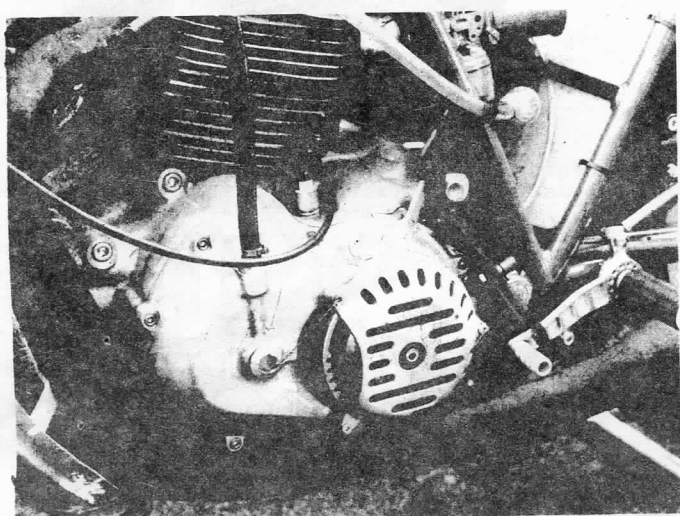
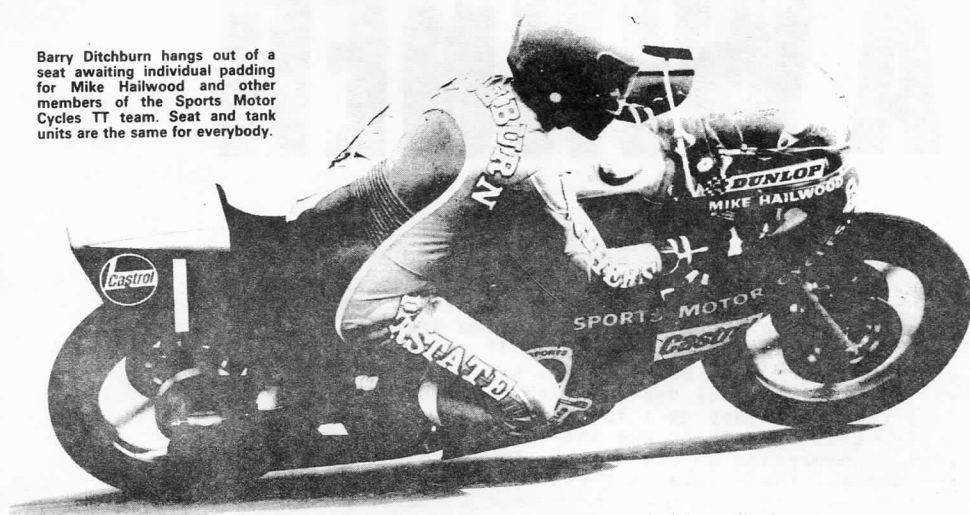
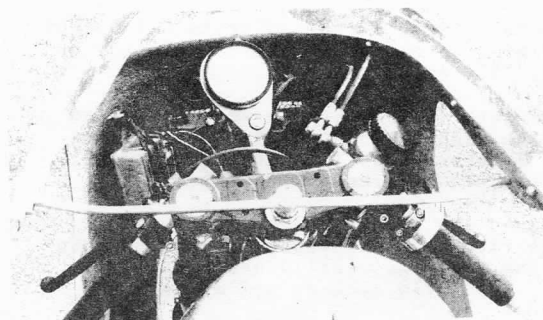


About the bike

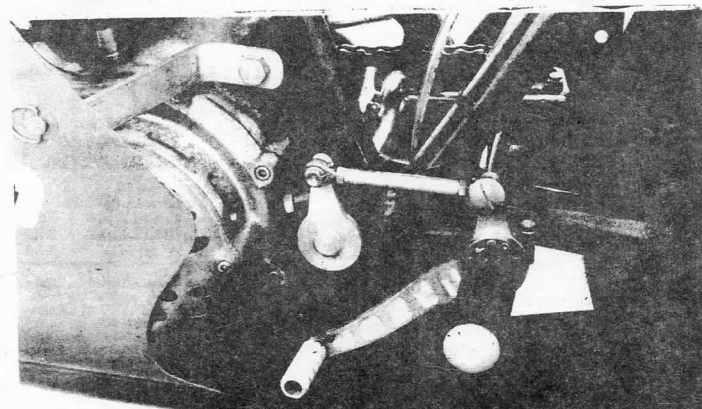
Barry Ditchburn hangs out of a seat awaiting individual padding for Mike Hailwood and other members of the Sports Motor Cycles TT team. Seat and tank units are the same for everybody.



aircooled clutch is a major difference between the racing and touring engines. This is the Roger Nicholls bike, with the rear brake pedal on the left of the bike.



Inside the Hailwood cockpit, with rev-counter red lined at 8500. The Lucas Rita transistorised ignition box is on the left. The oil cooler gets fresh air through holes in the fairing.



The gear pedal on the Hailwood machine is on the left, with cross-over shaft inside the swinging arm pivot. Note detail workmanship with wired studs and spring clips for expansion chambers.

The DUCATI on which Mike Hailwood will commence his TT comeback on June 3 is the third in our series of TT Formula 1 tests by Barry Ditchburn.

According to Steve Wynne of Sports Motor Cycles, Manchester, the 1978 desmo V-twin produces between five and ten bhp more than the Ducati on which Roger Nicholls was second last year.

The 864cc engine (86mm x 74.4mm bore and stroke) is claimed to give 88 bhp at the back wheel. It is probably no faster than the 750 Ducati on which Paul Smart won the Imola 200 in 1972 but has a better torque spread.

Good for 9000 rpm, the engine has a pair of 40mm Dell'Orto carburetors with gas flowed ports and bigger valves. Inlet valves are 43mm diameter, compared with 39mm on standard engines. Exhaust valves are 39mm against 36mm.

Inlet ports are increased from 32mm to 38mm while exhausts are up from 31mm to 34mm. Along with a compression ratio of 11 to 1, compared with 9.5 on Nicholls bike last year, the mods give more usable power at lower revs.

The normal contact breaker of the 900 Super Sport Desmo roadster is discarded in favor of a Lucas Rita transistorized system mounted inside the fairing.

An aircooled clutch is the most obvious difference in the transmission but the gearbox has been modified, with dogs removed from fourth gear to give a slicker shift.

The gear pedal is on the left, because Hailwood's right foot was damaged in a car crash, and he will be able to push the engine to 9500 rpm if necessary.

This gives Hailwood more leeway than Nicholls last year. For although Nicholls finished only 29 seconds behind Phil Read's Honda, after a minute pit stop, he was limited to 8000 or 9000 if pushed.