

# BULL SESSIONS...

BY JOEL

Well believe it or not gang, I've been caught with a page that needs to be filled and I couldn't find how to fill the damn thing so I decided to put in a B.S. (bull#0%\*) column for this issue. I don't know exactly what I'm gonna talk about, so I'll just let it ride and see what comes out.

Well like I began to tell you all, I've got a 900SS and I love it. I went to Sanibel Island on the coast of Florida the first long trip I took on the thing and I made it OK. While riding my Little D., a 450 Desmo sport I got bersitis or something like that I guess, hell I'm not a doctor, anyway I figured for sure I was gonna get it when I rode the 900SS, well I got it a little bit but I took some aspirin with me and that seemed to do the trick.

On the way back my friend Mike the Psyche was riding this rag Honda 550 and he could barely keep up with me. I was just rolling along in 5th gear at 4 thousand. She seemed content at that pace so I left it. He's been after a used Duke for awhile now and finally some Azzole who bought a new 1976 Duke, back then, had his for sale in the Auto Trader. He used a photo from a magazine in the picture and the bike looked like it was new. When they went to take a look at the thing it was a different story, the thing was sitting out in the weather for God knows how long, and the paint and decals were peeled off and faded, there was rust on anything that could rust, the rear wheel was caked with mud and sand, no clutch cable, dead battery, jeez, on and on.

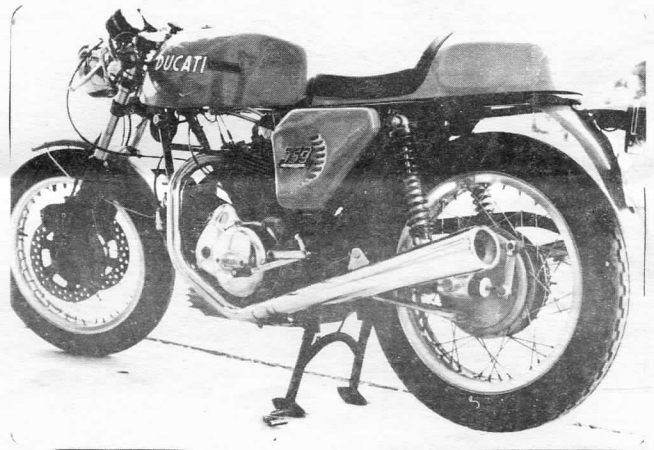
We took the thing on a pick up truck and began to work on it at the Ducati shop. The carbs were all thoroughly cleaned and all the cable lubed, the battery was charged, new oil in the crank-case, new gas, new plugs, and a big prayer for spark. I turned the key and no spark after a lot of kicking, then fiddled some more and then bingo! A big fat juicy spark. We plugged her up and the sucker sputtered a bit and fired. She sounded a bit rough, but nice...well, it just didn't sound like it was gonna fall apart or something. He took the thing home holding the "flash" button, cause his light switch had been broken. When he got home we stuffed some aluminum paper into the area where the switch made contact and we had lights. He was more anxious to ride than anything else. After years of watching us all have Ducatis and talk about them Mike the Psyche has a Duke. An 860GT Electric start. \$1000. Not a bad deal. Got up first thing this morning and pulled out his old rags and a tube of Semichrome and was polishing away in the garage. He walks around now with a silly grin on his face and a DIOC shirt. I think he has fallen into the Ducati trap....I mean he is gone, just like the rest of us, a bunch of sickies.

I know a lot of you have Ducati Sports, and I just want to say this. If you sell that bike you are an Azzole. I had in my possession the most beautiful sport on earth. I don't know if I'm going to be able to make it through this paragraph without crying ....but I'll give it a try. Well this Sport came into my life one Saturday afternoon. I wasn't looking but some how it found me, I couldn't hide from its charm. Like heaven above me, the Duke that loved me. I asked the guy if he wanted to sell it, he said maybe, came to the shop the next Saturday and I had the money in my pocket. It was mine. The paint work, the chrome, the cases, the tires, spokes, everything on this bike was original and in perfect condition. I would run, and run, and other than some minor electrical problems which a friend of mine fixed permanently, the bike was perfect. I would go out to eat, and park it by the entrance. Everyone would stop and look at it. It just sat there doing 60MPH standing still. At night I would take her out to the roads in the Everglades and ride alone, for I feared no evil. My Duke would never let me down. I was in love, and many of the people around felt the same way about my beautiful Sport.

One day, I got an ad from some Doctor in Orlando who had a Sport for sale, in mint condition he said. Only 2600 miles on it. In show room condition. I sold my Duke Sport for I decided that this Sport in Orlando with the low mileage

a year younger would be better than mine. I mean a Doctor with whom I had spoken, assured me that his Duke was really mint. We rode up there one day after work and arrived at 2 AM. I saw the Duke in the guys well lit garage and I almost had a cardiac. The bike was a bomb. It had a dirty engine, one worn out Good-year tire in the front, and worn out K81 in the back. The guy had the gall to tell me they were original tires. I proceeded to tell him that I was quite aware of what kind of tires the Sports came with, then he retracted his statement and told me that he was worn the original set and replaced them with the ones he had on...which were worn out. And the bike only had 2600 miles. Mmmmm. The bike looked like it had been badly abused and hardly ever cleaned. I was sick to my stomach. I left the place and told the guy a few lines of what I thought of his bike and his comments to me. All the way home, I tried to figure out a way of getting my Duke back. No dice. The guy doesn't want to sell, and I lost out on a bike that is a born classic. It is right up there with Vicent Black Lightnings, Brough Superiors, Indian Powerplus, BSA Gold Stars, Ariel Square Fours...on and on.

I see so many of these Sports being sold through the classifieds and I wonder if these people know what they are doing. Those Sports are going to be collectors items in a few years. In my opinion and ever there was a Ducati that captured the pure essence of what Ducatis are all about, the Sport captured that essence. If you have one, hang on to it. You may regret having sold it. I know I do. Constantly.



Here is a photo of what my beauty looked like. Sigh! I really doubt if I'll ever be able to find one that was in as mint condition as this one was. Every once in a while I hear some story about some guy that has one in a crate stored somewhere in a garage that his son bought and never rode on account he got runt over by a car or something and he never got to ride the thing, or I hear that there is one for sale somewhere in Canada. Brand new and all, but these stories never quite come true and my round case beauty with the Veglia instrument and the Quartz light and that legendary color of all Ducati colors "School Bus Yellow" Who would in his right mind paint a bike, School bus yellow? Ducati could and they could get away with it and we would all fall in love and live happy ever after with our Sport in the garage. I remember the time I rode with some guys and they tried to keep up with me and couldn't and how they would beg for me to let them just sit on it, and they would make believe they were out on a race track and..... what about the times I would wake up and go to the garage and kiss it good-night on account I hadn't done it before I went to bed for fear that it would not start in the morning or that it would start giving me Ducati troubles...right? My girl friend thought I was really sick. And she was right! I had Ducati fever of the worst kind "Ducati Sport Fever".

Maybe if I paint my 900SS school bus yellow and.....