

CAFE RACERS Ø TRACKERS Ø SCRAMBLERS Ø BOBBERS

built

handcrafted motorcycles

ISSUE
33

Bekyrd *Bali*
Dong Dong *Beijing*
Hoxton Moto *London*
Triumph Build-off *UK*
Lamb Engineering *Wiltshire*
Smiles for Miles *Somerset*
Siderock *Bournemouth*
Dirty Dick's *London*
Time Cycles *India*
Lonely Boy *France*
Unik *Portugal*



Dick's Desert Shed

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Welcome

CRAZY TIMES DON'T MEAN THE END OF CRAZY MOTORCYCLES

And in this issue we've got crazy by the crate load. The thing I've enjoyed most about putting this latest issue of *Built* together is the sheer diversity of the custom scene. There are no rules when it comes to building custom bikes of course, but on the one hand in this issue we've got a diesel-powered Enfield workhorse that's been transformed into a object of beauty (p20) and on the other are some 'boxes on wheels' electric bikes, racing around a motocross track in the centre of St Tropez in an event supported by Europe's hardest-core custom crew (p80).

Even Michael Lichter's exhibition at Sturgis this year was all about diversity (p48). Sure, there's plenty of bikes representing the archetypal Harley chopper but there are bikes flying in the face what we might think of as

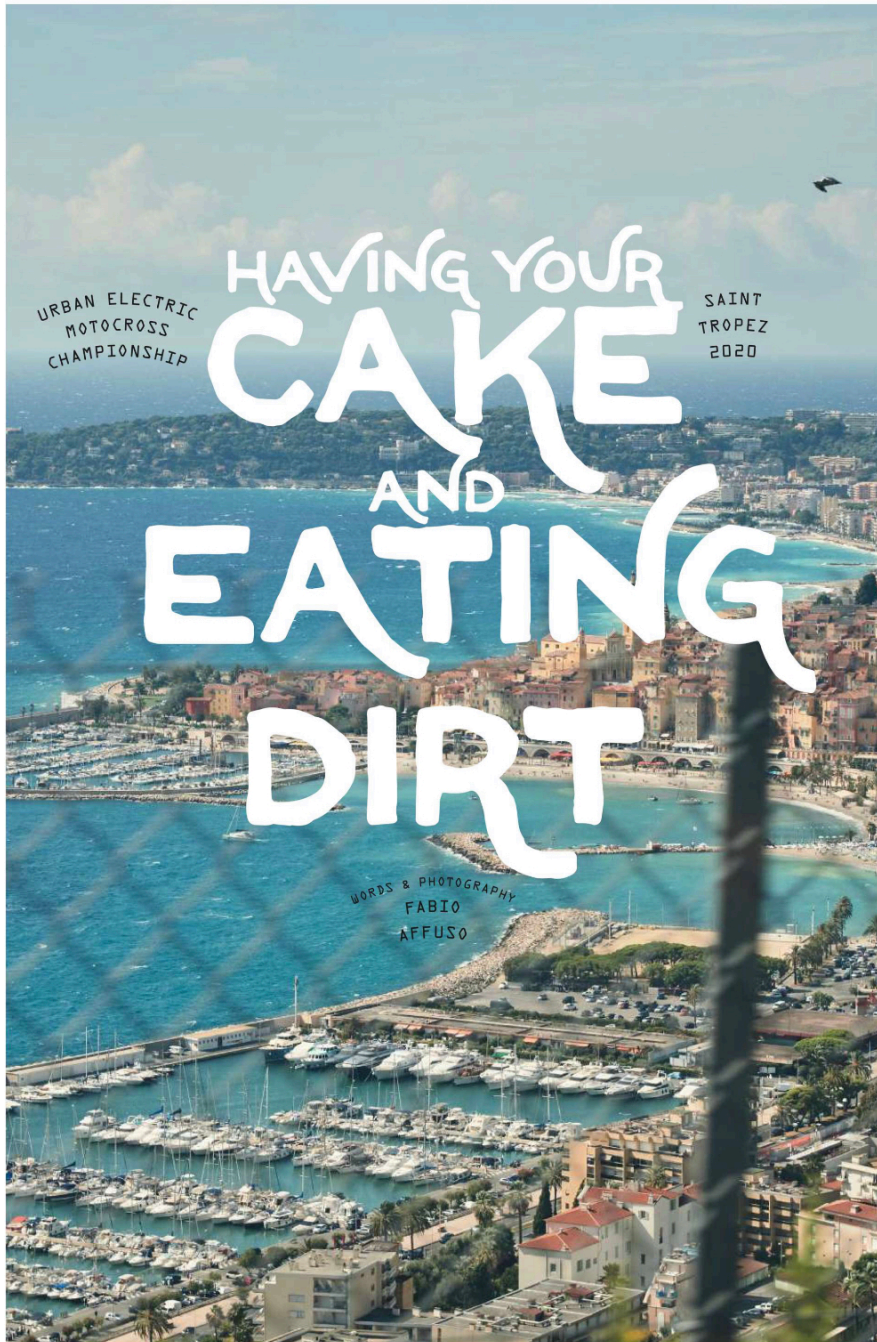
American custom bike convention – things like an Honda cafe racer, a Bay Area-styled lowrider and a mad electric bike with front and rear hubless wheels. That bike reminded me of the 1989 Franco Sbarro concept bike, an idea later adopted by chopper builder Billy Lane in a series of hubless chopper builds.

I love how the steampunk creativity of the Chai Shop Racer Enfield from Goa (p6) is balanced by the simple single, reworked by Bckyrd in Bali (p12) but then it's equally easy to appreciate the style and rideability of bikes like the Krystov Honda street racer (p76), Tony Taysom's Buell chop (p110), Dan Ridge's Honda trailie (p62) and Dirty Dick's W650 tracker (p42). Love 'em all.

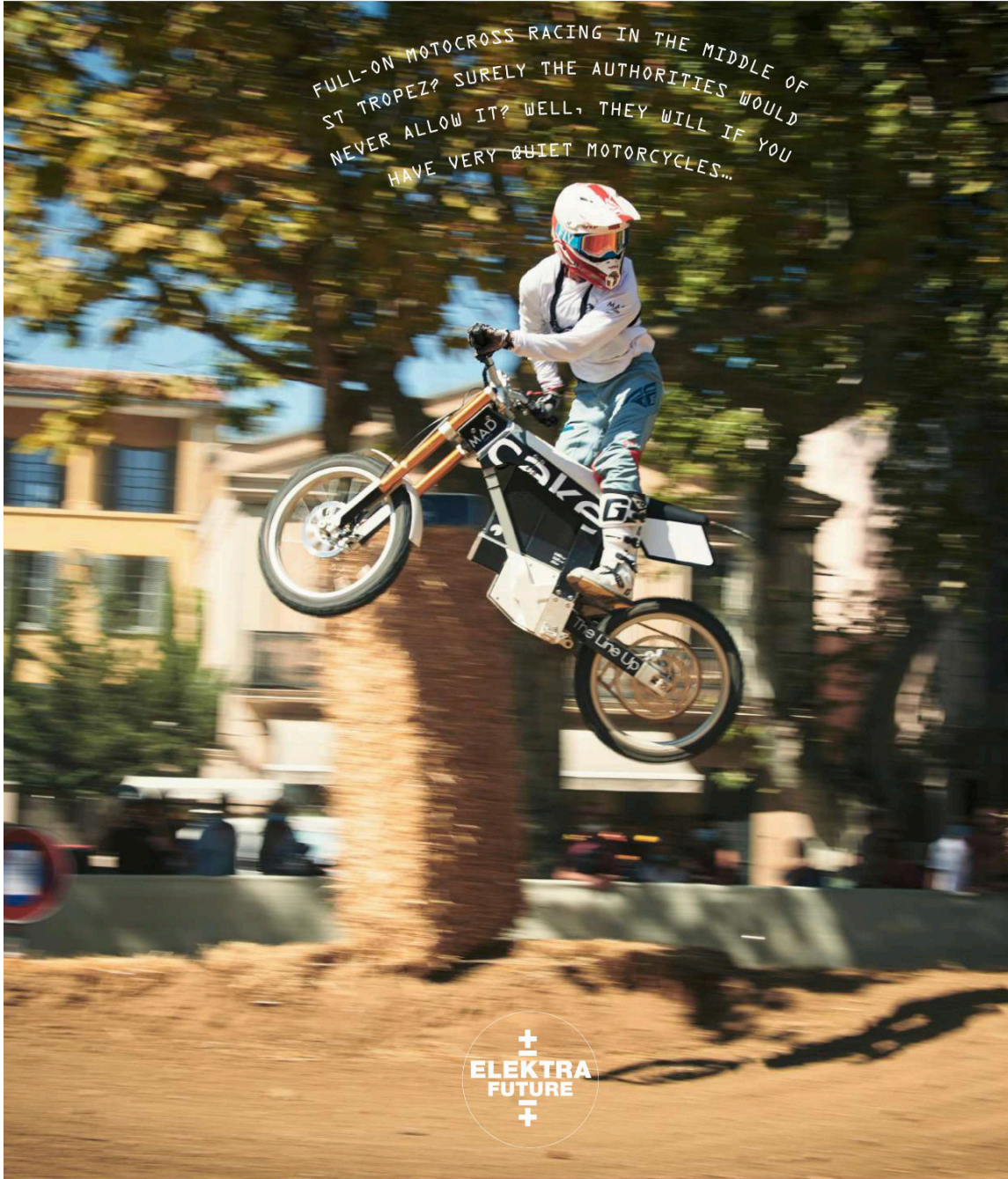
Enjoy the issue.

Chris





FULL-ON MOTOCROSS RACING IN THE MIDDLE OF
ST TROPEZ? SURELY THE AUTHORITIES WOULD
NEVER ALLOW IT? WELL, THEY WILL IF YOU
HAVE VERY QUIET MOTORCYCLES...



+

ELEKTRA
FUTURE

+

W

elcome to the first ever Urban Electric Motocross Championship, slap bang in the middle of swish Saint Tropez in the South of France. Vincent Prat, one of the founders of Wheels & Waves, joined up with Olivier Le Quellec and Swedish electric motorcycle brand Cake to create this brave new event called Elektrafuture.

The championship is divided in three groups: Swallows, Cuckoos and Eagles, with qualification rounds deciding who goes through to the main event. I'm staying with the El Solitario crew and, inevitably, a few of us are still recovering from last night's party. We recharge with an amazing brunch by the sea and make it to the track just in time for the last qualifying round in the afternoon.

I get on the track to take pictures but soon it's my turn to jump in the saddle. This Cake is nothing like I've ridden before. Lighter than a trials bike – just 79kg including battery – the Cake has a high-tech aluminium frame and the throttle response of a pissed-off Doberman. There are no gears and the power delivery is immediate – it looks and feels like a toy, which can be deceiving, as I discover when I overdo it and crash after landing my



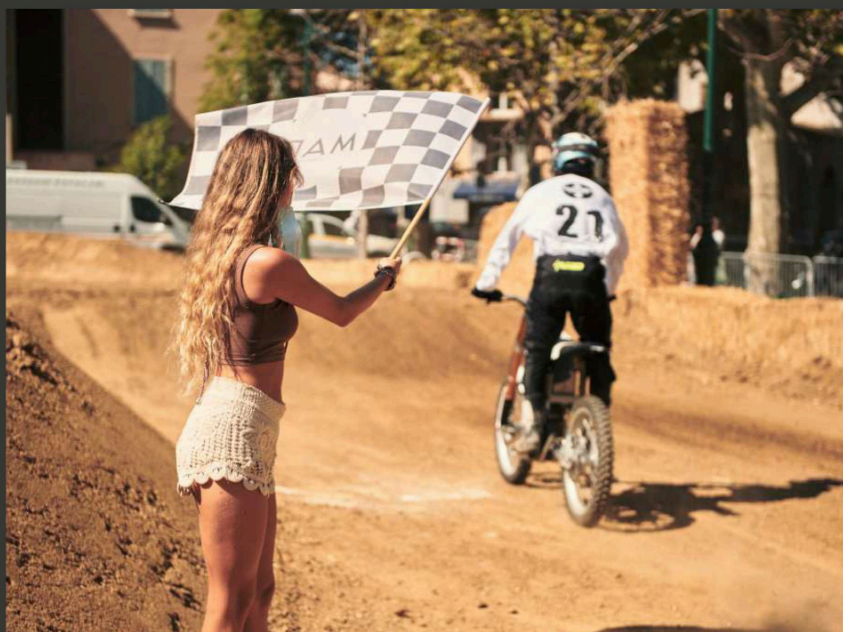
first-ever double jump.

With a little practice, and adjustment the ride can really be taken to the next level. For instance, the Cake has three riding modes: Explore, Excite and Excel. In Explore you get capped performance with three to four hours of battery life. At the other end of the scale, you get full-bore performance but only an hour of riding.

There are three engine braking modes: free wheel, two-stroke, and four-stroke. And the more engine braking, the more regeneration you get. So with a bit of practice there are enough combinations to suit most riding styles.

The front suspension is upsidedown air sprung forks by Öhlins with 38mm stanchion tubes, while the rear is also Öhlins but with Cake internals and linkage. They feel good and responsive.



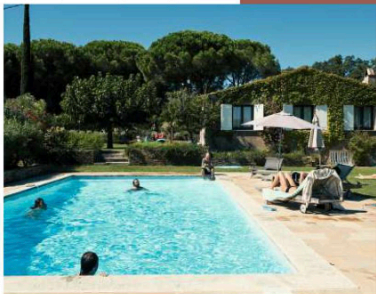


MUDFEST IT AIN'T

Being St. Tropez, this is not your average mud-splattered MX meet. 1700 tons of dirt were used to make the course



IT'S SURREAL THAT IT ALL HAPPENS WITH
ALMOST NO NOISE, BUT THAT'S WHY THE EVENT GOT
THE GO AHEAD - THE CITY CENTRE HAS NEVER
PROMOTED A MOTORCYCLE RACE BEFORE



The wheels are 19in front and rear with aluminium forged rims and CNC-machined hubs, with both ends having a four piston caliper and 220mm disc.

This bike is fun, and I get better with every lap. I could get used to this. Perhaps not for real motocross, but enduro or trail riding – and even commuting.

Finished with the races, we hit the road to explore the Riviera on some cool rides. From the El Solitario crew, David is on a Panhead, Vincent on a Norton, Fred from Blitz is on his custom R80, and Mike the Doc has arrived with two gorgeous BSAs. We ride for hours through twisty roads with gorgeous views of vine-filled fields and hillsides, and somehow arrive at the same beach we were at for lunch. It's a great spot and it turns out they have fab cocktails too.

Saturday is the official race day and although Friday night wasn't an early one, I make it to the track in good time to explore the event area with artists painting motorcycles and helmets, stalls with Elektrafuture merchandise and mags, other electric bikes on display including a fun-looking mini bike by Cake called Osa, and a stand by high tech French helmet brand Naca showing off some clever lids.

Professional motocrossers have arrived from all over the world to try the bikes for the first time and compete one-on-one on the gnarly city track. They don't disappoint, pushing the bikes to the limit and beyond. It's surreal that it all happens with almost no noise, but that's why the event got the go ahead – the city centre has never promoted a motorcycle race before.

For the the award ceremony Olivier and Vincent hand out beautiful trophies designed and produced by two design students from the School of Decorative Arts in Paris, created by hand from melted engine parts and assembled on an oak base to symbolise the transition between the old and new world.

Elektrafuture has been fun because of the cool friends, crazy bikes

LEFT
The El Solitario crew head out to explore the area

RIGHT
The course was part supercross, part BMX. The professionals hit it hard

BELOW
Fabio (far left) and friends – including crews from El Solitario and Blitz Motorcycles

LEFT, BELOW
Organisers Vincent Prat and Olivier Le Quellec



and surreal setting. But it's been a breath of fresh air too – something new and brave during a time when not even the most ordinary things are allowed. It is a totally unlikely event with a totally improbable bike in the most implausible of places. If that doesn't show vision and tenacity to break old paradigms and forge new ways of living with motorcycles, then what does?

Some may cringe at the idea of motocross in such a setting, but the majority – including local authorities – welcomed this fresh vision, which involved dropping 1700 tonnes of soil onto the tarmac to create the track.

The Cake motorcycles did their part too. They survived the rugged track in the hands of both amateurs and professionals, and showed that motorcycles don't have to be a nuisance but can perfectly coexist with peaceful and green city living. Isn't that what motorcycling desperately needs more of right now?



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