



Happy Ulysses owner from Appleton HD/Buell. Purchased with bags from Dave

GOTTA LOVE IT WHEN A PLAN COMES together. I was desperate to find a Buell Ulysses anywhere in the country. Lucky for me I had recently become a member of the BadweatherBikers.com Buell fan site. There I found a dealer who happens to have two Ulysses ready for sale. I contacted him (Dave) and supplied my credit card for a deposit and requested the Barricade Orange with bags. Dave suggested the orange since my good friend already had a black one.

Excited that I found one for purchase I now had to figure out how to get to Appleton WI and more importantly get the cycle back to my home in Everett WA. At the time I was working at a client site in Kansas City. While looking for a ticket I mention to my good friend Pam that I had found a Ulysses in WI. Her response was when are we going to get it? Jokingly I said we can pick it up on Saturday (it was Wednesday) and start our journey back. She cleared her calendar and I supplied a ticket from Seattle to Green bay. Within a day we were all set!

While waiting for the days to pass by Pam and I did a lot of reflecting on how I came to the conclusion of the Ulysses. Although she is not a rider of a cycle, I would say she is an avid passenger. It was her who suggested I take the Ulysses as

my next cycle. She test drove the VFR 800, Triumph Sprint ST and FJ1300 with me. My primary criteria for my next cycle were a sport tour. Some may argue that the Ulysses is not a sport tour. I would say that it is a very capable tour.

After every test ride of the other cycles she would respond that the ride was nice and she enjoyed going fast. Faster if I would please!

The Ulysses was the last cycle we test drove during the day. I had previously ridden it the week before. Although it was enjoyable to ride I was not sold on it. Plus, each of the other cycles did something better than the Ulysses such as acceleration, big fairing, sport bike styling, and included luggage. It wasn't until we both rode the Ulysses that I was sold. During our ride she noted how tall the cycle was. It is very tall. Probably taller than the 35 inch inseam that is stated. For a 5'9 guy I was on the tips of my toes all the time. This did not cause a problem for me since I did race dirt bikes as a kid up until my first street bike some 20 years ago. Plus the high seat height was great for seeing over cars.

During the test ride we did not bother with suspension adjustments, we just rode. We could not have picked a better day and Pam was in quite an adventuresome mood. We tried everything with the Ulysses. Pot holes, off curbs and even a few railroad tracks. This type of riding had never entered my mind on any other street cycle. Since the Ulysses was styled as a rugged adventure cycle I thought why not? During this urban off roading all I could hear was Pam giggling like a little school girl. She thought the ride was a hoot and we actually ended up riding it for two and half hours. By far the longest of any of the bikes we test drove. She called the HD dealer and made sure we

had enough time to continue our ride before they closed.

After returning the cycle we spoke for an hour on all the cycles we rode that day. As we tabulated the pros and cons both of us would return to how fun the Ulysses was. Especially for her. How it opened up possible routes we had not considered before. We also commented that the pricing was close for all the cycles I was considering. It was done. I decided to go with the Ulysses. Besides, the looks and the sound had grown on me. And any cycle that can make a passenger giggle is a keeper.

Saturday comes around and I land in Green bay at 9:21 am. Pam is due around 2:30 pm. Dave is there waiting for me in a gray Buell tee-shirt. He made it easy for me to identify him since we didn't really discuss those details.



The historic Lambeau Field. Home of the mighty Packers!

At the dealership we spent maybe 15 minutes taking care of the paperwork. I purchased a Buell helmet since I did not travel with my own. Everyone was very courteous and the owner came by to thank me. Dave spent a generous amount of time going over every aspect of the cycle and setting up my suspension for two-up riding. I was also fortunate to meet another BadweatherBikers poster Lake_Bueller. He was there test riding a black Ulysses. It turns out that he works

for the Green Bay Packers and offered to give me an inside tour Lambeau field.

It was an awesome tour! I can't thank Lake_Bueller enough for taking the time to take me through the field of one of the greatest football teams in history. I just wish I had more time to spend at the stadium. Unfortunately, I received a call from Pam. Her flight had landed just a tad bit early.



Lake_Bueller's S3T. The Ulysses is to replace in the Buell lineup

Lake_Bueller took me on a short cut to the airport. Luckily it wasn't too far to the airport. I didn't want to start my trip by showing up late to pick up my passenger!

Thanks Lake Bueller!

After picking up Pam at the airport I realized that I needed to purchase the Formula + transmission oil that is required for my 1k servicing. After another 45 minutes ride we were back at Appleton HD/Buell. All along I had racked up 110 miles of under 2500 rpm riding to complete the first 50 mile break-in period.



Pammie is ready to role!

While Dave searched for the Formula + I made arrangements to have my 1k servicing done by Gillette HD/Buell. Chuck the owner was happy and willing to complete the servicing for me.

\$5 later and Formula + in hand we start our journey back to the great Northwest.

Not knowing how to make it to I-90 Dave was gracious enough to show us the way to Madison WI close to the interstate. He also bought us dinner before we headed out about 7pm that evening.

Loaded up with a laptop, her luggage, my backpack strapped to the back rest and full bellies we were off on our journey.



We took many off road routes during the first 500 mile break in period

The first leg of our trip took us from Appleton WI to Rochester MN. A mere 338 miles and late into the night. The ride was comfortable and smooth. Both of us noticed very little vibration in the pegs and thought the seating was quite comfortable. The handgrips exhibited no

vibration at all at highway speeds. Which brings me to a point of break-in procedure.

I did read the manual and it discussed the proper break-in for the Ulysses: *During the first 50 miles, keep the engine speed below 2500 RPM in all gears and do not exceed 50 mph. Do not allow the engine to lug.* I accomplished this for the first 110 miles.

For the first 500 miles, vary the engine speed and avoid riding at the same speed for long distances. Engine speeds up to 3000 RPM are permissible in any gear after 50 miles have accumulated. But Do not exceed 55 mph for the first 50-500 miles. It his on this second point that I varied the break-in procedure. Knowing I had to get home in a set number of days I had to get going at a reasonable clip to make it in time. I also wanted to break in the cycle properly. I elected to ride at 60 mph (still below or at 3000 rpm). This allowed me to ride on the highway with less danger of someone not perceiving how slow I was moving. I also would turn off from the highway every hour or so to do some off roading. When ever we came across a gravel or dirt road, we would take it! We found ourselves in all manner of farmland driving for miles by corn, sunflower and other non-distinguishable produce. Not only was it fun, it gave me an opportunity to test my Ulysses on gravel and dirt roads. On this point the Uly does better on dirt roads than gravel. I think this was a factor of suspension and the fact I had a passenger on board. Because of my load and very soft suspension settings the front wheel was probably lighter than it normally would be. With the sag of the preload settings the front tire was hunting for a path. As the gravel would soften the more the front looked for traction. This presented itself mostly while cornering. Straights were no problem at all. Solution was to slow down

while doing sharp turns on gravel. We did reach speeds of 60 mph on gravel in the straights with no fear of traction. It was a great ride.

After 338 miles of travel with an average of 40 mpg we were beat and needed to rest. Day 1 is complete.

An early start from Rochester we were off on the road. After about 10 miles into this leg of the trip I noticed that my left mirror had come loose. Pulling off to the shoulder I was introduced to my tools. Simple enough, we were back on the road.

Now that the 500 mile break-in period is complete I could ride the Uly how ever I wanted. Knowing we had lost a lot of time on day one we needed to be in Gillett WY by Monday for the servicing. It is now Sunday morning and we have not made it across South Dakota. This was going to be a long day for it was about 600 miles to our planned stop of Rapid City.



South Dakota is very barren except for the ample open field off roads!

After 30 minutes of riding I filled the gas and checked the oil. The Uly was only down a touch on oil. Still within acceptable range.

There is not much to say about the trip across SD. It is straight, very long with a constant cross-wind and tons of bugs to smear your view of the road. We averaged between 90-95 mph. At these speeds we averaged about 40 mpg. The only stops

were for fuel and the above shot where we did some open field off roading. I just can't help it! It broke up the monotonous ride across SD. Plus it gave a BMW RT rider something to see as I hauled my butt across a field up to the scenic view point. He didn't mention anything but he did look the Uly over well.

With 600 miles and 10.5 hours of riding we arrive in Rapid City. I must say we are both beat. A hot meal and shower is all we could think of. At dinner we did discuss going to see Mt. Rushmore and ride through the Black Hills on our way to Gillette. We were close and should take some time to see some of the natural wonders in our great USA.

After a good nights rest we set off to the Black Hills to see Mt. Rushmore. The Black Hills provided for plenty of winding curves and different elevations. We actually passed a group of riders on KTMs and a GS 1150. They did not attempt to keep up with us as we ascended up the hill. They did acknowledge us as we passed by.

Mt Rushmore was a treat. We took our time and enjoyed a breakfast in the park. The beauty of Mt. Rushmore is something to behold if you have not seen it for yourself. We were surprised by how many foreigners were there. I believe there were more people from other countries speaking a different language then those from America!



The Black Hills were pleasant and Mt. Rushmore was a wonder to see.

None the less, we enjoyed ourselves before heading out to Gillett.

On our way out we bumped in to a Harley rider on his brand new Fat Boy. He and his wife were eager to speak with us about my Uly. He was surprised to see how well it looked in person since his shop in St. Louis has yet to receive one. We spoke for an hour or so about all of the details of our trip and how the Uly handled itself. He and his wife were excited about the trip we were on and wished us well. He actually welcomed me to the Harley family. Is the Uly a Harley?

On our way out of the Black Hills we were rained on. No time to change to rain gear we decided to ride it out. We did get wet but not soaked before the squall passed by.

By early Monday afternoon we arrived to Gillette WY. The Harley shop was directly off of I-90 making it easy for us to find.



Chuck is the BEST! I have yet to meet a dealer more enthusiastic about Buells.

Chuck the owner of the shop was waiting for us. He greeted me by saying "You must be the Ulysses rider going to Seattle". I confirmed it was I and he said lets get on with the servicing.

Chuck must have thanked me 10 times for allowing him to service my Uly. I think he was more excited than I was when I first purchased it.

After showing me his dirt track racing cycles (two of which have XB12R and Blast engines) we wheeled my Uly into the servicing bay. Chuck was nice enough to allow me to participate in the servicing and take pictures.

During the service he pointed out in great detail all of the small items I needed to be aware of when I do my own servicing. I was unaware of the detail necessary to complete something as simple as an oil and transmission fluid change. Chuck made all of this fun and interesting. During the servicing he would point out the differences between his XB12R cycles and the Ulysses. He was particularly interested in how well the frame was made. Pointing out how the frame was welded together.



Chuck preparing the Uly for servicing

The other mechanic who assisted was a master welder in his past life and affirmed the Ulys build quality.

While the servicing was going on there were a number of customers coming into the shop to see the Uly. I also heard Chuck on the phone telling a number of people that he is servicing a Ulysses right now!



Under the hood



Interactive Exhaust control center

The only thing Chuck could not service for me was the Interactive Exhaust control system. He had not received his upgrade for his digital diagnostic tool to complete the service. He assured me the most important items were serviced and I need not worry about making it home. I plan to complete this once I get home.

Two and half hours later the servicing is complete. Chuck informs me that the pleasure is all his and there will be no charge! I was shocked! I couldn't thank him enough. Anyone who is in the Gillette WY areas please go see Chuck. I don't think you will find neither a nicer guy nor anyone who likes Buells as much as he does.

Since it was getting late in the evening Chuck recommended that we call it night and not try to go across the mountain pass during night fall. He let us know of the large number of antelope and deer this year and that it would be safer to head out in the morning. He suggested we take the scenic route to Yellowstone along HWY 16 in the morning from Buffalo. I took his suggestion and ended our day in Buffalo WY.

Hwy 16 was indeed beautiful. It provided many twists and turns along with beautiful scenery.



HWY 16 provided everything Rain and off roads

We sampled a few of WY off roads while making our way to Cody.

The first off road we played with was a loose dirt road near a lake. The Uly handled it well. However, as the dirt turned to more sand I began to experience the limits of my load and suspension. To ride in such conditions required more acceleration to keep the cycle stable. This was a bit hazardous since we had lots of cow friends around!



The Uly makes a great cow herder!

It was fun and we explored a lake that was more beautiful up close.



Beautiful Wyoming

Now that our fun chasing cows and soil sampling was over we decided to hustle on over to Cody for our next planned stop. The mountain pass really gave the Uly a workout in the curve carving area. It handled it extremely well, even with the soft suspension settings. What was even more remarkable was the willingness of

the Wyoming car drivers to pull over to allow us to pass. This really increased our enjoyment by not being stuck behind a slow poke car climbing up a mountain. Rain aside; it probably was our best drive to this point.

Cody is a small town with all of the necessities one would need to continue their travel through. We chose to stop at a restaurant which had a long row of BMW GS cycles in front of it. It also turned out to be right across the street from the Cody HD/Buell shop. A perfect location.

It turns out that the row of BMWs belong to a group of riders participating in a Transamerica trip.



Globe Busting BMWs

About 50 of them are traveling from Anchorage Alaska to the bottom of South America. Go to Globebusters.com for more information. They are actually making a documentary of it. Camera crew and mechanics were on hand.

For being BMW riders they were very interested in my Buell Ulysses. We spent maybe an hour discussing how the cycle handled and the features and functionality of it. Granted, almost all of these guys were from other countries all around the globe; they all had heard of the Uly. One even wanted to sit on it.



Yeah, he liked it!

He commented how high the seat was. He mentioned that it is about the height of his GS. They spoke of rake, trail and how much clearance the Uly had and discussed that it would corner extremely well. It was at this point a British chap chimed in and mentioned that we had to take Chief Joseph Highway. It is a must for any motorcyclist. I made note of it and continued discussing with the leader of the group. He let me know that they plan to do about 30k miles in less than 5 months. The leg from Anchorage up to Canada they had to do 900 miles off road. We talked of traction and he gathered that the Uly would do fine if I changed out the front tire to a more knobby tire. The rear would do fine for both off and on road. I asked him if I could use my Uly on the

next trans-trip. He said that it would be a pleasure. There is no restriction on what type of cycle you use. It just has to be able to handle off and on road travel and be durable. He welcomed me and hopes to see me in a year and a half. They do this trip somewhere on the globe every year and a half.



Nice guys who really enjoyed my Uly

After great grub and a full tank we headed off to find Chief Joseph highway. I decided to poke my head in the HD Beartooth shop to say hello. They were very excited to see me on a Uly. They provided direction on where to find Chief Joseph highway. She assured me that it would be a wonderful curve carving ride. I was looking forward to it.

We finally arrived to Chief Joseph highway. It took us about 100 miles out of our way but was very well worth it.



Highly recommend this route. More hairpins than my grandmother's wig!

This route was extremely challenging. The hairpins were back-to-back with varying elevation. With the suspension settings and load I had it was a lot of work. But fun work! We only averaged about 70 mph. Pam let me know that one of the Globebusters averaged about 90 mph. I made her aware that he was not lugging her on the back nor the load we had. Plus he got a speeding ticket! Anyhow, Chief Joseph gave us another opportunity for some soil sampling. I wouldn't call it soil but more like rocks. Medium sized boulders to be exact.

Around one of the first curves there was a steep service road leading up to a plateau. The road was not dirt nor gravel but strewn with large rocks of various sizes. I could see a worn path from a 4x4 that looked worse than no path at all. I looked back and Pam and she asked me what I was waiting for. Let's get to the top and see what is up there! Getting to the top was easy enough. The Uly handled the rocks no problem at all. We climbed it effortlessly. What was at the top? Beautiful 360 degree panoramic views!



Miles and Miles of beautiful scenery

As beautiful as the views were, I was more worried about how to get back down. Only one way to do it was to do-it. Luckily the Uly handled it extremely well. I had to descend very slowly because of the steepness of the hill. The Uly slipped and slid across the rocks easily. It never

lost its composure. I never put a foot down nor did I bottom the exhaust. I was pleasantly surprised at how well it handled such rough terrain with a full load and a passenger.

Back to the road! I truly believe that the Uly is in its element on curvy roads. All of that technical talk of how this cycle is born from curve carving siblings didn't really matter to me during the purchase. I now know what all that hoopla was about. The Uly eats up curves! It does it in a way where both I and my passenger can enjoy the ride. Chief Joseph highway now ranks in the top spot of must ride pavement! It must be unknown for I never saw any other cycles on it. As usual, the few cars that were there moved to the side to allow me to pass. What a great ride!



9 miles of muddy, gravel road construction

The end of Chief Joseph put us 9 miles outside of Cook City. We had to wait about 30 minutes for the road to open. Traffic was allowed in one direction. After the wait I understood why. The road was in terrible condition. All mud, gravel and broken road. I had no problem keeping up with traffic. Not too close! I didn't want to eat dirt and gravel for 9 miles! The Uly had no problems with this portion of road at all. Next Stop Yellowstone park!



Yellowstone was a beautiful park to ride in. Unfortunately, the speed is limited to 45 mph. There was lots of traffic and no lanes for passing. This allow the Uly to get it's best gas mileage of almost 50 mpg. We made our way to various sites in Yellowstone and ended up stopping at the northern end of the park in Gardiner MT. There we spent the night and I received calls that I needed to end my journey earlier than planned. It was now Wednesday night and I had to be home in Everett tomorrow! It is approximately 800 miles from Gardiner to Seattle. Pam said she was up for the challenge. The following morning we left before first light. It was very cold. I would estimate around 30 F. The Uly had a hard time starting. Once on our way we realized we had not prepared for such cold weather. We quickly stopped and put on all manner of clothing plus our rain gear. We were lucky we put on our rain gear too. For it soon began to rain. After reaching Butte we stopped for Coffee and warmth. Next stop was Missoula MT where the temperatures were beginning to warm but more rain was on the way. From here, we agreed to haul butt until we got home. And we did. Only stops were for fuel and most of the 800 miles were done in the 90-95 range. It was the longest leg of our trip. Our bottoms were done by the time we got

home. We did make it in 10 and half hours! We both agreed that with more time we would have enjoyed Montana. All in all, the Uly handled itself extremely well for 2442 miles. We did things on a cycle we never would have considered on others that I have ridden for long term travel. For a detail trouble report and gas mileage breakdown look at the addendum to this trip report. The Uly suffered only a minor fan issue during the SD leg.

By the way, two days later we went for a trip to Mt Rainer. We did about 300 miles of riding that day of which 75 miles of it was off road. We both are looking for excuses to get out on the Uly as much as possible. I am very happy with my purchase and look forward to many years of pleasurable riding!

I hope you enjoyed my travel report.