



## **THE RISE OF BAKER DRIVETRAIN: A TRUE AMERICAN STORY**

For the need of profound improvements in the drivetrain for our American V-Twin drivetrain, a misguided transmission mastermind at General Motors stepped forward. It begins with an average kid, a military brat, who grew up through the counter-culture end of the BMX scene and into the motocross circuits. With a fanaticism for tinkering with his bikes and then pushing their limits while riding them, Bert Baker's road led into Michigan State University's Mechanical Engineering program. This career path would seemingly indulge the creative urge to understand and fiddle with technical shit as well as land him a job at GM as a Senior Project Engineer to Manual Transmissions. A nice engineering job at General Motors was perfect for financially supporting his goals of being a motocross champion on two wheels.

Although there was an obvious talent, Bert was not the model student or nor the model employee due to the regimented requirements of these institutions. However, these environments did cultivate Bert's absorbent blob of grey matter with the necessary theory, protocol, and experience needed to make improvements in the adjacent industry of the American V-Twin. This market has been longing for some significant new innovation for decades before BAKER Drivetrain.

During his years at GM, he also met a co-worker, Lisa, who was to be his future wife one day. Lisa was the bright student who sat in the front of the same classes back at MSU where a tardy, and hung-over, Bert Baker sat in the back of. Their paths would never really cross in the halls of the university, though. College, career, and a poor motocross environment around Detroit somewhat distracted Bert away from the necessary time needed to really succeed in the motocross circuit, so he retired from competition. Nobody knew it yet, but the elements were falling into place for a turning point to take place.

The rider within never left Bert. He was considering some cheaper foreign muscle bike with the latest technology and gizmos as a mode to keep him riding. Thankfully, his buddy Bill Schmidt offered to lend him his 1993 Harley Davidson Fat Boy for a weekend and instantly, with not a reason that could be explained but many know, Bert was hooked! As soon as possible, Bert went out and sprung the extra dough for a 1994 FLSTN. As any Harley owner does, he loved that bike and took the time to customize it a bit so he could cruise on it in style, and ever-so-naturally, bar hop his way into the Big Twin motorcycle world. However, that next year at the 1995 Daytona Bike Week Motorcycle Rally the Harley was stolen! The bike gods must have taken it because what was to come was the seed of BAKER Drivetrain.

Lisa Baker, now his wife, knew her husband was a tinkerer and she proposed that Bert take the insurance money and build a custom bike from the frame up. Once built, Bert noticed that this custom bike vibrated like mad with its big-inch motor. So he tried the standard solution by switching to a 61-tooth rear pulley which did reduce the vibration, but killed the performance. This particular engineering compromise was for some reason an oversight in this industry, but a nagging nuisance to Bert.

So, the transmission-centric blob of gray matter started bubbling with an idea. As an advanced manual transmission engineer for automobiles, Bert was inspired by the muscle cars of the 90's which had the 6-speed overdrives. With the knowledge gained from working with the latest models of GM cars, Bert comfortably applied it to the Harley-Davidson transmissions that were still founded on old WWII-era technology. The idea was simple, but the execution took expertise - his expertise. Over a period of 8-months, he hammered-out some prototypes that proved the 6-speed concept to work brilliantly.

The news of a man and his elegant solution to excessive big twin vibration spread across America. The demand was intense and it would take more than a technical genius to get these transmissions to market. It would take an entire company with a dedicated supervisor to oversee the manufacturing, guide employees, control the quality, and manage distribution to customers across the world. To do it right, this is a demanding task that often deviates from creative/technical mind like Bert's. But, that bright girl who sat at the front of the class at MSU, the one who also has

**MADE IN THE USA**

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engineering skills good enough for GM, was standing right there. Lisa took the reigns as President and Chief Operating Officer of BAKER Drivetrain, Inc. and Bert stood as Chief Engineer and Chief Executive Officer.

Because the BAKER OD6 (6-Speed Overdrive) 'felt like the cure for cancer for the H-D market', with no business experience or money they committed to the company. Both Bert and Lisa cashed in the 401k's, robbed the kids' college savings, and maxed-out the credit cards in order to build this entrepreneurship the right way - a way based on the utmost quality that Americans demand. This company philosophy is cultivated at BAKER and continues to reverberate throughout the company culture. Because of this initial innovation delivered via a strict commitment to quality using the finest people and materials along with a dedicated focus to the American motorcycle drivetrain, BAKER maintains its seat as the American V-Twin drivetrain authority.

BAKER Drivetrain will always be dedicated to premium drivetrain standards for the American big-twin motorcycles. We are committed to using materials, labor, creativity, know-how and grit that is born or made in the USA. The American big-twin culture and lifestyle is centered on this and so are we! The continued importing of foreign components will be the beginning of an assimilation of our priceless culture into a larger market. This movement will fundamentally corrupt our identity as American riders. As an American company standing on the forefront of innovation in our market, an arena that foreign knock-off artists can never completely understand - only imitate, it is our duty to keep this company on the leading edge, even as our products are poorly copied along the way. We will keep introducing new solutions based on empirically-based inspiration as we ride the piss out of our American V-Twins and get ideas from our American riding buddies using our proven engineering methodologies. To maintain our reputation of quality as we develop products, our strict research and development practices will never be compromised. Our iron-fisted protocol of an intense attention to detail will always be exercised in manufacturing to continue to earn our position and the American motorcycle drivetrain authority. Convinced we have the best damn products out there, the team at BAKER Drivetrain stands shoulder-to-shoulder behind the guaranteed products that we release with plain-English-speaking technical support before and after your purchase. BAKER Drivetrain's purpose is to steadfast against the foreign agents as one of the few companies that keeps the purity and integrity of a legendary motorcycle know as the AMERICAN V-Twin. There's so much more to it than 'buying American'. Live it.

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