

# I didn't know I'd bought a Kettle!

I love bikes, my parents hated them. The noise, the smell, the chrome, the sense of adventure, ride a bike you're a rebel, Barry Sheen on World of Sport, where do I sign?

August 1978, late Sunday afternoon, school holiday's, 9 years old, our next-door neighbour's daughter's boyfriend arrived on a dark Green Kawasaki Z1000.... I think I might pass out with excitement. Parking on the road, engine still running, before the lad could even get his helmet off, I was bombarding him with questions; "How fast will it go?", "What's the 0-60?", "Can you do a wheelie?" (Questions based on Top Trump Cards categories of course!) I was immediately reinforced by 3 of my mates having executed perfect running dismounts of their push bikes, left abandoned in a tangled heap." Can we sit on it?", "Can we have a go?" "Can we rev it?"

Bless his patience (I'm sure he later made a great Dad!) he treated us all to a good old rev, followed by a sedate ride around the block (unbeknown of our parents). Aged 55 I remember it like it was yesterday. That was it, I was hooked. Sadly, until I left home at 19, bike ownership was banned!

Various sports bikes entered and left my ownership over the years, the last of which was in 2008 an Aprilia RSVR 1000, a fantastic rocket ship of a machine. Sadly, one day on my lovely summer 15-mile commute to work I had 3 near death experiences, none of which were my fault. Whilst sometimes I may be think skinned, I got the message loud and clear, two days later she was gone.

Since that day I've looked at adverts, been into dealers, read the motorcycle press, watched YouTube videos, I want a bike, I don't want something that will hit 100 mph if you sneeze, I don't want something that is worth £2K less each year having only done 1000 miles, how can that itch be scratched?

Now my mate Big Kev loves his bikes, by accident during a USA holiday, he discovered a number of collectors of 70's Japanese bikes in the area where his family live. This began his occasional importation of high-quality



bikes into the UK. Not doer upper projects, well-loved bikes where the owners had reached the point they need to go before it became a burden to families.

This included GT250, 550 & 750 models. Amongst these in 2018 was PHJ, what's PHJ, I hear you ask? Funnily enough that's what I asked, well kind of! What I actually said when I saw a photo was "Ooh I love the pink bike, what is it?" It turns out it is a Suzuki 750J in Candy Lavender, now with 20K miles. I admired the bike but didn't really do much research at the time. Fast forward to 2023, Big Kev was talking about going on one of his epic adventures and reluctantly needed to divest himself of his goods and chattels. If you ever sell your bikes (not imagining he ever would) can I have first dibs on the pink one? It's Candy Lavender, not pink, is the stock answer.

I started to Google the bike, understand the history, discovered the Kettle Club (amazing work really looking forward to the events), found Suzuki GT750 idiot on YouTube (confidence booster for future maintenance). Discovering how cheap annual ownership is with PDJ Insurance, no MOT or tax, understood that the bike would unusually, be an appreciating asset.

Which is how, in February 2024, I became one of the newest members of the club and PHJ's newest custodian and that's how I found out I'd actually bought a kettle!

**Dean Lewis**