

# DESMO LEANINGS



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

Volume 1 Issue 4

Winter 2004



**Exclusive! Rossi article about Track Day Mental Preparedness**

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# Greetings from il Capo

After one year we have reached 280 members. The real importance of this is in the areas of new interest in the club. John Rossi, you will see some of his articles in this issue, has agreed to be US DESMO's northeast representative. He already has three events planned. John also had occasion to be out west and has been working with the Las Vegas Ducati dealer so we can have a presence out west.

Here in the core area of the southeast we will have the same six events we had last year plus we will now have a reciprocal membership with Sportbike Track Time. This will open several other tracks up to us and US DESMO members will be able to pay the Sportbike Track Time member price. We are also working on some joint track days. What Sportbike Track Time brings to our club is on track instruction. This is something the club itself has not tried so it will allow the next level to the track experience.

Our winter cover features another one of our own, Bill Birchfield of Charlotte, NC and his exquisitely fast Foggy Monster. Bill rode this bike at the Grattan track day last year and made a lot of 996 and 998 riders wonder what was making their bikes so slow. ☺ Club member Terry Wyse took these outstanding photos. Our goal has been to bring you something unlike what the national magazines do so we have tried to stay away from track photo and concentrate on riding experiences we all have regularly. If you have a nice set of shots please contact me so we can try and use them. Remember we want something artistic and high resolution.

Y'all need to start thinking about renewing your membership as all memberships were for the calendar year. I have included a form for renewal in the mailing plus the calendar of events. Keep up with our web site, [www.usdesmo.com](http://www.usdesmo.com), for additions and changes to events as this is all a work in progress.

We are always open to suggestions. Just remember it makes it a lot easier to execute one of your suggestions when they have as much detail as possible. Locations, contacts and assistance all make a new event much easier and faster to add to our calendar. 



Jim  
il Capo



Jim Calandro .....il Capo  
Clyde Romero.....Consigliere  
Bob Lattanzi .....Consigliere  
Terry Wyse .....Consigliere  
John M. Rossi. . . .NE Regional Rep.

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*Piazza del Mercato*

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**Barbara Nowell**

**(919) 967-7637**




After weeks of perfect riding weather Monday October 6, 2003 was looking like rain. Now we have had three track days this year and everyone looked like it was going to rain or it was actually raining when we arrived so we were do a break. When I woke up my driveway was wet and something was falling. As Eric Coffield and I drove to Kershaw that morning we tried to to determine if it was getting better or worse.

We arrived at the track a little after the 7:00 AM opening time to find the gate open and no one waiting. It appears the gate guard had arrived early and let everyone in that was waiting. Registration opened on time and tech inspection right after. Despite no one being in much of a hurry registration and technical inspection were done in short order. We had initiated a new method of processing and it worked a charm and the riders meeting went off a little early. The first group was out on the right on time. We had some spots of rain during the riders meeting but the track was dry. There was some concern that the track surface was a little slick but I think it was more the cool temperature than anything else.

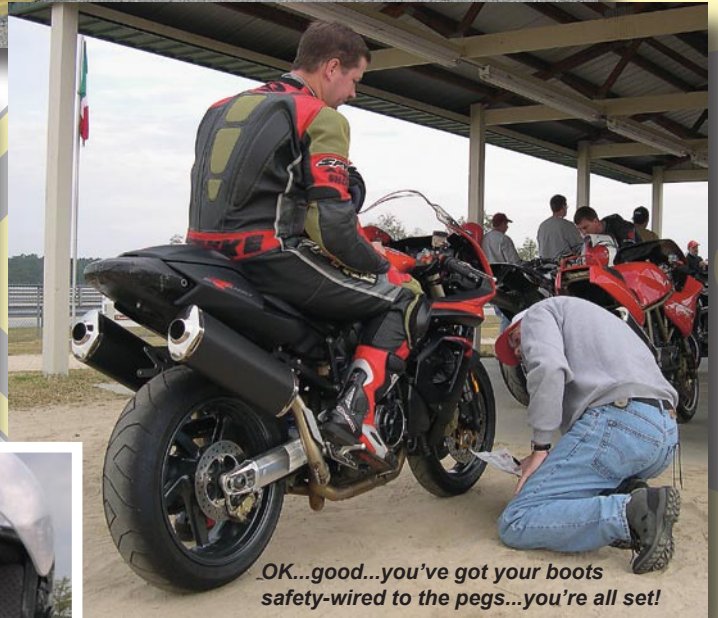
As the day warmed up the pace picked up with it. Now we did have a few fallers and Terry Hicks upheld his tradition of stopping to rest in turn one. He was not hurt and was able to fix up his bike to ride in later sessions.

For the remainder of the day it alternated between bright sunshine and over cast conditions. The temperatures remained cool but the humidity increased so we were a little warm at times but never hot. The track on the other hand remained warm and dry.

You can always tell when we have a nice day for riding by how many more people stay until the end of the event. Clyde Romero did have his bike just stop running. It appears to be an electrical gremlin that he cannot find so he heads out early. Jesse Perkins was littering in turn 9 but we found his missing body part and he put it back on more securely. We rolled the ambulance several times but no one took a ride back to the pits in it. Nice to see we still have a safe group to ride with. If you did not make the trip you missed one of the best track days we have ever had, not too cold and not too hot. Perfect leather riding weather. The only bad news is our photographer Troy Gwin did not make it. He stepped off his motorcrosser and tore some ligaments in his wrist and was having surgery on Monday. 

Jim Calandro  
il Capo

# Track Day Carolina Motorsports Park October 2003



*OK...good...you've got your boots safety-wired to the pegs...you're all set!*

*Are we having fun yet?*



*Sure, but we want to know which one of you is PERV and which is ERTS??*



# Ducks Fly South 2003

Well who says change isn't good? I know a lot of you were wondering why we moved from our old location. The reason for the move from the old rally site was that the police were getting bad and we didn't want our membership to suffer the hardships of this. So this effected our change to a new location and what a great one it is I might add. Enough of that for now.

The weather was great, considering how it has been in the last couple of years and that made for some great ridding. The route this year had us in the North Carolina Mountains and thru portions of South Carolina with a stop in Highland North Carolina for lunch at the Highland Inn. The lunch there was great and we left once again for the rest of the rally route which took us right up against the Tenn. border.

I must say that the route was one of the best to date. And speaking of that, not one of the rally attendee's got police attention. So it appears that the change of venue was indeed a good one. We had a total of 60 plus riders at the rally. We want to thank all the sponsors that gave us door prizes. Ducat of Atlanta, Moto Britallia, and Aprilia USA. Keep in mind our sponsors when buying gear.

Look for us at the same site next year; hope the weather will be just as good. Remember to sign up early and check the web site for all the latest news. We are always interested in suggestions for a better rally so send them in. Enjoy the rest of the fall riding season and we are looking forward to a great season next year. This being our first year I must say that things are looking up for US DESMO. That's all for now. Have a happy holiday season.



Clyde Romero  
VP US DESMO



# Mental Preparedness for Track Day

*Part I of III-part series on the Track-Day experience.*  
Article by **John M. Rossi**

Three words summarize my first track day experience. Fear, exhilaration, and addiction. That first track day event was in 1998. I have done seven more since and have at least that many track days planned for 2004.

For anyone planning to attend a track day, prepare yourself for a range of stimuli and emotions. Perhaps you ride well. You might even be fast. However, doing both of these things proficiently on a racetrack requires a whole new level of mental preparedness, physical conditioning, and exacting focus.

For the first-time track participant, there is probably no better environment to develop your riding skills than on a closed course. US DESMO's Track Days typically accommodate three groups: "White" - those with no prior track riding experience; "Green" for advanced/spirited riders, and "Red" for racers and fast riders.

The number one goal of any track day, irrespective of your level of experience, model, or make of motorcycle, is to have fun and arrive home that evening smiling and exhausted. This ought to be a shared goal that is commonly understood by all the riders at your track day. If you are a superstar, a track day is probably not the place to exhibit your road-racing prowess. There is no prize money, no press coverage, and no umbrella girls, (or boys) not even a \$5 plastic trophy.

While the racetrack is certainly the right place to explore the limits and hone your skills, it is no place to venture beyond your ability to control the motorcycle safely, confidently, and predictably. Should you decide to push it beyond your capabilities, and end up taking a ride in an ambulance, you can be sure that all the other riders who paid money to be there will be sitting it out until that ambulance returns. No track day organizer in good consciousness is going to let the event go on without an ambulance standing by. So besides hurting yourself, damaging your prized motorcycle, you could be holding-up 50 other riders from enjoying the day.

US DESMO typically maintains two ambulances with EMT crews for their track days so track time is rarely interrupted. But why test these safeguards when you can ride within your limits.

## **The Fear Factor**

Yes, fear is a factor and every rider inherently knows this about the sport, but may be unwilling to admit. No, this is not a cowardly fear that society has seemed to dub the word's meaning as something weak or inferior like the cowardly Lion in the Wizard of Oz. I am talking about healthy, primal fear that keeps you from harms way and that is hard-wired into our DNA from a half million years of evolution.

Perhaps I'm growing into a higher state of alertness as an experienced rider. Or I am simply more aware of our finite visit on this planet and the importance of self-preservation. It is through this optic that I see those "No Fear" stickers and think they ought to read "No Brain." Fear, in proper measure, is a good thing and has helped ensured survival and advancement of the human species.

Although I have raced motocross, downhill skied competitively, and been riding nearly 30-years, rolling my Ducati onto a road course was a new experience for me as it may be for you. For some riders, a three-decade tenure could bring about overconfidence. Fortunately, I was humbled by a healthy dose of self-preserving fear for a better part of my first track riding experience and it is a constant touchstone for each time I roll onto a racetrack or out of my driveway.

If you are new to the track experience, be aware of your learning curve. You will gradually overcome the initial sense of hesitation and uncertainty as your confidence slowly builds. Until you learn to read the track with your eyes, know where and what to be looking for, and develop an attitude for the line of the track, fear and the subsequent refraining action should help you to keep things in check. Listen to your cautionary instincts. They will not lie to you.

The track is a perfect place for any rider to refine riding techniques, develop a style, and demonstrate good judgment. If you are an experienced track day participant, chances are there will be other riders who are on a track for the first time. Acknowledge this by riding smart, safe, and with mutual respect for one another. Smooth and precise riding is the goal and example to set. Fast may become a byproduct of that later on.

## Exhilaration


Exhilaration is perhaps the single most commonly shared emotion of all motorcyclists. In fact, exhilaration is another base emotion that has kept our species engaged and evolving—from procreating to motor-sports. While motorcycles were first introduced as affordable transportation in the early 1900s, many of us motorcyclists today seek pure exhilaration from the sport, even on the days we ride to work. For novice and experienced motorcyclists alike, it is this quest for exhilaration that brings us back to the saddle —mile after mile —lap after lap.

As you become familiar with the track environs, you can concentrate more of your time controlling and modulating the level of exhilaration brought on through acceleration and shifting, deceleration and braking. But first you must learn the road course and the line of the track. For this article, think of the track as your partner even more so than the motorcycle. The sooner you become a student of the track you are riding on, the sooner fear subsides to give way to exhilaration that is controlled like a rheostat with a turn of the throttle, squeeze of a lever, and lean of the bike. I keep a notebook with maps of the tracks I ride and detailed notes and sketches for the entire course. Treat your notebook as a study guide that will allow you to mentally visualize and ride the course in your mind days and weeks before you actually roll onto the track.

## Addiction

Riding high performance machines as they were intended and developing the skills to do so safely and confidently is where the addictive quality of the track experience takes hold. Once you experience the exhilaration of riding a Ducati, or any race capable machine, in a track environment is where most riders feel the magnetic pull and desire to come back for more.

The more riding you do, regardless of where you do it, or with whom, and hopefully at reasonable speeds, you are continuously improving your own skill level and understanding the capability of your machine. Each time you return to the track will be different, yet, oddly familiar as well. Track conditions, temperature and weather, performance of the machine, along with your own state of mind are all critical factors that will challenge your performance and shape the experience and lessons that you learn.

There is no doubt that the magnetic pull of the track is cured by one thing only — more track time. As you anticipate your next track experience, know that the skills you are developing can translate to greater competencies for the everyday situations encountered on the road. In the meantime—just get out and ride safely. 

- Ride at your own pace**
- Become a student of the track**
- Ask questions**
- Think safety**
- Listen to your emotions**
- Respect fear**
- Modulate exhilaration**
- Courtesy goes a long way**
- Abide by the track rules**

**Its not about fast . . . its about control**

### *Upcoming articles:*

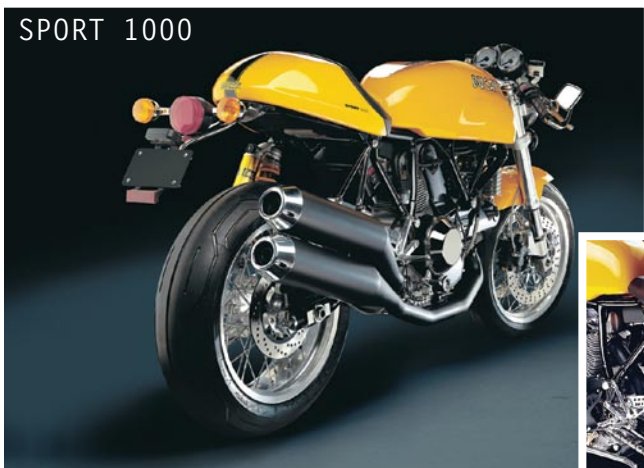
*Spring: 2004 Part II, “Motorcycle Preparedness and Rider Readiness”*

*Summer: 2004 Part III, “The Track Day Experience”*

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# US DESMO in the Southwest

by John M. Rossi

Experiencing the recent Grand Opening of the new Ducati Dealership, *Exotic Motor Sports of Las Vegas*, was a weekend-long, first-class event. Tim Britt's 10,500 s.f. dealership represents a multi-million dollar investment including a new building, parts and accessory inventory, and over 40 new Italian machines and scooters including Ducati, Aprilia, and Moto Guzzi. Their Service Department is run by Mike Lancaster, a former Ducati dealer himself and a seasoned wrench whose custom 748 and 4-valve Monster were the most highly detailed and eye-catching machines I have seen.



The author gets a feel for the Mountain Springs Race Track aboard a 998 Ducati courtesy of Exotic Motorsports of Las Vegas Photo by: Michael LaPutt, www.trackday.com



Rupert with a map of the 2.5 Mile road course, and plenty of choices of iron to choose from to drive it Photo: J. Rossi

Parts manager, Ben Ingram had arranged for me to join him at The Mountain Springs Race Track in Pahrump, Nevada. The track is home to Rupert Bragg Smith. Literally. The more than 250-acre site includes a 2.5-mile road course that is owned by Rupert whose white, tensile fabric tent structures and trailer complex sits right in the center of the action. The British-born, racecar driver is also an avid motorcycle enthusiast. He designed and built the increasingly popular

track 65 miles west of Las Vegas. It is used exclusively by Dunlop Tires as a test site, frequented by Audi and Porsche car clubs, and is the headquarters for the advanced driving school and twenty-five Z06 Corvettes that bear his name.

[www.bragg-smith.com](http://www.bragg-smith.com)

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[www.socaltrackdays.com](http://www.socaltrackdays.com)




Rupert (center on Aprilia) with Ben Ingram (front right) from Exotic Motor Sports of Las Vegas, US DESMO's John Rossi, (front far right), representatives of SOCAL Track Days Mike, Micky, and Cliff and several happy Ducati riders



# DucatiDayDaytona 2004

## Daytona Bike Show and Gala

**Ducati Online** and **Ducati North America** will hold a daylong gala at **Speedpark Motorsports** at 201 Fentress Blvd., Daytona Beach (Behind the Hooters on Intl. Speedway Blvd.) on **Friday, March 5th** from 12 noon to 9:00 PM. Attendees of the event can soak up the sun at Speedpark while looking at the Ducatis on display, ride on the go-karts, or test their skills aboard the Speedpark's 22 foot dragsters, each with a roaring 300 horsepower 350 cubic inch V-8 engine. The event will also include door prizes, contests, Ducati race team appearances, charity auction, Umbrella Girls, tech sessions, vendors and a daylong bike show and display. 2004 marks the 6th year of the premier Ducati bike show in the Eastern U.S. On display will be some of the most pristine original-condition and custom-built Ducatis ever amassed in one location.

The fee for entry is \$10. An additional fee of \$10 will be charged for those wishing to enter their bikes. The categories for the bike show include Best Bevel Drive, Best Monster, Best 750/900SS, Best Tourer, Best Hyperbike, Best Limited Production Series, and Best of Show. The 2004 show will showcase the Ducati 900SS, one of the most enduring models Ducati has ever produced. Past winners will display their bikes, and an expert panel will judge entries. 2004 also marks the second year of the "Ducati Idol, Let Your Ducati Sing" motor sound contest judged by the Desmodromic Club of Rome, Italy. Questions about the daylong event and activities should be directed to Ms. Vicki Smith at 954-764-3847 (veloce916@aol.com) as should Vendor space and charity auction items questions and contributions. Bike Show questions and pre-entries should be directed to LT Snyder at 850-968-0417 (LT@desmotimes.com) 

## Schedule of Events for 2004

### SouthEast Events

Monday, April 5 ..... **Track Day** ..... Roebing Road, Savannah, Georgia  
 April 30-May 2 ..... **Ninth Annual Ducks Along the Blue Ridge (DABR) Rally** ..... Mount Airy, North Carolina  
 Monday, May 24 ..... **Track Day** ..... Carolina Motorsports Park, Kershaw, South Carolina  
 June 21-22 ..... **Track Day** ..... Virginia International Raceway, Danville, Virginia  
 This is a MAD-sponsored event.  
 June 25-27 ..... **Ducks Head West (DHW) Rally** ..... Greeneville, Tennessee  
 September 17-19 ..... **Ducks Fly South (DFS) Rally** ..... Hiawassee, Georgia  
 Monday, October 4 ..... **Track Day** ..... Carolina Motorsports Park, Kershaw, South Carolina

### NorthEast Events

Friday, June 11 ..... **2004 Americade Rally** ..... Lake George, New York  
 Participation in any of the Americade events are completely optional and at your own discretion.  
 Monday, August 16 ..... **Track Day** ..... Loudon International Speedway, New Hampshire  
 This event is being hosted for US DESMO by BCM Motorsports, Laconia, New Hampshire.  
 Three dates TBA ..... **Track Day** ..... Pocono, Pennsylvania

### SouthWest Events

Three dates TBA ..... **Track Day** ..... Pahrump, Nevada  
 Hosted in association with Exotic Motorsports of Las Vegas. Tentative dates in May and September. More info to come.

As always, visit [www.usdesmo.com](http://www.usdesmo.com) for the latest information

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 301-449-5900  
**Elkridge**  
 Speed's Cycle  
 410-379-0106  
**Gaithersburg**  
 Battley Cycles  
 301-948-4581  
**MASSACHUSETTS**  
 Beverly  
 Eastern Cycle  
 Ducati  
 978-922-3707  
**Brookton**  
 Omaha Euro Sport  
 508-583-4380  
**Northampton**  
 Valley Motorsports  
 413-584-7303  
**Somerville**  
 Riverside/M/C Sales  
 617-628-6400  
**Worcester**  
 Moto Italia  
 508-757-3293  
**MICHIGAN**  
 Burton  
 Great Lakes Powersports  
 810-233-7800  
**Dearborn**  
 Heights  
 Rosanau Powersports  
 313-728-5000  
**Grand Rapids**  
 Gar's Sport Center, Inc.  
 616-452-6951  
**Michigan Center**  
 Mid Michigan Honda  
 517-764-0900  
**Roseville**  
 Classic Cycle, Inc.  
 586-447-1340  
**MINNESOTA**  
 Delano  
 Delano Sport Center  
 763-927-2677  
**Minneapolis**  
 Moto Prime  
 612-729-7200

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 Chesterfield  
 Chesterfield Valley Power Sports, Inc.  
 636-449-1500  
**Columbia**  
 Jones Powersports  
 573-875-4445  
**St. Ann**  
 Donelson Cycles  
 314-427-1204  
**MONTANA**  
 Missoula  
 Montana/Ducati  
 406-721-2154  
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 Stevens Motorsports  
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**NEVADA**  
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 Southern Nevada Harley-Davidson Sales, Inc.  
 702-431-8500  
**Reno**  
 Big Valley Motorsports, Inc.  
 775-322-4311  
**NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
 Laconia  
 BCM Motorsports  
 603-524-4998  
**Manchester**  
 United Enterprises, Inc.  
 603-669-7220  
**North Hampton**  
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**NEW JERSEY**  
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 Chery Hill  
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**Freehold**  
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 716-537-2309  
**New Hyde Park**  
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**Spencerport**  
 Hollink Motorsports  
 585-352-5738  
**Syracuse**  
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**Hickory**  
 Extreme BMW/Husvarna  
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 Hinds Motorsports  
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**Uniontown**  
 Midwest Motorsports  
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 Maxey's Cycle, Inc.  
 405-946-0558  
**Tulsa**  
 Atlas Cycle Sales  
 918-835-9959  
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 Hansen's BMW/Ducati  
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**Portland**  
 Tonkin's/Motocorsa  
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 (Euro Shop of Waco)  
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