

Velocette Motorcycle Models

Production of the Velocette motorcycle originally started as Veloce Ltd, formed by a German, Johannes Gujtemann, who changed his name to John Taylor, & eventually Goodman in 1910. This was indeed a family firm with both sons, Percy & Eugene, and daughter Ethel involved. So how did it get its name? Percy designed the firm's first single, a 276cc four-stroke, but in 1913 a 206cc two-stroke was launched & as a lightweight economy machine was named the Velocette. The marque was born & a distinguished line grew in which quality & performance would be the hallmark. The Thruxton became the Clubman's dream, with the odd little LE remembered by many in the sixties as the 'Noddy Bike' of the local bobby, in the days before the 'Panda Car'. Production continued until 1971.

Velocette Models

LE 1949-71, 149cc-192cc, WC SV flat twin, 250lb, 100mpg, 55mph

Pleasant little bike & the 'LE' meant 'Little Engine'. It was manufactured to get away from the idea of the oily engine bikes with chain drive of the period. Excellent ride, no noise or vibrations, this was a major hit with the police forces of the country & led to the demise of the 'Bobby on a Push Bike'. Designed around a pressed steel chassis it had leg shields, glove box & panniers to accommodate commuters, & was propelled by a shaft drive from a twin water cooled engine which was rubber mounted. The 149cc Mk1 model gave way to the 192cc Mk2 in 1952 & in 1958 the Mk3 came along with kick-start & 4 speed foot gear-change.

Valliant 1956-63, 192cc, ohv flat twin, 250lb, 100mpg, 60mph

The ohv Valliant sports version of the LE model was frail. Incorporating the basic LE engine, reverting to air cooling & placing it in a traditional duplex frame with a 3 gallon tank. Velocette wanted to try to recapture some of the traditionalists.

Vogue 1963-68, 192cc, WC SV flat twin, 330lb, 95mpg, 60mph

An attempt was made of updating the LE with new fiberglass bodywork. The Vogue first appeared at the Earls Court Show in 1962. Sadly not very well & it is verye sold, buyers opting for the cheaper alternatives like the Ariel Leader. The fiberglass body hung on new frame structure with rear fork pivots. A 2.5 gallon petrol tank was formed integral with the bodywork. At the front end twin side by side headlights were provided with a windscreen & an instrument panel. The leg-shields & footboards were moulded as one. The lower side panels were removed to access the engine. Indicators were moulded into the body panels. Not many of these were sold & it is very rare.

Viceroy 1960-64, 250cc, 2-stroke twin

Most manufacturers had a go at making a scooter in the late fifties, & this was the attempt by the mighty Velocette company. Predictions of sales of 5,000 models in 1962 actually resulted in 300 in total being made by the time it was discontinued.

MAC 1952- 349cc, ohv single, 370lb, 70mpg, 75mph

Velocette's traditional British single, a charming bike with good steering & reliability, it's an excellent working bike.

Viper 1956-69, 349cc, ohv single, 390lb, 60mpg, 85mph

This is a good sportster, which had excellent road holding, which exceeded the performance of the engine. The vintage chassis performed much better than most of the sixties rivals but looked its age. The 500cc Venom was basically a stroked version which sold better. Spare parts are expensive.

MSS 1953-68, 499cc, ohv single, 400lb, 60mpg, 80mph

Gentle touring 500, the last of the breed with good steering, comfort & reliability. Traditionally with a separate engine & gearbox with a strange clutch arrangement.

Venom 1956-68, 499cc, ohv single, 400lb, 55mpg, 95mph

Sports single in the Classic British tradition. It had quick, precise steering, capable of high cruising speeds. The Venom clubman is the most highly prized & highly priced model. Basically it is a stretched Viper. Built in the traditional 'Boy Racer Style' of its time.

Thruxton 1964-71, 499cc, ohv single, 390lb, 50mpg, 105mph

The last of the line & priced up like the BSA Goldstar & Norton Interstates. Collectors seem to own most of them these days.