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Happy New Year trend-setters!

FIRSTLY, MAY I, ON BEHALF OF ALL who work at *Classic Bike Guide* towers, wish you a warm and prosperous New Year! May your bolts not round off, your petrol not turn stale and your tyres be eternally pumped up. And if you see a mild forecast over the festive period, keep away from the sherry – some wonderful rides with quiet roads can be had while the rest of the world are cramming mince pies into their already-bloated bellies.

If ever you're feeling the years then relax – we are trendsetters! The annual *Motorcycle Live* show was busy and saw even more new bikes featuring a classic style, with Norton releasing two new, affordable and frankly great-looking 650 bikes – the Atlas and Nomad; Triumph giving over half their stand to the Bonneville family; Metisse showing their range, while CCM enthralled the crowds with a full-scale replica Spitfire fighter plane on their stand alongside the numerous Spitfire bike range.

And it wasn't limited to the British manufacturers – Honda have remade the infamous step-thru Cub and several other models were shown with historically-inspired paint schemes, Yamaha painted a modern XSR in XT500 colours, Kawasaki had painted a lot of Z900 tanks in retro schemes and Suzuki rebuilt one of their RG500 race bikes on stage. Clothing wise, we are also captains of fashion, with wax cotton and distressed (knackered to you

and I) leather everywhere. Tell your kids or grandchildren that next time they laugh at your traditional ways!

I talked to boss man of Norton, Stuart Garner, about the new models (see the video of what he said on the *Classic Bike Guide* facebook page). Obviously Mr Garner was waxing lyrical about the 650s that offer a reasonably-priced entry into the brand. But what came over to me was how, despite his status and fortunes, he came over as a real biker – one of us. He told me how the conversations over coffee at work are about bikes and how the new 650s have been made to withstand not just off-roading, but have parts made from metal rather than plastic so 'it can be kicked back into shape after a spill so you can keep on riding'. It was truly great to hear the CEO talking like this.

Meanwhile, this month has been hectic at Norfolk Ned HQ with my exploration through the pile of ES2 parts I've bought, while trying to finish the bikes that I need to move to have some bench space for said thumper. I still haven't got a manual for it, but joining the local Norton owners club and talking to friends has given me advice and confidence in working on the bike – along with the obligatory sarcasm and mockery. It's brought to my attention how our love of old bikes bring people together, with time, help and advice exchanged. A good friend is building a rather nice Metisse for his boss's son. With the Nickel-plated frame and Triumph's unit twin



installed it's beautiful half-built; how nice will it be once finished?

Every time I see people like Neville I learn about bikes that I never grew up with. Our old bikes are often a release from daily life; could others benefit like we do? I aim to get some younger people interested, in the hope they get some of the satisfaction that we do. Working on bikes, riding or modifying them; let's get others interested. And it's always useful having another pair of hands in the workshop no matter how small they are...

Right, I'm off for another mince pie. Have fun and be good

Matt Hull

editor@classicbikeguide.com



■ **GERMAN GRAND PRIX
NURBURGRING, 1930**

■ Started in 1925 and finished in 1927, the Nurburgring was a purpose-built racetrack and is one of motorsport's seven wonders. The idea was to use the undulating hills of the Eifel mountains to re-create famous road circuits like the Italian Targa Florio. It had several different layouts including a North loop and South loop – add them together and in the early years the complete track was 17.5 miles long.

Motorcycles started on the North loop (12.7 miles) and on the South loop (five miles) in different years. Many racers protested about the length, bumps and safety over the years, including Ago and Formula 1 never returned after Niki Lauda's accident in 1976, when his terrible injuries were made worse due to the time it took for services to arrive on such a long track.

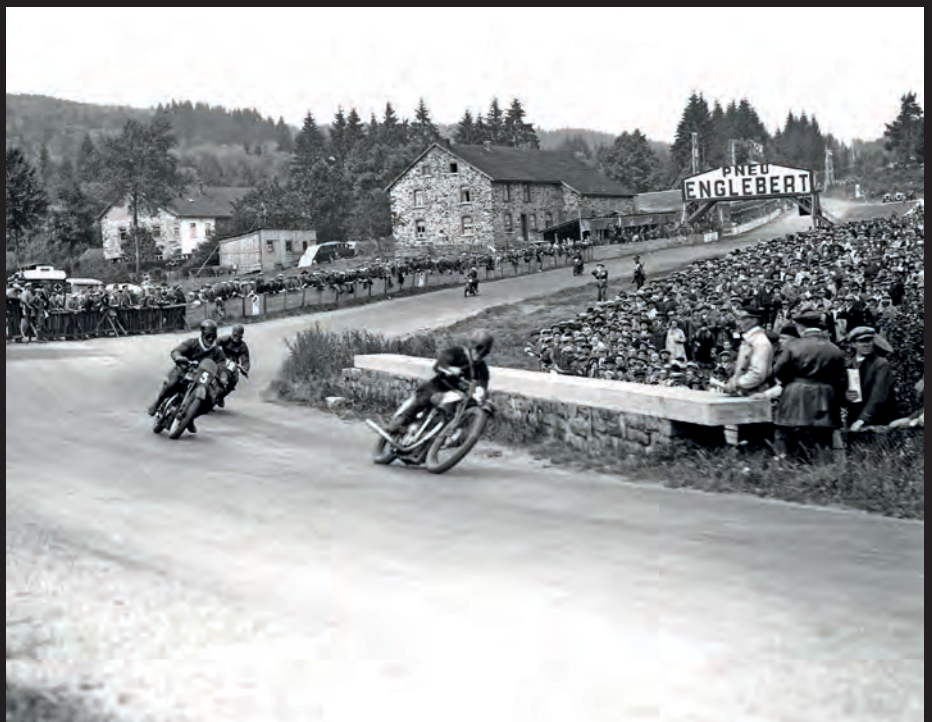
The German Grand Prix has moved over the years from AVUS, which was a test track with two long straights (and is now part of an autobahn), to the Nurburgring, briefly to Solitude and to Hockenheim. It then went to a shorter circuit, Sachsenring, where it has been held to this day; though 2018 was its final year there as MotoGP will move to the short-circuit at Nurburgring next year.

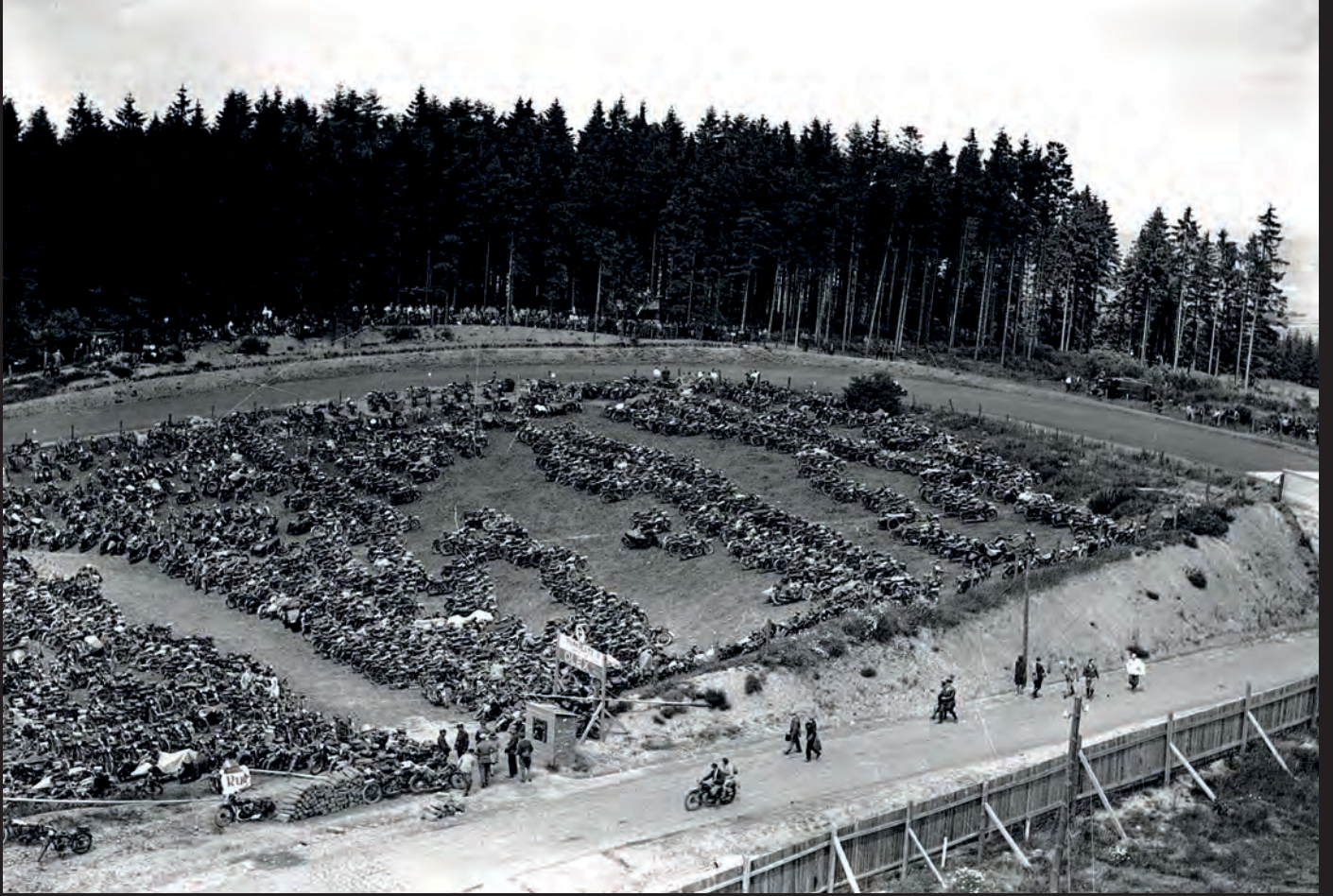
But back in 1930, it was at Nurburgring and all three races were won by British riders: Les Crabtree won the 250cc race, Jimmie Guthrie won the 350cc on his AJS and Graham Walker the 500cc race on his Rudge.

Tragically, Guthrie died at the 1937 German Grand Prix after it had been moved to the Sachsenring circuit. The Hawick rider had one of the Isle of Man mountain corners named after him, and a memorial, on account of his six wins at the TT. Following the Second World War there was also a memorial to him built at the Sachsenring.

Walker went on to ride with some success for Norton, Sunbeam and Rudge and, once retired from racing, became editor of *Motor Cycling*. As television grew in popularity he became a commentator for bike racing – his son, Murray Walker, famously following in his footsteps. **CBG**

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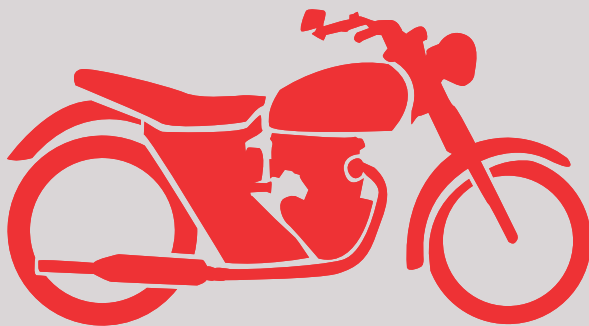
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Dream machine

One man's vision of the perfect motorcycle

Jon deBouhn dreamed of building this G/S special for more than 10 years before he laid a spanner on it. But it was worth the wait...

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY: PHILLIP TOOTH





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WHEN HE WAS A TEENAGER, JON DEBOUHN RODE A second-hand BSA B50MX on and off-road, and a 750cc Bonnie to A Archer & Son in Essex, the respected vintage vehicle restoration experts, where he was doing a four-year engineering apprenticeship. However, when he finished his apprenticeship in 1984 the British motorcycle industry was on its knees, while BMW was big news.

“They made the bikes to beat in the Dakar,” says Jon. “The G/S always seemed to finish the race without many problems. While other manufacturers were changing engines, BMW’s mechanics were changing the oil.”

Now qualified and with a handsome increase in salary, he immediately bought a new R80G/S. “What a bike!” Jon says with a smile. “It was so much better than the Bonnie and touring 600 miles in one day was never a problem.” He was hooked. There would never again be room in his garage for any other make or model of motorcycle. But although a stock G/S from any generation is a great bike, his desire to build his own version of the classic was growing.

After graduating in 1992 as a professional engineer he worked at Lotus Engineering for nine years. “But in spite of that I never felt confident enough to make a start. I guess it’s the old adage that ‘the more you know, the more you know you need to know’ which prevented me from getting on with it.”

You could call it a mid-life crisis, but it wasn’t until Jon was 47 that he felt competent enough to build a machine that had the right balance of simplicity, handling, a strong and smooth power delivery, and with a chassis that suited his height and build – Jon stands 6ft 4in in his cotton socks. The kick in the pants he needed came from his friend Angus Taylor, an ex-Lotus chassis engineer, who was building his own G/S special. Enthusiasm is contagious, and Jon started looking for a suitable donor bike.

“I ended up with a 1989 ex-Danish military R65G/S. This version has the extra-low final drive ratio, but also the 247E monoshock frame needed for such a project,” he recalls. “The bike was an eBay buy from Scotland, so it was too far away for me to check out in the metal. It turned out to be a typical example of the overpriced rubbish you can end up with if you’re not careful. At least the basics were there and the frame was straight...”

Good engineers don’t only design parts and make them. “I also set out a timeframe and a cost base,



and called on a few ex-Lotus chaps for the work that I couldn’t do. There are a lot of good cottage engineering businesses in Norfolk – probably due to the irregular work load at Lotus. My main helper for fabrication work was Steve Harris of Concept Engineering, another ex-Lotus guy who did all my TIG welding and made a lovely cockpit clock mount from my drawings and templates.”

When he bought the Danish Beemer, Jon intended to build his special as a 650 to save a little bit of weight, but he soon realised that this choice of engine would restrict any real capacity increase in the future. He changed the 650cc block for one from a late R80ST engine.

With so much information available on modifying these air-cooled engines, Jon sat down and wrote out a list of what he wanted. First thing on his shopping list was a set of lightweight Siebenrock 1000cc barrels and high compression pistons. The cylinder heads were pinched from a 1995 Mystic, the R100R based Roadster. Jon had the squish modified, converted the heads to twin plugs and gas flowed the ports. He opted for a late stock 308 cam and fitted 38mm Bing carbs tuned for the 1000cc conversion. “I wasn’t going for a peaky power delivery. I wanted a bike I could use in all conditions, with stable idle and good torque.”

Jon decided against fitting an oil cooler. “It would only add weight,” he says. “And anyway, my development work at Lotus convinced me that good synthetic oil and a three-litre sump conversion would make an oil cooler pointless in this climate, especially with the engine modifications I opted for. The retention, lubrication properties and heat rejection capabilities of synthetics far exceeds anything imaginable in the early 1980s. If BMW were using synthetics back then the mechanics probably wouldn’t have had to change the oil in the Dakar!”



“Good engineers don’t only design parts and make them. “I also set out a timeframe and a cost base”





Above: Images showing the four-stud to three-stud conversion design, parts and assembly

Above right: The swingarm after welding and removed from jigs and fixtures, adding in 75mm

Most of the chassis modifications were copied from HPN, the famous Bavarian specialist. "Why not?" asks Jon. "They know what they are doing!" Apart from the HPN mods that strengthened the frame, he also lengthened and lightened the subframe. The swingarm was also extended. "A number of specialists offer a swingarm that has been extended by 100mm because that is what was used on the Dakar-winning bikes," he says. "But I won't be powering up mountainous sand dunes. Angus did his calculations and said that a 75mm extension would be the ideal compromise for on and off-road use. This is what the G/S was designed for!"

The swingarm angle was also taken out to 15 degrees from the engine centre line. "You need to modify the frame to go to 15 degrees," he warns. "But it has given me the increased seat height I want and a generous 205mm of rear suspension travel – believe it or not, that's good for a monoshock!"

Fortunately he was able to draw this lot up on the CAD at home to check articulation, mounting points and travel before committing to the modification. The rear shock absorber is a Wilbers. "I've used these on my other G/S bikes and they are a good, cost-effective unit. I got it from German specialist Zietech. They always do their best to match the unit to your weight and riding style."

Probably the most difficult job on the swingarm conversion was to lengthen the drive shaft. "There's not a lot of room in the torque tube because the shaft damper takes up most of the space," explains Jon. "A high-carbon steel is used for the shaft for the obvious reason that the spline end needs to be hardened, so I had some reservations on the type of extension

joint – to weld or not to weld?" In the end he opted for a cod-mouthed sleeve machined from EN14 steel, calculated the correct wall thickness of the sleeve, and ordered some trick TIG rods specially developed for high carbon steel to minimise embrittlement.

The cod-mouth sleeve is rather like the curvy frame lugs used on high-quality bicycle frames, which increases the strength of the joint by distributing the molten filler metal over a larger surface area and also minimises the possibility of a stress concentration which would otherwise make the frame – or drive shaft – prone to cracking at the end of the lug. It paid off as the cod-mouthed sleeve kept the two cut-down shafts in line – total shaft run-out was under 0.10mm. A test sample was taken and proved to be as strong as the original shaft.

The standard final drive ratio for the R80G/S is 37:11. Jon reasoned that the ideal for his 1000cc special was 33:11, which would give an 11% increase in all gears, but this ratio was only used for a short time on the one-litre monoshock R100RT and RS. These both have cast wheels, with a four-stud fixing. He wanted to stay with spoked wheels, which have a three-stud fixing. The crown wheel and hub centre are one piece on the R100 monoshocks, so an adaptor plate was made to convert the four-stud fixing to three. It was designed so that the oil seal still runs on the original hub part.

"I modified standard flanged forged wheel studs to fit in to the adaptor I made," says Jon. "I didn't want them snapping and the wheel coming off at any speed!" Ride through deep water and the standard breather in the back hub can let water in, so he designed his own breather. Black anodized alloy rims and stainless spokes add a touch of class. ▶

The rocker box covers, protected by Jon's own stainless steel guards, are aftermarket versions of the early type. Jon doesn't like the look of the flat ones introduced in the 1980s. Does anyone?



Jon was trying to keep weight as low as possible. "That was a bit ironic," he laughs. "After all, it is a Beemer!" His target was 175kg, the same dry weight as the HP2 Enduro that he used to own. "The early 800cc G/S models weighed in at close to 186kg wet, while the R100GS was closer to a porky 200kg, but I knew it would be possible."

A generous saving in unsprung weight over the original setup was achieved by uniting a KTM front hub with a 320mm Brembo disc, with a new wheel spindle machined to mate this to the WP dual sport fork that gives 300mm travel. Even the thin layer of powder coating that protects the chassis was applied to his specification. "GKL in Snetterton do a great job and will happily coat to a predetermined thickness."

He sourced a new harness from Motorworks for £130. "I couldn't have made a harness for that money and found Motorworks invaluable for a lot of help

and parts." He modified the harness to take the twin ignition coils, rev counter, and the VDO gauges he wanted: volts, sump oil temperature and an analogue clock. Jon also deactivated the clutch switch, and replaced the speedometer with a simple bicycle unit. Now the main dial in the instrument panel is a full-size BMW electronic rev counter. Renthal supplied the handlebars, which Jon mounted on CCM fork yokes and risers. The plastics came from UFO.

In his quest to save weight there was no way that Jon was going to use a huge 58-litre Paris-Dakar fuel tank. Instead he fitted a small one from a late G/S airhead, remodelled at the front to give clearance for the fork legs on full lock. "For some reason, these tanks only had one fuel tap so I added a second one."

The exhaust system uses stock late-G/S headers with the balance pipe removed, bolted to a Keihan Y-piece that leads to a specially made bend and on to



an R1150GS Remus Revolution can with removable baffle. "That saved some weight as well!" It certainly did. The finished bike scales only 179kg with oil and fuel.

Attention to detail is everywhere. Steve Fulcher of Coachtrimmer recovered the seat with a suede top panel, and blue embroidered letters on white leather sides. The specially made free-flow air filter is secured by hooked elastic cords for quick removal. A sump guard was modified from the type fitted to the R1150GS Adventure. Apart from where specific grades of steel where needed, all fixings are stainless DIN 7984. "I couldn't find anyone in the UK who could supply small quantities so they came from Germany."

The rocker box covers, protected by Jon's own stainless steel guards, are aftermarket versions of the early type. Jon doesn't like the look of the flat ones

introduced in the 1980s. Does anyone?

It took nearly two years of his spare time to build the G/S special, and now he's packing in the miles.

"I've been using it all this year. I can't keep off it!" he says with a grin that tells you all you need to know. "If you overcooked the old G/S mono into a bend and shut the throttle it would get badly out of shape, so you had to keep it wound on to get around and that could be butt-clenchingly frightening. Not with this bike. The stiffer frame and longer, stronger swingarm makes it feel like I'm riding a 1980s version of the HP2 Enduro."

Whether motorway cruising or off-road riding, this is Jon's version of the perfect G/S motorcycle. "It is a beautiful bike to ride," he says. "I can whistle along farm tracks at up to 80mph and be totally in control. I'd be scared witless doing this on an ordinary G/S." And then he grins again. **CBG**

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WIN A 'NEW' 1977 NORTON COMMANDO

THE LATEST RAFFLE prize on offer from the National Motorcycle Museum (NMM) is another desirable rarity – a new old stock 1977 Norton Commando.

The NMM announced this latest prize after revealing the results of the summer 2018 raffle to win a 1969 Royal Enfield Interceptor Mk II 750cc. The raffle was drawn by TT and road racing superstars John McGuinness, Mick Grant and Trevor Nation at the Museum LIVE open day. The Interceptor was won by Craig Winter from Carmarthenshire. The second prize, a 1955 James ML125, was won by David Fallon of Leicestershire.

Launching the winter raffle, museum director James Hewing said: "We have something very special for our winter raffle by offering a brand-new old stock 1977 Commando, which has never been run or registered and is showing just a few 'push' miles only."



STRAIGHT
OUT OF THE
CRATE

The second prize is a Sealey MC680E electro hydraulic motorcycle lift, worth more than £1500 and the third prize is a luxury hotel break and dinner for two at Marco Pierre White

Steakhouse at the Manor Hotel, Meriden. The draw will take place on Sunday, April 28, 2019 at the International Classic Motorcycle Show, Stafford. Tickets cost £2

each and can be obtained via the museum on (01675) 444123 or online at www.thenmm.co.uk

New Norton bears the name Atlas

ANOTHER RESURGENT BRITISH manufacturer has revived an old name for its latest machine with Norton unveiling its first middleweight twin-cylinder motorcycle since the 650cc Mercury went out of production in 1969.

The new 650cc Atlas Nomad and Atlas Ranger twins are designed as entry-level machines and will be the first mainstream production machines from Norton since the 1970s. The Atlas name was last used on Norton's 1960s 750cc Featherbed framed superbike.

The new Norton uses an engine with elements derived from the company's own high performance V4 RR superbike in a steel trellis frame. Norton says the use of steel, rather

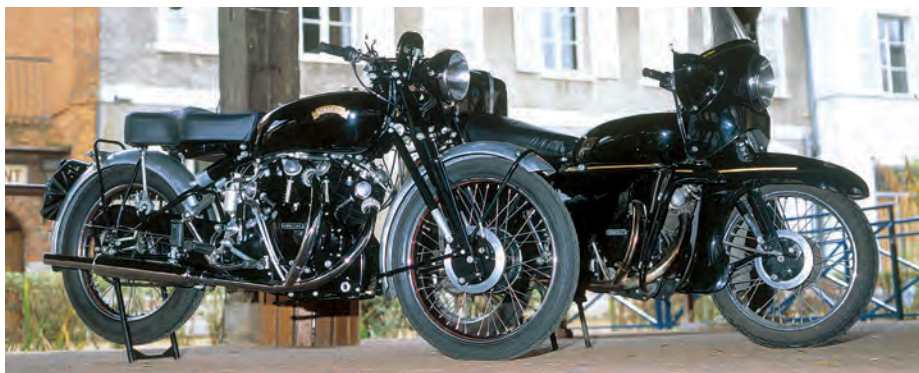
than aluminium is ideal for a dual purpose off-roader like the Atlas.

The in-house produced 84bhp 650cc engine has a 270° crankshaft and uses the V4's cylinder head, while the rest of the engine is completely new. The Norton Roadholder suspension has fully adjustable 50mm forks, while the monoshock rear will be preload adjustable only. Both bikes have spoked wheels and a 15-litre rotationally moulded composite fuel tank.

The new Atlas Nomad will cost £9995 with the more off-road focused Atlas Ranger edition £11,995. Norton intends to make 2000 Atlas models a year and anticipates the off-road styled Ranger will be the biggest seller. Orders for the new Atlas are now being taken.



Vincent legend Patrick Godet dies



THE DEATH HAS been reported of highly-regarded Vincent builder Patrick Godet.

Godet was born into a family of road hauliers, spending years working on lorries before pursuing a career in the automotive industry. He bought his first Vincent on leaving the army in 1973. A member of the Vincent Owners' Club after joining in 1974, he founded the club's French branch.

In 1979 he raced a Vincent Black Lightning in prestigious races. With wins in England and on the

European mainland, he went on to become a well-known name in the 1980s classic racing scene.

In the early 1990s, Godet imported a batch of Vincents and a stock of spare parts from Argentina and opened a workshop dedicated to their restoration. His restoration of an Egli-Vincent finally brought him into contact with Fritz Egli, who was so impressed by Godet's work that he gave his permission for the Godet machines to bear the Egli-Vincent name. Godet built Godet Egli-Vincents in Rouen,

France. He also established the only French factory team to compete in veteran races using specially designed Vincent classics.

A post by Egli-Vincent Motorcycles on November 27 read: "It is with great sadness that the entire Vincent community just learned about the premature death of Patrick Godet. In these painful moments, our thoughts and prayers go to his family and loved ones. According to Patrick's last wishes, his funerals will take place in a strict intimacy."

OBITUARY: Bruce Main-Smith



Bruce Main-Smith testing a Suzuki GT750 in 1973 (taken from the BMS publication Book of Superbike Road Tests).

LEGENDARY MOTORCYCLE JOURNALIST Bruce Main-Smith has died at the age of 89.

As well as being a pioneering writer, Mr Main-Smith was responsible for saving vast amounts of vital motorcycle literature for posterity. He was technical editor of the Vincent Owners' Club magazine MPH, work that led to his employment as a journalist for Motor Cycling until 1967, when the magazine amalgamated with The Motor Cycle. He was chairman of the Vincent Owners Club from 1960-63, and subsequently was made vice-president of the club.

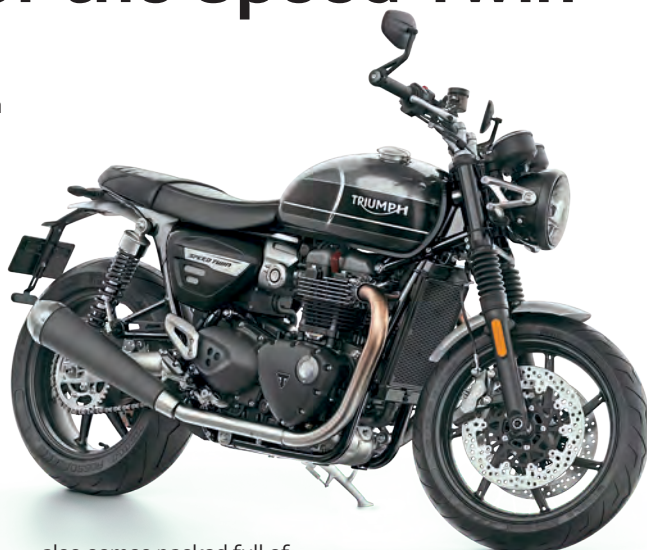
In 1967 he formed Bruce Main-Smith Publications and published scores of books and magazines. In addition, he collected a huge amount of original literature and photographs, including parts books, shop manuals, riders' handbooks and original sales brochures, copies of which he sold. In 1991 he retired and sold the company, together with the rights to the literature. In 2013 the company ceased trading and in 2014 it was taken over by the National Motorcycle Museum, which still supplies literature under the Bruce Main-Smith branding. More than 5000 items are listed, covering bikes from the early 1900s to the 1980s. Mr Main-Smith retired to Hampshire where he retained an interest in motorcycles and also in model railways. He died at Cerne Abbas, Dorset on October 6, 2018.

Return of the Speed Twin

ONE OF THE most famous names in motorcycling has been revived by Triumph for a new high-performance twin.

The new 1200cc Speed Twin re-introduces a legendary Triumph name. The 1200cc, 97bhp twin has a new chassis, high spec brakes and is 10kg lighter than the Thruxton twin it is based on. The Speed Twin has been designed as a hybrid of the Street Twin's detailing, the Thruxton R's performance and the Bonneville T120's ride and rider comfort.

Detail changes to the Thruxton engine are a new magnesium cam cover, revised clutch assembly and engine covers, which add up to save 2.5kg. The Speed Twin will have lighter 17in aluminium wheels than the Thruxton's spoked items. Like the smaller Street Twin, the Speed Twin has a low 807mm seat height. It



also comes packed full of electronic aids buyers of modern motorcycles have come to expect, including three riding modes and switchable traction control.

Three colour choices will be available, with plain black offered alongside two-tone silver over grey and silver over red. Custom exhausts providing a very classic

style grunt will be popular with everyone except the neighbours. More than 80 accessories, from luggage options to performance exhausts, will be available, and Triumph says the bike will go on sale in the spring. The price will be released in mid-January.

Castle Combe to host Sheene 50th celebration

ONE OF BRITAIN'S greatest motorcycle racers, the legendary Barry Sheene, will be commemorated at the West Country's biggest motorcycle race meeting, the Castle Combe Grand National, at the Wiltshire track on Saturday, August 31 and Sunday September 1.

Sheene, who went on to win the 1976 and 1977 500cc World Championship, took victory at Castle Combe aboard his Bultaco back in 1969, so plans are afoot to celebrate his 50-year association with the circuit, as well as his extraordinary career with displays and parades exclusively to do with Barry and his bikes over the years.

As well as his closest friend Steve Parrish, who is hoping to return to Castle Combe after being a guest of honour at this

year's event, various members of Barry's family, along with colleagues, friends and rivals, hope to attend the unique celebration, with lots of initial interest being shown. There will also be a packed programme of racing organised by the NG Road Racing Club and featuring several major championships.

Classic racing fans should also make a date in their diaries for April 6 & 7 when the Classic Motorcycle Racing Club (CRMC) makes a first visit to Castle Combe. With a rich heritage over the past 65 years, the 1.85-mile track is delighted to be hosting such a meeting, which will see packed grids for the various classes featuring machines from the Classic era (1945-1972), Post Classic (1973-1986) as well as sidecars.



PICTURE COURTESY OF CLIVE CHALLINOR

Bristol's Classic is ready for the off

FEBRUARY SEES THE annual show season move up a gear with the arrival of the Bristol Classic Motorcycle Show.

This year's event is on February 2 & 3 at the Bath and West Showground, Shepton Mallet. The show is well-known for the extravagant exhibitions put on by the local motorcycle clubs who go all out to impress and there is fierce competition for the much-coveted 'best stand' award.

The event is a magnet for enthusiasts, club members and traders alike – attracting thousands from all over the country and beyond. Bristol is also known for showing off some of the finest examples of privately-owned classic motorcycles in the country, many appearing for the first time after a winter's spannering.

All those who bring their motorcycle along are automatically entered to win a variety of different awards, including the prestigious best in show prize. Owners of private entries also receive two all-weekend entry wristbands and their bike will be admired by thousands all weekend.

Alongside the retailers in the main show hall will be the machines of dozens of private



owners offering up their pride and joys for public scrutiny, including everything from immaculate showroom-condition restorations to oily rag daily runners. Visitors will also discover that the Bristol show's retailers have a great deal to offer, while the autojumble gives the opportunity to pick up that vital widget to finish off your own project.

Taking up most of the outdoor

space at the show and inside the large Edmund Rack Hall, the autojumble is usually the first stop for most visitors as soon as they walk through the gates. The 2019 show will also host several Sunday-only autojumble plots, bringing in more opportunities for visitors to double their number of bargains. If you are interested in booking one of these pitches, they're available

for just £20. There will also be the opportunity to pick up a bargain with the Charterhouse Auction on Sunday offering everything from concours classics to rusty relics. Visit charterhouse-auction.com to preview the sale.

To find out how to book a jumble space, enter your classic, book a club stand or retail space, or just to buy a ticket, visit bristolclassicbikeshow.com



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Husqvarna 360, 390, 420

STK-186 £195

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STK-025 £155

Maico 400 (early model)

STK-114 £165

Montesa 247, 348/349 + others

STK-349 £195

Norton Commando - ignition only

STK-022D £225

Triumph 3TA, 5TA, Unit 650 - ignition only

STK-012 £175

Triumph 3TA, 5TA, T110, T120, T140

STK-102D £235

Triumph Tiger Cub - Direct mounting in cover

STK-200 £165

Triumph Tiger Cub - Crank case mounted

STK-202 £155

Villiers 6E-8E

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Villiers 9E-37A models

STK-970* £225

Villiers Starmaker

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Fancy a day out?

DECEMBER 2018

- ▲ **30 Ace Cafe London, Bike Day:** Ace Cafe, Ace Corner, N Circular Rd, Stonebridge, London NE10 7UD. london.acecafe.com
- ▲ **31 Ace Cafe London, New Year's Eve Party:** Ace Cafe, Ace Corner, N Circular Rd, Stonebridge, London NE10 7UD. london.acecafe.com

JANUARY 2019

- ▲ **1 VMCC (Dorset section) New Year's Day Run:** Streeter's Carpet Shop, Station Road, Sturminster Newton DT10 1BD. Tel. 01258 860864. dorsetvmcc.co.uk/events
- ▲ **1 The Hangover Meet:** Ace Cafe London, Ace Corner, North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com
- ▲ **2 VMCC (Dorset section) Lunch Meet:** Henstridge Golf and Leisure, Marsh Lane, Henstridge, Somerset BA8 0TG. Tel. 01258 860864. dorsetvmcc.co.uk/events/
- ▲ **4 FEBRUARY ISSUE OF THE CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE**
- ▲ **4-5 Ards Motorcycle Show and Autojumble:** Queens Hall, Newtownards, County Down, Northern Ireland. Tel. Tom Rutherford 07971 681779.

▲ 5 JANUARY EDITION OF OLD BIKE MART

▲ 5-6 The Carole Nash Classic Bike Guide

Winter Classic: The Carole Nash Classic Bike Guide Winter Classic Show at Newark will have something for every winter-jaded motorcycling soul. There will be a fine selection of classics to check out, no matter what motorcycling era or geographical origin takes your fancy, as well as the company of like-minded people in the comforting warmth of the Nottinghamshire halls. There's an undercover autojumble for part-hunting or for finding that bargain project to snap up – if your post-Christmas pocket can stand it. But most of all there are several thousand people getting back to the seriously fun business of motorcycles after the seasonal excesses. Special guest this year is GP legend Freddie Spencer. Brave the new year Nottinghamshire weather early as this is a show that packs them in and come and say hello. The show is held at Newark Showground, Drove Lane, Winthorpe, Newark, Nottinghamshire. www.classicbikeshows.com

▲ 6 Mid-Kent's Bike & Autojumble:

Lockmeadow Market Hall, Barker Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 8LW.

www.midkentsautojumble.co.uk

- ▲ **6 Bike Day:** Ace Cafe London, Ace Corner, North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com
- ▲ **6 The Victoria Bikers Pub's Brass Monkey Run for Rainbows Children's Hospice:** The Vic Bikers Pub, Coalville, Leics LE67 3FA. Tel. 01530 814718. www.vicbikerspub.co.uk Email victoriaacecafe2008@live.com
- ▲ **7 JANUARY ISSUE OF REAL CLASSIC**
- ▲ **10 Taverners VMCC Noggin & Natter:** 8pm, Enderby Sports & Social Club, Leics LE19 4QF. Tel. Mark Wills 07972 875687.
- ▲ **10 LE Velo Lancs & S Lakes:** Spitfire Memorial, Fairhaven Lake, Lytham. Tel. 01772 782516.
- ▲ **13 Maldon British M/C Owners' Club Bike Jumble:** Memorial Hall, Newland Street, Witham CM8 2AZ. Tel: 07787 847874; 01245 321573.
- ▲ **13 Bike Day:** Ace Cafe London, Ace Corner, North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com
- ▲ **13 VMCC (N/W Section) Bike Show:** Junction pub, Rainford, Merseyside WA11 7JU. (Note – this replaces the Worden Park Show). Contact Alex on 0151 5202136.
- ▲ **13 Kidlington Auto Jumble:** Exeter Halls,



■ 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 with some details and we'll do our best to include it so others can enjoy it as well.

Kidlington, Oxford OX5 1AB (just off the A4260). Tel. 02082 526831. Email events@woodclass.com, www.woodclass.com

■ **16 FEBRUARY ISSUE OF CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE MECHANICS**

■ **19 Kempton Park Motorcycle Autojumble:** Kempton Park, Staines Road East, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex TW16 5AQ. www.kemptonparkautojumble.co.uk

■ **19 Scorton Auto & Bike Jumble:** Held at the North Yorkshire Events Centre, Scorton, near Catterick, North Yorkshire. You will find bike bits, car parts and an autojumble every third Saturday in the month under cover from 8am to 1pm. Tel. Bert 07909 904705.

■ **19 Rockers' Reunion:** Rivermead Leisure Complex, Richfield Avenue, Reading RG1 8EQ. www.rockersreunion.co.uk Tel. Viv Roberts 01772 761522.

■ **20 AJS Matchless Owners' Club 'Founders Day' and Classic Bikes:** Ace Cafe London, Ace Corner, North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com

■ **20 Taverners VMCC Sporting Trial:** Stainby, Lincs, pre-65 inc. girder rigid class. Tel. Mark McEvoy 07973 142440.

■ **20 VMCC (Dorset section) Winter Run:** Dike & Son supermarket, Ring St, Stalbridge DT10 2NB Tel. 01258 860864. dorsetvmcc.co.uk/events

■ **20 LE Velo Lancs & S Lakes:** Wyreside County Park, nr Cleveleys. Tel. 01772 782516.

■ **20 Huddersfield Auto/Retro Jumble:** Old Market Building, Brook Street HD1 1RG. Tel. 01773 819154. www.phoenixfairs.jimdo.com

■ **26 VMCC (Dorset section) Breakfast Meet:** Henstridge Golf and Leisure, Marsh Lane, Henstridge, Somerset BA8 0TG. Tel. 01258 860864. dorsetvmcc.co.uk/events/

■ **26 LE Velo Northampton:** The Griffins Head, Mears Ashby NN6 0DX. Tel. 01604 499858

■ **26-27 Springfields Motorbike Show:** The Springfields Motorbike Show returns for another year. Tickets for each day are £7 for adults and £3 for children (5-15 years). The event starts at 10am each day and finishes at 4pm. The event is held at Springfields Events & Conference Centre on the A16 on the outskirts of Spalding, Lincolnshire, adjoining the Springfields Outlet shopping centre and festival gardens.

■ **27 Australia Day:** Ace Cafe London, Ace

Corner, North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com

■ **27 'Normous Newark Autojumble:** The Showground, Drove Lane, Winthorpe, Newark, Notts NG24 2NY www.newarkautojumble.co.uk

■ **27 Malvern Drive-In Classic Car & Bike Autojumble:** Expect to see more than 100 trade and autojumble stalls located inside the newly refurbished Wye Halls and outside hardstanding. A great opportunity to source hard-to-find car or motorcycle parts or accessories and catch up with friends with full protection from the weather. Visitors are welcome to bring and display their classic cars and motorcycles. There is no discount at this autojumble event for classic car exhibitors but classic motorcycle exhibitors can download the 2019 motorcycle season pass to gain entry for £3 per person from the classic shows website. Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Worcs WR13 6NW. Tel. 01484 667776. www.classicshows.org

■ **30 FEBRUARY ISSUE OF CLASSIC BIKE GUIDE**

■ **31 Taverners VMCC, Talk TBC:** Enderby Sports & Social Club, Leics LE19 4QF. Tel. Mark Wills 07972 875687

■ **31 LE Velo Lancs & S Lakes:** Blue Anchor, Bretherton (£6 nosh-up). Tel. 01772 782516.

FEBRUARY 2019

■ **1 MARCH ISSUE OF THE CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE**

■ **2 FEBRUARY EDITION OLD BIKE MART**

■ **2-3 The 39th Carole Nash Bristol Classic Motorcycle Show:** See news. Bath & West Showground, A371, Shepton Mallet, Somerset BA4 6QN. www.classicbikeshows.com

■ **3 Bike Day:** Ace Cafe London, Ace Corner, North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com

■ **4 FEBRUARY ISSUE OF REAL CLASSIC**

■ **6 VMCC (Dorset section) Lunch Meet:** Henstridge Golf and Leisure, Marsh Lane, Henstridge, Somerset BA8 0TG. Tel. 01258 860864. dorsetvmcc.co.uk/events

■ **10 Sunbeam MCC Gordon Jackson Trial:** Venue to be advised. Tel. Neil Sinclair 07885 660939. Email sinclairndlp@hotmail.co.uk

■ **10 Bike Day:** Ace Cafe London, Ace Corner, North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com

■ **10 MAG 'Fred Hill' Memorial Ride-Out:** Ace Cafe London, Ace Corner, North Circular Road,

Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com

■ **10 LE Velo Lancs & S Lakes:** GB Antiques, nr Lancaster. Tel. 01772 782516.

■ **14 Taverners VMCC Noggin & Natter:** Enderby Sports & Social Club, Leics LE19 4QF. Tel. Mark Wills 07972 875687.

■ **16 Stunt Fest:** A stunt fest in February? Why not? Santa Pod hosts this half-term treat. An afternoon of awesome stunts and displays for all the family, featuring some of the top UK stunt riders and drivers. The perfect high-octane half-term entertainment for kids in Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire and the Midlands. Main stunt attractions from 12 to 3.30pm, gates open from 10.30am Santa Pod Raceway, Airfield Road, Podington, Wellingborough, Northants NN29 7XA. Family tickets cost £35. www.santapod.com Tel. 01234 782828.

■ **16 Scorton Auto & Bike Jumble:** Scorton, North Yorkshire Events Centre DL10 6EJ. Tel: Bert 07909 904705.

■ **16-17 Classic Dirt Bike Show (sponsored by Hagon Shocks):** This show will welcome two iconic all-time off-road champions as the guests of honour. Multiple world, indoor and British trials champion Dougie Lampkin will be a star guest at the popular off-road show held at Telford International Centre, as will BSA works team motocrosser John Banks, who won four British championships. Dozens of clubs and private owners will be showing off their off-road machines at the show, while hundreds of traders will be offering dirt biking kit from new bikes, parts and accessories to riding gear and even project bikes if you're up for a challenge. Plus, why not have a rumble in the autojumble, starting at 9am, and get your hands on an off-road bargain? International Centre, Telford, Shropshire TF3 4JH www.classicbikeshows.com

■ **17 Bike Day:** Ace Cafe London, Ace Corner, North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com

■ **17 Huddersfield Auto/Retro Jumble:** Old Market Building, Brook Street HD1 1RG. Tel. 01773 819154. www.phoenixfairs.jimdo.com

■ **20 MARCH ISSUE OF CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE MECHANICS**

■ **21 CLASSIC DIRT BIKE ISSUE 50**

■ **21 MARCH/APRIL ISSUE OF CLASSIC RACER**

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Letters

Cuddle my Cub

Great buying guide piece on Triumph Cubs in the November issue. I bought my 1966 T20M about 10 years ago and was so disappointed in its condition compared to the pictures I put it back in the shed and bought a 1969 TR6C to go with my 1969 T120R. They have since both won best Triumph in shows.

I felt sorry for the little one and started on it. The learning curve was a challenge but thanks to the Tiger Cub Bible and the older Triumph experts (who have fond memories of them) it now stands tall with the bigger ones!

I bought a BMW K75S new but found it to be an uncomfortable handful and sold it off.

Andy



Sign of age

Signs of the advancing years are ubiquitous, as when the doyen of the Fifties, Sixties and Seventies, test-rider and journalist Vic Willoughby, is not recognised by the caption-writer of your calendar, in spite of a clear view of his face and the trademark glasses.

Alas, he's only "our brave pilot" to our presumably youthful hack in the caption to the July/August picture in your free calendar.

Nigel

Oh how right you are. Thanks for your observation and I hold my hands up! Although I like being called 'youthful'. I wrote those in the middle of the summer and have only recently been delving into Mr Willoughby's files, including his Gold Star. In my mind I couldn't get away from the fact he looks like a scary old friend... Matt

Which is the right colour for my BSA?

I am restoring a 1959 BSA B31 and have just started on the paint work.

On purchasing the October addition of *Classic Bike Guide* I read the article on restoring a B31 the same age and colour as mine. I have already purchased some paint, which I am not happy with. Would it be possible to find out the colour of the bike in the

article and supplier of the paint?
John

The paint in question was mixed by Breakwells of Walsall and as they have mixed this colour before, they may well do it again without a sample. Their number is 01922 400444. It is nominally called almond green. All the best, Rob Davies



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Products

New café kit for the Triumph Sprint

CAFE RACER KITS Ltd have announced details of their next kit bike conversion, following a preview at the Stafford Show. Following the success of the Triumph T300 Series Kit which has now exceeded 200 sales around the globe, CRK have turned their attention to the Triumph Sprint ST 955, which was manufactured from 1998-2004. The kit turns Triumph's sports-tourer into a 1970s-style street/track racer.

Ian Saxcoburg from CRK said: "The reasons for choosing the Sprint are that firstly it is a superb motorcycle. MCN describe it as a better bike than the contemporary Honda VFR which is praise indeed. However, a quick scan of the classified adverts will reveal that these great bikes are now available for very little cash. Find a scruffy one with some scuffs on the plastic and it can cost less than a £1000, which makes it ideal as the basis for a conversion. Spares are still readily available from Triumph or specialist breakers.

"Whereas the more glamorous Daytona models of the same era are starting to become



recognised as classics, the Sprint is more likely to remain at sensible prices for those looking to build something themselves.

"We have been working on the kit in our spare time for about a year now, considering various options for styling. The final choice being 'Retro Racer' to give the bike a classic set of lines and a styling nod toward the great racing bikes of the Seventies.

The bike is not meant to be a replica, instead it offers the builder the basis to create their own take on the theme by mixing colours and components."

The donor bike has a bolted subframe as standard so, unlike CRKs other kits, there is no cutting or welding required for the conversion. The original fuel tank and airbox are retained which makes tuning

the fuel injection easier, while the fairing has two projector headlight fittings.

Ian said: "CRK kits are all designed to allow anyone with a shed or garage and some standard tools to build themselves a great special. We have had some customers with zero experience who actually had to go out and buy a set of spanners to complete their bikes.

"We also have customers who are more seasoned builders who have taken the CRK parts unpainted and then developed their own additions by fabricating custom side panels, exhaust systems, body panels etc."

The conversion will be broken down into modules that can be purchased individually or as a complete kit. CRK are starting with the Subframe Module which will be available at the end of January 2019 and the other modules will be introduced during the following months. Each module will include detailed instructions. The initial rear subframe kit will cost £420.

■ **£2400 whole kit**
■ **caferacerkits.co.uk.**

Catch it happening!

I've used cameras from the UK company, Olfi, for years now and enjoy their easy to use and reliable nature. Some cameras are too complicated with too many menus and options to get lost in. Olfi seem to make it easy to get what you want, whether it be simple dashcam footage or more creative filming.

The only feature that's been missing has been the ability to use an external microphone so you can record yourself talking while riding. The new Olfi 'one.five black' edition has this, as well as 4k footage and other new features; including a removable battery so you can continue filming with a

spare. Yet despite all these extras that ease of use is still there. And being a British company, back up, advice and support is fantastic. Please note that the case seen here is an accessory – the standard kit comes with a normal waterproof one as this has a plug to fit cables.

It sounds all a bit gushing, but the vertical nature of the camera compared to other action cameras seems to make it easier to mount on the bike and is certainly easier to fit on a helmet with less wind-buffeting. I also dropped one out of the protective case – at, er, motorway speeds – and it still works brilliantly, three years down



the line. The kit we have here has enough mounts to get you started for £149.99 and even comes with a mini SD card. There are some much larger names out there, but

the Olfi is always the one I go for. Well recommended.

■ **£149.99**
■ **Olficamera.com**

Dolly is a space saver

SPACE. IT'S ONE of the problems faced by anyone who owns more than one motorcycle, especially if you are working out of a traditional garage designed for a car.

If you need to move your bikes around with ease in a confined space, you might have considered getting a garage dolly. These are wheeled stands, usually with a long metal wheel track for you to push your motorcycle onto and a side stand plate to prop your machine upon, all mounted on heavy-duty castors. The problems are that the resulting mass can be cumbersome and hard to move around, the bike can be unstable and storage of a seven-foot (or longer) metal track can be awkward and certainly hard to transport in anything smaller than a van. Any space saved is limited by the length of the track.

Instead of having a track the length of a bike, this dolly from CJ Autos consists of a short, wheeled skate with a brake on it and has arms and a second wheeled plate which the sidestand rests on attached to the skate. There are two arms, so the dolly can be used on machines that have front-mounted sidestands. Once

assembled (that took less than 15 minutes from the box), you place the skate on the ground, slide it under your machine's engine or behind the rear wheel and engage the brake. Then you push the bike so the wheel rests on the skate.

Swinging the sidestand out, you put that on the plate on the end of the metal arm. Release the brake and the bike is then ready to be moved. Because you are using the front wheel as the pivot, the whole plot can move around in a much tighter circle than on a conventional dolly. The use of the front wheel rather than castors at both ends makes it stable and easy to move the bike around, even on a rough asphalt surface, and swinging it through 360 degrees is a one-person job.

The skate has a double use, too. If you have a centrestand, you can use the skate to prop the bike up on that stand and make it moveable. As it's a selection of parts rather than a large assembly, you can dismantle the dolly and it will easily fit in the boot of a car. It's a very neat bit of kit and will be a boon for anyone with a crowded garage or workshop.

■ £130
■ cjautos.eu



Morgo filter kits

FITTING A REMOTE oil filter to a dry sump British four-stroke motorcycle is a common modification, and there are several on the market. But the go-to add-on is that made by Morgo, which has been used for many years by classic racers.

While some budget kits use large filters and ugly unfinished castings, the Morgo unit is smaller than most and beautifully made. The Morgo device uses an easily available small canister filter and is a compact high-performance unit designed so it can be tucked away, weighing just 275g.

The top face input and output ports make the unit very compact and with a range of different fittings available, connection into most existing return lines should be easy to perform. This filter should only be used on a pressure feed, on classic bikes this would

be on the return line or on the pressure output side of the pump.

The unit is billet machined from aircraft quality alloy and for many years the body and stainless-steel fittings have all been polished. Recognising that not everyone wants a chunk of polished alloy shining away in a hidden space, Morgo have developed new versions of the machining.

The filter kit is now also available in black and with unpolished fittings. The whole unit measures just 56mm (2¼inch) diameter and 92mm (3½ inch) long. There is a selection of fixing brackets and pipe fittings, so it should be easy to fit to any application. The filter comes with a mounting bracket and two 'rat tail' fittings available in four common sizes as standard and in top or side feed. Buyers should state which



size they require when ordering.

Morgo produce a wide range of high-quality race bred products for the engines of British motorcycles from rotary oil pumps to big bore kits and

stainless fasteners. You can even get a precision machined Morgo yo-yo.

■ £67.95
■ morgo.co.uk



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CBG Buying guide

Should you be tempted, here are a few tips to stop you getting carried away...

- Speak to those in the know – clubs, owners, specialists. Is this the bike for you?
- Get some quotes – how much are parts, how easy are they to work on and how much will it cost to insure?
- See if you can have a go on one. This may be tricky, but if you have comprehensive insurance a kind owner or dealer may let you try one out.
- If you can't do all the jobs yourself, will your local dealer be prepared to work on it?
- If you're unsure of any of the above, email us at editor@classicbikeguide.com and if we can't help, we'll try to find someone who can.



Famous for its performance in all fields of motorcycle activity, the Triumph "Tiger 100" has everything the enthusiast demands—speed, acceleration, brakes, suspension—plus the sleek good looks expected of a real thoroughbred.



"Tiger 100" in action. ("Motor Cycling" Photo.)

T100 and T110 GENERAL

ENGINE T100. 500 c.c. O.H.V. twin with two gear-driven camshafts. High compression pistons, die-cast alloy head and barrel with close pitch fins. Dry sump lubrication with pressure-fed big ends and valve gear. Patented plain big ends. Twin carburettors optional (extra). Racing conversion parts available.

ENGINE T110. 450 c.c. O.H.V. vertical twin with cast iron head and barrel.

High compression pistons, special camshafts, large bore carburettor, dry sump lubrication, pressure-fed big ends and valve gear.

FOUR-SPEED GEARBOX. Triumph design and manufacture. Heavy duty gears and shafts of finest quality nickel and nickel-chrome steel. Positive stop footchange. Multi-plate clutch with built-in rubber pad type shock absorber.

FUEL TANKS. All-steel welded tanks with quick release caps and accessible filters. Oil tank in a streamlined "one-piece" unit with air cleaner, battery and tool containers.

FRAME. Braised cradle type frame with swinging arm rear suspension with hydraulic damping adjustable for varying loads.

FORKS. The famous Triumph telescopic pattern with long supple springs and hydraulic damping.

< **Triumph T110**
Is it almost perfect?



Honda CX500

A sumptuous seat and practical

Francis-Barnett Falcon 58

SPECIFICATION

GUARDS: 5" wide; tubular stays; rear guard patented for easy wheel removal.

BRAKES: 2" dia internal expanding; finger-adjustment. Telescopic with 50" three-rate springs; total movement 5".

SILENCER: Extra long for mass, power and silence; detachable but still rigid; with exhaust for 1976 protection.

SADDLE/EQUIPMENT: Large leather spring seat, fully adjustable. Smiths Trip speedometer; Swage handle; softener; grease gun and complete tool kit. Best quality black stainless; saure blue to order; tank gold lined; chromium and cadmium plating.

FRAME: Tubular cradle type, brazed and welded; rear stay tubes bolted to cradle.

REAR SUSPENSION: Swinging fork; two-rate springs giving 4" movement; hydraulic damper; rubber rebound buffer.

LIGHTING: Battery, 6V 12 amp. Exide fed via rectifier. A.C./D.C. switch on headlamp. Electric horn fitted.

STANDS: Front and centre; centre stand spring-up pattern.

CARRIER: Tubular carrier, available as an extra. Pillion footrest legs are fitted. Note that a pillion seat may be fixed direct to the rear guard.

Francis-Barnett Falcon

Such good build quality for a tiddler

Our aim is to bring you as much detail as we can on a specific model so you can work out if it's the sort of bike you would like. Brought to you by specialists, all the information we bring you has been checked as much as we can – however if you spot anything amiss let us know so we can tell others – the best information often comes from owners! You can always reach us at editor@classicbikeguide.com



Buying guide

An **IRON HAND** in a velvet glove

Have sportsbikes ever looked this good? Here's your guide to one of the most classic of British bikes - The Triumph T110

WORDS BY OLIVER HULME PHOTOGRAPHY BY GARY CHAPMAN





WHAT IS IT?

The first Triumph twin with rear suspension, the T110's star faded after the Bonneville arrived, but it was their first supersports roadster.



GOOD POINTS?

In 1954, the T110 was the fastest new mass-market motorbike on the road, as well as being economical and stylish. Today it's still an excellent steed, turning heads and attracting envious glances.



BAD POINTS?

High speed cornering isn't the Triumph's strong point, with a flexible single down tube frame and quickly wearing swinging-arm bearings. And high oil consumption when ridden hard: but what do you want? It's gorgeous.



IN 1953 TRIUMPH WERE ALREADY CUTTING A SWATHE through the motorcycle marketplace, with some of the best sports motorcycles in the world arriving in showrooms waiting for eager buyers and adorning catalogues.

Triumph practically invented the mass-market sportsbike with the 500 Speed Twin in 1938 and leaving most of their rivals to play catch up and set the pattern for the design of their twins for the next 40 years. Just a few years later, in 1950, the 500 became a 650 as Triumph bored and stroked the Speed Twin to create the Thunderbird. But attractive as these models were, the sprung-hub rear suspension and old-style saddles were still harking back to the 1930s.

They had already increased the compression and changed the cams on the Speed Twin to create the Tiger T100 when three years later Triumph released the Tiger T110 into the wild, known on the streets as the One-Ten. This tuned up version of the Thunderbird had hotter cams, higher compression and a sprung frame. Triumph debuted their new baby by entering the prototype in the 1953 ISDT where it was ridden by Jim Alves and Britain took the top award in the competition. A month later Triumph unveiled the production version at the Paris Salon.

As well as a sprung frame, the T110 had an alternator and a separate magneto providing the ignition, with a manual advance/retard mechanism operated by a lever on the handlebars. The gearbox

was moved forward a little to fit it into the new frame and the primary chaincase was shortened. Oil capacity was increased from the Thunderbird.

The T110 was all about performance and Tigers took first, second and third in the 750cc class at the 1955 Thruxton 9-hour race, though they were beaten overall by a BSA Gold Star 500. The following year the Triumphs were beaten by a host of 350 Gold Stars but in 1957, by which time the race had become the Thruxton 500-Miles, a T110 with Mike Hailwood and Dan Shorey on board took top honours with an average speed of 66mph.

The US market, which was so important to British manufacturers, went crazy for the Tiger, with most of Triumph's production crossing the Atlantic. As important as the engine mods were, the big change was that sprung frame; Triumph's first. Though a far from perfect design, big bikes with sprung frames were still a rarity and getting the design right would take time. Look at a bare T110 frame and you will quickly spot the lack of structural bracing. This made the Tiger a bit of a handful on twisty roads. Much of this was down to Triumph's perverse paring of lowering manufacturing costs and desire for lightness.

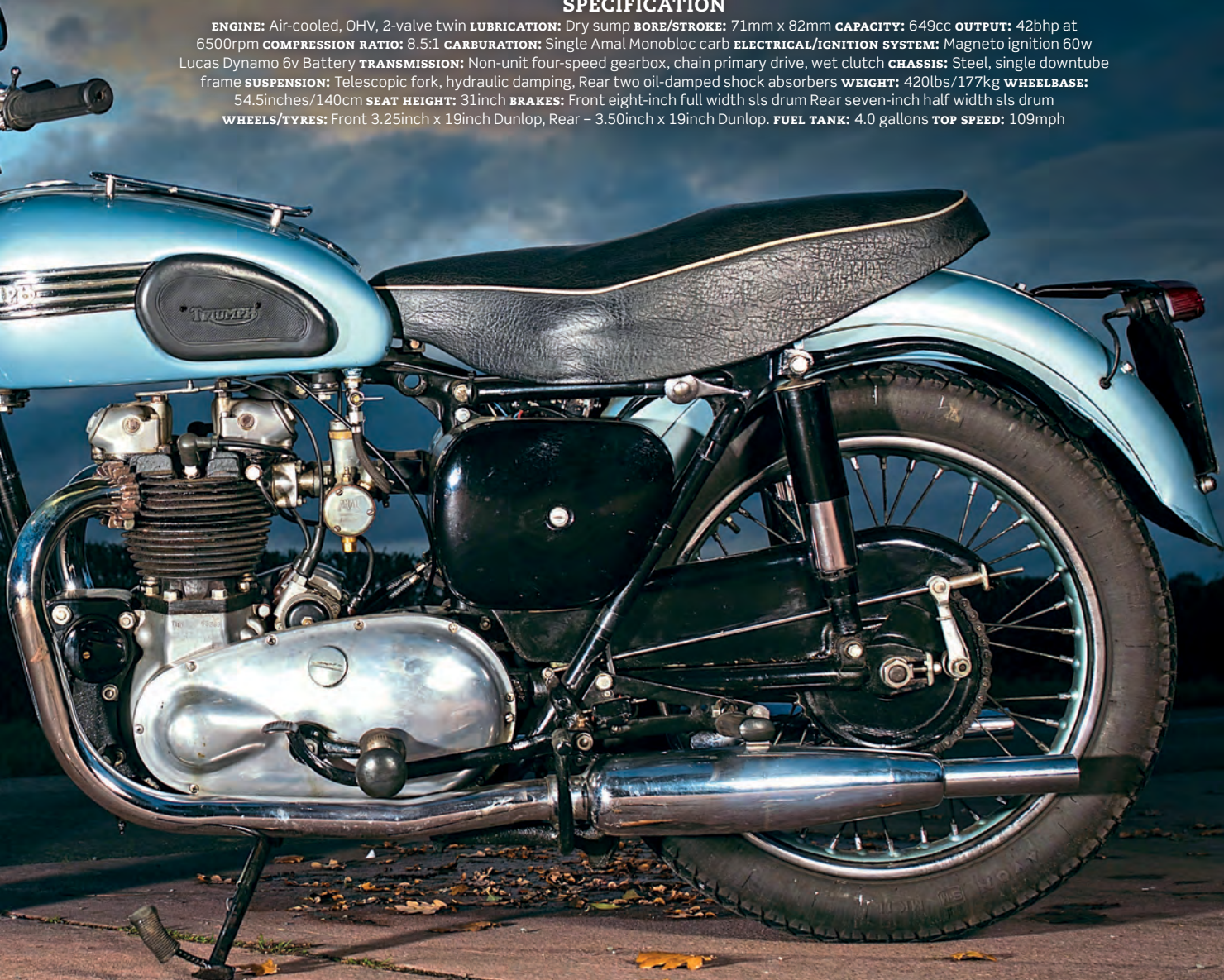
T110 stood for the machines alleged top speed of 110mph, and the Tiger was close to it – Cycle

magazine managed to wring 109mph out of a T110, with 114mph on the clock. Later Triumph claimed their uprated T110 had a recorded top speed of 117mph. It was considered one of the fastest motorcycles you could buy at the time, with only exotica like Vincent HRD offerings likely to beat it in the straight-line traffic light drag races. The T110, though pricey, was way cheaper than a Vincent. Pride and Clarke were offering brand-new T110s for £265 in 1956 (plus an extra 16s for pillion footpegs), while Slocombes of Neasden wanted £280 for a two-year-old Vincent Black Prince.

Triumph kept updating their models on a year by year basis and they tended to use their customers as their test riders. 1954 Tigers had cast iron cylinder heads which didn't shed heat quite as well as aluminium and they distorted when they were ridden hard and got hot. As a temporary fix, a fifth cooling fin was added to help beat the heat. There were also oil feeds running outside the engine to return lubricant from the rocker boxes. In 1955 the new alloy 'Delta' head was introduced which had iron valve seats. The external oil feeds to the cylinder head were replaced by directing the oil along the pushrod tubes and the choke lever was moved under the seat to clean up the handlebars. The frames now had sidecar lugs and a new sidestand.

SPECIFICATION

ENGINE: Air-cooled, OHV, 2-valve twin **LUBRICATION:** Dry sump **BORE/STROKE:** 71mm x 82mm **CAPACITY:** 649cc **OUTPUT:** 42bhp at 6500rpm **COMPRESSION RATIO:** 8.5:1 **CARBURATION:** Single Amal Monobloc carb **ELECTRICAL/IGNITION SYSTEM:** Magneto ignition 60w Lucas Dynamo 6v Battery **TRANSMISSION:** Non-unit four-speed gearbox, chain primary drive, wet clutch **CHASSIS:** Steel, single downtube frame **SUSPENSION:** Telescopic fork, hydraulic damping, Rear two oil-damped shock absorbers **WEIGHT:** 420lbs/177kg **WHEELBASE:** 54.5inches/140cm **SEAT HEIGHT:** 31inch **BRAKES:** Front eight-inch full width s/s drum Rear seven-inch half width s/s drum **WHEELS/TYRES:** Front 3.25inch x 19inch Dunlop, Rear – 3.50inch x 19inch Dunlop. **FUEL TANK:** 4.0 gallons **TOP SPEED:** 109mph





The 1955 Triumph Tiger T110 was already one of the hottest machines on the road and would wipe the floor with most of its two-wheeled rivals, in a straight line at least. It would give most cars a run for their money too, but more power was needed to keep the Americans happy. Compression was bumped up to 8.5:1, and new, hotter E3325 cams were installed. The added compression caused some kick-start shafts to snap, so a new beefed-up mechanism was needed using higher quality steel. Ignition was now handled by a K2FC competition magneto and the claimed brake horsepower from its twin-cylinder engine was 42hp at 6500 RPM. Braking was just short of 30 feet at 30mph – a very good figure in those days being helped by the air-cooled eight-inch front brake. Home maintenance was within the scope of the owner who possessed the necessary tools and a modicum of skill and faults in the lighting and ignition circuits were not beyond home repair.

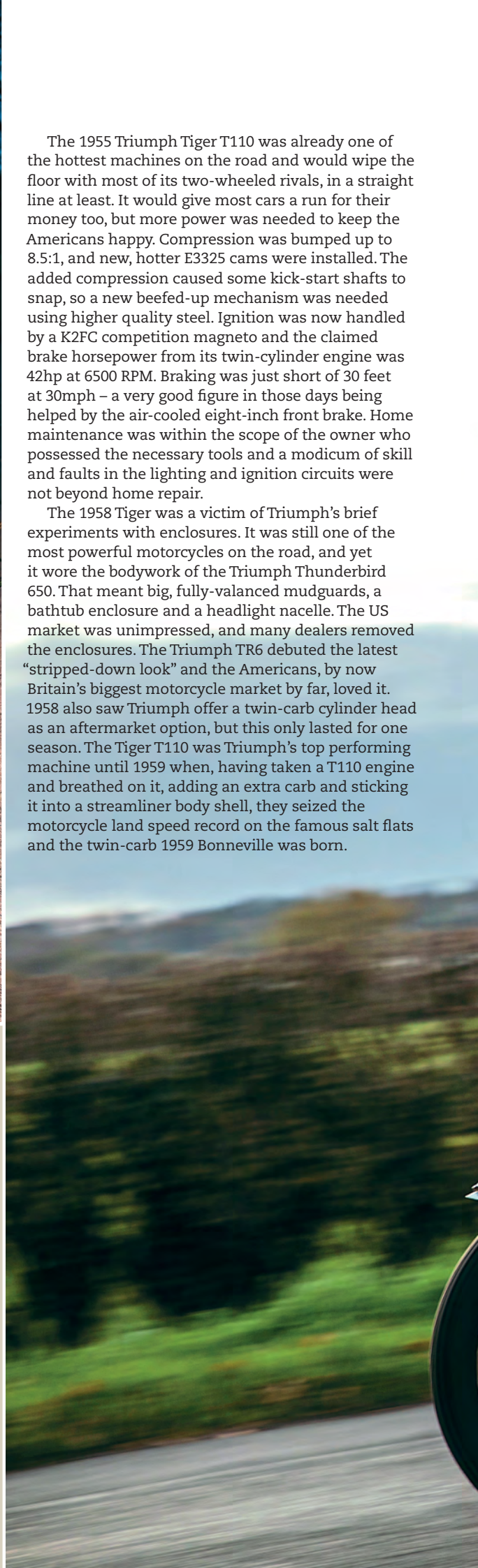
The 1958 Tiger was a victim of Triumph's brief experiments with enclosures. It was still one of the most powerful motorcycles on the road, and yet it wore the bodywork of the Triumph Thunderbird 650. That meant big, fully-valanced mudguards, a bathtub enclosure and a headlight nacelle. The US market was unimpressed, and many dealers removed the enclosures. The Triumph TR6 debuted the latest "stripped-down look" and the Americans, by now Britain's biggest motorcycle market by far, loved it. 1958 also saw Triumph offer a twin-carb cylinder head as an aftermarket option, but this only lasted for one season. The Tiger T110 was Triumph's top performing machine until 1959 when, having taken a T110 engine and breathed on it, adding an extra carb and sticking it into a streamliner body shell, they seized the motorcycle land speed record on the famous salt flats and the twin-carb 1959 Bonneville was born.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Triumph's Tiger range started with the T70 – so-called because the 250cc single had a top speed of 70mph. Next up was the Tiger T80 which was a 350cc single. Then came the T90 which was a 350 twin. Calling it a Tiger meant that it was the sportier version of the base 350 twin. After the Second World War the 5T Speed Twin was given hotter cams and higher compression, creating the Tiger T100, which would hit 100mph, on paper (or the speedometer). When the 650 Thunderbird arrived in 1950 a more powerful Tiger version was soon to follow. The 650cc Tiger T110, with a claimed top speed of 114mph and a recorded speed

of 109mph, arrived in 1953, and remained one of the fastest bikes you could buy until the 120mph Triumph Bonneville arrived in 1959, which was given the model code T120.

The use of the T coding went slightly off the rails in 1969 when the Trident was dubbed the T150, becoming the T160 in 1975 and in 1973 when the Bonneville became a 750 it was named the T140. None of these three bikes was good for 140, 150 or 160mph, but the masterminds at Triumph had started, so they had to finish. By this time the Tiger had become Triumph's tourer, and the single carb 750 was dubbed the Tiger TR7.



When the Bonneville was introduced in 1959, it too wore the Thunderbird's chunky bodywork, but it only took them one model year to correct that oversight. The 1960 T110 had a new frame built to improve the increasingly fast Triumph twin's handling. This was a duplex offering with two downtubes and a single top tube, though an extra top tube was quickly added to reduce flexing. The subframe was bolted to the main loop. It had the same forks as the other three Triumph 650s and a nacelle holding the instruments and switches.

With its performance outshone by the Bonneville and with the new unit 650 engine on the way, production of the Tiger T110 ended in 1961 and the Tiger name was retired until 1969, when Triumph used it to name the road version of the TR6 Trophy.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

The Tiger T110 was a hit with everybody that rode it. Writing in the *Motor Cycle* in 1955, Vic Willoughby said: "The twin's chief charm lay in its clean and truly searing acceleration which I judge to be second

only to that of the high performance 1000cc multis of the present day and recent past. I know some riders regard Triumph high speed steering as being a little frisky, but the T110 impressed me as being one of the best Meriden models I have ridden in that respect. Two of the Triumph's attractions for those who use a super-sports model for modest as well as zestful duties are commendable petrol economy at moderate speed and a well subdued exhaust." Willoughby's biggest criticism was reserved for a gearbox oil leak that dumped lubricant onto the back tyre.

An unnamed *Motor Cycle* tester described the acceleration as "scintillating" with pronounced though not objectionable vibration arriving at 80mph and concluded: "Possessing a performance which suggests the analogy of an iron hand in a velvet glove it is one of the most impressive Triumphs yet produced."

US magazine *Motorcyclist* pointed out that although the T110 was already fast, it was ripe for further tuning, though the writer added: "For the life of me I don't know why anyone but the all-out "drag" ▶

PRICES

A project: A mostly complete basket case T110 will cost around £2,000.

Museum-quality example: A fully restored T110 will set you back around £8,000-10,000, which is a lot less than an early pre-unit Bonneville.

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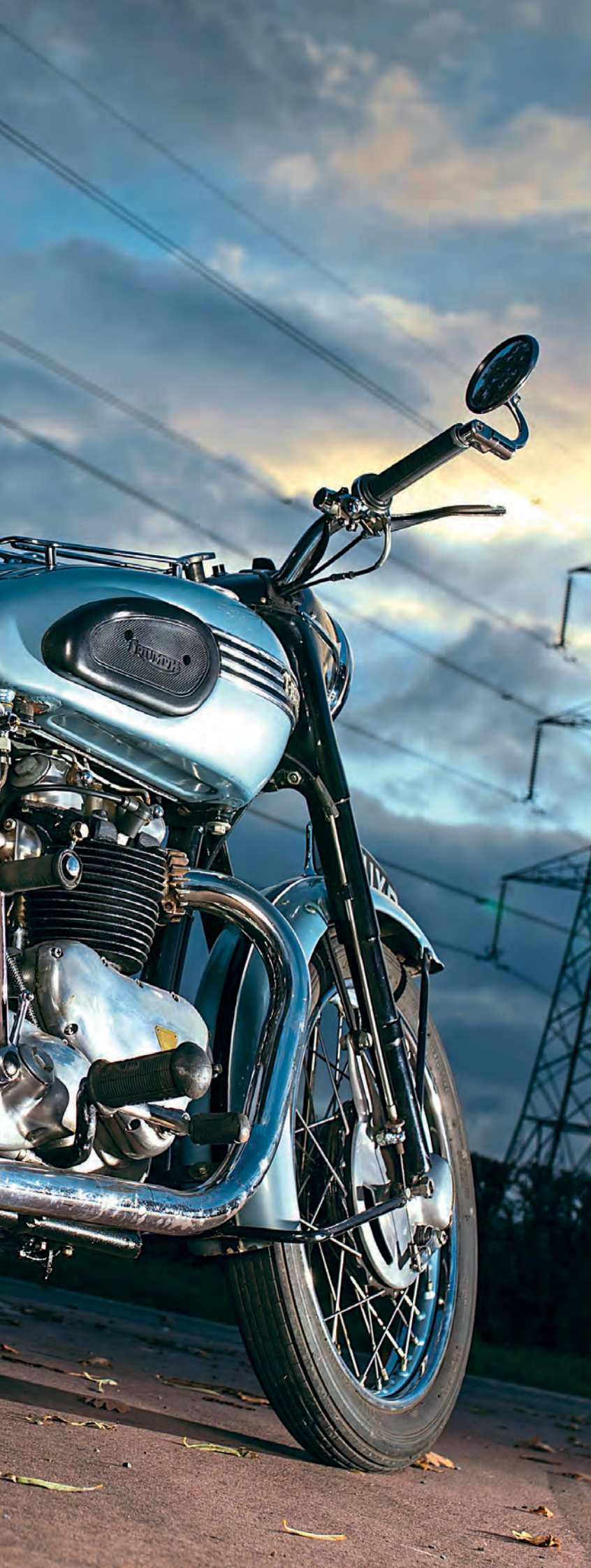
srmclassicbikes.com

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artist” would or could use any more power than is already packed into this compact power plant. If you are looking for a fast highway cruiser that will be equally at home in city traffic or in off-the-pavement riding, better go take a look and a ride on the Triumph Tiger T110.”

TIGER ON THE LOOSE IN CHESHIRE

Have you ever sat on a motorcycle and thought instantly: “Oh yes, this is just right...”? The Triumph T110 has a fair claim to be the first modern motorcycle. Try one for size and even if your experience is only of 21st century motorcycles almost everything will be familiar, with the possible exception of the manual advance/retard mechanism and the right foot shift.

The T110 on sale at Classic Motorcycles Ltd started second kick, with no more than a couple of gentle prods and a little bit of the advance/retard setting witchcraft that is needed on machines of this period. It chuntered along at tickover beautifully. The right-foot change gearbox was as smooth as any British gearbox made since 1950, and the clutch was a two finger job to pull in. The bike feels tiny in comparison to a modern 650, and its build is more like a 250 or a 400, so it’s a doddle to move about. With the clutch in and first gear engaged on the conventional one-down-three-up gearbox, the T110 and I took to the road.

Sadly, or perhaps fortunately given the Tiger’s reputation for being unforgiving on corners, the roads around Classic Motorcycles Ltd’s Cheshire HQ are mostly long and straight, so I had little opportunity to experience the legendary flexibility of the frame and the T110’s allegedly flighty handling, but the power take off was instant and enervating and the low-speed handling light and precise, with an impressively tight turning circle. For those who like to chuck their bikes into corners at speed, the Triumph will be something of an ‘experience’ and advice to riders is to just hang on and never shut the throttle halfway through a corner despite the temptation to do so.

First registered in August 1954, this T110 has the iron cylinder head of the early models and is in standard trim with no additions or removals. A Triumph marque specialist certificate from Meriden works records shows it left the factory on May 14, 1954 and has those all-important matching frame and engine numbers.

It has a lovely ‘scalloped’ or ‘pie crust’ front brake which was restored in 2010 with the hub skimmed and the linings replaced, and it shows, with the front brake happily hauling the diminutive twin to a halt. Not mint, but smartly kept, this T110 is a motorcycle that you would not be scared to ride for fear of wearing it out and is just begging to be taken for a run. The engine, though not entirely oil-tight, was mechanically quiet, crisp and smooth and the gearbox is a joy, and it gives a lovely ride which can keep up with modern traffic, albeit with a few quirks like operating the advance/retard at low speeds and the odd drip of lubricant. This motorcycle is a delight and for a Triumph of this vintage it is not unaffordable at £7999 – less than a modern Street Twin, more desirable and unlikely to lose its value. A true classic in every respect.

If some other lucky person has not yet picked up this gem, you can find it by visiting Classic Motorcycles Ltd eBay selling page by searching for their name, or call Lawrence on 01928 788500.



THE SPECIALIST: MONTY'S VERDICT

One of the big advantages of buying, riding, running and restoring a Triumph twin is that there are plenty of specialists out there to help you keep your bike on the road. One of these specialists is Monty's Classic Motorcycles in Devon. With a shed full of his own pre-unit twins and 35 years or more in the trade, Monty has got the kind of knowledge most can only dream of acquiring.

"The T110 is a beautiful engine. The cams aren't wild, and there's not too much power, so the vibes aren't as bad. The iron head is easier to work on, and you can change the seals on the pushrod tubes without taking the head off, which you cannot do with the alloy head. You just undo the rocker boxes and can get at the tubes. Back when I was youngster, we all went for the alloy head and the twin carb conversions, but with the benefit of hindsight, I should have gone for the cast iron head. Alloy ones wear out and most have been skimmed to death by now.

"An important thing is to get the carbs and ignition set up correctly. The pre-unit gearbox has the operating lever on the outside, so cable changes are easy. Gearboxes tend to be sound, though they

do suffer from wear and tear, like anything mechanical – lots of people will do engine rebuilds yet leave the gearbox alone because they don't like to touch them, and they end up with worn bushes and bearings and clutch problems and change gear like a tractor. After all these years any motorcycle's condition is going to be down to the last person who put it back together.

"On the early ones the frame could crack behind the primary chaincase and often these get bodged up and badly fixed. The first bikes had the 'pie crust' front brake, which worked well, but there were some breakages, so they used the BSA A10 brake until 1957, which was good. But then they moved Triumph's full width hub brake which just wasn't as good.

"Getting engine parts is no problem, and all the parts that wear out are available. If you have crankcases and a crankshaft you can build a new engine with new parts. The original con rods had white metal bearings that are difficult to replace. Back in the old days you could just send a worn crank back to Triumph for an exchange and refurb. Now there are new shell bearings available instead and you can get the crankshaft reground to take the shells.

"Tin ware is hard to get hold of, especially good mudguards, toolboxes and oil tanks. You can get new parts made in India, but don't expect it to fit straight on, and don't paint it till you've tried it out first. But don't forget that even when the bikes were new, we had trouble fitting stuff. You had to fiddle around and modify parts to make them fit.

"Triumphs are easy to work on, but so many people won't buy an original Triumph workshop manual and will rely on information off the internet. There's certainly loads of info on there, some of it good, but there also loads of internet experts telling people a load of old rubbish which they believe and end up damaging their bikes. Get the Triumph manual or find someone who knows what they are doing and talk to them.

"The saddest thing is when people spend lots of money buying bikes that look great on the outside, but the restorer has skimmed on the things you can't see that are important. That's the kind of thing that can put people off forever.

"The T110 is excellent – you can keep one on the road with few problems. As a riding machine they are great motorcycles." **CBG**

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Honda CX500

Could there have been a more insulting nickname for a motorcycle than the 'Plastic Maggot'? Honda's CX500 split opinions when it arrived and continues to do so

WORDS BY OLIVER HULME PHOTOGRAPHY BY GARY CHAPMAN





WHAT IS IT?

At the time, a high-tech, 500cc shaft-driven 80-degree V-twin sports-tourer and commuter.



GOOD POINTS?

Reliable, solid and economical, the CX500 makes an excellent tourer and a cheap practical classic.



BAD POINTS?

Early models had some teething issues with the engine and parts for later models can be hard to find. Handling is a bit top heavy.

COST?

Restoration project:

£300 (basketcase)
– £1,000 (complete, runner)

Mint condition:

£3,000 (CX500X/A/B)
£4,500-6,000 (CX500 Turbo)



THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER RIDDEN A HONDA CX500 still turn up their noses at Honda's vee, while those who have owned one will defend the V-twin passionately. The CX was ground-breaking when it first appeared in 1978, but it was greeted not with astonishment but with derision by much of the motorcycle press. Where everybody else was turning out double overhead camshaft straight four sports bikes, Honda had gone out and built a four-valve per cylinder opposed V-twin, with push rods operating the valves, a shaft drive and water cooling. Honda had even ditched the by now ubiquitous separate headlamp, speedo and rev counter arrangement and enclosed them all in a plastic nacelle. No-one had put a nacelle on a motorcycle since 1962.

It didn't help that when the CX500 was launched at a racetrack one of the first bikes was written off within a few laps by an over-enthusiastic journalist, causing the remaining scribes to voice concerns about the handling. The CX prototype had been an air-cooled V-twin 350, the engine shoved into a CB200 frame with a transfer box and a chain drive, down draught carbs and exhaust ports pointing to the floor. A second prototype had a shaft drive, water cooling and a more conventional exhaust and inlet layout. It still looked normal for a Honda – apart from the engine.

However, Honda were not going for normal. When the production CX500 arrived, there was nothing much like it on the road, with the possible exception of Moto Guzzi's V50.

PROBLEM

Criticism of the design was amplified when the camchain tensioners started causing trouble. Honda quickly fixed the problem with a factory recall, a highly unusual step for a motorcycle manufacturer at the time. The camchain tensioner problem had been caused by the chain being too heavy and overstressing the mechanism. The tensioner was mounted at the rear of the cylinders and required mechanics at Honda dealerships to take the engine out, put the new tensioner on and refit it. This was a job that Honda said could be done in three-and-a-half hours, leaving the drive to the rear wheel undisturbed. You can spot a modified engine by checking it has a triangle of dots stamped next to the engine number, though it is highly unlikely that an unmodified engine will still be running. Despite the bad initial publicity, Honda customers in the UK were brand loyal and the CX began to sell in sizable numbers.

Despite the sneers of the sports-bike riders, once the camchain issue had been sorted the CX500 proved to be a motorcycle that just went on and on and on.

They became the darling of the despatch riding circuit in the 1980s and the weapon of choice for those looking for a decent commuter/tourer, but whose pocket wouldn't stretch to a BMW.

The clutch and oil filter were mounted next to each other on the front of the engine, making them easy to get at. The four-valve heads were water-cooled and the valves themselves were operated by short pushrods. The barrels were cast into the crankcases. On the one hand this reduced the chances of oil and coolant leaks but would make a rebore or barrel work a major task. Fortunately, the engine was so well built there are plenty of examples of bikes passing 100,000 miles without needing engine work of this kind. The cylinders were set at 80 degrees to make the layout slimmer, and the heads were twisted off-centre by a few degrees, meaning the carburettors could be tucked



in under the petrol tank, avoiding the rider snagging the inlets with their knees. Honda made the gearbox spin in the opposite direction to the crankshaft. This cancelled out most of the torque effect you would normally get from inline crankshaft V-twin and flat twin engines.

The first model, in 1978, was the CX500X. The second model was the CX500A in 1979, which had an aluminium radiator surround and a neat little fly-screen which diverted attention from the nacelle. The CX500B, which arrived in 1981 had further design tweaks, with black wheels and a few other minor modifications, mostly to the engine breathing. Keeping the camchain properly adjusted remained important, as a slack chain could wear away at the engine casings and deposit nasty bits of swarf into the sump.

The CX was the first motorcycle ever fitted with tubeless tyres and the twin front discs were simple and excellent. The handling was good for the time, although the CX could be top-heavy. The liquid cooling, which had been a novelty at launch, meant the engine was kept at a constant temperature which added to the machine's longevity. Honda fitted the CX with an exhaust balance box under the engine and made it out of mild steel. With all the rainwater from the front-end splashing on it, the box rotted out in short order, and a replacement Motad two-into-one system was a common fixture.

The CX500B was joined at first by the CX500C, a custom variant with a peanut tank, high bars, shorter exhausts and a stepped seat. There was also the

“The CX was ground-breaking when it first appeared in 1978, but it was greeted not with astonishment but with derision by much of the motorcycle press”



“The CX was the first motorcycle ever fitted with tubeless tyres and the twin front discs were simple and excellent”

GL500 Silver Wing, a kind of mini-Goldwing with a barn door of a fairing and hard luggage. This was popular in the US and with riders of smaller stature who found bigger tourers a challenge. There was also the CX500D, a model rarely seen in the UK, which had the stock roadster tank, the custom's high bars and ditched the nacelle. There were also 400cc versions, made for countries where 400cc marked a major licensing and tax change for riders.

The CX500B was joined in 1982 by the CX500EC, commonly referred to as the Eurosport, although not given that name by Honda. If the looks of the original had been controversial, the EC was even more so, with the bike losing what few curves it had and some very 1980s styling being introduced. The EC had Honda's Pro-link rear suspension, anti-dive air forks and a twin-piston rear disc brake, all of which improved the handling. There was increased use of plastic for the bodywork and mudguards. An automatic camchain tensioner was introduced and this had mixed results, as keeping the camchain in adjustment was much easier, but the automatic tensioner could fail from 20,000 miles onwards.

Honda then decided that their shaft driven pushrod V-twin was the ideal candidate for that most 1980s of power boosts, the fitting of a turbocharger. The futuristic CX500 Turbo was packed with innovations and made for a single year. The CX was a big motorcycle for a 500, and now the early engine gremlins had been sorted out it happily took to a major power increase, being taken out to 673cc and this was branded the CX650ED Eurosport. The extra capacity turned the CX into a top-notch long-range middleweight. There was a turbo version of the 650 too,

which is regarded by some as the best of the CX range and is certainly the most powerful by a long way. Parts for Turbo models are hard to find, and this should be considered if buying one today.

Production of the CX in all its variants only lasted for six years, from 1978 to 1983, with the last models lingering in showrooms until 1984. The CX is still regarded with considerable affection by owners past and present. Many a machine has been raised from the dead, lurking in the back of sheds and garages with little more than a fresh battery and a dash of fuel. The early models have become a popular basis for a custom, be it a café racer or a brat-style street racer, partly down to their cheapness. A visit to eBay will show more home brewed customs on offer than stock machines. As a result, finding a stock early CX500 is becoming increasingly difficult, which is a shame because if any late 1970s Japanese motorcycle deserves its place in history, it's the CX500.

I had a CX500X more than two decades ago – here's my take on Honda's first V-twin:

“Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.”

Back in the early 1990s, I was gainfully employed by the Royal Mail and I needed something to take me the 40 miles each way on the M4 in south Wales. To perform this task, I bought a 15-year-old Honda CX500 for £400 to get to work on. This 40,000-mile CX500X, with its sticky-taped on indicators and other road wear bodes proved itself perfect for its allotted task of belting down the M4 every day at the crack of dawn, and hacking home again as night fell, often in sub-zero temperatures.





A family affair

Father and son Paul and Scott Woodland have had a long relationship with Honda's CX500EC. Paul bought an EC 16 years ago. A former Fowlers Motorcycles courtesy bike, the white EC has covered more than 60,000 miles with no more serious issues than needing a replacement stator. The EC isn't Paul's anymore however, as these days it's Scott's regular ride.

"When he was about nine years old, Scott had to go to football practice and my wife had taken the car, so I told him, if he wanted to go, he'd have to go on the bike. From then on, every time I went out, he would insist on coming along," said Paul.

"When I was in my teens, I told dad it was about time he let me have the bike, so he gave it to me and got the red one," added Scott.

The red EC is a French import and has done around 44,000 miles.

"I was caught by a bit of a bug for them. I had a CX500B before this one, and the EC handles a lot better than this does," said Paul, while Scott, who has also had a GL400 and a GL500 agrees: "It just sticks to the road."

Reliability has been key to CX ownership. Paul said: "The only other problem I've had was changing the water pump on the B. On my red EC the engine has never been touched. They're lovely motorbikes. I ride it pretty much every day and it will easily cover 200 miles in comfort."

The Woodlands' CX500ECs are their steeds of choice, despite there being other machines in the garage. Scott said: "We go on runs and rideouts together and seeing two of them always makes people smile."





The shaft drive reduced the amount of week-by-week maintenance needed. It was the most comfortable motorcycle I'd ever ridden and was big, chunky and reliable. Mind you, thanks to its age and the worn suspension it handled like a greased pig on roller skates. It was rarely ridden for fun, as 80 miles a day on the motorway six days a week was more than enough for me.

As with any old motorcycle in regular use, things that were not already worn out, wore out. I bunged a second-hand Motad exhaust system on it and repaired the torn seat with gaffer tape. I kept an eye on the oil level and changed this occasionally, rarely touching the filter. I wrapped the wheels with good Avon rubber, coated it with WD40, and did all the other things you have to do if your living depends on keeping a cheap motorcycle running. I never checked the camchain, so can only assume the modification had been done. It would pull away in almost any gear, the gearbox was smooth and would cruise at 80mph without as much as a whimper.

I learned of the CX500's most irritating weak spot, the four-inch long spark plug caps. These would crack and break down, creating mysterious misfires.

For three years it reliably barrelled on, but I started to tire, unfairly, of the CX500 and its soft, plodding nature.

Then one nasty, damp, greasy Welsh valleys morning, I was blatting out of the valley at around 45mph when I hit a collapsed manhole cover with my front wheel, on an entirely straight stretch of road.

The bars snapped hard from side to side, the back wheel also hit the cover and stepped out. Everything went sideways and suddenly I was sliding down the road on my face, the bike sliding alongside me as we bounced off gutters and kerbstones. I'd been riding that road for years and I'd never hit that manhole before.

The damage was that endured in your classic medium-speed get-off, taking out the headlight glass, indicators and brake lever, my crash helmet and a bit of pride. It bent and battered the exhaust and snapped an exhaust stud on the engine – not an enormous amount of damage, but enough to cost a couple of hundred pounds to put right. It sat outside the house looking all battered and forlorn for a bit, and I got offered a much more exciting Honda VF400 by a fellow postie, so I sold the damaged CX500 for £200. I let it go, as losing £200 on a motorcycle that had been daily transport for three years seemed reasonable.

If I thought motorcycles had souls, I'd wonder if the CX knew I was bored with it and spat me off on purpose. **CBG**

■ Thanks to Scott and Paul Woodland for braving a very inclement Sunday afternoon, and to Classicbikes.co.uk for the use of their immaculate CX500C custom – visit their website for details

SPECIFICATION

MANUFACTURED: 1978-1983 **ENGINE:** Water-cooled OHV transverse V-twin **BORE / STROKE:** 78 x 52mm **CAPACITY:** 497cc **COMPRESSION:** 10:1 **POWER:** 50 bhp @ 9000rpm **LUBRICATION:** Wet sump **IGNITION:** Electronic CDI **CARBURETTORS:** twin 34mm Keihin CV **TRANSMISSION:** shaft **GEARBOX:** Five-speed **FRAME:** Spine frame, engine as a stressed member **FRONT SUSPENSION:** 33mm telescopic forks **REAR SUSPENSION:** Twin FVQ shocks **FRONT BRAKES:** twin 11in (275mm) discs **REAR BRAKE:** 6.3in (160mm) drum **TYRES:** 3.25 x 19 front 3.75 x 18 rear **DRY WEIGHT:** 452lbs (205kg) **WHEELBASE:** 57.3ins (149cm) **GROUND CLEARANCE:** 5.9ins (15cm) **SEAT HEIGHT:** 31.9ins (81cm) **TOP SPEED:** 112mph

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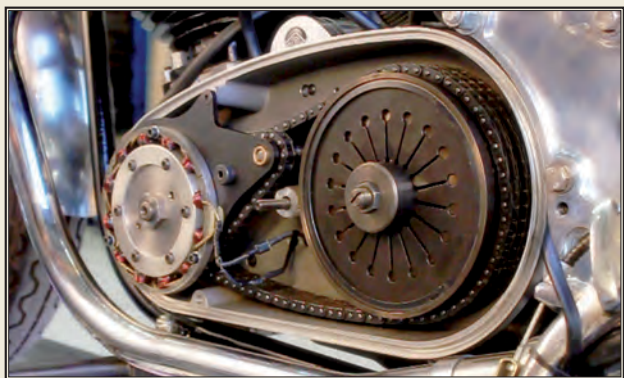
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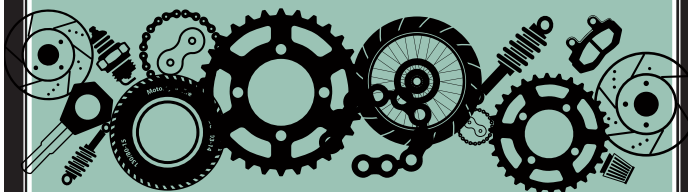
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Francis-Barnett Falcon

Francis-Barnett two-strokes were a cut above the hordes of Villiers-engined motorcycles being built by dozens of British manufacturers in the 1950s and 60s. Yet today these purposeful lightweights are often overlooked by those searching for a British classic



WHAT IS IT?

A 200cc two-stroke single from the heyday of British motorcycling



GOOD POINTS?

Well-made and of remarkable quality, especially in its early incarnations, the Falcon handles well, performs more than adequately and it has buckets of period charm



WEAK SPOTS?

Finding some bodywork parts for a Falcon is going to require serious autojumbling. High-speed running will put the Falcon under strain. You have to choose between the wide ratios of the three-speed box, or the inferior build of the four-speed offering. The AMC engine lacks the quality of the Villiers. Can be tricky to start when hot



ALTHOUGH THE FALCON NAME APPEARED IN the early 1930s, the model most commonly seen was in production from 1949 to 1965. Unlike many manufacturers, Francis-Barnett did not make a wartime bike and instead production was given over to making aircraft trolleys and using the factory as a War Department motorcycle service depot.

There were no less than 15 different postwar Falcon road bikes and the Falcon was also the basis for arguably the world's first purpose-built trail bikes. A few were available as highly competitive scramblers.

The road-going Falcon, certainly in its earliest form, was a handsome and well-built motorcycle with a top-notch finish. There was enough power from the compact 197cc two-stroke single to allow it to burble along for miles. These early models were noted for having Francis-Barnett's 20in-long front fork springs and a long silencer.

The Falcon arrived in 1948 and came at first with a Villiers 6E engine and moved on to 7E, 8E, and 10E powerplants. On the last models made, in the 1960s, Associated Motor Cycles used its own Piatti-designed 20T engines. Later trials and scrambler models were given the AMC 250 25T engine or a Villiers 32A 247cc offering. Initially, the Falcon had a one-up, two-down, three-speed gearbox, with big gaps between the gears that required the engine to have a broad spread of power. The 7E had a four-speed Albion gearbox and 8E had a three-speed gearbox at first, though an extra gear was available as an option by specifying that an Albion unit was fitted. The Albion might have given the rider more to play with, but it was not as well made as the Villiers box.

SOPHISTICATED

The Villiers engine could not be described as quiet in operation. This was partly down to the wide tolerances used by Villiers and this helped it cope with the indignities imposed upon the powerplant by kerbside mechanics. This meant that the engine would keep running long after machines with more sophisticated engineering had failed.

Despite being fitted with a proprietary engine, the Falcon was not a cheap option – a Falcon 200 was more expensive than a 250cc BSA C10 at its launch. The main reason for this was the Falcon was better made. The 1951 Falcons had swinging arm rear suspension, which was something of a novelty for a lightweight motorcycle of the period. The Falcon also had all manner of improvements and options added as the model was updated, many of which were not usually seen on small motorcycles, and indeed were considered special on much bigger machines. These included items like having the control levers welded to the handlebars to keep the lines clean. A Smiths Chronometric speedometer was used on early bikes before it was replaced by a magnetic speedometer on later machines, with the instrument in the headlamp nacelle. A battery was fitted on the first sprung frame models when most lightweights of the period relied on poor-quality direct lights and there was an ammeter to make sure the charging system was producing enough juice to keep everything moving smoothly.

Both the forks and the twin shocks were built in-house by Francis-Barnett and were well made. Rather than bouncing along the road like rival machines the



“The road-going Falcon was a handsome and well-built motorcycle with a top-notch finish.”



five inches of travel on the front forks and four inches at the back provided a smooth ride. And the shock absorbers are rebuildable.

While by no means a sports machine, the Falcon's handling was excellent up to 50mph and sure-footed at low speeds on poor surfaces. AMC, which took over Francis-Barnett in 1947, kept the company's model identification system. Francis-Barnett coded each model with consecutive numbers across its range from the 1930s. Each FB model was given a number, and the Falcon started as the model 54, which came with a rigid frame and direct lighting in 1949. The 55 released at the same time had a battery rectified lighting set, whereas the 54 had direct lighting. Then came the 58, which had rear suspension. In between times the smaller Merlin 122cc model was first listed as the 52, then the 53 and then as the 57. The numbering system ran right up until 1966 when the final models came out. Trials models had a T suffix but retained the equivalent road bike's number.

Francis-Barnett models had an alpha numeric frame number that identified the year, model and in some cases the suspension type, competition designation and colour. By quoting the frame number owners could purchase exactly the right parts for their particular bike, even down to the colour.

The first Falcon with the AMC engine was the Model 87, which used the same suspension and hubs as the 171cc Light Cruiser. The engine was similar to that fitted to the Light Cruiser, but with a longer stroke. This Falcon had a tubular steel frame, Wico-Paty electrics and did not have the enclosed bodywork of other Francis-Barnett models. In 1962 Francis-Barnett production was moved to the James factory at Greet in Birmingham. With the models being built side-by-side, more parts became common across both ranges.

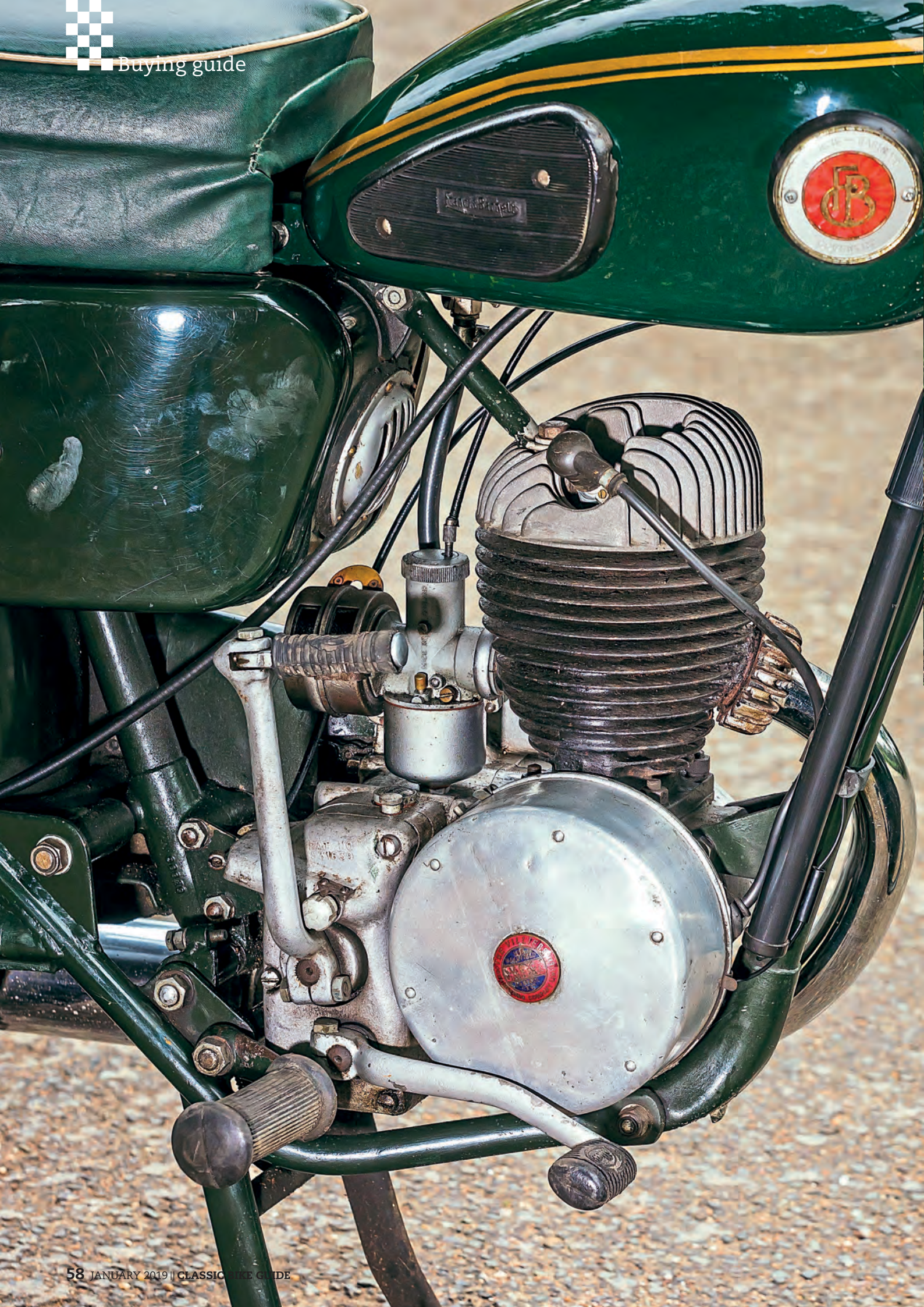
The exhaust system moved from the left to right side of the bike, and a two-colour paint scheme became a popular choice. A handsome early Sixties Falcon with the two-tone paint job was used as police transport in the TV series *Heartbeat* and in fact five Falcons in total were used over the 18 years the show was in production.

With AMC in a state of financial meltdown in the mid-Sixties, production of the Falcon and all other Francis-Barnett and James models ceased in October 1966. The company's last new model, the 149cc model 96, was not even given the dignity of a name. It was a sad end for a motorcycle manufacturer that prided itself in building small motorcycles of a higher quality than most. ▶

PRICES

Project: A mostly complete restoration project will cost between £600-£1000

Museum-quality example: A fully restored Falcon will set you back between £1800-£2500





A Falcon flies - the Francis-Barnett on the road

SITTING ON THE FALCON, THE FIRST IMPRESSION YOU get is that it feels like a full-sized motorcycle. This 1958-registered Falcon 74 is, in fact, a 1955/56 model that must have languished in a dealership for a few years.

It is fitted with a 197cc Villiers 8E engine with a three-speed gearbox. The paint lining on the tank is not standard and the seat has been re-stuffed and covered. The 74 was only available in one colour, Arden Green, but a four-speed option gearbox was available, as was a prop stand, leg shields, handlebar fairing panniers and chrome panelled tank, all at extra cost.

With this example's useful screen, the riding position was very much sit-up-and-beg with the feet slightly forwards. That screen, as well as the valanced mudguards and the long metal side panels fitted to the later models, protect me from the worst of the Oxfordshire road muck. With none of the mechanical complexity of a four-stroke, there was less possibility of oil leaking from every joint, and one can imagine the original owner riding the Francis-Barnett in flannels and brogues without getting too badly soiled.

The engine is easy to start, almost vibration-free and produces its power so low down in the rev range that it feels impossible to stall. The Falcon is a sheer delight to ride. There's a big brass flywheel under the right-hand engine casing and this gives the engine a decidedly non two-stroke feel. It simply chugs away nicely. The three-speed gearbox is positive and

forgiving. You simply tickle the carb a little and close the choke - which is little more than a metal flap on the air filter housing that you close to stop air rushing through. Two-stroke oil is added to the fuel by filling a cup attached to the underside of the filler cap. Improvements to two-stroke oil technology mean the ratios of oil to petrol can be wider than they would have been when the Falcon was new.

On the move you get the feeling that this solid commuter two-stroke would plod on for hours carrying its pilot in relative comfort along the nation's back lanes and B-roads. Braking seems more than adequate at the moderate speeds the Falcon is happiest with and the handling is sure, steady and seemed unlikely to throw any surprises my way.

Having lived through an era when British two-strokes were thrown away at the end of their useful life, the quality of the Falcon's construction is something of a pleasant surprise. One can just imagine heading out into the sticks on a summer's day for a gentle trip out with a partner or progressing purposefully to work in all weathers with sandwiches and Thermos tied to the pillion.

You might be seduced by big four-stroke singles and twins when you are in the market for a new addition to your stable, or when starting out in the world of classic motorcycling, but try to put your prejudices to one side and take a look at this solid, charming and simple British lightweight. You might be pleasantly surprised. ▶

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Thanks to Charlie Garratt of Oxford Classic Honda for providing the Falcon. Oxford Classic Honda stocks a wide range of classic motorcycles and can be found at classichondamotorcycles.co.uk



An expert view

JOHAN HARDING IS THE FRANCIS-BARNETT Owners' Club technical officer and spares supremo. We asked him what made the Falcon so special:

"Francis-Barnett and James were both made by AMC and used common engines, but the saying was that James were built down to a price, while Francis-Barnetts were built up to a standard. For example, if you look at the rear brake light switch on a Falcon, rather than simply bolting something on, Francis-Barnett used a rocker mechanism with seven component parts. The centrestand was constructed using an eccentric cam action rather than several springs.

"The Villiers engine tends to be hard to start when it's hot, and this is partly due to the magnets on the flywheel getting hot and losing their magnetism. You can modify the ignition system by slitting the coil's high and low-tension circuits and fitting a low-tension coil from a Honda C50 or a Vespa. For £270 you can buy a new electronic ignition conversion from

Villiers Services, which will solve the hot starting problem. The four-speed gearbox was made by Albion, which was owned by Royal Enfield, so the Falcon's gearbox shared a lot of parts with Royal Enfield models and the gears themselves could be changed to suit the machine's intended purpose – Trial Falcons could be converted to use three low gears and one high gear.

VILLIERS

"There are no special tools needed to work on a Falcon. You can just about take the engine apart with an adjustable spanner, a screwdriver and a spark plug spanner. The flywheel is not retained with a key but was tightened onto the taper on the crankshaft, with the timing marks added afterwards.

"You can change the crank oil seals with the engine in the frame on the Villiers. You just simply take off the outer clutch casing and prise the seal on that side with a screwdriver and fit a new one. Then you do the same on the other side by removing the flywheel. You can change both seals

in about half an hour. You can remove the gearbox internals without taking the engine out of the frame.

"The AMC engine was rushed to the market before testing was complete and there were early failures of the bearings, caused by insufficient oil getting to them. By 1961 AMC had farmed out production of its own engine to Villiers, which improved things.

"Falcons and Francis-Barnetts generally have a tremendous survival rate with a large quantity resurrected. They have survived because of the way they were built. They are the kind of motorcycle you can rebuild in your shed, you can get every single part for the engine and gearbox, and some new parts that are an improvement.

"Most cycle parts can be found, though seat bases and the original green control cables are hard to find. Tool box lids can be found at autojumbles for £5-£20 and mudguards for £20.

"You can get a project for £600-£700, a good one for £2000 and an oily rag runner for a lot less.

"Prices are going up, as lightweight British two-strokes are getting more popular, just like small Japanese bikes with electric starters and Italian lightweights. The reason for this is that they are a lot easier to start and a lot easier to move about by older riders than that big British twin or single." **CBG**

FRANCIS-BARNETT FALCON MODEL 58 (1952)

ENGINE: Villiers Mk 6E air-cooled, two-stroke single **BORE / STROKE:** 58 x 72mm **CAPACITY:** 197cc **LUBRICATION:** Petroil **IGNITION:** Villiers flywheel magneto with lighting coils **CARBURETTOR:** Single Villiers Middleweight **TRANSMISSION:** Chain **GEARBOX:** Three-speed right foot change Villiers **FRAME:** Single downtube cradle **FRONT SUSPENSION:** Telescopic forks **REAR SUSPENSION:** Twin shock swingarm with rubber rebound buffer below pivot lug **FRONT BRAKE:** 5in (12.7cm) drum **REAR BRAKE:** 5in (12.7cm) drum **TYRES:** 3 x 19in front and rear **DRY WEIGHT:** 224lbs (102kg) **SEAT HEIGHT:** 29in (74cm) **WHEELBASE:** 49½in (126cm) **TOP SPEED:** 57mph

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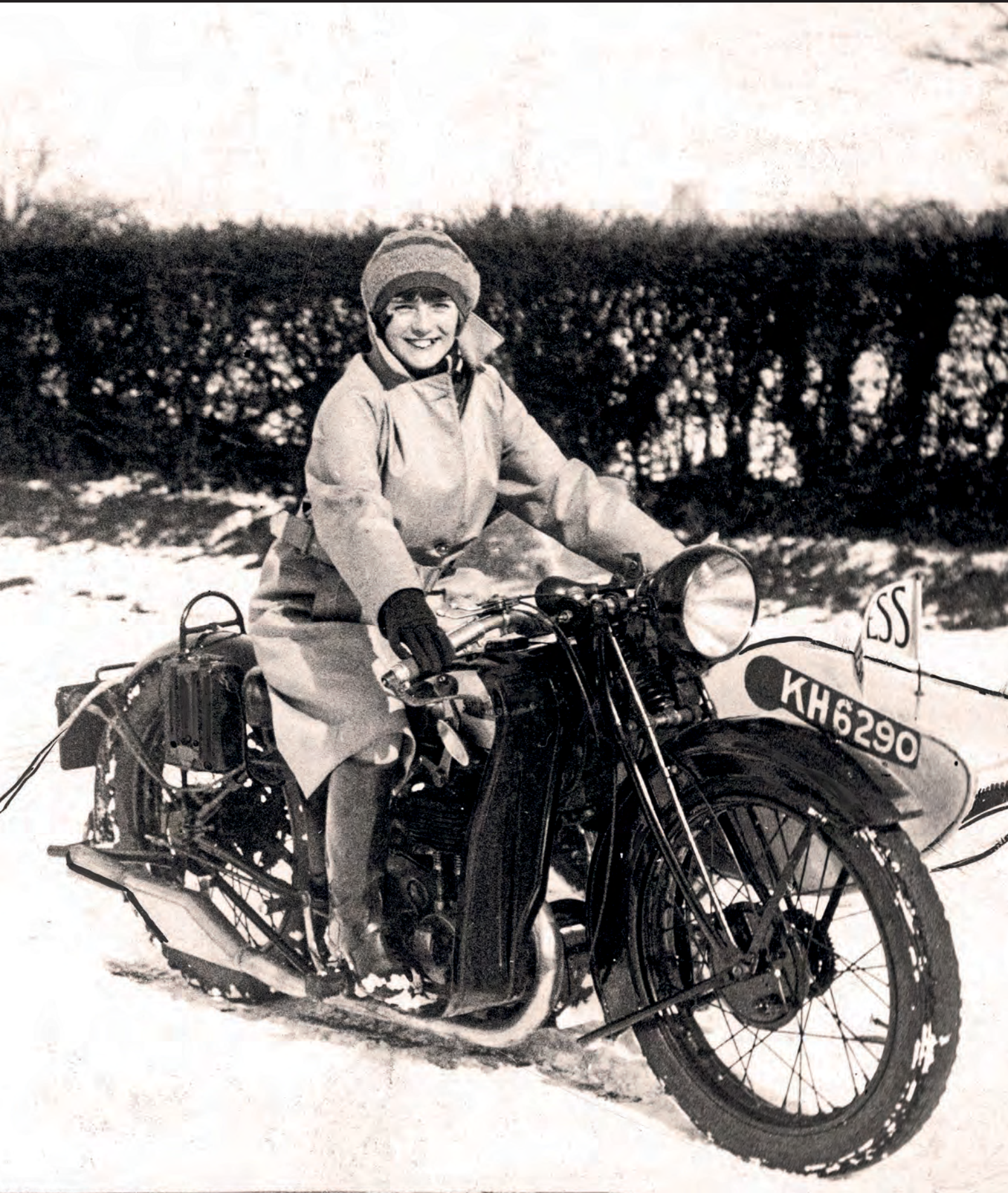
■ MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Very little is known about this smartly-dressed lady on her Matchless 500 sidevalve outfit (we think around 1928-29), other than the faces of the children suggest much fun was being had! Not quite sure how the sled was meant to slow down, but it makes you think what life was like in an age where a lady riding a motorcycle outfit, towing children on a sled on the snow-covered road with no helmets was fun; nowadays what a barrage of righteous comments would be thrust her way via social media. Maybe the dog felt the same it has to be said, as it looks somewhat unimpressed...

Merry Christmas to all our readers and we all hope your festive period is as much fun as this wonderful shot from the past. Happy New Year and here's to a fantastic 2019 with finished projects, riding galore and copious two-wheeled frivolities! CBG

■ mortonsarchive.com







PAUL MILES

THREE WHEELS BETTER

Paul declares his fascination with three-wheelers started for a legitimate reason...

“We went everywhere on my much modified Suzuki GS750, rain or shine. She wasn’t much of a fan when it came to the rain part, however and one day she declared that if I didn’t buy a car immediately, I should consider myself dumped.”

A FEW WEEKS AGO, I FOOLISHLY EXPRESSED an interest in a vintage Morgan three-wheeler that attends our old clunker runs. It really is a thing of 1920s beauty and just about the only ‘car’ that gets a free pass on vintage events – everyone loves a Morgan – until you go in the thing. Sporting a huge V-twin Matchless engine, tuned by Morgan/Brough specialists Cameron Engineering to deliver about 65bhp, it ranks right up there alongside the most terrifying experiences of my life.

Only a passenger, thank the gods, I jammed myself into the seat, next to driver Ian – we were like an inline bobsleigh team. It was a very tight squeeze – you wouldn’t want to face a 300-mile drive having just had a tiff.

The two speeds are facilitated by a pair of entirely separate chains and sprockets, one either side of the driven rear wheel. A huge lever physically disconnects the drive and, trusting as much to hope as skill, the intrepid driver slams the lever home into the next set of sprockets and, with luck, the tiny three-wheeler surges forwards to an ever more certain death. The brakes are terrible, of course, the speeds daunting. Both driver and terrified passenger get sprayed in oil from the open valve V-twin happily driving them forwards at an alarming rate and the three skinny tyres appear to provide as much grip as roller skates at an ice rink. Of course, I loved it.

Thank goodness for progress. We can only imagine how much better the three-wheelers were, half a century on. Except, I don’t need to imagine, I had one. You see there was this girl. I was young, she was lovely and we went everywhere on my much-modified Suzuki GS750, rain or shine. She wasn’t much of a fan when it came to the rain part, however, and one day she declared that if I didn’t buy a car immediately, I should consider myself dumped. There might have been a low speed roundabout incident that precipitated this unreasonable outburst, I suppose.

Desperate not to disappoint (for obvious reasons) I faced two problems. Firstly, I couldn’t afford to buy a car without selling the GS and secondly, there was the small matter of not having a car licence. In despair, I trudged along to the bike club. One of the members, on hearing my tale, suggested that I consider a

three-wheeler, because “after all, you can drive them on your bike licence”. I genuinely had no idea this was the case and even went to the police station to check. It was, and a tiny chink of light appeared in my darkness.

Obviously, I needed a bright orange Bond Bug, the cool three-wheeler. It even had a removable vinyl rooflet, Roystyle wheels and a radio. That would get me off the hook. But they were expensive and I had no money. Dad flatly refused to sign any more guarantor forms, the cad. The light was extinguished.

Then, from nowhere, came my salvation. A bloke I only vaguely knew had a Reliant that he would be prepared to swap for a comfortable, running motorcycle, nothing too small. It just so happened that a Suzuki GT380 was sitting in the garden, requiring nothing more than a complete engine rebuild. Two days later, having used a lot of second-hand parts and several litres of red Hermetite, it was running. Before it decided to break again, I quickly rode it slowly to the guy with the Reliant. I’d seen the Robins before and while they lacked the pizzazz of the Bond Bugs, at least they had four proper seats and suggested a modicum of comfort. We went to his lock-up. The Reliant was, in fact, not the choice of impecunious grandads everywhere, but the ‘commercial’ version, the dreaded supervan!

Still, it had a roof, plenty of room in the back (wink) and even a MW/LW radio, so the deal was struck. I even managed to steer it home after a fashion, despite having never driven before. Finished in a sort of purple, the condition was slightly beyond which we would consider to be patinated in current parlance. My friends laughed. Still, they weren’t important, it was what she wanted that counted.

I drove to her flat and she appeared in jeans. “Get changed,” said I, “we’re in the car”.

She did, re-appearing later as a teenage vision of loveliness. Emerging from the lift into the car park she asked where the car was. I waved towards the corner spaces. “You mean, that Capri?” she asked. “No, behind it”. “What? The bloody plastic pig? You expect me to be seen out in that? We’re finished, its over”. With that she spun on her vertiginous heels, went back into the lift and I never saw her again.

Three-wheelers, the devils spawn, relationship beakers... **CBC**

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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STEVE COOPER

JOIN THE CLUB

Steve shouts from the rooftops on the merits of joining the most ancient of pastimes – a motorcycle club.

“Actually meeting with people and talking to them can often evince whatever it is you’re in need of; information, parts or even a motorcycle. Personal contact, discussion, dialogue, conversation, discourse and the like are vital to this strange, odd-ball domain (sic) we’ve elected to live in.”

WHY WOULD YOU JOIN A MOTORCYCLE CLUB? What do they deliver? How good are the services they offer and are clubs of any kind actually relevant to this caustic, hubris filled, second-is-first-loser, fiscally motivated world of ours?

I ask in all innocence because many societies, groups or fellowships are struggling for members let alone volunteer workers. It would appear that for many the idea of meeting up, face-to-face with others holding similar interests is perceived as old fashioned, antediluvian, idiosyncratic and, ultimately, a total waste of time... oh and money.

If those who choose to comment upon society and try to influence us are to be believed, social media is The Only Way to communicate with like-minded individuals. After all it can link us to fellow New Imperial fans in South America, we can find components for our old Hondas in remote parts of Africa and discover specialists of parallel twin Ducatis in Australia.

All of which is potentially extremely useful but there’s a finite limit to what can be learnt, purchased or acquired via the Devil’s Ear Trumpet; aka the internet. Actually meeting with people and talking to them can often evince whatever it is you’re in need of; information, parts or even a motorcycle. Personal contact, discussion, dialogue, conversation, discourse and the like are vital to this strange, odd-ball domain (sic) we’ve elected to live in.

There are, sadly, some clubs that are introverted, reticent of new members and often border upon open hostility when a potential acolyte seeks admission to even the outermost circles of such organisations.

Clubs such as these are likely to either wither away on the vine or implode as they look forever inward. In such circumstances you could do a lot worse than harken to the words of the great Groucho Marx who once said: “I don’t want to belong to any club that will accept me as a member.” If this is the only organisation that supports your chosen mark then, respectfully,

you might just want to reconsider what you were thinking of buying!

Fortunately, the majority of classic motorcycle clubs will welcome you with open arms and relieve you of what is, in all honesty, a paltry sum given what’s on offer.

Some clubs can supply parts for machines that haven’t been in production since the late 1960s. This is unquestionably a good thing especially when there are no other sources of supply. Other clubs may not run a spares scheme but can offer DVLA approved dating services. No, they won’t set you up with some floozy from Swansea but they will accurately date when your bike was first made and thereby help you get a log book or even retrieve a lost registration number. Other clubs may offer technical support, some even have specialists who can rebuild your engine for you. And there are a small handful of dedicated individuals who will attend you in the event of breakdown or help fault find over the phone. All of these services are offered and supplied either by volunteers giving their time for free or dedicated individuals working for substantially less than the minimum wage. You might feel like saying “more fool them” but remember – they are the people who provide you and countless others with magazines, wanted and for sale adverts and all the other services good, old fashioned, clubs still offer.

If you are happy working in isolation, have the skills to fettle whatever needs sorting, are fortunate enough to have a stock pile of parts and don’t feel the need to socialise then good on you. You’re in a minority for sure and without question there are numerous clubs out there who would actually welcome your skills set and knowledge. However, for the rest of us there’s little like having a coterie of friends, mates and associates who can offer advice, repair stuff we can’t, supply that missing part or even sell you a bike at mate’s rate.

If your club subscriptions only get you out of hole once every five years I reckon that has to be a damn fine return on your investment. **CBG**

Steve Cooper once had a real job pretending to be an industrial chemist but is now a classic motorcycle journalist, serial restorer, editor of the VJMC’s Tansha magazine and perpetually obsessed by Japanese bikes of the 1960s & 70s. He likes two-strokes so much he often smells of semi-synthetic 2T!



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PAUL D'ORLÉANS

ROBOTS IN DRAG

Paul delves into the past to see where some interesting bikes of the present have come from

“Regardless, after it was completed, the R7 was never exhibited or even press-released; it appears to have been shelved immediately.”

THE INTERNET IS AWASH TODAY WITH TWO, YES two, modernised updates on the 1934 BMW R7, from Roland Sands in LA, and NMoto works in Florida. A press agency queried: “Interested in writing about the new BMW R7 body kit we’re promoting?” Yes, I was very interested, but not for the reasons they’d prefer.

These R7-inspired customs aren’t the first time a masterpiece of vintage design has been modernised – the contemporary Triumph Bonneville is an example of such a concept working well. The list of failures at the same game are legion, from Bernard Li’s mercifully short-lived Vincent update, to Glen Banquer’s ‘Jesus-poke-my-eyes-out’ take on the Brough Superior.

I feel slightly responsible for these twin R7 lookalikes. Eight years ago I wrote the first article, ‘The Best Bike BMW Never Made’, about the original, freshly-restored, one-off BMW R7, after spotting it at a trade show in Paris. I was seduced by its Art Deco sweetness and the unexpected elegance and grace of its lines... qualities atypical for a BMW. The Bavarian ethos of function, efficiency and order, plus its decades of Fordian black paint, hardly thrilled moto-aesthetes... but they’re charming despite their sobriety. The R7 is a different animal, more French than German in its curvaceous panache, and it has inspired BMW enthusiasts for generations.

BMW’s Alfred Böning oversaw the R7 project in 1934, but there’s a lingering question of whether a BMW ‘fender-man’ (auto stylist) sketched out the shape, as its monocoque chassis would have been pressed in the factory’s auto production department. Regardless, after it was completed, the R7 was never exhibited or even press-released; it appears to have been shelved immediately.

The world first saw the ‘Art Deco’ BMW in a 1936 magazine article that included a retouched side-view photo captioned: “What could have been.” That solitary photo launched decades of mystique around the R7, giving rise to the question ‘why on earth didn’t BMW manufacture this beautiful machine?’

Complicated forces worked against the R7. While the prototype is a hand-fabricated one-off, mass-producing its metal pressings would have required a huge investment in tooling (not to mention new castings for its radical prototype motor). In 1934 BMW sold only a few hundred of its terrific flagship R16 model, so recovering a big investment was unlikely. And Rudolf Schleicher, BMW’s chief of motorcycling, was

convinced it should build a road-going version of its supercharged racers instead of the R7, at which point, honestly, the R7 could have stayed in boxes.

And so we catapult to the present, with the OEM motorcycle industry in the doldrums, and the customising scene going gangbusters. It’s amazing, in this overheated climate of independent design, that it took eight years for customisers to build an homage to the BMW R7. Ernst Henne’s BMW land speed racer of 1930 has already inspired several homages, from Revival Cycles, Roland Sands and Kingston Custom etc, after it was displayed in that cauldron of custom hipness Wheels&Waves. Those bikes resemble the vintage original, but they aren’t slaves to the 1930s shape.

The R7 homages, on the other hand, carefully integrate 1934 design features into a new set of proportions, required by a contemporary motor and the impact – on me at least – is strange. Replicas using period engines (eg, the R17), fall into familiar territory, as making replicas of rare bikes is a popular sport. But, as the current examples are new motorcycles clad in vintage attire, the effect is less of near-miss replica and more ‘robot in drag’. I liken my emotional response thus – you come home to find your beloved wife replaced by a cyborg that isn’t nearly as pretty, well proportioned or sweet, but is remarkably efficient and will never grow old. As Colonel Kurtz said: “The horror.”

Good design inspires love – why else would we be so devoted to it, celebrate it, award it prizes, and pay millions for the best examples? We are enamoured of design perfection and we intuitively grasp home-spun design aphorisms like ‘if it looks right it is right’. Because very often, it’s true.

Whether such appreciation is genetically hard-wired or purely cultural (nature or nurture) is PhD turf, so suffice it to say, we respond enough to good design to spend hours and dollars copying the best examples and the motorcycle world is the least of it. Design Within Reach copies 20th century furniture masterpieces on a mass scale, the Metropolitan Museum sells replicas of 2000-year-old Greek jewellery and art museums worldwide are quietly removing the fakes from their collections.

These R7 homages aren’t actual copies, they are simply ‘inspired by’ modern, computerised, fuel-injected, disc-braked, 21st century motorcycles clad in Art Deco negligees. They are robots in drag, wearing lipstick and a wig, sitting cross-legged at the dressing table, giving you that look like ‘what’s your problem?’

Paul D’Orléans 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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New
RETRO

Triumph Street Twin

And a bit of Street Scrambler (2019)

Many find the blend of old-school looks and modern performance of the Street Twin and Street Scrambler to be ideal. And now Triumph has improved them, so what are the latest models like?

WORDS: ROSS MOWBRAY

IMAGES: TRIUMPH UK AND KINGDOM CREATIVE



TRIUMPH HAS ALWAYS LED THE SURGING modern-retro motorcycle market, building on its rich history with an eclectic range of classic-styled machines. For 2019 the British factory has updated its hugely successful Street Twin and Street Scrambler – and *Classic Bike Guide* has been out to Portugal to put them through their paces and see how the experience stands up against the ‘real thing.

As you would expect, the 2019 bikes have improved performance thanks to their new high torque 900cc Bonneville powerplant, upgraded front brakes and new cartridge front forks – and there is also a range of technological improvements and styling upgrades too, making the new Triumphs some of the

most well-equipped retro-styled machines on the market. So could you be tempted to buy new?

I’m ashamed to say I’m a little ignorant when it comes to classic motorcycles and I know that might be a slightly strange thing to say in a magazine that’s made its name getting under the skin of old school machines. Don’t get me wrong, it’s not that I don’t appreciate them; in fact it’s quite the opposite; I’m enthralled by their comparative simplicity and lack of electronics and as far as I’m concerned there’s nothing quite like the feeling of achievement you get after kick-starting an old British twin, as it (sometimes finally) bursts into life beneath you. But in my day job covering news and reviews of all the

latest metal to make it to market, I simply haven’t had a chance to spend any serious amounts of time on classic bikes. Not yet (we’re going to change that Ross! – Ed).

Although a few dyed-in-the-wool bikers are more than willing to dismiss the new modern-retro trend as nothing more than a fad, I’d be inclined to argue otherwise. For once, the new bike market isn’t about going as fast as possible, but feeling and looking good. And if it gets more bums on seats and bikes out on the road, then that has to be a good thing.

Want more temptation? They offer electric start, brakes that work, performance and comfort – and only need servicing once a year or so. And apparently they don’t leak on your garage floor... ▶





TRIUMPH STREET TWIN

PRICE: £8300 (for the standard Matt Ironstone model) **ENGINE:** 900cc liquid-cooled, eight valve, SOHC, 270° crank angle parallel twin **POWER:** 64bhp (48kW) @ 7500rpm **TORQUE:** 80Nm (59lb-ft) @ 3800rpm **FRAME:** Tubular steel cradle **WHEELBASE:** 1415mm **BRAKES:** (F) Single 310mm disc, Brembo four-piston fixed caliper, ABS (R) Single 255mm disc, Nissin two-piston floating caliper, ABS **TRANSMISSION:** Five-speed gearbox, O-ring chain **SUSPENSION:** (F) KYB 41mm forks with cartridge damping, 120mm travel (R) KYB twin shocks with adjustable preload, 120mm travel **WHEELS/TYRES:** (F) 18in x 2.75in cast aluminium alloy multi-spoke (R) 17in x 4.25in cast aluminium alloy multi-spoke / (F) Pirelli Phantom Sport Comp 100/90-18 (R) Pirelli Phantom Sport Comp 150/70-17 **SEAT HEIGHT:** 760mm **FUEL CAPACITY:** 12litres **MPG:** 73.4mpg (claimed) **WEIGHT:** 198kg (dry)

TRIUMPH STREET TWIN

Since its launch in 2016, the Street Twin has become one of Triumph's most important models, thanks to its unimposing style, easy-going nature and widespread appeal.

As far as I'm concerned, it's a gorgeous little bike with blatant styling inspiration from the 750cc Bonneville of the Eighties, with its cast wheels and an upswept brushed stainless steel twin exhaust system (you know the ones – from just before Triumph went bankrupt in 1983 and production was handed over to Les Harris for a few years).

Naturally, for today's want-it-all marketplace, Triumph has neatly incorporated a selection of mod-cons, including a ride-by-wire throttle, new Road and Rain riding throttle maps and switchable ABS and electronic traction control – without detracting from its retro appearance. The smaller details all tie in too, from its simple analogue/digital dash and LED lights, right through its slim leather and textile blend seat, which unlocks to reveal a USB socket for charging phones and modern stuff.

It's a compact little bike and settling into its saddle for the first time you'll notice how short it feels. I'm over 6ft and with its new 760mm seat height I could easily get both of my feet flat on the floor with plenty of room to spare. It's slightly taller than the outgoing model thanks to increased padding on the seat, which Triumph suggests should help to improve

comfort – and it weighs in at 198kg (dry) – which sounds a little on the porky side, but the weight is distributed so well that manoeuvrability should never be a concern, even at low speeds.

Its tweaked liquid-cooled, 900cc parallel twin Bonneville-derived engine is one of the major changes for 2019. The new powerplant offers an impressive 18% increase in peak power and now kicks out 64bhp at 7500rpm. Peak torque stays at 59lb/ft, although it now arrives slightly higher in the rev range at 3800rpm.

Essentially, the changes are as a result of new camshafts, new balancer shafts and a lighter clutch – which work to offer more midrange torque. It's vibrant and punchy out the blocks from the bottom of the rev range, with its ride-by-wire throttle and torque-oriented motor working together to allow you to make decent progress. Blip the throttle and you're rewarded with an old-school Bonneville gurgle from its parallel twin engine and twin exhausts. Lovely.

It's surprisingly fuel efficient, with Triumph claiming that you should be able to get just shy of 200 miles from its 12litre tank – I didn't quite get that return, but I did manage to achieve around 60mpg, which isn't bad at all, particularly when taking into consideration my spirited riding style while trying to find its limits – all in the name of yourselves, of course.

Its five-speed gearbox is top notch, offering short, precise changes, and a

reassuring clunk with each shift – and its adjustable clutch lever is light and easy to get on with, perfect for new and inexperienced riders. Admittedly, you'll rarely need to touch fifth gear unless out on the motorway or dual carriageway because of its high gearing and ample torque right through the rev range.

For stopping, the Street Twin comes equipped with a single large disc and new Brembo four-piston floating caliper at the front, with a single 255mm disc and Nissin two-piston floating caliper at the rear. They're more than up to the job and will bring you to a halt with little hassle. There are also front and rear ABS modules to help keep you in check.

Chassis performance is impressive too, offering surprising stability and agility. The just-wide-enough (for me) handlebars allow quick and effortless changes of direction – and despite the low seat there's a decent amount of ground clearance. Suspension has had Christmas early and now gains new KYB 41mm cartridge forks with 120mm travel up front, and KYB twin shocks with adjustable preload and 120mm of travel at the rear. On the mixed and unpredictable roads around Lisbon, they performed admirably, soaking up the worst the roads could throw at me. I did get a little squirrely on one occasion as I barrelled through a big pothole but the suspension settled quickly enough to allow me to get hard on the brakes and bank into the corner with no real concern. ▶



STREET SCRAMBLER

First launched in 2017, the Triumph Street Scrambler also gets a host of updates for 2019. Of course, there's a raft of similarities between the Twin and Scrambler (engine, suspension and brakes), but a handful of key – predominantly styling and ergonomic-oriented – differences help the bikes to stand apart.

The Scrambler riding ergonomics are significantly changed – with the wide bars, upright riding position and slightly taller ride helping to offer much more comfort for my tall-ish frame. And to bolster the bike's off-road credentials it comes with footpegs with removable rubber inserts, new Metzler Tourance tyres (the same as on the Triumph Tiger) and, best of all, a new Off-Road rider mode (in addition to the Rain and Road modes also on the Twin). Off-road mode can be selected only when stationary and it turns off traction control and ABS on the rear wheel. Just like the Twin, the 2019 Street Scrambler feels quick off the line. The engine pulls hard, while its lighter engine internals help the bike to rev quicker. It's still very smooth though, and honestly, it makes riding the bike a delight. No matter what you're up to, you've always got torque to play with – and it's all soundtracked by the lovely exhaust note from the bike's twin, side-mounted silencers.

I was also very impressed with the bike's handling. It's no track weapon, but I had absolutely no qualms pushing the front end into corners, even on the damp and greasy roads we encountered earlier in the day's riding. Sure, its 19in front wheel, slight increase in weight and higher riding position do mean that the steering is slightly slower than on the Street Twin, but it's still perfectly manageable and easy to ride.

Personally, I preferred the bike's taller and more purposeful riding position, with its wide bars and surprisingly capable Metzler Tourance tyres giving me the confidence to throw the bike into corners.

Sadly, we didn't get a chance to test ride the bikes off-road – but I did take the opportunity to jump up onto the pegs to see what it is like riding stood up and for a fairly compact machine it's not bad at all. Of course, most riders aren't going to be doing anything other than light gravel tracks and fire trails, for which I've no doubt that the Street Scrambler will be up to the job – but I'd love to see what it's really capable of on the dirt. **CBR**



TRIUMPH STREET SCRAMBLER

PRICE: £9100 (for the standard Fusion White model) **ENGINE:** 900cc liquid-cooled, eight-valve, SOHC, 270° crank angle parallel twin **POWER:** 64bhp (48kW) @ 7500rpm **TORQUE:** 80Nm (59lb-ft) @ 3200rpm (lb-ft & Nm) **FRAME:** Tubular steel twin cradle **WHEELBASE:** 1445mm **BRAKES:** (F) Single 310mm disc, Brembo four-piston fixed caliper, ABS (R) Single 255mm disc, Nissin two-piston floating caliper, ABS **TRANSMISSION:** Five-speed gearbox, O-ring chain **SUSPENSION:** (F) KYB 41mm forks with cartridge damping, 120mm travel (R) KYB twin shocks with adjustable preload, 120mm travel **WHEELS/TYRES:** (F) 19in x 2.75in spoked steel rims (R) 17in x 4.25in spoked steel rims/(F) Metzler Tourance 100/90-19 (R) Metzler Tourance 150/70-17 **SEAT HEIGHT:** 790mm **FUEL CAPACITY:** 12litres **MPG:** 68.9mpg (claimed) **WEIGHT:** 198kg (dry) **CONTACT:** www.triumphmotorcycles.co.uk

SHOULD I BUY ONE?

If you are after a retro-styled motorcycle with modern technology, based on one of the most popular motorcycles ever to make it to market, you could do a lot worse than either one of the machines in Triumph's Street range. They are not a classic Meriden machine, and barring the badge, they don't confess to be. But both bikes have an exceptional chassis, with the torque-rich engine offering plenty of power and smooth delivery. They are stylish, versatile, accessible and lots and lots of fun. Personally, the Street Scrambler is the one for me. Ever since its launch, I have had my eye on one for a while and I genuinely couldn't wait to ride the updated version out. I have got to confess that it didn't disappoint.



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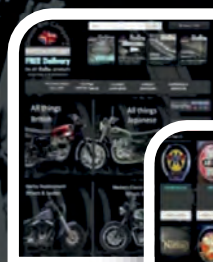
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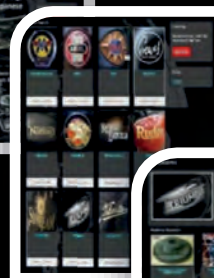
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MIKE HAILWOOD'S MACHINES

Mike Hailwood said that of all the memories from his illustrious career, the 1961 TT was his fondest. By Friday of race week in the 1961 TT, Stanley Michael Bailey Hailwood – barely 21 at the time – had already clinched victories in the 125cc and 250cc races. But the race that really mattered was the Senior – the blue riband event of motorcycle racing. For that, Michael needed a decent machine. Here's the story of Hailwood's ascension to motorcycle superstardom and the machine that helped to make that happen

PART
FIVE

ON JUNE 16, 1961 MICHAEL HAILWOOD had one of the most important breakfasts of his career. At the hotel on the Isle of Man, over a full English, Stan and Michael discussed tactics for the looming 1961 Senior TT. Michael had already won two races that week, he was fastest in the 125cc and 250cc classes and only just missed winning the 350cc race after the crankpin broke on his AJs. Pitted against the Senior, however, that was small fry. The Senior was the race that mattered.

But there were enormous challenges, including Gary Hocking and his four-cylinder MV Agusta. In 1961, Hocking was one of the world's fastest riders and this, combined with his powerful and super exotic MV Agusta, made him a fierce opponent.

And that was the discussion at the breakfast table: how could Michael gain time on Gary Hocking's 'big MV'.

Mike, speaking in *Hailwood*, which he co-wrote with Ted Macauley, said: "We realised that my Norton couldn't hope to match the MV for speed – there was about 10mph difference."

"We agreed the best plan was for me to stay as near as possible to Gary and pick up some extra time by slipstreaming whenever possible."

The tactics went to plan, but more of that later...

What also helped was the true might of the Manx Norton engine, built by precision engineer Bill Lacey. This, it seems, was something of a surprise.

Lacey's involvement with the Hailwoods was not without controversy. In 1957 he worked on a number of their machines, including a 500cc Manx, two 350cc Nortons, three MVs and a Ducati. But the relationship soured after Michael's

father Stan Hailwood and Bill had a huge fall-out over Bill's daughter Ann.

Ann worked alongside her father as a fellow motorcycle engineer and had begun to socialise with fellow racer Glen Henderson. Stan demanded that Ann stop seeing Henderson for fears that she would tell him their mechanical secrets. But in spite of assurances from Bill, Stan continued to insist she didn't see Henderson anymore. Lacey, no doubt disgusted by Stan's arrogance, asked him to clear all their stuff out of the Slough-based workshop within a week. It would be at least two years before they spoke again.

To say Stan was brusque would be an understatement. This was a man who had left a life of Lancastrian poverty, hitch-hiked his way to Oxford and become a millionaire as director of Kings Motorcycles. Stan always got what he wanted and what he wanted for Michael.

Speaking to Charlie Rous in 1987, Lacey said: "I was very fond of Mike and sorry about the rift between Stan and myself. It was after the 1959 TT and he, Mike that is, had retired from both the 350cc and 500cc races. We were staying at the Arragon Hotel, then owned by Geoff Duke. I told him that if I could do anything to help him personally, all he had to do was ask."

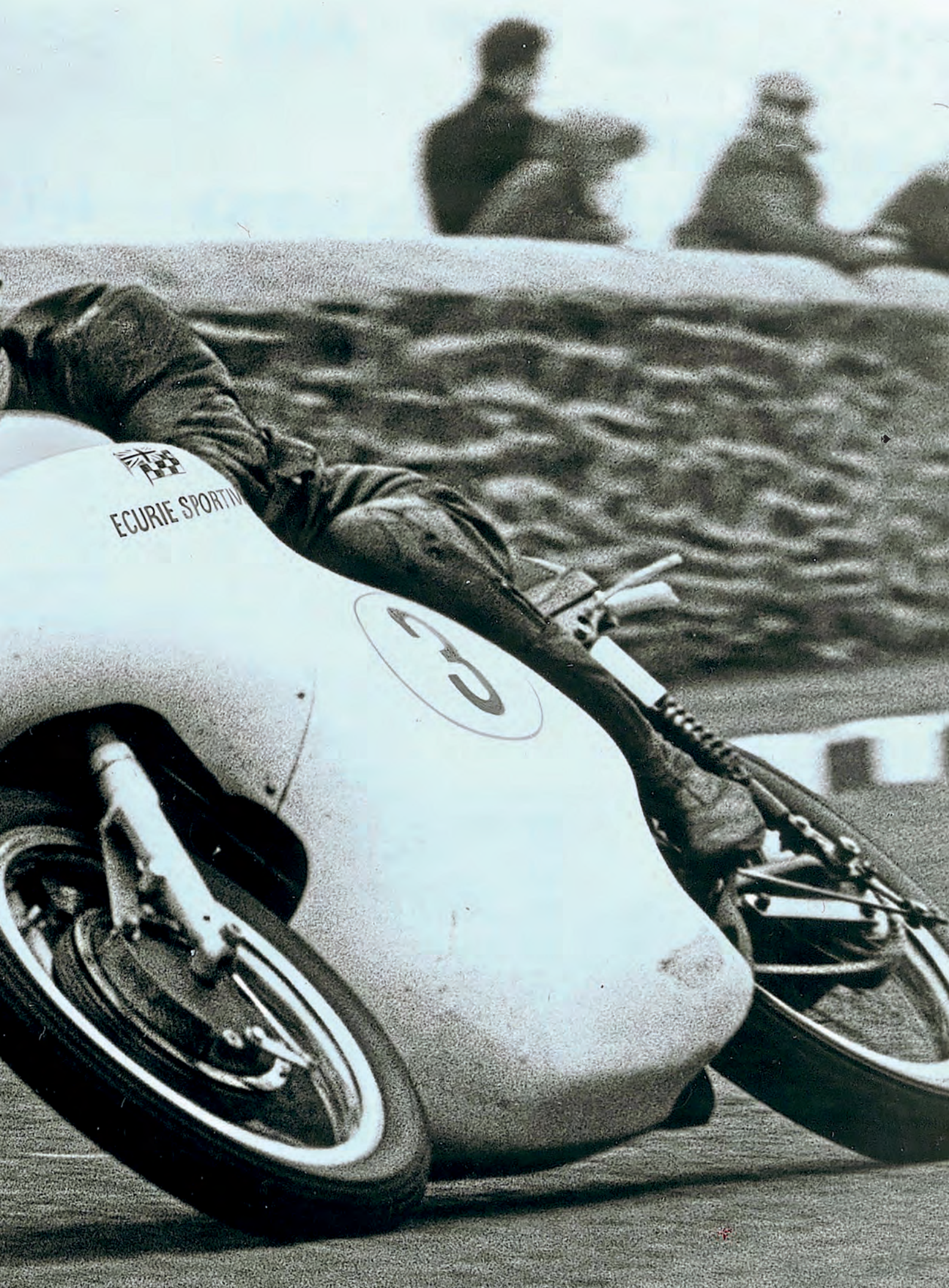
Some time passed and from Lacey's point of view Mike's career seemed to go from strength to strength. And then he got a call...

It was Stan. "He told me that Mike was in a lot of trouble with his bikes and he did not have a decent 500 for the TT. Stan reminded me of my promise to Mike and asked if I would do an engine especially for Mike and not as a favour to Stan."

A bunch of flowers and a conversation ▶

"I told Mike to ride it but not to reveal its performance to rivals."



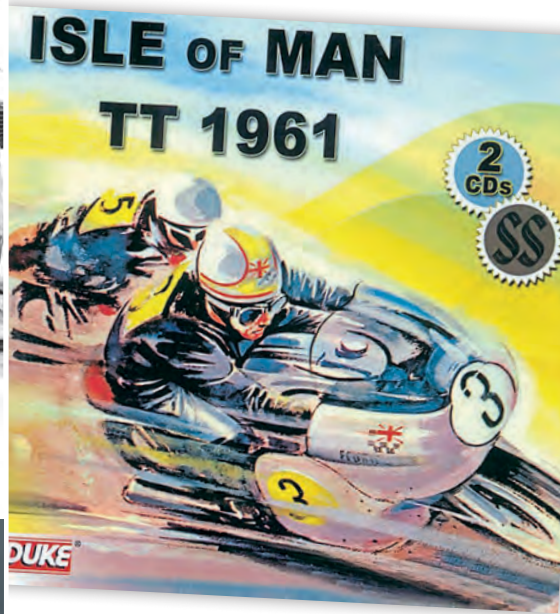


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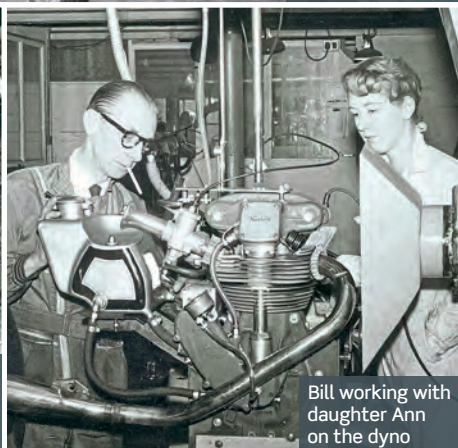
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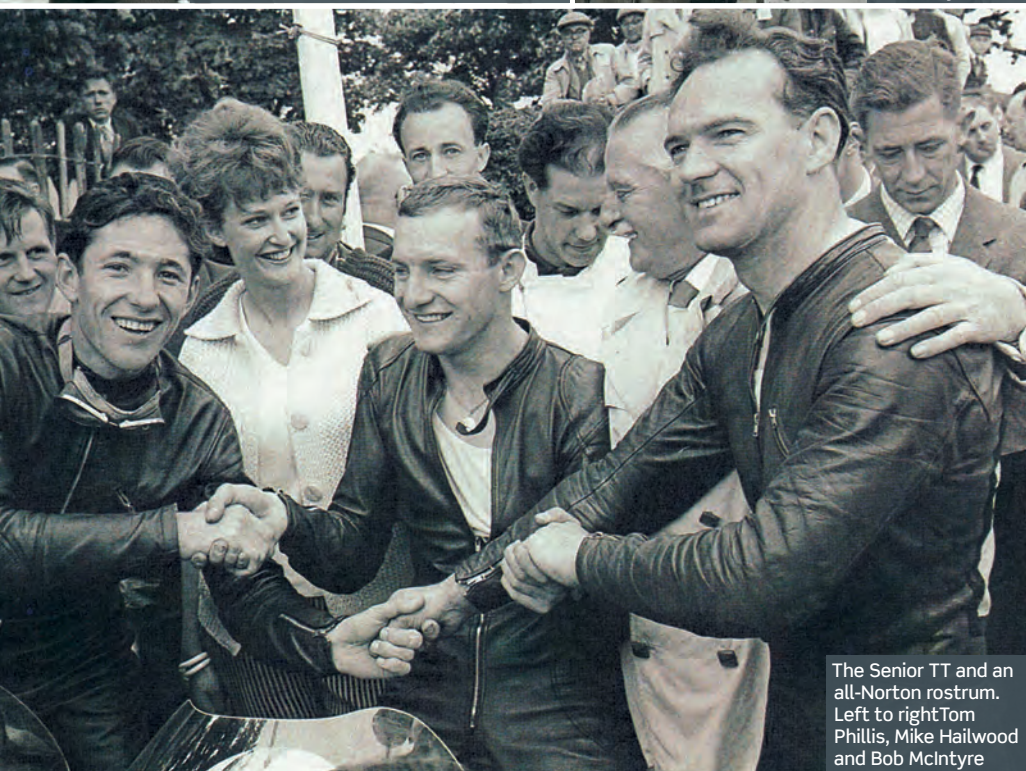
A young Bill Lacey works on his Grindley-Peerless for Brooklands



Left to right, Mike and Stan Hailwood recording an interview for the Stanley Schofield Sound Stories series with sound recordist Gordon Pitt and Graham Walker



Bill working with daughter Ann on the dyno



The Senior TT and an all-Norton rostrum. Left to right Tom Phillis, Mike Hailwood and Bob McIntyre

“We agreed the best plan was for me to stay as near as possible to Gary and pick up some extra time by slipstreaming whenever possible.”

with Mrs Mae Lacey later and Bill agreed, but there was one condition – there would be no price limit.

Lacey – in the same interview with Rous – said: “For a long time I had wanted to build a motor with a plain high end and main bearing.”

The result was a high-high-bred machine bristling with non-standard features, including Italian Oldani brakes and a single-piece crank assembly, as Lacey explains: “I went into it very carefully. A major modification was with the flywheels. I played around with the original Manx wheels, but finally decided the answer was a one-piece crank, which I had machined from a billet of KE 605 steel.”

Lacey planned that the engine would run at 7500rpm but on the test bench it ran to 8300rpm.

“Only then did I contact Stan Hailwood to tell him the engine was ready. He asked if I wanted to come to the TT. ‘Yes’, I replied. He then asked if the engine could be collected. ‘No’, I said, ‘it stays with me all the way to the island.’

“We went over together in Stan’s Bentley Continental with the engine in the boot. Very excited, Stan asked my opinion of the engine. I was also very confident and, with 66bhp, I told him that I thought Michael stood a pretty good chance.”

But there was another condition from Lacey – that all practicing be done on a standard engine, with his modified engine fitted for the last practice session only.

The preservation paid off in dividends. “I told Mike to ride it but not to reveal its performance to rivals.

“I timed him from Ramsay to Ramsay with orders for him to take it easy going through the starting area and not to show that he was trying. Even with this easing up, I timed him at 104.8mph.”

Lacey knew that Mike had every chance of winning the Senior. Race day soon came. Bob McIntyre was starting at number one, Gary Hocking at number two and Michael



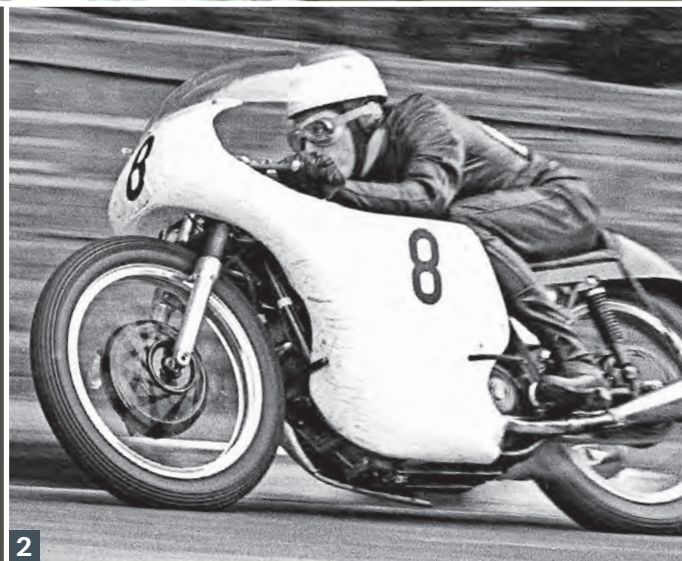
Above: Pamela Lawton gives Mike Hailwood a congratulatory kiss after his 1961 Senior race win, watched by his father Stan and Rem Fowler

1: Mike and Tom Phillis swap stories just after the Senior race

2: The 1961 Senior also saw the debut of the Domiracer. The pushrod twin went for a shakedown run in practice and ended up third in the Senior TT, the first pushrod motor home among an all-Norton podium

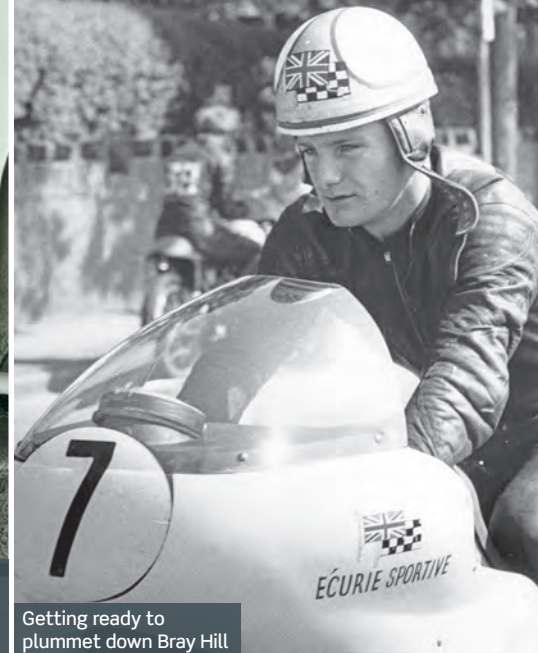
3: Bill Lacey, Mike and his father

4: Mike, Bill Lacey and Bob McIntyre after the race with Stan Hailwood in the background





Mike and Stan Hailwood with Vic Willoughby at the Arragon Hotel on the Isle of Man in 1961



Getting ready to plummet down Bray Hill

away at number three. By the time the trio arrived at Ramsay, Hocking had taken the lead and was not for giving up his position. Hailwood stuck to his plan and clung onto Hocking's back wheel. After three laps Hocking had a 29sec lead on Michael only this soon dropped to 15.2sec by lap four.

"In the end the plan did work, though not in a way we expected," said Michael in Hailwood. "Gary piled on the pressure and paid the penalty for doing it. He vanished up the slip road at Ballacraigne when he hit the bend too fast. I dodged in front, but not for long. He came back like the wind. After that I hung on to him like a leech. He had trouble, first with the fairing and then with the plugs, and I picked up some valuable time when he had to pull into the pits for some help."

Hocking's misfortune became Mike's fortune. "After that it was plain sailing and the Norton headed for home without the slightest sign of trouble."

And the proof was in the pudding.

"Nobody was more surprised than me when I found out after the race that I'd averaged more than 100, the first time it had been done on a British bike."

In fact, the only non-British bike on that day, out of 74 starters, was Hocking's MV – a machine the MV Agusta company insisted was a 'privato' entry and not a works machine.

Mike won with a lead of 1.42min over McIntyre. He had smashed the record for a single-cylinder machine with an average lap speed of 100.60mph and recorded the first British win since Ray Amm's 1954 victory, also on a Norton.

"When I watched a re-run of the race – it was shot from a helicopter – I was amazed to see how close I kept to the MV. Every time we went through the tricky bits of the course the gap seemed to narrow. I was obviously picking up a lot of time on the bends and then having it pegged back when the MV motored along the straights," he said in Hailwood.

But there was cynicism. Many believed that this victory had been bought – and it had, essentially, for about £3000–£65,700 in today's money. The machine itself would have cost £491.19.6d at the time. After all, Hailwood was riding a specially-built engine that had been designed and modified by an illustrious precision engineer. Without Mike's talent, however, it is doubtful that the Manx would have been so victorious and to prove this point, at the end of the 1961 TT, Stan bought an AJS that had finished very low down in the field. The idea was that Mike would race this machine – known as a back marker – and have him compete on it at Scarborough. Needless to say, Michael won on the AJS.

Jackie Woods – former racer and TT clerk of the course – was a travelling marshal at the 1961 TT. He said: "You could see Mike had a raw talent. He was an aggressive rider and he could jump on any machine and win. He was constantly on a motorcycle, he just loved to race motorbikes."

Lacey took the TT-winning engine back to Slough, as it contained many of Lacey's engineering secrets.

He then stripped the engine of its 'special parts' and they were never used again. Asked as to what he did with them, he said, speaking to Rous in 1987, that he "buried them".

"I didn't want anyone to get hold of them," he said.

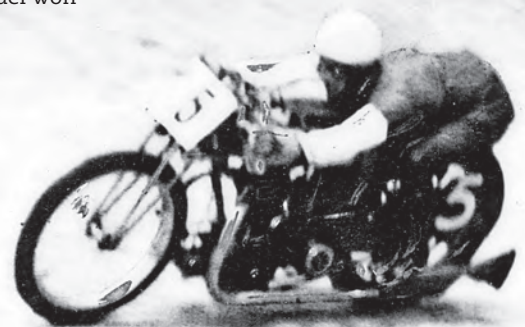
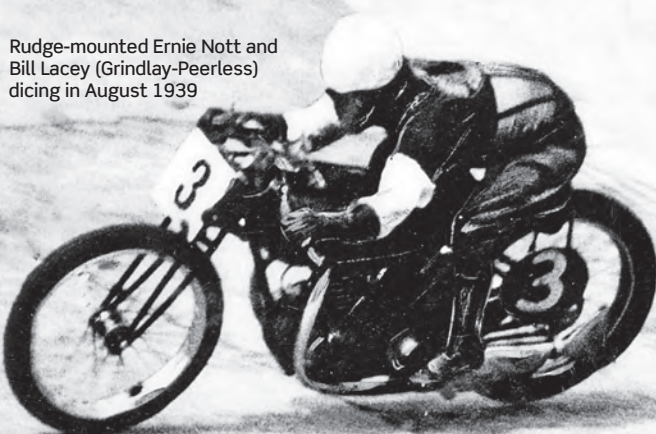
Mike later reported that he went to the 1961 TT expecting not to win, but after clinching three victories, his expectations soon changed.

He said: "After the TT I felt that I'd really arrived as a motorcycle racer."

He had indeed. Stanley Michael Bailey Hailwood had earned a new moniker: 'Mike the Bike'.

Mike Hailwood would soon become the fastest motorcycle racer on the planet. **CBC**

Rudge-mounted Ernie Nott and Bill Lacey (Grindlay-Peerless) dicing in August 1939



In the next chapter of Mike Hailwood's *Machines*, Mike is made the offer of a lifetime but it comes at a price – working for the formidable Count Agusta.

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CBG Workshop



Not all that shimmers is gold

After going through the workings of our dormant G3L, all seemed fine apart from the (large) issues with the engine. But wheel builder, Hutch, noticed another problem while admiring the Matchless over a cuppa. AMC wheels may be easier than some others to lace, thanks to the offset hub holes, but it doesn't guarantee that someone can't cock it up. Our rear wheel had one side laced completely wrong, meaning all the spokes were bent around each other - potentially leading to a wheel failure. And this bike had reputedly come from a 'professional' restorer. And so another job added to the list...



◀ Project Norton

What's this part for?



▲ Our Matchless

We found where the compression is going...

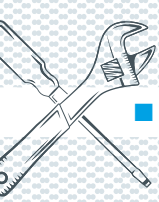


▲ Make your own HT leads

Save money and tailor to your bike

▲ How to

Clean Japanese carbs



How to make HT cables

I NEEDED TO REPLACE MY HT LEADS ON MY 1973 T140v Triumph Bonneville. So I bought a spark plug cable kit from SRM (srmclassicbikes.com) which contained two NGK resistor-type spark plugs, two right-angled silicone rubber boots to encase the coil connections paired with two right-angled connectors and a four-foot length of copper cored HT cable.

First the cable was cut into two equal lengths, the generous length of cable giving plenty of surplus to play with. The boots were particularly stiff and inserting the cable without lubricant was a bit of a challenge, though the boots were of decent quality, had the good grace not to split and should provide a good seal.

The ignition coils on a T140 sit upright under the seat, so the right angles are needed to prevent bending and fracturing the cables at the join as they run through 90 degrees, which is the reason for their needing replacement in the first place. Unlike

Japanese bikes, which usually have the plug leads moulded into the coil or have them screwed into the coil where they are secured by a crush fit rubber grommet, the Lucas coils have a large hole to insert the 90-degree connectors into. At the other end the plug caps are secured conventionally, with the caps having a screw-in connector.

The two rubber boots were lightly lubricated with WD40 and the cable inserted into the boot from the plug cap end, as this is easier than trying to get the boot on the end where you will fix the connectors. Then strip roughly half-an-inch of cable leaving the end exposed. I tend to twist the exposed wires slightly to prevent fraying, however I'm sure that others would advise you to leave them alone. Bend the exposed wire through 180 degrees and flatten it against the outside edge of the cable. Take the connector and ensuring that the exposed part of the wire is opposite the open side of the connector, crimp the tabs around the cable. There

are proper tools to do this with; I used one that was similar but not perfect that I had in my toolbox. Ideally you should try to get the tabs to stick slightly in the cable's rubber insulation.

Then, after checking for the strength of the connection, slide the rubber boot over the terminal. On a Bonneville the cables need to thread through the narrow gap between the frame tubes and the top of the side panel/air filter cover and are tucked in behind the carburettors. Therefore, either remove the side panels or don't fit the spark plug caps until the cables are in situ. Push the plug cap boot over cable, screw the cap in place, and fit the boot over the cap. What you shouldn't do during this process is what I did, which was to dislodge one of the points to ignition coil leads by accident and then wonder why the machine runs beautifully on one cylinder, and not at all on the other! With this rectified, the T140 is now running better than ever. The kit cost £18.20 with postage. **CBG**



1. The kit purchased from SRM has all I need



2. The cable is cut into two equal lengths



3. About half an inch of insulation is stripped off



4. Exposed wires are bent through 180 degrees



5. The terminal connector is crimped onto the cable



6. The terminal connector is firmly in place



7. The silicone-rubber boot is ready to slide in place...



8. ...and is ready to be inserted into the top of the coil



9. The other end - the plug cap ready for assembly



10. The protective boot stops the worst of the weather



11. The cap is screwed into the end of the HT cable...



12. ...and the cable is ready for fitting to the motorcycle



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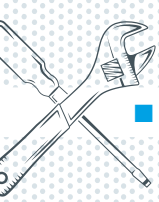
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Project Norton

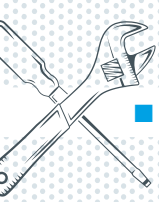
What have we done?

Boy, I can't wait to get Project ES2 running. All the singledom of my B31 but with a bit more stomp and hopefully, a bit more comfort - my Beeza is a smidge small for my tall frame and Small Heath didn't believe in plush suspension in 1954...

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY: MATT







IN ORDER FOR THIS TO BE A REALITY AND not just another of my many unfinished piles of junk that only move when I trip over them, a plan has to be hatched. So although I was itching to get started, some mundane tasks are needed. Bah humbug.

First – what have we got/what have we duplicates of/what do we obviously need? The basics are there like frame and swingarm along with the bigger brackets and engine plates. Bodywork? Check – mudguards, tank, headlight cowl and numberplate holder, along with stays are present and don't look like they need much more than a good rub down – the two-piece rear mudguard looks brand-new. Oil tank and toolbox also look correct for the year and have suffered no bumps; so just a good couple of hours rubbing down should have them ready.



What have we got? Let's play 'guess the bolt' game



Couldn't resist starting



Spares add confusion to forks



Top fork leg cleaned up



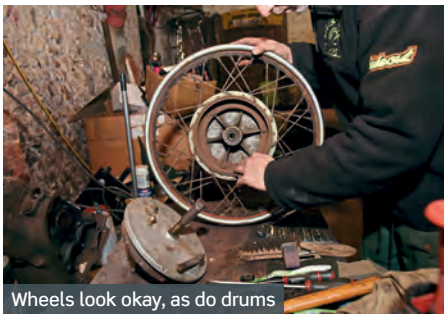
Long screwdriver, knowledge and beards needed to strip fork stanchions



Amal spider house...



Head needs fins replacing



Wheels look okay, as do drums



Shiny new loom and gaskets!

A list - got to keep to it if this is going to get finished

Norton ES2
 To Do...

- WHAT HAVE I GOT?
- SEPARATE SPARKS/DUPPLICATES
- BOX ENGINE PARTS
- FRONT END
- WHEELS + BRAKES
- BODYWORK - TANK? MUDGUARDS + BOXES/OILTAN
- CHASSIS PARTS FOR PAINT
- BODYWORK FOR PAINT
- ENGINE - BUILD
- GEARBOX - STRIP, CHECK + BUILD
- WIRING

Any hints or tips?

We'd love to hear from anyone who has, or has worked on, an ES2. All I have is an original 1950's Norton manual, so help and advice is most gratefully received! But what do you think about sympathetic modifications? I'm still undecided so you could swing it. Let us know!

The suspension is slightly trickier as there are two different lengths of Roadholder forks and I need to strip these to measure the stanchions so I can order seals and a rebuild kit. They look in good order and I know I'm not meant to start work but I couldn't resist rubbing one of the legs down, after checking that 1955 models had a bare finish, rather than black. Regardless, they needed doing as it seemed to be painted with bitumen - it was still soft and just clogged the wet and dry paper, so I used a soft brass-bristle wheel on a drill. I prefer an alloy finish, so will dress them nicely and lacquer them - though some wizz'd folk have told me that bead-blasting is sympathetic to aluminium and peens the finish, helping to protect from corrosion. I had hoped the bottom damper rod nut would undo but it didn't, as the damper rod was turning inside. So a quick trip to Stu's workshop and one of his lorry screwdriver bits on a long extension held the damper rod while I undid the 1/4in bolts. Stanchions look okay, but now I know which parts to order.

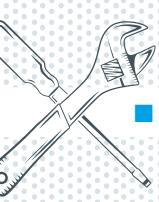
Gearbox is the later AMC one, which I'm not sure about keeping but I'll have a quick look at it, strip it, sort it and put it in as those in the know say it's a good box to use. And then there is that big thumper of an engine. The bottom end feels right with no toward slack in the bottom end, but it does seem silly to not crack the cases and replace the bearings while it's all in bits. Don't get me wrong - I can't afford to throw money at this project, but the bottom end is a good place to invest in.

The cylinder head has the exhaust port thread in good condition, whereas the inlet has had the spin-on inlet tract welded on crudely. I'd love to get this rectified but I think I'll just tidy the weld up - it'll still work. And I'd rather spend the time and money getting the broken fins repaired - not a job for me.

Valves look fine, as do the valve seats and spark plug thread, so hopefully a clean, valve grind and new fins should be it. The Amal carb has seen better days - and several families of spiders by the looks of it. Hopefully I can save it but they are available off the shelf so it's low on the list.

There are three wheels; two rear and one front. The front looks in good condition with the chrome only bad on the inside where the tyres seat. They seem to spin true and the drum is in good order, so I'll give them a clean and see if they need any new parts later. Other than that, there is a new seat, new down pipe, new gasket set, new valve springs and a new wiring loom, all of which will help massively. As far as I can see just a silencer (the pear-





It's tricky finding out what you need when you don't know the bike and didn't take it apart

shaped one) is needed, but that list will surely get longer...

After an initial investigation I need to make some room in the workshop. That means my Honda has to vacate the ramp and I've even bought some new storage boxes and fitted a larger strip light I found in a skip. Space and light - whatever next!

A list, that's what's next. In an ideal world I want all painting done in one hit - keeps the cost down - so lots of rubbing down first to minimise labour costs at the bodyshop. Then, who knows? These things always throw up unknowns. And I want my own touches too. I've always wanted that silver tank with the Norton name adorning the sides; not the plastic 'N' badge it should have. And being a Norfolk bumpkin, I like knobbly tyres and alloy mudguards - but we'll see. That's the key, the key I've never used before; to plan this build so it runs on time, keeps costs down and most of all, is enjoyable. **CBG**

Next month we rebuild the Roadholder forks and front end



Next time



The front forks are first on the list, so clean and rebuild so they are ready for their shiny black yokes and shrouds once back from the paintshop. And if there's time, the wheels will come next.

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Matchless G3L rebuild

Matchless? I wish we had some matches... Our G3L reveals all is not well when we strip the engine.

WORDS, PHOTOGRAPHY AND TEA MAKING: MATT
HARD WORK AND KNOWLEDGE: HUTCH OF HTE





▲ Kettle on, chat had and it was straight to work, stripping the seat and tank off. First thing I noticed was the care Hutch took with the tank – they're a close fit and can easily foul the top yoke, chipping the paint. One thing we did notice was the tank mounting bolts were all lockwired, a hopeful sign that this G3 had been put together by someone who cares.



▲ **Above:** Er – scrap that last statement. The exhaust looked nice and came off easily, but revealed a gasket made from a Coke can. The carb came off too, and looked to be in good order with little wear.

▲ **Right:** Although the head needed to come off to replace the pushrod tubes, we checked the valve clearances before removing it to see if they were guilty. The inlet wasn't closing quite as much as it needs to, but not enough to give us our compression issues. Still at least it wasn't the exhaust valve, which if not closing properly can burn out.





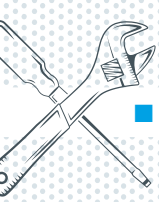
OUR MATCHLESS G3L is a good looking bike. After recommissioning it a few months back everything seemed in good shape and I was really looking forward to using it – it seems a fun, practical, good handling bike. But the initial shake-down ride gave an inkling that all was not well – and my right leg was hot and slippery. Once warm, the exhaust push rod tube was spewing oil out. Damn! The seals must be tired – not a tricky job except that the head would have to come off. It also seemed to have little compression, which meant that it was easy to start, as in really easy; too easy. Hopefully just valve clearances I thought: hmmm....

Not having worked on AMC bikes much I decided to see a man in the know, Hutch from HTE Motorcycles (01328 700711). Hutch spends most of his days keeping the classics (that's bikes, not people) of East Anglia running sweetly, so after starting (too easily) first kick, I donned my wellies and shot over to his workshop. Once warm, the little 250 sat beautifully at 55mph, albeit keeping my right leg nice and warm and slippery!

▲ **Above:** Out with the compression tester. Initially after a couple of kicks we had very little, showing there's either a problem with the valves, their seats, or the piston and its rings. So out with the plug and add a little old oil. This should seal the rings, helping us to localise the issue further.

▲ **Right:** Sure enough, compression was up twice what it was. That points to the compression leaking past the rings. So, it's definitely off with its head! Another way to see where your issue is, that Hutch has used, is to weld a compressor fitting to a butchered spark plug and listen for where the air is escaping. It all helps to know what's going on inside.





■ Many thanks to Hutch of HTE motorcycles, Norfolk, for his knowledge and patience! Contact him on 01328 700711



■ **Above:** Warning! Despite the size of our rubber mallet, the force used was not a lot – just enough that, once all the bolts were removed, it would free the sticking gaskets of the rocker cover. But check and check again that all the bolts, including those from underneath or the side, are removed. While we were there, Hutch took the pushrods out and used a white marker pen to note which was which.

■ **Right:** Uh-oh. You can see another problem here – the hardening on the head of the rockers is wearing. So ideally we need new ones as these would wear very quickly.



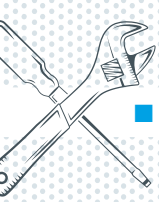
Tagging and bagging

The technical term is ‘controlled build’ or common sense. But many of us don’t do this. Simply buy a load of zip bags of different sizes, use masking tape to note what you’re putting in there and put them all in one place, like our cut-down oil container. Yes, we all know it’ll be going back together tomorrow and you won’t forget; but just in case it doesn’t...





▲ **Left & above:** The reason for my oil-covered right leg is here – a mangled pushrod tube seal and split, boded and split again tube. I would say fit for the bin but the tubes are being a little difficult to locate replacements. Seals should be easy though.



So now we have a shopping list. An oversize piston with rings and gudgeon pin, a rebore, pushrod tubes and seals, gasket set I already had from the ever helpful AJS and Matchless Owners' Club spares department (see jampot.com to join – well worth it) and some rockers. The head may need more, but we'll look at that next month. And I thought all we had was an oil leak... **CBG**

■ **Right:** Just before we deal with the barrel, Hutch turns the head on its – er head, and fills it with oil to make sure we're getting no leaks past the valve seats.

■ **Above:** This is the tricky part. Removing the barrel seems easy, but we had a stud that came out instead of the bolts coming loose, then you need to make sure any broken ring, piston or even barrel particles don't drop straight into the bottom end – so place plenty of rag down there.

■ **Left:** As the barrel came off the piston all looked fine, that is until the rings started to fall apart. Two compression rings and a three-piece oil ring somehow became over 20 parts – including two sections of piston lands (the raised sections between the rings) that had broken off. And I'd been sitting merrily a couple of hours earlier at 55mph worrying about a small oil leak!



■ The little end looks like an alloy item, so we're looking into what the G3L should have fitted. But it looks in a decent condition, at least.



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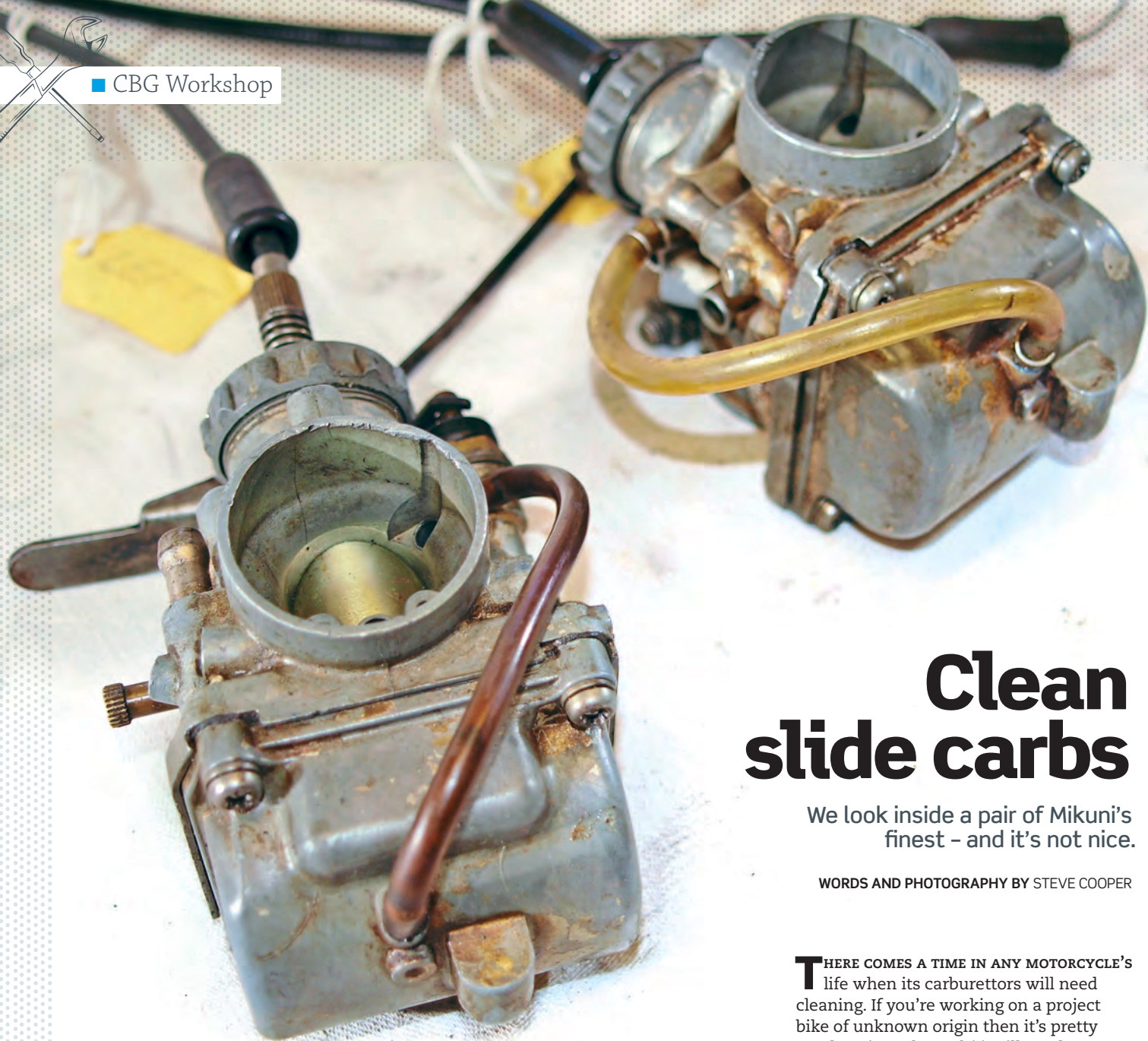
CLASSIC BIKE GUIDE

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Clean slide carbs

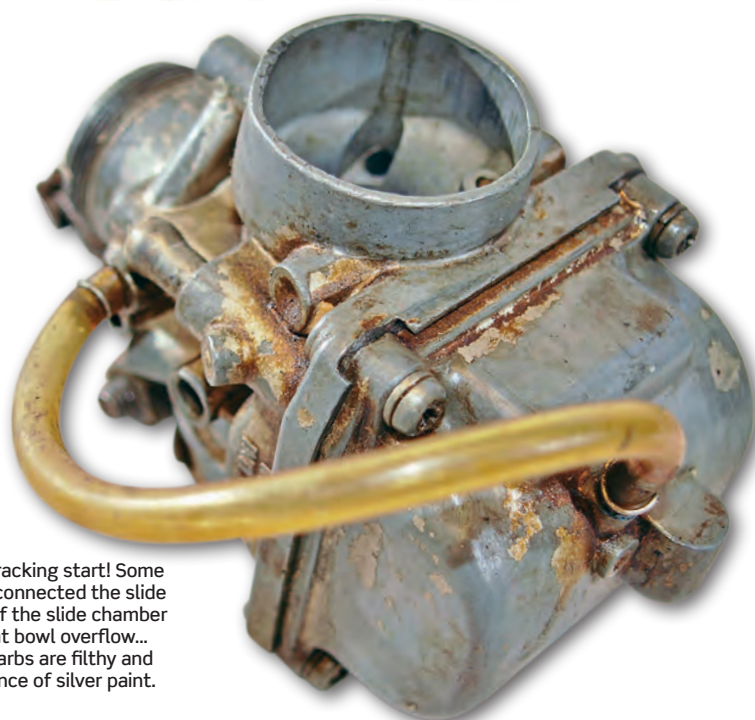
We look inside a pair of Mikuni's finest - and it's not nice.

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE COOPER

THERE COMES A TIME IN ANY MOTORCYCLE'S life when its carburettors will need cleaning. If you're working on a project bike of unknown origin then it's pretty much a given the carb(s) will need some TLC. The same applies to that bike you parked up a couple of years ago, intending to ride it the following month... Fuel now decays at an alarming rate and can easily render a working carburettor totally useless in a worryingly short time frame.

What follows is a precis of how I tackle the Mikuni slide carburettors that supply the power to the serried ranks of two-stroke twins that regularly blight my life. The article is not intended to be a comprehensive service guide but rather an overview of points of note, dodges, recommendations and wrinkles learnt from decades wasted fettling mainly Yamahas. Oh, and before anyone asks ... "why aren't you looking at British carbs?" I am, well in a way. I'm ripping apart some VM series Mikunis and the V in the prefix apparently stands for Villiers. Mikuni learnt a lot from the Wolverhampton firm and this was officially recognised in the naming of the Japanese devices; they may even have paid royalties; who knows?

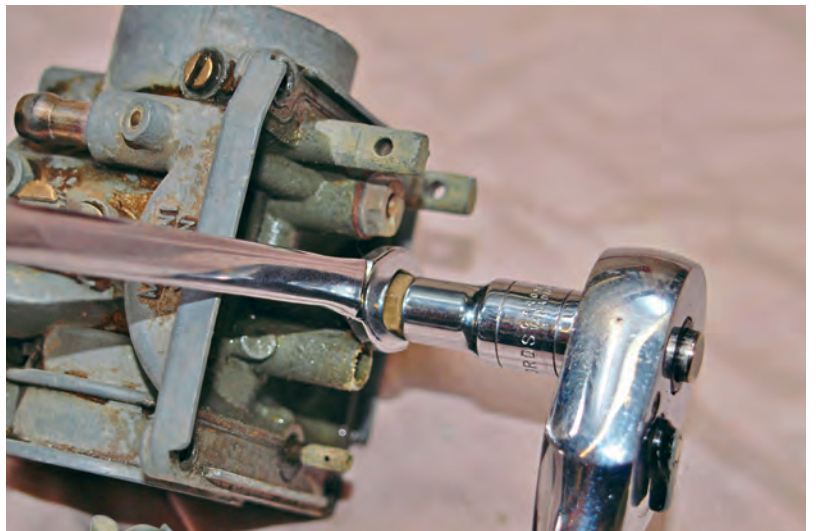
■ **Right:** A cracking start! Some numpty has connected the slide vent spigot of the slide chamber to the float bowl overflow... doh! Both carbs are filthy and show evidence of silver paint.



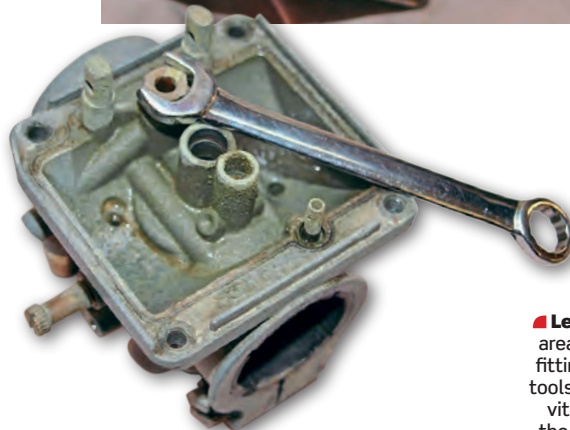


▲ **Above:** What an utter horror story. This is all from petrol that's not just 'gone off' it's actually starting to chemically decompose.

▲ **Left:** Having hosed off anything that's immediately soluble by carb cleaner, everything gets soaked in a suitable solvent. I use isopropyl alcohol which is cheap (via eBay) and quite effective.



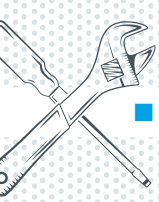
▲ **Above:** With the float and float pin easily removed thanks to a week of soaking, the main jet is removed from the emulsion tube. A 1/4in socket set and some good quality small size spanners make this task so much easier.



▲ **Left:** If you're going to use spanners in areas such as this ensure you don't find fittings suddenly coming loose, allowing tools to hit the vertical float posts. These vital supports are cast integrally with the body of the carb and are very easily damaged but extremely difficult to repair.



What we have on the bench are a pair of carbs taken from a Yamaha CS3C aka a 200cc street scrambler. The bike was sold new into the Canadian market in 1970 where it lived a hard life judging by the state of both engine and chassis. It's been heavily abused, badly repaired and generally unloved... until it landed up in my shed a few years ago. It's now undergoing what's best described as a renovation rather than a restoration whereby it's being made to look presentable but not a potential show winner. Therefore the carburetors are being cleaned, fettled and rebuilt but not bead blasted to within an inch of their lives etc. Anyway, enough talking, let's crack on.



■ Tickover and pilot air screws normally have a captive retaining spring around them that stops the screws turning with vibration. They often get stuck in place and/or lost so winkle the little blighters out!



■ Someone's already tried to get the pilot jet out and damaged the head. Heat and/or penetrating oil may work... or you could simply cause even more damage. If it won't move, try running the bike after the carb has been cleaned before attempting ever more drastic measures. A jet broken off in a carb is pain of epic proportions!



■ Don't ever ignore float bowls; there's a tiny brass jet cast into the rear wall. If it's blocked the choke passageways won't flow any fuel leading to extremely difficult cold starting.



■ Above: All the small brass parts ready for cleaning. Carburettor cleaner and the like make little or no impact on staining and dirt like this.



■ Yet with the application of some modern cleaning chemistry, a few minutes' soaking and some occasional agitation with a brush delivers parts that almost look brand-new.



■ Left: This is the product that has performed the marvellous transformation. Forch R578 may have been designed to clean EGR valves on diesel engines but it works brilliantly on old motorcycle carburetors as well!

CARBURETTOR METALLURGY



On most Japanese machinery running slide carburettors, the main body, carb top and float bowl are all made from die cast alloys of zinc, magnesium and aluminium with small amounts of silicon, but generally they vary in composition. The tops are often soft and easily attacked by chemicals, suggesting, to me at least, that there's a high percentage of zinc and/or magnesium present. The main bodies are generally made from an alloy that lends itself well to drilling, tapping and threading; i.e. readily withstands machining.

This same alloy also has to be one that copes well with die casting as a large number of the carb's internals are partially created at the molten stage. Float bowls tend to feature higher levels of silicon and the premise here is that even back in the 1960s the Japanese realised that petrol has the power to be potentially corrosive towards metal. This makes sense when you grasp that float bowls are exposed to petrol 24/7 so the more silicon present the less likely it is the metal will corrode.

This logic tends to hold true for CV carbs as well with the exception of the carb top covering the diaphragm; here it's often down to cosmetic concerns. If a bank of four carbs are going to be hidden by a tank then the tops are likely to be pressed steel and finished as cost effectively as possible. For the likes of Honda twins, Yamaha XS 650s then it's either chromed steel or satin finished alloy when the units are on display.

So when you see a fully restored bike at a show and the carburettor is doing its very own version of 50 shades of grey you'll know why!

When it comes to the slides in Japanese carburettors I have to say the likes of Mikuni were, sadly, well ahead of Amal. From the outset the surfaces of the alloy slides were hard anodised which meant they experienced minimal wear and thus the carbs stayed in tune better. If you've ever tried to set up a slide carb where the main operating cylinder flops about you'll know why the expense of hard anodizing is totally justified.



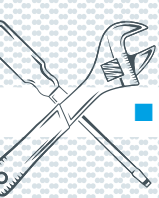
■ And it's pretty damn effective on float bowls and carb bodies as well. Decades of crud shifted in minutes... Forch R578 is serious stuff.



■ **Left:** The neoprene washer in the carb top has parted company with the glue that once held it in place. This apparently random piece of synthetic rubber seals the top of the carburettor and also prevents the threaded top from unscrewing. Once cleaned up it'll be reattached with some DIY impact adhesive.

■ **Below:** Every day can be a school day if you have an open mind! Tip acquired via a Facebook page; apparently Harpic Power Plus is the very thing for removing oxidation from die cast metals such as old carburettors.



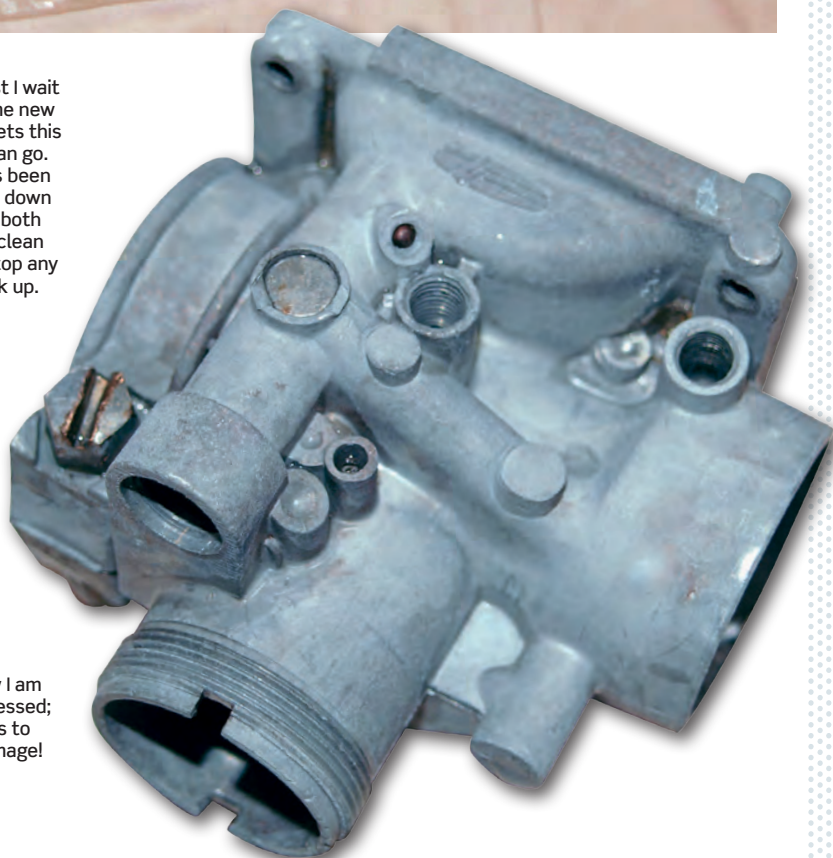


From here it'll be a case of rebuilding the carburetors back up and then adjusting them to approximately the correct tickover and pilot air screw settings.

Only once they are back on the bike can the carbs be fine-tuned. Rebuilding carburetors is best undertaken on a clean workbench with quality tools. This is even more mission critical when it comes to fitting new or freshly cleaned jets. Any jet that utilises a slotted screw fitting must be installed with a flat bladed screwdriver of the correct size. Now that might sound obvious but in far too many instances folk just grab the first driver that comes to hand. Whilst it might do the job it's eminently possible to damage the screw slot of the jet, flake off some slivers of brass and subsequently block the freshly cleaned carburettor...just don't ask me how I know about this okay?

Hopefully once the carbs are rebuilt I'll be able to prattle on again explaining how to set the carbs up on the bike if you haven't nodded off already? **CBG**

■ **Above:** Whilst I wait delivery of some new float bowl gaskets this is as far as I can go. Everything has been liberally hosed down with GT85 to both preserve the clean surfaces and stop any moisture pick up.



■ **Right:** Now I am seriously impressed; compare this to the 'before' image!



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BSA M33 500cc, single, 1959, immaculate condition, easy starter, £4650. Also BSA A10, 1959, good condition, bargain, £4200, full engine rebuild both bikes are in good condition, p/x welcome. Tel. 07443 642408. West Yorkshire.

HARLEY DAVIDSON Custom Built, 2006, V Twin 1340cc, £15,000 ono. Tel. 07985 529413. Bucks.

HONDA CBF500 MoT July 2019, 27,000 miles, very good condition, 2005, many extras just serviced, priced to sell, £1250. Tel. Brian 01329 667995; 07905 364262. Hants.

HONDA XBR500 1986, on Sorn, not run for three years, still a tidy bike, comes with brand new replica exhaust system from David Silver, still boxed, £1450 ono. Tel. Derek 07754 534366. West Yorks.

MATCHLESS G2CSR 1963, complete bike, flat battery, £1100. Tel. 07919 081365. Lincs.

MOTO GUZZI 1979, 500cc, shaft drive V twin, disassembled & stored many years, only 18,531 miles from new, requires reassembly, V5C, £1000. Tel. 01522 753100. Lincs.

ROYAL ENFIELD Electra X, 2006, 500cc, virtually complete, V5, stored 12 years, good reg, Watsonian Squire s/s sidecar, excellent chassis wheel, all fittings, great value winter project, £975. Tel. 01297 489578. Dorset.

SUZUKI GS500E 2005, black, very good condition, screen & hand guards, new tyres & battery, MoT July 2019, 10,500 miles, £950. Tel. 01993 882759. Oxford.

TRIUMPH Speed Twin 1939, all numbers correct frame/engine and reg, not pristine but lovely and ready to use, please no dealers, £14,500. Tel. 07792 352423. Shropshire. 4070bdsmkoh@gmx.com

TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE T140E 1983, very good condition, runs well, top end rebuilt, good tyres etc, 22,500km since new, driven regularly and stored in warm garage during winter, freight can be arranged inside EU if needed, photos can be sent on request £5700. Tel. +358-505928270. Finland. reino.renfors@netikka.fi

YAMAHA CS3E 1971, V5 present, original reg number, good condition, starts runs ok, older restoration, Dyno starter, tyres good, chrome good, rebuilt wheels, view anytime, £2500. Tel. 01909 721563. Derbyshire.

YAMAHA VMAX 1999, 9000 miles, good condition, £3500. Tel. 01306 737148. Surrey.

Parts For Sale

ARIEL Square 4, 1948 parts: barrels +40 with pistons, £270. Two c/rods, £80. Various pistons, £25 each. Other bits inc mag. Wanted: g/box, primary cover and inner rear cover swap why? other bits. Tel. 01524 843902. Lancs.

ARIEL PARTS: WD, 350cc, g/box, £175. Std piston, £30. Square 4 valves Rockers box of EN/parts, £80. Wanted Square 4 g/box primary cover rear inner. Tel. 01524 843902. Lancs.

BSA A65 kickstart genuine as new, £35. 400x18 trials tyre, very good, £15. DB32 polished flywheels and conrod needs bigend, crankpin, £100. Late (alternator) B31, flywheels, £75, 1940s, Genuine Lucas headlight, £45. Tel. 07711 956049.

BSA GOLDSTAR 1950s, 23 tooth sprocket, for BSA or Goldie as new, £5. Also gearbox shaft for BSA or Norton not sure which, not worn or chipped splines, good condition, £20 photo available. Tel. 01691 676408. Shropshire.

HEAVY DUTY Oxford Monster 52" plastic sleeved m/c chain and 'Viro' armoured padlock, condition as new, £49. Tel. Ron 02086 995307. London.

LUCAS HEADLIGHT 30s-40s, very good, correct glass, missing reflector, £45. Genuine A65 and late B40 genuine kickstart, as new, £45. Goldstar rear mudguard left hand bracket, very good, £25 plus shipping costs. Tel. 07711 956049. South Yorks.

MONOBLOC CARBS two complete carbs, 389 monobloc bargain, £40 the pair, plus p&p at cost. Also pair of barend mirrors new, £25 p&p at cost bargain. Tel. 07743 642408. West Yorkshire.

NORTON MANX STYLE alloy oil tank, as new never used, £175 ono. Norton slimline oil tanks x two, £35 each. Tel. 08796 588380. Notts.

PAIR OF T140E crank cases from a 79 bike good condition, want to sell or trade for 82 TSX parts like switches or fork stanchions, also interested in most TSX bits at the right price. Tel. 01628 668799.

PAIR OF TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE silencers/exhaust good chrome, £45. Honda 750 tank believed to be 1970s good condition. £35. Old Triumph Tiger Cub workshop manual used in good condition, £10. MZ Simpson S51 silencer (new), £30 collection preferred but delivery can be arranged at extra cost. Tel. 07899 995772. Sheffield.

TRIUMPH SPARES SHED CLEARANCE: a set of Duplex forks reconditioned TR6 T120, 8" FW hub complete plus new shoes, set of Duplex engine plates, K2F magneto with new brushes and pickups 56-60 cylinder head restored plus manifold and carb Duplex 3 gallon petrol tank plus new badges, trims Duplex sumpguard, set of timing gears, £650. Tel. 01355 222344.

TRIUMPH PARTS: two ignition coils, 12 volt small new with all brackets E6389, F6943 F6944 with all bolts, £75 pair, leaver 12/608 7/8 bars, £4. New head light with rim, £20. Battery retainers two off F6897, £5. Fender Bridge F5955, £5. Tel. 01933 355796. Northants.

TRIUMPH UNIT PARTS: two 12 volt coils E6388 new with brackets E6389 two off left coil bracket F6943, right coil bracket, F6944 with all bolts, £70 air lever 12/608, 7/8 bars new £4 two battery retainers F6897, £5 head light with rim no glass, new £20. Fender bridge, £5, gear box parts please ring. Tel. 01933 355796. Northants.

Wanted

1964 TRIUMPH Trophy TR6 - I used to own one, reg no 419 EER, do you know how it has weathered over the years, good or bad. Tel. 07981 530392. Norfolk.

ANY CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE wanted in any condition from a basket case to one in nice condition, cash waiting. Tel. 07811 189755. Staffs.

BMW R25/3 R26 spares wanted, anything considered for R25/3 R26, R27 models, even complete bike if cheap enough. Tel. 07971 478243.

BSA A10 OR A65 wanted in any condition, runner, project or spares, similar big twin of other makes considered. Tel. 07932 948153. Nottingham.

BSA BANTAM trials or trail machine wanted prefer one road registered and suitable for use in trials, may consider Triumph Cub as an option. Tel. 01539 722466. Kendal.

DOUGLAS 600/750 wanted 1920's/30's model any basket case condition, have Matchless G3L WD RAF trim new tyres, wheels, chains etc, no V5, not quite finished little work could exchange or sell. Tel. 01978 842668 leave message if no answer. Clwyd.

DOUGLAS WANTED 600/750 late 1920s/early 1930s model, any basket case condition project. Tel. 01978 842668 leave message if no answer. Clwyd.

DUCATI GTS 900cc, 1980, Bevel parts what have you for this motorbike? Harley 45 WLC parts wanted what have you for this 1940s motorbike and sidecar. Tel. 07863 262603; 02085 341761. London.

ENTHUSIAST LOOKING for classic bike, anything considered, Cafe Racer or Special or project even race bike, anything considered even non runner or damaged, will travel and pay cash on collection, also looking for scrambler or trail enduro bike. Tel. 07931 557018; 01613 350497 evening. Lancashire.

HARLEY 45WLC rear rack wanted that holds rear single seat in the WLC parts book, same seat as XA flat twin, has anyone seen one, I have seat and grab handle and top of rack where someone cut off rack, any help? Tel. 07863 262603; 02085 341761. London.

LAMBRETTA Model D150 wanted for restoration. Tel. 01162 123302. Leics.

LOOKING FOR HANDLEBAR SWITCHES for a 1982 Triumph TSX or spares to fix mine, or someone that can restore mine, or even internals from broken switches. Tel. 01628 668799. Bucks.

MOTO GUZZI V50 MK111, would consider MK11, must be good mechanically. Tel. 01495 759234. Gwent.

MOTORBIKE, MOPED any age condition, more rust the better, we need a winter project, Cornwall will travel upto 150 miles. Tel. 01872 241852.

MV AGUSTA 2006 185.882 mph, Bonneville Salt Flats land speed record pin badge, good price paid must be in good condition. Tel. 01422 251178. Yorkshire.

MZ SIMSON 50cc motorcycles wanted all models S50 S51 Enduro etc, will consider complete bikes, incomplete bikes running or not and spare parts, cash paid. Tel. 07899 995772. Sth Yorkshire.

PANTHER Model 10, 1956 ideally, parts needed: leading link forks (with shocks would be good); seat; front wheel and hub; headlight, other parts considered. Tel. David 07767 331809. Aberdeenshire.

RUDGE PARTS WANTED for 250 1935 rapid cylinder barrel, clutch cone outer cover engine, push-rods, rear sprocket any condition, need parts for new Hudson Autocycle engine, front wheel etc, have Bantam parts for exchange. Tel. 01978 842668. Clwyd.

TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE Hinckley wanted non runner, scruffy or why? Also Zundapp 201, 1957 tank with decent chrome panels. Tel. 01512 608612. Merseyside.

TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE T120 UK spec 1968/69 model years, full matching numbers. Tel. 07952 900268. Birmingham.

WANTED ANY RIGID motorcycle, older the better, also basket cases, spares wanted, collect anytime anywhere, cash paid, also Bar end mirrors, £8 each plus p&p, bargain. Tel. 07443 642408. West Yorkshire.

WANTED CASTROL LUBRICATION charts for BSA C15T, 1965 Tiger Cub, 1964, Matchless G3 CS, 1952. Tel. 07788 768313. Bucks.

WANTED FOR BSA 1939 C11 250cc, any parts why? especially correct Amal carburettor marked 74/024X or just body, MCR1 Lucas volt regulator, original Lucas T battery, Lucas horn type HF1140. Tel. Simon 01284 753974; 07783 277629. Suffolk.

WANTED FOR LAVERDA 500 swing arm, rear wheel spindle, chain adjusters, chain guard, Jota bars, any 500 bits. Tel. 01952 670152. Shropshire.

WANTED LUCAS 34419 light switch. Tel. 07539 444235. Surrey.

WANTED PUCH MAXI NSU Quickly, cyclenaster or just parts. Tel. 07790 168224. Warwickshire.

WANTED TRIUMPH rigid gearbox, complete working condition for 1953, 6T stamped NA, must be good. Tel. Steve 07396 270365. Brighton.

WANTED YAMAHA Suzuki or Honda 250cc must be original and running condition, cash waiting. Tel. 07866 919488. Herefordshire.

WORKSHOP MANUAL wanted for 1965 BSA C15T, old one. Tel. 07788 768313. Bucks.

Miscellaneous

BELSTAFF black wax cotton jacket size XXL, vintage vgc, £225 free post. Vintage Barbour wax cotton jacket size 40 chest, £95 free post or exchange Ducati Bevel or Harley 45 WLC parts why? Tel. 07863 262603; 02085 341761. London.

BELSTAFF mid-calf length motorcycle boots, black, size 10, brand new condition, cost £295 sell for £150. Tel. Ron 02086 995307. London.

CLASSIC BIKE MAGAZINE from 1978 up to 1988 over 100 issues in excellent condition, £35 buyer collects. Tel. 07504 327299. Torquay.

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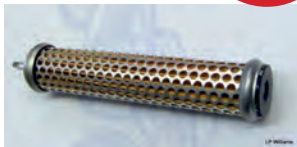
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FRANK WESTWORTH

TAKE IT TO THE LIMIT! OR NOT...

Frank tells of testing times and why the inordinate search for a mythical top speed.



“The engine spins up again. Maybe a little more vibratory than before, but it’s not easy to tell. The noise, though. Strewth, as they used to say in 1950s monochrome movies. It sounds dreadful.”

PICTURE THIS: YOU’RE CROUCHED OVER THE bars of a top motorcycle, in this case a Norton 650SS in entirely glittery, better than new condition. Flat bars, standard footrests produce that infamous bag of potatoes riding position; not entirely uncomfortable but not at all comfortable either. Only British motorcycles of this era seemed able to produce it. Back bent, head down, knees flapping, eyes straining to peer through spectacles while the helmet’s brim is intent upon shoving those same spectacles down your nose while at the same time cutting off your vision of the road ahead. Safety helmets, huh?

We need to pretend at this point that we’re all responsible adults and that rides like this are only ever attempted on closed private roads. Maybe airfields. Maybe a Somerset salt flat. This is a good pretence, not least because the more realistic alternative produces odd outbreaks of personal insults and bizarre faux moralistic outbursts.

We need to pretend at this point that we can see the speedo. In reality, the vibration – not just from the engine, but from the entire Going Fast process – is rattling both spectacles and eyeballs so much that the horizon is visible only through a veil of tears, and the only item in focus is the tachometer. The revolution counter, for empire loyalists. That fine Smiths chronometric clock is showing a flickering 6000rpm. As everybody knows, a 650SS in as-new condition hammers out its breathtaking 49bhp at just 6800rpm. Can we manage that? Deep breaths. The road is straight and long ... which is just as well, as acceleration is modest at this point. Unlike the hellfire, brimstone and the sounds of smashing Victorian teacups from below.

6200-ish...

6300-ish...

There’s suddenly an enormous raspberry cacophony and the power vanishes. Quick as a flash – add your own joke here – the clutch lever is grasped and speed ebbs rapidly away, as does the sound of disaster ... expensive disaster. The world comes back into focus and it’s time to ease out the clutch to see whether the engine has completely destroyed. Road testers are like this: endless selfless searching for facts and ultimates and things like that, just for you, gentle reader, just for you. Possibly.

The engine spins up again. Maybe a little

more vibratory than before, but it’s not easy to tell. The noise, though. Strewth, as they used to say in 1950s monochrome movies. It sounds dreadful. A combination of the racket a fag packet makes when stuck into the spokes of a pushbike wheel and the fruitiest flatulence it is possible to imagine. We drift down, down and down into legal speeds and the racket falls away with the velocity. Finally, speedometer needle flickering around 30mph or so, we open the throttle gently to see whether there is still a little motor motivation from the legendary Norton engine. There is. Maybe the power of a Jubilee, although it would be a very unhappy Jubilee if it sounded like this big brother does.

Chug slowly back to base. Base in this case being the home of the bike’s proud owner. He’s waiting in the drive, a steady and neutral expression held carefully in place. Pull up. Engage neutral. Kick down the aftermarket sidestand and dismount. Assume an appropriate air of contrition. The engine ticks over very slowly and strangely, its vocal outpouring somewhere between a slurry pump and a very, very elderly diesel. And there is oil. External oil.

‘Hmmm...’ we say in concert. ‘Hmmm... head gasket.’ We nod and share a sigh of relief. ‘I’ll get it fixed...’ I start. Proud owner, great and generous guy that he is, waves away the suggestion. ‘Not a problem,’ he says, mystifyingly. We repair to a table in the sunny garden, tell lies and drink tea.

Only this morning I was being lambasted through the ethers for my reluctance to take borrowed bikes to their limits. If a bike’s owner wants to discover whether the engine’s safe at peak power, then fine. But would you want to loan your P&J to me so that I can damage it, possibly destroy it? Is that even sane?

Many folk have many unrealistic views, to which they are entirely entitled, but possibly my favourite criticism of old bike riding impressions is that some clown (*c’est moi*) should push a half-century old machine to the point at which either its valves bounce or its engine explodes.

Norton’s splendid 650SS would achieve a maximum speed somewhere between 110 and 120mph when new, the actual figure depending on very many variables. It’s unlikely to have got any faster since 1964, so why risk destruction today? Some folk are just plain strange. And I’ve never got one to rev to 6800... **CBG**

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 columnist 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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Swedes in Vegas!

Rarities under the hammer in gambling capital of Nevada

It's logical to think that any kind of museum will be going to hold on to all of its exhibits *ad infinitum*, but that's not always strictly true. Sometimes it's due to financial reasons, occasionally it's thanks to local politics, but the most common reason – and the situation that we see here – is due to a relocation to a smaller venue.

The collection in question is the MC Collection, in Stockholm, Sweden, and the curator and owner, Christer R Christensson, is editing the impressive stable of bikes that he owns at the moment down to 120 machines. This still sounds like a lot of bikes, but the fact is that there are no less than 235 motorcycles being taken out of the MC Collection!

The remaining bikes will soon be on display at Tidö Castle, just outside of Västerås in Sweden (about 100km from Stockholm), and the new museum will be opening in the spring of 2019 (look at www.tidoslott.se for more details).

The impressive collection has been gathered by Christer over many years. Having first bought a Husqvarna in 1957, he started actually collecting with a silver Norton Dominator – which began a fascination with British bikes – in the Seventies. While clearly an avid motorcycle fan, it was the variety of design that truly fascinated Christer and during the following decade, while having a passion for Swedish-built bikes, he started looking further afield, at bike designs from around the globe, but his focus was still on interesting design.

He then started a restoration shop, being helped by Ove Johansson for many years, with Ove lending a helping hand from just eight years of age! The primary objective was to find bikes that had been kept, long term, by families in Sweden. There are even rarities, such as 1900s Indians and Harleys, that have



The Crockers Big Tank, built in 1939 and just one of only 72 V-twin Crockers. Previously a resident of Indiana, will it return?

stayed in the same Swedish family for well over 100 years! Around 80% of the collection was of bikes that were originally sold in the Swedish market – not just home market machinery, but bikes from around the world too.

Restoration was always back to original spec, if any restoration was undertaken at all. Christer collected many original sales brochures, to be able to learn the original finish of parts, whether they were nickel plated or whatever. As he points out, too many restorations are totally unlike the original, with modern

triple plate chrome instead of nickel-plating, for example.

The museum has been running for 20 years, and originally opened to the public when Christer realised that the bikes couldn't just stay in a garage or basement, but had to be seen by the public. He bought them because the design fascinated him, and he wanted others to understand that fascination too.

But, for now, you want to know about the bikes being sold. They've been shipped from Sweden to Las Vegas, and will be sold off in an auction coordinated by Mecum in January. Christer has kept many really rare, Swedish and European bikes, although some rarities, such as a 1939 Crockers Big Tank that was the only example of that model in Europe, have headed back across the Atlantic. As Christer said: "Sometimes bikes just need to be where they need to be!", and you do have to wonder just how some bikes, like that Crockers, ended up in Sweden in the first place!

Eighty-two of the bikes due to go to auction are now on show in Las Vegas, and the collection will be



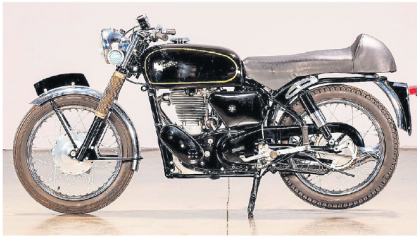
Set to achieve a premium price, this Honda CB750 is one of the earlier models with 'sandcast' crankcases (actually permanent mould castings) before the die-cast cases of the later models.



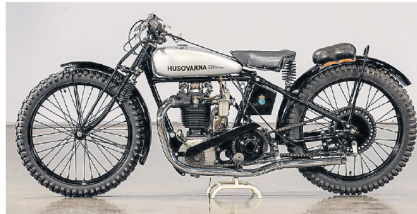
A replica of the NCR race Ducatis of the Seventies, this Swedish bike was originally built using race components from the factory!

sold, in individual lots, at Mecum's 28th annual Las Vegas Vintage and Antique Motorcycle Auction, scheduled for January 22-27.

And, although the sale in Nevada will mean that many machines will remain in the States – Christer is hoping that is where the Crockers will stay – the international market that supports large auctions such as this dictates that potential bidders will be watching from around the world. Some of those bikes will certainly be coming to Britain! You can see the bikes due for auction at www.mecum.com/motorcycles



With all of the factory's go-faster goodies, this Velocette Venom Clubman hails from 1968.



The 1929 Husqvarna Model A, built for dirt oval racing, uses a 250cc overhead valve JAP powerplant, Druid forks and a three-speed Sturmey-Archer gearbox.

