



BSA Gold Star 350cc (1960)

Renowned as one of the most versatile and all-round performers of its era

Model	Years	Engine	Suspension	Power (bhp)	Notable Features
DB 32	1938 to 1963	348cc air-cooled single cylinder, four stroke	Telescopic forks (front), swinging arm (rear)	Approx. 18–27 hp	Overhead valve (OHV) with alloy barrel and head. Transmission: 4-speed gearbox, wet multiplate clutch, chain final drive.

The BSA DB B32 Gold Star 350cc was part of the renowned BSA Gold Star series, produced by the Birmingham Small Arms (BSA) Company from 1938 to 1963.

The Gold Star line was celebrated for its performance, hand-built quality and racing pedigree, with the DB32 specifically representing the 348cc (often rounded to 350cc) single-cylinder models.

The air-cooled, single-cylinder, four-stroke featured an overhead valve (OHV) with alloy barrel and head. It had a 4-speed gearbox, wet multiplate clutch, and chain drive. Competition-tuned models reached speeds up to 110 mph (177 km/h). The steel full duplex swingarm offered improved handling over the earlier plunger or rigid frames.

BSA Gold Stars, including the 350cc DB32 model, were renowned as one of the most versatile motorcycles of its era. It excelled in a wide range of disciplines—road racing, trials, scrambles (motocross), and touring—making it the go-to choice for riders who wanted a machine that could do it all. This adaptability was a key factor in its widespread appeal.

Racing history

In the 1950s and 1960s, BSA Gold Star bikes were a dominant force in national and international motocross events. The British company's most significant victories came when countryman Jeff Smith won the 500cc Motocross World Championship titles in 1964 and 1965. These were the final years when four-stroke machines like the Gold Star dominated the premier motocross class before lighter two-stroke motorcycles became prevalent.

The World Motocross Championships, which began in 1957, did not include a 350 class, although the BSA 350cc

Gold Stars were earlier successful in the European titles. England's Johnny Draper won the 1955 European 350cc Motocross Championship.

In the Australian Motocross Championships, the 350cc class was a popular one from the inaugural titles in Daylesford, Victoria in 1953, through to 1968 in Collie (WA), with WA hosting the class for the last time at the National titles in Manjimup.

During this period, BSA Gold Star bikes won 12 out of the 17 titles held, with WA motocross legends Charlie West (2), Peter Nicol (2) and Alan Nicol (1) winning five of these.

West and Nicol's wins in 1961 and 1962 were possibly on the same DB32 model, as on display.

Restoration

The BSA DB 350 Gold Star on display was restored to original street set-up by the Lawson family with help from Bob O'Leary. Bob has numerous Australian and State titles in all forms of motorcycle racing.

Before the purpose-built lighter two-stroke motorcycles became prevalent, road bikes were stripped and set up for off-road use.

The engine was originally purchased from Mortlock Brothers, a well-known motorcycle dealership at 914 Hay Street, Perth. It was numbered 1601, the first one sold in 1960.

Established in 1896, Mortlock Brothers sold various brands, including BSA and Harley Davidson bikes through both the early 20th century and the post-war years.

In 2024, Peter Lawson's son Brook won an Australian VMX title on the bike in the Pre-1965 class, winning three other classes, including on the 500 BSA Gold Star also on display.

Photos: [Left to right] The restored 1960 BSA DB 350 Gold Star; Australian motocross legend Charlie West won two Australian 350cc Motocross Championships on Gold Star models in 1958 and 1961; and an advertisement for BSA Gold Star promoting its single cylinder engines.

