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THE BUELL SOURCE SPRING 2007



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ANDY HAMBLIN ROARS BACK

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08.16 • AUTOBAHN COUNTRY CLUB • JOLIET, IL
09.06 • MILLER MOTORSPORTS PARK • TOOELE, UT
09.12 • VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY • ALTON, VA
09.27 • POCONO RACEWAY • LONG POND, PA

10.04 • MID-OHIO • LEXINGTON, OH
10.09 • ROAD AMERICA • ELKHART LAKE, WI
10.17 • STREETS OF WILLOW • ROSAMOND, CA
10.23 • MOTORSPORT RANCH COUNTRY CLUB • CRESSON, TX
11.17 • LAGUNA SECA • MONTEREY, CA*

*DATE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. SEE BUELL.COM FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION.

ALL MAKES AND MODELS WELCOME

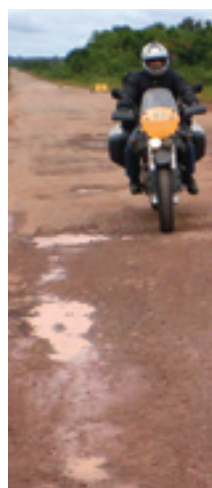
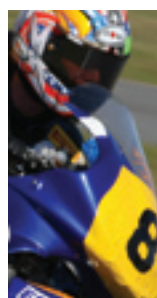
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4 Buell Lines

5 Back Talk

6 Factory Buzz

FASTRACK

10 Against the Odds

No road is too long (or too tough) for Andy Hamblin.

12 300

Bilansky and Higbee live and learn ... and win.

GEARHEAD

28 Get Your Race On

XBRR components now ready for your XB.

30 Ask Abe

How Buell handles the difference between stability and maneuverability.

STREETWISE

18 Long Way Home – Lassoing the Americas

Three Argentines follow fate aboard a Ulysses®

24 Uke

The original muscle behind the muscle – how the Buell bandwagon started here.



18

A unique entry into Panama.

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BUELL LINES »



We know each customer is a vitally important member of the family, too ...

Spring is arriving in Wisconsin as I write this, so I'll make it short so I can get out on my bike! But really, spring reminds me of the birth of things, especially Buell Motorcycle Company. We all know my name is the one on the bikes, but the name Buell on your motorcycle really stands for an American entrepreneurial team spirit that was merely a spark in me until more folks came along to turn it into a flame.

There is a great article on Kim Tordik in this issue, and believe me, as the second employee at Buell (not counting me) she has many times been in the driver's seat doing what Buell needed to survive. Someday there will be a book written, and when people read of the early days, and see the original barn and garage where we worked, they will know that what Kim had to work with was crazy (the conditions, as well as me!). As she smiled through the madness of it all, she was a source of sunshine on many a cold, poor, depressing winter day in Wisconsin!

A lot of you have heard of or met Henry Duga, who runs Buell Race Support. He was the first employee at Buell and has been my close teammate for two decades. The stories of what Henry has done for racers to get them to an event, or up and running during an event are legendary. Racers write me notes saying, "I couldn't have done it without Henry." Well, believe me, I understand completely, because Buell would not have made it to a 5th anniversary without Henry, let alone the 25th coming up next year.

And the list goes on and on: Tom Anglim, Dan Lang, Dave Ulicki (second cousin to Keith, who is also featured in this issue), Tim Mlinar, etc. Most of the folks with me in the earliest days of Buell are still here, and we value each new member of our team, as well. Every one of us knows how crucial each person was to making it through every week, and it continues today. We know each customer is a vitally important member of the family, too (Kim was the first to teach that), and we know that heroic measures by fellow employees in the smallest of tasks can be crucial to making it through to the next day (Henry was the first who taught us that).

The immeasurable blessing I receive and eternal spring I experience from the opportunity to work with truly good people every day is what the name Buell on the tank of each of our motorcycles means to me.

Best of roads to you,

Erik Buell

« BACK TALK

Readers are an integral part of *Fuell*.® Whether it's praise, criticism, or anything else you want to share with other Buell® owners, we want to hear what you have to say about the magazine, your bikes, events, racing, trips, or just motorcycling in general. Send letters or submissions for the Streetfighters section to fuelleditor@gsdesign.com, or mail them to *Fuell*, 3700 W. Juneau Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53208.

AN EYE FOR ART

I got the new *Fuell* in the mail today ... wow! Quite an improvement. The artwork on the back cover in the "Out of *Fuell*?" ad really caught my eye! I've been looking for some motorcycle art, and this is right in the vein of my quest. Where can I find copies of this artwork and more like it?

Brian O'Connell
Colorado Springs, Colorado

*Thanks, Brian. Glad you think *Fuell* is on the right track. The art you saw on the back cover was created for *Fuell* by a local illustrator. He's also doing all the original art for *Inside Pass*," Buell's Track Day events. Check out this issue's back cover for more of his work and details on *Inside Pass*. —Ed.*

OUT INTO THE COLD ...

Thought I'd give congrats and voice my support after reading the first issue (Winter 2007) of the new *Fuell*. The magazine looks great, the information is pertinent, and the presentation is professional. I especially liked the "Ask Abe" column and loved Kevin Smith's travelog.

I was so inspired, I put 150 rather chilly miles on my Ulysses® today in Eastern Wisconsin!

Bil Stachour
Appleton, Wisconsin

... AND, INTO THE HEAT

I really enjoy the new *Fuell* magazine and new Buell owners program. I really like the focus on racing, since I did a little club racing in the past. Don't forsake the old tube frame Buells, though. I ride a 1996 Lightning® S1. I put some miles on her yesterday – it was sunny and 80 degrees here in the Desert Southwest.

Wayne Peterson
Las Vegas, NV

I was so inspired, I put 150 rather chilly miles on my Ulysses® today in Eastern Wisconsin!



I SEE THE LIGHT(S)

I have a 2007 Ulysses XB12X and love it! I enjoyed Kevin Smith's article in the Winter 2007 edition of *Fuell*. I noticed some auxiliary lighting on the motorcycle in the pictures. I'm quite interested in adding similar (maybe that exact) lighting to my bike. I contacted PIAA, and they indicated they were developing lights specifically for the XB12X. My questions: What brand are the lights on the bike? Are they specifically built for the XB12X? Any tricks to install? Thanks in advance for the information and for building such an awesome machine!

Douglas W. Mitchell
Morgantown, West Virginia

Kevin Smith writes: The lights are PIAA 1100X (P/N 1192). Wiring them in wasn't too bad, but the kit had barely enough wire to run from the battery. They're mounted on short pieces of 90-degree perforated steel plate, which were then zip-tied to the base of the turn signals. I intended it as a temporary application, but they've been very secure and throw a good pattern.

TALK BACK TO US:

Send us an e-mail (fuelleditor@gsdesign.com). Submission of a letter constitutes permission to publish it in any form or medium. Letters may be edited for reasons of space and clarity.

FACTORY BUZZ »



HOMECOMING 2007 JULY 6-8

More Buells, More Excitement

Bring your Buell to Homecoming 2007 in East Troy, Wisconsin for an exciting weekend of riding and racing. This year, the event is scheduled to coincide with the ASRA (American Sportbike Racing Association), CCS (Championship Cup Series) and MOTO-ST Series races at nearby Road America, meaning there will be more opportunity than ever to cheer on Buell racers battling it out on the track (from the comfort of the track-side Buell hospitality tent).

By making your online reservation, owners can secure the Ultimate Buell Weekend Homecoming package. Enjoy factory tours and technical seminars with Erik in East Troy; and Buell Hospitality, an on-track parade lap session, and a racer autograph session at Road America.

Buell owners can reserve their space online via the owners section of buell.com. Full details are posted in the owners section of buell.com, including the schedule of events, hotel accommodations, and directions.

ASRA AND CCS CLASSES OPEN TO BUELL® MOTORCYCLES

- ASRA Thunderbike
- CCS Thunderbike
- CCS Supertwins
- CCS Lightweight Supersport
- CCS Lightweight Superbike
- CCS Lightweight GP
- CCS GT Lights
- CCS Team Challenge and GT Endurance

2007 BUELL DEMO SCHEDULE

Road America
Elkhart Lake, WI
June 1-3

Moto GP
Monterey, CA
July 20-22

Sturgis Bike Week
Rapid City, SD
August 4-11

Mid Ohio
Mansfield, OH
September 28-30

Biketoberfest
Daytona Beach, FL
October 18-20



DEMO THE BIKE. GET THE BAG.

Demo a Buell® motorcycle before June 30 and get a **FREE Buell Messenger Bag!**

Go to buell.com for more information.

Sipp Slides to 200 First



“... I’M REALLY STOKED THAT WE WERE ABLE TO FINISH. AND I WAS THRILLED FOR ALL THE PEOPLE WHO HELPED MAKE IT POSSIBLE.”

Walt Sipp became the first Buell rider to take the checkered flag at the Daytona 200 when he crossed the finish line on the Bison Racing XBRR™ at the prestigious March race. Walt’s hopes for a top-20 finish were dashed when he high-sided following a brush with fellow Buell rider Darren James early in the race. Shaken but undaunted, he picked the bike up, brushed himself off, and returned to the pits, where his crew hurried to get the XBRR back in racing condition. James would later drop out with mechanical issues.

“From a racer’s standpoint, I’m not at all happy with 46th place [in a field of 61],” Walt says. “I want to win every race I enter, and I know I could have done a lot better. But as a Buell enthusiast, I’m really stoked that we were able to finish. And I was thrilled for all the people who helped make it possible.”

Look for more in-depth coverage of the Bison Racing effort in the Summer 2007 edition of *Fuell*®.

VIVE LE VICTORY!

FRENCH PROTWIN CHAMPIONSHIP

In wet conditions at Ledenon Race Track in the South of France, Michel Amalric and the Macadam Moto XBRR outdistanced a field of mostly Ducatis and Aprilias for a win in the opening round of the French Protwin Championship. Though the margin of victory was a healthy 5.909 seconds, the victory was never a foregone conclusion. Of 40 starters, only 22 were still running to see the checkered flag.

“It was damned slippery out there!” Michel commented after the race.

“The team is hungry for more victories on the Buell,” said team leader Peter Clark. “Some of the competition has been very rude to us. But we gave them all a very rude shock at Ledenon!”



BUELL NEWS BRIEFS

Higbee Honored »

Congratulations to Buell racer and Buell test technician Shawn Higbee on his induction into the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame on February 19. Higbee, a native of Jamestown, New York, was honored for his accomplishments and contributions to motorcycle racing, both on the track and as a developer. In more than a dozen years in the industry, Higbee has worked as a Harley-Davidson technician; a movie stunt rider; a moto-journalist; and, of course, a highly successful motorcycle road racer, with multiple national championships to his credit in a number of top classes.

Ride for Research »

Buell Motorcycle Company is proud to be a sponsor of the Ride for Research Dual Sport Rally, presented by Wisconsin Dual Sport Riders, June 9-10, in Wabeno, Wisconsin. Proceeds from this fun and important event will benefit breast and colon cancer research at the University of Wisconsin Comprehensive Cancer Center. For more information, visit www.widualsporriders.org.

TO IN NOTHING FLAT

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- No payments for 120 days.

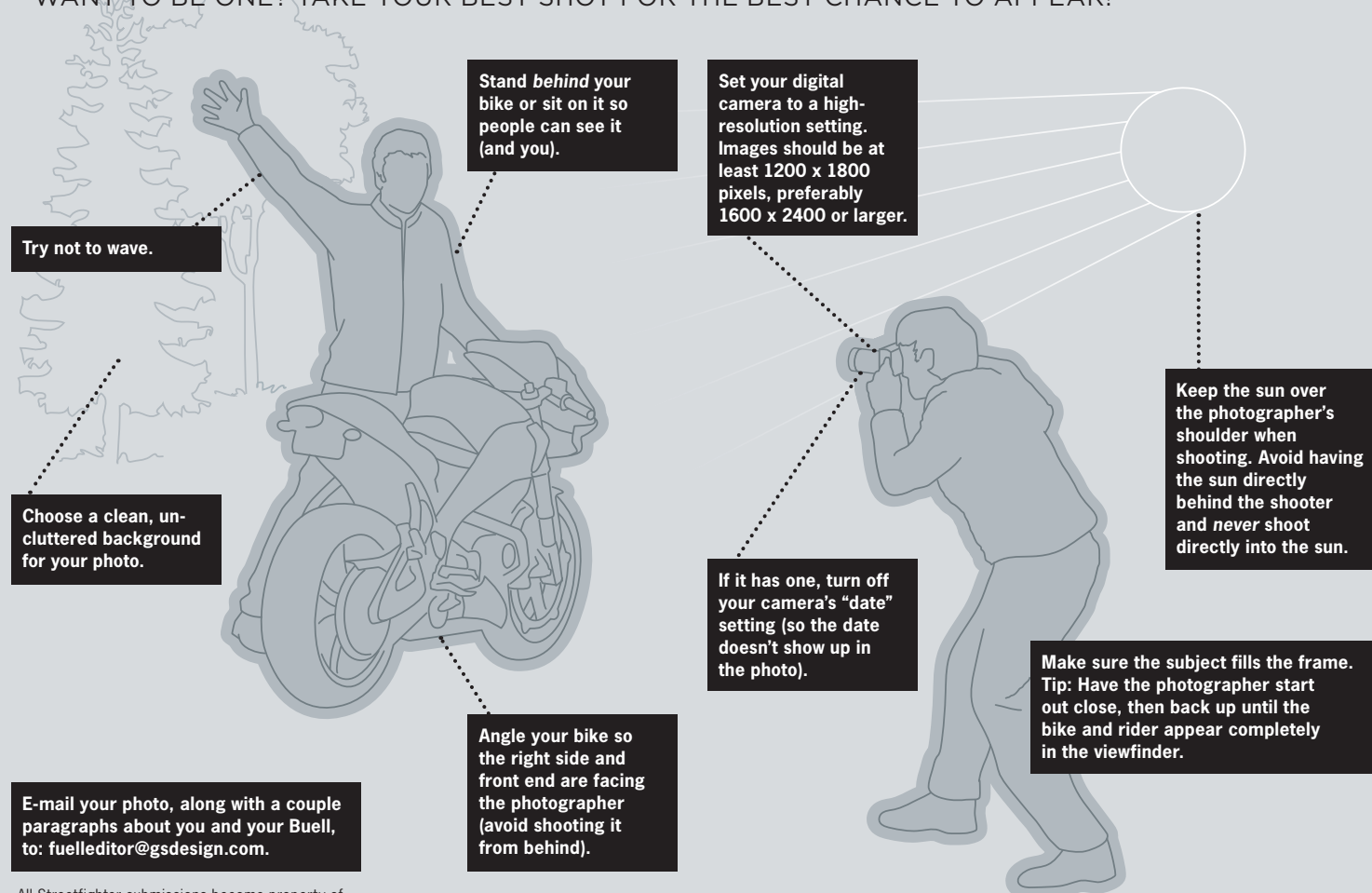
On all Buell® XB models – now through June 30!

Go to buell.com for more information.



How to Shoot a Streetfighter

IN EACH ISSUE, *FUELL*® FEATURES BUELL® RIDERS AND THEIR MOTORCYCLES IN “STREETFIGHTERS.” WANT TO BE ONE? TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT FOR THE BEST CHANCE TO APPEAR!



All Streetfighter submissions become property of Buell Motorcycle Company.



★ STREETFIGHTERS

My first motorcycle was a 1975 Honda CB550 – a very cool café bike that my former bosses bought for me five years ago, sort of as a bonus. I didn't ride back then, but they were always going out on their motorcycles, and I wanted to go, too. So they decided I should have a bike.

I still rock the Honda, but the Buell is my “first bike” now. I fell in love with the torque and the handling – it's much more powerful and responsive than I expected it to be. And I bought it from my current employer after he bought a Ulysses®. That seems to be a pattern. So I guess if I ever want another motorcycle, I'll have to find another boss to get it from!

Matthew Fleming » Milwaukee, Wisconsin
2004 Lightning® XB12S

SHE'S ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE WHO MAKES YOU WONDER, “HOW COULD THE COMPANY EVER FUNCTION WITHOUT HER?”

TRUE BUELL »

Kim Tordik EMPLOYEE NUMBER 2 SPEAKS OUT

KIM REFLECTS

On a sloppy start »

“I had only been working for Erik a short time when I decided to clean up his desk while he was away. Big mistake! He barely spoke to me for weeks! I'll never do that again!”

On the early shipping department »

“We didn't have a forklift back then, so when it was time to ship a motorcycle, everybody had to drop whatever they were doing and help push the crate up this old wooden ramp onto a trailer.”

On Erik's wardrobe »

“Whenever Erik left the house/office wearing a suit, it meant he was on his way to talk to a banker or potential investor. Sometimes he returned feeling optimistic, but many times he came back looking defeated. But he never gave up, and eventually his persistence paid off.”

On the “real” Erik »

“When people meet Erik for the first time, they're often surprised to learn he's this nice, normal, very approachable guy who just loves to talk about motorcycles. He's pretty much the same guy whom I met 21 years ago – success hasn't changed him a bit. I couldn't ask for a better boss!”

It all started, fittingly enough, at the track. Kim Wegner (now Tordik) was watching her siblings race go-karts in 1986 when Henry Duga, a family friend (and now Buell Racing Manager), asked Kim if she knew anybody who needed a job. It seemed Erik Buell was looking for, to use Henry's words, a “Girl Friday” to help out around his farm – which was then in the business of building motorcycles.

“I was bored with my data entry job,” Kim says, “so I decided to look into the Buell job myself.”

Knowing that Buell was a small fledgling company, it was a bit of a risk. But after meeting Erik and hearing him talk about his vision (and experiencing his enthusiasm first-hand), she decided to take a chance.

And that chance paid off. Today Kim is more than just Erik's executive assistant. She makes sure Erik gets where he needs to be. She handles payroll for 175 employees. And just generally makes sure things run smoothly at Buell headquarters. In fact, she's one of those people who makes you wonder, “How could the company ever function without her?”

The company has had a lot of ups and down over the years, with thrilling highs followed by scary lows. But she says she wouldn't trade a minute of it. “It's all been very special to me,” she explains. “And watching Erik go through all that, and knowing the sacrifices he was making to keep the company going, is a big part of why I stuck around all those years. I had to see how this ride would end. And it's not even close to being over yet!”



SEAT OF POWER: Kim kicks back at Erik's desk – which she now knows never to straighten!



RACER PROFILE **ANDY HAMBLIN**

THEY SAID HE MIGHT NEVER RIDE AGAIN.
HELL, SOME THOUGHT HE MIGHT NEVER WALK AGAIN.
HE ALMOST DIED, AFTER ALL.

AGAINST THE ODDS



PHOTOGRAPH BY LISA THEOBALD

What is it you sometimes hear motorcyclists say ... "Why walk when you can ride?" In the eyes of Buell racer Andy Hamblin, you have to ride before you can walk. So there he was, being helped out of a wheelchair and onto the seat of his warmed-up motorcycle at the Jennings GP track in Jennings, Florida, just two months after the end of a six-week hospital stay.

It's funny, isn't it, how some people think racing is the most dangerous aspect of motorcycle riding? Because it wasn't a spectacular 100-mph high-side that almost killed Andy. It was a distracted driver who failed to stop at an intersection.

FAMILY BUSINESS

It's not surprising that Andy would be so eager to get back to the track after such a serious accident. He's been on dirt bikes since he was 3 and a fixture at the track since he was a boy watching his dad, Chester, race. He started racing his own bike – a Suzuki X6 Hustler – at the tender age of 13.

"I started racing in the CCS Florida region on an Aprilia RS250," Andy recalls. "And then in 2002, at age 15, I worked up a deal with H-D of Lakeland and got aboard one of the demo versions of the Buell® Firebolt® XB9R. I was probably one of the very first to be racing one in Florida. I competed the entire first season on a bone-stock bike because there were no race parts available yet."

It was later that year, after Andy turned 16 and got his street license, that near-tragedy struck. "I was in a coma for four days and spent six weeks in the hospital," Andy recalls, vaguely. "I had a rod put in my leg, which had snapped in two in the accident. I had shattered thumbs. And I had a tendon transfer and nerve damage in my entire right arm."

The damage to his right arm was so severe that he still couldn't use his fingers when he first got back on the bike. He used a thumb throttle to accelerate, and worked the front brake by wrapping his nearly useless fingers around the lever and pulling back with his shoulder. Not the best way to win a race, but Andy never gave up.

His recovery and physical therapy continue today, and he looks at 2007 as a year to get his body finally back in shape for what he figures will be a breakthrough year in 2008. In the meantime, however, he's been no slouch on the regional circuits, winning the CCS Florida Expert Supertwins Championship in 2006. Goals for 2007 include competing in the entire SunTrust MOTO-ST series (with Bobby Stellfox and Team All American),

riding his XBRR" in a couple of AMA Formula Xtreme events (he just missed qualifying for the Daytona 200), and winning regional championships in the CCS Supertwins and Thunderbike classes. All while working at Custom World, his father's custom paint and fabrication shop in Tampa.

He'll also be working toward a marketing degree this summer, with his eyes on getting more involved in the business and promotional sides of the sport he loves so much. It's a tough business to make a living in, but with determination like his, it probably would not be wise to bet against Andy Hamblin. **fuel**





Shawn Higbee

ONE RIDER HADN'T RACED IN TWO YEARS. THE OTHER DIDN'T THROW A LEG OVER THE RACE BIKE FOR THE FIRST TIME UNTIL A FEW HOURS BEFORE THE GREEN FLAG FLEW.



YET SOMEHOW, SHAWN HIGBEE AND DAN BILANSKY MANAGED TO PULL OUT A WIN IN THIS YEAR'S DAYTONA USA 300, THE OPENING ROUND OF THE 2007 SUNTRUST MOTO-ST ENDURANCE SERIES.

It helps to remember, of course, that these are not just any two riders. Shawn is a former Harley-Davidson Twinsport Champion, Buell® Lightning® Champion, and Formula USA Superbike Champion. Dan is the current holder of the ASRA Thunderbike #1 plate. So it's not like they planned to lose.

"They did a hell of a job," raves team owner Richie Morris. "But then, I didn't expect anything less from these two. They're excellent riders, and they know how to work on the equipment, take care of it. There's nothing more you could ask for from a team owner's standpoint."

Though Shawn and Dan had never raced together – in fact, they barely knew each other before they joined forces on the Daytona H-D/Buell Richie Morris Racing – it didn't take long to realize they would make good teammates.

"Early on, Shawn and I were having some conversations about how we could set up the bike," Dan explains, "and it turns out that a lot of our suspension settings were very similar. We have many of the same preferences as far as spring rates, ride height, stuff like that."

They started putting the bike together just two weeks before heading to Daytona. Shawn and Richie did the prep work on the XB12R, adding a few "longevity parts," as well as a race muffler and ECU, but otherwise leaving the bike largely stock.

"The class rules in MOTO-ST are structured to promote the use of virtually stock motorcycles," Shawn explains. "This keeps costs down and creates a very level playing field."

300





Dan Bilansky

PHOTOGRAPHY: RILES & NELSON

At the track, Shawn did all the testing, fine-tuning the bike while simultaneously rebuilding his confidence. Two years earlier, on the very same track, Shawn mangled his left fingers in a crash and hadn't raced since. (See "A Long Road Back" on Page 17.)

When race day arrived, Dan was able to jump on the bike and find it almost instantly familiar. "It handled pretty much 100 percent as I like it to," he says.

The race became a fierce battle with Hal's Speed Shop/James Gang Racing Buell riders Paul James and Greg Avello, who led the GST class for 25 laps. As the final laps approached, Dan and Shawn led the class by about 45 seconds. But they weren't sure they had enough fuel to finish.

"Because of the limited track time, we weren't really sure how many laps we could run on a tank of fuel," Shawn says. "And that turned out to be a bit of a handicap. We would race to the front but then would have to stop sooner than the others, come out of the pits, and be way behind. We were out of phase, and it was kind of frustrating."

With a 45-second cushion, however, they could afford to play it safe. "Worst case, if we lost the lead, we figured we still had two laps to try to catch up," Dan says.

In the end it was a no-brainer, as *not* stopping meant risking a DNF. Shawn brought the bike in for a splash of fuel, and they finished more than 13 seconds ahead of the Touring Sport Ducati team, which edged the James Gang by just over three seconds, for second place in the GST class. A remarkably close finish after more than three hours and 20 minutes of racing.



WITH A 45-SECOND CUSHION

... THEY COULD AFFORD TO PLAY IT SAFE. "WORST CASE, IF WE LOST THE LEAD, WE FIGURED WE STILL HAD TWO LAPS TO TRY TO CATCH UP."



It was a great result, but the team sees plenty of room for improvement. There's no question the competition will improve as the season progresses, so the team will have to keep getting better to reach its goal of winning the MOTO-ST season championship.

"It was our first gig as far as pit stops and stuff, so we hope to get a lot better as we go," Richie says. "But if you can learn as much as we did in that race, and still win, that's always a good thing."

EPILOGUE

In the second round of the SunTrust MOTO-ST Series at Homestead-Miami Speedway, Saturday, April 14, the Richie Morris Racing team overcame an early three-lap deficit to finish third in the GST class. After six laps, the team was forced to bring the Buell in to bleed the brakes. Hard riding by Higbee and Bilansky, however, enabled the team to climb back onto the podium for the Homestead 500K.

With four races remaining in the six-race series, Richie Morris Racing maintained a one-point season lead over the Touring Sport Ducati team. The third round was scheduled to run April 27-29 at Virginia International Speedway. For results, visit buell.com. **fuel**

A LONG ROAD BACK

BY SHAWN HIGBEE

Throughout my racing career, I've broken my wrist, collarbone, and ribs; shattered my femur; ground my knee down to the tendons; and hit my head hard enough to lose consciousness. But nothing could match what happened in 2005 at Daytona, seeing the ring finger on my left hand severed at the knuckle, dangling from my bloody glove by a thin section of skin. Less dramatic, but equally horrifying, was the shredded end of my pinky finger.

At the Daytona hospital, I pleaded with the doctor to reattach the fingers. He wasn't able to save the pinky tip but did reattach the ring finger with a couple of pins. After nearly a year of treatment and surgeries, the ring finger was fused solid in a fixed position.

My hand may have been ready to race again, but was I?

CRASHING DOWN

Two years ago I had big dreams about racing a Buell® XB in the AMA Daytona 200 and the rest of the Formula Xtreme series. But then before the season even started, I tore up my hand while testing at Daytona.

I had put my heart and entire savings into building the team up, so it was a huge setback to miss the Daytona 200. After running a couple AMA Formula Xtreme races with a replacement rider, I made the difficult decision to suspend the campaign until I was ready to ride again.

Even with my hand repaired, returning in 2006 was a long shot. We didn't have the right funding in place, and the new XBRR™ wasn't quite ready at the start of the season.

In 2007, I got the opportunity to team up with Richie Morris Racing and rider Dan Bilansky, and we set out to compete at Daytona in the new SunTrust MOTO-ST endurance series on a Buell Firebolt® XB12R.

Once on-track at Daytona, I knew it would take awhile to get up to speed – I had not ridden at race speed in two full years. During Thursday's practices, I barely leaned the bike enough to drag my knee. Riding around at a pace that seemed similar to a fast street ride, I slowly increased my speed. Leaning the bike way over in the corners and sensing the forces acting through my body was like getting reacquainted with a long-lost friend.

The rate at which I increased my speed while at Daytona was the greatest in my entire 18-year racing career. The two years away from racing forced me to go from street squid speed to competitive race speed in a single weekend.

With little-to-no training over the past two years, I was concerned about my stamina and competitiveness on the track. Also, returning to race at the same place where I was injured was mentally difficult. Fortunately, I was able to suppress my anxieties, and I didn't think about the incident while on the track.

By the end of the weekend, I'd estimate my speed was back to about 90 percent of my previous capabilities. Fortunately, endurance racing is about much more than just going fast. It's about teamwork, consistency, and conserving yourself and the equipment. When the checkered flag dropped, we were the first to cross the line in the GST class.

It was a long road back. But in a way, it feels like I'm just getting started.



(A) Stormy weather in Bahía Arenal, Costa Rica. (B) Young admirers in Panama. (C) Victor in Loreto, Mexico. (D) Magnificent views in Petrified Forest National Park, Arizona. (E) Left to right: Rodolfo, Victor, and Catia in downtown Chicago.

A



D

IT CAN BE EASY TO FORGET HOW THE PATHS OF OUR ANCESTORS INFLUENCE OUR OWN. WE MAY CHOOSE THE SAME OR DIFFERENT PATHS AS THEY DID, THANKS TO OR IN SPITE OF THEM, BUT THE CONNECTION IS UNDENIABLE. IT'S THE PUSH/PULL OF NATURE AND NURTURE MAKING US WHOM WE ARE. IT CAN BE EASY TO FORGET BECAUSE MOST OF US REGARD OUR PATHS AS FAIRLY ORDINARY. YET SOMETIMES THE PUSH/PULL YIELDS SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY.

THE LONG WAY HOME: LASSOING THE AMERICAS



B



C



E

What if, for example, nature and nurture compelled you to travel some 13,000 miles through 11 countries in 81 days, the vast majority on your motorcycle, through all manner of terrain? If you ask Victor Carlos Testino of La Plata, Argentina, he'll tell you you'd better be ready to do it alone. And not just because most people whom you invite are likely to consider, for at least a second, the possibility you've gone mad. More on that in a little bit.

Victor was driven to make just such a journey: crossing the U.S. from east to west, going south through Mexico and Central America, and approximately two-thirds of the way south through South America to his hometown of La Plata, located some 35 miles southeast of Argentina's capital of Buenos Aires. A few of you may be inclined to think – and thank goodness for you, because it takes all sorts to make up the world – well, that's not a big deal; I'd do that in a heartbeat. Fine. But would you do it on a motorcycle you'd never ridden before? Never seen *in person* before?

Nature and nurture: It's a real crapshoot.

WHAT CHOICE DID HE HAVE?

If genetics can yield an adventurous spirit, science has yet to find the link, and researchers would do well to study Victor's family. His grandfather was a champion race car driver. In 1956, his father drove a '53 Plymouth from Chicago to La Plata. In 1973, his uncle made the same journey in a single-engine Cessna.

"I think it was a matter of destiny," Victor surmises.

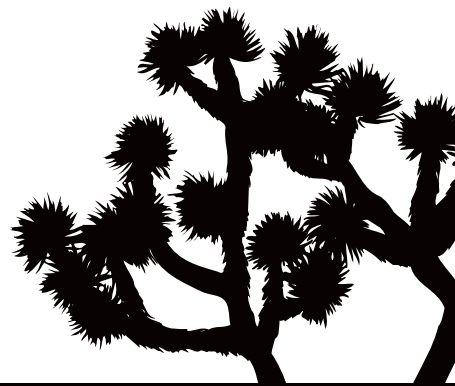
He began riding motorcycles at age 15 and got into dirt track racing. Before long, he began to think seriously about his own tour of the Americas, but two major obstacles loomed: lack of money and lack of peace in Central America.

"There was no way to get through the countries at war like El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Honduras," he relates. "The Central American leg would have been very short."

So Victor put the idea aside and continued becoming the man who eventually would be "lassoing the Americas," as the trip title *Enlazando America* notes in Spanish, on a Buell. He elected to spend his compulsory military service in Antarctica. He studied geology during his college years, except for the one he spent touring Brazil by motorcycle and backpacking around the U.S. and Europe. He joined an engineering firm that specializes in roads and bridges, sometimes in isolated places of extreme natural beauty. For Victor, nurture had assumed the same trajectory as nature.



(A) A sandy beach in Flamingo, Costa Rica. (B) Outside the 221-year-old church in San Ignacio, Mexico. (C) Catia soaking up the sun on a stop: Bahía de los Angeles - Cortez Sea - Baja California, Mexico. (D) Road signs on the way to Gran Sabana, Venezuela. (E) The Ulysses gets a repair after encountering less-than-ideal roads in the Orinoco jungle. (F) Arriving at Mazatlán, Mexico on the Cortez sea.



"I WOULD ASK EVERYBODY, 'WOULD YOU DO THIS ALONE?' BECAUSE ON A TRIP AS DEMANDING AS THIS ONE, YOU CAN'T DEPEND ON SOMEBODY ELSE ..."



THE PLAN COMES TOGETHER

By age 40, Victor realized the time had arrived, and he began to work out the details. He had inherited from his uncle a 1948 FL Panhead and a 1999 Heritage Springer® Softail®, which made him want to tour the Americas on an American motorcycle. Buell had the answer in the Ulysses.®

"I knew I'd be riding on every type of road surface," he notes, "and it looked like the Ulysses could handle it." He says "looked" because test riding one wasn't an option. Victor could read about the Ulysses on the Internet and in motorcycle magazines, but the new model wasn't available in Argentina.

"I have faith in Harley-Davidson," he says, explaining his decision to entrust his fate to the Ulysses. "I knew that quality would not be an issue."

But who, if anybody, would join him? Victor had a list of friends who expressed interest, but one by one they dropped out for a variety of reasons. At one point, nobody else was going, which might have been all right with him.

"I would ask everybody, 'Would you do this alone?' because on a trip as demanding as this one, you can't depend on somebody else," he notes. "If they say yes, then they're ready to go."

One of those who dropped out, however, mentioned somebody with whom Victor hadn't been in contact for some 25 years: Rodolfo García Varela, an old friend who used to plot and fantasize about the journey with him. Rodolfo took perhaps five minutes to make his decision in the affirmative, provided he could bring his girlfriend, Catia Regina Granelli Alves, along for the ride. The group was set.

GO TIME

When Victor first came face-to-face with the Ulysses at a Maryland dealership, he wasn't quite sure what to think. He was struck by the singular profile of the Buell motorcycle and its contrasts to his past motorcycle experiences. He also couldn't help but worry whether the lightweight aluminum and composite materials could withstand the demands of the journey. Victor was soothed, however, when he thumbed the starter and felt the pulse of the Thunderstorm® engine communicating its H-D pedigree. He ran the first 500 miles west according to engine break-in recommendations, and then promptly fell in love with the aggressive torque and engine response. Still, it was a love with limits.

"Riding in the States can be difficult for people who are used to the rules in different countries," he relates. "It takes a lot of patience to ride behind a truck at 70 mph when you've got such a powerful machine in your hands."

After a detour to visit Buell headquarters in East Troy, Victor and Rodolfo steered on to historic Route 66, stretching from Chicago to Los Angeles. The connections between the remnants of the fabled American road aren't always clear, so the route proved to be a bigger test of GPS technology than the varied strengths of the Ulysses. It did, however, prove to be an ideal forum for getting acquainted.

"The Ulysses was revealing things to me constantly," remembers Víctor, "so the riding got better and better. It's a unique personality with a lot of hidden treats."

THE MEAT OF THE TRIP

After reaching the Pacific Ocean in California, Victor, Rodolfo, and Catia stuck to coastal routes on the journey to Panama City, which included an 18-hour ferry ride from La Paz in Mexico's Baja California peninsula to Mazatlán on the mainland. It was in Mexico they began to encounter the types of road conditions that inspired the creation of the Ulysses. Solid, predictable asphalt often gave way to gravel, dirt, or mud, with plenty of surprise bumps and potholes to keep the nerves on edge. Curves became so common that encountering a straight road almost became an event. There, the Ulysses proved itself.

"It manages those conditions very well," Victor reports. "The handling in the curves and the power in the hills were amazing."

Perhaps in response, nature provided some of its own displays of power, and one of the most severe occurred on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, the thinnest part of Mexico between the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean. There, trade winds from the Gulf blow through a gap in the Sierra Madre to the Pacific, often at gale-force strength. During one 25-mile stretch, the group endured crosswinds topping 80 mph.

Border crossings presented an entirely different set of obstacles. Some took minutes, while others took hours. Some were simple, while others proved complicated. One of the more remote crossings from Costa Rica to Panama involved riding over a pair of railroad bridges outfitted with loose wooden planks



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A

to keep wheels and feet from slipping between the ties. A number of Central American crossings involved encounters with individuals hoping to profit from Victor's mission.

"They would say, 'You can't get that bike into this country without my help,'" he recalls. "After a couple of countries, we learned it wasn't true."

Still, some of the most significant challenges of the trip were yet to come. With no road route from Panama to South America, the bikes were packed up for a flight to Caracas, Venezuela. There, the three experienced an episode that even the mighty Ulysses was powerless to mitigate: a hotel room burglary. They lost riding gear, video equipment, and a variety of documents including Victor's diary chronicling the journey so far. He suspects they may have spent too much time there.

"The Ulysses began attracting more attention after leaving the U.S.," he notes. "At first, people might just be curious to see who these travelers are. Later on, people who might be more than just curious may start to take an interest."

The most trying road conditions of the trip also began revealing themselves, including an encounter at 80 mph with a tremendous pothole in Venezuela that destroyed Victor's rear tire and both wheels. The bikes had to be trucked 150 miles

"THE ULYSSES WAS REVEALING THINGS TO ME CONSTANTLY, SO THE RIDING GOT BETTER AND BETTER. IT'S A UNIQUE PERSONALITY WITH A LOT OF HIDDEN TREATS."

(A) Crossing the rail train bridge on the border between Costa Rica and Panama. (B) Catia taking a break in Mexico at the Guatemala border. (C) The Ulysses conquers the very rough mud trails from Boa Vista to Rorainópolis, Amazon jungle, Brazil. (D) "Red bikes" after the mud trails. (E) The incredible Iguazú Falls, between Brazil and Argentina. (F) Entering Argentina. (G) Victor and Rodolfo on the road from Pôrto Velho to Cuiabá, Mato Grosso jungle, Brazil.



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to a shop in Brazil that could provide replacements for the ruined equipment, but the rest of the Ulysses was no worse for the wear. And when the Amazon jungle lies ahead, this is a very good thing. Think rain and mud, and lots of them. In fact, the jungle has swallowed up roads that used to run through it, so to travel south the three had to board a wooden riverboat for a four-day 400-mile stretch of the Amazon and Madeira rivers. Still, the Ulysses did not disappoint.

"We kept to the maintenance schedule, and there were no mechanical problems despite the difficult conditions," reports Victor. "It was great fun to ride, and the frame maintained its rigidity throughout. I'm looking forward to lassoing something else with it. Africa, maybe?"

Victor has a dear wife of 15 years who might have something to say about such an idea. He also has three sons and a daughter who might have something to do with such an idea, sometime in the future. It's human nature – and probably nurture.

For more information on Victor, Rodolfo, and Catia's amazing journey, go to www.enlazandoamerica.com.ar/ing/home.html

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REPUBLICA ARGENTINA
PARQUE NACIONAL IGUAZU
TRIMONIO NATURAL DE LA HUMANIDAD
ENVENIDOS BEN VINDO WELCOME



UKE

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IT MUST HAVE BEEN WARM THAT DAY IN KENOSHA. **KEITH ULICKI** WAS WEARING JUST A T-SHIRT AND JEANS AS HE THREW A LEG OVER ONE OF THE VERY FIRST BUELL RR1000 MOTORCYCLES.

You see, Keith usually wears full gear whenever he rides. But he didn't that day because he didn't expect to ride very far – maybe just around the block. After all, he was really just humoring his friend Erik. Though the two worked side by side for many an evening in the shop at Uke's Harley-Davidson – Keith wrenching on his XR750 and Erik on some new road racer he was building – Keith didn't really have much of an interest in Erik's creation.

"I didn't think the bike was anything special," Keith recalls. "To me, it didn't seem much different than what the Japanese were doing at the time. I figured I'd ride it around the block, tell Erik it was nice. Then he'd be on his way, and I'd go back to work."

He was more of a dirt tracker, anyway. But the next thing he knew, Keith was flying down the highway, amazed at how smooth and steady the new bike was.

"I looked down at the speedometer and saw it said 120!" Keith says. "I had no idea I was going that fast. And I was thinking, 'This is the best road motorcycle I've ever ridden in my life!'"

"So I get back, get off the bike, and with a big sh**-eating grin on my face I said, 'Erik, we gotta start selling these things for you!'"





ABOVE: Keith's father, Frank, in a hill climb race; his mother, Marie, sitting on a late 1930s-model H-D® Flathead.

BELOW: Keith, himself, racing in 1978.

ALL ABOUT MOTORCYCLES

Uke's Harley-Davidson/Buell in Kenosha, Wisconsin has a long and storied history. Keith's father, Frank, opened the business on April 1, 1930, when he was just 21 years old. He was such a motorcycle freak that he never owned a car his entire life. When Keith was born, Frank and Marie brought him home from the hospital in a sidecar.

It's also a dealership with a long legacy of racing. Frank cut his teeth (and probably a few other things!) racing hill climbs and TTs in the summer, and on the ice in the winter. So it was only natural his two sons, Frank and Keith, became racers, as well. Today, virtually every member of the Ulicki clan is an avid rider.

Keith made quite a name for himself on the dirt track, competing professionally from 1969-1985, including a dozen years on the AMA circuit as a factory-supported rider for Harley-Davidson.

He based his racing operation out of the Kenosha dealership, often working late into the night to try to squeeze just a little more speed out of his XR750. When a young entrepreneurial engineer came knocking, wanting to use the shop's dynamometer (or "dyno") to develop his new roadracer, Keith welcomed him in. It gave him someone to talk to during those late nights in the shop. He and Erik Buell soon became good friends.

"We worked side by side on two different projects, but we were after the same thing: trying to go faster on the race track."

In 1985, when Keith finally got tired of all the travel (he never got tired of the racing, he says), he came back to Kenosha and started working full-time at the dealership. It was not long after that (probably 1988, as Keith recollects) when Erik dropped by with one of the first RR1000 models, hoping to convince his somewhat reluctant friend to take it out for a spin.

THE PHILOSOPHY WAS,
**"IF WE CAN GET PEOPLE'S BUTTS INTO THE SEATS,
 WE'LL SELL THESE MOTORCYCLES!"**



THE REST IS HISTORY

When the Buell bug bit at Uke's, it bit hard. "We went after the Buell market very aggressively," Keith says. "Because of the passion I had for racing, it carried over to Buell very easily. It was a perfect fit. I could talk about the bikes and how they handled, and people believed me because of my racing background."

The dealership was one of the first to organize Buell demo rides, for instance. They even took customers and prospects out to East Troy to tour the "factory." The philosophy was, "If we can get people's butts into the seats, we'll sell these motorcycles."

Still, those early years were often lean ones for Buell. Money was tight, as every last dime was poured back into research and development. Just making payroll was sometimes a challenge. On a couple occasions, Uke's helped out in a way that's still paying dividends.

"Basically, Erik called us up and said, 'I need to make payroll – could you buy a bike?' So we did, on two different occasions."

Don't misunderstand, this wasn't charity. It was more of an investment. "It's not like we had lots of money in those days," Keith says. "We didn't. My dad and I truly believed in what Erik was doing, so we bought those two bikes to help keep it going. And for our own benefit, as well."

Today, those two bikes are among the centerpieces of the Uke's museum, located in a loft area of the current dealership, which opened in 2003. They're not just any bikes; they're true collector's items, bearing serial numbers 2 and 5. (Also in the store's possession is one of the very first XB motorcycles built, a Buell Firebolt® XB9R with serial number 7.)

Today, Keith Ulicki and Uke's continue to be among the strongest supporters of the Buell brand. They were among the first to establish a local owner's club in the late 1990s and were very quick to sign up to sponsor a session of Inside Pass®, the Buell track day program introduced this year.

The future? Well, let's just say that Uke's is well-positioned to help spread Buell love to the next generation. When Keith opened the new dealership in 2003, he also opened Uke's Dirt Store next door, which sells ATVs and dirt bikes.

"Years back, when Harley-Davidson was selling the lightweight Aermacchi bikes [named "Sprint" for the U.S. markets], I saw how that drew a lot of young people into our dealership," Keith explains. "The Dirt Store does the same thing. If someone buys their very first motorcycle from us when they're just a kid, they'll think of us – and Buell and Harley-Davidson – later on, when they're ready for the road."

All the better to serve new customers when Buell makes good on its recently announced intention to enter the off-road competition market within two years.

Here's one thing you can count on for sure: When that day comes, Keith Ulicki won't have to be persuaded to try the new bike. He'll be one of the first in line – all geared up and ready to go. **fuel**

LEFT: Ulicki brothers Keith and Frank do battle on the track in 1969. In the foreground is one of the very first XB models off the assembly line, a Firebolt XB9R – "#007", as Keith calls it.



PHOTOGRAPHY: MARK HINES



◀ **XBRR FRONT BRAKE AND 8-PISTON CALIPER KIT**

This powerful racing version of the 6-caliper ZTL™ (Zero Torsional Load™) braking system helps separate Buell XB models from the ordinary. Designed to add extra front braking power, the assembly fits the perimeter-mounted front rotor that comes standard on XB model motorcycles.

XBRR STEERING STABILIZER KIT ▶

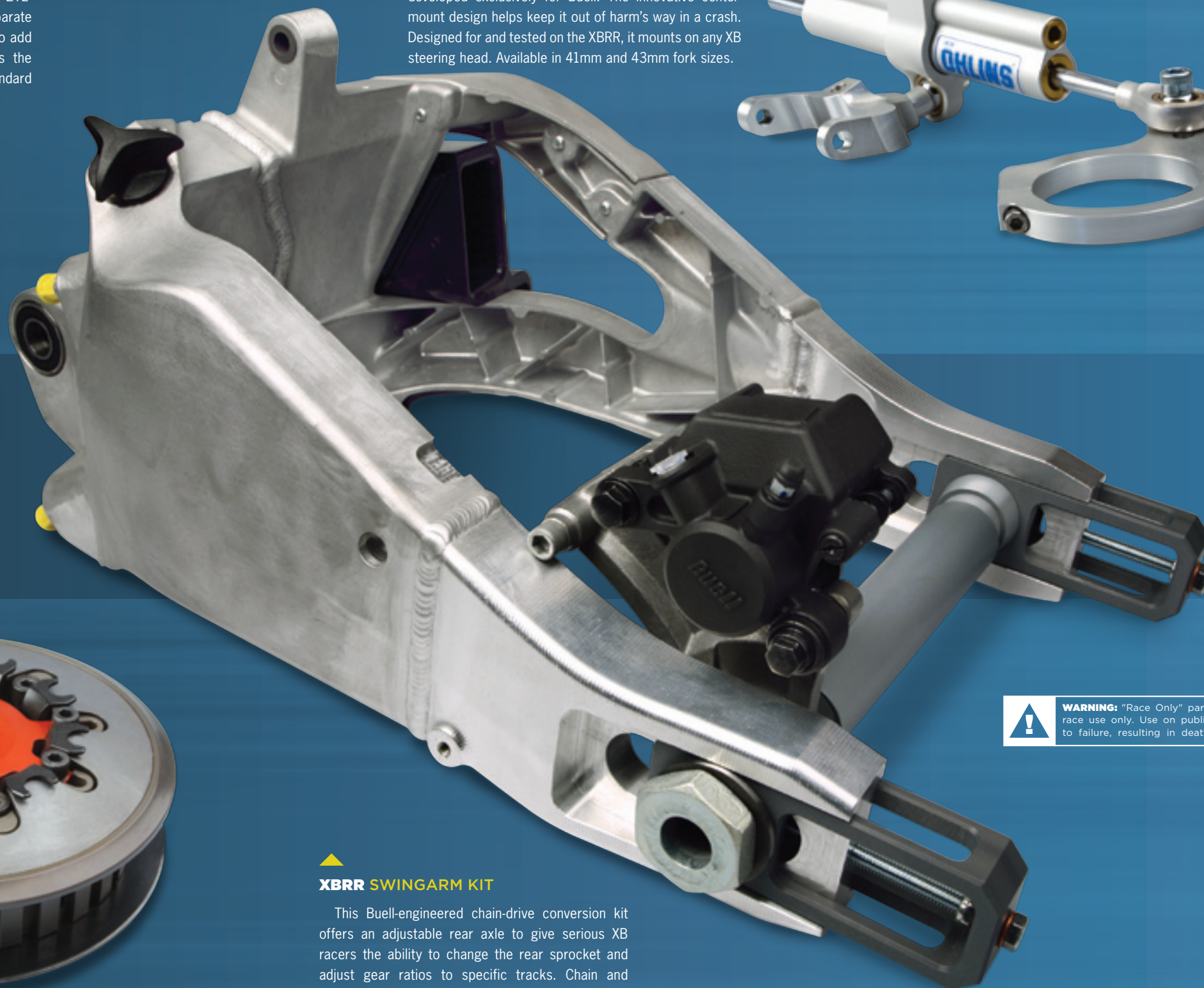
The premium Ohlins® adjustable steering damper was developed exclusively for Buell. The innovative center-mount design helps keep it out of harm's way in a crash. Designed for and tested on the XBRR, it mounts on any XB steering head. Available in 41mm and 43mm fork sizes.



GET YOUR RACE ON

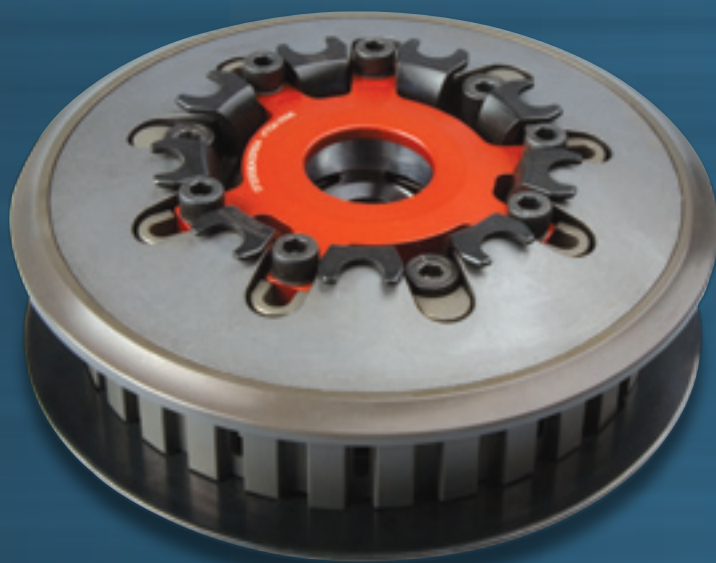
The Buell® XBRR™ was developed to put a high-quality race-ready bike within reach of the privateer racing team. But it has also served as a development platform for race-caliber XB parts.

Buell now offers a line of XBRR-developed parts that makes premium racing components readily available to Buell XB racers at all levels.



XBRR SLIPPER CLUTCH KIT ▶

Developed during the 2006 XBRR racing season, the slipper clutch mitigates forces created during downshifting to help match rear wheel speed with the speed of the engine. The first of its kind for an air-cooled V-twin racing engine, it helps maintain rear-wheel traction during turns to improve lap times. The slipper clutch is manufactured using Kolene® Melonite®-treated steel by STM (Italy). It requires Alto carbonite surface clutch plates (production Buell clutch plates are not recommended), RedLine automatic transmission fluid, and a special installation tool – all available separately.



▶ **XBRR SWINGARM KIT**

This Buell-engineered chain-drive conversion kit offers an adjustable rear axle to give serious XB racers the ability to change the rear sprocket and adjust gear ratios to specific tracks. Chain and sprockets are not included.

WARNING: "Race Only" parts are designed for race use only. Use on public roads could lead to failure, resulting in death or serious injury.



ASK **ABE**

A Buell technical forum with **Abe Askenazi**,
Director of Analysis, Test, and Engineering Process,
Buell Motorcycle Company

Q Abe, with such a short wheelbase, is a steering damper needed? Or, has Buell already incorporated this into the head bearings as part of its engineering mantra of “one component serving more than one function”?

– Dan, XB12Scg owner

A Even though motorcycle dynamics is a very complex subject, we can simply state that one of the tricks to creating a great handling bike is achieving the right balance in its stability and maneuverability attributes. Let’s begin by looking at the Buell definition of *handling* and its components:

Handling: The response properties of a vehicle as perceived and experienced by the rider.

Stability: The property of a vehicle that causes it to remain in a condition of equilibrium or steady motion, or converge back to such a condition when disturbed, as it travels at any attainable speed over any straight or curvy road that is reasonably smooth.

Maneuverability: The predictability in the response of a vehicle when subjected to operator input such as an intended change in direction.

Agility: The quickness or nimbleness of this response.

Precision: The accuracy or exactness of this response.

In other words, *stability* involves making sure the bike is not overly sensitive to road and rider inputs; whereas *maneuverability* requires the bike be athletic in its response, and thus not require too much effort or feel dull to these inputs.

Let’s now dive a little more into the stability side of the equation: Its two main modes are weave and wobble. Weave is a full vehicle snake-like motion (FIG A), whereas wobble is a front-end headshake (FIG B). It turns out that a steering damper does wonders for wobble but tends to be detrimental to weave. Since professional racers find they can control weave better than wobble, they are willing to put up with a bit more of the former in order to deal with a little less of the latter, and thus find a steering damper useful. However, for the street, we feel we should always try to arrive at a recipe that doesn’t require the rider to make such a compromise.

Hence, Buell exerts a colossal number of brain cells coming up with the right recipe of cg location, mass centralization, chassis stiffness, and chassis geometry, so we are able to deliver a great handling bike, while foregoing the need of a steering damper or the complexity of designing damping into the bearings. At Buell, we always aim to live by Erik’s overarching mantra: “Simplicity through sophisticated engineering.”

... Buell exerts a colossal number of brain cells coming up with the right recipe of cg location, mass centralization, chassis stiffness, and chassis geometry ...

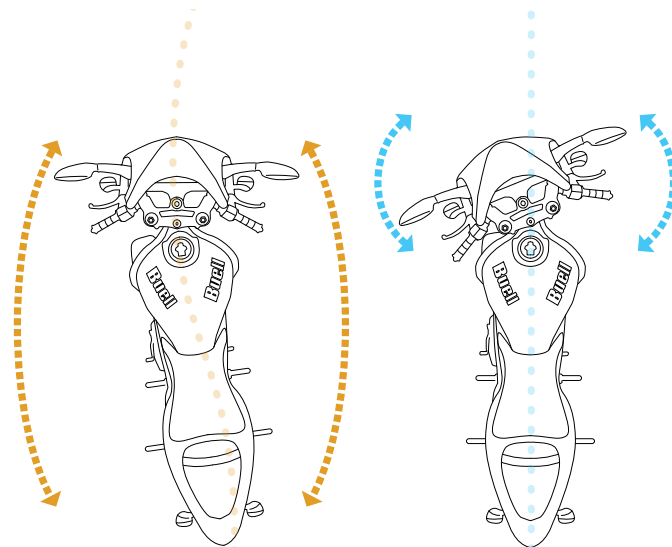


FIG A - WEAVE

FIG B - WOBBLE



FOR THE UNCOMPROMISING RIDER, THERE'S DIABLO.

The International Press and riders from all over the world say it: The Buell homologated Diablo T is the best tire in terms of grip, rider feedback and stability. Perfect for sport-oriented street riding, the Diablo T assures fast warm-up and equally impressive performance in wet and dry conditions.

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PIRELLI

POWER IS NOTHING WITHOUT CONTROL.