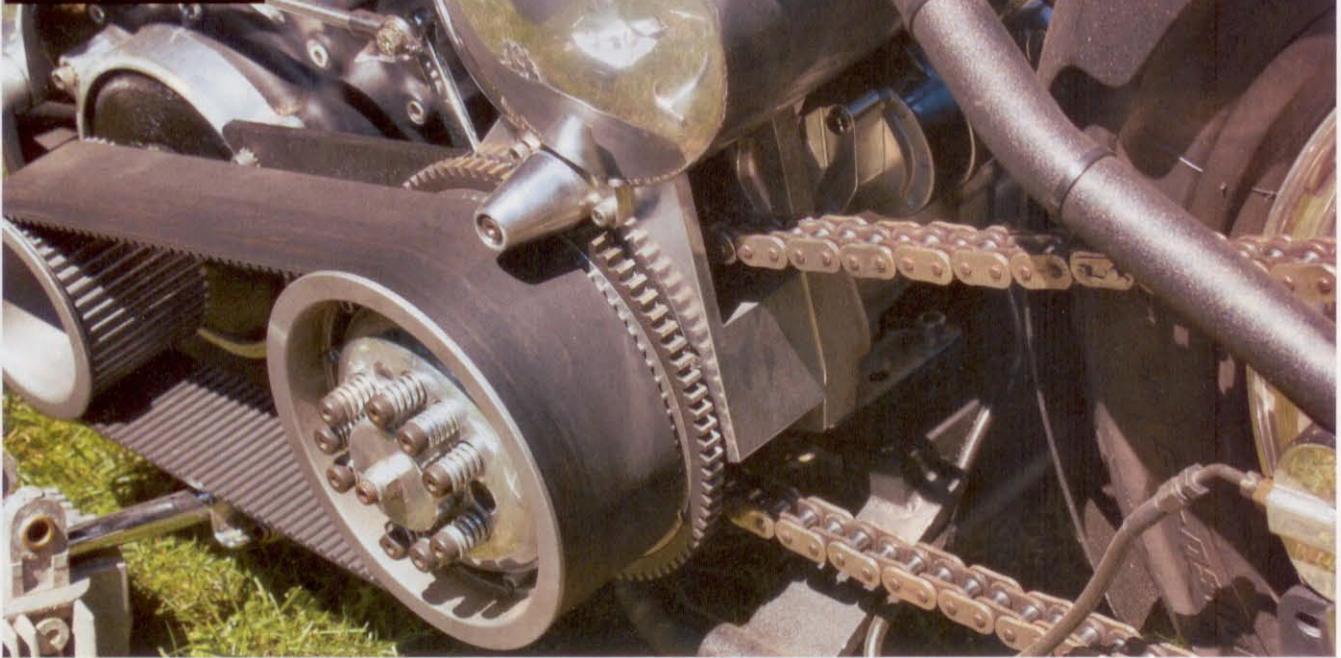
Let the Hacking Begin!



Support Milled and Correct Spacer



All Done, Looks Great!



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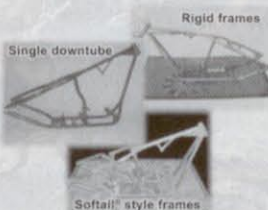
\$4,195.00



\$6,195.00

Builder's Kit: \$13,995.00 with S&S 96" motor, Baker 5 speed, BDL 3" belt drive
Rolling Chassis price are based on 200 rear tire and spoke wheels

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shut it off and started it about a dozen times, each time expecting some dreadful problem to arise, but it never did.

I relisted the bike on eBay and it hit reserve pretty quickly this time. I got to ride the bike for another week or so at least, before its new owner drove up from Florida to claim his prize. In that time the starter performed flawlessly and I have no reason to think that would change anytime soon.

I have to admit I felt more than just a little remorse watching the new owner drive away with the bike in a U-Haul trailer. It was all I could do not to chase him down and tell him I changed my mind! Damn, I miss that bike already!

Check out the full line of Tech Cycle performance products at www.techcycle.com or give them a call at 215-702-TECH. They have a very interesting starter kit for an open primary shovel as well as for Knuckle/Pan transmissions, ratchet top transmissions, rotary top transmissions, 5 speed in a 4 speed case, Spuntes, and all 5 and 6 speed transmissions.