

Contact:
Kawasaki Media Relations
pr@kmc-usa.com
www.kawasaki.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fire and Steel

FOOTHILL RANCH, Calif. (August 19, 2016) – Besides the Ninja® sportbike and KX™ motocross lines, perhaps no motorcycle model name has become more important to Kawasaki in the United States than Vulcan®. The first in a series of models extending over 32 years – so far! – was the 1985 Vulcan. Launched in 1984, its liquid-cooled V-twin engine design was a breakout for Kawasaki, representing the company's first American-style cruiser. In fact, the Vulcan was the first Kawasaki model designed from the ground up as a cruiser, in contrast to the previous decade's products, which were all developed from existing streetbike architecture. It was an essential move because the cruiser category was clearly moving toward V-twins, with various Japanese competitors either there already, or on the way.

“We were looking for a name with a ‘V’ in it that would indicate a V-twin engine, while also saying something about the motorcycle itself,” explains Mike Vaughan, Director of Marketing at Kawasaki Motors Corp., U.S.A. (KMC) from 1979-90. “As the Roman god of fire, Vulcan seemed logical.” After Vaughan suggested the name, there was no dissention – it was absolutely the right call for Kawasaki's new cruiser.

The first Vulcan – known officially as the VN700A – was specific to the American market. It arrived during a time when a tariff existed on 700cc and larger motorcycles to protect American motorcycle manufacturing interests, so the first model actually displaced 699cc. The Vulcan 750 was introduced in 1986 when the tariff ended. Apart from simply being a V-twin, the Vulcan represented a new generation of V-twin motorcycles, with dual overhead camshafts, liquid cooling, and shaft drive. So right for the US market was the original Vulcan that the model lasted for more than twenty years, until 2006.

Kawasaki's V-twin cruiser ideology was too strong to be constrained to just one model. For 1987, the Vulcan 750 was joined by the big Vulcan 1500, which would enjoy a 22-year production run of its own in various forms, including the retro style Drifter® motorcycle. Then came the Vulcan 800, Vulcan 1600, Vulcan 2000, Vulcan 900, and the latest edition, the Vulcan 1700. All retain the original Vulcan's mission of muscular V-twin performance, a refined and comfortable ride, and

characteristic Vulcan styling and quality. The 2016 Vulcan lineup includes two 1700cc Vulcan 1700 models (Voyager® tourer and Vaquero® bagger), three 900cc Vulcan 900 models (900 Classic cruiser, 900 Classic LT light tourer, and custom-look Vulcan 900 Custom), and three 650cc Vulcan models (streetwise Vulcan S ABS, racy Vulcan S ABS Café, and exclusive Vulcan S ABS SE).



1985 Vulcan Featured in the Fall 1984 Issue of *Good Times*™ Magazine

ABOUT KAWASAKI

Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd. (KHI) started full-scale production of motorcycles over a half century ago. The first Kawasaki motorcycle engine was designed based on technical know-how garnered from the development and production of aircraft engines, and Kawasaki's entry into the motorcycle industry was driven by the company's constant effort to develop new technologies. Numerous new Kawasaki models introduced over the years have helped shape the market, and in the process have created enduring legends based on their unique engineering, power, design and riding pleasure. In the future, Kawasaki's commitment to maintaining and furthering these strengths will surely give birth to new legends.

Kawasaki Motors Corp., U.S.A. (KMC) markets and distributes Kawasaki motorcycles, ATVs, side x sides, and Jet Ski® watercraft through a network of approximately 1,100 independent retailers, with close to an additional 7,700 retailers specializing in general purpose engines. KMC and its affiliates employ nearly 3,100 people in the United States, with approximately 300 of them located at KMC's Foothill Ranch, California headquarters.

Kawasaki's tagline, "Let the good times roll.®", is recognized worldwide. The Kawasaki brand is synonymous with powerful, stylish and category-leading vehicles. Information about Kawasaki's complete line of powersports products and Kawasaki affiliates can be found on the Internet at www.kawasaki.com.