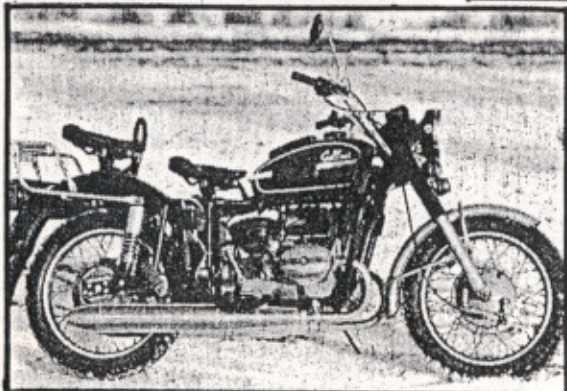


# Motor Cycle News TEST FILE

MACHINE: GALLANT 650

PRICE: £895



A CHEAP and cheerful all-weather commuter bike, the Gallant felt more suited to ten mile trips than two miles, preferring cruising on the open road to dodging traffic in town. Not remarkably economical on fuel, but overall running costs should be low. Even compared with the MZ and Jawa competition, it's a lot of bike for the money.

## PERFORMANCE

TOP SPEED	BEST	PRONE		UPRIGHT	
		81.31	mph	78.08	mph
		78.09	mph	74.14	mph

STANDING QUARTER MILE	BEST	TIME		TERMINAL SPEED	
		17.81	secs	72.13	mph
		18.09	secs	69.79	mph

ROLLING 40 <small>(¼ mile acceleration test from 40mph in top gear)</small>	BEST	TIME		TERMINAL SPEED	
		14.63	secs	74.16	mph
		14.88	secs	72.39	mph

SPEED THROUGH GEARS at 5800 rpm	
1st	32 mph
2nd	50 mph
3rd	67 mph
4th	88 mph
5th	
6th	
mph	10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

SPEEDO ACCURACY	
INDICATED	TRUE
30	28.4
50	46.3
70	65.7
100	—

FUEL CONSUMPTION	
Best	43.0
Avg	41.5
Worst	29.8
50mph	43.50
70mph	25.65
Tank capacity	4 galls
Avg	45.5

## TEST CONDITIONS

WEATHER: Dry track. Wind 10-17 mph.

RIDER: 12 stone wearing waterproofs

# ROAD TEST

# I SPY A BARGAIN

FROM the tough region of Siberia has arrived the most unlikely antidote to the superbike owners' British winter blues.

No, it's not vodka but the Ural factory's IMZ/8103 650cc twin, rechristened Gallant for the UK.

At under £900 new, the bike closely modelled on a post war BMW is so cheap you could save money by buying one!

If you don't think this makes sense, consider the lot of the superbike owner this winter. He has saved hard to put maybe £4000 to £5000 into his new high-tech, state-of-the-art dream bike.

Then the frosts come, the council grit trucks throw salt over the roads, and the superbike owner has a tough choice. Either he risks serious corrosion, the good chance of sliding off and breaking a lot of expensive components or he lays up the bike for the winter and takes the bus.

Even if he puts his faith in efficient cleaning and polishing, he could face losing hundreds of pounds during the bike's first winter.

Depreciation is the biggest enemy. If someone had paid full price of just over £3000 for a Honda Gold Wing, its value at a year old had dropped by £800. Only by keeping it in mint condition can he hope to cut his losses.

You begin to realise this is where the Gallant comes in. Let this 'classic' type machine take the battering of a few winters and it will pay dividends by keeping your best bike in top condition. And you get to ride all year round ...



Northamptonshire countryside does its best

to mimic the snow-covered Steppes as

a fitting setting for the Russian twin. Legshields



MACHINE MILEAGE: 1545

Avg range 166 miles

## COMPARISONS

Bike	Standing ¼ mile	Rolling 40mph	Avg fuel consumption		Price (£s)	
	Top speed (mph)	Time	Speed	Time	Speed	
MZ ETZ 250	81.4	17.2	76.2	—	—	59 765
Honda CB 125 TD	72.6	19.6	63.8	17.0	63.4	87 999
Jawa 350	85	17.7	—	—	—	40+ 689
Enfield India 350	69.7	21.2	58	—	—	86 1390

## SPARE PARTS PRICES (inc. VAT)

Front wheel	£77.05	Rear view mirror	£6.90
Fork Stanchion	£21.68	Oil filter	£3.16
Complete exhaust	£95.78	Front indicator	£5.17
Pair brake shoes	£9.77	Clutch cable	£3.79
Front mudguard	£26.59	Handlebars	£13.37

Major service intervals 2500 miles | Time taken Approx 3 hours

## SPECIFICATIONS

**ENGINE:** Air-cooled, flat twin four-stroke, with overhead valves. Bore and stroke 78mm x 68mm. Capacity 649cc. Compression ratio 7:1. Two Amal 28mm carbs. Claimed maximum power 40 bhp at 5800 rpm. Maximum torque. Wet sump lubrication.

**TRANSMISSION:** Dry, twin plate clutch. Four speed gearbox with internal ratios of 1st 14, 2nd 8.89, 3rd 6.63, 4th 5.06:1. Final drive ratio 3.89:1. Primary drive by gear, final drive by shaft.

**SUSPENSION:** Telescopic front forks. Rear swinging arm with shock absorbers two way adjustable for spring preload.

**WHEELS:** Spoked, steel rims.

**TYRES:** MOAEnb, 3.50 x 18 front and rear.

**BRAKES:** Drum brakes, twin leading shoe front, single leading shoe rear.

**ELECTRICS:** 150w alternator, charging 12v 9 a/h battery. Ignition by Lucas Rita electronics and coil. Headlight 45/40w. Warning lights for indicators and generator.

**EQUIPMENT:** Standard fairing, twin mirrors, toolkit, tyre pump, spares set, crash bars, legshields, side and centre stands, steering lock, steering damper, tank storage box, rear mudflap.

**DIMENSIONS:** Length 88.5 ins (225cm), width 32.8 ins (83.5cm), height 41.7 ins (106cm), ground clearance 4.9 ins (12.5cm), seat height 32.5 ins (82.5cm). Dry weight 474lb (215kg).

**WARRANTY:** 6 months or 6000 miles, parts only.

**IMPORTER:** Neval Motorcycles Ltd, Brockholme, Seaton Road, Hornsea, North Humberside. Phone 04012 3878.

... to say the best advantage of going for a new Gallant as opposed to a second-hand winter bike is the total reliability.

## Unusual

Anyone betting that Russian-made components went wrong would be in for a surprise ... first the Japanese-made coil failed, and then the British-made electronic ignition trigger went out of adjustment!

Both were highly unusual, and it was pure coincidence that these packed in during the two week test. The Japanese coil was fitted as a standard modification to improve spark power, and they are not known to be unreliable.

Having replaced points ignition with a Lucas Rita on my Triumph, I know the system's good. In the case of the Gallant, it was the reluctor gap that shifted, preventing correct ignition advance.

Just as we would hope, the bike from Siberia regularly started first or second kick even when it was white with frost. The chokes on the Amal 'Mark 1½' carbs had to be applied separately, and one could be turned off almost immediately so the twin would warm up at a fast tickover.

Alan Voase of importers Neval, says the Amals (an £80 option in addition to £65 for electronic ignition), give smoother, cleaner running than the original instruments.

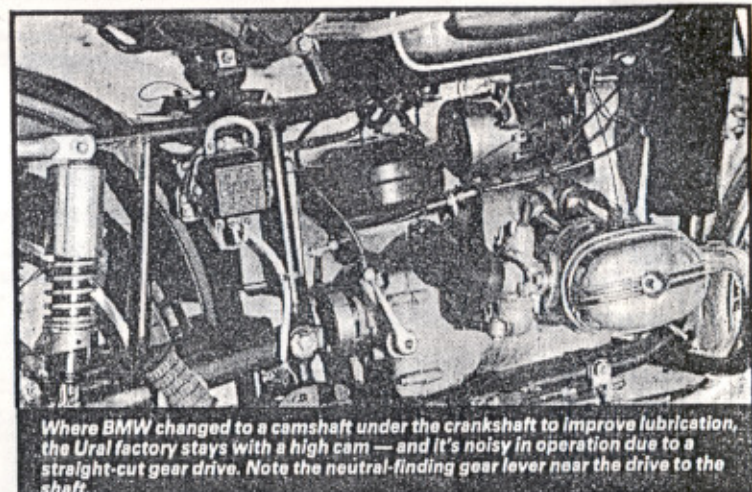
After familiarity with whisper-quiet water-cooled Japanese machinery, the air-cooled flat twin makes considerably more mechanical noise.

It's a different beast to the Kiev-built Dneiper twin, but still built for a purpose rather than to sound sweet. The Dneiper is primarily a sidecar machine and features plain bearing big ends (the Gallant has rollers), domed pistons (flat topped), and alloy barrels (cast steel).

The Gallant, which has solo gearing as standard, though lower gearing can be fitted for a chair, feels pleasantly long-legged.

It was rather reluctant to take top gear below 40 mph, though it would trickle along in top down to 30 mph. Opening it up at low speeds would produce a shake from the engine.

This, coupled with a very notchy gearchange prone to crunching cogs between first and second and third and top, and a reluctance to accel-



Where BMW changed to a camshaft under the crankshaft to improve lubrication, the Ural factory stays with a high cam — and it's noisy in operation due to a straight-cut gear drive. Note the neutral-finding gear lever near the drive to the shaft.

ate smartly meant the bike didn't feel at home in town.

Low speeds also provoked a wandering motion in the steering. Tightening the steering damper made it worse.

Rated optimistically at 40 bhp, the twin's grunt was delivered very softly. So it came as some surprise to find it getting into its stride at about 50 mph, with a comfortable 60 mph cruising speed. With the wind behind it, it would show a good 70 mph, though a headwind soon knocked the speed down.

To gain a constant 70 mph fuel consumption figure at MIRA I had to ride it flat out into the breeze — so it was not surprising to see consumption of two star plummet to about 25 mpg!

The relaxed unhurried cruising gait led me to expect better than the usual 40 - 43 mpg I achieved. A constant 50 mph fuel consumption of only 43.5 mpg showed little more could be gained by taking it easy on the road.

Better figures would probably be returned from a higher mileage bike. Neval report that the new engines are unusually tight and that the test bike wouldn't have been fully run-in at only about 1500 miles.

A number of improvements carried out recently by the Ural factory include better valves (the old ones were prone to burning), a change from six volts to 12 and the introduction of a twin-leading shoe brake on the front.

The improved electrics not only helped starting but the headlight gave a very good spread of light quite adequate for the performance.

British owners of the bike are sure to replace the Russian made tyres before they wear out. These chunky patterned items are great on snow, slush and gravel tracks, but not so hot on tarmac. As much as they disliked enthusiastic cornering and road features like overbanding and manhole covers, they were just about adequate for the bike's performance.

The ride on the old fashioned suspension was predictably firm and bouncy — really classic stuff, with the upright riding position making life a battle with the wind above about 50 mph.

After trying the Russian issue single seat — the dual seat is a British made item available at no extra cost — I'd say it has only one thing in its favour, that it helps soak up the impact from riding through potholes.

Most riders would opt for the dual seat, and sacrifice the tradition, but the single seat might be a lot more comfortable if used with lower handlebars mounted further forward. This is assuming the screen is not used — Neval admit it makes the bike wobble when caught by gusts of wind.

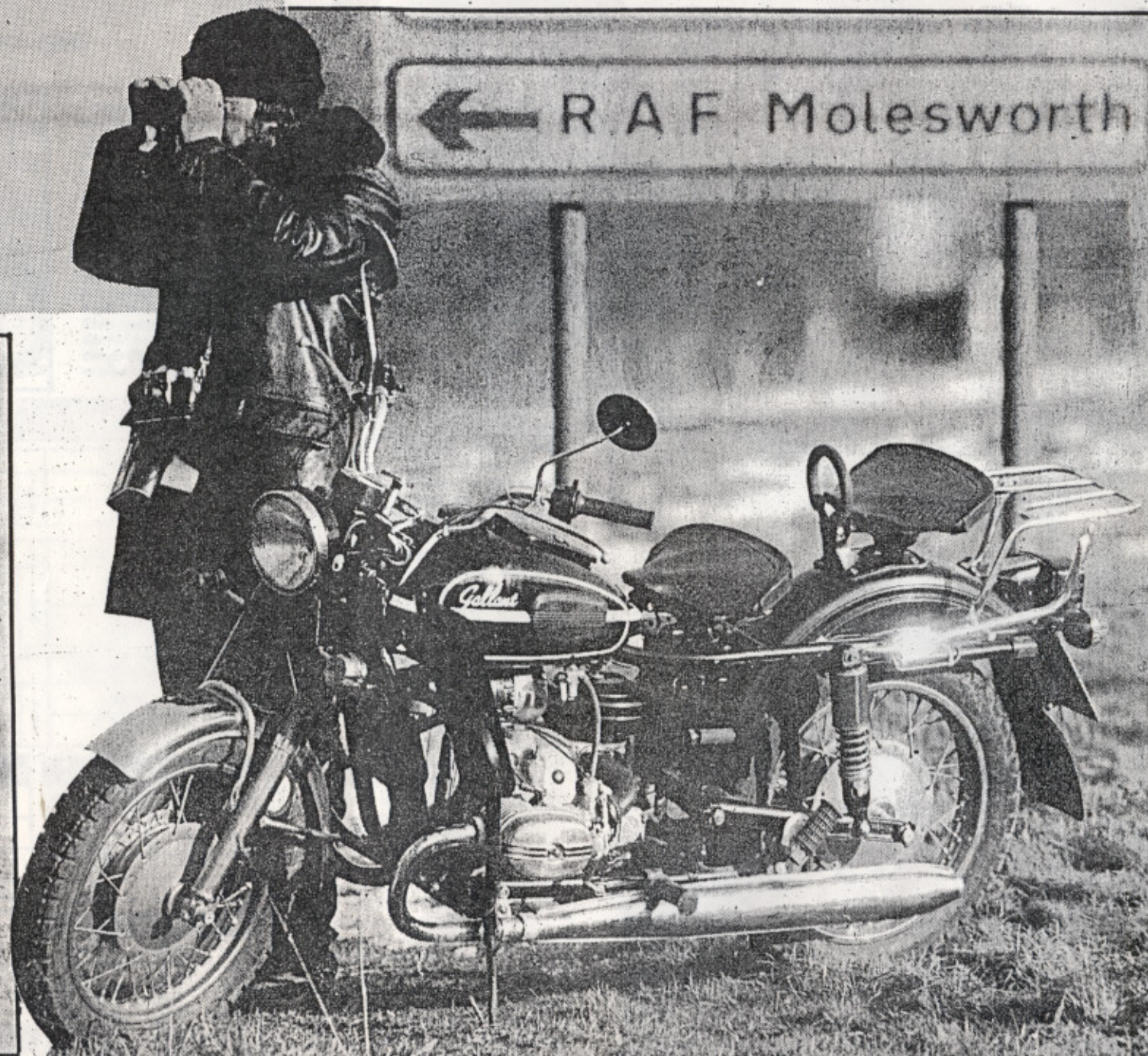
Of course it's strange, dated and unsophisticated, but that's half the fun. This is 'alternative' biking, off-the-shelf 'classic' biking at second-hand prices.



# GALLANT

by TERRY  
SNELLING

**Cut-price  
classics  
back from  
the USSR**



and crashbars make a lot  
of sense in the winter.

The original Russian tyres  
are none too great.

Vladimir Smirnoff scans the horizon for signs of the cruise missile bunkers, his trusty machine ready to take him deeper into the secrets of western defence. Vladimir denied the bike was the small change from the latest spy swap in Berlin.



