



# JAWA Motorcyclist

## JAWA 650 Classic @ 33600 km



The “mileage” has now reached 33600 km. It’s not so much for nearly six years use but I have to admit I’ve slowed down a bit of late. Nevertheless I’m still lovin’ it! It’s a comfortable ride for long trips and I try to get up to Scotland once a year if I can. It’s a strange mixture of a bike really. The cruiser styling is fine and gives the bike a low centre of gravity which is ideal for a sidecar outfit. But the engine is a modern single which simply doesn’t do plodding or thumping. If you try to it turns out to be only snatching. When I was running it as a solo I tried, without success, to change the final drive gearing because I thought this would improve it, but since I fitted the chair I decided the gearing was just perfect for this use. The BMW’s with the same basic engine have a 47-tooth rear sprocket against the Jawa’s 64-tooth. Quite a difference.

The only major problem I’ve had in this time is breaking spokes. It started quite a while after fitting the chair so I don’t think this was the major cause. One other customer I know has broken some rear spokes on a solo, but Ian Bridge hasn’t broken any. I broke about five each in front and rear wheels. My conclusion was that there had been a short-term failure of quality control. The spokes all showed slight surface damage at the bend. I think the tooling needed to be re-furbished. I had both wheels re-built with polished stainless spokes and had no further trouble. The new spokes are much easier to clean.

I’ve had the swing-arm pivot shaft out twice to re-grease the bearings. The last time I noticed some orange-coloured paste where the grease should be, at the drive side. My materials lecturer at college would call this “fretting corrosion”. Being pressed for time I just cleaned it up, re-greased it and put it all back. Next time I will replace the needle bearings and seals. The seals have synthetic rubber lips without a garter spring and they are liable to wear so that’s something to look for. Swing-arm bearings live in an awful environment and seldom get much attention. Martin Broomfield always says that Metalastic bushes are the best solution. I can’t disagree.

I’ve no particular worries for the future but I suppose the silencer will have to be replaced eventually. It’s probably the least attractive part of the bike, quite heavy and with a catalyst inside. I would like to find a cheaper alternative but a custom-made special might not be any cheaper. I’m not bothered about improved performance but I don’t want it to be noisy. Is there an answer?

John Osborn