

DESMO LEANINGS



The Official Magazine of the Ducati Owners Club of the United States

Volume 2 Issue 2

Summer 2004

THIS ISSUE...

- **MARVIN JENSEN'S 851 MAKEOVER**
- **BOB COOK'S DYNAMIC 998R**
- **RIDER READINESS, PART II**



DOUBLE SUMMER ISSUE

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Contenuto

Features

7
Marvin Jensen's 851 Makeover

by Marvin Jensen

9
9th Annual Ducks Along the Blue Ridge

by Jim Calandro

11
Bob Cook's Dynamic 998R

by Bob Cook

16
Motorcycle & Rider Readiness, Part II

by John M. Rossi

20
Americade 2004

by John M. Rossi

23
2nd Annual Ducks Head West

by Jim Calandro

The USual Suspects

3
Saluti dal capo

Greetings from il Capo

4
Piazza Del Mercato

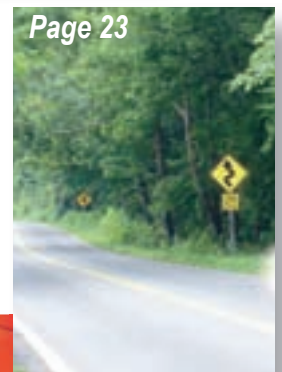
Classifieds

28
(new!) Bench Racing

Tall tales of fact and "friction"



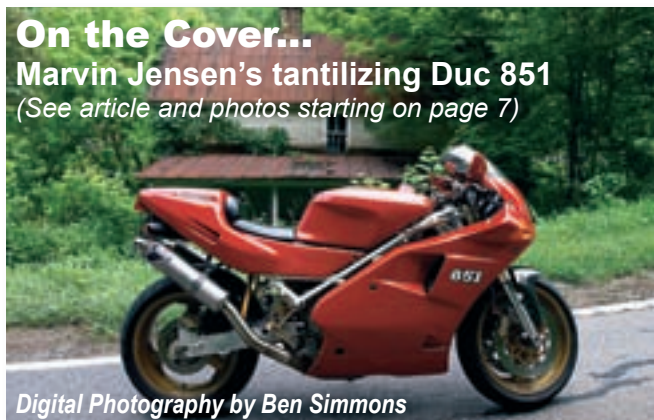
Page 9



Page 23



Page 11



On the Cover...

Marvin Jensen's tantilizing Duc 851
(See article and photos starting on page 7)

Digital Photography by Ben Simmons

Greetings from il Capo

Summer is here, and the newsletter is going to be late again. Our plan is to see if the printing house we are using can help us with magazine assembly as Terry Wyse, our graphic designer, has a new business that is growing, and he has less time to devote to Desmo Leanings.

We have put together a double issue this time to cover all the events; thirty-two pages to dazzle and amaze you. ☺ An interesting trend in events has begun to take shape: our weekend rallies and rides are seeing decreasing attendance, and our track days are now sold out. We are looking at new tracks and increasing events at existing tracks. What we need to do is figure out whether rallies need more publicity or they are just not as desirable. Please share your feeling on these two types of events.

Our summer cover features a classic Ducati 851 lovingly modified by Marvin Jensen and photographed by Ben Simmons. Read all about it starting on page 7. Again, if you have a nice set of shots, please contact us so we can try to use them. Remember, we want something artistic and high resolution. A nice story about the bike in the shots will make it all that more interesting to our readers.

We have about 30 percent of our old members who have not renewed their membership. We just issued member number 421, and with the renewal rate we have a current membership of just over 350. If you are enjoying the club and the events, please tell your friends about us so we can continue to grow.

We have had an increased support from the Ducati dealers. Many have attended our track days with their customers to both support them and have some fun themselves. Four Southeast Ducati dealers even rented Road Atlanta and have put on a track day of their own. 🏁



Jim
il Capo



Jim Calandroil Capo
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Piazza del Mercato

2002 Ducati ST4s

For Sale in Atlanta. It has the factory Comfort Fairing and Screen and Custom Bar Risers with Galfer extended lines. This fairing is cleaner looking and offers more protection than even the new 2004 ones. Stock fairing and lines included. Platinum paint has no scratches at all. Pampered by mature owner and always garaged. Only 8K miles. \$9,990

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Photos available on request.

Titanium slip-on exhausts

for a Ducati 996/916/748 ('94 to '02 models) from Fast By Ferracci (FBF catalog number F33500T). Includes Carbon/Kevlar fiber ankle heat shield. Has Ferracci's oval Italian flag logo. Bracket hardware also included. These pipes are beautiful and in perfect condition. They have only been used for 1000 dry miles. Reason for sale: need the money. Asking \$690 for everything.

Gary Meyering
eurobritbiker@yahoo.com
(703) 704-1617

1975 Laverda SF2

Dressed to look like the legendary SFC. Fairing, seat, rear sets, clip-ons and of course bright orange paint. Borrani rims, twin front disc and Laverda dual leading shoe rear brake. Bike is in good shape and is a daily rider.

Jim Calandro
capo@carolina.rr.com
(704) 843-0429

US DESMO

NORTHEAST REGIONAL EVENT

Friday, November 19th, 2004

5:00-6:45pm VIP Reception

7:00 General Admission - 7:30 Presentation

***Larz Anderson Transportation Museum
Brookline, Massachusetts***



DUCATI The Art and Design of an Italian Motorcycle

Speaker: Pierre Terblanche, Director of Ducati Design, Bologna, Italy

It could be said that of all the machines conceived by the human mind that the motorcycle embodies emotion, form, and function unlike any other. Ducati Motorcycles of Bologna, Italy has achieved landmarks in motorcycle design that few manufacturers can match. Ducati's indisputable dominance on the racetrack and the sensuality of form are imprinted in every model they build. The pedigree of these high performance motorcycles have become icons of culture, sport, leisure, and business throughout the world.

US DESMO is honored to welcome Pierre Terblanche, Director of Ducati Design, to the Larz Anderson Transportation Museum. Pierre will speak on the company's rich heritage and the unique role of style for the machines he has personally designed such as the 900SS, MH900e, as well as the company's latest, the Multi-Strada and the 999. Mr. Terblanche will address motorcycle design from identified market needs to new product development. Selected Ducati motorcycles will be exhibited at the Larz Anderson Transportation Museum.

Sponsored in part by: **SAE (Society of Automotive Engineers) www.sae.org**

Also, don't miss

Larz Anderson Classic, European Motorcycle Day

Sunday, October 10, 2004 - www.mot.org

***Reservations, information, directions, and costs will be made available on the
Larz Anderson Transportation Museum web site in the near future.***

Monitor their web site or the US DESMO web site for updates.

John M. Rossi

US DESMO

DUCATI Owners Club of the United States

Northeast Regional Representative

johnmrossi@comcast.net

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Aprilia New York adds DUCATI to its line-up.



The Aprilia RSV 1000R NERA is one of twenty in the United States. At \$27,999, you can expect the full support of Aprilia New York's staff. From left to right, Oncke Kipperman, Terence Maxwell, Frank Matera, David Hernandez, Gabriel Varga, Howie Mansdorf, and Tammy Anderson.

Aprilia New York is dedicated to Italian motorcycle marques, featuring Aprilia and Moto Guzzi. This is Aprilia's flagship store in the United States at 155 Avenue of the Americas in New York. Howie Mansdorf founded the 7,500 square foot dealership in New York's Soho district on January 4, 2004, incorporating 15 years' experience in the motorcycle industry, which includes the opening in 1996 of Xtreme Motorsports, his dealership in Freeport, Long Island. Aprilia New York's service center is headed by Frank Matera, whose experience for two years in Pro Thunder and two years in Superbike with the Ferracci race team has made the service center popular among Ducati owners in the City. Every member of the staff is an experienced motorcyclist who can offer help with full-service tuning and accessories, outfit you in the latest Dainese street/race apparel, or roll you

out on a new or used bike. The showroom feels more like a museum gallery than a dealership and features every current model of Aprilia and Guzzi, including the latest popular scooters. By the time you read this, Howie Mansdorf's next venture, "Ducati New York," will be underway in Lower Manhattan, his second location, with the assistance of General Manager Tammy Anderson. Look for upcoming Aprilia New York/Ducati New York - US DESMO Track Days at Pocono International Speedway. ⚡

John M. Rossi, Northeast Regional Representative



851 Makeover

Article by *Marvin Jensen*

Photography by *Ben Simmons*

Ever since the 851 was introduced I have thought that it is one of the Premier Ducatis. Approximately four years ago I saw a listing for a 92' 851 in the local classifieds and promptly bought it. The owner had invested a lot of time and money in the bike and it had only 8600 miles on it. Upgrades included Dymag wheels, an 888 aluminum rear sub-frame, 888 carbon tail section, FBF rear-sets, Fren Tubo brake and clutch lines and carbon high pipes. He also had painted it yellow.

The bad news was that he had low sided it twice, once on each side. The windscreen was broken, the side fairings scratched badly, left clip-on bent, and the left foot peg was half ground away.



I patched up the fairing a bit and made a matching replacement foot peg. I took the bike to G.M.D. Computrack where they put the swing arm back to the correct dimensions. After that I just rode it for two years doing the usual things to it like adding Nichols lightweight flywheel, clutch, motor mount bolts. I also

installed an aftermarket clutch slave cylinder, floating front rotors and GP radial master cylinder. Along the way I decided to uprate the suspension by installing Race-Tech springs and Gold Valves to the forks as well as an Ohlins shock to the rear.

Two years ago I had access to a super clean downdraft spray booth and the complete PPG Paint Mixing System so I stripped the yellow paint and proceeded to apply coats of epoxy primer, curing in a "hot room" and block sanding. I repeated this procedure until I had the bodywork ripple free. I have a spare side fairing from an SP4 which I had scanned by my local PPG dealer. Of course it didn't match, so I mixed my own red basecoat.

I sprayed the red basecoat, applied the Factory decals, and applied three coats of House of Color Urethane Clear, cured in hot room for three or four days, block sanded and applied two more coats of clear. Once again in the hot box for four or five days, then wet sanded with 1200, 1500, 2000 and 2500 grit paper, then rubbed with two different grits of rubbing compound. The end result is a super glossy finish with an almost perfect mirror image, no orange peel and the decals are totally flush under the clear. *continued next page...*



This winter with 33,000 miles on the bike I pulled the cams while adjusting the valves and noticed that the chrome on some of the rocker arms was wearing through. Not flaking, just wearing. I decided to pull the heads to lap the valves as well as replat the rockers. One thing lead to another and before I knew it I had the engine out of the bike and totally disassembled. I had a friend send the rockers to Guy Martin at MBP Performance for replating. I purchased some 95mm Pistal pistons from BCM and had Millennium bore and plate a pair of 916 cylinders to match. (907 cc's) I bought a pair of 748 heads on eBay and proceeded to match the ports and unshroude the valves so they would flow better. For the uninitiated, this is done because the 748 heads are designed for a much smaller bore and there is so much material encompassing the valves that it inhibits flow when used on a larger bore. I also decided on 748 transmission gears for a closer gear ratio.

I polished the connecting rods to eliminate any place where a crack could start and bought new rod bolts. I then made the long trek from Western North Carolina to the upper Midwest to have my brother magnaflux the crankshaft and rods, polish the crank journals, check the rods and shot-peen them, and balance the crankshaft assembly.

I assembled the engine setting the squish at 1mm. This turned out to be a rather large undertaking as the base gaskets I needed were on a long lead time and riding season was around the corner. I had to construct a special vacuum fixture so that I could produce the gaskets on the Bridgeport in my shop.

These head modifications coupled with the bigger bore and 748 heads left me with a 12.3/1 compression ratio. The cams are dialed in, the intakes advanced four degrees, MBP Valve Collets

installed. I'm using a P8 ECU with FIM chip, 3.5 Bar fuel pressure and a 45/50mm Farne exhaust header with titanium Termi's.

I now have 2500 miles on the new engine, it runs really well, lots of low-end and midrange power. I have not had a chance to take it to a Dyno yet, soon I hope!

This bike is an absolute blast to ride!





9th Annual

Ducks Along the Blue Ridge

Repeated checks to weather.com had been yielding great weather conditions for the Ninth Annual Ducks Along the Blue Ridge Rally. At the last minute this changed and it looked like we were going to get rained on. Friday started off sunny but went down hill after twelve noon. Those of us who got there a little early got some riding in without rain gear but we were glad to carry it. The group I rode with covered about 135 miles or valley river roads, some of the most relaxing and entertaining riding around.

Saturday morning we awoke to wet pavement and two State Troopers on Harleys! It turns out they were there for escort duty at a mall so at least they left, which is more than we can say for the rain! Now common folklore tells us that Ducati riders are prima donnas and do not ride in the rain. Well we had 47 riders who made the ride to lunch and considering we had about 60 riders signed up for the event that is a great showing. We rode most of the way in the rain. At a stop to put on more rain gear a few of our riders noticed a little old lady down on her hands and knees on the steps of a local church. It turns out she had fallen and broken her hip. RC Cole, a nurse, assessed her condition and recommended she go to the hospital.

They remained with her until her daughter came for her. I think Ducati riders just went up a notch in the eyes of the local northern North Carolina residents.

Their skies opened up later in the day and mountain roads cease to be fun when you cannot see approaching turns. As a result we only got in about 130 miles and then headed back to the hotel. Dinner was great as usual and this year we added a new twist, a shuttle bus to the country club. This allowed the consumption of adult beverages and prevented riders getting lost on the way home to the hotel in the dark. Door prizes were provided by Ducati NA, Charlotte BMW-Ducati and Myers Ducati.

Sunday looked sad and rain was forecast to be around until Monday. Despite this many riders went out for breakfast but we never needed our rain gear. Out of the 66 who pre registered we had 59 participate at the event. Ducks can be hearty if they want. ⚡

*Jim Calandro
Capo*

2004 Ducks Along the Blue Ridge



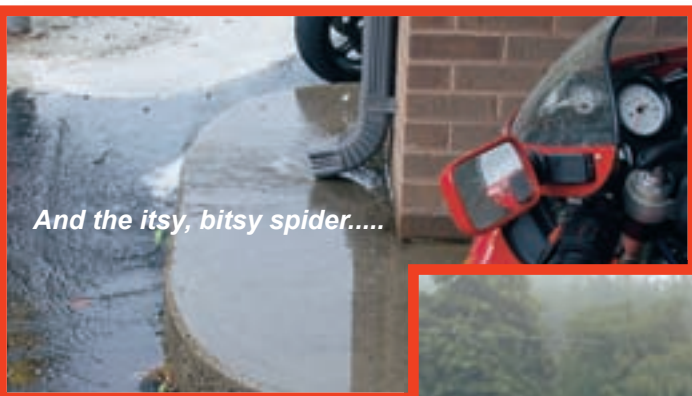
*Why me?
Because your a Clyde!*



*That's right...a medium height white male riding
an Italian sportbike..have you seen him?.....*



*...No? I guess we'll to have to take ALL of you in...
...except for the guy in yellow.*



And the itsy, bitsy spider.....



A parade of Ducs gets rained on.

Labor of Love

by Bob Cook



It started innocently enough in 2002, when Mark Stubbs, owner of Moto Europa in Richmond, VA told me, “We’ve got a 998R on the way that should be here in a couple of weeks. We’ll hold it for you if you want it.” I immediately said “Yes!”, then scrambled to find financing. Several weeks later, the bike was mine.

I originally justified the cost because the bike would arrive with all the “good” stuff already installed. What I didn’t realize was that the bike didn’t come with all the “great” stuff installed, which I quickly discovered in the current Ducati Superbike catalogue. From that point onward, it was a labor of love to make the bike lighter and quicker...something that would tax my wallet to the maximum but would ultimately result in the best bike that I have ever swung a leg over. Without the help of two outstanding dealers, Mark Stubbs (Moto Europa) and Bruce Myers (BCM Motorsports, Laconia NH), none of this would have been possible.

My goal was to reduce the bike’s weight to below 400 lbs fully wet with fuel, improve handling, and increase power. The bike currently weighs about 405 lbs fully wet, and is producing 151.4 rear wheel horsepower and 82 ft/lbs

of torque. The upgrades which had the greatest impact in transforming the bike into what it is today were the addition of the Corse swingarm (small axle) and Marchesini forged triple tree (set to the steeper steering angle); the Bucci/STM slipper clutch; the JHP quick shifter; the BST carbon fiber wheels; and the BCM engine work (including the 60mm Termignoni exhaust system). A complete list of non-OEM parts appears at the end of this article. This winter, I plan on installing a carbon fiber front fairing and tank, which should result in the bike weighing below 400 lbs fully wet, as planned. *Continued next page...*

One of the first lessons I learned was that, just because something appears in the Ducati Superbike catalogue doesn't mean that it is actually available. With the forthcoming (at the time) introduction of the 999, I decided to order the Corse magnesium swingarm (complete) before those stocks disappeared from the US warehouse. The swingarm was breathtaking, and so was the price! Fourteen weeks later, all the parts finally arrived...after Ducati North American received considerable "encouragement" from Mark Stubbs at Moto Europa. By that time, Moto Europa had already painted the front number plate on the bike, installed the Bucci clutch (subsequently modified with an STM 48 tooth basket and clutch pack), and custom fitted the flush mount 6" x 1/4" rear brake light LED. The Marchesini forged triple tree was fitted at the same time as the swingarm, adjusted to the steeper steering angle. The steeper steering angle helped the bike turn in quicker (but still not as quick as my ZX-6R), and the longer swing arm helped provide straight line stability and keep the front end down at the track.

In May of 2003, I was slogging around Mosport, Ontario (it rained every day, but the sun came out briefly on the last day of the Memorial Day holiday so I was able to push the bike a bit). Mosport's 3/4 mile long slightly uphill back straight had me thrashing the 998R for all she was worth...but I still wished that I had more power (what racer doesn't?). Enter Bruce Myers. I bumped into Bruce at Mosport, casually mentioned that I had a 998R, and he casually mentioned that he had already tuned three of them to make more than 150 rear wheel horsepower. I was stunned, but he was serious...and he said that he could do it without decreasing engine reliability or using jet fuel. I was hooked (again), my wallet already beginning to protest.

I participated in a BCM sponsored track day at New Hampshire International Speedway in late September 2003, and the next day dropped the bike off with Bruce at BCM so the engine modifications could be completed over the winter. I opted for the more modest of the tuning options, which according to Bruce, consisted of the three "Ps"...pipes, pistons, and ports. We had originally planned on installing a 60mm Sil Motor exhaust system...but before that could be done, Bruce called me with exciting news. A customer had just dropped off a brand new 60mm Termignoni carbon


fiber exhaust system for consignment, and Bruce wondered if I wanted to substitute the Termini's for the Sil's. Once again, I couldn't believe my good fortune, and I immediately said "Yes!" Bruce installed Pistal high compression pistons, ported the head, degreed the cams, installed a Pipercross air filter, burned a new FIM chip, and 16 dyno runs later, the bike was producing 151.4 rear wheel horsepower and 82 ft/lbs of torque...up from 130 rear wheel horsepower and 72 ft/lbs torque stock. Wow. Unfortunately, while I was wandering around in Bruce's showroom waiting to pick up the bike...I happened to look up to the top of one of the display walls where the pairs of Blackstone Tek wheels were hanging. My wallet said "No!", so I started saving yet again. Maybe someday...

My first opportunity to test the bike at the track came in March 2004 at Barber Motorsports Park. The track is the finest that I have ever ridden, suffering only from the lack of a long straightaway. Bruce was there as well, and during one session followed me on his 748RS (punched out to 853). Even though the 998R had the wrong gearing for Barber, Bruce said that he couldn't match the bike's drive out of the corners or the acceleration...only making up ground under braking. The bike was awesome, powering up steep hills with ease...so much so that I had to be careful overtaking other track day participants and racers fine tuning their bikes. I had an absolute blast, but yearned to get back to my home track, Summit Point, WV...with its long front straightaway. Summit Point is 2 miles long, with ten turns, lots of elevation changes, a technical carousel section,...and that long front straight.

Three months later, I'd saved enough pennies (actually quite a few pennies), and ordered the BST wheels from Bruce...a 3.5" front and 5.75" rear, both with aluminum hubs. I fitted a new set of OEM discs on the front wheel, fastened with titanium bolts. A Michelin Pilot Race 120/70 ZR17 S2 front and Michelin Pilot Race 180/55 ZR17 M2 rear were fitted, the same as on the OEM five spoke forged aluminum wheels I'd been using. The only difference between the two wheel sets with tires was the titanium disc mounting bolts. The weight difference was 6.5 lbs...2.5 lbs saved on the front, 4 lbs saved on the rear using the BST's. And the OEM wheels were pretty light to begin with!

In June 2004, I assisted a friend of mine as an instructor for a high performance riding school at Summit Point. Another good friend of mine (very fast, very good, very safe) agreed to follow me on his 2001 Yamaha R1. We both played hooky from our instructor duties for one session, and ran at about 85% race pace for 20 minutes. My friend could keep up, but the R1 couldn't, and I was eventually riding alone, enjoying the perfect bike on a perfect day on a track where I'd won races in the past. I can best describe it like this...picking up the action exiting Turn 10 just before the front straight, after warming up the Michelins.

I exit T10 (the high speed sweeping right hander before the front straight) in 4th, knee on the deck, looking hard right. The bike drifts left past the apex as I begin to stand her up, using the red and white rumble strip at the outside of the turn as a berm to stop the gentle slide. Now its full tuck time, throttle WFO, no rolling off as the quick shifter does its work through 5th (past the start finish line) and 6th on the downhill section leading to T1. At the "3" marker I sit up, 165 indicated, and brake hard for T1, the bike's tail wagging slightly but the front firmly planted, still with a margin for error (it is a track day after all!). I trail brake into T1, right knee skimming the concrete patch, and gradually roll on the throttle exiting T2, the right hander that leads uphill to T3. Again WFO through 3rd, inches from the edge of the track and the grass on exit...briefly touching 4th before back shifting to 3rd for T3, the tricky decreasing radius blind left hander. I pitch the bike left, letting the slipper slow her down as my left knee just kisses the curb, immediately accelerating past the apex, counter steering with my body to the right as the bike goes left, the front tire slightly off the ground as the forks shake ever so slightly. Down the chute, 4th gear, approaching T4, the very scary downhill right hander with hardly any run off and a massive tire wall facing me. I fight the urge to roll off and keep positive throttle through this turn, cutting a diagonal from the apex to the entrance of T5 just a couple hundred meters away...a left hand hairpin. I brake hard and backshift to 2nd, pitching the bike hard left, looking as far left as my head will turn, my diagonal line having kept anyone from trying to stuff me up the inside. A short squirt of the throttle has me entering T6, an increasing radius right hander and the entrance to the carousel that

tightens into T7. I short shift to 3rd, intentionally drift wide and late apex into T7, throwing the bike hard right (really hard...I've scraped the fairing here before on my ZX-6R). Immediately, I flick the bike hard left through T8, gradually feeding in throttle as I traverse the exit to set up for T9, the right hand uphill turn that can catch you off guard if you drift too far left. I accelerate at the apex and the rear spins up slightly, but the front stays planted thanks in part to the extended swingarm. 4th gear, then 5th as the bike executes a small power wheelie over the rise short of the footbridge, in spite of me being hunched over the tank. Backshift to 4th, let the slipper slow the bike entering T10, again with my knee skimming the tarmac as I stand the bike up as once again its WFO to the start finish line. I cross the line grinning from ear to ear because I know as I'm experiencing it, that it just doesn't get any better than this. Thank you, Ducati Motor Holding! 

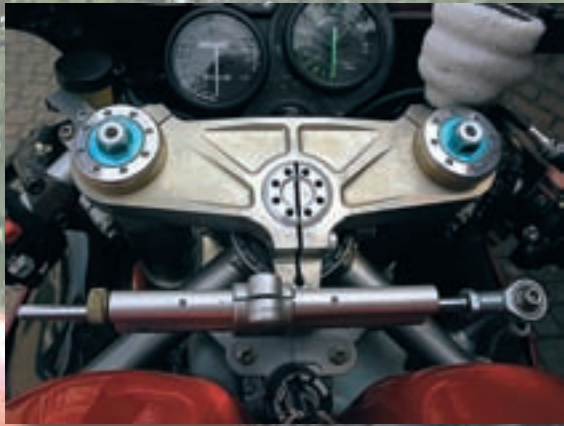


***About the author:** Bob Cook served 20 years in the Army as an Airborne, Ranger, Infantryman. He currently is the managing broker of Century 21 New Millennium's Kingstowne Virginia office. His amateur racing career was curtailed by a personal situation, but he still enjoys participating in track days and assisting others in improving their riding skills.*

Photos next page.....

Bob Cook's 998R





Preparing the Motorcycle and Rider for Track Day

Part II of a III part series on the track-day experience.

by John M. Rossi

You are scheduled and anticipating your track day to arrive — a tribal gathering of sorts comprised of likeminded men and women — it could be a week away or a 6 months away. The day is finally here...

...and shortly after dawn you are communing with sixty or more riders and organizers in the paddock. This will be one day, where in the course of modern life, you will want a number of things to line up perfectly. Those things we know as being engineered, meteorological, humanly physical, and of course mentally directed. This is no different than the perfect ride you strive for along the Blue Ridge Mountains, or the red sand coast of Prince Edward Island, or the Southwest's pale orange sunset with one major exception. As compared to your most memorable riding experiences, a closed-course track is a distinctive and intentionally designed environment.

takes on a whole new meaning at the track. For most riders, the experience can be so exhilarating, that you'll overlook your above average CO2 emission quota for the day.

Getting to the track:

I have never ridden my bike to a track day although some riders do. These riders show-up that morning,

peel off their tank bag and luggage, remove mirrors, pull a few fuses, and tape off the lights and their ready to ride around the track. For some folks this approach works just fine. I am usually so mentally drained, if not physically exhausted after a track day, I doubt I could ever safely throw a leg over a bike after 4:00 p.m. to ride home.

My approach and that of many track goes is to treat their track day as a

more serious sporting endeavor than a day of sport touring. So trailering the bike is the logical choice for many riders. Not to mention that bikes do fall down and riders sometimes crash—common in many sports involving velocity guided by human input. The mere thought of falling is something many riders avoid. However, should that event become a reality having a trailer or truck is a handy way to get home.



*We're not in Kansas anymore. One look at the Paddock during BCM Motor Sport's Track day at New Hampshire International Speedway, and you know you're in for a serious day of riding.
Photo: Ellen Klimm*

Just being at the track environment piques your awareness and heightens the senses in a way that you know that you have raised the bar a notch in the sport of motorcycling. With the sounds of tools, desmos, and bevels clattering about, as well as the textures of leather, Kevlar, blacktop, steel, and carbon fiber, it should be apparent that you are participating in something requiring the most from your skill, experience, and judgment. With just one smell of that synthetic laced exhaust, the term highbred vehicle



Rider, bike, truck, track . . . Simple! Spring Mountain Motor Sports Park, Pahrump, Nevada. Photo: John Rossi

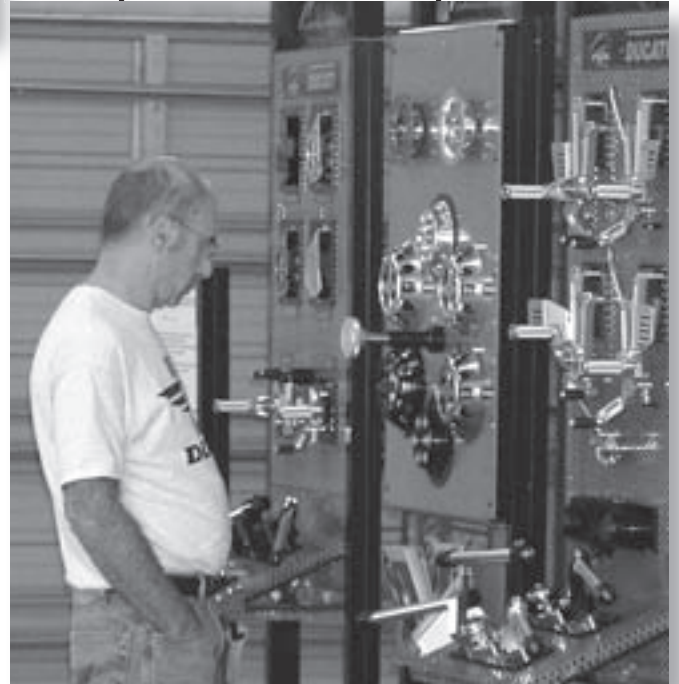
Once at the track, I place all my focus on learning the track, refining my line, and honing the roll on/off power techniques. That means I want everything on the motorcycle to be in order before arriving at the track. For me, prepping the motorcycle takes several days advance planning and a few late evenings. If you work on your own machine you know there is satisfaction found in the advance preparation. This step can be your manifestation of Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance. The best part is, you can author the ritual so it is completely suited to your own style and needs. Readyng the motorcycle, yourself, and all the supporting gear that you may need for track day should help free you up to focus more on your riding technique once at the track. That is not to say there won't be adjustments or even repairs to the motorcycle at your track day. However, you should arrive intent on riding, not wrenching.



There will always be adjustments to make and even repairs but, your track experience should focused on riding, not wrenching. Photo: Ellen Klimm

Facing Maintenance Facts

The track is an unforgiving environment that demands the highest performance of your motorcycle and from you as the rider. If you think something on your bike is marginal, beyond its half-life, or nearing the service interval, stop and address it. I'm not talking performance upgrades or adding fashionable aftermarket parts, I'm talking about all the basic systems and practicing sound principals of motorcycle maintenance and safety standards.



All the aftermarket, shiny-bits in the world won't get your bike through tech-inspection or around the track any faster. Photo: Ellen Klimm

If you overlook something, it is likely that the tech-inspection will catch it. No one rides on the track unless tech inspection passes you and your machine. If your riding equipment, clothing, or your motorcycle is deficient in any way, you run the risk of sitting out the track day you've been waiting for. With proper planning, the chances of this happening can be minimized. Should you need a refresher course of what makes your bike tick, look for a reputable Ducati dealer that conducts training seminars and register for one. Remember, there are no bad question about safety and maintenance issues. In the meantime familiarize yourself with the machine you ride by reading the owner's manual or pick up the indispensable Haynes service and repair manual.

Being Prepared with Tools and Supplies

These lists become very personal depending on the rider and motorcycle. You can carry the essentials or expand the list depending on the duration of travel plans and linked adventures that require other specialized gear and equipment. I find there is often some cross-over between many of the sporting activities I do and the gear that is needed.

Then of course there is always the weather forecast. The apparatus and gear needed to deal with cold, rain, snow or extreme heat can dictate its own checklist. With Boston as my home-base, it is not unusual to experience at least 3 out of 4 seasons when riding from the Atlantic coast to the mountains of New Hampshire or Vermont. So in the course of a day, your track conditions and weather can change as well. Should you forgot something, chances are you may find it from someone to borrow. Regardless of who has what you may need, you'll find everyone at the track to be helpful. It's sort of a thing among motorcyclists and the world would be a friendlier place if more people rode motorcycles.

Packing for two. You and the bike, it is that simple and that complicated. Even if you are heading off to the track with a riding buddy—not a bad idea actually and always good for a few hundred laughs—you should have your act together.

You. Self preservation and prevention. Now here is where the highest maintenance can be and for good reason. You want to get home at the end of the day having had a great experience and planning to do more track days. You may not need all of this stuff but, some of these items can be indispensable and make the difference between a having a great day and suffering needlessly.



Fortunately, the rider only suffered a bruised ego. Riding a little too hot much too early in the day could make for an unexpected and costly parts order. Photo: John Rossi

Like motorcycling itself, you ultimately will shape your own list and rituals for track day. It seems I have never packed everything on the list but, chances are that having some of these items could help get you through the day. So if you own it, why not bring it.

Be smart and check what the specific requirements are of the track and track-day organizers you plan to be riding with. There may be special criteria on equipment such as safety wiring oil drain plugs, filters, and water over coolant. Check this out well in advance and enjoy the day! ⚠

Motorcycle Check-list

- Top-off fuel tank on the bike
- Remove mirrors
- Pull fuses for headlight, brake light, turn signals
- Tape-off headlight, and/or completely remove turn and brake lenses
- Remove street bodywork and/or replace with designated track bodywork
- Tires are new or like new
- Brakes and rotors are like new and within spec
- Motor is tuned, tight, and oil free
- Valve belts are new and adjusted
- Chain and sprockets are within spec, properly adjusted, and lubricated
- All serviceable components checked, replenished, and renewed
- Hoses, wires, and cables are freely routed and without cracks or kinks
- Bike stand
- 3 – 5 gallons of fuel in a proper storage container
- Tools, flashlight, pocket knife
- Air pump and gauge
- Chain lube and WD-40
- Spark plugs
- Oil, filter, and funnel

Rider Check-list

- Leathers (tops and bottoms) that zip together or a one piece suite
- Body armor
- Helmet and spare face shield
- Gloves and boots (innersoles or orthotics if you use them)
- Undergarments (preferably wicking, tight fitting, aerobic sport clothing)
- Bicycle shorts (helpful in so many ways)
- Rain gear and bandanna
- Electric vest
- Sandals or comfortable slip-ons
- Earplugs and extra earplugs
- Sunglasses and lens cleaner
- Sun-block and hat (brimmed for sun or warm for cold)
- Your own food/water to meet special requirements or as a back-up
- A camp chair or stool
- A small rug or floor mat to stand on
- Change of clothes and extra clothes if needed
- Umbrella, tent, tarp & poles

Personal Items...

- First-aid kit
- Lip balm (with sun protection)
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Towel, soap, shampoo

Essentials...

- Leave a copy of your travel plans with a family member or responsible friend. Include contact names and phone numbers of the group you are riding with.
- Map of where you are heading
- Money and Photo ID
- Notebook, pen, and track map
- Camera, film, or video camera

US DESMO AT

Americade 2004 was a first for US DESMO. The ride from Lake George to Lake Placid offered Ducati owners, aficionados of Italian motorcycles, and US DESMO members a chance to meet and ride the sweeping roads through the beautiful Adirondack Mountains of New York. Most days greeted us with sunny blue skies and 75 degrees, dropping to the mid-50s at night. Perfecto. This entire region, known centrally as the Lake Champlain River Valley, is cradled between the Adirondacks and the Green Mountains of Vermont. Many riders visit these parallel mountain ranges, lakes, and rolling farmlands during the warm weather in New England. However, I once experienced three inches of snow in September on waking up at the Pines Hotel in Lake Placid (formerly the Saint Moritz), so plan accordingly—heated grips, seat, and Gerbing top—no kidding.

This year's gathering began at White Water Outdoor Center in Warrensburg, New York, and drew US DESMO members from Pennsylvania, Connecticut, New York, Massachusetts, Virginia, and Maine. Ron Prevatt, Ducati USA's Northeast Regional Representative, made a cameo to see what all the noise was by US DESMO, but he only made it to the campsite. Was it 500 meatballs this year?

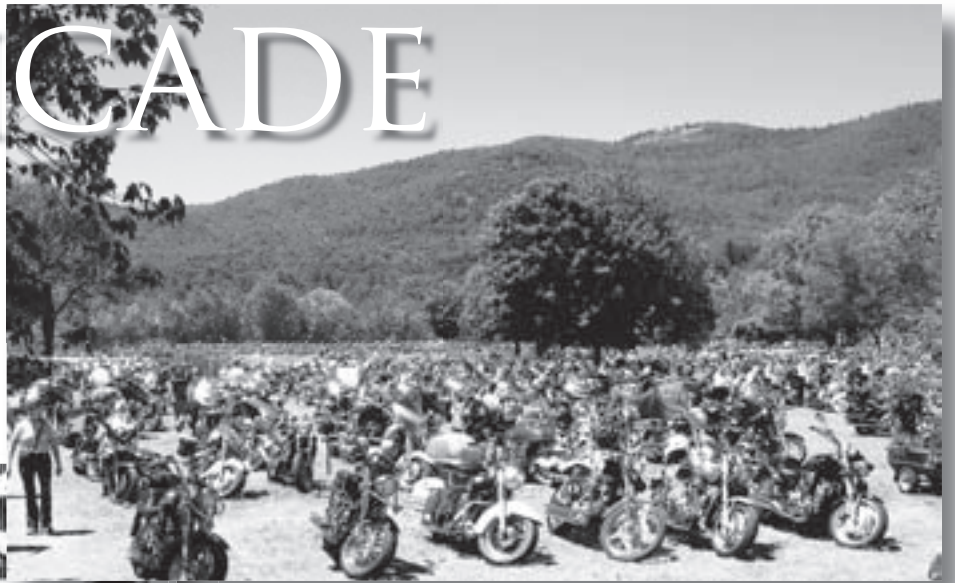
Next year, Ron and other Ducati crew members will have to leave the demo truck and store openings behind to actually ride among the symphony of twins. This year's musical contributors were an 888, a 951, an ST4, an ST3, a two-piece 900SS, an Aprilia section, a Triumph, Super Mario on his BMW GS, and, yes, Kevin's Buel held the base line. It was fun and fast, but way small; practically invisible. I would misplace it or lose it completely. At least a red Ducati is hard to miss, and most people do not cover their ears when you ride by.



This year's rigorous 4-day Americade schedule consisted of a "whatever you want to do, we can do" agenda. In other words, kick back, ride, eat, ride, eat, ride, sleep, and dream...about riding. Next day, repeat. The same is on tap for next June, punctuated by maybe a few more events. Schedule it now: US DESMO at Americade, June 6 – 11, 2005. Specifics to be announced at www.usdesmo.com.

John M. Rossi
US DESMO
Northeast Regional Representative

AMERICADE 2004





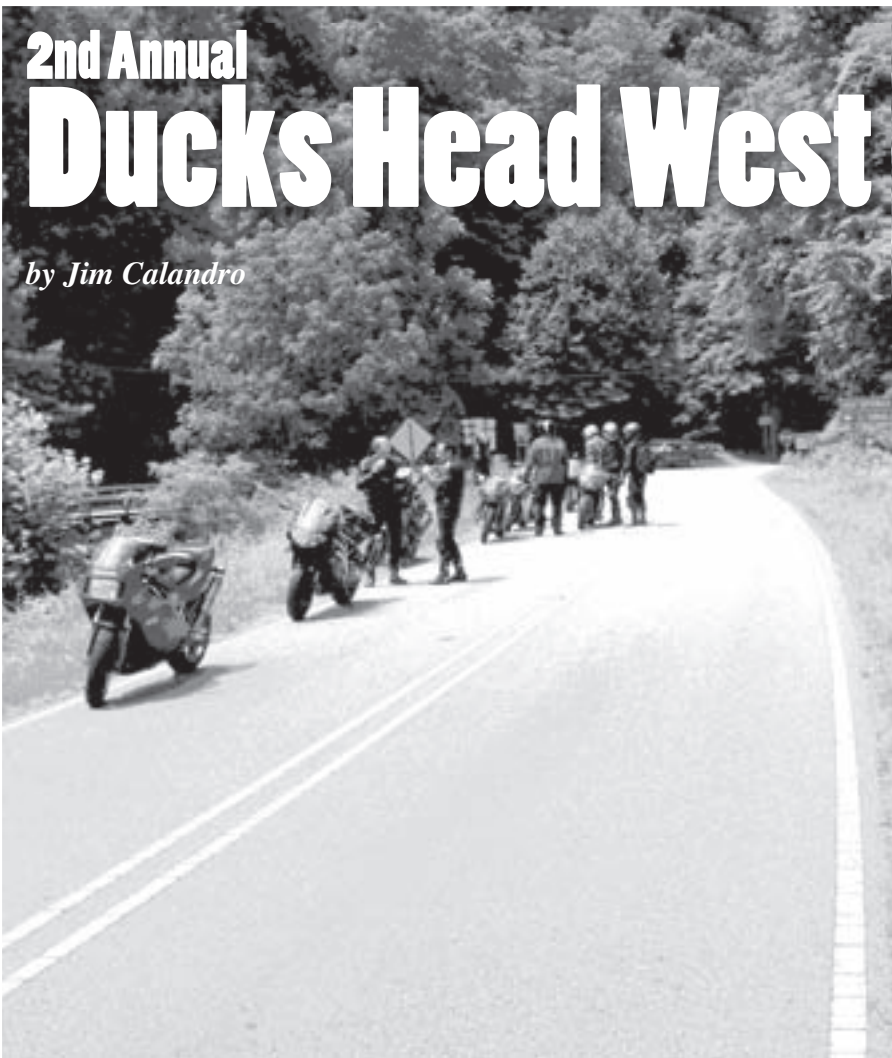
2004

Ducks Head West



2nd Annual Ducks Head West

by Jim Calandro




The Second Annual Ducks Head West had a shaky start as it rained hard all day on Friday. As a result, this rally had the smallest attendance since the first time we started having rallies nine years ago! Those who opted out were the losers this time around. Friday afternoon was saved by watching the new documentary about MotoGP called “Faster.” If you have not seen this movie, you need to buy it as soon as possible. The interviews are wonderful, and the racing scenes need to be seen to be believed. It was so good we ran it a second time that evening while we all ate pizza.

We awoke Saturday to cloudy skies but moderate temperatures and, more importantly, no rain. We used the same route as last

year, and the ride to Sneedsville is still one of the best roads around. Because our group was small, we were able to make all the same stops and have a chance for bench racing. On the way back to Greeneville, I did see Jim McKenna of Ducati North America lead his group up onto an interstate rather than under it. They were not seen again until around 8 p.m., so we are sure they did not follow the route directions provided.

Augustino’s provided dinner again this year, and it was just as good as I remembered it. I even got a “to go” box so I could take some home. There are some advantages to bringing the bike up on a trailer, and they include having a cooler. Door prizes were provided by Ducati North America, Ducati of Atlanta, and Myer’s Ducati of Asheville. Be sure to thank them the next time you are by their shops. We had two riders from Canada and seven from Miami, so those of you who missed this rally should hang your head in shame.

Sunday was a little more overcast but still no rain. Those of us who did not have a long ride home, or in the case of Mark Thorogood a very long ride home, went for a short ride for breakfast. Eighty-seven miles and lots of calories later, we were back at the hotel to load up for the return trip. This rally was just the reverse of the Ducks Along the Blue Ridge in that we started with rain and finished with a nice weekend. Hey, Ducks like water! 



AMA Superbike *Barber Motorsports Park* *Barber Museum*


by Jim Calandro

Ducati North American has become serious about AMA Superbike racing again and is sponsoring Eric Bostrom for the 2004 season. In conjunction with this effort they are trying to attend as many AMA Superbike events as possible with their tractor trailer and hospitality area. As part of this they requested that US DESMO as well as other Desmo Owner Clubs attend the races and support their effort. This was the only excuse I needed to attend the race at Barber Motorsports Park this May.

I was not sure what to expect from Ducati but was pleasantly surprised. They had the tractor trailer on turn 14, now "Ducati Corner", with an awning out with tables and refreshments for the Ducatisti. We had some sweet rolls for breakfast and some nice Italian food for Lunch. Drinks were available all day, all you had to do was show proof of ownership of a Ducati and you were treated like royalty. There was even a helmet and coat check!

Just a few feet away from this there was an inflatable dome with most of the new Ducati displayed. These bikes were out for anyone to sit on and most did. It was quite interesting to see the old hands of Ducati be critical of the new 999 but those unfamiliar with Ducati and more specifically the 916 series seemed to be very impressed with it. There was one 999 there with many Ducati Performance parts that has a net worth greater than my first house, kind of humbling.

In between these two displays they have reserved a slot for US DESMO to set up a club display. I brought my 1979 900 SS, 100 club newsletters, 150 business cards and assorted club regalia. By Saturday afternoon I was out of everything! I am not sure how many people I met but it would be conservative to say 400 people stopped by and talked Ducati and club. I was fortunate that Andy Rounds, club member and owner of SCM, a Ducati repair shop, was able to join me and help out with manning the booth. Everyone who stopped by was impressed with the effort Ducati North America was making for the Superbike races. Now if only Eric can find his way on this totally on a bike he has never ridden before with a different brand of tires.

One of the plusses of a race at Barber is the museum. If you have not been there you really need to go. I spent over four and a half hours there and only left because my feet hurt. I took almost 100 pictures and only stopped there as my digital camera was full! As they say a picture is worth a thousand words so feast your eyes on some of my shots. 

See photos next page...
(Barber Museum photos page 22)

US Desmo attends AMA Superbike



Vicki Smith (left), Ducati on Line, and Kristi Blanchard, Marketing and Sales Assistant DNA, join Jim Calandro at the US DESMO booth.



Andy Rounds, US Desmo Mechanic-In-Residence, cooks in the hot sun while Jim C is off enjoying the racing action. (Andy owns/operates SMC).

Barber Motorsports Park



Eric Bostrom visits North American War Horse

By Kevin Tetrault

Eric Bostrom made a sweep of East Coast appearances in the spring, stopping at North American War Horse in Scranton, Pennsylvania. This Ducati dealer is actually the largest multi-brand, power-sports center in the Northeast and includes Italian marques Moto Guzzi, Aprilia, and MV Agusta.



US DESMO representative Kevin Tetrault met Eric for the VIP lunch hosted by War Horse, where Eric autographed several spring issues of DESMO LEANINGS magazine and answered questions by fans and the press. The four-time AMA Champion has settled comfortably into his Parts Unlimited/Ducati Austin 999 with a record lap time at Daytona and a podium first at Pikes Peak International Raceway in Fountain, Colorado, on May 23, 2004. ⚡

BENCH RACING

Tall tales of fact and "friction"


Back about seven years ago when I started my first bike rallies I had an incident happen that is worth telling. It was the Second Annual Ducks Along the Blue Ridge and the event was winding down. As the event is only about two hours from my house I did not have to head straight home. I offered to ride with a friend on the first part of his trip to Atlanta, GA. After a nice ride down a valley road that followed and crossed a river several times we split up. Having had such a good time on the road I decided to head back that way.

I have not gone more than a mile on this road, 30 miles of nice twisties lay ahead, and I came up behind a farmer with a pickup truck, trailer and tractor on the trailer. He was doing about 8 mph on a very twisty section. We were at speeds where I was not sure if my bimota db2 would not just fall over. We came to a straight section with a good opportunity to pass. Now it was a school zone and was marked at 15 mph and no passing. It was Sunday and I figured what was the harm as the only reason it was not a legal passing zone was the school and no one was home. A quick snick into first gear and away we went. Just as I cleared the pickup truck and was reaching third gear I caught sight of "the man" parked in the school lot. He would have to be deaf, dumb and blind not to have seen me. :-)

Now the good news is there are no side roads on this valley road so traffic entering and being a danger makes it relatively safe. That is also the bad news. I decided the best course of action was to pull off immediately and take off my helmet so he could see my advanced age and maybe not take me to jail. The pickup goes on by, all the traffic that was built up behind it, and then the County Sheriff car.

What looked bad suddenly looked worse as when the deputy got out he looked like a poster boy for the US Marines. Shaved head, broad at the shoulders and narrow at the hips. Another words a very serious looking officer of the law. I figured I was toast.

Before I could beg for mercy his first words were "I just hate it when I get stuck behind one of those farmers when I am on my bike!" He then apologized for having to stop me as he just did not know who was in the cars behind me and they might report him for letting me go. He had never seen a bimota before and we talked bikes for a few minutes and he wished me well and told me about a few other good sports bike roads and when it was "safe to ride them".

This kind of made up for the 76 in a 35 mph ticket the bimota earned me another day. But that is another story. 

Jim



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It certainly didn't take Eric Bostrom long to get up to speed on his new Parts Unlimited Ducati Austin 999 Superbike.

One minute and 46.835 seconds was all Eric needed to set an all-time lap record during qualifying for the Daytona 200 by Arai. No superbike has ever lapped Daytona faster.

And no rider has ever made it look easier. Congratulations, Eric!

DUCATI 

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