

MOTORCYCLE SPORT

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STANDARD HOUSE, BONHILL STREET, LONDON, EC2A 4DA
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Law Breakers

MOPEDS and under-50 cc motorcycles ridden on the road by 16-year-old provisional licence holders are restricted by law to 30 mph maximum speed but are being ridden at speeds of up to 60 mph after being fitted with tuning kits brought in from Italy.

The easy-to-bolt-on kits consist of a cylinder barrel, a big-bore carburettor and a high compression head and sell for £80. It is a quirk of law but they are legal both to sell and to fit to machines but it is when the user, usually an inexperienced and untrained rider of 16-17 years, the age group highest in road accidents, takes a machine fitted with "hot" parts on the road that he could run foul of the law for exceeding speed restrictions, having no insurance (as no company issues cover for the tuned tinies), creating noise offence and risking disqualification for up to 12 months for a black stamp conviction on all three offences.

The man importing and selling the kits is Bernie Adey, from his business at Watford, who showed the tuning parts at his shop and at the Earls Court motorcycle show.

Police who have worked hard to improve road safety of motorcyclists are angry that the high-speed components are being sold at all. A spokesman said, "It is totally irresponsible to pretend to sell these tuning parts only to boys who say they will use their machines only in off-road events organised by clubs. Some undoubtedly will, but there are ready made and tuned specialist off-road bikes available and these could not be beaten in a scramble by souping up an ordinary 50 cc road bike or moped, which is what the imported parts are made for".

The police warn that riders using tuning kits render themselves liable for prosecution when caught on the road. Bob Ainsworth, head of Devitt (DA Insurance) Ltd, Britain's leading motorcycle insurance company, has said, "A policy issued for a moped or mini bike is null and void if the machine is made illegal by the fitting of a tuning kit. We could only insure such a bike if it was ridden by the holder of a full motorcycle licence and the bike's technical changes had been declared to us". Devitts have withdrawn their agency from Mr. Adey's motorcycle shop in consequence of his sales of tuning kits.

Manufacturers' guarantees are invalidated if tuning kits are fitted during the guarantee period.

Mr. Adey is unrepentant, however, and says, "We have no control over what buyers do with the kits but I try to warn all boys not to use them on the road". He expects to sell about 100 kits this year. We hope he will be proved wrong.

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Mike Hailwood, who seemed to be a special guest on almost every stand during the opening day of the Earls Court Show, poses with Scott on the VMCC display

Front Cover Picture

All-rounder Phil Read moto-crossing in a Super Six competition at Donington. The one-time road-race champion talks about his liking for the "music" of a four-stroke — preferably MV Agusta — in "Some People" in this issue

EVEN in today's cosseted world few motorcycle manufacturers offer full weather protection from the word go. Easy enough for traditionalists to look askance at fairings and dismiss them as cissy, but even our traditionalist tester was forced to admit that perhaps, after all, a fairing could have advantages.

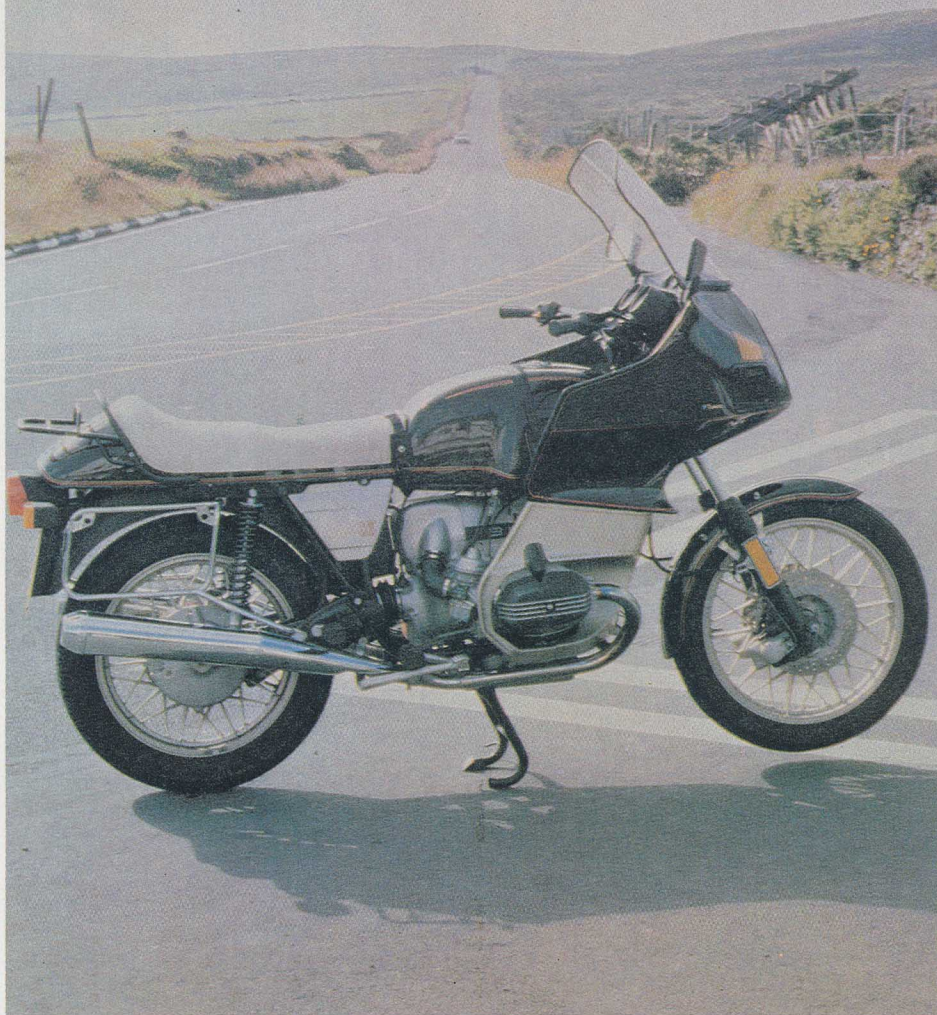
What caused this change of heart? The day(s) of the greenfly. Remember? The end of July, warm and muggy, and suddenly the air was full of nasty little green things. Of course it had to be the day we had chosen to visit the Isle of Man; nasties or not, the trip had to be made. The temperature was just over 80°F as we left London during the early evening. The sun shone, the traffic steamed but didn't move much and we found that a fairing can have its disadvantages, too. We melted. Even the minimum of riding gear was too much. Leather jacket, shirt, jeans and an open-face helmet were more than enough, and with very little help from the two air vents sweat seemed likely to cloud our vision. Used in town, the full RT fairing as fitted to the BMW R100RT was showing distinct limitations. The amount of heat that arrived in the vicinity of the rider was bordering on the unbearable on a normal summer's day. At that stage we did not realize it was possible to remove the lower half of the fairing — almost essential, we would think, in the summer months.

Misery ended as we pulled on to the M1 when it was possible to maintain a steady 60-70 mph for the first 50 miles, watching the windscreen get increasingly splattered. None of the plague that we were passing through reached our goggles, though. Perhaps 50 mph is the minimum speed that we could comfortably maintain and still keep cool. The journey progressed, traffic thinned, cruising speed crept up. By Birmingham we were holding a steady 70 plus, both rider and passenger untroubled by wind or bugs.

An hour's stop at Corley, near Coventry service station, which is surely one of the better motorway eating houses, and the heat of the day had gone. The flies hadn't. The journey progressed, traffic became less of a problem, road works more of one, and the big BM ploughed its way north like a massive battleship. It was completely steady at up to 110 mph (although we chose to cruise at a slightly less illegal speed) and the rider was always sitting in a kind of vacuum, having the eerie feeling that he was not a part of the motorcycle. That, of course, is the price of protection. The wind in the face, bugs in the teeth and sheer feeling of being a part of the elements is largely lost. In its place the rider can shrug off the weather. *Provided* that one keeps moving, even quite heavy rain fails to reach the rider; overtrousers are rarely needed. We took leather jeans on the 700-mile trip and they stayed in the tank bag all weekend. Hands are well protected and light gloves were sufficient even at night. Frankly, the air vents, car style and adjustable, were more of a gimmick than a useful addition. The Dutch police seem to have put the intake vents to better use by building their blue lights into them.

The RT fairing is a superbly made piece of equipment, two (barely) lockable glove boxes either side serving the dual purpose of providing a small amount of storage and extra rigidity and the solid mountings preventing the whole unit flapping from the breeze — often the case with lesser fairings. The windscreen has three easily fixed positions, giving the rider the angle of rake that suits him best. We used the sharpest angle,

Keeping the greenfly at bay



Easy enough for hard-core motorcyclists to dismiss fairings as cissy . . . but let them have to go to the Isle of Man on The Day of the Greenfly, and something like the BMW RT may well cause a change of heart



The RT fairing is a superbly made piece of equipment . . . the windscreen has three easily fixed positions . . . there are two (barely) lockable glove boxes either side

when a medium-height rider could easily see over the top without getting the breeze in his eyes. Clock and voltmeter live in the fairing surround and the lights remain in situ, shining through a glass dummy plate as on the fairing. A real bonus came with the mirrors, which because of the position of the fairing gave a much better angle of vision. But they did tend to shake more.

There were disadvantages, too. We have mentioned heat in town; if the bike is to be used mainly for its prime function, long-distance touring, this will not trouble a rider too much, but we ask our bikes to be a workhorse, too, so it did bother us. Engine noise is inevitably higher, almost unacceptably so for a BMW, but the plain fact is that *any* fairing will act in the same way and it is no use blaming the bike. A silly worry came with the steering lock, tucked away behind the fairing, it needed a little patience to locate. We lived in constant fear of the key falling into the bosom of the hot engine if we dropped it. It never did, of course. Difficult to judge the screen's effect on fuel consumption and performance. The test bike was thirstier than we would have expected, barely averaging 40 mpg, but we do not think that the fairing was to blame for this, for others have since told us that 48-55 mpg is to be expected. Performance? It'll top 115 mph; above that, who cares?

The verdict? If a fairing is your idea of motorcycling, this is undoubtedly one of the best. It offers the best protection that we have ever come across on a motorcycle, and as such takes much less out of a rider than riding on a naked machine. It is well finished, brown on the test bike with the detachable bottom half in silver. The brown is very much more attractive than it sounds, but red is also on offer.

It was too hot in town in summer, but so are they all. It is expensive, around about £400 (for BMWs only, of course), but that package

includes stiffer front fork springs, bigger handlebars, wiring loom and mirrors. Those big bars would have been misery at speed on an unfaired bike but on the RT they were excellent. As time goes on we shall try to take a similar look at the other top-class fairings that are available. Until then let us finish with a return to the greenfly. After 270 miles the bike was a mess, green and squashy wherever the front was exposed. Yet not one greenfly was to be found on either the rider's or passenger's leather jacket, and just a few had perished on top of the helmet. Goggles remained completely clear. It was incredible testimony to the efficiency of the design. On a day when motorcyclists were really suffering from the problems that the greenfly caused we merely steamed gently. It was a small price to pay.

B.P.

And how did we take the RT to the Isle of Man . . . ?

COMPLAINTS about the poor service and indifference of the old Isle of Man Steam Packet company to the Isle of Man are legion. Poor food, lack of sufficient comfortable seating, lack of information and incredibly long queues at TT time are just a few of the complaints that we have personally listed over the years. So it was with something approaching euphoria that we heard of the proposed Manx Line to be masterminded by Geoff Duke.

Operating from Heysham, just south of Morecambe, to Douglas, its initial timetable to start service seemed a mite ambitious. And so it proved. Bad luck and perhaps a naive faith in people keeping promises saw the new Manx

Line impotently in dock during last year's TT week when it had booked a great number of disillusioned IOMSP refugees. Such a blow could have been fatal but with all the determination that made him a world champion Duke fought back and, with Sealink throwing in their bit, the Manx Line finally went into service this year with its much acclaimed Ro-Ro service, the name being an abbreviation of Roll On-Roll Off. To accommodate such a system meant new docks at Douglas, and progress wasn't helped when it was promptly done a mischief by the docking ship.

TT week had long since gone when our chance for a weekend in the Isle of Man came. Arrival of an RT BMW saw us asking Peter Duke, son of Geoff, if there was any room. There was, and we found ourselves fighting a plague of greenflies (as related elsewhere) as we sped up the M1/M6 ready for an unlooked forward to night trip. It had nothing to do with Manx Line and everything to do with our aversion to being other than in our bed at such an hour. It is a little hard to plan an unknown journey the first time, and we pressed on when we really had time to stop, figuring that there would be food available at the docks if we were a bit early. There wasn't. There wasn't even a cup o' tea. The dock is the old, now disused BR station. It is well enough appointed but a number of people would stretch the seating a little. Manx Line say that they are aware of the problem and are working on it.

The Manx Viking, the Line's only craft, came in half an hour before sailing time, quickly discharged and reloaded and sailed half an hour late. There were only a handful of passengers on this mid-week crossing so no great strains were placed on the system. The Viking was a pleasant surprise. Two large lounges with comfortable aircraft-type seating set the tone with other seating in the bar, restaurant and the odd

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(b) No rear fog lamp shall be fitted to the vehicle so that it can be illuminated by the application of any braking system on the vehicle."

And Regulation 7 is retrospective.

As motorcyclists, we should all now be in a quandary as to what the safety industry really wants of us.

We have been legislated into a disadvantageous position in respect to other road users, yet left with the means to make ourselves equal by fitting rear-mounted fog lamps, if the design of our machine allows it. For a long time now the safety industry has been imploring us to use dipped headlights in daytime to increase our conspicuity (though the TRRL now has doubts as to the usefulness of lights for that purpose) and ALL road users are OBLIGED to use dipped headlights in "bad visibility"; but the use of rear fog lamps is still left to the driver's discretion, and motorcycles don't even have to have the lights fitted, much less use them.

There seems to be no consistency.

It has been suggested that for us to push for parity with other vehicles on this issue would jeopardise our arguments against compulsory full-time headlamp use. In this unreasonable world that may be so, but *I'm* happy to ride "headlight off" in daytime, just like most other road users, but I doubt if I'll be happy to ride without rear fog lamp lit in bad visibility when the majority of other road users will be using them and be expected to be using them.

I'm in a bigger quandary over the reason for enacting these Regulations at all. (Someone please tell me if I'm missing a basic point). But aren't I right in deducing that all the Regulations do is prevent us using rear-mounted fog lamps as brake lamps (for aforementioned reasons that are reasonable) and prevent us from using them in "good visibility" conditions. I wonder if it's really been worth it, and in fact whether the police can enforce it (just as they don't enforce the dipped headlight law).

I have a suspicion that had rear fog lamp use been made obligatory in bad visibility, on all

vehicles, including motorcycles (with basic exceptions), then "evolution" would have made a positive step forward. It's only a suspicion of course, because I've no proof.

IN BRIEF . . . at home

Mr Michael Jopling, Honda-riding Tory MP for Westmorland (still a constituency but now part of Cumbria), was recently reported in that county's only locally produced newspaper to have voted in Parliament against legislation for compulsory seat belt wearing in cars because it went too far in "holding people's hands".

He said, "It's up to people themselves if they are still stupid enough not to use them".

I wonder if this is significant and that a wind of change is blowing, as I believe Mr Jopling favoured compulsory safety helmet use those many years ago.

. . . and abroad

. . . On a recent motorcycle passage through France, where headlight use on motorcycles is compulsory at all times, I found the law honoured in the breach. Is this real evolution? I rode for one week in that country headlight-less and unprimanded. . . . Riders who have contemplated entering Russia by motorcycle will be aware that no foreign motorcyclists (that implies having a bike between one's legs) are allowed into the USSR. "There are better ways of seeing our country," say the Russians, even to the Fins who can enter Russia without visas in their passports (but only without motorcycles as well).

The Olympic Games are in Russia in 1980. . . . and the tie-up? This. The third rule of the International Olympic Committee states that ". . . The IOC shall secure the widest possible audience for these games. No discrimination in them is allowed against any country or person on grounds of race, religion or politics."

The reason for barring motorcycles must be a political one. The IOC have been informed; I'll keep you posted of their response. (The last time British riders rode in Russia was 1967 when the soviet Union hosted the FIM Rally.) G.W.

MANX LINE

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corner. They have pitched the balance of the eating just about right, aiming for cheap, hot, well-cooked food (given the system) at a low price rather than having a high-priced place just for the few. Breakfast, available all day, at £1.35 all-in, is excellent.

Travelling at night, we felt the lack of cabins (there are none — recent very expensive additions in this area had to be allocated to the crew!). With the resourcefulness that comes with being a motorcyclist, we found a comfortable niche for what remained of the night after we had eaten and the journey passed in relative comfort. Particularly noticeable was the absence of noise in the forward lounge.

Stowage of our BMW was all that we could have asked for. A series of motorcycle bays are aligned at each side and it is just a matter of dropping one down to accommodate four bikes.

The real advantage is that it is possible to pre-book a motorcycle even at TT week. Obviously there is a limit on the numbers that can be carried but for those quick enough off the mark the chance to avoid those long boring waits at the Pier Head is worth planning well ahead. Nothing is perfect, of course. While we had no complaints about the Manx Viking and would consider it on the level of the better cross-channel ferries, the fact that there is only one ship in operation could be awkward, for it is afloat most of the time and a few hours lost can never be recovered. Manx are only too well aware of this and are looking at the possibility of a second cargo boat which could stand in in emergencies.

It costs £6/8 return to travel to the Isle of Man by Manx Line and motorcycle costs £4/5. A little can be saved by travelling off peak. The journey from London took just half an hour longer than we normally expect to take going to Liverpool (five hours including an hour's break). Without doubt the arrival of a civilized alternative to the one we are all used to will be cheered by motorcyclists. B.W.

STREAMLINING

and its application to motorcycles

Part III

For everyday use, in racing and record-breaking

MOTORCYCLES of the future were envisaged by many people, yet none of the bikes seemed to reach the production stage, while the basic concept of "two wheels and an engine" soldiered on. The car owner by now (1930s) had come to accept total enclosure of his vehicle, access to any mechanicals necessitating the removal of one or more panels. This acceptance encouraged variations in body design, and the "style" of a vehicle now affected initial impressions, an important factor from the sales point of view. The illustrations here show some "styled" motorcycles, closely following the flowing lines of car styling of the time (1941). The motorcycle had fixed points governed by the seat position in relation to wheelbase and steering, which tended to fix the overall style from the start; however, practical features such as leg shields,

full mudguard enclosure and storage facilities were moulded in with a fair degree of success.

Edward Turner, originator of the famous Speed Twin, proposed "the extreme limit of motorcycle development" in a machine complying with the guidelines which he thought most likely to create a larger market. These were:

- (1) Be economical to buy and use.
- (2) Have the greatest practical weather protection.
- (3) Be infinitely more silent, both as regards exhaust and mechanical noise, than had heretofore been accepted as a standard.
- (4) Start easily and idle with certainty.
- (5) Be easy to clean and have as much of the works enclosed as practicable.

- (6) Conform to the reliability standard that motor cars had taught the public to expect. Turner suggested a minimum 10,000 miles without overhaul or adjustment. For such a relatively cheap vehicle, 60,000 miles would be acceptable as adequate life.
- (7) Handleability. The machine to be as light as possible, consistent with reliability.
- (8) Less vulnerable than current models and possess a maximum of stability.

The Vincent firm, famous for vee-twin engines and innovative machines, approached the problem of the alternative motorcycle by adopting ideas generally thought to be alien to motorcycle design, but similar to those followed in earlier machines such as the Ner-a-car and the Monocar. The adoption of stub axles, shaft drive and many features that would provide easier and cheaper construction were featured in their designs, along with the obvious full enclosure.

The approach (in theory, at least) toward motorcycle design took up the ideas of the early "two-wheeled car" pioneers. It was generally agreed throughout the industry that motorcycle design had stagnated, with the exception of machines like the Francis Barnett. One of the reasons put forward for this was the influence of the TT races and the accent on performance. Engines were constantly achieving a high degree