



The Heron TSR came about as the result of Suzuki officially withdrawing from GP racing at the end of the 1983 season...



...however, Team Heron and Team Gallina (in Italy) continued to be supplied with factory frames and motors, initially the XR40. Both teams began looking at innovative chassis solutions to remain competitive.



This bike was ridden by Kevin Schwantz (in Rizla colours) in his first points-scoring race in GPs, a 10th at Spa in 1986. It was later raced by Niall Mackenzie in the Skoal Bandit livery seen here.

Famous colours!

COMPOSIT COMPETITOR

THE 1986 SUZUKI HERON TSR

Something of an evolution of the official Suzuki square four it might have been, but the TSR did at least look to new avenues of frame design to keep competitive. The name was bond... Ciba-Geigy bond (a bonding material invented for aircraft construction - Ed) if we're being precise about what held this race bike together.

Words and photos: Phil Aynsley



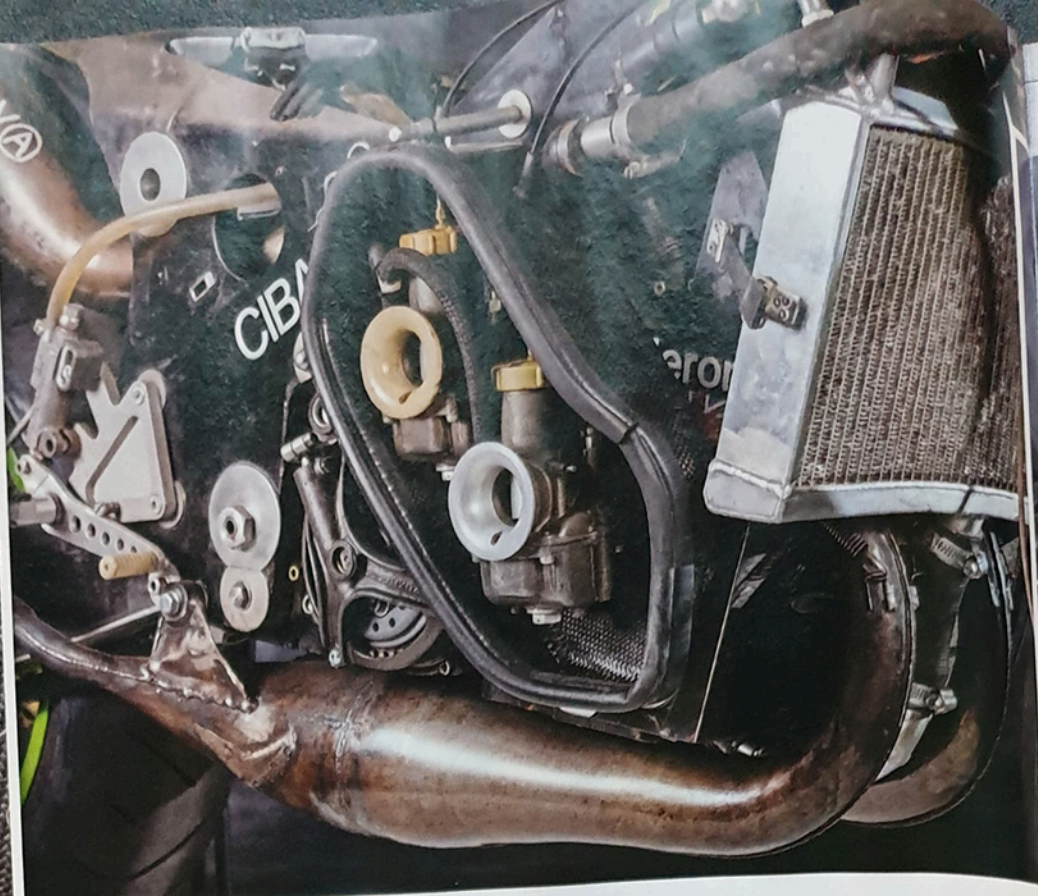
TSR08 in all it's glory.

CLASSIC RACER PEOPLE



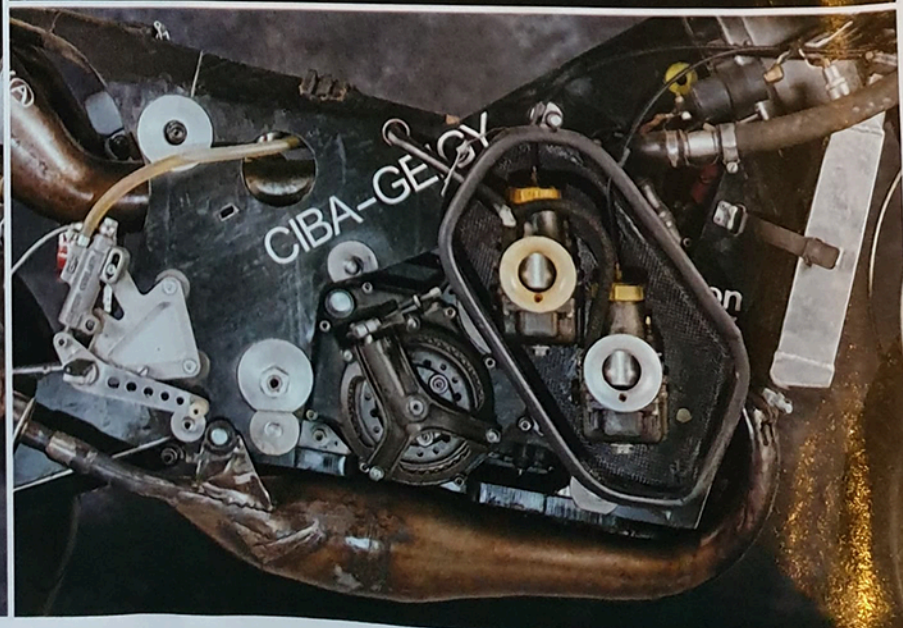
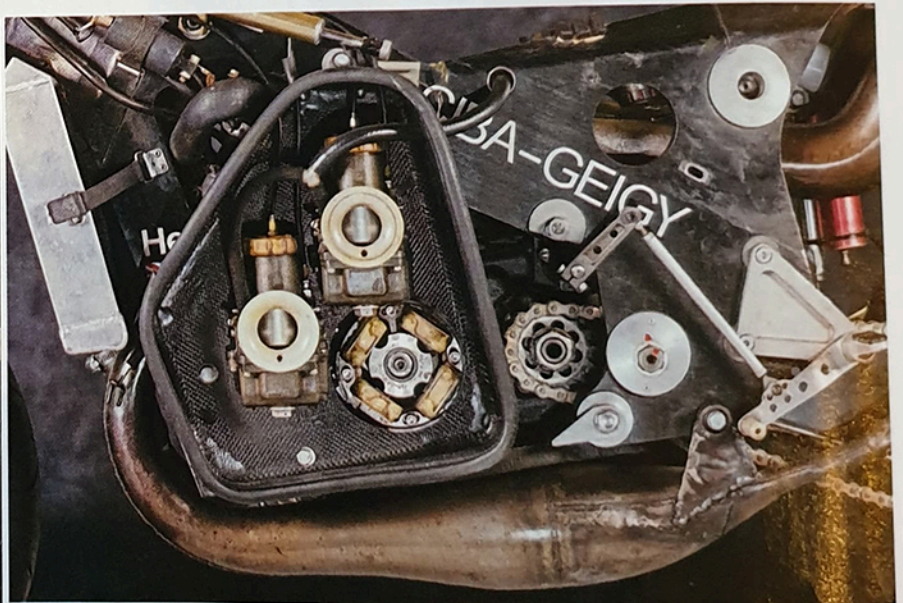
Mikuni VM36mm or VM38mm magnesium carbs were used depending on the track. The reed blocks can just be seen here with the reed petals in the closed position behind them.

1986 saw a composite swingarm replace the earlier alloy unit. White Power took over the suspension duties from components supplied by Suzuki.



The final version of the square-four motor was the XR70RV, as fitted to TSR08, which produced 138hp at 12,500rpm (rear wheel).

The XR70RV motor dispensed with the rotary disc-valves that all the previous square-fours had used and reed-valves took their place. The reed blocks were located in special crankcase uppers and positioned where the disc-valves would have been.

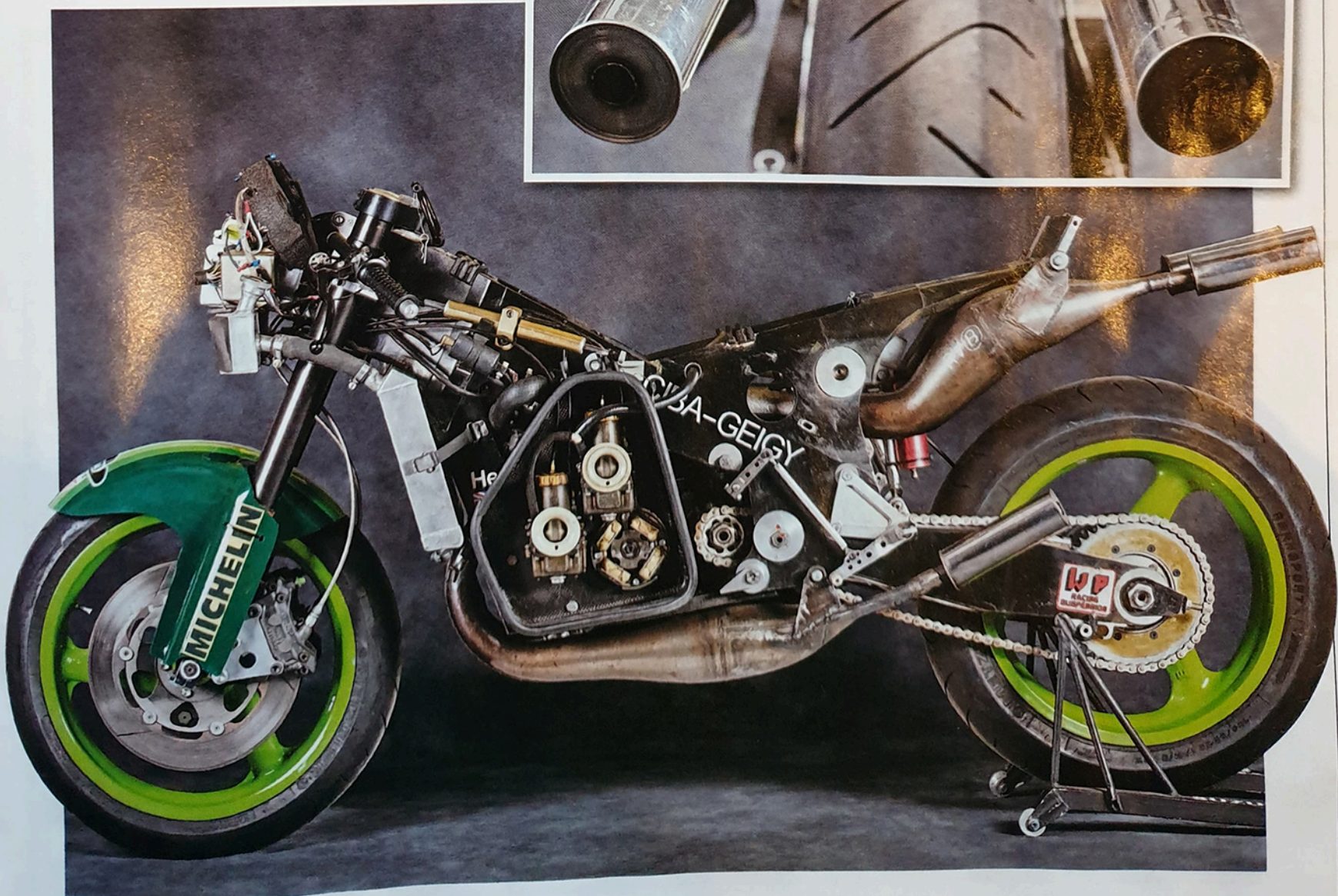
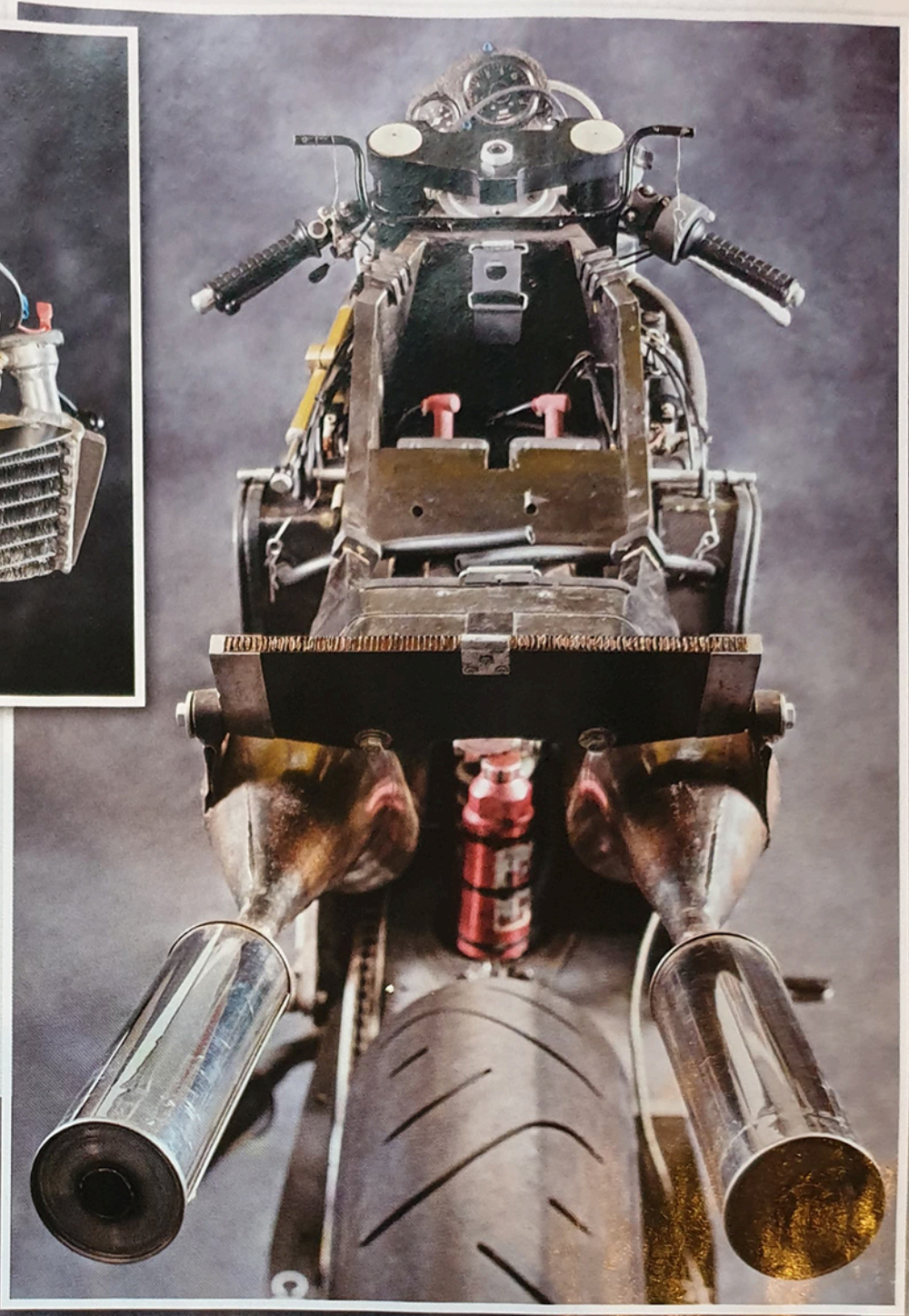




The main aims of the composite chassis were weight reduction and rigidity. These were accomplished with the bike having a wet weight of 115kg (no fuel) and excellent handling.

The chassis material was Ciba-Geigy Bonded Aeroweb, a honeycomb/composite material.

By 1986 the exhausts, cylinder heads and airboxes were all UK developed items.





The structure of the composite can be clearly seen here.

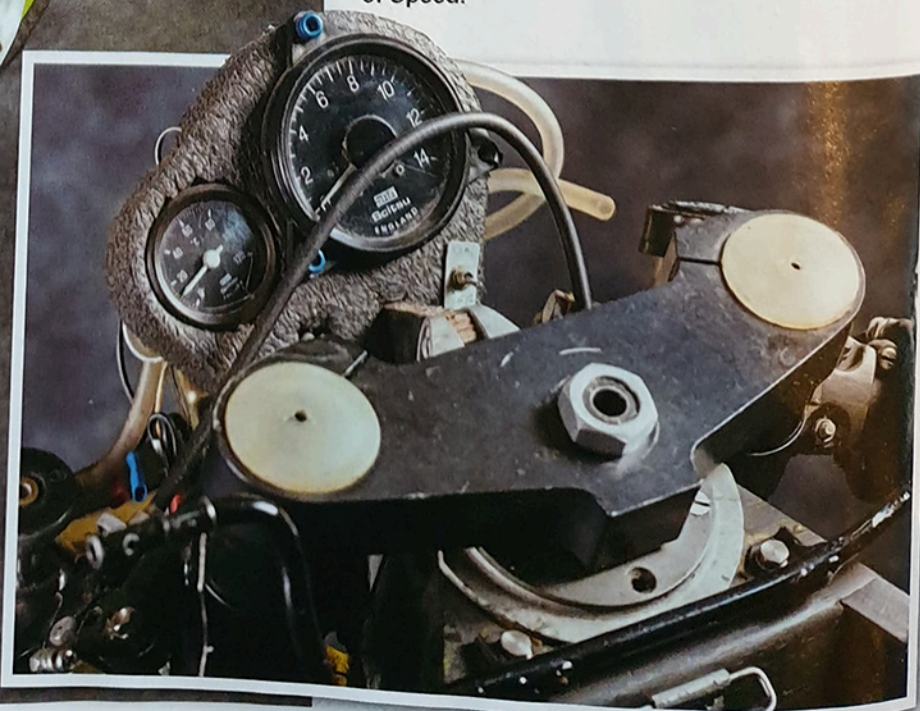


The frame was constructed by Nigel Leaper, who subsequently went on to work for several Formula One teams.



The first two prototypes were constructed with an aluminium cladding (painted white) over the composite, but the following six frames just used the black honeycomb material.

After the 1986 season the bike was sold and went to Germany. Wolfgang Von Muralt raced it in 1987. It was then stored in pieces until the current owner found it in 2008. It was rebuilt by ex-Heron race mechanic Paul Boulton and first saw action at the 2009 Goodwood Festival of Speed.



CLASSIC RACER PEOPLE



The business end.

The first chassis was built in 1984 with this eighth and final bike constructed in 1986.



Mackenzie was entered in the final three races of the 1986 season and had two sevenths and an eighth place finish.



Mackenzie qualified on the front row for the final race of the 1986 season at Misano.

