

Evolution of the racing fairing.



Although it never set a fashion for racing, this 1953 kneeler Norton was used to up the one hour record to 134 miles at the Montlhery circuit with Ray Amm aboard.



It's not hard to see how the term "dolphin fairing" originated. This 1954 NSU Rennmax is a direct ancestor of today's streamlining.



Whilst full frontal fairings were popular in all capacity classes in the 1950s. Tail fairings were rarer, generally being fitted to the 125 cc. machines, which needed all the help they could get. Slipstreaming by following competitors was rendered less effective because of the reduced wake. This is multi-world-champion Carlo Ubbiali winning the 1956 Belgian GP on a 125 cc MV Agusta.



With their own full size wind tunnel the Carcano designed Moto Guzzis of the 1950s, probably had the most efficient "dushbin" fairings of the period. Shown here is a 1957 500 cc. single cylinder at the TT with Keith Campbell aboard. It's 150 mph top speed is testament to the quality of the aerodynamics.



After the 1957 FIM ban on certain types of fairing, the “dolphin” shape quickly became the norm by the end of the 50s and early 60s. This shot of the great Bob McIntyre on a 250 Honda in the 1961 TT shows the basic form that has continued until the present time.



The aerodynamics of this 1999 125 cc. Aprilia is only different in detail to that of the older Honda on the left. The belly pan is narrower and fills almost completely the gap between the two wheels. Note also the front mudguard which is faired in to blend the air over the front forks. At the rear the seat back is larger to help smooth the flow as it leaves Jeronimo Vidal's back.