



▲ Looking classic in black, especially for a 'parts-bin special'...

the seat hump, chrome-rimmed clocks and alloy panel housing the warning lights. Brightness here stood out, because almost everything else was black, apart from the paintwork (yellow was an option, but only about a fifth of buyers asked for it). Black cover on the exhaust cans, black engine, black wheels, black swinging arm – and heh, even the tyres were black!

For all that, the first Striple was essentially another variation on the modular theme, with precious little to differentiate it from the Daytona, Trident or Sprint mechanically: a parts-bin special, in other words (excuse me while I wash my mouth out). Which meant that the bulky feel and slightly ponderous handling provided by the spine frame and relatively soft suspension were still the order of the day. When launched,

matching 17-inch wheels – the rear a useful bit wider to accommodate 180-section rubber – were a relative novelty, inherited along with most of the chassis from the sportier Daytona. As the fatter tyre worked out to be the same diameter as the supplanted 18-incher, the steering geometry remained unchanged.

Early Triumphs had been criticised for weak brakes, so the pair of 310mm discs and 4-pot Nissin calipers were welcome. At the blunt end, a 255mm rotor and 2-pot caliper continued to do the stopping, but no-one really notices back brakes, do they?

The connection between the road and frame was made by 43mm forks as before, although the triple-rate springs were New and Improved, while the familiar tri-link rear suspension lived on. Opinions were divided about Triumph suspension. Some said it was controlled and comfortable, others from the race-rep camp that it was just plain wallowly. Having a hefty 460lb plus rider to cope with was part of the problem, but in Triumph's defence the design aim was to produce bikes suitable for public roads, not racetracks. It's easy enough to stiffen the springs and damping to minimise fork dive and reduce float at 120mph. Which is fine, unless you happen to spend rather more time at 50mph in daily use, when extra bounce is preferable to being launched into the air by every catseye.

It quickly became clear that of the various mix 'n' match combinations of cylinders and strokes available the 885cc

