

# CLASSIC DRIVER

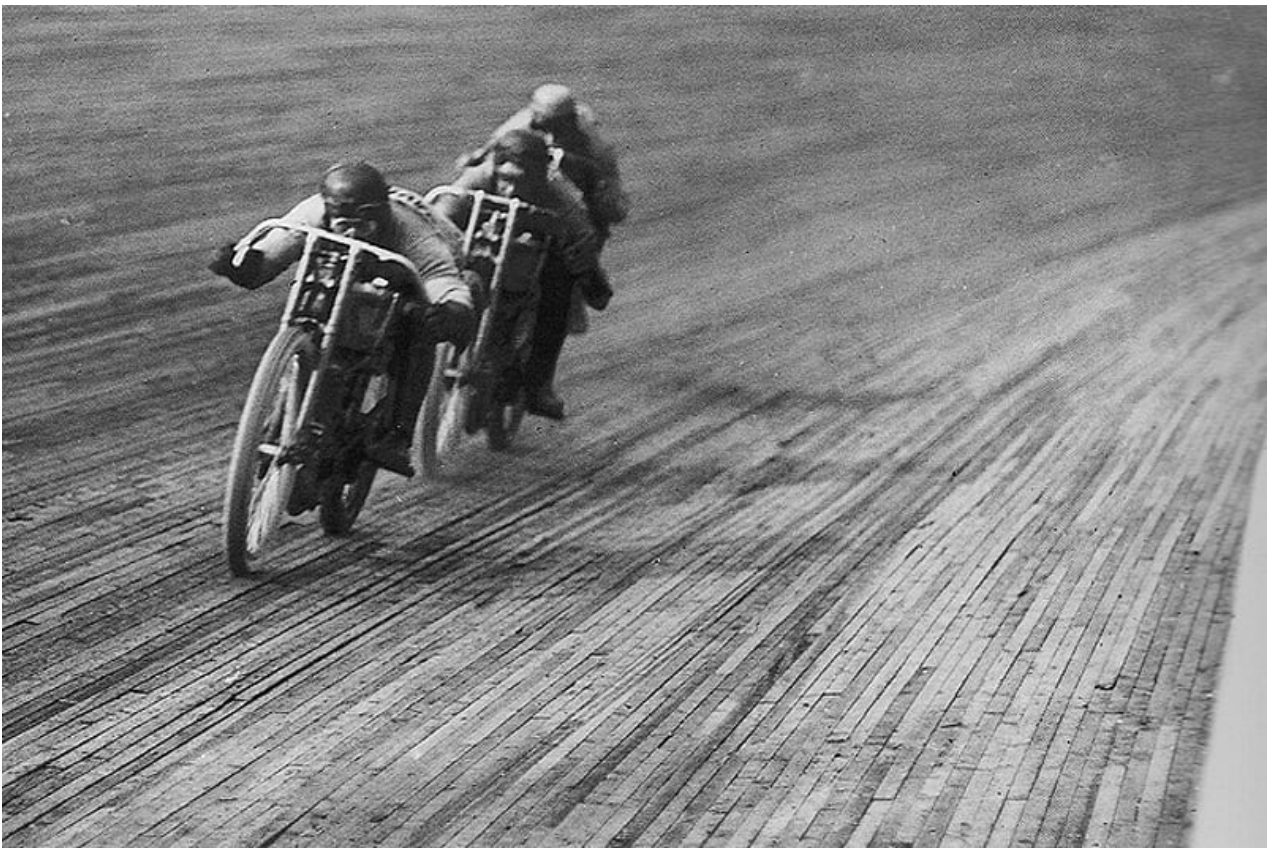
## Derringer Cycles: Vintage aesthetics, modern technology

### **Lead**

The name 'Derringer' commonly conjures up an image of the type of 19th Century pocket-sized pistol famously used by John Wilkes Booth to assassinate Abraham Lincoln – but Los Angeles-based industrial designer Adrian Van Anz has now adopted it for a range of bespoke, board-track-style motorcycles.

Board track enjoyed its heyday during the 1920s, when daredevil motorcyclists raced powerful, stripped-down motorcycles round specially built, wooden speed bowls. Although crashes were frequent, riding gear usually consisted of nothing more sophisticated than goggles, a flat cap, leather gloves and a woollen sweater, which did little to save the skin of the competitors when they lost control of machines rejoicing in such names as Pope, Indian and The Flying Merkel.





Van Anz has now revived the minimalist board track look with his on-trend Derringer Cycles company, which combines vintage aesthetics with modern, high-efficiency 50cc petrol engines. The result is a truly eye-catching steed that's also remarkably practical as a cross-town commuter bike. Top speed is around 40mph but, with a featherlight touch on the throttle, a gallon of fuel can be made to stretch as far as 180 miles.







Although based around a standard frame design, each Derringer can be custom-built to the buyer's specification to incorporate everything from special paint schemes and hand-made leather saddles to the smallest detail touches, such as coloured wheel spokes and hammered copper rivets. All-white tyres can also be fitted, along with canvas pannier bags – and, of course, the Derringer brand has its own line of merchandising ranging from \$49 T-shirts to \$650 leather jackets.



Unsurprisingly, the bikes are proving popular with the Hollywood set (Robin Williams, Hugh Laurie and Reese Witherspoon are said to be among the celebrity owners) but you don't need a movie star income to buy one. Basic versions start at \$3,500 with prices rising to around \$10,000 for a Derringer with all the extras.

The waiting list currently stands at around eight weeks.

Photos: Derringer Motorcycles

## **Gallery**





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