

Inside This Issue:

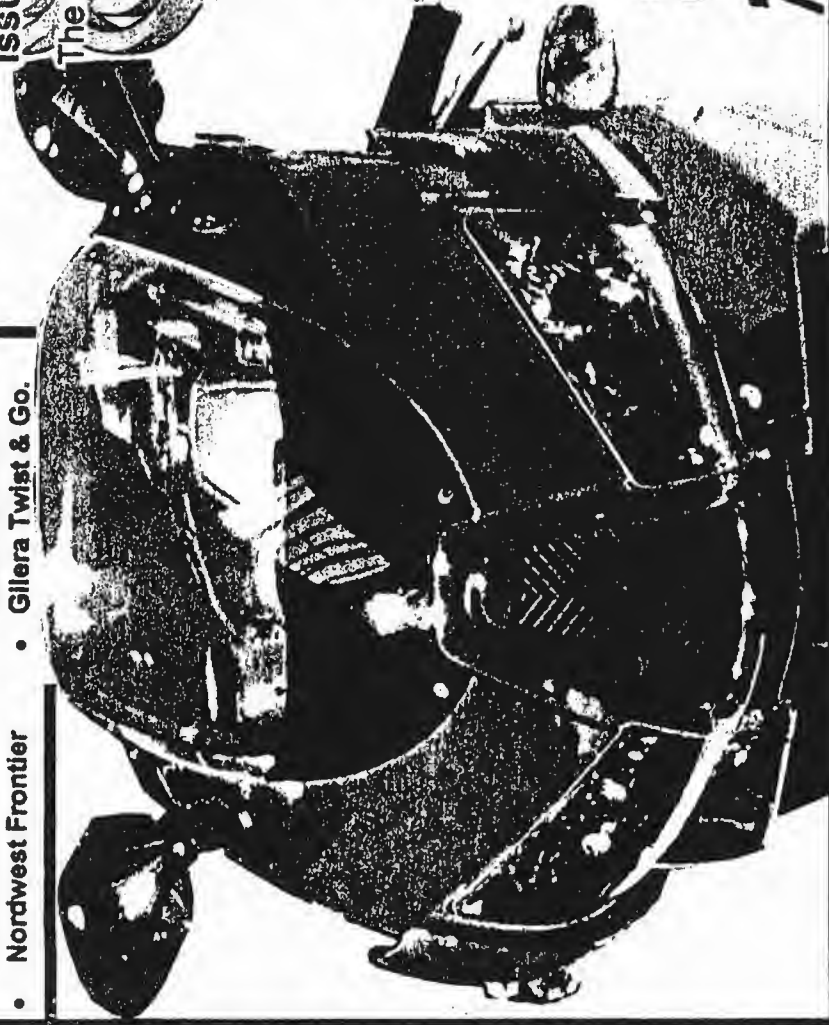
- Chairmans Chat
- BMF News
- My Nordwest
- Stafford Show
- Nordwest Frontier
- Gilera Twist & Go.

THE GEN

Issue 31—December 2001

The Gilera Network Newsletter
(For Gilera Enthusiasts)

Patron: Geoff Duke OBE



GILERA
Issue 31 December 2001
NETWORK



GILERA

The GeN Cover is sponsored by

BOB WRIGHT MOTORCYCLES

4 ORCHARD STREET
WESTON-SUPER-MARE
AVON
BS23 1RQ

Spare parts supplied for Gileras from
the 50's to the 90's

50 cc and mopeds, 125/150/175 four-stroke,
98 cc two-stroke - even 300 twins!
Two-stroke TG/GR1 plus MX/Enduro 125.
As well as Saturno, NordWest, RC600 and GFR



Tel: 01934 413847
Fax: 01934 642221

www.bobwrightmotorcycles.co.uk



Editorial

It's the motorcycle quiet season again. So not a lot is happening. There's been the public display of the new Gilera 600 Super Sport at the NEC Motorcycle and Scooter Show. There was also the usual Gilera models on show the DNA 50cc now comes with carbon fibre style instruments on certain models (it's the cheep sticky back style looking stuff you can buy from Halfords to stick on a very tasteful Ford Escort XR3i). Apart from the sticky back buying spree at Halford it looks as though all of Piaggio/Gilera's money for 2001 has been spent on the 600 Super Sport and a poorly executed launch of Piaggio's fault ridden X9 500. No one even bothered to clean the rust off the cut away display engines. All this was swept away with lots of loud music and very eye catching dancers.

Any offer of material for inclusion in the forthcoming issues of THE GeN will be gratefully welcomed.

I wish all Network members a merry Christmas and a happy new year with a tendency to write the odd article for THE GeN.

By Gary Cooper

Chairman's Chat

AGM

First thing I must do is apologise for not getting the AGM sorted out yet. The last few months have been a bit chaotic. My Mum has been ill for some time and she died in November so the Gilera Network has not been very high on my list of priorities recently. I have still got a lot to sort out but I will get the AGM mail out organised as soon as I can, honest.

Nordwest Fuel Tank Fillers

Nordwest fuel tank repair kits are now available from Bob Wright. He has two versions, a plastic and an aluminium one, both are glued into place and seem to work very well. Important thing is to use a glue that will not be affected by petrol. Bob has good advise about this.

Nordwest Water Pumps

Water pumps have not been available for a long time and with no alternative this has meant bikes off the road. Piaggio placed an order with a manufacturer in December 2000 and they received a delivery of pumps in November 2001! So there is now at last a plentiful supply. Bob Wright has them in stock.

But what goes wrong with the pump.

GILERA NETWORK

The first you will know is an intermittent squeal that will get worse until it is loud and continuous. The reason for this is the coolant seal leaking slightly and allowing coolant to get into the sealed ball races that support the pump shaft. Eventually the coolant gets through the bearing seals and turns the grease into a solid cake. The bearing stops going round and the squeal you hear is the shaft spinning in the bearing.

It is possible to press the pump apart and changing the bearings would be easy but you are unlikely to find a source for the complex coolant seal. Bob Wright has found a company in Italy who can rebuild them but this takes a while and it is not that cheap.

The Bike Show, NEC

Piaggio had their largest ever stand this year and I think it was the best looking stand at the show. It certainly had some of the best "dolly birds" some handing out brochures and some dancers. The non stop disco did get a bit wearing but the disco dancers continually attracted a bigger crowd than the bikes! Sort of selling scooters by subliminal advertising. All these people will go home and next time they see a girl dancing they will have an unexplainable urge to by Gilera. So that's OK then.

As promised the new 600 Supersport was on show and everyone thought it looked the business. Only trouble is that they are not due in the shops until October 2002 and the way things

go that will probably mean 2003 before they arrive. Let's hope people will be prepared to wait. It is the best looking 600 around and should have the performance to back it up. To support the 600 Piaggio had a display of old Gileras borrowed from the factory museum.

A late model 500 four, ** 125 twin, 250 GP V-twin and the RC750. Also Poggiali's 125 racer along with his leathers and helmet.

That's a lot of bikes for a scooter manufacture. It did mean that Ogrì and his mates could come onto the Piaggio stand for the first time without being embarrassed.

It was great to see the old bikes. Just amazing how small Poggiali's 125 is and also how low the ** 125 is. The RC750 looks huge and heavy, actually the seat is no higher than my RC600 and it weighs much less than you would believe. How the hell did those guys ride that all day flat out across the roughest terrain they could find and then do it again the next day and the next? Real live super heroes I reckon. The 750 engine was just one more Gilera innovation that was way ahead of its time, it was reliably producing 75 bhp in 1992. It was a long time before other big singles rivalled that. They were talking about 90 bhp from it with fuel injection and that still does not happen. They could still be beating the world with that engine if things had been different. There were no other new Gileras on show. A new colour scheme for the Runner and DNA but everything

carries on the same for next year for next year.

No H@K or GSM. Piaggio had said they would not be importing them anymore and sure enough they are not.

We were hoping to see the prototype 850cc V-twin engine that was shown at Milan but it did not turn up. This engine is intended to be a range from 650 to 1000cc and the bits can be built onto a crankcase that contains a conventional gearbox or a crankcase that has CVT transmission for use in a super scooter.

Maybe by next years NEC they will have a bike ready to show and that could mean a big twin in the shops during 2003.

50cc 2 stroke Catalytic engines.

The Runner 50 has now been re-homologated the scooter is generally unchanged but the engine now has a catalytic exhaust.

Talking of the 50cc two stroke cat engines; DNA, ICE etc. They do run fairly weak and if they are a bit too weak it can have a dramatic affect on the Cat.

The effect will be most noticeable on the ICE because it has a short silencer without an end can. You may find the end of the main silencer getting very hot even red hot and a flame may be seen at night coming from the outlet. A

weak mixture will make the exhaust hotter and add that to a cat that is already getting very hot and even a little 50 can make a big silencer glow!

The answer is fit a bigger main jet. You can prove this will cure it by unplugging the choke unit and taking it for a ride. The choke turns off electrically so un-plugging it will make the engine run rich and should cure the fault.

The bikes we get have Dellorto carburettors and main jets are very easy to get. Standard main jet is a #56 fit a #60. There are only two types of main jet, you need the larger thread type.

You should find the silencer cools down and the top end running is much sweeter.

By David Champlon



My Nordwest

My particular story starts about 4 years ago when after a decade of owning a Triumph Bonneville I decided I would like something modern to run along side it. Not wanting to part with my Bonnie, my budget was limited to £3000. I remembered an article I'd read in performance bikes magazine a few years ago about a Nordwest, Benji Straw had started bringing them in unofficially, so I dug out some back copies and found the article I was interested in the February 92 issue (other road tests I've seen appear in the following magazines: Performance Bikes August 93, Motorcycle International November 91, Superbike December 91, and Bike December 91 and October 93)

This machine really appealed to me, I loved the supermotard look. the wheel sizes offered modern (i.e. sticky) tyre options, the engine promised all the performance I wanted, relying on my license for a living I wasn't interested in absurd top speeds. I preferred to get my thrills through the twisties also this bike being a newish model it promised reliability. The more I thought about a Nordwest the more I liked the idea, so mind made up I started looking through the classifieds.

After a fruitless 3 months I was beginning to wonder if I would ever come across one of these machines (does

anyone know how many Nordies were imported into the country?). Soon after I came across a Nordie for sale at Riders of Bridgewater in Somerset, the fact this was the other end of the country didn't really deter me. This bike was a 95 on an M plate, mileage was a reasonable 14,000KM, two previous owners and finished in pink and black!! sorry magenta and grey. Riders sent me some photographs of the bike along with the previous owners phone number (he had traded it in for a Buell). I rang this guy and he was really helpful, he told me he had no problems with the bike, he also had some spares for sale and he informed me of the GEN I wish I had know of the club before. Well seeing as this was the only Nordie I had seen for sale, it did sound ok plus being a later model (I had always wanted the latest model I could afford) I decided to buy it unseen. I've never regretted my decision but then Riders are a big reputable outfit, I also bought off the previous owner a workshop manual and a flywheel puller, he also sent me some copies of the GEN. so deal done I awaited for Riders to deliver, unfortunately while attempting to start the machine prior to delivery the starter motor packed in so it was two weeks later with a new starter motor fitted riders finally delivered my Nordwest.

First impressions, it looked fantastic in the flesh so to speak, and it was with a lot of excitement that next morning I got to ride it for the first time, or rather I would have if I could have started it. It just didn't want to know, I phoned the previous owner who informed me of the black art of starting a Nordwest,

which in all probability hadn't been used for many weeks. So battery charged and carb drained it fired first stab of the button I could have kissed it (due to relief at not having bought a dud).

First riding impressions were generally good except it seemed a very revvy engine for a big single that is in town I always seemed to be chasing gears more two stroke than four. Also I had an almighty slide exiting one corner quite hard. Back at home I had a close look at the rear tyre it was a Pirelli MP7 150 section with all the consistency of a breeze block, very old and very hard. I also noticed the chain and sprockets were on their last legs, great! I could feel the start of a beautiful relationship beginning

It was at this time i got to make the acquaintance of Bob Wright, he sold me a new chain and sprockets. After reading an article about Nordwest gearing in performance bikes I went for a 15T front sprocket, I bought a new Michelin Hi-sport 160 to match the front. After these were fitted the bike was transformed, good power all through the range with less gear changes, still revvy. Though, making its best power at the higher end and rock solid handling at loopy angles of lean.

So I settled into life with a Nordwest, I got an Optimate battery charger, I chose this because of the extra wiring you get with it which enables you to connect to the battery permanently, this is very useful when the battery is hidden away underneath the bodywork. Now I forgot to mention that

when I got the bike the petrol cap had been previously over tightened, yeah you've guessed it, I had tried different glues to effect a repair but nothing seemed to. last more than a few weeks. then I had a brainwave, I removed the thread totally from the filler neck, this left me with a full circle of thread to work with. i drilled two holes in this opposite each other, then after sticking a rag in the filler neck (to stop debris finding its way into the petrol tank) I used this as a template to drill two holes in the filler neck, then after roughing up the inside of the thread and the outside of the filler neck i applied some glue and stuck

the thread onto the neck, and lining up the holes put two pop rivets through it. The petrol cap fitted perfectly once I had gently filed the high spots off the rivets, job done. I did this repair about three years ago and I've had no problems with it since. This was the state of the Nordie when I took it to the Isle of Man for the 98 TT. The wet one!! (If you were there you'll know what i mean) all it did was rain, the whole week! The Nordie ran perfectly mind and in the odd half hour when it didn't rain it proved to be perfect for the Isle of Man roads. Shortly after my return from the island I decided to have the Nordie painted, this had been in mind even before I bought the bike. I fancied cashing in shamelessly on its Italian heritage and painting it bright red with white highlights along the lines of an SPS. A mate in the trade obliged, he did a beautiful job in flawless Ducati red.

By Colin Davies

Nordwest Frontier



Well I dare say there hasn't been such a presence at the Motorcycle Show by Gilera for many a year, if ever! I was lured to the NEC by the possibility of seeing the new v-twin motor and also vain hopes of getting my leg over a Voxan, although given their financial problems it was not surprising they were not in evidence.

The display of competition Gileras was great. The 750 desert racer was awesome and the 250 GP bike really did look a lot like a GFR. I have to say the 600 supersport left me cold - beautiful, but ultimately boring. In the absence of Voxan I tried just three machines for size. The Suzuki SV650 would be a logical choice and it did have a very nice 'sack of potatoes' riding position, but I fancy something with a bit more go while I am still able. The R1100 R was not as high as I

thought it might be but that tank is really monstrous. So, once again, I found myself drawn to the V11 sport. A three year warranty sounds pretty good and the 'naked' styling is pleasing to my eye at least. Dave Richardson the U.S. Guzzi guru rates it the best ever from Mandello and if it gives the same unburstable feel as the Mille it won't be half bad. There is just no more room left in the garage so logic dictates that the 'Norturno' has to go hence the advert in this issue.

The last two hillclimbs of the season didn't produce any particularly good times and the October Prescott meeting was the wettest event I can remember for a long time. The 604 is getting increasingly difficult to start from cold without the aid of a jump from a car battery, and the graunching noises from the starter clutch definitely indicate the need for replacement before next season. New tyres are also called for and so I might even get her MoT'd again to scrub them in (probably Dunlop 207 GPs as recommended by Robin). She should be OK on the road so long as I don't use the massive grunt so much but let her rev out more on part throttle to prevent cooling system pressurisation.

This year Mike had plenty of volunteers for bikes to be displayed on the Gilera Network stand at the Classic Mechanics show so only the 604 went to Stafford. For a change however, she was part of a display by the National Hill Climb Association along with Robin Sim's KTM and Husky and a Yamaha 250. We had a lot of interest in "the least expensive motorcycle

sport" and Robin's dad's videos of hill climbing drew in plenty of spectators. I understand Bob Wright was there although adopting a pretty low profile.

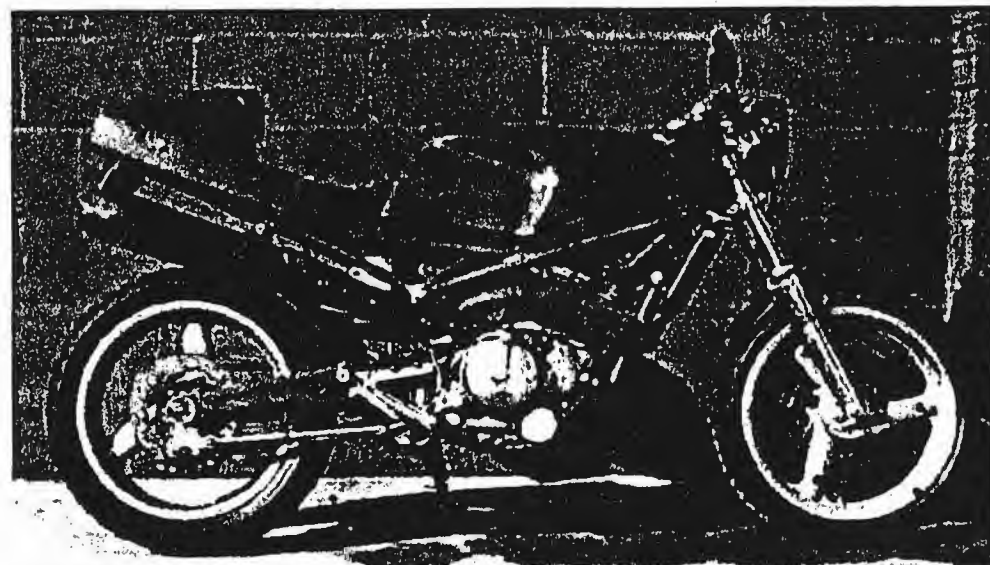
Anyway, best wishes to everyone for the festive season and lets hope a new committee can be assembled for next year.

By Pete Fisher

FOR SALE

Nordwest/Saturno

Late spec. Nordwest motor (inductive ignition etc.) in '91 'J' 'naked' Saturno. Built by John Rushworth in '93 and then rebuilt by him in '96. Very much a cafe racer - no indicators and has a push bike (accurate) speedo. Gas flowed head, twin CR35 Keihin smoothbore carbs = 50 BHP at the back wheel of a significantly lighter than standard Saturno, hence geared for 125 mph. Elliot tachometer with shift indicator. Much polished alloy and immaculate paintwork. Not certain of mileage, but very low (I have only done about 3000 miles in the 5 years I have had it). Cam belt replaced last April. MoT to May.
If I had the space I would keep it forever!
£2250 Pete Fisher 01902 337626



News from the BMF

Bike Tax Reduction Welcomed

After years of campaigning for proper recognition of the role that powered two wheelers (PTWs) can play in reducing traffic congestion, news that the Government is launching a consultation process on reducing Vehicle Excise Duty for small PTWs has been welcomed by the British Motorcyclists Federation.

Having helped the Labour party with its 'Bike to Basics' strategy document in the run-up to the 1997 election, Chancellor Gordon Brown's announcement, contained in yesterday's pre-budget speech, was "music to the ears" said BMF Chief Executive Simon Wilkinson.

In the Chancellor's speech, Mr Brown said: "In recognition of the important role that motorcycles play in the vehicle fleet, the Government is launching a consultation on options for modernising motorcycle VED to ensure, in particular, that the VED system reflects the benefits small motorcycles could bring if they substitute for car use."

This fully reflected the Government's 'Bike to Basics' document said the BMF, where it recognized that motor-

cycles were 'a valuable and integral part of Britain's transport network'.

Commenting Simon Wilkinson said: "This really is good news. We have always maintained that the PTW is part of the solution to traffic congestion and is ideal for personal transport. Our own trials have shown that on the typical urban journey you can save up to 50% on journey times, use far less fuel, cause less pollution and take up only a fifth of the road space of a family car. Not only that, it's easy to park too!"

While recognising that the Chancellor only made specific reference to small motorcycles, the BMF will be making representations on behalf of all motorcycle users pointing out that a moving motorcycle, no matter how big the engine size, is still more efficient than a stationary car.

Day- Lights Robbery Say BMF

News that the European Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (ACEM) has adopted the practice of Automatic Headlamp On (AHO) for all motorcycles, scooters and mopeds from 2003, has robbed the rider of choice say the British Motorcyclists Federation.

AHO means that the headlight is 'hard-wired' to illuminate automatically whenever the ignition is switched on and therefore the normal on-off headlight switch is not even fitted. While accepting that the majority of riders already use their headlights in daylight, that is their choice, for the other

riders, they will have no choice say the BMF.

The BMF see the implementation of this measure before consultation with users as a mistake. Nowhere in the world has the effectiveness of either DRLs or dipped headlights in reducing accidents ever been proven say the BMF. In fact, research has shown that the speed of an approaching motorcycle is far more difficult to assess with its headlight on than without!

Ironically, this news has come just as the EU is calling for further research into the effectiveness of permanent Daytime Running Lamps (DRLs) for cars, itself a move by the European Automobile Manufacturers Association to head-off proposals for costly pedestrian-friendly car design regulations.

Commenting, BMF Chief Executive Simon Wilkinson said: "We suspect the main reason for this move is the manufacturer's wish for globalisation of standards to cut production costs, not to improve road safety. While evidence of the effectiveness of DRLs in reducing accidents, either between vehicles or between vehicles and pedestrians, is yet to be proved, removing choice from the rider is a major issue in itself that deserves proper debate. We shall be making our objections known when Type Approval is sought."

Note: The BMF were successful in 1983 in getting the then government Transport Minister, Lynda Chalker, to drop plans to make DRLs compulsory on motorcycles and also succeed in getting the Advertising Standards Authority to force Lucas Industries to withdraw adverts for

DRLs on the grounds that their safety benefits were not proven.

Yellow Camers A Good Sign say BMF

The announcement by Transport Minister John Spellar today that safety cameras will in future have to be painted bright yellow is a good sign that the Government has taken notice of road-user concerns say the 140,000 strong British Motorcyclists Federation.

The sighting of speed cameras has often been criticised by the BMF, especially when their use has appeared to be more for revenue raising than accident reduction. The fact that cameras have also been painted grey has added to the feeling by many road-users that they were there to catch and not deter say the BMF.

As a responsible organisation, the BMF supports the enforcement of traffic law and accepts that speed cameras have a role to play but has been concerned that their indiscriminate use was a poor substitute for proper policing.

Writing to the Home Secretary David Blunkett earlier this year, the BMF had said that it supported his view that over zealous use of cameras was antagonising otherwise lawful citizens so the BMF now welcomes Home Office Minister John Denham's comments that; "Our aim is not to catch speeding motorists but to reduce injuries and crashes at known accident hotspots. These new rules on camera

visibility will ensure that motorists know exactly what the speed limit is, and there is now no excuse for getting a ticket."

Commenting, Simon Wilkinson, the BMF's Chief Executive said: "Even though we still have reservations over the hypothecation of fines for the netting-off schemes, this move is a good

one. As John Spellar says, it should ensure that road users are not caught by surprise and while we will continue to monitor the sighting of cameras, this announcement is a welcome sign that the Government are taking notice of road-user concerns".

From the BMF web site www.bmf.co.uk

Stafford Show

The rain came down again as is now traditional in October for the classic motorcycle mechanics show in Stafford. I decided to ride the Northwest down, got there early Friday afternoon and preceded to wipe the best of the muck off to make it look semi presentable for display, although just to prove it does come out of the shed and is used for the purpose it was designed for maybe I should have left it dirty? I was joined at the show as ever by Riley senior in the support vehicle. Our pitch was on the balcony in the main hall.

Exhibitors this year were: myself-Nordwest, Bill Rollo: Jubilee (I must learn the correct Italian spelling!), Richie Round: Saturno, Adam Round: Trail 50, and guest starring this year was Ged Gilligan's 250dohc racer. Pete was involved with the hillclimb lot this year but still supplied the display boards which go along way in enhancing the look of our pitch. Thanks to all

members who came for a natter and I hope all queries were answered? We did get quite a few people this year enquiring about older machines, my knowledge ends at pointing at pictures in a book and guessing at the nearest model, I know we have reference of frame no/model names but it never is easy to match them up! Now if someone fancies translating "Moto Gilera" into English (this book appears to have every Gilera model from past to present) it would be a very useful reference tool. Making his first appearance to the Stafford show this year was Bob Wright, who just happened to have his stall directly underneath ours! So it was nice and easy to direct people to Gilera's grotto. He also came and had a chat with us for a while and went away with a rally-raid poster (which he said will help him create a desert racer look-alike rc600!) He left me some "Registro Storico Gilera" forms if any one wants one? I don't know how easy it will be to send of to Italy to "register" your Gilera but it does cost you 50.000lit per year (how much is that?)

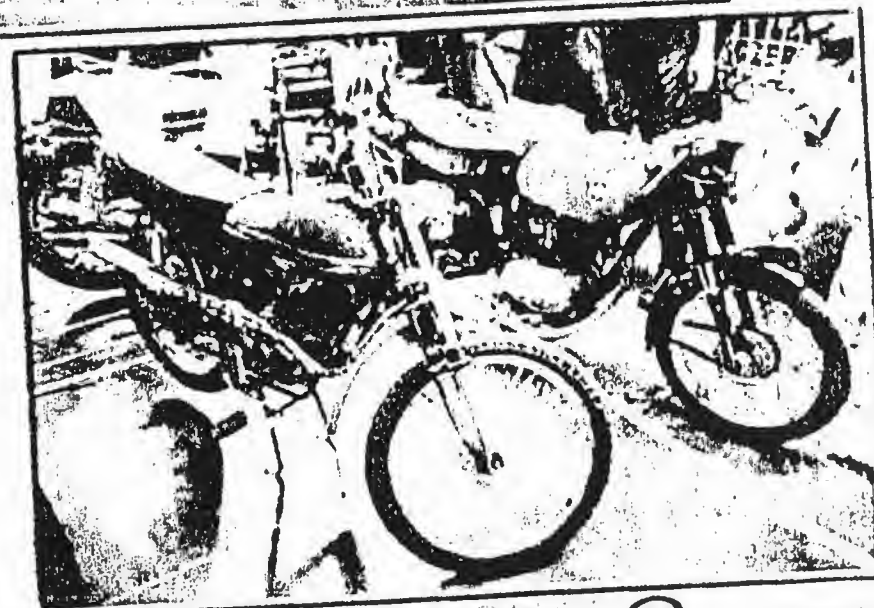
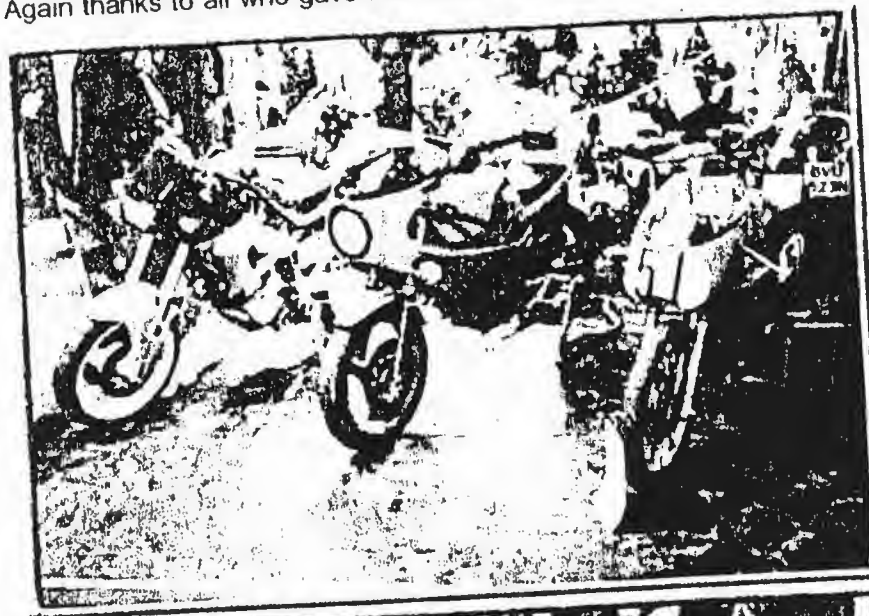
Again we had some good quality merchandise to sell (thanks David) which sold very well and I managed to

buy a Protar model of the 500cc "four" this has been reissued and I assume will be available through good model shops. (note:- this model is pre dustbin fairing era) price is around £20.

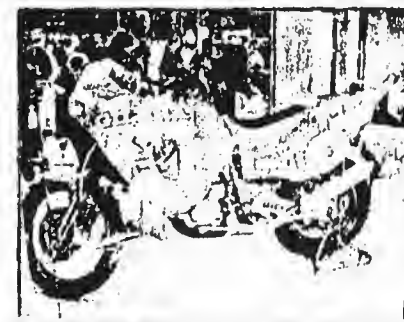
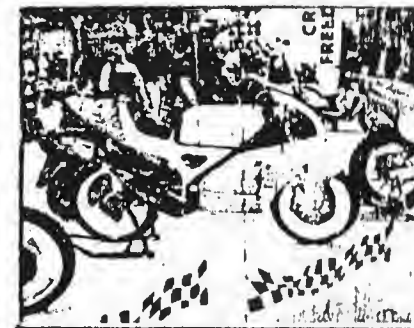
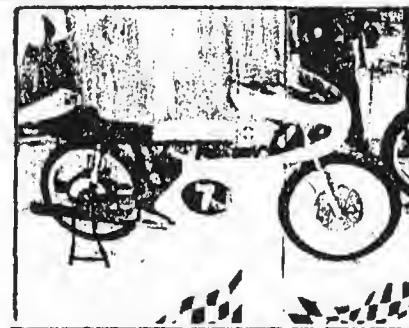
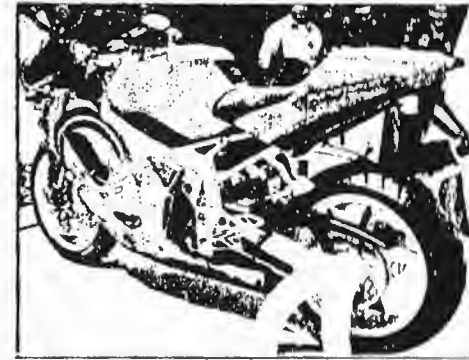
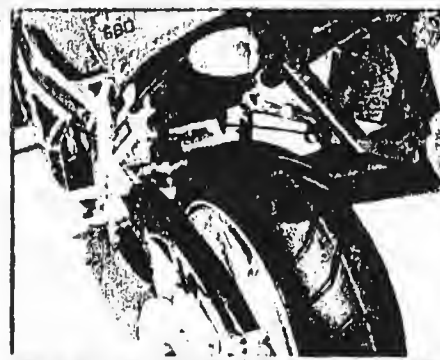
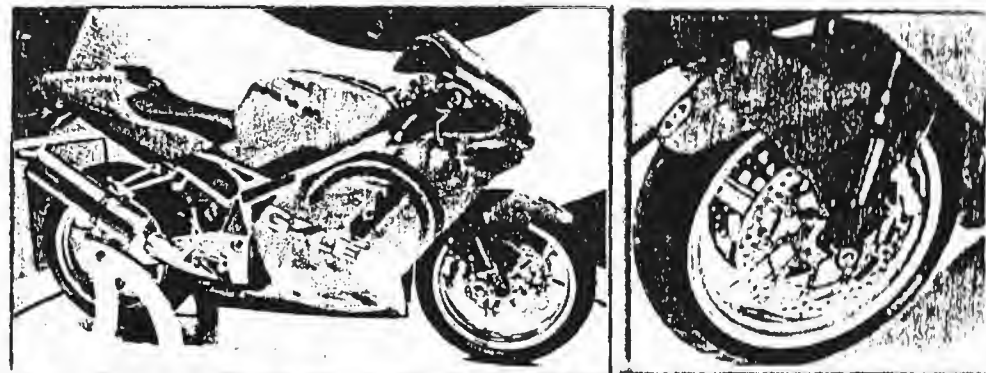
to this years event the two days seem to go by quite quickly, I never got to see the outdoor autojumble at all, was there any cx's going cheap.

By Mike Riley.

Again thanks to all who gave their time



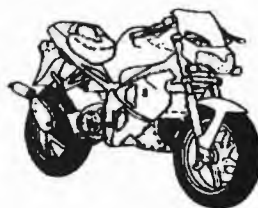
8 GILERA NETWORK 8





GILERA

Twist & Go



This article should be of interest to anyone owning anything with a lead acid battery especially at this time of year. I've invested in a battery conditioner, to maintain the charge and improve durability of the battery on my DNA. Also the DNA is one of the many bikes that don't have a kick start option. So if the battery is flat you can re-charge it or jump start it auto's can't be bump started. The battery information below was put together after reading a few extracts from battery manufacturer's sites.

The Lead acid battery is made up of plates, lead and lead oxide (various other elements are used to change density, hardness, porosity, etc.) with a 35% sulphuric acid and 65% water solution. This solution is called electrolyte which causes a chemical reaction that produce electrons. When you test a battery with a hydrometer you are measuring the amount of sulphuric acid in the electrolyte. If your reading is low, that means the chemistry that makes electrons is lacking. So where did the sulphur go? It is stuck to the battery plates and when you recharge the battery the sulphur returns to the electrolyte.

1. We must think safety when we are working around and with batteries. Remove all jewellery, after all you

don't want to melt your watchband while you are wearing the watch. The hydrogen gas that batteries make when charging is very explosive. When doing electrical work on vehicles it is best to disconnect the ground cable. Just remember you are messing with corrosive acid, explosive gases and 100's amps of electrical current.

2. CCA, CA, AH and RC what is that all about? Well these are the standards that most battery companies use to rate the output and capacity of a battery.

CCA is cold cranking amps this is a measurement of the number amps a battery can deliver at 0 degrees F for 30 seconds and not drop below 7.2 volts. So a high CCA battery rating is good especially in cold weather.

CA is cranking amps measured at 32 degrees.

RC Reserve Capacity is a very important rating. This is the number minutes a fully charged battery at 80 degrees F will discharge 25 amps until the battery drops below 10.5 volts.

AH amp hours a rating usually found on deep cycle batteries. If a battery is rated at 100 amp hours it should

deliver 5 amps for 20 hours, 20 amps for 5 hours, etc.

3. Battery Maintenance is an important issue. The battery should be clean, use baking soda and water mix. Cable connection needs to be clean and tight. Many battery problems are caused by dirty and loose connections. Serviceable batteries needs to have the fluid level checked, use only distilled water. Don't overfill battery cells especially in warmer weather. The natural fluid expansion in hot weather will push excess electrolytes from the battery.

4. Battery Testing can be done in more than one way. The most popular is measurement of specific gravity and battery voltage. To measure specific gravity buy a temperature compensating hydrometer at an auto parts store. To measure voltage, use a digital D.C. Voltmeter.

You must first have the battery fully charged. The surface charge must be removed before testing. If the battery has been sitting at least several hours you may begin testing. To remove surface charge turn on the headlight (high beam) for a minimum of 3 minutes. After turning off the lights you are ready to test the battery.

State Of Charge	Specific Gravity	Voltage	
		12v	6v
100%	1.265	12.7	6.3
*75%	1.225	12.4	6.2
50%	1.190	12.2	6.1
25%	1.155	12.0	6.0
Discharged	1.120	11.9	6.0

*Sulphation of Batteries starts when specific gravity falls below 1.225 or voltage measures less than 12.4 (12v Battery) or 6.2 (6v battery). Sulphation hardens the battery plates reducing and eventually destroying the ability of the battery to generate Volts and Amps.

The results of your testing should be as follows:

Hydrometer readings should not vary more than .05 difference between cells.

Digital Voltmeters should read as the voltage is shown in the table. The sealed AGM and Gel-Cell battery voltage (full charged) will be slightly higher in the 12.8 to 12.9 ranges. If you have voltage readings in the 10.5 volts range on a charged battery this indicates a shorted cell.

If you have maintenance free wet cell, the only ways to test are voltmeter and load test. Most of the maintenance free batteries have a built in hydrometer that tells you the condition of 1 cell of 6. You may get a good reading from 1 cell but have a problem with other cells in the battery.

5. Battery life and performance. Only 30% of batteries sold today reach the 48-month mark. In fact 80% of all battery failure is related to sulphation build-up. This build up occurs when the sulphur molecules in the electrolyte (battery acid) becomes so deeply discharged that they begin to coat the batteries lead plates. Before long the plates become so coated the battery dies. Some causes of sulphation are listed below:-

Batteries sit too long between charges. As

little as 24 hours in hot weather and several days in cooler weather.

Battery storage, leaving a battery without some type of energy input.

Deep cycling engine start battery, remember these batteries can't stand deep discharge.

Undercharging of battery, to charge a battery lets say 90% of capacity will allow sulphation of battery using the 10% of battery chemistry not reactivated by the incomplete charging cycle.

Heat of 100 plus F., increases internal discharge. As temperatures increase so does internal discharge. A new fully charged battery left sitting 24 hours a day at 110 degrees F for 30 days would most likely not start an engine.

Low electrolyte level, battery plates exposed to air will immediately sulphate.

Incorrect charging levels and settings. Most cheap battery chargers can do more damage than help.

Cold weather is hard on the battery the chemistry does not make the same amount of energy as a warm battery. A deeply discharged battery can freeze solid in sub zero weather.

Parasitic drain is a load put on a battery with the key off e.g. clock, alarm etc. You may have parasitic loads caused by a short in the electrical system or even a alternator rectifier fault. If you are always having dead battery problems most likely the parasitic drain is excessive. The

constant low or dead battery caused by excessive parasitic energy drain will dramatically shorten battery life.

6. Battery Charging, remember you must put back the energy you use immediately, if you don't the battery sulphates and that affects performance and longevity. The alternator is a battery charger. It works well if the battery is not deeply discharged. The alternator tends to overcharge batteries that are very low and the overcharge can damage batteries (i.e. if the battery is flat so you bump or jump start the engine). In fact an engine starting battery on average has only about 10 deep cycles available when recharged by an alternator.

Coolant Problems

Something to look out for on the Gilera Runner and DNA is a faulty coolant bottle cap. It is a common problem caused by over tightening the cap on the bottle. This distorts a rubber seal in the top of the cap and allows hot coolant to leak out. I've recently had this problem with my DNA and I have not been over tightening the cap. However to just check the coolant level on a DNA you must remove the cap to release a plastic trim panel that fits over the bottle. This means the cap is disturbed a lot more than it would on a Runner where you just have to remove the front body panel above the head light to expose the coolant bottle. Anyway a new cap cost £4.

By Gary Cooper

Plea For Newsletter Contributions

Is there anyone out there who has anything they want to say via an article in future issues of *The GeN*? If the answer is yes then send your articles to the editor via post or email at the address on the back cover. There's no problem with hand written articles, all photo's will be returned. Articles photo's sent attached to email can be in almost any format.

Welcome to the following New Members

- 380 - Mark Blackley - Merseyside - RC
- 381 - Michel Fiol - France - ?
- 382 - Tony Carver - Isle of White - Northwest
- 383 - Antony Howell - North Wales - Runner
- 384 - Mark Shimmin - Cheshire - ?
- 385 - David Watts - Nottingham - Northwest, B300
- 386 - Chris Alifaneti - Surrey - GFR
- 387 - Roger Nicholl - Cumbria - Northwest

2002 Events Diary

Spring Gathering - To Be Announced

BMF Show - 18 & 19 May

AGM - To Be Announced

Classic & Mechanics Show - 19 & 20 October