



# Giannini Racing

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What a ride it's been:



So there I was at a lightly attended, one-off race in New Jersey when a gentleman I'd never met, but often heard of, walked into my ramshackle pit which contained a meager stock CB350 racer. He introduced himself as Frank Giannini and stated that he liked to speak directly (more a statement than a warning). He told me that he was looking for a pilot, that he had an interesting bike or two and asked if I'd like to ride a few, then got in his car and drove away...never even so much as glancing at my little Honda racer.

Well I readily agreed to ride for such a renowned racer and builder. And as it turned out he had more than just a few bikes. There's an incredible stable of racing machines in his New Jersey shop. Frank started me out on a big Ducati single and by the end of our first season I'd ridden a Benelli, Ducati, Aermacchi and an RS125, it was an amazing opportunity for a misunderstood CB350 racer. I did manage a stunning first season in that I crashed most all of the bikes and didn't make it through a single race weekend without one or two offs, it was truly pathetic. In fact, during the last race of the season I slammed his beautiful Aermacchi into the rain soaked, turn 3 pavement before plowing through yards of mud and gravel. As I pushed the broken bike back to the pits, I had my resignation speech well rehearsed. But Frank wouldn't hear a word of it. I'm still not clear as to why, but he kept me on the team.

By our second year together, Giannini had taken a bit of a liking to my sad Honda 350 racer and decided it was time to change the dynamic of the ubiquitous little bike. Frank poured the knowledge and brilliance he had amassed during decades of building and racing all makes of exotic motorcycles into the simple, underappreciated little commuter bike. And just this past season, that much maligned Honda CB350 junkyard bike, now equipped with a ferocious Giannini Racing motor restrained only by it's fully custom racing chassis, won most of it's races...without a single mechanical failure. It was another amazing season, but this time without all the crashing.

Frank Giannini's generosity, with both his thoroughbred machines and his insightful wisdom, can only lead to more creative and dynamic machines in the pits at our vintage races. I'm honored and privileged to be riding motorcycles for Giannini Racing and only hope I can help Frank introduce more innovative machines to our sport. There is at least one very bright spot in the future of vintage racing and it's radiating from a vintage bike shop in New Jersey.

-Timothy "Biffle" Tilghman