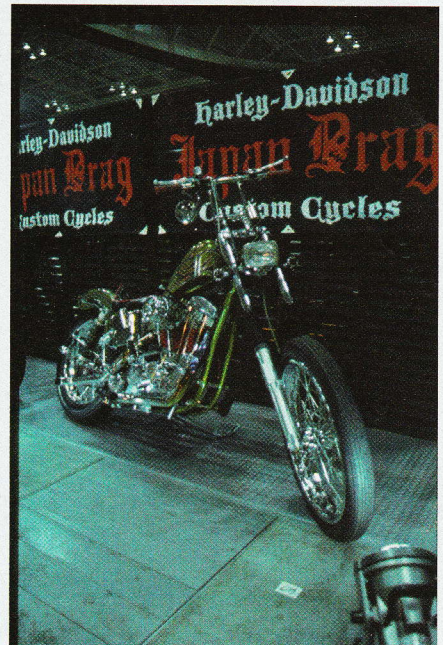


MC Upper's new custom



Parts offered by Motorcycle Den



a new one from Japan Drag with some Frisco-style influences!

## Interview with Keiji Kawakita - Cool Breaker/Hot Dock

by Nelson Kanno

I got to take a few minutes with Keiji Kawakita, owner/founder of Hot Dock Custom Cycles ([www.hot-dock.co.jp](http://www.hot-dock.co.jp)). Aside from building, re-engineering, designing/creating some of the world's finest customs, he takes time out of his busy schedule each year to put on the Cool Breaker show.

THBC: What did you think of the 9th Annual 2006 Cool Breaker show?

*Kawakita: We've finally gotten used to it and it ran without a hitch, no problems. We had a lot of guests and it was really fun. It was really busy. We also had a ride-in show within Cool Breaker this year.*

THBC: It looked like you had many guests from abroad.

*Kawakita: Yes, from the USA were ChopperDave, Sinners SoCal, S&S Cycle and Cory Ness to name a few. They all came because of their own personal interests. I was flattered to have them as guests, as well as Neil Blaber from of the AMD World Championship Custom Bike Building circuit.*

THBC: How would you describe Cool Breaker?

*Kawakita: I think of this show as a gathering of professional bikebuilders to showcase their talents for the general public. Cool Breaker continues to become a high-level, custom bike show. A Harley-only show. I've been thinking about the acceptance of Japanese powered customs next year. One thing for sure though, Cool Breaker will continue to be motorcycles ONLY.*

*The Mooneyes Hot Rod show has a huge attendance, which started out with almost all cars. 5 years ago, a few more bikes started to enter the show. The Mooneyes show is very interesting, no doubt.*

*I really like the USA, the American culture. After what Shinya Kimura did for the Japanese, it really changed how a lot of us looked at custom bikes.*

*Until some years ago, the Japanese only copied what was seen in American magazines and bike shows. Cool Breaker is definitely a "Japanese custom bike show". With the mix of American guests and their bikes at Cool Breaker, it's really becoming quite a show.*

Q: What do you think of the "old school" style that's prevalent in Japan right now?

*A: While I was at the last Cool Breaker show, I didn't really think "old school" style wasn't that apparent. After seeing coverage of the show in Hardcore Chopper Magazine and Hot Bike Japan, the "Sinners style" of customs have really become popular here in Japan.*

*More than just the bikes looking cool, it seems as if people like the life-style that's connected to that style of bike. I think a lot of the people who are into this current trend really appreciate that. It does have a garage-builder look, like a "cheap" custom, but the flare in those bikes really tend to show that lifestyle.*

*When Japanese people choose parts, they like the old or rare stuff. It seems as if they use these old and rare parts to give them a sense being more credited, which personally I'm not really interested in.*

*It's neat to see the general people do such things, but I don't believe in doing it as a professional custom bike builder. Just because you win that bid on eBay doesn't mean you're that much more cool.*

*Yes, the "old school" style is popular now but it has been in Japan since the 70's!*