



Newsletter

July 2015

Summer fun

The Commando had been mostly behaving itself, oil leak irritation aside. In fact, other than the normal basic maintenance and diddling about with the instruments, it has been exemplary – a model of reliability.

You will have notice the use of the past tense there so know what's coming.

Going into work one morning last week, the 'bike started to misfire just as I came into town. I was very low on petrol but even with the reserve tap on, I only just managed to limp into the petrol station. After filling up the 'bike refused to start, rewarding my efforts with nothing more than a nasty kickback and a very loud backfire. I checked the usual stuff – lights working, carb still attached, all visible cable junctions still connected – and all appeared to be correct. At that point a passing motorcyclist came over to offer help and we chatted for a little while. After he had gone on his way the Commando fired up easily, suggesting to me that something electrical was amiss.

It didn't sound particularly healthy but with less than a mile still to ride, I popped and banged into the office car park thinking that by the afternoon it should have cooled off enough to get me home. I had my tools with me, but I didn't want to be messing about with it in the carpark during office hours. I finished a bit early and expected to be able to head off. Wrong!

I returned later with more tools and spares. Having been here before, I have a tried and tested diagnostic routine...

- Is it sparking reliably when kicked over? No

- Does it spark when touching the Boyer pickup leads together (tests the coil and Boyer box)? Yes
- With the ignition on, poke about the pickup plate and squeeze the wires. Does it suddenly backfire making you jump and clatter your head against the handle bars? Yes

Diagnosis – dry or broken joint on the stator.

Luckily I had the spare stator plate which I removed and repaired previously which had exactly the same fault. Swapping the plates had it firing up easily and sounding good even with just guessing the timing.

Since getting it home I have fitted a Pazon kit I had under the bench as I don't fully trust my repair. I like the Pazon kit – easy to fit and with longer leads it can be wired in with fewer connections. This weekends jaunt up to Applecross will be a good test, but so far, so good.

Clocking off

I have been finding that my cheap cycle speedometer isn't up to the task on the Commando. I have refused to buy another standard speedometer drive until I have some notion that it will last for more than a few weeks, so for the past few years have been relying on a little Sigma cycle speedometer. It has given great service, but the face had crazed so I purchased a replacement kit from the supermarket. The new instrument has a myriad (unnecessary) features but becomes unreliable above 70mph.

After much consideration I ordered a Smiths electronic "greenspot" from Puca (<http://www.puca.co>).

They are pricey but a good company to deal with and a very nice looking instrument.

Unfortunately when I went to fit it, I found the studs wouldn't line up with the Commando alloy cup. I considered drilling or elongating the holes, but was a bit disappointed it didn't just drop in. I contacted the supplier who were surprised, as they believed the clocks should be a direct replacement for the original Smiths magnetic range. They offered a full refund with absolutely no quibble or suggestion that it was me or my 'bike at fault!

My second choice was the Trail Tech Vapor dashboard consisting of an LCD speedometer, tachometer and temperature gauge. (www.trailtechproducts.co.uk)



Again the vendor was very helpful with advice and even provided alternative leads when I was having trouble getting the tachometer to read steadily. It's clear and easy to read and I like having the time permanently displayed. The temperature sensor is a couple which can be fitted under the spark plug, head bolt or even a rocker oil feed union but I haven't fitted that yet. I find the back light to be a little too bright and I would have liked to have been able to set the Tachometer range – a full deflection of 12000 rpm is a bit redundant on my Norton at least.

For Sale

Sandy Bloy has just completed an interesting restoration – an ex RAC ES2. It has had a ground up rebuild and with a documented history. Quite a rare 'bike I would have thought.



For further details or to arrange viewing, call Sandy Bloy, Tel 01738552244 or Email sandy.bloy@mail.com

July Events

TVNOC Applecross Weekend
Jul 17, 2015 to Jul 19, 2015
Applecross camp site

August Events

VMCC S&T Rally
Aug 1, 2015 to Aug 2, 2015
Crieff, Perthshire

Dam Bike Run
Aug 2, 2015
Leadburn Inn, Penicuik

VMCC Scottish National Rally
Aug 7, 2015 to Aug 9, 2015
Coupar Sportsground, Blairgowrie

Grampian Classic Club Camping Weekend
Aug 21, 2015 to Aug 23, 2015
Ullapool, Highland

Belgium-Flanders Branch Begonia Rally
Aug 28, 2015 to Aug 31, 2015
Open Huis, Ieperstraat 157, Staden-Vijfwegen, Belgium