Winter Motorcycle Blues - Forget About It and Fix or Build Your Bike

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New York, NY (RPRN) 12/29/10 — Winter Restoration Blues and How to Get Over It With Old Bike Barn

Well folks it's that time of year again... The time when we all dream about the perfect winter project with all the right tools, parts and time we need to do it!

How many of us actually get there? Most of us don't have the luxury or the resources available like that of Jesse James, the Teutul's or Jay Leno. I'm here to tell you with a plan of action, some elbow grease and follow-through we can make this work. I confess even a person like myself (no excuse I have the parts at hand) can let real world responsibilities take the front seat.

For the New Year I want to cover a few tips about winter projects and what you can do to make them happen. The obstacles to getting going are not insurmountable but do take action and persistence to over come. The two biggest mistakes people make when getting a winter project going are not following a few simple rules to making sure things happen.

Set up the task at hand as if it were a project at work, by that I mean mentally set deadlines and monitor progress. Luckily you're the boss this time – Please Yourself.

1. Make A Move! It's easy set you goals and your budget, it's the first step and it gets you past the daydreaming point. Far too often people don't realize how cheap it can be to resurrect and old bike or update their daily driver.

2. Plan Ahead. Some things that need to be considered: The parts you will need, the tools, and of course the space to do it in. Now I know this all sounds kind of no-brainer, but how often do we plan until spring and not get the project done. Set dates and deadlines, it's truly amazing what you can do with only a few weekends work.

3. Goal Setting. Think about what kind of project you're planning. Is this a full restoration or what I like to call a resurrection? Older bikes don't need a frame off rebuild to be good reliable riders. What they do need is some attention to detail.

4. Always Have A Dedicated Area. Even if it's very small, one too many bikes never see the road again because someone moved a box of parts and the wife or kids put it at the curb. Make it clear to people that you are working on something important to you and not to mess about in that part of the garage, basement, or living room (A special wife is required on that last one).

5. The Project. Whether you are rebuilding or just going over your old steed, there are a few major areas I like to consider during the colder months. (A). Basic maintenance. People consistently over look the small stuff like oil changes, airfilters and plugs and wires.Too many of us head into winter with big plans and ideas and yet when spring comes we haven't even ordered the parts or washed off the bike, and definitely never tuned it up or drained the carbs. I think the least any of us should do is store our bikes ready for spring! If you're in a year-round riding climate any time is the right time for proper maintenance. (B). The brakes. It may not be the sexiest project, but there's nothing like a nice bike that can't stop the remarkable thing is many riders concentrate elsewhere first. I learned this from experience as a young man so now brakes always come first, provided the bike is at least running, no point in doing brakes on a bike with a blown engine… What amazes me is brakes can be done at such a reasonable price, and in no time at all, yet all to often are while people ride with sub par brake performance. Caliper kits, Master cylinder kits, brake pads are a good place to start on any bike; It's an important job and makes riding that much better when you have confidence in your brakes. (C) Fuel systems are also a neglected area, yet so affordable to tackle. Now I know carbs can seem intimidating, but with patience, some basic shops skills and a manual most people can handle even a complete carb rebuild. Pace yourself and keep the parts very organized and you will be happy with the results. The only thing better than crisp smooth acceleration from rebuilt carbs in the springtime, is crisp smooth acceleration from carbs rebuilt by your own hands. (D) Cosmetics. This one sounds like

another no-brainer but what most forget is it's the little details that make the overall package. Brake and clutch levers, new

blinker lights, tail lenses and so on are the little details that make the over all package shine. (E) Comfort. Well I'm covering it last but it's up there on the priority list! Things like changing your handle bars to better suit your riding style or selecting the right grips or seat can really go along way into how much you enjoy a bike.

Old Bike Barn Team

By no means have I covered it all but that's some of my thoughts about winter projects. The most important part is don't be caught planning until spring! Take action start by identifying what you want to do, getting the parts, and making a plan. As usual, the Old Bike Barn team and I will be here with FREE advice and plenty of opinions.

Keep it between the ditches and the shiny side up! Thanks for reading,

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About the author:
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