

team

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Castrol

news



BRIGHTON ROCKETTS

Beamish Suzuki sign for Castrol

THE 'EVANS EQUIPE'

Shropshire's rallying family

Bright

Just a quick glance around the paddock of any moto cross or trials event from schoolboy standard to British Championships and the name of Suzuki is everywhere.

In just seven years they have gone from a complete newcomer in the British market place to a position where they sell more moto cross and enduro bikes in the UK than any other make.

And behind their astonishing growth in popularity has been a family with such diverse interests as a herd of 300 Hereford Fresian cattle and a leading Sussex building business.

Graham Beamish helped his father Bill develop their Portslade motor cycle and cycle shop into a flourishing success and diversifying into the building and farming brought even more success.

He had strong moto cross ties, being a member of the BSA works team and at 17, was the youngest man ever to represent Great Britain in the prestigious Moto Cross Des Nations.

When his father died Graham took over and it was in 1972 that the small Beamish Motors Ltd were appointed the sole UK distributors for Suzuki moto cross machines and spare parts.

Just two years later, under a similar arrangement Beamish Motors began



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distribution of the first 250 cc trials machines, but soon this became a distribution arrangement with a difference.

A new frame was designed for the trials machine and several other modifications were done, which proved so successful that the Japanese factory, in an unprecedented move gave Beamish Motors the worldwide manufacturing rights for Suzuki powered trials machines.

This means that Japan now supplies only engines, forks, wheels and suspension, the frames are built exclusively for Beamish by Mick Whitlock, a world renowned frame builder and each one is made to a superb standard, of Reynolds 531 tubing, highly chromed.

The whole bike is put together at the Portslade factory, where there is also a



totally automatic vacuum moulding machine for making the tough durable mudguards, side panels and other accessories.

So far on the trials side there are three main models, the powerful RL 325, the newly announced RL 250N and the RL 250 sidecar trials outfit, which Cornishman Colin Dommett took to the British sidecar title in 1976, 77 and 78.

At the moment, the works supported trials riders are enjoying their best seasons to date, with third and fifth places in the British championships through John Reynolds and Chris Sutton respectively.

Each of the 1000 trials machines which leaves the factory proudly carries the 'Made in England' stamp for over half the components in it are in fact made in this country and the bikes are exported worldwide, even as far as Japan!

On the moto cross side, part of the reason for Suzuki's success must be their impressive range of machinery.

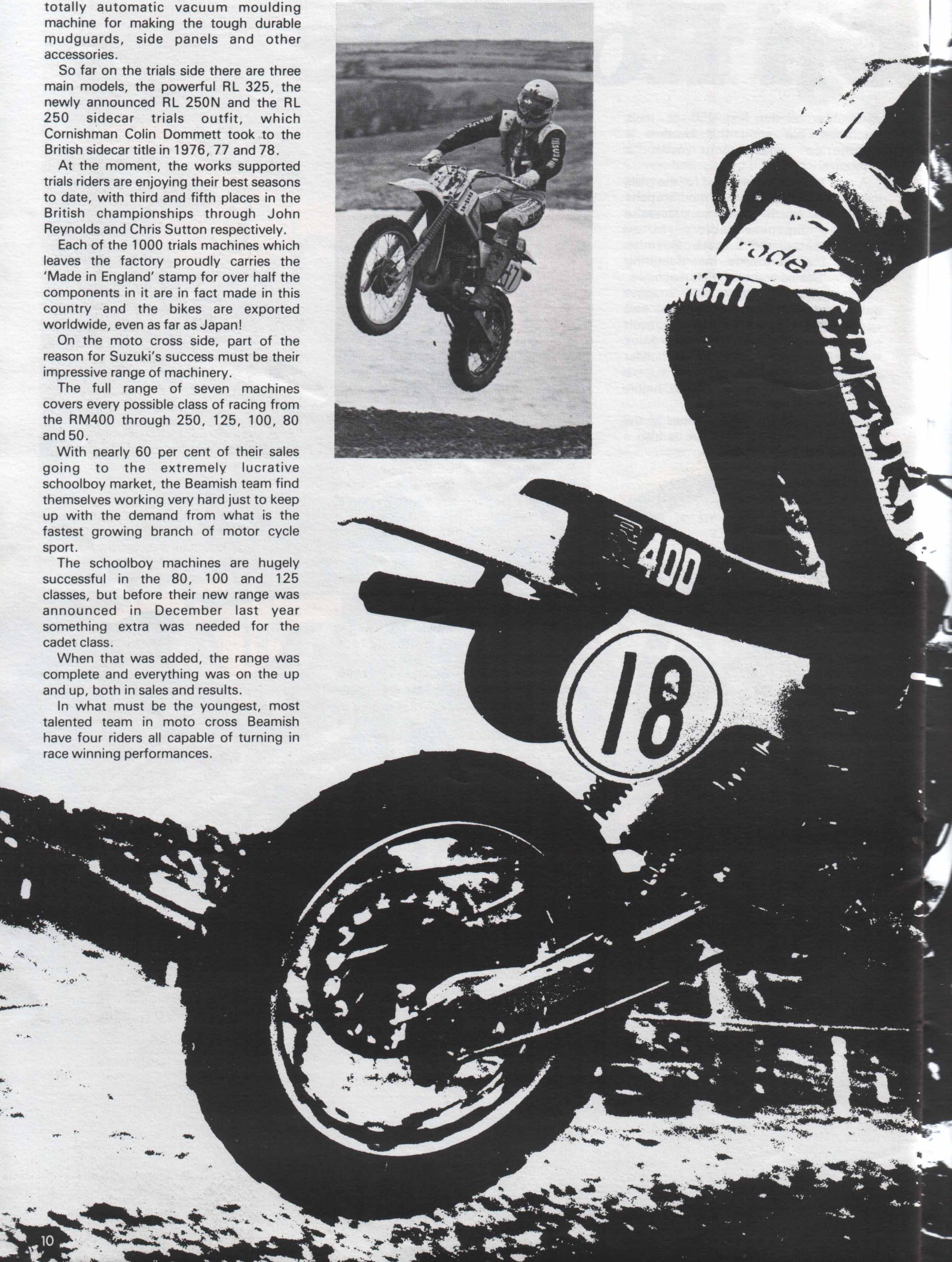
The full range of seven machines covers every possible class of racing from the RM400 through 250, 125, 100, 80 and 50.

With nearly 60 per cent of their sales going to the extremely lucrative schoolboy market, the Beamish team find themselves working very hard just to keep up with the demand from what is the fastest growing branch of motor cycle sport.

The schoolboy machines are hugely successful in the 80, 100 and 125 classes, but before their new range was announced in December last year something extra was needed for the cadet class.

When that was added, the range was complete and everything was on the up and up, both in sales and results.

In what must be the youngest, most talented team in moto cross Beamish have four riders all capable of turning in race winning performances.





Graham's eldest son, Steven is aiming for the Grands Prix next year and is at present lying fourth in the British Championship table, a position which if he holds it to the end of the year, should guarantee a ride in the world championships next year.

Johnathan Wright, a protege of Moto Cross star John Banks is only 20 years, like team mate Steven Beamish and has a very spectacular riding style.

Steven's cousin, Bill Aldridge is the oldest member of the team at 22 years old and like the other two, is employed by the Beamish organisation, preparing his bikes during the week between meetings.

The newest member is last year's under 19 champion Dave Watson, who joined them from Montesa recently, and had his first outing on an RM 400 at the British Grand Prix at Farleigh.

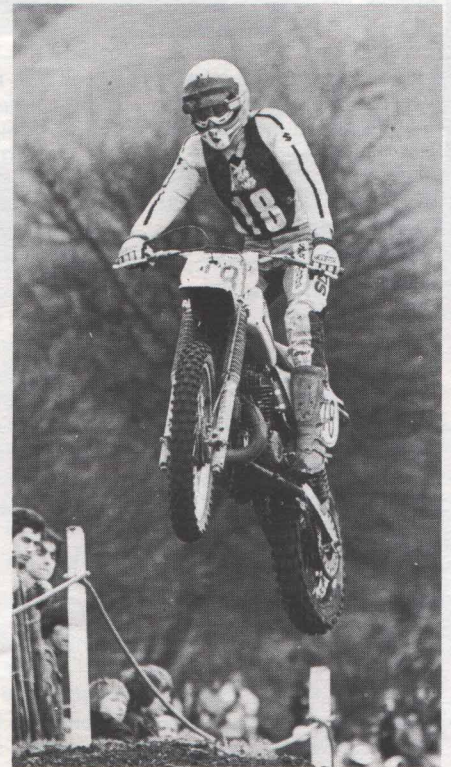
In addition to the works riders, the Beamish organisation support three more riders in the support series, seven in the trials championship and two leading enduro competitors.

All aspects of the family business come together in the development of the off road motorcycle side of things.

For on part of the 500 acres owned by Beamish Farms Ltd., there is a test track capable of stretching any machines to the full, and at the moment, two stages of a three stage £1,000,000 showroom and office complex have been built — naturally enough by Beamish Builders Ltd.

With in the region of 100 dealers nationwide, and a store of spares for machines going back to 1972, the job of remembering all the details are locating spares is to be done by a new £20,000 computer.

As if to prove his undoubted ability, Steven Beamish became the first Briton to beat current world 500 cc champion



Graham Noyce in this country, this year.

At the Ken Hall Trophy meeting on Bank Holiday Monday, the 20 years old Suzuki ace lead the first of the two leg races all the way after a superb start.

In the second leg he was holding a substantial lead when he fell, but there to take over the lead, and hold it to the chequered flag was his team mate Dave Watson, scoring his first major victory for the Beamish Suzuki team.

Re-mounting to hold on to third place gave Beamish enough points to take the overall victory.

Top left: Billy Aldridge in action. Top right: High flying Jonathan Wright.

Previous pages: Top: Billy Aldridge at work on his Suzuki. Below: Steven Beamish checking his engine.