

What I should have done—instead of condemning the Scott was to have got it all tidied up and put on a 20t or a 21t and ridden for a FINISH in 1935, however they thought that 32 was a bit old, though I did have another 'go' in 1955, 350cc Gold Star (£200 new) but dropped it near Gooseneck, 3rd lap. I dropped it for a very queer reason too! I felt very dissatisfied with my efforts above Waterworks 1 and Waterworks 2, so I spent two hours in day time learning it—drawing it, scaling it between the bends until I got it off pat and felt OK—result, in the race I must have got through 7-10 mph faster; but wasn't quite on the line coming out and clouted the bank on the left hander before the Gooseneck righthander should have been more to my left hand side coming out. One solitary consolation—as I was pulling myself together and checking bones etc, poor old Angus Herbert came up and said: 'What happened?' I told him, and he said: 'What a pity, didn't you know I was following you from Ramsey and through the town and round the hairpin and you were doing quite well.' HOW THAT raised my self respect!

I was 52, so they clapped on a 50 years age limit! I always WAS a late starter in any hobby. Flying, small bore shooting too.

I'm afraid arthritis in both hands has kept me off a bike now, otherwise I would dig out some of that Building Society cash and try a 'Silk'."

Still, 'Larry' is quite happy with his main hobby which he has held since 1926—Amateur Radio J51V-51C.

A SILK SCOTT IN KENYA

R. A. Ellam

I brought my 1975 Silk Scott to Kenya early in 1979 when I came to Kenya from Zambia. It had been stored in England as high import duty discouraged me from bringing it to Zambia.

My home is at Lanet, four miles from the town of Nakuru which is nearly 100 miles west of Nairobi on the Kenya/Uganda road. The road is tarmac but is in very rough condition now. A new road is under construction but not likely to be open for another year or two.

The rough road and the very bad driving habits of some local drivers make motor-cycling an uncomfortable and nerve racking experience. Dangerous overtaking is the most common hazard and on occasions I have been forced off the road by heavy lorries using all the road to overtake.

About the Silk Scott, my first impression was lack of power. This at first I attributed to altitude which is over 1,000 ft and can reduce engine output by about 25 per cent. I obtained a 17 tooth gearbox sprocket from Silk Engineering to replace the 21 tooth originally fitted as I considered the machine over-geared at this altitude; whilst this improved the performance I was still not too happy with it and as some piston slap was noticeable I decided to lift the cylinder block and found that the piston/cylinder clearance was not to normal limits.

Silk Engineering supplied oversize pistons and a local firm rebored the block to .030 inch, at my request allowing .001 inch less than normal because I don't intend to use maximum speed.

Since the rebore I have covered over a thousand miles, running in carefully and using MolySlip oil additive. The performance is greatly improved and I am quite satisfied with it, in fact I could probably refit the original 21 tooth sprocket again.

Soon after putting the machine on the road in Kenya, radiator leaks developed which persisted in spite of solder repairs. The points of leakage were from the end caps of the top tank and the inlet and outlet tubes. These points were insufficiently supported for a soldered joint and eventually I removed the circular top tank, cut away a section of the circular end caps and, using silver solder, attached flanges to the end caps to line up with the top tank flanges. I then silver soldered the end caps to the top tank, and at the same time I silver soldered reinforcing flanges to the inlet and outlet tubes which were then silver soldered to the upper and lower tanks. The top tank was then soft soldered back to the core and to date has given no further trouble.

I have read some complaints about the Silk kickstarter and at first I had to agree that it was a nuisance; I had problems with starting when I collected the machine from Derby. Later I discovered that the pilot jet adjusting screw was incorrectly set. Readjusting improved starting but the annoyance was the tendency of the kickstart pedal to fold up when the crank reached the lowest position of its travel. This no longer happens since the kickstart stop on the spindle housing broke off due to a powerful kick back and I electric welded a bolt to the housing to act as a stop. This limits the crank travel in both directions and the kick start no longer folds up in the six o'clock position. Starting is very easy, especially since the rebore.

An air cleaner was fitted and this was described and illustrated in 'Yowl', August 1981. So far the modification has been very successful. I have just completed another 'mod' which links the oil pump to the throttle. The Silk pump was hand controlled and I have been nervous that one day I would forget to operate the hand lever so I have constructed a lever arrangement which gives a progressive movement to the oil pump control cable in accordance with the throttle opening. First results are satisfactory but the device is still under test; I can describe it in detail when I am satisfied that it is reliable.

On the road my impression of the Silk Scott is that the steering is first class but softer suspension is needed in Kenya for local road surfaces. The engine is smooth and pulls well with no four-stroking down to 25 mph in top gear, vibration is apparent around 70 mph upwards but not so noticeable with the high gear 21 tooth sprocket, the front brake is very powerful, rear brake is weak and the angle of the pedal is wrong. I intend to make another pedal. The gearbox is also very good, no problems so far but I think third is too close to top—there is a fairly wide ratio gap between second and third gears. Fuel consumption in the 60 mph range is around 48 mpg. There is an annoying groaning noise from the alternator at idling and low speed. The bearings are in good condition and so far I have not been able to cure this but have put a switch in one of the alternator cables. Breaking the circuit stops the noise.

Concerning uneven firing on light loads with Scott engines; queries crop up from time to time about this and it is a most annoying problem. My engine is now as near perfect as can be hoped for but I had problems. Firstly, after fitting the air cleaner, rich mixture caused misfiring. This

can be proved by turning off the petrol supply when running light; on a level road the engine may fire evenly when the fuel level in the carburettor is nearly exhausted. Carburettor adjustment should rectify the fault. In my case more cut-away on the throttle slide improved matters but I was not quite satisfied and finally measured the timing on both cylinders and found a variation of 1.5 mm. I then synchronised the two by altering the point gaps on the Silk twin contact breakers, timing the contacts to separate at 8.5 mm before tdc (approximately 35 degrees before tdc). This meant one point gap of .202 inch and the other at .012 inch. Now the engine will two-stroke perfectly on light or heavy loads down to 25 mph. Below this, transmission snatch sets in (in top gear).

Silencer and exhaust pipe condition can also affect smooth running by upsetting the scavenging process. The Burgess absorption type straight-through silencer gives good silence when new, but the fibreglass absorption material surrounding the perforated centre tube becomes clogged with oily carbon, then the exhaust becomes too loud and the pulsation of exhaust gas in the exhaust pipe which assists cylinder scavenging is affected. This means that under light load there is insufficient crankcase pressure to scavenge the cylinders. Misfiring results until the throttle is opened to allow more crankcase pressure for scavenging. The only cure for this situation is a new silencer or a means of renewing the absorbent material, possibly by cutting open and welding up again. The Silk exhaust has a large expansion chamber with a perforated tube silencing element at the rear, easily removable for cleaning. It is very efficient in promoting even firing but a bit too loud for my liking so I packed steel wool round the perforated tube, improving silence but not affecting the performance.

My first Scott was a 1937 F.S. registration No. EUG 860, which I sold in 1952 when I emigrated to South Africa. I have often wondered if it is still in existence. If any member knows of this machine I would be pleased to have news of it.

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BROOKLANDS MEETING—10th September, 1938

(London Scott Club members and their results.)

Jim Best

One Hour Trial:

Jimmie Green 596cc (73.89mph) — Premier Award

Frank Hill 596cc (73.88mph) — Premier Award

Bill Best 498cc (76.15mph) — Premier Award

E. Bircher 596cc (63.92mph) — Silver Award

(Jimmie Green, Frank Hill and Bill Best finished 2nd in the Team Award).

FLYING LAP: — J. Green (84.84mph)

All four riders on standard road machines.

It may be of interest that in the winning team was Norman Roffey BMW 730cc. This was the same Norman Roffey who had been riding a GP Scott in previous years. This is the bike that George Silk has been working on and is now owned by Mr. J. B. Geer. (An article on this machine appeared in *Classic Bike*, January '82).

(This same machine will be on special display at the next National Gathering, Stanford Hall, 5th September, 1982).