

UNDER THE RADAR

While some custom bikes are very much in-your-face, impossible-to-ignore neck turners, many are far more subtle

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And few are subtler than this Triumph Scrambler, built by Metal Malarkey Engineering for owner Steve Goddard. While it's the sort of bike that would attract your attention if you were stood roadside as it passed, probably only the most committed of Hinckley Triumph anoraks would notice how radically different it is from a bike in the official factory range. It would take some close scrutiny even for them to notice some of the modifications because this Triumph is pretty much as radical as they come, given the number of bespoke parts, one-off engineering and race spec goodies involved in its build...

The initial concept was based around the idea of classic Triumph styling, with ergonomics to suit the owner and a combination of lighter weight and quicker steering than the standard 865cc Scrambler. And, naturally, all of the component parts had to be of the highest possible quality. ◊

THIS TRIUMPH IS PRETTY MUCH AS RADICAL AS THEY COME, GIVEN THE NUMBER OF BESPOKE PARTS, ONE-OFF ENGINEERING AND RACE SPEC GOODIES INVOLVED IN ITS BUILD



Metal Malarkey is based in the South Shropshire market town of Bishop's Castle, a quiet and unassuming little hillside gathering of black and white half-timbered buildings, a surprising number of great pubs and lots of live music. At the lower end of town, right next to the A488, lies the Malarkey workshop, wherein founder Malcolm Shepherdson and the team (including long-term custom bike builder Phil James, among others) create a range of aftermarket custom parts as well as building complete bikes.

One of Mal's masterpieces is the MME 21stC frame (yep, that's 'Twenty First Century'), built to contain classic parallel twin Triumph, Norton and BSA engines while exhibiting improved strength and superior handling traits to the standard item. For Steve Goddard's plan of

an improved 'new era' Hinckley Triumph, Mal utilised the concept of the 21stC frame with the new, fuel-injected Scrambler powerplant. However, on this occasion, a standard Scrambler lump wasn't used; this engine has a 904cc big bore kit, a conversion favoured by those folk wanting an even punchier modern Brit twin.

The frame is made from T45 carbon-manganese steel tube popular in the motorsports and aerospace industries, bronze-welded together in a design that allows the lubricant from the engine's 'cooling' oil pump to run through the frame rails on its way to the cylinder head, thus dispensing with the standard bike's oil cooler. There's actually a second oil pump that lubricates the engine's internals, with one devoted entirely to the cooling circuit.

The engine is mounted rigidly



(ie not on rubbers) with an additional head steady, while the mount at the rear of the motor, originally intended for the swinging arm mount, was re-engineered as an additional engine bracket. Instead, the swinging arm was mounted in a conventional manner in the frame itself (rather than the engine). That swinger is also rather trick, in that it's of an oval section construction, has some rather neat chain adjusters and is controlled by fully adjustable WP shocks.

Between the arms of the swinging arm is a wheel made from a Triumph hub attached to a Takasago aluminium rim

by stainless steel spokes, with a matching wheel up front. The front wheel is held by a chunky pair of upside-down forks from an Aprilia, along with the Italian bike's yokes. That little combination gives a rake of 25.5 degrees, and a trail of 102mm (as compared to the 27.8 degrees and 105mm of the production bike), with a wheelbase 27mm shorter than stock and a significant weight saving—the frame and swinging arm alone have shaved off 19 pounds!

But, while the figures are very impressive, they're not especially exciting to read and, besides, it's not all about improved performance, as the finished article has to look right, too.

A desire for contemporary Trumpet styling meant that a pair of T100 side panels, some Bonneville mudguards and an earlier model Hinckley Bonnie fuel tank were all sourced, although each piece had to be modified to suit, particularly the fuel tank. The earlier model tank had been chosen due to its sleeker design although, as it came from a carburettor-fuelled bike, it didn't have the

inbuilt fuel pump and filter that the fuel-injected Scrambler engine required. Consequently, not only did the tank have to be reworked to fit the frame (and note the neat way in which it fits around the rubbers on the frame) and have a fuel feed and return fitted, but a new home needed to be found for the fuel pump, filter and regulator. Incredibly, all these parts were squeezed beneath the seat and in between the (modified) side panels, although, with all the other gubbins required by a fuel-injected internal combustion engine (the bulky ECU, the fuses and relays and a battery that is more sizeable than that on a carb'd bike), it was something of a tight fit. Little surprise then that there was no room for an airbox and thus the bike runs a pair of free-flowing aftermarket air filters!

Wiring all the gadgets and electrical doobries together, including a Motogadget M-Unit and M-Lock keyless ignition system, wasn't the quickest or easiest of jobs, and threading the control wires through the 'bars

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SPECIFICATION SHEET

ENGINE:

Triumph Scrambler parallel twin (270° crank), converted from 865cc to 904cc, no oil cooler, Metal Malarkey stainless steel 2-into-1 exhaust with elliptical reverse cone mega silencer, twin K&N air filters, 75bhp.

FRAME:

One-off bronze welded T45 steel twin downtube frame in Metal Malarkey '21stC Design'. Oil through frame from pump to cylinder head, 30% reduction in weight over standard.

FRONT END:

19" Takasago alloy rim, Talon hub, black stainless steel spokes, four piston Brembo calipers, Brembo brake master cylinder, 320mm semi floating Wavy discs, Continental Attack 110/80/19 tyre Aprilia upside-down forks and yokes, Acewell speedo, headlight mounted indicators, handlebar controls wired internally.

REAR END:

17" Takasago alloy rim, stainless steel spokes, Triumph hub, twin piston Brembo caliper, 260mm disc, Continental Attack 150/70/17 tyre, oval section CDS swinging arm, reworked taillight body with LED bulb.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Modified pre-fuel injection model petrol tank, modified T100 side panels, modified Bonneville mudguards with one-off stainless steel braces, one-off wiring loom, Motogadget control centre, M-lock keyless ignition, Motogadget M-Unit, external fuel pump, regulator and filter, Barleycorn foot controls, Apico foot pegs.

PAINT & FINISH:

Candy red over candy white and gold pinstriping by Richard at FX Paintwork, Ormskirk, Lancashire. Frame, swinging arm and bracketry powder coated satin black

THANKS TO:

"Cambrian Powder Coaters, Oswestry; Nigel, Graham's Garage for all extra paint works; Glencoe for their help, advice and supplying components for the eternal fuelling system."



A BESPOKE TWO-INTO-ONE STAINLESS STEEL EXHAUST PROVIDES A PERFECT SOUNDTRACK THROUGH THE OVAL TWIN EXIT REVERSE CONE MEGA SILENCER

couldn't have made it any simpler, although it does make for a much improved end result. Some considerable care was also taken to ensure that all the ancillary bits and pieces match, in that the LSL brake fluid reservoirs, indicator bodies, chain guard, yokes and risers and fork legs are all matching anodised black, and the frame and swinging arm match the satin black of the engine cases. A bespoke two-into-one stainless steel exhaust flows down the right-hand side of the bike, providing a perfect soundtrack through the oval twin exit reverse

cone mega silencer.

Stood in the sunshine at Lancashire's funkiest race circuit—Three Sisters in Wigan—it was clear to see owner Steve's beaming grin as he piloted the lightweight Scrambler around the tight curves of what most folk term as being a 'kart track'. This big bore street scrambler seemed the perfect weapon for that kind of track, and for back lane scratching and urban terrorism too, come to that. It may be subtle but, much like a stiletto knife or silenced pistol, it does an efficient job without attracting too much attention! ☒