Subject: Ping Wayne - Virago
Posted by Dean Kukral on Fri, 04 Jun 2004 01:46:23 GMT
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How do you like your Virago? (Doesn't that mean "loose woman" or something like that?) If I am correct, it is a Japanese "imitation" of a Harley. Does it vibrate a lot, like the big twin Harleys? (That would explain a lot! ;)I have short legs that make it hard to handle a big motorcycle at stop lights etc. (yeah, ok, I am too old and soft, too - not to mention arthritis in the knees), but those v-twins sit a lot lower on the ground than the four cylinder jobs do, so I might fit one better.Does Alona sit on the back, and, if so, is she comfortable?

Subject: Re: Ping Wayne - Virago
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 04 Jun 2004 06:23:46 GMT
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Hi Dean,Yes, the Virago is a Harley copy. I bought my first about 15 years ago as a learner. One of my best friends was going to Tulsa University for a mechanical engineering degree, and he rode a Harley. It was cool and I wanted to learn to ride, so I thought I could learn on the Virago. My thinking was that if I threw it down, I wasn't out much money.That was about 100K miles ago. I've gone through one, my learner, and put a zillion miles on it. It served me so well that I got another.Like Harleys, Viragos are very easy to ride because they are so low and have so much bottom end torque. It has such a low center of gravity you can practically get off without putting the kickstand down. And it has so much bottom end torque that you can start out in almost any gear, pushing a Volkswagen uphill without rolling on any gas. Just pop the clutch and go. So they're probably one of the easiest bikes to ride.Viragos and (Evolution/Shovelhead/Panhead/Knucklehead) Harleys share many of the same features. They are are air cooled, V-twin engines and similarly tuned, but Viragos don't have pushrods and have wider separation angle between cylinders. Like Harley's, each rod shares a common crankpin but the wider separation angle keeps the mass of both pistons out of phase enough that the engine is easier (possible) to balance. They don't have as long stroke, so they don't have as much torque. That also gives them a little higher RPM limit and makes them less likely to exceed rod bolt stress limits. The rear cylinder runs hotter than the front, just like the Harley, because it is shrouded by the front cylinder.Harley's have both rods on a shared crank pin which means top dead center is 45o between cylinders. That's what gives them that cool sounding lope. On the Virago, each cylinder is 90o apart so counterweight is possible because the mass loads are far enough out of phase that balance weights are not prohibitively large. On a Harley, you have both rods going up at nearly the same time, so opposing counterweight would be huge. Harley-Davidson reciprocating assemblies aren't balanced, and that's why they vibrate so much. Virago's don't vibrate like that because they are able to balance the engine.Wayne

Subject: Cool

Posted by Dean Kukral on Fri, 04 Jun 2004 11:21:04 GMT
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They sound nice!  I think that if I could put my feet flat on the ground at a stoplight, I would still have a mc.  I am tip-toed, which makes it difficult on a fully-loaded touring bike with wife on back. Very tiresome in bumper-to-bumper traffic.There is nothing like an early evening ride in 80 degree weather - exactly like we are having now, except for the storms!It's funny, but the things that you remember fondly in life are usually those when you have been really happy or really unhappy.  For example, I remember turning a corner in the morning at Capitol Reef National Park and being presented with an awesome view in front of me of the sun shining on the cliffs from my back.  Or, topping a hill in Nevada in the late afternoon and seeing this breathtaking view of the valley in front, lit by the afternoon sun and partially shaded by clouds.  Both views were only possible with the total range of vision that you get in the open on a bike.  I also remember standing in the hail in Montana, clutched to my wife (with our helmets on!) with nowhere to go for cover.  Or passing a cornfield in Western Kansas in 100 degree heat and for ten seconds feeling the pleasant cooling effect of the irrigated corn.  Of flying off an 8" "cliff" in the highway in bumper-to-bumper traffic at seventy mph on six-laned Interstate 5 in California.  (At least the road went down and not up!!)I also remember one vacation out West in our new Eclipse GSX where it rained every day, and we said, "Boy, we are sure glad we are not on the motorcycle!":) :) :)

Subject: Re: Cool
Posted by hurdy_gurdyman on Fri, 03 Dec 2004 14:33:44 GMT
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Just reading through this old stuff and ran across this. I have a 1983 750 Midnight Virago. I'm only 5'3" tall (down from 5' 4.5"  that I was 20 years ago. Amazing what arthritis can do). I can get both feet on the ground on my Virago when wearing my leather riding boots. Driving with my wife on back an luggage strapped on is no problem. This bike is easy to drive.BTW, the Virago wasn't origionally a Harley copy. It was based on the English "Vincent" from the 1940's and was much more advanced then a Harley. The 1981-1983 Virago's had the Vincent look. In 1984 the styling was changed to have more of the Harley look. I personally prefer the riding position of the earlier Viragos, as they put you in a less leaned back position, and the footrest is more under you, better for us short people. I'm on my 3rd Virago now. I'll ride it as long as I can keep it running. Seeing as it only has 10,000 miles on it, that may be for a long time.Dave