

LETTERS

COLORADO M.D. OPERATES ON A DUC!!!

Dear Joel,

Here are some items for the newsletter.

I talked with David Stein in Corvallis, Oregon, and after discussions with him and his discussions with Cook Neilson I decided to pull the rockers on my 860. I was very upset to find the inlet rocker on the horizontal cylinder ruined; the chrome was completely gone off the cam follower end. There isn't much of a trick to pull them. After talking with David and the Ducati dealer in Denver, I did it myself. The spindles are threaded with a standard 5mm thread. I put a bolt in them and pulled them out. Three of them could be removed by hand, the fourth required a little muscle with the vise-grips solidly on the bolts.

I had a couple of other problems with the bike that are now solved. The fuse box melted because the wires pressed against the fuses. I took it apart and could never make it work right, there would always be something not working. I would put a volt-ohm meter on the posts of the fuses and with wiggling they would make contact. Of course while riding, the vibration was enough to loosen them. Finally I got tired of the whole thing, so I re-manufactured it. I went to Radio Shack and bought some regular single fuse holders. I then took a small block of wood and fastened the fuse holders to it. The original box is color-coded and so are the wires, so I just soldered the things together. Additionally, I was able to fuse the directional signals (in the original they run straight through the box), and added another fuse so when I put air horns on, I was able to fuse them also. I've had no trouble with the electrical system since then.

Another problem I had was that it wouldn't start with the electric starter but it could be kickstarted. The dealer had it for a month trying to find the problem. Finally, in desperation, I took the bike to an auto starter place and they found the armature was loose and fixed it. No more problems since then.

I have put on a Hugon fairing and am very pleased. It isn't as good as a Windjammer, but I think it fits the character of the motorcycle. Incidentally, I think the 860 is the greatest looking motorcycle around. In fact, I don't like the looks of the 860 GTS. I realize I am in the minority on this point. Even my wife does not like the looks; she thinks Harleys are the only good-looking motorcycles, can you imagine that. No taste! (Watch it there Doc, remember who she married, Ed.)

One other thing; there is nothing as great as riding in the mountains. A few weeks ago I was bored and so I fired up the Ducati and took a jaunt in the mountains. I cruised through South Park at 70 mph, average elevation is 9,000 feet. I took on some gas at Fairplay (elev. 10,000) and gassed it across Hoosier Pass to Dillon, and then up the 7½% grade to the Eisenhower Tunnel. I was going up that grade at 65 mph without the engine missing a beat. If anybody wants to try out an engine, that hill is the place to do it. I have yet to ride in anything with 4 wheels that can go faster than 45 mph up that hill to the 11,000 ft. elev. tunnel entrance. I rode 112 miles and used 2 gallons of gas, so I think that Ducati makes an excellent motorcycle.

Vincent N. Miles, M.D.
7569 East Easter Avenue
Englewood, Colorado 80110

Where the
* * * * * are
we?

FELLA HERE NEEDS A NEW ECONOMIC SYSTEM

Dear Joel

Thank you very much for the nice card you sent. I'd like to clear up the following:

1. The price for Ducatis - and motorcycles in general - are outrageous indeed because the import taxes here in Brazil amount to something around 300% over the vehicle's FOB value. Another factor is the exclusiveness of owning a rare model, the way it happened with the 900 SS Desmo here (not only the only one in town, but the only one in the country!), that makes it very expensive. Besides that, since February 1976, motorcycles, among many other items such as cars, are prohibited from being imported for an indefinite period of time, so it is very hard to find a brand new bike here.

Just the other day, visiting the shops downtown, I saw a brand new Honda 750F selling for the equivalent of \$10,800 U.S.!! So you see that I can be very happy owning this 450 Desmo of mine; the 900SS will take a little longer, but I know that someday I will have this poem on two wheels.

Marcos Buehler
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Brazil

NEED A DEALER IN BRISBANE

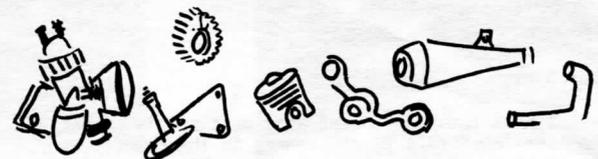
Dear Sir:

After reading of your intention to form an International Ducati Owners Club I have decided to write for some more detailed information. Despite the fact that Ducatis are very popular in Brisbane we have no established club as such. Our local dealer has a total monopoly on both new bikes and spare parts and is the only retail outlet for parts in the state and can therefore charge whatever he likes.

There are four or five guys with whom I have become very friendly with through owning my 860 GT. We have one 750 Sport, a 750 GT, a 750 Super Sport, my bike, and an 860 GTS. Needless to say we have countless experiences we could recount if they would be of benefit to any of you - both riding experiences and technical experiences, as we do ALL of our own mechanics.

Anyway, if you feel we can be of any assistance to you, or vice versa, please write:

Neil Stephen
39 King Street
Annerley, Brisbane
Queensland 4103
Australia



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