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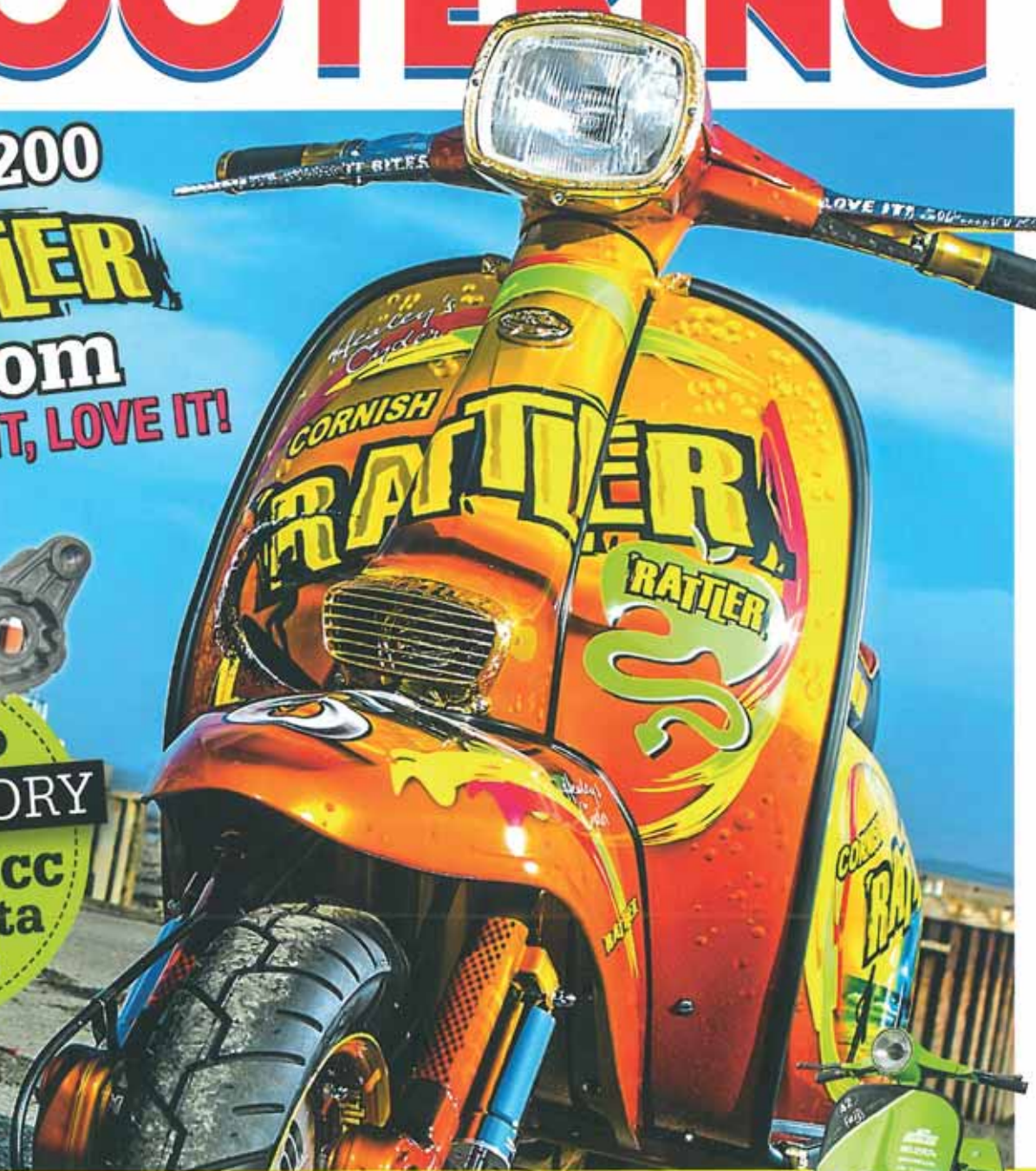
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MORTONS



VESPA TUNING & UPGRADES MEGA-FEATURE – PART 7

With a stack of tuning and upgrade products for various Vespa machines to hand, we intend to fit and analyse them over the coming months. Over the past six editions, the PX125 has been pampered no end, so this month we decided to break things up a bit... and test out the much-loved Malossi 210 kit.

Kit version

The Malossi 210 has been a defining upgrade for many Vespa owners over the years, albeit with a reputation of being a wheelie-pulling rev-monster. The fact of the matter is though, it wasn't particularly big on its bhp number, it was more the fact it had a razor sharp power band which came on so hard that you couldn't help but lift the front wheel. The actual peak bhp of these kits was often quite similar to a well set up Polini kit, the only difference being the Polini had a better power spread.

Also, due to the peaky nature of the Malossi kit, it often required a T5 fourth gear to make the scooter pull top gear. One of the main reasons for this was a severe lack of transfer timing on the original 210 kit, which was a pain, but could really be improved by the introduction of a 60mm stroke crank.

Further broadening of the power band could be achieved by porting the cylinder transfers, and then with a decent touring pipe on you could attain a good peak bhp figure... as well as a decent torque figure, and a nice power spread. At that point, the common T5 fourth gear upgrade was often not necessary and the kit would pull well. Such fuss and fettle spawned hybrid 'Polossi' kits, using the well-balanced Polini cylinder, mated with the funky Malossi piston.

Fast-forward to today, and the two new Malossi 210 kits no longer require the cylinder porting to the transfers. Malossi have vastly improved the kits in this area as well as improving many other points. The kits are available in both Sport (actually the more touring of the two?) and the MHR versions (read 'peakier'). Having ridden both, I can say the sport version is the one 90% of scooterists would want,



and only the absolute peak-bhp-hunters should seek the MHR version. Either kit can still be improved with a 60mm crank, but it's not nearly as necessary as it used to be on the old version. Other nice touches on the new versions of this kit include upgraded cylinder head, better cut outs in the spigot area, improved porting throughout, and a vertex piston which is coated for better heat dissipation and reduced friction (I'm told).

With readily available off-the-shelf carb, crank and expansion chamber combinations... it's very easy to build a Vespa engine which can either be a stonking 30bhp beast or a stump-pulling 24bhp torque monster. The choice is yours. But fancy carbs, cranks, pipes and engine building/tuning techniques aside, what can the average scooterist expect from a bolt-on kit? Well let's take a look...

