

Engine – Electric starter

A MAN LITERALLY HOPED INTO THE SHOP – NO IT'S NOT A FUNNY JOKE

A man did actually hop into the shop – as he had one leg! The missing one disappeared in an explosion. He came with two friends who I met on rallies in the 80's and we've been friends ever since. And the man with one leg wanted me to do an engine with an electric start for his Lambretta and side car.

If you thought the last engine I did was stressful then this one really sent the blood pressure over the top.

I didn't want to do the electric start. But that was okay, they had a man who was going to do it. Engine wise I didn't mind, but was too busy to take on a long winded project like an electric start and I'd been involved with one in the 90's which was nothing but trouble – this was to be no bloody different!

We waited months for the electric starter kit and after lots of chasing the ignition and parts was returned untouched as he didn't want to supply MrBee as he said I would just copy it! What bit of I didn't want to do an electric start! So I was forced into doing it using some parts supplied and I had the rest do.

Engine wise you have to think out of the box for a sidecar! I'd done a couple of tunes for sidecars. One tune was for a racing sidecar in the early 90's which was like a stage 4 cast iron with reed valve and it showed 130mph on the dyno! – that told me early on – speed on a dyno is nothing like speed on the road, why dyno operators use speed is beyond me! – That bike was part of Ralphs dyno bollocks campaign! That engine never got fitted in a sidecar but ended up in a Group 6 bike and it won races even though it was made for a sidecar and not designed for group 6 and I think it also beat Ralph to rub it in a bit more!

With that in mind I went down a similar route, but this time – SIL casings, ground and rumble polished, a special RT 230 Reed tune, bgm 60x110, Vape full DC modified for the starter motor, MB5 gearbox and sprockets to suit the chair, MB5 clutch, MB slippers, MB linkages, MB Carbon cowls, MB bearings, seals/gaskets, 30mm Dellorto with MB parts and MBgm Clubman etc etc. This gave 20hp with a wide spread of torque, ideal for the sidecar.

Would I do another – err no – engine yes – starter no. If I was to do another I'd put it into production, with a special flywheel, cowl, mag housing and starter, but done right – designed to fit – but I have far too many projects to do!

I'll let the photos tell the story.

























































