

It's a team made up of friends, family and dedicated riders.

Racing is full of ups and downs.

But through it all,

**THE PASSION IS ALWAYS THERE**

On June 7, 2008 at Elkhart Lake, the hard work finally paid off.

A first place finish aboard the Buell® 1125R™ in the SunTrust MOTO-ST SuperSport Twins class.

Congratulations to Shawn Higbee, Steve Crevier, Bruce Rossmeyer's Daytona Racing and everyone on the Richie Morris Racing Team.

We're proud of your accomplishments and even prouder to call you part of the Buell family.



Own the corners:



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# fuell®

THE BUELL® SOURCE SUMMER 2008



25TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION  
THE FACES OF BUELL  
QUARTER-CENTURY OF INNOVATION  
THE ORIGINAL ROAD WARRIOR



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PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVE GESS



THE GREAT AMERICAN MOTORCYCLE & ATV SHOWS

THE GREAT AMERICAN MOTORCYCLE & ATV SHOWS

100 YEARS LATER  
BUELL RR 1000

THE BUELL RR 1000 IS AN AMERICAN DESIGN AND POWERED STREET LEGAL SUPERBIKE. DEVELOPED AND BUILT BY ERIK BUELL'S BUELL MOTOR COMPANY. IT FEATURES A HARLEY DAVIDSON ENGINE BUILT IN THE STATE OF THE ART ROAD RACING CHASSIS. FULLY TRIANGULATED FOR GREAT STIFFNESS AND LOW WEIGHT. THE BIKE WEIGHS ONLY 395 POUNDS IN STREET TRIM AND PROVIDES EXCEPTIONALLY RESPONSIVE HANDLING AND TERRIFIC PERFORMANCE. A UNIQUE RUBBER MOUNTED DRIVE TRAIN ISOLATES VIBRATION FROM THE CHASSIS, ALLOWING THE MOTOR TO BE A STRESSOR. USING THE LATEST IN FRAME TECHNOLOGY AND A RADICAL FRAME DESIGN, THIS BIKE A LOOK AND FEEL LIKE A RACER ON THE STREET. THE BIKE CAN BE USED AS A STREET TRIM OR AS A RACER FOR USE IN THE TWINS GRAND PRIX OR FORMULA X. AVAILABLE FROM THE BUELL MOTOR COMPANY.

414-392

**10**  
Erik Buell unveils the RR1000.

Editor:  
Matt King  
Design and Production:  
gsdesign.com

Visit Buell Motorcycle Company on the Internet at [buell.com](http://buell.com).

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## BUELL LINES »



... certain people there laughed at me ... because I wanted to talk about my 200-year vision.



When Buell Motorcycle Company first became a part of Harley-Davidson, certain people there laughed at me. Not because what we wanted to do was impossible (though some probably thought that), but because I wanted to talk about my 200-year vision.

That's right, years ago I wrote a 200-year vision for the company.

You see, everybody knows the story by now that I started the company because I wanted to build a race bike for myself. And that's true. But after the first two rough years and the banning of the race bike, I had to sit down and decide what I really wanted to do for the rest of my life.

As I backed off from the daily panic and thought about the future, I found I could envision a much bigger picture. I've always loved transportation – especially personal transportation. Because to me it represents freedom. I think it's a core need for the human race to be able to travel, to be able to go see someone, to look them in the eye and talk to them. And the more people are free to do that, the better off we all are.

I started imagining what the world might look like in 2183 and how people will be getting from place to place (asteroid to asteroid?). I don't buy into mass transportation as the only way of the future. I think personal transportation is always going to be needed and very much desired. So I backed it up from there and saw motorcycles as a means for people to maintain their personal independence well into the future. If they can be athletic and agile and fun to ride, all the better.

So I started seeing what a Buell of 200 years could be and what image could make us desirable then, and the worries of tomorrow became much more manageable. When you can see 200 years as your stretch, envisioning 25 years becomes much more real, and 10 years very easy to plan. You now have a real defining road stretching off into the distance. You may need to stop for fuel or even repairs along the way, but you know where you're going, and you can enjoy the ride. Otherwise your business would be like a rally car race, driving at top speed while someone screeches out new directions at every moment, and there's an impending rollover if you hear or act wrong.

Another motivation for having this vision that went beyond having a plan for my career, was that I wanted to put people to work. I grew up in Pittsburgh, a steel town, and watched it fall apart as the jobs went away in the 1970s. I had just seen Harley-Davidson lay off 40 percent of its workforce. I wanted to help counter that trend, in whatever small way I could. And that's why Buell employees are so important to me today. You hear a lot of people talk about how Buell is a family – and that's just about the highest compliment I can possibly receive.

Yes, we've come a long way since 1983. But the way I see it, we've got 175 more years to go. Is that crazy? Maybe so. But it's the kind of crazy that makes it all worthwhile.

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](mailto:fuelleditor@gsdesign.com), or mail them to *Fuell*, 3700 W. Juneau Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53208.

## SECRETS REVEALED

I would propose you add a warning label to the XB12X, warning all riders they will be selling any other presently owned motorcycles after riding a Ulysses.® I've read about these for two years but never had the opportunity to ride one. There was a great deal on a leftover 2007 at a dealership 60 miles away. I added the bags and higher windshield before taking delivery (which was one month before you announced the XB12XT model).

I really didn't see this coming but should have after doing my research. The Uly is the best-kept secret in the industry. More horsepower, less weight, fantastic ride, more versatility, and I've adjusted to the seat height quickly although I'm only 5'-10". I forgot how FUN riding can be!

**Mark Stanforth**  
Kokomo, Indiana

## HAPPILY EVER AFTER

I am the "infamous" wife you blasted for throwing out my husband's *Fuell* magazine. It was actually quite funny. I thought it would be nice to keep this story line going for yet another issue ...

Actually my comment is about Buell customer service. After one of your employees read the article (he obviously knows of wives like me), he took it upon himself to send us HIS personal issue. Now that is what I call Buell customer service!

I personally thank him for having my back, and making sure my lovely husband can have the issue he gave me so much "grief" about! I'm doing my homework for my new bike and his customer service may have just landed another Buell customer. Thank you for your articles. I am grateful that now there is a magazine my husband will actually read!

**Rosie Moreland**  
Fort Worth, Texas

## OBSCENE LANGUAGE

I just installed the XBRR front brake and radial master cylinder to my Firebolt® ... only one word works ... OBSCENE. Of course, in a good way!

**Hans Bertelsen**  
Renton, Washington

## CLASS OF 2008

I picked up a new 2008 XB9SX this spring and still can't believe I own such a sweet ride. There are many times I open the garage and just stare at it. I'm 42 years old and this was my college graduation present to myself. I've been riding for 22 years and truly believe this is the best-handling bike I've ever ridden. I've owned the bike under a month and already have to take it in for the 1,000-mile checkup! Thanks, Buell, for an engineering marvel!

**Tom Jankowski**  
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

## WHAT A GREAT DEAL

I've always had a thing for Buells. I first saw one in the back of a guy's truck and was curious what it was. I'd never seen a naked sportbike before – it was so cool – a Buell S1 Lightning.® Wow! I thought I'd never be able to own one of those. Fast-forward to last year. I was looking for an affordable bike and went into a metric bike store, only to be very disappointed with the lack of help and knowledge. I decided to look at a used Firebolt at the H-D shop up the street and was amazed at how friendly the staff was. I ended up buying a 2007 XB9SX. It just rolled 4,500 miles on the odometer.

**Todd G. Brisbois**  
Bellevue, Nebraska

*Todd, I'm glad you found the Buell dealership experience helpful and positive. Buell is working hard to make the Buell motorcycle buying experience an informative and enjoyable process. —Ed.*

I've been riding for 22 years and truly believe this is the best-handling bike I've ever ridden.



## TALK BACK TO US:

Send us an e-mail ([fuelleditor@gsdesign.com](mailto: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 »**



PHOTOGRAPHY: BRIAN J. NELSON

**MOTO-ST SERIES**

**Barber 500K**  
Barber  
Motorsports Park  
Leeds, Alabama  
July 19-20

**Heartland Park 500K**  
Heartland Park  
Topeka, Kansas  
August 16-17

**Thunderbolt 500K**  
New Jersey  
Motorsports Park  
Millville, New Jersey  
August 29-30

**8 Hours at Daytona**  
Daytona  
International  
Speedway  
Daytona Beach, Florida  
October 17-18

*Schedule is subject to change.*

# BIG WIN AT MOTO-ST

HIGBEE, CREVIER, AND THE 1125R™ TAKE FIRST

The Buell® 1125R chalked up a significant race win when the No. 8 Bruce Rossmeyer's Daytona Racing Buell 1125R, ridden by Shawn Higbee and Steve Crevier, crossed the finish line first at the MOTO-ST Road America 500K in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin on June 7. The team was first overall in claiming the top spot in the Buell Motorcycle Company SuperSport Twins (SST) class. It was the first major North American professional road racing win for the Buell 1125R.

Weather was the story of the race as rapidly changing conditions delayed the start and shortened the event from its scheduled three-hour run to one hour and 40 minutes. But the No. 8 took the lead on Lap 17 (of 36) and pulled away to a 31-second victory over the second-place No. 6 Aprilia USA/Lloyd Brothers Motorsports Aprilia Tuono 1000R.



**JAMES GANG/HOBAN BROTHERS TAKE GST POINTS LEAD**

In the BMW Motorcycles GrandSport Twins (GST) class, the No. 70 James Gang/Hoban Brothers Racing Buell XB12R, ridden by Paul James and Jeff Johnson, took over the season class lead with a third-place finish. Sponsored by Harley-Davidson/Buell of Appleton, the team moved ahead of the No. 7 Richie Morris Racing/Hal's Harley-Davidson/Buell XB12R ridden by Clint Brotz and Dan Bilansky, which retired early with a rear wheel bearing failure.

"Tire choice was critical," said James. "We made the switch to DOT tires during our final pit stop, but the Pirelli rain tires the class leaders used appeared to hold up for the whole race distance, and in hindsight those were the better choice. But it's great to have a solid finish on our home track."

# BAD GUYS, BEWARE



The new Buell Ulysses® Police XB12XP goes confidently where other police motorcycles fear to tread. Based on the rugged and popular Buell Ulysses XB12X, it's built to be a nimble pursuit-and-patrol vehicle that is also capable of travel over a variety of terrain. From super-smooth highways, to beat-up inner-city streets, to unpaved back-country roads, wherever the perps flee, the Ulysses Police can surely follow.

## Congratulate Abe

The Buell Motorcycle Company is proud to congratulate Abe Askenazi, Senior Director of Analysis, Test and Engineering Process, on being named one of the "Top 100 under 50 Diverse Executive Leaders" for 2008. Abe is one of four Harley-Davidson Motor Company employees so recognized by Diversity MBA magazine.

According to the magazine, winners are selected "based on their position, the size of the budget they manage, scope of responsibility, civic achievement, and the Masters in Business or graduate degree they hold." Award winners will be honored at a Chicago event in September 2008.

Way to go, Abe!

## on buell.com

**LOG IN, CHECK IT OUT!**

Log in to the Owners section of buell.com following the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration for complete post-event coverage. You'll find photos, interviews, video clips, and more!

**READY FOR MORE?**

Just because the Anniversary festivities are over doesn't mean there aren't great reasons to ride or take a trip! Visit the Events Calendar at buell.com for a complete listing of Buell demo events, Buell company events (such as Inside Pass track days), dealer events, Buell races, and more.



## BUELL INSIDE PASS™ TRACK DAY EVENTS

Ride the 1125R and other Buell motorcycles (including select 2009 models) at the "Ultimate Track Day" event! Visit buell.com to register for a 2008 date. But hurry – spots are filling up fast!

**REMAINING 2008 SCHEDULE:**

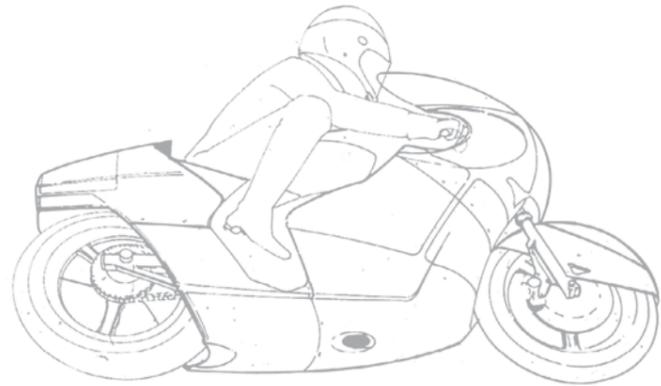
<b>Mid-Ohio</b> Mansfield, Ohio September 3	<b>Eagles Canyon Raceway</b> Decatur, Texas September 23	<b>Las Vegas Motor Speedway</b> Las Vegas, Nevada October 2	<b>New Jersey Motorsports Park</b> Millville, New Jersey October 12	<b>Willow Springs</b> Rosamond, California November 3	<b>Infineon Raceway</b> Sonoma, California November 17
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**IT COULD HAVE BEEN OVER BEFORE IT STARTED.**

When the racing authorities pulled the rug out from under his new race bike, it would have been easy to pack it in. Instead, Erik Buell changed course, steering his vision away from the track and toward the street. A quarter-century later, the Buell Motorcycle Company is doing for riders around the world what Erik originally set out to do for himself: building high-performance, high-quality motorcycles that are flat-out fun to ride.

TWIST TO DEFEAT



# BATTLE TWINS



AN EXCERPT  
FROM THE BOOK  
**25 YEARS OF BUELL**  
BY COURT CANFIELD  
AND DAVE GESS

AVAILABLE AT  
whitehorsepress.com

The pegasus has been the symbol of the Buell motorcycle since its beginnings. A pegasus appears on the Buell family crest. A more appropriate symbol might have been the phoenix, the mythological bird that rises triumphantly from its own ashes. Erik Buell certainly emulated this bird with the collapse of the RW750 business and the rise of the Buell Motor Company from the ashes. This would not be the last time he would perform a miracle.

The major feature article on the RW750 in *Cycle* magazine attracted a lot of attention even if it was too late to save the RW750. Rex Marsee approached Erik Buell in late summer of 1985 to build a show bike for Vetter Industries, where Marsee was head of marketing. Rex approached Erik with the concept of making a show "Bike of the Future" off the RW, but Erik was uncomfortable with this because he felt there was no future in two-strokes anymore. But he saw the chance to accomplish what he had wanted to do at Harley-Davidson: make a sportbike with a Harley-Davidson® engine. The Harley Owners Group® also had asked him if he wanted to build a replacement chassis for Lucifer's Hammer, their championship-winning Battle of the Twins (BOTT) bike.

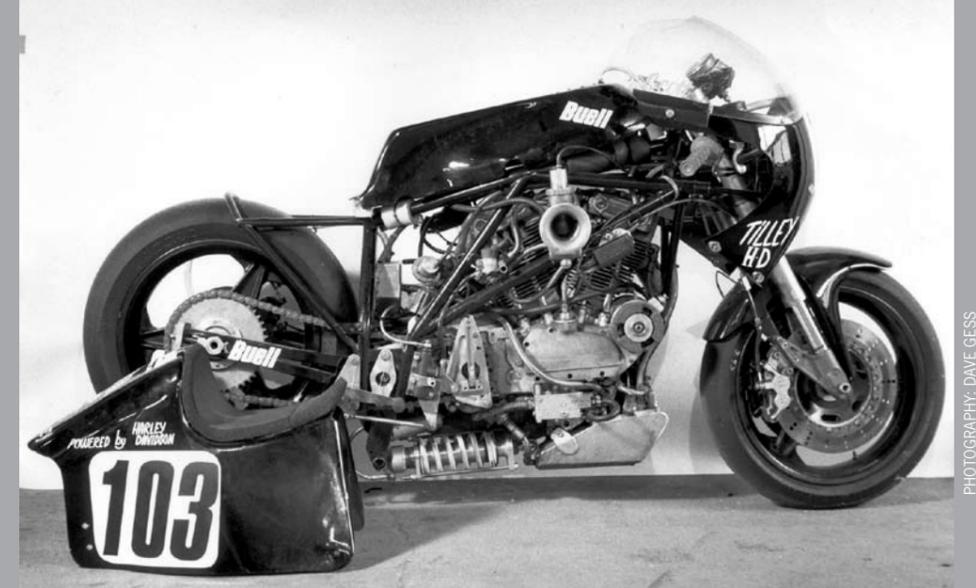
Designing a BOTT race bike would have been relatively easy, a marginally functioning show bike even easier. He had \$6,000 from Marsee, an XR1000 engine provided by Clyde Denzer in Harley's race department, and a few thousand dollars from the Harley Owners Group. Denzer had also arranged for Erik to use computer time in Harley's Computer Design Facility. Erik, however, was thinking much bigger than that. He wanted to build a completely street-legal superbike that would be eligible to run in the Daytona 200. It would become the RR1000.

The first hurdle was making it competitive. These days the idea of taking a Harley-Davidson engine and building a competitive superbike class racer would be laughed at, with good reason. Things were a lot different in 1985.

Modern superbikes make 170 hp and weigh 400 pounds right off the showroom floor. They are designed as race bikes first and then massaged into street bikes. In 1985 the superbikes started as actual street bikes. The 750cc multi-cylinder (twins were allowed 1000cc engines) sportbikes that formed the base for the Superbike class were lucky to put out 130 hp. The minimum weight for a multi was 390 pounds, while a twin was allowed as little as 320. The frames were adequate for street riding but simply could not cope when pushed to the limits of the tires, the engines, and the riders. To compensate, they added braces and gussets to the frames and swingarms. Their handling remained suspect. Brave men rode those things.

Erik's combined knowledge of building a frame for the violent RW750 and refining frames for Harley-Davidson was a unique tool set. He designed an extremely lightweight, exceptionally stiff chassis for the RR1000 that used the engine as a stressed member, even though rubber mounted. Knowing the violent shaking forces inherent in the XR1000 motor, Erik knew he had to use rubber mounting to have any chance of a lightweight chassis surviving 200 miles at Daytona and use on the street. But none of the rubber-mount chassis that Erik had worked on at Harley-Davidson had anything near the stiffness he needed for racing, so he invented the Uniplanar™ isolation system that has been used on every Harley-Davidson-powered Buell from that day forward. He had access to run finite element analysis on Harley-Davidson's computers to maximize stiffness and minimize weight. Not having the time to do so himself, he made a deal with Steve Wentworth, an engineer at Harley-Davidson who did some racing, to run the analysis work on Erik's designs on the computers at Harley-Davidson after hours, in exchange for a free frame and other chassis parts at cost.

No thought was given to expense or manufacturability; every tube was sized just right to meet the needs, some tubes having as little as .028-inch wall. In street trim, the RR weighed 390 pounds. Race bikes could get to the



The Lucifer's Hammer II bike with body panels removed. This XR motor had been seriously modified and included a 5-speed transmission.

PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVE GESS

Erik, however, was thinking much bigger than that. He wanted to build a completely street-legal superbike that would be eligible to run in the Daytona 200.  
**It would become the RR1000.**



Erik discusses carburetor mounting with Scott Zampach and Henry Duga.

class minimum of 320 pounds. Low weight, high stiffness, and Grand Prix chassis dimensions resulted in a bike with exceptional handling and the ability to use all of its available power accelerating out of turns. The speed you gain coming out of the turn is more valuable to a racer than speed reached at the end of the straight; this would be important because the bike would always be at a horsepower disadvantage. The XR motor would be lucky to get 105 hp.

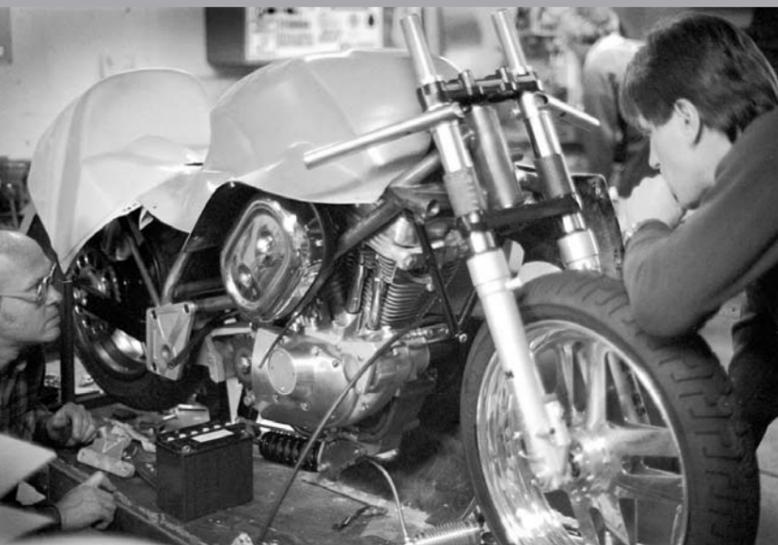
To further overcome the horsepower disadvantage, Erik used advanced aerodynamics. Reducing drag means less horsepower is needed to achieve a certain speed. Almost no thought was given to this on the street bikes of the period, and the resulting bikes were about as aerodynamically efficient as a Freightliner truck. Buell had worked hard on this for the RW750; the RR fairing was a further evolution. Many Bonneville records were set with RW and RR bodywork, most of these on other motorcycles like Scott Guthrie's fabulous Yamahas. The RR is perhaps the most aerodynamic motorcycle ever offered to the public. The Suzuki Hayabusa likely comes close to bettering it, but if it does it is not by much.

The second hurdle to qualifying the RR1000 was the "street legal" part. Some sort of Federal regulation covers almost every part of a motorcycle. Turn signals need DOT-approved lenses and reflectors. They need to be located according to a formula published in a book of regulations that was over six inches thick! That is just the turn signals. Headlights, wheels, brake lines, tires, etc. all had to meet a regulation. Erik did not have the resources to certify new items so most of these parts came from existing motorcycles. The turn signals and headlight came from a Yamaha and the taillight was from a Moto Guzzi. The mountain of regulations was enormous, but Buell just kept climbing until he had designed a street-legal bike.

Erik took the money provided by Marsee and Harley, combined it with all the cash he could scrape up, and built the show bike in a couple of months of sleepless nights and lost weekends. It debuted at the Los Angeles Great American Motorcycle Show in January 1986, and was a fully functional motorcycle at that time. Between traveling to these shows, Erik finished the Lucifer's Hammer II chassis and delivered it to Don Tilley in late winter of 1986. Tilley would tune the bike and get it set up for its debut at the AMA BOTT race during the annual Daytona race week.



The mountain of regulations was enormous, but **Buell just kept climbing** until he had designed a street-legal bike.



TOP: Erik Buell, Jim Schneider, and Brian McLaughlin discuss developing the RR1200 from the RR1000.

BOTTOM: Erik Buell and Jim Schneider contemplate how to fit the Evolution® 1200 engine into the RR frame.

While Erik was off doing the shows and putting in insane hours designing and building Lucifer's Hammer II, the Pittsburgh Performance Products company [Erik's side business selling race parts. -Ed.] continued to chug along generating meager but much-needed cash flow. As the racing season got under way, Dymag wheel sales would grow and the brake disc business was doing rather well. Erik had obtained U.S. distribution rights for AP Lockheed brake calipers and master cylinders, as well as Interstate Leathers, and had a busy little race distribution business with the exchange rate at one dollar to one pound sterling. In addition, Honda was talking quite seriously about licensing Erik's brake rotor technology for use on production motorcycles. They had contracted Daido to do a full set of tests on prototypes, and the results of the testing were everything Buell could have wanted. If this deal went through, Erik would be set.

Erik needed help to keep this all together. Enter Kim Pine (now Tordik) and Henry Duga. Henry would machine the brake rotors and assemble wheels; and Kim would take and ship orders, as well as pay the bills and keep the books. They both started in early 1986, Henry in April and Kim right after Memorial Day.

The Dymag modular wheel concept allowed Erik to keep a supply of different size rims along with hubs for many popular bikes. When an order came in, Henry would take the proper hub and rim and assemble them using a high-tech 3M glue. This was a very trick glue that, after opening, had to be kept in the refrigerator in Erik's kitchen to keep it from setting up. After assembly, the wheels would be heat-cured, in Erik's kitchen oven.

Despite Erik's efforts at the shows and a number of very nice magazine articles, orders were not flooding the phone lines. He had gotten a few deposits for RRs and sold a few frames to Harley-Davidson for evaluation, but things were not going well.

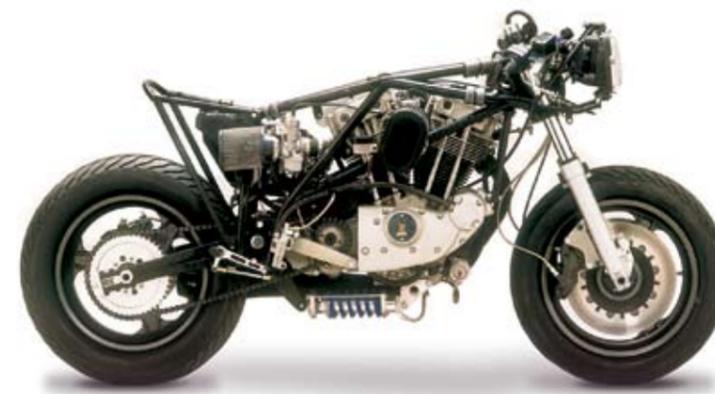
Erik knew that he needed access to the Harley-Davidson dealer network and a deal to purchase the 50 XR1000 engines Harley had in the Parts & Accessories department. Unfortunately, he was running into a stone wall trying to get Harley-Davidson to help him with either of these things.

To top it off, the brake rotor business took a stunning blow. Honda had forwarded an RFQ (request for quote) for tens of thousands of pounds of brake rotor material, and had invited Buell's Japanese sales agent to the Honda mansion, which was the final nod that formal business was about to commence. But the disc material supplier, Clad Metals of Canonsburg, Pennsylvania (who had the only rolling mill that could make the brake material and the patents on processing the material), was purchased by Pfizer, Inc. Erik was informed that Pfizer's corporate attorneys had told Clad Metals to shut down any business for Buell, as Pfizer did not want to be in the business of vehicle brakes due to liability concerns.

Erik had used up all his cash and borrowed everything he could from family. The racing season was over, and with it came the usual slowdown in wheel and brake orders. Even if he had had brake orders he was almost out of blanks to make rotors anyway. 1986 was not a very good year.

Fortunately Erik is an optimistic, joyful, passionate person. He always sees a way to make things work, to solve the toughest problems and fight his way through to the other side. Obstacles are meant to be overcome; adversity is something you fight through. During those very dark days, he used to have a Nietzsche quote over the computer in his office: "That which does not kill us makes us stronger."

Despite this well of strength, 1986 seemed to be wearing him down. He lacked his usual joie de vivre and generally looked terrible. It was the look boxers get just before the referee calls a TKO. Erik was going down, and it was very hard to watch.



#### THE DEALER CRUISE STORY

Just as matters seemed darkest in 1986, Devin Battley appeared with his crazy plan. He would smuggle Erik onboard the Winter Dealer Cruise in January 1987, and he could make his pitch to Vaughn Beals and sell bikes to dealers. All the top dealers would be onboard.

"I told Erik, all the bigshots will be there, and they won't be able to hide from you," Battley recalls. Battley was a new Harley-Davidson dealer in 1986 who knew Erik from road racing and was a customer of Pittsburgh Performance Products. His district manager Bob Thompson had asked him in the summer of '86 if he had seen the bike Erik Buell was building. When he checked it out, he decided he had to have one and put down a deposit. The bike did not show up when expected and phone calls to Erik revealed Buell's predicament. Battley thought this bike too cool to let fade away, so he proposed that Erik join him as his guest on the annual dealer cruise.

"I wasn't married or dating anyone at the time so I had no one else to take with me," Battley said. "They didn't specify who my guest had to be, so I took Erik."

Erik had some brochures produced hastily and headed off to Miami. Kim and Henry remained in Mukwonago anxiously awaiting the results. "We really didn't have anything to do but wait," Duga said. "There were no orders to fill, and if Erik didn't come back with orders for bikes, we were done."

"When he walked onboard, Beals and Bleustein gave us a look of, 'What the hell is he doing here,'" said Battley. "They didn't know what to say."

"The first two days of the cruise were so rough that the only ones not hiding in their cabins were a handful of dealers and Erik. These guys were all ex-racers. I guess racers don't get seasick," continued Battley. These "guys" were Bill Bartels, Don Tilley, Frank 'Uke' Ulicki, and Devin Battley. It is no coincidence that all of them would go on to become some of the most successful of Buell's dealers.

Erik was getting increasingly agitated as time passed, and there was no way to talk with anyone he needed to talk to. When Vaughn Beals finally appeared, Battley immediately cornered him and gave him the pitch. He told Beals that Buell could give Harley-Davidson a performance image with no risk to Harley. Beals apparently had been thinking the same thing but was unsure what the dealers would think of it. "He told me, 'That is just what I needed to hear,'" said Battley. Beals got a table set up so Erik could make his pitch to the dealers. Beals also charged Jeff Bleustein with figuring out how to get those 50 engines to Erik. Bleustein would get Buell Motor Company set up as a dealer and sell him engines on credit. This allowed Erik to get a bike assembled, delivered, and paid for before he had to pay for the engine. Considering how broke Erik was, this was a huge plus for him.

Erik left the cruise with orders and deposits for 25 bikes. Buell Motor Company was formally incorporated as a Wisconsin company February 26, 1987. fuel



TOP: The first RR1000 sits in Erik's shop, with Dan Chivington's Suzuki in back.

BOTTOM: Erik Buell with the first RR1000 made. Erik called Dave Gess wanting a picture of the bike before he shipped it off to California for the bike show. Dave said they could get into the studio that night, but Erik was shipping the bike that afternoon. The only choice was to grab a quick snapshot outside.



# THE SILVER COLLECTION

Twenty-five years of Buell has produced a wide-ranging collection of motorcycles, from the original square-four two-stroke RW750 to the liquid-cooled 1125R. What they all have in common is the ability to outshine the competition in the ways that matter most to their riders.



**RW750**

YEARS PRODUCED	1984
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	2
HORSEPOWER@RPM	163.5@10500
TORQUE@RPM	83.6@9500
DISPLACEMENT	748

84



**S2 THUNDERBOLT\***

YEARS PRODUCED	1994-1996
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	1,694
HORSEPOWER@RPM	76@5800
TORQUE@RPM	76@5200
DISPLACEMENT	1203

94



**S2T THUNDERBOLT\***

YEARS PRODUCED	1996
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	429
HORSEPOWER@RPM	91@5800
TORQUE@RPM	87@5200
DISPLACEMENT	1203

96



**S3T THUNDERBOLT\***

YEARS PRODUCED	97-98, 00-02
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	1,779
HORSEPOWER@RPM	91@5800
TORQUE@RPM	87@5200
DISPLACEMENT	1203

97



**S3 THUNDERBOLT\***

YEARS PRODUCED	1997-2001
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	2,670
HORSEPOWER@RPM	91@5800
TORQUE@RPM	87@5200
DISPLACEMENT	1203

97



**M2 CYCLONE\***

YEARS PRODUCED	1997-2002
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	8,803
HORSEPOWER@RPM	83@5800
TORQUE@RPM	80@4500
DISPLACEMENT	1203

97



**X1M LIGHTNING\* MILLENIUM**

YEARS PRODUCED	2000
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	661
HORSEPOWER@RPM	101@6000
TORQUE@RPM	90@5500
DISPLACEMENT	1203

00



**RR1000 BATTLEWIN**

YEARS PRODUCED	1987
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	51
HORSEPOWER@RPM	70@5600
TORQUE@RPM	70@4400
DISPLACEMENT	997.5

87



**RS1200 WESTWIND**

YEARS PRODUCED	1989-1992
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	208
HORSEPOWER@RPM	68@6000
TORQUE@RPM	72@4000
DISPLACEMENT	1203

89



**S1 LIGHTNING\***

YEARS PRODUCED	1996-1998
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	4,680
HORSEPOWER@RPM	91@5800
TORQUE@RPM	85@5200
DISPLACEMENT	1203

96



**RR1200 BATTLEWIN**

YEARS PRODUCED	1988-1990
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	59
HORSEPOWER@RPM	68@6000
TORQUE@RPM	72@4000
DISPLACEMENT	1203

88



**RSS1200 WESTWIND**

YEARS PRODUCED	1991-1992
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	98
HORSEPOWER@RPM	68@6000
TORQUE@RPM	72@4000
DISPLACEMENT	1203

91



**S1 WHITE LIGHTNING\***

YEARS PRODUCED	1998
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	2,210
HORSEPOWER@RPM	101@6000
TORQUE@RPM	90@5500
DISPLACEMENT	1203

98

99

**X1 LIGHTNING\***

YEARS PRODUCED	1999-2002
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	11,228
HORSEPOWER@RPM	101@6000
TORQUE@RPM	90@5500
DISPLACEMENT	1203

**FIREBOLT® XB9R**

YEARS PRODUCED	2001-2007
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	7,484
HORSEPOWER@RPM	92@7200
TORQUE@RPM	72@5500
DISPLACEMENT	984



**FIREBOLT® XB12R**

YEARS PRODUCED	2004-
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	9,166
HORSEPOWER@RPM	103@6800
TORQUE@RPM	84@6000
DISPLACEMENT	1203



**XBRR**

YEARS PRODUCED	2007
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	56
HORSEPOWER@RPM	150@8000
TORQUE@RPM	100@6400
DISPLACEMENT	1338



**1125R™**

YEARS PRODUCED	2008-
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	2,881
HORSEPOWER@RPM	146@9800
TORQUE@RPM	82@8000
DISPLACEMENT	1175



**M2L CYCLONE®**

YEARS PRODUCED	2001-2002
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	1,761
HORSEPOWER@RPM	91@6000
TORQUE@RPM	85@4900
DISPLACEMENT	1203



**LIGHTNING® CITY X XB9SX**

YEARS PRODUCED	2005-
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	7,649
HORSEPOWER@RPM	92@7200
TORQUE@RPM	70@5500
DISPLACEMENT	984

**ULYSSES® XB12X**

YEARS PRODUCED	2006-
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	6,489
HORSEPOWER@RPM	103@6800
TORQUE@RPM	84@6000
DISPLACEMENT	1203



**ULYSSES® XB12XT**

YEARS PRODUCED	2008-
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	831
HORSEPOWER@RPM	103@6800
TORQUE@RPM	84@6000
DISPLACEMENT	1203



**BLAST®**

YEARS PRODUCED	2000-
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	20,805
HORSEPOWER@RPM	34@6500
TORQUE@RPM	30@5500
DISPLACEMENT	492



**LIGHTNING® LOW XB9SL**

YEARS PRODUCED	2003-2004
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	1,513
HORSEPOWER@RPM	92@7200
TORQUE@RPM	70@5500
DISPLACEMENT	984



**LIGHTNING® XB12Scg**

YEARS PRODUCED	2005-
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	3,692
HORSEPOWER@RPM	103@6800
TORQUE@RPM	84@6000
DISPLACEMENT	1203



**LIGHTNING® XB9S**

YEARS PRODUCED	2003-2004
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	4,332
HORSEPOWER@RPM	92@7200
TORQUE@RPM	70@5500
DISPLACEMENT	984



**LIGHTNING® XB12S**

YEARS PRODUCED	2004-
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	10,847
HORSEPOWER@RPM	103@6800
TORQUE@RPM	84@6000
DISPLACEMENT	1203



**LIGHTNING® LONG XB12Ss**

YEARS PRODUCED	2006-
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	4,826
HORSEPOWER@RPM	103@6800
TORQUE@RPM	84@6000
DISPLACEMENT	1203



**LIGHTNING® SUPER TT XB12STT**

YEARS PRODUCED	2007-
APPROX. NUMBER BUILT	1,755
HORSEPOWER@RPM	103@6800
TORQUE@RPM	84@6000
DISPLACEMENT	1203



# PASSION PLAYERS

Part of the Buell philosophy is that everyone's job is just as important as everyone else's. The result is a group of employees as dedicated and passionate about what they do as you'll find anywhere in the world.



## BODY AND SOUL

### SHAWN HIGBEE

BUELL TEST ENGINEER/BUELL RACER  
10 YEARS AT BUELL

It's one thing to pour your soul into a company you work for. It's another to offer your body, as Shawn Higbee has done on repeated occasions. Most recently, Shawn broke his leg, shoulder, and hip in a horrifying crash at Iowa Speedway last summer. Following an extended hospital stay and weeks in a wheelchair, he wouldn't race again for ... well, a few months. He loves it too much to give it up (and it makes him a better engineer).

"I just love the feeling you get on a bike at speed," he says. "It seems like everything settles down, and it's very calm and quiet. You get into this zone. Some people would take yoga or meditate. But for me, being on the bike is where I feel the most calm. It's relaxing to me, as strange as it may sound."

It's one thing to pour your soul into a company you work for. It's another to offer your body ...

## MORE TO THE STORY

For more on the people and passion behind Buell motorcycles, log onto [buell.com](http://buell.com) to view a short film with additional interviews and behind-the-scenes footage.

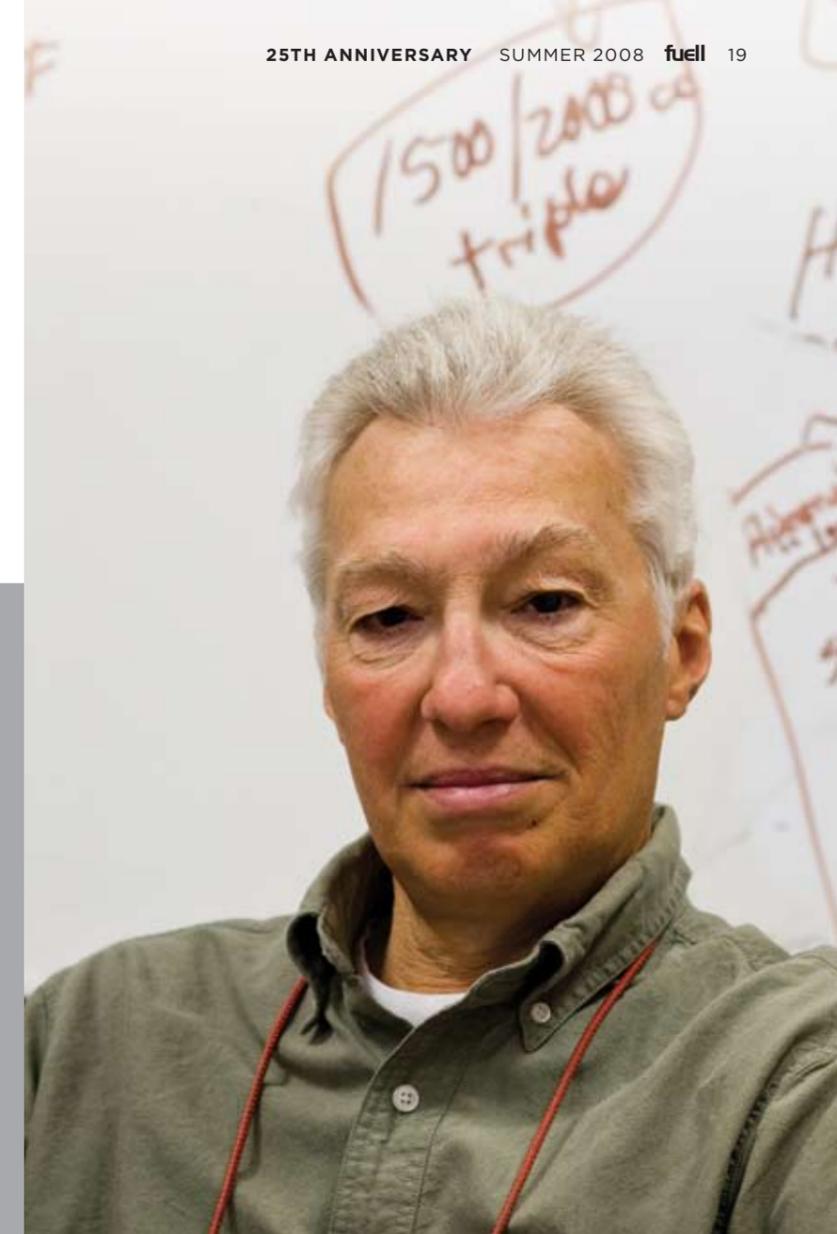
## THE SOURCE

### HENRY DUGA

RACE MANAGER  
22 YEARS AT BUELL

On race days, one thing that separates Buell from other motorcycle manufacturers is the level of support its privateer racers receive. We're not talking factory sponsorship; we're talking Henry Duga and his van full of parts. Both have become fixtures at CCS (Championship Cup Series), ASRA (American Sportbike Racing Association), and MOTO-ST events from Iowa to Daytona.

"It all started at Daytona in February of 1996," he says. "My job was to go to the races and make sure everybody had access to the parts they needed, and to get to know dealers and the riders. It has really worked out well. The racers appreciate it, and it's been going on ever since."



## THE INSIDE STORY

### STEVEN H. ANDERSON

PLATFORM MANAGER  
2-1/2 YEARS AT BUELL

One could be forgiven for thinking Steve Anderson already had one of the best jobs a motorcycle gearhead could ask for. As a top-tier motorcycle journalist, he traveled the world to ride and evaluate just about every form of two-wheeled motorized transportation known to man.

Still, it wasn't enough. He wanted to stretch his considerable engineering skills a little further. So when the time was right, he and Erik struck a deal for Steve to come aboard to work on the Buell XBRR race bike. Don't ask him what he's working on now – he can't tell you. But he will tell you that a motorcycle's "story" is still more important to him than a pile of raw data.

"When I was writing motorcycle road tests, I never wanted to give a list of specifications," Steve explains. "The story is, why does this bike exist? What's it meant to do? And how does it fulfill those goals? And that's exactly how we approach new designs at Buell: by putting the needs and desires of the rider ahead of what looks good on a spec sheet."





I tell people I came to Buell because I always wanted to build the great American superbike.

### START TO FINISH

**TIM MLINAR**  
R&D MACHINIST/DESIGNER  
18 YEARS AT BUELL

Tim came to Buell as a machinist because he liked the idea of working for a small company, where he would be able to see the finished product, not just bins full of machined parts. He had read about the then-tiny company in the newspaper, found out they needed a machinist, called Erik, and got the job. Today, he spends his workdays crafting prototype parts for top-secret future Buell® motorcycles.

But one of his favorite parts of the job is getting out and working Buell demo events. He loves how people who may never have heard of Buell can get hooked so quickly after just one ride – or 30.

“I had one guy at Sturgis last year who came back two days in a row, and he rode the same Ulysses® over and over,” Tim says. “He probably went on 20 or 30 demo rides. And he just loved that bike. He was like, ‘As soon as I can afford one I’m getting one of these!’ It was great.”

### DREAM JOB

**MATT SHEAHAN**  
LEAD DESIGN ENGINEER  
4-1/2 YEARS AT BUELL

Growing up in northern Wisconsin, Matt worked on pit crews for snowmobile racers. He was drawn to all kinds of power sports, in fact. But it was motorcycle design and development that really captured his interest and passion. So when he had an opportunity to work at Buell, he jumped at the chance. It’s a place, he feels, where he can follow one of his dreams.

“The approach to design and development is very unique; it’s something I’ve enjoyed immensely,” he explains. “I tell people I came to Buell because I always wanted to build the great American superbike. And this is where that’s going to happen. The 1125R was a big step in that direction.”



### MILESTONE MAKER

**JOHN SZCZYBOR**  
ASSEMBLY  
8 YEARS AT BUELL

When John started working at Buell, he initially approached it as just another job. He had no idea that it would turn into such a great career opportunity, something he’d enjoy so much and still be enthusiastically working at more than eight years later. His favorite Buell memory is the day the 100,000th Buell rolled off the assembly line in 2006.

“We had a really good time with that,” he recalls. “We didn’t know – at least I didn’t – that it was going to happen until a couple hours before. And none of us knew at the time that it was going to be presented to Erik. We built it, kept working, right up until it was at the end of the line. Then we all stopped to watch it roll off the line. And it was Erik who rolled it off that day, so it was kind of neat.”

“Building 100,000 bikes is a great accomplishment for the company, and we all took a great amount of pride in being a part of that.”

### HOW MAY I HELP YOU?

**DONNA LAKIN**  
RECEPTIONIST  
12 YEARS AT BUELL

Donna came to work at Buell during a tough time in her life, when she was just looking for a job – any job. She found one in the Buell body shop. It was not necessarily her first choice, but she was happy to have a job – and was soon thrilled to be working at Buell.

“I absolutely love working here,” she says. “It really is like a family. When something goes wrong, people are eager to help you. We take care of each other.”

Before long, Donna was able to move from the body shop into her current role as receptionist. It suits her well. Just ask anyone who is greeted by her warm smile when they walk in the door.



We're kind of like a family here, in a way.

## MOM OF THE YEAR

**ROZLYNN GARCIA**  
ASSEMBLY  
7 YEARS AT BUELL

As do so many others, Rozlynn appreciates the family atmosphere at Buell, the way everyone hangs out together, and cares for one another. But it's her 10-year-old son who probably gets the biggest charge out of the closeness of the Buell family.

"My son is in awe of Erik Buell," she explains. "So every time there's a gathering, I make sure he gets a chance to talk to Erik. He thinks it's awesome that the man whose name is on the motorcycles is there hanging out with the employees. And he's right. Working at Buell is awesome."



## CLEAR ON THE CONCEPT

**DAVID ULICKI**  
MANAGER OF R&D  
18 YEARS AT BUELL

Telecommunications, it turns out, doesn't hold a candle to building prototype motorcycles. Back when he was going crazy with boredom working on cell phone systems, David kept a drawer full of clippings and articles about "cool places to work." One of those clippings was a 1985 *Cycle* magazine article about Erik Buell and the RW750. Four years later, he became the first engineer (other than Erik) on staff at Buell Motor Company.

As Buell grew from eight people to the current 175, David has worked in every area of the company. Today, David heads a department that fabricates parts and builds prototypes for all future Buell motorcycles. Unlike his old job, he says he's never been bored in nearly 19 years at Buell. That's because the work is just as exciting as the Buell product line.

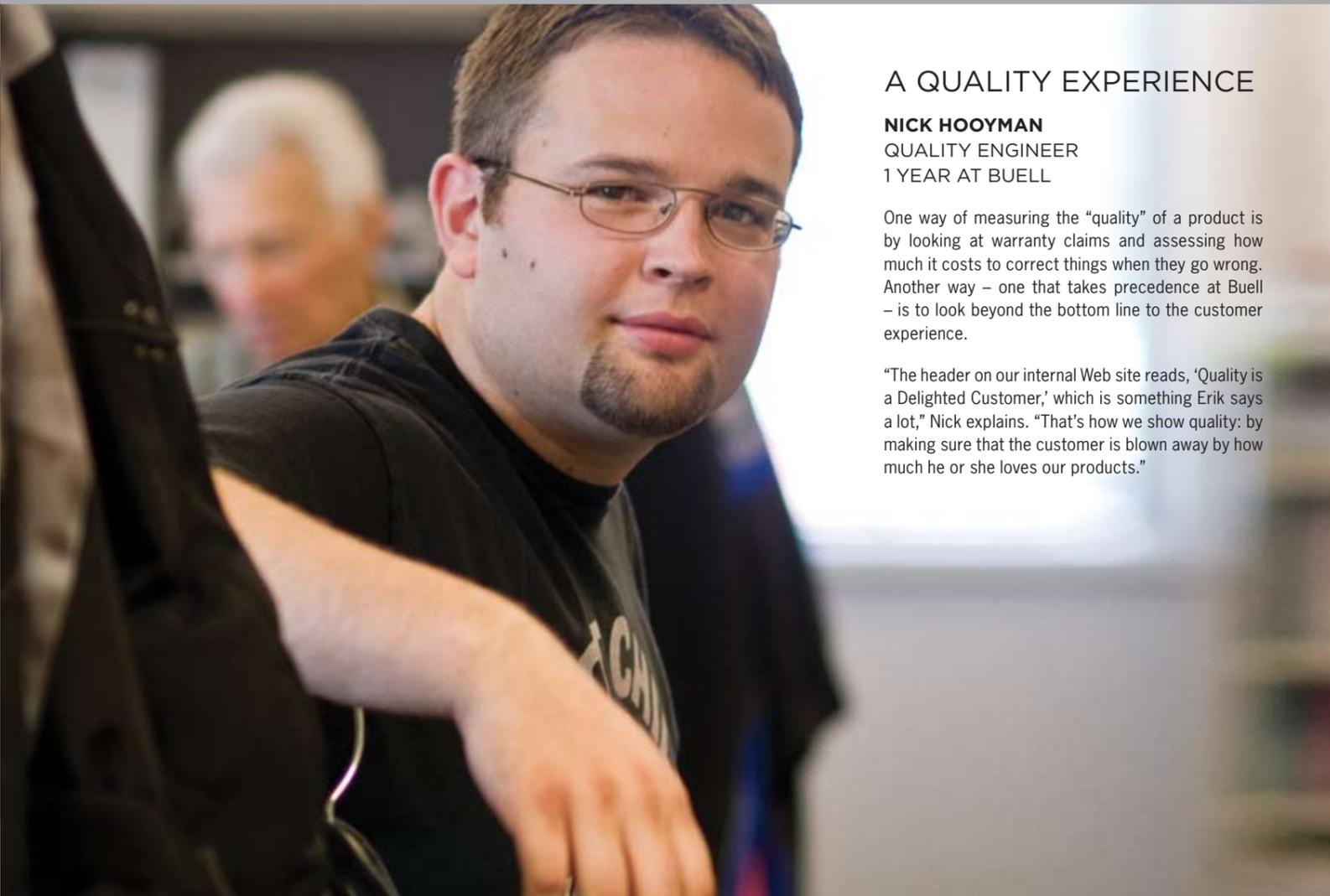
"I've been going to the Chicago Auto Show since I was in grade school," David explains. "And the most exciting thing is always the concept vehicles. That's partly the kind of bikes we make in my department. Some are shiny and pretty, like those cars. But some are test mules. Those, we mash on until they break. Either way, it's very interesting work."

## A QUALITY EXPERIENCE

**NICK HOOYMAN**  
QUALITY ENGINEER  
1 YEAR AT BUELL

One way of measuring the "quality" of a product is by looking at warranty claims and assessing how much it costs to correct things when they go wrong. Another way – one that takes precedence at Buell – is to look beyond the bottom line to the customer experience.

"The header on our internal Web site reads, 'Quality is a Delighted Customer,' which is something Erik says a lot," Nick explains. "That's how we show quality: by making sure that the customer is blown away by how much he or she loves our products."



## FAMILY, BUSINESS

**GENE PAWLAK**  
INTERNATIONAL FREIGHT  
11 YEARS AT BUELL

Erik Buell has a reputation for caring about his employees. And Gene knows it's true because he has experienced it first-hand. A few years ago, when his wife was suffering from breast cancer, Gene asked Erik for permission to raise some money for breast cancer research. Erik's reaction was not quite what Gene expected.

"He opened up his wallet, pulled out a \$100 bill and handed it to me," Gene recalls. "So not only did he okay the fund-raising, he was the first to donate. That really impressed me. Later he would check and see how she was doing, and fortunately, she came through fine."

"We're kind of like a family here, in a way. When we tell Erik our problems, he listens to us. And when he listens to us, he goes and does something about it. And things get better."



## MASTERWORKS »

## HAVE A SWEET CUSTOM BUELL?

Send a few snapshots and a brief description to [fuelleditor@gsdesign.com](mailto:fuelleditor@gsdesign.com). Your bike could be featured in Masterworks.



## VERSION 1.0

**LITERALLY THE PROTOTYPE FOR ALL BUELL CUSTOMS TO COME**, this aerodynamic brawler was built from the ground up by Erik Buell himself. Though its ancestry runs from the Barton Motor Company, a small British manufacturer Erik bought out in 1983, this bike is all Buell. The original Barton frame couldn't handle the stresses produced by the wickedly powerful engine, so Erik built a new one of his own design and went racing.

But the engine, a 750cc square-four two-stroke screamer, proved finicky, unreliable, and nearly uncontrollable. So he redesigned and remachined virtually every component to his own liking. The resulting bike, which Erik dubbed the RW750 (RW for "Road Warrior"), was designed to race in the AMA Formula One class. He figured he could build a few bikes and sell them for enough to make a go of it as a motorcycle builder.

In 1984 he pronounced the bike ready for sale. Shortly thereafter, the AMA eliminated the F1 class in favor of the Superbike, instantly making the new bike obsolete. In the end, only two were ever built, and the fledgling Buell Motor Company was on the verge of collapse.

Ironically, the death of the RW750 racebike led to the birth of the streetfighter, a concept that would keep Buell going for the next 25 years – and beyond.

**EPILOGUE:** Both RW750 motorcycles are now in Buell hands. In 1998, the machine pictured here, which had languished in Erik's old barn for many years, was secretly restored and presented to Erik as a surprise. He keeps it in his office today. RW750 Number 2 was repurchased from the American Machinists' Union (it was raced for one year) and now sits, unrestored, in the lobby of Buell headquarters.

"There were places in the powerband where it would pick up 40 horsepower in 500 rpm! You couldn't ride it. The only way to ride it was to ride it around the corner completely out of the powerband, get it completely straightened out, turn on the thing and have it wheelie. Or, you had to ride it with the wheel spinning, because you couldn't deal with it coming on the pipe in the corner — it would just crash. The power was like a light switch. This thing was a monster. It was terrifying to ride."

— ERIK BUELL, IN HIS AMA "HEROES OF HARLEY-DAVIDSON" BIO

PHOTOGRAPHY: MARK HINES

# DESERT STORMING

## TACKLING BAJA ON A BUELL®

KEVIN SMITH, SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA



**BAJA.** TO A CERTAIN TYPE OF RIDER, THAT SIMPLE WORD BRINGS SMILES AND FAR-OFF THOUGHTS OF EXOTIC TRAVEL. BUT THE THING IS, BAJA'S NOT EXOTIC TRAVEL - IN THE *FARAWAY* SENSE. IT MAY BE UNFAMILIAR AND EXTREME, BUT IT'S RIGHT HERE IN OUR BACKYARD.



### EVEN BEFORE I BOUGHT THE ULYSSES,® I KNEW I'D RIDE IT TO BAJA.

I finally had a bike worthy of the trip, but still I hesitated. What about all those *banditos*? What about the dirt roads and the language barrier? I wavered for months but finally set a date. Then I got even more serious, and told my friends and family; once I made it public, I was committed.

It didn't take much to convince my buddy Jon to go with me on his BMW R1200GS. We're both dirt novices so we should use the easy route and stay on the pavement; the dirt rides would wait for another time. Then I realized, the point of having a bike that will go off the pavement is to take it ... off the pavement.

Our new route would take us way off the pavement, meaning I'd probably fall down. So I went back to school. Two days at RawHyde Adventure Camp in Southern California to learn the basics. Little did I realize how much I'd use those skills.

#### PLAYING IN THE DIRT

Highway 94 that heads out of San Diego was a good reason to cross into Mexico at Tecate; green mountains and serpentine pavement made the extra distance worthwhile. Further proof that on a motorcycle, it's the journey, not the destination.

Once "in country," we suffered through Ensenada and made a beeline for San Felipe. We were surprised at the good pavement and high speeds (move faster than the speed limit or become hood ornaments) and knew we were headed for something much different.

The first 50 miles south of San Felipe were on rough pavement, but at least it was pavement. The next 45 miles took us nearly five hours. A smooth gravel road turned rough, then crumbled into rocky climbs and descents, miles of washboard, a bit of sand, and endless dust. The edges of the concrete *vados* (shallows) had been washed away and would dent a wheel if we took them too fast. We were captivated by the stunning beauty of the coast and exhausted from hours of standing on the pegs, so stops became frequent, even though the day was slipping away. When we reached Alfonsina's motel, we were full of relief and pride. After all we had been through, I gave the Ulysses the nickname *El Burro*.

The morning brought another 35 miles of dirt road, but it seemed easy compared to the day before. We spent a few hours swapping stories with Coco, an icon of the Baja desert, then reached MEX 1 in the afternoon.

For the next two days, we reveled in the blissful pavement and amazing vistas, but then, full of confidence, we took a hard left and tackled another 35 miles of dirt road. After all, we'd been told the earlier section is "Baja's worst dirt road." Whoever told us that was wrong. Nature struck back as we struggled through dry washes filled with round head-sized boulders; then steep climbs punctuated by sharp-edged rocks; finally bursting into the palm-filled oasis of La Purísima three hours later. The sandy road was a welcome change. 

"... THE POINT OF HAVING A BIKE THAT WILL GO OFF THE PAVEMENT WAS TO TAKE IT ... OFF THE PAVEMENT."





We decided to stay on the pavement until Cabo San Lucas. It was a great ride as we passed through broad valleys, and climbed up and over several mountain ranges. The road was a mix of relaxed cruising, traffic-free corners, and brushes against the coastline. We still stared at every view.

A few days in Cabo gave me time to recover from a cold, but soon we were itching to get back on the bikes. We completed the southern loop to La Paz, then headed for Loreto. The twists and turns along the coastline on both sides of Loreto were a must-have experience for every rider: one glorious curve after another and nearly no traffic.

I'm already making plans to return to Baja. It's a wonderful place filled with warm and friendly people. *Es una vida buena* (It's a good life), after all. **fuel**

**"ES UNA VIDA BUENA"**

**STREET  FIGHTERS**

**BUELL® FEVER**

A black and orange 1984 XR1000 ignited my passion for Buell motorcycles and inspired us to start the collection. When I saw a black and orange (notice a pattern?) RR1000, I knew one day I would own one. The search was on but went unfulfilled for a while. In 1996, I test rode a Lightning® S1 and immediately fell in love, so my wife, Nancy, and I bought our first: a silver 1997 Lightning S1 – which she rode more than her Sportster.® So there were two Buell fans beneath our roof ... I could deal with that! We bought (and modified) another S1 shortly thereafter, and since we both liked the new XBs and craved more power, we purchased a 2004 Firebolt® XB12R. Then ... it happened. At long last, I found my black and orange RR1000. My dream had finally been realized. And yet ... I'm still restless. We're always looking for that next addition to the collection. An 1125R? It never ends ...

**Brian and Nancy Tierney » Appleton, Wisconsin**  
**1987 RR1000, 1997 S1 Lightning, 1998 S1 White Lightning, 2004 Firebolt XB12R**



**GOLDEN ADVICE**

It took me awhile, but I finally got my first Buell motorcycle. Erik and I actually go way back: Both of us being from the Pittsburgh area, we met around 1970, while getting into the road racing circuit. We had a lot of adventures racing together at local tracks. I moved away in 1975, but Erik and I kept in touch over the years. I traced the progress of the Buell brand since the beginning, promising myself I would get a Buell if I could keep it and ride it in a place far away from the congestion of the city. After buying a vacation home near Big Bear Lake last year, Erik suggested I get a Lightning City X XB9SX, which I did without hesitation. It's perfect for the mile-after-mile of tight, twisty mountain roads I ride. The handling is a dream, and it's a fantastic thrill ... even for an old road racer like me.

**Dana Ward » Manhattan Beach, California**  
**2006 Lightning City X XB9SX**



**ARE YOU A STREETFIGHTER?** E-mail your high-resolution photo, along with a few paragraphs about you and your Buell, to: [fuelleditor@gsdesign.com](mailto:fuelleditor@gsdesign.com). All Streetfighter submissions become property of Buell Motorcycle Company.



# ASK **ABE**

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

Those early days at Buell were amazing!  
We worked crazy hours with passionate  
people on exciting projects.

## HEY, THAT'S PERSONAL!

**Q** Everyone at Buell seems to have a story. What's yours?

**A** My story begins in Mexico City, where I was born and raised. When I was 12, my grandfather bought me a small Carabela, a Mexican motorcycle. Needless to say, it changed my life in many ways. Beyond the thrill of riding it, that little bike helped unleash my innate mechanical curiosity, my natural interest in tinkering. I customized it (perhaps prophetically?) by painting it black with silver lightning bolts on the side.

When I was a teenager, my mom and I emigrated to California. I attended high school in Los Angeles and eventually enrolled in college at UC Berkeley. I started in Electrical Engineering, but soon realized I was spending too much time in the computer lab and not enough time working with my hands. So I switched to Mechanical Engineering.

By then I was totally into bikes. I got my first Harley® a Sportster®, and later an old Triumph Bonneville basketcase. Whenever I could get away from my studies, I was either tinkering with or riding motorcycles. I was so engrossed by it all; I realized I really wanted to "do motorcycles" as a career. Of course, I read all the performance mags, and that's how I first found out about Buell; talk about a perfect fit. So as I was finishing my bachelor's degree, I sent a "letter of interest" to Erik. I had read about his small company and his innovative ideas. I told him that I was a passionate motorcycle guy and would like to work for him when I finished graduate school. But time passed, and I didn't hear back from him; I figured he was busy.

For graduate school, I got a professor to sponsor my master's thesis on "single-track vehicle dynamics." I had all of these chassis and suspension ideas that I wanted to research using simulation models, which I planned to build from mathematical models available in the academic literature. Yet soon I discovered that the models that existed were built upon assumptions that would invalidate the type of research I was after. Hence, my thesis turned into developing my own mathematical model from scratch. After two years of intensive work, sprinkled with garage grease and riding bikes, I presented my thesis and received my degree. I then sent another letter to Erik, telling him about my graduate work and reaffirming my interest in coming to work for him.

Not long after that, I met an H-D/Buell representative at a motorcycle show. I explained who I was and what I was all about. He took my name and said he would drop a note to Erik. You have to realize that I just couldn't think of anything else I wanted to do with my career; I wasn't looking for a job anywhere else. So for the next few weeks I worked on finishing a project I started while working on my master's: the restoration of a 1951 Chevy

pickup, from the ground up. And then one day, after a few hours spent under the truck, the phone rang. My heart stopped: It was Erik himself. "If you can get yourself out here for an interview, I'd like to talk to you." Without missing a beat, I booked a ticket to Milwaukee.

I wore a suit to the interview, but brought my riding gear, just in case. It paid off when, after seeing pictures of an original Ducati Monster I managed to buy in '94, Erik said, "I want you to take a ride on something and tell me what you think." He then asked his small engineering staff to lead me on a thrilling test ride of the first prototype S1 – talk about a dream interview! After the ride, Erik asked me, "When could you start?" I did a few mental calculations and replied "three or four weeks."

So I went home and waited for the phone to ring. When it didn't, after about a week-and-a-half, on a Friday, I called to find out what was going on. A short while later, I was called back and told "Erik is very interested, but you told him three or four weeks and he needs somebody now! If you can report to work by Monday, 10 days from today, the job is yours."

I frantically spent the next few days finishing the '51 and packing its bed with the Monster and a couple of trunks full of stuff. On Wednesday night, I installed the windshield wipers, on Thursday morning I embarked on the truck's maiden voyage, and on Sunday, the truck and I arrived safely in Wisconsin. The next day, on June 5, 1995, I started my dream job.

Those early days at Buell were amazing! We worked crazy hours with passionate people on exciting projects. The pace was neck-breaking, and we each had to shoulder a ton of different responsibilities. Things have settled down quite a bit since then – we have more people able to focus on more specific things. But the pace is still fast, the people are just as passionate, and the work is as exciting as ever.

I don't think I would ever want to return to those days – not now that I have a wife, a 4-year-old boy, and a baby daughter. But at the same time, I wouldn't trade them for anything! I've come a long way from painting lightning bolts on my little Carabela – just as Buell has come a long way from the farm in Mukwonago. And I'm honored to have played even a small part in that amazing story.

P.S. Of course, long ago the Monster gave way to a '95 S2, which has since been replaced by an '06 Ulysses®. Yet, I still drive the '51 Chevy regularly (at least when it's not snowing)!



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