

features

THE BOTTI DUCATI

Story and Photos by Harvey Voien

IN defiance (and in spite) of all available modern production machinery, Jacquie Botti chooses to race a Ducati 250 in Southern California Club events. In this (her first) season, Jacquie's bike, her red and white leathers her long hair streaming out from under color coordinated helmet, and her souped-up blue VW van have become familiar sights at AFM races at Ontario Motor Speedway and Riverside Raceway.

Amid the array of screaming two-stroke 250 production racing bikes, the raucous pulsations bellowing forth from the Duc's racing megaphone throw the admittedly few hard-core Ducati Single enthusiasts into loud cheering and shoutings of encouragement. The extreme torque gets Jacquie off the line and into the Ontario banking ahead of the not only the other 250 prod. bikes but the 200 GP's as well -- this race being combined because of the number of entries.

But, the fifteen year old frame and suspension reflect their limitations; the advantage of sheer power manifested in the straights in slowly relinquished in the corners with much wiggling and chattering of tyres.

After the race, in the pit area, Phil Schilling pauses to look, ponder and remember bygone days when this sort of mount was competitive as well as fun. He then continues on his way to take a plug reading on Mark Homchick's Yamaha. Ah, the inexorable advance of motorcycle technology! What price glory?

Ray Roberts, DIOC member, originally built the bike for club racing under looser rules. Jacquie and I added the pieces required to qualify the bike for production racing, applied about 200 feet of more safety wire, and did the assorted wrenching required to race prep the bike.

Basically, the racer is a narrow-case five-speed 250 with assorted parts added from different models. This parts swapping is permitted, within limits, for production racing under AFM rules. The head is MK III with large valves and bronze seats. Piston is a Desmo item. I wish it had a desmo head! A Dellorto 32 pumper feeds the fuel and an original racing megaphone sees to the extraction of spent gases. Michelins are circumambient to steel rims -- PZ2 front and PZ4 rear. Brakes are OEM with racing linings and drilled-open scoops. Original fenders, gas tank, and headlamp are fitted. Tachometer is a Desmo "beer can" unit. Original --and rare--clip-on bars and rear set controls (which fall readily to hand, and foot) are fitted. The seat is the only non-original component and is permitted under AFM rules for production racing.

No mechanical failures have occurred for four outings which include about eight races and maybe ten practice sessions. This despite 10,000 rpm engine excursions and speeds sufficient to scuff away the tyres at alarming (and expensive) rates. At the moment competitiveness is limited by the frame and suspension. Anyone out there care to donate a Ceriani front end? With disc brake? It'll be legal!

Oh well, if nothing else, it is still a damn good street bike. Ciao.

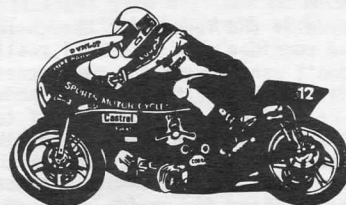


The gas shortage has affected all of us and now it is having its effect on racing. On this particular race day we could not get gas, because we had an 'odd numbered' tag and it was an even numbered day.



But we were prepared for the situation and here is our trusty racing engineer replacing the odd numbered tag and getting ready to put on an even numbered one.

**DUCATI 900
WORLD CHAMPION**



Isle of Man - 2 June 1978 Driver Mike Hailwood

ISLE OF MAN T-SHIRT

This shirt was created to commemorate the tremendous win of Mike Hailwood at the famed Isle of Man races. It is silk screened in three colors, red, green, black on a white back ground. Printed on both sides. \$6.50 plus \$1.25 shpg & handling.