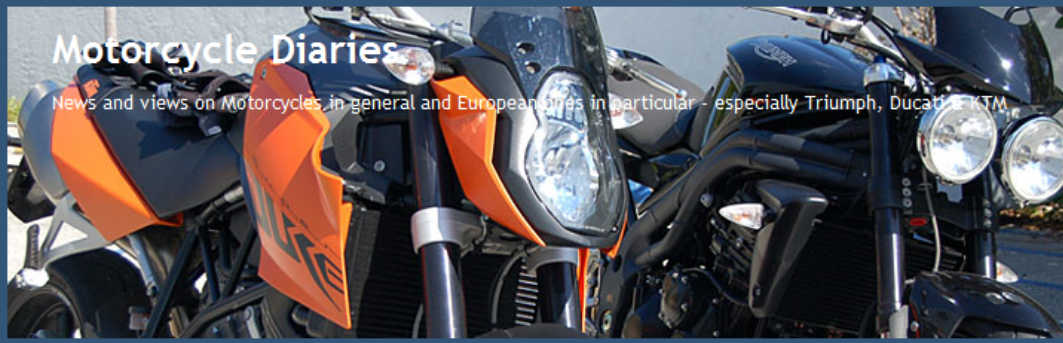


# Motorcycle Diaries

News and views on Motorcycles in general and European ones in particular - especially Triumph, Ducati & KTM



WEDNESDAY, 10 JUNE 2009

## ➤ The Best Cafe racers in the world - Norvin, Triton



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Garry is a master at the art of deception. There are restorers, and there are show bike builders, and then there are cafe racer builders. But no-one I've yet met that combines all these skills. This isn't the most extraordinary thing about Garry though, that is that his bikes are so deceiving. They are so perfectly contrived that at first glance they look like original models. Then you realise that the finish is far too good. Then you start seeing the details he adds. And the more you look you realise that these aren't originals, or restorations, but Garry's unique re-creations.

The brilliance about Garry's cafe racers are in the subtle perfection of attention to detail. He changes, upgrades and refines the bikes he builds, but in such a subtle, beautifully blended way that you have to



look hard to spot the changes he has made. And when you start to spot them they come thick and fast. But nothing is done that doesn't both improve the bikes performance - and looks. Garry is so pure in his approach he can't even abide the bastardisation of the bike's brand names, so his Norton Featherbed framed Vincent is a Norton on the tank - and - well the engine speaks for itself (in a bark that just beggars belief) out of its exquisitely curved "straight" pipes.

Take the Vincent's kick start: He has removed a centimetre from the centre and welded it back together so that it fits more snugly back to the engine. It now clears the pipes when used, by a calculated 1/10" of an inch. Or the hand-fabricated rear-sets on the Hinckley-engined Triumph. Or going back to the Vincent check out the front brake. Garry wanted an effective stopper that wouldn't ruin the Vincent's classic 1949 lines. So he found and re-engineered probably the last, best drum brake ever made - an early seventies twin-leading shoe from a Yamaha TZ250. But the genius of it is that you would never notice it as your eyes gorge themselves on what with the Hinckley-engined Bonneville are the two most lovingly created pieces of cafe-racer candy that I promise you will ever see.

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I'm here to check out the Triumph which I had heard about from Mark Wilshire at the Ace Cafe. He thinks quite rightly that Pure Triumph should be offering something like it to our customers. Lovely though the Triumph is though, it is the Vincent that demands the greatest attention. I've got to say that it is one of the most beautiful and desirable motorcycle I have ever seen. Don't ask Garry to make you one though unless you happen to have a spare Vincent motor hanging around - or are prepared to wait a couple of years while he finds you one. And if you want this one, you will need to offer him somewhere in excess of thirty five thousand of her majesty's pounds sterling (US\$56k or so).

The Triumph is a bit more accessible in a number of ways. Again you will need to find a donor Hinckley Bonneville, or wait for Garry to find one. Not surprisingly this will be somewhat easier than laying your hands on a Vincent engine. The Triumph looks so right in every single respect, you have to wonder why Triumph don't get him to do a refresh of the Bonneville - or perhaps more appropriately the Thruxton. Triumph did a pretty good job of re-creating the Bonneville line, but a lot of the detailing doesn't bear that close scrutiny. To get the proportions right in every respect for him, Garry used for instance a Suzuki headlight. "The Triumph headlight is just too big, it doesn't look right". What can you say? The proof is in the impeccable, achingly beautiful lines of his Triton. (Sorry Gary doesn't call it that - but that's what most people would call it). If you can't live without a Triton like this then contact me at [chris@pure-triumph.com](mailto:chris@pure-triumph.com), I can at least put you in touch with Garry, and if you are in the US might be able to help procure you a bike like this.

Hardly surprising that some have called Garry's bikes "The best cafe racers in the world".

Posted by Striple at 21:53   
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