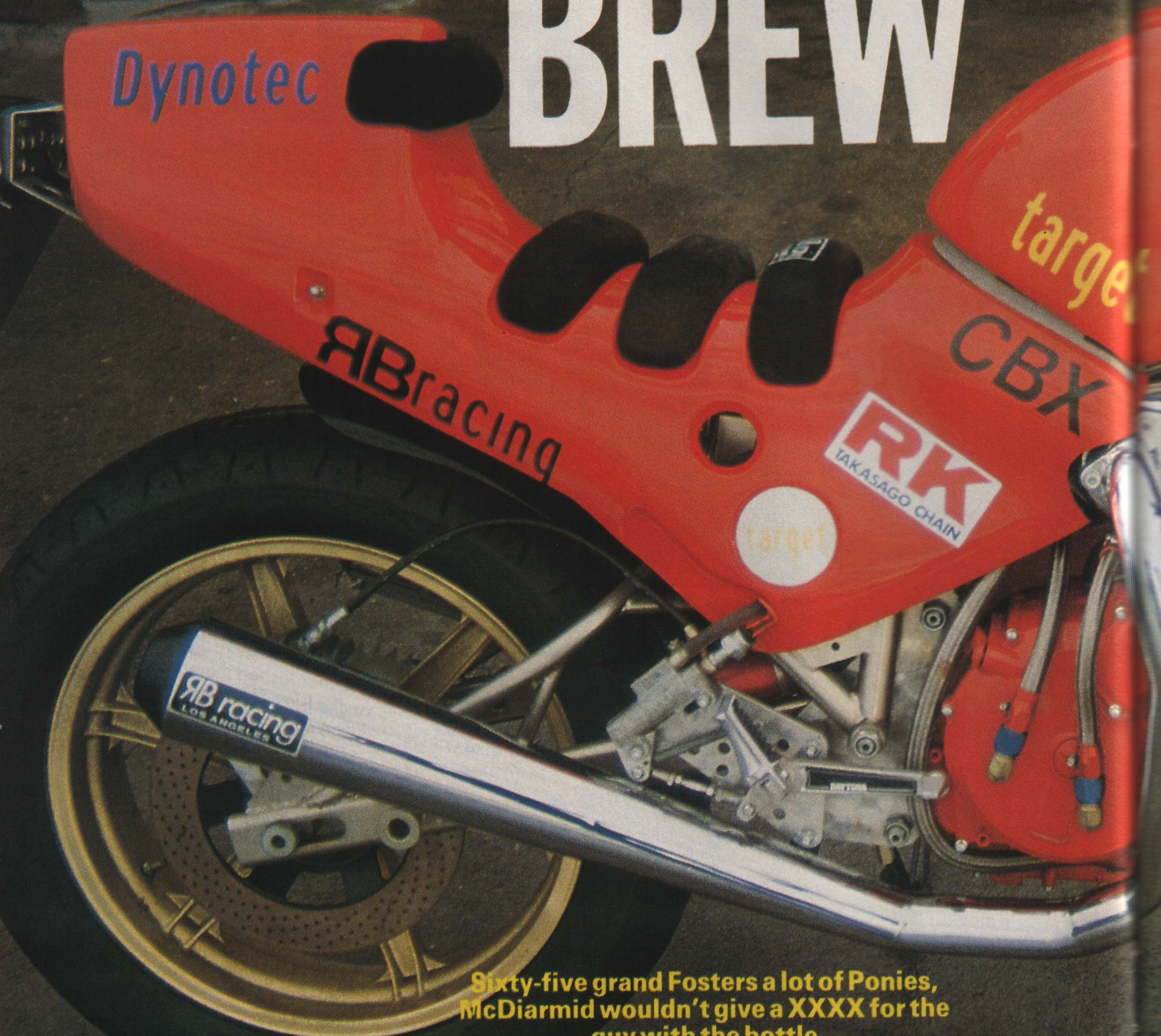


# CRUCIAL BREW



## Sixty-five grand Fosters a lot of Ponies, McDiarmid wouldn't give a XXXX for the guy with the bottle

**I**t was simply awesome. For £65,000 — and rising — it should have been. I swallowed a couple of times, then found my breath. “A thousand horsepower?! I’d like to see it run.”

“So would I,” croaked Fitzy, one of the regulars at the Dynotec goodies emporium; “I just wanna see who’s got the balls to press this effin’ button.

All this thing needs is a pair of mirrors so you can see your ass in time to wave it goodbye.”

The argot was pure Aussie, but you couldn’t blame Fitzy for getting excited. The button in question was connected to a nitrous bottle. The nitrous bottle was connected to what had once been an ordinary six-pot Honda CBX1000. But that was a long time ago. Apart from an on-board relationship

with a quantity of compressed nitrous oxide, this CBX now boasted 700 extra cc’s and not one but two turbochargers. Dynotec boss Steve Legett reckoned that with a bit more work it could introduce four-figure horsepower to the primary drive. What would happen next was anyone’s guess.

I was impressed. Or perhaps the word’s nonplussed. “Yes,



truly amazing," I concluded to Geoff Richards, owner of arguably the most powerful motorcycle in creation. "But why?"

"Well, that's a good question. I suppose I sort of wanted to improve the CBX and got a bit carried away," he replied. "You should be," I thought. "This thing's as nuts as you are."

Geoff is quietly spoken,

polite, educated — and completely mad. He started off running a 500 Manx Norton racer on the road, bored out to 800cc and running on methanol. "I fitted a kickstart to it but the compression wasn't much interested unless you jumped off the garage roof holding a bag of cement. When it did run it was fine except when the valves burnt out — about two dozen at the last

count. Then I had a 1000cc Ariel Square Four in a stretched Featherbed frame; it handled a bit funny so I wasn't surprised when me mate slung it in the Swan River." An assortment of British twins followed. This could account for his taste for long, oily hours in the workshop rather than on the open road.

"When I bought the Honda," continued its victim, ▶

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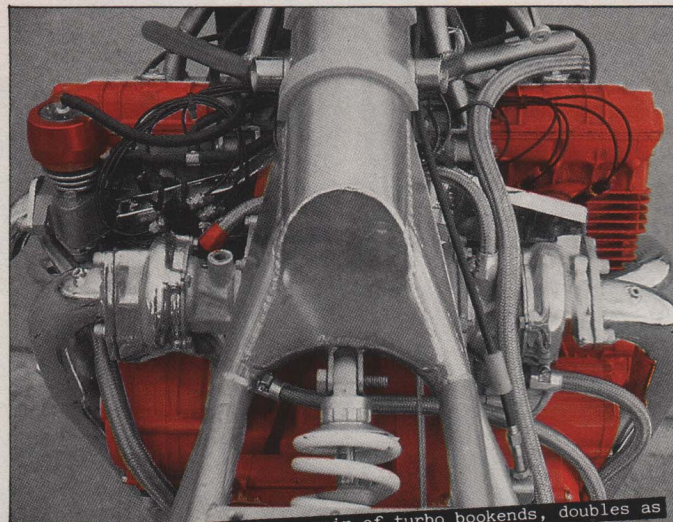
There's a pipe for everything except the rider's lobotomy

"it weaved all over the road — the ultimate Japanese streetbike and it was bloody lethal. So I fitted a Russ Collins swing arm — it was actually intended for a CB750 and took a bit of persuading, but improved the back-end no end.

"Then the front end was a bit crook, o'course, so I grafted on a set of CB1100R forks. That was miles better, but then the brakes weren't up to it, so on went a set of brakes off another 1100, and by then it handled pretty well and stopped, too."

Leapfrogging the chassis at the expense of the engine inevitably meant — you've guessed it — that the bloody thing wasn't quick enough any more. At this point Geoff threw sanity and reason to the winds. His chequebook came off idle; it's been bouncing valves ever since. The CBX had made that fatal transformation from a means of transport to a project.

An idea had evolved — to wring as much power from the basic CBX mill as was



Main frame spar, flanked by a pair of turbo bookends, doubles as air shift reservoir; wastegate is on the left

theoretically possible, by any means imaginable. Practicality didn't enter into the equation and to that extent, at least, the project has been a copper-bottomed success. First of all Geoff gave his hybrid CBX to a bloke who until then had been

a friend. This gorilla ported the head, jemmied-in an 1150cc big bore kit, completely screwed up the piston clearances in the process. His final 'friendly' act was to do a runner, leaving Geoff with a non-runner . . .

But Geoff is clearly nothing if not determined to the point of self-flagellation.

Undaunted, he bought a set of Megacycle cams and a Wiseco 1190cc kit for a spin up his next cul-de-sac, which might have worked, and a session of elaborate carb butchery by another erstwhile friend, which didn't. Further mega-dosh brought a bank of Powerjet carbs from Hot Bike Engineering in the States. This improved matters to the extent of a powerband fully 1000rpm wide and flat-spots to the point of first-degree impetigo everywhere else. Then a bank of 36mm Amal carbs proved 'a disaster'; it isn't clear precisely how this scores on the scale in use, which seems to run from mere 'catastrophe' all the way to 'Armageddon'.

Listening to this catalogue of expensive misfortune, it occurred to me that no-one with the faintest notion of anything more complex than a clothes peg had touched this device since it left Japan. But

there was more.

"Fuel injection seemed to be the answer," Geoff had concluded, probably on the grounds that it was untried and pricey. A 'system' was acquired from a firm here in the UK and passed to number three in a line of supposedly hot mechanics for sorting-out. Here the project put yet another victim to flight — this fettler got off on his toes, too, leaving yet another stack of unpaid bills and the bike in its customary lifeless state. When finally cajoled into erratic life it seized four times on the way home, intermittently making sufficient din to summon every cop for miles around.

No-one could trace the problem until it dawned on Geoff that the injector modules were set up for a four with 180-degree crank throws. The CBX, as even Roland's mum knows, is a six, with a 120-degree crank. It only ran at all when by sheer fluke one of the injectors happened to chuck a dose of gas at a cylinder at roughly the right moment.

It may well have been that the suppliers could have resolved this problem, had they not by this time gone bust (I wonder why) and changed hands. Geoff spent several frustrating months playing piggy-in-the-middle with the new and old proprietors before slinging the whole bloody lot in the bin.

Fuel injection having failed so miserably, you'd have thought Geoff would go back to good ol' dependable carbies. Not a bit of it — turbocharging, that had to be the answer! And just to add a little zest to a task that was merely impossible, there'd be two turbos rather than one. At the same time, on the demonstrably optimistic grounds that such an engine would probably tear the existing chassis apart, the old one was thrown in a skip and an Egli rolling chassis put on order.

Nine months later, in 1986, the chassis arrived. I've never been much impressed by the work of this eccentric Swiss gent since racing an elastically Egli-Vincent at Silverstone a few years back and several areas of the frame look distinctly suspect — at least when you think of anticipated torque figures approaching 500ft. lb. Immaculate Target bodywork — one of only two such kits in existence — turned up at much the same time. Or, rather, the second set did. The first arrived, would you believe, without half the brackets and already crash-damaged. The bodywork and

frame between them priced a cool £8500 from the project's already overheated coffers.

Bob Brown, proprietor of RB Racing in San Rafael, California, had a better excuse for his delivery delay on the turbo components — he had to develop the system from scratch. By this time the project had suffered a distinct change of emphasis, for Mr Brown appeared to know what he was doing.

There can be few conditions more dangerous than enforced waiting to someone as ensnared in the quest for power and insolvency as Geoff. So, with a little help from Wiseco and a modest £800-worth of head and barrel work, the hiatus of 1986 saw the CBX spurt to a full 1723cc. When dyno'd in this normally-aspirated state it pumped out an awesome 180bhp. Full-boost turbocharging upped this by degrees to a claimed 485bhp on the Dynotec brake. Most owners of road-going two-wheelers might be expected to settle for Cosworth DFV type horsepower. Geoff isn't most people.

Nitrous — now there was a thought to singe your wallet on! A call for the necessary hardware went out to California's NOS outfit. The call was cheap. The cheque wasn't. Dynotec have added water injection to the set-up to lower combustion temperatures. Nitrous Oxide injection itself is triggered by throttle response and a Warp factor button on the left-hand clip-on which does for your brain and back tyre in much the same instant.

The thought of all this (utterly unrealised) stomp naturally put the bottom-end and transmission into question. Steve Legget added further webbing and an internal cradle to the engine's long-suffering crankcases, from which was hung an £8000 drop-forged chrome-moly crankshaft. This in turn played host to a set of Russ Collins titanium con-rods worth, together with their respective piston assemblies, a mere £4300.

Further damage was done to Australia's already parlous balance of payments deficit when more shekels scuttled off to the States in exchange for a drag-style MTC slider clutch. During the first 100 miles or so of testing, the CBX had already lunched a pair of standard Honda gearboxes. A cluster of special nickel/iron alloy gears from Peter Hollinger — *the man for car racing 'boxes in Oz* — is about to vanish into the engine's ▶

# 1988 MOPED MAYHEM RACING COMBINE

## MOPED MAYHEM

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## 1988 ROUND 1

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#### RIDER INFO

RIDER NO. 1 NAME ..... AGE .....

ADDRESS .....

..... TEL NO. ....

RIDER NO. 2 NAME ..... AGE .....

ADDRESS .....

..... TEL NO. ....

RIDER NO. 3 NAME ..... AGE .....

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#### INDEMNIFICATION CLAUSE

We have understood the rules and regulations issued for this meeting and agree to be bound by them. In consideration of the acceptance of this, our entry, we agree to save harmless and keep indemnified the organisers and their respective officials, representatives and agents and other riders from and against all action, costs, expenses claims and demands in respect to death, injury, loss of or damage to the person of the property of ourselves or mechanics howsoever caused, arising out of or in connection with our entry to our taking part in this meeting and not withstanding that the same may have been contributed to or occasioned by the negligence of the said bodies, their officials, representatives or their agents. We declare to our knowledge the riders possess the standard of competence necessary for an event of this type to which this entry relates and that the machine entered is suitable and roadworthy will be reached. We declare that the riders are over 16 years of age.

RIDERS' SIGNATURES

SIGNATURE OF  
GUARDIAN IF RIDER IS  
UNDER THE AGE OF 18

Rider 1: .....

Rider 2: .....

Rider 3: .....

Rider 4: .....

voracious maw; a snip at only £1000, although they did take two years to turn up. No doubt in the hope of maintaining the fragile *status quo*, Steve is speculating on taking the capacity out another 300cc or so when the gearbox comes apart.

Since the bike's acceleration (potential) will make conventional gearchanging an inertia-bound impossibility, an airshifter also went on the shopping list. Changes should be simple — no clutch, just rev the thing all you dare then hit the handlebar-mounted button and the next cog'll crash irresistibly into engagement (or maybe pieces). The shifter's compressed air reservoir is the Egli frame's main backbone spar. Any pronounced pressure loss will, it's hoped, act as a tell-tale for frame cracking.

Finding a chain and tyre to handle this sort of torque overkill involved more than a stroll to the local breakers. Thankfully a high-up from RK chains clocked the bike at a

# CRUCIAL BREW

local show and was sufficiently gob-struck to offer a one-off special, gratis. The resulting assembly of individually handmade, gold-plated links is valued at no less than £75 per link. Before you run out of fingers, that's about £8500 for the full necklace. Rear rubberware is a special ultra-wide Pirelli.

Various chassis components are under review. The rear end sits on a White Power shock absorber in the conventional monoshock position, but this will be relocated under the belly of the machine to make way for a monstrous 58mm twin-choke Mikuni carb. In the braking department the

current state-of-the-art four-pot Brembos are likely to be ditched — purely in the interests of diving even further into the red unknown, one suspects — in favour of a set of unobtainium calipers with carbon fibre pads.

So far this economic black hole has gorged its way through around £65,000, with the cheese and dessert courses still to come. Reasons why no longer come into it — the irresistible brute has taken on a cosmic life force all its own. But recently Geoff came upon a goal, shimmering away like a mirage on the horizon. The world speed record for fully-equipped street-legal

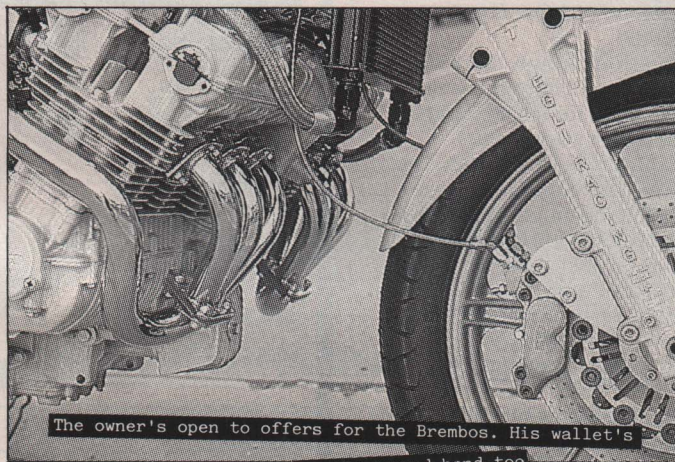
motorcycles is, he discovered, 'only' 193mph.

In theory there's nothing to prevent this mad bunch from reaching their goal. The speedo, for one, is on their side — it's calibrated up to 250mph. With everything dialled-in on maximum, power should be, to quote Rolls Royce, adequate — the best part of 1000 women-and-children-first horsepower according to the co-conspirators.

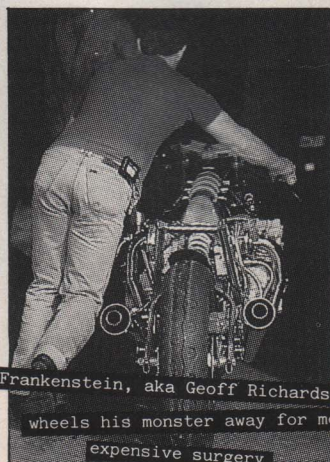
Suddenly the quest for someone to ride the damn thing looked like posing more problems than any of the technical nonsense which had gone before. Would you get on board and give it max? Does *anyone* combine lunacy and brazen talent in the necessary proportions? For an antipodean there's only one answer to that — enter Graeme Crosby. Croz the crazy Kiwi, much-loved over here for his Moriwaki and Suzuki exploits, evidently has a serious interest in taming the beast. Like Fitzy said, that'll be worth seeing. We'll keep you posted. ■



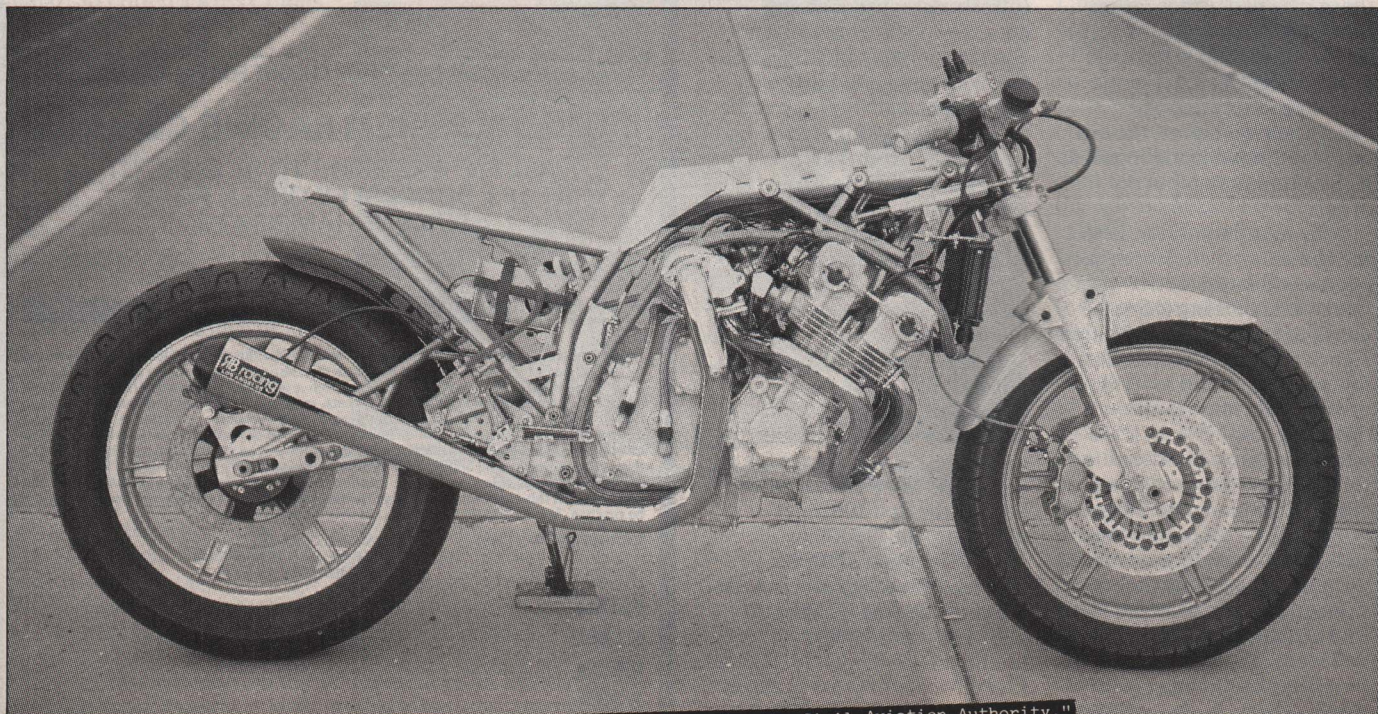
It's a little known fact that Honda modelled the CBX's frontal lines on the Willis beer gut



The owner's open to offers for the Brembos. His wallet's pretty second-hand too



Frankenstein, aka Geoff Richards, wheels his monster away for more expensive surgery



"Sorry, sir, we can't give you an MOT for that. Try the Civil Aviation Authority."