

Foreword

As part of the development of our website the Webmaster Bobb Negus strongly suggested a section devoted to sidecars and twisted my arm to provide some text.

My early memories as a child are of the sidecar fitted to my Dad's BSA M21 around 1953/4. When I was sixteen I tried to raise £80 to buy a Panther outfit as my first bike but failed by £30. For £50 I bought a BSA 175cc 2 stroke Sunbeam scooter followed by a 250cc 4 stroke Sunbeam. Both were totally unreliable but I usually managed to have one on the road most of the time (using the number plate from the 175 as it was taxed and insured). At some stage I fitted a sidecar to the 175. Nothing fancy but a proper boat shaped open tub that was aluminium on a wooden frame with the luxury of a seat. Single point fitting using a big round plate with 6 or so bolts. The scooter link was slung under the frame and bolted on. It may have been slow but great fun and wildly flexible under braking when the nose dipped dramatically.

Fast forward until about 1978 when my kids were packed into a sidecar for a run out from the Club camping weekend in Wollaton Park, Nottingham. They were hooked and described the experience as making their bums fizz. Eventually I acquired a bent (not nicked) but accident damaged early Squire/JAWA sidecar. I managed to fit it to a JAWA 634 by lowering the bike using 16 inch wheels and raising the sidecar by going up from an 8inch to a 10 inch wheel. I cut off the boot top and raised it up on a rather rickety frame with a thin Perspex wrap around side/rear screen so the kids had a separate space each. That outfit went like a train and handled a treat.

In the 1980's I fitted a Trials sidecar to a CZ Enduro and the first test ride was in deep snow. We went for miles and my wife Pat was so, so cold sat up on the chair! The most memorable experience for me was when offroading with John Blackburn and Ian Bridges. The tie rod holding the sidecar wheel in place broke. Pat had a lift back to a road on the mudguard of John's bike. I rode the outfit with the chair wheel off the ground – to said road - then I went on John's mudguard back to the van. In the bends I never knew whether to drag my leg or raise it as there were no footrests. Outfit recovered and soon fixed. I now ride a 2011 JAWA Classic with a swift sidecar. Electric start, great disc brake and a fork brace. Wonderful.

JAWA has consistently offered a sidecar outfit to the public since 1977 when it cost £599 plus a delivery charge of under £16. Prior to 1977 you could special order a JAWA Model 360 and a Velorex sidecar.

I think sidecars are like Bovril – you love or hate them but you can't deny that they are fun, frightening, a crowd attractor and really practical for carrying loads or rally gear. We have pulled together the sidecar content and hope you enjoy it. If you have material we can use please email us.

The JAWA outfit has always been extremely competitively priced and has introduced many to the delights of a bit on the side!

The Club is affiliated to the Federation of Sidecar Clubs.

Pete Edwards March 2016