



Well here we are in 1999 and not a sign as yet from Pontedera that there is anything special about this year. You will see from page 12 that I am not alone in thinking that this is a pretty poor show.

Sorry this issue is late but there were one or two items that needed to be clarified before publication. I might as well warn you now that the June edition is a certain to be late in view of my TT trip, so following Geoff Lord's suggestion at the AGM I will issue renewal forms in May rather than wait for GeN#21. The regulations and entry form for the Cadwell Track Day should also be ready to go in the post at the

As well as Gilera being 90 this year the Gilera Network will be 5 years old with the publication of GeN#21 in June. Time to take stock of what the future holds and the direction the network should take in the future. The committee could take the poor attendance at AGMs as your endorsement that we are doing a great job, but we would like to see if a meeting at venue nearer to more members and on a date that doesn't clash with major bike events gets a better turn out - see page 17.

The Morini Riders Club have been forced to accept the June 11 date offered to them by Cadwell Park for the track day. This has caused us some problems in providing helpers as well as making it difficult for committee members to attend an AGM on the same weekend (another reason for the change in arrangements for the AGM). The event will still be a highlight of the year for those able to attend it - see page 20.

David's Gilera Literature Database

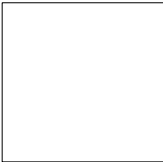


(page 21) will be a great resource for anyone refurbishing a bike and as it runs to several pages it will be issued as a separate publication.

... a plea for ... nes to be ... n our stand at the ... ay. I have booked ... n view of our

anniversary, so I need lots of bikes to put on it ! The turn out of modern machines last year was impressive but we really need older models to illustrate the Gilera heritage. Get in touch now !

*So enjoy 1999 and HAPPY BIRTHDAY GILERA!*



## GFR Notes

It has been an interesting two months. Mid December, the Ducati developed a severe case of frame failure. While I was awaiting the replacement from Italy (as it is apparently being sent across the Atlantic in a rowboat), I took to the streets on the GFR. Great trepidation filled my soul. This was the incipient rainy season in San Francisco, and I feared that I would ruin my precious little 125. As if to mock me more, the gods sent down snow flurries as well - something that occurs only every forty years or so in the Bay Area. Nevertheless, I survived, mostly. I had one small upset that broke a turn signal. This was fortuitously remedied by realizing that the new Laverdas used a nearly identical blinker.

Then came the big crash.

One fine afternoon on my route home from work, I noticed that the throttle had become stuck in the fully open position. I found myself accelerating toward cars that were stopping for a traffic signal. Too much brake and the front wheel was gone. I must admit the aerodynamicity of the GFR allows it to slide quite a distance. But with that grinding noise were pulverized my hopes of keeping its beauty intact.

The week since I have assessed the damage as mainly cosmetic; spots worn through the paint on the tail section and several points on the fairing. These can be repaired with time and patience, elbow grease and buffing compound, and some faux carbon-fiber graphics. The mirror was smashed and the shift lever bent, but they can be replaced. The worst and most disheartening were the deep scratches and dents in the petrol tank. I should be able to start within a week as the frame for the Ducati is rumored to be arriving this weekend.

The moral: Keep that throttle cable and assemblies very well lubricated. After complete disassembly, I discovered the problem was from the rain and road grit that had found its way into the cables causing

them to bind completely. After cleaning and lubrication, the throttle responds better than ever. I had always thought that the throttle was difficult to turn, but now I realize it was the fault of a dirty cable and should turn quite freely. Check yours now!

Other bits to note: A correction on the spark plug I mentioned in previous writings; it is an NGK R567A10. I would imagine the B10EG David Riley mentions is very similar, thanks for the tip. However, I am still seeing a high rate of fouling (in my opinion) - every 300km or so. I have checked the injector settings and they seem fine. My only conclusion is that it comes from being unable to "burn it out" in the city. There are just far too many traffic signals here!

I recently replaced the airbox with a sock type air filter. I assumed it would be ridiculously difficult to get a stock replacement here in the States, so I went the removal route. First thing I noticed was a large increase in - noise! Do not do this modification if you do not want to attract attention. I also noticed the GFR seemed to run a bit smoother, with a bit more power between 5500 rpm and power valve opening. This could be due to no longer being choked up.

That's all for the moment. Once the Ducati is back on the street and I can get to work on the GFR, I'll write about new things I find. In addition to the restoration work, I plan to clean and protect all the electrical connections, as well as adjust and tune everything from stem to stern. Look to these pages for my ongoing revelations.

And look to the World Wide Web for my occasionally updated Gilera sites!  
<http://itsa.ucsf.edu/~cbare/bikes/gfr.html>  
<http://itsa.ucsf.edu/~cbare/bikes/106ss.html>

*Chris Bare*



## "Stoppers & Starters" - a tale of wear and tear.

I have been fortunate to have owned a low km-age NW (now 14,000, owned from new) and a "high" km-age NW (28,000 when bought). The comparisons are interesting in so many ways although as information for the Network, I will focus on two items; the rear brake calliper and the starter motor.

The high km-age bike had had a hard life and in many ways showed it. The rear brake calliper didn't work and I assumed it had seized. Not so, when taken apart, the seals and pistons came out easily with the latter looking very sound indeed! Closer inspection showed that the cause of the poor-performance was the brake pad backing plates carving grooves into the back of the calliper and thus jamming considerably under both hard and light applications. The brake pins had become worn permitting sufficient sideways movement to make this rubbing possible. The pads themselves were a little crumbly and the pins were shot. It seems prudent to check the calliper, pads and pins regularly if used hard but I was shocked by the pins - it seems that they are of soft material. Perhaps stainless ones would prove more resilient.

The low km-age bike's starter motor grew worse and worse from new until it ceased to turn the bike over for long, even with a charged battery. I didn't understand the nature of the problem for some time, choosing to hunt for solutions elsewhere. In retrospect, the clues were building up into a hard portfolio of evidence; low voltage over the battery (12.2v), massive voltage discharge (down to 9v) on start-up and a tendency to kill batteries.

I finally twigged and pulled the starter apart. It passed all the workshop-manual connectivity tests but looked terrible in there; one of the brushes was jammed in its holder, the armature was slightly burned and light corrosion was everywhere. It looked as

if the case had leaked at some point! The cure? The starter motor from the high km-age bike! A single touch of the button and it starts every time!

Have you seen the price of starter motors in the UK? Have a guess!

I notice that no-one has really covered Air filters in Gen. Who has made improvements, what did they use and how did they do it? I can't help thinking that by turning that battery-carrier laterally, would give me room for quite a large K&N! To hear from those people who made smooth-bore carb tune-ups would be interesting too! The full tune-up story would be even more interesting!

*Simon Roberts*

Well I don't know about anyone else but I haven't heard anything from SJB.

I suspect a bit of research suggested that the potential market for a Gilera marque history video was rather limited.

If they get in touch with me again I will let you know - PSF

*Jeroen Baack invites you to see the inlet ports of a Saturno as you have never seen them before !*

## CUSTOM MOTARD

The way by which I came to own a Gilera Northwest was somewhat unconventional. My motorcycling preferences have always been towards streetworthy show bikes rather than dirt refugees. However my taste for the wild open spaces had been aroused by watching the DAKAR Rally on satellite telly. Consequently I bought a Cagiva Elefant. A 750 that looked like the ones that had won the DAKAR a time or two. It was a great winter street machine, if a bit tall and heavy for a little lad like me. Sadly our time together was short as I "did my back in good and proper." Upon my recovery two months later the Doctors Orders were "ride a lighter machine." The trouble was I was hooked on the "I'm in charge" riding stance of the off road machine. At that time I didn't want a real off roader, as tarmac use was my only intention. Luckily it would appear that I am far from alone in that intention as the Gilera Supermotard I am now so enamoured of was sitting in the wings just waiting for me to discover it. Whilst based on an off road chassis the Northwest had all the sports bike goodies I wanted and it weighed in at only 165 Kg. Yippie. Just what the Doctor ordered !

Although purchased out of necessity I have



Dick Stapley's custom motard

grown to truly love this bike ! It has improved my riding skills no end. Even so it was not long before I was moved to practice my life long hobby of customising on my latest machine. Further blending of uses had to take place ! This had to be good old grass roots customising. A bike built to a **customer's** specification. My specification, but what should that spec. be ?

The main problem when you really like a standard bike but still hanker after some individuality is how to make changes that enhance the bike's use as well as its looks. The most straightforward way to achieve this is to improve its weak points and otherwise confine your attentions to the cosmetic side of things.

The only thing on the Gilera that I found to be really crap was the headlight. After that I'm happy whilst riding it but not whilst looking at it. For my own taste it looked too much like a competition machine. So that was the challenge, the basis of the custom project. To make it even more of a street machine without losing its Dirt bike charms.

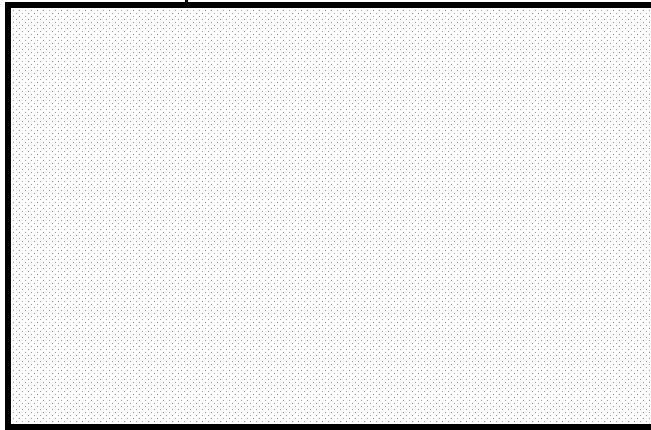
It didn't take me long to suss out that all of my intended improvements would involve cutting and altering the bike's body work.

Fooling around with plastic body panels can be both awkward and expensive, especially if you are messing with a rarish set of original panels. To my good fortune I have a friend who has the skills and the facilities to make quality fibreglass copies of motorcycle body work. So to start with Geoff copied all the panels and produced a full set of crack resistant fibre glass replicas for me to mess with.

(You too can buy these panels through Bob Wright but be prepared for a wait as we only produce on a "spare time" basis.)

Generally the styling of the Norwest is lovely, especially the shape of the front mudguard. Only a few things niggled me.

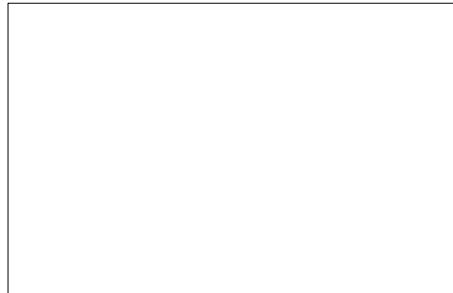
- 1) The competition number type side panels
  - 2) The letterbox style headlight
  - 3) The wide open rear wheel which allowed muck to splash all over the plot.
- For a meddler like me that's not a lot of gripes.



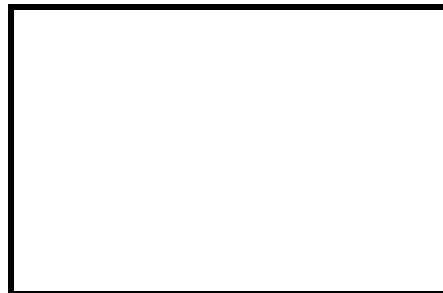
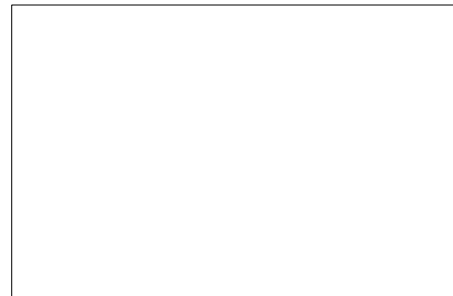
### **Nordie with attitude !**

You have to hand it to the Italians their styling is usually top notch.

Colour of course is always a big factor in customising a motorcycle and for the Nordy all indicators pointed to combinations of Orange and Brown. One of its Gilera stable mates had been used for desert Rally Raids



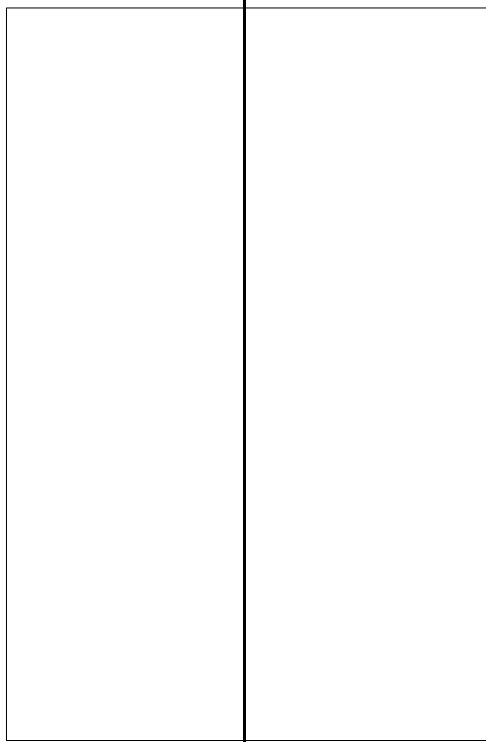
### **The remodelled nose cone takes shape**



and I'm a fan of the Dakar rally. The deserts of **North West** Africa host that raid and are definitely orangey brown. On the practical side the USD forks are finished in a golden anodising, the stainless steel exhaust goes biscuit coloured with the heat and the cast iron disc gives off a brown rust dust which

settles on the rims turning the white wheels orange. The clues are all there to be seen.

The number side panels were the starting point of my restyling. On a drawing I tried out different cut aways and eventually settled on the ones that looked a bit like a bird wing. That set me off on the art work side of things too. The use of an Africa art influence and a hieroglyphic style to produce an image of a bird seemed like a good way to justify the bit



straightforward cutting job using a template to make sure both sides matched.

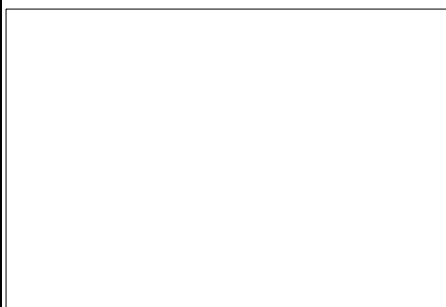
The hugger came next. I narrowed a copy of a 1000 Exup item and restyled the sides to echo the peak of the Nordy's tail piece. Thanks to Geoff I could use huge amounts of cheap filler and anything else that came to hand to make changes as I was only making the pattern for him to copy.

As I mentioned earlier I'm a fan

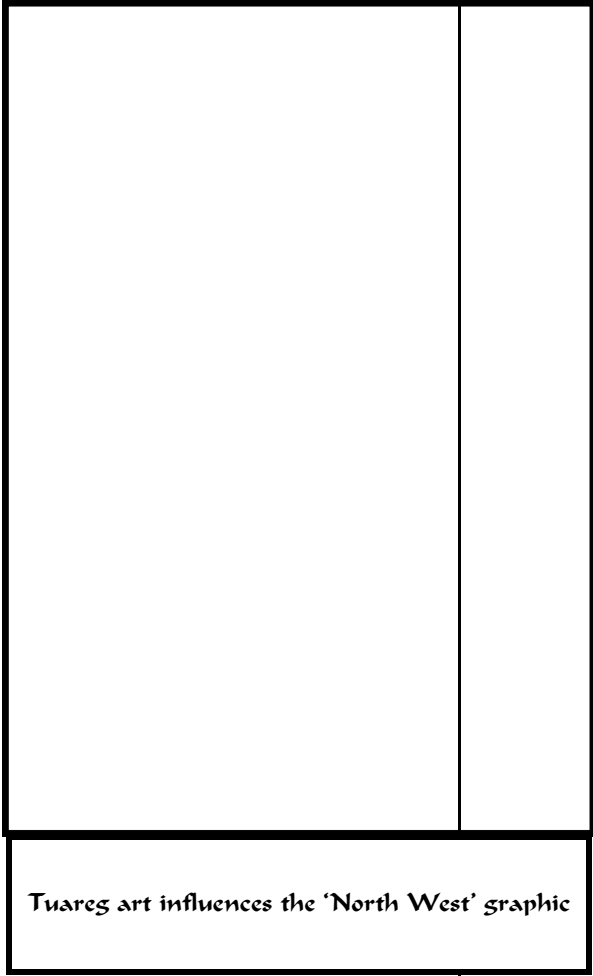
### Dick's Desert Racer features reworked side panels and twin exhaust



hanging down from the side panels. I get a buzz from this stuff. One thing leading to another. It's the fun of customising. The actual alteration of the panel was a



of Rally Raid, only of watching it mind, and I do like to see my way when riding at night. So with those influences the boggle eyed look for a twin headlight fairing seemed



Tuareg art influences the 'North West' graphic

natural and in keeping with the overall theme of the bike. I'm pleased with the way this unit turned out. It was the most difficult part of the project. Headlights are the face of a bike and consequently fine details determine the character of the face just as with us humans. To complete the Rally Raid cross over look I added a pair of lever protectors or "Puff Muffs". So called because they help to keep your hands warmer.

The artwork on the bike has all been done by my girlfriend Kay who would be pleased to assist you with any airbrush work you may fancy on your bike, helmet or jacket. She has 20 years experience and trades under the name NIGHTSHAYDE Tel. 01482 447182. The influence is North West African which complements the bike's name. The emblems on the fairing sides are Tuareg with a little compass added pointing, yes you guessed it, North West.

This is how I first set the bike up but I'm an interfering so & so and always on the look out for improvements in both style and function. Thanks to my acquisition on an XRT Gilera I have a different bike for poor weather and now green lane use so I have ponced up the Nordy a bit more. It is now wearing a twin exhaust originally made by Nigel Windys, new orange puff muffs and tapered handlebars all set off with lots of shiny bits. Whoopee !

The exhaust allows it to rev better but it doesn't ride any differently.

Oh and in case you dared to suppose the Nordy will now become a show boat I'll still be caning it around Cadwell on the track day and I'll still take it on camping holidays over the summer but I'll change to the XRT around the end of October '99 or whenever there is a lack of tarmac.

*Dick Stapley*

## Relatively OK !

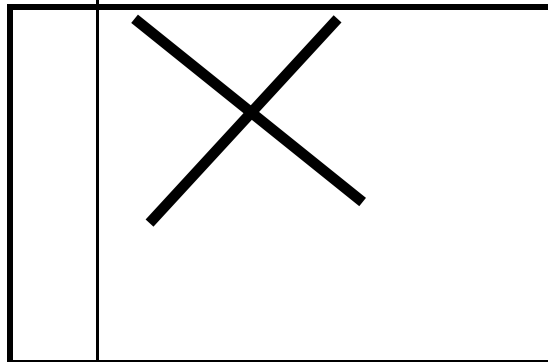
Sorry it's been so long since I last wrote, but, and I'm a bit afraid of saying this, there hasn't been much to write about. Yes my bike has been relatively OK for a while. I use the term 'OK' loosely, there have still been enough faults to make a Honda worker cry into his sushi, but, touch wood (touches the table) nothing major.

Now where should I start, more broken fairing mounts, repaired by drilling and bolting via steel plates to adjacent plastic (side panel to tailpiece), holding together well after about 10000 Kms, nice dome headed stainless screws look very well almost 'factory'.

Whilst trying to check chain tension in the garage I, err, well, slipped and, well, the bike fell over. Well I could've cried but luckily it only broke the mirror mount on the clutch side, lever and lever mount OK so I took off the other mirror and, hey presto, another 2 mph top end. Wish I'd done it ages ago ! No actually I miss me mirrors and have become very paranoid when scratching (no not that scratching) and constantly am waiting to hear that WEEEEOOO sound from behind that means, "you're scooped mate". Speaking of which, an officer of the law on a nice shiny new Pan-Euro scooped me last year for having a slightly worn rear tyre (for "slightly worn" read "baldy as a very baldy thing"). He said over and over how he couldn't believe that I felt safe on a tyre like that. I was going to tell him that I felt so safe that I had got me pegs down on the roundabout just up the road but then I thought better of it. After much bowing and scraping on my part he sent me on my way with a kind "I've never seen one of those before, so I'll know you next time. I'll be watching for you and if I see a tyre like that on that bike again I'll do you !" Thank you officer, I won't do it again, and I didn't, that summer. Speaking of tyres, I got a

pair of Continental radial 2000's for £105 from one of those mail order companies in MCN (I had these in the garage at the time of the above incident- sod's law !). I have been well impressed, the front was a 60 series so the steering was very light, maybe a bit too light, but seriously grippy, as I said I got me pegs down a few times last year, although suprisingly they didn't wear much better than BT90's. The front didn't go out of shape as badly though, there's actually a fair few miles left in it but the rear is Donald Duck.

Another thing which may have had a bearing (wait till you see this as a link) on the above steering lightness was the condition of the wheel and head bearings (good huh?). The steering over the winter has got very notchy, likewise the front wheel bearings. She's due MOT now so they are top of the list for renewal, along with the back tyre. I think she knows she's due MOT too because in the past few months the headlight bulb has blown, one indicator, instrument console light and speedo cable, have also kicked their last. I can



*X marks the position of the temperature gauge sender*

fix all of these but I need a bit of help with a couple of other problems. My temperature gauge isn't working, I don't know where the sender is, so a little help here together with a copy of the wiring diagram referring to it would be great. [See picture - the sender is on the head under the cambelt cover - Ed.]



Also my rev counter has developed a tendency to behave like a hyperactive child after a selection box and three tins of cheap pop. I start the bike up and the rev counter jumps neurotically in the corner, I rev her up to what feels like about 6000 rpm, rev counter continues its little seizure, then shoots up to 6000 rpm and dances there frantically until I slow down again, and no that's not the way I drive. Any helpful comments would be gratefully received.

Keep an eye on your sprocket carrier bearings as well as the bolts. Mine started doing a passable impression of a rose joint a few months back; (yes all of these problems occurred within a few months). Luckily I hadn't thrown out my old sprocket carrier when it disintegrated on me. A little heat and a gentle nudge with a F.B.H (F\*%\$£&\* Big Hammer) persuaded the bearing from the shagged carrier to take up residence in the current one, happy days, another few quid saved. I also found that the little washers that sit behind the cush rubbers had become a little dished allowing a certain amount of side to side play in the sprocket, probably what wrecked the bearing. Replacements were located in the box of bits at the back of the garage, you know, the box that contains the seized pliers, the bolts that don't fit anything, the two blown indicator bulbs, the front bicycle spanner and the transit brackets out of the new washing machine (just I case they're ever needed again). Now my sprockets as snug a fit as a (I'll leave that to your imagination).

At the start of the winter I got my exhaust aluminium sprayed. It lasted that winter very well but I am afraid two seasons of well salted Northern Irish roads have done for the coating again. Can stainless header pipes still be got and is there anywhere making them cheaper than Gilera ? I must give Scorpion a ring about a tail pipe. My wife and I (that sounds vaguely familiar) have sort of decided on buying a scooter so hopefully my beloved Nordie won't have to be subjected to another season of unabated corrosion.

Speaking of scooters, I read in 'Scootering' magazine (in the newsagents whilst waiting for a lift you understand), that the Gilera Runner is one of the worst handling of the new breed of "super scoots". Something to do with the entire rear end being rubber mounted to isolate the rider from vibes. Any comments ? I must say this surprised me after reading Chairman's Chat in GeN#16.

About the end of the summer last year I was servicing my pride and joy (then I went out to work on my motorbike ha ha !). No really, I went to adjust the valve clearances, but no matter how many times I checked the gaps, she still souded tappetty when warmed up. A telecom-fest of phone calls ensued, with comments ranging from "you'll have to renew the head mate", through "are you sure you've not got the exhaust clearances and intake clearances mixed up" WELL DUH !, to "its probably just a bit of end float, a lot of big singles do it". I plumped for the last one, and many hard miles later the gaps are still OK and she hasn't got any noisier. Fingers crossed (running out of fingers though).

Does anyone make an after market air filter to replace the standard one or has anyone any experience of running with K&N type filters and junking the airbox ?

I think my clutch may be on its way out, 36000 Kms, a lot of it town driving, is this about right ?

Does anyone know if the standard wiring loom will support a more powerful headlight bulb than standard ? I scared myself a few times this winter and decided fitting a pair of KC Daylighters to the bars would ruin the lines a bit so am working on the idea of converting the nose cone to take two of the little eyeball spotlights all the motor factors are selling but a stronger bulb would be cheaper and less hassle. [See Dick Stapley's article for an alternative approach - Ed.]

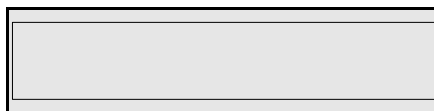
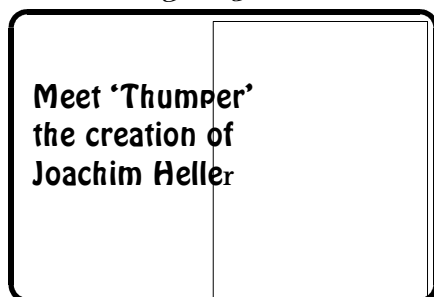
I bought myself a new crash helmet last year. I had an FM Force 1 Falappa replica 9 you know the one with the Indian feathers

that so many have tried to copy since, which I loved, but it was getting very tatty after nine years 40000 miles in all weathers and a trip to the south of France, and back of course. I wanted to get a Simpson bandit RX, but a combination of price and the fact that there was no-one this side of the pond selling them kind of put me off. Then Arai brought out this 'Maverick' helmet, understated streetfighter styling and Japanese top-line quality and a very reasonable price. Needless to say I bought it. I love it, the way the visor clicks off for washing the flies off in the cafe toilets, the way little kids look at you and then prod their parents and point (OK that's a bike thing I know). The way my head slides into the opening with the slightest of effort and then just as it's fully on it seems to grip tightly all round (OOH ! I've come over all unnecessary !). Suffice it to say its a classy piece of kit. Few complaints, it's actually quite noisy at speed, and the styling is a little too understated. I still want a Simpson or one of those new Bandit RX's, the Simpson rip-offs. But last week, just out of curiosity I tried on my old FM lid again. It was like putting on a bedside table drawer on my head in comparison. Money well spent, but I still want a Simpson.

Anyway that's enough drivel on my part, hope to see some of you over for the North west 200 this year. I know I've said it before but it's a heck of a weekend and a pretty special week if you can spare the time. I'll be there (who sang that ?). If you're coming over give me a shout.

All the best.

*Mark Gracey*



## **NORDWEST**

L 93, red, white & blue colour scheme. Very good condition - some minor cracked plastic - hence

**£2000**

Bradley Mak Essex  
Tel: 0181 478 3330 - evenings

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## **Nordwest Bodywork**

Set of tank and side panels. White/mauve colour scheme with graphics. Cracked but repairable.

### **Reasonable offers**

David Lindsey London  
Tel: 0976 404702 (mobile)

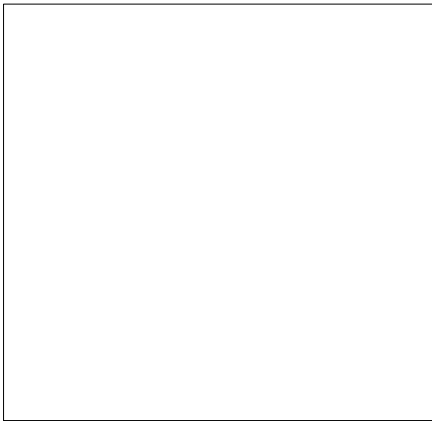
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## **300B Twin**

Track bike: good condition. With complete second bike in pieces as spares.

**£250**

Raymond Ainscoe Yorkshire  
Tel: 01943 816775



The Gilera Network web site now has a new '1999' page featuring the 'Ninety Years of Gilera' logo and Raymond Ainscoe's 'Gilera Story' from GeN#x.

This resulted in the following email from Hardy Schneider of 'Bikers Live' in Germany:

Date sent: Sun, 21 Feb 1999 18:15:23 +0100

From: HardySchneider <postmaster@bikerslive.de>

Organization: Huber Verlag GmbH & Co KG

To: Webmaster@gilera.co.uk

Subject: 90 years Gilera

Dear Sirs,

I want to know, whether there will be any festivities or celebrations concerning the 90th anniversary of Gilera this year.

Asking old fans in Italy has brought no success. Can it be, that the Milwaukee factory celebrates every year

anything that doesn't matter and the oldest name in European motorcycles is forgotten by it's own manufacturers?

I'm thinking about planning an exhibition and meeting together with the German Gilera IG and a technical museum. But actually that should happen at the Monza race track, for example, near the old factory. So if you know any events about that, I would be pleased if you let me know.

Best regards,

Stephan H. Schneider,  
editor

Naturally, I had to agree with him that it is a scandal that the 'factory' have yet to show any recognition of the significance of 1999. I have e-mailed [press@piaggio.com](mailto:press@piaggio.com) without reply and the latest issue of Piaggiornale (the first of 1999) makes no mention of the anniversary whatsoever. We will be making the most of it at the BMF show (the organisers were interested to hear about it) and the Classic Mechanics Show at Stafford in October.



The latest version of the linked rings site map at [www.gilera.com](http://www.gilera.com) is really good, but once again no real mention of the anniversary. In fact, despite confirming that the marque was founded in 1909, the text refers to 80 years of 'racing history'.

I have had several enquiries recently from Runner owners and hope that more articles for 'The GeN' will be forthcoming about the super scooters. Do they really not handle too well compared with the opposition ?

Enquires continue to arrive by e-mail from all over the globe and a fair proportion result in a new membership. My knowledge of the older machines is not good enough to answer some of the questions but I am always able to refer people to Bob Wright for spares.

One German enthusiast is keen to find out how to make a Saturno go faster as his message to the G-Net mailing list explains :

*I have 1001 questions .*

*My name is Felix Hasselbrink and I live in the north of Germany. I have two Saturnos. One since a few years - it's a normal street bike. The other one I bought last year at the Dutch Ducati Clubraces in Assen. It is tuned and lightened. (98 Piston, 558 ccm, Carillo-rod, bigger valves (37/32), head flowed, cams modified for longer valve timing, 2 exhaust pipes) The bike has 50 PS at the rear wheel. I am thinking about changing to a 102 Piston to get 604 ccm. Has someone any experiences with this?*

*Also I'm thinking about changing the frame to use a cylinder head with two carburettors (e.g. Nordwest or RC 600). Has somebody done this already? Can you give me some tips?*

*Also I'm thinking about changes for the fork and the rear damper. What do you think works well?*

*I'm always looking for interesting parts - like tuning parts, magnesium-sidecovers for the engine, technical information and so on.*

I have filled him in with my experience of 102 Pistons ! PSF



**The pitch and marquee are booked for the BMF Show. This year is a special one for us so I would like as many bikes as possible on the stand - especially the older models to celebrate the 90th Anniversary. So if there is any chance you can bring along your classic Saturno, Arcore, 50RS, Giubeleo (in fact anything older than 1989!) please get in touch. In view of the special circumstances as well as getting free entry to the show you will receive a contribution towards travelling expenses.**

**This is a really good opportunity to meet other Gilera enthusiasts, as well as take advantage of the amazing range of bike accessories and clothing on offer at special show prices.**

**Please give me a ring to reserve a pass - PSF**



I hope you have all been out there polishing your bikes ready for all that riding that you are about to do now the weather is improving. If you have been using your bike through the winter you may have noticed that it has been getting filthy. The roads have been very wet and very dirty for along time, water will have got in everywhere so there are some things you should be checking.

Every electrical connection needs to be unplugged, checked and sprayed with WD 40.

Suspension links need to be dismantled, cleaned and lubricated.

Brake callipers need to be removed, cleaned, piston action checked, pads checked. While you are there check the disks for wear and clean any dirt out of the holes. Pads and disks have probably been wearing faster than usual because of the amount of dirt they have been collecting.

Measure the chain for wear, check the sprockets and lube the chain.

Lubricate all the moving parts like the levers and cables.

## NEWS FROM THE FACTORY

I have a few bits of news about the current Gilera products from Piaggio.

The Runner scooters are selling well and new versions are due in the shops around May. We already have the 50cc Runner SP which has an asymmetric paint scheme and a rear disk brake. The 125 and 180 will appear in this format. I have recently been to Italy and I saw what I was told was a production Runner 180 with a rear disc, an adjustable rear shock absorber and restyled instruments. It also had a larger fuel tank

which had necessitated the battery being moved to the rear of the helmet storage compartment.

The 50cc six speed trail bike, strangely called the 'H@k' will not be imported and nor will the Cougar 125cc custom bike. The Cougar is not bad as baby customs go but the 125 market in Britain is not large and Piaggio have decided that they would be unlikely to be able to sell enough to justify importing it. I think the good thing about the Cougar is that it shows Piaggio are prepared to develop motorcycles. Let's wait and see what happens next.

A couple of other interesting things I saw in Italy were a rather old prototype GFR engine which was fitted with fuel injection, I have no idea how it performed. Also I saw the Piaggio 50cc direct injection two stroke engine in pieces and also was able to watch one being tested. The exhaust pipe would glow red within a minute of full throttle running! Two-strokes don't normally do that, in fact traditional two-strokes can't do that. This engine uses a conventional carburettor to feed the system but fuel injection is an option. Later this year there will be a 125 and 180cc version that should appear in UK, maybe at the NEC.

The GFR CDI problem has now been resolved. The faulty CDI units have been recalled and ones that actually work are now in stock. It took a while because Piaggio had to get the manufacturer to identify the problem and then make a new batch.

There is a large and expensive (Italian text) book about Gilera that has been out of print for some time. It has now reappeared, not just a reprint but a new edition that now covers all the bikes up to the GFR. Just as soon as I can track down a copy I will buy it so watch this space for a review.

Replica castings for the original Saturno are being produced by a German enthusiast, so if you find yourself needing some crankcases or what ever contact:

Albert Sauter  
Schellingstrasse 16  
D-71229 LEONBERG  
Germany  
Phone: 0049 7152 25352 or 25247  
Fax: 0049 7152 25854

This guy is a talented enthusiast and not a professional business. I do not know too much about him at the moment but if I learn more I will obviously pass it on.

## **CHECKING THE CLUTCH. Northwest – Saturno – RC600 etc.**

You may be aware that there have been a few cases of clutches coming apart with serious results. It seems to be a possible problem for early Nordwests. The problem is the three countersunk screws that hold the clutch to the gear come loose and shear or fall out. You won't get much warning that things are falling apart.

You may want to consider checking it next time you do an oil change.

Wait till the engine is cold before you remove the cover or it may distort.

Disconnect the clutch cable.

Remove the right hand foot pedal & brake lever. On the RC 600 you can just remove the bolt that retains the front of the sub frame this will let it drop down, out of the way.

If you have a kick start you will need to remove the lever, disconnect the cable and remove the return stop screw. This is a large "Allen" bolt that you will find by looking at the back of the engine from the left side, it is more or less in the middle in front of the shock absorber.

Remove the cover bolts and carefully remove the cover, if you are careful / lucky the gasket will all stick to one side and will not be damaged. If it breaks order a new one now.

Carefully remove the kick start shaft (if you have one).

Now the book says "Remove the circlip from the clutch centre and then pull out the thrust bearing". I could not get the thrust pad out of the bearing so I could not use a bearing puller on mine and the bearing was tight in the clutch. I had to take out the clutch springs and then remove the clutch centre to press the bearing out. Use a tubular sleeve and do not knock it out because it could easily be damaged. The reason for taking out the thrust bearing is so that you can get a socket in to remove the clutch retaining nut. You will have to refit the centre to lock the two halves of the clutch together before you can remove the nut. There is a locking tool for the crank but you can lock the gears together by jamming something in between them. Not very technical but it will work. You must use something reasonably soft, I would recommend a piece of copper, a replacement soldering iron tip would do. Do not use wood or a screwdriver. Wood will splinter and steel tools will probably damage the gear teeth.

With the nut removed you can slide the complete clutch off and examine the screws on the back. If you find any loose I would suggest that you change them all and Locktite them. You will get good quality countersunk "Allen" bolts from a nut and bolt supplier, you should find one in your local Yellow Pages.

While you have the clutch out you may as well check the plates for wear and also make sure that the slots have not been damaged by the plate tangs.

Putting it back together is obvious. If you have a kick start then be aware that the drag spring goes in the locating place at the bottom and not the other one that looks as if it was made for it. Put the cover on and then press the kick start down about half way and insert the return stop bolt.



## **WATER PUMP PROBLEM RC600**

How come I have had trouble with my water pump? I asked Bob Wright how many he sells, not many. So I don't think it is a common problem.

I have replaced the pump in my RC600 twice in 30000km. It has not leaked but the bearings have failed.

The second pump failed after only 10000km and about a year. I took it apart to find out what was going on.

The shaft runs on two sealed for life ball races, they had seized and the shaft had been running in them. I took the covers off the bearings and found them full of a hard black cake that was stopping the balls moving. I washed this out with WD40 and the races were fine and spun well. My conclusion is that they use the wrong grease and it does not cope with the heat.

The only way to save it would be to fit new bearings before using it. Once the damage becomes apparent it is too late to save it.

## **TWO YEARS WITH THE RC600**

I have been commuting on the RC for over two years now, it has done 36000km and I am really enjoying it. As I mentioned above, the water pump has failed twice, which is a bit annoying but apart from that it has been reliable.

I have changed the head races, silencer and chain and sprockets, it is on it's second set of tyres, original brake pads, none of the panels have cracked and the starter clutch is still fine. I did fit a kick start when I got it and that has proved very effective. Also the handlebar

mounted choke conversion has proved worth it.

Originally I ran it on four star and then for a year I used unleaded. I was not really aware of any great difference and it always started easily. A couple of months ago I used four star again and I was surprised how much sweeter it seemed, smoother idle and crisper pickup. So now I am using leaded all the time.

The finish has survived well and the engine still cleans up even after being used through a couple of wet and salty winters.

Fuel consumption has remained fairly consistent at around 53-54 mpg. That is mainly driving in and around London.

It has never used any oil and there is no sign of any leaks. I have always used semi-synthetic Silkolene.

I have been threatening to do a serious re-styling job on it ever since I got it and it will happen one day. It's ok like it is but I would prefer a lower seat with bigger tyres and brakes. The brakes it has are ideal for the trail tyres and it is not too difficult to get the front tyre squealing. A larger fuel tank would be nice for going places.

## **LOOKING BACK**

I am slowly collecting literature when I find it. I hope that this collection will prove a useful bit of history in time.

There are some interesting facts and figures.

Back in the early '50s there was a somewhat forgotten single cylinder four stroke 250 called the Nettuno (a baby Saturno). The owners hand book gives details of the sport and touring version.

**Sport:**

6.8:1 compression  
14 hp  
6000 rpm max.

**Touring:**

6:1 compression  
11 hp  
5200 rpm max.

Both are claimed to do 2.8 ltrs per 100km.

In the '70s the 250 was not a popular size. Gilera were offering a smaller four stroke single, the 175 Extra. The engine was still slightly over square and compression was still only 6.5:1 with a maximum of 6000 rpm. 9.1 hp was claimed at 4500 rpm. This meagre sounding engine gave a claimed top speed of 115 kh/hr (72mph) and fuel consumption of 2.9 ltr. per 100 km. (94 mpg)

When Motor Cycle tested the B300 twin in 1954 they got an overall consumption of 90 mpg from the 12.5 hp, 70 mph super smooth engine.

In 1964 they tested the 123cc Six Day Special single which also gave a genuine 70 mph top speed and was happy to cruise at 55-60. This bike was returning better than 120 mpg. Why they called a bike with clip ons a Six Day Special will remain a mystery.

Motor Cyclist Illustrated tested the less sporty 123 Extra and got 145 mpg! "Less than a half penny a mile" they said. (Hands up, who remembers £.s.d.?)

These little bikes were giving creditable performance with excellent reliability and the 125's were usually compared to "other 250s" They were reasonably priced, so how come they were not more popular? A clue comes when you look for the importers name, it is different on almost every road test.

In a time when production road bikes are doing almost 200 mph these small thirty five year olds do not sound very amazing. Gilera were showing others how to do it and they carried on doing that right up till the Nordwest, when it came out people were not really sure what it was. Ten years later similar bikes are popular from many manufactures and if you look at the Nordwests styling and

performance it is still up to the job. Ah well it just goes to show that having a good product is not all you need.

I will always appreciate any Gilera stuff you can pass on so please put it in the post or give me a call. Thanks.

*David Champion*



As attendance at Annual General Meetings has not exactly boomed over the last few years the time has come to try a change of venue.

Looking at the membership list, somewhere around Oxford ought in theory be closer to more members than Lincolnshire. A date which doesn't clash with the British GP or other big event might also be a good idea.

I would be glad to receive suggestions for a suitable location. Whilst it doesn't need to be in a pub (a village hall or similar is often a good choice), it helps if there is one nearby to adjourn to once the formal business is over. Our finances will run to a modest outlay on the hire of a function room.

So if you know of somewhere that fits the bill give me a call (once you have checked they are OK with the idea). A Sunday during July is favourite, and they are unlikely to have to accommodate more than 25 people. PSF



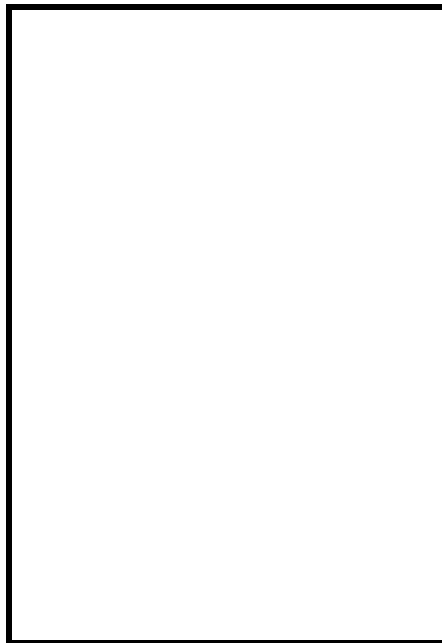


## A GILERA WHAT ?

Robin Sims kindly drew my attention to an article in the March edition of 'Streetfighters' magazine which featured the Nordwest-engined Saturno built by John Rushworth currently residing in my garage.

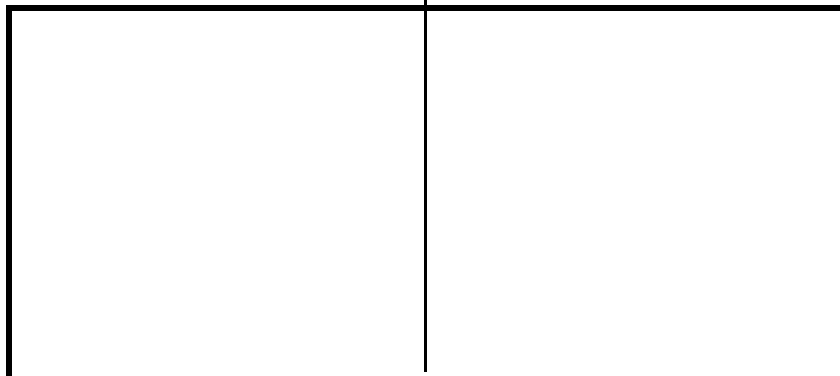
The prose is a little lurid and inexact for my liking :-

"The Gilera Saturno, far back in the mists of ancient time, was a famous Italian sportsbike back in the days when "sportsbike" applied to single-cylinder sidevalve drippers with no rear suspension and a front end resembling the handiwork of a drunken gate builder..... Until the mid Eighties that is, when the newly revamped Gilera riding high (?) on the sales success of the Nordwest supermotard (still one of the sexiest



motorcycles ever invented) **[no arguments there - Ed.]**, decided to resurrect their most famous bike and give it an up to date twist." **[Ignoring a) the rather more famous 'four' and b) the fact that the Saturno came before the Nordwest ! - Ed.]**

The piece has some nice photos including those included here. Would you buy a used bike from this man ????





No 'snail mail' this issue, or even any contributions direct to 'The Gen' ( Mark Gracey's letter deserved an article ) so I have taken the liberty of reproducing some contributions to the G-Net internet mailing list:

 **Joachim Heller**

Hi all you Gen'eers out there

Maybe some of you will remember my name :) After this little 'off' last may, I had a bikeless time. Just at Christmas time I throw away this dammed blue crutches (they hadn't red ones). Until this time it wasn't a big problem to have no bike, but then....

Because Saturno #uno didn't look very well, I decided to store the rest of it and buy another one. Everybody thought that finding one, would be hard work, but surprise... ONE little announcement in the 'motalia' magazine (thanks Felix) and I found Saturno #due.

OK it wasn't so beautiful like #uno. It seems to be a bike for driving, not for cleaning, polishing, working ..... like mine was. Price ? If you \*must\* have a bike you didn't like to talk about such non relevant things :) It's build in '89 and has 7000km on the clock. It was only 2 years in use and the rest of the time, it was stored as a replacement bike for racing. The engine has the big piston and some other things done. And it had never been running with this engine. The rest wasn't in mint conditions, so there is a lot of work to do in one of the next winters.

But for now, I would like to use it like it is. Of course some things are still left to do,

like changing the belt, replacing the brake fluid... When I bought it, there was no possibility to run the engine. No battery in and no kick starter lever mounted. It might be a risk, but the guy looks reliable to me :) At home I searched for my old battery, but of course it has gone. Kick starter lever plugged on and ... Nothing ??? Seems to be, that there is only the shaft in, but connected with nothing. Seems to be that I have to open the cover to have a look what's in there (Jeroen wasn't it you who has somehow had trouble with the kick starter? Any advice ?) Next was to buy a new battery. Result... clonk and nothing else. I plugged in my old starter engine .... Winn...winn...winn..bang Nothing besides some backfiring :) OK what else would one expect after such a long time. But I decided to have a look in this other starter engine. No surprise I would like to say, a starter engine with \*nothing\* in it couldn't crank :) Buy a used bike and enjoy it :))

Now the good things. Like said before the engine has the 98mm piston. As far as I could see from the outside, the inlet ports have been ground to a bigger diameter. This part of the valve guides which normally could be seen in the inlet has also been cut away. [ I have warned Joachim about John Rushworth's experience with cut-off valve guides - Ed.] The carb has a diameter of about 41mm. The valves? I don't know. The guy from which I bought the bike mentioned that there are the standard valves in. But who did make such a lot of work without changing the valves? Maybe he was a bit confused. I also would be, if I had such an amount of bikes in my garage(s) :) Maybe I could compare them to my old engine to find out what is in there.

The carb jetting is standard besides an #145 main jet. Any help with re-jetting is appreciated :) The engine really hasn't ever been running, because you can see natural aluminium everywhere inside. No black burnt oil.

That's it for now. Seems to be that I have to do some work before I could go back to the road on two wheels :)

Ciao and have some fun, Joachim

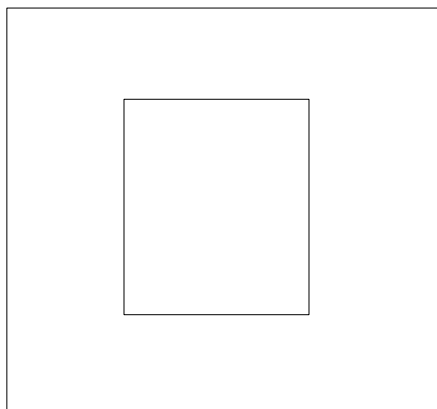
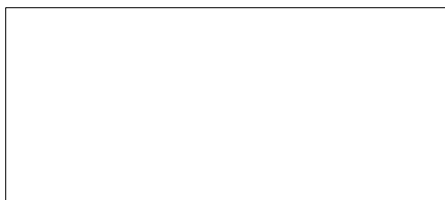
PS the guy from which I bought #due is working on a 660ccm engine for his race Saturno (BTW with a nice aluminium swing arm). Parts are complete, he has only to stick them together. He suspected some problems with the cooling and he also isn't sure if it will last (at least he isn't sure how \*long\* it will last)

### **Peter Hardy**

Peter Hardy aged 40. Living in Newbury Berkshire, UK..

On the verge of being single again. 3 kids, 2 living with me. Ride a Gilera Nordwest as my daily transport to work. 12 miles each way. I have a Triumph Bonnie awaiting renovation. I stripped it 16 years ago for a winter restoration and got married instead. Also in to Citroen 2CV's (sad I know) and older Mercedes. I am a mechanical fitter by trade but haven't been on the tools for 10 years, at present employed as a technical author.

I got the Gilera as a freebie basket case and got it sorted remarkably easily considering. So far it's been perfectly reliable. I'm a bit worried that daily use in all weathers is going to destroy the bike so am considering buying a Honda CX or Kawasaki 750 for daily transport and keeping the Gilera for weekend fun. Also a subscriber to the "Thumper Mailing List"



The date for the track day this year is confirmed as June 11. **Note that the AGM will not be held on the same weekend - see page 17.** This has raised some problems for us so far as providing scrutineers and sighting lap marshals is concerned. Most of the stalwarts who have helped out in previous years will be at the TT, on holiday or teaching on that day.

This may force a change in the arrangements and Gilera Network members may have to pay the full entry fee ( unless they are also Morini Riders Club members as several of you are ! ).

The event, will I am sure, be every bit as enjoyable as ever, and as soon as I have regulations and entry forms I will mail them out to everyone as including them in GeN#21 will be too late. - PSF

David Champion has amassed an impressive array of manuals, brochures and other literature for machines of the marque. The entries on this page give you some idea of what is available. This material is not for sale, but David can arrange for you to have access to it. It will be published in its entirety once a suitable format has been devised.

125 (1980's)	Recognition sheet				
125 5V	Road test		English		
125 5V Arcore	Parts Catalogue	Gilera	Italian	Photocopy x2 (prefix # 111)	
125 5V Arcore	Workshop Manual	Gilera	Italian	Photocopy x2	
125 6 Day Special	Road test	Motor Cycle	English	9/7/64	
125 Apache	Sales Brochure	Gilera	Italian	red, grey seat	
125 Apache	Sales Brochure	Gilera	Italian	red, grey seat	
125 Arizona Hawk	Sales brochure	Gilera	Italian	black / red	
125 Crono	Colour 5x7	Gilera		mauve / white / black	
125 Crono	Maintenance handbook			Italian	
125 Crono	Owners hand book			Multi	
125 Crono	Sales brochure	Gilera	English	mauve / white / black	
125 Custom	Press Release		English		
125 CX	Owners Handbook	Gilera	Multi	blue / orange	
125 CX	Owners Inst.book	Gilera	English		
125 CX	Road Test	Motorcycle 4/91	English		
125 CX	Sales Brochure	Gilera	Italian	black / orange	
125 CX	Sales Brochure	Gilera	Italian	black / orange	
125 Extra	Road test	Motorcyle Mech.	English	Aug'67	
125 ER-RRT-FB	Workshop Manual			Italian	
125 Freestyle	Maintenance handbook	Gilera	Italian		
125 Freestyle	Owners hand book	Gilera	Italian		
125 Freestyle	Sales Brochure	Gilera	Italian	two tone blue	
125 Freestyle	Sales Brochure	Gilera	Italian	two tone blue	
125 GFR	Colour 5x7	Gilera		reace rep colours	
125 GFR	Colour photo		Italian		
125 GFR	Maintenance handbook	Gilera	English		
125 GFR	Owners hand book	Gilera	Multi	5 copies	
125 GFR	Road test	Secondhand Bk	English		
125 GFR	Sales brochure	Gilera	English	race rep colours	
125 GFR	Sales brochure	Gilera	Italian	race rep colours	
125 GFR	Spares Catalogue		English		
125 GFR	Sticker set		-		
125 GFR	Sticker set		-		
125 GFR	Test comparison	Fastbikes	English		
125 GFR	Workshop Manual		English		
125 GFR	Article	Italian			
125 GR 1	Parts Catalogue	Gilera	Drawings	from 1977 catalogue	
125 GR 1	Work shop manual	Gilera	English	original. (p/n. 171652)	
125 KK	Sales brochure	Gilera	Italian	red / white. In sales book	