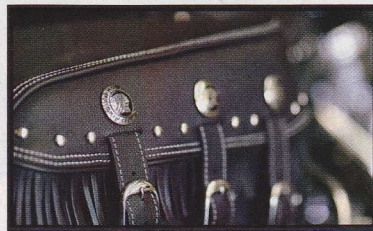
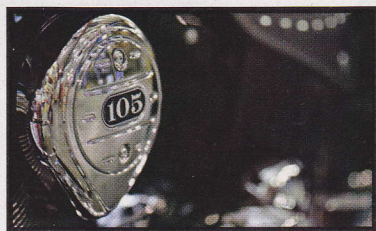


HALL TO THE CHIEF

The Indian Chief Vintage Final Edition is a collectible piece of motorcycling history.



THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Polaris now owns the Indian name, and starts by giving the past a proper send-off.

By Bill Heald






In the history of American motorcycles, the Indian name brings both pleasure and pain. The pleasure comes from the innovative, beautiful motorcycles the company built for several decades (for a while, it was one of the largest motorcycle manufacturers in the world), and pain from the fact that, less than a decade after World War II, the company went bankrupt. While resurrected many times, the name never achieved its former glory. That renown stemmed from race victories and a reputation for styling and engineering, including deeply valanced fenders and inline-four engines that proved to be well ahead of their time.

By far, the most popular Indian model was the Chief, and whenever a concern has acquired the rights to the company name, a model usually sported this moniker, helping to maintain the Indian legacy. Sadly, a lot of the Indians produced in the 1950s were just re-badged foreign makes, but at least the name was kept alive and on two wheels, and over the years many companies temporarily built the bikes, but ultimately failed. Now that Polaris Industries (Victory motorcycle's parent company) has secured the Indian brand, the company has big plans for it, but first it has decided to pay tribute not just to the motorcycles of the past, but to a recent manufacturing location as well. The place is Kings Mountain, North Carolina, where small runs of Indian motorcycles were built from 2006 to 2011, and Polaris is saluting these

highly customized bikes by building a limited-edition Indian Chief called the Vintage Final Edition. "We are working hard designing and building the new Indian motorcycle, but we knew it was important to honor and celebrate the long and proud heritage of Indian Motorcycle, and the Kings Mountain era played a key role in that continuing history," explains Steve Menneto, Vice President of Motorcycles at Polaris Industries. "The Final Edition is an acknowledgement of our gratitude to the team at Kings Mountain for sustaining the Indian Motorcycle story and its heritage as America's original motorcycle brand."

The motorcycle itself is fully loaded with all things Indian, including a massive 1,720-cc V-twin engine and an Indian Red, Thunder Black, and Gold Pinstripe paint scheme based on the Chief that was displayed at the 1939 World's Fair. It's also armed

with such standard features as a black-leather solo seat (with included detachable passenger pillion), windshield, black-leather saddlebags, chrome grab rail, engine guards, chrome fender tips, lots of leather-fringe accents, and auxiliary driving lamps. The detail work is exemplary and revives some of the marque's most celebrated styling cues, and since this motorcycle will be built in extremely low numbers, it stands to be a highly collectible unit.

Now that production of the new Indian line will be in Polaris's Spirit Lake, Iowa, facility, the future of the brand looks bright indeed, and with this very unique tribute to the past the company looks forward to bringing some of that Indian style, innovation, and pride back to the marketplace. Those interested in the Vintage Final Edition should act fast, though, as once they're gone, they're gone. 

SPECIFICATIONS

Engine type	Air-cooled, 45-degree V-twin
Bore x stroke	100.7mm x 107.9mm
Displacement	1,720 cc
Fuel system	Closed-loop, sequential-port fuel injection
Ignition	Electronic
Transmission	Six speed
Front suspension	41mm conventional forks
Rear suspension	Single shock
Front brakes	Dual-caliper floating rotors, 292mm discs
Rear brake	Single-caliper floating rotor, 292mm disc
Front tire	130/90 16 whitewall
Rear tire	150/80B 16 whitewall
Fuel tank	5.5-gallon capacity
Wheelbase	68.4 inches
Seat height	27.25 inches
Curb weight	753 pounds
Base price	\$37,599