



“when I approached a roundabout at 60mph I realised that the front brakes did not work properly”

REBUILDING AN EX-RACE SPEED TRIPLE

OR HOW MANY SPEED TRIPLES DOES A MAN NEED!

BY DAVID CLARKE

Usually the story of a full bike restoration involves some “old school” Triumph or similar British bike from the 1960’s or Japanese bikes from the 1970’s. However this story involves a bike built in 1994 with less than 3000 miles on the clock! So how come I needed to restore such a recent bike?

Let’s start at the beginning of the saga. In January 2011, I was the proud owner of two Speed Triples, a 1994 in Racing Yellow and a 1996 in Black, so enough Speed Triples then? Wrong!

Whilst on the internet one lunch time I put in “Speed Triples for sale” (just to pass the time of course!) and started to check the results. There staring at me was a 1994 Speed Triple in a very non-standard paint scheme and with what appeared to be all the genuine Speed Triple Challenge race parts. Having researched the Speed Triple Challenge race series when writing the book “Hinckley Triumphs – The First Generation” I knew that genuine ex-race bikes were extremely hard to find and this bike came with provenance. I rang the dealer in Warrington who told me the bike had been run by the StreetBike Triumph dealers in Dudley and gave me the registration, engine and chassis numbers. I then took a flier and rang StreetBike who still operate in the West Midlands, and asked if they had any information on their ex-race bikes. With a stroke of luck I spoke to Gary Marshall who not only remembered the bike but also confirmed the registration, chassis and engine numbers and who the rider was. Result!

I travelled up to Warrington to the dealer (who sold custom-style bikes) with my bike trailer to check the Speed Triple over. In the

flesh it was a bit scabby with the pink and black chequer paintwork very faded and the rest of the bike looking scruffy. However it did have the ex-race parts including a TTS 3-4-3-2-1 manifold with a Sebring rear silencer (TTS only made 70 sets of the 3-4-3-2-1 exhaust manifold and I have never ever seen any advertised for sale).

Incorrectly many people refer to the complete system as Yoshimura, but they only provided the silencer, usually substituted by a Sebring which was cheaper to replace. The Proflex rear shock still had the ‘Proflex’ sticker on the remote reservoir and a Daytona oil cooler had been fitted. The only race part missing was the steering damper, although the lengthened bolts in the rocker cover told me it had once been fitted.

The mileage was only 2,800 miles and StreetBike confirmed that when it stopped racing in 1996 the bike was stored for a number of years before finally being sold to a guy who appeared to have not ridden it either.

The only real downer was the fact that the original clip-on handlebars had been removed and a set of Renthall-style flat bars fitted with the top yoke drilled for the risers.