

# LETTERS cont.

couldn't afford in any case) Then, in a late summer DIOC Newsletter, a 750 Sport appeared for sale in Portland, Oregon for \$3,000 (firm). Since Portland is virtually in Alaska's backyard, I felt pretty lucky. Based on conversations with the owner and photographs he sent to me the bike seemed right. Eventually, I "arranged" a business trip to Portland and finally in an October drizzle, in the dark, wearing only street clothes and having signed a release prepared by the owner, I started the magnificent Ducati and rode it for about 2 miles on Portland's rain slicked streets. I had discovered my next motorcycle even though I had no idea in the world where I'd get \$3,000 for a new toy (a wife and two young children make such moves hard to justify).

Months went by, and the 1986 riding season in Juneau dawned with me astride my Norton. The Ducati was drifting to the far edges of my field of possibilities. I focused on the good features of the Norton... because it appeared very likely I would own it for a long time.

Early that summer my friend Corso did it once again. He managed to actually sell his Sabre and immediately bought a 1986 Honda VFR Interceptor. And once again he came by to give me a taste. The Interceptor is a wonderful machine, and my brief ride that early summer evening found a familiar switch in my heart and it was thrown as surely as it had been three years earlier when I had decided to buy the Norton. This time, however, it was the Ducati in Portland that decided to somehow shoehorn into my existence.

I called the guy in Portland that very evening and did some sincere fast talking about money, burning passion, sacrifice, and symbolic passing of the torch. The next morning he called back to accept my offer of \$2500. So I sold my beloved 1969 Chevy pickup and wonder of wonders, sold the Norton too! No money out of the family coffers meant it was difficult for my admittedly wonderful wife to be anything but supportive of my new acquisition. I remember Corso being amazed that I had actually sold my truck as a means of financing the Ducati (probably because he had borrowed it regularly up to that point.)

It took quite awhile after I sent my money down to portland to get the bike up to Juneau. One morning in early August I had the wonderful experience of opening the doors on a shipping van and moving out a bunch of other freight to finally reveal a truly beautiful and absolutely spotless 1974 Ducati Sport. Best of all, it was mine!

In Alaska the riding season is not real long, but before the 1986 season closed I had gotten to know the Ducati well enough to have been awarded a pretty healthy speeding ticket by the Alaska State Troopers, and to have realized that I had to come to terms with an outrageous yellow Italian motorcycles and self control. This I feel I have managed to do almost completely. There is the rare occurrence of wrist lock on certain favorite stretches of local pavement, but it's rare.

Corso has a similar problem of self-control, possibly a more serious one than mine since his machine is capable of truly blinding acceleration and mind-numbing speeds. We have, however developed a fairly effective therapy. We go for long distance fast paced rides.

Once a year we leave Juneau on our motorcycles for the empty highways of Northern Canada. This year it was the Yukon Territory. Four days of empty roads, most of it paved, much of it excellent and some of it truly memorable.

Canadian highways are lonely with an occasional vehicle encountered going either direction, and towns every 100 miles or so. We saw about equal portions of good flat out road (with 100 mph sweepers) and

wonderful twisty stuff along magnificent north country lakes that stretch for miles and miles across the wilderness. The kind of road that deserves a return trip so you can benefit from the learning.

In four days of riding I think we saw four police cars. Three within the city limits of Whitehorse (the territorial seat of government) and the fourth passed us going in the opposite direction as we streaked along at about 80 mph. He never even put his foot on the brakes. In the course of our tour we spent about 1 1/2 hours at speeds close to or slightly in excess of 100 mph. Our major concern was not police or "the big white Buick" but rather we had to be wary of moose and horses. (It wouldn't be very much fun to run into a moose making a left turn in front of you as you clip along at 95 mph.) And we did see a moose and several horses during that long weekend.

I learned to appreciate the layout of my Ducati. At speeds above 75 mph the drop handlebars and rearsets are just right. The generous rake and trail make for extremely stable high speed touring. I have yet to feel any wobble from the chassis and I've been in some fast corners with bumps that certainly would have promoted wobble.

In stark contrast to my old Norton, after 800 miles of high speed running the Ducati has used not one drop of oil. Not one. The engine truly enjoys running at 6000 rpm, sweet and strong and singing a throaty song to me and anybody else within a mile or so. The bike has good brakes and a nice five speed gearbox. And to top it off, it's a work of art that is joy to behold. It's the only Ducati in Juneau and I ride it regularly rain or shine. I like it a lot and Foyston was right, yes indeed, he sure was.

(Tom Carson is a civil engineer project manager for a private engineering firm in Juneau, Alaska).

## rennsport

SINCE 1977

BMW MOTO GUZZI DUCATI

HOME OF THE "BATTLE OF THE TWINS" CHAMPIONS  
DAYTONA '86 LAGUNA SECA '85 & '86

Let **rennsport** help you maximize your engine's efficiency by putting over a decade of performance experience to work for you with our complete cylinder head rebuilding services including:

REMEMBER . . .  
"EFFICIENCY BENEFITS ALL  
ENGINES, NOT JUST  
HYPERFORMANCE ONES."

- UNLEADED GAS CONVERSIONS  
— seats - valves - guides with seals —
- VALVE JOBS  
— custom 3 angle - or competition 5 angle —
- DUAL PLUG MACHINING  
— with all related electrical components —
- HELIARC WELDING  
— exhaust thread and fin repair —
- HOLLOW GLASS BEAD BLASTING

Of course we offer a full range of engine components and rebuilding services as well. Including: • CARBON FIBER PUSH RODS • STAINLESS STEEL VALVES • FORGED PISTONS • TOTAL SEAL PISTON RINGS • LIGHTENED WRIST PINS • 2 INTO 1 INTO 2 EXHAUST SYSTEMS • LECTRON CARBURETOR CONVERSION KITS

SEND \$3.00 FOR OUR 1987 CATALOGUE

**rennsport**

800 WEST EL ROBLAR  
OJAI, CALIFORNIA  
93023 USA

CALL, ASK FOR C.B. RICE,  
AND WE'LL DISCUSS YOUR  
BIKE'S ENGINE NEEDS

### 805-640-0642