Motorcycle editorial

By cap hpi

June 2023

Motorcycle market overview

The latest news out there has not changed much from what has become the “norm”. Although the forecast of domestic recession are proving incorrect as there has been a small growth month-on-month at the back end of last year and into 2023. With 12 interest rate increases in as many months currently failing to slow inflation and with continuing strikes, even the resilient motorcycle buyers are finding it difficult to have a positive outlook. There is not generally a negative feeling around the industry, but perhaps a little less positive than was felt over the first months and lower showroom activity perhaps eventually showing in the new registration numbers. Perhaps the announcement that consumer spending had shrunk in March is now impacting our industry.

New market

As mentioned above, although feedback has suggested lower traffic in the showrooms all this year it did not impact sales up to the end of Q1, as the ones visiting dealerships were buyers, not lookers. The problem with that state of affairs is there could be an assumption that those kicking tyres now, will be buyers in the months after the initial visit. If that is the case it could go some way to explaining why the sudden total registrations decline of 13.1% to 9,848, from 11,327 in April last year in the latest MCIA new registration figures.

Drilling down into the figures it is a little difficult to find a real positive to crow about at the moment, with Moped continuing the sharp retreat seen this year, with the month and year to date (Y-T-D) both seeing over a third less than 2022. After the good performance for the new plate, Motorcycles are minus 12% for the month, but less of a loss Y-T-D at -2.1%. Trying to find a significant positive really only leads to one sector this month and with a quarter of the market share the prize is awarded to Naked.

April 2023 and Year to Date - New Registrations by Style

Mopeds	Registrations			Market Share (%)		Year to date			Market Share (%)	
	Apr-23	Apr-22	% Change	Apr-23	Apr-22	2023	2022	% Change	2023	2022
Naked	31	54	-42.6%	7.7%	8.7%	120	215	-44.2%	7.7%	8.9%
Other	82	82	0.0%	20.4%	13.2%	316	324	-2.5%	20.3%	13.3%
Scooter	288	486	-40.7%	71.8%	78.1%	1,119	1,889	-40.8%	72.0%	77.8%
Totals	401	622	-35.5%	100.0%	100.0%	1,555	2,428	-36.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Motorcycles	Registrations			Market Share (%)		Year to date			Market Share (%)	
	Apr-23	Apr-22	% Change	Apr-23	Apr-22	2023	2022	% Change	2023	2022
Adventure	1,780	1,843	-3.4%	19.0%	17.3%	7,330	7,579	-3.3%	20.3%	20.6%
Competition	638	590	8.1%	6.8%	5.6%	2,366	2,293	3.2%	6.6%	6.2%
Custom	679	872	-22.1%	7.3%	8.2%	2,513	2,675	-6.1%	7.0%	7.3%
Modern Classic	1,033	1,260	-18.0%	11.0%	11.9%	3,947	3,772	4.6%	11.0%	10.2%
Naked	2,332	2,188	6.6%	24.9%	20.6%	8,214	7,302	12.5%	22.8%	19.8%
Road Sport	783	974	-19.6%	8.4%	9.2%	2,945	3,060	-3.8%	8.2%	8.3%
Scooter	1,841	2,681	-31.3%	19.7%	25.2%	7,595	9,121	-16.7%	21.1%	24.8%
Touring	242	216	12.0%	2.6%	2.0%	1,063	1,010	5.2%	2.9%	2.7%
Unspecified	28	3	833.3%	0.3%	0.0%	71	16	343.8%	0.2%	0.0%
Total Motorcycle	9,356	10,627	-12.0%	100.0%	100.0%	36,044	36,828	-2.1%	100.0%	100.0%

Tricycles	Registrations			Market Share (%)		Year to date			Market Share (%)	
	Apr-23	Apr-22	% Change	Apr-23	Apr-22	2023	2022	% Change	2023	2022
Other	37	14	164.3%	0.4%	0.1%	138	54	155.6%	0.4%	0.1%
Scooter	54	64	-15.6%	0.6%	0.6%	133	200	-33.5%	0.4%	0.5%
Total Tricycles	91	78	16.7%	1.0%	0.7%	271	254	6.7%	0.8%	0.7%

Summary	Registrations	Market Share (%)	Year to date	YTD	Market Share (%)

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	Apr-23	Apr-22	% Change	Apr-23	Apr-22	2023	2022	% Change	2023	2022
Total Scooter	2,183	3,231	-32.4%	22.2%	28.5%	8,847	11,210	-21.1%	23.4%	28.4%
Total Moped, Motorcycle & Tricycles (exc Scooters)	7,665	8,096	-5.3%	77.8%	71.5%	29,023	28,300	2.6%	76.6%	71.6%
Total Registrations	9,848	11,327	-13.1%	100.0%	100.0%	37,870	39,510	-4.2%	100.0%	100.0%

Again, in the engine size tables there is a lack of something to be positive about, with the exception of 751-1000cc up 15.2%, and at the opposite end, the learner legal sub 125cc bands are both falling foul of the popularity seen during the pandemic as they start to re-align at lower numbers. The positive is the larger capacity machines tend to be bigger ticket and more profit for a dealer.

April 2023 and Year to Date - Powertrain and Capacity

Month

Powertrain	Apr-23	Apr-22	% Change
ICE	9,512	10,758	-11.6%
Electric	336	569	-40.9%
Total Registrations	9,848	11,327	-13.1%

YTD

Powertrain	Apr-23	Apr-22	% Change
ICE	36,794	37,021	-0.6%
Electric	1,076	2,489	-56.8%
Total Registrations	37,870	39,510	-4.2%

Month

ICE	Apr-23	Apr-22	% Change
0-50cc	260	350	-25.7%
51-125cc	2,868	4,015	-28.6%
126-500cc	1,587	1,642	-3.3%
501-750cc	1,379	1,403	-1.7%
751-1000cc	1,747	1,516	15.2%
1000cc+	1,671	1,832	-8.8%
Total Registrations	9,512	10,758	-11.6%

YTD

ICE	Apr-23	Apr-22	% Change
0-50cc	1,128	1,272	-11.3%
51-125cc	11,131	12,416	-10.3%
126-500cc	6,012	6,320	-4.9%
501-750cc	5,149	4,681	10.0%
751-1000cc	6,445	5,530	16.5%
1000cc+	6,929	6,802	1.9%
Total Registrations	36,794	37,021	-0.6%

Month

ELECTRIC	Apr-23	Apr-22	% Change
Moped ≤ 4 kW	141	272	-48.2%
Motorcycle ≤ 11 kW	162	243	-33.3%
Motorcycle ≤ 35 kW	4	10	-60.0%
Motorcycle > 35 kW	7	21	-66.7%
Exempt	6	6	0.0%
Unknown	16	17	-5.9%
Total Registrations	336	569	-40.9%

YTD

ELECTRIC	Apr-23	Apr-22	% Change
Moped ≤ 4 kW	427	1,156	-63.1%
Motorcycle ≤ 11 kW	534	1,147	-53.4%
Motorcycle ≤ 35 kW	17	73	-76.7%
Motorcycle > 35 kW	14	44	-68.2%
Exempt	35	33	6.1%
Unknown	49	36	36.1%
Total Registrations	1,076	2,489	-56.8%

April 2023 - Highest Registering Model by Style

Moped	Best Selling Models	Apr-23
Naked	Vmoto SUPER SOCO TC	5
Other	Sur-ron LIGHT BEE	28
Scooter	Aprilia SXR 50	22

Motorcycle	Best Selling Models	Apr-23
Adventure	Yamaha TRACER 9 GT	112
Competition	Multiple Items	39
Custom	Royal Enfield SUPER METEOR 650	107
Modern Classic	Royal Enfield HNTR 350	90
Naked	Honda CBF 125 M	180
Road Sport	Kawasaki NINJA 1000 SX	76
Scooter	Honda PCX 125	270
Touring	BMW R 1250 RT	62

New Registrations by Brand

Best Selling Brands	Apr-23
Honda	1,859
Yamaha	1,101
Triumph	837
KTM	672
BMW	651
Royal Enfield	482
Kawasaki	457
Ducati	310
Suzuki	304
Lexmoto	290

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Tricycle	Best Selling Models	Apr-23
Other	Multiple Items	10
Scooter	Yamaha TRICITY 300	22

April 2023 - Highest Registering Model by Engine Size

ICE	Best Selling Models	Apr-23
0-50cc	Aprilia SXR 50	22
51-125cc	Honda PCX 125	270
126-500cc	Honda ADV 350	91
501-750cc	Royal Enfield SUPER METEOR 650	107
751-1000cc	Honda CB 750 HORNET	119
1000cc+	BMW R 1250 GS	98

Electric	Best Selling Models	Apr-23
Moped ≤ 4 kW	Sur-ron LIGHT BEE	28
Motorcycle ≤ 11 kW	Sur-ron ULTRA BEE	39
Motorcycle ≤ 35 kW	BMW CE 04 15kW	4
Motorcycle > 35 kW	Zero Motorcycles SR/S ZF14.4	2
Exempt	Electric Motion EPURE RACE	4

The European association, ACEM, has recently released its first quarter registration numbers and it gives us the chance to benchmark our domestic market in the top five continental markets for Motorcycles, both ICE and electric. The comparison on any level does not make for pleasant reading with the others all starting the year off better than the UK when compared to the first post pandemic year, 2022. A positive spin is difficult to apply to this one, apart from that at least we are still a slight positive!

Q 1 2023	France	% 2022	Germany	% 2022	Italy	% 2022	Spain	% 2022	UK	% 2022	Total	% 2022
January	11,914	5.90%	7,519	35.20%	20,263	46.60%	13,291	13.60%	5,421	-6.70%	58,408	21.30%
February	14,947	16.90%	15,894	21.90%	22,657	23.40%	12,505	-0.70%	4,506	-5.00%	70,509	14.60%
March	22,084	1.90%	31,551	5.40%	36,077	28.40%	18,331	25.30%	16,899	6.80%	124,942	13.40%
Jan - March	48,945	7.10%	54,964	13.20%	78,997	31.10%	44,127	13.40%	26,826	1.70%	253,859	15.50%

Used market

There is a mention above that traffic through the doors is lower than perhaps is comfortable, but sales are still happening at a reasonable rate. Although the monkey on the shoulder of where sales will go in the coming months is not something easily predictable, it should be something considered important as stock levels should reflect demand. So, over the next few months some clarity as to where prices are going will be easier to spot, bearing in mind the season is already halfway through and the natural lower volume turnover is around the corner. Currently though the reported prices when discussed during research are in the mid-season level, where, except for a couple of corrections the market suggests, generally little movement either way is required.

Auction

The auction system is still not seeing larger quantities of entries as would have been expected five years ago and have been in decline since the shortages of used machines in the trade system and increasing in the decline during the pandemic.

As the motorcycle trade does not depend on sourcing stock through the sale rooms to a great extent the difference between 400 bikes a month going through the sale rooms and the current numbers of around 200, is reasonably easy to overcome, and as the lack of auction entries are down because end of PCP bikes are more likely to be taken in part-exchange than handed back, there is a natural easing of the problem.

The main sale in the system that sees Black Horse and BMW disposals, has had a reduced entry list of less than 70 this last research period, but an increased sold amount at 79% of those, and an overall average of all sold units of 101% of the CAP reported figures.

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End notes

Ducati had a good start to the year with Q1 revenue up by 40.3% (to £282.6m), operating profit a massive 134.2% increase (to £50.8m) and operating margin increasing from 10.7% to 17.8%. Total production numbers were up 8.2% (to 17,043)
Still early in the season there are a number of incentives in place from some manufacturers to boost sales in many forms to make the most of the early buyers. Seen widely in the car industry, but something new in the bike industry, is an authorised factory service programme. Husqvarna has introduced its new Lifetime Mobility Cover scheme with a free breakdown cover product for Husqvarna road bikes offered when owners have the bike serviced at an official dealer. Every service covers the bike for breakdowns until the next official service, and comes with roadside assistance and also covers accident, theft, vandalism and fire. The cover is for a year, or until the next service is due, whichever is sooner, and is available for up to 60,000km/eight years for singles and 80,000km/eight years for twins.

Triumph has passed control of its Indian market sales and distribution operation to its partner Bajaj. The connection to the Indian firm has taken its time after being first announced in 2017 after Triumph failed to develop its own India-based operation officially announced in 2013. There are currently only 15 Triumph dealers in India, but more than likely to increase substantially once the more affordable models are available.

Bajaj currently has around 6000 dealers in the country for its own bikes, with plans to introduce Triumph dealers in 120 cities over the next two years. The bikes will be targeted at successful Indian rivals like Royal Enfield, but are also offered globally as a new entry point to the Triumph range. The Bajaj empire already has connections with other manufacturers including KTM in which they have a substantial shareholding in the parent company. They manufacturer the Austrian brand’s 125, 250 and 390cc single-cylinder models for them.

This has fuelled rumour that Bajaj is interested in buying Triumph in the future, although there’s currently no indication that the British brand is for sale. There is a group of famous, old-name bike brands Bajaj have already bought, and in 2020 the company bought rights to the Excelsior Henderson brand. In 2022 it added a number of British names to its trademark portfolio including Vincent, HRD and Egli-Vincent. BSA are now up and running under Mahindra ownership and Royal Enfield are on a roll under the ownership of Eicher Motors, so it’s not a stretch to see why Triumph would, being already up and running with a worldwide name in the big bike market, make for a very attractive addition to the Bajaj.

The first Triumph single-cylinder model range will be unveiled in London on Tuesday 27th June according to Bajaj managing director, Rajiv Bajaj, and he stated that the bikes will be in dealers soon afterwards, adding "We should have product on the market in the second quarter of this financial year." Triumph’s official press release said that "the motorcycles developed together from this partnership will join the current Triumph product portfolio and be distributed by the Triumph led dealer network worldwide".

The singles have a distinct overtone of Triumph’s existing ‘modern classic’ line up and leaked spy shots have both a scrambler-style and a more traditional roadster. They both have the same DOHC single-cylinder engine that like the Bonny twins, will be water-cooled but with a classic look of an air-cooled design.