



Brian Chapman

The term giant-killer is often used in sport, but rarely is it used more aptly than when describing the outstanding performances of Brian Chapman. For many years he developed his tiny, unfashionable single cylinder Vincent Comet 500cc drag bike. It was called Mighty Mouse and as he continued its development the elapsed times came down. A blower was added, and the nitro started to be tipped, causing the times to tumble further and confounding those who said it would not go any quicker.

Somehow he managed to get under 10 seconds - a massive achievement at the time; but when he became the first 500cc rider anywhere in the world to run under 9 seconds - that was frankly unreal. Mighty Mouse remained competitive with the bigger bikes during the 1970s and he picked up more than his fair share of Top Bike eliminator and championship wins.

The blown 500cc Vincent finally reached the end of its development at the end of the seventies, notching up a best of 8.81seconds; so Brian decided to build a V-twin Vincent. Debuted in 1981, Super Mouse ran like a double-engined 500, with twin blowers. It was immediately successful, and rapidly headed down towards the 7 second zone. Unfortunately he got thrown off the bike in 1982; having recorded 8.25s/169mph. Brian himself was thankfully only badly bruised. Although he rebuilt the bike and it ran again, it was not long before he retired from full-on racing.

Brian, and his wife Renee, were always to be found in the pits on race days, along with their 2 young children; and over a 10 year period at Santa Pod he did not miss a single meeting. That has to be some kind of record in itself. And as the sport progressed they also ran at many other venues in Europe and even further abroad. Being an enthusiastic Vincent Owners Club member, he and his 500cc machine were invited to go to America by the club in 1978. There he took in some drag races, and proceeded to shut down the odd double Harley or two along the way. The American Vincent owners in the stands loved that.

Brian's induction into the British Drag Racing Hall of Fame recognises both his amazing technical achievements and his long time contribution to the sport of two-wheeled drag racing.