

# 'Hey buddy, lend me ya bike – I gotta race to win!'

IF YOU GET NERVOUS AT STRANGERS EVEN looking at your treasured bike a bit funny, imagine how it would feel to lend it out for a full bore race thrashing to a foreigner you've never met before – and then see him wheelie it wildly to victory in a prestigious meeting.

CB reader and British triples fan Richard Darby can tell you exactly what it feels like, for that's just what happened to him and his Rob North Trident F750 replica during a weekend he'll never forget last July.

Darby gawped with a mixture of heart-stopping horror and heart-warming pride as American superbike ace Cal Rayborn III howled to first place in the second Anglo-US Match race of the Transatlantic race festival at Cadwell Park, riding the club racer Darby had built himself.

"It was a tremendous feeling," said Darby, who had responded to an eleventh hour plea from Transatlantic series promoter Robert Iannucci for Formula 750 eligible bikes to help out a caught-short US team.

Knowing many of the UK's most competitive triples would be committed to a classic club race meeting at Mallory Park the same weekend, Darby and fellow Trident and Rocket 3 Owners Club member Clive Tilley were contacted as a long shot. Both men generously agreed to lend racers on the Friday before the meeting – before they even knew who would race them.

Darby added: "At first I wondered what on earth I'd let myself in for, especially when I first saw Cal riding over the Mountain with the front wheel high in the air.

"But he's a really nice, genuine guy. After practice it was clear he was treating my bike carefully – he was using the clutch for every gear change. I told him he didn't have to.

"I've read a lot about Cal Rayborn Senior and am a great admirer. And Cal Junior seems to be very like his father."

Darby, a 42-year-old production engineer from Wolverhampton, is no mean club racer himself, having notched up a championship on his Triumph at the Welsh Tonfanau circuit.

But compared with the triples ridden at Cadwell by Rayborn's opponents such as Colin Breeze and Dave Pither, his Miles Engineering-framed racer is only in an average state of tune. As archivist of the T&R3OC club, Darby has closely studied all published details of the original BSA and Triumph factory triple race machines.

"I try to follow original 1970-71 works specifications rather than using any of the newer ideas now used in historic racing," he said. "But to see Cal win on my bike really made my weekend. If ever there was proof that it's the rider that wins races and not the bike, this was it."

**Mick Duckworth  
pics Keith Martin**



▲ Proud owner Richard Darby (left) joins Cal Rayborn for the celebrations after the American's victory on his bike

◀ Top Yank racer Cal Rayborn III gives Richard Darby's beloved Trident maximum stick cresting Cadwell's famous Mountain section