

LETTERS

TOURING ACCESSORIES FOR AN 860GT. TRIPPING MADE EASIER

Dear Joel,

I am enclosing a picture of my Ducati 860 with the back rest and luggage rack I promised you. This is a Yamaha accessory made for a TX 750. It really fits the Ducati well. No holes have to be drilled or any alterations made to either the bike or the rack. All you need is four worm drive hose clamps. Clamp the rack to the frame member coming up around the back of the seat. Use the other two clamps to fasten the back rest under the seat on the main frame rails. This back rest has a locking compartment for gloves, etc. in back. I believe other Yamaha racks will work other than the one for the TX 750.

I may be thrown out of the club, but notice also the frame mount fairing. This is an Arthur Fulmer fairing, the same as the Wixom. It is sort of modified road roving design and penetrates the wind much better than most. I made mount brackets from a set designed for another bike. None of the brackets disturb the air flow to the engine. If anyone has any questions about it, feel free to write me. I really like the bike's looks better without it but it makes the type of riding I do very nice.

I would like to note some of the things I found out about the 860. Maybe it will be a help to others. I do all my own work as we have no dealer in Nashville.

The seat is sorry. I have installed the water seat cushion and this helps a lot. I intend to modify it later. The 750 GT had a much better seat.

The fuse box is weak. On a long trip, burning the headlight all the time, the fuse for the lights overheated and melted. I bypassed it with another fuse and holder. I also by-passed the main fuse from the battery.

The handle bar switches are very weak, and the starter switch on mine overheated and the contact buried in the plastic. I installed a piece of heat resistant gasket between the button and the contact. I'll probably change over to Yamaha bar and switches later.

In an earlier letter it was stated that there was a problem with the crack around the front air filter. I now believe this was engineered this way because the crankcase fumes are routed directly into this carb. I know this is not good but I believe this fresh air was intended to counter act the crankcase fumes.

I have had hard starting problems with my 860 when it is cold. I changed the plugs to NGK, without much result. I have just installed air gap type spark plug caps from a Honda 360. I have not had these long enough to tell for sure, but it seems much better so far. The spark actually jumps a gap before getting to the plug intensifying the spark to the plug. I know a Honda will hardly crank without them.

My front carb seem to load up at times. I wonder if anyone else has the same problems.

With all its faults, it's still ahead of the Japanese mass assembled products.

One other thing which could help someone. The cap on the end of the starter kept coming off when I first purchased the Ducati.



Water cushion and luggage rack from a TX 750 Yamaha make the hard Ducati seat easier to live with on long rides. L/Rack back rest has compartment for gloves.

The horseshoe lock on the end of the starter shaft was too large and I had to file it down to clear the sides of the cover.

I would like to encourage all DIOC members to write Cycle magazine to ask why they have not run a road test of the Ducati 860. This is the finest of the magazines but we deserved better than a continuation of article after article about the Japanese ho hums.

Before I close, there is a 750 GT just like new here in Nashville, 3800 miles, that can be bought for \$1600 or less. If anyone is interested, contact me. KEN BRUNDIGE, 469 RURAL HILL RD. NASHVILLE, TENN. 37217



The Fairing is by Wixom Bros. Marketed by Arthur Fulmer Brackets were home modified from another bike.

DIOC'S "DEALERS DIRECTORY", A SNITCH LIST?

Joel,

I found your July issue of the DIOC News at Dales Cycle Shop in Rock Island, Illinois while on vacation. I was bench racing with Dale and he said, "Here is something you would enjoy reading." Boy was he right! The news is a needed publication. People with the Ducati fetish will find your paper timely. I'm in agreement with most of your thoughts, Joel, as to what makes a strong club.

But I didn't agree with your dealer directory completely. I got the impression it was a SNITCH LIST. I'm the first to admit we all have a right to go "states evidence," but why plea-bargin a Ducati owner's best friend (his dealer) away? Keep your directory to "just the facts," i.e. name, phone address, hours, etc. I would guess there are only 100 or so dealers in the U.S.A. and they probably sold 700 or so Ducatis. Put yourself in the shoes of that dealer who sold 2 to 10 units last year and made a small but fair margin of profit. Are you going to have in stock every known part for a 250 Ducati Formula III? I say let's keep opinions out of the dealer directory.

My opinion of GHOST MOTORCYCLES is different than Ken Prescott's. It was a rainy afternoon on Long Island in August of 1972. As I got off my Honda 500 they welcomed me heartily. I confessed I wasn't there to buy a new mount, but instead wanted to see the place I had heard so much about. I got the royal treatment. Not one but two (count 'em 2) salesmen showed me the place, parts, service (in the basement), and the used bike warehouse (across the street). After talking with the salesmen and visiting a mechanic, they gave me a free GHOST t-shirt, and wished me luck on my journey home to Michigan. I even remember them showing me a 750 Ducati with megaphones and short handlebars. I didn't realize then I would ever own one of Bologna's funny looking twins.

Does this make Ken Prescott's view anymore right or wrong than mine? Opinions are neither true nor false. Our impressions can be used to recall that incident but shouldn't be used as an overview. How do you know that the very day you walk into your local Ducati dealer, he hasn't lost 3 1/2 million in the stock market on a rubber crutch maker, his wife has run off with the part time mechanic, and his house has been repossessed. That could make a difference in how you're treated.

In closing, let me say -- face the facts:

1. Ducatis are not the best seller and because of this, a dealer can't afford to stock his shelves. He should develop methods of getting parts. It's far more important to be able to get the part. No dealer has all the parts, no matter what make of bike.

2. Opinion is far too hazy to make a decision on. Be thankful you have a Ducati dealer within 100 miles rather than trying to find some other down the road. Call ahead and see if he has the parts instead of driving 80 miles and grumbling when he doesn't have them.