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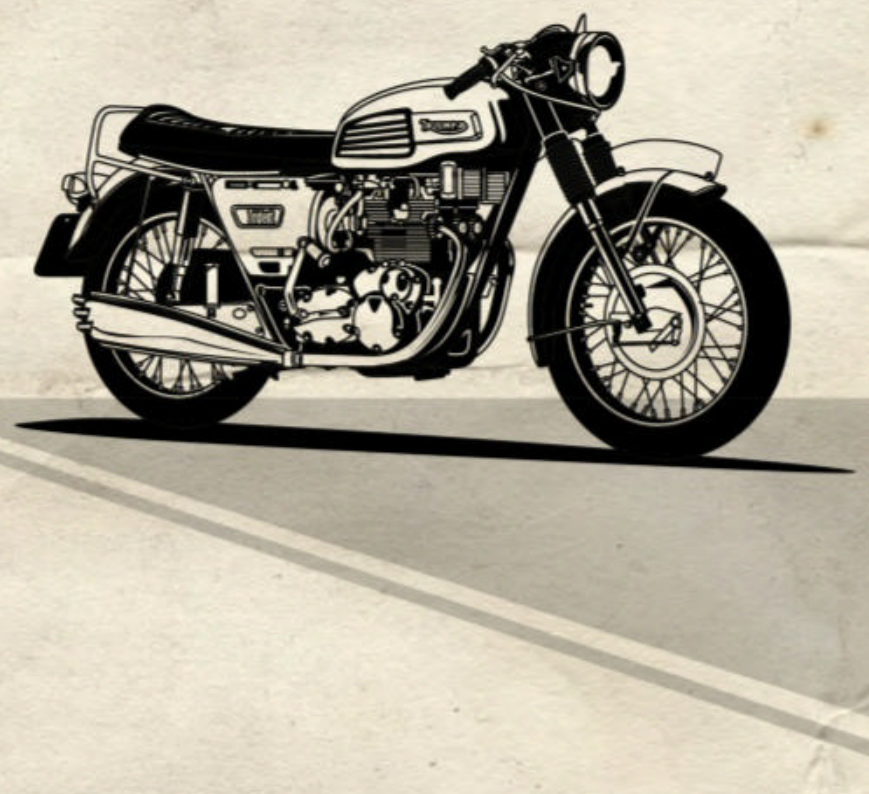
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Old meets new

STILL LOVE THE STAFFORD SHOW, THERE'S always something different and it makes you feel like you're part of a much larger classic world. This month I had one of those lucky 'pinch me' moments, being fortunate enough to spend a little time with some true racing legends – in no order, Charlie Williams, Alex George, John Cooper, Ben and Tom Birchall and Ian Hutchinson.

Being a journo and working around racing a little, I'd spent some time with Ian, knew what troubles, pain and hard work he's had to endure, as well as how honest and damn talented he is. It was great to see him feeling confident, on the mend and he was saying he's just bought an old Bultaco trials bike.

It was also really interesting to see Hutchy talking to the racers from previous generations, about their lives, careers and how the world of bike racing differs nowadays. The mutual respect was evident among these guys.

I'd never met Charlie Williams, Alex George or John Cooper before, and what true gentlemen they are. Being able to get a first-hand glimpse into the world they came from was incredible and totally different to today's racing. They may have got start money in the old days, but boy did they earn it.

If you want to know more, both Charlie and John have books out at the moment. I've read John's, and have just started Charlie's – both well worth a read.

The Norton has been causing headaches this month. You would have thought with a Norton it would just be a case of ordering anything you need; but oh no. Commando parts, not a problem, and even Dominators are well catered for. But singles? Then good luck. I completely understand it's supply and demand, but what do I do?

The valve guides, cams, cam followers, cam follower guides and rockers are knackered. Valve guides are no issue and thanks to a bimble around the stalls at Stafford a cam follower guide turned up (coincidentally, why don't autojumble stalls put a simple list of what era or makes of parts they have? Other than frames or tanks giving you a clue, you have no choice but to root around the boxes – it's like doing your weekly shop wearing a blindfold). But the hard-wearing faces of the rockers and cam followers need building up where they've worn, then grinding or linishing down. So it has got me investigating engineering practices, which has all got quite fascinating – well to a Luddite like me.

Stelite welding or spraying, hard chrome, nitriding – how is best to refinish these parts? I'm still looking into it; will I revert to old-school methods, or will modern technology have the answer? Old meets new again; I'll let you know who wins.

In the meantime, my friend, Neville, lent me his ES2 off-roader, so I could feel what all the hard work is for – it'll be worth it, and the Norfolk Norton Owners' Club had a splendid, one owner from new, N15CS on their stand at a local vintage show; so more motivation.

The bike meet season has started in full swing again, and where I live in Norfolk we are blessed. Old Buckenham Two Wheel Tuesday sees upwards of 500 bikes on a good evening, the Whitwell and Reepham Railway is still busy every Friday and first Wednesday of the month the Mid-Norfolk Railway has one at Dereham station. First Thursday is Krazy Horse in Bury St Edmunds with bands, hot rods and a great night, while Wells-next-the-Sea usually has a few bikes anytime.

Check out your area – ask at shops or check the likes of Facebook; there's bound to be several. You can arrive mounted on a classic, a modern, big or small and enjoy what others have turned up on. Who doesn't like looking at bikes with a burger and a beer?

One of my favourite sights is the race leather-clad riders looking at the older bikes – I wonder if they've tried a classic? They're welcome to have a go on my B31 – I'll bet you a pint they come back smiling. Old meets new, new meets old. In a world that seems hell-bent on polarising people against each other, it's nice to see biking transcend above such behaviour. Get out there!

Enjoy the weather, enjoy the mag and be good.



Matt Hull
editor@classicbikeguide.com

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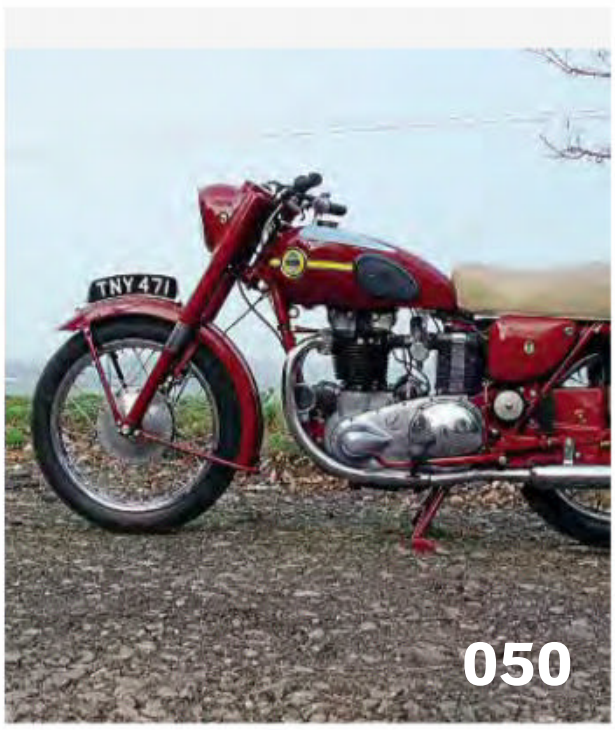
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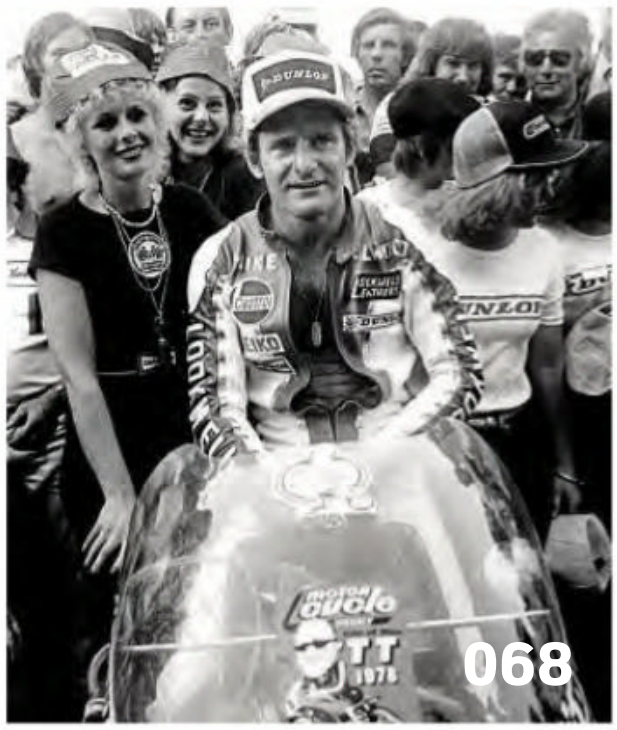


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Capturing a moment in time

Several elements made me choose this image – John Surtees in 1960, en route to winning the Senior TT. His MV Agusta was easily the fastest bike compared to the following gaggle of Norton singles, with a time of 2 hours, 12 minutes and 35.2 seconds, at an average speed of 102.44mph. MV Agusta team-mate, John Hartle, was second, three minutes behind, at a speed of 100.44mph. Hartle reversed those positions in the Junior.

Outclassed by the MVs, Mike Hailwood and his Norton came a remarkable third, just three minutes behind Hartle, with an average speed over the six laps of 98.29mph. Just think about that – 226 miles at almost 100mph average, on a single-cylinder Norton with 1960s suspension and tyres.

Talented riders and amazing bikes aside, spare a thought also for the photographer, shooting the fastest bike in Grand Prix racing, coming head-on, with a glass plate camera – no autofocus, no motordrive, slow shutter speeds and, oh, sitting on a grass bank on top of a mountain... CBG


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Motorcycles That matter

Honda Dax

Does the little Honda deserve classic status? A two-seat motorbike that could be tucked into a tiny space, bring two-wheeled pleasure to many and, crucially, show people that hadn't experienced motorcycling before that it could be fun

WORDS RACHAEL CLEGG **PHOTOGRAPHY** GARY CHAPMAN

THE YEAR OF 1969 WAS, ON THE WHOLE, A good one. It witnessed the release of Led Zeppelin's second album, the Rolling Stones' Let It Bleed, Easy Rider, the Woodstock Festival, man on the moon, the list goes on… Hell, even Sesame Street made its debut in 1969.

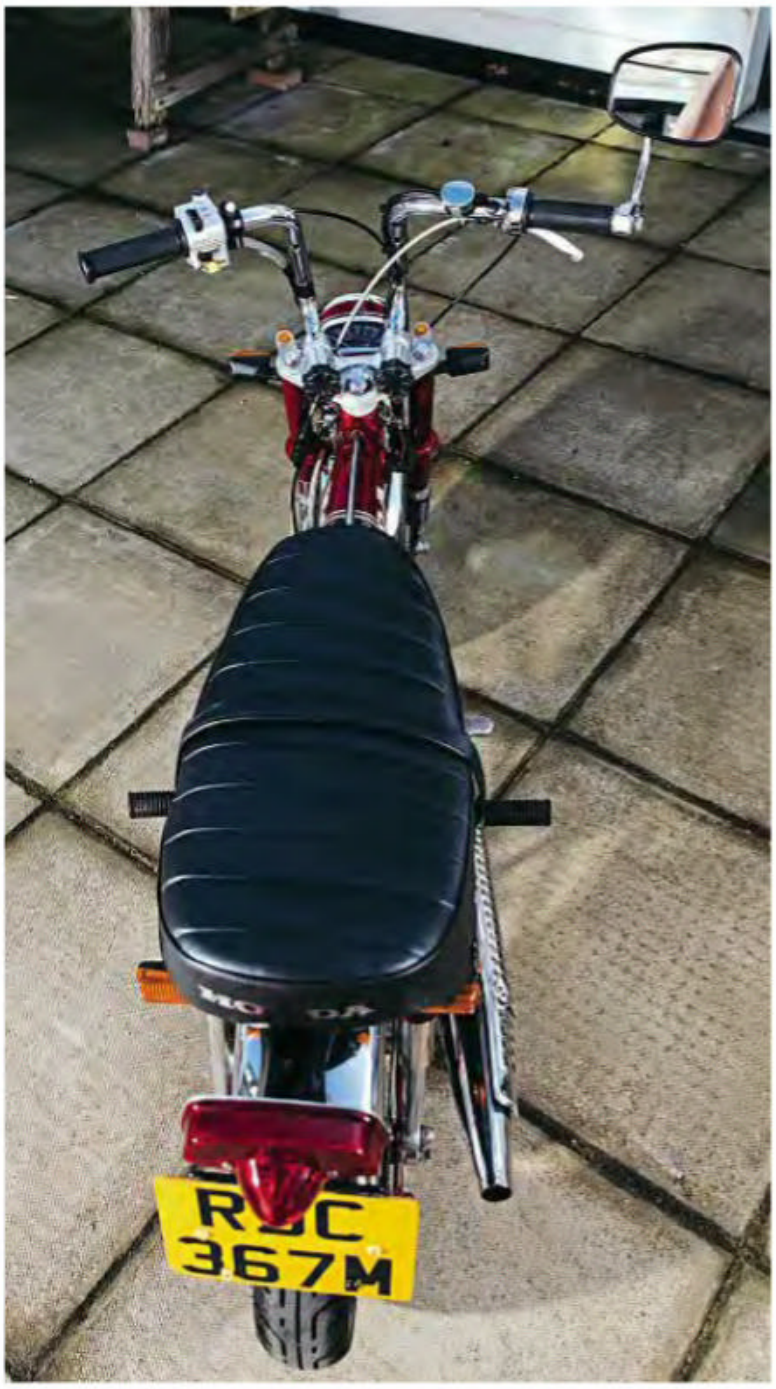
And as if all that wasn't enough for one year's excitement, Honda then decided to unleash to the world a motorcycle that would remain among the quirkiest ever built: the Honda Dax.

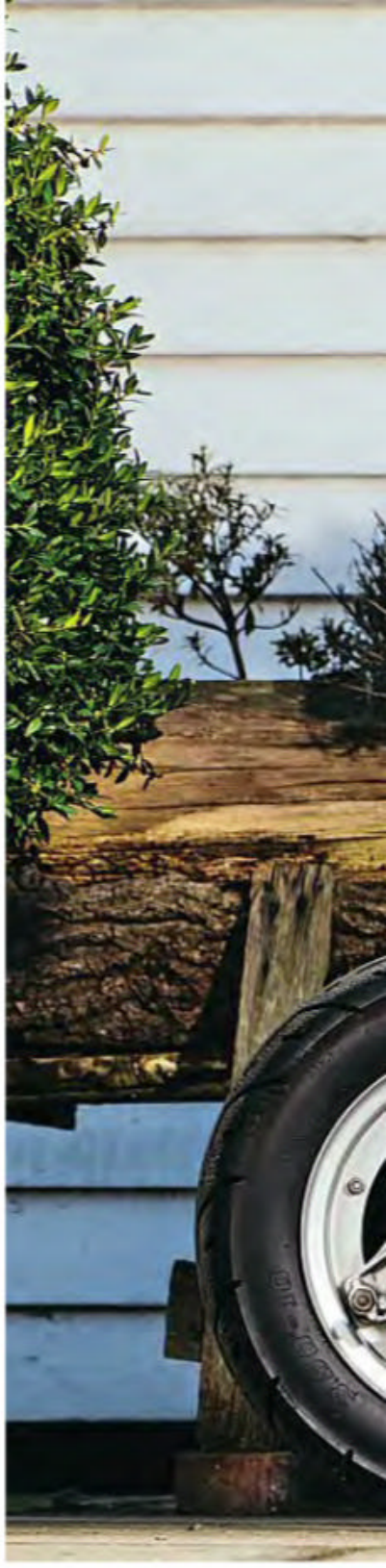
Launched in 1969, the Honda Dax wasn't a racer, it wasn't a workhorse, it could barely be described as a 'road bike' but it was hugely popular simply because it was fun. It was fun to ride, fun to hear and fun to look at.

Somehow, the Dax seemed to tap into the very soul of 1969. The baby boomers were at a two-wheel-yearning age, rationing seemed to be in the distant memory and suddenly, here was Honda, barely 18 years into producing motorcycles, presenting the globe with a reliable 72cc machine that could be chucked in the back of a car.

The market was there, and so were the economic conditions: in 1962 the UK Government changed its trading agreement with Japan – this liberalised the import and export restrictions between the two countries, essentially opening the floodgates for Japanese motorcycles. By 1969 the perception of Japanese machinery was as it is today: reliable and technologically progressive. Even a quirky play thing like the Dax could be depended upon on the roads.

The Dax ST70 was produced from 1969 to 1981















and it had a younger 50cc sibling – the ST50 and from 1972 Honda even launched a C90, with a 90cc engine. But the latter was only in production for three years; it would be the smaller machines that proved most successful. The name, 'Dax' was inspired by the machine's squat, sausage dog-like proportions, like that of the dachshund dog.

But it's the machine's format that is so distinctive, made possible by its pressed steel frames and T-shaped profile. Even its 'belly' – the single cylinder engine – resembles that of a dog. But the Dax was designed as a 'toy' – albeit one primarily for grown-ups. In fact, Honda, quite literally, capitalised on the Dax's fun factor. The ST50's 1973 pamphlet reads: "Considered by many as the ideal FUN machine in the Honda lightweight range, the ST50 Dax has been recently reintroduced to the UK market."

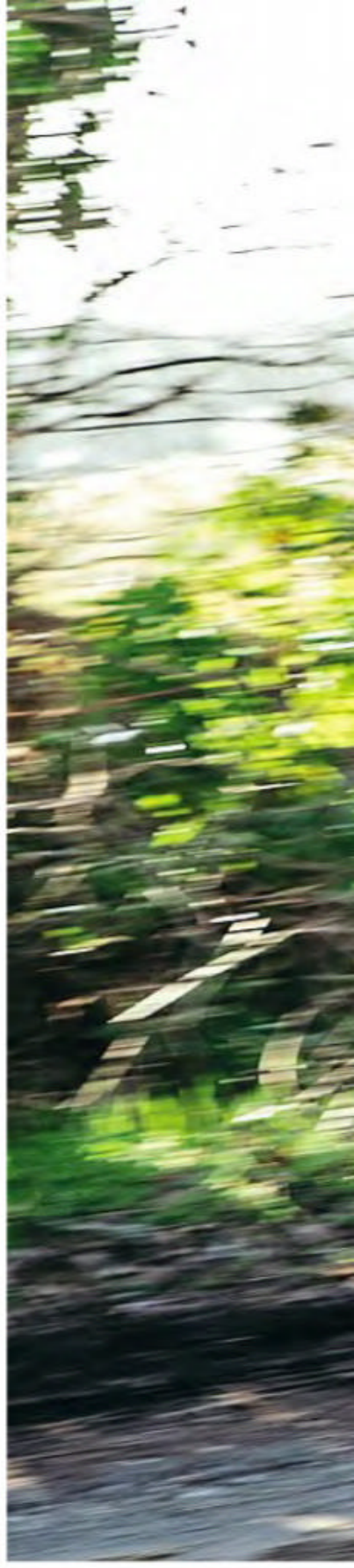
It reads on: "As one of the country's most versatile machines, the ST50 Dax is suitable for a variety of uses – including off-road excursions as well as being fully road legal for use on normal public highways."

So to put the Dax to the test, we decided to have a blast on a 1973 ST70 at Davolls classic motorcycles in Billericay, Essex. And even from the off, the machine's a doddle: the kick-start is easy and the Dax fires up after just a few kicks. Moreover, the limited gearbox – having only three gears – means there's plenty of range from first to third. And despite its size, the ST70 can easy bob along at 40mph. We took it down a 40mph road and kept up with traffic with no problem whatsoever.

The machine's limited suspension and small-







"To onlookers, it's a joy too: the smiles on the faces of fellow drivers as they see the Dax on the road and hear its four-stroke hum is a sight to behold"

diameter wheels, however, does make for the odd dramatic 'bump' – especially over pothole-riddled roads (and let's be honest, the majority of UK roads are) but overall – when potholes are dodged – it's relatively smooth. The seat is extremely comfortable with a relaxed riding position, though motoring with two adults on the seat might be a tad too cosy! But it's a fabulously steady ride and punchy enough for most urban streets.

Handling is easy too, insomuch that it barely requires thinking about and as a result road junctions are relatively stress-free. Its micro proportions and short wheelbase also make for easy manoeuvring, so tight turns are a piece of cake. And it's this that adds to the machine's capacity for fun: it removes the majority of worries associated with motorcycles – especially for a novice. To put it bluntly, the Dax is never going to outwit the ability of its rider. Low-centre of gravity machines always inspire more confidence than their higher counterparts and the Dax's tiny dimensions could make even the most inept motorcyclist feel like 1969's world champion, Giacomo Agostini.

To onlookers, it's a joy too: the smiles on the faces of fellow drivers as they see the Dax on the road and hear its four-stroke hum is a sight to behold. Surely everyone should own one of these great bikes?

Basically, the Dax is one of the most well designed toys in the motorcycle world – only it's a toy that has stood the test of time and proved to be mechanically reliable. But best of all it really is bloody good fun. It wasn't just fellow drivers smiling as *CBG* took the Dax for a spin: its rider (this writer) had a grin like a Cheshire Cat all day too!

But to understand the Dax, and its fun factor, we must look to its predecessor, the Honda Monkey bike, which was launched eight years before the Dax. The 50cc Monkey Bike was not originally intended to be produced on an industrial scale. Rather, it was developed by Honda while the factory was building its own motorsports-inspired theme park at Suzuka, known as Tama Tech Park. The company decided to build a number of small, technologically simple motorcycles for children to use at the theme park and thus the Monkey Bike was born.

The Monkey Bike, officially known as the Z100, shared the same basic 49cc engine as the mass-produced C100 Cub moped so it required no extra resources – other than tiny five-inch wheels. In fact, part of the Monkey Bike's charm was its sheer lack of sophistication. Honda's racing motorcycles were becoming ever more advanced, technologically surpassing almost all other motorcycle manufacturers, yet the Monkey Bike was an exercise of simplicity: originally it didn't even have rear suspension.

But, much to Honda's surprise, the Monkey Bike was proving as popular among adults as children. And Honda – ever quick to spot a gap in the market – quickly developed a road legal version of the Monkey Bike for adults. It was fun that propelled the bike's success, not technological advancement.

And this provides an important context for the Dax, which was essentially cut from the same child-sized cloth. The Dax was created off the back of the Monkey Bike but with 'adult friendly' features, such as a more powerful air-cooled engine with 7000rpm and a seat big enough for two people.

Dax's literature highlighted the machine's road-going qualities. The pamphlet reads: "The go-anywhere Dax features folding handlebars to provide easy storage and transportation. Fitting easily into a caravan, boat or the back of a hatchback or estate car, the ST50 Dax is ideal to take away with you on holidays for those short trips down to the beach or to the shops. In addition, holders of full car licences are able to ride this versatile machine with no restrictions."

CBG can verify that the Dax would fit in the back of a car, though perhaps not a 1969 Mini Cooper or a Ford Cortina. But it does guarantee an enormous smile and possibly the most fun you can have on a road with a 40mph speed limit and much faster than a sausage dog. CBG



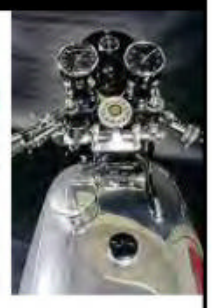
THE DAX ST70 SPECIFICATION

ENGINE UNIT: Air-cooled, single-cylinder, four stroke, chain-driven overhead camshaft **BORE AND STROKE:** 47mm x 41.4mm **CYLINDER CAPACITY:** 72cc **SUSPENSION:** telescopic front, swinging arm rear **ENGINE WEIGHT INCLUDING OIL:** 18kg

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George Grinton (588cc Norton) takes a wide line through Ramsey Hairpin, 1925 sidecar TT.

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Rickman Day at Sammy Miller's

THE FIRST EVER Rickman Enthusiasts' Day will be held in 2019 at the Sammy Miller Museum in Hampshire. The event has gathered interest from around the world, and the Rickman Brothers, Don and Derek will be attending.

The idea is to gather as many Rickman motorcycles in one place as possible and to invite the family and local ex-factory workforce. Rickman owners are welcome to bring their machines to display on the forecourt of the museum and to be eligible for judging.



There will be a registration fee of £6 (proceeds to charities). Trophies will be awarded by the brothers for various classes on the day and the event will be raising funds for two charities nominated by Don and Derek, The Hampshire Air Ambulance and the local Oakhaven Hospice.

The event will be held at The Sammy Miller Museum on June 23 from 10am-4pm. For further information visit the Facebook page 'Rickman Enthusiast's Day 2019'. To register your Rickman, please contact Russ Gannicott at triaxiom@btconnect.com





Credit: GTHpicsnaps

Racers return to Oliver's Mount

ROAD RACING IS to return to Scarborough's Oliver's Mount road circuit. Racing was cancelled when 12 people were injured in two crashes in September 2017 when competitors crashed through fencing and hit spectators.

The venue attracts thousands of spectators to the 3.8km (2.4 mile) track. It has been announced two meetings will take place this year, in July and September. Events at the circuit had previously been run by the Auto66 Club, but now a newly-formed motorcycle racing club, Two Four Three Road Racing Association, will be in charge of the races.

Scarborough Borough Council has granted a lease of the site to GrantRoberts Ltd, operating as the racing club and headed by two former Isle of Man TT racers Eddie Roberts and Mick Grant. The operators said races and safety improvements for both riders and spectators along the Scarborough route had been "months and months in the planning".

Eddie Roberts said: "We finally took hold of the keys to the track at the weekend, and we're moving in, everything is coming together as planned. We've been inundated with racers asking about entries, and we are expecting the demand to be high. We will also be announcing 'star' riders shortly."

The two meetings will be the Barry Sheene Classic on July 27/28 and the Gold Cup from September 27-29. Oliver's Mount is the only natural road race circuit in England, just outside Scarborough town centre. Fans will be pleased to see ticket prices have been slashed, making a weekend at Oliver's Mount, Scarborough, even more tempting than before.

Prices for both events are as follows: Saturday £20, Sunday £25, weekend ticket £40, Advance tickets are available from Duke on 01624 640024 or online at www.dukevideo.com/oliversmount.

Win yourself a Mercury



ONE OF THE very best classic Nortons is up for grabs in this year's Vintage Motorcycle Club raffle.

The immaculate 1969 Norton Mercury 650, a single carb twin, was the last Norton to feature the Featherbed frame. The Mercury, a softly tuned tourer, was made by Norton at the end of the Sixties to use up left over parts while the 750 Commando established itself.

Despite its humble origins it is regarded by many enthusiasts as being one of the best Norton twins ever made.

To buy tickets, which cost £1 each, visit www.vmcc.net/Competitions-and-Raffles. The draw will take place on Friday, June 28.

Death of tiddler racer Rodney Gooch

SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES TT tiddler racer and Castle Combe Circuit motorcycle coordinator Rodney Gooch, has died aged 73, after a long illness.

Rodney started riding in the TT in 1967 and campaigned the 125cc White-Bantam from then until 1969 and campaigned lightweight Yamahas into the 1970s, coming ninth in the 1974 Ultra-Lightweight TT at a speed of 82.22 mph.

Rodney also campaigned a 50cc Ducati in the only 50cc race at the TT held in 1968.





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Stafford sparkles despite the showers

THERE WERE TWO MAIN TOPICS OF conversation at the Stafford International *Classic MotorCycle* Show during the first day. One was "Who on earth would pay nearly £85,000 for a 650cc Triumph twin" and the other was "Do you suppose it will stop raining?"

Bud Ekins' 1962 649cc TR6SS was the Triumph twin and the purchaser remains a mystery. They paid three times the Bonhams auctioneer's top estimate, once fees and commissions were added; taking the final bill to £97,500.

Outside it rained and the winds blew all day on Saturday. Autojumblers are hardy, but even for them the April conditions were appalling. Piles of parts were covered with tarpaulins to protect them, while gazebos collapsed. Sadly, a day of the extreme weather was enough for some, who had upped sticks by the end of the day and even more sadly some unwelcome visitors took advantage of the bad weather and stole from a few stands, one trader losing a frame to thieves while he was sheltering.

Sunday, thankfully, was a better day, and the site was buzzing with bargain-hunting classic fans who had decided against a Saturday visit. It seemed that classic prices had settled down a little, with some lovely usable classics including Norton ES2s and BSA A10s at around the £4000 mark. Visitors also got to see members of the Owd Codgers Trials Club tackle a specially created course.

Inside the halls there was a line-up of famous TT racers including Ian Hutchinson, Tom and Ben Birchall and Steve Plater talking about all things Isle of Man racing, the road to success and, in Hutchy's case, the incredible road to recovery.

Guests of honour from many eras of TT racing entertained visitors with live chats, including nine-time winner Charlie Williams, three-time winner Alex George and six-time winner Jim Redman, plus the man who beat Agostini, 'Mooneyes' John Cooper and Tommy Robb.

On display behind them was an incredible collection of nine ex-TT machines. The show organisers, Mortons Media Group, raised just over £518 to donate to the TT Riders' Association by selling commemorative posters to visitors for signing opportunities with the star guests.

Mortons Media Group associate director and former TTRA president Malc Wheeler said: "I am over the moon with the generosity of people at the show. Every penny raised will go to help an injured TT rider or a former rider who needs assistance."

The bikes on show were refreshingly different for the 39th show, with a beautiful 1929 Dresch 250 taking best in show. There was a good scattering of Silks, some superb Scotts, a DOHC BSA 250 which was built as a sixth form project two decades ago, the last DMW 250 to leave the factory and fine selection of Norton Dominators to mark the model's 60th birthday.

There was a pair of rare Indian Chiefs which were rebadged Enfield Constellations, the only surviving BSA Starfire Woodsman, a 98cc NSU Vincent Fox and Allen Millyard's impressive Velocette V-twin special.

The Ariel Owner's Club rebuilt a 4G Square Four from the ground up in 17 hours. The Square Four in question had been in Ariel specialist Draganfly's possession since 1983 and has had four owners from new.


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43


27
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Letters

An owner's view of the first days of the Honda CB750/4



In the 1960s I was the general secretary of the Honda Owners' Club (GB). In 1969, four club members, including me, were invited to assist at the Brighton motorcycle show where the Honda CB750/4 was to debut.

On the stand was a turquoise specimen mounted on a revolving pole, with telephone handsets around the circular plinth on which the pole was fixed. A second machine in gold was on the show stand in front of the counter. It was this machine that eventually went on to be owned by Lord Denbigh, then another owner, ending up with an old friend of mine, the late Dave Ayesthorpe. It was this machine that sold at auction for £161,000.

I remember the machine well because I had to seal the fuel tank cap with tape to appease a fire officer on duty at the show. I also remember discovering that this machine had side panels made out of thick glass fibre, not plastic. It was a late version of the CB750 prior to the mass production beginning.

On the afternoon when the Honda staff were celebrating Honda sales manager Eric Sulley's birthday in the hospitality suite, the price of the CB750 was announced, to be received with gasps of astonishment.

At the time I owned a 1966 Honda CB77 (MOY 1D) and a 1966 Honda CB450 (MYL 14D). In January 1970 I decided to trade in both my immaculate Hondas at Reads of Leytonstone and buy a CB750. At the time Honda (UK) was importing just 25 per month to avoid overstocking. My order for one of these machines would come out of the February shipment as all the machines for sale in January had already been sold. I took delivery in early March of a turquoise blue specimen registered YYX 1H with engine number CB750E 1015424 and frame number CB750 1015136.

These first CB750s had no prefix as the much vaunted "KO" was not applied until mid-1970 following a number of modifications as a result of a recall of the original models. Only 36 of the interim "KO" models were imported officially into the UK. The recall related to the carburettors, and the drive chain in particular following some accidents in the USA.

For some time in the UK the CB750 was rather rare and exotic and the centre of attraction. Despite its size and power I didn't find the machine intimidating but it was a bit of lump. The American market high handlebars made for a windy ride but I later fitted a Motoplas windscreen.

In the braking department everyone was impressed by the front disc brake but it didn't provide firm braking if needed and squeaked when not in use!

Shortly after becoming a CB750 owner in 1970, the late John Ebbrell of the *Motor Cycle* weekly magazine asked me to take over his spot on the Wheel Base BBC television motoring programme. The job was to convey a BBC cameraman riding pillion on my CB750 round the TT course on Mad Sunday at legal speeds! This was the first time this had been undertaken by the Beeb and I saw that the camera was inside some sort of box that was to be held in the cameraman's right hand when we rode the course.

There weren't many CB750s on the Island at the time and most carried foreign numberplates. At times we stopped behind a camera car and soon people came from the road side to have a look at my CB750; partly because it had a UK registration which made it a bit rare and to say that they were hoping to get a CB750 the following year.

The introduction of the Triumph Speed Twin in 1937 was the last time a bike caused such a stir. The trip round the TT course with the cameraman went off to the satisfaction of the BBC and I eventually was paid £10. The following year the BBC did more filming round the TT course but they got Geoff Duke as rider.

I also made a few trips to Belgium and so unusual was the CB750 at the time that on returning to Blighty, the Customs Man was very curious to know if my CB750 was truly owned by me and bought in the UK!

I kept YYX 1H for two years and then in 1972 I decided to have the K2 model. This version had a number of changes made to the exhaust system to quieten it down. It also had the various changes first seen on the interim KO model, plus flatter handlebars. By the time of buying the K2, the CB750 had begun to lose its mantle of exclusivity and Kawasaki was raising the game with its Z1. When I sold my K2, I moved to BMWs but later became a CB400/4 and CB350/4 owner.

Oddly I never craved for another CB750/4 but I have a 1966 CB450 and a CBR600F. However, ownership of one of the first 50 CB750s to arrive in Britain was a once in a lifetime experience.

Tony Eldridge

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Products

Cable kit to check your speed

EMERGENCY CONTROL CABLE repair kits are a useful thing to have in your toolbox or on your bike and usually they are available for clutches and carbs. A new product from Slinky Glide is this handy repair kit suitable for mechanical speedometers.

While complete control cables are commonly available, instrument cables can be harder to find. Retailing at just £5.60, the kit is a solution for those who cannot find a replacement speedometer cable for their machine and offers a cheaper alternative to those who can but who would rather repair than replace.

The kit contains a 1.5m by 3.2mm cable, three cable adapters, a tool and instructions.

You'll need a hammer and a chisel and something to use as an anvil to cut the cable to the desired length, and a vice to crimp the ends onto the cable, so it's not a 'side of the road' repair. But then a broken speedo cable isn't something that's likely to leave you stranded.

The adapters are common to most Japanese classics and the cable is long enough to fit bikes with rear wheel speedo drives as used on British bikes. There isn't a fitting for the drive end on a British drive, so you would have to modify the inner to fit using a file.

The kit is part of the existing range of control, speedo and tacho cables and kits from Slinky Glide, now fitting over 8,000 models. The kit is available from Wemoto.



- **Slinky Glide Mechanical Speedo Cable Repair Kit**
- **£5.60**
- **wemoto.com**

Record your thrills on the cheap

THIS ACTION CAMERA is a rip-off of the popular GoPro and I bought it last year as a bike/dash cam. The image and sound quality are pretty good, image stabilisation is excellent. Using it in 4k mode doesn't make a lot of difference from 1080p, it just uses up the battery faster and fills up the memory card.

A 16gb card will fill up in 40 minutes at 4k and in two hours at 1080p. The battery will last about 30-40 minutes at 1080p if you turn the display screen off.

Adjusting the settings is fiddly, but you can circumvent that by using the accompanying OKCAM app. This lets you tweak things more easily on the screen of your smartphone and offers a live preview on your phone, using a wi-fi connection which has a decent range. For these purposes it's handy for sticking on a tripod and retiring to a safe distance during sporting events. It also lets you upload video straight to the internet. I used a mobile phone battery pack to keep it going for longer.





It comes with a feast of accessories including a plastic waterproof case, multiple straps and mountings and another case for clipping to a jacket front, which is the one I use most often.

After using it for a while I'm at something of a loss about what the point of it is. Taking videos of rides and posting them on YouTube? According to YouTube a whole 392 people have watched my 20-minute video 'Levenwick to Sumburgh Head, Shetland on a 1973 T140 Triumph Bonneville' and I suppose there is a point to using it in case of incidents and problems on the road.

Taking short videos of static bikes or shows? Guilty. It takes 12mp photos, in still, burst or time lapse but they aren't great. But the thing is, it was very cheap. And super high-resolution video is all very well, but it all looks the same online which is where most video ends up. It's very handy as a dashcam and is inexpensive enough for you not to worry too much about losing it – which is far from the case with even the cheapest Go Pro.

- **GoXtreme Pioneer 1080P Action Cam**
- **£49.99**
- **argos.co.uk**

Security saves bikes and cash



READING AN ARTICLE on bike security the other day in a copy of Motorcycle, Scooter and Three-Wheeler Mechanics from 1960, they suggested swapping the magneto spark plug leads round as a security measure. Today you need to be better prepared.

With a new two-wheeled baby on the way, it was time to sort out some new security as most of mine is good, but quite old.

As many insurance companies now offer substantial discounts for riders using Sold Secure Motorcycle Gold or Thatcham3 locks they seemed worth laying out the extra for, if only for the savings.

No lock and chain is going to prevent a dedicated and equipped thief but my approach to security is similar to the advice given to Canadian hikers about how to escape from a bear: You don't need to run faster than the bear, you just need to run faster than other people also running away from the bear. In other words, make your motorcycle so hard to steal that the thieves go elsewhere.

This time I've plumped for the Kryptonite New York Fahgettaboudit Chain and New York Disc Lock. A dedicated thief would have to cut through the lock shackle and body twice to get it off, and the huge hexagonal link 14mm chain looks seriously tough. It's also seriously heavy, too heavy to carry around, so using the disc lock and a lighter cable will have to suffice while travelling around. But with this chain on a ground anchor, I'll not worry about it being in the garage.

It comes with three keys, one with a little light on it. Some people report that the lock can get stuck if out in the weather, but a decent squirt of silicone-based lube should sort that out.

Kryptonite have a lifetime key replacement service – lose your keys and they'll send out one new set, free of charge. They'll also cover you to the tune of up to £1,750 to cover any financial loss from insurance excess in the event of theft while the lock and chain are in use and are broken open. The first year is free, and you can continue to subscribe after that from around £25 for five years.

- **New York Fahgettaboudit Chain 1415 and New York Disc Lock**
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Shelves for those handy with a hammer

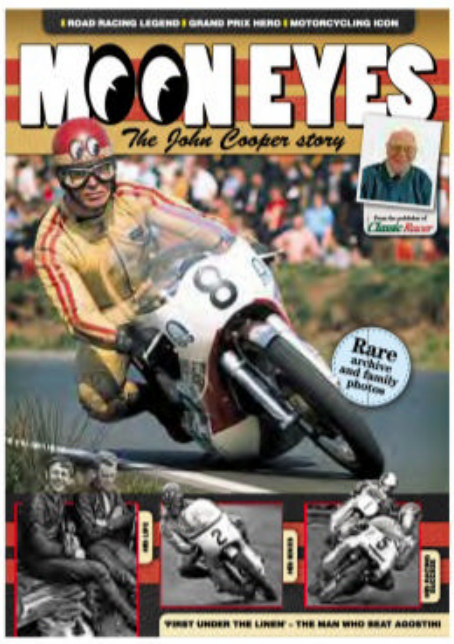
IDEAL FOR ANY workshop, store, garage, office or home, this Clarke Boltless Shelving Unit is quick and easy to assemble and can be put together using only a mallet. The shelving comes in sizes supporting 150kg-1,000kg per shelf and doesn't require nuts and bolts, instead it utilises slot and pin locking mechanisms that are durable, hard-wearing, easy to work with and more dynamic to look at than traditional nut and bolt fixings. This type of fixing is also a lot safer than traditional fixings, as the slot and pin fixings allow for a more rounded, rolled edge finish with no sharp edges.

- **Clarke Boltless Shelving**
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- **www.machinemart.co.uk**

Well worth a read

I'D HEARD OF John Cooper and when finding photos of the racer in our archive, always admired his stern concentration and open face helmet, complete with 'Mooneyes'. But there are so many famous racers, that it is sometimes hard to know a lot about them all. So this easy to access bookazine on John is superb, and reinforces how good and successful Cooper was, and what a fascinating world racing was from the late Fifties to the early Seventies.

From Derby Pheonix club meetings at circuits such as Alton Towers, John graduated to Grand Prix and riding in the Isle of Man TT – recording his greatest moment in 1971 when he beat Giacomo Agostini in the Race of the Year at Mallory Park, watched by thousands of fans cheering him to victory.



It is easy to read, with most of it coming from John himself, alongside some cracking imagery evoking the heady days of road racing and its heroes, including Mike Hailwood, Phil Read, Bill Ivy and Barry Sheene, much of which has never been seen before. Well worth the £6.99.

- **Mooneyes – The John Cooper story**
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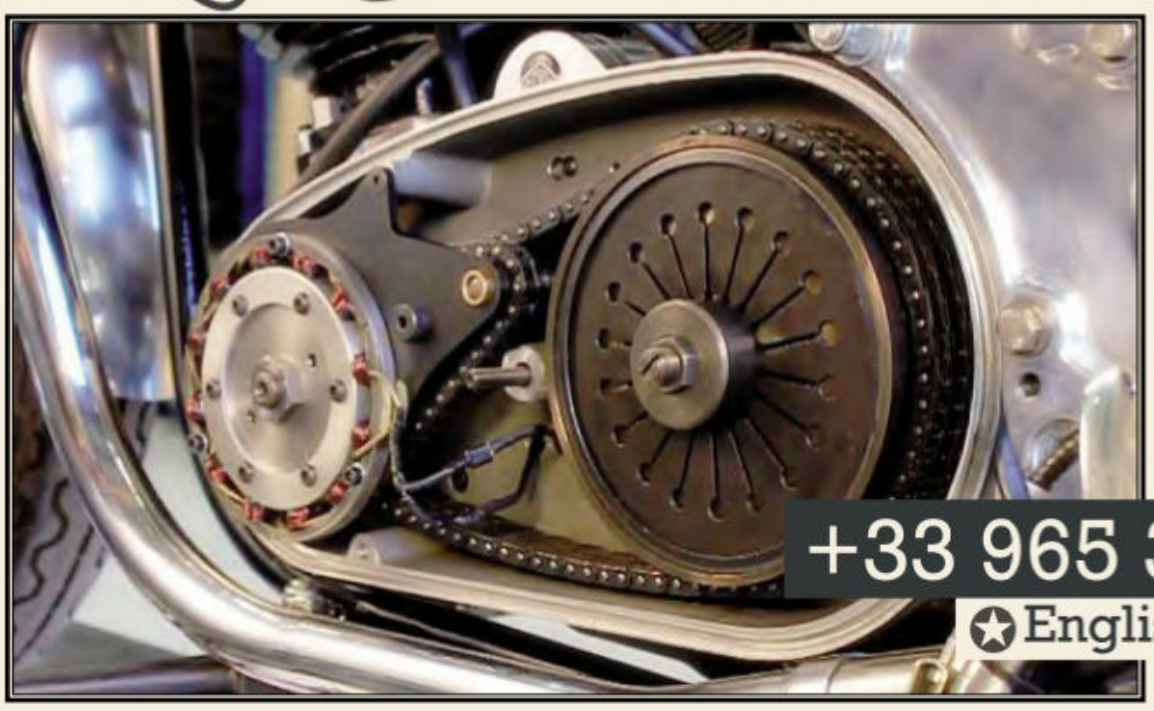
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RPS Triumph-3 750cc 1972 with Richard Peckett

THE 77TH GOODWOOD MEMBERS' MEETING:

Hunting, shooting and – racing

HOSTING BOTH THE GOODWOOD Revival and Festival of Speed in 2014, the Duke of Richmond decided to stage a more low-key season-opening two-day historic race meeting at the Motor Circuit in March each year, with a cap of 'just' 33,000 paying spectators, over the 2.367-mile circuit opened in 1948 by the Duke of Richmond, and laid out on a decommissioned Second World War airfield which the RAF had built on his Goodwood estate near Chichester, on England's leafy South Downs.

This is a continuation of the Goodwood Members' Meetings, club racing days out for the dedicated enthusiast rather than the high-profile teams contesting the circuit's major races, and 71 such meetings were staged over the 19 years of the circuit's original existence. And unlike the Goodwood Revival, today's Members' Meetings also feature cars and bikes that raced after the Motor Circuit closed for competition in 1966, and its deliberately limited headcount ensures no crowding, just a relaxed atmosphere.

The Members' Meeting is a celebration of Britishness in Goodwood's own inimitable way. Inevitably, there's more than hint of the old pre-Second World War Brooklands "the right crowd, but no crowding" ethos about the occasion which took place on April 6/7 this year – three weeks later than in the past, after the 2018 edition was afflicted by snow!

In their heyday, the Members Meetings were held in summer, with the racing accompanied by picnics in the car park, and socialising on the lawns. The final (71st) original-series Members' Meeting took place in 1966, before the current Duke's grandfather closed the Motor Circuit for racing, having refused to line it with metal barriers as then mandated by the FIA/RAC under pressure from future F1 World champion, Jackie Stewart.

Although the period costume

WORDS BY ALAN CATHCART **PHOTOGRAPHY BY** CHRIS MCEVOY



Yamaha TR3 350cc 1972 Chris Moore



Robinson Norton 750 1970 with James Hillier



Jamie O'Brian, 350 Yamsel, Graham Higlett, 750 Triumph-3



Race winner Graham Higlett + 750cc 1972 RPS Triumph



Seeley Weslake 750cc 1972 Ian Stelltner-01 3rd

requirement of the Revival isn't repeated, all paying 'guests' at 77MM – shorthand for the 2019 77th Members' Meeting – were asked to adhere to the occasion's dress code, enjoying such thoroughly English country pursuits as archery, duck herding, ferret racing and a tug of war.

After proceedings at the Motor Circuit were opened on Saturday morning by the local Chiddingfold Hunt in full regalia, complete with an array of foxhounds, closely followed by Goodwood staff ready to scoop up anything emanating from the dogs' or horses' exhausts, 77MM saw famous personalities in abundance, a jam-packed roster of races and high-speed demonstrations, and a spectacular evening extravaganza ending with a superb firework display, all set amidst 300,000 daffodils in full bloom, specially planted for the event.

The weekend's programme featured 15 races, the most yet staged, including for the fourth time a motorcycle race. However, after three years of staging the Mike Hailwood Trophy race for 250/350cc two-strokes built between 1970 and 1982, this year for the first time the Sheene Trophy was held, catering for bikes which would have competed in Formula 750 races held in 1972, signalling the first time that any bikes over 500cc had ever raced at the reborn Goodwood Motor Circuit.

As with the Hailwood Trophy race in previous years, the event was organised by CRMC (Classic Racing Motorcycle Club) chairman Gordon Russell and his wife Sally, whose son Michael was racing against dad, each on contrasting bikes – Gordon on the unique 1972 four-cylinder Hadleigh Honda with Rob North frame raced so successfully in Britain in the 1970s by Julian Soper, and Michael on a 750cc Norton Atlas twin built by Richard Adams.

"Goodwood fans love the bike race amidst the car racing programme, and the Duke of Richmond is a Ducati owner, and a keen biker," said Gordon. "But after three years of two-strokes, for 77MM he wanted to have something different, just like the Revival switches between a 1953 and 1968 cut-off every other year.

"But we can only get a track licence here at Goodwood for bikes up to a certain performance level, so while I'd love to have seen high-barred 1980s-type naked Superbikes racing around Goodwood like in Australia's Island Classic, the ACU simply won't allow us to run that sort of bike round here, because of safety concerns on such a fast circuit. They're perhaps not quite as quick as the later two-strokes, but they're heavier, so if they do go down, they'll slide a lot further.

"We therefore decided to run the earlier Formula 750 class with a fairly strict 1972 cut-off, and for air-cooled motorcycles



only, which essentially removes the very fast early two-strokes like 750 Suzuki triples from the equation. But F750 has such a rich history, both in AMA racing in the USA as well as the Isle of Man TT and events like the Imola 200, so it's a genuinely Historic class that sits well in the Goodwood programme."

Despite a clash with the CRMC meeting at Castle Combe, the Goodwood grid was headed by reigning CRMC F750 champion Graham Higlett on the RPS-framed Triumph-3 owned by sponsor Paul Bowling, himself also in the line-up with a similar bike, but with a Rob North frame. RPS stands for Richard Peckett Special, and the man himself – a top-level British racer in the 1970s before founding P&M Motorcycles – was present with his own such bike, ridden by Andy Hornby. This was concocted in 1972 by Peckett in after-hours visits to café racer king Dave Degens' Dresda workshop.

"The Rob North frame was a works fitment that took a while to become generally available," says Richard. "But Dave Degens had begun making his own frames, so I'd go there after work and over an 18-month period we cobbled up this chassis together, based on a Featherbed Norton design – we'd have finished it sooner, but I kept running out of money to finance it! But in the end it got done, by which time Dave had got so used to having me hanging around, he offered me a job and I went to work for him. That's why we used to enter the bike as a Dresda-3, even though it was my own creation – unless Dave and I weren't getting on for some reason, when it became an RPS-Triumph! But when Dave did eventually get round to building his own frame for the Triumph T150 engine, it had different top tubes than mine, so this is the RPS which we build replicas of today, like Paul Bowling's bike."

Peckett is also today the king of Triumph/BSA-3 engine tuners, and the 750 Triumph motor in the RPS tuned by him delivers 83bhp on the P&M dyno, fitted with a later six-speed Quaife gearbox.

By happy coincidence Dave Degens was also present at Goodwood, with the 650cc Dresda Triumph twin on which he won the 1970 Montjuich 24 Hours in Barcelona for a second time, partnered by team-mate Ian Goddard. This piece of history on wheels which last raced 15 years ago was ridden at 77MM by Roger Skipp, with its 650cc unit-construction Triumph ohv motor slotted into a Dresda frame, again based on the Norton Featherbed chassis, complete with massive eight-leading shoe 10¼-inch drum front brake specially concocted by Degens to counter the twisting Montjuich track's numerous hairpins.

"It's only a 650 because power wasn't what you needed at Barcelona, it was such a tight circuit," said Dave, "plus we had to run such a low compression – just 8.5:1 – to cope with the terrible Spanish petrol we had to use. But when I won Barcelona the first time in 1965 the Oldani front brake on my Dresda was worn down to the rivets, so I made this brake and that fixed matters – we did four 24-hour races before relining it! I sold the frame to a bloke in England after we got home to pay for my next bike, but my wife Teresa saw it advertised and we bought it back, then reunited it with the engine which I'd hung on to. It's nice to have it out here at such a historic event – very proper!"

Other British twins on the Goodwood grid included Larry Steltner's Seeley-Weslake 750, which he built himself for son Ian to ride to third place after a race-long battle with Gordon Russell on the Hadleigh Honda, using a Mk.2 Seeley frame originally made for a Suzuki 500 twin. The Lincolnshire-based former toolmaker concocted the eight-valve engine entirely himself, including making his own crankcases.

Current Isle of Man TT star, James Hillier, rode the Robinson Norton 750, a nicely engineered and pretty light twin believed by owner Ron Wallis to have been created in 1966 around a 750 Atlas engine by the same firm which made Robinson brakes – though little is known of the bike which was making its first outing for four decades. Sadly, it only lasted one lap in the race.

Velocette expert Richard Adams turned his attention to creating another Norton Atlas-based twin for Michael Russell to ride,



Yamaha TR3 350cc
1972 Chris Moore

with a one-piece crank, alloy rods, six-speed gearbox and a heavily modified cylinder head, though only 64bhp was the result on the same dyno which had seen Adams' 500 Manx engine produce 56bhp. The sweet-handling frame with Norvil alloy hubs and K-Tech suspension was very light despite carrying twin front discs, but the Norton twin's 12mph speed handicap against the trio of Triumph triples Michael spent two-thirds of the race battling with for fifth place was insurmountable on such a fast circuit, before he retired on lap nine of 14 with an oil leak.

As well as the array of British twins and triples it was Japanese bikes which completed the grid this time around, with a pair of very tasty air-cooled 350cc Yamaha two-strokes – Jamie O'Brien's 1972 Seeley framed Yamsel TR3, and Chris Moore's factory-framed such bike – and a trio of Honda fours. These were headed by the Hadleigh Honda owned by Chris Wilson, having its first race in 40 years in the hands of Gordon Russell, who'd completely restored it with the help of former Grand Prix technician Nigel Everett.

The one and only Rob North-framed Honda four ever built came about after Boyer Triumph boss, Stan Shenton, stepped in to acquire the Rob North frame project after BSA/Triumph went bust, intending to use it with other engines, so this unique bike features a four-cylinder tuned CB750 motor squeezed into the space Rob North had left for a triple! This well-known bike allowed Essex racer Julian Soper to dominate club and National racing at Brands Hatch, Lydden and Snetterton for several seasons in the mid-Seventies – invariably challenged by Richard Peckett's RPS Triumph-3, Chris Emmins' Seeley Weslake and Lance Capon's fearsome Vincent. Seeing it in action once again at



Impson in Rob North BSA-3 &
Rob Wittey on Honda CR750




Rob North Triumph-3
1971 Brett Randall




Dean Stimpson (BSA-3) &
Graham Hignett (Triumph-3)

Goodwood jogged more than a few memory banks – even if Russell wasn't wearing Julian Soper's legendary striped helmet!

After qualifying 3rd on the grid it was Rob Wittey on Andy Smith's standard-framed Honda four who took the hole shot on a sunny Sunday morning, only to slow at the end of the lap, allowing pole-sitter Graham Higlett to lead across the line, closely followed by Dean Stimpson (Rob North BSA-3).

But seasoned Goodwood competitor Stimpson then passed Goodwood first-timer Higlett to hold the lead for the next three laps, in a melodic standoff between two variations on the same theme, with RPS and North frames housing the Triumph triple motors.

Brett Randall's Rob North Triumph-3 then joined the party, before Higlett regained the lead on lap five as Stimpson's BSA began misfiring, before retiring on lap seven. The reigning CRMC champion started to pull away, establishing the new F750 lap record of 1:26.95 (93.26 mph) as he opened up the gap to 20sec over Randall, who'd fallen back into the clutches of Andy Hornby (RPS Triumph-3).

Hornby had spent the early laps battling with Michael Russell's Norton, which dropped out on lap nine with an oil leak. Behind, dad Gordon (Hadleigh Honda) was enjoying a battle of his own with Ian Stellner on his father's Seeley Weslake, the two swapping positions constantly aboard two bikes with very different genes, the scream of the open-piped Japanese four contrasting with the hard thud of the British parallel-twin with its two-up 360° crank. Sadly, the Honda retired two laps from the end when it stuck in second gear, leaving Stellner to gain a hard-earned final place on the rostrum. However, this only came after Brett Randall became the race's only faller, sliding off his Triumph at St.Mary's on the final lap while in second place, when he hit a false neutral. The runoff area proved plentiful enough that bike and rider emerged unscathed!

Before that, the warring duo of Hornby and Randall had closed to within three seconds of leader Higlett, who had however backed right off to coast home 2.46sec to the good over Hornby, in a 1-2 finish for RPS Triumph triples, ahead of Stellner's Weslake twin.

The high rate of attrition in the 21-minute race meant there were just eight bikes running at the end, with Vince Cundle's original-looking Honda CR750 four replica joining the Weslake as the only finishers not powered by a BSA/Triumph three-cylinder motor.

"This was the start of a learning curve for everyone," said Gordon Russell afterwards. "Goodwood's a lot faster than any other circuit these bikes race on today, so it's more of a strain on the engines. There are lots of tuners building BSA and Triumph triples, which is why they emerged mostly unscathed. I'm sure that next time around in 2021 there'll be many twins and fours still running at the finish!"

Log on to tinyurl.com/y5bvonud for highlights of the 77MM race. CBG



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CBG Buying guide



Royal Enfield Constellation

Enfield's twin is now being seen as the great bike it always has been



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- 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.

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


ROYAL ENFIELD

Royal Enfield Constellation

WORDS BY OLI **PHOTOGRAPHY BY** GARY CHAPMAN

ROYAL ENFIELD'S CONSTELLATION IS A BEEFY beast with the personality and aggression of a Pontypool rugby prop forward from the Sixties – big hearted and ready to trample the opposition. The 692cc engine is squeezed into a frame derived from the 350 Bullet, and this punchy and muscular motorcycle is a piece of late 1950s brutalism, covered in chrome.

The Constellation was born out of the range of twins Royal Enfield launched in 1948 with their 500 Twin that grew into the touring 692cc Meteor in 1953, which in turn was joined by the sportier Super Meteor before the Constellation arrived in 1958, having at first been an export-only model branded as an Indian Apache for the US market.

Why a 700? The engine of the Constellation was essentially two 350 Bullets, with two separate cast-iron barrels and twin alloy heads. There was barely an inch of spare space around the mill, though you could remove the tappet covers and set the valve clearances without taking the tank off. Like they had with the Bullet, Enfield built the oil tank into the crankcases with the filler sticking out of the right-hand side. This meant that the bike didn't need an external oil tank, which kept the plot compact, removed the need for external oil lines and allowed the use of a cylindrical oil filter, but did reduce the oil capacity to four pints. With the oil inside the crankcases it meant that once things were hot, they stayed hot.

The frame used the bolted together engine and gearbox as a stressed member with no lower frame rails. The engine produced the kind of vibration you got from any 360° parallel twin, though the Constellation was better than most. Despite this, with so many parts bolted together, those who rode their

WHAT IS IT?
An early British musclebike

GOOD POINTS?
They're powerful, easy to work on and reliable with good spares availability and buckets of character

BAD POINTS?
There are plenty of resolvable weak spots, which you'll need a bit of mechanical skill and a lot of patience to sort out

COST?
A basket case will cost you £1500
An oily rag runner or restoration project £4000-plus
A good quality show bike £5500-7000



machines hard could find the engine working loose in the frame.

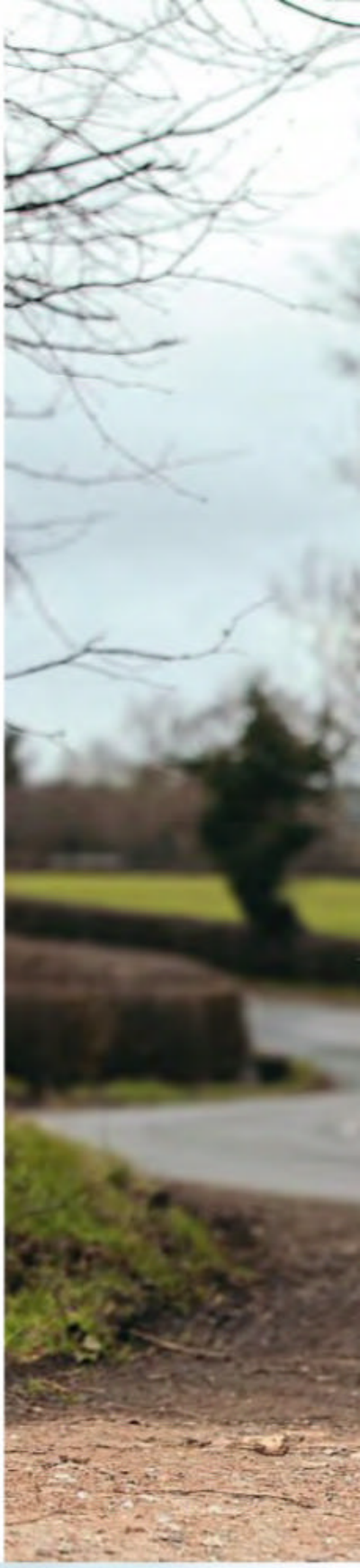
The Constellation had a new design of crankcase, as Royal Enfield found their old dies were worn out. This gave the designers the chance to fit the camshafts higher and make the pushrods shorter, even though the Constellation had a long stroke engine. The barrels were so deeply set in the crankcase that they were almost oil-cooled.

The crankshaft was beefed up, there were special Nimonic valves, developed from those fitted to BSA's Gold Star, and a single Amal TT racing carb. Electricity was provided by an alternator, while sparks came from a Lucas competition magneto with a manual advance/retard.

While other manufacturers were trying to trim down their machines, RE put a big 4¼ gallon petrol tank on it, covered it in chrome and gave it red or blue panels. A Siamesed exhaust system was fitted to help keep the weight down to 405lbs and the Connie produced a claimed 51bhp with very impressive claimed top speed of around 115mph. These were the sort of numbers that really mattered down at the transport cafe.

A pressed steel casquette surrounded the headlight and single clock, and fork shrouds kept things neat and tidy at the front, but this meant you couldn't fit clip-on bars without ditching everything. This resulted in many a Constellation being fitted with ace bars by their young tearaway owners, which gave things a clean-lined and aggressive profile. Ace bars were available as a factory option from 1961.

There were neat snail-cam final drive chain adjusters and then there was the infamous 'scissor' clutch. Rather than a conventional operation, the clutch was operated by a cable that ran into the primary chaincase, rather than operating a pushrod running through the gearbox like more conventional











"Riders also found that while the Siamesed exhaust was lighter and cheaper, it also slowed acceleration, and twin pipes would often be fitted"

designs, the cable pulled on one of two levers, one fixed and one moving, that met at a pivot point like a pair of scissors. These operated through an arrangement using four ball bearings on a sprung unit on the outside of the clutch plates. The design worked moderately well on less powerful machines.

On the Constellation the clutch required careful adjustment and even then, it would slip badly and would run out of clearance if held on when the oil was hot. Had it not been for RE neutral finder, the Constellation would have been a tough ride in cities. An improved and more conventional clutch was fitted in 1961, with the cable entering on the right and a pushrod running through the primary shaft. Handling was firm and positive using Royal Enfield's own leading axle front forks and a basic set of Armstrong shock absorbers.

Production road racing meant everything for sales, so Royal Enfield campaigned the Constellation at the Thruxton 500, but this turned out to be a bad move, as despite the efforts of the team, it soon became clear that riding it at high speeds for a long time wasn't a good idea. In 1958 the racer split the petrol tank and it misfired badly. The clutch caused problems in 1959 resulting in rider Bob McIntyre crashing; in 1960 the clutch cable broke, caused the engine to lock up and chucked Bob Mac off again; and just when Enfield had sorted out the clutch in 1961, their production racing Constellation threw a conrod.

And it wasn't just on the track that problems with the Connie came to light. The vibration was so severe that RE ended up dynamically balancing the crankshaft from 1960. Head gaskets blew because of the separate twin cylinders. If a head gasket went west, the cylinder pressure would blow into the internal oilways, causing oil to squirt everywhere and the oil pump would cavitate at high speeds, interrupting the oil supply to the big ends. Oil breathing was inadequate too. Oil leaked from plenty of other places, resulting in the Royal Oilfield moniker that became attached to the brand.

The gearbox is best described as agricultural. The Albion unit needed heavy footwork to get up the box and some serious effort to get it back down again. Riders with small feet would have to take their feet off the pegs to get things to change. It was hard to start when hot, especially for those early bikes fitted with the temperamental TT Carb, and Enfield



replaced it at first with a single Monobloc that was easier to live with, and then settled on two of them on splayed intakes with a single float chamber to match Triumph's use of a pair of carbs on the Bonneville. Bellmouths were fitted behind a rather neat pair of shields moulded into the side panels. During the brief infatuation manufacturers had with enclosures, Royal Enfield flirted with the idea on later models by fitting an ugly rear mudguard that was at least less intrusive than those used on other marques. The chromed mudguards on the earlier bikes were markedly more attractive. A more successful use of enclosure was the Airflow fairing, increasing speeds and providing excellent weather protection. Riders also found the lighter and cheaper Siamesed exhaust slowed acceleration, and twin pipes would often be fitted.

The Connie snarled on for a few more years, but by then Triumph, Norton and BSA were competing on equal terms in the power stakes and the compression was reduced, coil ignition was fitted and sidecar mounts added as it took on the role vacated by the end of Super Meteor production. As a sports bike it was overshadowed by the 736cc Interceptor, which in its Mark 1 version looked very similar to the Constellation but was vastly better, RE having learned from the mistakes made with the 700 twin.

"Although it's compact, it feels big, which is a bit of a contradiction, but if you sit on one, you'll see what I mean"



SPECIFICATION

MANUFACTURED: 1958-1962 **ENGINE:** Air-cooled ohv twin **BORE / STROKE:** 70mm x 90mm **CAPACITY:** 692cc **COMPRESSION:** 8:1 **POWER:** 51bhp **LUBRICATION:** Dry sump, integral oil tank **IGNITION:** Magneto **CARBURETTOR:** Amal TT/Monobloc **TRANSMISSION:** Chain **GEARBOX:** Four-speed foot change **FRAME:** Single downtube **FRONT SUSPENSION:** Telescopic forks **REAR SUSPENSION:** Swinging arm, twin Armstrong shocks **FRONT BRAKE:** 6in 2ls drum **REAR BRAKE:** 7in sls drum **TYRES:** 3.25 x 19 front 3.50 x 19 rear **WHEELBASE:** 54in/1372mm **SEAT HEIGHT:** 31in/760mm **DRY WEIGHT:** 405lb/165kg



ON THE ROAD

THE CONSTELLATION IS more than a little intimidating. It was all power and grunt and had little in the way of fripperies and fancies and was all the more handsome for it. Although it's compact it feels big, which is a bit of a contradiction, but if you sit on one, you'll see what I mean.

Starting was accomplished standing alongside the Constellation with the bike on its centre stand. Carbs were tickled, the advance/retard lever set at about half way, and to my surprise it burst into life second kick.

Once alive it settled down nicely, and a blip of throttle had it snarling a little. The riding position felt modern. Once rolling the engine's grunt made it clear that this was a motorcycle with a powerful personality, and the Connie quickly established itself on the road. Some motorcycles talk to you, and this one said: "Don't worry, I'm in charge here."

The hefty gearshift was a challenge, but the spread of power was so broad and the gap between third and fourth so wide that once I had reached a suitable cruising speed, rapid changes weren't going to be needed. It went where you pointed it and giving it a fistful of throttle saw it accelerate hard and gather unstoppable momentum.

Handling was purposeful and it didn't feel as if the Enfield was ever going to get you into trouble. Power came from low down. It was just a question of finding a decent series of curves and rolling into them. The 7in brakes did the job of slowing things well, which was a surprise, as they had looked so puny, they made me wonder whether the thing would ever stop when I needed it to. They were helped along by the considerable engine braking. Just keep a firm grip on the bars, decide where you want it to go and it will take you there in style.

I had heard that the Constellation could be a temperamental starter once it was hot, so pulling into a handy lay-by for photographs was a little worrying, as I could hardly leave it ticking over while Gary took the pictures. The thing shook a bit at tickover and would have made it difficult for the camera to capture it without making it look like it was out of focus. I killed the engine, worrying all the while whether my Bonneville-trained right leg would be enough to coax it back into life when the time came, or would an embarrassed phone call have to be made to Classic Motorcycles Ltd to get someone to come and start it for me? My fears were unfounded and once it was captured for digital posterity it sparked up instantly under my nervous foot.

This Constellation was beautifully cared for, with the only blemish being a fist-sized scratch on the tank's otherwise immaculate chrome, possibly caused by a brick falling onto it while it was stored. Getting it rechromed would be an option, but to be honest I felt it had the look of a duelling scar or a rakish eyepatch on a piratical hero. If it was mine, I'd have left it there.

By the time it was ready for its return journey, I had the feeling that the Connie and I had come to an understanding. I wouldn't overdo things and it would take me wherever I wanted to go.

In the days when the Constellation was new, *The Motor Cycle* tested one, declaring it to be a worthy successor to the Vincent twins in the cubes stakes, and called it a "well-mannered roadburner with tremendous punch and ultra-high cruising speeds," claiming that 100mph was a perfectly attainable speed to hold the bike at, with "instantaneous, full-blooded acceleration" with "as much power on tap as most ordinary riders can handle". It's a verdict that's hard to argue with, though perhaps a little restraint and respect for the 60-year-old technology might have the modern rider easing off on ton-up rides.





GORDON G MAY IS THE CURRENT ROYAL Enfield company's historian and has ridden classic Brits huge distances around the world, including an Enfield Bullet to India. Later this year he will ride from North Cape in Norway to South Cape in South Africa on an immaculately restored Enfield 500 Twin.

Gordon says that retro-fitting parts from the later Interceptor and other Enfields can solve a lot of the issues with the Constellation.

"The problem with the Constellation was that people tried to ride them hard, asking them to produce more than they could give. Putting 51bhp through it showed up the bike's weaknesses, things like the exploding primary drive covers. The early clutch design caused problems and the engine didn't breathe well enough. But with a bit of effort, so many of these problems can be resolved.

"Using the later Interceptor breather sorts out the problems with that and using the Interceptor oil feed to the rockers solves a lot of the problems with the valve gear. The new clutch fitted from 1961 sorts a lot of the problems in that area, with an extra pair of plates too, so that the only reason it causes problems are down to faulty assembly or adjustment.

Retro fitting the later oil seal to the end of the crank housing helps keep the oil in the chaincase. Fitting a dry clutch with a belt drive solves the leaks in that area. The dynamic balancing of the crankshaft reduced the vibration considerably.

The 500 twin was already one of the smoothest twins you could buy, and US riders praised the Constellation for the lack of vibration experienced from the power plant. The Constellation frame was the same dimensions as the 1956 frame for the Bullet and the 500 Twin, apart from having a slightly longer swingarm, and it was made with heavier gauge tubing to stiffen it up.

"The Airflow fairing, as well as improving speeds and comfort improved fuel consumption dramatically reducing it by up to 20% and, if updated and by not riding it at high speed for long distances, it's easy to live with. But when they came out, the Constellation couldn't sustain the 100mph speeds that riders expected of it. It was simply a bridge too far."

To read about Gordon's adventures on two wheels, visit www.overlandtoindia.co.uk CBG



Thanks to Lawrence at Classic Motorcycles Ltd for the use of the Constellation, which was still available for £5999 as we went to press. 01928 788500

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HONDA CB250K

WORDS BY OLI **PHOTOGRAPHY BY** JASON CRITCHELL

THE BRITISH L-PLATED RIDER IN THE late 1960s was not particularly well-served by the world's motorcycle manufacturers. If you were 17 you wanted a 250 but you were stuck with ageing designs from the Brits like the BSA Starfire or the Triumph 250 Trophy, obscure and complex Italian marques, something Japanese and two-stroke, or the odd-looking C72 from Honda, which was all chrome panels and pressed steel.

In 1969 things changed, when the Honda wizards of Hamamatsu came up with the home-market only CB250 Dream. With this model, Honda moved away from their existing sloping twin engine in a pressed steel frame. Instead, they came up with something in a more conventional cradle frame with an all new 249cc air-cooled parallel twin SOHC four-stroke engine, producing a claimed 30bhp at 10,500rpm. It had upright cylinders, a five-speed transmission and refinements almost unheard of in such a small mass-market motorcycle.

There was electric start, indicators, a speedometer and a rev counter, a wet sump and twin CV carbs, all as standard. The CB250 Dream was updated and became the CB250K for the British market. The tank was redesigned without its chrome panels, the new bike being given a smart two-colour paint scheme instead.

The Honda was an instant hit and hammered the last few nails into the coffin of the all-British 250. It was sophisticated, reliable and smart. It was also a little respectable, which meant it was popular with commuters as well as with those teenage learners who were finding it hard to persuade parents to sign the finance forms for something as hell-raising as Suzuki's T250.

Early CB250K models were a little noisy mechanically and its five-speed box and overhead camshaft were considered, by those used to pushrods at least, to be mechanically complex.



WHAT IS IT?
A smart little early 1970s four-stroke

GOOD POINTS?
Well made and usable on 21st century roads with equipment that's almost modern.

BAD POINTS?
It's a little unexciting and some of the ancillaries can rot badly.

COST?
A **basket case** will cost you around £1,000
An **oily rag runner** or restoration project £1,500-2,500
A good quality **show bike** £3,500-5,000

The chain from the overhead camshaft was driven by a sprocket at the centre of the crankshaft. Adjustment of the cam chain was by automatic tensioner, which worked well when new, but needed regular attention. A locknut on the tensioner was loosened, the tensioner mechanism automatically adjusted the chain, and then the locknut was retightened.

The location of the tensioner, which was tucked away at the rear of the block, made it hard to get at and it was often ignored. Inexperienced users sometimes assuming that the word 'automatic' meant they could simply leave it alone and the device would do the job for them without needing attention.

There was a four-bearing crankshaft three roller, one ball. The 100-watt generator was on the left-hand end of the crankshaft and the starter drove the engine through a starter clutch and chain in the generator housing. At the other end of the crankshaft was the centrifugal-type oil filter. This could easily be removed for cleaning and the wet sump engine with its horizontally split crankcase was oil-tight, when new at least.

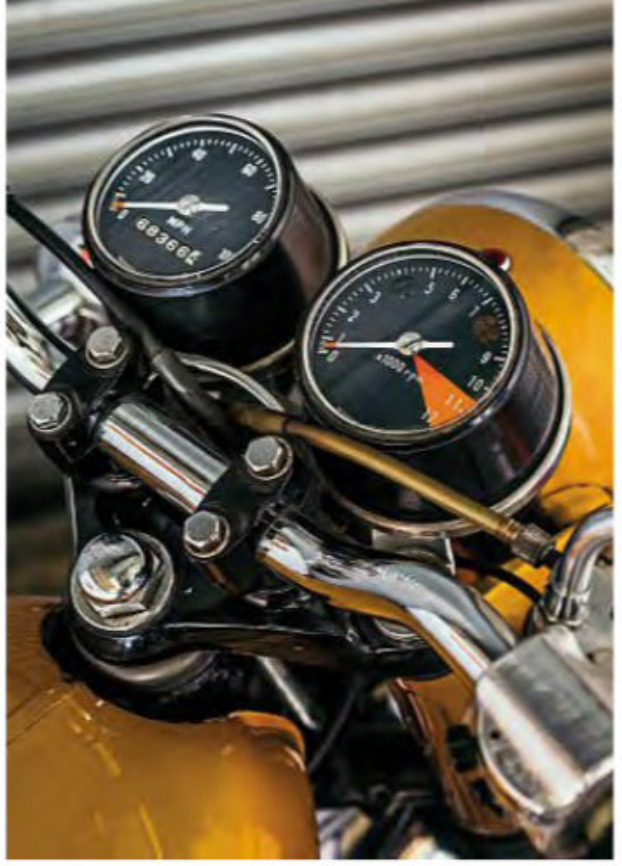
The contact-breaker assembly was driven by the overhead camshaft and tucked away under a cover on the left-hand side of the cylinder head. Primary drive was by double gear. The clutch had no fewer than eight plates and was as light as a feather. The engine could be revved hard and by comparison with its rivals at least was nearly vibration free. The Honda also ticked over, meaning the rider could happily sit with their hands off the bars, engine burbling away beneath them while rivals had to blip the throttle or risk the engine stuttering to a stop.

If there was an issue with the CB250, or indeed any Honda of the period, it was nearly always going to be something to do with the camshaft operation. The camshaft ran in aluminium end caps mounted on either end of the cylinder head with a detachable cam box holding the rockers operating the valves. These could wear badly if the owner neglected the regular oil changes or used cheap 20/50 multigrade designed for cars rather than Honda's recommended 10/40 lubricant.

Later, Honda decided to run camshafts directly in the cylinder heads of their motorcycles, with decidedly variable results. The exhausts were one-piece units from the downpipe to the end









SPECIFICATION:

ENGINE: 249cc two-cylinder, two valve per cylinder four-stroke OHC twin **POWER:** 30bhp @ 9,500rpm **BORE/STROKE:** 56mm x 50mm **COMPRESSION RATIO:** 9:1 **TRANSMISSION:** 5-speed constant mesh gearbox, Wet multiplate clutch **TYRES:** 3.00 x 18 front, 3.25 x 18 rear **WEIGHT:** 160kg/352lbs **SUSPENSION:** Oil-damped telescopic forks, twin oil-damped adjustable shock absorbers **BRAKES:** 7in/180mm 2LS drum front 6.3in/160mm sls drum rear **GROUND CLEARANCE:** 150mm/5.9inch **WHEELBASE:** 1320mm/52ins **FUEL CAPACITY:** 12 litres/2.6 Gallons



of the silencer. While the downpipes were good and solid, the pressed steel silencers rotted quickly, with many an owner hacking off the box when holes appeared and fitting Dunstall silencers or a dirt-cheap pair of reverse cone megaphones, with consequent reduction in performance to go with the anti-social increase in decibels. Fortunately, you can buy pattern silencers today for a not unreasonable £99 from David Silver Spares, should you crave originality and smooth running. Seat bases and mudguards also suffered badly from rust worm, as like many Japanese bikes of the period they had a tendency to dissolve in Britain's bad weather.

The 250 was a sleeved down 350. Abroad, in countries unencumbered by draconian learner laws, the 350 version was more popular. The 250 wasn't particularly lively, certainly by comparison to Yamaha or Suzuki's 250s, or Triumph's 250 Trail Blazer, but with a Honda you knew what you were getting and were unlikely to choose one based on a desire for rocket-ship acceleration or top-end power.

You could even tour on one, two-up with luggage, if you didn't mind sticking to 60mph. The cycle parts were robust and the Japanese had got the hang of decent welding. The frame had a single front downtube welded to a double cradle, and a pressed steel box section top tube that was hidden by the tank. The gearbox, while not exactly smooth, was easily as good as other bikes of the period, though a stall in third or above would require a bit of effort to get it back to neutral.

Handling wasn't exactly ground-breaking but was predictable. The FVQ shocks, which were as soft as Biro springs, quickly gained the moniker 'Fades Very Quickly' and once all the oil had made its way past the seals they ended up in the bin. The in-house front end was markedly better. Ground clearance was good, with the main limiting factor to enthusiastic cornering being the terrible factory-fitted tyres. Better tyres were available but given the youth and/or poverty of the owners they would often be replaced once they were down to the canvas by blocky and ribbed Avon Speedmasters rather than something more sophisticated.

Headlights were adequate at best and resulted in many a dealer selling a Cibie halogen unit. The twin-leading-shoe front and single-leading-shoe rear brakes would, if not too worn, haul things to a halt rapidly, if that's not an oxymoron. Honda 250 drum brakes have ended up on classic racers and the drums were better than the fashion-dictated discs that appeared on later models. Economy was good, and 70mpg was easily achievable, significantly better than their thirsty two-stroke rivals.

Things moved rapidly forwards at Honda's HQ, and the CB250K got a quick cosmetic redesign, which wasn't a complete success. The principal change was to the petrol tank which lost its square profile in favour of a more traditional, bulbous look with a rust trap chrome trim along the bottom seam. Where the K0 K1 and K2 had been given a sporty appearance, the K3 and K4 that replaced them were drab, parochial and dull. But 1973 was a bit like that, unless

you were a glam-rocker. The series was in the showrooms for just three years before being replaced by the CB250G series, which made vague efforts to up its game, and was bigger with upward sloping exhausts and an extra gear, but also suffered from a series of very dull paint jobs and some uncharacteristic mechanical failures.

The engine rustled on, having its electric start removed on the cheaper CJ250T which was a sop to mid-Seventies austerity, before Honda retired it in favour of the CB250T Dream, which was slower than the original 250K. CBG

THANKS TO OXFORD CLASSIC HONDA FOR PROVIDING THE MACHINE IN THESE PICTURES





WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR ON A HONDA 250

DAVE JUPP HAS worked on many early Honda CB250K models, as well as the later CB250G. "The biggest issue with the CB250 is that the original users didn't change the oil often enough. Oil is the life blood of the bike and needs to be changed every 1000 miles or so. The K series used early CV carbs and you must take care of them as the rubber diaphragms can split. Exhausts would rot badly in the early days, but thanks to modern petrol the engines run hotter, which means that any water vapour that goes into the exhaust burns off more quickly.

"Honda wanted you to replace your bike every three years, but they are reliable bikes if you look after them. People used to use them as cheap transport and bought them to get to work on, so they got a lot of hard treatment. The standard TLS front brake was excellent and better than the disc on the G series.

"You'll be unlucky if you have any trouble with the frame which is a proper welded loop with bolt on engine mounts. There is a bolt that runs across the bottom of the frame which can seize if it's a bike that has suffered from poor maintenance and you need to make sure that you pump a bit of grease into the swing arm bushes.

"The electrical system is quite robust, apart from the selenium diode and while you can get electronic ignition systems, the engines are so simple that the original points are easy to set up and work well.

"The bigger 350 was a very competent and solid motorcycle, and a typical 350 would easily do 90mph. The 250 would just about make it to 85 and as the 250 was a sleeved down 350, it was a bit overweight. But it's a good, solid, package even if it was staid compared with other bikes of the period from Yamaha and Suzuki."

SPECIALISTS:

David Silver Spares
www.davidsilverspares.co.uk
Oxford Classic Honda
www.classichondamotorcycles.co.uk

OWNERS' CLUBS

Honda Owners' Club
www.hoc.org.uk
The Vintage Japanese Motorcycle Club
www.vjmc.com







Looking for a CB250K?

IF YOU ARE thinking of acquiring a CB250K, this fine example is worth a look. An immaculate ground-up restoration with a personalised numberplate, it is for sale in Hexham, Northumberland. The bike is on the market privately for £3750 ono. Email **franceswhitehead7@gmail.com** for details.

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Ariel 650 Huntmaster

WORDS BY Oli Hulme

ARIEL'S 650CC HUNTMASTER. IT'S JUST A BSA Flash A10 in sensible shoes, right? That's a common opinion... and it could not be more wrong. Certainly, the engine can use some of the parts from the A10 power plant under its Ariel cases, but the rest of the Huntmaster is all Ariel. In fact, BSA saw so much that was good about the Huntmaster that later on it nicked the brakes for its own models.

The 650 appeared in 1954 when Ariel had to come up with a new big twin to sit between the 500cc Fieldmaster and the behemoth that was the 1000cc Square Four.

By this time Ariel was in the hands of BSA and the Small Heath management could not countenance the spending of money for a brand new 650cc twin engine just for Ariel. The existing engine on the 500cc Fieldmaster twin could not be taken out to a higher capacity. The Ariel 650 twin was the third British motorcycle to be made postwar in this capacity, following a strategy started by BSA and Triumph.



WHAT IS IT?

A. soft and comfortable traditional British twin

GOOD POINTS?

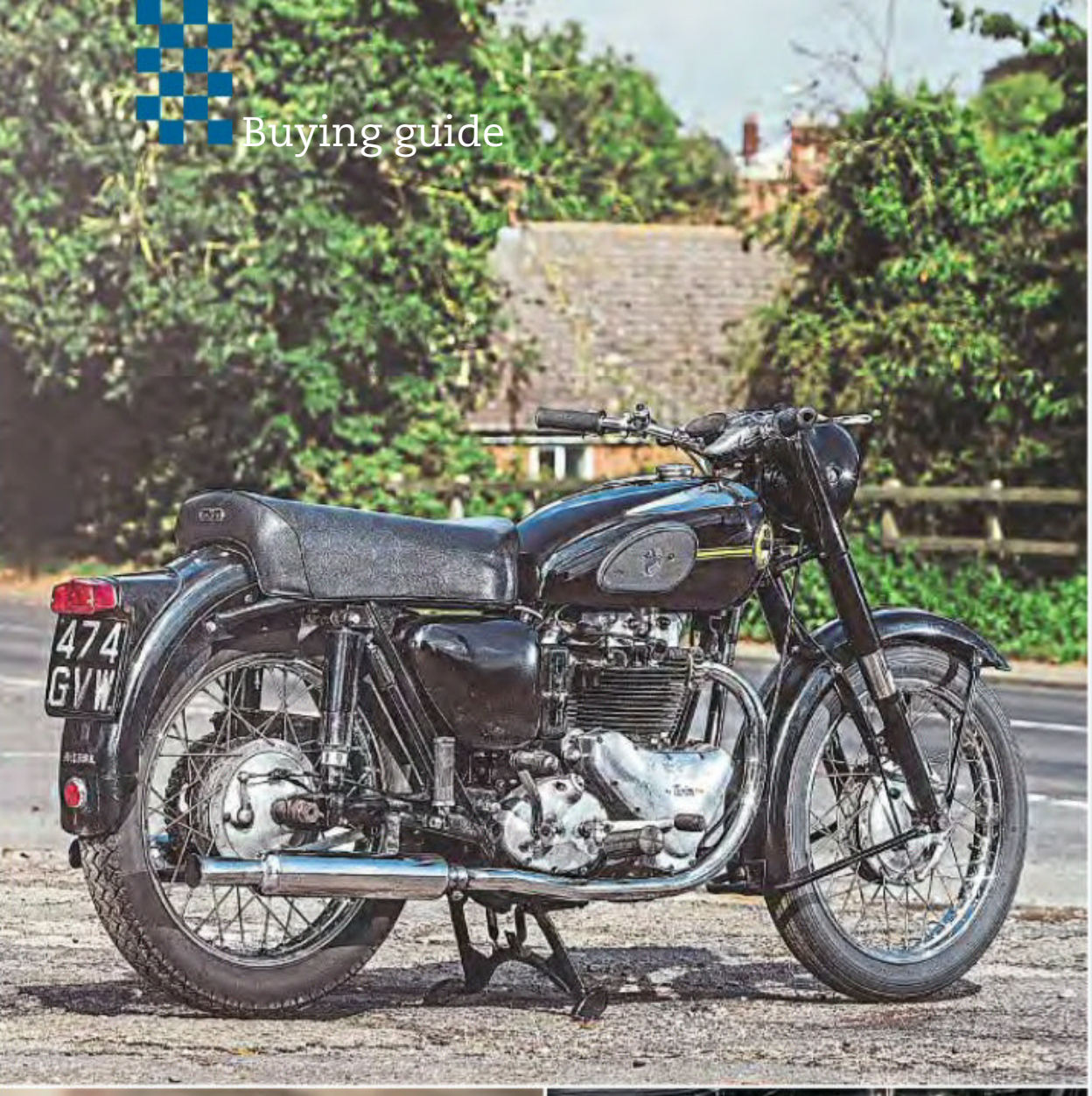
They're better made than most, understressed and unlikely to have been thrashed

BAD POINTS?

It's heavy, some might say ponderous, and is a little parochial

COST?

A basket case will cost you £1,500 – 2,000
An oily rag runner or restoration project £3,000-4,000
A good quality show bike £5,000-6,000

















While other manufacturers were happy to simply slap different branding on near identical motorcycles, BSA practice was to let its brands compete with each other properly. Which was why BSA and Triumph produced such wildly different motorcycles despite having the same parents, and also why Ariel was doing things differently to both of its siblings.

For the new 650, BSA built Ariel a version of its A10 engine built at Small Heath then shipped it to the Ariel factory at Selly Oak. The engine shared its internals and cast iron cylinder head with the A10, but outside it had a properly cast Ariel badged timing cover over an Ariel specific timing chest, a more compact valve cover that made it easier to adjust the valve clearances than on the A10, and a different timing cover and clutch. The clutch was a dry Burman unit that was lighter than the A10 version, sitting under a smart chromed cover, and the primary drive arrangement required different mounting bosses to be built into the crankcases.

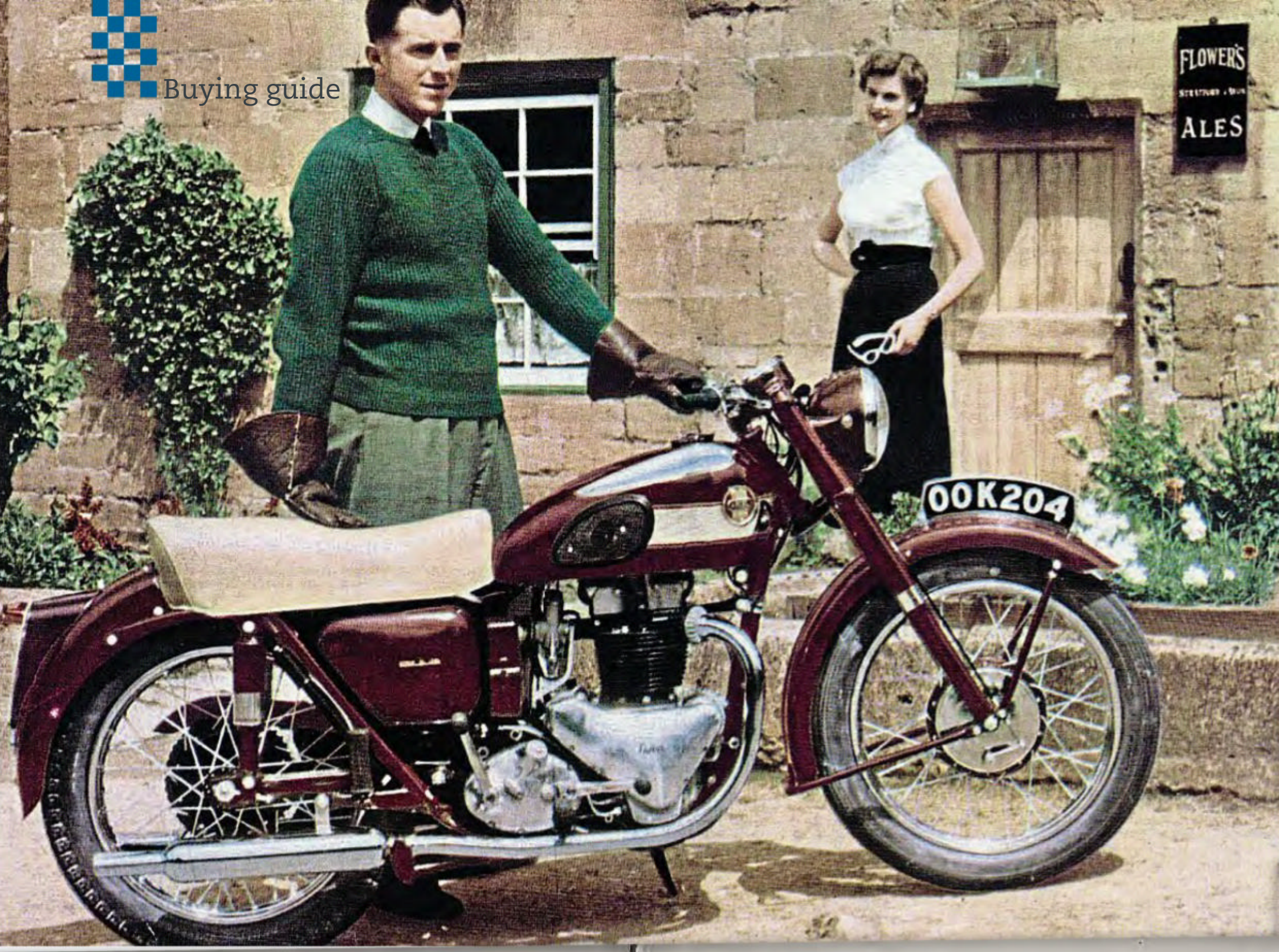
Ariel had a reputation for clever engineering solutions to other people's problems and these applied to the Huntmaster. Unlike BSA models which required the removal of the left-hand exhaust and the

primary chaincase to adjust the clutch, the job could be done on the Huntmaster by simply removing the clutch cover. You could get at the chain case drain plug without skinning your knuckles and swearing. The rear brake torque arm which was slightly kinked was marked 'outside' to help refitting. There was a hinge in the rear mudguard to help get the QD rear wheel out, and the centre stand had elliptical feet which made it easy to use from either side. Such refinements gelled with Ariel's reputation as being a 'gentlemans' motorcycle. Even the compression ratio was reduced to just 6.5:1 to keep things smooth and receptive.

Apart from the engine, almost everything else on the Huntmaster was unique to the Ariel. The gearbox was from Burman, and the frame was unique to the Huntmaster, a solid and stable brazed lug duplex design. It was fitted with five sidecar mounting lugs, because attaching a sidecar to a big twin was a good way of providing family transport. The swingarm was a box section item supported by substantial mounting plates. The headlamp was conventional at first with a separate clock, while later it adopted a nacelle similar to that fitted to the Square Four, while the seat – which at first had a slope to the end of the tank – was replaced in 1956 with the curious Ariel design of the late 50s. This followed criticism of the original seat which was quite low and combined with the soft suspension meant the foot controls were hard to operate comfortably. The replacement was a taller, deeper and more comfortable perch inexplicably fitted with a light brown cover. The tank was a lustrous black, or later a lustrous claret, with two curious gold lined and chromed indentations at the top running back to the seat. All these unique items, combined with Ariel's established reputation as a premium motorcycle for serious and sensible riders, meant BSA felt it could stand a high price tag – £230 to £213 for the A10 and a hefty £30 pricier than the main rival, Triumph's Thunderbird.



"Apart from the engine, almost everything else on the Huntmaster was unique to the Ariel."



ROAD TESTS OF NEW MODELS

The 646 c.c. Ariel

A Luxury Roadster with a Wide Range of Usable Performance and Excellent Handling Characteristics

THE Ariel Huntmaster is the third six-fifty vertical twin to make its appearance on the British market since the war, and it is the fourth contemporary vertical twin of over 500 c.c. capacity. Ariels have long been famous for the production of popular machines in both the 500 and 1,000 c.c. classes; the new 646 c.c. model is a logical addition to the range, since it provides performance characteristics intermediate to those of the five-hundred and the thousand. The Huntmaster is not noticeably heavier to handle than many a five-hundred, but its greater engine capacity and higher gearing endow it with a charm not unlike that of a thousand. It provides effortless acceleration and a reserve of power that enables a high cruising speed to be maintained in the face of adverse conditions of wind and gradient; and the engine's comparatively flat torque curve invests the machine with a good, all-round, top-gear performance.

New Duplex Frame

In addition to these attributes, the Huntmaster features an entirely new duplex frame incorporating pivoted-fork rear-wheel suspension. Except for the steering-head and seat-pillar lugs, the new frame is of electrically welded construction. Both front- and rear-wheel suspensions are sensitive around the static-load position and possess a long and reasonably soft range of travel. There are few machines which provide a greater immunity from bumps than does the Huntmaster. When traversing irregular surfaces at high speeds, the rear suspension was inclined to "bounce," and slightly heavier recoil damping might be an advantage for a rider desiring to use the high performance available to the best advantage.



Sleek and workmanlike: frontal aspect of the Huntmaster

For a person of medium stature the riding position proved to be a trifle too "compact." Long periods in the saddle resulted in tiredness of the arms and legs. The top of the dual seat had a downward inclination towards the front, with the result that the rider's portion of the seat was too low in relation to the footrests and handlebar. (The 30in unladen seat height, quoted in the information panel, may be misleading, since the upholstery of the seat is soft, and the springing is readily deflected by the rider's weight.)

During part of the test the Ariel was ridden with a 2in-thick slab of sponge rubber strapped on top of the seat. The resultant improvement in the riding position was most marked. An even greater degree of machine control and rider-confidence resulted, while the improved knee angle spelt increased comfort on long runs. Even after this seating modification had been carried out, a 5ft 6in rider experienced no difficulty in placing his feet on the ground during traffic halts. The dual-seat is not adjustable for height.

The footrest hangers are mounted on serrated bosses; the most suitable adjustment was found to be with the hangers set two or three splines rearward from the vertical position. A more rearward setting might be desired for sustained high-speed cruising, but the change was impracticable because of the consequent increased reach to the brake and gear pedals. The handlebar ends are swept back at an angle which provides a natural and, therefore, comfortable position for the rider's wrists and hands.

The Hand Controls

With the exception of the horn button, all hand controls could be set for convenient operation. The horn button, mounted on the right-hand side of the handlebar, was too far inboard to be reached without the rider removing his hand from the twistgrip. Transposing the positions of the horn button and the dip-switch resulted in the latter control being inaccessibly placed. The reach to the front brake lever was rather too great for the required delicacy in operation; a chain link interposed between the movable and fixed portions of the lever effected the desired improvement. The splined mounting of the gear pedal enabled it to be so positioned that both upward and downward gear changes could be made without the rider moving his right foot from its rest. A slightly higher setting of the rear-brake pedal was desired; though an adjustable pedal stop is provided, the required position could not be obtained because the pedal crank fouled the footrest.

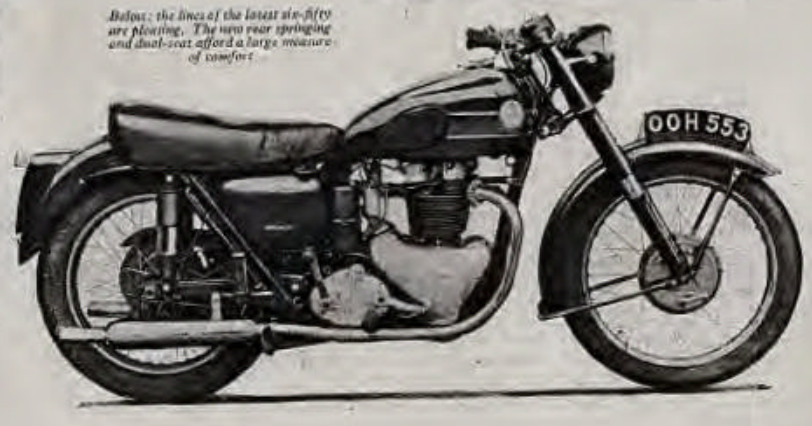
Cold weather prevailed throughout the test, and the machine was normally parked outdoors overnight. Nevertheless, though the engine felt "tight" when it was turned over by means of the kickstarter each morning, first-kick starting was generally accomplished. Starting drill was to turn on the petrol with the machine on an even keel, depress the carburetor tickler momentarily, close the air lever and open the throttle very slightly. If the petrol tap was opened while the machine was supported on the prop-stand, carburettor flooding was apt to result, and two or more kicks might then be required to effect a start. The air lever could be opened fully as soon as the engine was running.

The engine would idle very slowly but, at such low crankshaft speeds, mechanical clatter was caused by oscillation of the engine-shaft shock-absorber cam, and by movement of the clutch plates relative to the case. These noises could be reduced by setting the throttle stop to provide a fastish tick-over, but the higher idling speed meant that bottom gear engagement from neutral was difficult to accomplish without clashing as the pinions came into mesh. Light piston slap could be heard, and there was a faint whine from the timing gear.

Gear Changing

As implied earlier, with the engine idling really slowly, bottom gear could be engaged noiselessly. When taking up the drive from a standstill, the clutch engaged firmly; it was smooth and reasonably light to operate and was unaffected by a succession of full-throttle getaways when the performance figures were obtained. All upward gear changes could be made cleanly, provided the gear pedal was moved with deliberation. Perfect downward changes, at all normal speeds, could be effected without any hesitation in pedal movement. Neutral selection from bottom or second gear was simple and certain. Gear whine was audible when the machine was under load in the indirect gears, particularly in third.

The somewhat widely spaced gear ratios were well chosen to suit the commendably wide range of engine r.p.m. over which usable power was developed. As will be deduced from the mean maximum speed figures quoted in the performance data, the overall gearing was too high to permit the Huntmaster to attain its best top-gear speed. Furthermore, the performance figures were taken while an extremely strong and gusty three-quarter wind was blowing and the rider was clad in bulky winter riding kit. The fastest one-way top-gear speed recorded by stop-watch was 96 m.p.h.



Below: the lines of the latest six-fifty are pleasing. The new rear springing and dual-seat afford a large measure of comfort

Close-up of the pivoted-fork rear-wheel suspension. Rear brake-operating cable and a foot of the roll-on centre stand are also shown

Under conditions of normal road use, however, the Ariel's overgearing was unimportant since the engine pulled equally lustily at low, moderate and high speeds. Once out of built-up areas, the machine could, if desired, be ridden almost exclusively in top gear. Response to the slightest throttle opening was immediate at any point in the machine's speed range and lusty acceleration was always available, whether from 40, 50, 60 or 70 m.p.h. The Huntmaster had no "best" cruising speed, so wide was the engine-speed range over which beefy pulling power was delivered. At any chosen speed the machine's performance was both effortless and unobtrusive.

When long, adverse gradients or headwinds were encountered, their effects could readily be compensated by an increased throttle opening. Set cruising speeds of anything up to an indicated 80 m.p.h. could quickly be regained after traffic delays by using a generous throttle opening; the chosen speed could then be maintained with the twistgrip rolled back appreciably. At no time was pinking or running-on experienced. With a following wind, many miles were covered with the speedometer registering a steady 87 m.p.h.; yet the engine was then turning over at a

Information Panel—The 646 c.c. Ariel Huntmaster Twin

SPECIFICATION

ENGINE: 646 c.c. (70 x 84 mm) o.h.v. vertical twin. Fully enclosed valve gear operated from a single camshaft. Light-alloy connecting rods; plain bearing big ends. Roller main bearing on drive side; plain bearing on timing side. Compression ratio, 6.5 to 1. Dry-sump lubrication; oil-tank capacity, 6 pints.

CARBURETTOR: Amal; twistgrip throttle control; air-slide operated by handlebar lever. Air filter.

IGNITION AND LIGHTING: Lucas magneto with auto-advance. Separate 56-watt Lucas dynamo. Ten-diameter headlamp with sealed-beam light unit.

TRANSMISSION: Burman four-speed gear box with positive-stop foot control. Bottom, 11.55 to 1. Second, 7.4 to 1. Third, 5.7 to 1. Top, 4.35 to 1. Multi-plate dry clutch with Neoprene inserts. Primary chain, ½ x 0.305in, in oil-bath case. Secondary chain, ⅝ x ¼in, lubricated by adjustable bleed from primary chain-case; guards over top and bottom runs. Engine r.p.m. at 30 m.p.h. in top gear, 1,745.

FUEL CAPACITY: 4 gallons.

TYRES: Dunlop. Front, 3.00 x 20in with ribbed tread. Rear, 3.50 x 19in Universal.

BRAKES: Both 7in diameter x 1¼in wide. Fulcrum adjusters.

SUSPENSION: Ariel telescopic front fork with hydraulic damping. Pivoted-fork rear springing employing coil springs and hydraulic damping.

WHEELBASE: 56in unladen. Ground clearance, 5in unladen.

SEAT: Ariel dual-seat. Unladen height, 30in.

WEIGHT: 438 lb fully equipped and with 1½ gallons of petrol.

PRICE: £192. With purchase tax (in Great Britain only), £220 8s.

ROAD TAX: £2 15s a year; £1 0s 8d a quarter.

MAKERS: Ariel Motors, Ltd., Selly Oak, Birmingham, 29.

DESCRIPTION: The Motor Cycle, 15 October 1953.

PERFORMANCE DATA

MEAN MAXIMUM SPEED: Bottom* 46 m.p.h.
Second* 70 m.p.h.
Third* 89 m.p.h.
Top: 90 m.p.h.
*Valve float occurring.

HIGHEST ONE-WAY SPEED: 96 m.p.h. (Conditions: Extremely strong three-quarter wind. Rider bulkily clad.)

MEAN ACCELERATION:

	10-30 m.p.h.	20-40 m.p.h.	30-50 m.p.h.
Bottom	—	3 secs	—
Second	4.4 secs	4 secs	3.8 secs
Third	—	6 secs	5.6 secs
Top	—	7.2 secs	7.9 secs

Mean speed at end of quarter-mile from rest: 78 m.p.h.
Mean time to cover standing quarter-mile: 17 secs.

PETROL CONSUMPTION: At 30 m.p.h., 86 m.p.g. At 40 m.p.h., 75 m.p.g. At 50 m.p.h., 62 m.p.g. At 60 m.p.h., 57 m.p.g.

BRAKING: From 30 m.p.h. to rest, 28ft (surface, dry tarmac).

TURNING CIRCLE: 14ft 6in.

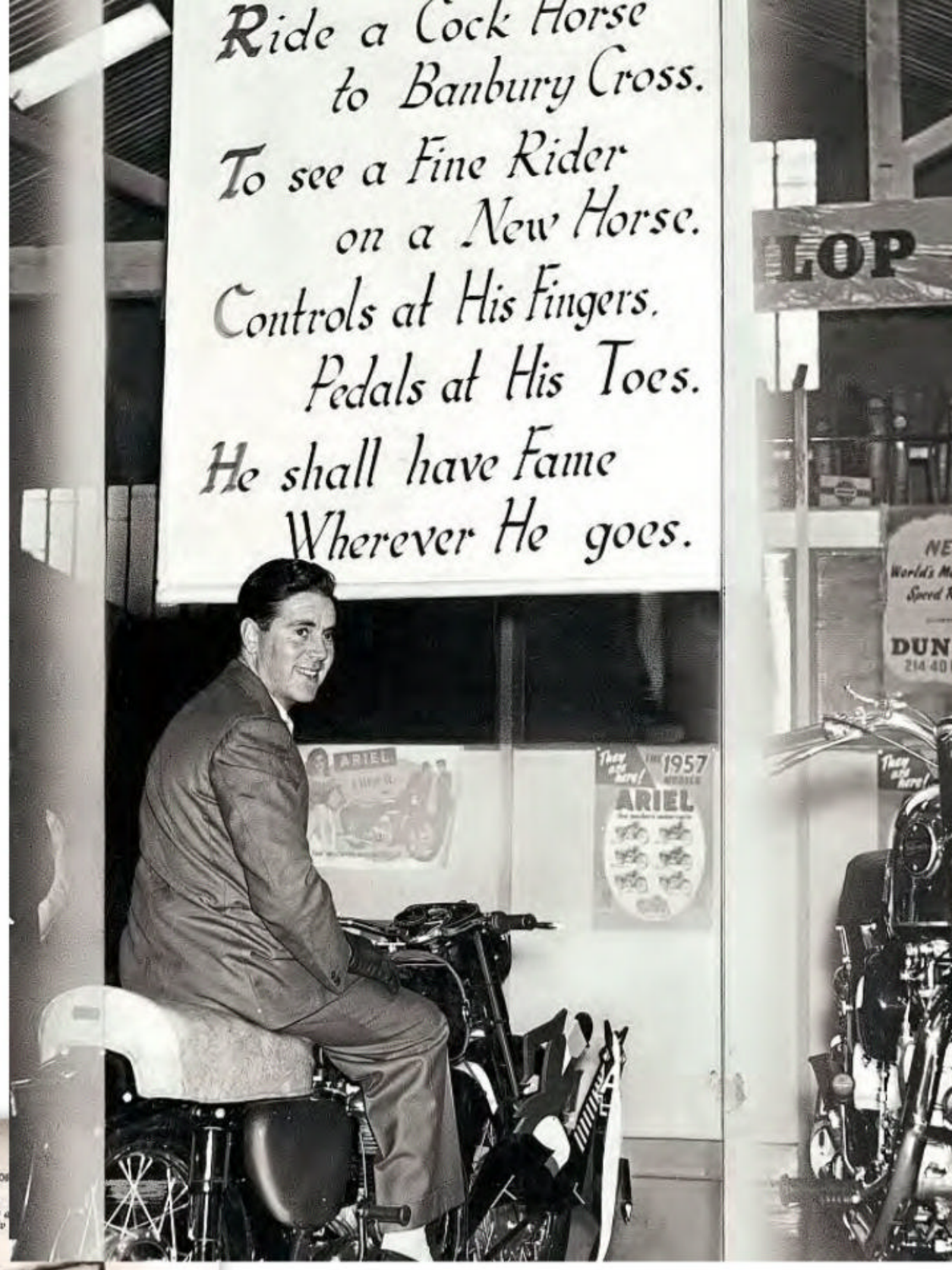
MINIMUM NON-SNATCH SPEED: 17 m.p.h. in top gear.

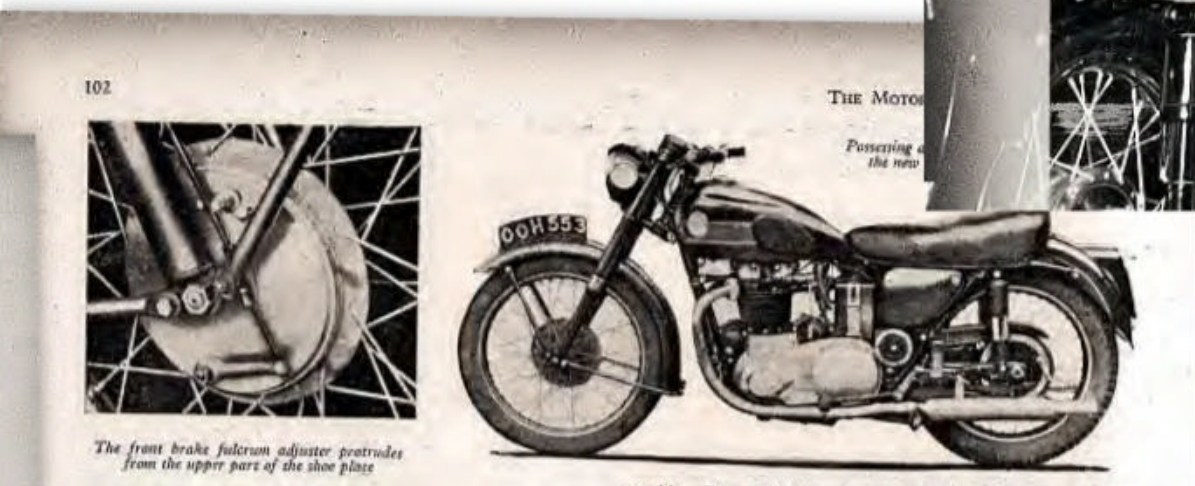
WEIGHT PER C.C.: 0.66 lb.

The low compression engine, the heaviness of the manufacture and the forward set footrests gave the 650 a smooth ride, and the heavy changes on the Burman box meant the Huntmaster was never going to be a speed demon, at least away from the lights. Rather the riding technique required using the considerable torque to get things into top gear, and once there the Ariel would throb on for miles without excessive effort. The Huntmaster would pull from 17mph in top gear.

The suspension at the back, with the close-to-vertical Armstrong shocks, made things bounce on poor roads, while the general steering geometry made the ride predictable and unchallenging. Performance was equally gentle, with a top speed of 96mph, which was hardly Bonneville challenging. In 1956 increasing the size of the clutch sprocket took it to just over 100mph. Riders of such a sensible motorcycle would probably not have cared much about top-end performance. They were more interested in whether it would sweep them to far off destinations at the claimed 60mpg than the next roundabout on the North Circular. Power was claimed to be 35bhp, though it is unlikely that any actually produced that much power when they rolled off the production line.

Ariel did produce a performance version known as the Cyclone in 1957. This bike, limited to fewer than 300 models, had an engine that had 10:1 pistons, the camshaft from the BSA Spitfire and tougher crankshaft that helped knock out 40bhp.




102

THE MOTO

Possessing
the new

The front brake fulcrum adjuster protrudes from the upper part of the shoe plate

Road Test of Ariel Huntmaster Twin

speed well below its power peak. An accurate check of the speedometer showed that it read fast progressively from 1 m.p.h. at 30 m.p.h. to 5 m.p.h. at 80 m.p.h.

Engine vibration was perceptible at the handlebar between an indicated 65 and 72 m.p.h. in top gear, and at corresponding speeds in the lower gears. In town, the engine was perfectly happy at 30 m.p.h. or below in top gear. Above 17 m.p.h. in top gear the transmission was commendably smooth, though individual power impulses could be felt up to 25 m.p.h. The Ariel's exhaust was well subdued at small throttle openings; with more liberal use of the throttle it became slightly aggressive, but was not considered to be offensive. At the conclusion of the test some oil seepage had taken place at the joints of the timing cover and the gear box end cover. No discoloration of the exhaust pipes had occurred in spite of much hard riding.

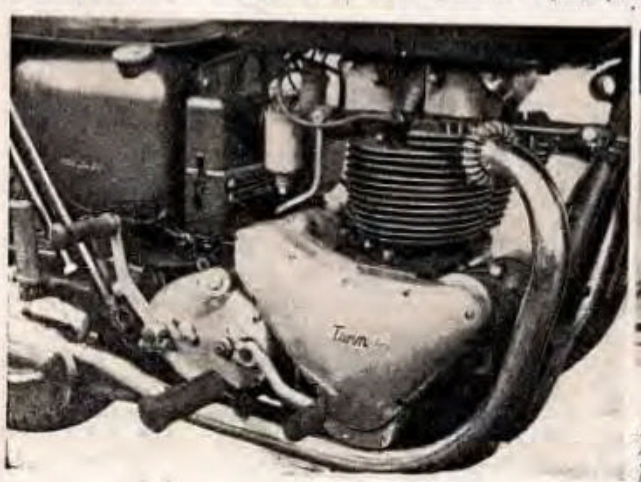
A trifle heavy and self-centring at low speeds, the steering was at all times rock-steady and positive. In no circumstances was it considered necessary to use the steering damper. The Huntmaster could be heeled over confidently on fast or slow bends; the front wheel would automatically turn in by just the right amount to follow the rider's chosen line. The degree to which the machine could be banked was not limited by the footrests, or any other components, fouling the ground.

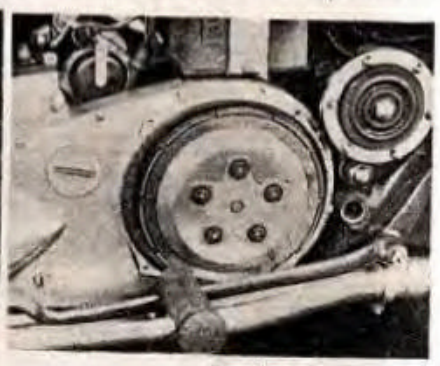
Both brakes were extremely powerful; either tyre could easily be made to squeal from any speed of which the machine was capable. Rear pedal leverage was such as to permit sensitive control of the brake. On the model tested the front-brake drum was slightly eccentric and resulted in a pronounced tendency for the brake to grab twice every revolution of the wheel. This factor, combined with the uncommonly light operation, made considerable caution necessary when applying the brake at low speeds on slippery surfaces. Light application at higher speeds resulted in a high-frequency, front-fork judder. Fairly frequent adjustment of the front brake was called for during the course of the test. The adjustment involved seconds only, since the square head of the self-locking fulcrum adjuster protrudes through the brake shoe plate.

The headlamp furnished a wide beam of sufficient intensity to permit daylight cruising speeds to be used on main roads after dark. The Huntmaster is equipped with centre and prop stands in addition to a front stand. The centre stand has a rolling action and is easily brought into use with a moderate rearward pull on the machine. A welded-on extension makes for convenient operation of the prop stand and its sensibly large pad provides safe support for the machine on all normal surfaces.

A criticism concerns the mounting of the tyre pump on the right-hand side of the rear sub-frame; in this position the pump rapidly became fouled with road filth both inside and out. During the course of the test a replacement petrol tank was fitted as a result of a leak having developed in the original. The Ariel's tool-kit was of average motor cycle quality but was found to contain no tappet spanner nor any spanner large enough to fit the footrest retaining nuts.

The Huntmaster is attractive in both appearance and finish. It is enamelled in a pleasing shade of deep claret; chromium-plated panels and flutes relieve the fuel tank colour scheme.





Left: The pannier-type oil tank and the large capacity air filter blend well with the new frame layout. Above: The Neoprene-lined clutch operates in a compartment separate from the primary chaincase; the cover has been removed

The Cyclone's day in the sun came when members of Buddy Holly and the Crickets each bought new motorcycles to celebrate their hard work and new-found fame. The musicians had been thrown out of a Harley-Davidson dealership when they arrived to buy bikes by owners who didn't welcome scruffy teenagers. Buddy, along with bassist Joe Maudlin and drummer Jerry Allison, went instead to a nearby British bike dealer where their dollars were more welcome. Maudlin bought a Triumph Thunderbird and Allison a Triumph Trophy. Holly bought a black Ariel Huntmaster Cyclone.

Once the deal was done with the delighted dealership the teenage rock and rollers rode their new British iron round to the Harley dealership and did burnouts on the forecourt.

But wheel spinning performance was not the way Ariel was going. The stock Huntmaster got new full width hub brakes in 1956 and made the chrome tank trim removeable. There was an optional steel final drive chain case, which was fitted with automatic lubrication to extend the life of its chains. In 1957 the tank got bigger and the bodywork bulkier, just as riders were looking for machines that were sparse and sporty. Sales slipped, and in 1959 production of Ariel four-strokes came to an end as the factory moved to Leader and Arrow production, a decision that seemed forward thinking, but turned out to be a dead end.

In just five years the Huntmaster had travelled from being a class-leading sports tourer to becoming Ariel's big bike swansong.

‘A motorcycle with top hat and tails on’

LESTER GRANT IS vice-president of the Ariel Owners’ Club, and rode a Huntmaster for a decade. Ten years on a bike gives the rider a pretty good idea of what it’s like.

“The Huntmaster is a lazy, relaxed ride, with a reasonable amount of power, easy to maintain and there are plenty of parts available, thanks to the BSA connection. The main concern is that it’s a bit heavy. It could do with an alloy head rather than a cast iron one to lower the centre of gravity. You can fit the BSA alloy head with a bit of modification to the rocker covers.

“I’ve built a 1000cc Square Four in a swing arm frame and thanks to some weight lessening it’s only 10lb heavier than the Huntmaster. Mind you, the BSA A10 is heavier than the Huntmaster, thanks to the use of thicker frame tubes, as BSA’s tubing isn’t of as good quality as that used on the Ariel.

“It’s a good all-rounder and very robust. The thing is that the 500 twin is so much nicer to ride, and if you get the 500 to 60mph its quicker than the 650, though two-up the 500 would struggle to keep up. The Huntmaster is excellent for sidecar work, and will feel less stressed, though you must rev it a bit to get the best performance out of it. The Burman gearbox is pretty good, and you won’t have any trouble with it as long as it hasn’t run out of oil through rider neglect. The Huntmaster is quite heavy at low speeds, but once it’s rolling you don’t really notice it.

“You can fit electronic ignition, but the original K2S magneto is pretty bulletproof and just needs an overhaul every 10 years or so, which will cost about £250. Fitting a toothed belt to drive the dynamo is a good idea as the v-belt can slip. It’s fairly easy to uprate the electrics to 12 volts, though I now fit 6v LED bulbs to all my bikes, which reduce the load on the dynamo and are very bright; they are as good as modern lights. I had an Avon Air fairing on my Huntmaster for a while which improved speed and took fuel consumption from 60mpg to 76 mpg. I fitted Ikon shocks to mine and that showed up the front forks a bit.

“The headlight on the later bikes is the same as the Square Four, which looks pretty, but makes it a swine to change the fork springs. They also let a lot of muck in underneath, which fouls the light switch and causes it to fail. Apparently, Ariel asked Lucas to fit a cover under the switch to protect it, but Lucas wanted an extra £1 for each cover and Ariel didn’t want to pay that. I made one from the lid of an aerosol can.

“A Huntmaster can do impressive miles, I would happily do hundreds of miles a day on mine and the factory used to organise rides from London to Edinburgh in a day. I know of one club member who has covered 75,000 miles in a year on a Huntmaster riding in all weathers, and he’s still on the same set of IMD pistons. It doesn’t smoke. The late Bob Brassington did 100,000 miles on his, riding it to the Arctic Circle and across Russia in the 1960s. He summed it up best when he said the Huntmaster was a: ‘motorcycle with top hat and tails on’.” CBG

OWNERS’ CLUB
Ariel Owners’ Club
www.arielownersmcc.co.uk

SPECIALISTS:
Draganfly
draganfly.co.uk

Some spares are also available through the Owners’ Club

SPECIFICATION

MANUFACTURED: 1954-58 **ENGINE:** Air-cooled ohv twin **BORE / STROKE:** 70mm x 84mm **CAPACITY:** 646cc **COMPRESSION:** 6.5:1 **POWER:** 35bhp **LUBRICATION:** Dry sump **IGNITION:** Magneto with auto advance/retard **CARBURETTOR:** Amal Monobloc **TRANSMISSION:** Chain **GEARBOX:** Four-speed foot change **FRAME:** single downtube **FRONT SUSPENSION:** Telescopic forks **REAR SUSPENSION:** Swinging arm, twin shocks **FRONT BRAKE:** 7in sls drum **REAR BRAKE:** 7in sls drum **TYRES:** 3.00 x 20 front 3.50 x 19 rear **WHEELBASE:** 56in/1372mm **SEAT HEIGHT:** 30in/760mm **DRY WEIGHT:** 435lb/165kg



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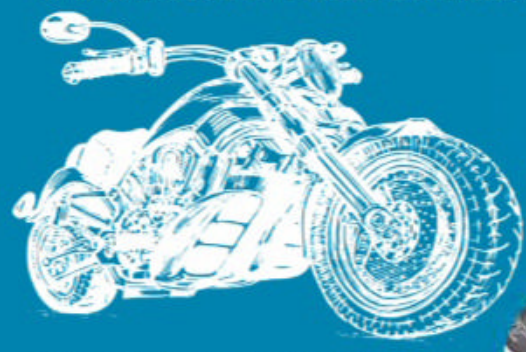
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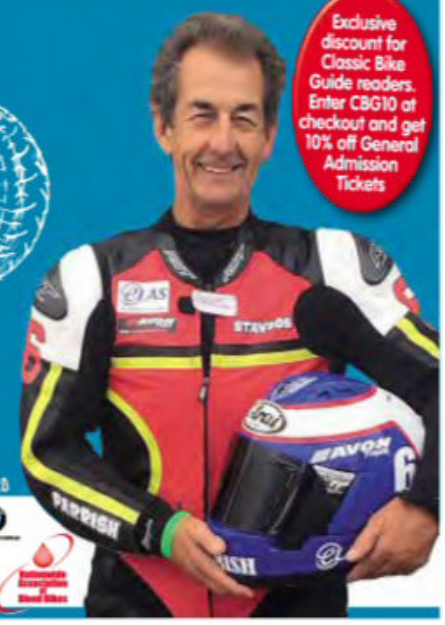
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MAY 2019

- **30 Park it in the Market:** One for the Londoners. On the last Thursday of every month Greenwich Market is home to an evening of classic cars and bikes, great music and street food. Park It in The Market starts after the regular Thursday Market has tidied up for the day. Hundreds of people show up to listen to some great live music, wander round the food stalls or simply relax in the Coach and Horses or the Admiral Hardy. The atmosphere is friendly and welcoming as visitors wander around the classic vehicles and chat to their owners. The event was voted the best Vintage event by Time Out. It all gets going at 7pm. Greenwich Market, Greenwich, South London, off the A200.
- **30-June 2 Unwanted MCC's Annual Bike, Trike & Custom Show:** The Rockbar, Shobnall Sports & Social Club, Shobnall Road, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire, DE14 2BB. www.unwantedmcc.co.uk Tel: 07988 521 400 or 07761 931226. Email: unwantedmcc@aol.com.
- **31-June 2 BACKFIRE Race the Waves 2019:** South Marine Drive, Bridlington, East Riding of Yorkshire, YO15 3JH. www.backfire-ltd.com Tel: 07718 420630. Email: paul.backfire@outlook.com
- **2 MAD Sunday (Motorcycle Awareness Day):** Ace Cafe London, Ace Corner, North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com
- **2 'Normous Newark Autojumble:** The Showground, Drove Lane, Winthorpe, Newark, Notts, NG24 2NY. www.newarkautojumble.co.uk
- **2 Vintage Japanese Day:** Sammy Miller Museum, www.sammymiller.co.uk
- **2 The British Two-Stroke Club (Leicester Section) The John Lee Memorial Run:** The Lady Jane, Coalville, Leics. Tel. Eric Hathaway 01162 750532.
- **2 VMCC (Dorset section) Old and New Run:** Henstridge Golf and Leisure, Marsh Lane, Henstridge, Somerset, BA8 0TG. Tel. 01258 860864. dorsetvmcc.co.uk/events/
- **2 South Hants Vehicle Preservation Society (SHVPS) Classic Vehicle Show & Autojumble:** Queen Elizabeth Country Park, Gravel Hill, Horndean, Hampshire PO8 0QE (three miles south of Petersfield on the A3) www.shvps.org.uk Email shvps.autojumble@gmail.com
- **3 JUNE ISSUE OF *REAL CLASSIC***
- **5 VMCC (Dorset section) Lunch Meet:** Henstridge Golf and Leisure, Marsh Lane, Henstridge, Somerset, BA8 0TG. Tel: 01258 860864. dorsetvmcc.co.uk/events/
- **6 LE Velo Lancs & S Lakes, Downham (meet by bridge):** Tel. 01772 782516.
- **7 JULY ISSUE OF *THE CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE***
- **7-9 Lion Rally:** Gravelly Bridge Farm, Grazeley Green Road, Grazeley, Reading, Berks RG7 1LG. www. readingmag.org.uk. Email leebrown296@hotmail. com.
- **7-9 Retrofestival:** Newark Showground, Newark, Notts, NG24 2NY. www.retrofestival.co.uk
- **8 Daventry Motorcycle Festival:** Daventry town centre (Market Square and High Street), Daventry, Northants NN11 4HT. www.daventrybikefest.co.uk. Tel. 07877 544572. Email info@daventrybikefest. co.uk
- **8 Italian Bike Day:** The Red Lion, Cassington, Oxfordshire OX29 4DN. For more information, email alanbmrco@gmail.com
- **9 20th Ripon Classic Car & Bike Show:** Ripon Racecourse, Boroughbridge Road, Ripon, HG4 1UG. www.markwoodwardclassicevents.com. Tel. 01697 451882. Email info@markwoodwardclassicevents.com
- **9 Triumph Bike Day:** Ace Cafe London, Ace Corner, North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com
- **9 Sunbeam MCC Rose of Shires:** Stoke Bruerne, Northants. Tel: Rob Bayman 07850 870094. Email robertbayman@btinternet.com
- **14-16 The Old Goats Grumble 5:** Sycamore Farm, Heavygate Lane, Shottle, Belper, Derbys DE56 2DS. www.lozmcc.esy.es. Tel. 07786 065341. Email league.of.zeal.mcc@gmail.com.
- **15 Dirt Diggers:** A day of racing featuring everything from moped to choppers with classes for all bikes and riders 8am-midnight, Eddie Wright Raceway Normanby Road, Scunthorpe.
- **15 Scorton Auto & Bike Jumble:** Scorton, North Yorkshire Events Centre, DL10 6EJ. Tel. Bert 07909 904705.
- **15 TOMCC Berks:** An Old Motorcycle Gathering for tax-exempt motorcycles – all marques at: BCSA, James Lane, Burghfield, Berks, RG30 3RS. www.berkshiretomcc.org.uk/blog
- **15 British Two-Stroke Club Lincolnshire Branch Summer Run:** Sausthorpe Village Hall, PE23 4JN. Sign on 9.30am-10am. Tel. Andy Jones 07940 447570; Jay Smedley 07502 222754.
- **15 Afternoon/evening of grasstrack racing:** for youth and adult riders, solo and sidecar racing. Sparrington Farm, Pencombe, Bromyard, Herefordshire. HR7 4SL. Email: sallyannpalmer226@gmail.com Mobile: 07968 649327.
- **15-16 Prescott Bike Festival 2019:** Prescott Bike Fest will feature an extensive display of historic, custom builds, race bikes, factory bikes, prototypes, shed builds to record-beating machines – literally everything from Salon Privé class winner 1903 Royal Sovereign, to the 'Warhorse' – the World's Fastest Monowheel, and everything in between. Unlike a static bike show, Bike Fest's showcase of Paddock Specials features over 100 examples of rare racing machinery where you can meet the owners, watch them fire up and tackle the historic hill climb course. Admission is £12 on Saturday, £15 on Sunday in advance or £24 for a weekend ticket and the event is held at Prescott Hill Climb, Gotherington, Cheltenham, GL52 9RD. For further information and tickets visit www.prescottbikefestival.co.uk
- **15-16 Clwyd Veteran and Vintage Machinery Society Ltd Annual Vintage Vehicle & Steam Rally & Craft Fair:** Oswestry Showground (just off the A5, SY11 4TB). Enquiries: Bernie Morris 01978 762889; 07545 092072. Email 1bernie.morris@gmail.com or Joan Evans 01244 544124; 07976 872520. Email Joan.glyn@talktalk.net
- **16 'Drive it Day' Breakfast Meet:** Battlesbridge Motorcycle Museum, Essex SS11 7RF. All classic vehicles welcome. Tel. 01268 769000. www.battlesbridge.com/events
- **16 Classic Cars inc Father's Day Special:** Hoghton Tower, Hoghton, Preston, PR5 0SH. www. markwoodwardclassicevents.com. Tel. 01697 451882. Email info@markwoodwardclassicevents. com
- **16 Father's Day Motor Show:** Castle Howard, York, YO60 7DA. www.classicshows.org. Tel. 01484 667776. Email info@classicshows.org.

JUNE 2019

- **1 JUNE EDITION *OLD BIKE MART***
- **1 Cirencester Autojumble:** Livestock Centre, Castle Market, Driffield Road, Cirencester, GL7 5QY. Tel. 07831 421455.
- **1 Classic Motorcycle Show:** Hall's Green, Weston, Hitchin. Tel. 07963 609143.
- **1-2 Motofest Coventry:** Coventry city centre, West Midlands, CV1 2FJ. www.coventrymotofest.com. Tel. 07989 058860. Email lee@coventrymotofest.com
- **2 Kenley Autojumble:** The Portcullis Club, Kenley Airfield, Victor Beamish Avenue, Caterham, CR3 5FX (just off jct 6, M25) for sat nav use CR3 5LT. Contact Martyn 07772 169524/Anita 07971 823314. Email info@kenleyautojumble.co.uk www. KenleyAutojumble.co.uk
- **3 Wells CMCC Tortoise and Hare Run:** A great event which sees riders take in the Somerset countryside on two runs, with lunch in England's smallest city. Riders of Snails (Veteran or very small capacity machines) have a 45-mile route, Tortoises (machines of unlimited capacity up to 1965, or small capacity machines up to 250cc to 1990) have a 75-mile route while the Hares (machines of 250cc or more up to 2005) cover 115miles. There's a lot of enjoyment in following a Vincent Rapide dicing with a Ducati 916 on the Mendip Hills, or just plodding along with the pack. Advance tickets are £10 with a donation made to Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance. www.wellsclassicmotorcycleclub.co.uk.

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.

- **16 Polish Bike Day:** Ace Cafe London, Ace Corner, North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com
- **16 58th Jimmie Guthrie Memorial Run:** The Green, Denholm, Hawick TD9 8NA. Tel. 01835 830422. Website: jimmieguthrie.weebly.com
- **16 Norton – Natter & Nosh:** Sammy Miller Museum, www.sammymiller.co.uk
- **16 Retro Show:** Santa Pod Raceway, Airfield Road, Podington, Wellingborough, Northants, NN29 7XA. www.retroshow.co.uk Tel. 01234 782828.
- **16 Father's Day Motor Show:** Castle Howard, York, YO60 7DA Tel. 01484 667776. Email info@classicshows.org www.classicshows.org
- **16 LE Velo Lancs & S Lakes:** Conishead Priory, nr Ulverston. Tel. 01772 782516.
- **19 Yorkshire Rose TOMCC Open Night:** The Waverley Pub, Brinsworth Road, Catcliffe, Rotherham, S60 5RW. Tel. 01142 620195.
- **19 JULY ISSUE OF *CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE MECHANICS***
- **19 VMCC (Dorset section) Mid-Week Run:** Warden Hill Trading Post on A37, Long Ash Lane, Dorchester, DT2 9PW. Tel. 01258 860864. dorsetvmcc.co.uk/events/
- **19 VMCC (Essex Section) Midweek Run:** Tel. Rex Croft 01376 34092.
- **19 Bucks British & Classic MCC present their annual Shiny Bike Night:** The Plough at Cadsden, Princes Risborough, Bucks. HP27 0NB www. bbcmcc.freeuk.com Email: norbsa02@aol.com Tel: Dermot 07940 492348.
- **20 JULY/AUGUST ISSUE OF *CLASSIC RACER***
- **21-23 Summer Solstice Rally:** Laverstock and Ford Sports Club, 23 Church Road, Laverstock, Salisbury, Wilts SP1 1QX. Tel. Chris 07518 638186 or Tags 07921 854834. Email sarumbikertrev@gmail.com.
- **21-23 The Farmyard Party:** The Farmyard Party, Duncombe Park Estate, Helmsley, N Yorks YO62 5EB. www.mapevents.co.uk. Tel. 0800 9883199. Email enquiries@mapevents.co.uk.
- **22-29 36th Sunbeam MCC Welsh Week:** Llanbister. Tel. Bev Kemp 07876 597697. Email vsekemp@ btconnect.com
- **23 Rickman Enthusiasts' Day:** Sammy Miller Museum, Hampshire. The Rickman Brothers, Don and Derek will be attending. 10am-4pm Sammy Miller Museum, Bashley Cross Roads, New Milton, Hampshire, BH25 5SZ
- **23 North East Classic Car & Motorcycle Show:** Castle Howard, York, YO60 7DA. www.classicshows.org. Tel. 01484 667776. Email info@classicshows.org
- **23 Trike Day in aid of NABD:** Ace Cafe London, Ace Corner, North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 7UD. london.acecafe.com
- **23 Sutton and Huby Motorcycle and Classic Car Day:** six miles north of York. All motorcycles and motorcyclists welcome! For an entrance form please email pauleastwood61@gmail.co.uk
- **23 Romney Marsh Show & Bikejumble:** Marsh Road, Hamstreet, Near Ashford, Kent, TN26 2JD. www.elk-promotions.co.uk
- **23 Coast to Coast Run:** Westland Classic MCC parade run from Lyme Regis in Dorset to Burnham-on-Sea Somerset, stopping at Yeovil and Shepton Mallet. www.wcmcc.org.uk
- **23 Salisbury Motorcycle & Light Car Club Horses & Henges Solstice Run:** Charity motorcycle road run between several white horses and henges in the Wiltshire area. Tel. Andy Elliott 07909 778685. Email publicity@salisburymotorcycleandlightcarclub.co.uk www.salisburymotorcycleandlightcarclub.co.uk
- **23 VMCC (Essex Section) Breakfast Run:** Tesco car park, Maldon. Tel. Dave Overy 01621 893450.
- **23 VMCC (Dorset section) The Long Run:** Visit dorsetvmcc.co.uk/events/ Tel. 01258 860864.
- **23 VMCC Cheshire Cats Vintage Ride In and Gathering:** at the historic Stretton Watermill near Farndon, Cheshire SY14 7JA from 12.30pm. Email robert.moon93@ntlworld.com Tel. 07800 601226.
- **23 North East Classic Car & Motorcycle Show:** Hardwick Hall, Sedgefield, Co. Durham, TS21 2EH. Tel. 01484 667776. Email info@classicshows.org www.classicshows.org
- **25 British Two-Stroke Club Lincolnshire Branch club night:** Meet for fish & chips, Mermaid Fisheries, Boston Road, Horncastle. Tel. Andy Jones 07940 447570; Jay Smedley 07502 222754.
- **26 JULY ISSUE OF *CLASSIC BIKE GUIDE***
- **27 LE Velo Lancs & S Lakes, Dent (meet main car park):** Tel. 01772 782516.
- **28-30 Summer Solstice Rock Fest Rally:** Southam Rugby Club, B4451 Kineton Road, Southam, Warks CV47 2DH. Email solsticerockfest@hotmail.com.
- **28-30 Pistons and Pints 2:** Breighton Ferry Inn, Breighton, Selby, N Yorks YO8 6DH. www. bracanmcc.co.uk. Tel. 07951 653195. Email info@ bracanmcc.co.uk.
- **28-30 British Two-Stroke Club Annual Rally and Annual General Meeting:** Henlow Bridge Lakes, Henlow, Beds, SG16 6LN. Tel: 02392 460014.
- **28-30 Thunderbird Rally:** The New Broom, Uttoxeter Road, Checkley, Shrops ST10 4NB. www.watoc.info. Tel. 01952 299018. Email ken.talbot@sky.com
- **28-30 VMCC NI Section Antrim Coast Weekend:** based at the Halfway House Hotel, Ballygally, Co. Antrim. Tel. Ian MacDougall 028 2582 2356. www.vmccni.wordpress.com/
- **29 Armed Forces Family Fun Day:** The Old Springs, 126 Spring Road, Orrell, Wigan, Lancs WN5 0JJ. Email brigantiarebelsmcc@gmail.com.
- **29 VMCC (Dorset section) Breakfast Meet:** Henstridge Golf and Leisure, Marsh Lane, Henstridge, Somerset, BA8 0TG. Tel. 01258 860864. dorsetvmcc.co.uk/events/
- **29 Sunbeam MCC The Three Dales Tour:** Arkengarthdale, Yorks. Tel. Wallace Holmes 01325 460554. Email multuminparvo@hotmail.co.uk
- **29-30 Classic Car & Motorcycle Show:** Letchworth Town Centre. Tel. 07963 609143.
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STEVE COOPER

Steve reflects on a number of two-wheeled surprises from the past 45 years.

"One of the perennial questions that gets asked is "What's your favourite bike?" To be honest I'm not sure I have one. Perhaps it would be better to venture which bikes have impressed or surprised me."

A QUICK CALCULATION REVEALS I'VE BEEN messing around with motorcycles for 45 years now and I'm not planning on packing up anytime soon. Over that rather worryingly long time frame, I've owned a fair number and ridden infinitely more. The latter is primarily due more to happenstance and serendipity rather than skill.

The late Rob Gibson, then editor of our sister title, *CMM*, asked me if I could find him some Japanese bikes to road test and it all sort of snowballed from there. If you've lent me your bike to ride then a huge thank you from a bloke who still struggles to believe he gets to do this, and more.

One of the perennial questions that gets asked is "What's your favourite bike?" To be honest I'm not sure I have one. Perhaps it would be better to venture which bikes have impressed or surprised me… in which case I'll happily waffle on to the foot of this page. I'll leave MZs aside as I've already come out on that one so in no particular order we have:

Benelli 2C – Italy's answer to the stroker hoards from the East. Packed with character, smaller than you might think and class leading handling. Not as fast as the Japanese offerings or as civilized but a great bike and still not too expensive.

Honda VT250 – Infinitely better than its reputation and something that only Honda could conjure up. The tiny V-twin thrives on revs and handles so well. Only bogie is the frankly bonkers enclosed front disc brake; a response to a question no one asked. If only they'd made it a 400!

Yamaha XS650 – Still the best parallel twin to come out of Japan until the modern era. So much character, a gutsy motor that will even outlast Keith Richards and still massively overlooked. Early examples handle better than the old wives' tale. Post 1975 models in general and factory customs in particular still stupidly cheap.

Morini 350 – Nothing that old should motor on or cope with bends the way they do. Very much an engineer's view of how a bike should be and built without compromise to the key elements of engine or frame. Never cheap but worth seeking out.

Honda 750/4 – the earliest in particular impress beyond belief for a mass production motorcycle made in the late 1960s. Okay they may not be the best handling machine but the levels of speed, ergonomics, sophistication and ease of use are breathtaking for the period. Oh and they do make a rather lovely noise when given the beans.

Kawasaki triples – each a unique experience and some inherently more stable than others. The early 250s or 350s have stunning lines, most of the 500s can and will scare whilst the later 750s are actually a damn fine all-round machine… if you can afford the petrol.

Benelli Sei – Oh so much more than a Honda 500/4 with two more pots. Essentially a two-wheeled Ferrari without the cost; looks and sounds divine. Significantly more reliable than some would have you believe and possibly one of the best 750s of the period.

Triumph T160 – The apogee of the British superbike, a mass of technical compromises that works much better than a three cylinder T100 should do. Classic lines, unique sound, great ride.

Norton Commando – Another last-ditch effort from an ailing industry yet so much more than the sum of its parts. Little stomps along like a Commando.

Yamaha AS1/2/3 – Seminal 125cc tiddlers that really shouldn't be as quick as they are. Bouncy handling only adds to the fun as does the banshee exhaust note. Only the AS3 has a decent front brake which ensures the AS1 and AS2 variants are ridden with extreme focus.

Ducati GT750 – yes a round case, bevel drive, L twin, and possibly the most impressive bike I have ever ridden. Nothing, but nothing, prepares you for the experience. Loping punchy motor, divine handling, excellent brakes and style by the bucket load. Oh and the exhaust note is like angels playing bassoons…very loudly!

Yamaha RD350 – From 1973-75 nothing below 750 could outrun these giant killers. Now unfairly overshadowed by the RD400.

Suzuki Goose – yes only a 350 four-stroke single but the way it can be hustled through bends has to be experienced to be believed. Quite why Suzuki never dropped in a DR500 (or bigger) motor is beyond me.

Cagiva Alazurra – another 350 and essentially a baby Ducati. Exquisitely poised, delicious motor and top drawer brakes. It made me want to find a full bore 600 Pantah.

Doubtless this list will evolve and change but one thing's for sure…life is rarely ever dull! 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 MILES

It's that time of year!

"After all 13 of the winter months have ticked tediously by and Spring comes around once again, the shed becomes a frenetic hive of activity."

IT'S SPRING! THE CLOCKS HAVE MOVED FORWARD, something we do every year to assist munitions workers and help them win the Crimean war, or something equally relevant. Spring has finally sprung up and down the land and sheds are being flung open after months of being ignored; it's time to start your engines once again. Having duly wrestled with the lawnmower and given the patch its first, not-too-short, cut of the year, permission will be finally granted to begin waking up the slumbering beasts I refer to as 'the nice bikes'.

Although I ride year-round, it's fair to say that most of my journeys on wet, salty roads will either be on a scruffy 'I'll restore that next winter' bike, or a modern motorcycle, something in which I have little invested interest or love.

The nice bikes have slumbered under covers, with drained carburettors and fuel tanks and with wheels raised off the floor to protect the tyres. Any batteries will have been removed prior to storage and been regularly charged over the dark months. Sounds like a plan, eh? It's an utter fantasy of course, because, despite the best of intentions that never happens with me. The reality is that I ride the nice bikes up to, and invariably just beyond, that point when they should really have been put into hibernation, before frantically dragging out the long-ignored winter hack which starts first kick, of course and gets pressed into immediate duties.

The posh bikes end up being thrown in the shed with a sheet over them and the best they can realistically expect by way of winter storage preparation is to be run with the petrol turned off until they conk out before being covered with an old blanket. And that's it, winter preparation completed. After all 13 of the winter months have ticked tediously by and spring comes around once again, the shed becomes a frenetic hive of activity as I attempt to wake up all my slumbering beasts to enjoy the five weeks of spring/summer.

The first one fails to immediately fire up, of course. At this point a normal, rational person would shrug, expecting nothing more from an old bike that's been resting for many long, dark nights. I take it as a personal slight and immediately resolve to teach it a harsh lesson by dragging it screaming to the workbench and subjecting it to seriously quick and angry spannering; after all, it's warm and sunny, time to be out riding, not working on bikes!

Racking the empty corridors that used to be my brain, I try and recall whether this recalcitrant old warrior was suffering from any ailments prior to being put away –'was this easy to start, or difficult? Did it leak a bit from the primary case and the gearbox, or was that the other BSA?' and so forth. The normal, rational rider whom I referred to earlier would of course have made careful notes about any issues requiring address, as well as dates for oil changes, tyre pressures and yes, even starting procedures; these very old machines like it doing in a particular way.

Being abnormal and irrational, I prefer to ignore such obvious attempts to toady up to the bike, so each waking up session is like owning the wretched thing for the first time and it usually fights me every inch of the way.

The days pass and usually (hopefully!) I end up with a nice bike that occasionally also functions as a working motorcycle. Tyre pressures specific to that particular clunker are settled upon and not made a note of and I almost get around to making tiny markings on the advance/retard and air slide levers that represent optimal positions for easier starting. Finally getting to enjoy that first ride of the season is a sweet experience; for me it's usually bittersweet as I remember that yes, this was the AJS that could really do with a clutch rebuild and the magneto is getting a bit flustered when hot; tasks I could have performed over the dark winter months, of course when I was otherwise preoccupied trying not to buy yet another project on eBay.

The slightly disappointing AJS is pushed back in the shed as the next victim gets its moment in the sun and the process is repeated, unearthing different issues, yet with a sadly familiar outcome. The entire process invariably occupies most of the riding season and by the time the nice bikes and I have settled upon an uneasy alliance of mutual distrust, the nights have begun to draw in again and my thoughts turn to preparing the hack bikes for winter.

I know the answer is fewer bikes, ridden more often, but there are so many tempting winter projects on sale in November… CBG

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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PAUL D'ORLÉANS

PULLING A THREAD, LOSING A SWEATER

Paul looks at the café racer, its origins and asks – where did it come from?

"Promenade Percy had originally been 'seaside promenade Percy', as flashy young riders on the lookout for 'fairies' (young ladies on the lookout for riders)"

When my publisher asked for – another - book on café racers, because the last one (cleverly titled 'Cafe Racers') sold well, it required considerable meditation before I could find my way to signing a contract. What is there new to say on the subject, with so many magazines, books, and TV shows about the subject?

While my 2014 book had taken the long view, it didn't really dig in, so out came the shovel, and a quarter of my library was suddenly strewn around my office, in a search for clues.

When had the term café racer first appeared? Couldn't find that. It seems to be a contraction of 'coffee bar racer', which was in common usage to describe a subculture of young fans of fast bikes in the 1950s. Pulling the thread a little harder, I did find what appears to be the earliest published usage of 'Promenade Percy' (1932), and even the rockers of the 1960s knew who they were.

A clerk at *Motor Cycle* magazine in 1963, Mike Evans, had been asked to explain the café racer scene to the puzzled older riders who made the bulk of the mag's subscribers. His opinion piece noted that the rockers scene – whom he called the 'coffee-bar cowboys' – was a mix of fashion (for the gear) and the same old impulses seen in every generation of motorcyclists since the beginning.

"But the cowboy, apart from the name, is not an innovation of the present generation – he has been with us since motor bikes first appeared. Our fathers knew him as 'Promenade Percy' or 'Bypass Bertie'. The frequenting of a coffee bar is not the necessary qualification for being branded a cowboy. In the eyes of the judges – that is, the public – the incriminating evidence is (a) leather jacket and jeans and (b) racy-type bike with dropped bars. That they differ from the enthusiasts' norm can surely be accounted for quite rationally in one word – fashion. Youngsters are nothing if not fashionable. And the contention that denim jeans are impracticable or that drop bars are uncomfortable is only a side issue.

"In motorcycling, as in most things, our actions and clothes are dictated by fashion. Nowadays, much nonsense is written and talked about 'ton-up kids'. The phrase has gradually become synonymous with coffee-bar cowboy, and for that matter, with young motorcyclists."

I was delighted to discover that a young writer working 56 years ago arrived at the same conclusion as myself: that café racers were, are, and always have been, no matter what they're called or what they look like, which is merely dictated by changes of fashion, and the motorcycle technology of the day.

Mr Evans also called out the Promenade Percys, photographs of whom had been included in Mike Clay's seminal 1988 book 'Cafe Racers', which was a revelation to me at the time. It wasn't a surprise that there had been a subculture of fast riders in England in the 1930s: that was obvious from the numerous TT Replica, Grand Prix, and Ulster models available direct from manufacturers. It was the identified and named subculture that was news, and that it was associated with particular details of motorcycle customization, the attire of the riders (generally flashy), and the places they hung out.

Promenade Percy had originally been 'seaside promenade Percy', as flashy young riders on the lookout for 'fairies' (young ladies on the lookout for riders) hung around the Southend promenade – a great spot to hang out with its funfairs, pier, and beaches, and also a nice 30-mile ride from London.

By 1933 the 'seaside' had been dropped, as 'promenade' was sufficient, and generalized the description: promenade was the activity, not the location, which was a fabulous twist of words.

I reckon the 'Percy' bit referred to Percy Shelley, the Romantic poet and libertine who died young and beautiful in 1822 at the age of 29, and who was known to cut a figure with his Renaissance-inspired attire. The slightly feminized associations with dandies like Percy was another evergreen trope, which seems a Protestant legacy: with every other culture in history, it was men who were the fancy dressers, as in the animal kingdom.

Strangely, the compelling interest of the Promenade Percys in picking up girls at the seaside was also implied to be slightly feminized, as 'real men' should be focusing their energies on competition with other men, in sports or proper motorcycle racing. Which is the same criticism implied in 'cafe racer' and 'coffee bar cowboy' – these weren't 'real' racers but youngsters faking it to look attractive to the opposite sex. And of course, it worked, for both male and female riders, and there were certainly both at hangouts like the Ace Cafe.

There's a dissertation to be written on the subject, but my book will be mostly about the pictures, as it should be. CBG

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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Just the best

We spent hours looking through the archive to find the best photograph to run as the poster for the last chapter in our Mike Hailwood series.

But of all the races, all the countries and all the bikes Mike rode, it was the man himself that brought the magic and that people loved. Seen here at Oulton Park, 1966.

Mike Hailwood MBE GM, 1940-1981.

CBG



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PART TEN

MIKE HAILWOOD'S MACHINES

In the final part of Mike Hailwood's Machines, we look at one of the greatest TT races ever – Hailwood's Comeback – and how it almost didn't happen

WORDS: RACHAEL CLEGG **PHOTOGRAPHY:** MORTONS ARCHIVE/DON MORLEY

IT'S SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 1978 AND A YOUNG MAN IS dispatched to buy a tennis ball and a sponge. It's an unusual shopping list for a mechanic clad in racing team gear but, nonetheless, he runs to Douglas high street on the Isle of Man as if his life depended on it. And that's because it did, or at least, *someone's* life depended on it…

The sponge and the tennis ball were for the world's greatest motorcycle racer, Mike Hailwood who, after an 11-year hiatus from TT racing, returned to the island and raced in what is now considered to be one of the greatest sporting 'comebacks' of all time.

In fact so momentous was Hailwood's return to the Isle of Man, that it is not merely known as *a* comeback it is *the* Comeback.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. Before we get to the tennis ball, the sponge and the greatest sporting comeback ever, let's rewind a few months and see how it all started.

It all began with a phone call in late August 1977.

Patrick Slinn, the then technical manager of the UK's Ducati and Moto Guzzi importer, Coburn and Hughes, remembers it well: "I had a confidential call from Sports Motorcycles director Steve Wynn. Wynn explained that he'd been contacted by the Daily Mirror's sports editor Ted Macauley – who was also acting as Mike Hailwood's personnel manager – with a proposal that seemed like a bolt out of the blue.

"Ted told Steve that Mike wanted to race in the 1978 TT. Mike had been living in Auckland, New Zealand and had been racing a Ducati over there with his friend and fellow racer Jim Scaysbrook, but was becoming bored and wanted another crack at the TT," said Slinn.

"Ted had asked Steve if he knew anybody at Ducati who he could speak to regarding Mike racing a Ducati at the 1978 TT. Steve called Ray Elliot, who was director of Coburn and Hughes Ducati importers, and asked if the factory could be informed immediately."

Elliot called the Ducati factory who were, according to Slinn, "cautiously optimistic", but not for long.

Within days Mike, Coburn and Elliot had flown to the Ducati factory as part of a regular scheduled importer meeting – only they tagged on another topic for this meeting's agenda: Mike Hailwood and the Formula One TT.

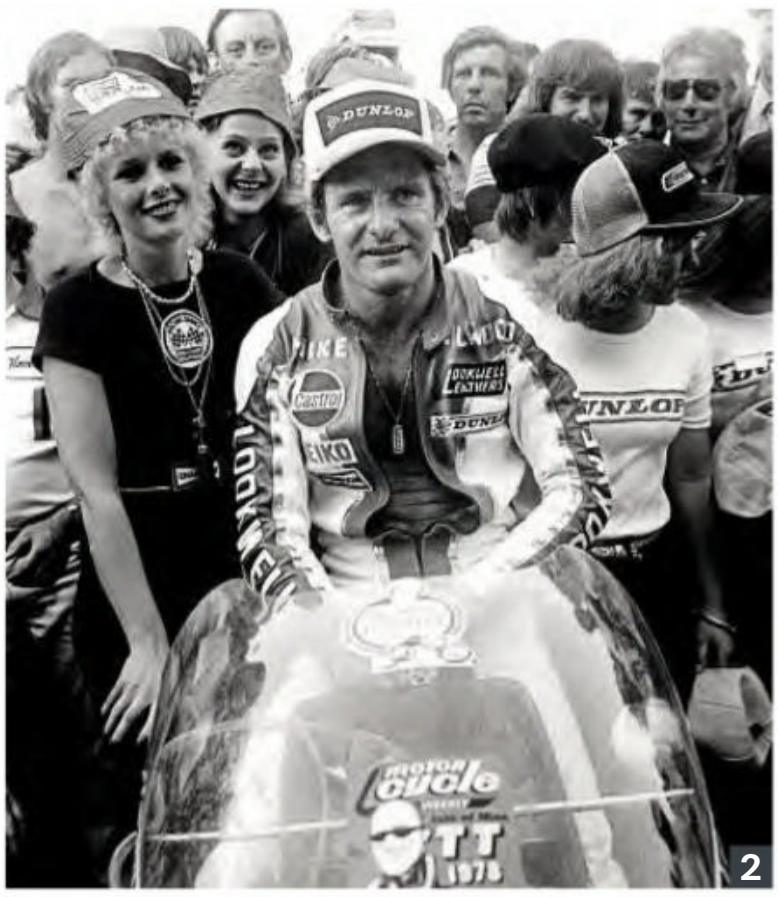
Of course, Ducati agreed to support Hailwood – a decision met with much enthusiasm from the marque's experimental department. Within weeks they had developed an 864cc V twin – the engine of which was based on their 750cc. The crankcases were sand-cast with internally cast strengthening ribs.



The man, the bike, that race. No.12 was chosen to represent Mike's TT wins



1: Mike in the winners' enclosure, just after the Formula 1 race



2: Happy faces surround a man that just looks exhausted and perhaps a little shell-shocked with what he had just achieved



3: On the Martini sponsored TZ350 in the 1978 Junior, Mike came 12th

Slinn said: "The engine also featured a close ratio five-speed gearbox, a dry air-cooled clutch, and an improved big end bearing, utilising a larger diameter crankpin."

The pieces were coming together: machine, rider, team – all they needed was a contract for Hailwood.

Slinn said: "Ted invited us all to a meal to negotiate the contract but it didn't take long. I think we were done by the time the second course came to be served. Ted said Mike wanted £1000 and that was that, the deal was done over a handshake."

It is hard – if not impossible – to imagine anything like that happening today. But this was 1977. And Hailwood had already negotiated a good deal with Martini Yamaha.

Slinn visited the Ducati factory the following week where Hailwood's engines were being tested. He said: "They had one of the engines on the dynamometer and I watched it as it was being tested. It was producing about 85/86bhp at 7500rpm. Guillano Pedritti – who had built many of the engines that Ducati had used in their racing engines – told me that with more development the engine would produce around 90bhp."

And while the TT plans were fully in motion, Hailwood was desperately trying to prepare himself. To put it into context: he was 38 years old, out of shape and had only peripherally dallied in motorcycle racing throughout the 1970s. His racing era – that of black leathers and pudding basin helmets – was long gone. In 1977 it was all about sponsor-clad leathers, full face helmets and bigger machines that were actually quite reliable.

Moreover, he had been forced into retirement with serious leg and foot injuries from car racing in 1974 at the Nürburgring while racing in the Formula 1 series for McLaren. This had massive implications for his overall race fitness.

Macauley, speaking in Chris Hilton's *A Man Called Mike*, said: "It was a terrible risk. Here was a man who was pot-bellied, couldn't walk properly and was very conscious that he might destroy his own legend or worse, much worse."

Hailwood, as quoted in Hilton's book, said: "I've got something to prove to myself. I want to do it because I want to prove to myself that I can still do it. I can't race a car because of my foot but I can a motorbike."

Hailwood gave up drink, cut down on gastronomic excesses and studied the Royal Canadian Air Force's Exercise Plans for Physical Fitness. The countdown was on….

Then, in April 1978, the TT Ducatis were shipped to Sports Motorcycles, as Slinn says: "After they arrived I travelled up to Manchester to see them. The three bikes were all painted in silver and red. One machine was designated for Mike Hailwood and was complete with two spare engines. The specification of each engine was identical – each with the sand-cast crank cases."

The machines were painted in colours inspired by the Castrol oil can – not those of the Italian flag, despite the machine's origins.

In many ways, the Ducati is hugely significant for Hailwood's comeback, as Greg Pullen points out in his thoroughly comprehensive *Ducati & the TT*. Hailwood was, as Pullen says, on a Ducati when he won his first GP race at Dundrod in Ulster. His machine was the Romolo Ferri 125cc desmodromic Bialbero and Mike the Bike was just 19 years old.

Almost 20 years later, Hailwood was with a

"But while Hailwood had an epic lead, mechanically the Ducati was hanging off the skin of its teeth – split-seconds away from breaking down"

Ducati once more. After testing at Oulton Park and Donington it was time for the IoM TT.

Hailwood's racing number was 12, to represent his TT victories – hard-earned wins that would undoubtedly play into his hands come race day. Hailwood might have been almost 20 years older than he was on his Duke debut but he was also much more experienced. And on the Isle of Man TT course, that counted for a great deal.

But first, they had to get there and set up a garage on the island. So the team made a nondescript garage near the Douglas Bay Hotel their HQ. "It was great," said Slinn. "It was a good set-up and Hailwood was very pleasant. My wife Elaine always said that he was a gentleman and he always turned out well for sponsors and supporters. He respected them very much."

Initially, Hailwood wanted to enter the TT under a pseudonym, in case of failure, but the ACU disapproved: no doubt because it would mean missing out on a huge PR opportunity for a then dwindling TT that had not long since lost its championship status, which no doubt helped visitor numbers and the event was in stasis.

So Hailwood entered as Hailwood and the crowds followed – thousands of them – and it was an injection in the arm for a stagnating TT.

"The atmosphere at the IoM TT during the 1978 TT was electric," said Slinn. "Everybody was talking about Mike. However, the press were not too enthusiastic, as they didn't think he'd do well and they believed that Phil Read would win. They said the Ducati Mike was racing was a long wheelbase, slow-revving bike and was not really competitive against the



Above: Mike at Quarterbridge – look at the advertising compared to when he'd raced there last

Below: Turning into Creg-Ny-Baa on the Suzuki RG500 in 1979. He won the Senior and came second to Alex George in the Classic



Japanese multis. But Steve Wynne, John Sear (Sports Motorcycles' sales manager), myself and one or two other people believed Mike would win the F1 race. However, after the Thursday afternoon practice, when Mike had broken the F1 lap record, opinion changed and some of the press thought he might finish among the top three!"

While practice week ended well, it did not get off to a good start, as Slinn says: "Mike's Ducati stopped on the high speed run through Crosby village. After the bike had been returned to the paddock the fault was traced to the Lucas Rita electronic ignition unit."

The problem was soon fixed. "The following morning Ducati engineers Franco Farne and Gillian Pedritti arrived by air from Italy. Franco had heard that the Lucas Rita electronic ignition unit had been unreliable and one of the first things he did was to remove the Lucas Rita unit from Mike's bike and refit the Ducati contact points and coils."

By Thursday the Ducati and Hailwood were truly at one with each other, as Slinn says. "In the Thursday afternoon practice session Mike lapped the 37¾-mile mountain TT course at close to 111mph and he had no idea he had lapped at this speed – it was in fact a record for the F1 race. It was so fast that Franco concluded that his stopwatch was faulty!"

But on the early morning practice session on the race day itself, Hailwood was flying off the 250cc Martini Yamaha at Braddan Bridge. Dickie Attwood, Formula 1 driver and good friend of Hailwood, had sailed to the IoM to help his pal. Writing in Hilton's *A Man Called Mike,* he said: "He lost control at Braddan



"111mph and he had no idea he had lapped at this speed – it was in fact a record for the F1 race. It was so fast that Franco Farne concluded that his stopwatch was faulty!"



1979 and Mike came fifth in the Formula 1 race. Behind him are Ron Haslam and George Fogarty

Bridge, the front wheel skidded and he was flung off. The bike ricocheted against a wall, tearing the fuel tank loose. Mike was badly shaken and he said he was. He even looked shaken."

Hailwood took a nap and the team finalised the machine's preparations and submitted it to scrutineering up at the paddock. Hailwood, meanwhile, had asked one of the team to go and buy him a tennis ball and a sponge.

Slinn said: "Mike asked if we could have a tennis ball with the top cut off it and a damp sponge placed inside it so that he could wipe his visor during the race and clear it of all the inevitable dead insects." Of course, the team obliged – dispatching a mechanic to Strand Street, Douglas – on a tennis ball and sponge shopping expedition.

And while the team secured squidgy spheres, Macauley and team helper Ron Winder were busy commandeering red telephone boxes. In Pullen's *Ducati & the TT,* he said: "We didn't have the same degree of sophistication as Honda, although I paid about £200 each for some very old heavy duty radio phones. But the problem was that the reception wasn't very good; and believe it or not it was its absolute worst in the pits.

Our fail-safe was to use telephone boxes and a pile of 2p pieces, or whatever they took. There was a row of red telephone boxes so we'd commandeer one and not let anyone else get in. My post was a car garage just as you left Ramsey to go to May Hill."

The anticipation now among the crowds and across the globe was tangible, as Hailwood's Formula 1 colleague Brian Hart – who was at Jarama for the Spanish Grand Prix – reported in *Motor Sport* magazine, in 1999: "We were all waiting for the newspapers to arrive so we could see how he'd done in practice. I was hanging around the radio listening to the BBC World





Barry Sheene and Mike at Mallory Park circuit in 1978

Service to see if I could find anything out. That's the sort of bloke he was. You didn't forget him… Mario Andretti took pole for the Spanish GP but the big news in pit lane was Hailwood's victory on the Isle of Man."

And what a victory it was. The tennis balls and the telephone boxes paid off as Hailwood smashed the race with an epic lead of two minutes and a record lap speed of 108.51 mph.

Had Phil Read not retired at the Bungalow earlier in the race, Hailwood's lead may not have been so huge, - perhaps not even a lead at all. The two had diced throughout the start of the race until Read's Honda broke down.

But while Hailwood had an epic lead, mechanically the Ducati was hanging off the skin of its teeth – split-seconds away from breaking down, as Slinn says: "Just as Mike crossed the finish line to win the F1 race a tooth broke on the bottom bevel gear of the desmodromic engine. Mike didn't know this.

"There was no way the engine would run with a broken bevel gear, so it must have broken as he turned the throttle down while crossing the line.

"It literally took him to the finish and then it blew – any earlier and he wouldn't have won."

Fate definitely had victorious plans for Hailwood on June 3, 1978.

Whether fate or through sheer grit and determination, Mike the Bike had done it. The elation throughout the crowds was sensational, as Hailwood himself explained after the race. He said: "On every corner they were all cheering and waving their programmes. It was just fantastic and going through Ramsey I could hear people cheering."

Macauley, writing in *A Man Called Mike*, said: "I'm a hard case and if I've cried twice in my life then that's about it. But the tension because I had organised it and I had known I could be responsible for getting Mike killed… when he was coming across the line and he had won I burst into tears." CBG



John McGuinness paraded Mike's bike at last year's Classic TT for the 40th anniversary of Mike's victory

Patrick Slinn would like to say a special thank you to Steve Wynn for inviting him to be a part of that very special TT in 1978.
Slinn was asked to be director of Sports Motorcycles following his role in the 1978 TT.

HAILWOOD'S 1978 TT RESULTS:

1978 Formula 1 race: first, 108.51mph (Ducati)

1978 Classic Race: retired due to engine failure (500cc Martini Yamaha)

1978 Junior TT: 12th (250cc Martini Yamaha)

1978 Senior TT: 28th (750cc Martini Yamaha)

BACK AGAIN….

HAILWOOD would return to the Isle of Man again in 1979 riding a Ducati in the Formula 1 race and a Suzuki RG500 in the Senior.

In the Classic race Hailwood rode a Suzuki RG500 and finished second after a nail-biting dice with Alex George.

Hailwood's Heron Suzuki RG500 was the star of the show though, and it was on this machine that Hailwood once again proved that he was the man to beat – 21 years after his first TT – in the blue riband event, the Senior.

The RG was a liquid-cooled four-stroke with telescopic front suspension and twin shocks on the rear. The machine was among the most successful race machines of its era – the mid-to-late Seventies to the 1980s, dominating GP grids. It was the first seriously competitive production racer since the days of the Manx Norton and Matchless G50. Hailwood won the Senior on his RG500 with a speed of 111.75mph.

The 1979 Senior TT-winning Heron Suzuki is on display at the Manx Museum in Douglas on the Isle of Man.



Ducati released the 900 Mike Hailwood replica (MHR) in 1979

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PRIZES Art of Motoring painting



1st PRIZE

Example of artwork from Art of Motoring



2nd PRIZE

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3. www.triplesrule.com — What colour is the needle on the oil pressure gauges supplied by Triples Rule?
4. www.ventz-range.com — Where was the inventor riding when he came up with the concept for Ventz?
5. www.motolug.com — What Motolug collapsible single trailer model can be added to in the future to make a twin trailer?
6. www.montysclassicmotorcyclesshop.co.uk — What is Monty's regular hack?
7. www.triumphtwinpower.com — What's the name of TTP's airbox intake cover?
8. www.art-of-motoring.co.uk — In which gallery would you find 'Old Friends'?
9. www.davida.co.uk — In 2018 Davida had a new helmet launch, what was the name of this?

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1. ..... 4. ..... 7. .....

2. ..... 5. ..... 8. .....

3. ..... 6. ..... 9. .....

MAGNI MV AGUSTA 750S TRIBUTO TEST

TIMELY TRIBUTE

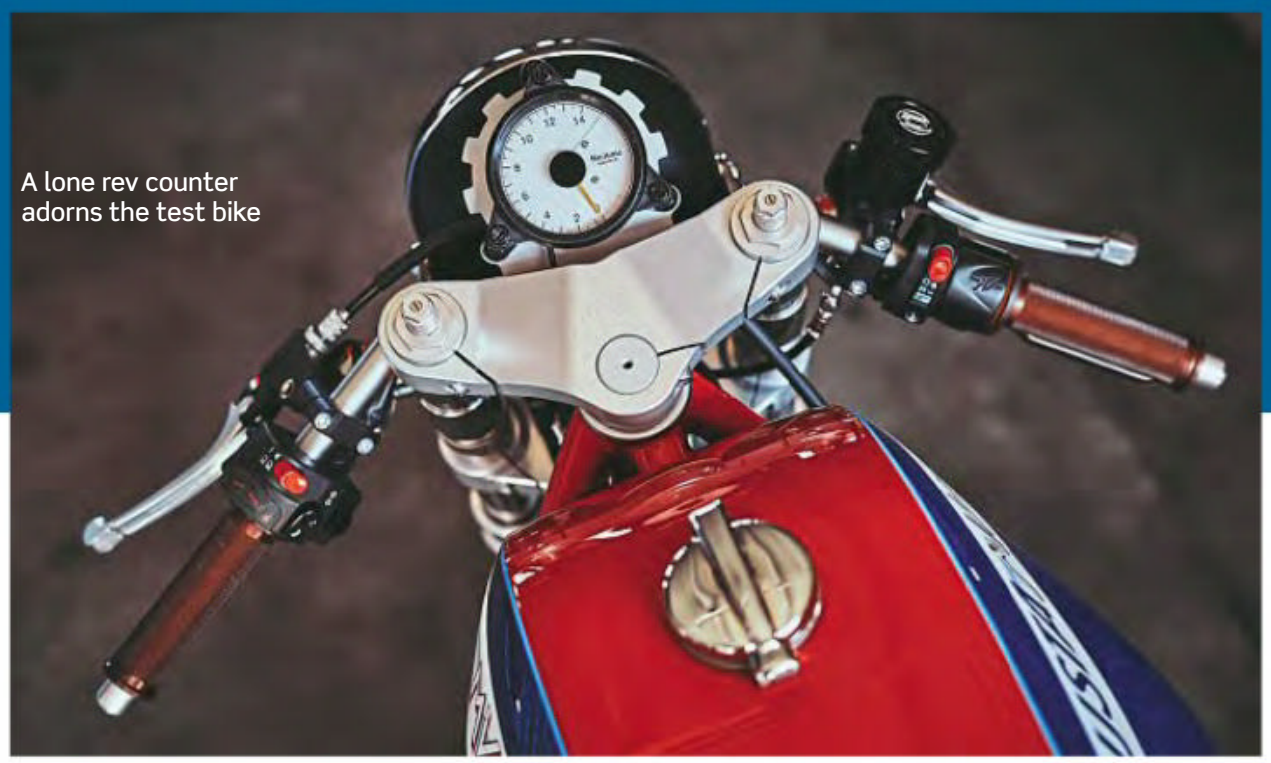
The names Magni and MV Agusta are well acquainted, but only now are the two united in one bike – the 750S Tributo



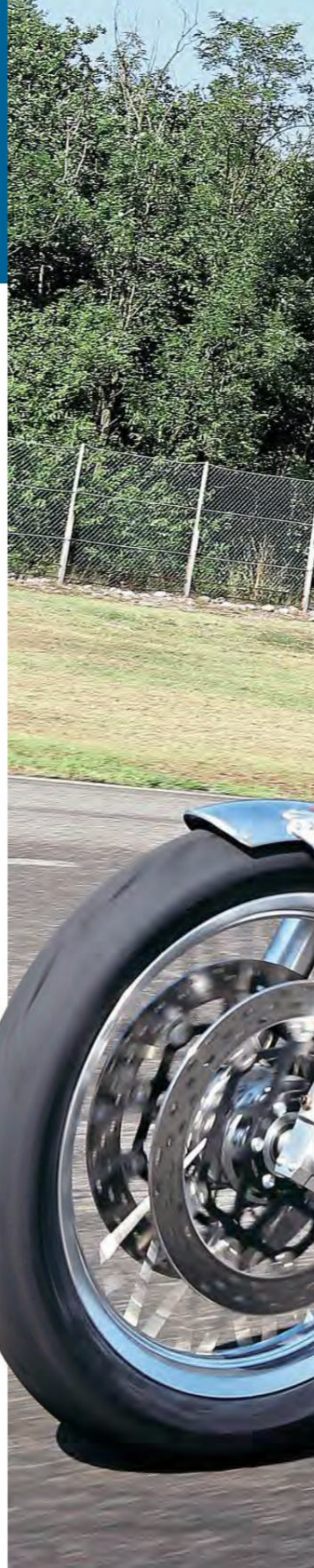
MOTO MAGNI CELEBRATED ITS 40TH birthday in 2017, but it's only in the past six years that its small but well equipped factory, run by Giovanni Magni, 59, has started using the products of the modern MV Agusta firm as the basis for creating and refining a blend of yesterday's looks and today's performance.

Mind you, it's hard to think of any company more entitled than Moto Magni to use current MV Agusta hardware to produce such an authentic retrobike. For it was the firm's founder, Giovanni's late father Arturo who, before he passed away in December 2015 at the age of 90, led the world's most successful ever non-Japanese GP race team to its remarkable haul of 75 road racing World Championships in 26 years, bankrolled by the profits of Count Agusta's helicopter factory and achieved with bikes developed in MV's former race HQ at Gallarate, just a stone's throw from Moto Magni's Samarate factory.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEL EDGE



A lone rev counter adorns the test bike



However, Giovanni's first Magni MV tribute bike was actually a ringer, because the only thing MV about the Magni Sport 1200 S introduced 20 years ago in 1999 was its styling. For this was a palpable pastiche of the original ultra-desirable four-cylinder MV Agusta 750S streetlegal superbike, of which just 402 examples were built from 1971-75 (one of which sold in April 2018 for £96,700 ($122,108) at the Stafford Classic Show auction). That's because the Magni lookalike was powered by a Japanese engine, the ubiquitous Suzuki 1200 Bandit motor. Despite borrowing various design cues from the original MV 750S, like its red leather hump-backed seat and the shapely so-called disco volante (flying saucer) styling of the fuel tank with tricolore paintwork (but a Gallic red, white and blue rather than the colours of the Italian flag – no, I've never been able to find out why), the result looked pretty ungainly, plus it was rather uncomfortable and tiring to ride. Nevertheless, 92 examples were sold around the world during the next decade, and these have themselves become collectors' items, even if Giovanni Magni admits it wasn't his family company's finest piece of work.

RIGHT DECISION

"The problem was that we couldn't get access to the 750cc MV Agusta F4 engine that had finally reached production the year before," he says. "They were backed up for at least two years with orders, and there was no other four-cylinder Italian engine to consider using instead of that. But we could obtain the Suzuki motor, and while it's not the most beautiful engine to look at, it had excellent performance, and suited our needs. And our sales proved that it was the right decision!"

In 2013 Giovanni decided to finally introduce a modern MV-engined Magni, with the four-cylinder Storia, a classically restyled stock-framed Brutale 1090 that was unveiled at that year's Milan Show, and continues in production today. But although he's delivered 23 such bikes to date and has orders for more trickling in continuously, Giovanni got criticised by some Magni tifosi for merely offering a change of clothes with the Storia, since it didn't have a bespoke Magni frame, but instead used the production MV Brutale one – which handles very well!

This was a source of serious irritation for Giovanni, so he and his brother Carlo decided to make a streetlegal three-cylinder retrobike using the 800 Brutale F3 motor in a purpose-built period-style Magni frame. The result debuted late in 2014 as the nominally streetlegal fully-faired Magni FiloRosso – Italian for 'red line', as in taking it to the limit – an exquisitely designed, superbly executed and classically striking streetlegal three-cylinder racer-with-lights, looking for all the world like the 500cc triple GP racer that MV's 15-time World champion Giacomo Agostini took to seven successive 500GP World titles from 1966-72, before switching to Yamaha.

Twenty-one examples of the FiloRosso have been completed so far, all created to order in the Magni factory at a price of €30,000 upwards plus tax, depending on spec.

But now Giovanni Magni has completed the circle by coming back to where he started out, with a modern tribute to MV Agusta's iconic 750S streetbike – but this time powered by an MV Agusta engine, not a Suzuki one. The result is called – what else? –the Magni MV Tributo 750S, and was unveiled at the last EICMA Milan Show in November with prices starting at €36,000 + tax fully built up depending on spec, or €26,000 + tax, still assembled in the Magni factory, but using a donor bike supplied by the customer. "We won't provide chassis kits for home assembly any more," says Giovanni. "If somebody supplies a donor bike we'll always give them a discount off the list price, but we have to adapt the stock Eldor ECU and wiring loom to the new application ourselves – it's not something you can do at home."

He already has five orders since launching the bike at Milan, and construction of the first of these is well under way. But before its show debut, I was honoured to be allowed to be the first



" It's so perfectly proportioned that until you sit aboard it you've no idea it's so relatively tiny - quite low, but not too short; it's perfectly packaged."

person to ride the prototype Tributo show bike – including Giovanni himself – beyond a 2km ride up and down the road outside the Magni factory to make sure the gearbox and brakes all worked, before bringing it to Pirelli's Vizzola test track for yours truly to sample it in action.

This cleverly concocted creation uses an unmodified liquid-cooled Brutale 800 three-cylinder motor with rearwards-rotating 120° crank, wrapped in a TiG-welded Magni open cradle chrome-moly tubular steel frame using the engine as a fully stressed component.

It comes complete with box-section twin-shock swingarm and 18-inch wire wheels made by JoNich in Milan, with sturdy but lightweight aluminium spokes and rims, the front a 2.50in wide one with a 4.50in rear. Both are specially designed to take tubeless tyres, in this case Metzeler's latest Racetech RR, a 110/80 front and 160/60 rear. The conventional 43mm fork and twin rear shocks all look very classic, but are in fact fully-adjustable high-spec hardware made by ORAM near Como, a small but high quality suspension manufacturer that's recently begun making period-looking motorcycle components.

BEAUTIFUL TRIBUTE

Even the shocks are individually adjustable for both compression and rebound damping, as well as preload. Axially-mounted four-piston non-Monoblock Brembo calipers grip the twin 320mm floating front discs, giving hefty braking response with a 220mm rear to arrest a bike weighing just 170kg dry, split 49/51% for a slight rearward bias.

The result is a breathtakingly beautiful tribute – yes, it's surely the right word – to MV Agusta's Classic heritage, which thanks to a longer 1420mm wheelbase is slightly more spacious than Magni's previous such iteration, the FiloRosso using exactly the same completely stock ultra-compact 79 x 54.3mm 798cc F3 engine, which is likewise here painted silver. This once again makes you realise how inexcusable it is that MV Agusta should smother such a good-looking piece of mechanical art in black paint in its Brutale application, especially as thanks to its being so eye-catching, the low-mounted stock Brutale water radiator is so visually unobtrusive. Whereas the FiloRosso carried a fairing, the three-cylinder Tributo apes the four-cylinder 750S in being naked as nature intended, and the result is that even if it's slightly longer than its Magni sister-bike, it seems even more diminutive – small, but perfectly formed.

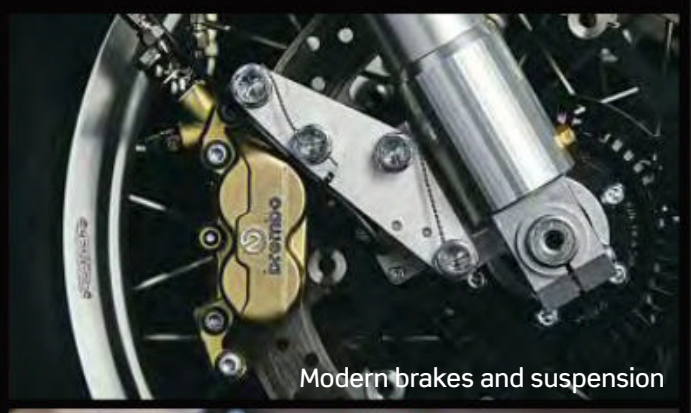




It's hard to name another classically-styled bike with a modern powerplant look – as though they were created for each other originally

However, there's quite enough space to allow a 5ft 10in rider to feel comfortable on the Tributo, which is one of those bikes you just slip aboard to discover a riding stance that's sporty but welcoming, where you feel a part of the bike from the very first. It's so perfectly proportioned that until you sit aboard it you've no idea it's so relatively tiny – quite low, but not too short, it's perfectly packaged. The footrests don't feel as high-set as on the FiloRosso, though the clip-on Discacciati handlebars are quite steeply raked, and carry very Seventies looking dark red Ariete rubber grips complete with a ridge along the right-hand one to make it easier to keep the light-action throttle fully wound open, just like my brand new Ducati V-twin had back in 1974!

Riding the Magni MV in just-completed prototype form meant there was only a Scitsu tacho fitted, mounted forward of the upper tripleclamp milled from solid Ergal alloy, and behind the large 190mm-diameter round headlamp shared with various Moto Morini and Guzzi models. But customer versions will carry the original MV Brutale dashboard linked to the Eldor EM2.0 ECU incorporating the Mikuni RBW/ride-by-wire throttle package. This



Modern brakes and suspension


Original details



Sublime attention





Hand-made details abound

has a choice of four riding modes – Sport, Normal/Touring and Rain, plus one Custom setting with increased options, and eight levels of switchable traction control, all to be accessible via the control pod on the Tributo's right handlebar. Add in the full range of set up choices delivered by the ORAM suspension, and the new Magni is very much a modern motorcycle dressed in period clothing.

INTUITIVE

It's also one of those bikes that's simply intuitive to ride – without being at all nervous despite its quite sporting steering geometry, with the ORAM fork set at a 25° rake, with just 85mm of trail via a 60mm offset on the machined-from-solid tripleclamps. The Magni MV feels light and flickable, and goes exactly where you point it, sometimes seemingly anticipating your command. Thanks partly to the skinny 18-inch rubber it feels nimble and agile, while rock solid on the fast fourth and fifth-gear sweepers round the Pirelli track's outer perimeter course.

It made mincemeat of even the tightest infield turns, where the wide spread of torque peaking with 62lb ft available at 8600rpm entices you to save on gearshifts in driving hard and strong out of a low speed corner – you can accelerate wide open in sixth gear from just 2000 revs without a hint of transmission snatch.

But you must keep the MV engine revving above 4000rpm for any meaningful drive, though the high 13.3:1 compression ratio will help give a jump out of a bend, allowing you to surf the waves of torque as the addictive intake roar from the trio of open 50mm Mikuni throttle bodies now deprived of their airbox – but each covered with a protective intake grille to guard against stones etc – competes with the great-sounding free-flowing non-catalyst triple-pipe exhaust's haunting howl to deliver the evocative sound of mechanical music.

Why is it that three-cylinder bikes sound so much better than anything else on two wheels, even if silenced to meet Euro 4 requirements, which is however, very much not the case here?

"We sell all our bikes on the understanding that they're not homologated for road use," says Giovani Magni. "It's up to the customer to register it in his or her own country if they want to ride it on the street, otherwise they must use it only as a track day bike."

The reason the Tributo isn't homologated for the street is simply one of cost, plus the time needed to add ABS, sanitise the exhaust system via a catalyst and figure out a way of wrapping the throttle bodies in some kind of airbox without destroying the bike's allure.

Despite its period looks recalling the MV 750S the Magni Tributo's scintillating performance is from another era – today. The F3 800 engine delivers 125bhp at 11,600rpm at the crankshaft, and combined with the Tributo's low weight of 170kg dry with all street equipment, results in addictive acceleration from low down, as well as a determined midrange roll-on, again accompanied by that exquisite exhaust note.

Fire up the motor and it settles to a fast 1800rpm idle, but once you cross the 4000rpm threshold and achieve serious forward motion, from there until the 13,000rpm revlimiter there's just a luscious flow of linear power which is simply – sorry, that word again: addictive. The performance is almost unexpectedly good because you're half seduced into thinking the Tributo will behave like the oldtimer it appears to be. Not a bit of it – this is a real world ride whose stonking appetite for revs delivers modern Supersport-style poke, and the harder



you rev it the more power there is for you to avail yourself of.

They don't come a lot better than this, a bike that looks a million dollars and has performance to match, even without the gamut of rider aids that had yet to be dialled in for me to use. The default riding mode Magni was using for development was Sport, but despite that the pick-up from a closed throttle was strong but completely controllable – no snatchy or over-fierce response as on some other bikes (though to be fair, not on MV Agusta's own 800cc family of models), just a deliciously refined feel to the whole package.

Considering the bike I rode was effectively brand-new, Giovanni Magni had done a great job of dialling in the ORAM suspension just right, so that at both ends it was very compliant and induced heaps of confidence. I could use serious turn speed without worrying about front end grip, especially thanks to those great Metzeler race-spec treaded tyres, and the way the Tributo shook off the effects of a series of bumps that have appeared over the summer on the entry into one second-gear turn – probably because of the suction effect of the latest grippy car rubber tearing up tarmac softened by the sun – was really impressive.

There was minimal front end dive under the super effective braking from high speed delivered by the Brembo stoppers, yet I could feel the front fork absorbing the bumps without any chatter on the angle as I trailbraked into the apex. Nice. And the twin rear shocks laid the MV motor's more than acceptable level of torque to the tarmac exiting a turn – again, everything felt super-controllable, with no trace of a snatchy initial pick-up.

DISAPPOINTING

I've ridden a couple of original early-1970s 750S MV Agusta streetbikes in the past, but always found them distinctly disappointing, with a mechanically noisy engine and heavy steering, and the handling compromised thanks to the shaft final drive which Count Agusta for some reason stipulated should be fitted (leaving Arturo Magni to make a chain-drive conversion kit which sold very well!).

The first time I rode one I was hugely disappointed that the performance failed so dismally to live up to the MV's fabulous looks, and when I rode the second of the two bikes which were built up for Ago and team-mate Alberto Pagani to ride in the 1972 Imola 200 in MV's only factory outing under Formula 750 rules, that proved equally disappointing.

The model came devoid of any of the lightweight allure of the three-cylinder GP bikes that Ago had won copious world titles with, and at one-third of the price the contemporary Honda CB750 was a much better motorcycle, if less exclusive than the Italian bike. But almost 50 years on, Giovanni Magni has corrected the truth of time by creating the gorgeous-looking, sweet-handling, glorious-sounding 750S Tributo bearing his family's rightly esteemed name. Job done!

Retro bikes don't come any better than this – unless it's the equally impressive, and evocative, fully-faired Magni FiloRosso powered by the same engine, but with a different exhaust that delivers a subtly different tune. Your choice, should you be fortunate enough to have the resources to indulge in one of these classic era counterpoints to today's leading edge MV Agusta products..... CBG

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HARLEY NORTON CAFÉ RACER

Special Brew

Some things look like they were always meant to be. Shane Venn shows us around his remarkable special; a modified wideline Featherbed frame housing a Harley Sportster motor, built by Dave Degens.

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY ADAM BOLTON

Café racers, rock 'n' roll and the resulting counter culture are all steeped in a long and fascinating heritage. It's a vital and charismatic part of British motorcycling and social history and in fact I count that in the last year there have been at least two books published on café racers. The whole culture finds itself currently very much in vogue, and bike magazines are full of shots of gleaming aluminium tanked motorcycles here and shiny brand spanking new black leather jackets there.

On the other hand, for many people the culture of rock 'n' roll, bikes and cars hasn't been just a passing bandwagon but a lifestyle, for life, and Shane Venn is one of them, wearing his passions on his sleeve as boldly as the tattoos on his arms.

Shane shows me photos of him as a teenager with his mates, cool, rockin' and looking the part. "The music came first for me," he explains; "1950s rock 'n' roll, Sixties stuff, I loved it all, and we'd go to clubs to dance and hear the music. By 1983 I was driving around in an old 1950s Vauxhall Wyvern, a lovely old car."






Oldani-style TLS is massive



The Milwalkee V-twin looks right at home within the Featherbed frame, but took some work to fit

One look around Shane's fine double garage, which he purpose-built himself to house his collection, reveals that his passion has remained strong, and the Wyvern has been replaced by a Cadillac – not just any Cadillac, but the finest cruising Caddy there is, a 1953 Coupe de Ville, and its impressive proportions take up half the available space.

Another huge Yank motor is the 1957 GMC stepsider pickup next to the garage, in primer and patina. Then there are Shane's bikes. Shane's a precision engineer and CNC turner, so "it helps when building stuff", and like most engineer's personal vehicles, Shane's 'stuff' is fabulous.

"My first motorcycle when I was young was a 350cc Triumph 21, and I've loved Triumphs since then. I've now got a 1968 Triumph TR6C Trophy, and a 1957 T110 pre-unit." Nice bikes too, restored and ridden by Shane. But it's Shane's café racer I've come to see and a handsome motorcycle it is too.

Over the years, Norton Featherbed frames have had all sorts of motors shoehorned into them, but to see a Harley-Davidson V-twin is still a reasonably rare occurrence. Strange really, as the fit is so neat that they look made for each other, and in this case, that's because they were (to a point).

Shane explains how he came to own the bike that is more special than your average special. "I saw it on eBay about a year ago. It didn't make its reserve price, which I found surprising. I liked it a lot, and it also looked very well put together. I also thought it was unusual, not having seen a Harley Norton combination before. I've owned Harleys previously, a 1952 Panhead, and 1998 Sportster, and I appreciate the characteristics of the motors, but I'm more of a café racer type person than someone who wants to cruise along.

"Anyway, I contacted the seller and told him I'd like to come and see it, which I did. He was the second owner, and was selling because he was emigrating. The bike also had no MoT, but fired up well, so we agreed

a price we were both happy with, and I bought it."

From some history that came with the bike Shane knows that it was the first owner who had the special built to his taste, and very good taste he had too, as he chose no one better to build a café racer than Dave Degens of Dresda Autos – the Dresda red logos aren't on the bike for show.

Dave Degens is the godfather of Triton building and racing, and is still active today. He was presented with the Harley motor, which is an ironhead motor from a 900cc XLCH Sportster, and asked to build a frame round it. Apparently Dave Degens took a wideline Featherbed frame from his stock, and modified the frame to fit the motor, or should that be so the motor fitted the frame? In any case, he did a fine job. Though compact, the XLCH motor is tall, so the front cylinder head in particular would always have a job fitting below the top frame rail and comfortably inside the headstock and front down tubes of the Featherbed frame.

The integrally mounted generator looks like it would have caused more problems, but in fact it's the cylinder head that touches first.

The other issue is that being of unit construction, the Harley motor is also long from the end of its gearbox casing to the front of the primary chain case, and there aren't any bits that can be stripped off, relocated or modified to make more space. Dave Degens has actually used the XLCH's original front and rear holes for mounting bolts by shoving the motor as far back into the frame as it will go, positioning the rear engine mounting points first with a welded additional plate, and then cutting engine plates for the front to mount the motor to the Featherbed's down tubes. A tight fit, but a simple and fortunate solution, and the motor sits pleasingly and almost perfectly horizontally within its frame. The tolerances are tiny though, and you can just about see a chink of fresh air between the iron cylinder head and frame.

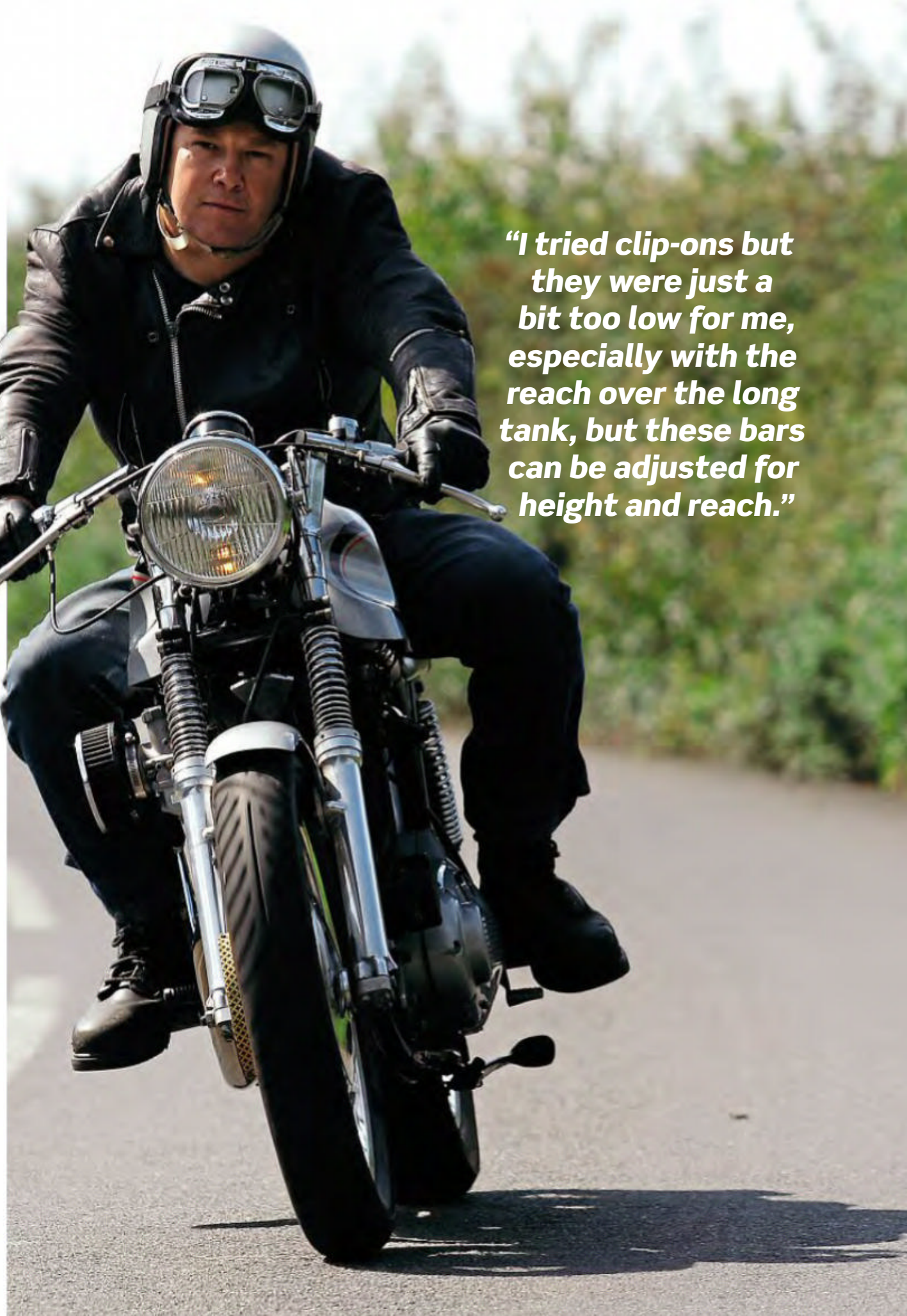
The lower frame rail has had a small amount of tube sacrificed to allow the Ironhead motor's sump bolts enough clearance, but it's a tidy and impressive job all round, as you would expect from a company with Dresda Auto's history. A Dresda box section swinging arm and a reversed Norton rear hub have been used to accommodate the Harley's right side chain drive, and again, though clearance is minimal between tyre and metal, the result is functional and clever.

Shane agrees. "Like I said, I could see that it had been built well, but when I got it home I had to spend a fair amount of time getting the bike to ride reliably – I think the previous owner didn't really ride it very much." A slipping clutch was the first problem to resolve. "Easily done," says Shane, "by taking it apart and refitting with the correct clutch plates. It had been run as a wet clutch, and not a dry clutch as it should have been. Other problems weren't helping the running at all. I found the tappets were tight, and that the timing was also out – the timing on an Ironhead Sportster has to be spot on, otherwise it just won't start."

Shane's absolutely right – my own brother many years ago owned a 1962 XLCH which had the earlier models' more aggressive cam profile, and he found at the cost of a fractured ankle that kicking a Sportster not in tune can damage your health. High compression pistons and a dodgy magneto system didn't help him either, especially as he was bravely using the XLCH to commute to work in London and back.

"The motor is completely stock so there's no reason why it shouldn't run reliably, especially with the help of modern components," says Shane. "In fact, I replaced the contact breaker ignition with a Quickstart 2000 electronic ignition system – it sits under the distributor cap and you couldn't tell it was there. It was easy to fit and the bike starts and runs so much easier now. I also decided to fit a modern regulator/rectifier box too that means I can use the bike and know that it'll charge properly and run lights and start when it needs to."

Modern components aside, the bike's lines are traditional café racer, and it looks very good for it. Long glass fibre five gallon racing tank with quick release filler cap and metal strap holding it in place is followed by typical racing single hump seat,



"I tried clip-ons but they were just a bit too low for me, especially with the reach over the long tank, but these bars can be adjusted for height and reach."

again in glass fibre, and all this keeps the weight down.

The neat oil tank also provides accommodation for the small 12v battery, and sits neatly where the old Sportster tank would have been. A massive single Smiths speedometer quickly tells you all you need to know on the move and the lack of other instruments means the rider isn't distracted from riding fast, which of course is what the machine is built to do.

The massive Oldani style TLS front brake is drilled and ventilated to disperse heat, and laced, as is the 7 inch rear brake, to a set of very attractive Morad aluminium rims, with wheels built by Brickwood.

The front forks are Triumph/BSA telescopic units with the springs exposed, and the rears shocks are a set of classic and simple Hagon's finest. The handlebars aren't quite the low clip-ons you might expect, but Shane, who is just a couple of years older than me but roughly the same shape, explains: "I tried clip-ons but they were just a bit too low for me, especially with the reach over the long tank, but these bars can be adjusted for height and reach." I see his reasoning is right when I get to have a ride. Like most motorcycles (and people come to think of it), the Harley Norton, though a beautifully proportioned motorcycle, definitely has its better side, which is the side with the exhausts complete with drilled heat shields that Shane fitted.

It's such a good choice to have kept the traditional slash cut Harley pipes rather than try and stick on some reverse cone megaphones or similar, as they flow perfectly with the lines of the lower frame, and only accentuate that wonderful curve upwards and to the right of the famous Featherbed tubing.

The Mikuni carb-mounted K&N air filter adds some more chrome flash. The left-hand side of the bike looks oddly minimalist in comparison, and most of the wiring seems to also be gathered on this side, spoiling a little the overall look of the café racer. Shane agrees and has it down on his list of things to do. "I'm too busy riding it!" he laughs. Too right – and now it's my turn.

Kicking Shane's Harley motor to a successful start is less hard work than I thought, and with a little choke from the 38mm Mikuni which Shane bought brand-new to cure some plug sooting problems he had with the old carb, and the uprated ignition system, the ironhead motor clatters into life.

I take off up the country lane with long sweepers where we've been taking some photos, remembering that it's a one down and three up gear change, with my right boot. It's easy to forget how quick off the mark a 900cc air-cooled Harley motor can be when required, and I'm taken aback by the acceleration. Ironhead motors have so much more life to them than their later Evo cousins, and in a stripped down and light Dresda chassis, it can really impress with its turn of speed, though you have to want to supply plenty of gas by holding the throttle open as wide as you dare.

The noise from the slash cut and open pipes is demonically loud, and I feel a little evil when I swoop at full chat past an adjacent pet cemetery. Handling is ever so taut, the suspension is firm, and again I'm reminded how stable and good Featherbed frames are. I find the riding position comfortable, though it takes a little effort to bend my toes round the kicker pedal to change gear, but once on the move the torquey Sportster motor doesn't need much ratio shifting.

The ignition key is also in a slightly awkward place, right under my leg, but its irksomeness is soon forgotten about, as is the front brake which fades easily and probably just needs some fine adjustment. The rest of the ride supplies precisely what a thrash on a single purpose café racer, whatever the motor or frame configuration, should be – fast, flashy, furious fun.

Shane asks me what I think when I get back, and I tell him that it does exactly what you'd expect from a special brew of Norton, Harley and Dave Degens. He agrees. "I'll keep this long term now, and I already use it for weekend blasts and occasionally to go to work on it. It feels like a modern bike, or a modern classic at least, and looks fantastic. It can still be sometimes a bit difficult to start, usually in front of other people, but it does everything I ask of it – though I would love a Norvin!" Who knows, with Shane's passion, he may own on one day, and hopefully he'll let me have a ride too. CBG



Shane still has jobs he'd like to do, but says: "I'm too busy riding it!"

CBG Workshop

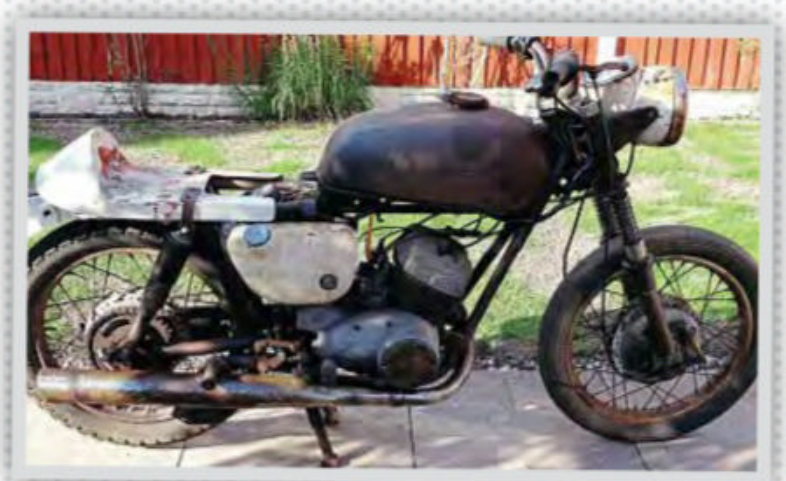
All that glitters isn't gold

While at the Stafford show, I was able to chat to a couple of gents on the Norton Owners' Club stand. In 10 minutes these fine gentlemen had listened to my ES2 woes, conferred with each other, checked with someone else and given me some answers. These answers were perfect, agreed with my guessing and will help my build. But they were also different to anything I'd come across on the internet. Suggestions on there were unchecked, unfounded and from someone I'd never met. Yet, because it's online, we have a tendency to believe it. Thank goodness for clubs, for good old checking the facts and for fellow enthusiasts.



▲ Norton project

Things are getting messy and it's all but EaSy with our ES2



▲ Yamaha YDS3 restoration

Would you have been brave enough to take this on?



▲ How to run in your new engine

Our Matchless G3 is back together; but how should we run it in?



▲ How it works - Threads

We look at how to identify threads



How's that work?

Finding the right Fred

By Hutch



WE TALK ABOUT OUR OLD nails in terms of aesthetics and ergonomics, power and torque, character and looking like it's doing 100mph standing still; but when it comes down to fixing and keeping the things running it's more tolerances, limits and fits, bearings, nuts and bolts.

The mechanics of a bolted joint are a complex combination, taking in metallurgy, metrology, stress, strain, coefficients of friction and other factors, but usually when trying to fix your bike what you really want to know is – what thread is this bolt or nut so I can get another or clean this one up in some way.

Identifying a thread requires only a few tools, reference data and a dose of common sense. You need to find the major diameter, pitch and thread angle.

Thread angle is very difficult to measure at home, particularly on smaller diameter threads, without larger pieces of equipment (like a shadowgraph machine) and can mostly be overlooked for ID purposes. The majority of threads are either 55 or 60 degrees and occasionally 47.5 degrees for BA (British Association threads).

Pitch is the distance between two adjacent peaks, or troughs on a thread – this is not entirely true but good enough for identification purposes if not in metrology terms. Pitch is expressed in either distance (Metric, BA) or TPI (Threads Per Inch) for imperial threads and is easily measured with Pitch or TPI gauges.

The major diameter of a thread is the maximum diameter across a bolt and is easily measured with a vernier or digital caliper. To allow a nut and bolt to run together some clearance is needed, so expect the major diameter to be a little less than the stated size; so an M12 metric bolt may have a measured major diameter of 11.7mm or 11.8mm and a ¼" bolt a major diameter of 0.23" or 0.24".

Female threads are much harder to identify, measuring the core diameter may help but finding a bolt that will screw in and then measuring that is the fastest and easiest way.

So, having established base data of pitch and major diameter a quick study of some reference data will, hopefully, identify the thread for you. I usually go for the Zeus book first, it's a reference manual for precision engineering and a worthy workshop companion. If that can't help, try the internet. The Zeus book also has a handy converter from metric or decimal imperial to fractional imperial, which saves the calculator and head scratching.

Common sense helps. If it's a European or Jap bike it's likely to be metric, older European bikes (1950s-60s NSU for example) used M7 a lot, which is not used much now. Metric threads come in fine, course and constant pitch (the same pitch for all diameters), while American bikes are predominantly Unified threads.

It helps with British bikes to have some idea of when the bike was built and the fasteners being used at that period; as time moved on some design and tooling changes were made so you can end up with a full selection of threads on the same bike from Whitworth, Cycle rate (CEI or BSCY – a constant rate pitch of 26 TPI up to 7/16") BSF (British Standard Fred) & BSC (British Standard Course) UNF (United Fine) and UNC (Unified Course). Of course threads could have been changed or recut during the life of the bike, so don't assume.

A very few threads will have the same major diameter and pitch but different angle. ¼" Whitworth and ¼" UNC are examples, but this should be obvious by the age of machine you are working on.

Pipe threads, ¼ BSP (British Standard Pipe) in particular (and commonly used) is 19TPI and not many TPI gauges have a 19 blade; care also needs to be taken with BA as only a couple of sizes (0BA & 5BA) have a whole number of TPI's – 2BA for example is 31.4 tpi. 0BA is also almost the same as M6 except in angle.

Good luck and hope this helps. Of course, if all else fails – pop rivet or self-tapper!! CBG





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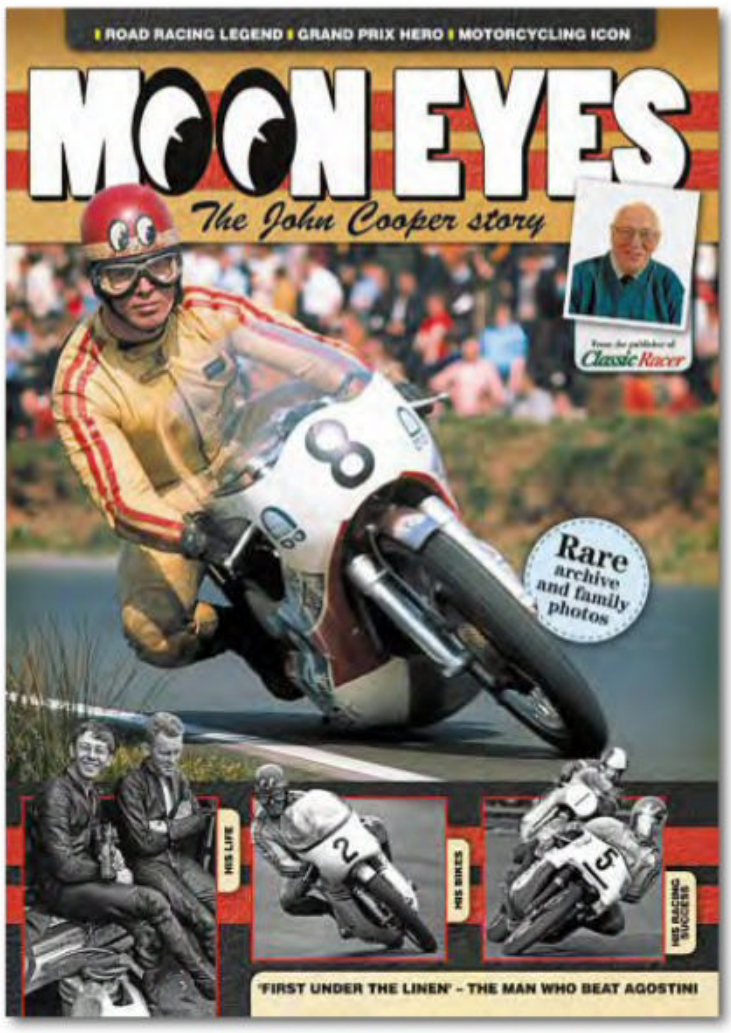
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RESTORATION

1967 Yamaha YDS3 250cc Twin, five-speed

Brave are those who take on the projects others shy away from!

WORDS BY ROB DAVIES **PHOTOGRAPHY BY** ROB AND PETE

WHO CAN DENY THE USEFULNESS OF a fitting workshop manual in the restoration of a classic motorcycle? And yet – in the early days of the Japanese invasion, the manuals were somewhere between useless and extremely funny, due to being transliterated from Japanese into English. I have one in front of me right now. It's a dirty, worn buff volume – designed – ha ha – for the bike of the month. See if you can decipher this delightful piece of advice – which comes under the heading of 'Cushions suitable for highway driving' – and I quote 'The cushions are of a new type designed for highway running, and the car body, especially in cornering gives a comfortable road holding which can be expected in no cars but YDS3.' So I'm glad that's cleared that up…

Anyway, on to our delectable restoration for this month; which as you may have already guessed is the early Yamaha of the title page. Yes they are pretty rare, but perhaps you or one of your friends may very well have had one of these whizz bombs back in the day.

As you can see from the before pics, this really was a wreck – and I have seen better examples pulled from my local canal. But Pete (and we will now refer to our brave restorer as this – for it is his name), must have been besotted with the type to take on a challenge such as this.

He bought it in September 2016 from eBay for a whopping £800. He knew that this price was no doubt over the top, but like many of us, he had set his heart on the beast. And in a way, I suppose that it's good that we don't all desire to build a pre-unit Bonny; for if we did, life would be so dull. But even for that money, there were still important items missing, such as fuel tank, seat and mudguards. The Yam was an American import and its previous owner had attempted –

Above: The Yam as purchased in 2016





Above: It just shows how much you can charge for a wreck these days

Left: This TLS is going to go through something of a transmogrification. You can do this too!

Below: Can chains really get this bad – without being dragged from the local canal?



and failed, to turn the bike into some kind of café racer – is this some kind of disease? Anyway, Pete took his prize home and started to take it apart, starting with the drive chain that was in one solid lump – oh dear.

It was then time to start searching for suitable spares, and it quickly became obvious that many bits were only to be found in the US. Now this is not a bad thing, but you do have to add on the sometimes exorbitant postage that these guys require; plus the added insult from our own dear postal service, who bang on a handling charge.

A month or two later – as our gallant lad was taking a purposeful stroll around the Stafford show, he alighted on a friendly Irish chap (Fast Klassics) who had an almost identical rolling chassis for sale. It was for the YM1 – a 305 version, but the bike was pretty much the same. There was a bit of a light-hearted discussion, and Pete walked away to mull things over. But this was too good to let go as it was in such a good condition. The seller said: "So make me a sensible offer" and Pete's reply was £350. This was duly accepted, and he pushed the new acquisition away with a warm glow.

Now he had two bikes to cannibalise and thus make one good mount. Things were looking up. Oh, and just before he walked away, the very nice Irish chap said: "I have a box of bits that you might like," and without any more expenditure, Pete received a large cardboard box – for no extra payment – did I say that? With a front light, control box, main stand and air box. So what do you think of that eh? There are still some great guys about in the biking fraternity.

You will no doubt be aware that bikes from this

Nine months from purchase, and it's starting to come together



Much polishing will need to go into these engine cases



The points arrangement taken out for cleaning



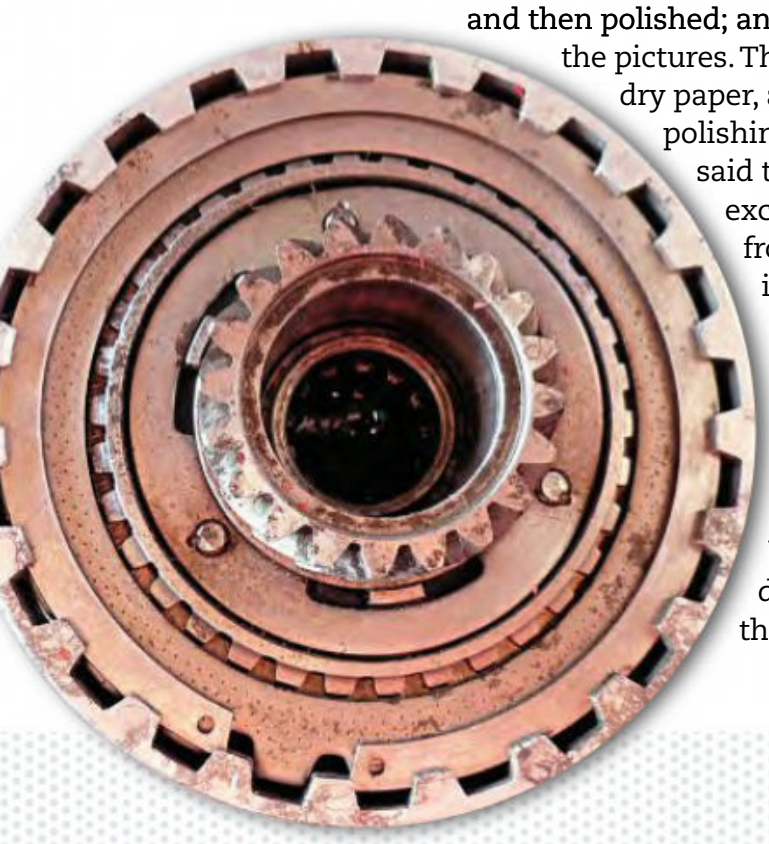
Outer case removed to show crank drive to the clutch; kick-start shaft, far right, and gear lever shaft

Below: The clutch is a dinky little mechanism

Right: The pump that feeds the two stroke oil to the fuel

period were well stocked with chromium parts – chrome appeals to the magpie in most of us. Pete collected all those parts that required the shiny treatment, including the repaired down pipes, silencers and kick-start and spent another £1200. Painful but necessary.

While that was going on, he set about getting the hubs stripped from their spokes, to be cleaned and then polished; another daunting task – see the pictures. This involved lots of wet or dry paper, and much bending over the polishing mop and wheel. Having said that, when you look at that exceptional twin leading shoe front brake, which to my mind is one of the most attractive features of this particular machine, you can see that the work was well worth it. And thus, on to the engine – an engine that now had the refinement of an oil/petrol blending system. Ah the old days of mixing fuel were on the wane.







Left: Speedo and rev counter quadrant. Idiot lights for main beam; neutral – always useful

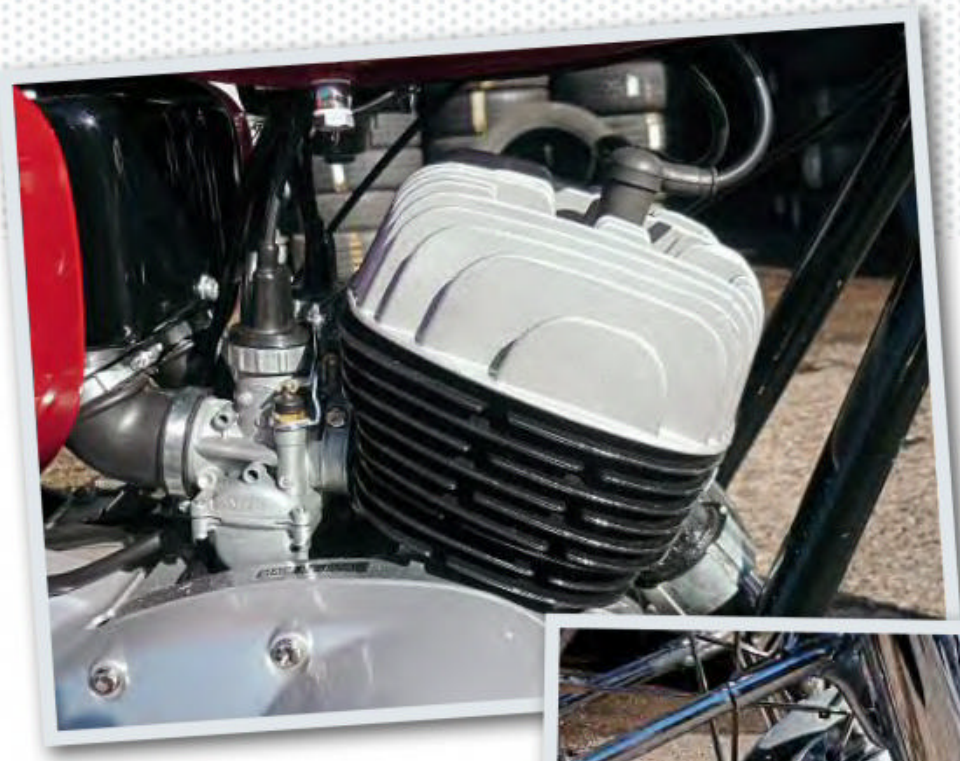
Below: Another small miracle

Early two-strokes are relatively uncomplicated, but at this age always require stripping to check every component. This was where Spa Motorcycles, Cheltenham, became extremely useful. Following the engine strip, Pete got talking to Rob of Spa, who said that they specialised in the restoration of early Yamaha cranks and seal replacements; so he handed the engine to them to get the job done properly.

The barrels of the first bike were still on standard bore, so a new set of pistons were obtained from eBay; another milestone achieved. And then a second engine came up on the ubiquitous website, so that was purchased too – can one ever have enough spares? Besides, the carbs and the clutch

looked better from this engine, and they alone can be expensive components.

Pete restored the seals and bearings in the gearbox himself; he then had the one set of carbs cleaned by ultrasound, and new jets were fitted. This in itself was no easy task, as anyone who has tried to remove jets from old alloy carbs will know; and much frustration was encountered. New coils and condensers were fitted; Pete sprayed the frame and tinware himself, and 12 months after the initial purchase, it became that nerve-racking time to start the engine. There are always problems, trust me. There is no electric start with this 6-volt system; but the workshop manual states clearly: 'Carburettor – built-in starter, easy to start.'



Left: Twin carbs drawing air from a useful filter box

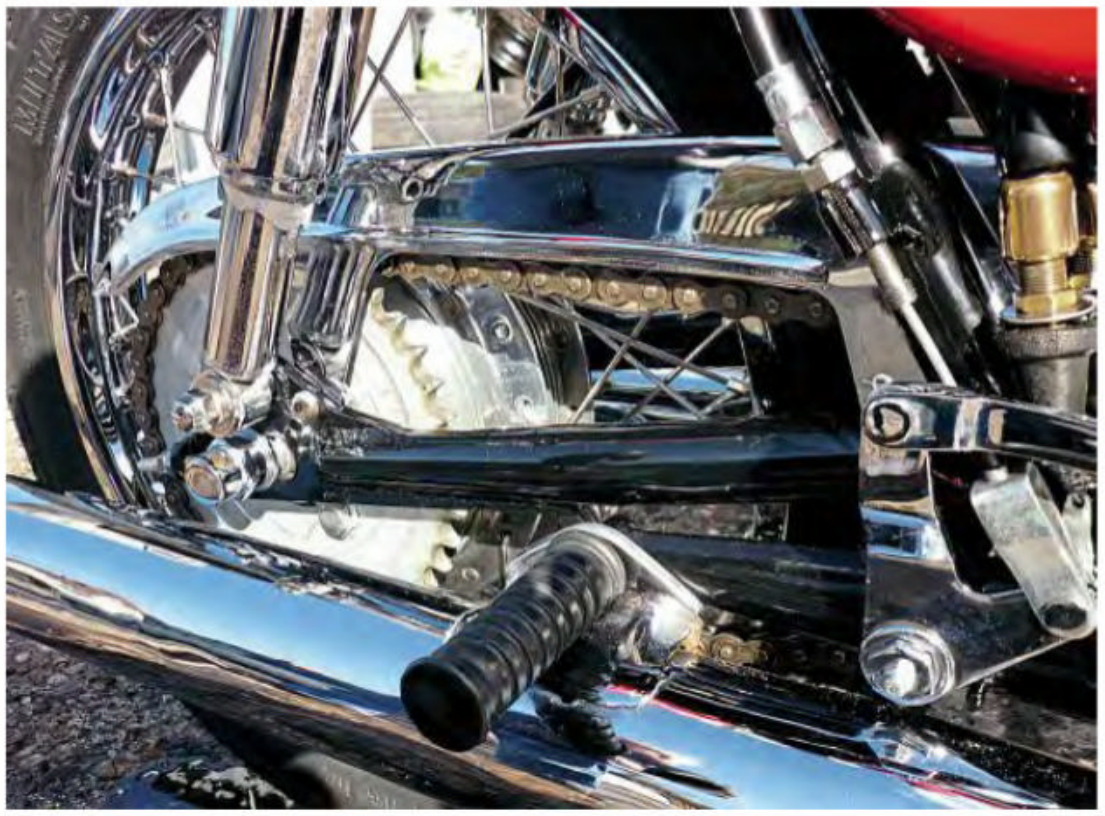
Below: The gorgeous TLS has cleaned up marvellously – hats off to you gentlemen



Below: Where the two stroke oil lives – but the badge could have been a tad more quality that a silver sticker. I suppose that's where Yamaha saves money



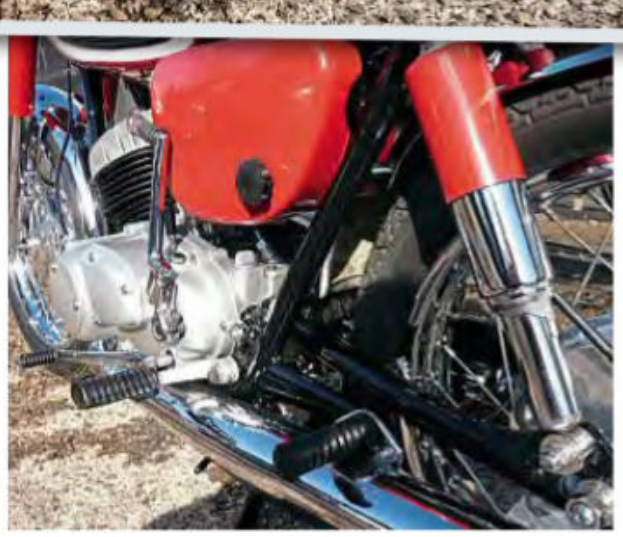




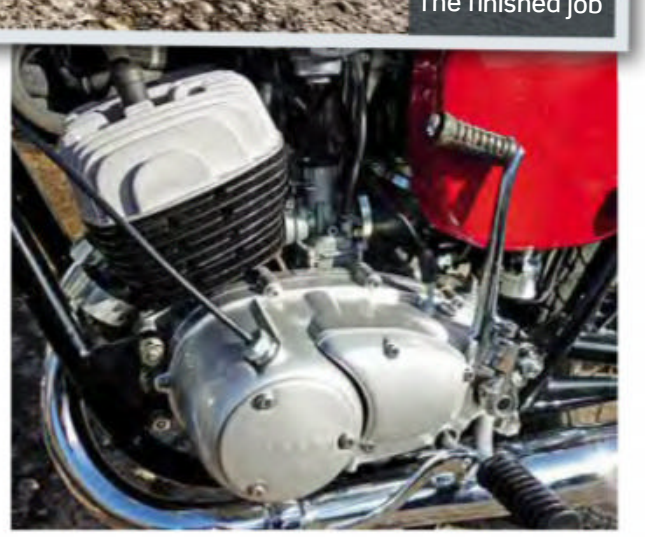
Compare this picture of chrome loveliness to the early rust bucket, and you realise the work/love and money that has gone into this bike



The finished job



A good spray job by the restorer to frame and side panels; and new rubbers to gear lever and footrests makes all the difference



The two-stroke has always been a simple enough design, but this one didn't half go

The starter mechanism (in this case your leg) to get into motion with just one kick at any time (told you) assures effective starting of the engine particularly in cold freezing weather. (Hmmm).

But yes, the engine did start easily, fabulous! Can you sense a but? Unfortunately, it only ran for a few seconds before cutting out. Repeat. This is that dreaded time when you (in this case Pete), started checking everything – swapping carburettors, even taking the head off to make sure there were no leaks. The problem persisted. It was time to phone a friend.

Pete: "It will start but will only run for a few seconds."

Rob: "Have you tried this?"

Pete: "Yeah, tried all that."

Rob: "Have you tried putting the old condensers on?"

Pete: "But I have fitted brand new condensers – shiny ones."

Rob: "Ah sometimes new condensers don't always work."

Pete: "Really?"

Rob: "Really."

So, the old scruffy condensers took the place of the brand new shiny condensers; and have a guess what? The bike ran a treat. And I think we will finish on another small clip from the Yamaha Handbook, which states, under the heading of 'Excellent running comfort'.

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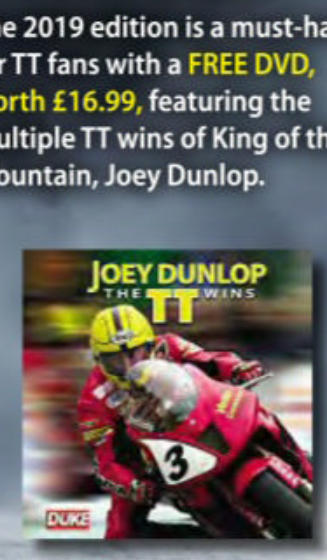
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Oil? Check. Nuts and bolts tight? Check. Fuel? Check. Feel the kickstart movement – does it feel right?

PART FOUR

Rebuilding our Matchless
Run in a new engine

In our final chapter of the G3L rebuild, we look at how to treat a freshly rebuilt engine without the risk of having to fix it all again!

WORDS, HASSLE AND IMPATIENCE BY MATT
WISDOM AND PATIENCE BY HUTCH
TEA AND WHEEL-BUILDING SKILLS BY SHELLEY

MATCHBOX GENIE

After much more time, effort and money than we thought, our G3L rolls on its wheels; if slowly. From an oil leak from the pushrod tubes to a complete top-end rebuild, the 350cc single just needed the carb cleaned, checked and put back on, starting first kick!

Hutch let the engine tick over getting to operating temperature, checking the oil was returning to the tank with a torch, while listening for unwanted noises and unwanted leaks. He then let it cool down overnight and checked the tightness of the nuts and bolts of the parts we had disturbed – the barrel, head and rocker cover.

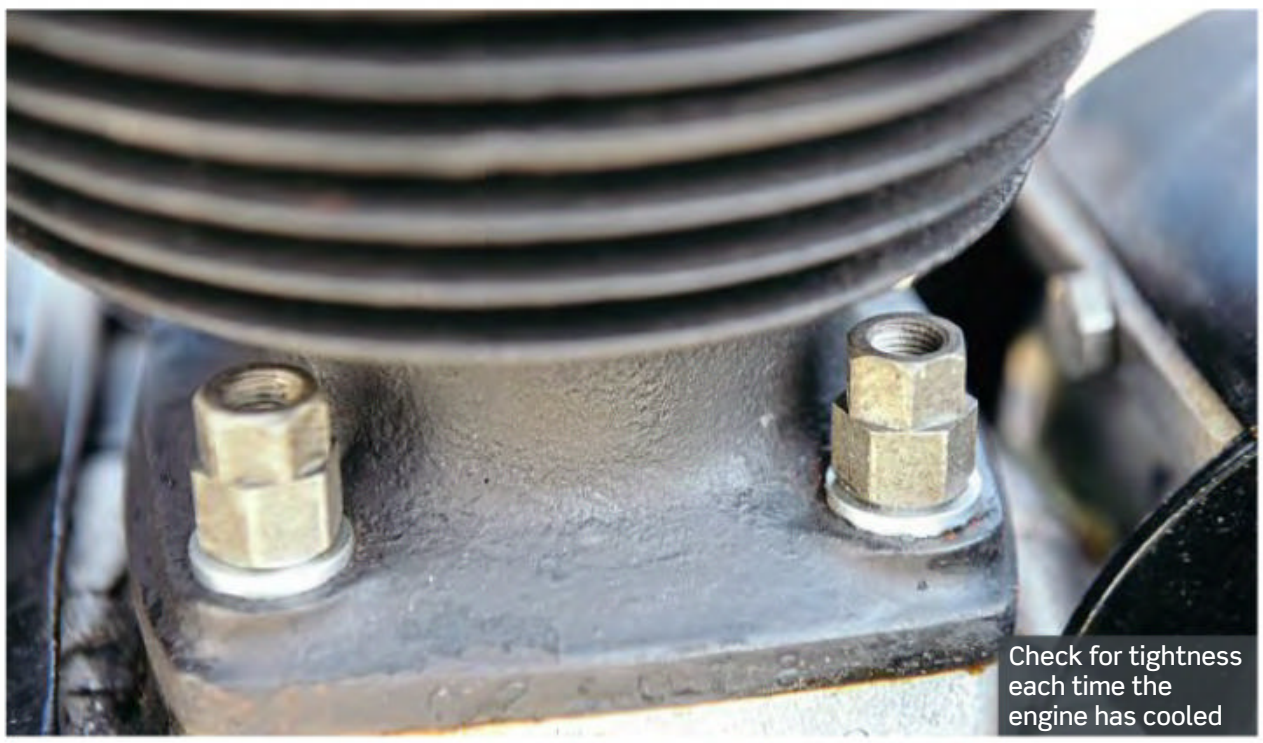
Our bike has got a new piston and rings, though the barrel didn't receive a full rebore as it was so worn, it was close to the next over bore size, so we honed it to the correct tolerance for the new slug and rings. Hutch honed it a fraction more to give a good clearance before fitting, but the finish is still different to a completely rebored barrel, so running in will be a little easier on ours. Most rebuilds will receive a new tank of fresh oil, but ours had only been changed 14 miles before with good quality 20-50 so, as we will be changing it again soon, we left that in.

HOW SHOULD YOU RUN A REBUILT ENGINE IN?

Many different opinions exist on the best way to run an engine in; however this is ours. Mechanical sympathy is the key – listening, checking and taking into consideration what the different parts are doing. First job after initially running the engine for a few minutes, is letting



The clutch biting point may change quickly if the plates are new



Check for tightness each time the engine has cooled



Final drive chain slack will affect the gearchange



it cool and then checking tightness, was a spanner check of all the ancillaries, from wheel spindles to tank fixings. Once you're happy that all is as it should be, and there's some fuel in the tank (my common mistake – my neighbours are used to seeing me push bikes back) warm the bike up, listening to the engine and feeling the response of the throttle, followed by a trial run of four to five miles. This is a really nervous ride and you need to be really concentrating – listening, feeling and, just in case it nips up (seizes), keep your hand over the clutch. Hopefully you shouldn't need that, but it's better to be safe.

The inaugural ride should allow you to feel if anything is wrong, but you're not so far from home if it doesn't. Once home, let it cool and tighten the barrel, head and rocker cover again. A plug check could also be wise – it's a handy internal gauge of what's been happening inside. The

Crucially, look in the oil tank to check that the oil is returning

exhaust could tell you a story, but as ours had been burning oil originally, it was still wet inside, so we could discount the oily smell.

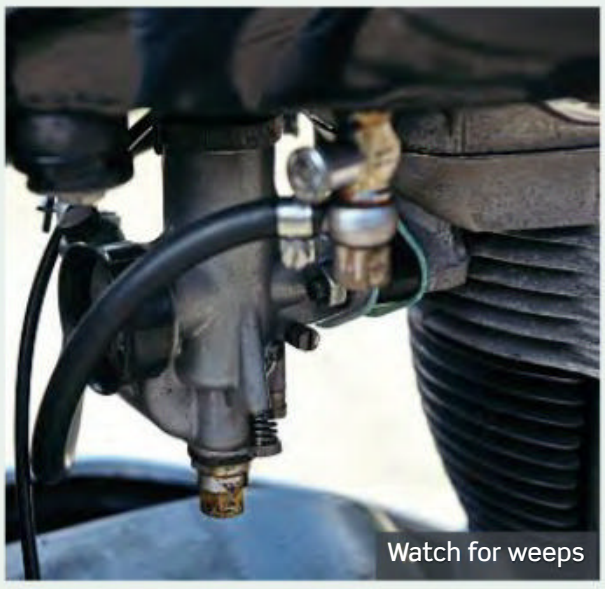
THROTTLE OPENING AND REVS

Again, this is where mechanical sympathy comes in. The top speed on our G3L 350cc, with its gearing, should be around 30-35mph for these first miles, and it can be higher on a taller-geared bike like a 650 twin, but it's how you get there that is important. If you open the throttle too much, you'll be putting too much stress on the thrust-side of the piston, rings and other parts. So it's a balance of revs and load – smooth, light throttle openings, without visiting the higher end of the rev range. Think of the engine as yourself on a Sunday morning after working hard the day before – or a heavy night…

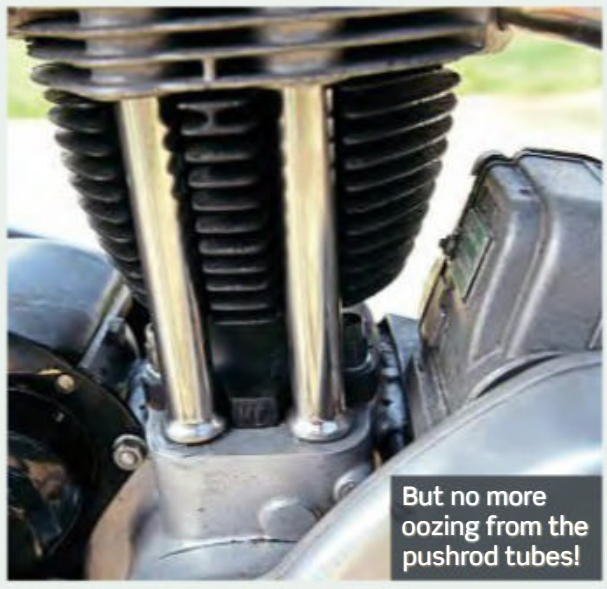
But if you are too gentle, use too little revs or too little load and there is



Kickstarting will feel different as the engine begins to coke up and bed in


Watch for weeps


We had slight base weeps at first


But no more oozing from the pushrod tubes!

a chance of glazing the bore. So let the engine breathe, try not to keep the revs constant for too long and vary the speed. This is where quiet country back lanes are handy, which is just as well, as in Norfolk they are all we've got!

Future rides for the next 40-50 miles should be capped at a similar speed, keeping to those varying revs, varying throttle openings and listening to the engine. Each time you come back and the bike is cool, check the torque of the nuts and bolts.

For the next 200 miles or so, bring the speed up – on our bike to around 40-45mph – allowing a corresponding increase in the amount of revs and throttle load. This one is hard (for me at least) to stick to, as you feel all is okay and if you are used to modern bikes, there shouldn't be much to worry about by this stage. But stick to it – all that hard work you've put in is relying on your patience!

By this time, well done – you're over the hard bit. Now it is time to change the oil, take the rocker cover off and check the clearances, inspect the plug and check the barrel and head bolts yet again.

As we only have to worry about the rings and new valve seats bedding in, we can use our bike more; but if you have a freshly rebuilt bottom end as well, then you really should be sticking to that careful running-in procedure for more like 1000 miles, as there are so many more bearings, faces and parts that need to bed in.

AFTER THIS

The plug is a good gauge of mixture and unwanted oil, but your kickstart can also help you. As you use the bike, the way it feels when kickstarting will change. As the rings bed in and the carbon starts to build on the piston, so the kickstart will feel different – slightly harder. This is a good sign, so be conscious of it and always start the bike the same way; whether you prefer it to be on the stand, off the stand, abreast or to one side. CBG

On the ride you're on high alert, listening and feeling for anything unwanted, as well as watching speed, revs and load

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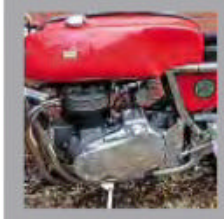
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Woodruff key came out nicely; at this point it all looked so straightforward...



PART SIX

Project Norton ES2

This is getting complicated...

Stripping our ES2 bottom end reveals problems not easy to answer

Among the boxes of bits our 1956 Norton ES2 came in the form of, the bottom end basics seemed in one piece. I got knowledgeable friends, Neville and Hutch, to feel the con rod for big end play and mains bearing noises and they declared it fit, with just the side play to check. Great, I thought; one less thing to worry about so I could get on with repairing the head, sorting the frame and so on.

As this is a total rebuild, everyone agreed that we should still strip the bottom end, and while inside it would be prudent to replace the bearings so we would know the belly of the beast is fit and healthy.

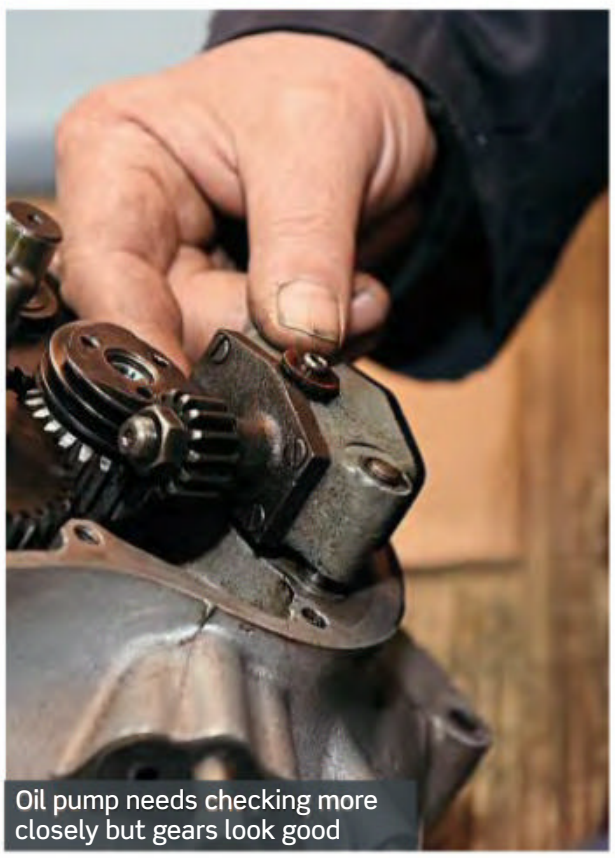
After a good clean up, we started stripping the casings, which was easier than normal as parts were already stripped, such as the mag drive. Still, bagging up nuts and bolts as we went along should help the rebuild. As the cam side came apart, the oil pump felt good, as did the drive worm gear, but this will need to be checked at a later date. This was the first time I had stripped a vertically-split crankcase, so it was nice to see it come apart easily, even the woodruff keys played ball and really helpful to have friends there to explain the procedures.

The crank looked in good order, and the three main bearings (the output side has two) felt like new, another good sign that no horrors should await us. We put that to one side so we can replace the big end bearing – which means splitting the crank to bolt the new one in. I'll be getting help with that as the new one cost me £179, so I don't fancy ruining it, or setting up the crank wrong. Now we can do this, in fact Neville has done this at home in his lathe on his ES2, but I chickened out; this is a tricky and exact job and I'd rather watch an expert the first time, so hopefully next time I can do it. You can't exactly take a crank to your local Norton dealer, so



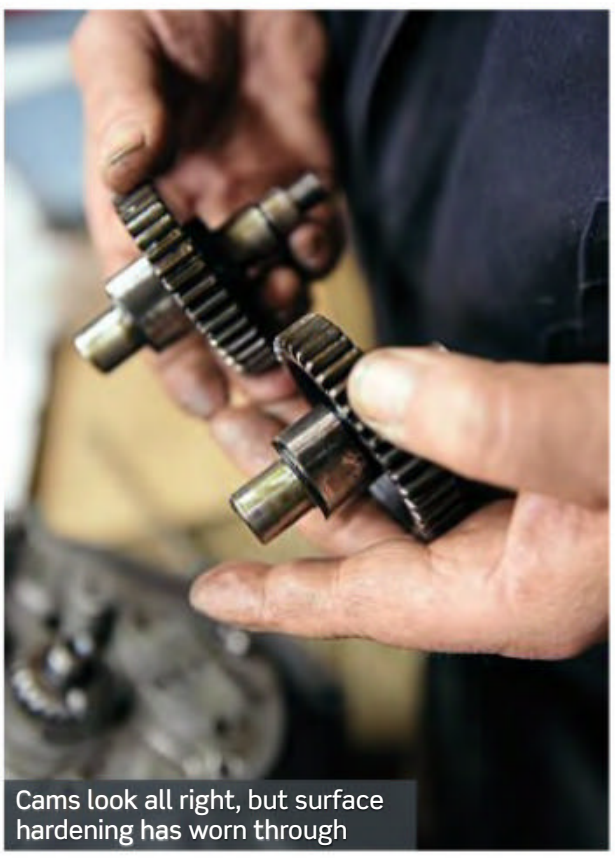


Labelling should make life easier



Oil pump needs checking more closely but gears look good





Cams look all right, but surface hardening has worn through



Cam followers will only come out with guides. Does it look like an Inca mask from here?

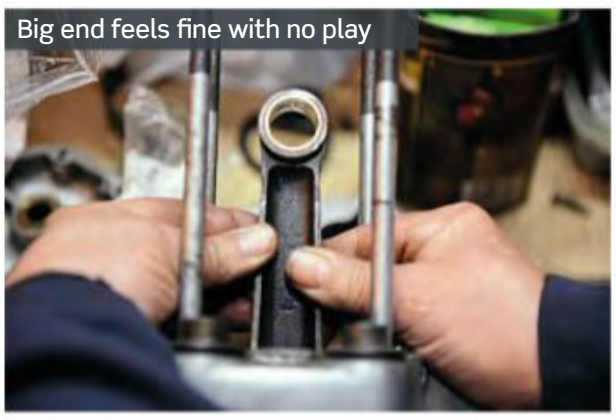
locally I have Trevor Hedge, a successful ex-speedway rider who has built an excellent reputation building classic speedway engines and is set up for such a job. I'm looking forward to watching it happen, as he's a busy man and couldn't fit it in before we went to press.

But, and you could tell I was building up to a but, as the cams came out the faces looked worn through the hardened finish. The cam followers, or tappets, have to come out in their guides, which are cast. So we carefully heated up the crankcase to press them out. This is tricky, as there is little to get purchase on; there is a collar at the top, but being cast it looked too easy to snap. So we used pressure from the bottom, using the hardened finish of the follower. One came out nicely, but the other was a really, really tight fit and it cracked the bottom of the guide. More heat, different tools and different methods got it out eventually, but it was wrecked.

With the guides out, we could see the face on the cam followers. The faces were badly worn; which we suspected after seeing the cam wear. One hasn't quite gone through the hardening, which Mike Pemberton usefully pointed out was originally hard chromed, but the other has started – both need work or replacing. The damage looks like it happened over a short time, as there is evidence of normal wear and tear around the worst scarring; it could have run dry, so I need to make sure the oil pump wasn't the cause.

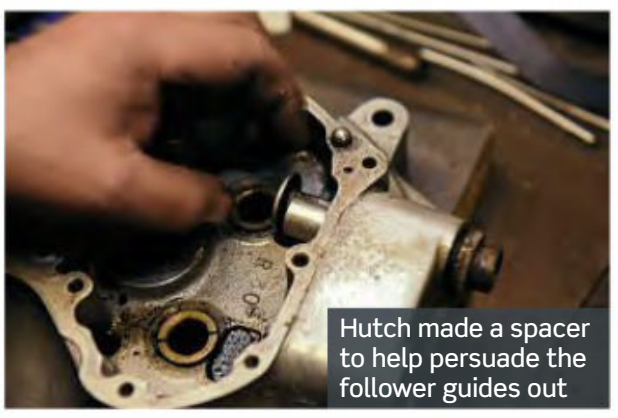
Gorgeous looking new cam followers and guides are available from Pushrod performance (pushrod-performance.co.uk), but I wanted to at least try to repair the originals. I sourced a new guide from the Stafford show autojumble, so a major


If in doubt, get the book out


Big end feels fine with no play


Scraping ancient goo off the mating surfaces should keep it oil-tight

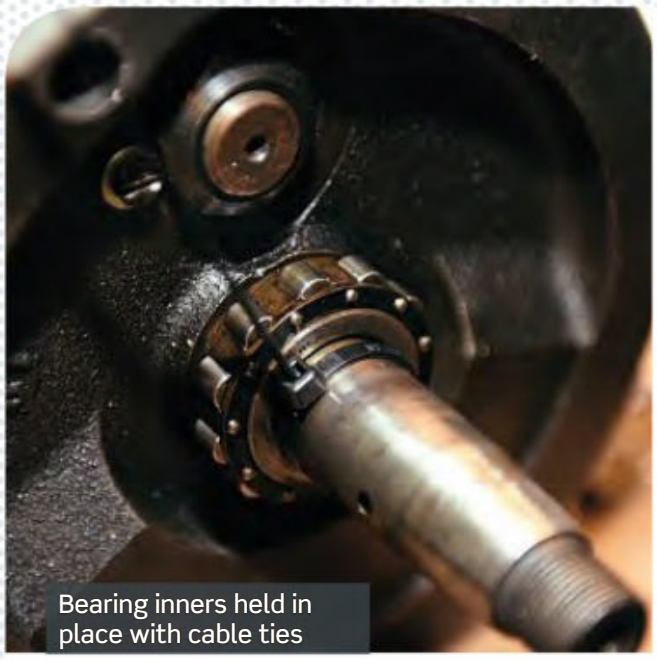

Stud extractor socket is invaluable

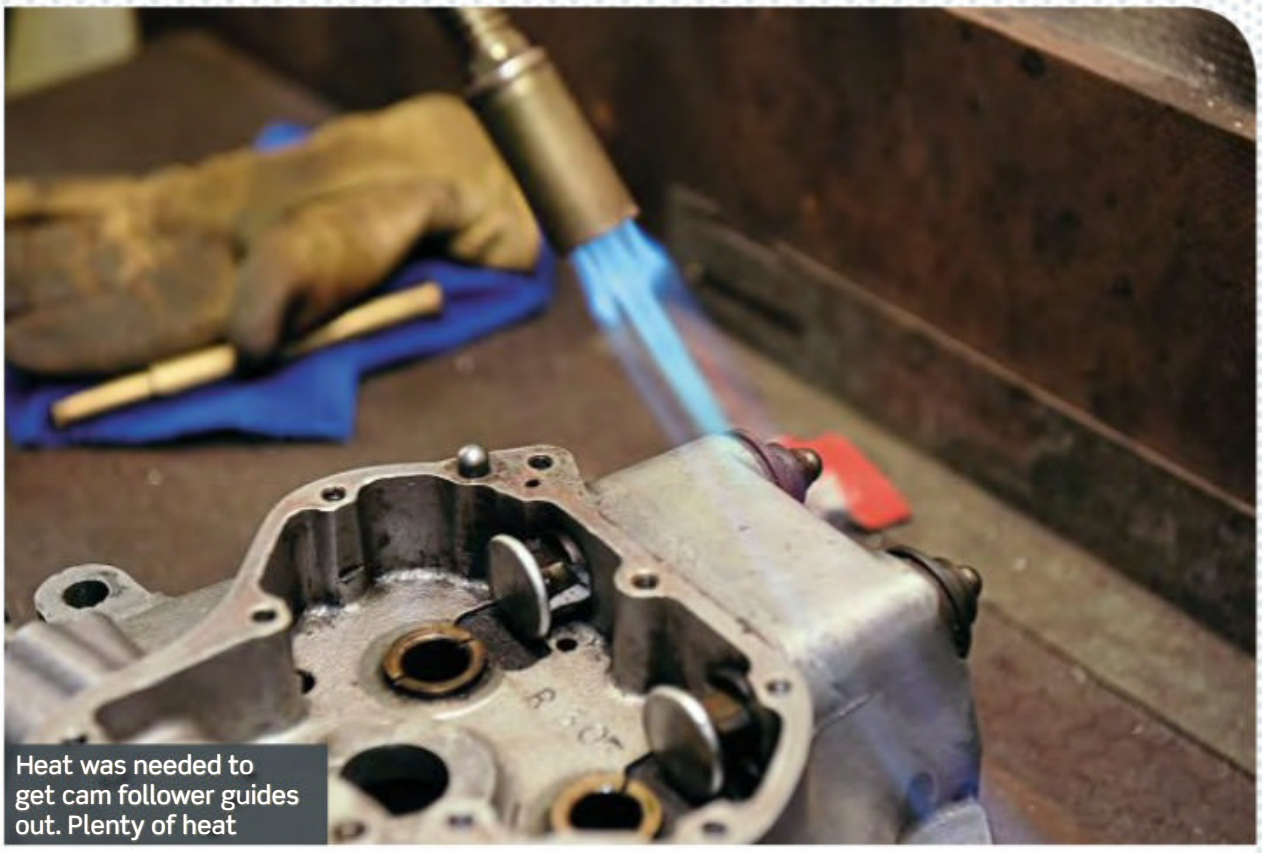

Hutch made a spacer to help persuade the follower guides out

score there. Then I spoke to a number of engineers about what we could do with the followers. They take some battering from the cam lobe, so I intended to build them up using Stelite TIG rods, an old, but carbon-rich and very hard material, then grinding them and getting them hardened, nitrided or hard-chromed. Mike Pemberton recommended a company for hard chroming, with a 0.030" of industrial chrome, and as he builds some great race engines, I trust him.

Newman cams questioned Stelite, as it's notorious to grind and has other poor qualities. I'm off to see them next week to find the best solution.

Why the hell would I go to the trouble of repairing rather than buying some new parts? Because many, many bikes out there won't have new products available, so I'm finding it interesting to see how we can rectify this. Metallurgy is fascinating


Bearing inners held in place with cable ties


Heat was needed to get cam follower guides out. Plenty of heat

and this is helping me understand how and why they used what they used in the Fifties, plus what we can do 70 years on. It's all for you, dear reader!

I thought I would have to replace the cams, as the hardening has gone. But Newman cams have said they can replace the hardening, or I could go for some of Mike Pemberton's cams, if he doesn't think they are too racy in their profile for my standard engine. I also read (don't quote me it was on an American website) Model 50 cams would fit and feature slightly more lift – but that has to be confirmed. It's part of the fun of researching a new bike.

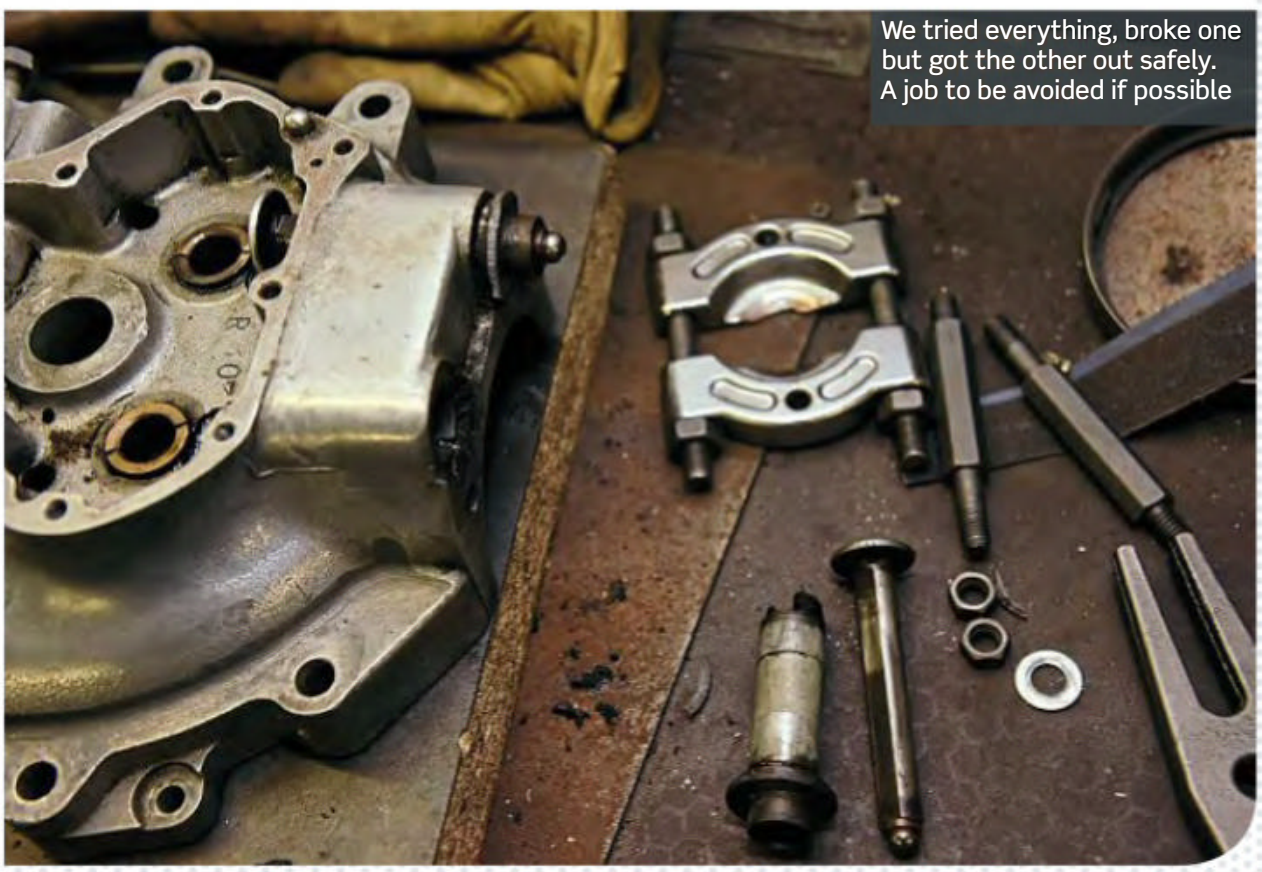
So, I'm stuck for the moment. I could replace the mains bearings, but I may as well wait until I need to heat the crankcase up to refit the cam follower guides as well. The crank is waiting patiently for its turn to be repaired and rebuilt, so I need to be happy the repaired cam followers will be all right or replace with new. While new is great, it would be immensely satisfying to repair the originals, and hopefully help others with a similar problem.

WHAT ELSE?

I've been cleaning up the fuel tank inside. A dozen nuts held in rings of welding wire and shaken about with a little old petrol inside is helping, but my arms are finding it hard work! So I've wrapped the tank in an old duvet and ordered a cement mixer for the weekend – £30 - a bargain! I'll let it do all the hard work and see how it looks then – I don't like sealing a tank unless it needs it.

So it's been a frustrating time, really. The frame sits there wearing its forks and swing arm, the wheels are being built next week and I daren't strip the gearbox as I've no bench space until the engine is together again. Sorry not to be more productive but sometimes these projects just stall – hopefully next month they'll be lots to report! CBG




We tried everything, broke one but got the other out safely. A job to be avoided if possible

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012794CBG	DISTANCE PIECE – BETWEEN MAIN BEARINGS	£23
002580PCBG	GASKET SET – COMPLETE ENG-19S 1957-1958 & ES2 1957-1964-PATTERN	£17
463121CBG	GEAR – STEEL –MAGDYNO SINGLES	£41
068813CBG	IGNITION – ELECTRONIC – SINGLES – VELOCETTE ETC	£169

8834CBG	JET – OIL CONNECTION – 1/16H/18/19/20/50/ES2- 0.281" DIAMETER	£17
13792CBG	JET – OIL FEED – TIMING COVER TO MAINSHAFT – 1950 ONWARDS	£15
83011CBG	LEVER – VALVE LIFTER – ES2/50/18/19/16H ETC BALL END	£15
83009CBG	LEVER – VALVE LIFTER – SMALL PLAIN TYPE	£13
100023CBG	LINER – CYLINDER – 18/ES2/16H ETC – 79MM BORE WHEN MACHINED	£37
C126CBG	NUT – CYLINDER HEAD SLEEVE-S/S ES2/50/18/19 (WAS D3T/156)	£6
WW50063CBG	PANEL – HEADLAMP – COMPLETE WITH SWITCH & AMMETER	£22
463066CBG	PICK UP – MAGDYNO SINGLES	£6
C2117CBG	PLATFORM – MAGDYNO	£40
68282CBG	PUSHROD – 19S WITH ADJUSTER – DOUBLE CUP TYPE	£28
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138282CBG	PUSHROD – MODEL 50 WITH ADJUSTER – DOUBLE CUP TYPE	£31
085005CBG	REBUILD KIT – UPRIGHT GEARBOX – PRE 1949	£105
990692CBG	RIM - HEADLAMP - 7" - CHROME - GENUINE LUCAS	£10
068100CBG	ROTOR - ALTERNATOR - WELDED TYPE - LUCAS 74MM DIA	£89
78301CBG	SADDLE – TO SUIT ES2 AND MODEL 18 ETC	£33
067862CBG	SEAT - FEATHERBED - SLIMLINE - NO HUMP - STEEL BASE	£129
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216123CBG	SPRING – VALVE – SET – ES2/ MODEL 50 – 1959 ONWARDS	£19
143978CBG	SPRING – VALVE – SET – ES2/19/50 - PRE 1959 – LARGER	£19
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21653CBG	SPROCKET – DISTRIBUTOR – MODEL 50/ES2 – 16 TEETH	£22
16821CBG	SPROCKET – ENGINE – 20 TOOTH – 50/ES2/19S – DYNAMO MODELS ONLY	£25
13853CBG	SPROCKET – MAGNETO – 1948 TO 1958 MODEL 50/ES2/193 – 16 TEETH	£22
067090CBG	STANCHION – FORK – PAIR – 20½" – MANX – CHROMED	£70
011836CBG	STANCHION - FRONT NUMBER PLATE - EACH - TWO REQUIRED	£12
037000CBG	VALVE – ES2 – INLET OR EXHAUST – LEAD FREE	£13
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1952 BSA Goldflash
Stunning, full nut and bolt restoration, must be best available, same reg from new in 1952, all correct, only 3 former keepers, no plastic aftermarket parts, perfect
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1997 Ducati 748 SPS as new condition, UK bike **£11,500**



1972 Honda CB450 Only 16,500 miles, fantastic time warp cond, all original & correct..... **£5750**



1968 Yamaha YM1
305cc, stunning, full nut and bolt restoration to standard, must be best available, twin Mikuni carbs, 100mph bike, introduced in 1965, this bike is 1968, as new condition
£9650



1979 Yamaha RD250 V/original timewarp bike, UK bike not an import, same reg from new, stunning cond **£4650**



1951 Douglas MK5 350, fantastic original condition, correct numbers, nice runner. **£5500**



1952 MV Agusta 125 sport
Stunning perfect condition, full restoration nut and bolt, as new condition, very rare and collectable, time and money spent on engine and it runs perfect, new MOT
£5700



1954 Douglas MK5 350, fantastic original condition, correct numbers, nice runner. **£4950**



1993 Ducati 750SS very rare, all completely original, fantastic condition **£4950**



1966 BSA Lightning
Stunning nut and bolt restoration. This was done back in 2016. The bike looks fantastic. Please see photos. Must see in our showroom. The bike rides great with no problems
£8500



1999 Ducati 916 Completely standard, superb original condition..... **£8950**



1985 MZ TS150, full nut and bolt restoration, as new **£2850**



1972 Suzuki T500
This bike is in fantastic condition, it's a timewarp bike and all original bar the new paint job which is as per its original colour. Owners handbook. Its all correct 1972, it has the drum brakes. This also has its original exhaust. All the chrome is original and in very good condition. This T500 is a great find, please see photos **£7850**



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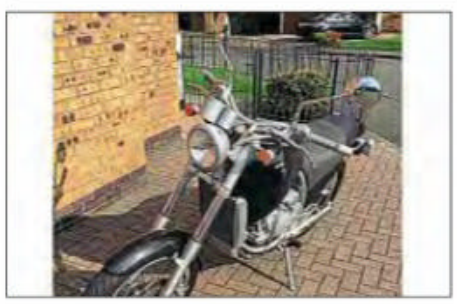
BSA A10 Golden Flash with Watsonian chair, 1955, superb show condition, rides as good as it looks, any inspection welcome, £8000 ono. Tel. Pete 07879 483529 for more info. Devon.



AFS MATCHLESS 350 G3, 1960, nice example in original colour with AFS logo on petrol tank, good runner, lights/horn fully working, reg on original number, £3750 Tel. 07860 752471



AJS 350 16MS 1958, matching frame and engine numbers, previous complete rebuild, recent new TT100 tyres, vgc, £3750 Tel. 07871 032813 Northants



APRILIA MOTO 6.5 Philippe Starck rare UK model, vgc, only 3,400 miles, all docs inc orig owners handbook and warranty cards etc, orig tool roll also present Tel. Brian 07796 395269 for more info/photos



ARIEL ARROW 250cc Sport, Golden Arrow, owned from new in 1962, 30,000 miles genuine, re-build about 80% complete Tel. 07789 278644 Oxfordshire



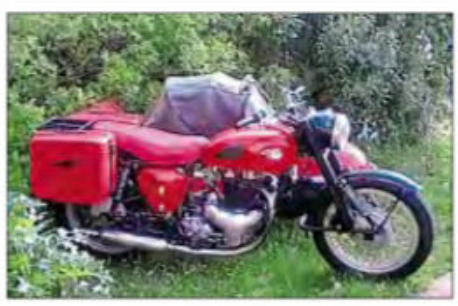
BMW R1100S 2000, yellow, new tyres, only 13,831 miles from new, BMW panniers, Meta exhausts, MoT, £3200 Tel. 07877 329607 Scotland



BMW R1200C first reg April 1998, MoT, genuine mileage 8100, cream colour paint work with chrome and polished alloy parts, little use recently, £5950 Tel. 07711 565600



BSA Golden Flash, 1950, Plunger, lovely bike, older restoration, lots bills, original reg, £4500 Tel. 01792 873536 Wales



BSA A10 lovely outfit, handles well, easy start, new chains and tyres, engine in good condition, many new parts, Craven panniers, magnetic sump, £4400 Tel. 01923 229924 Herts



BSA A65 great condition, runs well, has all the original features, call for details, £4000 no offers Tel. 07365 297414 Portsmouth



BSA B25 Starfire, 1969, current MoT but now exempt, many stainless steel fixings, matching numbers, regularly ridden, Email for pictures, £2500 ono Tel. Paul 07814 035949 bodders52@yahoo.co.uk Leics



BSA D14 175cc, 1970, new seat, new chrome wheels etc, professional respray blue, show bike, like new, rebuilt engine, bills to show, £1500 Tel. 0161 2191070 Lancs



BSA B31 350, 1957, 9500 miles, nice tidy looking bike, Ally wheel rims, solid state voltage controller, easy starter, runs and rides well, £4650 may p/x Tel. 01328 700711 Norfolk



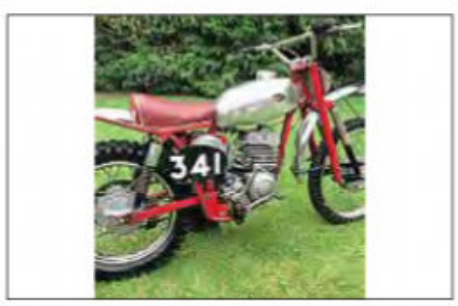
BSA GOLDSTAR Rep 1956 Pearson 600cc, rebuilt engine, new head Newby belt drive, Mikuni carb, easy to start, very fast, not matching nos, correct in V5, £10,500 Tel. Ian 07523 914187 Essex



BSA GOLDSTAR Catalina replica, bike is in Cornwall, please ring for details Tel. 07779 742629



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1969 BSA A65 L
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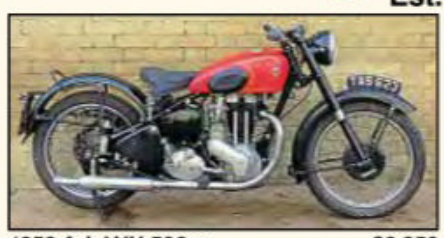


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1936 BSA B2 250cc..... £5,500



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1961 BSA B40 350cc.....£2,850



1924 Royal Enfield 2¼HP £4,650



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1920 ABC Skootamota 125cc lovely early scooter	£6250
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1953 ARIEL VH 500cc smart plunger	£6250
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1936 BSA B2 250cc OHV lovely lightweight	£5500
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1948 BSA A7 500cc choice of 2	£6500/£7500
1928 BSA S28 500cc desirable flat tanker	£9850
1954 BSA M21 600cc in military trim	£4250
1952/59 BSA A10 Golden Flash 650cc choice of 2	£6250
1920 CLYNO Model C 269cc charming lightweight	£6150
1924 DOUGLAS CW 350cc attractive flat tank	£10,000
1949 DOUGLAS T35 350cc recently refurbished lots of bills	£6000
1924 JAMES Model 10 749cc V-twin needs finishing	£11,000
1952 MATCHLESS G3L 350cc nice tele rigid	£5850
1958/60 MATCHLESS G3L 350cc choice of 2	£2400/£3750
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1961 ROYAL ENFIELD Crusader 250cc rides nicely	£3000
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1957 ROYAL ENFIELD Super Meteor 700cc clean bike	£6000
1940 ROYAL ENFIELD K 1140cc one of the last made	£27,500
1949/50 SUNBEAM S8 500cc choice of 3	£6250
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DUCATI 750SS 2002, recently restored, emerging classic, runs and rides well, currently needs the starter reconditioning and needs new belts, £1450 no offers Tel. 07365 297414 Hampshire



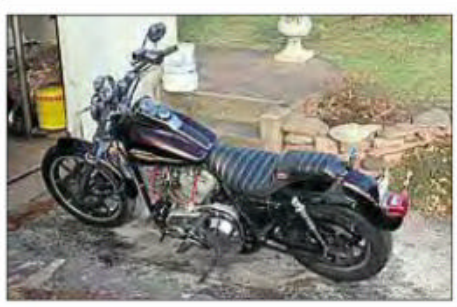
DUCATI 750SS 1989, fitted with a 904 engine, full fairing renovated, Marcanessi wheels with new tyres, Laser exhaust, braided brake hoses, new battery, £2200 Tel. 07971 651258



DUCATI 916 1998, very tidy & rare in yellow, stunning bike, great runner, same owner 17 years, original with lots of extras, 22,000 miles, £8950 Tel. 07734 704020 Scotland



EXCELSIOR 250cc Talisman twin, 1959, £5000 Tel. 07927 940368 Northern Ireland



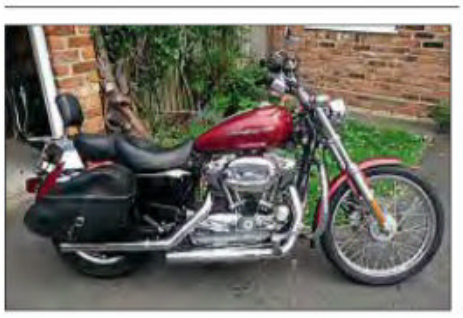
FXR 92, with Sputhe 100" Fatvo motor, Odometer reads 44,814 and the motor was placed in at 39,705, I will be swapping the front end for another dual disc, $6500 Email. bikeproject676@gmail.com America



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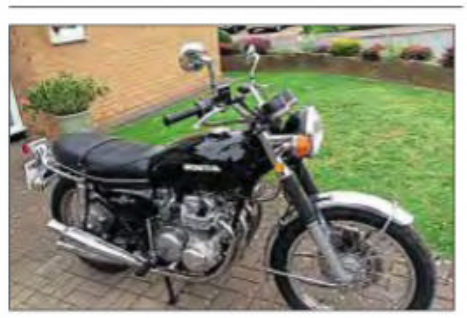
HARLEY-DAVIDSON FLTC Tourglide, 1985, 1340cc, imported 2018, UK reg, good condition, £5750 Tel. 07413 935748



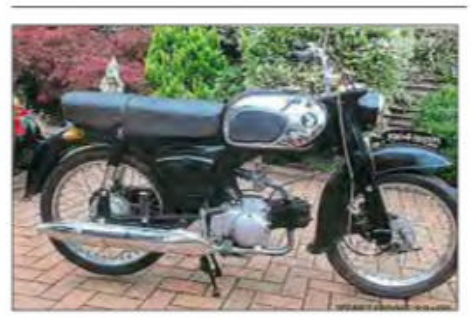
HARLEY-DAVIDSON XL1200 C Custom Sport, first reg 2006, 10,168 miles, two sets of keys and fobs, MoT, leather fixed panniers, £5795 Tel. 07939 529337



HONDA 250 Super Dream, 1979, 3.5 miles only, never used, showroom condition, ready to use or simply admire, £7995 Tel. James 07835 925885



HONDA 500-4 1972, early model, good condition ready to ride, only 22k miles, original exhaust with spare nos, £4750 ono Tel. 07977 554243 Hertfordshire



HONDA C200 1964, complete rebuild 10 years ago, little used since, small bike that's easy to live with, £1995 Tel. 01482 881638 East Yorkshire



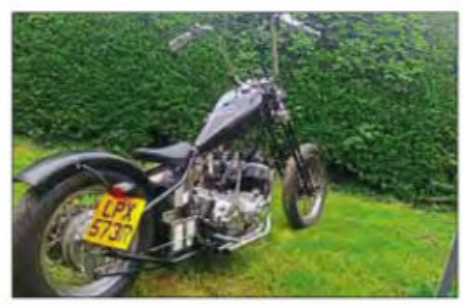
HONDA CAMINO 1985, pedal & pop, vgc, new MoT, 700 low mileage, runs well. Also, Honda 1977, pedal and pop, vgc for year, 800 low mileage, £995 each ono Tel. Pete 07716 784342 Swansea



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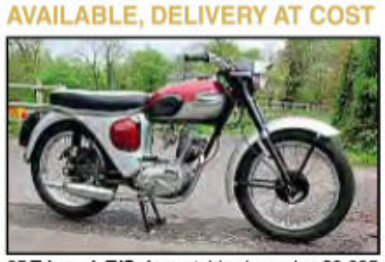
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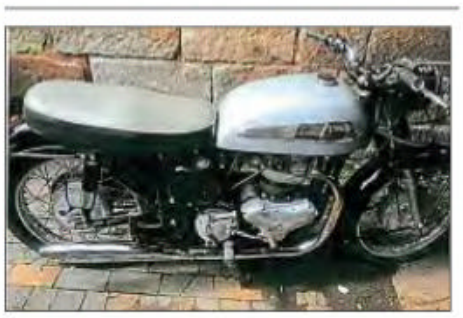
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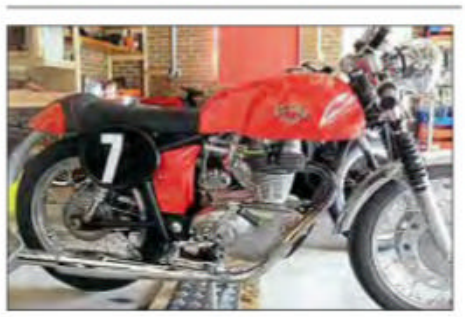
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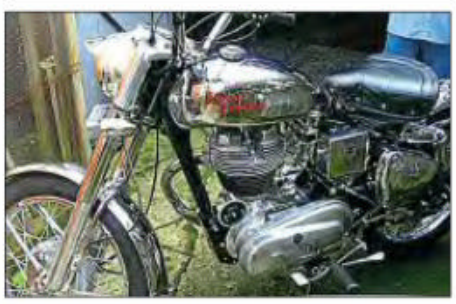
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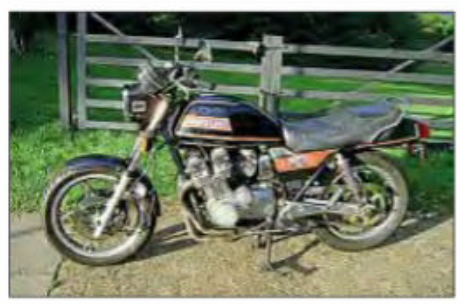
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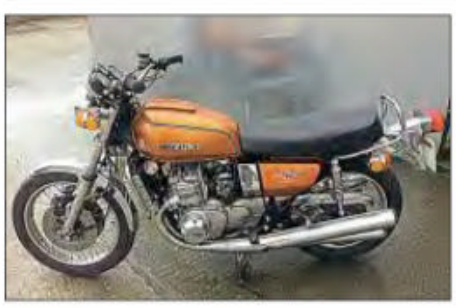
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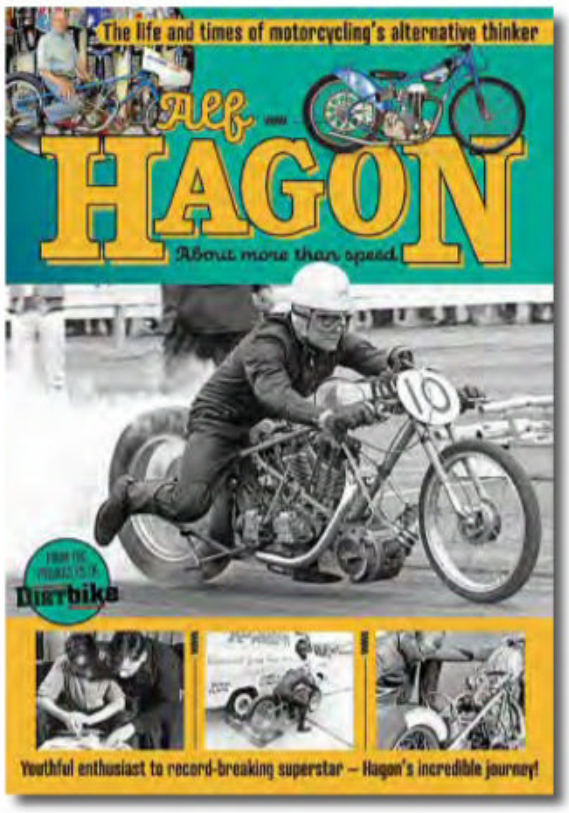
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cbg's pick



TRIUMPH T100C 1969 Trophy, all original unrestored bike, looks and sounds lovely, only done approximately 3 miles since MoT, imported from California, £5700 ovno. Tel. 07932 566321. East Sussex.



TRIUMPH T120R 1966, great running project, 1971 T120R Triumph Bonneville, a 1974 Mk 2 850 Norton Commando runs well, a 1964 BSA 65, a 1971 TR6C, a 2002 Ducati 750SS, £6750 Tel. 07365 297414



TRIUMPH T120R Bonneville, 1971, 3900 miles, UK reg, original genuine unmolested Triumph, £5250 Tel. 07365 297414 Portsmouth



TRIUMPH T120R 1966 Bonneville, restoration project, chrome, brightwork and key parts in good order, needs repainting and the motor needs some tlc, £6500 Tel. 07365 297414 Hampshire



TRIUMPH T140E Bonneville, 1978, UK matching numbers, original good chrome Dunlop rims, rebuilt engine frame and forks in 2015, MoT, 20,000 miles, £6250 Tel. 07799 075752 Scotland



TRIUMPH THUNDERBIRD GT 1963, matching numbers, good honest bike, needs tlc, £4500 ovno Tel. Gordon 07837 865016 Notts



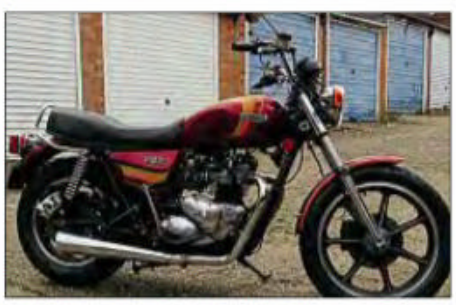
TRIUMPH TR6 Trophy, 1968, 650cc, twin, tax book, in good condition, £7250 Tel. 07927 940368 Northern Ireland



TRIUMPH TRIDENT T160, 1977, no expense spared, too numerous to list, matching frame and engine numbers, must be viewed to appreciate, £9950 Tel. 07877 017041 East Sussex



TRIUMPH TROPHY T100C 1969, only 8,460 on the clock, UK reg, orig except new tyres, matching frame and engine nos, MoT, imported from California, £5750 ovno Tel. 07932 566321 East Sussex



TRIUMPH TSX willing to p/x my TSX for a Triumph 675 speed triple, possibly with a blown engine and the twin pipe model if possible Tel. 01628 668799



VELOCETTE LE 1965, 41,800 miles, extensive overhaul, new piston, full exhaust, new car, part re-wire, full fairing, tidy bike, £1900 Tel. 01248 681466 Conwy



VELOCETTE VENOM 1961, with Thruxton specification, frame no VMT3620, gearbox 129633 TT500cc single cylinder engine, £13,500 ono Tel. 07539 223891 Surrey



YAMAHA DT175 MX 1983, 6950 miles, second owner, good condition, quiet engine, easy starting, sensible mods for on/off road use, MoT, £1450 Tel. 01449 736367 Suffolk



YAMAHA XJ600 good condition, used regularly, bike has recently had a service is running well, £795 Tel. 07880 565808 Norwich



YAMAHA XS1B clean and good condition, chrome wheels and mudguards are all original, 9300 miles, bike stood for some years, brought from USA, £3800 Tel. 01782 460545 Cheshire



YAMAHA XS750 Midnight Special, phone for more details or to arrange a viewing, £1800 Tel. 07999 613808



YAMAHA YZ6 2004, 20,551 miles, MoT Aug 2019, excellent original condition, just serviced, well maintained, £1900 Tel. 07563 362172 West Midlands

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For Sale

BMW 1100GS 1997, black, 61,643 miles, £1600. Tel. 01452 856036. Glos.

BMW R65LS 1983, good condition, 1400 miles, new tyres, £2000. Tel. 01828 632269. Perthshire.

BSA A7/A10 FRAME Triumph 6T engine, 1957 Tribsa, Triumph alternator primary cases, BSA gearbox, coil ignition, Dellorto carb, remote oil filter, Conical TLS front brake, Siamese pipes, very pretty, nice condition bike, recent work/new parts includes:- new tyres, alternator, solid state reg/rec, ammeter, rebuilt rear wheel, rear sprocket and chain, V5 present, £6750 may take p/x. Tel. 01328 700711. Norfolk.

BSA STARFIRE 1969, B40GB engine, steel tank, Smiths chrono speedo, road/trial bike 20" front wheel, high level exhaust, spares new and old, in need of restoration, part spare engine and C15T engine in bits, 2X 1970 steel A65? tanks, offers, prefer sold as job lot, T140 disc front wheel GC, £100. Tel. 01253 737690. Lancs.

HONDA BENLY CB92 parts tank, silencers etc, all very rare parts, reluctant sale of investment parts to clear. Tel. 01522 703687. Lincs.

HONDA C90 1986 gold, MoT March 2020, original and unrestored, tools and tool bag, 16,500 miles, £900. Tel. 07766 322558. Suffolk.

HONDA CB250N Superdream, 1978, not been on the road for at least 20 years but it cleaned up nice, only 24,000 miles, stripped the carbs and put in a new battery, new oil and filter, air filter, spark plugs, fuel tank tap, replaced the silencers and front brake master cylinder, runs with good compression, has a kickstart and electric start, originally silver but has been quality resprayed as black, got a new V5 so I am registered keeper, as it was first registered in 1978, it is tax exempt from April 1 this year, so doesn't need a MoT either, cheap classic motorcycling, £890 ono. Tel. 01227 700397. Canterbury.

HONDA VFR750FT 1996, 46,106 miles, silver, Maxtonised forks, Givi panniers, Baglux tank cover and bag, stainless exhaust system, chain oiler, new chain, sprockets, manual, spares £1800. Tel. Jim 07974 071187. Lancs.

KAWASAKI GTR1000 1993, full MoT, 2020, fully refurbished, tyres, battery, oils, seals, £2200 ono. Tel. 01434 240263. Hexham.

MANX GOLDIE unfinished project, complete, unmodified rolling chassis, tanks, wheels etc, complete 500 engine, GP carb etc, may separate, pristine condition, would make superb Triton. Tel. 01276 932987. Berks.

SUZUKI GSXR750WN 1992, 33,000 miles, blue, white, many new parts, bills to prove, on Sorn, £2500. Tel. Richard 01243 948518. West Sussex.

NORTON MOD 50 1964, Slimline frame, 12v electrics, indicators fitted, alloy rims, tank treated by Tank Care Products of Norfolk, black/white, vgc, £5000 ono. Tel. 01284 762067; 07989 927650. Suffolk.

ROYAL ENFIELD Crusader, 1961, complete nut & bolt rebuild, modern electrics, runs well, 1400 miles since rebuild, sport engine, £2600. Tel. 01744 601589. Merseyside.

SUZUKI GS500E 1989, 20,000 miles, very good condition, £600. Tel. 02083 045132. Kent.

SUZUKI GSX750ET 1981, MoT, over £1000 of receipts on engine, fuelling, electrics, chassis, 62,000 miles, starts and runs well, £1550. Tel. 07944 295672. Middlesex.

SUZUKI TS250 1978, great runner, sounds lovely, comes with spare crankshaft on and off road tyres, spare front forks, original 1978, Haynes manual, £2000 or sensible offers. Tel. 01822 481113. Devon.

TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE 1964, very rare, T120TT, matching numbers, concours collector's machine, for sale or exchange for smaller concours/rare machine with cash adjustment either way, £15,950 ono. Tel. 01522 703687. Lincs.

TRIUMPH TR65 1982/83, fitted Yamaha front end, needs rear wheel, barn find, £1900. Tel. 07877 329607. Ayrshire.

TRIUMPH TROPHY 1993, vgc, Givi luggage, 30k miles, £1450. Tel. 07722 749635. London.

VELOCETTE LE model, 200cc. Tel. 07903 124199. Cleveland.

VINCENT RAPIDE Series D, 1956, full black shadow spec, vgc, presently in open trim but full set of enclosures and fittings included, current owner 55 years and 3rd from new, £50,000. Tel. 07814104934. Wales.

Parts For Sale

BSA B31 1958, £175; complete, fully enclosed, original rear chain guard, sound condition, suit S/A frame, pair nearly new HD silencers, off late 883 Iron, £100. Tel. 01297 489578. Dorset.

BSA GOLDSTAR swing arm, 8" single sided front wheel, will need new rim, photographs available, buyer collects, £230. Tel. 07857 146199. Bristol.

BSA SPARES: B31/A7/A10 bits and pieces, clutch parts, con rod, cylinder head, ring for more details. Tel. 07779 742629. Cornwall.

HARLEY-DAVIDSON 883 Sportster spare parts: Derby cover, £50. Left hand battery cover, £40. Primary chrome trim, £120. Right hand oil tank cover, £60. Gear cover, £50. Sprocket cover, £155. Tel. 01227 454689. Kent.

GEARBOX for 1957-58 BSA, good, £90 no offers. Tel. 01495 313881. Gwent.

HONDA 175cc spares: side cover left-side new points, plugs, oil seal, etc, £20 buyer collects. Tel. 07825 941887. Herefordshire.

HONDA BENLY CB92 rare spares for sale, tank, silencers, carbs, etc, all in good condition, all very hard to obtain spares. Tel. 01522 703687. Lincs.

ITALIAN PARTS: sale of large amounts Ducati, Benelli, Cagiva, Laverda, Morini plus Japanese, BMW, British etc, sell or exchange? Tel. 07833 906288. Essex.

MANX SPARES rev counter, anti vibration mounting, f/b cable with guide set, f/glass rear mudguard, oil tank protector, r/wheel adjuster, set Reynolds alloy steering adjuster, £95. Tel. 01276 932987. Berks.

MK 1 CONCENTRIC CARB 932, good condition, £85 ono. Tel. 01883 348187. Surrey.

NORTON FASTBACK tail fairing, good condition, £115 ono. Tel. 01883 348187. Surrey.

PETROL TANKS Triumph Saint, £100. Cub hump type, £50. BSA A65 f/glass flip-up cap, £60 all good condition c/w badges, taps, cap, £200 the lot, may swop Bantam spares. Tel. 07842 287137. Northants.

TRIUMPH speed twin engine, complete, year 1955 approx, £1000 bargain. Also B40, project matching numbers, complete, engine in one lump, good tinware, bargain, no docs reg number with bike, £1100 ono. Tel. 07443 642408. West Yorkshire.

TRIUMPH SPARES Pre-unit crankcases, 5T, 6T Speedtwin engine complete, year 1955 approx, running, very rare TR5 Square head Trophy engine, full rebuild, perfect, many new parts, much more, £2000. Tel. 07443 642408 anytime. West Yorks.

TRIUMPH STREET TWIN 2016, £50; luggage rack, A9758179 Triumph parts, also Versys gel seat, 2013, 650cc, offers £50. Tel. 07758 640296. Essex.

TRIUMPH T120/TR6 PARTS. Pair exhaust downpipes in excellent condition, (changed to Siamese), £85; original Lucas chrome headlamp shell in good condition but no perfect, £40; Tiger Cub silencer, vgc but not the best quality, suitable off-roader, £15; BSA RGS original rear open number plate, excellent condition, £48; A7/A10 etc rear number plate (closed type) needs small repair, £15. Tel. 01865 762859. Oxon.

TRIUMPH UNIT construction type clutch (3 spring) as fitted to 350/500 models, complete clutch with spare plates, good condition but needs a set of roller bearings as some are missing, can post but heavy, £50 ono. Tel. 01865 762859.

TRIUMPH TIGER 100SS frame and swinging arm log book applied for, £250. Tel. 07877 329607. Ayrshire.

TYRES. 300 x 19'' ribbed front, S/m Mk 2, vgc, £20 ono; Honda Fireblade, front 16'', Pirelli Diablo, used but plenty left, £20 ono; 165 x 15'' classic Pirelli Cinturato, vgc, hardly used, £25 can post but prefer collection. Tel. 01865 762859. Oxon area.

TRIUMPH TR6 1962, exhaust pipes and silencers (Burgess pattern), excellent condition, chrome perfect, £220 ono. Tel. 01883 348187. Surrey.

Wanted

BSA BANTAM wanted any model for total restoration project, anything considered. Tel. 07986 080118. West Midlands.

CYCLEMOTOR Autocycle or British moped/scooter wanted, anything considered in any condition, older the better eg prewar, will travel to collect, your price paid. Tel. 07983 832076. Staffs.

FRANCIS-BARNETT Greeves, Bantam, James, Excelsior or similar two stroke wanted, any model, any condition, runner, project or spares. Tel. 07983 832076. Staffs.

GOOD LATE B33 BARREL and piston wanted. Tel. 07857 146199. Bristol. Email. surferkane@gmail.com

HONDA CB750 1969-70, wanted early oil tank, seat, rear wheel hub, may have exchanges, KO frame, with V5C or just V5C Triumph OIF, V5C wanted. Exchange rear hub for front hub. Tel. 01709 719246; 01709 876651. South Yorks.

LIGHTWEIGHT RUNABOUT motorbike with an electric start, something like Honda CBF250 or light 250 twin, reasonable condition and price please. Can collect. Tel. David 0743 6002647. Hants. thehubbards1954@hotmail.com

MOTORBIKE TRAILER good condition with spare wheel wanted for single bike. Tel. John 07788 768313; 01442 865673. Bucks.

NORTON 850 Commando cylinder head wanted. Tel. 01803 866763. Devon.

PROP STAND for 1956-58 BSA A7, 500cc. Tel. 01495 313881. Gwent.

TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE wanted, 1963-1966, any condition considered. Tel. 07453 808808. West Midlands.

WANTED 1960/70S TOY model bikes by Britains, Timpo, Lone Star, etc. And plastic garage figures, soldiers, knights, cowboys and plastic garden. Tel. 07823 443474.

WANTED ANYTHING for a BSA B44 particularly an engine/gearbox, any condition considered, many other parts required. Why? Please call or text. Tel. Eric 0751 801 0441. Beds.

WANTED CYCLE MASTER Puch Maxi, NSU Quickly, any Japanese, mopeds or smaller motorcycles. Tel. 07790 168224. West Midlands.

WANTED PROJECT can you help, motorcycle/moped, more rust the better, anything thanks. Tel. 07422 516869. Devon.

Miscellaneous

ISLE OF MAN TT collectors coins, rare, 1997 Phillip McCallen 50p pieces nine in total, all in good condition, £45 the lot, free postage. Tel. 01522 703687. Lincs.

COMPLETE SET OF On Two Wheels magazines in folders and in good condition in Norfolk, make me an offer. Tel. 01493 700939.

EVEROAK GRAND PRIX open face helmet white, complete with peak, size 57, very good condition, undamaged, no scratches, never sustained impact, with original box, plus Halcyon goggles, fair condition and good leather gloves, £125. Tel. Ron 02086 995307. London.

KAWASAKI Z1 SCALE MODEL made by Polistil, big 1/10 scale(approx) 900cc, Z1A with working suspension and drive train in excellent condition, £95. Tel. 07504 327299. Devon.

LEATHER GAUNTLETS with Kevlar & thinsulate, size XL black, brand new and still with tags attached, cost £75, sell for £39 plus p&p. Tel. Ron 02086 995307. London.

MAGAZINES: MotorCycle Mechanics magazines x 9, useful older collection from 1960/70s, £10 posted. Tel. Richard 01842 819969. Norfolk.

MOTORBIKE JACKET Weise Avenger jacket with detachable inner lining, black, size Large, condition 'as new', £79. Tel. Ron 0208 6995307. London.

MOTORCYCLE CLOTHING: jacket and trousers, black/blue jacket size XXL, trousers size XL, not used in a while, good condition, £75. Tel. 02380 899075. Hants. Email. davidbosworth60@sky.com

MOTORCYCLE MAGAZINES early copies of Motor Cycling, Nov, 1955 London Show Number, 132pp; plus Motor Cycling Nov, 1945, £5 pair; also 4 issues of Practical Motorist & Motorcyclist from mid-1950s at £6. Tel. Richard 01842 819969. Norfolk .

OXFORD MONSTER h/duty bike security chain, 52" long inside a clear plastic sleeve, c/w 'Viro' armoured padlock, both items vgc, £49 plus postage, or collect from London. Tel. Ron 0208 6995307.

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VINCENT PUDDING BASIN HELMET original 1950's, 6.5" x 8" (internal), made by Cromwell, good original condition, non road legal, £250. Tel. 07596 108060. Essex.

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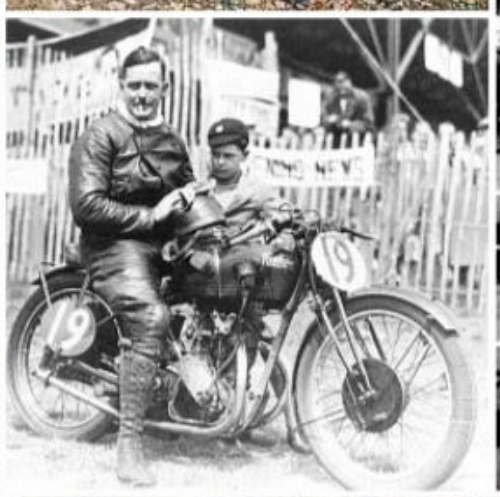


















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Who's who ||

EDITOR || Matt Hull
editor@classicbikeguide.com

PUBLISHER || Tim Hartley
thartley@mortons.co.uk

ART EDITOR || Kelvin Clements

DESIGNER || Tim Pipes

PICTURE DESK || Paul Fincham, Jonathan Schofield

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT || Jayne Clements

PRODUCTION EDITOR || Sarah Wilkinson

DIVISIONAL ADVERTISING MANAGER || Billy Manning

ADVERTISING ||
Kieron Deekens 01507 529413
kdeekens@mortons.co.uk

ARCHIVE ENQUIRIES || Jane Skayman
01507 529423 jskayman@mortons.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER || Paul Deacon

CIRCULATION MANAGER || Steven O'Hara

MARKETING MANAGER || Charlotte Park

PUBLISHING DIRECTOR || Dan Savage

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR || Nigel Hole

EDITORIAL ADDRESS ||
Mortons Media Group, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6JR

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FRANK WESTWORTH

CLASSIC DISAGREEMENT
What makes a good sidecar tug?

"The longest journey I ever suffered aboard an unholy tricycle – a Christmas haul from Norwich to Taunton – was so hideous for all concerned that we removed the sidecar and set fire to it."

Discussion is always healthy; argument less so. Possibly. Making suggestions is generally welcome; offering advice less so. And why?

Consider this: I was recently involved in a time-old conversation about sidecars. Well, not about the contraptions themselves, more about the suitability of a particular bike for tugging one. Although I've covered many, many miles attempting either to pilot an outfit or learning the meaning of true terror while incarcerated within that small shed at the side, it is certainly true to say that I've never enjoyed the experience. I put this down to a winning combination of cowardice and skill shortage; the former increasing the latter. And the longest journey I ever suffered aboard an unholy tricycle – a Christmas haul from Norwich to Taunton – was so hideous for all concerned that we removed the sidecar and set fire to it, returning to Norfolk two-up on the resulting solo. Strange, perhaps, but true, certainly.

A fellow wondered whether a 1961 Matchless G12 would be a suitable device for attaching to a sidecar. He'd heard that the top ends were weak and that they suffered from wear to the valvegear. That shut me up. But only for a moment.

And of course he who hesitates is last, so another party to the great debate, quick as a flash, suggested that the enquirer should get a BSA A10, a Flash of the Golden variety. This, he suggested, was a much better tug than a Matchless, and indeed has never been known to go wrong. I was so confused by this that I swallowed my coffee without chewing it first. Or was that the muesli? It's difficult to remember when memories are as confused as here.

Beezer 650s less trouble-prone than Matchless twins? Really? Matchless twins with top-end troubles? Really?

I suggested – gently, because that is always the best way when nonsense is involved – that while AMC's 650s may have developed a largely undeserved reputation for snapping conrods or cranks, I'd never heard of any suffering up top. In fact, quite the opposite. Early twins suffered from wear to the cams, but usually because owners failed to change the oil when the bikes were well old – the same lack of even basic servicing also produced a spate of collapsed oil filters. But valvegear woes?

This is a myth, an unfamiliar myth, but a myth all the same. It's not entirely unlike the myth that BSA twins all suffer from failure of the timing-side main bearing bush, which they do not. Back when old Brit 650s were just old Brit twins and only penniless fools rode them… I was that penniless fool and I rode lots of them, BSA and AMC twins being plentiful, cheap and cheerful, as well as considerably unfashionable, unless they were Rocket Gold Stars or CSR 650s. Back then, before they morphed into revered classic motorcycles, they rattled on for years and years and thousands and thousands of miles. Failures were many, but in my entire riding life – a half-century or so – I have broken one Matchless and one BSA 650. The Matchless threw a rod because some idiot (ahem) had 'rebuilt' it and broken two piston rings while doing so, while the BSA wrecked a barrel because some idiot (ahem) had somehow neglected to fit circlips to a gudgeon pin. We live, we learn…

However, countless miles and many years later, folk are still pondering the obscure merits of which elderly workhorse would be best suited for hitching to a sidecar. Matchless or BSA? This debate will doubtless rattle on for years, even though the answer is obvious – buy a Panther. They're wonderful in every way, have a truly glorious fellow-sufferers' club, and were actually intended by both their makers and whichever is your favourite celestial being to act as sidecar tugs. Easy… 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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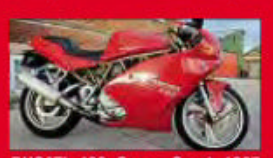
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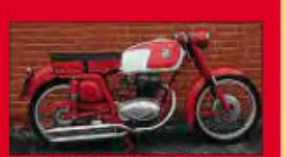

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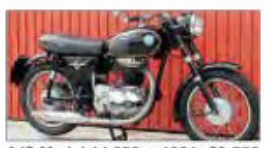

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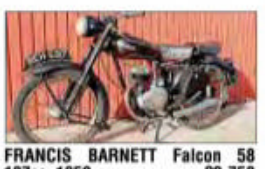

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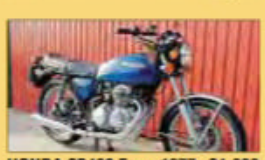

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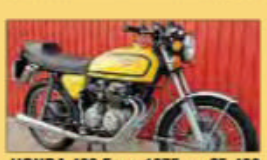

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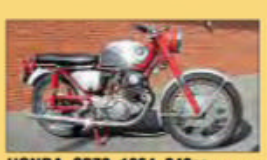

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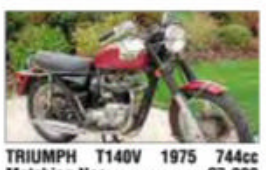

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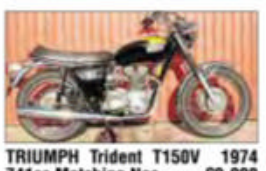

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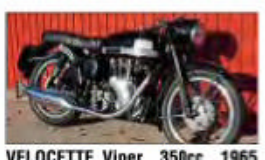

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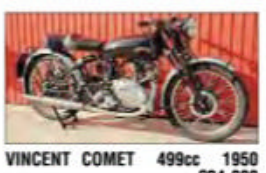

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