

Owner Survey Cont'd

THE BEAT WITHIN

Dear Joel, here's my contribution to the 750 / 860 GT, GTS Survey.

1975 860 GT, purchased in May of 1978. Cost \$1,200. It was stock when purchased except for BMW R90S Sport bars and a B.S. The bike is painted black with gold metal flake. So far these are the modifications I've made. The costs I've mentioned are vague estimates.

-Camber 1/4 fairing For appearance mostly but it helps in a high-speed tuck (5 mph more or less) \$70.

-Bar-end mirrors The fairing interferred with clamp-on mirrors now I'm sold on these type. \$35

-Twin bulb taillight (Yamaha), much better than stock.

-Turn signals, front and rear are Japanese units from a salvage yard \$15.

-Custom paint. Clear acrylic polymer over red-candy lacquer. The acrylic resists chips and protects from all gas fuel spills, always looks 'wet shiny' and needs no waxing. \$275

-K&N filters. \$15

-Fuse box re-worked. I scraped the stock junk, wired in stadard fuse block (Radio Shack, I guess) cured many of my electrical ills. \$15

-Trip to Wood's Motor Shop in Glendale, California. I gave Jim a bunch of money, but I can't remember how much, maybe \$600 - \$650 in return for: a set of Conti mufflers, front and rear Pirelli Phantoms, S&W street shocks and a 'Stage I' job on the heads. Conti mufflers and Pirelli Phantoms should be stock on all Ducatis. Head job really woke up the "beast within" this combo of modifications helped me realize some of the potential of the 860 GT, but also made me realize I would prefer a 900 SS instead of a converted 860.

-Recently installed a Sears Increncell Battery, \$50 It's too soon to tell if its worth the extra bucks.

Thats about it for modifications. As for how it runs... Around town I take it easy since the bike tends to load up at low speeds. The Contis are trouble at high RPMs in traffic. I do mostly local runs through coastal mountain ranges. It's in this setting that the 860 really shines although at times it tends to show street-bike orientation. I can still dice with the Japanese bike-brats but it's getting tougher against FZR 750s and other sophisticated Jap mounts.

Long trips on freeways are boring but the 860 handles them OK; except for some vibration numbness. I've ridden San Diego to Laguna seca and back with tank bag and soft saddle bags. The best part always is route #1 south of Big Sur. Race weekend is July draws out the crazies and I usually 'Jap-up' a few Ninjas and such, but the serious Canyon kings and 1100's blow me off in the few straights. I don't do much 100+ except on lonely desert highways.

In regards to "competition" I've never raced on tracks. My only competition is in the local canyons.

You ask "what I like best about the GT" well the big twin torque combined with lightweight handling.

Dislikes? The kickstarter. I'd rather push-start. But, I would buy another - only for a collection. The bike is a real joy to own and I would not hesitate to recommend it to someone else. These bikes are worthy to be recommended since they are unique and any serious rider can appreciate the many qualities it has.

Closing comments: To me the 860 GT ranks last in styling, braking and instrumentation when up against any other Ducati. Instead of up-grading this bike to what I wanted it to be I should have just

bought a 900 SS. Maybe I will. Maybe an Alazurra or a Paso! (MHR Mille?) Yeah!

Denny Pavletich, 5650 Waverly Ave., La Jolla, CA 92037.

A SPONTANEOUS PURCHASE

In the interest of brevity. I limit my comments to the questions asked. The bike is 1979 900 GTS.

I bought the 900 GTS at Ghost M/C in Sept. 1979 as a result of a spontaneous road test insisted upon by Sal, the shop owner. I went to Ghost on my V-7 Sport Guzzi to buy a tach cable and rode home two hours later on the Duke. Sal said "come back and pay the balance next week." That's the most credit I had ever been extended without an application! (The DeFeos have always been good to me.) Sal and Griffin gave me an attractive deal on the bike, good trade in on the V-7 etc. I have spent very little on the bike, so far. In the 8,000 miles I have personally ridden the bike it has required less upkeep money than any bike I have ever owned including my FJ 1100 Yamaha, which eats up tires and brake pads like nobodys business!

Changes to the bike, including replacement parts were: A. retro fitting of non-emission pilot air screws \$8. B. Bosch Quartz headlamp, \$22. C. new rear wheel bearings \$15 (mysterious failure discovered while changing a flat tire. D. Two rear tubes and one replacement tire \$50. A new rear tire is needed once again. The first tube failed at 75 mph in the rain on Interstate 80 for unknown reasons. I din't fall down, (in case anyone was wondering). E. My friend installed a Tomaselli dual cable throttle assembly during his ownership. He did a beautiful job of machining away the old assembly making use of the stock switch assembly possible. F. A new battery was installed sometime in the last 5 years, by the previous owner. G. I installed a set of Bub Conti Replica mufflers. H. I have temporarily installed a 1976 Honda 750 seat (without modifying the bike or any of its parts) and nobody has noticed

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