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Past to present

I'm all-in on what's coming next. New tech, new platforms, new ways of going faster... I love it. But I'm just as obsessed with what's come before. This issue strikes that balance perfectly. It's a blend of nostalgia and now, a reminder of just how quickly the bike world has evolved. I've ridden more machines than I can count, and I've seen firsthand the relentless chase for more power, more electronics, more everything. And yet, some bikes remain timeless. On paper they look almost laughable by today's standards (modest bhp, skinny tyres, basic suspension) but ride one and they get under your skin instantly.

For me, the grey import era is one of the most fascinating chapters in the two-wheel story. I was lucky enough to own a KR-1S and a VFR400 in my teens, benefitting from a movement I barely understood at the time. Now, having spoken to the people who lived it and shaped it, I finally get how it all unfolded. Their insight fills these pages, and I hope it's able to answer a few questions for others, too.

Whilst we're at it, we're also diving into the rise of the V-twin this month... another era defined by fierce competition and unforgettable bikes. Nowadays, it would seem that V4s and triples are the major platforms for performance, and Triumph's a

world-class ambassador for the latter engine type. Blurring the lines between peak torque and power figures, there's a lot to like about them... and the same goes for Triumph's new Trident 800. That's a bike I've just got back from testing, and it really impressed me. Not least of all because it seems they've nailed the pricing every bit as much as the build. Anyway, I'll leave it at that and let you dive into the feature to get my full take on it.

Enjoy the mag

Bruce



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Bruce Wilson

Editor

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Upfront

WORDS: SIR ALAN OF DOWDS

PLANET FAST BIKES - NEW METAL, NEWS & REVIEWS



MV AGUSTA GOES ICE COLD WITH NEW RUSH TITANIO

If you're going to launch a super-trick hyper-naked, dripping in titanium and attitude, you don't stick it under strip lights at a trade show. You roll it out onto a frozen lake in St. Moritz, in front of collectors, couture-clad petrolheads and enough carbon fibre to build a Le Mans grid. At least, that's what MV's just done with its latest addition. This is the most extreme evolution of MV Agusta's wild-child naked yet: the Rush Titanium. And no, this isn't just a new paint job.

The Rush has always been about excess. Since 2019 it's served as MV's flex... part streetfighter, part rolling art installation. But for 2026, the Titano takes that ethos and turns it into a materials masterclass. Yes, the 1000cc Euro5+ inline four is still the jewel in the crown - hand-assembled in Varese, packing 16 radial titanium valves and four forged titanium con-rods. It's already one of the most characterful fours out there. But here, titanium isn't hidden inside the engine. It's





everywhere. There's a new Arrow titanium slip-on, brushed to within an inch of its life and laser-etched with the MV logo. It's lighter, sharper, and visually ties the whole bike together. The exhaust hanger? Titanium. The tank cover? Titanium, complete with atom-inspired graphics. Then there's the dashboard carriers, headlight mount, and fasteners, that too are made of the precious metal. It's obsessive detailing in the way very few ever dare commit to.

Visually, the Titanio dials up the drama without shouting about it. The new Nero Intenso base is deep and glossy, offset with Argento Magnum and subtle Blu Titanio accents. Every painted panel gleams, deliberately clashing with the matte twill-weave carbon fibre that now replaces the old plain finish. The effect is pure theatre. Light bounces off gloss surfaces, gets swallowed by carbon, then flickers across brushed titanium. It's a bike that demands you walk around it twice. Blu Titanio anodised aluminium details add contrast, while the Alcantara seat carries Titanio branding and laser-marked graphics that reinforce the whole "precision engineering meets Motorcycle Art" vibe.

And yes, it still looks like it wants to fight something. The original 2019 Rush came in grey, bronze and red — loud and unapologetic. The 2021 Rush Army darkened the mood. The 2023 Mamba brought venom in Rosso Mamba 2.0. The Titanio? This feels like the grown-up assassin. Less shouty, more surgical. Still muscular. Still aggressive. Still rocking that drag-inspired rear wheel treatment and unmistakable stance. But now it's layered with material sophistication rather than just colour. It's the most refined Rush yet, without losing the madness that made the name stick.

Let's be clear. This isn't about practicality. It's not about value. And it's definitely not about being sensible. Just 300 individually numbered bikes will be built in Varese. Pricing and full specs are still under wraps, but if you're already checking your ISA balance, you might be missing the point. The Rush Titanio exists because MV Agusta can build it. Because there's a small group of riders who don't just want performance... they want exclusivity, craftsmanship and something that feels engineered rather than assembled. We can't help but want one... even if our bank balances tell us otherwise.



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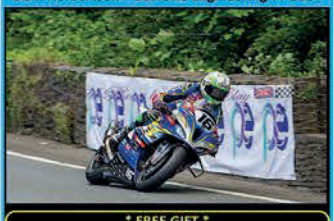
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HARRISON BILLET GOES TO HEL...

There's a new heavyweight in British braking. HEL Performance has officially acquired Harrison Billet, bringing one of the UK's most respected names in precision-machined motorcycle calipers and discs under its wing. Exeter-based HEL - best known for its stainless-steel braided brake lines, radial master cylinders and in-house CNC billet calipers - has snapped up the Harrison Billet brand in a move that significantly strengthens its grip on the performance aftermarket.

Founded in the 1980s, Harrison Billet built a loyal global following for its beautifully machined calipers, discs and brackets, covering more than 140 European, Japanese and American models — including a huge range of Harley-Davidsons dating back to 1971. The brand became synonymous with rock-solid performance, reduced weight and serious stopping power. Now, with Harrison's product range and manufacturing know-how joining HEL's already extensive portfolio, the combined operation promises one of the most comprehensive braking line-ups in the industry.

HEL's Simon Lane described the move as both strategic and personal, paying tribute



to founder Ken Harrison, who supported him early in his career. Production will continue at HEL's UK headquarters, with existing Harrison Billet products remaining available under the brand name... and new additions already in development.



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