

DESMO S

Well, the count-down is over, and the club has begun to lift off.

First news is that you now have a Committee, which reads as follows.

President: Mick Walker.

Chairman: Paul Smith, of 96 Barnes Rd. Highfields Farm Estate, Stafford.

Secretary: Dave Knight, of 7 The Drive, Swinfen Hall, Lichfield, Staffs.

Treasurer: Helen Boyes, of 'Cronk-Ny-Mona', 21 St. Annes Rd. Lichfield, Staffs.

Other Member: Bob Böyes, of the above address.

Responsibilities are as follows:

Mick is a figurehead, as are most Presidents, and leaves the day to day running of the club to the rest of the Committee.

I do most of the paperwork, correspondence, dealer negotiations, editing Desmo, memberships, etc..

Paul keeps Committee meetings in order, and helps out with bits and pieces.

Helen makes sure no-one fiddles the books.

Bob has no specific responsibilities as yet, but, like Paul, helps out generally.

All decisions affecting the running of the club are made jointly between the four of us. We will look after things as best we can until we consider the club to be large enough and have a sufficiently firm footing to elect a Committee itself

BRANCHES:

Yes, Branches. We consider it feasible to get three branches running. If you want to help form a branch, then these are the people to contact for details: They should have contacted you already, but if you got missed, and you live near enough to attend meetings, write to:

North West: Centred around the Warrington area. Organiser is Chris Dell, of 122 Walton Road, Walton, Warrington, Lancs.

Herts: Centred around the St. Albans area. Organiser is Bernard Adey, of 5 The Mall, Park Street, Nr St. Albans, Herts.

North Midlands: Centred around the Lichfield area. Organiser is me. (Dave Knight) Chris has already arranged a meeting for those in his area for May 3, details from him.

SECRETARY'S SCRIBBLES.

From the good news to the bad. I'm sure I express the sentiments of the whole club when I offer Stephen Arran all our condolences, and wish him all possible luck in future. Stephen was recently involved in a tragic accident, and subsequently lost his right arm. The club can help Stephen, by helping to dispose of the remains of his 250 24 Hours. For sale are the complete engine unit plus rear wheel and a few more bits and pieces. If you are interested, please write to me with details of what you require.

I said in the last Desmo that I would be getting a 750. I've now got one, and I'm immensely pleased with it. It's all a big bike should be, smooth, fast, comfortable, starts stops and accelerates well, and it Handles, with a capital H. At below 3000, it rumbles along like a locomotive, grumbling quietly at the world. Raise the revs to 4500 - 5000 and the motor takes on a whining urgency, just waiting for the 'andfull. Wind it right back, and the exhaust note becomes a staccato yammer, staying that way right through to 7 grand safe, 8 maximum, and a top whack of 110-115. That's all in fifth, from about 30-35 MPH, without a shake, shudder or tiny little vibe anywhere. Superb.

RACING.

The racers amongst you will be interested to know that Alan Warner, of Altina M/cycles (see ad. for address) is trying to get a Ducati only race in the programme of the September Gaydon Meeting. Racing there is good, I marshalled there a few times last year, so I've seen it, and very competitive. Alan reckons

about 25 starters ought to be enough to secure a 'Dukes only', so if you fancy your chances among similar competition, get in touch with Alan.

If Alan swings it, the club will supply a trophy to the winner, perhaps for keeps. Incidentally, organising club is the North Gloucester MCC, and they pay better prize money than a lot of other clubs.

I've heard that club member Ian Gittens, Mick Walker's rider, was trying a cantilever Ducati at Snetterton a week or two ago. How's it go, Ian?

DISCOUNTS.

Unfortunately, we can't yet arrange a discount on spares, due to the wierd Italian prices. However, when they stabilise a bit, we hope to persuade Mick Walker to give us something, but for now we have (fanfare of trumpets!!):

10% off Lewis Leathers. Cash orders only (including cheques, P.O.s, etc,) but not credit accounts.

10% off labour charges on servicing/race preparation carried out by Altina M/Cycles. Also 10% discount on rebores. See ad. for address.

Sports Motorcycles (Manchester) will offer a discount on new machines to any club member, but it's up to you to haggle about a price.

Hopefully, we have more to come in future, and details will appear when they do.

We also have a number of members who can offer discounted or cheap services, they are as follows.

Myself. All bearings necessary for a Ducati at very cheap prices (well, comparatively cheap).

M Hunt, 28 Wyndham Cres., Broomhill, Bristol, BS4 4SY, can supply Tommaselli clip-ons, levers and twist-grips for £12.50 a set. Also Nolan Guardsman full face helmets for £17.00.

Richard Ruth, 17 Oxford Meadow, Sible Headingham, Essex, can offer plugs (10 in a box) at trade price, which works out at around 10p a plug cheaper. He also can do 6 or 12 volt bulbs.

Clive Steemson, Brandywell, Halloughton, Southwell, Notts, can provide genuine Ducati parts at below retail price (he works for the Notts Ducati agent), and is also willing to help club members with servicing or overhauls at his home workshop.

Chris Dell (address appears earlier) can offer Duckhams Q20/50 for about £1.60 a gallon, getting cheaper the more you have.

SELL/BUY/SWAP SHOP.

D.A. Clarke, of 11, Lyon Ave, New Milton, Hants, BH25 6AP, has a 460 Frame, tank front forks and wheel, all in good nick, going cheap. He also has a flywheel assembly with big end ~~bearing~~ bearing gone.

If you fancy a cheap pair of rear suspenders, get in touch with J Heather, of 15 Cross Road, Hanworth, Middlesex. He has a little used pair of Marzocchi units, suitable for a bike of around 290 lbs. (most Ducati singles). List is around the £30 mark. Mr. Heather wants £15, no offers.

Nigel Taylor, of 8 Turner Street, Leicester, is doing design work on valve gear, and requires a good Ducati single head, preferably Desmo. He has for sale: 125 crank, cases, covers, clutch, cogbox, bearings and cams, all in good nick. Nigel will receive gratefully any info anyone can supply him on desmo heads.

Paul Klat, 71 Queens Drive, Osset, Yorks, has for sale the following bits for a 200cc Elite. (If you're reading this aloud, take a deep breath). New 67.2 mm short skirt 9:1 piston, 'A' type barrel and head (bare), tank, seat, (both original but the tank needs painting), various clip-ons, control levers, forks, various top yokes, bottom fork legs, genuine Ducati swept-back exhaust pipe, 3 racing megga's, chainguard, 2 chrome toolboxes, gear cluster, 2 alloy rocker covers, bevel cover (head), cam cover, various inlet & exhaust valves, plus other(? , more) odds and sods. All cheap.

Paul Marwick, of Greathill, Polmaise, By Stirling, Stirlingshire, Scotland, requires a set of Sebring crankcases, or a complete Sebring engine. Paul is quite a dab hand at spray painting, and can also do sandblasting, so if you want any bits done, contact him.

Chris Dell (again), requires a set of racing leathers (5'6" x 38"). A Ducati 250 or 350 is also on his shopping list. Ring Warrington 64648.

TECHNICAL ADVICE SERVICE.

Some members have already offered assistance with this venture. The idea is that if you have a problem, you can contact someone who knows how to deal with it. As soon as we have sorted out who will be responsible for what, the people to go to with your problems will see their names in lights (well, print anyway).

ODDS AND SODS.

As Ducati's seem cursed with pretty bad electrics and lighting, the following will be of interest to most members. First item is a simplified electrical circuit, which comes courtesy of David Ross. Second is a 12 volt conversion for 6 volt singles which is attributable to (you guessed it) Chris Dell, he gets his finger into everything! Plans are available for either system, so if you're interested in one of them, drop me a line explaining which circuit you want details of, and I will send plans by return. The prerequisite is, of course, a stamped addressed envelope.

If it's just your lights that worry you, then good news is that Mick Walker is having a brighter light unit made for the Mk. III singles. At present it's in the prototype stage, but finished units should be ready come summer. Price hasn't yet been fixed. If you're interested, get in touch with M.W. in a couple of months.

As was mentioned in Desmo 3, Richard McKee, of 7 Blair Park, Dixon Rd, Bangor, Co. Down, N. Ireland, is willing and able to put up a couple of club members at his place. If you are competing at, or are going to watch events like the Temple 100 or the Ulster G.P. get in touch with Richard. Board is free, and I'm assured that his home, only $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile from the beach, is in a very quiet part of Ireland (that is, until the Dukes get there), and its great sickle country.

Turning to memberships, we really do need more members if the club is to prosper and grow. I therefore appeal to each and every member to spread news of the club's existence to any Ducati rider you meet. Give my name and address and ask people to write for details. I've heard that there are about 5000 Dukes on the road in Britain, so there is room for expansion.

I've had a few letters complaining of spares prices. I was hoping to have an explanation from Mick Walker on this subject printed in this issue, but as I've yet to get a reply, it will have to wait for the next one.

I said in the last issue that I would like to see Desmo grow to mag size one day, but due to the small present circulation and limited club funds, it will be impossible for the time being. However, it seems that a newsletter is adequate for the moment, so we will have to wait for a substantial increase in membership before we expand.

We are trying to arrange a rally for June or July this year, but we haven't fixed a definite venue or date yet. I think it likely that we will plump for a one-day affair through necessity. Everybody else seems to have beaten us to get bookings at Donnington, and we can't hold a rally as such at Mallory. It therefore means that we can either have a one-day rally (on a Sat'day) at Donnington, or have a get-together at something like the Post TT International, camping overnight. One thing that is pretty certain is that we will have a corner in the Ducati Concessionaire's tent at the BMF Rally, Donnington Park, May 4th. If we do, we will endeavour to have one member of the committee, at least, present at all times. Try not to miss the rally, and drop in and see us.

There was very little response to the plea for workshop tools, but we are carrying on with plans to provide them for members use. We shall endeavour to ammass a collection of tools by buying them, making them and scrounging them from every possible source. Please, if you do have any surplus to requirements, let me know what you require for it, and the club will probably buy it. More details next month.

Swapping the subject to oil, I have heard many conflicting opinions on what to use. To clear matters up, I am going to write to the factory and ask them what they recommend. An answer will appear in Desmo in due course.

Before I close, thanks to all who took the time and trouble to reply to the questionnaire that I sent out with the last issue. As a result of the answers, we have decided on a badge for the club, which will be provided in sticker form initially. We can also have machine badges and woven cloth badges made to order, but we would need to get the money in before having the badges made, as the club funds couldn't stand the strain of having all types made at once. Next month, there will be a sample of the design, and (I hope) some prices.

On the subject of badges, special thanks are extended to Mr. Pankhurst, who sent in about half a million designs, all of which were quite superb, and the badge we chose is one of his designs. Unfortunately, due to the price, it doesn't look as if we will be able to have any metal lapel badges done yet, but as membership increases, so will our chances of having badges made.

Finally, as a lot of members seem to own Elite's, next month's Desmo will include an article on the model, with preparation, tips, recommendations, and various other notes. Also, perhaps a short road impression if I can borrow my mate's bike.

Just before completing this Desmo, MCN came out with a feature on the new Ducati twins. For those who didn't see it, they are a 350 (32 BHP) and a 500 (42 BHP), both overhead bumpstick twins. Both will be available with options of Desmo or spring valve gear. The big boo-boo that MCN made was stating that these will be introduced in place of the big V-twins. Panic stricken that my new bike would be obsolete almost before I got it, I phoned Mick Walker, and was told that MCN was wrong. What is, in fact, likely to happen, is that the 750 and 860 production lines will be utilised for a short while making the new twins, until the lines for the 350 and 450 singles are run down. The 350 and 450 singles will then cease production, and the tools for the twins will be moved in to the gap. The V-twins will then resume production back on their own lines. I don't quite know why the Italians should choose this method of shifting production, but that is apparently what will happen. The thought that struck me is that the 450 will probably end up as a collectors item, rather like the Goldie and Velo Thruxton. It will probably be worth owners of the 450 hanging on to theirs for this reason, 'cos they ain't exactly common. Anyway, the 250 single will continue production in both it's present forms, Desmo and Mk III, for some time to come.

Well, that's about all for now, except to thank all those who have written letters for Desmo. Sorry that there isn't really any room to print them, but next month's ought to have more space, now that most of the big news is out of the way.

Safe Biking

Dave Knight (Sec.)
7 The Drive,
Swinfen Hall,
Lichfield,
Staffs, WS14 9QT.

A quick P.S. (nearly forgot this).

A Perry, 133 Dorchester Rd, Garstang, Lancs, is looking to buy a 350/450 Duke, must be in good condition.

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