

Horizontal View

The magazine of the Cossack Owners' Club
March/April 2022
The Andrew Mutter Edition



What cannot art and
industry perform, when
science plans the progress
of their toil.



Front and rear covers

Our front cover's big picture this issue is Andrew Mutter's M66. You'll be well familiar with that by now but I thought it looked lovely in this shot. After reading this issue of HV you'll be well familiar with him too. The rest of the front cover is the casting of the first trophy in Baldrick's 2022 rally campaigne. Find out something of what that is on page 5.

The rear cover features two digital renders from John Fall. He's an engineering graphics designer who uses his art in his professional life as well as simply for the art in it. "Retired Engineer, worked in transmission design, graphic art equipment design, electronic soldering machine design and Aerospace Industry. Served my apprenticeship at GKN Birmingham UK." He's Irish and a keen motorcyclist. We might have more of these.

The IZH 350 is a collaboration with Michal Szlachetka and Eugene Chigirinov who supply virtual parts for the IZH 350 and 49, available for you to build your own digital beauty. I'm not certain but I think the Ural gearbox is all John's own parts, created individually by himself.

Inside the rear cover is a flyer for an "international" Ural meeting in Finland. I'm not quite sure who's organising it but there's contact details on the flyer. Is there a Finnish Ural club? They seem fun. If anyone goes, we'll need to know what happened.

James Beattie is the Scottish poet responsible for our very apt quote. He was born in 1735 and probably had no idea what casting aluminium was. He is remembered for his staunch opposition to slavery as well as his poetry and thinking.



This issue is so packed full of Jupiters already, Terry Inman's beautiful restoration of his will be in the next issue with a bunch of Planeta Sports. We've had several contributions which will fit better next time than they did this. Don't worry, everything sent in is gratefully appreciated and precious.

On the subject of Planeta Sports, Arctic Molly continues her trek up Scandinavia on page 31, for the sake of continuity. She's actually in the Arctic now. She'll get as close to Russia as you can get without pissing off the Russians next time.

Here in the HV office, we love these. If you attach images to your emails when you send contributions in that

way, it preserves the original file format. For example if your camera or phone stores images as .jpeg, that's what I get. I can edit it and store it reliably. My email account has these buttons. The attach button is the paperclip.



Lots of people embed images in the body of their emails. Then I get the file format from their email provider's server. Sometimes I can't get these out of the email and maintain its quality and often they disappear in my email's filing system. I know lots of people use phones now and send me links to cloud based files. These are often fun because they are then protected as the intellectual property of the website owner. Google is a particular struggle. If you can, please attach images to emails and for lots of them, put them all in one folder and send them via www.wetransfer.com if they exceed your email's size limit. This too preserves the original file format. Having said that, do what you like if you have to. I'll sort it out this end somehow.

A warm welcome to.....

Daniel Peggie, Saline, Fife.
James Penman, Saline, Fife.
Neil Branham, Knutsford, Cheshire.
David Priestley, Dumfries,
Ian Hartley, Caernafon,
Gwenedd.
Paul Prictor, Swindon, Wilts.
Mark Jenkinson, Croft, Leics.
Dean Larmet, Kings Lynn.
Brendan Hawkins, Porchester, Hants.
David Lively, Todmorden, Lancs.



At some point in the next few years I'm going to need to get stuck into a project I'm going to need every synapse of head space for. Editing Horizontal View is outrageous fun and I'm sure there'll be someone out there who'll love it just like I do when I need to stop. Fancy a go, whoever you are? Nothing's critical yet. I'll see how things go. I'm just floating the idea to see what the universe thinks of it. Wanna chat about it? Contact details on page 4.

Advance warning

*Here's Rally
Commissar Charles
Hancock on the
subject of a possible
South Western Rally.....*

Having been approached by a member from the South West he pointed out to me that although there was a reasonable number of Rallies nationally, the reality still remains that members living in Somerset, Devon and Cornwall have to travel a very long distance to attend the nearest COC rally!

I will organise a rally in south Somerset or North Devon if there is more than one member interested! After all it's a lovely part of the country! Charles' contact details are on page 4.

May 6-8th The Spring Dent Rally, Conder Farm, Dent, Lancashire, LA10 5QT. This event is run on the Dent formula as it has been for many years and is a get together for riders of a variety of machines! Rally badges will be available either included in the rally fee or for a nominal sum a trophy will be awarded for extraordinary endeavour. The price per night will be under £10 More details later.

June 10-12th The Three Magpies, behind the pub at Sells Green, Wiltshire, SN12 6RN. £10 per tent per night. Included in the price will be a Rally Badge and tea and coffee throughout the day. Evening meals should be available in the pub. Awards will be given for furthest travelled solo, furthest travelled outfit, most original machine and best modified machine.

Camping weekend at **The Junction Pub, 102 News Lane, Rainford, St Helens, WA11 7JU** for 8th to 10th July 2022. The venue is a pub restaurant with a large flat field at the rear. There are good, 24 hour toilets and by July there should be a shower unit. There is a large marquee on the field and on Friday and Saturday evenings there will be a brass band concert in the marquee.

In the pub on Friday evening there is an open mic session and any budding musicians can get up and do a turn. On Saturday evening there will be a band on in the pub. All music will finish by 11pm. Table meals are available all weekend and on Sunday lunch time there is a carvery for those who want a meal before returning home.

All welcome, even campervans.
The cost is £10 per tent/unit per night.
Contact Tony on 07504 700522 with any queries.

Forthcoming COC events

August 12-14th The East European (Red Star) Rally held at Greetham Community Centre, Rutland, LE15 7NG. This is the postponed 2020 event and is a joint Rally of the COC, the JawaCZ Club and the MZRC. We hope this year to include the IFA club who are enthusiastic owners of all vehicles from the GDR. The price will be £20 per person. A badge is included in the fee. Other details of activities and speakers will be published nearer the time. An event not to miss!



In the expectation that we could have visitors from East European countries such as the Ukraine and elsewhere one of our members, Konstantin Long, has volunteered to act as an interpreter at the East European Red Star Rally.

Konstantin graduated with a degree in Mechanical Engineering from the Mogilev State Technical University and then went on to read Mechanical Engineering at Hull University. He imports models of Soviet motorcycles and will also bring some new motorcycle parts to sell at the Rally. So our friends from Belarus, Ukraine and Russia will be in good hands with Konstantin who not only will be able to talk to them in their language but also talk about mechanical problems with them! However we are still looking for people with other language skills such as Polish, Czech, Dutch and French!

September 16-18th North Owersby, Lincolnshire, LN8 3PW. This is different from the other rallies in that the relatively small size of the field means that we can only accommodate 25 people, so that means pre-booking is essential. The Rally is all inclusive with two breakfasts, tea, coffee and snacks available throughout the day, two evening meals and a litre of beer on arrival. A badge is included and awards are as for The Three Magpies. The bar operates on the basis of an honesty box with the price at around £1-£1.25 per can or bottle.

At North Owersby there is a purpose built cabin with a wood burning stove. The facilities building has a composting toilet and a wash hand basin with hot and cold running water. Next door is a shower room. The price is £40 per person.

October 7-9th The Autumn Dent Rally, Conder Farm, Dent, Lancashire, LA10 5QT. This is the second Rally of the year at Dent and is run on broadly the same lines as the May event with badges and an award.

The Hero Rallyist Award. Any member who attends every Rally in 2022 will receive an award at the 2023 AGM as Hero Rallyist of 2022. The rules governing this award will be published shortly. Finally we hope that we've put together a program that builds upon what we have done for many years and will bring fun and fulfilment to all. We will provide, as far as possible, what you want so please get in touch with ideas or suggestions and if we're getting it wrong tell me so that we can deal with it. *Charles' contact details are on page 4, use these for up to date info on all COC events except The Junction Pub on July 8-10th.*

23/24th April, The IFA Club's Glaslost event. This is based around Glasgow and visits the Riverside Museum transport collection, the Bo'ness and Kinnel Railway and the Glasgow Vintage Trust collection.



14/15th May. Oxford Eastern Bloc Vehicle Weekend. Enjoy road runs through fabulous scenery and interesting venues to visit including the Control Tower at RAF Greenham Common.

9/10th July. Iron Curtain Vehicle Weekend based around Stafford. This includes a run to RAF Cosford and the National Cold War Exhibition on Saturday and Sunday based at the Really Retro Show at Penkridge, Staffordshire.

Richard Hemmington is the man to see about these and the rest of the IFA Club's 2020 calendar. He's on 07736 962572 or on Events@ifoclub.co.uk

The dates for the April Stafford Show are **April 23rd and 24th**. If you want to take part in that you'll want to arrive on Friday, April 22nd and ask Comrade Carl Booth if he has room for your bike on the COC stand. His contact details are opposite, telephoning him is better, he has no internet at home, strangeley.

March 25-27th Middleton Top Campsite Middleton, Matlock DE4 4LS £10pn 1person, £15pn 2persons.

Stafford



August 19-21st Providence Inn Yedingham near Malton YO17 8SL £10 per tent night. 3rd visit here, well liked friendly pub.

October 28-30th Sentry Circle Camping, Northallerton DL6 2UD. £7pppn. Again 3rd visit this time on their flatter field this year. It will also be their Halloween and Bonfire Night on the Saturday with entertainment on their outside stage. 3 pubs in a 1/1.5 mile walk.

The info contact for all three MZ Yorkshire section events is Glen Kapoor on 07596556070. He's not worried about capacity at any of the three campsites so it's OK to just turn up.

New email Address

NB. Peter Ballard has a new COC email address. This is in the Politburo panel below, please use it from now on. Thank you!

Politburo

President & Identification and Registration:

Peter Ballard: 01225 891634
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General Secretary: **Tony Jones:** 01942 605949/07504 700522
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Treasurer: **Phil Inman:** 01780 720420
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Membership Secretary: **Gina Inman:** 01780 720420 membership@cossacownersclub.co.uk

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Facebook: Because almost everyone does it.
www.facebook.com/cossackownersclub

Interesting motorcycle stuff only please. We find it necessary to filter out all sorts of the internet's alternative content!

This magazine was beautifully printed in Leeds by Thistle Print Ltd, Unit 6, Aston Court, Bramley, Leeds, LS13 2AF 01132040600
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May 20th/22nd2022 Notts and Derby's Section Camp at The Miners Standard Pub and Campsite, Winster, Derbyshire, DE4 2DR. Pub meals (inc breakfasts) available, also limited accommodation available at the (haunted) inn. See Gary Watson, 0115 956 9421, 07745 106764 before 8.00 p.m or at gandmwatson@gmail.com

Occasionally I am asked to recommend motor insurance for our type of bikes. I always recommend RH Motor Insurers. When taking out motor insurance it is always advisable to look further than the headline premium. Ad-ons, policy excesses and extensions can make a big difference over the term of the insurance.

RH Insurance is a division of Hiscox Insurance and they issue policies underwritten by Equity Red Star. Their policies are classed as specialist policies rather than classic or modern bike policies. They are primarily aimed at classic machines, over 20 years old. Multiple bikes can be added to the policy. For example I recently added a 1994 Soviet Knight to my policy and the additional premium was £5.60 for the remaining seven months whereas a 2006 Ural 750 combo was £140 for seven months.

Contact RH insurers on 0333 043 3911 or rhspecialistinsurance.co.uk and be sure to mention the Cossack Owners Club. *Check out the November/December 2019 edition of HV, page 29, for a more in depth introduction to RH motor insurers.*

In troubled times, when the feared COVID stalked the Land, Philip of Rutland, the Lord Blackadder, keeper of the Cossack Owners

Club Treasury, did order his serf Baldrick, the Rally (dis)organiser to bestir his idle self and journey unto the Town of Accrington and that part known as Oswaldtwistle. There to make himself better known to Phil Rushworth Hero Foundrymaster of the Cossack Owners Club and make himself useful to that respected personage.

The Lord Blackadder feared that the unkempt and slatternly Baldrick would begin partaking of wines and ales before the Christmas Yuletide was lawfully

MZ Rally

Tony Jones Insurance

upon them! So Baldrick set forth from Lindum Coloniae and travelled with much trepidation through diverse and disputatious Counties and Ridings and so came to the house where Hero Foundrymaster dwelt. Baldrick recognized it because there proud in the front window was a Ural engine of great age. Phil let him in and gave him such sustenance as was right to do before setting him to work.

Sadly it became apparent to Phil that Baldrick was all brains and no sense and so he set him to the simplest of labouring tasks, these just being within the capability of



Baldrick. Out of an old gas bottle, a defunct generator and an ancient vacuum cleaner Phil had created a means whereby scrap aluminium from worn out Soviet motorcycle parts and similar sources could be made into Rally awards and other items.

The Sorcerer's Apprentice

Just after the aluminium had been smelted and a Rally Award cast the noble personage known throughout the land as Binnzi, recipient of the 2021 Mikhail Sholokov Award for Creative Writing and a much loved and respected figure among both the COC and a closely allied tribe, the Yorkshire Section of the MZRC, arrived on his motorcycle to offer help and advice. Shortly thereafter Mick Sweeney of the COC arrived (it is hoped that Mick Sweeney will engrave the Rally Awards). Hot drinks were provided, the day being exceedingly cold, and work progressed.

After lunch of bacon sandwiches with the bacon being fried over the blast furnace, in a fit of compassion Phil suggested that Baldrick might take a hammer and a defunct Dnepr



cylinder head which had fallen for the Motherland. It was a grave over estimate of Baldrick's ability since he retorted that there was no way that a cylinder head could break a hammer because bits kept falling off it!



Patience finally exhausted Phil and Binnzi did the job themselves and a new Rally Award was cast, the surplus soviet aluminium being cast into ingots and marked for future use. The afternoon wore on, tea was drunk and as dusk was falling Binzi made ready to take his leave. Then disaster struck! Binnzi's hitherto trusty steed, a product of the German Democratic Republic many years before wouldn't start! So after much coaxing and fiddling Binnzi admitted defeat.

Now Binnzi being a man of quiet courage then did an act of such unparalleled bravery that Phil was rendered speechless. Binnzi let himself be transported home by Baldrick. With a tight courageous smile of the sort that fighter pilots gave as they climbed into their Spitfires to go and duel with the dastardly Hun, Binnzi climbed into Baldrick's car and was thus transported back to Bingley. After a restorative cup of tea and armed

with simple instructions as to how to get to the M62 Baldrick climbed into his car, narrowly missing a neighbour's house and headed off to become within a very few minutes totally lost! However even someone as directionally challenged as Baldrick eventually reached home and as he fell into bed he reflected on the sage advice of one Winston Churchill "This is not the end, this is not the beginning of the end but it is perhaps the end of the beginning " The first Rally award had been cast!



Note what looks like a scrap alloy car wheel at the top of the above picture, a source of raw material?

Appeal. Any scrap aluminium would be gratefully accepted by Baldrick for his trophy programme, particularly scrap Russian. Contact Charles Hancock, details on page 4 if you have any.

I hope the whole club appreciates Phil Rushworth's expertise as much as the committee does, it's fascinating stuff. At some point we might be able to offer a technical description of the process. Baldrick won't be writing that.



I arranged to meet my brother at Jacks Hill café in mid December. Many of you will know of it as a bikers café on the A5 near Towcester in Northamptonshire. However, I was surprised to see it all closed down.

There was a notice on the entrance. It said that they had been forced to close down due to the following reasons. The passing traffic had diminished during Covid and also due to on going A5 road works, sporadic deliveries of food due to supply and driver staff shortages. And lastly their own staff shortages due to sickness and self isolating after track and trace etc.

There was a 'For Sale' board out saying large plot of land for sale. I expect it will be a new housing development or similar. I feel sorry for the present lady owner, she had only recently purchased the business in late 2019, just before the pandemic! She had spent a fortune on a well overdue refurbishment. All new toilets, new furniture, new flooring, installation of full air conditioning throughout, upgrading the lorry driver accommodation, and new outside brickwork etc.

I had previously visited there in early October and was surprised and pleased to see the refurbished property. So as to accommodate customers for outside seating she had also installed brand new picnic furniture and not just by the front car park but all around the building. I hope any new owner continues with the café but I have my doubts.

You can't read this on the tiny reproduction of the flyer HV has space for so.....

This takes place at 10.30am on April 17th 2022 at The Silver Ball Cafe, Reed, near Royston in Hertfordshire, SG8 8BD. The contact details for this are Stephen Wood on 07534 456642 or David Greenwood on 07775 525591.

David Greenwood

<https://sidecarclub.org> events calander tells you all you need to know. Yes that is Jim Turner's K750 on the front of the flyer.

ULEZ

Visitors to the Ace Cafe will need to be aware of this. It's Ultra Low Emission Zone and has now been extended out of Central London up to the A406 North Circular. Here's Andrew Mutter on the subject....

"The rule is it has to be an historic vehicle to qualify as exempt, so that means the bike has to be older than 40 years old on a rolling program so this year a 1981 vehicle would now be exempt. This is why all my bikes apart from my recent purchase of a BMW R1250 R are all over 40years old! I had to sell my Valk GS1500 (shiny Goldwing Cruiser) because I live within 2mins of the North Circular and it would have cost me £12.50 to take the Valkyrie out of the garage. There is a place in London where you can get the bike converted so it is legal! They will even do Ural's depending on the carbs or fit catalytic converters. It's not cheap but might be worth it."

Here's the ULEZ website on the subject of motorcycle emissions testing.....

"We will accept evidence from test facilities approved by us for measuring NOx emissions. If successful, the test facility will contact us with the results. Test centres that believe they can offer motorcycle emissions testing to the required standards should email their contact details to rulezenquiries@tfl.gov.uk"

So far there appears to be only one, Riverbank Motorcycles Ltd, Unit 12, Riverbank Business Park Dye House Lane, Bow.



Baldrick the rally (Dis)organiser had another go early in December. This time it was mostly MZ with a significant presence from China. Heavy rain for the preceding days turned his Lincolnshire field into a swamp making it necessary to ease the outfits on, off and across it with a gentle push. Friday was mostly sunny, the editorial Voskhod didn't get wet much and we got the tent up dry. Right, note naked trees and leaves on the ground. Camping in December? The MZ club do that.

Barbara cooked both veggie and carnivore's soup for Friday night's meal, served with bread rolls. We enjoyed sausage casserole, again in the two choices, on Saturday. Spectacular is too small a word for how good that was. It was particularly welcome after we'd been out for fish and chips in Cleethorpes on the ride out. The fish and chips were fine but as we left the restaurant the sky blackened and within minutes we were fighting our way homeward straight into the teeth of a head on hurricane. Horizontal, high speed rain, right in face? Ooooh lovely!

Mr Kapoor lead the ride home but kept his MZ TS150 in third gear all the way so he could thrash back to the stove in Baldrick's cabin quicker. The Voskhod, crippled with three close ratio gears and an optimistic leap to the fourth, couldn't keep up. We tried though, chin on the tank in third until it was obvious the crank would go round no faster, then up into top to be blown to a crawl once again. Apparently, according to Tom O'Brien following, the tail light glowed brightly in the gloom at goodness knows how many thousand rpm.

Below, Cleethorps Pier looking lovely, in the sunshine, half an hour before it wasn't. Note the



long lamp post shadow even though it's lunch time. Camping in December, how much fun is that?



Above, Gina in the fog. Actually it's not fog, it's condensation on the camera lens. Humidity wasn't half of it. The wood burner had been lit for days and Baldrick's cabin was warm and toasty where the surrounding swamp was not. Bringing anything in from outside had it dripping wet in seconds. Then, everyone hung their kit round the fire after their return from Cleethorpes.

Below, Paul White's Chang Jiang, nothing a blast of WD 40 wouldn't fix.



Opposite bottom, Glen Kapoor and the inevitable Russel Johnson on Chang Jiang's old model. Below, Baldrick the Breakfasteer.



Above, Tom O'Brien's CZ 472. The 2 in 472 means it's a 350 as opposed to the 250 which would be a 471. These have all the same mechanical bits as a Jawa but the crankcases are different so the rear engine mountings don't fit, unless you really want them to. Tom said it was lurching and snatching on a light throttle so we thought it might be that thing where you set up the idle in the garden.

What happens then is the crankcases fill up with petrol while you're fiddling around for ages. When you're eventually satisfied you have a steady, even tick over, the screw's lean because the cases are rich. Then, you go for a ride and blow all the excess petrol out. When you get back you have to set the pilot screw again but, often with old school carbs, there's a gap in the carburation just off idle. This is because of the change from running on the idle circuit to running on the main bore of the carb. The trick then is to richen up the idle according to how it feels on the road, then screw in the throttle stop to restore the tick over. This lifts the idle into the sweet spot you've discovered on the road.

This works for anything but two strokes are a special thing because they have crankcases full of petrol normally. If your four stroke has crankcases full of petrol that might be because you have a Russian petrol tap.

Of course the weather makes a difference and the cold, damp air of winter might need more gas for being denser. Seasonal variations are one of the reasons you get those little screws to play with. We were camping in December, we don't usually.



The bloke sitting between Russell and Tom, with the braces, took a phone call from his wife to tell him his other bike had been stolen while he was away! We thought, because it was a Chinese 125, the thief probably didn't get very far.

Sorry people, but I'm not a MZRC member and I haven't remembered the MZ rider's names, except Dave Etock who I might have spelt wrong. I remembered him because he played the accordion and led the fire side singalong in the cabin. The Inman woodwind section played too. I don't have a picture of that because they made me play guitar. My apologies to those who had to escape to the Roadkill Cafe's gazebo outside to chat. Fortunately Charles provided a wood burner out there too.



Previous page, in matt black, Russell's other ride. I've no idea what model it is. Below, this is a Super 5, loveliest MZ model of them all in my opinion, the one before the styling gets too abstract.



Not that I know, but perhaps the reason for the strange appearance of later MZ cylinders is to achieve performance and some degree of environmental consideration. To go fast they need that huge exhaust pipe but it must mean that it sucks the living daylights out of the cylinder on a light throttle. I've owned two 251s and they were both irritatingly peaky. Do their cylinders need the surface area of a football pitch to keep them cool without the soothing effect of enough cool, slippery petrol when they're struggling in the traffic? I remember reading that the 251 was the last model Walter Kaaden had a hand in, so it really is rocket science! This one was at Krampustreff, below.



I'm sure he loves it but I couldn't love mine. I love the easy expectations of my Voskhod though.



Above, infinitely better than a Voskhod, but.....



David Angel brought a Pekin Express, Chang Jiang's new model. What's it like then David?

Chang Jiang at 500 miles by David Angel, director of F2 Motorcycles Ltd.

Pekin Express

As some of you will know, I have ridden, sold and supported Ural motorcycles through my company F2 Motorcycles Ltd for decades. We still support Ural owners with spares, service and technical advice, but we no longer supply new Urals. However, we wish the new importers and dealers the very best.

After much negotiation, F2 Motorcycles Ltd along with the European Distributor DIP of France have managed to persuade Chang Jiang to produce a left-hand sidecar version of their new water-cooled 650 EFI sidecar combination. This has been type approved to Euro 5 standard, and F2 Motorcycles Ltd have been appointed as the agent for the UK.

The very first example with VIN number ending 00001 was registered to myself in September 2021. I treated this as I do all motorcycles by starting with a very thorough preparation, checking, oiling, greasing and adjusting everything, leaving nothing to chance. This didn't turn up any horrors, but it did give me a few surprises.

The complete outfit arrives with the sidecar attached so one might assume aligned correctly, but this is not the case – the alignment was way out, and so I now know that they are just put together for ease of crating. I also have to assume that many of the nuts and bolts are tightened with air tools, either that, or the workforce is made up almost entirely of world's strongest man competitors. Just about everything I undid was ridiculously tight, but I suppose this is better than bits falling off during the long voyage and road trip they undergo to get here. I do wonder if the guy who tensions the spokes at the Ural factory trained his opposite number in the Chang Jiang factory. I have never PDI-ed a Ural and found the spokes evenly tensioned, there are always 3 or 4 which are so loose they rattle and Chang Jiang are the same, 40 spoke, 35 or so nicely tensioned with 5 rattling about loose. They had made no attempt to add balance weights, which is one up on Ural who add weights but always in the wrong place. It's no big deal and easily sorted as part of the PDI.

Really I found very little else of note during the preparation. I have PDI-ed a few now and they seem consistent. If I'm being critical, some of the finish could be better, but I have always felt the same about Urals and indeed Jawas. So just as I have always done with the other marques, I treat the underside of the mudguards and give all the nooks and crannies a coat of ACF50 as part of the preparation.



The first few rides were a major culture shock for me. Decades of riding softly sprung, roly-poly lazy-engined Urals did not prepare me for the Chang Jiang experience. Like most people, I had assumed it would be pretty much the same but maybe with a little more top-end. However, there are no similarities at all between the two marques. On the very first press of the start button, the lack of mechanical clatter reminds you that this is a modern water-cooled motor.



The Bosch EFI seems to manage cold and hot starts equally well with no drama. The Chang Jiang sits low to the ground and has firm, some might even say hard suspension. Thankfully, the superb adjustable sprung saddle helps a lot with the overall comfort level, but this is most definitely a bike for use on the road rather than a go anywhere on/off road compromise. There is pretty much zero body roll in corners, and the low centre of gravity helps keep the sidecar on the ground during spirited riding. The steering is heavier than what I am used to, but this imparts a great deal of stability with no tendency to flap about, even on rough roads. A steering damper is fitted as standard, but in all honestly, it's not needed.

The gear-change is as you would expect from a modern motorcycle – slick, and thankfully with a heel and toe rocker, as my stupidly large size 13 boots have problems getting under the toe for up changes. The pattern is odd, neutral is at the bottom, so it's all up as in 0,1,2,3,4. This is to allow for the reverse. There is a lever on the handlebars that acts as a safety lock-out for reverse. Once this is moved out of the locked position, the reverse gear below neutral can be selected and the pattern becomes R,0,1,2,3,4. The dashboard contains a gear indicator and there is a reversing light, and a rather annoying reversing beeper (which I have removed from my bike).

Chang Jiang along with Bosch seem to have done a decent job of optimising the mapping for sidecar use. This same engine is used by a number of manufacturers, and in some cases puts out well over 70hp, but Chang Jiang have done the right thing and detuned it to 54 hp with a very wide spread of usable torque peaking at 45 ft/lbs, (for comparison Ural claim 41 hp and 42 ft/lbs for their 2022 model). The Chang Jiang motor will pull smoothly in top gear from below 30 mph right up to the maximum speed. I have to say, as I enjoy a clean license I have not been able to verify the maximum speed on the road, but it easily exceeds

the national speed limit in the UK, which is enough.



(I read somewhere that the CJ engine is made by Loncin but it's pretty much identical in layout and theory to those made by Zongshen, Kawasaki and Yamaha. You get a short stroke, four valve DOHC, 650cc twin engine with a 270 degree crank, gear driven primary drive and the gearbox stacked up vertically to keep it short, very fashionable!)

It is certainly a higher revving motor than what I am used to and at first it seems like it could do with higher gearing, but after a couple of hundred miles to acclimatise, I have come to the conclusion that the gearing is about right. It just seems odd cruising at 50 mph and 5000 rpm where as the Ural at the same speed would be doing 4000 rpm. But at this speed the Chang Jiang still has another 4000 rpm to go, so it's hardly really trying.

I rode the Chang Jiang to an MZ rally in December. It gave me a chance to get a feel for the comfort after a few hours riding, and the cold, wet weather was ideal for giving the electrical system a thorough water ingress test. It was comfortable for me, and the standard heated grips were a real plus on this trip. All the electrics worked, and all in all, it was a completely drama-free and thoroughly enjoyable ride. As the air temperature dropped it became clear just how good the Ural had been at heating my feet, so I have had to invest in heated insoles for winter riding on the Chang Jiang.

Naturally, many people have asked me which is better, the Ural or the Chang Jiang. On the face of it this seems like a simple enough question, but the answer is really which is the better bike for you and your needs.

The Ural is primarily an off road vehicle of old design with some modern tech added to squeeze

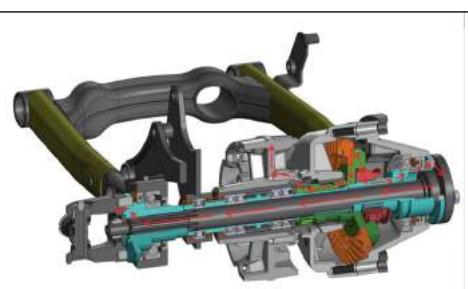
through emissions standards. It is slow, it wallows in corners, and has some reliability issues if used outside of its design brief (which is riding along unmade roads carrying a reasonable load at speeds below 55 mph with frequent maintenance). It has a torquey engine and without doubt has an old world charm, but the usable rev range is only 2500 rpm (2000 to 4500). That said, it is comfortable, light to steer, great on badly surfaced roads and easy for the home mechanic to do basic routine servicing including valve clearance adjustment every 2500 miles. Ural have chosen to do everything they can to make it difficult for the EFI system to be interrogated away from a dealer, although there are some clever owners who have come up with solutions.

The Chang Jiang is very much a road bike. It can maintain 65/70 mph all day if required, and equally it can potter along at 30/40 mph in top gear. The engine is very flexible having a usable rev range of about 4500 rpm (3000 to 7500). If you let the motor spin it is fairly quick, and certainly much quicker than the Ural. It corners without body roll or wallow and is more stable on smooth roads. That said it is heavier to steer and the ride is harsher on badly made roads. It is a complex motor, and while simple tasks like oil changes are easy enough for the home mechanic, more complex work such as valve clearance (at 30k plus miles) may be beyond home maintenance, although any dealer who has ever seen a Kawasaki 650 twin could manage this. The EFI, being made by Bosch, can be interrogated by any cheap OBD2 reader available from eBay for about £25.00.

I removed the rear seat from my bike to expose the substantial luggage rack, partly because I don't need the passenger seat, but mostly because I prefer the looks. Everything else has been left standard.

They're
available
again here!

What Happened to Ural?



Right is Andrew Mutter, grinning broadly because he's got a grip on one at the latest Earl's Court show I think. It's on the Horsepower Motorcycles stand. They seem to be a big shed full of other people's expensive cars and motorcycles which they charge £240 and £99 per



month respectively to look after. If you're that pushed for time they'll clean your bike for £25+VAT and something called detailing is £POA. There's loads of room in their building so now they're a Ural dealer!

I think I remember Andrew telling me they have a test track for punters to try out the two available Ural models. He met Mike McCombe at the show and tried to interest him in the Cossack Owner's Club. I emailed Mike and sent him the then current issue of HV to introduce us and ask him if he'd like to introduce Horsepower Motorcycles. He didn't reply. Does he think we're a bunch of impoverished, oily fingered luddites? There's no address for them on the Ural UK website or on their own site. If you want to go look at Urals you'll need to book an appointment using the on line booking form where you'll need to agree to their terms and conditions. And promise to dress up smartly?

So far there are two dealers in the UK. The other is The Sidecar Guys, www.sidecarexperience.co.uk. There's a dealer in Eire, Adventure Motorcycles, and they're at Unit 35, Gorey Business Park, Ramstown, Gorey Co. Wexford Y25 YH24 but closed on Mondays.

The list price for the 2WD gear up is £13,500, the 1WD CT is only £11,800. For that you get a new 2-into-1 exhaust system with high mount silencer (Euro 5 compliant), all new rear brake system utilizing a two-piston Brembo caliper and a standalone mechanical parking brake caliper, high compression pistons (*As opposed to?*), forged



aluminum front swing arm, updated inlet manifolds with fixed vacuum ports and a new centre stand design. WooHoo, at last! Above is what the new centre stand looks like. Here's the official factory brochure on the all important left hand sidecar wheel drive.....

"The left hand selectable 2WD system on the Gear Up model has been developed from the existing right hand 2WD system. It is engaged with a simple lever below your right leg. In 1WD the rear wheel is driven conventionally by the splines on the left side of the bevel drive.

When 2WD is engaged, the system then drives the sidecar wheel, which is locked to the rear wheel using a splined driveshaft that runs the way through the centre of the rear wheel assembly.

The driveshaft sits in spacers, and the drive flange is supported carrier bearings on the left side of the rear swinging arm. The rear brake carrier also has its own built bearing system, therefore the centre axle revolves within these bearings.

You will normally ride in 1WD, however, if you do encounter areas where there is poor traction, especially off road (*Charles' camping field in December*), 2WD is a complete game changer. Just remember, the reason for the amazing level of traction is that there is no differential."

On the subject of pistons, the official factory YouTube video tells us, in an American accent, that the new design increases the compression of the Ural motor by 20% to 10.5 to 1. It's necessary to squeeze harder for Euro 5. They're gravity cast from NASA 388 aluminum silicon alloy, with teflon coated skirts and hard anodised crowns and top ring grooves. The top ring face is plasma sprayed with molybdenum. Gudgeon pins are phosphate coated. Presumably they're made in the USA.

Whereas on previous models you could get away with using basic grade fuel of low octane, don't try that in 2022. That's enough digital, high tech for one issue, what else has that Andrew Mutter been up to?

Andrew sent me a couple of videos and told me he was thinking about buying the Jupiter in them. Below is a shot from the first one taken in Latvia where it came from. In this the Latvian guy who was selling it explains the starting procedure, starts it and rides up and down between the garages. Everything sounds like it's running in a biscuit tin on mobile phone videos on YouTube but it seems to work well enough. Nice East European rack system!



The other video was made by the bloke who bought it, shortly after he took delivery of it. Bottom is a shot from that. This man might buy and sell a few motorcycles, there's more than the Jupiter in the picture. Note the copious clouds of smoke there weren't in Latvia. Did we mention Russian fuel taps? (Page 9) Also note the bucket under the end of the left hand silencer to catch the excess fuel dripping out of it. It makes you wonder if the bike had been left on its side stand and the crankcases have filled up with petrol.

The risk here is that the left, downhill side fills up and the right hand side starts. Then, the right pulls the left round too fast and awash with too much fuel, it gets blown up the transfer ports without



there being enough room in the combustion chamber for it. This is called hydraulic locking and it's been the death of a thousand two strokes. Below is what happened to my mate Alex. It started on one so he revved it to "clear" the other side. Then it stopped suddenly with a bang and wouldn't go round any more.



Here's Andrew emailing.....

I've persuaded that guy to sell me his Jupiter 4, for £800 which I think is a great price. It's not running at the moment but I've seen pictures of it running. I think probably 18 months ago he imported it from Latvia. It's got all the documents validated by COC. If you remember I had one like it (Published in Horizontal View) but the Jupiter three. (Below is another shot of young Andrew.)

I thought I'll try and get it going, I've got a roller starter. I'll let you know how I get on. I think he can't be bothered with it, he likes riding bikes but not fixing them!

It looks like it's got Jupiter 5 forks in the video and the front brake looks a bit soft. Maybe trying to start it with rollers is a bit extreme. Take the plugs out and turn it with the kickstart first to see what it feels like. If it won't start on the kickstart it might



have something wrong it'll suffer from badly if you force it round. Don't bother trying to start it until you've cleaned the points and the carb, set the ignition timing and put fresh petrol in it.

Well I bought it, it's in worse condition than I thought it was, still it's gonna be a challenge for me. I know it was running a year ago that's in a sense why I bought it. It's been painted by hand badly. I'm going to put it in the shed and have a think about the best approach. I'll try and get it running first like you suggest and then think about the bodywork and the forks.

It's going to be a learning experience for me for sure. I hope I haven't bitten off more than I can chew. I learnt with the Ural an approach is do what you can do, then ask people, then if all else fails pay for it to be done. I've got a spark and I don't think the fuel was getting through, anyway haven't had time to look at it yet. Too late for the roller starter because I did use it on it until the battery ran out which wasn't long. Let's hope I haven't done any permanent damage!

I've ordered some stuff from someone called Minsk Supplier and received this response particularly about the model of Jupiter that I own. Apparently it is a Jupiter 3 but a later model although the registration documents say Jupiter 4, who knows!

This is from Matei Dragomir from Minsk Supplier who I'm sure was the man behind MinskParts.com in Romania. Anyone know if things have changed?

"You have a Jupiter 3, but a later model. The Jupiter 3 you had in the 70's is very cool. The orange colour was only sold in Western Europe and it is very rare now. I also have a Jupiter 3 that I LOVE. Regarding your order, shipping is very, very problematic. Shipping time will be around 3 months. I have sourced a pair of second hand grey knee pads for the fuel tank, but they are at a partner, that means that you have to pay another 25 euros for shipping, so maybe you consider keeping the black knee pads you have now. Also this partner says that he has jupiter 4 (second hand) badges for the side covers.
Happy new year!"

As I understand it this bike has Jupiter 4 cylinders, cylinder heads and primary drive cover. The flat ended silencers are also J4 parts. Also as far as I know, the differences between 3 and 4 are only cosmetic. I think the factory used up parts from old models on new ones and introduced new parts halfway through production runs. What year is it?

According to my IZH factory list, J4 production started in 1982 with 8941 made that year. J3 production ended in that year with only 73 made with sidecars on them and 59 solos. The last year of big J3 production was 1981 with 12,467 outfits and 3,000 solos. If you're interested, 1980 was the best J3 year ever with a staggering 192,449 outfits and 664 solos. The best solo J3 year was 1972 when 63,355 rolled off the line.

Then Andrew sent me an email titled "I'm feeling very proud of myself." and a video of his Jupiter running, in his own shed, right.

We enjoyed an exchange on which carb he should buy to replace the original leaking K36Д. NB, the Д corresponds in Roman letters to D and in the case of Russian carbs denotes IZH Jupiter. Andrew bought his new carb, a Pekar K68 Д from Towpath Motorcycles after we established what the Д meant.

Alternative jets aren't available for Pekar carbs from Pekar themselves so make sure you get the right spec if you need one.

By the way, Dynojet main jets fit the thread in the K series needle jet. You can use these if you want to experiment but be aware the numbering system different, it's based on flow rate not hole size, or the other way round.

Just bought a pile of parts for £125 including two wheels, side panels and a whole host of other stuff. Just thinking what I should tackle next any thoughts? At the moment it's exciting!

Well the engine's running. Do the brakes work? I suppose before you ride it you'll need to know if you can stop!



Do I detect a note of sarcasm in your reply? Seriously the bodywork is terrible, none of the lights work, and it looks like it's been painted with house paint with a roller. I've not checked the chain, wheel alignment, the seat needs fixing, there is loads and loads to do. It may be running but its certainly not rideable.

Seriously, I know people do but I wouldn't spend a single penny on paint or chrome until I was sure it was mechanically fixed. Now you've got it running, go through the electrics, change the oil, not just in the gearbox but in the suspension as well, fix the brakes then go for a ride. You won't know what you've got until you try to use it. For example, if the main bearings are rusty through years of inactivity, they'll fail quickly. If you haven't spent your money on paint you'll be ale to afford to rebuild the engine.

If it's been screwed together to sell or been left unused for a long time, everything will settle down loads after a few miles. If it was mine I'd get it road worthy without worrying about what it looks like, fix everything I needed to during the shakedown and when I was happy with it, then I'd paint it, or not.

Most people strip everything, spend loads on a shiny restoration then discover it's horrible to ride. I always start in the middle where the expensive bits are. Once the engine's running OK, everything else is then available to test, work on or play with. Once it's alive it's a motorcycle. Before that it's a gamble.

I've taken most of the bodywork off at the moment so I can access the chain the wheels, electrics and so on. I've decided to work on the electrics they are in a real mess most of the existing wires are either brittle or unplugged. I have to be careful because electrics aren't my strong point so ill do it carefully (not that I have many strong points when it comes to mechanics) I had to call in an auto electrician to help me sort the Ural out!

I'll fix the bodywork so it's safe and patch the rear mudguard. It's got lots of holes in, then reassemble it with the thought that I will take it off again and have the bodywork eventually powder coated. I might rubdown the frame while I'm there and give it a coat of Hammerite.

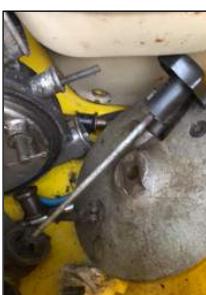
You probably saw my post on Facebook asking for the fuse rating. I'm going to put a blade blade fuse holder in Matthew at Windmill suggested that I should put in a 30 amp fuse. It seems a bit big but I don't really know and I've looked in all the manuals I have.

Yes 30 amps is a bit big even for a 6v system. I would have thought 15 was safer. That existing fuse you have is a work of Soviet industrial folk art. Keep it forever somewhere so whoever inherits your Jupiter can keep it too. It's beautifully Russian. See page 5 of the January/February 22 HV to find out how charmingly quaint it is.

Facebook users will know Andrew needed one of these, right, and the front half too. If the second hand parts he's found in Ukraine don't work out, he still might. Please could someone sell him one? If you think your Jupiter parts are more precious than money, he's prepared to swap you whatever's left over at the end of his project from the boxes of bits he bought. Fancy any of this lot, below.....



Contact the HV office, details on page 4 and I'll pass you on. Alternatively check out Facebook, although you might need to scroll down miles.



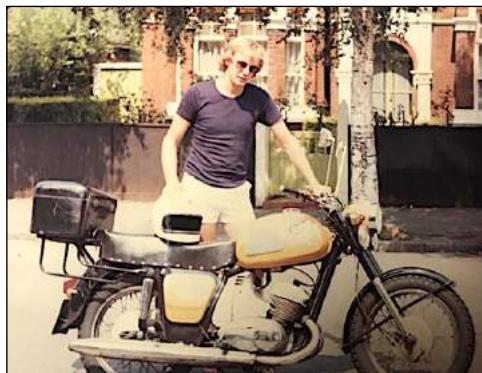
I had owned had a couple of Honda 50s, a Bantam that my art teacher had sold me, and a Lambretta Series 1 scooter before. One day my dad came home from the office one day after talking to a guy at work who said you really should go and have a look at these recently imported Russian motorcycles, they are really good value he said! I'd already got an old bike jacket from this guy and my dad seemed very keen and respected his judgement. So off we went one Saturday to the Cossack dealers TC Munday's in Brixton, I liked the strange look of the Blue Urals at the front of the shop however my Pa wasn't so keen for me to own such a big powerful bike and it was just too expensive for me. We settled on the black and yellow 350 Cossack Jupiter 3, costing a princely £270. He thought it would be great if I had a new bike that didn't break down. (Little did he know!)

I remember the day I got it, I was a bit nervous about being on the road on a new 'fast' bike. On leaving the shop my dad said to me "And don't think you are king of the road son!" Picked it up and was very worried when I found out that I couldn't get the Jupiter into neutral gear, I went back to the shop and the mechanic said you'll have to get it into neutral before you get to the traffic lights, he said with some irritation..... and that was the end of conversation!

I got used to the bike eventually and found that it was absolutely fantastic, what a sense of freedom it gave me. I could travel around London with my mates, give people lifts, I could go to parties at my sister's college and have loads of fun. I didn't look after the bike very well; however, it was great having some wheels and the freedom it gave me.

If you haven't guessed by now I went to art college to study Fine Art, first to Camberwell School of Art then Birmingham to do an MA and I was very lucky to go to Cheltenham to do a Postgraduate Fellowship in Painting. It was about then I bought the bike, probably the summer of 1975 aged about 23. I took the bike with me to Stroud, Luckily enough there was a motorcycle shop right next to the building that housed my allocated Stroud studio, interestingly they were also a Cossack dealer. I'm not sure if they were an official dealer or just did some servicing.

I use the bike all year to get me to work and teach my day at Cheltenham. I had a friend who was also doing the fellowship, Mike Holland who used to ride on the back from Stroud to Cheltenham through



Painswick all through the winter, spring and into the summer. After work there was the inevitable party with other tutors and students, you know all about art college, sex drugs and rock n roll. We used to stay over on Tuesday on somebody's sofa and come back to Stroud on a Wednesday morning with the inevitable hangover!

During that year I also used to teach a day a week at Sir John Cass School of Art in Whitechapel, every week I travelled up to London from Stroud to stay with my parents on a Thursday evening and then do a days teaching at Sir John Cass, then travel back at the weekend.



I couldn't afford bike gear and it was about a three hour ride to London, I only had a very old ski jacket, some gauntlets and no waterproof trousers. Somebody told me that you could pad the inside of your jacket with newspapers to keep warm which I did. When I got to my mother's house it could take me up to an hour to thaw out on those cold February days.

About this time, I had a girlfriend in Birmingham and sometimes I would travel from Stroud to Birmingham to visit her. One dark night I was travelling to see her and the road curved round to the right and instead of going round with the road, I went straight forward into a ditch. There was nobody around to pull me out and it was very very dark and scary! The bike was on top of me in the ditch and still running, somehow, I switched off the bike, wriggled out from under it and with a lot of effort pushed it out of the ditch. Unbelievably there was little damage done apart from bruised pride! If you look closely at the two pictures of me on the Jupiter the later one has two headlights that I must've attached later to compensate for the lousy 6V beam and to avoid another crash.

The Jupiter3 had a very strong, reliable engine and I had very little trouble with the bike apart from the rating of the fuse and the breaking of the front brake lever. To sort out the lever I got my Sculpture teacher friend to fix it (he made metal sculpture). He was able to make me a metal tin plate band to hold the front brake lever on, this worked quite well until the metal stretched.

Other bike issues I remember were the lack of front braking, I had my wheel drum skimmed, and then I replaced the brake linings that I bought over the counter from Pride and Clarks in Brixton. I stuck the shoes on with epoxy resin, I'm not sure how safe this completely balmy idea was in retrospect.

I came off the bike twice more, unfortunately the last one skidding in the rain on the way to work, the tires didn't have a very good grip, thinking back I believe they were sidecar tires, having a very flat squared profile which didn't help the cornering or breaking ability of the machine.

This mishap twisted my front forks, I had little mechanical knowledge, my brother-in-law and I worked out how we could fix them by taking the forks of the bike and wedging between side passage wall of my mother's house and next door's wall. We then proceeded to apply pressure with a car jack to straighten them up against the wall, cracking a few bricks in the process.

Sadly the bike was beginning to become a bit tired and I wasn't able to sort it out. I needed a reliable machine to go to work every day from Dulwich to East London where I had my first teaching job, I needed a new bike. Dad again lent me the money to buy an Yamaha XS500, that I still have, below. I mentioned to Les, a friend, that I had a spare bike that needed some TLC and he persuaded me to swap the Cossack for a not very good amplifier! He arrived at my house one day unannounced with a van and that was the last I saw of it.

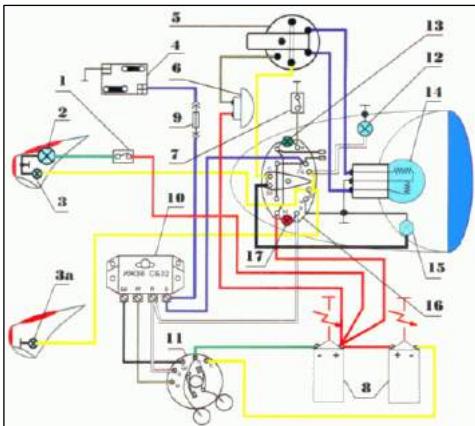


If I remember correctly, the XS500 was Yamaha's first go at four valve combustion chambers with screw and locknut valve clearance adjusters, two to each rocker, a third order lever design. The valve gear was pulled round with a duplex chain. There was another chain deep in the bowels of the engine to drive what Yamaha called "Omniphase" balancing. Everyone does it now, it's rotating counterweights to cancel out the rocking couple from the 180 degree crank but at the time it was a radical new trick.

Yamaha tried it first on the XS750, not the three cylinder lump we all know and love but the earlier OHC twin. This used two balancer shafts but the drive chains wore out quickly so the weights wandered out of omniphase, making the engine vibrate like Mk1 Planeta Sport. The 750 used a 360 degree crank like a BSA for even firing with both pistons rising and falling together. The first balancer was necessary to counteract this but a second was needed to counteract the rocking couple between the first and the crank. Apparently all this thrashing hardware frothed up the oil so badly crank failure was a certainty.

You can have a small picture because it's a boring motorcycle and everyone on the internet hates it.





Hi Paul, please do you have a wiring diagram you could send me for my Jupiter all the wires have been cut off from the harness. I tried using the wire I bought from Amazon and it's obviously not the right rating, when I re connected the new battery the wire got a hot and melted the covering. I've now got only the neutral light on and not the red ignition light! So I've got a problem to solve, any ideas?

Your Amazon wire would have to be so far not the right rating to melt. It would be completely obvious if it was that wrong. You must have a direct short to earth somewhere. Check out the purple wires on the attached diagram, above. These are to the two likely problems. Most likely is the regulator box cut out stuck shut.

This is a device which cuts off the dynamo from the battery if the charging voltage drops below battery voltage. If this happens the dynamo operates like a brake, a reverse motor on the crank! There are two coils in the regulator. One has a contact on both sides of its moving contact. The cut out has only one. I bet that's stuck shut.

If it isn't, remove the generator brushes. Just click the spring holder open and pull them out. You'll do this because the direct earth will be through the dynamo rotor. If you don't have the short with the brushes out, it'll be a regulator issue. If you do, the trouble looks like the ignition switch. Have fun.



Here's the internet on wiring smoke kits.....

These kits were supplied surreptitiously to Lucas factory technicians as a trouble shooting and repair aid for the rectification of chronic electrical problems on a plethora of British motorcycles. The smoke is metered, through the fuse box, into the circuit which has released its original smoke until the leak is located and repaired. The affected circuit is then rectified and the replacement smoke re-introduced. An advantage over the cheap repro smoke kits currently available is the exceptionally rare Churchill metering valve and fuse box adapter. It enables the intrepid and highly skilled British Motorcycle Technician to meter the precise amount of genuine Lucas smoke required by the circuit.

Unlike the cheap, far eastern replacement DIY smoke offered by the "usual suppliers", this kit includes a filter to ensure that all the smoke is of consistent size. It has been our experience in our shop that the reproduction Chinese smoke is often "lumpy", which will cause excessive resistance in our finely engineered British harnesses and components. This is often the cause of failure in the repro electrical parts currently available, causing much consternation and misplaced cursing of the major suppliers. These kits have long been the secret weapon of the "Ultimate Authorities" in the trade, and they may not be available much longer. Be forewarned, though, that it is not applicable to any British vehicle built after the discontinuing of bullet connectors.



Here's Andrew's final word for this issue.....

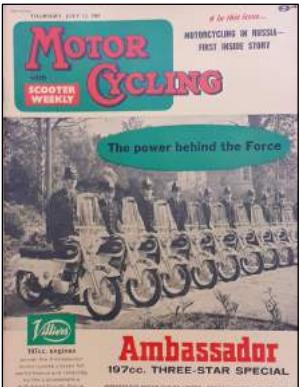
I must've had the original Jupiter for 4 or 5 years and I'd love to trace it although this is probably impossible because I don't have any information or records apart from that it was a P registration, and had very rare bike combination of colours, and it was swapped for an amp by Les from East Ham. Are you still out there Les? Does anybody own my yellow and black Jupiter? Does anybody know anything about this bike? If you do contact me, please, it would be great to be reunited with my bike. Email your HV editor, details on page 4.

I always wanted a 650 with that peculiar raised rear seat, you might have seen my lock down project grey Ural that I recently recommissioned and bought from Tony Jones, it's been Horizontal View for the last couple of issues.

Here to hoping that I can find my old bike one day and complete the renovation of the latest Jupiter4/3. Presumably the reference to art college, sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll of page 17 means names have been changed to protect the guilty?

Soviet two strokes are oozing out of the woodwork everywhere just lately. Here in the HV office we've noticed a marked increase in correspondence concerning what was plainly the mainstay of proletariat transport east of the wall. These days Minsks are the new BSA Bantams and Jupiters are infinitely cooler than any Villiers engined thing ever was.

Here's a contemporary view of real Russia, published in Motor Cycling in 1961, before a Ural ever turned a wheel in the UK, officially. I hope you're OK with the ponderous, plodding style of the period journalism. Did people talk like this in 1961? You can't read this but the front cover reads "Villiers 197cc engines power the



Ambassador motorcycles chosen for reliability and performance by the Leicestershire and Rutland County Police."

Добро пожаловать (It says this in 1961)

Motorcycling pursuits, whether in the fields of sport, pleasure or utility, are universal and, as we have so often averred, know no frontiers. Nevertheless, the motorcycling scene in one of the greatest countries in the world, has, until today, been wrapped in mystery. Though the Russians use motorcycles, in their various forms, to a very considerable extent, build large numbers of machines and are keen on the sport, it has been left to "Motor Cycling" to pull aside what was once called the Iron Curtain and shine a revealing light upon the models they use and upon some of the problems they encounter.

Whether or not Russian machines will appear on our market, the fact remains that they and their sponsors are extremely welcome to our shores, as will be the Soviet riders in October when they come over, as we all hope they will, for the ISDT in Wales.

Alongside a breathtaking, gigantic display of Soviet technology, four Russian motorcycles, including the C-259 250cc DOHC twin cylinder racer seen in Finnish and Czechoslovak events this year, were unveiled before British eyes for the first time at the opening of the three week Soviet Trade Exhibition at Earl's Court.



Motor Cycling's captions here are..... At the Soviet exhibition, Earls Court. Above, typical of the old faithful heavy flat twins is this 600cc Ural. Opposite top, Engine gearbox unit of the 346cc twin cylinder two stroke Jupiter. Below that, the 175cc Kovrovs single cylinder twin port two stroke, a modern design. *The Kovrovs looks like it could be on the Avtoexport stand alongside the C-359 GP bike mentioned in the text.*

These machines spearhead the drive by the Russian organisation Avtoexport, to break into the British market, although only the 346cc, twin cylinder



Jupiter, the 175cc single cylinder Kovrolets and the horizontally opposed, twin cylinder 600cc Ural and single adult sidecar are for sale. No British prices are quoted.

The racer is claimed to develop 37bhp at 11,800rpm on a compression ratio of 10.5 to 1 and to have a top speed of

120mph with streamlining. Cylinder dimensions are 55mm bore x 52mm stroke. It has a duplex frame, with telescopic front suspension and rear swinging fork.



The two strokes have modern styling and an attractive blue finish. The Jupiter's engine has a claimed output of 18bhp while the twin port Kovrolets, although only half its capacity, produces 12bhp.

Technical comment by Phil Irving (Yes, Vincent!)

At first sight, the general finish of the Russian built machines was good without being "scintillating". It appeared to be the genuine production job and not enhanced in the accepted Show manner. Chrome plating, though not over lavish, was of good quality and all aluminium castings on the touring solos were satin finished.

Technically there appeared to be nothing new, the most interesting model, the 250cc racer, with DOHC and unit six speed transmission is almost identical to the 350 Jawa, which raced in the IoM, except that it is generally smaller and lighter and has no fairing. An ingenious feature is the grinding of the rear springs to a barrel shape to furnish a progressive rate.

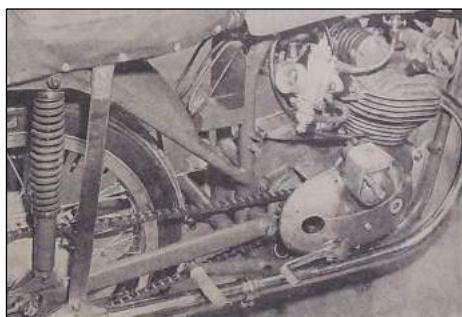
Ignition is by coil, with a two arm contact breaker and two double ended coils firing dual plugs. Brakes are two leading shoe front and rear, with large inlet air scoops but no outlets except for a number of holes in the drum well.

This model has the gear pedal on the right and the brake on the left, with no provision for change over, whereas all three touring models have these controls reversed. The 346cc Jupiter even has a rocking pedal on the left, plus a lever for hand operation on the right which moves in unison with it. On both solos the kickstarter (folding) and gear pedal are mounted coaxially. Both power units are similar in outline to corresponding Jawa editions and have the carburetors hidden beneath cast aluminium housings.

The sidecar machine, of somewhat grim and forbidding appearance, bears a striking resemblance to an old model BMW. It retains plunger rear springing and the welded frame is neatly gusseted in the corners where this type of frame is prone to fracture. All three wheels are interchangeable, and a spare is mounted above the boot of the sidecar, which is pivoted on rubber at the front and supported by very stiff quarter elliptic springs on a chassis with plenty of ground clearance.

An interesting point is that the front axle is mounted forward of the slider centres in order to reduce the trail. Altogether, an outfit designed less for joy riding than for rough country work, even under water, as both carburetors are well sealed with rubber hoods and the large air cleaner is located high up.

All components on the models shown were claimed to be of Russian manufacture, including the racer's aluminium rims, which is strange in view of the limited production of this model. The carburetors closely resemble GP Amals but are not Birmingham products.



How it is in Russia. Motorcycling's growing fast but it has its problems.

If a popular saloon costs over £1,500 and you have to wait several years before it's delivered, if, on the other hand, you can walk into a shop and buy a workmanlike 125 for £120 straight off the peg or wait a few months for a BMW style twin at £310..... Well, the answer's fairly obvious, isn't it?

That's how it is here in Russia. And that's why the home motorcycle industry, although it has doubled its output in the past five years or so and now produces at the rate of more than half a million units a year, cannot keep up with demand.

At least, that's the chief reason. There are others. Petrol is fairly cheap here and the roads in rural districts are so poor that the motorcycle is sometimes a more practical means of transport than a car. And it is as a practical means of transport, very often family transport, that the majority of Soviet riders regard their mounts. A sidecar (it will cost about £120) can be pressed into service for plenty of jobs besides passenger carrying too.

Significant is the fact that last year 13% more motorcycles and scooters were sold than in 1959, but 10% fewer bicycles. (These sales, incidentally, included machines imported from Czechoslovakia and Hungary.)

So there is the general picture, a booming market, largely for ride to work machines. But with the boom have come growing pains, some of them so severe that the papers have been bombarded with letters from indignant motorcyclists and the press has, in turn, taken up the cudgels on behalf of its readers. Garaging, sales methods and spares are the chief targets. ("Sales methods"? What, "If you don't want the bike bugger off"?)

In the big towns, anyone who decides to buy a motorcycle immediately encounters a vicious circle. There is no private land in Russia, and a plot for a garage can be obtained only through the local authorities. Their permission is often refused on "town planning" grounds. To make matters worse, it is impossible to apply for a plot at all until one has actually purchased a motor cycle, so no one buys a machine in the knowledge that there will be nowhere to house it.

This is a serious business in a country with long hard winters. There are no parking shelters of any kind for motorcycles, nor are there garages which

will take them for storage or overhaul. Even in Moscow, with its thousands of motorcycles, there is only one repair shop with a staff of 20 or 30, including supervisors and clerks.

In Russia they speak of "buying a cat in a sack" and that's a fair description of the way you have to buy a motorcycle. You must take it away with the wraps on.

In a letter to the newspaper Komsomolskaya Pravda, one indignant customer described how, after buying a motorcycle, "One has to hire a taxi to carry it home, then find a place where the battery can be charged, and all the time to wait with trepidation to see whether the engine will really start"

Often it's hard to find spares in the shops, but they are offered on the black market. The same applies to such essential things as goggles. There is an under the counter trade in the outsize pattern known as "muzzles". There are also home made windscreens to be had.

So much for the negative side of the picture. It exists, but the campaign against it is underway. As a breed, motorcyclists usually overcome the problems attached to their hobby. They have the same spirit here. One of the the Russian race judges has said. "I would choose astronauts from among the world's motorcyclists."



Motor Cycling's captions here are The two lads above are taking one of the massive BMW style twin outfits round last year's Soviet cross country championship course. Bloody 'ell, watch that tree! I hope what's in those sacks is soft. And opposite, The girl's mount is a Russian built lightweight.



Blunt speaking. The motorcycle industry itself is in the throes of a drive for expansion, and improvement of quality. Again, there has been some blunt speaking.

The chairman of the Central Automotor Club, Mr N. Strakhov, is quoted as saying "Generally speaking motorcyclists are technically behind the rising demands. The bad quality of the sport and racing motorcycles from some of the factories hinders the development of the sportsmen's skill." In fact, although it has produced some good models during the past few years, notably the IZH 240 and the K175, the industry is still far from perfect.

Quantity of production had to be the first objective. The Soviet industry now claims to have the greatest output in the world. Last year Russia produced half a million motorcycles and scooters, and the figure is rising. For the first three months of 1961 there was an output of 141,000 motorcycles and scooters, or 7% more than for the same period last year. But this is still not enough to meet demand. Higher production specialisation is considered vital here. It has been decided that, in a country where there is no sales competition, it would be pointless to organise in one and the same factory the production of a variety of models, and it is thought that each factory should concentrate on the production of a single type and so permit the installation of complete automation and conveyor lines.

Some of the largest motorcycle factories have already begun to specialise. In Minsk, where they produce motorcycles of up to 125cc, it is planned to

change over entirely to 250cc machines. The factory in Vladimir produces 175cc machines, the Udmurtia factory works on a 350. In Kiev and Irbit they have specialised in heavy motorcycles. By next year, these factories will be producing 650cc models.

Attention is also being paid now to the greater use of plastics. Izhevsk motorcycle factory used some plastic details for an experimental model which, on completion, was 27lb lighter than the standard machine. The factory now plans the progressive introduction of plastic details into their regular production.

The effective history of the Soviet industry has been short. The first attempts to produce motorcycles in Russia were in 1913-14, at the "Dux" factory in Moscow and in Riga's bicycle factory, where they were assembled from imported parts. These were cut short by the first world war. The first Soviet motorcycle, the "Soyuz" ("Union"), was constructed in 1924, but it was as late as 1932 that the first factory was established in Izhevsk.

Pre-war Russian design ran to very heavy transverse V-twins, admittedly not successful. The first post-war model broke with this tradition. It was a horizontally opposed, shaft drive job, practically identical in layout with the current BMW. This set the pattern for the present generation of Russian heavyweights. Whether side valve or OHV, they are sturdy, slow revving machines with no pretensions to high maximum speed.

Of this line, the most advanced model in mass production is that designed by the Central Construction Experimental Bureau of Motorcycles with the assistance of the Irbit and Kiev factories. Suitable (like all the rest) for sidecar work. It is a 650cc OHV job. Makers' figures are output 28bhp, speed solo 75mph, weight 437lb. It has low pressure tyres and a 4.5 gallon tank.

Other heavy models include the M61 (750cc, 24bhp, costing £416), the K750 (750cc, 26bhp, £388), and the M52 (500cc, 24bhp, £310). But they are generally hard to come by and there is often a waiting list. A lightweight, available currently in most motorcycle shops, is the M1M, a 125cc, two stroke with an output of 5bhp, selling at £119. Payments may be spread over a year.

Scooters now on the market include the Vyatka 150, which has been in production since 1957, and the Tula T200, which closely resembles the Vespa. A commercial version is also available.

Proving very popular here are the 350cc and 250cc Jawas from Czechoslovakia. They are priced at £258 and £218 respectively. Also available is the Hungarian 250cc Pannonia De Luxe, selling at £238.

For the lightest forms of two wheeler, the motorised bicycle and moped, there is again a big demand. Clip on engines made by the Austrian firm of Ehrenpreis were on sale in Russia as long ago as 1910-12, but the real history of the modern clip on began in 1956, when a home built engine appeared, named after the Siberian river Irtisch. This was quickly sold out. It was particularly popular in rural areas.

In the same year came another version of this engine, the D4. It was made a Kharkov, Leningrad and later, Penza, production finally reaching 140,000 a year, and it also equipped a complete moped known as the V-110. This model was not a success. It suffered from weak brakes, poor lights and an over high frame.

Seven models of moped are now in production (a typical example costs £42), but it is recognised that some of these lack customer appeal. Planned for mass production in Riga is a new model, the Riga 1. With a 50cc engine producing 1.5bhp, it has a claimed top speed of 25mph and a fuel consumption of 165mpg. Riga 1 was well advertised and production of the first 75,000 was promised for 1961, but it has been undergoing tests for two years and mass production has still not begun. When it does appear on the market, this moped, "motorcycle's little brother", is expected to have a big appeal.

Finally, a short word about motorcycle sport. A leading daily commented recently "During the past few years motorcycling has become one of the most popular sports" Many factory sports clubs are now being equipped with machines.

Interest in road racing proper was signified by the Soviet Union's entry into the FIM in 1956. Last May, Russian riders on Russian machines appeared at international events in Finland. Ufa, capital of Bashkiria, in European Russia, has long become the centre of Soviet motorcycle racing. Not long ago, riders there were competing for a "Yuri Gagarin" prize. Other race tracks are in Rovno, in the Ukraine, and in Maikop, south of Rostov-on-Don.

On the Moscow river embankment, there are now regular competitions for amateur motorcyclists. A

course of 240 yards with 10 obstacles has to be covered in not more than 90 seconds. Anyone with a motorcycle license can have a go.

The first Soviet motorcycle rally was held in June of last year between Rostov-on -Don and Novorossisk. 18 teams of three took part. Cross country racing for solos and sidecar outfits is very popular. Huge crowds watched last year's championship events for which more than 300 entered, near Vilnius, capital of Lithuania. And, of course, there is ice racing.

In spite of the scarcity of machines and the shortcomings of some of the models available, Russian motorcyclists feel that they can cope with the situation. Their greatest concern is that for the past few years the lists of winners of the most important competitions have contained no new names. At present the under 16s are not allowed to join motorcycle clubs. Trainers and sports commentators here are of the opinion that until teenagers are attracted to motorcycling it will be hard to forecast the future of the sport in Russia.

The caption for the picture right is.....

Paddock
arguments look
much the same
anywhere. Here
the men in
leathers are
Russian riders
Victor Pylaev, left,
and Nicolay
Shestopalov, who
took their 350s to
the Finnish road
races last May.



Indian artist Nithin Rao Kumblekar is the man responsible for the kid stealing his father's Zezdi Road King opposite bottom. He made me laugh!



Just in case you care, the Zezdi Road King is a 250cc two stroke single made by Ideal Jawa Ltd in Mysore India between 1978 and 1996. Owning one of these in India spectacularly cool. They sound fantastic on Youtube. The internet tells me that Ideal Jawa produced a special edition call a Dollar Road King, so called because it was priced in US dollars and only they would buy one.

*On the subject of money,
Philip was passed on to me
from David Cox because he contacted the website
with this request.....*

My name is Phil and, I am asking for some advice please. I have the chance of purchasing said bike that has been completely rebuilt. I want to do a very long trip on it and, wondered if you can advise.

I am married to a Russian woman and hope to do a trip to Moscow and, back on my own. I have biker contacts in Moscow, so would be looked after. Question is, do you think, if ridden moderately, the bike would be up to the task? I am a fit 67 year old.



The bike in question was a Jupiter 3 outfit, for sale on Ebay. It was for sale from RTS Motors Ltd, Real Toy Shop, in Grimsby Lincolnshire who said.....

"So what have we here, what a thing a lockdown project that has seen this old Russian bike and sidecar outfit restored to former glory and undoubtedly better than that, its most likely the best of its type out there. Watch the video (on Youtube) you can see far better there just what its like and see the pile of bills and paperwork that comes with the bike for work done, all new pistons, rings, carbs, seals, screws etc as well as paint, in the video I talk you through pretty much everything I've just ridden it home about 10 miles and its a hoot, with that 2 stroke twin ding dinging away if not a little scary, its only done the 160km since build and is still running in, something very different to enjoy or show. I can help with delivery no problem at all, if it doesn't go I'll just hang on and enjoy it myself next summer."

It was offered for a staggering £3,995, all major debit cards accepted. I bet they were!



I sent Philip..... "It has a Royal Enfield speedo on it so we have no idea of the real mileage. It looks like everything's been rebuilt so it probably has issues like sticky forks where there's rechroming, spokes which will settle down lots and brakes which need bedding in. It has Jupiter 5 silencers on it. Interestingly, our man didn't let it tick over when he started it and he put the camera on the ground so we couldn't hear the engine.

I think you'll need to do a lot of shaking down before you leave for Russia because a total rebuild like this could hide a multitude of sins under its shiny paint. It matters what it's been rebuilt with. There's a lot of Chinese junk available for old Russians and very few real Russian parts left.

Best advice? Go have a ride on it, see what it feels like. If you want it, buy it, then take your spanners with you." Did he buy it? We don't know.



Here's the auctioneer.....

Sold at Auction

"This machine (Below) is an older restoration which has since deteriorated, having some degree of corrosion to most surfaces. The original engine has been replaced with a Suzuki T500 engine. The engine turns, the speedometer displays 29,318 kms on the odometer, there are no documents, and no key is present. Offered strictly as viewed, for restoration, prospective bidders should satisfy themselves as to the condition and completeness, or otherwise, of this lot."



This seems quite a good idea, not too far removed from a T500 or a Jupiter! It sold for 862 euros. Note chain on the wrong side conversion.



I would like to thank you for accepting me to the club, I am now the proud owner of a Minsk 125 from 1972, or so I was told by the previous owner who was an 80 year old Bulgarian. So any more info on my bike would be much appreciated (please see the photo).

Dean Larmet



It is a major project which I plan to start this summer so I'm now looking where to source parts from. I'm currently working in Kuwait so time at home on my project is limited.

Your Minsk is a hotch potch of bits from various years. If you still have the frame plate on the steering head it will tell you when the frame was made. The last two digits of the engine number will tell you when the engine was made. The electrics and the wheels are from much later than the rest. Do you have any paperwork with it?

Unfortunately I was given no paperwork with the bike. The original Bulgarian license plate is still on the bike, what I'll need to do is once I've got the frame and engine dated is to rebuild to the earliest dated parts.

After further investigation I found the frame plate and I fear the bike is from 1986 and not from 1972 as I was told by the previous owner, so I'll base all new parts on the 1986 date.



Check the engine number. Your engine is earlier. This matters because the earlier engine has gearbox oil lubricated main bearings, meaning the crankcases are different to the later ones. A

Are there any shops or dealers that may sell parts for Minsk's anywhere in the UK? At the moment I only seem to be able to find parts on Ebay, any info would be greatly appreciated.

In a word, no, not yet. How about it Townpath?

*I'm guessing right,
is Dean's office in
Kuwait. Oddly*

enough, Here in the HV office we have available NOS Minsk crankshafts which fit these earlier engines. Below. And lots of other Minsk bits. Contact details on page 4 to find out what



A black metal flywheel with three holes and a central shaft, a copper connecting rod, and a copper gasket.

Neil Branham

**Neil
Branham**

I currently have: Kawasaki - Z1R, Eddie Lawson
Replice, Ninja Z1000SX and the latest Z650RS,
Moto Guzzi - SP1000 modern resto twist and
Bellagio.

I want to do more winter rallies in Europe and therefore thought it would be a good idea to buy and learn to ride an outfit. So my plan in 2022 is to retire in July, learn to ride an outfit and then purchase one, Dave at F2 Motorcycles is helping me with this. Then in February 2023 ride to the Primus and Krystal rallies in Norway, what could possibly go wrong?

I obtained my license back in February 1979 and did my first rally (Ides of March) that year. I had a break from bikes when I got married had kids etc but the pull to get a bike was never far away and I've been riding again for the last 10 years. I look forward to attending a number COC rallies in the future. *And a few weeks later*

Update on my bike collection. I've now bought a Ural Gear Up 2013 from Dave Angel. Let the adventures begin. I pick it up in April.



Neil sent me pictures of his whole fleet which sadly we don't have space for this issue but this "retro twist" above, gets in because it's very pretty.

Noel Davies

Noel
Davies

Very quickly got a reply to say that the timing mark didn't look like the original. It was in fact a centre punch mark, put there by A N Other. The original mark, a very faint line, was



one tooth to the side. I reinstated the correct mark. Once again, with advice from club members, I was able to pull the camshaft out and reposition it so that the real marks lined up at piston TDC.

Quick tip: I found that even after rotating the engine two revs the cam lobes didn't clear the followers enough to pull the camshaft out, so I pulled the followers back using a strong little magnet glued to a small metal rod.

This time, I thought, it will be right. But it was not to be. No, that would be too easy. Now the left side ran and idled nicely but the right would not run on its own. The timing light showed that the right side was several degrees more advanced than the left. By now I was getting really peed off with the damned thing. Back to the trusty internet to gain some more knowledge. I came across a write up from a guy who was having the same issues as me, left side good, right side bad. He had traced it to asymmetric advance unit cam lobes.

This made sense to me so I rigged



up a degree disc and checked each lobe. I expected to see 180 degrees between them but one was 5 degrees off. The writer said he painstakingly filed the offending lobe and used trial and error until it was right.

Having messed about with this for so long, I didn't fancy a lot of trial and error so I spent a day making an indexed clamping arrangement which I could set up in the milling machine. This meant I could set the cam so that the milling cutter just touched the "good" lobe, turn the cam through 180 and machine off exactly the right amount to be 180 degrees apart. This time, I thought, it will be right. And just for a change, it was.

The bike now runs evenly, nice low idle and no more backfiring. This has been a long arduous road which has taught me two things. When working on Russian bikes, never assume anything and that the new parts you just bought probably aren't any better than the part you are replacing (assuming it even fits). Well that's the motor running, now its time to check the sticky front forks, then I can finally start thinking about adapting to all hand controls.

"When working on Russian bikes, never assume anything and that the new parts you just bought probably aren't any better than the part you are replacing". *Amen to that! We had a sign above the stores counter in one of the dealers I worked for which said "Assumption is the mother of all cock ups."*

On the subject of sticking forks. Sometimes moving the L/H fork slider, the one with the clamp on it, up and own the spindle helps. Also, try turning the stantions to see if there's a sweet spot. Sometimes, if they've been run in they'll be worn to fit a particular place. They might have been assembled somewhere different.

Here's Motor Cycle, as a weekly paper by then, from October 19th 1974, when it cost 8p.

Brassed Off

The Cossack Owner's Club have written to point out that they are thoroughly brassed off with getting mixed up with the Cossack Club of Cheltenham. The former is a one make national club and the latter an all makes local outfit. However the two organisations are used to it now and have a good relationship. The Cossack OC has a new man for dealing with membership enquiries, pleas for help and queries, Peter J Ballard from Leyland, Preston, Lancashire.

Matt's a journalist, he comes to visit us on our stand at Stafford and can be seen hanging around race paddocks with his camera. He's a lovely bloke.

Matt Hull

He's pictured below on his Morini. He writes on a website called Classic Bike Hub where he has a sort of buyers guide to European classics. Tristan Parish found it. On the subject of Russians Matt tells us they're primitive, hardwearing and cheap and correctly points out they're not one brand as marketed in the past. He mentions centralised planning and the fact that each factory made only one model, just like Motor Cycling did in 1961.



Sensibly he warns that buying a sidecar with 2WD registered after 1981 is a bad idea because you won't be able to ride it in the UK.

Of the Minsk he says."A clone of the DKW RT-125, like the MZ 125, Harley-Davidson's Hummer and the BSA Bantam, the Minsk is crude and primitive and for the last 70 years has been the major form of transport of the Third World. Two million have been made, and maintenance is of the big hammer and bent wire type."

Here's Matt's Planeta, presumably the Sport. "The Planeta is probably the best and certainly the sportiest Soviet-era machine you can buy, and was still in production in the late 2000s. Fitted with a 350cc two-stroke single motor, they are reliable, easily maintained and virtually bulletproof. They are made at the same factory that makes the Kalashnikov assault rifle. Can be tuned to produce a good turn of speed." I think he might be confusing models there.

And finally, here's his assassination of the lovely Voskhod. "One of the worst motorcycles ever made. Unreliable, crude, and slow with terrible brakes. Its appearance has a certain period charm

if you like that. Prices £500 plus, incredibly." I know he had a friend who used to be in the COC, I hope he still does because then, he'll read this. Do we need a chat with him?



By the way, has anyone ever seen a Harley Davidson Hummer? You have now. Note girder forks with rubber band springing and opposed elastic damping. That's not how DKW did it.



As many of you know I like my old bikes and do many miles on them. Back in the deep dark days when I lived with my partner who was a BMW rider and was not a lover of camping, it was decided to upgrade my old Jawa outfit so a trailer tent could be towed. So the search started but what?

Glen Kapoor

Not a BMW I was sure of that. An old Royal Enfield twin as I knew they could pull a chair and trailer as I grew up in one? Not a new bike surely, then I had a light bulb moment a new ural of course! So I started looking into them knowing it would have to do holidays and my 50mile round trip to work 5 days a week in winter, when I didn't use my solo just like my Jawa did. So after some thought I went ahead and bought myself a brand new Ural. The next two weeks till I could pick it up were the longest ever but then the day dawned, train and coach down to pick it up and there she was gleaming in

her maroon and cream paint with all the extras on, oh how I fell in love. So after a quick chat and a look at other bikes my Ural ownership began with a ten hour trip home stopping plenty to let her cool down as after all I was still running in, but already it impressed me with its pulling power and relaxed ride compared to my Jawa.

After a couple of weeks she started to work for a living and the first trip away was to mid Wales two up with luggage and trailer tent, doing it with no effort but at its own pace (I like the bike to set the pace not the other way around).

After several UK trips it was decided, not by me, that the trailer tent was OK but is there another option? Head scratching, I suddenly remembered an outfit I had seen once towing a little French caravan called an Eriba Puck so after looking around and nearly falling through the floor at the price of new or even a few year old ones, I eventually got hold of one at a not too wallet hurting price. So for the next 4.5 years it towed the caravan with not too much complaint only ever once really struggling when we had to leave a very wet campsite up a steep incline on a muddy gravel road. On UK trips it was normally the two of us on board but for Continental trips Katie found it boring, so would go on one of her own bikes and meet me there. With this arrangement we visited France, Germany, Austria, Holland, Spain, Italy, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland and a few that slip my mind. With all this mileage the good old girl never gave me any problems. With regular servicing and running fully synthetic oil the only things that needed replacing were things you would expect with use and mileage. The only major thing I had to do was to replace a rusted sidecar mudguard and a couple of spokes over all that time.

After five years of service and a baby on the way it was time for a change. The trusty Ural went up for sale bought by a chap in Cornwall that still has it. The day puff puff went up the road was a sad day (I must admit she got named puff puff after my young nephew said it goes puff puff just like a train). Would I have another well yes of course I would but I don't think any would live up to that good old beast.

Sadly, all Glen's photos of his epic voyages have been lost. I hope his trips come up in conversation when we next meet. Opposite is a Eriba Puck, not the actual one, but just like it.



Ural France is holding its AGM in

Marcillat en Combraille on **April**

2nd 2022. The exact location is

GTR Performance Amusement Centre, www.gtr-performance.fr

It's about 20 km south of

Montlucon. The format of the weekend is similar to our AGM, that is arrive

Friday, ride out Saturday,

meeting the afternoon and

go home Sunday. It looks

like there's loads of fun

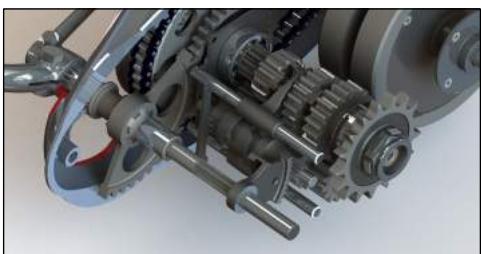
things to do on site. Here's the English translation of Ural France's relevant webpage.....

**Ural
France**



"We obviously hope that many of you will be able to come and discover this beautiful region and we invite all Bikers (members or not) to this event. As usual non-members of Ural-France can join us for this weekend. In all cases, you will have to send us the reply coupon accompanied by the payment check according to the options chosen. (Checks will only be cashed after the GA)."

<https://ural-france.com/evenements/assemblee-generale-2022.html> gets you to the forms to download. I can tell you how beautiful this region of France is because my sister lives there. Ural France is a big club with lots of money. Most of its membership is awash with disposable income and you can expect brand new Urals in droves. Consequently you must pre-book and engage their administration properly. It's easier than you think.



In Sveg I met a German BMW pilot who'd done the north of Norway four times. He had nothing good to say about Nordkapp at all. €40 to get through the tunnel, €15 to park, €25 to get in the visitor's centre and €40 to get back and 60 to 100 tour buses every day! Forget it he said, it's bollocks, a Scandinavian Land's End. Round a bit, north from Finland was apparently lovely. It was only 3C the week before. It was so stormy he could only ride at 40kph, but it was still lovely. He pointed out the good bit on my map and took some photos of Molly. He thought she was marvellous. 28,668 miles.

June 15th Wednesday. I sort of get Sweden now. It's a valid place to be Ray Mears in. Campsite chat last night was about the 99.999% of it you can't see through the roadside trees. It's a vast, untouched wilderness the Swedes go hunting, fishing and driving their rally cars in. They do all that because there's so much space. Nowhere else in Western Europe is that quiet. There are loads of bears but not many people have seen one.

This morning on the campsite car park, two blokes were sorting out their kit for some outback thing. They had serious 4x4 trucks and rifles, fishing gear and proper wilderness survival clothing. Real camping, not like me and Molly. I like campsites and their shower blocks. I make this hard enough without sacrificing the most basic of luxuries, hot water. We could free camp, it's legal in Sweden.

Today's been a bit mad. It rained all night and the weather forecast for Östersund was awful. Lycksele looked better but rather than pack everything wet and risk not being able to dry it out to sleep in, I thought I'd stay in Lit. Then it stopped raining so I changed my mind.

Off to a late start and several soakings later we got to Lycksele to discover the campsite was a leisure complex and nowhere near the town. I was sure there'd be another one soon so I kept going but there wasn't until I got to Avidsjaur, 65° north. The average daily maximum temperature in January is

Arctic Molly

-8.7C. Snowmobile tours are a big thing here.



The strange thing for a southerner is when the sun gets to around what should be 5 o'clock high, it feels like the day is winding down. I was happy to find this site, worried I was running out of time. Since then I've put the tent up, dried it, had a shower, done some washing, walked into town, had dinner and I'm writing this in the sunshine at 9.30pm. It's still 19C and we have two more hours of bright sunshine left. We are only 1° south of Poll Cirkeln here. Clouds of mosquitos drive you nuts wherever you go up here. It must be maddening out in the wilderness.



I saw my first reindeer this afternoon. We are now apparently in Lapland. Avidsjaur has one long main street and that's pretty much it. Everything else is 100 miles away so the youths just cruise up and down in their Volvo. It's a scruffy brown 240 with a hole in the exhaust and they rest their arms out of the windows while they're on their phones. I walked down to the supermarket and back and they passed me 14 times, like youths everywhere.





I'm going to oil Molly's chain at 11.30pm, because I can. 28,952 miles.

June 16th Thursday. AM. I don't know what the time is. If I remember the point at which the horizon shielded us from the sun for a few minutes last night, and assume that to be north, the sun is about 1/4 way round the horizon from there now so it must be 6.00AM. It didn't get even slightly dark.

My washing dried in the sunshine last "night" and it's hot now. There's no condensation on the tent. I'm going to go on about this because I'm amazed by it. Of course it's been the same for millions of years but the reason life on this planet is like it is, is because of just this phenomenon. It's difficult to imagine the geometry of the solar system down south. In six months time it'll be -20/30C here and they won't have seen the sun for weeks.

Hopefully we'll get to Jokkmokk today which is just north of Pol Cirkeln. The town has the best museum of Sami culture in Sweden. I should be interested but I'm not particularly. Sami culture is because they live up here, on top of the planet, where the sun goes round very slowly, or rather they do. Up here the planet's surface is much closer to its spin axis. The radius of the circle they spin in is much smaller. It still takes 24 hours to go round once but because their circumference is smaller, their speed in miles per hour is less.

You can try to imagine that all you like in Norfolk but it doesn't make sense until you've felt you need to press on because you think its 10.00PM but actually it's only 6.30. Sometimes it feels like tea time then you notice everyone else has gone to bed.

After I've seen the sun all day, when it's night time in Loddon I'll think of where the sun is, or rather where I am. In the middle of the night on December 21st, I'll be looking straight out into the ultimate bleakness of deep space, the furthest I'll ever be from the sun. At mid day on June 21st, I'll be closest. I don't think flying up here on an aeroplane would work. You have to ride across the planet's surface and to feel that, you need a motorcycle. Being trapped in a little tin box or isolated in a gold fish bowl camper van isn't it.

PM. Jokkmokk, or 3km outside it. 66°37' north. Record high 34C in July, record low -46C in January.

Jokkmokk Market has been taking place since 1605. On the first Thursday in February every year, thousands of people gather in the town for concerts, exhibitions and trade in one of the most important social events for the Sami people. Temperatures during the festival can drop as low as -40C.

As usual there's a big sign on the way in, "Jokkmokk Camping Centre". You just know what that's going to be, a big car park, security barrier and a painfully pretty blonde receptionist who'll greet you in English because she saw the GB plate on the CCTV. She'll say "196SEK please."

However tonight there's a choice, 95SEK for a pitch on a farm down the road a bit. We'll have two nights and a day off to celebrate our arrival in The Arctic. I took some pictures of Molly on the south side of the imaginary line which makes mathematical, geometric sense of the rhythm of life on this planet. Now we're really on holiday.



On the sign above it says "The Arctic Circle's position is defined by the inclination of the earth's axis, which varies under the influence of the sun, the moon and the planets. During a period of 40,000 years the Arctic Circle moves southwards and northwards within an area 180km wide. During a period of 18.6 years, it also moves within an area 570m wide. The Arctic Circle will reach its northernmost position in the year 12,000, return here in 22,000, to reach its southernmost position in 32,000 and so forth." On the ground the Circle is marked by a line of white painted stones either side of the road, which presumably someone has to move occasionally to keep up.

Molly had another good day. In places the pine trees thinned out and there was room on the

ground for some boggy grassland. We could almost see some scenery. I had all day to cover just 100 miles. I let her rattle along gently past rivers crashing over rock strewn rapids and mirror smooth lakes, shinning in the clear, bright sunlight. It's drier up here and that soggy light green moss has gone crispy. Sometimes it's even almost dusty!

I've seen loads of birds I've never



seen before and huge, brightly coloured, fast flying flies. They're very loud and make any roadside stop quite a hectic experience. The dense clouds of mosquitos have reached a new intensity. Standing still is a severe test of endurance. They fly round your hands when you try to do anything and in front of your eyes when you're trying to see it. The tent has to be zipped up at all times so that when it all gets too much to bear there's still somewhere to hide.

We're surrounded by pine trees here so we can't see the sun at night. This will be more comfortable. You know how hot it is in a tent during the daytime? It's like that all night too if you don't camp in the shade. 29,061 miles.

June 17th Friday. Most of these campsites have a kitchen, kök round here. The families are in the kitchen in the evening with pots and pans and proper food. Almost everything I own is to make sure Molly gets round OK. I walked into town and had a look round the shops thinking "Can I afford that, can I carry this?" I can't have anything squishy or perishable. Domesticity is one of my challenges. Traveling's hard work really, having done it is lovely. The harder it is, the cooler the achievement. That should apply to house work, but it doesn't.

Camped next to me is an Austrian. He's got a Suzuki V-Strom. I'm sure he cruised effortlessly for 1,000km yesterday. I wonder how long he'll keep it for. I'm sure the marketing men will make him want something else. He looks like a well sorted, management sort of bloke, he can afford it.

Actually the Sami museum is fascinating, more of an insight into what happens when the sun doesn't shine all night. Today its 22C. Of the hundreds of old photos in the museum, there are none of the traditional Sami way of life in shirt sleeves. It's all ice, snow, hunting, fishing, ice, snow, reindeer

herding, ice, snow, living in furs and ice and snow. Summer up here is only two weeks long.



Above, this is stuffed elk in the Sami museum. Elk is Scandinavian for moose. These things are huge and it's a privilege to see one from the road. Incidentally I haven't seen much fruit and vegetable growing. I suppose in order to eat dinner, you have to outwit it first.

In North Africa you meet people with all the gear and "Trans Sahara" plastered all over their Unimog, in Tangier city centre. There are some of those here. A huge overland truck with 5' tall wheels, whining gearboxes and an almighty, smoking diesel engine caused a snarl up in Jokkmokk's only main road. It even had a motorcycle in a rack on the back. I noticed I wasn't alone in thinking "Where on earth are they going with that?" It was very clean and shiny. It made me smile to see it had Swiss registration plates. Army knife syndrome!

Which way next? Kautokeino sounds good. Having been there you'd go to Karasjok along route 92 which crosses an area on the map which isn't green. Does that mean no pine trees? I like that idea. Karasjok is in Norway, in the wrong place. A far neater and fuel efficient route to the end of Western Europe would be through Kittilä and Inari, straight to Kirkenes. That way is another 450 miles of pine trees but worse, today, tomorrow and Sunday are the midsummer shut down in Finland. In the guide book it says don't try to travel, Finland is shut.

Plan A is to go to Pajala, 150 miles away and on the border with Finland. The map says it has a campsite and there's a dot in the town symbol, so it might be big enough to have a proper petrol station instead of an automatic one. I avoid these because I'm not sure they'll take English cards. I'm also not sure I've left enough in the bank to cane it with the card too much. I won't need to buy petrol in Finland where it's expensive if it's a real, inhabited station.



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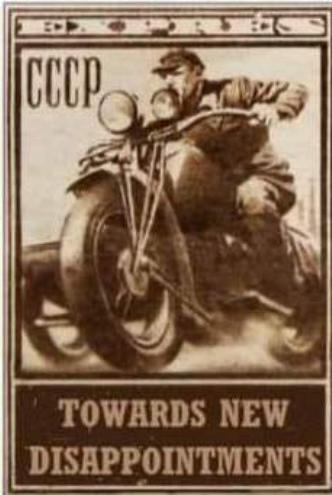
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More info of Ural meeting:

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