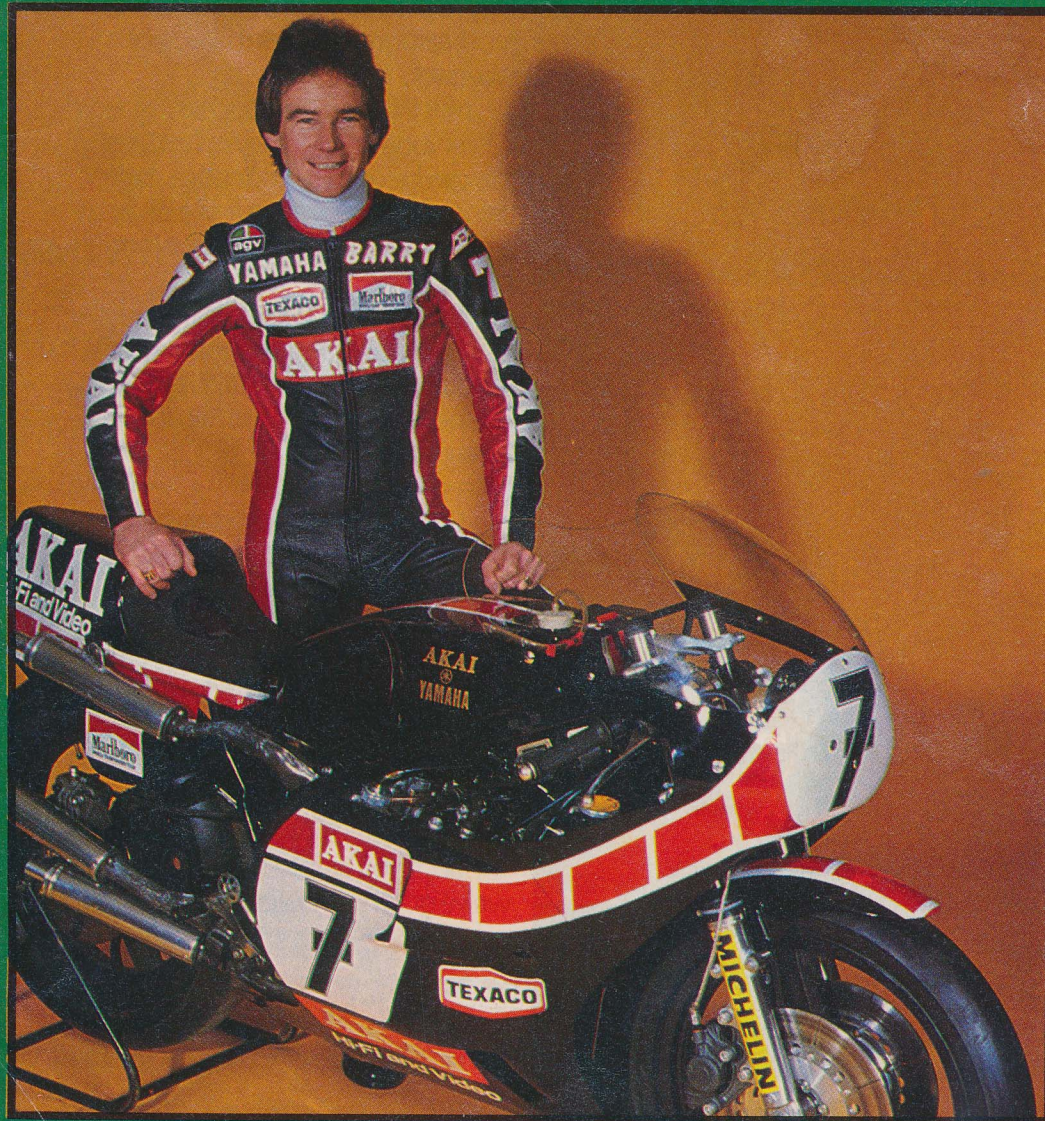


motorcycle MECHANICS

With the May issue
FREE

Special

Barry Sheene's Thirty Best Bikes



Race developed safety leads to road developed fun.



The Yamaha RDs are famous for their performance, predictable handling, precise steering — and safety.

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YAMAHA

For race developed safety on the road.

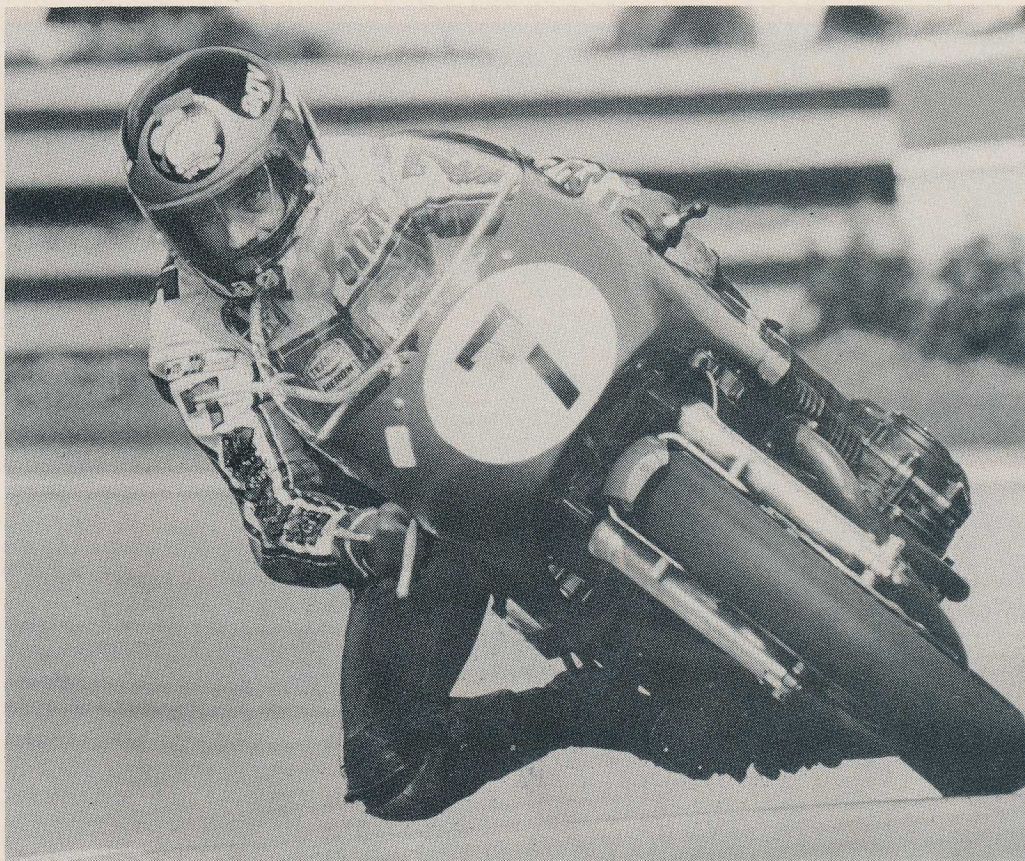
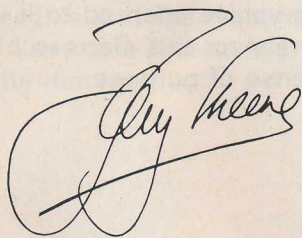
Introduction

OF ALL the decisions I had to face in my road racing career, perhaps the toughest one was to pick out a list of my all-time thirty favourite motorcycles. There have been so many I have rated highly, it became almost impossible to nominate just 30.

I enjoy riding on the road almost as much as I do racing my Team Akai Yamahas on the tracks of the world. The bikes I have chosen have given me the greatest pleasure.

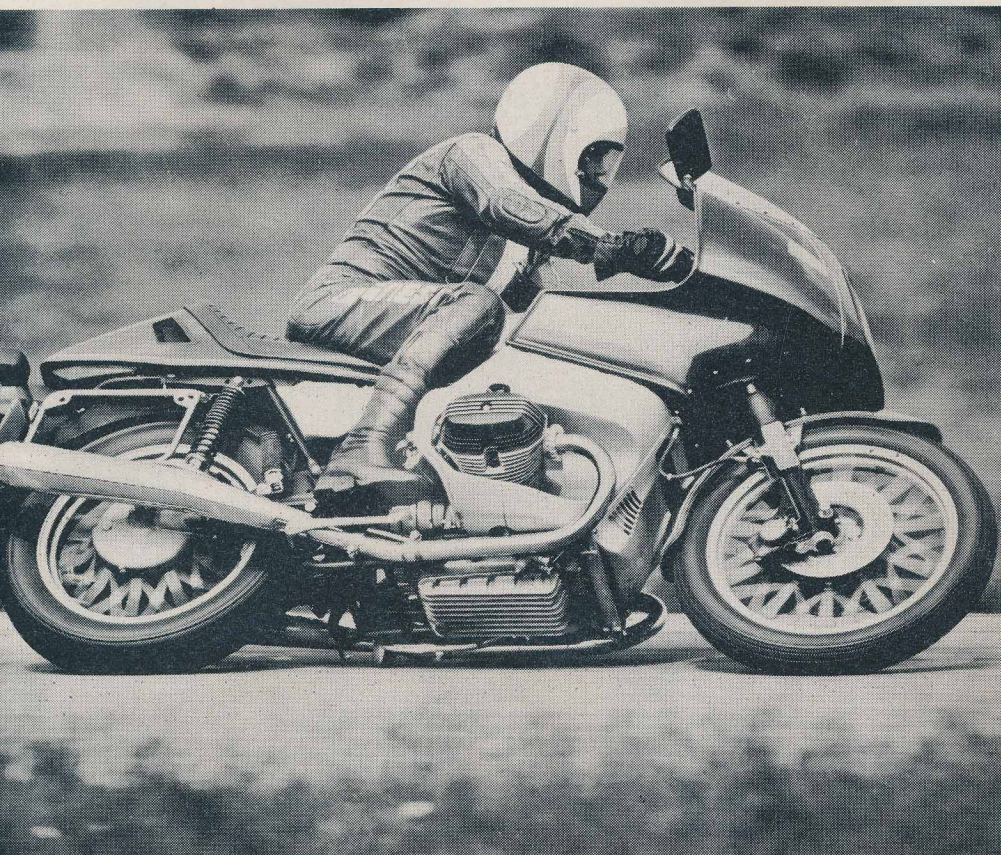
There will be those who will raise their eyebrows at some of the motorcycles in my final selection. Opinions vary, of course, and all I have offered is my preference.

Running through this special Motorcycle Mechanics book I have compiled with staffman Brian Crighton's assistance, I hope it provides a thoroughly absorbing read – just as MCM does every month.



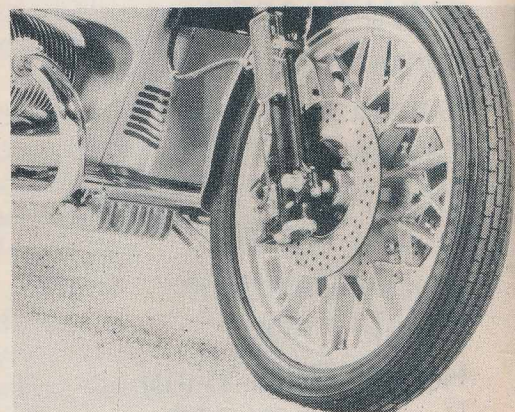
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BMW R100RS



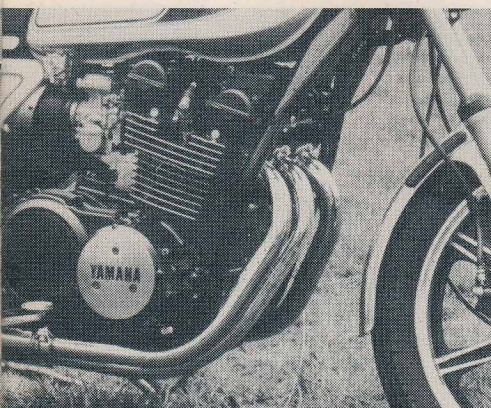
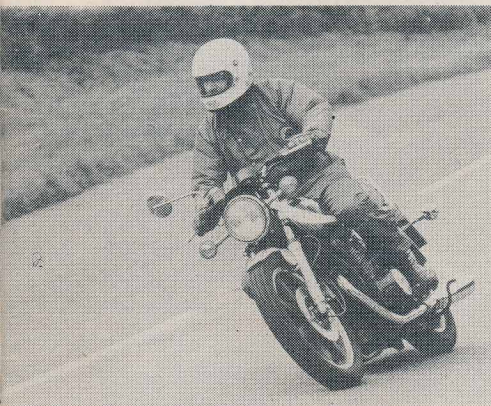
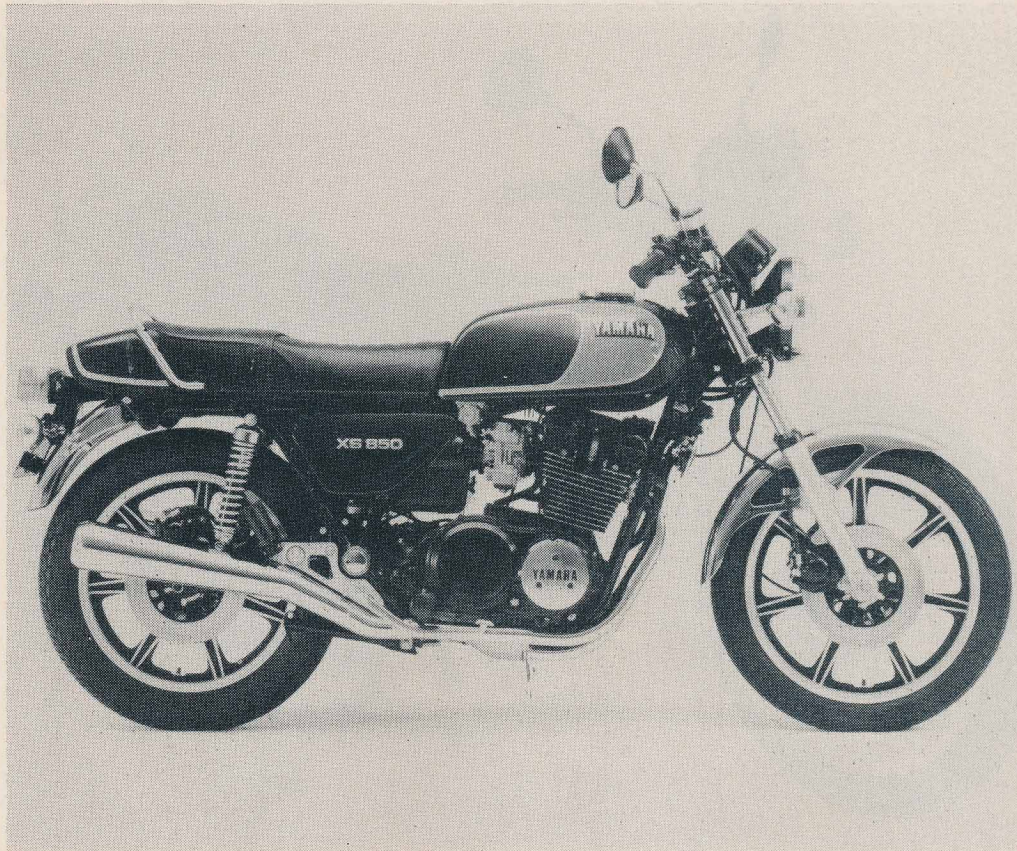
BMW HAVE always had a reputation for fine and expensive motor cycles. They've been making flat twins since 1923 and it's still a winning formula. When the Japanese superbikes gave BMW some heavy opposition they came out with the R100RS in 1976. This made big news because the wind tunnel developed plastic fairing. It gave the BMW a modern image and as a sports touring machine the R100RS is excellent, combining protection with long range speed and style. It takes a little time to get used to the long suspension and somewhat clunky gearchange, but once you've adapted to it you have to respect this German bike for its sense of purpose.

MODEL: BMW R100RS
MCM ISSUE TESTED: January, 1977
TOP SPEED: 116mph
SS $\frac{1}{4}$ MILE: 13.5sec/98mph
PRICE: £2899
ENGINE: ohv flat twin four-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 980cc
BORE \times STROKE: 94 \times 70.6mm
COMPRESSION: 9.5
POWER: 70hp at 7250rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: 55.7lb-ft at 5500rpm (claimed)
LUBRICATION: wet sump
GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: single plate dry diaphragm
IGNITION: coil and contact breaker
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and 240 watt alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 5.3gal
WEIGHT: 464lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 57.7in
FRONT BRAKE: twin disc
REAR BRAKE: single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.25 \times 19
REAR WHEEL: 4.00 \times 18



Yamaha 850

THE CHOICE of Yamaha's new 850 shaft drive triple is based on the firm foundation laid down by the 750 version (shown in the detail shots) which has always represented excellent value for money. It has satisfied both the touring and sporting rider and the new 850 offers further improvements to both types of rider. Some early 750s used a lot of oil and others were said to suffer from transmission faults. Whatever, Yamaha seem to have the model well sorted out and ready to go with the new 850. The triple feels slightly rough in terms of vibration compared to a four, but then a lot of riders prefer this and the Yamaha is the only Japanese four-stroke triple on the market.



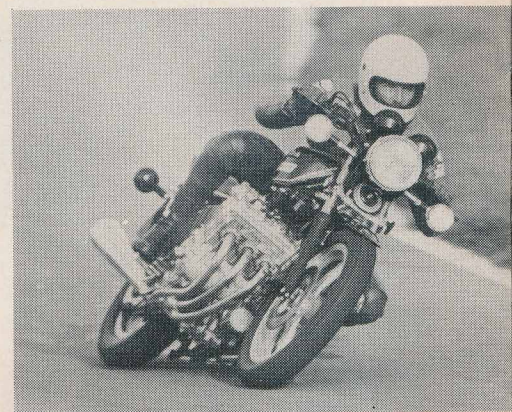
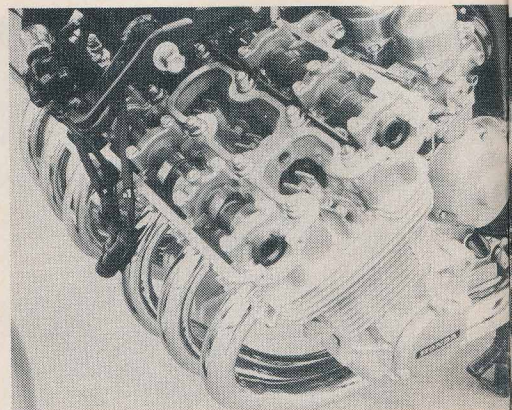
MODEL: Yamaha XS850G
MCM ISSUE TESTED: 750 – November, 1978
TOP SPEED: 750: 121mph
SS¼ MILE: 750: 13.5sec
PRICE: £1825
ENGINE: dohc three cylinder four-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 826cc
BORE × STROKE: 71.5 × 68.6mm
COMPRESSION: 9.2
POWER: 79bhp at 8500rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: 7.1kgm at 7500rpm (claimed)
LUBRICATION: wet sump
GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION:
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 5.3gal
WEIGHT: 520lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 57.7in
FRONT BRAKE: twin 267mm discs
REAR BRAKE: single 267mm disc
FRONT WHEEL: 3.25 × 19
REAR WHEEL: 4.00 × 18

Honda CBX



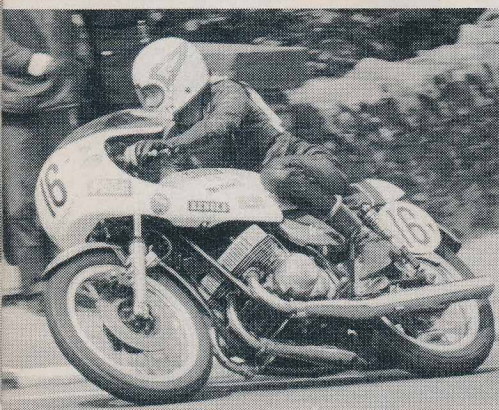
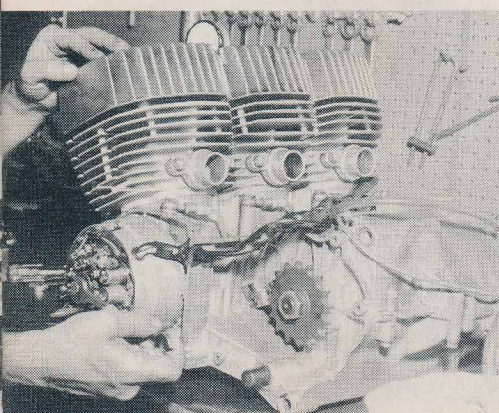
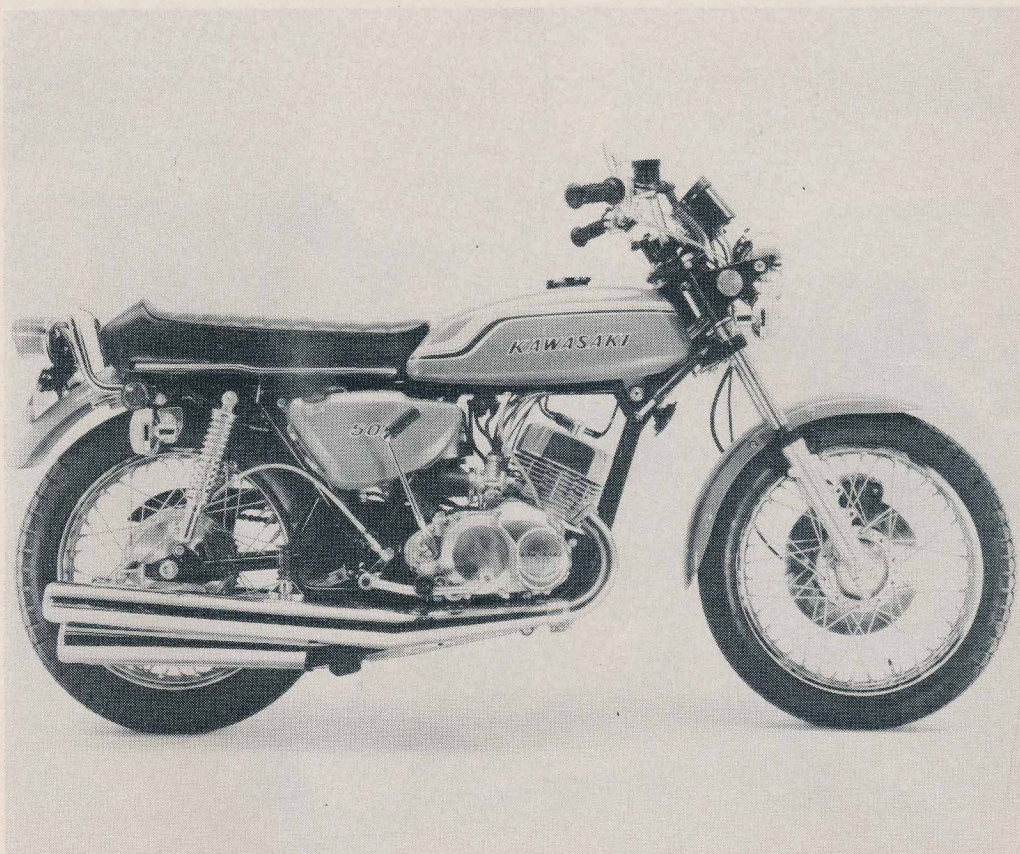
IF YOU remember the grand prix Honda-6 that Mike Hailwood and Jim Redman used to ride then you can understand why Honda's 1047cc six cylinder CBX should be included. This machine has come in for some wild criticism — too big, too fast, doesn't handle and so on — well it's worth the money just for that engine. It's a grand prix engine for the road and it's the most powerful production road bike you can buy. With four valves per cylinder and double overhead cams it's a sensation. Maybe it's not the best handling machine on the road, but what you lose on the corners you can make up on the straight!

MODEL: Honda CBX
MCM ISSUE TESTED: October, 1978
TOP SPEED: 135mph (MCM radar)
SS¼ MILE: 12.0sec
PRICE: £2578
ENGINE: dohc six cylinder four-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 1047cc
BORE × STROKE: 64.5 × 53.4mm
COMPRESSION: 9.3
POWER: 93bhp at 9100rpm (MCM dyno)
TORQUE: 56lb-ft at 6000rpm (MCM dyno)
LUBRICATION: wet sump
GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: transistor and coil
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and 240 watt alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 4.4gal
WEIGHT: 549lb
WHEELBASE: 58.9in
FRONT BRAKE: twin disc
REAR BRAKE: single disc
FRONT WHEEL: 3.50 × 19
REAR WHEEL: 4.25 × 18



Kawasaki 500

THIS WAS so powerful when it first came out that it was super for popping wheelies. It quickly built up an evil reputation for handling and guzzling petrol, but this only added to its appeal – and substantiated Kawasaki's reputation for performance at the time. Kawasaki weren't making any four-strokes for the British market when the 500cc Mach III HI first came out in 1968. They were the only company with two-stroke triples over 350cc and at the time the 500 was their biggest British bike. In fact, I can't think of any 500cc road bike since which could outperform it. The later version is shown here.



MODEL: Kawasaki 500 HI Mach III

MCM ISSUE TESTED: June, 1969

TOP SPEED: 124mph

SS $\frac{1}{4}$ MILE: 13.2sec

PRICE: £575

ENGINE: three cylinder piston port two-stroke

DISPLACEMENT: 498cc

BORE X STROKE: 60 X 58.8mm

COMPRESSION: 6.8

POWER: 60hp at 7500rpm (claimed)

TORQUE: 42.3lb-ft at 7000rpm (claimed)

LUBRICATION: Injectolube Automatic

GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh

CLUTCH: wet multiplate

IGNITION: capacitor discharge

LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and crankshaft generator

FUEL CAPACITY: 3.5gal

WEIGHT: 382lb

WHEELBASE: 55in

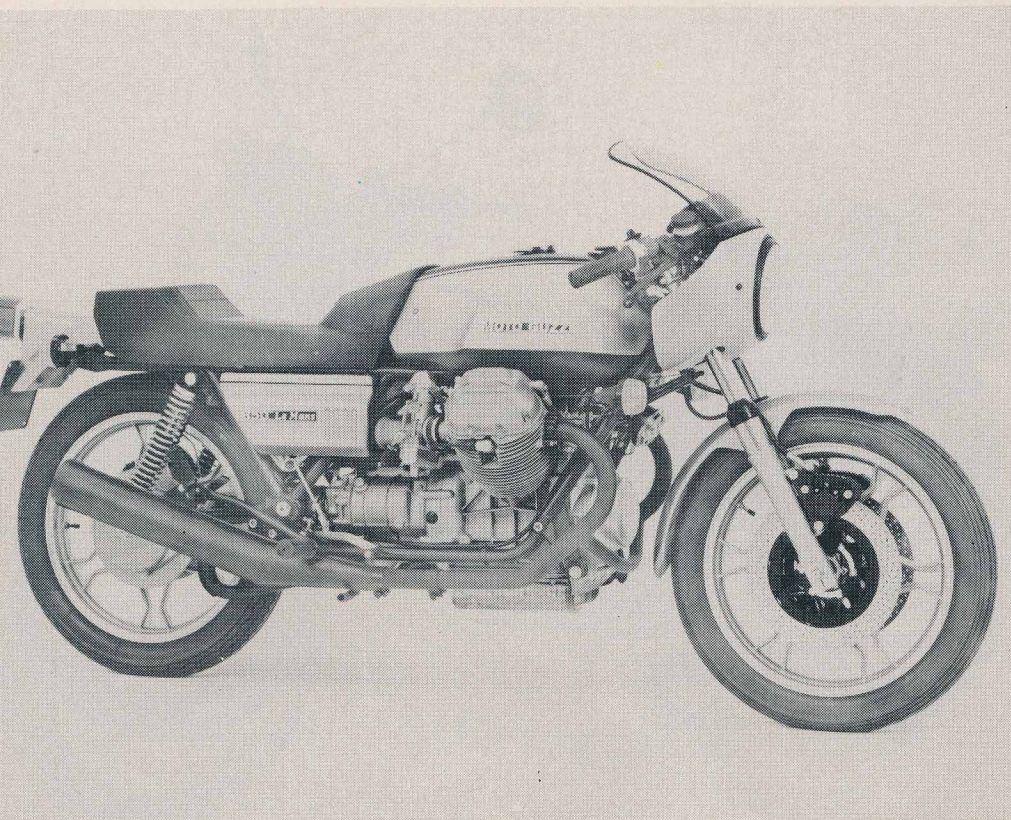
FRONT BRAKE: twin leading shoe drum

REAR BRAKE: single leading shoe drum

FRONT WHEEL: 3.25 X 19

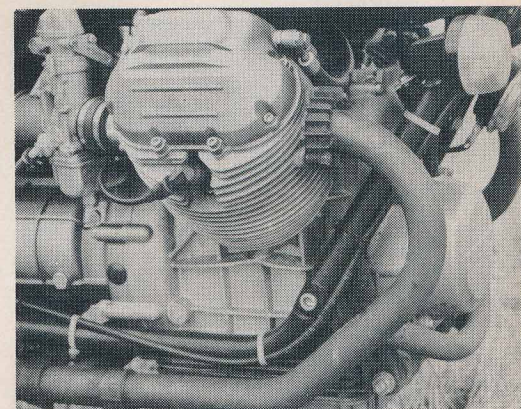
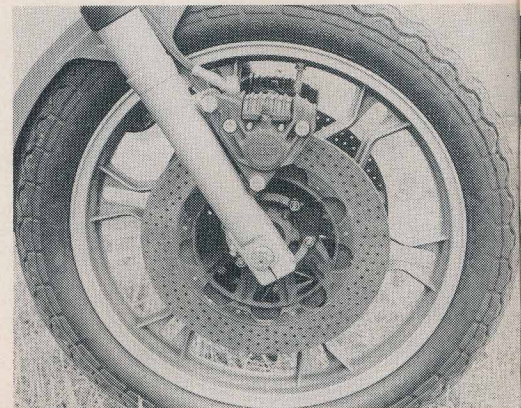
REAR WHEEL: 4.00 X 18

Moto Guzzi Le Mans



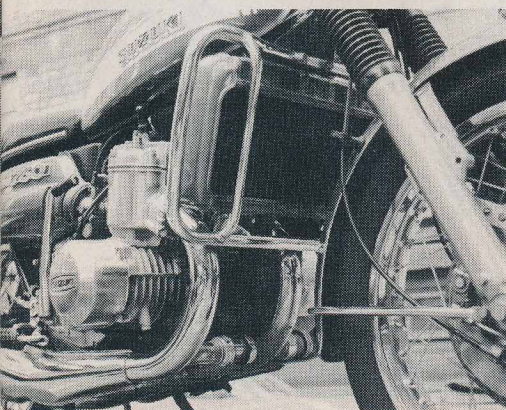
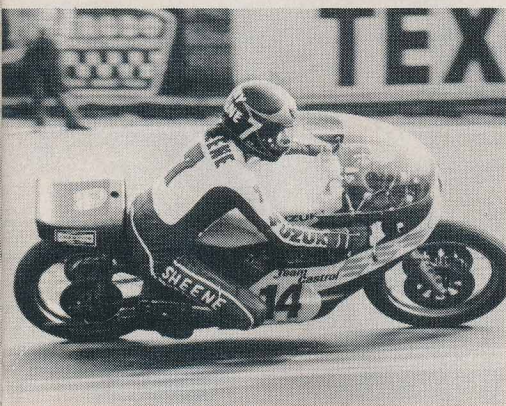
IT'S SMALL and neat, it's smart and it's got bags of torque. For thousands of enthusiasts the Moto Guzzi Le Mans is *the* cafe racer to own. It has style and individuality. True it may be a little uncomfortable on a long run but it looks so good you can forgive it that. The whole Guzzi V-twin range has style and the Le Mans heads the cast. The clutch and finish on these models have been something of a weak point in the past. Both have been improved recently on this shaft driven Latin which isn't quite as potent as its looks might lead you to expect. But it's still a very fast pushrod twin.

MODEL: Moto Guzzi Le Mans
MCM ISSUE TESTED: October, 1976
TOP SPEED: 122mph
SS¼ MILE: 13.6sec
PRICE: £1999
ENGINE: ohv V-twin four-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 844cc
BORE × STROKE: 83 × 78mm
COMPRESSION: 10.2
POWER: 80bhp at 7300rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: not stated
LUBRICATION: wet sump
GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: dry single plate
IGNITION: coil and contact breaker
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 4.7gal
WEIGHT: 482lb (wet)
WHEELBASE: 58in
FRONT BRAKE: twin discs
REAR BRAKE: single disc
FRONT WHEEL: 3.50 × 18
REAR WHEEL: 4.00 × 18



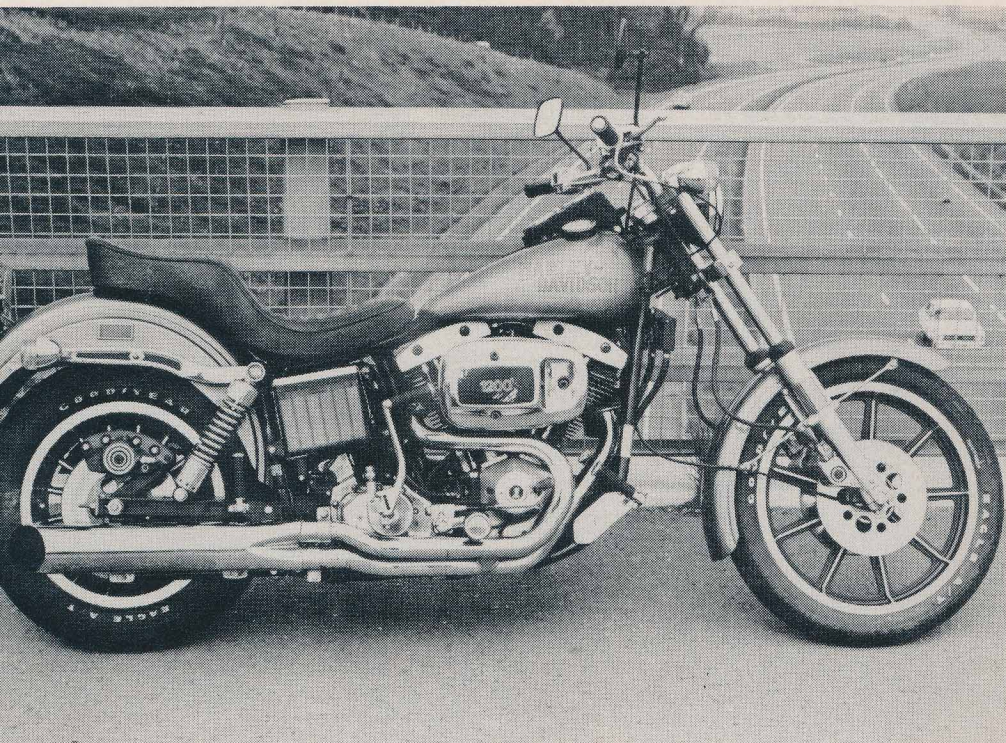
Suzuki GT750

NINE YEARS as a Suzuki works rider gave me plenty of time to ride some of their road bikes. When I was living in London I used to use the later type GT750 water-cooled model. It had stacks of power for zipping through the traffic when a gap opened up. It never over-heated in the summer when you were queueing thanks to that big radiator stuck across the front and it always looked impressive. On the open road it was good for over 120mph and for a two-stroke it was surprisingly economical. In fact when Suzuki brought out the GS750, the GT still had the performance edge.



MODEL: Suzuki GT750M
MCM ISSUE TESTED: October, 1975
TOP SPEED: 118mph
SS¼ MILE: 13.6sec/99mph
PRICE: £969.50
ENGINE: watercooled three cylinder piston port two-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 738cc
BORE × STROKE: 70 × 64mm
COMPRESSION: 6.9
POWER: 70hp at 6500rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: 55.7lb-ft at 5500rpm (claimed)
LUBRICATION: Suzuki CCI
GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: coil and points
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and 280W alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 3.7gal
WEIGHT: 507lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 57.8in
FRONT BRAKE: two 11.7in discs
REAR BRAKE: single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.25 × 19
REAR WHEEL: 4.00 × 18

Harley-Davidson



THE AMERICAN Harley-Davidson still has the mystique it has held for decades. It is a dream machine symbolising freedom and the American way of life for thousands of motorcyclists. As well as this image you also get plenty of motorcycle for your money, even though they are rather expensive. The 1200 FXS combines all this with the rugged rebellious chopper look toned down just enough to get admiring glances from people of all walks of life. No-one can walk past it and not notice the giant V-twin motor. When it rumbles into life it embodies over half a century of American history. Harley's V-twin first breathed life in 1911.

MODEL: Harley-Davidson FXS Low Rider 1200

MCM ISSUE TESTED: August, 1978

TOP SPEED: 101mph

SS $\frac{1}{4}$ MILE: 16.2sec

PRICE: £3449

ENGINE: ohv four-stroke V-twin

DISPLACEMENT: 1207cc

BORE \times STROKE: 87.3 \times 100.8mm

COMPRESSION: 7.25

POWER: 46bhp at 5100rpm (MCM dyno)

TORQUE: 54lb-ft at 3800rpm (MCM dyno)

LUBRICATION: dry sump

GEARBOX: four speed constant mesh

CLUTCH: wet multiplate

IGNITION: CDI

LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and alternator

FUEL CAPACITY: 3.2gal

WEIGHT: 586lb (dry)

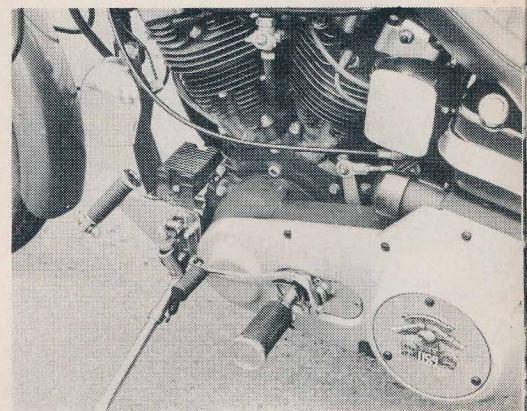
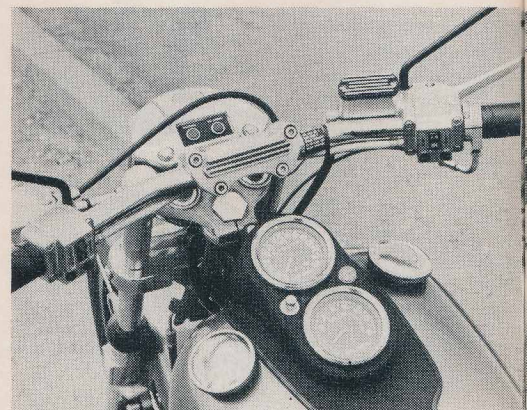
WHEELBASE: 63.5in

FRONT BRAKE: twin disc

REAR BRAKE: single disc

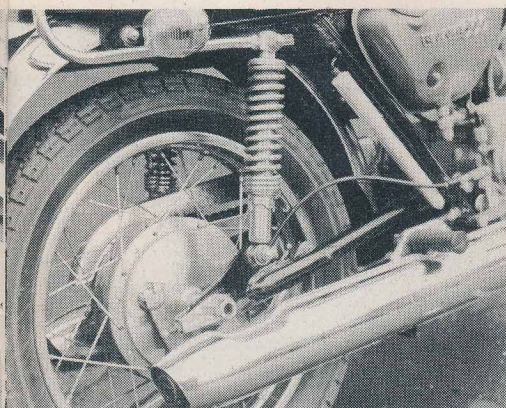
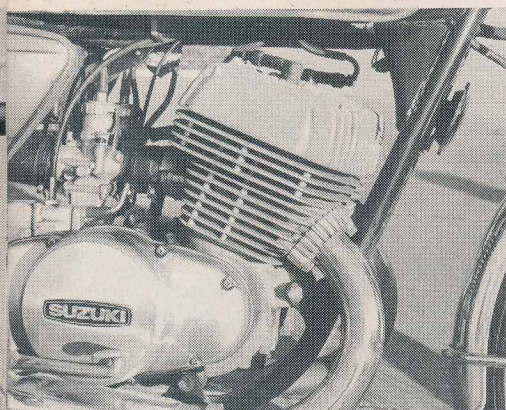
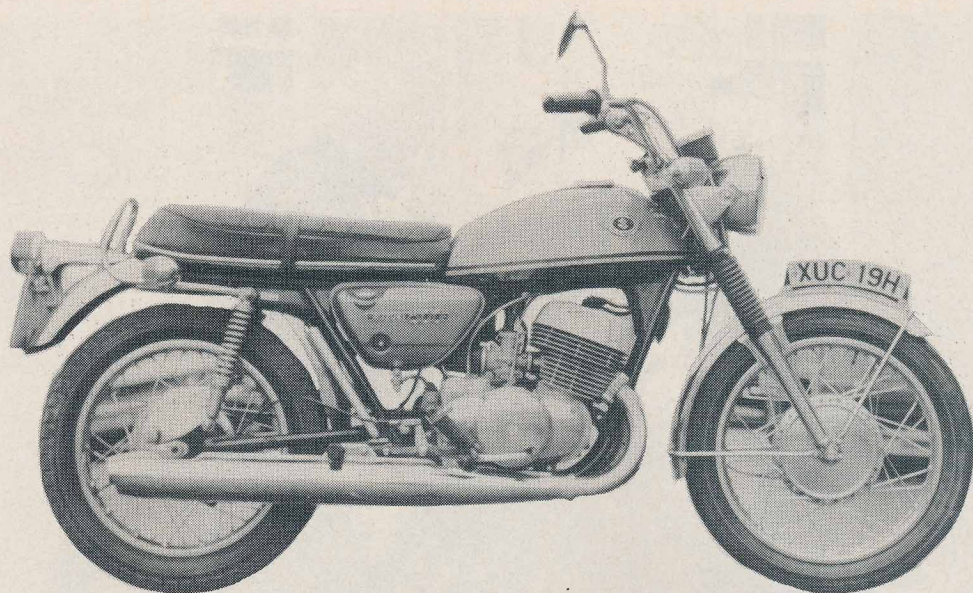
FRONT WHEEL: 3.25 \times 19

REAR WHEEL: 5.10 \times 16



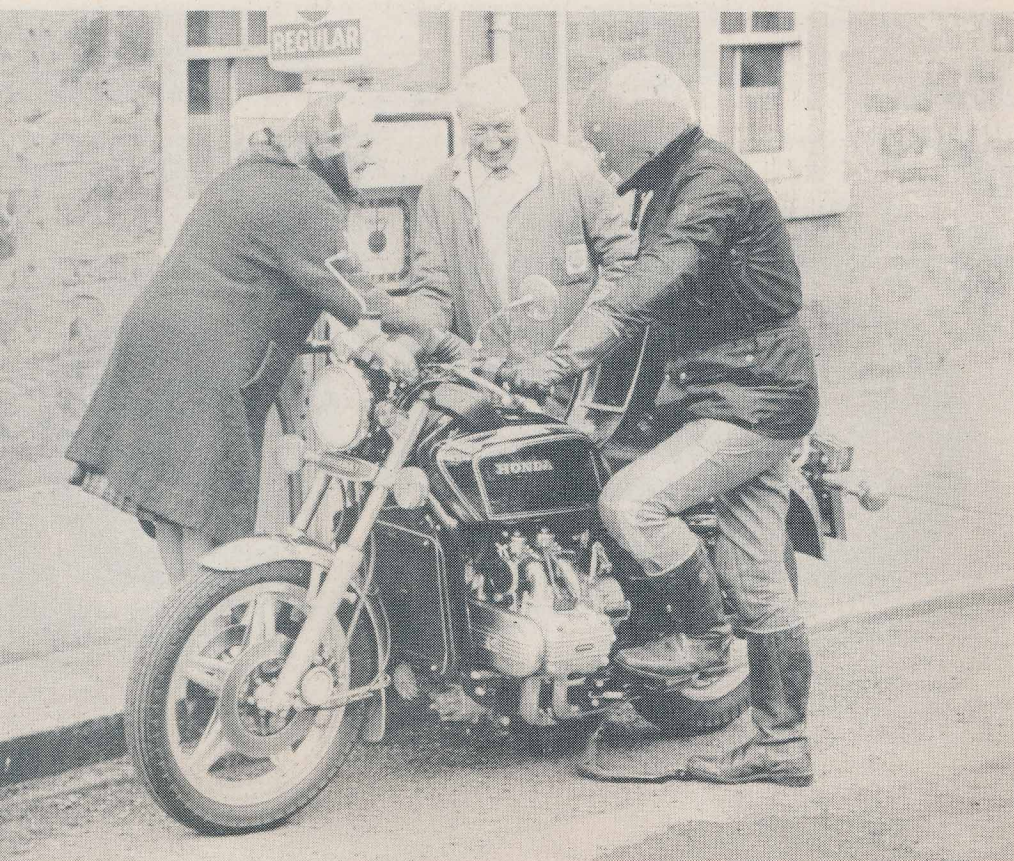
Suzuki T500

SUZUKI'S 500cc two-stroke twin was a long time favourite for riders looking for a fast bike on a limited budget. This model plays a special part in my life because I raced a modified version in the 1971 Isle of Man TT. It was the only time I ever raced in the Island. The 500 had been announced in 1968 and tuners were quick to get even more power out of what was then regarded as a very powerful 500. The original road bike had wide moto cross type bars. Just changing them for clip-ons gave the bike a much more sporty flavour.



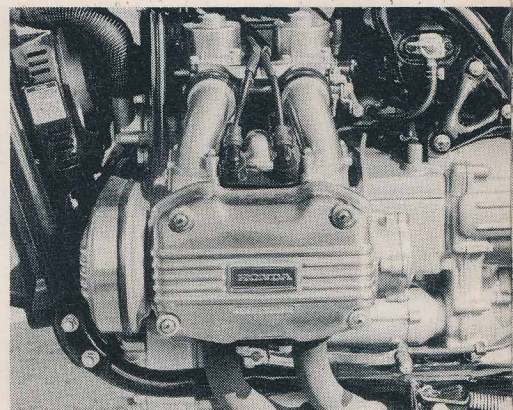
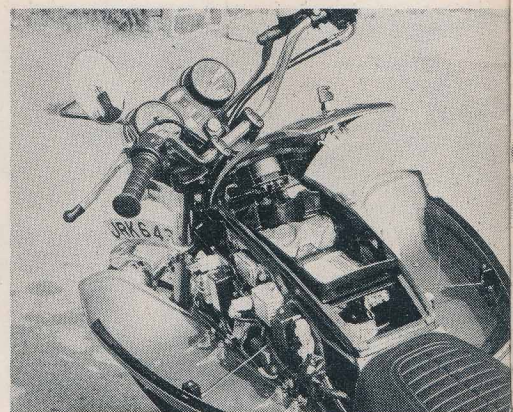
MODEL: Suzuki T500 MkII
MCM ISSUE TESTED: March, 1970
TOP SPEED: 108mph
SS¼ MILE: 14.2sec
PRICE: £432.44
ENGINE: two-stroke twin
DISPLACEMENT: 492cc
BORE × STROKE: 70 × 64mm
COMPRESSION: 6.6
POWER: 47bhp at 7000rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: 37.5lb-ft at 6000rpm (claimed)
LUBRICATION: Suzuki Posiforce
GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: coil and contact breaker
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 3.1gal
WEIGHT: 412lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 57.2in
FRONT BRAKE: 200mm twin leading shoe drum
REAR BRAKE: 180mm single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.25 × 19
REAR WHEEL: 4.00 × 18

Honda Gold Wing



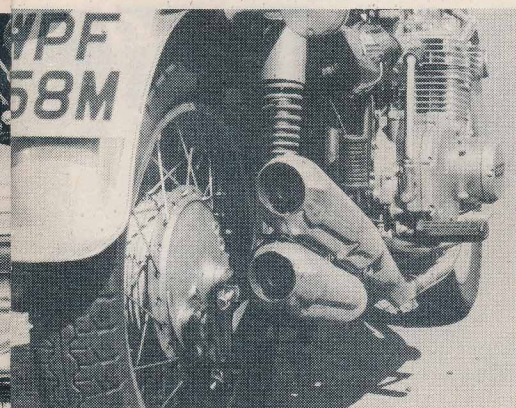
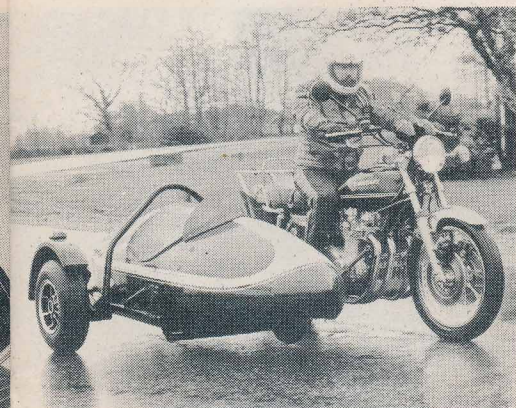
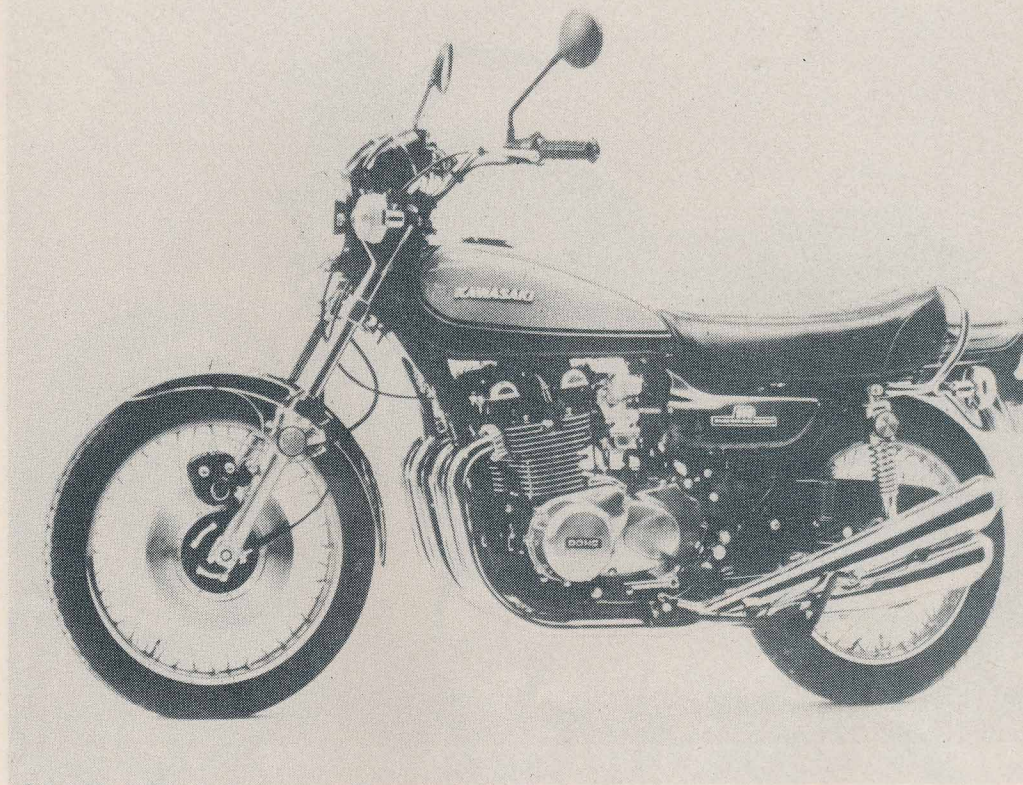
WHEN HONDA brought out the watercooled flat four Gold Wing it caused something of a revolution for touring motorcycles. It was big, powerful and smooth – just the thing for long motorway-style trips. The Japanese manufacturers are currently waging a prestige touring motorcycle war which the Wing started. It's hard to believe that it was as long ago as 1974 when the world first saw one. If you remember people couldn't believe that a motorcycle could be so massive. Now it's accepted. The Wing mesmerised everyone with its shaft drive, underseat fuel tank and dummy tank which opened to reveal the electrical system. Now there's a brand new 1100cc version.

MODEL: Honda GL1000 Gold Wing
MCM ISSUE TESTED: November, 1976
TOP SPEED: 122mph
SS¼ MILE: 14sec/95mph
PRICE: £1600
ENGINE: sohc watercooled four cylinder four-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 999cc
BORE × STROKE: 72 × 61.4mm
COMPRESSION: 9.2
POWER: 80bhp at 7000rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: not stated
LUBRICATION: wet sump
GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: coil and contact breaker
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and 300 watt alternator
WEIGHT: 584lb (dry)
FUEL CAPACITY: 4.2gal
WHEELBASE: 60.9in
FRONT BRAKE: twin discs
REAR BRAKE: single disc
FRONT WHEEL: 3.50 × 19
REAR WHEEL: 4.50 × 17



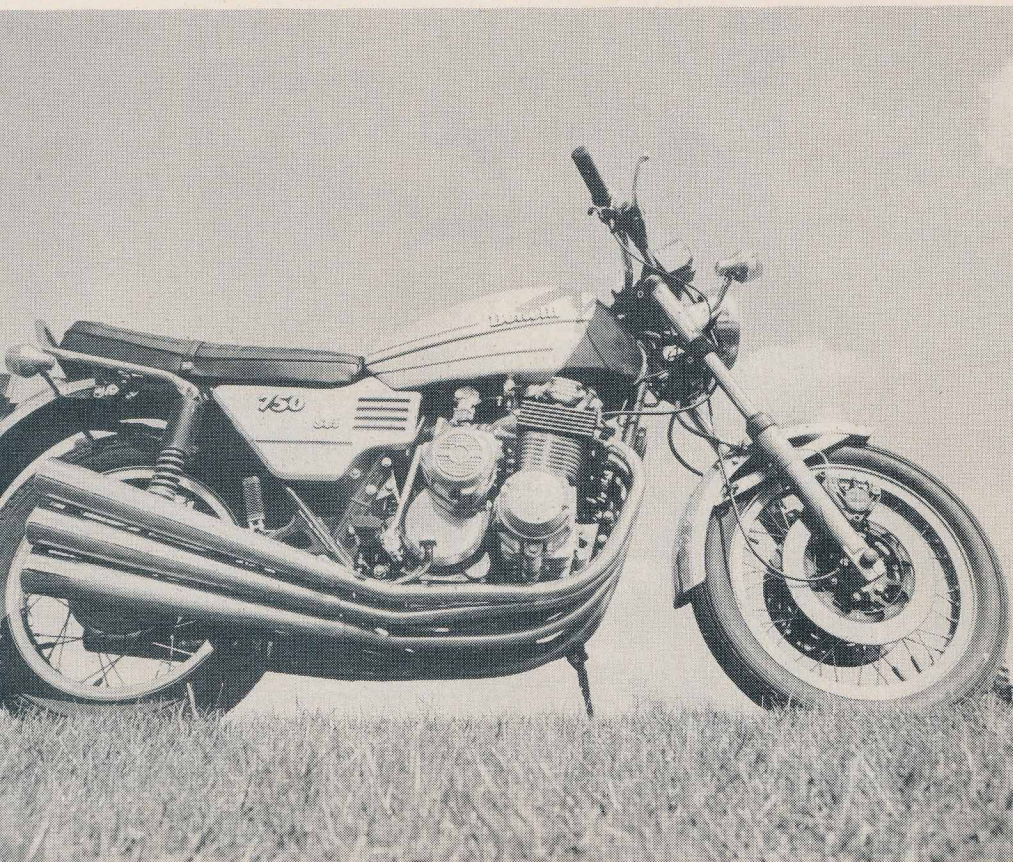
Kawasaki Z1900

THE 900 Kawasaki Z1 was the forerunner to all the modern superbikes which make the motorcycle road scene so exciting. I know Honda were the first with a big four, but Kawasaki were first with *big* performance big fours. This machine was a rocket, capable of over 130mph in almost any conditions. It looked mean with its black engine and it caused a sensation. Kawasaki opened up a big four-stroke factory in 1973 to cope with demand when this model was released. It was their first four-stroke for overseas sale. What a way to start! Since then the motor has proved to be reliable and robust. Detail shots show the later 2900.



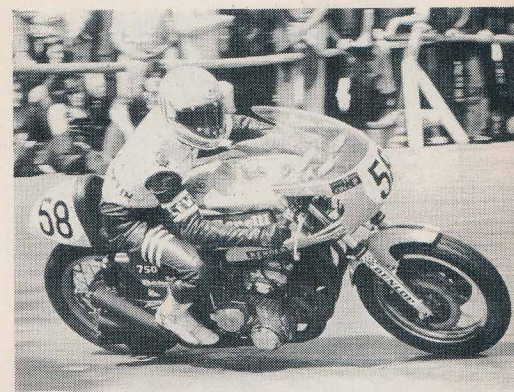
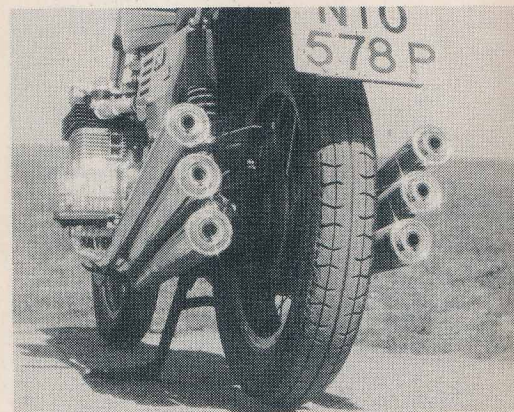
MODEL: Kawasaki Z1
MCM ISSUE TESTED: October, 1974
TOP SPEED: 134mph
SS¼ MILE: 12.2sec
PRICE: £1177
ENGINE: dohc four cylinder four-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 903cc
BORE × STROKE: 66 × 66mm
COMPRESSION: 8.5
POWER: 82bhp at 8500rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: 54.3lb-ft at 7000rpm (claimed)
LUBRICATION: wet sump
GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: coil and contact breaker
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 3.9gal
WEIGHT: 506lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 59in
FRONT BRAKE: 11.65in single disc
REAR BRAKE: single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.25 × 19
REAR WHEEL: 4.00 × 18

Benelli 6



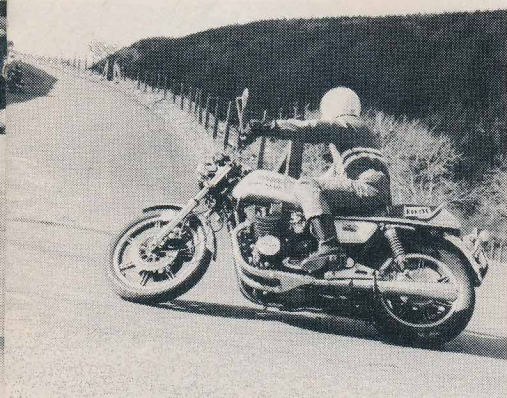
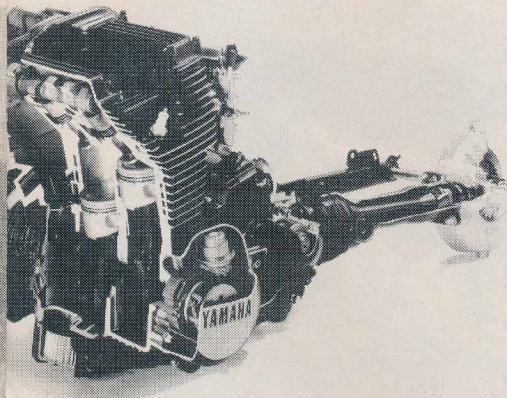
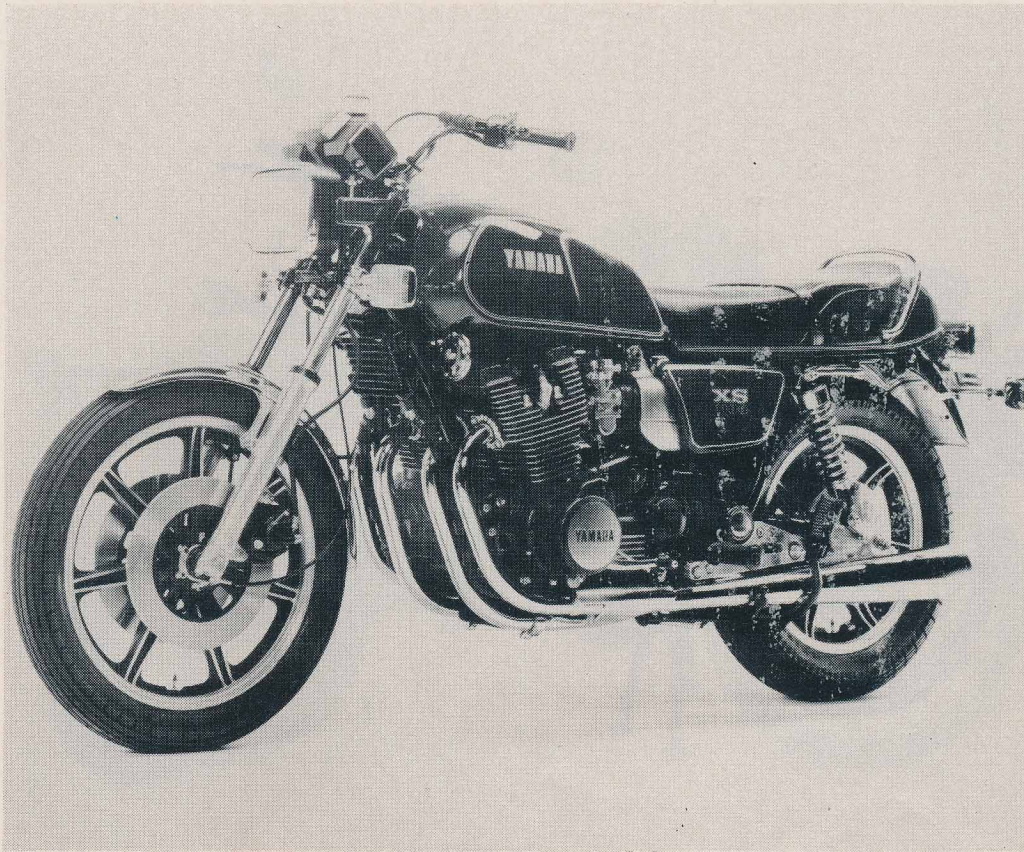
STRANGE HOW things go round in circles. The Japanese copied European motorcycles and became world leaders. Then the Europeans copy the Japanese. That's how it was with the Italian 750 Benelli-6 except that Benelli went one stage further by introducing the world's first transverse six production bike. When it was first seen in 1974 it seemed to represent a magnificent kickback to the Japanese upstaging the growing number of four cylinder machines issuing from the 'Rising Sun'. The six exhausts pipes left people open-mouthed as they double-checked the cylinder row. The engine was incredibly smooth. It was fed by three Dell'Ortos and featured two-valve heads.

MODEL: Benelli 750 Sei
MCM ISSUE TESTED: July, 1976
TOP SPEED: 109mph
SS¼ MILE: 14.0sec/92mph
PRICE: £1798.53
ENGINE: sohc six cylinder four-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 747.77cc
BORE × STROKE: 56 × 50.6mm
COMPRESSION: 9.8
POWER: 52.6bhp at 8000rpm (MCM dyno)
TORQUE: 38lb-ft at 7000rpm (MCM dyno)
LUBRICATION: wet sump
GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: coil and contact breaker
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and 280 watt alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 4.7gal
WEIGHT: 458lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 56in
FRONT BRAKE: twin discs
REAR BRAKE: single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.50 × 18
REAR WHEEL: 4.10 × 18



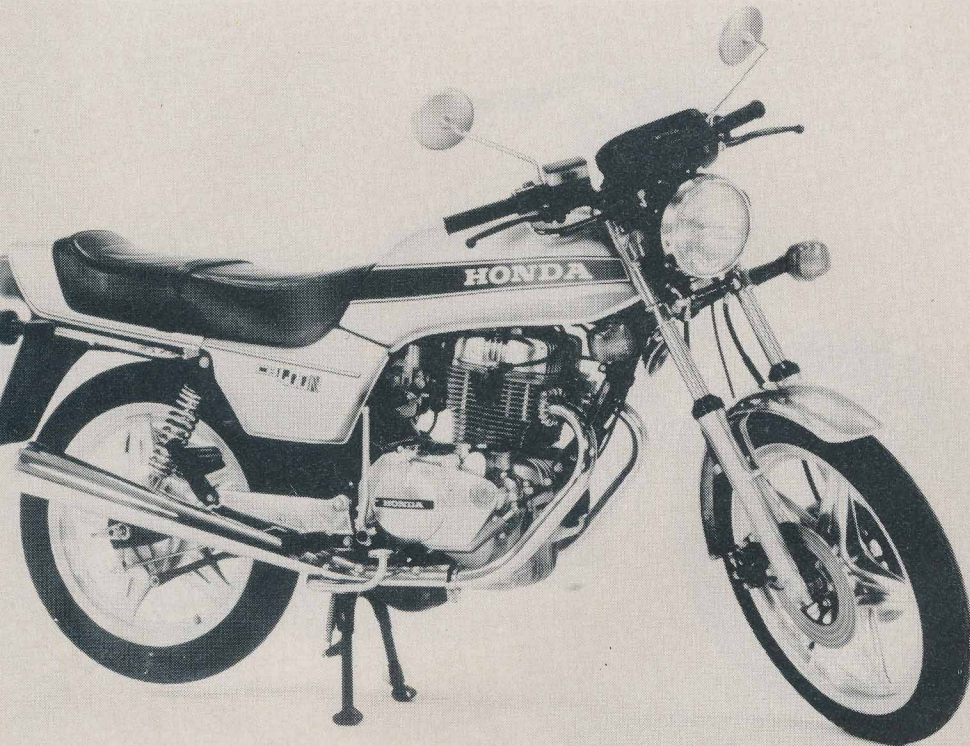
Yamaha XS1100

YAMAHA'S giant XS1100 is a great bike for touring. It's strong enough to pull a caravan. You could load it up with camping gear, fairing, panniers and a pillion and it wouldn't know the difference. That big, black four cylinder motor is the best in the business for torque. That means you can sit on the motorway in top gear and get first gear style acceleration when you open the throttle. It's smooth and comfortable and the big fuel tank gives you 200-mile rides at a time. The shaft drive cuts out the need for chain maintenance, so you can spend more time gassing it.



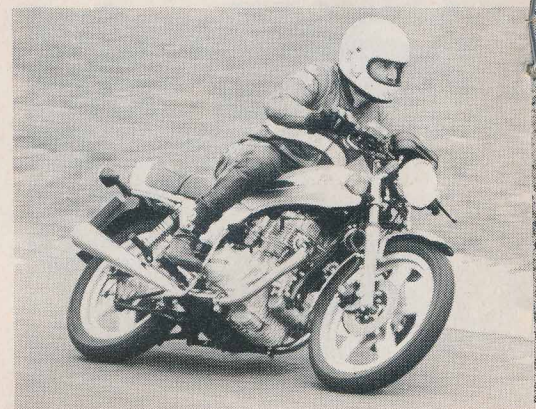
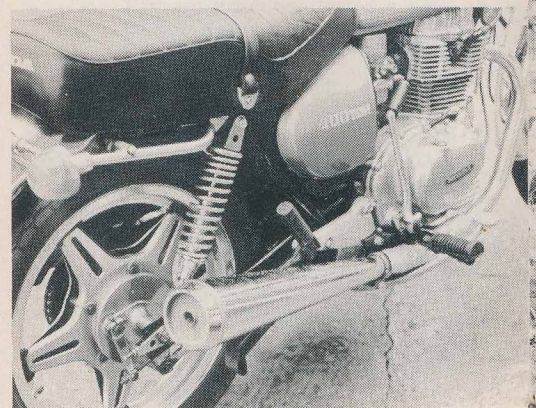
MODEL: Yamaha XS1100
MCM ISSUE TESTED: October, 1978
TOP SPEED: 126mph (MCM radar)
SS $\frac{1}{4}$ MILE: 12.3sec
PRICE: £2005
ENGINE: dohc four cylinder four-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 1101cc
BORE \times STROKE: 71.5 \times 68.6mm
COMPRESSION: 9.2
POWER: 82bhp at 8200rpm (MCM dyno)
TORQUE: 64lb-ft at 5800rpm (MCM dyno)
LUBRICATION: wet sump
GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: transistor and coil
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 5.3gal
WEIGHT: 565lb
WHEELBASE: 60.8in
FRONT BRAKE: twin disc
REAR BRAKE: single disc
FRONT WHEEL: 3.50 \times 19
REAR WHEEL: 4.50 \times 17

Honda CB400N



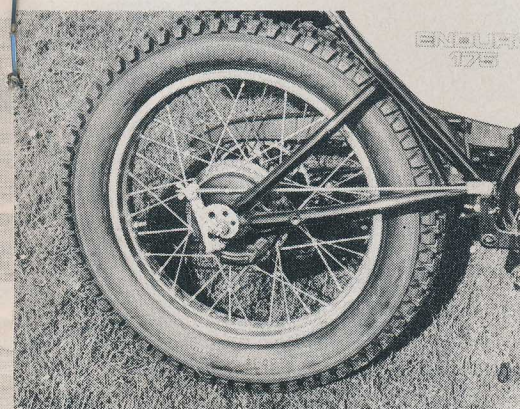
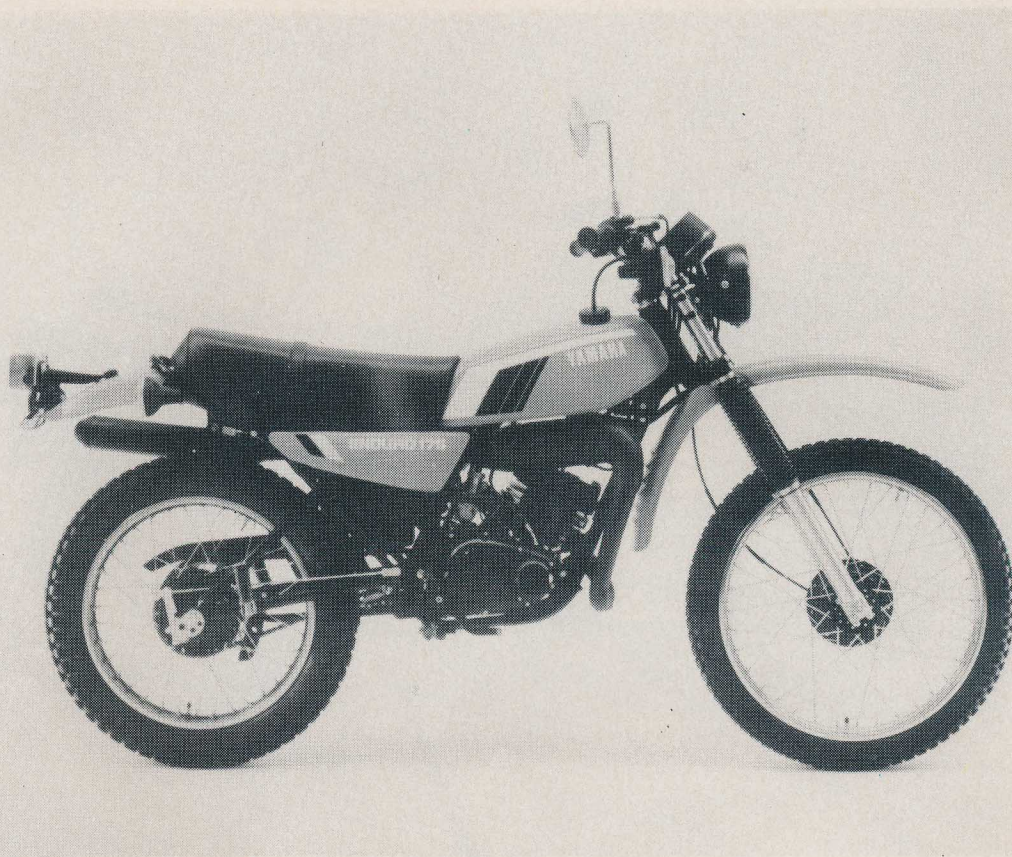
WITH PETROL and insurance costs going up all the time it seems that middleweight bikes will take on new importance. One of the class leaders is Honda's sharply styled CB400N. It's called a Dream and it looks like one. Honda have made it a very sophisticated model with balancers for smoothness and three-valve heads for efficient gas flow. The bike doesn't strike you as anything special at first. It's when you start to discover that you can wind it above 110mph and that it has racer-type handling to match that you realise this is a sportster rather than a docile tourer.

MODEL: Honda CB400N Dream
MCM ISSUE TESTED: October, 1979
TOP SPEED: 114mph
SS $\frac{1}{4}$ MILE: 13.7sec/94mph
PRICE: £1053
ENGINE: sohc four-stroke twin
DISPLACEMENT: 395cc
BORE \times STROKE: 70.5 \times 50.6mm
COMPRESSION: 9.3
POWER: 38bhp at 9500rpm (MCM dyno)
TORQUE: 24lb-ft at 7000rpm (MCM dyno)
LUBRICATION: wet sump
GEARBOX: six speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: capacitor discharge
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and 170 watt generator
FUEL CAPACITY: 3.1gal
WEIGHT: 377lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 54.7in
FRONT BRAKE: twin disc
REAR BRAKE: single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.50 \times 19
REAR WHEEL: 4.00 \times 18



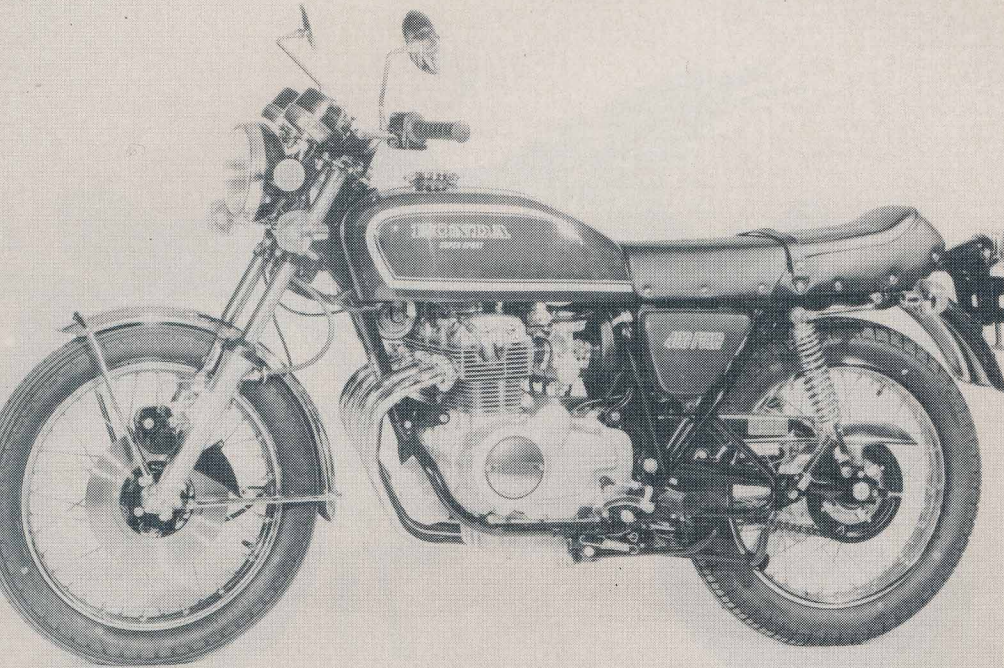
Yamaha DT175

YAMAHA'S monoshock DT175 trail bike is really comfortable on the dirt and on the road. Obviously it's not bulging with horsepower but there's plenty of stick there for a lot of off-road fun. It's light and easy to throw about. Everything is neatly tucked out of the way to give a slim moto cross feel. You've got 10½ inches ground clearance for riding over rocks and through ruts and enough suspension movement to power through the rough stuff. It's also strong enough to take trail abuse and features flexibly-mounted indicators. In town it's ideal for zipping through traffic and it looks good in both types of situation.



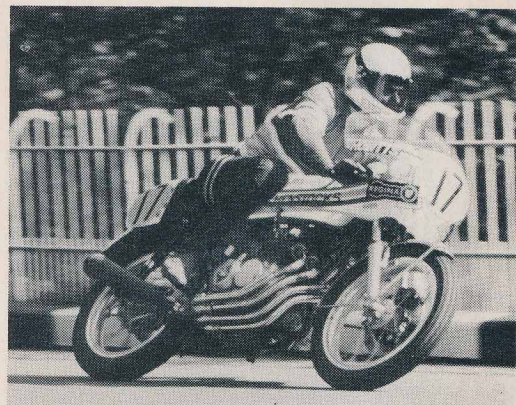
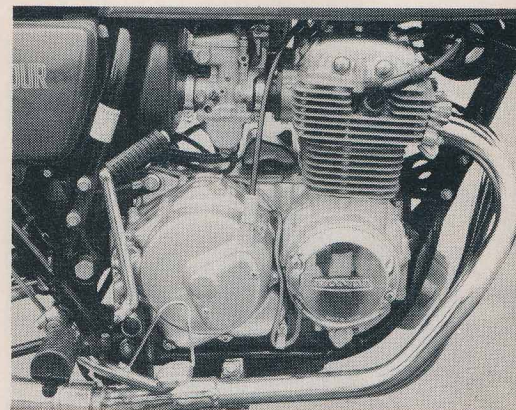
MODEL: Yamaha DT175MX
MCM ISSUE TESTED: September, 1978
TOP SPEED: 72.5mph (MCM radar)
SS¼ MILE: 17.3sec
PRICE: £570
ENGINE: seven port reed valve two-stroke single
DISPLACEMENT: 171cc
BORE × STROKE: 66 × 50mm
COMPRESSION: 6.8
POWER: 12.4bhp at 7400rpm (MCM dyno)
TORQUE: 9.3lb-ft at 5500rpm (MCM dyno)
LUBRICATION: Autolube
GEARBOX: six speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: capacitor discharge
LIGHTING: 6 volt battery and flywheel magneto
FUEL CAPACITY: 1.5gal
WEIGHT: 216lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 53.1in
FRONT BRAKE: single leading shoe drum
REAR BRAKE: single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 2.75 × 21
REAR WHEEL: 3.50 × 18

Honda CB400F



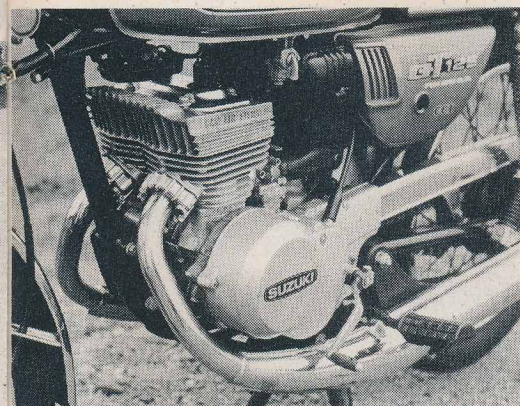
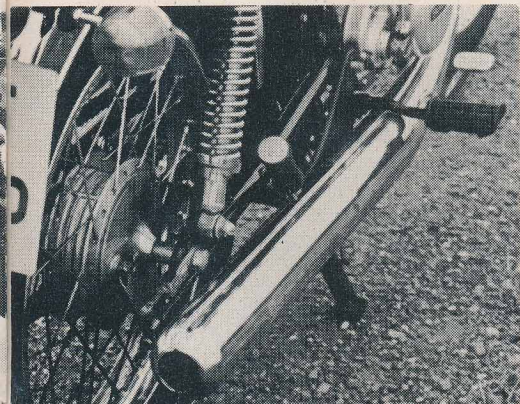
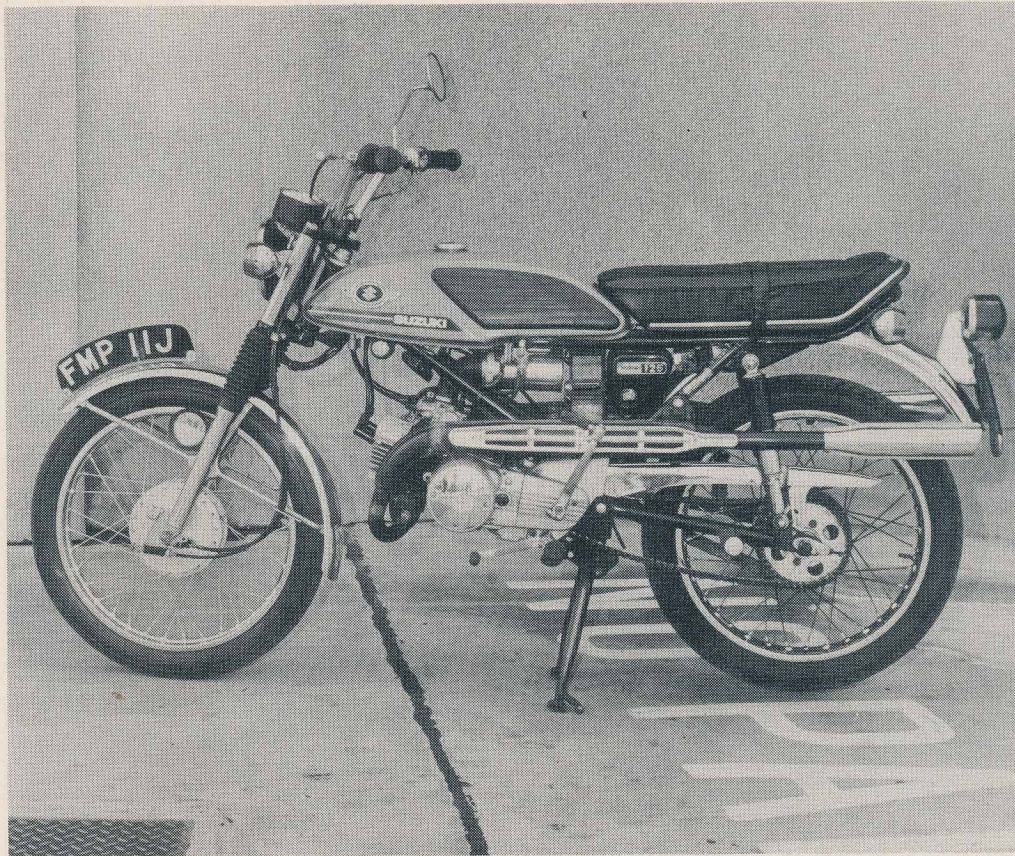
HONDA SET the pages of motorcycle history on fire when they announced the four cylinder CB750. The big four created a new fashion. Honda went on to produce a whole range of fours any one of which could be justified here. My vote goes to the 400cc version because it is so small and easy to ride. And it's great for doing powerslides in the paddock between races! Honda actually had produced a smaller four, a 350. But it was never sold in Britain. The sporty six gear 400F made our scene in 1975 and soon became a favourite. So much so that there was an outcry when production was dropped two years later.

MODEL: Honda CB400F
MCM ISSUE TESTED: June, 1975
TOP SPEED: 103mph
SS $\frac{1}{4}$ MILE: 15.2sec/85mph
PRICE: £669
ENGINE: sohc four cylinder four-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 408cc
BORE \times STROKE: 51 \times 50mm
COMPRESSION: 9.4
POWER: 37bhp at 8500rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: not stated
LUBRICATION: wet sump
GEARBOX: six speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: coil and points
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and 156 watt alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 3.1gal
WEIGHT: 397lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 54.5in
FRONT BRAKE: 10.5in single disc
REAR BRAKE: 6.5in single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.00 \times 18
REAR WHEEL: 3.50 \times 18



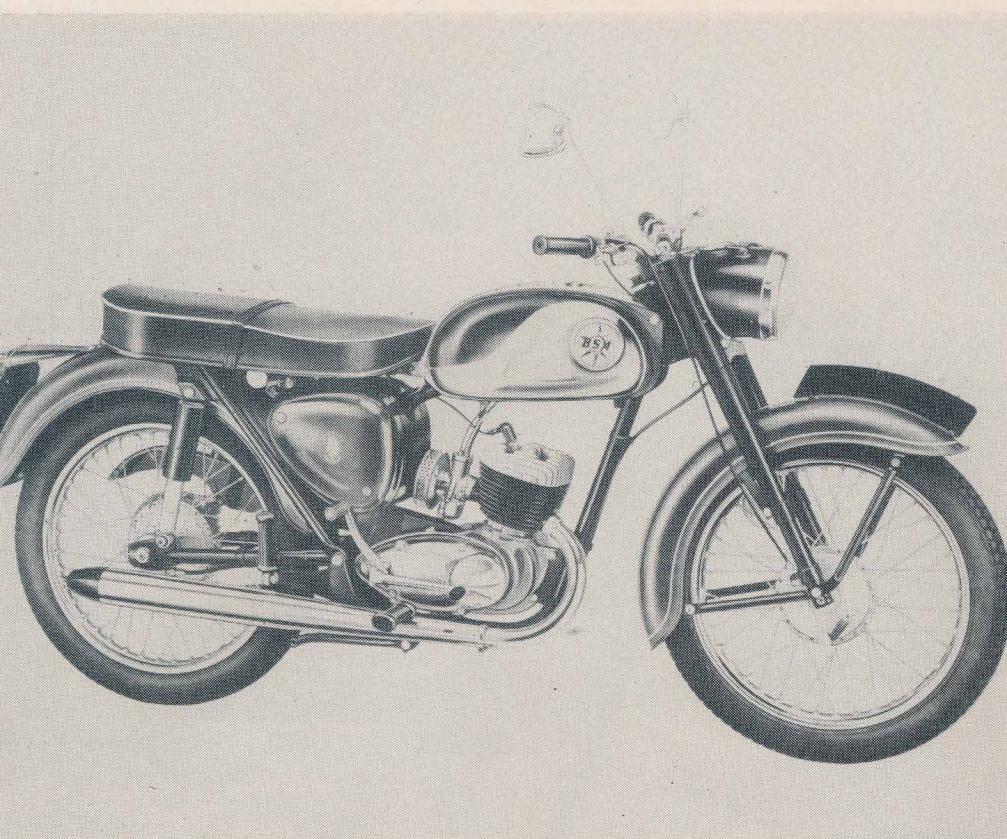
Suzuki 125

A LOT of my early racing success was aboard a 125 Suzuki – runner-up in the 1971 world 125cc series and the 125 ACU title in 1971. So it's not surprising I have a soft spot for the Suzuki roadster in particular the twin cylinder GT125A with its ram air cylinder head cover. To get the best out of this little screamer you have to keep the motor in top condition so it brings out a bit of the tuner in you. The plugs and points have to be regularly checked to keep the over 70mph performance on tap. It's a challenge for spanner and riding skills. The main picture shows the 125 Stinger which preceded the GT model.



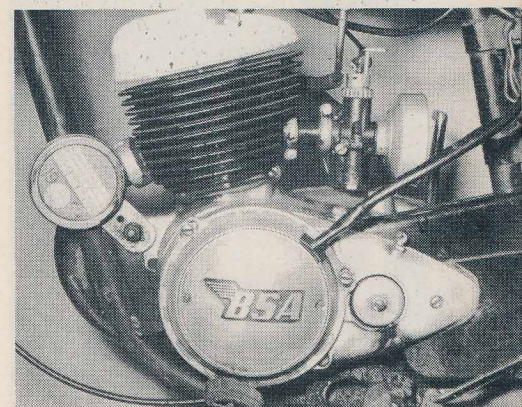
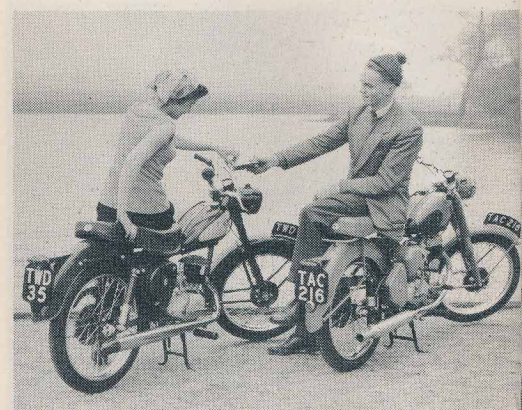
MODEL: Suzuki GT125A
MCM ISSUE TESTED: September, 1976
TOP SPEED: 74mph
SS $\frac{1}{4}$ MILE: 18.3sec/68mph
PRICE: £425
ENGINE: two-stroke twin
DISPLACEMENT: 124cc
BORE \times STROKE: 43 \times 43mm
COMPRESSION: 6.8
POWER: 16bhp at 9500rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: 9.4lb-ft at 9000rpm (claimed)
LUBRICATION: Suzuki CCI
GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: coil and contact breaker
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 2.2gal
WEIGHT: 238lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 48.4in
FRONT BRAKE: single disc
REAR BRAKE: single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 2.75 \times 18
REAR WHEEL: 3.00 \times 18

BSA Bantam 125



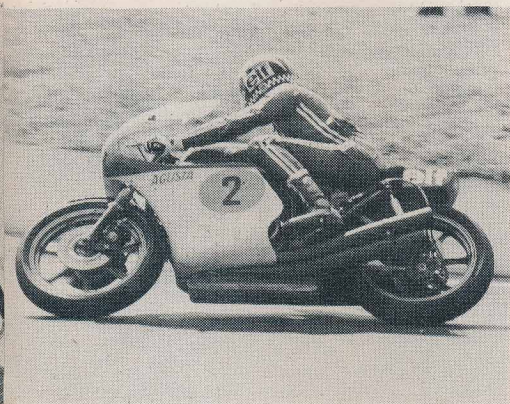
THE BANTAM was one of the first road bikes I ever had. Despite the abuse it was given it always went. I had one of the 125cc three speed versions (show below). You just wouldn't believe what it went through. At that time Bantam racing was very popular and parts were plentiful. The Post Office delivery boys used them and every now and then they would be sold off as old stock. This was a prime source for many a racer. The original 123cc DI was introduced in 1948. It was followed by the 150 version in 1954 and the 175D5 in 1958 – shown opposite.

MODEL: BSA Bantam DI
MCM ISSUE TESTED: not tested
TOP SPEED: 46mph
SS¼ MILE: 30sec (estimated)
PRICE: £94.20 (1950)
ENGINE: single cylinder two-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 123cc
BORE × STROKE: 52 × 58mm
COMPRESSION: 6.5
POWER: 4bhp at 5000rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: not stated
LUBRICATION: petroil 20:1
GEARBOX: three speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: coil and contact breaker
LIGHTING: six volt battery and flywheel generator
FUEL CAPACITY: 1.9gal
WEIGHT: 171lb
WHEELBASE: 50.5in
FRONT BRAKE: 5in single leading shoe drum
REAR BRAKE: 5in single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 2.75 × 19
REAR WHEEL: 2.75 × 19



MV Agusta

THE ITALIAN MV factory is the most successful in the history of motor cycle road racing. The marque has won no less than 37 world titles, an incredible record. So when you step aboard a 750-4 you expect something special. Granted the roadster doesn't have the urge of the grand prix machines. It compromises with a shaft drive and lighting to make it a sensible road burner. What is special is its looks and sound. The magic wail of the double overhead cam four-strokes thrilled race crowds for two decades. You just have to be impressed . . . I certainly was when I was up against them on the tracks.



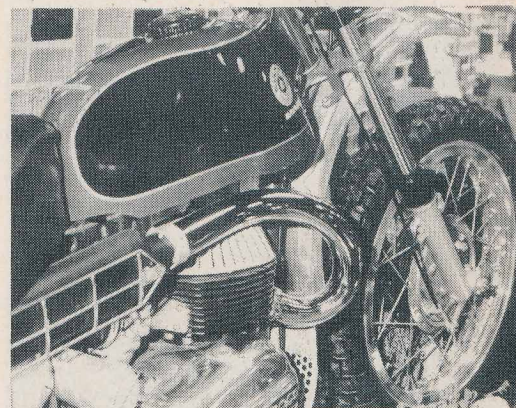
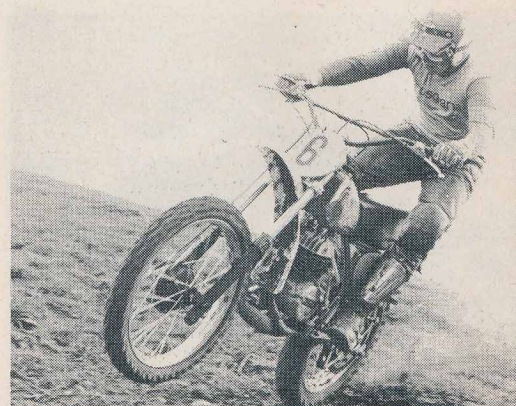
MODEL: MV 750S America
MCM ISSUE TESTED: March 1977
TOP SPEED: 120mph (estimated)
SS $\frac{1}{4}$ MILE: 13.5sec (estimated)
PRICE: £3764.74
ENGINE: dohc four-stroke four
DISPLACEMENT: 790cc
BORE \times STROKE: 67 \times 56mm
COMPRESSION: 9.5
POWER: 75bhp at 8500rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: 47.91lb-ft at 7500rpm (claimed)
LUBRICATION: wet sump
GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: coil and contact breaker
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 5.25gal
WEIGHT: 518lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 54.7in
FRONT BRAKE: twin disc
REAR BRAKE: single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.50 \times 18
REAR WHEEL: 4.00 \times 18

Bultaco Frontera



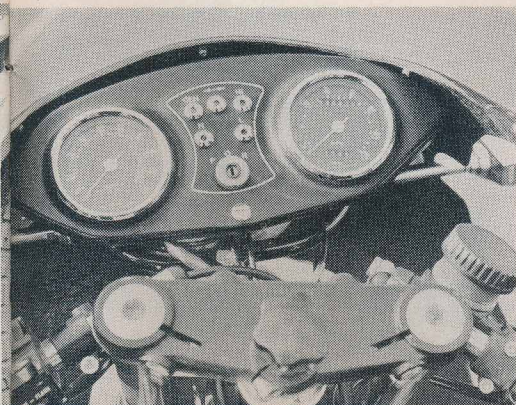
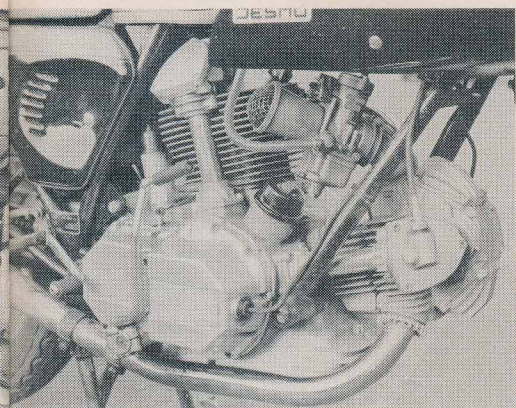
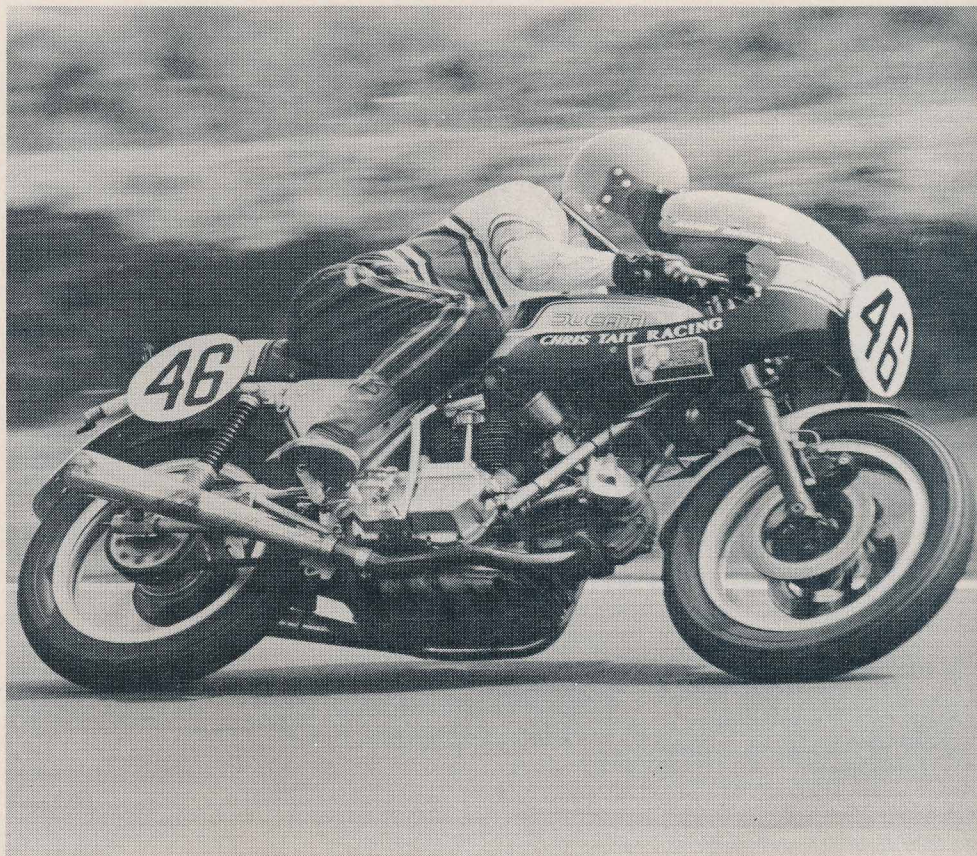
THE BULTACO factory in northern Spain is relatively new. It started in 1958 when Francesco Bulto left Montesa. Bultaco soon became established in the two-stroke world selling lots of off-road machines to the States as well as for the dusty roads of the home market. Bultaco scored the 1975 world 250cc moto cross series much to Montesa's envy. The Frontera enduro bike is almost a moto crosser even though it has lighting fitted. The latest 250 and 370 versions with alloy tank and 38mm Amal carburetter give a broad spread of power – so much so they feel like four-strokes. They are developed from the old Matador model (shown bottom pic.) and are great fun for slides and wheelies on rough land.

MODEL: Bultaco Frontera MkII 370
MCM ISSUE TESTED: not tested
TOP SPEED: 95mph (estimated)
SS¼ MILE: 14sec (estimated)
PRICE: £1025 (1979)
ENGINE: single cylinder two-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 363.168cc
BORE × STROKE: 85 × 64mm
COMPRESSION: 10
POWER: 42.2bhp at 7500rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: not stated
LUBRICATION: petroil
GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: flywheel magneto
LIGHTING: six volt flywheel generator
FUEL CAPACITY: 2.3gal
WEIGHT: 254lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 55.9in
FRONT BRAKE: 140mm single leading shoe drum
REAR BRAKE: 140mm single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.00 × 21
REAR WHEEL: 4.50 × 18



Ducati

SOMEONE ONCE wrote that the shortest distance between two points is a curve if you're on a Ducati. Ride a Desmo 900 Super Sport and you know just what the author was getting at. The Ducati handles so well it's an easy motor cycle to go fast on. A development of the 750SS its frame utilises the engine as a stressed member and the valves are mechanically closed by the famed Ducati desmodromic design. The bike looks and sounds as though it should be on a race track. Need I remind you that Hailwood won the 1978 Formula One TT on one?



MODEL: Ducati 900SS

MCM ISSUE TESTED: January 1979

TOP SPEED: 129mph (MCN radar)

SS $\frac{1}{4}$ MILE: 13sec (estimated)

PRICE: £2519

ENGINE: sohc four-stroke twin

DISPLACEMENT: 863.9cc

BORE X STROKE: 86 X 74.4mm

COMPRESSION: 9.5

POWER: 67bhp at 7300rpm (MCN dyno)

TORQUE: 55lb-ft at 5000rpm (MCN dyno)

LUBRICATION: wet sump

GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh

CLUTCH: wet multiplate

IGNITION: CDI

LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and alternator

FUEL CAPACITY: 4.4gal

WEIGHT: 415lb (dry)

WHEELBASE: 59in

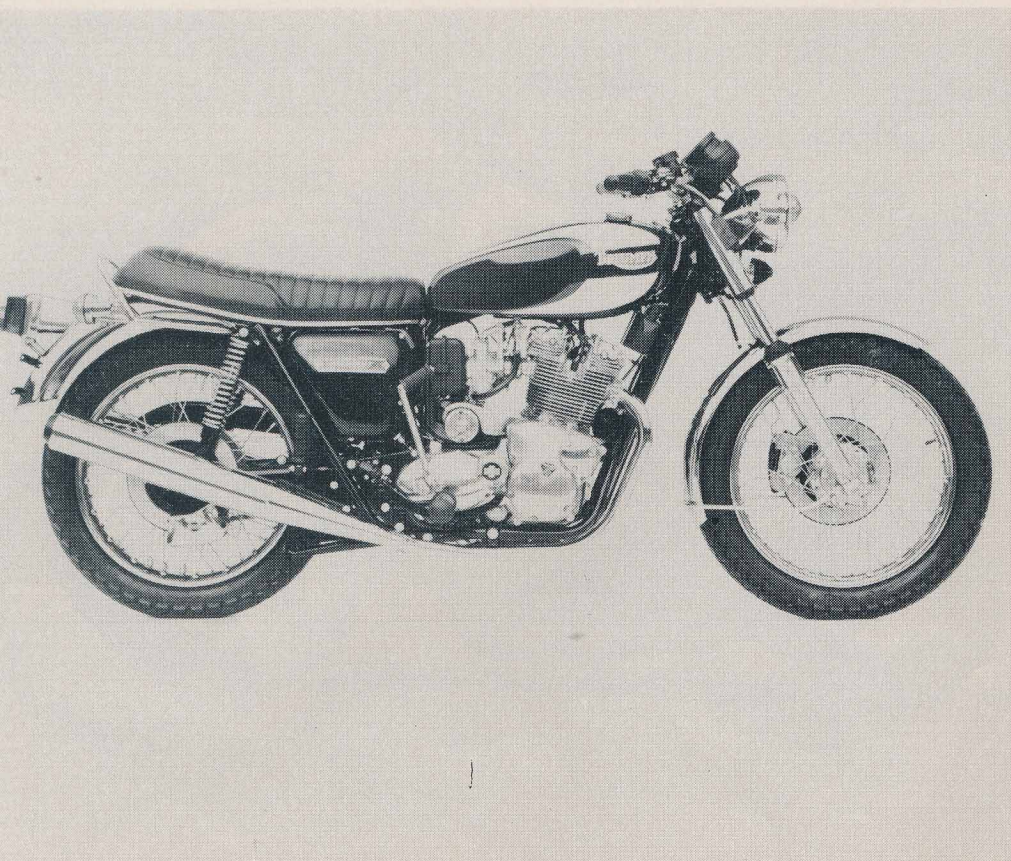
FRONT BRAKE: twin disc

REAR BRAKE: single disc

FRONT WHEEL: 3.50 X 18

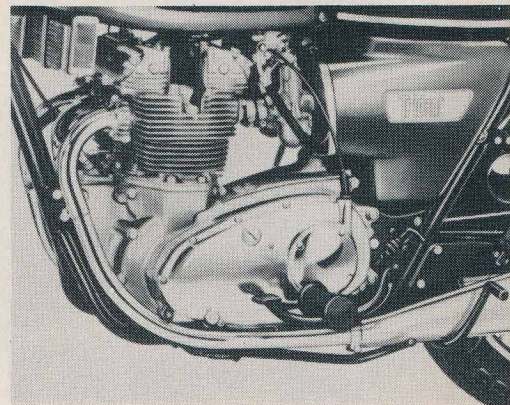
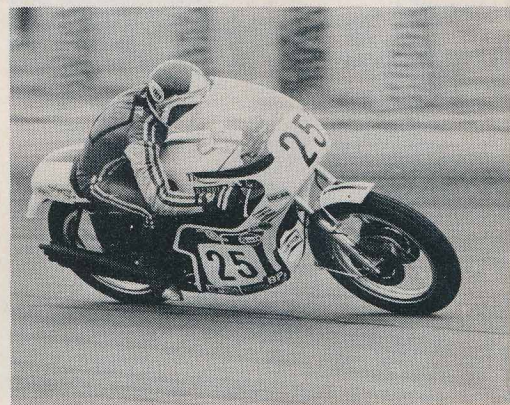
REAR WHEEL: 4.25 X 18

Trident



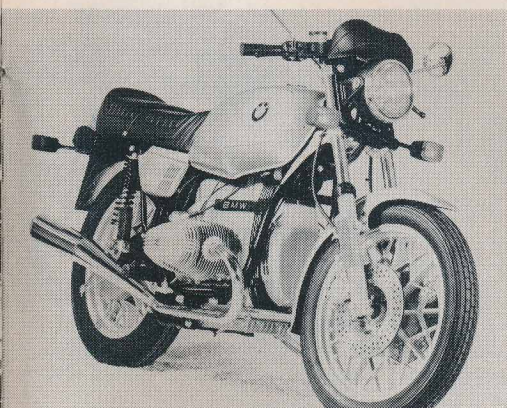
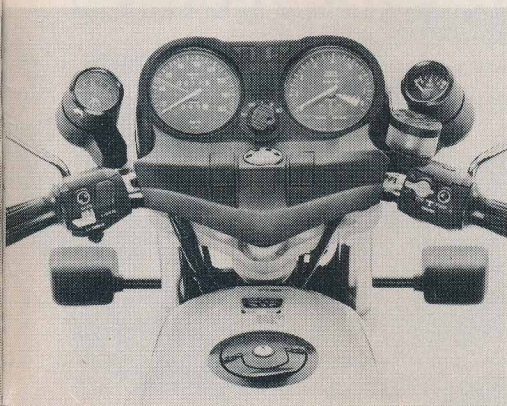
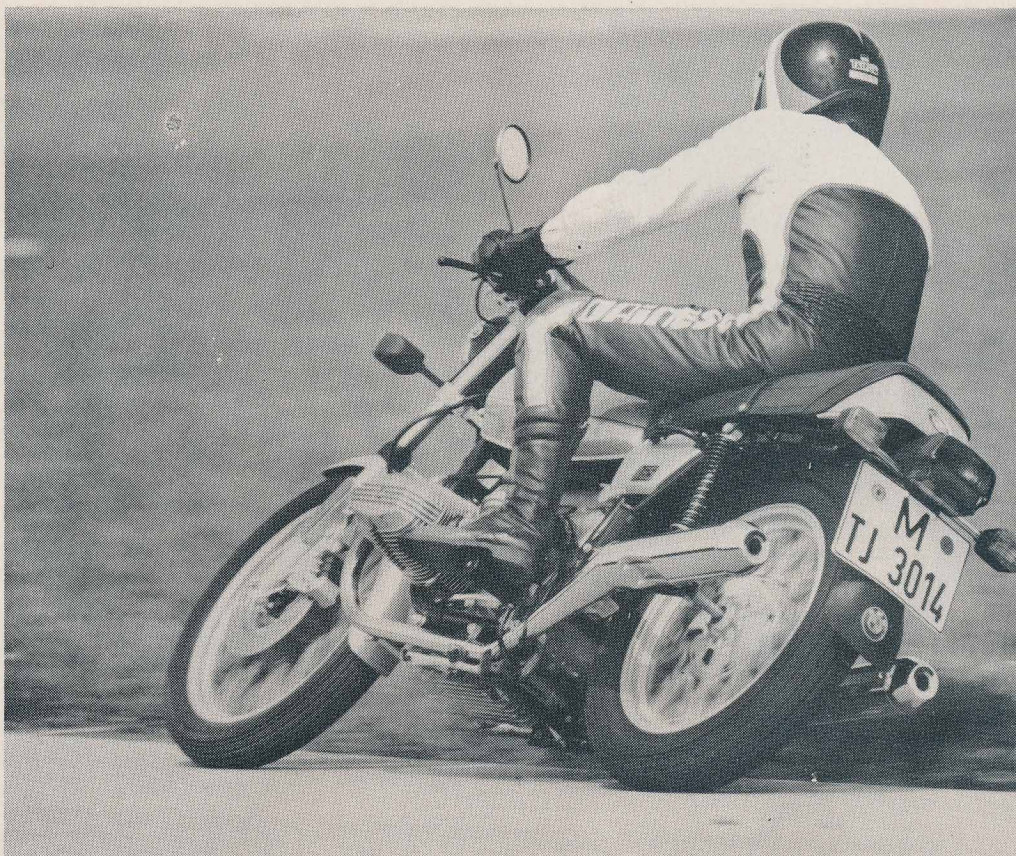
FOR THE British industry 1968 was a notable year thanks to the introduction of the Norton Commando and the Triumph and BSA triples. The Trident and Rocket were virtually identical. They quickly dominated the racing scene with victories at Daytona and in long distance events. Remember John Cooper, Ray Pickrell and my brother-in-law Paul Smart? A lot of their fame was gained on these triples and even Mike Hailwood came out of temporary retirement to race a Rocket at Daytona. The power they gave was sensational at the time and the bike looked so different. The best known of all was "Slippery Sam", the Trident ridden to five consecutive Isle of Man production TT victories.

MODEL: Triumph Trident 750
MCM ISSUE TESTED: December 1968
TOP SPEED: 129mph
SS¼ MILE: 13.4 sec/105.5mph
PRICE: £550
ENGINE: ohv four-stroke triple
DISPLACEMENT: 740cc
BORE × STROKE: 67 × 70mm
COMPRESSION: 9
POWER: 58bhp at 7500rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: not stated
LUBRICATION: Dry sump
GEARBOX: four speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: Diaphragm
IGNITION: coil and contact breaker
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and 110 watt alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 4.5gal
WEIGHT: 468lb
WHEELBASE: 58in
FRONT BRAKE: 8in twin leading shoe drum
REAR BRAKE: 7in single leading shoe
FRONT WHEEL: 3.50 × 19
REAR WHEEL: 4.10 × 19



BMW 650

IT'S ON the cards that BMW will produce something completely new very soon. Meanwhile their latest offering is the 650cc R65 introduced in 1978 along with a 450cc version. The R65 is a compact version of the bigger BMW flat twins. It's neatly styled and offers a good compromise of speed and economy with a long range fuel tank for the touring rider. The R65 sticks to BMW's shaft drive tradition but features shorter suspension than the 800cc and over models for a sportier ride and feel. The shaft features a torsion damper for smoother gearchanges and transmission take-up.



MODEL: BMW R65

MCM ISSUE TESTED: June 1979

TOP SPEED: 109mph (claimed)

SS $\frac{1}{4}$ MILE: 14.5sec (estimated)

PRICE: £1999

ENGINE: ohv four-stroke twin

DISPLACEMENT: 649cc

BORE \times STROKE: 82 \times 61.5mm

COMPRESSION: 9.2

POWER: 45bhp at 7250rpm (claimed)

TORQUE: 36.9lb-ft at 5500rpm (claimed)

LUBRICATION: wet sump

GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh

CLUTCH: dry single plate

IGNITION: coil and contact breaker

LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and 280 watt alternator

FUEL CAPACITY: 4.8gal

WEIGHT: 452lb (dry)

WHEELBASE: 54.8in

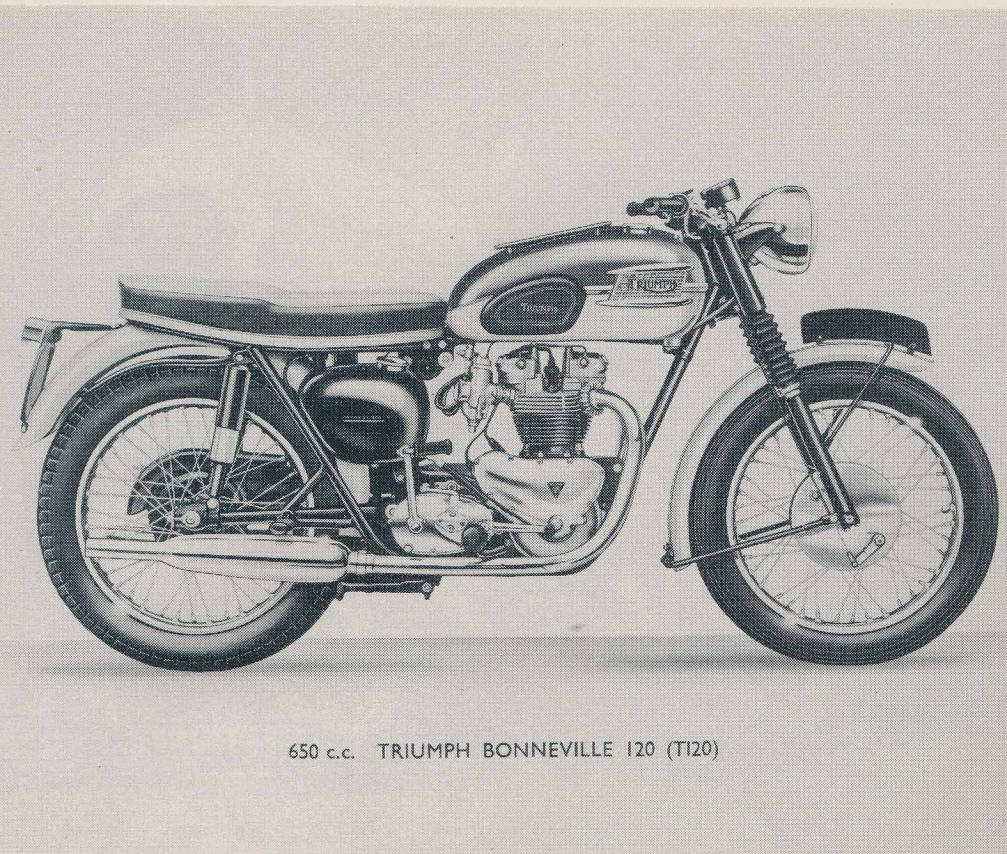
FRONT BRAKE: 10.24in disc

REAR BRAKE: 7.9in single leading shoe drum

FRONT WHEEL: 3.25 \times 18

REAR WHEEL: 4.00 \times 18

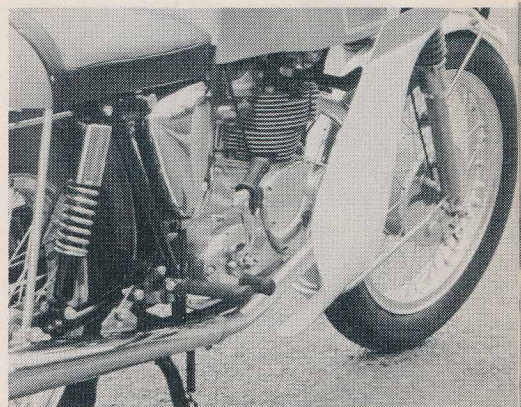
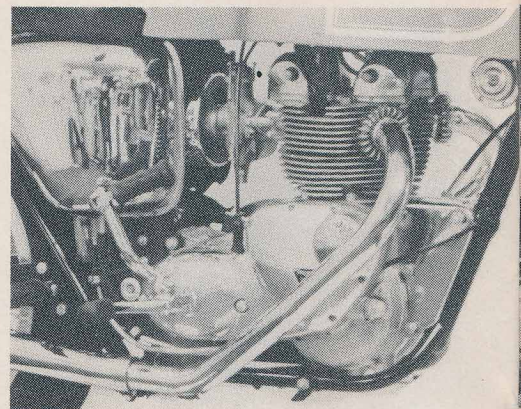
Triumph Bonneville



650 c.c. TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE 120 (T120)

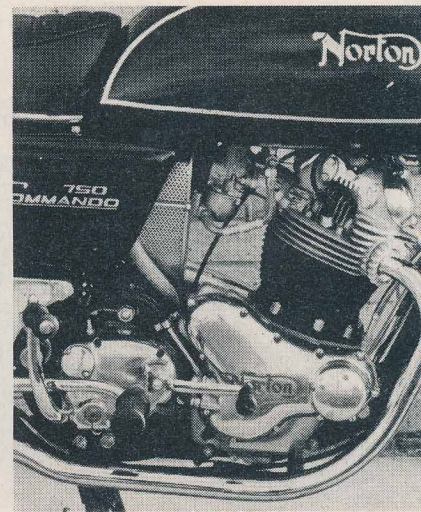
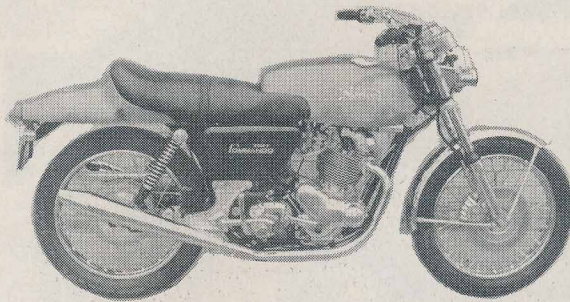
I WAS nine-years-old when the Triumph Bonneville was first announced in 1959. It looked a classic then and still does. What's more the Bonnie is still in production and it's 21 years old this year. Three cheers. Triumph were cashing in on their Bonneville land speed record when they brought out this version of their 650 twin. It was the top of the Triumph range and just about the most desirable British street bike. You were really somebody if you had one. The Americans went mad over them too. Tuners on both sides of the Atlantic soon got to work on the pre-unit engines. This resulted in all sorts of competition versions.

MODEL: Triumph T120 Bonneville
MCM ISSUE TESTED: (May, 1964 unit construction model)
TOP SPEED: (118mph May, 1971 test)
SS $\frac{1}{4}$ MILE: (14.2sec May, 1971 test)
PRICE: (£552 May, 1971)
ENGINE: ohv 650 four-stroke twin
DISPLACEMENT: 649cc
BORE \times STROKE: 71 \times 82mm
COMPRESSION: 8.5
POWER: 46bhp at 6500rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: not stated
LUBRICATION: dry sump
GEARBOX: four speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: Lucas magneto
LIGHTING: six volt battery and 60 watt dynamo
FUEL CAPACITY: 4gal
WEIGHT: 404lb
WHEELBASE: 55.75in
FRONT BRAKE: 8in single leading shoe drum
REAR BRAKE: 7in single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.25 \times 19
BACK WHEEL: 3.50 \times 19



Norton Commando

THE FASTBACK styling of the 750cc Norton Commando when it first came out in 1968 was completely new. The forward tilt of the motor which Norton rubber-mounted for smoothness added to its rakish style and made the machine an immediate winner. It was a progression from the 750 Atlas. And it wasn't just a cosmetic update. The engine was given a diaphragm clutch, triplex primary chain and alloy chaincase. From this original Commando came several variants, the Roadster, Interstate and American versions. Later the capacity was increased to 850cc and the motor was successful on British short circuits and particularly in sidecar cross.

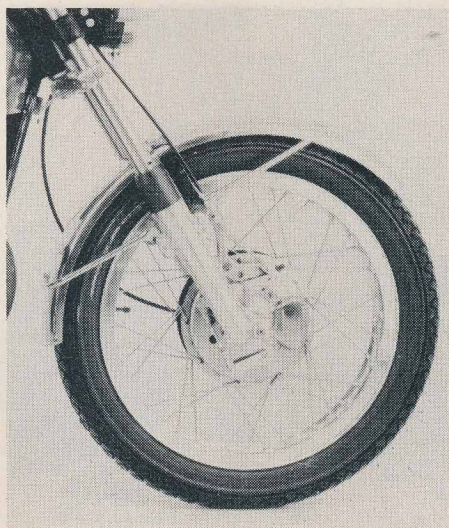


MODEL: Norton Commando 750
MCM ISSUE TESTED: August, 1968
TOP SPEED: 122mph
SS¼ MILE: 12.8sec/104mph
PRICE: £456.97
ENGINE: ohv four-stroke twin
DISPLACEMENT: 745cc
BORE X STROKE: 73 X 89mm
COMPRESSION: 8.9
POWER: 58bhp at 6500rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: 48lb-ft at 5000rpm (claimed)
LUBRICATION: dry sump

GEARBOX: four speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet diaphragm
IGNITION: coil and contact breaker
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 3.25gal
WEIGHT: 415lb
WHEELBASE: 56.75in
FRONT BRAKE: 8in twin leading shoe drum
REAR BRAKE: 8in single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.00 X 19
REAR WHEEL: 3.50 X 19

Bultaco Metralla

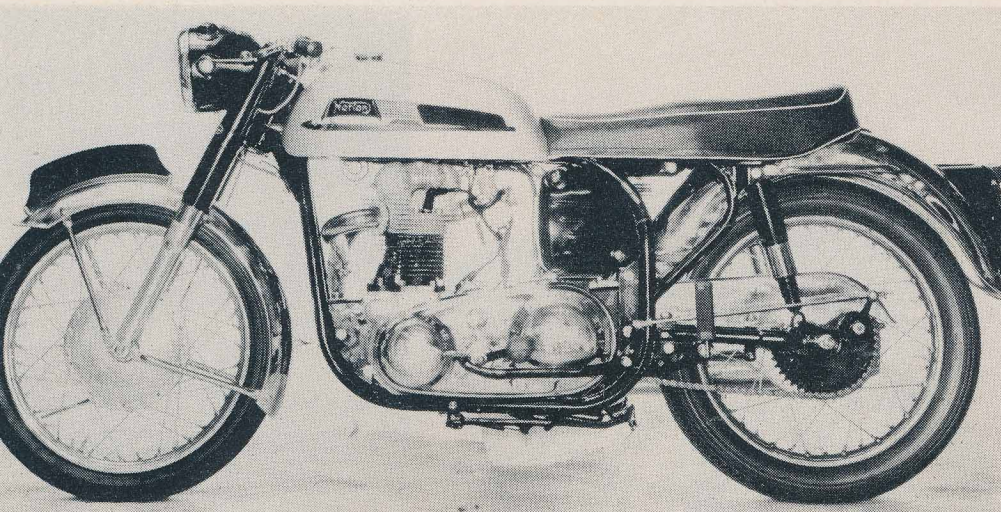
IN BRITAIN Bultaco are known for their off-road machinery. What is not so well-known is that Bultaco have made some excellent road race machinery. The company won the 50cc world series three times 1976-78. Most of their road bikes have a competition air about them and this includes the latest 250cc Metralla GT single cylinder two-stroke with electric start. The Metralla has been a popular mount in Spain for a decade now. The Bultaco factory was one of my first road racing sponsors. In fact the first road race bike I ever tried was one of my father's Bultacos. I went on to win the 125cc British championship on one in 1970.



MODEL: Bultaco Metralla GT 250
MCM ISSUE TESTED: not tested
TOP SPEED: 95mph (estimated)
SS¼ MILE: 15sec (estimated)
PRICE: not stated
ENGINE: single cylinder two-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 244.29cc
BORE X STROKE: 72 X 60mm
COMPRESSION: 10
POWER: 24bhp at 7000rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: not stated
LUBRICATION: petroil

GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: electronic
LIGHTING: six volt battery and flywheel generator
FUEL CAPACITY: 2.86gal
WEIGHT: 243lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 51.5in
FRONT BRAKE: 160mm twin leading shoe drum
REAR BRAKE: 160mm single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.00 X 19
REAR WHEEL: 3.25 X 18

Norton 650SS

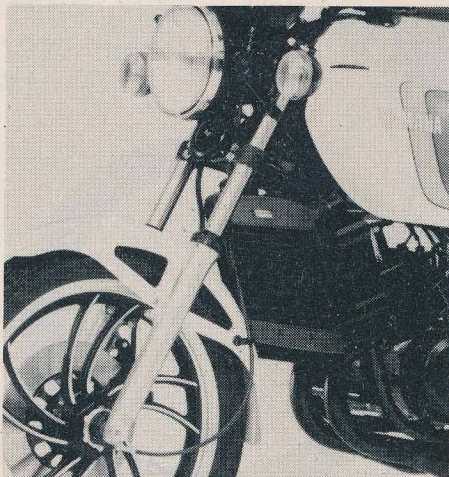
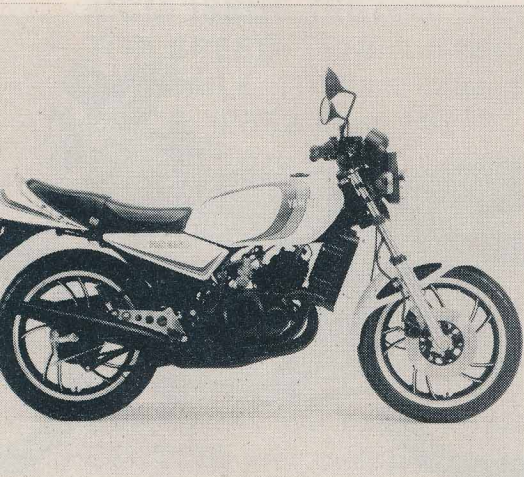


MODEL: Norton 650SS
MCM ISSUE TESTED: July, 1962
TOP SPEED: 119mph
SS¼ MILE: 14sec (estimated)
PRICE: £321.60
ENGINE: ohv twin cylinder four-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 647cc
BORE × STROKE: 66 × 72.6mm
COMPRESSION: 9.45
POWER: not stated
TORQUE: not stated
LUBRICATION: dry sump

GEARBOX: four speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: magneto
LIGHTING: two six volt batteries and crankshaft alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 3.5gal
WEIGHT: 408lb
WHEELBASE:
FRONT BRAKE: 8in single leading shoe drum
REAR BRAKE: 7in single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.00 × 19
REAR WHEEL: 3.50 × 19

SLEEK LOOKS and classy silver and black finish kept the Norton 650SS (Sports Special) high on the big bore shortlist of motorcyclists during the 'sixties. The 650SS won the Thruxton 500-miler several times on the trot. It had the famous Norton Featherbed frame and Roadholder forks. Most owners fitted the optional extra rev counter to give the machine the raciest image possible at the time. You couldn't mistake its sound, and it had an alloy head, 12 volt lights and good brakes. There was something about a Norton that appealed to the girls too. It definitely had sex appeal.

Yamaha RD350



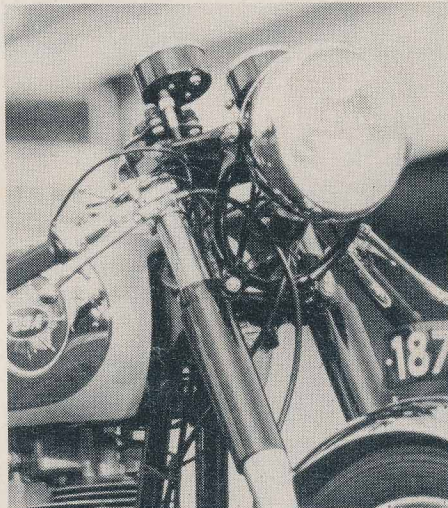
MODEL: Yamaha RD350LC
MCM ISSUE TESTED: not yet tested
TOP SPEED: 110mph (estimated)
SS¼ MILE: 14sec (estimated)
PRICE: to be announced
ENGINE: water cooled two-stroke twin
DISPLACEMENT: 347cc
BORE × STROKE: 64 × 54mm
COMPRESSION: 6.9
POWER: 47bhp at 8500 (claimed)
TORQUE: 39.2NM (4.0kgm) at 8000rpm (claimed)
LUBRICATION: Yamaha Autolube

GEARBOX: six speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: electronic
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 3.7gal
WEIGHT: 315lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 54in
FRONT BRAKE: single disc
REAR BRAKE: single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.00 × 18
REAR WHEEL: 3.50 × 18

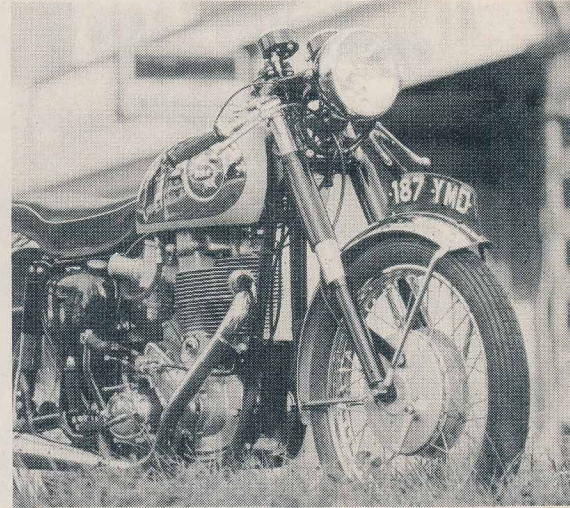
AT THE time of writing Yamaha's new 350 water-cooled twin isn't available in Britain. I had a ride on one while on holiday in South America. It's fantastic. It steers like a racing bike and goes like a rocket. I think it's going to be a big seller. You could say it was only a matter of time before Yamaha introduced a water-cooled road bike like their racers. They've gone on another step by making it a monoshock roadburner and because they haven't styled it as a replica road racer I forecast that the customisers will go overboard with racing-style options.

BSA Gold Star 500

SEVENTY miles per hour in first gear. That's the impressive reputation the 500 BSA Gold Star used to have. It was a racing bike on the road. A pig to start, but when it was running it sounded glorious and the rider was the envy of everyone within earshot. It looked fabulous with its chrome tank, giant cylinder and carburettor and sweeping exhaust pipe. Can you believe that the "Goldie" first came out in 1938 with light alloy barrel and head. It followed the success of a 500 single designed by Val Page which won a Bemsee Club gold star award for lapping Brooklands at over the ton. Production on the last model, the DB34, stopped in 1963.



MODEL: BSA Gold Star B34
MCM ISSUE TESTED: not tested
TOP SPEED: 115mph (estimated)
SS¼ MILE: 14.5sec (estimated)
PRICE: £260.40 (1955)
ENGINE: ohv single cylinder four-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 499cc
BORE × STROKE: 85 × 88mm
COMPRESSION: 8:0
POWER: 40bhp at 7000rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: 32lb-ft at 6000rpm (claimed)
LUBRICATION: dry sump



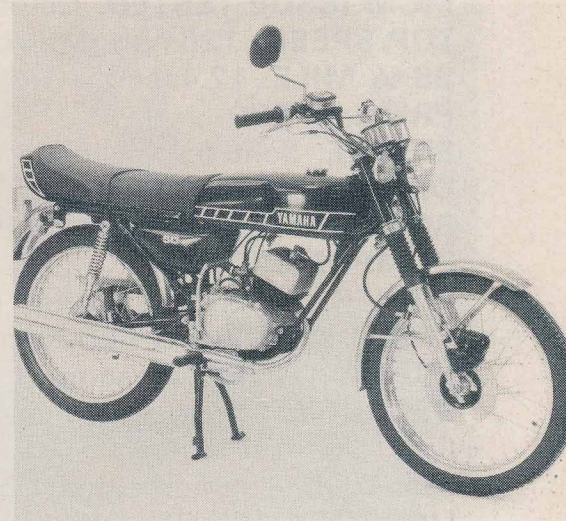
GEARBOX: four speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: Lucas magneto
LIGHTING: 6 volt battery 60 watt dynamo
FUEL CAPACITY: 4gal
WEIGHT: 416lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 56in
FRONT BRAKE: 8in single leading shoe drum
REAR BRAKE: 7in single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 3.25 × 19
REAR WHEEL: 3.50 × 19

Yamaha FS1E

I FELT I ought to pick out at least one 50cc model, so my vote goes to the Yamaha FS1E because it's like a modern day Bantam giving newcomers to motorcycling their first taste of two wheels. There must be punished "Fizzers" about the country just as there used to be Bantams. The FS1E has been the most popular sports moped for several years thanks to a good combination of looks, power and economy. Before the 30mph moped restriction most sixteeners rated this model as the fastest for its size. If it's any consolation to restricted sixteeners, I started racing on a 50cc Kreidler.

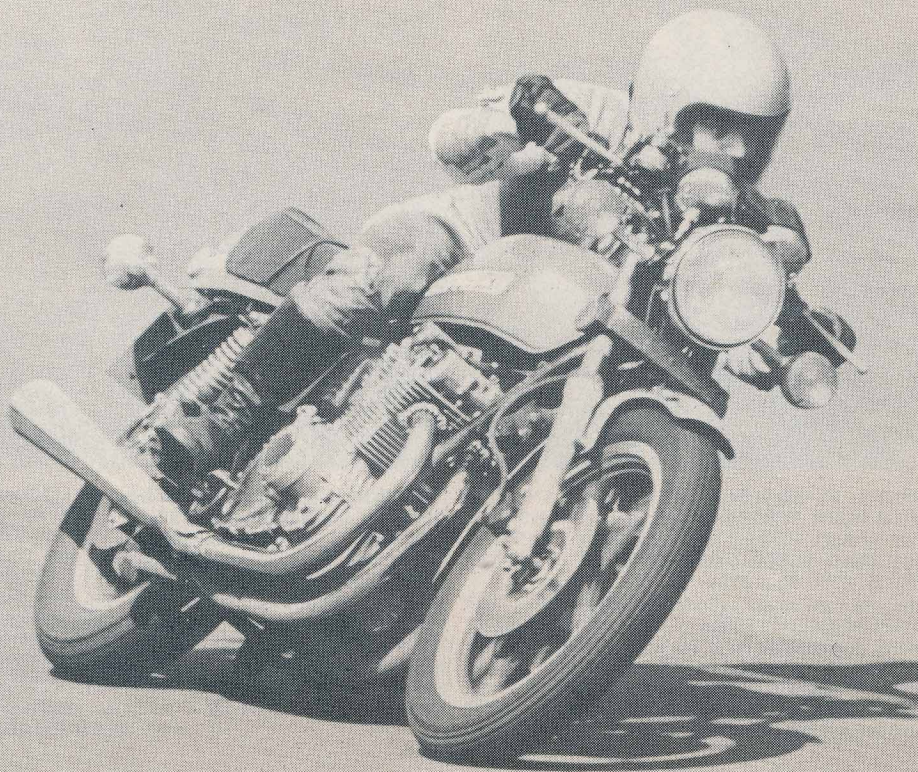


MODEL: Yamaha FS1E DX
MCM ISSUE TESTED: April, 1977
TOP SPEED: 43.5mph
SS¼ MILE: 25sec (estimated)
PRICE: £280
ENGINE: disc valve two-stroke single
DISPLACEMENT: 49.9cc
BORE × STROKE: 40 × 39.7mm
COMPRESSION: 7:1
POWER: 4.8bhp at 7000rpm (claimed)
TORQUE: 3.9ft-lbs at 5000rpm (estimated)
LUBRICATION: petrol 20:1



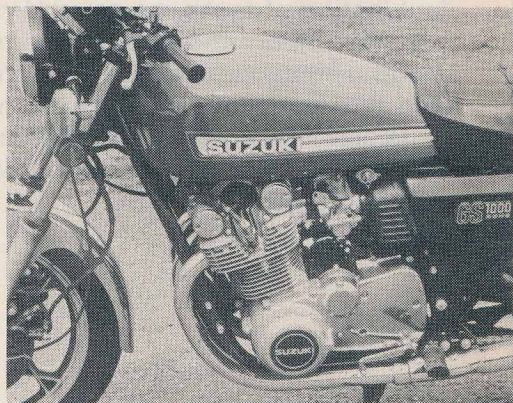
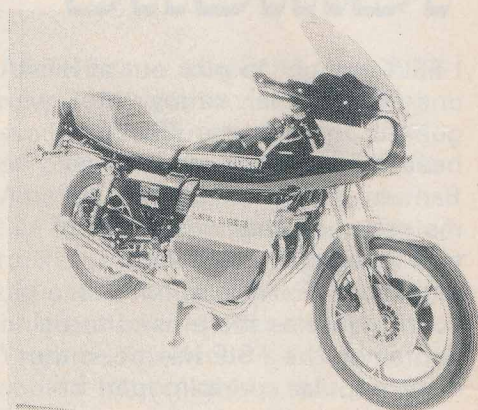
GEARBOX: four speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: magneto
LIGHTING: 6 volt battery and alternator
FUEL CAPACITY: 1.4gal
WEIGHT: 159lb
WHEELBASE: 45.7in
FRONT BRAKE: single disc
REAR BRAKE: single leading shoe drum
FRONT WHEEL: 2.25 × 17
REAR WHEEL: single leading shoe drum

Suzuki GS1000



I'VE BEEN running round on one of these until quite recently. It's the sports rider's superbike – great looks, handling and power. They've always done well in production racing because Suzuki made an effort to keep the weight at a reasonable level compared to the other big fours. The GS1000 was announced in 1978 and Suzuki boasted at the time that it was 33lb lighter than the Z1000 Kawasaki, 31lb lighter than the Yamaha XS750, 43lb lighter than the CB750 Honda and to emphasise the point 128lb lighter than the Gold Wing. The first models were coil sprung but Suzuki soon updated the model with air suspension.

MODEL: Suzuki GS1000
MCM ISSUE TESTED: October, 1978
TOP SPEED: 126mph (MCM radar)
SS ¼ MILE: 12.4sec
PRICE: £1890
ENGINE: dohc four cylinder four-stroke
DISPLACEMENT: 997cc
BORE × STROKE: 70 × 64.8mm
COMPRESSION: 9.2
POWER: 76bhp at 8200rpm (MCM dyno)
TORQUE: 56lb-ft at 6000rpm (MCM dyno)
LUBRICATION: wet sump
GEARBOX: five speed constant mesh
CLUTCH: wet multiplate
IGNITION: coil and contact breaker
LIGHTING: 12 volt battery and 250W generator
FUEL CAPACITY: 4.2gal
WEIGHT: 516lb (dry)
WHEELBASE: 59.3in
FRONT BRAKE: twin disc
REAR BRAKE: single disc
FRONT WHEEL: 3.50 × 19
REAR WHEEL: 4.50 × 17



We'd like to stitch you up...

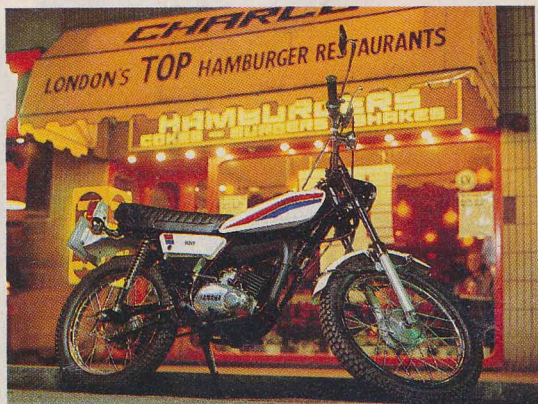
...with Yamaha's exciting range of clothing and accessories of course. Items currently available include beannie hats, lightweight jackets, anoraks, sweat shirts, lightweight rain suits, various types of umbrellas,

shoulder bags, holdalls and top boxes. All are designed in Yamaha's striking red, white and blue trim, except top boxes which are either white or black, and should be available from your regular Yamaha dealer.

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