LAVERDA RACING TEAM KONSTANZ
THE LAVERDA-PARADISE

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MEGA-AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2004 written by Andy

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Dear Laverda Friends

The last time we wrote a newsletter was autumn 2002 and that is why this newsletter will be particularly elaborate and detailed. Here you'll finally find some news on:

- Why there was no time for newsletters (our large construction site)
- Tips and tricks on:
  - Installing piston rings
  - Selecting tyres for Laverdas
  - Gel batteries
  - Tooth belts as the primary engine in the three-cylinder motor
- New parts, which we finally have
- The 2004 Laverda season with more than 16000 km:
  - May Rally
  - Pastis Rally
  - Classic Bol d'or
  - Live at the new Werner Race, Rötger Feldmann with the Red Porsche Killer and Andy Feldmann on a Dolmete with 24 chainsaw motors

As with all past newsletters, this newsletter can also be downloaded at our Internet Shop. There you can also view all pictures in colour and in large format!

Redesigning the 300 m² workshop: That's why there hasn't been a newsletter for almost 2 years!

Life can be so wonderful – and is always wonderful with a Laverda – but sometimes it can also be stressful. But everything is only temporary.

For more than 17 years now, our workshop has been located in the old three-floor factory building (formerly the "Stromeyer Zeltebau", which has a rentable surface of 8500 m^2 where our Laverda shop occupies the second largest space with 300 m^2. This building has been called "Neuwerk" for years now. Actually the building was supposed to be knocked down due to a small motorway through the middle of Konstanz. After a two year struggle with the German Federal Government, the "Länder" (States) and politicians, in Konstanz in particular, we were able to purchase this building in 2000 together with the club we founded back then, which has been turned into a co-operative. Because of us, they had to move the new small four-lane street over two meters in the finished plans. We the "Neuwerkler", as people call us in Konstanz, consist of 80 members of a co-operative and almost 100 external private renters and have shown that it is possible to do the impossible.

Those of you who have already visited us still remember our old grey factory box which has now almost been completely renovated after three years of personal initiative on behalf of the firms located in the Neuwerk including architects, heating installers, carpenters, electricians, etc. And the new colour of the giant building, bright orange-red (Laverda-Orange) wasn't even my idea, but I actively promoted it against those who wanted to have it grey or ochre during the vote with our 80 colleagues.

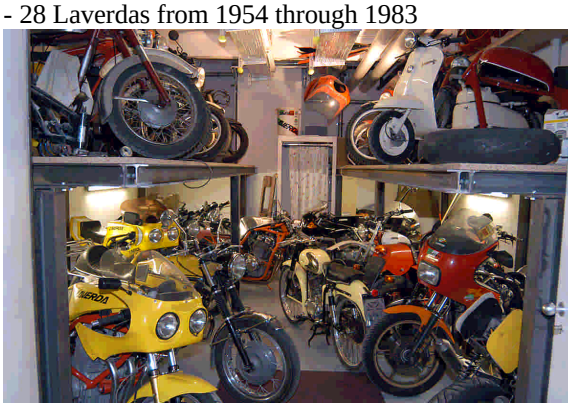
Picture 1: The old Neuwerk building in 1999 – south side and the Laverda-Paradise

Picture 2: The new bright orange Neuwerk building in 2004

In the course of the renovation of the building, every individual had to carry out modifications on his/her area according to his/her needs. As our Laverda Paradise had always been spread out to four different areas in the ca. 240 m^2 building and because we now finally had the opportunity to get one area of our own by moving, I was forced to completely redesign the ca. 300 m^2 new surface. The new windows, heating system, water and electrical connections were arranged for by our co-operative, of which we all have a share. The design of the remaining inside infrastructure was left up to us to take care of.

It all surprisingly began three months earlier than planned on June 16th, 2003. Starting on this day, I worked on the construction site from Monday through Sunday at least 100 hours for six months until it was totally finished on December 20th, 2003.

Picture 3: Motorcycle stock in the Laverda-Paradise - 28 Laverdas from 1954 through 1983

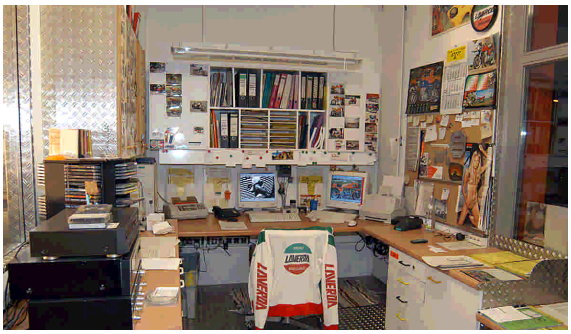


Picture 4: Workshop area of the Laverda-Paradise with 3 lifting platforms and the machine area

Businesses already located in the "Neuwerk" took care of the internal partition of the walls, the plastering of ca. 600 m^2 wall surface, the installation of the sanitary facilities and the locks. The rest of the floors, with time-tested aluminium chequer plates for the ca. 120 m^2 workshop and office space, the painting of the concrete for the remaining 180 m^2 and laying and wiring the cables, and the spraying the ca. 250 litres of old-white dispersion paint on walls and ceilings and, of course, the furnishing was all my work.

In order to not interfere with the shipping of replacement parts during the reconstruction we relocated the storage area, which had been dispersed among three different areas for all those years, onto the high raise rack of a high-tech logistics company, which took care of the shipping for us. This worked out so brilliantly, that we have concluded a long-term contract with this company. Nothing will change for you though, or have you noticed a difference in the last year and a half since we have been doing this?

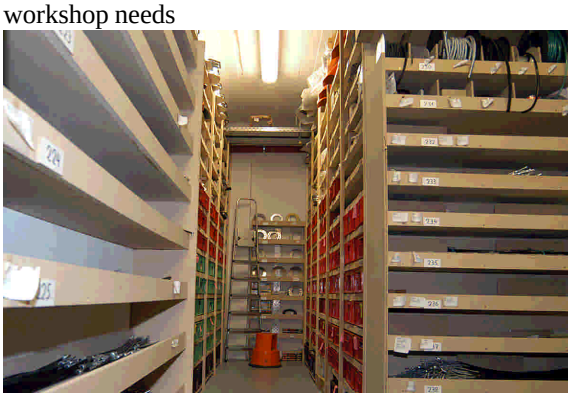
Picture 5: Office area with the world-wide distribution centre



Picture 6: Alfred and Andy in Alfred's motor maintenance area

You place your order as usual, and we will contact you if we believe that you might have ordered the wrong part, and will just forward the correct order with the invoice electronically to our high raise rack, where up to three people are available during peak times, in order to ensure than all almost 8000 packages were sent out all over the world safely, reliably and quickly in 2003. By the way, the manager of this logistics firm of course rides a Laverda, as well as various other Italian motorcycles.

Picture 7: Internal storehouse, 2 of 8 shelves for our workshop needs



The attached pictures 3-7 will give you a brief impression of our brand new workshop, which – as far as I'm concerned – leaves nothing to be desired and has more space than for just three lifting platforms. Along with that, you'll find pictures 1 + 2 of our giant Neuwerk project, which of course as expected posed many problems, but we "Neuwerklers" have pulled together and are working with each other and not against each other. Only by doing so, are we able to get such a giant project off the ground, and the bottom line is that it has worked out so astonishingly well that even television programmes and a leading Swiss economic newspaper have dealt extensively with our project. Those who would like to learn more about the Neuwerk project can browse through our site on the Internet at www.neuwerk.org. Life has of course changed here, but we are all proud of what we have accomplished. For all the firms, artists, and private individuals who have been in the Neuwerk building for a long time, there is also cafeteria run by the "Neuwerklers" in addition to the previously existing Neuwerk bar and multi-function room. There are also 10 additional rehearsal rooms and a party room for young people set up by the city of Konstanz and the Youth Centre. We should also not forget the cigarette, beer, soft drink, coffee and sweets machines, which are only accessible for "Neuwerklers". Sometimes the nights are long in the Neuwerk building.

☺Since we are our own cooks in the Neuwerk building, there is the famous saying "No one has the right to relax in the Neuwerk", but we still are considerate of one another. There are 80 members of our "family" and the bottom line is that we all get along very well.

Because of this rough construction endeavour in 2003, in which I only rode my Laverda for a total of 6000 km except in the May and Pastis Rally and the big Laverda meeting in Simbach, I wanted to take it easy in 2004, which I in fact did by riding over 16,000 km with the RGS, 75 cm^3 from 1954 as a city moped, a 250 Chott and other machines.

By the way, I should mention it this again! The change in our address from "Reichenaustr. 186" to "Oberlohnstr. 3 (im Neuwerk)" only has to do with the new street configuration around the Neuwerk. The city of Konstanz changed this because it is only possible to access the building from Oberlohnstrasse.

2004 Season

May 1st-Rally to Levanto, Italy near Genova for the 25th time

Unfortunately we only travelled 2594 km in eight days with only below-average weather, during which our tyres mostly rode on rainy wet mountain passes in the surrounding areas. This time there was a rather high failure ratio among the nearly 40 motorcycles.

- Gogo with a Kawasaki Mach 3 and transmission damage
- Elke with a V50 Guzzi and a torn off valve
- Jörg with a Yamaha RD 350 LC – with a broken piece of a piston
- Wolfi, who normally travels with a Triumph Bonneville, tried his Yamaha RD 350 LC which he got on the Internet. The result was awful. It spat individual parts of the pistons out of the exhaust. As it only cost 250 €, he had it scrapped down there and the others came back with the 3 accompanying vehicles.

☺The bottom line is: as always, it still was a very fun rally after all.

19th Rally from Pastis to Southern France "Grand Canyon du Verdon" and Ardeche June 9th-27th, 2004

My favourite event, with 14 days of sun and 4634 RGS kilometres – what a dream. Even if my Laverda suffered a knock-out for the first time due to the tooth belt kit which I bought from a German manufacturer and which was supposed to replace the original time-tested chains of the primary engine.

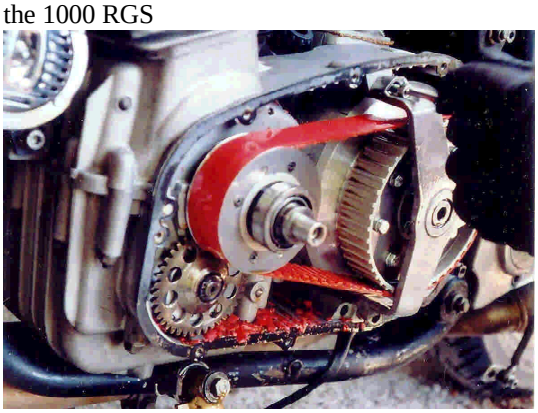
According to the German manufacturer, it didn't really have much long-haul experience yet. So as I often do, I wanted to test whether it would be good or bad for a Laverda.

Most of the trips taken this year were not only for relaxation, but also for trying out various new things, whether it be the 6 different brake pad sets, which were successively replaced, worn in and then tested extensively , or new brake disc material, transmission gear wheels, which I have manufactured, or many years ago the development of our 10 mm oil pumps, which were first tested for 20,000 km, before they were produced in large quantities, and dozens of other parts, which –depending on the purpose of their use – are tested for a minimum of 5000 km, but mostly 10,000 km and more for one or even two years, before being sold.

At the weekend before the Pastis Rally we went on a weekend trip with five bikes to Alsace, France to a racetrack. It is called Anneau du Rhin and this is where the Bosee Team from Konstanz organised a racing training event. A total of about 550 speedy kilometres back and forth at an average outside temperature were no problem for the tooth belt.

Then on the evening of June 9th, 2004 we took off on some 30 motorcycles to the Pastis Rally. On this evening our goal was to travel the 350 km first leg on the Swiss motorway almost to the "Le cote" rest stop before the French border. The accompanying vehicle with beer, a grill and sausages was already there, when we arrived at around 12.30 am, and after a starlit party night our journey we continued on the next day. We formed up in a 6 Pulk, Bea with a Clubman-Honda, Christiane with a KTM, Dieter with an XJ 900, Lutz with a Gilera 600, Axel with a Yamaha TRX and me with a Laverda RGS 1000. We travelled the last 40 km to the border on the freeway and then the country road to Annecy and then on into the mountains over Col de Marais on small mountain passes up to St. Francois Lougchamp, and then La Camare to Col du Galibier. Then it happened, after riding another 250 km – while accelerating in second gear the engine speed jumped without me thrusting forward. I rolled over to the right into a shadowy area, and there I had already realised what had happened – the tooth belt had given out. While my dear colleagues enjoyed a good laugh, I leaned the machine onto a tree and started to unscrew the hot primary cover with the ignition of the120° motor. When the cover was down on the ground, what a horror: the belt hadn't been torn. It was even worse: there were no teeth left on 2/3rds of its surface. They were crumbled to pieces in the primary section (see picture 8).

Picture 8: Fallen out teeth in the primary engine of the 1000 RGS



Picture 9: Everyone making fun of me – the second tooth belt is broken

We managed to rake out the 150-200 tiny crumbled up pieces of the tooth belt, which took more than an hour. Because I didn't trust this whole thing anyway, luckily I had brought a replacement belt along with me. I installed this while my dear colleagues continued to laugh wondering how long the belt would hold. Finally, we were able to continue our journey.
Two questions troubled me:

1) How long would this belt really hold
2) How many tooth belt pieces had fallen through the hole in the aluminium dividing wall, which separates the primary engine from the transmission? But I was quite certain that I had immediately shut off the motor, so that wouldn't pose any danger for support, etc.

Not even 50 km later, three of our guys were suddenly missing. We stopped and soon Dieter came and said that there are problems with Bea's Clubman Honda. We turned around and we quickly realised that the 500 one-cylinder motor had damage on the large end bearing. We dragged the machine into the village just 1 km from there. Bea, who speaks French very well, parked the Honda machine with the keys and paper at a bar where it was safe, until it was picked up somehow. We divided up Bea's baggage onto the other 5 motorcycles, and she was allowed to take a seat on Dieter's XJ 900.

Since Dieter did not want to travel that fast with a pillion rider on board, we rode much slower than the others, which also helped to save my tooth belt.

But then it happened – the second tooth belt held for a total of 218 km although we were driving very carefully. Dieter pulled me about 1 km along a flat road up to a perfect rest stop with tables and benches and that was it. Bea got off Dieter's motorcycle and Dieter took off at an unbelievable speed to notify the others. At a spot just 25 km before Gap there was just one lonely house. Bea went up there and asked for me whether it would be safer for me to park the machine on his property than on the road, which was no problem whatsoever. The others had already arrived in the meantime – once again laughing - to discuss (see picture), whether they should take the beer reserves for the rally, some of which I was transporting as 2x5 litre kegs, or me, as we were soon running out of space with only 4 motorcycles left. (After Annecy there is generally no more accompanying vehicle, meaning that we had to distribute the larger quantities of beer and sausage onto the motorcycles).

Picture 10: Andy Wagner on the KTM (thanks Christiane)

I was lucky – they wanted to take me. Just my sleeping bag, camping mat, and the rain gear were distributed onto the motorcycles, while we left the rest on my Laverda. I myself only had the possibility of riding on Christiane's LC4 620 KTM under the condition that she could take a picture of me as proof, because I always make fun of her because the thing still doesn't turn on after kick-starting it. Ok, whatever will be, will be (see picture 10). Christiane is indeed a 184 cm tall (ca. 6 feet) slim lady, but she let me do the driving and took a seat behind me. During the further journey to the next destination Moustiers – St. Marie I realised and have to tell you here that a KTM LC4 620 like that rides brilliantly even with a 184 cm tall pillion rider. Unfortunately I wasn't able to try this out myself. And I have to admit here that I could have sometimes kick-started the KTM, but I usually gave up after the 5th or 6th try and let Christiane do the kicking, while she just made fun of me (I'll never complain again when she's kicking, I promise Christiane!). Very late in the evening around 11 pm we had enough of all the breakdowns and we still managed to have a hearty party in our special spot in the forest with all the 40 rally participants and empty several 5-Litre kegs of beer.

On Friday around 11 in the morning I rode up to Moustiers for breakfast and then phoned the Laverda Paradise shop in Konstanz to order the parts. That never happened to me before. The original parts of the primary engine with the chain lay nicely in a plastic box on my private shelf, where my colleague found them for me.

But there was just one problem: Even with DPD or UPS Express, it would have taken me 3 – 4 days to get the package with all the original replacement parts and some additional tools due to the weekend and the extremely remote area where we were stuck. So I called Ali in Konstanz, a Neuwerkler who rides a Husqvarna and whose damaged motor wasn't ready for the rally yet. He immediately volunteered to jump in the car and travel the 750 km to me in exchange for the gas money. Plus, he could take Bea's Clubman Honda, which still stood in the mountains, home with him.

On Saturday afternoon Ali was there and I rode the 150 km to my Laverda as a pillion rider on Axel's TRX. Well, we took off the hold and it was the same crap all over again – the teeth had fallen off the tooth belt – we cleaned up everything, installed original parts with two reliable individual chains and we soon zoomed off to Moustiers again to the others. Of course there was a lot to celebrate during this night.

Just a side note – the gasoline costs for Ali's bus amounting to 175 € were paid in full and transferred back to my account because I had clarified the problem with the ADAC (German Automobile Club) in advance.
☺Thus, accolades to the ADAC, which I otherwise haven't had to use yet after 12 years and 100,000 Laverda km.

The Pastis Rally tooth belt test was over and we travelled many, many curves with perfect weather.

For security reasons, I discharged oil at home and removed the oil filter and the camshaft drive chain holders to see whether there were still any pieces of the tooth belt in the motor.

With a borrowed optical endoscope I spotted some rubber debris from the tooth belt in the motor, which I got out after a lot of twiddling around. The bottom line: I had a lot of luck again. For more on how and why that all happened, see the section "tooth belt" kit in the primary driving mechanism- no thanks". Up to now I know of four people who have had trouble with the tooth belt and three whose are still holding.
What reason is there anyway to replace something that works wonderfully ! ?

☺Despite all that, I had a great tooth belt test drive for 14 days without a drop of rain and with chains in the primary driving mechanism, you don't need the ADAC anymore either.

1st Classic Rally on 2-4 July 2004

As we in Konstanz are great fans of rallies, we took off for the first Classic Rally for 2004 on the weekend of July 2nd -4th. Prerequisite: the motorcycle must be at least 20 years old, which is certainly no problem because most well-known people from Konstanz only ride older Japanese vehicles, except for a few British and Italian machines.

There were only 12 of us, but 4 were travelling with Laverdas. So we took off for the 1st Classic Rally around 7 pm over the Splügen mountain pass to Mandello on Lake Como. About 10 km before there is a bar in the mountains, where we arrived shortly before midnight. Two hours later we headed to our sleeping area hidden well on a river in the forest.

I have no idea which roads we took in the mountains to the east of Lake Como on Saturday for about 340 kilometres to Mandello, because they were not shown on any of our maps (1:500000 scale). We had a long night at the "Conti Bar", as we call it, slept on the shore below and headed back home after the late breakfast. On Sunday there were yet another 1050 km on the tachometer.

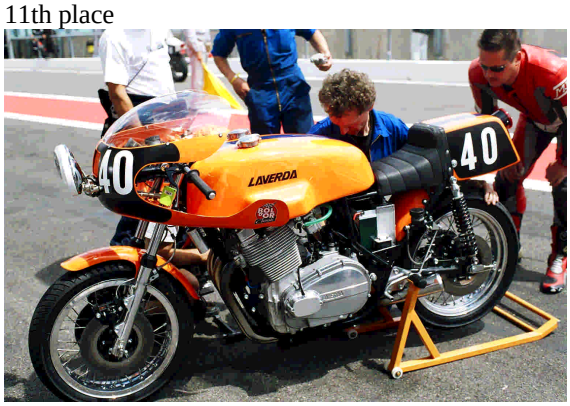
☺It was Christian's great idea to invent this rally, where he couldn't even ride himself due to lack of time – oh well, maybe next year.

Classic Bol d'or in Magny Cours on July 9th- 11th, 2004

I wanted to go there anyway and after a good Laverda friend from Karlsruhe asked me if I felt like being his passenger in his knee race side car, I said yes, because I have never tried out side car motorcycling before.

Picture 11: Axel and Andy with the BSA A65 side car (a lot of fun)

Picture 12: Van Dijk's Bol d'or racer which raced to 11th place



Unfortunately, the side car race during the event was nothing more than two 25 minute demonstration runs, but it was a lot of fun (see picture 11). Besides many other races for various old-timer categories, there was also the long-haul race (i.e. the Classic Bol d'or). On Saturday evening there was the night race for 1 ½ hours and on Sunday a 1 ½ hour daytime race. A Laverda 1000 Bol d'or Replika from Van Dijk came in 11th place in the race (see picture 12). A 750 SF re-designed by a French team with a SFC Look (see picture 13) also participated in the long-haul race and according to the official starting positions it barely qualified to race despite the completely inferior motor performance (for example, the fastest was a 1000 Moto Guzzi with a 45,000 Euro motor tuning, Titan piston rod, etc., while the rest of them were a bunch of 1000

Picture 13: 750 SFC Reblika during a long-haul race

Kawasakis and Yamaha TZ 750. Both drivers of the machine were on a list. Then when the drivers were then switched during the night race, they got a black flag, which meant that they were disqualified immediately. The organisation then stated that this driver's time did not qualify and therefore he could not race. But since this man was on the official starting list, he rode back onto the track against the will of the organisation, and they gave him a black flag on every lap until the end of the night race. Yet they still were 30th out of 55 participants at the end of the night race. The team got into a heated discussion with the organisation, but didn't have any luck. The Laverda 750 wasn't allowed to race the next day (disqualified).

Somehow things just got messed up. The race management staff probably put the name of the driver on the official starter list by accident and then said that he could not ride after all. Oh well, those race management guys should have been more careful with their list.

Anyhow, the end of the story was that they weren't allowed to ride on Sunday anymore; along with that, half of the check for 300 € that each team has to pay as a security deposit for transponders, etc. was kept as a penalty.

Easily earned money for the organiser, who makes an error and then gets to keep 150 €.

☹It's a shame that the 750 SFC Rebliko Team had so much trouble. They were really pissed off.

☺But as for me, that wasn't the last time that I rode with a side car. Almest 2000 country road km were also added to the RGS.

Laverda Meeting in Heftrich on August 13th – 15th 2004

I took a country road to Karlsruhe where I had to make a few business visits, and on Saturday to Heftrich, on the Autobahn though because it was raining. After arriving, I had a fun night until 4 in the morning, and then I urgently had to get into my sleeping bag. On Sunday after breakfast around 11 o'clock with nice weather I took the country road and a few detours on curvy roads to Karlsruhe, where I stayed before leaving for home on Monday, because my telephone hours for you started at 3 pm.

☺You guys in Heftrich are great – it was a lot of fun on that night, and soon there were another 1550 km more on the RGS.

LCS Meeting in Switzerland on August 20th-22nd, 2004

Picture 14: More than 40 bikes from 1952 through 2001 were on display

Here I had just travelled 70 km with my 250 Chott, but headed back home three hours later, because they still needed me at the three day festival.

The people from LCS really did a good job with their Laverda exposition – respect! I was impressed, all Laverda types were represented by 40 machines from 1952 to 2002 (see picture 14).

Werner Race September 3rd – 5th 2004

I wanted to go there anyway and once I received a personal invitation from the Feldmann brothers, I couldn't resist.

Back in 1988 in Hartenholm 200,000 Werner Comic fans and I experienced the race between the Porsche Killer and Holgis Porsche.

It was obvious that this amazing event could not be repeated 16 years later, but anyone who was not there really missed out on something.

This time at the Lausitz Ring (about 100 km south of Berlin), not only a new race between the 4-motor Horex Red Porsche Killer (owned by Rötger Feldmann = driven by Werner Bröse) and the Porsche (driven by Holgi) was supposed to take place, but also the newest creation by Rötger Feldmann and, in particular, the builder Andy Feldmann, the 24-motor chainsaw motorcycle, the "Dolmete", see picture 15.

Almost even more unbelievable than the four horex motors in a row (see picture 16), 24 Dolmar chainsaw motors were screwed to a self-supporting aluminium box frame, which resulted in an almost 4 m long, and just about 300 kg Dragster Racer.

Picture 15: Andy Feldmann with the Dolmete Dragster – 24 chainsaws power this thing

Picture 16: Legendary Red Porsche Killer – final servicing – the sound will drive you nuts

Andy Feldmann explained the technology to me. In the inside of the aluminium box, each chainsaw motor has a tooth belt wheel, which runs along the tooth belt waves to the transmission, which is from a Harley. The final engine to the back wheel runs along a chain. Thus there were 24 motors because 24 bottles of "Bölkstoff" (beer) fit into a box. Together the motors came to a total of about 1.9 l cylinder capacity, around 170 horse power, and about 300 Nm torque. These two-tact motors turn up to about 15,000 U/min. The most difficult thing is, as Andy Feldmann explained, are the carburettor throttle controls, which is extremely precisely precision engineering. At full throttle, the whole thing is brought down to zero via the adjusting screws and synchronised that way for each individual motor. The dual throttle control, one for the 12 right and one for the 12 left motors are also synchronised with each other so that all right and left motors ultimately run synchronically to one another.

By the way, this gas grip is a time-tested Laverda part sponsored by our shop. It was an honour to be able to help with such a brilliant project.

Each motor that has to be started individually with the chainsaw pull has a control light, so you have an overview of which motor is not running.

The noise level which amounts to more than 120 decibels is very easy to describe. Just imagine there are 24 lumberjacks each with a chainsaw at full throttle – simply ingenious.

Thanks to the invitation by the Feldmann brothers and the VIP ribbon on my wrist and the Werner card around my throat I had direct access to the whole happening, which the other visitors could only see from the bleachers.

Picture 17: Rötger Feldmann (Werner) and Andy Wagner, Relaxing ride in the Horex side-car

On Friday morning I took a spin with Rötger in his car and then a tour in the Oldsmobile from the Werner comic strip and with Holgi in his Porsche and then as a passenger with "oily foot" in Rötgers Horex combi (see picture 17). It couldn't have been more fun.

Besides the 15 Bands, which included Motörhead, Apocalyptica, IBO and others, on Saturday and Sunday there were plenty of Dragster motorcycles and cars, motorcycle stunt shows and even steep face riding events. I can tell you – it's quite an experience to stand no more than 3-4 meters away from a 7 m long Dragster car, whose V8 motor with giant superchargers between 2000 and 2500. Especially when it blows through a green light letting amazing sound, which makes the last bones in you vibrate, before it zooms off the final ¼ mile to the home stretch.

Andy Feldmann lost the race on Saturday between a Dolmete and a nicely tuned Audi, which was driven by Christiane Lurer, because he got off to a bad start. Plus 3-4 motors out of the 24 gave out, but it was still amazing to watch.

On Sunday there was another race between the Rötger's Red Porsche Killer and Holgi in a red Porsche. Rötger unfortunately never got off to a good start after a total of three tries, meaning that Holgi won all three times. But all you had to do was look into the bleachers and see how enthusiastic people were about this odd spectacle.

If you were there and experienced everything live like I did, I must say that it would have been a good idea for some new Werner Comic. Of course, the team were a bit disappointed that not everything worked out the way they imagined it would, but everyone still had a lot of fun during all the commotion and of course at the goodbye party during the night.

And I think it's pretty certain that there will one day be a 3rd race with five laps by the Red Porsche Killers, because it already lost a total of four times if we include Hartenholm in 1998 - party on!.

Summary of this odd spectacle:

☺For me the highlight of the 2004 season

☺I had taken off six days from work for this, 6 days with super weather, 2 days on a country road and one day on the Autobahn on the way back; a total of 1954 km with the RGS, and in between 3 days of great fun.

I took a total of about 135 pictures of these vehicles with 2 and 4 wheels, some of which were really unbelievable, and have already posted them on our Internet site www.laverda-paradies.de.

Starting with the wooden motorcycle powered by a chainsaw, a five meter-long old East German moped or a 9 m long car, where one axis can be steered from the back and one from the front; A V8 Motor, whose 8 manifolds stand on the ground like spider feet and the rest of which was designed like a big black spider, and the very best: The motor was started by remote control, and made such a powerful noise that made the vehicle vibrate and hop, which scared the death out of the clueless people walking by.

Then of course the Sate Liter Bowl was there which we are familiar with from the Werner Comics, Mammut 2000 and a bizarre motorcycle set with 3000 cm^3 of cylinder capacity. Simply unbelievably creative constructions, which you'll all see when the pictures are on the Internet. Have fun looking at them.

Once again Mandello on Lake Como from September 10th-13th, 2004

At this event the motorcycle season slowly starts to wind down. As always, we still take care of business matters with the suppliers down there. We had a great dinner at the All-Verde on Saturday and celebrated André's birthday which we have been celebrating there for 11 years – this time with 25 motorcyclists from Konstanz. A great celebration during which we travelled many wonderful routes, even if the trip home was a bit rainy.

Summary of the 2004 Season

Besides the excursions mentioned here there were of course lots of other short weekend trips, and the 2004 season was a duly compensation after the summer of the century in 2003, which I unfortunately almost entirely missed due to the reconstruction of our workshop.

I would now like to praise my entire team and the shipping logistics firm, which took care of the shipping the replacement parts, for which 80% of the annual orders are placed by fax, letter or the Internet shop, in a quick and reliable manner. It is

great to see that the boss of a Laverda business operating worldwide is almost superfluous thanks to the system we have contrived and of course both the internal and external co-workers, which can be relied on 100 %.
We should of course not forget all our world-wide customers that support our system by cooperating. That is just as important.

Thank you very much to everyone!

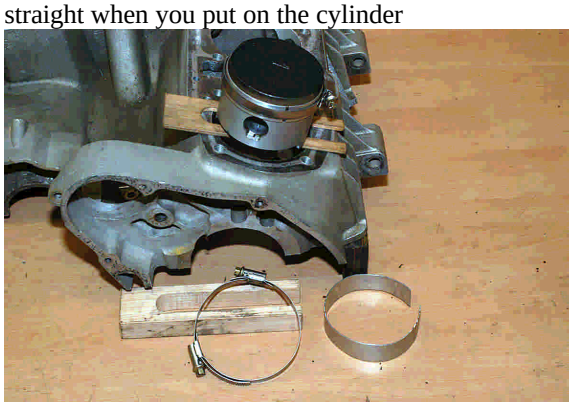
Technical Tips and Tricks

Installing the piston rings

It often happens that customers break the very delicate oil scraper ring when installing the pistons in the cylinder, because they are normally lacking the special tools necessary for doing this.
Here is one possibility which is very simple and for which the material can be found pretty much everywhere. It is definitely a good emergency solution:

- Find a 0.5 mm aluminium sheet in the junk pile. Perhaps even a locksmith's shop might have a sheet like this laying around. If you can't come up with aluminium, a steel sheet will also do. If all else fails, a tin can that is large enough will also do.
- No matter which of the three possibilities you try, you'll have to cut a 16-17 mm wide strip metal strip, whose length depends on the diameter of the pistons. For example, it should be e.g. 23.3 cm long for 75 ∅ pistons and 24.8 cm for 80 ∅ pistons, thus simply the length of the piston with a 1-2 mm leeway.
- The strip of metal is then burred clean on each edge, and in particular the interior surface must be clean and smooth, which can be done easily with a very fine piece of sandpaper.
- Then the strip of metal is preformed to fit around the piston skirt (beneath the piston rings).
- Now you need a hose clamp that fits the diameter; if you can't find a large one and have no other option, you may attach two smaller ones onto one another.
- If the pistons are attached to the piston rod, the joints of the piston rings must be distributed properly (distance to one another ca. 120°). However, none of the joints should point to the front or back.
- Then for - 2-cylinder 750 Laverda both pistons
  - 3-cylinder 180° all 3 pistons
  - 3 cylinder 120° only the middle and left piston (in driving direction) and then slightly lubricate with oil the right piston with the strip of metal bent forward and then place it around the three rings of the piston, parallel to them. (see picture 18)

Picture 18: The piece of wood holds the piston straight when you put on the cylinder



- Carefully press the strip of metal together with the hose clamp, until the strip of metal is lying properly on the piston, without being so fastened that it can no longer be moved.
- Once this has been done for the concerned pistons, put the cylinder on top (it is always best to do this together with someone else if you don't have any experience).
- Mount the pistons.
- On the 750, both are clearly together or
- For the three-cylinder 180° take the middle one first, turn the crankshaft a little bit, so that the outer pistons are elevated and then mount them
- Turn the crankshaft on the three-cylinder 120° (in driving direction) so that the centre end of the piston rod is about 60° before the top dead centre, while the left piston rod is then located 60° after the top dead centre. These can then both be mounted with one another. After that, turn the crankshaft in running direction, so that both other ring sets do not slip out again. It's hard to close it, but it can be done.
- In any case, lubricate the cylinder sleeve a little bit, so that everything slides well.
- Press the cylinder downwards with small strokes of your hand, applying moderate, but very uniform pressure. Please be extremely cautious that the pistons are angular and do not tilt.
- If the cylinder sleeve is fastened too tightly below, the sheet plate can get jammed between the pistons and the cylinder bevel.
- If everything goes well, the edge of the cylinder sleeve presses the metal strip downwards to the piston skirt and the rings slide nicely over the bevel into the bore hole.
- Remove the clamps and the strip of metal and everything should be alright.
- It's only difficult to mount the pistons consecutively on the 120°, without another piston slipping out so far due to the rotating crankshaft, so that the oil ring has once again been freed up. Testing this without mounted piston rings might help you to better see the order and the correct position of the crankshaft. This demands very steady fingers.

- In order to hold the pistons at an angle, while they slide into the cylinder sleeve, it is also helpful to lay thin strips of wood or even some flat pieces of aluminium or steel sized between 5 and 10 mm under the piston skirt on the cylinder based gasket.
- When turning the camshaft, never let the camshaft drive chain get jammed beneath in the motor, because a single element can be worn down so much that it could rip later.
- Things like this are always very difficult to explain, but I hope that this text and the pictures along with it (18 + 19) will help you to do it better. Have fun with the screws!

Tyres for Laverdas

People often ask me which tyre is the right one for a 2 or 3 cylinder Laverda.
Personally, I've rode with Metzeler tyres for more than 16 years, on the front ME33 Laser, on the back ME99, or ME55 on the back to in the proper size.
A few years ago, I put Bridgestone BT45 tyres on the front and back of one of my thousand Laverdas just to test them out, because one of my colleagues said that they were better than the Metzeler stuff. They were completely right.
Many little things, which always bothered me, simply disappeared with the Bridgestone tyres. Especially when it's raining, the motorcycle feels much better and more secure when steering. There are many other advantages and sometimes it really is worth switching from long-standing and time tested products to new ones.
I also know people, who for example endorse Avon tyres, which certainly is not a bad tyre either. But here I would like to make a very clear recommendation: If you haven't tried them out yet, put on some Bridgestone BT45 tyres in the fitting size the next time you change your tyres. They will definitely also win those of you over who are among the more sporty riders.

Gel batteries

Do gel batteries work for Laverda's? This question is being asked more and more frequently.
I usually ride the most kilometres annually (more than 10,000) with my Shark 1000 (1000 from 1975). I've been riding this for more than four years now with probably the most widespread gel battery from the brand Hawker, the Odyssey model, which has been conceptualised especially for motorcycles. It has performed very well during the last four years (without a control system, only with a rectifier). It always starts reliably with its mere 17 Ah in every situation. I would even say that although it is only half the size as the giant 28AH batteries, the starter switches on even better.
A small battery which is fully charged doubtlessly starts better than one that is twice the size, but is not fully charged. Plus gel batteries are also supposed to have a higher starting current.
In my 1000 RGS I used to use up a (plated) lead battery every year after 5000 – 8000 km; and the fine vibrations of the 120° motor also easily killed a Varta battery. The gel battery can easily withstand this, as this year proved, before I primarily rode the RGS this year, because after an overall performance of almost 200,000 km my 1000 Shark needed not only a major motor repair, but the entire chassis frame was also run down.
However, my 750S from 1969 has also already killed two of these batteries, although they only had a few thousand km. When I was ready to take out the gel battery for its winter sleep, the machine barely started. When I removed the gel battery, I saw the same problem as back then. The lower third of the black plastic case was ripped into little pieces for the most part, and a white substance was seeping in some spots. It was time to junk the gel battery.
I am going to send this one back to see what the manufacturer says who honoured the guarantee for the reason that external factor such as acid or gas had destroyed the case (which of course cannot be the case). Plus, they said there was a total discharge, which would indicate a short circuit (which also cannot be the case). But perhaps it was just a weak creeping current which afflicts a gel battery more than a lead battery after sitting around for a long time.
We still have to check what the real problem is. The Bosch charge regulator functions properly, which means that we can rule out that the battery was overcharged. In any case, I never had any problems with a standard lead battery in the 750S from 1969, and only once with the gel batteries. Perhaps they just do not tolerate the very hard vibrations from my 750 from 1969. When I've finished analysing this problem, you'll be able to read about it in a future newsletter, as long as we have your e-mail address.

E-Mail Communication

By the way!!!
As most of you already know, I hate communicating by e-mail.
It is difficult to deal with orders and problems in such as short period of time, as it often takes a lot of time and patience to clarify them.
You might have a question for which we have a return question, which you do not really understand because it is too technically detailed, to which you then respond with an e-mail to us; and this goes back and forth and takes an immense amount of time for both parties.
On the telephone, we can discuss these things much more quickly and precisely, in English as well. I can speak English very well and talk about Laverda problems, but it is difficult for me to read an e-mail written in English, let alone write reply in English! That's why it's always best to call!
☺We're looking forward to your call!

Newsletter E-mail

When I love e-mail!!!!
I think our super mass-e-mail programme is just great.
Everyone whose e-mail address we have is documented in the programme (we update it once or twice a year) and this way these people receive – above all - our info-newsletters like this one here, as soon as it's finished.
Along with that, they get all other important information such as

- when there are no telephone hours because I like to ride my Laverda
- short messages, e.g. the reason why the gel batteries really did break and lots of other information all about Laverdas, which is hopefully interesting for you.

Sending this information to around 3000 e-mail addresses, which we have already registered, only costs us about 30 – 60 minutes online and thus just a few cent. Sending this quantity of letters by regular mail is just a financial nightmare and we just can't do it for a total of nearly 10,000 clients worldwide

☺It's great that we have a mass e-mail programme. Don't forget to give us your e-mail address!

Your e-mail address

This is why! If you have not yet received a circular e-mail from us or haven't received one for a long time, then we either do not have your e-mail address or we have an incorrect one.
Please let us know your e-mail address as soon as possible, preferably by fax (it's the easiest for us), together with your complete address. This will enable you to receive all up-to-date Laverda information. If you can't do it by fax, please send us this info by e-mail to: info@laverda-paradies.de
Please be sure to write "Laverda 8888" in the "concerns" or "topic" space at the top of the e-mail, because otherwise the message will be killed by our security system and shot back into the data universe along with the other 400-500 Viagra and sex e-mails we receive on a daily basis (we protect ourselves from all the bad stuff from the Internet).
Thus, before you continue to read this, send us your e-mail address, so that you don't forget to do so.

Tooth belt kit in the primary driving mechanism of a Laverda 1000 – no thanks

In this newsletter I wrote about the tooth belt test during the 19th Pastis Rally and why this doesn't really work.
After I arrived back in Laverda Paradise after 14 days at the Pastis Rally, I searched on the Internet for the firm that manufactures the Syncroflex tooth belt, where I then gathered information on the durability of these tooth belts.
According to the German manufacturer, I had been using the Red Racing Belt, which sustains about 25 % more than the white standard tooth belt.
According to the sales department, the red tooth belt Generation 3 is the best that the Syncroflex shop has to offer.
It is resistant to oil, transmits a lot of power and can be used up to 100°C.
Well, as the friendly man from the technical department said, if all three factors interact and above all in a motor, which generally running at least 80 to 100°C in hot oil, the belt is totally overstrained.
Another fact is that the oil on the tooth belt wheels is pushed away from the teeth of the synthetic belt, which means that each tooth is constantly exposed to additional stress – in particular in the front on the tooth wheel of the camshaft, where only a few teeth are being used.
I did an extra temperature check on my RGS, where I had the problem. On the day of the test, on which it was very hot outside (28°C), obeying all traffic laws I rode out into the back-country around Konstanz. The motor temperature that I measured with my temperature sensor device (-50 up to +1250°C) directly in the oil: 106°C. In France we had outside temperatures up to 33°C in some places (shown on a display along the street, which shows the time, date, and temperature), and then on extremely curvy mountain passes while riding very fast, the temperature might slightly rise to 120 or 130°C or even higher, meaning that the tooth belt is totally overtaxed.
I spoke about these problems with other dealers. For example, there is a Dutch dealer who knows of 2 cylinder Laverda riders who have had problems, but it wasn't certain if the problems were related to the kit manufactured in Australia or the kit from a German dealer which was re-manufactured according to the Australian model.

Picture 19: Not only the teeth falling out, but also the wire netting destroyed the entire motor of the French bike

After sending around an e-mail on this problem, I myself received a message from a Frenchman concerning this problem. His tooth belt was broken down even much more than mine (see picture 19). Even the steel meshwork from the back of the belt had been broken down and destroyed all areas of the motor. This was a tooth belt kit made in Australia.
He also e-mailed me the answer from the manufacturer written in English, in which they claimed that there are simply people who like to hit the gas pedal a little harder and high-performance as well as low-performance motors, and heavy people and light people. Things like that can happen that when people weigh too much, have a powerful motor and then ride at full throttle like on a race track.
By the way, the German manufacturer accused me of not having installed the parts correctly so that the alignment of the two belt wheels was not correct and claimed that this caused the teeth to fall.

However, I can say with a clear conscience that my straight-edge, with which I checked the alignment, is not bent.
I should also mention that two guys contacted me who used the German tooth belt kit and everything is still running smoothly (around October 2004).
As for Peter from Berlin, his has held for three races in his 1200 racing Laverda (probably a total of less than 500 km).
Bruno from Frankfurt has already travelled about 2000 km with it and he claims to have a more cautious riding style.
Jeremy from England has used the Australian tooth belt kit on his 1000 and has been riding with it for approximately 12,000 miles, but had replaced it once at some point in time. He also knows about the problem of the motor temperature, but it usually isn't that hot in England.
My bottom line is that the tooth belt kit probably is most suitable for racetracks, where the motor is indeed put under stress, but the cooler is turned on due to the high number of revolutions and the high speed. The temperature in the motor is the most difficult problem. It cannot be above 90° C for a long period of time.

- When you're zooming around mountain roads and for two hours or for a whole tank filling, which always involves a high number of revolutions per minute, the motor heats up much more at speeds of less than 100 km/h than on a racetrack.
- For a relaxed ride on a Sunday morning it will certainly do the job, or when you're riding on the freeway in full throttle, because even there the motor will by far not get as hot as when you're riding around narrow mountain passes.
- For all the tooth belt kits, which are on the market for example for Harleys and old English motorcycles, the belt never runs in the oil, but instead dry and is cooled off by the air stream. Thus it all works great here.

☺I'm looking forward the 2005 season with a primary chain drive with a big smile on my face, because – depending on the season – I weigh 75 +/- 2 kg, have a powerful motor and like to press on the gas in narrow mountain passes and no tooth belt is good enough for that.

New Parts

Hagon and Koni shock absorber = Ikon

Many of you know this already as the press has been dealing with it for years: Koni has discontinued the production of stereo-shock absorbers and there weren't any left.
We have added the Hagon shock absorbers to our programme as a very good replacement.
For a while now, the Konis have been back on the market under the name Ikon and they are manufactured the exact same way in Australia in the machine park which Koni sold. Of course we also have these in our repertoire
Order-Nr. 14-39 for 750 Laverdas Hagon shock absorber pair for 222.50 €
Order-Nr. 14-39A for 750 Laverdas Koni/Ikon shock absorber pair for 335.00 €
Order-Nr. 53-32 for all three cylinder Laverdas Hagon shock absorber pair for 222.50 €
Order-Nr. 53-32B for all three cylinder Laverdas Koni/Ikon shock absorber pair for 335.00 €

Koni = Ikon for 350 + 500 Laverdas

Of course there are the new Ikon shock absorbers 350-500 Laverdas as well – 1 pair for 335.00 €

Sealing for old Konis

In order to repair old Stereo-Koni suspension struts with a leak, we also have sealing kits here in stock. They fit not only in the old Konis for Laverda, but also in all Stereo Shock absorber pairs from BMW, Ducati, Guzzi, Honda, Laverda, Moto Morini, Suzuki, Yamaha and all those that I did not mention. 1 sealing kit contains 2 x O-rings and 2 x Stepp seals. You'll also get information on which and how much oil you have to fill it with.
Under the order-nr. "Koni seal" you'll receive a seal kit for a pair of old Koni shock absorbers for 24.00 €.
We'll of course take care of the job of installing the seals into the Konis, if you'd like.

Fuel tap seal for old rectangular original fuel taps (see picture 20)

Soon the inner sealing will only be available on an individual basis for the old rectangular fuel taps, if doesn't do the job anymore. We have continually tested the material for one year now and it works very well on our 750 S from 1969. An expensive tool and high-quality rubber material which sustains unleaded gasoline bring the price to 6.50 € per seal for a fuel tap.
Under the order nr. 12-72 you'll get 1 x seal for a rectangular – 6.50 € per unit.

Starter button case 750 GT/S/SF (see picture 20)

The black case for the electric starter button was moulded out of black synthetic material in a very elaborate fashion.
Nr. 9-1 case starter button GT – one of them costs 41.00 €

Gas and choke cable distributor 1 – 2 for all 750 Laverdas (see picture 20)

Normally this part made of synthetic material was available for 9.00 €, but after while it was no longer deliverable.
Coincidentally, we only received half of one and I re-manufactured the other half and the inside valve.
This distributor as a whole now costs 15.50 €.

Choke cable distributor 1 – 3 for all 3-cylinder Laverdas (see picture 20)

This part has not been deliverable for years now and even though you only need a few per year, I have manufactured it completely from aluminium.
Order-Nr. 54-56 Choke cable cartridge in aluminium 1-3, 23.50 € for 3

Picture 20:Everything has been elaborately moulded and twisted from the solid and is finally deliverable again

Picture 21: Lamp holder arms 750 + 1000/1200-180° and a new brake drum rods with a right-left shank

Lamp holder arm 750 GT/S/SF and 1000 -180° (see picture 21)

Both have been remanufactured in pairs according to the original.
Order-Nr. 59-53 + 59-54 pair of lamp holder arms 1000 + 1200 -180° - 98.00 € per pair
Order-Nr. 26-27 + 26-27A pair of lamp holder arms 750 GT/SF – 98.00 € per pair

Rod for new Laverda brake drums (see picture 21)

The connecting rod between both levers of the brake drum and the corresponding shanks normally have a M6 right-hand thread on both sides.
We have had this rod and the corresponding shanks remade to the extent that one side has a right-hand thread and the other side a left-hand thread. This way the brak can easily be synchronised continually variably, which is normally a very tedious and imprecise task. A kit for rebuilding this which is composed of a connecting rod and two shanks for the new front and back Laverda brake drum can be obtained under the order number nr. 20-13A brake connecting rod kit – kit for one brake drum 47.00 €

Front suspension for 1000 SFC with 41.7 mm M1R shank

We have tested this special front suspension to replace the original one in a very elaborate driving test. We have it in stock and can deliver it to all of you who have problems with the shank in terms of the responding behaviour (shank too hard and crooked). This spring will help as long as the buffers are not the problem.
Order-Nr. 90-72 – Pair of front suspension springs, 41.7 mm shank– 94.50 € per pair.

Andy Wagner on his 75cm³ Laverda from 1954

Picture 22: Colour poster 95x65 cm on glossy paper showing 40 Laverda models, 19.00 each €

Laverda Poster (see picture 22)

We have also received a few of these wonderful posters from the remainder of our stock. Forty different Laverda models from 1950 to 1993 are portrayed in colour on glossy paper; 95x65 cm.
Order-nr. 0-12 Laverda Poster 95x65 cm – 19.00 € per poster.

Long exhaust manifold for SF1-SF2 and SF3 (see picture 23)

We have had the long manifolds in our programme for a long time now, order-nr. 18-36A and 18-37A for 230.00 € per pair.
When using these longer manifolds, the large collector box under the motor can be left out, which gives you above all more ground space for inclined positions.
Following up on our suggestion, the manufacturer re-designed these by attaching a connecting pipe in front of the motor just like on the older models 750S and SF, which has helped the motor run and perform better. Since the beginning of 2004 only the new improved manifold set is sold under the order-nr. 18-36A and 18-37A 365.00.

Picture 23: New version of the extended manifolds for the 750 SF 1-3

Picture 24: Nearly rust-proof brake rings with a diameter of 280 mm. We still have to find the right brake pads!

Brake disc rings made of rustproof material (see picture 24)

We have been testing a rustproof sample of the outer rings of the 280 ∅ brake discs for the 750's and 1000-1200 -180° three-cylinders, but we still haven't found suitable brake pads for them about which we can say that the brakes work really

well. Next summer at the May and Pastis Rally we'll continue testing them extensively, both during dry weather and rain. We will also test 12 other pads from different manufacturers until we have found the right ones. Various stuff from Lucas and Ferodo unfortunately did not work well at all. We will also solve this dilemma, and as soon as an adequate solution has been found, we will send around an e-mail, under the condition that we have your e-mail address, so that you are up-to-date.

Standpipes for the 35 and 38 mm ∅ Ceriani and Marzocchi Gabel

The following standpipes will soon be deliverable, if your old ones are worn down or bent. When ordering with our catalogue number, always indicate the ∅ and length of the standpipe (very important).

- ∅ 35 x Length 595 mm for Marzocchi Gabel 350 + 500 Laverda
- ∅ 35 x Length 584 mm for Ceriani Gabel for all 750's with a brake drum
- ∅ 38 x Length 570 mm for Ceriani Gabel 750 + 180° three-cylinder models
- ∅ 38 x Length 595 mm for Ceriani Gabel 750 + 180° three-cylinder models
- ∅ 38 x Length 630 mm for Marzocchi Gabel 1200 + 120° three-cylinder models
- ∅ 38 x Length 660 mm for Marzocchi Gabel 1200 + 120° three-cylinder models
- All new items thus cost 153.00 € per unit, the pair thus costs 306.00 €.

You should note that very many standpipes are offered at a very low price. In terms of their diameter they are ∅ 0.02 – 0.05 mm smaller than the originals. This means that there is too much room to manoeuvre in the shank, which has a noticeably negative impact when you're riding.
- A 35 mm standpipe must have a diameter of 34.98 – 34.99.
- A 38 mm standpipe must have a diameter of 37.98 – 37.99.

A tolerance up to 34.97 or 37.97 is still acceptable, but everything that is smaller leads to problems.
We have had extra standpipes manufactured which do not have these problems.

Prices in the catalogues

Generally, the great majority of the prices do not fluctuate from year to year, not least because of our immense stock of all individual items. As my computer just told me after I wrote this sentence, we can currently deliver 3478 items for two and three cylinder Laverdas from our stock.
Nevertheless, there still are a few exceptions, where inflation is so high that the price has to be changed in the middle of the year.
For example, in our 750 catalogues from 2002 – 3rd edition, less than 40 parts have become more expensive in the course of two year. I really think that is ok.
However, individual unscheduled price changes are only taken to account in our Internet shop. Please check there.

Winter will soon be over

I have invested a great amount of time into writing this newsletter, after not having written one for two years. Now that it's finished, our next task is to take care of a few orders which have already come in.
Unfortunately it's the same thing every winter – we usually don't have enough capacity for all jobs and orders.
That is why you should make an appointment with us as quickly as possible to make sure that your Laverda will be ready for the spring.
With our very best wishes for the New Year 2005

Andy Wagner + Staff

Andy Wagner on his 1200 Motodd MK3