

Looking for the Valium

Dear Sir,

The earlier article by Ged Rumble interested me, especially as he turned out to be the owner of the third Silk Scott I heard about, the pistons of which did not match the cylinder bores. Having heard a sound of discontent from my own Silk Scott, with reluctance, being no great engineer, I opened up the engine and found that my machine also had pistons which slapped around in the bores, and I am having this put right. It's a bit staggering when you think that my machine has done about 1,400 miles from new.

That apart, the worry about cranks from Glyn Chambers made me think that he had left out what may be the prime reason for cracks in the cranks, namely that overhung cranks which cannot be supported on either side are not a good way of designing engines.... OK in the early years, perhaps, with lower performance, but when the search for better performance came along, I guess the damned things had to wobble a bit? I guess we should not love our machines to the extent of excusing some bad ideas which may have been put right if speleology hadn't taken its toll. The lube business was also duff and I hope the clean air boys aren't going to make life miserable for us as time goes by.

I wait Ged's next article with anxiety... I hope he isn't going to make me peer further into the innards of my Silk Scott as I hope to run it more this coming summer. To date I have had to fix a stop to the kicker, modify the spark box to give manual advance and retard — which turned out to be a boon — fit a detachable wiring plug to allow for the offside panel to be detached, find a pair of sit-up handlebars to save my vertebrae. I'm lucky to have adjustment to the primary chain via a well-hidden threaded bolt (some don't). A face lift on the saddle...well I'm getting there, but the next ride will have cost more than a pint of juice. Oh, the bearing oil seal on the pump-spark divide seeps a bit, water pipes fall off, not enough meat on the bone...no, no, I won't go on; where's the Valium jar?

**Geoff Bucknall,
Bromley, Kent.**

Birmingham Scott History

Dear Tom,

I refer to Bruce Moore's letter in the February issue of *Yowl*. As he thought, his recently acquired Birmingham Scott (WOE 424, frame S1009) is indeed an early example. It was despatched from the Aerco Jig & Tool Works on 20th July 1956, the *eighth* bike off the production line. The original engine fitted was DPY 5451.

The first Brummy (frame S1001) left the Works some two months earlier on 17th May 1956. It was registered as XUA 227 on 1st June 1956. It is now owned by a Club member in South Wales and is still going strong.

Generally speaking the bikes were despatched in *frame* number sequence. the prefix DPY (Shipley-made) engines were not fitted in numerical order, and cannot be used for dating purposes. The prefix DMS (Aerco-made) engines were fitted 'more or less' in numerical order, especially in the later built bikes, but are still not reliable to