

A FANFARE OF TRIUMPHS

As far as collective nouns go, most folk seem to know that a group of crows is known as a murder, a collection of ducks is a raft, lions are found in a troop, etc. There are also the lesser-known ones such as a wake of buzzards, a superfluity of nuns, an intrusion of cockroaches or a sprig of vegetarians (yes, really)

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SPECIFICATION SHEET

JEZ BRAY'S SPEEDTWIN

ENGINE:

1975(ish) unit Bonneville, standard barrels, E3134 inlet and exhaust cams, twin Amal Concentric carbs, alternator crank, WEB belt drive, pre-war Triumph rigid gearbox, competition Lucas magneto, exhaust bought from USA.

FRAME:

1951 Triumph Speedtwin, modified hardtail, rigid footrest hangers with pillow rubbers.

FRONT END:

Standard yokes, wheel and forks with chrome shrouds, 7" drum brake, unknown handlebars (probably Triumph), custom switchgear, pushbike speedo with pick-up on rear wheel.

REAR END:

Standard wheel, hub and drum brake, stainless steel one-off torque arm.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Original Wassell fuel tank donated to the cause (thanks Pop!), seat by Dragon Seating, modified rear guard from the States, original oil tank, battery box hand made by owner, loom by owner, headlight from USA, twin tail lights using modified Lucas wing markers.

PAINT & FINISH:

Candy red over silver base with engine-turned platinum leaf detailing. Paint by Babs, artwork by LetterKnight (John Leeson). Polishing by owner and Bob Cooper Chrome.

THANKS TO:

"Berty; Houghey; Mr Jes Flower; Babs; John Leeson."

Naturally there are also collective nouns for motorcycles – a darkness of Matchlesses, a chord of Yamahas, a drey of Scotts and so on. Equally as naturally, I made those up. And, in a moment of fantasy, I also decided that the one for a group of Triumph motorcycles would have to be a fanfare.*

There's probably also a collective noun for a group of blokes who like messing around with motorcycles, too. Suggestions to the editor please. The fanfare of Triumph twins that you see here is owned by Nick Hough and Jez Bray – Nick's is the blue 'Trophybird' and, obviously, Jez's bike is the candy red Speedtwin. And, not only were they photographed together, they were built together as well. It wasn't so much that the bikes were on adjoining

workbenches with each process being undertaken at exactly the same time, but the two mates worked on the respective projects consecutively, helping each other out with ideas bouncing between the two like a metaphysical version of Newton's cradle.

So there's little surprise that a casual glance suggests that the two twins are very similar. But take a closer look and you'll realise that, while the styling may echo each other, the spec and detailing makes each bike truly unique from the other. We'll begin with Nick's motorcycle, for no other reason than Jez says that it was "All Houghy's fault", so I figured that we should start with the protagonist!

The basis of the bike is a TR5 Trophy frame, which, although rigid as standard, has been much modified with various ugly

brackets removed (and pretty ones added, like the seat spring pillars) with a set of footpeg brackets from a swinging arm model frame. The engine is from a Thunderbird – thus giving the bike the sobriquet of 'Trophybird' – although it is far from standard. The spec sheet lists the full mods, but mention must be made of the big valve head, T140 crank, billet con rods and genuine racing magneto – a rare find that had originally been used on a pukka factory race bike, and far trickier than the 'normal' competition magneto that was available to the general public.

Jez, meanwhile, had started with a 1951 Speedtwin frame, forks and wheels. Remember kiddies, pre-'73 bikes are road tax exempt, and pre-1960 are not required to undergo annual MoT test, which meant that he would have a rigid frame that wasn't bound by many regulations or costs. But that didn't mean that it had to stay standard, so it was subjected to a bit of titification and given some rigid footpeg mounts, too.

For a powerplant, Jez wanted a



JEZ WANTED A BIT MORE GET-UP-AND-GO THAN A SINGLE CARB 500CC TWIN, SO HE SOURCED A UNIT CONSTRUCTION BONNEVILLE POWERPLANT