

GILERA



NETWORK

THE GeN

Issue 32

2002 - 1st Quarter

The Gilera Network Newsletter
For Gilera Enthusiasts

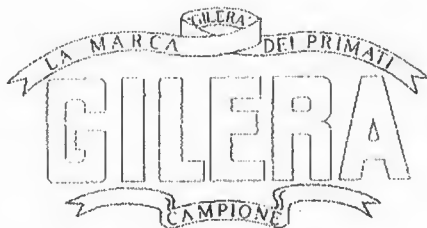
Patron: Geoff Duke OBE

Issue 32 : 2002 1st Quarter



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Editorial

It's time to ponder over the future of 'The Gilera Network' again. If it's members want the club to survive they need to contribute to it and I don't mean the membership fee, I refer to articles for this newsletter and volunteers for the various official roles. As can be seen from the upcoming events on the inside back page there aren't any. Well none until a replacement club secretary can be found. I remember at the last AGM when three paid-up members attended (yes only three) this was to be a topic for discussion. Mike Riley gave lots of notice that he was standing down as secretary and we reasonably thought that a replacement would come forward.

On a different note, the Gilera Network web page address has changed to www.gilera-network.co.uk this change was due to problems with the service provider for the old web address. The site has been rebuilt with new material so members comments are welcome as to how the site can be developed.

By Gary Cooper

Chairman's Chat

Firstly I must apologise for this copy being late. Mainly my fault, sorry.

Well, Piaggio is still doing well with Runner and DNA. The Runner is just coming into the shops with a bit of re-styling and a 200cc four stroke version is also available. A couple of extra horse power and some more torque should help keep sales going. I expect the larger engine will find its way into a DNA before long.

Now talking about Runners there is a recall under way at the moment involving some Runner 125s / 180s. All owners of affected vehicles will have received a letter telling them what to do. The vehicles affected are fitted with right way up forks made by Sebac. These forks say Sebac on them. Forks that just say "S" are made by Showa and are not affected. The problem is a possible weakness in the fork legs, which means they could bend due to an impact. Modified legs are fitted to solve the problem. The forks will not suddenly fall apart under you but someone decided they are not as strong as they should be so they are playing safe and changing them.

Vehicles manufactured after November 2001 will already be fitted with the modified forks. But if you think you may have these forks and have not received a letter it could be worth calling into your dealer, he

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will have a list of all affected vehicle chassis numbers and if there is any doubt he can contact the recall help desk.

New Bikes.

Recently Motorcycle News had an article and pictures showing a new Gilera motorcycle.

The bike they showed is a Cagiva Raptor chassis fitted with an all new 850cc 90 degree V-twin that is being developed by Piaggio.

Piaggio say that something similar to this prototype will be available next year.

MCN claimed that this was an exclusive test and they went on to say that after riding it they believed the engine had variable valve timing and produced 100+ bhp. Well I don't want to cast doubt on MCN integrity but their article and photos did have a surprising similarity to those shown on the Motociclismo (Italian bike mag) web site for a week before their exclusive test. The Italian Motonline site also carried pictures and text about their test of the 850.

Variable valve timing? The reason they gave for this assumption was the "kick" as the revs built up. Now I always thought the reason for that kick is because of the lack of variable valve timing, it is quite noticeable on Saturnos and Nordwests. Valve timing and cam profiles are always a compromise and variable valve timing was developed to overcome this so there should be a lack of any power surge "kick". The engine has a

conventional four valve single ohc layout with Marelli fuel injection.

100+ bhp. Why? "Because it felt like it" Piaggio claim around 80. What was the guy basing this on? He would know what 100+ in a light naked bike feels like if he has ridden an S4 Monster (916 engine). Now that is down right lunatic so if this new motor feels that good it is going to be awesome. A 60+ bhp 750 Monster is smooth quiet and goes like a rocket until you are going pretty quick. I would say it feels like more than 60 bhp. So I think we can say this engine goes well enough and feels like 80 bhp.

The pictures look good. If the bike is going on sale next year I reckon there will have to be one on show at the NEC, so watch that space.

Gilera / Cagiva.

I expect that most of you know Piaggio has been involved in discussions to buy the Cagiva group. This has been going on for ages but finally it seems that a deal had been struck. Some of the details are still a bit un-clear but Piaggio have certainly bought the Cagiva factory and the right to manufacture Cagiva products, but not the right to use the name. Now they have a factory to build the 600 Supersport and a ready made bike range. I have been told that there are plans to re-badge several of the Cagiva models.

There is a lot to do before these new "Gileras" reach the shops so I expect it will all happen during next year. An

importer has to be officially appointed, a dealer network must be set up and the bikes have to be built. If they do use some of the Cagiva models I do hope they re-engineer them because attention to detail and a cheap finish has let Cagiva down. The Raptor is a great bike to ride and if it were worked on a bit it could be a real winner. It is a shame to think that we will probably see the Mito 125 with a Gilera badge on the side. Not a bad bike but the GFR was better in every way.

I think we will see probably a five bike range next year with plans to develop the new V-twin engine into different capacities to suit further models. A big trailie would be an obvious choice.

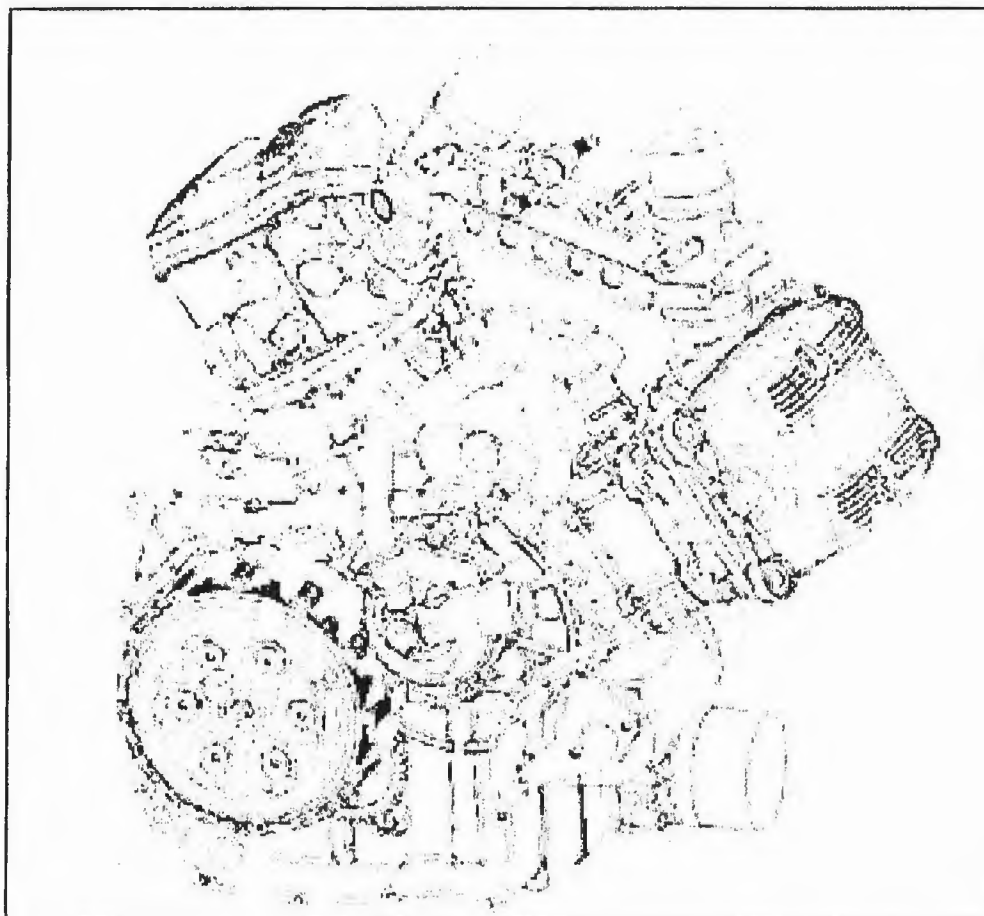
I expect we may also see some attention being given to the single cylinder market. Don't forget that with

the Cagiva deal comes Husqvarna. They make some good bikes but they are all a bit radical so maybe a more main stream bike using their engine? I won't be long before people will know what you are talking about when you say "Gilera"

The other brand that comes with Cagiva is of course MV. I understand that money will be available to continue developing the new 1000cc four. Now it would be a bizarre irony if a version of that appeared with a Gilera badge on the side. Remember that the first MV four was developed from the four-cylinder Gilera engine, funny old world.

By David Champion





CX 125

I am in a Transit van heading for NLM the Mecca of Morinis in England. In the back is a 3 1/2 Sport and a little 4 stroke zz50 Corsarino. Stuart at NLM is pleased to see the bikes but his shop and store barn are full to bursting. After a bit of discussion he buys the Corsarino for himself. the Sport is still in the back and so I ring Nat, a man I met at the Stafford Show who had a good looking CX125 in blue. We head for his barn about 40 minutes drive away in the growing darkness find him in amongst a vast selection of bikes and some interesting furniture.

He has two CX125's, the dark blue one and a less attractive green one. He is not interested in the Morini to start with, but after some discussions he is willing to swap for the green CX. I look it over and have a quick blast on it. everything works. there is oil in he petrol so the exhaust is pretty smokey, but the engine pulls well. We load up and go.

Back home I wash off the dust and muck from the barn and check more closely. There are a few broken bits where the fairing attaches and a very loose chain, squealing brakes and the clock doesn't work, but decent tyres, strong coolant, plenty of 2t. To check further I realise I will have to strip the fairing. Slowly I unscrew the fasteners and take the sections away and try to

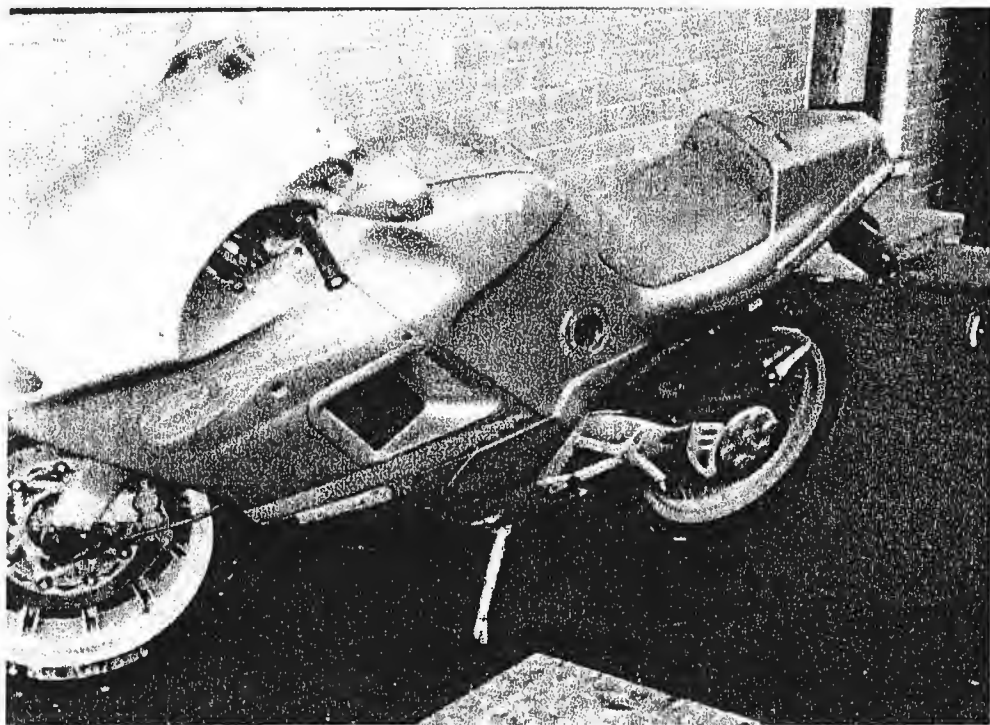
keep the bits organised. Everything looks untouched, if a bit dusty. The only problem is under the seat section which has obviously been forced off before and small mounting sections of plastic are missing. Stripped the bike still looks good, functional and aggressive. it's not like some faired bikes where the ugly plumbing is designed knowing it will never be seen. It seems well planned and put together. The single sided swinging arm is neat and the single fork is a bit weird but wonderful. Not to everybody's taste, but art as well as engineering. I don't have a manual, so email David Champion, who will send me a copy, which he does. impressively it is not a photocopy but an original, and is very useful for adjusting the back wheel and chain. This involves loosening the pinch bolts and anchor arm and then using a screw driver through the wheel to act as a lever. A neat idea, no foddling with adjusters.

I drain the gearbox of less than a litre of red coloured oil, no sign of it when I checked the dip stick. The petrol tank is a bugger to get off and I have to loosen the airbox to get it off. They are both molded plastic items that fit into each others shape. this gives a good view of the carb and engine from above. I clean all the areas that have now become accessible. The engine is dusty but otherwise clean thanks to the fairing. Only a bit of gold paint on the outer engine casing has flaked. The exhaust near the cylinder has a few spots of rust, soon removed and treated. Front brake pads are fine, but the rear are down to the last

1000 miles. i send a template of them to jim Allans in Scotland and get some back in two days. I run the engine and squirt some 2t Slick 50 into the carb and rev it a bit. Refill the gearbox with semisynthetic 10w/50 and some 4 atroke Slick 50. Spray grease the newly adjusted chain and see what else needs doing. The manual seems to show replacing piston rings every 8000km. I don't do it. I wash the air filter element and lightly oil it. The rear shock and linkages are dirty but come up OK with degreaser. All the body panels are hung up around the garage already cleaned

and glued as best I can. I feel to see if the steering head bearings are OK, but am unsure as the fork moves a bit. It seems to settle slightly when you put your weight on it. but there seems no real movement. Now all I have to do is put all the plastics back on, if I can find all the bits in draws and cupboards. Thanks to Paula at Piaggio I have dating certificate so I can register it as a 1991 CX125.

Thanks to David for info. and advice, Paula for dating the bike, Dave at Jim Allan Brakes 01324 620111, Dave and Robert for their help.



FOR SALE

From: Dave 01492 530908 evenings (Colwyn Bay, N. Wales)

Nordwest, late'93, Blue/Blue. 14,000Km, almost unmarked condition. Stainless fasteners, new Arrows stainless silencer, new Regina Gold chain, recent cambelt, good Michelin Hi-Sports. To include rotor puller, alternative gear box sprocket, original silencer, copy of factory manual. Mature owner last 6+ years. \$2,100 or might exchange / deal for Morini 350/500 Strada or Ducati 250 III Widecase.

David Firth, Mem. No. 162 Lapsed

From Dick Stapley

Gilera XRT600 big trailie. Completely refurbished See www.gilera.cz Dick Stapley or TBM53 Selling to finance new project. Great tourer £1500 firm (01482)447182 HULL.



EVENT (24th to 26th May 2002)

The name Cat Babbleton Farm will mean something magical to a lot of people. Nestled in the Yorkshire Wolds near the village of Foxholes out of earshot of almost everywhere this is the birthplace of The Farmyard Party. It created the formula that transferred so well to Duncombe Park.

The farmyard has changed little since the Farmyard Party out grew it in 1995 although the new owners have smartened it up a bit. The dale is as it was and ready to provide it's old magic. The famous track to the dale is as steep as ever but the chalk surface is smoother than is used to be.

The Fox 'n' Dale party is not trying to imitate the old FyP.

This is a new event and we know the atmosphere of this venue will make its mark on all who attend. We will be using more of the quaint out buildings and going for a more intimate atmosphere than the last Farmyard Parties to be held there.

The organisers of this new event are no strangers to bike rallies as all those involved gained their expertise in and around the Farmyard Party over the last ten years.

Camping will be the main stay of the accommodation as usual but we can arrange B&B or hotel accommodation and even a shuttle bus if there is sufficient demand.

Experience of old tells us that this do must be kept down in size. So in an attempt to avoid out growing the venue this will be a ticket only event.

Another familiar constraint, which was invented to avoid clogging up this venue, will also be retained. No cars. No vans. No pedestrians. No excuses. (The usual disabled persons exemptions will apply.)

We welcome all bikers to this new event on the weekend of 24th to 26th May 2002.

See the adverts for further information
Credit card booking will be available.

For enquiries, tickets or information about trade stands
Contact Jane on 01751 433366

Why Gilera?

This is the launch of what I hope will be series of articles by the members of this club which will enlighten us all about how we became brand loyal to Gilera or not.

The idea is not to just recount how we came to buy a Gilera, although that will come into it, but to say why we like the Gilera(s) we have and what makes us stick with them.

If we get this right it should provide some varied reading.

To give a form to the series try to answer the following questions in whatever way you like or ignore them and do your own thing.

1. What caused you to buy a Gilera(s)?
2. What do you like about it (them)?
3. Why do you keep it (them)?
4. How do you use it (them) and what satisfaction does that bring you?

The answers to these questions can be as factual or as "in your head" as you like. Most of the satisfaction in motorcycling is of the lifestyle

variety, likes and dislikes rather than the "It is reliable and gets me to work" angle.

Lets see how similar or varied we are.

Here's my opener.

What caused me to buy a Gilera?

The simple answer is a bad back! I had a Cagiva Elephant at the time I rubbed my sciatic nerve up the wrong way thus paralysing my right leg for a month. The advice for recovery was not to load the leg up too much so the big bike had to go. However the bolt upright riding style of a dirt bike was the right one for recovery so I was on the look out for a baby elephant. I soon remembered a strange looking bike that Angie, a friend of mine had purchased. She was very happy with it and said it went better than you might expect. Tim, her husband had recommended she buy it and I reckon that was just so he could ride it too. I was right. I borrowed the Northwest and that was the clincher.

You see Tim has a theory on bike riding that states that speedos get in the way of your riding. Everything within his reach has the speedo disconnected. On my test ride I rode a lot of my favourite routes and the Nordie disappointed me. I had the throttle well open and the bike was revving close to the red but it

seemed as though I was just cruising around the bends. I felt nothing dramatic so I reasoned that I must be doing around 65mph. When I got back and discussed this with Tim the revs calculations determined I was close to 100mph! Wow I had to have one of these. I got one other piece of advice about Nordwests before I bought one that has proved to be true.

"If you want one of these you had better like spanners". I do.

What do I like about the Gileras?

Lets start with the Nordie. I like its lightness, it's seating position, it's superbike-embarrassing handling, and it's rareness too. The bike is a well-balanced riders package but then so are lots of bikes. I used to have a Ducati Monster that was all of the things I have just described. However there is something more about the Nordie that has got under my skin. I reckon it has something to do with the design flair and original thought that is the hallmark of Gilera. The more I learn about the mind set of those who worked in the original factory the more I feel comfortable with my Gileras as a lifestyle thing.

I also like the big single power plant. It delivers power in a similar way to the old British bikes I used to run but without the leaks and the breakdowns.

Gileras have another parallel with Brit bikes for me. My favourite era of Brit bikes was the last ten years of their existence. I liked the way they restyled the bikes whilst still using the same underpinnings. This seems true of Gilera too although their underpinnings were much better and more reliable. If you study the various interesting machines they put out in the last ten years of their existence in Arcore you find that for the most part they were powered by three engines. A 50, a 125 and the DOHC single in three sizes. The designs were very innovative and the lack of different power plants didn't put them off.

Why do I keep my Gileras?

Well I reckon I have been taken over by a whole lifestyle thing! I feel a brand loyalty like I have never done before. Not to the old or new Gileras but to 1985 to finish Arcore Gileras. However I must confess to commuting on a Runner 125. I had an Aprilia but when it came to the time to change I was seduced by the brand. Having bought it I soon discovered I was riding the fastest 125 "twist and go" on the street. It is a thoroughly entertaining commute.

On the more practical side of things I have decided to get to know a particular motor and learn all about it mechanically. This idea came to me in order to avoid servicing charges and to become competent in keeping a motor well maintained.

My mechanic friends all seem to become expert in the idiosyncrasies of particular engines. The theory of the internal combustion engine may be common to all motors but each engine's design faults and problems are not. To know the Gilera DOHC motor is now my chosen quest. It will be a long haul.

How do I use my Gileras and what satisfaction does that bring me?

I have four Gileras. A Nordie, an XRT, an RC 125 and the Runner. Each one provides it's own purpose or entertainment.

The Runner is the run about. I commute on it and run around town on all errands that don't require a car. I also transport it to the bike rallies that I help organise to belt around the site. It's off road manners are surprising so long as the going is firm. It flies well off speed humps too.

The Nordie and XRT are most used for touring now. Kay and I went to the Gilera Revival in Italy in 2000 riding one each. Showing up in the manufacturer's home-town on a customized pair of their products gave us a great buzz. The VIP treatment that went along with it was very gratifying too.

My RC 125 is twinned up with Kay's KTM 125 for our Green Lane excursions, Great fun! The

similarity between the two bikes is surprising. The KTM has a power valve exhaust, reed induction engine and so does the Gilera. The KTM uses a Yamaha motor but the Gilera's is home grown.

I tried green laning on the XRT at first and it is very capable but at under 11 stone I did not have the mass to tame the beast so it was transferred to touring duties.

There is one other use I put all my bikes to that is often overlooked. I play with them all in the workshop. I service them, customise them and study them. A bike can entertain me for ages and not turn a wheel. I have been into customising and showing bikes for all of my adult childhood and I can honestly say that Gileras have provided me with masses of satisfaction since I discovered them.

Could it be that they are brilliant bikes or could it just be that I like spanners.

Now you tell me your angle on Gilera.

By Dik Stapley

Any replies to Dik's question of "how we became brand loyal to Gilera or not" can be sent directly to Dik at 'stapley@stapley.f9.co.uk' or sent as usual to the Editor at the location on the back page.

England's Northwest

There used to be only one way to go flying over dirt tracks and putting black stripes on the tarmac, on a powerful single. Light and agile enough for off road and tough enough for life on the street. In the fifties it was the BSA Gold Star, in the seventies the XT/ SR 500. This type of "Steam hammer" engine was the ideal choice for a dual use bike. There are motors available today for the adventurous biker. However the "enduro bikes like the Triumph Tiger or the BMW GS are usually kept away from the dirty stuff.

The Japanese manufacturers now seem only half hearted about the single cylinder segment of the market so it is left to the likes of KTM and MZ to provide steeds for the Crazy Knights of dual sport to joust on. However things looked entirely different ten years ago. Then there was the dohc single sledgehammer from the little town of Arcore in upper Italy. It had just emerged as the hottest and newest contender in a hard fought market.

The motor first appeared in 1985 as a 350cc Enduro. Over the years the engine was enlarged all the way up to a 76hp 750cc in 1992. The engines concept proved itself with the RC 750R that enjoyed a series of victories in the Pharaoh Rally and three class victories in the Paris-Dakar. In parallel with this the Piuma 560, with a top speed of 220km/h thrashed it's competitors in the Sound of the Singles racing series.

Versatile Single

When applied to a production line this motor gave raise to the Saturno 500 sports bike, the Hard Enduro RC600 and the Travel Enduro XRT. Gilera also created the Northwest, aided by Pinninfarina, who designed the bodywork. They were the first company to market a bike based on the French "Superbiker" concept. It came with three disc brakes, upside down forks, 17inch three spoke cast alloy wheels. All these features have now been popularised by the Austrian lords of the hard rider in their Duke

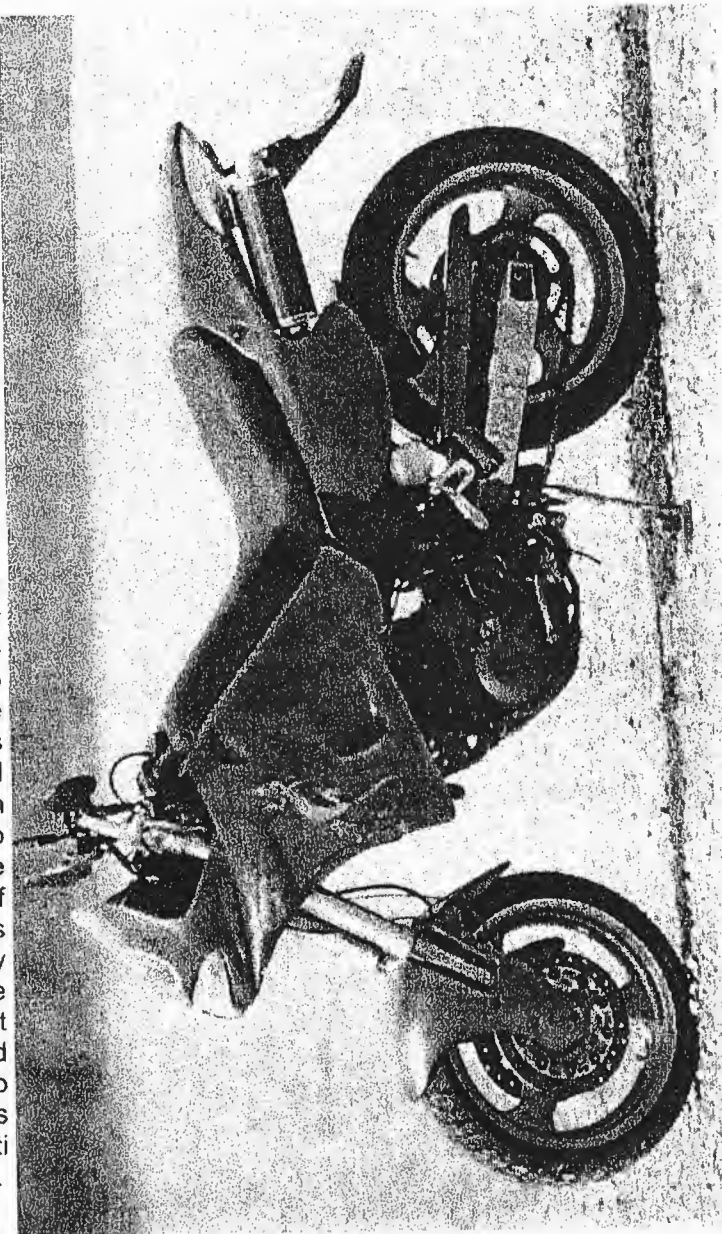
Gilera's production bike concepts like the Northwest's Supermoto and the XRT are still modern enough to have been taken further by Kay Shuttleworth and Dick Stapley. Whilst Dick modifies the bikes using parts from other machines Kay does the colour composition and artwork. This technique is similar for both bikes.

Accolade for the Northwest

The elegance and streamlined style of the front of the Supermoto is significant in that, as an insider should recognise, it uses the nose of a Gilera Runner scooter. The adaptations to the tank side panels were achieved by cutting out the winker units from the runner side panels. Far more striking are the modifications to the rear of the bike. The tail light unit is from a Honda scooter that is blended into a modified carbon fibre Gilera mudguard. The rear sub frame is a lightweight one from one of the Gilera crossers the

RC-R. Below, just visible, are the cheeky home made exhausts. The changes to the sub-frame also demanded changes to the air box and other parts around it. Being careful not to affect the new silhouette of the bike Kay and Dick chose a smooth colour transition from front to back. There are more colours involved in this technique than it seems and it takes a lot of time and skill. The additions of the lizards, which appear almost three-dimensional, add to the colour change theme. The Italians at the International Gilera Revival in Arcore were so impressed by the aesthetic quality of the Northwest's conversion that they decided it was the best looking bike at the event. Dik And Kay had ridden to the Gilera event as part of their multi week tour of Europe.

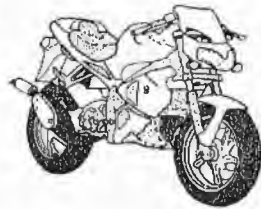
By Dick Stapley





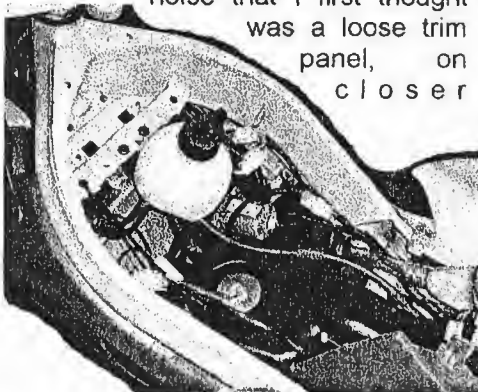
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Twist & Go

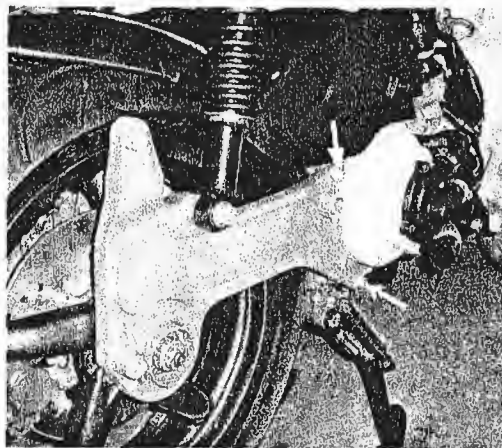


The last few month of DNA 180 ownership have seen a few problems. Since day one of ownership my DNA has lost coolant at a very slow rate. I put this down to the common Piaggio faulty coolant bottle caps so I replaced the cap and found no difference. On the Easter week end I went to the east coast and back on the DNA but on opening the storage area I found that it was wet with coolant, the expansion bottle was dry but the rest of the cooling system was OK. On inspection I found a crack in the expansion bottle, I phoned the dealer and he ordered one. The following weekend I took the DNA to the dealer to have the tank fitted, while there the dealer mentioned they have had a few DNA's in with fuel lines being trapped by trim panels.

While riding the DNA I noticed a odd noise that I first thought was a loose trim panel, on closer



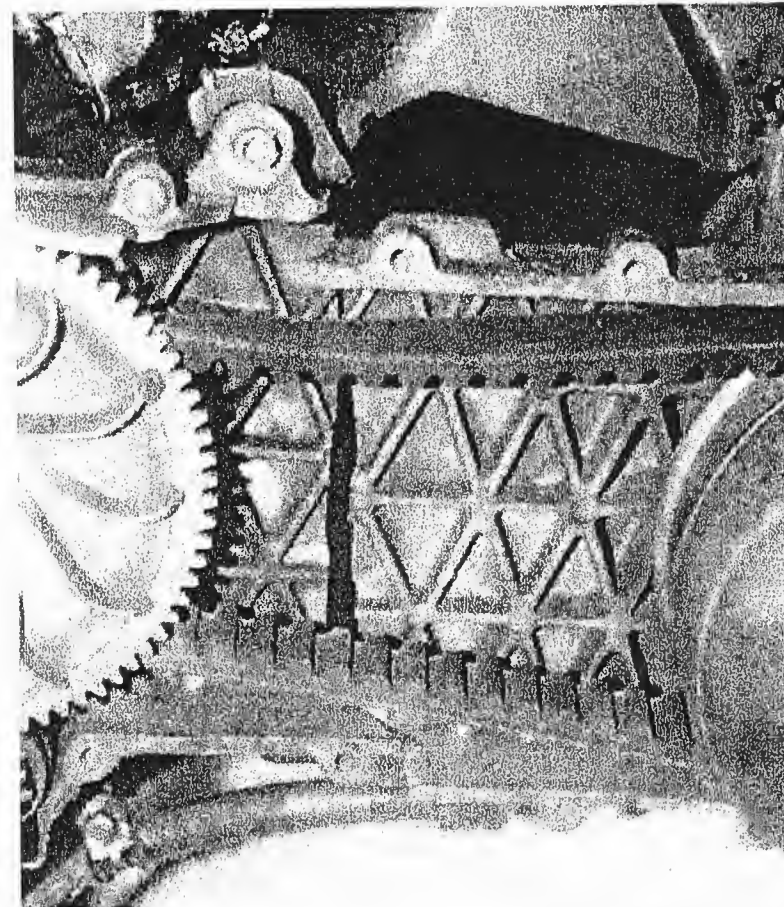
inspection I couldn't find any loose panels but more alarmingly I found the two allen head bolts that hold the swing arm on to the engine case were loose to the extent that I could rotate them by hand. I tightened them to the correct torque and put a blob of paint on each so any future movement should be easy to spot.



The next and hopefully the last problem occurred during a trip to Scarborough. I noticed an oil leak coming from the air-filter casing. This was odd as the casing doesn't contain any oil. On inspection I found that the oil was coming from the cam cover vent. Apparently it's a common occurrence, the inlet for the vent pipe into the air filter case is only 2mm in diameter even though the vent pipe is about 10mm internal diameter. After a

while a build-up of oil in the pipe forms and on a fast journey the oil can be forced into the filter casing. The dealer told me that they open the inlet up, so I opened the hole from 2mm to 7mm with a drill so now it shouldn't happen again.

If anyone owns a Runner please have a look at this photo.



It shows a Gilera Runner 180 2-stroke snapped transmission casing. This was on a tuned Runner but it's also been known to happen on standard

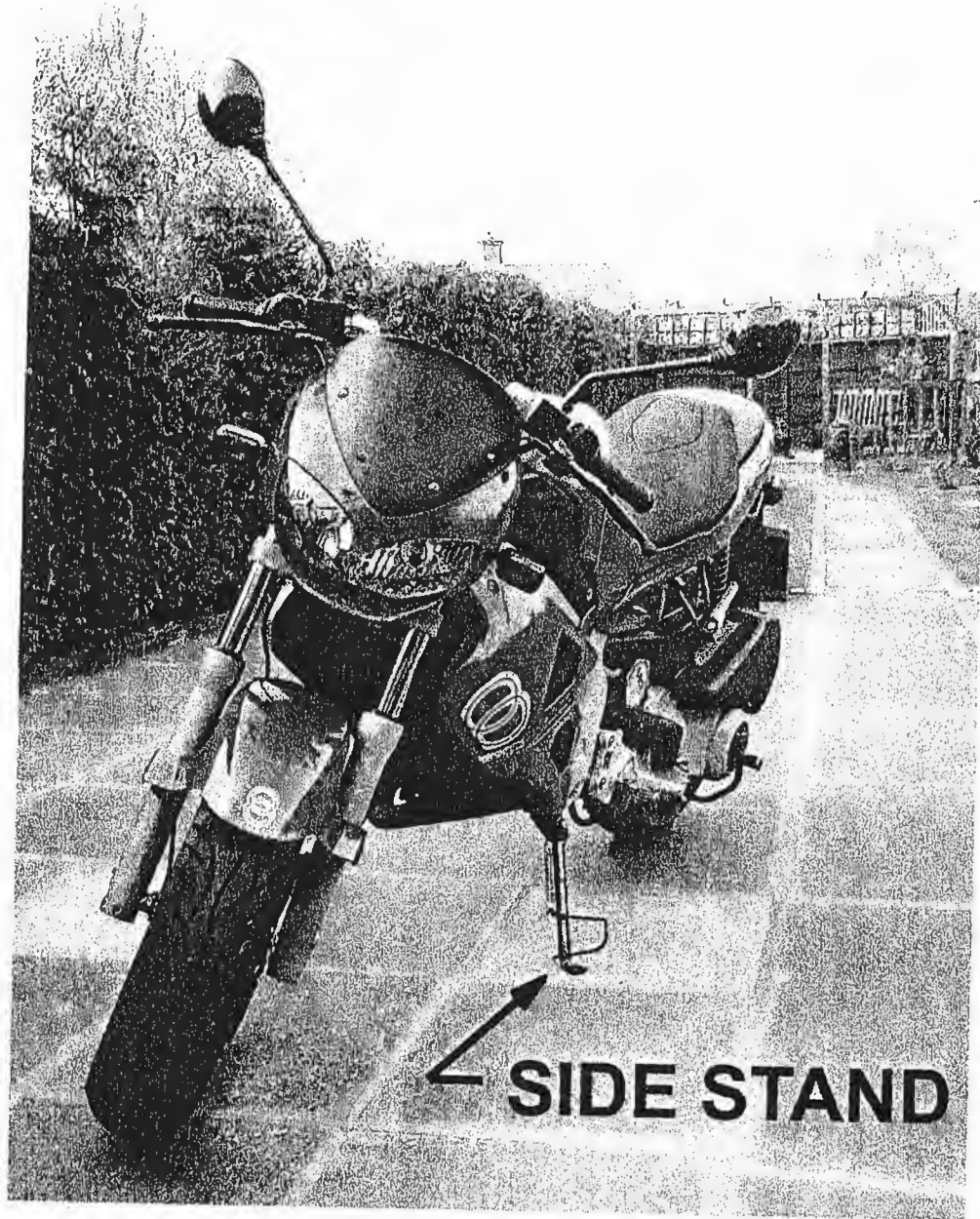
Runners but not nearly as often. The Runners at risk are the early rear disk models. Later models have a strengthened case as Piaggio/Gilera have known of this problem for quite a while.

There has also been a recall of Gilera Runners that have the new right was up forks. Apparently due to machining problems the forks can crack. Piaggio/Gilera has been sending letters out to registered owners of the affected Runners.

At last I've managed to get a side stand for my DNA. It was from Bob Wright's. He apparently gets them from a secret supplier on the Continent! I had one on order from my local dealer ever since buying the DNA that's just about a year ago. It fits

fine and when in use the DNA sort of passes for stable.

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.

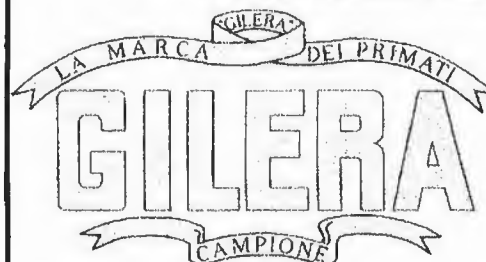
2002 Events Diary

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All subscriptions renewable on 31 May each year. Cheques payable to "The Gilera Network" to be sent to the Membership Secretary

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GILERA NETWORK
On The
INTERNET

www.gilera-network.co.uk

The Gilera Network Officials

PRESIDENT

Eleanor Quigley (nee McIntyre)

CHAIRMAN

David Champion,
59 Frome House, Rye Hill Estate,
Peckham Rye, London, SE15 3JF
Telephone: 0171 639 3466
Email: d.champion@btinternet.com

SECRETARY

Mike Riley,
9 Hawkshead Avenue, Breadsall Estate,
Derby, Derbyshire. DE21 4EA
Telephone: 01332 722736
Email: moto.riley@cwctv.net

TREASURER

Richie Round,
369 Chester Road, Sutton Coldfield,
West Midlands, B73 5BL
Telephone: 0121 382 7707

EDITOR

Gary Cooper
28 Summerfield Crescent, Brimington,
Chesterfield, Derbyshire S43 1HA
Telephone: 01246 629043
Email: g.cooper1@ntlworld.com

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Les Wassall
1D Heath Road, West Heath, Congleton,
Cheshire. CW12 4LF
Telephone: 01260 297294
07890 646001 (mobile)
Email: doby75@totalise.co.uk

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Rob Thorne
16 Mars St, Smallthorpe, Stoke-On-Trent,
Staffs. ST6 1PA
Telephone: 01782 577294

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