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# American Thunder

Winter 2008/2009



Newsletter Of The Independent  
UK Buell Enthusiasts Group

## UK Buell Enthusiasts Group



The UK Buell Enthusiasts Group continues to go from strength to strength. American Thunder has been very well received and we now have a well established informal relationship with Buell UK. UKBEG is taken seriously and this has paid dividends, especially with their support for our main event, the Emma Radford Buell Festival. Note: The 2009 event will take place on the 18th July – see page 12 for details.

This year we celebrated UKBEG's 10th Anniversary. We wanted 2008 to be something special and in many ways it was, but the great British weather put a spanner in the works for many of the events.

Our first event of the year was the UKBEG Buell meet at Brooklands, Surrey, on Sunday 16th March. It rained, and it rained and then it rained some more – what a great start to the new events season! Still, we had 32 Buells attend the meet, which was amazing given the poor weather conditions. UKBEG's 10th Anniversary meet was based around Black Bear HD/Buell in Newmarket, over the weekend of 22nd/23rd March. Our Ulysses was snowed in (see picture left) and we had to stop an extra night at our B&B.

For 2009 we have 23 Buell events listed in the events diary – see page 12 for details. We've got most of the UK covered and there will be another UKBEG Buell weekend in Germany, this time in the Black Forest – see page 6 for details.

The current economic climate has spoilt many peoples plans for 2009 and trading conditions for most companies will be very difficult. Whether this badly affects the motorcycle trade remains to be seen. For 2009 Buell have a terrific range of motorcycles available and now that the 1125CR joins the 1125R in the line-up it should help the brand consolidate its position within a crowded marketplace. Early reports indicate that the updates and improvements to the 1125's engine and transmission have transformed it into the bike it should have been in the first place.

UKBEG's first event of 2009 is being held at Brooklands, Surrey, on Sunday 15th March. We hope to see you there **and** we'll try to get the weather right this time!

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Unless stated otherwise all the text and pictures in this issue are by the editor, Chris Jessop.

UKBEG's independent web site:  
[www.ukbeg.com](http://www.ukbeg.com)



## Buell Plant Visit, East Troy, Wisconsin, USA

Allan Brownridge, who works for Harley-Davidson/Buell UK, writes about his visit to the Buell plant in Autumn.



On our holiday we made a trip to East Troy to have a factory tour round the Buell plant. East Troy is a city located about 40 minutes south west of Milwaukee and they offer regular plant tours – just email them to book a tour. It was pretty easy to find the right place as we just looked for Buell Drive and there are two Buell facilities – the main office (picture A) and the actual production building (picture C) which is about 100 yards down the road. After signing in as visitors, we sat in the small reception looking at the RW 750 (picture B). This building is where they do all the design, testing and engineering.

One of the Buell staff collected us and walked us over to the production building. Once inside he explained that they were only building air-cooled bikes that day and that they usually built around 70 per day. We weren't allowed to take pictures in there but the production line is in the shape of a letter J.

The engines come already built (they are built at the Capitol Drive plant in Milwaukee) and at the start of the J, the frames and engines are married up. There are about 14 "stations" where workers add on the various components. Each bike sits on a wheeled platform which is pushed from one station to the next. There is no automation or robotics – every bike is built by hand.

Each worker has a prescribed time to do the task, shown by a clock counting down on his monitor. When the time elapses the display turns red signalling that it should have moved on by then. If the worker has several instances where this happens, the supervisor investigates why this is – perhaps the process time is too little, the worker needs more training or the tooling needs reworking. A very cool part is that every worker has a tray of tool bits which the computer knows are all in their respective places. The worker picks the tool bit out, in order that the job needs to be done and as this is happening, the computer is automatically adjusting the torque setting for that particular job. The computer will not allow the tool bits to be taken out in the wrong order so every nut or bolt is always put in order and with the correct torque.

As we walked down the line, the bikes became more obviously identifiable as each distinct model – they don't build a batch of one model, any air-cooled bike for any market would be right next to another which could be anything going anywhere. Like a lot of production plants in the middle of the J were a team of people building the sub assemblies. Front forks and wheels come onto the line already built, the tailpieces the same.

As the bike came to the last station, at the top of the J, it was fuelled and lubricated so the engine could be started.

At this point it was lowered onto its own wheels and rolled into the testing bay. Here an experienced road tester fully tested all the lights, horn, indicators etc and then using a rolling road got on the bike and took it up and down through the gears. He did about 2 miles on every bike until the amount of fuel in the bike ran out – they are shipped dry of fuel. Only if it passed every test was it signed off by him to go to the crating team. They simply put polystyrene over the bike and built a shipping crate around it and before you knew it, it was being picked up by a forklift and heading on a truck to a dealer. I was surprised by how small the plant is, by the enthusiasm the workers had for being there, the pride they take in their work and how un-automated it is.

**Allan spotted this S2T Thunderbolt in Milwaukee:**





## UKBEG German Weekend - August 2008

This was UKBEG's first major event held on the continent and it took place between the 22nd and 26th August. We used the Hotel zur Post in Klotten as our base, which is located in the beautiful Mosel Valley. A total of 16 UKBEG and 3 German XBORG members attended the weekend.

The Hotel zur Post is part of the 'Motor Bike Hotels' group, a European-wide organisation offering specialist accommodation and facilities for motorcyclists. Our hotel had free, secure garage parking, dry-room, service/repair corner and a wash place. The picturesque village of Klotten is ideally placed for the Mosel Valley, Eifel Mountains, Hunsruck Mountains and the world famous Nürburgring.

Jane and I have used these type of biker-friendly hotels in the past and although we'd never stopped at the Hotel zur Post before, we knew it would prove suitable for everyone's needs. It's one thing having great biking roads all around you but if the accommodation is second rate it would spoil the whole weekend. We weren't disappointed – the Hotel zur Post provided great hospitality and excellent food. The garage, which was

accessible from within the hotel, had space for around 30 motorcycles. The garage was actually a converted chapel with a wooden floor, which had alloy plates for side or centre stands. The drying room was well thought out with separate heated racks for jackets, gloves, boots and helmets. We put this room to the test on Friday 22nd, when most of us arrived. Torrential rain covered this region of Germany and quite a few of us got a soaking. Our clothing may have been dampened but our spirits weren't – it's all part of the riding experience.

With the exception of 4 riders, everyone in our group had arrived at the hotel by 6.00 pm. We tucked into our evening meals and then spent an anxious evening waiting for these 4 riders to arrive. Through mobile phones we knew they had arrived safely in Calais and were on their way. Given a fair wind they should have arrived at teatime but something had obviously delayed them, or they'd got lost en-route. The weather was still foul and as the clock ticked past 10.30 pm we became very concerned for them. There was a small balcony outside the hotels front door and we waited there looking down towards the main road that runs through Klotten. We fully expected them to use this road but in true UKBEG style, they suddenly arrived under our noses from completely the opposite direction – they'd ridden through the mountains behind Klotten. It was well past 11.00 pm. At least everyone had finally arrived safely. This was turning into some adventure and we hadn't even ended the first day yet!

The weekend was informal in nature but prior to our visit we had planned several day trips. We'd also arranged to meet members of the

German Buell forum. On Saturday morning Gunter and Jorg met us at the hotel for a ride-out which included a visit to Buell Koblenz. The dealer was expecting us and had laid on some light refreshments. We had a route planned to the dealership but Gunter's and Jorg's local knowledge proved invaluable. And of course their help with translations came in handy! Pictured right are various scenes outside the Hotel zur Post, including Saturday mornings gathering prior to the ride-out.

We arrived at Buell Koblenz at around 1.00 pm, after an interesting tour of the area.

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The nearby town of Cochem in the Mosel Valley. This picture was taken from the 259 which winds its way up from the valley into the Eifel Mountains.





The staff at Buell Koblenz made us very welcome and we spent an enjoyable hour or so discussing all things Buell. It was interesting to get a German perspective on the brand. Their Buell showroom was separate to the Harley-Davidson sales area and also contained sports bikes from other manufacturers, the most notable of which was Ducati. Their stocks of Buell apparel and accessories were rather meagre. Like the UK, it is rare to find a Buell dealer who actually stocks a good range of Buell 'goodies'. Before we left, Jane and I had a tour of the workshop and 'development area' where street fighters and Harley-based customs were being created. I couldn't take any pictures in there but they had some very interesting specials – one of which was based on a S1 Lightning. They normally closed at 2.30 pm on a Saturday but were quite happy to stay past this to accommodate us. Clearly a pro-active dealer, Buell Koblenz was well worth the visit.

Our group went their separate ways after the visit to Koblenz. Some decided to go the long way back to Klotten, taking in the Hunsrück Mountains, while the rest of us rode alongside the Rhine before heading back west down the Mosel Valley. This area of Germany has so much to offer motorcyclists and you could easily spend all day riding around the unclassified back roads without seeing much traffic.



Jorg's XB with stunning skeleton paintwork.



For Sunday we had arranged for a lunch at the restaurant 'Altes Brauhaus' in Bernkastel-Kues. This establishment is run by Dirk Kettermann, a fellow German Buell rider, who invited us to call in during our visit to the region. In Dirk's own words - *I'm a German Buell rider and found your tour in our German Buell forum. I'm located in the Moselle Valley in Bernkastel-Kues, and run a hotel and a restaurant in this beautiful town. Bernkastel is just a 45 minute ride from Klotten, with a lot of curves, going from Cochem-Lutzerath-Bad Bertrich-Wittlich-Bernkastel. I'd like to welcome you in our restaurant "Altes Brauhaus", located directly at the riverside, with a nice overlooking view from the terrace.*

As the previous day, Jorg met us at our hotel and led the run to Dirk's restaurant. The route followed the River Mosel down the valley, using the 416 and 49 to Cochem, which is the largest town in the region. Cochem has a medieval castle located on top of a hill above the town and a large paved area near the river where local riders meet. One thing that always strikes us about visiting the continent is the fact that motorcyclists are made welcome almost anywhere. Special areas are reserved for bikes and local restaurants and traders are pleased to have their custom. A refreshing change from some areas of the UK.

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This biker-friendly attitude was also apparent in Bernkastel-Kues. Although not strictly legal, we parked our bikes on the wide paved area alongside the River Mosel, opposite Dirk's restaurant. A police patrol car passed several times and they didn't take any action. Our line-up of British registered Buells looked very impressive and created a lot of interest amongst members of the public. Dirk had kindly reserved two large tables on his terrace for our group (see pictures at the bottom of page 4) and we all tucked into some glorious regional food. Dirk's staff were brilliant and made us feel very welcome. It's amazing what a couple of e-mails can achieve – we'd

arranged all this before we set off for Germany and Dirk really came up with the goods. For the afternoon, Dirk and Jorg had planned a 4 hour tour of the region. We created quite a stir as we started our bikes and lined up ready to leave. The route consisted of mainly unclassified roads with a few short stretches of main road thrown in for good measure. Local knowledge obviously paid dividends here. We'd only travelled a short distance through Bernkastel-Kues before we turned left and headed straight up into the mountains. We rode through some beautiful countryside on twisty roads that were never ending – it was truly a Buell riders paradise! For the faster riders in our group it was a blur of hairpin bends, Armco barriers, small mountain villages and long fast straights. Jorg looked after the slower riders and made sure we didn't get left behind. We had a set meeting point along the route where everyone could assemble – which is where the picture below was taken. From here we made our way to Dirk's sisters restaurant where he'd arranged for a coffee stop. We sat on the terrace basking in late afternoon sunshine – a perfect end to a perfect day. My description of the afternoon doesn't really do it justice – you had to be there to fully appreciate what a great time everyone had. Our thanks go to Dirk and Jorg for looking after us so well, everything just worked out perfectly.



Taken on Sunday's ride-out, left to right, Steve, David, Ian, Rob, Kev, Dirk, Kathryn, Stuart, Jane, Phil, Jorg, Pete, Alistair, Ian, John and Graham.

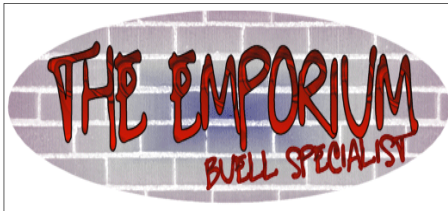
Monday was a free day. Jane and I completed a tour of the beautiful Eifel Mountains and visited the Nürburgring – not to go round the track, but just to see the museum and shop complex. It's a fascinating place, steeped in history and a magnet for petrol-heads from all over Europe. You only have to walk around the public car park to see a mouth watering range of exotic muscle cars and high-powered motorcycles.



The weekend was a great success and, with the exception of Friday, the weather was reasonable. Most of our day-time riding was done in dry conditions. The choice of hotel and location couldn't have worked out better – everyone praised the high standard of food and accommodation. The one low point was Ray's (blackrag) problems with his XB. This resulted in the bike being recovered to the UK while Ray had to fly home. Unfortunately his travel arrangements became rather protracted and Ray experienced unacceptable delays.

For Jane and I, what made the weekend complete was the camaraderie and friendship of fellow UKBEG members and their friends. There was a great mix of people with an excellent sense of humour.





**'The Emporium' - The UK's Independent Buell Specialist**  
 Unit B6, New Mill, Park Road, Dukinfield, SK16 5LX.  
 Telephone: 0161 343 3077 or 07860 433939.

**Contact: Maz Matsell for all your Buell repair & service requirements.**

## UKBEG German Weekend - 26th to 30th June 2009

Following the success of this years UKBEG German Weekend we've decided to organise another in 2009.

The Hotel Waldblick is located in the Black Forest and is of a similar standard to the Hotel Zur Post, in the Moselle Valley, which we used this year. Jane and I have stayed at the Waldblick before and can highly recommend it.



Arrive Friday 26th and depart Tuesday 30th June 2009 - staying a total of 4 nights.

Location details can be found here: [http://www.hotel-waldblick.de/template01.php?page\\_ID=30&lan=en](http://www.hotel-waldblick.de/template01.php?page_ID=30&lan=en)

To book a room contact the hotel direct, quoting 'Buell Group'.

Contact Brigitte Kilgus, e-mail: [BrigitteKilgus@hotel-waldblick.de](mailto:BrigitteKilgus@hotel-waldblick.de) or telephone 00 49 78 36 93960

The Waldblick can offer a good selection of accommodation including at least 5 single rooms. Please state which category of room you'd prefer. These are special rates and are being held at 2008 levels.

### Single rooms:

Category 1, with shower, WC, Tel, TV, breakfast and evening meal, for 62.50 Euro per person/night.

Category 2, with shower, WC, Tel, TV, balcony, breakfast and evening meal, for 68.50 Euro per person/night.

Category 3, with bath, shower, WC, Tel, TV, balcony, breakfast and evening meal, for 71.50 Euro per person/night.

### Double/twin rooms:

Category 1, with shower, WC, Tel, TV, breakfast and evening meal, for 105.00 Euro per room/night.

Category 2, with shower, WC, Tel, TV, balcony, breakfast and evening meal, for 117.00 Euro per room/night.

Category 3, with bath, shower, WC, Tel, TV, balcony, breakfast and evening meal, for 121.00 Euro per room/night.

To simplify the booking process, Brigitte has agreed that we can use Visa or Mastercard to make the booking but no deposit will be taken. Their policy is to take 80% of the rate if you cancel less than 2 days before or don't check in. No rooms have been reserved on UKBEG's behalf - it's a first come, first served arrangement.

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## UKBEG Cumbria Weekend - 12th to 14th June 2009

Arrive Friday 12th and depart Sunday 14th June – staying a total of 2 nights.

Location: Kirkstone Pass and Brotherswater in Patterdale, which are just 3 miles apart.

The Kirkstone Pass Inn offers B&B accommodation and a bunkhouse.

Their web site: [www.kirkstonepassinn.com](http://www.kirkstonepassinn.com)

Their address: Ambleside, Cumbria. LA22 9LQ.

Phone: 015394 33888.

The Sykeside Camping Park and Brotherswater Inn offer camping, B&B accommodation and several bunkhouses.

Their web site: [www.sykeside.co.uk](http://www.sykeside.co.uk)

Their address: Brotherswater, Patterdale, Cumbria CA11 0NZ.

Phone: 01768 482239.

Please book direct with the location of your choice. There are a limited number of rooms available so you're advised to book sooner rather than later.





## Buell Product Reviews

### Buell Street Flame Helmet – review by Ash:

#### **Part number: EC-99464-09. UK Retail = £242.00.**

I was asked to test out Buell's new model of helmet, the Street Flame. It's the first new helmet I have tried in a long time as I always ride with an Arai and so was interested in the comparison. First impressions when I got it out of the box were that it looked bigger and felt a little heavier than the Arai. The quality feels good and there are some nice features like the easy to change visor, which is just one simple button instead of the gut wrenching plastic sound when you pull and wrestle off the Arai's visor. A search on the Internet revealed a good selection of aftermarket visors in a variety of shades from a light smoke to a dark tint and at a reasonable price.

Once on it felt light, the padding was OK but not as snug and comfortable as I was hoping, I take a small and although this is the same 55-56 small it felt larger and a little looser. The Double D ring strap has a handy tag on it that has the Buell logo and it's easy to use even with gloves on, although the straps themselves seem to be

mounted quite far back which means when tight it feels a little restrictive around the throat. The switches for the vents on the chin and forehead are large and again easy to use with gloves on.

Out and about around town, I didn't notice much of a difference in noise reduction compared to the Arai, it's reasonably quiet but the visibility through the helmet is somewhat restricted due to the size of the nose piece. It deflects breath from misting the visor very well but when looking at the clocks I found tilting my head a lot further down than before which means less time looking forwards. Sideways visibility is excellent and I had an excellent peripheral view, which was reassuring in traffic.

On the quicker A-roads and motorway I was very aware of the wind noise, and over around 60 or so it did creak a little around the vents and visor. Once up to speed you can feel the forehead vent working well and can actually feel a good stream of cool air which in the Arai I can't feel at all. With a shoulder check I found the visor would lift a little at speed, it could do with a lockable visor to prevent this happening. It felt seated firmly with no noticeable lift when up around the ton mark. Opening the visor is a little tricky with only a small indentation to get a gloved finger under. The Street Flame is made by KBC, an American manufacturer who first started out making helmets for the Snowmobile market in 1991. In the last 6 years they have turned into a successful supplier to Harley Davidson, Kawasaki, Suzuki and the like. I did notice the lack of gold ACU sticker on the back, I'm not sure about safety labels in American helmets but this may pose issues if you wanted to use it on the track for either a track day or as a racing lid, and although the Buell catalogue states it meets EC-2205 requirements, there are no safety stickers anywhere on the lid at all. I even removed the inner padding and lining but didn't find anything although I'm not sure if, being an American made helmet, it has to display a sticker, it did at least give me a chance to have a go at removing the inner padding, which was very easy and is apparently washable.

I'm a firm believer in the phrase, "you get what you pay for" when it comes to helmets. The standard version of the KBC lid retails at £139.99 and is a mid level budget lid. The Street Flame is the same lid with different graphics and Buell logo on the front and sides, it retails at a reasonable amount more though. Having said that, for the money, you do get a lot of lid and if you can put up with the little annoyances it gives, the qualities of it will shine through. It is a nice lid .... but for overall comfort, quality and that 'safe and confident feel' ... I will stick to an Arai.



### Buell Mesh Jacket – review by Adam:

#### **Part number: 99439-09BM. UK Retail = £150.87.**

At long last in this Indian Summer I've had the opportunity to wear the mesh jacket that Allan Brownridge of HD/Buell UK kindly supplied me to test.

When I opened the packet the first thing I felt was how well protected the body parts that hit the ground first in a 'mishap', would be. My fully armoured leathers don't have significantly better protection for the elbows and shoulders, so that was a plus straight away. However, like most of the riding jackets now on the market, there wasn't any spinal protection fitted. As with most other manufacturers I suppose HD assume that riders will choose their own. I know I would, and I do. However, unlike any other jacket I've seen, it does have a firm and protective hard foam layer in the lumbar region. In the UK this would also give a bit of insulation as well, although the mesh design of the jacket doesn't really lend itself to being used in cold weather.

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The liner which zips into the jacket may not be completely water-proof although it's certainly 'heavy' shower proof, but since the jacket isn't designed as foul weather gear, its more than adequate and would certainly keep out the chills on a summer evening ride home. The quality of the overlock stitching is amongst some of the best I've seen on bike gear with the seams being even and parallel, I don't think any of this would burst in a rider/tarmac interface.

The only problem I found was that during hot weather insects and bugs tended to get stuck in the mesh and were fairly difficult to sponge out. I let mine dry and blew them out with an airline. Although I'm a bit of a leather fetishist and only feel safe dressed up in a bit of dead animal, this jacket is certainly high quality and certainly up to the job that it was designed for. I can see me wearing it a fair bit more if we get any half decent weather next Spring/Summer.

One feature that I didn't immediately like when I saw it was the 'Mandarin' style collar. Now this is only personal prejudice because I like a higher collar which is a rare feature these days in any jacket. When I used the jacket on the bike though, it wasn't really a problem and no draughts got past it, so all in all, it's well designed. Another good feature is the tops of the arms and shoulders. These provide plenty of room and movement without being too baggy and the sleeves are also adjustable for fit with some high quality pop studs. These work well and I can confirm that when used on my 1125 there's no flap or ballooning at any speed. Speeds which your average HD owner would never see!! In conclusion, a good bit of kit that's well made and practical. I don't know what it retails for but if it fits the bill for your needs, you won't be disappointed.




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### **Buell Turbulent Helmet – review by Chris Jessop:**

#### **Part number: EC-99463-08. UK Retail = £242.00.**

My current helmet (a Moto Guzzi, made by Suomy) was due for replacement, so when the opportunity arose to try out this new Buell helmet I jumped at the chance. In the normal course of events I was going to buy another Moto Guzzi helmet – now made by AGV. Coincidentally the Buell Turbulent helmet is also made by AGV. Based on their Stealth model, the Turbulent is a high quality fibre-glass helmet that weighs 1.4 kg (3 lbs. 2 oz) It has a removable, washable liner, Double D-ring chin strap, chin, side and forehead vents and meets American DOT and European EC-2205 safety standards. It also has a 5-star rating in the recently introduced SHARP tests. The helmet doesn't have an ACU Gold 'race use approved' sticker.

It would be fair to say that the Buell Turbulent is one of the most comfortable helmets I've ever worn. The padding is luxurious and doesn't put any undue pressure across the forehead or cheeks. I first used this helmet on a dry, cold, 276 mile ride and couldn't fault it.

Most of my riding is long distance so all-day comfort is very important to me. The visor is very easy to use with cold weather gloves and clicks reassuringly between positions. Forward and peripheral vision is excellent.

The anti-mist features are the most effective I've ever experienced. I did try to mist up the visor at low speeds and when stationary at lights etc. but the chin vents really do work. The open/close button for this vent is up inside the chin piece and is easily operated. The forehead vents are also easy to operate but I can't vouch for their effectiveness, electing to keep them closed due to the cold weather. At the time of writing I'd not used the helmet in wet weather so the juries out on how good it is in the rain. At motorway speeds the Turbulent is reasonably quiet and the visor doesn't have any air leaks. When making life-saver checks at speed the visor stays securely closed.

This helmet has a quick-change visor system which is easy to use. AGV can supply alternative visors for the Buell Turbulent in blue, red, tinted, iridium blue, iridium gold and iridium silver.

I like the overall design of the Turbulent and find the Buell graphics, which adorn the sides, front and rear of the helmet, very tasteful. All the graphics are covered by a thick lacquer and the helmet has a quality look and feel about it. The basic AGV Stealth retails for around £199 but I reckon it's worth the extra £43 for this unique Buell design.

Thanks to Buell UK for supplying the helmet and to Black Bear HD/Buell in Newmarket (Tel 01638 664455) for confirmation of UK retail prices for all the items in this product review feature.





## Buell 1125R & 1125CR 2009 Engine Development

The 2009 1125R and 1125CR Buell liquid-cooled Helicon engines have undergone significant changes\* to cure problems which blighted the original version of the 2008 1125R. (\* Note: These can be retro-fitted to 2008 models) In a recent interview with Motorcycle News, Erik Buell said, *"Last year we had a new product with the Helicon engine when for years Buell produced bikes with air-cooled engines. After the initial launch of the 1125R we realised we had a lot to learn with the new engine. The ECU update mid-way through the year wasn't a fix as such for the running of the bike but to control the electronics better. The important thing was to cut down the amount of time the fan was running because the stator wasn't strong enough to charge the battery. For 2009 both bikes will feature a new stator. The problems with overheating, poor fuel economy and fuelling have been resolved. It wasn't easy and it caused an awful lot of head scratching. In the end we sent our man to Rotax to see what was going on and this is when we found a problem related to the mapping procedure. The ignition was so far out over certain points. The new mapping is available by flash download to all 1125R owners from their dealers. The difference will be instantly noticeable"*.

In addition to new ignition mapping, which improved the 1125 engine's fuel economy by more than 20%, the 2009 Buell Helicon engine has twin 61mm throttle bodies with revised injector position angles. These are down by 13° which produces a fine atomisation in the cylinder head rather than droplets which hit the back of the piston. Fuel is now sprayed more directly down the throat of the intake tract, onto the backs of the inlet valves. The finer angled shot of fuel results in improved throttle control. The O2 sensors have been repositioned to prevent overheating, which was a problem on the original 2008 1125R because its advance/retard ignition curves were out by up to 40° in some areas.

Note there are two inlet valves per cylinder but each injector has a pair of nozzles, so there are two streams of fuel each aimed at one inlet valve. This is useful in cooling the inlet valves, but the heat means the fuel vaporises more quickly and a finer, better mixed mist of fuel and air enters the cylinder when the valve opens. As stated earlier, correcting the ignition mapping improved the 1125 engine's economy by more than 20%, a big improvement, but the subtle injection change added an impressive 5% or so to that figure, as well as improving the feel and usability of the engine.



Photos: Buell

## Buell 1125CR - First Ride

Saturday 8th November was my first opportunity to have a test ride on the new 2009 Buell 1125CR. Jonathan Hunt and Steve Loxton at Black Bear HD/Buell in Newmarket (Tel 01638 664455) went that extra mile to ensure that their newly arrived demonstrator had the optional high bar kit fitted before I rode it. As nice as the standard clubman bars look, I really prefer the normal riding position offered by the high bars.

Was it worth travelling down to Black Bear to sample Erik's latest creation? You bet! The 1125CR is a stunning machine with breathtaking performance. Because the bike only had 300+ miles on the clock I could only rev it to around 5,500 rpm through the gears, but the torque up to that point is simply phenomenal. It felt so much better than the early version of the 1125R I rode in April this year. See the feature above for an explanation of the differences between the 08 and 09 engines.

The 1125CR felt like a modern version of my S1. Not as beautiful in terms of styling but very similar in size and riding position. The high bars felt just right and I'm glad I didn't have to use the clubman bars. At 6 ft 3" I'm sure they would have been too extreme for me.

Luckily the roads had just about dried out before my test ride so I could enjoy a mixed route of A and B roads, with a bit of dual-carriageway thrown in for good measure. I covered approx. 60 miles so it was far enough to get a good feel of the bike. The seat is comfortable and my legs didn't feel too cramped.

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If you're between 5 ft 9" and 6 ft I'm sure the 1125CR would fit you like the proverbial glove. Dimensionally the 1125CR is a compact bike. When you're sat on it there doesn't appear to be that much in front of you. Look down and the air box cover blends nicely into the air scoops, which sweep around the front forks. I think the scoops look purposeful, others think they look hideous. The instrument console is neat and uncomplicated. Red detailing on the fork tops and bar clamp are a nice touch and match the rest of bike.

Black powder-coated handlebars and fuel cap look high quality items. One of the most impressive features of the 1125CR is the way it makes large amounts of torque right from tickover. It may be



a modern, liquid-cooled V-twin, but it has all the traditional Buell qualities that we've come to expect from the air-cooled V-twins. Instant grunt in the low to midrange. As stated earlier, the 1125CR has an unbelievable engine. Just a tweak of the throttle sends it hurtling towards the next bend – quite addictive, even when running the engine in. The CR's final drive ratio has been geared down by 8.5% (2.815:1) for a sharper response than the R's top speed inspired ratio of 2.593:1. The swinging arm is also 5 mm longer on the CR, giving a 1389 mm wheelbase. The liquid-cooled 72° V-twin has a bit of 'character' about it. There's a rasp from the air intakes as the revs rise and vibration is present, but not annoyingly so. If, like me, you've only ridden air-cooled V-twins for the past 10 years, you may find the 'tinkling' noise of the Helicon engine slightly off-putting. I'm more used to the low revving, solid V-twin thump of air-cooled Buell and Moto Guzzi motorcycles.

The 1125CR's gearbox is very slick and demands quick changes with plenty of revs. Try changing gear with too few revs and you're rewarded with a grating noise as the transmission protests. You have to adopt a different mindset when riding this bike. All 2009 1125's have a gear position indicator in the display and I found this very useful. Top gear (6th) roll on acceleration, given the 5,500 rpm limit, was very impressive. During my test ride I travelled along the busy A11 for a few miles and it just blitzed past slow moving traffic on a wisp of throttle.

The Showa front forks on all 2009 1125's have upgraded internals. I'm not sure what weight of rider Black Bear's demonstrator was set up for but if felt surefooted and didn't give any cause for concern.

At the beginning of this feature I stated that the 1125CR reminded me of my 1997 S1 Lightning. The riding position is very similar and both bikes are dripping with attitude. Styling wise – the S1 has it, but for sheer power and fun it has to be the new Buell 1125CR.



**Comparisons:**

**1997 S1 Lightning**

86 hp @ 6000 rpm  
79 ft.lbs @ 5400 rpm  
749 mm seat height  
1420 mm wheelbase  
193 kg dry weight

**2009 1125CR (1125R)**

146 hp @ 9800 rpm  
82 ft.lbs @ 8000 rpm  
778 mm seat height (**775 mm**)  
1389 mm wheelbase (**1384 mm**)  
168 kg dry weight (**170 kg**)

I enjoyed my brief ride on Black Bear's 'high bar' 1125CR and would like to thank them for preparing the bike in time for my test ride. I believe it was the first example on the road in the UK. Would I buy one? probably, but only after a 300+ mile test ride.....





# Book Review - 25 Years Of Buell

**ISBN 978-1-884313-74-5**

**Whitehorse Press official publicity for the book, including pictures:**

### About the authors: Court Canfield and Dave Gess

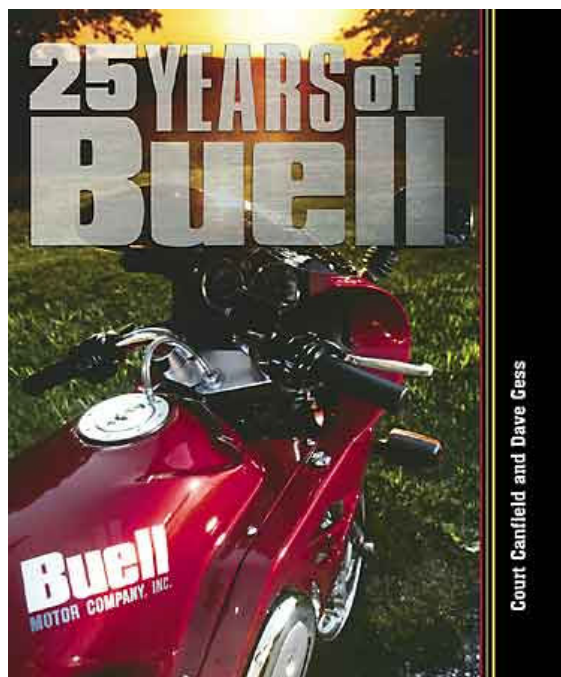
This book was produced to commemorate Buell Motorcycle Company's 25th anniversary. Illustrated by hundreds of photographs from private collections and corporate archives, it covers Buell's history from inception to the present. Erik Buell is, of course, at the centre of this inspiring story, but the company has thrived not just because of one energetic, visionary man, but because that man was able to inspire others around him to give 110 percent to their common objectives. This story is as much about the people of Buell as it is the motorcycles of Buell.

Court Canfield stumbled onto Buell in the late 1980s when you could hold an owners convention in a phone booth. After buying his first Buell, a 1990 RS-1200, Canfield has ridden Buells in 44 states and has become the "acknowledged unofficial Buell storyteller."

He tends to be drawn easily into challenges like circling the United States on a Buell or riding a Buell halfway across the country and into the Guggenheim Museum for "The Art of The Motorcycle" exhibit. He maintains close contact with Buell owners around the globe.

Dave Gess has been involved with Buell Motorcycles since buying a used car from Erik Buell in 1983. When Buell Motorcycles got started it was quickly obvious that letting Gess turn a wrench was a mistake but he helped the project along by generating publicity and promotional materials.

A photographer by profession Gess not only took publicity pictures but also documented the design and building of all the early Buells. These early photographs and stories from the first 15 years of Buell provide an insider's view of the company.



Jane and I were fortunate enough to be present at the world launch of this book on Thursday 3rd July 2008, at the Buell factory in East Troy, Wisconsin.

Court Canfield, Dave Gess, and Erik Buell were present at the launch and they kindly signed a couple of copies for us.

The book documents the history of Buell motorcycles from 1979 through to 2008.

The introduction to the book gives the reader an insight into what makes Erik Buell tick and tells the story of his childhood days and how his interest in motorcycles developed. The rest of the book is split into six chapters:

**Silver Dream Racer:** The development of the RW750, 1979 to 1985.

**Battle Twins:** The development of the RR1000 and RR1200, 1986 to 1988.

**Westwind:** The development of the RS1200, RS1200-5 and RSS1200, 1989 to 1992.

**New Beginning:** The development of the S2, S1, S3, M2, X1 and Blast, 1993 to 2002.

**XB Series:** The development of the XB9R, XB9S, XB9SX, XB12R, XB12S, XB12S Long, XB12STT, XB12X, XB12XT and the XBRR. **The Future:** The development of the new liquid-cooled 2008 1125R.

I can highly recommend this book, it is a must for any true Buell enthusiast. It contains many previously unpublished photographs and gives a fascinating insight into the trials and tribulations of the companies early days.

At various stages it could have so easily ended in tears and there wouldn't have even been a Buell Motorcycle Company. For confirmed Buell anoraks this book has plenty of little snippets of information that have never been made public before. For those of you that are new to the brand, this book tells the complete story of how Erik Buell's determination, ingenuity and hard work, created some of the most original and innovative motorcycles available today.

25 Years of Buell is available direct from the publishers, Whitehorse Press, 107 East Conway Road, Center Conway, New Hampshire 03813, USA, priced at \$24.95. Amazon Books can also supply the book at £16.99.





## UKBEG 2009 Events Diary

Please visit the Events Forum on [www.ukbeg.com](http://www.ukbeg.com) for full details or telephone Chris Jessop on 01924 518224.

December 28th, Sunday. (2008)	<b>UKBEG</b> Cabin Fever Meet	National Motorcycle Museum, Solihull.
March 15th, Sunday.	<b>UKBEG</b> Buell Day	Brooklands, Weybridge, Surrey.
April 11th, Easter Saturday.	<b>UKBEG</b> Buell Day	Black Bear HD/Buell, Newmarket, Suffolk.
April 26th, Sunday.	<b>UKBEG</b> Buell Meet	Glastonbury, Somerset.
May 2nd & 3rd, Saturday & Sunday.	<b>UKBEG</b> Buell Challenge	Lands End to John O'Groats.
May 11th, Monday.	<b>Buell</b> Performance Academy	Castle Combe.
May 17th, Sunday.	<b>UKBEG</b> Buell Meet	RAF Cosford, Shropshire.
June 6th & 7th, Saturday & Sunday.	<b>Buell</b> Day	Belgium.
June 12th to 14th, Friday to Sunday.	<b>UKBEG</b> Cumbria Weekend	Kirkstone Pass & Patterdale.
June 19th, Friday.	<b>Buell</b> Performance Academy	Mallory Park. Leicestershire.
June 26th to 30th, Friday to Tuesday.	<b>UKBEG</b> German Weekend	Schwarzwald/Black Forest.
July 5th, Sunday.	<b>UKBEG</b> Buell Meet	White Scar Cave & Devils Bridge, Yorks/Lancs. July 17th
to 19th, Friday to Sunday. <b>UKBEG Main Event</b>		
	Inc. Emma Radford Buell Festival on Saturday 18th July.	
	Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre, East Kirkby, near Spilsby.	
	Location details: <a href="http://www.lincsaviation.co.uk">www.lincsaviation.co.uk</a>	
	'Em Fest' accommodation: <a href="http://www.haywainmotel.co.uk">www.haywainmotel.co.uk</a>	
July 23rd, Thursday.	<b>Buell</b> Performance Academy	Croft Circuit.
July 24th, Friday.	<b>Buell</b> Performance Academy	Mallory Park. Leicestershire.
August 1st & 2nd, Saturday & Sunday.	<b>UKBEG</b> Deliverance 2009 (Adam's BBQ) - Oswestry, Shropshire.	
August 21st, Friday.	<b>Buell</b> Performance Academy	Mallory Park. Leicestershire.
August 23rd, Sunday.	<b>UKBEG</b> Buell Day	Sammy Miller Museum, Hampshire.
August 29th to September 5th, Sat to Sat.	<b>Diggertours</b> Manx GP Trip.	
September 11th, Friday.	<b>Buell</b> Performance Academy	Mallory Park. Leicestershire.
September 27th, Sunday.	<b>UKBEG</b> Buell Meet	Llanberis, Snowdonia.
October 4th, Sunday.	<b>UKBEG</b> Buell Meet	Lindisfarne & Bamburgh, Northumberland.
October 16th, Friday.	<b>Buell</b> Performance Academy	Mallory Park. Leicestershire.
December 27th, Sunday.	<b>UKBEG</b> Cabin Fever Meet	National Motorcycle Museum, Solihull.

### UKBEG Buell Challenge - 2nd/3rd May 2009

The UKBEG Buell End to End Challenge will take place over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend of 2nd/3rd May 2009. The purpose of the Challenge is to raise money for UKBEG's adopted charity, the Papworth Hospital Cystic Fibrosis Unit, in memory of Emma Jane Radford, a member of the group who passed away in April 2004, aged just 26.

The Challenge involves riding from Lands End to John O'Groats (or vice versa) over a period of no more than 36 hours. The total distance by road between the two points is approximately 874 miles. It is an endurance run for Buell motorcycles but all makes are welcome to take part.

**To formally register for the event please complete the form on page 15.**

#### **For the £13.00 registration fee you will receive:**

- An official Buell/UKBEG event T-shirt and sticker.
- Sponsorship forms.
- Route guide.
- An event registration card for use at the middle distance check point.

£10 from each registration will go towards the charity. The remaining £3.00 covers postage and packing etc.

Allan Brownridge of Buell UK has kindly arranged to support the event by donating the official event T-shirts and stickers free of charge.

Note: Your cheque will not be cashed until the T-shirts and stickers are ready to be shipped. Early registration will give us some idea of how many shirts to order and in which sizes.



## Buell Motorcycle Production Figures - As Of June 2008

Note: HP and torque (ft.lbs) figures are for US spec models. Information courtesy of Buell Motorcycle Co. USA.

### Models in current production:

<u>Model (CC)</u>	<u>Number Built</u>	<u>Years Produced</u>	<u>HP – RPM</u>	<u>Torque – RPM</u>
Blast (492)	20,805	2000 onwards	34 – 6500	30 – 5500
1125R (1125)	2,881	2008 onwards	146 – 9800	82 – 8000
XB12XT Ulysses (1203)	831	2008 onwards	103 – 6800	84 – 6000
XB12X Ulysses (1203)	6,489	2006 onwards	103 – 6800	84 – 6000
XB9SX Lightning City X (984)	7,649	2005 onwards	92 – 7200	70 – 5500
XB12R Firebolt (1203)	9,166	2004 onwards	103 – 6800	84 – 6000
XB12S Lightning (1203)	10,847	2004 onwards	103 – 6800	84 – 6000
XB12Ss Lightning Long (1203)	4,826	2006 onwards	103 – 6800	84 – 6000
XB12Scg Lightning (1203)	3,692	2005 onwards	103 – 6800	84 – 6000
XB12STT Lightning Super TT (1203)	1,755	2007 onwards	103 – 6800	84 – 6000

### Models now out of production:

<u>Model (CC)</u>	<u>Number Built</u>	<u>Years Produced</u>	<u>HP – RPM</u>	<u>Torque – RPM</u>
XBRR (1338)	56	2007	150 – 8000	100 – 6400
XB9SL Lightning Low (984)	1,513	2003 to 2004	92 – 7200	70 – 5500
XB9S Lightning (984)	4,332	2003 to 2004	92 – 7200	70 – 5500
XB9R Firebolt (984)	7,484	2001 to 2007	92 – 7200	70 – 5500
X1M Lightning Millenium (1203)	661	2000	101 – 6000	90 – 5500
X1 Lightning (1203)	11,228	1999 to 2002	101 – 6000	90 – 5500
S1 White Lightning (1203)	2,210	1998	101 – 6000	90 – 5500
M2L Cyclone Low (1203)	1,761	2001 to 2002	91 – 6000	85 – 4900
M2 Cyclone (1203)	8,803	1997 to 2002	83 – 5800	80 – 4500
S3T Thunderbolt (1203)	1,779	1997-98 & 2000-02	91 – 5800	87 – 5200
S3 Thunderbolt (1203)	2,670	1997 to 2001	91 – 5800	87 – 5200
S1 Lightning (1203)	4,680	1996 to 1998	91 – 5800	85 – 5200
S2T Thunderbolt (1203)	429	1996	91 – 5800	87 – 5200
S2 Thunderbolt (1203)	1,694	1994 to 1996	76 – 5800	76 – 5200
RSS1200 Westwind (1203)	98	1991 to 1992	68 – 6000	72 – 4000
RS1200 Westwind (1203)	208	1989 to 1992	68 – 6000	72 – 4000
RR1200 Battletwin (1203)	59	1988 to 1990	68 – 6000	72 – 4000
RR1000 Battletwin (997.5)	51	1987	70 – 5600	70 – 4400
RW750 (748)	2	1984	163.5 – 10500	83.6 – 9500

## Buell RS1200 Westwind

Following my request on the UKBEG web site for information regarding 'classic' Buell motorcycles, a European based owner (who wishes to remain anonymous) kindly sent us the following text and pictures.

My RS1200-5 was built in December over the Christmas period of 1990. It is a 1991 model year 5 speed. 1991 was the first year of the 5 speed XL Sportster motor.

I imported it from Louisiana. It was bought from new in Houston, Texas and was bought at 2 years old in 1993 by a guy in Louisiana who sold it to me in February 2007. I bought the bike off e-bay and shipped it over without seeing it. It arrived at my home in April 2007.

Continued on page 14...





It is number 38 of 65 built in 1990/91 and was built by Tom Anglim one of Erik Buell's first employees. Tom is still at the Buell factory today and was delighted when I sent pictures of the old bike over to the factory. The speedometer says ~9,000 miles but I doubt it is accurate.

The bike has been restored back to the condition it left the factory with a couple of exceptions. The cam cover and primary covers are HD chrome plated items from a 1993-on Sportster but were fitted to the bike when I got it so they've stayed put. The bike has been fitted by myself with XB9 rocker covers and breather system. The factory Supertrapp header pipes are ceramic coated but were like that when I bought the bike, they are irreplaceable now so will remain with the bike. The bike has a Supertrapp silencer kindly donated by Adam Brown since the factory original Supertrapp (a slightly different shape to the item currently fitted) is badly battered. The rear shock is an exposed spring WP unit, whilst the 1991 RS1200's built later in the model year had WP rear suspension, this bike was originally fitted with a Works Performance enclosed spring shock as per the 1990 4 speed RS and RR1200's. I have that shock but it is in bad shape right now. The restoration was done very sympathetically and everything original that could be reused has been, the paint etc. is original for example and has polished up to stunning condition for its age.



The engine has been stripped apart from splitting the crankcases. Everything inside was really dirty, the previous owner wasn't too generous with oil changes I think. However, the only parts requiring replacement were an oil pump drive pinion, primary chain tensioner and valve stem seals. Every gasket on the motor was leaking and the entire bike was dripping with oil when I got it. The only other engine parts requiring attention were the starter motor and the valve seats. The valves were reground by myself but really if the bike was ever to be regularly used, new seats would be required as they are quite badly receded. The bike will never be ridden whilst I own it so that isn't an issue for me.

The motor, electric's, instruments, controls are all standard XL Sportster so are easily available. The original Buell cycle parts are mostly unavailable but the factory is keen to support the continuing existence of the old bikes so they will help with parts supply where possible. The main reason why the bike will never be ridden under my ownership is that even a minor accident could easily right the bike off and it is far too good a bike to risk that happening to it. Maz Matsell at the Emporium assisted me in the restoration and overhauled the front and rear suspension, the starter motor and other parts. Thanks Maz.



## Registration Form - UKBEG Buell Challenge - 2nd/3rd May 2009

Please write your details clearly – thank you. Your details will be kept confidential and not divulged to a third party.

Your full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Your T-shirt size: \_\_\_\_\_ (Small, Medium, Large, XL or XXL)

Your telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Make of motorcycle you intend to use for the challenge: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred starting point – Lands End or John O’Groats: \_\_\_\_\_

The registration fee is £13.00.

Please make cheques payable to: **Jane Jessop**.

For your £13.00 registration fee you will receive\*:

An official Buell/UKBEG event T-shirt and sticker.

Sponsorship forms.

Route guide.

An event registration card for use at the middle distance check point.

\* Note: Your cheque will not be cashed until the T-shirts and stickers are ready to be shipped. Early registration will give us some idea of how many shirts to order and in which sizes.

£10 from each registration will go towards the charity. The remaining £3.00 covers P&P etc.

Please send this completed form and payment to:

**UK Buell Enthusiasts Group**  
**PO Box 271**  
**Dewsbury**  
**WF12 0WA**

The UKBEG Buell End to End Challenge will take place over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend of 2nd and 3rd May 2009. The purpose of the Challenge is to raise money for UKBEG’s adopted charity, the Papworth Hospital Cystic Fibrosis Unit, in memory of Emma Jane Radford, a member of the group who passed away in April 2004, aged just 26.

The Challenge involves riding from Lands End to John O’Groats (or vice versa) over a period of no more than 36 hours. The total distance by road between the two points is approximately 874 miles. It is an endurance run for Buell motorcycles but all makes are welcome to take part.



## Press Release - Buell Promoting Helmet Safety

Following the recent confirmation of a five-star SHARP rating for its Buell Turbulent helmet, Harley-Davidson and Buell UK & Ireland is continuing to prove that it is head and shoulders above the rest in terms of promoting helmet safety with the implementation of a new sticker scheme.

The new process will see all dealers in the 35-strong UK & Ireland dealer network placing quality stickers inside each helmet sold. The exact date of purchase will be filled in on the sticker in-store to serve as a reminder for the required three-year replacement rule to improve rider safety.

"We are implementing this scheme to ensure that we continue to provide the highest standards of safety and care for our customers," says MotorClothes Brand Manager Allan Brownridge. "All of our lives are becoming increasingly busy and even those of us who are aware that helmets should be replaced every three years, or more frequently if roughly handled, can find it difficult to remember when this needs doing. The stickers will provide a reminder for those motorcyclists."

Although SHARP ratings are not currently required by law, they do provide an easy reference safety rating for consumers who require additional reassurance about the quality of their chosen helmet.

"There has been substantial speculation regarding the legal and insurance implications of the introduction of SHARP ratings," added Allan. "However, we do not want to wait until manufacturers are forced into implementing helmet safety measures. Our primary concern is ensuring that when our customers take to the road, the only thing they have to think about is enjoying the ride."

As the scheme is only being implemented in the UK, it further reinforces the benefits of purchasing a helmet from a local dealer. Helmets produced in America and bought online by UK customers do not conform to EU legislation, which means that they are not road legal in the UK and Ireland. It is also important for consumers to have a try before they buy policy to ensure that they have a correctly fitting helmet. Dealer staff will be able to offer advice. To locate your nearest Buell UK & Ireland dealer, please visit [www.buell.co.uk](http://www.buell.co.uk)



## UKBEG Cumbria Weekend - June 2008

Held over the 14th to 15th June, this was UKBEG's first long weekend trip to the Lake District. We used two locations, the Kirkstone Pass Inn and the Sykeside Camping Park / Brotherswater Inn, in Patterdale. They're only 3 miles apart and although using a split location may seem odd, it worked very well.

We had 5 Buells, 1 Moto Guzzi, 1 Suzuki and 1 Cagiva attend the weekend, with people using a mixture of camping and B&B accommodation. For the Saturday I had planned a ride-out which took in some of the best scenery and roads that the Lake District has to offer. Our group met at the Kirkstone Pass Inn at 10.30 am and then headed up the A592 towards Ullswater, turning left onto the A5091 to Troutbeck. From there we turned left onto the A66 for a short fast ride to the B5322 at Threlkeld. Turning left again we followed this minor road for a couple of miles. Onto the main A591 heading south, we passed the Helvellyn mountain range and Thirlmere lake. Into Ambleside and we turned right onto the A593 before turning right again onto unclassified roads through Langdale and the Furness fells.

The weather had been pretty good up to this point, the roads had remained dry and everything was going to plan. The next part of the route on single-track unclassified roads is challenging in good weather but in heavy rain it can be awful. So of course, it started raining.... We rode over the Wrynose Pass without too much difficulty but the Hardknott Pass lay ahead. Heavy rain, rivers of water across the road, grit, acute bends with steep gradients, misted up visors – who's idea was this? After one of the most memorable (and scary) rides we eventually rode out of the low cloud into warm, glorious sunshine. Once we'd left the mountains behind us we rode into Eskdale and stopped at the railway station in Boot. This was sanctuary after the Hardknott Pass and it gave all of us an opportunity to dry out and have a hot drink. I was sure everyone would want to lynch me after that experience but we just laughed, nervously. Things could have easily gone pear-shaped, with damage to the bikes or worse still, to the riders.

The rest of the route to Coniston was brilliant with a good mixture of quiet roads, sunshine and stunning scenery. To finish off the day we took the ferry across Lake Windermere. An excellent weekend with great company!! See page 6 in this issue for details of the 2009 UKBEG Cumbria Weekend.





## Press Release - Buell Expands Experience Events

An increased focus on the 'rider down' approach has led to the expansion of the Buell Performance Academy for 2009 with the addition of two new tracks and some brand new experience events.

In addition to enabling attendees to experience a range of motorcycles in the existing Buell line-up, the Academy will also now be used as a feedback opportunity for UK motorcyclists.



All UK-based events will cost just £99 including the use of Buell bikes.

The Experience events will continue to operate from Leicestershire-based Mallory Park, but one-off events will also be staged at Croft in North Yorkshire and Castle Combe in Wiltshire. Ladies only and novice sessions will be offered and advanced events have been designed for people who attended last year's Experience Days.

The two types of advanced events have a specific focus on a particular aspect of riding with a dedicated half day track session and skills course aboard liquid-cooled Buells or a half day tailored off-road session using the Buell Ulysses family. In addition, two new European events have been added to the calendar.

Track enthusiasts who have attended a UK-based event will have the opportunity to join the Buell Performance Academy team at the Nurburgring in Germany, while an off-road adventure is available in Spain, which includes a trek among unspoilt scenery, ending with a luxury outdoor camping experience.

Early interest can be registered at [www.buellperformanceacademy.co.uk](http://www.buellperformanceacademy.co.uk) to receive a notification when a full online booking facility goes live ahead of Christmas. A text reminder will be sent to all attendees three days in advance of each date to ensure that nobody misses out. Visitors to the site will also be invited to provide feedback on the events and there will be an opportunity to contact the instructors direct.

Further benefits will include a members area with access to exclusive competitions, downloadable screensavers, wallpapers, Buell-branded MySpace skins and a weather checker and route finder to help with planning any two-wheel trips.

"The Buell Performance Academy is a very important aspect of our plans for 2009 and beyond," says Buell UK & Ireland Brand Manager Andrew McIndoe. "Buell is about having fun and enjoying the experience of motorcycling. We just want people to try our bikes and discover what they have to offer, which is why we are offering such a competitive price package of £99 aboard our bikes."

Date	Event	Location
Monday 11 May	Experience Day	Castle Combe
Friday 19 June	Experience Day	Mallory Park
Thursday 23 July	Experience Day	Croft
Friday 24 July	Advanced sessions	Mallory Park
Friday 21 August	Experience Day	Mallory Park
Friday 11 September	Advanced sessions	Mallory Park
Friday 16 October	Advanced sessions	Mallory Park

European tour dates to be confirmed

Castle Combe web site:

[www.castlecombecircuit.co.uk](http://www.castlecombecircuit.co.uk)

Croft Circuit web site:

[www.croftcircuit.co.uk](http://www.croftcircuit.co.uk)

Mallory Park web site:

[www.mallorypark.co.uk](http://www.mallorypark.co.uk)

### Note:

All the Buell Performance Academy dates have been included within the UKBEG events diary on page 12.





## UKBEG 2008 Events Review

### UKBEG Buell Day – Brooklands, Surrey, Sunday 16th March

As mentioned on page 1, this event was badly affected by the weather. Jane and I stayed the Saturday night in the Staines area and enjoyed a dry ride down from Yorkshire. It was only when we got within spitting distance of the M25 did it start to rain. It continued to rain all that night and the following day. When we arrived at Brooklands early on Sunday morning we didn't think anyone would turn up. We sheltered in the entrance to the shop/café and watched as persistent rain fell on our Ulysses – it looked very lonely parked in the paddock area, surrounded by large puddles. We just looked at each other and laughed. We thought we might give it an hour or so before riding back home. We couldn't blame anyone if they didn't bother turning out on such a miserable morning. But just as we were having our third coffee, we heard the rumble of V-twins and headlights appeared through the trees which line the entrance road down into Brooklands. What a welcome sight – a small group of Buells!! We were simply blown away by the response of UKBEG members. By lunchtime we had a total of 32 rather soggy Buells lined up in the paddock. Brooklands staff allowed us to dry our riding gear in one of their first floor event suites. There had been a party the night before and it was still decked out in balloons and streamers. Warm radiators lined the outside walls of the suite and we made full use of them. It looked surreal as various items of motorcycle kit steamed away in a posh ballroom. Given the circumstances the day went brilliantly. Everyone enjoyed their visit to Brooklands and we shared plenty of laughs. You don't have to be bonkers to be a Buell rider in the rain – but it helps!



### UKBEG Buell Day – Sammy Miller Museum, Hampshire, Sunday 25th May

Jane and I had ridden down to Hampshire the day before so we were able to arrive at the museum early. Despite a wet start to the day this event was blessed with warm sunshine and we had well over 50 Buells at Sammy Miller's. This location has always proved to be one of the most successful for UKBEG and this year was no exception. Our line-up of 50+ Buells looked very impressive. The museum has one of the finest collections of rare and classic European racing machines in the UK as well as proving an ideal location to hold a motorcycle meet. The café serves delicious food and their courtyard is a great place to sit down and chill out with good friends.





**UKBEG Buell Meet – The Falkirk Wheel, Scotland, Sunday 1st June**

Scotland has never been a successful location for UKBEG events – but we keep trying. Despite having quite a few members north of the border, either the choice of location or the weather seems to put the kibosh on them. The greater distances involved in getting around Scotland don't help much. A few members who are based in England rode up the day before. Jane and I stopped in South Queensferry, near Edinburgh. At least Saturday was dry and we had a great ride up the A68 through the Borders. It's one of our favourite routes and it was pretty much free of traffic. Sunday morning started out dry and we arrived at the Falkirk Wheel nice and early. We knew that a handful of members would turn up but the weather forecast for 10.00 am onwards on Sunday was atrocious. This would probably affect the turnout, and it did. There were 4 Buells, 1 Moto Guzzi, 1 Cagiva, 1 Honda and 1 Triumph at this meet. Because of the small numbers I can remember almost everyone's names: John and Kathryn, Kev, Rawni, Norrie, Martin and Mel.

True to form the heavens opened at around 10.00 am and it rained for the rest of day. It didn't stop us enjoying the visitor centre or the Falkirk Wheel itself. It is a fascinating place – if you're into massive structures and can appreciate British engineering at its finest, then I can recommend a visit. For a small charge we could travel up and over the wheel system, which forms the lock, in a glass roofed boat. The Falkirk Wheel looks impressive enough from the ground but when you're actually in a boat, high in the air, at the top of its rotation, it's breathtaking. We had to ride 235 miles back to Yorkshire so we left Falkirk mid-afternoon. Because of the poor weather we thought we'd use the A1. This was a slightly longer route than we used on Saturday but it was easier to use in bad weather. We left the Edinburgh area in heavy rain and it stayed like that until we reached North Yorkshire. Even though we were wearing quality waterproofs it felt cold for the time of year and the wind was coming right off the North Sea. It was one of those gruelling rides that just had to be done. John and Kathryn on their XB12XT and Kev on his X1 travelled down the A68 through the Borders but used the A1 from Darlington southwards. They passed us twice on the A1, waving to us as they rode past. It was one of the most memorable weekends of the year and well worth the effort.



**UKBEG Buell Meet – Llanberis, Snowdonia, Sunday 7th September**

Another wet weekend – what a surprise! Nothing ventured, nothing gained, that should be UKBEG's events motto. On Sunday morning Jane and I had a dry ride over the Pennines but hit rain in the Greater Manchester area. The prearranged meeting point was the Electric Mountain visitor centre in the village of Llanberis. Rick from Luton on his X1 and local rider John on his XB12S were already there when we arrived. It was wet in Llanberis and low clouds





Because of the poor weather forecast we weren't expecting many to attend but we were pleasantly surprised by the eventual total of 6 Buells, 1 Cagiva and 1 Suzuki. After a hot drink we left on a ride-out to the Porthmadog area. The ride was led by Adam Brown on his X1 Lightning. This is Adam's play ground and his guided tour took us along minor roads through the spectacular Snowdonia National Park. Luckily the weather improved as we neared the coast and the roads dried out a bit. We had a lunch stop at a bikers café near Tremadog, on the A498. After an hour or so Jane and I left for home, heading east along the A498 and A4086 to the A5 at Betws-y-Coed. This was a brilliant twisty route and traffic free. We stopped for a photo opportunity at the Llyn Gwynant. The higher we went, the worse the weather became. The mountains seemed to have trapped all the clouds and visibility was poor near the Pen-y-Pass. There's something about riding in poor conditions, it concentrates the mind and improves your riding technique. From Betws-y-Coed we travelled up the A470 to Colwyn Bay and the A55 coast road. At least the weather improved near the coast. Back into the Greater Manchester area and the heavens opened, we've never experienced rain like it. The M56 and M60 were like rivers and clouds of spray made for a dismal ride. Our waterproofs were well and truly tested. Naturally, once we were back in West Yorkshire the sun came out. Most of UKBEG's meets are planned well in advance so we don't have a choice whether we attend or not – if the weather is bad we just have to grin and bear it. We're back in Snowdonia on Sunday 27th September 2009.



**UKBEG Buell Meet – Haynes Museum, Somerset, Sunday 21st September**

Guess what? A dry, sunny weekend. If only the rest of the year had been like this. Jane and I travelled down to Somerset on Saturday and had a great time exploring Salisbury Plain and the Cranborne Chase. We don't visit this area very often so it made for a very pleasant day.

There were 35 Buells at this meet, which was our third highest total of the year. The museum allowed us to park in a separate area from the public car park and our line-up of Buells looked very impressive. Everything just seemed to come together for this meet with a perfect day bathed in warm sunshine. It made a change to be able to walk around in a T-shirt. The museum, which is one of the UK's largest collections, has over 350 cars and bikes on display in 11 halls. The world famous 'Red Room' is packed with every conceivable sports car from around the world and their collection of American cars from the 50's and 60's is particularly impressive. I can recommend a visit if you're ever in the area. This was one of our best weekends of the year and we didn't have to put our waterproofs on at any stage of the 530 mile round trip.



**American Thunder  
Spring 2009**

This will be published in late March or early April. If you would like to submit any material for American Thunder please send it on a CD, which can be returned if required, or via e-mail. Our contact details are shown top left on page 1.