

Ready To Rumble

TRISH'S ACE GETS ANOTHER MAKEOVER



BY TRICIA SZULEWSKI OVER THE YEARS, I'VE DONE A NUMBER OF performance upgrades on my 1999 Honda Shadow ACE 750. In March 2002, I installed a Roadhouse Brand 2-into-1 Classic Exhaust, a Dynojet jet kit, and a Thunder Mfg. Teardrop Air Kit. Those mods gave my ACE a boost of 10 hp and left me tooling around happily for a while.

Eventually, however, the bike's single-crank vibration, combined with a bit of hooligan riding, wore out the Roadhouse pipes. I had to replace the canister when I basically blew a giant hole through it. And the front heat shield had scraped the ground so many times that it was crumbling. Knowing I was doomed to continue this abuse, I started looking into other exhaust options. I decided that Hard-Krome's Kickers would look great on my Honda bobber, along with a new Thunder Mfg. Odyssey Air Kit.

After installing the pipes and before adding the air kit, I rode the ACE around the neighborhood a bit, only to find that there was a lot of black smoke coming from the exhaust and loud popping on deceleration. So, I installed the air kit, changed the fouled spark plugs and a corroded spark plug wire, and then took the bike to John Tavolacci at Dyno Solutions for tuning. The dyno showed that the bike was running slightly lean throughout the rpm range, except just off idle.

We e-mailed the results of the first dyno run to Travis at Thunder Mfg. He found the off-idle richness to be acceptable, but gave us instructions for completing the installation with a Dynojet

Stage 3 jet kit. *RoadBike* Associate Editor Steve Lita helped with this next step. Because my bike has high-compression cams and pistons from a previous upgrade, we needed to customize the jetting. But the jet kit didn't have a suggested calibration for my bike's engine modifications.

Steve drilled the carburetor slide's air bleed hole with the drill bit that was included in the jet kit. He positioned the slide needle E-clip in the proper groove, which raised it slightly and thus richened the bike's midrange and top end. Then he installed a hybrid jet setting, because the bike was not dangerously lean — we just wanted to richen it a bit.

A trip back to Dyno Solutions showed that we'd brought most of the jetting in line with what John, the dyno pro, had suggested (13:1). Thunder Mfg.'s technicians approved the charts when we were done, and now I've got properly jetted carbs to match the pipe and air cleaner, and I even managed to gain about 1 hp.

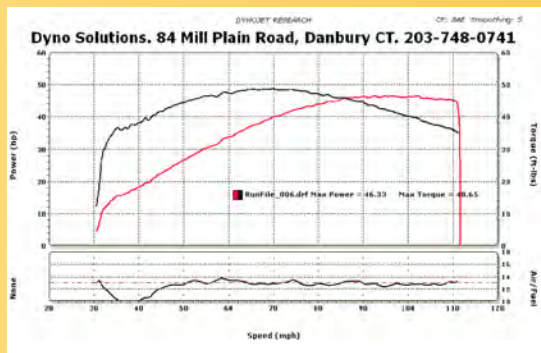
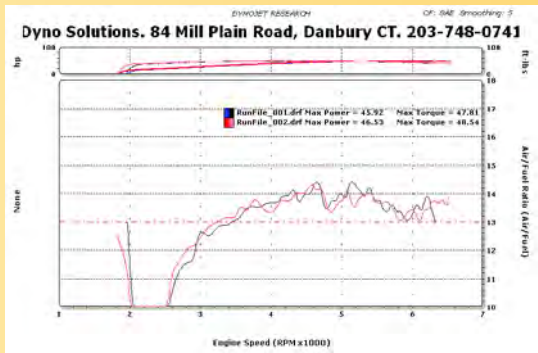
Overall, I'm happy with the changes. The pipes' rumble is louder and deeper than the Roadhouse exhaust. The Odyssey air kit looks hot with the black fluted insert, and I love the look of the chunky 2-into-2 Kickers. I wish the pipes didn't slant downward, but I think that's due to the 1"-shorter-than-stock rear suspension that I'd previously installed. Even so, these pipes give my lowered ACE a bit more cornering clearance. I promise I'll try not to scrape them too soon!

SOURCES

Kickers \$589.95
DG/HARD-KROME
 1230 La Loma Cir.
 Dept. RB
 Anaheim, CA 92806
 800/854-9134
 hardkrome.com

Odyssey Air Kit \$154
 Adapter Kit \$80
 Black Fluted Insert with
 Hardware \$28.95
 Dynojet Stage 3 Jet Kit \$81
THUNDER MFG.
 21408 N. 11th Ave.
 Dept. RB
 Phoenix, AZ 85027
 623/869-7154
 thundermfg.com

DYNO SOLUTIONS
 84 Mill Plain Rd., Dept. RB
 Danbury, CT 06811
 203/748-0741
 dyno-solutions.com



After the first dyno run showed that the bike was running a bit lean, Steve used the 130 jet in front with the mixture screw two turns out, and the 134 jet in the rear with the mixture screw two and a half turns out. He set the E-clip in the fourth groove on the needle. The second run showed us that we were on the right track.

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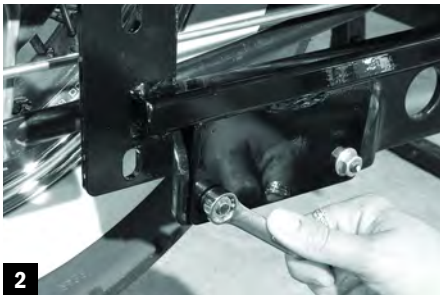


Most aftermarket exhausts don't come with a new set of gaskets, so remember to order them ahead of time.



1

The Hard-Krome Kickers come with most of the necessary hardware, but you'll need a new set of exhaust gaskets, your stock bracket, and some of the stock hardware.



2

After removing the front footpeg and the Roadhouse pipes and bracket, I replaced the stock exhaust mounting bracket. Then I used the supplied nuts and my own washers to attach the Hard-Krome bracket to the stock one.



3

I installed new exhaust gaskets and then screwed on the front header with the stock cap nuts, leaving them fingertight for now.



4

At this point, I discovered that the pipe's mounting tab wasn't lining up properly with the mounting bracket. I marked the overlap with a grease pencil and removed the bracket.



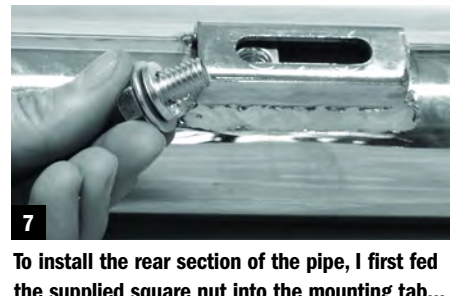
5

I used a rotary tool with a cutoff wheel bit to take .25" off the bracket. Then I smoothed down the sharp edges with a file and sprayed the bracket with black Rust-Oleum paint.



6

Reinstalling the bracket, I checked that the notch was going to work.



7

To install the rear section of the pipe, I first fed the supplied square nut into the mounting tab...



8

...and then screwed (fingertight) the bolt, washer, and lock washer through the back of the bracket and into the square nut.



9
I loosely mounted the other pipe the same way: header first, then the rear section. Luckily, there was no clearance problem. I tightened down all the nuts, alternating every few turns of the wrench, so that the header gaskets would crush evenly and create a perfect seal.



10
To install the new air kit, I removed the teardrop kit from the air box. Then I attached the adapter to the new backing plate, fit the adapter onto the stock rubber boot, and tightened the hose clamp.



11
Using the new hardware, plus an extra nut and washer, I attached the bottom of the adapter to the stock mounting point.



12
I bolted the new backing plate to the adapter...



13
...and then slipped on the air filter and bolted on the cover.



14
Four small Allen screws secured the fluted black insert to the cover. And now my ACE has a fresh new look. **RB**