

MILLION POUND PLAN TO BUILD ALL-BRITISH 'SUPER SINGLE'

ARTIST'S IMPRESSION
BY JOE LAWRENCE

Exclusive superlight Hejira set to combine carbon-fibre frame of existing race machine with sophisticated F1 car engine technology

BY TERRY SNELLING

BRITISH race bike experts Hejira have revealed an ambitious million-pound plan to put a super-exclusive road-going single into production.

The bike would come in a choice of specification - either a limited edition machine featuring the latest Formula One car technology or a less expensive version using a much lower-tech chassis and engine.

Hejira boss Derek Chittenden said: "It's not all pie in the sky. The technology is already here and we have put in £50,000 of our own money to prove it's possible."

City financiers have been approached to fund the project and a number of interested groups are now studying the proposal.

The limited edition bike would feature the first bike chassis to be "properly engineered" in carbon fibre. The wheels would also be made of the super-lightweight material.

But, funds permitting, the most advanced feature will be the engine.

Key components will be taken from an F1 car engine and the crankcase

castings will be made from thermo-plastic.

With a capacity of around 650cc, the target power in race tune is 90bhp, detuned to 65-70bhp for the road, which even then would rival Ducati's exclusive Supermono racer.

Other features include four valves, fuel injection with engine management computer and a six-speed gearbox.

With its styling perfected in a wind tunnel, the sleek single is likely to cost up to £20,000.

At about half this price, the "budget" model would have a steel trellis frame and a less-sophisticated engine - possibly a Rotax unit - but similar sharp styling.

Chittenden says he could have a prototype up and running within eight months if the necessary finance comes through.

He added: "I want to build an all-British machine. We can't compete with the Japanese in mass production, but we have the expertise to build something very special."

"If we can't get the full £1 million, and I don't expect early confirmation, we could get a long way towards my dream on more limited funds."

■ ABOVE: Our artist's impression shows the new road bike's styling would be closely based on Hejira's racing single

■ BELOW: Hejira's pioneering race machines feature extensive use of carbon fibre, including using the lightweight material for the frame

'Crankcase castings will be thermo-plastic and target power in race tune is 90bhp'