

# PRODUCT TESTS



Braking into a corner on a country road, the Ducati is in its element.

*(The following article is from MOTORCYCLE WEEKLY a British magazine that gives excellent coverage of all the weekly events taking place in the motorcycle world. Our thanks to them for the use of this piece.)*

## PANTAH PLUS!

Peter 'Walter Mitty' Clifford gets his claws into a bike that inspires the wildest dreams - the Rayner Pantah Special.

Dropping down to the Cregg, flat on the tank of a works Ducati, you glimpse the crowd sitting on the grassy banks under the June sun, waving their programmes in encouragement. Braking early for the right-hander, you have plenty of time to spare. The Ducati moans as you change down through the box, the rear tyre skips slightly as you engage bottom gear and gently you accelerate once more on the last fast run to Brandish and then to Hillbury.

It seems to take forever to get to Signpost but from there you know that the signal light will be on over your number on the Glencrutchery road and those in the grandstand eagerly await your arrival. Once Governors Bridge has been negotiated at a snail's pace, a short burst of acceleration takes the Ducati across the line and into the winner's enclosure for your first TT win....

I have never won a TT and am never likely to, but like thousands of other have dreamed of emulating Mike Hailwood or Tony Rutter. Nothing could help you fulfil such dreams more than a replica of the TT Formula II Ducati that Rutter raced to victory this year (1983).

Harris Performance Products have built more than 50 replicas of the works Ducati frames and two companies, Sports Motorcycles and Dave Rayner Motorcycles make roadsters from the racing frames. It was the latter machines we tested, and underneath the twin headlamp fairing it is all racer.

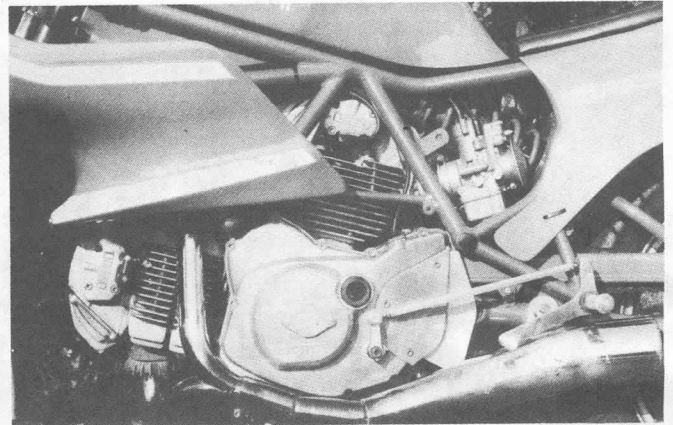
At the heart of the Ducati's excellent handling is the Harris frame. Not that Harris claim any responsibility for the design, it is a replica of the Ducati racing original. The Hertford company produce these frames with their usual superb standard of craftsmanship. The one-inch diameter, 17 gauge tubes are Reynolds 531, joined by bronze welding with inline gas flux.

The frames are plastic coated by Dave Rayner, a process which involves heating the frame in an oven and then dipping it into a vat of aerated plastic particles. The plastic melts onto the frame and hardens after the chassis is removed from the vat and allowed to cool.

The Rayner Ducati is a racing machine that you can ride on the road: if you want a civilized middleweight roadster then forget it. But if you want the superb handling and braking that only a true racer can offer then the disadvantages of the Ducati, and there are few, will not put you off.

The Ducati creates an uncanny feeling. Compared with the vast majority of roadsters one has the feeling that it would be impossible to crash the Duke by running out of ground clearance or tyre grip. You may well get so carried away that you run out of road and when you do, you are likely to be cornering at high speed.

It is a difficult feeling to relate, but the essence is that if you choose the correct line for a corner then the Ducati will accomplish its task at a speed that will satisfy any road rider. This means that if something unexpected occurs, then man and machine are going to be in big trouble. Finding a patch of oil, dust or a car in the wrong place once



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