



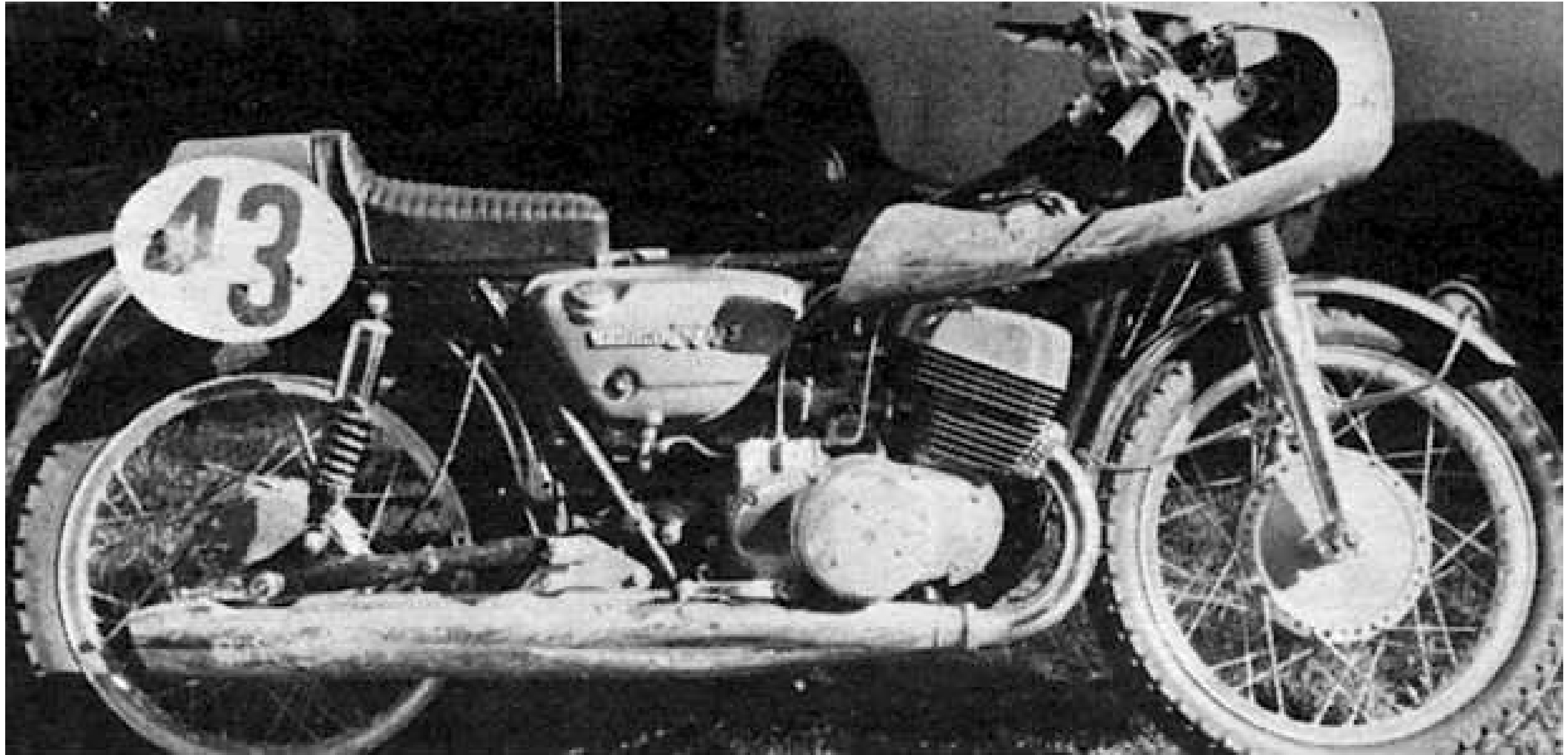
Motorcycle Mechanics on the way to and at the Isle of Man - 1971

Images and text drawn from MCM of August 1971



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All our dreams, hopes and aspirations went crashing down the hill at Paddock Bend with Martyn Ishwood when he was scooped off the track at Brands Hatch by an out-of-control bike. Martyn took a tumble and in spite of a few bruises bounced back to race again that fateful afternoon on the Kent circuit, but not so our Suzuki. It lay sad and twisted in the paddock, looking very much in need of first-aid if not a complete facelift operation.

Broken fairing and shattered screen, bent front forks and wheel, ripped back tyre and graunched mudguard. dented fuel tank, silencer and twisted footrest and gearchange ... say it quick and it doesn't sound much. Look at it and you would believe that only a scrap merchant would be interested in the wreck!

Fortunately, our worst fears were unfounded. With the front wheel pushed backwards almost to the motor, it seemed as if the frame of the Suzuki must be bent. Yet, when we removed the fuel tank to check, it was obvious by the size, thickness and strength of the steering head, that it was only the forks which had taken the punishment.

The motor too, apart from scrapes along one side, which had also bent the footrest and gearchange, was intact. Damage was superficial and with the exception of the shattered Perspex screen, bent wheel rim and twisted fork stanchions, could all be repaired. As anybody will discover if they go to buy replacement items such as chromium-plated mudguards, they are not cheap and when Emie Hall told us the twisted front and rear guards could be straightened without too much trouble, it meant we didn't have to dig so deeply into our race budget.

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He hoped that he could also cut the silencer open, tap out the very bad groove and then "stitch" the silencer with the welding gear. But this didn't prove necessary as we were able to obtain a second-hand silencer. Glass-fibre work. One of the problems in converting the Suzuki for racing was the fitting of the fairing. It took hours to align it correctly, drill all the necessary mounting-point holes and then get the screen to fit.



Therefore, Emie wasn't too pleased at the thought of having to do the job again. We bought a new fairing from Eddie Crooks. but Ernie repaired the old one! It saved a great deal of time and money and although we can't use the words "good as new" because the resin-bonded patches still show on the inside.

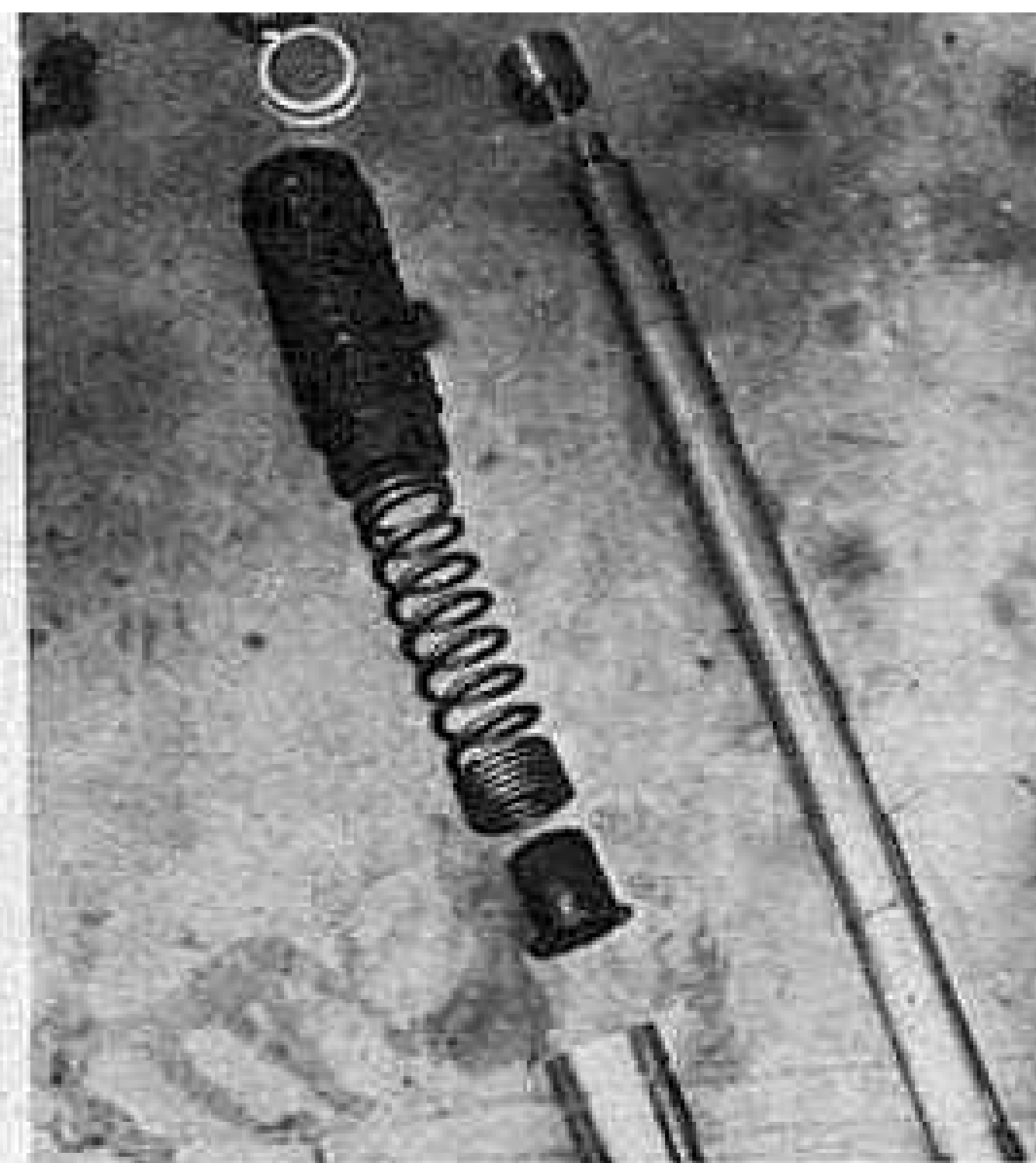
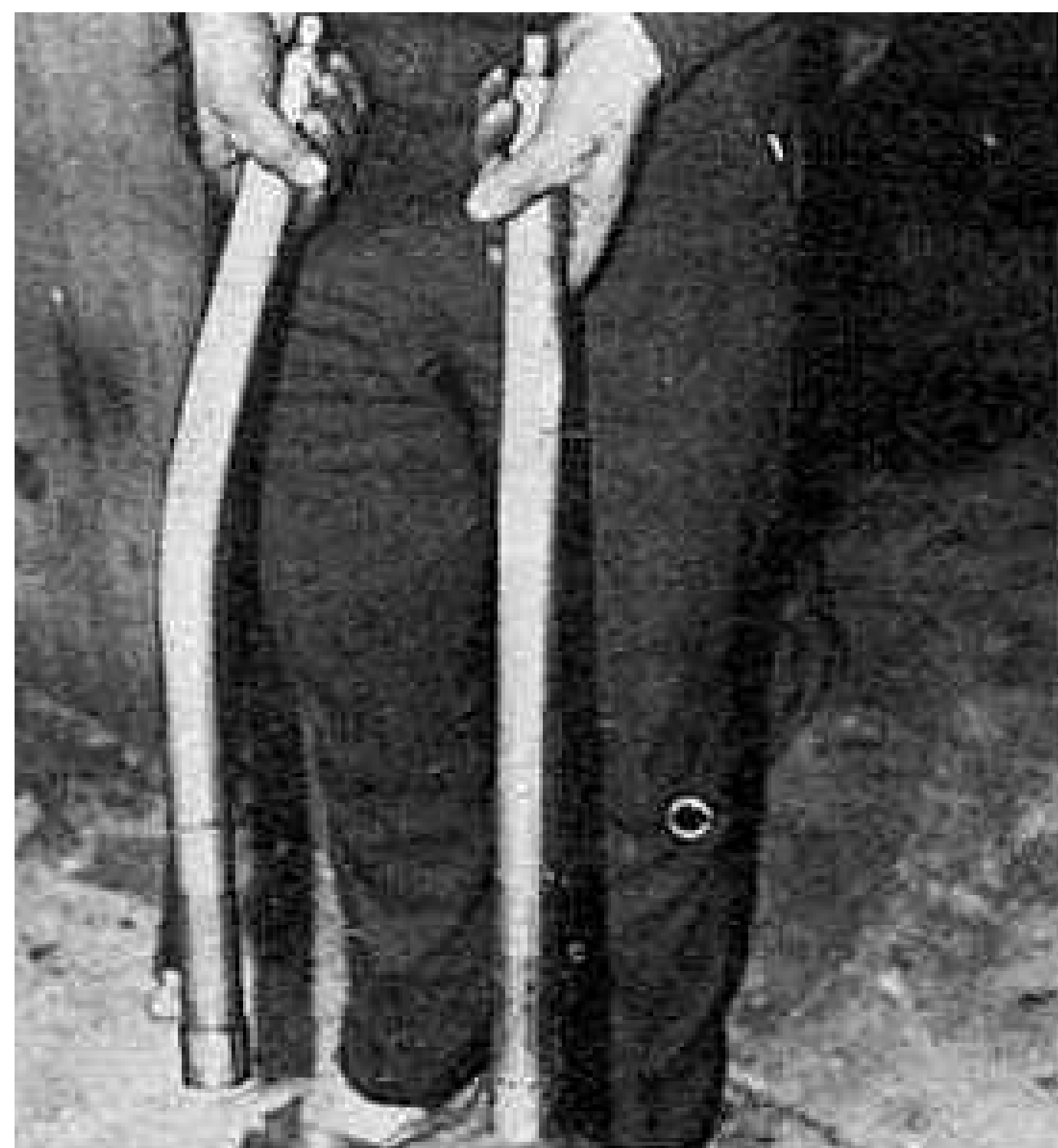
The fairing is now as strong as before and equally as efficient in protecting and streamlining the rider and bike.

Glass-fibre repairs are a doddle providing you follow the instructions properly. In fact, it is possible to make a repair which is almost undetectable. While the glass-fibre repair was setting, Emie got to work stripping the rest of the damaged components. After removing the front wheel and sending it off to the wheel-builders, it's really the only way for a good repair, the fork legs were dropped out of the steering head crowns.



There is no way of bending fork stanchions straight and the only answer was renewal. However, there are some dealers who offer a fork-straightening service which may be used if the stanchions are not damaged too badly in the accident. With the wheels out, the mudguards front and rear were removed and Ernie "the hammer" Hall went to work gently tapping and shaping on a soft "former" surface (a block of wood) to avoid damaging the chrome. It worked a treat and, apart from a couple of barely visible marks, the mudguards are fully serviceable and almost as smart as new.

There's no doubt that Emie Hall has worked wonders on the MM Racing Show Suruki, and if anybody requires tuning or nice preparation work on their bike, they can contact Ernie at 18 Blenheim Crescent, South Croydon, Surrey. Phone 01-686 6980. The work Emie did in this crash repair job obviously worked well, as we won our first Silver Replica in the TT Production Machine Race ... The story of Martyn Ashwood's exploits can be seen over the page.



Motorcycle Mechanics at the Isle of Man - 1971 - Part 5



When you cross the Fairy Bridge on the way in to Douglas from Castletown, Isle of Man, it is a brave fellow who scorns the fairies! The locals swear that if you have the "little people" on your side then good luck will go with you as you cross the bridge. After our second place in the Thruxton 500-Miler. we were extra polite to the "little people" as we made our way to Douglas for the Production TT of 1971.

Practice went like a dream with Martyn Ashwood putting in an 85 mph lap to qualify, and the hope that after he'd learned the 370-mile circuit a little better, he'd add another two or three mph to his lap speed. Britax accessories, real name Britax (London) Ltd, were impressed with our performance at Thruxton and are now backing the MM Racing Show Team for the rest of the 1971 season. They, of course. manufacture handle- bars, rearsset footrests, safety belts and many other useful two-and three-wheeler accessories at their Proctor Works in Byfleet. Surrey. Anyway, we are digressing. After a quick check-over to make sure ignition timing, oil levels, tyre pressures, chain tension, etc., were all OK, the Suzuki had the old spark plugs changed for new NGK8s and we were ready to race!



The fuel tank was topped up with Shell 98 octane and the oil tank filled with Shell 2T twostroke oil at weigh-in or scrutineering and then the bike was passed by the scrutineers without trouble and wheeled into the parque ferme. On Wednesday afternoon, June 9, the bikes were rolled out into the warming-up area and the Suzuki started second kick. Within half an hour, riders and machines were parading up on to the Glencrutchery Road and our hearts began to beat faster.

Four laps of the Mountain Circuit and it would all be over and as Martyn dashed across the road at the Le Mans start, we held our breath for a first kick start. His foot slipped on the start lever first time, but with another prod he was away in about eighth place down Bray Hill. There was no refuelling as the six-gallon tank was enough for the 31 mpg average of the T500 to last the four-lap race. All we could do was bite our nails and wait. People around the circuit remarked about the Motorcycle Mechanics Racing and Sporting Show advertisements on Manx Radio, especially the SUZAKI which Martyn was supposed to be riding according to the American commentator. Anyway, thanks to the fairies and Emie "Rebel" Hall the bike went like a train and Martyn's times improved every lap until his fastest lap of 87 + mph took him on to the leader board in sixth place. This earned Martyn his first ever TT Silver Replica and for us on Motorcycle Mechanics a great deal of satisfaction. The Barcelona 24-Hour Race at Montjuich Park is our next production machine event and Mick Chatterton will be co-riding with Martyn once more, with Emie Hall and Chas Deane in the pits. Let's hope we do as well there as we did at Thruxton and meanwhile, to the "little people" on the Isle of Man we say: "Thank you, fairies! We hope to be in the Isle of Man again next year!"