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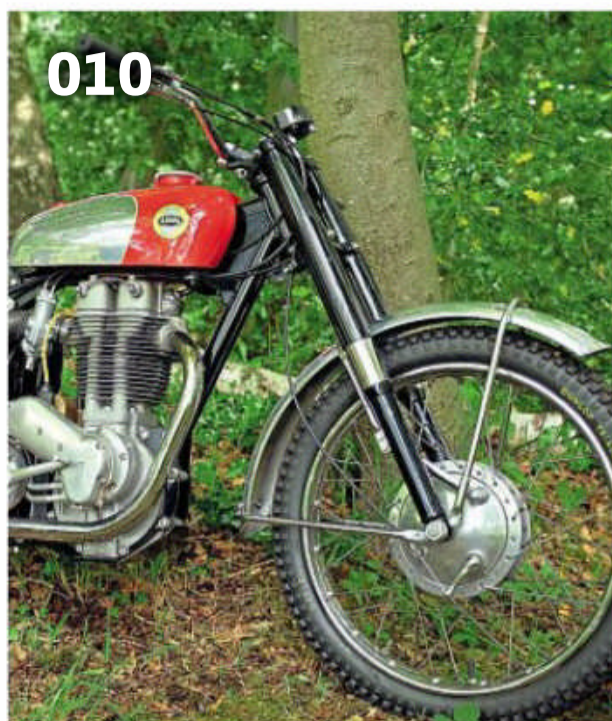
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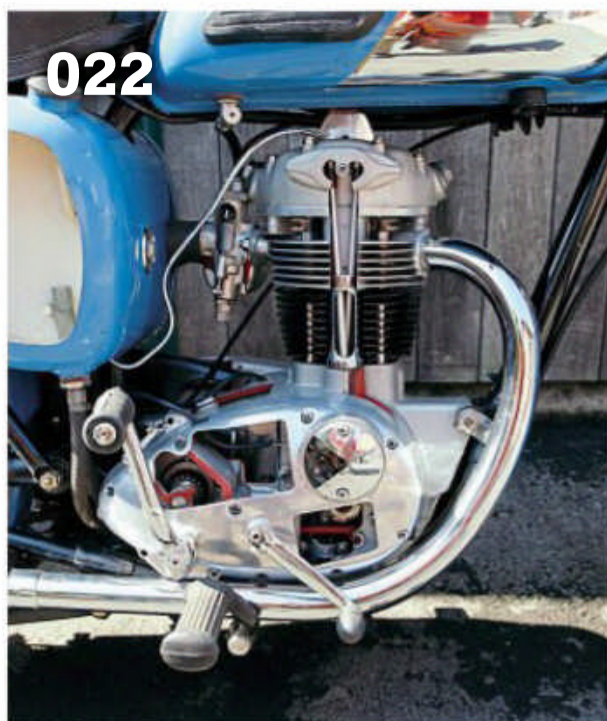


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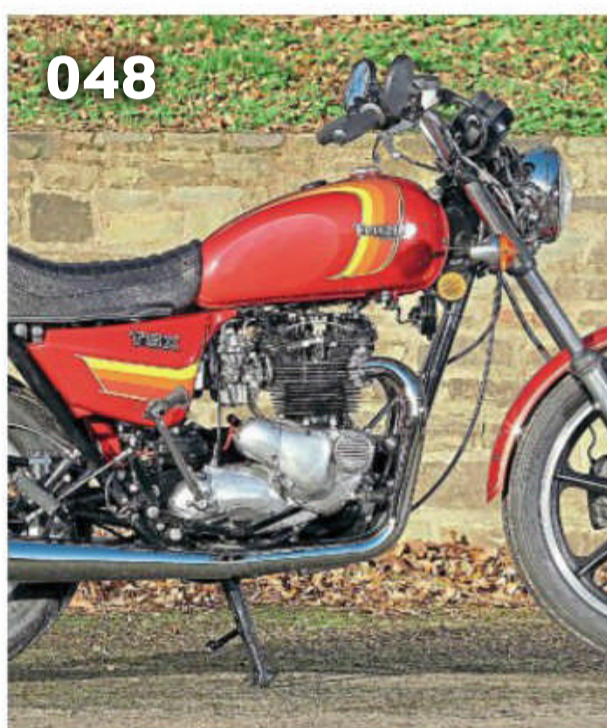
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Welcome



Welcome one and all!

THE SUMMER MAY BE EBBING AWAY ALL too quickly, but the bike meets have been buzzing and some wonderful machines have been getting out, no doubt some finished thanks to the Government-backed 'finish your bike' scheme. Or, at least I think it was called that... Last week there was a twin-BSA A65-engined, original drag bike at our local bike meet, while a couple of weeks ago at another meet, there was a trio of gorgeous, modified Puch Maxi mopeds, a beautiful Rotary Norton F1 - Yamaha FZR1000 EXUP look-a-like, and a BSA with a Ford Kent crossflow engine, mounted transversely. Nev's been out on his JAP-Ariel, I've been falling in love with the B31 again, Maria's been on her GS500, and there was even a Stanley steam car puffing up to the meet recently - a grand way to travel. Hope you've all been getting out alright, too.

"Can I try the Beeza?" asked Maria recently. It was inevitable, I suppose. It's a great bike to learn on; the gear change

is slow, but engine will pull from any revs, the brakes are good enough and the seat height is what a bike should be. "If you can start it, you're welcome," I replied, thinking I was safe. First kick, it fired up. Oh well! A quick lesson in upsidaisy, opposite-side gear changes, carb tickling, advance and retard and top dead centre, and madam was ready. Coming from a family of farming and engineers, she mimicked the proverbial duck into water; though she may have been flapping under the surface, Maria looked as calm as a cucumber sandwich above as her and her father rode off. Unlike me, who managed to do nothing in the workshop for an hour, before I heard the putt-putt of the Brummy single coming back home up the lane. Phew.

"That was brilliant!" Then came the realisation that I've heard often, of those who've had a go on an old bike for the first time and wondered why it's so different to what they're used to, yet so much fun.

There's an element of that every time I pop out on an oldie - and long may that continue.

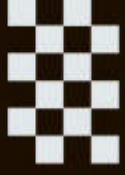
Had a lovely ride to Derbyshire to see K-Tech suspension on the 'Pig' recently. The BMW R100's 311-mile journey was made all the better thanks to servicing and balancing the Bing carbs; I had more power, less vibes, instant pick-up and a much more pleasant ride. The new jets and needles all add up, but boy is it worth it. Meanwhile, Nev has been sorting a friend's A10 - it never seems to stop! Apparently the weather is good next month, so let's make the most of it.

Enjoy, and be good.

Matt Hull

editor@classicbikeguide.com





■ Touring - in the most beauteous style

This month, Ross Mowbray, editor of *Morebikes*, and I toured around the East of England for a couple of days, which you can read about on page 66. We used one of the first mainstream tourers, a BMW R100RT brought out in 1978, and its modern-day sibling, the R1250RT, to see the difference. With more than 40 years between the designs, it was very interesting.

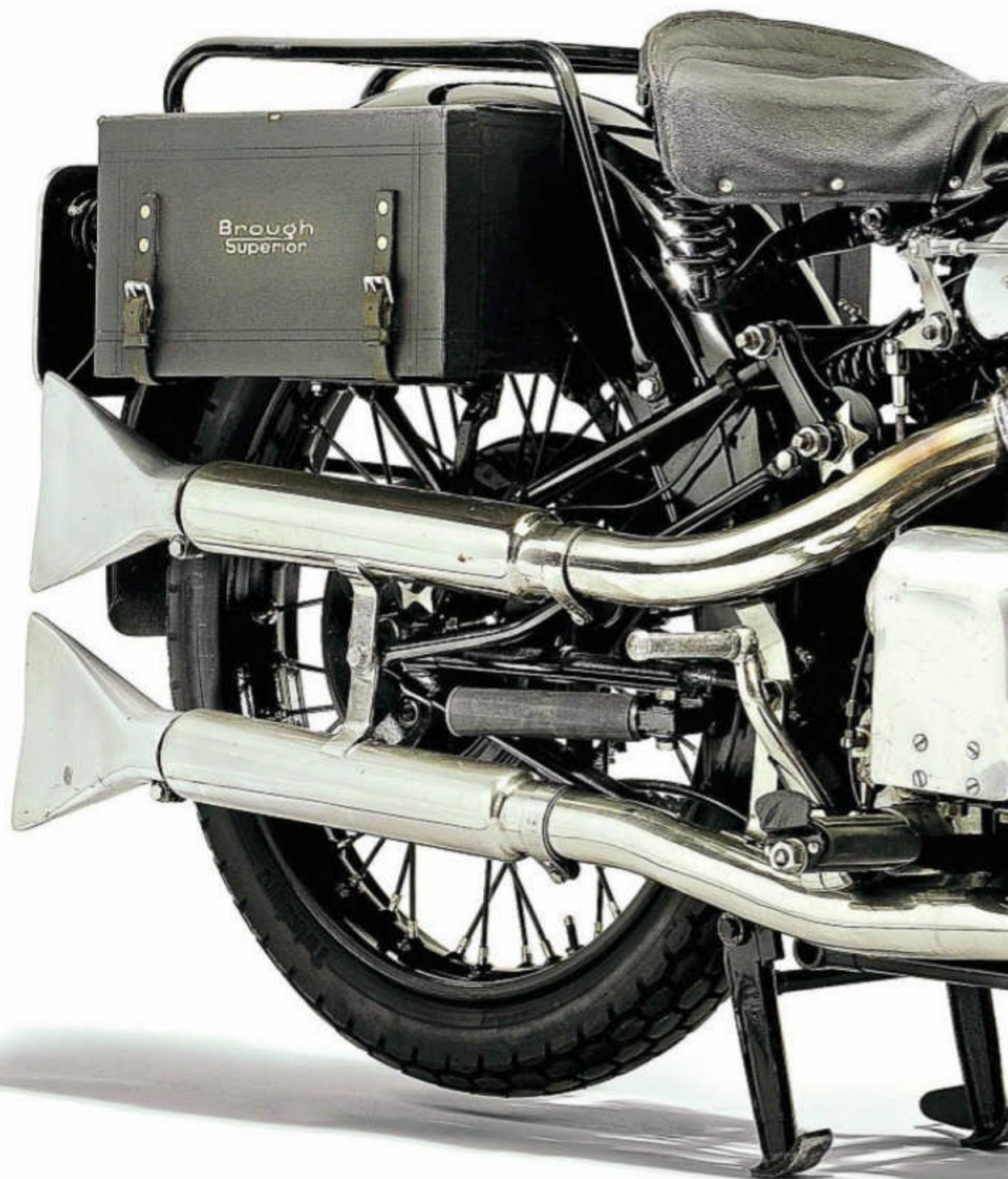
Ninety-one years ago, back in 1929, the very idea of touring was grand. While the working man was trying to keep food on the table, those that could were finding the still-new motorcycle could give them a new-found freedom. And the few that could afford it, chose to do it on a Brough Superior SS100 Alpine Grand Sports.

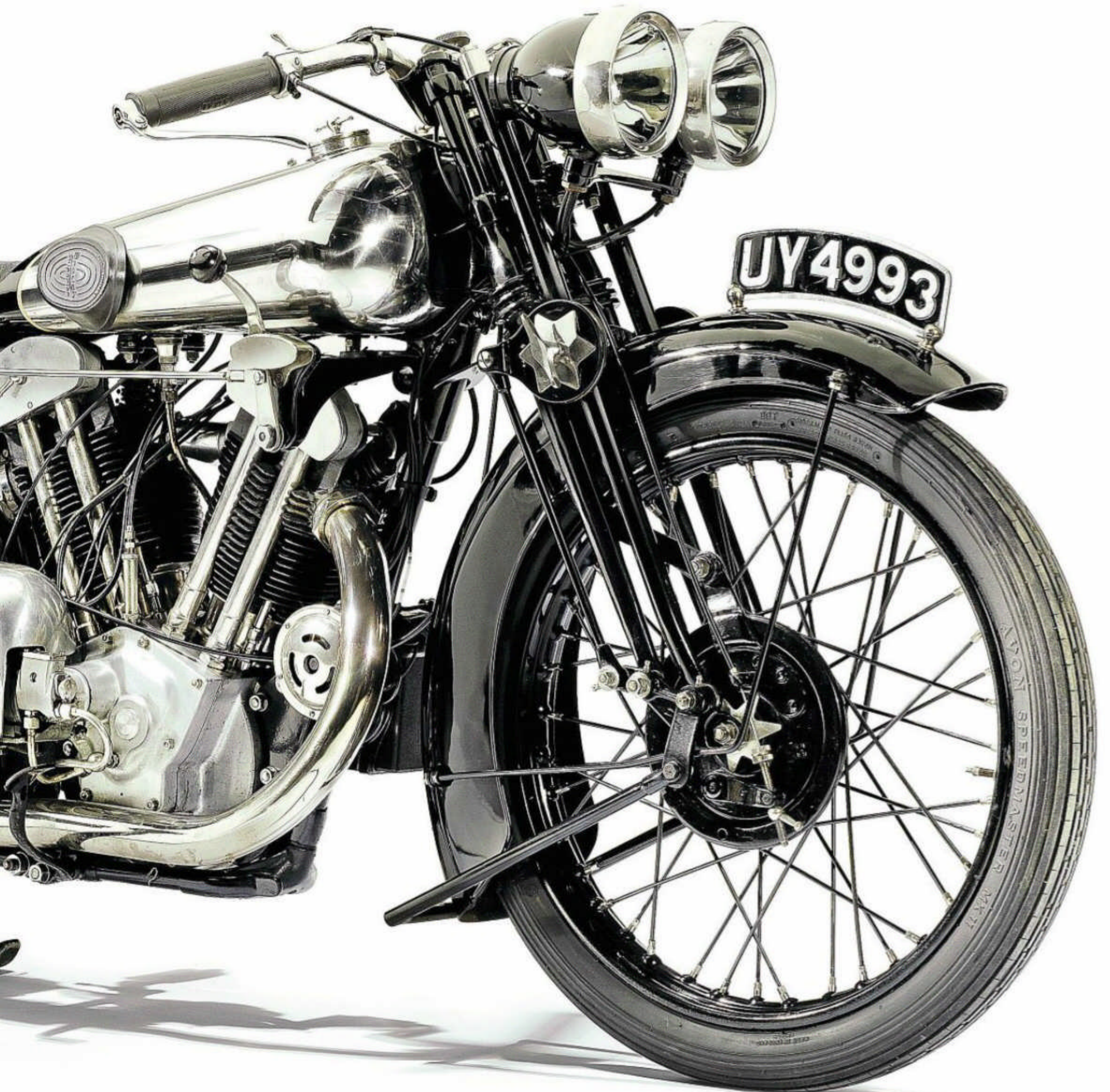
The 986cc V-twin was made by JAP and each bike was tested to 100mph, at a time when most people didn't have a car, let alone a vehicle that could top a ton. You really were someone special.

The Alpine Grand Sports was tuned slightly for touring, and took its name from an Austrian reliability trial in 1925 in which George Brough himself competed, but still focused very much on performance - to the degree that it would probably be as quick as our 1989 BMW.

The two toolboxes fitted would have held bits and bobs, with a large rack on top for luggage, although it was obviously just a single-seater. And, originally there would have been an accompanying chair.

The bike pictured had an older style frame and was sold in 1929 to a Mr Preston, who specified Castle forks, a Cruiser sidecar and twin headlamps. It last sold at auction with Bonhams in 2014 for £315,100. I paid less than 1% of that price for my BMW - I bet I get more than 1% enjoyment. However, it is truly one magnificent machine. **CBG**





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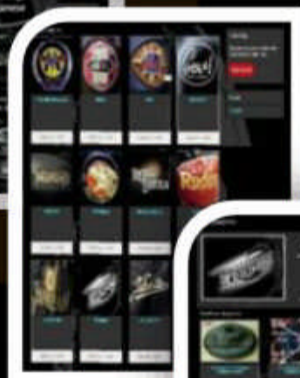


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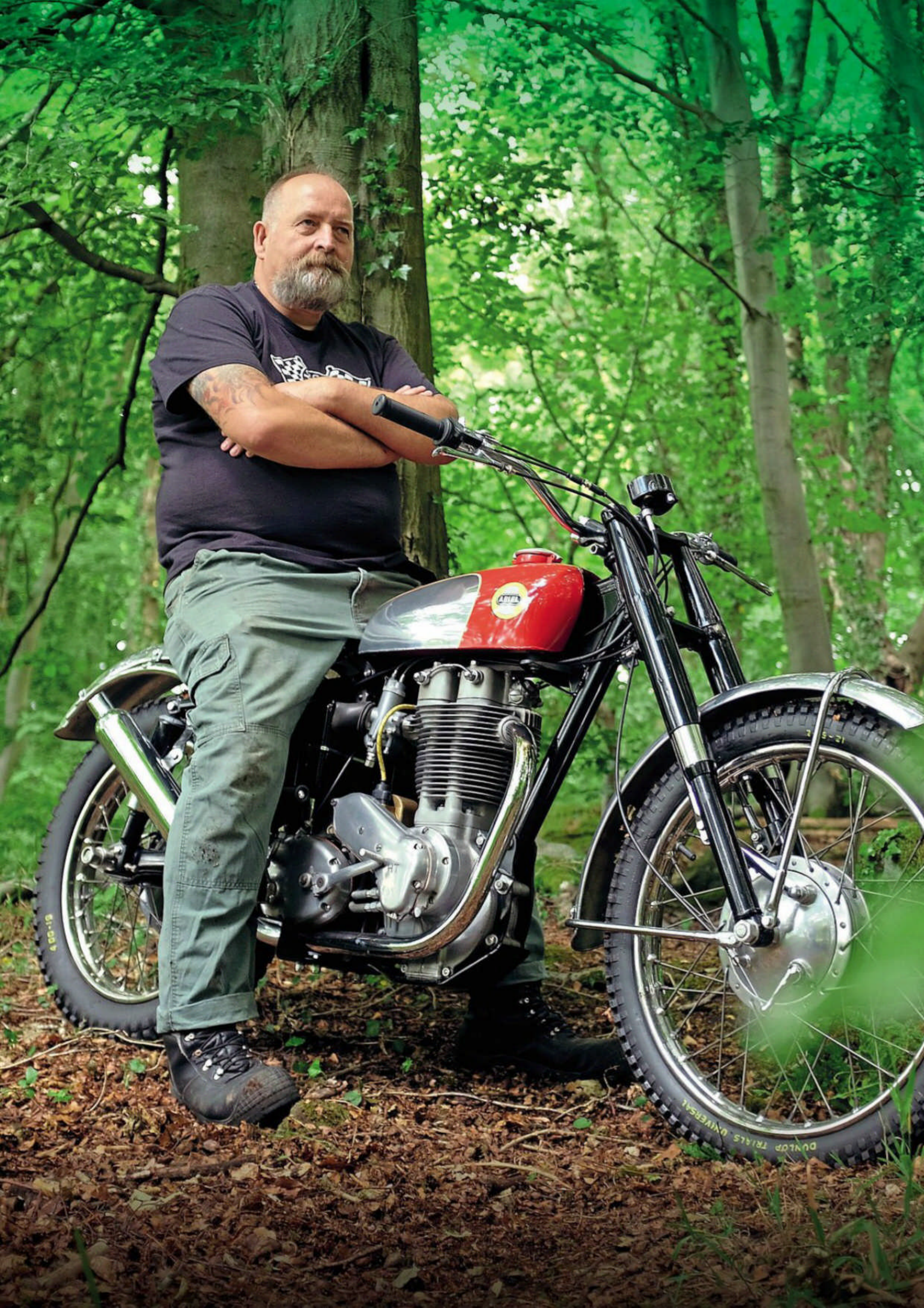
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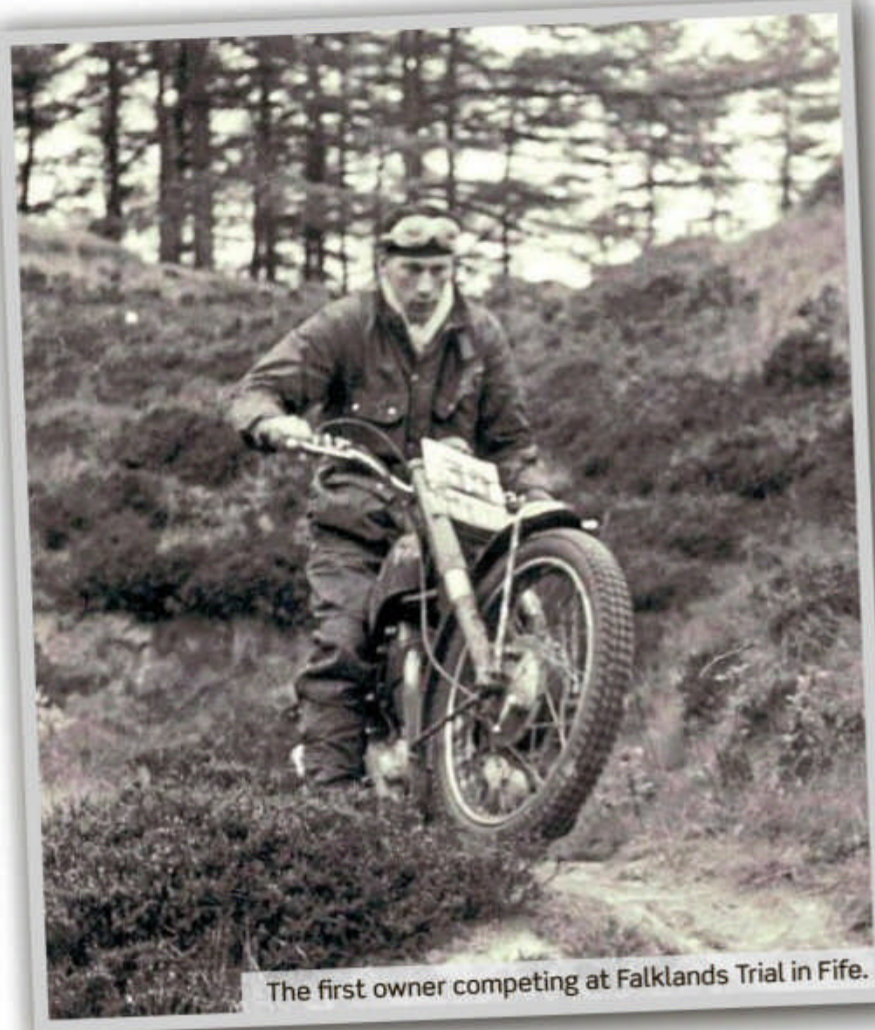


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The first owner competing at Falklands Trial in Fife.

Ariel HT3

During the Seventies this competition Ariel HT3 trials bike was rescued from a bunch of gravel pit youths in Tillicoultry, Clackmannanshire. Back then it was a 'bit of a dog' according to new owner Hugh Ramsay. Otherwise known as 'Big Shug', Hugh is largely responsible for its present handsome condition; notwithstanding some help from his friend, Martin Green.

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY STUART URQUHART

HUGH CONFIDED THAT THE HT3'S SAVIOUR was actually Martin, a biker who is also 'weel-kent' in Tillicoultry for being a hoarder first, and motorcyclist second. Although they were lifelong friends, Hugh mentioned that he couldn't ever recall having seen Martin ride a motorcycle – despite the 'collector's' known obsession for Scott and Ariel motorcycles. Even when Martin managed to buy the Ariel from the 'wild bunch', it was immediately spirited away to a large shed outside his house.

There it festered for more than 40 years, never seeing the light of day or turning a wheel. But one day Martin would make a start on restoring his HT3, more of which follows.

During my discussions with Hugh, what became obvious was not only did this Ariel have a well-known history, but also it would appear to have never left Clackmannanshire.

THE TILlicoultry PIT BOYS

As the HT3's story unfolded, Hugh revealed that one of my own friends and SCMC member, Jake Beatson, was once a 'Tilly Pit Boy', so he was quite familiar with the little trail bike. Naturally I called him up, and he was delighted to recall one illuminating tale about the Ariel's forgotten history.

"When I was 16 years old the Ariel belonged to a

friend of mine from Glendevon," said Jake. "He offered it to me for a fiver, which unfortunately I didn't have. As I remember, it was complete apart from a clutch pushrod, which meant nothing to me. Later, the bike ended up in the hands of another friend in Tillicoultry, Billy Miller, and we used to ride it up and down a gravel pit beside the railway line.

"One day as we were attempting to start it, it spat back through the carb, and suddenly caught fire. As it lay on its side with flames spreading, we panicked, but managed to extinguish the fire by throwing gravel and dirt over the bike. Then we cleared the bike of debris, flooded the carb and it started again – first kick!

"By good fortune it was then sold to another friend, who added it to his growing collection of 'things to be restored'. By his own admission he (Martin Green) was more interested in the process of restoration than riding. And there it lay, half-restored I believe, until Shug managed to persuade him to part with it. Back then (and this would be 48 years ago) it was just another old bike, and would probably have ended up on the scrapheap had it not been rescued by Martin. So it's a lucky bike... a very lucky bike indeed!" concluded Jake.

THE TILLY TWINS

After Jake had mentioned Billy Miller, I decided to post a picture of the restored HT3 on SCMC's Facebook page, accompanied by a message requesting

that he get in touch about the trial bike's history – and Billy did!

“My brother Philip bought the Ariel for me when I was working in Aberdeen, but I can't recall who he bought it from. When I returned home at weekends we used it for fun, spending hours on end just thumping around our local woods and gravel pits – perhaps in the very same woods that Shug now enjoys the Ariel, opposite Tulliallan Golf Club,” said Billy.

“We were trials daft in those days and big Sammy Miller fans, but in one mad moment Philip decided to sell it to his friend Pat Lolla, another gravel pit lad who looked like a scruffy Sixties pop icon!” laughed Billy. “Unfortunately, Pat subsequently died and I believe Pat's bereaved parents sold the bike on to a local wheeler and dealer for a pittance. I do remember it was missing mudguards and a toolbox, and only fit for the scrapheap. It's great to see that Shug has it up and running and back to its former glory – it looks absolutely stunning!”

THE AVID COLLECTOR

On the second day of the Ariel's photoshoot I was scheduled to meet Martin Green in person. A meeting which would deliver more about the bike, its history, and its celebrated saviour/long-term owner. Once Hugh had plied us with coffee and cakes, Martin drew up a stool and revealed the HT3's illuminating story.

“Forty years ago we bikers all knew each other due to Tillycoultry being a small and close-knit village. I knew the Ariel 'pit bike' was in the hands of Sandy Johnstone, a canny back door dealer who buys and sells anything, including beat-up cars, trashed motorcycles and the occasional auld granny!” Martin chuckled to himself.

“We got on well and although he was a bit of a jack-the-lad, he was a sound bloke. When Sandy offered me the HT3 I naturally snapped it up. I knew it was an original competition trials bike and likely to be worth more than the average unwanted British motorcycle when properly restored. This was at a time when Japanese motorcycles were all the rage and British iron was no longer desirable; except I'm ashamed to say, for trashing in our local gravel pits.”

Martin then lost his job as an engineer at Weir Pumps in Alloa and the HT3 was subsequently forgotten throughout the Seventies and Eighties. Then in late December 1982, Martin's parents asked him what he would like for Christmas and he replied: “A Lyta petrol tank!” So his folks gave him a bundle of cash and Martin began the Ariel's restoration.

“I remember to this day that the Lyta alloy tank



“I remember to this day that the Lyta alloy tank from Brian Hitchison cost me £39 including postage”

from Brian Hitchison cost me £39 including postage. Brian was a renowned builder of bespoke petrol tanks for competition scramblers and his beautifully finished petrol tank moved me into starting the HT3's restoration. Immediately I sent the bashed and dented wheels away to some chap in the Peak District and they returned a week later with new Dunlop alloy rims and flashy chrome spokes. Encouraged further, I then stripped and rebuilt the Ariel front forks and BSA-type yokes and fitted new bearings, bushes and seals from my own stock.

“Luckily I had the foresight to buy up new old stock from local dealers that were switching from British to Japanese dealerships, so I soon accumulated an appreciable stock of Ariel and Scott spares, especially for models I was particularly interested in. Parts not available from my own stock or from local bike breakers, I would find at autojumbles. It was an exciting time for accumulating cheap British parts and abandoned motorcycles. I couldn't help myself and I became an addictive collector,” said Martin, almost apologetically.

Martin also said that the original rear mudguard





brackets came from an Ariel rep down south; a dealer who was happy to let them go because the factory didn't have plans to make many HT3s. (Much later Hugh revealed that Martin handed him the rare brackets in their Ariel factory-branded wrapping paper when Hugh was rebuilding the HT3.) Martin also explained that the airbox is unique to the Ariel HT, having a vertical 'dent' to accommodate the upright mid-section of the frame.

Another revelation was Martin's claim to having fitted a 350cc piston from one side of an AJS 650 twin, aided by expert engineer Peter Hepworth of the famed piston manufacturer. And none other than 'Chopper' at Happy Hamrax Motorcycles supplied several hard-to-find parts and a set of NOS Armstrong shocks.

Over to Martin once again. "The Amal Monobloc was rebored before being rebuilt with a new throttle slide, needle and jets. The competition magneto was refurbished by Dave Lindsley when he was still based in Lancashire. 'Not good!' said Dave when my magneto arrived, '...this one will cost you an arm and a leg!' he teased." In the end Dave produced a cracking job for a knock-down price, I was well chuffed!

"I picked up the correct D-shaped speedo from Dunfermline's legendary motorcycle breaker, Willie Pittblado. We enjoyed a good blether about the HT3, which he constantly referred to as 'that there rare wee beastie!'. As we chatted I noticed a nice chrome Ariel chainguard fixed to an A10 that he was breaking. In typical style, Willie tossed me a couple of spanners and bellowed, 'It's yours for a couple of

The Charismatic Engineer

When the charismatic Edward Turner joined Ariel in 1932 he introduced the 500cc and 350cc Red Hunter models – also commonly referred to as 'Ariel's sporting singles'. Although gifted engineer Val Page was responsible for designing Ariel singles as early as 1926 (Black Ariels), it was Turner that introduced popular red and chrome petrol tanks,

single port heads, enclosed valve gear, high-level exhaust, beefed-up crankcases, forged steel flywheels and improved oil lubrication. The Red Hunters evolved from road burners and grasstrackers into fully fledged trail bikes – to become the forerunners of the successful HT and HS competition trials machines.



“In one session while clearing one of Martin’s sheds, we found a half-restored 1950s VH Ariel and a 1930 Scott buried beneath a mountain of old cylinder heads - I don’t know who was the more surprised!”

measly quid – if ye can get it aff!’ . The best two quid I’ve ever spent.

“I also fitted a set of original chrome handlebar levers, Ariel hub bearings and brake shoes – all NOS I found in another shed. In fact, since I sold the HT3 to Hugh, he has raided my sheds on more occasions than I care to remember.

“I would have rebuilt the Ariel as a showpiece but I began to lose interest as the years rolled by. Truthfully, I’m glad it went to Hugh – he’s built himself an extremely rare and stunning little trail bike. I doff my hat to the lad!”

Below: Bantam-style toolbox.



THE ARIEL FANATIC

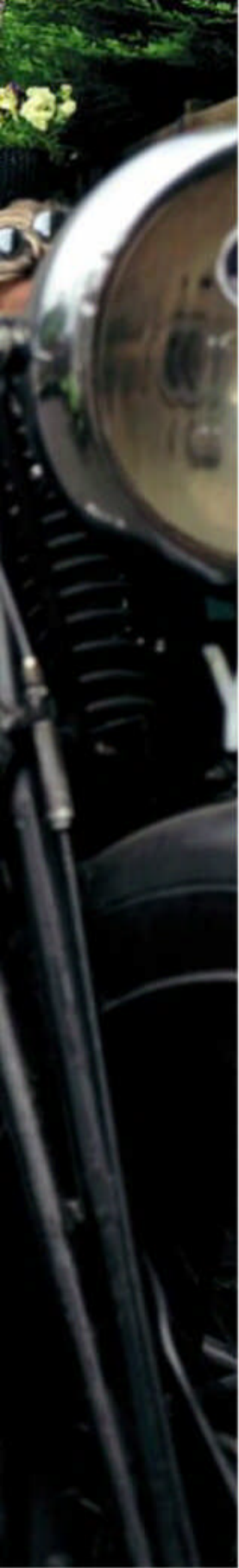
Hugh Ramsay has been an Ariel fanatic since he was a schoolboy. His exceptional Ariel Racer Special was featured in October 2018 CBG, and a regularly ridden Ariel VB 600 outfit takes pride of place on his drive. Hugh and Martin have been good friends for almost as long as the latter owned the HT3.

“I knew that Martin was running out of steam with his HT3 project and to my shame I nagged him relentlessly to let me have it,” said Hugh. “Then I raided his crates of spares to find missing parts for the rebuild – in one session while clearing one of Martin’s sheds we found a half-restored 1950s VH Ariel and a 1930 Scott buried beneath a mountain of old cylinder heads – I don’t know who was the more surprised!

“The HT3 arrived with me as a rolling chassis, with the bottom half of the engine bolted in place along with its gearbox and alloy mudguards. Other parts were supplied loose, such as the refurbished competition mag, carburettor, cylinder head (beautifully restored!) and a lovely NOS Lyta alloy petrol tank wrapped in factory greased paper.

“I already knew from my negotiations with Martin that he’d rebuilt the hubs, forks and had obtained a new standard bore barrel and piston, so I was happy to pay his price!

“Being a rare and local bike, and partly restored,



it really appealed to me," enthused Hugh. "My HT3 (350cc) is a 1958 competition model and it is quite a rare machine. According to my sources only 32 were manufactured as against the 450-plus examples of the more common HT5 trials machine that carried Sammy Miller to so many ISDT championships," said Hugh.

According to Jake Drummond of the Kirkcaldy & District Racing Motorcycle Club, this HT3 was despatched to County Motors in Kirkcaldy, and the black and white inset picture shows first owner Andrew Birrell competing in the 1959 George Scott Memorial Trial, below Falkland Hill in Fife.

Hugh went on to tell me that the Ariel cleaned up surprisingly well, as Martin fortunately had plastered the rolling chassis with grease once he'd lost interest in restoring the bike. The HT3 was missing its handlebars, toolbox, airbox and other less obvious cycle parts. A fitted three-plate clutch was the wrong type, as were the wheel spindles, which caused a lot of head scratching. But Hugh simply embarked on more raids to Martin's sheds and unearthed most of what the bike required. Parts he couldn't find were sourced from the Ariel Owners' Club scheme, such as a used, but perfect silencer and a set of stainless mudguards. Armours supplied the front exhaust pipe, "...as the original from Martin's shed weighed more than the bike itself!" joked Hugh.

Above: Burgess air filter.

Right: Rare factory mudguard supports.

Below: Lyta alloy tank.





“I also searched for parts at the Stafford Show; the replica Dunlop rubber saddle was an inexpensive, but great find. The original Trialmaster tyres were ‘Martin shed’ finds and are in NOS condition, with no damage or cracks. The correct Bantam toolbox was professionally painted by my friend Jeff Brewer, along with other black cycle parts and the Lyta petrol tank. Thanks to Martin’s earlier work, the engine went together surprisingly well, although I had to replace a missing gearbox stud that was responsible for a persistent oil leak – after which, oil then leaked from the drive sprocket. The cause was a worn gearbox mainshaft collar and seal. Once I replaced both items, the leak simply dried up.”

THE RIDE

Hugh confirmed that the engine fires up first kick and ticks over sweetly – suggesting his friend Martin’s carb work was spot on. The engine’s low-down torque and smooth running also proved Martin’s work on the head and valves was much as expected from a professional engineer. The HT3 also handles well and the tyres provide excellent grip in the rough stuff. The bike runs on straight 50 mineral oil which is used in the engine, primary drive and gearbox.

“The Ariel is a cracking little bike and pulls well; I use the same oil throughout the engine and it neither burns nor leaks oil. I’m pleased with the new dry clutch, and the primary drive is smooth and quiet. I mostly use the little Ariel for Sunday ‘grin’ rides in the 15 acres of virgin forest I’m fortunate to have behind my house. The only grind is the trials gearing is frustrating for road use – unless you want to ride over modern traffic, rather than keep pace with it!” chuckled Hugh. “I love its iconic red and alloy Lyta tank and its purposeful looks turns many heads,” said Hugh.

For a 62-year-old design the HT3 can still punch well above its weight, and I can understand why it was such a resounding success in Sammy Miller’s expert hands. **CBG**

The Legendary Trials Rider

After a short but successful road racing career, Irishman Sammy Miller turned his hand to trials competition to become one of the most celebrated trials riders in history. Best known for riding his modified and lightened Ariel HT5 500cc factory single (GOV 132) to nine gold ISDT victories and five Scottish Six Days Trials championships, he was very much a dominant figure and competed successfully in over 1300 trials. Sammy was also crowned British Champion 11 times and European Champion twice, impressive records that earned Sammy an MBE in 2009. Although he went on to ride successfully for Bultaco, Sammy was best known for his work in developing the Ariel HT5 as a potent and competitive trials machine.



Above: Dinky brake lever.

Left: Rear wheel.

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Clarke WORKBENCH WITH PEGBOARD

BALL BEARING ROLLER DRAWERS

Easy to assemble, providing valuable working space and plenty of additional storage capacity.

Available in Red or Galvanised Finish

Dimensions (LxWxH) - 1150 x 560 x 1440 mm

Pegboard back wall with 30 hooks supplied

£64.99 EXC.VAT
£77.99 INC.VAT

CWB-R1

Clarke PREMIUM CHESTS/CABINETS

BALL BEARING ROLLER DRAWERS

Combines premium quality with fiercely competitive pricing & super smooth ball bearing roller drawers

30 KG MAX DRAWER LOAD

EXTRA LARGE BOTTOM DRAWERS

SEE WEBSITE FOR PACKAGE DEALS WITH TOOLS

① **£119.98** EXC.VAT
£143.98 INC.VAT

MODEL	DESCRIPTION	DIMS LxWxH (mm)	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CLB600	6 Dr chest	660x305x365	£99.98	£119.98
① CLB900	9 Dr chest	660x305x475	£119.98	£143.98
CLB200	2 Dr step up	672x310x195	£49.98	£59.98
CLB1005	5 Dr cabinet	685x465x795	£169.98	£203.98
② CLB1007	7 Dr cabinet	685x465x955	£199.98	£239.98

Clarke HD PLUS

BALL BEARING ROLLER DRAWERS

"Fantastic chest and top box combi, well built, well packed ideal for home and workshop use. Will be getting another set asap"

See www.machine-mart.co.uk

① **£129.98** EXC.VAT
£155.98 INC.VAT

② **£249.98** EXC.VAT
£299.98 INC.VAT

③ **£199.98** EXC.VAT
£239.98 INC.VAT

RUBBER GRIP SIDE HANDLES

EXTRA LARGE SIDE HANDLE FOR EASY MOVEMENT FITS EITHER SIDE

EXTRA LARGE DRAWER PULLS

Clarke HD PLUS HEAVY DUTY & PROFESSIONAL THE ULTIMATE IN TOOL STORAGE!

Extra heavy gauge double wall steel construction

FULL DETAILS - SEE IN-STORE OR VISIT WEBSITE

EXTRA LARGE SIDE HANDLE FOR EASY MOVEMENT FITS EITHER SIDE

BLUE LINE INDUSTRIAL

Clarke BLACK GOLD LINE

MODEL	DESCRIPTION	DIMS LxWxH (mm)	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
① CBB2098	9 Dr Chest	710x315x420	£129.98	£155.98
CBB2108	10 Dr Chest	710x315x475	£139.98	£167.98
CBB2038	3 Dr step up	710x315x250	£72.99	£87.59
CBB2158	5 Dr Cabinet	758x468x815	£199.98	£239.98
② CBB2178	7 Dr Cabinet	758x468x975	£249.98	£299.98
CBB2138	3 Dr Cabinet	758x481x975	£199.98	£239.98

GREAT LOOKING, BIG 5" INDUSTRIAL CHROME SPOKED WHEELS FOR EASY MOVEMENT

EXTRA LARGE EXTRA HEAVY DUTY

BALL BEARING ROLLER DRAWERS

RUBBER GRIP SIDE HANDLES

BLUE LINE INDUSTRIAL

EXTRA LARGE SIDE HANDLE FOR EASY MOVEMENT FITS EITHER SIDE

BLACK GOLD LINE

FULL DETAILS - SEE IN-STORE OR VISIT WEBSITE

EXTRA DEEP DRAWERS

EXTRA LARGE DRAWER PULLS

1.5M TALL

② **£439.00** EXC.VAT
£526.80 INC.VAT

*Was £359.98 inc.VAT
*Was £478.80 inc.VAT
*Was £502.80 inc.VAT
*Was £778.80 inc.VAT

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
CBB2288#	41"	8 Dr cabinet	1126x468x1000	£379.98	£455.98
① CBB2248	41"	14 Dr chest	1045x415x486	£269.98	£323.98
② CBB2268^	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

Clarke MECHANICS/PROFESSIONAL TOOL CHESTS/CABINETS

BALL BEARING ROLLER DRAWERS

FULL EXTENSION ROLLER RUNNERS FOR SMOOTH OPENING ACTION

Superb quality & value for automotive workshops

MODEL	DESCRIPTION	DIMS LxWxH (mm)	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
① CTC800B*	6 Dr chest	600x260x340	£66.99	£80.39
CTC900B#	9 Dr chest	610x255x380	£79.98	£95.98
CTC500B^	5 Dr cabinet	675x335x770	£109.98	£131.98
CTC800B	8 Dr chest/cab set	610x330x1070	£119.98	£143.98
② CTC700B	7 Dr cabinet	610x330x875	£129.98	£155.98
CTC1300B	13 Dr chest/cab	620x330x1320	£159.98	£191.98
③ CTC103	3 Dr step up chest	672x310x250	£54.99	£65.99
CTC109	9 Dr chest	662x305x421	£89.98	£107.98
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

Clarke HD PLUS TOOL CHESTS/CABINETS

BALL BEARING ROLLER DRAWERS

Heavy duty/industrial build quality with lockable front covers for added security and protection

LOCKABLE FRONT COVERS STORE NEATLY WITHIN CABINET

*Was £419.98 inc.VAT

① **£144.99** EXC.VAT
£173.99 INC.VAT

② **£289.98** EXC.VAT
£347.98 INC.VAT

③ **£169.98** EXC.VAT
£203.98 INC.VAT

④ **£339.98** EXC.VAT
£407.98 INC.VAT

LARGE 37" CABINET

Clarke BOLTLESS SHELVING BENCHES

Simple fast assembly in minutes using only a hammer

SAVE 10% EXTRA

WHEN YOU BUY 4 SHELVING UNITS AND SAVE AT LEAST £23.99 INC.VAT

CHOICE OF 5 COLOURS: RED, BLUE, GREY, SILVER & GALVANISED STEEL

Strong 9mm fibreboard shelves
150 KG PER SHELF

Strong 12mm fibreboard shelves
350 KG PER SHELF

FROM ONLY **£29.98** EXC.VAT
£35.98 INC.VAT

MODEL	DIMS WxDxH (mm)	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
150kg	800x300x1500	£29.98	£35.98
350kg	900x400x1800	£49.98	£59.98

29858

Clarke HD PLUS MODULAR GARAGE STORAGE SYSTEMS

BALL BEARING ROLLER DRAWERS

Corner units in stock

PRICE CUT NOW FROM ONLY **£799.00** EXC.VAT
£958.80 INC.VAT
WAS £982.80 inc.VAT

PAY Monthly NO DEPOSIT

✓ CREATE THE PERFECT FITTED GARAGE / WORKSHOP

✓ HEAVY DUTY, PROFESSIONAL PACKAGES - CHOICE OF 10

✓ ALL UNITS ALSO AVAILABLE SINGLY FOR CUSTOM BUILD

FROM ONLY **£86.05** INC.VAT PER MONTH* OVER 36 EQUAL PAYMENTS

ALSO FLOOR TILES 4 PACK ONLY **£35.98** INC. VAT

FREE UK DELIVERY

A choice of stainless steel or wooden worktops

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Clarke HYDRAULIC MOTORCYCLE LIFT
CML3
FROM ONLY **£399.00** EXC. VAT
£478.80 INC. VAT

450
FOLDS FLAT FOR EASY STORAGE

- Safety locking device
- Hinged ramp for easy loading
- Table size 2200 x 685mm
- Fully mobile • Max lift height 770mm
- AIR ASSISTED VERSION ALSO IN STOCK FOR ONLY £550.80 INC. VAT

BEST SELLER

Clarke HYDRAULIC MOTORCYCLE AND ATV LIFT
CML5
FROM ONLY **£119.00** EXC. VAT
£142.80 INC. VAT

- Easy to use, foot pedal operated
- 4x wheels (2x with castors)
- 680kg capacity
- Inc. securing straps

680

Clarke MOTORCYCLE DOLLY
MCD1
FROM ONLY **£84.99** EXC. VAT
£101.99 INC. VAT

- For storing & moving motorcycles & scooters
- Max load capacity 567kg • Unique fold down ramps

Clarke DRILL PRESSES
CDP152B
FROM ONLY **£69.99** EXC. VAT
£83.99 INC. VAT

- Range of precision bench & floor presses for enthusiast, engineering & industrial applications

MODEL	MOTOR (W)	SPEEDS	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CDP5EB	350/5		£69.99	£83.99
CDP102B	350/5		£79.99	£95.99
CDP152B	450/12		£149.99	£179.99
CDP202B	450/16		£189.99	£226.80
CDP10B	370/12		£199.99	£239.99
CDP352F	550/16		£229.00	£274.80
CDP452B	550/16		£239.00	£286.80
CDP502F	1100/12		£569.00	£682.80

B = Bench mounted
F = Floor standing

Clarke MECHANICS MOBILE SEAT
CMS1
FROM ONLY **£18.99** EXC. VAT
£22.79 INC. VAT

- Strong steel frame • 4 rubber wheeled castors
- Comfortable padded seat
- Integral storage tray

Clarke METAL LATHE
CL300M
FROM ONLY **£579.00** EXC. VAT
£694.80 INC. VAT

- 300mm between centres • LH/RH thread screw cutting
- Electronic variable speed • Gear change set • Self centering 3 jaw chuck & guard
- Power feed

Clarke JETSTAR PRESSURE WASHERS
JET9500
FROM ONLY **£59.98** EXC. VAT
£71.98 INC. VAT

210 Bar 3045 psi

Makes easy work for washing vehicles, patios, stonework, etc. • JET7500, 8500 & 9500 include hose reel

MODEL	MOTOR MAX.	PRESSURE	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
JST1850	1400W	1523psi	£59.98	£71.98
JST1950	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

Clarke SPRAY GUNS
PGF14
FROM ONLY **£23.99** EXC. VAT
£28.79 INC. VAT

HUGE CHOICE IN-STORE/ONLINE

MODEL	DESC	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
PR012C/	1.2mm,	£23.99	£28.79
14C/18C	1.4mm, 1.8mm		
PGF14/18	Pro, Gravity	£26.99	£32.39
SP14/18C	1.4mm/1.8mm	£28.99	£34.79
AP15	HVLP, 2.2mm	£29.99	£35.98

Clarke MOTORCYCLE RAMP
MAR200B
FROM ONLY **£69.99** EXC. VAT
£83.99 INC. VAT

- Lightweight aluminium folding motorcycle/loading ramp
- Anti-slip wheel grips & individual steps for extra strength
- 340kg max load

Clarke PARTS WASHERS
CW2D, CW1D, CWM20, CW40
FROM ONLY **£42.99** EXC. VAT
£51.59 INC. VAT

PARTS WASHER FLUID FROM £5.99 INC. VAT

MODEL	TANK CAP.	TYPE	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CW2D	10Ltrs	Bench	£42.99	£51.59
CW1D	45Ltrs	Floor	£99.98	£119.98
CWM20	22.5Ltrs	Floor	£144.99	£173.99
CW40	75Ltrs	Floor	£159.98	£191.98

Clarke ARC WELDERS
EA110, 115N, EA165, 160N, EA200, 190N, 235TEN#
FROM ONLY **£59.98** EXC. VAT
£71.98 INC. VAT

For home user, automotive and industrial applications.

MODEL	AMPS	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
EA110	40-100	£59.98	£71.98
115N	30-110	£71.99	£86.39
EA165	65-160	£72.99	£87.59
160N	40-150	£79.98	£95.98
EA200	60-200	£99.98	£119.98
190N	50-185	£104.99	£125.99
235TEN#	40-210	£159.98	£191.98

#Turbo fan cooled

Clarke ELECTRIC HEATERS
DEVIL 6003, 7003, 7005, 6009, 6015, 7015
FROM ONLY **£49.98** EXC. VAT
£59.98 INC. VAT

DEVIL 7003

MODEL	VOLTAGE	HEAT OUTPUT KW	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
DEVIL 6003	230V	1.5-3	£49.98	£59.98
DEVIL 7003	230V	3	£59.98	£71.98
DEVIL 6005	400V	2.5-5	£69.98	£83.98
DEVIL 7005	400V	5	£84.99	£101.99
DEVIL 6009	400V	4.5-9	£109.00	£130.80
DEVIL 6015	400V	5-10-15	£169.00	£202.80
DEVIL 7015	400V	15	£199.98	£239.98

Clarke TURBO FAN GAS HEATERS
Little Devil II, Devil 700, Devil 900, Devil 1600, Devil 2100, Devil 4000
FROM ONLY **£79.98** EXC. VAT
£95.99 INC. VAT

DUAL VOLTAGE 230V/110V

MODEL	OUTPUT KW	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
Little Devil II	10.3	£79.98	£95.98
Devil 700	15	£99.98	£119.98
Devil 900	24.9	£139.98	£167.98
Devil 1600	36.6	£169.98	£203.98
Devil 2100	49.8	£259.00	£310.80
Devil 4000	131	£429.00	£514.80

Clarke DIESEL HOT WASHER
HARRY HOTWASH
FROM ONLY **£479.00** EXC. VAT
£574.80 INC. VAT

145 Bar 2103 psi

Offering low cost, efficient heating

INC. CONTAINER FOR DETERGENT

AMAZING LOW PRICE!

Clarke BENCH BUFFERS/POLISHERS
CBB150, CBB200
FROM ONLY **£64.99** EXC. VAT
£77.99 INC. VAT

For a brilliant shine

MODEL	DIA. (mm)	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CBB150	150	£64.99	£77.99
CBB200	200	£79.98	£95.98

Clarke NO GAS/GAS MIG WELDERS
MIG102NG
FROM ONLY **£124.99** EXC. VAT
£149.99 INC. VAT

- Professional type torch with on/off control
- Thermal overload protection • Turbo fan cooled
- Easy conversion to gas with optional accessories

MODEL	MIN/MAX AMPS	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
MIG 102NG*	35/90	£124.99	£149.99
MIG 106	40/100	£159.00	£190.80
MIG 145	35/135	£179.98	£215.98
MIG 196	40/180	£219.00	£262.80
MIG 240	50/240	£399.00	£478.80

*no gas only

Clarke DIESEL/PARAFFIN HEATERS
XR60, XR80, XR110, XR160, XR210
FROM ONLY **£189.00** EXC. VAT
£226.80 INC. VAT

DEVIL XR80

Ideal for fast efficient heating

- Extra-long run fuel tanks - up to 53 litres
- Variable heat output with thermostat control

MODEL	MAX OUTPUT	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
XR60	14.7KW	£189.00	£226.80
XR80	20.5KW	£239.00	£286.80
XR110	29.3KW	£289.00	£346.80
XR160	46.9KW	£349.00	£418.80
XR210	61.5KW	£399.00	£478.80

airmaster TURBO AIR COMPRESSORS
8/260
FROM ONLY **£89.98** EXC. VAT
£107.98 INC. VAT

Superb range ideal for DIY, hobby & semi-professional use

MODEL	MOTOR	CFM	TANK	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
8/260	2HP	7.5	24ltr	£89.98	£107.98
7/250	2HP	7	24ltr	£94.99	£113.99
11/260	2.5HP	9.5	24ltr	£109.98	£131.98
8/550	2HP	7.5	50ltr	£119.98	£143.98
7/510	2HP	7	50ltr	£119.98	£143.98
11/550	2.5HP	9.5	50ltr	£139.98	£167.98
16/550	3HP	14.5	50ltr	£199.98	£239.98
16/1050	3HP	14.5	100ltr	£249.98	£299.98

*V Twin Pump #Oil free

Clarke MIG WELDERS
PRO90, 110E, 135TE Turbo, 151TE Turbo, 175TECM Turbo, 205TE Turbo
FROM ONLY **£194.99** EXC. VAT
£233.99 INC. VAT

Quality machines from Britain's leading supplier

MODEL	MIN-MAX AMPS	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
PRO90	24-90	£194.99	£233.99
110E	30-100	£229.98	£275.98
135TE Turbo	30-130	£249.98	£299.98
151TE Turbo	30-150	£289.00	£346.80
175TECM Turbo	30-170	£449.00	£538.80
205TE Turbo	30-185	£489.00	£586.80

Clarke MICRO JUMP STARTS
JSM200
FROM ONLY **£49.98** EXC. VAT
£59.98 INC. VAT

12V JUMP START

MODEL	START BOOST	PEAK BOOST	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
JSM200	200A	400A	£49.98	£59.98
JSM300	300A	500A	£64.99	£77.99
JSM350	350A	500A	£84.99	£101.99

Clarke INSTANT SHEDS
CIS8612
FROM ONLY **£159.00** EXC. VAT
£190.80 INC. VAT

UV treated & water proof cover for protection against all elements

MODEL	SIZE (LxWxH)	EXC. VAT	INC. VAT
CIS788	2.4 x 2.4 x 2.1m	£159.00	£190.80
CIS8612	3.7 x 2.4 x 2.4m	£189.00	£226.80
CIS81212	3.6 x 3.6 x 2.5m	£209.00	£250.80

Clarke WIZ MINI AIR COMPRESSOR
FROM ONLY **£84.99** EXC. VAT
£101.99 INC. VAT

IDEAL FOR AIRBRUSH WORK

Oil Free

- Ideal for brush work • 1.58cfm air displacement
- 2.8 bar maximum pressure • Inc. gauge

Clarke SOCKET SETS
PRO360
FROM ONLY **£26.99** EXC. VAT
£32.39 INC. VAT

Top quality chrome vanadium steel.

- 18 Sockets 8-32mm
- Reversible ratchet
- Comfort grip handle

HUGE RANGE OF RATCHETS, SPANNERS AND SOCKET SETS

1/2" TORQUE WRENCH - CHT141
FROM ONLY **£26.99** EXC. VAT
£32.39 INC. VAT

- 5" Extension bar • 1/2" - 3/8" adaptor
- 28-210 Nm

Clarke ARC ACTIVATED HEADSHIELDS
GWH4
FROM ONLY **£37.99** EXC. VAT
£45.59 INC. VAT

SEE FULL RANGE IN-STORE/ONLINE

- Activates instantly when Arc is struck
- Protects to EN379 • Suitable for arc, MIG, TIG & gas welding

PAY Monthly NO DEPOSIT

- Over 18, 24 or 36 months
- From only £300 minimum spend*
- 18.9% Rep. APR

5 MIN APPLICATION!

NEW SPECIALIST MOTORCYCLE TOOLS - SEE CATALOGUE, ONLINE AND IN-STORE

VISIT YOUR LOCAL SUPERSTORE OPEN MON-FRI 8.30-6.00, SAT 8.30-5.30, SUN 10.00-4.00

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B'HAM GREAT BARR 4 Birmingham Rd.	0121 358 7977	GATESHEAD 50 Lobley Hill Rd, NE8 4YJ	0191 493 2520	NORTHAMPTON 48, Beckett Retail Park NNS 5JW	01604 267840
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BOLTON 1 Thynne St, BL3 6BD	01204 365799	GLOUCESTER 221A Barton St, GL1 4HY	01452 417 948	PETERBOROUGH 417 Lincoln Rd, Millfield	01733 311770
BRADFORD 105-107 Manningham Lane, BD1 3BN	01274 390962	GRIMSBY ELLIS WAY, DN32 9BD	01472 354435	PLYMOUTH 58-64 Embankment Rd, PL4 9HY	01752 254050
BRIGHTON 123 Lewes Rd, BN2 3QB	01273 915999	HULL 8-10 Holderness Rd, HU9 1EG	01482 223161	POOLE 137-139 Bourne-mouth Rd, Parkstone	01202 717913
BRISTOL 1-3 Church Rd, Lawrence Hill, BS5 9JJ	0117 935 1060	ILFORD 746-748 Eastern Ave, IG2 7HU	0208 518 4286	PORTSMOUTH 277-283 Copnor Rd, Copnor	023 9265 4777
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CAMBRIDGE 181-183 Histon Road, Cambridge, CB4 3HL	01223 322675	LEEDS 227-229 Kirkstall Rd, LS4 2AS	0113 231 0400	SHEFFIELD 453 London Rd, Heeley, S2 4HJ	0114 258 0831
CARDIFF 44-46 City Rd, CF24 3DN	029 2046 5424	LEICESTER 69 Melton Rd, LE4 6PN	0116 261 0688	SIDCUP 13 Blackfen Parade, Blackfen Rd	0208 3042069
CARLISLE 85 London Rd, CA1 2LG	01228 591666	LINCOLN Unit 5, The Pelham Centre, LN5 8HG	01522 543 036	SOUTHAMPTON 516-518 Portswood Rd.	023 8055 7788
CHELtenham 84 Fairview Road, GL52 2EH	01242 514 402	LIVERPOOL 80-88 London Rd, L3 5NF	0151 709 4484	SOUTHWEND 1139-1141 London Rd, Leigh on Sea	01702 483 742
CHESTER 43-45 St. James Street, CH1 3EY	01244 311258	LONDON CATFORD 289/291 Southend Lane SE6 3RS	0208 695 5684	STOKE-ON-TRENT 382-396 Waterloo Rd, Hanley	01782 287321
COLCHESTER 4 North Station Rd, CO1 1RE	01206 762831	LONDON 6 Kendal Parade, Edmonton N18	020 8803 0861	SUNDERLAND 13-15 Ryhope Rd, Grangetown	0191 510 8773
COVENTRY Bishop St, CV1 1HT	024 7622 4227	LONDON 503-507 Lea Bridge Rd, Leyton, E10	020 8558 8284	SWANSEA 7 Samlet Rd, Llansamlet, SA7 9AG	01792 792969
CROYDON 423-427 Brighton Rd, Sth Croydon	020 8763 0640	LUTON Unit 1, 326 Unstable Rd, Luton LU4 8JS	01582 728 063	SWINDON 21 Victoria Rd, SN1 3AW	01793 491717
DARLINGTON 214 Northgate, DL1 1RB	01325 380 841	MAIDSTONE 57 Upper Stone St, ME15 6HE	01622 769 572	TWICKENHAM 83-85 Heath Rd, TW1 4AW	020 8892 9117
DEAL (KENT) 182-186 High St, CT14 6BQ	01304 373 434	MANCHESTER CENTRAL 209 Bury New Road M8 8DU	0161 241 1851	WARRINGTON Unit 3, Hawley's Trade Pk.	01925 630 937
DERBY Derwent St, DE1 2ED	01332 290 931	MANCHESTER OPENSHAW Unit 5, Tower Mill, Ashton Old Rd	0161 223 8376	WIGAN 2 Harrison Street, WNS 9AU	01942 323 785
DONCASTER Wheatley Hall Road	01302 245 999	MANSFIELD 169 Chesterfield Rd, South	01623 622160	WOLVERHAMPTON Parkfield Rd, Bilston	01902 494186
DUNDEE 24-26 Trades Lane, DD1 3ET	01382 225 140	MIDDLESBROUGH Mandale Triangle, Thornaby			

BSA MYSTERY BIKE

BY JIM REYNOLDS



YOU WON'T SEE MANY BEESA C15S SECTIONED to show off the inner workings as neatly done as this one. It's part of Paul Rigby's collection from vintage through to late classics, but as he's a man who likes to get out and ride his bikes, this one does rather cramp his style.

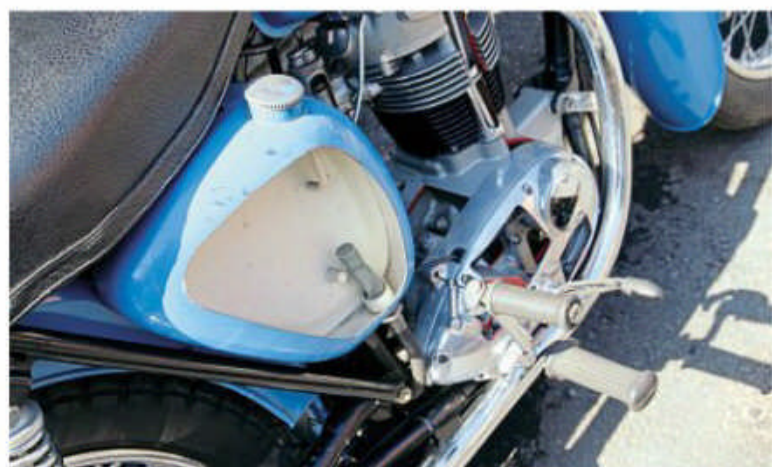
There's a big gap in its history, but Paul does remember being asked to weld and re-instate a silencer for a family friend about 30 years ago "so they could re-use it on this bike they were restoring. I

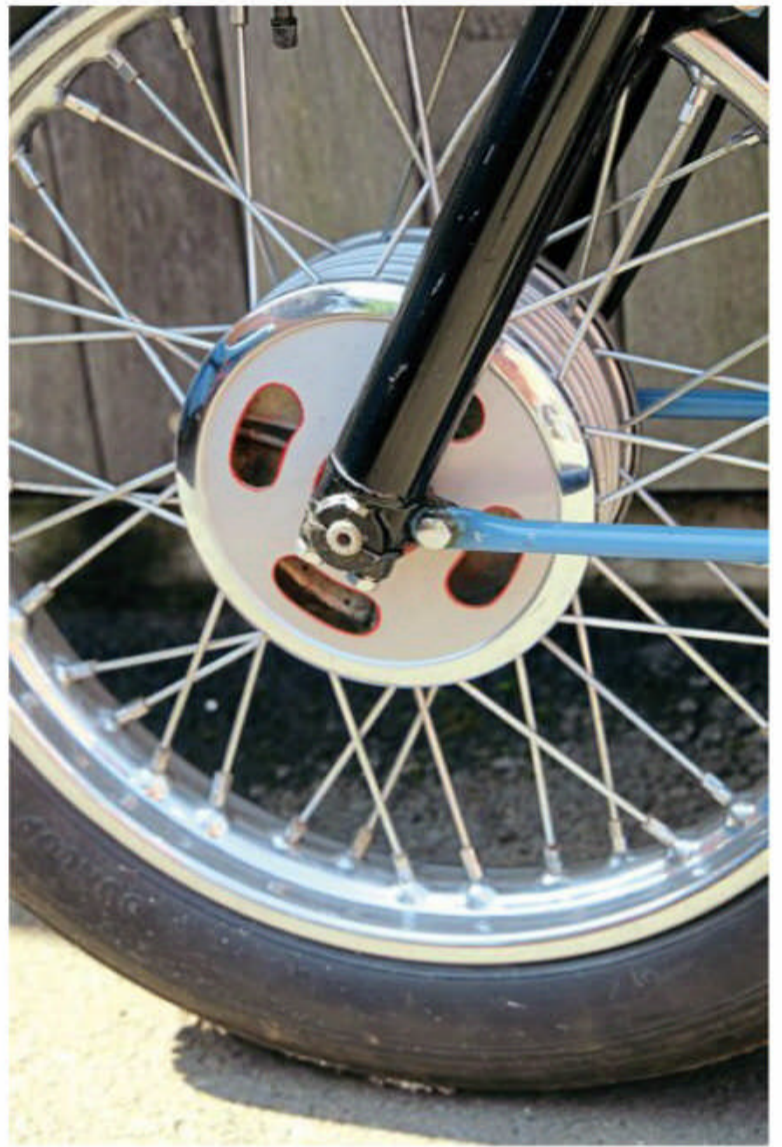
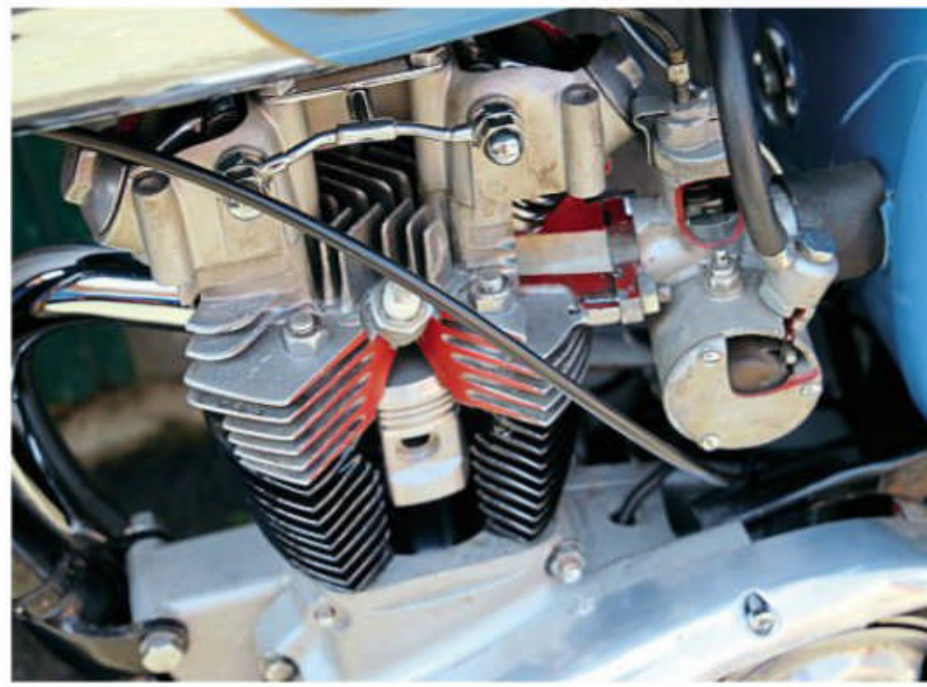
never saw the entire bike back then, just various parts.

"Twelve months ago the family contacted me and asked if I would be interested in retrieving the bike from the loft. I was glad to help, expecting boxes of parts, but I was confronted with the completely assembled bike in their loft.

"Then I spent many hours stripping it down to manageable sized parts to get it through the loft hatch. I've asked the family about it, but they have no history, and sadly the owner passed away and nobody thought to ask him while he was still alive. But I did undo the welding work I did 30 years ago on this same exhaust to expose the cutaway components and had it re-chromed."

Look around this stripped-to-the-bone Beesa and you can see what a thorough job was done on it, apparently at the BSA works in Birmingham's Small Heath area. Top restorer Graham Horne should know, he worked at Ariel and then BSA when the British bike industry was still a significant power in the world, and he's looked the bike over. "Judging by the quality of the work and the finish, I think it was a factory job," he says. This was not just a case of taking stock components and cutting them back to show how they





worked, they've been finished with polishing, plating or chroming to show each part to best advantage.

Both hubs have been cut back to show the brake shoes and the cams that open them to provide stopping power.

The Amal carb shows off its operation, with even the float chamber open to view, and the inlet tract down into the combustion chamber draws your eye to the cutaway barrel and polished piston, while round on the timing side there's a pair of very smart pushrods nestling in their cutaway tower.

It's a very smart little bike, but after 30 years or more in the loft it's not immaculate. The paint is worn in parts and the plating on some of the nuts is beginning to lift. So if you have a burning ambition to take the best overall trophy in the cutaway classic concours, this is not for you. But if you love your Beesas – and a lot of people do, because of the memories they recall – you could stand this unique example in the corner and bring back happy times without making a sound or ever getting wet.

The bike is entered for Bonham's auction at the Carole Nash Classic Motorcycle Mechanics Show at Stafford on October 19/20. [CBG](#)





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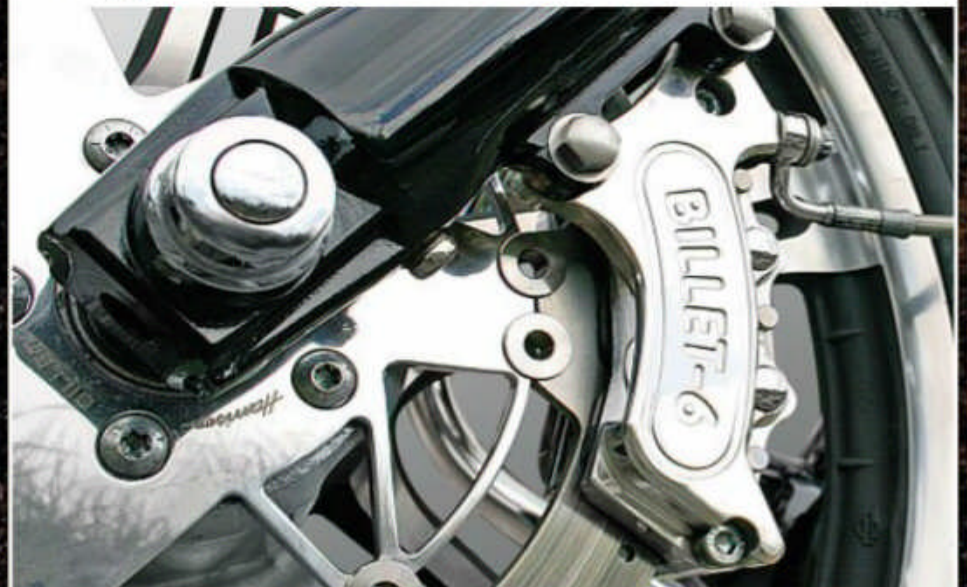
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The logic is clear – if you want a haircut, you don't go to the supermarket. So, if you want a certain part for your classic motorcycle, then you approach the companies that deal in parts and expertise in those very models. And look what we have here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

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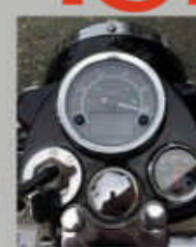
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Flanders Field Race fun

How to run a vintage festival



A try-out by a small group of friends spontaneously degenerated into a friendly demo race, and the Flanders Field Race was born.

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHS ONNO 'BERSERK' WIERINGA
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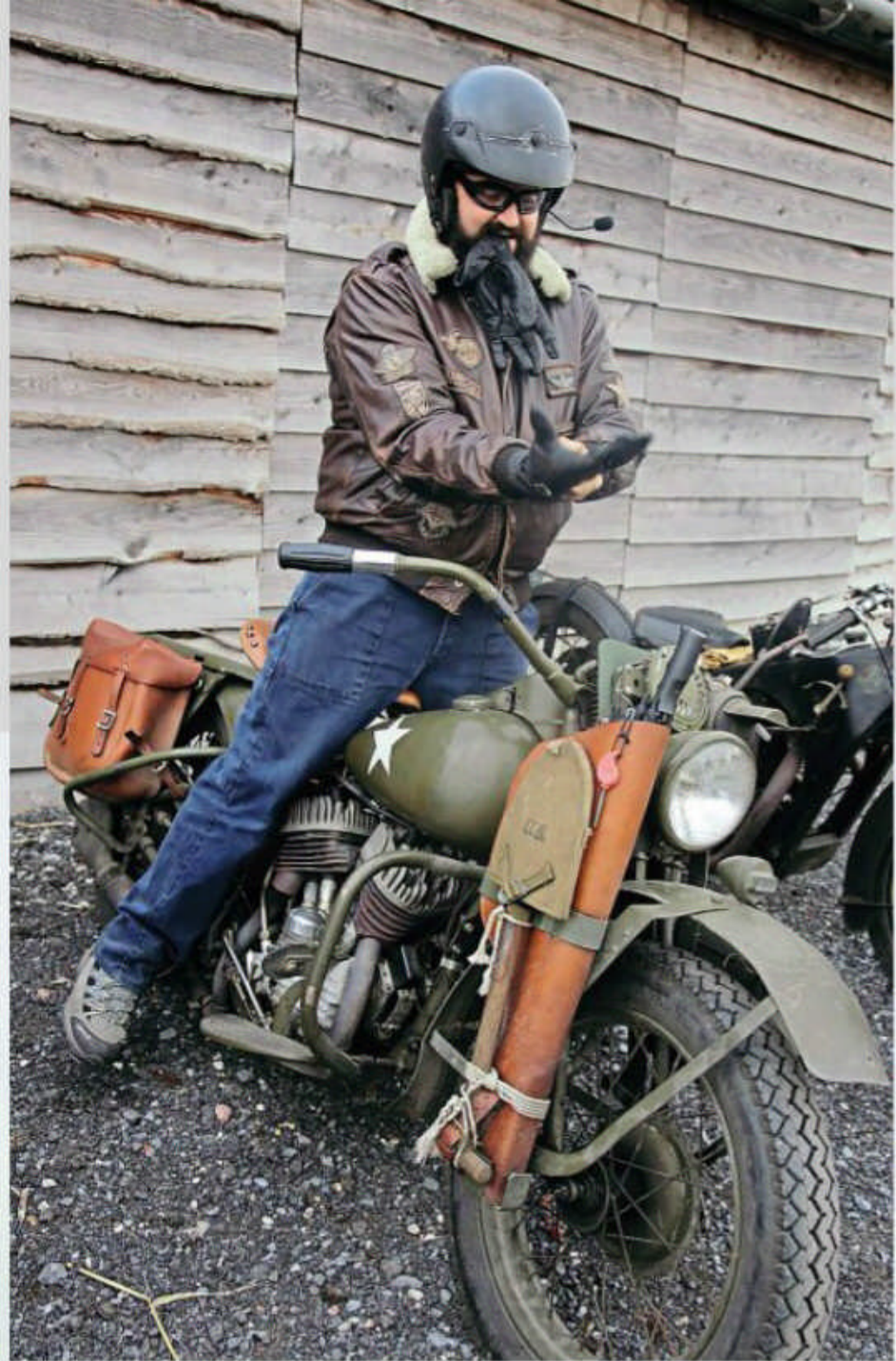
IN RURAL FLANDERS, MANNEKENSVERE, ALMOST ON the Belgian coast, plans were made by 10 friends to organise a fun old-school event in the future – a race over a freshly cut field, with the help of a farmer who immediately made his land available when he heard about it. The initiators are Ivo and Hans – the first known for his De Coude Scheure establishment opposite the field, and the second for his HD Classics motorcycle shop in Baal, Belgium.

“We want to organise an old-fashioned fun event, with a field race for old bikes up to the year 1947. The current circumstances do not allow a large-scale event now, but we want to see if it is possible to have a field race for classics here next year. We want it to be just like in the old days, when the farmers’ sons raced their motorbikes across the newly mown fields, simply because it was fun and, of course, because they liked speed. We want to create that idea, that atmosphere,” said Hans and Ivo, both avid motorcyclists, especially with the very old stuff, which is raced under the name Time Bandits Racing Team.

Ton agrees: “Just a day of fun without difficult rules and commercial interests, accessible to everyone who likes older bikes, with an old-fashioned field race with lots of fun and hardly any costs.”

“We want to see if this initiative can grow into a new event, which is why we are trying today to see if





it is something," said the men. This time a modest set up with a simple, straight track across the field, but the plan is to add a dirt track and something of an agility course as well.

And then today the try-out, without an audience and in a very private circle.

Early in the morning there's a dozen motorbikes in 'the pits', or the parking lot next to the Koude Schuur. The attendees adhere strictly to the current rules, as agreed in advance. Some riders are already tinkering, filling petrol, and Nick, the owner with the oldest motorcycle, a Triumph with no less than 3hp from 1905, even comes riding from his home more than 20km away.

Ivo and his lovely wife Delphine provide coffee, and in the meantime the farmer is kind enough to level the land slightly with a cultivator behind his tractor.

The riders, often dressed in a 'period correct' suit, inspect the field. On the surface it looks fine and flat,

but it appears to be full of cracks and gullies, with many treacherous stones hidden under the smooth-feeling straw – that will see spectacular riding.

The old machines are started and warmed up on the road – old, very rare machines like a 1931 Royal Enfield JF 500cc OHV Four Valve; Brough Superior 1000 Sport Mk.1 from 1926; 1929 Harley-Davidson JD board track racer; BMW R47 500cc OHV from 1928;





a Norton ES2 OHV 1935; Indian Chief from 1940; various Saroleas such as a Course 500; 32R from 1932 and a 1919 550cc; a La Mondiale from 1929; BSA B31 from 1953; various H-D 750 side valves; and the 1905 Triumph 3hp and Triumph Tiger Cub 200cc from 1966 in off-road version. These machines certainly will not be spared; the speed is increased until the engines roar

with pleasure and the owners are smiling blissfully. "It looks like a 'live Bonhams catalogue' here," one of the riders remarks. And indeed, you will rarely see such a collection of motorcycles in real life, let alone ride them, and ride them hard.

Not all engines want to start easily. For example, the Royal Enfield and the H-D JD Racer need a helping hand by pushing them back to





life, as most engines have been forced to stand still for a long time.

The start is wonderfully simple. Empty bottles indicate the starting line, and with a wave of the flag and with a nice rumble and roar from the exhausts, the riders go into a bumpy battle. And then it turns out to be a lot more difficult than expected, with hand shifters and foot clutch, carefully riding between the cracks and gullies, manoeuvring to get to the end of the track is not always easy! The most important thing, however, is that there is fun.

The huge hamburger that was the lunch provided extra weight and thus traction on the rear wheel in the afternoon, after which this beautiful, really

old-fashioned and with love for the old motorcycles covered day, came to an end with a delicious barbecue, accompanied by the inevitable glass of Picon in the Koude Schuur.

The atmosphere, the conviviality, the helping hand in tinkering, and especially the friendship between the racers make such a day as this special. A friendly competition that should definitely be followed up next year! **CBC**



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THE CAROLE NASH 27th Classic Motorcycle Mechanics Show, one of the best bike shows in the world, is going ahead... but with a twist. Visitors will be welcomed to the show on October 10 and 11 at the Stafford County Showground, but they must have bought their ticket in advance from the

website www.staffordclassicbikeshows.com/october

You can purchase either a Saturday or Sunday ticket, but if you don't have a ticket, you will not be allowed into the show. The total number of visitors will be limited on both days to keep everyone safe, allow for social distancing, and keep the show in line with government guidance. Ticket buyers should check out the safety plan at www.mortonsevents.co.uk/covid and see what the organisers are doing, and how those

attending can help to keep everyone safe.

Visitors should bring their face covering or mask so they can access the indoor space at the show, again in line with government advice. Whilst the show may not look and feel like a 'regular' Stafford, it is hoping to combine the best of the April and October shows, with a great mix of vintage and modern classics, with space and time to explore every aspect of the show. And being less crowded, it should be even easier to see all the stands, exhibitors and bikes.

Classic-styled Mash are coming back to the UK



MASH IS BACK, AGAIN

MASH OWNERS WHO were left without a spares or bike supplier when Three Cross Motorcycles went into administration will be pleased to hear that a new importer is to start looking after the brand in the UK.

Motomondo UK Ltd is to become the new distributor of the French/Chinese

brand of classic-styled singles. The company is a subsidiary of Motomondo BV Netherland, who have distributed the Mash brand while working closely with the Mash factory in France for the last five years. Motomondo BV distributes Mash not just in the Netherlands but also in Belgium,

Luxembourg and Germany. Besides Mash, MotoMondo also distributes many other brands in the Benelux region, like Royal Enfield, Hyosung and Rieju.

Details of the Mash range of singles from 50-650cc can be found on a new website, www.mashmotors.co.uk and there is a substantial dealer network.



New Meteor panniers could suit many classics

NEW METEOR BAGS FOR MODERN CLASSICS

WHETHER YOU CALL them 'retros', 'modern classics' or 'naked' bikes, one area in which riders have not been best served is the provision of decent on-bike luggage.

Craven have plugged this hole with the launch of the new Meteor pannier system

Meteor panniers have been designed specially to accommodate the high-rise silencers used on the

new 'classics' like the Royal Enfield Interceptor.

The Meteor is made to sit high enough to avoid fouling the silencer, but narrow enough to avoid spoiling the lines of the bike and making sure there is still enough room for a pillion.

In order to maintain the capacity of a standard pannier, the Meteor has been made deeper horizontally, giving a clean

finish with the same storage space. Big enough for a full-face crash helmet, fitting kits will be available to suit many machines with upswept silencers.

Initially just black or white versions will be available, but Craven are confident they can create Meteors to match most Interceptor colour schemes.

Visit www.craven-equipment.co.uk

BACK IN BLACK

THE END OF the line for Royal Enfield's 500cc unit construction engine is approaching, and the company is marking this with a special limited-edition run of 1,000 Classic 'Tribute Black' motorcycles to be released into the European market.

The limited-edition 'Tribute Black' motorcycle is equipped with a range of accessories designed for the model, including canvas pannier bags with mounting racks, touring mirror kits, a pillion seat and a machined oil filler cap. Each bike will carry a serial numbered plaque.

The motorcycles will feature a dual-tone paint scheme, with mudguards and fuel tanks carrying both glossy and matt black finishes, and will showcase Royal Enfield's hand-painted, pin-striped tank details.

CEO of Royal Enfield Vinod Dasari said: "Since 2008, Royal Enfield 500cc motorcycles have proudly set the stage for the middle-weight motorcycling segment. The Classic 500 in particular has garnered success for Royal Enfield across various international markets with its sublime retro-chic design



The Royal Enfield 500cc single is marking its demise with the Tribute Black special edition

and engaging ride experience. The Classic 500 Tribute Black is an opportunity for aficionados to own a piece of Royal Enfield and motorcycling history."

The current range of existing Classic and Bullet 500 motorcycles will continue to be available for retail across European markets during 2020 while stocks last. Service and spares parts will also remain available for current owners throughout Royal Enfield's dealership network. Just over 200 'Tribute Black' models will be available in selected dealerships throughout the UK.

RIGHT-HAND SIDECARS: BUYER BEWARE

ANYONE TEMPTED BY the idea of owning an imported motorbike and sidecar combination has been warned to be extremely careful or they could end up the unhappy owner of an unusable machine.

The rules surrounding the use of combinations are complex, but the most significant is where the sidecar is attached. Many Soviet-era combinations making their way to the UK today would be illegal on British roads. This is because the machine often has the sidecar mounted on the right, rather than the left. While machines are imported with the appropriate paperwork and NOVA forms, and can in fact be registered in the UK, they still would not be legal to use on the road. David Angel from F2 Motorcycles has produced detailed guidance for those tempted to buy an imported combination.

He advised: "If the motorcycle is registered in the UK before August 1, 1981, or the motorcycle is permanently registered to you in another country and you are visiting the UK on holiday, you can use it. If neither of these apply you cannot."

The confusion has arisen because the law states that any bike of any age can be registered in the UK, and the V55/5 used to register a previously used vehicle in the UK does not actually ask if there is a sidecar or which side it is fitted to.

However, Regulation 93 of The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 states: 'No person shall use or cause or permit to be used on a road any two-wheeled motor cycle registered on or after August 1, 1981, not being a motorcycle brought temporarily into Great Britain by a person resident abroad, if there is a sidecar attached to the right (or off) side of the motorcycle.'

So, while the paperwork might look good, the use of a newly registered right-hand sidecar is illegal and would render your insurance invalid, even if it was made prior to August 1981.

David advises buyers: "If it is already road registered in the UK, simply look at the V5C. The only section you need to worry about is the date of registration. If this date is on or after August 1, 1981, riding it on the road will contravene The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986." For more information, visit simplysidecars.co.uk and follow the links to Sidecar Law.

SAMMY WELCOMES JAPANESE RIDING VISITORS

WITH ACCESS TO motorcycle events and ride-ins restricted, Sammy Miller invited riders of Japanese bikes to join him at his Motorcycle Museum on Sunday, August 30 for a ride-in. Thanks to good weather the museum welcomed hundreds of bikes and their riders. Around 80 pre-1990 bikes were displayed in the museum's courtyard, whilst those manufactured after 1990 were able to park in the car

park. Bikes arrived throughout the morning and the complex drive was filled to capacity by late morning. A great many visitors also arrived to enjoy the bikes and everyone had the opportunity to chat with Sammy. Visitors on classics had an opportunity to win a prize for their bike, and this year judging was undertaken by Sammy himself. Sammy also conducted workshop tours throughout the



CREDIT WWW.JACQUELINELAWTONPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

day. The museum in New Milton, Hampshire, is crammed with interesting machines, from road and racing classics to rare prototypes and, of course, plenty of trial icons.

The museum continues to host a Motorcycle Ride-In every Tuesday morning and the museum is open daily from 10am. Visit www.sammymiller.co.uk for further information.

THE RETURN OF THE TRIDENT

TRIUMPH HAVE UNVEILED the first prototype of their new low-priced Trident naked which harks back to the unfaired performance bikes of the 1990s. The new Trident has a monoshock rear end and a liquid-cooled three-cylinder engine. The Trident design prototype has been created during a four-year development programme in the UK.

It is the second time Triumph have resurrected the Trident name, originally used on the pushrod triple of 1969-1977 and later used on the 750 and 900cc un-faired Hinckley triples of the 1990s.

Styling is a mixture of modern sportsbike at the rear with a tank that owes much to the Speed Triple, and to Triumph's range of twins.

The Trident design prototype was revealed at the London Design Museum. Few technical details have been revealed, which was a surprise given the machine is due to arrive in showrooms in early 2021. The exact price, engine capacity and power have not been revealed. It seems likely that the engine will be a de-tuned version of Triumph's 675cc triple engine. Triumph says the triple is 'the perfect balance of low-down torque and top end power'. It will be joining a crowded marketplace and will need to be priced very competitively among the rival middleweight Japanese twins that fit into a £6,000-7000 price slot.

Steve Sargent, Triumph Chief Product Officer, said: "The Trident design prototype marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter for Triumph, where the brief was all about fun, from the look to the ride. With its pure minimalist form, clean lines, Triumph design DNA and more than a hint of our Speed Triple's muscular poise, this gives the first exciting glimpse at the full Trident story to come. Ultimately our aim was to bring a new take on character and style, alongside the accessible easy handling and quality Triumph is known for - at a price that's really competitive."



TRIUMPH PREPARES TO WELCOME VISITORS AGAIN

THE TRIUMPH FACTORY Visitor Experience Exhibit, Shop and Café at Hinckley in Leicestershire will be re-opening on Saturday, October 10. To provide

a safe environment for those making the trip, visits to the Triumph Factory Visitor Experience Exhibition will now need to be pre-booked and tickets paid

for through the venue website. Admission is £6 for adults, £2.50 for accompanied children, and £15 for families. The shop and café are always free to enter

and no pre-booking is required. All visitors must bring and wear face masks or coverings (except for those exempt for medical reasons and children under 11). Visit www.triumphmotorcycles.co.uk/visitor-experience/ information to book your tickets.



Bookworm

This month, Matt has been comparing the US Clymer manuals with the British Haynes variety. Did one shine over the other? And to break the boxer monotony, we look at Ivor Davies' Triumph book.



BMW workshop manual vs Clymer BMW workshop manual

While I have balanced carbs, serviced engines and repaired them since a young whippersnapper, it's only been possible through what's been picked up from watching my elders and often, betters. So, with no training and an 'iffy' CV, a workshop manual helps no end to bring confidence to a job.

John Haynes wrote manuals for more than 1000 different cars and bikes, selling more than 200 million books. His passion for cars led to the Haynes Motor Museum in Somerset, which is always worthy of a visit.

Haynes manuals have always been the go-to for UK shed dwellers like myself, and while the brand has often suffered sarcastic abuse for overly explaining really easy jobs, yet skimming over the tricky ones (with the term 'reassembly is the reverse of removal'), the torque settings, measurements and clearances have also been essential.

The US has always had Clymer manuals. Floyd Clymer was a bike enthusiast, dealer and racer, and even tried with the Clymer Indians and

Velocettes to start his own bike brand. Unfortunately, it came to a halt after he died in 1970.

I borrowed one of each to help understand the R100 that currently rules my life. Neither are current editions, but have all I need in them. The Clymer looks the most impressive, being more than twice as thick as the Haynes version. Also it has less sarcasm attached when talking to others, which is probably down to the fact that less have used them, being American.

As both manuals offer advice on a number of the 2-valve boxer models, they both have to try and simplify the information; yet the Haynes manual manages this in a much clearer way.

It also, to myself at least, is more obviously laid out, with specs and tolerances at the front of each chapter, which is quicker and easier to find than the Clymer, which has it at the end.

Having said all that, the stepped chapters marked clearly on the side of the pages in the Clymer manuals make life simpler, as do the explanations at the beginning of each chapter. Clymer also must take credit for

more photographs, and quite simply more words.

Though, again being American, it carries an awful lot of precautions at every stage, too. Oh, what a world of litigation.

Worryingly, the clearances and adjustments differ between each manual. This is undoubtedly down to the Clymer having its information from BMW USA and Haynes from BMW UK. And with many old bikes having come from the USA nowadays, this may actually be useful. But then it could also be down to different petrol, or even altitude.

Would I recommend one or the other? No, I would look for both. For the specs, for the fact that one job may be better described in one than the other, or for a different photograph that helps. But also if you spill your coffee on one, work can still progress...

BMW workshop manual

■ £21.50

■ motobins.co.uk
■ motorworks.co.uk

Clymer BMW workshop manual

■ £34

■ motorworks.co.uk
■ motobins.co.uk

Pictorial history of Triumph Motorcycles

BY IVOR DAVIES

Ivor Davies was PR man for Triumph after the war, so knows his Triumph onions. It's a simple book, telling the history of the marque through mainly official photographs. You know the facts are mainly correct, which is essential when using for identification, but also for restoration. It doesn't concentrate on the golden years, but looks from beginning, right through to the sad demise.

Each photograph has a nicely sized caption accompanying it, so you can dip in and out of this book as you wish. For only a few quid, this is a nice edition I have enjoyed and learned from.

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James Ultralight

One man's restoration of this idyllic pre-war runaround



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Italian heavyweight stallion; is it beauty from all angles?

Valespeed
We look at another new British bike manufacturer, Valespeed

Twins are not always identical
We test Honda's CB750Z against Kawasaki's Z750 twin

Who's who ||

EDITOR || Matt Hull
editor@classicbikeguide.com

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

ART EDITOR || Kelvin Clements

DESIGNER || Michael Baumber

PICTURE DESK || Paul Fincham, Jonathan Schofield

PRODUCTION EDITOR || Sarah Wilkinson

DIVISIONAL ADVERTISING MANAGER || Billy Manning

ADVERTISING ||

Kieron Deekens 01507 529413
kdeekens@mortons.co.uk

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

SALES AND DISTRIBUTION MANAGER || Carl Smith

MARKETING MANAGER || Charlotte Park

PUBLISHING DIRECTOR || Dan Savage

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR || Nigel Hole

EDITORIAL ADDRESS ||

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

WEBSITE ||

www.classicbikeguide.com

GENERAL QUERIES AND BACK ISSUES ||

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Email: help@classicmagazines.co.uk
Web: www.classicmagazines.co.uk

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Letters

Whoopsy – sorry!

On page 59 of the July edition you had a picture of two police officers giving the halt sign and the caption said an A65. I have had a good look and think it is an A10.

Ray Hewitt

...and again...

I have just started a subscription to your magazine and have been reasonably impressed; that is until I came to 'Motorcycling and the Police – a perfect match'. On page 59, picture one - it states 'a BSA A65'. I think you will find it is the earlier model A10. Get your proofreader to watch 'Heartbeat' and you will see a near-identical one.

Andy Bean

Matt: Dear Ray and Andy, you are absolutely correct, thank you. And no one to blame but myself!



I win

Hi, I've just got September's edition of Classic Bike Guide and read Frank's column. His autumn anorak phrase is an obvious reference to the 1967 Kinks' song, Autumn Almanac. I also went to Blackpool for my holidays. I hereby claim my £5 prize; please send it to your nearest animal charity.

Cheers,

Ian Munro

Matt: Well done, Sir!

If at first you don't succeed, love again

Thirty years ago I bought a Tribsa complete with sidecar. I did this because I thought it would be great fun taking my mates out and about in the sunshine. I tried it out on the farm where I lived at the time and soon discovered that talking it out on the road would result in my death. I removed the chair and used it a handful of times, but decided it was too slow, handled like a gate and the brakes were just ornaments.

Fast forward 30 years and here I am riding it again. It's a case of the opposite of rose-tinted goggles.

It has plenty of speed, goes where you point it and the brakes are good. Looking at the pictures, you will see why this change of heart has come about. It now has a Morgo 750 kit fitted, all bearings inside and outside of the engine replaced, polished and now matching con rods. The crankshaft has been lightened and balanced. I've also fitted a Bob

Newby clutch and belt drive. Obviously I had to open up the primary case to allow the beauty to be seen.

Some lovely, flanged alloy rims are fitted. I've also binned the distributor and replaced it with an electric ignition kit from Electex World Ltd. Thanks to Bob for sorting that out. Your keen eye will have spotted the front disc, not around in 1961. This is the result of a change of front end. The forks and hub are from a 90s Thunderbird and with some clever work from a fella I know called BJ, they now hold up the steering end of the bike. This then allowed me to have a brake to stop with.

Now it seems the 30-year rest has changed my mind about riding a classic bike and not just owning one. They can be great fun after all, and start, run and so far can be reliable. It makes plenty of noise, which is almost as important as the attention it gets when I park it. I've really enjoyed the



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build, from the head steady made from an old bedstead, to chopping the seat down.

Yes, it belongs to me, but a massive part of it will always belong to my great mate Mack. Without his help and time I could not have done it. If you know an aircraft engineer who knows Triumph engines as well as him you are halfway there. That 70-year-old brain is still sound! The only problem I have now is, do I repaint it or not.? Mack says yes, but another friend, Neville, says no. I could go on with much more but would hate to bore you. Thanks, Ashley.

Matt: Dear Ashley, thanks for letting us all see your bike – and no, none of us were bored! It looks great and I hope to see it soon. Keep enjoying it!



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The writer of this month's Star Letter wins a Duchinni D501 open-face helmet worth £49.99. Traditionally-shaped open-face helmet with stitched trim, pull-down internal sun visor and optional peak. Find out more at thekeycollection.co.uk

Ural 650

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY BY OLI





“**I** CALL HIM ANDROPOV,” SAYS RUSSELL, OWNER OF this splendid green and white Ural 650 flat twin. A reference to Yuri Andropov, the 1980s leader of the Soviet Union, perhaps? “Because bits ‘dropov’ him all the time,” Russell added.

Russell has had the Ural for three years and is the 18th owner. “I bought it from a bloke in Camborne in Cornwall. It was advertised as being a runner with an MoT, so I thought I’d ride it back home. When I got there the bloke said, ‘Where’s your van?’. He wasn’t expecting anyone to actually try and ride it.”

Russell toggled up and hit the road. “I thought I’d just slipstream lorries at around 55mph, but on a couple of occasions I simply couldn’t keep up with them and the speed dropped to below 30. The bars were so badly positioned I had to stop three or four times on the way back to ease the cramp in my wrists. It was the longest ride of my life. I got it home, parked it and thought I’d bought a complete and utter lemon.”

The following day he got to work. The problem was that the settings on the replacement Mikuni carburetors were “all over the place”.

The first step was to remove the boded-on pod air-filters and replace them with the pancake filter from a Triumph Spitfire. With the aid of a Gunson Colortune carb tune-up tool he was able to sync the carbs and fit the right jets. “Once done it started straight away and would happily do 70mph. I think the previous owner had tried but, in the end, just gave up because ▶



“The first step was to remove the bodged-on pod air-filters and replace them with the pancake filter from a Triumph Spitfire”

he couldn't get it right. There are thousands of permutations, but once you do get it right, it's fine.”

He sprayed it Ford Highland Green and Ford Ivory White. “I used to really like the off-the-wall paint schemes the factory used to use, and this kept it kind of Russian.”

Although registered in 1994, it is believed to have been sitting languishing in an old Russian warehouse for several years before being imported by Neval, who re-chromed all the important parts and registered it. Eventually it made its way to Russell.

“Since I sorted the carbs out, it's been bombproof. The engine is really solid, and the only issue is that if you leave it on the sidestand for a while, oil will leak into the left-hand cylinder. That's nothing to worry about though, it just smokes for a bit.”

Russell uses 10W/50 fully synthetic oil in the engine and changes it regularly, buying oil filters at 10 for £10 from Ukraine and puts EP90 in the gearbox.

The “awful” rear shock absorbers were replaced with pattern examples designed for a Suzuki GS750. Lucas indicators replaced the old ones when they fell off, and wider bars replaced the wrist-snapping originals.

“And I should have bought shares in Nyloc and Loctite,” says Russell. Nuts and bolts have been an issue. “If you are used to a Japanese bike, you'll always find the head and thread sizes match. These are all over the place. I have to take them to a fastener supplier and get them to measure it to get the right ones. Of course, that might not be the Russians – it could be the 17 previous owners.

“Touch wood, I haven't had to do anything major to the engine, though. It's a great lazy thing. I just replace things as and when needed.

“The brakes take a bit of fettling, but at the last MoT the lad doing it said he'd never come across a drum as good as this. It must have been set up absolutely perfectly.”



Above: Russell painted it in Ford Highland green and Ford Ivory white

Below: To be used in the Soviet Forces is to be hardy and reliable

To start it with the sideways kickstart, Russell has created his own ritual. “I put on the ignition, petrol and choke, turn it over five times to prime it, then give it a big swing and it will start. I don't know if that's the right way to do it, but it works for me, so I'll stick with it.”

The Ural is perfect for country roads. “You'd be surprised how easy it is to throw about. If you lean in with it, it tips in, but if you stay upright and lean it under you it's fine and you can scrape your boots. It's perfect for country laning. Just go everywhere in top, change up early and change down late. Don't force the gearbox, just ease it in and it's fine.”

The gear selector adjustment feature hasn't been touched. “Third gear is something of a challenge, but you just let it slow down to 30mph to change down. It's got glacial gear changing.”

Russell uses German Mefo Explorer tyres front and back. These are quite knobbly and the rear tyres wear quickly, but one design feature of the Ural helps reduce that. The front and back wheels are interchangeable. You just swap them round and the wear gets balanced.

Maintenance is done at home. “You do need to be able to wield a spanner and a screwdriver, and being able to fabricate a bracket or two will help. Some of the head sizes are weird, and you need special thin spanners for the yoke and the fork tops – you can get kits with those in. Electrically, it's a bit old and dated, but I've never had any problems with that. Though sometimes I look at the wiring and think, ‘My God, what were they thinking?’, and think about getting a new loom made, but if it ain't broke...

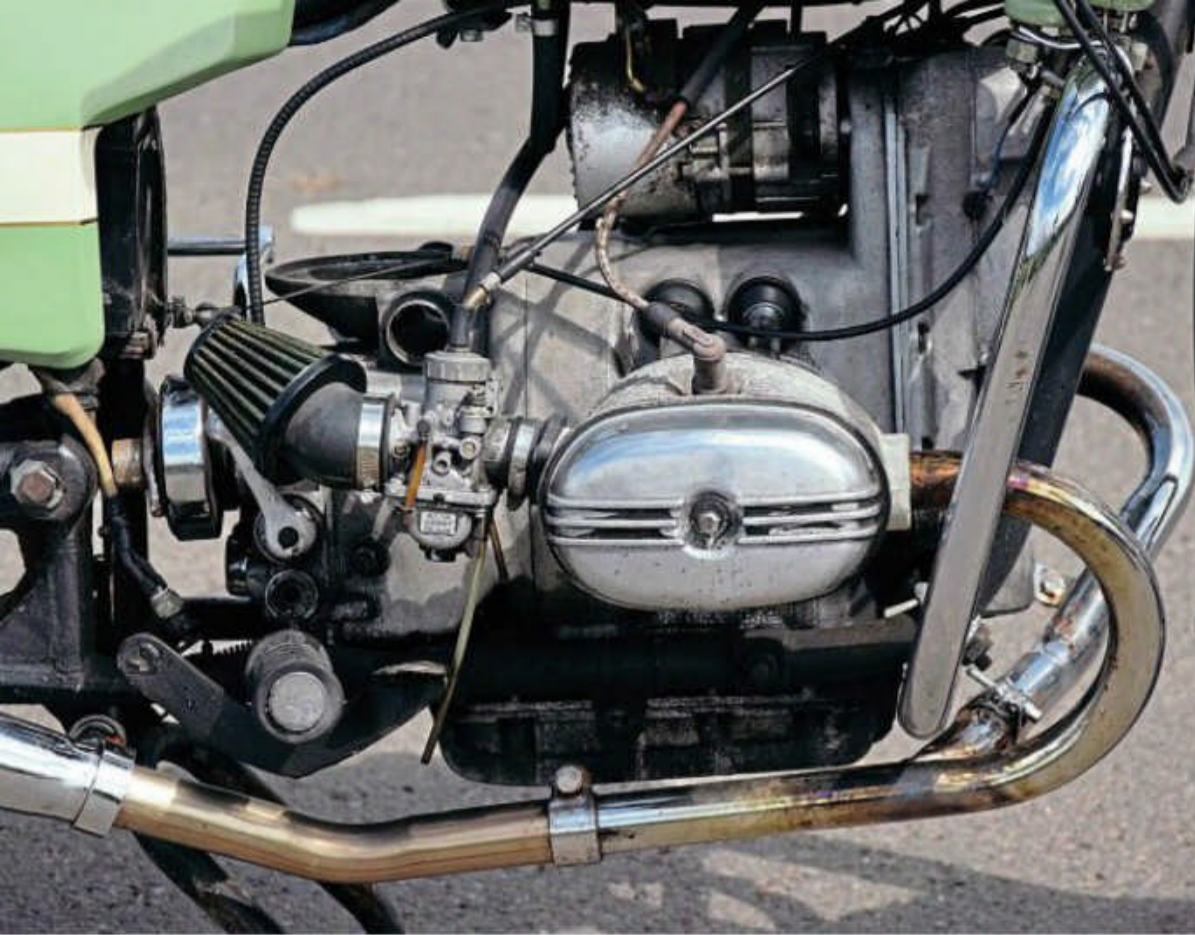
“I'm going to get a stainless exhaust system made for it, and some slightly quieter exhausts as they are a bit loud and anti-social. Even mates with bikes have said, ‘Russ, that's a bit loud’.

“I've never had any issues with it, and I'd be confident to take it anywhere. I've been offered serious money for it. but always turned it down. It just puts a grin on my face.”

50 YEARS OF SOVIET STYLE

IT'S A CHARMING motorcycle, your Ural. Not overly large, and certainly not over-stressed, Urals are currently attracting prices that would have astonished owners in the 80s and 90s who could hardly give them away. This once derided flat twin has a following among young hipsters, old rallyists, classic fans and those who just want something quirky.





Things don't get much more grassroots and real in motorcycling terms than owning a Ural. First imported by Wells Motorcycles as the Ural, a new 650 cost £299 in 1971 – around half the price of a 650 Bonneville.

Importing was then taken over by the import agency Satra (Soviet American Trade Association) and it was re-branded as a Cossack. The new agency got to work refining the Ural, mostly in the braking department, with new British drum brake shoes and cables. The Ural was part of a range which included Dnepr flat twins in solo and sidecar orientation and two-stroke twins and singles, which were all made in different factories in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus under Soviet central planning. Of all the Soviet motorcycles, the Ural was the most popular.

Importation was then taken over by Neval, and eventually returned to the original Ural name. The 750 is the only Russian make that you can buy new today in the UK, and there's a six-month waiting list if you want one, from F2 Motorcycles. Solo mounts are no longer sold new in the UK, and the Ural is only available as a combination.

There is a strong second-hand market, with a steady trickle of bikes coming into the UK from

Above: Know what you're buying – not all Soviet boxers are the same

Below: Urals can be run on a budget, but you need an idea of how to look after them

Russia, the Baltic states and other countries including Moldova and Bulgaria. Registering an imported second-hand one can be a challenge, and while the Cossack Owners Club can help, buying one like this is a decision that should be cautiously made, given all the potential pitfalls.

On a trip to Belarus in the late-noughties, your scribe saw many Urals and Dneprs still carrying out sterling service, mostly with sidecars attached. You can see them being used as family transport with a headscarf-wearing Babushka in the chair, or being used to deliver milk churns, or re-purposed as tractors to bring in a potato crop. One of the Ural's sisters, a two-wheel drive Ukrainian Dnepr, was spotted with the sidecar wheel removed, being used as a drainage pump. They used to be family transport next door in Russia too, but now the Russian riders buy them out of nostalgia. They have a cult following in the US, despite a rocketing price that has seen the new cost shoot up threefold.

"I have to take them to a fastener supplier and get them to measure it to get the right ones. Of course, that might not be the Russians - it could be the 17 previous owners"



WHAT'LL IT DO, COMRADE?

THE URAL WILL manage 85mph, though that's stretching the limits of the performance. Power varies from 28-40bhp at around 5,000rpm, depending on the model and carburation. 85mph is about the limit of the handling. Compression is 6.8:1 to 8.5:1. The earliest had tiny carbs and it was originally designed to run on Soviet-era 72 octane petrol. They are reasonably smooth for a twin, and they pull from way down in the rev range with lots of torque. The gearbox is a left-foot shift and uses a one down, three up change pattern. A brand new Ural 750 combination will cost from £15,750.

Interested in a Ural? You need to speak to David Angel at F2 Motorcycles. We asked him what to look for when buying a Ural 650.

The most important thing is to make sure you are buying a Ural and not a Dnepr by mistake. The Dnepr is completely different and the factory in Ukraine closed in 1998. You cannot get good parts for them any more.

The general look of the Ural engine is rounded and soft, with no sharp angles. The rocker cover is an almost oval shape with three raised lines halfway up. The space between these lines is painted on 70s models.

The timing cover, which can be found on the bike by looking back between the two frame down tubes at

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Below: A workhorse they once were, but Urals can be a lot of fun nowadays

the front of the bike, is tall and rounded towards the top. It nearly always has the Ural logo cast into it.

The engine is smooth, and the Ural pulls well as a solo. Spares supply is generally ok, and the very last ones had an electric start.

Attach it to a sidecar and it has to work hard. Spares are not so easy to find for early models. The early 6-volt electrics are only just ok. When buying, look out for Nippon Denso alternator conversions or original L424 alternators. Avoid Chinese copies of the L424. Mikuni carb conversions are great. Try and buy from an owner who uses good oils, and a 12-volt late model is best if you want it for everyday use.

Things to watch out for include the late 90s Russian 300-watt alternator, which is known as the 'hand grenade', and for good reasons. It can simply stop turning and seize. It's driven from the cam gear and if it does seize, the flywheel has too much mass to stop, and as a result a seizure will destroy the cam gear. If you are lucky, you'll just smash eight or nine teeth off and find them in the bottom of the sump. A more likely result is that the bits of a shattered cast iron cam gear will punch holes in the alloy crankcases.

The K301 carburettor, fitted up to the late 1970s, is absolutely awful. It leaks, floods, spits, and sends fuel almost anywhere except into the engine. What does make it to the engine is rarely the correct mixture. Use a K63/K65 carb, or a round slide K68. The Jikov used from 1998 is excellent, but they need looking after as you can't get spares any more.

Avoid badly maintained rough bikes, motors run on cheap oils and early models, unless it's as a second bike or a hobby. **GBG**

URAL 650 SPECIFICATION

ENGINE: Air-cooled OHV flat twin **BORE/STROKE:** 78 x 68mm **CAPACITY:** 649cc **COMPRESSION:** 7:1-8.5:1 **POWER:** 28-40bhp @ 5200rpm **LUBRICATION:** Wet sump **IGNITION:** Coil/points (electronic from mid 80s) **CARBURETTOR:** Twin slide carbs **TRANSMISSION:** Shaft **GEARBOX:** Four-speed left-foot change, shaft drive **FRAME:** Twin downtube cradle **FRONT SUSPENSION:** Telescopic forks **REAR SUSPENSION:** Twin shocks **BRAKES:** 8in (20.4cm) drum **TYRES:** 3.50 x 18 front and rear **DRY WEIGHT:** 474lb (215kg) **LENGTH:** 88.5in (225cm) **GROUND CLEARANCE:** 4.9in (12.5cm) **SADDLE HEIGHT:** 32.5in (82.5cm) **TOP SPEED:** 85mph

"Tyres wear quickly, but one design feature of the Ural helps reduce that. The front and back wheels are interchangeable. You just swap them round and the wear gets balanced"



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TRIUMPH TSX

WORDS: OLI HULME



SOME OF THE BEST TRIUMPH PUSHROD TWINS to use today emerged just as the Meriden factory slipped towards oblivion. The Tiger Trail is now one of the most sought-after twins, along with the TR65 Thunderbird.

The eight valve TSS was supposed to have a top speed of more than 120mph, with an anti-vibration frame in the works.

One of the very last great motorcycles out of Meriden was the TSX, a factory custom that could have done great things. It followed the principles that the Japanese were establishing for factory customs. The irony being, of course, that those customs were created in the first place to follow the lines of the US export Bonneville.

Triumph and BSA had long realised the value of the American market for their products and in the early 1970s had built bikes specifically for it, like the X-75 Hurricane triple and to a lesser extent the 500cc Trophy Trail/Adventurer. The T140D, a classy Bonneville in black and gold, had been another bike designed for the US buyer. A range of issues meant it wasn't a success Stateside. Road testers felt the T140D needed lower handlebars and a flat seat. Heavy rain in the US was felt to have caused poor a spring sales season and the T140D came at a price that was uncompetitive compared to Japanese models.

Meanwhile a US dealer in Pennsylvania, John Monaco, had created his own chopper-styled Triumph, which some buyers thought was a factory model. It had a look that hasn't aged well, with a square headlight, an angular and bulky seat and a lowered rear suspension. This bike was the inspiration for a design by Meriden's Jim Barclay and, dubbed the Triumph Bonneville Phoenix, had been shown at the Earls Court show to mixed reactions.

WHAT IS IT?

Meriden's last ohv twin



GOOD POINTS?

The best Triumph 750 twin engine. The whole plot is comfortable and easy to ride



BAD POINTS?

Some spares are hard to find, and an undercharged battery can cause starter problems
How much?

COST?

They hold their value. A rough, complete, running TSX will cost around £5000, while a good one will cost £7500-plus.



Brenda Price, the head of Triumph Motorcycles America, was keen on a US custom model and had championed the Phoenix. She was ready to hand over the reins to Wayne Moulton, a former boss at Kawasaki, who had created the Kawasaki Z1000LTD and Z650SR factory customs. He had re-joined Triumph Motorcycles America in 1980 having last worked with the company in 1964. Wayne Moulton looked at the Phoenix and then came up with his own concept, junked most of John Monaco's bodywork, refined the frame alterations to make them less obvious and fitted cast wheels.

TSX HITS THE MEAN STREETS

Moulton's creation became the TSX and was originally supposed to be given the TSS engine. The prototype was sent to the UK, where it was judged to be just what Triumph was looking for. Triumph produced it in a style that was virtually unchanged from Moulton's concept – a condition Moulton insisted upon.

Unlike his work at Kawasaki, where development money had been available, Wayne Moulton had been forced to use off-the-shelf parts from Triumph stock, and bargain basement bits from other manufacturers' over-production, such as petrol caps made in Italy for German mopeds. Even so, Wayne Moulton felt the TSX was his favourite bike – and as payment for his efforts he got to keep the first to come off the production line.

The petrol tank was a modified export tank with the filler cap relocated to the middle and with one fuel tap deleted, using a balance pipe at the front to transfer fuel from one side to the other.

The short front mudguard was created by getting a T140D item and chopping two inches off the rear, then painting it. The rear mudguard's substantial trimming required a relocation of the rear light mount, but for UK market a plastic extender had to be fitted to match the number plate. In the US buyers just took this off and threw it away.

The front indicators were rubber mounted and attached to the bottom of the fork shrouds, but the vibration often made short work of these and they sometimes ended up being relocated on the headlamp brackets. ➤





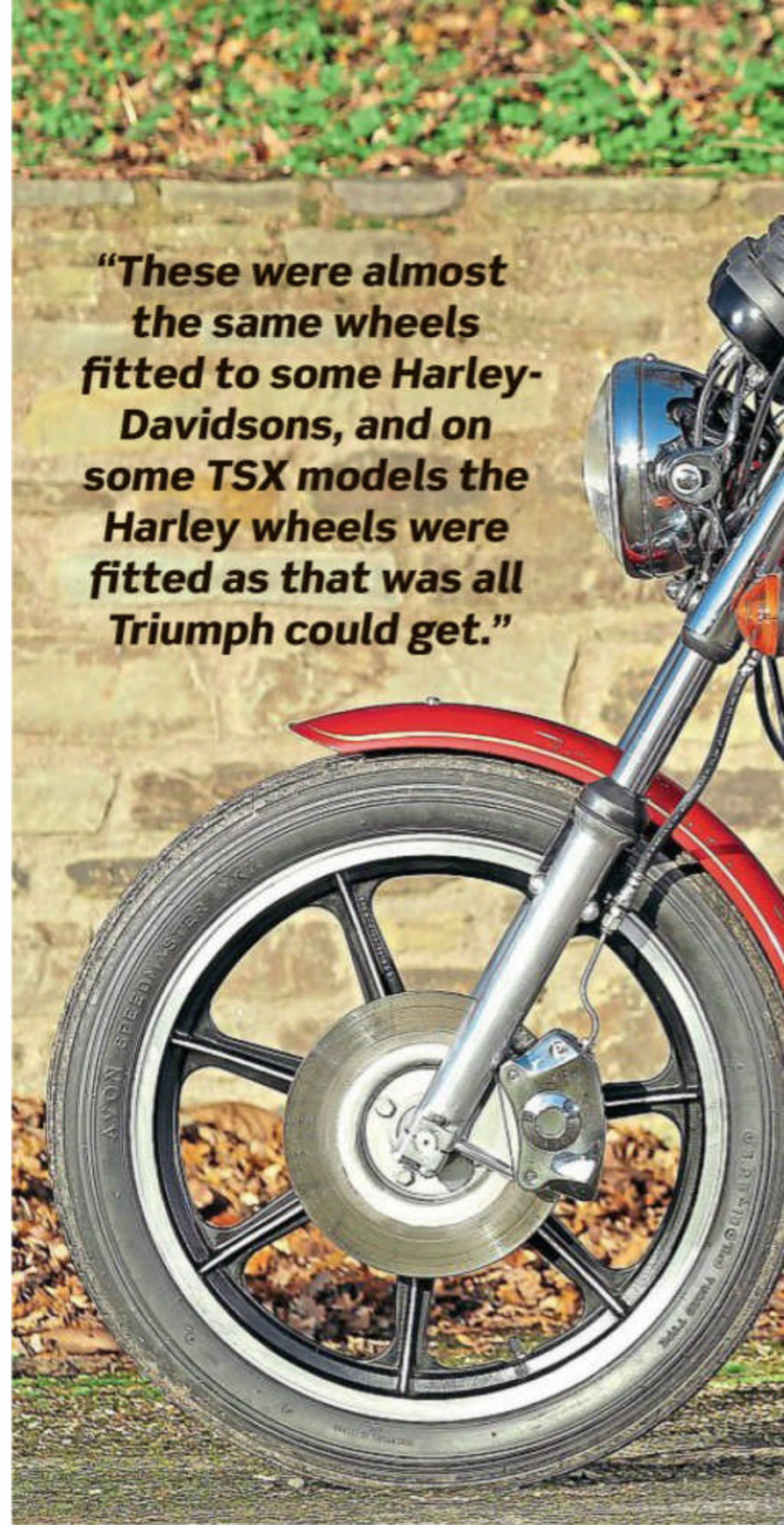
The TSX used the TSS bottom end, which was a refined and toughened up version of the original T140 item. This was used with the stock Bonneville top end and fitted with the Bing carburettors also used on the Executive Bonneville – making for as good a 750 Bonnie engine as you could get.

Short megaphone-style slash-cut silencers looked good, but to meet US emissions regulations – a challenge all manufacturers were struggling to cope with – these silencers were restrictive and limited performance. By 1982 American buyers weren't really buying Triumphs for their top-end performance and had their highway speed limited to 55mph, so lack of power wasn't an issue. The old balance pipe at the cylinder head was finally changed to one mounted under the engine, an idea borrowed from Craig Vetter's TT Bonneville, and the down pipes were markedly fatter.

The handlebars had a new profile, the TSX bend, and their height was midway between the full-western bars the US press had disliked and the semi-western bars used on the police bikes. These were later used on 1982 US-market Bonneville.

The back wheel was a 16 inch seven-spoked cast wheel as was the fashion for a factory custom using a US-made Morris Mag. These were almost the same wheels fitted to some Harley-Davidsons, and on some TSX models the Harley wheels were fitted as that

“These were almost the same wheels fitted to some Harley-Davidsons, and on some TSX models the Harley wheels were fitted as that was all Triumph could get.”



was all Triumph could get. Although the rear wheel was smaller and fatter, the gearing remained the same. The chain guard was chromed. Fitting the fat wheel did require a few modifications, with the swing arm slightly widened and the frame modified as the engine had to be offset by around a quarter of an inch to make everything line up. On the front was a 19 inch seven-spoke Morris.

The TSX had the new abbreviated triangular side panels and came in red, with stick-on red, yellow, and orange decals, the red scheme later joined by a black paint job. This was something of a departure from hand-applied pinstripes and was considered garish by many, but compared with the eyeball-melting paint jobs of many far-eastern rivals of the time the look of the TSX was positively restrained.

There was a stepped seat too, to emphasise the pseudo-custom lines. So even though the frame was lower, the seat remained the same height. To make things lower the bottom rear shock mounts were moved back by a few inches. The Bing CV carburettors were as fitted to BMW twins of the period and were a bit of a squeeze. These were another concession to meet emissions regulations but did have tendency to leak and for the floats to get stuck, so turning the tap off and running them dry was a common procedure.

TSX models for the US market were different in having leaner running Bings and a decal on the rear mudguard saying so; a locking petrol cap as standard, a different engine/frame date code system with the





frame code stamped on a riveted metal plate. The usual US spec lights-on ignition, right hand dip headlamp and Veglia 85mph speedo were also used.

In a radical move the TSX was built without a kick start as standard, using the electric start system that graced the late top-of-the-range Triumphs. Recalling the chequered history of British electric starts on the Norton Commando and T160 Trident, Triumph went all out and fitted a substantial mechanism involving a starter believed to come from a Reliant car. Even so, the sprag clutch could still give trouble, especially if owners didn't keep the battery in top condition. A kickstart was available as an optional extra, which most buyers went with. Germany's importer Wüst Bros offered the electric start as an option as its customers expected to kickstart a British bike.

SEVENTIES STYLE

Because of the fatter exhaust system, the kickstart had to be attached as close as possible to the end of the kickstart shaft so it cleared the silencer.

The TSX also looked back to the early 1970s with wire headlamp brackets, similar to those fitted to the very first oil-in-frame 650, though thankfully these were less prone to fracturing thanks to thicker steel rods rather than wire. The shocks on the prototype were expensive US-made S&W items but cheaper Paioli shocks were used on production models, as opposed to the Marzocchis on the TSS. The rear Lockheed brake caliper had been repositioned, sitting above the swing



arm rather than below, and the rear master cylinder was now a Brembo. This too had been relocated and was easier to get at than the old Lockheed unit. You could request a second front disc.

Struggling with parts supply meant different discs, some four-stud and some five-stud, were used depending on what wheels and discs Triumph could buy. Lockheed calipers were still used front and rear.

The Bonneville followed the lines of the TSX for the final production year at Meriden with a machine that was near identical to the TSX but with more conventional spoked wheels and the rear drum from the TR65 Thunderbird. The TSX was one of the more expensive Triumph twins in the range, costing \$3695 in the US. The price was a killer in Europe too. In Germany, it cost upwards of 10,000 DM – 3000 more than its rivals, the Kawasaki Z750 LTD and the Yamaha XS650 Special.

There were further refinements planned for 1984, even though the factory had by this point stopped making motorcycles. An optimistic sales brochure listed the standard model as a TSX4, indicating four valves, A TSX 8 with the TSS eight-valve engine was also listed, which was the original plan for the TSX.

The TSX might have secured a brief renaissance when Triumph manufacture was taken on by Les Harris in Newton Abbot, but after building a prototype with the stronger TSS/TSX bottom end, it was discovered in the licensing agreement obtained from the owner of the Triumph Harris were only able to build bikes with the original Bonneville bottom end. ▶



ERUM WAHEED IS a TSX owner and knows more about oil-in-frame Triumphs than almost anybody.

He says: "It's like a factory bobber before there was such a thing, you're sitting lower in the TSX, a little hunched even – it's not a behemoth of a bike – rather than sit-up-and-beg. It feels funky and unconventional as if you'd slotted a big motor into the frame of a 250cc bike."

"On the TSX you're sitting lower and more 'in' the bike rather than 'on' it. I ride my other Triumphs with their conventional sit-up style and the difference to the TSX is marked. I could happily put my feet forward on highway pegs with the TSX such is its riding position."

What are the best things about the TSX?

"The motor is strong in performance and presence both visually and audibly. The styling is distinctly American West Coast with plenty of chrome and polished alloy and a gloriously loud, eye-catching, happy colour scheme and fat rear tyre."

"If you like a custom style seating position, you'll enjoy this. My passengers love the generously proportioned passenger seat. That fat rear tyre must help."

"Brakes were excellent, and a double front disc was an option and the electric start was the latest and last upgrade of Meriden's system so it's as good as it could be."

"The Bing carbs are something you love or hate. I love their pick-up and smooth sophisticated performance."

"American ones do tend to be low mileage but while their condition varies, invariably they still have the raised white lettering tyres."

"Finally, it's the bike everyone says is their favourite. True, some gents prefer the practicality of the Tiger Trails and I love the understated TR65 but Joe and especially Josephine Public loves the TSX: no question."

No motorcycle is perfect, so what does Erum think we should watch out for?




"The brittle plastic top shrouds on the Paioli rear shocks can crack as the springs compress and release. Buy the superb metal alternatives to release your spirited use of the bike."

"I'd also say the Bing carbs are sensitive to impurity but it's worth it as when on song they're wonderful. Availability of parts unique to the model is hard and fracturing indicator brackets (a curable but not uncommon problem) are best repaired and the whole part re-chromed instead of waiting for the part to turn up."

"There's really nothing else unless you fear the Meriden electric start system. Parts for this British miracle are available but not cheap so, if you're a regular rider, kickstart it instead when and while you can."

"If you want modern raised white letter (RWL) tyres then you'll struggle as they're out of fashion and hard to find if they're even made now. Certainly, OEM manufacturer Avon isn't doing them. It's not a big problem if you're a rider though: their Roadrider tyres are lovely if non-RWL alternatives."

"I had a unique problem with my centre stands twisting to the extent that Reg Allen's fitted a gusseted police centre stand. Maybe the reproduction centre stands were part chocolate or maybe it was just me, as no one else had reported this problem!"

Thanks to Erum Waheed, Morgan Rue and the TSX Facebook group for their help with this article 

SPECIFICATION

ENGINE: Air-cooled

ohv parallel twin

BORE / STROKE:

76mm x 82mm

CAPACITY: 744cc

COMPRESSION: 7.9:1

POWER: 48bhp

@ 6500rpm

LUBRICATION: Dry sump

IGNITION: Lucas

Rita Electronic

CARBURETTORS: Twin

Bing 32mm Type 64

TRANSMISSION: Chain

GEARBOX: Five-speed

FRAME: Oil-bearing

duplex cradle

FRONT SUSPENSION:

Telescopic forks,

hydraulic damping

REAR SUSPENSION: Paioli

BRAKES: 10in Lockheed

front and rear

TYRES: 3.25 x 19

front, 5.1x16 rear

WHEELBASE: 56in

SEAT HEIGHT: 30in

DRY WEIGHT: 415lb

TOP SPEED: 100mph

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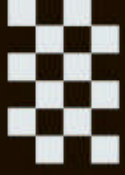


Owner
Mark Upham



All personnel
English speaking





■ Vincent: always breaking records

Here is a great photograph from May, 1952. It shows the Vincent team around a Vincent 998cc Black Shadow at the Montlhery circuit, France. They were there to attempt several speed records, in an attempt to market the small British manufacturer.

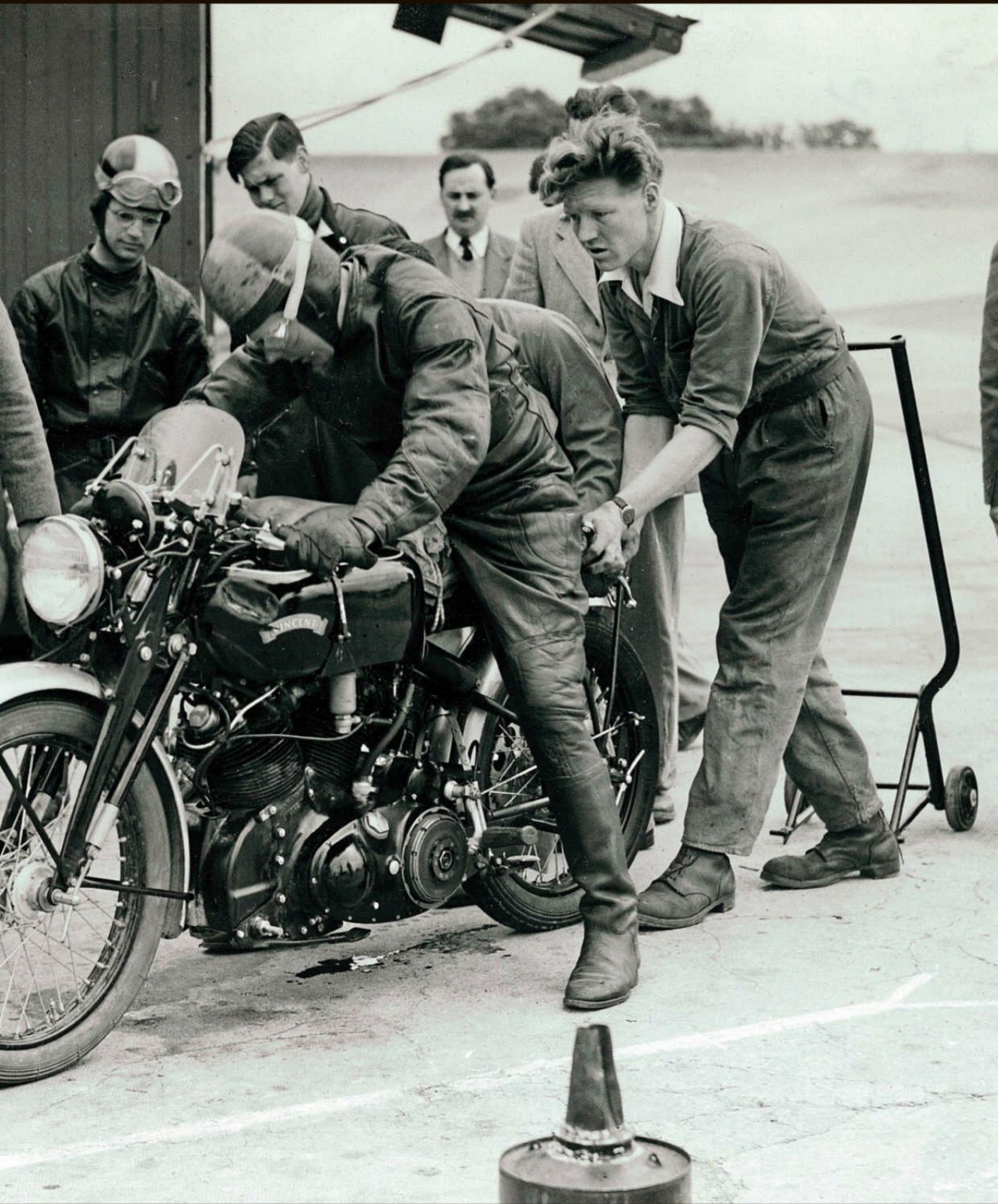
Despite initial work, the Black Shadow refused to gain the record they had wanted; the 24 hours at more than 100mph, due to mechanical issues. But they did succeed in eight records, including the six hours at more than a constant 100mph.

The Black Shadow nowadays lives in the shadow of the Black Lightning, the ultra-rare racing-spec machine, born of an idea between Vincent's Phil Irving and one of their dealers, a certain Jack Surtees. With lots of magnesium to shave weight, hotter cams with higher lift and longer duration, polished internals, ported heads and racing Amal 10TT9 carbs, the Lightning made around 70bhp and, crucially, weighed more than 35kg (77lb) less than the road-going Shadow.

But unless you were a racer, and a wealthy one at that, you couldn't buy a Lightning. And even if you could, it wasn't a road bike. So, in 1952 those eight records were set on the bike you could walk into a dealers and buy – the Black Shadow. Which obviously would have never benefited from any knowledge or parts from the Lightning...

The bike above sold at auction in 2013 for £113,500; at the time a record for the sale of a motorcycle. It was beaten in 2018, when another record breaker sold for £651,715. It was also a Vincent. **CBG**





BRITISH BIKE GUIDE

PART FIVE

This month we get to the end of our guide, but are we saving the best until last? It's the turn of the masters of the single cylinder, Velocette, and the gentleman's steed, Vincent.



VELOCETTE

One of the most individual of English bike builders, Velocette's great postwar hope was the LE flat twin, which was expected to sell in vast numbers as a bike for everyman. It didn't, and the Hall Green factory had continual cash-flow difficulties as a result. Even so, it built some great singles until the money finally ran out in 1971. Enthusiasts provide a wide range of improvements for the Veloce original, and all the singles command higher prices than most other Brit equivalents.

Vogue
192cc sv l/c flat twin || 330lb || 95mpg ||
55mph || 1963-68

An attempt at updating the LE with neat glassfibre bodywork. Very attractive and practical bike, but with less performance than the Ariel Leader. Rare now but charming to ride.

Prices:
low £3500 || high £5000



Thruxton
499cc ohv single || 390lb || 50mpg || 105mph || 1964-71

Last of the line, and priced alongside BSA Gold Stars and Inter Nortons, with which they share the market's stratosphere. Often tough to start, requiring 'The Knowledge' to make them give their best, they suit spirited riding and are only suited to the truly committed (and wealthy).

Prices:
low £17,000 || high £25,000+



LE
192cc sv l/c flat twin || 250lb || 100+mpg || 55mph || 1949-71

A truly heroic (commercial) failure. For years, British motorcyclists had cried out for a water-cooled, silent, sophisticated, shaft-driven bike with built-in legshields. But they didn't buy it, probably because it was too civilised, odd-looking or just gutless. LEs are pleasant little machines with a style

of their own, a dedicated following and their own owners' club. The ohv unfaired Valiant roadster was frail but flew.

Prices:
low £2000 || high £3500

MSS

499cc ohv single || 400lb || 60mpg || 80mph || 1953-68

Gentle touring 500. The last of a breed, with good steering, comfort and reliability; plus the traditional separate gearbox, Miller electrics and strange clutch. Probably the easiest of the Velo singles to live with, boasting good main road performance, fine handling and always adequate braking.

Prices:
low £6000 || high £9000



Venom

499cc ohv single || 400lb || 55mpg || 95mph || 1956-68

Sports single in the old tradition. Quick, precise steering and high cruising speeds make it a desirable machine. Although outdated by the 1960s, Velo enthusiasts kept it in production after all its rivals had fallen. Venom Clubman is the most highly prized, highly priced and hard to ride.

Prices:
low £7500 || high £15,000

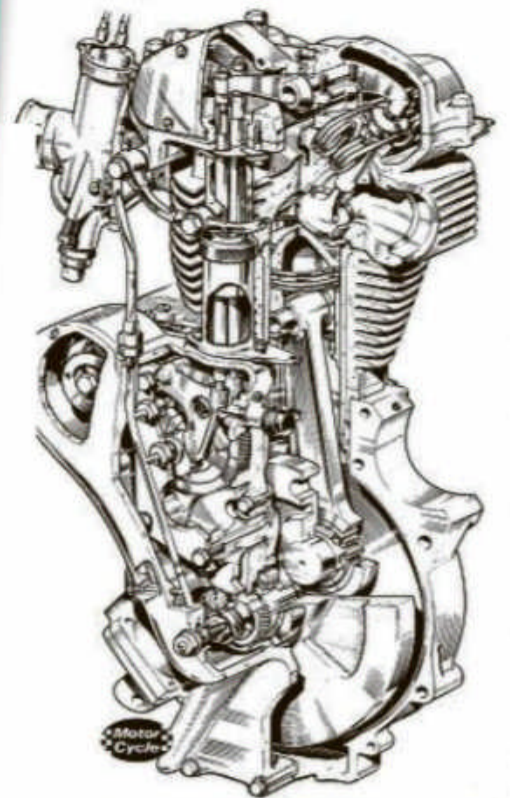
Viper

349cc ohv single || 390lb || 60mpg || 85mph || 1956-69

Sweet, 350 sportster whose roadholding outperforms the engine. Like most trad Brit heavyweight 350s, its bigger brother sold better.

Prices:

low £6000 || high £9000



VINCENT

Probably the most widely discussed British marque, this small builder of high-quality, expensive motorcycles soldiered on with high-performance twins until 1955, when even re-badging NSU tiddlers couldn't save it. Considering their ultra-high value, it is good to see so many on the road. Spares plentiful, if rather expensive. A superb owners' club and riding community ensures their survival and desirability.



Black Prince and Black Knight

998cc ohv V-twin || 490lb || 50mpg || 110mph-125mph || 1955

Based on the Series D chassis, the Black Prince was a result of Vincent listening to its customers and looking at the perceived popularity of a cleaner, enclosed motorcycle. One of the first bikes to incorporate glassfibre fairings, the Black Prince was decades ahead of its time, but too early to help save Vincent. Decidedly tall to ride, enclosed fairing also pushes your legs out, but it's still engaging, as all Vincents are.

Prices:

low £25,000 || high £ if you have to ask...



Comet and Meteor

499cc ohv single || 400lb || 60mpg || 85mph || 1948-54

Half of the famous V-twin (half the size, half the appeal, less than half the price), the Comet and Meteor share most of their cycle parts with the big twins, which keeps up the cost, but have a Burman gearbox rather than Vincent's own, making them a little less charismatic in the eyes of some. Good

to ride, quick and with excellent steering. Meteor less common, with Brampton forks, whereas the Comet had Vincent's Girdraulic front end.

Prices:

low £15,000 || high £25,000

Rapide/Black Shadow

998cc ohv V-twin || 460lb || 50mpg || 120mph || 1950-55

Sold as a tourer (Rapide) and sportster (Shadow), the big Vin has a fearful reputation to live up to and largely succeeds. Genuinely capable of holding their own in the modern motorway world, the big twins attract addicts to their unique engineering and riding experience. Electric starts and other upgrades are now increasingly considered acceptable. Prices are in the stars, and show no sign of falling. Few owners are disappointed, and they can't afford to be.



Prices:

low £20,000 || high £ HUGE...

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*Resurrected From A Tiny
Cardboard Box:*

The Wardill 4



ALL PROJECTS HAVE THEIR BEGINNINGS. IN THE case of the Wardill 4 it was a small, cardboard Kodak box.

Mark Wardill had seen this box as a child and knew it was important to his family, but it was only as an adult that he found it contained a small collection of glass photographic negative plates – and when developed those plates were found to contain a number of photographs of his great-grandfather, Percy Wardill, in the early 1920s; a discovery that uncovered tales of a mysterious motorcycle with the family name on the tank.

Research ensued, with ancient and crumbling copies of *The Motor Cycle* realising some of the scant information about the Wardill. It was enough to encourage Mark, who was at the time more of a custom car petrolhead, to investigate getting the original 'supercharged' two-stroke engine built again.

"What I wanted to do was make sure that whatever bike I created was, for all intents and purposes, my grandfather's bike. The same wheelbase, wheels, etc."

Recreating the engine turned out to be a lot trickier than he initially anticipated. "It sounded simple in theory, but it would have cost a fortune. And getting a two-stroke through the emissions regulations was going to be hard," said Mark.

Undeterred, he had a think about whether there was another way to recreate the Wardill. "I decided to look at building a bike with an off-the-shelf modern engine, try to make some for sale, and use the money from those sales to pay to have the original engine made."

Finding a suitable engine wasn't as easy as you might think. It had to be new and available off the



Above: It takes a brave person to start a motorcycle company – Mark Wardill is just that man, following in his great-grandfather's footsteps

WARDILL AND THE WARDILL 4

We seek out those brave souls who have decided to take on the modern world with handmade, British motorcycles, years after the industry was said to be finished.

WORDS BY OLI HULME PICS BY GARY CHAPMAN

shelf to go into a production bike, for a start. It also needed to use a carburettor to avoid the need for the electronics needed for fuel injection, and it needed to be simple and classic in style.

Most big manufacturers won't sell complete engines off the shelf, but Mark managed to find a source of Suzuki-designed GN250 engines, made for the Pulse Adrenaline trail bike. "I printed out a picture of the bike, 1:1 scale and taped it to a wall in my garage. I then propped the engine up on blocks of wood in front of the picture and stood back and found that the engine would fit," said Mark.

Although the bike has its roots in the 1920s, computer aided design (CAD) takes a big role and a lot of the effort out of producing the prototype. The frame, which uses the engine as a stressed member, was designed on screen, and is manufactured out of T45 aviation strength steel, often used for high strength engineering in equipment to support disabled people. It's hand formed and TIG welded. Each section is hand cut and placed in forms to exacting standards. These are then brought together to create a bespoke frame around which the motorcycle is assembled.



Above: So much attention to detail

Left: Smiths speedo

Below: 250cc, air-cooled engine is plenty for the lack of weight



Designed and built by specialist British bike builder Hollis using precision laser cut steel, the girder forks might look vintage but to comply with the modern regulations the forks had to be both sprung and damped – old style forks would have had a single spring. The compact unit doing the job on the Wardill has adjustable damping.

The petrol tank that follows the Wardill of the 1920s was built around a timber former and manufactured from four individual sections of 2mm thick aluminium. These were hand formed using a combination of hand-beating and rolling through an English wheel. It is then hand welded and pressure tested before being sprayed and that lustrous black and gold paint job polished to a mirror finish. Other colours are available on production models.

There's a redesigned vintage seat on an old-fashioned tubular mount similar to that used on a bicycle and this allows the bike to be set up for a rider of any height. The electrical system is as sophisticated as you can get. It uses a digital controller and micro switches. The digital wiring harness uses a small control box on the handlebars, and another control box behind the engine to take over complete control of the bike and 'talk' over a fine serial line. The load cables to the bits that need powering are wired from the nearest box. This saves various metres of cable, the load lines to the consumers are shorter and the installation time is drastically reduced when building.

On the prototype the switchgear wires go through the handlebars and a slender wiring loom slips under the tank to a compact electrical box at the rear of the engine. The modern regulator/rectifier on the side of the electric box is to be covered in a brass cage. ▶



On the prototype none of the micro switch buttons are labelled and there's a good reason for this. To pass the MSVA test and get the bike registered, there are rules that have to be followed – and one of the rules is that the typeface of labels on the buttons has to be of a particular size. But in one of those strange bureaucratic anomalies, if there's no lettering at all, the bike doesn't need any, so they've been left unmarked.

A similar challenge came when designing the exhaust system. To get through the regulations the silencer needed to be an original factory fitment. But Mark could use any silencer he wanted, without any official markings beyond a manufacturer's plate. So, a simple classic style silencer was used with a small brass plate engraved Wardill Motorcycles riveted to the tailpipe.

The vast majority of the work putting together the parts that make up the Wardill, from paint to fabrication, has been contracted out to local craftspeople in south Wales with Mark completing the final construction in his own workshop.

The large digital speedometer has the Wardill name laser etched into the back cover and written in gold lettering on the face; it was designed and made for Mark by Smiths Instruments in West Wales.

The tank was also fabricated in West Wales. The frame is manufactured, and paint applied in a village just a short distance away from Mark's workshop. The Wardill is the first Welsh road bike to be made since 1958, when the last Bown left nearby Tonypany.

The University of South Wales also had a hand in the project, with its Centre of Excellence in Mobile and Emerging Technologies (CEMET) designing a ground-breaking custom app, which allows potential buyers to configure their own Wardill on a tablet or mobile phone. The university has also created an augmented reality experience that will mean when the bike goes to trade fairs, potential customers can sit on the bike and ride the Wardill4 in virtual reality, complete with engine noises and birdsong simulating a ride along country roads. The most interest in the Wardill has come from the UK and USA so far.

Mark's inspiration when creating the model for the Wardill is borrowed from another British institution, based not far from the Welsh valleys in Malvern.

"I want to be the motorcycle equivalent of Morgan Cars," said Mark. "They are handcrafted and use traditional techniques but also use a lot of modern technology. I want to be like that for bikes."

Above: Mark's research through the family's photographs and documents have helped shape the Wardill 4

Right: Vintage, yet passes all the necessary laws



A WORK OF EDWARDIAN GENIUS

THE INSPIRATION FOR the modern Wardill stretches back to the Edwardian era. In 1903, Percy Wardill's brother, Ernest, had opened a garage on Pound Street, Carshalton, with backing from their father Henry. Ernest had started out as a cycle repairer and at the Carshalton garage he dealt with bicycles and cars. In 1923, Percy and Ernest decided they would build their own motorcycle, with an engine designed by Percy.

While most would-be motorcycle makers might have gone a simple route – using a proprietary engine, or something that followed accepted principles – Percy was one of those remarkable innovators of the early 20th century, and had his own ideas.

He wanted to improve the traditional two-stroke engine using what he described as a supercharger, but not the kind of blower supercharger that became more common, but something similar to the split single, with touches of the sleeve-valve and with a radical difference. The Wardill was a valveless two-stroke where the crankcase compression had been eliminated. Two pistons were used; the first, the smaller of the two, being the type used in an ordinary three-port two-stroke engine with a deflector on top. The second piston was an annular design, sitting like a ring doughnut around the smaller piston. This





“The frame, which uses the engine as a stressed member, was designed on screen, and is manufactured out of T45 aviation strength steel, often used for high strength engineering in equipment to support disabled people”

meant a pumping cylinder was formed around, and concentric with, the working cylinder. This annular piston was mounted on two con rods, one on either side of the central piston and sat in a lower, stepped, cylinder which held the ports. This separate pumping cylinder meant the engine did not rely upon crankcase compression to work. The working piston was fastened to a connecting rod driven from the crankshaft, while the pumping piston was supported by those two rods, each eccentrically mounted from the main shafts on either side of the big-end throw.

The castings for this engine were done in the Great Eastern Railway workshop at Grimsby, and the work was arranged by Percy’s cousin, Bill Spencer, who was the manager at the Great Eastern Hotel in the port.

At the garage in Pound Street, the engine was put into a frame. The resulting arrangement was neat and compact, and the engine performed well under racing conditions. The engine was tested rigorously between 1924 and 1927. The Wardill won several trophies when it competed in a number of public trials, resulting in a lot of press coverage and interest for the invention. The complete machine, on sale in 1927, had a 346cc engine, chain drive and an Albion three-speed gearbox. The first Wardill used a Grigg frame, Grigg being based in nearby Twickenham and



Above and below: How proud would you be to find these photos with your name on them?

Croydon. Grigg was already geared-up to build around 100 bikes a week and used a frame that bore a marked resemblance to the triangulated Cotton frame, for which reason Grigg was nearly sued by Cotton, but went bust before legal action could begin. The later three Wardill models used a frame of Percy’s design instead.

In 1927, Percy was set to expand production, and with two potential American backers in the UK, took them to Brooklands to show off the machine. Unfortunately, the Brooklands-employed test rider crashed the bike at speed, the backers got cold feet, and this brought Percy and Ernest’s dreams to an abrupt end. The Wardill Motorcycle Company faded into history, the only evidence of their existence being a handful of magazine articles and those treasured photographic plates; that is until today.



RIDING A VINTAGE-STYLED FLAT TANKER WITH A MODERN ENGINE

SO, WHAT'S IT like? The answer is that it's hugely entertaining, with its own challenges and delights. Steering the Wardill prototype was affected by the upside-down handlebars, which give the bike the air of a vintage board tracker and push the rider into forward riding position worthy of a 1960s café racer. Production versions will have their steering custom-made to the owner's requirements.

While the riding position does put a lot of the effort and the riders weight on the wrists and, to a lesser extent, the shoulders, it does mean that you aren't as

affected by the rigid rear frame as you might in a sit-up-and-beg stance, though in any case the saddle was remarkably comfy.

Mark has a home-brewed saddle in the works based on an original 1920s design, which should be even more forgiving. The lack of rear suspension means the bike is low, which adds to a perception of speed even when you are progressing at relatively low velocities. While at first glance it looks vintage, the use of the Suzuki GN250-derived engine means you don't have to deal with all the stuff a rider of the 1920s might have had to learn about. There's no lever throttle, no manual advance mechanism, no hand

“The castings for this engine were done in the Great Eastern Railway workshop at Grimsby, and the work was arranged by Percy's cousin, Bill Spencer, who was the manager at the Great Eastern Hotel in the port.”



oil pump to prime, and no need to take your hand off the bars to change gear. The electrics are taken care of with smart microswitches and a push of the starter button – on the front of the bars and operated by the index finger rather than the thumb, an arrangement that feels so right it makes one wonder why everybody doesn't do it – brings things to life.

The 250cc ohc engine feels as if it is quite punchy, which is hardly surprising with so little weight to pull along – the Wardill weighs in at about 90 kilos. Although based on an old 1980s engine, its performance is perfectly suited to the 21st century, being smooth and effective, with a gearshift that's so slick as to be almost imperceptible.

This all adds to the initial strangeness of the ride. You're piloting something that feels old in every other part of its operation and has got a lot going on in the handling department; and you really need to keep an eye on what's going on, as riding the Wardill requires your undivided attention.

You need to be watching out for speed bumps, potholes and gravel patches, errant squirrels and horse manure. Mechanically, however, you have nothing to worry about. Now this may or may not be a good thing. If you are a long-standing rider of flat tankers, you might miss all that lever pulling, pump priming and hand changing, which for the



experienced vintage rider is part of the fun. But if you aren't used to such arcane delights then the lack of all this faff makes things a lot easier to cope with.

One thing that does carry over from the 1920s is the way you use the brakes. If you are used to relying on the front brake and dabbing the back only when necessary, you'll need to give things a rethink on the Wardill. The tiny drum on the front of the Wardill requires you to work the other way round. The Hollis front forks are stiff enough but giving them the job of handling a more powerful modern stopper might have been a challenge for a girder, so a tiny drum was used instead. There's a decent sized and more than capable bigger drum on the back to take up the slack.

The Wardill is, it is worth remembering, brand-new. There's no decades-old sloppiness to the feel or crunchiness in the controls and it uses up-to-the-minute materials too, all of which help keep everything taut. You won't end up covered in 30-weight monograde oil or have to learn about how to make a carbide lamp work, which is just as well as the MSVA regulations require the lights to be on all the time.

With skinny wheels and a frame that is as minimal as you are going to get, don't expect your knee sliders to make contact with the tarmac, but the stiffness keeps everything pointing in the right direction.

The bar position on the prototype was a challenge but works well enough. With higher bars things would be a little easier to live with and a slightly tighter rake might quicken the steering up a bit. The Wardill is, you will not be surprised to learn, not going to win any drag races or put in a competitive lap time during a track day. It will, though, turn heads. Almost everyone waves at you, as you ride past, and when you park it up, you'll spend a lot of time explaining to passers-by just what it is and how it works. The first line in any conversation is likely to be "My grandad had one like that..."

The Wardill is, ultimately, deeply unconventional and huge amounts of fun. And if anything, that's what motorcycling should be all about. **CBG**

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Some have a beautiful Vincent, Triumph or even an FS1E as the bike they've always had – Matt chose an unloved Honda CBR. So he made it as he wanted it, with no money, little time and very little idea of what he was doing.

WORDS, PHOTOGRAPHY AND BIKE BY MATT
(IGNORE SEAT HEIGHT - WASN'T BOLTED ON)



MANY YEARS AGO A BEAUTIFUL LADY called Rachel used to teach with me at the training school in Norwich. It was the mid Nineties, everyone seemed to come to our school, training was a lot of fun and the group of instructors were all young, enthusiastic, and loved bikes. Pete had a Z900, Rich had an American Police KZ1000 with titanium under the footboards, Rick had a beautiful Kawasaki ZXR750H1, and Rachel had a 1989 Honda CBR600F. With its all-enclosing bodywork in white with red, it looked great, sounded fab and I was very jealous, while trundling along on my BMW K75RT (I was also dispatching at the time).

But just like the Suzuki GSX, CBR1000, ZZR600 and Ducati Paso, enclosed bodywork, like the Triumph bathtubs and Ariels decades before, quickly became dated, especially after the odd drop or as panels started getting brittle. Rachel decided to move and sold her bike to my friend Rich, for his first big bike. This it excelled at, and predictability, reliability and comfort took us everywhere and once he moved on to a newer bike, I bought it to start my own training school.

By now it had no fairing lowers and was starting to look less glamorous than it once did. As I discovered the incredible workhorse that is Honda ST1100 Pan Europeans, the CBR was pushed into a dilapidated shed.

NEW LIFE

Years came and went, and I ended up working for a motorcycle magazine. I saw the rise in specials being built and as Norfolk has always had a thirst for something different, this gave me the hunger to build something. But I was skint, so no cool

donor. I had a Honda Bros (and still do) but it was too far gone. Then I ➤



Above: Next to my 1997 race CBR600; nine years apart

Above right: Rebuilding the tank took a lot of time, but changed the feel of the bike completely

Below: How the CBR600FJ would have looked originally in 1989

remembered the CBR, which was by this point holding up a shed. After donning my Indiana Jones hat, the CBR was extricated from the shed, which promptly fell down.

WHAT COULD WE BUILD?

The fashion back in the mid Noughties was various, but none seemed to use a modernish, beam-framed supersports bike as a starting point. Hmm. So what were the 'must-haves'? A classic look was ideal, despite the starting point. But it was already VMCC eligible. I wanted it to handle, I wanted good manners, I didn't need to worry about tuning, and I knew I wouldn't know what I wanted until I saw it. And it all had to be done with no money. So that's easy, then.

Hours upon hours of looking at the bike stripped down on the bench taught me a lot. A beam frame doesn't look so imposing in black. The stance of the bike could be lowered slightly, but that's all as the handling was so good to start with. It already had new stainless steel downpipes and budget shock from Wemoto, new Avon Roadrider tyres, and the engine was in good shape, other than an oil leak from the 'O' ring that seals the starter. Also, the three-spoke wheels, while outdated for modern bikes, looked good in my eyes. But it was tired, had started to go rusty and needed stripping.

The chassis was blasted and powder coated by a friend who makes fences (thanks, Jack!), then new bearings, head races and the like fitted, as they were all cheap. The engine came in for some serious cleaning as it would be on show, so emery



pads, toothbrushes, thinners, brake cleaner and wire wheels went to work, followed by a lacquer from spray cans to keep it looking good. Side casings and wheels got a Ford gold metallic as the local motor factors had a bulk deal, so I also did the brake cylinder and kept some for the petrol tank.

The tank looked really modern, with a modern filler, swaged lines, so I took a grinder to it (not recommended), cut the two knee areas out, then the top, swapped the knee ovals around so they went in more, tack-welded it all in place and took it to a brilliant welder, Pete, at engineers par excellence, CWD Engineering. Pete TIG welded the patches and a smooth top, cut a hole, then machined a collar for me to fit an eBay Monza cap. This cost £200, mainly in labour, but transformed the bike into something different – I think a little like an early TZ. Some filler and it was ready for painting.

I've always been a Jim Clarke fan, so the red, white and gold scheme of Gold Leaf fags would look good – but what were the codes? Classic Lotus is just down the road from me, so I popped in and while I was dribbling over cars, they found the paint codes from the latest Gold Leaf Elise in a car magazine – apparently no one remembers the colour codes and when they got dinged, the sprayer just tried to match them! In the end I needed so little I bought cans of the closest match, then took it to a friendly bodyshop, Ashtons, who lacquered it to protect from petrol.

The seat unit was painted at the same time, but had been a real labour of love/ pain. Not happy with anything you could buy, I made a buck from wood and modelling foam, and once I was happy with the shape blending with the tank and the rear light I had from Wemoto, covered it with filler, rubbed it down and Ashtons painted it in whatever colour they were using. I could then take a fibreglass mould, which would finally let me make my own fibreglass seat. It took forever and it isn't really different enough to really feel worth it. But I know it's handmade and I have used the skills I learned there since, to make carbon fibre panels for cars and parts for bikes.

The seat unit needs a seat. I realised race seat foam is too hard, yet domestic seat foam too soft. In the end I thought of the best bike seat ever invented – the Honda CBR400 – and cut one up, blending it with an old Suzuki seat foam I had, using a hacksaw, Stanley knife and glueing it together. For a cover, I didn't know anyone with a leather sewing machine (they have a





Costings

Major costs (guessed as it was a long time ago) I had with the bike, which as it was would be worth £250, but did have good downpipes, recent tyres and a cheap shock fitted.

Bearings	£60
Tank	£200
Paint	£50
Oil and fluids	£50
Acewell dash	£240
Silencers	£50
Grips and 'bars	£80
Labour	£priceless
Total	£730ish

foot that moves to help with the thick material), so I used fake leather, which is thinner and would go through my mother's machine – just. We played with offcuts, then put in the diamond stitching and finally the shape, which was then glued and stapled to the fibreboard (because it bends) base.

The electrics... On a Honda CBR nearly all the electrics are within the front fairing; there is plenty of space and they hide away nicely. But I didn't want a fairing. Weight over the front, looks, and so I had to hide it; under the seat seemed a good place. Sounds so easy, doesn't it? This is why I like British bikes; they have no wiring. It took forever to create the jigsaw that allowed everything, including the battery, to fit under the seat. It all sits on a beautiful carbon fibre panel that I picked up from a smashed F1 sidecar when I was marshalling as a kid. The plan was to build a new loom once it was working; haven't got there yet...

GETTING THERE

The exhaust would play a crucial part in taking that 80s look back in time. I found some cheap aftermarket exhausts secondhand that someone couldn't fit (?) for £30 and got some offcuts of stainless steel pipe from an engineering friend. I then had to learn how to MIG weld stainless, with stainless wire and higher settings, though luckily the gas I use for mild steel (Argon mix) is ok. Welding pipe is tricky. Cutting angles with pipe is trickier and getting the silencers at the angle I wanted was the trickiest! In the end I had the silencers taped with spacers where I wanted them, using them and the downpipe as a jig for the cut pipe. Once tacked together, I could then take them off and weld properly on the bench. I will admit, my friend Steve the Superwelder finished it over to make it look as good as it does – but only because he offered!

The front end is standard apart from some fork gaiters, Chinese clip-ons, a cheap eBay headlight and some British-style fat handgrips. There is also a small 3-row oil cooler that sits below the headlight on a CBR, but I figured that isn't needed as a naked roadbike, so I cut the hoses and placed a stainless pipe between them, which now runs behind the downpipes. There wasn't a lot of thermal dynamic workings there – it just fitted. The mudguard was from friend Dave's stash, reshaped, and then some small gauge pipe used to make stays, with washers welded on the ends.

The largest headache was also the most expensive part, the Acewell speedo. It has all the functions you'll



Top: Seat isn't bolted down so sits too high here and I need to make a chain guard!

Above: Bodywork took quite some time

ever need with the speedo that works off a magnet on the wheel, which is what you need for a bike that would use a cable. It works brilliantly, looks fantastic, and aftersales was great. But while I understand electrics, I do seem to have an unfair amount of issues. Physically, the wiring has a multi plug in the middle, which is a great idea, but it was in just the wrong place for this bike. And getting the feeds just took me forever. But once I'd finalised that and made a little alloy bracket, all seemed good.

WAS IT WORTH IT?

Finally, and with life getting in the way that was around four years, the Jim Clarke/Lotus/Honda/Café Racer went for an MoT. It passed, though the speedo magnet fell off the wheel. It felt lovely, the position was uncompromising, but what I wanted – this was not meant to be a distance machine. The handling defied its looks; 17in wheels and modern tyres with clip-ons that are actually lower than the originals gave the feeling of holding on to a bull by the horns, literally. The engine benefited from being standard with the original airbox, so no re-jetting was needed, but boy, was it loud!

Naïvely I'd thought two silencers would be twice as quiet. Idiot. It was deafening, so I tried blocking one silencer, which made the bike just sound like a sportsbike – at least the two had given it a unique sound, albeit too much. I put more acoustic matting in the exhausts and also lowered the gearing as much

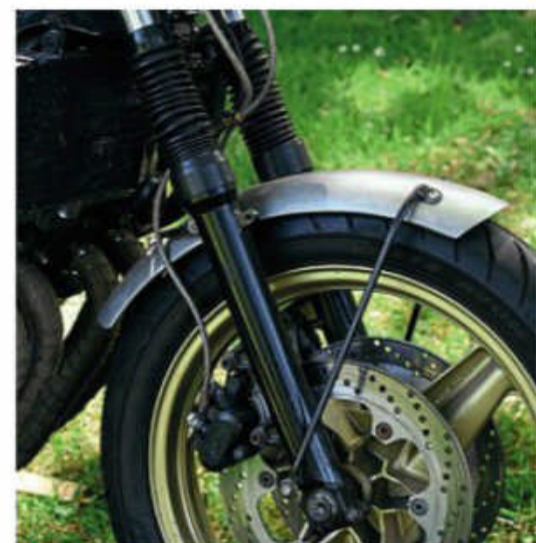
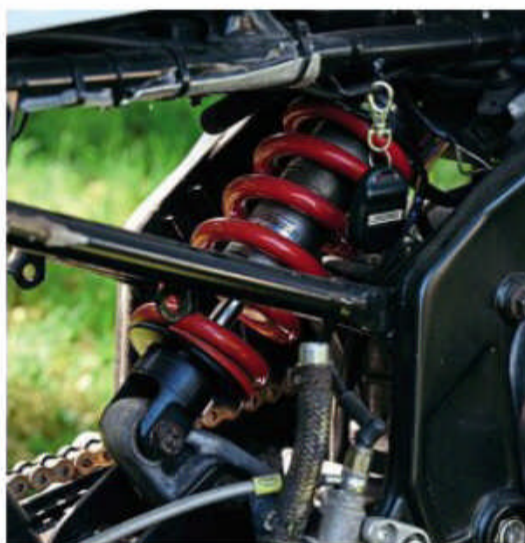
as possible, which made it quieter and changed the feeling totally; it felt more like an older bike. But it was still too loud for my liking, so I made a quite restrictive baffle for one silencer and a less restrictive one for the other. It's better, but the only way to make it quieter would be to blank one off, and that sounds too modern. A two-into-one each side may be the answer.

I've had the CBR for more than 16 years and some years I don't even tax it. But when I do, I love taking it to a bike meet and watching folk look at it. Many like the Monza cap, but the tank shape throws them. Others spend quite a time looking at the little details, which makes it all worthwhile, and the know-it-alls who just call it Hipster junk just make me laugh.

It's not perfect by a long, long way. But it's how I wanted it, with the skills and tools I own, the time I had, and the money I could afford. I loved the process of making this bike, from the challenge of a modern-style bike to the wiring, the exhaust, making the seat and cutting the tank! Getting it all to line up and work was satisfying, but it also adds to the riding experience – if you've built, or rebuilt a bike, that connection you have is so much stronger. In a world where everyone and everything seem to be so false, my connection with this bike is a rare sensation that I love. I've known it now for more than 20 years – why couldn't 'my' bike be a Vincent, or something glamorous?! But it's time to move on. The CBR – my CBR, is now going to be sold. They won't have the connection of building it, but maybe they could change it, improve it or somehow get a similar relationship with it. I hope they enjoy it as much as I did. **CBG**



“Naïvely I'd thought two silencers would be twice as quiet. Idiot. It was deafening, so I tried blocking one silencer, which made the bike just sound like a sportsbike”



Left: Mother was very proud of my first sewing attempts, using mock leather, wadding and cotton underneath. The sewing machine couldn't take much more though...

Things I learned...

A dry build feels like a waste of time, but once things are painted or coated, prove invaluable. Which lugs can come off and which need to stay? Does everything line up? Paint, don't powdercoat You can't touch it up, it's not really harder wearing; looks tatty after a little time; close tolerances no longer fit; and if they're not used to bike parts, often coat areas you didn't want. Great for gates and stairs, not bikes – don't be lazy, spend the time preparing it and then get it painted. (My opinion).

I am very proud of the seat unit, though I wouldn't put so much work in the first model in the future, as I would have the seat a couple of inches narrower at the front for comfort and for those with shorter legs. And I'd have brought the sides down slightly to line up with the tank – which they did when I designed it, but...Use the various mags and websites for inspiration, but don't let them make you feel inadequate. So many bikes built don't run, or would be awful if they did. The builders may be professionals and the photographers are experts at making bikes look better than they are.

Build your bike to your budget, bearing in mind your skills, your wants, and by all means have a go at areas that you've no experience in, but also be happy to use professionals. This is a bike for you, not for others to look at.

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give up taking some of the strong painkillers prescribed by the doctor and I feel much better in myself. I was really pleased with the service I received from Jenny. After seeing the difference Bioflow has made to me, many of my friends have now bought wristbands for themselves

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CLASSIC TOURING



What have touring bikes ever done for us? Apart from their distance-shrinking abilities, weather protection, reliability, sanitation – oh, maybe not... We look at two tourers, that have 45 years between them

BY MATT AND ROSS
PICS BY GARY CHAPMAN





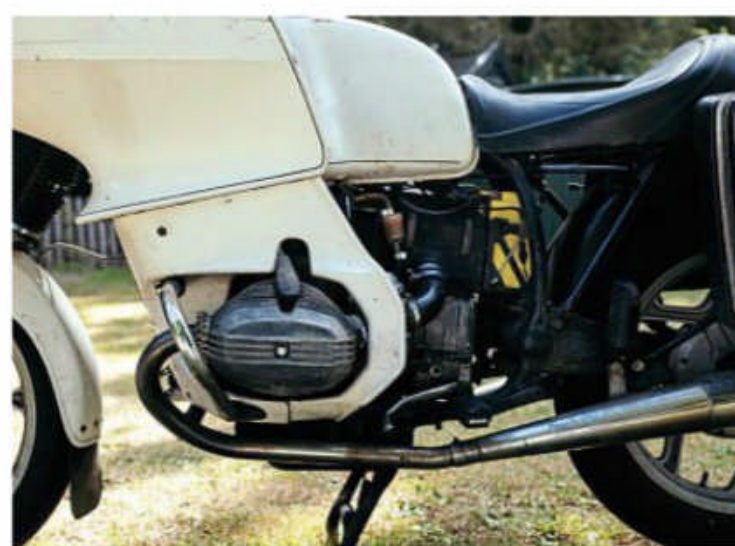
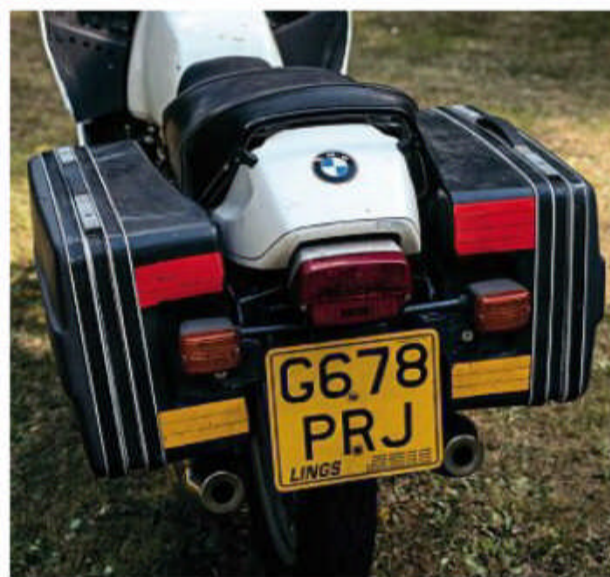
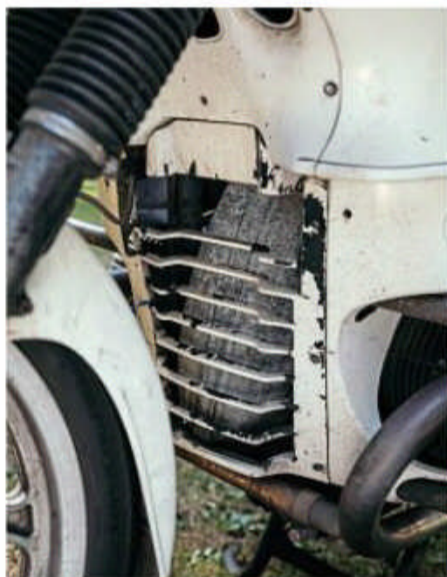
HOW CAN THE EQUIVALENT BIKE BE SO large?" I ask Ross, my modern-bike-loving colleague. We are both looking at the brand new, £19,000 BMW R1250RT and alongside, its direct predecessor, a 1989 BMW R100RT. Though the R100 is one of the last, its design harks back to 1978 and further; so effectively they are 40 years apart. "I'm not sure; the new one has lots and lots of gadgets, more power; in fact more everything," smiles Ross.

There have been touring bikes before – look at the Brough Superior with its effortless speed, or the Ascot Pullin with its enclosed bodywork. And look at how many millions of miles folk have managed on Enfields around the world. But BMW made the RT range to appeal to touring riders with a bike made specifically for them.

Both those you see here are designed for long-distance riding; though the R100 largely started it and the R1250 is the culmination of 40 years of evolution. Both share the boxer engine configuration, though the R1250 has more than twice the power. It also has, depending on which figures you read, 50kg (110lb) more weight – and it feels more. Besides that, it has more gadgets than a spaceship, whereas the R100 is, in this company, sparse; though back in the 1970s it was the bike for professionals and those covering miles. And it had a clock.

So are those of us who love old bikes missing out, or are modern bike riders just gadget junkies, wasting their money? We wanted to visit all three countries of mainland United Kingdom, but then the world went somewhat mad and closed. So we did the next best thing; we circumnavigated Norfolk, because I live here...

Our friend Gary Chapman took the photos on one day so we could cover the 226 miles with no interruption, trying to take as many different types of road as we could. Those of you who have visited Norfolk may know there are no motorways. This is deliberate, to prevent 'incomers'. So we did venture out to Cambridgeshire to give the bikes a stretch. And our conclusions were not as you may think.





The coast road that circumnavigates the east, north and part of the west boundaries of Norfolk is one ancient route. No one designed it and no one planned the amount, the size or the weight of traffic using it now. But due to the fact the coastline is so popular with tourists because of its old-world charm, they can't change it. Oh, and also this year you cannot really go abroad...

So a bike seems the ideal choice. Nipping past traffic, no issue when it gets a little narrow, none of it is quick-enough to tire you, the sounds and smells of this rural idyll are directly ingested. There is no better way to see the countryside than by bike. It's so good, that even a grumpy old git like myself waves to the ice cream-toting kids on the pavement. Kids love bikes, don't they?

Both old and new excel at this part of our journey. The R100 is comfy at any speed – apart from the tear in the seat that is making my bum wet – and the sound is quiet, conservative, yet different enough from all other vehicles that folk turn round to see. First and second gears are perfect for traffic, people crossing, hills and slow riding balance, as are the brakes. It is a most natural large bike to ride.

The R1250 is just as good at slow speed. I've always been impressed by how BMW boxers hide their girth, but the RT is the master. It is larger though, and that weight is still present. So while easy, you find yourself a little more tense than on the older machine; it also feels taller (it is) and I found it less natural to get my feet down comfortably and confidently. One massive benefit though is the electrically operated screen – pop it down when negotiating towns and you have the same vision as a sportsbike – it's so reassuring compared with the old bike. The screen is adjustable on the R100, but you need two hands and it cannot be done on the go – I may have tried...

Past Cromer heading east and the road becomes slightly quieter, with the villages less busy. It gives you a chance to see how these big 'ol barges handle B roads. The young pup is 20mm longer than the old master, with fatter tyres and electronically-adjustable

“Both old and new excel at this part of our journey. The R100 is comfy at any speed - apart from the tear in the seat that is making my bum wet”



suspension. It defies all known forces, behaving like an Eighties sportsbike but with comfort and manners. The R100 still handles well; but with older-style wheel and tyre sizes, older suspension plus no electronics firming the damping up or softening the ride, it's not as supple, nor as accurate. But then it doesn't cause any issues, once you get used to the engine braking of the Boxer and the way it likes to go in off the throttle and bring the throttle on gently once in the corner. Both handle well – especially the R100 considering its age (and the rivals it would have had in 1978 – Triumph T140?), though it is on modern tyres; but you can still tell it is from a previous generation. Either will hold their head high, though the new R1250 holds it up with shiny earrings and a posh hat.

We cover quite a few miles now without stopping, using mainly A roads at 50+mph. The weather's good today, which always makes things nicer, but as I knew the roads I thought about which bike I would baggy beforehand. I chose the modern bike, as I spend very little time 'cossetted' on a bike these days; and I'm not disappointed. ▶



This R1250 is an absolute weapon. The 'Shiftcam' engine has variable cam timing and 135bhp. Open the throttle where safe and you enter warp drive – overtakes are so ridiculously easy, and safe. Allied to the excellent handling and the RT is an armchair fitted in a jet fighter; almost. You see, all this speed, all these electronic aids (engine modes, ABS, traction control, electronic handbrake, cruise control) and excellent handling do bring a problem – one of conceit. It kids you into going faster, to pushing the handling.

But no matter how clever it is, and it is clever, you are still on a near-300kg motorbike, to which the laws of physics are still applicable. And every so often, you will overcook or under estimate that corner or situation; and you will have to get out of it. The brakes are phenomenal, utterly so, as is the ABS. But they can only do so much – your contact patch is the same size as any other bike. A quick mention must be made of the automatic handbrake; squeeze the front brake while stopped and it holds the brake on until you raise the revs and feel the clutch bite. Nice touch, especially two-up, but totally unnecessary if you can ride. It's called clutch control and if you don't have it, you sure as hell shouldn't be on this bike.

Meanwhile, as I'm contemplating the meaning

of life and ABS, Ross – that young whippersnapper – is rolling into, and out of roundabouts, bends and junctions on the old R100, looking as happy as Larry. Ross is tall, which helps on most bikes, but makes him look especially at home on these two. As I follow, I'm imagining Ross disliking the adequate-yet-lacking brakes when compared with the new bike; the lack of heated seat replaced by said split seat which ends in a damp rear; merely five gears, so no high speed/low revs cruising; no cruise control; no stereo; no electronic screen and no snazzy dashboard to distract you. At the petrol station, I pull up, all smug, awaiting the millennial pouring of woe.

"Bloody hell, that's not a 40-year-old design – it feels so modern," says Ross. Damn. Didn't expect that. "It isn't a classic; it must have felt so modern back when it was new. It has softer suspension than a modern bike, but then the engine braking means that I hardly use the brakes, and you end up riding differently to a new bike, where you're always tempted to ride harder, hit the brakes and turn in. This is more genteel!

"This morning I looked at the skinny tyres and thought they'd feel awful, but it goes where you want and feels like there's just as much grip as the new bike. In fact it's all so – civilised."



“They used designers to design the bike, not engineers - this was a huge step. They used aerodynamics to make a fairing that helped high speed handling. The panniers were designed with the bike. They even had branded clothing. Big business ideas had found motorcycling.”



What does he think us old bike folk put up with?

He is, of course, correct. BMW got the R100 family spot on. It suffered from a very high price as a result of the Deutschmark being so strong, and from falling sales in the US, but they did many things so well.

They had a range - with the naked R100/7, the sportsbike with the R100RS and the tourer with the R100RT. They brought high quality, and when there was a problem they generally fixed it quickly. They used designers to design the bike, not engineers - this was a huge step. They used aerodynamics to make a fairing that helped high speed handling. The panniers were designed with the bike. They even had branded clothing. Big business ideas had found motorcycling.

Looking at Gary's photographs I notice both bikes look around the same size, both width and length. In fact, because the R1250 wears its front fairing so low, it almost looks smaller.

The bars also look closer to the rider on the 1250, yet both are really comfortable, where you could drain a tank (20 litres on the 1250, 22/24litres on the R100), fill up and carry straight on again, without any numb bum issues. Mind you, the new machine will cruise well into naughty speed territory without the merest hint of vibes, though the enormous, TV-style dashboard gives you no excuse.

The R1250RT is a wonderful place for a pillion. There are huge grab rails, a heated seat, and the screen can be adjusted to suit. That perch is wide, comfortable and great for looking around at your surroundings. But by the time you have a weekend's clothes, a full tank, pillion and rider, you have got a lot of weight aboard, making slow speed balance and manoeuvring a perilous affair.

The R100RT doesn't need a speedo - you can tell what you're doing. You can feel it; you can hear it. It

feels most comfortable at 70-80mph and I don't use the last thousand revs or so - it just doesn't feel like it needs it, or indeed likes it.

That may be a trait of the later monoshock bikes from when the model was reintroduced in 1987. They adopted the R80 monoshock frame, wheels, brakes and other parts including seat unit and also had to use the smaller 32mm Bing carbs, instead of the earlier 40mm units. The compression ratio was also lowered on the monoshock bikes to help get through the emissions requirements. This resulted in peak power diving from 70bhp to 60bhp; but beneath the headlines were an increase in midrange, and many would say a delivery more suited to touring.

Whichever model you choose, keeping the carbs in balance and tappet clearances checked is key to a well-mannered engine, to good economy and performance. The later bikes are better behaved and have much better suspension and brakes, while the older bikes have the edge on looks and more power. Later ones tend to be cheaper too, which is why I have one... ▶



Some sort of conclusion

As we head for home, enjoying the sun lowering in the famous wide Norfolk skies, I tried to sum up in my head an argument for each bike. I also noticed that while the new bike's headlights are like the second coming and superb, the R100 was also well lit, and must have been a revelation to those who had been illuminated only by old Lucas sealed beams before this. And this seemed, to me, to sum both bikes up. The modern, electronically controlled spaceship that is the R1250RT is a wonderful way to cross large distances and is worthy of representing the new world here. However, it failed to get one up on the old bike for most of the day. It doesn't have a soul, it doesn't talk to you and, if you're touring, why do you need something so fast? It does do everything better; but do you need everything better?

The R100RT fails only on not really feeling like a classic bike – because it's too damn good. You need to keep the carbs balanced, the suspension could be better damped, six gears would lower the cruising revs; but then if you're touring, why are you wanting to cruise fast – isn't the whole point to look around? It talks to you, it lets you know how you're riding and it has most of the benefits of the newer bike.

But when you consider how old this design is, how old this engine design is, the bike is a sure-fire winner. And the best part? The R1250RT is just shy of £20,000. My R100RT cost just shy of £2000.



We didn't have rain, but I've ridden both in the wet. The fairings do their job admirably, with the new bike 'fairing' better. Both pannier sets keep dry too, even if the whole of the internet tells me my old ones leak. They don't.

Motorway 'testing' showed the smoothness of the new engine and the ability to fine tune the screen, but otherwise Mways are just boring sewers to me, made worse by my fellow man showing no thought or care to their fellow being. Just like being in a sewer, I feel surrounded by rats. But on a bike, while more vulnerable, I also feel more able to escape and being higher than in a car, I feel better prepared. Yes, the R100 is comfy at a lower speed than the R1250, but both are happy up to and above the limit. Both are easily capable of quick acceleration for slip roads and both can pop in an overtake on the A roads. The new bike is much quicker, but we failed to find a situation where that came in handy, other than smile inducing... **CBG**



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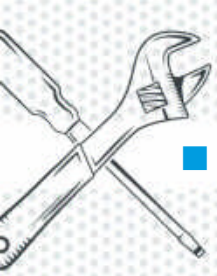
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Servicing your Bing CV carbs

Bing CV carbs are often found on BMWs and the last Triumph T140s. They're also often blamed for poor engine running and performance; so we took ours apart to have a look.

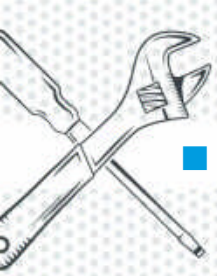


TOOLS NEEDED

Basic tools: spanners, screwdrivers, long nose pliers, carb cleaner, rags

Optional: rubber grease, carb balancer, compressor

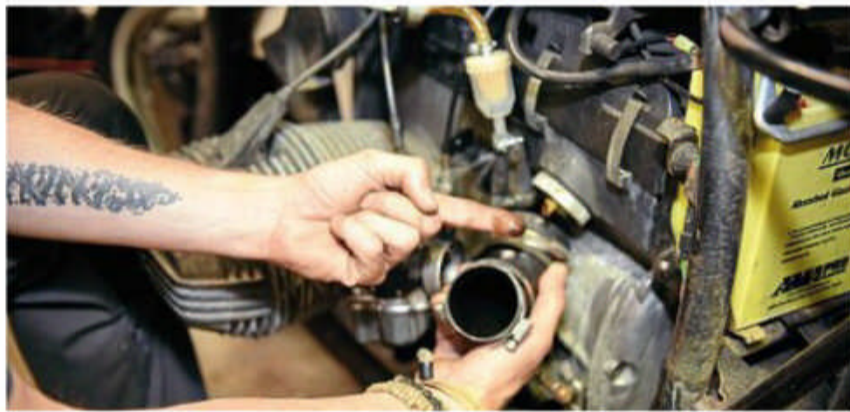
Parts: carb servicing kit from Motoworks or Motorbins (O rings, jets, needles, diaphragm rubbers and gaskets), new inline filters; you may also need cables and floats. ▶



WATCH OUT: These carbs are from our R100. They are similar to those used on the last Triumphs - like the TSS - but they're not identical, so use this as an introduction, not a guide. Bing did change its carbs over the years, so know what age bike they came from. And later Boxer engines fitted with monoshock rear ends had 32mm carbs, not 40mm like the early ones. Also, US machines had different settings, jets and needles, so watch out if using American workshop manuals, like Clymer.



Boxers are so easy to get the carbs off! Loosen the hose clips on the manifold rubber and the intake tube. Wiggle the carb out, twist it round and remove the fuel hose (once you've checked the fuel tap is off), the choke cable and the throttle cable.

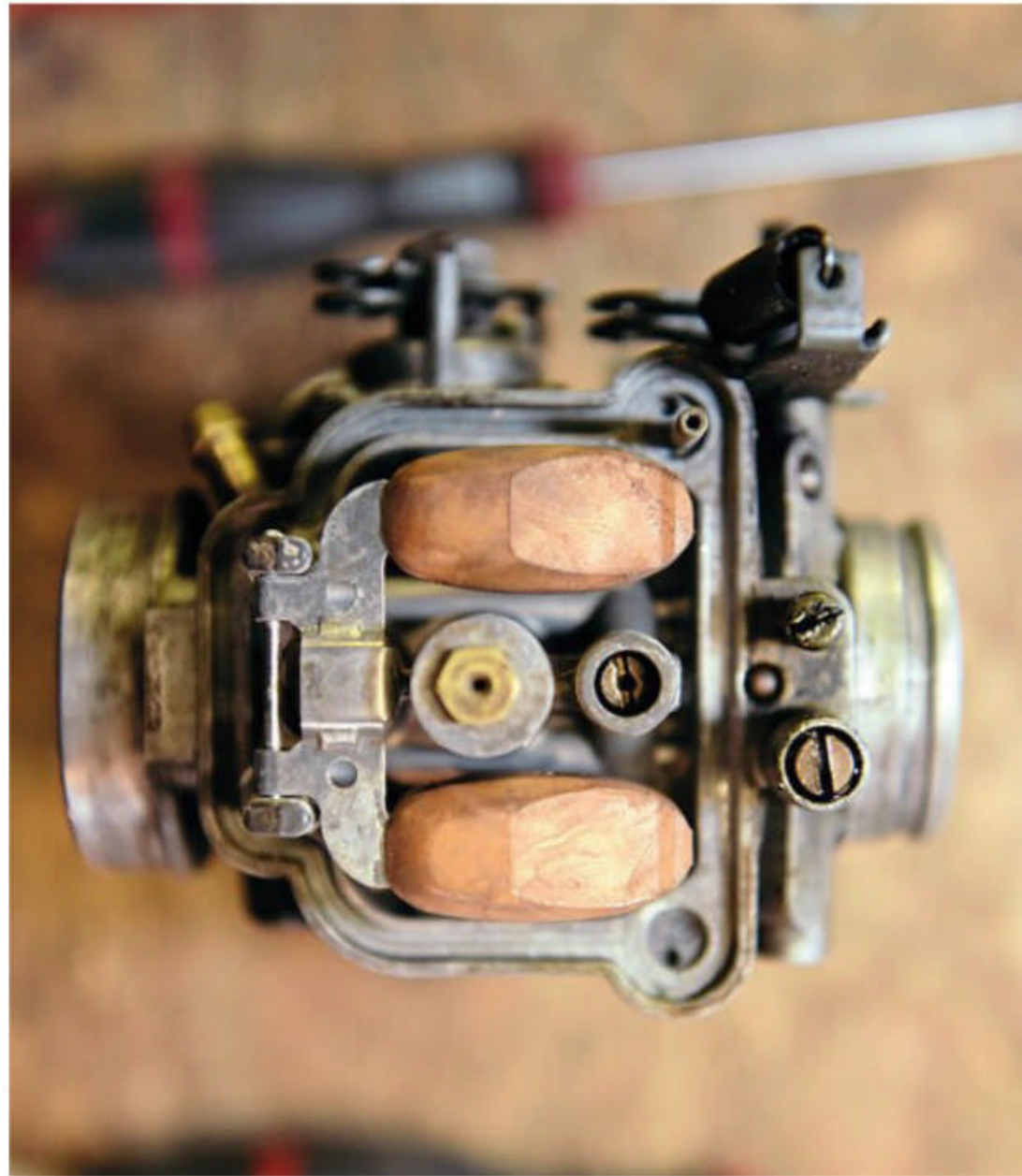


Both our carburetors had a small amount of oil coming from the crank breather that comes out in the air filter. Nothing to worry about at the moment, but could be a sign of worn rings. We worked on one carb at a time, which takes longer, but you at least have reference from the other if you need.

Right: Have a good visual inspection first. Is everything there, is there any damage, is it the model you have bought parts for? Petrol stains, so you can see if there are issues. Then, with a tub beneath you, prise open the sprung catch holding the float sump on slowly; fuel will come out and try not to tear the sump gasket.



Right: This is what was in the bottom of the sump, waiting to be sucked up to block the jets or worse, into the engine. It's rust from the tank, and the reason inline filters are so important. That tank was sealed. Carb cleaner and a Brillo pad cleaned the sump out.



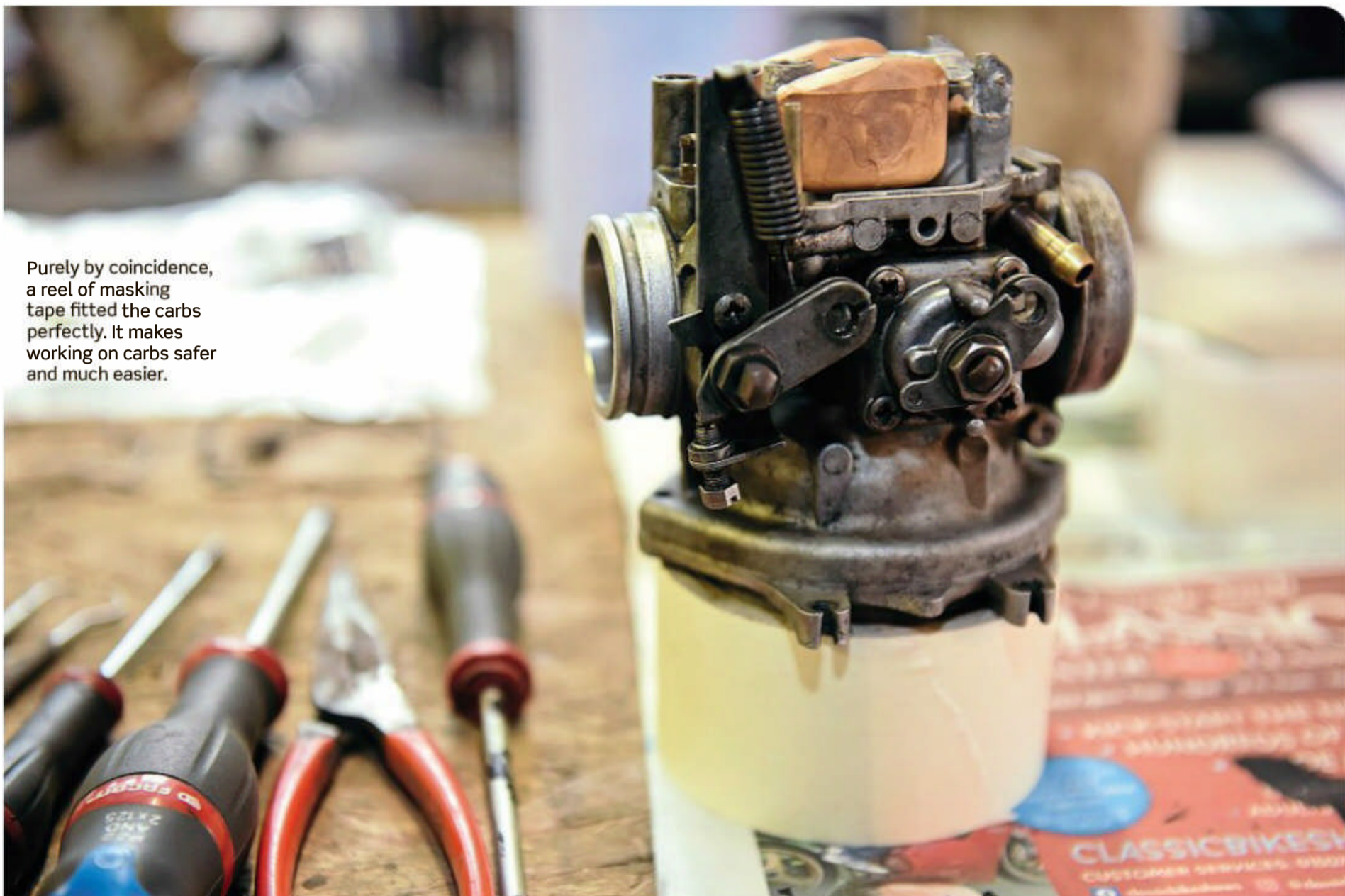
Carbs can be confusing! So how do they work? Here we can see from the bottom with the float sump removed. Above, the air is being sucked into the engine from the piston heading down the barrel. That creates a vacuum above, which sucks fuel up from the float chamber. To make sure there's always enough fuel to call on, the two floats allow the fuel in via the float needle, closing it when there is enough; just like your toilet cistern. The main jet in the middle and the pilot jet to its right allow fuel to mix with the air rushing past above at different times to ensure smooth running, and the main jet also has the needle sitting in the top raising and lowering as the throttle is opened or closed. To the right of those are the mixture screw to adjust the ratio of fuel to air and the vacuum blank, which is used to set up the carbs. Above you can see the choke and throttle levers that the cables operate.

You don't need to know the exact intricacies of how a carb works to work on them; they do their job. Just make sure they are clean, that the fuel is clean, the air is not restricted by a dirty or collapsed filter and there are no leaks of fuel or air to the system. Then set up to the manual and you shouldn't be too far off.



Oh, my wondrous dental picks! Here, the pilot jet has an 'O' ring that is preventing its removal. Remove all the jets, watching for 'O' rings, springs and even small washers. Check the 'O' ring's condition and look through the jets to see if they are blocked. Pop them into a container to keep safe.

Purely by coincidence, a reel of masking tape fitted the carbs perfectly. It makes working on carbs safer and much easier.



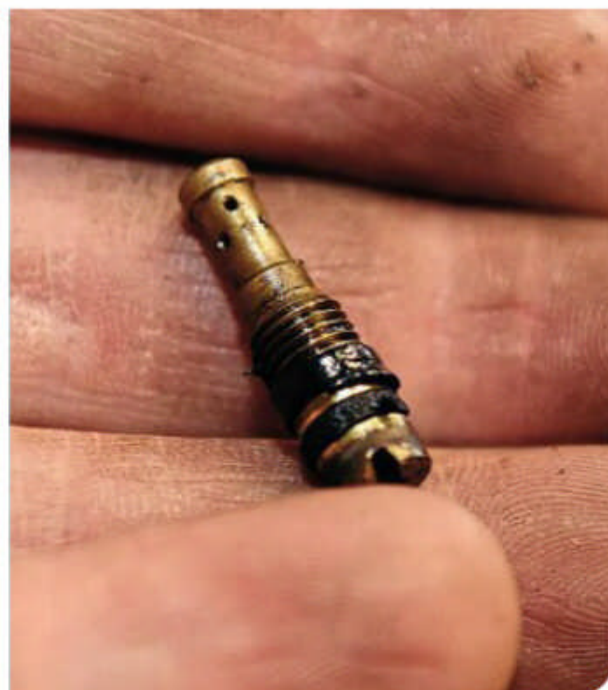
Top and bottom left: The float needle valve needs care. The pin only removes one way and the float arm attaches to the needle valve via the smallest, thinnest clip you've ever seen. Take real care not to ping it across the garage!

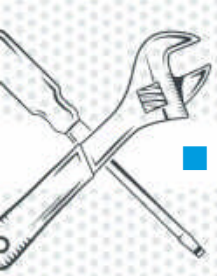


Top right: Here's a close up of the pilot jet. The 'O' ring is tired and wouldn't hold a seal and the jet holes are partially blocked. Make sure you have a new 'O' ring before removing the old one, then blow out the jets with compressed air if you can, even by using a bike pump with a football needle attached.



Bottom right: Now undo the crosshead screws holding the diaphragm top on, being careful not to slip or round off. Watch the spring as they love to fly off and look carefully for rips in the diaphragm rubber, or where it hasn't been seated properly. Even if replacing them, keep any good ones in case. ▶





Left: Give the whole body a good clean with carb cleaner and a toothbrush. Ideally all parts could go into an ultrasonic parts cleaner, but we don't all have one. If you do, watch the small parts. Boxer carbs stick out in the grime; they'll be glad of a clean.



Right: The choke circuit needs checking, so remove the outer square and clean up. There is a gasket here, so make sure you have one



Above: With the tap popped out (it took a gentle force) it can all be cleaned up and the airways through the body blown out. Ours were nice and clean, however, if they've been standing, you could find it all blocked with dried fuel deposits. Make a note of where the tap was pointing before you put it back together!



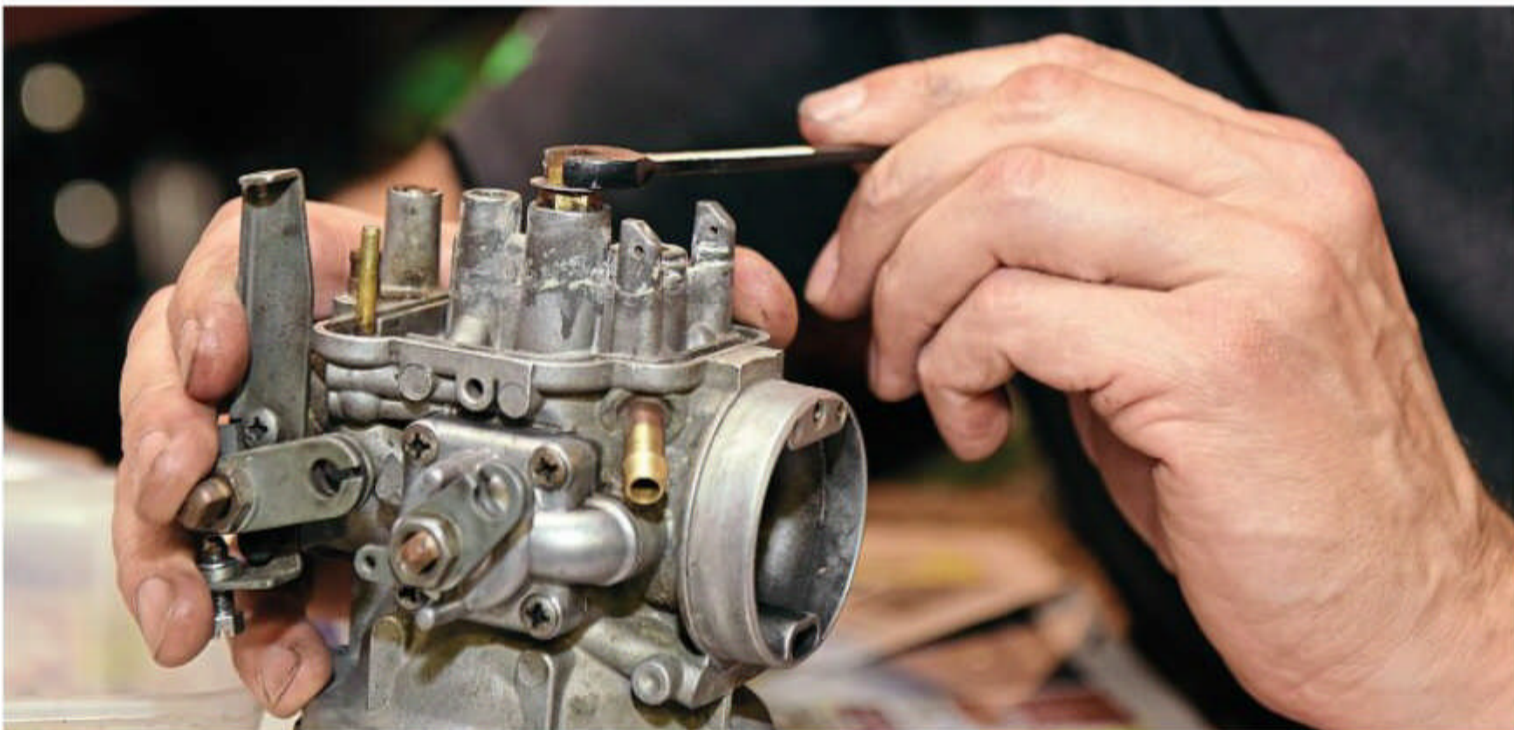
Top right: The piston holds the needle with a screw in the top. The piston is made from rubbish alloy, possibly mazak, the needle from aluminium and the screw from brass. On both carbs it took the piston in a vice to remove the screw so the needle could be replaced - be really careful or the screw will break.



You really do need compressed air now; either from a compressor, a can or even at a friendly garage. I blew out all the airways I could see and find, both ways if possible. Strange, white dust came out of some; dried deposits from fuel.

Bottom right: Here I have the old and the new needles. You cannot easily see wear on the old one (on the right) but it is there. You can also see the different options for the circlip that richen or weaken the mixture. Set it in the middle or where it's recommended - more petrol doesn't give more power!





Above: With all the parts safe in bags, I could then match up what was in the service kits with what I had. All the jets were blown and cleaned thoroughly, then the old 'O' rings removed and kept if in good order. I then used a little grease to help the new ones on, as light oil will make them expand too large.

Left: Carbs are made from light alloy, mazak and brass - all fragile materials. I have to keep remembering this isn't like my usual garage jobs - tightening things as much as possible and using hammers. Taking apart and rebuilding a carb is best done sitting down, with a table and good light.



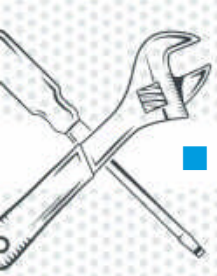
As the bottom end comes together with new pilot jet, new float needle jet and new 'O' rings, I must confess to making a mistake. With all this work and new parts I would have been much better off paying for the services of an ultrasonic cleaner. Oh well.



If you are reusing the float chamber gaskets, you may find they have shrunk. I left mine in petrol to expand slightly, then refitted the sump. Next, if replacing the diaphragm, make sure to line up the locating tabs with the body and piston. Take time to seat the diaphragm in the well.



With the piston back together, feel the piston movement for smoothness - its working against the light spring, but you should also be able to feel the 'cushioning' from the diaphragm. If it drops too quickly, remove and check the diaphragm is seated properly. ▶



The mixture screw needs to be adjusted before running. The Clymer manual recommends just ¼ of a turn from full in, whereas the UK Haynes manual opts for ¾ to 1 full turn out (for the 32mm model). These are only a guidance, but it's close enough for it to start up. Make sure return springs are fitted too.



Above: Refit to the bike, making sure all clips are tight and there is no way air can be sucked in via the inlet rubbers. Now set the choke and throttle cables. These can be tricky, but try to get around 1mm of free play in both cables. I used a feeler gauge to feel that the throttle stop wasn't touching.

Right: Next to the mixture screw is a blanking screw to a vacuum outlet. Connect a carb balancing gauge to a warm engine and adjust the mixture screws to raise the idle so it is revving nicely and the two carbs are showing they are in balance. Make a note of how far out the screws are - they should be near to the same. Now you can use the throttle stops to adjust the idle down to between 800-1100rpm.



TAKE CARE...

When the screw in the piston that holds the needle in place broke, I thought some heat may help it undo. Mazak and heat don't mix, and the tube that locates the piston in the carb top slightly warped. This caused it to stick - a very dangerous situation. I thought it was game over and time to find a new carb. Luckily, Hutch had an idea and spent some considerable time using valve grinding paste to centralise the tube again. A lucky escape!

The bike now rides more smoothly, accelerates more instantly and, though it now needs choke to start from cold, it returns more than 40 miles extra per tankful! I need to play with the balance as the bike stalls occasionally after being held open for some time, but it is still an amazing improvement. **CBG**



On older bikes without electronic ignition you can pull off a lug lead and balance the carbs one at a time, by getting one correct, then matching the other by ear. This cannot be done on later, post-1981 models or it will damage the ignition.



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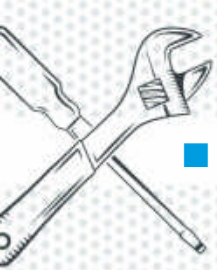
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Twisted Wires

In the first of a new series, we welcome top old-bike engineer, Hutch, and his tips from the workshop. This month, making new cables

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY HUTCH AND CHELLEY OF HTE MOTORCYCLES

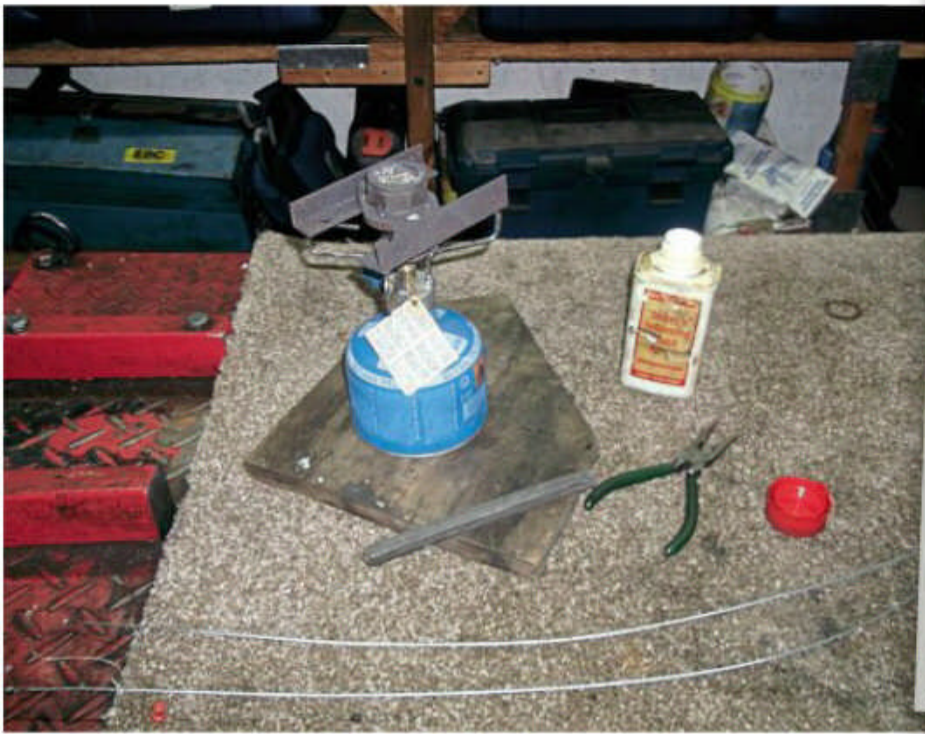
MY VELOCETTE KTS NEEDS CABLES. THESE small jobs seem to take far more time than bolting all the big parts together and are far less enjoyable than seeing a bike taking shape from a pile of bits. The bike needs new cables throughout. Normally I buy new cables to suit where possible as it usually works out cheaper than making your own (some classic Jap bikes excepted). But as with many old bikes, my Velo is not completely standard. I'm not enough of a rivet counter to worry about this, but it does mean standard cables don't always fit, so making them is the best option.

Fortunately I have old cables for the throttle and choke cables I am going to make, which will act as patterns. The first job is to fit them to the bike and make sure all the fittings, lengths and adjustments are ok.

I measured the old inner cable diameters; the throttle was 1mm and choke 1.5mm. I am using 1.5mm for both on the new cables, mostly as that's



A workshop cable-making kit has all the different parts needed for most bikes - but pre-war Velocettes?



Solder bar, soldering pot, cooker, Baker's Fluid for cleaning, and pliers so you don't get burned.



A simple jig to hold the cable in the right place so you can make a 'nest' at the end.

what I have, but make sure it'll fit through the carb slide before going any further.

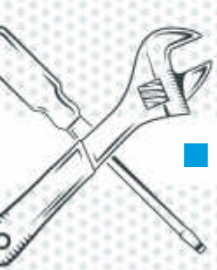
I always like to make up the outer cables first, ensuring I have all the correct fittings, nipples, ferrules, etc. I'm fortunate as I have a workshop cable kit to pick from, but all the components are available individually and even so I had to shorten a couple of ferrules on the lathe so they didn't stand too proud of the carb top. Cutting the inner and outer cables needs a good straight cut for which I use a Parrot-

Below: Soldering the nipple for around 20 seconds in a home-made soldering pot, then letting it harden for a further 20 seconds.

nosed cutter; other methods and cutters are available. I use outer cables with a lining already fitted – just remember not to lubricate the cable as it can make the lining swell.

Once the outer cable is made up and looks ok I move on to the inner cable, I like to fit the first nipple to the inner cable before fitting it through the outer, just for ease of handling. First I fit the appropriate nipple on the inner cable, open end towards the end of the cable, and then spread the wire end into





a 'nest'; this is possibly one of the most difficult and critical parts of cable making, which I find more difficult on smaller diameter cables. For this I use a home-made fixture held in the vice. Once formed, I pull the nest into the open end of the nipple.

Now comes the soldering bit. I use a harder Tinmans solder (i.e. not electrical) in a solder pot, which is made from an old plumbing fitting and heated over a gas ring. I'm not keen on using flames directly on to a cable as the heat can affect the cable and you can't see the solder capillary through the nipple so well. As with all soldering, cleanliness is crucial. I dip the nipple/cable end first into Bakers Fluid to clean it, then straight into the solder pot, keeping the very top of the nipple above the surface of the molten solder. That way I can look for the solder working its way through the nipple. I usually count to 20 once I submerge in the solder pot, then 20 again once I remove the nipple to let the solder solidify. It's then just a case of cleaning the nipple up a little with a file.

Measuring the inner cable up to the old one, I cut it long by a couple of inches, using the parrot-nosed cutters again, and feed the inner into the new outer all the way through and the right way round (ahem). It's then just a case of marking where the second nipple needs to fit, sliding it on and cutting the inner cable to length, remembering to leave a little extra for forming the 'nest', then soldering as before.

Remember, it doesn't matter if you make cables



Above: Once filed, this is what you should end up with.

Below: Finally, two new cables ready to use.

longer or shorter than standard, it's the amount of 'free' inner cable that is important to function. Many modern bought cables have ends that are formed as nipples, as opposed to soldered-on brass nipples; these cables are often stainless and don't solder well, should you think of trying. **CBG**



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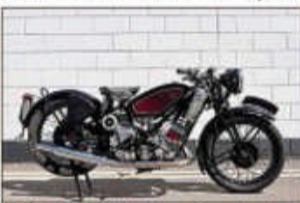
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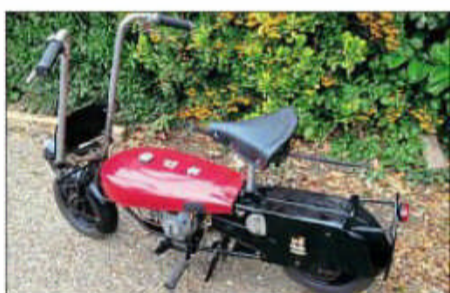
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HONDA NTV600 Revere, 1989, 25,000 miles, MoT till July 2021, vgc with rare original exhaust system, BMW R90S type fairing & lowered footrests, £1200 Tel. Richard 01872 260138 Cornwall



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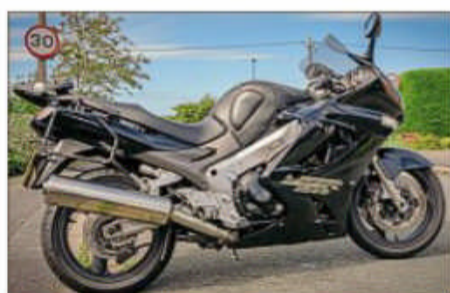
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HONDA C50 1972, good condition, black, runs well, £1500. Tel. 07833 937639. Lancs.

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MATCHLESS G12 650cc twin, 1959, restored 2006, still in excellent all round condition, original registration, £4250. Tel. 01424 220772. East Sussex.

NORTON DOMMIE 1960, very nice bike, £5950. Triumph Trophy, 1993, too big for me, sell or swap for smaller British bike. Tel. 07513 269252. Staffs.

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CB77 SPARES FOR SALE: frame, engine, main stand, swinging arm, bottom end built up with crank, gear box & selector clutch ok dynamo ok, 3 r/h/s two need work one is good condition with new kick start gear, front forks rear shocks, good speedo and two carbs good condition, full set of gaskets oil seals+gaskets, head stripped for blasting barrels need rebore, good valves + springs + camshaft, lots of other stuff, £1000 ono. Tel. Ron 07768 982954. Perthshire

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HONDA C90 1972, Speedometer, £50. Centre leg shield clip, £10. Tel. 01622 676324. Kent.

HONDA CG125 rough but complete, stood in garden ten years, no keys or documents, good project, £299. Tel. Steve 07396 270365. Brighton.

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BMW K75 OR BOXER wanted, rideable condition, preferred, but any condition considered even a basket case, twin shock or early monoshock, Boxer ideal will travel. Tel. 07984 950257. Derbyshire.

BRITISH BIKE PROJECT or spares wanted, anything considered any size or condition, more of a tinkerer than a rider now so open to offers, older the better, pay accordingly, can collect. Tel. 07538 696157. Leics.

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MOTO GUZZI V50/V35 looking for a complete UK bike with V5 to restore, running if possible. Tel. Mike 07511 688088. Birmingham.

MZ SCORPION wanted, bashed crashed or abandoned project. Tel. Mark 07775 811417. East Sussex. Email. markfairweather11@hotmail.com

ROYAL ENFIELD Thunderbird, 350cc, does not have to be a runner, just complete, electric start model. Tel. 01524 733604. Lancs.

TRIUMPH 5TA FORKS 1966, wanted yokes not required. North Yorkshire. Email. macdonald864@btinternet.com

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YAMAHA XS650, SR500 or TR1 wanted, rideable condition, preferred but any condition considered including chopper, customised or basket case will travel, other make big twin/single considered. Tel. 07984 950257. Derbyshire.

YAMAHA YDS 5 PARTS anything considered even a complete bike, WHY? Tel. Richard 07769 715916. Lincs.

CLASSIC MOTORCYCLES WANTED, any condition including projects, parts also wanted, collection from anywhere, motorcycles sold on your behalf. Tel. 01617 480865 Manchester. Email: rajonesclassicmotorcycles@gmail.com web: rajones-classicmotorcycles.co.uk (T) R0676585C

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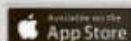
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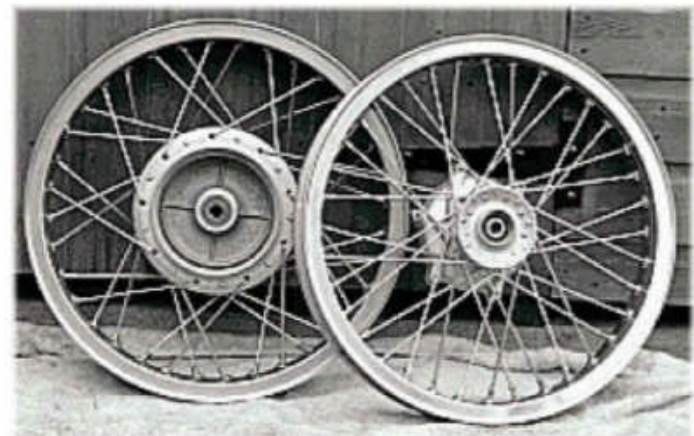


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FRANK WESTWORTH

FAMOUS LAST WORDS

One of those days. It's been one of those days...

"I dragged out the mostly modern Triumph twin instead, pushed its starter button, observing that it sounds less like supertanker anchor chains being dragged over a tin roof than does the amusing equivalent on the Norton, and shot off back to M&S. We're posh in Cornwall"

A MOMENT OF REALISATION STRUCK ME THIS afternoon, as they sometimes do. I'd been out powering around the greensward aboard possibly the best Norton ever built (electric start, good handling, great brakes, comfortable too) and had been riding like a complete bozo. This is, of course, not entirely unusual, but today I was riding a comfortable, compact and entirely conventional machine as though its tyres were flat, the steering head races seized and I was under the influence of something powerful. None of these was the case – any of them would have provided a perfect excuse. But no. No corner worked, a favourite set of bends was entirely unfamiliar and where there were four changes of direction I managed about 14. Pathetic.

Of course it was the bike's fault. I decided several times during the rubbish ride that I would cease insisting that 400cc Norton twins are the best thing on the road since the Honda Cub, but would sell it first, before my in-print denunciation devalued the hideous junkheap.

But it was also a puzzle. I had been out on the same bike a couple of days previously, wasting time while waiting for a pal from the frozen wastes of Yorkshire to clatter up aboard his mid-70s H-D Behemoth Glide to complain about it. Which he did, but later. The point here is that on the previous ride – different route, same kind of roads, as is the local way – the Norton had performed perfectly and I'd enjoyed it considerably. Mock ye not; these actually are great little bikes. If slow.

Filled with indignation that the bike about which I've been singing praises from the very rooftops for some time now had finally behaved in the way its (many) knockers claim, it dawned on me that in my towering grump I'd forgotten to do whatever it was I'd gone out to do, so before domestic mockery set in I needed to go out again. On the Norton? Not. A. Chance.

I dragged out the mostly modern Triumph twin instead, pushed its starter button, observing that it sounds less like supertanker anchor chains being dragged over a tin roof than does the amusing equivalent on the Norton, and shot off back to M&S. We're posh in Cornwall. Although the M&S is in Devon. I digress.

There was something wrong with the

Triumph. Its steering was all over the place. It was impossible to set up the many bends and corners properly. And the engine? It was always either revving off its big ends or lugging like a Panther 120 on full retard. What on earth was up with the thing? I'd been considering replacing it with a newer version of the same model, but it was plain I needed to think about this. I did the shopping and returned home. Slowly.

I mentioned a moment of realisation. This was it. I've been riding motorcycles – legally – for an entire half-century this very year. Fifty years on two wheels. That's almost worthy of an exclamation mark. Almost. And despite... how many miles is that? Even at 10,000 a year average it's a half-million miles. How's that for a scary thought? And I still can't get it right every time. Why not?

Probably because riding a motorcycle with any verve at all is a seriously complicated thing to do. And yes, I know full well that there are many riders out there who never think about their riding, they just get on, kick up and go. Never a second thought. I've never been like that, not really. When a chap rides mostly old bikes mostly always, the whole thing feels precarious somehow. So many things to go wrong with a capricious machine balanced on two small rubber contact patches, every ride intensified by the weary nagging worry that something will break, fall off or fail. I've had front brake cable nipples pull off several times, punctures galore, a rear wheel seizure on a Matchless while riding rapidly indeed down a Lakeland pass. It all adds up to that power of alertness which makes every completed ride into a successful adventure. Fifty years. A half-million miles, maybe. I am, I decided, entitled to an off-day every so often.

Which is a comforting thought.

The following morning I invented an excuse and took out the Norton again. It ran well. I rode well. My favourite sets of bends produced wide smiles and a need to repeat the ride through them. Motorcycling was an extraordinary discovery when I rode my very first machine over a half-century ago. The ride remains the same.

Never give up. Never surrender. Try again. Always. **CBG**

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

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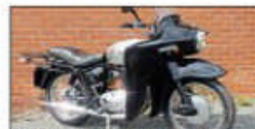
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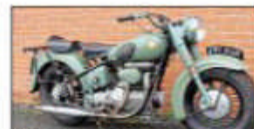
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