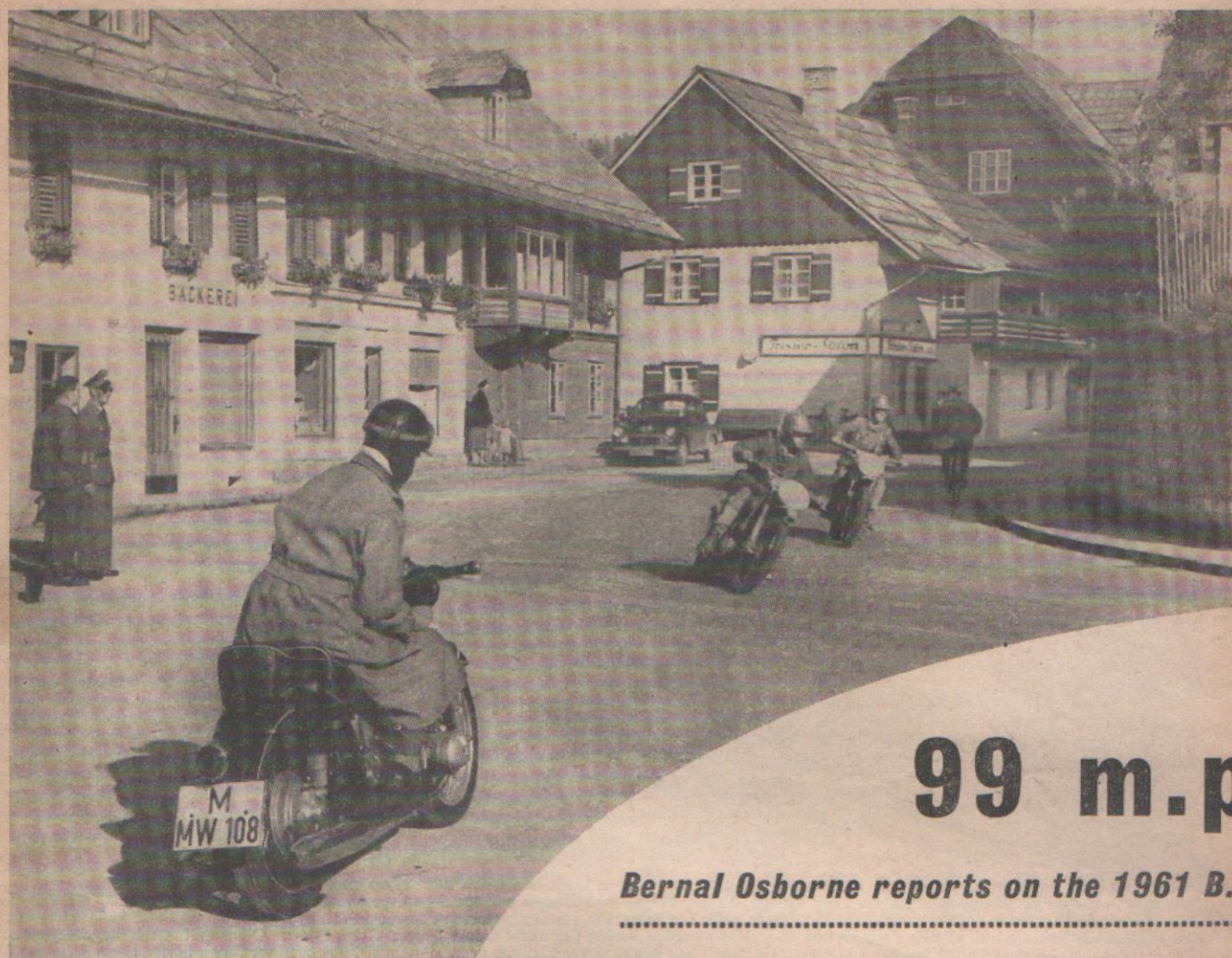




99 m.p.h.

Bernal Osborne reports on the 1961 B.M.W.

PIONEERS in the early 'twenties of the transverse h.o. twin with shaft drive, the German B.M.W. concern started a classic design fashion to which they have remained faithful ever since. Allied to it has been a tradition of building to high engineering standards, rather than to a price. For connoisseurs the name ranks with that of Rolls-Royce, and possession of one of the models made by the Bayerische Motoren Werke A.G. is the ultimate ambition of many discerning riders.

Temporary possession, of course, is the next best thing. Consequently when the opportunity arose recently of using a Frankfurt Show sample of the latest R50S 500 c.c. sports twin as transport while reporting the International Six Days Trial, our original choice of vehicle for the outward journey—photographer Alf Long's lively Morris 1000—seemed suddenly all too slow a means of getting to Munich!

They are excellent hosts at the B.M.W. factory and there was a pleasantly social atmosphere about the business of taking over the model from Herr Dietrich, of Export Sales, inspecting the showroom which contains one of the B.M.W. world speed record holders and, finally, trying out the new-for-'61 R50S.

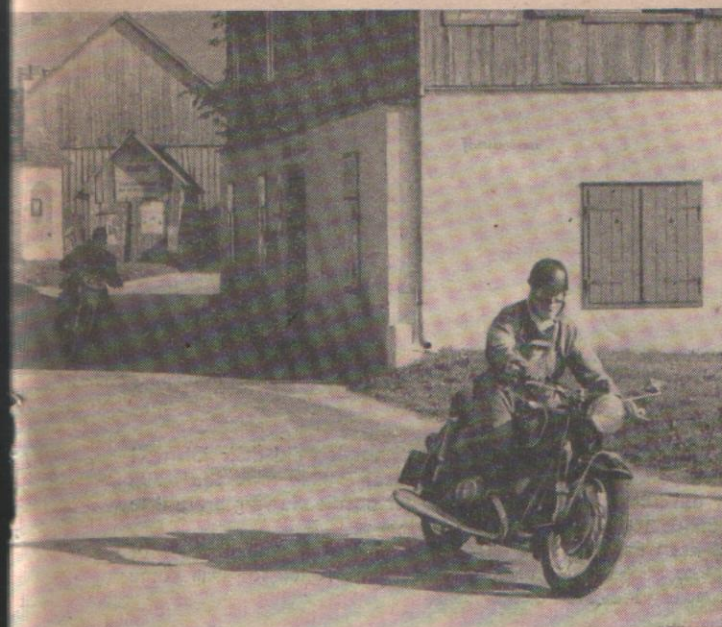
A part of this last process, incidentally, was learning to work the "winkers" now fitted as standard equipment to anticipate the coming law which will make these fittings compulsory for German two-wheelers. Built into the handlebar ends, they are operated by an up-and-down switch. One could have wished for a switch working from left to right to simplify the initial task of a foreign novice who, when he left the factory

gate, had to remember also to keep to the right and operate gear and brake pedals quite differently located from those on his own machine at home. There was quite a little wild flashing not justified by subsequent direction-changes, but the Munich police are very tolerant at September's end—the eye of their famous *Oktoberfest*.

The 17-litre (3½-gal.) petrol tank had been filled to the brim at the works, with the warning that the three-way petrol tap would need to go to "reserve" when about 12 litres had been used. Incidentally, full marks go to the generous size of the filler aperture which makes it possible to see right down to the base of the tank and to fill up without fuel splashing.

Some 150 miles separate Munich and Bad Aussee, the 1960 I.S.D.T. centre, of which distance about two-thirds is *autobahn*. The remainder consists of slow, winding, by-roads and a 4,000-ft. mountain pass, the Potschenhöhe, rebuilt last year as a kind of Glencoe road, and now a well-graded highway replacing the old one-in-four track.

From the moment when the throttle was given its first sharp twist after I had turned onto the *autobahn*, there was no doubt about the superior acceleration and speed of the R50S. (The compression ratio, by the way, is 9.2:1 compared with the 6.8:1 of the R50.) The factory's speed claims at once seemed to be reasonable—a 145 k.p.h. (91 m.p.h.) maximum being obtainable, they said, with the rider *sitzend*. If the rider were *legend*, then the pace could be whipped up to 160 k.p.h. (99½ m.p.h.).



the I.S.D.T. with the 99-m.p.h. grandstand: (left) watching form at Mitterndorf and (right) on the road between checks, with a competitor following. (Right) Taking over: Herr Dietrich, of B.M.W., explains points.

—LIEGEND

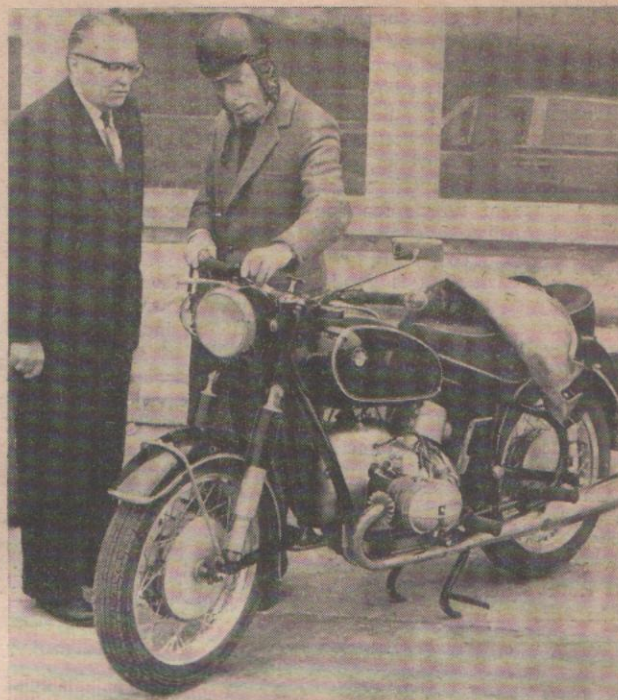
"500" which he used to cover the I.S.D.T.

Certainly, in the 18 miles before the first *autobahn* fuel and rest point at Holzkirchen, the needle of the 200-k.p.h. speedometer was easily swung to the 145 mark. And this was no flash attainment; indeed, as the ride progressed it became an exhilarating cruising speed—other traffic permitting and making allowance, too, for rear-brake performance in emergency, for the action was spongy and retardation slow compared with that produced by the twin-leading-shoe front brake.

The tall pines of Königsforst were blurred green walls beside the *autobahn* verge. The dreamy, warm breeze floating over the Alps from Italy became a howling gale. Progress was signified by the flash-past of big blue-and-white signs showing turn-off points to neighbouring townships—Bad Tolz, Tegernsee, Rosenheim. Soon came Chiemsee, the toy ocean of Bavaria, flecked white where dinghies were planing away northwards; Chiemsee is still an American playground, just as it was when we passed this way to the "International" in Austria eight years ago.

The *autobahn* streaks ahead, ribboning over marshy ground. Here is the fresh smell of water and a chilly blast replaces the warm gale: hundreds of midges thrash at goggles. But let's ease up . . . the needle swings back to 125-120 k.p.h.—which is enough, for none will complain if we confess to an average of no more than 80 m.p.h. all the way to Salzburg.

With no daylight-saving in Austria, September dusk was shrouding Salzkammergut and the pilot bulb was soon in use



for twilight riding and town work. The main beam and dip later provided a combination of long-reaching pencil and flat-spread beam to light the darkening way to St. Gilgen and Bad Ischl. Excellent equipment it was, too. The high-pitched warning note from the horn also was above usual standards, commanding the attention of holiday traffic without being unduly strident.

For the R50S there is no change in the standard B.M.W. "electrics," which consist of a 6v, 60-90w. output D.C. generator carried on the front engine mainshaft with the A.T.D. and contact-breaker mechanism above, driven by the camshaft. There was no need during the trip to adjust this or maintain the battery-lighting side of the circuit.

Built into the headlamp shell with a coil-ignition warning light is a green indicator that lights up when the ignition is "on" to show true neutral; a useful gadget that saves pedal-fumbling for the uninitiated. From the start, note was made of the soft-as-butter bottom-gear engagement. Contrariwise, a debit mark went to the metallic "clash" when changing up. A distinct pause in lever movement while the engine revolutions dropped obviated this trouble, but made it difficult to secure maximum acceleration (0-60 m.p.h. in 9 sec. is the makers' claim).

For *autobahn* use and on fast stretches of main road encountered during the "Six Days," the new hydraulic damper, based on racing Continental practice, was most effective in killing any suspicion of steering wobble. It is controlled by a two-position steering-head knob and can be thrown out of action for town riding, when the steering becomes freer, though still a little on the heavy side. Geometrically good, the whole of this Earles-type front end is massive and heavy in appearance.

Movement of the front and rear suspension, controlled by double hydraulic units, was stiffer than that of most British "500s" and this, coupled with a slightly crouched riding position, caused some fatigue until the rider had accustomed himself to these characteristics. By simple lever action, the rear dampers can be pre-loaded for sidecar or pillion work.

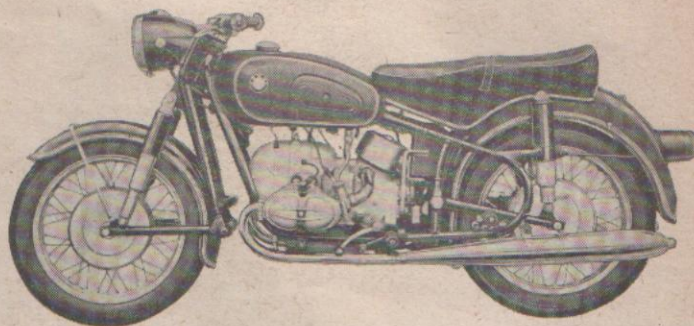
After exactly 190 miles the main fuel supply ran out and replenishment, again to the brim, with BV-Aral showed that

12 litres had been consumed—a rate equal to 71.9 m.p.g. overall on territory which included high-speed work, nadgery in the lanes and stop-and-start trips to the Press office and riders' "camps" in Bad Aussee.

Running on this popular German fuel (about 96-98 octane) the machine was an excellent starter; it was happy instantly to justify the 90-m.p.h. claim, yet would throttle down in top gear to less than 25 m.p.h. without snatch in the transmission. There was a trace of torque reaction when pulling away and also on the immediate over-run when snapping the throttle shut at speed.

Weight distribution is good, with a very favourable centre of gravity so that, short of touching ground with one of the rocker covers (which is exceedingly difficult, incidentally), the model could be heeled well over to take at speed average road bends with normal camber. But, regardless of its disposition, the weight is there; it totals 441 lb., which is above average for a British "500," and our own manufacturers could teach the Münchener something about roll-on centre stands which do not require a Teuton giant's strength to operate.

On the 150-mile return run there was interesting company in the person of another Press scribe on the standard R50 model. By getting tucked well down, this chap was able to clock a steady 90 m.p.h. cruising speed. But, from that point, the R50S, with rider adopting the *legend* position, leapt ahead.



In standard form, the 500 c.c. B.M.W. R50S is rated at 35 b.h.p.

The nine bonus horses of this sports version did their job well and the additional usable r.p.m.—near 2,000—took the R50S 'way out ahead, with the speedometer needle clawing around to the magic 160 k.p.h. notch.

Its deep exhaust note hardly disturbing the golden peace of that late September morning, the B.M.W. rolled towards home at a steady indicated "ton."

What's On

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15

Gloucester and Cotswold. Matthews Trophy Trial. Air Balloon Inn, Birdlip, Glos. 1.30 p.m. (Western Centre).

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16

Bray. Callaghan Cup Scramble. Fassaroe, Dargle Road, Bray, Eire, 2.45 p.m. (M.C.U.I.).

Chester. Deva Cup Trial. Kay's Garage, Gwersyllt, near Wrexham, on Mold road (A541), 11 a.m. (Cheshire Centre).

Harrogate. Mackay Trophy Main Road Trial. Adelphi Hotel, Cold Bath Road, Harrogate, 2 p.m. (Club).

Hillsborough. Trial. Reservoir Inn, Haychatters, Low Bradford, Sheffield, 10.30 a.m. (Yorkshire Centre).

Invicta. Scramble. Geddinge Farm, Wootton, near Canterbury, 2 p.m. (South Eastern Centre).

Llangollen. Sun Cup Trial. Smithy Service Station, Whitehurst Gate, Pentre, near Wrexham, 11 a.m. (Cheshire Centre).

Midland Centre. Alec Ross Trophy Trial and Centre Team Trial. White Hart, Newbold-on-Stour, on Stafford-Shipston road, 10 a.m. (Midland Centre).

Portsmouth. Kaj Bornebusch Trophy Scramble. Grandfathers Bottom, Butser Hill, Hants, noon (Southern Centre).

South Liverpool. Scramble. Rivacre Valley, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, 12.30 p.m. (Cheshire Centre).

Stevenston. Ayrshire Trophy Trial. Mitchells Garage, Dalry, 11 a.m. (S.A.-C.U.).

Sunbeam. Two-Stroke Trial. Cross in Hand Hotel, Cross in Hand, Heathfield, Sussex, 10.30 a.m. (South Eastern Centre).

Tiverton. Hookway Trophy Trial. Roundhouse, Exebridge, Somerset, 1 p.m. (South Western Centre).

Tweed Valley. Trial. Cocklaw Burn, Scremerston, 2 miles south of Berwick-upon-Tweed, 11 a.m. (North Eastern Centre).

Westmorland. Rutherford Trophy Trial. Danes Café, Stoneley, 4 miles north of Kendal, on Windermere road, 10.30 a.m. (Northern Centre).

Worcester. Robin Loxley Memorial Trial. Wobbly Wheel Inn, Alfrick Pound, 5 miles from Worcester, 10.30 a.m. (Western Centre).

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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22

Portsmouth Racing. Night Navigation Safety Rally. "George," Portsdown Hill, 7.45 p.m. (Club).

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23

East Grinstead. Scramble. Dry Hill Farm, Dormansland, near East Grinstead, Sussex, noon (South Eastern Centre).

Leavesden. President's Cup Trial. Dell Café, near Watford, on St. Albans road (A405), 10.30 a.m. (South Midland Centre).

Offer Vale. President's Trophy Trial. Hare and Hounds Inn, 4 miles from Sidmouth, on Honiton road (A375), 11.30 a.m. (Regional Restricted).

Somerton. Scramble. Stofford, near Yeovil, 2 p.m. (South Western Centre).

Southampton. Scramble. Old Park Farm, Beaulieu, Hants, 12.30 p.m. (Southern Centre).

Twickenham. Williams Rose Bowl Trial. W.D. Land, Weavers Down, Hants, 11 a.m. (South Eastern Centre).

Waterloo. Chairman's Challenge Cup Trial. "Red Lion," Newburgh, Parbold, near Wigan, 11 a.m. (Restricted).

SOCIAL FIXTURES

FRI., OCT. 14: Ariel Club Night. Hare and Hound Hotel, 7.45 p.m. Ilkeston: Film Show. "Three Horse Shoes." Derby Road, Ilkeston, 8 p.m. London: Shell Film Show. H.Q., 7.30 p.m. Vincent H.R.D. (South London): Talk, Phil Irving, Artillery Hall, Bromley Road, Catford, 8 p.m.

SAT., OCT. 15: Portsmouth Racing: Working party. Scramble course, 2 p.m.

SUN., OCT. 16: Ariel (Liverpool): Chester Zoo. Birkenhead Tunnel Entrance, 1.30 p.m. Birkenhead Pegasus: Mystery Run. Haymarket Car Park, 10 a.m. Bradford Central Sidecar: Burton Leonard. Packard Garage, 10.30 a.m. Mid Bucks: Support Scramble. Brill, 12.30 p.m. Surrey District Sidecar: Presidents Cup Road Trial. Banstead Station, 9 a.m. Triumph (Ilford): Clacton. Bob's Café, Gallows Corner, 10 a.m.

TUES., OCT. 18: Somerton: Bingo. "Red Lion," 8 p.m. Vincent H.R.D. (Birmingham): Police Road Safety Quiz. "Hen and Chicken." Causeway Green, Langley, 8 p.m. (North London): Tuning by Ray Petty. "George IV," Holmes Road, Kentish Town, 8 p.m.

WED., OCT. 19: Birkenhead Pegasus: Short Night Rally. Oxtown Conservative Club, Village Road, 7.30 p.m. London Douglas: Club Night. H.Q., 8 p.m. Mid Bucks: Talk on I.S.D.T. by Eric Chilton. "Derby Arms." St. Mary's Square, Aylesbury, 7.30 p.m. Triumph (Ilford): Film Show. Church Hall, Mossford Green (opp. "Chequers"), Barking, 7.30 p.m.

THU., OCT. 20: Maidstone Aces: "Kings Arms," Boxley, 7.30 p.m. Yeo Vale: Committee Night. H.Q., 8 p.m.

PRESS DAY

FIXTURES intended for our *What's On* feature concerning Friday, October 28, to Thursday, November 3, inclusive, must be received in this office not later than first post on Wednesday, October 19. Every effort is made to ensure accuracy in this feature, but no responsibility can be accepted for errors.

IMPORTANT EVENTS

Oct.	15	Moran Cup Trial, Eire.
Oct.	16	Senora del Pilar Road Races Zaragoza, Spain.
Nov.	5-6	Novemberkasan Trial, Sweden.
Nov.	6	Perce Simon Trial, Hants.
Nov.	12	Scott Trial, Yorks.
Nov.	12-19	Motorcycle Show, Earls Court.
Nov.	20	Mitcham Vase Trial.
Nov.	26	British Experts Trial.
Nov.	27	Saint Cucufa Trial, France; Knut Trophy Trial.
Dec.	3	Irish Experts Trial.
Dec.	4	Man of Kent Trial; Williamson's Nightmare Trial.
Dec.	10	Hoad Trophies Trial.
Dec.	11	Northern Experts Trial.
Dec.	18	Southern Experts Trial.
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Jan.	1	Three Musketeers Trial.
Jan.	6-7	Exeter Trial.
Jan.	8	Vic Brittain Trophy Trial.
Jan.	14	St. David's Trial.

Pathfinders and Derby. Wingfield Trophy Scramble. Clifton, near Ashbourne, Derbyshire, noon (Regional Restricted).

Redditch. Terry Cups Trial. The Gate Inn, Honeybourne, Worcs, on Bidford-on-Avon-Broadway road, 10 a.m. (Midland Centre).

Rochester. Chatham. Williams Trophy Trial. Bell Inn, Bredhurst, near Gillingham, 10.30 a.m. (South Eastern Centre).

Runcorn. Novice Trial. Dunham Hill Service Station, Helsby, 11 a.m. (Cheshire Centre).

Shepton Mallet. Autumn Cup Trial. Mendip Service Station, Gurney Slade (A37), 10.30 a.m. (Club).