



1916cc S&S engine dominates the Doo with a mighty bark from the slash cut exhaust

“The machine has more style and menace than Tony Soprano”  
ROLAND BROWN

# US grunt, Italian style

► New 1916cc Doo cafe racer tested ► Exotic Ducati Diavel rival ► £20,166

**by Roland Brown**

The name Doo means “Two” in the dialect spoken on the back streets of Milan, where this V-twin special was built. But his stunning creation from CR&S (short for Café Racers and Superbikes) speaks Italian with a broad American accent.

The Doo is what results when a team of Italian engineers cram an American-built, 1916cc, S&S V-twin engine into a compact chassis with a stainless steel spine frame. And then add neat bodywork and classy cycle parts to create a bike with more style and menace than Tony Soprano.

If that transatlantic mix appeals, you might be surprised to learn that the basic version of the Doo costs around £21,000. Adding a dual-seat and six-speed (instead of five-speed) gearbox ups the price to almost £23,000: hardly expensive for a hand-built special.

CR&S’s UK importer, Bedfordshire-based Flitwick Motorcycles, offer two years’ warranty on the Doo and should have more success selling it than they did a few years ago with the Italian firm’s debut model, the single-cylinder Vun. But you’ll need patience as well as cash. Only a couple of bikes per week will

“We knew the X-Wedge engine was the answer. American, but not a Harley”  
ROBERTO CREPALDI



be built, and the waiting list already stretches well into next year.

The Doo’s worth waiting for. Its blend of muscular motor and improbably agile chassis never failed to put a smile on my face.

It’s a striking machine, despite being much smaller than photographs suggest. S&S’s beefy X-Wedge engine is very much the centrepiece: all polished covers, stout pushrod tubes and chunky aircooling fins.

Bodywork is minimalist, dominated by the large-diameter stainless steel frame spine that contains six litres of fuel, with another eight litres in a tank under the seat. Billet aluminium rear subframe

plates hold the seat unit, single-sided swingarm) and footrests.

A wide one-piece handlebar rises up and slightly back from the milled alloy top yoke, giving an almost upright riding position. The only dial is a small black-faced unit that combines digital speedo with an analogue tachometer.

And although the motor comes to life with a typical big-inch American V-twin mix of whirring from the pushrod area and bark from the short, slash-cut silencers below my right boot, it was immediately clear the Doo was nothing like a typical Yank V-twin to ride. Its footrests are quite high and rearset, and although the bike is far from light it felt firm and quite sporty; much more super-naked than cruiser.

The engine makes 97bhp and is seriously grunty, its maximum torque figure of 110ftlb bettered only by Triumph’s Rocket 3 and Yamaha’s V-Max. The torque curve is virtually flat all the way from 2000rpm to the limit at just over 5000rpm. Opening the throttle in any gear was generally enough to send the bike charging forward with a neck-straining force and machine-gun like exhaust sound.

Several times I glanced down to find the Doo indicating over 100mph and still pulling strongly, heading for a top speed of around 130mph. At higher revs there was a slight tingle through the pegs but the unit was impressively smooth, too. My only minor niggle concerned the five-speed gearbox, which shifted sweetly in the higher ratios, but required a deliberate boot from first to second.

The Doo handled well enough to be fun, even if a bike this heavy was never going to go round bends like a racer. Its steering geometry is sporty, and at 1576mm its wheelbase is slightly shorter than that of Ducati’s Diavel, never mind Yamaha’s rangy V-Max. The multi-adjustable Sachs suspension was pretty firm, too, with only 120mm of travel up front and 127mm at the rear.

Stopping power was well up to the job,

too, thanks to a blend of Brembo’s radial front calipers and 320mm wave-pattern discs. My bum was glad of a break after an hour or so but comfort was reasonable by naked bike standards, and CR&S boss Roberto Crepaldi says they’ll offer thicker padding for longer-legged riders who don’t need a low seat.

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Single analogue/digital display



Billet alloy plates hold the seat unit



Offset single shock and chunky stainless swingarm

## THE FACTS

**CR&S DOO £20,166**

Engine:	1916cc 4v air-cooled V-twin. Five gears
Chassis:	Stainless steel spine frame
Claimed dry weight:	245kg
Fuel capacity:	14 litres
Suspension:	Sachs 48mm fully adjustable USD forks. Sachs single rear shock, fully adjustable.
Brakes/tyres:	2 x 320mm wave front discs, Brembo four-piston radial calipers, 220mm rear disc, twin-piston caliper. Pirelli Diablo Rosso, 120/70 x 17 front, 190/55 x 17 rear
Info:	<a href="http://www.crs-motorcycles.com">www.crs-motorcycles.com</a>

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## Verdict

The ability to customise the Doo adds an interesting element, but in some respects it’s not especially necessary – simply because the standard bike is so striking and so capable. You’re hardly likely to find another of these things parked up at the local bike meet, after all. And having spent a couple of days riding this base-model Doo on one of the world’s most demanding stretches of road, I’d be very happy to order one just as it is.

This blend of American powerplant and Italian chassis engineering certainly hits the target, if you’re looking for a big, characterful V-twin engine in a sharp, sweet-handling and unmistakable package. Crepaldi and his CR&S team are genuine enthusiasts whose passion shines through in their product. And they’ve managed to keep the Doo’s price improbably reasonable, too. It looks like an offer that plenty of people will be unable to refuse.



American engine, Italian style, classy engineering: £20,166

## MILAN-BASED FIRM DATES BACK TO 1992

Café Racers & Superbikes is a 12-strong firm headed by Roberto Crepaldi, whose varied background includes working as a young man with Enzo Ferrari; co-founding Italian Harley and Triumph importers Numero Uno and Numero Tre; and successfully racing a Britten V1000 in collaboration with the late John Britten and riders including New Zealanders Andrew Stroud and Shaun Harris.

Crepaldi, 57, founded CR&S in 1992

to go classic racing. In 2006 the firm began production of its first bike, the Vun (“One” in local Milanese dialect), powered by a 652cc Rotax single engine. They’ve since sold more than 100 and are still building two per month. “We always wanted to build a twin but couldn’t find an engine we liked,” Roberto says. “When S&S came up with the X-Wedge we knew it was the answer. It’s a good engine with lots of torque, it’s American and it’s not a Harley.”