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BACK STREET MAGAZINE

**INTO THE
SUMMER!**

**THE RETURN OF
OUR SUMMER
EVENTS GUIDE**

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OLD-SKOOL EVOS | HARDTAIL BANDIT | SUPERCHARGED KWAK CHOP**

HELLO AND WELCOME TO THIS NEW ISSUE OF BSH!

In a change from last issue, as I sit here typing this, outside my window the sun's shining, and it's not absolutely feckin' freezing' for a change. No, I'm sitting here in a tee-shirt for the first time this year, and as soon as I've written this editorial I'm off for a spin on a bike, of which I have a choice of four at this particular moment – the Future Bike, a BMW R18 Classic test bike, a Super Soco TC Max electric bike, and my latest acquisition: an 1100 Gixer-engined softail 'fighter that I picked up at the weekend. Yep, life's pretty good at the moment...

As it says on the cover, this issue sees the return of the great BSH events listings, which've been missing for the last eighteen months or so due to the Chinese chiroptera pestilence, and it's already filling up ridiculously quickly – it's running at about eight pages on my computer so far, and that's just the ones I know of.

O' course, cos we're still in the, thankfully relaxing, grip of Covid, and no-one quite knows what's going to happen, if you are planning to attend one of the bashes listed in it, it'd be a good idea to check that it's actually happening before you set off, y'know? It'd be a bit poo, wouldn't it, if you set off for a rally a hundred miles away and, when you get there, the local council've shut it down?

A recent press release from clever-people-who-know-stuff has announced that the majority of drivers these days regard speeding on motorways and normal roads as more unacceptable now than it was five years ago. Really? Are they sure? Has anyone told the majority of drivers this? I spend a lot of time on motorways, mostly in me van over the last few months 'cos it's been feckin' cold (and since I passed me car test, I don't need to lose all the feeling in my fingers/toes/nipples/other extremities), and I can say, hand on heart, that I haven't noticed any reduction in traffic speeds. 'Cos o' the fact that 'cos I've not had me (car) licence two years yet, if I get six penalty points before November, I'll have to retake



EDITORIAL

me test (and I'm not entirely sure I won't have to retake me bike test too, and that doesn't bear thinking about...), and the fact that 'cos I'm driving a van I have to keep me speed down (50mph on single carriageways, 60mph on dual carriageways, 70mph on motorways), I've been more aware of speed limits than normal, and I can honestly say that the majority of drivers, especially on motorways, still come ear'oling past me. Hmm, doesn't look like speeding's that unacceptable to me...

Similarly, over the last six years I've had to do two National Speed Awareness courses (or 'naughty boys' driving courses', as I call 'em) due to me slightly heavy right hand, and on both occasions I was the only person, the first time out of 80 people, and the second out of eight, who'd not been gripped for speeding in 30 or 40mph limits (86 in a 70, and 77 in a 70, in case you were wondering). That doesn't sound much as though the majority of drivers feel as though speeding's unacceptable either, does it?

Sometimes, when you read these things (press releases, not the gibberish I spout), you do wonder how in touch with the real world these survey compilers really are? I mean, if you ask someone a question relating to something that they know they shouldn't, but do, you don't have to have a degree in psychology to know that they're unlikely to say 'No, I do that, and I'm proud', are they? They're far more likely to make 'No, it's terribly bad, terribly terribly bad' noises, aren't they? That's just human nature – we all know we shouldn't speed, but we do (partly because there're so few coppers these days due to successive Governments cutting funding, and the chances of getting caught aren't high); we all know that we shouldn't burn stuff due to global warming, but we do; and we all know we stuff ourselves with fatty/sugary foods, but we shouldn't. Ask us about any of those, though, and noooo, we don't do any of them... gawd, no, 'course not, we wouldn't do such a thing, would we? Yet survey compilers listen, write down the bollocks we tell them, and then report it as fact...

Anyway, it's starting to cloud over a little out there so I'm out of here, see you next month!

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STUFF

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BUILT IN 'ERE

AFTER THE MARATHON BUILD OF MY LAST CHOP (FEATURED IN BSH 430), I TOOK A BREAK FROM BUILDING FOR A FEW MONTHS, BUT YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE – YOU GET THAT ITCH AGAIN...



DIG MY 'FIGHTER!

WORDS: CONRAD WEISKRANTZ

PICS: NIK



I was on the lookout for something different – I didn't want anything off eBay, nor did I want a huge project; just something to rescue and get on the road again, not a full build. I saw this hardtailed '83 Kawasaki GPz750 digger over at Crawley Custom Classic Motorcycle Engineers in Witney (who'd made me a new frame for another chop as the one it'd come with was so bad). It belonged to Bob, one of the mechanics, who'd decided to get rid of some of his bikes. It fired up, didn't run too badly, and had a V5, but best of all the original builder'd done a good job – it looked just right, and wasn't a clone of anything else.

A deal was done, and the bike was mine. It'd been off the road for at least ten years so everything rubber'd perished (rubber parts decay badly after about ten years so they need to be replaced), a lot of the electrics were frayed, and there were shorts everywhere, so it needed a complete rewire. I replaced all the rubbers, the hoses and the tyres, and it also didn't have a tacho (rev-counter) or any idiot lights (not even an oil light!) so they were added too. The left grip was modded with Velcro to make sure my left glove stays on it by Richard at Snob & Lock in Wantage, and the clutch was moved to the right side of the 'bars so that I could ride (my left hand was damaged in an accident years ago).



There's a lot of polished ally on the bike, and I'm not much of a bike cleaner (I'd rather ride than clean) so gave them a quick spray of clear-coat, and that now means I don't have to keep polishing the thing! I stripped and rebuilt the brakes, gave the engine a full service, added a few new bits and pieces (like risers, handlebars, rear light, clutch, etc.) and, suddenly after a few months, it was ready for a test ride.

The first run threw up a couple of issues: a circlip missing on the rear brake master-cylinder meant fluid was falling out of it (50p to fix), and as the



balance pipe from the exhaust system'd been cut out (for better access to the oil filter), it was running a bit roughly. I had a word with Grant at GP Performance (he sets all my bikes up on his dyno, and makes them run perfectly) about that, and was told 'politely' to get one in there. After getting that sorted with a friend, Mike, it ran a lot better in the midrange, but still had an odd issue when it got hot, and the idle was all over the place. 'Oh well, I'll let Grant sort that out,' I thought, and off it went to the dyno. A few days later I got a phone call – Grant'd discovered what was wrong with the idle... I'd put new inlet rubbers on (because the old ones were so badly cracked), but the new ones'd come from China, and when they got hot, combined with the ethanol in the fuel, they were, to quote Grant, 'as tight-fitting as a c**k in a sock!'. We put some genuine Kawasaki ones on, and it was, and still is, fine.



ENGINE:

1983 Kawasaki GPz 750 R1 engine/frame (single top tube, hardtailed) re-jetted carbs, individual Ramair air-filters, set up on dyno by GP Performance, EBC clutch plates/springs, Kawasaki headers/custom 4 into 2 balance system/turn-outs, Kawasaki Z1000 LTD wheels (19" front, 16" rear)/discs (fronts with spacers), GPz calipers/forks/master-cylinders/controls/torque arm/foot-rests/foot controls, one-off billet yokes, braided brake lines (fronts routed through steering stem), chrome Z-bars, right-side clutch, billet throttle assembly, chrome mini speedo, black mini electronic tach, modified left grip with Velcro by Snob & Lock, modified stock front mudguard, unknown rocket/digger fuel tank,

one-off seat/rear 'guard/struts/battery box/electrics box/chain guard/plate holder, one-off loom by owner, chrome Bates headlight, cat's-eye tail light

FINISH:

Silver/black paint by owner, polishing by previous owner

ENGINEERING:

Bike rebuilt by owner

THANKS TO:

"Crawley Custom Classic Motorcycle Engineers (01993 770702 or www.ccc-motorcycle-engineers.com); NABD for help/inspiration about riding again; Grant at GP Performance (01865 343634 or www.gpperformance.co.uk); Richard at Snob and Lock; & Mike for sorting the centre section of the exhaust..."

What's it like to ride? Huge fun – it's loud, quick enough, and there's very little out there like it so it's unique. I look at it, and see a chop from that period in the mid '80s when the style was changing from trad' '70s to the streetfighters of the late '80s – it's got a digger/streetfighter look to it. It's also completely different to my other chop, even though they're both Kawasaki 750s!

Things that need doing? Well, the gearing needs sorting as it's under-geared (great for overtaking, but a bit frantic for normal riding), and the seats need re-covering so that they match. It's not perfect paint-wise either (could be better), and the engine could do with new valve stem oil seals, etc., but that's not really the point – to me it's something rescued from an era when they were built to ride every day, and that's what it is again. The last few rides (this was written towards the end of last year. N) may've been in the wet, but I still always get off with a smile on my face, and that's what matters the most, isn't it?

