



The Beemer Reader

Newsletter of the BMW Riders of Vancouver Island

BMWMOA # 237

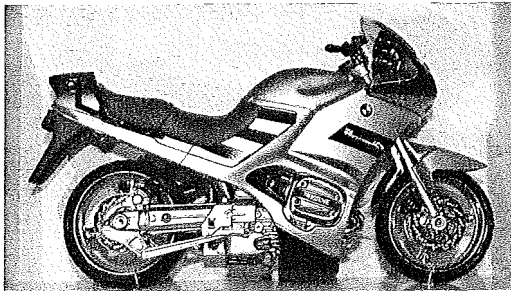
BMWRA #290

Volume 14, Number 02

February, 2004

Draw this month

R1100 RS Silver



Cost \$1 per ticket.

January winner: *Chris*

Calendar winner: *Andre*



This motorcyclist was seen speeding homeward recently.

Annual Dues are now OVERDUE !!

Get your \$20 to Peter the Treasurer now. Newsletter mailings may cease if you don't, and you wouldn't want to miss a single issue.

A Great Start for the Year

It was a super day January 1, 2004. The weather, although cold, gave us dry roads and many were able to ride to the beach for our annual "first of the year" get together. It was a good turnout. At about 12:30 we rode over to **Geoff Stevenson's** for chilli, buns, drinks, and cookies. 14-16 members were present and digital cameras abounded (perhaps Christmas presents). Thanks to Geoff for his gracious hospitality. Look for the special insert of photos.

As I sit to write this, I am looking out on a world covered with snow. It makes thinking of riding motorcycles rather difficult. But it won't be long before the sun returns, the days lengthen, and the temperature rises. Then we will all be out on our "steeds" looking for destinations and companions to 'coffee' with.

Now it the time to check over all those biker magazines you have not had time to read, to fondle the catalogs and imagine the new accessories you'll need, and to plan trip routes you have always dreamed of taking. Just because the bike is in storage doesn't mean your imagination should be shelved!

Look for the photos of the Vancouver Motorcycle Show, Jan 23-25 in the next issue (Mar 04)

Chris Jones

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Sunday, February 1, 2004

Meeting is at 9:30 am

At *The Chequered Flag*

A shift down memory lane Part 2

By Geoff Stevenson

Next up was a 1951 Matchless G80S. This 500 c.c. single wasn't that far removed from my first bike: A 1954 Ariel 350 c.c. Red Hunter, so I thought I'd soon feel right at home. Boy, was I in for a surprise.

Kick-starting a difficult. But to certain guarantee and/or (b) that big shock.

The approved the the piston over without fighting compression bit tamer, but a punch for the

The Matchless

gearbox posed a new problem: Not only was it on the right again, but the shift pattern was one up and three down. (These old bikes have magnetos and anemic generators, too, and their electrical system is often a weak point).

I let in the clutch carefully and opened the throttle. Forward progress could be described as regal, but certainly not rapid. However, once you accepted that the engine under the tank wasn't much more powerful than the modern lawnmower, it was all rather relaxing.

Except for that vibration! I used to think that the big flywheels on those old singles smoothed everything out. But memory has a way of doing that: You forget about how much the old bikes shook and shuddered (probably because you were having too much fun, despite the vibration).

I rode my old Ariel about 20,000 miles in less than two years and can't remember a single shake. The shrinks call this selective amnesia.

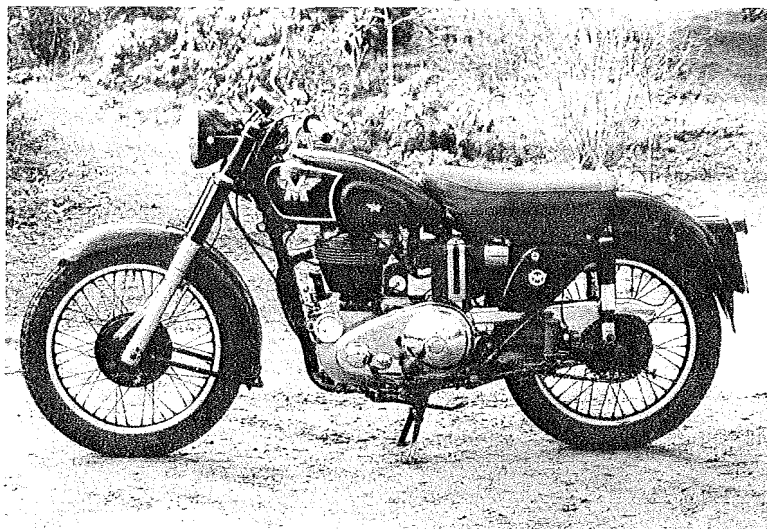
The Matchless had another surprise, too: I can't recall the last time I had to slow down much for a hill. On our modern bikes, after all, we just shift down once or twice, but even the steepest mountain pass in B.C. is no match for a modern bike, especially the multi-cylinder litre (or more) mounts many of us in the club ride.

I leaned the Matchless into the first corner. The handling was fine (after all, we were going only 35 or 40 m.p.h.), but as the grade increased, the bike slowed. I shifted (up on that wrong-side lever) down into second and opened the throttle. I could see nothing in the rearview mirror. The pegs were buzzing. The bars were shaking. My arms felt numb. The sound was wonderful, but this was clearly a different experience.

I backed off a little on the throttle and we powered up the hill at an indicated 30 m.p.h. in second. I used to think these old singles always had a sweet spot; if there was one on the Matchless, I never found it. The vibration diminished a little, but my tingling fingers told me to turn around at the first opportunity and head home.

Brakes? Not really: We were into single shoes front and rear (and pretty thin shoes at that). Let's say that you ride very carefully with brakes like that.

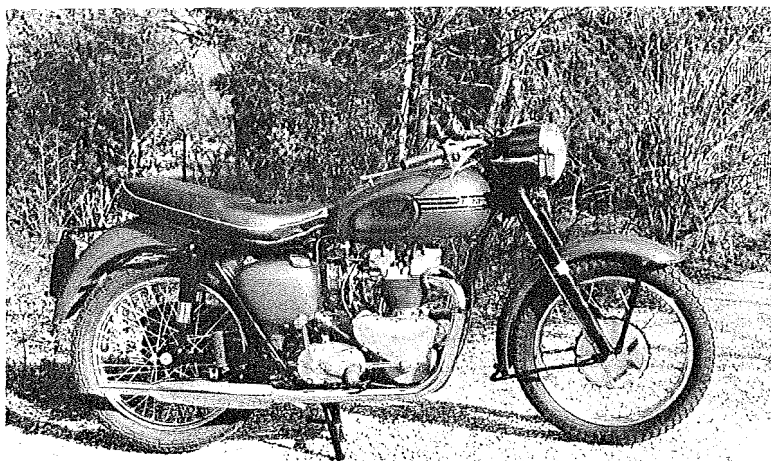
Last up was a 1955 Triumph Tiger 500 c.c. twin. This has one of the first all-alloy engines (most British bikes of the period used cast iron cylinder barrels). This bike was fun.



big single isn't really that just kick away is an almost that (a) the beast won't start your right leg will be in for a

technique calls for you to use decompression lever to ease TDC and then kick hard, the pressure build-up on the stroke. The old 350s were a 500 single packs quite a unwary.

started easily, but this



At first, I found the swept-back handlebars a bit odd (your hands seemed to be halfway down the gas tank), but the ergonomics turned out to be better than they promised.

Not much more than 400 pounds, this bike probably made around 30 bhp, but it had lots of torque and it was easy to ride. The gearbox had a modern shift pattern (even if it was still on the wrong side), but by now I was getting used to shifting with my right foot.

You could move up and back on its long, flat seat - and even use the passenger footpegs once you were cruising to give your back and legs some new angles on a long ride.

Of course, the lack of a fairing does have one advantage: At highway speeds, most of your engine noise is instantly drafted away because there are no body panels to trap it. Mind you, those old air-cooled engines were noisier than the water-cooled units of 2003.

I wheeled the Tiger back into the parking lot and my time was up. There was also an early 70s Norton 850 twin in Alistair's shop (and it had a handlebar fairing), but I'd run out of time. (Next time I'll start with the Norton).

It had been a fascinating hour and-a-half down memory lane. Comparisons to our modern bikes are quite unfair; it was sobering to realize that the bikes of our youth bear little resemblance to the machinery we ride today. We have far more power, better chassis, superior brakes - and the modern bike is far safer.

But those old gals sure stir up a guy's memory cells. ☺

Joe Rocket vs. First Gear Mesh Jackets

Over a month ago I had looked at a Joe Rocket Phoenix jacket and hesitated because of what someone here called the "Mutant Ninja Turtle" look. A couple of weeks ago a friend bought a First Gear mesh jacket and I liked the looks so much I ordered one from my local dealer. Tonight I had the chance to compare them both side by side and ended up with the Joe Rocket. My reasons may not be yours, but here are my observations:

In summery, the Joe Rocket looks to me like it would give both better cooling and better protection in a crash, but at the expense of being somewhat less comfortable and defiantly more radial looking.

Both jackets have two kinds of padding: sewn-in and removable. The sewn-in on the First Gear is very thin and of only medium density. The sewn-in on the Joe Rocket is much heavier - about that of the removable padding on the FG. The removable armor on the JR is very thick, appears to be dual density, and is pre-molded in the shoulders and elbows to fit your body. Further, the JR has more armor of both types covering a larger area of your body.

However, armor is of little use if it's not between you and a hard place. The First Gear was baggier on me, especially in the sleeves and elbows (XL size in both) which allowed its padding to move around easily. OTOH, the Joe Rocket fit closer and has two snaps on each sleeve to tighten the arm area which helps a lot to keep things in place, as does the contoured shape of its removable padding.

The JR removable armor needs to fit your shoulders and elbows or the jacket will be uncomfortable. I found removing the very large armor in the back made a big difference and still left more protection than that of the FG in that area. For the most part I think you'll want to use the removable armor since removing it will cause the JR to loose much of its ability to keep the sewn-in protection in place.

The mesh fabric of the JR has larger holes but with fairly thick material between the holes, giving almost a "chain mail" look. The First Gear's ventilation is more subtle and helps it pass more for a regular jacket.

The outer shell of both is polyester, as is the inner lining of the JR, but the FG's lining is nylon. I haven't a clue if that matters at all.

Over all, both seem to be well-made products, but significantly different designs. The Joe Rocket still looks pretty radical to me, but I got to thinking about how "I'd" look after an unplanned get off and decided riding was never a fashion show before and there wasn't a good reason to start now. However, you might find the lighter weight and easier fit of the First Gear right for you. ☺

All standard disclaimers apply.

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

For Sale: 1974 R90S- silver smoke in colour. Has been completely disassembled for a frame off restoration including engine. Frame and swingarm have been stiffened and powder coated. Bike needs re-assembly. Asking \$2500.00

Also have an R75/5 frame with drive shaft and final drive in good condition. Will sell for \$300.00

Graham Sanh- 250-248-6934 or sanhshine@shaw.ca

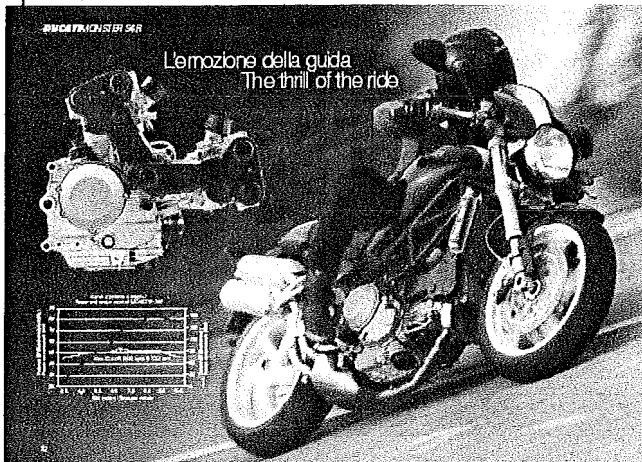
Wanted: Right side battery cover for /7 air head
Brian Radford 1-250-653-9370

Free: back issues of the Beemer Reader.

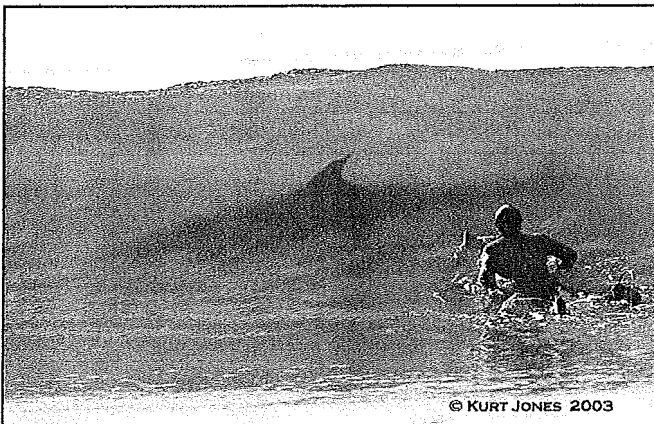
Contact: Roger Godlonton 656-5395

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

Ducati Monster 620 Dark won in a contest, **FOR SALE**
Speak to Chris Jones



No, it's not a BMW, but it is a beautiful motorcycle.



Enhanced photo????...Perhaps not.

Calendar of Events

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

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Island View Beach – January 1, 2004



l to r: James, Dave M., Geoff, Barry S., Tim, Peter, Terry, Dave F., Mike, Bill, Vince, Rudy, Tom, Barry L., Andre, Brian. (photographer Chris)



Tom, Marg, Vern



Barry, Rudy, Dave M, Peter, Andre



Bill, Dave M, Barry L, Barry S



GS's in a row



Bikes at the beach



Brian & Michael

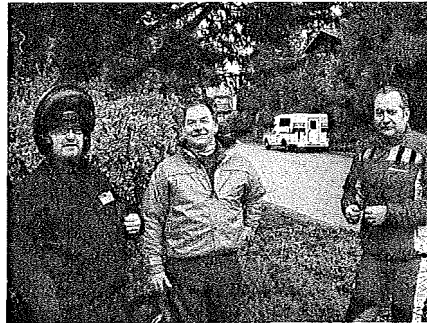
Geoff Stevenson's House – January 1, 2004



Brian, Mike, Barry S, Roger, Dave F, Peter, James, Geoff, Chris, Terry, Andre



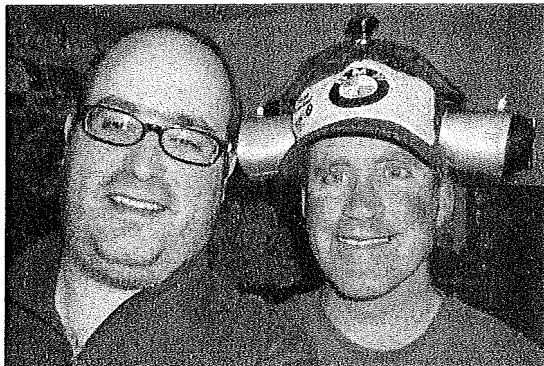
Bikes at the beach



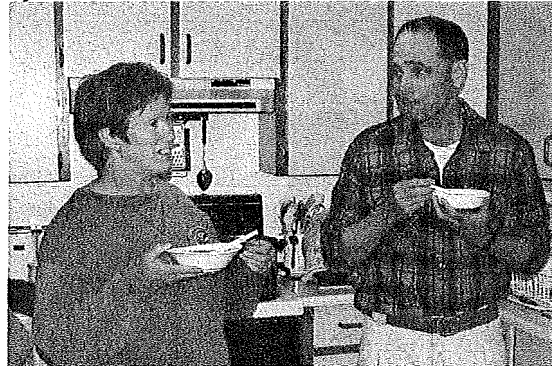
James, Terry, and Andre



Dave & Michael



James, and Dave



Heidi & Dugald

Special thanks to **James McFayden & Peter Jeurgenson** for contributing photos