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By XsSpeed

If you've never heard of the Sinners then you probably haven't been reading *The Horse Backstreet Choppers Magazine* for very long. One of our staff members, Nelson Kanno, and sometimes contributor, ChopperDave are both Sinners. Several Sinner's-owned bikes have appeared in the pages of this mag and often rule that issue.

Just who or what are the Sinners you ask? According to Rico Fodrey, one of the original founding members, "The Sinners are an eternal brotherhood of love and friendship. Eight years ago we became friends with some old timers that had been in a car/bike club in the '50s named 'the Sinners'. They told us we were just like them and we should carry on with it so we did. We say 'Sinners don't join-they're born.' It's definitely not an MC (1% club)."

So when Hammer asked me if I wanted to fly to LA for the June 9th sneak preview of *Choppertown*—a documentary about the Sinners, I said "hell yeah!" My wife, Mari-Ann, and I flew out there a day before and the makers of the movie, Zack Goffman and Scott Di Lalla, met us for a few beers and gave us the history of making the movie.

Scott and Zack wanted to make a film of guys building a "working man's" bike not a six-figure superstar's museum piece. They were flipping through an issue of *The Horse* mag in July 2004 when they saw Katty Noteboom's cool Sportster. He was wearing a Salinas Boys t-shirt so they did some research and found Katty through Cole Foster. When Rico found out Zack and Scott were asking about Katty and the Sinners, he called them and said "Anything involving the Sinners goes through me."

After Zack and Scott told Rico and the other Sinners that the movie's goal would be to capture the brotherhood and spirit of a group of working-class bike builders, Rico and Katty agreed to be filmed. Scott and Zack quit their full-time jobs, maxed out credit cards and pursued their dream to create the movie (ala Blair Witch Project-style).

The movie-making met with an immediate setback; after the first day of filming, their cameraman got a better gig and left. Zack and Scott had to borrow a camera from ex-stuntman and friend, Michael Baron. After learning how to use the camera, Scott could be seen filming out of the sunroof of Zack's '84 Mercedes going down the highway while Zack held onto him by his belt and drove at the same time.

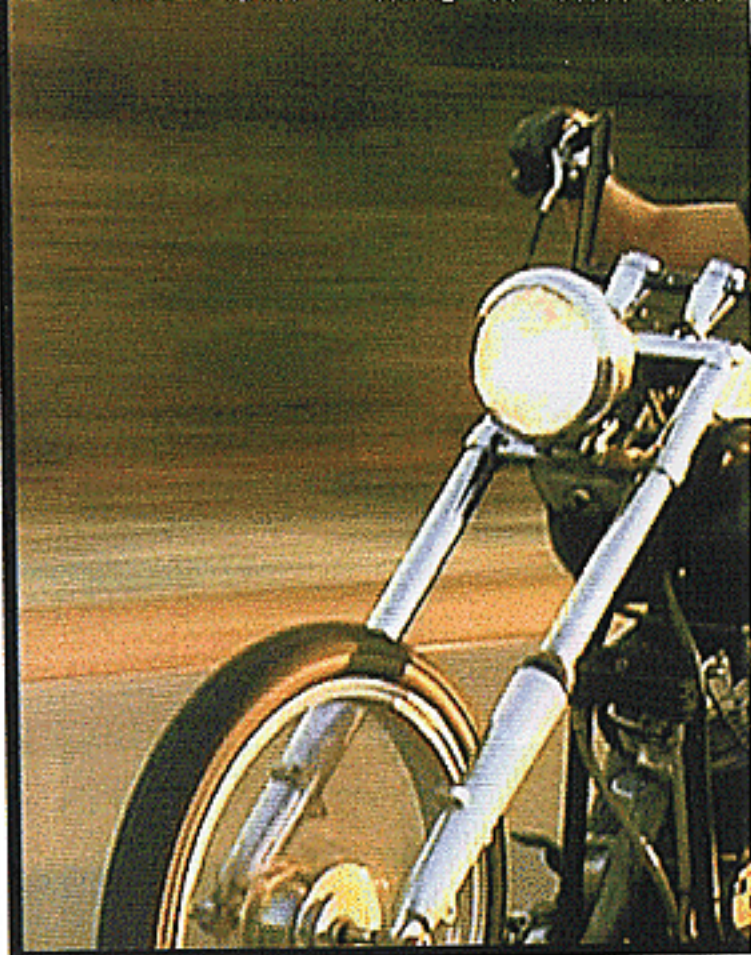
"The film is kind of like *The Outsiders* meets *Easyriders*", says Zack. I thought, "this sounds interesting..." When we got to the sneak preview at the Sony Pictures Studios in Culver City, there was a bunch of Sinners already there, including Rico and Katty. Hugh King from the Discovery Channel was there as were editors from other motorcycle mags.

The movie starts with Katty showing up at Rico's place with an old Shovel frame. After looking it over they decide it is a good starting platform. Katty scored a motor that was on display at a dealership and starts the build. It then turns into a bike build without the stressors or glamour-searching moments seen on the *Biker Build-Offs*. It's more about buddies having some beers, pitching in to help and brainstorming ideas. It makes you want to get in there and hang out or help.

As the build progresses, Rico and Katty travel to see ex-pro skateboarder and fellow Sinner, Jason Jesse, to score a tank. Jesse

CHOPPERTOWN:

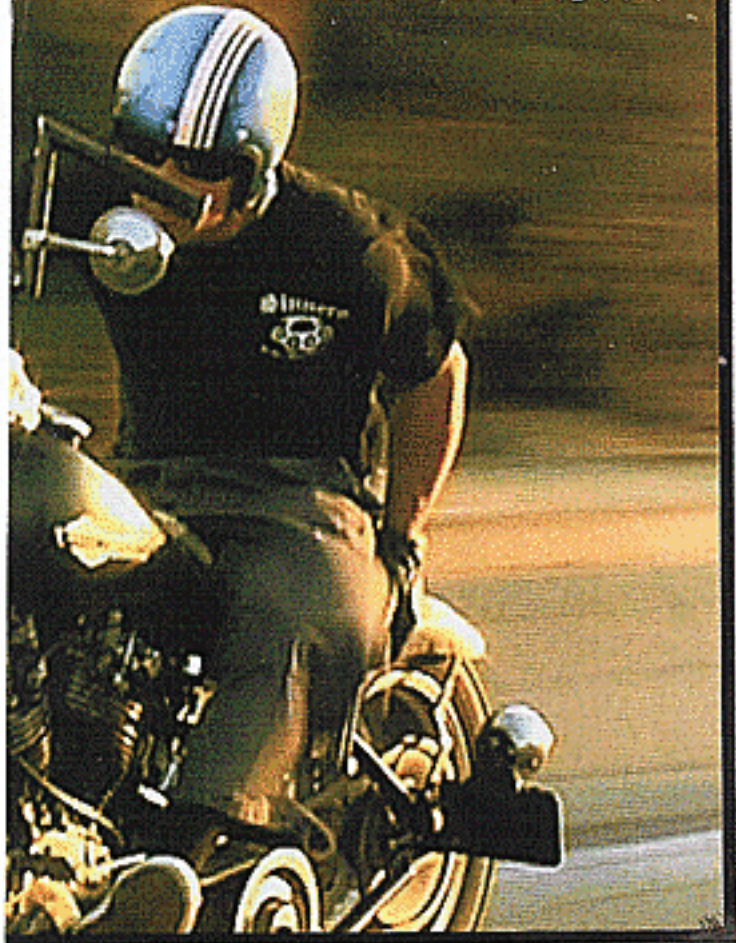
"The film is kind of like The



Katty and Rico

The Sinners

OUTSIDERS MEETS EASYRIDERS™



"The Eternal brotherhood of love and friendship". L to R: Rob, Job, Horseleg, Rico, ChopperDave, Jimmy, Danny, Gary, Roger, Nelson, James, Jose, Erick, Dustin, Jeff, Cole, Jason, Noah, Kutty and Brandon.

Jesse (who has been on Monster Garage) shows everyone a naked pic of ex-pro skater legend Jay Adams' girlfriend. It is real cool to see his Automodown skate area/shop/guns and other cool shit. The Mustang tank that Jesse gives Kutty has a doll's head stuck on the cap and doll arms glued to the sides of the tank—a bizarre piece of wall art at the Automodown.

The rest of the build continues with Cole Foster helping out by working his magic on the tanks. Kutty made some cool pipes and had his friend Jimmy White TIG them up.

The seat Kutty chose for the bike was a Bates solo with the original skin on it. It was cracked and faded, to which Kutty commented that it had history and he didn't want to just cover it up. Rico expounded on the concept, saying parts that come from swap meets have a life of their own and other people had fun with them. It's definitely not that shiny, new, bolt-on crap.

I couldn't agree more. Big dollar bikes with CNC-milled wheels and stuff suck to me. **I would rather ride a home-made Honda chop than a \$30k billet barge any day and I bet the Sinners feel the same way.**

When the bike is finally finished and they kick it over, you can feel the sense of accomplishment and joy of the build. Kutty does an indoor burnout on it and the back wheel starts skipping and going sideways. One of the other sinners, Danny Takahashi, put his foot up against the rear bottom frame rail keeping it from spinning out to the left.

The wrenching atmosphere at Rico's is the breeding ground of a soulful build. Everyone is having a good time and there are no scripted fights or trash-talking to grab ratings, yet the movie has suspense. In one scene, a bunch of the sinners travel to Hemet, California, to watch Kutty's band, The Whitewalls, play at a local club. While they are enjoying the show, a fight breaks out and some of the Sinners get dragged into it while the band plays.

In one scene, Sinner Gary Frye brings his bike into Rico's shop to work on it. After he was done, Rico tested it by doing a burnout near the shelves in the back of his shop. What happens next had me rolling!

It was cool seeing the trademark Sinner-style of the '70s metallflake helmets and vans screaming down the Southern California highways. Watching Kutty's finished bike next to other Sinners' chops was inspiring. Zack and Scott did a great job of capturing the love and brotherhood of the Sinners along with what goes into a real bike build. Although the Sinners all liked the movie and often cheered during the showing of it, some thought it ran a little long and I tend to agree. In one scene, Rico gets a haircut and it seems to never end.

The soundtrack is a good mix of rockabilly/punk that fits the movie. Seeing the actual band play a couple times during the flick and hearing from some of the Sinners' "significant others" adds some variety to the basic build premise. One song, 'Stay' by The Whitewalls, really kicks ass. I got a copy of their CD on the way out and I listen to it now in my garage/shop boom box.

All in all, I really liked the movie and had a good time meeting Rico, Kutty, and the other Sinners. Kutty's bike was there on display and it was pretty "fucked" (Sinner slang for cool). Zack and Scott were great hosts, having food and drink after the show then inviting everyone to a local Irish bar to hang out. www.choppertown.com

Hey Hammer, got any more tough assignments for me? 