

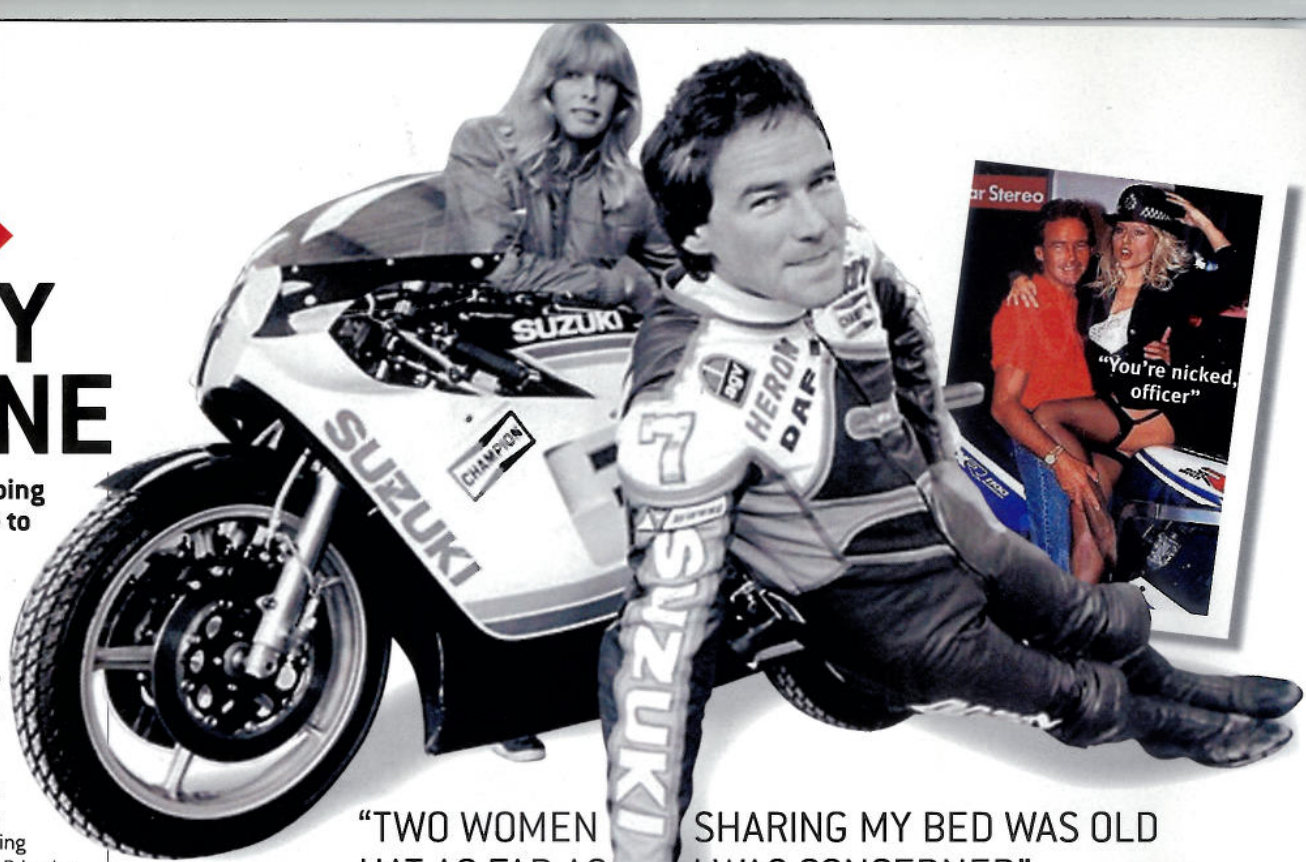
Pantsmen

BARRY SHEENE

In the first of an ongoing series paying tribute to some of the world's great swordsmen, **RALPH** bows at the altar of recently departed motorcycle champ Barry Sheene

JULY 1982, Silverstone: 250cc rider Patrick Igoa lies on the track next to his crashed bike. In a qualifying session for the British Grand Prix, the Frenchman has come off at a blind rise, right on the racing line. Heading towards him is Britain's Barry Sheene on a 500cc bike. At 265km/h, he's the fastest thing on the track.

Sheene hits Igoa's bike with stunning force. Both fuel tanks explode. Sheene is launched forward, his knees crush his hands, and his crotch thumps into the exploding tank. Both his legs are



"TWO WOMEN SHARING MY BED WAS OLD HAT AS FAR AS I WAS CONCERNED"

shattered below the knee. He is thrown 9m into the air, and falls to earth 90m down the track, sliding another 270m before finally stopping. Everyone thinks he's been killed. But he hasn't.

Even before Silverstone, cockney Sheene was world-renowned for three things: winning races, surviving brutal stacks, and rooting lots and lots of women. Before him, motorbike racing's image was one of antisocial lunatics in black leathers. But Sheene made two wheels sexy. Hell, he even appeared in *Vogue* magazine.

Bad Barry lost his virginity on a pool table in a church crypt, and from that point on barely stopped long enough to ride a bike. A patch on his leathers said, "Happiness is a tight pussy." His helmet carried a Donald Duck emblem. He claimed it was rhyming slang. Before he made it big, he blew most of his cash on a caravan for girls, instead

of the usual rider's van.

"The only thing he was world champion at was sex," proclaimed Sheene's brother-in-law. "In every country, there used to be a competition for the girls in the paddock. Barry won." He used the caravan until the body fell off the chassis... then welded it back on.

However, he was world champion – in 1976 and 1977. It was a top effort, considering what he'd been through to get there. At Daytona Beach Raceway, Florida, in March 1975, Sheene's rear wheel locked solid at 286km/h, making him cartwheel down the track for eight seconds. He was thrown 270m, still conscious, and broke everything – even one of his kidneys.

His survival was amazing – and a film crew caught it all, making Sheene famous overnight. However, the only

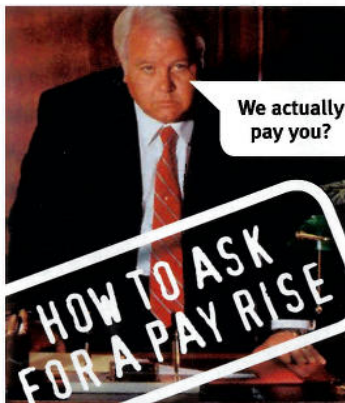
thing he cared about when in hospital was the fact that he couldn't have sex.

In those years, Sheene was the world's biggest, er, machine. It wasn't unusual for him to have three women on the go at once. "A different girl each night was my regular pattern," he said. "I tried everything I had read about, and a whole lot more. Two women sharing my bed was old hat as far as I was concerned." He finally settled down with a 22-year-old glamour model and *Playboy* Bunny.

The Silverstone crash essentially ended his career. X-rays of Sheene's smashed legs – with steel scaffolding and 27 screws holding them together – made front pages worldwide.

Sheene came to Australia in 1987 and died of cancer this March. For a while, he was the man who had it all. Onya, Bazza.

Ivan Smith



We actually pay you?

HOW TO ASK FOR A PAY RISE

IF YOUR boss is looking at the bottom line, and for effective performance from staff. To get a raise, you need to demonstrate the ability to increase revenue and turnover ... It's usually best [to ask] in person. It can be helpful to write down why you think you deserve a raise and, if possible, hand that to your employer ... buttering up your boss won't help. Ultimatums usually don't work, either.

"It's probably not a good idea to ask for more money during restructuring or downsizing, particularly if you value your position."

Garry Brack, executive director of Employers First (formerly Employers' Federation of NSW)

Bar trick of the month

THE STRAWPEDO

EVER since beer was invented, men have tested their masculinity in skolling contests. Now, by using a simple, bendy straw, you can become your local's number-one lager swiller.

Just place the straw in the neck, then bend its top back so it points down to the bottom of the bottle. It's now an oxygen dispenser, removing all the air – which is what makes skolling a stubby in one go so damn difficult – from the bottle, so all the liquid shoots down your throat.

Practice and you'll see off a bottle in two gulps – and be chaired from the pub by your mates.

Warning: skolling kills moustaches

Getty Images (1), Scope (1), AP (1)

Illustration > Tim Andrew