

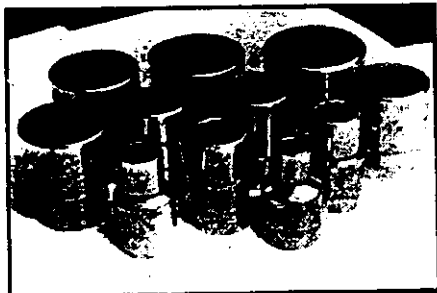
Left: "Before" — as found with wrong oil tank, exhaust and odd gussets welded on the frame. But all the essentials are there, just waiting for restoration.

WHAT may seem to be totally obvious, the restoration of a classic British pre-65 trials or scrambles machine ready for use in competition starts in the workshop!

Silly as it may seem that is the one area of restoration that often eludes the tyro but I have never seen a successful restoration project emerge from a workshop that could be categorised as 'scruffy'. So, first things first, start on your work area and restore that before you introduce the bike into the equation.

My own preference is for a clean, well-lit and well-organised area for two reasons. Firstly a lot of the restoration work involves paint surfaces and mechanical reassembly work that demands totally clean working conditions and, secondly, the machine may well sit in the work area in bits for long periods whilst you track down that elusive spare — and in untidy conditions all the bits have a tendency to damage or lose themselves . . .

I always clean my machines thoroughly before I ever take them near the workshop and my standard procedure is to



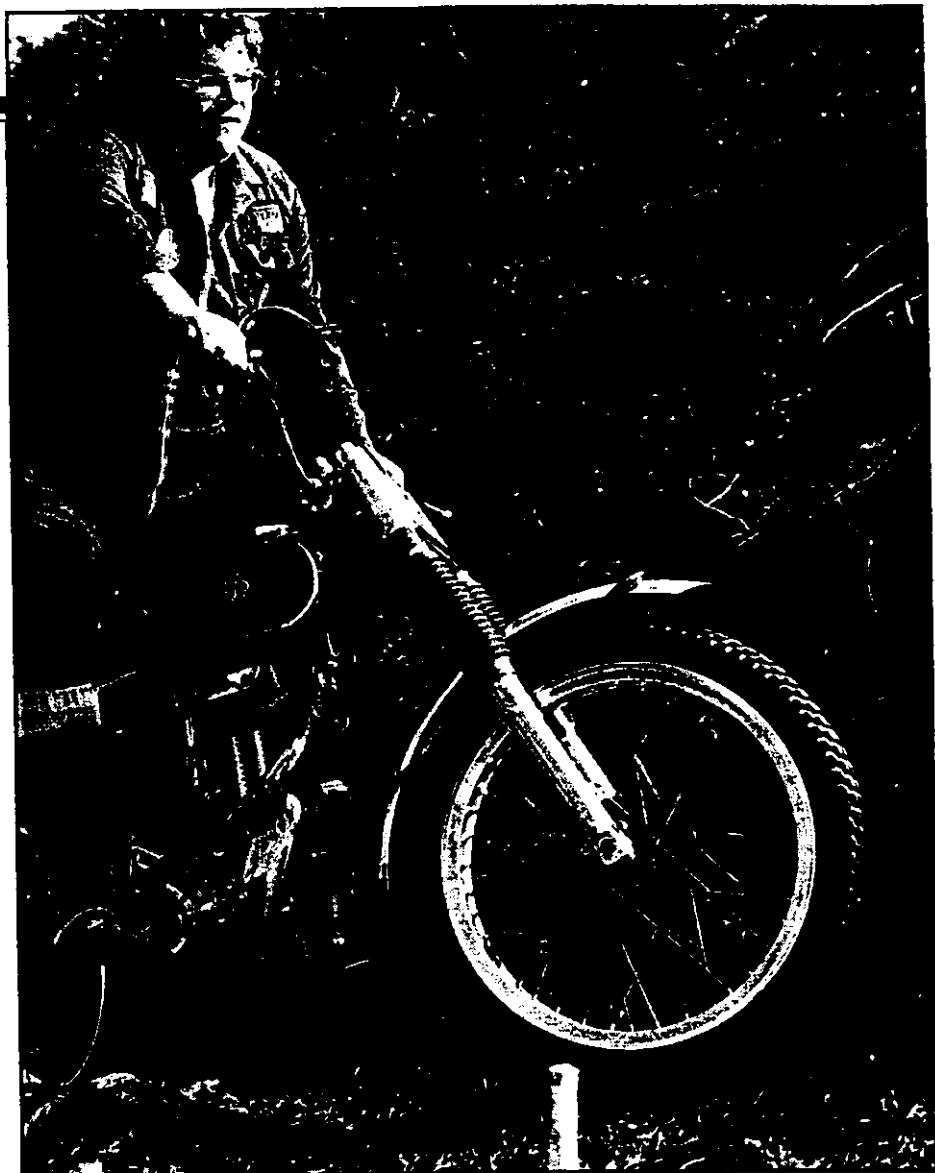
Essential tools. You start down the restoration road when you mash your last nut . . .

thoroughly spray with Gunk and to poke a stiff paint brush into all the crevices. Then it's a thorough cleaning with the hose pipe, wiping off excess water and finishing with a spray of Contact 'Duck Oil', which chases off the water, lubricates the working surfaces and leaves a protective film on all the alloy, etc.

That way I also keep my tools clean — there is nothing more frustrating than to

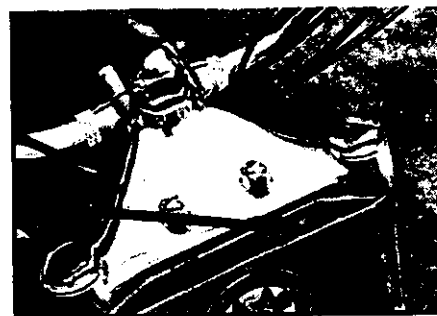
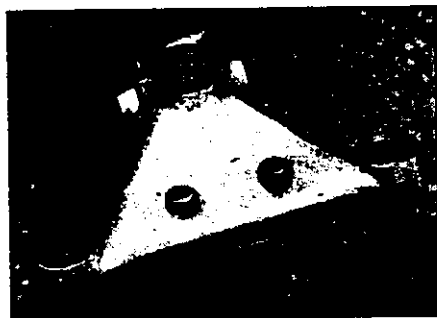
Right: The Ajay today. Alloy refinished by taking out the major dints with emery cloth, back to flat, but scratched, alloy. Take out the scratches with 420 grit wet or dry paper followed by 600 grit used wet. Finish with ordinary wire wool from the local hardware shop and then polish with Solvol Autosol — the "only" alloy polish!

The nuts filed back to bare metal and carefully hand polished before rechroming. Note that rechroming adds a thin protective film to the surface — it should look like chrome before you hand it to the chromer if you want a superb finish.



Above: On any Sunday afternoon — using the bike in a classic trial. There are events throughout the country on every weekend except Remembrance Sunday.

Left: One of my Ajays as I bought it, alloy pitted and discoloured, fork top nuts rusted and the wrong fork crown nut for the year.



scratch a freshly rechromed nut with some grit in your spanner the first time you tighten it . . .

Equally, I always use the correct size spanner for the job. My preference is for a selection of Whitworth square drive sockets, including the large sizes for fork top, rear axle and clutch centre nuts. I also have a full selection of combination spanners and ring spanners for those awkward to reach nuts and bolts.

A full selection of screwdrivers are high on my list, with blades that correctly fit every type of screw on the bike. You start down the road to becoming a restorer when you mangle your last nut or screw.

Other than well-fitting, good quality, standard workshop tools, the other equipment needed is really a personal question

