

# Old-School Cool

BY TRICIA SZULEWSKI

**F**aithful *RoadBike* readers may recognize this Honda as my old 1999 Shadow ACE 750, which was featured in a number of past articles. Most of the stories focused on how I transformed it into a hopped-up bobber. One of the changes that didn't make it into print was a tire change: I swapped my Metzeler 880s for the Dunlops you see here to get the old-school, whitewall look. But I had to squeeze a fatter front tire on the stock rim, which left no clearance for the stock fender bracket. But I liked the bobbed, no fender look, so I scrapped the stock parts.

Since then, I've sold the Shadow to my friend Kelly. She, too, originally liked the look, but after a couple rides on wet pavement, decided that function was more important than fashion. I suppose not everyone is built to withstand a face full of dirty water every time the skies open up or you ride through a puddle. I'd always thought about adding a Harley FLH front fender to the bike, but never got around to it. So when I came across a low-cost fiberglass replacement fender from West-Eagle Motorcycle Products, I sent the picture to Kelly, who promptly put in an order.

West-Eagle's specialty is old-school lookalike parts for modern cruisers, and I was eager to participate in the installation. The super-light fender arrived without hardware, but had a nice black gel-coated finish. I was warned that gel coating is no replacement for paint, as it will wear away in no time. So once we held the fender up to the bike, making sure it was going to work, we sent it out for some paint.

The next thing to tackle was the mounting hardware. I'd long since gotten rid of the stock fender and huge, heavy bracket that wrapped over the tire, from one fork leg to the other, so we needed to improvise. We figured that we needed four 10mm screws for mounting, and while we could've used spacers between the new fender and the fork leg mounts, we decided to go one step further. Kelly's friend Mike is handy with his tools, and fabricated four strong, rectangular metal pieces to protect the fiberglass. He drilled holes in all the right places, and finished up by spray-painting the brackets black to blend in with the fender. They offer extra strength and support to the fiberglass, so that there was minimal bend (and potential for cracking) when we torqued the screws to secure the fender.

West-Eagle also offers a variety of other products that would make the ACE look old-school cool. Remind me to give Kelly that catalog.



1

The Shadow looks pretty cool without a front fender, but riding in the rain is miserable when you get slapped in the face by a wet rooster tail.



2

Luckily, when I ditched the stock fender and fender bracket, I left the mounting points on the fork legs intact.



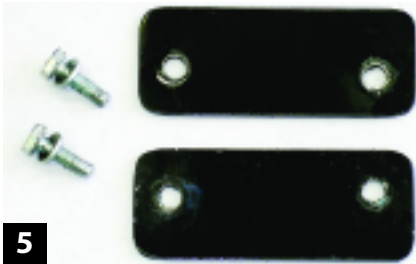
3

The West Eagle fiberglass fender arrives with a coat of black gel gloss, which we sent out for real paint. The gel would have eventually worn away.



4

Holding up the fender, we discover that it's too narrow to mount directly to the fork leg mounts without large spacers.



**5**

Kelly's friend Mike came up with a better idea. He fabricates four metal brackets, two for each side, with holes for the screws. He finishes them off with a coat of black spray paint.



**6**

Using one bracket on the inside and one on the outside of the fender tab, the fit is perfect.



**7**

I attach the four 10mm screws. Even with the strong brackets, I'm careful about not over-tightening, which could still crack the fiberglass.



**8**

The new fender is lightweight, a fraction of the cost of a custom metal fender, and looks like it belongs with the whitewalls. **RB**

### **hard data**

West-Eagle Motorcycle Products  
FLH Style Front Fender #F-3492, \$160  
310/787-8577  
[www.West-Eagle.com](http://www.West-Eagle.com)