

MARTIN LAMPKIN Joins Team DBR...First Tests Inside

DIRT BIKE RIDER

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SSDT REPORT
One Man's Challenge

British 500 GP Preview
Plus 250 GP Action

D.I.Y.
Project XL250

WILLIE SIMPSON
Against The Odds

DYNO-MIGHT
500cc Power Secrets Revealed!

TESTS

Suzuki RM250 • Italjet Duo • Kawasaki Tecate

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THE DBR ORGANISATION: **Managing Editor** Dave Calderwood. **Editor** Peter Donaldson. **Production Editor** Tony Smith. **Editorial Assistant** Jane Leech. **Ad Controller** Peter Crew. **Ad Manager** Dave Campling. **Tele-Sales** Sue Burks. Joy Davies. **Staff photographers** Martyn Barnwell, Patrick Gosling. **Contributors** Jack Burnicle, Colin Taylor, Brian Crichton, Peter Howdle. **Editorial and advertising office:** Dirt Bike Rider, EMAP, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough PE2 0UW (Tel: 0733 237111; Classified advertising: 0733 236644).

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Just My Style...

It wasn't that long ago Italjet told MARTIN LAMPKIN he was too old for a factory ride. Mart took the rejection like the pro he is. Now he gets his own back, putting the production 350 and 250 through their paces.

IT was a pleasure to be asked to test the Italjets, since I remember when the bikes first came out. Bernie Schreiber rode the prototype in the Swiss round of the World Championship following his move from Bultaco after its problems.

The first impression of the bike in those days was not very favourable. But as the rest of the Italian bikes developed into World Championship contenders the Italjet wasn't left behind and it is now a competitive machine.

I went to the factory about three years ago looking for a contract, but unfortunately couldn't agree terms with the boss, a very hard businessman called Mr Tartarini. The two reasons I didn't get a contract were, of course, money and the second – at that time a bitter pill to swallow – I was getting too old.

He said he was looking for a younger rider. Although my results were good enough he wanted some young rider to bring on. He obviously made the right decision bringing on Phillippe Berlatier whose Scottish Six Days bike I tested.

Phillippe is one of the best natural riders I have seen. Apart from being a complete head case, he is as good at trick riding as he is on the more natural sections which contradicts my earlier thoughts that the bike was a bit old fashioned. He can do anything on the bike as I saw when he spent the week at my pub and the local discos while practising between the British and Irish world rounds.

The bike suited my type of riding; good fun to ride both in the sections and over the rough. Usable power in the first three gears in the sections nowadays is a bit of a rarity but the heavier flywheel on the Italjet made it almost impossible to stall and yet quite snappy and quick from the bottom with bags of mid-range power. I'll say it again, fun to ride.

The engine noise of the 326cc unit on the road sections is at times a bit frightening. The vibration-type seizing noises are, in my Bultaco experiences, to be ignored. But you cannot help mentioning the Bultaco as there is no doubt the two bikes are alike in many respects.

The six speed gearbox is very positive – I didn't hit a neutral while testing or in the





Inter Centre Team Trial where I rode the Italjet by choice from a good selection of other bikes available.

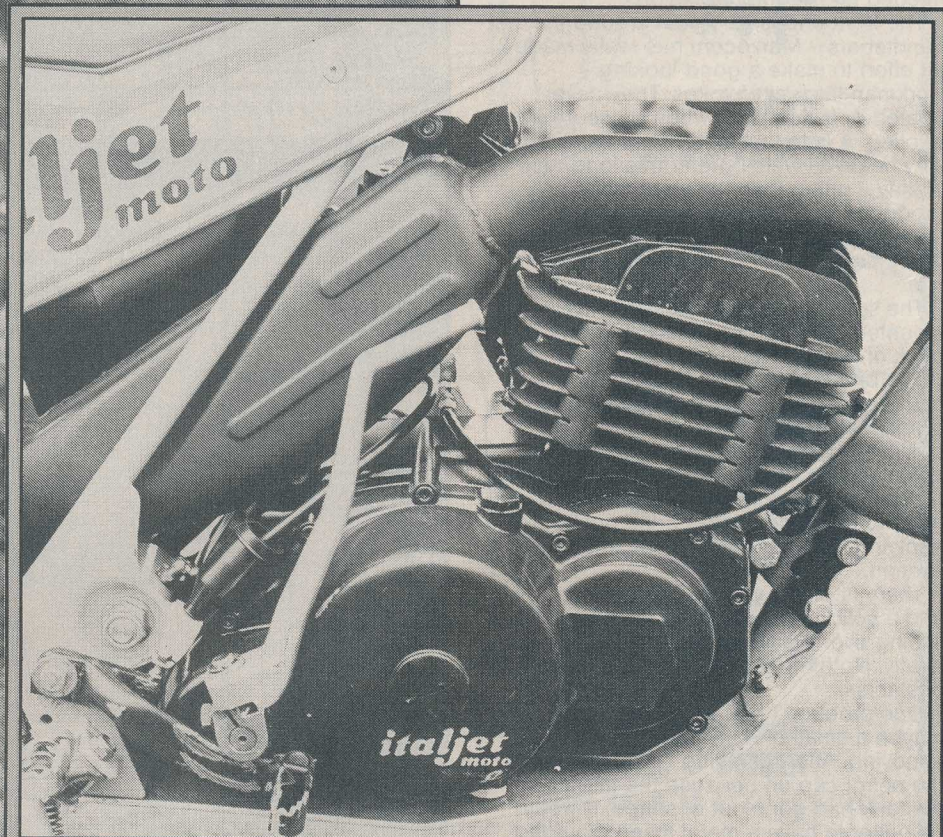
Malc Rathmell and I came out of retirement at the request of team manager Tom Ellis. It was a good trial in which to test a bike. The weather began dry and hot but then it rained, making the sections very greasy indeed, grip-wise. Remembering I had the new Michelins presented no problems.

I still have the throttle control while looking and feeling for grip, but my timing is sadly out after a lay-off. The very light Welsh sections were not my or the bike's cup of tea. An odd hill climb would have suited but they seem to have all gone. It was much more fun with a couple of good blasts.

The carburation on the 350cc needed a slight adjustment coming from the

ABOVE LEFT: 'I'm not a small engine fan but the 250 is no anti-climax after sampling Big Brother.'

MAIN PIC: 'By choice I rode the 350 at the Inter Centre. Its fun to ride and is always willing to work for you.'



'The 250 has more pulling power than a good many other machines of its size.'

WHAT a surprise. After riding the 350cc bike I thought the 250 would be a bit of an anticlimax. But I must confess I was well pleased with its overall performance, even though I'm not a small engine fan.

It is not gutless and is very forgiving, making it a good buy for the clubman. It's got more pulling power than many of the

other 250s I've ridden.

It's almost identical to the 350 in all aspects but should in my opinion be individualised by having its own colour scheme as the Ossas did back in the old days.

Summing up, I'd say it's a good clubman's bike, with national potential, but lacking the guts for the real big time.

Scottish Highlands, but the Dell 'Orto is the easiest to set up of all the carbs I've been acquainted, with the twin air type filter – a big improvement on the earlier model. The swinging kickstart buckled under my weight or was it the compression? It must have been the compression. This was the only problem I had mechanically.

Moving on to the frame, what a bloody awful colour! But you cannot judge a bike by its wrapping. The Italjet is generally neat and compact, the major set-back being the width of the engine around the footrests. you either have to ride on the balls of your feet or like a duck at 10 to two. I rode on the balls of my feet because I've been more comfortable for the last couple of years in that position.

In fact after moving the handlebars back into a reasonable position after Phillippe had them on the front mudguard I felt in control. There isn't any tucking under of the front end and the bike has the right amount of rake and is especially good in a straight line. For the very tight sections, although the steering is positive, I thought it a bit on the heavy side. Either that or I'm weakening.

The suspension is fine; the bike now being produced has Marzocchis front and rear giving a smooth ride, the rear suspension is particularly good, keeping the wheel on the ground where it's needed for maximum traction.

The front end is very neat around the handlebars – Marzocchi has really made an effort to make a good looking workman-like set of yokes. They never twisted or flexed even when pressure was applied. A substantial front mudguard stay helps as well. I prefer this long type of stay – rather than the small ones now produced which just fit in between the forks – for the simple reason the mudguard doesn't vibrate or touch the tyre.

The speedo is neatly tucked away, mounted on a purpose-made lug on the back of the right-side fork casting.

The brakes are good. Phillippe's bike had the rear brake on the left with a rod extension, making braking much more positive than a cable which even when adjusted properly stretches under pressure. Like all bikes I've ridden you need to keep the brakes dried out by applying them for a mile or so after a wet section.

There is plenty of ground clearance and a solid, well-shaped sump shield for sliding over the larger rocks and logs fits neatly. Nothing hangs down to jam on obstacles.

One problem I had in the trial was maybe a small one but nevertheless annoying. After refuelling I couldn't get the petrol cap on because the thread on the tank had gone out of shape. It would be better to have a metal insert moulded into the tank. That way when the thread goes you don't have to buy a complete tank unit.

My final summing up of the machine is that it's a strong workman-like bike which with the right rider aboard can be a winner.



'A good buy for the clubman'... the 250.

350

SPECIFICATIONS

250

Price, (incl. VAT)	£1345
Engine..... single cyl 2-str, air-cooled	
Bore x stroke.....	83.2mm x 60mm
Capacity.....	326cc
Carburation..... Dell 'Orto PHBH 28 BS	
Ignition..... contact breaker	
Max power (claimed).....	14.7kW @ 5500rpm
Max torque (claimed).....	2.73kg-m @ 3850rpm
Gears.....	six

CYCLE PARTS

Tyres..... Michelin	
Front.....	2.75 x 21
Rear.....	4.00 x 18
Brakes	
Front..... SLS	
Rear..... SLS	
Suspension	
Front..... hydraulic telescopic	
Rear..... twin Marzocchi shocks	

DIMENSIONS

Weight (dry).....	91.8kg
Wheelbase.....	1295mm
Seat height.....	762mm
Ground clearance.....	330mm
Fuel capacity.....	5.5 litres

SPARE PARTS (incl. VAT)

Air filter.....	£6.90
Piston kit.....	£69
Rings only.....	£10.30
Head gasket.....	£4.36
Rear sprocket.....	£11.43
Rear mudguard.....	£8.75

Price, (incl. VAT)	£1345
Engine..... single cyl 2-str, air-cooled	
Bore x stroke.....	71mm x 60mm
Capacity.....	237.5cm
Carburation..... Dell 'Orto PHBH 26 BS	
Ignition..... contact breaker	
Max power (claimed).....	11.7kW @ 5500rpm
Max torque (claimed).....	1.8kg-m @ 4650rpm
Gears.....	six

CYCLE PARTS

Tyres..... Michelin	
Front.....	2.75 x 21
Rear.....	4.00 x 18
Brakes	
Front..... SLS	
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Suspension	
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Bike supplied by ... Italjet Moto, Wellington Road, Worth Way, Keighley, West Yorks.