



DR SPROCKET'S COLUMN

MY FRIEND RICHARD

When I first arrived at Oxnard AFB in '67 north of L.A. my high school buddy W.J. O'Patchen introduced me to his friend Richard. We're still tight some forty five years later.

Richard drove a '57 Chrysler 300 with a dual quad hemi on board. Walter's ride was a two-toned blue metalflaked '58 Caddy El Dorado. I still had my slammed '41 Chevy coupe. You can imagine what the brass thought of us. The base closed down in '69 and I went overseas. Richard had already been kicked out for

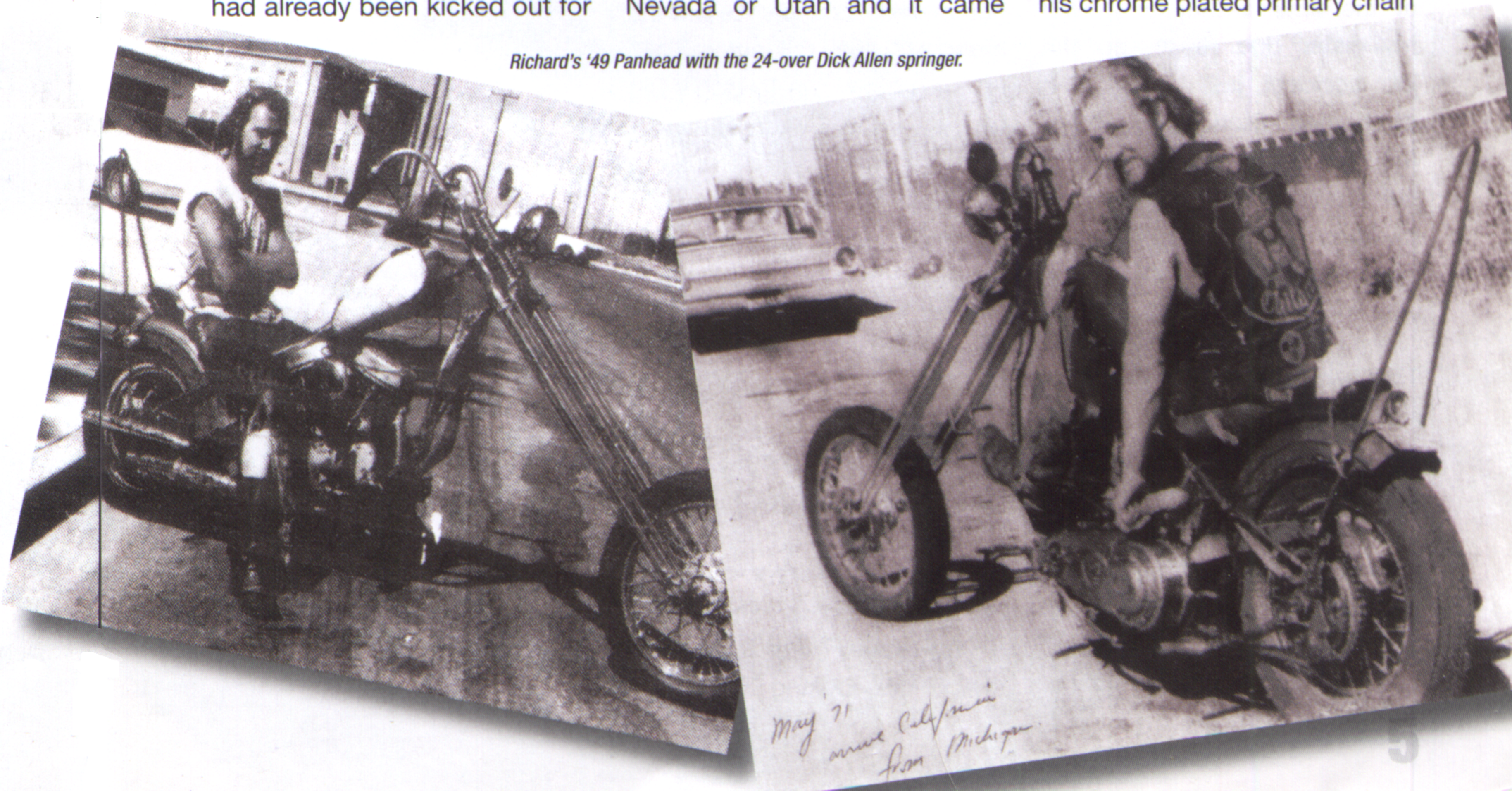
knocking out our C.O. While I was on the Mekong River Richard had Dick Allen build him a '49 Panhead with a 24" over H-D springer using Model A radius rods. A bitchin' caved in-sided Wassell tank in candy blue with white pearl sides sat on the top bar.

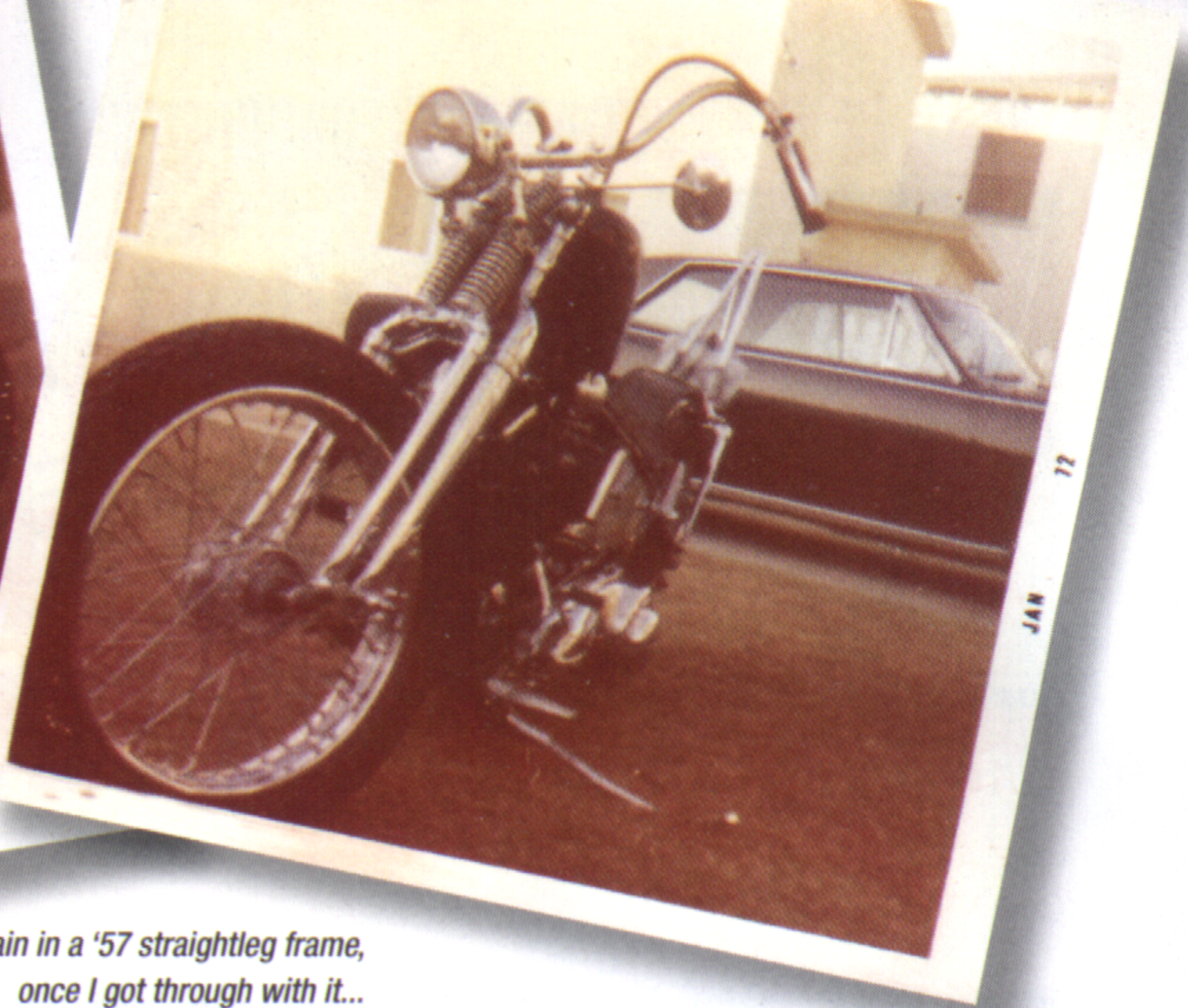
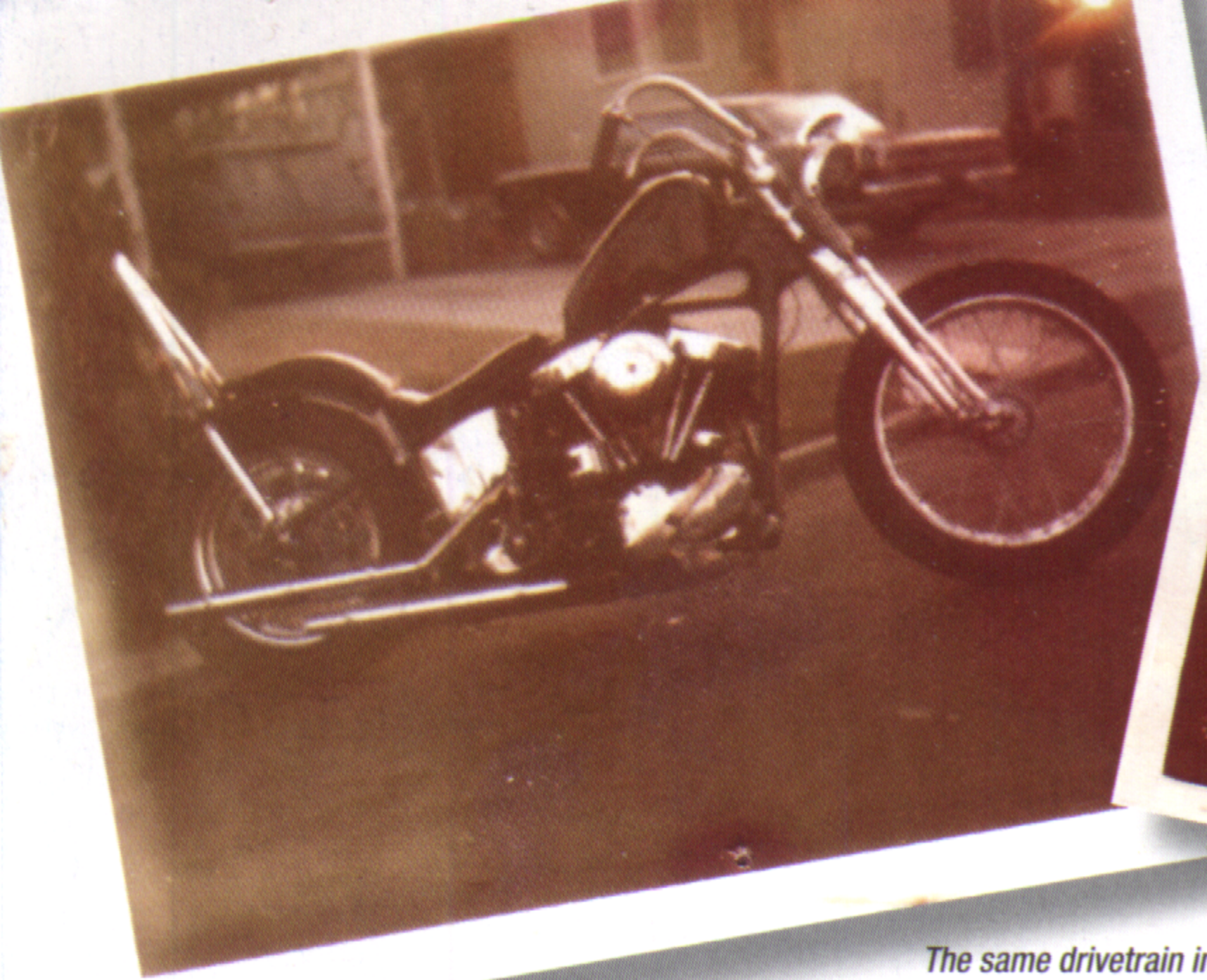
Richard got so many "unsafe vehicle" citations he decided to follow a patchholder from Michigan back east. His Panhead blew up due to an oil flow blockage (his fault) in Nevada or Utah and it came

to rest in his friend's '50s Ford stationwagon for the rest of the trip. Richard joined the club soon after his arrival and they "acquired" a cherry donor motor they found resting in the only police bike in town: a 1965 FLH Police Special. Reinstalled in his Pan frame he proceeded to receive many citations there too. Gotta go!

While streaking across the Arizona desert back to California his primary chain and its cover left the motorcycle. Thanks to his chrome plated primary chain

Richard's '49 Panhead with the 24-over Dick Allen springer.





*The same drivetrain in a '57 straightleg frame,
once I got through with it...*

belt holding up his Levis he was able to limp into Long Beach. For \$750 the machine was all mine so he could clean up his license in California. The bike had changed some. Like the full size five finger footpegs "giving the finger" made of rebar. Also the large swastikas for the clutch and brake pedals – also made of rebar. Not to mention the huge dildo for the jockey shifter just to blow citizens' minds.

I was encased in a body cast at the time and staying with my sister due to an on the job accident just after being discharged. Richard cut down the front so I could sit up and cut the bar out from between my legs. He would tie me on the back of the bike and off we'd go weaving through traffic.

That winter I was back on two legs and ready to make the Pan my own. I bought a bone stock '57 straight leg frame from D&D Cycles along with a nice stock chrome plated BT springer. I changed the drive train over and mounted a Sporty tank. The first time I took it out I came

flying down an offramp from the freeway and hit the rear brake (my only brake) to stop at the light. The rod between the pedal and the master cylinder had become disconnected. I finally stopped a couple of blocks later without hitting anything. I eventually sold it because I couldn't get it registered and had to run a red tag.

A couple of years later Richard shows up at my house one night and we proceed to get really hammered. As usual we get the munchies so I roll out my '47 EL for a trip down to Bob's Big Boy on Long Beach Blvd. for shakes and burgers. I roll out the driveway and upon reaching the first cross street with a dip I nailed it. The bike stands straight up till the sissybar hits the ground and the 18" over Wayne girder is aimed at the stars. When it comes down the bike seems a little lighter. I feel behind me and Richard's MIA.

I slide to a stop and hop off. There's Richard out cold laying in the street with his arms straight out looking like Christ

on the cross. My sissybar with Bates taillight and license plate attached are wedged tightly under his back. I thought he was DOA.

Lights start coming on, doors opening, shades going up. I know the cops are on their way and we're in no condition to say hello.

Richard is out cold and he's a big boy so it takes me a while to drag him over to the curb. About that time the cops make a showing. I get Richard to slur from across the street that we had an equipment malfunction and he'd be OK. After a few minutes they bought it and left. Needless to say we never made it to Bob's Big Boy. I pushed the EL home and spent all night keeping Richard awake so he wouldn't pass out from a possible concussion.

Now I think about it this could explain some of his behavior later in life.

Or not.