

Jack Taylor — Stockton

WHEN you've been building since 1936, have just finished a triplet with a 21/19/17-inches frame and are working on a seven-foot unicycle, as well as racing and touring frames for bikes, tandems and trikes, then you're an expert.

The achievement belongs to Stockton dealer Jack Taylor, exporter of complete machines to the States, and maker with his brothers Norman and Ken of about six frames a week.

Jack considers himself ahead of his time — with ideas that are at least 20 years old!

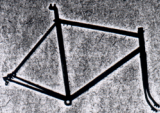
"They're all coming back to vertical dropouts and things we had when we were racing! It means that, to please the lads, you have to work below your own standard, because otherwise they won't appreciate what you do. Only the Ameri-

cans really appreciate our best work."

Jack's main problem is variations from the basic pattern. He works, as a basis, on a road frame with 73-degree head and 71-seat, giving a 41-inch wheel-base. But almost inevitably he finds that once he has delivered a frame built to order with Campagnolo ends, the purchaser will decide on Simplex gears. Or when right-side cable loops have been requested, the



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brakes to be fitted will take the wire from the left.

"They should leave the matter of equipment to us, or at least bring in a list of the parts themselves. As it is they hang all sorts of stuff on the frame and make a real mess."

Craze at the moment is for frames like the great Eddy's, — white with red panels, — and some lads even paint Merckx' name on the down tube.

He's keen on brazed-on fittings. — "They're far neater" — and on touring frames and tandems has great demand for Mafac Criteriums.

"I reckon," he says, "I sell more of those than of any other brake."

Touring frames are the most difficult to make because of the tremendous number of special fittings. The Americans, especially, are particular how their bag supports are fitted.

"You could look at a touring frame in our workshop and wonder how on earth the customer was going to use all those brazed-on bits!" Jack laughed.

Unusual feature in frame-building these days is a regular output of open frames for women — and made to a racing standard. If you want one, then Jack's the man to see.

After all, a man who thinks nothing of building triplets, circus unicycles (with a chain on each side to lessen the strain) and trikes, certainly knows all there is to know about frame building.

And if you want a guide to the cost — his top racing frame, with 531 tubing, Nervex lugs and Campagnolo head fittings, and with a TA bottle cage welded on, costs £28.