

WORLD CHAMPION 2011

世界チャンピオン



Not only did **Ken Tabata** travel a long way to attend the World Championship of Custom Bike Building, he took a long time to get there too. Japanese custom builder Ken began work on his Championship entry, **Tavax 2011V**, 3½ years ago. His efforts have been well rewarded, however, as he is now the **World Champion of Custom Bike Building 2011**

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CHAMPION
2011



A LONG ROAD TO TRAVEL

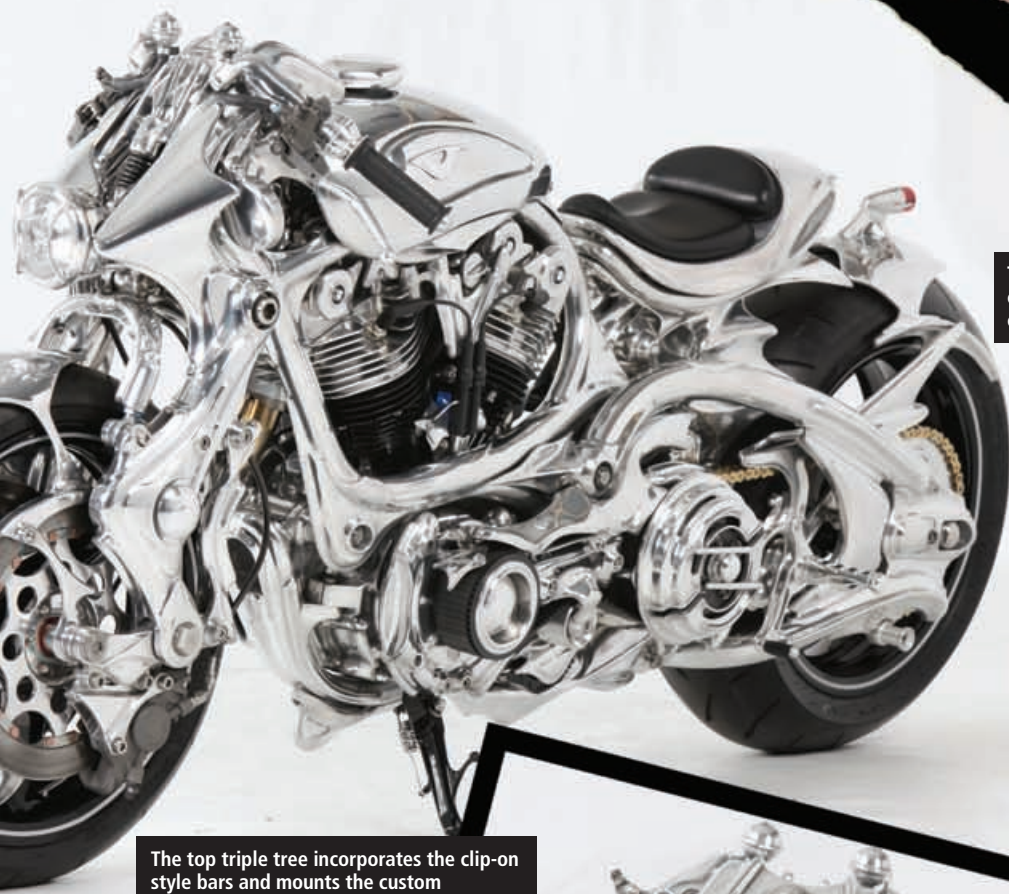
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Ken Tabata with his wife Akiko



One of the few pieces on Tavax 2011V not made by Ken Tabata is the primary drive, which was sourced from Primo Rivera. However, Ken did fabricate his own belt tensioner, pulley and belt covers



The S&S SH93 motor used in Tavax 2011V features custom rocker boxes along with a custom cam box cover and air cleaner for the S&S carb



The top triple tree incorporates the clip-on style bars and mounts the custom machined aluminum fluid reservoirs for the brake and clutch levers



The minimalist taillight sits atop a 'hugger' style rear fender made from aluminum, which flows seamlessly from the swingarm

WORKING under the name Tavax Engineering in Yao City, Osaka, Japan, Ken Tabata set out to build a bike that represented, in metal, a cheetah chasing its prey across the African Savannah, to look as if it had muscles rippling under its metal skin as it travels down the road. The bike he designed to achieve this aim is Tavax 2011V, crafted by hand from aluminum.

Ken's starting point for the build was an S&S SH93 Shovelhead style motor. This was stripped down and rebuilt with custom rocker boxes, cam box cover and one-off air cleaner for the S&S carb.

With the engine work complete, Ken then set about building the frame that wraps itself around the motor. From the 25-degree raked headstock the frame travels back along the top of the front of the engine and then at the base of the front cylinder it swings back to run along the length of the motor as well as carrying on down to pick up the front engine mounts. The additional tubes that run along the top edge of the engine case finish behind the rear cylinder and provide a pivot point for the swingarm.

The swingarm itself is suspended by a single shock, which is activated by a linkage system similar to that found on many modern sportbikes. At the front of the bike linkages are also used in the suspension, where the fork begins at the axle as a leading link with a pair of pivoting arms in each of the fork legs working on a horseshoe shaped piece that pushes a single shock in a design similar to that of a Springer fork. The top of the front end is finished with a top triple tree that incorporates the handlebars that carry AP Racing controls with custom reservoirs.

The transmission that the swingarm curves up and over is a stock five-speed, albeit polished, and is connected to the motor by a Primo Rivera belt drive that features a sprung pulley to provide the tension to keep the belt in place.

Behind the gearbox and the coil shock for the rear suspension, Ken has utilized the space in front of the rear wheel to house the bike's oil tank, which itself is almost hidden by the one-off rearsset controls he has fabricated.

To match the rearsset controls and race bike-inspired suspension, Ken has forgone a large diameter front wheel and wide rear tire in favor of a performance-oriented wheel package. Both the 3.75 x 17in front and 6.25 x 17in rear wheels are modified Marchesinis fitted with Dunlop tires. The race theme continues through to the brakes, with twin two-piston AP Racing Lockheed calipers at the front and a matching two-piston caliper at the rear.

The combination of race bike engineering with carefully sculpted aluminum frame and bodywork was enough to convince Ken Tabat's fellow competitors that his bike, Tavax 2011V, was the best in show at the World Championship of Custom Bike Building. Once again, a Japanese builder takes top honors.

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