

BLUE COLLAR



BUILD OFF 2019

By Rob Borden

In only its third year, the Blue Collar Build Off is making a huge splash in the “low budget, amateur bike building” world. It has already been featured all over the country in everything from internet blogs, to mainstream radio, national magazines, newspaper headlines and even the ABC News.

Rob Borden, BCBO founder, says that competitors have only thirty days to turn some old donor bike, or scrap parts into a completely functional, badass motorcycle. And they are only allowed to spend \$1,500. “They start off with a donor bike, or a pile of parts, which most of the time contains all of the components of a working motorcycle. They must take what they have, and are only allowed to spend up to \$1,500 on missing parts, supplies, customization, etc...” says Borden.



“All teams start off on a pretty level playing field as far as their donors. What sets them apart, is what comes next. Thirty days of intense, grueling labor. Teams are comprised of up to four people, most of whom are unknown, home garage motorcycle enthusiasts, and maybe a few small, independent shops.”

Rob says that the idea behind it is to show what small time, virtually unknown guys can do with average tools, average resources and a very limited budget. “The bikes that show up are amazing. You would never guess they were built out of some shitty old bike, and only \$1,500.”

What sets the winners apart is the amount of labor they put into their builds, and the quality of their work. “That is where the true investment is,” says Rob. “A full month of labor, for up to four people on a team. You tell me what that is worth.” Some teams do more than others, and some teams are more skilled than others. One team may only have \$2,000 “worth” of labor, while another team may have \$10,000 worth of labor. It is all relative. Regardless, when you see most of these bikes, you will agree, they are NOT \$1,500 bikes.

After the build time is over, contestants make their treks from all over the country to Las Vegas, NV for a pre-show, followed by a group ride the following morning to the Saddle Sore Ranch, near Kingman, AZ. The approximately 120 mile ride is a "proving ride" of sorts. Bikes that are unable to complete the ride under their own power are disqualified from the final judging.

Upon arrival, they ride into the "West Coast Rendezvous" which is in full swing at the ranch at that time, with bands, vendors, biker games, onsite camping, nightly campfire parties and more. An old school, biker rodeo camping event. Bikes are lined up



by the stage, and a panel of judges start their judging process by meticulously going over each bike, their complete photo album from start to finish AND the ledger where they must account for every penny spent on their build. Any discrepancies can be grounds for disqualification.

This year's winners were: 1st Place Harley & Best Of Show - Dysfunctional Veterans (St Robert, MO); 2nd Place Harley - Illinois Tall Boys (Hartford, IL); 3rd Place Harley - Conaway Customs (Fairview Hts, IL); 1st Place Metric - Poundtown Choppers (Grand Island, NE); 2nd Place Metric - Kitchen Crew (Las Vegas, NV); 3rd Place Metric - Team DK (Las Vegas, NV); SSR FAVORITE - Falling Rocks (Ramona, SD); The CLEETUS Award - Iron Misfits (Aurora, NE).

Blue Collar Build Off 2019 is sponsored by Samson Exhaust, Red Rock Harley-Davidson, Quick Throttle Magazine, Motorcycle Tire Center, Legal Ride, Rider SOS Accident Fund, Steve Soffa- Artist & Designer, Ricky Bongos USA, Saddle Sore Ranch, Mexican Moonshine Tequila, Chrome Factory, Hogs & Heifers Saloon, Biker Atlas and more. Photography by Barrie J Berry Jr, and Gene Mulcahey.

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