

March/April '73 30p

# bike

**FREE**  
MOTORCYCLING GUIDE



**Giant Test: Kawasaki v Triumph X75 750s**  
**Dirt Test: Rickman v CZ Enduros**  
+Yamaha+WSK tests We try Speedway  
Customising an £85 Triumph Bike Show Inquest



# GIANT TEST



## The Stoplight Kids

*Mark Williams takes the wraps off the two hottest ego boosters in the new generation of Pzzazz n'Power road scorchers, the Triumph X-75 Hurricane and the Kawasaki Mach IV.*

PHOTOS: JOHN WALLACE



Who cares about mechanical refinement, cossetted rider comfort and good manners? Who the hell wants to know whether his motorcycle's going to make it on a tour of Uruguay, or whether he's got enough gas in his tank to take him from Leicester to Coventry? Who needs stern dependability and stolid ruggedness – a machine to tap your briar pipe on as you reminisce about that Elephant Rally it took you to five years ago?

Well not Johnny Romeo, that's for sure. Johnny, in his custom French leather dudes, Webco T-shirt and wrap round sunglasses. Johnny makes \$1100 per month (a little over £450) persuading disc jockeys in Los Angeles to play little pieces of highly prized plastic as many times a day as possible on the AM (pop/schlock) commercial radio networks. Johnny drinks the best Bourbon at three a.m., hotfooting it with his dame around East 42nd street bars, and four hours later he's up and breakfasting with Mr. Big from some five station syndicate who just might do a deal on all the product (records released by Johnny's company) during the next month. Johnny has a \$3,000 stereo outfit, an air conditioned pad high above L.A.'s smoggy skyline and a log summer house in Marin County. Two years ago he was a two bit hustler sweeping recording studio floors and studiously listening to advice and gossip but now he can afford the jazziest threads, the best tickets for the Stones' concert, the latest drugs and a Kawasaki Mach IV which he bought for \$1,395 (around £600) last month.

Maybe that explains a little about a whole new market that's opening up for bikes in the States. It's a group of people who want flash good looks, brute power and all the action they can handle for those stoplight grands prix, those zippy trips round town on warm summer nights and the odd Sunday run upstate to impress your lady friend or merely get that adrenalin flowing.

The Harley Sportster is that sort of bike (remember 'Two Harleys Hammer America – Almost' in *Bike Summer '72?*). The water cooled Suzuki GT 750 is not, neither are the Laverda, nor the big Guzzis, nor the 750 Honda-4, nor even the Harley SuperGlide. They're all powerful bikes certainly, but there's *too* much sophistication, *too* much

bulk and not enough lean, mean bitchiness. Are you beginning to get the picture?

Well Craig Vetter did way back in '69 when the American BSA/Triumph distributors asked him to execute a "design exercise" (nice multi-purpose phrase that) on the Rocket-3. The result was a stock frame, slightly raked and fitted with overstock length forks to give it a rakish look – and some dynamite 'bodywork'. In our very first issue we printed a picture of the original Vetter-3, bemoaning BSA's reluctance to put it into production. That was two years ago. Now maybe they've watched the Sportster and Mach IV market develop (not only Angels buy Sportsters), and decided to make Their Big Move.

And if it rips the eyeballs out of your sockets just looking at it, wait 'til you open up those three 27mm Amals, dump the clutch and take off, front wheel pawing the CO<sub>2</sub> in an effortless bid to put the highway behind you.

So we decided the time was right to Giant Test the Kawa alongside something that could really give it a run for its money, on every level: The Pure Moxie Giant Test.

Now it so happens that the derisive sentiments smeared across the first paragraph cannot justifiably be applied to either the Mach IV or the Hurricane. They *are* highly refined mechanically. They *are* reliable. They *do* have an in-built lifespan which is sufficient to quash any criticisms of disposable engineering which have been laid at the door of certain manufacturers of "performance is all" machines in the recent past. But all this is somewhat immaterial to Johnny Romeo – if comforting to those of our readers who are by now choking with indignant fury.

The criterion is Pzzazz n'Power, understand. Power to move your gut somewhere near the brink of over-excitement as you feel the scenery move past you very quickly indeed. Power to get you past any smartass in an MGB or an Elan who might think he's going to cut you up as you're aiming for a gap in the traffic. Power to have your girl hugging on tight as your white knuckles grip those ever accelerating handlebars whilst you course along some arterial road somewhere in the nineties. Own up – inertia, that almost indefinable sense of sudden velocity, is *the* addictive quality that makes motorcycling. And ►









KAWASAKI

750

XHP 847L

KAWASAKI



these two bikes have it in great self-indulgent gobbs.

The Pzzazz . . .? Well, the Pzzazz can take care of itself for the moment. Let's interest ourselves in hauling power.

The Kawasaki H2 mill is simply a beefed up, somewhat refined brew based on the devastatingly fast 500cc Mach III. The porting and timing on big brother are somewhat milder than on the Mach III which means you don't experience such cheeky, unannounced spurts of power as the motor comes on the pipe. The horses are there if you want 'em - all 74 of 'em for heavens sake - but they're controllable almost to a fault. Add to this a super-strong six bearing crankshaft (which unfortunately comes with rather small flywheels, thereby engendering mild surging when the motor is not under load) and you have a bulletproof motor that'll keep on delivering the goods until the chickens come home to roost.

And unlike its bitchy little sister, the H2 has a pretty wide

spread of torque that makes the old adage about "screaming Japanese strokers" sound a little weak. Like the X-75, the H2 will pull comfortably from below 3 grand, which makes it a very easy machine to ride if you're feeling lazy, and although the Triumph's power starts a couple of hundred revs before the Kawa's, it must be said that the British machine is more comfortable when stoking up the mill from low engine speeds.

The Kawasaki's small flywheels have something to do with this and the other partner in crime is the critical two stroke ignition timing which is set up primarily to cope with high revs. Unbalanced carbs on our particular H2 probably further exacerbated the spluttering.

The X-75's race winning BSA pushrod OHV engine is definitely a much smoother proposition, offering four main bearings on a chunky (but factory balanced) crank and a set of valve gear that from memory clatters a lot less than on a Bonneville or Daytona.

Unlike the Kawasaki's three Mikuni carbs which are operated by three cables joining the main throttle cable at a special junction device, the Trumpet's Amals are drawn by a hinged bar which is connected to the throttle cable on the nearside. Both systems work smoothly but the X-75 takes more strength to open and keep open.

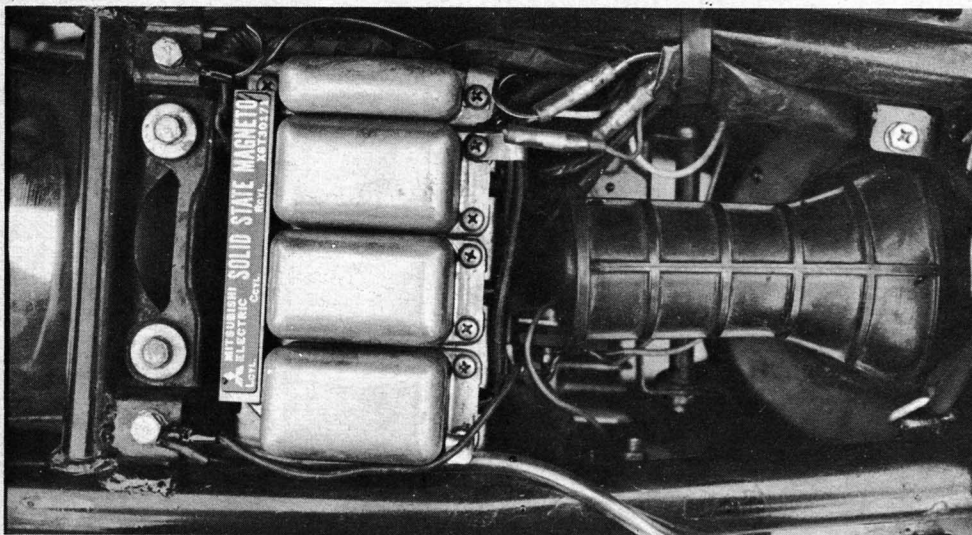
Actually there's more of a fuss when you yank open the Kawa's throttle - whether suddenly or gradually - from low revs. The exhausts emit a loud, hard edged "plutter", low frequency vibes shake the whole machine about a bit until you reach around 4,000 rpm and, as Kawasaki engineers still haven't conquered the problem despite their 'Superlube' system, there's enough blue smoke pouring out of the exhausts to root a ferret out of his hole. If you're doing this at traffic lights, and you're Johnny Romeo, all you do is sneer confidently at the gaping motorists alongside and enjoy the unutterable insolence of it all. Something some riders might not approve of.

They might prefer the throaty thrum of the Triumph being wound up ready to unshackle the clutch . . . very little vibration, no smoke, but a lot of poke. You can smoke the rear tyre on either bike if you've a mind to. You can pull wheelies with ease in first, second, or gulp n'goshdarnit *even third*. And you can be sure either motor will stay in one piece.

In fact you've got to race the X-75 up to about seventy-five hundred revs before it feels uncomfortable - and even then you're about 300 rpm beyond optimum power. When it does start to protest, all you feel is a tingle in the handlebars, and just the merest suspicion of one in the footrests.

Despite rubber engine mounts, the H2 tingles feet, hands and bum at certain engine speeds, although with five gears and that surprising spread of torque, you never have good reason to endure it for long.

Indeed five speed gearboxes have a lot to do with the raw appeal of both bikes. An abun-





dance of power spread wide across the range is something you can experiment with . . . play with even, until you find the combination that turns you on most. The Hurricane and Mach IV gearboxes were both smooth and relatively fuss-free at the start of our test, but the H2's neutral-at-the-bottom-and-five-up gear-change schedule meant occasional freewheeling when down-shifting if you weren't watching the neutral warning lamp mounted in the tacho. And both upward and downward changes proved difficult after 250 miles of hard riding (the machine had done 5,200 miles before we stumbled upon it). Re-adjusting the remote linkage failed to completely cure this fault, making for some stiff booting.

The five cogs on the Triumph, sorry BSA, motor were like the Kawasaki's, well spaced and shifted swiftly except once or twice when young Harrison was getting a bit mean during the quarter mile drag-offs at Snetterton. Had trouble hitting second

apparently, but then I hate to think what revs he was up to. Me, I hardly missed a change during the whole party. Sometimes neutral was a bit tricky to find when the motor was really hot, but, as Triumph have a seven pint oil system and that ole forward mounted cooler to look after the heat generated by those 60 odd horses, that wasn't very often. The big single plate automotive-type clutch would also take a lot of abuse, even after a batch of 12 second quarters it only evidenced very minimal fade. Overall gear ratios are lower than on the stock bike - the Americans preferring faster acceleration times to overall top speeds.

The five plate Kawasaki unit was somewhat less pleasing. It didn't like prolonged use in heavy traffic and it grabbed all the time (although the way one wants to use that yelping Kawasaki horsepower does tend to encourage this, I guess). I'm told by ex-assistant editor Terry Kreuger that the optional heavy duty plates available for the Mach III

are The Ones To Use. Mind you the helical gear primary drive on this machine is a marginally more efficient set up for the street tripper than the Triumph's triplex chain. Ever had a primary chain bust on you at 70+? No party. Pays to inspect the primary drive regularly on the Triumph if you're really a street cowboy but during our test it didn't seem to deteriorate at all. (Mind you there is that school of thought that prizes a modicum of "give" in the drive train, and I can respect their opinion).

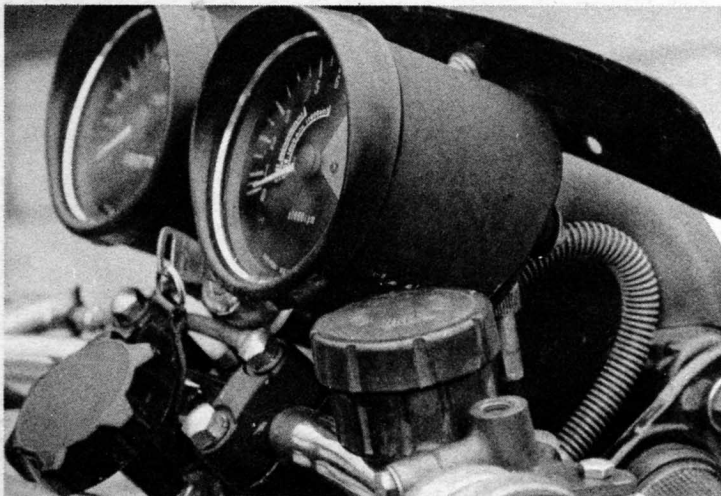
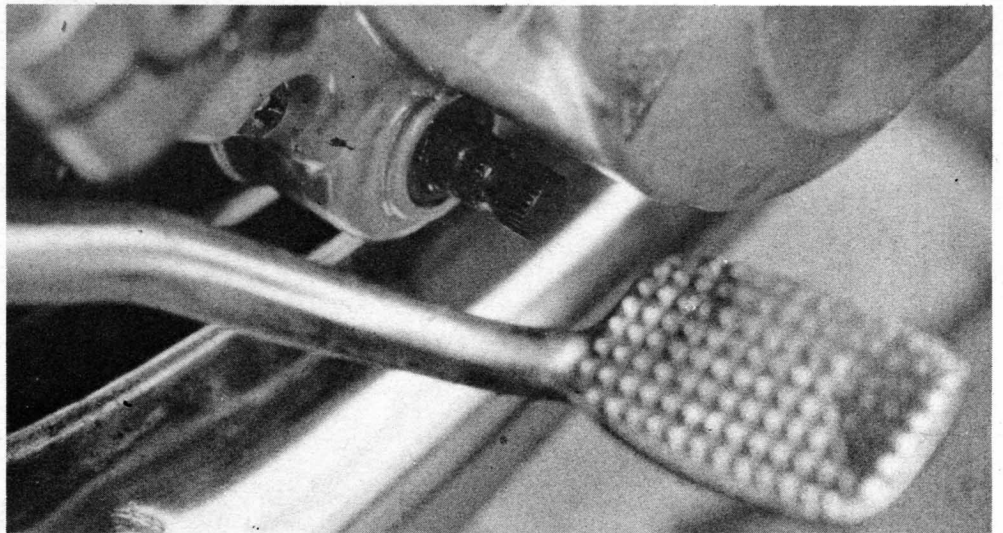
Saving on chains is something Kawasaki do keep in mind though. They've fitted a small chain-oil tank alongside the battery which feeds a manually operated oiler mounted just above the nearside pillion footrest. Putting the bike on its centre stand - it needs a good yank - and pulling the oiler knob releases the lube onto the chain which should be spun for maximum penetration. An oiler is fairly essential on high torque bikes like these, but where's the automatic chain oiler

fitted to the stock Trident and Rocket-3? Nowhere to be found on the Hurricane - oh well Johnny'll have to carry a can.

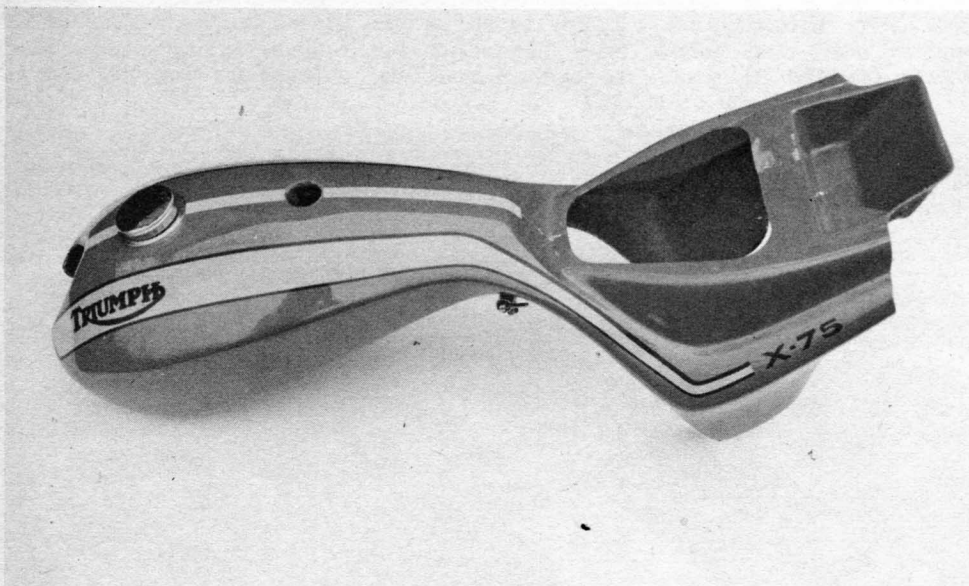
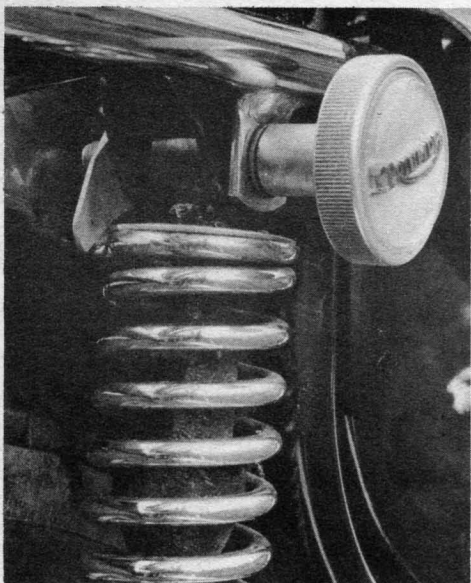
Sparks for the Mach IV are provided by pointless Capacitor Discharge Ignition which shouldn't need adjustment during the normal course of duty. In fact only partial adjustment is within the scope of the average owner and the bike must go to a dealer for the full job. The X-75 uses a normal battery/coil/contact breaker arrangement, prone to malfunction as we all know, but the triple set of points housed in the timing cover behaved perfectly throughout.

'Course blasting about the highways like a lunatic is really not very wise, it's even less sane without a good bunch of anchor power to hang onto when the time comes. The Kawasaki is well served in this department with an 11½ inch disc upfront and a big eight inch drum at the rear. The whole plot stops very rapidly and without wiggling its tail around, although the front disc didn't ▶

*The standard Kawasaki styling looks as neat on the 750 as it does on the smaller models. Under the seat is mounted the box of tricks for the capacitor discharge ignition, fitted only on the 750 for this country. Kawasaki are the only manufacturer to fit this system as standard, giving perfect timing, easier starting and longer plug life. Odd piece of rubber hose is the air-filter intake. Front brake needs more lever squeeze to operate than most discs, but still works well. Gear change shaft goes right through crankcases and emerges from the right-hand cover for 'English' conversion. Test bike had the flat bars from the 500 Mach III. Kawasaki controls and instruments are right where you need them. Under the tank picture shows the usual untidy collection of cables, wiring, coils and lousy welding.*





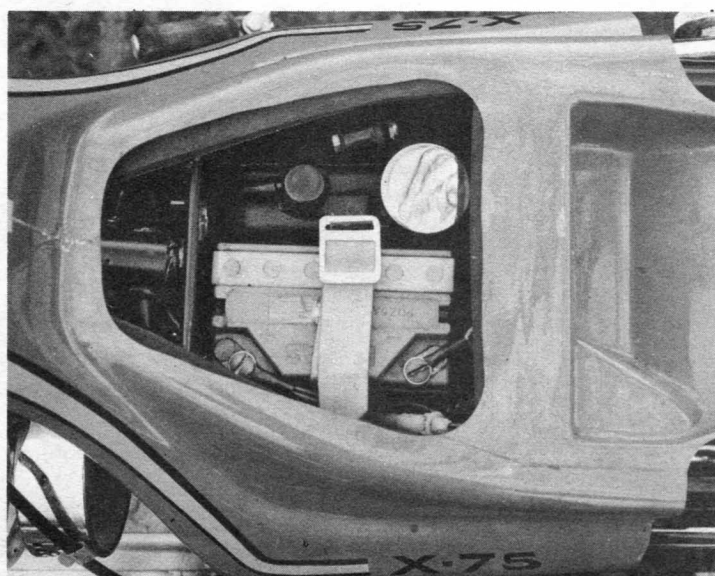


The flashy lines of the Hurricane make normally disinterested people walk into lampposts. Though the looks are spoilt at close range by untidy mounting of such things as coils and choke lever, the X-75 is the hottest thing to be seen on since the Honda 4.

A prime example of Michael Mouse engineering. To stop the nut turning at the other end while the seat fastener is being turned, a piece of bent metal is welded to the nut and hits against the rear suspension unit.

Apart from alloy rims, 2" of fork leg and an extra silencer, this is what'll cost you £200 over the price of a stock Trident. Y-shaped bracket for the headlamp mounting is rubber-mounted to the bottom fork yoke. Under the seat cutaway gives access to the oil tank filler and battery.

Compartment for a small tool roll is moulded in to the glass fibreware.





have the same degree of "feel" to it that you'll find on a Yamaha XS-2, a Commando or a Sportster. Still, it's damn safe and just what you need for stop-start street racing.

The Hurricane, unlike the Kawasaki and, strangely enough, its Trident brother, comes with a twin leading shoe front stopper of the type fitted as standard to all the Triumph biggies before the advent of discs. Only it's polished up to look nice (it does, it does) and fitted with a heavy duty cable which eliminates any soggyess you mightn't have liked.

Technically I would say it's wrong to put a brake like this on such a powerful bike when something more efficient is an option on the (cheaper) stock Trident. But there may be reasons . . .

Consider Johnny R. He likes to think of himself as a Big Tough Man, despite his allusions to trendiness; a stud in swank clothes. Big Tough Men ride Big Tough Motorcycles: Sportsters, Mach IVs and . . . isn't this where we came in? Yes, the Hurricane needs a strong handful to haul it quickly to a stop. The Big Grasp. But it does work and it only showed fade after some nasty business at Snetterton. And, as Mr. Harrison says, there's always Joe Dunphy and his racing linings if you want to sacrifice a bit of progressiveness. In the meantime the 8 inch front brake and a 7 inch unit outback will do quite nicely thank you; for Big Tough Men, of which I would not presume to be one but never did I feel unsafe at any speed (sic.). Ralph Nader might not like it but I enjoyed the experience of definitively *using* the bike's brakes, as well as that throttle. It required almost the same degree of purposefulness as riding an enduro bike hard across unfamiliar trails.

And so we *are* back amongst the engaging, essential crudities of these two bikes. They don't have electric starters f'instance, and neither do they need them. The X-75 starts second kick from cold after you've flooded the two outer carbs and plunged the choke lever downwards (it's mounted alongside the carbs - saving on cable costs perhaps!?) and it's warm enough to scoot off after 60 seconds usually (better than the Trident we tested in ish numero uno, I recall). When it's warm it still likes a tickle but it always fires first prod.

The H2 starts third or fourth  
*continued on page 57*

# TRIDENT

	Triumph X-75	Kawasaki Mach IV
Engine Type	3-cyl OHV 4-stroke push rod operated OHV, 4 bearing crank	3-cyl piston port 2-stroke, 6 bearing crank
Bore & Stroke	67 x 70 mm	71 x 63 mm
Capacity	740 cc	748 cc
Compression	9.0:1	7.0:1
BHP @ RPM (Claimed)	60 @ 7250	74 @ 6800
Clutch	Single plate, diaphragm spring, dry	Multi plate, wet
Primary Drive	Triplex chain	Helical gear
Gear Ratios (1)	12.87:1	n.a.
(2)	9.15:1	
(3)	6.98:1	
(4)	5.93:1	
(5)	4.98:1	
Carburation	3 x 27 mm Amal	3 x 32 mm Mikuni
Ignition	Battery & Coil	Electronic CDI + solid state magneto
Lighting	Alternator	Alternator
Wheelbase	60 ins	55.5 ins
Kerb Weight	444 lbs	464 lbs
Ground Clearance	7.5 ins	7 ins
Instruments	Speedo & Tacho	Speedo & Tacho
Wheels & Tyres (Rear)	4.25 x 18	4.00 x 18
(Front)	3.25 x 19	3.25 x 19
Brakes (Front)	2LS 8 x 1.62 ins	11.5 ins disc
(Rear)	SLS 7 x 1.25 ins	SLS 8 x 1.4 ins
Fuel Tank	2 gal (approx)	4 gal (approx)
Fuel Consumption	29 mpg	22 mpg
Speedo Correction*		
Actual Speed @ 60 mph	55 mph	55 mph
Top Speed*	116 mph	120 mph
Standing Quarter & Terminal Speed*	13.31/102 mph	12.49/106 mph
Braking Distance		
From 30 mph	39 ft	30 ft
Decibel Rating:		
Mid Range At Ear	93 db	92 db
12 ft	86 db	87 db
Optimum Revs At Ear	104 db	106 db
12ft	98 db	99 db
Horn Note 12 ft	92 db	87 db
Seat Height	32.5 ins	31.5 ins
Peg to Seat	19.5 ins	18.5 ins
Handlebar height	43 ins	41.5 ins
Steering Lock	Yes	Yes
Kill Button	Yes	No
Steering Damper	Friction	Friction
Trafficators	No	Yes
Electric Starter	No	No
Folding Pegs	Yes	Yes
Trip Mileometer	Yes	Yes
Price	£895 inc p.t.	£754 inc p.t.
*Figures achieved using electronic timing equipment		
Mechanical Reliability	****	****
Overall Engine Characteristics	****	***
Electrical Reliability	****	***
Handling	****	***
Exhaust Silencing	***	***
Attention to Detail	****	****
Rider Comfort	**	***
Braking	***	****
Lighting	**	**
Ease of Maintenance	****	***
Finish	****	***
Value For Money	**	**
**** excellent *** good ** expedient * unsatisfactory		



continued from page 35

boot from cold providing you've pressed the starter jet lever mounted alongside the twist grip.

You've got to keep it down for a minute or two before the motor's warm enough to be ridden. This operation is accomplished by the most godawful clatter, of which much has been said before. It's also serenaded by cries of abject pain if you've forgotten to fold up the offside footrest and plunged the awkwardly shaped kickstart lever-plus-boot down onto it. (Guess who made *that* mistake first time around?)

Another feature of both machines are the ribbed front tyres. The X-75's is a 3.25 x 19 Dunlop nestling into an alloy rim, as does the 4.25 x 18 Dunlop K81 on the back. Now the stock Trident has 4.10 x 19s both ends and, not unnaturally, it handles better than it looks. With the Hurricane it's *vice versa* of course, but the handling is just what Johnny would love; fast and mean. The ribbed front cover wanders a bit on poorly surfaced corners and isn't very amusing in the rain, but the bike holds a line under power and it doesn't wallow if you're riding solo (from which all you bright sparks will realise that it does when you're not). Which is all a fellow can ask for unless he's training to be a road-racer. Which brings us to boy racer Martin Harrison's comments regarding race track performance.

"Well, Brian . . . . ." As we mainly went to Snetterton to do some accurate  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile speed tests, neither of the bikes was driven round the main circuit particularly fast. However, there was a lad on a Kirby Metisse just itchin' for a race and a few laps on each of our 750s gave us a taste of speedy motoring.

Both bikes handled pretty well, though the Kawasaki plunged about a bit through the bumps on Riches. Even that wasn't too worrying, it could still be driven through with eighty on the speedo. The Triumph stayed rock-steady all the time, though as I drove it a lot slower that maybe doesn't mean much. To me, riding the Triumph was like sitting on top of a 97 horse-power double-decker bus, no place to try any Saarinen-style cornering antics.

Placed at the 300 yd. marker board before the hairpin, we used the National Sprint Association's Ernie Woods, along with a few boxes of flashing lights and whirring digits, to find out exactly what the beasts would do.

The Kawasaki got first try at holding top speed past the timing lights which had nothing to do with having only 250 yards past them in which to brake for the hairpin. After going into a horrifying tank-slapper at 115 mph (where are those hydraulic dampers, Agrati?) the friction damper was tightened down to

get the H2 safely through the lights at 120 mph. Which is exactly what the speedo read.

The Triumph managed a true 116 mph, with 110 on the clock, before trouble struck. Approaching a hairpin at that speed on a heavy bike with fading drum brakes is no way for a lad to spend an afternoon. Still, there's always the down-into-first-gear-and-lock-the-back-wheel technique.

Standing quarters were uneventful, the H2 not surprisingly making the fastest time with 12.49 secs., the Triumph dragging by in 13.31 secs. Terminal speeds over the  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile were 106 and 102 respectively. Back to you Mr. Williams.

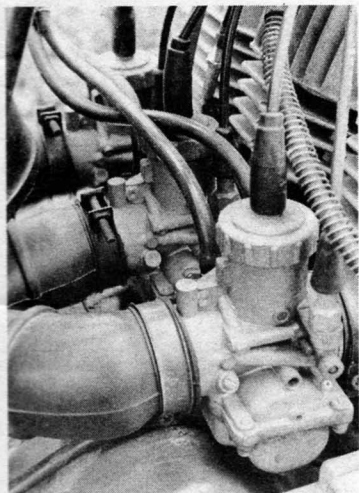
The Kawasaki, partially due to its flat bars and consequent riding position, feels surer round bends, but in the States it's got the same cowhorns as the Triumph so what the heck? In the rain it's a *joke* - a goddam dangerous *joke* which limits riding to cagey third gear dawdling. Tyre sizes are almost the same as the Triumph but the composition and design are not, and the Triumph's wheelbase is  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches longer than the Kawasaki's.

However in the dry, on a fast open highway or even a well surfaced winding country 'B' road, the Kawasaki is as agile as the Triumph and perhaps slightly faster - if you can handle all that torque. The suspension on either

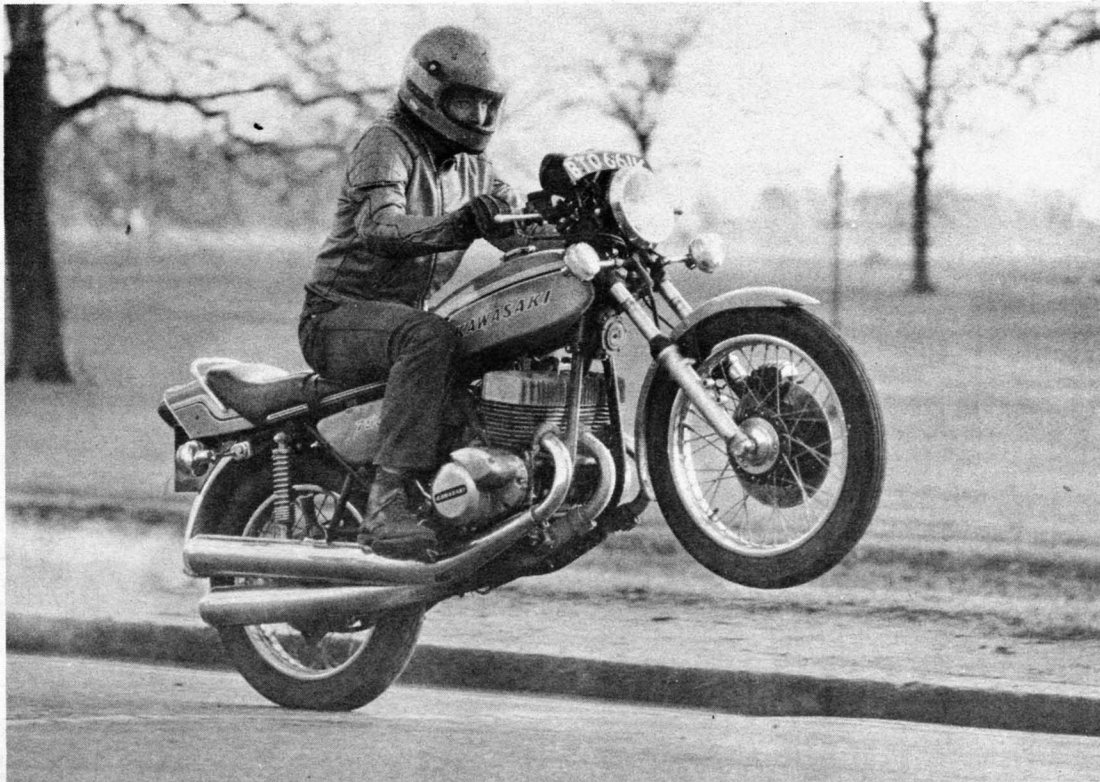
bike permits confidence under such conditions, the Kawasaki gives the stiffer ride. Yet there was little to choose between the two bikes for long distance riding; neither of them was really comfortable after seventy or eighty miles of non-stop riding; the Kawasaki proving too stiff and vibratory and the Hurricane having submitted you to an excess of wind buffeting, thanks to those high 'bars. The thick bulbous handgrips on the British machine were also a mite tiring after a while, especially if your hands are a bit on the small side, in which case the fairly solid ribbed rubbers on the Kawasaki are preferable.

But of course on bikes like these long blasts were out of the question due to voracious gas consumption. The Triumph's meagre 2 gallon tank has you watching out for petrol pumps after about 65 miles of hard roadwork when 35 mpg is the norm. The H2 offers just 20/22 miles to the gallon under such conditions but at least it has a four gallon tank. Who cares, gas stations are havens where you can stop and reflect on the excitement you've just left behind; a chance to warm up the knuckles and get your breath back for the adventures ahead.

If you're contemplating heavy duty nighttime riding on unlit roads though, you're going to have to satisfy yourself with lower cruising ▶



Three Mikunis with three separate cables provide all those rarin' horses for the Kawa.





speeds because neither machine safely illuminates the scenery above 70 mph. The 7 inch Lucas unit on the X-75 is the same as you get on the pre '73 Bonneville, affixed to the bottom yoke by a graceful chrome swan-neck that divides to reach up into a bracket each side of the nacelle. It stays solidly in place but the beam has no real cut-off and is too diffuse. The Kawa's 35W main beam also suffered from a lack of focus and the dip was so much lower down that it was impossible to adjust the matt black headlamp unit to provide optimum duality of use.

The Mach IV is fitted with the vast rear lamp common to the whole Kawasaki range and it's a nice one. The Lucas unit is almost dim in comparison but still fine by current standards and as on the Triumph, stoplight switches are operated by both front and rear brakes.

However the Kawasaki is the only one of the pair equipped with trafficators - thereby moving slightly toward the 'luxury' standard that our Johnny probably sneers at, harbouring uncharitable thoughts of *effetism* in his West Coast mind. But no matter, the Triumph would look kind of, er, incongruous with a set of winkers now wouldn't it?

Also strictly in line with the pukka motorcycling image is the X-75 switchgear which consists of a large chrome horn button (easy to find in a hurry), with a main/

dip lever beneath it that is so near to the 'bar that it wouldn't sweep across if Triumphs hadn't cut a bit out of the left hand rubber 'grip, and a tall, loosely mounted kill button on the right hand side. The off/parking/mainbeam switch is directly in front of you in the lamp nacelle, together with an oil pressure warning lamp and main beam indicator lamp either side and forward of it. Ignition key slots in on the left of the steering head and is therefore totally inaccessible whilst riding.

Again the Kawa is a little more sophisticated with its ignition switch right between the tach and speedo, the former of which houses neutral gear and beam condition idiot lights. All the electrical switchgear - and this doesn't include a kill button - is alongside the left grip and it falls nicely to hand.

And now back to the basics on these two highly distinguished bikes, namely Pzzazz.

Craig Vetter's 'bodywork' for the British triple really starts with a clean layout pad. Attempts to radically re-style "the bits that fit on the frame" usually end up in aesthetic disasters, but not this time. The thing is a total design concept that works beautifully, the forward sloping seat (good for pillion hugging ladies) with its subtle grab rail, (the seat is removed to reveal battery and tool compartment by removing the two knurled knobs either side of

the rear sub frame), and the front section (you can hardly call it a "tank") enclosing the steel gas liner are very snappy. The glass-fibre ware is high quality, the yellow stripes look good too - but the 'Triumph' sticker is of curiously blotted appearance and looks wrong.

Vetter's body covers the standard duplex downtube frame and under-the-seat oil tank. It's a proven handler, so why change it? The side and centre stands fitted to it are easy to operate and just don't ground - at least not in our experience. But it's a tall beast, office dwarf Martin Harrison had trouble paddling the X-75 along in slow moving traffic and pushing it to gas stations... what was that I said about Big Tough Men?

No, it's wrong to assume that this machine will only appeal to six footers and I'm sure the seat height could be lowered with a little Triumph ingenuity, ground clearance notwithstanding. That seat, incidentally, is a comfortable one - better than the Mach IV's in that respect - but a bit short for regular pillion work.

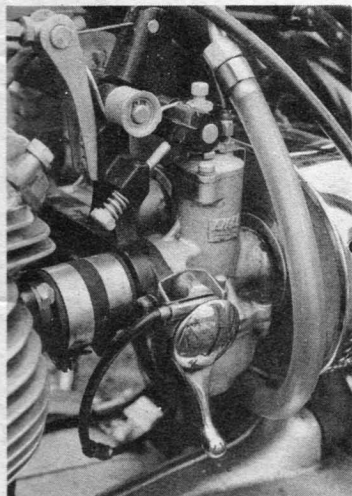
Indeed the Kawasaki's relatively hard seat is complicit in the bike's fatiguing vibrational effects, as mentioned earlier. However the 31.5 inch seat height makes it easier on shorter riders and its seven inch ground clearance didn't seem much of a problem: We never grounded anything. The

Mach IV shares the square-tank-and-lunchbox styling of most Kawasakis and you either like it or ride something slower. I dig it myself and the rear compartment is certainly useful. I also admire the standard of paintwork and the baked on striping, although frame enamel and chromework certainly were below the standards of BSA/Triumph. That beautiful splay of shorty meggas on the Hurricane complete with heat shield, is so beautifully made and finished. And check the highly polished yokes, fork sliders, engine cases and hubs.

If it's Pzzazz, at least it is certainly *quality* Pzzazz.

The Kawasaki chrome just isn't lasting the winter, there's rust around the exhaust brackets and elsewhere on the bike already and although Johnny R. might like something with a raw quality to it, I'm sure he wouldn't be seen polishing chrome every weekend.

However the choice is at least there. The market's now become so diverse that it can embrace two machines combining brute power, forceful behaviour and stunningly original looks. Kawasaki were first in the market place - or was it really Harley Davidson - and their Mach IV is still the inertia king, but Triumph have taken the plunge into a challenging new field and come up with what in the true sense of the word is the most exciting motorcycle built in Britain. ■



Triumph mount choke lever alongside left hand carb. Note pivoted bar throttle control.

