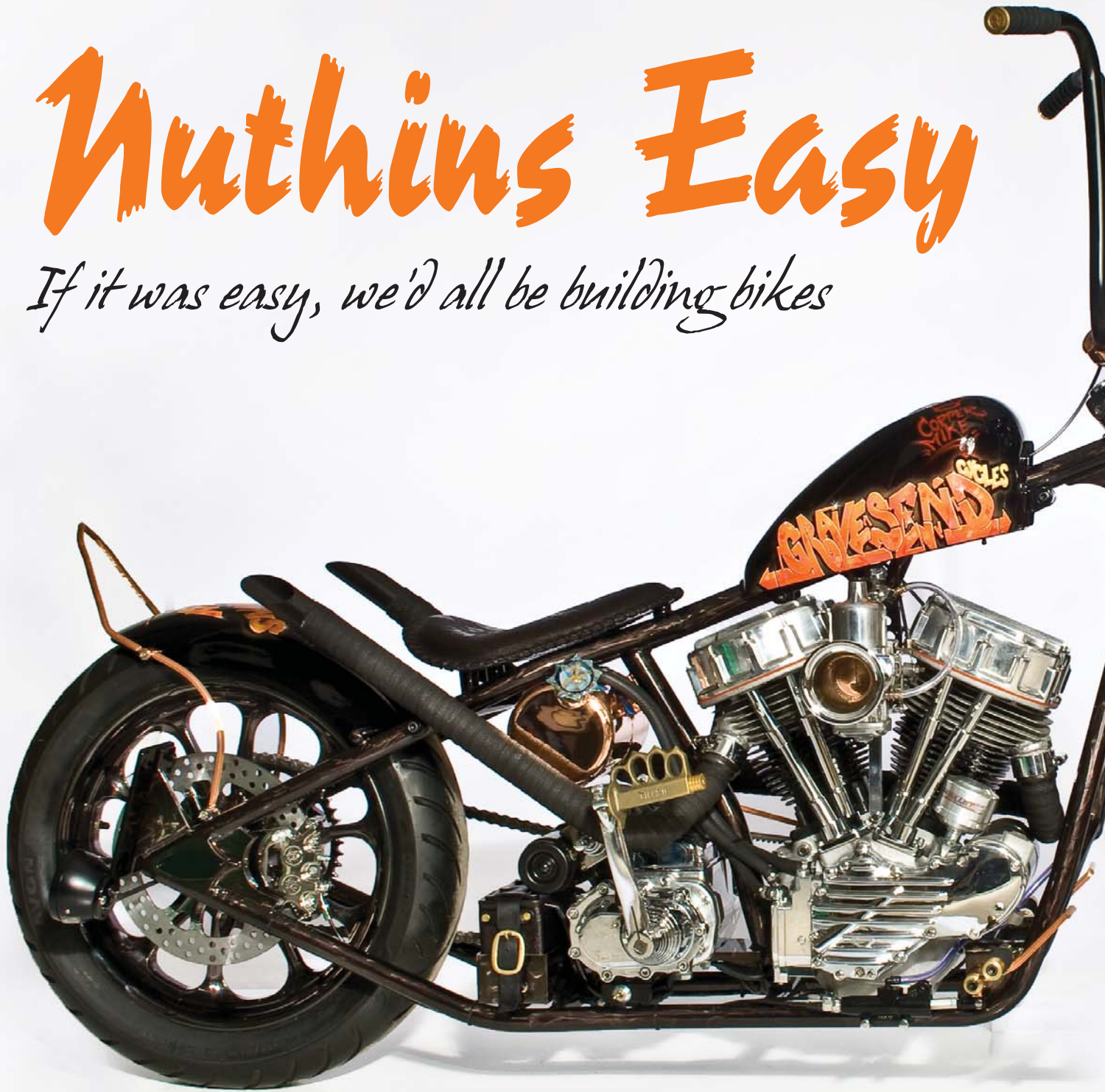


Nuthins Easy

If it was easy, we'd all be building bikes



photos by Mark Velazquez

If you're struggling to keep it together like the rest of us, you'll relate to this bike's moniker, "Nuthins Easy." Its builder, New Yorker Copper Mike Cole, doesn't work on Wall Street but his shop, Gravesend Cycles, is near enough in the New York City burbs to have felt the economic crunch as fiercely as

any banker or broker. But that hasn't held him back.

"Early in the build I gave the bike that name and it gave me a hard time from that point forward," said Mike. And as with most things that take hard work but turn out well in the end, the challenges of building Nuthins Easy only make it all the more gratifying when it's finished. Part of the reward

includes winning the New York versus Connecticut Full Throttle Bike Buildoff last summer.

"I had a vision for a dark, sinister Panhead," said Mike, and part of that vision was what he calls black chrome, actually a translucent powdercoating that he chose for the proprietary triple downtube frame. But this meant etching the entire frame by hand with a die



*"I'm self-taught and still learning!"
—Copper Mike*

grinder to prep it before sending it—and the rims—off to Action Powder-coating. Mike also wanted the front end to “look right” and that led to machining a narrow glide front end to accept 41mm wide glide legs, and shaving the lower tubes. Are you starting to see where the bike’s name originated?

From there he swept swap meets for parts, and handmade components

became requirements, not options. “We made the forward controls, pegs, shifter linkage and exhaust,” said Mike. “Like the bayonet brass knuckle kicker pedal, the sissy bar was made from gear stock, then heated, twisted and plated.” After bending the handlebars, Mike machined the ends and made caps that were inset with 1951 pennies—the same year as

the engine, a vintage Panhead built by Keino.

Like the pennies, copper details aren’t an accident. It has become Copper Mike’s signature to put a few copper bits—such as the risers and oil tank here—on every bike he builds. Added artful touches are courtesy of Mikey Seats (tooled seat and leather-wrapped battery box) and James Jaun

continued

►► SPEC SHEET

Gravesend Cycles
Lindenhurst, New York
2009 Special Construction

HUMAN FACTOR

Fabrication	Gravesend Cycles
Assembly	Gravesend Cycles
Painter	Mike Terwilliger, Scrapyard Paint
Plater	Captain Steve
Engine	Builder Keino

ENGINE

Year/Model	1951 Panhead
Displacement	More than stock
Ignition	Mallory
Cases	H-D
Heads	H-D
Cylinders	H-D
Pistons	H-D
Cam	H-D
Carb	SU
Air Cleaner	Velocity stack
Exhaust	Gravesend, one-off
Transmission	5-in-a-4
Primary	Rivera Primo

BODY WORK

Gas Tank	Sportster
Front Fender	None
Rear Fender	Gravesend
Seat	Mikey Seats
Hand Controls	Internal throttle and hockey tape
Foot Controls	Gravesend Cycles
Handlebar	Gravesend Cycles
Headlight	Sportster
Taillight	Lick's Cycle
Dash/Instruments	None

FRAME

Year/Model	'09 Gravesend
Rake	Stock
Backbone	Stretch 4"
Downtube	Stretch
Fork	Wide Glide
Type	H-D
Trees	Narrow Glide
Rear Shocks	None

WHEELS, BRAKES & TIRES

Front Wheel	Performance Machine 21"
Rear Wheel	Performance Machine 18"
Front Brake	None
Rear Brake	Performance Machine
Front Tire	Avon MH90-21
Rear Tire	Avon 130-18

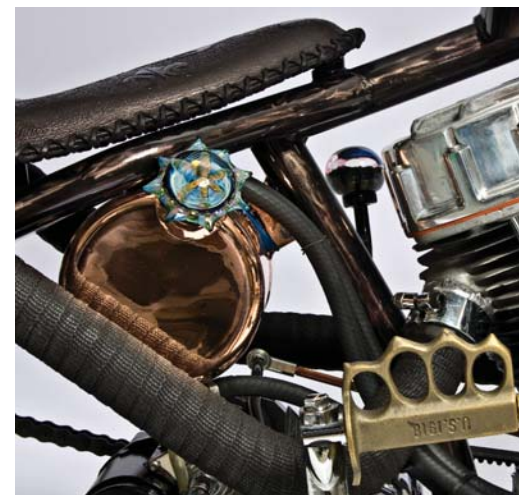
Thanks to: Manny Ferreira (aka P-chop),
Don Haass, Mark Treglia, Mark Velazquez



(hand-blown glass shifter knob and oil tank cap.) The graffiti paint job was applied by Mike Terwilliger of Scrapyard Paint in Farmingdale, New York.

"I just get a vision of how I want a bike to look and I follow it till I get there," said Mike. It's that vision that drives this builder to address every bit of the bike, no matter how minute, resulting in jewel-like traits—because that's how the bike looked when he first pictured it. "The overall design and fabrication are what I like best," said Mike.

The tagline for Mike's shop—named, incidentally, after his hometown neighborhood of Gravesend in Brooklyn—is "Vintage, Contemporary, Handmade." They're attributes achieved only through determination and sweat equity. But then, Nuthins Easy, at least nothing that's worth it.—*M. Stemp*



Resource

Gravesend Cycles
Lindenhurst, New York
631-433-3173
www.gravesendcycles.com

*"When you go out on your own and you're
doing your own thing, nothing comes easy.
You just have to keep working at it."
-Copper Mike*

