

A MOVIE FOR GEARHEADS AND OTHER MECHANICAL PEOPLE



Hollywood just doesn't cater to the gearheads of the world, but the truly devout mechanical enthusiast can find solace in Blockbuster's new release section this summer.

Burt Munro, played by Anthony Hopkins in "The World's Fastest Indian," wanted only one perfect run on the Indian Scout that he bought for \$50 in 1920 and spent his whole life tinkering with in his New Zealand garage.


The Scout had a 37-cubic-inch, 42° V-twin engine with side valves. A helical gear primary drive was contained in an oil-tight, cast-alloy case, and a three-speed, hand-change gearbox with a foot clutch was fitted. A double-down tube cradle frame was used, rigid to the rear, and a leaf spring provided the forks with nearly 2" of movement at the front.

What did Munro do to prepare his bike for worldwide acclaim? Probably nothing the AGMA would recommend. He used an old spoke for a micrometer and cast parts in old tins. He built his own four-cam design to replace the two-cam system and converted to overhead valves.

He made his own barrels, flywheels, pistons, cams and followers and lubrication system. More or less, he hand-carved his con-rods from a Caterpillar tractor axle and hardened and tempered them to 143 tons tensile strength. He built a 17-plate, thousand-pound pressure clutch and used a triple chain drive. He experimented with streamlining, and in its final form, the bike was completely enclosed in a streamlined shell. The leaf-sprung fork was dispensed with and what appears to be a girder fork from a 1925-1928 Prince

was substituted.

And the result of all this blood, sweat and tears? Munro took out a second mortgage to travel to Utah and race on the renowned Bonneville Salt Flats. As avid racing fans already know, he captured a land speed record at the flats in 1967.

Whether a sequel is in the works is not for The Addendum Team to reveal. Suffice it to say, we think the E! True Hollywood Stories of Gear Heroes could be a blockbuster franchise. 

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