

60p

motorcycle MECHANICS



**MAKING
MILWAUKEE
FAMOUS**

MIGHTY ATOMS
We split the Yamaha
and Kawasaki 80's



Want our
fast Honda 50?
See inside

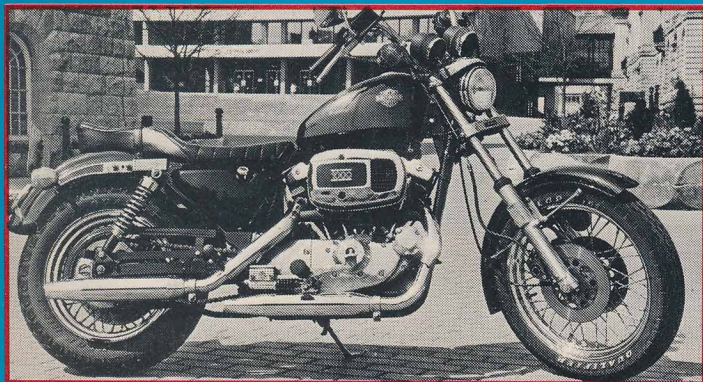
**Biking's heavy
metal hero**

Shocks unlimited **Women's wear** Z 750 GP on test

WIN +++ WIN +++ WIN



Our hot MB50 — see page 34



What made Milwaukee famous... Colin Taylor passes on his thoughts on the Harley Sportster — See page 24.

Editor: Ian Beacham Production Editor: Phil Balding News Editor: Malcolm Gough Road Test Editor: Jim Lindsay Technical Editor: John Robinson
Photographer: Martyn Barnwell Designer: Tony Baskeyfield Editorial Secretary: Jane Leech Advertisement Controller: Peter Crew Advertisement Manager: Chris Seaton.
Editorial and Advertising Offices: Motorcycle Mechanics, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough PE2 0UW. Tel: 0733-237111. Telex: 32157.
Classified Advertising: Tel: 0733-236644.
Annual subscription rate: £22.00 (inland), £23.00 (overseas), £34.00 (airmail) Europe
Cheques or postal orders should be made payable to Motorcycle Mechanics and sent to Competition House, Farndon Road, Market Harborough, Leics.
U.S subscription agent: Buzz Walneck, Walneck's Vintage Motorcycles, 7923 Janes Avenue, Woodbridge, Illinois 60545.

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Readers are welcome to submit articles and photos for consideration.

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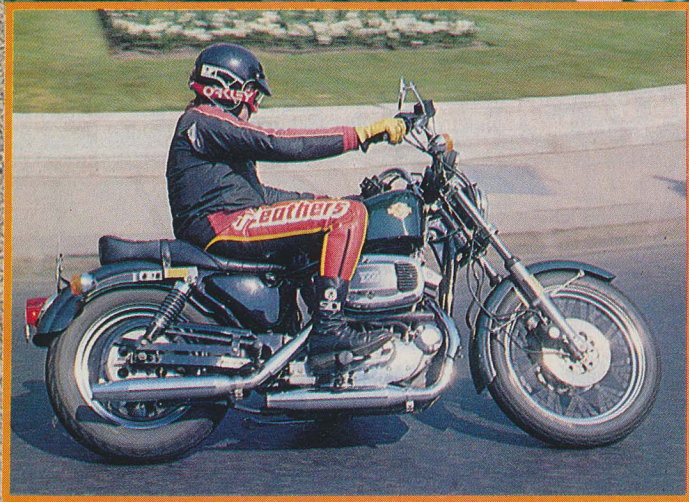
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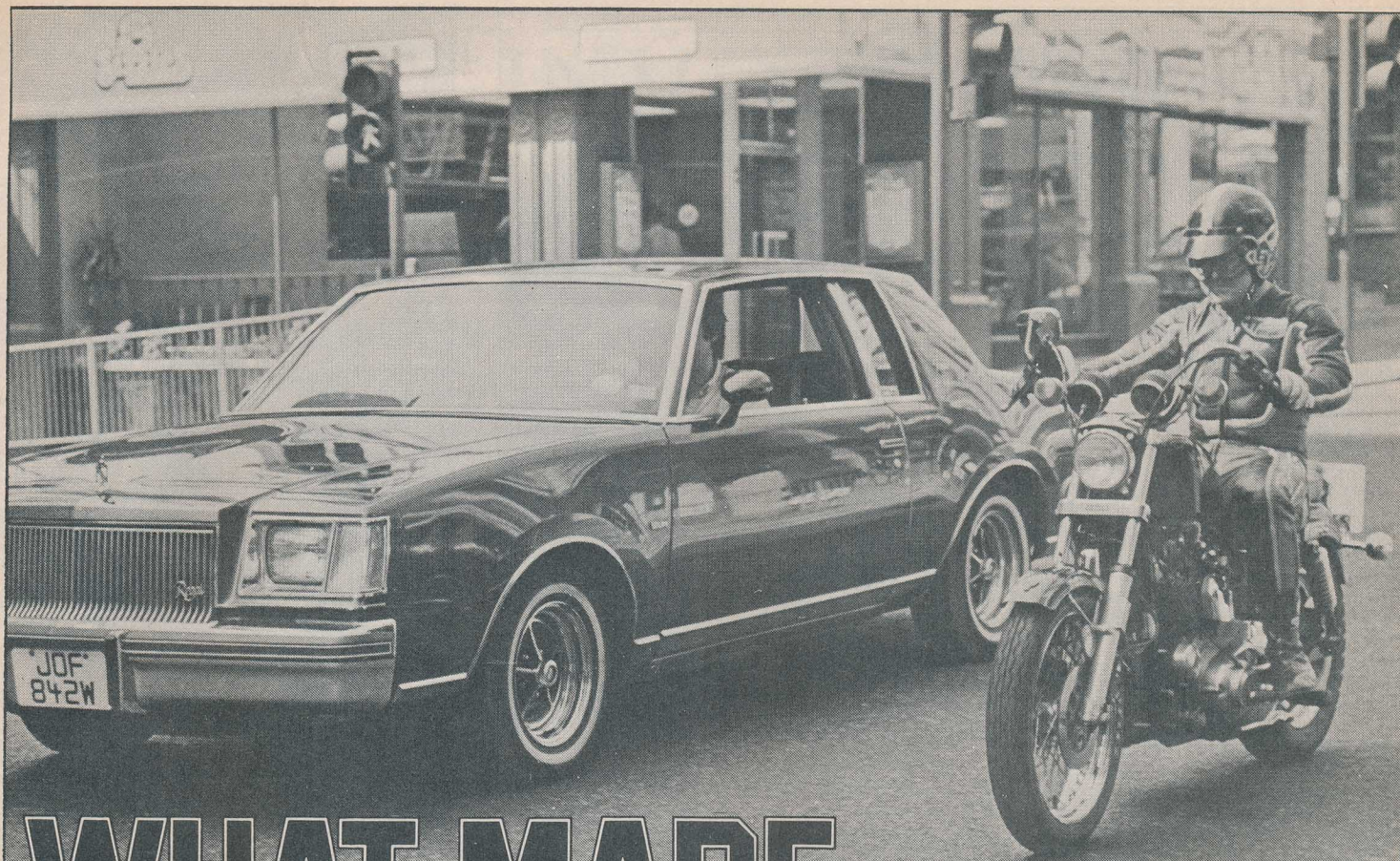
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BURGER STEAKS
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MUSIC FROM
LOS ANGELES RADIO
ON E.L.O. &
LIGHT FROM
OWN D.J. STAY
NIGHT & WATCH
LIGHTS





WHAT MADE MILWAUKEE FAMOUS

I USED to be undecided about Harleys. I just couldn't believe that a machine surrounded by such an aura of mystique could really be a serious motorcycle. Now, having spent a couple of weeks riding the Sportster, I'm not so much undecided, I'm just not sure.

But, if you start with the basic idea that the Sportster is the meanest looking motorcycle that money can buy, and that looking at it is mainly what it's for, you won't be disappointed.

Fire up the motor and your ears will be subjected to a collection of rattles and bangs which hardly sound like the music that you've paid £3,700 for the privilege of hearing.

Ride down the street and you'll soon find that going fast on this bike is no fun. If you try to, the waves of vibration that assault your body at 60mph will blur your vision. At 80mph it seems as if you're in danger of losing the fillings from your teeth. But curiously, at 100mph, everything goes smooth.

At first I thought that there was something wrong with the bike but then I realised that there was, in fact, something wrong with the way I was riding it. The Sportster was, after all, the first Harley I've ridden and I soon realised that you can't just treat it like any other 1000cc motorcycle — or any other motorcycle at all come to that. You've got to take it easy and let the bike work for you rather than against you.

On roads with long hills, the Sportster shows its true capability. It pulls up the climbs

● Some people say that it's a certain type of beer that made Milwaukee famous. Colin Taylor has other ideas . . .

like a train on just a touch of throttle as if there were no slope there at all.

It's definitely a lazy engine. Riding along at 70mph in top, the crankshaft is spinning at a little over 3700rpm. And cracking the throttle open at this speed does not give you 'kick-in-the-pants' acceleration, although the mill does rev on to 6000 without complaining too much.

The two cylinders are fed from a single butterfly carburettor mounted between them. The beautifully chromed exhaust header pipes are linked by a balance pipe and run into separate short mufflers. The mufflers emit a burbling growl of the nature that could only be produced by a long-stroke 45 degree V-twin.

The frame of the 1982 Sportster is all new. Gone are the weighty cast iron lugs with the frame tubes brazed into them — and not before time. It was never a very rigid or attractive structure. The new frame is very much a 1980s CO₂ welded fabrication and it works well too. The Sportster's handling is quite acceptable in comparison with other modern motorcycles and an almost unbelievable improvement on previous models.

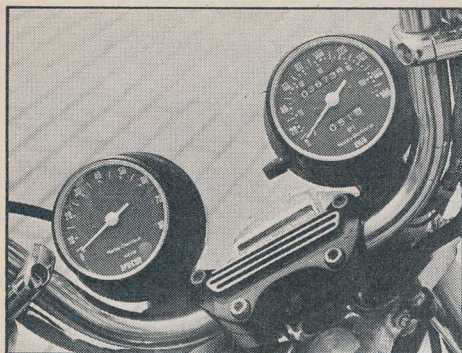
Some of the improvement is in part due to the meaty Dunlop Qualifier boots. The Good Year Eagles formerly fitted as original equipment were long on wear but pretty short on grip, especially in the wet.

The front forks are Japanese (Showa to be precise) and the rear shocks look suspiciously Oriental too. The spokes, we are led to believe, come from Taiwan, probably much to the horror of Harley fans who all thought they were hand-massaged from best Wisconsin steel! Still, that's progress. We also heard an unconfirmed tale that the primary drive chaincase was not cast in the US of A, but what does it matter? The resulting assembly of bits and parts looks like only a Davidson can. Without comparison.

One accessory I would like to see fitted as standard is a set of highway pegs (forward mounted footrests and controls). Not because I think they look particularly cool but because riding this Hog in a laid back position would be quite comfortable.

Something else that needs attention is the seat. I gave a lady a ride down to town on the bike and she, being a seasoned CBX pillion, left me in no doubt about the seat. "It's bloody awful," she said.

The passenger perch on the Sportster looks like a throwback from pre-war times, when a hard bum pad stuck on the rear mudguard represented the ultimate in pillion comfort. More lavish padding and perhaps a backrest



The speedo drives from the front wheel while the tacho is electronically triggered.



too would help, although I'm sure that Harley purists would not agree with me.

Fuel consumption did not vary much throughout the test. There was little difference between running flat out and cruising gently. 45mpg was the average under all conditions. Harleys are known to drink oil and this one was no exception, consuming around a pint every 200 miles. Nothing to worry about, they're all like that, although we here that the new FXRS is not quite so greedy.

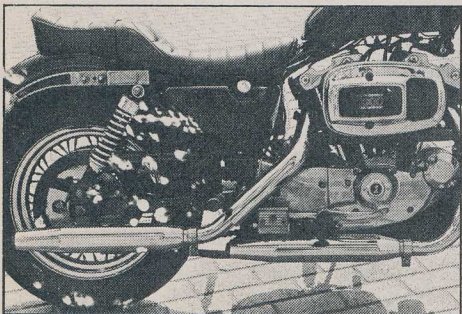
Despite its meagre dimensions, the headlight provides a good enough beam for night cruising. In the top of the shell are two small red warning lights for oil pressure and the generator. The tacho and speedo are both rubber mounted on the handlebars which are themselves rubber mounted, so the whole affair is pretty flexible.

The speedo drives from the front wheel while the tacho is electronically triggered. The grips are fatter than normal but are eminently comfortable to hold. With only a butterfly to operate, the throttle is incredibly light and easy on the wrist.

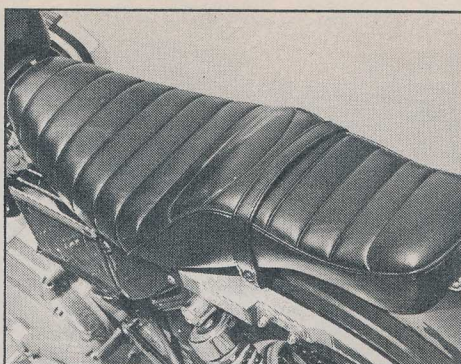
Harley switchgear '82 style is a great improvement on its predecessor. Gone are the awkward to use push buttons for the indicators, horn and starter. Instead, the bike is fitted with easy to use rocker switches. Unfortunately, the indicators only stay on while you're actually pressing the button, like



Indicators are close at hand but you have to keep the switches pressed in.



The classy outline of the Sportster.



The seat was not high in the comfort stakes.



A flick of the boot and out comes the sidestand.

before, but they are at least manageable now.

The horn has to be heard to be believed. The racket it kicks up is not unlike the bellow of a bellicose bull. You really hope that folks step off the kerb just so you can use it.

The gearchange took some getting used to as the pedal action is quite heavy. I found that the slickest shifts were made when I didn't rev the motor beyond 4000rpm. Finding neutral was most difficult and the only really satisfactory way was to wait until I'd stopped and turned the engine off.

But in the end, it's the way the whole plot is slung together that gives the Sportster its appeal. And it's an appeal which kind of makes detail faults pale into insignificance.

Do I want one? Well... I'd like to have access to one but I'm not sure that I would pay out all that money just to be able to say, "I've got a Harley."

It's not the best motorcycle I've ridden and it's certainly not the worst. It is definitely the one which has left me thinking that all the follow-my-leader Oriental bikes lack the ability to stand out in a crowd.

Some people say that it's a certain type of beer that made Milwaukee famous. I reckon that it's the factory that can produce motorcycles like this one. □



Cool styling — that's the Harley Sportster.



Specifications Harley Sportster

Recommended retail price£3,699
Warranty 6 months, 6,000 miles (optional 12 months unlimited mileage)

PERFORMANCE

Top speed 105mph
Standing start 1/4 mile 15.3sec/79.5mph
Fuel consumption: Worst 56.13mpg
Average 49.1mpg

ENGINE

Type OH V-twin
Bore and stroke 3.189 x 3.812ins
Piston displacement 1000cc
Compression ratio 8:1
Fuel system Butterfly throttle with accelerator pump

TRANSMISSION

Gears 4 speed
Clutch multi-plate, oil bath
Primary drive triple chain
Final drive single chain

CHASSIS

Front tyre MJ90 x 19
Rear tyre MT90 x 16
Front brake 10 x .19ins
Rear brake 11.5 x .23ins

DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase 60ins
Length 87.5ins
Seat height 29ins
Dry weight 512lbs
Fuel capacity 2.4 gal
Oil capacity 5 pints

INSTRUMENTS

Includes: Speedometer, odometer, rev counter, warning light for generator, oil pressure and high beam.

IMPORTER

Coburn & Hughes, 53/61 Park Street, Luton, Beds.

Tester's verdict

Good points cool styling
Bad points several
Performance disappointing
Economy not really
Handling good
Comfort uncomfortable
Braking good if you try hard
Equipment sparse
Value overpriced