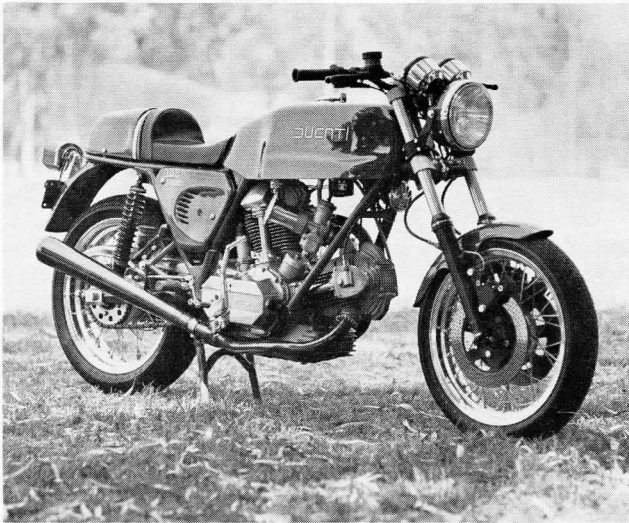


features



A VERY SPECIAL SUPER SPORT

By Bob Braverman

Ring, ring-

"Hello, Powerhouse Products"-

"Braverman, you ratfink, I though you were my friend - a friend to all Duke freaks. But are you? No!!!

The rather frantic voice at the other end of the phone was our somewhat emotional and sometimes irrational DIOC director. Normally, Joel is pretty easy going, but the idea of a member giving another publication (actuacally two publications) first shot on our pretty special Super Sport, well it was more than he could handle. It didn't make any difference that I explained the magazines wrote the stories and even took the pictures.

Anyway, in order to appease him, I promised I'd scribble some words about my bike and maybe even take a few photos. (Besides, I still owe him for the last ad we ran so what's fair is fair.)

Any of you who have been reading the newsletters for a while probably remember the last piece I wrote about my Ducati SS. I said a lot of controversial things that really shook up a lot of folks out there in reader land, but what the hell, that's the way it goes.

At that time, we were zeroing in on the final stages of engine development work, but had'nt done much with the chassis. A decision was finally made to do the whole trip. Along with installing our new 11-1 flat top pistons and big titanium valves, the ports were enlarged some more and all the engines' castings were bead blasted prior to assembling everything. The modified crank was still perfect so there was no need to touch it.

Also, we installed our new cams too. We were surprised (and happy) to find the 10-1 pistons still in the like new shape after almost a year of use. We swanped these for the new 11-1 pistons. We never got a trace of detonation with the 10-1 parts so we bumped up the compression one whole point to see what would happen. So

far, we still don't have any detonation even with todays lousy gas.

The 44mm Mikuni carbs are unchanged since we built the engine the first time about a year and a half ago. They work a lot better than the 40mm Del'Orto's.

One of my chief objections to the Ducati chassis is the excessive trail the front end has. In order to speed up the steering, and improve low speed maneuvering, we made a new set of tripple clamps from plate stock. The end result was a trail reduction of 6 inches to 4½ inches total. The difference is like night and day, plus none of the high speed stability has been reduced in any way. All those hours on the milling machines making chips were well worth the effort. Also, I played around with different fork springs and tried various preloads, but so far I've come close but haven't optomized the front suspension yet. I feel the stock fork springs are too stiff for me.



After lacing up the wider DID front and rear wheels, the stock tires were replaced with Good Year racing rain tires. I needed a lot more traction with the reworked engine since I could break the rear tire loose in a corner just by opening the throttle. I used a 3.25 X 18 in front and a 3.75 X 18 in the rear. These numbers are deceptive however, since the rear tire, for example, is six inches wide; (rear wheel width is a WM6) Anyway, the new tires provide a lot more bite, and not only that but they are lasting longer than conventional good street rubber. We didn't plan on getting better tire mileage, just lucked out.

The lousy stock shocks were finally thrown away and 13 inches S&W freon units took their place. They work great.

In order to improve the top end oiling situation, the oil is now routed to a filter under the tank and two separate lines go to each head. The new filter is four time the size of the stock one. The standard tiny filter is a joke. And not a very good one at that. The new filter itself is from an Opel automobile, and it's a standard screw on automotive type.

I've never been too wild about using clip ons on street. They're too uncomfortable for me. When the new tripple clamps were made, I used a couple of dirt bike type handle bar mounts to hold the new flat bars in place. The standard bar mounts to hold the new flat bars in place. The standard instruments were replaced with Yamaha SR500 units. Also the front fender was done away with and a Kawasaki LTD fender put in its place.