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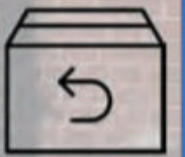
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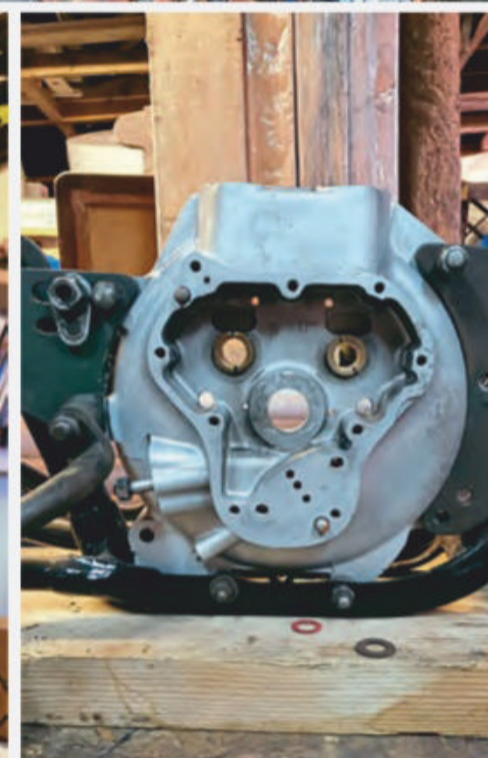
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'Aas a right rumm'un, huh?'

(Norfolk dialect meaning: This is a somewhat strange time, isn't it?)

GOOD DAY! IF YOU'RE READING THIS, then your love for old bikes must still be burning – or your passion is golf and this was the only magazine left in the shop... either way, thank you!

Yes, we all know it's a funny old time, so I hope you've been able to get things done. Here at CBG towers we had a look for all those jobs we had the bits, or tools, to do. So the garden, so often a reserve bike park, hasn't known what's hit it and looks... like a garden! My wonderful lady, Maria, spent weeks painting the fence, then made a barbeque from scrap iron and gave her bike a right good sorting. I've been trying to get the floor welded up on my four-wheeled love, my Opel Kadett, building a Ford sidevalve engine for Father and getting the Norton bottom end together – with mixed results – see page 80...

Meanwhile, Neville has managed to make a new creation in lockdown, a Tiger-engined, BSA-framed flat tracker. It just goes to show what you can do if you have enough parts, lots of imagination, skill and a shed. But more on that next month!

It's been great to talk to the many old

bike spares suppliers who have moved heaven and earth to stay open with all the troubles. It has been easier to get 1950s ES2 and 70s Kadett parts than it was flour! I know many of our advertisers and suppliers are smaller companies, but that has its good and bad points, so well done for adapting and a massive thank you!

Thank you also to those readers who have emailed or written in with stories, comments, photos and observations. With time, which many have, comes a chance to do things you don't normally. If I haven't replied, I will and they've been most interesting – again, thank you!

As this is written and as this old git here understands it (I never was that good at listening to authority), as of tomorrow (May 13) we can ride. So tyre pressures, chains, oil levels are going to be checked, and if it's been a while, then take a minute to blow the cobwebs away – I'm bad enough when I've been riding every day.. And remember, it isn't just us – car drivers are bad enough normally; many of them haven't been out for weeks so, as they say here in Norfolk: 'Go you careful, bor!'

The British bike guide starts this month on page 64 – but we've only managed to get through the latter 'A' so far! I really enjoy putting this together, with the help of Frank Westworth, who is still busy down in the West Country putting *Real Classic* magazine together (real-classic.co.uk) and Oli. It's amazing how many models there were, and we've missed a few out too. As always, any comments, stories or chit-chat, let us know.

Also, let us know if you're finding trouble getting a copy of *Classic Bike Guide*, as we have some easy ways to subscribe – no more worries in the shops! We'll keep bringing you everything to do with old bikes, you keep enjoying it and together we will see through all this.

Be good!

Matt Hull

editor@classicbikeguide.com

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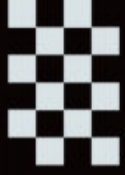
#080



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■ Norton lives on

Not sure if the ink on the contract is dry yet, but Indian motorcycle manufacturer, TVS Motor Company, has stepped in to buy the ailing Norton Motorcycles. They are intending to keep production in the UK, to re-employ staff and fulfil the orders of customers who had looked like losing out.

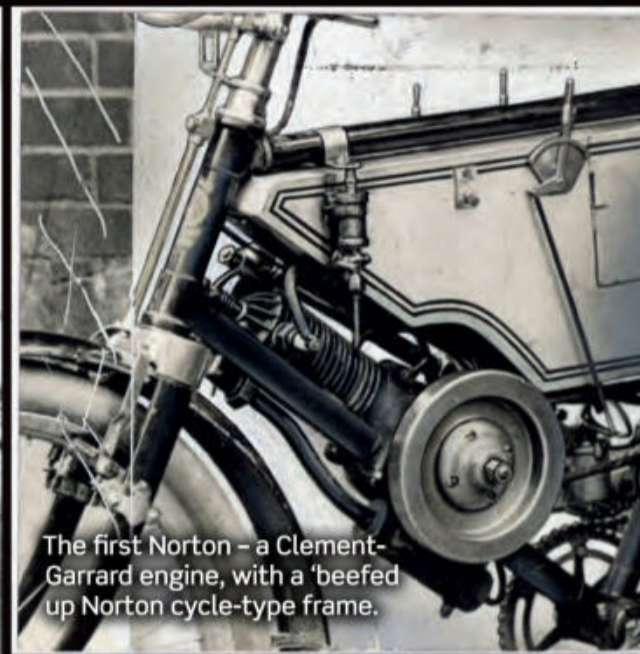
There is still a dark and smelly cloud over the exact reasons Norton went bust, with many questions still to answer; but hopefully the new owners can turn it around. They are already talking about restarting production of the 650cc Ranger and Atlas which we tested in January 2020.

This brings a great excuse to dig out some old photographs, from James 'Pa' Lansdowne Norton himself with his father, to the first TT winner with Rem Fowler in 1907.

Love 'em or not, the name Norton has been around longer than all of us and looks to be around for longer still. **CBG**



Norton's seminal moment - Rem Fowler with his Peugeot-engined 1907 twin cylinder TT-winning mount. James L Norton - his pit attendant - stands behind.



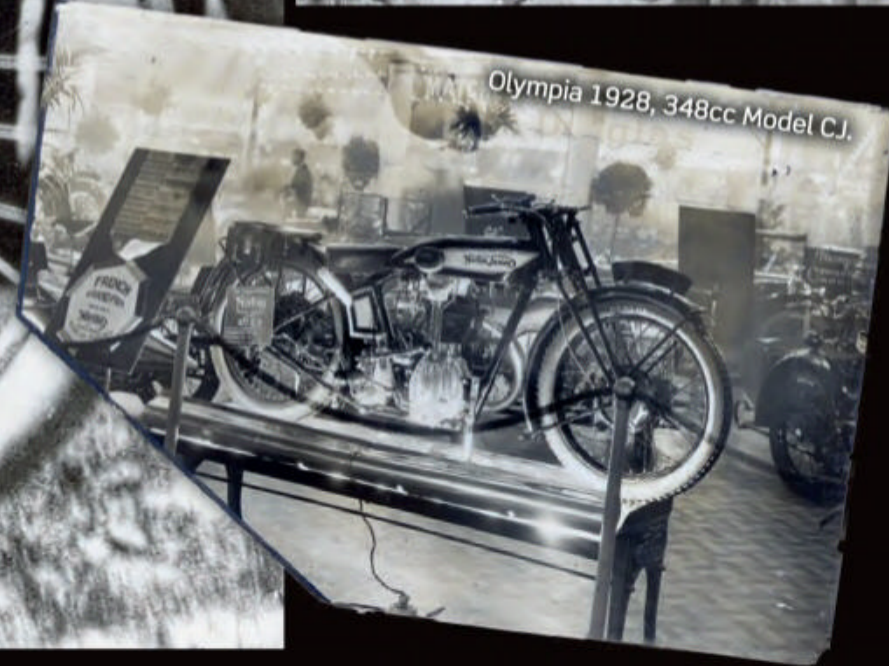
The first Norton - a Clement-Garrard engine, with a 'beefed up' Norton cycle-type frame.



James Landsdowne Norton at the controls, with his father in the sidecar. At this time (1912), Norton was generally known as James L Norton - 'Pa' came later.



Senior TT victor Stanley Woods, 1926.



Olympia 1928, 348cc Model C.J.



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The logic is clear – if you want a haircut, you don't go to the supermarket. So, if you want a certain part for your classic motorcycle, then you approach the companies that deal in parts and expertise in those very models. And look what we have here – a number of specialists whose focus is on certain makes and models of classic motorcycle, just the job!



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A scenic landscape featuring a range of mountains in the background, a calm lake in the middle ground, and a motorcycle wheel in the foreground. The sky is a clear, pale blue. The foreground shows a dirt path with patches of snow. The overall mood is serene and adventurous.

CONTAGION

Professional photographer, Owen Howells, thought he'd use his BMW R100RS to get him to a great job on the Med. Then the world closed. This is his superb story about his run from the sun

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY OWEN HOWELLS

IN MY 12 YEARS AS A PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHER, jobs hadn't come much more perfect than the one I had lined up: five luxury glamping accommodations to photograph, dotted along the Spanish and Portuguese southern coast. The weather had been positively awful for a month at home in Wales, so a trip to one of the sunniest parts of Europe couldn't come at a better time. The cherry on the cake was I could take my BMW R100RS along for the ride. The ferry would get me and my bike to Santander and the rest was by motorcycle.

This particular 1982 RS has been no stranger to travel. Over the past eight years in my ownership it has visited nearly half of Europe's 44 countries, getting as far north as John o'Groats and as far south as the hills of Albania. Back in the late 1970s, the RS was penned as the ultimate touring machine, and 40 years on, the basic needs of a touring motorcyclist haven't changed a lot. Blistering performance and the latest gadgets are bonuses, but in my opinion all you really need in a touring bike is comfort, reliability and a bit of character that'll keep you interested when the days on the road are long.

Ask someone who's only tried an RS and they might tell you they're a bit dull, and a brief 10 minute test ride blasting down the road might even confirm that for you. But an RS's character introduces itself over a greater number of miles; the gentle tapping of valves and civilised exhaust note a comforting reminder that the team in Bavaria engineered this bike, not for quick cheap thrills, but for longer, more meaningful journeys. Saying that, turn up the wick, tuck behind the screen and there's nothing boring about hitting 120mph with ease on a 40-year-old machine!

It was only since this winter the bike was identifiable as an RS as it had spent its early years in S trim, with just the bubble fairing for protection. For a basic reduction in wind blast that does the job just fine, but pales in comparison to the serene microclimate you live in when sat behind the once ground-breaking RS fairing. It might be rainy and cold outside, but in your own little bubble you're always warmer and drier than you would be standing still! Sure it adds a little wind noise, but this can be rectified with ear plugs or the addition of a little added spoiler. Nothing else looked like it at the time, and other manufacturers soon rushed out to produce their own, mostly inferior, alternatives.

I had allowed three days to travel from Santander to the first job in the Algarve. While not a leisurely sightseeing tour, enough time for a scenic route without blowing Euros on Portugal's tricky to decipher toll road system and squaring off my brand new rubber in the process. Crossing the Picos via Potes and Riano was no more than a morning's work, and the afternoon was spent dodging gravel patches and potholes on the remote mountain pass from Ponteferra, which leads into North Portugal.

The two days winding south through Portugal's

hills and vineyards gave me a chance to get a feel for the Lasertecs which, despite looking like a 40-year-old tyre, handled my immature trackday style well. The front end, now sprung with Motobins' progressive springs, dealt reassuringly well with trail-braking into corners, and felt pliable yet sure-footed on the often bumpy asphalt, with a distinct willingness to turn the bike towards the apex, something that had been missing in stock form. Sure it gets a little cranky if you push the front too hard, but a comfortable ride has to come with some compromise. The rest of its handling lived up to its Gummikuh (Rubber Cow in German) nickname and gets a little wallowy under pressure, but never dangerously so; it's just a movement under the saddle you get used to and soon learn isn't about to cause any major upsets.

My evenings and mornings are spent taking photos of cabins, and the rest is spent on scenic routes heading east to the next job. It's early spring and the temperature is hovering around 20 degrees, making life for me and the air-cooled engine very pleasant. It's hard to find a fault in any of it; the roads are quiet, the scenery is beautiful and the towns are quaint and welcoming, having a bike that purrs through makes you feel part of the atmosphere.

BREAKING NEWS

In the background to my blissful lifestyle a story is bubbling about coronavirus spreading in Europe. I keep an eye on it during breaks, become stricter with my personal hygiene and for now it's not a worry as I'm a long way from trouble.

Cut to three days later and I'm riding south to my next job near Marbella. Last night Madrid and the surrounding area got red-flagged as hotspots for the virus and is no longer recommended for travellers. This cuts off my direct route back to the ferry. My client in the UK is getting a bit twitchy about the situation. We decide to go ahead with the next job, but book a back-up ferry to leave Santander a few days earlier in case things deteriorate.

The final 10 miles involves twisting up and down tiny lanes into the hills on loose gravel and rough asphalt; not the RS's speciality with its short bars and wrist-heavy riding position. The tiny cabin to be photographed is nestled amongst orange and lemon trees with a backdrop of nothing but untouched landscape. Despite only a handful of kilometres separating us, the luxury yachts, pampered celebs and overly lavish lifestyle of Marbella seem refreshingly far away.

I unpack my kit. In the left pannier is a drone, laptop and flashguns, right pannier two SLRs and three lenses. The carrying capacity of the Krauser panniers, offered as a factory add on when purchased new, is impressive, and being lockable is essential when carrying over £10,000 worth of equipment. It just adds that security of knowing I can leave the bike for five minutes. Also a great design feature of these panniers is how snugly they sit on the sides of the

“But an RS’s character introduces itself over a greater number of miles; the gentle tapping of valves and civilised exhaust note a comforting reminder that the team in Bavaria engineered this bike, not for quick cheap thrills, but for longer, more meaningful journeys”



“First my dad, then my girlfriend, then sister and now Canopy and Stars are ringing. The message is clear, Spain is in lockdown from an out of control epidemic, travel is restricted, all non-residents must leave the country.”

bike, meaning the overall width of the bike is not increased; useful, as I do like a cheeky filter from time to time!

From the flat twin seat I unstrap the Oxford 50 litre dry bag which contains two weeks' worth of clothes. Not so secure from theft, but if someone wants my three -day-old underpants then they must be pretty desperate.

I sit down to a refreshing glass of fresh lemonade and the texts starting coming. First my dad, then my girlfriend, then sister and now Canopy and Stars are ringing. The message is clear, Spain is in lockdown from an out-of-control epidemic, travel is restricted, non-residents must leave the country.

But my ferry isn't for two days, it's a long time to be staying in this part of the world, with the political landscape changing daily who knows where I might end up stuck. Minutes later that option is taken out of the equation – Brittany Ferries have cancelled my sailing.

Looking at the ferry timetables I review the options. I'm currently the furthest from home I've been on the entire trip. How soon could I make Santander if I leave now? On a normal day I'd allow two days for this, but maybe it could be done in a day?

Time isn't on my side and scrolling through various ferry options is taking up time – I need to be spending time on the bike heading north. I hastily repack the bike, the various bits of equipment that did fit perfectly like Tetris shapes, now don't seem to fit, and everything's just getting stuffed in any old way. The plastic panniers are bulging and the rusty hinges creaking, but I'm packed.

I get dad on the phone as I head off on the bike. He toured Europe regularly at my age and has been on a fair few adventures, so was the first person I decided to call for a solution. The Sena SMH5 Bluetooth headset combined with a smartphone allows for voice activated



dialling, ideal when I'm in no mood for pulling over to make a call. While I'm navigating the gravelly paths to the main roads he's checking ferry companies for the next possible route home. Ten minutes later I get the call back I didn't want; all ferries from Spain are fully booked, no room for a motorcycle and rider.

Dad is no longer available so I get Charlotte, my girlfriend, on the line. She's right on the case, checking out all routes out of Europe. She's got a solution...

"I've found a ferry for you, it leaves in two days from St Malo"

"Great! How far have I got to ride?"

"Google maps says 2000 kilometres"

"Charlie, I need the next nearest port"

"That IS the next nearest port!"

It's now 7pm, the evening is drawing in and I'm getting close to the motorway. It's 47 hours until my ferry leaves so packing in for the night is not an option. I fill up with fuel, put on my warmest riding gear and set off into the Spanish wilderness. I've rush booked budget accommodation in Zaragova while I was stopped, I thought it was easily makeable this evening but when I set the sat nav it's four hours away and check-in closes on my expected arrival time.

For the most part of the tour I'd been gentle on the bike's engine, respectful of its age and keen not to work the air-cooled boxer too hard in the warmer

climate, but this wasn't the journey for motorcycle preservation and the bike spent most of its time with the clock near the 100mph mark. What surprised me was the ease at which it sat there, almost no vibration and an occasional look down at the dipstick thermometer confirmed it wasn't working too hard, registering a healthy 110 degrees.

As the motorway climbed away from the coast and onto the Meseta central plateau, illuminated towns dotting the hills gave way to an empty dark landscape and all that was left to see was the never ending stream of white lines illuminated by the headlight. Three high performance cars with British plates flew past me at what must've been close to 150mph; clearly they'd had the same idea! Would I be able to get petrol? Would the hotel even allow me in? Will the border still be open? Where can I get food? By this point I was hungry but I knew my chances of a hot meal were long gone!

The R100RS tank is generally good for more than 200 miles, but having once been caught out playing the fuel tank lottery I played it safe and started looking for petrol stations at 150 miles. A nervous 30 miles went past before I saw the welcoming bright lights, only to receive a much less warm reception when I arrived. Makeshift barriers barred access to the shop and toilets, with the attendant now serving behind a pane of glass wearing a mask and gloves.

Food choices are limited at best in Spanish petrol stations, but I knew this might be my last chance for food till the morning so I tried to signal to the attendant which items I wanted. Carbs (the food kind!) are essential for this kind of travel as you



“Despite the slight raise provided by the K75 bars (a popular mod offering a 4cm raise over the stock RS bars) some serious shoulder and neck cramp was setting in”



burn through a surprising amount and that's not a problem to get – chocolate bars, donuts, crisps, pastries – if it's unhealthy they've got it! Protein and vitamins are more of a problem, I'd have to settle on a yoghurt drink and a pack of mixed nuts for now.

A glance at the sat nav revealed that tucking behind the screen for the past few hours gained me a few extra minutes, meaning when I arrived in Villarrobledo I had enough time for check in. It was nearly midnight, and the town was lifeless except for a few late night food deliveries, tended to by eery looking figures in full protective suits. I hurriedly chained the bike to a lamppost on the kerb outside the hotel. I had a feeling it was illegally parked and slightly in the way, but I was going to be leaving at 6am so wasn't expecting issues overnight.

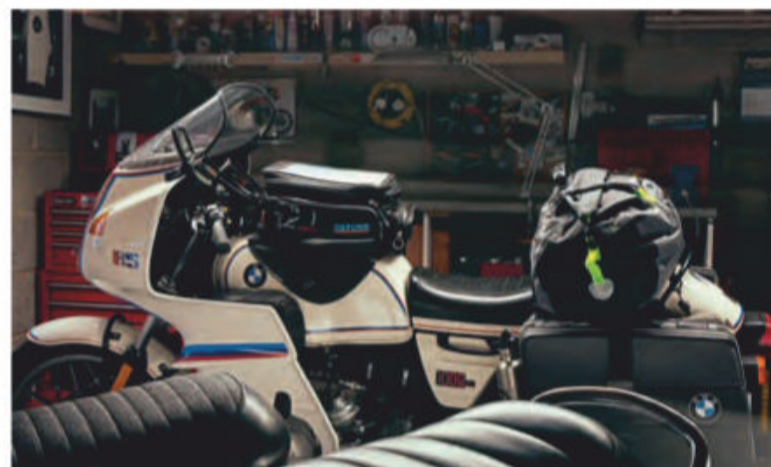
With an adequate five hours' sleep I set off before sunrise. Last night's dash up the motorway had left me with 350 miles to the French border and I was keen to get there by lunchtime. A long stretch of the journey across the Monegros desert is on A-roads rather than motorway. It's a glorious ride as the roads are fast, flowing and completely empty. Once the morning mist that was hampering my vision cleared I'm making good progress. The roads are smooth, and the RS is just in its element sweeping through the rocky formations at speed. The torquey flat twin has a satisfying handful of grunt, giving a characteristic side to side vibration as you pull out of the slower corners, smoothing out to a ride that would put many Inline 4s to shame.

WHY AN R100RS?

My whole inspiration for buying a classic started with Mad Max (1979), and in particular the scene where Goose takes the Kawasaki Z1000 for a high speed dash across the desert. At this moment I felt I was living that scene. Sure the R100RS is a tamer beast, but here I was tucked in the cockpit of a 1970s classic, charging across the rocky landscape as the flat twin roared beneath me... that morning I spent very little time worrying about the situation, I was living a little dream and I was having way too much fun!

The 250 miles passed very quickly, and by lunchtime the welcome sight of the Pyrenees appeared on the horizon. A much needed petrol stop break gave me a chance to fill up on food supplies. More nuts, a handful of protein bars, an energy drink and some crisps... but wait, bananas! That's a genuine fruit right there, filled with vitamins and potassium, maybe I'd escape Spain without getting scurvy after all!

A picturesque ascent up the South side of the Pyrenees was followed by the welcome sight of the border. No restrictions, in fact just lots of people enjoying the mountains! I took a break to take in the fresh mountain air and catch up with the news. France was now going into lockdown, all public spaces were closed and travel would be restricted from tomorrow, my ferry tomorrow afternoon



would be the last one out of the country.

By the time I started descending out of the mountains I was realising a constant schedule of working/riding/working/riding followed by crossing Spain was starting to take its toll on me and I was just exhausted. It was time to get some proper rest, France would have to be conquered tomorrow. I found accommodation in the unremarkable town of Pau and finished the final 50 miles of the day.

The final dash to the ferry was 450 mostly motorway miles, across France. The temperature had dropped dramatically since Spain, and I was very glad of the protection from the elements offered by the fairing. Rain showers were deflected around me, with only my helmet, shoulders and boots getting hit by the spray.

Much has been said about the RS riding position and its somewhat back-breaking nature, and by this point I was starting to suffer from its characteristics. Despite the slight raise provided by the K75 bars (a popular mod offering a 4cm raise over the stock RS bars) some serious shoulder and neck cramp was setting in. This is an unfortunate side effect caused by the lack of wind blast – nothing to help hold your body weight off your arms. At this point a bit of cruise control wouldn't go amiss, just to give the right arm a chance to stretch out and recover.

The roads are still empty, at one point I went a full 10 minutes without seeing another vehicle on the motorway. The only other vehicles carry British, German, Belgian and Dutch plates...all hot footing it north to get out of France before the lockdown. The speedo needle still sits around the 100 mark, and I occasionally get a blinding flash from one of the conveniently front-facing speed cameras. The

boxer twin shows no sign of giving up, the constant flat twin drone, sound of valves and wind noise give the impression of being in the cockpit of an old single-seater aircraft.

It's a long day, and while France is a beautiful country, this part is very flat with not much to look at from the main drag. It's a relief when I glimpse down at the sat nav and see just 20 miles to go. I arrived with two hours to spare, greeted by police checks in the centre of St Malo. No one is allowed to be out unless they're on essential travel, but as I've got nowhere to go I'm allowed through and can sit in the harbour. I'm grateful that BMW built these bikes to last and, like so many times before, it got me to my destination without a fuss. Forty years ago these bikes cost more than twice a Kawasaki Z900, but to see it soldiering on after so many years makes you realise the original list price was actually excellent value for the quality.

The ferry ride home is a huge comedown, everyone is ordered to stay in their cabins for the entire trip. The adrenaline of the past few days wears off quickly and watching the news is the first time the severity really sinks in of the tragic background to this adventure. Britain was going into lockdown too and I was arriving into a country very different to the one I left.

With my photography career put on hold by the coronavirus lockdown, I've had plenty of time to give the bike the attention it deserves, and it now sits serviced and perfectly polished as the centrepiece of my garage. It's great to look at, but these bikes aren't ready to become museum pieces just yet and as soon as we're allowed back outside it'll be a workhorse once again. **CBC**



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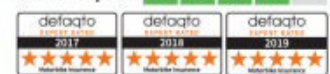
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I really want an RS – and I'm not sure why

Matt has an unhealthy obsession with a bike he's never ridden. We self-indulgently investigate the reasons many of us lust after a bike, but we've no idea why...



THROUGH THE (LACK OF) BRAINS I WAS BLESSED with, a number of unrelated events, sheer luck and the placing of the moon on a Thursday, I have spent most of my life riding motorbikes. Which is odd, since my main love in teenage life, was cars. It started as fun, slowly reaching addiction levels, and when my career path – photography – went topsy-turvy with the invention of digital, I became a courier, or dispatch rider. That in turn led to becoming a bike instructor, anywhere from Norfolk to London, journalism; and all the time it has been a hobby, as well as transport.

Due to all of this is my love of bikes that have purpose. While I admire gleaming concours bikes trailered from show to show, or incredibly styled Instagram-loving café racers with no suspension travel, to me they are just trailer queens.

If you look back through bikes you've hankered after or admired enviously, they rarely match the bikes you found best. I love the Ducati 916, but my favourite sportsbike is the steel-framed CBR600F. Conversely, I loved my years on a Honda Pan European ST1100, but have always lusted after a BMW R100RS. So why?

I don't know, if I'm honest. Is it that they look a little like a 1970s James Bond villain, or that they sold them in gold? Is it the panniers that look like briefcases, or that beautiful single seat on a tourer? I think it is a blend of the 'fix in the desert' longevity, the superb (for the Seventies) blend of sportsbike,

tourer, looks, practicality, ahead of its time design and thought (think what the British manufacturers were pumping out – oh no, they weren't).

The most bizarre part of this lust is – I've never even ridden one. But I have done more than 340,000 miles on BMWs, either K series bricks, or boxers, from old'uns to brand-new ones with variable cam timing, so I guess it would feel somewhat familiar. I recognise the thought the German company put into detail like riding position, aerodynamics with the first fully-faired bike, lighting and reliability. They ought to – the price of a new R100RS was double that of a Honda Goldwing, and much more than double the price of a brand-new Kawasaki Z900 – the hot dog of the time. In fairness this was due to the strength of the Deutschmark more than the costs of the bike or the head-strong confidence of BMW...

Once I would want to get everywhere as fast as possible; every journey was a race. I rode in all weathers, no matter what. Then, over time, things change. You slowly start to calm down, surrendering to the sheer hordes on the road, cameras and using a car more often. And then you realise the journey is just as nice taken slower, and the bike you're on becomes more than just how fast it goes. Its personality comes through.

I'd like to imagine the R100RS to be smooth and effortless, yet with those quirks; the rocking at idle, I imagine the steering to be heavy at slow speeds and the gearbox to be, well, like most old BMWs – ➤



Lots of info from the most expensive bike on sale in its day – bars feel a little close, though

somewhat clunky. The shaft drive will bring a jerk to on-off throttle work, and that much-loved fairing, designed in the Pininfarina wind tunnel to give the rider insulation from buffeting and downwards thrust for stability, hence the swage just above the cylinder heads, will make the mechanical noise sound more than it would on less-faired bikes. But I need to ride one to find out.

I'm happy with those issues, if they prove correct. I'm also happy with the aging looks – I'm the same! I'd be happy with covering plenty of long distances on an old bike – we know what goes wrong, and that age of bike can usually be fixed by a competent mechanic without a laptop. I'm even happy with it not being standard – the BMW world and the fervent aftermarket suppliers are great at evolution. So heated grips, a sat nav bracket, small extender to the screen for long journeys (I'm tall), K75 handlebars for a less extreme riding position (slightly higher), the latest tyres and brake consumables and maybe even a little tweaking of the boxer engine, would all be looked at to improve the experience.

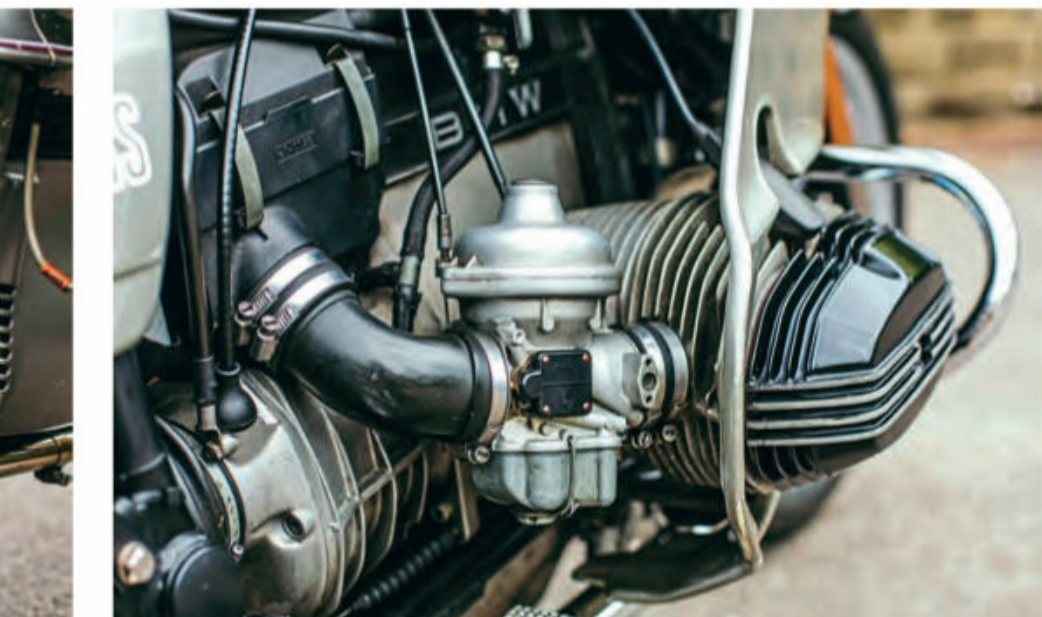
Just think of the journeys opening up to you. An old bike demands less motorways and more A and B roads, so Scotland, the South West and Wales would be great long weekends or longer for discovering. The Classic TT would be a must, the Ardennes isn't too far away; or just two-up to the coast for Sunday afternoon ice creams. Full face or open helmets? Leather or textile jackets? I don't care; that cocoon is protecting you both.

Whenever I think I may be mad wanting an RS, I remember that the production run from 1976 until 1981 was good – but then BMW wanted to concentrate on the water-cooled K series and discontinued the



Hans Muth, left, came from designing BMW car interiors and transformed the brand's bike style





Japanese bike fan's impressions of the BMW R100RS

BY STEVE 'YAMAHA' COOPER

The BMW R100RS will be a bit of a culture shock if your background is Japanese machinery. And although it features a lusty four-stroke, two pot motor it's certainly not a big British parallel twin either.

The one litre Beemer is unequivocally different, but that doesn't mean it's somehow odd, quirky or downright wrong; it's simply an alternative take on a large capacity machine.

Most of the urban myths attributed to the flat twins are just that – fantasy. There's no discernible feel of the shaft drive trying to climb over the crown wheel and the back wheel doesn't 'hop' on down changes unless you're a total and utter clutz. Only the twitch to the left when stationary betrays the engine's format.

The bike's ergonomics are stunning and that apparently minimalist seat is 'hundred's of mile comfortable'. There's an undeniable Teutonic logic about the whole machine but it's not without its issues. The centrestand is difficult to use up or down and its mate likes to hide away from inquisitive boots. Quite why the gear lever is easy to tap down but awkward to lift up is one of biking's great mysteries. Oh, and the complaints regarding the indicator switches are totally accurate.

Yet despite those rather surprising oversights by the designers, the bike still impresses. The motor has levels of torque that would make CB750 or Z1 owners cry; unless you drop the revs stupidly low, any gear will have the bike surging forward.

Handling is way ahead of any of its Oriental peers and probably class-leading. The Brembo brakes are period top drawer, strangely remote and possibly even wooden, yet they do the job remarkably well – once again not bad or wrong just different.

Riding an R100S for a 15-minute test ride is likely to be a negative experience; there's so much going on and so much that's alien, most riders are likely to come away with their preconceived prejudices largely reinforced. Similarly, if short commutes or Sunday pleasure rides are your norm you'd struggle to understand the bike's *raison d'être*. That's not what the bike was intended or designed for; long distance blasts are its forte.

Fast sweeping trunk roads, dual carriageways, autoroutes, autobahns, autostradas and the like are its natural hunting ground. That stunningly effective fairing takes the wind blast off the rider, the seat/bars/pegs triangle work beautifully, the motor simply purrs as the miles disappear.

Buy one for the wrong reasons and you'll curse your decision but if you want to ride long and far then be able to enjoy the rest of the day then you'll be grinning from ear to ear.

boxers. But due to demand, in 1986 they reintroduced the RS as a limited edition. The demand proved to be true, so in 1988, they brought the RS back albeit with changes like the Monolever rear suspension, but as a full-time member of the model line-up, until 1992. Emissions controls, which brought the 70bhp down to 60bhp hadn't helped, however the better handling and other improvements had made the comeback kid a worthy winner.

I see no point in having a 'dream garage', as it inevitably brings nothing but disappointment. I have or have had most bikes I'd like, considering the amount of money I have to warrant buying bikes. If I found a pre-oil in frame Trophy again I'd like that, and the R100RS would be lovely as an 'everyday bike'. Pre 1981, or post 1986 I don't mind, mileage neither and a few scratches just add to the story. I never mind buying a project, but prices for a usable bike are around £3500-£5000, with some asking money only those with too much would pay. A good friend of mine has mentioned he has one in bits in a shed, but I've too many projects at present. I'll have one someday; I'll use it as much as possible enjoying the weather protection, it'll have the Krauser panniers, I'll smile as it wobbles beneath me on idle and I'd really, really like a gold one.

Matt 



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WIN A JUBILEE

THE NATIONAL MOTORCYCLE MUSEUM has unearthed another astonishing 'new old stock' classic for its summer raffle.

The bike is a 1977 Triumph T140J Silver Jubilee Bonneville which has never been run or registered and is showing just four miles on the clock.

The T140J was created by the Meriden factory to mark the 25th anniversary of the Queen's accession to the throne. The limited-edition batch of UK and export models came with blue seats and a special silver and blue paint job. The boost to Bonneville

sales helped Meriden survive in the tough times of the late 1970s and several buyers mothballed them as collectors' items and investments.

Second prize is an almost equally desirable Sealey Retro Style Combination Tool Chest worth £850, with a luxury hotel break and dinner for two people at the Manor Hotel, Meriden as third prize. Tickets cost £2 via the museum or online by visiting www.thenmm.co.uk The winter raffle first prize of a new Triumph Thruxton TFC Ltd Edition 1200cc was won by Andrew Winscom of Worcestershire.

Norton to return with new owners

THE COLLAPSE OF Norton appears to have been short-lived with a new owner emerging.

India's TVS Motor has bought the company, pledged to double its workforce and launch more products. The factory does seem set to move from its Donington Hall home to new premises nearby.

TVS is India's third biggest motorcycle manufacturer and already has close links with BMW, building the BMW 310R and using BMW engines in a TVS badged 300cc road bike. Norton was bought out of administration for £16 million soon after the company collapsed. TVS is reportedly set to invest tens of millions of pounds in Norton. Customers who lost hope of ever seeing bikes they had paid for arrive might yet get their hands on their exotic twins and V4s after all.

Sudarshan Venu, TVS' joint managing director, said Norton had "tremendous potential". He said production at Donington Hall would be restarted to fulfil outstanding customer orders, but that Norton would require a newer, larger factory within six months to begin its expansion plans.



Mr Venu told Indian publication *Car and Bike*: "The strong design team and assembly team is coming over to us, and we will look to leverage their strength and work with them to deliver more bikes of this storied brand. In Europe, the location is in Derby, in Donington Hall. We will move to another new location very soon, in the same region. The idea is to continue with this very talented team to get the brand back to its

original glory, and take it into the future."

John Russell, former boss of Harley Davidson Europe, has been named interim chief executive. Mr Russell was also MD of Manganese Bronze, producer of London's black cabs from 2007 to 2013. Classic bikers with long memories will recall Manganese Bronze as the company that owned Norton Villiers in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

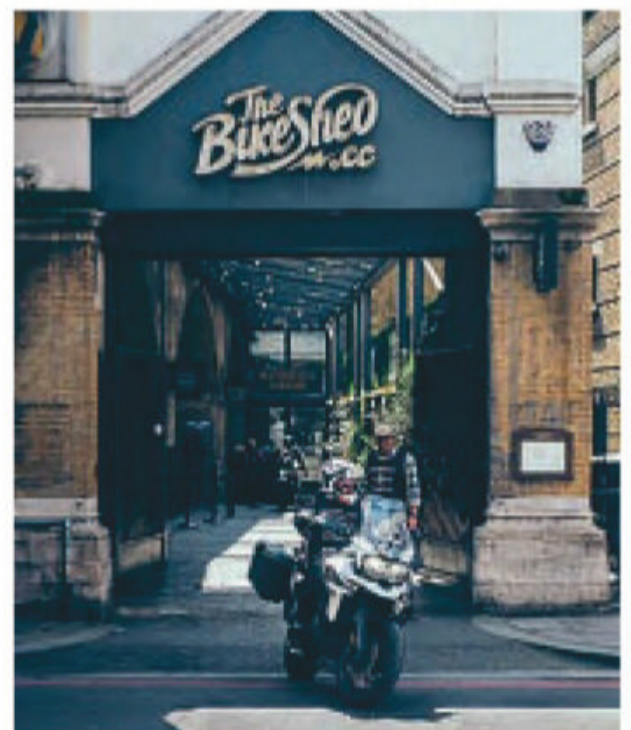
BIKE SHED RIDERS TAKE TO THE STREETS

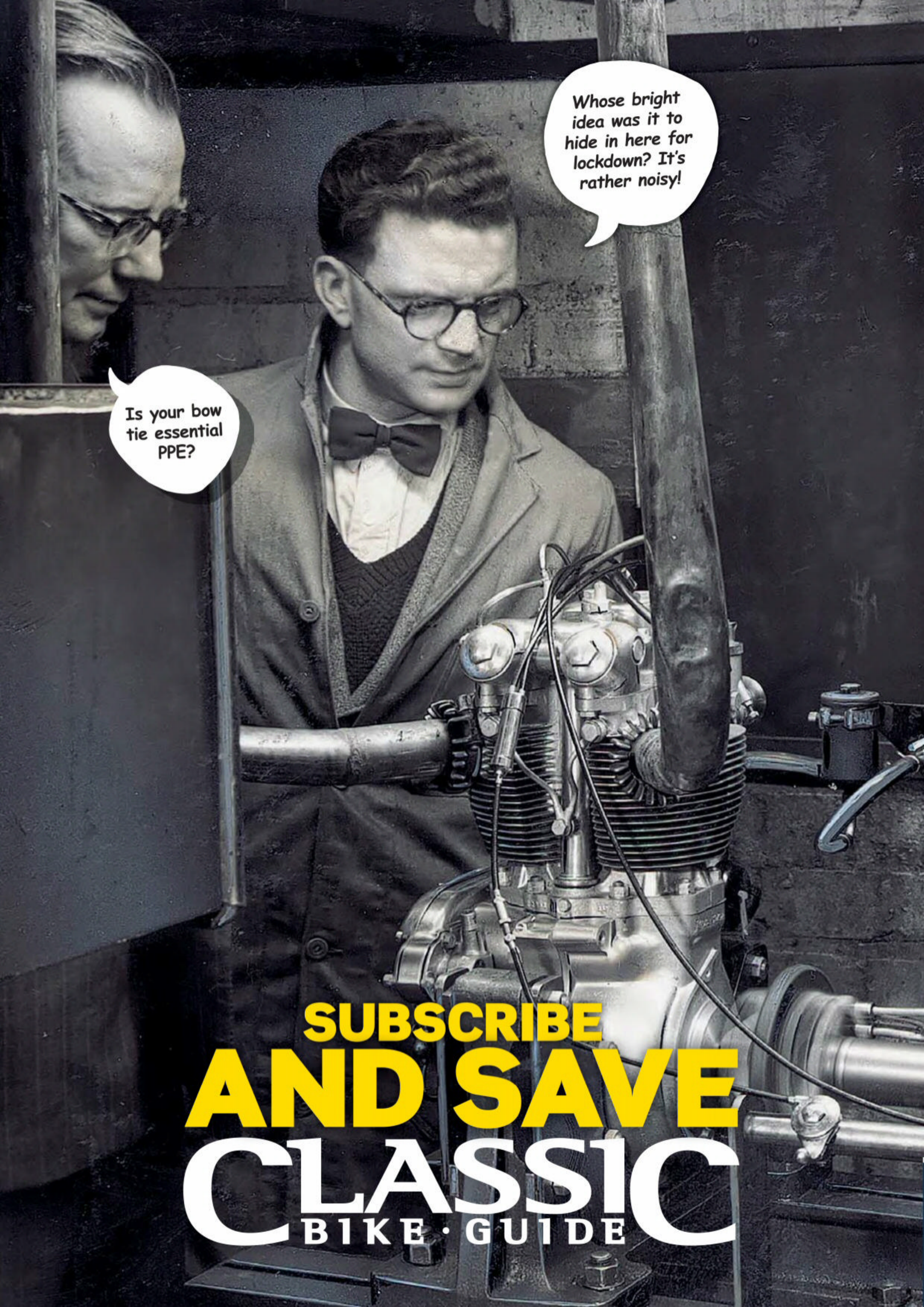
LONDON'S BIKE SHED MCC has mobilised its motorcycle community to help out during the Covid-19 pandemic.

When The Bike Shed was forced to close its doors they decided to create a volunteer riders' group to provide free courier-style services to the NHS and other organisations.

Members use their bikes to collect PPE parts for assembly and deliver assembled PPE gear to frontline healthcare workers, along with food, medicine and NHS lung-capacity testing kits, to see which people might be better off in hospital than at home.

Indian Motorcycles offered to cover the cost of services and provided two bikes with full luggage for anyone who could make good use of them. The Bike Shed sourced a mobile app from developer Gophr which repurposed its commercial courier app free of charge. The app collects riders' details with full safeguarding and legal checks, and tracks jobs for the pickup and delivery clients. The Bike Shed volunteers are working with Team Rubicon UK and the government and British Red Cross to coordinate tasks.





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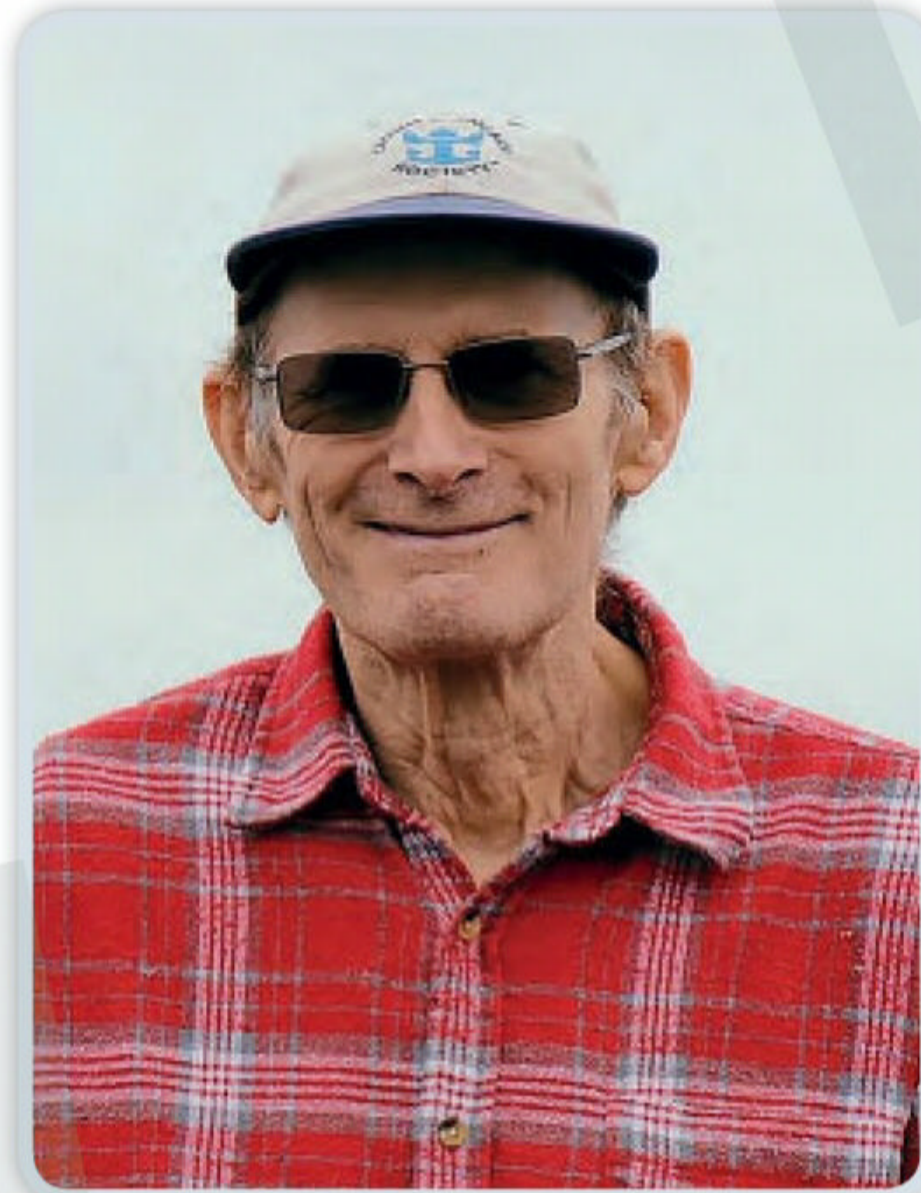
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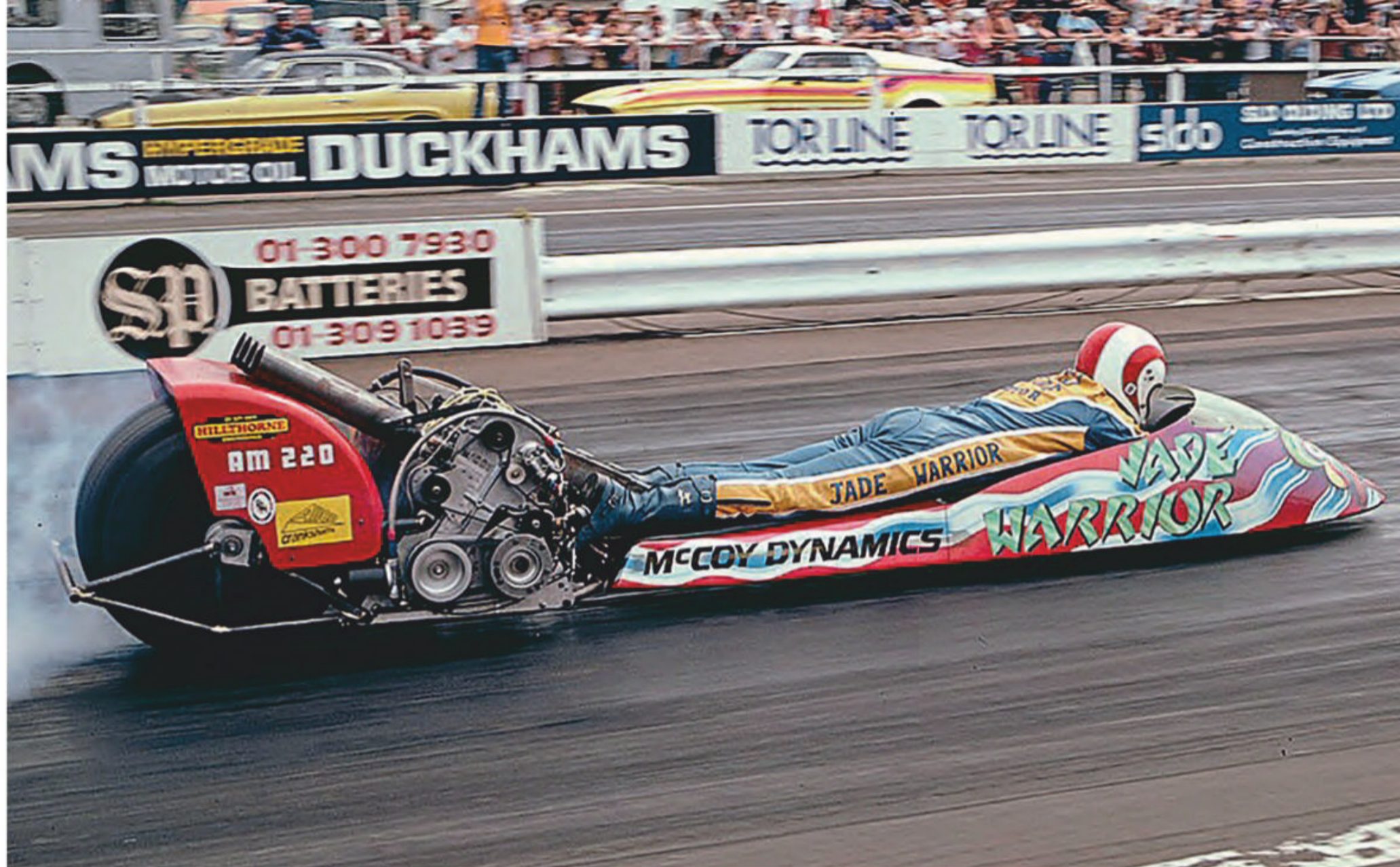
Angus McPhail

THE WORLD OF MOTORCYCLES LOST ONE OF ITS most eccentric geniuses when coronavirus claimed Angus McPhail in April. He was best known in drag racing and sprinting circles, particularly for Jade Warrior that had him stretched out on his stomach ahead of a supercharged two-litre four cylinder engine that used a Cosworth cylinder head on a home-brewed barrel and upper crankcase, cast as one. It drove a big car slick through a torque convertor, and in the 1980s he was the first Englishman to get into the seven second bracket for the standing start quarter mile without using nitro-methane for fuel. Google Jade Warrior to see him in action and prepare to be amazed.

He was born in Pinner and made his mark early on with a 1930s 250 BSA that went better than it should,

but him serving an apprenticeship at the De Havilland aircraft factory in Hatfield meant access to advanced knowledge and materials. He built a Formula Junior single seater racing car there and was renowned for getting special parts made; a set of close ratio gears for the Volkswagen gearbox would have cost close on £200 in the 1960s, but not with his connections. Plans for the car didn't advance far when he got involved in bike sprinting and he sold the Macon design to Tony Houghton, who went on to build a series of them.

He had a lesser known second hobby with the manufacture of small bombs, using a blend of fertiliser and sugar sealed in steel tube with an Airfix model jet engine fuse. If he wanted a long delay, he'd light a fag and wrap the fuse around it, which could give up to 10 minutes' delay while we all got out of



Above: The 'ultimate head-first projectile' - Angus and Jade Warrior.

the area. He made a special underwater version with the fuse fed through a long plastic tube and the bomb suspended on bent welding rod, then hung over the sluice gate on the ornamental pond in posh suburban Pinner. The idea was to blow the gate out and drain the pond, but although it went off with a huge tower of water - think of a small anti-submarine mine - and all the ducks were up and away in panic, the gate held. He gave up being an urban terrorist before he was discovered, and concentrated on bikes.


His first sprinter was the knee-high Ariel Arrow powered Ag's Barrow, breathing methanol through a big carb and later tried using a model aircraft fuel containing nitro-methane, but that wasn't any faster. The bike had a tubular space frame, with alloy panelling bonded by aircraft adhesive and rivets, like Formula One racing cars had been using. It was quick and was used as a front cover picture in *The Motor Cycle* with an enthusiastic write-up by technical editor Vic Willoughby. He also gave time to help me and John Cruttenden build a 500 Triumph sidecar outfit that won the sidecar class at the 1964 Ramsey Sprint at the TT, then decided to get serious with the Macon three-wheeler. Lambretta front wheel, driver and crewman lying side by side with fuel tank, supercharger, 500 Triumph engine and Norton gearbox in line down the centre spine, with two Mini wheels on the rear axle. It took world and national records, standing quarter mile times in the low 13 seconds before it was sold to Dave Green, who put a 650 motor in and took 750 world and national records.

He never stopped thinking of ways to build something better and faster and his next three-wheeler had room only for driver and ballast, with the first version of his four-cylinder engine driving twin rear wheels via a torque convertor. I drove that for a newspaper feature and it was a very stable and fast ride. Lessons learned with that led to the ultimate head-first projectile, Jade Warrior. By that time he was working closely with Mick Hand and then Keith Parnell, whose 750 Triumph was modified to give ground effects with a skirt like Formula

One cars of that era, in this case the exhaust gases sucking the bike down and giving much better traction. That careful development work gave Keith the bike to make him the first English rider to get below nine seconds for the quarter mile. When the same technology was applied to Jade Warrior, Angus reckoned it gave something like 1000lb of downward thrust, a nominal bike in some people's eyes, but all it had was two wheels and a huge amount of engineering knowledge; he was a big draw at bike events in Europe, with crowds looking on in wonder.

He left De Havilland and worked on the Ford GT40 project from their base in Slough, putting in silly hours and building his own projects at the same time. When that ended he set up as a self employed gas fitter and engineer, again working silly hours either on the business or in his garage at the bottom of the garden.

In recent years he'd been working with old team mates Mick Hand and Keith Parnell on Keith's son Lorcan's Honda-powered bike that is running in the six second bracket and beginning to make rivals take serious notice. With the loss of such a vital element you might think that progress will stall, but I wouldn't suggest you put money on that. I suspect there will be an even greater wish to succeed, simply to honour the memory of an inspiring team member taken by a damned little virus long before his time.

Uncle Jim Reynolds 



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4 CTC105	5 Dr cabinet	685x465x790	£169.98	£203.98
CTC107	7 Dr cabinet	685x465x950	£199.98	£239.98

* Was £83.98 inc.VAT * Was £101.99 inc.VAT
* Was £143.98 inc.VAT

1 **£66.99** EXC.VAT
£80.39 INC.VAT

2 **£129.98** EXC.VAT
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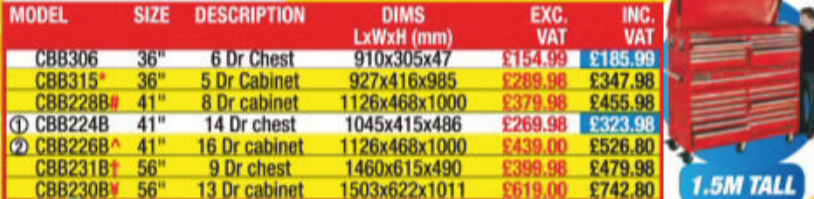
3 **£54.99** EXC.VAT
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4 **£169.98** EXC.VAT
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MODEL	SIZE	DESCRIPTION	DIMS LxWxH (mm)	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CBB306	36"	6 Dr Chest	910x305x47	£154.99	£185.99
CBB315*	36"	5 Dr Cabinet	927x416x985	£289.98	£347.98
CBB228B*	41"	8 Dr cabinet	1126x468x1000	£379.98	£455.98
1 CBB224B	41"	14 Dr chest	1045x415x486	£269.98	£323.98
2 CBB226B*	41"	16 Dr cabinet	1126x468x1000	£439.00	£526.80
CBB231B†	56"	9 Dr chest	1460x615x490	£399.98	£479.98
CBB230B‡	56"	13 Dr cabinet	1503x622x1011	£619.00	£742.80

1.5M TALL



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MODEL	DESCRIPTION	DIMS LxWxH (mm)	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
1 CBB209DF	9 Dr chest	710x370x420	£144.99	£173.99
2 CBB211DF	11 Dr Cabinet	785x490x1075	£289.98	£347.98
3 CBB309DF	9 Dr chest	975x370x420	£169.98	£203.98
4 CBB311DF*	11 Dr Cabinet	1045x490x1075	£339.98	£407.98

LARGE 37" CABINET

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3 **£169.98** EXC.VAT
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4 **£339.98** EXC.VAT
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JS1950	1600W	2030psi	£89.98	£107.98
Jet 7500*	1600W	2030psi	£119.98	£143.98
Jet8500	2100W	2610psi	£149.98	£179.98
Jet9500	2400W	3045psi	£179.98	£215.98

* was £149.99 inc. VAT

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CIS8612	3.7 x 2.2 x 2.4m	£189.00	£226.80
CIS81212	3.6 x 3.6 x 2.5m	£209.00	£250.80

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PGF14/18	Pro, Gravity	£26.99	£32.39
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CF18C100	18"	£39.98	£47.98
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COP202B	450 / 16	16	£189.00	£226.80
COP10B	370 / 12	12	£199.98	£239.98
COP352F	550 / 16	16	£229.00	£274.80
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235TEN#	40-210	£159.98	£191.98

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Products

Big value... that's the size of it

I'M NOT A big fan of labels, particularly if it means paying an extra 30 quid for a badge. When hunting for a decent set of good quality, warm and ideally waterproof gloves, I'd much rather they fitted properly than anything.

Going through the shelves at my local bike gear shop, I couldn't find a decent pair that actually fitted. I measured my hands, which were apparently medium, but nothing suited.

At the Stafford show I stopped by the Midlife Classics stand (purveyor of good quality old-school kit to the discerning) and tried a selection of wares, finally finding a pair of **ARMR Moto WPL860 gloves** that fitted. They were of course XL, which just goes to show you can't tell a size without putting the things on. After a couple of months, I can say these are now my all-time favourite gloves. The wrist cuff doesn't go too far up the wrist and is wide enough to go over the cuff of the bulkiest jacket (unlike the gloves they replaced). They're goatskin with a discrete knuckle guard and have more than



enough padding with stretch panels on the fingers. There's an effective breathable waterproof membrane that makes them as waterproof as you might get. They're extremely warm in the nastiest conditions. The only problem I foresee is that their heat retaining properties mean they might start to smell a bit in the summer.

List price for these is £59.99, but Mid Life Classics are selling them for **£39.99**, and they are well worth it. See Mid Life Classics at your local show, or visit www.midlifeclassics.co.uk

Here's a bright move

I'VE BEEN CONSIDERING getting one of the current generation of LED worklights for my unpowered garage for some time, but I find most of those on offer are more suited to builders than workshops, as they're bulky and awkward and hard to store.

This new Clarke Worklight is none of these things. It's roughly the size of a hardback book, with a folding handle/stand that you could hang on a wall or put on the ground. There's a grab handle which Clarke describes as "ergonomic" – which is posh talk for saying you can get your hand around it. There's a single 1200 Lumen (whatever that means) 15w lamp that provides three levels of brightness.

The 25% setting is bright and will last for 11 hours on a full charge, the 50% setting is very bright indeed and will last for 4.5 hours, while the 100% setting has "oh my god I've accidentally looked directly at it and now I'm blind" brightness. This will flatten the battery in two hours. It's got a Li-Ion rechargeable battery that you can charge with any 5v USB charger (no charger is included but a cable is, and most smartphone chargers will do the job). On the back there's a battery level indicator, a waterproof cover over the charging socket and, very neatly, a second USB socket so you can use it as a charging pack for a mobile phone, Go Pro, sat nav, or bluetooth speaker for your workshop. This little feature partly sold the lamp to me.



Handy for a workshop, but equally easy to pack away in a set of panniers or the boot of a car, this compact light doesn't feel as substantial as a builder's lamp, but is in all probability more likely to resist damage from being stepped on or dropped. You could even use it while camping, as long as you didn't mind attracting low flying aircraft.

■ **Clarke COB LED rechargeable worklight**
■ **£23.98**
■ **Available at Machine Mart branches over the counter (check stock/opening hours first) or online at www.machinemart.co.uk**

Racing Classic Motorcycles - First you have to finish

By Andy Reynolds

I REALLY ENJOYED this book by Andy Reynolds. I met Andy for the first time last year, when he was scrutineering at a damp and cold Classic Racing Motorcycle Club meet at Snetterton. He was informative, energetic and thoroughly friendly. His book sums this up – it is an account of his racing exploits, from going to see the TT races as a boy, with all the fun and frolics that entailed, to racing there some years later.

From TZs to Patons, Andy has been lucky enough to race them all; but there's something missing from this book that so many other books about racing have: ego.

This book also doesn't read like some boring results sheet; it's about the never-ending journey that racing captures you, shakes all of the money in your pockets, replaces it with life changing memories and incidents and changes you for ever.

If you're not into your racing, then this book may not hold much for you. But if you are, then this is a must.



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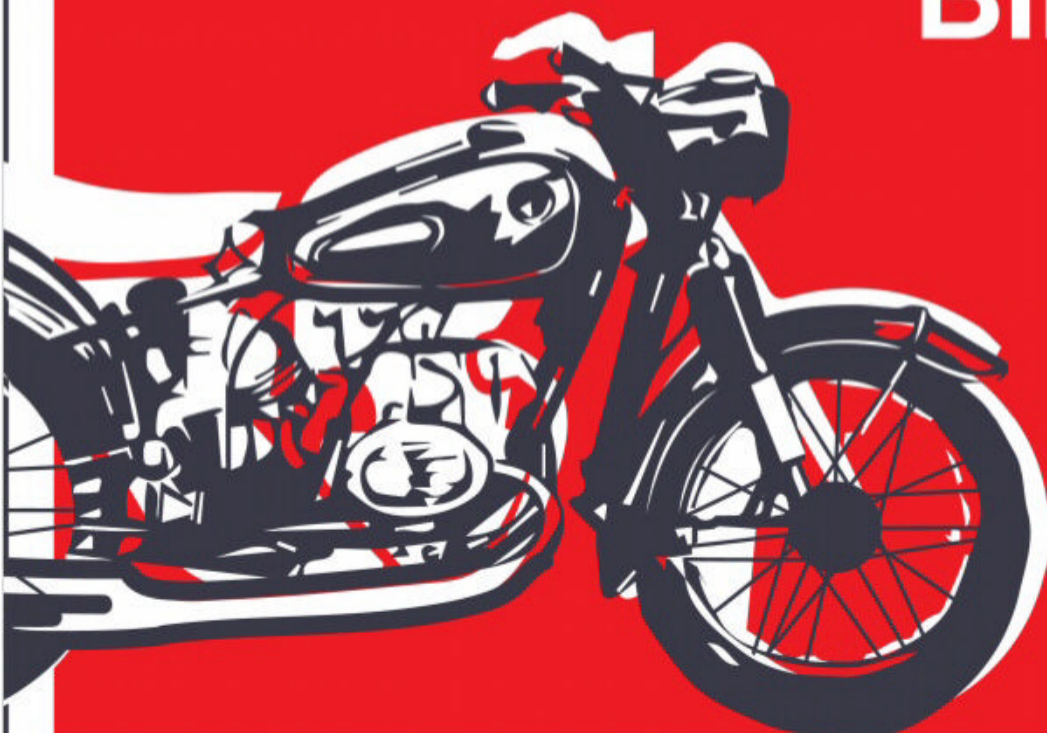
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Letters

Enfield envy

As a reader of your magazine, I loved the April issue, mainly the 'My Green Dream'.

Two years ago, a friend of mine gave me a Bullet 500 from 1955. Well, okay, only the engine, frame, forks and wheels.

So instead of rebuilding it as standard, I used the parts catalogue from Hitchcocks to build the trials look that I love.

Antonio M.C. Lamas
Montijo, Portugal

STAR LETTER



Any help with Triumph connection?

Thanks for a great mag, as a recent returner I devour the contents on receipt.

Does anybody know of a link

between the 1930s Triumph XO 150cc, ohv, four-stroke single sloper and the 1950 Triumph Terrier 150cc, ohv, four-stroke

single sloper? Looking forward to hearing any response.

Bev Williams



Looking after my Cubs

Thanks for the great article on Triumph Cubs. My 66 T20M Mountain Cub is tuned for top speed and horsepower on dirt roads,

however I admire the trials scene. It looks like it would be loads of fun!

Andy

THIS MONTH'S STAR LETTER WINS

The writer of this month's Star Letter wins a Premier Rocker OR 20 helmet worth £99.95. Premier started out in 1956 and found fame in the 1970s with Phil Read MBE. The Rocker draws on all that heritage, adding modern touches, like a retractable internal sun visor and moisture-wicking and odour-free lining. Find out more at www.thekeycollection.co.uk





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WHAT IS IT?

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BSA B33

The classic underdog, so often used as a basis for a pretend Gold Star, can be a great bike in its own right

WORDS BY OLI HULME PHOTOGRAPHY BY GARY CHAPMAN

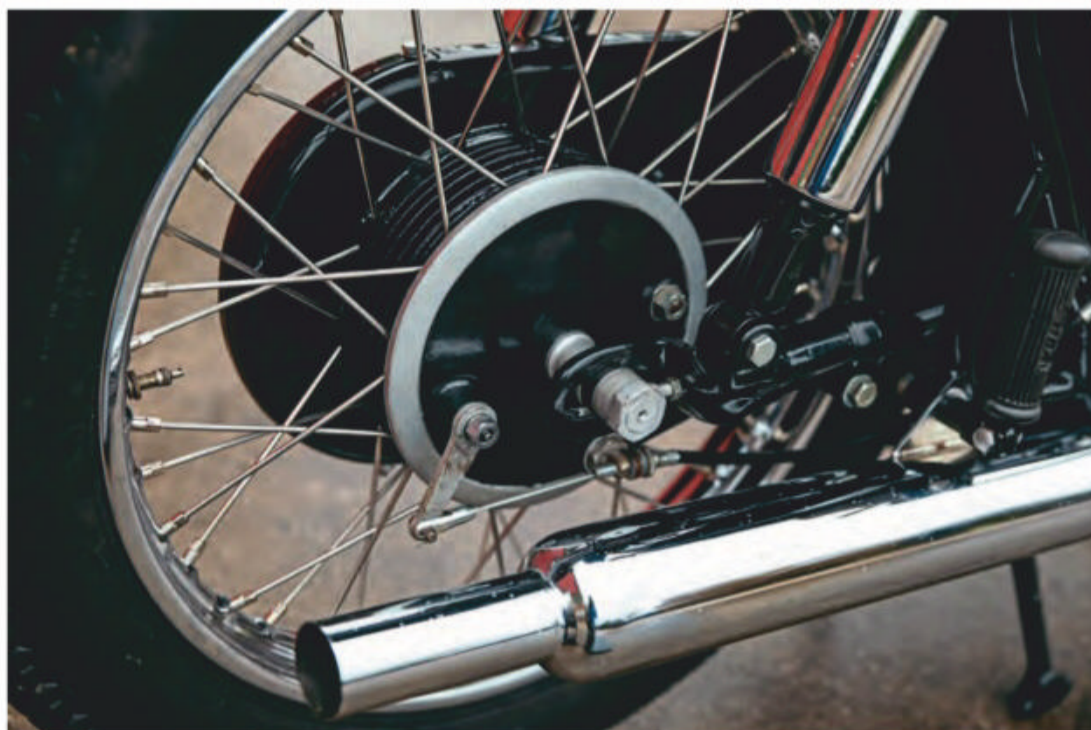
SOMETIMES JUST LOOKING AT A CLASSIC motorcycle tells you whether it's going to work properly. Take, for instance, this machine, one of the very last BSA B33 models. It does not have the air of being especially sporting. It's handsome rather than beautiful. The chrome is deep but not overdone. The castings look solid, strong and capable and the unfussy whole gives it the air of a being a motorcycle that will provide long and trouble-free use. It looks complete and it has considerable presence.

Popular opinion suggests that the British factories rested on their laurels as the years went on, but it is worth remembering that during the B33's 13-year production run it went through three different suspension systems and three frames, one based on a competition racer. There were three different brake designs, two gearboxes and with just two years to go before the end of production, there was a completely redesigned ignition and electricity generating system. This all adds up to a pretty dramatic series of changes by modern standards, especially when you think that on an equivalent modern 'cooking' model you'd be lucky to see much more over 13 years than some changes to detailing, new paint and rehashed graphics.

THE LIFE OF AN UNDER-RECOGNISED CLASSIC

Launched in 1947, the 499cc BSA B33 was based upon the 1945 348cc B31 which in turn was derived from the company's pre-Second World War singles, though with the more modern addition of telescopic forks. The B31 had been announced before the end of the war as BSA geared up for a postwar boom. The new B33 looked like the B31 in most respects, but had a slightly larger carburettor, heavier flywheels and a larger rear tyre.

It made sense for BSA to be the first out of the starting blocks with a simple, solid motorcycle for



their buyers, the kind of thing you could bolt a sidecar to, or just ride, while the development of sportier models could go on in the background.

Rigid at first, they got plunger rear ends as an option in 1949 and in 1954 a swinging arm frame that followed the lines that most of the bigger BSAs would follow until the late 1960s. This double cradle effort had an elegant rear subframe loop and the whole plot follows the principles of that used on the Gold Star.

The B33 filled an unglamorous role as reliable day-to-day transport. You could fix it yourself and least keep it on the road with regular home maintenance. BSA had a large dealer network too, and the bike got a reputation as a sensible buy. If you wanted something more exotic, there were Goldies, A7s and A10s to lust after in the BSA range.

In the mid-50s the B33 ended up with Ariel brake hubs, as well as such luxuries as a steering head lock. The B range used BSA's effective gear-type oil pump. The crankshafts were built-up with two big flywheels spinning between a roller bearing on one side and a ball bearing on the other. The big-end bearing was a caged double roller and the con rod was steel. There's a tapered crank pin which is pressed into the flywheels and secured by rivets. So far, so sturdy, and that was the point. This was a motorcycle designed to go on and on.

With BSA working on their new unit-construction singles in the late 1950s, change was underway. The B33 got a revamp as the end of production loomed. In 1958

the old Magdyno, which Lucas were keen to stop making, was replaced by an alternator and a coil ignition. The alternator required a large protuberance on the primary chaincase. The points and distributor auto-advance were neatly hidden in the location once occupied by the Magdyno and the BSA's design meant that this arrangement was much neater than on other marques.

The brakes got another upgrade, using the full width ribbed hubs made of cast-iron, used on most of the bigger bikes in the BSA range by that point. The rear brake was operated by a shaft running through the swingarm spindle connecting with the brake using a cable.

The B33 lasted a year longer than the B31, going out of production in the middle of 1960. BSA felt the B31 could be replaced by the 250cc C15 and to an extent they were right. Demand for big soft singles was evaporating, and their sidecar hauling capabilities were becoming less and less important as cars became more affordable. While those B-series singles would be missed, by virtue of its design the unit single would be much cheaper to make than the B31/33. The C15 derived 350cc B40 was launched in late 1960 and was supposed to be the B33's replacement, although BSA never really replaced the B33, with the company's last production 500 single not appearing until 1971.

LIVING WITH BSA'S BIGGEST SINGLE

A B33 has an air of class. Even though it's a 500cc single, you'll be hard pushed to make it to 80mph, and at that speed you'll definitely know all about it. Indeed, the B33 isn't that much faster than the B31, though it will be less stressed getting there. It will cruise happily at 55-60mph and sustained speeds higher than that will be a little unfair on venerable gentleman from Small Heath.



If you're regularly riding two-up or just looking for something that doesn't feel stressed, the B33 is a top choice, and a late one all the more so. Giving it a good steady kick will get things going, as long as you don't lose your nerve halfway through. The first part of the swing is where things get moving. The bottom half is where the magic happens. It's no lightweight, having gained a portly 60lbs (27kg) between 1947 and 1959 and despite the addition of a neat little handle to help you out, hoofing it onto the centrestand isn't a smooth operation; even in a 1956 road test the difficulty of getting it onto the stand was criticised.

Handling on these later bikes is better than most equivalent bikes of the period as BSA used simple and well-made suspension componentry with such luxuries as three-point adjustable rear shocks. The gearbox requires a firm foot, but you won't get a selection of false neutrals or notchiness. B33-specific engine parts are trickier to come by than those for the B31, while most of the tin ware is interchangeable between the models.

If you are looking for a first classic and can find one of these rather lovely singles you won't go far wrong. In a road test in the mid-50s *The Motor Cycle* described



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the B-series single as: “an attractive model for the rider who wants a lively, economical easy-to-handle all rounder but is not insistent on an ultra-high maximum speed.” It’s hard to argue with that verdict.

BUY THIS BIKE

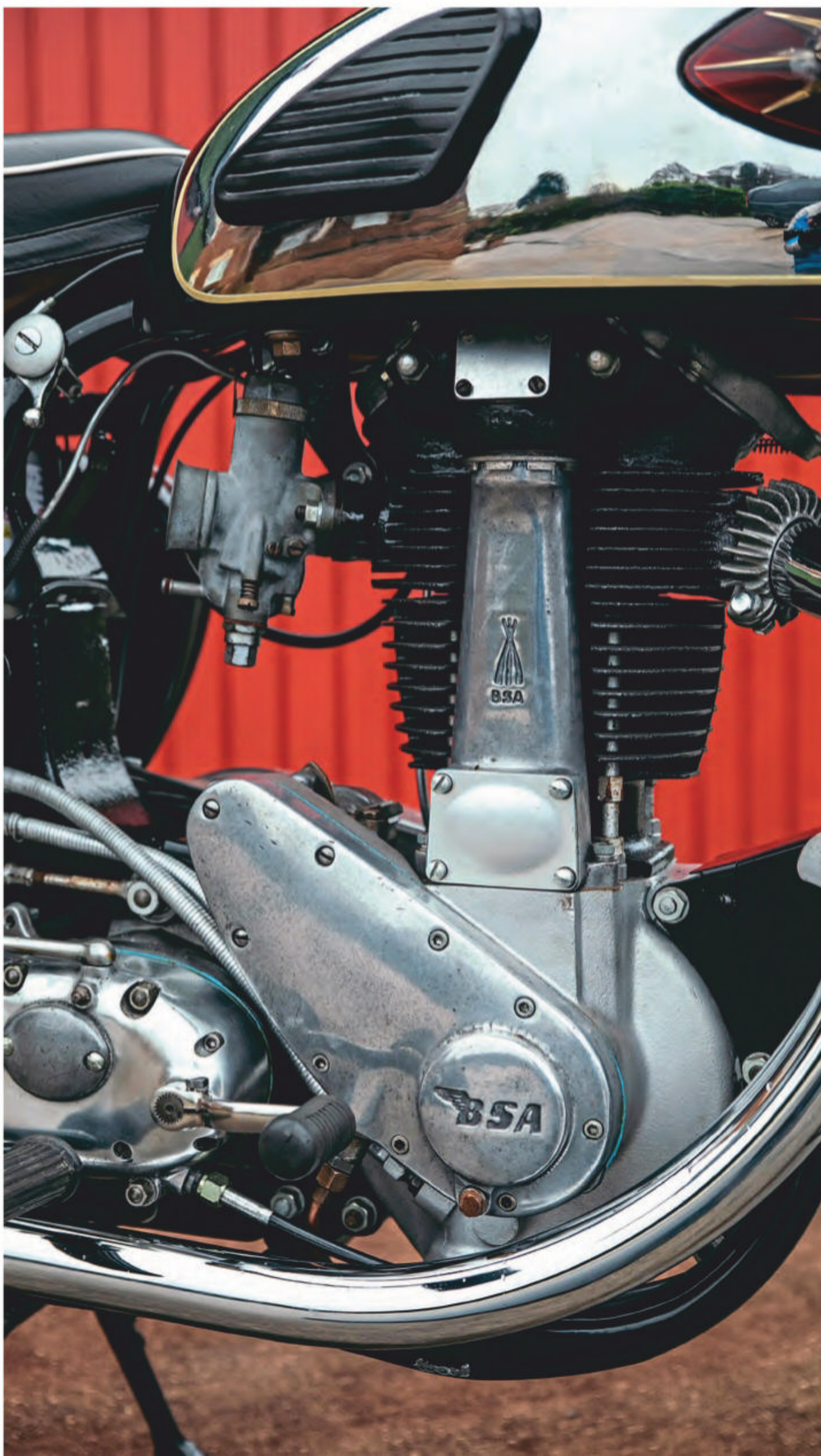
This particular B33 is on sale for £5999. It’s got the original registration number and glorious finish. It also has handy optional extras like the fully enclosed chaincase. The engine number marks it as one of the very last B33s to leave the factory, being registered in June 1960, shortly before the annual summer shut down and the end of production. Visit Classic Motorcycles Ltd on eBay or call 01928 788500.

FORTY-SIX YEARS IN THE SADDLE

Ray Jackson has been taking his pre-unit BSA single to the road since 1974. So, we asked him to give us the benefit of his experience.

The first versions weighed considerably less than the later models and they gradually increased in weight as time progressed. They were also slightly more economical on fuel. But by the late 1950s when the B31 and B33s went over to the alternator models, BSA appeared to get them just about right. With alternators, distributors, and coil ignition, they were more comfortable to ride, easier to start and happier doing distance work.

There were many more alternator B31s produced compared to their B33 big brothers. This is probably ▶



Why not try:

MATCHLESS G80/AJS MODEL 18

In 1959, like BSA, AMC ditched their magneto and generator set up for an alternator/points arrangement. On these singles this meant a significant change in the way the engine looked, losing the attractive drive chaincase to the magneto in favour of a cleaner, but somehow duller, more homogenised appearance. Similar to the BSA in the way it performs, possibly a little less fine handling, though many would dispute this, the AMC singles are a good alternative and tend to come in cheaper.

NORTON ES2

You'll pay for the name with a Norton, but you'll stay for the ride. This long stroke single was reliable, easy to look after and a long-standing design. It went through similar design changes through the 1940s and 50s, ending up going into a slimline Featherbed frame. They were, according to those that know about these things, better in their pre-Featherbed versions. The last ES2, the Mk2, is a Matchless with Norton badges and while not a bad bike, isn't really the same thing.

VELOCETTE MSS

An idiosyncratic, delightful 500 single from Velocette. Stylish as heck, English as tuppence, the postwar MSS arrived in 1954 with the same frame as the Velocette MAC. The swing arm version was the longest lasting single from the classic period. It features all of Velocette's more unusual features, especially in the drive train department. You'll need to have either a considerable aptitude for mechanics, and engineering skills will be handy too, or have money and/or a good friend with those skills. But my goodness, they are lovely to ride.



because the twin cylinder A7 didn't cost that much more than the B33 and was more agile. These alternator machines are generally known 'GB' models to distinguish them from the earlier Magdyno models. GB31s were produced during 1958 and 1959 and the GB33s from 1959 to 1960 when the range was phased out. These bikes are quite rare compared with the Magdyno models because there were comparatively few made, the GB33s being rarer still.

The engines on the GB models differ from the earlier ones. The crankcase interiors have additional stiffeners cast into them and they have large finned barrels and cylinder heads. Also, the base where the magneto would normally sit doesn't have the scallops machined into them. Compared to the GB31, some GB33 spares are very difficult to obtain. Crankcases, barrels and cylinder heads are particularly sought after and are snapped up by the sporting fraternity, simply because they are liable to blow their engines and are constantly looking for spares to go on the shelf just in case they need them. The late B33 has an extra-long 'ski slope', a cover that fits over the gearbox plates that is scarce. It extends from behind the rear of the crankcases, over the gearbox plates and finishes underneath the battery carrier. The equivalent cover on the earlier models only went from the rear of the magneto to underneath the battery carrier.

Most riders go for the GB31s and fit Triumph T140 pistons with Gold Star scrambles cams thereby giving the bike power which is probably equivalent to that of the B33. It isn't possible to bore out a B31 barrel in order to fit a B33 piston as there isn't enough material and you would just end up with a set of fins. However, the GB33 is a more sought-after bike and commands a much higher price than the GB31. After riding my GB31 since 1974 and doing more miles than I care to think about, this includes riding it all over the continent many times, I've never had to remove the engine from the frame but I've rebuilt the top end three times. I've also rebushed the distributor twice. Not bad I suppose, for the amount of pleasure it has given me.

Thanks to Ray and to Brian Pollitt from the BSA Owners' Club for their help. **CBC**



SPECIFICATION:

ENGINE: OHV single **BORE AND STROKE:** 85x88mm **CAPACITY:** 499cc **COMPRESSION RATIO:** 6.5:1 **CARB:** Amal Monobloc **POWER:** 23bhp@5500rpm **IGNITION:** Points **ELECTRICAL:** Lucas alternator, 6v Battery **TRANSMISSION:** Chain primary drive, four-speed gearbox, wet multiplate clutch **FRAME:** Double cradle **SUSPENSION:** Hydraulic forks, twin shock rear **WEIGHT:** 404lb/183kg (wet) **WHEELBASE:** 56in/1435mm **SEAT HEIGHT:** 28.75in/730mm **BRAKES:** 7in drums front and rear **WHEELS/TYRES:** Front - 3.25x19in rear 3.50x19

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YAMAHA

DT250

The advert could have read 'Crash on Sunday, ride on Monday' for Yamaha's DT250. But with 175cc and 360cc siblings, was it just the one in the middle?

WORDS BY OLI HULME PHOTOGRAPHY BY GARY CHAPMAN





BEFORE TAKING THIS PARTICULAR DT250 to the road it was impossible not to check out its immaculate condition. It was a low mileage stunner, less than 4000 on the clock, and not a speck of dirt or corrosion blighting the plot. The 1973 DT250 was also known as the DT3, in that period when Yamaha were still using arcane letter and number codes rather than names that were an indication of the capacity. It looked as if it had just come out of a showroom circa September 1973.

The level and the quality of equipment is incredible for the early Seventies. There's good switchgear, clear and top-notch instruments, decent brakes, and solid, well-built bodywork.

On the road the somewhat soggy riding conditions were causing me a little concern. The new Michelin tyres looked like they'd have a bit more grip than the old school knobby tyres originally fitted, but they did look as if they needed scrubbing in a bit or they were going to be as grippy as racing slicks. Still, I reasoned, let's give this bike a go and see what happens.

As I initially pootled gently along, I thought that for a two-stroke 250cc single the Yamaha seemed almost docile, easy to control, and just right for the novice, all of which came as a surprise. I was expecting some honest-to-goodness rortiness, such as I'd experienced on my old TS250 Suzuki a few decades back, but this felt almost

slow. That fancy 'race-bred' reed valve didn't seem to be doing anything.

And then the rev counter hit 5000rpm in third. The back wheel dug in, the front wheel lifted slightly as suddenly the thing hurtled forward, the sudden onrush of wind pinning my eyelids open. My hands clamped tightly to the grips, as I thanked my lucky stars that I was on a straight bit of road rather than a twisty bit of nadergy. We got faster and faster. And then as suddenly as it had arrived, it ran out of steam. Until I changed up again, and the revs dropped just below 5000 and with faintest twitch of throttle we and it did it again. Whoa, baby, calm down a bit. We've only just met...

It's a peaky little beggar then. Next to no torque at low revs, and all the power coming in late on. I wondered if it must have made it a handful off-road. A little farm tracking or dirt road work was certainly achievable, but I could see it cartwheeling away from the rider if you were riding on the grass and the bike suddenly gained traction at high revs. Of course, my initial experience was down partly to riding an unfamiliar motorcycle in imperfect conditions. I'm sure that after a few days you'd get the hang of it, but surely there must have been a few new owners who after jumping straight off their FS1Es dumped their L-plate-equipped DT250 into hedges on the first day out. But that was the way two-stroke trail bikes were back then. Snarly little beasts that scored

low in the sophistication stakes, but which would out drag pretty much anything else in the Friday night market square sprints and go anywhere you wanted. Adventure bikes? Who needs one of those? Safety and smoothness were sacrificed for power and acceleration.

There was initially a certain amount of thruppenny-biting on the tighter corners at first. It was, blessedly, light enough and low enough to paddle about from a standstill. Once a few hills and a few more bends had been negotiated, the way the DT produced its power became more understandable and the riding experience improved no end. Tackling gradients improved throttle control and with bike under my considerable load, with a little confidence I found it did go round corners, after all.

It progressed well enough at low revs, and I've never paid such close attention to a rev counter before, watching for that previously terrifying but now exciting burst of power. It was comfortable too, far more so than many much more modern offerings, and with a relatively low seat and highish steering head you didn't feel like a windsock. Even so, riding the DT is an exhilarating, rather than a relaxing experience. It's a grin-making motorcycle you can still use every day, on or off road, and there's really very little to go wrong. Look after it and it'll go on for absolutely years.



FROM THE DESERT TO THE WORLD

The poky Japanese trail bike can be an absolute joy, no matter what the name is on the tank. Yamaha got there first by a few months, and their 250cc trail bikes were built at first for desert racing in the US, wiping the floor with heavier British twins developed from road bikes and challenging Spanish and Swedish rivals for winners' laurels.

They weren't quite as sturdy as Husqvarnas and Bultacos, but they were a lot cheaper and, like the British machines that came before them, they could be ridden to the races, used to compete, and then ridden home again.

The first Yamaha 250 trail of this kind arrived in 1968, as the DT1. Originally the model was based on a Montesa acquired by Yamaha importers in California. They pressured Yamaha to come up with a similar design, based around the engine used in their motocrosser. The Californians created a proof-of-concept prototype in late 1966 and sent it to Japan where Yamaha created two pre-production models and sent them back for evaluation in California which gave them the thumbs up.

Two months later the first production

DT1s arrived and they were big sellers with more than 70,000 sold. Until then, serious off-roading hadn't been something that gripped the imagination of Japanese riders, but the new Yamahas quickly got noticed, so much so that in September 1970 Yamaha set up a network of Yamaha Trail Land sites throughout Japan where people could experience off-road riding on the DT range. These proved immensely popular among younger riders in Japan and boosted sales. Established as a serious part of the Yamaha range, the first DT1 was followed, logically, by the DT2, which in turn was replaced by the DT3/DT250.

"ONE OF THE BEST BIKES YAMAHA MADE"

In the UK, Yamaha's DT250 didn't capture the imagination of the motorcycle press who were largely fixated not just on road bikes, but big road bikes. They grew to love its smaller sibling, the DT175 for its ability off-road and were in awe of the DT360 as a snorting beast of a bike that needed to be tamed. But the 250 was felt by the pundits to be neither as light and malleable as the 175, or as imposing as the 360, and the common opinion was that it was neither one thing nor the other.

Out in the real world however, it was both things at the same time. This was particularly important when your motorcycle wasn't just a plaything but was needed as day-to-day transport. The 250 did both jobs with aplomb. You could hack it to work or school in the week, crash it off-road at weekends and bend it back into shape on Sunday afternoon for its

workaday, weekday role. You could even tour on it if you so desired and could live with hours in the thinnish saddle.

By the time the DT250 arrived in 1973 the more road orientated 19in front wheel fitted to the DT1/2 was replaced by a mud-friendly 21in hoop. It had many bits that were extra modern, like dual springs on the rear shocks to make the ride better off-road. How much power did the DT make? Officially it was claimed to produce anything from 21 to 24bhp, which isn't bad for a mass produced two-stroke when you consider that the 1970 AJS Stormer 250 motocrosser, a true competition machine, managed 27bhp. A factory race tuning kit available in the US took the Yamaha out to 30bhp. By now Yamaha's motocrossers, using race versions of the various engines, were all-conquering.

The engine on the DT250 was a 246cc air-cooled two-stroke single with a revolutionary race bred reed valve and a 26mm Mikuni carburettor. The barrel had ports all over it and holes in the piston skirt, all of which produced a better throttle response. It also had two sparkplugs, one pointing backwards at 45 degrees to the piston crown as a spare in case the main side mounted plug fouled, hence the cutaway in the left-hand side of the cylinder head. Just swap the plug lead round and away you went again.

Like most trail bikes the DT wasn't about top speed and would run out of steam once at 75mph in fifth. It would, however, accelerate like nobody's business. Yamaha's Autolube system, the first of its kind, had been launched in 1961 and removed



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The Yamaha DT Enduro Owners' & Enthusiasts' Group on Facebook is a good source of technical information and spares

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the need for petrol premix, so owners didn't have to ride around with a bottle of Castrol 2T bungied to the back of the seat. Although the DT250 tipped the scales at nearly 300lb, the low centre of gravity helped cope with the extra poundage.

It was a slender beast at the front, spreading out a little to the rear, and like



most Japanese trail bikes it had a painted steel exhaust curving sharply upwards. This ran along the inside of the rider's right leg and was prone to catching road crud and to rusting out very quickly indeed, the sharp bend being most at risk. These days finding a replacement will be tricky.

Other sought-after spares are the short chainguard which shields the rider's legs but doesn't protect the rear sprocket and the flimsy-looking lower chain guide, which looks like an ideal candidate for snagging on a loose branch or getting packed with mud. Neither of which would have been big concerns for desert racers, of course. It had steel mudguards, though later models moved to plastic. Both types are now hard to find in decent condition and in the case of the plastic items, the right colour.

The DT had pillion footrests, but as the seat is particularly short the rider needed to know their pillion very well indeed. If they didn't before the ride, they certainly would afterwards. As the rests are bolted straight to the swing arm, the pillion would also need very flexible knees. They are simple to work on and you can get at everything.

Owner Allan Clarke says he could service his DT250A, including decoking the top end, in an hour. He added: "I found my

DT250a to be most useful, had no problems and was great on and off-road. I replaced original long stalk indicators with short rubber, front shock boots, fitted a plastic engine bash plate. One of the best bikes Yamaha made."

Controls were basic but well made. A left-hand switch set contained dip switch, horn, and indicators, with just a throttle on the right. The combined ignition and light switch was centrally mounted between the clocks instead of being tucked away somewhere inaccessible where it was just asking to get damaged or, worse, let the key fall out when things get a bit worn.

There were only two idiot lights, one for the ignition and one for the indicators. The lack of a neutral light was a bit of a problem and it would have been even more of an issue if the gearbox wasn't so slick. The front indicators were mounted on the bars on these early machines, flexible rubber mounts being an innovation yet to come. The choke is by a lever on the top of the Mikuni carb, which is a little fiddly, but to be fair you wouldn't need to use it much. Later models had bar-mounted choke cables.

Brakes were pretty substantial for a trail bike which benefited from having very similar equipment to the 360. The whole



Also try:

HONDA XL250

Honda's XL250 is a bit chunkier than the DT and, like the Yamaha, was more highly regarded as a 350 than a 250. Powered by Honda's four-valve 250 single engine road bike, the XL was an excellent trail bike for the road and a great road bike on the dirt. It was fast, light, and responsive. It was reliable too, until the top end went west, which was usually down to insufficient oil changes. The XL has a lot of fans. At the time it was popular with many, apart from those who felt only a two-stroke would do on the dirt. The later XL250S is a far more modern offering.

BSA 250 GOLD STAR

If you are looking for a 250cc trail bike from the early Seventies, one to consider is the BSA Gold Star 250. Based on the long-lived BSA 250cc pushrod engine and also available with Triumph badging, the trail bike trim was radical, and it had some decent quality bits. It could handle well and was usable up until you got it to 70mph, at which point it would start to shake itself to bits. It could be hard to start, which was problematic if you stalled it in the mud. Increasingly popular, good restored ones are starting to appear, and they are holding their value well.

SUZUKI TS250

Suzuki's TS250 went through a range of looks in a long production run. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but the mid-1970s TS with its tiny petrol tank and big chrome shield on the upswept silencer was arguably the best looking of the bunch and was very much Yamaha's rival. Like Yamaha, as the years went on, Suzuki went for straight lines and sharp angles. The TS250 used a frame that was close to identical to the earlier models and had an engine with origins in the 1960s until 1979. A bit of a hooligan's bike and none the worse for that.

SPECIFICATION:

ENGINE: 246cc air-cooled single-cylinder reed valve two-stroke **COMPRESSION RATIO:** 6.8:1 **POWER:** 21-24bhp @ 6000rpm **GEARBOX:** five-speed **FINAL DRIVE:** Chain **FRAME:** Steel-tubed double cradle **SUSPENSION:** 34mm telescopic forks, twin shock rear **BRAKES:** 150mm single leading shoe drum, 150mm single leading shoe drum **TYRES:** 3.25x21 front 4.00x18 rear **SEAT HEIGHT:** 32.5in/825mm **WHEELBASE:** 55.5in/1410mm **GROUND CLEARANCE:** 8.7in/220mm **DRY WEIGHT:** 275lb 123kg **FUEL CAPACITY:** 2.2gallons/10 litres **TOP SPEED:** 80mph

DT range was developed over the next decade, the 250 getting a radially finned head in 1975 and a complete cosmetic and frame redesign for 1978, with slab-sided bodywork and a monoshock as well as using more practical off-road equipment but considerably less power.

Finding a decent early period DT 250 isn't as hard as you might think, they made loads of them and they are regularly crossing the Atlantic in assorted conditions from rust heaps to concours.

BUY THIS BIKE!

This 1973 DT250 was on sale at Classic Motorcycles Ltd for £4995 at the time of going to press. You'd be hard pushed to find a better one, though it's in such stunning condition that you might be a little reluctant to take it on the dirt. **CBC**



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A trio of ES2S

As Project Norton began to take shape in the hands of Matt, I jumped at the opportunity to road test a trio of ES2 models offered by Norton aficionado Sandy Bloy (Cammy Norton, April 2019).





WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY STUART URQUHART

THE 1957 NORTON ES2 PICTURED HEREABOUTS is a recent Bloy restoration and I had already prepped its story when the 'triple' ride-offer pinged up on my mobile. Sandy would supply two Easytwos of his own and rope in his good friend Bob to bring along an immaculate 1953 plunger – too good an opportunity to miss. I eagerly accepted and we set about making plans for the next sunny day.

Weeks later I arrived at Sandy's workshop to be confronted by three handsome Norton ES2 singles. I was already fully-acquainted with Sandy's own 1957 model, and as I shook Bob's hand I couldn't help but

drool over his immaculate 1953 plunger. I learned that Bob's particular ES2 had been given a new lease of life by Sandy, very much along the lines of Project Norton.

For the road test Sandy had planned a quiet route that skirted the Sidlaw Hills and offered breathtaking views over Angus. As we donned our kit and started engines, I was brimming with excitement for the ride ahead... and it was dry! A nod from Sandy and we were off. I was soon grinning from ear to ear as our synchronised exhausts thrummed and echoed all around us – a magical sensation that can only be experienced within a group of British classic singles on full crack.

1957 MODEL ES2

The younger 1957 AMC machine which I was riding produced an uplifting beat as it surged effortlessly in pursuit of Sandy's fast diminishing ironhead. As Bob began to fill my rear view mirror on his 1953 model, I realised I was holding him up. So I crunched down a gear causing the AMC box to voice its concern at my heavy boot tactics. But as I opened the throttle wide, Bob began to shrink again as my thrumming engine worked hard at reeling in Sandy's stomping ironhead.

I was astonished at how much pace Sandy was squeezing out of his earlier machine, and as we thundered past 55mph I just hoped my Easytwo's brakes would hold back any potential pile-up at the rapidly approaching junction I'd spotted ahead. As I heaved on both anchors, a startled Bob once again filled my rear view mirror. I chuckled when I noticed both his boots were dragging ground in a desperate attempt to scrub off excess speed. I later learned that a poorly fitting pattern brake cable had robbed poor Bob of a normally effective front brake!

By now my AMC box was behaving rather well, and as we negotiated a cluster of testing bends, I began to marvel at the impeccable handling and flickable nature of this pre-Featherbed model. Grip and feel were also inspiring, and a series of mid-bend potholes failed to upset this big single's trajectory and smooth ride. I noted that some engine vibes appeared at around 50mph, but soon departed as the revs and speed began to climb along a straighter section of road. I was having fun!

Clutch and throttle controls all felt light, and the 500cc Norton engine was nothing short of responsive and willing. Whenever we stopped to enjoy the views, all three singles fired up again on the first kick. On my

1957 model no flooding of the Amal concentric or any ignition adjustments were necessary – just deploying the customary valve lifter would ease the big lumpy engine past compression and turn first kick starting into a breeze. Even with ear plugs in, the thumping exhaust note from the original silencer was delightful. It was a truly pleasant ride and as we stopped for



a chat and to rattle off some pics, I was invited to swap my AMC machine for a blast on Sandy's earlier ironhead model.

1955 MODEL ES2

Once again it was 'start engines' and the ironhead puffed into life on my second kick – unfortunately I'd fluffed the valve lifter technique at the first attempt. On the move again, I was immediately struck by the lower gears of the Norton gearbox. The AMC gearbox I was using previously, demanded rapid and slick gear changes; but the Norton 'box was slow and easy to use. A particular delight was holding second, then third gear, to wind up the lazy old engine into a higher performance zone. Third gear proved especially adept in building speed beyond 50mph – then a click into top gear produced an appreciable drop in revs, but a sudden surge of brutal and addictive power. All too soon I was drifting past 60mph.

All afternoon the gearbox proved to be faultless and smooth, whether selecting up or down the cogs; and the light-action clutch neither grabbed nor slipped once during our mad dash across The Sidlaws. This 1955 model was also gifted with better brakes than the full width AMC type anchors. However, both were eclipsed by the excellent rear howler on Bob's earlier machine – it was such a pity his front brake was out of action on the day of our test.

Sandy's 1955 ES2's handling was pretty good too – provided we avoided potholes and road bumps that spoiled the otherwise smooth and tree-lined routes surrounding the Angus hills. As we upped the pace on the straighter sections, I was launched from the saddle several times – a common occurrence with stiffer rigid or plunger sprung frames. Comfort ▶



“The bore and piston were fine but the big end was replaced along with a new set of piston rings”



however, was on a par with the later swinging-arm (AMC) model, although I prefer the ergonomics of prewar motorcycles – which are more familiar to me.

1953 MODEL ES2

I was particularly looking forward to having a ride on Bob's 1953 ES2 – it mostly resembled my much loved prewar Ariel Red Hunter – and is just as handsome. Starting Bob's dream machine was a piece of cake and the engine seemed to fire up before I had completed the downward stroke of the kick-start.

But before we set off on the homeward leg I became a little concerned with the lack of a front brake on Bob's P&J. I need not have worried; for this 1953 model's impressive engine braking and wicked rear brake offered plenty of retardation for heart-in-the-mouth moments.

Again, I was impressed by light controls and a responsive and torque-laden engine. A wonderfully compliant gearbox and smooth transmission further enhanced this ES2's manners, as did the lightest action clutch within the group. The ride and handling proved to be very much in line with Sandy's 1955 model, with both bikes performing extremely well over the country roads we explored.

Once we returned to base I asked both owners which ES2 model was their favourite, and why?

SANDY:

“I've owned many Nortons throughout my life and the ES2 has always been a firm favourite. They are well designed and robust machines that are simple to maintain. Now becoming quite collectable, the ES2 is nevertheless a reliable and everyday motorcycle that provides endless thrills. I love the early, statuesque, ironhead engines – even the later all alloy motors look impressive, although I'm a sucker for the earlier model ES2's long pushrod tunnels.

“Arguably the final Featherbed models are credited

as the ultimate British single – cammy Nortons aside. However pre-Featherbed models are cheaper and still offer the club enthusiast a brilliant classic experience. Much as I love my later model ES2, the plunger and rigid models are my favourites – not only are they entertaining to ride, they make fabulous restoration projects with plentiful spares on offer. I will always have one in my shed!”

BOB:

“Sandy and I have enjoyed a long friendship and I benefit from his advice and experience. I have owned several classics and currently garage a Matchless G11 and Norton Dominator – but my Bloy-restored ES2 is my most prized classic. I confess to pestering Sandy relentlessly into selling it to me. I have always admired the tall and elegant engine and the timeless design of the big Norton single.

“ES2s are particularly reliable and the power and long-legged stamina of the engine makes it an ideal classic for long distance touring or camping weekends. I take it everywhere and can ride all day long without ever feeling tired.

“Furthermore, the ergonomics are the best I have experienced on a classic Fifties motorcycle. I enjoy watching the big single turn heads at classic gatherings and I never tire of talking to other enthusiasts about the joys of owning such a delightful and thrilling motorcycle. It's a great all-rounder and has never let me down. I will never part with it.”

SANDY'S 1957 ES2 RESTORATION

“Following the sale of my 1953 ES2 to Bob last year, I began the hunt for another Norton project,” explained Sandy. “Of interest were two Atlas projects within NOC circles. A member had advertised both were up for sale ‘due to having too many uncompleted projects’. So I contacted him to see if he had any other potential projects for sale in the hope of finding a

single. During our telephone conversation imagine my surprise when the vendor texted me a picture with the question: 'Is this you with my wife?' Naturally I was taken aback; but after studying the digital image that popped up on my mobile's screen – the penny suddenly dropped, and I realised that I'd met this couple at an NOC rally in Yorkshire. The vendor's wife had admired my tattoos and tartan kilt, and requested if her hubby could take a picture of Highlander me and her, posing alongside my cammy Norton. Strange but true," chuckled Sandy.

So after such a great introduction the vendor got back in touch and offered Sandy a partly-built Featherbed Dominator, fitted with an ES2 engine. Sandy takes up the story:

"Weeks later the vendor called and offered me an incomplete Dommi/ES2 project, along with the ES2's original frame, wheels and most of the cycle parts that a friend had stashed away in his parents' loft. I agreed to buy the ES2 engine and parts unseen, and collect them from the vendor's home in Southend-on-Sea. However the vendor kindly offered to dry-build the ES2 so that it could be wheeled into a courier's van and save me a round trip from Perth – I was very grateful, and we shook on the deal.

"When the bike eventually arrived in Perth, the only missing parts were a chainguard, centrestand, dualseat and exhaust – all the other cycle parts and tinware were present and in fairly good condition," confirmed Sandy.

"I began the rebuild in mid-November by pulling the engine apart to check its condition. The bore and piston were fine but the big end was replaced along with a new set of piston rings. Inspection of the top end revealed a cracked exhaust guide – so I replaced both guides before polishing and grinding in the valves. New valve springs were also added during the engine's rebuild. The gearbox was found to be in good condition and after a lick of protective paint here and there, I fitted new rubbers and chains and used the bike as a runabout for a full year – I wanted to give my 1955 ironhead ES2 a well-deserved rest. But just one Scottish winter knocked hell out of the rebuild and I was forced into undertaking a full and proper restoration."

Second time around, the project ES2 came apart very easily. Sandy sent the frame and other cycle parts to be powder coated black by IPF Coatings in Glenrothes. The wheels were sent to local wheelman George Spence and returned with chrome-effect powder coated hubs, laced to stainless rims and spokes. "I was after a robust and lasting finish that would withstand the worst Scottish weather," winked Sandy.

The petrol tank had 'been through the wars' and was expertly restored, lined and painted by professional painter Andy Wardlaw. Sandy discovered a pair of chrome petrol tank side panels within a box of spare parts that came with the bike – 'an unexpected and lucky find' according to the big man. ▶



The dual seat base had already been powder coated and recovered for another Bloy project, but ended up on the ES2 – as did a stock exhaust system. Sandy fitted a new wiring loom and the magneto/dynamo was professionally restored by Bright Sparks & Co. A solid state voltage control box and rectifier joined the electrical upgrades and Sandy patiently restored the original Lucas headlamp switch back to new.

A E Pope restored the speedometer and fitted a new dial but retained the original mileage (Sandy cannot guarantee that the recorded mileage is correct). Other small parts such as levers and rubbers were supplied by Wassel. New drive chains were fitted throughout and new steering head bearings and a damper unit were sourced from Norvil, along with a set of new replica Girling rear shocks. Sandy made up his own control cables and treated all the alloy parts to a 'spit and polish' on his dolly mop. The concentric carb was ultrasonically cleaned before new seals and gaskets were added.

"I was fortunate to have a store of original parts, all with good chrome, so no outsourced chroming service was required – which is just as well given

the lengthy wait for chroming these days. I also fitted new Commando stanchions and seals to the Roadholder forks. The original bars were swapped for a pair of Commando handlebars which offer better comfort. I also fitted the customary anti-wet sumping tap – which, although a labour saving device, is not to everyone's taste. AWS taps have always served me well – along with simple magnets that I attach to the drain plug for obvious reasons.

"As the project came in various boxes without any legitimate paperwork, I had to apply for an age-related plate, and I must say that the DVLA provided an excellent service. The ES2 restoration was a fairly simple exercise and the bike has run faultlessly ever since its completion.

"I love my Norton ES2s, especially the early Fifties models. Curiously, I often find myself in a line-up of camera wielding admirers – hell bent on a tyre-kicking session with my 'ex' – who's now shamelessly fallen into the loving arms of my good friend Bob!"

Update: Now that Sandy has a prewar Sunbeam project awaiting his attention, his restored 1957 AMC ES2 is up for sale. Just Google 'Sandy Bloy Motorcycles of Perth' and make him a sensible offer. **CBC**



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8910CBG	DISTANCE PIECES - ROCKER BOX - ES2, 18 & 20 - PRE-1947	£46
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19800CBG	GUIDE - TAPPET - ES2, 19, 50 - 1957 TO 1963	£50
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C188CBG	GUIDE - VALVE - 18, 19, 20, ES2, 50 - PRE 1959	£9
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A2/156KITCBG	KIT - STUD, NUT & WASHER - CYL/HEAD - 16H & BIG 4 - SET 9+9+9	£56
037000KITCBG	KIT - VALVES & GUIDES - 18, 19, ES2 - PRE 59 - WITH COLLETS	£92
0370009KITCBG	KIT - VALVES & GUIDES - ES2 - 59 TO 63 - INC CLIPS+ COLLETS	£96
187379KITCBG	KIT - VALVES & GUIDES - MODEL 50 - 59 TO 63 - INCLUDES CLIPS	£58
18737KITCBG	KIT - VALVES & GUIDES - MODEL 50 - PRE 1959	£57
A2/67CBG	LEVER - VALVE LIFTER - 18, 19, 50, ES2 - IRON HEAD	£21
D37/156CBG	NUT - CYLINDER HEAD SLEEVE - ES2, 19, 50 - 1956	£8



A3/156SSCBG	NUT - CYLINDER HEAD SLEEVE - ES2, 50, 18, 19 - STAINLESS	£18
C3/105CBG	PAD - ROCKER - OHV SINGLES - 1946 TO 1957	£19
10394CBG	PAD - ROCKER - OHV SINGLES - FITS BOTH - 1958 TO 1964	£19
NM10394CBG	PAD - ROCKER ARM - 18, 50, ES2 - 1958-1964	£19
8909CBG	PAD - ROCKER ON VALVE - ES2, 18 & 20 - PRE-1946	£19
LJRL1CBG	SET - MAIN BEARINGS - SINGLES - 1933 ONWARDS	£100
216123CBG	SET - SPRINGS - VALVE - ES2 & MODEL 50 - 1959 TO 1963	£22
143978CBG	SET - SPRINGS - VALVE - ES2/19/50 - PRE 1959 - LARGER	£21
9122CBG	SET - SPRINGS - VALVE - MODELS 1 & 16H - 1933-1945	£16
A2/144CBG	SET - SPRINGS - VALVE - MODELS 1 & 16H - 1946-1955	£17
037000SETCBG	SET - VALVES & GUIDES - 18, 19, ES2 - 2+2 - PRE 1959	£67
0370009SETCBG	SET - VALVES & GUIDES - ES2 - 2+2 - 19 TO 64 - LESS CLIPS	£74
13779CBG	SHAFT - TIMING SIDE CRANK - 1, 16H, 18, 19, 50, ES2	£53
C3/64CBG	SPINDLE - VALVE LIFTER - SINGLES - O.H.V. MODELS ONLY	£13
C3/75CBG	TAPPET - COMPLETE - 18, 19, 50, ES2 - LATE TYPE	£70
50007CBG	TAPPET - ES2, 19, 50 - 1957 TO 1963	£70
C2/691EXCBG	TAPPET - EXHAUST - 16H & BIG 4 - 1946 TO 1955	£70
C2/691INCBG	TAPPET - INLET - 16H & BIG 4 - 1946 TO 1955	£70
C3/86CBG	TOP - PUSHROD - THREADED FOR ADJUSTER - 18, 19, ES2, 50	£12
037000CBG	VALVE - ES2 - INLET & EXHAUST - LEAD FREE	£14
9121CBG	VALVE - INLET & EXHAUST - 18, 19, 20 & ES2 - PRE-1946	£19

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Marketing Triumph

Triumph's name may be the same, but the company's badge has been constantly changed and adjusted. Miles Perkins, Triumph's head of brand management, had a hand in the latest logo and looks back at its history

WORDS BY TRIUMPH PHOTOGRAPHY BY TRIUMPH AND MORTONS ARCHIVE

THE FIRST TRIUMPH BICYCLE emerged in 1885, with the first motorcycle in 1902. And since the first model, they have carried the company's logo.

Whether it's spelled out in the red, white and blue of the Union flag, the simplified black 'smile line' Triumph moniker or the more recent triangle treatment, it's a brand that is recognised by riders and non-riders alike. The logo is where the brand meets the style of the era.

Miles Perkins is now Triumph's head of brand management, while a few years ago he was part of a design team at the company behind brands like Google, Tesco and Uber. And the latest in a long line of Triumph logos was their doing.

"For me the Triumph logo represents an incredible history and attitude, and generates a great deal of reverence and passion from fans all over the world, something the team took very seriously when carefully developing the latest version of this marque in 2015.

"The creation of the new badge with its Union Flag detailing and Triumph logo was inspired by the original maker's timing cover triangles from the 1930s and was first sketched out at the factory with the Triumph engineering team."

Sadly, he doesn't have that original hand-drawn sketch anymore – "I'm kicking myself as this would have been a wonderful memento" – but he does have the inside track on how and why the company's logo has changed since 1902.

"The logo is synonymous with the passion and independent attitude that the bearer shares. The likes of Steve McQueen, Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen, who all wore T-shirts bearing the logo, helped make it a metaphor for style, individuality and fashion," he says.

Each of the 12 main different adaptations of the logo since 1902 has represented not only the British-ness and ambition of the firm but also the mood and design style of the era, with each marking a barely discernible yet markedly different change of emphasis.

Logos were essential before television. The need among riders for a mark of distinction or branding that stated their bike was the real deal, stands to this day. Without modern media outlets to spread the word, visual symbolism from the beginning was a powerful tool, and is even stronger now.

THE TRUMPET: A 19TH-CENTURY MARK OF APPROVAL

"One of the very first logos had a slightly religious leaning to it; it featured a trumpet above the Triumph name. The trumpet possibly signified the triumphant fanfare at the gates of heaven. With Siegfried Bettmann choosing Triumph over his own name to brand his new cycles, both for being more easily pronounced and for intoning a much more positive and uplifting spirit. Those early bikes gained the nicknamed Trumpets from their owners.



CREST: 1902-1906

"The crest logo represents Triumph as a company and product you could trust through its confident and bold establishment design. It also intones a celebration of the imperialism of the time, and the six flags possibly represent the continents covered by the Commonwealth."

FIRST SIGNATURE: 1907-1922

"This script style design logo sought to make Triumph appear less of a faceless manufacturer and more approachable, by making the firm's voice more personal, stressing the emphasis that was put on human craft, care and engineering. In simple terms this logo said 'you can trust us'."



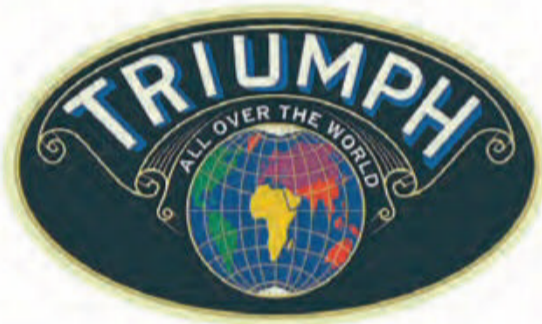
**THE SECOND TRIUMPH
CREST: 1922-1932**

“After the First World War, faith and trust in British products was a major selling point for firms based in the UK, and Bettmann strengthened that message with an evolution of the old crest design. A shrewd businessman and Bavarian skilled in import and export, he recognised that Coventry was at that time, the silicon valley of the bike world and added red, white and blue to the patriotic mix as well as emphasising the links with Coventry. A clever move.”



MAP: 1932-1933

“This was a reasonably short-lived logo and not as well known as the script version. It reflects the logo’s expanding role in advertising and magazines of the day and stresses the message that Triumph encompasses the world, and the world can be conquered more easily on a Triumph.”



SMILE LINE: 1934-1990

“Advertising was becoming an altogether more sophisticated art and the idea that branding was about delivering a clearer message on quality and personal choice came increasingly to the fore. This was the start of the age of the science of brand with the advent of television so the logo, with its distinctive smile line, was born.

“The T in Triumph was drawn to symbolise the piston in an engine’s cylinder head while the serif font and sweeping line from the R to the left of the H were very much the design flavour of the day, bringing a more instantly recognisable human touch taking the lead from Victoriana and the Art Deco design.”



TRIUMPH REBORN: 1990-2005

“Following receivership in 1983 and John Bloor’s rescue shortly after, the logo needed another evolution that reflected the amazing renaissance of the business and the energy of the motorcycle boom of the 1990s. Every element of the logo was sharpened up a little and the smile line brought to the front of the H to give it more balance, reflecting the new-found strength and stability of the brand. In line with the design style of the day it became a more solid, modern and symmetrical logo to be trusted.”



SERIOUS BUT WITH MORE PERSONALITY: 2005

“A subtle change in colour and continuation of the sweeping line – which some have suggested represents the open road from valley into mountains – and the addition of a contemporary blue colour change modernised the logo all over again signifying the comeback was complete, with Triumph now starting to grow across all categories. The new design simplified the main strokes of the letters even further whilst introducing a more flowing feel with subtle rounded letter edge detailing. This added even more personality and distinctiveness whilst maintaining the classic overall logo form and smile line.”

DESIGN BRIEF FOR A MODERN ICON

“The brief in 2015 was to evolve the logo once again to better represent, and sit

TRIUMPH

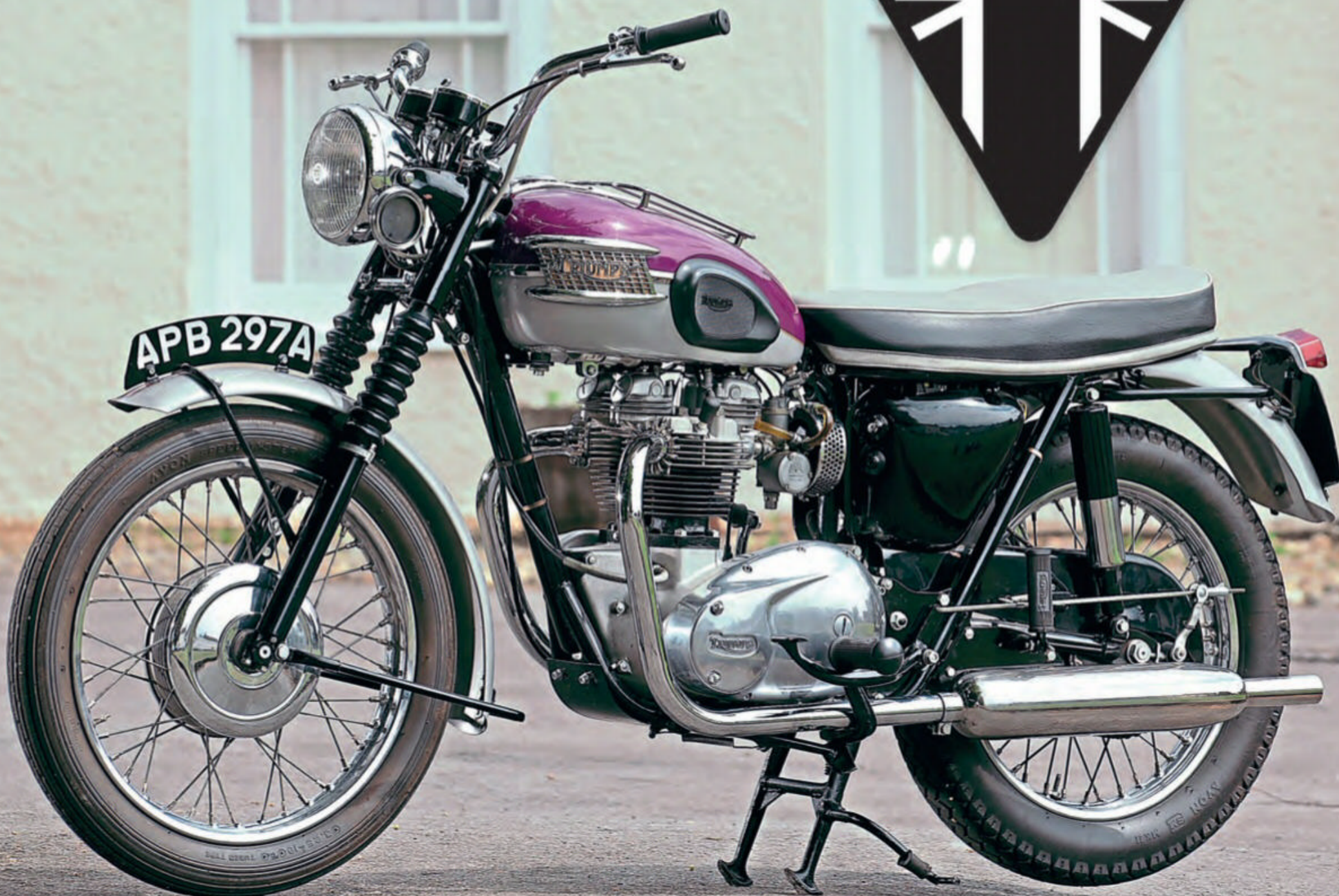
alongside, the breadth of new products and categories Triumph had grown into – from the classic, to the sports and the adventure, all without losing its core iconic flowing smile line and form. The first step was to subtly update the letters, making the spacing and alignments more symmetrical, lowering the height of the T and lightening the letter forms a little.

“We also reduced the amount of serif detailing whilst maintaining the soft rounded corners. Our aim was threefold, to keep that friendly, human feel and all those heritage cues, to make it cleaner and more suitable for use in digital advertising and finally to have a logo that would look as right on a naked sports bike as it did on a modern classic.”

Along with an evolved logo, Triumph

also created the new triangle badge to provide a more singular symbol of the brand. This incorporated the Union Flag, the logo and timeless shape of the original ‘engine makers mark’ that first appeared with patent details on the engine casing of 1939 Speed Twins.

Miles is proud of his involvement and suitably glowing in his loyal way. That in itself, is a good sign: “Most motorcyclists who ride big bikes would certainly know the Triumph logo and continue to associate it with a rich, long history, technical excellence, and British engineering. Our challenge, as those that came before us who have shared custodianship of this incredible brand, is to make sure that as times change the brand continues to evolve to reflect today’s riders and their passion.” **CBC**





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BRITISH BIKE GUIDE

PART ONE

THANKS TO THE WORLDWIDE ISSUES AT THE moment, we couldn't bring you the usual supplement on British postwar bikes; instead we've decided to serialize it in the mag. So, welcome to part one of *Classic Bike Guide's* British Bike Guide!

We've attempted to put as many of the postwar British bikes together, with a few column inches about some of the main bikes built from the end of the Second World War, with an archive or contemporary photo to help identification.

Much of it was written by our very own Frank Westworth, so there are some personal observations with witty opinions – you'll notice he loves Matchless and Norton... It's not definitive, it's not a story of the British bike industry and it's not a buying guide. And there will be some we've missed and some you'll disagree with, so let us know!

But this is here to give a brief insight into the many, many bikes manufactured in the UK that may be of interest to you, or indeed someone you know who may be getting into the world we all (mostly) love.

WHAT'S THE BEST MODEL FOR ME?

Interest rates are at an all-time low and buying a(nother) classic bike is easy! Getting the right bike for you is slightly less so though, so if the classic bug has firmly bitten and your savings are currently sizzling away in your pocket, there are a few honest, even harsh, questions you need to ask yourself before you decide which bike to go for.

How much use will it get? Do you like working on bikes or just riding them? What will you use it for?

If you're used to a modern bike with turn-key reliability, power aplenty and you are planning to cover decent miles, then a later bike, maybe even a modern retro-styled bike, would be best.

If, on the other hand, you're after something for the monthly VMCC bumble, then you can look for something a little older, even an oddball. However, if you're after a project to provide time and solace in the workshop, then you need to look for spares availability and if wise, a project that's as complete as possible. Oh, if only I'd been told this before...

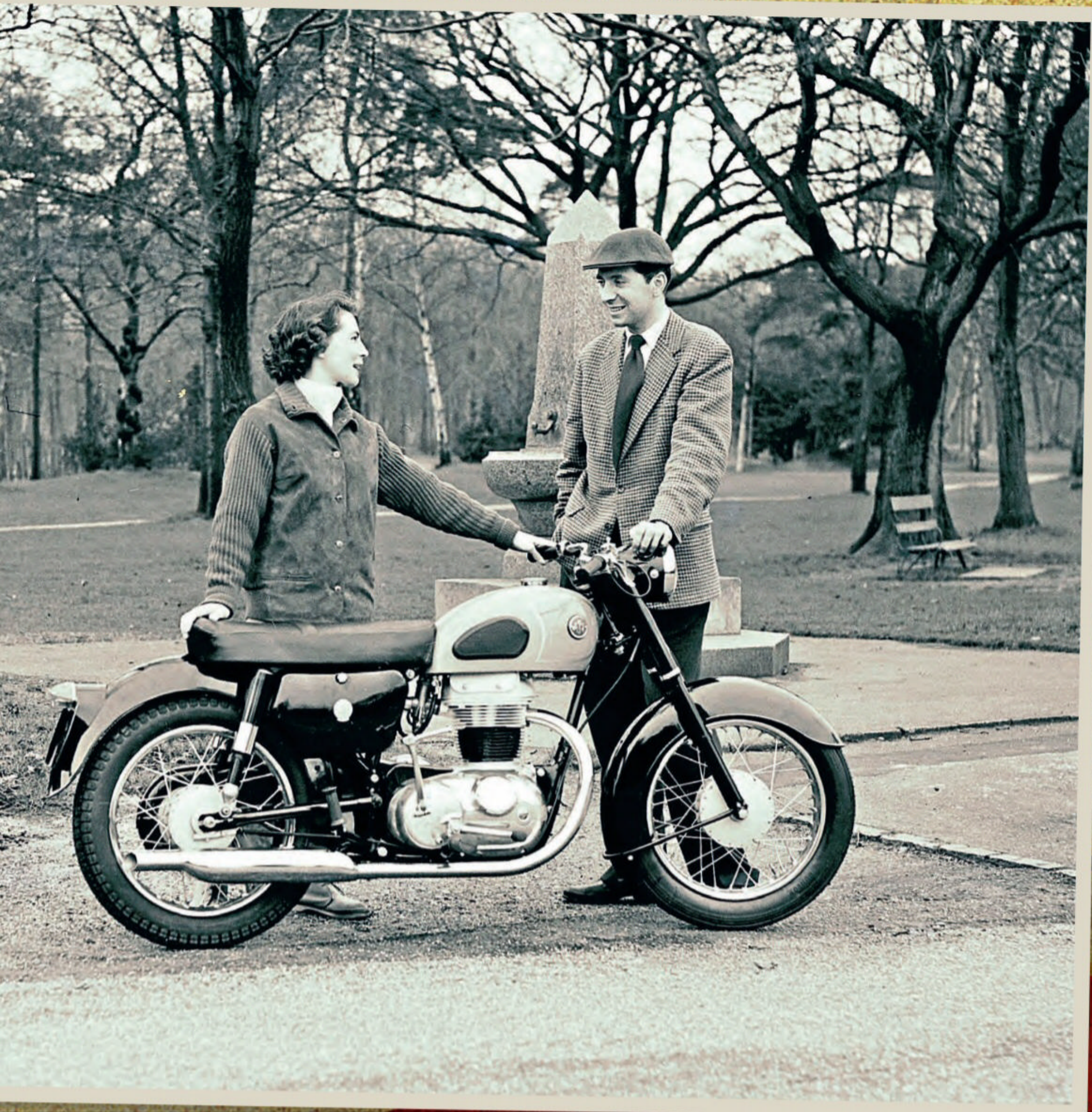
Unless you grew up with British bikes, identifying which classic is your own particular dream may be tricky. Many bikes had several names, yet often there were prewar and postwar models with the same name, yet totally different. Then there were the technology changes as models evolved – unit or pre-unit, girder forks or tele-forks, rigid, plunger or swinging arm frames, side valve, overhead valve or overhead cam engines.

And is the reg original? What is easy – too easy – to get wrong, is the exact spec, and as a result, the price.

There are, for example, many different Triumph Bonneville's, and if you decide that your life will only be complete if shared with a Bonnie then you need to know which sort of Bonnie you want to share it with. It all sounds simple, but it's not. Sometimes. If you know you want a 1965 T120TT and nothing else, you'll be fine.

Sticking with the Bonnie idea, if you want the whole 1950s Rocker thing – complete with pre-unit charm, genuine Edward Turner styling and a glorious tangerine paint job – then you are not going to be happy with a 1972 T120 rather than a T120 from 1959





This applies to all marques and all models. Before you spend your money, ride a few of the bikes on your shortest short list. Join the relevant owners' club, join the club before you spend your money — so you can meet owners, maybe even ride their bikes, and learn about the reality of life with your dream bike. This is essential.

If you've narrowed it down to a couple of candidates, chosen whether you want a concours machine, runner or project, it's now a case of looking at prices. Classic bikes don't benefit from an industry-wide price guide, such as *Glasses Guide* or the *CAP* book. Prices are whatever people think their bike is worth, or what they feel they

can get for it. The prices in this publication are purely there as a rough guide, taken from our own classifieds, auction prices and industry experts, but they're just a guide. There's no easy way around this, you just need to do your homework.

You need to become an expert. Follow bikes online, in auctions and from dealers. And of course, they will all be different and in different conditions. Do the numbers match? Are you bothered if it's reflected in the price? After all, most bikes will be more than half a century old and rarely original. Look at a bike that seems okay apart from some tarnished mudguards and iffy spokes. Budget at least £125 per wheel and

mudguards, depending on whether you can find new/old stock or if you're happy with pattern parts, for around £300. Paintwork is getting more and more expensive. Don't trust the bloke who says he'll do it for a couple of hundred — you'll regret it. In fact, be careful who you do trust. Ask around; there are a lot of 'experts' out there...

Never lose sight of your goal — there are minefields, but once through you should have a depreciation-free way of having a lot of fun. We hope this guide inspires you and remember should you have any questions, please contact us at editor@classicbikeguide.com. Enjoy.

The Classic Bike Guide team.

AJS & MATCHLESS

By 1950, Associated MotorCycles Limited in South London was building bikes under both AJS and Matchless badges. At one time, AMC boasted the largest factory in the world dedicated to motorcycle production.

In 1953 it acquired the Norton marque, at first keeping production in Birmingham but eventually moving Norton in with AJS and Matchless in 1962. AMC also built James and Francis-Barnett motorcycles

(also in the Midlands and not at Plumstead). So the varied range of models offered under the AMC banner stretched from 98cc two-strokes all the way through to stonking 750cc four-stroke superbikes.

The company was also successful in two-wheeled sports, and apart from the dedicated and highly specialised road-racers it also built a lot of competition-based roadsters.

The whole lot collapsed in 1966, and

was reborn as Norton-Villiers, concentrating on the Norton Commando series and a range of two-stroke AJS off-rovers.

Model designations are shown for AJS, with Matchless equivalents shown in brackets, as the two marques increasingly differed only in finish and trim styles. The bikes are very solid, well-engineered and rewarding to ride. Spares are plentiful, and there is an excellent and very active owners' club.

Model 20 (Matchless G9)

498cc (66 x 72.8mm) ohv twin || 410lb
|| 60mpg || 90mph || 1948-61

AMC's twin took a different path from the already established designs from BSA, Triumph, etc. So the engines are unusual, having a third main bearing between the cylinders, and

separate barrels and cylinder heads. The engine is a notably clean design, with no external oil plumbing to spoil the lines and leak at the joints. It was never particularly popular with the sporting riders, although it was a handsome motorcycle and reliable enough. There were no rigid-framed or plunger-framed twins. Gradual

development included the switch from a Burman gearbox to one of AMC's own design (aka the Norton gearbox, which went on to handle the power of the Commando!) in 1956. The 'jampot' rear suspension was replaced by Gang units the following year.

This is a good, reliable

conservative motorcycle. Late ones are rare and very good, with alternator electrics and excellent duplex frames. Early jampot models can have odd handling and poor brakes.

Prices:

low £2500 || high £4000



ADVERTORIAL PAIN RELIEF FOR BARRY AND SHEILA

Although only in their early 50's, Barry and Sheila Samson of Gwent had been suffering from health problems for years. Sheila had pains in her legs and a frozen shoulder which kept her awake at night. She also found getting out of chairs difficult. The constant feeling of pain and tiredness was really getting her down.

Barry was suffering from muscle pains and arthritis of the hip and knees and could no longer ride his bike. He could only walk very short distances and was having weekly physiotherapy sessions to help his mobility.

A few weeks ago they read about Bioflow magnetic therapy wristbands and decided to try them. They were both thrilled with the results. Sheila says, "I'm getting out of chairs much

more easily and my frozen shoulder is much better. I'm now getting a good night's sleep for the first time in years and people keep telling me I've got my smile back!"

Barry says, "I felt an improvement very quickly. I'm now walking further and have been unexpectedly signed off from my physiotherapy as I've improved so much. It's great to be able to get about without help. Last week I started taking my bike out again and am absolutely thrilled at the thought of getting back to riding it regularly.

If you would like information about Bioflow magnetic therapy products please contact Jenny Ryan, 0114 2307844 / 07817671259
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BRIAN'S BAD BACK BETTER WITH BIOFLOW



60 year old Brian Peters of Kent had been suffering from arthritis in his back and knees for a number of years. Despite taking painkillers, he was finding his work in heavy engineering increasingly difficult and painful and was unable to enjoy his hobby of riding and restoring vintage bikes.

A friend advised him to try a Bioflow Magnetic therapy wristband as it had really helped the pain in his wrist and ankles so Brian bought a Bioflow Elite from distributor, Jenny Ryan. He says, "I was really pleased with the service. I received the Elite the day after I ordered it and

now I've stopped taking painkillers, my back and knees are much better and I no longer get any pain from an old operation scar. My wife is also delighted as she says I'm much better tempered! Several of my friends have commented on how much better I look and now they are also buying Bioflows from Jenny."

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Model 31 (Matchless G12)
646cc (72 x 79.3mm) ohv twin || 430lb
|| 55mpg || 100mph || 1959-66

The most common AMC twin. The earliest models were plainly a stroked stretch of the 600cc Model 30, and developed an over-exaggerated reputation for fragility. The early 650 crank was supposed to be delicate, but only the alternator versions, which carried the massive alternator rotor on a drive-side crankshaft extension, had problems. AMC responded by forging post-1960 cranks in a very tough nodular iron. The post-61 models are very sound, if slightly staid, machines. In common with the rest of the heavyweight range, they acquired Norton forks and wheels for 1964, along with 12V electrics. Again, genuine CS and CSR versions will hold 25% higher prices, but watch out for fakes.

Prices:
low £3500 || high £7500



Matchless G15/45
749cc ohv twin || 430lb || 50mpg
105mph || 1962-63

Conscious of the ever-growing demand - particularly in America - for more power, AMC stretched its engine out to 750cc and offered the Matchless G15/45 (there was no AJS equivalent) for sale in the US. It was strangely unsuccessful. Myth suggests that the engine was unreliable, vibratory and not very good, but repatriated bikes are very pleasant, beefy torque-deliverers, and sound in wind and limb. The idea of a 750 twin was resurrected in 1963-64, but the new model used the Norton Atlas engine to power a range of models collectively known as 'AMC hybrids'.

Prices:
low £7500 || high £11,000... if you can find one



Model 8 (Matchless G5)
348cc (72 x 82.5mm) ohv single ||
350lb || 70mpg || 80mph || 1960-62

Bigger version of the Model 14, built with better forks taken from the early 1950s heavyweight but with a slightly feeble brake from the two-stroke range. They provide a better ride than the early 250 Model 16 (Matchless G3), although by 1962 there was nothing

between them apart from better torque. The 350s didn't last long as they competed with AMC's own heavyweight 350 singles, without being better, just slightly lighter. Surprisingly quick and pleasant to ride, and currently enjoying rising prices along with their 250 stablemates.

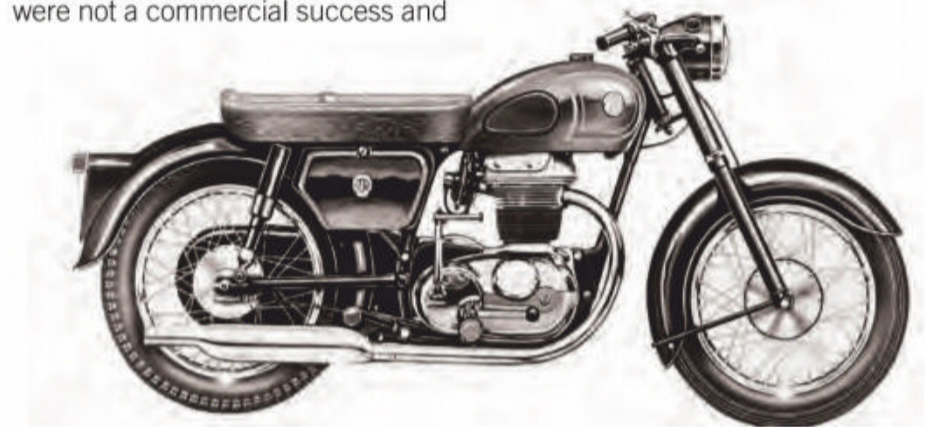
Prices:
low £2500 || high £4250

Model 14 (Matchless 62)
248cc (70 x 65mm) ohv single || 340lb
|| 75mph || 1958-66 || 85mpg

AMC understood that it needed a lightweight four-stroke motorcycle to rival Triumph's Cub and BSA's C-range. Intelligently, they used a bicycle based on its James two-strokes and designed its own new four-stroke engine to fit. That engine appeared to be of 'unit' construction (where engine and gearbox are built into shared castings), but the gearbox was separate and cylindrical, attached to the crankcases by a pair of steel straps. The 250s and the similar 350s were not a commercial success and

are not widely sought-after today. However, they are fun to ride (CSR 250s in particular) and offer a low-cost intro to classic motorcycling with plentiful spares and simple construction for straightforward spannering. Prices are currently rising, as the demand for physically smaller old bikes increases. The best bets are the AMC-forked versions and the late CSRs. As with most AMC models, the 250 was available in standard, 'S' (chrome mudguards), CS (off-road styling), and CSR (café racer) versions.

Prices
low £1500 || high £3000



Model 16 (Matchless G3)
348cc (69 x 93mm until 1963, then
72 x 85.5mm) ohv single || 400lb ||
80mpg || 75mph || 1945-66

Soundly engineered and finished trad Brit single. AMC singles are immensely strong, engineered to cover countless miles with little maintenance and no complaint. They started as rigid machines very close in spec to the wartime Matchless WD G3L, then switched to swinging arm suspension as the end of the 1940s approached, avoiding the 'plunger' rear suspension used by others. The late 1950s models with alternator

lighting and half-decent brakes matched to fine handling are the most common, although the rigid-framed models have a considerable minimalist cachet and are rising in value at the moment. Also unusual, although not particularly popular, are the 1964-on versions, with their (relatively) short-stroke engine, Norton forks and wheels. Rigids fetch the highest prices, but spares for the later ones are easier. Very easy bike to live with; very few faults.

Prices:
low £2200 || high £3750 (CS comp models a lot more)





Model 33 (Matchless 615)
745cc (73 x 89mm) ohv twin || 420lb ||
45mpg || 110mph || 1964-68

Following the sales failure of the G15/45, AMC dropped the donkey from its Norton Atlas 750 twin into an AJS/Matchless chassis to create the Matchless 750 twin. The result is a terrific motorcycle, more rewarding to ride than the sum of its parts. The legendary Atlas shakes are much reduced in the hybrids, perhaps because the heavy-lugged AMC frame absorbs more energy than the welded Norton Featherbed. The 750 hybrids came in three forms, a Mk.2 UK-style roadster, a CS street scrambler and a CSR café racer. Confusingly, the CS and CSR can be similar, especially US-spec models. The AJS versions are very rare and therefore expensive. The final hybrids used the same engine squeezed into the cycle parts of the Matchless G85CS scrambler, replacing that machine's ohv alloy 500 single, to produce the P11, P11A and Ranger 750, often badged as Nortons. These machines are addictive, rare, highly sought-after and highly priced!

Prices:
low £6000 || £15,000

Model 30 (Matchless G11)
593cc (72 x 72.8mm) ohv twin || 410lb
|| 60mpg || 90mph || 1956-58

As Norton (under AMC ownership) took its 500cc Dominator 88 and stretched it into the 600cc Dominator 99, so AMV stretched its own 500 twin, simply over-boring it a little to provide the extra capacity. This is the least common of the AMC twins, and the 600s have been described as the best model in the series. The sports (CS) version is very unusual, very handsome and will cost an easy £1000 more than an equivalent standard roadster, and the very rare CSR version may fetch even more.

Prices:
low £3500 || high £7500



Model 18 (Matchless G80)
498cc (82.5 x 93mm until 1963, then
86 x 85.5mm) ohv single || 400lb ||
55mpg || 80mph || 1945-66

The 500 version of the very traditional AMC single really is a bigger version of the 350, with a bit more of everything, especially torque. Excellent riders' machines; classic in every way. They share almost all the components apart from the piston, flywheels, barrel and head with the smaller engine, which gives them a tendency to knock out some pattern big ends very quickly. However, this is not the problem it was, as the

quality of AMC spares continues to improve. This is a pleasant touring motorcycle, with good handling and comfort allied to a relaxed 60mph cruising speed. It's easy to convert a 350 single to a 500 as the strokes are the same, but to run smoothly they also need the 500's flywheels. When considering a machine that claims a competition heritage with engine number suffixes C, CS or TCS, check with owners' club before buying.

Prices:
low £3500 || high £6000 (CS comp
models a lot more)



G80
499cc ohc single || 390lb || 55mpg ||
95mph || 1987-90

Early starting and finish problems would appear to have been overcome on the later bikes, and the G80 makes a pleasant, practical, comfortable classic styled bike for everyday use. If you have a choice, opt for the electric start and twin front discs, just accept that you'll pay more for one of these. The once-famous marque was offered a new lease of life from a new home in Newton Abbot in Devon. Only one model was offered; a Rotax-engined 500cc single, either with or without a second front brake disc to handle the power of the electric start (a joke). The frame, designed by Triumph engineer Brian Jones, is oil-bearing, light and neat. Many spares are available from either the company (L F Harris) or from Rotax. The G80 suffered from over-pricing, sadly, and didn't do well.

Prices:
low £2100 || high £4000



ARIEL

Ariel, which built its range of high-quality machines in Selly Oak, Birmingham, was a part of the BSA group of companies, and the BSA influence became greater as the years rolled by.

Its machines always had a carefully crafted air of quality, with thoughtful styling and finish. The singles were conventional in design, strong and reliable performers with a solid competition heritage to complement their build quality.

There are two twins, the 500, which is an Ariel design, and the 650, which is a lightly redesigned BSA A10. All Ariel machines used Burman gearboxes despite the increasing use

of BSA Group components in other areas, and they have a gloriously prewar primary chaincase design, complete with a dry clutch running in its own external housing.

Gear changes are typically Burman; slow but sure and silent if adjusted properly. The famous Square Fours, with their cylinders arranged in a square and running two crankshafts, are some sort of pinnacle of British engineering, although they can be expensive to restore. The final flourish was the introduction of the Leader/Arrow range of two-stroke twins, and when these were discontinued in 1965, Ariel was no more.

We will ignore the Ariel 3... Spares okay (one good specialist dealer, and the entirely excellent owners' club), apart from tinware.

In common with most other major manufacturers, Ariel entered the postwar world with a range of mostly rigid machines, but was a little ahead of the mainstream game in that it'd introduced its sprung frame just before the Second World War on the Square four. It was an unusual design, more clever than most. After the war, it offered rigid and springer frames, finally introducing their own excellent swinging arm frame in 1954.

VH (Red Hunter)

497cc ohv single || 375lb || 55mpg || 85mph || 1945-58

A very sound, big banger, often with a beautiful maroon finish (like the

rest of the four-stroke range) and great reliability. Rigid models are always good to ride, though some consider the later swinging arm machines to be the best riders and the most oil-tight. HS (scrambles)

and HT (trials) comp versions are very highly sought-after and highly priced as a result, so check that what you're buying is the genuine article. Ariel's singles are still underrated, too, and are more affordable

than many others, despite their excellence on the road.

Prices:

low £2800 || high £6000



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Leader
 247cc two-stroke twin || 330lb ||
 55mpg || 70mph || 1958-65

A radical concept; a wholly enclosed, fully faired touring

motorcycle, with a range of accessories that almost defied description in the 1950s. One of the few wholly original designs to emerge from the postwar British industry. Especially recommended

to those who still enjoy leisurely lane cruising. The fairing is excellently effective, and the only real downside is the poor braking. Check that the pressed-steel beam frame is not rotted, especially around

the suspension pick-up points. Comfortable and clean.

Prices:
 low £2200, high £3500

Colt
 197cc ohv single || 270lb || 80mpg ||
 65mph || 1954-60

A smart-looking utility single loosely based on BSA's C11 with added Arielness. A faintly unusual idea, as 250cc was a more popular capacity both for commuters and learner riders. Spares good for the engines; Ariel-specific parts less so.

Prices:
 low £1500 || high £2500





KH (Fieldmaster)
498cc ohv twin || 390lb || 65mpg ||
90mph || 1948-58

Sweet touring twin with a unique motor in standard Ariel cycle parts. Engine spares can be hard to find, and the bikes are quite a rare sight these days. The engine is unique to the model, and is unusual in having its pushrods at the outside corners of the block. The 1953-only all-alloy KHA is the most rare and will cost more. Available with rigid, Anstey link plunger or swinging arm frames. The all-iron rigid twin is a particular charmer, not unlike Norton's iron twins in the way it rides.

Prices:
low £3500 || high £6250



FH (Huntmaster)
648cc ohv twin || 400lb || 55mpg ||
100mph || 1954-58

Solid touring 650 twin, with a BSA A10-based engine that retained the tractable, quiet iron cylinder head to its end. Probably the most usable Ariel twin because of the easy availability of engine spares, and upgradeable using any sporting BSA A10 components. A stylish but sometimes slightly more expensive

alternative to an A10, entirely capable of long-distance two-up travel. However, like other Ariels, the tin bits are scarce, although the rise of replica parts has eased this somewhat. The brakes can be marginal, although they were deemed sufficient for sidecar use in their day.

Prices:
low £3000 || high £6500



NH (Red Hunter)
347cc ohv single || 365lb || 70mpg ||
75mph || 1945-58

A handsome working single in the trad Brit mould. Few special virtues or vices. The unusual Anstey-link plunger models can be challenging to ride and interesting to own; the excellent swinging arm frame handles rather better. The single engines are all developments of a prewar design, and their ancestry is plain to anyone who observes that their single oil pump is almost identical to that fitted to countless Triumph twins. Few faults, although the Lucas Magdyno can be expensive to refurbish.

Prices:
low £2200 || high £4000

Arrow
247cc two-stroke twin || 305lb ||
55mpg || 75mph || 1960-5

A stripped-down Leader, built to utilise spare capacity in the Ariel works and then found to be popular with learner riders, the odd-looking Arrow was smooth and fast by the standards of the time, although it

was also smoky and underbraked. Also built as the Sports (or 'Golden') Arrow (20hp, 80mph) and finally as the 200 Arrow.

Prices:
low £2200 || high £3500



Square Four
997cc ohv four || 480lb || 45mpg ||
100mph (Mk.1 and Mk.2) || 1949-1959

The famous British postwar four is a machine of immense appeal, considerable mechanical noise and great smoothness. Early models are supposedly prone to overheating, and the solo handling can be a little exciting at speed, not least because Ariel never put its swinging arm Four into production and the Anstey link plunger rear end can struggle with the weight and performance. The brakes can also struggle to cope with the speed and mass. For all that,



the Squariel is a highly desirable and functional bike with a unique cachet. Mk.2 bikes easier to rebuild.

Prices:
low £10,000 || high £16,000



VB
598cc sv single || 370lb || 50mpg ||
60mph || 1945-58

One of the last of the sidevalve sloggers (along with BSA's M20 and M21); great reliability, massive charm and almost no performance. Like a lot of sidevalves, they offer an

alternative experience to more common ohv singles. If you have a choice, go for the rigid, which boasts considerable character, the swinging arm model rather less so. Do not expect great acceleration or excitement

Prices:
low £2750 || high £4250



Fork overhaul: Part Two!

Last month (CBG May 2020) Steve Cooper looked at how to strip telescopic forks. With everything cleaned, it's now time to see how you inspect and rebuild them

NOW IS THE POINT AT WHICH the rebuilding of the forks can commence on the following assumptions:-

- The stanchions are in good condition, aren't bent and show no signs of pitting
- A pair of suitable fork seals, washers and oil are to hand
- Proper examination has been made of all parts and any bushes, where fitted, have been inspected and/or renewed as necessary

Generally a fork rebuild is significantly less fraught than the initial strip down simply because everything is clean and free of oil. That is as long as the spares you've ordered are the correct ones! As always a selection of appropriate, decent quality, tools make the task easier.

The forks we're working on are typical early 1970s and as time moved on, although the appearance hardly changed, the internals began to get subtly more sophisticated. By the end of the decade high end and competition

machines were running cartridge forks which offered substantially better damping control over a much wider range of deflections. Although outside our rebuild feature many of the advantages of cartridge forks can be employed in earlier designs via devices known as 'fork emulators'. If you want to get the best out of an older bike's suspension without modifying its external appearances, these clever pieces of kit are worth investigating. But back to the plot....



1



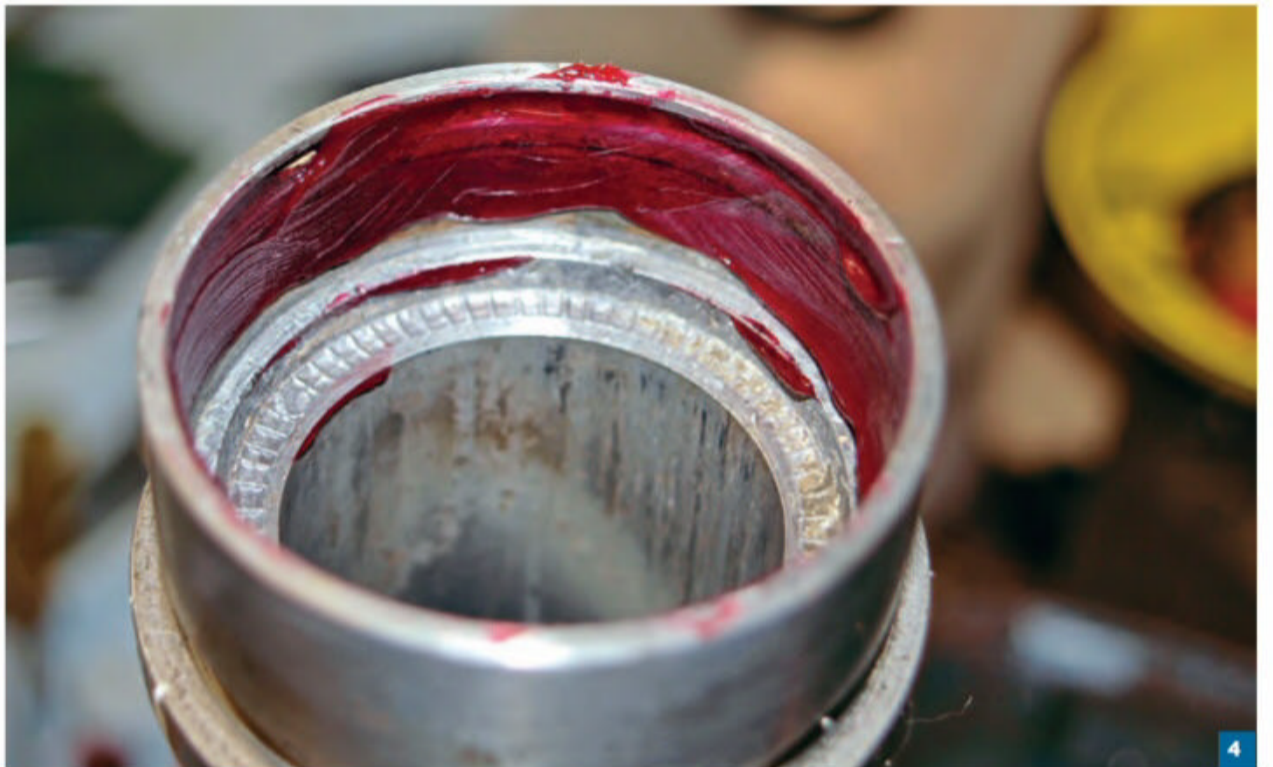
2

1. Often overlooked but a vital component: the fork drain screws which are best removed with a JIS driver if the bike is Japanese. Always worth checking the sealing washer is in good condition.

2. Now is a good time to check any studs in the lower legs for concentricity and thread quality. A loose thread die sorts out any corrosion or clogged threads well enough.



3



4

3. Still in the same area the old Allen bolt washer has been winkled out for two reasons. (A) Old washers often leak. (B) Never use a fibre washer here as they will compress.

4. With the seal holder area scrupulously clean, a smear of rubber grease is wiped around over the housing. This will aid the installation of the seal and negate the need to use undue force.



5



6

5. Buy cheap, buy twice as they say. Experience has shown spending good money on quality seals pays dividends. Go for a branded name or one you've had success with before. Cheap seals are precisely that and you only want to do this job once!

6. The new seal is introduced to the leg with thumb pressure and checked to ensure it is positioned squarely in the bore.



7. If the seal's in true it won't require too much force to seat it properly. Use either a purpose made seal driver or a suitably sized round drift, such as a socket. Always press down on the outer edges of the seal, not the flexible inner portion.

8. Next the large washer and wire circlip are fitted and it pays to fit them with some grease, that will hopefully minimise corrosion.

9. The hard chrome-finished stanchions have been give the okay and the only issue spotted is this wear, right at the lower end. It's quite possible all the crud found in the bottom of the lower leg acted like grinding paste over time.



10. The seal kit used came with a special seal lubricant which overcomes stiction as the leg is fitted; rubber grease is a viable alternative. Using either will help protect the seal's lip.

11. Now is the point where all of the damping mechanisms that sit under the stanchions should be loaded in, ensuring everything is in the correct order, followed by any retaining circlips etc.



12

That surface coating!

Telescopic fork legs are plated with hard chrome and whilst it might look like 'normal' decorative wise, it's a mile away both in application and mechanical properties.

Originally OEM fork legs were initially nickel plated then given a finishing flash of hard chrome; nickel was used to give the legs a degree of cosmetic gloss. Industrial hard chrome dispenses with the nickel and is applied directly to the fork tube which has previously been ground and machined fractionally under sized.

Chrome is applied by an electrolytic process until the tube is oversized and then precision ground to size. Lastly, a final polish is carried out to reduce stiction and aid the bedding in of the seals. Hard chrome plating involves toxic materials along with strong minerals acids and this combination of chemicals means there's probably less than a dozen firms offering the service and not all of those handle motorcycle forks.

Before sending your fork legs to the first advert you come across, do some research to ensure your components are being handled by a firm with the necessary experience.



13

12. As you'd hope, the stanchion slips easily into the lower leg and through the seal. A small amount of juggling may be necessary to get the damper rod lined up with the bolt hole in the lower leg.

13. The Allen bolt is added to the lower leg before the spring is introduced; this facilitates a little wiggle room. A fresh copper washer and precautionary wipe of medium strength thread locker complete the job with the bolt initially just nipped up.



Fork oils

The period advice to refill forks with either ATF fluid or 10/30w light engine oil is now totally and utterly out of date. Back in the day the choices for telescopic fork fluids was severely limited and the oil industry really wasn't geared up for the subtleties of damper valves, bypasses and blow-off devices. ATF was notionally viable because it was low viscosity and contained an antifoam compound. 10/30w oil was similarly attractive simply because it was relatively commercially available and not overly thick. Little thought was given by the manufacturers either; many Japanese bikes arrived with fish oil as the damping medium to their front suspension! Thankfully technology has caught up now and a wide range of viscosities are readily available from 2.5w through to 30w. For a mid-1970s bike as is being fettled here I'd start with a 20w oil and see how it felt. All of its internal damper engineering is relatively primitive so 20 weight is a reasonable start but you'll do no harm by experimenting with grades. It's also possible to vary the quantity of oil to a degree but the generally accepted guidelines suggest no more than $\pm 10\%$.



14. The spring with the tightest coils uppermost is now fed into the suspension leg. Positioning the spring this way minimises unsprung weight.

15. The top nut is carefully fed into the fine thread of the stanchion and tweaked up with the appropriate socket. Care is needed here as it's very easy to cross thread the soft material.

16. With the spring compressed the forks internals are effectively held allowing the Allen bolt in the lower leg to be properly tightened.

17. The top nut is temporarily removed to allow the correct quantity and grade of fork oil to be added slowly avoiding air locks and spillages.

18. Last job - the top nut is reinstalled and nipped up sufficiently to effect a seal. Excess force will only damage the alloy threads.

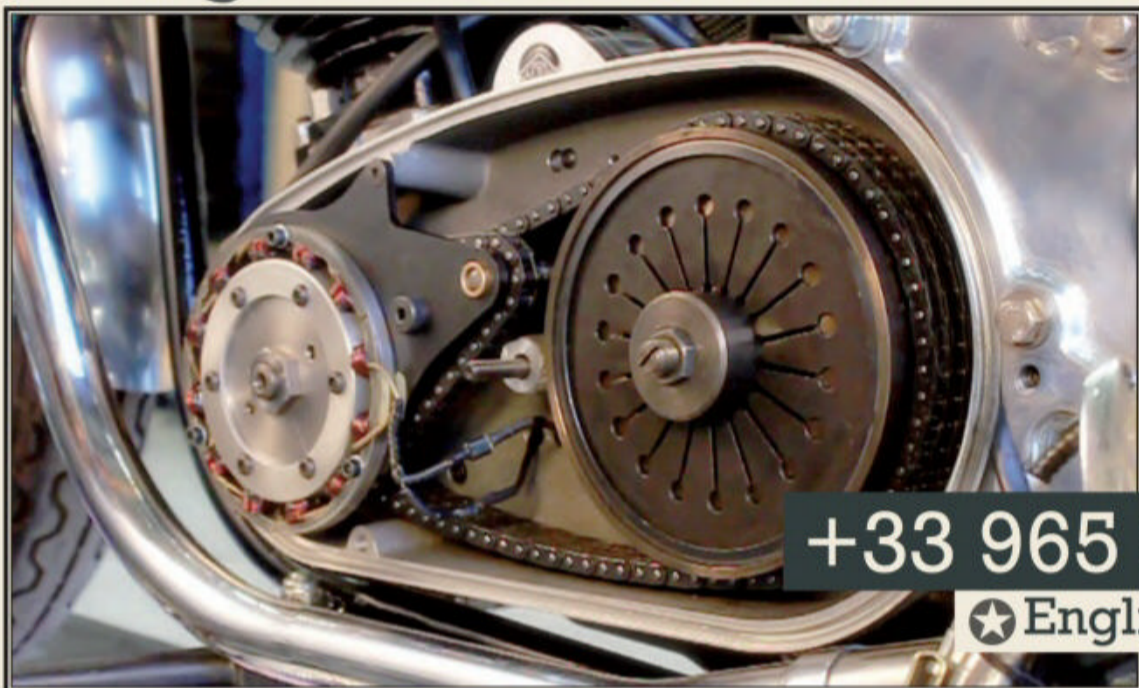
With both legs rebuilt it's best to compress them a few times to work oil through the internals. If they rebound well and there are no leaks it's time to reinstall them back on the bike, get the front wheel and guard fitted then go for a test ride...as if any of us ever needed an excuse to do that! **CBG**



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Project **Norton**

Lockdown means no ride-outs or bike meets; but does that equate into workshop time? Matt lines his excuses up

THE NORTON FRATERNITY IS A HARDY BUNCH. Not only are most of the suppliers I have found open and happy to serve via mail order, but the local Norton club are there for questions, as well as running a quiz to keep you all in the mood!

But despite the Norton back up and for many reasons, time was limited on the ES2. So it was a case of getting on with what you can with what you have.

CARBURETTOR

The Amal 376 monobloc carb was, like the whole bike, in bits when I got it. It was also filthy, so I soaked it in petrol for a week, then in thinners. This seemed to soften the deposits and filth, so then I attacked it with liberal brake cleaner and a stiff toothbrush. This got rid of a lot of gunk, but it was still looking very sad for itself, so I vapour blasted the alloy parts; the body, jet body, slide and top.

Many suggested blasting as a bad idea, yet others swore by it. It's like powder coating – it's a love/ hate thing. But it was what I could use and I trust those that said it was alright. The parts came out looking like new, but with that 1950s rough finish – just what I wanted.

Next came cleaning the other brass parts and putting it all back together. Some of the threads had become slightly corroded over time, and I don't have the right taps and dies (Tracey tools have a great selection of old sizes if you do need) so I lubed the threads and slowly teased whatever was meant to be in there, by tightening ever so lightly the releasing; so hopefully ridding the thread of corrosion. It worked really well apart from the main jet, which being thin, tore itself apart. Mental note, instead of buying shiny things, buy taps and dies. Still apart from that, and the float cover I lost (which Neville has a spare but I can't get to him yet because the world is closed) we have a carb ready to go. I've ordered a service kit from Burlen fuel systems which includes parts such as gaskets, seals, jets, needle and float, and I'll make some cables once the bike is going together.

BOTTOM END TROUBLE...

With the bottom end ball bearing in the freezer since last month (I told you life had got in the way), and the concept of old cranks, bearings, vertically split cases and shims sorted in my head, I got the bearings, spacers, shims and cases together. Next was getting

BELOW: Damn, I broke it





busy with the brake cleaner, cloths and toothbrushes on the cases, then used an airline to make sure all the nooks and crannies were as clean as possible, including the sludge trap. Now it was all about timing, as it takes hours to get a bearing cold enough in the freezer to shrink any amount, or to heat up a casing enough to allow a little more room to slot the bearings in; but it takes minutes, even seconds, for that advantage to disappear.

I heated the area of the case where the bearings fit using the plumber's blow torch, could have used the cooker but Maria had a cake in there... I tried not to concentrate on a small part, to keep the heat even. As it was, there was plenty of liquid coming from the alloy. I didn't think the bearing would 'drop in with light pressure' as the original book says, so I had the old roller bearing outer race to use as a drift.

And – it didn't go in. So now I'm against the clock as the heat from the case is warming the bearing. Mallet and old outer race into action, trying to keep it all straight, until I realised that I'd have to drive out my impromptu drift, so I had no option but to use a wide chisel with a flattened and curved end to drive the bearing home via its outer race. Ugly method and hindsight shows me better solutions but no bearings were harmed in the making of this engine...

There will be engineers reading this, shaking their heads and tutting, and quite rightly, I'm sure. And I apologise – I was somewhat ashamed. But I have limited time on this project, with limited equipment ▶

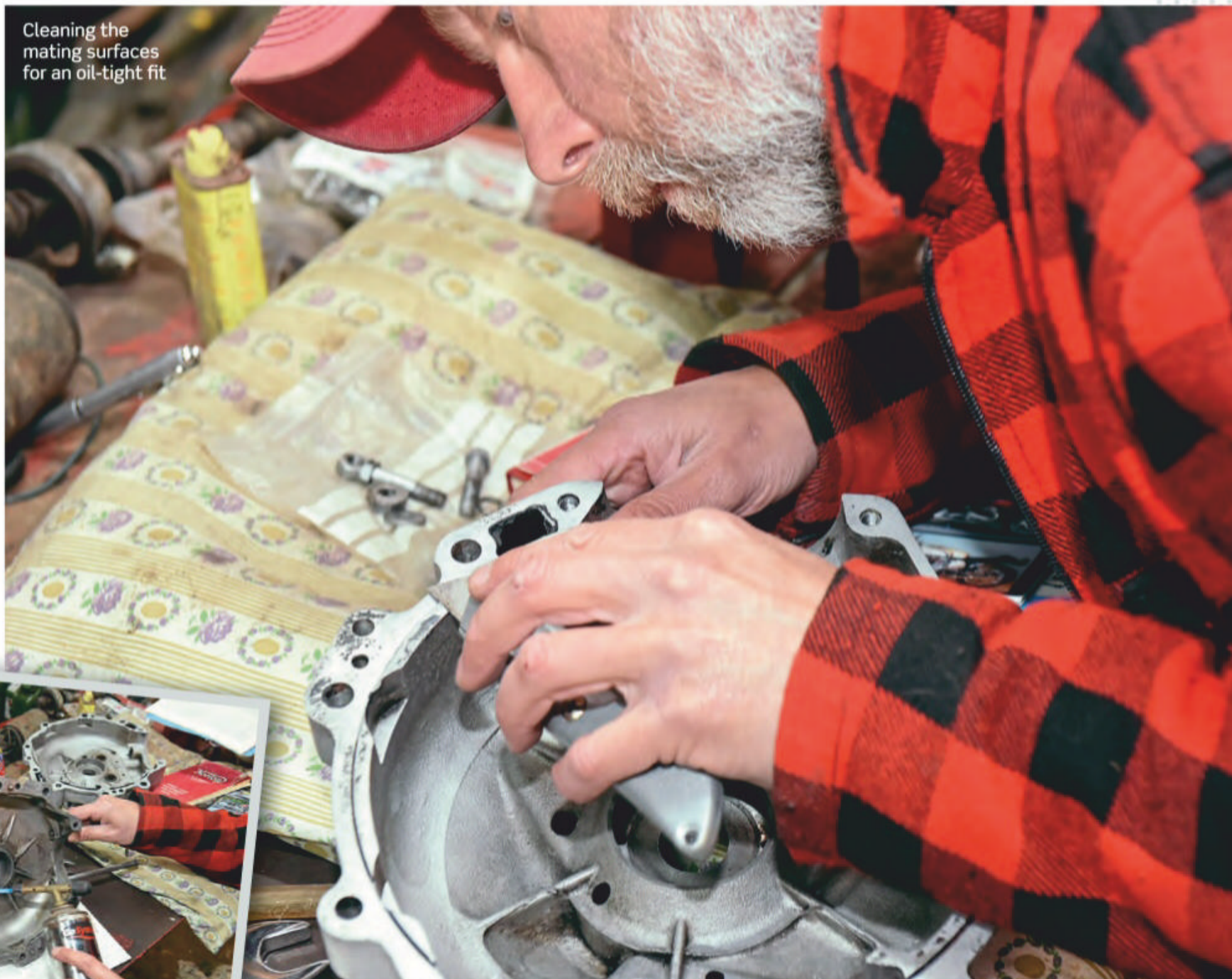
1: Dried up washers

2: Coming together after blasting, just needs a new float cover and main jet

3: The first bit of the bike to be completed!

4: Heating up the case for the bearing to go in – it cools down very quickly

Cleaning the mating surfaces for an oil-tight fit





1: Had to use old race as a drift

2: Roller bearings are a perfect fit to the crank

3: An old wheel brace helped remove the drift - I'm not proud of this!

4: You must remember the spacer in between the bearings on the drive side

5: And make sure the roller bearings are fitted the correct way

and funds; just like many owners, and I finished the job as well as I could. I wish I had an engineering background, but I don't.

With the bearing home, the roller bearings fitted beautifully onto the crank, making sure their outer races would come out in the cases. The drive side also has a plastic(?) spacer that goes in between the two bearings (the drive side has two as that's the side the most force is) and the bearings fit with a tight clearance fit in the cases. This helps with the next stage, which is measuring the end float - the amount of side-to-side movement the crank has in the cases, which is adjusted by fitting shims on the crank to get the right measurement, which on this ES2 engine is 0.005in. You'd also check the con rod for sideplay; but as Trevor Hedge rebuilt the crank assembly, this is already done.

Big lumps of wood come in handy here, as you'll need to steady your bottom end as it resembles a spinning top. Once you're happy the assembly isn't going anywhere, it's time to put the cases together so the endfloat can be measured. It's only age that has allowed me to have the patience in putting something together, only to split it up again, like dry building a bike, then ripping it apart to paint it all. But with age comes a little knowledge, and it does make sense, for not much extra time.

At first, the two halves wouldn't come together. It's tricky as you can't see inside, but I'd got 0.050in gap between the cases. I was sure I'd got the bearings pressed home, so what was up? With the master of gentle persuasion (a rubber-faced mallet) it came together, but I decided to pull it apart and investigate.

But it wouldn't come apart. Now I started getting

angry. And it doesn't help having the pressure of writing it all up and having to photograph it all! I knew the roller bearings were fine, so it had to be the ball bearing. I had to use heat again on the drive side case to get it all apart and the fit of the ball bearing was too tight on the crank.

So after talking to others who all told me bearing tolerances are rarely, if ever wrong, I decided to dress the crank end with some 1200 grit. It took an age, as it doesn't fit into my lathe for me to spin it by hand. I also didn't want to oval the crank end. But finally I had a good fit with the outer bearing and with it all together.

The dial gauge is only cheap, but works well – however it has a magnetic base and the cases are alloy. The base is quite heavy, so I held it tight, while using the other hand to lift the crank. I'd tried to hold

the cases vertically which would have meant less effort needed to move the crank, but I couldn't get everything solid and safe. I then had to work out what gap I needed from imperial measurements but a dial that reads in metric! Without shims there was a little slack (I didn't write down how much as I was somewhat miffed by then), so I had to fit one shim on each side (you have to make sure the sides are even) which brought it into tolerance. Phew.

There's so much more to do, including sealing the cases with Wellseal, but I'm going to wait and get it all checked by my friend, Hutch, who not only has a jig to hold engines with a dial gauge, but also knows what he's doing!

But then this is how you learn, this is my apprenticeship, but with an errant master, isn't it? **CBC**



6: The crank was too tight in the ball bearing, so had to be worked on with 1200 grit

7: And eventually it all came together!



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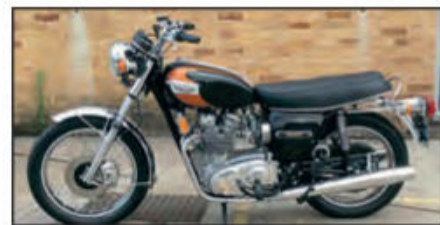
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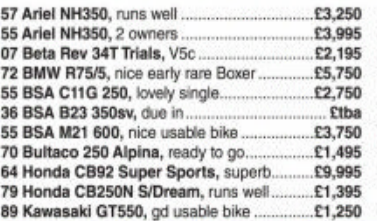
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BSA A65 1963, MoT and tax exempt, good tyres, new pistons and rings carbs rebuild new jets O rings gaskets new chrome air filters, 2420 miles, red, starts first second time, runs well, very good condition for age, oils changed, new sump plate and bolt, back brake and front plate needs polishing, £4200 ono. Tel. 07375 941190. Wales.

BSA A7SS 1958, very nice original condition, easy starter, reliable bike, good paintwork, chrome work, all good part exchange welcome, why? Can delivery anywhere, £5250. Tel. 07443 642408. West Yorkshire.

HONDA C90E 1985, taxed, MoT, showroom condition, 26,887 resprayed, all new Honda parts, leg shield, exhaust, no mileage, since MoT, new tyres. Tel. 07546 063059. Mid Glamorgan.

HONDA FIREBLADE year 1999, last of the carb models, fully rebuilt in as new condition mint, £4000 ono. Tel. 07739 575811. Berkhamsted.

JONGHI H54T 1955, two stroke, 250cc, nice original bike, some paper work, £1895. Tel. 01538 753086. Stoke-on-Trent.

SUZUKI BANDIT 600cc, 2003, 17,500 miles, 12 months MoT, vgc, well maintained Haynes manual, braided brake pipes, new chain and sprockets, £1600. Tel. 01425 473162. Hampshire.

TRIUMPH 6T 1959, unrestored, original bike, from new matching numbers original reg number in charcoal grey colour, good starter, part exchange welcome, can deliver, £6450. Tel. 07443 642408. West Yorks.

TRIUMPH T120C 1963, nice bike £10,000. Tel. 01933 355796. Northants.

TRIUMPH T120R 1971, hardtail chop, selling as not being used, on Sorn will need a service too many parts to mention, all running classic, 4 speed single carb Tiger head, email for pictures had bike since 1987. Tel. 01214 204632. Email. choppermatt120@gmail.com

VELOCETTE VIPER 1957, 4 owners from new, last owner 45 years, original condition, some SS fastenings, fitted with 2LS front, concentric carbs, 12V conversion, new tank, seat and mudguards, service manual, original buff log book, Sorn, has stood for 2 years, needs new battery and recommissioning, £5700, photos can be supplied, if interested please contact email. dchlebek@gmail.com

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AERMACCHI 125 HD engine, with extra spare barrel/head, pistons, conrod, lots cogs etc, Malanca E2C 125, new silencers, top bottom yoke, new CEV chrome headlight shell CEV 04610, used CEV 0273W CW CEV 187 light. Tel. 07814 257373. Devon.

ALLOY ENGINE plates poss Triton? (can email pictures), £40. Honda CB750/900 DOHC, original s/arm assy, £25. Goldwing book hardback, (P Fallon). Tel. 01772 783774.

BANTAM WHEELS front and rear complete with brakes, good spokes. Tel. Gareth 07811 271702. Caerphilly.

BSA ribbed front mudguard, no indents so believed to be for a girder forked model & maroon paint on underside, primary chaincases inner & outer (inner number 29-8183 C10 & others). Tel. Gareth 07811 271702. Caerphilly.

DOUGLAS mark cylinder heads, good condition no broken fins, Rocker gear on right hand head, collection preferred but postage at cost if required, £80 each or £150 the pair. Tel. 01179 041333. Bristol.

FRED & BATES TAP/DIE SET pre 1912, 28 piece in original box, £40. BMW R100RS 1978m swinging complete arm, £70 + p&. Tel. 07565 559588. West Yorkshire.

HONDA CB350 SG/SJ engine and gearbox came out of a crashed motorbike quite some time ago, it has been stored clean and dry indoors and still turns freely, open to sensible offers. Tel. Allan 07891 936838. Kent.

LOOKING FOR ALL things Scott, enthusiastic amateur bitten by Scott bug seeks Scott 2 or 3 speed project and or any spares, anything considered. Tel. Edward 07401 540898. Northamptonshire.

MATCHLESS 350 G5 bottom end, 1960s, almost complete, collection only £50 no offers. Tel. 02085 501598. Essex.

MOTO GUZZI Sport 1100i, two end cans off 1998 new sport, two clamps patent stamps on stainless steel, offers. Tel. 07565 902340. Essex.

MOTO GUZZI SPARES a pair of brand new Buzzo silencers, £300. T3 clocks and with housing brand new, £250. Rear carrier rack Le Mans/G5/T3 as new, £90. Original Tarozzi rear sets great condition, £150. Brand new H section exhaust pipe chrome, £120. Right angled speedo gearbox, £30. Tel. 07584 090437. Devon.

NORTON COMMANDO original fastback seat tail unit resprayed, front fixings slightly modified, £75 collection only. Tel. 01953 607225. edwingeorgeclarke@hotmail.co.uk

ONE PAIR OF new old stock Keihin 725A/B carburettors part numbers 16101-348-004 & 16102-348-004 in mint condition inside and out, these were purchased for a 1974 Honda CB250 K4 but no longer required, should fit other models in the K series but check your part number first, £595 free UK postage. Tel. 01225 768716. Wiltshire.

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PAIR OF CONTI replica stainless steel silencers, sized to suit standard down pipes on twin shock BMW R100RS, complete with brackets, excellent unmarked condition, £350. Tel. 07834 212749. Lincs.

TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE 1970s barrels and pistons, £200. Thruxton silencers, new, £100. Leather motorcycle jackets, large, £40 each. Various helmets, £15 each. T140 rear light, £30. Various sets of forks, Norton, £30 each. Tel. 07763 644030. Wirral.

TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE/BSA twin leading brake plate, complete, £200 ono. Triumph/BSA 8" full width front hub, complete, £100 ono. Royal Enfield Constellation fork legs for use with a sidecar, £150 ono, 1959 Triumph T110 pre-unit engine complete with dynamo and magneto, needs rebuilding, £2000 ono. Tel. Joss 07492 867975. Sheffield.

TRIUMPH TIGER CUB original petrol tank, solid resprayed comes with chrome cap fixing bolts and badge screw, £75 collection only. Tel. 01953 607225. Email. edwingeorgeclarke@hotmail.co.uk

YAMAHA YFZ450 barrel and piston, 95m/m, £55. Yamaha XSR700 original exhaust system, £58. Honda VFR800 Haynes manual 02-05, £8. Tel. 01772 783774. Lancs.

Wanted

AJS M33 FRAME wanted, or complete bike. Tel. 07500 114283. Leics.

ANY AUTOCYCLE classic bike we are still looking for a project for my 11 year old boy it can be anything in any condition, we are in Cornwall but can travel. Tel. 01872 241852.

BRITISH BIKE PROJECT or any spares wanted, anything considered, from autocycle to big twin in any condition, more of a tinkerer than a rider now so open to offers, older the better, pay accordingly, will travel dependent on restrictions. Tel. 07538 696157. Leicester.

BRITISH BIKE SPARES wanted BSA, Norton, Triumph or why? Any quantity, distance no object when lockdown lifted. Tel. 07984 950257. Derbyshire.

BROCHURES AND SALES CATALOGUES wanted for pre-war Motorcycles, Norton, Triumph, BSA, Indian, Harley, Vincent, Velocette and other makes. Tel. 01457 872788.

BSA C10 C15, B31, M20, A10 or A65 etc wanted for a restoration project any condition, will travel when restrictions lifted. Tel. 07932 948153. Notts.

BSA SUNBEAM 175 scooter, 1959, wanted complete engine or parts for two stroke BSA Sunbeam scooter anything considered. Tel. 02476 618667. Warks.

CLASSIC BIKE wanted BSA or similar, good price paid. Tel. James 01704 331519. Ormskirk.

CLASSIC BRITISH BIKE wanted, 2 stroke or 4 stroke, complete bikes or projects, collect, cash paid on collection. Tel. 07443 642408. West Yorks.

CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE wanted anything considered and in any condition. Tel. 07858 132682. Notts.

EXCELSIOR CONSORT XAY 224 is it still out there hiding in some garage unloved unwanted, give me a call I would love to have back. Tel. Rob 01344 303298; 07748 740928. Berks.

GOLD STARS looking for my dads 1956 Gold Star. Frame Numbers 4943, 5130, 5235, 5251; engine nos 2019, 2032, 2214, 2220. If you have any of these please email. Alain on recycledreading@gmail.com

HONDA CB1100F wanted engine or engine parts cases etc, 1983-1985, may consider restoration project. Tel. Lee 07724 517154. Lincs.

HONDA TWIN or single pre-1990 wanted for restoration project, any model 50cc to 500cc older the better, Black Bomber or XL250 would suit, have funds and will travel. Tel. 07538 696157. Leics.

HONDA XR75 1976 exhaust system wanted, schoolboy scrambler. Tel. 01229 463040. Cumbria.

LOOKING FOR AJS 1947, 500cc, M18, registration JLM 470. Tel. 02085 501598 or 07747 020725. Email. mikewoodley4@aol.com

1953/4 MANX SEAT wanted, original seat in useable condition, even if tatty. Also 1953/4 featherbed Inter parts wanted, especially original tool tray and photos of Inter's in 1954 Clubman's. Please email. recycledreading@gmail.com

NORTON 1947 350cc Plunger] Manx No. B10 1146* XM105, supplied to Alec Bennett, Southampton, originally registered EOW 375 in Southampton. Last known in Kent 1971. Son trying to find dad's bike. Please email. Alain recycledreading@gmail.com

ROYAL ENFIELD GT535 2015 swap for T140V runner Royal Enfield, as new, 181 miles, don't mind full resto on T140V, 1976 to 1978. Tel. 07565 902340. Essex.

SANGLAS 500S mid to late 1970's. Tel. 01803 866763. Devon.

SUZUKI T500R parts wanted, 1971 left side panel, rear grab rail, side stand, handlebars, rev counter. Tel. Mike 07511 688088. Birmingham.

TRIUMPH RESTORATION PROJECT wanted unit, pre-unit, OIF etc, early rigid bike ideal will travel when restrictions lifted. Tel. 07932 948153. Notts.

TRIUMPH TIGER CUB wanted, any condition considered. Tel. 07891 936838. Kent.

WANTED ENGINE or parts for 1936 cyc-auto, Wallington Butt design with magneto mounted on front of engine or Villiers engine as fitted to 1936/37 model. Tel. 01322 333853. Kent. Email. peter-townsend1@sky.com

WANTED SINGLE OR TWIN 1930s in any condition, cash and collect, genuine retired engineer wanted to restore and rideout. Tel. 07788 453318. East Yorkshire.

WANTED YAMAHA YDS5 private enthusiast seeking complete bike or any parts considered, in particular front and rear mudguards, WHY? Tel. Richard 07769 715916. Lincs.

YAMAHA XS650 SR500 or TR1 wanted, any condition considered even a restoration project, distance no object when lock down lifted. Tel. 07984 950257. Derbyshire.

Miscellaneous

BOOKS: 'Motorcycles and How To Manage Them', circa 1960, as new, £15. 'The Book of the Triumph Twins', circa 1969, as new, £15. 'Motorcycle Care & Maintenance' (David Frost), circa 1963, pages yellowed but clean, otherwise as new, £10. Tel. Ron 02086 995307. London.

GAUNTLETS a brand new pair of leather gauntlets with Kevlar and Thinsulate, black, size XL, never worn, still with tags attached, cost £75, sell for just, £39. Tel. Ron 02086 995307. London.

MAGAZINES: The Classic MotorCycle, January 1953, March 2020; 48 Classic Bike Guide, 39 magazines from January 2001 - January 2020; Motor Cycle Sport magazines May 1968, September 1990 50pence each. Tel. 01255 815208. Essex.

MOTOR BIKE JACKET very good quality warm jacket with detachable inner lining, hardly worn, black, size medium, condition as new, £79. Tel. Ron 02086 995307. London.

NITRO HELMET virtually new unworn 'Flip-Face' still in box £43 - cost over £60; New waterproof Rayven motorcycle trousers, medium, £17. Tel. Richard 01366 728030. Norfolk.

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VESPA HELMET label reads new Maxmode Demijet TOBS6685, 1985, size 55 made in Italy, manufactured 07/2000 complete with Vespa badge, £65 p&p £7 UK only. Tel. 07756 567248. Dorset.

YAMAHA three sales brochures for RD125, RS125, RS100 with Eddy Grimstead, plastic wallet for above. Tel. 01582 601467. Beds.

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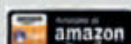
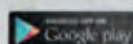
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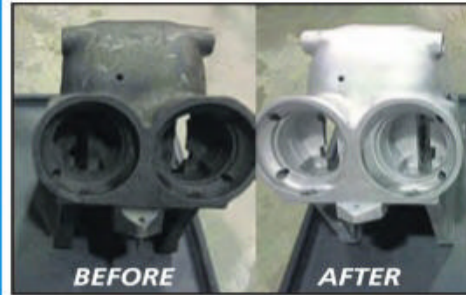
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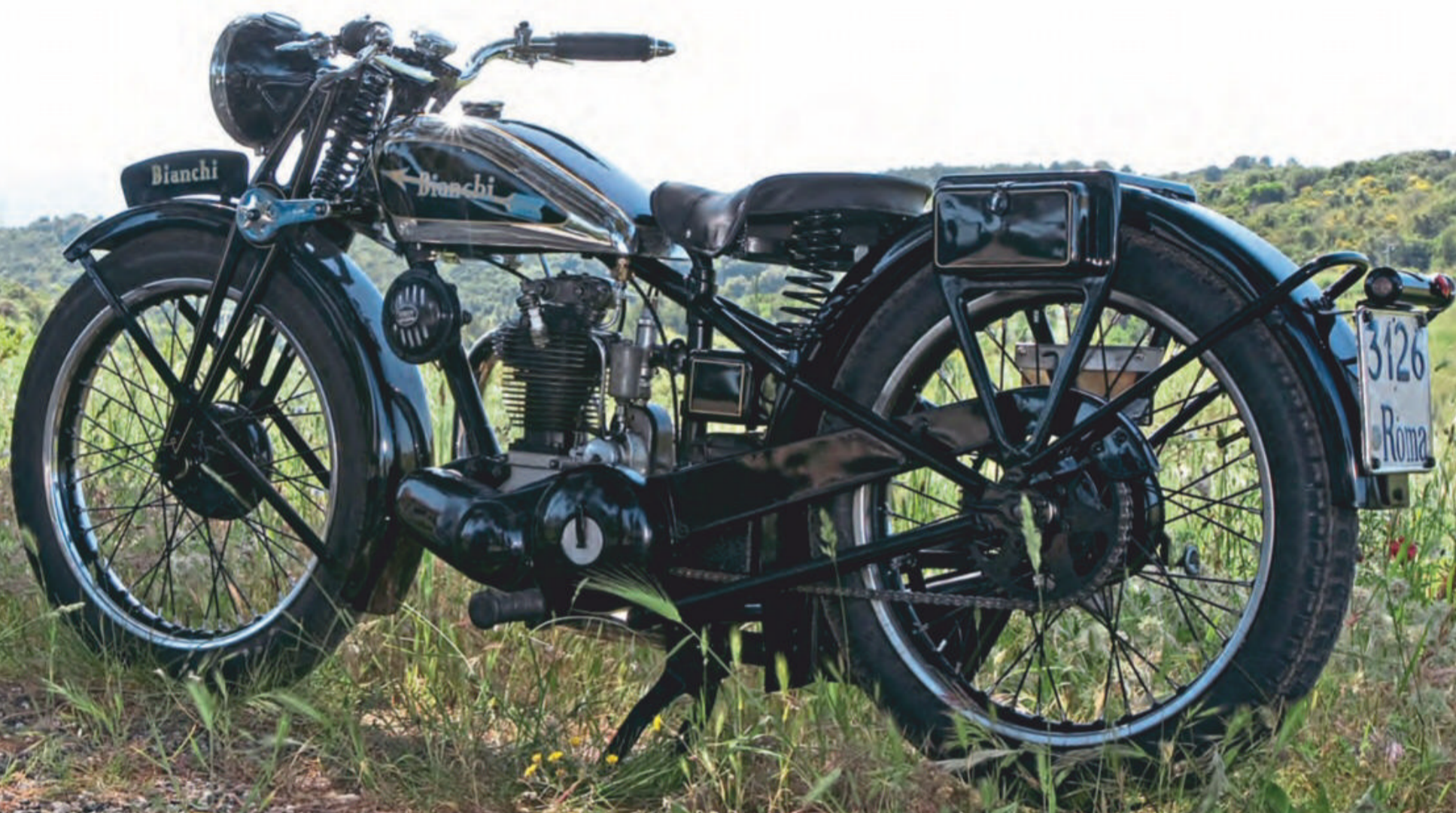
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FRANK WESTWORTH

FAMOUS LAST WORDS

In the age of armchair experts, I bring you... The Shed Detective

“This (Norton) is not a recent acquisition. In fact, I acquired it over a decade ago as it’s an example of a Norton twin I’d always fancied a ride on, never had, so bought one to see what it was like.”

PICTURE THIS: YOU HAVE FALLEN FOR YET another ancient clunker, have attempted to see through the sales patter to gaze instead upon reality. You liked what you saw. You bit both your lip and the bullet, and flashed the cash. Another proud – and only slightly oozing and incontinent – relic of some great motorbicycling heritage or other is now yours. In these remarkable times, it is probable that you’ve not even seen the beast in the tin, not until it lands, awkwardly, chez vous.

As I rattle the keyboard to produce this matchless opus, the advice is that non-essential trips should be avoided, so it plainly is time for proud new owner to don his anorak of invisibility and transform into The Shed Detective. Your secret identity, whereby you can seemingly miraculously figure out your new bike’s old life history. Well... at least the bit of its life history which will explain why it was sold – never mind those ‘ill health forces sale’ jokes, seek out that ‘genuine reason for sale’ and enlightenment will surely follow. As indeed may penury, disillusion and a swift resale, but we’ll be unfashionably optimistic and assume the best!

So there I was, gazing in wonder and admiration at the latest gently leaking heritage classic on the bench. A Norton. A Norton twin, but possibly not a Norton twin with which you may be personally familiar and almost certainly not a Norton twin to ignite fiery passion in the cockles of your heart ... or whatever the saying is. For this, gentle reader, is an Electra. Be calm now. Go easy with the derisive laughter – a chap is too easily discouraged.

This is not a recent acquisition. In fact, I acquired it over a decade ago as it’s an example of a Norton twin I’d always fancied a ride on, never had, so bought one to see what it was like. At that time these handsome little fellows were wildly unpopular and were decently cheap to buy. They still appear to be as unpopular as ever – certainly among the armchair experts – but are now improbably expensive. Not that I’m complaining, you understand. Oh no.

Of course I had it running sharpish. How else should a chap pass those relentlessly sunny lockdown days?

As you know, of course, the Norton Electra was fitted with two batteries to handle the starter motor. Yes, you read that correctly. It has an electric hoof. And yes, it works fine, thank you. This particular machine has a single 12V device rather than the twinned 6V offerings fitted in long-ago Plumstead, but it works fine. Well... it did, a decade ago, and a new battery will restore prolonged active starting, I am almost certain.

Meanwhile, casting around me for faults – always a wise move, particularly if a chap’s better half intends to ride the bike – so that I could be all heroic and fix them. Faults? Few. But lo – what is this? Gripped by a set of neat Viney bones to the bracket vacated by one of the batteries is a piece of soft cloth, carefully folded. It’s a yellow cloth, so plainly not standard Norton.

Inside the neat cloth was a neat little plastic bag containing a neat selection of fuses. My face was a picture. Every picture tells a story. Why would a previous owner carry around maybe a dozen assorted fuses? The Shed Detective of course has a theory, and it is connected to those genuine reasons for sale. What could possibly go wrong with a 1965 electric-start Norton? Hmm. Betcha that has nothing at all to do with selling it.

Another Norton – my very first Commando in fact – was an early inspiration for The Shed Detective. Previous owner, an otherwise pleasant fellow, swapped it for my disastrous T140 Bonnie. I couldn’t figure out why, although to be honest the Norton rattled like a road drill and vibrated almost as badly, which of course Commandos do not do. The Shed Detective soon observed that the engine and primary chaincases were not connected. And the drive-side crankcase half was from an Atlas. Enlightenment followed. It was still better than the Bonnie, of course.

And then there was that really neat BSA A65 in green lane trim. Lovely bike, very cheap. Bought as that inevitable non-runner, it was soon up and at ‘em again. Why had it been sold? Maybe the plastic pack of heart pills carefully wrapped and stored inside the seat hump was a clue... **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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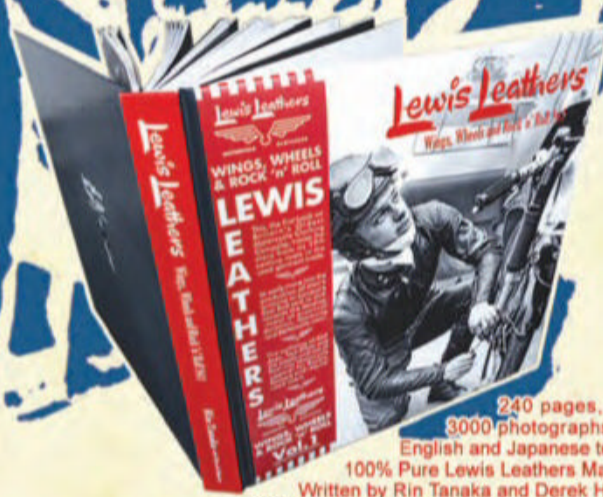
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