

NEOCLASSICAL MOTORCYCLING

(or, passing the classic test)

'Ah, but is it really a classic?' Paul Miles tackles a Triumph triple and the tribulations of rhetoric...

Photos by Paul Miles

Now then, one of the great pub games among motorcyclists is playing 'Is That A Classic?' You know the rules: somebody mentions a bike and a host of widely differing opinions quickly follows. In the main, though, if the bike is old and European it passes muster, deemed to be worthy and gets priced accordingly, ie. stratospherically. Ditto some old American bikes, and then eventually you come to the tricky Japanese question. Even the most diehard Whitworth welder will grudgingly admit that Japanese bikes can be well-engineered, oil-tight,

reliable and indeed certain models from the 60s and 70s have achieved cult status, hence their prices have risen inexorably to the point at which there are few, if any, bargains to be had. So, the smart enthusiast is always looking for the next big thing, the future classic, the emerging collectable, but how do you spot one? Well, let's find a machine that might be available for sensible money and apply the classic test criteria.

The bike in question is a 1995 model Triumph Speed Triple 900. Finished in black and pretty much completely standard except for a small wind-deflector screen mounted over the headlight. ➤

