

# CBX Member Bios

## Csaba Csere

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

***Being editor of Car and Driver is easy. Buying that first CBX was a real problem.***



Leaving for college in 1969 finally delivered me from parental supervision and allowed me to indulge my interest in motorcycles.

### **In the Beginning - Pre-CBX**

First came a used '67 Honda CB77 SuperHawk. Then came graduation from M.I.T., my first job, and a used '74 Honda CB550. Within a year I was road racing with the East Coast club called the American Association of Motorcycle Road Racers, known as the AAMRR, or simply, the alphabet.

Although the club raced at several East Coast venues, I focused on the nearby races at Loudon (forwards and backwards), Bridgehampton, Thompson, a decrepit circuit in Connecticut on which bikes were launched into the air during the crude transitions between the road portion and the banked oval.

Car racing also attracted me, but on my budget, all I could have campaigned was the likes of a Ford Pinto in the SCCA's showroom Stock class. Running the CB550 was infinitely more exciting.

*Team Leader: John Mortensen (acting)*

*Team Member(s):*

### **WE ARE LOOKING FOR A PERMANENT TEAM LEADER**

To join this team or submit an article please contact John Mortensen at [jmortens@attbi.com](mailto:jmortens@attbi.com) or call 651-5081 late eve MST

**GOAL:** Highlight ICOA Members and their CBXs

**SUBMISSIONS due for next Express 4/15/2003.** Current article format/content, but be creative. 250-500 word count in MS Word or Email format preferred. Jpeg pictures please. Regular mail/photos acceptable.

After graduating from Novice to Junior in 1976, I escalated my racing by buying a Yamaha TA250 production racer. Not only was this machine vastly quicker and more responsive than the four-cylinder Honda, but it also demanded far more maintenance. Turns out some of us are Corvette drivers and I was one of them, which is another way of saying that I never came to terms with the hair-trigger Yamaha, at least not compared with some of the club hot shoes. Two of them, Mike Baldwin and Richard Schlacter, ended up racing Grand Prix in Europe.

At the conclusion of the '77 season, I sold the Yamaha, and also broke up with my girl friend and quit my job—a 26-year-old crisis if there ever was one. After spending the winter living with some grad student buddies, I decided to follow my automotive interest and accepted a job in Dearborn, Michigan at Ford's Advanced Engine Engineering Office.

### **Should Have Bought A CBX**

With steady money rolling in again, I decided to resume motorcycle road racing. But what to race? It was clear that my talents were more suited to heavier machines and I didn't really want to do much wrenching. An open-class production bike was the obvious answer and in the summer of 1978 the fastest such machine was the Honda CBX.

I had pored over all of the reviews and salivated over the bike at the local dealer. But the new Suzuki GS1000 was also a strong contender. Slower than the CBX in a straight line, the Suzuki had a reputation as a better handler and I decided to go with it.

And a good choice it was, but I quickly learned that in capable and daring hands, the CBX was much quicker. In the long sweeper leading onto the back straight at Nelson Ledges, I encountered one Canadian-riden CBX that easily overhauled me, even though I was leaned over far enough to grind a hole in the GS1000's exhaust system.

*(Wonder if this was Dan Sorinsen on George Beavers CBX Racer.... editor)*

Turns out that the CBX's tucked-in alternator and ignition system really paid off. Of course, the CBX was wobbling precariously as it steamed by, which I could see clearly from my rear view. When we hit the straightaway, the big six easily stretched its lead.

### **Really...Should Have Bought A CBX**

Impressive as the CBX was, I stuck with my Suzuki and earned my WERA expert license over the next two years. But the magic of the big Honda Six—its unique combination of power, style, and sound—was branded in my brain and I resolved to get one eventually.

The CBX wouldn't arrive for a long time because my motorcycle involvement diminished drastically when I joined *Car and Driver* magazine as its Technical Editor in late 1980. It was a good thing I was single, because being a staffer at a car magazine is an all-encompassing job. But for a machinery and speed nut, it was heaven, especially when I was able to do some automotive racing for through the magazine.

In the mid-Eighties, this meant three seasons racing in the SCCA's Showroom Stock Endurance Series, two of them in Corvettes, co-driving with the likes of Paul Tracy, Tom Kendall, and Scott Goodyear.

I even managed a drive in the Press on Regardless Pro Rally and the Baja 1000.

### **14 Years Later I Purchase My CBX**

By 1993, I had become the Editor of Car and Driver, had been married for eight years, had built a new house with a four-car garage and was expecting my first child. By my reckoning, this meant less time for racing and more for motorcycling. In other words, this was the right time to acquire the CBX I'd always wanted.

After looking with various degrees of intensity for the next several years, I finally acquired a '79 X in nearby Detroit. It was clean and presentable, though hardly concurs. Other than iffy pilot jets, it was mechanically sound and ran very nicely. It was quite stock, except got a Corbin saddle, a cheap aftermarket nose

fairing (fitted with an oil pressure gauge), and a 1980 tailpiece. It even had stock pipes in decent shape and the factory sports kit. I was happy to pay \$2500 for it.

Since I still travel about twice a month for the magazine so there hasn't been as much time as I'd like to ride the CBX. Moreover, since acquiring the X, I've also picked up a 1983 Honda CX650 Turbo, a 1965 Jaguar E-type convertible, and a 1998 Honda VTR1000 Super Hawk.

As a result, I've only put a couple thousand miles on the CBX since buying it. But encouraged by a successful mini-restoration on my Turbo last winter, this year's project is to clean up and upgrade the CBX. I plan to repaint the frame, seal the various oil leaks, redo the paint on the tank and the '79 tail piece I bought

from the Australian CBX club, clean all of the carburetor jets, and fit the CB1100F front and rear suspension bits that Mike Brown Barone has been nagging me to do.

### **Marlinton or Le Mans**

If everything is finished by June, I might finally make Marlinton and meet all of the CBX nuts who figure so prominently on the pages of the CBXpress and the Internet mailing list.

Then again, my wife might drag me on vacation, or I might assign myself to cover the 24 Hours of Le Mans.

In any case, I look forward to meeting all of you one of these days.

- *Csaba Csere*



*Csaba at Speed!!!!*