

IN MY CAR

By Ben Lowry

Ben Preston

President, Students' Union, Queen's University, Belfast

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST CAR?

A ROVER 214i was my first — well, actually, it was my mum's, but we didn't argue too much over ownership. It was a fine car with a surprisingly racy k-series engine, great road handling and plenty of happy memories.

YOUR CURRENT CAR?

I am currently driving a 2001 VW Polo, but it is quite boring.



I would frequently use the car if I am travelling to the Republic for committee meetings of the Union of Students in Ireland.

Then there was the legend of the Union minibus. It was hired out by clubs and societies, and was known to turn up on beaches in Donegal, lost in Dublin and generally wrecked round the place. It has since been decommissioned.

I'm into my second year as

“ According to the internet my dream car is the Batmobile, but I would also love a BMW GS1200

Union president and still loving the job. I wanted the post because I felt I could make a difference in the Students' Union and it looked like a good experience. When I am travelling around Belfast, I do my small part for the environment and cycle. I also have two motorbikes, a black Honda Hornet 250 and blue Suzuki SV650. I ride the SV all the time and occasionally take the Hornet out for a spin. Motorbikes run in the family and are definitely one of my passions.

AT WHAT AGE DID YOU LEARN TO DRIVE?

At 16 I was driving a tractor for a farmer in Monaghan, at 18 got the car test in the North when the family moved to Dungannon, and last year I passed my bike test.

WHAT IS YOUR DREAM CAR?

It would have to be the Bugatti Veyron because it's got everything — beauty, performance and exclusivity. Three core

principles for life there, I think! According to the internet, my dream car is the Batmobile, but in my dream garage I would also love to see a BMW GS1200 bike so I could do a Ewan McGregor and ride across the world.

CAN YOU CHANGE A CAR WHEEL?

Yep, and I do all the servicing on my motorbike.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE CAR STORY?

One time I was parked on Portstewart strand enjoying the view and company. When it was time to go for a Morelli's ice cream, I discovered the rear wheels of the Rover had sunk into the sand. I panicked and tried to dig the wheels out, but it was to no avail and I ended up with plenty of sand in my shoes. Eventually, some kind soul spotted my predicament and towed me out.

It goes down as one of my more embarrassing adventures in the car.

ON YOUR BIKE



DAVID NEELY

At last ... a way to stop salt ruining your bike



Chui is wing man for nutty record

NOT content with having set two Guinness world records for solo stoppies, Craig Jones has been at it again.

This time at Donington race circuit he took a passenger, but didn't place him on the pillion seat.

Instead, he got poor Wing Chui positioned on an extension to the front wheel spindle.

Then Craig took his Buell Firebolt up to 120 before applying the front brake and balancing the bike on its front wheel.

The result was a world best distance of 305m.

Afterwards, Craig said: "Wing and I have worked and performed together for several years and you need to have total faith in each other, especially when you have two guys sharing the same motorcycle and performing manoeuvres that test your body and bike to the limit."

We'll take your word for that Craig. Mr Chui is not recorded as having said anything. No wonder.

WILL GLENTORAN OR CLIFTONVILLE HAVE THE FINAL SAY?



Plus...

Analysis, quotes and pictures from the CIS Cup Final at Windsor Park



It was my first new big bike for many years. I was as proud of it as anything, very much enamoured by it, and I could not help visiting my garage on the flimsiest excuse, just to look at it.

Others not interested in motorcycling may find this sad, but this scenario will find a resonance with all bikers. Who among us has not sat on our bikes in the garage with snow deep outside?

However, there was a downside to my ownership of that particular bike. One day near the end of the winter, I opened the garage door and what I saw almost left me in tears.

The engine casings of the bike and other parts were white: salt, the curse of all riders.

I had been out on the bike about three days earlier and, although the roads were wet, I thought all the salt had been washed off them. Besides, the temperature had been well above freezing and there was no need for the gritters. Wrong, wrong wrong.

The gritters had been busy, unknown to me. When I re-



A rust beater, ACF-50

turned home I thought I would leave the bike to the weekend before giving it a good wash. Too late, the salt had done its evil work.

I washed and scrubbed and polished, and spent hours with Autosol, but never succeeded, to my satisfaction, in removing completely all traces of salt.

Over the years I have tried different products to protect my bike during the winter. Some work better than others, but none is really outstanding.

Then I heard of a product, but was unable to source it — until now. A friend of mine rides his bike throughout the year and when you see it in spring you'd swear he'd kept it in the garage over the winter.

What was his secret? He told

me he had access to a product developed for the aircraft industry through his contacts — he's got a helicopter pilot's licence — and he couldn't sing its praises highly enough.

Well, he didn't need to sing its praises, because all I had to do was look at his bike in the spring and there was not a drop of rust on it anywhere.

Then, at this year's international bike show in Birmingham, there it was, the magical stuff — ACF-50. At last, everyone has access to it.

It was designed to protect aircraft from existing and new corrosion and it's approved for ferrous metals and non-ferrous metals. Probably its toughest test was carried out by the US Navy on jets on their aircraft carriers. It's now part of their standard equipment.

But, almost equally importantly, it's also for use on electrical systems and electronic components.

When applied, ACF-50 forms an 'active', ultra thin, clear film that will kill any existing corrosive cells and protect against new corrosion forming.

The advice is that on areas such as switches, or under the

tank and seat, one application will last up to 12 months.

Other more exposed areas will need topping up more regularly.

It's claimed to have the ability to 'chemically neutralise road salt' and water will bead on contact and 'literally bounce off'.

I would normally be wary, being a sceptical old hack, of such claims, but having seen my friend's bike at the end of the winter, I know what ACF-50 can do.

However, to put the matter beyond doubt, another good friend who rides 24/7, 365 days a year — the sort of person who gives a bike dealer a heart attack when he comes to trading in and the dealer looks at the recorded mileage — is going to carry out his separate tests. I'll let you know how he gets on.

The product is also available as corrosion block crease and it has the same properties as ACF-50. It can also be used as an assembly grease.

Hurst BMW Motorrad at Newtownabbey has just taken its first deliveries and a 13oz tin of the spray costs £12.

It will probably be your best buy of the year.