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THREE WHEELS ON MY WAGON AND I'M STILL GALLOPING ON . . .

What sidecars are best suited for . . . horizon hunting; and (right) the open road on a Bonneville and Squire ST2

THE front rocker oil delivery pipe banjo had slackened off during the journey north into the Peak District. You would not believe the volume of wind blown oil the feeble lubrication system of a Vincent Black Shadow can deposit over itself, its rider, its partnering Stieb and passenger, and a few weeks camping gear. No wonder I felt warm and dry.

We reached our camp site and I looked at Eileen in triumph. Eleven different expressions fought for room simultaneously on her face as she grappled womanfully with the unexpected revelation of her previously Anglo-Saxon coloured husband as a shinin' black boy. She sat there in a good six inches of water swilling about the bottom of the Stieb and began chanting in a week faint voice, "oh dear, oh David, oh dear, oh David." She cried a little, mewling softly to herself, and then, peering more closely at me, began to giggle, softly at first, but with increasing vigour until I was the subject of great waves of hooting laughter.

It was her first time in the north and her first time camping and it was pouring with rain which lashed into us horizontally with all the power of a mountain gale behind it. She was wet, I was wet, the gear was wet, the tent was wet, everything was wet, even the ruddy mag' was wet, and my fingers were numb.

"Oooooaaaaw", she moaned loudly at me, when the hysteria had died down, "This is horrible. I wish we'd gone to Steads' (hotel) on the Isle of Man."

I cursed the world and its maker for sending this damn lot on me all at once! I had told Eileen what fun camping was, especially on a motorcycle, and how fine the north was. She had believed none of it and was now sitting with a wet bottom, pointing accusingly at me and everything rotten around her, howling almost as loudly as the gale. She could see her future and it was very, very wet. That I could possibly play any part in it seemed pretty remote by what she

indicated then. In a rare old temper, utterly ignoring the rain, I slammed around in the mud, rigging the tent alone and glorying in the self imposed martyrdom, the sheer impossibility of it all. By the gods, if she though she could suffer, just watch me! "Go and get the damn shopping" I yelled through the storm, once I was satisfied she had begun to recognise my suffering, which by that time I had developed to a quite magnificent pitch. She slopped off to the tiny shop, crowded with Gaz-hungry campers, damp from the rain, but smart from their cars. My old Barbour suit *did* look a bit odd on her, even with the legs and arms rolled up a bit and the waist pulled in tight. Just as the tent rigging was completed Eileen returned. She obviously thought that because you could not see through the canvass walls you could not hear through them, either. "YOU ***** OLD PIG" she screamed at the top of her voice. "why didn't you tell me I had oil all over my face, too!"

It was a bad bad night. Damp, too.

It rained all the next day and things got much worse.

It rained all the next night and things got worse still, so I made the promise that if it was still raining next morning we'd pack up and keep riding north until we found the sun.

It was raining next morning so we packed up the rode north.

And thus it was we found Scotland and the sun together. As we rode so we dried and warmed and blinked in the bright light. The banjo union bolt stayed put the mag' stayed dry and we stayed clean. Life for the following few weeks was blissfully happy. Sidecarring, Eileen discovered, really was an awful lot of fun, and camping was only just this side of perfection.

We had five quid left: should we stay another week and risk the Vin's balding rear tyre, or should we buy another and come home immediately? We compromised, stayed another week, and decided to ride home slowly, a system

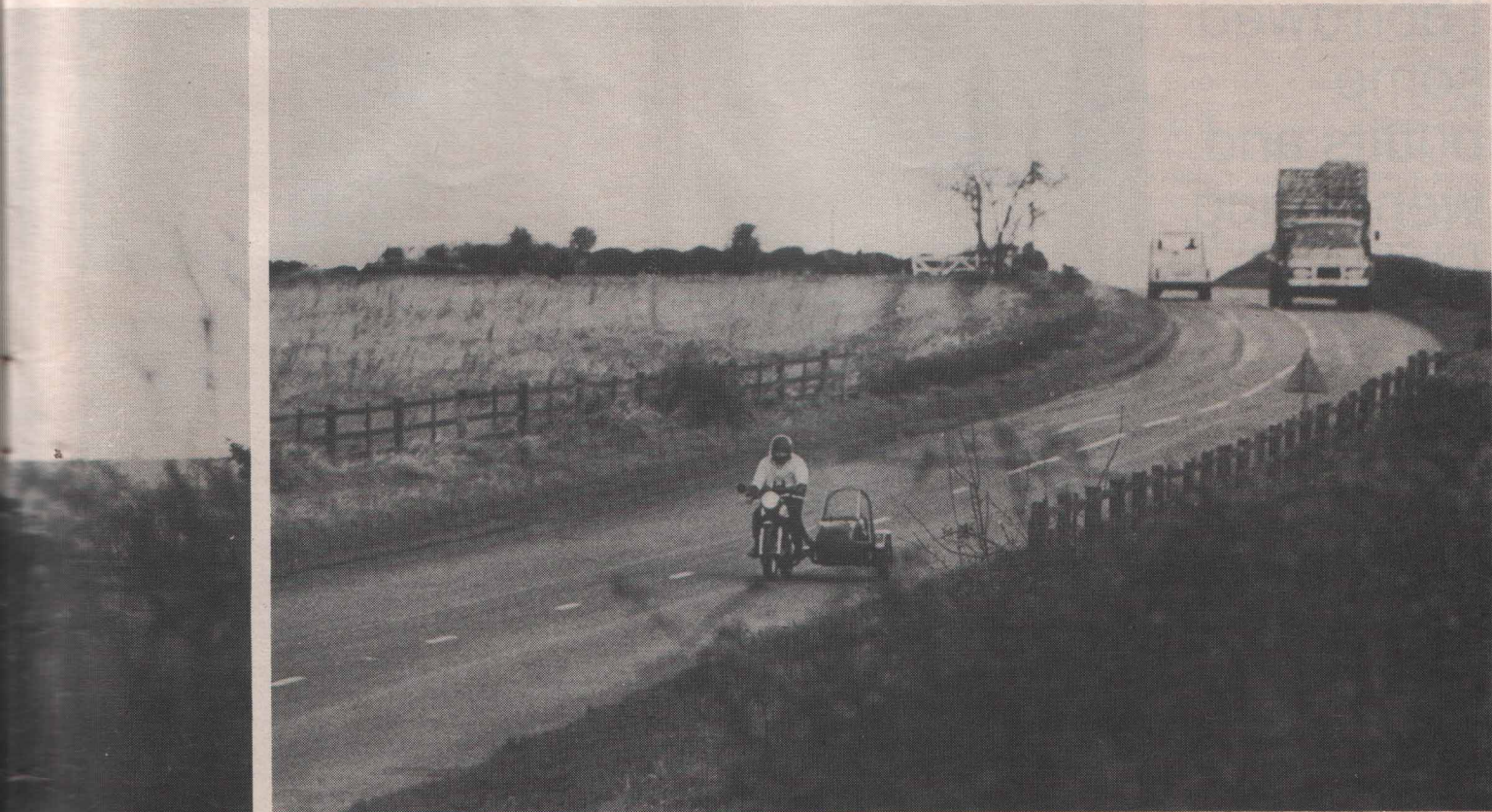
which worked perfectly until we were south of Edinburgh on the A68, short-cutting the eastern coastal sweep of the A1. Even now that road is about the only one I know that resembles an Alpine pass turned on its side, but then with its endless humps over the lower northern hills, now removed, it could wipe the smile from a derring-do driver's face quicker than the apparent impossibility of locked wheels on a wet road.

I quickly struck the right sort of rythm and charged the upward inclines on full throttle and the Vin' thundered. We leaped over the sharp ridged crests, leaving the road, and landing with a lovely crushing wallop and a wiggle before charging of downwards, booming and shuddering. In the equally severe troughs everything went flat as the front wheel began its accent before the back one had finished descending. Tyres scrunched, suspension springs locked solid, steering weighted, my gut met the road.

Hill after hill, trough after trough, mile after mile, faster and faster, I began yelling and whooping. Eileen tugged at my trouser leg in excitement. The Stieb began its usual high speed shenanigans with the body yawing madly on its suspension, which affected the entire outfit and I decided once and for all to lock it up permanently. But after this was over. Crazy speed and fun and Eileen encouraging me all the while by tugging at my trouser leg. I was so hugely pleased she loved it so much. What a girl. I could hear her yelling. Great stuff!

On and on. More and more. Suddenly it was over, and the Vin' pobbled down to its prearranged 50 mph to save the rear tyre. The rear tyre? Omigawd! We pulled onto the verge for a quick inspection and stopped, which was when I noticed how still and quiet Eileen was. And how sort of. . . er. . . sticky my right leg was. . . nasty. Eileen had passed out, after vomiting over the chair's inner side. She had





been trying to warm me by tugging my trouser leg and screaming for one to stop.

It was a bad ride home that day.

It began to rain that night and things got much worse. After the Steib, various other chairs, including a Gerard Grand Prix which, however much my passengers enjoyed it, gave me the heeby jeebies on fast right handers as its long pivoted fork suspension collapsed down and down and down. More stable than the unpropped-bodied Stieb at all other times however. There was a monstrous Busmar Astral that wobbled around beside the S7 like an overloaded potting shed in a hurricane. A Swallow Flight which, despite its high ground clearance and the unbalanced appearance of a little single seater on a double adult chassis, gave a very good account of itself. A Watsonian Monza that looked good but buzzed and rattled with vibrations of its own makings. And best of all, that Princess among sidecars, a Garard S90, with its beautifully coachbuilt construction, car-type interior, glass windscreen, folding side windows, waterproof hood and all the right sort of refinements and design elements that only it, above all sidecars, seemed to blend so well. Heavy, but so elegant, stable and comfortable. Ask Roger Woods. He had a nice sports bicycle I rather fancied at the time so we swapped. Then he swapped the S90 for an old bike he liked the look of the now we both mourn for our lost S90. The Shadow went, a family arrived, a car proved to be an infinitely better bet than a big sidecar and chairs disappeared from British roads. I hung on to the Stieb but eventually someone persuaded me to sell it to him.

My waggons had either two or four wheels for a long time after that, then one day I heard something about Squire sidecars, close to home, and went visiting to discover a couple of classic car engineers playing about with chicken wire and glass fibre and trailer wheels. Well, what would you have thought under such

circumstances? Right. That's what I thought, and was much more interested in the Bentley and the Invicta and the Cooper Norton they were rebuilding.

I wanted to know where they got the idea from. "Dunno, really. Seemed like a good idea."

But did they know anything about sidecars? "Not a thing."

Well, where did the design come from? "Us. Suck it and see. Mistake after mistake."

But surely they could drive a chair? "O lor, no. Crazy isn't it, but fun. We love it!"

Did they have no idea at all about the third wheel placement? "Not the slightest. Used Mini wheels because they are cheap, and trailer suspension because it seemed about right."

Then it must work? "Well, sort of. We wanted a trailing arm but it wobbled the whole outfit about so we turned it round and it worked so we'll keep it that way."

I shall never forget being ticked off by the old guard of the British motorcycle industry as they quietly bundled it up into wads of folding stuff. "You wrote about the death of BSA and we counted 20 mistakes. Why didn't you come to us and ask. We'd have put you straight." This from an industry so corrupted by its own deceits it was actually blind to truth and honour.

So when a couple of commercially minded British motorcycling businessmen began admitting their innocence, even their ignorance, could show nothing of any immediate value for motorcycling, and were so obviously careless of exposing their warts in public it disarmed me completely. They simply had a finger on a new pulse of motorcycling, it felt right for them, and they were going to do it the hard, practical way from the ground up, step by step, learning as they went.

Squire sidecars have long since left the days of suck-it-and-see behind, and its directors are now all skilled third-wheelers who have adopted the

casual, easy manner of all experts who understate their skills and have the confidence to repeat stories revealing their mistakes, both in driving and business.

"There is no science in sidecars design. The whole thing is a mass of compromises, instinct, experience, and design based on 'how' rather than 'why' such and such a performance will or has happened if such and such a thing is done."

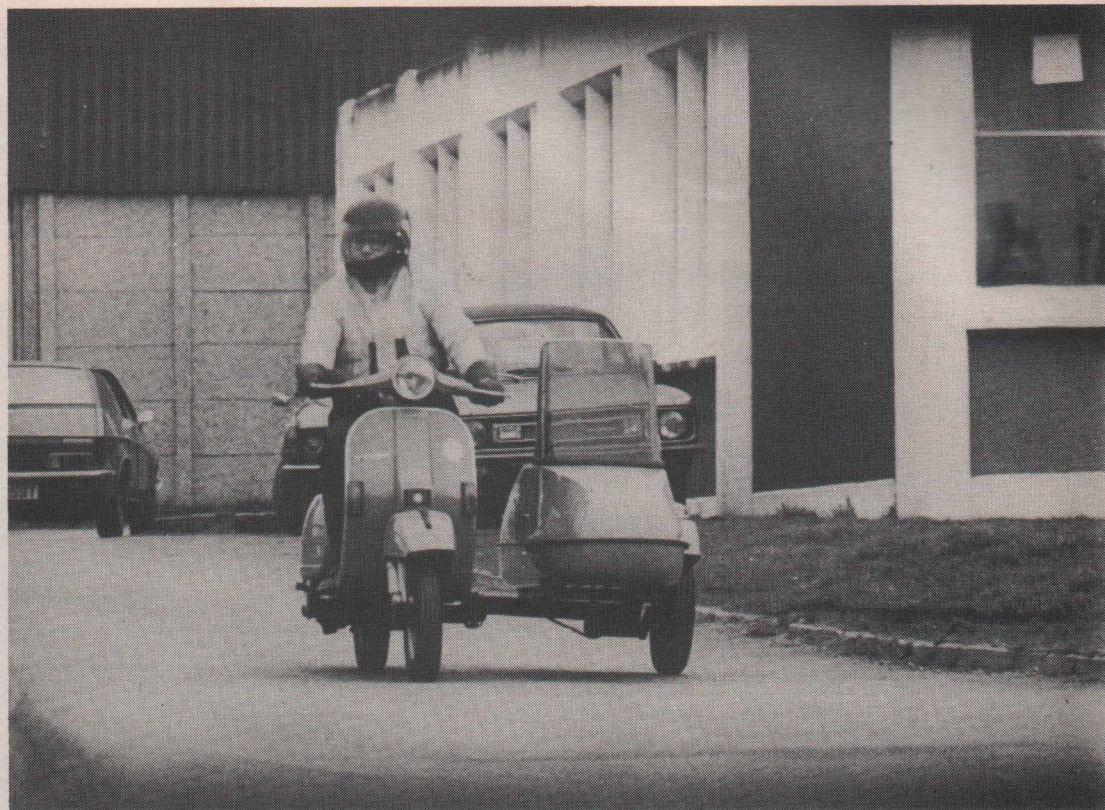
In fact, of course, what has happened to Squire is that they have discovered in a few years of intensive development what the old industry knew, but which was forgotten with its disappearance. There was no industry they could turn to for help of guidance, no ancillary part suppliers, no accessory makers, no designers to buy off. Nothing.

Now they are indisputably the western world's leading sidecar manufacturer, a fact that has raised some aggravation among the remaining fringes of the old industry who dropped out when the going was tough. Now the attempt to return after Squire proved it *could* be done rankles because the market leader appears to them to be a precocious kid.

Other chair makers exist, but in Britain at least, Squire's competition is mainly limited to small concerns operating on the principle of individually constructed items. Squire production runs into many hundreds of each model.

Being big raises any number of problems. As far as possible all chassis must accept the same sort of fittings if the business is not to become so complicated and expensive it becomes unprofitable. A range of products to suit the majority of machines and tastes must be offered, which has persuaded Squire into turning out chairs suitable for wee Vespas and up to Kawasaki 1200s. Designs must be suitable for long term production, which leaves no room for error in the drawing office. Compromises must be accepted for the sake of commercial viability

I borrowed some outfits and went riding (driving?)



Vespa and PV1 sidecar — nippy, taut, smooth, quiet, and very sweet to use in town. Underside view — it might not appear so, but the connection is strong



whatever the personal feelings of the directors might be.

For all their acceptance of the fact that there is precious little that is both new *and* generally pleasing to the third wheel clique, although Squire do run a research and development department, headed by Trevor Hulks. I made the error of assuming that Hulks was the company spanner man when I arrived for a chair to be fitted and was met with wails of indignation from the two other directors, Peter Rivers-Fletcher and Mike Raughage. "Cor, ruddy cheek. Look now, we can *all* put our own products together, and frequently do. Anyway,

Trev's not here so you'll have to put up with us, see!"

Latest R&D child to approach the showroom floor is a proper double-adult saloon model, complete with door and carpet. It uses a similar chassis to the others so will be free of the off-putting "stagger" so many of the old-fashioned double adult saloons suffered from as they lurched around on their body springs. I saw it as a mixture of expanded polystyrene, plaster and wood more-or-less ready for the first glass fibre moulding. Very traditional shape, but compact and neat.

There are certain aspects of Squire sidecars I

dislike, like little wheels, which could be a left-over from my rattling Watsonian Monza, but Hulks is convinced that the fractional decrease in suspension movement acceleration a large wheel provides is offset by the far greater problems 18 inch wheels incorporate. "I will agree, a passenger would get a more comfortable ride on a large wheel over a long distance on really bad roads, but we cannot cater for that sort of unusual circumstance: we have to cater for the average — the norm. We really tried with big wheels, but they shoved the price of everything right up. The chassis was much more complicated, the wheels themselves cost three of four times as much as our little 10-incher, and they were unsuited to our suspension system and we could find nothing else on the market that would do the job half as well. This meant manufacturing our own suspension and when we tried to match these little beauts (he hefted a standard leading link-in-rubber unit) we just gave up. Sure we made something more comfortable, but at what a cost! And we were frightened silly about its durability, after all, the present suspension *never* gives trouble, and it *is* adjustable."

It was the business of improved comfort that led them to try the twin-wheeled sidecar they publicised a short time ago. Each wheel had a spring rate half that of a normal unit: they absorbed shocks extremely well without severe dipping and Hulks proved his point, but the price was too high.

There are brake systems that have undergone, and are undergoing, experimentation, different screens, new weathersealing methods, alternative seats, new sidecar body materials and so on and so forth. But it is patently obvious that unless the public are willing to pay for a high technology sidecar — which they are manifestly not — then the traditional tube steel chassis, crude connections, GRP body, and brakeless small wheel are here for a long time yet.



commercial or performance standpoint. Rivers Fletcher, an expert chair driver now, disagrees. As he cut his teeth on brakeless third wheels, it is only to be expected. From the safety point of view they contribute invaluable to stable deceleration, especially from high speed and more especially when a curve is involved (if any meally mouthed, table-top cop comes up with any of that rubbish about good drivers never having to brake on curves, then he's out of touch with reality). The brake should be coupled to the bike's rear brake, but so its bites more gently and does not lock under its normal load when applied hard. The whole outfit's performance is transformed this way. I do know of people of prefer an independant chair brake with a pedal operated parallel to the bike's rear brake so one or the other or both can be used: they say it helps around left handers. Maybe, but we all have our own preferences. Whichever, though, a sidecar brake is, in my opinion, essential.

The fittings & connections on Squire outfits are overbuilt, rugged, simple, ugly, effective and unshiftable by time or riding, although there are exceptions, as Rivers-Fletcher remembers. "We still get complaints about slipping clamps and I guarantee, in *every* case, once we investigate it we find oil or grease used somewhere along the line! We tell 'em not to, and to assemble dry, but there are always the chumps who think they know best."

So I borrowed some of the outfits and went riding (driving?).

Vespa 150 and PV1 sidecar

To an habitual sidecarist, the outfit felt unnervingly light in every respect: it felt short, high and narrow, and so responsive that a quick

Above: The SLI. Despite its spartan appearance and finish, this is one of Squire's best and would probably match a bigger motorcycle than the factory's 450 cc limit. Length 5ft 8in, width 2ft 7in, height 3ft 6in, weight 130 lb. Left: MZ and ZP1. A rugged little lightweight outfit but needs more gearing down than the factory can provide. Surprisingly, the front brake coped very well. Length 5ft 6in, width 2ft 3in, height 2ft 8in, weight 120 lb. A commercial box sidecar is offered also





Best of the lot was this Kawasaki Z400 and SL1. A perfect match — very practical, very comfortable, and very sporting, giving constant 70-80 mph cruising with fine handling

Too many motorcyclists dismiss scooters without serious thought

glance over the shoulder sent it scampering across the traffic lane. I was convinced it was about to start shimmying and I feared cross winds, roar chambers, corners, acceleration, braking, traffic, road junctions, straight lines — *everything!*

Then I became accustomed to it as no shimmying occurred, corners came and went safely, and in general I pottered around happily, if somewhat out of place on the pretty little cob.

It really is exactly the sort of general runabout that women especially should love. You could pack a couple of children and the weekends shopping (as well as the driver, dummy) into this, cruise home at a useful 40 mph and still expect around 80 mpg. Ok ok ok, so men might like it too, but the things look and feel so feminine that its main market must be to women, surely?

Top speed proved to be 45 mph, and handling was surprisingly good. In fact I would go so far as to claim that a Vespa with a sidecar bolted on handles a darn sight better than one without, by which I do not simply mean that the third wheel adds stability (as it must at low speed), but that the inadequate suspension performance of a solo Vespa suits a chair perfectly. The front end took to it like a duck to water, although the trailing link suspension still managed to disguise the braking effect. The rear end dipped too much on occasions, and allowed a spot of mild yawing, but modestly and something simply negated by

the adoption of a more robust suspension unit which Vespa, with all their facilities, must be able to supply.

Too many motorcyclists dismiss scooters without serious thought; it is traditional to do so, but if my family wanted the cheapest form of local transport as a sort of car back-up then this would be it. The reliability, durability and all round low running costs of the average Vespa puts most motorcycles to shame.

Construction of the PVI is simple. A heavy steel pressing is bolted to the underside of the scooter's double skinned floor pan-cum-chassis. A disc flange is three way bolted to another disc flange welded on the end of a single heavy arm protruding from the lightweight sidecar chassis. The wheel is sprung in normal Squire fashion through a rubber in torsion short leading arm.

Curiously, absolutely no flexing occurred, at least that I could discover. In fact the entire outfit gave an impression of unusual rigidity.

MZ 250 and ZP1 sidecar

Enough has been written about this little outfit to fill this magazine, so I will not dwell on it except to say that I still find it one of the most pleasing little road vehicles around currently. Because the MZ has a spine frame and rubber mounted engine fitting design was a nightmare, some of which is evident in the layout of the connections. These follow some pretty

convoluted routes which are partly at cross purposes with an average rider's kick starting leg. "Here, let me show you" said Raghauge, snapping the engine into life with a wince. "Ah, yes," I said, "I'd forgotten for the moment." Then I stalled the engine by selecting the wrong gear. When I left there were smirks on the faces of the Squire crew and a plaster on my left ankle.

Be that as it may, the workmanlike, eager demeanour of the little outfit pleased me hugely. Cruising speed was around 55 mph with 55lb of chair ballast, and this was on the lowest factory gearing available. If the outfit were mine I think I'd cog down even further with the help of Roger Maughfling and his sprockets.

Handling was good at "high" speed, but deceleration, at low speed especially, suffered from the colly-wobbles, which was probably a front tyre and steering geometry weakness. Argue among yourselves, all you MZ folk, but don't drag me into your fights. If the outfit were mine, the first thing I would do would be to fit the flattest-profile front tyre I could lay my hands on, and then a steering damper. Combined they should do the trick all right.

For all its small size, the sidecar was comfortable, although the plastic foam-filled seat lacked the body contoured comfort of the bigger models, and the screen was high enough to protect the passenger from all major draughts. The squab lifted forward to reveal a

very useful boot. As with all Squire sidecars, a hood is provided, but, as with all Squire sidecars, the wretched thing cannot be stowed anywhere on the chair in a convenient situation.

Very pleasing was the inclusion of powerful sidecar lights, including winkers, in the mudguard, although from my experience with sidecar mudguards they are in a very vulnerable spot and would probably benefit from some sort of guard rail.

Kawasaki Z400 and ML1 sidecar

I like Z400 Kawasakis. They were about the first of the current crop of Japanese middleweights and are still about the best for all the apparent advantages of the others. This is quite simply due to Kawasaki's fine tradition of building bullet-proof engines that go and go and go forever, and which make a mockery of the old British brigade's claims for their machines in this respect (you tell me about this bloke with a Z400 that broke / ran / bent this that or the other after only two minutes / hours / days / weeks / miles, or whatever, and I'll tell you stories about new Gold Stars and Vincents and Velocettes that'll make your hair curl).

But I never would have believed that an entirely unmodified solo Z400 could be strapped to a chair and then return such an eminently creditable performance. I tell you, this thing was amazing! No wobbles, no serious suspension mischiefs, no apparent overgearing — none of the usual bogies that accompany unmodified solos put to work as sidecar tugs.

Could it really be that the wedge-shaped SL1 is aerodynamically stable *and* offers a good drag co-efficient? Nah. And yet. . . .

Good, strong acceleration up to 80 mph, another five mph on tap with a little encouragement, and acceleration enough to beat the heck out of a queue of ambitious light car drivers winding along the Warwickshire main roads at 60 mph.

Handling was lovely and negative, despite early apprehension that the luxuriously soft springs and damping would let go under duress, but they never did and, while a mite soft, they disciplined all movement very satisfyingly indeed. When I think honestly about it, the old Vin and Stieb hit 90 mph, and knocked up another five with the greatest of difficulty, handling was good at speed if you were strong.

I liked the chair, too, and so did my passengers, principally because it sheltered them so well from wind and rain. Wind roar, I was informed, was very low. Once on the move the use of the hood was unnecessary. I left it behind.

Entry into the seating compartment is simplicity itself. The windscreen hinges forward, and then clips back into place once the passenger is seated. Ah! And the best of this model is that there is no mudguard for people to lounge on, passengers to climb on, other road users to knock, or you to forget. Instead the wheel is tucked neatly under a curving body flair which form a very effective mudguard. Absolutely no wheel splashes from dirty water ever spattered my passengers.

Behind the squab is a boot big enough for such a small chair. The seat is somewhat slabby,

The ST2 now incorporates a hinged screen for improved passenger access. Comfortable, snug. Length 7ft 2in, width 2ft 10in, height 3ft 8in, weight 198 lb. PVC hood with side windows and tonneau cover provided. A cheaper model, the ST1, is supplied with more utilitarian equipment

indeed the interior itself is rather spartan but the idea is to keep prices down.

To cater for people disliking the wedge shape, Squire have produced another model of more orthodox style, the ML1, but from a purely functional point of view, the SL1 cannot be beaten, and according to various passengers it exceeds even its bigger brothers passage through the wind.

The chassis a lightweight flat affair on which the sidecar body sits.

Triumph 750 Bonneville and ST2 sidecar

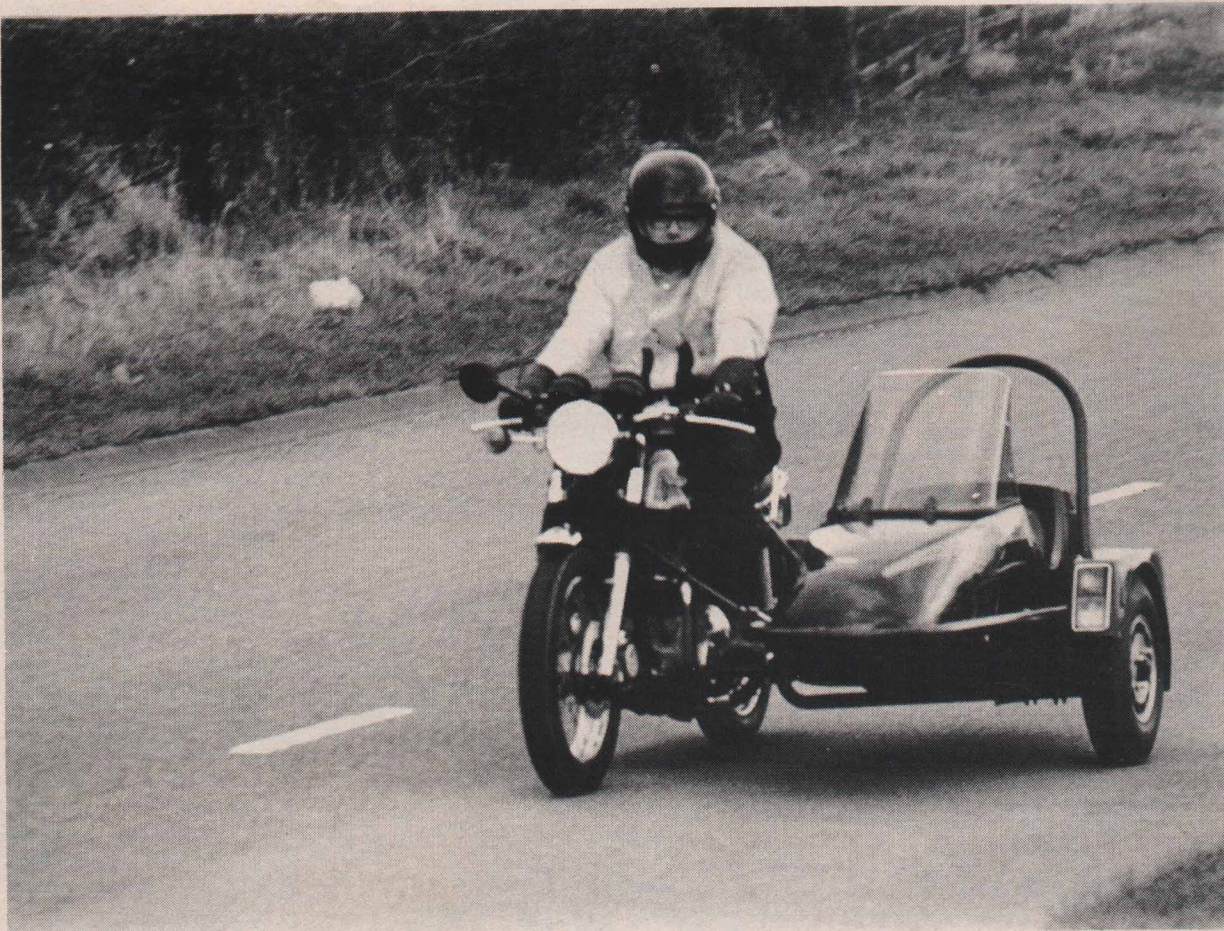
A few years ago Pebble Mill At One (Midlands TV lunchtime programme) did a short piece on motorcycling by introducing to the public the BMW R100RS, and the Triumph Bonneville around the time it became a 750. I agreed to chat about the two machines for the cameras. When the Triumph arrived, the two chaps delivering it came over and one of them

said, "Oh, you're the bloke who doesn't like us, aren't you." It was no question. No, I do not dislike Triumphs at all, in fact I own one, but with a few rare exceptions whenever a Triumph and I have got together the experience has been unpleasant. Thus, despite the fact that I have kept my mouth shut (or, rather, my typewriter switched off) many more times than an honest journalist should about his country's own products, I am stuck with a reputation of disliking Triumph motorcycles. I would *love* to ride a good modern Triumph. Do they exist?

Then this has to happen. The Bonneville was modified for sidecar work by the factory with beefed up suspension and lowered gearing, but compared to the Z400 it was not good at all. Steering flutter, suspension yawing, engine vibration, a top speed no greater than that of the Z400 and inferior roadholding. What it did have was a good torque spread, and that was very nice to play with.

The ST2 is an improved derivation of Squire's





Top of the Squire range. The roll-over bar is not absolutely essential, and is not fitted to the cheaper ST2 or the more expensive child-adult RS1

Gearing is best dropped by at least 15-20 per cent . . .

very first model, and is still their flagship. Given the ever widening selection of sidecars available these days it would probably be the one I would choose (if Squire would fit a brake). It has its shortcomings, but compared to its advantages they are slight. The thing is very roomy and will seat the fattest and longest legged passengers you might care to know as a friend. The seat itself is superbly comfortable and is actually a car rally seat design.

Behind it is a truly enormous boot, reached through a lockable hinged lid with weatherproof sealing.

Since the early days, when a passenger could be battered into a state of bewildered suffocation by the area of high pressure turbulence behind the windscreen, and hoods could be sucked into the cockpit by the same force, Squire have changed the ST2's screen. By moving it back a few inches the passenger now sits in calmer air, and entry is improved thanks to a hinged screen.

A perimeter loop chassis, incorporating an under body sub-chassis principally for wheel mounting strength, and a roll-over bar above the passenger's head, cages the sidecar occupant in comparative safety, as well as providing greater stiffness than any roadgoing outfit could possibly require.

The colour-impregnated GRP body is suspended inside the chassis on five rubber bushes placed to isolate the passenger from vibration and to inhibit resin cracking around the mounting points. They work well.

Ask any chair buff what the finest sports chair were, and in all probability he will name two;

Steib S501 and Wessex single seater, and in the next breath compare them with advantage to the Squire ST2. Fair enough, but whatever the short term advantages of a Wessex might have been, anyone who drives hard will know full well the shocking speed which they wore out their suspension bearings, and how delicate their glass fibre was, and what a pain in the . . . er . . . neck their beautiful fittings could be. And just you shove along a fully laden S501 at speed over poor road and feel the ghastly lurching that developed as that swinging body began bouncing around. The damping of those body suspension units was inadequate.

Nope, when all is said and done, if you want a chair that harmonises with a motorcycle, is not too expensive, requires minimal care and attention, and puts up a good performance, you end up right back at the style of sidecar that Watsonian began back in the 1960s with the Monza, and which Squire, unwittingly at first, quickly realized was the only suitable compromise.

To be fair, the ST2 was not perfect. Whatever my sympathies for Squire's suspension predicament, too many passengers commented, if not complained, about the coarseness of the ride in a top line sidecar. From the driver's point of view it is perfect, with a wheel that absorbs enough road shocks to provide a comfortable ride for him, but without sinking high into the chair on hard right handers. I think I might prefer a slightly longer link, or maybe softer rubber providing two inches of movement for road shocks, and a rubber to stop severe dipping and to absorb major blows to the wheel.

Individual Squire models can be adjusted to suit varying load carrying and performance requirements as things stand, and experimentation can work wonders, as I have discovered in the past for myself. In any case, the chair *is* comfortable, and the coarseness never intrusive.

I rather see Eileen and me in a GL1100 harnessed to a Squire ST2 smoothing across Europe for a holiday in the Dolomites sometime. . . .

There is one point I would disagree with Squire about: they claim motorcycle modifications are normally unnecessary. Admittedly the Z400 appeared to disprove this, but how better would it have been with lower gears, proper tyres, beefed up suspension and suchlike? Please, please, please, if you are considering a sidecar do not imagine you can simply bolt one alongside your trusty solo and then expect to get the best out of it.

Suspension springs and damping will require stiffening; flatter section tyres fitted, or preferably small diameter wheels with car tyres; gearing will have to be dropped by 15 to 20 per cent at least; wider handlebars fitted to lighten steering and much else besides. Right now an awful lot of sidecars are being sold to new owners who simply do not know and, if advised, get all hot and bothered claiming that it suits them just fine that way. Maybe so, but it still aint right.

Then there was the time I had the torsion bar sprung ISDT Goldie outfit that caught fire one night as we banged north.

Three wheels are so . . . silly.

D.L.M.