Les Archer at speed aboard the Big Velo.

of the famous KTT and all its illustrious history. In 1926 the riding ace Alec Bennett, being so impressed by the machine offered to ride in the Junior TT on the Isle of Mann for nothing unless he won—which he did by ten minutes!

The years from this development until the second World War saw Velocette Motorcycles gather a worldwide reputation as fine hand built, quality machines. Demand was huge across the range with KTTs being ordered and sent all over the world. Racing was the motivation, not only to drive sales but for the prestige of winning, and the greatest motorcycle road race in the world was the Isle of Mann Tourist Trophy. This dangerous race was the crucible for improving speed, endurance and mechanical excellence. The Velocette, elegant in black with a single hand painted gold pin stripe sported all these attributes, and during the ’30s developed ground breaking design features and an enduring aesthetic.

With success and fame in hand on the 350 KTT, Harold Willis, the head of racing at Velocette Limited enlarged the engine that Percy Goodman had conceived some ten years earlier into a 500cc MT5001, MT being Factory experimental racing, 500cc number 1, first appeared in 1934. This may have been aided by the factory developing the MSS pushed engine road bike model concurrently. The machines had similar designed new lightweight loped frame, positive stop foot-change gearboxes and engines with a bore and stroke of 81x96mm. With the prestigious premier 'senior' class in mind these experimental ‘dog-kennel’ engines were prepared. The name comes from the shape of the bolt on cam box. Special ‘works’ parts included magnesium castings for the cam box, gear box, and conical rear hub which was no doubt the predecessor of the M9KMTT wheel set. One notable feature of MT5001 was the use of the ‘stretched’ front fork, made by Webb's, their intended use was for sidecar units, but the race department at Velocette thought they would be more capable of coping with the 38 bhp the new engine produced.

MT5001, the first of these rare machines was ridden by the flying Ulsterman Walter Rusik to win the Ulster Grand Prix Senior of 1934 at the record speed of 98.38mph, & a blistering outright lap record of 92.13mph. Rusik on the Velo followed Stanley Woods aboard a Moto Guzzi home in the Senior Isle of Mann TT of that year. Woods went on to become synonymous with racing Velocettes and in 1936 took MT5003, albeit with a new ‘springer’ frame developed at his request, to a spectacular second place two seconds behind Jimmy Guthrey on a Norton. The 500cc works racing Velocettes were continually developed until WW2 including a dualie version, & in its final form as a fully enclosed 50 inch square 'Huntley & Palmers' head. Only a handful of factory racing 500s were made & were never available for sale to the public.

The Consistent

MT5001

NZ’s BIG VELO

World’s Fastest