



The Beemer Reader

Newsletter of the BMW Riders of Vancouver Island

BMWMOA # 237

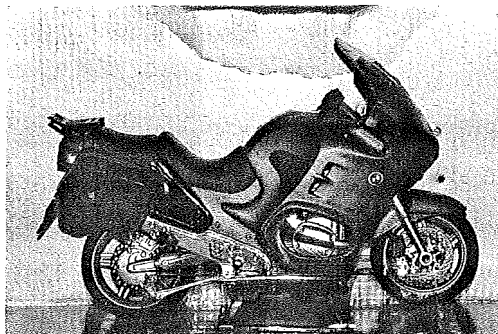
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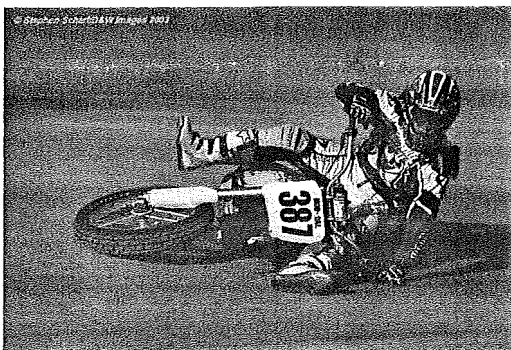
Draw this month

R1150 RT Green



Cost \$1 per ticket.

December winner: Ian MacDougall



Here's another way to go around a corner...not recommended!!

Happy New Year

Bt the time you read this several members have gathered to greet in the new year and wish everyone a Happy New Year. The lunch at Geoff Stevenson's will be well received and enjoyed by all. The calendar donated by SM Cycle which was offered as a raffle prize will have been won. See next month for the winner.

Now that we're into a new year, let's consider how we could make it the best ever. Think about volunteering your time to some event: poker run, picnic, gathering at a favourite spot, a ride to some destination, etc. We could use another person to help in sending out the newsletter (ask Brian Davies for details) or put something together and plan it. Let me know in advance so it gets publicized. We all want to know about happenings so we can plan to attend them.

The Vancouver Motorcycle Show takes place in Abbotsford Jan. 23-25, 2004. Anyone who has attended in the past will tell you how interesting it is. You will see the latest motorcycles, gear, accessories, etc. and have the opportunity to buy some things at amazing discounts. You can also see restorations, superbikes, and off-road vehicles. Occasionally they show riding skills, and demonstrations of motorcycle feats. It's an event many of us wait for all year!

I hope you all are riding most of the year and are out there on dry days taking advantage of our weather. After all, the rest of Canada has to wait until spring to even consider getting the "beast" on the road.

Another great riding year ahead. I'm looking forward to it... are you? See on the roads.

Chris Jones

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Saturday, January 10, 2004

Meeting is at 9:30 am

At *The Chequered Flag*

A shift down memory lane Part 1

By Geoff Stevenson

Those of us old enough to have ridden our first bike in the early 60s usually have fond memories of those early mounts. Mostly they were British, most of us started on singles and graduated to twins and we thought they were pretty neat bikes - until Mr. Honda produced bikes half the size with the same performance and (a little later) electric starters, disc brakes and all those other accoutrements we now take for granted.

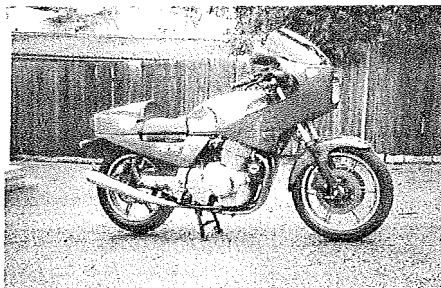
(Mr. Honda's products didn't seem to leak oil, either, but that's a subject to be explored another day).

But what were those old bikes really like? How far has motorbike design and engineering progressed in the past 40 years? Why did all those British marques disappear anyway?

Those were some of the thoughts racing through my head as brother Alistair suggested I should try out some of the wheels in his collection the other day. This was in the bucolic district of Ettrick, in the heart of New Zealand's apple-growing country, where they ride on the left-hand side of the road, the pavement twists and turns in a motorcyclist's delight - and, it seems, there is a distinct shortage of policemen (which was just as well, since three of the four bikes I rode had neither current registration nor license plate).

Ettrick's a great place to ride. Alistair lives at the foot of a series of hills and the road up the hills climbs around a thousand feet in just a few miles (no good counting in kilometers, since Mr. Smith's dials on the old bikes were always imperial measure).

To get me ready for the culture shock, Alistair reckoned I should start on something that would be reasonably familiar: A 1982 solid Italian would run fastest



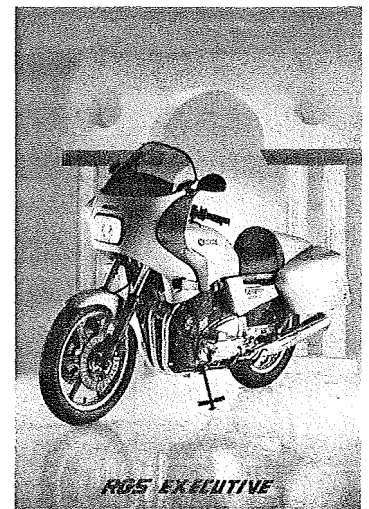
I had ridden the small) fairing low for my taste, discs up front similar to a bike 20 years younger.

Laverda RGS 1000 triple. This is a sturdy piece of engineering and the big Laverdas from the early 80s around 140 m.p.h., which made them among the production bikes of their day.

Laverda before and with its blood red (but quite just repainted, it looked very smart. The bars are a bit but the gearshift's on the left and the twin Brembo and single at the rear mean that stopping distances are

bike used to be a bear to start, especially when hot. It came with contact breaker points and there never seemed to be enough voltage to get the engine to fire easily. Alistair has recently fitted electronic ignition and this has transformed hot or cold starting and, I suspect, improved performance, too.

Apart from the handlebars, the Laverda's not too different from a K bike of the similar period. It has loads of acceleration, the handling is fine and the long, flat seat allows at least a couple of hundred kilometers before needing a butt break. I rode sedately up the hill, turned around after perhaps 10 minutes and cruised down. On the



Next up, as John Cleese would say, was something quite different: A 1973 T150 three-cylinder, 750 c.c. Triumph Trident. This bike weighs well under 500lbs wet and, with perhaps 60 bhp on tap, has lots of performance. Wonderful exhaust note, too.

Neither the Trident nor the two bikes to follow had a fairing. I guess I've grown soft over the years, but I don't really want to ride any longer without at least a handlebar windshield and, ideally, with a full fairing. I've spent a while lying prone on the tank of a Britbike trying to get the Smith's needle past the magic 100 m.p.h., but those days have gone - as this ride clearly confirmed.

The Trident had a clutch that might have been magnetic: The lever travel from disengagement to drive seemed the thickness of a hair. But after stalling twice, I gingerly tried again and rode off. The shift lever was now on the right, with the rear brake on the left. I felt 25 again as I snicked into second, then third and finally fourth (no five-speeds back then).

Of course, as we climbed the hill I needed to shift down, but the wrong-footedness - and remembering to stay on the left - certainly had my brain working overtime.

The Trident boasts twin-leading-shoes on the front brake and, providing they're adjusted properly, these old brakes (the pre-1970 BMW airheads used the same system) work remarkably well. But in stops close together they produced some pungent smells and they'd fade in really heavy use.

With its flat seat and moderate bars, the Trident was comfortable. But that rush of air when you accelerated hard was quite something. Hard to know how fast you were actually going, since the British speedos were infamous for their jerky motion and always seemed to be trying to catch up to your actual speed.

Still, this was performance not too different from a modern 750 c.c. bike, but with inferior brakes and handling. Of course, we won't even discuss reliability.

☺

Rocket III

The first ever production bike to break the 2-litres barrier, the Rocket III is the ultimate power cruiser.

As alluded to by its name and alone among the cruiser fold the Rocket III is powered by a triple cylinder engine, an engine format that Triumph has very much made its own. Its fuel-injected, longitudinally-mounted, in-line three-cylinder engine has a cubic capacity of 2,294cc - 140 cubic inches - and uses the same size pistons as a ten-cylinder American muscle car.

But the impressive numbers don't end there as the Rocket III makes more peak torque than two together of almost any other production motorcycle. To be precise, a massive 147ft.lbf torque at 2,500rpm, with 90% delivered at a mere 1,800 rpm.

This stunning triple digit number means, two-up, it will accelerate faster than pretty much anything else on two wheels.

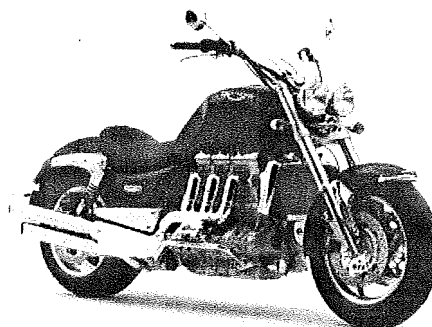
But while the Rocket III's statistics and its looks are striking, our motorcycles are built to be ridden, not just admired. Usability is a core belief at Triumph and an element close to the heart of every Triumph rider, so built around the Rocket III's motor is a chassis that's more than a match for its monstrous output.

Just as remarkable as the engine's sheer motive force is the balance that's been struck between power and control making the Rocket III a surprisingly easy-to-manage machine. The ergonomics are such that it's no more of a stretch to the foot or handlebar controls than it is on the Triumph America cruiser model. This relaxed riding position, along with the hugely torquey engine, provides the perfect platform for stealing the limelight close to home or for eating up countless miles on a longer jaunt.

The standard machine is fitted with a detachable pillion seat and comes in Jet Black or Cardinal Red. There is also a whole range of Triumph accessories available for those who want to add a touch of their own personal style.

But make no mistake, the Rocket III is not just another motorcycle; it's the ride of a lifetime. There isn't a benchmark it hasn't obliterated, a limit it hasn't disregarded. It is, simply, the biggest and most impressive production motorcycle the world has ever seen. And added to the breathtaking riding experience are truly original looks that ensure it will never be mistaken for anything else.

Awesome is an over-used word but for the Rocket III it's barely adequate.



Buy, Sell, or Trade

For Sale: an older BMW full face with the tilt up chin guard. It has a few scratches but it is in decent condition overall. (visor is good).

Medium.Large? reduced to \$50

Nigel Beattie: nbeattie@district.langford.bc.ca

Wanted: Right side battery cover for /7 air head
Brian Radford 1-250-653-9370

Notice: Any ads placed in the newsletter will run for two issues unless otherwise requested.



January 23-25, 2004

Motorcycle Truisms

The Sidelines

It's always better to be on the sidelines wishing you were on the track than on the track wishing you were on the sidelines.

Too Slowly

No one has ever hit something too slowly.

Luck & Experience

You start with a bag full of luck and an empty bag of experience. The trick is to fill the bag of experience before you empty the bag of luck.

Calendar of Events

Saturday, January 10, 2004

Sun. February 1, 2004

Sat. March 6, 2004

Sun. April 4, 2004

Sat. May 1, 2004

Sun. June 6, 2004

Sat. July 3, 2004

Sun. August 8, 2004

Sat. September 11, 2004

Sun. October 3, 2004

Sat. November 6, 2004

Sun. December 5, 2004

**Meeting at 9:30 am
The Chequered Flag**

**January 1, Island View Beach
Noon at the beach.**

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