

**Cover Story**

Wisconsinites love their motorcycles. Ever since 21-year old William S. Harley and 20-year old Arthur Davidson released their first production Harley-Davidson motorcycle in 1903, things haven't been the same on Wisconsin roads. From Fat Boys to Softails, it seems as if everybody in Wisconsin either owns a motorcycle or wants to someday.

Mike Osborne is one of those guys who is more passionate than most about his motorcycles. Owner of Osborne's Pro Street, Osborne first began customizing bikes back in the late 1980s. Ten years later would find him stripping down and customizing bikes, and now, having come full circle, OPS finds itself creating custom accessories and building bikes from the ground up; Osborne has found that his passion for motorcycles has become



a full-time occupation.

Based in Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, OPS consists of a factory with an office, a showroom, and warehousing facilities. Osborne's interest in creating his own parts that led him to purchase an automated CNC machining center, a move that allows virtually every part of his bikes to be custom made. "We weren't happy with many of the components out there today," Osborne said. "Ultimately, we found that the only solution left was to design and build our own."

The OPS machine shop is impressively equipped with an Atrump CNC machining center system and state of the art computer automated drawing systems. Machining runs are planned to achieve maximum efficiency in terms of both material supplies and machine time. Osborne operates OPS on a 'Just-In-Time' finishing model. This allows him to fulfill orders and replenish warehouse stock levels just as they are needed in the manufacturing process. It's a process being widely adopted by manufacturers across almost all segments of the motorcycle component industry. "In today's market, it doesn't make sense to manufacture dozens of the same swing arm and have them just sitting there," Osborne said. "And to tell the truth, most of our designs are one of a kind anyway."

Osborne takes a hands-on approach to his parts design and manufacturing process. Although CAD/CAM tools are used extensively in the process prior to machining, much of his design process is conducted with paper and pencil, allowing him and his designers to get a better feel for the final look of each component. In the end, his designs are defined in 2D and 3D drawings and processed with Mastercam and Solidworks before they are routed to his in-house CNC machine shop. Some of Osborne's designs require up to 15 or 20 tool changes to complete; as all of his parts are fully machined from solid stock (no molding operations are ever used). This attention to detail results in high-quality custom parts, and OPS now sells to enthusiasts all across the United States. "We're out to achieve perfection in everything we do," said Osborne. "That extends from the showroom and open road into our machine shop."

So what exactly does an OPS bike look like? Consider one of Osborne's newest designs: The Ozmosis. Sporting a 124 Cubic Inch Engine by S & S Cycle and fabrication by OPS, Osborne has designed a bike that's unique both in terms of aesthetics and performance. "Once we decided what we wanted the bike to look like, it took us about a month to design and mill all of the necessary components," Osborne said. "L'Cars Corporation of Cameron, Wisconsin helped bring our gas tank and seat designs to life, and one of our painters, Lance Ludwig, put the finishing touches on. The Pagan Candy Green paint and multi color flame design he put together really turned out great. I challenge you to lose this bike in a crowd."

Osborne started thinking of the Ozmosis as a pro-street bike with more power than most riders can handle, but it ended up being a work of art on 2 wheels. Osborne custom designed and milled the swingarm himself, pairing it with a custom OPS belt drive cover and OPS triple trees to complete the bike's one-of-a-kind look. "The frame and suspension probably took me the longest to complete," Osborne said, "not because it was any harder than the rest of the bike, but because I kept changing my mind on how I wanted that part of the bike to look. What most people don't realize is that if you alter a certain part's design, however simple a modification, it can impact a number of associated components." Osborne ended up choosing a 42 degree rake design and adding 4 inches in the Ozmosis's backbone for stretch.

Once the frame was completed, Osborne turned his attention towards the bike's accessories, creating custom bars, risers, front and rear fender, pegs, and foot controls, all designed and milled in-house by OPS staff. "With many bike shops, you're getting a custom designed frame or gas tank, but they usually outsource the remaining parts to sub-contractors," Osborne

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