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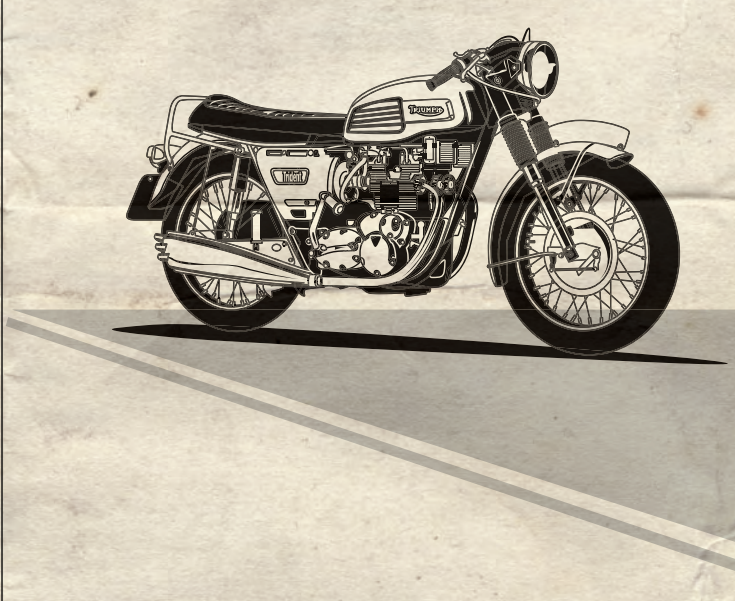
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THE HARD WAY

- [ ] Ring an insurance broker that's not Hagerty. Spend half an hour explaining why your classic isn't just "an old banger".
- [ ] Politely decline home, pet and travel insurance. Patiently explain that you only need agreed value classic bike insurance. To get off the phone, promise to get a quote for your home "in the near future".
- [ ] Go out to the garage, pull off your bike's cover, snap several photographs. Email photos but hear back that "the photos are too dark" or "we need six and you only sent five".
- [ ] Cough up a £15-50 "certification" fee, on top of your policy premium.
- [ ] Wait on hold half an hour while their staff reviews the information. Lose the connection. Ring back, get transferred to three wrong departments. Get put on hold again.
- [ ] The Agreed Value certification finally arrives. You begin looking forward to repeating the entire tedious, maddening process, fee included, if you want to increase your value again.

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Ciao, Bimota, Torna presto!

RUMOURS ABOUND THAT Bimota, the Italian bike manufacturer, has closed its doors in Rimini for good. Started in 1966 by Bianchi, Morri and Tamburini (Bi-Mo-Ta) to make air conditioning, in 1973 they split to make bikes as well, always using other manufacturers' engines, but concentrating on making frames and suspension that made the most of the powertrain. They had some success in the 1980 350cc World Championship with South African Jon Eckerold and later on in World Superbikes with Virgino Ferrari and Davide Tardozzi, both of whom would go on to Ducati.

But finances were always an issue and yet again, they have reared their ugly head. Hopefully, investment can be secured to safeguard the artisan company, but currently it's not looking good.

Here we see Bill Smith at Ballacraine crossroads in the 1978 TT, riding the 944cc Yoshimura-tuned Bimota Suzuki. Unfortunatly, Smith didn't finish the race. CBG



MATT **HULL**

CLASSIC BIKES, MODERN TIMES

BEFORE THE INTERWEB, dreams couldn't be realised quite so easily. When I started riding, my evening 'blast' (as much as you can on a Suzuki ZR50, albeit with a slightly tired 80cc big-bore) would take me down the B-road, via potholes, roadkill and farm detritus to the small town of Wymondham, Norfolk. Wymondham (pronounced Windh'm round these parts) wasn't as big as Dereham, there wasn't the other bikes to chase that you had in Norwich and the girls weren't as pretty as up on the coast, but it had Chris Clarkes Motorcycles. By the time I got there it would be closed, but the Ducati and Aprilia dealer had large, full-height windows for me to stare through, just like an enormous computer screensaver. It was my equivalent of surfing a Ducati forum, but without trolls.

The main focus would always be the Ducati 851, though the newly released 900 Superlight was always going to be the more realistic option. Over the years my blast became a ritual, this small manufacturer started dominating World Superbikes (in the era WSB was more important than Grand Prix), hire purchase became a rite of passage and the reason I went to work and so began a love affair with this quirky Italian marque. A 600SS was the first – N98GVF (still around?) and seven more have followed – so far. If I had been born earlier, I dare say I would have ridden to Hornigolds, the local bike shop in Dereham, where I would have fallen in a similar way for something British. But for me, Ducati was my affordable exotica. There are many parallels to the trials and tribulations of Ducati and the British bike companies, I hope you enjoy our look at the eight-valve history in its 30th year.

I found myself on that same B-road last weekend, but this time aboard a 1950's British 350cc single. The road is still a cart track – even by Norfolk standards – but the ride was just as fun and just as thrilling as those formative thrashes. If anything, the thumper adds to the experience. From the satisfaction of judging the starting procedure, to timing the downchanges, to adjusting the ignition, it's as engaging as my 888 SP3 was at three times the speed. The latest iPhone release may steal the headlines, but for me getting an old bike set up just right and getting to know what it likes best is much more satisfying than a phone app. We've got three perfect such bikes this month for satisfying such pleasures from Norton, Royal Enfield and Matchless.

But technology is still exciting. It allows more reliable mag windings, allows you to find a part for sale 250 miles away and has helped British company CCM create a wonderful, new, lightweight, yet classically styled bike, the Spitfire. Traditional frame-building is safe in the knowledge that the stresses and materials are up to the job. The Spitfire is a corker, rides as well as it looks (It would be perfect for my B-road) and your *CBG* was really privileged to be the first people outside of the Bolton factory to ride it – see page 52. At CCM I found a great bike and a passionate team, seamlessly blending traditional methods and style with modern technology.

Right, I'm off to steal some mag spanners from my friend, Stu. Have a good read and let us know what you think and what you've been up to. Be good.

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The world of bikes is coming to Motorcycle Live show

THE UK's biggest bike show – Motorcycle Live – will open its doors at The NEC, Birmingham from November 18-26.

There will be at least 38 manufacturers displaying their machines, including Hesketh, Metisse, CCM and Norton, as well as a host of larger manufacturers from around the world.

The Ace Build feature will present the four finalists in the show's custom building competition.

Visitors paying for reduced price on-site car parking at The NEC, either in advance or on the day, will receive a voucher for half-price admission to the National Motorcycle Museum, which is next to the venue. Motorcycle parking at the show is free of charge.

For more details visit motorcyclelive.co.uk

MOTOR CYCLE LIVE 2017
NEC BIRMINGHAM

Last chance for Guzzi's zero interest deal



Fancy a brand-new Moto Guzzi? Then you have just a few days to sign up for the company's interest-free credit scheme.

Moto Guzzi is also offering a PCP scheme at 5.2% APR over 37 months.

The deals end on September 30.

For example, on the interest-free scheme, a new V7 Stone, the cheapest model that Moto Guzzi sells in the UK, would cost £249 a month over two years with a deposit of just over £2,000.

The PCP plan requires a deposit of £1,880 and monthly payments are lower too, at £99 a month for 37 months, plus a final payment of £3,300.

The deal is available on all three V7 models and the V9 Bobber.

Mutt can be found in Custard Factory



MUTT Motorcycles has opened its first shop in the heart of Birmingham.

The company offers a range of 125cc customs and has resurrected the New Imperial name with 125 and 400cc models.

Mutt's new store is based in an up and coming retail and business area known as the Custard Factory, in Digbeth, and showcases its range of lightweights and upmarket custom creations.

The company's workshop is on site so buyers can pop in for any Mutt requirements, from demo rides to servicing to commissioning a bespoke build. Along with the full range of bikes, one offs and other custom machines, the store sells motorcycle clothing and accessories with some of the finest brands in the industry, including Belstaff, Deus Ex Machina, Roland Sands, Rokker, Biltwell, Bell, Hedon, Knox, FTH, Treadwell, Pike Brothers, MotoStuka, Eska, DMD, Nexx, Red Wing, Resurgence, Ashley Watson, Mininch, Stylemartin, and Mutt Motorcycles apparel.

There is a coffee shop on site and secure bike parking in the yard. Mutt's 125s use a version of the bullet-proof Suzuki GN 125 engine with several Mutt-specific modifications to give it a classic custom look with spoked wheels, rear drum brake, a British inspired tank, and a twin shock frame shape.

Visit muttmotorcycles.com.

A LITTLE SOMETHING EXTRA IN YOUR G&T?

A GERMAN artisan gin maker recently launched a range of exotic alcoholic beverages with a special ingredient – vintage Harley Davidson parts.

Three different distillations of Archaeologist Gin contained parts in the bottle from three different vintage Harleys: a 1939 flathead, 1947 knucklehead and a 1962 Panhead.

The components were nickel-plated to ensure the gin wouldn't get contaminated.

They were mounted on a stainless steel plinth that formed the bottom of the bottle. The labels were hand printed to resemble 1930's motorcycle parts' packaging.

The batch of gins, priced at €1000 a bottle, have sold out.



Trials ace Dougie Lampkin to star at revamped Dirt Bike Show

EUROPE'S leading indoor off-road event will see live action from 12-time trials world champion Dougie Lampkin's display team.

The Dirt Bike Show has been redesigned for 2017, as organisers Mortons Media Group look to build on a successful 2016.

New features added to the show this year include a Motoball match between France and Germany, where the four-strong teams will go wheel to wheel and try and score past the opposition goalkeeper, who is on foot.

There will be the Minibike Supercross track, the Wall of Death, and many other have-a-go experiences.

The Dirt Bike Show is once again being held across four days – October 26-29 – at its now traditional home of Stoneleigh Park, in Warwickshire, in partnership for a second year with oil and lubricant giant, MOTUL.

Major manufacturers, including Beta, Honda, Husqvarna, KTM, Sherco and Yamaha, will have stands showcasing their latest new-for-2018 machines, and they will also be selling merchandise. The Monster Energy DRT Kawasaki race team will also be attending for the first time.

Hundreds of traders will be offering deals on a huge range of riding gear and accessories in the retail hall, too.

Bridgestone will be joining the likes of Goodyear, Michelin and Dunlop, and leading off-road products distributor Race FX will be attending for the first time.



Advance tickets are available now and can be bought from the Dirt Bike Show website – dirtbikeshow.co.uk – or by calling 01507 529529. Prices start from £8.

If you're new to the event and would like to find out more about booking a stand either visit the website or call the organising team on 01507 529430.

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New 'Bobs' from Harley Davidson



HARLEY-DAVIDSON is launching eight new higher-performance Softail models for 2018 in the face of renewed competition from Japan and a resurgent India.

The company says the aggressively styled 2018 Softail models are faster, lighter and offer better handling than any of their Big Twin cruiser predecessors.

The Softail now has a lighter, more rigid frame, while maintaining the look of a hardtail.

A new high-stiffness, carbon steel tubular frame, combined with a new swingarm, increases the rigidity of the chassis, which has half the component parts of the previous model and 22% fewer welds.

The new Softail models are up to 17kg lighter than before, improving the power-to-weight ratio, providing better braking and increased lean angles for many models. New seat designs and materials have been designed to provide an improved fit for a wider range of riders and greater comfort for cruising.

The new engines on the Softail models also feature a counter-balanced system that reduces engine vibration.

Harley-Davidson claim the engine's trademark 'potato-potato-potato' sound is still there, but with less intake and mechanical noise.

The new Softails cost between £12,295 for the Street Bob and £17,545 for the Fat Boy.

Carberry launches new Enfield-based twin



A NEW Enfield-based one-litre V-Twin engine has been launched by the founder of Carberry Motorcycles – as Royal Enfield develops its own parallel twin 750.

The Carberry V-twin is created from two Royal Enfield single-cylinder barrels mated onto a new crankcase.

Creator Paul Carberry has relocated to India to build his Double Barrel V-twin. A new company, Dream Engines and Modifications, has been formed by Jaspreet Singh Bhatia and Paul Carberry.

It is resurrecting the Carberry Motorcycle, which had ceased production in Australia in 2011 after fewer than 15 bikes were produced.

The engine uses the latest Enfield cylinders and heads and has a five-speed gearbox. The proposed frame for the upcoming complete bike is made from cold-drawn tube and the primary drive is upgraded with a seven-plate clutch. Initially, only the engines are being supplied, with a new Carberry V-twin engine costing around £7,000.

Visit carberry motorcycles.com.

Bimota abandons Italy



HIGH-END sports bike manufacturer Bimota is reported to have departed from its plant in Rimini, Italy.

The factory has been gutted and the signage removed. Bimota has been in financial trouble for several years, ever since a disastrous decision to try and build its own two-stroke v-twin engine turned out to be a costly mistake.

In recent years the company has tried to make money by marketing a clothing range and Bimota bikes, using Ducati engines built in Switzerland by the firm's latest owners from stockpiles of parts. With the closure of the Rimini factory it is sadly unclear how long this operation can continue.

KAWASAKI'S Z900 SET TO RIDE AGAIN

KAWASAKI is expected to launch its new retro Z900RS this month in Tokyo. The new bike will use an updated version of the Z800 four-cylinder, water-cooled engine. Rumours of the Z900RS have been spreading in recent months ever since Kawasaki trademarked the name. Although fitted on a modern platform, the Z900RS will take its styling cues from the 1973 original, including four into four exhausts and a period paint job. The move comes following the sales success of Yamaha's similarly 1970s-themed XSR900.



NATIONAL MOTORCYCLE MUSEUM LIVE

ANNUAL FREE OPEN DAY!

SATURDAY 4TH NOVEMBER 2017

Following the massive success of Museum LIVE over the past three years, Saturday 04/11/17 will see the museum host our 4th annual free open day when everyone will be invited to visit the museum collection free of charge. There will also be a host of other free attractions including our amazing "stars on stage & riders wives" feature which is presented in association with wheel builders to the museum, Central Wheel Components Ltd. A wide variety of catering will be on offer including breakfast, lunch, a range of hot meals & snacks plus a special BBQ.

Museum Live 2017 Timetable:

To assist visitors, everyone arriving on site will be given a free timetable with a full list & timings of all the days exciting, free, events.

Free Museum Entry:

Everyone will be invited to visit the newly reconfigured museum collection, free-of-charge.

Indoor Autojumble & Trade Area:

The event will feature a large indoor autojumble held within the warm & dry surroundings of the National Motorcycle Museums conference facilities. For details of how to book a 6ft pitch for just £35.00 contact Dan Powell on (01675) 444112 or e-mail: danp@nationalconferencecentre.co.uk

The event will also feature trade stands & displays from many well-known names including Central Wheel Components, Footman James insurance brokers, Triumph, Norton, Bonhams auctioneers and H&H classic auctions.

Food Court, Bar & Live Band:

Fantastic catering provided by the museums chefs will be available in our Ballacraine suite food court & bar area.

This area will also be the venue for our live band providing musical entertainment over lunchtime.

Meet The Experts:

In attendance will be some of the museums specialist suppliers & craftsmen (including our own restoration team) who will be available to chat and answer questions.



NEW FOR 2017 Stars On Stage & 'Riders Wives' In Association With Central Wheel Components Ltd:

Racing legend and pundit STEVE PARRISH will host two special FREE TO ENTER "stars on stage" features at 11.00am & 2.00pm.

Held on the stage in the museums magnificent Britannia suite these free 1 hour chat shows will feature multiple world champions FREDDIE SPENCER & CARL FOGARTY MBE plus their partners in a fun "RIDERS WIVES" question and answer session. Other motorcycling personalities from the past and present will also be in attendance including PETER HICKMAN, MICHAEL RUTTER,MARIA COSTELLO & JOHN "MOONEYES" COOPER.

All our guest stars will also be making personal appearances to sign your favourite memorabilia.



Museum Live "Start Up" Feature:

See & HEAR some of the most famous race machines in the world started up in our special LIVE START UP area. Bikes old and new will include some of the museums famous racing inventory as well as ex-Moto GP bikes via our friends at the Brackley Festival of Motorcycling and Phil Morris Racing.



Plus The Draw For The Best Classic Motorcycle Raffle Prize In The World:

Our summer 2017 raffle to win a 1960 BSA Gold Star 500cc worth over £20,000 will be drawn by one of our celebrity guests live on stage during the afternoon of the event on 04/11/17.

To have a chance of winning this amazing prize you can purchase tickets online from www.thenmm.co.uk or by calling the Museum on 01675 444140.

Parking:

Car parking for the event is just £5.00 per car with motorcycle parking absolutely free. Given the events huge popularity, the museum encourages car sharing which makes this nominal parking charge even better value!

For further details and updates on Museum Live 2017 see www.thenmm.co.uk

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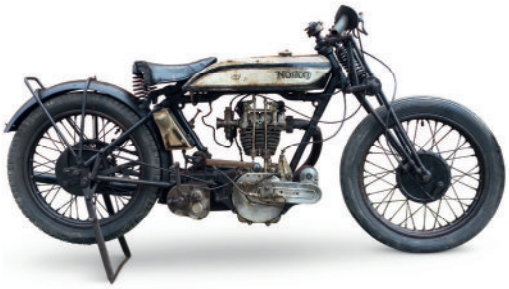
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1924 NORTON 490CC MODEL 18 PROJECT
£10,000 - 12,000 *



1926 AJS 799CC MODEL K2
£13,000 - 16,000 *



1927 ZENITH-JAP 678CC MODEL 6-80
£24,000 - 28,000 *



1931 MATCHLESS 394CC SILVER ARROW
£8,000 - 12,000 *



1933 BSA 986CC MODEL G33-13 'WORLD TOUR' MOTORCYCLE COMBINATION
£16,000 - 22,000 *



1997 DUCATI 916 SENNA II
£12,000 - 16,000 *



The ex-works, Jorge Lorenzo, 2007 World Championship-winning
2007 APRILIA 250CC RSW GRAND PRIX RACING MOTORCYCLE
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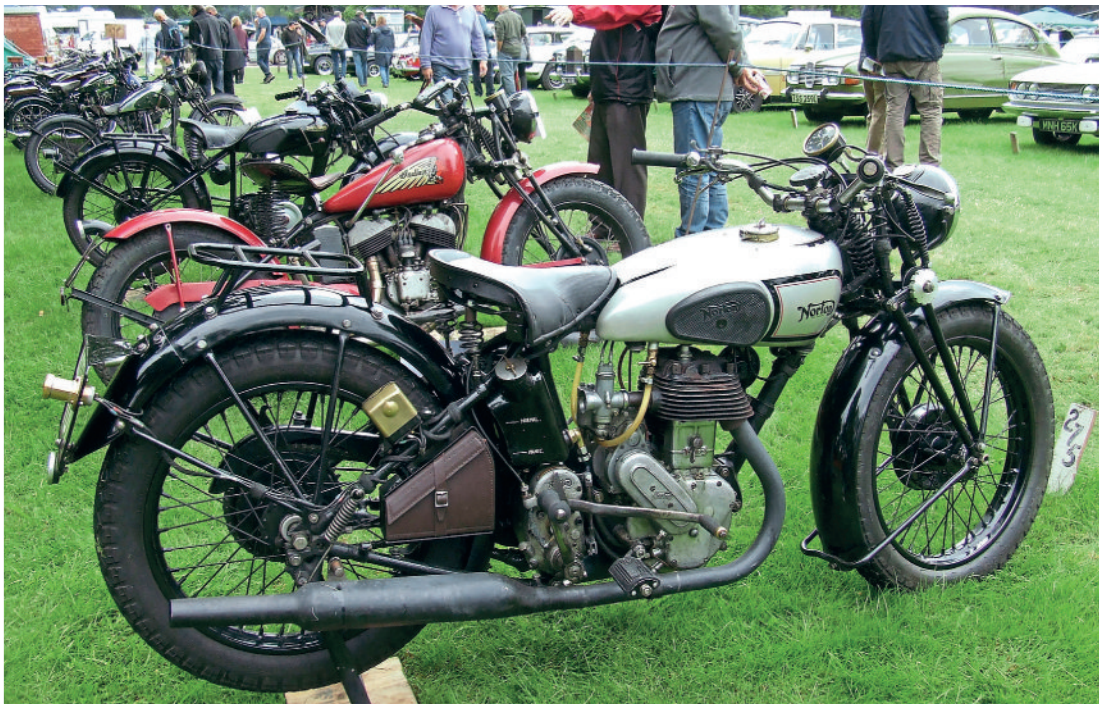
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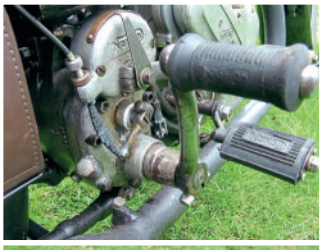
The 24th Carole Nash classic motorcycle mechanicsshow

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43rd Glamis Extravaganza

THE 43RD GLAMIS Extravaganza certainly lived up to its name with a vast array of interesting and unusual machinery. With 1500 vehicles dating from 1890 to the present day, and more than 100 motorcycles on display. The regularity run proved popular on the Saturday and it was great to see a large number of owners clubs present exhibiting a broad range of machinery. Entrants also had the option of visiting Glamis Castle or simply soaking up the sun while perusing the assortment of bikes, trucks, steam engines, cars, buses, tractors, stationary engines and military vehicles.

A packed programme of events over both days saw representatives from most classes in the ring with a very informative commentary on each vehicle. A fairground organ provided background music while a fire show kept the crowds entertained.

More than 150 stalls offered a wide variety of tempting wares. From spare parts, bikes, clothing, food, local crafts and antiques to dog bandanas, it all made for a pleasant wander round. Many scoured the autojumble for elusive parts, while the untapped potential of the R25 offered for restoration generated a lot of interest. The judging on Sunday brought even more bikes, with some winning multiple awards. The weather broke in the afternoon, giving another opportunity to look at the stalls on the pretext of sheltering from the rain. This didn't deter attendees however, and it was entertaining to observe experienced entrants with open top cars, being particularly adept at driving along while holding a large umbrella aloft.



Indian Scout

More than 30,000 Indian Scouts were built during for Second World War for the Allied forces. The 500cc sidevalve flathead V-twin was based on Indian's earlier civilian Thirty-Fifty model. This 1941 Indian 741 was an old military bike when William bought it 17 years ago. His subsequent rebuild is not entirely to standard spec. The exhausts are straight through stainless steel pipes, while a 12v car alternator, sourced for a pound at an autojumble, supplies the electrics and lights. William did most things himself, including the paintwork. The Indian head on the gearchange is cast in

BSA M21 commercial outfit

Ian recalls when Commercial outfits were commonplace in the 1950s. In his locality there was a rabbit trapper who used a 350 Matchless outfit, which he later replaced with another outfit powered by a 350 Norton. Another trapper used a Harley outfit. A fencing contractor had a B33 and sidecar with a photographer also used an M33 outfit.

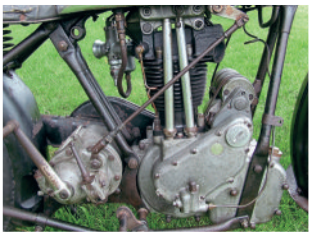
This 591cc BSA M21 side-valve single was registered new with a sidecar, in 1950. The original owner did property repairs and maintenance for the Forestry Commission in Roxburghshire, owning it 18 years.

Ian, the fourth owner, ran the M21 solo for a spell but was lucky enough to swap a vintage ladies' bicycle for the original Watsonian trademan's box (which a friend had rescued from a skip in Perth). It is a properly made commercial sidecar box with a beautifully curved top, teamed with a BSA Model 23 chassis. It's interesting to see that Watsonian's current range includes its own commercial sidecar body, the Mule.

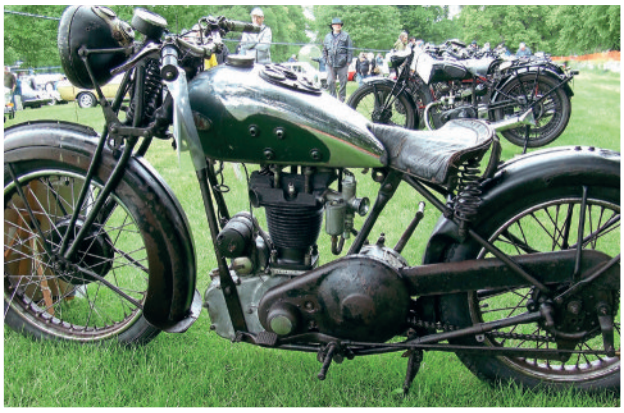
Almost identical to those used by the AA as patrol vehicles, Ian sees his M21 as a fairly basic but honest motorcycle. Ian renovated the BSA in 2011. During his 35 years of ownership the M21 has been re-bored and the top end's been done, replacing the valves and guides, the bottom end, however, has not been touched. Robust, reliable and easy to work on, it's mostly original and still sports the original BSA factory chrome plating on the tank, which is in remarkably good order. Even in austere times the British bike industry took great pains to do things right.













aluminium. It was made in America from a cast taken from the Indian head on a Jennings' one-arm bandit. William was lucky enough to find two original brass Indian heads at Glamis a few years ago.

The only rear suspension is provided by two large springs under the seat, which is mounted on the frame through a slot in the petrol tank, in a similar manner to Harleys of the same era. William describes the handling as interesting. The Indian has a left-hand throttle with a foot-operated clutch. The three-speed crash gearbox is not a synchromesh box so you have to pick your moment and really shove hard to change gear. The front mudguard is a wee standard British item cut down to suit and the rear mudguard has been similarly shortened. William fabricated the neat rear light from a bit of stainless steel pipe that he bent to fit.

William was attracted by the styling and overall look of the Indian, telling me that people often say, "If you meet someone with one Indian it's their first as they'll always end up with more".



1964 Moto Guzzi Lodola 235 GT

The Lodola was Carlo Guzzi's final design before he retired. Following the Guzzi tradition of naming machines after birds, Lodola means skylark. The 175cc launched in 1956 with a Sport version soon following the Normale.
The SOHC four stroke single sported a cylinder inclined at 45° rather than horizontally like Guzzis Astore and Falcone. A 235cc version, the Gran Turismo, joined them in 1959, replacing the Airone. Featuring pushrod-operated valves rather than the overhead camshaft of the 175, the Gran Turismo was heavier and in a lower state of tune. The GT produced 11bhp and was capable of a top speed of around 70mph, slightly less than the 175 Sport. A series of 175cc and 235cc ISDT type machines followed, featuring an overhead camshaft. 1961 saw a final increase in capacity to 247cc, accompanied by a five-speed gearbox. This Lodola has obviously benefited from a thorough restoration, perhaps not the fastest but certainly an eyecatching machine.

















Triumph Trophy

International Six Day Trial success prompted Triumph's adoption of the Trophy moniker for its off-road twins, initially the 500cc TR5 followed by the 650cc TR6. In 1967 the single-carb Trophy 650 was available to the American market in Road Sports trim with low pipes, or off-road competition form with high pipes. Desert Sleds, like this example, were produced with Californian desert racing in mind, designed to be equally at home on or off road. Production continued until the early Seventies, by which time the Trophy engine was housed within the taller oil-in-frame. This TR6C was exported to Johnston Motors, California in 1967, spending most of its life in San Francisco until repatriated in 2014. The new owner found it to be relatively original with the exception of the non-standard exhaust system. The Trophy had obviously been well maintained, so rather than undertaking a complete restoration the engine was stripped, rebuilt and any issues addressed.

This Trophy is currently running on +0.20 pistons and rings, the big-end shells have been replaced along with the requisite oil seals, steering bearings, clutch plates and carb. It's benefited from a new wiring harness, rectifier/regulator, battery and electronic ignition. The control cables have also been replaced. About 500 miles have been covered since the rebuild with the Trophy starting and running well, without any issues or oil leaks. Future plans include a new paint job for the petrol tank.

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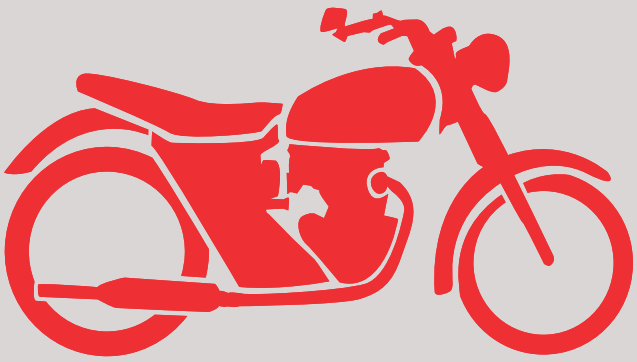
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The Fenman classic

Wimbotsham, Norfolk, August 28





FOR THE LAST 30 years the quiet, tucked away village of Wimbotsham, just outside King's Lynn, Norfolk, has turned itself into one of the largest gatherings of classic bikes in East Anglia for the August bank holiday Monday. This charming show started out as a few friends meeting at the park bench and quickly grew in size to fill the pub car park.

Although one year was cancelled due to the foot and mouth disease outbreak, it's now grown to eclipse the entire village, with the local pub putting on guest beers and friendly residents putting signs outside their house declaring 'free bike parking'. The show bikes take pride of place in the primary school playground, trade stalls and club stands frequent the playing field, visitors in cars are allowed to park on farmland, while the thousands of bikes attending find wherever they can to slot in somewhere around the beautiful village.

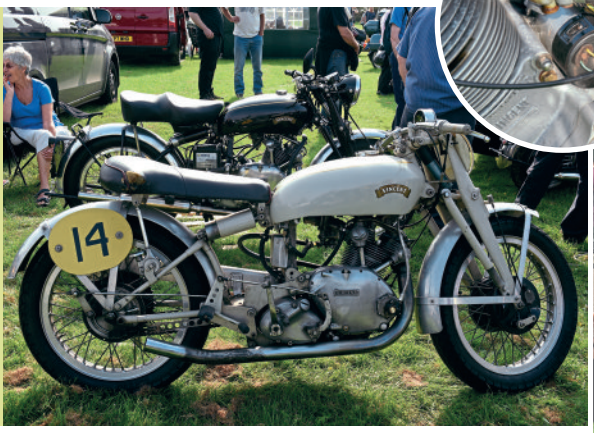
Run by a group of classic bike fans, the Fenman Classic Bike Show helps to raise thousands of pounds for mainly local charities and makes sure that the village gets its share too, with the village hall, school and playing field all benefitting. With classes for any pre-1985 bike, everyone is welcome and this year there really was plenty for all to enjoy, as the variety of different bikes showed around the village.

The 30th Fenman Classic Bike Show will be held next August bank holiday. For more details see fenmanclassic.co.uk











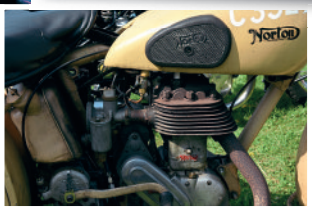
VINCENT OWNERS' CLUB, SUFFOLK

As certain marques go up in value, some people could assume that the owners get a little snooty. I couldn't get away from the Vincent Owners' Club stand, which had a variety of bikes on show, including this racing Comet. And despite their prestigious bikes, many were modified to make riding easier in later years, including centrestand levers, starter motors and indicators. The spoke counters may have an issue, but I think seeing these bikes being used is the greatest sight. If you live in or near Suffolk, the club couldn't be more friendly and helpful. See voc.uk.com







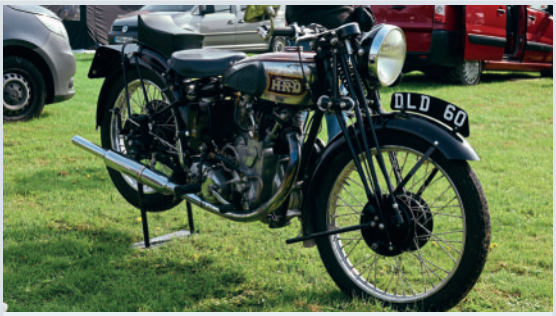




LITTLEPORT YOUTH BIKE CLUB

Mathew West and Martin Dolezal were at the Fenman show to highlight the Littleport Youth Bike club. Along with several other keen bikers the club has set up a workshop project for kids to learn about bike maintenance. With the aid of sponsors and donations, they have rebuilt several bikes and scooters, giving children of all ages the necessary skills to be able to fix their bikes, as well as a better understanding of how engines work, how to service suspension and currently they are rebuilding a Yamaha RD350YPVS. This is a superb project and hopefully introduces another generation into the great world that we all love. For more information, see littleportyouthbike.co.uk





1936 VINCENT COMET SERIES A, PETER APPLETON

Peter has owned this Series A for eight years after completely restoring it. "I use it several times a year to go to work, but mainly for weekend runs," explains the chairman of the Suffolk Vincent Owners' Club. "It cruises easily at 65-70mph and the only thing that has gone wrong is a puncture." Who says you can't use a classic? For more serious touring Peter uses his Rapide, fitted with panniers. Infamous Vincent road tester, George Brown, who we featured in last month's *CBG*, had ridden this bike.









STARTING YOUNG – 1979 HONDA Z50R, JACK WATTS

Fourteen-year-old Jack Watts found this Z50R in a terrible state, languishing in a storage container. It had been thrashed by friends of a farmer's son and left to disintegrate. So he set about his first restoration and after just six months the result is something people three times Jack's age would be proud of. "The hardest parts to find were the standard air filter and chain guide – but the rest was fairly straightforward," smiles Jack, now the heady-age of 15. "It still has its original tyres and lives in my bedroom!" People have been so impressed by Jack's work that he has started his own restoration business, JW Restoration, based near King's Lynn.



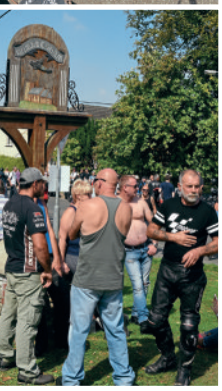


1941 MATCHLESS G3L, GORDON MAY

This ex-military Matchless G3L was found abandoned in Burma, then shipped back to the UK. Gordon May recommissioned it, adding a few choice improvements, then proceeded to ride it to Vietnam, via Europe, Central Asia and China. He wrote a book about it, called Overland to Vietnam – a great read in a sea of adventure bike stories.

"I love this show and come from Manchester to be a part of it. We camped here last night and I love the clear Norfolk nights with all the stars – and a beer from the Chequers!"

















THE MOTO RUMI CLUB

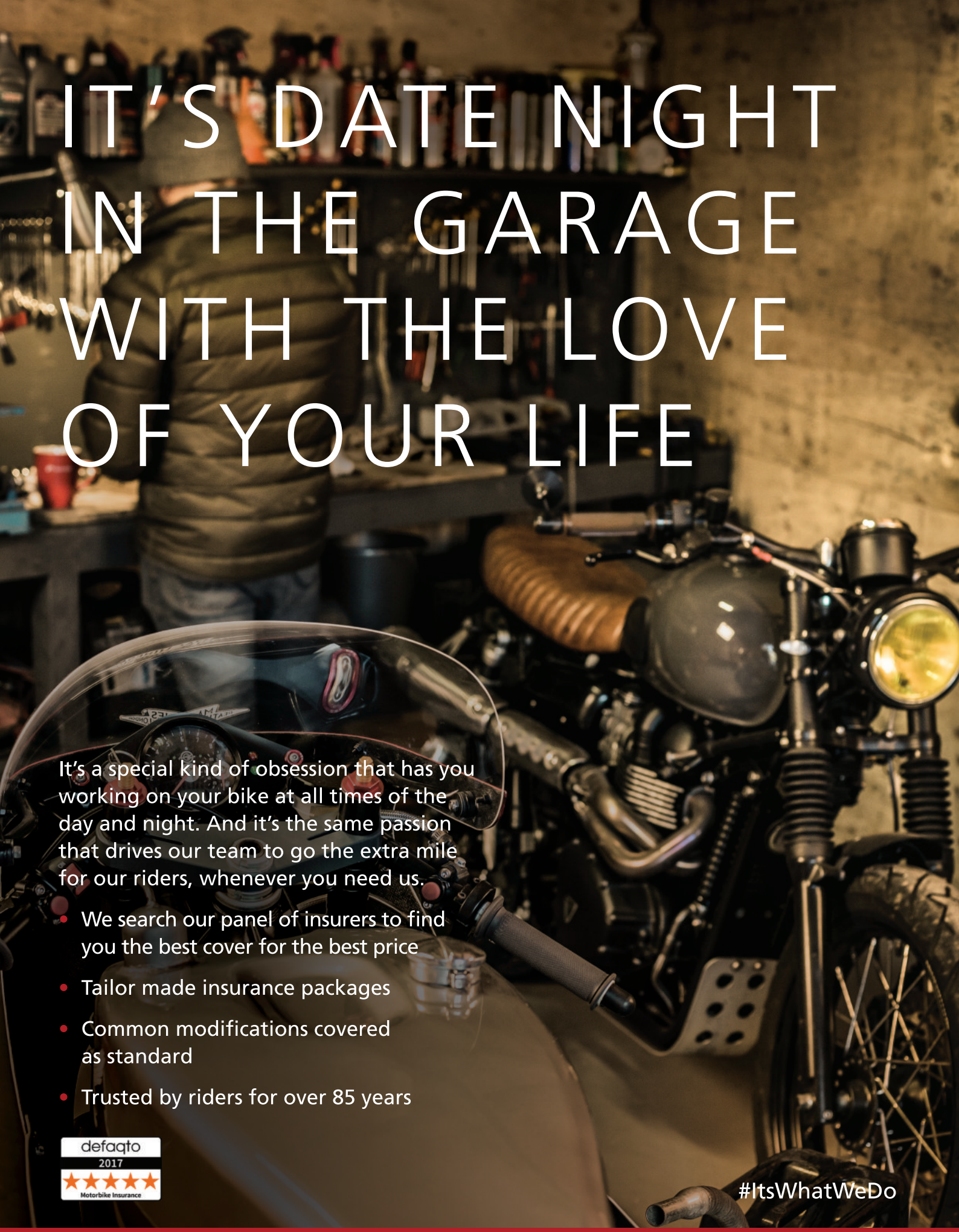
Ray Hatfield brought along a great collection of the little-known Moto Rumi brand. "The scooters, called Scoiattolo (Squirrel), were very expensive with cast aluminium exhausts and bodywork, compared to Lambretta, Vespa and even the British scooters, but they were so well made. It's just a shame they stuck with their 125cc engine – I think they could have been more successful if they'd gone with a larger engine."

The flat-twin 125cc engine was also used in a number of racers to highlight the road bikes winning the Italian national championship in 1954.

According to Ray, there are around 100 scooters, 12 racers and 10 road bikes in the UK. "So if you see Moto Rumi parts at an autojumble or online, you buy them whether you need them or not!" However, many parts are by third party companies, such as forks and carbs, so restoring one is not impossible and you end up with a beautiful, unusual bike or scooter. CBG







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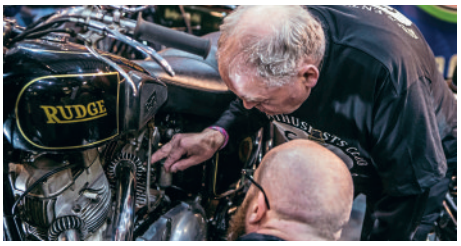
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WHAT'S GOING ON IN OCTOBER



1 **Mid Wales Classic Bike Show**, Pant-y-Dwr Village Hall, off the B4518 Rhayader-Llanidloes road. Bike show and autojumble, admission £3, doors open at 10.30am. For details call Roger on 01597 870241.

1 **Spirit of Shuttleworth Race Day** including classic sprint and air display, special arrangements for early motorcycles and pre-1960 motorcycle clubs. Visit shuttleworth.org/raceday

1 **Newton Abbot autojumble**, Newton Abbot Cattle Market. Admission £2, stalls from £10. Contact Pete Dear 07977 643852

1 **26th Copdock Motorcycle Show**, Trinity Park, Ipswich. Autojumble, dealer stands, traders, show bikes, live music and club stands. Confirmed attractions include guest appearance from Dougie Lampkin MBE, 2 Bros +1 stunt team, Tigers Children's Motorcycle Display Team, Ken Fox's Wall Of Death, Vintage Speedway Cavalcade, a Custom Marquee, Classic Pre-65 Scramble Bike Cavalcade, Motoball. Visit copdock-cmc.co.uk

1 **Navestock bike and car jumble**, Navestock Side, Kelvedon Hatch, Essex CM14 5SD woodclass.com

1 **Haynes Breakfast Club**, from 9am, Haynes International Motor Museum, Castle Cary Road, Sparkford, Somerset himm.co.uk

5 **Thunder Thursday**, monthly bike meet Leadburn Inn, Leadburn, nr Pencuik Midlothian theleadburn.co.uk

7 **Ride to the Wall** RTTW is a unique motorcycling fundraising ride with a dedicated service of remembrance that provides an opportunity for all motorcyclists to ride as an organised group to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, to pay their respects and recognise the sacrifice made by the 16,000+ servicemen and women whose names are engraved on The Wall of the Armed Forces Memorial. Visit rttw.org

8 **Hoggin' the Bridge** starts in the Brightside Group PLC car park which is behind Severn View Services, Aust, Junction 1 M48, near Bristol. The parade ride of



Know of a show, club meet or event that would be of interest to fellow classic bike enthusiasts? Then feel free to drop us a line at editor@classicbikeguide.com with some details and we'll do our best to include it so others can enjoy it as well.

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around 3,500 bikes will begin at 11am over the Severn Bridge then follow a route through several local towns and villages and will finish at Caldicot Castle. Here there will be bands, autojumble, traders, stalls and a range of food outlets. The event will finish with a parade of bikes through the heart of Caldicot. Registration is essential, visit hogginthebridge.co.uk

8 **Kenley Autojumble** the Portcullis Club, Kenley Airfield, Victor Beamish Ave, Caterham Kent CR3 5FX. Gates open 9am, £2.50 admission, facebook.com/KenleyAutojumble

8 **Bovingdon Car, Bike and Boat Jumble**. Open to the public at 9am, Bovingdon Airfield, Upper Bourne End Lane, Bourne End, Hertfordshire. HP1 2RR woodclass.com





14/15 ***Classic Motorcycle Mechanics* Show**, Stafford. Kiwi racer Aaron Slight will be guest of honour at The 24th Carole Nash *Classic Motorcycle Mechanics* Show over the weekend of October 14/15 at Staffordshire County Showground. As fast and smooth on the track as he was flamboyant and controversial off it, and often sporting a multi-coloured mohican haircut, Slight will have some entertaining tales to share with the Stafford audience. And with more than a decade racing in WSB, when the series was arguably at its peak for both factory Kawasaki and Castrol Honda teams, the friendly New Zealander will have plenty of great races to draw from. The *Classic Motorcycle Mechanics* Show, the largest show of its kind in the world, which majors on the later Japanese and European scene, promises the usual successful mix of almost 1000 trade and autojumble stalls, stunning club stands and private entries, Bonhams' record-breaking auction, live entertainment in the *Classic Dirt Bike* area and *Classic Racer* Grand Prix Paddock, and the live Restoration Theatre. Ticket prices are £12 for adults, £11 for seniors or £3 for under-12s if bought in advance. Parking is free. To find out more or to book advance tickets go to staffordclassicbikeshows.com/october or call 01507 529529.

15 **Stickney Autojumble**, Stickney, nr Boston, Lincs.

21 **Kempton Park autojumble**, gates open 9.30am.Admission £6. kemptonparkautojumble.co.uk

21 **Scorton Auto and Bike Jumble**, North Yorkshire Events Centre, DL10 6EJ. Admission £3, pitches from £12. Call 07909 904705

22 **'Normous Newark autojumble**, Indoor and outdoor plots, admission £7, Newark Showground, Newark-upon-Trent, Notts, NG24 2NY newarkautojumble.co.uk

22 **Malvern Classic Motorcycle Show and Jumble** 10am-3pm, Three Counties Showground, Malvern.

26-29 **Automobilia**, Spares and classic motorcycle and car auction, Allington, near Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN14 6LJ. Visit richardedmondsauctions.com for listings

26-29 **2017 Dirt Bike Show**, Stonehill Park Warwickshire (see news)

28-29 **Footman James Classic Bike Live**, East of England Showground, Peterborough. Admission £12

29 **South of England Classic Motorcycle Show**, 10am South of England Showground, Ardingly, Kent. elk-promotions.co.uk

29 **Ipswich Bike Jumble**, Great Blakenham, Suffolk IP6 ONJ. Admission £3.





ARMOTO
FROM FARADAY TO MODERN DAY

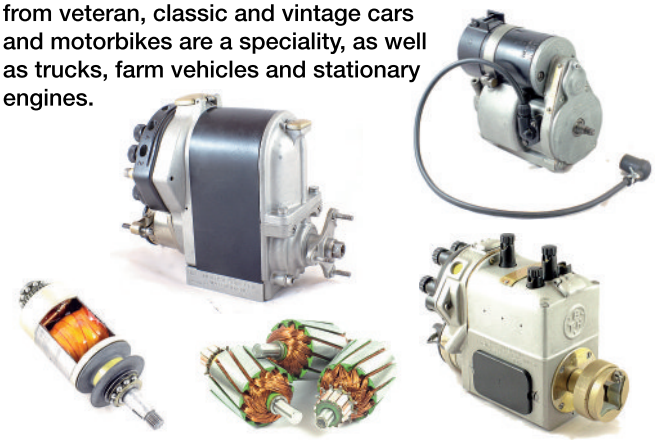


REWINDS & REPAIRS

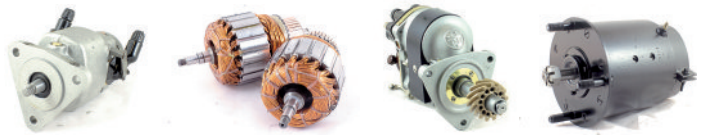
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Matchless G3L

Rugged war horse or reliable work hack, the Matchless G3 has looks, charm and can be a genuine usable classic.

WORDS BY OLIVER HULME

YOU COULD DESCRIBE a Matchless G3, or for that matter its AJS 350 sibling, as solid and dependable, but maybe not glamorous. The first models are a good example of a long stroke, long lasting single and provided unexciting but reliable transport for hundreds of thousands of postwar workers.

Like many a British motorcycle of the day, the G3 Matchless used parts borrowed from its bigger sisters. Although this made them heavy and ponderous at 390lbs (177kg), it also meant the cycle parts were stronger, longer lasting and could easily cope with the claimed 16bhp power output, while hauling around rider, passenger, luggage and occasionally even a sidecar.

The Matchless and AJS singles were the first British volume production motorcycles to be offered with telescopic forks. These were first used on the wartime despatch rider mounts that made the G3's reputation and were popular with their khaki-clad pilots. They brought their appreciation of the technology into the showrooms of civvy street or snapped up civilianised ex-WD models. The G3 was also a popular choice for government service postwar and hundreds were supplied to the Auxiliary Fire Service, whose job it was to be mobilised to put out fires in the event of a nuclear attack.

The civilian models were the first mass-market British bikes to get swinging arm rear suspension alongside the Teledraulic forks as parent company AMC jumped straight into using the format, bypassing the sprung hubs and plunger frames offered by rivals.

Full width alloy brake hubs arrived in 1954, which was sophisticated for a cooking commuter. In 1956 AMC standardised the frame across its range, fitting all its four strokes from 600cc down with the same single downtube item. The frame on the machine seen here is from a 1956 G9 twin, while the engine is a 1951 item. The frame standardisation also meant the addition of a larger slab-sided oil tank and toolbox cover to match. In 1958, they were given Lucas 6v alternators and coil ignition, which might have meant more modern electrics, but it also meant the removal of the stylish alloy chaincase for the magneto.

Another across-the-range frame change took place in 1960, using a double cradle frame also used on all large AMC bikes up to the 650 twins. The G3 didn't really need such a heavyweight item but for the purposes of easy production the move made sense.

SPECIALISTS

Used spares at AMC Classic Spares
amcclassicspares.com
Parts are also available through the owners' club

OWNERS' CLUB

AJS & Matchless Owners Club
Jampot.com















The biggest change to the engine and styling came in 1962 with the introduction of the G3 Mercury. This had a higher compression, higher performance, short-stroke engine and the bike featured famously garish chrome tank badges. There were S-coded sporting models too, with various flashy parts including low bars and chrome mudguards. The wheels became 18in items and the frame remained the same as that used on the AMC 650 twins. In 1964, the G3 appeared with a still shorter stroke engine but the competition had long since overtaken Matchless. Production limped on until 1966, when Matchless was taken over by Manganese Bronze and production of the singles ended.

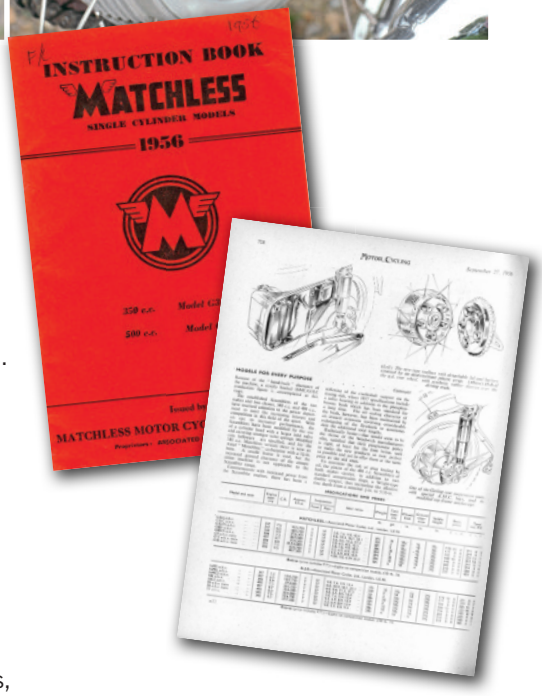
ENGINE AND GEARBOX

The engines on the models built from 1947 to 1962, as seen here, were basic and robust, battle hardened in the war and tough as old army boots. Components were also used on the G80 500cc engines. A built-up crankshaft was used with iron flywheels. It has two ball bearing races on the drive side, with a bronze bush on the timing side. The crankshaft was lightened and stiffened in 1954. The dry-sump engine has a caged roller big end and a gear driven oil pump. The barrel is cast iron and there is an alloy head with hairpin valve springs. Early models were fitted with wire-wound pistons, which helped reduce piston slap, but this was dropped. The cast iron barrel is secured by short studs from the crankcase. These first G3 engines were fitted with Amal type 76 carbs, which were replaced with 1 1/16in Monoblocs in 1955.

Originally, the G3LS – LS standing for Lightweight Springer – was fitted with a Burman CP gearbox that required firm treatment. These were later replaced with AMC's in-house gearbox, a design acquired in the takeover of Norton. The three-spring clutch has a smooth take-up on the low compression early models, but needs more care with the higher performing late models.

At first the chaincase was made from pressed steel and this was famous for discharging lubricant onto the machine, rider and surrounding environment. It was later replaced with a more oil-tight cast aluminium case when the ignition moved to points from magneto. The barrel is secured by short studs with further studs holding on the cylinder head. The later short stroke engine introduced in 1962 had the pushrod tubes cast into the cylinder block. On these engines, full-length studs run from the crankcase, which is the same as that fitted to the earlier models, to the cylinder head. Compression ratio had risen from a soft 6.5:1 on the early bikes to a perkier 8.5:1 on the short strokes.

The carburettor was bigger too, increasing the power to 23bhp and adding 5mph to the top speed, propelling the G3 to 80mph. The final G3, from 1964-66, used parts from the Matchless competition models and had many updated engine components, including a redesigned fuel pump.

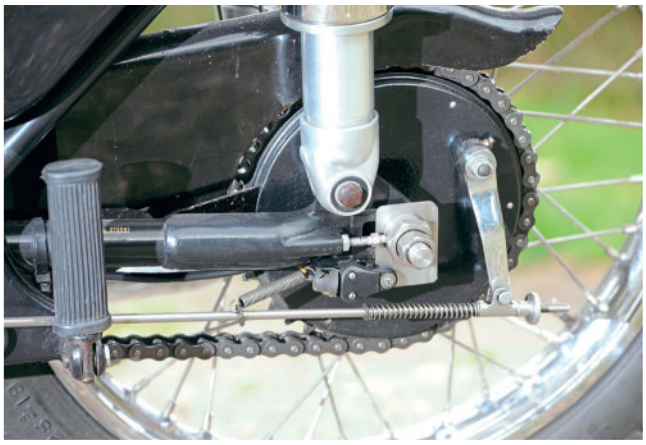


ELECTRICAL

The ignition was originally provided by a magneto fitted to the rear of the cylinder block with a 6v dynamo fitted below that was driven through primary drive. The magneto drive was then moved to the front of the engine with a handsome new casting holding the drive, until the ignition was replaced with a coil-type system with the points under the right-hand side timing cover and a Lucas alternator was mounted on the left-hand end of the crankshaft.

SUSPENSION

The G3 had the company's own Teledraulic forks at the front, which were beefed up in 1958 with stronger stanchions, springs and better damping. The later models also benefited from beefed up swingarm mountings. At the back, the postwar G3 was originally fitted with the company's own Teledraulic shocks and then the famous Jampot shocks made an appearance until 1957, when they were replaced by Girling units modified to use the same clevis mounting as earlier machines, so that AMC didn't have to redesign the swingarm.





BODYWORK

One refinement that was dropped from later models was the hinged rear mudguard, which had made it easier to remove the back wheel. The subsequent one-piece steel item, combined with the bike's weight and a poorly designed centre stand, made repairing a rear puncture on a G3 a fiddly job. Early bikes were fitted with single seats as standard, with the short dual seat that made carrying a pillion an intimate experience originally offered as an option. Most early G3 paint jobs were black, with the tanks being dipped into baths of paint to apply three coats before being stove-enamelled. An original paint job can sometimes be identified by the runs and drips still visible on the bottom of the tanks. The later short-stroke bikes were also sold in a variety of colour options, the most popular being red and blue. In the Matchless paint shop these coatings were applied by one worker carefully pouring paint over a tank from an old saucepan, while another suspended the tank from their fingertips inside the filler hole.

MATCHLESS 1951 G3LS

ENGINE: OHV single **BORE AND STROKE:** 69x93mm **CAPACITY:** 348cc **COMPRESSION RATIO:** 6.5:1 **CARB:** 1 1/16in/27mm Amal 76 **POWER:** 16bhp@5600rpm **IGNITION:** Magneto **ELECTRICAL:** Lucas Dynamo 6v Battery **TRANSMISSION:** Single row chain primary drive, four-speed Burman gearbox, wet multiplate clutch, chain final drive **FRAME:** Single downtube double cradle **SUSPENSION:** Teledraulic forks, swing arm, AMC shock absorbers, Matchless 1956 G9 Chassis **FRAME:** Steel, single downtube double cradle frame **SUSPENSION:** Teledraulic telescopic fork, hydraulic damping, Rear – Jampot shock absorbers **WEIGHT:** 390lbs/177kg **WHEELBASE:** 55.25in/1400mm **SEAT HEIGHT:** 30.5in/780mm **BRAKES:** Front full width sls drum, Rear full width sls drum **WHEELS/TYRES:** Front – 3.25in x 19in Dunlop, Rear – 3.50in x 19in Dunlop.

A massive thanks to Pete Volkes for the loan of his immaculate Matchless, which is a great example of a precisely set-up machine.



SHOULD YOU BUY A G3?

Early G3LS models are good, solid, plodding British singles, well-made, robust and classically good-looking. They are more than capable of progressing at moderate speeds for long periods, heavily over-engineered and bomb-proof, with little to go wrong. How this example ended up in a G9 frame isn't clear, but one can imagine a previous owner with a blown twin engine slapping the 1951 G3 engine into it to ensure reliable, fun transport. The later G3 is a sportier model, with less vibration and a bit more top end and acceleration. CBG

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Photo by Mykel Nicolaou

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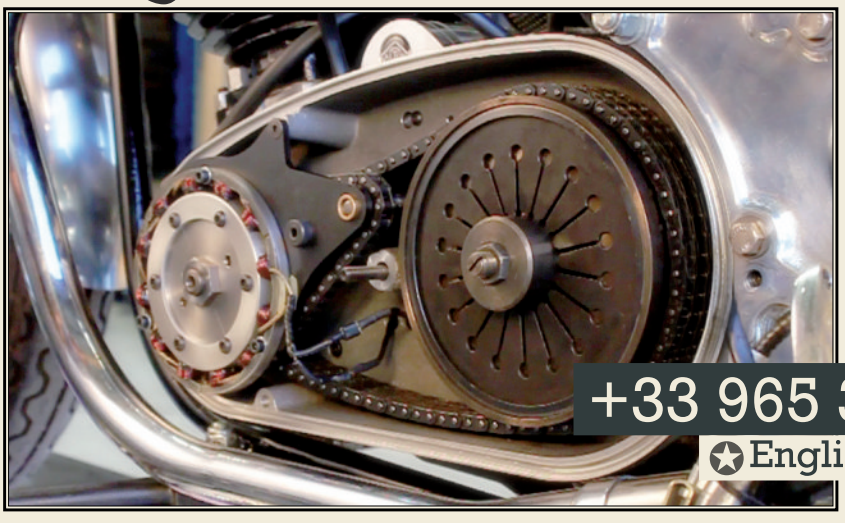




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1961 Norton Dominator Model 99

SLIMLINE SUAVE

99cc more than the 88 with the appeal of three-figure speeds

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY MARION THIRSK

NORTON ADDED A bit more muscle to its Dominator range in 1956, when the 497cc parallel-twin Model 7 was dropped, and the Model 88 was joined by the 596cc Model 99. The 66mm x 72.6mm bore and stroke of the 497cc Model 88 were increased to 68mm x 82mm on the Model 99, giving 596cc, an extra 99cc. Both machines enjoyed the benefit of confident handling, attributed to the combination of Norton's wideline featherbed frame, their famous Roadholder forks, and relatively good brakes.

In common with the Model 88 of the time, the 99 had a light alloy cylinder head with integral rocker boxes, deeper fins were introduced in 1960 on the 99 for greater cooling.

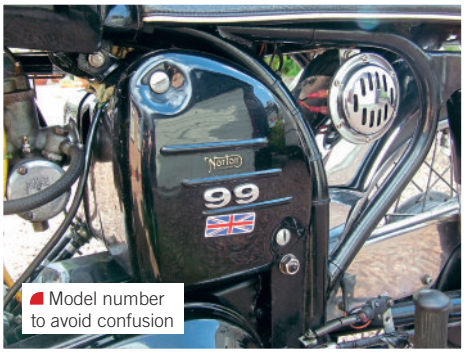
Norton's Dominator twins were solid and reliable, good steady sellers for a public who bought what they had faith in and could afford. The featherbed frame was not initially envisaged as a sidecar tug, so the Model 77 was offered as an alternative. This saw the Model 99's engine married to the Model 7's non-featherbed-framed cycle parts.

Norton claimed the 99 offered 'really outstanding solo performance with the highest possible degree of safety'. This was particularly reassuring with the model number giving a genuine indication of the 99's top speed. *MotorCycling's* road tester managed 101mph, noting "a slight resurgence of high-frequency vibration, noticeable at the knee-grips, at speeds in excess of 100mph, but it was not distracting"! Potential owners were lured with the line the Norton would be ideal for foreign holidays with a comfortable cruising speed of 80-85mph on the Autobahns. The fuel economy wasn't bad either, returning 60mpg at 60mph.

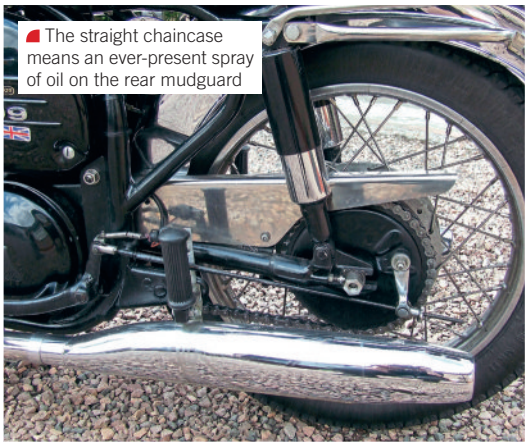
The 99 was available in a limited range of colour schemes over the years. Because of a nickel shortage grey featured prominently on Nortons in the early-1950's and certainly



Does what it says on the tinware



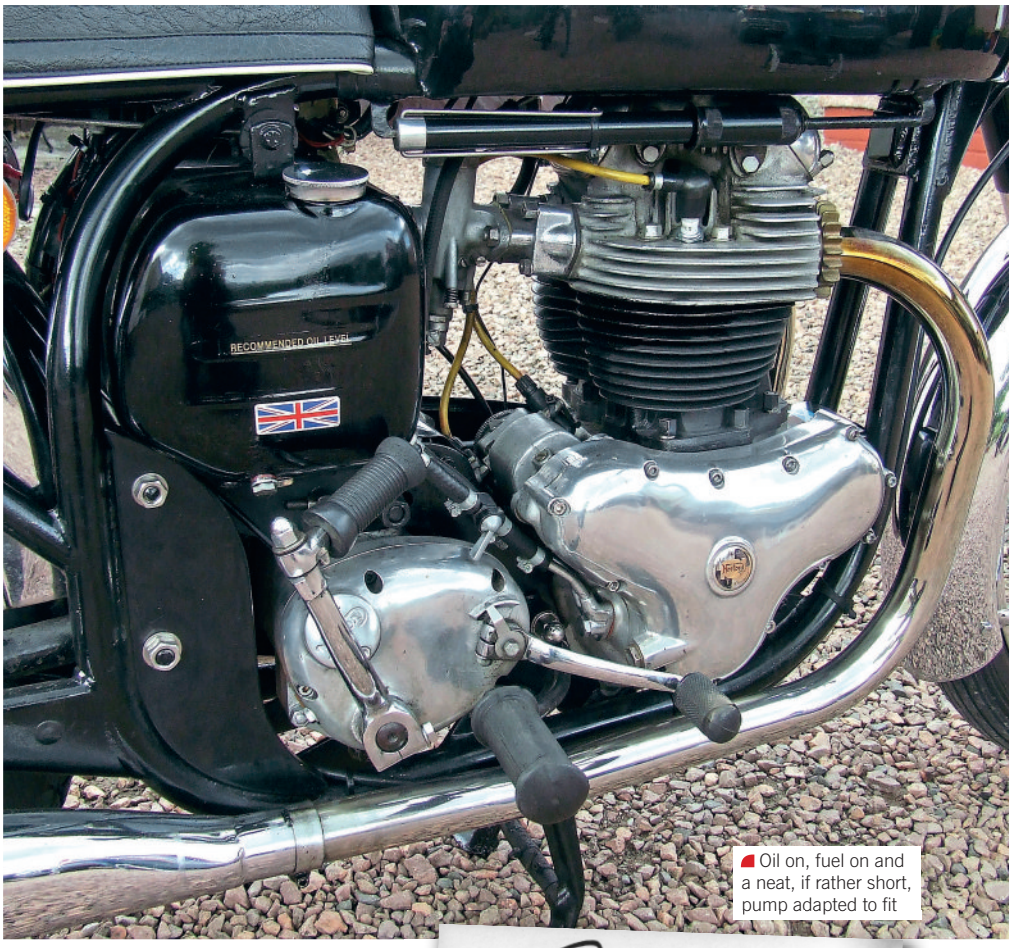
Model number to avoid confusion



The straight chaincase means an ever-present spray of oil on the rear mudguard



Fourth time lucky with a Smith's speedo replacing the Indian alternatives



Oil on, fuel on and a neat, if rather short, pump adapted to fit

set the palette for the early Model 99's with features such as grey tank, mudguards, fork shrouds, oil tank, and battery box. 1959 saw blue or red alternatives, with later models offering two-tone paint options of red, black, blue, green or the ever-popular grey, combined with a more pale dove grey.

1958 saw the introduction of coil ignition, with a distributor and alternator replacing the magneto and dynamo. With the tank and seat on the wideline frame being about 11" wide, the introduction in 1960 of the new slimline featherbed frame must have been a relief for many. Being narrower, with the top tubes closer together, it certainly made life much easier for shorter-in-the-leg riders.

Taking its lead from Triumph, Norton launched bodystyled De-Luxe versions of the 88 and the 99. Siamesed two-into-one pipes replaced the twin exhausts, with pressed steel side panels, which ran from the carbs to the numberplate, partially enclosing the rear wheel for a streamlining effect. In the café racer era a lot of machines were relieved of excess tinware and significantly lightened. This makes a De-Luxe with original tinware a rather rare sight today.

Initially, the tank was chrome-plated with a frosted silver top and side panels. This was short lived, being superseded by a painted tank with large chrome plated sidepanels, mirroring the shape of the petrol tank. Later models sported long, slim, wedge-shaped, linear badges. These featured rather small, similarly angular kneepads. The badges neatly delineated the contrasting two-tone paint finish. By this point a revised cylinder head and barrel with extra finning and larger inlet valves were fitted as standard. Owners could opt for flat handlebars in preference to taller ones. Other optional extras later offered by Norton included a fully enclosed rear chain case, polished ports, twin carbs, high-compression pistons and special forks for sidecar use.

In 1961 Norton launched a specially tuned 88SS and 99SS, Sports Special versions of both Dominators. With twin carbs, polished ports and combustion chambers, plus a high-performance camshaft, siamesed pipes and a magneto, the power was given as 36bhp for the 88SS.



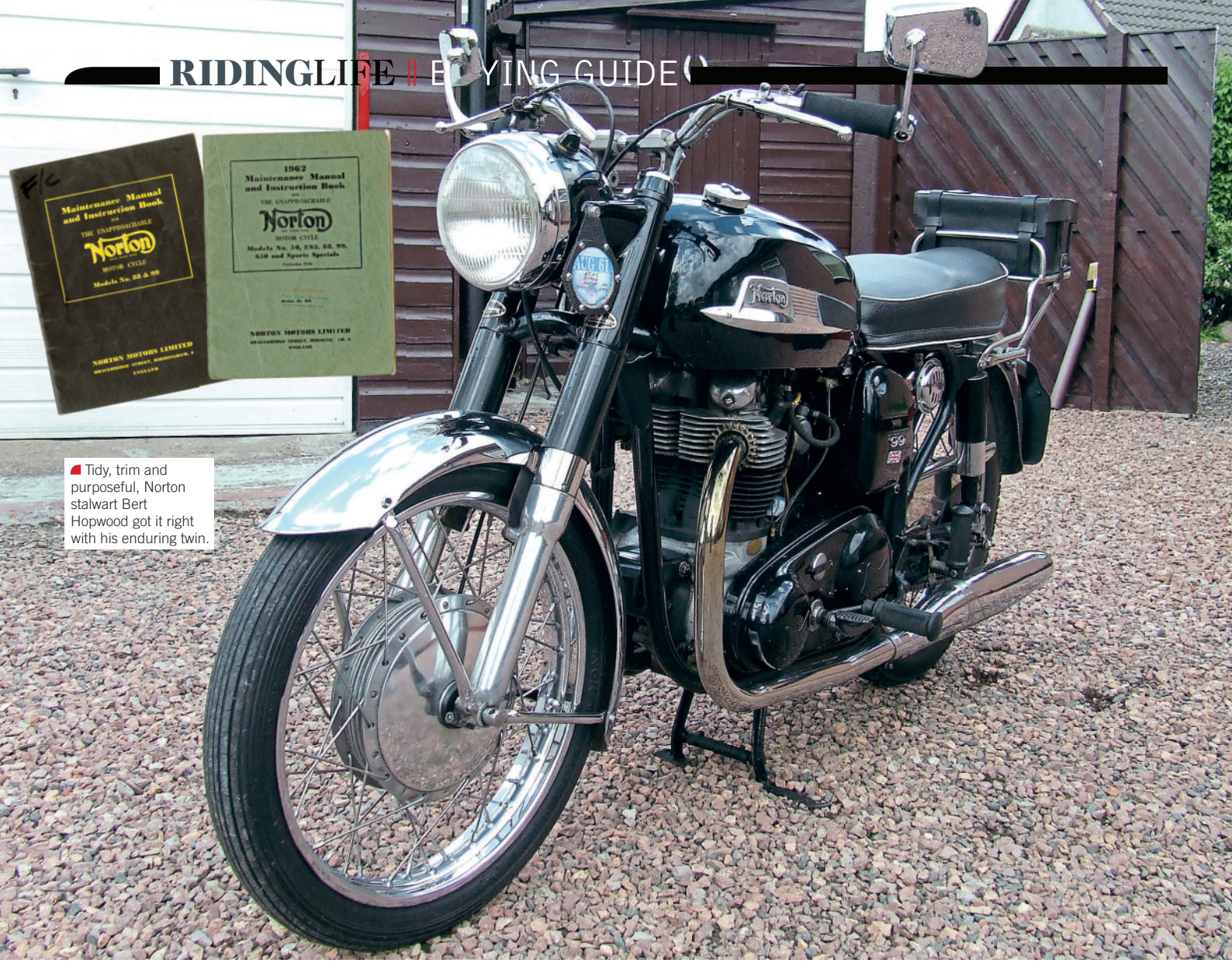
PRICE GUIDE
£5500 - £8000

FAULTS & FOIBLES
Primary chain cases contain a very large rubber band and are notorious for leaking if the single bolt which holds them on is overtightened.

ALSO CONSIDER
Norton Atlas: bigger and rarer. More oomph equals more vibes.
Norton Mercury: even rarer, some consider this the ultimate Dominator

SPECIALISTS
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RGM www.rgmnorton.co.uk

OWNERS' CLUB
Norton Owners Club
www.nortonownersclub.org



Tidy, trim and purposeful, Norton stalwart Bert Hopwood got it right with his enduring twin.

While the 44bhp 99SS had a potential top speed of 115mph. The Sports Specials came with folding kick starts and ball-ended control levers as standard, rearsets and a rev counter being optional extras.

The owner of our featured bike, Bob, has enjoyed owning this, a 1961 slimline featherbed Model 99, for four years. The Dominator had already been fixed up and was in pretty good shape when Bob bought it, but the old rear mudguard was a bit bashed and pitted so he opted to source and fit a NOS (New Old Stock) one. This was topped off with a new water transfer, slightly larger than the original, to make the Norton brand a bit more prominent. Keeping things tidy, Bob had a rather neat leather tool bag made up to fit the rear rack. He also replaced the cables and fitted American risers to bring the bars up a bit more. This gives a more upright riding position which suits him much better.

Everything is painted rather than powder coated. Finished in black, the chrome sets it off nicely. Bob's added a tank protector to save the paintwork from his zip and some shiny 99's to prevent any confusion as to the model. This 'Domi' went through three Indian speedos in short succession (at about £60-70 each), but Bob has finally sourced and fitted an original Smith's clock.

The primary chain case has been fitted with a new rubber seal, with a band of silicon inside to seal it. There's only one bolt holding it on and these are notorious for leaking if overtightened. An inline tap has been fitted to prevent wet sumping so Bob's mantra (along with many others) is 'oil on, petrol on'. Excess oil has a tendency to get thrown onto the chain, then equally quickly thrown back off again. As the chainguard is flat at the end, the rear mudguard consequently ends up with a fine spray of oil up it in a distinctive pattern.

The Domi usually takes about four or five kicks to start. Bob puts the choke on, then turns it off again before starting.

Initially, it jerked when he shut off the throttle at lower speeds then rolled it on again. It wouldn't pick up so he'd have to drop a gear to let it pick up again. This has been resolved by changing the slide to one with a bigger cut out for modern fuels and it now pulls cleanly.

The Domi pulls really well, Bob finds it's a lot faster than Norton's ES2 single, with a quieter tone off it. Covering about 80-90 miles a week on average Bob describes his Domi as a really nice handling bike, which can whip round the bends with no bother. CBG

MANUFACTURED: 1956-1962 **ENGINE:** air-cooled OHV twin **BORE / STROKE:** 68mm x 82mm **CAPACITY:** 596cc **COMPRESSION:** 7.4:1 (1956) / 7.6:1 (1960) **POWER:** 31bhp @ 5,750 rpm **CARBURETTOR:** Amal Monobloc 376 **IGNITION:** Lucas magneto until 1958, then coil ignition **LIGHTING:** 6V dynamo until 1958, then alternator **LUBRICATION:** dry sump with gear-type oil pump **CLUTCH:** multiplate **GEARBOX:** four-speed **PRIMARY DRIVE:** chain **FINAL DRIVE:** chain **FRONT BRAKE:** 8" drum wideline **REAR BRAKE:** 7" drum wideline **FRONT SUSPENSION:** Norton Roadholder forks **REAR SUSPENSION:** Armstrong twin shock **FRONT TYRE:** 3.00 x 19" **REAR TYRE:** 3.50 x 19" **WHEELBASE:** 55½" (1397mm) **GROUND CLEARANCE:** 6" (152mm) **SEAT HEIGHT:** 31" (787mm) **WEIGHT:** 395lbs (180kg) **ACCELERATION QUARTER MILE:** 16 secs **BRAKING:** 29 foot at 30mph **TOP SPEED:** 101mph **PRICE NEW:** £267 16s 10d (1957)

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1960 Royal Enfield Constellation

TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

Faster than a speeding Bullet, Royal Enfield's torquey twin pulls ahead

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY
MARION THIRSK



LIKE MANY BRITISH bikes, the American market enjoyed Royal Enfield's Constellation (badged as the Indian Apache) a year before it came to the home market in 1958. Launched as "A motorcycle for real enthusiasts only" the solidly muscular Connie oozed raw power. Royal Enfield's Constellation and Super Meteor were, for several years, the largest British twins available. An interesting alternative to Triumph and BSA's 650cc twins, the Connie's 692cc motor offers plenty of grunt, with bags of torque and brisk acceleration, proving an extremely fun ride with plenty of usable power on tap throughout the rev range.

Marketed as one of the fastest roadsters in production, the Constellation featured special cams, high-compression pistons, machined induction tracts, special valves and valve springs. Claiming a maximum speed of around 115mph, adverts suggested "You need a Constellation to enjoy modern motorways!" Designed to give as much weather protection as possible, Royal Enfields "Airflow" fairing could be fitted to boost performance, with the advantage of increased top speeds and reduced petrol consumption.

Recognising the vibration issues commonly associated with twins, from 1960 on Royal Enfield dynamically balanced the crankshafts during manufacture, while separate barrels and heads made maintenance much easier. A new type engine head-steady and lighter pistons were introduced, along with twin carbs for improved power, particularly at lower speeds and mid-range.

In common with the Bullet and Meteor Minor, the oil tank was cast in with the crankcase, with the Albion four-speed gearbox (equipped with traditional Enfield neutral selector) bolting on to the back of the engine.

Royal Enfield designed its scissor clutch specifically for the Constellation and it was also fitted to the 500cc Meteor Minor. Four



The siamese pipes were replaced after the somersault, it took several attempts to find the correct pair with at least four variants available.

PRICE GUIDE

£5000 - £8000

FAULTS & FOIBLES

Watch out for worn clutch springs, the clutch cable drying out where it runs near to the left exhaust pipe and oval bearings in the scissor clutch. Some owners fit Bullet clutches or even clutches from another marque, but this can be a costly and awkward option as the main gearbox shaft needs replacing too. If set up well, a scissor clutch is fine.

Royal Enfield offered an oil cooler as an optional extra. Few owners took this option and RE oil coolers are consequently extremely rare. Some owners opt for fitting a larger breather to release oil pressure in the crankcase when hot.

The Connie is not happy pottering around town, but is in its element on the open road, at speed…

ALSO CONSIDER

Super Meteor offers a lower state of tune. Mark I Interceptor, visually very similar but more money.

SPECIALISTS

Hitchcocks
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OWNERS' CLUB

Royal Enfield Owners Club
www.royalenfield.org.uk



Left: The engine cutout switch on the right-hand bar earths the magneto to kill the engine, not to be confused with the horn switch on the left-hand bar.



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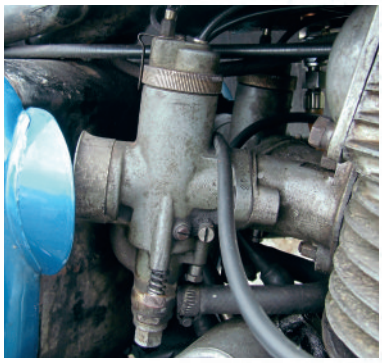
ball-bearings are seated within indents between two levers on the outside of the clutch basket. When the clutch lever is pulled in, the cable pulls the outer lever up against the fixed position inner lever in a scissor action. The ball bearings ride up the side of their indents, effectively drawing the pressure plate against the clutch springs, releasing the plates. The load is effectively shared between four ball bearings instead of one, with clutch assemblies statically balanced to avoid vibration. After all that, not inconsiderable effort, a conventional clutch replaced the scissor clutch from 1961, and by 1963 the Constellation was available with 12-volt electrics. With bags of torque the Connie could be slowed down slightly by attaching a sidecar, so was available with sidecar gearing, steering damper and appropriate suspension.

When purchased 16 years ago this 1960 Constellation was effectively a barn find, having stood forgotten for many years, with a genuine 12,000 miles on the clock. Well used since, it is more or less as purchased with the exception of a very recent paint job after re-lining the tank. When the tank was stripped it became obvious that it had been resprayed multiple times, with each successive respray seeing the paint creep closer to the edge of the tank. Abandoning the earlier burgundy livery, owner Alan opted for Polychromatic Peacock Blue. The chromework, wheels, rims and spokes are original, as are the 6-volt electrics.

The dual seat is comfortable but as standard found to be rather on the short side. Combined with the rather springy original Armstrong shocks, this caused a problem when Alan enthusiastically negotiated a humpback bridge. Sitting pillion, his heavily pregnant wife parted company with the chair. Luckily she managed to grab hold of him while airborne, landing on the back edge of the seat – the seat has since been extended and recovered...

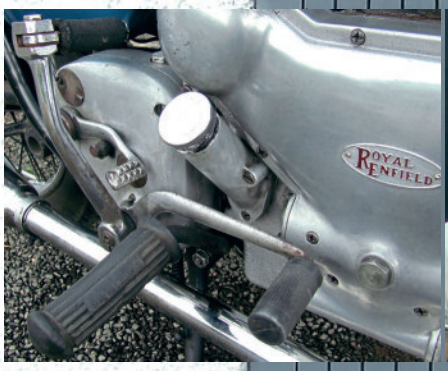
Replacing the Armstrong shocks with Hagons, other mods to date have seen the original centrestand and sidestand replaced with Indian components. The new centrestand is much easier to use than the original one, which had its lugs ground off over the years and took considerable effort to use. A Samrat sidestand was fitted as an alternative to Royal Enfield's spike, which was okay on grass but not always so good on Tarmac. The Samrat stand requires the longer hex-bar and accompanying left-hand riders footpeg from a 1999 Bullet to fit it, otherwise the footpeg fouls the brake lever.

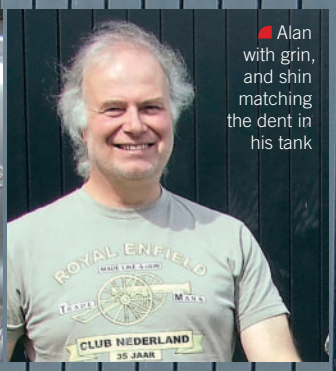
The K2F magneto started acting up while camping at Applecross; a strip-down and rebuild attracting a small crowd of spectators. The bearings run on a waxy paper gasket, which had worn through, allowing the bearings to earth against the casing. Conducting a search around the tents, Vernier gauges were used to source the correct grade of cardboard cereal box, then a replacement gasket was handcrafted using the old gasket as a template. Following reassembly, the audience of sports bike riders thanked Alan for the best day's entertainment they'd had in years! Badly bitten by Scotland's infamous west-coast midges, Alan was just glad to get the Connie going again. A test run down to the village shop proved things were now working



Left: The offside carb doesn't have a float bowl. Starting on the sidestand can starve the right-hand cylinder of fuel so it's best to get the Connie upright before turning on the petrol. Note the sidepanel lugs, these were fitted following complaints from Enfield's road testers that their coats were being sucked into the air intake on the carbs!

Right: Enfield's handy neutral selector resides below a well-worn kickstart rubber





Alan with grin, and shin matching the dent in his tank

as they should, so he was somewhat dismayed when the Connie got bored after about 15mins parked up on the sidestand and rolled lazily off it…

The Connie sported a sidecar for many years until a mounting bolt sheared causing a rather spectacular somersault into a field. Following repairs the Connie reverted to solo use, enjoying the opportunity to crack on, unencumbered by a chair. The tank still bears a dent matching Alan's leg as a reminder.

On a recent trip to the Dutch Enfield rally, leaving the tunnel under the river at Rotterdam, Alan was amazed at a sudden absence of traffic around him. Having been flagged down, he soon discovered the cloud of smoke covering the road behind was giving him a pretty clear run. The campsite was reached with the Connie smoking really badly and guzzling oil. Recovering the Connie to his friend Peter's house, an airhose was used to clear the oilways. Peter finally spotted a tiny piece of gasket on the ground but wasn't convinced it had come out of the oilway. He decided to see if it fitted and pushed it into the oilway, unfortunately past the point where the oilways intersected so it could not be blown out again! A bit of time was then spent fabricating a tiny hook to extract it. The Connie ran fine for the rest of the holiday, coping well with truly horrendous rain and flooding for the last four days.

Royal Enfield's earlier 700 twins are often overlooked in favour of the later Interceptor, however this makes Constellations considerably more affordable and just as much fun. If you want a machine with loads of torque that begs to be opened up, accelerates well and pulls like a train, the Connie could be for you. CBG

MANUFACTURED: 1958-1963 **ENGINE:** OHV parallel twin **BORE / STROKE:** 70x90mm **CAPACITY:** 692cc **COMPRESSION:** 8.5:1 **POWER:** 51bhp @6250rpm **CARBURETTOR:** Single Amal TT carb with separate float bowl, Twin Amal Monoblocs on later models, then single carb Amal Monobloc on sidecar model **IGNITION:** Lucas magneto **LIGHTING:** Lucas 6v alternator **LUBRICATION:** Dry sump with four-pint oil tank cast integrally with crankcase **CLUTCH:** Multi -plate wet clutch **GEARBOX:** Albion four-speed PRIMARY DRIVE: duplex chain **FINAL DRIVE:** chain **FRONT BRAKE:** 6in dual front **REAR BRAKE:** 7in single **FRONT SUSPENSION:** Royal Enfield hydraulically damped telescopic forks **REAR SUSPENSION:** Twin Armstrong shock absorbers **FRONT TYRE:** 3.25x19in **REAR TYRE:** 3.5x 19in **WHEELBASE:** 54in (1371mm) **GROUND CLEARANCE:** 6in (152) **SEAT HEIGHT:** 31in (787mm) **WEIGHT:** 403lb dry, 427lb fully equipped (193kg) **ACCELERATION QUARTER MILE:** 88mph 15 sec **BRAKING:** 35ft from 30mph **TOP SPEED:** 106mph+ **PRICE NEW:** £295 in 1958



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BELL MOTO 3 HELMET

MY FRIEND HUGH bought this classic looking Bell Moto 3 helmet on looks originally, for when he's riding his Honda XR600. Hugh also has a more modern, more usable flip-up lid for practicality, but when I see him, he's always wearing his Bell – so what's it like?

"I fell in love with it when I first saw it as it looked like the helmets we had when we were younger (the original Bell this is modelled on was the first full-face off-road helmet). It took a little while to bed in – I thought I'd got too small a size, but after a while it became really comfortable – and still is. I don't travel long distances and rarely go above 70mph on the XR, but up to that speed the Moto 3 is fine – goggles fit perfectly and although it doesn't have as many vents as my other helmet, I don't seem to get too hot, even when off-road. I like the peak, it keeps the sun and branches from my eyes and it feels nice and light. And on an old dirtbike it looks great."

£299
bellhelmets.co.uk



DANE TYRIL GLOVES

THESE ARE THE best gloves I've owned in over 20 years (there may have been better ones before that – I can't remember). Warm enough to be used on a mild winter's day, yet not so thick to be unusable once the sun comes out, the Tyrils also give plenty of dexterity. But crucially for the UK, they have been, and still are, totally waterproof.

The outer is Cordura with leather sections and knuckle armour, while the Gore-Tex membrane keeps you dry and yet it lets your hands breathe. And the design is nicely understated, so they go well on a modern or a classic bike. £129 is a lot of money, but these are, without doubt, the best, most used gloves I've ever worn.

£129.00
daneclothing.uk

TOMTOM 410 GREAT ROADS EDITION SAT NAV

WHY DO WE need a sat nav when we managed with maps for so many years? And if you do ever get lost, most clever phones have Google maps on them, which has sat nav as standard, with live traffic congestion updates, for free. But maps get wet and it's easy to drop your phone, so if you like journeying to new climes, a motorcycle sat nav can be useful.

This TomTom 410 is the cheapest the company does as it's been superseded by the 450, but at £349 you get the unit, lifetime map updates and a RAM mount fitting kit, which wires into your bike for charging. Designed for biking, the 410 is waterproof and although your bike needs to be 12-volt to run it, if the unit is fully charged it will last for around 40 minutes on its built-in battery. It's easy to use and comes with a clever setting that finds interesting routes to your destination, which include more bends for a better ride. I'm not really into my gadgets, but the TomTom is easy to use, easy to set up, can do a lot more than I've used it for and so far it has been totally accurate.

£349
tomtom.com



LASER TORQUE WRENCH 6207

OVER TIME YOU get a good feel when torquing up nuts and bolts, but I still like the safety and confidence a torque wrench gives you, especially with engines and gearboxes.

This digital wrench from Laser has so far proved really accurate and, being a ¼in drive and fairly small, it's particularly useful for smaller jobs. It reads in metric or imperial, from 4.4 – 22.1lb.ft. The only issue I have is the on/off switch is so small I need a tool to turn it on – which is annoying.

£59
lasertools.co.uk



DANE OSTED GORE-TEX PRO LADIES JACKET AND LYNGBY TROUSERS

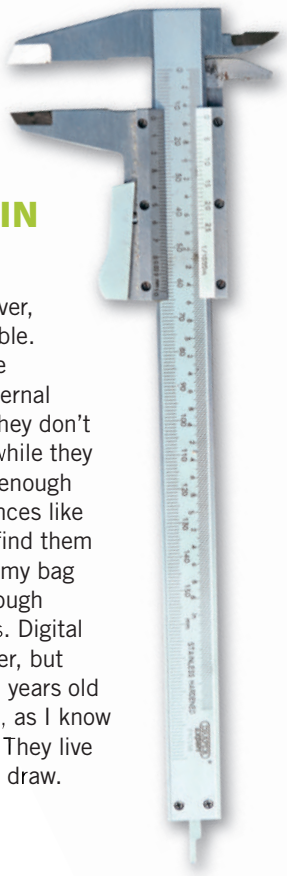
NO APOLOGIES FOR having two Dane products in this month - we've found it to be superb gear. We often hear how tricky it is to get good clothing to fit a lady, so it's refreshing to find the Osted suit is not only female-shaped, but works as well as any top suit. (Our tester wasn't available, so many thanks to Chloe for modelling a suit that was two sizes too big!)

This Dane suit isn't the cheapest, but the materials used and the thought behind it easily justifies this – it will last you a long, long time. It will also keep you from the elements as much in winter as it will keep you comfortable in the heat of summer. The outer is Gore-Tex Pro, a hard-wearing Cordura outer with a waterproof membrane laminated to the inside. This means it stays drier and crucially, when on tour, it dries out more quickly than a lesser suit. It has all the armour you would expect in the elbows, shoulders and knees, a removable thermal liner and zips, straps and adjusters to really tailor the fit perfectly. It's also not very heavy, meaning it's a real all-day suit.

Disappointingly, the jacket doesn't include a back protector and the trousers don't have hip armour, though there are pockets for them to be added. The jacket and trousers can be bought separately, but they zip together all the way round the waist for extra safety and to beat the drafts, like the clever cuffs and main zip – this is a really effective suit. In two years of use it has never let any water in - you get what you pay for.

Jacket £599 Trousers £460
daneclothing.uk





DRAPER 6IN VERNIER

FOR UNDER A fiver, these are invaluable. Instantly readable for external or internal measurements, they don't creep open and while they are not accurate enough for minute tolerances like bearing shells, I find them useful to have in my bag when looking through autojumble boxes. Digital ones can be better, but these are now 15 years old and still get used, as I know I can trust them. They live in my 'essentials' draw.

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LEGENDS OF CADWELL PARK
PRO-AM CHALLENGE

Back to the future – swarms of Yamaha RD250LCs get the BSB 'Party at the Park' buzzing

If you were a penniless but promising young racer back in 1982, the Yamaha RD350 Pro-Am challenge provided a dream platform to fire you into the limelight. Identical bikes were handed out to professional, established racers and young, up-and-coming upstarts alike, by picking keys from out of a helmet, so there were no shouts of 'fix'.

The racing was fierce, physical and at times, plain dirty, with plenty of elbows and even legs out action – reaching out to hit a rival's kill switch was not uncommon – pros defending their egos against the young 'uns with a point to prove. And to cap it all, most races were shown on Saturday afternoon TV, giving many a couch sports fan their first taste of bike racing. The championship ran for two years from 1982-83 and launched the career of three-times BSB champion Niall Mackenzie, GP racer Kenny Irons and even one Damon Hill, who would go on to win the Formula 1 championship in 1996 for Williams. Lin Jarvis, now Rossi's boss at Yamaha, was also involved in the series alongside Honda development rider and stalwart, Dave Hancock.

It became a must-see event. The bikes wore no fairings so spectators and viewers could see the effort the riders were putting in, which was considerable, the bikes were even which kept the pack Moto3-style close to the end and most importantly, you could head to your Yamaha dealer on a Monday and buy a bike exactly the same as you had watched at the weekend.











Dean Robinson



"Don't tell anyone but I never actually raced LCs! I started on a Yamaha TZ250 in a clubman series called the Marlboro Clubmans back in the mid-Eighties. I got involved in this when a friend of mine, Jim Barker, who rode in the original series, had a go. I went with him and stupidly said I'd like to have a go at that. I originate from Grantham but now live in Lincoln, so I'm riding for the Lincolnshire Poachers against the Gamekeepers.

"The last time I raced at Cadwell Park was 30 years ago – where I fell off on the mountain! In fact I went to the Ron Haslam race school because it had been so long, where I was taught by Andy Muggleton, one of the other riders in the Pro-Am!"

'WHY DON'T WE BRING IT BACK?'

The rebirth of the Pro-Am championship began in 2014 during a chat over a curry, (as some of the best ideas seem to be), between ex-Honda racing manager Chris Herring and IDP moto owner and all-round good egg, Darryl Young. They were both talking of how good the 1980s were with a grid full of LCs and hungry riders and as Herring was helping the Circuit of Wales run the MotoGP, they wondered if a competitive classic race with some of the original riders would be a great support for the Silverstone event – so Young went away to see how plausible it was.

It was quickly obvious that using the original RD350LC was nigh on impossible. The bikes have gained near iconic status, raising prices, meaning getting 30 or so bikes would be tricky. But the 250 variant was more achievable. Thanks to the similarities of the 250 to the 350, some bikes were 350s but using different barrels and pistons, taken back to 250cc. As they were identical to look at, similar to ride and made the same sound, the smaller sibling was decided on.

Then came the job of sourcing and sorting the bikes, thanks in no small part to a silent partner that bankrolled the purchase of the bikes. Thirty examples were bought from around the world, with every bike then systematically stripped, checked and rebuilt to exacting standards. Two-stroke engine genius Bob Farnham rebuilt all the cranks while IDP moto made sure the bikes were as original and identical as each other. Even the correct kick-starts had to be plated for that authentic olive green colour.

As per the original rules, the bikes were largely standard, even running standard expansion pipes. Tyres were Michelin TG22 on the rear with Dunlop KR1 fronts originally, but the new bikes would wear Continental Classic attacks, which although not dedicated race tyres, still offer superior grip to the originals. Hagon supplied fresh rear shocks, while Maxton serviced the forks and EBC provided appropriate brake pads.

The first race was as a support for the 2015 British MotoGP, with Niall Mackenzie and Alan Carter two of the best known racers of the original series. But the Silverstone circuit is so wide and long, the spectacle was somewhat lost. The following year the weather played its part in causing over half the field to crash, with at least two bikes completely written-off. As the racers pay nothing to enter, there was then a £250 crash damage fee chargeable, which was voluntary, just so that crashes would not jeopardise the spectacle happening again.

The plan was always to race at selected events for three years and then auction the bikes off to recoup some of the expense. But before that, Herring and Young got together with Stuart Higgs, race director of British Superbikes, to support a couple of rounds for 2017 – Knockhill and Cadwell Park.

At Knockhill, the classic LCs had the perfect circuit for their 40bhp and entertained with the riders forming two teams, England against Scotland. Scotland was victorious, largely thanks to a certain Mackenzie winning both races.















Dale Robinson

"I started racing on LCs, mainly at Cadwell Park, as I lived in Morpeth, Northumberland. Three of us would head down in an old van with the bikes in the back – it was a really friendly atmosphere – if the van made it! But I never hung around a class, I wanted to get my International licence and ended up riding an RC30 in World, Australian and New Zealand Superbike championships and British Superbikes in 1989-1990. I gave up then to concentrate on business, but a couple of years ago got into parading my two-strokes (Dale has a collection of ex-GP 500s, including an authentic replica of Sheene's RG) which quickly got out of hand and started racing classic Superbikes! Then the Pro-Am came along – it's still fun, the lads are still fired up!"

At Cadwell, the theme was Lincolnshire Poachers versus Gamekeepers, although admittedly some of the Poachers had slightly tenuous links to Lincolnshire. Racers from the old MCN Superstock championship, Charlie Corner and Dale Robinson were there, with Andy Muggleton and Curt Langan, who raced in the Marlboro Clubmans championship in the Eighties, along with Geoff Fowler, Ivan Gray, Grahame Mitchell and Paul Tinker, another rider from the original series.

First practice was hard for the riders, many hadn't ridden the bikes before and towards the end the rain appeared. But no one came off and afterwards, despite their ages and lack of time racing in recent years, the scene of competitors swapping stories and comparing sector times on the timesheets was no different to the young guns on modern machinery. Nor was the hesitation when some riders asked others about which gear they were using for a particular corner – not through rudeness, but because, despite their age, competitiveness rarely wanes. Once a racer, always a racer!

During qualifying the rain had wet the track, but still the top ten riders were just 4.5 seconds apart. Top of the table was the youngest rider out there, Pete Jennings, ex-national racer, whose day job now is crew chief for McAms Yamaha's James Ellison. John Corrin, Owen Cherrell, Andy Muggleton, Pete Boast and Dale Robinson made up the two front rows for the races ahead.

The LCs had two races, one on the Saturday and one on the Sunday. After leading briefly, Jennings slipped off at the old hairpin, allowing Charlie Corner to take a convincing win eight seconds in front of John Corrin and Paul Tinker.

Sunday's main race was a corker in front of the BSB crowds and TV cameras, with the top three finishing within 0.7 second of each other, Corrin taking the flag ahead of Jennings and Pete Boast.

To take an idea and follow it through, to source the bikes, find as many of the original racers as possible and sell the idea to MotoGP and BSB has been a feat Darryl Young, Chris Herring, their team and sponsors can be truly proud of. After the droning of the Moto3 bikes and the roar of the Superbikes, the Pro-Am LCs really did have the fans buzzing. CBG




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CCM SPITFIRE, CAFÉ RACER AND SCRAMBLER

CCM shocked the custom world with the launch of its beautiful Spitfire, back in February. And CBG was the first outside the factory to ride it!





WORDS BY MATT HULL PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMIE MORRIS







Clews Competition Machines are masters of survival. For over 40 years, the team at CCM have built a niche making scramblers, road bikes, racers, adventure bikes and now, as much a surprise to themselves as to anyone else, custom bikes. But looking at their skillset, if there is an area that suits the expertise of the Bolton factory, it's customs, where their attention to detail and innovative ideas are appreciated even more.

CCM founder, Alan Clews, was a newsagent who liked going scrambling at weekends. Like many riders in the Seventies, he wanted a decent scrambler and the BSA was the best at the time, but they wouldn't sell him one. So he built one himself, firstly with frames and parts from the defunct BSA competitions department, then making his own. This rapidly turned into a sideline to the family newsagent, when fellow riders saw Alan's bikes and wanted one. He would take a BSA B50 unit engine, play with the bore and stroke, modify the barrel fins to prevent mud build up and save weight and later machined footrests into the engine side cases, eventually having his own cast.



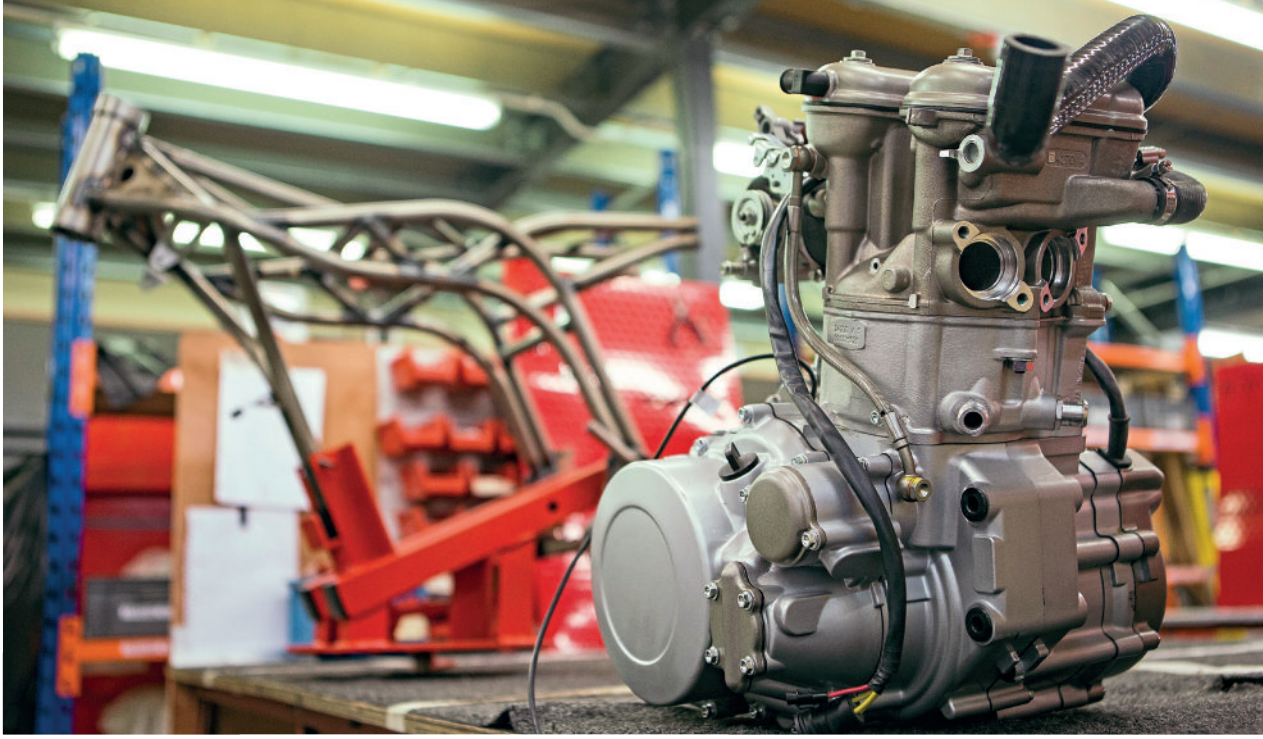
CCMs were always beautifully presented and had their fair share of top riders – Vic Eastwood, John Banks (now a successful Honda dealer), Jimmy Aird (now of Scott Leathers fame) and one Eddie Kidd.

The business has had its ups and downs, with the demise and then rise again of the four-stroke, economics, Japanese and Italian rivals and engine suppliers all giving CCM issues. But they've entered trials competitions, road racing, flat track and the roadbike market, as well as continuing with their beloved off-road. In the Nineties they teamed up with Armstrong to supply the military with the venerable MT500 and more recently have supplied and modified smaller off-road bikes for use by military forces around the world.

Throughout all this, including several financial times of burden and ownership by others, the Clews family has steered CCM. Alan has now retired, but is regularly at the factory and sons, Austin and Russell, along with son-in-law Gary, still run CCM. This is no badge-engineered company.

Three years ago CCM released its 450GP Adventure bike, a super-lightweight go-anywhere bike (the 450 weighs 135kg – a BMW R1200GS weighs 240kg) that was designed to take you to, and then along a trail, or just as easily around the world. It had taken five years to develop, had a













Design genius, Chris Ratcliffe



Russell Clews has CCM in his DNA

"The as-yet unnamed bike was born not from focus groups, not to fill a gap in a range, but because a small group of employees liked it..."

futuristic bonded chassis, a BMW engine, superb ergonomics and performance off-road plus a 200 mile tank range. It was also type approved, a massive step forwards for such a small company, which meant swapping age-old suppliers for new ones.

But the market for adventure bikes is used to 1200cc giants, great for road riding and looking like they can go around the world – not lithe-like 450cc bikes that are, in reality, much more useable once off road. Despite the hard work, sales were steady and with Euro 4 regulations coming in (the 450 had no ABS), the writing was on the wall for the low-volume, round-the-world machine.

BACON – THE FUEL OF IDEAS

Rightly or wrongly, the market wanted a more powerful adventure bike. One of the solutions for the Adventure GP was a 600cc single-cylinder engine designed by BMW / Husqvarna that small manufacturers such as SWM were using. It was only 10kg heavier and benefitted from six-gears, giving it much needed improvement in torque and long-distance cruising comfort.

So one of these engines was on a bench in the factory, when one bacon butty-fuelled tea-break, some of the factory lads were talking over an idea based on the current custom bike theme.

Everyone added their ideas, including Ted Unwin, the man responsible for the TIG-welded tubular frames and one of Alan Clews' first employees at CCM in the Seventies. Designer Chris Ratcliffe noted them all down and formed some ideas as CAD (computer aided design) programmes, using the latest FEA (finite element analysis) software to help create the right amount of flex and rigidity. Once his designs looked like a bike he then showed them to Austin Clews. One quick look and the boss simply said: "We've got to do it!"

The as-yet unnamed bike was born not from focus groups, not to fill a gap in a range, but because a small group of employees liked it. And this is the beauty of a small manufacturer – they have the flexibility to look at projects like this. The more minimalist the bike looked, the more everyone liked it.

So the decision was to make the frame the signature of the bike, leaving it unpainted so even the bluing of the welds could still be seen. This meant Unwin and his team had to prepare and finish all the tubing before it was welded, as any cleaning up afterwards

would reduce the effect. “It takes a lot longer to make something look unfinished!” explains John Drogan, CCM’s marketing man.

Originally the frame had a steering angle of 22.5° / 118mm based on using 19in wheels, but testing has seen this change to 18in wheels with flat track tyres. Front forks are by WP, the rear taken care of with a traction shock, both fully adjustable and with a normal 120mm of wheel travel.

The tank was crafted in special modelling foam, which once set is solid enough to be machined and from there a buck can be made to form the four aluminium parts that are then TIG-welded together. Though the bike we rode had a foam tank with a two-litre tank inside for short test rides, there is also a larger tank for testing, which has a Frankenstein look to it compared with the beautifully shaped finished tank.

The engine is a tried and tested unit, but CCM sent a test mule off to Athena in Italy to take the engine tuning as far as possible with standard parts, then to bring it back to get the right blend of power and manners for a road bike. With around 55bhp and 43lb-ft torque pulling just 125kg (dry), the question was not about enough power, but power delivery. This bike may have the looks of a one-off special, but it has to ride like the production bike it really is.

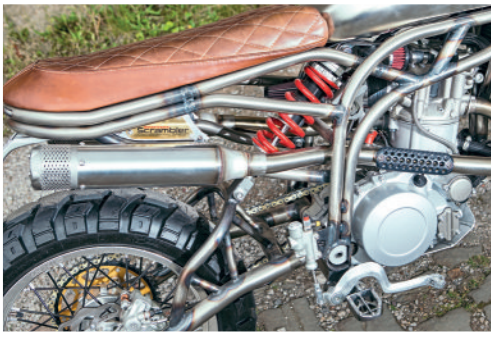
It needed a name. Austin Clews, who

Left, Scrambler. Right, Café Racer. Take your pick









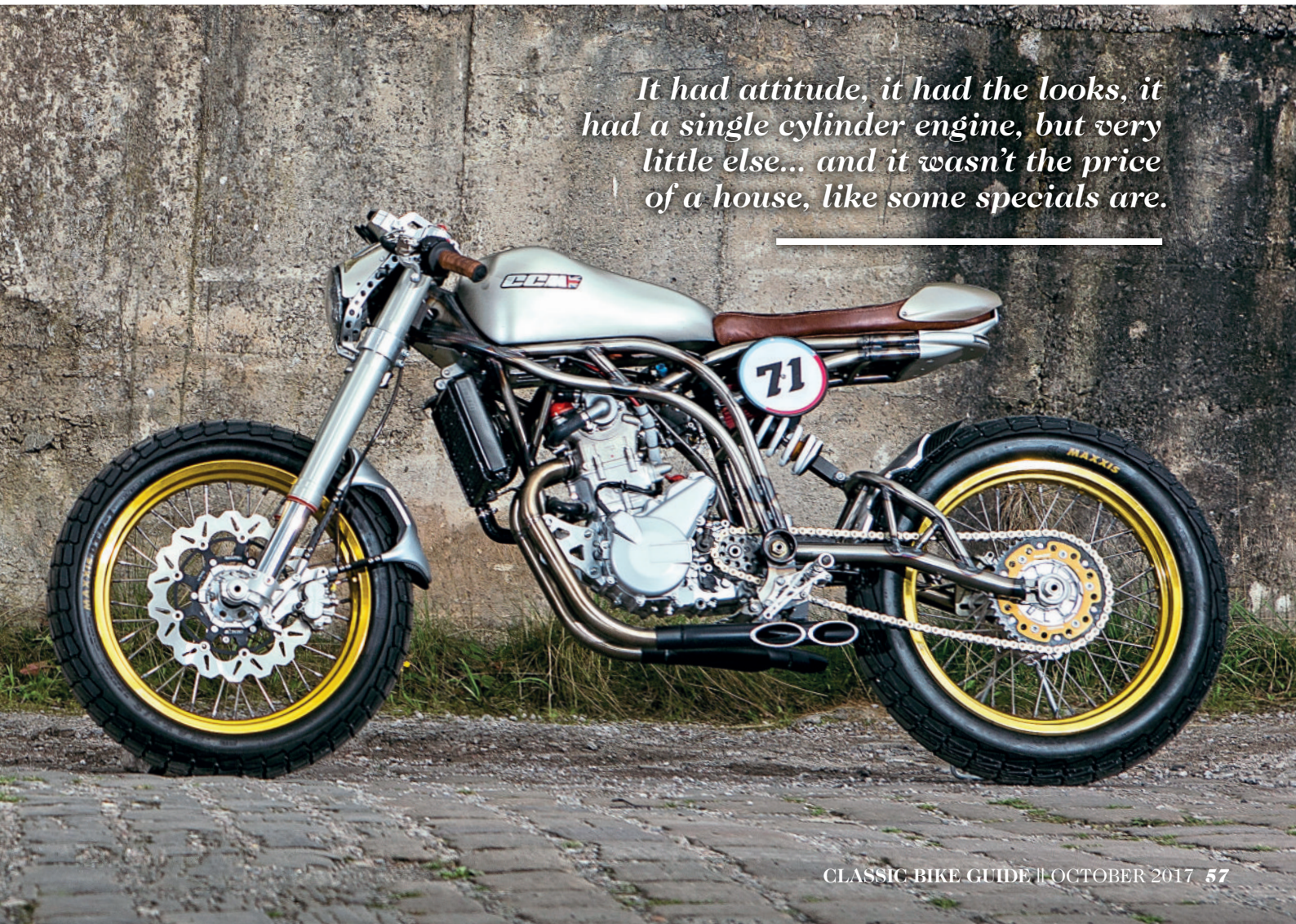
grew up sweeping the floor in his dad's factory explains: "We wanted an aviation name and mum's dad was in Bomber Command. We eventually settled on Spitfire.

"We were able to get the test mule looking like a production-ready bike for the London Motorcycle show in February this year," explains Drogan. "Realistically we hoped to get 30 orders of a total run of 150, which would help us keep the shop floor busy as the Adventure GP drew to a close. But by the end of the three-day show we'd sold them all and had deposits for reserves too!"

The Spitfire had taken the show by storm, helped in no small way by the price of just £8274. Here was a bike, so quintessentially British, that perfectly grabbed the imagination of the buying public.

It was truly British, made in the UK, by a British motorcycle company with a hell of a pedigree. It had attitude, it had the looks, it had a single cylinder engine, but very little else. And it wasn't the price of a house, like some specials are. And there would be a warranty. Since the market was there, two other models have now joined the range, the Scrambler and the Café Racer, of which 250 of each will be made. These will be slightly less high spec so as not to upset those first customers, and will cost more at £9274 on the road. The Scrambler has more suspension travel, higher bars and a twin seat with the twin exhausts exiting just underneath, while the Café Racer is single seat with low-slung slash cut pipes and clip-ons. There is also another variant waiting in the wings, due to be released at the Motorcycle Live show this November. Look at the history of CCM and you can possibly guess what theme this will take.

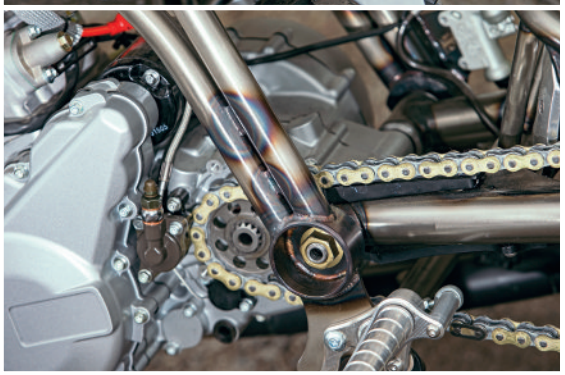
The Spitfire may look like the perfect special, but CCM has learned a lot over the last 40 years. With 20 separate sub-assemblies being put together and exacting inventories, the Bolton factory should see a finished bike off the production line every 90 minutes, around 25 bikes per week. And with plans to move to larger, bespoke premises in the new year, as well as the imminent 600GP Adventure with yet more innovative (I'm sworn to secrecy) technology that CCM has just secured funding for, the future for one of the country's true motorcycling manufacturers is looking rosy – thanks, at least in part, to some bacon butty-fuelled tea breaks.



It had attitude, it had the looks, it had a single cylinder engine, but very little else... and it wasn't the price of a house, like some specials are.









WHAT'S THE SPITFIRE LIKE TO RIDE?

To start the Spitfire you hold a lanyard to the seat, which turns on the ignition. You then have two machined aluminium buttons to choose from – aptly named 'Fire' or 'Kill'. Hit 'Fire' and the Spitfire roars into life, not with the burble of a supercharged radial Merlin, but a nice, even tickover of a single-cylinder with unrestrictive pipes. It gives the soundtrack of a special with the manners of a CBR. After a few moments to show restraint and respect, I give the leather wrapped throttle grip a blip. The engine revs rise immediately and crisply, so I tap down for first and the gear indicator tells me so.

The clutch is light, as is the throttle. Steering lock is nowhere near as easy or tight as the Adventure GP thanks to the more traditional-style frame, but is no worse than a Ducati Monster and the bike weighs so little, even if I have to walk it backwards to turn around, it's no hassle.

Riding position is purposeful, yet somehow comfortable, even though I felt my lanky frame would be too tall. The bars on the Spitfire are wide and the foot rest quite high, but it's the position the bike warrants. CCM is still finalising the wheel sizes, but the bike needs barely a breath for it to change direction. Why can't all bikes be this light?

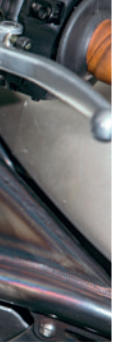
The carburation is faultless. Bearing in mind this is still a test mule with a dummy tank, it rode with the manners of a modern Honda. It should, in theory, be frugal, too. It felt eager in every gear, which thanks to the gorgeous-sounding exhaust wasn't exactly a chore to listen to. The single front disc wasn't bedded to the pads yet, but it doesn't have to stop too much and though the seating position only gives you one place to sit, it's a nice position, at least for my small ride.

There's not much point in talking about the cornering or ground clearance, as none of the suspension was set up yet. But expect a bike that handles as well as it looks – at least as far as road riding is concerened. And with such little weight to suspend, the suspension can be lightly sprung and lightly damped, giving a supple, controlled ride.

Below, Spitfire – looks of a custom, rides like a production bike

"You then have two machined aluminium buttons to choose from – aptly named 'Fire' or 'Kill'. Hit 'Fire' and the Spitfire roars into life..."

















CCM 450GP Adventure – as close to a Dakar bike as you can buy. With more new technology and a larger 600cc engine, it could be formidable.

The clocks are not the prettiest, being similar to those used on the Adventure GP, which show fuel, gear position and speed (including tenths) but are surrounded by beautiful machined aluminium, so you hardly notice them. Other details like the seat, the albeit minimalist carbon fibre mudguards, in fact every detail you look at is carefully thought out and beautifully finished. Some parts are still rapid proptotype printings, waiting for the production variant, but if anything the finished article will look even better.

There are some niggles, this is a special after all. The sidestand is a suicide, flip-up type (early Ducati, anyone?). The suspension hasn't been set up yet and the bike needs more sag and more top out. The rear brake pedal and gear lever needed to be adjusted lower and the forks just touched the fuel tank. But as I've said, this is the reason for this bike to exist – to sort niggles. And if any problems find themselves through to the customers, fear not. CCM prides itself on not having dealers – you deal with the factory directly and if you have a problem, they pick your bike up. CBG



CCM SPITFIRE

PRICE: £8274 (Scrambler and Café Racer £9274) on the road **ENGINE:** 599cc single cylinder, 4v, l/c **POWER:** 55bhp @ 5500rpm **TORQUE:** 43lb-ft @ 5500rpm **CHASSIS:** T45 Steel tubular frame, TIG welded **SUSPENSION:** WP forks, traction shock, fully adjustable **BRAKES:** Front, Brembo four-piston caliper, 330mm disc. Rear Brembo single-piston caliper, 240mm disc **TYRES:** Maxxis flat track (Spitfire and Café Racer), Heidenau off-road (Scrambler) **SEAT HEIGHT:** 830mm (est) **FUEL TANK:** 14 litres

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MARK **WILLIAMS**

Calm, whatever the latest rage

The classic bike scene is constantly changing, but in a good or a bad way, wonders Williams?

AS YOU'LL KNOW by now *CBG* has a new editor and thus a new chapter opens in the history of this august organ which the recently exited Frank Westworth and I launched way back in 1988. Ye gods, that's almost 30 years ago. And as in many other commercial endeavours, new chapters in magazine publishing prompt reflection on past efforts and achievements.

However just for once, I'm going to resist gazing into my personal rose-tinted rearview mirrors, because what's far more interesting are the changes that have occurred to the wider, if sometimes wackier world of classic biking these past three decades.

Most recently and obviously has been the growth of the retro-custom phenomenon, as exemplified by the trend for café racers, street trackers (aka scramblers) and what we must now call 'bobbers', which were previously known as hard-tails. And although many of these are beautifully wrought concoctions based on Japanese and continental machines manufactured in the last 20 years, what is too easily ignored is that the genesis of the custom bike scene goes way back to the 1950s and 60s. And I'm not just referring to the often ludicrous looking choppers that sprang, or rather wobbled, out of California's outlaw biker culture, but the vogue for cut-down, souped-up versions of the British twins and singles now considered synonymous with rocker traditions.

Looking back at the magazines of the era, traditional motorcyclists viewed all that stuff with a certain po-faced condescension, even though all the leather boys were really doing was mimicking the road racing bikes of those times. And of course that trend continued into the early 1970s when companies like Read-Titan, Rickman and Dresda also applied the same principles to bog-standard Kawasakis, Hondas and Suzukis, although by then their customers were wannabe road-racers rather than Brylcreemed trouble-makers.

Which brings us neatly to the acceptance, also initially treated with some disdain in the motorcycling press, of Japanese bikes into the classic conclave. When we started *CBG* it was in fact called *Used & Classic Bike Guide*, certainly and wholeheartedly embracing Japanese models but mainly as reliable, high-performing and often attractive transport rather than things to be coveted, exalted and perhaps salted away for pension purposes. That of course has long since changed, many of those self-same middle-of-the-roadsters have now become bona fide classics and entire magazines and numerous websites exist to celebrate the oriental marques and models without which motorcycling would have died on the vine 40 years ago. And for all the moisty-eyed nostalgia that exists for the likes of Norton, BSA, Triumph, Ariel, Matchless, Velocette and the rest, let's not forget that due to its now infamous commercial myopia, corporate arrogance and lack of investment, the UK motorcycle industry was on its knees by the late 1960s and would likely not have survived even without the so-called Japanese invasion of the 1970s.

Yet arguably the aforementioned British marques epitomise the undeniably buoyant classic bike movement, and with few notable exceptions – Laverda Jotas, Honda CBXs, Kawasaki Z900 et al – it's their products that command the fastest rising values and attract the most lustful admiration. Which perhaps explains another major development, albeit one that's occurred almost inadvertently over the past few years as the cost of Commandos, Bonnevilles, Goldies and the like have escalated far beyond the reach of mere mortals like thee and me. I'm talking about the demand for more modest, hitherto often considered boring commuter fodder like C15s, Captains, Falcons, Jubilees and Bullets, bikes which even as recently as five or six years ago, you could pick up in rough but running order for under a grand.

And for anyone thinking of going continental, if not Enfield Continental – thank you for smiling at Williams' weedy pun – the same is now true of the more obscure Italian lightweights, also from long defunct marques such as Capriolo, Motobi and Parilla, which even in well-rotted condition are fetching substantial sums at auction, because the rest of us can no longer afford Mk.1 Le Mans or Darmahs. And nothing wrong with that either, for some of these semi-exotic tiddlers are both mechanically advanced and aesthetically exquisite. Locating spares for them, however, maybe another matter...

And of course one of the reasons for all this is, ironically, the emergence and growth of the very retro-custom trend I mentioned at the start of this column. The fact is every time a British, German or Italian twin has been broken down and rebuilt – or 're-purposed' in the horrid modern jargon – into something it was never meant to be, it means there's one less old bike in that 'original condition' which marque devotees revere above all else. Which in turn is pushing up the prices of those un-modified, nay unmolested examples which those who don't fancy the eye-boggling uniqueness of a street-tracker or a café-racer care so deeply about?

So is maintaining the stock of decent British (and German and Italian) classics in original nick a lost cause, or will the retro-custom 'craze', peter out leading, perhaps ironically, to a cottage industry restoring heavily modded machines back to their previous incarnations? In another 30 years you may know the answer to that, but don't for heaven's sake ask me. CBG

'Many of those middle-of-the-roadsters have become bona-fide classics and entire magazines exist to celebrate models without which motorcycling would have died on the vine 40 years ago'

WHO IS MARK WILLIAMS?

Williams is a serial motorbicycle magazine junkie, having published, launched and edited *Bike, Which Bike?* and *Motorcycle International* among others. This means he's tested, ridden and even owned more bikes than is probably good for him

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BSA
A10 Plunger Frame
A10 1954 - 1958
A10 1958 - 1962
A65 1963 - 1970
A65 1970 - on Oif
Bantam D1 Fishtail
Bantam D3 With Fin
Bantam D7 Cone End
Bantam D14 Cone End
DBD 34 Correct Baffle
B31Rigid
B31 S -Arm up to 1980
B31 Plunger
M20 Rigid
M20 Plunger
C15 / B40
C10
B44 High Level
Rocket 3 Rayguns
Norton /AJS /Ariel
P11
Commando pea Shooters
Commando S High level with Heat Guard Lugs
AJS Matchless Twins 1 1/2"
AJS Matchless Twins 1 5/8"
AJS 350 Single
AJS 500 Single
Ariel Leader
Triumph
Tiger Cub
3TA / 5TA
T120 Unit long UK
T120 Unit Short US
Pre Unit 1938 - 1954
Pre Unit 1954 - 1960
Pre Unit 1960 - 1962
Pea Shooters To Fit T140
T140 Cigar Style
T120 Oif
Hurricane X 3
T100C High Level (Small Type)

Engine & Transmission





Triumph T150 belt Drive Kit
Triumph T140 Belt Drive Kit
Triumph T120 Belt Drive Kit
Triumph 750cc Barrel 10 Stud
Triumph Pre Unit 650cc Barrel 8 Stud ...
Triumph T100 Unit 500cc Complete Valve Spring Set
Triumph 750cc Trident T150 T160 Complete Valve Spring Set
Hepolite Pistons and Shells also available

Exhaust Pipes



BSA
D1 Rigid Under Footrest 1 3/8" Bore
D1 Over Footrest Plunger 1 3/8" Bore
D5 / D7/ D10 1 3/8" Bore
D7 High level 1 3/8" Bore
D14 / 4 1 3/4" Bore
C15 Low level
C15 High Level
B44 Victor High level Special 1968
C10L
B31 / B33 1 3/4 Swept Back 1 5/8" Inlet
A10 Plunger
A10 S-Arm 1954 - 1958
A10 S - Arm 1958 - 1962
A10 Spitfire Scrambler
A50 / A65 1965 - 1968 Tie Bar Style
A50 / A65 Siamese
A65 firebird Plain Steel 1971 on
A10 Low Level Full length Spitfire US
Mk1 Rocket 3
A10 Siamese
A65 Oil In Frame
Triumph
650 / 500 Pre Unit Swept Back 1 3/4" Stub 1 1/2" Bore
650 Unit Swept Back 1 3/4" Stub 1 1/2" Bore
5T / 6T Alternator Engine 1 3/4" Bore
T110 / T120 1960 - 1962 Duplex Frame 13/4" Stub 11/2"Bore
Speedtwin 1939 - 1952 1 3/4" Bore
5T / 6T Dynamo Engine 1 3/4" Bore
T120 Unit 1965 - 1968 1 3/4" Stub Bore
T120 TT 1 3/4 Bore Tuck Under Engine Style
T120 1969 - 1970 Balance Set c/w Bal Pipe
T140/ T120 Big Bore 1 3/4" With Kick up Extra Long
T120 / T140 Big Bore 1 3/4" Extra Long Straight
T140E Balanced 1 3/4" Stub 1 3/8" Bore
T140V Balanced 1 3/8" Bore
T140V Un Balanced 1 3/8" Bore
T120 Unit Siamese 1 3/4" Stub 1 1/2" Bore
T160 4 Pipes & Manifold Set
Hurricane Set of 3

Frame & Chassis Parts





BSA:
B25 B50 OIF Sump Guard Plain Metal
A65 Up To 1970 Sump Guard Plain Metal
C15S (Early) Sump Guard Plain Metal
Bantam D1 Rigid Frame Chain Guard
A7 A10 B31 B33 Number Plate
Triumph:
T20 Sump Guard 1957 - 65
TR6C Sump Guard
T20 Chain Guard
T120/ TR6/ 3TA Chain Guard
Norton:
Dominator Rear Stays Chrome
Commando Centre Stand 1971

Shocks



BSA: Model	Size	Style
Bantam	11.4"	Black
C15/B40	11.9"	Black/Chrome
C15/B40	11.9"	Chrome Spring
B31/B33	12.9"	Chrome Spring
B31/B33	12.9"	Black/Chrome
A7/A10	12.9"	Black/Chrome
A7/A10	12.9"	Chrome Spring
A65 1972 - 73	12.4"	Chrome Spring
A50/A65 1962 - 69	13.4"	Chrome Spring
A50/A65 1962 - 69	13.4"	Black/Chrome
Rocket 3 1969 - 73	13.4"	Chrome Spring
B50 1971 - 72	12.9"	Chrome Spring
Triumph		
Tiger Cub	11.4"	Black
T100R/C 1969-74	12.9"	Chrome Spring
TR5 1969-74	12.9"	Chrome Spring
T140	12.4"	Chrome Spring
T120/TR6	12.4"	Black/Chrome
3TA/5TA	11.9"	Chrome Spring
T150/T160	13.4"	Chrome Spring
500/650 Pre Unit	12.9"	Black/Chrome
500/650 Pre Unit	12.9"	Chrome Spring
3TA/5TA 1957-69	11.9"	Black/Chrome
Norton		
Commando	12.9"	Chrome Spring
Electra	11.9"	Chrome Spring
ES2 Slimline	11.9"	Black/Chrome
Dommi 88/99	11.9"	Black/Chrome
Slimline 88/99	11.9"	Chrome Spring
Model 50 1957-60	12.9"	Chrome Spring
ES2 1957 -60	12.9"	Chrome Spring

Mudguards



Front	Wheel size
Steel ,115 mm wide , 380 mm long	16"-21"
Steel ,140 mm wide , 400 mm long	15"-18"
Steel , 115 mm wide , 760 mm long	17"-18"
Aluminium , 105 mm wide , 380 mm long	16"- 21"
Aluminium , 115 mm wide , 390 mm long	16"- 21"
Aluminium , 105 mm wide , 800 mm long	17"-18"
Aluminium , 105 mm wide , 830 mm long	19"
Stainless Steel , 115 mm wide , 760 mm long	17"-18"
Rear	
Aluminium C profile, wide 138mm long 1270mm	
Aluminium 163mm wide, 1100mm long	
Steel, 138mm wide, 1010mm long	15"
Steel, 138mm wide, 1010mm long	16"
Steel, 150mm wide, 1040mm long	15"
Steel, 150mm wide, 1040mm long	15"
Steel, 180mm wide, 1000mm long	

Seats & Seat Cover Sets



BSA Seats:
Bantam D7 D10 D14 - Black / White Piping
C15 / B40 1958 - 1966 - Black / White Piping
A10 Spitfire Scrambler Short Type
B31 B33 1954 - 1959
A10 Rocket / Super Rocket
B50ss / B25ss

BSA Seat Covers:
D10 / D14 (B8)
C15 / B40 (B7)
A50 / A65 Hump Type (B5)
A50 / A65 Flat Type 1962 - 1966
A7 /A10 Plunger (B1)
M20 Plunger (B1)
Rocket 3 Mk111 (B15)
B44 Hump Style (B9A)

Triumph Seats:
T140 1973 - 1977 Black / Gold Logo
T25T / T25SS Oif 1971 -1972 Black / Gold Logo
T20 Cub 1963 All Black / Gold Logo
T150 1968 Black
T120 / TR6 1967
T100 / T120 / T150 1968 Black / Gold Logo
T160 1975 Black / Gold Logo
T100 / T120 / T150 1967 - on Grey Top/ Gold logo
TR7 / T140 US Models Drop Side 1978 - 80 Logo
Tiger 90 / T100 1967 Grey Top/ Gold Logo

Selection Of New Hinckley Bonneville Seats

Tan / Brown Ribbed top, drop side stitching, with embossed Triumph Logo.
Dark Brown Hinckley Dual Seat
Black Hinckley Dual Seat Ribbed top, drop side stitching, with embossed Triumph Logo
Black Basketweave Top Racing Large Hump, Gold Triumph logo
Black Basketweave Top Racing Small Hump, Gold Triumph logo

Triumph Seat Covers:
T140 US Black / Gold Logo
T140 US Brown / Gold Logo
TR5T 1973
T100 Daytona 1967 Grey Top / Gold Logo
5T / TR5 T100 / 6T up to 1954 Black
5T / TR5 6T 1954 - 1959
TR25SS Gold Logo
T120 Grey Top / Gold Logo 1960 - 1962
3TA 1962 - 1963 Grey Top / Gold Logo
5TA 1963 Grey Top / Gold Logo

Norton /AJS Matchless:
Dommi Atlas ES2 Wideline Frame Black/ Red Piping
Norton Commando Roadster MK111 850cc Black/ Gold Logo

Lucas Stockist





PAUL MILES

Keeping a lid on it

From royal blue to Bluetooth and carbon fibre...

BEING OF SUCH tender years, I never had the dubious pleasure of riding the Queen's highways on my motorcycle without the legal requirement of a crash helmet in place. Not for me the unconstrained joy of a gentle summer breeze rippling my flowing, blonde highlighted and gently-permed locks (Status Quo's Rick Parfitt had many crimes to answer for, including fashion-corruption of the youth of 1970s broken Britain). Nope, for me the first experiences of a life on two wheels were spent encased within a royal blue Project 7 with matching blue tinted visor. When I removed the helmet my colour perception had been so altered that red buses looked green, but that's a different story, for another time.

Adding a posh new helmet to the HP on a bigger bike was little more than a rite of passage and I discarded the blue monstrosity without a second thought. I think the next was a full face Premier in metallic bronze with pinstripes, but I already had my eye on an American Bell Star – just like Kenny's. Thus began my lifelong obsession with crash helmets – I must currently own eight and yet still seek the perfect bone dome. As I've found out, like the absurd concept of 'just the one motorcycle', that single perfect crash helmet remains as elusive as the quark.

There have been lots of full-face helmets, of course. When young, the need to go everywhere at maximum speed was paramount and to do that I needed to emulate my racing heroes; after all, you never saw Kenny in a pudding basin Everoak. I've owned dozens, perhaps even hundreds, over the years. From the iconic, but oh-so-uncomfortable Bell Star, via 'Star Wars' designs that render the view of the road ahead akin to looking through a letterbox; even venturing into the custom fit end of the market, paying way over the odds to watch a chap hand-carve pieces of polystyrene and ending up with something indistinguishable from a dull-but-worthy helmet available off the shelf.

Full-face helmets started off heavy and extremely flawed. Hand-laid fibreglass weighs a great deal and as a consequence, the lining and visor were often made as thin as possible to offset this mass. The resultant helmet usually fitted me like a saucepan, steamed up in three seconds and left me shouting for the rest of the evening. As they've evolved the shells have become much lighter, allowing the designers to fit such 'essentials' as air vents, flip-down sun visors and Bluetooth adaptors. The result of all this technological wonder is a crash helmet that weighs pretty much the same as my earliest hats, but allows me to pretend I'm in a car using sun visors and talking on my hands-free telephone. Quite why I'd ever want to speak to other people when I'm out on my bike is another question entirely, I ride to get away from all that.

Why didn't anyone ever make a no-frills helmet using the lightest materials possible? I'd buy that. Turns out they did and I bought one. About nine years ago BMW briefly advertised a carbon fibre helmet tied like a balloon on a piece of string to the bars of a... BMW. Who'd have thought? "The lightest helmet EVER MADE" they crowed. It is. They omitted the "most unaffordable helmet ever made" bit, but somehow I found a way, possibly adding it to the HP of a new BMW.

Here at last was the answer to all my problems. It weighed next to nothing, sported no sliding air vents or double visors and looked a million dollars (disturbingly close to its price). I pulled it on, it was like wearing a sable hat, I slid my glasses onto my... what? Wait, my specs won't go on due to the closeness of the fit. Undeterred, I popped in some contact lenses; at last, I was ready.

For all its comfort, coolness and safety I might as well have been wearing a colander, such was the wind noise. Using earplugs made no discernable difference, it was that loud. I called BMW, who told me it was really a racing concept and in order to reduce the weight to a minimum the little air vents were left off, allowing the holes to whistle down the wind. In fairness, they sent me a top-of-the-line flip up with their compliments to use as an everyday hat, keeping the carbon fibre one for special occasions.

I still have and occasionally put it on when watching MotoGP racing on the telly, I can hear everything perfectly. CBG

'Quite why I'd ever want to speak to other people when I'm out on my bike is another question entirely, I ride to get away from all that.'

WHO IS PAUL MILES?

Paul Miles is a lifelong Londoner who rides every day and regards a prewar classic as perfectly suited to urban commuting. A contact lens specialist by profession, he nowadays appears to be a full-time rider, breaker and fixer of old bikes. Entirely fails to understand the concept of patina or winter lay-ups.

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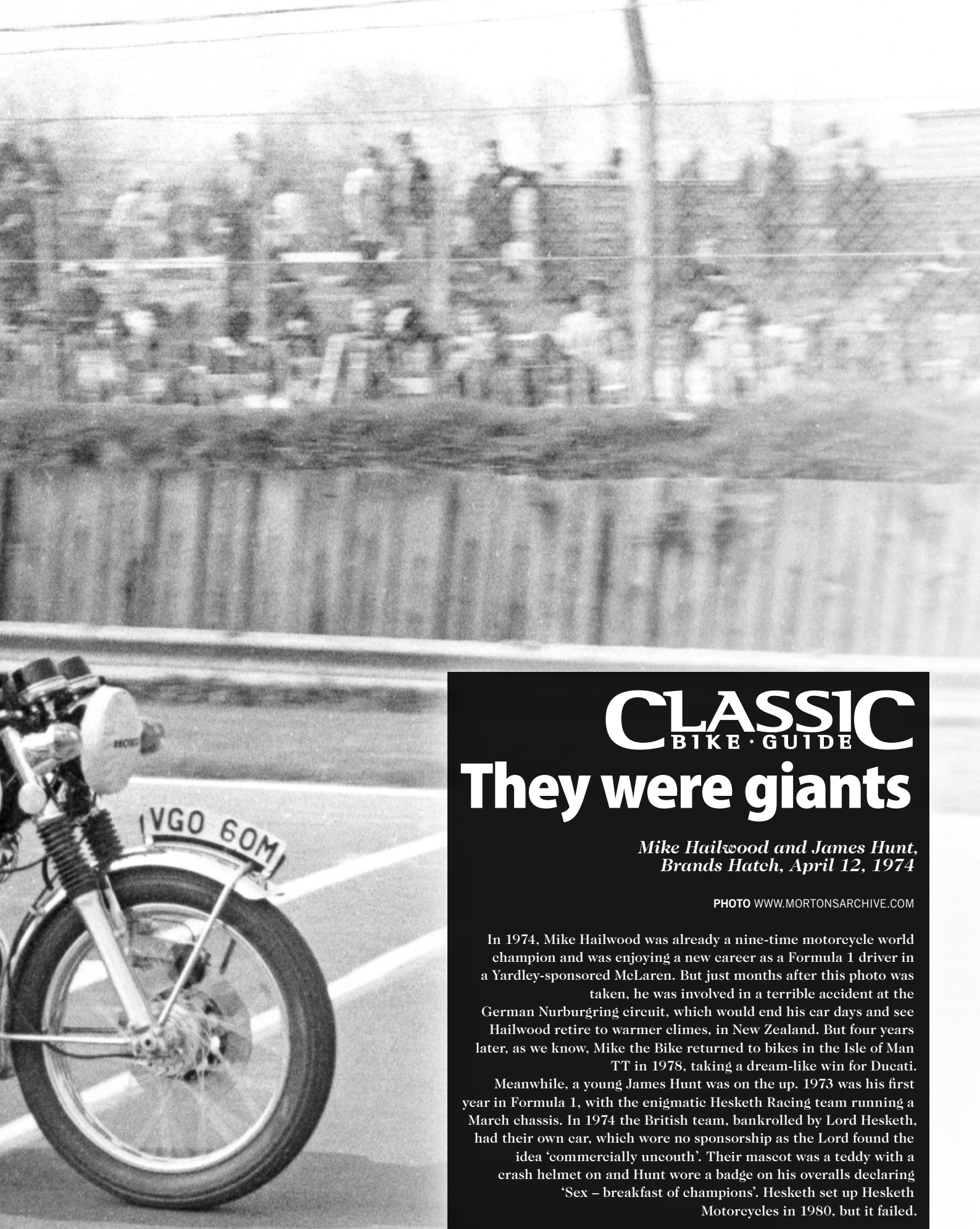
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CLASSIC BIKE · GUIDE

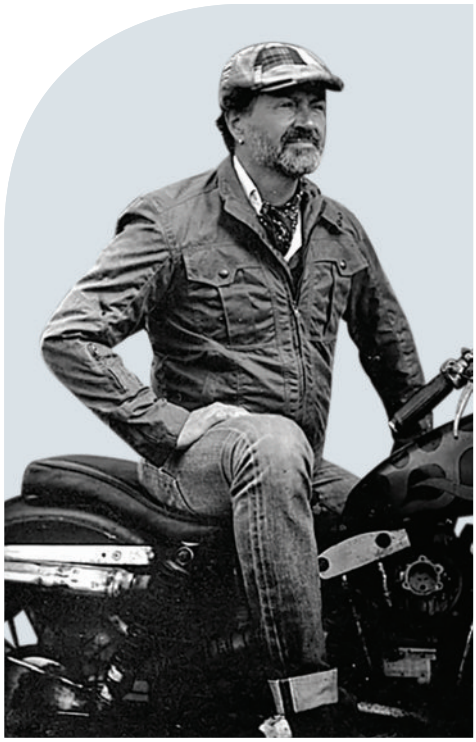
They were giants

Mike Hailwood and James Hunt, Brands Hatch, April 12, 1974

PHOTO WWW.MORTONSARCHIVE.COM

In 1974, Mike Hailwood was already a nine-time motorcycle world champion and was enjoying a new career as a Formula 1 driver in a Yardley-sponsored McLaren. But just months after this photo was taken, he was involved in a terrible accident at the German Nurburgring circuit, which would end his car days and see Hailwood retire to warmer climes, in New Zealand. But four years later, as we know, Mike the Bike returned to bikes in the Isle of Man TT in 1978, taking a dream-like win for Ducati.

Meanwhile, a young James Hunt was on the up. 1973 was his first year in Formula 1, with the enigmatic Hesketh Racing team running a March chassis. In 1974 the British team, bankrolled by Lord Hesketh, had their own car, which wore no sponsorship as the Lord found the idea 'commercially uncouth'. Their mascot was a teddy with a crash helmet on and Hunt wore a badge on his overalls declaring 'Sex – breakfast of champions'. Hesketh set up Hesketh Motorcycles in 1980, but it failed.



PAUL D'ORLÉANS

Keep karma and carry on

More head east, leaving Indians versus India

WHERE'S THE PARADE, the champagne, the clinking of glasses at club meetings everywhere?

A classic motorcycle, designed in 1948 and steadily updated, has become the most-produced large-capacity motorcycle in the world. It exceeds the production of all other big bikes, combined. It's charming and simple, values we celebrate in our vintage machines, and its devotees love the 'soul' of the machine and its integral place in the culture of its country of origin. I'm not talking about Harley-Davidson, I'm talking about the Royal Enfield Bullet.

Yes, 'big bike' is a relative term, but given the hundreds of millions of 'small bikes' produced annually across the planet (sub-250cc), the title for 350cc and 500cc as 'big' is fitting – certainly that's the perspective of the vast majority of riders, who can only afford small-capacity machines. Big bikes are a sign of economic prosperity and individual success, everywhere.

Westerners may not love the Bullet the way they do in India, and prefer the update of the Triumph Bonneville, Ducati Scrambler or the Harley-Davidson Road King, all based on classic designs and updated for modern consumption. Those are big hits for their respective makers, but the numbers built are microscopic compared with the output of Bajaj or Mahindra, or the unacknowledged 800lb gorilla of the motorcycle world, Hero, selling over seven million motorcycles per annum.

A few Western companies have taken note, such as Triumph, which has done a deal with Bajaj, or KTM, which happily took a 14.5% investment from Bajaj to boost its production and make it the largest manufacturer in Europe. BMW has sorted a deal too (with TVS), to build smaller machines with its familiar blue/white logo (Bavarindians?), and soon you will see the revived BSA, Jawa, and Peugeot, all built by Mahindra, which has been on a brand-shopping spree.

From a numbers (and financial) standpoint, Indian factories could easily absorb the entire European and American production capacity, and be in competition only with Japan and China for dominance.

Royal Enfield, the king of big-bike sales, has at the time of this writing made an offer of over $1 billion to buy Ducati. The requirements of brand identity mean nothing will change about Ducati's style, just as things stayed the same after its purchase by Audi a few years ago. The next target of an Indian takeover could be that most American of brands, Harley-Davidson, which is rumoured to be for sale. That would, of course, place the only other American manufacturer of note, the revived Indian, in competition with actual India. Lord knows how the supremacist-in-chief would respond – don't be surprised if he suddenly grows a protectionist bone! For, like his pal Vladimir, he fully understands the value of the 1% subculture as allies.

While Harley-Davidson already has a factory outside New Delhi, total ownership of the brand by an Asian company would be hard for its American customers to swallow, regardless that even today a shrinking percentage of the parts used to built H-Ds are 'Made in America'.

As students of motorcycle history, it behoves us to pull ourselves occasionally from the pleasures of wallowing in our favourite pastimes, to look at the present, and consider the future.

It can't have escaped your notice that the home country of this publication is proposing a ban on sales of petro-powered vehicles in a generation. While many of you readers will have long been practising hands-free saddlestands on heavenly Brough Superior SS100s, I'll have just reached my sell-by date (78) in 2040, and plan to stick around a bit longer. The life-expectancy number is dropping in the USA, at least for my demographic (white males), as the pleasures of synthetic opiates surpass even Fox News to break up the drudgery of rural existence. I've already sampled the pleasures of e-bikes, and like the slot cars I tortured in my youth, they're terrific fun. All motorcycle brands will be forced to grapple with the new paradigm, or start making toasters, because their future won't involve tiny explosions in oiled metal chambers.

But back to the Bullet: the story arc is rich in irony, or perhaps karma.

The Royal Enfield and BSA 'brands' were first encountered by Indians in the 1800s... stamped on gun barrels and pointed their direction. They've certainly had the last laugh in that relationship, as the old names went bankrupt, and the world's fastest growing economy snapped them up, the yoke of colonisation having been replaced in their memory with the whiff of nostalgia and a reputation of solid quality. Time and business savvy have proved their own Truth & Reconciliation commission, no apologies required.

May we sell you a motorcycle, sir? CBG

'From a numbers (and financial) standpoint, Indian factories could absorb the European and American production capacity, and be in competition only with Japan and China.'

WHO IS PAUL D'ORLÉANS?

Paul d'Orleans is a writer, artist, sartorialist and photographer. He's best known as The Vintagent for his long-running blog and judges concours such as the Quail and Villa d'Este, consults for Bonhams auctions, shoots digital and tintype photographs, and is curating an exhibit on café racers at the Sturgis Motorcycle Museum.



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30TH ANNIVERSARY 1987-2017

1987 DUCATI 851S SUPERBIKE

THE DAWN OF DOMINANCE

Ducati's 851 was the brainchild of an extraordinary engineer, a passionate factory and a lust for racing success. And CBG's Alan Cathcart was there at the beginning, putting his hand in his pocket



Few new bikes have ever been as eagerly awaited as the production versions of the eight-valve, liquid-cooled Ducati 851 Desmoquattro. The prototype, clad in Tricolore livery, took Marco Lucchinelli to a debut victory in the American Daytona BoTT (Battle of The Twins) race exactly 30 years ago, then spent the 1987 racing season developing, before the new bike's launch at the Milan Show late that November. Two versions would be available, the 851 Strada road model that was scheduled for production in 1988 – when just 304 were in fact made and a more powerful version suitable for privateer Superbike and BoTT racing, known as the 851S Kit. A total of 206 examples of this were made in 1988, 54 of them destined for the USA, and 152 for the rest of the world.

Though nominally road legal, inasmuch as it had lights and electric start, the 851S Kit came with no speedo, just a rev counter and water temp gauge, had only nominal silencing of its twin exhausts via largely ineffective internal baffles, and came already fitted with Michelin Radial slicks. But despite its slightly schizophrenic identity crisis, the Kit seemed to be the modern equivalent of what most 'Ducatisti' consider to be the ultimate Ducati customer V-twin of all time, the raw-edged, green-frame 750SS, that was a slightly sanitised version of Paul Smart's 1972 Imola 200 winner. But at least the 401 of us who bought one of those could ride it on the street, as I did mine before taking it racing….

The 851S Kit bike had no such luxury, so my first acquaintance with the customer version of Lucchinelli's 8V/851 prototype that had blitzed by me and the other riders mounted on air-cooled Pantah-engined Ducatis – or in my case, an ex-works Bimota DB1 (Ducati Bimota 1) – on the Daytona bankings as if we were in reverse gear, took place one year later at the Misano race track in March 1988, rather than on the Via Emilia or Autostrada del Sole. Or should I say, my first riding impression, because ever since the previous November I'd been the owner of the first customer Desmoquattro motorcycle ever to leave the Bologna factory, bearing chassis no. ZDM851S 850009. After the first four chassis numbers were assigned to factory ➧

WORDS BY ALAN CATHCART
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEL EDGE, PHIL MASTERS, FERMINO FRATERNALI, MORTONS ARCHIVE





Descrizione	
851 Superbike Ed. 11/1987	
851 Superbike 4/1988	
851 Superbike Kit 1/1988	
851 S monoposto rosso 1989	
851 S biposto Europa 1990	
851 S biposto Europa 1991	
851 Superbike Kit 1/1988 U.S.A.	
851 S biposto U.S.A. 1990	
851 S biposto U.S.A. 1991	
851 S biposto California 1990	
851 S biposto California 1991	
851 S biposto Svizzera 1990	
851 S biposto Svizzera 1991	
851 S biposto Germania 1991	
851 Sport Production 1990	
851 Sport Production 1991	
851 S.P.S. 1991	
851 S Biposto Europa 1992	
851 S Biposto U.S.A. 1992	
851 S Biposto California 1992	
851 S Biposto Germania 1992	
851 S.P.4 1992	

Cathcart rides the pre-productions 851S on a visit to the Bologna factory in 1988 – but was underwhelmed

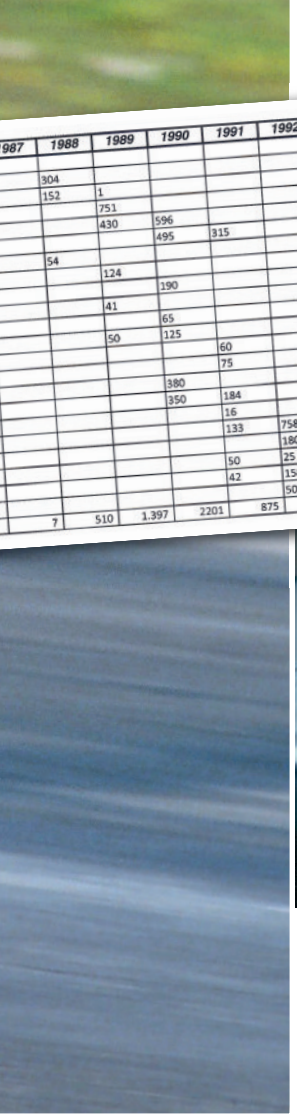
pre-production prototypes, this was one of the seven initial customer examples of the 851S Kit, all formally known as the 'Superbike Edizione 11/1987', which were hand-built that month to be shipped to favoured race teams around the world for them to be prepared for racing the following season. But such famous Ducati tuners such as Reno Leoni and Eraldo Ferracci who planned to debut theirs at Daytona the following March had to wait their turn – for thanks to my friendship with its creator Massimo Bordi, I was lucky enough to be first in line to receive such a bike.

This was partly because I'd got support from New Zealand Ducati importer, Don O'Connor, to race my brand new 851 in the BEARS support class to the 1987/88 NZ Superbike Championship starting in mid-December at Manfeild. I'd wanted to race it in the main Superbike series, but wasn't allowed to because insufficient numbers of the brand-new model had at that stage been built for homologation purposes. Still, this would be a great chance to shake my new 851 Superbike down and become familiar with it before racing it at Daytona myself – and especially to take at least the first steps in learning the intricacies of its open-loop, fully mapped Weber Marelli IAW electronic fuel injection system – a complex and back then somewhat intimidating new technology, for those of us used to jetting carbs or altering ignition timing.

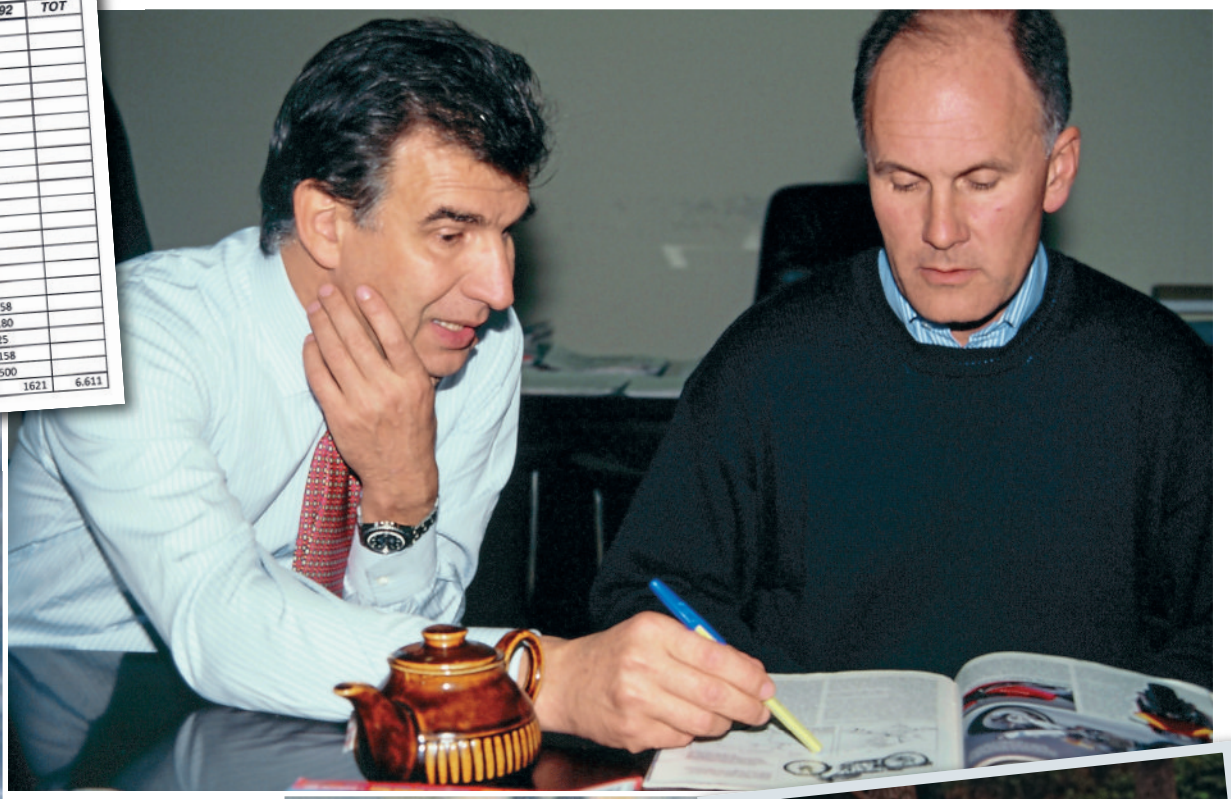
But, as they say, the best-laid plans and all that saw my new Ducati spend Christmas at Milan Airport, captured as a pawn in a drawn-out customs strike that prevented its departure to New Zealand, meaning I never actually got to sit on it until the following February! Instead, thanks to Don O'Connor's quick work and open cheque book I ended up contesting the NZ series on Bob Brown's hyper-developed ex-Kevin Magee air-cooled 851cc Ducati F1 2V Desmodue, which I enjoyed racing so much that I ended up buying it, taking delivery of the Yellow Peril from Bob at Daytona that year. I won my first race on the bike on the Daytona bankings at the start of Cycle Week '88, before it took me to my best-yet Daytona GP Twins finish with sixth place in a race won by Roger Marshall's Quantel Cosworth, ahead of Dale Quarterley on the factory-supported Ferracci 851 Desmoquattro.

Back in Europe, I finally took delivery of my 851 Superbike – only to discover that a mysterious ignition bug prevented Ducati guru Steve Wynne, who was race-preparing the bike for me, from persuading my Desmoquattro to fire up. As consolation for trucking it back to the factory for investigation, Massimo Bordi gave me a ride at Misano on the factory's pre-production 851 Superbike as a taste of what lay in store. But I was frankly underwhelmed by



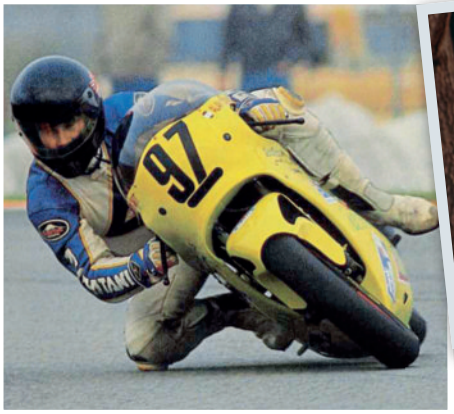


1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	TOT
	304					
	152	1				
		751				
		430	596			
			495	315		
	54					
		124				
			190			
		41				
			65			
		50	125			
				60		
				75		
			380			
			350	184		
				16		
				133	758	
					180	
				50	25	
				42	158	
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7	510	1.397	2201	875	1621	6.611



Inset: Production numbers for homologation purposes

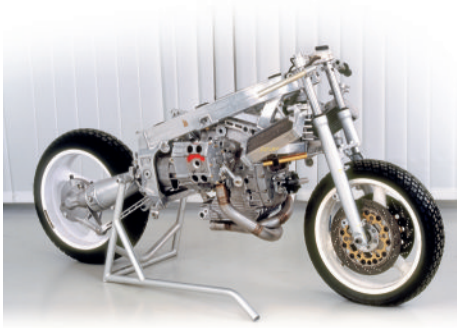
Above left: Massimo Bordi talks design with Cathcart. Great teapot!





Above: Bimota DB1 – that was blitzed by Lucchinelli's 851

Below: Another of the challengers in the European BOTT – the Bakker-framed BMW Boxer – which turned out to be a factory prototype of the R1100



the experience, for there was no question the Bob Brown F1 Pantah was a much more competitive package. So I decided to keep on riding that in what turned out to be one of the most enjoyable seasons I ever had in a 25-year race career. I got sponsorship backing to contest Europe's premier ProTwins race series, the six-round German championship run as a support class to the Pro Superbike series, and contested by a fleet of 851S Kit Ducatis fresh off the Bologna production line. Other top twins included the Bakker-framed Telelever-forked factory BMW of Herbert Enzinger, which turned out to be the prototype of the soon-to-be released new-generation R1100 Boxer. The Australian-built Ducati ran flawlessly all season long and though I never won a round I had several rostrum finishes en route to second place in the German championship. I also won a couple of races on it in France, Belgium and especially Italy, where it inevitably attracted heaps of attention. And I never once got beaten all year long in Europe by a new-model 851S Kit – a fact that caused Massimo Bordi ongoing anguish, as he never ceased to remind me when I'd visit the Ducati factory for journalistic purposes.

"Every Monday morning after you've been racing that bloody Australian banana somewhere in Europe, I come into the office and find another pile of telexes from 851 customers complaining that their bike wouldn't beat that old air-cooled Desmodue," Bordi would declare. "What can I do to stop you racing it?" I replied: "Well, Massimo, you could let me have the factory Superbike motor you were supposed to have sent to NZ in the first place for me to race with there!" But Ducati was short of engines for Lucchinelli's works Superbike - which is why it didn't do all the World Championship rounds that year, after winning the first race at Donington – because of constantly cracking crankcases. It was making too much power for the Pantah bottom end, that for cost reasons had initially been retained on the new eight-valve motor, complete with kickstart boss on this electric-start motorcycle, so I didn't get that factory replacement engine until the end of the season. And guess what – it cracked the crankcases the second time I rode it! Though Ducati sent me another set gratis, I preferred to wait before rebuilding the engine with the later, much stronger production crankcases, after which it proved completely reliable. What was that about guinea pigs?

My invitation from Bimota factory management to race their hub-centre Tesi from 1991 onwards meant the 851 Superbike got pushed into a corner of my



Reunited – Cathcart rides his 851S after being recommissioned by Britaliamoto

garage, from which it only emerged more than 20 years later when I prepared to move house. As the first-ever customer Ducati Desmoquattro to leave the factory – even if it only got as far as the customs shed at Milan Airport – it was obviously ripe for restoration, and my former race engineer Alistair Wager www.britaliamoto.com did a great job in rebuilding the bike to exactly the same specification as when it exited the factory that day in November 1987. The chance to shake it down came at the mammoth Bikers Classic event at Spa-Francorchamps in July 2014, although sadly each of my outings coincided with a typical Ardennes deluge. Still, the new Dunlop D208 tyres Alistair had fitted did their job in keeping me upright, and a subsequent outing at a sun-kissed Donington Park took me back to riding the factory's 851 Superbike pre-production prototype for 20 laps at Misano back in March 1988.

My initial reaction after doing so was one of disappointment – especially after testing Lucchinelli's truly impressive 8V/851 Daytona-winner six months earlier. The 115bhp claimed by Ducati to be delivered to that bike's rear wheel at 11,500rpm was certainly there, whereas the 851S Kit's claimed 119bhp at 10,000rpm at the gearbox was certainly excessive – and after racing my F1 Pantah with 102bhp at the wheel, I had a valid basis for comparison. Moreover, Bob Brown had slimmed that bike down to an amazing 124kg half-dry (with oil, no fuel), against the frankly porky 851 Superbike's 165kg, admittedly with lights and a generator. No wonder the customer 851 Superbikes ridden by Jimmy Adamo (on Reno Leoni's bike) and Dave Keiffer had proved well off the pace in the Daytona ProTwins race. The 851S Kit indeed required heaps of work on the part of its customers to make it competitive even in ProTwins racing, let alone in Superbike events against the cream of Japanese four-cylinder repli-racers like the RC30 Honda and GSX-R750 Suzuki. My admiration for the technical tour de force that the Desmoquattro engine certainly represented was tempered by its frankly disappointing performance in customer-ready guise, which I became reacquainted with when I rode my now restored bike at Donington.

When you sling a leg over it the 851 is really surprisingly wide for a V-twin – at 700mm across, it's exactly as broad as a four-cylinder Bimota YB4EI. Viewed from on top without the cumbersome, heavy bodywork that takes an age to remove, there seems no good reason for this girth, apart from the bulky water pump sticking out on the left in a very exposed position. The impression of bulk is further heightened by the wide, squat, 20-litre aluminium fuel tank, which also seems to extend back a long way, accounting perhaps for the stretched-out riding position – Marco's 8V/851 prototype was quite the reverse. The frame was based on the 750 F1s, but with a rising-rate rear end and 17in Marvic cast magnesium wheels on this 851 Superbike version.

Thumb the switch (the electric start means there's an easy 5-8kg waiting to be lost) and one of the principal benefits of 851 ownership becomes immediately apparent. Thanks to the Weber/Marelli EFI with twin injectors and a single butterfly throttle per cylinder, the throttle action is incredibly light, with minimal spring pressure especially compared with the carbs we'd all been reared on. Via its precise, controllable engine response the EFI revolutionised the power delivery of the desmo V-twin engine back then, and even today it's crisp and responsive. It pulls cleanly from as low as 3500 rpm with a noticeable step at 5000rpm when the power starts to build more strongly from there up to the 10,000rpm peak, 500 rpm after which the rev limiter cuts in by reducing the fuel flow to the injectors – something we'd never encountered before on a track-focused performance motorcycle. The ultra-close ratios of the six-speed gearbox with just a 500rpm average gap between them on this special set of ratios on the Superbike and Kit help keep revs up above seven grand – all the hype about the Desmoquattro having the soul of a twin, but the heart of a four, is true.

Especially in the midrange, there's excellent torque, making the rear end squat and the front end lighten as you crack the throttle hard exiting a turn. But the grip from the Michelin slicks the bike was wearing when I tested it at Misano proved much too good for the Ducati's ground





Left: 851 was starting to look like the plumbers' nightmare modern Ducati's have become

Below: Pressurised airbox shows enormous intakes

Bottom: Early promotional shot…







clearance, causing me to scrape the fairing and ground the brake pedal on the right, as well as knocking the gear lever into a false neutral on the left. The likely reason was a combination of the 851's undoubted width, the footrests being too low, and the Marzocchi forks dropped 20mm through the tripleclamps, presumably to increase front-end weight bias and sharpen the steering. But the 41.7mm Marzocchi MIR fork gives excellent damping by the standards of the era, even if the 851 needs a fair bit of effort to lay it into a turn. It took a good bit of muscle to make it change direction in the Donington chicane, thanks to the rangy 27.5° head angle – more than you'd expect from a V-twin, and especially compared with a light, flickable F1 Pantah. What was that about the heart of a four?

The 851S is also seriously underbraked, taking into account its weight and performance. Though four-piston Brembo

DUCATI 851S SUPERBIKE – SPECIFICATION

ENGINE: Watercooled dohc 90° V-Twin eight-valve four-stroke, with desmodromic valve operation and toothed belt camshaft drive **DIMENSIONS:** 92x64mm **CAPACITY:** 851cc **OUTPUT:** 119 bhp/88kW at 10,000rpm (at gearbox) **COMPRESSION RATIO:** 10.6:1 **FUEL/IGNITION SYSTEM:** Electronic fuel-injection and engine management system, with Weber IAW ECU, a single injector per cylinder, and two 50mm Weber throttle bodies **TRANSMISSION:** Six-speed with straight-cut primary drive **CLUTCH:** Multiplate dry **CHASSIS:** Chromemoly tubular steel spaceframe **SUSPENSION:** Front: 41.7mm Marzocchi fully adjustable inverted telescopic forks. Rear: Extruded aluminium swingarm pivoting in crankcases, with rocker-arm progressive link and fully-adjustable Marzocchi monoshock **HEAD ANGLE/TRAIL:** 27.5° **WHEELBASE:** 1460mm **WEIGHT:** 165kg dry **WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION:** 48/52% **BRAKES:**Front: 2x280mm Brembo floating steel discs with four-piston Brembo calipers. Rear: 1 x 260 mm Brembo steel disc with two-piston Brembo caliper **WHEELS/TYRES:** Front: 120/70-17 Dunlop Sportmax D208 on 3.50 in. cast-magnesium Marvic wheel. Rear: 180/55-17 Dunlop Sportmax D208 on 5.50in cast-magnesium Marvic wheel **SEAT HEIGHT:** 760mm **YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION:** 1987 **MANUFACTURER:** Ducati Meccanica SpA, Borgo Panigale, Bologna, Italy **BIKE TESTED:** Chassis no. ZDM851S 850009
ENGINE NO.ZDM851W4B000445



Dry clutch, fuel injection, detachable subframes for racing, Brembo brakes – this is the first of the modern Ducatis.

calipers were fitted as new, they weren't the latest Serie d'Oro type as mounted on the customer Bimota YB4EI, and the discs they grip up front are only 280mm in diameter, as if there were a pile of them lying around the factory that someone thought it would be neat to use up in this way. The 320mm rotors fitted on the 1989 Strada would have been welcome to help eradicate the lack of braking power on the bike I rode at Misano. Riding mine at Donington reminded me of that, and I had to make sure I didn't get over-ambitious stopping for the Foggy chicane or Redgate. And with slipper clutches still on the horizon, you can't exaggerate using lots of engine braking, else you'll chatter the rear wheel into the kitty litter…

But flawed though the first Ducati Desmoquattro may have been, it was very much a work in progress. While Honda was doubling up on World Superbike titles in 1988-89 thanks to Fred Merkel and the Rumi RC30, Ducati's R&D team was gradually refining its new-born eight-valve machine until by 1990 they had the makings of a champion, which Raymond Roche duly turned it into. It was the start of a story that's still being told today, but with Chaz Davies and Marco Melandri doing the telling on their 1199cc Panigales. You can't appreciate the present without paying due reference to the past, and I'm privileged to own and ride the customer Desmoquattro that started it all. CBG



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LEGENDS
ONE AND ALL

From diesel engines to 14 World titles – Alan Cathcart tells the incredible story behind the eight-valve Ducati family



This year marks a very important anniversary. Thirty years ago saw the showroom debut of the Ducati Desmoquattro (eight-valve) V-twins, the most unique and successful series of production motorcycles the modern era has seen come to the marketplace, via the race track. Yet it would have been hard to envisage at the start of the 1980s that a decade later, Ducati would end up defeating both Honda and Yamaha to win the World Superbike Championship with a twin-cylinder racer. For by 1983 the Italian company was at a low ebb, with fewer than 3000 bikes a year trickling out of its Bologna factory as this was increasingly turned over to diesel engine production, having passed in 1978 into the hands of the Rome-based VM Group, a state-subsidised manufacturer of industrial engines. Motorcycles were a low priority for VM, so with worldwide bike sales crumbling and twin-cylinder models neither commercially desirable nor technically chic, Ducati's future looked bleak. But in 1985, with the marque literally days away from being consigned to the scrapheap of history, a deal was struck with the late, lamented Claudio Castiglioni and his brother Gianfranco, owners of the flourishing Cagiva factory which had risen from the ashes of Harley-Davidson's Italian operation, to acquire Ducati. Since this coincided with the scheduled retirement at age 65 of the company's legendary technical guru Ing. Fabio Taglioni, and his replacement as the company's chief engineer by his brilliant, youthful, understudy Ing. Massimo Bordi, this was a significant watershed in Ducati's history, in more ways than one. Bordi had joined Ducati in 1978 after completing an engineering thesis on an air-cooled four-valve desmodromic cylinder head, but worked at first on VM diesel engines, before becoming Taglioni's assistant in developing the bevel-drive Mille V-twin.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALAN CATHCART ARCHIVE, MORTONS ARCHIVE





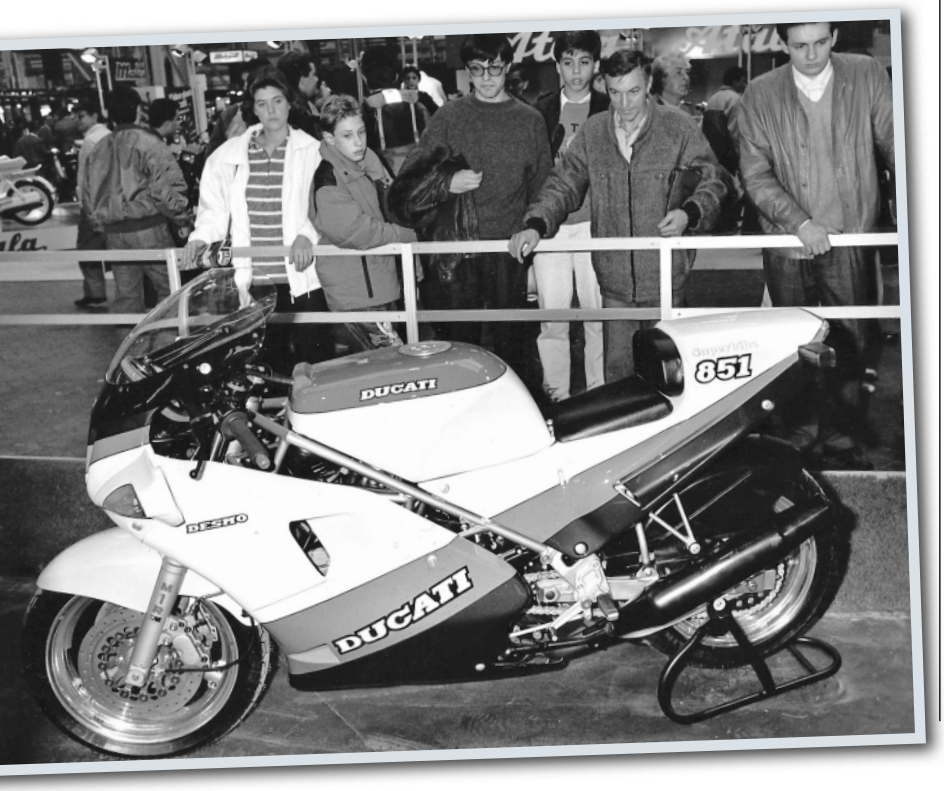


With the energy and flair which had driven them to make such a success of Cagiva, the Castiglioni brothers transformed Ducati's model range, manufacturing facilities, PR image and racing fortunes. Determined to create a new generation of desmo V-twins, which their foresight told them would enable Ducati to carve its own much larger niche in the market, they commissioned Massimo Bordi to produce a mould-breaking new engine which set many new benchmarks for Ducati. For while still retaining the firm's trademark desmodromic 90-degree V-twin format, Bordi's desmoquattro was the first-ever Ducati motor employing liquid cooling, electronic fuel injection, and more than two valves per cylinder. Its four-valve desmo cylinder heads, each with eight rockers and belt-driven twin overhead camshafts, turned the page in Ducati's technical development – even though it employed the same vertically split crankcases as its air-cooled desmodue (four-valve) predecessor, complete with blanked-off kickstarter boss! Bordi had initially considered designing four-valve heads with conventional valve springs (not desmodromic) and looked at five valves (as on a Yamaha), or six valves (Maserati) but finally decided on a four-valve desmo. He initially wanted to call it the Ducati 850, but colleague Gianluigi Mengoli convinced him to name it the 851, to avoid association with the dull Fiat 850 car.

Above left: Gianfranco Castiglioni on Ducati 750 Paso

Above right: Claudio Castiglioni

Bottom: 851 debut at 1987 Milan show. Is that Sean Connery looking on?



With input from British F1 engine gurus Cosworth, in whose Northampton R&D facility Bordi had spent four months from September 1985 to January 1986, Mengoli began making engine drawings upon Bordi's return to Bologna in early 1986, completing these in April. This radical break with Ducati's past duly made its public debut in September, in prototype 748cc (88 x 61.5 mm) endurance racing form. Always intended to be an 851cc motor, it had to be sleeved down to 750cc to comply with FIM regulations for Marco Lucchinelli, Juan Garriga and Virginio Ferrari to ride in the Bol d'Or 24 Hours at Paul Ricard, where it retired with a broken conrod bolt after 13 hours, while running in seventh place. Producing 94bhp in endurance guise at this early stage of development, compared to the 87bhp of the equivalent air-cooled, carburetted 750TT1 desmodue with identical engine dimensions, the future potential of the prototype desmoquattro was self-evident.

This was confirmed when Bordi took the engine out to 851cc (92 x 64mm) for Lucchinelli to ride in the ProTwins race at Daytona in March 1987, where with 115bhp now available at 11,500rpm (the first time any Ducati had ever broken the horsepower 'ton') Marco scored a decisive victory with the prototype 8V/851. In doing so, the Ducati registered lap times and top speed on a par with the four-cylinder 750cc factory Superbikes contesting the Daytona 200 that same week, giving the first hint of what was to come. Later, this was followed by a pair of race victories in the 1987 Italian Superbike series (then conveniently open to prototype machines), defeating future World Superbike champion Fred Merkel's Team Rumi RC30 Honda and the likewise fuel-injected Yamaha-engined works Bimota YB4EIR of the man who'd ironically later become Ducati's Superbike team manager, Davide Tardozzi. This presaged the arrival of a V-twin road bike to form the basis for a desmoquattro contender for the new World Superbike Championship due to begin in 1988 – the tricolore-liveried 851S ('S' for 'Strada' – street). This was duly launched at that winter's Milan Show in November – but before that the first seven customer models had already been built, all Superbike race versions with lights but no speedo, to allow their fortunate customers to go racing with them. Ducati's Desmoquattro era had dawned.

Nowadays, when Superbike grids have until recently been dominated by twin-cylinder bikes, it's





hard to appreciate just how scorned and second-best any racer with less than four cylinders was viewed as being back in 1987. Those who raced them were considered diehard romantics merely content to make up the numbers – which is probably why, in concocting the rules for the new Superbike class, the FIM gave those presumed no-hoper twins a 1000cc capacity edge, against 750cc fours.

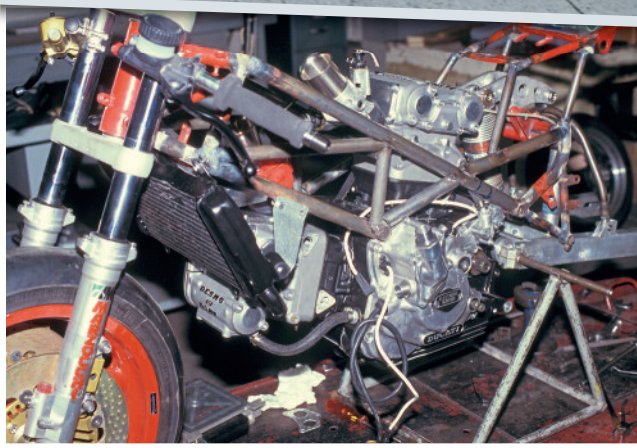
Yet the irony is that the bike which kickstarted Ducati's long and glorious roll call of Superbike race victories at World level didn't take full advantage of that, being 149cc less than it was allowed – and nor did it follow the prevailing fashion for aluminium beam frames. Instead, the Ducati 851 racer which exploded on to the world stage with Marco Lucchinelli's upset victory in the first-ever World Superbike race held at Donington Park in

Above left: Franco Farne talking to Massimo Bordi, 1988

Above right: Franco Farne during testing, 1988

Right: 851 in prototype stage – notice the revised frame from just behind headstock

Below: Tamburini with Alan in 1986, looking at Yamaha's FJ1100 – what would become the Ducati 750 Paso's rival





April 1988, only measured 851cc. The reason was simple – Ducati couldn't afford the huge costs of new crankcases, so had to use the air-cooled four-valve crankcase die, which wouldn't support a larger capacity. Moreover, the hard-headed decision was taken to persevere with the tubular steel spaceframe chassis format, which all belt-drive Ducati models from the first Pantah onwards had always employed. This not only further enabled the desmo V-twin to stand out from the Superbike pack, but it also yielded improved heat dispersal for the rear cylinder, was more robust in accidents and easier to repair if it did get damaged. And although it was probably not best appreciated then, the steel trellis gave more responsive handling with improved feedback. Honda later grasped this fact when building a better Ducati, with the so-called 'controlled flex' deliberately introduced into its World title-winning VTR1000 SP-2 V-twin, the Japanese giant's implied compliment to Bordi's design strategy.

During that debut 1988 Superbike season, the new Ducati engine received a 2mm overbore to 888cc (94 x 64mm), but the first 510 desmoquattro customer bikes built that first year were all 851s – and, like the works racer, suffered more than their fair share of development problems, especially cracked crankcases, with their unfortunate customers treated as involuntary guinea pigs. But the lessons learnt the hard way in resolving these issues on both road and track were moreover ploughed back into the 851 Strada streetbike. With revised styling and now painted in all-red Italian racing colours like the works Superbikes being campaigned by Raymond Roche and Baldessare Monti under Lucchinelli's team management, this was built in growing numbers (1397 bikes in 1989) as the world's first series-production electronic fuel-injected Superbike, acclaimed for its impressive performance and excellent handling.



It may say 851, but by now it was 888cc

851 GROWS TO 888

Even so, it took until the following year, 1990, when production increased to 2201 Desmoquattro models of all types – the most of any one year for the 851 family of bikes – for Ducati's eventual domination of the Superbike class to be asserted. Raymond Roche won aboard his 888cc racer, the first of what has so far proved to be a total of 14 World Superbike titles and 15 Manufacturers' crowns for the Italian marque. The acclaimed (and successful) SP2 production racer which followed was closely based on this and formed the basis of the privateer Superbike prepared by American-based expatriate Eraldo Ferracci in company with Bologna-based tuning shop NCR, to compete in the 1991 World Superbike series. Fitted with Dunlop tyres (whereas factory Ducati Superbikes always raced back then on Michelins) and ridden by Doug Polen, the Fast by Ferracci privateer bike beat all factory entries with however many cylinders to win the 1991 World Superbike title. The fact that the Ducatis were now close to the 145kg twin-cylinder class weight limit, then a massive 20kg less than the 750 fours could scale (though this would be progressively reduced until, by 1996, it was the same for both), didn't hurt. "This is the true spirit of Superbike racing," declared Claudio Castiglioni, "where a customer's bike can beat the factory machines. It's also good for business – it shows that we at Ducati can sell you a bike you can win a World Championship with!"

Polen repeated his title victory in 1992, this time racing for the Ducati factory team now run by another former 500GP world champion, Franco Uncini, riding an 888cc bike little changed from the year before, then switched back to riding for Ferracci exclusively in the USA in 1993, to finally win the AMA Superbike title for Ducati in a key sales market. By now a whole range of street-legal 888SP models with different levels of specification and performance was available, establishing Ducati's stratagem as conceived by Bordi of offering its customers a wide choice of


Tamburini, 2007.


Anders Andersson (Öhlins test rider), Giancarlo Falappa and Franco Farne with the 916 prototype, June 1993.





Bimota's rider, Davide Tardozzi, tests rival Lucchinelli's Ducati.



Tamburini shows off the 916 prototype, May 1993.



spin-offs from its world-beating Superbikes, alongside the base-level 851 Strada model. This finally received the 888cc engine in 1993, just as the long-rumoured replacement for the first-series Desmoquattro was finally unveiled at that year's Milan Show as the intended riposte to Ducati's ill-felt loss of the World Superbike title that year to Kawasaki and Scott Russell: the iconic 916.

DUCATI 916 – BEAUTY HAS NEVER BEEN SO CRAFTED IN METAL

Designed by legendary progettista Massimo Tamburini, (the 'ta' in Bimota who after leaving them had worked for Cagiva since 1984), the 916 established Ducati in the first flight of world brands. It was stunning, like nothing we had ever seen. It was ➧

instantly admired as much for its stunning, ground-breaking styling and lean, lithe looks (especially compared to the tubbier 851/888), as for the impressive performance of its new, longer-stroke 94 x 66mm 916cc engine. This was housed in an all-new tubular steel spaceframe designed by Tamburini, with a single-sided cast-magnesium (or aluminium, depending on the model) swingarm pivoting in the engine cases and the exhaust system sweeping aggressively up the opposite side to exit beneath the seat. These and its many other unique technical and styling features immediately stamped the 916 as a must-have motorcycle, and although it took a while to redress some initial handling problems (eventually resolved on the factory racers via a 25mm longer swingarm, though this was strangely never transposed to the street models!), Ducati's determined team leader Carl Fogarty regained the coveted World Superbike crown for the marque in 1994 aboard a 955cc (96 x 66mm) race version of the new model, to bring added lustre to what was by now the world's most desirable motorcycle of any kind, bar none.

Fogarty repeated his title win with an uprated version of the 955 in 1995, the year in which the 916 was joined by its kid brother, the 748. Retaining the same dimensions as the 1986 endurance prototype which began the desmoquattro saga, this was Ducati's attempt to build a junior Superbike with which to take on the 600cc Japanese fours in the Supersport class, which now under FIM rules also permitted 750cc twins. Producing 115bhp at 11,800rpm in the form that the late Italian pocket rocket Fabrizio Pirovano won the FIM Supersport title on the Corona Ducati in 1996, the 748 was both a commercial and a sporting success. It dominated the Supersport World Championship for a hat-trick of seasons, as well as earning the approval of a band of customers who preferred it to the bigger-engined V-twin, on the grounds you had to work harder to make it go as fast, which made it more satisfying to ride. However, demand for the 748 alongside the back-ordered 916 only exacerbated a growing problem, as issues elsewhere in the Castiglionis' business empire drained Ducati of much-needed cash to pay suppliers. As components dried up, so did the means to complete bikes and earn the money with which to keep the company afloat – the worst kind of vicious circle which Massimo Bordi, by now promoted to general manager of Ducati, was powerless to redress. For it was Ducati's cashflow, such as it was, which was bailing out Cagiva – and he wasn't signing the cheques.



Above: Foggy leads at Assen, a common sight, 1999.

Below: 888 and 916 race together but Foggy won the championship, 1994.



Troy Corser's victory in the 1996 World Superbike series with the 996cc (98 x 66mm) version of the 916, to complete Ducati's second hat-trick of titles in a championship where the 162kg twin-cylinder weight limit was now the same as for four-cylinder bikes, came against a dark backdrop of shrinking production. Down from 21,000 bikes in 1995, 1996 saw just 12,500 produced at a time when 916 orders were ramping upwards, fuelled by success on the racetrack. In September that year came the announcement that the Castiglionis had sold 49% of Ducati equity to American venture capitalists TPG/Texas Pacific Group, and while the brothers initially retained 49% themselves with the balance held by an Italian bank, it wasn't long before TPG and its associates assumed total control. Under the leadership of company doctor Federico Minoli, a US-based Italian who was himself an enthusiastic rider, the company was transformed in the space of just a couple of years via American investment, so that by 1998 not only had Carl Fogarty regained the coveted World Superbike title for the Italian firm, which Honda's ex-Ducati rider John Kocinski had wrested from them in 1997 on the Castrol RC45 (Foggy would go on to make it two in a row in 1999), but production was up 250% since the Cagiva days, and the many newcomers to the Ducatista brotherhood were being made to feel valued, instead of waiting for months without explanation to take delivery of the prized bike they'd ordered.

Meanwhile, the overhaul of Ducati's range had begun, with South African progettista, Pierre Terblanche, supplanting Tamburini (who'd opted to





remain with Cagiva, to complete his MV Agusta F4 project for them) as the company's design chief. The transformation of the Ducati range came via him, and new technical boss Gianluigi Mengoli, Massimo Bordi's former right-hand man who replaced him when he left the company in late 2000, after failing to be selected by the board to succeed Minoli in running the company he'd devoted more than two decades to serving. Heading it was the 2001 debut of the Testastretta engine, a new-generation 998cc short-stroke variant on Bordi's mould-breaking Desmoquattro engine, which on its debut 15 years earlier had set so many new benchmarks for a Ducati V-twin motorcycle. Careful empirical development of Bordi's original design had seen the 115bhp at 11,500rpm produced by Lucchinelli's 1987 prototype 8V/851 increase to the 173bhp at 12,100rpm output of the 996 that won both Riders and Manufacturer's titles in 1999, before Honda regained both crowns the following year in building a better Ducati, in the form of the VTR1000 SP-1 V-twin. With this, Colin Edwards won the championship in a season scarred for Ducati by a serious injury to their four-time British world champion, Carl Fogarty, which duly led to his retirement from racing. But though Ducati fought back with Aussie star Troy Bayliss, who duly regained the World Superbike crown for the Bologna factory in 2001, he did so riding a 996R powered by the new Testastretta motor which, while still architecturally the same engine at heart as the first of the Ducati Desmoquattro line back in 1976, in terms of details was an all-new design, with more aggressive 104 x 58.8mm short-stroke dimensions, compared to the 92 x 74mm format of Lucchinelli's original 8V/851 prototype.

Ducati trod a turbulent path over the 15 years of the Desmoquattro's existence – but one factor stayed unchanged all that time: the unique essential

Foggy, Donington Park, 1999

format of its desmo V-twin engine, which Honda, Suzuki and Aprilia all copied in terms of overall architecture, but without ever matching it for desirability and allure – or the extra cachet of having won a succession of World Superbike titles with the result. That process continued with the Testastretta engine, which after powering Bayliss to those debut World titles for man and motorcycle, repeated the achievement in 2003, this time slotted into Pierre Terblanche's controversially styled, but better laid out 999. While Bayliss took a sabbatical on the MotoGP grid, Neil Hodgson (in 2003) and James Toseland (2004) continued Ducati's domination of the World Superbike title roster on the 999, before Bayliss resumed the mantle of champion in 2006 in the 999's final flourish at the head of the field.

The move to 1200cc twins for Superbike racing for 2008 to keep the playing field level resulted in the development of the 1098R. With its 106 x 67.9mm 1198cc engine producing 197bhp at 11,900rpm, it was the ultimate evolution of the Desmoquattro L-twin concept. This enabled Bayliss to complete a hat-trick of personal World Championship titles in 2008, thus clocking up lucky 13 for Ducati's iconic engine format. Carlos Checa duly won Ducati's 14th World Superbike title in 2011 with the privateer Team Althea 1098R, before the debut of today's radically different Panigale in 2012 marked the start of an all-new chapter in desmo V-twin history, with its ultimate edition, the Superleggera, a roadbike featuring 215bhp and a carbon fibre airbox-frame, wheels and fairing for a dry weight of just 154kg – as standard.

But the lineage can continue no more, and the 1299 Panigale is to be the last of the eight-valve family. For next year Ducati are expected to launch their new Superbike range with a V4 engine.

Drawing from their extensive MotoGP project, it was seen as the best configuration for the future. So the Desmoquattro may be gone, but without it, what is to come could never be. CBG



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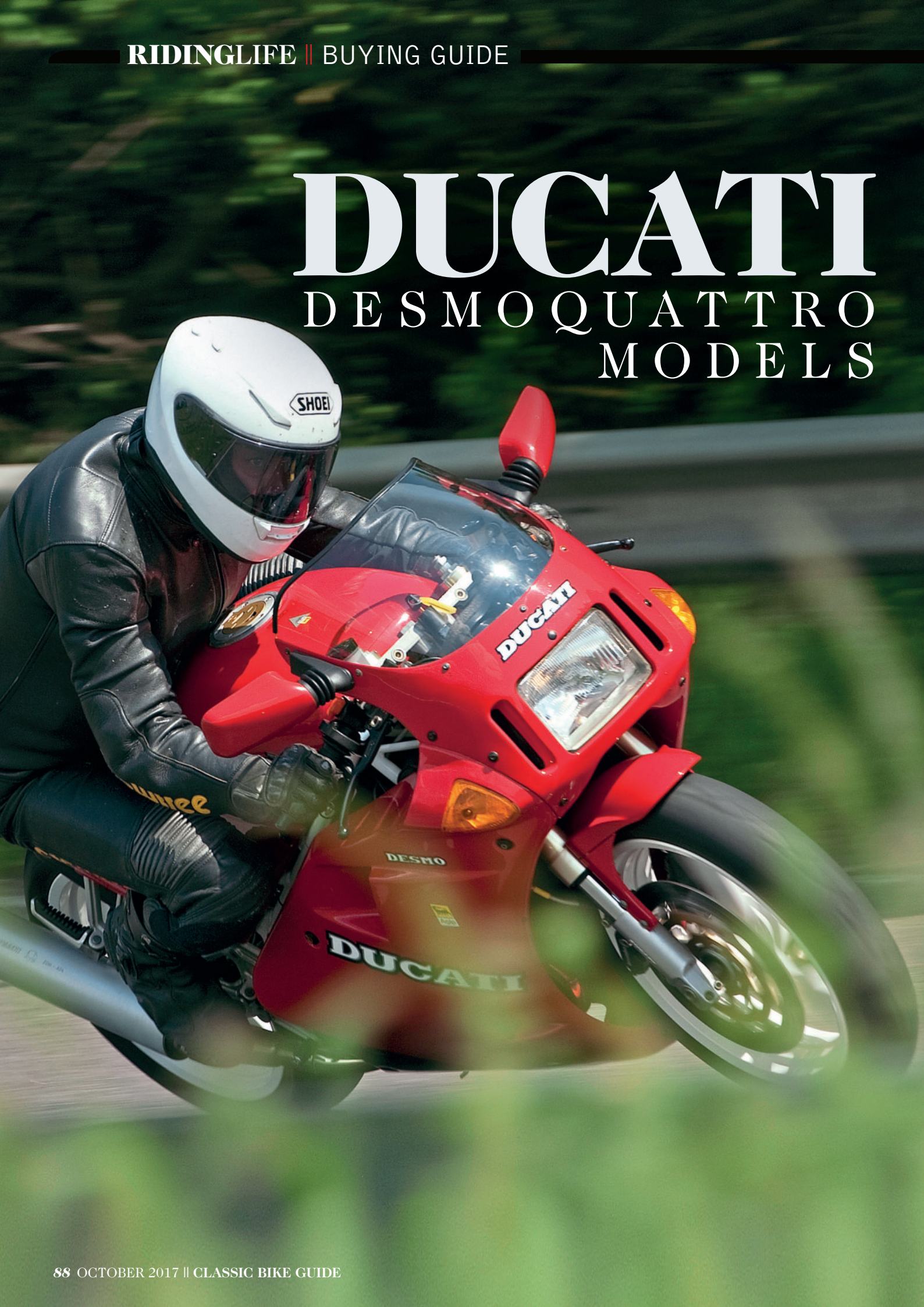

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DUCATI
DESMOQUATTRO MODELS





FROM THE 851 to the 1198 Panigale, the four-valve Desmoquattro engine and its successor, the Testastretta, have helped Ducati keep its reputation as one of the greatest makers of sports bikes in the world. That's not bad going for an engine that can trace its history back to a 500cc V-twin from the late Seventies.

When the Castiglioni brothers from Cagiva bought Ducati in May 1985 they needed a new powerful engine and after rejecting a V4 'BiPantah' they settled for the liquid-cooled, multi-valve, fuel-injected evolution of their existing 750cc V-twin, partly designed by Cosworth, not least because it fitted into a modified trellis frame then used on the air-cooled, two-valve Paso.

The water-cooled Desmoquattro engine was first seen more than 30 years ago in 1986 as a 748 endurance racer ridden by Virginio Ferrari, Juan Garriga and Marco Lucchinelli at the Bol d'Or Endurance Race and then it promptly became the road going 851 in 1987. The racer engines were built on 750 F1 Pantah cases, but these were beefed up for later production.

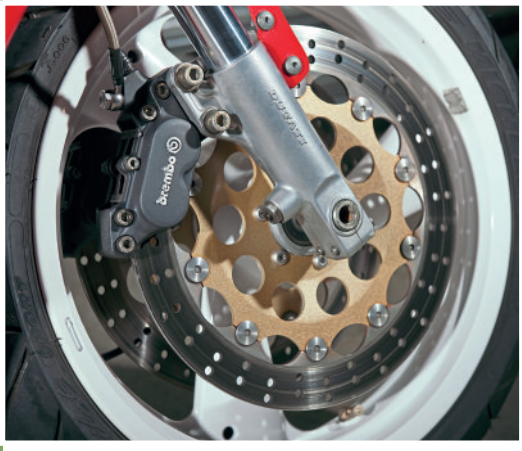
Ducati was very short of money in the late Eighties and up until 1996 – this meant that some componentry, even on top of the line bikes like the 851 and 888, can be suspect – though fortunately this tends to apply to items like switches, wires and hoses, rather than engine parts and brakes.

The 851 uses the trellis frame design that marks out every modern Ducati, from the 600 Monster to the 1198 – though the Desmoquattro frames are stronger and of a very different geometry to the air-cooled models. Buyers don't need to worry about this bit of the design – it might not be the aluminium beam sported by its Japanese rivals but it's easier to repair and more stable than most, plus there's no danger of any fatigue with the frame being ridiculously strong.

Cagiva, which owned Ducati at the time, considered dropping the famous name and badging the bikes as Cagivas. Common sense prevailed, though you do still see evidence of Cagiva's involvement in Nineties Ducatis with the company's elephant logo cast into some of the parts, including the original silencers.

RUNNING A DESMOQUATTRO

We are going to concentrate on the first three generations of Desmoquattro, the 851/888, the 748/916 and the 749/999 models. Ducatis can handle like a dream, are light and have a tendency to vibrate. While this doesn't affect the rider too much on the Desmoquattro-engined bikes, nuts and bolts can work loose. It's a good idea to go over the bike regularly to make sure nothing has come adrift. Eighties and Nineties Ducatis are an assemblage of parts as much as an engineered whole and have bits bolted on rather than incorporated into a finished design. Things can fall off if you don't go around the bike regularly with threadlock and spanner. For example, there are two bolts that hold the mounting pin on the bottom of the fuel tanks and these can become dislodged, falling into the front injector intake with catastrophic results.





FAIRINGS AND PANELS

If you are thinking of buying a Desmoquattro, the fairings and panels on a Ducati are well worth taking a careful look at. The early originals are fairly thick and made of fibreglass, which makes them harder wearing and easier to repair in the event of a spill. Tell-tale signs of a bike being used on the track are the fitting of thinner, less substantial racing panels. Along with lockwired bolts, these are signs of a bike that will have been thrashed.

The fairing panels are fixed in place on some models with Dzus fasteners, but on others with Wellnuts. This is a rubber device shaped like a top hat with a captive nut inside. The theory is that the captive nut is pulled into the rubber as it is tightened holding everything in place inside tubes and lugs. As they get old, the rubber loses what little adhesive properties it used to have and they pop out, leaving fairing panels flopping about or worse, and the expensive fairing retaining bolts and washers get lost on grass verges. More than a few owners fit longer bolts and attach proper nuts to the other end, or add a dab of superglue to the Wellnut in the vain hope they won't fall out.

ENGINE

The Desmoquattro is a solid unit with only one major failing – the plating on the rocker arms can deteriorate. Richard Green, from North Wales Ducati specialists Moto-R, said: "You should check the shims and the rocker arms, as they lose their plating. Rocker arms are around £140 each and there are eight per cylinder, but the issue



only affects the inlet arms. You can't see this when doing the shims. To check them you have to take the cams out and that's a job that needs to be done by someone who knows what they are doing. Apart from that the engines are good."

The cams on the Desmoquattro and Testastretta are driven by belts. It doesn't matter what the previous owner might say, unless you are buying from a dealer who can prove it, change the belts as soon as you can. They are not overly pricey and once the fairing panels are removed it is a simple job to replace them for the reasonably skilled home mechanic who can follow a manual. Or find a dealer to do it for you, as it's not a time-consuming job. Even if you have a receipt for belts that shows the bike has only covered a few miles since fitting, change them anyway, as they could have been standing for a long time. A snapped belt will ruin your engine. Change the belts every two years or 5000-7000 miles. With an engine derived from mechanical genius rather than a reliance on technology, there isn't a lot that can go wrong otherwise.



In 1994, the company introduced the Ducati 916. Designed by Massimo Tamburini, it was stunning, with striking new bodywork that had aggressive lines, under-seat exhausts, and a single-sided swingarm. Along with the 748, 996 and 998 that followed, the 916 is widely regarded as being one of the most beautiful motorcycles ever created.

The powerful 916 is the crème de la crème, and is rapidly rising in value as a collector's item, but don't rule out the 748, as this is a forgotten gem with usable power on tap. This sleeved down, shorter-stroke 916 might need to be revved hard to get the best out of it, but if you can reach the limits of either the torquey 916 or the buzzy 748 you're a highly sophisticated rider and should consider taking it up for a living. The 748 is also built onto the same crankcases as the 916, and this makes the smaller engine considerably tougher. The same goes for the cycle parts, which are identical, but won't be put under as much stress. Most popular on the second-hand market are the early 916 made up until 1998, which featured the italicised logos rather than the later blocky graphics. The 916 or 748 are the easiest of the Desmoquattro bikes to service. Later bikes don't share as many parts across the range as the early models.

Check the coolant reservoir tank that sits under the front of the fuel tank and has a









851 Superbike

DESMOQUATTRO MODEL HISTORY

- **1987-1991** 851
- **1991-1994** 888
- **1994-1999** 916 available as both single seat (Monoposto) and dual seat (Biposto) as 916SP, SPS, SPA, SP2, SP3, Foggy Replica, Senna, Senna II, Senna III.
- **1994-2002** 748 available as both single seat (Monoposto) and dual seat (Biposto) as 749SP, SPS, E, S, RS and Senna.
- **1999-2001** 996 released as Biposto, R, S, SPS.
- **2002-2003** 998 Testastretta engine in R and S versions.
- **2003-2007** 999 Terblanche redesign Available in various special editions and as R or S models.
- **2003-2006** 749 – Available as 749 Dark, 749S, and 749R.

Thanks to Richard Green at Moto-R, Ruthin, North Wales for his help with this article. Visit moto-r.co.uk

tendency to crack. Watch for any signs of coolant spray around the headstock area and get it replaced right away if you detect any leakage. Be especially careful of any spray getting on the faces of the gauges, as it will ruin the plastic lenses. These can also be an issue, as the plastic does tend to deteriorate after two decades. A cracked lens is more likely to be a result of plastic fatigue than accident damage.

CLUTCH

The air-cooled clutch is famously noisy, so don't worry too much about noise from that area unless it sounds particularly mechanical. But the hydraulic master cylinder needs careful attention. Keep an eye on the fluid level in the clutch master cylinder and for leaking fluid around the footpegs as the slave cylinder seals can fail, leaving you clutchless. One popular after-market mod is an open carbon fibre clutch case, which can look good, but increases noise, and should you end up sliding down the road a casing is a lot cheaper to replace than a clutch mechanism.

WHEELS, SUSPENSION AND BRAKES

Some of the parts away from the engine on the early four-valves are interchangeable with those on the more common SS models, including wheels, controls and headlights.

On the 851 and 888 the Brembo brakes are excellent and can be replaced with items from SS models built around the same time. Ducati has stuck with Brembo with good reason, for a production motorcycle they are as good as you can get. The wheels are similarly interchangeable with some contemporary SS and Monster items.

On the single-sided swingarm rear wheel on the 916 range there can be a problem with the cush drive. These rubber cush drives on the rear sprocket carrier have a steel ring that can detach from the rubber and grind down the rear axle eccentric adjuster. The first sign of trouble will be aluminium swarf on the swingarm. Richard Green recommends replacing the sprocket carrier with one from JT or Renthal, which has a retaining lip on the inside to stop this from happening. The rear axle is okay, but the ride height adjuster can seize up and needs to be checked – applying heat to the rose joints can free these up.

Crash damage can be spotted by looking for missing lock stops or damage to the edge of the radiator. Many bikes are fitted with carbon fibre swingarm covers, which might have been added to cover a multitude of sins incurred in a crash. Another giveaway are the clip-ons – these are fitted with a steel lug that locks them into place in a slot on the alloy headstock. In a crash that bends the clip on, the steel will tear away the alloy.

PETROL TANKS

The 851, which was very much a prototype initially, is fitted with an aluminium petrol tank while the 888 that followed it has a steel tank. These tanks do have a tendency to rot from the inside out. Richard Green, from Moto-R, says this can be solved by cutting the bottom out of the tank and re-welding it, but with so many early

Desmoquattros now left standing for long periods it is an increasing issue. Oddly, the problem does not seem to have continued into the 916 range, which also has a steel tank. The 851 and 888 also have the fuel pump and filter mounted on clips inside the tank, which are only accessible by removing the filler and this can be fiddly to deal with. From the 916 on the pump is mounted on a removable plate in the bottom of the tank.

If ethanol-heavy petrol is left in a Ducati tank, it will attract water which, in turn, can get sucked into the petrol pump inside the tank through the filter. Water passes more quickly through the pump than petrol does, which causes the pump to run faster and this can then overload the whole bike's charging system.

If water sits in the pump, expect it to corrode quickly. Change the filter regularly and drain the tank if it is going to be left standing. Where possible, change the fuel lines both inside and outside the tank for good quality items. Braided stainless steel is worth the money.





WHAT TO BUY

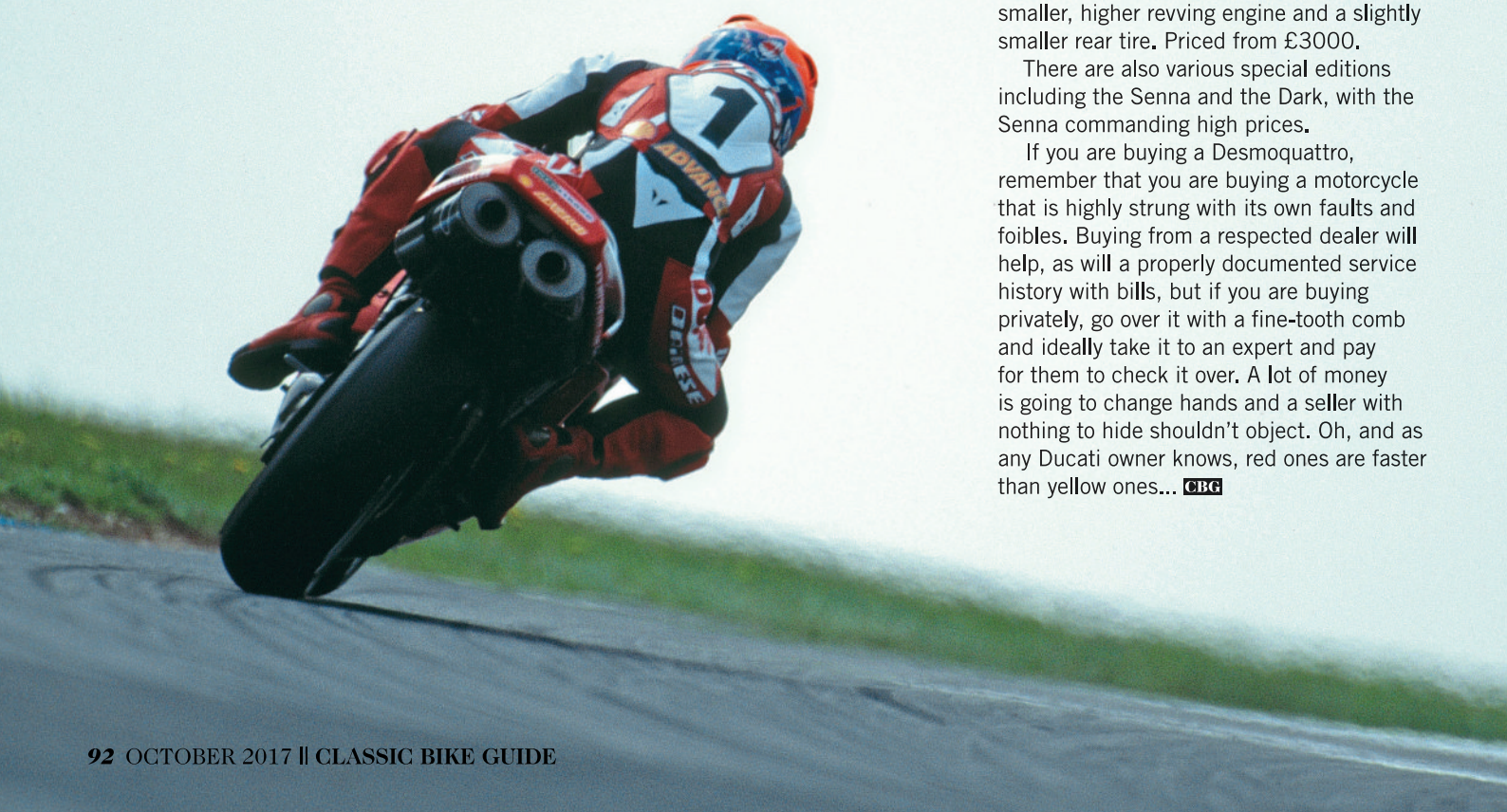
The 916 is the bike everyone wants and is rapidly rising in value. Start at £5000 and keep going up. Lots of these bikes have been parked up for several years now, so watch out for the negative results this will have had on a motorcycle that has been standing. The 748SP and SPS are the gems of the Desmoquattro range, and highly recommended. You can get a basic 748 from £3500. The 996 is kitted out in the 916 bodywork. Although larger and stronger, the 996cc engine had a softer, less peaky power delivery and less top-end power. The 2001 996R, the last of the "996" models, had the 998cc engine and new Testastretta heads producing 135bhp. Shop about - you'll be better off spending more on a good example than going for the cheapest you can find.

The 2003 Ducati 999 was designed by Pierre Terblanche, its appearance was greeted with far from universal acclaim. It was initially viewed in the same way Triumph replacing the 1969 T120 with the Oil in Frame Bonneville was. But over time the 999/749 looks have matured nicely. It's still a great motorcycle and it will be £1000-2000 cheaper than an equivalent 916/998.

The Ducati 749 and its variants (including the 749R) are similar to the 999 to look at, but the 749 has a lower price, a smaller, higher revving engine and a slightly smaller rear tire. Priced from £3000.

There are also various special editions including the Senna and the Dark, with the Senna commanding high prices.

If you are buying a Desmoquattro, remember that you are buying a motorcycle that is highly strung with its own faults and foibles. Buying from a respected dealer will help, as will a properly documented service history with bills, but if you are buying privately, go over it with a fine-tooth comb and ideally take it to an expert and pay for them to check it over. A lot of money is going to change hands and a seller with nothing to hide shouldn't object. Oh, and as any Ducati owner knows, red ones are faster than yellow ones... CBG



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WORDS AND PICS: PHILLIP TOOTH

HONDA 400/4
ENGINE BUILD



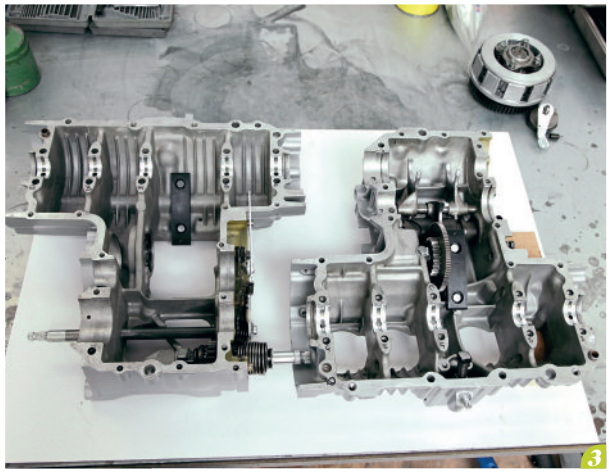
THE ORIGINAL OWNER of this Honda 400/4 thought he had found a cheap and easy way to make the engine look as good as new. "He took the motor out of the frame, taped up all the holes he could see, and then got to work with the grit blaster. Then he sprayed it silver and put it back in the chassis," explains Ashley Barter. As a DIY restoration technique it couldn't have been simpler – or gone more catastrophically wrong. "After the engine had been running for about 10 minutes he started hearing terrible graunching noises. At least he had the good sense to hit the kill switch. But then he parked the bike in the back garden."

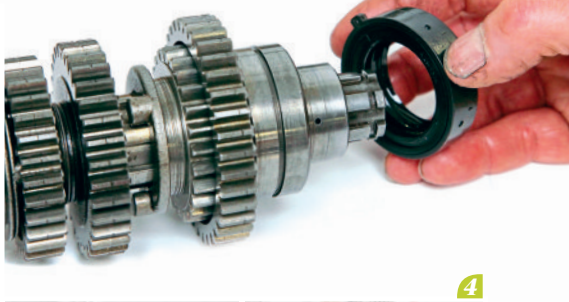
That was a little over 10 years ago, and the weather had taken its toll on the 400/4. When Ashley picked up the wreck he had a choice: "I could scrap it, or completely restore it. I rather like these Hondas, so I decided to restore it."

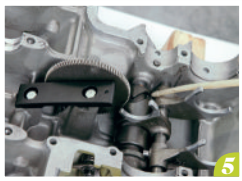
He stripped the engine and scrupulously cleaned all the components. Some parts – like the pistons and big end shells – were junked, but because the original owner had the good sense to stop the engine as soon as he realised something was wrong, much could be saved. Here's how Ashley put the engine back together, with some hints and tips to help you do the same.


1

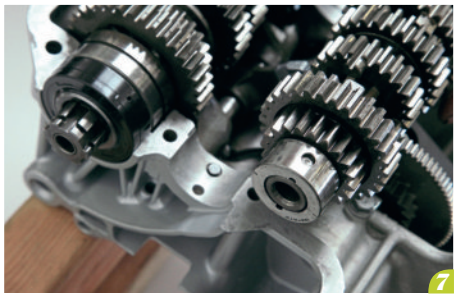

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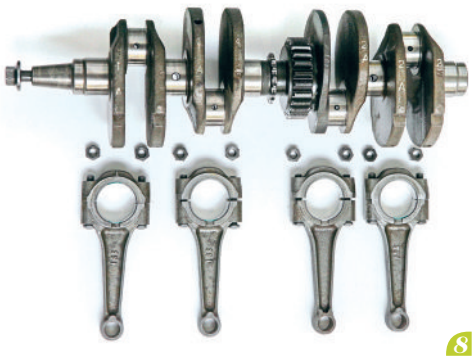

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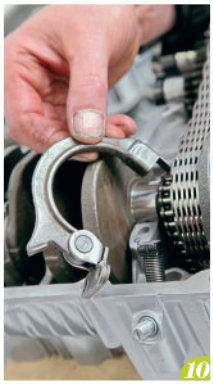

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1 & 2: From usable parts to scrap metal in 10 minutes – the blasting grit had found its way inside the engine, scoring the white metal big end shells and the pistons.

3: Degrease cases and chemically strip paint before dipping in alloy wheel cleaner (less than 25% phosphoric acid, 20% nitric acid) for two minutes. Then repaint.

4: You will be inserting the gears into the upper crankcase half. Check gear teeth and sliding shafts for heat bluing or side load marks. Note position of locating ear on oil seal.

5: Make sure the selector drum and forks move freely. The hard chrome on the forks is thin, so make sure it is not worn through or blued by heat. Don't forget to oil.

6: There is only one half to this circlip, which locates in a groove that runs all the way around the ball race. Other bearings are located by steel dowels...

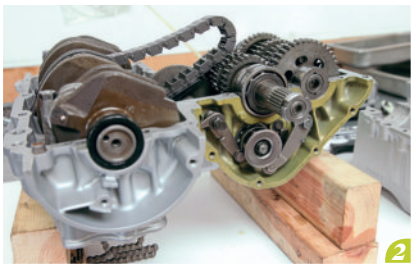
7: ...like this one in the crankcase that fits snugly in the hole in the bearing race. Both circlips and dowels are used to locate the bearings laterally.

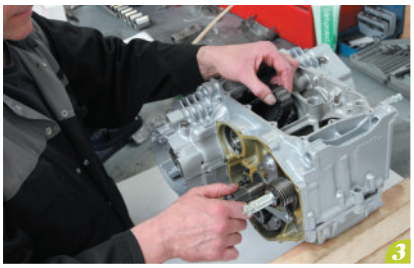
8: The crankshaft assembly has been cleaned and the conrods carry new bearing shells. Make sure the keys on the shells face the exhaust side of the engine. Use new pinch bolts.

9: Loop the camchain and primary chain over their sprockets. Use the primary to lower crankshaft assembly into the top half of the crankcase after oiling all shell bearings.

10: Fitting cam chain tensioner arm. Raised mark on spring loaded adjuster faces out. Adjuster screw in crankcase is temporary – it should be hex-head, locknut and O-ring.









1: The hole for gearbox mainshaft is bored right through the crankcase and covered with a rubber bung that keeps oil in. Horizontal line on bung is for cosmetics only.

2: Gear selector mechanism in position. Assemble new seals on shafts and drop them into the case – don't try to push them on after assembly! Yellow chromate paint is primer.

3: Gearbox primary shaft will be inserted from oil pump side now that the bottom half of chain case is put on. Primary chain sprocket (not shown) carries the starter gear.

4: Eyeball the 10x8mm cap bolts and the holes to make sure they are the correct length. The six inner bolts are longer, and have P stamped on head. Torque in sequence.

5: When he tried a cheaper pattern cylinder head gasket, the locating dowels didn't match up with the holes. A waste of time and money – buy Honda parts.

6: Locating dowels have cylindrical O-rings. Jets on each side of the cylinder head restrict the flow of oil to the top end. Make sure that they are clear and fit new seals.

7: Don't mess about dressing the ignition points – a complete assembly, including condensers, is only about £30 and you won't have knackered Pozidrive screws.

8: The jets feed oil to the spray bars. Direct the spray holes to the cam, not the valves. Only use genuine valve guide seals if you don't want a smoky engine.

9: Make sure that the gasket face is clean and the surfaces flat. Exhaust studs should be replaced if they have rusted. High-temp paint finish is not standard.

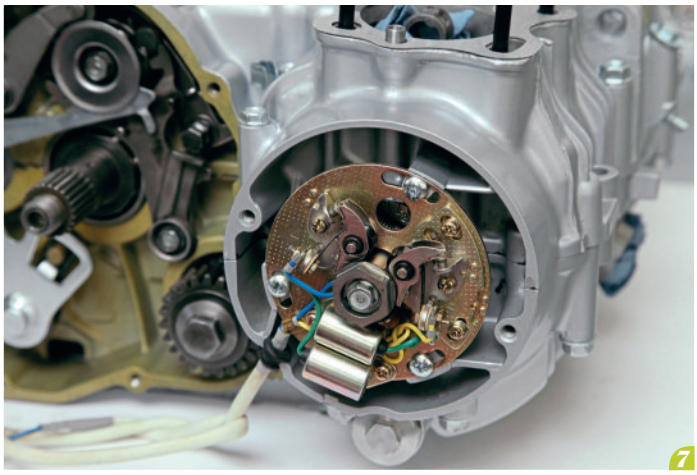
10: Check gap of new piston rings are between 0.15 – 0.35mm for compression rings, 0.2 – 0.5mm for oil control ring. Too tight? Use a needle file to increase gap.

11: Gearchange shaft oil seal is the only one you will slide on after two halves of the crankcase are bolted together. Red top pressure release valve screws into oil pump housing.

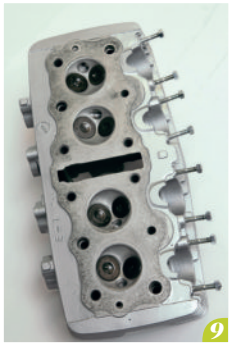
12: Piston valve cutaway is marked 'IN' for inlet, so point to carburettor. Zip-tie holds cam chain. Lift up when turning crankshaft over to fit next piston, or cam chain will jam.



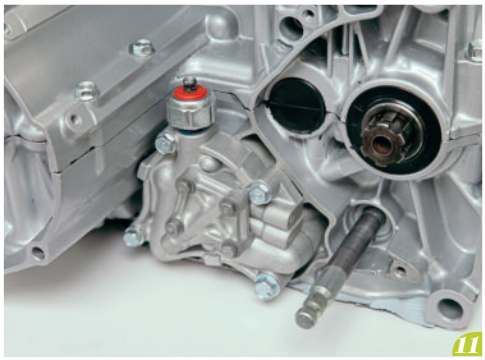




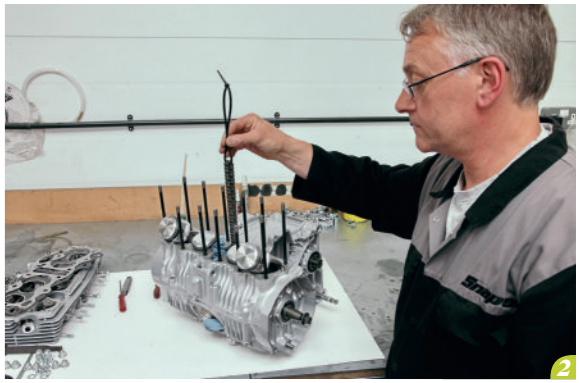


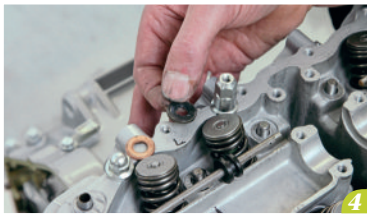
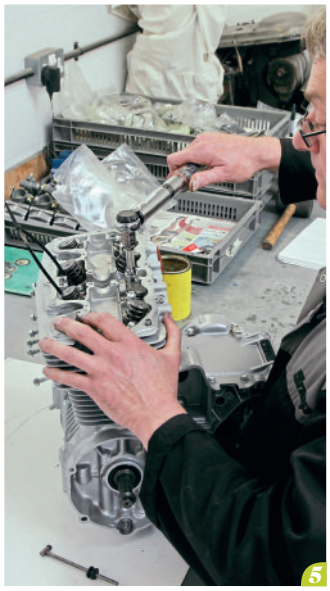


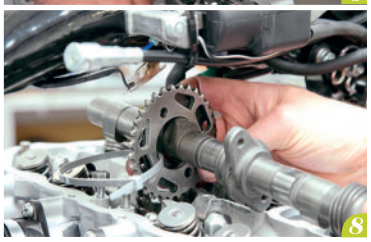
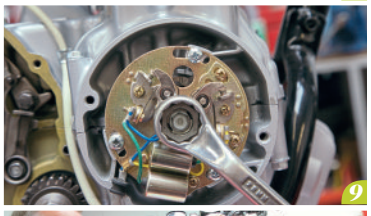
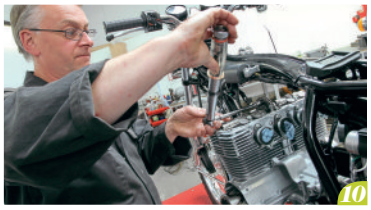
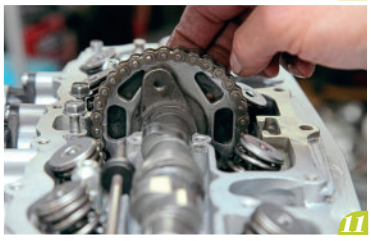
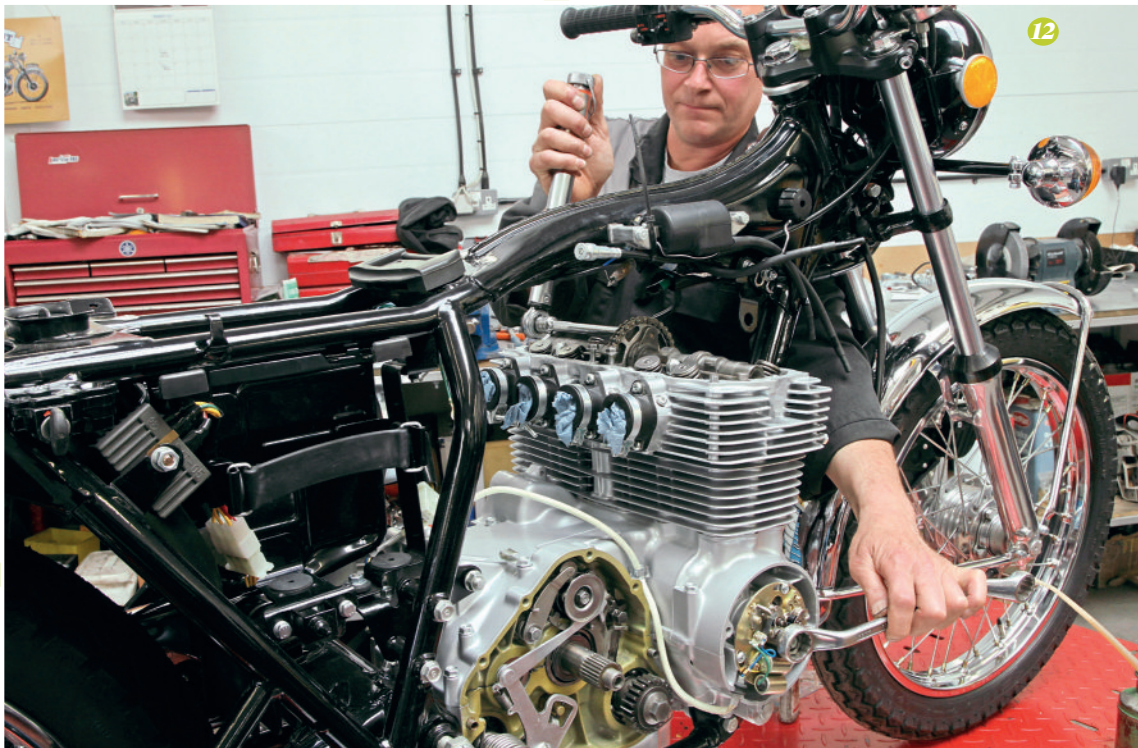






1: Make sure that wire circlips are secure in grooves. Gasket should be assembled dry, but use Welseal sparingly if a butcher has damaged the crankcase base face.

2: When all four pistons are on their connecting rods, make sure that the cam chain moves freely on its lower sprocket before attempting to fit the cylinder block.

3: Strong fingernails are an advantage when fitting pistons and rings into the bores. A generous lead at the bottom of each barrel means a ring compressor isn't needed.

4: Some washers are soft copper, some Dowty – these are metal with a vulcanised rubber seal. They are needed to stop oil passing down studs to outside of engine.

5: Dry threads will give the wrong torque reading, so oil studs before putting nuts on. Then torque down the cylinder head, tightening the nuts in the correct sequence.

6: Short cam chain guide fits at front of engine, while this long tensioner slipper fits inside curved tensioner arm at the bottom and the holder that is bolted to the head.

7: Installing the part-assembled engine in the frame is easier because it is lighter – especially if a friend helps. Use cheap foam pipe insulation to protect paintwork.

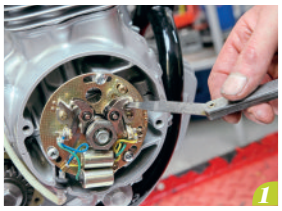
8: Zip-tie the camshaft spacing ring and the sprocket together so that you do not lose them inside the cylinder block, then thread the camshaft through them.

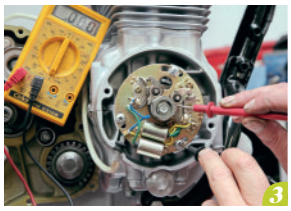
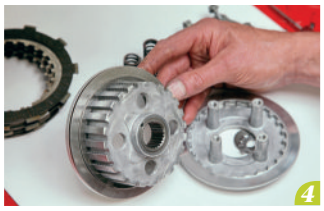
9: To set camshaft timing, rotate crankshaft nut clockwise until T mark (Top Dead Centre, 1+4 pots) is in line with static timing groove visible through points base.

10: Align the scribed valve timing marks on the cam chain sprocket until they are parallel with the cylinder head joint face, then loop the chain over the sprocket.

11: Without disturbing sprocket, rotate camshaft to align hole in spigot with hole in sprocket and bolt together. Turn crankshaft 180° so that second bolt can be fixed.

12: Use a spanner on the mainshaft nut to stop the engine turning when tightening sprocket bolts. The cams are not yet connected to the valves as the rocker arms are in the top cover. Poke the cam chain tensioner slipper into the tensioner arm. Use a torch to see what you are doing. The cam chain guide is already in place but it is not under tension.



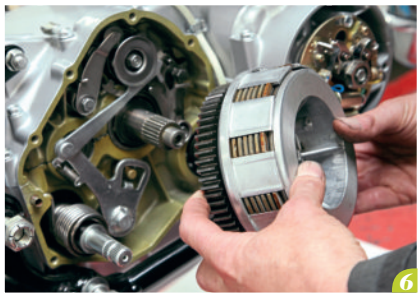
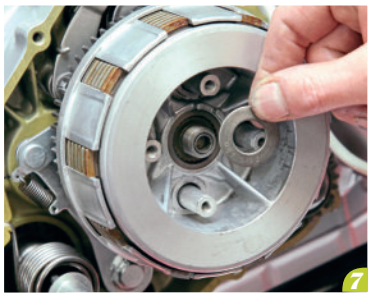

1: Base plate is stamped 14 and 23 to indicate which points are for which cylinder. Adjust the contacts so that the points gap is 0.3 – 0.4mm but the same for both.

2: Line F14 mark visible through points base with static mark. Touch leads on earth and live side of 14 points, rotate plate until meter indicates zero (no conductivity, points just opening).

3: For the second set of points, line F23 mark with static mark. These points are mounted on a secondary back plate so they can be adjusted independently of first set.

4: An extra plain clutch plate fits on top of a spring plate, retained by a large circlip. Gap between plate and clutch centre should be 0.1-0.5mm. Check plates and drum for burrs.

5: The friction plates have bonded linings. The minimum thickness is 2.3mm but replace them as a set if any measure below this figure. Make sure that the plates are flat.


6: Building the clutch on the bench is easier and quicker than assembling it on the mainshaft. Don't forget to put the thrust washer on the mainshaft before the clutch.

7: The CB400F uses a dished Belleville spring washer, which goes on next. You can't get this wrong as it is stamped OUT SIDE.

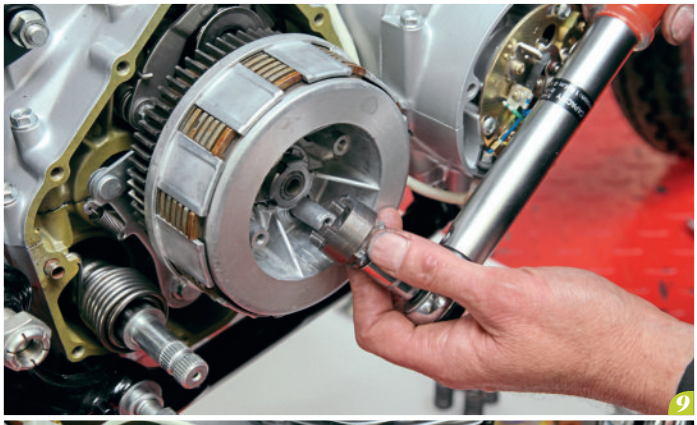
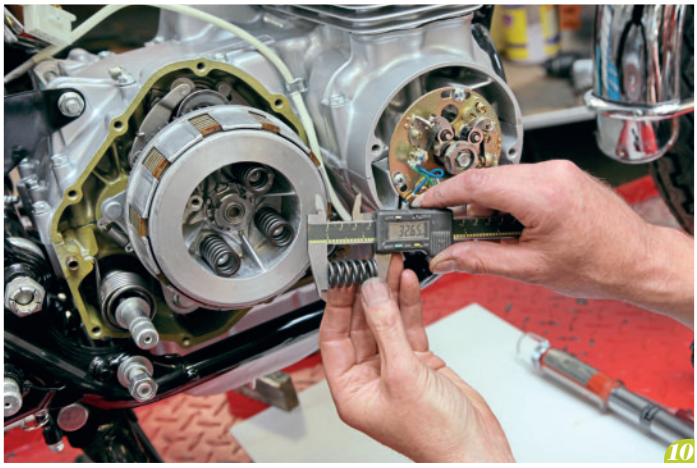
8: Then the new tab washer is slipped on the mainshaft. The tab washer locates in a wide groove in the clutch centre.

9: You can buy a special tool to screw on the castellated clutch nut that is specific to the CB400F, or you can make your own.

10: The clutch springs must have a minimum free length of 29.75mm. If they measure less, replace all four. Weak springs or worn friction plates mean a slipping clutch.

11: With the springs in place it is time to bolt on the spider pressure plate. Make sure that the bearing spins freely first.

12: Now it's time to bolt on the alternator, fit the engine covers and the carbs. We are well on the way to finishing the restoration. And this time it has been done properly. CBG



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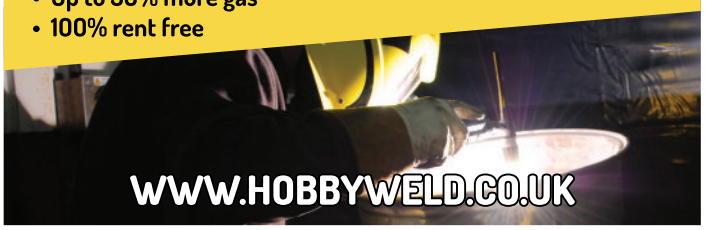
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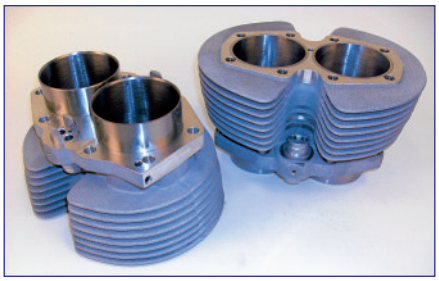
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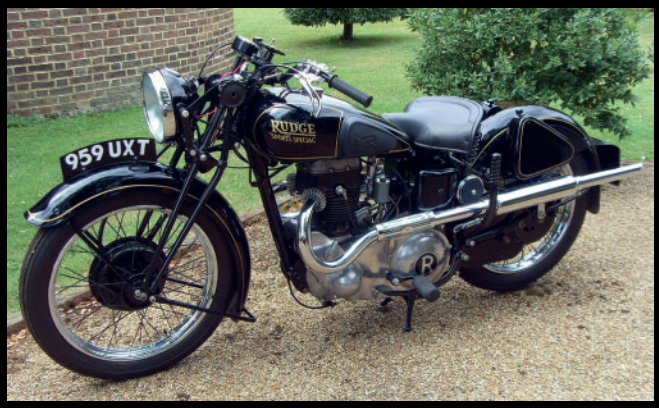
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YAMAHA SRX
Born to the wrong generation

Frank Melling looks into a Japanese homage of the trusty British single

THAT YAMAHA'S BIG single remains a minority interest is proof positive that Yamaha made the same mistake as many other manufacturers – they came unstuck by following the demands of vociferous customers, who then didn't buy the bike they had been so stridently demanding.

Throughout the 1980s there was a consistent call for a true classic big single – a bike drawn directly from the same gene pool that spawned the likes of BSA's Gold Star and the Velocette Venom. The arguments for the sporting single were strong and persuasive. With a narrow engine, the rest of the bike can follow suit and the single concentrates its mass immediately down the centre line of the bike, providing a most elegant and graceful of riding experiences.

Yamaha had already tried one stab at the exercise, with the somewhat dreary SR500 – the sort of bike trainee accountants would ride on their way to a seminar on tax allowances for maggot breeders in social priority areas. The SR had middle-aged styling, didn't go, didn't stop and had soggy handling, though ironically the SR400, the Japanese-market version, was re-introduced back in 2014 to feed the custom – retro scene. But back in the Eighties, the SRX was intended to be a completely different beast.

When launched in 1985, the SRX was completely new in the sense that it had little or no relation to the earlier SRs. For a start, the engine was sourced from the proven XT600. This was, and is, an excellent motor, with 45bhp, foolproof starting, a sweet six-speed gearbox, light clutch and willing power. In the XT/SRX trim it was also lightly stressed since basically the same power unit was used in the TT 600 enduro bike and successful Paris-Dakar entries.

The chassis was new and depending on which side of the fence you stood, it was either inspired by Yamaha's TZ race bikes or the lesser-known British designed and built Seeley Suzuki. Either way, it was a neat piece of engineering that enveloped the engine so tightly that the bottom frame rails had to be made detachable.

Other bits of the first bikes were the result of raids on Yamaha's parts bins. The front forks and brakes were lifted straight from the YPVS two-strokes and the electrics were common to many of Yamaha's bikes at the time.

Strangely, since the Yamaha actually pioneered single shock suspension with their YZ motocross machines, the SRX was a twin-shocker – with a swinging arm that owes more than a nod to a British bike.

If you like big singles, there is no question that the SRX is stunningly beautiful – not simply attractive, but a pure work of art. The petrol tank looks as if someone has poured liquid plastic over the bike as it curves its way sensuously round the frame. Neat touches abound everywhere. Being a dry sump engine, the oil tank is separate and fabricated from alloy. The clip-ons are neat and precise and the instruments give a cafe racer feel in a way that is completely authentic. In short, Yamaha got the SRX completely right.

The riding experience is as good as the bike's looks. There is something utterly addictive about the thump of the huge,









96mm, high compression piston banging away beneath you.

Nothing else can match the single in the spine-tingling emotion stakes. With the standard silencer replaced by something less restrictive, the SRX could be a Manx Norton or Matchless G50 with lights and an idle jet. As the single overhead cam, 608cc, four-valve single sucks in lungs full of air and exhales them with window rattling enthusiasm, it's back to real GP road racing in the Sixties. Where are my pudding basin helmet and black leathers?

The six-speed gearbox is sweet, the clutch light and the motor bursts into life with one half-hearted prod of the kick-start. The only thing it doesn't do like a British classic is leak oil.

The frame is every bit a classic, too. Equipped with modern tyres, the handling is excellent, with all the neutral predictability and stability of my Seeley Suzuki race bike. Put one of the 'Continental Circus stars' of the Sixties on the SRX and it would have won GPs.

Yet the SRX is also a thoroughly practical motorcycle. The four-valve head is equipped with twin carburettors and this gives an effortless, fuss-free performance on the road. There is none of the hesitation of a sporting big single from low revs. Instead, the SRX just gets on with the job all the way from 2000rpm to around 5500rpm when vibration begins to make itself felt.

Peak power – a genuine 45bhp at the back wheel – comes at 5500rpm and maximum torque 1000rpm lower. Despite the apparent lack of horsepower on paper at least, a standard SRX will cruise effortlessly at 75mph and will just about crack the magic ton, while more sensible riding will see a miserly 80mpg.

This performance and frugal petrol consumption makes the SRX a very pleasant, if unusual, classic touring bike. Unlike classic British bikes, it has excellent lights and the inevitable vibration, which comes with any big single, is never intrusive.

The only modification to watch for is that the thinner saddle, fitted to all Japanese market imports, needs replacing by the inch-thicker European spec design, so that the riding position is not too cramped. Otherwise, the SRX is a bike that will handle 300-mile trips in a relaxed classic style and still have the reserves of power, handling and braking required to deal with modern traffic. And that narrow chassis, allied to a low seat, makes it confidence inspiring for shorter riders who can also embrace the low weight, low seat and Japanese manners.

Yamaha built an outstandingly clever motorcycle in the SRX, which exceeded

THE SRX KNOWLEDGE:

The twin shock SRX was launched in 1985. In 1987 an updated version with a 17in front wheel was introduced. This stayed in production until 1989. The earlier bikes have a more classic look and the handling is more docile. Performance is identical in both cases.

The SRX was sold worldwide and failed in every market. At the end of production, American dealers were offering a buy-one-get-one-free deal, they were worth so little.

In an attempt to resurrect the bike, the electric start mono-shock was sold from 1990 until about two years ago. Apparently, there are still some brand-new examples of the SRX in Japan.

Other than the obvious drawback of their km speedometer, Japanese imports make good buys. However, all Japanese bikes have a really irritating speed warning light that comes on at 55mph. The idea was to dissuade Japanese riders from going too quickly on a classic bike. One simple snip of the wire cures this.

The chassis is extremely strong and has no problems. The original rear shocks tend not to wear well, but Hagon make excellent replacements.

The rectifier is also suspect and can be upgraded. Fortunately, the engine runs perfectly should the rectifier fail, so you can always get home – even if the lights, horn and indicators are not available.

Because the engine is used in so many different Yamaha applications, there are no problems with parts being available. The engine is simple for even the lowest grade home mechanic to undertake home maintenance. The sohc engine means that valve clearance can be adjusted without the need for shims, or special tools and, with very regular oil changes, the motor will run forever.

One part that is like gold dust is the lovely little silencer. This rots internally and the alloy guard is easily damaged too. If you see one of these at an autojumble, buy it immediately, because it is the one key part that has disappeared.

Replica silencers are available and, because no one at MoT testing stations knows what the original silencer looked like, these can be fitted without any problem. Replacement silencers also give a distinctly fruitier exhaust note.

SRXs are tyre sensitive – simply because there is not a lot of tyre to play with. Avon Roadrunners are highly recommended, as are Metzeler Model Perfect. Keep to the original sizes because it is very easy to destroy the handling of these lightweight bikes by fitting oversized tyres. Remember, riders were turning in 100mph laps of the TT on tyres narrower than those on the SRX – and with hugely worse compounds. You will have no problems with a 45bhp bike.

It is difficult to price SRXs these days. I know from first-hand experience of mint condition twin shock bikes fetching £2200 and I have heard of prices even higher than this. Yet, nice clean SRXs seem to make only around £1000.

Everything in this article refers to the SRX 600 – the only true 'Super Single'. There are two other versions of the bike – the 400 and 250. The 400 was built to meet Japanese market demands and is horrible. It is almost the same weight as the 600 and produces about the same power as an energetic hamster in an exercise wheel. Avoid it at all costs. The 250 is a bit better, simply because it is different. Neither compare, in any respect, to the SRX600, which is the true torchbearer of the sporting big single.



its performance brief in every respect and looked the part too. The bike was completely faithful to its original concept, met the customers' demands and worked perfectly must clearly have been a guaranteed success? Well, no.

First, Yamaha tried a re-vamp of the bike by introducing a modern front end and replacing the 18in front wheel with a 17in version. In some ways, this was a retrograde step because the original SRX had completely neutral and very stable, handling. The 17in front wheel gave quicker, but slightly more nervous handling, which was more suited to sporting riding.

All the twin shock SRXs suffered from the myth that they are hard to start. And a myth it is. An SRX will fire-up first kick, hot or cold – even after a six-month lay-up. But this was the late Eighties and none of this meant anything to riders brought up on electric buttons.

Kickstarting was simply intimidating, hard work and old fashioned. As were twin shock rear ends, so Yamaha answered the complaints with yet another attempt at modernisation. This time, the chassis was turned into a monoshock and the motor given an electric starter. The result was a bike that was more popular in the Japanese market, with shorter riders and easier to use, but for some had lost the spirit of the SRX.

My opinion is that in the end the problem was classic riders who should have been embracing a modern, clean, easy to use and reliable large single-cylinder bike rejected the SRX, simply because it was Japanese, saying that it lacked character. This was a euphemism for being trouble-free.

Younger riders thought they wanted a classic single but found that when the SRX was stacked up against a GS1000 Suzuki, complete with four cylinders and an electric start, the big single was not so much quaint as painfully archaic.



So the SRX600, which in theory had all the right boxes ticked, in practice found itself to be never quite fashionable and never quite cult. It should have faded into an obscure and unloved demise – but for one thing. The SRX was, and in my opinion is, a thoroughly outstanding motorcycle that means today mint examples are appreciating at truly astonishing rates.

The best British bike the Japanese have ever made finds its time has come. CBG

There are two excellent websites for SRXs. These are www.srx600.net and www.thumperclub.org.uk
The following tech specs came directly from srx600.net, where you will find a mountain of other good data.

LENGTH: 2125mm (83.7in) **WIDTH:** 705mm (27.8in) **SEAT HEIGHT:** 770mm (30.3in)
WHEELBASE: 1385mm (54.5in) **GROUND CLEARANCE:** 145mm (5.7in)
WET WEIGHT: 176kg (388lb) **TYPE:** Air-cooled four-stroke, sohc
CYLINDER ARRANGEMENT: Single cylinder **DISPLACEMENT:** 608 cc
BORE X STROKE: 96.0 x 84.0mm **COMPRESSION RATIO:** 8.5:1
LUBRICATION SYSTEM: Dry sump **OIL TYPE AND GRADE:** 20W/40 **AIR FILTER:** Dry type element
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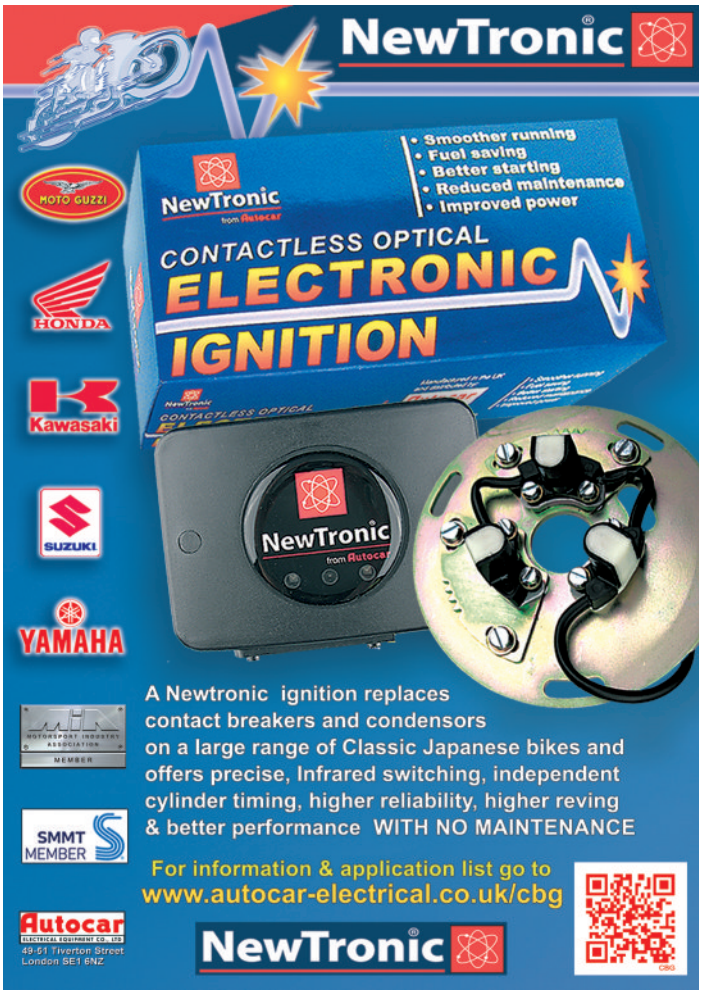
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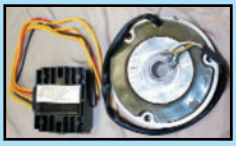
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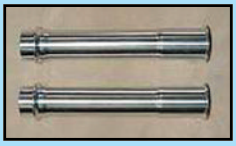
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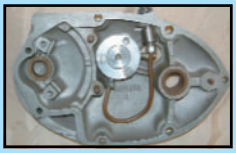
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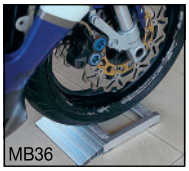




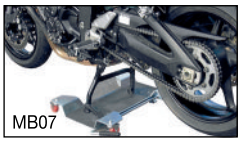




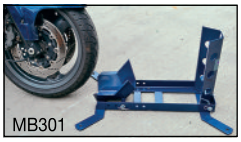
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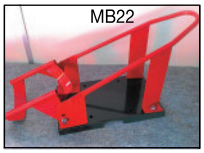


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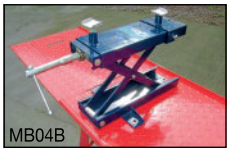


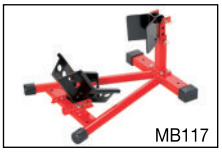


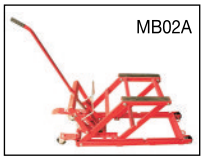
















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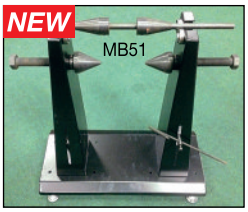

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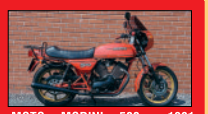

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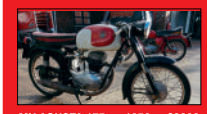

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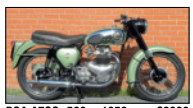

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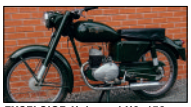

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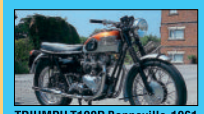

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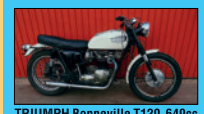
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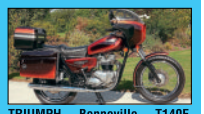

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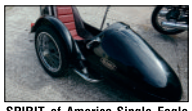

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ARIEL ARROW 250cc, Sport model, MoT April 2018, new front brake shoes, matching nos, £2650 ono Tel. 01202 533772 Dorset



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BSA A7 Shooting Star, cartridge oil filter, indicators, mirrors, owned since 2002, garaged, all MoTs on Sorn, £5000 Tel. 01923 675797 Herts



BSA B25 Starfire, 1970, long MoT, V5C, recent engine rebuild by RTS racing products, electronic ignition, metal tank, starts & runs well, £2650 may p/x Tel. 01328 700711 Norfolk

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1948 SCOTT FLYING SQUIRREL. Just fantastic, 1948 Shipley built £4000k on engine rebuild it has done 500 miles, running great, magneto was re-magnetised. Roger Moss crank and bearings etc. Put together by Ian Pearce, converted to 30-1 petrol mix. All matching numbers correct UK bike same reg from new. All bikes come with MOT and a PDI, PX welcome. Delivery anywhere in UK
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This VFR NC30 is a proper first class pocket rocket. Just great condition, very fast, just had large full service. Very collectable, must be seen and great value. All bikes come with MOT and a PDI, PX welcome. Delivery anywhere in UK
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1993 BIMOTA DB2. What a great bike and very rare. Stunning to look at, rides great as well. Not much more we can say, just perfect, will come with a new MOT and service plus cam belts on the Ducati motor. All bikes come with MOT and a PDI, PX welcome. Delivery anywhere in UK **£12,950**



1990 BENELLI SEI. One of the last built and in full working order, the condition is as new and a great bike to ride, we have owners handbook, workshop manual, V55C, it will have a full service when sold. Just perfect. All bikes come with MOT and a PDI, PX welcome. Delivery anywhere in UK **£16,900**



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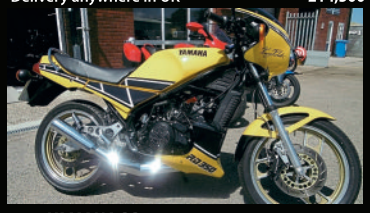
1982 BMW R100 This is not your ordinary R100 painted with cafe seat etc. This bike is a 1976 race spec American R100s, Engineering perfection!! Fortune spent on it. Full engine rebuild, Braced frame. Just perfect. Must be viewed. See 20 photos. All bikes come with MOT and a PDI, PX welcome. Delivery anywhere in UK **£14,500**



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Just stunning perfect condition. Full restoration. Hand crafted exhaust, Kenny Roberts paint job, running perfect. This bike is the best RD350 that we have seen!!! It's a must see bike. All bikes come with MOT and a PDI, PX welcome. Delivery anywhere in UK
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1960 BSA A10 S/Rocket
Nice one £7750



1958 Triumph 5TA
good value £4750



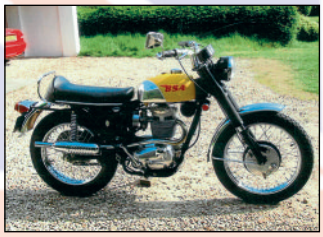
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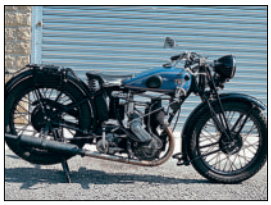

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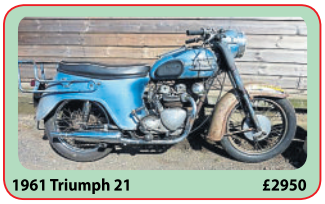
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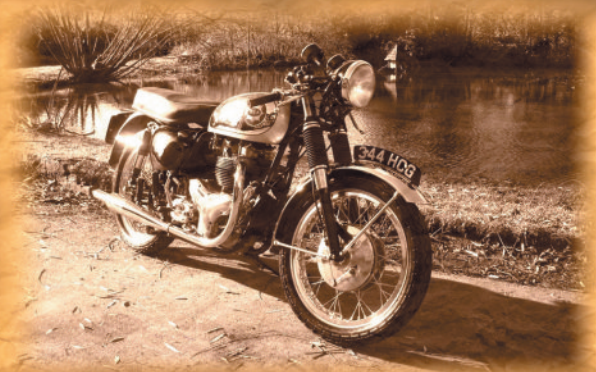
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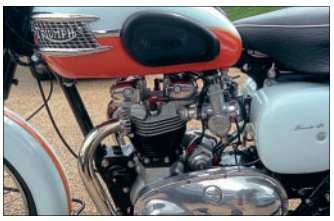
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BSA B175 Bantam 175cc, matching no's, starts and runs fine, nice condition, must be seen,1969 ..... £1495
Cossack 350cc twin, Cafe Racer, great looking bike, runs fine, must be seen,1976 .....£1095
Kawasaki ER6-N 650 twin, immaculate condition,1461 miles, all history, must be seen, new MOT, 2011 ..... £3295
Royal Enfield Meteor Minor Sports rolling chassis, no documents, 1961 .....£1195
Royal Enfield EFI 500cc Trials model, immaculate condition,1397 miles, all history, manuals, new MOT, must be seen, 2009.... £3295
Triumph Tiger Cub SC, matching engine and frame numbers, lovely bike, must be seen,1963 ..... £2995
Triumph Tiger Cub T20SS matching numbers for restoration, no documents, 1962 .....£1395
Triumph T150+ T150V for restoration/spares or repair, 1971, 1974 ..... £2300, £3300
Velocette MAC 350cc nice original condition, runs fine, lovely bike, 1959 ..... £4995

BIKES CURRENTLY BREAKING: BSA A7/A10 B31/33 C10/11/12/15/25 B25, A50/65, BANTAM B40/44. TRIUMPH T140/T120/110/90/3TA/5TA/T20 CUB. NORTON 88/99/50/ES2/16H/COMMANDO/AJS/MATCHLESS G3L/G80.

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1962 Greeves Silverstone style café racer, 250cc, immaculate..... £5999
1961 Triumph T21 350cc bathtub twin, matching numbers, very tidy..... £3999
1982 BMW R45, 12,000 miles, panniers, original..... £2500

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BSA C15 1960 trials genuine £2500
BSA D7 Bantam nice 1959..... £1500
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Triumph 3TA not original good runner £2850
Triumph Thunderbird 1959, very original..... £7450
Triumph T110 1954 original not restored..... £7550
Triumph T110 1956 original nice £7550
Jaguar Mk1 1959 very nice.... £26,500

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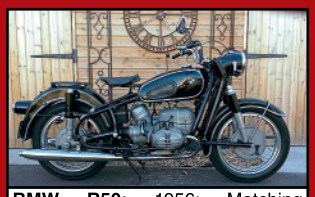
Norton 650SS; 1962; Matching Numbers; original registration; very correct; really lovely example throughout £9,650



Triumph Harris Bonneville; 1987; Matching Numbers; extremely original incl exhaust, ex F. Westworth £5,350



BSA B40; 1966; a great deal of money has been spent to make this a superb machine including full engine rebuild £3,995



BMW R50; 1956; Matching Numbers; Original registration; UK supplied Machine; really lovely example £8,500



Vincent Black Prince; 1955; 3all correct matching no's; original registration; Buff Log Book, lovely £112,500



Ariel Arrow; 1965; really nicely restored including full engine rebuild; runs and rides extremely well £2,995



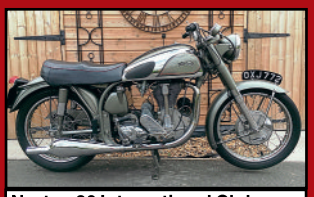
Bridgestone 175 Hurricane; 1968; a very original machine beautifully restored; runs and rides extremely well £4,350



Triumph TR6C; 1970; Matching Numbers; really lovely machine; runs and rides extremely well £6,995



Triumph T120R Bonneville; 1960; Matching No's; Buff Log Book; fully restored, original registration, lovely £14,500



Norton 30 International Clubman; 1954; matching no's; Buff Log Book; I.O.M. TT History; Stunning..... ..... £26,250

BSA DB32 Gold Star; 1955; nice honest bike, original Buff Log Book ..... £T.B.A.
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Triumph T110; 1959; Matching No's; Black & Ivory; very correct and nice example..... £7,995
Triumph TRW; 1952; Magneto ignition; running and riding really well; lovely example £5,250
Triumph T100; 1956; Matching No's; really lovely example throughout ..... £T.B.A.
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BSA A10 very smart, 1960 bike, black, chrome, Siamese Goldie, goes very well as high spec engine, full years MoT, vgc £7000. Tel. 07827 798969. Essex.

BSA BANTAMS 1959, D7, black, complete oily rag condition, runner. 1970, B175 blue, complete clean condition, runner, £2000 for both. Tel. 07813 458452. Notts.

BULTACO SHERPA 250cc, 1978, (Model 198B) fully rebuilt with lots of new parts fitted ready to trial, bike in very good condition, bike located in Fife Scotland, £2000. Tel. Ian 01337 258515; 07776 010601.

HARLEY/AERMACCHI 250SX 1975, for spares or repair, largely complete spare frame and fork legs included, no paperwork, £650. Tel. 01244 880958. Chester.

HONDA VT500 good runner, long MoT, 1986, slight damage on left of tank, otherwise in good condition, £600. Tel. Steve 01254 607767. Lancs.

HONDA XBR 1985, near perfect, new tyres, 8000 miles, £2750 may take good CB250RS p/x. Tel. 01337 827954. Fife.

KAWASAKI KZ1900 1976, metallic green, immaculate, no rust, £4999 no offers. Tel. 07475 942720. Hants.

MOTO GUZZI Nuovo rolling chassis, new tyres, just needs an engine, deluged suitable Cafe Racer or Bobber, £950. Tel. 01978 842668 (answer phone). Clwyd.

NORTON CLASSIC No 28, as featured in Classic Bike Guide January 2017, £12,500. Tel. 07715 579019. Perthshire.

PIAGGIO MP3 250cc, 2007, MoT Jan 2018, most MoT's, new parts fitted, receipts for over £800, both keys, V5 in my name, immobiliser, clock, fuel gauge etc, pull out seat cover, handbrake, handbook, 18,500km, (11,200 miles) vgc, £1795 ono. Tel. 07913 032864. Yorkshire.

ROYAL ENFIELD Crusader, 250cc, 1961, almost fully assembled, has all its parts, had trouble with the rewiring, stored in garage in West Wales, £2250. Tel. 01952 595563. Shropshire.

SECMA TRIKE 1.4L, 7507 miles, superb condition, 10 months MoT, can be driven with a car license, it has a removable soft top with gull wing doors, £7000 ono. Tel. 07774 108948. Lancs.

SUZUKI GT185 1977, red, unfinished project, new pistons, rings, rebore, lots of new parts too much to list, £2000. Tel. 01282 838231. Lancs.

SUZUKI RE5 1975, dismantled, new rotor housing, Suzuki manual, £2000. Tel. 07986 772793. Lancs.

SUZUKI GS500F 11,000 genuine miles, very good condition, 2005, not ridden for five years, hence no MoT, refurbished swinging arm, will pass MoT, £1100. Tel. 02083 114230. London.

TRIUMPH 3TA 1964, in need of restoration, missing headlamp, I do not have the bathtub panels, used to ride this 15 years ago but it's sat for at least 12 years, it will not start, you will need a van/trailer to collect, £1700. Tel. 07795 128753. Notts.

TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE Trident T100SS wanted buy private enthusiast for project, anything considered, complete, runner, crashed or abandoned project, cash collect. Tel. Tony 01932 563982. Surrey.

TRIUMPH LEGEND immaculate original condition, superb green paintwork, 16,000 miles, new tyres, oil and coolant change, runs superb, years MoT, appreciating classic, £3695. Tel. 01332 675428. Derby.

TRIUMPH T100 12,000 miles, MoT May 2018, extras the CBG prize bike summer 2004! blue/white, one owner, cherished but finally must go, £3000. Tel. 07912 185478. Tyne & Wear.

TRIUMPH T100 1967, TLSFB heavy duty cable new front rim new Siamese exhaust + original remote oil filter new Pazon ignition & battery, MoT, August 2018 historic tax (free!) clean standard condition, £4500. Tel. 01474 746854; 07789 260740. Kent.

TRIUMPH T120 BONNEVILLE 650cc, 1966, matching numbers, has all its parts, partly assembled, stored in garage in West Wales, upwards of £4500. Tel. 01952 595563. Shropshire.

Parts For Sale

AMC GEARBOX Matchless, excellent condition, £295. Norton Commando fastback tail fairing, excellent condition, £125. Tel. 01883 348187.

BMW R100 USED SPARES: regulator/rectifier from 1990 machine, (Telefunken 12141244477), £10, plus good throttle cable, £5, postage £3. Also as new BMW 'R' Series Haynes manual, £10. Tel. Richard 01842 819969. Norfolk.

BMW R850R sports exhaust by Black Widow Performance Systems, less than 1000 miles, taken off my bike when sold, cost over £200, £130. Tel. 01482 643946. East Yorkshire.

BSA A10 BACK WHEELS new rims, spokes, two in total, bargain £95 each p&p at cost. Norton front wheel hub 99, complete, £110. Tel. 07443 642408. West Yorkshire.

BSA A10 ENGINE complete with frame, forks, wheels, oil tank, as much as possible for build for chop. Tel. 07857 926724. Lancs.

CAFE RACER SILENCERS pair tulip upswept, pair short reverse cone mega, pair replica Dunstall retro, used once only £50 per pair. Tel. 01646 601773. Pembrokeshire.

DUCATI 400SS SPARES engine needs top cylinder, £350. NS400 cylinders tuned, not DIY job, two exhaust gutted, one standard, for leg, £500. Tel. 07816 043480. Staffs.

HARLEY BUDDY SEAT its original but will need restoration, last used in the eighties on a Panhead! Could post but would prefer the buyer collects. Tel. 07798 866071. Middx.

HONDA CB400T DREAM box of engine parts too many to itemise £50. Tel. 07904 520394. Essex.

HONDA CB750 SOHC kickstart, 1969 onwards, £25. Tel. 07979 949654. Cheshire.

HONDA TL125 ENGINE £110. Big bore piston and barrel kit, £70. Seat, £25. Tel. 01455 841691. Leics.

IKON BASIX rear shocks to fit Hinckley Bonneville SE with 17" cast wheels, part number 76-3043, massive improvement over standard shocks, unmarked, perfect condition. Tel. Tom 01914 880694. Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

KNOWLEDGE OF BMW K75S? anyone in the Sussex area with a good knowledge of BMW K75s? My otherwise reliable machine has developed an electrical problem and a misfire on the over-run, which the local garages do not have the immediate knowledge to fix. Any help welcome! Tel. 07817 943154. West Sussex.

SUZUKI GT500/T500 rear shocks, very good condition, £30 ono. Tel. 07583 069656. Cheshire.

TRIBSA T110 ENGINE in A7 frame, Morgo 750cc, too much to list, please call for details, £7995 ovno. Tel. 01132 526552. West Yorks.

TRIUMPH SPORTS CUB 1961, engine/transmission, unit only, totally rebuilt by Meriden off-road, unused since, R-cam, 9.1 piston, £1750 ovno. Tel. 07961 948279. Somerset.

VILLIERS 4T ENGINE £350. Exhaust system for Villiers Twin, good chrome, little use, front pipes for Royal Enfield turbo twin, £35. Tel. 01684 293594. Glos.

Wanted

A BIG 500 S/V WANTED 1920s model in unrestored condition, Triumph preferred, have 1929 Scott Flyer and other bikes, may exchange. Tel. 01978 842668. Clwyd.

ANY MAKE OR SIZE classic motorcycle wanted in any condition from a basket case to one in nice condition, cash waiting. 07811 189755. Staffs.

ANY MOTORCYCLE or moped projects, any condition or age, looking for a project for me and my young boy trying to get him off the computer must be near Cornwall, Exeter, Devon, can travel a little bit if the old van makes it. Tel. 01872 241852; 07422 516869. Cornwall.

ARIEL RED HUNTER wanted either NH or VH350 or 500cc, any condition considered but should be complete, South West Area. Tel. 07964 514984. Somerset.

ARMY MOTORCYCLE WANTED any condition, anything considered, eg BSA WDM20, WDB40, BMW, Flying Flea, G3L, Triumph TRW, Harley WLA, Welbike, Paratroop bicycle, Willys Jeep etc, will travel your price paid. Tel. 07538 696157. Leics.

BSA A10 OR A65 restoration project wanted in any condition, cash buyer will travel. Tel. 07932 948153. Nottingham.

BSA BANTAM restoration project wanted any model from D1 to B175, any condition, spares welcome. Tel. 07984 225937. Leics.

BSA C11 1950, reg three speed gearbox, kick start quadrant wanted or even a complete gearbox if only option. Tel. 07976 414531. Nottinghamshire.

CYCLEMOTOR, BROCKHOUSE, CORGI autocycle or vintage moped wanted, either runner or restoration project, anything considered, will travel. Tel. 07983 832076. Staffordshire.

DMW LEDA front wheel nuts for Earles forks, top hat type £20. Tel. 07393 584173 call evenings. Worcester.

LUCAS 3ET COILS wanted as fitted to energy transfer ignition. Tel. 01933 355796. Northants.

MAGNETO BOSCH ZE1 wanted dead or alive. Tel. 01543 262466. Staffs.

ROYAL ENFIELD 350 project required for winter project, decent engine and frame together, no silly prices. Tel. 01524 733604. Lancs.

RUDGE WANTED 250-500 (early thirties) model, project any condition, (bare bones) or goer, have collection of bikes may exchange. Tel. 01978 842668. Clwyd.

SUZUKI TS250 Savage, 1969/70, parts wanted, anything considered, including/complete non runner. Tel. 01305 826670. Dorset.

TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE T120, 1968-1969, reasonably priced. Tel. 07821 021162. Oxfordshire.

TRIUMPH DAYTONA immaculate condition, 1970-1973, £6000-£8000. Tel. 01278 722614. Somerset.

TRIUMPH TWIN WANTED in any condition, runner or project, any model considered from early rigid pre-unit to 750 unit oif (including 3TA/5TA), Triton or other non-standard bike ok, even a chopper, any spares welcome, will travel, your price paid. Tel. 07538 696157. Leics.

VINCENT COMET or Velocette Venom wanted as renovation project, anything considered with or without V5. Tel. 01748 811676; 07810 434147. Yorks.

WANTED NSU QUICKLY cycle master, Honda or similar Japanese moped or just parts, quick collection and cash paid. Tel. 07790168224. Warwickshire.

WANTED SINGLE BIKE TRAILER within a fifty mile radius of Manchester. Tel. 01612 875845. Rochdale.

WANTED AJS 1928 or 1929, K12 or M12 side valve 250cc cylinder head or a complete engine, can exchange a 500cc K9/M9 engine or other swaps like a vintage speedo vintage leather saddle etc, or good price paid, please help. Tel. Mike 01307 830318 and leave a message.

WANTED CLASSIC BIKE or project, standard or special anything considered, even incomplete or damaged or been standing, also wanted classic scrambler/motocross bike running or not, collect anywhere and pay good cash. Tel. 07931 557018 or 01613 350497 eve. Lancs.

WANTED TL125E IGNITION SWITCH number 35, 300, 129, 670 and for central handle bars. Tel. 01455 841691. Leics.

YAMAHA YDS3 complete seat or base only required, 1964-65. Tel. 01384 371386. West Midlands.

YAMAHA YDS3 PARTS WANTED nos or used, anything considered why? Tel. 07891 668901. Lancs.

Miscellaneous

AKITO LEATHER JACKET Mercury Plus, womans size 14, £20 ono. Tel. 01525 753068. Beds.

BADGES: 33 ACU TT badges, 60s to 90s; 18 ACU TT programmes 63 to 93; 24 Editions TT Specials, 63 to 74; 3 LP TT sound stories, £100 the lot will split buyer collects. Tel. 01964 534153. East Yorkshire.

BMW CLUB JOURNAL MAGAZINES A5 size, 20 issues, some 1981, 82 some 1992, good reading, £10 including postage to UK, far too interesting to send to skip. Tel. Jason 07983 997253. Derbyshire.

CLASSIC BIKE MAGAZINES continuous run from issue 1 3/78 to issue 242 3/00, boxed up, need space, £100 buyer will have to collect. Tel. Alan 07733 113451. Southampton.

CLASSIC BIKE MAGAZINES: 100 copies approx, excellent condition, £10. Tel. 01285 861462. Glos.

LADIES BLACK LEATHER motorcycle jeans, size 12, 27" inside leg, little used, £30. Tel. 01503 240732. Cornwall.

MATCHLESS OWNERS MANUAL 1953-69, clean, £17.50. Matchless, AJS post war singles and twins, restoration, Roy Bacon, Niton Publishing, mint, £25. Tel. 01403 732206. West Sussex.

MQP TRAVELLER JACKET XL black/red removable inner body warmer, hardly used, £35. Swift black trousers XL with leather seat and knees, never worn, £30. Tel. 01277 821691. Essex.

TWO PAIRS BLACK LEATHERS JEANS for sale, pair Richa jeans, 34" waist, 32" long as new, £35. Pair 1 XS jeans, new unused, 36" waist, 32" long, £55. Tel. 01708 450968. Essex.

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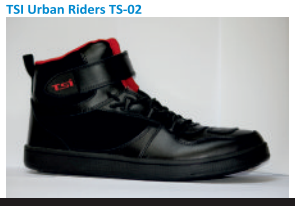
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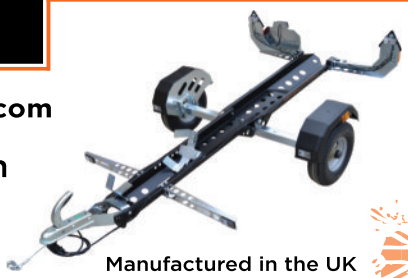
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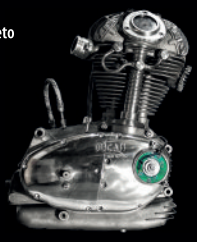
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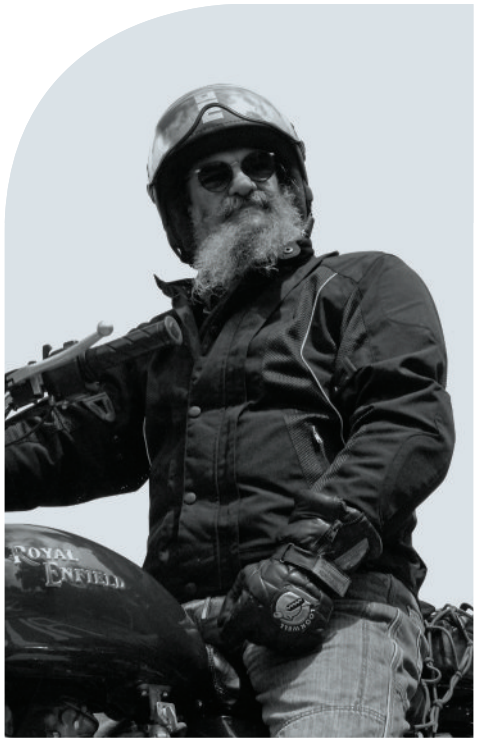
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FRANK **WESTWORTH**

Famous Last Words

Spare a thought on prices

I ENJOYED A truly entertaining – and lengthy – conversation about bikes the other day. Chatting about bikes – of all sorts and all ages – is a great way to get a free chuckle or two and these things are always welcome in the declining days of western imperialism/austerity/social chaos (insert your own favourite end-of-days scenario here).

"Do you actually ride bikes?" a fellow asked me. He appeared to be serious. I beamed back at him, speechless, brandishing the crash helmet that dangled enticingly from my arm, which was itself inside a sleeve of the armoured leather jacket I'd acquired several years ago from a purveyor of obsolete but new Triumph branded gear at a Stafford show. As luck would have it, I managed to waggle the arm carrying the helmet and not the other, which was holding tight to a plastic coffee in a plastic cup. A more senior moment might have bathed the nutcase in hot liquids. Maybe I waggled the wrong arm. Some folk are bewilderingly dim.

"Where do you get bits for them?" My bogglement increased. We were standing – him chatting, me boggling – outside a large motorcycle emporium. Well, large for Bude. All things are relative, as I'm sure you know. I gestured at the shop on whose forecourt he was talking at me. "No no," he said as I struggled to contain the exuberance of the coffee, "I mean for old bikes."

Aha, a rare moment of comprehension. I beamed as amiably as a chap can when his throat is being corroded by battery acid disguised as coffee.

A decent enough question, though. Where do we buy spares? Over the years, since the arrival of the internet age, it's been a common cry of the doomer-gloomers that autojumbles are dead, and that eBay and the like are the only places to buy spares for elderly motorcycles. Followed inevitably by hand-wringing and wailing about the dismal quality of parts costing less than their packaging – bought rather than decent quality parts from a decent supplier of quality parts because – you know – money.

In fact, I buy almost all the parts – depressingly many of them – from suppliers I know and trust. And if they can't deliver, then I trawl the ethers, seeking out the poorer quarters where the ragged people who ride BSAs and the like tend to go to sell rare and valuable and top quality bits cheaply, for some reason. Why would anyone sell rare and valuable parts cheaply? I have no idea. My experience is that they do not do this. I do not do this. Do you do this? I thought not.

The next conversation on this subject – I lead a wild and interesting life, as you can see – was about the idiotic prices asked for spares at jumbles. No no, I'll correct that: the idiotic prices spares sell for at jumbles. Why, endless dismal people demand to know, would anyone pay the going rate for rare spares? The going rate is in fact what someone is prepared to pay. It is not a law of nature or an act of God. Nor is it a mystery. If someone is prepared to pay £5000 for a 250 BSA kickstarter quadrant then that is the going rate. I would like to meet that person, as I have several spare BSA quadrants, and…

Intrigued, I unearthed my BSA wants list and dialled up eBay. None of the parts I need are listed thereon. No. Not one. Except in the USA, weirdly, and buying from the USA can be both unrewarding and unexpectedly expensive, as can returning those parts when they turn out to be the wrong ones, which is a common enough occurrence when buying unseen in the UK, too. This is the rub, and the too often forgotten reason why so many of us – I include myself here – buy our bits from jumbles when they appear and we have the loot in the wallet to pay for them.

My advice to the chap asking for it was that he should make the effort, switch off the computer, get on his bike and head for the nearest jumble and start digging. Ask the traders what else they've got if they have spares for your bike on show but not the ones you want on display. They've all got more stuff in the van or at home.

Increasingly, I find nothing I want to buy on auction sites. I never want to buy used parts I can't see, clothes I can't try on or cheap junk generally. We all need to get out more and go to more jumbles to buy bits. If nothing else, there's the chance of a decent ride and some fresh air… CBG

'Why, endless dismal people demand to know, would anyone pay the going rate for rare spares? The going rate is in fact what someone is prepared to pay.'

WHO IS FRANK WESTWORTH?

Frank Westworth is the editor of *RealClassic* magazine, the latest in a long series of publications that began in 1982 when he was bullied into producing *The Jampot*, the previously excellent magazine of the AJS & Matchless OC. He was also founding editor of *Classic Bike Guide* and has returned as a penance. Or something. He has a mysterious obsession with riding obscure and elderly motorcycles, which he does very slowly…

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