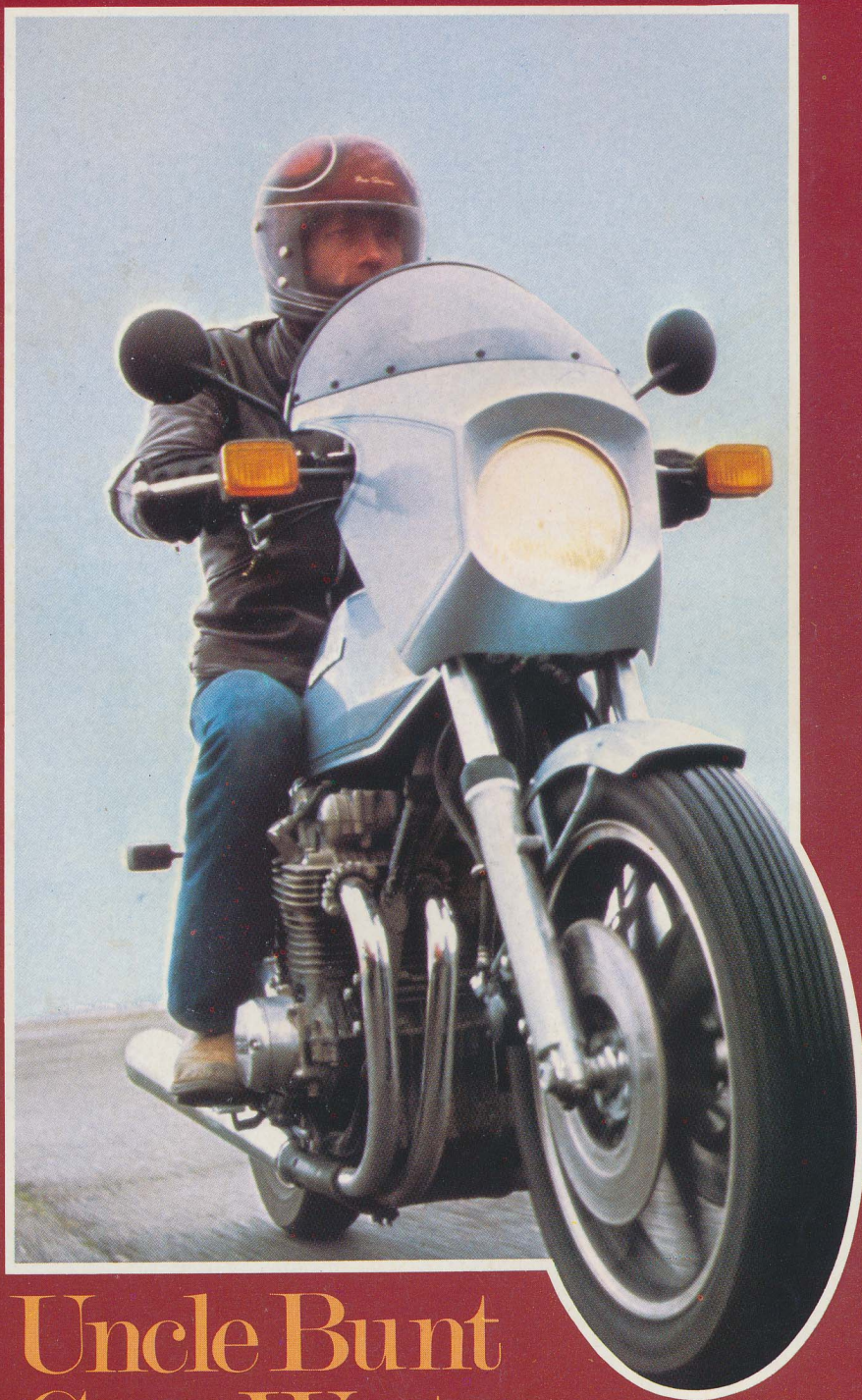


# bike

MARCH 1978 45p

Old Gold:  
Tritons

Meet The  
Megabikes:  
Kawasaki  
Z1-R,  
Yamaha  
XS1100



Uncle Bunt  
Goes West



# bike

No. 60 MARCH '78

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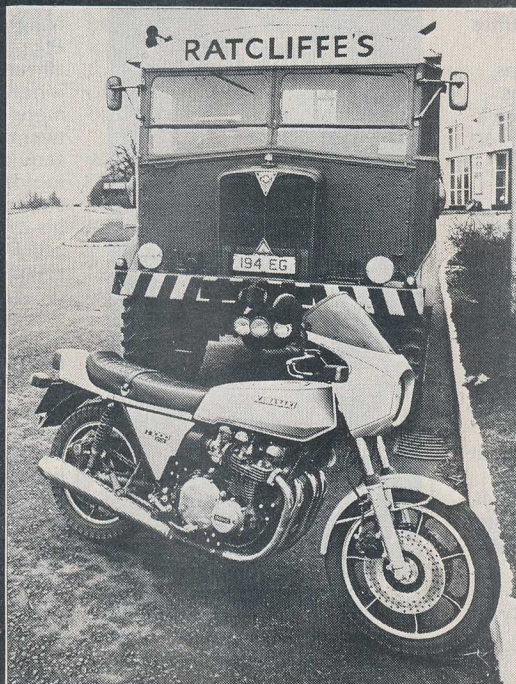
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DON'T BE A DUMMY



## Check Out Our Riding Suit Tests

HOW, WE often ask, is it possible for bikes to have become so sophisticated within a decade while heavy duty motorcycle clothing has remained in the Middle Ages? It's a situation that's often troubled us, particularly when faced with a snow-bound 200-mile bike journey wearing a suit that'll give about as much protection as a paper bag after 50 miles.

The reason for such a state of affairs is not really apparent, although we find it difficult to believe that a suitable alternative to proofed nylon or waxed cotton doesn't exist. It's about time that someone in the ever-expanding bike clothing market discovered it.

The result of such a situation is that we round-the-year bike testers have always been faced with a pretty uninspiring selection of bulky, baggy, cumbersome and thoroughly unattractive suits for protection. And in our experience that's usually meant resigning ourselves to becoming progressively cold, damp and finally wet depending on how long a journey we've got to make.

But, eternal optimists that we are, we'd hoped that the industry's apparent stagnation in recent years had meant that something of a clothing revolution was just around the corner. Would the suits we assembled for this article reveal that the clothing designers really had been at work or would 1978 clothing merely continue the same old styles and materials?

The suits were used during our hectic road test programme which invariably produces too many motorcycles at the worst possible time of the year: winter. This means that these suits have been put through the severest tests of winter endurance. So while some may not have come up to our expectations, less enthusiastic (more intelligent?) bikers who take to public transport at the mere forecast of snow, might well find the same suit okay for their, less-punishing, use.



## Belstaff Concorde

I LIKE to think, probably vainly, that I've always been able to avoid the lemming instinct. I refused to join the queues patiently waiting to surrender their greenies to *Jaws*, I've never felt the slightest temptation to get into a Harold Robbins flesh and greed tome, and I swear I'm liable to stick the heel of my boot through the next juke box that spews out Mr and Mrs McCartney's dreadful ode to their rock star's haven from reality.

Just occasionally, however, the attempt to develop an individual turn of mind catches you out. For three or four years now I've relied on two-piece nylon suits to get me through the worst of winter motorcycling. The only problem is, they're a time-consuming bitch to peel on and off for short journeys.

So finally I took the plunge and joined those suave hordes who flash about in hip-hugging one piece suits. I acquired a Concorde one-piecer from Belstaff, one of the real heavyweight names in the manufacture of motorcycling clothing.

The Concorde is made in 4oz nylon which is coated in neoprene to give it additional abrasion resistance against motorcycle fuel tanks and the like. It has a zip to the waist, and the zip is protected by a flap secured by press studs. There are more press studs at the ankles, and the wrists are elasticated. It's very light, folds to the size of a bottle of wine, and is very quick to get into and out of. It also kept me dry on the kind of five-mile urban hops for which I wanted its protection, so really I was entirely satisfied with its performance.

I didn't get the chance to try it on a long wet run, but as it is meant as a lightweight suit you'd obviously need something substantial underneath in such conditions.

Price: £25.53. Supplied by Belstaff International Ltd., Caroline Street, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent.





## Bruce's Warwick

WHAT AN amazing novelty. A bike suit that actually appears to have been designed to fit the anatomy of a normal human being instead of the hunch-backed, short-assed Neanderthal throwback most manufacturers seem to regard as the average biker.

Vanity is an understandable human weakness which makes me think that Bruce's are onto a winner with their neat red nylon two-piece number — it's the smartest waterproof I've worn. Take a look at the trousers for a start — that's where the worst lack of style usually shows — but these are well cut and close fitting. And while the seat has a double thickness of material for extra wear, it doesn't hang in great folds of voluminous cloth.

The medium length belted jacket is also well tailored and close fitting, with a slick white reflective stripe down each arm. Four smallish patch pockets are provided, and the cuffs are of elasticated knitted material. Velcro fastens the pockets, collar and flap protecting the zip from ingress of rain water. The collar suffers from the same failing as on many other suits — you can't do it up when you're wearing a thick polo neck sweater or scarf. Both jacket and trousers have a warm, quilted lining.

One warning though, if your *avoirduois* is generous. The suit's close fit means you won't get into it. Similarly you can't wear bulky clothing underneath. This point, and the fact that, although sound in construction, the suit is rather lightweight, don't make it ideal for long distance riding in the depths of winter. But if that's not your thing and you are, well, just a *little* bit, vain you could do much, much worse. *Bill Haylock*

Price: jacket, £16.20; trousers, £9.72. Supplied by Bruce's Motorcycle Accessories, Laurel Works, Laurel Road, Handsworth, Birmingham 21.



## Kett Tornado

IF YOU need a waxed cotton suit but don't have the bread, this suit isn't really the answer. It's as warm as waxed cotton, at least when new, and is guaranteed waterproof for a year, but nylon has basic problems which make it unsuitable for long term use in bike clothing. The proofing wears off quickly and light nylon suits billow at higher speeds and drag you around the bike.

Alternatively if you want to keep warm and dry on the way to work this suit, made from 4oz nylon with a hefty coating of neoprene, is perfectly acceptable. This two-piece suit has zip gussets, which are more water resistant than the conventional buckles and studs, but the lining catches badly in boot heels when dressing. The praiseworthy lack of seams results in a strange sleeve shape which caught on my elbows when turning and presumably explains the lack of top pockets. Although these problems are not likely to trouble the commuter, a more serious long distance winter biker would find them annoying.

More seriously, though, the neck of the suit does not seal properly and unless you're wearing a balaclava you'll end up with a cold neck. I'm afraid the Velcro neck fastener is no suitable alternative for a belt and buckle. Personally I'd be prepared to pay a little extra and buy a waxed cotton suit which has none of the faults I've mentioned.

However, if you have irreversible objections to waxed cotton the Kett Tornado is as good a nylon suit as you're likely to get for just under £50.

*Royce Creasey*

Price: complete suit, £48. Supplied by Kett Manufacturing Company Ltd., 59 Palmerston Road, Wealdstone, Harrow, Middlesex.



**Belstaff Formula 750 Jacket (Below)**

*The jacket that's light in weight, strong on features. It's made from polyurethane-proofed nylon and come in orange and black, red and black or royal and black. A combination that has as much to do with safety as it does with style. To keep warmth in and weather out, all our seams are sewn and taped. And the zip front has a studded overlap too. Team up the XL500 overtrousers with it in red, black or royal.*

*Jacket Style No 02203  
Overtrousers Style No 02106*



Look for the Belstaff symbol. Your sure guarantee — don't be put off by inferior imitations.

**Belstaff Mk II Europa Suit (Right)**

*Here's one of the most versatile performers in the Belstaff range.*

*We make it from polyurethane-proofed nylon. Not the ordinary kind, but a special heavy duty version that's as big on strength as it is on look.*

*And looks are very big on Europa. Thanks to an extra smart design and a choice of five amazing colours. Choose black or green and your stripe's yellow.*

*There are three useful pockets, a reinforced seat and a zip front with a studded overlap too. Wear Europa for touring, for commuting or as the perfect suit over leathers.*

*Suit Style No 02206*



**Belstaff Trialmaster Professional Suit (Above)**  
*The world's number one competition and touring suit.*

*We take one of the toughest weatherproof materials there is. And we make it even tougher. With double-sewn seams where others use single. With reinforcements at the shoulders, elbows, seat and inside leg. With zipped and studded overlap front.*

*And you can choose any colour you like so long as it's black. Or green. Or a rather racy red.*

*The Belstaff Trialmaster Professional Suit. On or off the road, it's miles in front. Jacket Style No 02101*

*Trousers Style No 02102*

**There's only one best. Belstaff**



There's only one range of motorcycle clothing with fifty years' experience sewn into every garment. There's only one range chosen by so many people in so many countries. There's only one range that gives you so much choice, it means a suit or jacket that's right for your kind of riding. There's only one range that has so much professional rider experience behind it. The name of the range? It just has to be Belstaff.

See them at your dealer or send for a FREE Belstaff brochure. **Belstaff International Ltd.** Caroline St., Longton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs.





## Johnson

IN THE absence of a revolutionary material that is light, compact and warm enough for serious winter riding, manufacturers are being forced along very much the same lines. For the time being at least, they're striving hard to make detail improvements that will individualise their suits in a crowded market full of extremely similar products.

But in producing a more stylish two-piece suit principally for their huge Continental market, Johnson have made detail changes on their MC 95/96 suit at the expense of its effectiveness. This is particularly disappointing in view of a previous Johnson suit I reviewed favourably in *Ride On*, March 1977 issue.

The latest suit is made from the same 4.7oz silicon-coated nylon but the belt has given way to a tightly elasticated waist, the crotch strap which prevented the jacket riding up at speed is no longer used, and the collar is raised at the rear to form a pretty ineffective weather barrier on the neck.

The elasticated waist forces the bottom half of the jacket to flair out, letting in a draught, and the collar is looser than the previous suit despite the Velcro fastener. It must account for considerable heat loss. So despite the fact that the jacket didn't leak and there are ample pockets, three outer and one inside the quilt lining, its design is a step backwards. The trousers, which are quilt-lined down to the boot height, were up to previous high standards.

Johnson, who've supplied clothing to North Sea fishermen for more than 100 years, have the ability to make excellent clothing, and they welcomed my criticisms in such a receptive manner that improvements could be included on their next range of bike suits.

*Graham Sanderson*

Price: jacket, £24.50; trousers, £14.50. Supplied by Johnson and Son Ltd., North Quay, Great Yarmouth.



## Eurostyle

IMAGINE THE scene: It's late one grey afternoon in December, the deluge of rain continues into its sixth hour and the temperature has been dropping steadily since noon. A solitary rider smashes through clouds of spray thrown up by a juggernaut as the last nerve ending in his hands becomes numbed with cold.

I was that rider and I'd chosen the conventionally-styled Eurostyle waxed cotton two-piece suit to keep me warm, waterproof and comfortable in such typically wintry conditions.

The suit is bulky and the Egyptian waxed cotton from which it is made is greasy and looks totally out of place unless you're riding a bike. Visit a bank in full bike gear and check out the horrified reactions for confirmation.

A studded flap protects the jacket's nylon zip and there are four pockets, again stud fastened, on the outside, with a fifth in the blue quilt lining which is featured on both jacket and trousers. Cuffs fasten tightly around the wrists to successfully prevent draughts and likewise the collar, lined with brown corduroy, which fastens with a familiar belt and buckle arrangement. Unfortunately, tightly fastening the collar greatly restricted the neck and head movement which is always so necessary especially in town, and riding with a loose strap allowed body heat to escape and let in rain.

Trousers have an elasticated waist and the stud and strap fastenings at the ankles allow snug and watertight fitting around boots.

Quite frankly, the suit performed as I thought it would. It kept me warm on relatively short journeys but after 200-300 mile bashes I was always cold although still dry.

*John Bulley*

Price: jacket, £30.35; trousers, £20.44. Supplied by Europagear Ltd., 54a Friday Street, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon.