

DYNO DIGS

This Special Feature Sponsored By The Motorcyclist's Post

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Subject Motorcycle:

1929 Excelsior Henderson KJ
Four Cylinder

Owner:

Ron Webster

Location:

Mad River Run Rally in Westfield, VT

Story:

Ron is a former endurance rider who raced from 1964 through 1980. Ron actually rode in the International Six Days (ISDT) twice and received a gold medal at the Isle of Mann in 1971. Over his competitive career, Ron rode Greeves, Ossi's, Yankee's, and Husqvarna's. Ron purchased the 1929 Excelsior Henderson from a collector in Enfield, CT back around the 1990 time frame. The bike is in basically original unrestored condition. Ron has numerous motorcycles in his collection, including another fully restored early Henderson Four. Ron has preferred to leave this particular bike as is so that he can ride it to events where it always draws a crowd.

History:

The original Henderson's were manufactured by the Henderson Brothers between 1912 and 1917 at which time they sold the brand to Ignaz Schwinn (Schwinn bicycle) who also owned the Excelsior brand of motorcycles. The Henderson's worked for Excelsior for a year after which they went out on their own. William Henderson developed a revised four cylinder motorcycle that was rolled out in 1920 as the Ace. Around 1926 Indian purchased the defunct Ace brand and utilized the engineering to develop various Indian Ace model derivatives, including the Indian 4 models. Ron believes that other unrelated four cylinder motorcycles were produced by Pope and Cleveland in those early years.

Performance:

While a run was performed on the dyno, the results were inconclusive as the owner insisted on running the machine and was apprehensive about stressing the engine on this beautiful machine. For sure the bike made more than the three horsepower the test indicated. The air/fuel mixture graph however showed that the early carburetor did a reasonably good job of metering the air/fuel mixture, albeit a little on the rich side. Ron said he may bring the bike back for another run to see what the machine will really do; and this time he'll let Rob run it!



Ron Webster (sitting) responds to passersby about running his 1929 Excelsior Henderson KJ on the RDS Dyno. (RDS Photo)



Ron Webster's 1929 Excelsior Henderson KJ as he purchased the bike some 15 years ago. Barn fresh! (RDS Photo)