

Old BIKES

A U S T R A L A S I A



Yamaha YR-2
Swift & sleek

Junak 350
Pole apart



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Moto Guzzi Airone

Delectable 250 single



PLUS



1954 Redex Trial
Seven days of torture



JIMMY PRINGLE: Briefly, the best



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Old BIKE

AUSTRALASIA



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Only for the brave



Story and photos Jim Scaysbrook

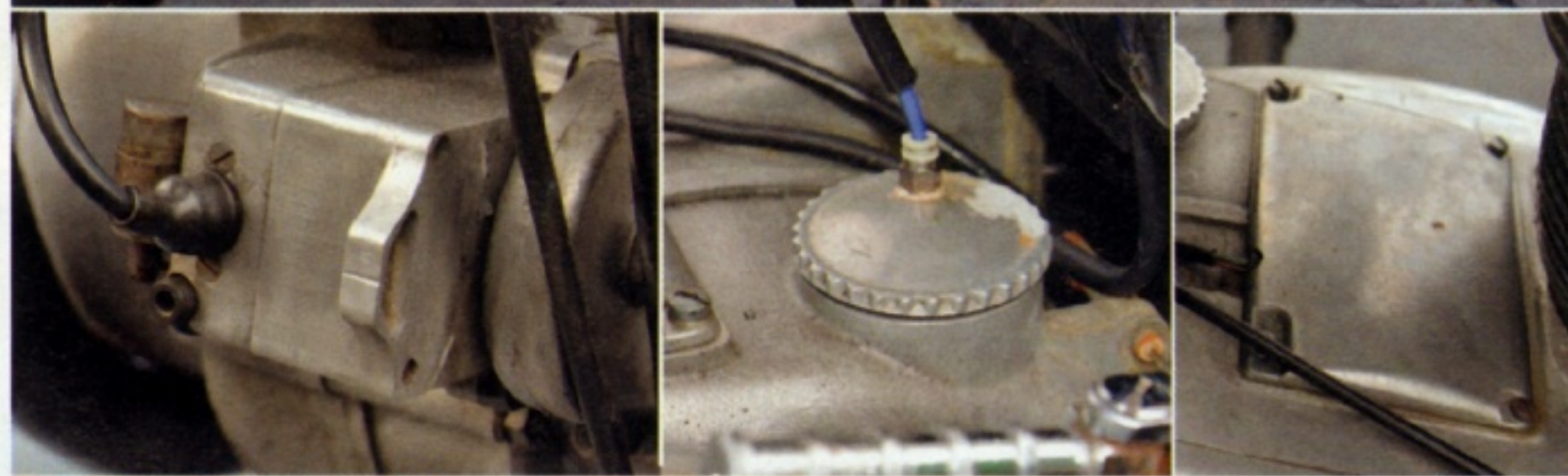
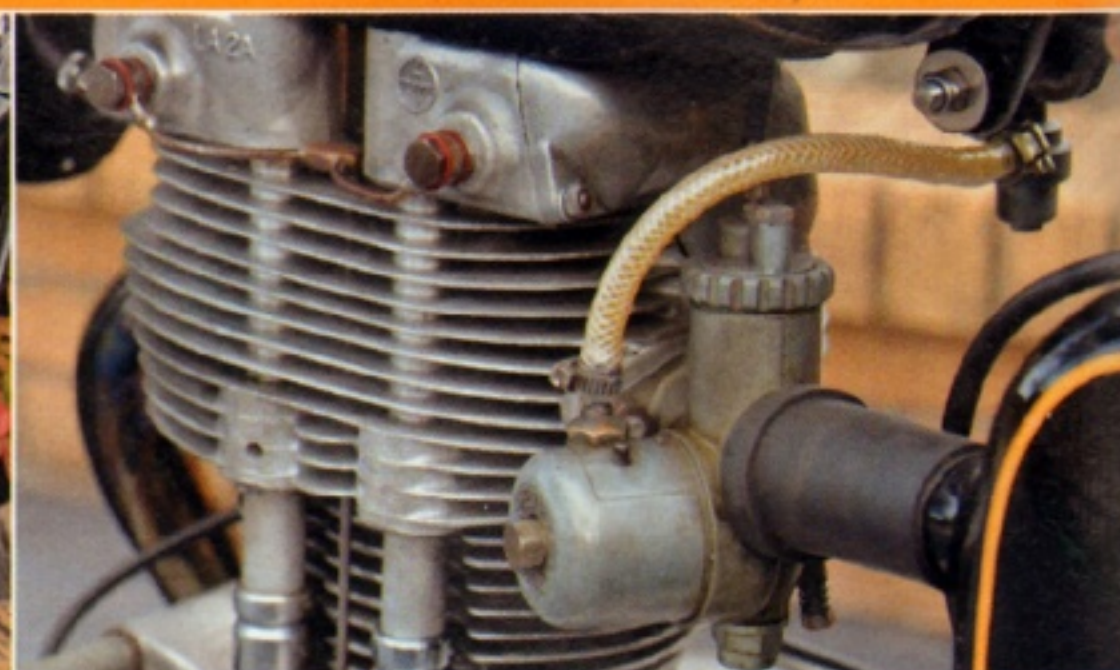
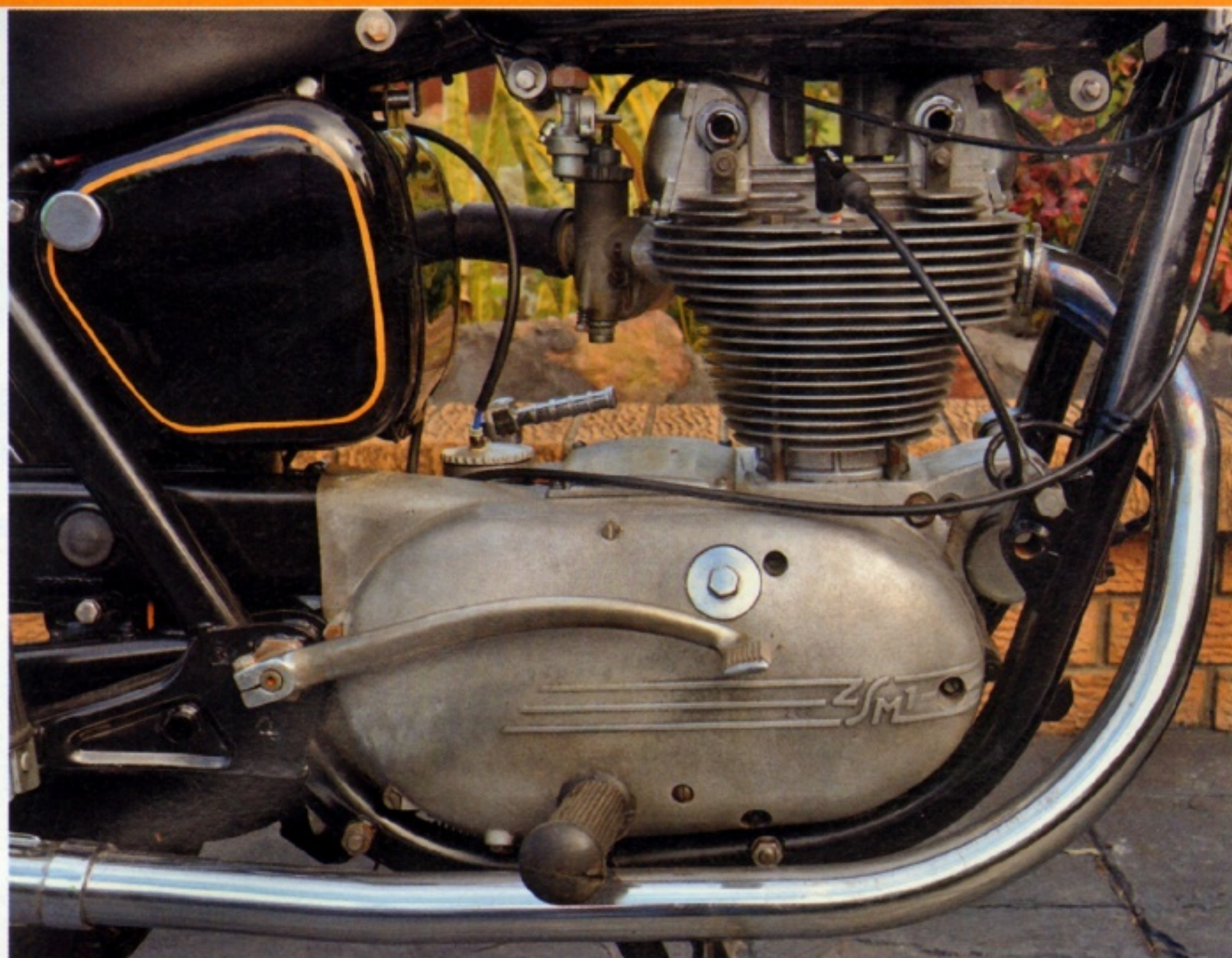
You could easily stroll past a Junak and be forgiven for dismissing it as a BSA, or a Triumph, or an Ariel, or an AJS or Norton, because this is a motorcycle that has borrowed styling features from a number of popular brands. Yet this 1962 Model M10 350cc Junak owned by Michael Okorovik is, upon closer inspection, a very individual motorcycle, one of only four in Australia and the only registered runner, albeit one that most westerners are completely unaware of. That lack of awareness equates to an almost total dearth of information, particularly outside its native Poland, as Michael laments.

SFM JUNAK M10 350

RIGHT AND BELOW Michael's
M10 Junak as received.
BELOW RIGHT Everything you
need to know is in here
- in Polish!

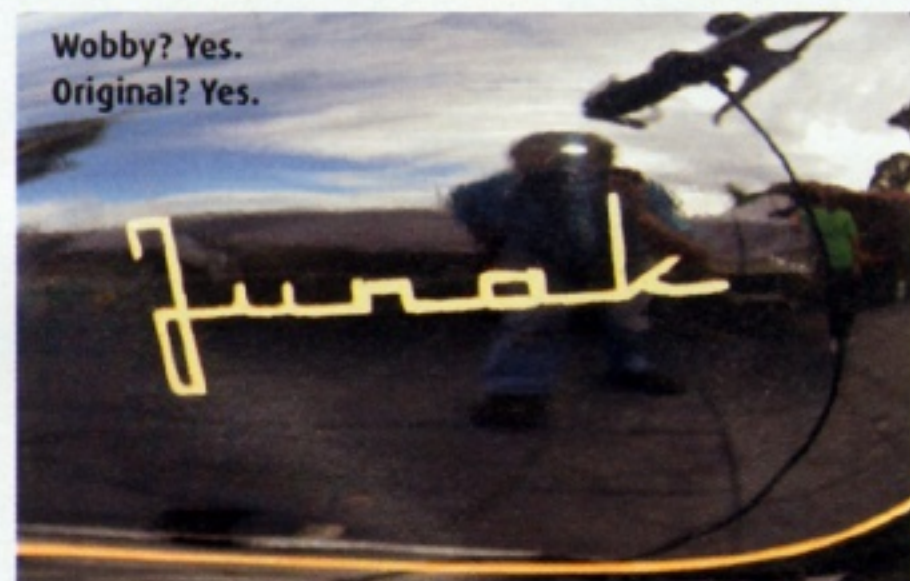


SFM JUNAK M10 350



TOP LEFT Shades of many engine designs are obvious. ABOVE LEFT Magneto sits out front and gets waterlogged. ABOVE CENTRE Chain oiler is built into the crankcase. ABOVE RIGHT Generator hides under here. TOP RIGHT Polish-made Pegaz carburetor. CENTRE RIGHT Rocker spindles are eccentrically adjusted. ABOVE CENTRE RIGHT A seat built for long distance comfort. RIGHT Perfect for carrying a 20kg bag of potatoes. LEFT "Dosta si z drogi!" ("Get out of the way" in Polish).

"When you Google say, 'Honda CB750', you get half a million results. When you do the same for Junak it asks, 'Did you mean Junk?' The situation is improving, but there's still not much information on the web."



Wobby? Yes.
Original? Yes.

To dive back into history, the 350cc Junak was the only four-stroke motorcycle produced in Poland between World War II and the 1989 revolution which began in Poland and led to the fall of communism in Eastern Europe. Junak was the brand name (meaning 'brave man') of SFM, which itself stood for Szczecin Factory Motorcycle. Szczecin is the Polish city near the Baltic Sea where the motorcycles were produced, or at least assembled; the parts coming from numerous suppliers in the eastern bloc. The engines were made in Lodz.

The original factory was established way back in 1858 by Bernhard Stoewer in what was then part of Germany, to manufacture sewing machines, machine tools, and later bicycles and typewriters. Around the turn of the century, Bernhard's sons turned to the

manufacture of automobiles – only the third car production plant established in Europe. It later built buses before being turned over to military production for the Second World War. Under the post-war communist regime, the plant made tractors, beds, trailers, generators, and eventually...motorcycles.

The Junak M07 was designed around 1952 by a team of engineers basing their thinking on the pre-war Sokol – a Harley-style 995cc V-twin, along with 500 and 600cc singles, that was available in military or civilian trim and was designed by the engineer Tadeusz Rudawski. This man was apparently well respected in his field and his teachings heavily influenced the thinking behind the post-war Junak. The first Junak – the M07 – went into production in 1956 and was later refined into the M10, the model featured here. The M07 used lighter style mudguards, conventional steel spindle hubs with bolted-on brake drums and a Lucas-style headlamp. Utilizing the same frame and unit-construction engine, the model was refined into the M10 for the last six of its nine years of production, ending in 1965.

"People have criticized the pin striping and the way the name is painted on the tank, but this was always done by hand and never perfect – that's the way they were."

SFM JUNAK M10 350



TOP Here's looking at you, kid.
 ABOVE Now where have we seen that nacelle before?
 RIGHT Full width hubs are very BSA-like.
 FAR RIGHT Muffler pre-dates the Honda CB500 concept.

The product was basically quite OK, but the major impediment to sales was the price. At a time when the average wage was 1500 Polish Zloty per month, the Junak cost 23,000 Zloty, or 15 months' wages. The pricing was also a serious problem when it came to export sales. Small numbers of the Junak were sold to Eastern European countries such as Hungary, Bulgaria and especially Russia, and to Finland, Norway, Turkey, Venezuela, Mongolia and a few to UK. With its communist links, Cuba was a ready market and a handful went to USA and to parts of Africa. The US models, reportedly just a single batch of 21 machines, were optioned-up with saddle bags, higher handlebars and other frills.

Polish police forces used Junaks modified to take special equipment, and the factory also built two 'trike' versions. The first of these used the rear half of the motorcycle with a front-mounted two-wheeled box, but this failed to get past the prototype stage. The other, marketed as the B20 with the rear section of the bike removed and the trailer section behind, went in to production and

about 25,000 were produced for commercial and agricultural use. Many of the solos were fitted with sidecars of various styles.

The Junak also found its way into competition with a model called M07-C for trials and motocross, and in 1959 the factory supported an effort by F. Stachewicz for a propaganda effort using a streamlined and slightly tuned version of the M10. On a section of closed public road, Mr Stachewicz achieved a two-way average of 149.3 km/h - shy of the hoped-for 160 km/h mark but not bad all the same. The record attempt was filmed by the news-reel organization PKF (Poland Film Chronicle) and widely shown in cinemas.

Michael's 1962 Model M10 was purchased about three years ago from a chap who had a pair of them - the other one, a non-runner, went to the National Motorcycle Museum at Nabyac, NSW. Although his example was substantially complete and running, Michael decided upon a full rebuild. The M10 was dismantled and the frame powder coated, and the tinware enameled black with gold lines. "People >

1962 SFM Junak M10
Specifications

ENGINE	Single-cylinder OHV
BORE X STROKE	75mm x 79mm
CAPACITY	349ccm
COMP. RATIO	7.0:1
MAX POWER	19 hp at 6,000 rpm
LUBRICATION	Dry-sump pressure
ELECTRICS	Magneto ignition 6V lighting system 14Ah battery 45W dynamo
TRANSMISSION	Multi-plate clutch with cork inserts working in an oil bath Four-speed constant-mesh gearbox Gearbox ratios: 1st gear - 3.04 to 1, 2nd gear - 1.97 to 1, 3rd gear - 1.294

SFM JUNAK M10 350



Michael on his Junak at the 2013 Macquarie Towns Show in Windsor, NSW.



Michael's Junak shares its bedroom with an East German Simpson scooter.

have criticized the pin striping and the way the name is painted on the tank, but this was always done by hand and never perfect – that's the way they were. The only non-original parts are the petrol taps, which are Honda. I rebuilt the horn myself, I was rather proud of that!"

There were a few parts to source, such as the tail-light and muffler, and these came from Poland, along with a supposedly reconditioned head. "When I received the head it was still covered in grime and was worn out, so I had the original head reconditioned locally at Liverpool. They fitted valve guides from a car and I got a new barrel and piston from Poland. I have not split the crankcases – everything seemed fine so I just left it the way it was." The wiring harness was sourced from Germany and a new muffler came from Poland. "There were three types of mufflers listed, and they just fitted whatever was available at the time. Mine is the fluted type, but there were also longer tapered types, which could be either chrome plated or painted black."



Prototype of the M14 Junak Iskera – the last Junak built.

"The generator is 6 volt, and negative to earth, which took me a while to work out. I have seen some bikes in Poland that have been converted to 12 volts, but they use external belts and brackets and look horrible. The generator sits under a cover in the top of the crankcases. If the seals leak it can get full of oil and stops working."

Michael has managed to simplify the starting procedure so that the engine commences within a couple of kicks and once it has belched out the residual crankcase oil, settles down to a slow, regular tick over. But it wasn't always so. "This is a very unforgiving motorcycle. If it kicks back, it hurts! On the freeway you can reach 120 km/h, but the ride is unbearable, it vibrates like crazy. Junak means 'brave man' and you need to be brave to ride it!"

There are other foibles, as he explains. "The rear chain is lubricated by a pressurized oiler in the rear of the crankcases. However this can get blocked so then pressure builds up inside and results in oil leaks. I have fitted an extra hose to stop that happening. The magneto sticks out the front and cops water thrown up from the front wheel. For this reason riders used to wrap the magneto in a plastic bag."

The M10 received a styling makeover from the original M07, with more deeply valanced mudguards, and very BSA-like full width alloy hubs. The standard headlight was replaced with an obviously Triumph-influenced nacelle, and the rear chain guard was extended to cover both top and bottom runs.

Despite its copycat nature, the engine has some very interesting features. Valve clearance is by eccentric spindle, the same as a 7R AJS, while the gearbox internals can be removed – cassette style – without splitting the crankcases. The carburetor breathes through an oil trough located in the left side cover – air simply bubbles through the liquid, removing many of the impurities before it reaches the engine. The engine itself is 'mirror image' of the usual British style, with the pushrod tunnels running up the left side through the alloy barrel and into the head. The concentric-type carburetor is a Polish Pegaz (Pegasus, as in flying horse), although on earlier models, Spanish-made 29 Type Amals with separate bowls were fitted.

By the time the plug was pulled on the 350 Junak, 91,400 had been built. The factory experimented with a new design – the very futuristic looking M14 "Iskera" – but it never went into production and the plant reverted to making car sub assemblies. Today, Junak exists as an importer of re-badged Korean Hyosung models. "There are very strict laws now, meaning you can't take the old Polish-built bikes out of Poland" says Michael, "so the bikes that exist in other countries have become quite valuable. But, I guess they were always expensive."

Fully road registered and now a reliable starter and runner, Michael's Junak is to be seen at various shows and rallies in Sydney, where it always stops onlookers in their tracks. An Ariel, a Norton, a BSA? No it's a Junak – a brave man's motorcycle. ■



A Junak B20 fitted with a box trailer.



An M07 Junak with sidecar.