

1923 BMW R32

VINTAGE & CLASSIC REGISTER



ISSUE 6/2002

VINTAGE DIARY

27th/28th April 2002- The 22nd

International Classic Motor Cycle Show. Stafford County Showground. The Vintage & Classic Register will have a special display at the show.

May 2002- BMF Show, The East of England Showground, Peterborough. The Register will again be represented in the Club Marquee.

1st/2nd June - Yorkshire Register Meeting, Ilkley, W. Yorks. Contact Eric Rance for details. 01943 607358 or e-mail eric@rance.com

21st/22nd/23rd June - 1st Vintage & Classic Register Rally, Llwyngwair Manor Holiday Park, Newport, Pembs, S. Wales See inside pages for more details.

28th July 2002 - VMCC Founders Day Rally, Stanford Hall, Nr. Lutterworth, LEICS. Register stand as usual. A relaxed day with auto-jumble. m/c museum, trophies etc.

23rd-26th August National Camping Weekend, Silloth, Cumbria. Supported by the Register this event gives those in Scotland and the North a chance to get together. Contact David Dalglish for general details.

15th September Register Meet at Gainsborough, Lincolnshire. Overnight camping if required. BBQ etc. Contact Terry Bradshaw (01652 648743) or myself for details of location etc.

Well, I'm pleased to report that the Register continues to grow; we are fast approaching 500 members as I type this.

The diary of events this year is being enlarged in an effort to give everyone the chance to meet up with riders of the older BM's. Please try and support the Register meets if you can.

You will see that we now have a few business adverts within the pages. Please use their services when you can, they have given us their support. What is important however, is the quality of their workmanship, which has been tried and tested by members.

Within these pages I'm continuing the story of the Tim Reid R51 that was competing in the 1939 Senior TT along side Georg Meier and Jock West. I am indebted to John Joiner, John Lawes and... 'The Amateur Mechanic' for their contributions on this subject.

A nom de plume, I hear you say; just like the old days of the weekly motorcycle magazines. Well yes, and no, I'm not at liberty to enlighten you to their true identity, but I can say that he, or she, is one of the most knowledgeable authorities on BMW's in this Country.

An article entitled 'Setting the timing on '51-'69 Twins' by this writer is included in this newsletter and hopefully there will be more in future issues.

Most owners of pre'69 BM's will probably have on their shelves a book called 'How to Restore your BMW Motorcycle (Twins 1950-1969) by Roland Slabon. This is an excellent book but has a number of anomalies that should be pointed out to newer, (and older for that matter), owners. I have a *four-sheet* dossier, also written by 'The Amateur Mechanic', that corrects these anomalies. If you would like a copy please send me a SAE.

Many thanks to those who have contributed to the newsletter, including those above, and not forgetting Vic Doswell, Roger Newark, Robin Walker and Eric Rance. Keep it coming everyone.

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Setting the Timing (Twins – 1951 to 1969)

by 'The Amateur Mechanic'

The magneto made by either Bosch or Norris, and fitted to all twins made between 1951 and 1969, is a robust and very reliable piece of equipment. As most will know the engines of this period (and later) have no distributor and therefore employ a redundant spark i.e. when either piston is on a firing stroke both plugs fire. This feature can be extremely useful when identifying faults in plugs, caps or leads. Magneto ignition generally performs better at higher revs and it is therefore essential for easy starting to get the best spark possible when kicking over the machine. This always occurs at the position of maximum flux in the magneto and the BMW magneto is marked for easy location of this position.

To set (or check) the magneto for the point of maximum flux is quite simple:-

1. Set the flywheel so that the S mark is in line with the mark scribed into the timing hole in the clutch bell housing.
2. Check the line on the magneto rotor is EXACTLY lined up with the 'V' notch on the magneto body. If not slacken the 10mm A.F. nuts on the magneto back plate and adjust the body until the correct alignment is obtained. If the range of adjustment on the body is insufficient then proceed as follows:-
 1. Adjust the body to the centre of its adjustment travel.
 2. Extract the rotor, realign to the notch in the magneto body and replace.

Once the correct alignment is achieved the magneto (but not the engine) is now timed.

Timing The Engine

All the factory manuals say that 'the ignition timing is set by moving the magneto body'. This is plainly wrong! If the timing should be adjusted in this way, why bother to time the rotor to the body, then move it? No, the correct way to set the timing is by adjustment of the points back plate. Before doing this it is necessary to set the points gap to 0.4mm (16 thou). Having done this proceed as follows:-

1.To Time Statically.

Set the flywheel to the 'S' mark and adjust the points back plate until the points are just starting to open. This can be checked either by using a test meter or a battery and bulb. When using either method it will be necessary to disconnect both the capacitor and coil leads from the points. It is necessary to check the timing on both cylinders by rotating the flywheel through one revolution. Both cylinders should have similar firing positions. If not see my later notes.

2.To time using a strobe light.

Check first at tick over when the 'S' mark should be in line with the scribed line on the crankcase. A blurred line (or moving line) is indicative of an error in timing between the cylinders. Increase the revs to check the advance, when the 'F' mark should move to line up with the scribed line in the crankcase. If the timing on both cylinders is not identical BMW tell you to "split the difference. In the past people have been known to stone the cam on the advance and retard unit in order to improve the timing, believing the error to be caused by manufacturing imperfection or uneven wear. My own experience of working on these engines over the last 35 years leads me to believe that the root of the problem lies elsewhere.

Almost all errors stem from the alignment of the rotor on the camshaft. Although located on a taper (which should be accurate) any engine that is at least 30 years old and has probably been stripped several times (maybe without access to factory service tools) may have suffered considerable damage. All the many engines I have built in recent years have (eventually) had very accurate timing, cylinder to cylinder. On all these engines each rotor has been set up (using a dial test indicator) to run better than 0.05mm (2thou) measured on the extremity of the shaft that supports the advance and retard unit. To achieve this needs a good deal of patience! Start by

checking both the rotor and camshaft tapers for any sign of damage. Clean up the surfaces, and if necessary, lap in lightly with fine grinding paste. When both of these are OK thoroughly degrease with a proper solvent (not petrol etc) and refit. It is possible to get the rotor to seat on the taper in a different position by tightening the retaining bolt (through the advance and retard) a little at a time whilst tapping the rotor LIGHTLY to obtain the required alignment.

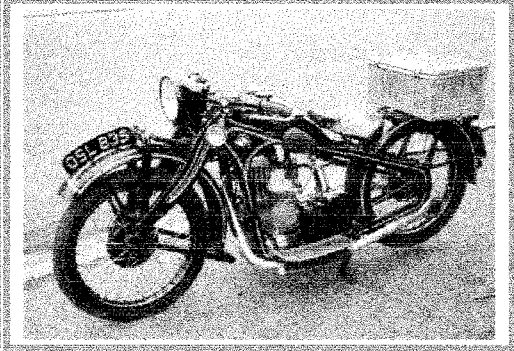
So there you have it! Set the timing correctly and you will be rewarded by easy, reliable starting, good performance and fuel economy.

As someone said to me many years ago "90% of all tuning is careful assembly". **Good Tuning!**

Remember the white R50 with the chrome tank that originated from the States and was featured in issue 5/2001 of the Newsletter? Well, the query that was posed concerned those chrome panels. Was it an option from the factory or a previous owner's attempt at customizing?

Answer, a factory option (No. 4080040) a chrome plated US Pattern fuel tank. How long before one turns up on a machine entered in the 'concours'? and gets the judges wagging their fingers and declaring 'it's not original'?

The R50 in question was originally owned by Robin Walker, and so too was the pretty little R32 shown here. It's a 1932 model of 198cc. Robin informs me that it was a great crowd, (but not 'bird') puller and fun to ride although the engine had limited power.



The photo of Gordon Diplock, on his R75/5, was taken in 1977. Of interest is the Earles fork front mudguard that he fitted to give added protection from spray. This modification no way spoils the lines of the machine. It's a pity that modern machines don't have sensible guards; I can't understand the manufacturer's thinking on this.

Tel. 01422 835566

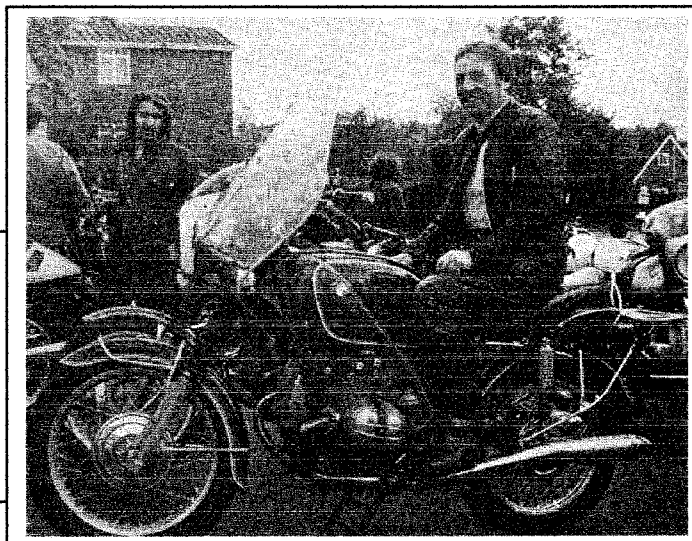


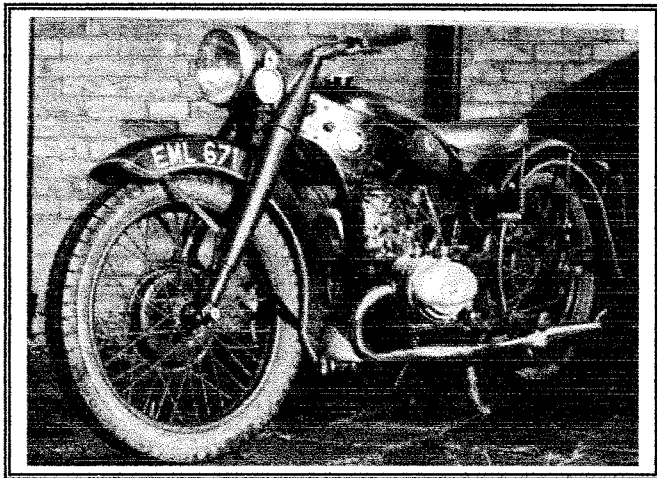
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W.Yorks.
HX6 3DE**

**Contact – Roger Bennett
For all BMW services including Bevel Box
Repairs, Reboring, Engine & Gearbox
o/hauls etc.**

**BMF SHOW 19 – 20 MAY
East of England Showground
Peterborough**

**If you would like to exhibit your machine
for the Club on both or either of the days,
please give me a call for details. Passes
will be available, but I do need to know in
plenty of time. Thanks**





I cannot recall how I heard of this machine but it was in the possession of a person - not a BMW Club member - residing in the village of Wherwell, near Andover. At this time, 1965, I lived in Reading and had already been in the Club for twelve years.

A visit to his house made interesting viewing and I decided to buy it; it was not a runner. The village was entirely composed of thatched houses - apparently a local thatcher had roofed all but one - the R17's owner - and was so keen to do every last house that he offered to do it for nothing! The owner's pride and joy was a Lancia Dilambda, quite a rarity, and as he was not a motorbike man there was no difficulty with my purchase; a friend with a pick-up came and collected it and we got it home without too much trouble.

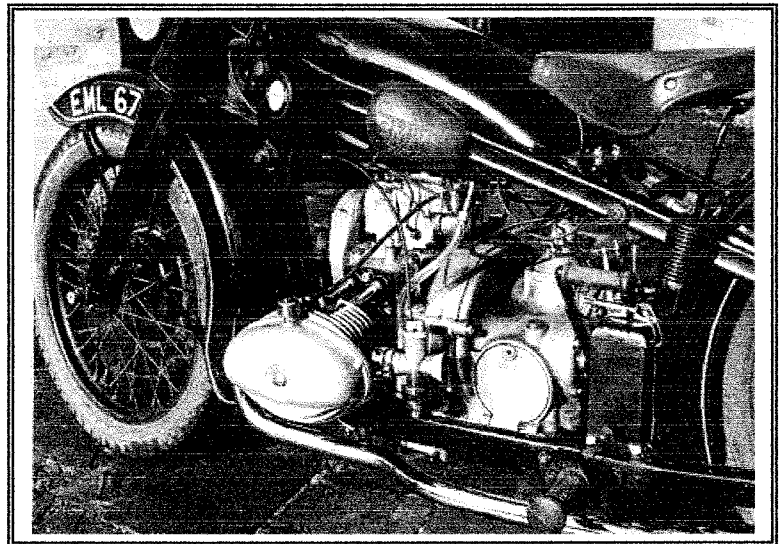
Many things were wrong with it - Bowden carbs, a horrid tatty dualseat, wrong handlebar levers and footrests, exhaust system clapped out including silencers that were off a British machine of some sort, and generally scruffy. Obviously it had been in the hands of some ignorant, non-B.M.W. man.

Nothing daunted I stripped it completely and nearly gave up straight away, some clown had welded the crankpins to the bobweights, the big-ends were shot, the fork sliders were badly scored inside and the bottom stanchion bushes were beyond description and totally unlike any others, being bronze with white-metalling machined with spiral grooves. AAH! the crankshaft assembly was quite irrecoverable. I could have wept.

PRESSED STEEL AND HAND CHANGE

1937 R,17 746 O.H.V

BY VIC DOSWELL



However, there was nothing to do but press on; it did have a London registration and a logbook. The first thing was the crank; by a miracle dear old Frank Cox, of Markhouse Motors in Walthamstow, not only had an R17 himself but also a spare reconditioned crankshaft, albeit by Alpha. He could supply some of the other minor bits but no fork components.

I then rang up MLG in Goldhawk Mews, Shepherds Bush, and sobbed on the shoulder of Charlie Lock. 'Oh, dear' he said, 'this goes back a bit... but hang on'.

I heard him gallop up the stairs to the stores - a pregnant pause ensued, then he came down again and picked up the phone. 'You won't believe this' he said, 'but I have a brand new pair of fork bushes from pre-war and fork sliders that are not too bad'.

Well, I was up there next day with my bugged articles (fit for the scrap bin only) and found that the sliders, although not pristine, were way better than mine. My sliders looked as if they had been run with steel swarf and grinding paste, and without any oil. Somebody who had never heard of teles in 1935-37 had obviously no inkling that they should have had oil in them.

Now for the other spares I required. At this time there was a man in Jersey who put an advert in the Journal (it was on Roneo sheets then) about spares for old B.M.W's. I rang him and found that he had German Amal carbs, handlebar levers, the correct rubber saddle, footrests and sundry other

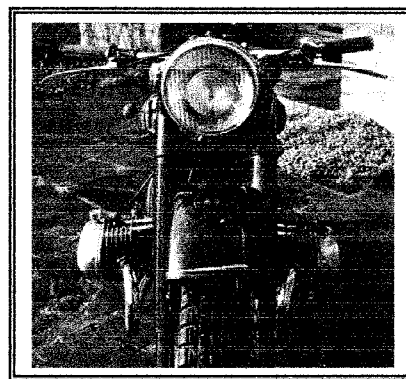
bits, but alas, no aluminium footboards. I never did find any.

I think the Germans left the best part of a motor maintenance depot behind his back garden - B.M.W, D.K.W, Zundapp, Horex, German Triumph, you name it, he had it - it looked like individual private post-war reparations. Know what I mean?

Things were now looking better; the engine interior, apart, from the crank, was not too bad and the electrics seemed O.K. - new wiring of course, once you had worked it out. This machine had a large dynamo perched on the horizontally split crankcase with a crafty device fitted whereby on turning a switch on the generator to an emergency position, one could - and DID! - actually kick-start with a totally flat battery!

The bores were hopeless, though the pistons would do; the bores had to be sleeved back to them. Big problem - what was the piston/barrel clearance? The factory in Munich could not help as all their drawings, so they said, had been destroyed by bombing! I had a very helpful firm of cylinder borers in Mill Lane, Reading, so I told them, to hone the sleeves to the post-war clearances of 2 - 4 thou (total). They kindly explained that if this didn't work they would have another go for nothing. They also had terrible problems with the piston rings, which were one eighth of an inch wide. They finally found some from a Dodge car!

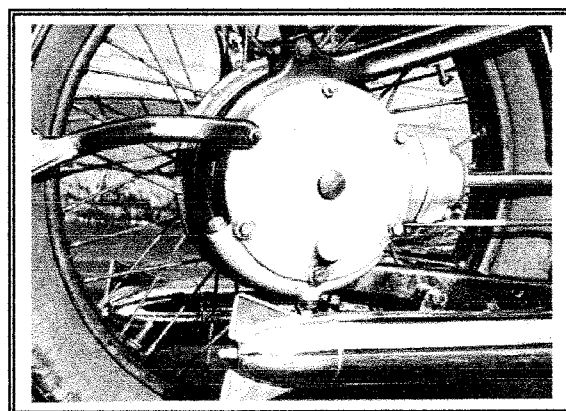
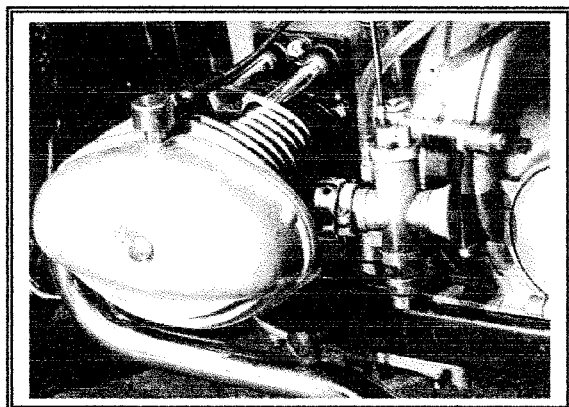
Meanwhile the Jersey bits had arrived and I had stripped all the paint from the tin-ware. This machine has a pressed-steel frame, exceedingly robust, and I had taken it all to a firm in Reading (now alas defunct) called Warricks who made trade bicycles, the old ones with a big steel delivery basket over a small front wheel, just like the one in 'Open all Hours, the TV sit-com. They had a



complete stoving plant and they did it all with four coats of enamel hard stoved. Afterwards you could hit it with a hammer with no effect! All the chroming was also done locally, a lovely job completely blasting it and then copper, nickel and hard chrome. What joy! Another firm in the Oxford Road, sign-writers, lined it out. They made a super job. Those were the days.

So now we were nearly there. I got it taxed and insured. The alloy castings were cleaned up and various new bearings fitted. These are never a problem being all standard sizes, doesn't matter whether British, German or Outer Mongolian. I did however, have to make the odd felt oil seal.

Came the moment of truth. Oil in, including the forks, petrol in the tank and away she went. I could not get silencers, the fish- tail design, but BSA Bantam ones looked reasonable. She emitted a growl, not unpleasant. Up the road on her then in half a mile the pistons were nipping up! Oh God, back to the cylinder borers. After some thought I asked them to take out another 2 thou, now making a total of 6.4thou. This was perfect and I had no other problems with the machine during the time I owned it, and this included a blast around Silverstone in the M.C.C. High Speed Trials in 1966. More on this anon.



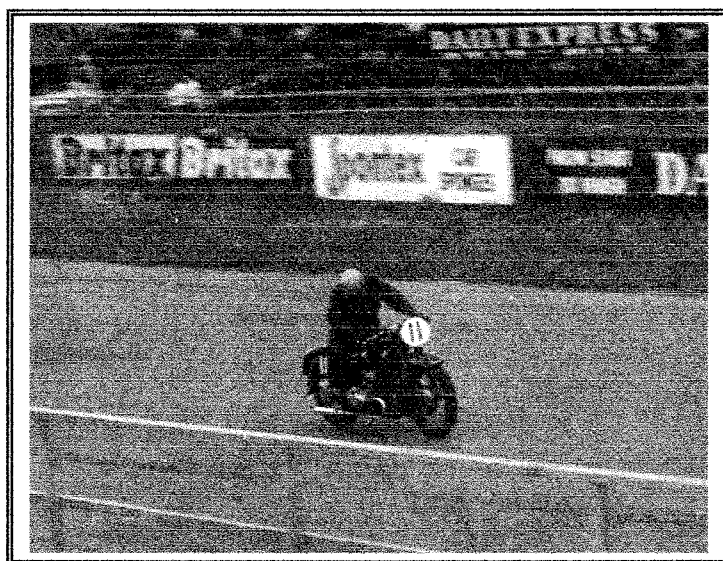
TECHNICAL DETAILS

Model manufactured 1935 to 1937: Bore 83 mm (pistons like soup-plates!) Stroke 68 mm (more familiar!): Compression Ratio about 6.5: Peak revs (wait for it!) 4500 rpm: Horses 33 Four-speed hand change-car type lever from tank gate straight into the top of the gearbox: Manual ignition advance by 1/hand bar end lever to about 37 deg: Capacity 746 cc : Gear ratios unknown but once it was in top gear it seemed like one rev. per telegraph pole! Max speed 140 kph. - pulled like a Shire horse.

Telescopic forks(from 1935) fully oil damped with control rods with ports in them, running up each leg. These emerged at the top yokes and had lugs about one inch long fixed to the top ends; these were joined by a threaded rod with a turnbuckle adjustment, and at the right-hand side the lug was provided with a thumb-piece. Below this, on the yoke, were numbers marked 1,2,3,4. By adjusting the thumb-piece - on the move - you were able to adjust for either a softer or harder damping. How about that, in 1935?



Vic photographed at Silverstone - 1966



Problems, but not with the bike!

I gave the machine some running, out and about on Club events and riding just for enjoyment. Then came the day when I thought I had enough miles on the clock, so I thought 'let's do it' and entered for the M.C.C. High Speed Trials at the Silverstone circuit.

The bike went well although never in the running. Just try hand changing when leant over in a corner at 70 mph! My problem was quite another thing. I had at the time an ex-German U-Boat set of leathers, all one piece and about an eighth of an inch thick. They had one zip from neck to crutch and weighed a ton.

After several laps I was aware that the wind was getting through the leathers; the zip had failed. I blame some Royal Navy depth charge, and I was becoming a motorised barrage balloon. Not good.



The offending zip can just be seen!

Halfway along the middle straight of the club circuit, towards Becket's Corner and the pits turn, I spied a St John's Ambulance man and pulled in quickly. "Have you got a big bandage?" I said.

"Where are you hurt?"

"I'm not, the bloody zip has gone on my leathers and I need to tie it around me."

He gave me one and I proceeded to battle on, but the wind won, the opening in my leathers getting wider and wider. Eventually I had to retire, I'd had a full hour on the circuit and I was freezing. Never mind, I had my fun- and the bike went well.

After a couple of years I lusted after an R60 Earles-fork 600, and there were a couple of chaps in the Vintage Club who approached me about the R17. They had one but wanted a pair. There was no room in the garage for the R26, the R17 and an R60 and their offer was tempting so I let it go. Often wonder if it is still about?

Is EML 671 out there? It was great fun, I never thought I could get it rebuilt and running when I first took it to bits. But then you never know, do you?

Vic Doswell

Note - For those unfamiliar with the R17, the large circular lid, on the side of the gearbox, covers the tool kit aperture

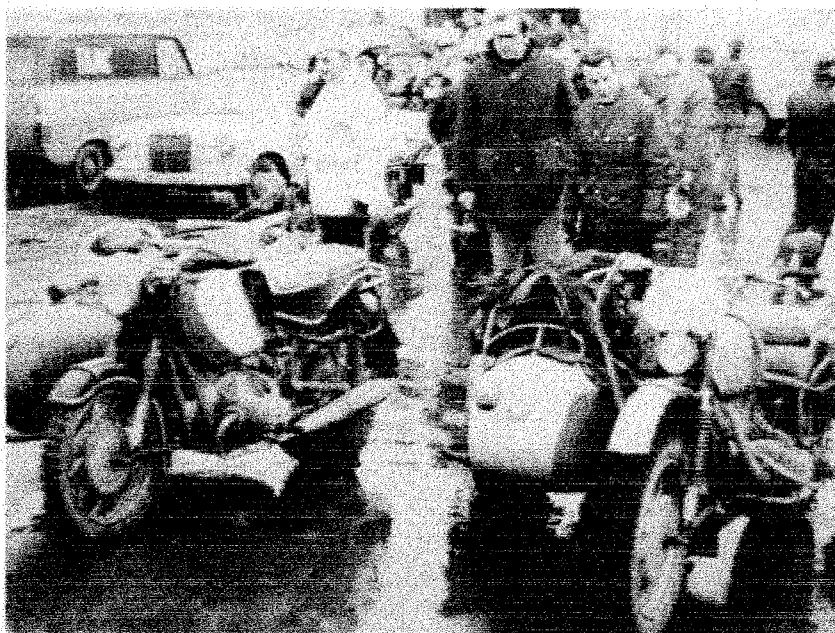


Roger Newark kindly supplied the two photographs shown here, they were taken at the 1971 Elephant Rally at the Nurburgring. Hopefully the photocopying will not have lost too much detail.

The two cross-country outfits shown have a double rear wheel. Roger has no idea whether the two wheels were connected in any way or whether one wheel drove the other via the scrambles type tyre knobbles.

Interesting! Any ideas?

Is the character wearing a flat cap, in the top photo, the late Fred Secker from the Club?



George Meier's 1939 Senior TT winning machine will be on display on the Club stand at the Classic Motor Cycle Show at Stafford on the 27th/28th April.

The Tim Reid R51 – the story continues

The following article was supplied by John Joiner who once owned the Reid machine. Many thanks to John for filling in some of the blanks.

Continuing on from the last N/Letter I've had correspondence from a number of people and the gaps are being filled. I now know where it is located but I'll come to that later.

My first encounter with this machine goes back to Cadwell Park in 1975. At that time I was racing a 1939 Tiger 100 sidecar outfit and whilst reliable was doing no better than third place. I sat on the bank at the 'Hair Pin' next to Dave Treen from Hastings who at that time was trying to campaign a push rod BMW and was very disconsolate after yet another engine failure. "What I could do with is a Triumph, that way I could at least be sure of a ride", Dave said. So on that bank a deal was struck, Dave would have the Triumph from my sidecar outfit plus cash and I would get his BMW including a load of spares. On the 29th September 1975 Dave delivered the BM and spares in his Volkswagen twin cab pickup driving all the way from Hastings with his children and took away the Tiger 100 and £260 cash.

At the time I did not appreciate just what I had got, the basic bike turned out to be the ex Tim Reid 1939 TT machine, a private entry of that year by a well known London jewellers. When received the bike had been fitted with a works prepared R51 RS engine once raced by Otto Kolle, more about this engine later.

The registration document stated that it was a 1939 model not put onto public roads until 23rd July 1946 when it was in the hands of Thomas Johnson, Chalk Farm, London. In 1957 it then went to John Porter of Paddock Autos at East Molesley Surrey who registered it in 1962. Between then and Dave Treen I have no idea where or whom but Dave had several BMW's through his hands. I believe the Kolle engine also came from John Porter

Other details:

Frame No. 507358 Engine No. 503403

Registration No. KJO 672 registered 23rd July 1946
Model RS 1 SS 500cc

The Tim Reid machine had an illustrious career.

1939 was an important year for BMW at the TT races, three machines were entered by the Munich factory the riders were Georg Meier, Jock West and Karl Gall. All were supercharged and weighing only 306 lbs much lighter than their rivals so had a distinct advantage. In practice Gall crashed heavily into the pub wall at Ballaugh Bridge and was so badly injured that he subsequently died from a fractured skull. This left BMW without a third team member, so Tim Reid was invited into the team as the third member in an outside attempt to take the team prize.

There was evidence that the works mechanics had attempted to improve the performance of the R5 1 SS like the fitting of slow taper megaphones and twin carbs. These came with the machine when I acquired it.

There was to be no fairy tale ending though, in the race a spectator ran across the course in front of Tim who, in swerving to avoid him came off and broke his arm. Georg Meier won the race and Jock West came in second and hence into the history books.

I have a small piece of paper, which was attached to the back of a framed picture, this came with the bike, it reads;

Isle of Man

The Senior T.T. When the 41 competitors for the senior Tourist Trophy race lined up today scarcely a cloud was in the sky. The roads of the Isle of Man course were dry, and there was only a slight wind. O.P.S. T.Reid (No.23) BMW at speed near Union Mills. FOX.MIC.June 16th 1939. J/C/JS.

I passed the picture on when I sold the bike.

The first time I rode the Reid machine it was attached to a Watsonian racing sidecar platform, we took it up to Silverstone in 1976 for a practice session and from what I can remember it went very

well. At the time it was fitted with the Kolle engine, this engine was incredible in that it was so free revving it would go all the way up to 10,000 revs. Bob Currie took an interest in the bike and wrote an article on it for the Motor Cycle Weekly. I can remember 'Tich' Allen got rather upset with my treatment of such an historic machine that I felt forced to revert it back to its original state and build another for sidecar racing, but that's a different story.

From then on the Reid machine was treated with respect. It was used for pleasure riding solo and the odd road trial, although we did briefly prepare it for John Armstrong to race solo at Silverstone just the once, instead of the Grand Prix Triumph that we were campaigning as part of *Team Escargot*.

By this time I had other BMW's including two Rennsport outfits so it was inevitable that I should part with it. It went to Mike Gardiner in Dorset who promptly sold it to BMW at their head office at Bracknell. The last time I rode it was in the parade at the opening of the BMW's new offices at Bracknell in March 1980. I did hear of it still being around, it was now in pieces and in pretty awful condition. I believe someone in Rugby had been asked to rebuild it.

Tim Reid was a remarkable chap who had his motorcycling origins in speedway racing, when he rode in the 1939 TT races this was his first and only island road race.

What he did during the Second World War I have no idea, but afterwards he was involved with the design of the Watsonian 1000cc sidecar outfit. During the 50's his favourite theme involved the design and manufacture of a four piston, twin cylinder two-stroke engine with variable supercharging. This was designed to fit a BMW chassis. Capacity was 598cc producing 42 BAP at 5000 RPM. I wonder what became of this engine?

He also did development work for BSA and Ariel before going to GKN in the 1960's. I believe that finally he went to BMC as a designer.

To come back to the Kolle engine, this was engine number 503499, it was revamped by the factory for club-men to race after the Second WW. Not everyone who wanted one could have a twin cam Rennsport engine or could afford one; Owen Greenwood used to sidle up when we were in the

paddock at a race meeting and call me Mr. Money bags!

Less than 40 were made so the factory set about converting R51 engines, these were designated 254(RS) engines. They had gear driven twin camshafts instead of a chain drive and also employed a Bosch magneto in place of the dynamo. The cylinder barrels were aluminium-alloy with cast iron liners. A unique feature was the way they were held in place, 6 turn- buckles were -used with a coarse thread one end and a fine thread the other so that when tightened the barrel was trapped between the head and the crankcase. Two Bing carburettors, later changed to Amal TT's on special induction stubs, fed each cylinder. Pistons too were special being beautifully made Mauhle high compression types. The engine was coupled to a close ratio gearbox. This engine caused some problems with resonance when we raced it in a sidecar outfit. My passenger Frank Bayman suffered from a series of split visors. At first we thought that he was catching these on something but later realised that it was resonance as he hung over the back of the machine. People would come up to us in the paddock and comment on the noise often saying they could hear it plainly all around the circuit and expected it to blow to pieces any moment; but it never did. I had many calls before a race meeting asking if I was going to take the BM as they would go along just to listen to it.

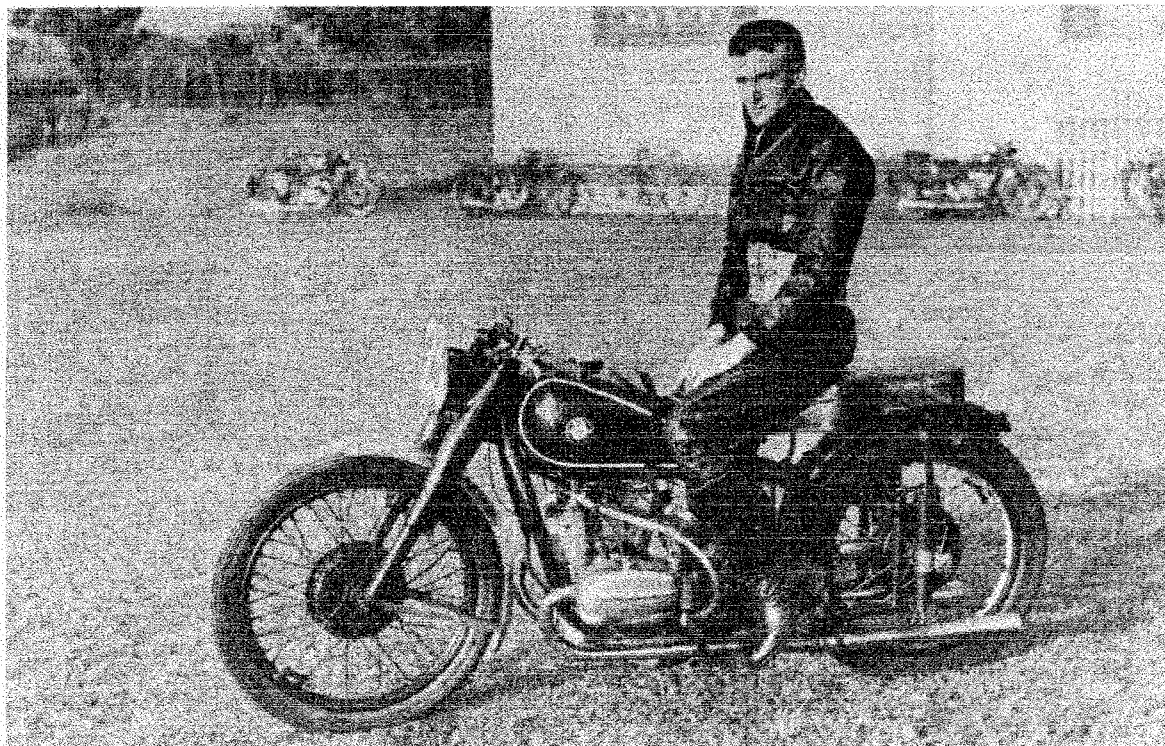
I can remember showing some photos of my machines when in Germany working at the Munich factory, their attitude changed towards me completely ending with them showing me the design on the drawing board of the new K series bike long before it was announced in the press.

John Joiner

MICK BARR
INDEPENDENT
BMW SPECIALIST

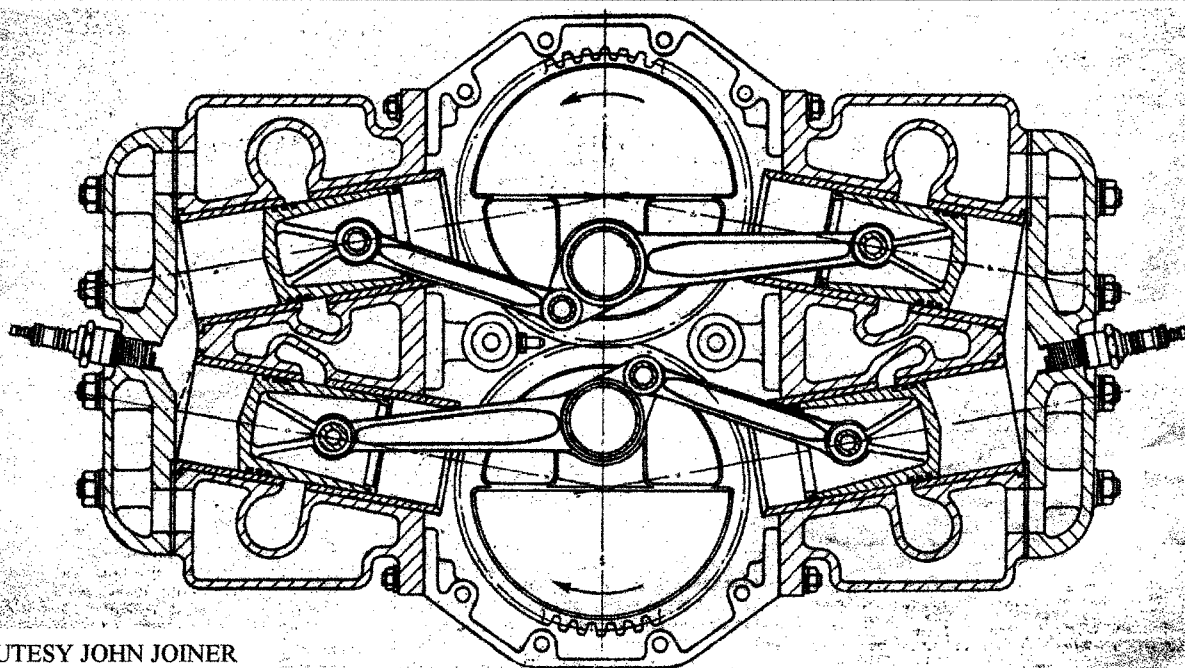
Factory Trained BMW Technician with over 20 years experience for Service, Repairs and Renovation of all Twins from R51/3 4 Valve Twins. K-Series. Gearbox Specialist.

Scraptoft, Leicester
Tel. 01162 419316 Mobile 0378 629030
FAX: 01162 921840
E-mail: mick.barr.bmw.specialist@virgin.net



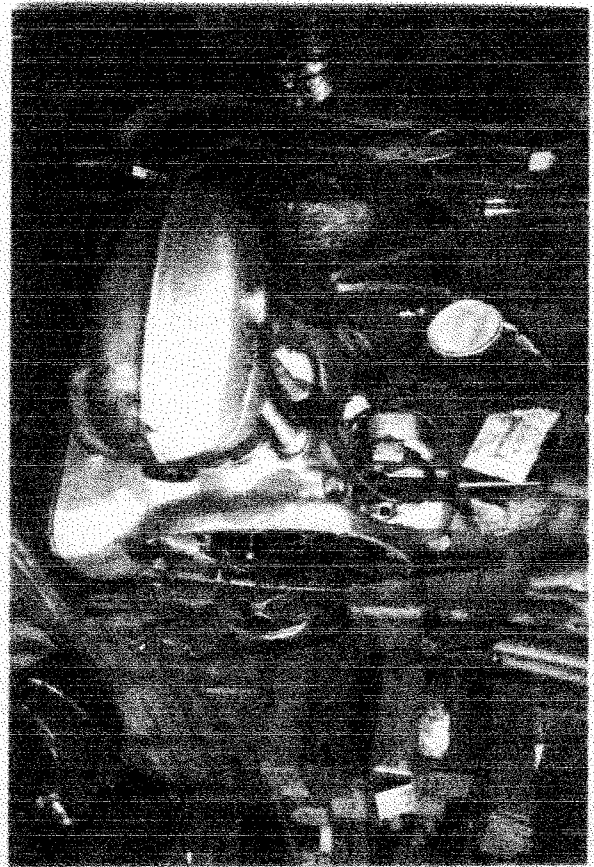
(KEIG COLLECTION PICTURE)

TIM REID ON 1939 BMW R51
BEFORE THE SENIOR RACE

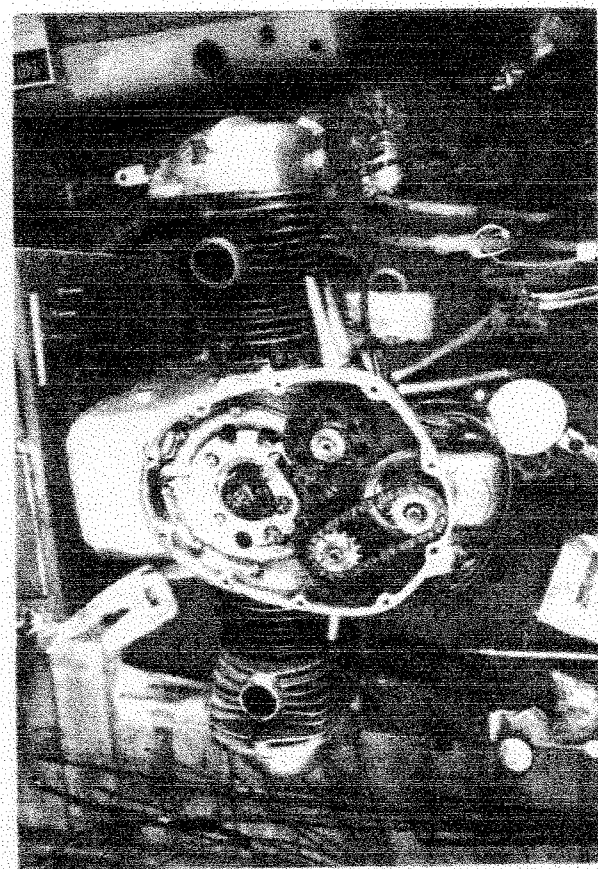
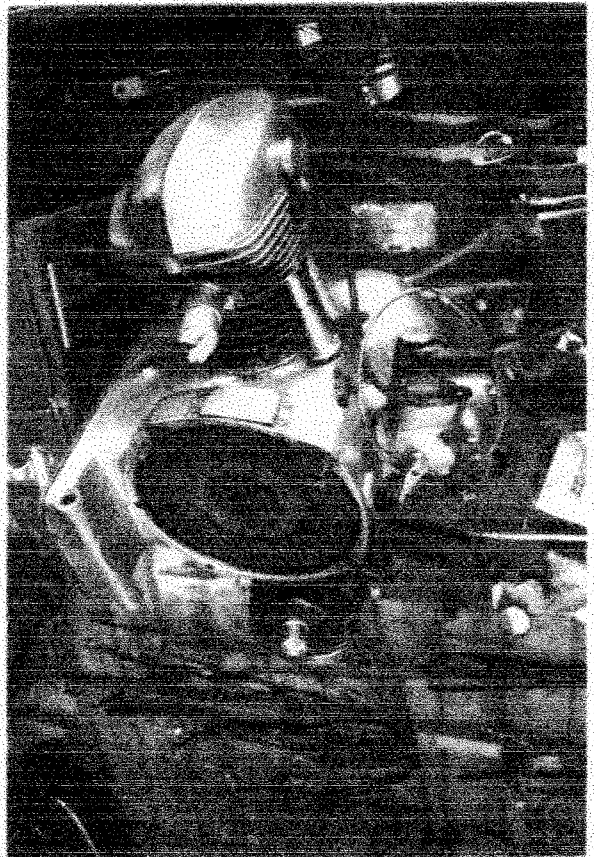
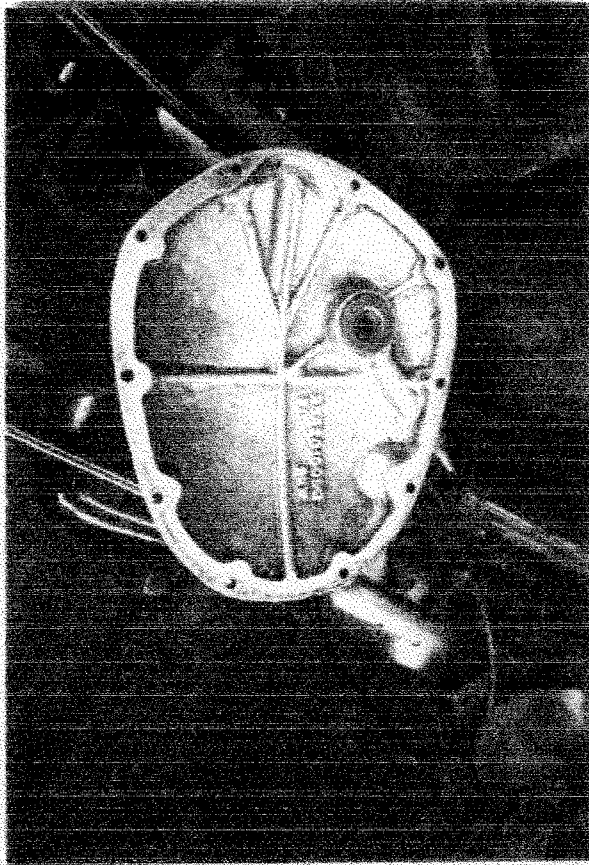


COUTESY JOHN JOINER

REID DUPLEX ENGINE



Q51 Q50 ENGINE (KOLLE ENGINE)



John Lawes writes here about the Reid R51 article that appeared in N/letter 5/2001.

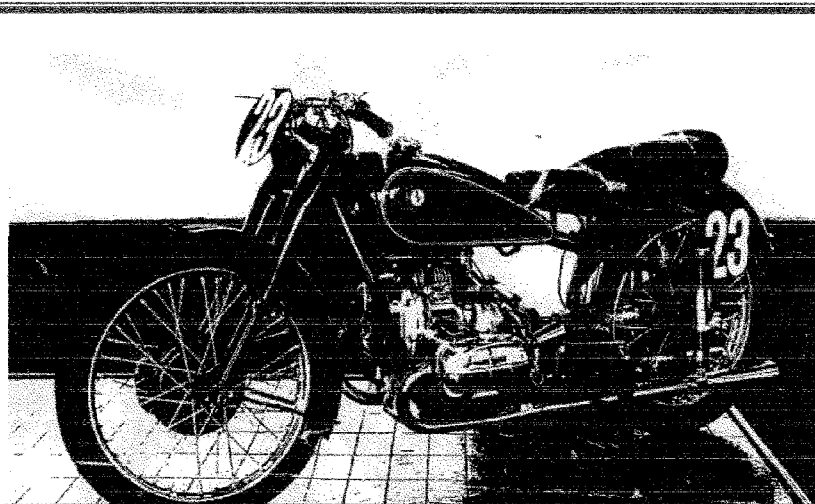
Interestingly, some of the photos were supplied by the late Joe Greenwood, our Clubs' first Vintage Secretary. What was not pointed out in the article were the differences between the R51, R51SS and RSIRS models. Perhaps the latter model was not relevant to the article, but being the OHV racing, as opposed (excuse pun) to sports model, produced in very small numbers by the factory. This comparison would better emphasise the achievement by Tim Reid on a, presumably, more or less R51SS.

The photos supplied by Joe show the cam and dynamo drive arrangement used on the RSI and RSISS models. The RS version has gear driven camshafts and chain driven magneto, instead of the roller less chain used on the other models for camshaft and dynamo drive. The cover over the gears is just that, a cover, but it is in magnesium alloy. Additionally, the RSIRS has alloy barrels instead of iron barrels painted aluminium/silver. The alloy barrels are held down with the heads, by a turnbuckle arrangement instead of straightforward studs and nuts.

Before John Joiner owned and raced the Tim Reid machine, it was owned and raced by the late Dave Treen. John then acquired the machine, and raced it with sidecar, in V.M.C.C. events. At this point he was using an ex-Otto Kolle R51RS engine, which is now in my RSIRS. This machine had the distinction of being the first non-British machine to win a V.M.C.C. race. And it started from the back of the grid, taking the lead after Gerrards, on the first lap!

Subsequently, John returned the machine to road trim. It was later sold to someone in the Dorset area, who then sold it on to BMW C.B. and is supposed to be now in a rather derelict, and dismantled state, tucked away somewhere in the bowels of Bracknell. Many years ago, I had reason to ask G.B. for some racing brake details. They couldn't help, they said, but when I told them they had a machine tucked away that would furnish that information, they came up with the details I wanted. I suspect they hoped to prove me wrong and were surprised that I knew they had something special! I don't think that many at BMW knew they had a piece of T.T. history.

J. Lawes



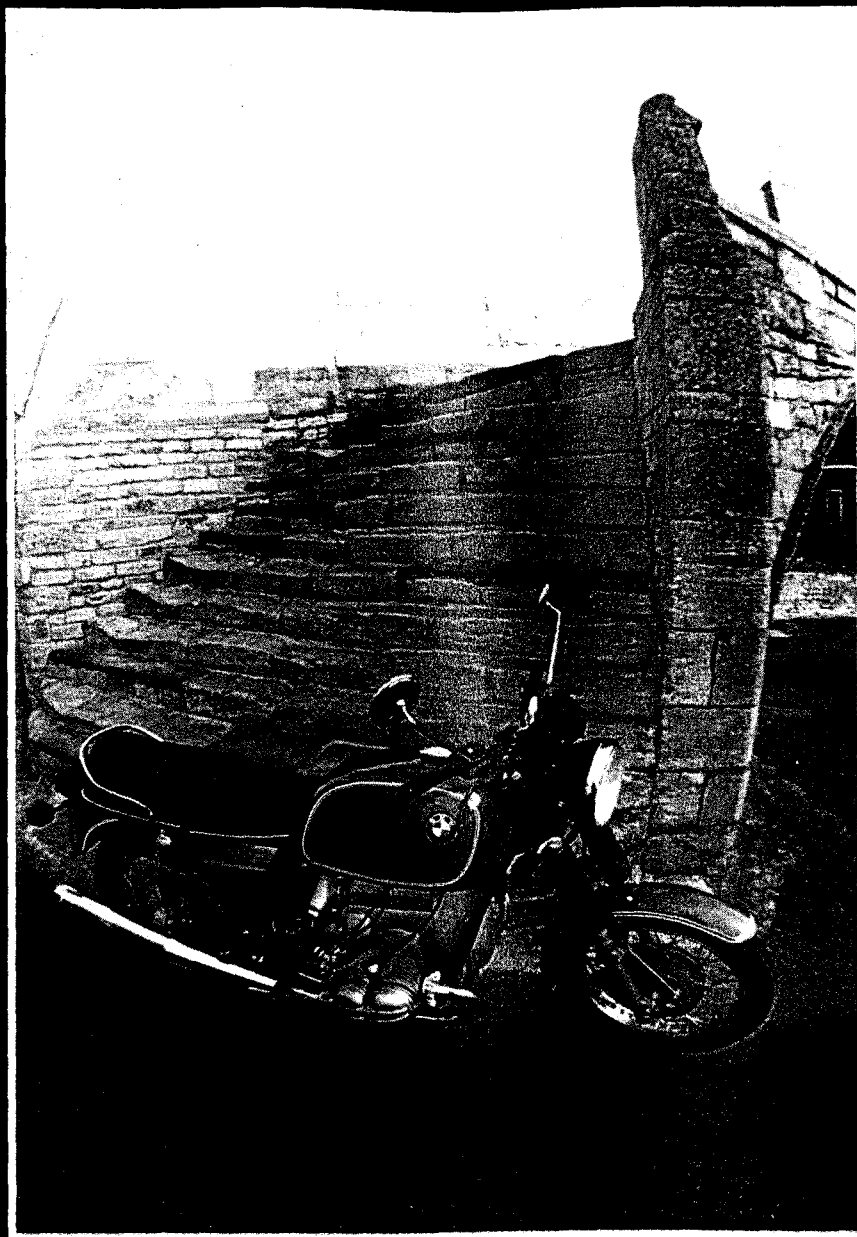
The Reid R51 now owned by BMW (GB). Contrary to some suggestions, this machine is not an SS. Factory records substantiate this, it is a standard R51 upgraded to SS spec.

I can now add to John's comments concerning the condition of Reid's R51. It is true that it is owned by BMW at Bracknell, but far from being derelict and tucked away, was rebuilt to the condition shown in the picture on the left.

It is not just a showpiece having been ridden in a lap of honour in the IOM, together with the Kompressor BMW's of Meier and West to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of that historic win in 1939.

Maybe, just maybe, we could secure this machine for the Club stand at the Classic Motor Cycle Show in 2003. Although I'll add here, I've already earmarked a machine for next year.

BABY BEE-EM



The forgotten bike in BMW's range could be their best.

Road test by Mike Nicks

WOULD you pay £1,400 to go 96 mph? There is so much other worthy ironware on offer in today's incredibly varied motorcycle market that anyone considering the purchase of BMW's smallest flat twin will surely end up by evaluating the bike on a power-per-£ basis. And on those terms, the R60/6 emerges as a very dubious proposition, when you recall that even some of the quicker 250s are almost as fleet as the Bee-Em in a straight line.

So what exactly is the appeal of the R60 that enables it to continue selling in the BMW range alongside the more blatant attractions of the chunky 750 and 900, and the lissom 90S? Why does anyone hand over the price of a Z900 Kawasaki, the world's fastest quantity production motorcycle, for what appears to be a rather mild and unadventurous cooking bike?

As a way of explaining the subtle charms of the R60, I should start by ►

pointing out that the bike was tested back in the steely grip of February. For most of the test period the weather was icy, wet and grey — the sort of conditions in which all intelligent motorcycle journalists spend three hour pub lunchtimes idly planning summertime sojourns across Europe on someone else's bikes and money.

However, we'd requested the R60 for appraisal in a fit of enthusiastic curiosity after trying it briefly at one of Bee-Em's deluxe press binges earlier in the winter, so when it arrived on schedule there was no choice but to get out in the tundra and put miles on it. It was then, in the winter gloom and frost, that the benefits of R60 style biking rapidly showed through.

For one thing, the 600 BMW is quite obviously one of the swiftest, yet safest, motorcycles that can be ridden in bad weather conditions. On most bikes, your mental warning bells start ringing loud and early immediately road traction is reduced by rain or slime. But this phenomenon was largely absent on the R60, even though the roads at that time were in a particularly tacky state. At first this was disconcerting, as it seemed that maybe the bike was oddly insensitive, and the messages from that crucial contact patch between tarmac and tyre were just not getting through. Then I realised that when the R60 is ridden with the reserve with which the average rider treats wet roads, there are no warning messages — at such speeds the bike is far more within its limits than other machines. The Metzlers are coping, the suspension is holding them fast to the ground, the frame is keeping everything together, and the brakes don't need to carry stickers informing you that they may not work for the first couple of seconds as you bear down at 70 mph on that articulated truck crossing the dual carriageway ahead.

After a couple of hundred miles of this kind of reassurance, it became apparent that you can even get down to some mild scratching with the R60 in the wet. You can actually

pitch the bike into rain sodden turns, rather than just cautiously angling the thing in as with most other bikes. OK, M. Adbrain of Runcorn, we know you can scrape the pegs of your Mach I Kawasaki in the wet, but the rest of us actually want to live to the turn of the century, if only to see if the world can exist that much longer.

There is a theory that anything that handles in the wet ought to be the next best thing to Kenny Roberts' Yamaha in the dry. This might be a wild generalisation, but it certainly holds true for the R60. For the two or three dry and sunny days of the test, the little blue bomber proved that it's right in there with the best of the sports bikes when it comes to serious bend swinging. The legendary BMW opposed twin engine layout gives a distinct sensation that the cylinders are actually hugging the bike to the ground: certainly the R60 is beautifully precise and stable in bank-to-bank situations on roundabouts and ess bends. In fact it's this general air of handling stability that is the trademark of all BMWs. They're built so that the cycle parts are 'faster' than the engines, hence you get none of that vagueness or sense of imminent disaster that you find on many bikes when they're pushed to the limits in handling or performance.

It may be poor consolation to anyone who's just unloaded two grand on the ultimate BMW, the 90S, but the opinion of everyone who rode the R60 was that it is in fact the best handling bike in the Bee-Em range. It's lighter to handle, a little easier to manage, better *balanced* in a host of minor ways that add up to a noticeable difference on the road. Which is really saying something, because the bigger BMWs themselves set some amazing standards in high speed rideability. Just why the R60 should be better is not that obvious — ready for the road, with a gallon of fuel in the tank, it weighs only 18 lbs less than the 90S.

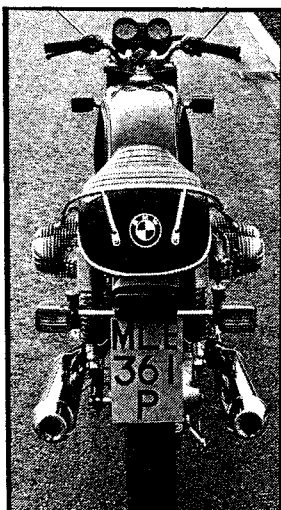
Maybe it's just the fact that it has a mild 40 horsepower to transmit, against the 90S's claimed 67.

Anyone who didn't know that the 750 and 900 cc Bee-Ems came after the introduction of the 600 might be able to guess this from rides on all three variations. The blue blood of pure Bayerische Motoren Werke lineage flows fullest in the 600, and in contrast the bigger bikes feel what they are, slight mutations from the original design theme (highly sophisticated, almost flawless mutations nonetheless).

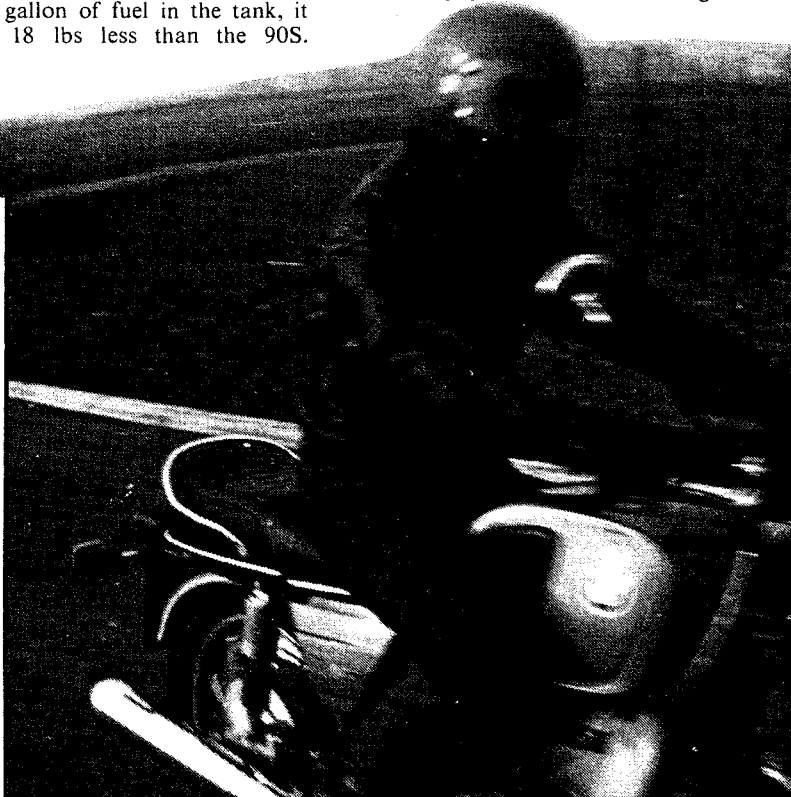
There is certainly no feeling about the 600 that it's under-powered — or gutless, to use more basic biker parlance. Like the other BMWs, it's by no means the fastest bike in a straight line in its class, yet it's capable of setting high and tireless average speeds. The 96 mph quoted in the intro to this test is BMW's figure for the bike's top speed with the rider sitting up; 104 mph is its absolute top clout, with the rider prone. The aforementioned dire weather scotched our usual drag strip performance tests, so the figures mentioned here are BMW's own claims for the bike, which we have no qualms about borrowing as previous tests with other models have indicated that their forecasts are invariably totally accurate.

The 599cc mill is quite a revver, turning 4,500 rpm at 70 mph. But there is no vibration at high engine speeds, and 80 mph two-up cruising is effortless, assisted by suspension and seating arrangements that have clearly been specifically designed to cope easily with pillion travel. There is some vibration below 3,000 rpm, noticed in the form of blurred mirrors and lazy shudders passing through the bike. But at least the images in the mirrors become pin sharp at the speeds that you really need to use them.

Naturally you need to use the gearbox



Littlest BMW looks a big bike visually, weighs nearly 450 lbs.



quite often to maintain high cruising speeds, and it's the infamous BMW gear change that remains the greatest discouragement to R60 ownership (apart from the price, of course).

All the latest BMWs apparently contain minor modifications inside the box to make the change smoother: you could have fooled me. Upward changes on the R60 are no problem as long as you make the obligatory BMW pause before treading in the next gear. It's the downward shifts that are a real bitch. Fifth to fourth is fine, fourth to third begins to need concentration, but for the final two it's a case of gritting your teeth and ignoring the blank stares from the bus queues.

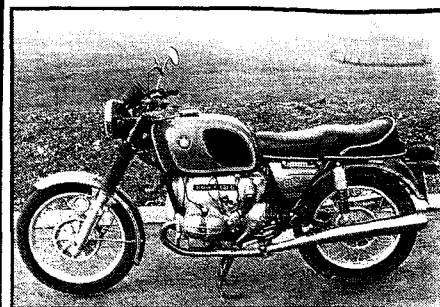
Only the day before the bike was due to go back did I finally make a couple of silent passages down through the box while slowing for second and bottom gear situations. I guess confirmed BMW owners learn to live with all this, rather like Triumph freaks tolerating blown bulbs and split number plates (now who said anything about oil leaks?), but there's no escaping the fact that the BMW transmission has a dinosaurian nature of its own that just doesn't mesh with the rest of the bike. Together with a rather fierce drive take-up by the clutch and the dipping and rising of the long travel front forks (7.8 inches of movement) under hard braking or acceleration, it makes for a bike that's definitely not at its best in commuter-type applications.

The R60 is the only bike in the BMW range to be fitted with a drum front brake. Single or twin discs are available as optional extras, but the drum works so well that it's all that's necessary to cope with the R60's performance. Whatever advantages discs may offer in terms of manufacturing costs or servicing, there's no doubt that in many cases they've been added to bikes

merely as sales come-ons, and most of them function no better than a good drum.

This refusal to run with the pack is typical of BMW's approach to bike design. They will not, for example, be coming out with the rumoured water-cooled flat four à la Honda Gold Wing. According to a factory executive who attended the aforementioned press gathering, they've tried such a layout, but have decided that it's too heavy and cumbersome to offer the kind of biking they want. Function prevails over fashion in Berlin. More typical of BMW is the feeling you get that their bikes have had more development and test mileage put into them than any other brand, which is not so surprising when you consider how long they've been playing with the same basic design. You sense that their testers have already been through any given road situation, not just once, but many, many times, and have thought about it, about how the rider can be helped to cope with the ever-changing movie of the road, without destroying the essential feeling of biking.

By now you're probably thinking that this test has been yet another pro-BMW monologue knocked up by yet another free-loading writer who doesn't actually have to pay for the privilege of hacking round on a BMW. But no apologies: in any activity, someone has to set standards for others to aspire to, and as far as the *quality* of the sensation of biking goes, a lot of people think that BMW's scale is as good as anyone's. If our Japanese friends could follow BMW thinking in areas that do not necessarily involve huge investments and inflated price tags, and finally get rid of their plastic tyres, flexy frames, and non-absorbent shock absorbers, biking would be a lot safer — and more satisfying — than all the digital gear indicators and bleeping turn signals will ever achieve. ●



Checkout

Engine	OHV opposed twin
Bore X stroke	73.5 x 70.6mm
Capacity	599cc
Compression/ratio	9.2:1
Carburation	2 x 26mm Bing
BHP @ RPM	40 @ 6,400
Primary drive	Direct
Clutch	Single plate, dry
Gear ratios	
(1)	14.8:1
(2)	9.6:1
(3)	6.9:1
(4)	5.6:1
(5)	5.0:1
Electrical system	280 watt alternator, battery and coil
Lighting	55/60 watt headlight

DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase	58.0 ins
Seat height	32.0 ins
Ground clearance	7.0 ins
Handlebar height	40.5 ins
Kerb weight	448 lbs
Fuel capacity	3.96 gals
Oil capacity	4 pints

EQUIPMENT

Trafficators	Yes
Electric starter	Yes
Trip mileometer	Yes
Steering lock	Yes
Helmet lock	Yes
Headlight flasher	Yes
Kill button	Yes
Toolkit	Yes
Spares	No
Others	Final drive by shaft; alloy rims; tyre pump; 2 mirrors; Quartz iodine headlight; steering damper

CYCLE PARTS

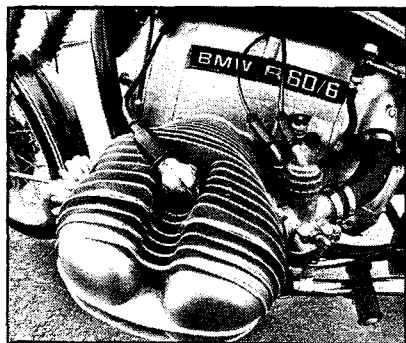
Tyres (front)	3.25 x 19 Metzeler
(rear)	4.00 x 18 Metzeler
Brakes (front)	7.9 in t/s drum
(rear)	7.9 in s/s drum
NB:	Continental and Michelin tyres also fitted

PERFORMANCE

Top speed	104 mph (est)
Standing ¼ mile	15.9 secs (est)
Fuel consumption	55-60 mpg (est)
PRICE	£1,399 inc VAT
Guarantee	12 months parts & labour, unlimited mileage

Supplied by BMW Concessionaires GB Ltd., 991 Great West Rd., Brentford, Middx.

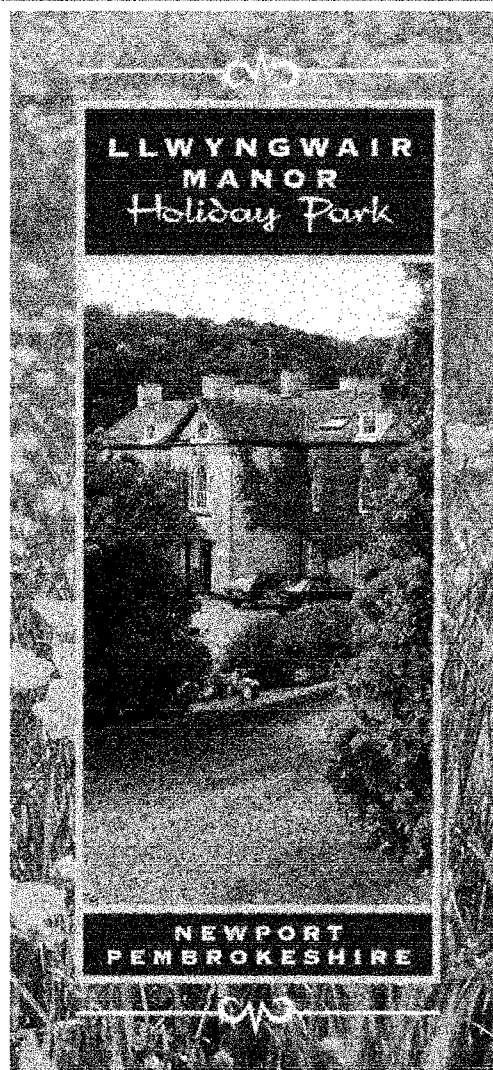
bike 69



Above: Switches and instruments are well laid out.

Left: Flat twin mill has been a BMW badge for 53 years.

1st Vintage & Classic Register Rally 21st/22nd/23rd June



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Please note: this is the Newport located between Fishguard and Cardigan.

MODEL WORLD

Eric Rance gives details below of a number of BMW kit models that are available. The first is a 1960 R60/2 with Steib Sports sidecar that is marketed under the unlikely name of 'Tootsie Toys'. It is available from Model Motorcycles, PP Box 31613, London. SW2 4FE. This model is very well detailed and to 1/10 scale with working steering and suspension and with the option of with or without base fixing. It is fully equipped with panniers and a large screen. Eric removed both of these as, firstly, the screen seemed clumsy in detail and the panniers obscured too much of the machine. It was purchased from a Club member several years ago for £50.00.

The second model is available either in kit form or built-up and is a 1/9 scale model of a 500cc Rennsport racing machine. It is made by the Italian firm 'Protar' that is managed by the racing legend, Tarquinio Provini. The kit is available once again from Model Motorcycles at a cost of £25.00 +P&P. The suppliers suggested that the model of Max Deubel's BMW racing outfit was superior but difficult to find.

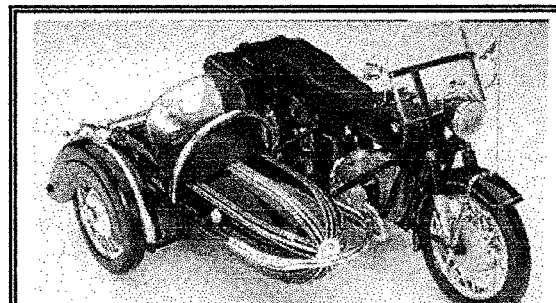
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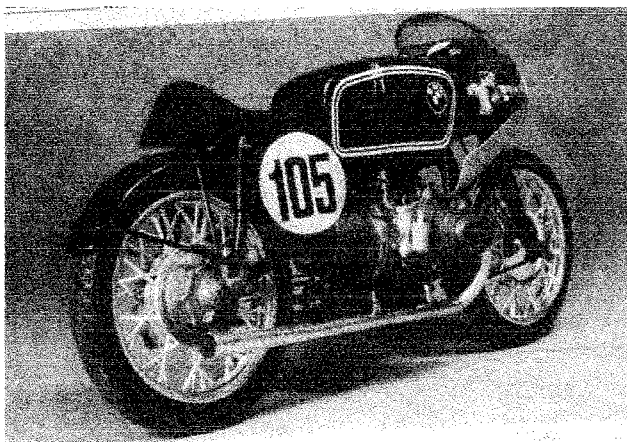


MODEL BMW R60/2 & STEIB S/C

Model world continued:-

There are also models of the R1200 and R1100R each at £19.00 and a K100 at £10.00. Additionally, I believe Airfix Models include a 1960 R69S 1/10 scale for £25.00. These models are vulnerable when built and are best displayed in a Perspex or glass cabinet. These can be obtained from Timbercraft of Abercorn House, York Business Centre, Watling Street, Towster, Northants, but they are not cheap. All of these models would be ideal presents for a motorcyclist off the road, or for those that have not the garage space for the real thing!

Eric Rance



'PROTAR' 1/9 SCALE RENNSPORT

In addition to Eric's suggestions, try your local BMW dealer, some sell 'knick knacks' and models. I received a superb metal model of an R60/2 solo for my 60th recently. They are available with and without a Steib sidecar and in either black or white. A 250cc version is also manufactured, - once again with or without a s/car. (Ed.)

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Well, that's about all for this issue: I hope there has been something for everyone.

Please keep the articles coming, without your input I may have to resort to features on J..... machines! Only joking.

Next issue I hope to be able to include a number of fully dimensioned drawings of the specialist tools that make life easier when working on the earlier machines. Although the Tool Hire service run by the Club is a boon postage costs considerably, and the PO (or should that be Consignia?) benefits quite handsomely. For all of us to have a basic set would be a great advantage.

I hope to meet many of you at the Vintage & Classic events; please introduce yourselves, it's nice to be able to put a name to a face.

Ride Safely

Malcolm Mc Nair