

MINI SUCCESS

BBR has deep roots in motocross

► If you've ever wondered, BBR stands for Brown Brother's Racing. BBR Motorsports is three brothers, Chris Brown, Duane Brown, and Brent Brown. Back in 1976, when Chris was 9, Duane 11 and Brent 14, they bought out NK Cycle from their mentor and cousin and began distribution of BMX parts and motocross accessories in their parent's garage. They called it Brown Brothers Bike World. The hot products at Bike World were from DG, Redline, FMF, Bel Ray and GT. The money they made they spent on trick motorcycle parts. As their shop gained momentum, a move into an 1100 square foot retail space in Kent, Washington was necessary in 1978. The "Tracker" BMX team formed and the Brown brothers split their time between the BMX tracks and the motocross tracks.

The Brown brothers were different from most kids in Junior High shop class in 1979. Chris and Duane built a custom XR75 with a hand-fabricated frame incorporating a custom linkage-style single shock and swingarm combo, dual leading brakes, and a modified Powroll engine. They got an A+ on the project, beginning many years of custom fabrication. In 1980 their dad, Charlie Brown, let the brothers bulldoze the backyard into a mini-motocross track after Duane and Chris purchased a YZ80 from the local Yamaha Dealer. The payment was a whopping \$23 a month. With the bike shop thriving in 1981 it allowed the Brown brothers to play with more motorcycles and race cars. The "BBR" logo first appeared on Brent's 1969 Roadrunner drag-car. He won a 1981 West Coast event at Seattle International Raceway at age 18 sporting the logo.

The year 1982 rolled around and the brothers changed the name of the shop to "BBR" (Brown Brothers Racing). The BBR BMX team sup-



BBR Motorsports can be blamed for the raging success of mini bikes. BBR will also happily take the blame for how technically advanced the mini bike world has become. What BBR builds is essentially a small works bike. Derek Costella, wide open at the Mini Moto SX.



1977: Chris Brown stands with his DG/XR75.



1978: The Bikeworld days.



1979: Duane and Chris's Junior High project.



1982: The BBR BMX team.

ported 14 riders who competed at national events across the country.

The bike shop was sold in 1984 and a new 2500 square foot motorsports machine shop took its place. They built a three-acre Supercross-style track in the back. The brothers machined all kinds of motorsports parts during work hours and rode the sun away every night. While they never stopped building motorcycle parts, the Mopar resto business was booming for the Brown brothers. In 1986 the BBR boys started stuffing XR engines in YZs, CRs and RMs. Of course, their personal moto bikes became pretty exotic. The first hand-built aluminum swingarms become available to the public for the XR75 and XR100 and the orders started to pour in. In 1988, Brent had his business and finance degree, Duane had his fabrication and auto body degree, and Chris was studying for his com-

puter science degree. The elements for a successful business were coming together. For the next four years, while still fabricating motorcycle parts, BBR restored over 30 show-winning cars. In 1992, after winning best of show with their 1969 Hemi four-speed Road Runner at the West Coast Mopar Nationals, Duane and Chris dove head first into building the trickiest four-stroke motorcycles in the world, while the businessman Brent developed a formal business plan for BBR. The first BBR aluminum frames were designed from a hospital bed after Chris developed life-threatening pancreatitis in 1994 and spent ten years in and out of hospitals. In 1995, when four-strokes were oddities, not the norm, BBR debuted its first aluminum framed race bike at the White Brothers 4-Stroke Championships. American Honda took serious interest in BBR's prototyping and a long-



1996: The aluminum-framed XR400 on the cover of Dirt Bike magazine.

standing relationship was born. The media took notice in 1996 and BBR's aluminum-framed XR400 graced the cover of both *Dirt Bike* and *Motocross Action*. Versions of the bike won



1984: Duane Brown rips it up on his RM.



1986: Fabricating XR swingarms.

MINI SUCCESS



2006: Life is good for the Brown brothers, who get to play with motorcycles every day.



2004: Rich Taylor ripping it up in Vegas.

almost every class at the 4-Stroke World Championships. In 1997 BBR fabricated "The Hindenberg," a hand-made aluminum perimeter frame with a Husaberg 501 motor. Honda development rider Rich Taylor podiumed the bike against full factory riders at the Washougal Outdoor Nationals. Shortly after, BBR went wide open into production of complete custom aluminum-framed motocross bikes. A line of aftermarket parts was developed for the new YZ400 four-stroke and the BBR frame kits were in high demand for XR/CR conversions. In 2000, BBR's Perimeter Framed YZ426 was introduced and retailed for a cool \$22,000. BBR also built a Works-Suzuki RM400, TTR225/YZ125 conversion and a variety of custom mini's. With tons of magazine coverage and a bunch of race wins, the BBR company grew fast. The waiting list for BBR bikes stretched quickly to over six months. In 2001 BBR's aluminum perimeter framed YZF250F four-stroke hit the market and weighed 20 pounds less than the stock bike. It was the the foundation for Honda's future CRF250. Hand-crafted race bikes remained the foundation of BBR at this time.

More media coverage helped show-



The BBR shop is a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility with the latest in CAD design, CNC technology and top welders.



BBR is all about performance. Some custom head work.



A line of 110 frame kits ready to ship to new homes.

One pretty mini bike. Travis Pastrana enjoys the perks of being famous.



case BBR's work, as *MXA* named BBR's TTR125 "Playbike of the Year." The first aluminum-framed XR50 made the cover of *Dirt Bike* with Travis Pastrana aboard. BBR was hard at work developing the perimeter frame for the 50 along with a CRF150 components program. Sales of the BBR 50s soared in 2003 with the "Super-Pro" frame kit and BBR 50s placed 1-2-3 at the Four-Stroke World Championships at Glen Helen. BBR 150s finished 1-8 at Langtown and 1-10 at the White Brother Nationals. 2004 saw the release of both the 50 and 110 aluminum perimeter frames. BBR bikes finished 1-10 at the Las Vegas Mini-Moto Nationals with riders like MC, Rich Taylor, Stanton, Antunez and others.

The Dyno room at BBR.



In 2006 at the Vegas Mini-Moto, BBR success in the motorcycle world was on display with over 30 of the trickiest minis lined up outside the BBR and Monster trucks. Today BBR is wide open keeping up with orders for parts as well as complete bikes. With the release of Honda's CRF150R motocross bike, BBR is busier than ever, currently developing an aluminum perimeter frame and numerous aftermarket performance parts for the new CRF150R. □