

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS . . . Continued

Why not publish the answers to questions in the newsletter? Most Ducatis are the same. My questions are listed below but let me ramble on some more.

After reading each newsletter, I get the impression that some DIOC members ride bikes often but their trusty seven year old steed has still only seen 5,000 miles of asphalt. What are they really doing astride their bedroom-stabled mount? Which leads me around to agreeing with Mr. Baraschuck of Canada who dared to criticize Ducatis. I fully agree with his comments and go further to say that one reason clubs like this exist is because Ducatis have a few problems. I own a 450 Mk III D and a GT 750 and what great pieces of machinery they are — but try riding them. I tried using the GT to get to work and back (90 km) each day but the poor thing was really not up to it. The rear indicators decided that they had had enough, the instruments and cawling agreed, switches broke, plugs were fouling every 2,000 km, carbies always needed synchronization, and I could never tune it to not stumble when accelerating from standstill. Oh yes, the starting procedure was either get it in the three kicks or forget it. I reckon it was a Ducati flooding that encouraged Noah to build his ark. Oh, I know that Rita Ignitions exist and better coils help, but to echo Mr. Baraschuk — why should it be necessary to do this. Ducatis are nice toys but can they really be used as a means of transportation?

Now for my questions which concern both the 750GT and 450 MK III D.

1. Is there better alternators available?
2. Has anyone used a transistor-assisted contact coil ignition system?
3. Is it necessary to improve oil circulation and oil pump? If so does anyone know how? (450)
4. Can anyone produce better instrument brackets for my 750 GT?

Thank you and your club members for any assistance you can render me in this matter.

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NOTE: US Air Mail postage to Australia for a standard letter is 40¢.

**DARMAH SURVEY RESULTS:
RIDICULOUS LEAN ANGLES**

My bike is a 1978 red Darmah. \$3400 purchased in 1979 from Portland Motorcycle Co. The bike was new (no miles) it just took me to buy it. Too many other people were in love with the Suzuki low slingers to look at that beautiful Ducati.

I like the handling and styling the most. I've ridden bikes with clip-ons (900SS, etc.), but prefer short low bars. My Darmah gives away a little on top end to the Japanese machinery, but in Oregon we have corners and sweepers that won't quit. I owned a Kawasaki Z-1 before the Darmah. The quality I like most is ridiculous lean angles and going around the outside of the 4 bangers on corners.

I would recommend it to other people and feel it is a better all around bike than the 900SS. Yes, I would buy another one. I use it mostly in good weather. It's too nice a bike to ride constantly in the rain. The oil is changed every 1,000 miles plus filter. The valves are checked and adjusted if needed every 3,000 miles. 6,000 miles per year is about average. The Finish could be better. I am also considering buying a later model seat so my wife will be more comfortable.

I installed 13 inch Koni shock absorbers with 90 lb. springs. It makes the bike look like a moto crosser in the rear but with

my 200 lbs., it hauls me around just fine and I don't bottom out or pogo around bumpy corners. I run Michelin P22 tires (S-41 front M-45 rear) and can get the last tread rings to scuff if I want to. I have a top end of about 115-120 (according to spedo) that I hope will increase when I get my 40mm Dell-orto's installed (some head work necessary to match up the heads to the manifolds). The Contis I put on sound very nice. If that combo doesn't work, Imola cams are next.

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DOES EVERYTHING BETTER

I bought my 1980 Darmah Super Sport new in October of 1980 for around \$5200, from Arizona Kawasaki-Ducati in Tempe, Arizona. Compared to the 1979 Honda 750F that preceded it, the Ducati does everything better. I like everything about the bike except that I can't get all the leaks stopped at the same time! Another complaint could be the poor quality of the paint and fiberglass, except that you buy a Ducati knowing that lousy finish is a Ducati trademark, and if that bothers you, you'd buy a BMW.

As far as favorite features, in no particular order they are: the engine, the handling, the brakes, and the looks. Oddly enough, I did not expect the bike to be particularly comfortable and was pleasantly surprised to discover that even with clip-ons it ours very well, particularly over back roads, solo. I just did 800+ miles in two days with two friends on more touring-oriented bikes (GS850 Suzuki, Kawasaki 900 with Windjammer) and was at least as comfortable as they were.

Maintenance other than oil and filter, etc., since I moved to Southern California has been performed by Woods Motor



ROAD RACING TEAM

NCR T-SHIRT

- This shirt was created from the famous N.C.R. racing team decal which appears on the Ducati racers in Europe and around the world.
- As many of you well know, N.C.R. has been building successful racing hardware for Ducati for some time now. The late Mike Hailwood won aboard one of the N.C.R. Ducatis.
- We now have the shirt, through this club only. It comes printed in four colors: red, sky blue, silver blue, and black; with red or navy collar and sleeve ringers.
- Add this fine shirt to your collection of Ducati shirts, you'll love it.
- Price \$6.95 plus \$1.25 shipping and handling. Canada add 20% when using Canadian funds. Overseas just add \$3.10 to price of shirt for air mail delivery.