

AUGUST 1978

# Motor cycling

MONTHLY

price 40p

## THE TOUGHEST TEST: HONDA CX500

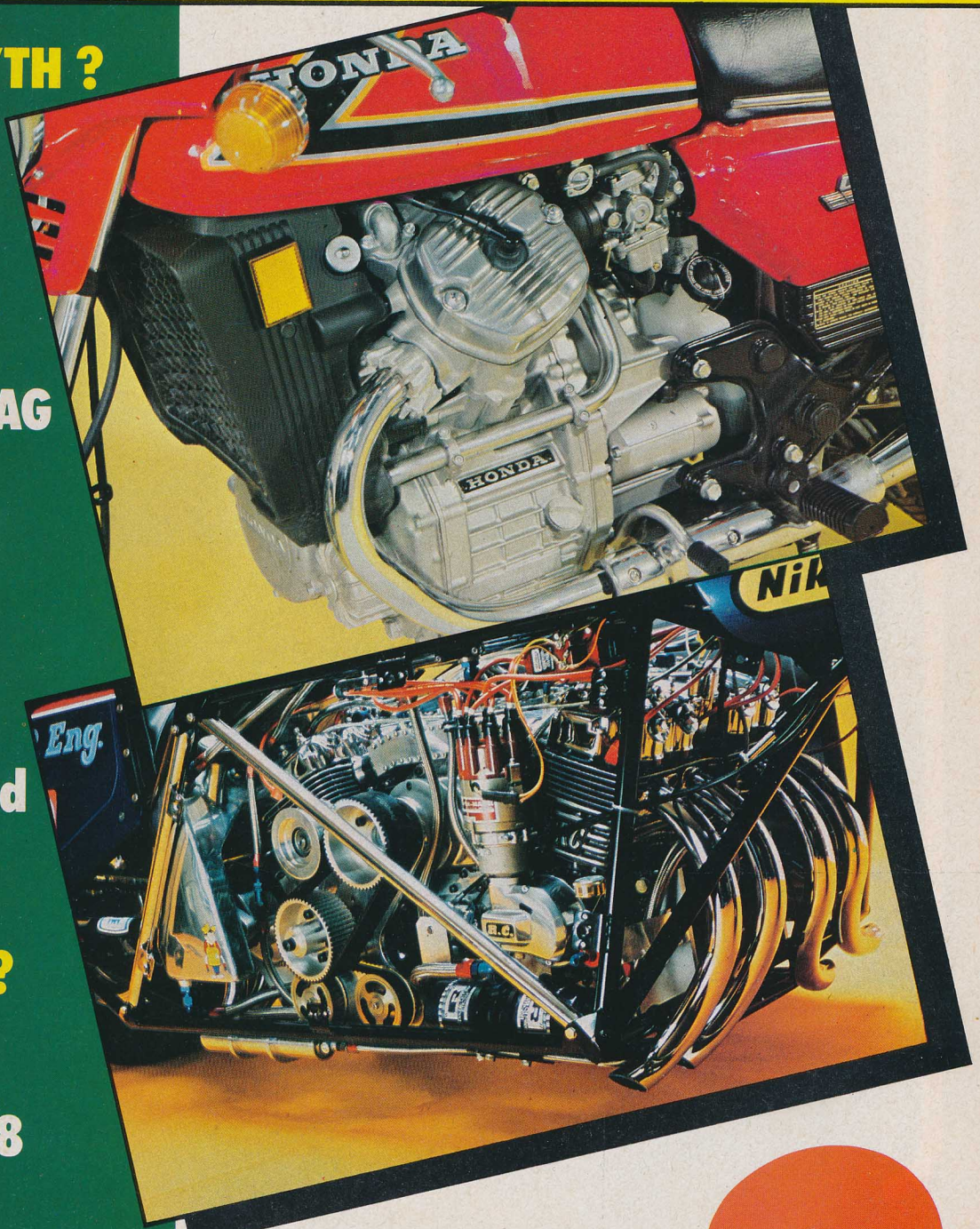
### LEGEND or MYTH ?

We rode it  
8000 miles  
to find the  
answer!

IN THE SOFT BAG  
Easy  
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YAMAHA'S  
LATEST 50s  
Road & Trail  
versions tested

200mph  
in 400 yards ?  
Russ Collins'  
fabulous  
2000cc Vee-8



*Special* 6 page **FEATURE** on **HELMETS**

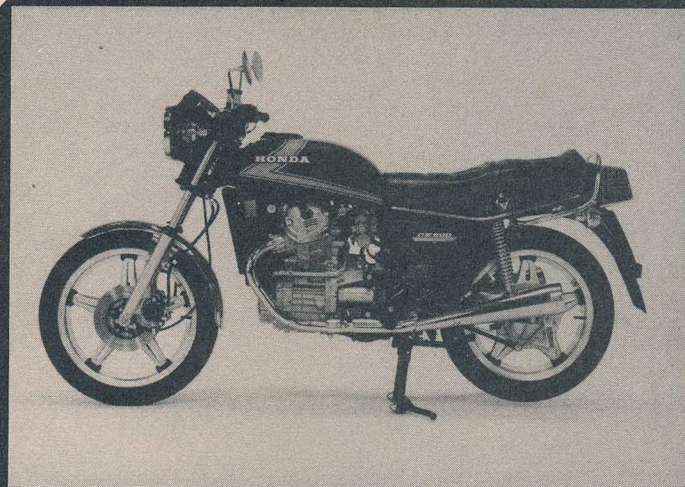


Westover House,  
West Quay Road,  
Poole, Dorset BH15 1JG  
Poole 71191

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MONTHLY

**AUGUST 1978 No. 34**



## BIKES ON TEST

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Legend — or myth? We bring you the first real test of Honda's new V-twin. We rode ours over 8,000 miles to find out how good it is — or isn't.

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Twenty-five thousand miles — that's right! 25,000 miles — ownership of the big flat four. We check it out against its abilities when new.

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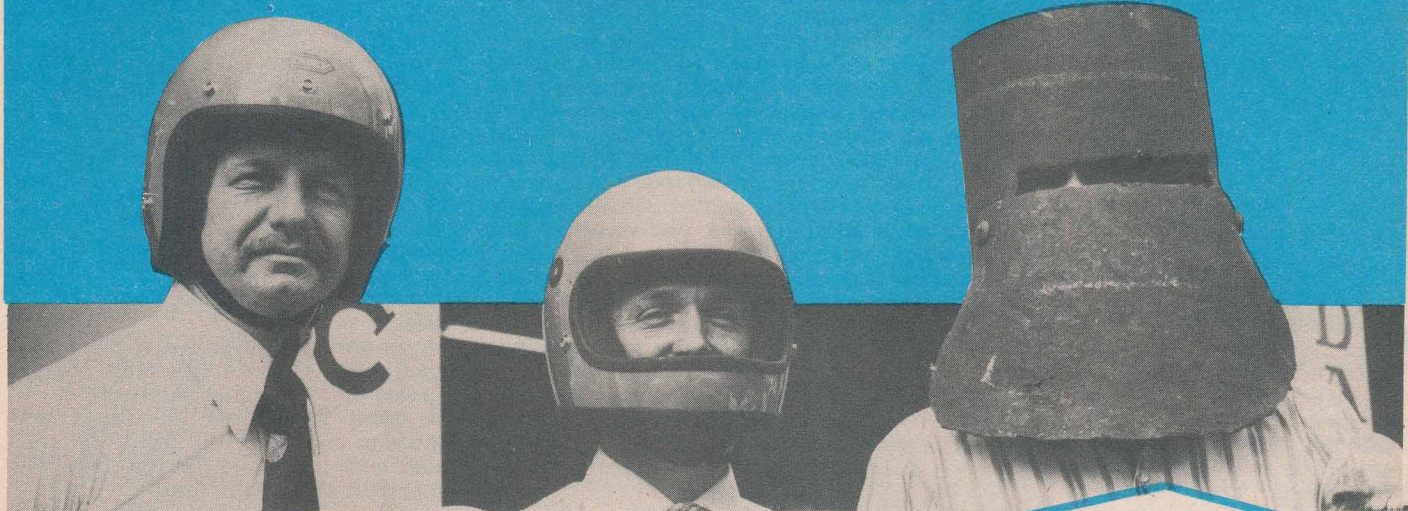
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# KEEP YOUR HEAD!



## Geoff Carless investigates the safety aspect of motorcycle helmets with some surprising results . . .

COMPULSORY safety helmet legislation is reckoned to save up to 200 lives a year as well as numerous serious, totally disabling head injuries.

But, just because all motorcyclists, with the exception of the Sikh population, are legally required to wear safety helmets, it doesn't necessarily guarantee our security in the event of an accident.

Even the type of helmets we wear can influence the severity of injury we might receive. The arguments for and against full face or open face 'jet' helmets have been waged and never been fully won by advocates of either design. Consequently, we decided to pose a few questions to the faceless, nameless statisticians who profess to know all the answers and propose legislation to protect us from ourselves.

Sorting out a few contacts, or at least their 'phone numbers, was easy; but getting them to say anything was very hard. The various Government Departments were of little help, with anonymous people claiming that their findings were 'top secret' until such time as they decided to release them.

A 'phone call to the Transport and Road Research Laboratory found one man, who refused to give his name, willing to give the following quote: "Based on our experience I can tell you the following. The benefits of full face helmets more than outweigh those of open face, or the jet style. Open face can cause facial injuries, and there is no real evidence to suggest that full face helmets can cause spinal injuries. Finally, we deplore the use of smoked visors." He refused to say any more or put me in touch with anyone else within the organisation.

The Optical Information Council also had a man willing to give a quote, but no more. He told me: "We cannot really comment on the helmets themselves, apart from saying that if a full face is chosen it should have a large aperture for safety.

"We condemn the use of smoked visors and recommend a clear one with sunglasses. People who wear glasses should use flip-up sunglasses. Photochromatic glasses are not recommended, as they take too long to change in different light. The closer the visor is to the eye the better, especially in wet weather. That's all I can say." Once again we were unable to get any more information.

One of these so-called contacts who refused to give his name, or any information himself, put me in touch with the Accident Research Unit at Birmingham University, and they proved more than helpful.

The smell that greeted me when I visited the unit wasn't pleasant, and as I entered the laboratory the reason was evident. On the table was an assortment of about thirty helmets, all of which had been worn by the deceased in fatal accidents. Some were still covered in blood.

The damage to the helmets varied. Some had stayed on the head they had been protecting, and had been scratched or holed; but, more important, some had little damage to the shell because they had come off during the accident.

Why do they come off? I was shocked to find that some helmets were made with only a small rivet holding the straps in place, and it only needed a small tug to pull them off.

Straps should be held in place by a

Ned Kelly wore the 'tin' helmet made out of plough mouldboards to become an outlaw . . . now we become outlaws if we don't wear safety helmets when riding our motorcycles!

metal bracket and not just a rivet, which tends to spread the hole around it with continued use. Check this when you buy a new helmet by pushing your fingers hard against the padding so that you can feel what is underneath.

I was also warned about ABS and polycarbonate helmets. They may be cheaper than glass-fibre, but they don't offer the same security.

If you ride anything bigger than a 30mph moped, then invest in a good helmet. Oh, and don't paint polycarbonate helmets — they can become weakened and crack like an egg-shell on impact.

## FAULTS

Throughout my travels looking for damaged helmets, I found several Police stations with Black Museums. To protect the interests of the officers that helped me, I cannot name the stations or the officers.

Here is a list of the twelve helmets that shocked me the most. They are all full-face and it should be noted that painted polycarbonate helmet failures were not manufacturers' faults, but those of the owners.

1. Yellow AGV — strap pulled free on impact. Rider killed.
2. White Phil Read Europa — painted polycarbonate that had cracked like an eggshell on impact. Rider killed.
3. White Paddy Hopkirk Agordo — painted polycarbonate that cracked on impact. Passenger killed.







4. White AGV — strap pulled free on impact. Rider severely injured.
5. Yellow AGV — strap pulled free on impact. Rider severely injured.
6. Blue Bikestyle — strap pulled free on impact. Rider killed.
7. Blue Bikestyle — strap pulled free on impact. Passenger severely injured. (Same accident as No. 6).
8. Black Kangol Falcon — strap pulled free on impact. Rider severely injured.
9. Red/yellow Hondastyle — strap pulled free on impact. Rider killed.
10. Yellow Bikestyle — protective bar around mouth and chin shattered on impact. Rider's face badly injured by pieces of polycarbonate.
11. Black Nolan 2000 — strap pulled free on impact. Injuries not known.
12. White Stadium Scorpion — strap pulled free on impact. Rider killed.

The helmet failures were not always the sole cause of death or injury, but were a contributing factor in most cases.

I should point out that the above faults do not necessarily represent an accurate cross-section of any or all the manufacturers. They are only the worst dozen that I saw. It is also fair to say that most of the strap failures were on fairly old helmets, and that most of the manufacturers have given the matter their attention. But beware, some haven't. So check the fitting when you buy. It is also a good idea to check the helmet you already own.

## STATISTICS

Statistics in the country cover almost everything, except it would seem, the varying injuries between open and full-face helmets. So, to provide the evidence for the question of which is the safer helmet, I had to go further afield. How does Australia grab you?

In 1977 the Traffic Accident Research Unit, Department of Motor Transport, New South Wales conducted a three month survey of injuries in relation to the type of helmet. It was concluded that full face against facial injury, and that they do not increase the risk of accident due to lack of vision.

The types of injuries suffered by riders involved in accidents were listed under their various headings, as can be seen in table 1. Tables 2 and 3 go on to show the types of facial injuries with both helmet types.

Whether you wear an open face or a full face helmet, I'll let you analyse the figures for yourselves. I'm sure you will have to agree that they are in favour of full face.

## VISORS

Nearly everyone I spoke to in relation to helmets and visors condemned the use of smoked visors. Even those that agreed they could be of use in strong sunlight, also agreed that they would prefer to see them banned.

It would appear that all the experts would like to see clear visors, and sunglasses when needed.

It is a sad fact that many riders wear tinted visors nearly all the time. Even at night. It is also a fact that this has resulted in many deaths, although once again statistics are not available.

Mr. Riger Ide, a scientific officer with the West Midlands Forensic Science Laboratory returned to the scene of one fatal accident in Cattell Road, Birmingham, in which a 17-year-old youth was killed on August 5, 1977. He

had ridden into the back of a lorry parked illegally without lights.

In darkness, using the same visor the deceased was using at the time, Roger found that his ability to discern objects was significantly reduced. Laboratory tests showed that only 20 per cent of available light could get through the tinted visor.

The coroner told the jury; "I think you must come to this conclusion. Motorcyclists must not wear tinted visors at dusk or at night. We know why this young man rode into the lorry. He couldn't see things in front of him because he was wearing that tinted sunvisor."

Verdict — Death by misadventure.

People tend to forget, probably due to the high prices they have to pay, that visors are a throw-away commodity. When they become scratched they are almost useless, although some scratches can be removed with jewellers polish.

I, for one, will never use a tinted visor again, and will make sure that I change my clear ones at regular intervals.

I hope these few comments and statistics will help you decide on your next head protector. Buy the best you can afford, but check it first!

**Geoff Carless**

TABLE 1  
Location of Injury Classified by Type of Helmet Worn

Location of Injury	Number of Motor Cyclists and Pillion Passengers	
	Wearing Full-face Helmet	Wearing Jet Style Helmet
Whole body.....	24 (3%)	18 (2%)
Head.....	46 (6%)	53 (7%)
Face.....	26 (3%)	64 (8%)
Neck.....	5 (1%)	6 (1%)
Upper extremities.....	187 (24%)	183 (23%)
Back.....	15 (2%)	21 (3%)
Chest.....	15 (2%)	12 (2%)
Abdomen.....	13 (2%)	6 (1%)
Pelvis.....	25 (3%)	31 (4%)
Lower extremities.....	335 (44%)	313 (40%)
Unknown.....	77 (10%)	77 (10%)
Total.....	768 (100%)	784 (100%)

TABLE 2  
Facial Injuries Suffered by Full-face Helmet Wearers (Motor Cyclists and Pillion Passengers)

Location of Facial Injury	Number of Facial Injuries							Total
	Laceration	Contusion	Abrasion	Fracture	Haemorrhage	Avulsion	Unknown	
Nose.....	1	—	—	3	—	—	—	4 (15%)
Eyes.....	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1 (4%)
Mouth.....	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1 (4%)
Unspecified.....	14	—	4	2	—	—	—	20 (77%)
Total.....	16 (62%)	0 (0%)	4 (15%)	5 (19%)	0 (0%)	0(0%)	1 (4%)	26 (100%)

TABLE 3  
Facial Injuries Suffered by Jet Helmet Wearers (Motor Cyclists and Pillion Passengers)

Location of Facial Injury	Number of Facial Injuries							Total
	Laceration	Contusion	Abrasion	Fracture	Haemorrhage	Avulsion	Unknown	
Nose.....	—	—	1	2	2	—	—	5 (8%)
Eyes.....	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	4 (6%)
Mouth.....	8	—	—	—	1	1	—	10 (16%)
Unspecified.....	24	3	13	3	—	—	2	45 (70%)
Total.....	35 (55%)	4 (6%)	14 (22%)	5(8%)	3 (5%)	1 (2%)	2 (3%)	64 (100%)



# IF THE CAP FITS!

**Heads or tails? You pay your money and buy your bone dome ...**

**PICKING** out a safety helmet to suit our personal tastes is far from easy. Walk into any large motorcycle dealer, particularly one that specialises in riding gear, and you'll find a selection almost as varied as the range of motor cycles on his forecourt!

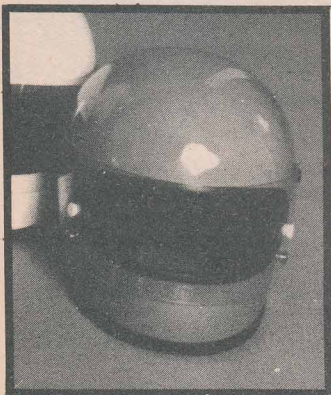
Fortunately for us customers, there is a pretty tough price war going on at the moment, with some importers and retailers slashing prices to gain a larger slice of the market. So keep an eye open on the advertisements — you could save yourself quite a few pounds when buying your helmet.

Due to the wide discrepancy in retail prices, some of the importers we contacted were unable to give recommended retail prices for the helmets they distribute. In fact, there is no guarantee that the prices given here will be the same as you will pay. They should merely be taken as a guide ...

**BELL HELMETS**  
Two-Four Accessories Ltd.,  
53 Clapham Common  
South Side, London, SW4  
9BU.

Pioneers of the full face helmet, Bell bone domes are manufactured in the United States.

All Bell units imported into this country have glass-fibre shell construction, polystyrene foam shock absorbent protection and have an extremely high standard of finish. They are also among



the most expensive motorcycle helmets on the market.

Four different Bell helmets are available from Two-Four Accessories; two open face models, one full face and one off-road competition unit.

Cheapest in the range is the RT (Road Trial) open face helmet with an RRP of £36.50, while the other open face helmet — the Magnum 2 — costs £53.50. Both types are available in twelve sizes.

It now costs just under £60 to buy the Bell Star 2 full face 'space age' safety helmet. Available in ten sizes, it meets the highest safety standards of any helmet and is reckoned by many to be the best. Price is £59.59.

Finally, for the moto-cross rough rider, Two-Four Accessories are importing the Bell Moto Star helmet which has extra mouth and nose protection, but still has sufficient space for goggles.

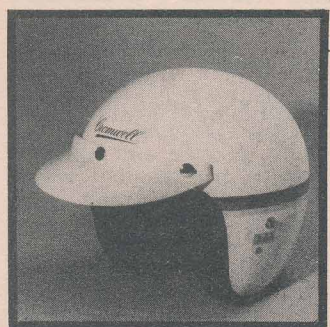
This model, including duckbill visor, will set the off-road rider a cool £60.43.

**BELSTAFF/CROMWELL**  
Belstaff International Ltd.,  
Caroline Street, Longton,  
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs, ST3  
1DD.

Cromwell (Helmets Ltd.) make them and Belstaff distribute them ... in other words, two established British companies have come together to provide motorcycle clothing from toes to head.

The headwear comprises the open face 'Prince' helmet and the full face 'Viscount'. Both are of glass-fibre construction and designed to exceed BS5361 specification.

Both helmets come in four standard sizes, but with removable padding for making minor adjustments to fitting.



Recommended retail prices are £13.99 for the Prince and £24.05 for the Viscount.

**CENTURION HELMETS LTD.,**  
Mill Lane, Thetford,  
Norfolk, IP24 3DA.

Once one of the major manufacturers of cheap, lightweight helmets, Centurion have completely revised their sales policy and gone upmarket with a range of four helmets — one open face and three full face integral models.

All have A-CU approval for competition use, including the lowliest in the range, the open-face 150. This poly-



carbonate helmet is manufactured to BS 5361 and is available in five sizes, complete with peak and five-stud fitting for wrap-round visor. Cost is £10.80.

A very popular model in the range is the 'Sprint' full-face helmet which is available in four sizes and sells for £19.95. This too is made of polycarbonate and comes in four colours with contrasting brushed nylon lining. A 1mm visor is included.

Two new full-face models in the Centurion range are the 'Sport' and the 'Special'. Both are made of glass-fibre with black leather trim interiors. Also, both have the BS2495/77 rating and come in four sizes.

The 'Sport' as worn by Roger Marshall, Kevin Wretton and Jock (TT sidecar winner) Taylor, sells for £36.00.

However, the higher specification 'Special', which has a 2mm visor and RAC-approved car racing life support system (which is detachable for motorcycling) sells for £48.00. Colours for both models are simply black or white.

**KETT MANUFACTURING CO. LTD.**  
59 Palmerston Road,  
Wealdstone, Harrow,  
Middlesex, HA3 7RR.

Kettcover insurance is given free with many of the helmets marketed by the company. This includes all Boeri helmets, the Kett Silver Wing, all DIWS and Caber helmets.

The insurance pays £1,000 to any purchaser of a Kett helmet who receives any



kind of head or facial injury which permanently prevents him/her from following their employment.

No specification was given as to whether the helmets are made of glass-fibre or polycarbonate, but all attain or exceed BS5361.

The two Boeri models, the GT and the Elite, sell at £21 and £24 respectively and both have A-C.U. competition approval stamps.

Two other full face helmets distributed by Kett are the 'psychodelic' Caber 400 and the Caber 100 models. The latter helmet is at the lower end of the price range of integral helmets with an RRP of £19.20, while the Caber 400 sells at approx. £28.50.

The DIWS 'Fantasy' has a metallic sculptured finish in blue, green, red or gold with black and this full face helmet retails for approximately £27.00. A similar but cheaper version, the DIWS Formula 1, is available with single colour metallic finish at £19.50.

Finally, there is Kett's own 'Silver Wing' full face helmet. Available in white, black or blue with quote 'deluxe soft nylon corduroy lining' it comes complete with A-C.U. competition approved stamp at £19.95.

Not bad with free insurance thrown in as well ... not that we hope anybody will need to claim!

**EVEROAK**  
Everitt W. Vero & Co.,  
London, SE22.

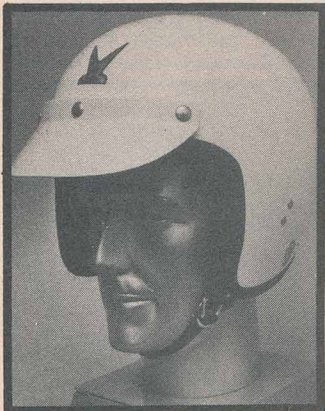
Practically all the police patrol motorcyclists wear the open face Everoak Grand Prix, which is made in glass-fibre and manufactured to







the highest BS2495/77 specification. Hand made with leather inner face and ear pieces, the Grand Prix also has A-C.U. approval included in the price of £30.00.



Everoak have always tended to aim high with their specifications and their full face 'Maxmaster' helmet, in glass-fibre, is no exception. It attains or exceeds the BS2495/77 specification and has A-C.U. approval for racing. The RRP of this model is £33.00.

Finally, at the bottom of the range is Everoak's polycarbonate Clubmaster. The standard open face retails at £12.50, while 'extras' such as the ACU stamp and Scotchlite trimming put the price up to £14.00.

**GRAND PRIX**  
Phil Read International,  
Glenbrook House, 7  
Molesey Road, Hersham,  
Surrey, KT12 4RH.

The name 'Premier' is no longer associated with Phil Read and has not been since September last year.

Phil Read International now has a range of plain and patterned glass-fibre helmets manufactured by Kangol to BS2495/77 with A-C.U. approval and stamp.

The helmets are called the

Phil Read Grand Prix range and are worn by Phil Read, Eddie Kidd, Ron Haslam, John Hobbs and Michael Lee.

Features include snap-on visor to take 'rip-off' mud lenses, rubber 'window' trim, beige coloured interior in brushed nylon with soft cheek pads and a soft neck roll at the rear.

Five patterns are available in four different sizes. Prices of the helmets range from £33.60 to £43.50. Phil Read replica and the Black Knight £44.75.

A less expensive polycarbonate helmet range, the Phil Read 'Europa' models are also available to BS5361 specification, with BS2495/77 applied for. Price of this four colour, four size range is £19.95.

A brand new GT version of the Europa, produced in polycarbonate to BS2495/77, is now available in four sizes and colours at £24.40.

**GRIFFIN**  
Griffin Helmets Ltd.,  
Highfield Road, Halesowen,  
W. Midlands.

Griffin helmets have become almost as rare as hen's teeth due to tremendous demand for these unusual but very comfortable helmets.

The Griffin range starts with an open face polycarbonate De Luxe model which retails at £13.50. But this is the only thermoplastic helmet in the range.

The Jetstar, which is also an open face helmet, A-C.U. approved and built to BS5361 specification, is made of glass-fibre and sells at £23.90.

Surprisingly, this is more expensive than the lowest priced full face helmet, the Speedstar, which sells at £23.15. This has BS5361 specification and uses basically the same shell as the two super Griffin models, the Clubman standard and

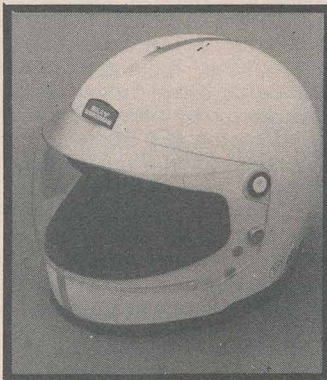
the Clubman HP (high performance).

The standard Clubman (BS5361) sells for £34.90 while the HP Clubman (BS2495/77) costs £39.90. Both are exceptionally good helmets.

**GUARDSMAN**  
Ken Cobbing Ltd, Monro  
Industrial Estate, Waltham  
Cross, Herts.

Exclusive to Ken Cobbing, the Guardsman range of helmets are all made of polycarbonate.

The two open face 'jet' helmets are available in three sizes and manufactured to the BS5361 specification.



The GD100 Trail Helmet is one of the least expensive helmets on the market, retailing for only £8.79 and comes complete with peak. Colours are white, orange and blue.

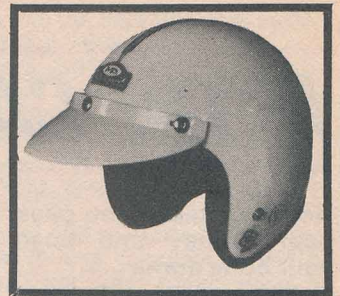
Additional white and black models are obtainable with the GD500 Imola helmet, which has a ventilated peak. The price wasn't available at time of going to press.

Top of the Guardsman range is the GD2000 Monza full face helmet, which has a moulded, shatterproof visor incorporating a frosted top section. Manufactured to BS2495/77, it is available in four sizes in white, black, orange, blue, yellow and green. Price of the GD2000 is £22.50.

**PADDY HOPKIRK**  
Mill Accessory Group Ltd.,  
Two Counties Mill, Eaton  
Bray, Dunstable, Beds.,  
LU6 2JH.

Raced and rallied, the Paddy Hopkirk 'Agordo' helmets come in open and full face designs in a range of twelve colours including metal flake or plain.

Both the integral and jet helmets are polycarbonate and constructed to meet BS5361 requirements. A-



C.U. approval has also been granted to both designs.

A printed guarantee that has no time limit is given with every helmet. It specifies that if your Paddy Hopkirk helmet is damaged in a road accident, it will be replaced free of charge.

Regarding prices, Mill Accessory Group stated; 'These are dictated by the trade and often the best 'buys' are through mail order organisations, where our helmets are usually the cheapest available.'

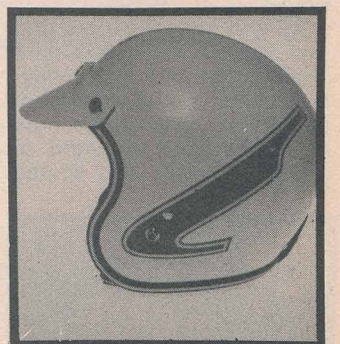
Agordo are shortly to introduce a moto-cross helmet similar to the jet style, but with an extended integral chin piece and mouth guard.

**KANGOL HELMETS LTD.**  
Commerce Road, Stranraer  
DG9 7DF, Scotland.

Three thermoplastic (Polycarbonate) and three glass-fibre safety helmets make up the basic range from Kangol, which offers something to suit every pocket and head.

Lowliest of the range is the Pinto 'moped or scooter' helmet which is open face with detachable peak and manufactured to BS5361. It sells at £10.25.

A step up the range to the next thermoplastic skid lid, the Colt Mark 2, and this has



similar specification to the Pinto, but with added trim and colouring.

The detachable peak can easily be swapped for a full face, five-stud fitting visor. Price of the Colt is £12.85.

The Kestrel Mk 1 and Mk 2 are also manufactured in polycarbonate but to the





more sophisticated BS2495/77 specification. Both are also full face helmets and have A-C.U. approval. Four sizes and six colours give a reasonable choice at a price of £23.96.

Glass-fibre shells are used for the remainder of the Kangol range and all are to the BS2495/77 specification with A-C.U. approval.

Falcon is the name and apart from a standard model at £33.00, there is the Falcon Classic/SH at £41.00 and the Classic/TH at £43.50. Exterior and interior trim would appear to be what makes the difference in price.

Four sizes and a multiplicity of colour schemes are available with the Falcon Classic helmets.

**KING**  
The King Safety Helmet Co. Ltd., 97 Maidstone Road, Rochester, Kent, ME1 1RN.

Barry Sheene wears them, Dave Potter and Bill Hodgkins wear them... the super 'King' helmets are all to the highest BS2495/77 rating with A-C.U. racing approval.

All are manufactured with a glass-fibre shell and all are full face, integral helmets with clip-down polycarbonate visors.

Prices start at £39.95 for the standard, nylon lined helmet, which is available in black, white, red, blue or



orange and rise rapidly to £48.57 for a Barry Sheene, Pat Hennen, Dave Potter or Stan Woods replica.

It is possible to have your own personal design helmet for £53.72.

Leather lining is another touch of luxury available with King helmets with the basic helmet costing £46.01 and £54.63 for any of the replica models.

Top of the pops' must be your own design, leather

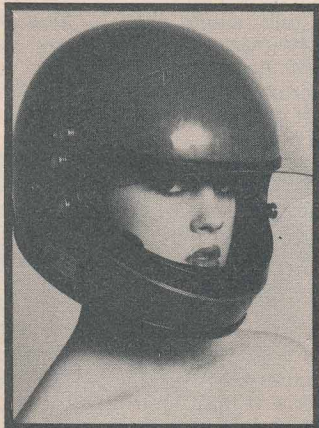
lined King at £59.78. How flash can you get?

A recent addition to the King range is the Vi-King Integral glass-fibre helmet to BS5361 specification in four colours (black, white, red or blue) and three sizes. In standard trim with nylon lining, the cost is £29.94. However, the Vi-King can be decorated to the customer's own design and this pushes the price up to £43.71.

**LIFE (U.K.) LTD.**  
Unit 19, Suttons Industrial Park, Reading, Berks. RG6 1AZ.

Life helmets, manufactured in Italy, have stormed on to the British market with the launch of a 30 model range and a £50,000 promotion campaign.

Jet-style polycarbonate helmets in white, yellow, red, orange, black and blue retail at £10.99 with full face polycarbonate helmets in a similar range of colours selling at £19.95. All comply with the BS5361 specification. Also, six sizes are available to provide a fit for most head shapes.



Glass-fibre helmets manufactured by Life meet the higher BS2495/77 standard suitable for competition A-C.U. approved use and prices have been standardised no matter the design with open face models selling at £26.95 and integral helmets costing £39.50.

Mick Grant replicas, special designs for Suzuki and Kawasaki owners, MTB (match the bike) as well as metallic flame designs are all available at the same price.

All jet style helmets come complete with peak and Lexan visor, while full face helmets also have the safety factor of a Lexan polycarbonate visor.

There is also a no questions asked replace-

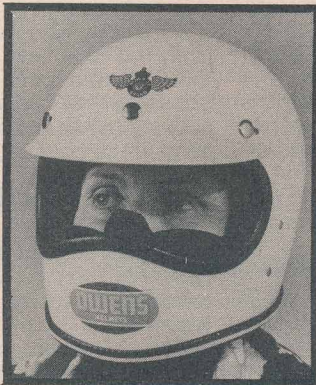
ment over a two-year-from-new purchase period which guarantees replacement of any helmet damaged in a road accident, following examination by the manufacturer. A model identical to that damaged will be supplied.

**OWENS HELMETS**  
Royal Works, 82 Hanbury Street, London, E1 5JN.

Twelve different sizes, plus a personal fitting service from Owens helmets ensures that if you buy one of their products, they will be prepared to ensure it fits perfectly.

Owens make extra small sizes for children and extra large for big heads.

All of their helmets are made of glass-fibre and all have A-C.U. competition approval.



The three cheaper models in the range are all open face 'Mastergarde' helmets — the 'New Style' BS5361 for trials or road use at £13.50. The 'Super' model BS5361 at the same price and the 'De Luxe' with leather lining and BS2459/77 at £20.00.

The integral or full face 'Mastergarde' models start with the Dome at £25.50. This is A-C.U. approved and has BS2459/77 specification.

A leather lined version, which is flameproof and named the 'Cardome' is priced at £30.00.

Moving uprange, there are two versions of the 'Stargarde' full face helmet; one with nylon lining, the other with leather. Both have the patented built-in face/nose lining which prevents misting of the visor and the cost is £27.50 and £32.00 respectively depending on whether nylon or leather lining is your choice.

Finally, the most expensive in the Owens' range is the new 'Haltstone' model

which incorporates the special face lining and is a full-face helmet designed for use with visor or goggles and a peak. This model retails at £38.00 and is to the highest specification BS2495/77 and A-C.U. approved.

**STADIUM LTD.**  
Queensway, Enfield, Middlesex, EN3 4SD.

Five different models of safety helmet, three in polycarbonate and two in glass-fibre, varying in price from £11.30 to £44.60 offer the motorcyclist a wide choice in jet or full face styles.

All are A-C.U. approved from the lowliest Project 7, which is available in five sizes and colours in jet-style BS5361 for only £11.30.

A de-luxe version of the model is the Project 9, which is also BS5361 and A-C.U. stamped and costs £14.50.

Cheapest in full face Stadium helmets is the polycarbonate Cobra, available in five sizes and colours and manufactured to BS2495/77 with full A-C.U. competition approval. Cost is £21.90.



Six sizes and six colours for the Scorpion full face glass fibre helmet means a helmet to suit and fit most heads. BS2495/77 and A-C.U. approval make it race-worthy and at £29.20 it is very competitively priced.

But, if you want to go car racing, you have to have a flame-proof bone dome and with a very apt name, the Phoenix is top of the range from Stadium.

Two colours (black or white) and four sizes, restrict its appeal, but being glass-fibre, it may be decorated to your liking. Cost of this super helmet is £44.60. BS2495/77, A-C.U. stamp and RAC approval mean that the Phoenix can't rise much higher in specification.







# HELMET CARE...

**If you want to keep a head . . . select your motorcycle safety helmet and look after it!**

EVERY helmet sold over a motorcycle accessory shop counter must by law carry a British Standards Institute 'kite mark' specification proving that the design has passed certain rigorous tests to ensure that it is suitable for the purpose for which it is intended. In other words, protect your head against injury in the event of an accident.

If we were all the same size and shape, things would be very much easier for the helmet manufacturers. They could produce one size to fit everybody and just change the colour schemes to suit our personal tastes.

Unfortunately, things don't work out that way. Human beings come in all shapes and sizes and this variation in dimensions also includes our heads.

Consequently, the first and most important factor when choosing a helmet isn't whether it looks pretty, is jet or full-face style, or worn by Barry Sheene or Phil Read on the race circuits . . . but that it fits perfectly and correctly on our heads.

When trying on a helmet, it should grip firmly but gently all round the skull at back, front and on both sides, with no uncomfortable pressure points, which on a long journey become unbearably painful and cause the rider to lose concentration.

On the other hand (or head), the helmet should never be a sloppy fit allowing our head to flop about inside like a pea in a ref's whistle. Testing for true size and fit should be done without fastening the strap. A loose helmet can be pulled tight on to the wearer's head using the chinstrap, but the fitting is still incorrect and after a short while, the strap will loosen and allow the helmet to flop about.

In the event of an accident, a loose fitting helmet, especially jet-style, is liable to fly off the wearer's head with disastrous consequences.

What's the point in manufacturers going to the trouble of making helmets in varying sizes, the BSI spending hours testing them to the limit to ensure they're safe to wear and the first thing a motorcyclist does is choose the larger, ill-fitting size because it's the only the shop has that he or she likes because of the colour scheme?

So remember, point number one is to choose a helmet which fits perfectly and is comfortable to wear.

## Life's value

WHAT value do you place on your life? Fifteen pounds? Twenty-five pounds? Forty pounds?

Sounds a daft question and is to any

sensible, thinking person.

We all know that human life is priceless and yet it's incredible the number of riders who are totally ignorant of the danger in which they place themselves by not paying sufficient regard to the safety helmet that they are wearing.

The number of old boys you see riding their commuter bikes still wearing the Corker helmet they bought fifteen or twenty years ago for a couple of quid is amazing.

The chin strap just about holds it on their head and the neck curtain is in tatters. The law simply states that you must wear a BSI approved helmet properly fastened when riding a powered two-wheeler.

As far as these riders are concerned, they might just as well be wearing a paper hat!

A motorcycle helmet, like any other item of riding gear is subject to wear, tear and ageing.

Sunshine, rain, salt spray, natural oils from the skin and hair grease oil take their toll on the construction of a helmet. Stitching rots, securing straps fray and become weak, while occasional knocks and bumps weaken the shell.

## Change it!

A SNAZZY paint job will cover the blemishes and make a helmet look like new; but deep down in its construction, the ageing process continues and when we need 100 per cent impact resistance, a vital component fails.

It could be the chinstrap or harness breaking loose from its fixings, or the shell itself cracking up or the inner shock absorbent lining just not taking enough sting out of an impact.

Whatever the failure, it can and does have fatal results!

The policy for any sensible and dedicated motorcyclist is to change his or her safety helmet at least every two and no longer than three years. It may seem like a promotion campaign to sell more helmets, but it is a fact that helmets do wear out even though they may never have been damaged in an accident.

Of course, anybody who wears a helmet which has taken a knock in a spill needs their brains examined, that's if they have any left should a second accident occur!

Trouble is, one becomes attached to a helmet, in more ways than one. It is a personal thing, something which one is loathe to discard. But think about it; as we said at the beginning, how much is your life worth?

Quite often one reads in the small ads, 'Motorcycle gear for sale. Size 8 boots, two-piece suit and size 3 full face helmet. Twenty five quid the lot.'

Buy the riding suit and boots by all means. Let's face it, the worst you can get is a possible soaking in the rain or a galloping case of athlete's foot. But leave second-hand helmets well alone!

They may be three weeks old, maybe three years old; they may have bounced

down the road or been used to prop up a crankcase for a front wheel puncture repair. If you don't know the history of the helmet, don't even consider buying it. It's your life that is at stake!

## Paint jobs

OKAY, so you've bought yourself a nice new, well-fitting safety helmet and you want to keep it in as new condition. You might even want to personalize it with your own custom paint job.

There's nothing wrong in that *providing you follow the manufacturer's instructions!*

These are usually contained within the box in which you buy a helmet or attached to the helmet by a piece of string. If the label says 'Do not paint or spray the helmet as it may weaken the shell' *do not paint or spray the helmet.*

The warning is given for a very sound reason. Safety helmets are constructed of different materials. The three common types are ABS plastic, polycarbonate and glass-fibre.

Both ABS and polycarbonate helmet shells are manufactured by a plastic injection moulding process and tests have proved that the substances are prone to attack by solvents, hydrocarbons (oil and petrol) and cellulose.

Outwardly, there appears to be no change when they are painted or sprayed, apart from looking that much prettier. But physically, the molecular structure can be altered and this weakens the shell of the helmet.

This weakened shell cannot be detected by the naked eye, but if put to an impact test against the bonnet of a car or a kerbstone with your head inside, it can split like an eggshell!

If you want to go pop art in helmet design, then choose a glass-fibre bone dome. Fortunately, they are unaffected by paint or spray cans and you can personalize one of these helmets to your heart's delight.

What do you do with your helmet when you come in out of the rain, freezing cold and dripping wet?

Stick it in front of the fire to dry it out? Hang it by the chinstrap in the hall and let it drip? Stick it in a nice, warm airing cupboard by the immersion tank? *Then don't!*

Artificial heat will obviously dry out a helmet quickly, but it also speeds up the ageing process on leather linings, stitching and so on. A helmet should be wiped dry externally and then allowed to dry out naturally.

Also, if the visor is mud or insect bespattered, don't take a hard cloth to it. The scratches it will cause will ruin the visor and create terrible vision problems at night, especially if it is raining.

A soft sponge, running water and a dash of washing up liquid will work wonders in removing insects and only gentle pressure should be applied, even when using a sponge.

The shell of the helmet can be cleaned in a similar manner, although it is obviously possible to use greater pressure on the surface for stubborn marks. But, whatever you do, don't use petrol or any other solvents to clean the shell of an ABS or polycarbonate helmet.

Charles E. Deane