

Editorial

Sorry - late again ! David and I promise to pull out all the stops to ensure that GeN#15 is out before Christmas.

I am sure all members will join me in acknowledging the help of John Rushworth who retired as our PRO at the AGM. John was instrumental in the formation of the Gilera Network as a founder member and did great work to publicise our organisation all round the world by designing the excellent G_Net World Wide Web site. We wish him well in his new XR400 project and feel sure that at heart he will retain a passion for Gileras which may one day re-assert itself. Thanks John !

Welcome to Ian Calvert (Saturno scratcher supreme) who takes over as Public Relations Officer. Ian will be concentrating on the more conventional media and so we need a volunteer to maintain and hopefully further develop the WWW pages. The principle of paying for a small amount of web space was agreed at the AGM - so anyone who fancies carrying on John's work and keeping the Gilera torch burning please contact me ASAP.

Recent issues of Piaggio's house journal 'Piaggiornale' have featured the new Gilera scooters strongly and in particular the 'Runner'. The marque is certainly undergoing a resurgence and with a bit of luck perhaps it is only be a matter of time until a 'proper' bike of a reasonable capacity bears the historic name once more.



AGM

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at The Blue Bell Belchford on 17 August 1997

The meeting opened at 11.20 am with 16 (which eventually increased to 17) members present. The Chairman welcomed everyone with the news of the great success of the Cadwell Track Day both organisationally and financially and the Secretary passed on a bottle of Chianti to Nigel Lee on behalf of the Morini Riders Club in recognition of his help with scrutineering.

Apologies for absence

The Chairman gave apologies on behalf of several members, but the Secretary forgot to make a note of the names !

Minutes of the last meeting.

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 21 July 1996 having been published in 'GeN#10' were poropsed as a true record by Mike Riley and seconded by Gary Menzies. There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report

David Champion reported that membership had peaked just prior to renewal time at 156. The rate of renewal was good. It was possible that there were fewer machines distributed amongst fewer members. In particular several GFRs seemed to have disappeared, and several members now owned more than one bike (Chairman and Secretary - guilty !). The task of filling 'The GeN' was becoming increasingly hard. The Chairman called for more contributions and explained that if a member just sent in relevant facts and figures an article could be written round them. The Gilera

Network continues to affiliate to the BMF at 130 members. At this point David Riley asked about our position in the BMF Rally club display competition. The Secretary reported that we were 26th - a very good effort and ahead of the Morini Riders Club. Piaggio will be making a contribution towards the BMF Rally expenses. Mike Riley suggested that a Gilera scooter be entered in the 'moped' race next year. The Chairman is amassing technical information and asked that any member who had anything should send it to him along with items for the 'scrap book'.

Treasurer's Report

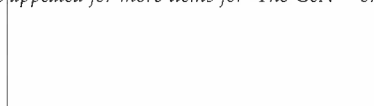
Andy Wallington reported a healthy surplus for the year. There had been a problem balancing the books as a result of income received 'between Treasurers' but this will be resolved to reflect an accurate opening balance for the next year. There is no need to raise the subscription which can remain at £9 (plus overseas supplements).

Membership Secretary's Report

Pete Myers reported that about 80 members had paid their subscriptions for 97/98. Several members in the USA had joined recently. Personal cheques and cheques in dollars were a problem. Membership forms to be changed to ask for cheques in UK pounds. He asked whether the subscription rate should be changed to allow for 'part year' rates. The Chairman explained that the subscription covered 4 issues of 'The GeN'. Members present at the AGM agreed that the system should remain unchanged. Pete enquired how many of those on the G_Net Internet mailing list were paid up Gilera Network Members. The Secretary estimated that it was about 25%. The Membership Secretary and Secretary will only answer one or two queries and then advise people to join the Network !

Secretary's Report

Pete Fisher explained that the Committee had managed to avoid having a single meeting in the last year except for an unofficial one at the Spring Gathering. After donning his official Editor's hat he appealed for more items for 'The GeN' - or else



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PRO's Report

The Secretary reported that John Rushworth was unable to continue as PRO. Everone expressed their thanks to John for his work in setting up the G_Net pages on the 'World Wide Web'. It was agreed that around £30 a year should be spent on renting WWW space. Pete Myers suggested that Johnnie Campbell may be prepared to take on the role of 'Webmaster'. A volunteer is needed if the G_Net mailing list is to continue - an item to be placed in GeN#14.

Election of Officers

Chairman - David Champion : proposed Ian Calvert, seconded by Ian Robinson.

Treasurer - Andy Wallington : proposed David Riley, seconded by Pip Taylor.

Membership Secretary - Pete Myers : proposed Dick Stapley, seconded by Gary Menzies.

Secretary/Editor - Pete Fisher : proposed Beth Davidson, seconded by Nigel Lee

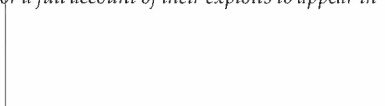
PRO - Ian Calvert : proposed Nigel Lee, seconded by Ian Robinson

Items raised by Members

Pete Myers (Membership Secretary) asked if telephone numbers could be given to other members requesting them. The Secretary confirmed that this could be done only if a member had indicated that their number could be included on the Membership List.

Any other Business

Andy Wallington informed the meeting that he and Ian Calvert were going to the Nurburgring at the end of August where they would be able to ride round the circuit for £7.50 per lap. The journey to the Ring is also an enjoyable ride. Members called for a full account of their exploits to appear in 'The



GeN'.

Pete Fisher explained that it might be possible to compete in the Isle of Man hill climbs on the TT circuit on a day licence if a member of the NHCA. David Champion mentioned the Italian bike rally in Czechoslovakia. He also reported that the new Gilera scooters were now in bike shops and the 50cc Runner was selling quite well. Larger capacity versions are on the way with a 125 available by August 98. A prototype 125 four-stroke custom bike is also ready so there was the potential for new members.

Ian Caloert remarked that the race shop at Usmate Velate was still open. David Champion confirmed that large capacity bike engines were to be seen around the Pontadera factory. There appeared to be no truth in the rumours in the Italian press of a new Saturno although it was just possible the rights might be sold to another maker such as Bimota.

Pete Fisher reported that the Gilera Network is in contact with Pontadera and that they receive a copy of 'The GeN'. The Gilera marque seems to be receiving promotion by Piaggio as their 'sports' bikes. Ollie Duke is riding in the Carnell scooter races and there is to be a demo at the GP at Donnington. The race scooters were developed in conjunction with Malossi.

The factory supported the TT classic parade in honour of the 40th anniversary of the first 100 mph lap. There is no news of the prototype V-twin motor.

Kevin Bennet made members aware that Fowlers of Bristol supply NW fork seals together with the appropriate spacers.

There was concern that Saturno seat bases were out of stock despite it being less than 10 years since the model ceased production. Dick Stapley has developed replacement body work for NW for sale via Bob Wright and his bike was available for inspection at the meeting. He pointed out that the rear wheel hugger can only be used with a sports silencer.

Bob Wright can supply stainless steel silencers manufactured by Gazelle. An additional bonus is that they do not melt the rear indicator !

Pete Myer's problem in obtaining a crankcase half was as a result of confusion with different part numbers for the different ignition systems. Members can check part numbers with David Champion.

The Secretary apologised to Mike and David

Riley about the Knockhill fiasco.

The LONG DISTANCE AWARD went to Andy Wallington who had ridden his tuned Nordwest engined Saturno over 400 miles from Swanage. It was suggested that next year there should be 'concourse' awards. Mike Riley proposed that next year's track day should include an official get together of all machines and riders at a particular time.

Nigel Lee drew members' attention to a problem with the clearance between NW brake calipers and disc - they get so close there is a danger of the caliper touching the disc. The permanent solution involves machining the caliper, but a quick fix is possible by putting a shim on the front wheel spindle.

Dick Stapley asked for advice on head gasket problems. The importance of checking the head nut torque was stressed and the use of sealant (e.g. Yamaha bond) advised.

Gary Menzies advised NW owners to check that the speedo cable was not snagging the head lamp wiring connector. David Champion suggested using loose tie wraps to control the route of the cable.

Pete Fisher asked if anyone had heard of a broken cambelt recently. It appears that the message about changing on the basis of age as well as mileage had reached everyone.

Pete Myers mentioned a static display of bikes in at an air show at Sandy Airfield on Septemebr 14 in aid of charity.

The meeting closed at 13.00.



GILERA NETWORK ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD 30/6/96 - 23/7/97

INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£
Subscriptions/back issues	1594.00	Photocopying/collation	467.10
Sale of stickers etc.	8.00	Postage	251.85
Advert (Bob Wright)	40.00	Stationery	16.14
Bank Interest	8.30	Donation to MRC (96 AGM)	75.00
		BMF Subscriptions	117.00
		Insurance	112.00
		BMF Rally stand	66.40
		Scottish show	135.39
		J.Rushworth (PRO) Expenses	60.00
Total	1650.30	Total	1300.88
Surplus	349.42		

FOR SALE

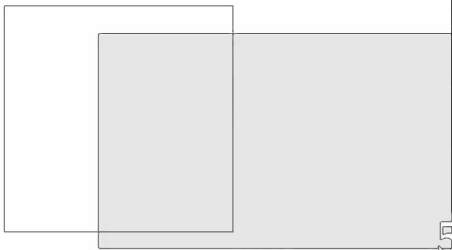
Ken Smith wants to sell his Nordwest:
1994 L Nordwest, MoT May 1998, 4900 Kms.
New battery, cambelt, 15 tooth sprocket.
Nickel plated exhaust. Scott oiler.
All stainless screws.
No winter use.

£2600

Phone: 0141 942 0906 (GLASGOW)

Jeroen Baack is having some close ratio gear sets made for Saturnos. Price around 500 - 550 Deutschmarks. He is also looking to sell his very nice Saturno and rare special GFR.

Details available from his World Wide Web site at:
<http://www.inter.nl.net/users/J.Baack/index.htm>
Contact him on - Fax: +31-(0)53-5729773
Email: jf.Baack@inter.nl.net
Haaksbergen The Netherlands



Quick Queries

S George asks: Has there been any new headway on the tuning front, as I'm planning on getting some more oomph from my Nordwest soon. [Keihin smoothbore carbs and a less restrictive silencer still seem to be the quickest route to extra go - Ed.]

On a related topic **Niall Hamilton** enquires: I also have a query to members about which aftermarket exhaust is best all-round, and preferably doesn't require rejetting. [Depends on whether you are looking for greater durability, increased power, or both. The Gazelle units available from Bob Wright seem to get good reports - lets have some feedback for GeN#15 - Ed.]

Meanwhile **Simon Roberts** reports the following: I spoke with Quill a few days ago, he mentioned that under current manufacturing schedules 6 weeks was a typical turn-around time between order and delivery for his RC 600/Nordwest pipe (essentially half of a Ducati 916 race system - absorbtion baffled with 102Db on full noise). Around late November, he plans to try a standard 916 pipe on an NW/RC to see if it offers a promising compromise between a little more power with a little more silence. If this is the case, he will consider putting it into production. The result is expected to be a stainless system with mechanical baffles.



If you weren't there you missed a great day. Thanks to being able to confirm the date early in the year and a lot of hard work by the MRC in publicising the event the entry was the biggest ever. Nigel Lee valiantly got stuck in to the scrutineering early and I also pressed Jim Rolt (NHCA IoM Hill Climb Scrutineer) into service. The MRC organisers got the paperwork flowing smoothly and over 90 riders and machines were signed in and scrutineered with only a 15 minute delay in starting the first session.

Nigel rapidly swapped his scrutineer's hat for an instructor's helmet and Ian Calvert donned his. They showed people round the circuit for the first few laps for each group, and as you would expect gradually increased the pace so that the 'fast' group got an excellent demonstration of the lines to get round Cadwell respectably quickly.

There were very few incidents, though I have to report that two of the three 'offs' were Nordies (including one N. Lee !). A Bimota rider also gave his wallet a severe challenge by wiping off a clip-on and modifying the plastics. I am glad to say nobody suffered more than knocks and bruises.

An MV being run-in for Phil Read made an appearance, but was hardly being ridden hard. The Morini/Gilera-only sessions proved as much fun as always with fastest Morini award going to the MRC Chairman John Shepperd. My 2C/375 is definitely getting tired as it couldn't match the speed of a standard 350 Dart down the straight. The Norturno was going very well, particularly as I had geared down to somewhere around

standard Saturno gearing, and it was really steaming on as I approached Park. Difficult to say if I was lapping quicker than on the 604 last year. I couldn't catch Robin Sims on his standard NW, but he didn't manage to lap me either.

Make a note in your diary now of the date for next year - FRIDAY 24TH JULY 1998

GERMAN GILERA GATHERING

Joachim Heller e-mailed a report of this event to the G_Net list. As far as I can tell it took place over the same weekend as the Cadwell bash (please correct me if not Joachim).

The meeting held at the Cafe Fahrtwind, Ahrbrueck near the Nürburgring attracted several Nordies, some RCs (one with over 100,000 kms on the clock), two XRTs, one RV200, a perfect condition old 150 and a bunch of Saturnos with two riders from the Netherlands making the gathering international. Joachim was surprised to find his the only Saturno which was not extensively modified but pleased to see that his was the cleanest ! It seems that most Saturno riders in Germany are running really 'hot' tyres as well as all kinds of improvements frowned on by German rules and regulations (particularly regarding silencers and open velocity stack air intakes). He was most impressed with a special 'ram air' intake system of which the originator claimed improved power at high and low revs (although Joachim suspects the motor may have also been tuned a little).

With luck there will be another gathering next year, perhaps over a weekend with camping facilities. If it doesn't clash with Cadwell who fancies a Gilera Network trip over ?

NORTHWEST FRONTIER

Most exasperating hill climb experience of the year award for 1997 must go to the event held at Ger in France over the August Bank Holiday weekend. The NHCA had been invited to take part in this meeting as long ago as September 96, and at first it sounded like a really good opportunity - special rates for the ferry crossing etc. The hassle began when the NHCA checked with the ACU about licences. In 1983 I did the Limonest-Mont Verdun hill climb near Lyons in company with three other British competitors. In those days you could get a one-day international licence at a reasonable cost but now you have to hold an annual European A or B licence according to the type of event. After much confusion it was decided that we must all be issued with new 'B' licences and Robin Sims the Secretary of the Meeting for the NHCA had the task of co-ordinating all the entries and licence applications - thanks Robin ! The total cost of the entry including the licence looked , even at that stage, like making the seconds/pound on the bike rate pretty high even allowing for the fact that the course is 2.2 Kms.

Once it was certain that we were definitely going I booked us a 5 day return crossing from Portsmouth to Cherbourg which compared reasonably with the Magic Holidays Ramsey 5000 package as fortunately Robin's trailer, which we had elected to take, was just eligible for the 3 metre rate. After a comfortable night crossing in a cabin we were soon on our way down through Normandy when we spotted a small band of other NHCA riders pulled in at a cafe. We joined them for coffee and then tagged on to the end of the convoy. On first arriving at the venue things looked good as we drove down the course to the paddock. The hill was being prepared to a high standard with loads of straw bales being deployed to protect the 'Armco' which lined some of the bends. Our first impressions were that it was going to be a very fast course. British hill-climbers are used to fairly basic paddocks and can cope without much in the way of facilities given the usually small entries. When we learned that there would be no drinking water and two fairly crude loos to cater for 130 riders and their 'equipes' plus the potential for loud rock music until the early hours we decided to camp elsewhere ! First port of call was the home of the organiser Remy who had

invited us to camp in a field next to his home but on enquiring where we could use the loo he told us we could walk into the village. At this point several of us decided that we would rather go to the nearest proper camp site with showers etc. ! Our little convoy eventually found a municipal site not too far away and though even that proved a little basic and 'foreign' for some of the more sensitive souls amongst us I have stayed on worse sites during my travels in France.

Remy had greeted us with a very pleasant aperitif and then proceeded to inform us that virtually none of our bikes would pass scrutineering ! This meeting was to be the final round of the French National Hill Climb Championship and was being run to FIM regulations which required machines to be prepared to the same standards as international road races. This was OK for many of the French competitors as we had already noted the number of vans in the paddock run by participants in world endurance racing. One of our best prospects for prize money spent the whole day drilling and wiring all his brake line unions and a few of us with road bikes were faced with totally removing the lights. Having experienced scrutineering at a French event before I suspected that in common with the usual European approach to rules and regulations these strict requirements would be more honoured in the breach than observance. We considered mounting an en-masse blockade of the hill if necessary on the lines of - 'if we don't ride - nobody does': just the kind of direct action they understand in France ! As it turned out my predictions were correct and the paperwork took longer than the machine examination with not one machine being failed after a cursory effort which would not have passed muster at the most grass roots of events this side of the channel.

Once scrutineering was out of the way we still had plenty of time to walk the hill. This amazed the local riders who took advantage of the public road still being open to buzz up and down the course on a variety of scooters or by the carful. The impression still was of a very fast course, with much talk of Isle of Man gearing. The road surface looked nice and grippy but it seemed pretty ripply to me, particularly towards the edges on the inside of some bends. The first (un-timed practice) runs eventually got under way and we were impressed with the start-line system of lights which seemed to get riders off on their way in very quick

succession. As I had suspected the Nordie's poor front damping did not like the bumps and the bike was shaking its head and trying to stand up on nearly every bend. The bumpiness tended to limit the power you could get down and so everyone reported that in fact maximum speed attained was nothing like as high as on the 'short' (2.2 Km) Isle of Man hill.

During the first timed practice things started to go wrong. It appeared that even the most minor of incidents resulted in long delays even if there was

arriving back at the paddock it was clear that the start of racing would have to be delayed due to poor visibility. By the time the final practice could start a lot of time had been lost and then the French road-racers began pressing on too hard and falling off so leading to even more delays. To be fair there were some very fast riders competing on top class machines and it was the final of the championship with everything to go for. Even our quickest competitors were way off the pace except for a rider from Jersey on a very quick 250. The capacity classes meant that I was in the over 600 class (by all of 4 cc !) and therefore on the smallest bike in the class by far with half the engine capacity of several of the leaders and the only single. At least I managed to keep ahead of an 851 Ducati, and I was also quicker than a TL1000 Suzuki in what seemed to be a 'not serious racers class'. I bet that was a handful on the bumps !

Despite being so behind schedule the traditional French two-hour lunch was enjoyed so that the official timed runs were very late in starting. Once again people started to fall off and then a sidecar crashed at



Not France but Baitings Dam 1995

no injury to the unfortunate rider. The arrangements for recovering machines were non-existent and communication between the officials confused so much time was spent waiting at the start line or after the finish in the baking heat. The day ended particularly badly for one of our number driving his own designed and built three-wheeler car. As a result of an incident just before his first run he did not get a proper attempt at the sharpest corner towards the top of the hill. On his next climb he went into this right-hand hairpin too fast and stuffed the car into the bank thus trashing the front suspension. He was the last machine up the hill and so we all assisted him to recover the car using his own trailer. Another pleasant evening was spent around the barbecues on the camp site without consuming too much red wine in view of an early start the next day.

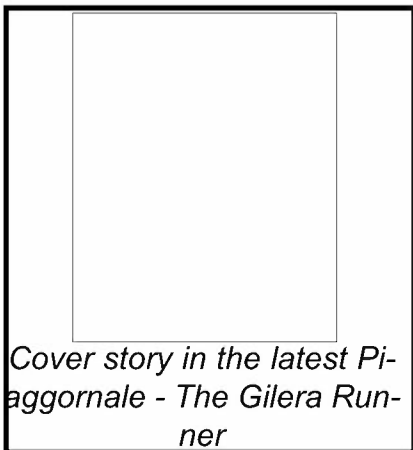
the hairpin and set fire to the straw bales. A few of us were left waiting at the top of the hill for over an hour whilst the local fire brigade were sent for. I have to say that very few fire extinguishers were in evidence. To cap it all there then came an announcement asking for Dick, our grounded three-wheeler pilot, to unload his car so that his trailer could be used to recover the outfit ! Given the effort it had required to load it he understandably declined and the machine was eventually retrieved with the aid of a farm tractor. By the time the over-600's were called for their second timed run it was nearly 5 o'clock. As I joined the queue another incident stopped the proceedings and deciding that I had had enough I returned to the paddock and climbed out of my leathers. About 30 minutes later the meeting was abandoned as the unfortunate rider who had fallen was taken to hospital with a broken leg. The doctor had accompanied him and as the road had to be opened again the meeting was

Sunday morning dawned very misty and on

abandoned. So I ended up getting only four runs with a best time of just over 90 seconds and Robin had got the Husky up 5 or 6 seconds quicker at the cost of cracking a couple of welds on the exhaust system as result of the bumps.

All in all not a totally satisfactory event organisationally. The hill was challenging but I still think I prefer Lergby Frissel. We now hear that it is unlikely to be used again. There was the consolation however of all being presented with a bottle of wine and a locally made vase, so we all took a pot home !

 Pete Fisher



Cover story in the latest Pi-
aggornale - The Gilera Run-
ner

FORZA ITALIA '97

For 1997 Forza Italia took in its third venue in as many years. The theory behind the move to Lydden Hill in Kent was that its location, close to Dover, would encourage a stronger foreign participation. The organisers also hoped that the nature of the circuit would lend itself to a better atmosphere for riders and spectators alike.

Having enjoyed myself so much at last years event, I had already vowed to compete this year no matter where it was to be held. When I heard that the venue was to be Lydden, a tight nadgery circuit and far more NordWest friendly than the fast seeping curves of last year's venue, Donington Park, I was chuffed to bits.

Machine preparation was confined to a change of cam belt (for well documented reasons), and a change of gear selector pawl because the gear change problems from last year hadn't disappeared over winter. Well, you never can tell what effects the cold weather might have on a motorcycle engine. I also fitted TZ250 clutch springs to cure a clutch slipping problem that had existed since I fitted the 33mm smoothbore carbs last year. The forks were sent away for modifying but were returned three weeks later, untouched, when everyone ran out of time.

Rider preparation was, however, a bit more intense. Back in late February I did a track day at Lydden just to get to know the circuit, and then approximately six weeks before F.I. I entered a club meeting at the circuit. It pee'd down all day and my best result was third in class from eight starters. Now the intense bit. I work for a motorcycle dealership that runs three bikes in the Triumph Speed Triple race series. The opportunity arose for me to ride in two rounds of the series, Thruxton and Oulton Park. Both were circuits that I had never ridden before. Circumstances dictated that for my first race, at Thruxton, I would miss free practice and go straight into qualifying, on a bike that I hadn't even sat on in the showroom. Talk about in at the deep end, even my nerves were nervous. Unfortunately, both races were stopped very early due to crashes. Noise curfews prevented either race from being restarted. I was off the pace

on both occasions as I suspected I would be, but it gave me an insight into what it takes to compete at that level.

As last year, Forza Italia was a two day meeting - practice on the Saturday, and racing packed into an afternoon programme on the Sunday. Local church laws prevent engines from being run before noon. Slightly disappointing was the number of entries, only 13 names appeared in the programme. However, with the likes of Alan Cathcart on his Ducati Supermono and Dave Walker on his Tigcraft Yamaha (currently 1st and 2nd in the national singles championship) competing everyone knew that it wouldn't be a slow race.

Just before free practice on Saturday morning I sent Karen on a mission - to find the pit lane or somewhere to dangle a pit board from. "There is no pit lane" was the best that she could come up with "but I've found a grassy mound that I can stand on". The grassy mound that Karen was talking about was on the exit of the hairpin, about 20 feet from the edge of the track, and about a quarter of a mile before the start/finish line. A far from ideal location, but the only option available.

Prior to Forza Italia, my best lap at Lydden (at the dry track day) was just under the 50.0s mark. In the 15 minute free practice session I managed to dip into the 48's and felt that I could probably go a bit quicker in the 30 minute qualifying session in the afternoon. However, just before the qualifying session started the heavens opened and completely siaked the track. Not having the luxury of wet weather racing tyres fitted to spare wheels, I decided to get out on the track anyway and see how Dunlop D207GP's handled the conditions. While other people were changing their wheels, myself and a couple of others were recording times to determine grid positions. Eventually more people came out on to the track but as the track dried they found that the wets that they had just fitted were overheating. Therefore, for the last five minutes of qualifying I was circulating on a half dry track on my own. The upshot was that I set the 6th fastest time, putting me on the second row of the grid for Sunday's race.

Tyre wear at Lydden can be heavy. A 20 lap race after two practice sessions could mean that you end up with a knackered tyre mid race. I therefore

decided to use a pair of nearly new Dunlop D207GP's (the new kid on the block) for Saturday's practice sessions, and to switch to the Michelin cut slicks that I used last year for the race. Sunday dawned overcast leaving me unsure as to whether I should change tyres as the Dunlops are a better wet weather tyre. I eventually went ahead with the tyre change when the sky cleared, but I had left it too late to take part in the 15 minute warm-up period. I was keen to get out for this session to make sure that the Michelins hadn't 'gone off' through sitting in my garage for nearly a year.

The race, for me, was a bit of a disappointment. Due to be run over 20 laps, the first attempt was stopped on the second lap after another rider suffered machine problems as he left the start line, and decided to park his bike on the track on the entry to the first corner. The clerk of the course had no option but to red flag the race. The restarted race was reduced to 15 laps. After the customary argy bargy of the first lap, I was left lying in 11th place, scrapping for 10th, and much quicker than the rider in 12th (and last) place. As the race progressed I would keep showing my front wheel to the rider in front, but each time he would just up the pace a bit. Unfortunately, I was just about at my limit and could never make a passing move stick.

Karen was doing a sterling job with the pit board keeping me informed of the number of remaining laps. With about five laps to go I was aware that the leaders, Walker and Cathcart, were catching us. Approaching the hairpin for the 12th time, Dave Walker came past on the inside. As I tipped it in for the corner I was aware of Cathcart on my outside, so I held a tight line all the way around the bend and waited for him to come past. When he failed to show I looked behind only to see him right up my exhaust pipe, expecting me to drift out as usual so that he could drive past on the inside. Oops. I think I may have cost him the race.

I eventually finished 9th after a couple of other riders crashed out, and earned £30 for my efforts. My fastest lap was a personal best at 47.5 seconds (average speed - 76 mph). Although I was slightly disappointed with the result, as last year, I thoroughly enjoyed myself, and will probably have another go next year, albeit in a different class.

Also flying the Gilera flag at Forza Italia '97 were Ian Calvert on his 558 Saturno, and Pat Sproston on his GFR. Both were out in the High Speed Trials, a series of 20 minute thrashes for supposedly road legal machines. Gold, Silver, and Bronze awards were given depending on the number of laps completed by each rider in the final H.S.T. on Sunday. In the wet Saturday afternoon session, Ian was the star, being the quickest rider on the track. He collected a Gold award for his efforts on Sunday, no mean feat considering the opposition consisted mainly of Ducati 916 and 888's (some running on slicks !), Bimotas, and a host of faster machinery.

Well, that was Forza Italia '97. the other races were good, and the paddock food was bad. The expected 20000 spectators failed to materialise, as did Carl Fogarty, but those that did attend enjoyed what they saw. I think I'll be back.

✍ Nigel Lee

Anticipation: A boy's triumph over the forces of Darkness

I wanted a Gilera.

It all started part way through 1996 when I was working at the Zeitgeist (Bar and Grill and Guest Haus). I regularly perused the cork board for interesting bikes to dream about buying. I have a strong taste of the exotic, having graduated from the Honda Interceptor V4 to a Suzuki Bandit 400 to the Duc, with side trips through many marquees from many countries, running and not. So there, before my eyes hung a printout of a



computer e-mail. The fellow was selling quite a collection of Honda Hawks and pieces, but my eye was drawn deeper. There, nestled among the GTs and the Cagiva Freccia, was a 1993 Gilera CX SuperExotic. The description was tantalizing, but the price unattainable. I had just recently bolted from the biotech industry again, seeking refuge in the simpler life of a tavern cook. Dirt poor, that is. So away into the dark recesses of my mind did slink the dancing faeries of Paioli single sided front forks. They resurfaced, several months later. I had started part time work in an AIDS research center, on call from the bar. It was rather humorous to claim to be a barfly by day, and a surgeon by night. But the extra income did me well, allowing me to finance the purchase of an exotic and bizarre motorcycle I had lusted after for several years; the Yamaha GTS1000. And the single sided front suspension slammed back into my forebrain, weighted with a 300 kilogram sport touring sled. A Ducati, and a GTS. I was quite a sight at the local gatherings. But, satisfaction is a vaporous critter, constantly slipping out of my fingers to hie around and kick me in the arse. I started dreaming of acquiring an Aprilia.

A benefit of my biotech employment was internet access. And I do love to surf for motorcycles. California, land of sun and microsystems, is a haven for geekbeat bikers who can flagrantly parade their passions and nearly pornographic photographic treatment of their beloved machines all within the ethereal confines of THE NET. Mail lists lead to clubs. Clubs lead to web pages. Web pages lead to the G_NET. There, I saw for the first time what the CX really looked like, and I was lost. I knew I had to find one. I had to find the one that was for sale. I was going to have to do some detecting. I posted to a whole mess of BBS, looking for "the fellow who was selling the Gilera CX." To my amazement, he responded. To my disappointment, he had sold the bike. Then I learned that he was going to recover the CX, but never sell it again. In retrospect I can understand that sentiment. But it was just the first of the pebbles that Chance rolled down the hill of life trying to trip me up. I began searching elsewhere; BBS, newspapers, glossy Euro mags, tattered laundry cork boards. I looked anywhere there might be an advert, a flier, a lead on this elusive beast. Time stood still. Mountains rose and fell. The moon circled, but no CX was to be found. I did find a smattering of other Gilera, classic and

modern. Some abroad and some here in the USA. One of which was a 1993 GFR. I had found some information on this model. It was interesting. Still very exotic, I began to talk with the seller. Then the issue of money arose. By now I was working full time at the Institute, but I was making payments on two other exotics and had just moved into a larger apartment with the girlfriend. Cash was not an option. After a month of applying and searching, it appeared neither was credit. But in the eleventh hour of the eleventh day, or some time around then as I don't have a watch, I was successful. And I purchased the GFR. Only to have found two CX less than one week later, Dadblabbit! Still, the choice was an excellent one. I now owned what is to my knowledge, the only one of these in all of North America. I'd call that exotic.

But how to actually get it into my possession. The bike needed to be moved from one side of the Rocky Mountains to the other. I immediately ruled out riding this precious machine all that way. Best would be to ship it freight. Two weeks later, the little GFR was finally strapped in and trundling toward the west coast. Anticipation rattled in my brain like the cam chain of a '72 CB450. Three days on the road over a weekend, waiting, waiting, and when the call came that it had arrived... well, I rushed right down to pick it up. I am bouncing. I am bubbly. I am so excited my toes are purple. First stop, back at the garage to fit a temporary number plate. Well, truthfully the first stop was a couple of blocks from the pickup when I foul the plug. But I recover, somehow. Then, after fitting the plate to avoid unnecessary questions from Officer Law, I buzz down to pick up the girlfriend. Two up to the apartment was interesting, to say the least. The GFR doesn't have much mentionable low rev grunt, and payload exceeding the mass of the machine does not increase performance. But the ride was fun, despite the police car following me for a dozen blocks. Either of them. And then, I was off to the pub to let all my friends drool, despite the threat of jail from the motorcycle cop who warns me to slow down, even though I have not yet exceeded the speed limit. I presume I just looked like I should. Happily, I scooted along until the sudden loss of power. Blast! Fouled plug again. Only this time, I had run the already weak (original) battery down and there was no hope of even a bump. Luckily, my garage was downhill from there.

And so the beautiful machine stood tall, garaged, for the moment. Finding a replacement plug, too, removed a few strands from my pate. Manufacturer's specs called for a Champion C55C, which does not exist in the USA, as far as I can tell. I cross referenced an NGK, but that too was remarkable rare. I finally found one in a car racing speed shop, luckily just south of my present locale. I bought one and levitated home, eager to get my machine running. I flipped back the tank, unscrewed the old plug with its nearly missing electrode, and spun in the new plug. I pressed on the boot. I pressed it on again. I looked and saw that the plug had the nut still screwed to it. So I twisted. I pulled out the plug and twisted with a better grip. I was getting nowhere. Close inspection revealed that this particular plug did not have a screw-on nut, but a fixed one instead. So now I needed a different plug boot. Again, no part was to be found. I began to feel as though there were a conspiracy to prevent me from running this bike. My friends started to doubt its very existence. I was at wits' end, of sorts. By now, I had discovered a plug with the proper throw and thread. This meant I could get it running. These plugs were racing plugs with very thin electrodes that do not last very long. It took me several more days to track down a proper plug boot to be able to use the robust plug. Such a small thing, that so easily slows us to the state of non-running. The only other gross anatomical distress was the windscreen; cracked by the transit company. I feared dark forces gathering on the horizon, preparing for the battle to claim recompense. I called the previous owner. No, it had been laden with an intact screen, he would vouch. I called the carrier. They would forward the proper forms. Ah, how paper makes the world round. I acquired a part estimate. I wrote letters and filed all the documents. And I waited. I was certainly surprised when the cheque arrived. I should have asked for more.

Many Americans simultaneously fear and admire motorcycles. The freedom, the individuality, the noise, the self-assurance. To compensate, ugly little laws are passed to prevent the most awe-inspiring and exciting motorcycles from ever reaching US soil. And the people themselves are no better. That is why I was forced to move six motorcycles (total value over \$30,000) onto the street for two weeks. Fear and pettiness. When

they took my garage away, I was incensed. I was angered and I was stubborn. So I went right to the top; the building owner. It seems that there had been a gamut of misrepresentations. Shortly earlier, a bike that was being stored under the building started smouldering. This cause all sorts of fire fear panic. At the same time, one of the building managers happened to visit while I was washing the bikes and had stored a friend's while he was on holiday. Seven motorcycles in various state of completion startled him as he thought an electrician let the space. Within a day, I was informed from the person I paid moneys to that we would have to leave. Talks later revealed that the person I paid had illegally sublet the garage to me, at great profit, unbeknownst to his (ex) personal friend, the building owner. But the owner was reasonable, and I am polite, and an agreement was reached.

If only the government were so amenable. Truthfully, convincing the California Department



of Motor Vehicles was not as difficult as I had anticipated. It had been registered once previously in California, which I'm sure helped. After I spent two days trying to find the engine number, I had a dealer friend of mine write up the ID number verification page that is required. That only took two hours and stripping half the bike. Three of us down on aching knees, fiber optic lit mirrors and extended brushes to decipher the faint etchings. But it was done. Now, there was only the interminable queue at the Department. Waiting and hoping that nobody would catch on to the bike's true nature. Dodging customs agents and tax officials everywhere. But a mere month after I had put it in my garage, I got my number plate. Now to save up for insurance.

And now for the fun. Owning a machine as exotic and rare as my GFR is a treat. It is a pure joy. But

it is never enough. Things must be done. Certainly some repairs must be made. The windscreen must be replaced. The Gilera badges on the mirrors were lost some time ago, as was the rear inner mudguard. And there are scratches. A chip in the blue here, a crack in the clearcoat there, a torn sticker below. There are brakes to bleed and chains to replace, tyres to scrub and cables to lube. The list is endless. But so are the smiles.

✍ Christopher Bare

GILERA Saturno Bialbero Corsa 550 of 1991

The Bialbero Corsa was a one-off version of the Saturno build for the English journalist Alan Cathcart and Davide Tardozzi to participate in one of the earliest SOS (Sound Of Singles). Alan Cathcart was riding the race at Monza. While

extra tube from the aluminium engine plates mounting running upwards to the main frame tubes. The wheels were magnesium Marchesini's and the front disks were full floating Brembo 28 mm. They used Michelin slicks.

ENGINE MODIFICATIONS

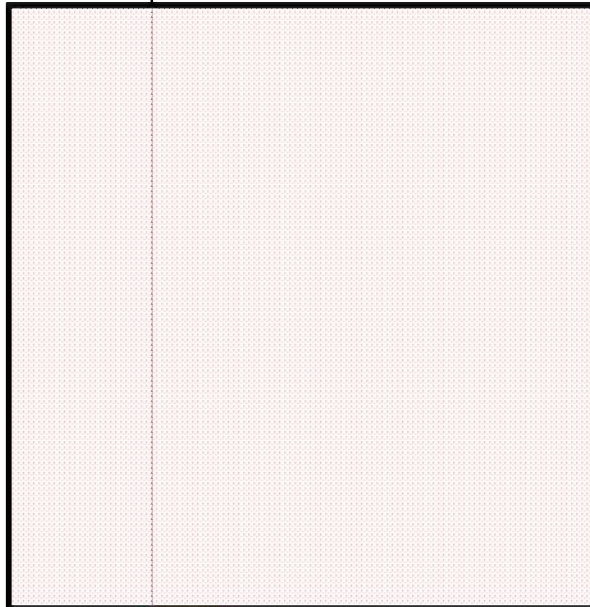
The engine was modified by Francesco Pennati, who had four weeks to turn the standard Saturno



rival Cagiva had planned a Husqvarna 510 engine in a Cagiva 125 Frezzia frame to be raced by Bianchi, the Gilera factory couldn't afford to sit still. In the race the Cagiva was quicker but the Saturno steered much better. Cathcart won the race after the Frezzia's rear shock absorber was getting worse and worse.

FRAME MODIFICATIONS

The frame modifications were made by Giancarlo Colombo and were relatively simple: the standard 40 mm Marzocchi front fork was replaced by a 40 mm M1R and the yokes sunk 25mm. The rear end was raised 50 mm. The engine was placed 40 mm forward and the frame had an



engine into a race engine. He did this by placing a Pioma close ratio gearset into the Saturno cases. On top of it he mounted a standard RC600 cylinder and piston. The Saturno cylinder head became 34 inlet and 31 output valves and was flow tuned. The original Saturno camshafts remained with their moderate lift of 9.5 mm and so did the compression ratio at a low 10:1. The 40mm Dell'Orto was replaced by a 42mm version. The engine produced a measured 55 Bhp at the rear wheel at 8250 rpm. The rev limiter came in at 8500 rpm. A larger watercooler was mounted.

Year: 1991 (?)
Amount made: 1

CC : 558
Bore*stroke: 98 * 92 mm (RC 600)
Compression: 1:10
Camshafts: as on Saturno, with 9.5 mm lift
Valves in/out: 34/31 instead of 31/28 on Saturno
Gears : 5 (close ratio, later used in Pioma racer)
BHP: 55 bhp on rear wheel at 8250 rpm
Power from: 4000 rpm
Rev limiter: comes in at 8500 rpm
Cylinder: RC 600 standard, nikasil coated (Gilardoni)
Piston: RC600 standard
Ignition: Nippon Denso CDI unit

Carb: Dell'Orto 42mm
Exhaust: 2 megaphones, on the right side, as on works Paris-Dakar enduro's.

Dry weight: 123 kg
Front fork: Marzocchi M1R, 40mm
Front brake: 280mm Brembo's, full floating, extra large pump
Rear: Marzocchi
Wheels: 17 inch magnesium Marchesini's
Tyres: Michelin slicks
Cockpit: rev counter, temperature meter

 Jeroen Baack

G-Mail

 Jan Cees van Rijkevorsel

At the moment I am riding the Saturno with the spare motor of the Pioma. It has 45 instead of 35 HP at the rear wheel and a close ratio gearbox. With the original carburettor it is a completely different motorcycle, great and very reliable.

I have done 45,000 Kms. with the original engine and 12,000 now with the spare Pioma engine. The only trouble has been with the starter freew-wheel.

 Roger Chilton

17,000 KMs of hassle-free Nordwest riding. Well, almost. Impossible ? I have been quite surprised by some comments in recent Network pages regarding Nordwest problems. Starting problems, sprockets disintegrating, bodywork cracking, fuel caps snapping off, cambelts breaking etc. I've owned my Nurdy for just over two years (bought from new) and it appears that I must have been very lucky. So far.... No starting problems at all, sprockets still intact, bodywork - not a crack in sight, leak-free fuel cap and the cambelt appears to be in one correct-length piece.

I can only hope that I stay this lucky. It must be luck because I certainly don't look after my bike very well as all my mates will agree.

The only real problems I have encountered have been caused by things falling off, me included. Gear lever (now that was fun !), two number plates, bar end weight, tax disc holder and an unreasonable amount of punctures. One other problem is that my aftermarket hugger gently scrapes the Arrow exhaust when thrashing two-up.

Anyway, must go. Keep up the good work.

P.S. Just remembered. I also own a Yamaha RD350LC. A Yamaha main dealer had a water pump shaft on order for three weeks without any luck. I just happened to mention this to Bob Wright and guess what? - next day delivery of the shaft to my door. Bob is a top bike bloke in the festering sea of dealer mediocrity (he'll like that!).

Nick Brewster

My bike is a 1993 Nordwest in blue/silver. It currently has just under 22,000 Kms on the clock. I have owned it now for 4 months (7,000 Kms) and it has been astonishingly reliable. The only serious maintenance required up to now has been new head bearings, and a new cam belt (just fitted).

Are there many Gilera owners in Scotland and if so has it ever been suggested that some kind of meeting be arranged ?

If there is any assistance required with any club matters north of the border I would be more than happy to help. [A very enjoyable gathering was organised by Charlie Newsham at Loch Tummel in May '95. Sounds like a volunteer to take over from John Rushworth as Northern Co-ordinator ! - Ed.]

Leigh Millward

I felt guilty about reading the Gen but never contributing so I've scribbled down a few lines about how I shipped an Apache 125 out to Athens earlier this year. [See next column - Ed.]

While reading GeN#13 I noticed some incorrect info in Chairman's chat concerning the power valves fitted to 125cc models. The GeN states that electronic power valves were used on the MX-1 and MXR models, but I am fairly sure this is not the case. The KZ, KK, MX-1, MXR, SP01 and SP02 all use a mechanical valve operated from the crank shaft. The electronic power valve with transparent plastic over the cable quadrant came in on the CX, Apache, FreeStyle and Crono.

APACHE IN ATHENS

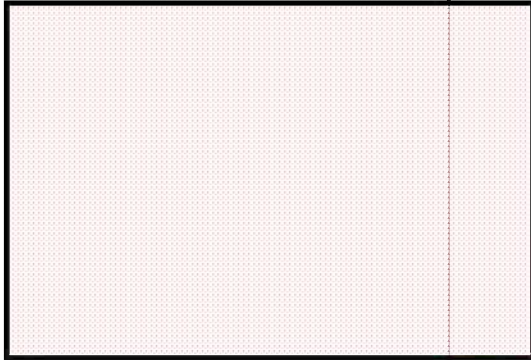
With my ever growing collection of Gileras on the dozen mark and my need for transportation while in Greece, last year I spent eight weeks there, it seemed perfect sense to base one of them in Athens. I could leave the bike at my girlfriend's house which is only 20 minutes walk from the airport, and the need for taxis during my visits would disappear.

But which model ? The MXR 125 deserved thought because of the storage space in the false fuel tank, just the job for beach towels, beers and sun lotion. The Apache 125 finally got the vote because of its versatility. The off road capability of this bike would be invaluable on my numerous visits to various islands. With that decided how would I get it to Athens ?

I didn't really fancy riding a 125cc engined machine with a limited range (approx 120 Kms) the 2000 miles south. After a few inquiries the solution was obvious, put the Apache in a crate and it could be shipped by road for about £150. The search for a suitable 'box' began and it wasn't long before a reasonably sized container turned up at work. After some quick work with a measuring tape I reckoned with both wheels removed and forks out the frame complete with swinging arm would squeeze in, although the sides of the crate would have to be made slightly higher.

With the crate now positioned in the company's carpentry shop the Easter weekend would be very busy. On Good Friday bike and box finally came 'face to face'. It was obvious that removal of wheels and forks would not be enough. Finally, at two in the morning with head lights, instruments, exhaust, side panels and tail unit removed and wrapped in jiffy foam everything except the back wheel was cosily in position waiting for the chippy to add a few inches height and screw down the top next morning.

With all dispatch and customs forms completed the Apache in a box was on its way courtesy of British Aerospace, destination Pandis Kawasaki Athens. George Pandis is a friend of a friend and didn't mind his shop in Palissa being used as a delivery and assembly point.



down the road. We are not talking a 'Kwik-Fit' depot here, just a small place the owner was running from his home. A trolley jack was used to support the apache while the rear wheel was removed. With the tyre off the damage to the rear tube could not be fixed. The owner didn't have any tubes of the correct size but said he could get us one, it would be about ten minutes while he fetched it on his C70 and could we look after the place while he was gone ? - These Greeks are so friendly. He returned, fitted the tube and tyre and we were back in business.



The bike has been in Athens for some four months now and so far I've had no problems. The temperature indicator did hit the red zone on a hot day as I came across Athens two up in built up traffic, but this was the only occasion this has happened. I've been to the islands of Paros, Antiparos, Naxos, Mycanos and Ikarta, driven up and down mountain roads, along beaches, through crowded streets, down to cape Sounion and up to the Corinthos canal, two up most of the time and the Apache hasn't missed a beat.

Four weeks later I am walking into terminal 4 Heathrow with suitcase and Apache rear wheel wrapped in jiffy. This just happened to be the week of IRA motorway bombs and warnings of bombs at airports. I suppose it was inevitable that I'd attract attention, and with the airport swarming with police with guns it wasn't long before I was challenged. After convincing the group of four policeman that my odd looking package was only a motorcycle wheel and I had no intentions of blowing up the terminal I was allowed on my way.

One thing to be aware of while riding in Greece is the road surfaces, they are unbelievably slippery. I don't know if its because of the heat and volumes of traffic or the marble content of the stone, but I've had to forget riding like I do here.

Next day I met up with my friend at his place in Athens and we made the short trip to Palissa. Sure enough the crated Apache was waiting for us in a quiet corner of the Pandis workshop. After lots of welcoming greetings and back slapping a cordless drill was employed to unscrew the lid. Now I wanted to take a cautious approach and ease bike from crate slowly, but the four mechanics had other ideas, and before I could say "Battery Acid" the crate was tipped on end with the apache being unceremoniously heaved out. No damage done and it wasn't long before the bike was in one piece again. It started first whizz of the motor (I've never had any starting problems with any of the 125 models) and i was all set to ride into the Greek sunset.

 Leigh Millward

Disaster struck while taking my friend back home. I'd forgotten that I let most of the air out of the tyre for the flight. The resultant puncture came suddenly on a narrow downhill street. It caused the heart to beat a bit faster to say the least. Luckily we could see a car tyre fitting place just

Chairman's Chat

In the last issue I mentioned that I was thinking of going to the Czech Republic next year for a rally. Well it looks as if I may not be alone. A couple of people have expressed an interest. If you are tempted give me a call and we can have a chat. I have not got the dates yet but it is during July. The trip will be two weeks camping and a couple of thousand miles. Gileras are preferred but not compulsory. I have no intention of hurrying and I will be keeping off the motorways.

A WEEKEND IN LINCOLNSHIRE

I was unable to make it to the track day this year so Pete has reported on the events of a very successful day. I had to work ! When I finally escaped it was six o'clock on a very humid evening and now all I had to do was escape from the heat and pollution of London. Getting across the city was not so bad because a lot of people were on holiday. Up the A1 then Peterborough, Sleaford and Horncastle. Not the most exciting road but it has a few good corners once you get off the A1. I got to the Blue Bell at about half eleven which was a bit late for food but was in plenty of time for a few beers thanks to there friendly interpretation of pub licensing hours. I guess they call it a private party or something but people were still there at half two. I managed to get my tent up in the dark with a bit of encouragement from Andy Wallington and the next thing I knew it was light and in the tent it was boiling hot so I had no option but to get up. The folk in The Blue Bell are not renowned for rushing so breakfast is a leisurely affair, occasionally a very small pot of tea is produced, don't these people understand that breakfast requires huge quantities of tea. If we go to the Blue Bell again we must get them a very big tea pot. Saturday was a hot windy day that seemed to be promoting mass inactivity. We lounged around in the shade talking bikes while the "next generation" grappled with the complexities of digestion and unaided long distance travel. It seems that it was only the other day I was telling you about several expected new arrivals. Now all the Genbinos are

rushing toward their first birthdays and I am pleased to say that they are all fit and healthy and looking like potential future Gilera owners.

The Morini Club held their AGM and after lunch the silly games started. Slalom was eventually won by a lady riding an MZ outfit! she was the only one to complete the course. Limbo riding was interesting and got very serious. The winner had taken his fork springs out to lower his 3 1/2 as far as possible. Pete Fisher had brought along a topical variation of that old favourite "hoop la". The aim was to get Gilera and Morini cam belts over large tent pegs. Initial light hearted fun turned into a long queue of people determined to do better next time. At first we all seemed unable to get the wobbly quoits on any peg that was beyond an arm's length away but slowly techniques began to develop and the competition hotted up. After a while it became clear to all that we were going to be upstaged by the kids who seemed to quickly come to terms with the game. I wonder if they realised it was not a computer simulation? Next it was time for the slow race. Bikes line up at one end of the field and the last one to the far end with out putting a foot down is the winner. The honour of the Network was challenged so I agreed to have a go. I don't know if it was my skill or the Saturno's low down, well balanced weight but I won! Clip ons & rear sets did not prove a disadvantage. Of course the Morini guys were making excuses about poorly balanced carbs and dry clutches. I think the answer is obvious, don't you.

As the sun went down the smell of barbecued animal lured most of us toward the pub for the usual (delicious) burnt offerings with salad and beer. It was getting late by the time red hot bananas were being handed round and it was a lot later by the time the last folks tottered off to bed. During the night it poured down but very considerately it left off at about seven. Another leisurely breakfast with sporadic tea and then it was time to start preparing for the AGM.

Tents were being packed and V-Twins were leaving but at the same time great thumping singles were arriving to boost the numbers and give us the best attended AGM yet. The AGM is reported on elsewhere so I will not go on about it other than to say "Thanks" to all of you who were able to make the trip.

I had (as promised) produced an award for the furthest travelled member at the AGM. We have not attracted anyone from overseas yet and for a while I thought I might have been the furthest travelled but then Andy Wallington broke the news that he had been camping at Swanage with the Boys Brigade and had ridden about 400 km. I was thinking about an award for the highest mileage bike but I think Andy would win that as well. If you want to know what it is like to live with a Saturno ask Andy, it is his only means of transport. He often commutes between London and Loughborough as well as nipping out to the Nurburgring for a few racing miles at weekends. He does a lot of miles and most of them are very fast ones. He has ridden a lot of fancy machinery for the motorcycle press but still comes back to his Saturno, so maybe they aren't so bad. And wouldn't you know it, before the day was out Ian Calvert and Andy had arranged to do a trip to the Nurburgring. I hope one of them will have time to write about it. I hear that Ian's new Laverda was snapping engine mounting bolts and Andy managed to set light to his carbon fibre silencer! Should make a good story.

It was time to pack up and head for home. Maybe next year we will encourage some of our European members to come and who knows maybe even something other than Saturnos and Nordwests may turn up. All in all a good weekend. The weather was fine, we had a laugh and the pub was almost out of beer by the time we left. Look out for details of next year's event.

RUMOUR CORNER

Or
Latest Gilera News.

I think most of you know what the 50cc Gilera scooters look like by now. They are selling well for a new name, particularly the Runner. Problem is that it is a 30 mph moped. A lot of them are being de-restricted which unfortunately makes them ever so slightly illegal. I have already heard of one new owner who has got into trouble after being stopped doing over fifty. It did not take the quick-witted, eagle-eyed law guardians long to realise that

something was wrong. I have ridden a de-restricted Runner and believe me it is fun. Decent tyres, good brakes and the new improved frame with an engine that will do 55 easily.

And now the really good news: The 125cc and 180cc versions of the Runner are not far away. Piaggio will be showing them at the Motor show and the Motor Cycle Show and they should reach the shops around the end of the year. I have just got the specification and they sound like fun to me. The 125 is claimed to produce 18hp but I bet that by the time we get it will be 14hp so it is learner legal top speed should be about 65mph+. The 180 is 20hp and claimed to do 120km/h that's about 75mph. I reckon that must be pretty conservative when you consider it only weighs 115kg and the current 12hp 125's will do 65. Lets face it the 70cc race scooters are 16hp and will do 85mph easily. Scooters are starting to get more interesting!

Already the Italian race tuning company Malossi are planning a Runner 180 single model race series. They hope to get four countries running the same mildly tuned scoots so they can have a truly international class. It is looking doubtful if it will happen in time for the 1998 season so it may not happen until 1999. The pending arrival of these new scoots poses a few questions. Like:

Who will be our first Gilera scooter-owning member?

Who will be the first to go touring on one?

Will Pete Fisher fit a race kit and start hill climbing one?

And:

How long will it be before Nigel Windys is caught doing a stoppie on one?

Oh and don't worry Gilera have made scooters in the past. I think the first was in the early '60's.

Now for some rumours. I have heard from two places that there is a 120cc version of the Eaglet 50cc custom bike already on the road. How come no one in Italy seems to have heard of it? It all became clear when I saw a photo of a new Eaglet recently. On the chrome Harley style air filter cover it says in Italian "one twentieth of a litre" that's 50cc to you and me. Funny how rumours start.

Until recently future plans for Gilera seemed vague but all of a sudden I keep hearing whispers

from all over the place about motorbikes. It seems to be well known in Italy that Piaggio are doing a deal with a Far Eastern manufacturer for a supply of 125 and 250cc engines that will be used in Gilera bikes. Now everyone at Piaggio denies this but where have these rumours suddenly started coming from?

Nothing was announced at the Milan show so I doubt if anything is about to happen but let's consider the possibilities. Gilera were doing a deal with Honda when the factory closed. Honda engines are now being made under licence in the Far East by large factories. There are some very good Honda designs about that have not been well used, for example the dohc version of the RS250 which was only used for a short while before Honda dropped it. That is a very nice and well sorted engine and just the sort of thing that would suit an Italian designed bike. I think we can be fairly sure that if a Gilera bike appears it will not be a Taiwan built CG125 with a Gilera badge on it. So don't get too worried. I think if there is any truth in these rumours, we could soon see an exciting new product.

It would be nice to see an original engine but lets be realistic, it is often uneconomic to do it all yourself and I am sure we will see motorcycle manufacturers follow the car makers lead more and more. Piaggio can look at people like Aprilia, Bimota, MZ and even BMW for clues about buying in successfully. Piaggio have first hand experience with the far east as they have been building Dihatsu vans in Italy for several years. Oh yes; and they build scooters in their factory in China. Yes,yes yes but when will there be a new Gilera Four?..... I keep dreaming.

TORQUE YOUR HEAD STUDS

When was the last time your cylinder head studs were torqued ? In case you are not aware they should be done at every service (4000km). Not doing them could well mean that the reduced tightness will allow the head gasket to start leaking and once it starts it will only get worse. Once it is leaking all you can do is change it and that means taking the ENGINE OUT. Are you

convinced it is worth doing?

It is fairly easy to do on Nordwest and RC600 but on the Saturno it is not possible to get a normal socket on all four of the nuts.

Nordwest & RC600

You will need a torque wrench with a range upto 40 Nm. and down to about 15 Nm. with a socket and an extension bar that is long enough to get the wrench clear of the frame.

Slacken the four bolts by about 1/8 of a turn each. This ensures that they will not be stuck and will accurately be tightened. 1/8 of a turn is not enough to break the seal that has been made.

Set the wrench to 20-22 Nm and tighten one nut. Next tighten the opposite nut. Now do the other two nuts in the same way.

Repeat this with the wrench set to 25-27 Nm.

Now repeat with the wrench set to 33-35Nm.

Saturno

All the above applies but unless you take the engine out of the frame you can not use a socket so the only option is a ring spanner and a spring balance to measure the torque being applied. Now this is a bit difficult because the length of spanners varies and the torque you need is about 34 Nm or 3.5 Kg.

Now if I understand this correctly: If you had a spanner one metre long you would have to apply a pull of 3.5 Kg and if it was half a metre long you would need 7 Kg. If the average spanner is about 20cm long (1/5 metre) you will need a pull of 17.5 Kg. 25cm long = 14 Kg. 30cm long =11.7 Kg.

The sum is 100 divided by the length of your spanner multiplied by 3.5

Measure the length of your spanner from the centre of the nut to the point you are pulling. Lets say it is 23cm. So $100 \div 23 = 4.347826 \times 3.5 = 15.217$ or to put it another way you need to pull just less than 15 1/4 Kg.

GeN BINDERS - GeN BINDERS - GeN BINDERS

Now is the time to buy your Gen Binders. How many more times must I tell you?

Each binder will hold twelve copies of the Gen. They are proper hard covers in antique red with

gold blocking on the spine.
Cost is £ 4.10 each inc. p&p or £3.95 each if you order more than one.
Cheques made payable to Gilera Network please. send to David Champion.
How can you survive without a couple of these in your book case?
Oh yes and you will get a free Gilera pin badge with every order.
Yes I know it said £3.85 in the last Gen. sorry but I calculated the cost before I got them and they weigh more than I thought so they cost more to post.

Tee Shirts, Baseball Caps and Badges
I have got a limited number of good quality Red Tee Shirts printed with the Gilera Name and Logo on the left breast in white. Sizes are L. XL. XXL. £5 each plus 75p p&p.
Also I have Red baseball caps with white printing. One size fits all. £2 each plus 50p p&p. I was given these by Piaggio in Italy so all proceeds go to club funds.
And of course I still have embroidered badges. Yellow Logo on Red or Black at £2.50 inc. p&p.
Cheques made payable to David Champion please.
Mike Riley's cartoons printed on Tee Shirts and mugs have been selling well. If you fancy a full colour cartoon of Nordwest, Saturno or GFR or maybe a shirt with all the different Gilera Logos on the front give Mike a call on 01332-722736.
Tee Shirts are £12 and the mugs are £9.40 inc. p&p.

BOOK NEWS

Mike Walker called me the other day to say that he was putting the finishing touches to his book of Gilera and it was due to go to the printers for publication in the new year.

There was a splendid Gilera reference book published in Italy some time ago, unfortunately it went out of print and specialist dealers doubted if it would be reprinted. I casually mentioned this to Bob Wright the other day and he said "Oh I have just seen a new reprint of it in Italy and I have ordered some". Bob does not know when these may arrive but it does seem as if there may be a

fairly definitive Gilera book available again soon. Did I mention that it costs about £50. Give Bob a call if you think you may want one.

GFR 125 FACT FILE

Yes at long last the GFR fact file is ready. My experience of the GFR is limited and you will notice there are plenty of missing items in the list. So if you have any information that could be added to this file please let me know.

 David Champion

[In view of the very small number of GFRs and the fortunate abundance of material for this issue I have decided to publish the GFR Fact Sheet as a separate item. So if GFR owners (or anyone else who would like one) give me a ring I will send one by return of post - Ed.]