

HawkWorks

The Honda Hawk GT Owners' Network

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Hawk Ride California Style!

Buzzing through Sunday dawn traffic in San Francisco was a real trip. Especially on a borrowed VFR that just a few hours earlier I had unceremoniously thrown onto my own leg. Jim Davis and his better half, Maureen, were leading myself and my bud Alan through the maze of San Francisco streets at a breakneck pace. You see, we were fashionably late for the big Hawk Ride at Alice's, and Captain Davis figured that if he rode fast enough, the vacuum created behind his commuter Hawk would suck the two slug Texans right to our destination. I guess he was right.

A couple of months ago I decided that it was time to blow a wad'o cash and buy a second race Hawk for our team (uh, that would be Panda Racing of course). My brother and I shared one last year, and I thought that we had better not push our luck, or we WOULD disembowel each other by next season. So, who else to buy it from than the only guy on the planet crazy enough to stock ten Hawks and enough parts to build ten more. A call was placed to the infamous Hawkmeister - Jim Davis.

"Ahhh, sure Robert, I've got a Hawk for you. But you see, I'm moving from Chicago to San Francisco -- why don't you just come out there to pick it up?" I thought to myself, what's another 4200 miles among friends. Speaking of friends, I actually managed to convince my riding buddy Alan to take six days of vacation time, drive out to San Francisco from Austin, TX in 2 days, ride for 2 days, then drive home dragging my new racer behind us. I was amazed (so was his wife).

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The Hawk 'List Ride: Count'em Twelve Hawks!
Photo: Robert Pandya, Panda Racing.

Of course, Jim likes to trade. "Ahhh Robert, do you think you could pick up a few parts from this guy in Ft. Worth on your way out? I'll give you a good deal on your Hawk." Sure, What's a broken back?

Our overloaded trucklet left for the west coast at midnight on Wednesday October 23rd. At some point in West Texas we stopped at a Chevron for some consumable and more combustible. This was one weird place. The androgynous person cleaning the glass looked right through us, while the proprietor -- in his bitchin' down vest -- shuffled about the inside of the shambled store. Come to think of it I don't remember seeing a reflection. I made Alan pay for the gas. (What are friends for? ed.) I swear there was a gimp under the counter. Four AM and rolling.

We arrived (after getting thoroughly lost in Downtown San Francisco) (Just who decided to build a city on the side of a cliff anyway?) on Jim's door step at about 6 AM on Friday, and slept most of the day. Take into account the two hour time difference and we did pretty well.

Friday night we went downtown from Jim's suburban sprawl to pick up

(what else) a Hawk. This was to be Alan's ride. I had the Viffer.

Saturday we off-loaded the trucklet and trailer, then fixed up Jim's commuter Hawk to some trick specs: VFR rear wheel, F2 front end. I even managed to guilt Jim into cleaning some of the chain spooge from his cush drive. Not an easy feat, pal. There was more funk there than under a Taco Bell dumpster. The Viffer was cleaned up, recharged, and fitted with a certain Texas CB-I license plate, and I was ready to ride.

That afternoon I took the sport-barge for a test ride, and insured a certain disaster by deciding to U-turn on the side of a hill, on a fat bike I had never ridden, while still mentally stumbling through aftermath of the road trip. It fell on the left side, marring up the only unscratched panel on the whole bike. Luckily I managed to throw most of my soft tissue under the bike and keep it from sliding down the side of the mountain Jim lives on. Through a Herculean effort -- OK OK it was an adrenaline rush -- I managed to pick up the 550 pound beast off of my leg with the free leg, from the down side of the hill. Of course, I had to yank my foot out of the hole I punched in the fairing. I was pissed -- Still am. It all happened in slow motion. (Continued on page 4.)

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Super Hawk!

Will it be the end of our beloved GT?

By Karl Johnson

I had a Hawk once. It was bought originally for my wife, who wanted to replace her 250 interceptor, and who was, I think, most attracted to the lovely blue paint. I had my own bikes and as a rule I wasn't allowed to ride her's. I took it over a few years later when she realized that riding was really not her thing. I was a little disappointed, but she was right; motorcycles are more dangerous for the occasional rider.

I looked forward to all the little improvements I could make to this underrated machine. The usual handling upgrades, Fox shock and Progressive fork springs, were closely followed by Metzeler tires and steel-braided brake lines. I swapped the clunky driver footpegs for the slimmer passenger pegs. The Telefix clip-ons were adjusted too low for comfort, but they looked great! Dale Walker's left exit exhaust exposed the wheel and swingarm for all the world to see. It was a massive pain to install, but it looked and sounded great, gave a noticeable increase in power, improved throttle response, and blew enough packing out the muffler to make it look like I was riding a Chicken-Hawk.

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Legal Stuff: Much of the information published in HawkWorks is provided by your fellow members, and Hawk enthusiasts. Therefore I cannot guarantee the accuracy of each suggestion. When preforming any modification, please do so within the boundaries of your mechanical ability, and under the supervision of a qualified mechanic. I would like to thank everyone for their contributions to the newsletter. (Begging really does work!) Please, keep them coming.

While saving for a set of RC31 body-work, I fell in love with a new bike. I bought the first MuZ Skorpion Sport I could find and flew to Tucson to ride it back to the SF bay area. The Skorpion is a great bike. It feels very much like the Hawk, only different in that way that only big singles can be. I was so happy those days; two great bikes to run all over the Santa Cruz mountains with, and a work schedule that allowed me to do it during the week when the tourists and police were elsewhere.

Then it happened: a difficult to diagnose illness left me unable to work. I was left with no choice but to sell a bike. I still owed too much on the MZ, and no one wanted my 150K mile BMW. I sold the Hawk to a young man in SF who will never ride it like I used to. Maybe I'm just bitter.

Ever since the sale I have been scheming to start the process over again. After about a year things were back to normal for me, but the whole sportbike world had changed. I wanted a Hawk because I like twins and the only other sporting twins were those Italian marquees that come with a frequent jones for hard to get expensive parts. Now, late in 1996, the Cologne show gives us an embarrassment of riches in the twin cylinder sportbike class. Suzuki's fuel injected TL1000s and Yamaha's TRX are going to be available soon, and don't forget the SuperHawk. How they can call it a Hawk without a single-sided swingarm is beyond me, but Super it will be. With a displacement of 996cc, and only 423 lb. (12 more than the Hawk GT), this bike will out perform almost any GT.

Now I, and many of you I expect, face a decision. I could easily spend as much as



Honda's VTR1000F SuperHawk: one of many 97' offerings.

the \$9k asking price of a SuperHawk to put together a competitive Hawk. Have you ever tried insuring a special bike for anything approaching what it cost you to build? It is this sort of decision that I am absolutely hopeless at making: the rational vs. emotional one. A good friend has told me that motorcycling is not rational, and that my rational approach to it makes things difficult. I consciously apply the wrong set of values while my unconscious instincts scream for attention. Of course, as he bought a 916 shortly before a major downward career change, his judgment is at least somewhat suspect. But I wonder if he isn't at least a little right?

I expect to agonize over this question for most of 1997. I'll wait for the magazine comparisons of the new models. I'll go to all the dealerships. I'll stare at photos, compare weights and power outputs, all the while explaining the benefits of each to my ever so understanding wife. I'll weigh the pride of building a unique bike against the confidence inspired by factory equipment, and a factory warranty. I dream of having a partly disassembled Hawk in my living room ready for a new VFR wheel or bodywork painted in replica to some racing team...

When all the research is done I will be able to rationalize almost any decision. I don't know whether I can ignore the bottom line and go for the Hawk that my heart wants, but I'm going to chase my philosophical friend and his 916 until the question gets a fair hearing.

Karl is in the process of putting together an MuZ owners club. We plan to publish more info when he hears from the importer.

New Bearings for CLASS

Upon getting the okay from my significant other, as a combined gift for B-Day and Anniversary, I diligently began prepping my bike for the Reg Pridmore, CLASS Riding School held on the Streets of Willow, CA. Having bought my 88' Hawk used, over three years ago and doing nothing except oil changes for maintenance during the last 10K miles, it needed some going over.

I had previously covered some maintenance issues with upgrades that I did to my bike. For the most part my bike needed a valve adjustment, coolant replacement, and new tires. At least that's what I thought. After completing the adjustment and removing both wheels I notice that my steering head bearings seemed a little rough. Grabbing the bars for a better feel, I discover a definite detent at the center position. I couldn't comfortably go to Reg's CLASS, thinking that at anytime, while out on the track, my front end would transform into a bearing grinder. Crunch, Yeah, I'll take a pound of those Hawk bearing, extra lean please.

Having already skipped the last week and a half of work due to some sort of flu (the doctors never tell you what it really is), I began tearing the front end down Tuesday night. In my over anxiousness to expose the bearing crunch monster, I overlooked my shop manual and just removed my bikini fairing, top steering stem bolt, clip-ons, instrument cluster, and fork legs, in that order. What a mistake.

After removing my fork legs, I thought this was going pretty well. I'll just yank this top triple clamp off, OUPS! Upon lifting the top clamp the headlight bracketry, and a full on mess of wiring, clip-ons, cables and other associated junk all came tumbling forward in a tangled bundle resembling something you'd find in a yard sale box marked 50 cents. Since the headlight bracket relies on a prescribed separation between the top and bottom triple clamps, no bolts, just rubberized pins, when the separation is expanded, by yanking the top triple clamp, everything falls out.

After untangling that mess and removing other misc. from the bottom triple clamp and with the top triple clamp removed, the only thing holding the steering stem in the frame was a special lock nut and adjustment nut. With a small screw driver and

hammer I unbent the top tabs of the locking washer between the two nuts and then used the same tools to unloosen and remove both nuts, one at a time. While removing the adjustment nut, the stem began to fall out and reveal the upper and lower bearings. At last, I reveal the bearing monster.

In actuality the bearings weren't that bad. The monster turned out to be a puppy, with my races showing a brownish tinge and very slight wear markings. I call it a night, almost assuring myself that a set of tapered roller bearings would be easy to find the next day.

Wednesday morning, I call 4 different Honda dealers, and they all come back with the eternal response, "Not in stock, Special Order". As I begin to panic, it hits me, Hawkworks, Gary Orr, he'll know where I can get those bearings. "Gary, where can I score some tapered bearings today?", his response is better than I could image, "I've got a set here, you could buy them off me for what they cost me if you'd like". But like the fairy godmother granting my wish, he mentions, "How about writing me a story before the next issue of Hawkworks". Anything for those bearings, that's what I would have given. After making the 120 mile round trip for these, got to have, (#@%\$&*!) bearings, and getting home after 8pm, I proceed with removing the old races.

The Honda manual calls for special tool number this and special tool number that, I used the flat, straight end of a tire iron to bang out the bottom and top races in that order. The Honda engineers were nice enough to leave cut outs on opposite ends for my tire iron to get a good surface to hit. Next was the bottom inner race, the top one just slides off the stem. The engineers weren't as nice. A thin, one third portion of the race was the only surface exposed for hitting, and that surface was covered by a dust seal. I placed the bottom clamp/stem assembly upside down in my Workmate Vise Bench, taking care not to damage the threads on the stem and started banging away. I banged on the sacrificial dust seal with a small flat end punch and medium hammer, moving my punch over the small area

after each hit. After what seemed like a few good hits I saw some progress and knew that nothing could stop me now.

I recently read in another motorcycle publication the technique of putting the new outer races in the freezer before installing them. With about 15 minutes freezer time, the new races were ready for installation. Here again special tool number such and such, I use the old races to bang on and drive the new races in. I was careful not to bang one side in further than the opposite side by using small taps at first, then progressed to medium taps to drive them home. This same technique was used with the lower inner race with the exception of freezing the stem and having to tap the old race back off.

With the races on, the hardest part is behind me. What's left is packing the bearings with heavy duty wheel bearing grease, using the palm method, and reassemble in reverse order. After installing the forks and getting the major pieces loosely reassemble, I finger tighten the steering stem adjustment nut and give the whole fork assembly two or three good whacks against the steering stops to seat the bearings. Then I retighten the adjustment nut just enough to begin feeling resistance in stem movement compared to finger tight (This method used due to not having the appropriate special tool torque wrench).

With the adjustment nut adjusted to my feel, I mounted the top trip clamp with the associated headlight assembly bracket. As I reassembled these items I noted that this was a good time to reroute cables wires and hoses that were previously causing some bind when turning from lock to lock. This was caused by replacing stock clip-ons with lower ones. With the rerouting complete the rest of the bike went together quite easily if not tediously and time consuming. Patience is a good thing here.

I finish putting my bike together with an hour to spare before my ride picks me up to go to CLASS, and I haven't even packed my overnight stuff. All goes well at CLASS, the bike works flawlessly, almost too good. How I did in CLASS will have to be left for another story.

Mike Aguilar

One question on every ones mind is were can I get these bearings. Dale Walker's Holeshot Performance sells them as a kit for the Hawk. They cost around \$60

The next morning we were off like a herd of turtles to meet John Sweeney (editor of Sport-Twin News) and his ragged EX500 on the Golden Gate Bridge, pick up ride leader Melissa (kook66), and head off to the fabled twisties around Alice's Restaurant. Melissa was kind enough to show off the city as it was bathed in morning light. A beautiful place, unless you are hopelessly lost with a truck load of bike parts.

On the way to Alice's we came across a sorry sight. A very customized -- and beautiful -- Hawk was laying just outside the first sweeping corner off the highway. It belongs to Rasayd Chung, and he was not a happy man. The structural foam tail section of his Hawk was a bit smooched, but the true evidence of the violence of the impact was the bent VFR rim that no longer allowed the wheel to turn. Bummer. I got pics. Of the Cop too. Nice guy, but he didn't look a bit like Ponch or Jon.

With visions of Rasayd's crunched Hawk in our heads, we made our way up the mountain to Alice's. All of the sudden there it was; tiny and glowing in the morning light. My heart raced and I was just plain giddy. I felt like I had seen it all before, but never like this.

I calmed down somewhat after we had some breakfast and sucked down some coffee, but I was still giddy. Met several Hawk lister, and other lister wannabes. It was Ducati day (by Presidential order I'm sure) and there were tons of the red and yellow beasts crawling about. A Bimota SB6 stole my heart. As did a Kenny Roberts replica RD400. We shared stories, and a few lies, then were off for the kook66 tour o' twisties.

Melissa rips. She rocks. Gentleman, let me warn you right now, that you had better not try to out ride her on tight roads, lest you become intimately acquainted with the abrasive end of a Redwood. I am serious.

Tuck those imaginary Mick Doohan Cajones between your funky thighs because macho doesn't count for squat here: Got it!



Rasayd Chung, his freshly crunched Hawk, and the C.H.P. Hey I'm just doing my job! Photo: Robert Pandya, Panda Racing.

I had no idea where we were. At some point we hit Hwy 1. The Pacific ocean crashed under us, the cool wet air chilled us, the road twisted before us and Alan caught up to me with a grin so big I could see it right through his Shoei.

We stopped along the way for tinkle breaks (also caught on film -- hey, it's what I do), lunch stops, photo ops, and had a ball. We hit every kind of road from the tightest pothole-ridden leaf covered gravel-strewn one lane driveway to nowhere, to flowing wide and smooth twisties to OZ. The latter is where the VFR excelled.

After lunch Dean Welder led the way through a road he knew well. He tore along on his converted race Hawk. I plowed atmosphere behind him. Nirvana. I was starting to like this Viffer beast, as long as I didn't have to U-turn on the side of a mountain. We headed back to Alice's after taking a photograph of the twelve Hawks and their bastard fat brother.

We were constantly getting looks from other bikers. I had never seen so many Hawks in one place at one time either. And not one of them the same. Schweet!

At Alice's most of the group split up to head home. After a couple more cups o' joe, we were off too, but not before Melissa threw one more driveway at us. A four mile long driveway in the dark, with a tinted shield, on a honking huge Viffer beast that I was starting to hate again.

When we finally arrived back at Rancho De Hawko it was late, dark, cold, and 260 miles had passed

beneath the wheels of the beast. I felt great.

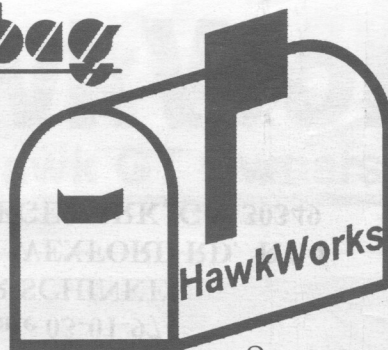
That night we decided which Hawk was to be mine. I took off the bits I didn't want and added bits I did. NOWHERE can you do this but in Novato California, in the semi-organized garage of our host Messrs. Davis. What to do with the screwed up VFR? Jim decided I should take it back to Texas with me and convert it into a naked bike. Hawk squared. I like it.

We set off at 6 AM on Monday Oct. 28th. We didn't get lost. We didn't stop but to fill up the Trucklet, empty ourselves and buy road food. We arrived at 4 in the afternoon on the following Tuesday. Taking into account the time change, stupid daylight savings time, and a good rain we hit in Travis county, we made good time. Averaged 58 mph for 1730 miles nonstop. I'd do it again, and so would Alan, but his wife would kill me.

By Robert Pandya

Robert is a professional photographer and an aspiring motojournalist. He will also be taking over the duties of network coordinator for HawkWorks. This article originally ran in Sport Twin News, an on-line newsletter edited by John Sweeney, dedicated to the twin-cylinder motorcycle. If you would like to check it out, it can be found at: "www.sport-twin.com".

Member Mailbag



After a couple of years receiving service from the local dealers, I became determined to find a better way. A fellow rider referred me to Tim Parker, "The Bike Doctor." The referral gave me some confidence that I would be dealing with a reputable business, and I knew I had found the wrench I was looking for before I even met him. His wife's Hawk was parked in the drive when I arrived.

I would feel confident recommending Tim for maintenance on any bike, but of course we're primarily interested in one bike. I am pleased to entrust my Hawk to someone who has a personal stake in knowing everything there is to know about this motorcycle. I'm not about to badmouth large shops, because they always did a good job and I liked the guys, but Tim provides services that are very important to me. Instead of talking to a service writer who has to describe everything I want done on a work order in 25 words or less for someone else to interpret, I talk to the man who is going to do the work. When the bike is ready to pick up, I again get to talk to the person who actually saw the inside of my engine, discovered and corrected any problems, and can tell me precisely what condition my bike is in. This is a LOT better than an invoice that says "fixed alternator."

HawkWorks member and occasional ride leader, Paul Hobin sent in this glowing note about local independent bike mechanic Tim Parker, a.k.a. "The Bike Doctor." Interested San Diegans can contact Tim at: (619) 390-7200.

HawkWorks has received quite a bit of feedback concerning Kiyo Watanabe's carbon fiber Hawk tank. As many of you will remember from the Sep. 95 issue, Kiyo produces a 5 gallon carbon fiber tank for the Hawk which is compatible with the stock airbox, petcock and filler cap. The tank retails for \$675. and is available by calling (818) 841-0930. To the best of my knowledge this is the only readily available tank option for the Hawk. Gotham racing began to produce large capacity tanks but that section of the company closed. There are several HawkWorks members who own Kiyo's tanks and for the most part the feedback has been favorable. As with any after market product there have been a few areas of concern.

One area which Kiyo has had problems is seepage. It is very difficult to take a woven fiber and seal it completely. Two of our members have reported problems with leakage. One was a spot on the rear mount area which the owner was able to repair, and the other leaked around the petcock where the spout exits from the tank. The second Kiyo was able to fix however it did take several weeks.

Another short coming is that the tanks do not have a water drain in the filler well. If the bike is ridden in the rain or washed, water can be trapped in the filler cap and flushed into the tank if the cap is opened before it has a chance to dry. This prompted HawkWorks member Marick Payton to epoxy a brass drain tube into his carbon fiber tank. This of course risks creating a leak and is a hassle many may not wish to endure.

In all, the feedback has been positive, with a greatly increased fuel range and unique appearance of the tank justifying the minor setbacks. If anyone has any alternative tank ideas, or additional comments on the Watanabe tank, please send them to HawkWorks.

Here is another rear stand option sent in by John Pearson. The "Pit Bull" single sided swingarm stand is available in two styles for \$95 or \$135 retail. The difference is that the more expensive model comes with bearings for the spindle to spin easier. While this is certainly handy for chain maintenance, it isn't necessary for tire changing, etc. At half the cost of the TBR stand one would naturally expect some concessions in quality. While matte gold finish is actually stronger than that of the TBR stand, the stand itself isn't quite as heavy duty as the TBR stand, but it is certainly up to the challenge of holding up a Hawk for a few hours.

Pit Bull can be reached at 1401 E. Olive Dr. Huntsville, AL 35801. Phone (205) 533-1977.

SWAP SHOP

Wanted: Clutch side engine cover, TBR exhaust pipe, and Stock headlight assembly. Also interested in used engine. Please call Dave at: (714) 859-5052.

For Sale: 1988 Hawk, Blue, 16k, recently serviced, "S" type fairing, Progressive fork springs, Russell front brake line, TBR clip-ons, Corbin seat, Dynojet stage one carb kit, Supertrapp exhaust, Pirelli MT08 & MT09 tires, trick turn signals, and more. All stock parts plus extra fairing and targa side panels avail. \$2700. Call Bob at: (717) 764-0659 6-10 pm. EST weekdays, antime weekends.

For sale: VFR750 handlebars. Half the height of Hawk bars, look great. Brand new with bar-ends and clamp bolts. Cost \$300, sell for \$125. Ccontact Alan at: (904) 292-1665, ADSinger@aol.com

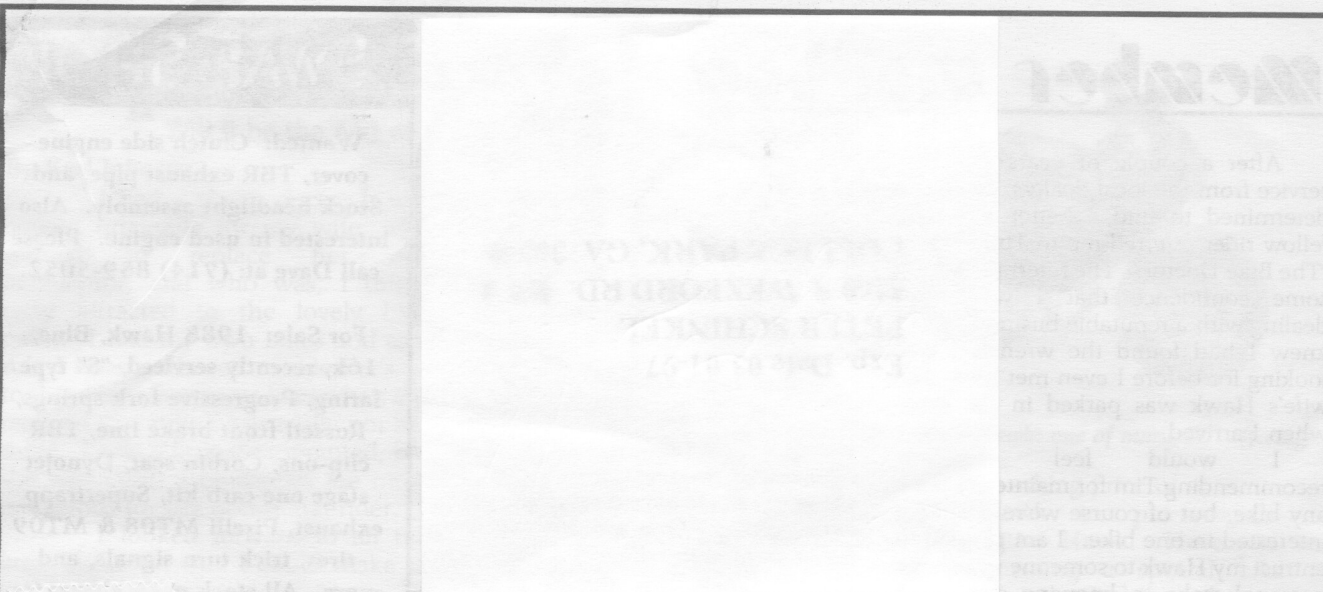
For Sale: 1989 Hawk, 8k, great shape, stock down to Bridgestone Excederas. Runs great, but needs battery. \$3500 firm! Also 1977 honda CB550, original, looke good, needs carb work to run. \$750 obo. Call Ken at: (901) 337-1656.

Wanted: Gray seat cowl in near perfect condition, call Paul at: (619) 670-9934.

Wanted: Hawk GT in excellent condition and reasonably priced. Call Tom at: (607) 539-7774.

For Sale: SPEC II full fairing kit for Hawk GT, Red, Tinted windscreen, w/ headlight and all mounting hardware, excellent condition, includes modified front turn signal stalks, photo avail. \$375. OBO. Call Cary at: (407) 273-1489.

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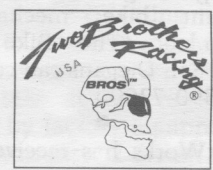


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