

DEC 71

MANCHESTER "17" MOTORCYCLE CLUB.

NEWSLETTER - DECEMBER 1971.

This is the last newsletter I shall publish for at least a year as your new editor for 1972 is Paul Tootall who did such a good job on the newsletter in 1969 and '70. This past year was not my first as editor, but it has certainly been the best for members' support and I should like to thank all of you who have written articles for me.

In this issue Paul takes over the editorial while we both composed the AGM report; Tom Dugdale continues with "The Vintage Years" and writes about the early "17" clubrooms which is quite applicable considering our own recent and highly successful move to the Royal Oak. I wonder how many of us will be supporting the club 37 years after we joined as Tom is doing!

A balance sheet is attached and Ian's "Interpol" road-test is the other feature of this bumper Christmas issue.

DAVE MOSES.

Once again I find myself back in the Newsletter Editor's chair. I'm pleased to be back on the committee and at the same time glad that I've had the two year break. Ideally, all the committee positions should be changed regularly to keep up new ideas and maintain interest in the keener members by allowing them "rest" years.

My position is still the same, in that I will only be able to attend meetings about once every six weeks, and committee meetings are out unless they coincide with that sixth week. Alas, things may get worse and I may have to leave the district altogether so I hope you don't feel I've been inconsiderate in standing for a position which I may not be able to keep. Until then I'll do my best to give you a monthly newsletter - especially important in winter I feel - with all the usual features by Wilf, Tom and roving scribe Alan, and reports on the closing stages of the President's Social Cup and the Trials Championship with points tables.

The most important man on the committee over the next four months is, to my mind, the Social Secretary, now Dave Nurse. We must continue in the fine style set by the departing committee who've laid on the recent talks by Don Green of the AMCA. Dave is in charge of the programme, but we must all help with the organisation and suggest as many ideas for socials as possible to make his job easier (He's also more likely to stand next year as well!)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - NOVEMBER 16th.

Our second meeting at the Royal Oak saw the club's 36th Annual General Meeting, and after initially disputing the "air time" with Harry Carpenter, things went very smoothly. (Our thanks to Jerry Quarry for his timely knock-out!)

There was a good turn-out for the meeting but many people arrived a little too late to hear all the reports.

We'll summarise the events here and add that the club is thriving and stable, but has plenty of work on it's plate in order to remain that way.

The minutes of the AGM 1970 were read by the departing Secretary, Keith, and accepted as a true record of events without discussion on any matters arising therefrom.

There was, however, ironic laughter when Keith stated that the Training School had been moved to Warth Meadow to cut down on the losses of equipment by theft. We have just had SIX machines stolen at Warth Meadow! More on the Training Scheme later.

The secretary's report was one of confidence in the future and satisfaction with the past year. We have fulfilled the club's aims in promoting trials and scrambles with success on the whole and the road-going boys had been sated by the re-vaaped Social Cup contest and their numbers have increased. Keith is resigning from the post of secretary for personal reasons and thanked the committees of '69, '70 and '71 for their support in making this a pleasant and rewarding period. He hopes to return in the future, firing on all cylinders, and I'm sure we'll be glad to see him. A controversial figure at times to say the least, Keith is an undisputed hard worker and an invaluable member of the club. We wish him all the best.

Frank the Bank then told us all now we lost so much money this year(!) and warned the club of seven lean years and a great famine if we are not careful with the funds. No, seriously, the position is sound, and with Frank in charge to balance the fiddle and fiddle the balances I don't see how we can fail. As always, we must spend sparingly and shrewdly and make every effort to bring in subscriptions aplenty and succeed in our money making promotions. At the time, there was a figure of £78 in dispute with Cheshire ACU concerning the ill-fated Championship Scramble, but we are within the rules and Frank was confident that the charge of excessive prize money is unproven and we will be reimbursed with the £78.

Pev gave his last scrambles secretary's report after nine years in the post and was given a warm reception. Pev is one of the most likeable blokes you'll ever meet and I'd like to add the thanks of the whole club for his stalwart service in the scrambles secretary position. We are eternally grateful to him and only hope we can keep up his standards in the future without bothering him too much for advice! Pev now succeeds Brian as President of the Club and we hope he'll guide us for many years to come. As for the four scrambles this year, we have not made a fortune and in fact the present figures show a loss until the Centre come forth with our lolly from the Championship meeting. The course has stood up well to the season and the revised start and paddock site has eased organisation. The weather has not been as kind as in the past and we've been competing with Hawkstone and the AMCA for both riders and spectators. The rebuilt "Gents" is a boon and the racing has been very good with the Club seeing the rapid rise over the season of new Cheshire Champion Peter Mathia, and the further improvement of Bob Wright. Despite the weather, the crowds have been good and we appear to have established a regular following. There's definitely a chance of success at Harrat Grange, but the formula, so far, has eluded us. Pev thanked everyone for their assistance - everyone who assisted that is, and expressed his regret at having to stand down.

A scrambles sub-committee has been formed with a mandate to run three meetings at Harrat Grange. The viability of the September meeting is very suspect and to Frank's relief (or was it his suggestion?) it will be scrubbed. The sub-committee will consist of Paul T, Frank Turner and Duncan McDonald and will run the meetings until such time as a full scrambles secretary is found (strong hints from Keith in this respect). Personally, I'm relying on several publicity stunts and hard work on advertising to see us through. The club needs the scramble members and ought to provide Cheshire with more scrambles for ACU riders than the trend forbodes. We don't want to lose the course or the revenue a successful season would bring and I'm sure we would all like to remain involved in running ACU scrambles as long as such events are viable in Cheshire with the rising threat of AMCA monopoly on ground and competitors.

Eric is still keen on running a grass-track, and if a site is found, the scramble sub-committee will take over the promotion with Eric being co-opted to the team!

Ever quiet Dave R. then announced a successful year of trials with more entries than ever; this, to a trials man, is the best tribute to his efforts he can wish for. More than capable, Dave has masterminded some good events with results appearing rapidly and well presented with assistance from Dorcen and Gordon. Dave has also been active down at the Centre Board meetings promoting the use of 5.3.2.1.0. marking and the intermediate class. With him having a big hand in the "rounds" formula of the revised Cheshire Championship, we are indeed lucky to have Dave in charge of our trials and are confident of even greater things one day with perhaps my dream of a "National" being our plum meeting. The finances involved in putting on this years trials were enough to make Frank smile, and Dave closed with a vote of thanks to all observers and in particular, Harvey and Duncan for section preparation.

Beryl was almost too modest and expressed no more than her hope that we had enjoyed the films and thanked everyone for their help. Beryl is not standing for Social Sec. this year and we thank her in turn for the efforts and special keenness she has put into that most difficult of tasks.

Ian the copper (chopper) was rightly in his finest hour. With Keith as his number one, Ian achieved more than was ever dreamed of with the Manx Grand Prix Helicopter Fund. A surplus of over £400 and now even more, has been credited to next years fund, and the publicity we have gained is immeasurable. Alas, the laughing policeman is also leaving us for sunnier climes (as they say). Ian is going to play chicken at the bottom of Bray Hill in TT week as a member of the Manx Constabulary and will be sadly missed on clubnight, at the Training School, and on road trials. We wish him all the best and hope we can arrange a "reet gud doo" before he leaves in January.

John-the-chairman then called for any other business and Keith immediately sparked off a lively discussion on the merits and otherwise of the AMCA. Keith believes that the AMCA is the set-up to be part of if we are to thrive in the future but it seemed that the majority of those present were against it. The club's policy is at the moment restricted to moves at the Cheshire Centre Board meetings aimed at bringing about unity and eventual amalgamation. The representatives of the committee were tabling the suggestion that the ban on AMCA riders be lifted for Cheshire ACU events. As I see it, the advantages of the AMCA for the "17" are several more riders in the area and a variety of courses for the scramblers; less competition for ground and fewer problems in the financing of a meeting because of the AMCA backing. We would have no problems on date clashes and with our changeover, ACU meetings in Cheshire would surely decline and fade away completely - leaving no opposition. The standard would be lower in trials and scrambles, but therefore will attract newcomers on small budgets who cannot ride as often in the ACU, (more travelling and shrinking prize money).

The disadvantages (given the present ACU ban) are many. Paul and Moses would never be able to ride in the Isle of Man (or anywhere else) if they were strictly AMCA members and declared themselves so; Henry could never win a National or become a well known (sponsored) expert; Peter's Mathia and Ormesher could never represent official (the ones the Press notice) British or any other regional team. The road members would be denied marshalling privileges at Oulton and we couldn't run a training school or associate ourselves with the MGF Helicopter. The Benevolent Fund would go (if we were honest) and many members would resign in order to stay in their sport.

The meeting closed with Paul Sandbach being shot down on a few of his hardy annuals but it was all in good spirits and John brought the hammer down on a very successful AGM in time for last orders and a further ten minutes furious discussion on the AMCA!

The new committee is as follows:-

President	-	Pev Attwood
Chairman	-	Paul Sandbach
Secretary	-	Dave Abrahams
Trials Secretary	-	Dave Rowland
Social Secretary	-	Dave Nurse
Newsletter Editor	-	Paul Tootall
Press Secretary	-	Doreen Rowland
Treasurer	-	Frank Turner
2 Members of Committee	-	John Roberts Gordon Ruffley
Training Scheme	-	Trevor Cowdrey
Scrambles/Grass Committee	-	Tootall, Turner and Duncan McDonald (co-opted).

Training Scheme.

The RAC-ACU Training Scheme is once again the cause of many headaches. The only pleasures now to be gained is the occasional smooth-running Sunday and the fact that some training is better than none at all and we are doing a service to the community.

Over the years, Frank, Moses, John Bell, myself and lately Malcolm Brown have become thoroughly cheesed off with the losing battle of keeping the bikes running. The occasional complete overhaul often ends in thefts, or disillusion when struggling with old worn out parts. Even when a bike is going well it needs regular servicing and it's hard enough to get down to it on your own bike without getting an ulcer over the 20 year old D1's.

Trevor, Ian, George and Jim have had things well organised on the actual training for some time, but its the mud and the lack of bikes etc. which puts off purists like Frank, Moses and I who make occasional visits. The training part is easy, and I could imagine nothing more enjoyable given a concrete schoolyard, a lock-up and classroom and ten shiny new two strokes which never broke down!

Next year we hope to move to Cheadle Heath sewage works where the complex has been modernised. At least there are surfaced roads there and perhaps, now, a really secure shed for the bikes. Let's hope we can improve the image of the course in the club's eyes and catch up on all the publicity we're losing. Hyde's course is praised and photographed in HALF PAGES in the local "Reporters", and their experience is far less than ours with a lower pass rate to boot!

Formula Furness.

November 22nd saw me in Barrow on a cold wet night queuing up for a free motorcycle film show at the Public Hall. The occasion was the launching of a new motorcycle club - Formula Furness MCC - and over 400 people attended. Tony Jeffries, Tony Sharpe and Norman Barrow were the guest celebrities who were interviewed and answered questions in between some interesting motorcycling films. Things were really well organised with smart displays of bikes and posters by Eddie Crooks and an artistic souvenir programme chock full of adverts, articles on the club's aims and pen portraits of the guests.

Anyway, yours truly managed to win third prize in the raffle - a tin of biscuits - and never one to resist a bit of name-dropping, I promptly donated it back for their first club night with the best wishes of the Manchester "17". Well, the MC (Gerry Babb of IOM fame) started raving about helicopters and what have you; there was tremendous applause and I was slapped on the back and received all sorts of offers of hospitality, invitations to drinks etc. and was lucky to get out alive! I've hundreds of friends in Barrow now, but the main thing is that it just goes to show what widespread publicity Ian and Keith have gained for the "17" with the Rescue Fund!

Doreen Rowland will continue to look after subscriptions and will be grateful for early payment of 1972 dues. If you don't get to the Royal Oak on Tuesdays, send the loot to:-

Mrs. D. Rowland,
9, Coniston Drive,
Handforth, Cheshire. Tel. No. 061-95-23412

Subs are 65p - full membership
50p - sporting membership

Cheques and PO's should be made payable to the Manchester "17" Motorcycle Club.

Trials Sec. Dave Rowland can of course, also be found at the above address if he's not out winning sidecar trials - as must surely become a regular achievement following his recent rapid progress.

My address is:-

Mr. P. Tootall,
151, Compstall Road,
Romiley,
Cheshire. 061-427 2040

where you can send letters, articles, fivers or rude comments as long as the latter two come together!

The new club secretary is Dave (Moses) Abrahams,
20 Alma Road,
Levenshulme,
Manchester M 193NW. 061-224 5567.

On Tuesday November 23rd we had a visit from Dave Irving, chairman of the U.M.I.S.T. motorcycle club. He invited any "17" member down to their Monday meetings (during term-time) at the new UMIST Union Building off London Road, Manchester.

"HAVE HELICOILS, WILL TRAVEL"

Pete Lilley tells Moses he can now fit Helicoil inserts to repair damaged threads. He will fit these to assembled machines on your own premises at reasonable charges and offers 25% discount to "17" members.

Sizes available at present:-

14 mm spark-plug
1/4" B.S.F. and 1/2", 5/16", 3/8" Whit.

The address is:- Mr. P. Linney,
51, Shaw Road South,
Cale Green,
Stockport, Cheshire.

Forthcoming Events.

First of all, apologies to everyone who turned up on November 23rd to hear Ken Eyre's talk and particularly to Ken for the presumptuous "booking". On holiday at the time, Ken has agreed to come and the date will be announced shortly.

- 5th December - Challenge Trial - Tideslow Rake (off A623 n. Tideswell).
- 11th December - Social for Northern Experts' competitors; 8pm . Saturday evening in the lounge of the Queens Hotel, Macclesfield.
- 12th December - Northern Experts Trial, Fourways garage (late Cluelow Cross) OBSERVERS please note raffle to be held!
- 14th December - Tuesday film and slide show: 1970 John Simister Trial and "Dave Nurse visits Darley Moor and the 1971 I.S.D.T."
- 26th December - John Hartle Memorial Trial and second leg of challenge v Sheffield and Hallanshire.
- 20th December - Ian Bradshaw's farewell party before his departure to the I.O.M.
- 13th February - Annual Dinner Dance, Saturday 6.30pm at Stockport Co-op Hall. Tickets from Doreen (150 only) for £1.75.

Toot's Rocket Trial - November 26th.

This was my first attempt at organising a rocket trial but apart from netting 23 social cup points I feel I could have made the competition slightly more difficult and therefore more interesting.

The weather was kind for November, being mild and dry, and twenty or so members came out for the fun. I can't tell you much of the early antics but I was to blame for a late first rocket (watch stopped) and a later second one (excitement and proximity of "nouns"). The masses were despatched up to the Kettleshulme - Disley Road below Bowstones with Sharman and I in the rocks at the top of Eccles Pike.

After the first late rocket, the ones who'd waited came straight up to the Pike and began searching the rocks. We were under a big boulder about 50 yds down the Chinley side and could hear Moses, Trevor, Rod and Paul all shouting and cursing but we managed to get the second one off and fire the third before Rod, Roger, Mike, Paul and Dave found us. Some had come within 10 feet and not spotted the "pad".

Moses and Trevor went a little off beam but found us 15 mins. later. However, the car crews - Roberts, Rhodes and Brassingtons were right out of touch and came leaping up at 10pm thinking they'd taken the rostrum places! Poor Keith; the top of the table king was incredulous when we told him his position and immediately got out the Rhodes' rule book; but to no avail!

So with six less rockets and four sprained ankles we left for the Goyt Hotel in Whaley for a pint and a barney. The hospitality from Miss Hunt was superb and all '17' members are always welcome there.

Results. (Rocket Trial).

	<u>POINTS.</u>
1. Red Yarwood	30
2. Mike Travica	29
3. Graham Phipps	23
4. Rhett Petherbridge	27
5. Dave Nurse	26
6. Trevor Cowdrey	25
7. Alan Kempster	24
8. John Roberts and Geoff Brassington.	18
9. Dave Abrahams	17
10. Keith Rhodes	16

George played Sir Gallanad by helping Pat up the hill, and paid the penalty by dropping right out of the points (20 only) and into 12th place!

The Top Ten in the President's Social Cup are now as follows:-

<u>Entrant.</u>	<u>Events.</u>	<u>Points.</u>
1. Keith and Hilary Rhodes	9	211
2. Dave Abrahams	8	188
3. Alan Kempster	6	162
4. Dave and Doreen Rowland	6	152
5. Paul Tootall and Sharman	6	145
6. Dave Nurse	5	140
7. John Roberts and Geoff Brassington	5	127
8. George Long and Gillian	5	120
9. Pat Roberts and Pat Brassington	5	94
10. Beryl Brown	4	69

With six weeks to go it's still wide open!

Chinley Stadium - Sunday 28th.

The most we can say about the football match against our friends the Peak MCC, was that we all enjoyed ourselves. We lost 4 - 0 after an hour's play and there were no serious injuries barring sheer exhaustion!

We kicked off sharp - 45 mins. late - with 13 players and a referee from the "17" and 11 men from the Peak Club!

The stars on the "17" side soon became apparent. George played scrum half and was excellent at sweeping the opposition off their feet - walking over them and booting the ball upfield. Yours truly did a quick fancy dribble early on and then gave best to the boggy field and the 4cwt case-ball we were using! My only other notable contribution was to send the ball sky-wards when confronted with an open goal! Moses played for the enemy in my shirt and Frank's wellies, while other footwear to be seen included motor-cycle and army boots, shoes and pumps! Play was somewhat snort of skilful owing to the number of falls caused by lack of grip. Red, Roger and Paul S were genuinely good in defence, clearing most attacks which by-passed George. Dave Nurse, or "Flowerpot the Gnome" as he is now known, was always there with advice and encouragement.

Ian was useful as a (S) winger (?) in his faded Borstal issue shorts and Mike was our most promising forward but for his wellies. Alan retired to ref. the second half and Frank came into the mid-field.

Strange sights during the game included George rolling Moses into the mud and three Peak players leaning on their goal having a smoke! It's true! Len was playing to the crowd (Chris and Snarman) and we had two mystery players - one in goal - who refused to make themselves known!

Let's be fair though, Peak played well - especially Dave Ashton - and their goalie even saved TWO penalties! We all retired to the Santa Rosa cafe - near Combs (who couldn't recall booking in the Black and White Minstrels) where drinks were on the Peak Club.

It was a right good do and Dave Nurse is currently looking for a pitch and a date for the return game.

More about the Vintage Years.

As the club is moving to a new meeting place it is perhaps the right time to talk about some of the clubrooms we had in the early days. They were all in the Chorlton-cum-Hardy area, and as it was agreed that the only place where alcohol and motor cycling should mix was in the fuel tank, we never considered meeting in a pub! The very first meeting of the club was in Lane's Cafe above a shop opposite Chorlton Bus Station. We continued to meet in the cafe for a few months, the arrangement being that every member attending a meeting must buy something, but as a 3d coffee was as much as most members could afford we were not over popular with the cafe proprietors, and we were soon asked to find other accommodation. The lads immediately went out and within half an hour had found a new clubroom only about 100 yards from the cafe. We had this place to ourselves. It was a long narrow room over a lock-up garage big enough to hold two cars and a bit. The entrance to the clubroom was up a vertical ladder fastened against the wall just inside a wide door to the garage. None of the lads objected to this method of entrance, but some of the girl-friends took rather a dim view of it, trousers for women were not in fashion at the time.

We built a plywood screen round the ladder and made the room upstairs presentable by covering in the exposed roof beams with flattened out cardboard boxes and papering over. The result of our labours was that we had quite an attractive clubroom - not as big as we would have liked but it was our own place. We bought a table tennis kit, and in - off shots coming from the ceiling where it sloped down to meet the walls at shoulder height were counted as quite legal.

Pre-war, we always had two club nights per week. One on a week-night and the other on a Sunday. I think the Sunday meeting did a lot to popularise the weekly social runs; after the runs finished - straight back to the clubroom. The members who had been out would recount the adventures of the day to those who had missed the fun, and there were always some tales to tell.

I think the next clubroom which we had was the one over the stables. Coalmen still delivered their coal by horse and cart, and the entrance to this room was across the coal yard and a proper staircase but outside the building. It was a fine big room well lit, and "central heated" by the horses below.

At times it was really overpowering, so we were soon on the move again. We found an empty room at the rear of a dance hall in High Lane; Chorlton-cum-Hardy. The dance hall itself was the upstairs floor of a large house. All the dividing walls had been knocked out to make one big room, whilst downstairs the separate rooms were used as cafe's, offices, etc. The snag with this place was that we approached our room at the rear of the house across a dark unkempt garden, and there were no toilet facilities available. Our last move before the war was to the Women and Junior Conservatives Clubroom in Manchester Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy. This was an excellent place with entrance hall, cloakroom, kitchen and proper toilet as well as the main room which was big enough to take the table tennis across one end whilst leaving room for members to sit round the fire place at the other. We played a lot of table tennis, and when we had a match on with some other club, the table took pride of place down the middle of the room. We could beat teams from other motor clubs, but we always lost, to even the third teams, from table tennis clubs! The snag about this clubroom was that the building stood between two large houses, and the entrance was through the garden of one of them. The neighbours did not love us and we could not park vehicles either in the road outside or in the garden, however, we came to an arrangement with the proprietor of the Lloyd's Hotel, which was only about 100 yards away, to use his back car park. It was not until our membership was drastically reduced as members were called up for service early in the war that we started to pay anything for attending club nights. We paid 6d each night, and this included a cup of tea, (made by our lady members) and a biscuit. This fee was not only paid for the rent of the clubroom, but enabled us to build up a sufficient reserve fund so that at the end of the war we were in a position to buy the equipment needed to run scrabbles. However, the money we had was very nearly used for an entirely different purpose. We all but went into the dance hall business!

The dance hall in question was the same one in High Lane C-c-H where we had previously used the room at the rear. The army had been in residence, and the place was in a mess, it needed to be scrubbed out, painted, decorated, and furnished. Patches of the dance floor needed relaying where bullet holes through the ceiling and roof had let the weather in. It would have meant a lot of hard work, and expense (more cash than we had in the bank). But the small band of members still around were prepared to tackle the work, and lend the club the money to finance the venture. The idea was that we would run a dance each Saturday night and use the place as a clubroom for the rest of the week. The scheme fell through due to no fault on our part. We had been negotiating with the owners of the property and we reached an agreement, but when the owner went round to see the agent in who's hands she had placed the letting, she found that he had signed an agreement to let to someone else on the day before! At the end of the war the Conservatives decided that their juniors needed an extra night per week in the clubroom, so once again we were house hunting.

Warrick Wood made enquiries at the youth club centre in Wellington Road, Stockport, and we were allowed to meet on one evening each week in the upstairs rooms.

Ever since then, club meetings have been held in the Stockport area.

TOM DUGDALE.

Interpol Calling.

A few days ago I had the pleasure of testing one of the new 750cc Norton Commando Interpol police machines. I had the machine for two days but unfortunately both days were wet and very windy and there fore justice could not be done to the performance.

The initial appearance is one which shows power coming from every line, with upswept silencers blending in with the Avon fairing and Cerriani type front forks. A closer inspection shows a poor paint finish and the proud name of Norton displayed by a cheap transfer which curls up at the sight of petrol.

The equipment on the Norton is impressive, with the blue flashing light mounted in the fairing screen and twin tone horns mounted under the tank at the front of the engine. A radio is fitted on the tank with the aerial mounted on the butty box, which believe it or not does not contain butties but a first aid kit, tape measure, tool kit and last but not least summons reports. With all the extra electrical equipment the bike is blessed with two 12 volt batteries. The switches to control the electrics are mounted on a console together with the speedometer and warning lights for ignition, oil pressure and main beam. A headlamp flasher, dipswitch, engine cutout and horn switches are mounted on the handlebars.

Now to the interesting part, the actual riding. Sitting on the machine gives you the impression that you are perched on the bike instead of being sat on it. The seat is well padded and very firm. In comparison with the Triumph Saint, the handlebars are 2" higher, as are the footrests and the seat is $1\frac{1}{4}$ " nearer to the headstock. This gives a more cramped riding position. The ignition switch is positioned under the seat and is of the four position type, with the key turned over to the right the parking lights are operated and the key can be removed, the next position is, off, then ignition and the last position is ignition and lights.

Starting the bike needed a firm swing on the kickstart after flooding the twin carbs. The kickstart fouled the silencer on the downward swing (apparently this being a common fault - the kickstart tending to bend). Putting the machine into first gear produced only a slight click even without freeing the clutch. Setting off was an art that had to be mastered, the clutch was either in or out and, compared with other machines, very poor. Too few revs and the engine stalled, too many revs and you'd be playing at George Browns. After the clutch had been mastered you could rely on a smooth take-off every time.

Out on the open road the bike comes into its own, with enough power to make even a straight road interesting. The top speed attained on the test was 95mph but weather conditions governed this rather than the bike. The ride was smooth throughout the rev range and only slight vibrations could be felt through the footrests in the lower half of the rev range. This is due wholly to the isolastic mounting of the engine, for when I put my foot on the engine, vibration was present, with a really bad patch between 50 and 65mph.

The handling was very good whilst on a smooth road, but on bends with slight undulations it bounced about. This was probably due to a very stiff front fork action.

With all this power available, and good handling, one would expect decent brakes but unfortunately this was the worst part of the machine. The front brake needed tremendous pressure at the lever and then nothing happened for a second and when it did it was nothing to instill confidence in the rider. The rear brake was slightly better but this was soon affected by water. At one point during the test I was confronted by an artic' that had just decided to overtake. I had to apply the brakes really hard and start praying. On any other bike the wheels would have locked and thrown me off; not this one; it slowed down very slightly and luckily my prayers were answered - the artic' returned to it's own side of the road. In town the machine becomes more of a handful. At 30mph, 4th gear can be forgotten as the engine is not very tractable - requiring constant use of the gearbox.

Filtering in heavy traffic was especially awkward due to the action of the clutch which did not lend itself to slipping.

Taking all things into account the bike is good on the open road, with good roadholding and a gearbox which seems to revel in clutchless changes, the main points which require attention are the brakes and the riding position.

One point that should be mentioned is the Avon fairing. It gives little or no protection due to the riding position and the inclined engine which requires the engine panels of the fairing to be cut off, allowing water thrown up from the road to be directed onto the riders feet.

IAN BRADSCAW.

Well folks thats all for now - We wish everyone in the club a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

P.S. THIS MONTH'S CRYPTIC CLUE

A brilliant but somewhat erratic twenty-two year old from Stockport! ??

NEXT MONTH'S FEATURE ---- A CROSSWORD PUZZLE.

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