

New retro: BMW R18
One huge boxer

Royal rumble
Enfield's Clipper 250



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DECEMBER 2020

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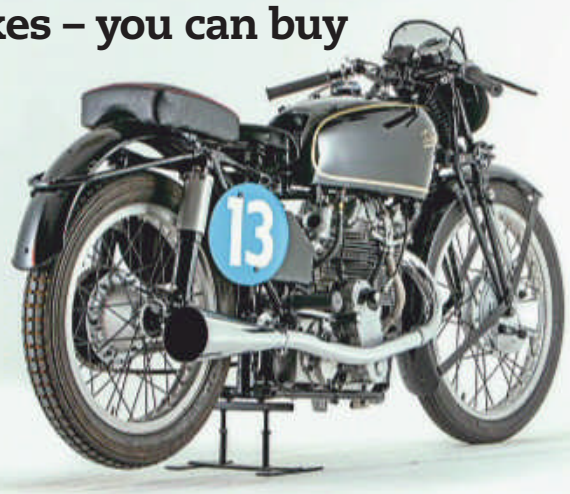
FREE CALENDAR THIS ISSUE
UK ONLY



Workshop
How to fit a Helicoil

Impossible to find, so made at home

Museum marvels
Our favourite museum bikes – you can buy





The rule of six
Honda CBX1000 restoration



New to classics?
Get the most fun from riding classic bikes



So there's a BSA "Project" in the shed or garage, in fact it has been there a long time…

You know how most of your plans to get it up and running never get finished, because you struggle to work out what is actually needed, where to get good reliable parts that fit properly and how to find out the tips and tricks that make the job easier.

It's an embarrassment every time you see it and it hurts to know you're missing out on the fun and freedom of riding a bike you've fixed.

Well what I suggest (what I did!), is join BSA Owners' Club and tap into the wealth of support and technical advice available and all the encouragement from other members.

This simple approach means that you can realistically plan to get back on the bike again in the Spring and enjoy a Summer of idyllic rides around the lanes, on your own or with good friends – we're known as The Happy People!

If this is something you may be open to, just follow this website link to join us now:
www.bsaownersclub.co.uk & click the "*Download a Membership Form*" box.

To help you get started, why not email me the No. 1 problem you face and I'll point you in the right direction. Bill.

Here's my email: **pro@bsaownersclub.co.uk**

Let's do it!





















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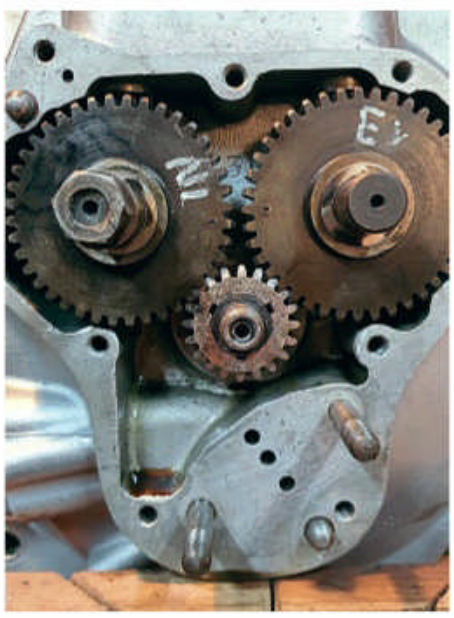
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Housekeeping

Here's to everyone enjoying the final flurry of nice riding days! Although I do love those surprise autumnal or winter days where the roads are dry and the sun, for a few hours, is our friend. That's the glory of not having immaculate bikes – they are always available for an impromptu 'blat' out.

Here at Hullville, we can tell it's getting colder; not because the bike meets are getting quieter and darker; not because that jacket liner gets put in. We can tell because come late evening, the slugs move into the kitchen. I just cannot find where they come in, slimy little buggers. The kids think it's hilarious. I don't.

They've been seeking warmth for years; just like my BSA not starting when it's still warm. Dynamo and magneto are all right, carb settings work and feel fine, but I dread trying to start it after 30 minutes or so, especially now Maria's using it more. Little niggles are what make every day different though, I suppose.

Bike-wise, we've had a quiet month; well, apart from the BMW valve clearances, which are rather vocal in reminding me they're loose. I popped to see my friend Ben at TTT Motorcycles in Sudbury, where the guys in the workshop were putting a badly-restored Triumph back in shape. I also got to try a brilliantly tuned new Royal Enfield Interceptor they'd got just perfect – more on that next month – and the great roads in that area.

Elsewhere we've been making a list of jobs needed on the old family Ford 103E that took my mother and father to hospital to have me, to see how big a task it is. Great news is the chassis – what there is – is in strong shape and the bodywork needed is pretty minimal. The suspension and the non-hydraulic, rod-operated brakes will need some love and the 1172cc sidevalve engine is asking for the full works. And bearing in mind it hasn't the performance of an M20, that engine weighs a ton! Bikes or cars? I enjoy them both.

And heading further back in time, our good friend was recently offered some old working trailers, so what better way to pick them up than steaming up the Garrett traction engine? For those not into steam power, traction engines are incredible machines that feel so alive when you're next to them. To top it off they just happened to be coming down the road as the level crossing was closed for the Mid Norfolk Railway testing a Standard class loco at the same time. There was more steam than a holed Scott radiator and more whistling than the workshop kettle. A wonderful sight and smell that made up for the lack of shows this year.

Workshop beckons. The ES2 is actually making progress; I'm enjoying it again. The B31 needs an oil change, a couple of niggles and the tank repainted, the BMW needs a service and possibly more – I suspect the crank seal is leaking, causing the dry clutch to slip slightly. And I'm fed up with never having any room, so I've decided to have a clear out, sell some bits and bobs and general stuff, to be able to concentrate on what's left. Then, maybe, I'll find some time to stop the slugs.

Hope you enjoy this month's magazine, we've tried to bring a nice mix of bikes and stories. If you think you have a bike or story that others will find interesting, or want to correct something, you're all more than welcome to email me.

Be good



Matt Hull
editor@classicbikeguide.com

CATALINA GRAND PRIX

Between 1951 and 1953 the small island of Santa Catalina, 27 miles off the West Coast of the USA, hosted the Catalina Grand National enduro, an event designed to test both a rider and machine's prowess on-road and off.

After those first three years, the AMA (American Motorcyclist Association) didn't like the rules the Catalina event ran to, so withdrew their permit. Not put off, the event continued to run independently, growing every year – 1956 saw more than 1000 entrants.

The 10-mile lap around the island's paved roads, dirt tracks and 'oiled dirt surface' affected everyone on there and the sheer number of people gave tremendous economic benefits.

Because the race had few rules – there were two classes, below and above 250cc – many manufacturers including NSU and BSA were using it heavily in marketing, with the smaller bikes getting equal coverage. BSA even named their final US incarnation of the Gold Star, the Catalina Scrambler.

Sadly, in 1959 the final race was held, for a variety of reasons. There was another in 2010 when Red Bull got involved, but it is yet to become the fantastic spectacle it once was, on that little island just off California. CBG



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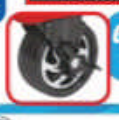
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CBB215B	5 Dr Cabinet	758x468x815	£199.98	£239.98
② CBB217B	7 Dr Cabinet	758x468x975	£249.98	£299.98
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② CTC700B	7 Dr cabinet	610x330x875	£129.98	£155.98
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④	CBB311DF	11 Dr Cabinet	1045x490x1075	£339.98	£407.98

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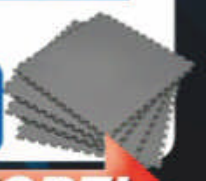
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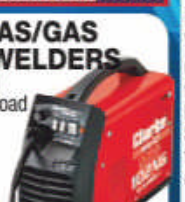
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I want - a Triumph TR6C

Allan Seggie has wanted a TR6C for years. Most went Stateside, so Allan built his own.

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY STUART URQUHART


Trophy650

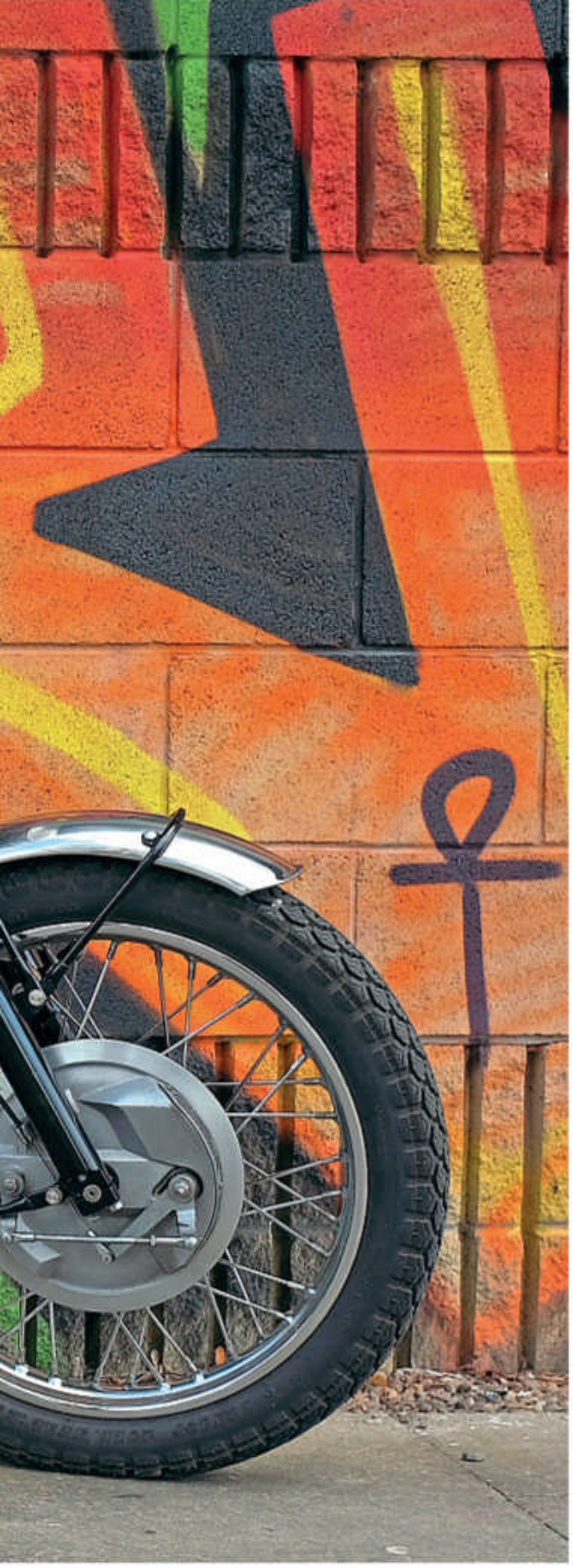


A well-thumbed picture of a 1967 TR6C Trophy hangs in Allan Seggie's garage. He's not a chap to indulge in sentiment, but nevertheless will admit to going giddy at the knees on sight of Triumph's iconic green and white Street Scrambler.

"The majority of TR6C Street Scramblers were made exclusively for the American market," Allan informed me while I was photographing his Trophy 'special' for this month's build feature. "The yanks loved them," Allan continued, "and Triumph twins were more popular throughout the Sixties than Harley-Davidson's own home-grown V-twins. Not only did our vertical twins out-perform and out-handle Harleys, they out-sold them for almost a decade, keeping Triumph buoyant throughout troubled times. But unfortunately for UK enthusiasts, most TR6C production ended up overseas to meet US demand – with just a mere trickle being allocated to the UK."

SOME ATLANTIC YORE...

The TR6C Trophy (or Street Scrambler) was not as popular in the UK as the T120 Bonneville. As Allan explained, if you were a fan of the 650cc C-model back in the mid-Sixties you would be very lucky indeed to own one. Most were exported to the States, so it's easy to appreciate why this particular Triumph is a rarity in the UK. Part of Meriden's Sixties model line-









up, the 1967 mist green model won praise as 'a very fine motorcycle and one of the nicest Triumph twins.' Tipping the scales at 360lb (163kg) and with 42bhp on tap, the Triumph 650 Scrambler was quite capable of topping the 'magic ton'.

Throughout the Sixties, Triumph produced many non-standard Bonneville and Trophy models – all to meet the whims of US East and West Coast dealerships. Triumph's twins were all subject to constant tweaking by US enthusiasts. It was a policy that resulted in common variants such as Street Cruisers with lights, twin carbs and low-level exhausts – or Desert Scramblers without lights but having high-level exhausts, slim mudguards and a single monobloc carb.

It is common knowledge that Triumph ISDT team rider and Hollywood 'King of Cool' Steve McQueen was a great ambassador for the brand and his passion for Triumph twins further boosted their popularity on both sides of the pond.

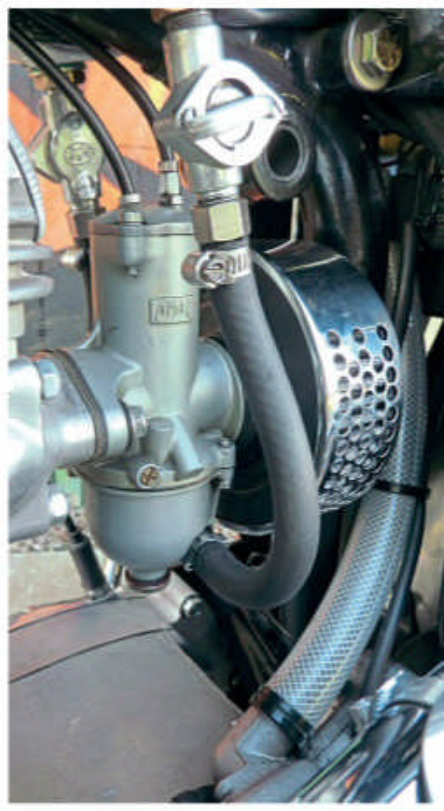
However, the sweeping craze for fitting performance-enhancing high compression pistons and hot cams soon blighted Triumph's later twins – upgrades that resulted in unwanted engine vibration, blown bulbs, cracking mudguards and numb-finger syndrome.

By the early Seventies Triumph was struggling with poor management and reliability problems; issues that were blamed on a merger with BSA Group. The subsequent introduction of the Umberside

Not only did our vertical twins out-perform and out-handle Harleys, they out-sold them for almost a decade, keeping Triumph buoyant throughout troubled times

oil-in-frame models only compounded Meriden's problems. Then a run of poor publicity followed by a Government-sanctioned merger with NVT led to a workers' sit-in.

The uncompromising relationship that developed between the factory workforce, management and Government led to a lengthy dispute and a damaging halt in production. Although Triumph would make a brief and profitable recovery years later, highly competitive products from Japan were already flooding global markets – products that were destined to deal a crushing blow to the once dominant British Motorcycle Industry.



MOON DUST AND CONUNDRUMS

Allan's lovely Triumph Street Scrambler within this feature is actually a 'replica'. Yep, you read that correctly dear reader – as it didn't take Allan much keyboard crunching to find that owning such a desirable and original classic would prove impossible – none were to be had!

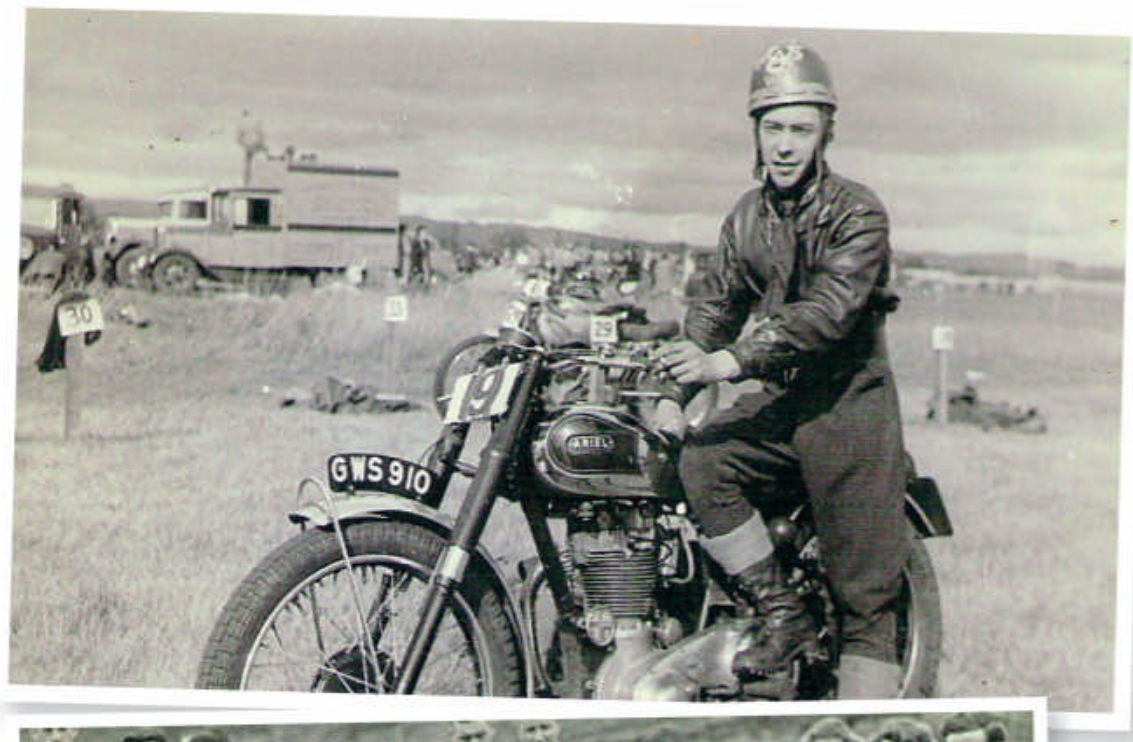
"I was truly gutted to discover that original TR6Cs were as thin on the ground as moon dust! I'd saved hard and sacrificed my beloved Ducati Monster at the Altar of Triumph in the sole expectation of fulfilling my lifelong dream of owning a TR6C. But what to replace it with had tormented me long before my Monster departed. I hankered after another British classic motorcycle, but what I asked myself, could possibly dish up the fun and thrills of the Ducati?"

Allan then lamented that Triumph's baby sibling, the TR5, had also been another dream bike of his youth – but these too were now orbiting well beyond his reach. He'd also considered a Matchless G3 single in WD trim – surmising that such a glory day motorcycle might open the door to battle re-enactments... but then he dismissed the idea 'as a bridge to far' (I did offer up a re-enactment chuckle, it seemed rude not to). Then I learned that Allan's father, one Allan Seggie Snr, was a WD dispatch rider and competitive works trials rider for Ariel (GWS 910) – see photos, (right).

"Sometimes the answer is staring you right in the face!" Allan changed tack suddenly with a roll of his eyes. "As I may have mentioned earlier, above my garage work bench is a torn page from an old classic bike magazine that features a beautifully-restored 1967 Triumph TR6C. It's hanging there because I always thought the model looked 'super cool' and very different from the multitude of stock T120s. 'Wow' factors for me being the iconic mist green petrol tank, distinctive off-road styling, beautiful hi-rise Siamese exhausts, pull-back handlebars, and an easy-to-tune single Amal carb.

"So not long after the Ducati's departure, I began to search in earnest for an off-road Triumph project. After several weeks of intensive searching on eBay I came across a presentable 1969 Trophy 'Special' with non-matching numbers. I realised it could be converted into a TR6C replica without too much hassle or expense. Listed at an affordable 'buy it now' price, I became quite excited and contacted the vendor.

"The seller was a Mr John Bull (I kid you not!) and he seemed the genuine article – but we did joke that his well-kent name could be a stumbling block when it came to flogging an old motor vehicle! However, following several follow-up telephone conversations and emailed photographs from John, I fired in a bid. Suddenly I became the proud owner of a Trophy located down in Norfolk but a very long drive from rural Perthshire. Once I'd couriered the bike to Scotland, I reckoned I had a shrewd purchase in my hands. Following several months of test riding I soon found faults to sort, but I knew it was the perfect choice for creating the bike of my dreams – a TR6C Replica!"





Above: Allan's father, Allan Snr, was a dispatch rider in the War and rode trials for Ariel with some success

Further research of its non-matching numbers suggested the frame was from a T120R Bonneville and the engine from a TR6R. Luckily both the frame and engine numbers quoted on the documents were the same year – 1969.

Allan's initial thoughts were that his purchase could be a TR6R that had suffered a front end and frame-bending smash. This would explain the presence of a US export spec rear stainless mudguard. There was also a yellow breaker's mark painted on the headstock. Another theory hinted to a T120R that had suffered a blown engine – principally because the clocks were post 1970, and had possibly been replaced after a damaging front end crash. Before stripping the bike and undertaking its transformation into TR6C Replica, Allan wisely ran it for several months to test for possible mechanical or steering problems. Back to Allan again:

"Imagine my relief when I found that the Trophy ran sweetly and proved to be mechanically sound. The brakes were excellent; especially the 1968 twin-leading front brake. The only problems that required attention turned out to be fairly minor: The speedometer didn't work and the gearbox leaked oil and occasionally jumped out of second gear. However, I enjoyed several test runs before winter arrived, along with the unexpected spectre of Covid-19."





THE WINTER BUILD

The nation was already in lockdown by the time Allan started to pull apart the Trophy for its metamorphosis into his dream machine. Previous test runs had already proved the engine was good mechanically, and it only required a top end strip to check the tappets, sort oil leaks and replace a few leaking gaskets. Allan takes up the story:

"As I was inspecting the engine I discovered the rocker boxes were actually from a 1971 oil-in-frame model. Top end oil leaks were caused by a previous owner's use of incorrect tappet covers, then drilling and fitting wire-lock to stop them from vibrating loose. Unfortunately his drillings only encouraged oil leaks. I also retapped a stripped thread and replaced all necessary seals and gaskets before I sourced and fitted the correct tappet inspection caps. Unfortunately later models have a different arrangement for the rocker box head-steady and mine was missing, so I fabricated my own. The only other engine work required was to clean out the primary drive and inspect the clutch.

"All good, I then moved onto the gearbox. After stripping the outer cover and kick-start assembly, it was soon obvious that one oil leak was due to a worn kick-start oil seal. On removal of the inner cover, the gear selection fault turned out to be nothing more than a worn leaf spring. Once replaced the fault was cured.

"The numerous bodges and rounded bolt heads I uncovered during the stripdown convinced me that some previous owner's toolkit only comprised of a hammer, a pipe wrench, one large screw driver and (maybe) an adjustable spanner!" tutted Allan.

BETTER THAN THE REAL THING?

After servicing the engine, Allan's next step was to rebuild the front forks and fit new seals, bushes, stanchions and fork cap-nuts. The head bearings were checked, cleaned and greased before a new stainless pinch bolt was added to the top yoke. Allan said the fork shrouds that came with the bike are patterns, easily identified by an unsightly gap between the top yoke and the stanchions.

"Before stripping the bike and undertaking its transformation into TR6C Replica, Allan wisely ran it for several months to test for possible mechanical or steering problems"



"Once I'd removed the shrouds to rectify their 'short-comings' I simply elongated the lower eye fixings for a better fit. Then I fabricated two metal plates and welded them over the unsightly holes! I also slipped an O-ring over the top stanchions which fit nice and snug and hide any gaps – they also do a splendid job of securing the shrouds. Since observing other Triumphs, I've noticed quite a few are spoiled by poor-fitting shrouds!"

The wheels were in great condition with excellent chrome – Allan's only task was to clean and polish them and fit new tubes and tyres. Fortunately many of the cycle parts such as the frame, mudguard brackets and chainguard had already been treated to a durable black powder coat finish by a previous owner. A new stainless steel front mudguard was sourced to match the rear one. Allan also fabricated a rear numberplate carrier and lower front mudguard bracket – then had them powder coated along with the head-steady, top yoke, rear footrest carriers and clock bracket.

"My friend Gavin sealed and repainted the tank in Triumph mist green and white – an iconic factory colour available for one year only. Gavin also painted and lacquered the side panels with their gold signature decals. I sourced a set of better-looking 1967 knee grips while Gavin artfully touched-up the tank badges. The petrol taps were thoroughly cleaned and new dowdy washers added. I also fitted the recommended external oil filter and located it behind the frame down tube. A new Amal concentric carburettor and drilled chrome air-filter help to enhance the Street Scrambler look. I also managed to repair the seized speedometer just by methodically stripping and cleaning the inner workings. I later added a digital back-up speedometer which I mounted dead-centre of the 'must-have' US style pull-back handlebars.

"The bespoke exhaust heat shields I made in stainless – they're designed to blend seamlessly with the slash-cut Siamese pipes – concours machines would of course be fitted with standard Sixties Triumph silencers. Final jobs were to fit a modern regulator/rectifier, new battery and tidy up the harness, coils and electronic ignition – I also fitted a dummy Zenor up front to satisfy car park critics," concluded Allan.

Certainly to my critical eye Allan has created an absolutely stunning TR6C Replica. A personal Street Scrambler that turns heads and on the day of our photo shoot, attracted Joe Public to come and 'have a gander' – as one group of curious skateboarders remarked: Is it as good as the real thing? You decide...

I BUNGLE A RIDE...

After several hours of rattling off pics I was clock-watching when Allan's tempting offer of a ride had me swapping camera for helmet. I knew I could manage no more than a short blast, but nevertheless, a light clutch and a willing throttle had me making my great escape around Perth's sprawling docklands.

Pigeons scattered from derelict buildings as I thundered around on Allan's Trumpet – accompanied by its rich and astounding soundtrack. Excellent carburation and a torque-laden engine slapped a manic grin across my face! I had hoots of fun racing up and down the deserted straights then dragging my boot dirt-style around the mini-roundabouts. Then suddenly I was no longer Bud Ekins as the 2LS front brake pulled an impromptu 'stoppie' and launched my bum skywards. Allan doubled-up in a hearty belly-laugh when he clocked my bungled brake test. Suffice to say the brakes scored 10 out of 10.

At the risk of repeating myself, Allan's TR6 is a well put together motorcycle and the 650cc/42bhp engine is a belter. Even the gearbox gave an ultra-polished performance on the day, and handling and control was much as expected from a Triumph – confident and inspiring. After my short but sweet joyride I pulled up beside a beaming Allan and he bellowed: "Wow! I had no idea how gorgeous those slash-back pipes sound on full crack!"

Allan's TR6C Trophy definitely plucks the right heart strings. No need to ask, it's a 'yes please' from me. CBG



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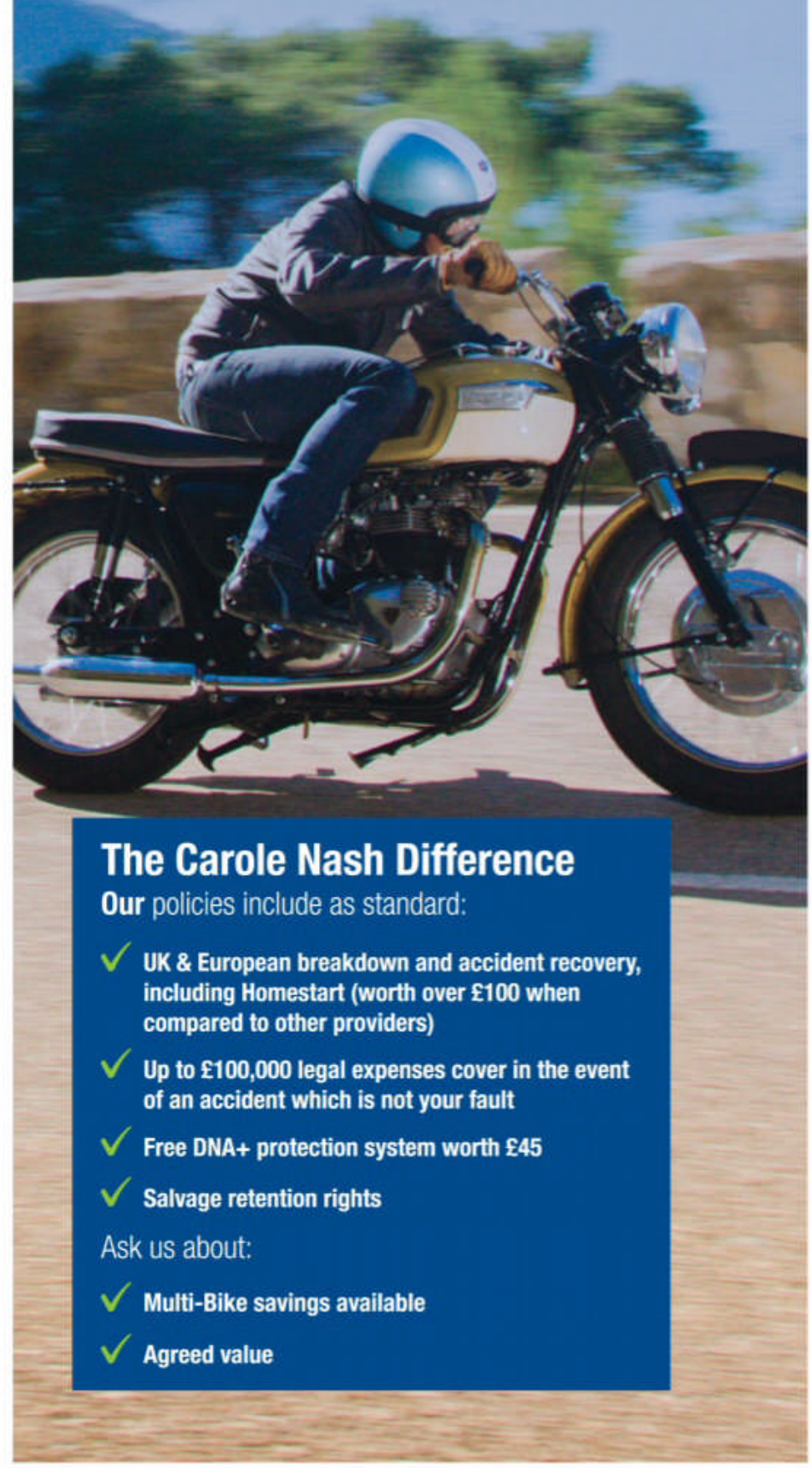


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For your pleasure, our guide to the most Italian of stallions, the Laverda Jota



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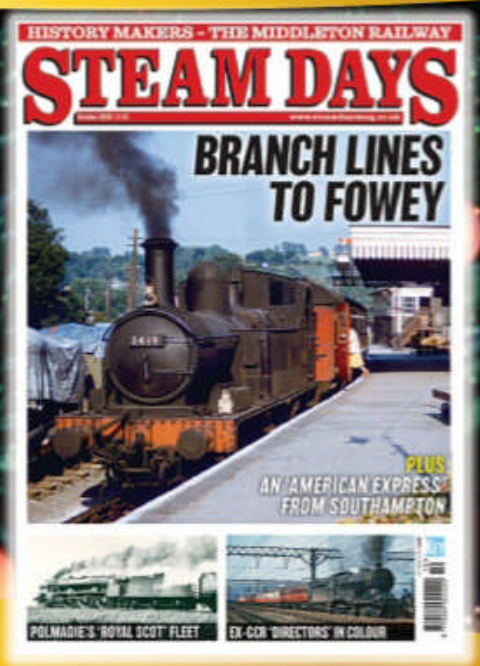
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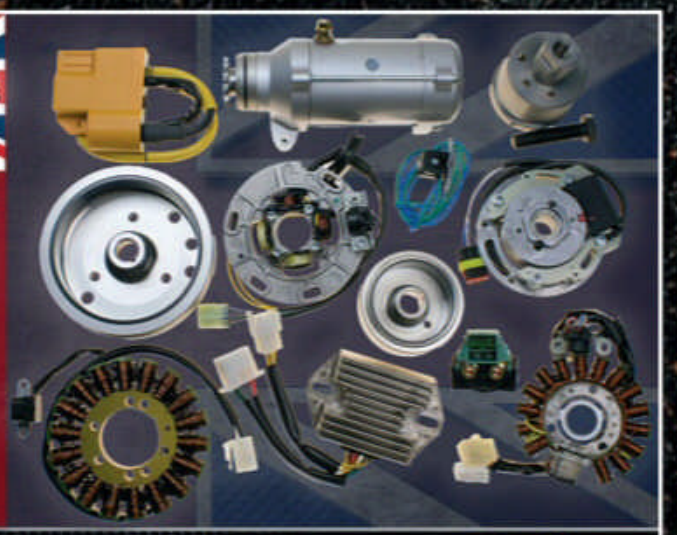
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IMPORTERS TAX HIKE TO FOLLOW EU DEPARTURE

IF YOU ARE planning on importing a classic motorcycle from Europe, it might be worth getting your wallet out now, as you may have less than a month to do it without incurring extra costs.

Cross-border parts buyers and sellers can also expect longer delivery times, as new tax rules relating to the UK leaving the EU come into force.

Importing a classic motorcycle more than 30 years old from Europe does not currently incur VAT payable in the UK or Duty. The Government has decided that such machines will still not incur Duty, but will be liable for 5% in VAT.

A spokesman for HMRC said: "Vehicles over 30 years may be classified as collectors' pieces, which incur a 0% duty rate and a 5% VAT rate. The UK Global Tariff 2021 states that the duty rate will remain at 0%." This extra 5% charge will not only affect private and business importers of bikes they have just bought, but also may hit any ex-pats who want to return to the UK with vehicles, from motorcycles to motorhomes, that they have bought in EU countries for use there."

The process of buying and selling parts to and from EU countries will be another area that looks set to change from January 1, 2021, if the UK leaves the EU without a trade deal, though customers should only see minor changes. The HMRC spokesman said: "From January 1, import VAT on most goods with a value not exceeding £135 will no longer be due at the border. VAT will be charged on these goods as if they were supplied in the UK and accounted to HMRC on the UK VAT return."

When sales are made through an online marketplace such as Amazon or eBay, the marketplace will be liable to account for the VAT on these transactions.

Low value consignment relief, which currently applies to imports of goods up to £15 in value will also be withdrawn.

Overseas sellers and online marketplaces will be required to register for VAT in the UK and account for the VAT due on a VAT return. This would remove the need for VAT to be charged at the border, or by buyers when they get the items delivered. UK sellers selling goods to the EU will now be classed as making exports. Any VAT due on these goods will charged in the EU on importation using a similar system.

Traders do not anticipate problems for the customer. Paul Goff, who sends electrical and electronic components around the world from the UK, said he does not think there will be many issues: "I think it will be just like sending goods to the US, as we do at the moment. We ship goods out around the world and don't anticipate any major changes, as we are a small operator." Paul has been told to register for an Economic Operators Registration and Identification (EORI) number from the EU.

Rüdiger Paustian runs XS650 Shop in Hamburg and ships parts for the Yamaha twin to the UK. He says that he does not see any issues with selling goods, but buyers might need to wait longer for their items. He said: "There is no problem for me to sell parts to the UK after January 1, 2021, but there will be a longer delivery time for the customers, because I don't know how much time the customs declaration will need."

CBG contributor Caylee Hankins



Classic Bike Guide contributor, Caylee Hankins, tragically lost her fight with cancer on October 31, 2020. There wasn't much this talented young lady couldn't do; I met her racing dirt track on a Harley-Davidson in Croatia, but she was also a professional photographer, gifted writer and film producer. There are few that can ride and shoot as well as Caylee could.

I only met Caylee a few times, but it was her personality that was so addictive and made her shine. Without trying, without wearing the right clothes, she seemed always to be the coolest person around.

A regular competitor in the Dirt Track Association (DTRA) in the UK, Caylee had been riding for just a few years and had already ridden around Vietnam and more recently Morocco, both times carrying photographic gear as well.

She covered Wheels and Waves, the retro, custom festival in France once; the details of the bikes were correct, the words and photography captured the festival superbly. I'm sure if there was a chance, she would have competed, too.

Rarely do you meet such bright stars in life – ride on, Caylee.

KEEP ON JUMBLING

AS BIG CLASSIC motorcycling events continue to vanish from the calendar, some major autojumbles have still been still operating.

Elk Promotions welcomed buyers and sellers at their venues in Kent and Sussex, with the most recent held on October 25. Julie Diplock from Elk Promotions said: "Overall we had a great event, held over one day and with a mini-show. As to be expected with torrential rain and flooding on the Saturday evening and Sunday morning, visitor numbers were a little down on October last year, but the weather didn't deter the serious buyers and jumblers. We had around 150 jumblers and traders in the all-motorcycle autojumble, and everyone reported good business.

"Following the relaxation of Government rules we had a small display of machines in the main hall, which was well received by most, although I got a couple of complaints from people about the lack of exhibits – usually there's around 180 machines on display. However, folk were understanding when I explained that there are now strict limits on the number of people that can be allowed in the buildings, and we could not have held the full-sized show as there would have been very little room for visitors. Folk were great, and just really pleased to be out and spending their money."



Eric Paterson brought this Triumph TRW to October's Elk Promotions jumble. Photos by Angie from Freche Fotze Racing

The next Elk Promotions gathering should be The South of England Classic Motorcycle Event on Sunday, January 17 at The South of England Showground, Ardingly, West Sussex.

Until England entered a second lockdown on November 5, those jumbles still taking place were subject to ever-changing regulations, largely depending on the attitude of their local authorities. One jumble organiser was told he had to provide a helipad for an air ambulance at the event.

If lockdown is lifted on December 2 as suggested, scheduled events will include Rufforth Park Jumble near York, which has seen large turnouts every first Saturday of the month, and the Great North Jumble at the North Yorkshire Events Centre at Scorton near Catterick on the third Saturday of each month.

The 'Normous Newark and Kempton autojumbles have been cancelled for December. As we went to press, the next events will hopefully be Kempton, January 16, 2021 and 'Normous Newark, on Jan 31, 2021. As always, check websites or with organisers before travelling.

Sadly, the Carole Nash *Classic Bike Guide Winter Classic* scheduled for January 9/10 at Newark, which is held mainly indoors, has been called off. The Carole Nash Bristol *Classic MotorCycle* Show planned for February 6/7 is still on the calendar, as is The *Classic Dirt Bike* Show at Telford on Feb 13/14.

VE DAY BIKE WINS TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE BUILD-OFF

FOWLERS TRIUMPH OF Bristol has scooped the Public Choice Award in this year's Bonneville Build-Off Challenge with their striking entry, the VE Day Commemorative Bike, as featured in last month's *Classic Bike Guide.*


Fowlers' winning VE Day special

Thousands of votes were cast via the Bonneville Build-Off website, as nine Triumph dealerships across the UK competed to create the best custom bike.

General Manager of Triumph Motorcycles UK, Devron Boulton, said: "The VE Commemorative bike is a stunning piece of design with a strong British Army theme running throughout the custom build. The bike has combined both modern and heritage elements that seamlessly combine and, what has really impressed me with this bike, is how good it looks from every angle. Congratulations Fowlers Triumph."

To commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day in 2020, Fowlers' winning bike featured girder forks, canvas bags and big bars with British Army heritage as the inspiration for its build. A blacked-out engine and exhaust and addition of commemorative badges on the cases and clocks with genuine Second World War accessories completed the custom-built tribute.

SIDECAR SALES BOOM

PRODUCTION AT WATSONIAN Sidecars is fully booked-up until Christmas, with orders now being taken for delivery in the New Year. In addition to demand from customers in the UK, the Cotswold-based manufacturer has recently shipped sidecars to France and the USA, and further exports are scheduled to be sent to Austria, Belgium and Germany.

Development work is also under way, designing fitting kits for the latest models of motorcycle. The most recent addition to Watsonian's range is a kit for the Triumph Street Twin.

Since its introduction in 2000, the Triumph Bonneville has been one of the most popular choices for Watsonian customers across the world. Watsonian say this is thanks to its classic styling, low centre of gravity and torquey parallel twin engine.

The Street Twin, with a more powerful liquid-cooled 900c motor, has a revised chassis that required a completely redesigned fitting kit, so that the sidecar can be attached in the optimum position for handling and structural integrity.



A Watsonian GP700 sidecar, colour matched to the Street Twin

For information on the range of Watsonian sidecars and fittings call 01386 700907 or visit **www.watsonian-squire.com**

CLASSIC BIKE·GUIDE

Christmas Gift Guide

Yes, it's that time again. Whilst we've become accustomed to Christmas carols being played in shops and on the radio since before the clocks went back, the run up to Christmas can nonetheless be an extremely stressful time. In particular, in finding ideal gifts for your nearest and dearest, and the feeling of impending doom at receiving dozens of pairs of socks, outrageous aftershaves that smell quite unlike anything else you've ever experienced and enough chocolate and salty snacks to give your doctor heart palpitations. So, we've made your life a hell of a lot easier with our exclusive Christmas Gift Guide! Check out some of these must-haves for classic bikers and leave the magazine open on these pages for all your loved ones to see...

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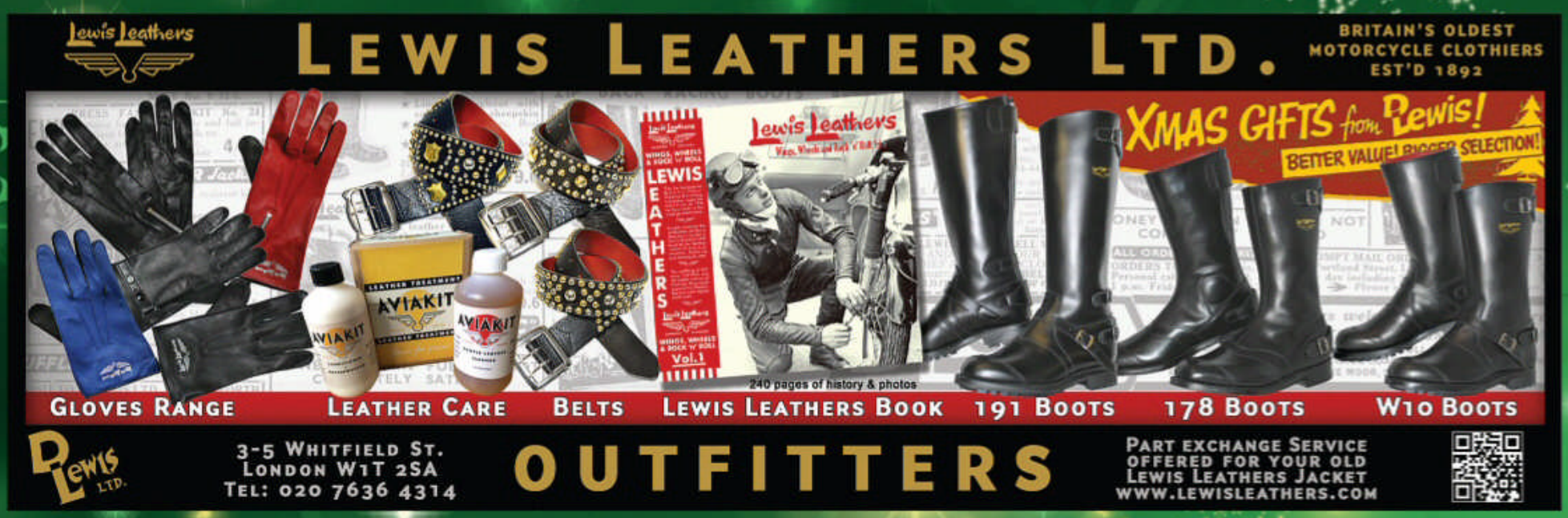






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Premier Trophy BTR helmet

- **£300**
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I was looking for an old-style, full face helmet when Premier showed us this Trophy. Not only does the shell represent the Seventies shapes so well, but the paint job is amazing and really makes this new helmet look like an old one. The shell is composite with the EPS (polystyrene to you and I) multi-density and the lining is really sumptuous with leatherette edge and moisture-wicking fabric. The cheek pads are removable for washing, the double-D ring is anodised and the whole helmet has a quality feel to it. In fact, it's more comfortable than a lot of contemporary helmets I've tried.

But with a retro look, comes retro features; or lack of them. The visor has no anti-mist coating and as the helmet has no vents, it's a spring and summer only lid. And the visor doesn't fit to the visor rubber when down, so if it rains, you get wet.

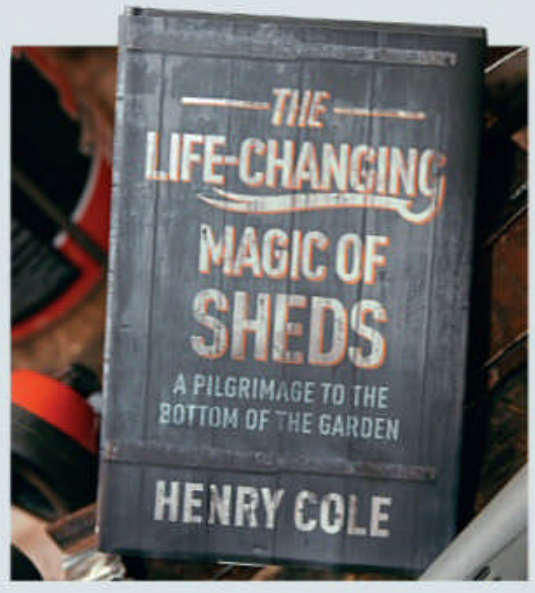
But if you want a practical helmet, there are hundreds to choose from – this one is designed to give safety while looking cool on old-style bikes. And with its shape, large visor aperture and lack of vents or trinkets adds to an older bike. Pop on some sunglasses and enjoy. And there's a five year warranty.

Maria

The life-changing magic of sheds

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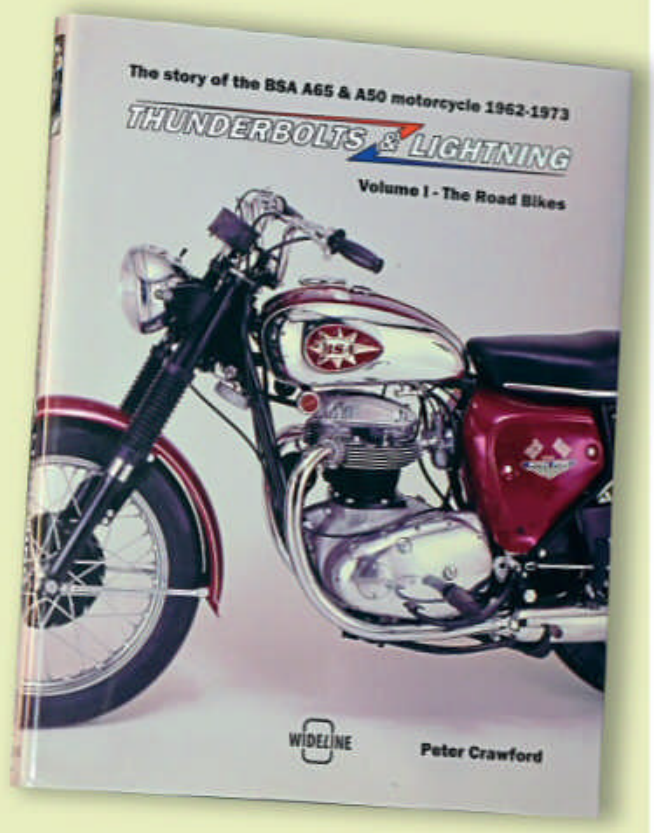


I admire Henry Cole for doing the impossible; he gets old stuff on the television. It may be banal, it may have very low production values, but he does it, series after series. And the man should be congratulated for that. But can he write books?

Many of us have little time to spare, so a book must earn its place. And, I'm afraid, this one doesn't. It doesn't teach me anything, as it is talking to someone that doesn't frequent sheds. It does make me smile, however, which is good and much needed in this world, but it is not enough. Buy it for your partner, so they understand a little more about why you disappear; and as it's someone 'cool' from the telly, your shed-time may become more acceptable. It's not a bad book; it just has no point for those that have found sheds.

Thunderbolts and Lightning Volume one – The Road Bikes by Peter Crawford

The story of the BSA A65 and A50 motorcycle 1962-1973



- **£25 + £3.10 p+p**
- **wideline.co.uk**
- **ISBN – 9781838133603**

The very same day I received an email enlightening me that I'd muddled an A10 for an A65 in last month's copy, the press release for this book turned up. Perfect, I thought. And so far, I've found it most interesting.

It's not easy reading in places, but Crawford interviewed more than 80 people who had links to 'the BSA' to put this 268-page book together. As such, it contains some very interesting facts, with some outwardly-looking opinions, while also looking from the inside. And while Triumph has been written about more than anyone cares, the BSA hasn't, especially the later years.

The book starts with why the later twins had to come about, and benefits from hindsight, giving a realistic representation of what, I assume, happened. As with all references, one must account for personal sway. But I liked it; though I admit I still haven't finished it yet. I have peaked at the end and there is an interesting look at some ways to improve your BSA twin for the modern day. Overall, this is a 'must have' for those who have an interest in the postwar BSA and in particular the unit twin machines.

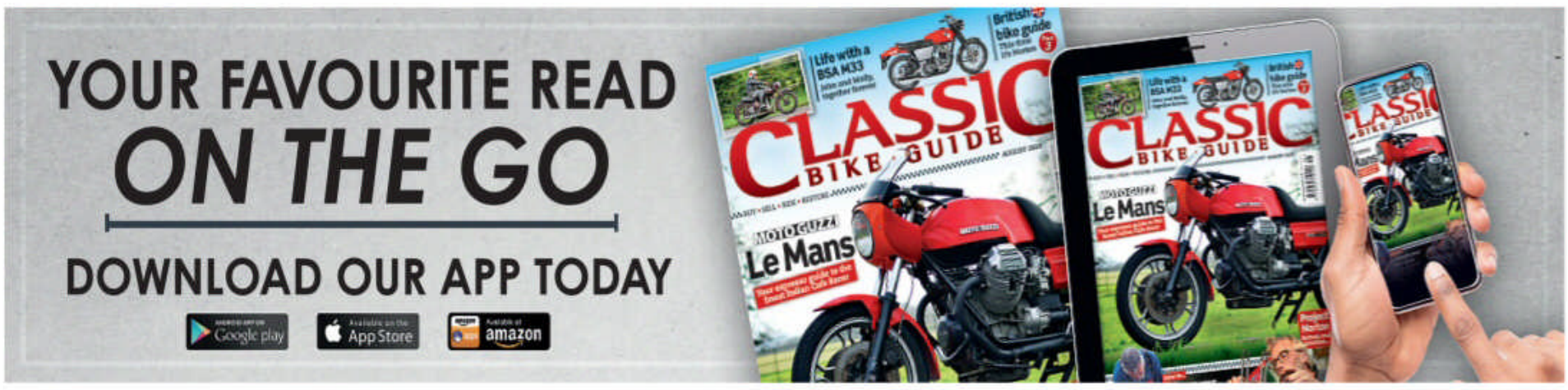
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Oh I do like these! Merino wool is beautifully comfortable, and with built-up heel and toe areas, these stay on for longer than most socks. They are a compression fit and allow the feet to breathe, with the wool wicking any moisture (sweat) away, keeping you feeling as fresh as a daisy. (Also great should you spend all day in wellies!)

The waterproof socks feel different, not as plush, but are much thinner than any other waterproof socks I've tested. They are also windproof, so I use them for autumn/winter cycling as well. And like the Merino wool socks, they are built-up in the heel and toe areas. Great for those who don't wear waterproof boots, or are looking for another layer in winter.



Letters



STAR LETTER

Kawasaki and Megura facts

I like Oli Hulme's work, it is interesting, very diverse and has the lowest-cliche rate of any current bike writer.

The comparison of the two Japanese 750s is another example of good prose, starting from an unusual viewpoint and leading to a complete reappraisal of the long-held misconceptions.

Unfortunately, Oli does state that "Kawasaki's first four-stroke bike had been the W1 650 parallel twin, a licence-built copy of the BSA A10," – most of which is incorrect.

1960 Megura motorcycles bought a licence from BSA to build the A7. This was financed by Kawasaki buying a part-share of Megura. The A7 copy was built for three years and called the Megura K.

1963: Megura were completely taken over by Kawasaki.

1965: Kawasaki redesigned the model K to improve the crankshaft bearings and the oil pump, becoming the K2. This was over-bored to 624cc.

1966: Kawasaki totally redesigned nearly every component making the all new 636cc W1.

Correct history is important in our hobby, hope this helps.

Regards Richard Hall

Many thanks, Richard. Hope this is of use to other readers – it was to us. Matt

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Matchless mudguards



Back in the spring my brother passed onto me the February 2020 edition of the magazine, principally for the Ariel Square 4 piece.

I happened to reread some of the articles recently (as you do when not feeling well, and awaiting delivery of bike parts), and enjoyed Frank Westworth's lament for the Matchless 650CSR rear mudguard he wants, but can't find.

I then scanned the reader adverts, in the vain hope of spotting an unobtainable part for my WD M20, to see a Warwickshire reader offering AJS 650CSR mudguards and headlamp brackets for sale. If these mudguards are the same as the ones on the Matchless version, I very much hope that Frank spotted the advert and achieved his goal. If not, they are probably long gone...

Richard Taylor



Frank replies: Why are there no short answers? I have sadly failed to find the entirely correct 1965/66 rear guard for my 65 G12CSR, and am of course inconsolably desolated by this. The photo (above) shows (blurrily) the right guard.

In the end, and mostly by accident, I found what I thought was the right guard, bought it unseen (as a chap never should), offered it up to ensure that it fitted the late frame properly. Which it did.

However, careful pruning of my AMC anorak's bright green plumage revealed that it's actually a guard from an even more rare model: the G15 Mk2. But it fits, looks okay (see photo, left) so there it's staying. Until I get it rechromed and it dissolves into dust...

All the earlier UK CS and CSR guards are (I think) slim alloy. Some US market 750s had chromed steel blades which are as slender as the alloy, but more shiny. Did you really want to know that? Did anyone?



Ariel goes full circle

I am thrilled to learn from Hugh Ramsay that his beautifully restored Ariel HT3 trials bike has been purchased by Scott Birrell, son of trials competitor and original owner, Andrew Birrell. The picture shows Scott (left), being presented with his dad's competition machine after he read about its restoration in October's *Classic Bike Guide*.

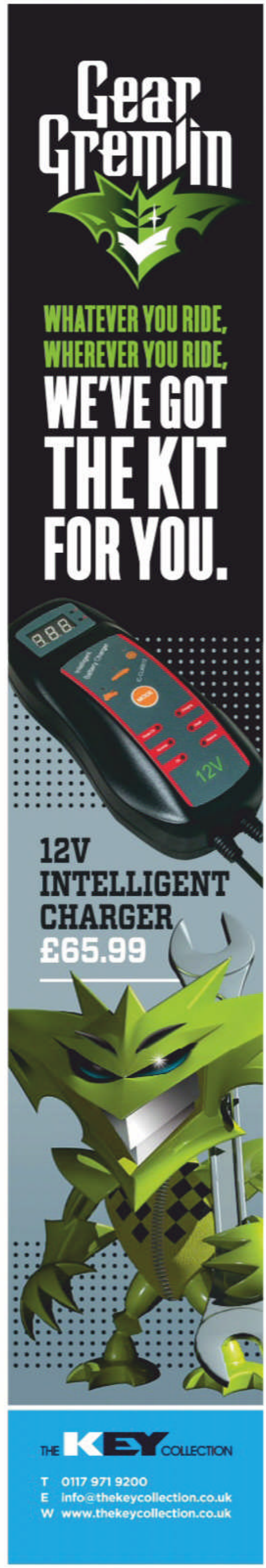
What a nice 'full circle' ending to an amazing story.

Stuart Urquhart



THIS MONTH'S STAR LETTER WINS

The writer of this month's Star Letter wins a Gear Gremlin Classic Neon Cover worth £59.99. Bright, waterproof and washable bike cover, with elastic hems for a secure fit and side cut-outs to pass a chain through. Find out more at thekeycollection.co.uk



ROYAL ENFIELD CLIPPER BUYING GUIDE

Worker's playtime

WORDS BY OLI HULME
PHOTOS BY GARY CHAPMAN

NOT ALL MOTORCYCLES ARE GLAMOROUS. SOME are just there to get the rider to their destination, cheaply and conveniently. Royal Enfield's 250cc Clipper, launched in 1954, was purpose-built to fill that role. It used an old-fashioned engine with a cast iron barrel and cylinder head which was based heavily on RE's rigid-framed 350cc Model G, which had decidedly prewar origins. To create the Clipper this engine was installed into a slightly smaller version of the first sprung Bullet frame introduced in 1949. The Clipper also used the gearbox from the Model G.

Using 1930s and wartime tech on the Clipper meant it would doggedly keep running, even when crudely maintained by backyard mechanics equipped with big hammers, military surplus spanners and a little skill.

The Clipper was extremely cheap, partly because RE were using up leftover and surplus Model G and Bullet parts. The Clipper got a coil and a points ignition set up, installed where the Lucas Magdyno used to fit on the Model G. A small Amal 276 carburettor contributed to impressive fuel economy, with the Clipper owner finding they could achieve 100mpg easily.

Compression was far from performance-enhancing, and Royal Enfield declined to say what it was in its publicity. It was estimated at 6.5:1, if that. The 250 also featured some modern attributes such as an air filter. An alternator was fitted inside the primary chain case and created the electrical power once provided by the Magdyno. There was also a cush drive in the rear wheel and a version of Royal Enfield's signature "casquette" headlamp, which is still used on some India-made Enfields today.

To keep costs down the side-mounted riding lights were omitted. The Clipper also got a stylish rethink for the Transatlantic market, with a brash red paint scheme and various shiny gee-gaws. This was shipped to the USA after being badged as the Indian Fire Arrow.



WHAT IS IT?
A bargain basement utility bike

GOOD POINTS?
Simple to work on, and solid as a rock

BAD POINTS?
The gearbox is a challenge to live with at first.

COST?
Basketcase/project:
£1000
Oily Rag Runner:
£2000-2500
Concours:
£4000-4500



Despite the budget credentials of the Clipper, the finish was good. Paint was thickly applied and for the few years of production was in olive green, though you could have it in red as an extra. What little chrome there was managed to be tough and hard-wearing. The Clipper had an old-fashioned sprung saddle.

Royal Enfield then decided they did need a budget 350 to sell alongside the alloy head Bullet after all. They relaunched a 350 as a Model G2 alongside the Clipper, using a Bullet-derived frame, the old sprung saddle and an engine that looked very similar to the Clipper, with cast-iron barrel and head, though it used a Lucas Magdyno. The Clipper and the G2 used a winged tank badge, unlike the shield-like design used on the Bullet and the new Crusader 250. Both the first Clipper and the first sprung Model G only lasted until 1957.



NEW FOR OLD

The Clipper name survived beyond 1957, being used on the base model in RE's four-stroke 250 range into the middle of the 1960s, when it was sold alongside the more luxurious 250 Crusader. The new Clipper was a budget version of the Crusader and had a detuned version of the new Crusader unit engine. The Clipper and the Crusader both had cast iron barrels and heads. Curiously, Royal Enfield were still using the sprung saddle on these bottom-of-the-market Clippers. One can only assume they did this so they could offer the dual seat as an optional extra or were keen to attract a conservative market that didn't like change. Or perhaps they just had a lot of sprung saddles to get rid of. In a sign of changing tastes and designs the Crusader got big mudguards, while the new Clipper had more slender offerings.

Bikes like the Clipper, both the early and late models, were cheap and cheerful transport for the working chap, or chappess. It was cheap to tax and insure, miserly at the pumps and basic to look after. For those looking for a reasonably priced, small classic the Clipper retains those virtues.

TAKING TO THE WIND ON A CLIPPER

The tea clipper ships of the late nineteenth century were beautiful, slender, fast creations designed to get cargoes from port to port in the most efficient manner possible. Royal Enfield's Clipper was neither beautiful, slender nor fast, but it was, at least, efficient.

Riding the Clipper today is a curious experience. It is a sort of both pre and postwar motorcycle in one. The engine is about as basic as you can get. There is 1950s coil ignition and a feeble alternator under the primary drive casing, and it took a lot of juice from the battery and a fair bit of tickling and thrashing about to get

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things mobile on a gloomy and damp day. I threatened it with being bump started, and it chuffed into life.

It appeared to be a chunk of alloy and cast iron of little sophistication, designed not to excite the senses, but to just go on and on in all conditions. It chuntered along, having decided for itself just exactly how fast it was going to go, and despite their best efforts the rider had little to do with it. The Bullet-derived frame was good and solid. The combination of sprung saddle and fairly firm shock absorbers made things quite bouncy as one form of suspension would react in a contrary way to the other. But with so little in the way of power, such erratic rider movement wasn't going to be an issue. The 250cc Clipper had apparently produced just 11bhp when it was new, so 65 years on, some of those horses were bound to have escaped.

Then there was getting to grips with the gearbox. The changes went one-up-three-down, as was fairly common practice in the mid-1950s. Enfield gearboxes had their challenges and the Clipper's contained a large number of neutrals for the unwary rider to find. It is little wonder that RE had decided to include a neutral finder on their more sophisticated models, though perhaps the money would have been better spent on developing a better gearbox.

Once warmed up and rolling, the Clipper chugged along tolerably well. Performance was on a par with a modern 125, if possibly a bit slower, but given the Clipper has about the same power as a bottom-of-the-range modern Chinese bike but is pulling around a lot more weight, that's hardly surprising. With such gentle performance, it was hardly going to test my ability to touch any pegs or scrape any knees.

The experience of riding a Clipper will hardly give you a rush of blood to the head. One suspects that when new the Clipper was the sort of motorcycle that would be used, and used hard, passed on to another owner, who would use it hard too, and so on, until the thing expired and was left out for the rag-and-bone man, or buried in the hole left when you removed your Anderson shelter.

All of which means that despite being a reasonable seller, not a lot of the first models survived beyond the mid-1960s. It also means that if you bought one today you would have a cheap, unique motorcycle. It'll be a talking point with club members at bike gatherings or just while polishing it outside your place of domicile. The Clipper offers a Thirties feel with a mostly 1950s ridability and a lot of charm.

"Using 1930s and wartime tech on the Clipper meant it would doggedly keep running, even when crudely maintained by backyard mechanics equipped with big hammers, military surplus spanners and a little skill"

HOW RE CAME TO THE CLIPPER

Royal Enfield were always keen on recycling. In the years following the Second World War their underground factory in Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire, was given over to refurbishing both used and unused military surplus motorcycles and converting them into civilian spec, from Flying Flea 125s into Ensign 125s and olive drab 350 and 500 singles into something more desirable, shipping them out to dealers in an attempt to keep up with the postwar civilian demand.

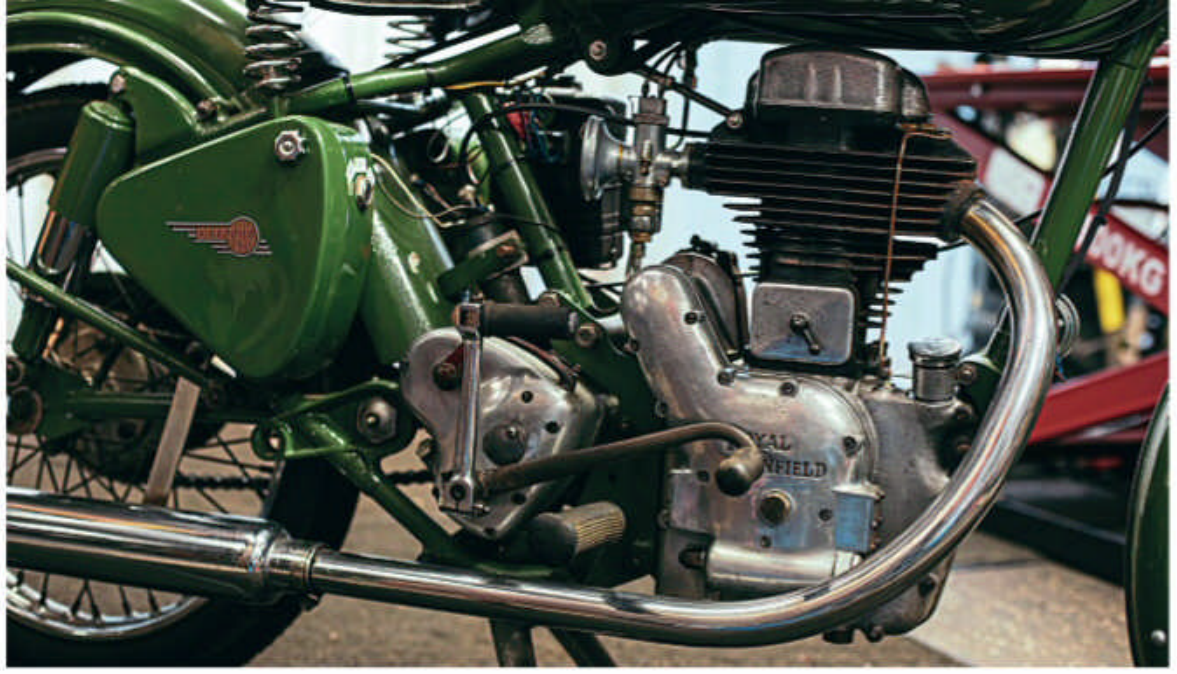
By repurposing old military stock, Royal Enfield were quick out of the starting blocks in satisfying that civilian market and it gave them time to come up with new models, becoming the only major British factory to jump from rigid frames to swing arms without a period of using plungers.

They had been developing their Bullet single through the 1930s while at the same time building the 350cc Model G which had a less sporty engine. A smaller version of the model G, a 250, was produced too.

The 350 Model G was the machine which emerged from Royal Enfield in 1945. It was very much an updated prewar motorcycle filling a hole in the marketplace for a useable 350 single, in a period when such solid singles ruled. Solid workaday motorcycles were what the factories had decided the public wanted, and the Model G delivered that, being much cheaper than the Bullet, and indeed most of its rivals. You got Royal Enfield's undamped telescopic forks, but no rear suspension. It would run on poor quality postwar petrol, and it was economical, easy to start by the standards of the time and cheap to tax and insure.

The model G stayed in the range until the early 1950s, performing a stolid and purposeful role, plodding on rigid-framed while Royal Enfield concentrated on giving the Bullet and their 500 and 700cc twins rear suspension. Only the BSA B31 350 was cheaper than the Model G.

And then, in 1954, Royal Enfield dropped the rigid Model G from the range, deciding instead to concentrate on bikes with rear suspension and the utilitarian market was to be satisfied by the 250 Clipper, using as many parts from the stores as they could get away with.







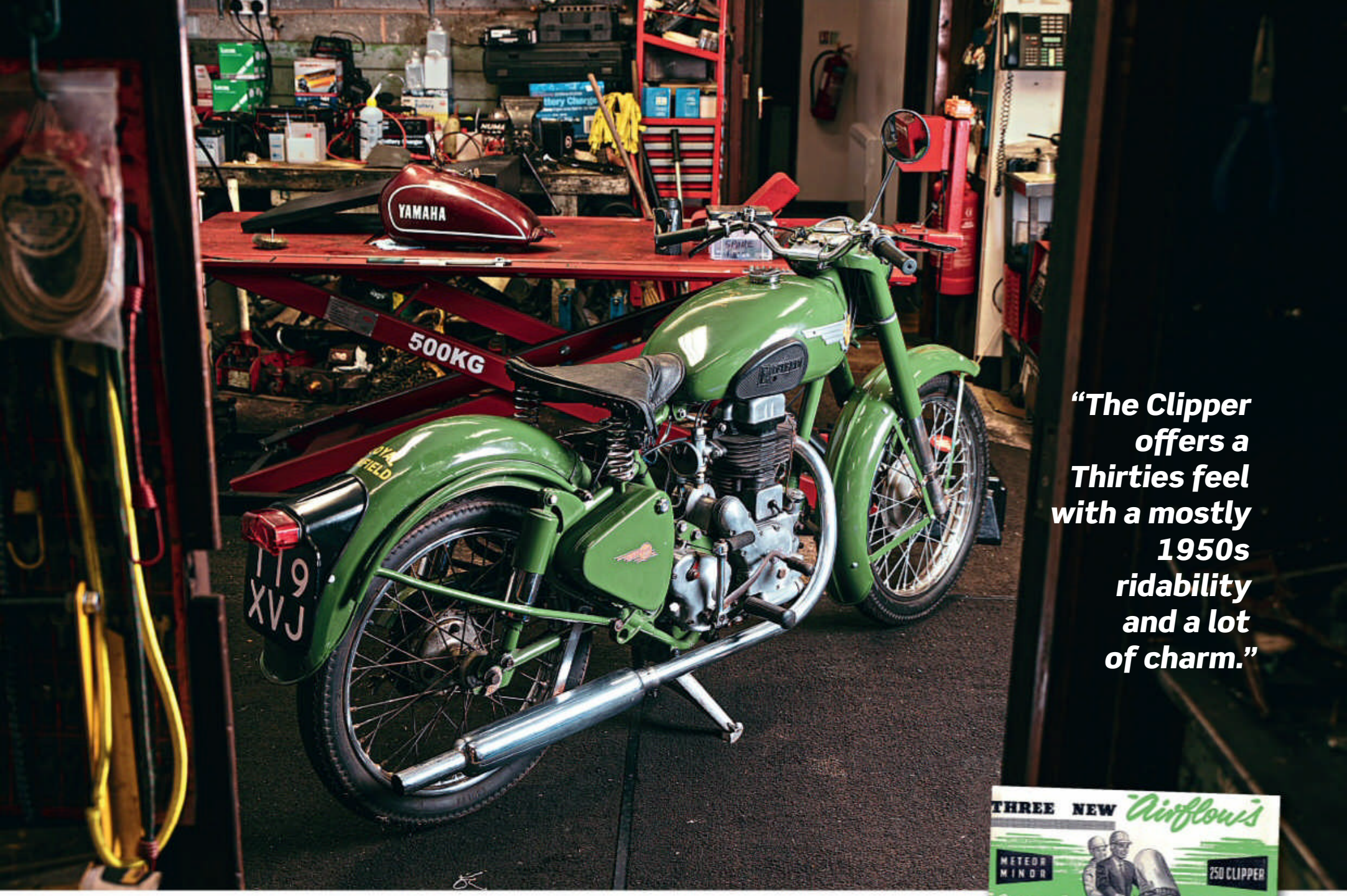


RUNNING YOUR ROYAL ENFIELD – ADVICE FROM 1955 AND TODAY

Advice on how to start your Royal Enfield in the winter came from Vic Willoughby in *The Motor Cycle*. If you were fortunate enough to live at the top of a hill, you could bump start it in second by simply rolling down it. The issue was the viscosity of the oil – Willoughby said that he had heard of owners keeping a heater running in their shed under the engine to make it easier to spin in the morning. However, his main advice was to switch to thinner SAE20 in the winter, or to use the then new multigrade oils all year round.

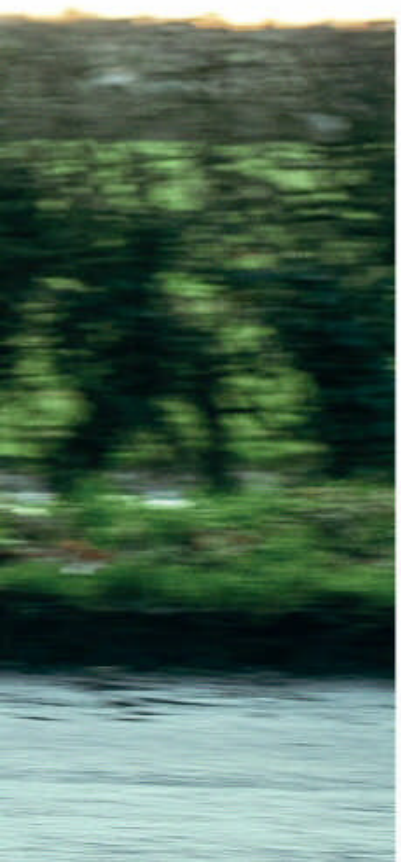
Richard Ross from Royal Enfield specialists Hitchcocks says the concern was most probably not a starting issue, but that the extra thick oils used in the early 1950s could put stress on the oil pump.





"The Clipper offers a Thirties feel with a mostly 1950s ridability and a lot of charm."





These days Richard advises against the use of heavy monogrades and recommends a good multigrade, either mineral or semi-synthetic.

One issue that affected the Clipper, but not other Royal Enfield singles, was that the Clipper used an alloy primary chaincase secured by a single fastener rather than the pressed steel item used on most other models. On the face of it this looked like an improved finish. However, the pressed steel item had both an inspection hole to check primary chain tension and you could move the gearbox to adjust it. On the Clipper you had to remove the alloy cover to check tension and adjust the chain, which was a bit of a pain and after regular removal this resulted in oil leakage and fruitless efforts being made to stop the Clipper living up to its Royal Oilfield nickname.

Richard says that some gearboxes would be grease packed rather than oil filled and it's vital to know the difference. If it is grease packed, use Renolit grease. Engine parts are still available from Hitchcocks, both new old stock or remade and they have substantial stocks of used parts. Some cycle parts can be harder to find, but often parts also fitted the Bullet and other models.

"You do need to watch out for wet sumping," said Richard: "Never top the oil up above half way on the dipstick, and when you stop the bike ease the piston to top dead centre, so that the big end sits above the oil level. Brakes aren't great, but suspension and steering are good, and the engine is very reliable. On the whole, the Clipper is very practical motorcycle without any real weak points."

ALSO CONSIDER:

Royal Enfield's main competition was with BSA who were knocking out the C10 side valve and OHV C11 and C12 singles. The sluggardly C10 cost just £130 while the C12 which had rear suspension and cost £160 new, about the same as a Clipper. They were very utilitarian machines, more so even than the Clipper. A C10, 11 or 12 will cost you around £2,500 in reasonable condition.

Panther produced their Model 65 250cc single for the same price as the C12. The Panther is more outdated, but also a lot more charming. These once derided examples of Yorkshire's finest now command premium prices and you could easily pay £5000 for a good one. Panther also turned out Villiers-powered two-strokes, as did AMC offshoots James and Francis-Barnett, but these were more troublesome than their four-stroke brethren. Expect to pay anything from £1500 for a runner to £3500 for a restored example of a 250 two-stroke.

If, back in 1954, you had wanted something only slightly more sophisticated, like a Matchless G3, you would have to stump up another £60 – 25 per cent more than for the humble Clipper. Today, thanks to the relative availability of AMC singles, a G3 or its AJS equivalent will cost you around the same as a good Clipper. CBG

SPECIFICATION

MANUFACTURED: 1954-1957 **ENGINE:** Air-cooled ohv single **BORE/STROKE:** 70mm x 64.5mm **CAPACITY:** 248cc **COMPRESSION:** 6.5:1 **POWER:** 11bhp @5,500rpm **LUBRICATION:** Dry sump, internal oil tank **IGNITION:** Points and coil **CARBURETTOR:** Amal 276 **TRANSMISSION:** Chain **GEARBOX:** Four-speed foot change **FRAME:** sprung single downtube **FRONT SUSPENSION:** Telescopic forks **REAR SUSPENSION:** Swinging arm, twin shocks **FRONT BRAKE:** 5in sls drum **REAR BRAKE:** 5in sls drum **TYRES:** 3.00 x 17 front and rear **DRY WEIGHT:** 312lb **TOP SPEED:** 60mph

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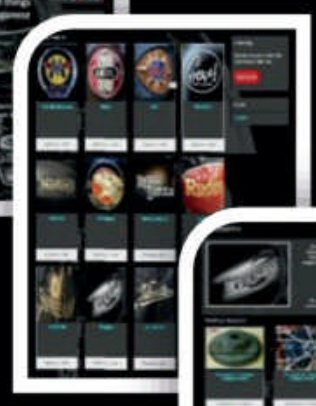


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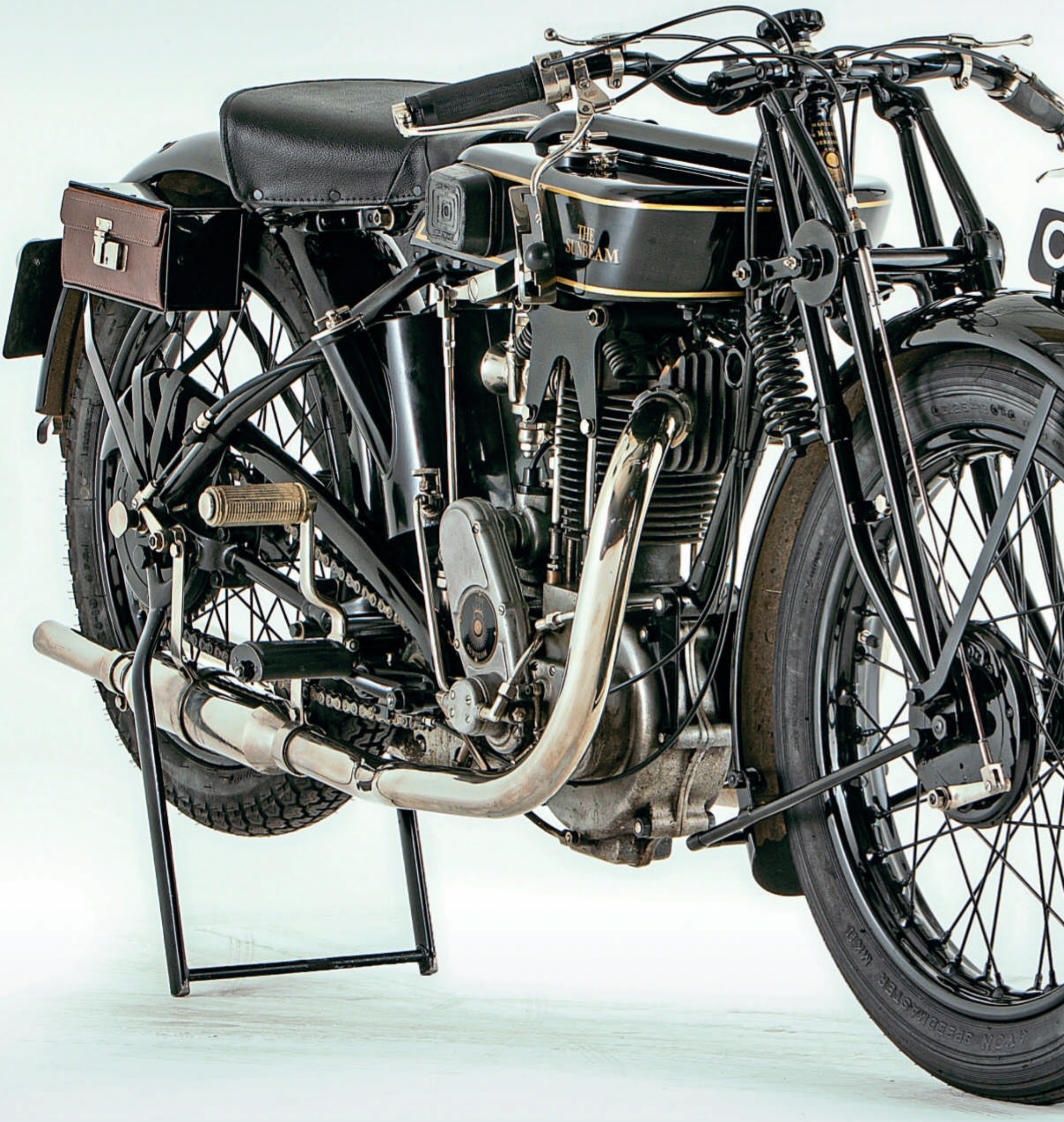
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Museum marvels

Due to the world's problems, The National Motorcycle Museum is selling some of its bikes. We thought we'd have a look at the Christmas list to better all Christmas lists...

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF BONHAMS

Museums have been on the large list of businesses that have been hit hard this year. And while the conference centre attached to the National Motorcycle Museum normally helps massively towards the finances, it too has taken a huge hit. Something has to be done, so the near-impossible task of deciding which bikes need to be sold has had to be made.

More than 50 bikes are to be auctioned by Bonhams, in their winter sale, on December 5/6 at Bicester Heritage. For more information, see bonhams.com

We couldn't feature all the bikes, so we've chosen models that we like, are interested in or just don't see that often. Hope you like them.

Most, if not all bikes being sold, are models the museum has multiples of, so it's not the end of the world and I look at it as letting the bikes stretch their legs after being inside for years. We all hope this helps the museum to continue, as it is such a vital source of information, enjoyment and encouragement for us all.

1928 Sunbeam 493cc TT Model 90 Racing Motorcycle

ESTIMATE £18,000-24,000

This TT Model 90 comes with an old-style continuation logbook (issued 1949) recording two owners: R Shelton and Peter Woodward, who acquired the bike in November 1983 and is listed as previous keeper on the accompanying V5C.

Writing in the Marston Sunbeam OC magazine of summer 2017, Peter Woodward says: "The Sunbeam showroom at 194 Broad Street, Birmingham displayed the bike for sale in June 1928; an unknown gentleman used it to race at Pendine Sands during the summer and he returned the bike to the showroom for resale afterwards.

"... the CT close-ratio gearbox, without kick-start or components; the kick-start hole in the gearbox was blanked off with a genuine plug, this was slightly domed and plated in nickel. The Binks three-jet carburettor for performance and the WM2 x 21in front wheel are how it left the factory ready for racing at Pendine.

"The second owner, Mr Bate, was employed as works managers at R T Shelley, the engineering company that bailed out Norton Motorcycles when it became bankrupt. The third owner, Mr Shelton, worked at the Sunbeam Elms factory as a fitter, where they serviced and overhauled customers' bikes. He rode the Model 90 during the war years, and one night he ran into a bomb crater in the dark, which seriously damaged the frame."

The Model 90 was then stored in a bedroom for many years until eventually the house was condemned and the Sunbeam auctioned in London, where Peter Woodward bought it. Peter then restored the machine to his usual exemplary standard, fitting a kick-start-equipped BT gearbox for convenience, and in December 2002 sold it to the National Motorcycle Museum. The Sunbeam has since been restored by the National Motorcycle Museum, as commemorated by the attached silver plaque.

The Classic MotorCycle's editor James Robinson wrote a lengthy article for the magazine's January 2018 edition about his experiences riding 'OX 5193'. James much enjoyed the Sunbeam: "Thing is, one really doesn't want much more performance, as it's already so quick compared to (almost) anything from its period, plus most motorcycles 30 years newer. Cruising at 55-60mph is absolutely effortless..." A carburettor in need of adjustment/tuning was the only niggle of note.

1959 Triumph 249cc Tigress

ESTIMATE £3000-4000

Latecomers to the scooter market, BSA introduced its first 'proper' scooter in October 1958. Launched under the BSA and Triumph banners as the 'Sunbeam' and 'Tigress' respectively, both could be had with either a 175cc Bantam-based single-cylinder two-stroke engine or a new 249cc twin-cylinder four-stroke unit. Pressed steel bodywork of conventional appearance was wrapped around a duplex loop frame. For the 249cc version, comfortable cruising at 55mph and an average fuel consumption of around 80mpg were reported by contemporary road-testers.

Apparently restored, this twin-cylinder Tigress was purchased 'as is' by the Museum in July 2010. Accompanying documentation consists of an old-style V5C, an expired tax disc (1967), and a Vintage Motor Scooter Club dating certificate.



1956 Ariel 350cc Red Hunter

ESTIMATE £3800-5200

In 1946 the Red Hunters became the first models to feature Ariel's new telescopic front fork, and the following year could be ordered with the optional Anstey Link plunger rear suspension. A new duplex loop frame with swing arm rear suspension was adopted for 1954, the 500cc VH gaining an alloy 'head at the same time (a feature the 350cc NH would not enjoy until the 1956 range was announced). Stylish sports roadsters, the much-loved Red Hunters were discontinued when production of all Ariel four-stroke models ceased in 1959.

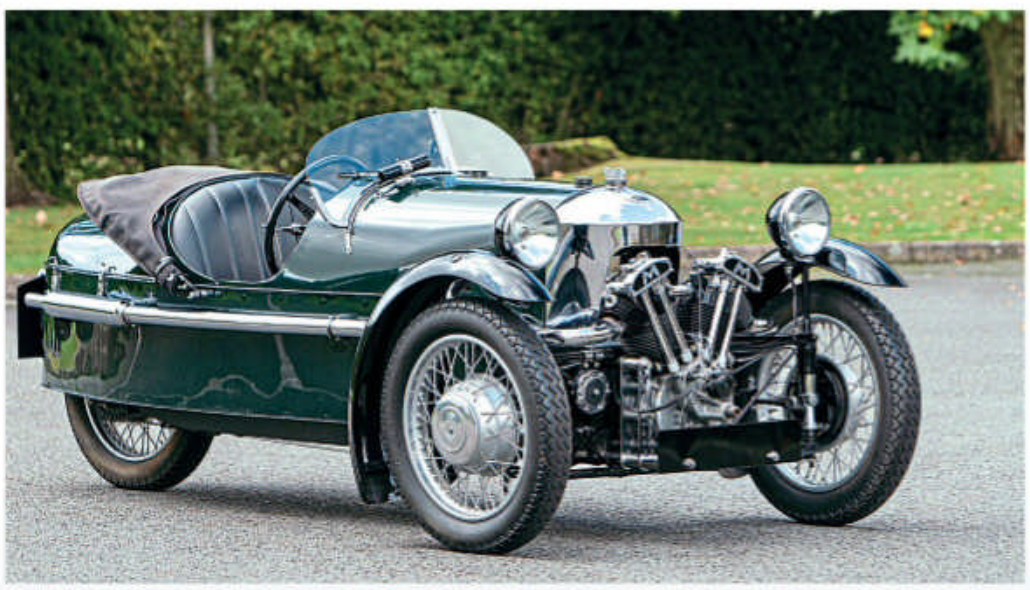
This 350cc Red Hunter is offered with its original old-style logbook and an old-style V5C, both of which record the engine number as 'LB1019', indicating that it has been changed.





c1934 Morgan MX2 Super Sports Roadster

ESTIMATE £28,000-36,000



Its superior power-to-weight ratio enabled H F S Morgan's humble, three-wheeled cyclecar to outperform many a larger-engined four-wheeler; and its maker was not slow to capitalise on his creation's competition potential. A Gold Medal in the 1911 London-Exeter-London Reliability Trial with Morgan himself driving was followed by victory in the inaugural cyclecar race at Brooklands the following year, Harry Martin taking the chequered flag three minutes ahead of the field.

Racetrack successes led directly to the road-going Grand Prix model, introduced for 1914. The first Aero sports model, inspired by the Grand Prix, followed immediately after the First World War. Subsequent technological developments included the fitting of front brakes, operated by hand lever, from 1924 and the adoption of a new chassis – the M-type – on the new Super Sports model in 1928. This new chassis was some 2½in lower than its predecessor and undoubtedly helped Morgans trounce the opposition at the New Cyclecar Club's meeting at Brooklands later that year.

In 1931 a conventional three-speeds-plus-reverse gearbox was introduced, the old two-speed transmission disappearing soon after. A more refined model – the F4, with 8hp Ford Model Y four-cylinder power unit – appeared in 1934, later forming the basis of the first four-wheeled Morgan.

From the mid-1930s onwards, Morgan three-wheelers, like George Brough's superlative motorcycles, were fitted with Matchless V-twin engines in preference to those from JAP, and for the three-wheeler enthusiast for whom high performance remained top priority, the Matchless-powered Super Sports was the model of choice.

1968 Norton 745cc P11A Series 2

ESTIMATE £10,000 - 15,000

Associated Motor Cycles' final years saw the ailing company launch a bewildering assortment of 'badge-engineered' hybrids. Announced in the autumn of 1963, the first was a street scrambler intended for the North American market.

The AJS/Matchless-framed machine used the 745cc Norton Atlas engine, and the experience gained paved the way for the AJS Model 33 and Matchless G15 roadsters introduced for 1965, by which time Norton forks and brakes had been standardised throughout the range.

This 'mix-and-match' policy continued under Norton Villiers' ownership, the CSR-framed roadsters being joined by a Norton-badged clone: the N15. While the range as a whole contracted, there was one new model for 1967: the Norton P11; another Atlas-engined hybrid but this time one built using the Rickman-style Reynolds 531 frame of the Matchless G85CS scrambler.

With the Commando's arrival later that same year, the days of the P11 were numbered and production ceased at the end of 1968.

Dispatched new to North America in April 1968, this example of one of the rarest and most sought-after of postwar Nortons was reimported in November 1989 by Worldvista Ltd and purchased from them in 2005. The machine was restored by Worldvista's Michael Bell and has been restored since by the NMM, whose commemorative silver plaque is attached.



1996 Triumph Daytona 1200

ESTIMATE £2000-2500

Triumph's resurrection and transformation into a thriving global brand is one of the more unlikely manufacturing success stories of modern times. Unveiled in the autumn of 1990, the range consisted of three and four-cylinder models named after iconic Triumphs of the past: Daytona, Trophy, and Trident.

Acquired from its first owner in 2016, this Daytona 1200 has been restored by the Museum and currently displays a total of 14,361 miles on the odometer. These were superb, powerful bikes back in the 1990s and thanks to the platform of bikes using familiar parts, would be easy to keep running nicely for years to come. CBG





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Pip Harris

Character is an oft overused term; but there is little else to sum up racer Pip Harris. Jim Reynolds looks back

WORDS BY JIM REYNOLDS **IMAGES** MORTONS ARCHIVE

Peter 'Pip' Harris was a native of the West Midlands, brought up in a motorcycle family and encouraged by his dad, who raced an AJS to second in the 1923 350cc Junior TT, to try his hand at grasstrack racing.

Having ridden the old chap's sidecar outfit quite a bit, it was natural that he'd stick to what he knew and in the late 1940s he picked up a Grindley combo, a little known make by Billy Grindley of Prees Heath in Shropshire.

With good mate Charlie Billingham keeping the sidecar wheel down, they had enough success in local events to look for something a bit quicker for the 1949 season, and found it in a 596cc Norton outfit that London dealer Jack Surtees – father of multi world champion John – was selling on. It had been one of the quickest outfits around the old Crystal Palace circuit in south London and at Donington Park, one of the rare long stroke 596cc overhead camshaft motors built just for sidecar racing. They had a reputation for vibrating like a road drill but going well enough to dominate the class in British racing.

One of the first meetings with the new outfit was at Cadwell Park, in those days a very narrow three-quarters-of-a-mile circuit, where local man Jack Beeton normally dominated the sidecar class. "They said you couldn't overtake with a sidecar through the Old Hall bends, but we showed them that you could," smiled Pip at the memory. He and Charlie won the class at the June meeting and came back in September to repeat the success.

In that same season they won at Haddenham in Buckinghamshire, an old airfield where the course passed ranks of RAF Lancaster bombers, parked up with nothing to do. Third in that race was Jack Surtees on his new 998cc Vincent 'Black Lightning', not quite able to match the youngsters on his old Norton single. They were a dynamic pair, good enough to win the Cadwell championship in 1951, from Jack Beeton and future world champion Cyril Smith.

But the sidecar scene was changing, with the FIM limiting the world championship class to 500cc and the national bodies like the ACU naturally following suit. World champion Eric Oliver had moved on to adapt the Featherbed framed Manx to sidecar specification, but his outfit was blessed with a special engine out of Joe Craig's race shop, where world title winning bikes were born. What Pip Harris wanted was one of the new bikes.

But the 500 Manx was in demand, its Featherbed frame a major step forward from the old lugged and heavier version, and the factory was fussy about who was going to have one. Managing director Gilbert Smith, with a limited number of bikes to allocate, told Pip he wasn't going to get one – there were more

"They said you couldn't overtake with a sidecar through the Old Hall bends, but we showed them that you could."





Pip Harris, sharing the glory with the grime, after winning Race of the Year, Mallory Park, 1964



October 13, 1968 – No. 1 Pip Harris and John Thornton on a 500cc BMW outfit, leading Gerry Boret and P Kennard on a 998cc Vincent at Snetterton

deserving riders than him, so he'd have to carry on with his rigid frame model for the 1952 season.

As you'd expect of a competitive racer making a name for himself, Mr Harris was not pleased and looked around for an alternative. As organisers were offering two sidecar classes, 500cc and over 500cc, he'd have a word with the Vincent factory in Stevenage.

It just so happened that 'Gunga Din', the works big twin drag racer that tester George Brown had been doing a lot of winning on, was standing idle. George had moved on to develop his own version, using more conventional chassis options for what was to become the legendary 'Nero', and as that was clearly not a standard looking bike, the factory did not want to be directly involved. But 'Gunga Din' looked like a standard 'Black Lightning' racer and they were happy to lend it to a promising young star like Pip.

"I took it down to Watsonian, they bolted a sidecar on and we were off to Silverstone Saturday. We went out in practice, and they used to mix sidecars and solos then. We overtook one of the works Norton 350s down the straight, it was such a flyer!" One suspects that Gilbert Smith would have been there and taken note. The blending of Harris's driving talent and all that Vincent power won the Over 500cc sidecar race and on April 26th Gunga Din was out at Boreham Airfield in Essex, home to the Ford Motor Company's performance development now, but a relatively new race venue in 1952. The big Vincent ran away on the long straights to win the race.

A week later they were at Eppynt, high in the Brecon Beacons and known as the Welsh TT with its use of roads in the military training area. It was familiar territory to the Midlands crew, who'd won there in 1952 on their Norton. With the big Vincent's power advantage they just cleared off and were heading for an easy win when passenger Charlie Billingham missed his grasp and was thrown out of the sidecar. Pip ran back to where the marshals were gathered around a rather second-hand looking Charlie, waiting for the St John Ambulance people to arrive. "Don't you worry about them, you just put him back in the sidecar," commanded Pip. They did as he told, and the Vincent cruised to the finish and medical attention for the man in the chair. Typical racer's sense of priority.

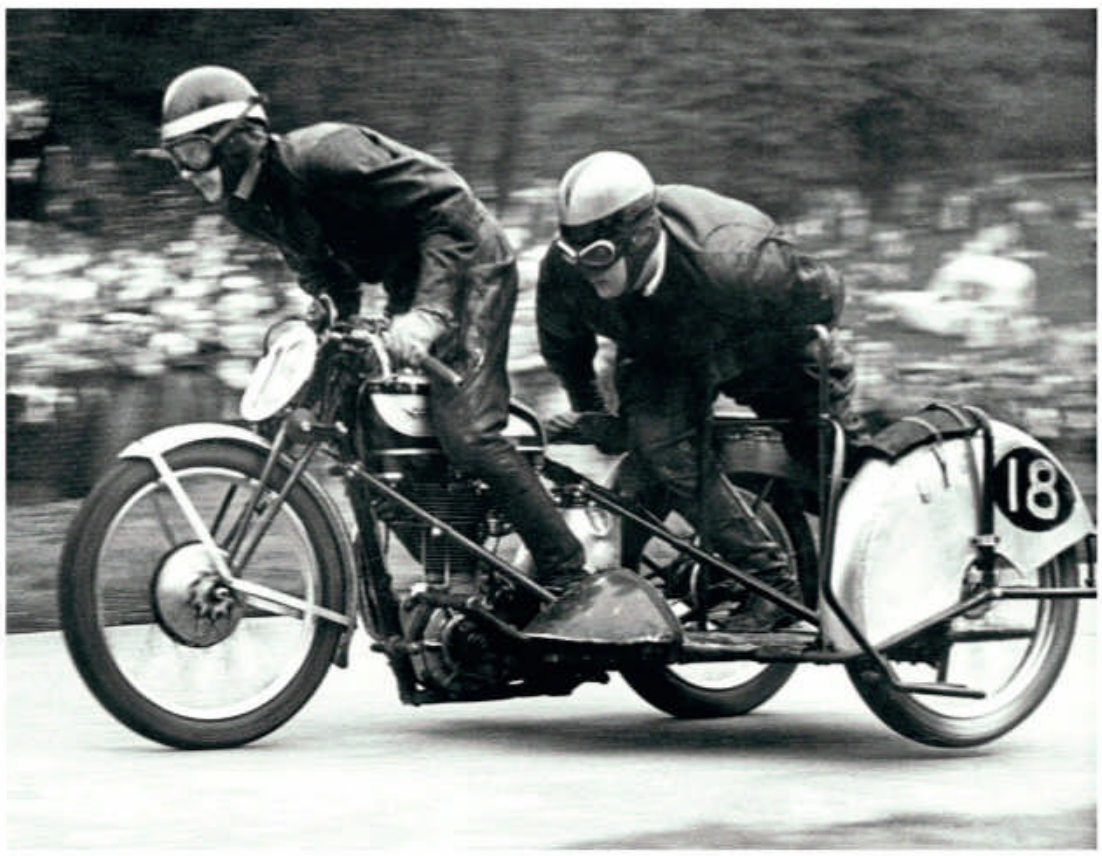
It was no real surprise when a letter arrived from the Norton factory, advising Mr Harris that they found they could accommodate his order for a new 500cc Manx. That embarrassing demonstration of Vincent power had obviously moved some senior Norton opinions into the second half of the 20th century. Gunga Din went back into retirement at Vincent's Stevenage factory and with a Watsonian sidecar bolted up to his new Featherbed Norton, Pip spent the rest of 1952 getting used to single cylinder power again. By the start of the 1953 season he was ready to do battle.

On Good Friday he was at Brough airfield in Yorkshire and took the sidecar race, then on Easter





"The marshals were gathered around a rather second-hand looking Charlie, waiting for the St John Ambulance people to arrive. "Don't you worry about them, you just put him back in the sidecar."



Above: At Cadwell Park in 1950, with Charlie Billingham in the chair

Top: Charles 'Chas' Mortimer (left) and Pip Harris (right) at the Brands Hatch Super Prix in July 1991

Monday he was out on Thruxton's sweeping curves down in Hampshire for another convincing win. At the Silverstone Saturday big event sponsored by *Motor Cycling* magazine it was multi world champion Eric Oliver who won the 500 and 1000cc chair events, but with an engine out of Joe Craig's Norton race shop, that was to be expected.

However when the world championship rounds started, Eric Oliver and works tester Cyril Smith were off around the continent to battle for the title, leaving the English scene to young Pip Harris and another 1000cc Vincent charger, Ted Davis. Harris was on great form, winning again at Eppynt in Wales, twice at Cadwell Park, Crystal Palace, at the final meeting on Ibsley airfield near Ringwood in Hampshire, Snetterton and at Oulton Park. You'd like to think Gilbert Smith at Norton would have sent him a Christmas card, but the man wasn't renowned for his generosity.

He went even better the next year and I'm not going to give you another list to read through. There were 30 UK meetings with a sidecar race and Mr Harris on his 500 Norton won 17 of them. But on the international scene things were changing, and Willi Noll won BMW their first of many world titles; the German twins were very fast. In 1955 Pip rode Norton and a Matchless G45 twin, the latter taking him to third in the TT behind Schneider's BMW and Bill Boddice's Norton. For the Belgian GP he was back on the Norton to finish fourth – the only non-BMW in the top six. That Matchless powered him to an early season win at Snetterton, but he was back on his Norton for a few wins in a UK season dominated by Bill Boddice on a quicker Manx. It was around this time that Pip and Charlie Billingham split, after Charlie couldn't lose as much weight as Pip asked – a 500 single pulling two bodies needed as little surplus weight as possible. Goodbye Charlie, hello Ray Campbell.

Pip got along well with racing veteran Jack Beeton and the two of them recognised that a BMW was the bike to have if you wanted to win. But they weren't cheap – BMWs never were – and the two drivers agreed to share a long-stroke Rennsport racer if they could find one. Which they did, and very soon Pip was looking to modernise the chassis. He worked with Ken Sprayson of Reynolds Tubing on a chassis

and a development of the leading link forks that Earnie Earles had created for solos and sidecars. The Harris-Beeton co-operation lasted until Jack decided to retire and Pip bought out his half of the combo; in its developed form it brought a lot of business to Reynolds with commissions from other racers, world champ Max Deubel amongst them.

Pip remained a major force in the British sidecar scene, winning the first Sidecar Race of the Year at Mallory Park with its £500 first prize. The ACU had introduced National Championships for road racers and he won a handful, concentrating on the home races with an occasional trip to the nearer European races.

He was running the family garage business in Wombourne and long hauls to Spain or Italy cost him too much time and money. But he did like the Belgian and Dutch races, his personal international highlight coming as a win in the 1960 Dutch TT after a big scrap with the Swiss ace Florian Camathias. I'd like to tell you which Dutch village he named his house in Wombourne after, but age and memory don't co-operate these days.

He had a long and very successful racing career, stretching from 1949 to 1972, governed by his need to watch over the family business and not get too carried away by success, a real feet-on-the-ground merchant. "I didn't go chasing world championships – I'd proved I could beat most of them with equal machinery." And with all that experience, which of the many drivers he'd competed against did he rate the best? "Klaus Enders," was his unhesitating response. "We were stopped up on the Mountain in one TT practise session and I could hear this BMW coming up fast. I don't know just where we were, but it was by a right-hander and Klaus had a right-hand chair. He was in fifth or sixth, I couldn't say which, but he came through that bend without backing off at all. It was great to watch."

I can still hear him coming up Anerley Ramp at Crystal Palace on the Matchless G45 twin, full noise (and what a noise that was) and not backing off, as Ray Campbell lifted his head slightly to keep his helmet clear of the railway sleepers that lined the track there. Meet the retired racer in his smart business suit and you'd never think of him doing something as downright dangerous as that. But he was a sidecar racer. A very good one. CBG





Above: Pip received the 1959 British Road Racing star (the British championship) for 1959 from Lord Brabazon

Below: Pip Harris and Roy Lindsey on a 492cc BMW at Snetterton, August 30, 1970



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Dixon - Denny - Douglas

1923 – almost 100 years ago – is the year we see Fredrick William Dixon on the way to winning the inaugural Sidecar TT race for Douglas, on the RA. The bike was one of the first to be seen with a form of disc brake on the front wheel, hence the name RA – which stood for the Research Association that designed the brake system. The RA had an OHV, wet-sumped engine, 350cc or 500cc, inline boxer with the gearbox mounted above the rear cylinder; quite a machine.

TW (Walter) Denny is in the chair, operating a lever to allow the outfit to 'lean'. Now that, ladies and gentlemen, is called trust. The pair atop the Douglas averaged a speed of 55.1mph, and helped Douglas to achieve a superb year, with Tom Sheard winning the Senior and fastest lap going to Jim Whalley, at 60mph in the wet. Brooklands saw Douglas victories that year, as well as at the French Grand Prix, the Spanish 12-hour, Alec Bennett winning the Welsh TT and even the formidable 400 mile Durban to Johannesburg marathon.



Honda's CBX 1000

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROB DAVIES, GLEN PRICE, ALAN FISHER AND PAUL PURSEY





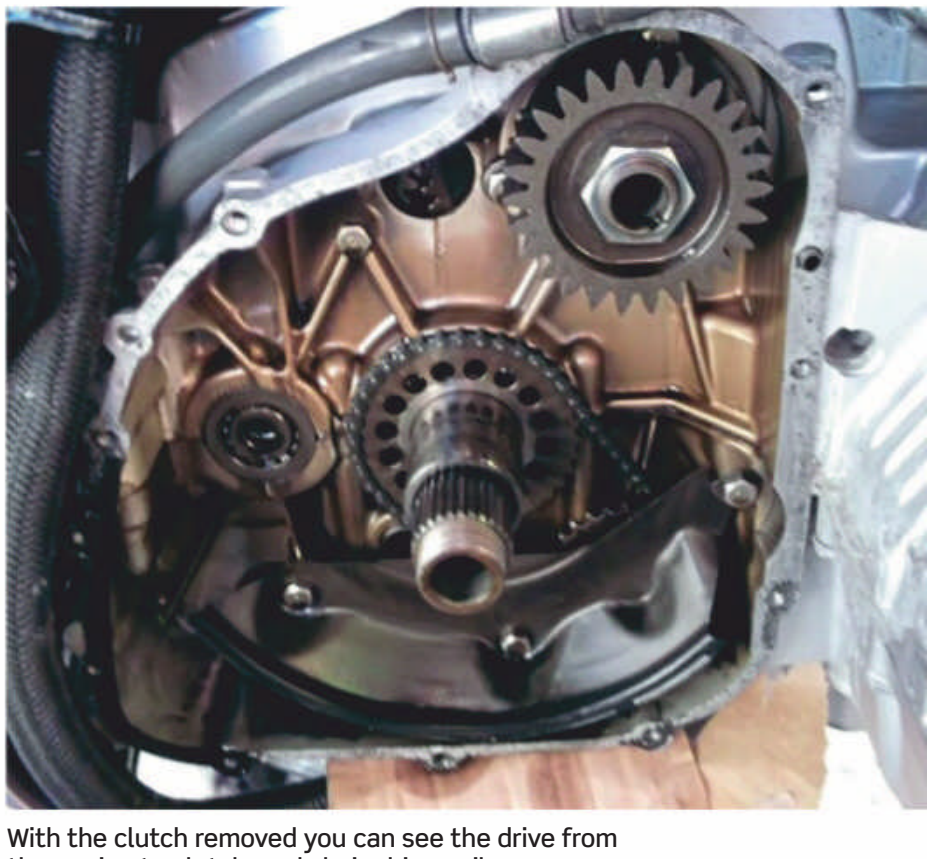
The CBX 1000 engine after a clean and painting

HONDA'S SIX-CYLINDER, 24-VALVE, FLAGSHIP was the ultimate in two-wheeled experience back in 1978. It was the aircraft carrier of the biking world. The sheer width of its engine and its glittering presence proclaimed to the motorcycling world 'Beat that – if you can', and of course no one else could.

The successive five years of CBX production saw the bike go from naked to fully faired touring type with pro-link suspension; but ironically it is the early naked Candy Glory Red version which is still the one to attain to. Now that I have said that, CBX fanatics have taken the engine and allowed their fertile imagination to run wild, and I have included a few pictures of customised CBXs to show you what can be done – or if you're a purist – how a perfectly good bike can be – well that's your opinion, and you're entitled to it. But going back in time:

I was 24, and Glen Price was a mere 17 in 1978 when the first CBXs hit the news and the streets. Glen and I, like many others I guess, could only look longingly at the glittering, but totally unreachable purchase price of £2750. We walked sadly away from the showrooms with the determination that one day – yes one fine day, we would actually own one of those six cylinder beauties. Nevertheless, it would be nearly 40 years before Glen managed to actually get hold of one – and I'm still saving up! This is Glen's rise to the challenge:

"In the late 1970s, I was banging around on a 1963



With the clutch removed you can see the drive from the engine to clutch, and chain driven oil pump



Triumph Tiger Cub that I had built up from a box of bits bought from my cousin for £15. This was already my sixth bike, having started with a Raleigh Runabout at the age of 12. I had the bug and I still have it today.

"Since 1978 there have been another 27 bikes of all makes and models, in all shapes and sizes. Alongside the CBX in my stable right now is a 1974 Suzuki GT550 and a 1999 Triumph Speed triple. So, how did I come to finally own a CBX? Well, with prices rising at an alarming rate, I didn't think I ever would. I had just sold a Triumph T150V when a purple (yep) CBX Z of 1978 vintage came up on good old eBay, 40 miles away in St Leonards-on-Sea.

"It was a classified advert priced at more than the Trident had added to my pocket, so I watched it intently – as you do. The photos showed it to be generally tired and shabby, but it looked complete, which was a bonus. The odd colour and general condition clearly seemed to deter buyers – great – and the price gradually came down until it got to the point where I just had to go and have a look.

"So have a look I did, and sure enough it was shabby and tired and purple, plus the engine had been painted black at some point. Someone else had tried to get the black paint off, but only where access had allowed it – not a good look at all. But it was a CBX wasn't it – and it looked complete.

Above: A very comfortable seat and a beautiful tank that very cleverly disguises the width of the front of the tubular frame

Below left: Clutch with new rubbers in place

Below centre: The part of the frame that carries the engine is a brutal bit of pipe work, but is covered very gracefully by the fuel tank on the naked version. Picture taken just after the restored engine has been put back in the repainted frame

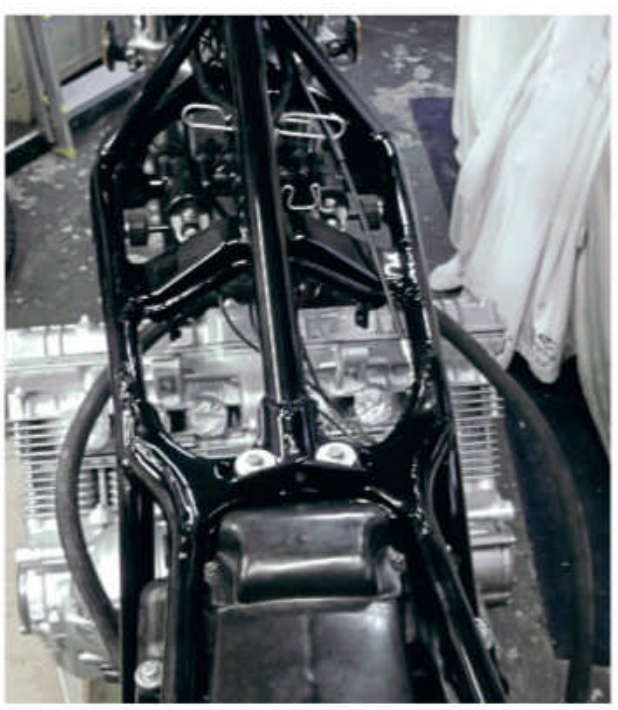
Below right: A bank of six carburettors is impressive

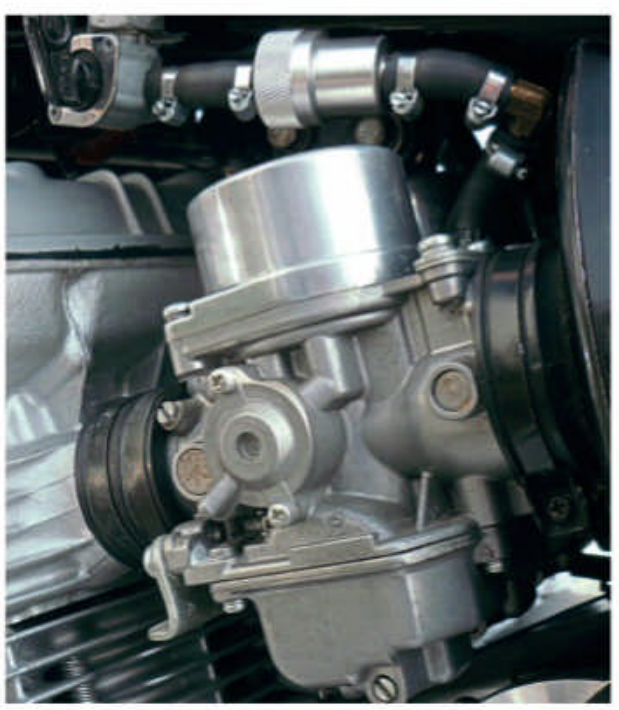
LAST CHANCE TO OWN A CBX

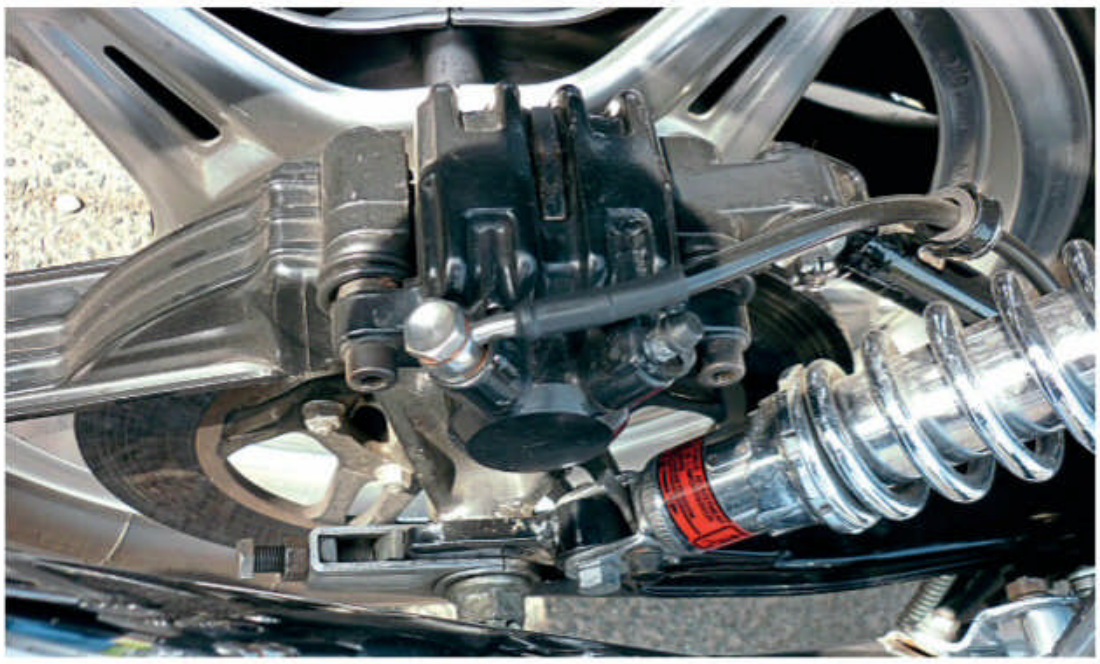
"It took a bit of cranking to get it to fire up, and when it did, it didn't sound right at all. Cylinders number five and six were not firing. "Probably just the plugs," said the vendor. "Okay, let's whip them out and have a look" said I. "No tools," was the reply. This was the point where I was ready to walk away. Before I did, I made a rash offer of £1500 – less than it was originally listed at. It was a rash offer because the dead pots could have been caused by something expensive. My offer was turned down, so off home I trotted.

"Almost as soon as I got home, the phone went, and it was the vendor ringing to say it was now running on all six. He had borrowed a plug spanner from a neighbour and voilà. "Told you," he said. "I'm going to have to sleep on this," was my reply, but sleep was hard to come









"So have a look I did, and sure enough it was shabby and tired and purple, plus the engine had been painted black at some point. Someone else had tried to get the black paint off, but only where access had allowed it – not a good look at all."



by that night. The next day, after much deliberation, I made an offer of what the Trident had sold for. This was probably going to be my last chance of CBX ownership, and I knew it was going to cost a whole bunch more money to get it how I wanted it. But I had to go for it. It was now or never. My offer was accepted, so the next stage of the saga began.

"I collected the purple wonder the following Wednesday evening after work, it was pouring with rain too. The first thing I had to do was fill it with petrol. The ride home was not pleasant. The appalling weather coupled with me not wanting to bin my new steed made for a tense journey. The engine seemed to vibrate more than I thought it should, the tyres were old and hard and the front brakes were, well, rubbish. It pulled well though and seemed to reach 70 with no effort at all – until I realised it had a kph speedo!

"After a good clean up the following weekend, it didn't look much better. I had hatched a plan which was to ride it through the summer months, then take it off the road in October to have the paintwork restored to the original red and black. Then I would drop the engine out, get it soda blasted and paint it silver. As with many plans, this one strayed a little, well a lot, the further I got into it.

"I mentioned before that the engine vibrated. There was a patch between 2500 and 3000 revs which returned at 6000. This was a worry; these bikes should not vibrate. A compression test showed some interesting results. There were similar values across the six, but not as high as I was expecting, at 120-130psi.

Top: With a dry weight of 544lb (247kg), good rear stopping power is essential

Above: Six vacuum gauges are required to set the bike's carbs. Here we can see that they are widely out and each needs setting to bring it in alignment with the rest

LOCAL EXPERTISE

"Luckily I am blessed with local expertise in the form of Steve Gosine, the South East regional rep for the club, and font of all knowledge. Steve loaned me the club's vacuum gauges, but the balance was really rather good. He then had a listen, and I could tell by the look on his face as much as what he said that more investigation was in order. A valve clearance check showed four valves to be tight; so they were corrected. It was at this point that it became obvious that someone had been in there before me; about six of the cam cap bolts were non-standard, some were chromed, and two even had Phillips heads! This did not bode well.

"Another cause of vibration could be a worn primary chain and there is a trick to tell how worn it is that is worth knowing. First remove the alternator – where you will find lurking behind it a 10mm bolt holding an oil feed tube which sits under the top run of the primary chain. As the chain wears, it touches the tube and takes chucks out of it. Steve said that any chunks missing dictate the necessity for a new chain. Mine had a few small ones. The final turning point from a cosmetic clean up to a full engine strip came when I took off the sump and looked at the oil strainer – I have never seen

one so badly clogged in my life, and doubt many of you have either.

"There were traces of blue stuff, that turned out on investigation to be silicone sealant – the cam cover had plenty of that on it; the black stuff was also rubbery in texture and turned out to be the sealant used between the crankcase halves – yep this engine had been fully stripped in the past, probably the same time it was painted black. Why? I was wondering and what other bodges are lurking inside? Had they changed the primary chain I wondered? – No, as it turned out.

"So the plan changed to a full engine strip and rebuild, replacing anything that it needed. A daunting thought to start with, but the CBX engine is actually not that difficult to work on, there is just a lot of it. When the engine was out, the plan changed again and I totally stripped the frame down too.



The CBX dash is a classic of design

REBUILD BEGINS

"I fitted the engine to an engine stand that I had wisely bought years ago. This just needed a couple of angle brackets made up to bolt to the two rear engine mounts using M14 studding. So, what did I find in the engine? Well, pouring petrol into the exhaust ports with the head in the vice revealed that 10 of the valves leaked badly, doing the same with the inlets was a little better – only 4 leaked. This explains the reasonably even, but low compression figures. The bores were in excellent condition and measured well in spec; but the ring gaps were on top limit, so they went in the bin. Further investigation showed that the shell bearings were in excellent condition, and I think this is why it had been stripped before. However, the primary chain was very slack, so whoever stripped it before didn't change it.

"So the rebuild began. Steve Gosine vapour blasted the crankcases, head and barrels which I then painted in heat resistant silver. Steve could be heard grumbling about the four layers of paint he had to get off and the state of the internal surfaces. My garage has no mains electricity, so in the midst of winter it is not a pleasant place to be. Luckily my wife let me rebuild the cylinder head in the dining room – this was very out of character… New parts included all of the chains, piston rings, uprated clutch rubbers from the Six Centre, gaskets and seals everywhere, the correct cam cap bolts, carb rubbers and clamps etc plus 16 of the 24 valve shims. Many thanks go to John Stone for the loan of the club shim kit here.

"Eventually the finished engine looked splendid with its new paint job and replated fasteners. While the engine rebuild was going on, the frame was shot blasted which revealed some corrosion around the lower engine mounts. This is quite a common problem as they fill up with water if the drains at the bottom get clogged up. Getting the centrestand spindle out was a struggle too; they are poorly lubricated at the factory and seize in the frame. The holes were duly TIG welded up and the frame painted in 2-pack by Jeff Coker of Albert Coker and Sons in Edenbridge. Jeff also painted the bodywork and did a fantastic job of it all too, he is well known in the community having got 15 CBXs himself, so knows a thing or two about them.

"I pondered long and hard over which was the best method for getting that huge lump of engine back onto my squeaky clean frame, and eventually plumped for the one Jeff suggested. This is to lower the bare frame over the engine, then lift the lot up to fit the wheels. The two pieces of equipment that made this easy were my hydraulic lift table and a stout winch mounted on the rafters in the garage. I used the winch to lift the engine off the stand and onto some blocks positioned on the hydraulic lift table then rolled this out of the way. I then hoisted the frame up on the winch and rolled the engine back underneath. By jacking the table up and lowering



The Pro link version before restoration. Was this the ugly duckling of the range, or did it provide useful engines for the budding customizer?

" It was at this point that it became obvious that someone had been in there before me; about six of the cam cap bolts were non-standard, some were chromed, and two even had Phillips heads!"

the fame down I was able to get the bottom bolt in easily, then it was just a simple case of rotating the frame around that to line all the other bolts up. I fitted the carbs, cables and airbox to the engine beforehand too.

READY FOR THE ROAD

"Many parts such as the headlamp bracket and both stands were powdercoated locally and the grab rail was rechromed. Many new parts were sourced and lots were replated. Everything went together well and I didn't lose anything, though it took me a while to find some of it in the numerous boxes spread about the place. I managed to find a NOS mph speedo to replace the kph one someone had fitted. This was a great find but it was missing the trip reset knob – and the bit it screws onto inside so I couldn't simply use my old one. It also made the Tacho look faded so I sent all three dials to Nigel Sadler who made one speedo out of the two and refurbished to Tacho to match.

"I didn't want to refit the vacuum operated fuel cut-off device. There is no 'prime' position like a Suzuki, so it takes a lot of cranking the engine over to fill the carbs once they have dried out after a couple of weeks sat idle. I am, however well aware of the risk of filling No1 pot with petrol, causing hydraulic lock and a bent conrod. This happens due to the dodgy overflow pipe work design where all six overflows are connected together under the carbs. This can allow fuel overflowing from any carb to run into No1 pot if left on the side stand with the petrol tap on. To eliminate this risk, I have fitted individual overflow pipes to each carb. Why didn't Honda do this I wonder?

"Other excursions from standard, just to upset the rivet counters included lots of stainless fasteners plus stainless carb clamps. I also fitted new braided brake lines to replace the corroded ones on it when I bought it. The new ones are covered in black sleeving so don't look too bling. I eventually got the old girl ready for the road on May 20, when the paintwork came back from Jeff Coker and what a brilliant job they had done of it. A swift road test suggested that all was not well with the gearbox though. It only had four gears and a neutral where 5th should be. Why? Answer – I had fitted the gear selector shaft back to front, that's why… those in the know will tell you it's easily done, but not so easy to correct. Engine out time. Not what I was hoping for at all. The good news is that the shaft can be reversed via the sump; there is no need to split the cases again so it was soon back together and rectified.

"So, that's it. I can honestly say I enjoyed (almost) every minute of the rebuild,even if my bank manager didn't. I kept a log of what I spent, and think the bike is probably worth about the same, so the six months' labour didn't add any value but that wasn't the idea. It kept me occupied; I learned a lot, produced a beautiful bike, and met many great people along the way. Oh and thanks too, to my wife Kym, for her patience and letting me build the head in the dining room."

Standard CBX alternator on this model; many choose to upgrade as the output can be poor

Comstar wheels have never been attractive, while the stopping power at the front is also very of its time with its solid discs and single pot calipers



Custom CBX creations

The CBX has, in creative hands, seen some rather exotic customisations; so if you're a purist rivet counter, this is the time to look away as we view Alan Fisher's Rau conversion. As you may know, Rau made some great frames back in the 1970s. Alan bought this one from Holland, as the company still continued to make bikes after Rau's death. It has a Honda VFR swingarm, Triumph 595 rear wheel modified to fit, Showa USD forks, Suzuki front wheel and Wilbers rear shock. The engine came from a low mileage Pro Link – so they do have their uses. And finally we have Paul Pursey's Moto Martin – with Turbo – that thing has to fly.









Above: Alan Fisher owns the only Rau CBX in the UK. The motor has a stage 3 dynojet kit

Right: A one-off exhaust system to complement the MV seat unit

Left: Paul Pursey's MotoMartin Turbo

Below: And the motor is an engineer's joy

Helping hands were: Steve Gosine for much needed advice and vapour blasting the engine **cbxcarbs.co.uk;** Jeff Coker for more advice and top notch paintwork **alfredcokerandsons.co.uk;** Foremost coatings for shot blasting the frame **foremostcoatings.com/blast-cleaning/3549128;** Albion Plating in for the Chrome **albionplating.co.uk;** YB Plating for the Zinc **ybplatingltd.co.uk;** Philpots for restoring the fork legs **pittedforks.co.uk/index.php;** Nigel Sadler for restoring the clocks. CBG



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New

RETRO

BMW R18

A throwback to the 1936 BMW R5, BMW's 1802cc R18 is a brand-new bike taking a look at the world of old bikes.

Considering this is a standard production bike, it's stunning, like it's just rolled out of a museum. We head to Germany to discover it performs as well as it looks.

WORDS BY: ADAM CHILD 'CHAD' **PHOTOGRAPHY BY:** BMW

THE ENGINE STARTS WITH A charismatic rock, and if you have never ridden an opposed twin before, it may take you by surprise. Each blip of the throttle pushes the bike to the left. I celebrate this quirkiness. At tickover, around 900rpm, displayed on a digital clock, the bar ends dance around while the instruments vibrate slightly; adding to the appeal. It has character all right, something I was afraid BMW would weaken.

It's a stunning bike in the flesh; clearly inspired by BMW's early boxer machines from the 1920s and 30s, like the R32 and R5. Elements are almost art deco, like the R7 prototype from 1934. It doesn't scream at you like a sportsbike. It's not covered in lavish chrome like a Harley; it doesn't need neon lights and a radio like a Honda GoldWing. It is unique, yet clearly BMW. Remove the badge, and it's still a BMW.

New
RETRO

Similar to the older bikes, the modern frame blends into the swingarm to give the sense it's a rigid frame. The fishtail exhausts mirror the R5 from 1936, the exposed nickel-plated shaft drive is lovely, even the little manual chrome lever which activates a reverse gear is neatly tucked away (an optional extra).

The centrally mounted clocks have 'Berlin Built' inscribed on the dials, the double pinstriping appears hand-painted. In fact, the R18 looks like a one-off special, not a mass-produced bike which has just been wheeled off the production line.

It's classical, yet has up-to-date clocks, LED lights, modern suspension, and rider aids, like ABS and traction control. Obviously the gigantic air-cooled 1802cc boxer is the king-pin which holds the design together and gives the R18 such a distinctive image.

This is a colossal boxer engine. Each cylinder has a 107.1mm bore size; the pistons are as large as my hand. The engine, including the gearbox and intake system, weighs 111kg – that is over 17 stone – that's a big bloke hung in the frame. As you'd expect from an 1802cc air-cooled engine, peak power and torque are way down in the rev range. If you must tout such crass figures, peak power is 91bhp at just 4750rpm and the huge 116.5ftlb of torque is at 3000rpm; barely ticking over. The last time an engine created this much torque it was on tank tracks. Even between 2000-3000rpm there is more than 110ftlb of torque.



I can't remember the last time an engine took centre stage on a motorcycle. But as impressive as they are, torque and power is considerably less than Triumph's power Rocket, and down on bhp compared to Ducati's Diavel, which also happens to be cheaper than the BMW.

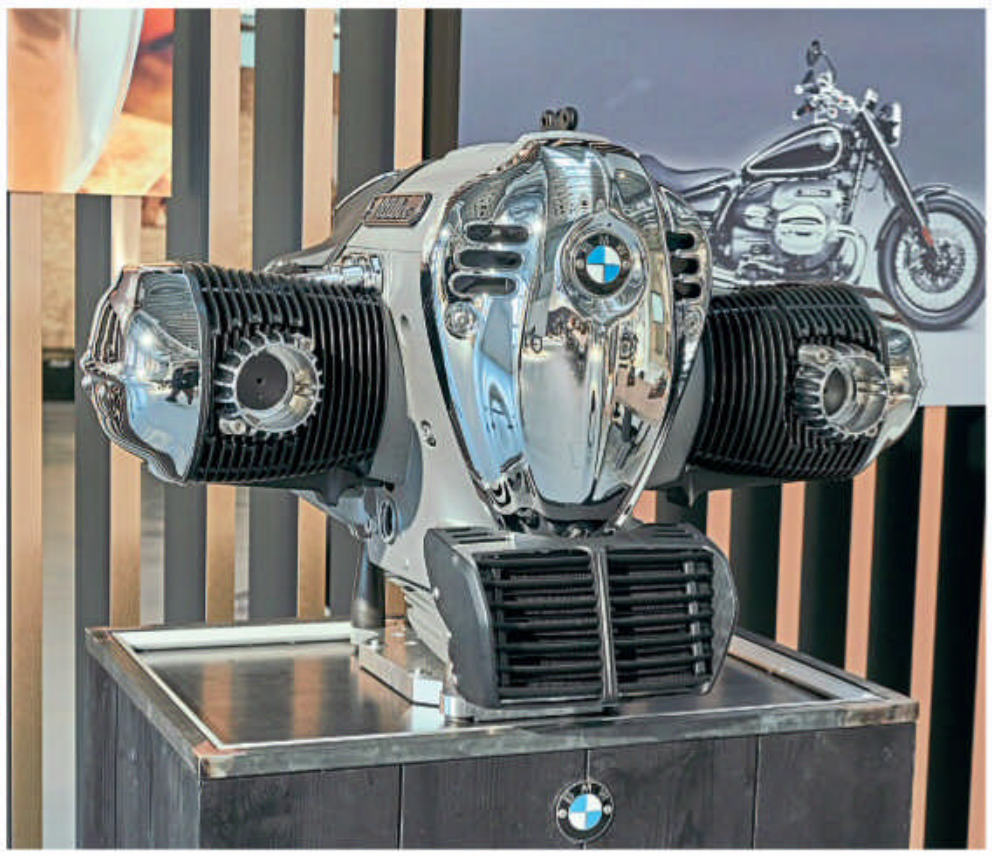
When you throw a leg over the relatively low seat you're immediately drawn to the engine, like a drunk to happy hour. Each protruding cylinder head is almost overwhelming; it feels very unfamiliar to see so much engine whilst still seated on the bike. The right cylinder

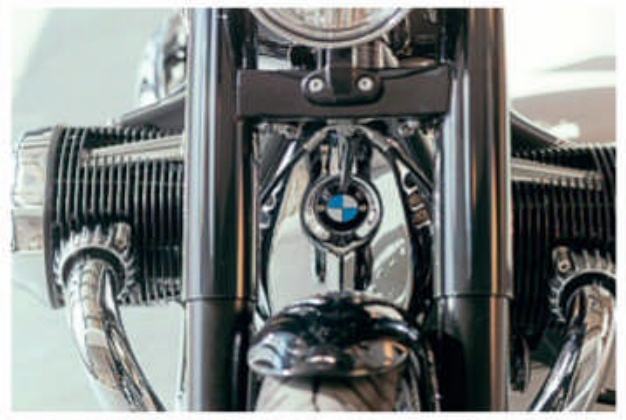


"All the work is low down in the rev range; just tickle the throttle for progressive acceleration, you don't really need to pass 3000rpm. Peak power is at 4750rpm but after that it tails off"













is set closer to the rider, as it sits further back on the crank which runs the centre line of the bike. When your feet are on the mid-way pegs, your shins are close to the huge cylinders, you can feel the heat in traffic, which on test in Germany proved beneficial, drying out my wet boots and jeans after a downpour. At one stop I discovered the cylinders are large enough to rest a brew on, and even dry out gloves remarkably well. It will be interesting to see how much heat is generated in the middle of summer when you're stuck in traffic. Your right foot, covering the back brake, is almost directly underneath the cylinder. It's not annoying, just quirky, which adds to the appeal of the R18.

It's a shame the fish-tail twin exhausts don't sound as good as they look. There is a little bark when you start up the big motor, but after that it's a little muted. I know BMW must conform to Euro-5, and on large throttle openings there is a rumble, but from such a large, charismatic engine I was hoping for a little more. I don't want it to be annoying, not an American V-twin with straight pipes, which starts car alarms, but just something would be nice, the odd pop on the overrun. It's like watching football or rugby on the TV during Covid, there's no noise or atmosphere.

The power is effortless, the fuelling is excellent, and you can really feel the disparity in the power modes, Rain, Roll and Rock – no, I'm not joking. As you'd expect all the work is low down in the rev range; just tickle the throttle for progressive acceleration, you don't really need to pass 3000rpm. Peak power is at 4750rpm but after that it tails off to eventually find a soft rev limiter just after 5500rpm. It does get a little vibey in the last quarter of the rev range, noticeably above 4000rpm, but if you're revving it that hard, then you're not really riding the big boxer how it was designed.

Instead, simply short shift and ride the torque. The gearbox is smooth, but for me it feels like it needs a heel and toe gearshift and footboards (optional) rather than standard pegs and gear lever. The revs noticeably drop when you change from fifth to sixth gear. It will gladly pull from just over 1200rpm in top but usually, at town speed, I was back to fifth. Sixth gear is noticeably tall, which is perfect for cruising.

On the motorway at 60mph the big girl is plodding along at 2200rpm. At 75mph, revs increase a little to 2500rpm, effortless and smooth. Once you push on a little to 85mph and above, it's closer to 3000rpm with the vibrations noticeable. And it's a shame the cruiser doesn't have cruise control as standard, which is what I'd expect from this type of bike.

Each cylinder is huge, it has the aerodynamic drag of a London bus, and let's not forget about the weight, so it should be horrendous on fuel. But as it revs so slowly, like a canal boat, it's actually not that bad with BMW claiming just over 50mpg. On our 180-mile ride, a mixture of motorway and mountain passes south of Munich towards Austria, I managed 54mpg. In theory, you can expect over 200 miles before needing to fill up, though in fact it's closer to 130-140miles before the fuel light illuminates.

There is no getting away from the fact this a 345kg bike; a fully dressed Goldwing is 381kg. Add the rider and we're easily over 400kg, that is the same weight of a Jersey cow. Some bikes hide their weight once moving, and the BMW does this, feeling far lighter than it is, but those huge protruding cylinders and the rock between gear changes are a constant reminder of the bike's size.

You're always aware you're on a large bike, weight is low down, but unlike an American V-twin, you can actually see the engine and think about that weight before attempting a roundabout at speed. You always have the bike's weight in the back of your mind.



New
RETRO





The relatively basic set-up is impressive. The forks don't dive or buckle, the shock and ride are impressive, it feels like the front is communicating with the rear and vice-versa. Some big cruisers feel like the front was designed by one team and the rear by another, or they thought about the looks and chrome but left the handling for Friday afternoon after drinks in the pub at lunch time. The BMW breaks that rule, this is a bike that has clearly been designed from the ground up.

Rather than steer into corners, it rolls in. You roll the bike over its large front wheel and onto its side. It's relatively easy to deck the pegs, which thankfully are hinged and not fixed. But even when the pegs cause a rooster of sparks it doesn't feel like the BMW is on the limit and about to head straight on. Over longer periods the set-up did feel on the firm side, which I guess is the pay-off for having suspension that doesn't wallow and force the bike wide when ridden with the faintest bit of aggression.

The riding position is comfortable, the bars not too wide, and the vibrations are apparent but not annoying in any way, though I did have numb-bum after a full day in the saddle. Again, I might be reaching for a plusher aftermarket seat in the accessories catalogue before embarking on any serious long-distance touring.

TECH SPEC

NEW PRICE: £18,995
CAPACITY: 1802cc
BORE X STROKE: 107.1 x 100mm
ENGINE LAYOUT: Four-stroke, two-cylinder boxer, air-cooled
POWER: 91bhp @4750rpm
TORQUE: 116.5lb. ft @3000rpm
TOP SPEED: 120mph (estimated)
TRANSMISSION: Six-speed shaft drive
AVERAGE FUEL CONSUMPTION: 54.2mpg (tested) 50.44mpg (claimed)
TANK SIZE: 16 litres Max range to empty (theoretical) 227 miles (tested)
RIDER AIDS: ABS, traction control, three rider modes,
FRAME: Double cradle steel frame
FRONT SUSPENSION: 49mm conventional. non-adjustable forks
REAR SUSPENSION: single rear shock adjustable pre-load only
FRONT BRAKE: 2 x 300mm discs, 4-piston calipers with ABS
REAR BRAKE: 300mm single disc, 4-piston caliper with ABS
FRONT TYRE: 120/70 R19
REAR TYRE: 180/65 R16
RAKE/TRAIL: 57.3°/150mm
WHEELBASE: 1731mm
SEAT HEIGHT: 690mm
DRY WEIGHT: 345kg
WEBSITE: www.bmw-motorrad.com









Trying to stop a Jersey cow from 100mph is asking a lot of the twin discs and calipers. The front brake lever in fact activates the front brake only, but the rear is linked to the front, which gives the sensation of a strong rear brake. Even under heavy use it didn't show any sign of fade despite my abuse. The lever is adjustable and there's a nice feel. ABS comes as standard, isn't too intrusive on the front, but it's relatively easy to get the rear ABS activating, especially in the wet.

Unusually for BMW, the ABS is not lean sensitive, and while you could argue cornering ABS isn't required on a low revving cruiser, on such a large heavy bike, it would certainly be welcome by some. There is nothing wrong with the conventional ABS but other large premium BMWs do come with cornering ABS as standard – it all depends on what you are used to.

Because there is so much compression from the huge engine, BMW has fitted an engine braking management system, MSR, which prevents the rear from locking up during fast down changes. At times you can feel this working, reducing the engine braking, giving a two-stroke feeling as the bike carries speed into corners. Once or twice this caught me out slightly, as the bike rolled into a turn a little quicker than expected without the engine braking, I anticipated, but this is favourable over locking the rear.

Close to £19,000 is a lot of money for a single-seat cruiser which doesn't even have cruise control (and given the accessories list is so appetising, few models will leave a BMW showroom standard). On the other hand, the price is justified in the quality, appeal and desirability of the new R18. Not only are you buying into the high-end BMW brand, but this is a completely new model for 2020, unique and huge – a lot of bike for your buck.

Compared to the competition it's somewhere in the middle ground. Harley-Davidson has the Softail and Deluxe, which you could argue are the closest competition to the BMW, and both are considerably cheaper than the Beemer. Then at the other end of the scale is the Indian Vintage Dark Horse, £21,399, and Triumph's Rocket at £19,500.

I think it's priced competitively for today's market. It's a hard one to call as you could argue the R18 doesn't have any direct competition, but when sports bikes are pushing £20,000 and BMW's own K 1600B is over £19,000, I think the price is in the ballpark.

RIDER AIDS AND EXTRA EQUIPMENT/ACCESSORIES

Clearly the marketing team named the rider modes, Rain, Rock and Roll, which translate roughly to rain, road and sporty. The rider aids only change the engine performance and character, and do not alter the standard traction control or ABS. There is a noticeable step in the throttle response and power between the mode: Rain is very soft and lethargic whereas the Rock mode is responsive and direct but not too sharp, a mistake some manufacturers make. In the wet or when grip is reduced, the Rain mode is beneficial and isn't just a gimmick, as with so much power and torque it's easy to lose traction.

The standard traction control, which can be deactivated or reinstalled on the move, will obviously prevent any major slides or wheelspin, but again, like the braking, isn't lean-sensitive and is relatively basic. Yes, it works, and the reintroduction of the power is soft, which means that once the rear starts to spin it shouldn't spin again when the power comes back on line. However, shouldn't we expect lean-sensitive traction control from a premium BMW?

As you'd expect the list of accessories is huge and designed and built in partnership with legendary bike designers like Roland Sands, and Vance & Hines. The R18 is really a blank canvas for your imagination to run wild.

I left my trip to Germany thinking: heal and toe lever and foot boards, V&H pipework, relaxed bars, and a pillion seat. The 'hipster' clothing matches the high-end finish to the accessories. Some may sneer at the marketing and image, but cleverly BMW have created a stunning bike, which can easily be modified and personalised. I'd like the heated grips, reverse and hill start, which are all optional extras. CBG

Verdict

It's so different from anything else on the market, BMW have to be congratulated on producing a model so visually close to the original R5. BMW has entered the interesting cruiser market with a huge boxer statement; on looks alone they are on to a winner.

It's a 2020 model dressed for the 1920s and 1930s. It's elegant, a work of art, doesn't appear to be a standard production bike, but a special hand-built by custom bike builders.

The dramatic boxer engine holds the design together whilst delivering some 'real-world' performance and, for a big bike, it will go around corners scraping its pegs all day long. Yes, it's heavy, yes it rocks from side to side and vibrates at high revs, but that is what I wanted... some soul. When you buy a 1802cc boxer you want it to feel like a big bike.

The finishing touches like the exposed shaft drive are lovely, which means I can forgive my personal niggles like the lack of a fuel range/gauge, no keyless fuel cap, and no cruise control as standard. This is BMW's first venture into the cruiser market for some time and they've done a remarkable job, which should have the competition worried.

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What's it like riding a classic for the first time?

Maria shares her thoughts on getting used to an old bike this year, in the hope some of her reservations may help others in the same situation.

WORDS BY MARIA **PHOTOGRAPHY BY** MATT, BIKE BY BSA

"**WHY – WHY DO YOU WANT TO RIDE AN** old bike?" asked Matt. That's an easy one, because girls aren't supposed to ride bikes, let alone classic ones. All dad's side of the family are into motorbikes so I have always been around them, admiring them. I passed my test 13 years ago and have owned and ridden bikes, but only ever new ones, as I thought classic bikes were out of my 'league'. Almost as if I wasn't allowed to ride them because they are reserved for the old boys who rode them originally.

Since getting back into the world of motorcycles (and Matt teaching me the difference between a Velocette LE and a Triumph Bonneville) the classics have become a lot more appealing. I struggle with a lot of the modern bikes because they are too tall and too heavy for me. I like to have my feet firmly planted so I can manage the bike if we have a wobble. Matt said to me a few years ago when I bumped into him that I should have a look at a classic as they are generally a lot lower and more manageable for my size. I took absolutely no notice whatsoever!

Spending more time this last year or so with the older bikes I have started to think that they aren't just for the likes of my dad and Uncle Neville. There is no reason why I can't ride them, I have a licence and have had for years. I have a 1970s Benelli 125 Enduro which is a family heirloom, with a right-foot gearchange and kick-start, though it is a two-stroke. I've got it working, had a play and really quite liked it. But I've not been far as it's a little unreliable and not registered.

So, I plucked up enough courage to ask Matt if I could have a go on the BSA B31. This was a massive thing for me because the thought of riding a bike that has the gear lever and brake on the opposite side to what I'm used to, and also the gears are upside down, was very daunting. I wasn't worried about crashing it or falling off, or even dropping it when we came to a stop. I was very, very nervous about actually riding it, having to think about everything being the same; but different.



Matt gave me a run-down of all the levers a couple of days beforehand and the sequence of twisting, twiddling and tickling knobs and levers before I even try and start it. It sort of went in. Come Saturday, I asked Matt over breakfast if I could have a go on the BSA. He said "If you can start it, you can ride it." Dad was there to come out with me; he used to have Bonnevilles, but he now has a modern Honda CB500 and would follow.

Matt tested my knowledge on what I needed to do to start it and said "Off you go then." I ran through all the steps and kicked it; nothing. Try again; and 'BRUMBA', she started second try. (I think Matt was hoping I wouldn't be able to…)

Up into first and I had a little go up the yard, getting a feel for the clutch, brakes and the really different riding position. You really sit on top a classic but it's low; whereas modern bikes make you feel like you're sitting in them, but they're much higher. Time to venture further and I stall pulling out of the drive. First lesson; you can't pull away with few revs like on a modern bike. A quick kick and off we went up the road – we'd already decided which way to go and that I'd be in front. As the gear and rear brake pedals are on the other side and the other way up to what I'm used to, Matt had stuck Gaffa tape on the tank and written 'brake!' on the left hand sticker and an arrow pointing up with 'down' written underneath and an arrow pointing down with 'up' written on it to help if I was in a flap!

After what felt like revving the nuts off her, trying to figure out which way to kick it, I got her into second and away we went. The physical difference between the travel on a modern gear lever and an old one is quite something – it also needs more pressure. But handling was much less worrying. The first corner came up and I could feel myself tense up wondering how on earth to get round it, so I took it steady and I was amazed, it was like the bike was on rails. I thought to myself "ooo now I like this".

Then the first junction comes up. I look down at the tank to see which way I need to kick it to go down a gear; up, got it. Change down to third, it's going well. Get towards the junction, pull the clutch in and I decide to stop to give myself a chance to think. It's all clear, I give it one more try to make sure I'm in



MARIA'S ADVICE FOR THOSE BIKERS NEW TO OLD BIKES

- It feels impossible, but try to relax.
- Plan a route that avoids too many junctions, right turns, or busy areas
- You're learning, you will make mistakes; don't beat yourself up
- Everything takes longer on an old bike, so use that to your advantage
- Fit a mirror for one less thing to worry about (we didn't)
- When safe behind, get used to slowing down, changing down, and then getting quicker
- Remember brakes are not what you're used to! Less reliance on the front, more 50/50
- Handling feels slower than a modern bike, but more stable
- Set the advance and leave it – learn about that another day
- Enjoy it – it just gets better every ride!

the right gear and go; in fourth! I knew as soon as I pulled away but went blank with which way to kick to change down, so I rode the clutch and gave it some revs until she 'put-putted' off. I patted her on the tank and muttered "sorry bike, but well done".

The next few miles were good, few more gear changes in the right direction, a couple of villages and I was feeling confident (I looked down once to see where the indicator was, then remembered there wasn't one and stuck my hand out). We then came to some bends and after the first bend a few miles earlier I thought I don't have to take this one so steady. The bike is absolutely wonderful in the bends. It stayed where I put it and came out where I was expecting it to, it clung to the corner and made me feel very confident in corners, which is another thing new for me.

We came to some traffic lights and dad pulled up next to me to check I was all right, I was beaming from ear to lug; this was bloody brilliant! As we left we came over a few mini roundabouts and on the way out when changing up I found when I was letting the clutch out it felt like it was in neutral so I kicked it again and kept ending up in fourth and chugging a bit. A few miles on I worked out that it was probably because I hadn't got my foot out fully from the gear lever and was getting a false neutral.

I was still beaming my head off as we rode along, relaxing more every mile. Why hadn't I had a go on this before, what was I so worried about? The more I relaxed, the less mistakes I made. We got back home after a few backfires which scared the life out of dad who was still riding behind and were quickly greeted by Matt.

His face was full of worry and he was trying to read my face to see how I got on. The first thing I said was "how do I turn it off," he twiddled some levers and put his hand over the air intake and she came to a stop. "How was it, what did you think, how did you get on?" Matt said. "It was bloody brilliant," I beamed.

The three of us sat down in the garden and had a cup of tea and talked about what it was like and how each person found it. Matt having ridden it before and standing about waiting for us to get back, dad having ridden behind me watching what was going on and seeing how I was doing, and me, having never ridden anything like that before and how truly wonderful it was. That's it now, it's an old British bike for me! CBG

"Matt tested my knowledge on what I needed to do to start it and said "Off you go then". I ran through all the steps and kicked it; nothing. Try again; and 'BRUMBA', she started second try"



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How the professionals repair damaged valves and guides

After Oli heard his BSA make one of those horrid noises, it was time to see how the professionals sort valves and valve guides

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY: OLI HULME



The reason for the valve dropping was obvious

When riding my BSA Starfire back to the garage a few weeks ago, I pulled in the clutch, there was a bang, a clunk and the engine stopped. I had a feeling this was terminal, pushed it back to its resting place and whipped the rocker box off. I realised very quickly that the exhaust valve had snapped.

The cylinder head came off and to my relief it appeared that the BSA gods were smiling, and apart from a small mark on the piston crown and a seriously bent valve, I might just get away with some head work.

I bought a new valve and slotted it in place, then turned the head upside down, filled the combustion chamber with Gunk, stuffed the inlet and exhaust port with paper towels and left it overnight. By the morning the towel stuffed in the exhaust port was soaked and all the Gunk was gone, having trickled past the valve. It was clear that the work required was beyond my limited skills, and I took the head to my local engineering shop Hamlins of Bridgwater for advice.



The valve, collets and cap are scrap

PROPER ENGINEERING

Hamlins are what most of us might think of as a proper engineers, founded by Thomas Hamlin in 1896, right at the beginning of the motor age. Thomas's great grandson, Mark Hamlin runs the company with his wife Francine and it's still in the Victorian brick-built workshop the business started in. They do a lot of work on classic vehicles and repair and remanufacture pretty much any kind of engine, from those used in micro-sized model aircraft to massive 20-cylinder generators, to obscure agricultural power plants running on wood gas. The stack of jobs by the front door awaiting attention included Triumph twin cylinder heads and Jaguar engine blocks.

Mark wiggled both the valves, informed



A proper engineering shop

me that I needed at least one new valve guide, and under the circumstances I might as well fit two. As they were fitting new guides, the valve seats would need to be recut. Parts were ordered and once they arrived, the head work commenced.

With the head on the bench, engineer Joe Izard's first job was to remove the old valve guides.

These bronze guides are pressed into the aluminium head and to remove them the head needed to be heated. Joe uses a heated parts washer to do this, which warms up the head to around 60 degrees in just a few minutes.

Joe said: "You can try to do it at home in an oven, but sometimes you could have the head in there for an hour and it still wouldn't have heated up enough. Applying too much or direct heat could damage the head too, and isn't a good idea."

Once heated, the old guides were swiftly knocked out with a hammer and a pin punch – a metal punch with a precision machined lower section that fits snugly into the valve guide.

Next he measured the external



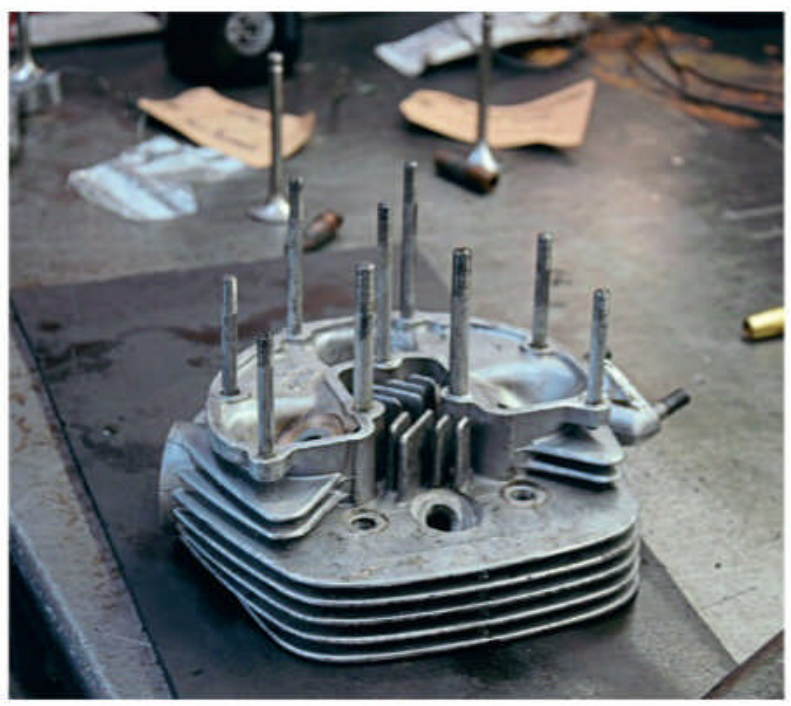
Heating the head in the parts washer



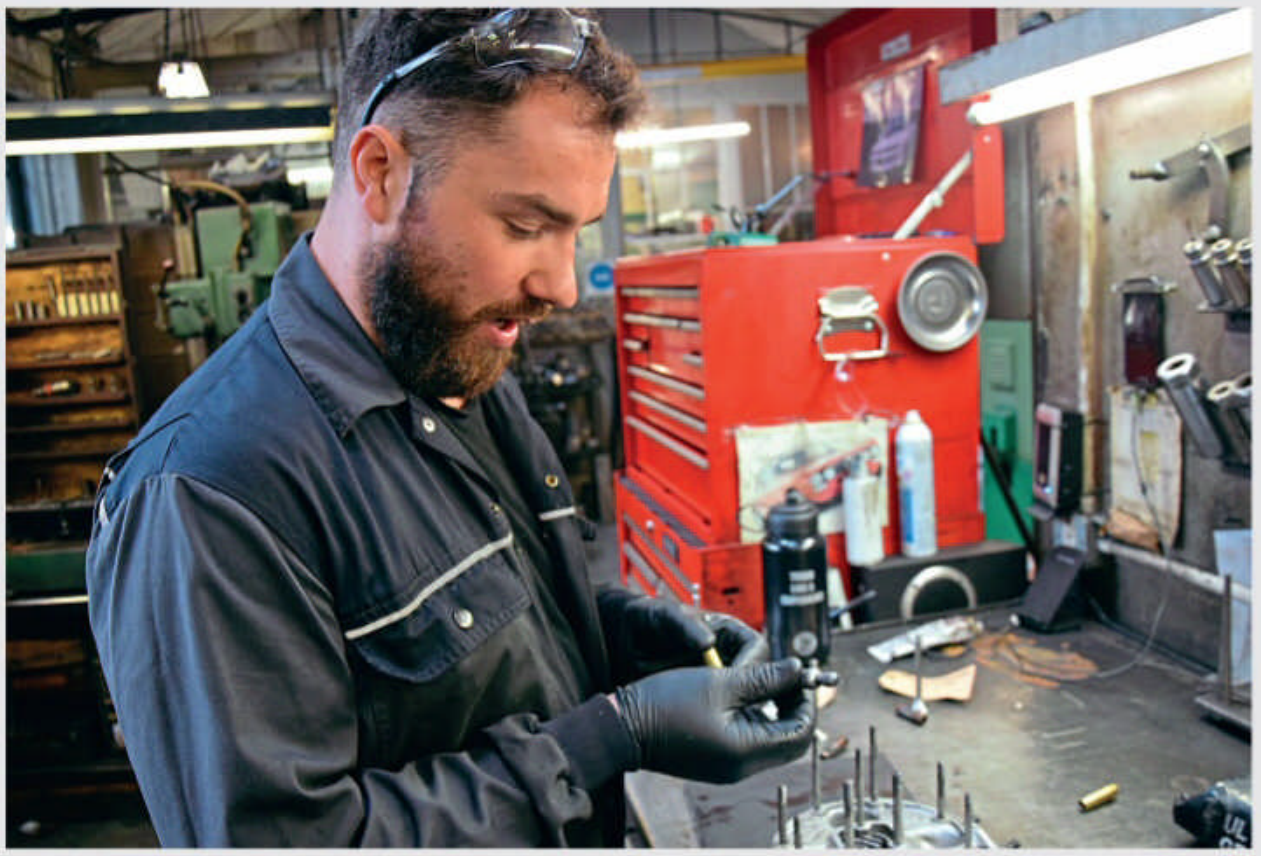
Joe prepares the head for valve guide removal



Removing the old valve guides

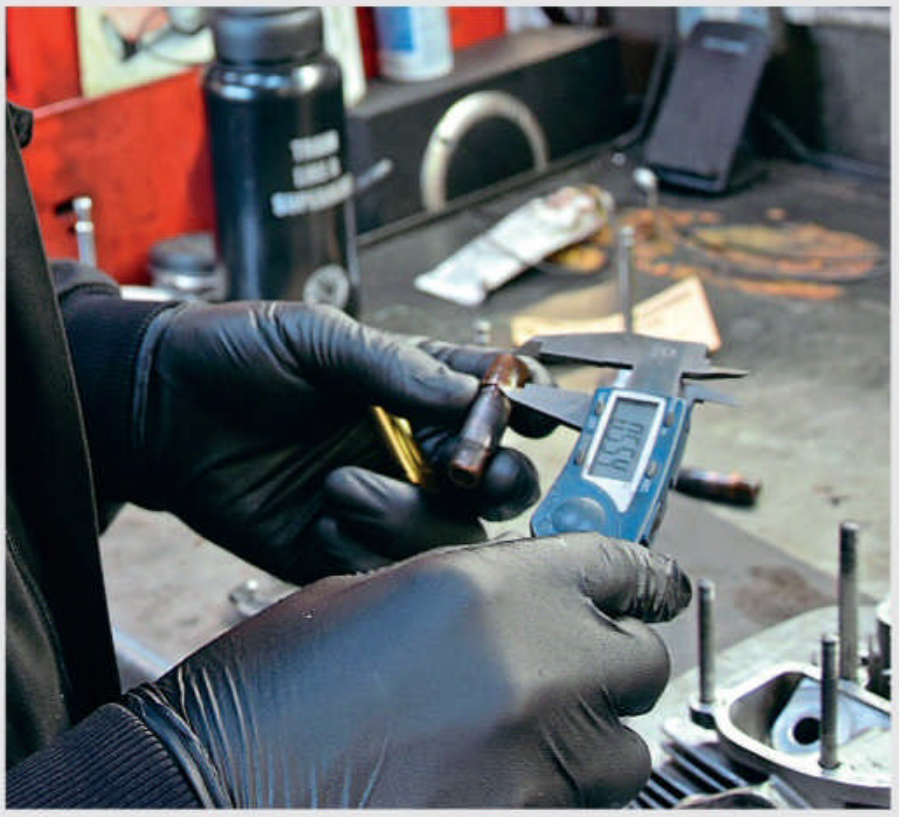


The head ready for work









Measuring the old and new guides





Decoking the head



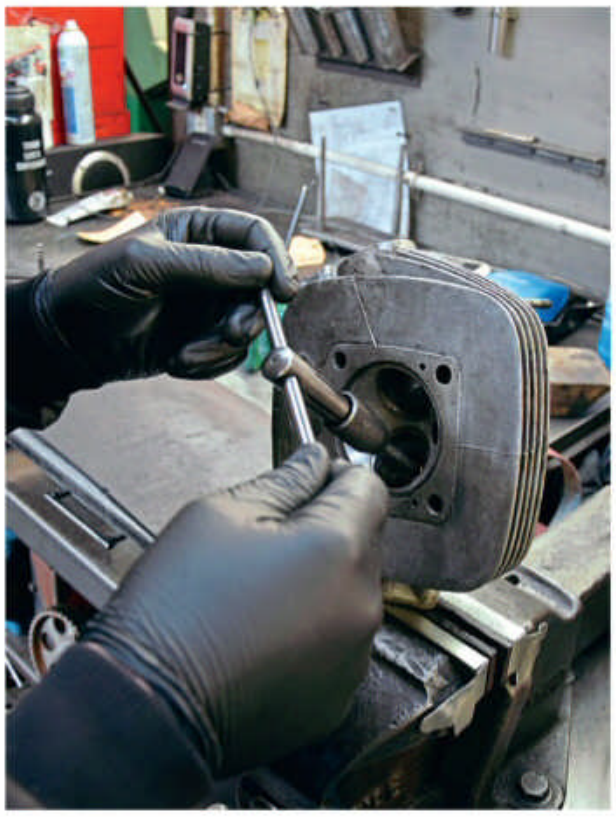
Fitting the new valve guides

diameter and length of the new guides against the old with a micrometer and Vernier caliper to ensure everything would fit properly and would operate within the correct tolerances. The external diameters of both the new valve stem and the old inlet valve stem were checked, and as the old valve was noticeably worn too so a fresh one was ordered.

The ports were then decoked with a wire brush mounted on a drill.

The new valve guides were installed using the same hammer and pin punch method.

The new valve stems were deburred by hand with a reamer to remove any possible imperfections in the manufacturing process and ensure the valves would move freely.



Deburring the guides with a reamer

RECUT THE VALVE SEATS

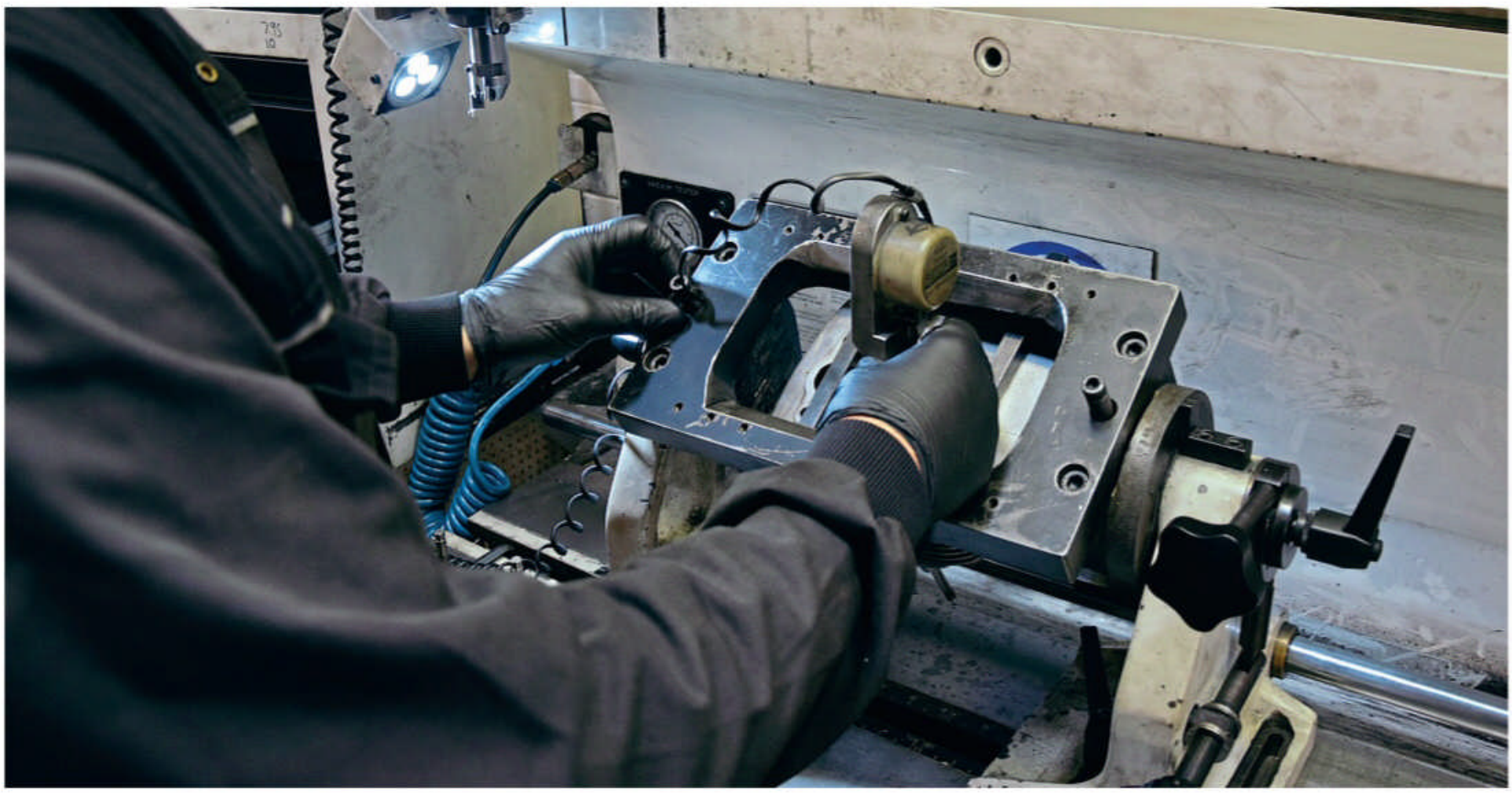
The head was fastened into the cutting machine.

This uses an electronic gauge to ensure the head is at the right angle for accurate cutting and is accurate to 5/100ths of a degree.

The cutting machinery floats on a cushion of air, eliminating any restriction to movement. Valve seats need to be cut at three angles, and old-style valve seat cutters required the use of three different carbide cutting heads, but the modern cutting equipment can cut all three angles at the same time to tolerances of 100 thousandths of an inch.



"The modern cutting equipment can cut all three angles at the same time to tolerances of 100 thousandths of an inch."



Setting the angle of the head





Cutting the valve seats

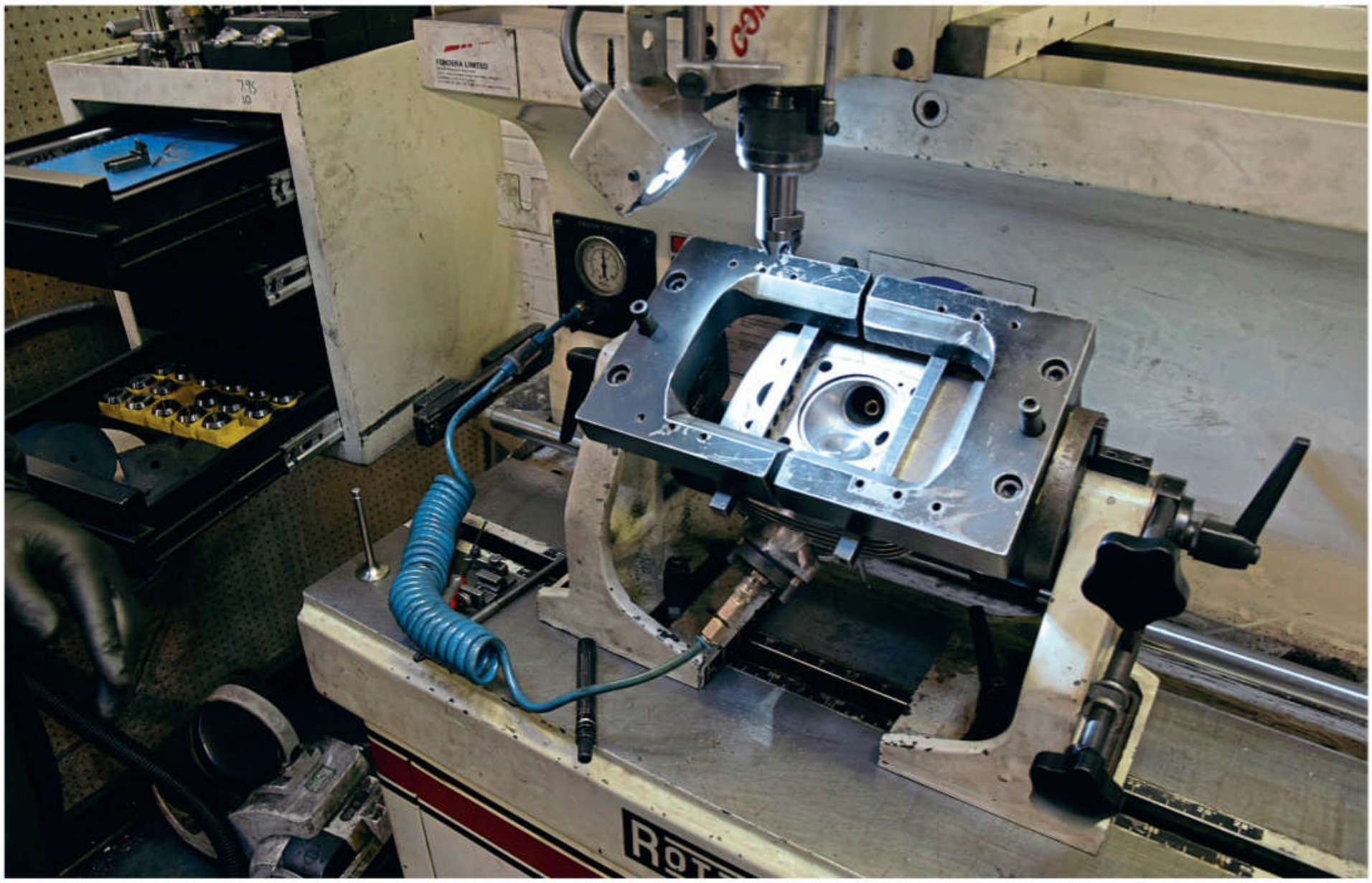
Listening to the cutter as it shaves tiny amounts of metal off the head, you can hear when the valve seat is properly cut. Joe says: "Once the seat has been recut like this, there is no need to lap the new valve in."

Then Joe attached a vacuum tube to both the inlet and exhaust ports and this was attached to a gauge that checks there was no leakage, the same task that had taken all night in my garage with the cylinder head sitting full of Gunk.

And the job was then completed. It took about 40 minutes and cost less than £40 – making it a lot easier and cheaper than trying to do it myself.

Now I just need to fit the new valve components and check that the impact of the broken valve on the piston crown hasn't done any damage to the piston, barrel, con rod, bearings, etc, all of which are entirely possible. The BSA gods do laugh at us when we make plans, after all. CBG

Thanks to Joe and to Hamlins Engineering. Visit hamlinsengineering.co.uk



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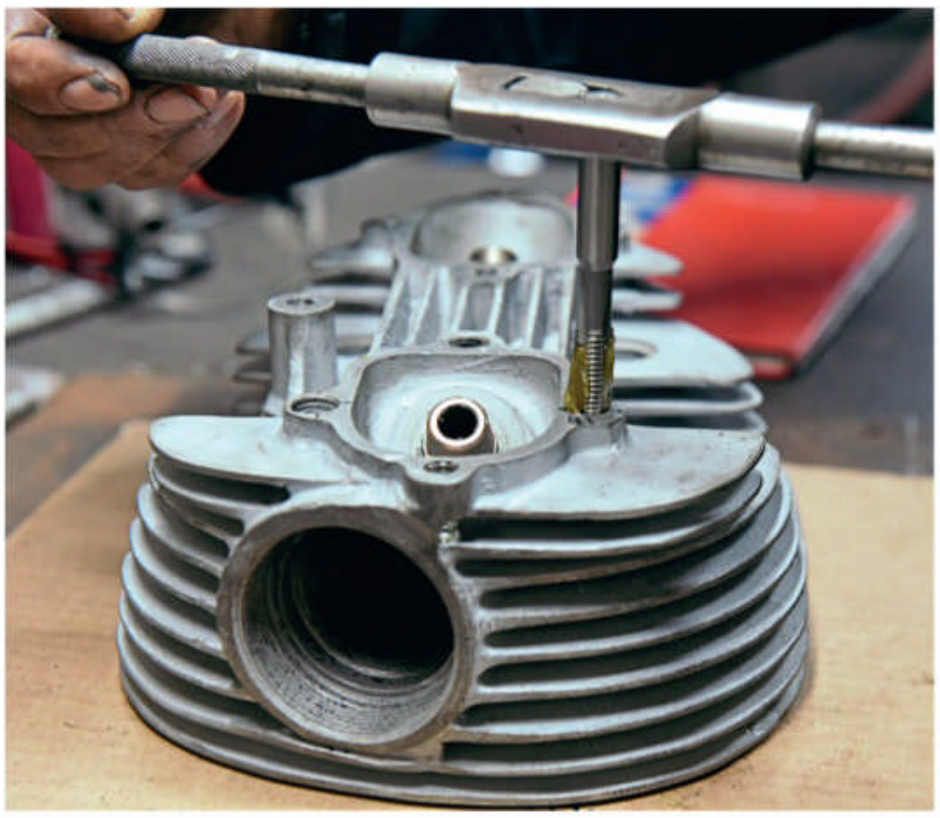
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Project Norton

The ES2 is coming alive again and starting to make sense to Matt

Last month I felt the warmth coming back to me about the 'damn Norton ES2 project'. It had been fighting me, and having bought it in bits, I had never seen it in one piece before, making the job harder still.

The cam timing stopped me getting the bottom end together, as I hadn't a clue how to set it up. On a car, the punch marks on the cam gears would line up, but on the Norton, the old manuals I've been using say they line up to the corresponding marks on the crank, or pinion gear – I'm not sure what to call it. But mine had no such marks – but in the box of bits was the original pinion gear that had been ground off. This had punch marks! So I popped the new one off and the old one on, set up the cam gears and then replaced the pinion gear with the new one. I then turned the crank through a cycle and saw the cam followers raising and lowering at the right time to the piston. Voilà!

Next job was to sort the cylinder head that I'd forgotten needed a couple of Helicoils. However, you should know by now that things are not that easy, and while one could have an insert, once we had established what size thread it was (5/16th Whitworth), the other, which had already been Helicoiled, needed something more substantial.

This hole had very little aluminium around it, just 3mm in places, so it needed to be thought about. Hutch was the man to tackle this and he thought the galvanic rate and thermal properties of brass would work best in making an insert in aluminium; plus it's a harder material. After careful measuring, we found the hole needed to be 11.1mm deep and 7.7mm width. Because of the lack of sidewall, Hutch decided a brass insert could be fitted in with less interference and use a certain Loctite to create the fit.

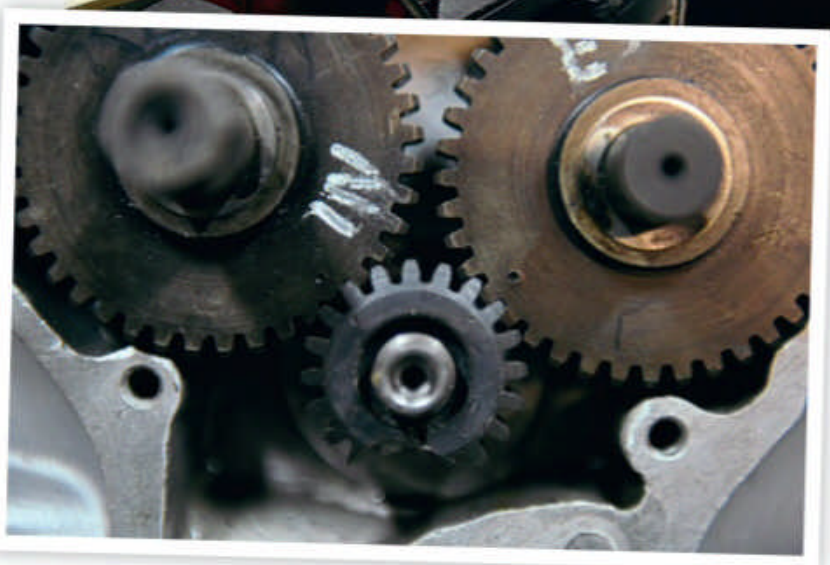
Left: Hutch is taking the diameter down to fit the hole. It needs to be tight, but enough room for the Loctite

Above: One thread could be Helicoiled.

Right: Hutch used some hex brass, because it would hold well in the lathe chuck and because he had some!

Below right: With the original pinion gear in place, the cam gears could be fitted correctly.It was then just a case of replacing the old gear with the new one, without moving the cams.

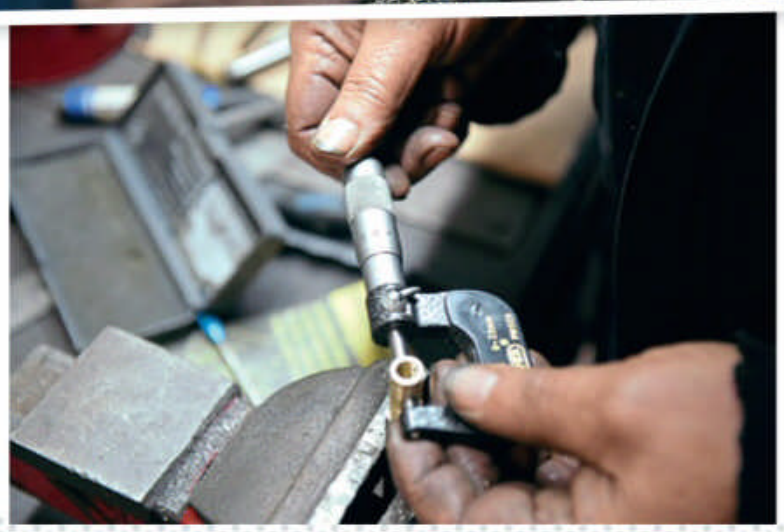












Top: Drilling the hole to tap

left: The culprit - with little meat on the head to do anything

below left: Fit had to be exact

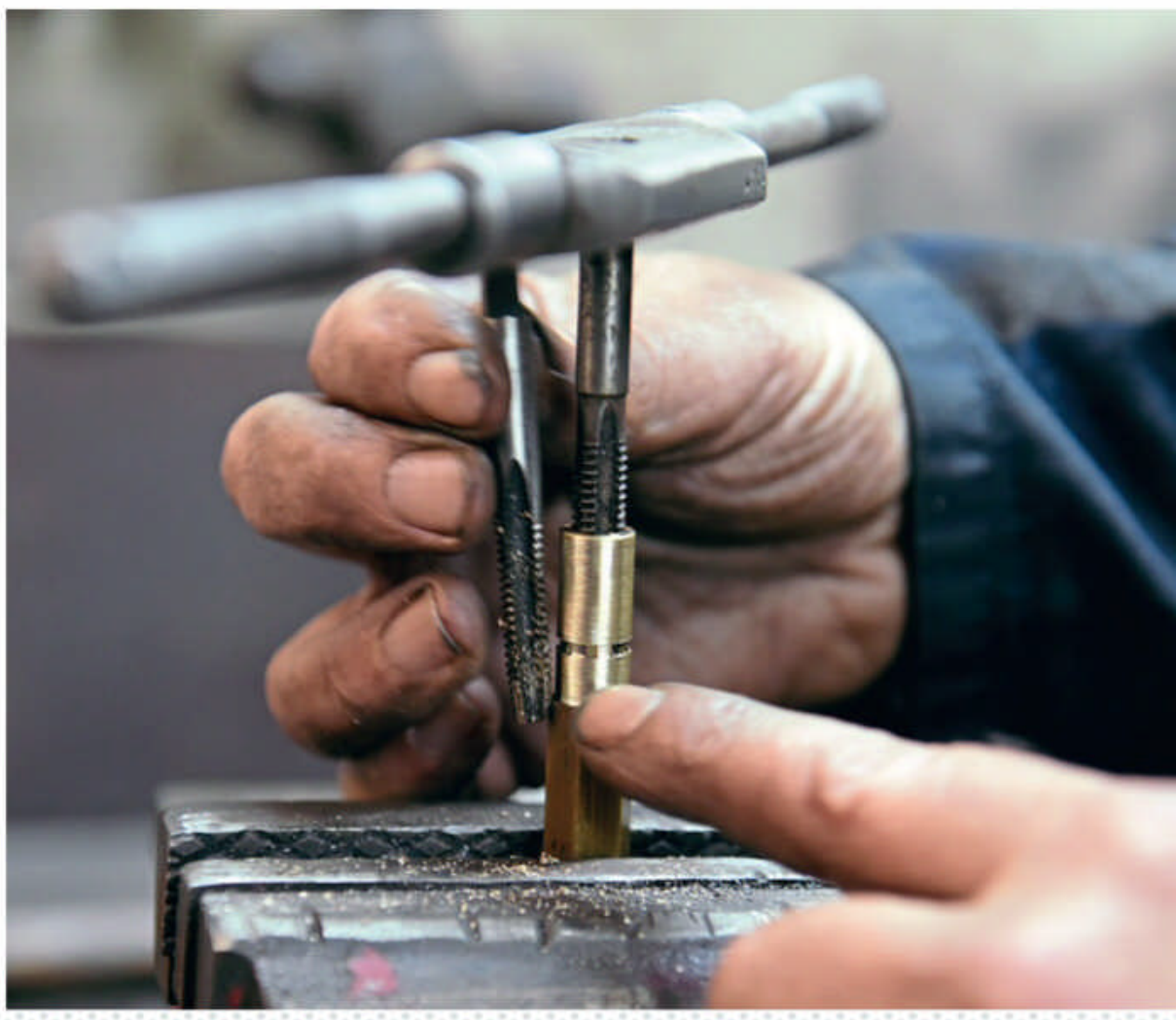
Below right: Checking depth when tapping the new hole

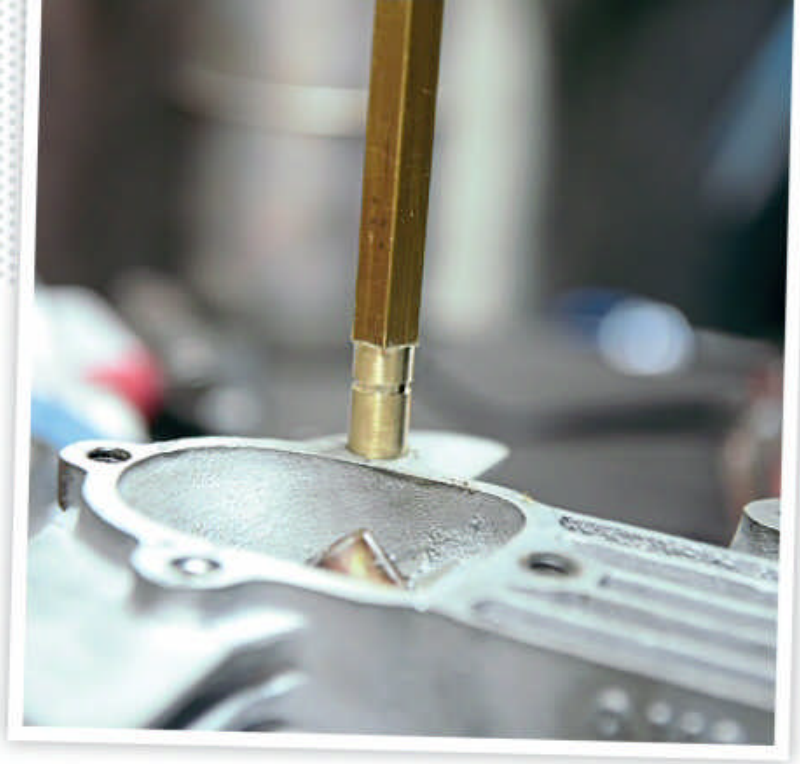
Hutch used a length of hexagonal brass because it would hold nice and securely into the jaw chuck of the lathe, and because he had some in the workshop. A piece was cut that was big enough to have plenty of grip in the chuck and Hutch used several passes with different cutting tools to get down to the outer diameter we wanted. I have a basic lathe that Neville kindly gave me when he upgraded, but there is a hundred-fold of difference between having used a lathe a few times with no skill or knowledge to back it up, and the likes of Hutch who have spent their lives learning and using machine tools, finding out which tool is the best one for a particular job, how a particular material responds and reacts to being machined, getting tolerances correct and having the patience for those jobs that need time.

I find machining intoxicating; the blend of mathematics, feel and knowledge. It's such a shame that engineers and machinists are not seen in this country in the same light as they are in other countries, like Germany. If I had a chance to retrain, I'd go into engineering instead now.

Hutch had our insert drilled, tapped correctly and machined to the correct fit to go in without risk of breaking the wall, yet tight enough for the Loctite we were using. There are multiple Loctite potions available, depending on what you need – consult the website to see more. When Hutch was happy, he coated the insert just like using superglue, then placed it into the hole and left it for 24 hours.

Next day with the insert nicely solid, Hutch faced the insert very slightly on the milling machine. Once the head was attached to the bed of the mill, I was wondering how he would get the mill head to not eat into the head, when Hutch got out a cigarette paper and stuck it on the head next to the insert. When the mill touched the paper it moved and spun off, showing us it was just the right height. Genius! One head, now ready to fit, just waiting on the new 'O' rings for the pushrod tubes.











Top left: Checking fit

Top: Finished insert - looks so simple

Top right: certain Loctite for gluing brass to alloy with heat

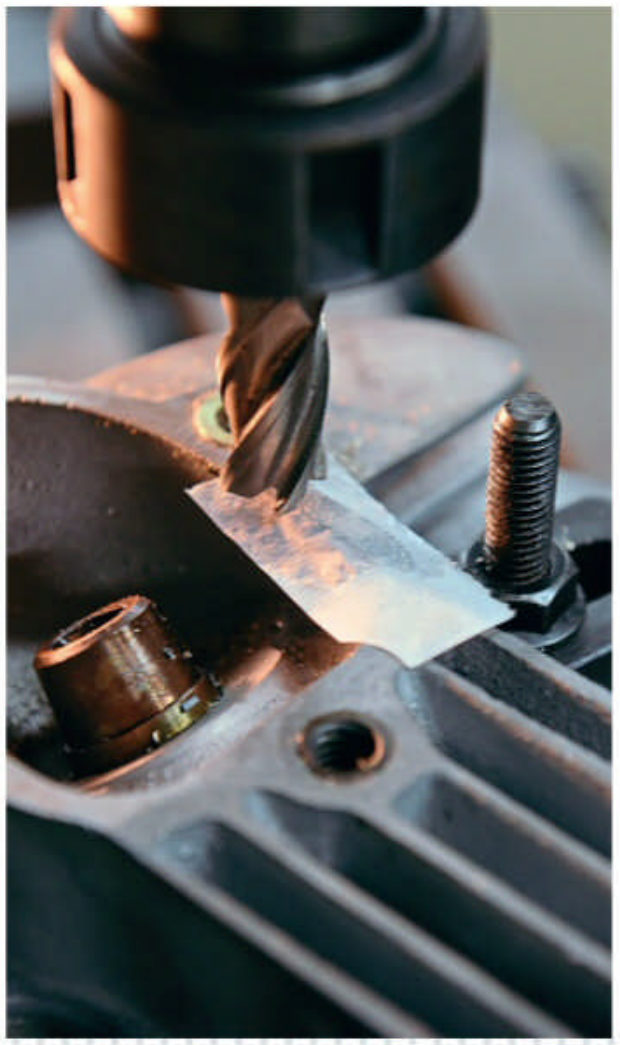
Right: Hutch literally finding a fag paper's width

Below: Paint booth! This was made with plastic sheeting a neighbour's new mattresses came in and some staples. Will have to wet the floor to keep dust down before spraying.



Back in the workshop and I had the much less skilled job of rubbing down. Though it has been so much easier, thanks to my friend, Nick of Ashtons Classics (01362 692271) showing me these new Norton Blaze paint stripping discs. Used on an angle grinder, so noisy, they are twice as expensive as the usual stuff on eBay at just under a tenner each, but are just fantastic. Orange ones are similar to a medium-grit abrasive paper, but providing you don't go too close to anything sharp, they last ages and take almost no metal off. Superb.





I have got some painting to do for another couple of bikes and a car, so I thought I could do a bulk job. So the oil tank, which looks in good order and has the correct tabs to be fitted, was taken back to bare metal, as was the petrol tank. This has had lots of paint in its time and the present colours, a hand-painted top with red pinstripe and silver below looked, I thought, rather good. But I've chickened out, so silver with pinstripes it will be, with the oil tank – and toolbox once I've beaten it into shape – in black, along with the front mudguard and stays, the handlebars (I like black handlebars), headlight and clock surround. The rear mudguard needs painting too, but I still don't have the holes drilled, so I can dry build it, get it lined up and then paint it – black is often being sprayed.

And unlike machining, I like spraying and am happy with how well I can do it. So I've used some plastic sheeting a couple of mattresses were delivered in to create myself a spray booth. The floor needs to be hosed down prior to painting, but the sides and roof are covered and for small parts this should prove ideal.

Lastly for this month, I've started looking at the magneto and the dynamo. The magneto feels okay and I'll see if it gives me a buzz later, but the dynamo was in a ton of bits and looking very sorry for itself. The clamp and one end is missing, but I've ordered a couple of bearings for it and hope to have a go myself. What can go wrong? CBG





These new Norton Blaze discs remove paint but not metal - perfect but expensive. most of the panels are now ready for primer and top coat. I quite liked the black and silver two-tone tank, but have decided to finish it in silver, with coachlines, as per standard.





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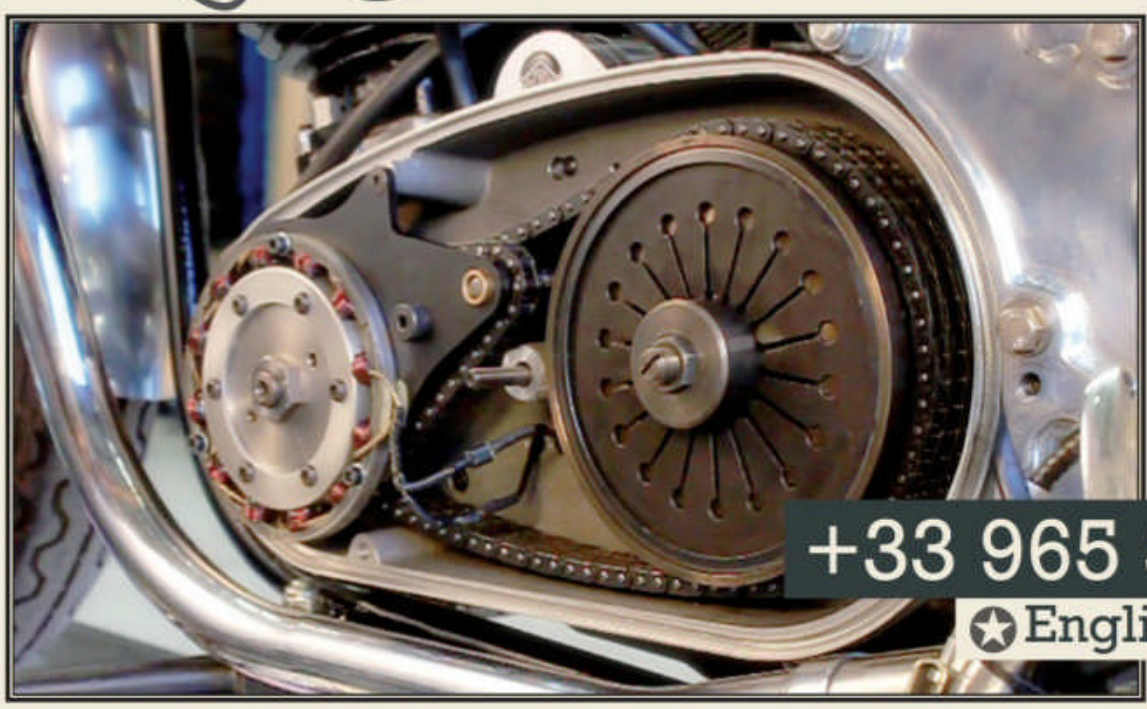
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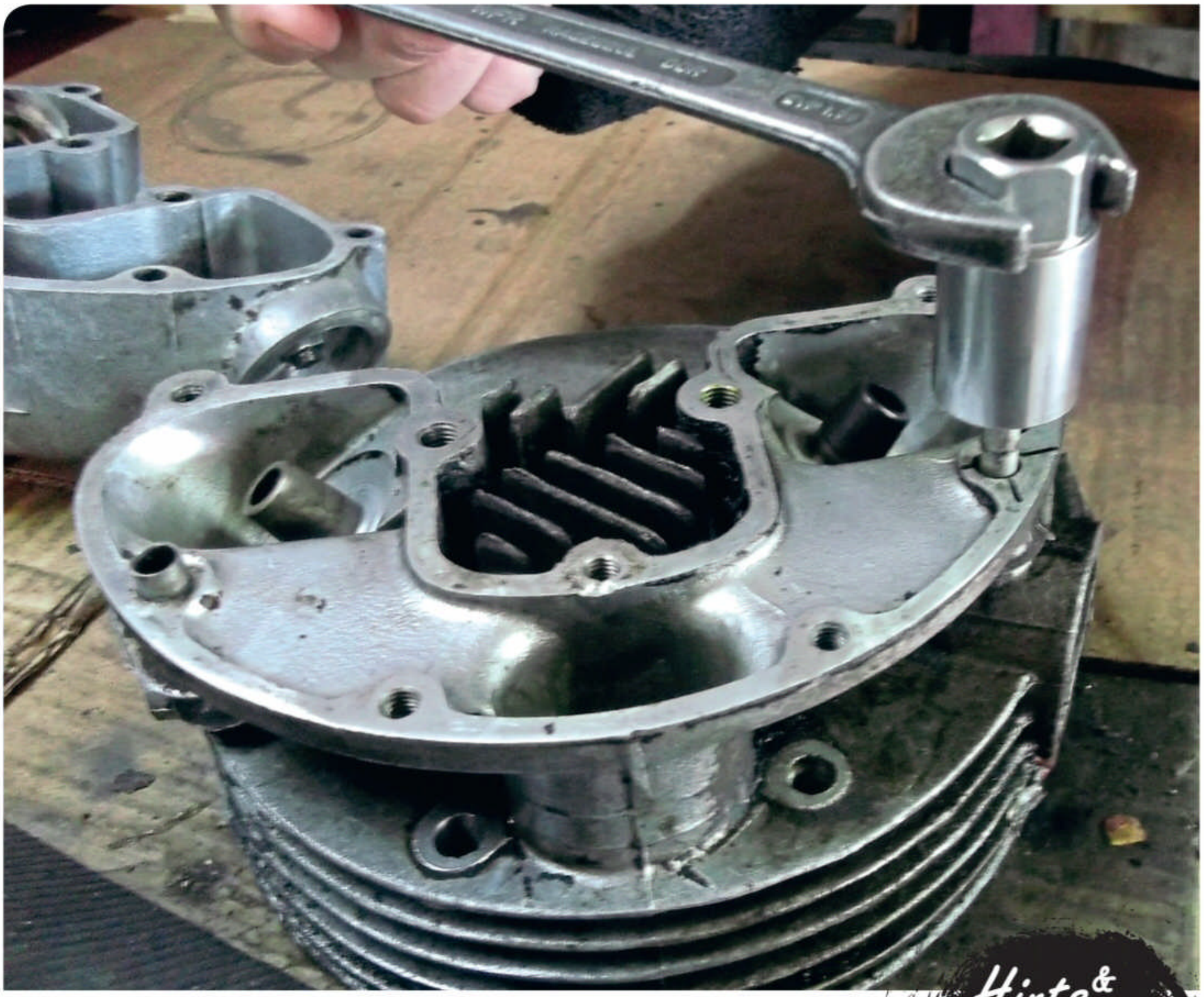
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Poorly Fred

Hints & tips FROM HUTCH'S WORKSHOP

This month we look at using thread inserts

WORDS BY HUTCH **PHOTOGRAPHY BY** CHELLEY

MOST OF US LOVE THE BUYING OF SHINY, new bits, painting and polishing our bikes. But the main and most important bit in my mind to repairing, rebuilding and restoring old clunkers comes down to the mechanical restoration, cleaning and returning components to their former mechanical glory. Of course tuning and improving is a different thing and for every change there is often a price to pay in some way, be it function, comfort or reliability – and that's a different type of fun.

At some point all repairs and rebuilds come down to mechanical detail. Nuts, bolts and threads should all be functional and at least as the design intent. This is particularly important for threads on gasket joints, as it means equal torque gives an equal amount of load over the whole gasket face.

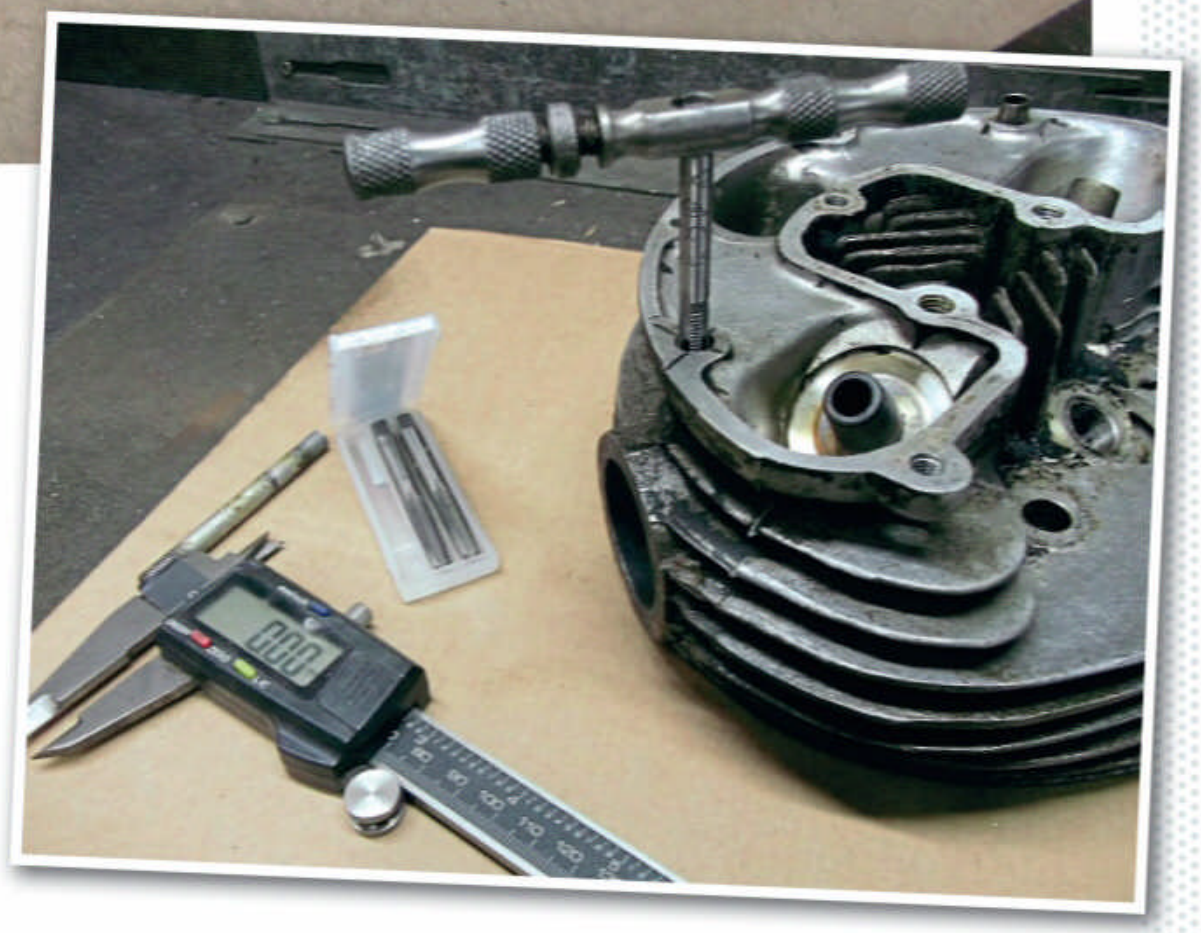
I recently pulled the top end of an Ex-WD BSA B40 for inspection to try to cure some leaks. Whilst the head had reputedly never been removed before, the rocker box had certainly seen a few spanners; when removing the nuts to remove it one of the studs came out with the nut, the thread of which was full of ally and would need some attention if the clamping force on the gasket face (and hopefully oil retention) was to be restored.

Once the head was removed, stripped and cleaned, the formerly threaded hole was identified and marked; just for safety's sake so as not to affect a repair on the wrong 'ole.

Taking the cleaned up rocker box stud that came out of the failed thread, I used a digital Vernier (or very-near) to measure the width, TPI (threads per inch) gauges and a Zeus book (the engineer's bible for identifying threads and converting metric to imperial) to identify what the thread was, and so what insert we would need.

The thread was identified as being ¼in and 26tpi – and this is where Imperial can get tricky. This meant it was either BSF (British Standard Fine) or CEI (Cycle Engineers Institute), which is also called BSCy (British Standard Cycle). The difference is the thread angle of the thread – which can be difficult to measure. BSF is 55deg, whereas CEI is 60deg; but without a shadowgraph machine or similar, you need more information. A little research showed that BSA used BSF from 1958. Practicality says one will probably fit in the other but given the choice it's good to use the right one.

As a first go at repairing the thread, I attempted to 'pull back' the thread using a ¼in/26tpi plug tap; unfortunately there wasn't enough meat left in the hole on this one, but it's always worth a try. This hole needed a thread insert fitting to bring back to standard.



There are a number of different thread repair systems, individual thread size kits are easily available online or at a tool shop and relatively cheap (compared to scrapping heads!) plus once you have got them, insert refills are even cheaper; the kits usually come with instructions.

Above: Zeus chart, vernier and thread gauges needed to see which insert is needed. Retapping the hole didn't work



Fortunately for the BSA, I had a thread repair kit of the right thread. The existing hole depth was measured; this is particularly important as you don't really want to drill too deep and break through somewhere you shouldn't, in this case the exhaust port.

The measured hole depth was marked on the tapping size drill that came in the repair kit and the offending hole was drilled to this depth, keeping the hole perpendicular is important but as it's just opening up an existing hole a little, this is achievable even with a hand-held drill.

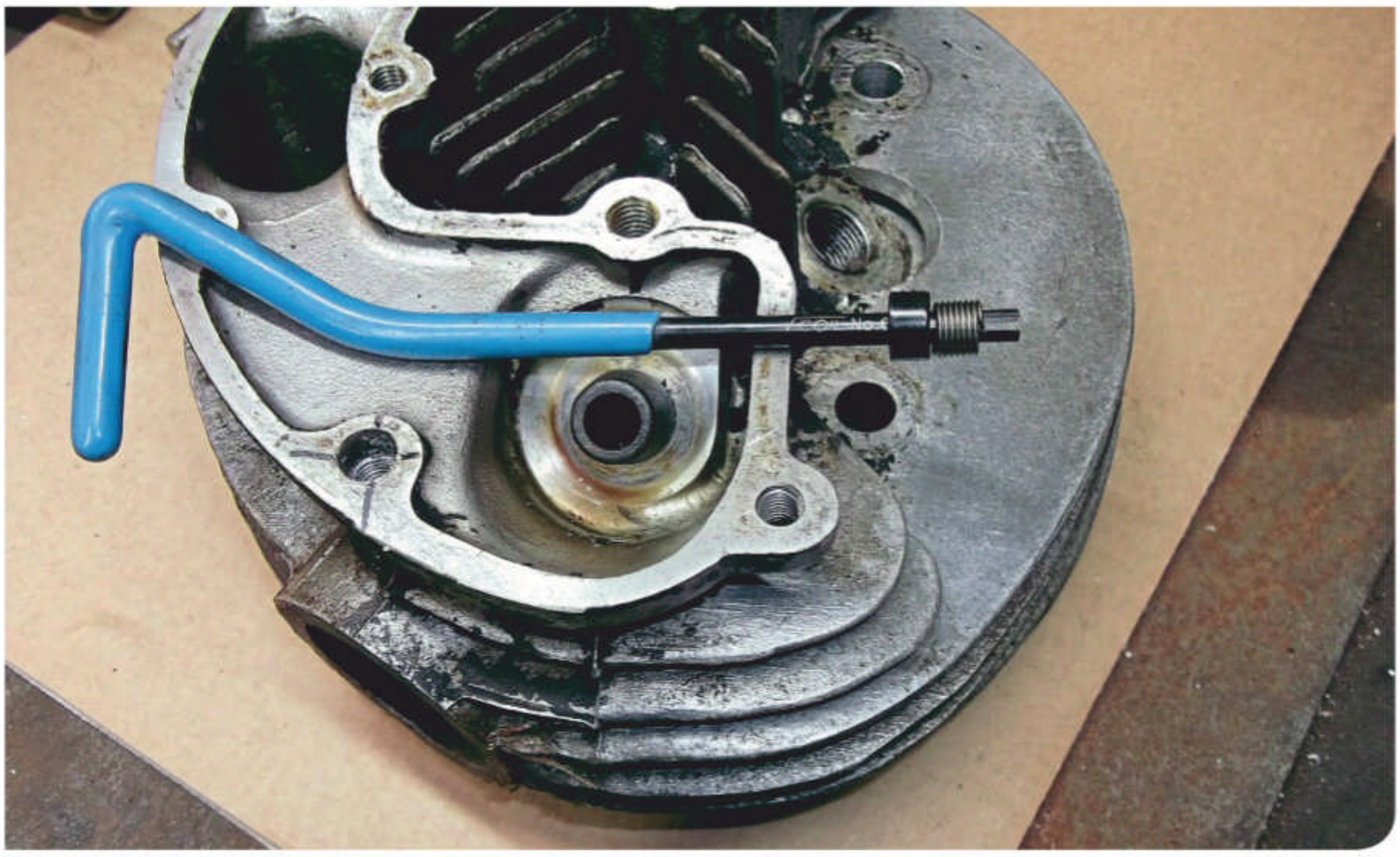




Tapping the hole to take the insert with the tap from the kit. Take your time and use cutting compound, or oil to help

Before any tapping it's important to blow out any swarf left from the drilling, then the hole can have the repair thread cut using the tap that comes in the kit. I always like to use a cutting fluid/compound when tapping. Once the thread has been cut it's important to clean out the newly threaded hole of any swarf and cutting compound again.

The thread repair insert was fitted onto the insertion tool and carefully wound into the newly tapped hole. This one was a little more difficult than usual, as the hole also had a dowel counter bore at the top of it. The insert was wound in until it was ½ to 1 turn (thread pitches) below the start point of the original thread.



Left: Drilling the hole to take the insert must be straight and true

Above: Measuring the depth of the hole to use the correct insert. The hole must be free of swarf!

Once you've wound the insert in, take the punch to break off the tang you've used to wind it home. Then shake it out!

The small drift that came in the kit was then used to snap off the tang on the bottom of the insert and the head then shaken about upside down until it fell out the repaired hole.

Finally, having had its thread cleaned up with a die, the stud was fitted to the repaired threaded hole to check that it fitted okay – fortunately it screwed in perfectly. One head ready to run again! CBG



Right: Finished and ready to run again

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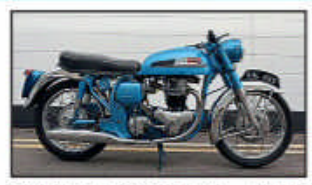
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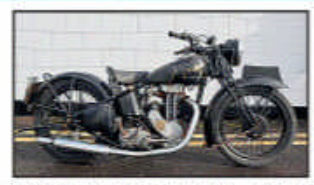

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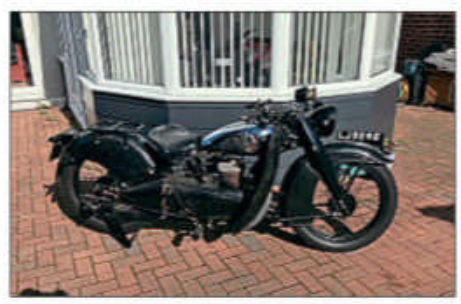
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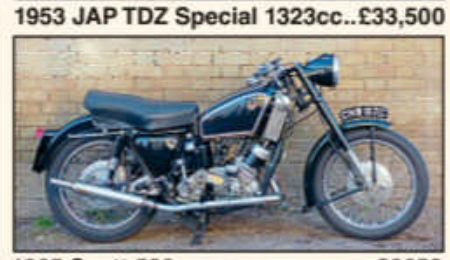
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SUZUKI GT250 1976, running but needs tidying up, old log book and an old MoT, no history, will make a lovely bike, might have it on the road ie MoT before this ad is out so please call for info, £2750 ovno. Tel. Ron 01248 714036. Wales.

SUZUKI TS185 (L) 1973, good original clean decent chrome twin, spark head, recent full service, V5C, not taken off road, 5800 miles, good tyres, chain, battery, controls, £2395. Tel. 07813 845894. Worcs.

TRIUMPH DAYTONA 1996, 900cc, South African model, superb original condition, red, 32,000 miles, to big and fast for me so selling cheap, £1695 or close offer. Tel. 07722 749635. London.

TRIUMPH TIGER 100S 1967, engine reconditioned by Tricor Ledbury, frame powder coated, paintwork completed, invoices for work carried out, good looking bike, oil filter fitted, matching numbers, £6000. Tel. 07842 267629. Gloucestershire.

TRIUMPH TR25W Trophy, 1969, selling as restoration project, bike is in bits please ask for pictures of all parts and work done with receipts, frame has been powder coated, complete new wheels, tyres, hubs etc, fuel tank & mudguards all resprayed, engine needs reconditioning, bike is 98% complete just missing a small exhaust section & chain guard that I am aware of, bike is located at Shifnal Shropshire, call for more info £2700. Tel. 07814 456095.

VELOCETTE LE 1965, hundreds spent on bike for MoT 2017, little use, call for details, clean tidy bike, £1800. Tel. 01248 681466. Conwy.

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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 & two carbs good condition, full set of gaskets oil seals+gaskets, head stripped forblasting barrels need rebore, good valves + springs + camshaft, lots of other stuff, £1000 ono. Tel. Ron 07768 982954. Perthshire.

HONDA 400/4 Motad, 4 into 1, exhaust system, includes clamps but not seals, in used condition as it was fitted to my 400/4, photos available, £200 ono plus postage, about £25 located near St Ives. Tel. 07814 866098.

HONDA NT650 large size pannier lids - doubles capacity, in silver and in very good condition, pair £50. Tel. Richard 01366 728030.

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ITALIAN PARTS: selling lots makes, Ducati, Benelli, Laverda, Cagiva, Morini, British, BMW, Japanese. Tel. 07833 906288. Essex

PANTHER SIDE CAR CHASSIS with braked wheel and non-original deeply valanced mudguard, solid but rusty and suspension appears to be seized, wheel in poor condition but hub looks sound, designed for Panther 100 or 120 with swing arm rear end, £300 or offers. Tel. 01462 742529. Hertfordshire.

ROYAL ENFIELD clipper frame with forks and swinging arm, £165. Tel. 07377 042587. Didcot.

SPARES FOR HONDA CB250 CB350K: pair of side panels, Honda CB450 (black Bomber) early Suzuki RV125 main stand, pump, rear rack, parts book & manual. Tel. 01291 423392. Wales.

SUZUKI GS250EX seat with trim (c1980) £20; Honda CB125S (c1975) nos mirror £10, blue RHS cover £20, handlebar grips £5 pair; cam sprocket £5; Yamaha YCS1 & 2 Factory Service Manual, £15. Tel. 07813 845894. Worcs.

TRIUMPH 5T Speed Twin rigid nos oil tank stamped, 1946, maroon, superb, £400. Also Honda CG125 complete, rough, rusty, spares, repair, £299 contact for details. Tel. 07396 270365. Sussex.

YAMAHA X J6F rear carrier as new £50. Baglux leather type tank cover and Baglux tank bag, tank bag never been on the bike, £80. Belstaff two old style red and black jackets, £35 each. Tel. 07443 413169. Manchester.

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ANY AUTOCYCLE OR MOTORCYCLE pre 1985s, any condition, I'm wanting to enlarge my collection, can collect anywhere in England. Tel. 01872 241852. Cornwall.

BSA A65 1970/71 Inner timing case and outer cover wanted, would consider complete/incomplete, running/non running engine also. Tel. 01305 826670.

CLASSIC MOTORCYCLES wanted anything considered from a basket case to a nice bike top price paid by keen enthusiast. Tel. 07885 257211. Lancs.

CORGI ORIGINAL TYRES wanted for display only, cracked, split, distorted, discoloured why? Tel. Jon 07872 320227.

FAIRING QUICK release clips/toggles with back plates needed, also Honda Britain tank required. Tel. Phil 07538 601970.

HARLEY-DAVIDSON 1340 EVO wanted, Fat Boy, Softail, Hertitage, Wideglide, private buyer cash waiting for the right bike. Tel. 07825 376982. Derbyshire .

HARLEY-DAVIDSON Aermacchi 250cc, Sprint H forks wanted, if you have some forks in good useable condition or that I might be able to refurbish. Tel. Neil 07413 935748. Hants.

HONDA REBEL 250cc wanted, mechanically sound and low miles, good price available. Tel. 01751 474350. North Yorks.

HONDA CB750 1970 wanted early oil tank, also HM300 exhausts, have got genuine HM341 for exchange. Wanted K1, K2 clocks restoring CB750 diecasts why? Wanted BSA C15 B40 engine, T90, petrol tank. Tel. Peter 01709 876651. Email. joan-w@talktalk.net

KAWASAKI W650/W800 wanted, any condition, also any parts for above model. Tel. 07711 107649. Wales.

KAWASAKI ER5 WANTED private bloke trying to buy a Kawasaki ER5, cash waiting, some work not objected to nothing major, also looking for a Triumph project, any cc anything considered phone or text me, genuine buyer. Tel. 07565 712371. West Midlands.

MOTORCYCLE STARTER ROLLER 12V wanted, good condition. Tel. John 07788 768313 anytime. Bucks.

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NORTON 1947, 350cc Manx number B10, 1146* XM105 supplied to Alec Bennett, Southampton Bert Morris, Totton was EOW375, last known in Kent, 1971, son trying to find dads bike. Email. recycledreading@gmail.com

NORTON INTERNATIONAL 1954, 500cc trying to rebuild my dads Senior Clubmans bike, need original factoy dual seat, any tinware etc. Also photos of inters in 1953/1954 Senior Clubmans. Please email Alain recycledreading@gmail.com

SUZUKI TS250 1969/70, early points model parts wanted, complete/incomplete, non runner/runner also considered. Tel. 01305 826670. Dorset.

TRIUMPH ROCKET 3 outfit Watsonian sidecar. Tel. 01613 309814. Manchester.

VYD 636 GOLDSTAR 1956, 500cc, would owner please email Alain if he wishes to know of its past. Email. recycledreading@gmail.com

WANTED MOTO GUZZI V35 Imola, does anyone have a UK registered complete bike at a reasonable price. Tel. Mike 07511 688088. Birmingham.

WANTED NSU QUICKLY Puch Machi, Cyclemaster or just parts. Tel. 07790 168224. West Midlands.

WANTED YAMAHA YDS5 any parts by private enthusiast, anything considered, even a complete bike, WHY? Tel. Richard 07769 715916. Lincs.

WANTED: BRITISH MADE chrome front mudguard and stays for Royal Enfield Constellation, 1959. Tel. 07854 272022. Hampshire.

CLASSIC MOTORCYCLES WANTED, any condition including projects, parts also wanted, collection from anywhere, motorcycles sold on your behalf. Tel. 0161 748 0865 Manchester, email: rajonesclassicmotorcycles@gmail.com web: rajones-classicmotorcycles.co.uk (T) *RO679092C*

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RIDING JACKET Weise Avenger jacket with detachable inner lining for summer/winter use, size L, colour black with coloured logos, very little used, brand new condition, £65. Tel. Ron 02086 995307.

RON JERRARD rode Syd Lawtons 1953, 350cc Manx an ex-Ivor Lloyd/Reid & Haysom 7R in 1955, Junion Manx, a Jack Difazio Gold Star, 500cc, 1956 Clubmans (2nd). Email. recycledreading@gmail.com

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FRANK WESTWORTH

FAMOUS LAST WORDS

There is no fuel like old fuel, so they say... Frank laments petrol and the stranglehold it has on us

"As I devastated the homeland of several thousand spiders, hauling aside supposedly waterproof covers to expose the rusty ruins beneath, I decided that I would make them all work."

THIS STRANGE YEAR, WITH ITS ENDLESS uncertainty, will we/won't we; can we/can't we, has challenged even the more optimistic among us to find a bright side to look upon. And I am endlessly, relentlessly optimistic. Mostly. Except where oily-frame BSA/ Triumph 250 singles are concerned. I shall say no more about those at this point.

My own answer to the disastrous dithering has been to grasp the opportunity to rescue at least a few of the long-lost treasures which lurk in remote corners of the shed I like to call The Shed. And despite some fairly spirited disposals of the two-wheeled kind, there are still a few machines maturing nicely, gently converting themselves back to the mostly ferrous oxides from which they mostly came. Some of them – not too many, honest – haven't actually run for several decades. As I devastated the homeland of several thousand spiders, hauling aside supposedly waterproof covers to expose the rusty ruins beneath, I decided that I would make them all work.

See what I mean about relentless optimism? I chose the six machines which have been silent for the longest, but started with those which were easiest to reach. Entirely down to laziness, nothing more. Almost last, but certainly not least, of the chosen few was an elderly AJS, a 500 twin, which is the same age as I am, and is similarly worn out.

As you are wearily aware, a bike needs sparks and it needs fuel. If it has these, and there are no obvious reasons otherwise, such as holes in pistons, crankcases or fuel tanks, for example, then the thing should run. After only a little ministration, the sparks were great. I am a fan of the magneto. None of that tiresome battery nonsense. The fuel tank was almost full of fuel, which caused the ancient pre-Monobloc to leak a lot when tickled, and it was valuable leaded fuel, not this modern nonsense which seems to be a diluted form of paint stripper. So hurrah, let's get down to the kicking thing.

No one has ever asked me how I maintain my athletic physique, but if they did, I would share with them that it is entirely down to my inability to start a motorcycle without several hours of initially frantic but increasingly feeble kicking. Did you know that my right leg is around a half-inch shorter than its sinister companion? Strange but true.

Nothing. Not a cough. Nothing. I commenced kicking at the start of summer. By autumn, I accepted that something was amiss. So I tried a different set of plugs, new plugs, too, rather than a set rescued from a nearby Harley or similar piece of modernistic nonsense. They made no difference. Money wasted.

I drained the fuel tank. Almost three imperial gallons of what should best be described as previously petrol emerged, smelling foul and looking a little like very strong builder's tea. Aha! All I need is a gallon of modern feeble fake fuel and the bike will run, surely?

It did. Just like that. It sounded great, didn't smoke and didn't even leak too much oil. Had I changed the fuel in April, I could have enjoyed several miles of hopefully happy motoring. So it goes. Or not, of course.

So what had happened to the fuel? I am no stranger to leaving bikes parked up for lengthy periods of inaction, and until the arrival of the modern stuff, which I try to drain before parking the bike with an empty tank, I would simply screw the cap down and stick some tape over the cap's vent hole. This had not worked, plainly.

As an experiment, I tried to ignite the old fuel. The match just went out. Amazing. I've never seen that before. But close optical examination revealed that the tea-like colour was mostly small particles of rust. Fuel does not cause stout AMC steel to rust. Rust does clog fuel tap filters, however, I can reveal. Enraged at the loss of my very last full-lead fuel, I poured some onto a particularly virulent patch of bamboo, which is the bane of the Better Third's garden life. Brownie points are always useful, and the bamboo had proved itself resistant to all known defoliants, so… So the bamboo appeared to enjoy the strange stuff, and flourished. So much for the brownie points.

A neighbour restores ancient tractors – who better to consult? He smiled at me. Poured the dead fuel into a large and impressively rusty agricultural implement, cranked its handle and we both stepped back – he with an air of satisfaction, me less so – as it coughed, spluttered and rattled into smoke-belching life.

'Proper job,' he said. 'You should give up on them old bikes, and fettle some proper machinery.'

I think he has a point… 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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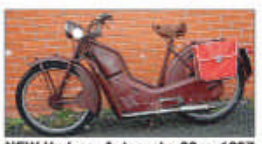

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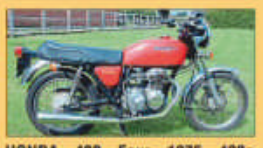

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