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# American Thunder

Spring 2007

Newsletter of the independent  
UK Buell Enthusiasts Group

## UK Buell Enthusiasts Group - A Brief History

My wife Jane and I placed our order for a Billet Silver S1 Lightning in November 1996, following the launch of Buells in the UK at the NEC that Autumn. We finally took delivery on the 20th May 1997 – some 6 months later. It was well worth the wait! Then, as now, Buells look like nothing else and perform like nothing else. While on holiday in the USA during October 1997 we visited the Buell factory in East Troy, Wisconsin, and were lucky to be able to tour the plant production area and meet Erik Buell himself. In April 1998 we formed the UK Buell Enthusiasts Group.

The idea behind UKBEG was to create something as unique as the motorcycles themselves. It was run along the lines of a normal club but we produced a bimonthly newsletter called American Thunder. Created and printed at home, it soon became very successful and finished up looking more like a magazine than a simple newsletter. We also organised a few meets and runs around the UK with varying degrees of success.

Membership of UKBEG reached 213 in April 2000, which at that time was approximately 35% of all UK Buell owners. Unfortunately we became victims of our own success. The time required to run UKBEG as a club and produce American Thunder was becoming too much and the costs were hard to manage. In April 2000 we decided to close down UKBEG as a club and just use a web site, [www.ukbeg.com](http://www.ukbeg.com), which club member Steve Shakeshaft had created. The web site has survived many ups and downs during the past 7 years but remains true to its main purpose, which is to share the enthusiasm for these unique American motorcycles. Since 2003 our main involvement with the web site has been to organise many of the UKBEG events.

The Groups main event is held at the Lincolnshire Heritage Aviation Centre, a former WW2 bomber base, near the small village of East Kirkby. It's grown into something of a V-twin festival over the years and we invite all the British and Italian motorcycle clubs to share in the fun. During the event a Lancaster bomber performs a taxi-run and we also have a Spitfire flying display.

This years event takes place on Saturday 21st July. Since 2004 it's been dedicated to the memory of one of our members, Emma Jane Radford, who passed away 22-04-04, aged just 26. We also raise money for the Cystic Fibrosis charity. Last years event raised £400 and 86 Buells attended – despite severe thunderstorms on the day.

For 2007 we've decided to publish American Thunder again. There'll be 3 issues, Spring, Summer and Autumn.

### Our S1 at the 2004 Lincolnshire event



## WWW.UKBEG.COM

Visit the Groups web site for all the latest up to date information.

In addition to a social forum and general Buell chat you'll find a specific section that covers all Buell technical questions. There's a wealth of knowledge that has been built up over a period of 9 years and all of it is easy to access. Both tube-framed and XB models have their own sections that cover all known faults and popular modifications. This aspect is one of the main strengths of our web site.

The 'Events & Rides' forum is the place to visit for news about what's happening and where. This section details our more formal Buell events which are shown on page 3 of this newsletter and locally based runs and meets which may just have 2 or 3 days notice.

We welcome new members on the web site – but even if you don't want to post a message you're quite welcome to browse all the content. [www.ukbeg.com](http://www.ukbeg.com) is one of the most visited Buell web sites on the internet, with contributions from Buell owners all over the world.

## Buell XB12s. Owner: Jonah Jones.

Jonah has transformed his 2004 XB12s with the following modifications.

### Specifications:

**Engine:** Buell race kit (ECU/Exhaust) plus modified airbox.

**Bodywork:** Full Imberger carbon fibre – less seat hump.

**Paint:** Candy blue over Aztec silver base. Carbon base showing through tribal design with drop shadow.

**Wheels:** Front: standard finished in Chromflair paint. Rear: Taylormade-wheels Billet, polished 3 Pc split rim. 8.5" x 18 with 240/18 tyre.

**Bits-n-bobs:** Renthal Ti bars with traction grips, CRG billet clutch and brake levers, Rizoma billet mirrors, mini chrome indicators, Rizoma rear light unit with stainless number plate bracket, blue LED 'Angel Eye' headlamp mod.

Future modifications include a new LED rear light cluster plus stainless undertray, have the wheels chromed, fit different headlights, and fit a billet front pulley cover.

Pictured bottom right, Jonah brought his XB12s to the UKBEG Buell meet which was held on the 28th January 2007 in North Yorkshire.



## Buell S1 Lightning. Owner: Guy Elliott.

Guy won the UKBEG 2006 Buell photo competition with the picture on the right. Below, Guy details the modifications carried out to his S1 Lightning.

I'm the third owner of this bike which was originally imported into the UK by the second owner – who didn't really appreciate the potential of the Buell and therefore it wasn't looked after very well.

I purchased the bike in September 2005 and rode it for one month. I then took it off the road and stripped it down. The main reason was to check all was mechanically sound, however, once it started to come apart I decided to make a few alterations!

I cut the seat sub frame off and raised it an inch and a half, I then removed the rear foot-rests together with their frame loops.

The old seat was reupholstered with 'S1' embroidered in silver. I fitted a Mikuni carburettor and polished everything I could get my hands on – including the wheels! I painstakingly made a billet aluminium rear light containing 96 red LED's to say the word Buell, which always catches peoples eyes.

A great addition was the 4 kg NOS bottle for which I handmade all the billet brackets for the bottle and solenoids.



I changed the standard headlight to something a bit more 'street fighter'. I removed the original wiring loom and created my own. This allowed me to remove the original dash and all the unnecessary



warning lights. To keep a clean line under the seat, I removed the rear number plate and fitted it to the swinging arm with an aluminium bracket. I fitted a single dial speedometer into a billet aluminium housing with an oil pressure and neutral LED. All the oil pipes are now braided – in keeping with the rest of the bike. The frame was re-powder coated in metallic silver and all the body work painted in a metallic diamond black. The bike has been fully stripped again this winter, mainly due to a poor quality powder coat. A new list of work has begun, including one inch Z-bars with all switch controls removed, allowing me to fit a new aluminium start button to the starter solenoid. A new fully polished aluminium swinging arm will replace the original steel one and the front forks will also be polished.

I appreciate that the work I've carried out on my Buell may not be to everyone's taste, but I'm proud that my ability has created a machine of such individuality which is often admired. I've already started the list of jobs for next winter!





## 'The Emporium' - The UK's Independent Buell Specialist

Unit B6, New Mill, Park Road, Dukinfield, SK16 5LX.  
Telephone: 0161 343 3077 or 07860 433939.

Located in Dukinfield, east of Manchester, The Emporium is the affectionate name coined by Buell enthusiasts for 'Just Buells', an independent business run and owned by Maz Matsell IMI MechE – pictured right with Erik Buell at Silverstone in June 2005.



Maz is an engineer, perfectionist and passionate Buell enthusiast. He's dedicated the past 9 years to working on nothing other than Buell motorcycles. Maz bought his first Buell in 1998 while working in Las Vegas and now owns two S1 White Lightning's (one of which is still in its original crate and unused!) a 2001 X1 and a M2 Cyclone. It would be fair to say that when he's not at the workshop spannering Buells, he's either on the UKBEG web site or asleep! He earns a living servicing, tuning and repairing all Buell models from the tube-framed S1/S2/S3/M2/X1 series to the later fuel-framed XB range. Maz holds the UK's largest stock of Buell service parts. Tube-framed model upgrades are held in stock and all parts can be supplied via mail order.

His wealth of knowledge means that he can advise on all aspects of Buell ownership and knows what works and what doesn't. Free advice is also available over the phone. A considerable investment has been made in tools and specific Buell service equipment, ensuring your Buell receives the best possible care and attention. His 2007 labour rate is a very reasonable £30 per hour.

Maz is a highly respected technician whose quality of work on Buells speaks for itself. He built the 1250cc S1 White Lightning (pictured right) campaigned by Martin Courage in the 2006 Thunderbike race series.



## UK Buell Enthusiasts Group Events Diary 2007

There's a full program of UKBEG Buell events and meets taking place in 2007. The **Events Diary**, within our web site [www.ukbeg.com](http://www.ukbeg.com), shows up to date information and contains hyperlinks to the different locations shown below.

Please contact Chris Jessop for further details about any of these events. Tel: 01924 518224 evenings .

March 25th Sunday.	UKBEG Buell Meet.	Eden Camp, Malton, North Yorkshire.
April 9th Easter Monday.	UKBEG 'Grand Day Out'.	Red Marley Classic Hill Climb, Worcestershire.
April 22nd Sunday.	UKBEG Buell Day.	Sammy Miller Museum, New Milton, Hampshire.
May 4th/8th Fri/Tue.	UKBEG Normandy Trip.	Contact Chris Jessop.
May 9th/13th Wed/Sun.	UKBEG NW200 Trip.	Contact Chris Jessop.
May 18th/20th Fri/Sun.	UKBEG Scottish Weekend.	Contact Chris Jessop. .
June 24th Sunday.	UKBEG Buell Meet.	Norfolk & Suffolk Aviation Museum, Flixton, Suffolk.
July 1st Sunday.	UKBEG Buell Meet.	Electric Mountain, Llanberis, Snowdonia, Wales.
<b>July 21st Saturday.</b>	<b>UKBEG Main Event.</b>	<b>Emma Radford Buell &amp; European V-twin Festival.</b>
		<b>Lincolnshire Heritage Aviation Centre, East Kirkby.</b>
July 31st Tuesday.	Twin Cylinder Track Day – Mallory Park.	Contact Chris Jessop.
August 4th Saturday.	UKBEG BBQ/Buell Meet.	Dockgate 20 HD/Buell, Southampton, Hampshire.
August 11th/12th Sat/Sun	UKBEG 'Racefest'.	Thunderbike Races, Cadwell Park, Lincolnshire.
August 19th Sunday.	UKBEG Buell Meet.	Fleet Air Arm Museum, Yeovilton, Somerset.
September 23rd Sunday.	UKBEG Buell Meet.	Jodrell Bank Observatory, Cheshire.
October 14th Sunday.	UKBEG Buell Meet.	Steam Boat Museum, Windermere, Lake District.
December 30th Sunday.	UKBEG 'Cabin Fever' Meet.	National Motorcycle Museum, Birmingham.



## Spanner In The Works - The Buell Technical Page

The small print: if you're not familiar with workshop practices - leave it to the 'experts' No responsibility is accepted blah, blah, blah.....

**By Chris Jessop.** In November 2002 I replaced all the engine case fasteners on my 1997 S1 Lightning with stainless steel versions. Early Buells have fasteners that are barely adequate for our British climate and can soon look discoloured. When fitting stainless bolts be sure to smear a small amount of copper slip on the first 3 or 4 threads and use a torque wrench. The list below shows all the fasteners required for the 1203 cc Buell (EVO) engine used in the tube-framed models. All are cap head socket screws unless stated otherwise. Torque figures used are Newton Metres.

### ROCKER BOX COVER – PER CYLINDER

4 off 1/4"UNC x 7/8" long (14 to 18 Nm)  
4 off 1/4" x 5/8" large OD washers  
4 off 63858-49 fibre washer (Buell part)

### TIMING GEAR CASE

1 off 1/4"UNC x 1 1/4" long (9 to 12.4 Nm)  
3 off 1/4"UNC x 1 3/4" long (9 to 12.4 Nm)  
2 off 1/4"UNC x 2" long (9 to 12.4 Nm)  
5 off 1/4"UNC x 2 1/4" long (9 to 12.4 Nm)  
11 off 1/4" x 7/16" small OD washer

### CLUTCH (DERBY) INSPECTION COVER

4 off 1/4"UNC X 5/8" long Button (9 to 12 Nm)  
4 off 1/4" x 7/16" small OD washer

I found that the best source for all these imperial fasteners (which are bought separately and not as a made up kit) was D Middleton's in Batley, West Yorkshire. Tel: 01924 470807. Web site: [www.stainlessmiddleton.co.uk](http://www.stainlessmiddleton.co.uk)

### BOTTOM OF PUSH ROD TUBES – PER CYLINDER

2 off 5/16"UNC x 3/4" long (20 to 24 Nm)  
2 off 5/16" x 1/2" small OD washer  
1 off 1/4"UNC x 7/8" long (9 to 12.4 Nm)  
1 off 1/4" x 7/16" small OD washer

### PRIMARY CHAINCASE

7 off 1/4"UNC x 1 3/4" long (9 to 12.4 Nm)  
4 off 1/4"UNC x 2 1/4" long (9 to 12.4 Nm)  
2 off 5/16"UNC x 3 1/2" long (9 to 12.4 Nm)  
11 off 1/4" x 7/16" small OD washer  
2 off 5/16" x 1/2" small OD washer

### PRIMARY CHAIN INSPECTION COVER

2 off 1/4"UNC x 9/16" long Countersunk (4.5 to 6.8 Nm)  
(Use 3/4" long cut down – which are readily available)

## XB Range Airbox Modifications - by Steve Turnbull

BUELL® 2007 MODEL YEAR TECHNICAL FORUM

### Additional Holes in Airbox Functional Cover

- Revised calibration for new airbox



**Snorkel Removal** – The earlier XB's (Pre 06) have the inlet routed in through the left frame beam. Inside this is a rubber snorkel, which can be removed to provide greater airflow into the airbox. This is a standard mod as recommended by the Buell race kit and best of all, it's free!

**9 to 12 Airbox Mod** – The early XB9 airbox has a flat top, whilst the XB12 has a vortex in the top to guide air into the throttle body. Replacing the early XB9 inner airbox lid with the one from the 12, has been known to provide performance improvements.

**Hole Saw Mods** – Possibly one of the best cheap/free mods you can perform. This has now been replicated by the factory on the newer 2006 and 2007 XB's. Greater airflow into the engine will generally give greater hp figures, but can result in a slight drop in torque at low rpm. The picture left is from the official Buell Technical Forum, showing the additional holes in the 2007 airbox.

**Re-routed Breathers** – This is an ongoing solution to the problem of pressure build up in the crankcases causing oil in the breather pipes. The standard Buell design routes this back into the airbox and back through the engine. As these vapours will not burn, they result in reduced power. This has been proven in the US to be worth 2 to 4 hp! Not a bad result for another very low cost project.

The current breathers come up into the airbox base. They need to be pulled down, then joined together with a 3/8" T-piece. Then run a single 3/8" hose to a suitable container to catch the fluid in. This will need to be emptied every 500-1000 miles or so, therefore should be accessible. Ideally, the hose should flow downwards at all times, but have a T-piece fitted with a breather located above. This will allow the crankcase to breath as designed and should be tee'd in and routed high enough to ensure the pipe does not fill to this point.

There will now be 2 holes in the airbox, where the breathers used to enter. These need to be blocked, usually with rubber grommets. If you use sealant, ensure it's oxygen sensor friendly non silicon.

