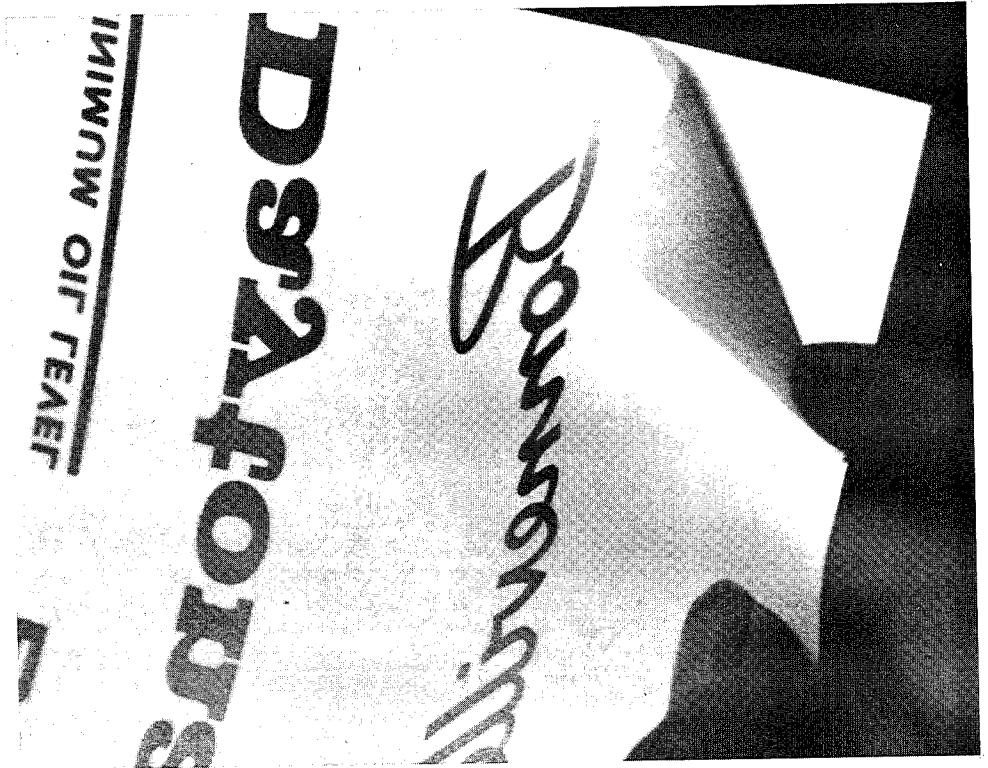


# Varnish Decals — from a conversation with Vintage British parts manufacturer David Holder... with tips he learned from his dad

British suppliers are bringing back the varnish decal. You will recognize it because the image is reversed as you are looking at it. Although these require more skill to apply they will, in the long run, outlast the Mylar and press-apply decals. With a few exceptions it is how the factory decorated their motorcycles. Properly applied they are almost impossible to detect, unlike the water slide, Mylar, or press-apply types. Heres a few tips:

1. There must not be any wax or dirt on the working surface.
2. The decal is silk screened on to a two part paper: a heavy paper backing and a thin water soluble paper covering. The image rests upon this thin paper covering and must be removed from the heavy backing before



Above: Before the gold size is applied to the decal you should just start separating the decal paper from its backing. Below: follow the outline of the decal with a small brush. Any excess on the working surface can be removed later with a mixture of a little alcohol and water.



- the decal is applied. To do so rub the corner of the decal sheet and you will be able to peel them apart. It is best to do this after step 5, below.
3. Be sure that the air temperature is 80° to 100° Fahrenheit and that the decal, gold size and working surface are about the same (in cold weather use a small heat lamp). **Most problems occur while trying to apply the decal when it is too cold.** The heat makes the paint in the decal 'plastic' and the adhesive easier to work with allowing it to be transferred without cracking.
4. Before you fully remove the paper backing and apply the adhesive locate the decal on the working surface with a china marker grease pencil.

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