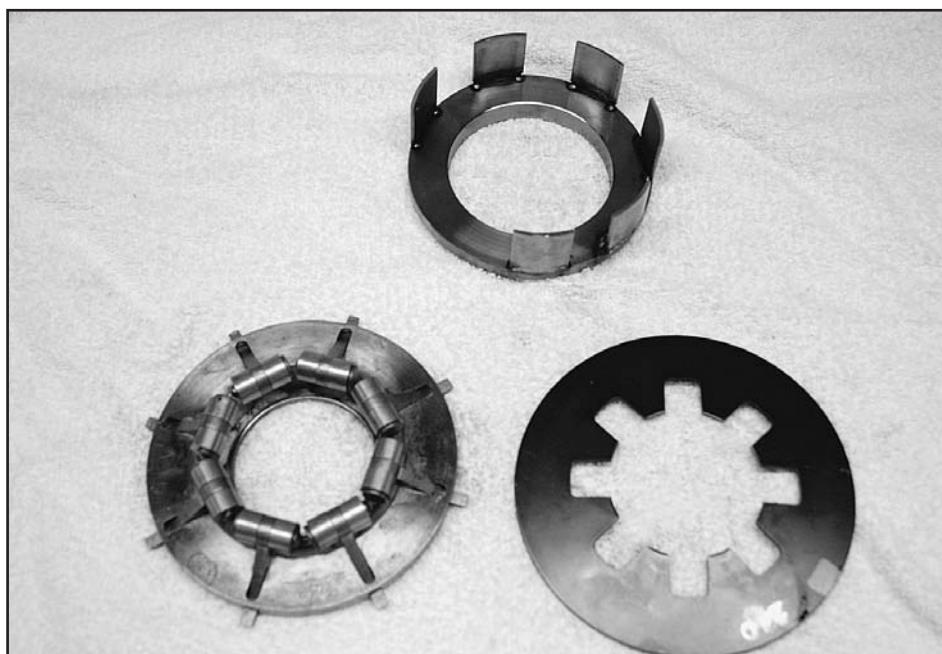


PRODUCT REVIEW

Lighten up, lock it up



The VP Clutch and diaphragm spring (below) and special adapter tool (top)

AIM Variable Pressure Clutch
P/N VP004 ('90-'97 Big Twins)
\$300
AIM Corporation
www.aim-tamachi.com

Reviewed by Terry Roorda

For the money, there are few if any other modifications you can make to your Harley that deliver the same level of immediate gratification as the Variable Pressure (VP) Clutch from AIM Corporation. Manufactured in Japan by H-D fanatics, the VP Clutches (more accurately referred to as spring retainer kits—you still use your stock clutch basket) are available in a variety of configurations and spring tensions to install on a wide range of post-1990 stock and

performance-built motors. Kits are made for 883 and 1200 Sportsters, 80-, 88-, 95- and 103-inch Big Twins, and range in price from \$225 to \$300.

The VP Clutch is a lock-up style device, utilizing a system of small precision centrifugal weights to exert ever greater pressure on the clutch plates as engine speed increases, such that the higher the motor revs, the greater the resistance to clutch slip-

page. At the same time, the spring pressure required for tooling around town is reduced substantially, allowing for the use of a lower-tension clutch spring and result-

ing in significantly lighter clutch lever pull—as much as 50 percent lighter in some applications. It's a cake-and-eat-it-too proposition.

This setup is attractive for riders who want an easier time of things when shifting frequently in urban traffic...

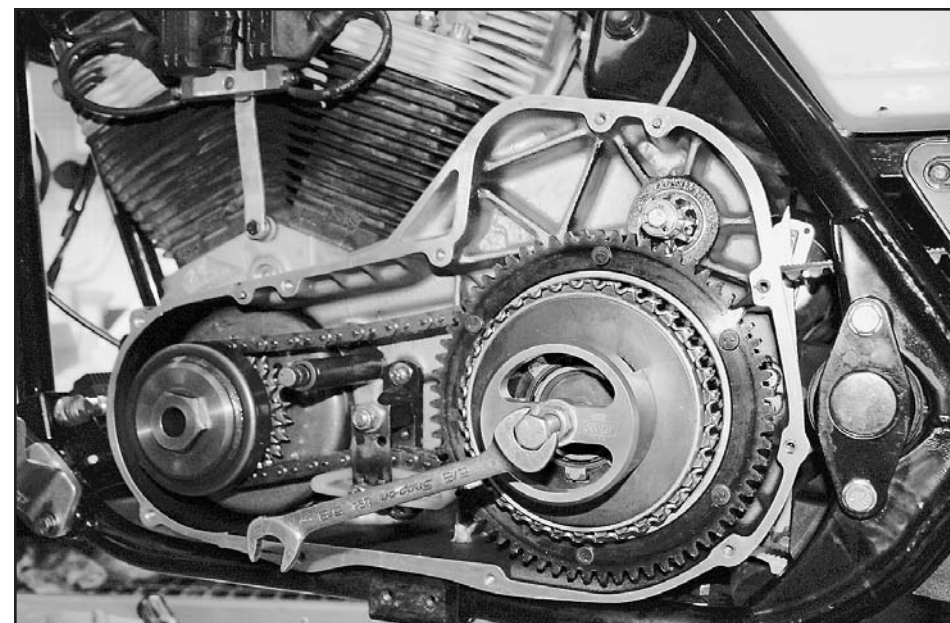


Figure 1

On most Harley models, including all Twin Cams, the installation of the VP Clutch can be done in a matter of minutes right through the derby cover without the bother of pulling the primary cover, and while the manufacturer stresses that the installation should only be performed professionally, that's just the type of thing you'd

provided only to their dealers. For this installation on a 1994 FXRP, the manufacturer provided us with the adapter.

In last month's *THUNDER PRESS* we detailed the installation of a Screamin' Eagle Six Speed Gear Set on the high-performance '94 FXRP belonging to Larry Equitz with the

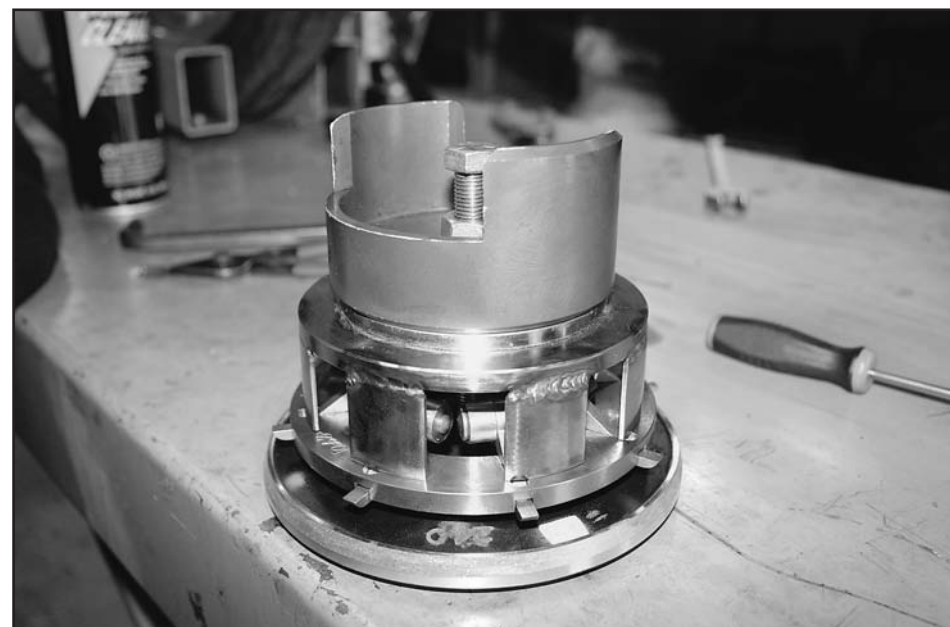


Figure 2

expect a manufacturer to stress. On Evolution-powered Tourers and FXRs, however, the primary cover has to be removed, and a special adapter tool employed to do the deed—a tool

objective of improving the bike's high-speed, long-distance touring prowess. And while they were at it, the guys at Cycleworks in Santa Rosa, California, Richard Roy and Stan

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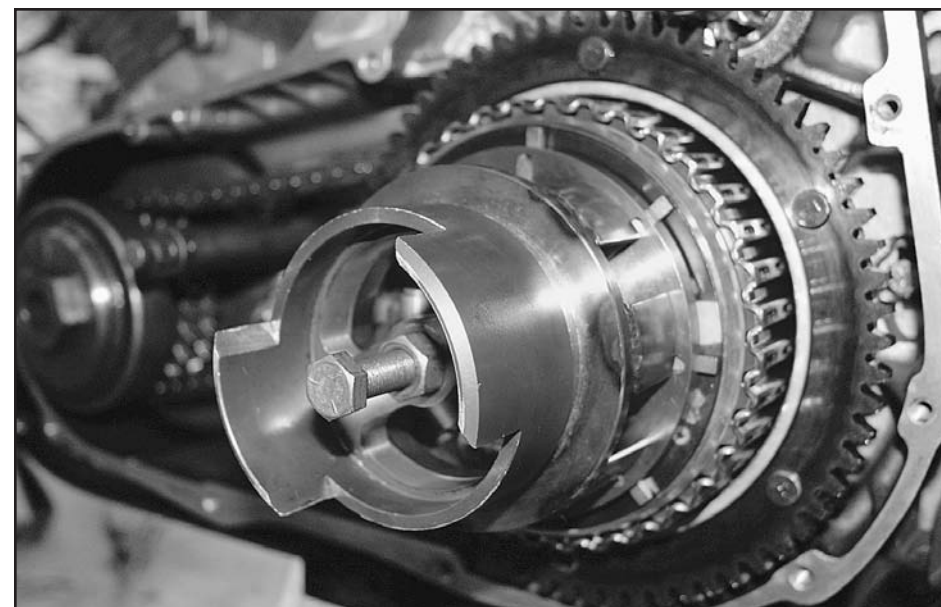


Figure 3



Figure 4

Continued from previous page

Olsen, went ahead and installed the VP Clutch to make the bike more operator-friendly at low speeds while at the same time assuring that when Larry hammered it on the highway he'd get everything the big motor had to give to the rear wheel. Because of the healthy torque being produced by the FXRP, AIM supplied a VP Clutch kit with a diaphragm spring that could handle the output and yet still bring a claimed 25 percent lighter pull on the lever.

Installation of the VP Clutch began with the lock nut and clutch adjustment screw being removed and a clutch compression tool being attached to take the pressure off so the retaining ring could be extracted (Figure 1). The special adapter tool was then lined up with the inverted compression tool and positioned over the provided replacement spring in such a way that the levers of the centrifugal weights could be positioned to miss the spring teeth, and the retainer ring could be laid in to be manipulated once the jig was realigned on the clutch for the installation (Figure 2 and 3).

The next step was the only tricky part in the operation, as the snap ring had to be worked into place with the

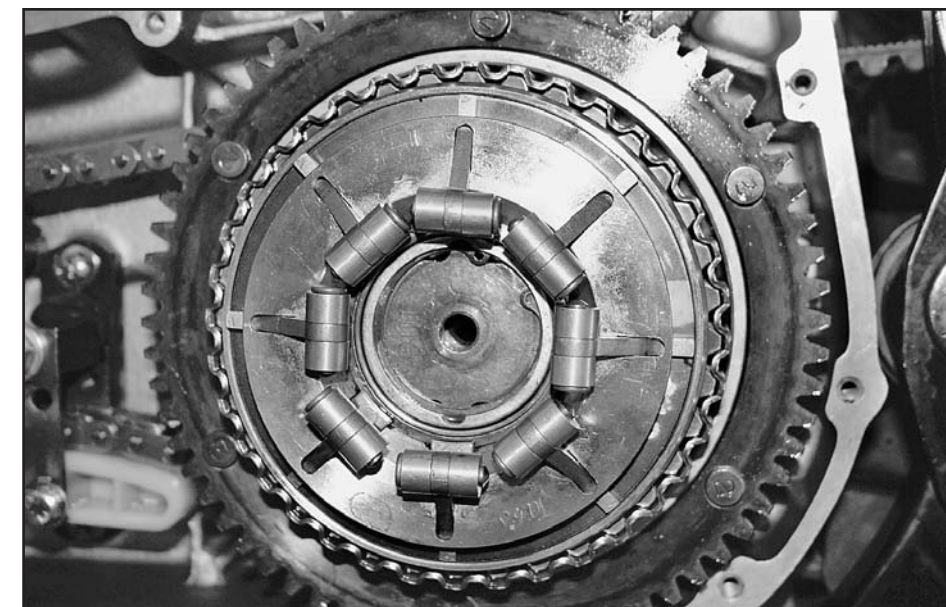


Figure 5



Figure 6

the bike is dramatically reduced at slow speeds, and it feels like riding on a much smaller machine. When the throttle gets twisted, the whole works tightens up considerably and provides lock-positive power transfer. The clutch lever pull increases with higher engine speeds, as you'd expect, but then you don't do more than feather it during shifts at those speeds anyway. This setup is attrac-

tive for riders who want an easier time of things when shifting frequently in urban traffic and while holding the clutch lever in at stops—and who doesn't? And it's ideal for anyone with a potent motor who wants a similar ease of lever operation but also needs the confidence to crack it open without slipping a disc. ♦

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