



The public had the option of buying sprung HT 350s and 500s from 1956 to 1959 when Selly Oak concentrated on making two-strokes.

Ironically that proved to be Ariel's finest year with Sammy Miller winning almost all the major trials. Sam went on to turn his bike, GOV 132, into the most successful post-war competition Ariel.

Norton never made a trials machine with rear suspension. Their 1947 model, a dismal lash-up with a pre-war frame and telescopic forks, was dropped for 1948. The 500T appeared in 1949 with the same 490cc Model 18 engine contained within the aging 16H frame. Shortening the seat and chain stays and steepening the steering angle reduced the wheelbase to a manageable 53in.

That was the extent of chassis development, but the 500T steered and handled well. It was discontinued when the Model 18 died at the end of 1954.

Which trials irons were the best? All had their champions, though Douglas and Panther fans were few and far between. The

Thanks but no thanks. Billy Nick (centre) shows off his lightweight A7 to BSA competition manager Bert Perrigo (left) and sales director Stan Digby



Trials ace Sammy Miller developed his 500cc HT into the most successful Ariel in post-war competition. Just the sort of thing Selly Oak should have made

Bob Manns (left) was one of the most reliable Trophy teamsters in the ISDT. AMC director Donald Heather checks his Matchless at the Plumstead factory

BSAs developed by Bill Nicholson had superb engines. Bikes from AMC had sharper steering and were better on the nadgery. The heavy 500T Norton was excellent on mud or tarmac as were the

springer Enfields. But I'd settle for a Triumph Trophy. With the generator engine or the later die cast head and barrel, the Triumph was a challenge on a twisty section but a great road machine. **(B)**

