

## Winter Storage

Most of my work when I was a Triumph and Honda dealership mechanic in the mid-70's and now again as a part time vintage/ classic mechanic, deal with the results of long-term storage, even in the mild climate of Atlanta.

The **Number One** issue is fuel left in the tank and carburetors. When the fuel evaporates from the float bowls, it leaves a coating that closes up the orifice of the jets. This is especially harmful to the smaller jets, like the idle jets, which, more often than not, clog completely closed.

The **Number Two** issue is stale fuel. These days fuel now goes bad in about 6-10 weeks. I'm aware of products like Sta-Bil, but feel they are best suited for machines that will be cranked and ridden at every opportunity, the owner just doesn't know when that is. For instance, our friends in North Carolina where it could be clear and sunny or it could be snowing.

If the rider knows the machine will definitely not be ridden for 2 months or longer then it's best to empty out ALL the fuel and burn it now in the car. To prevent condensation in your fuel tank the normal practice is to fill the fuel tank. That's a very BAD idea. To keep condensation out of the fuel tank simply remove the fuel cap, or prop it open if it's hinged. Condensate only accumulates in closed volumes. And too, without fuel the bike can be more safely placed in a temperature controlled part of the home, like a heated basement.

When the bike is finally brought back out, I highly suggest that the first tank of fuel be Chevron high test, or similar brand that includes fuel cleaners. Those cleaners really do work.

Way down the list in a distant third place is battery maintenance.

1) Batteries should be completely removed from the bike for care in a temperature-controlled area. I've seen batteries freeze and crack open, dumping their acidic contents all over precious vintage paint jobs and polished aluminum. This is not cheap to fix.

2) DO NOT leave the battery on any type of charger full-time. A battery worth keeping until next spring only requires 1 hour of charging every 2 weeks; over charging kills a battery faster than no charging.

3) If you **must** leave the battery on a charger then get 2 of those lite-duty home lamp timers. The kind you use when you go on vacation. Set both of them to be ON for one hour per day, and then plug one into the other. Plug the first timer into the wall outlet, and the battery charger into the second timer. The combination of timers will greatly reduce your charge time and keep the battery on a more sensible charge schedule.

If you'll remove the fuel and battery now, you can avoid my high charges next spring.

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