



The single cylinder Silk at the 1987 Barbon hill climb. (From the Margaret Duff Collection and captioned by Arthur Fogg.)



and still managed to make the best performance for a late vintage machine, namely a 1924 two-speeder. A new award for the best performance by a Scott rider went to yours truly. In view of past criticisms of the starting procedure which did cause some Scotts to smoke on leaving, this year all entrants had to come to the line with a dead engine. So, Brian, there was very little smoke in evidence. I couldn't help but notice, though, that the only ones having starting problems at the word "go" were bikes using 'nails'!

The pictures of the single cylinder Silk were taken when it was ridden by Graham Rhodes into sixth place in the 250cc class at the 1987 Barbon hill climb in Cumbria. The last Silk produced had a 500cc engine of the loop scavenge type and the single was in effect half of that engine. There was, in fact, a second 500cc Silk which was assembled from parts by George Silk and others for the magazine *Motorcycle Mechanics* for inclusion in the classics display at the 1987 Motorcycle Show. I believe the 500 engine also used squish heads via American Wiseco pistons and was fed from twin Amal Monoblocs through reed valves and 68 b.h.p. was seen on the Silk dynamometer.

I always enjoy reading the correspondence columns of the *Motor Cycle* and *Motorcycling* of many moons ago. In particular my attention was caught by two letters which appeared in *The Motor Cycle* in 1951 participating in a series on the subject of two-stroke lubrication. They were written by a Mr. Brown and a Mr. Singleton commenting on the use of petrol lubrication as applied to Scotts. From Mr. Brown's letter I quote:

"I have a 1933 596cc Scott Flyer. It has done quite a mileage in its 18 years of life. It has not had any repairs whatsoever done to it in all those years. Both big-ends and small ends rattle like heck — have done for years. I use the machine for touring in the summer solo, and then sometimes I put a small sidecar on it. It is used in winter for getting out trials courses. The Scott is put in a shed covered in trials mud all winter and is swilled down with a hosepipe when summer comes. It does about 69 m.p.g. and 75 m.p.h; I am not a speed merchant. It has seized twice through my forgetting to put the oil in the petrol but that has not made any difference to the performance or anything else." Mr. Brown used half a pint of oil with each gallon of petrol — when he remembered.

The other contributor, Mr. Singleton, wrote as follows:
"In 1945 I bought a 1933 TT Replica Scott in splendid condition which had been converted to petrol, using the system in which one crankcase oil reservoir is connected to the main bearing of the opposite cylinder. Incidentally one oil hole on each packing gland had been elongated to give a longer dwell for oil delivery (Swabey system?). The machine has been used mainly for fairly high speed road work — normal averages of 45-48 m.p.h. on 100 mile non-stop runs with occasional digressions over downland, farm tracks etc. but no real trial sections. I always used one pint of Castrol XXL to two gallons of petrol. However in three years (say 12,000 miles — with petrol rationing) I had three sets of pistons, two rebore, numerous sets of big-end bearings, two complete seizures and no trouble with main bearings. In 1949 I converted to Pilgrim pump; I have needed no engine spares since and the machine is much smoother."

Take your pick!