

Performance Talk

Winter Maintenance Tip

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Happy New Year; so here we are in a gas crunch again, and there are more and more of you digging out those old and neglected motorcycles, trying to do your part in saving gas and money. The biggest problems with the old motorcycles will be the bad gasoline, flat tires and the dead battery.

First thing is to get the battery disconnected (negative cable first) and on a trickle charger at a low, slow rate of charge. Second, pull the gas line of the carb(s) and drain all that bad gas out of the gas tank. Remove the carburetor(s) so you can clean them and the air cleaner. Be sure to use an aerosol can of carb cleaner and blow out all the jets and air passages. You may need to remove the jets and clean them with a welding tip cleaner available at any local hardware store. Dry everything with a blower and reinstall. If the gas line is dry, cracked or hard and brittle, replace it using a new clamp. Also replace the air cleaner if it is not serviceable.

If there is any cracking on the sidewall, replace the tire. Check the tread depth using a penny. Stick the penny in the tread groove. If the top of the tire tread doesn't hit the president's head (approximately 3/32nds of an inch) replace the tire. If the tire looks good but is flat, air it up and look for leaks with soapy water. Any leaks will cause bubbles. You might also want to tighten the valve stems, or maybe replace the inner tube.

OK – you have taken care of your tires, cleaned the fuel lines, cleaned the carb(s), checked your battery and installed a new air cleaner. Now you can put new gasoline in the tank, hook up the charged battery (positive cable first) start it up and go for a ride.

If any of this scares the heck out of you, don't hesitate to call a shop to do this for you. There really are still a few shops around that will work on the forgotten motorcycles and help you get back on two wheels again. Good Luck, and ride safe.



Big Steve

Stop in and tell `em Del Sent ya