

Triumph Tiger Cub

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Manufacturer	Triumph
Production	1956-1968
Engine	199cc single cylinder OHV four stroke
Power	10-14 bhp @ 6500rpm
Transmission	4-speed gearbox to chain drive

The **Triumph Tiger Cub** is British motorcycle made by Triumph Motorcycles at their Meriden factory. Designed by Edward Turner and launched at the Earls Court show in November 1953 the Tiger Cub competed well against the other small capacity motorcycles of the time such as Villiers two-strokes.

Development

The first Tiger Cub was derived from the Triumph Terrier with the same frame and forks. In 1957 an off-road version the T20C was produced with high level exhaust and improved suspension. The original model had a plunger frame but this was changed to the modern pattern of swinging fork and two suspension units in 1957. The original model also had the ignition points in a "distributor" on the crankcase behind the cylinder, later models (such as the one shown) have it at a more regular location, on the end of the camshaft under a chrome cover. The last model made was the T20B Super Cub, which was a D10 Bantam with a Cub engine. Launched in November 1952, it was discontinued in 1968.^[1]

Unloved design features

The top tube of the Tiger Cub was lower than normal, leaving the headstock poorly supported. Some rigidity was recovered by the bracing of the petrol tank. A plain bearing on the timing side main bearing sometime wore rapidly.^[2] The primary chain ran in a shallow oil-bath but if the level ever dropped, the chain suffered lubrication failure and stretched. The chain was not tensioned - and even worse, the primary chain case on early models was a slightly "waisted" shape. So a worn chain struck both the inside of the cover and the crankcase itself, making the oil-level even more difficult to maintain in the future. Another common Cub complaint was that the Cub would run along the highway at highway speed (~50mph) for 1/2 hour and then stop unexpectedly. Some attributed this to overheating, but a cure was never found.^[3]

Legislative boost

In 1960 the law was changed restricting learner motorcyclists to a maximum of 250cc and the Tiger Cub became one of the most popular ways of getting onto two wheels.

References

- [1] Kemp, Andrew; De Cet (2004). *Classic British Bikes*. Mirco. Bookmart Ltd. ISBN 1-86147-136-X.
 - [2] Estall, Mike. *The Triumph Tiger Cub Bible*. Veloce Publishing. ISBN 978-1-904788-09-6.
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