

Custom-Built On A Budget



Stock Suzuki C50

»BY BOB FEATHER

One thing I know about bikers: We like to customize our bikes. From appearance to performance modifications, we love to take our stock bikes and tailor them to our liking.

But what are the best upgrades a guy can make without breaking the bank? Of course, there is never a simple answer to that question, so we at *RoadBike* put our heads together and came up with a plan.

First, we needed a bike. Statistics show that the Suzuki C50 is the best-selling metric cruiser in its class, so we figured it would make an excellent choice for this project. (Don't ya wish everything were that easy?) Jim, the service manager over at Adams Suzuki of Oakville, Connecticut, put us in

contact with Phil Ercoli, who had recently purchased a brand-new C50. Phil readily offered up his ride as a donor bike for our little project.

Next thing was a real-world budget. Boy, is it easy to spend a lot of someone else's money on accessories! We wanted to improve the look of the bike and pull out more performance from the stock power plant. Imagine our surprise when we learned that the \$1,500 project budget was almost a quarter of the bike's \$6,799 MSRP!

The C50 is a good deal as new bikes go, so in keeping within the budget, we were challenged to come up with an affordable customizing package. With \$1,500 burning a hole in our collective pocket, we hit the catalogs! We considered anything and everything for this model, from chrome covers to new seats, handlebar risers to lever sets, and forward controls to floorboards. It's all great stuff, but it could quickly bankrupt our budget without making enough of a change in the bike's appearance.

So, finally, after many late nights of cold pizza and warm beer at the *RoadBike* think tank, we eventually agreed upon a package that would give the C50 a modest makeover and bump up the ponies, too.



1 Phil Ercoli's wife is grateful for the new Suzuki Chrome Passenger Backrest Kit that gives her the extra comfort and support she needs for those long rides through the New England countryside. Phil uses the backrest to attach bungee cords when strapping things down to the seat. It bolted right onto the bike without a hassle.



2 The Kuryakyn Driving Light Bar with signals cleans up the front end of the bike by replacing the stock turn signal stalks. The new signal lights are discreetly tucked into the lightbar mounting bracket for a thinner look. The projector beam lights pierce the darkness when winding down those country roads at night.



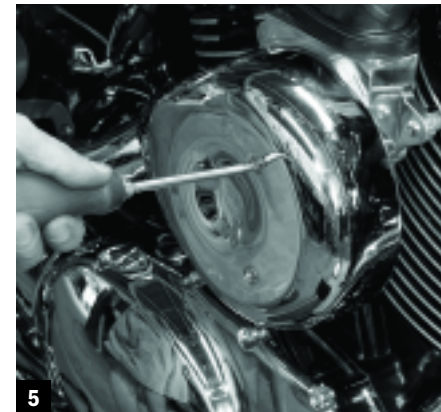
3 Ditching the big stock exhaust cans in favor of a new aftermarket system gave Phil's bike a sleek custom look. The Hard-Krome 2.5" Strippers exhaust gave the C50 a throaty growl. The supplied mounting bracket needed a little modification to properly line up with the exhaust system.

All *RoadBike* readers know that we couldn't let Phil head on down the road sporting a new free-breathing exhaust without also upgrading his intake system to reap the full benefits. It would just be plain irresponsible. All style points from the new accessories would evaporate every time he closed the throttle and Jiffy popped his way through deceleration. Imagine the shame!



4 The C50's fuel injection module was upgraded with a Cobra FI2000R Fuel Management System for the right blend of fuel and air to best take advantage of the new exhaust.

Simply bolting on a performance exhaust system without rejetting or remapping the fuel intake most often results in a bike that runs poorly, makes less power than it did in stock trim, and pops loudly on deceleration.



5 Ah, the final touch — a new air cleaner cover! It is perhaps the most recognized and enduring air cleaner cover in the business — the S&S-style teardrop unit.

Phil claims that there's a noticeable improvement in acceleration, and the bike still offers excellent fuel economy. "The new pipes are pretty loud," he says. "So, I have to back off the throttle and just chug my way through crowded areas, and, of course, around the men in blue. It sure does sound great when I open 'er up though!"

So, there you are: a sharp-looking bike-on-a-budget that not only looks great but enjoys a boost in performance, too! What's not to like? **RB**

Sources

COBRA
cobrausa.com
714/692-8180

HARD-KROME
hardkrome.com
800/854-9134

KÜRYAKYN
kuryakyn.com
866/277-9598

SUZUKI GENUINE ACCESSORIES
Available at your local Suzuki dealer
suzukicycles.com

THUNDER MFG.
thundermfg.com
623/869-7154

Grand Total:
\$1,503.80
Plus Labor



Thunder Mfg. S&S-style air cleaner cover and adaptor **\$274.00**

Suzuki Chrome Passenger Backrest Kit **\$234.95**

Kuryakyn Driving Light Bar with signals & wiring harness **\$269.95**

Hard-Krome 2.5" Strippers exhaust **\$499.95**

Cobra FI2000R Fuel Management System **\$224.95**