

always on a lower trajectory. To be lusted after in the showroom, a motorcycle had to be a) fast; b) expensive; c) flash; d) trend setting; e) a bit scary. People have always liked nutter bikes, just think of Kawasaki triples or Yamaha Elsie's.

The Speed Triple is considered to be one of the first factory-produced streetfighter style machines. Essentially a 900 Daytona with the full fairing removed and a single headlamp fitted, the 97BHP engine propelled the exposed rider to hitherto unheard-of velocities without the protection afforded by a screen. Triumph also sponsored a one-make race series that supported the racing calendar, associating Triumph with racing once again in the minds of the punters. Pass A

#3: Sporty riding position

For a bike to be considered a classic, it has to be fast, as previously discussed. Fast is always associated with a sporty riding position which will include drop bars and rearsets. A seat hump or bumstop is even more desirable and if available as an ex-factory fitment should be considered as essential.

The Triumph has clip-on handlebars and slightly rearset footrests. An optional, removable, seat hump was available as a factory option, colour matched to suit. Pass A

#4: Dualseat

To justify the purchase of a neo-classic to your significant other can be a challenge in itself. It has to be cheap enough to be affordable, yet offer new possibilities to the family, however ephemeral. For this reason, no off-road motorcycle need be considered. Getting dirty is a solitary pursuit and therefore your classic mud-plugger would need to be your principal machine and not an extra 'investment opportunity'. The next dead cert needs to have a comfortable dualseat 'in case we go touring, or if little Johnny wants to go out on the back' however unlikely that may be. Another reason why the seat hump has to be removable.

The Hinckley triples are reckoned to have one of the most comfortable pillion perches around, far more suited to touring than the racing crouches offered by many race replicas. Pass A+

#5: Major faults

If a 10-20 year-old machine was boringly reliable, with no major wrinkles, it will never become a classic and is destined to be considered only as a workhorse. There should be a Russian roulette approach to buying a neo-classic, in that it probably won't break, but if it does go wrong it will take considerable time and money to rectify. A potential major ➤



Under the neat (black) cowling there lurks a pillion seat (black). The cost of replacement plastics is not low



The 'carbon fibre' exhaust cans are in fact steel cans with wrap-around sleeves



Clear clocks with starkly contrasting white faces. There is little in the way of gimmickry, and the idiot lights are invisible in sunlight