



HOLE

Ballistic Cycles Goes Boldly Where
No Big Wheel Has Gone Before

WORDS: MARK MASKER PHOTOS: DON KATES



SHOT





In racing, a holeshot refers to the racer who has the strongest start off the line. Bringing a bike with a hubless 30-inch front wheel to a bike show might be the same thing. It's no guarantee you'll win, but the competition better bring his A-game to stop you. The *Hot Bike Tour* is fading into the background in our rearview mirror, but Ballistic Cycles' hubless-front-wheel bagger is still at the forefront of our minds. Whether you love or loathe 30-inch front wheels, you have to appreciate the boss-level skill set that goes into creating one with no hub then riding it for a thousand miles for all the world to see.

In all honesty, I'm not that surprised by this bike though. When mammoth front hoops grew larger and larger, I hoped someone would punctuate the trend with a hubless bagger like Billy Lane with his hubless rear wheel at the height of the fat-tire chopper phenomenon. I'm also not shocked Ballistic Cycles was the shop to do it. It's been around for more than 15 years, is one of founding fathers of the Gigantor front wheel, and takes a lot of pride in conjuring up ambitious custom iron. Here's what Ballistic had to say about this gutsy project.

Baggers: Why a hubless front wheel, and why a 30-incher?

Ballistic: We were the first to put a 30-inch wheel on a motorcycle, so we figured it should be us to take the concept to a whole new level.

Baggers: What inspired you to make this baby?

Ballistic: Ballistic Cycles is used to starting trends. We created the first 30-inch bagger, and we also pioneered the first full-body kits. So we stayed the course and decided to knock this one out of the park. We built this bike for Sturgis, and we used it for the *Hot Bike Tour*. Our inspiration for this build was to completely raise the bar in the bagger industry and leave everyone scratching their heads on how they think they will top it.

Baggers: What did you have to do to the front end and frame to make them work with something this ambitious?

Ballistic: The front end, along with the rest of the bike, is uncharted territory as far as we are concerned. By this, I mean they are completely different from anything ever done before. Machined from solid pieces of billet, the front end has an integrated brake system built right in, along with a

custom air cylinder designed specifically for the load endured by the wheel and motorcycle. All articulation is done with precision-tapered bearings and shafts for a smooth, consistent operation.

Baggers: Is there a market for wheels like this or were you just showing off?

Ballistic: I think there could be a huge market for them if more customers and builders were into cutting-edge technology that pushes the boundaries of what is possible. Cutting necks and adding a few glass parts is one thing, but truly building a ground-breaking motorcycle takes a bit more time, effort, and a bigger budget.

Baggers: Sooner or later demand for huge front wheels is going to drop. How are you planning for that?

Ballistic: We are already onto the next chapter of what we think the next trend will be, and that is one of the main reasons for building a bike like this. It's almost as if this was our salute to the end of the big-wheel trend.

Baggers: Is a hubless 23- or 21-inch wheel in the cards?

Ballistic: We are not planning on doing any



smaller hubless wheels as of yet, but with all the bearing sizes available, we know for a fact that we can build any of the common wheel sizes on the market right now.

Baggers: How did you go about engineering the hubless wheel?

Ballistic: We teamed up with a couple of engineers that have the knowledge, ability, and connections to get the job done correctly. The most challenging part of this build was not only pushing our fabricator to his limits in terms of time and workload but also making sure we met our end goal of this bike being a completely rideable bike. And we achieved that.

Baggers: Years ago Billy Lane made a chopper with a hubless rear wheel. Would you ever build a bike that's hubless at both ends?

Ballistic: We have no plans for a dual hubless build since we are going in a totally different direction.

Baggers: Where do you go with this idea? Will there be some sort of builder's kit?

Ballistic: It was just a concept specifically for this project. No plans for a kit in the

future, but things can always change due to popular demand.

Baggers: What has been some of the feedback you've received from your peers?

Ballistic: During the build of our hubless bike it seemed as if everyone who saw what we were doing and didn't know who we were or what we had done in the past had something negative to say about it. However, our die-hard fans were completely supportive from the beginning. It's pretty humorous that since the bike has been done, smoked the competition in Sturgis, and rode 1,000-plus miles on the *Hot Bike Tour* we haven't heard any negative feedback since.

Baggers: How did the bike do riding 1,000 miles during the Baggers Invitational Bike Build-Off on the GEICO Hot Bike Tour?

Ballistic: The bike ran great and rode amazing on the Tour. We did have one complication during the ride when we picked up a piece of debris on the road that punctured our front tire. However, since we were close to the end of the tour, we ran back to our shop, swapped the tire, and met back up the next morning. ■

FACTOIDS



In motorcycling and off-road racing, the holeshot describes the rider who's first through the first turn. Some races even have a holeshot prize separate from the rest of the race.



Dragracing was imported to Europe by American troops stationed in the UK and Germany during the Cold War.



A "holeshot win" is where a dragracer runs a slower elapsed time but wins because of a faster reaction time off the line.



SPECIFICATIONS

GENERAL

BIKE OWNER	Ballistic Cycles
SHOP NAME	Ballistic Cycles
SHOP PHONE	(608) 437-1556
SHOP WEBSITE	ballisticcycles.com
YEAR/MAKE/MODEL	2006/H-D/Road King
FABRICATION	Ballistic Cycles
ASSEMBLY	Ballistic Cycles
BUILD TIME	5 months

ENGINE

YEAR/MANUFACTURER	2006/H-D
TYPE/SIZE	V-twin/107ci
BUILDER	Revolution Performance/Ballistic Cycles
CASES	H-D
CYLINDERS	Revolution Performance
HEADS	H-D Stage 3 ported and polished
ROCKER BOXES	Roland Sands Clarity
EFI/CARB	H-D Delphi with Thundermax tuner
AIR CLEANER	CMP/Ballistic Cycles
EXHAUST	Ballistic Cycles Stainless
SPECIAL FEATURES	Twin 53mm Aero-charger Turbos, liquid-cooled intercooler

TRANSMISSION

YEAR/MANUFACTURER/TYPE	2006/H-D
CASE	H-D

CLUTCH	Barnett/Scorpion lock up clutch
PRIMARY DRIVE	H-D

FRAME

YEAR/MANUFACTURER	2006/H-D/Ballistic Cycles
RAKE	Secret
STRETCH	Secret

SUSPENSION

MANUFACTURER FRONT	Karta Tool and die single mono air shock
LENGTH	Secret
TRIPLE TREES	Ballistic Cycles
MANUFACTURER REAR	Ballistic Cycles rear air ride
SPECIAL FEATURES	N/A

WHEELS, TIRES, AND BRAKES

MANUFACTURER FRONT	Steve Schueller and Blair McGrath/Ballistic Hubless
WHEEL HEIGHT/WIDTH	30 x 4
TIRE HEIGHT/WIDTH	140/40/30
CALIPER	Ballistic integrated dual 2-piston
ROTOR	Ballistic built-in 29-in. perimeter
MANUFACTURER REAR	Rampage Wheels Chrome Smoothy
WHEEL HEIGHT/WIDTH	18 x 5
TIRE HEIGHT/WIDTH	180 x 55 x 18
CALIPER	HHi
ROTOR	H-D

FINISH-PAINT

COLOR	Multi over chrome base
PAINTER	Cypress Customs/Ballistic Cycles
GRAPHICS	Cypress Customs

ACCESSORIES

FRONT FENDER	B'Cool/Ballistic Cycles
REAR FENDER	Ballistic Cycles
FAIRING/WINDSCREEN	N/A
GAUGES	Dakota Digital
GAS TANK/CAP	Ballistic Cycles
DASH	Ballistic Cycles
OIL TANK	H-D
HANDLEBARS	Ballistic Cycles
HAND CONTROLS/GRIPS	Carl Brouhard
FOOT CONTROLS/PEGS	Carl Brouhard
HEADLIGHT	Ballistic Cycles
TAILLIGHT	Radiantz
TURN SIGNALS	Radiantz
LICENSE MOUNT	Ballistic Cycles
SEAT	Ballistic Cycles/Guy's Upholstery
SADDLEBAGS	Ballistic Cycles
SADDLEBAG LATCHES	Ballistic Cycles
SPEAKERS	N/A
HEAD UNIT	N/A
AMP	N/A

MISC We would like to give a special thank-you to all of our sponsors who sent us parts for this build.