



HARLEY-DAVIDSON OWES MUCH TO THE RACING WORLD

Story by Beverly K. Harvey, Photos by Michael Blackwell

Do you know how many Harley-Davidson store's in the Kansas City market support a Flat Track Racer, Road Racer and a Drag Racer? Give up? One and it is Blue Springs Harley-Davidson located in Blue Springs, Missouri. (www.bluespringsharleydavidson.com)

Not many folks know that Harley-Davidson derived its start back in the early 1900's due to motorcycle racing. One way to promote the sales of bikes when they were first manufactured was to race them. There were races all over America in the early days and for the companies winning the top seeds in those races... it was pay day. People would buy the bike brands that netted the top spots in those early races, much the same as folks do today. As Harley racers won more and more races, the sales began to grow. Thus, Harley-Davidson grew.

You may have seen pictures of the “wrecking crew” on post cards and ad's for Harley-Davidson's. These early racers put Harley-Davidson on the map as a company. Harley-Davidson owes much to the racing world. Blue Springs Harley-Davidson and the Worth family honor the tradition of racing by supporting racers and competing in motorcycle racing to this day.

Racing for the Worth family runs deep. Ray Worth (Founder of the Worth Harley-Davidson shops in Kansas City) raced Pro Stock in the late 1970's. Ray was even featured in an article in Cycle World in the 1980's. Later in the 80's Ray was approached by Yamaha to build and race a Seca 750 in the all new Jr. Pro Stock class. Ray's team had the number “one” plate two out of three years and were first in their class, this was quite an accomplishment at that time. Ray reset records each time he ran and gave all the racers something to reach for on their next run.

Ray's son David, owner-operator of Blue Springs Harley-Davidson also raced in the 80's. David ran in the Super Stock Class and raced locally here in Kansas City and the surrounding area.

On December 16th, 1985 the third generation of Worth racers was born. Little did we know that this blue eyed, blonde haired bouncing baby boy would follow in his dad's and his grandfather's footsteps in later years by racing. Welcome to the world of motorcycle racing Danny!

David and his son Danny have spent many a day riding dirt bikes and racing each other through the woods at Chadwick, Missouri and other locations in Missouri over the years. These were the early years that would set the stage for the third generation Worth racer.

Danny Worth, now 20, raced for the first time in 2006 in the AHDRA (All Harley Drag Racing Association).(www.AHDRA.com) Quite an undertaking for his first year riding in the pro-series and he began racing at mid season. ▶