

TRICK
GIXXERS
'BUSAS
&
B-KINGS

HIP-HOP HAYABUSA

Livin' LRG on invisible wheels

BY PAUL DEAN



AT FIRST GLANCE, IT SEEMS LIKE A REALLY BAD IDEA, dangerous, even. Kinda like dumping nitroglycerine into a paint mixer or wearing boxer shorts made of razor blades. But on this spectacular custom Hayabusa, the concept in question—clear plastic wheel centers—not only looks cool, it actually works. Quite well, in fact.

Yeah, that's right, *plastic*. The wheels are from Metalsport (www.metalsportwheels.com) and have see-through centers made of a special hardened polycarbonate developed by GE. Their utter transparency makes the hubs look like they're magically floating in space, an effect that causes bystanders to stare in disbelief. And if you think no one in their right mind would dare ride on such wheels, think again: They've been approved by both the DOT and



the TUV (the worldwide certification agency based in Germany). According to the bike's builder, Nick Anglada of Custom Sportbike Concepts (www.cscbikes.com) in Winter Garden, Florida, "The bike is perfectly stable and handles normally. It feels no different than one with alloy wheels and the same 240 rear tire."

Anglada was commissioned to build this memorable machine as a corporate showcase for LRG (Lifted Research Group), the hip-hop/skateboard clothing company based in California. LRG submitted a simple concept based on its white-and-green corporate colors, then Anglada spiffed the design to give it more pizzazz. The wheels turned out to be the *pièce de résistance*.

But they aren't the LRG bike's only see-through pieces. Using its patented Gator Glass material, Gator Customs (www.gatorcustoms.net) in Illinois made clear windows that fit into cut-outs on the fairing lowers, allowing an unobstructed view of the gold-anodized engine covers. The clutch cover also

has a Gator Glass window that puts the pressure plate on display, and green-tinted triangular panes near the fairing's rear edges complement the overall color scheme.

Surprisingly, the foundation for this white-and-green dazzler is a stock 2008 Hayabusa frame. So too has the 1340cc inline-Four engine remained untouched except for short little Voodoo exhaust slip-ons.

Just about everything attached to the frame, however, was modified or replaced. CSC bolted up a sturdy Gregg's Customs single-sided steel-trellis swingarm, mating it with a Race Tech-reworked shock and a gold-anodized Beringer caliper on a Galfer wave rotor. Two more Beringer/Galfer combos provide stoppage up front, and Race Tech also had its way with the fork internals. CNC-machined, gold-anodized adjustable rearsets from Gilles Tooling replace the standard foot controls.

Anglada kept the stock gas tank and front fender, and made only minor mods to the fairing, but he ditched the 'Busa's signature "humped" tailsection in favor of a sleeker one from a GSX-R1000. "Grafting that thing on there took a lot more time than we imagined," he says. "We ended up spending a whole lot of man-hours making it fit."

CSC livened up the stock instru-

ment display by using EL Glow backlit faces with green lighting. The faces incorporate LRG's little tree-like logos, and the same designs are embossed into the leather handgrips, the green leather-and-suede seat and the clear windscreen. Repulsed by the thought of mirrors poking out into the airstream, Anglada mounted an AnT Systems Rear-Vision monitor on a Techmount platform atop the steering stem, then hid the camera so it is all but invisible, a tiny dot just under the taillight.



Anglada estimates the value of the LRG Hayabusa at around \$50,000—a sizable pile of loot for a bike with a stock frame and engine. A big chunk of that cost, however, is owed to the wheels, which run close to 12 grand per pair.

More than likely, that qualifies them as the most outrageously expensive motorcycle wheels ever made. But without them, this would be a much more ordinary custom—and all of those double-takes by stunned bystanders would never happen. □

