



**Builders: Uwe Briele and Manni Klocke
V-Triebwerk (V-Engine Work)**

Building a custom motorcycle can be challenging, but building a first-rate custom motorcycle that includes a sidecar and is also designed to tow a trailer requires years of custom motorcycle building experience, and few natural-born wrench-turning skills.

Manni Klocke and Uwe Briele of V-Triebwerk (V-Engine Work) custom cycles located in Rietberg, Germany, have all the right skills and experience to build such a machine. They were born and raised in Padeborn, Germany, a city located in the northeastern part of the country. As childhood friends, these guys knew that with their

mutual mechanical interests that one day they would be involved in building some sort of custom machines, but were not sure exactly what at first. Manni is a school-trained mechanic, and specializes in motors and transmissions. Uwe is a school-trained machinist, and specializes in frames and bodywork. Their interest in motorcycles eventually steered them to the field of designing and producing custom-built sidecars for Harley-Davidson motorcycles.

Manni built his first sidecar almost 30 years ago for his own BMW motorcycle. He received many compliments and lots of attention for his custom-built sidecar rig. These compliments and sidecar interests, along with something he enjoyed doing prompted him to enter the sidecar business. A few years later, Manni and Uwe teamed up and started expanding the business even more. That was almost 20 years ago, and the business is still going strong today, even in a world of economic crisis. Today, their shop employs a total of six people and currently produces between 12 – 15 custom Harley-Davidson sidecar rigs annually. They also do enough repairs and regular maintenance services on customer bikes to keep everybody busy five days a week, and often weekends too. For more information about their sidecars, log on to www.v-triebwerk.de

dropped it off at V-Triebwerk Sidecars in Rietberg, Germany, where they started the customizing process. "In my profession, I'm a dealer for agriculture, forest machines, and products similar to America's John Deere. But, I'm not a mechanic, especially when it comes to customizing a motorcycle with a sidecar. V-Triebwerk did the work on my other bikes with sidecars, so they were an easy choice because I knew the quality of their workmanship and they have my full trust," said Ben.

Once V-Triebwerk received Ben's customizing instructions, their first priority was to build a sidecar that would enhance the vintage look of the Heritage Springer. Ben's wife, Milena, enjoys a comfortable sidecar ride with her hubby as often as possible, so a double Softail-style suspension system was fabricated and located in the lower front portion of the sidecar. "This sidecar suspension system provides a very smooth ride and makes our travel very enjoyable," said Milena. "The double Softail suspension provides a smooth ride up to almost 90mph." Other special features on the sidecar are a brown leather seat that color-matches the rider's solo seat, a roadster-style windshield, a stainless-steel luggage carrier and sidecar rider step, a lockable trunk, and a telescopic trailer coupling.

After completing the customizing portion on the sidecar, the majority of the remaining work was done on the bike itself. The gas tank was handmade with an old-style angular tank with a housing for the speedometer. The dashboard was also

handmade with a look similar to the old 1929 – 1936 Harley fuel gauges and ignition locks. The standard electrical system was maintained with some modifications, and a vintage-looking battery box was placed on the rear left side of the bike. Just by simply relocating the battery externally on the bike not only gives it a bit of retro-style (a huge retro style), but it's a lot easier to get to the battery. Ben used a trailer from one of his previous rigs, and it only had to be re-painted to match the colors on the motorcycle and sidecar.

Once V-Triebwerk tightened the last nuts and bolts and added the final touches and details of the build, Ben Vielitz had more than just another Harley-Davidson motorcycle with a sidecar and trailer (like there's a lot of those). His machine had been transformed into an award-winning piece of fine art that could be comfortably ridden on the European autobahns while at the same time providing a rolling showcase for V-Triebwerk. His new rig was tested at Europe's largest motorcycle event, European Bike Week, and won first place in the Three Wheel category at the 2008 event.

Running a full-time business is tough, but Ben and Milena still find time to rack up about 3,000 miles a year on *Big Brown Fellow*. Summers in Central and Northern Europe are not too long so they have to manage their time between work, riding the Harley, and spending quality time with their four children and two grandchildren. "When one of our grandchildren was two-years-old, she could tell the sound of a Harley from other motorcycles without even seeing them so I think Harley-Davidson is in our family blood now," said Ben.

- Sedrick C. Mitchell
Photos by David Hayes & Ben Vielitz



SPECIFICATIONS:

- Owner:** Ben Vielitz
- Year/Make:** 2007 H-D FLSTSC
- Sidecar:** V-Triebwerk Sidecar
- Fabrication/Assembly:** V-Triebwerk
- Build time:** 5-months
- Engine:** 2007 96" TC B
- Pistons/Cylinders/Heads:** H-D
- Cam/Ignition:** H-D
- Carb:** H-D EFI
- Pipes:** Knuckle-style fishtails
- Air Cleaner:** H-D
- Transmission:** H-D w/reverse gear
- Primary/Clutch:** H-D
- Frame:** H-D/V-Triebwerk sidecar sub-frame
- Forks:** H-D w/stiffer springs/steering damper
- Rear Suspension:** H-D
- Wheels:** TTS M/C 3.50x16 / 80 spokes
- Front Tire:** MT 90 B 16
- Rear Tires:** Dunlop 150/80 B 16
- Brakes:** H-D
- Sidecar Brake:** coupled w/rear -separate circuit
- Fuel Tank:** V-Triebwerk
- Oil Tank:** H-D
- Fenders:** H-D
- Handlebars:** H-D
- Headlight/Taillight:** H-D
- Hand/Foot Controls:** H-D
- Painter:** V-Triebwerk
- Color:** metallic and brown/gray-metallic
- Seat:** solo w/5" springs/matching sidecar seat
- Sidecar:** V-Triebwerk Sidecar
- Special thanks to:** V-Triebwerk for perfect work.