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

Volume 3 Issue 1

Spring 2005



***Third Annual Roebling Road Spring Track Day***

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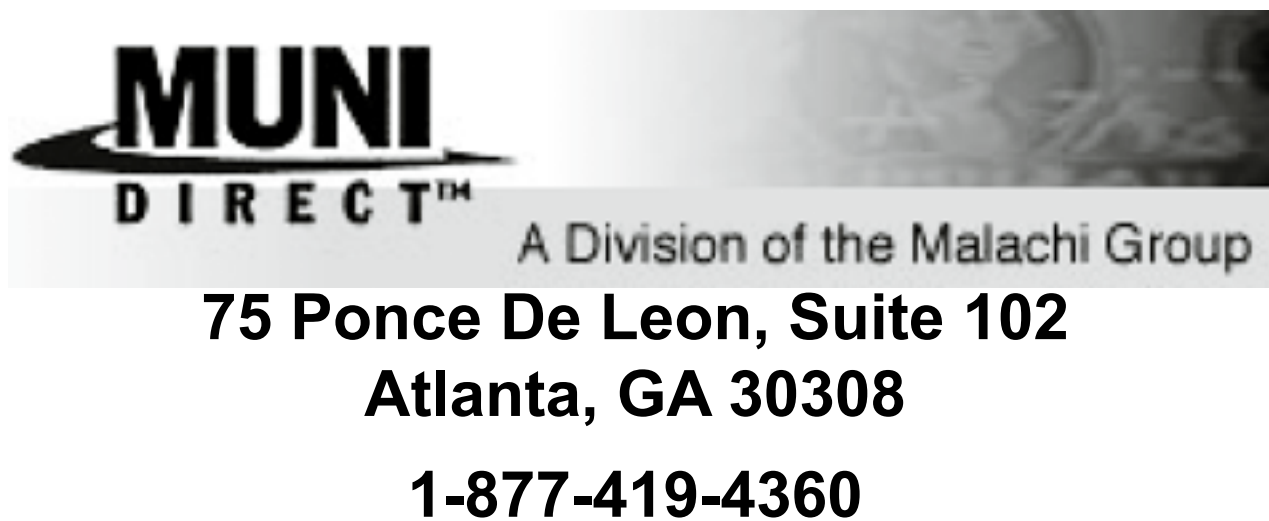
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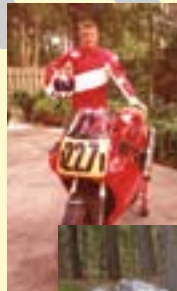
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Cover image and Roebling Road Track Day images courtesy of Ray Hale, REH Images 910.280.1155


## Greetings from il Capo

Unfortunately, events have conspired to delay this issue of Desmo Leanings. Our editor, Terry Wyse, is self employed and has had a dramatic up turn in his business. Unfortunately for us, that means his ability to donate volunteer time is severely limited. Our Web Master, Lewis Kirk, has stepped up to help us get this issue out. We are working on our next issue, so any articles you would like to contribute should be sent in soon.

The club has reached another milestone with the issuing of membership number 600. So far this year, the Southeast region has had two track days with only one red-flag accident. If you have participated in other track days, you know the significance of this lack of incidents. Our weekend rally in Mt. Airy was the first rally in the last four that did not get significant rain. It is about time we caught a break.

The Ducks Head West Rally was cancelled due to the Southeast dealers' having put together a Ducati track day at Road Atlanta on the same weekend. We did not want to hurt attendance at this event.

The Northeast region of the club has several ambitious new events for this year. See our web site for details and come out and help them be a success. We have started to work with Advanced Motorsports of Alvarado, Texas, to begin a South Central region for the club. We are always open to new ideas on how to spread the word on how much fun you can have on a Ducati.

Don't forget to check the web site, <http://www.usdesmo.com>, for an up-to-date event schedule, and a new and improved discussion forum. 



Jim  
il Capo



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# Piazza del Mercato

## **1985 Moto Guzzi Lemans 1000**

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**Brad Powell, Marietta, Georgia**  
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## **2002 Ducati 748R #954**

2 miles New out of box in June 2004. Never started. Perfect Condition. \$19,900. Photos available upon request.

**Bryson Stephens**  
**bryson@bogartsmotorsports.com**  
**205-956-6693**

**1993 Ducati 888 SPO** – 9800 miles; FBF carbon-fiber exhaust cans and FBF ECU chip (original exhausts included); carbon-fiber front fender (original red included); adjustable brake/clutch levers (originals included). New Michelin Pilot Power tires. Cloth FBF Ducati cover. Complete service performed at BMW-Ducati of Charlotte less than 500 miles ago with new belts, valve adjustments, and all fluids replaced. This bike is in museum quality condition or could be ridden daily. \$9500US.

**Jim Crews**  
**jcrews@wfubmc.edu**

## **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.

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## **1967 MotoGuzzi 125 Sport**

Silver, excellent original condition with only 900 orig miles, runs great, no damage or rust, titled - \$2200.

Pictures at [www.bradsbikes.net](http://www.bradsbikes.net)  
**Brad Powell, Marietta, Georgia**  
**678-576-4258**

## **1973 Laverda SF2 750**

Excellent Fireburst orange, very nice original condition, 35k, fresh topend, excellent cosmetic and mechanical condition - \$4500.

Pictures at [www.bradsbikes.net](http://www.bradsbikes.net)  
**Brad Powell, Marietta, Georgia**  
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## **2002 Moto Guzzi Lemans 1100**

Champagne color. New gel battery. 3,500 miles. Excellent condition. \$7,500 OBO.

**Bill Birchfield**  
**bill@qppionline.com**  
**(704) 617-1835**

## **1991 Ducati 851 SP3 #216**

6 miles New out of box in June 2004. Never started. Perfect Condition. \$25,000. Photos available upon request.

**Bryson Stephens**  
**bryson@bogartsmotorsports.com**  
**205-956-6693**

## **Correzione**

Our Winter 2004/2005 issue's story "The Art and Design of an Italian Motorcycle: An Italian Perspective" had the wrong author. Federico Cioni is the author of this colorful article. We wish to extend out heartfelt apologies to Federico for this error and thank him for providing such an entertaining review of Pierre Terblanche's presentation.

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# Meet the Member

## Jim Conley

When I was 5 years old, my parents gave me a new Honda Mini Trail 50. This started me on some of the most joyous times of my life. I was very fortunate that my dad was a dirt rider and then later owned several BMWs. He would take me trail riding all of the time, and then when I was older he would take me motocross racing. Thanks to him I pretty much grew up in the saddle of a motorcycle.



The 50 soon grew to an 80, then a 100. 125s and 250s soon followed. I loved the speed of bikes and the easiest way to go faster was to get bigger bikes. This trend would follow me into my street riding also.

My first taste of an Italian bike was at Daytona Bike Week in 1977. I was 15 and had just bought a new Yamaha RD400 as my first street bike. I did not have my driver's license yet, just my learner's permit. Dad and I headed to Daytona. He had his BMW and I had the 400. We figured if I was stopped by the police we could bluff our way out of a ticket by telling them we thought you could ride a motorcycle with a learner's permit if your parent was present. You couldn't, but that was the plan.

Dad had managed to get tickets to a dealers-only motorcycle show. We spent a few hours there checking out all of the new bikes and accessories. But then I saw the most incredible little bike. It was a bright-red Moto Morini, and it was beautiful. It had clip-on bars, rear-set pegs, a v-twin engine, and was Italian through



and through. At this point in my life I did not even know that motorcycles were made in Italy, but after this experience I would.

I started doing research, and soon learned about the great marques: Moto Guzzi, Laverda, MV Agusta, Ducati, and many more. I also learned about Mike Hailwood, Paul Smart, Giacomo Agostini, Massimo Bordi and Massimo Tamburini, and many more. I was hooked on Italian bikes, except for the fact that my research also turned up the dark side: flies in the paint, tail light bulbs that would blow and strand the bike, parts that were impossible to get, etc.

My need for speed saw me buying bigger and faster bikes. The RD400 soon was traded for a Kawasaki 900 and then, after graduating from college, an 1100, finally ending with a Yamaha FJ1200. Each one was lots of fun, but none of them had the soul of that little Moto Morini from years earlier.

In 1990 I bought a Suzuki GSXR750 and started doing track days. This led to racing it with WERA in the southeast.

But in late 91 and early 92, Italian bikes, and Ducatis in particular,



reappeared on my radar. Ducati had a new 900SS that the magazines were raving about, and I had the good fortune to meet Dr.

Tom Parit. Dr. Tom had a 900SS, and when we rode together I had to really work to keep up on my much faster Suzuki. Hmmmm, maybe there is more to motorcycles than just horse power. Maybe besides building beautiful bikes,

the Italians had it right, building light, good-handling bikes with plenty of torque.

Along about this same time, I met Jim Myers of Myers Ducati in Asheville, North Carolina. He did not have a 900SS at the time, but he did have a 750SS that he let me have a demo ride on. I was hooked! I told him to find me a new 900SS, and I would buy it. He had a new yellow Superlight in stock, but I told him my first Italian bike was going to be red. A few days later he called, and my 900SS was ready for pickup.

My wife Tammy, who was very pregnant with our first child, took me to pick up my new bike. As we were doing the paper work, Diane, Jim's sister, asked her when she was due. Tammy's answer was "two days," and poor Diane almost fainted. She told Jim to shut up and let us leave. Apparently the thought of Tammy's giving birth in their dealership did not appeal to her.

The Ducati was all I had hoped it would be, and I rode it often: sport touring, sport riding, and even a few track days. I was still racing with WERA, but the lighter, better-handling facet of Italian bikes led me to lighter, better-handling race bikes. The Suzuki was sold, and an FZR400 that I finally made expert on took its place. I then got a Honda RS 125 GP bike and finally a TZ250. I still have the TZ and use it for track days now.

I was perfectly happy with the 900SS, but then Massimo Tamburini built the lovely 916, and I had to have one. The only problem was, I didn't think I could afford one and keep the 900. No way was I going to sell the 900. Tammy (who was then due with our second child) told me it was "now or never," so I called Jim Myers again. 916s were very hard to get at this time, but he came through, and I soon had my second Italian bike.

The 916 was by far the most expensive bike I had ever owned, and the first few times I rode it I was afraid I would crash it. So I was pretty conservative on it, and it was not very much fun. I felt like I had made a big mistake, but then I took it to a track day at Talladega

Grand Prix. The bike had 600 miles on it and had not been ridden hard, but on my second lap I was putting my knee down in "the sweeper," the fastest turn on the track, and I was hooked again. When I returned home I called Jim Myers and told him that Ducati did not charge enough money for these bikes—they were priceless.


My third Ducati came about in an interesting way that included my wife again. It was my 40th birthday and I was at work. Tammy called me and told me she had a gift certificate from Myers Ducati for my birthday,

and wondered if I wanted her and the kids (three now) to pick me up, go out for lunch, and then go spend it. Of course, I wanted to go. I was thinking of all the neat things I could pick out. When we

arrived at the dealership, I thought everyone was acting odd. I walked in the door and was met by Jim. He was talking away, but everyone knows that's not unusual. He was telling me how he had convinced Tammy to get the gift certificate rather than his helping her choose a gift. I agreed that was a good idea. Finally we made our way into the store, and there

sat a new Monster 900 Dark with black balloons and a "Happy Birthday Jimmie" sign on it. She had picked it out by herself and paid for it by herself. I have not been speechless many times in my life, but I was then. I rode it

home in the rain that day, and I actually had to stop a few times to calm down.

I have had many miles and years of great enjoyment from my Italian bikes. One crash and one almost fireball at a track day have not diminished my love for Italian bikes. My greatest pleasure is the many people I have had the opportunity to meet because of these bikes, people who share a common bond of our appreciation and love of Italian motorcycles. 



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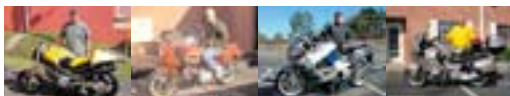
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# US DESMO TRACK DAY REPORT

by Jim Calandro

US DESMO has conducted two Southeast region track days so far this year: one early one at Roebing Road just outside Savannah, Georgia, and the second one at Carolina Motorsports Park in Kershaw, South Carolina. We had only one accident for the two events that required a red flag. I told the crasher that his crash really did not count because he was riding a Suzuki. I am not sure he grasped the humor, but he was in relatively good spirits.

The March track day at Roebing Road was not heavily attended; about 80 percent of the bikes were European out of a total of 67 bikes. It is a shame more people did not sign up, as the event had great weather and everyone had a great time. The group that had the most riders was the novice group. It appears the word has gotten out that we are novice-friendly, and it is an easy way to get your "feet wet" in the world of track days. The track managers and staff like working with our club because of the maturity of our members. I think that is a nice way of saying "old people," but the sentiment is the same. We do not damage the track or facilities and do not break the rules, so we are always welcome. Well, we did break one rule, and that is no race motors before 8:00 a.m.

April saw us at Carolina Motorsports Park, and the weather looked threatening with lots of overcast. By the time the first group went out to ride, it looked like we were going to have rain any minute. Well, we were lucky and it never happened. The weather warmed up later in the day but never got truly hot. We filled the grid this time, but our percentage of European bikes dropped to 70 percent. Come on you Ducati, Moto Guzzi, Aprilia, Laverda, BMW, Triumph, etc. guys and girls, get out there and join us. We would like this event to become 100-percent European bikes, but we cannot do that at the current price structure, and we have to allow other bikes to fill the grid and help pay the bills. We rode all day




# US DESMO TRACK DAY REPORT



without ever having a red flag. I have never been to a track day that has done that, so it says a lot about how safely our members are riding.

We have two more track days in the Southeast region for 2005: one at each of the tracks mentioned above. We have a reciprocal arrangement with Sportbike Track Time, and you can visit our web site for a list of track days where this exchange of memberships is valid. We have been asked about doing track days at other tracks, but two factors have limited this. One is the cost of some of the more prestigious tracks. We could not keep the number of participants or the cost as low as they have been for our existing tracks, so we have not used them. The second factor is insurance. The tracks we use allow us to be insured under their policy; however, some tracks, like Virginia International Raceway, require you to get your own policy, which increases the cost twenty fold. You would have to do a series of regular track days at each of those tracks to be able to afford it. STT has done that, and they are an alternative for those tracks.

US DESMO events are only as successful as the membership allows them to be. We are expanding and have more events in more locations, so check out our web site for details. While you are at our web site, look on the events page for some new types of events by the Northeast region that sound very interesting. We have Advanced Motorsports of Alvarado, Texas, which is supporting the club through track days; again, visit our web site for details. The Southeast region has the two track days mentioned above plus the last rally of the year, which is the weekend of September 30 through October 2. There is something for everyone, so come out and ride with us. If you have a thought on another type of event, be sure to share it with us. 



*All photographs from Roebing Road and courtesy of Ray Hale, REH Images 910.280.1155*

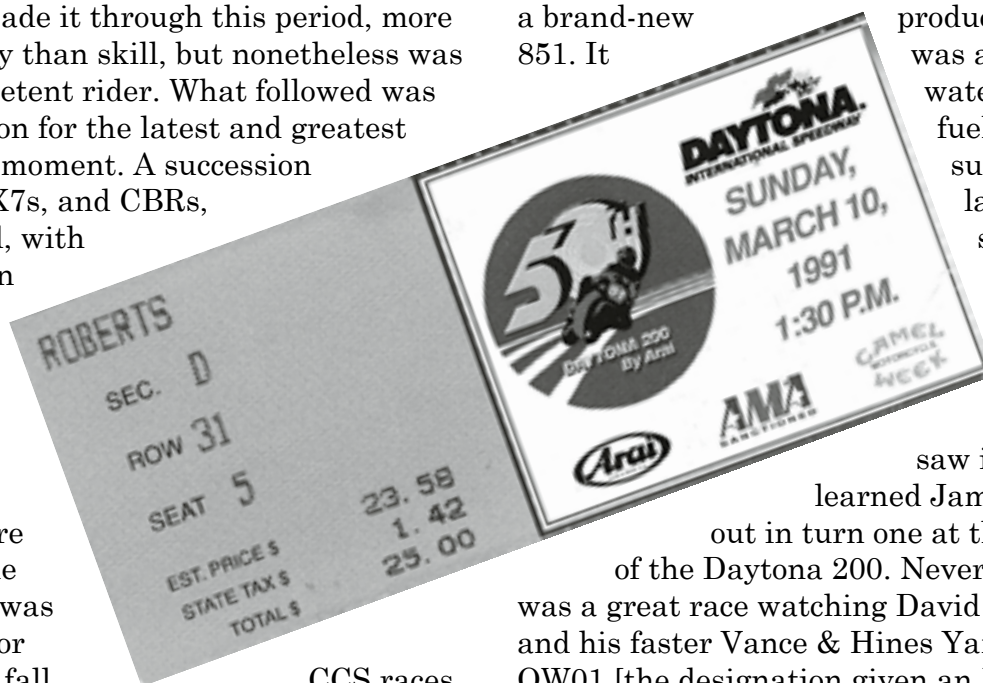
# Meet the Member

## Bill Weber

Ducatis have been my passion for fifteen years.

It all started in 1985. Even though I had been interested in motorcycles since the Kawasaki Z1, I had neither the money, nor inclination to take that big step in becoming a motorcyclist. When I saw the first true race-replica Suzuki GSXRs, I knew I had to have one. Having just graduated from college and finally having some money, it was time to get in the game. After the prerequisite learner bike, a Honda 250XL, I stepped up and bought a 1986 Suzuki GSXR 1100. Like most young guys with their first sport bike, I rode fast and without fear on public roads. Luckily, I made it through this period, more from bravery than skill, but nonetheless was soon a competent rider. What followed was a true passion for the latest and greatest bikes of the moment. A succession of ZX10s, ZX7s, and CBRs, etc. followed, with my license in constant jeopardy from riding them.

Living in Florida, my first exposure to motorcycle road racing was as a spectator going to the fall at Daytona in the late 1980s. There were not that many Ducatis club-racing at that time; there was only the odd F1 750 here



CCS races late 1980s. There were not that many Ducatis club-racing at that time; there was only the odd F1 750 here

and there. They didn't finish well and were not that fast, but I found myself drawn by the look, sound, and the mystique of an Italian underdog going up against the Japanese hordes. There was a large selection of bikes parked by spectators in the infield, and I looked for a street F1 750 but had no luck.

The first AMA race I attended was Daytona in the spring of 1990, and it was quite an experience. Riding my latest acquisition, a Kawasaki ZX7, down from Jacksonville that Sunday, I found a spot along the west horseshoe to view the race. I had not read much about Ducatis in the national publications since I attended the fall races, but I did read that a brand-new 851. It

Ducati was to race was a 4-valve, water-cooled, fuel-injected superbike with last year's superbike champion Jamie James on board. I never

saw it, and I later learned Jamie was taken out in turn one at the very start of the Daytona 200. Nevertheless, it was a great race watching David Sadowski and his faster Vance & Hines Yamaha OW01 [the designation given an FZR750RR equipped with a factory race kit. Ed.] battle Randy Renfrow on his nimble Honda RC30. Randy would take the lead in the infield,



only to have Dave come around on the banking. Horsepower rules at Daytona, and Sadowski drafted past Renfrow for the win. The Ducati interest was still there, but the hook was yet not set.

In the summer of 1990, the AMA ran a superbike race on the streets of Miami. This race was actually broadcast on network television. This was my second AMA race, and I saw Ducatis run this time. In fact, unbeknownst to me, there was a whole race of almost nothing but these new 851s called Pro Twins! Jamie James crashed out of the Superbike race again. (Maybe it was the Yokohama slicks Ferracci was running at the time). I was definitely starting to get the itch and become a Ducati fan.

1990 was a very memorable year for race replicas, with bikes like the Honda RC30, Yamaha OW01, and second-year highly revised Kawasaki ZX-7, but I was drawn to the Ducati. I began research in earnest on the street 851, but what I discovered discouraged me from jumping in. Price, maintenance, and the lack of a dealer anywhere close were huge hurdles. To own a Ducati at that time, one had to be truly committed. Coming from the Japanese side of ownership, I wasn't quite there...yet!



Many Ducatisti say it was the 916 in 1995 that put Ducati on the map. For me, it was the 900SS in 1991 and Doug Polen. Italy softened the trade restrictions that year, which enabled Ducati to choose the best available components (Japanese electronics, suspension, and carburetion) for their new 900SS, and Doug Polen was hired to ride the superbike.

In early 1991, I read about a new 900SS that was going to be introduced. Doug Polen was also signed that year with increased factory backing and a new Dunlop tire deal. I was anxious to see both, and neither disappointed. The Ducati superbike had been transformed from an experiment in 1990 to a dominant force in 1991. The Doug Polen (Ducati) – Scott Russell (Kawasaki) battle for the 1991 Daytona 200 was one of the best ever. Scott Russell barely nipped Doug at the line to begin a string of victories, which would earn Russell





the nickname “Mr. Daytona,” but it was the showing by Polen that made me and everybody else take notice. It was the start of big things to come from Polen and Ducati in the next two years. The race was impressive, but it was what I saw outside the track at the Motorcycle show that sealed my fate. It was there I saw my first 900SS in all its glory – the white frame and wheels along with that birdcage frame that showed off the engine was too much to resist. I was now officially hooked. I offered to write a check for the one they had on display after the show. I was of course denied, and I was told there were only a few in the country so far and they needed this one to show, but Ducati had just signed a dealer in Jacksonville. I went the next week to see this so-called “Ducati” dealer and promptly paid an up-front cash deposit for the first 900SS he received. What I found out later was that Cagiva at the time had appointed many small shop operators as “dealers” with the sole intent of moving out unsold Paso 750s at cut-rate prices to get them out of their warehouse.

In the end, only long-time key dealers got the 900s and 851s, and such was the case for me. After five months and the small-time dealer’s assertion that my bike was on a boat somewhere in the Atlantic, my dream was dying.

Needless to say, I never got my bike. This ordeal left a bad taste in my mouth about this Ducati dealer situation, and at the same time another landmark sportbike was being introduced, the Honda CBR900RR. I promptly got my money back from the Ducati dealer and bought the first 900RR in town. The Honda was a good bike. It was too good really. To have fun with it you had to be way over the posted speed limit, and cruising on a buzzy four cylinder with all the character of a refrigerator was just plain boring to me. At thirty, married, and starting to settle down, I began to lose interest



with Japanese sporting machinery and was less willing to take the risks the local Sunday morning sportbike crowd took. I wanted the Ducati I didn't get before. I sold my 1993 900RR in late 1992 (mine was an early release bike) in search of a 900SS.

The trouble was that in 1992 Ducatis were still far and few between. Yeah, I had one fellow that wanted to sell me his low-mileage 900SS with pipes for \$10,500! Pass. Brand new they were going for \$7,800. I settled for a mint 1990 750 sport with carb upgrade and pipes for \$5,800. Not the exact bike I wanted, but it was Ducati. I was in. A funny thing happened to me after I got this bike: I WANTED to spend money on stuff for it. It was something that I never wanted to do with Japanese bikes, other than the obligatory pipe and jet kit.

This feeling only exacerbated itself when a few of my riding buddies did get 900SSs and were just that much faster than me. Soon came the high-compression pistons, cams, full exhaust, etc. A scant \$3,000 later, I had my hotrod 750 making all of 76 hp. This was up from about 60, but, more importantly, was as fast as a stock 900SS. This was the start of a pattern of the Ducati disease that afflicts me to this day.

Going to races, watching them on television, and reading every single magazine I could lay my hands on about road racing was starting to become more interesting than riding on the street for me. After attending numerous events and helping other club racers, I had convinced myself I had to get on the track somehow. During the mid-1990s, there were no track days available here in Florida. Either you raced or you didn't. It was hard to stick a toe in the water to try it. You took a race school on Friday with a fully prepped bike and raced that weekend. When I told friends I wanted to do it on a Ducati, they thought I was nuts. And it would have been nuts on my 750 Sport. A new track-worthy bike was in order.

In early 1995, the 916s came out. Even though it was not the bike I wanted, in some ways it helped me get the bike I did want. And what I wanted was the one I saw Doug Polen ride when he won his superbike

championships: an 888. In 1995, an 888 was last year's model, and, because everyone wanted a 916, I "stole" a mint 1993 888SPO with a full exhaust and other goodies for \$8,500. Once again, I was in! But the competitor in me rose to the surface. The 916 my buddy rode was faster. I couldn't have that, so modifications started immediately.

The 888 engine was built up with pistons, cams, etc by a fairly successful mid-nineties 888 racer named Pablo Real. Together, we got the bike up to 112hp with a nice torque curve. Finally, I had the fastest twin in town and could run with all the 750s of the day. SharkSkinz bodywork was ordered and reservations made for an Ed Bary race school.

I hardly slept the night before the race school. Butterflies were churning. Going from street rider to the track was a big step, and almost as big a step as being a non-motorcyclist and deciding to buy your first bike. Sometimes, you just have to take a deep breath and a leap of faith that it will work out. Well, unfortunately my first track experience did not work out. I crashed in turn four at Roebling Road in my second session out. A simple low side sent me packing, unhurt and unwavering in my determination to give it a go. I had put in too much mental and physical effort to let a simple low side deter me. What did I figure out? Being a fast street rider does not make you a fast track rider. Spend money and time setting up suspension first. Don't be cheap with tires. Building an engine is fun, but if you are not experienced at the track, it is putting the cart before the horse.

What followed on the 888, after some minor bodywork, was continued development and many successful and fun track days. The first few, in between CCS race practice Fridays, were with Tony Foster and PCS out of Daytona. By 1998 there started to be regular track days popping up. I turned into a once-a-month regular at Frank Kinsey Racing School's track days. There was a core group of Ducati guys that went on a regular basis. My street riding days got fewer and fewer until my 888 never again took off its race fairings. Riding a sportbike on the street after doing

track days was fairly dull now.

By 1998, there were many 916/748s showing up at the track. I was content with my 888 and relished its rarity. I had the only 888 at the track and was a bit of a snob about it! Heck, it was even voted best hyperbike at the 1999 Daytona Ducati Party. By this time, I was one of the faster track-day riders and believed my 888 was every bit the bike a 916 was. It was faster down the straightaway and was doing 1:23-24 lap times at Roebing Road. Well, that all changed one track day when I had some problems with my bike and one of my friends offered to let me ride his track-prepped stock-engine 916. This bike was a revelation

compared to mine. An 888 is wide, not enough weight on the front, and likes to push the front as does a 900SS. The 916 felt like a 250GP bike in comparison. At the end of the first session, I had done a 1:21. A unique bike does

not make a fast bike, and a new bike was in order. I ended up buying that 916.

As luck would have it, just when I began with the 916, other faster twin-cylinder bikes began showing up at the track. The twin-cylinder sportbike was at its zenith. Honda RC51s, Suzuki TLRs, and Ducati 996s were giving me fits down the half-mile long straightaway. Track days or not, within our group there was competition for the fastest bike. It was time for another horsepower injection. They say timing is everything, and around this time the AMA race manager for Ducati moved to town and brought superbike corse parts that he sold to a select few: 431,G cams, pistons, etc. found their way into my 916. At 118 hp, I was on par with the big twins. Many track days followed, and riding



your bike on the track seemed to catch on. A new motorcycle-only track even opened up within an hour and a half from where I live: the Jennings GP. No need to ride on the street ever again, except, of course, for my Italjet dragster scooter.

At the start of 2001, I decided to try a few CCS races just for the fun of it and to gauge how well I really did ride. My first race was a Supertwin race, and I came in third. Roebing Road is a horsepower track, and I got beat by a highly modified 996 and a full corse (ex Red Bull) 996. I finished, got wood, and could now say that I raced. I was proud of my accomplishment.

Later that year, I teamed up with one of my track friends to form TNT racing and race his 996 in the 200 mile endurance race. Yes, on a Ducati, which was the only Ducati in the field. We finished and got fifth overall. The only drama being that we didn't have enough fork oil in the front, which caused us to bottom out on the front end. I am sure the corner worker in turn one at Roebing Road

got a kick out of watching 120-mph stoppies going into the braking zone.


At a track day at the end of 2001, I spun the primary gear off the crankshaft and through the side case cover. What I was going to do for the 2002 season? It was easy for me. The horsepower wars were continuing to escalate, and now modified 996s were what was needed to be competitive. Instead of fixing and further modifying the 916, I would replace it. Thanks to Ben Fox, a 996 engine was found, bought, suitably modified to 129 hp, and installed.

I was going to make a full assault in 2002 in the SE CCS race series; however, things didn't go according to plan. At the first race in February at Daytona, with my parents in attendance for the first time ever, oil leaked

from my tail-mounted carbon breather box onto my rear tire as I went into turn one. One highside later, I had two broken ribs and one tweaked ankle. After a couple of months of R&R, I picked it back up in May at Jennings GP and continued my quest. I won most of my races the rest of the season in Supertwins and Formula 40 and even a few in Superbike. I put myself in a position points-wise where all I had to do was show up at the last double points round at VIR and finish and I would be SE region champion in Supertwin and maybe Formula 40. Unfortunately, I finished the season like it started, with a big highside, which tore through my leathers on my arm and rashed me to the bone. My concerted effort for an entire race schedule was done. Any future racing would be at selected events strictly for hobby sport (as I humbly promised my wife).

Track days were done in earnest in 2003 along with a few race weekends. Three races entered with two wins and a second place. At the end of the year my partner Steve, with TNT racing, decided it was time for

him to sell his 996 and get one of the new Testastretta-engine 998s. No worries, I thought. I knew those engines weren't going to run as strong as my developed 996. What I didn't know is that he was going to get an R model. A 998R. At mid-130s hp stock, he had me right out of the box. I needed to go back to the drawing board. A large airbox and further tuning and development got me back close to his bike's power.

Early 2004 saw his 998R go to BCM and come back with headwork, a 60mm full exhaust, and 147 hp. My 996 needed to find one last hurrah to keep up. A call to Bruce at BCM netted me 13.9:1 high compression 100mm (1026cc) pistons and 54mm large throttle bodies. After the appropriate tuning, it was making 145 hp. I entered three races this year and won them all, passing GSXR 750s down the front straight! Unfortunately for me, my teammate Steve's 998R just returned back again from BCM in preparation for the 2005 season with 154 hp. When will the madness stop? Does anyone have a 999R motor he needs to sell? 

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# THE STORY OF THE UGLYSTRADA

by Joe Rankin

Would you let me alone with your bike?

A bike coming from the factory is just a good “starting point” in my opinion. Okay, I have issues. We all do.

The Multistrada seemed like a good choice for a road bike: plenty of torque, upright riding position for my worn-out back, nice sound, easy-to-work-on two-valve engine, and it was a Ducati! Sounded like an easy choice.

I was lucky enough to have a buddy who moved to Florida from North Carolina and found himself in need of a boat and nowhere to ride curves on the Duc except for on ramps on I-10. I sent a check, and the Duc was on its way.

The first thing I noticed was DAMN, that thing is ugly. I figured that feeling would go away once I swung a leg over the old girl and fired her up to hear the sweet sound of



the two-valver. After I got a ladder out and then sat on the brick of a seat, I was still thinking I would get the “Ducati experience” once I fired her up and took a spin. First, that exhaust had to go! The seat was too hard and way too tall, the handlebars didn’t fit me just quite right, and what’s up with that rotating windscreen?

Off to Home Depot for some hacksaw blades and sandpaper.



**Exhaust:** The stock system was big, heavy, and non-Ducati quiet. There is now a full system with Arrow Cat bypass, Remus midpipe, and Remus carbon-fiber cans. The whole system is Jet Hot-coated to keep the silver color forever and never turn blue or rust. True Ducati sound now. Yee haw!!!!

**Ignition:** Power Commander to complement the free-flowing exhaust.

**Handlebars:** Replaced the stock chrome bars with Pro Taper Hawkins High Woods bars and billet risers for better ergonomics and less vibration.

**Windscreen:** Stock screen is too short. Upgraded to Ducati comfort windscreen.

**Cam covers:** Upgraded to billet see-through by Rizoma. You can see the belts running the cams through the clear windows. Very cool.

**Clutch cover:** Upgraded to Rizoma billet.

**Frame plugs:** Stock are plastic. Upgraded to billet plugs.

**Oil filler cap and shock adjuster:** Also made of billet.

**Pressure plate:** Upgraded to red-anodized billet cover and silver-anodized retainers.

**Rear passenger pegs:** The stock peg-holder castings are huge. We made billet custom heel guards. The stock ones can be put right back on for use with saddlebags if desired.

**Wheels:** Stock wheels have standard paint and chip easily. Upgraded to black powder coating.

**Rear hugger:** Stock none. Carbon-fiber hugger keeps all the grunge off the exhaust and suspension.

**Front fender:** Short and doesn't do much. Monster fender is about 4" longer and sleeker looking.

**Tires:** Brand new Avon SPs.

**Rear fender and lights:** Upgraded to a custom billet taillight with 64 LEDs that incorporates amber turn signals into the LED array. Ask anybody at Daytona in 2005: this sucker will fry retinas, and MAYBE Aunt Mabel will know I am stopping.

**Front turn signals:** Small LED signals instead of the big mirror/signal combination.

**Seat:** The stock seat was a brick. Upgraded to the comfort seat.

Now the really unique pieces:

The stock Multistrada has a two-piece fairing, with the top piece rotating independently from the bottom. I wanted a different look and molded the two halves together to give a better front end "flow." The gauges and handlebars still rotate within the fairing using the stock gauge bracket with modifications. The wind protection is exactly as stock but with a taller windscreen, and it looks a little cleaner with no gap between the lower and upper halves.


The rear tail section has a better look by installing a Ducati tail cover and then molding closed the holes that the stock grab bar leaves in each tail side section when it is removed. This eliminates the passenger seat.

The tail and fairing are color matched to the stock bodywork with the addition of painted-on semi-gloss black number plates.

This is a very distinctive looking, comfortable, and powerful bike that sounds just awesome. You won't see yourself going down the street or see another one like it on a Sunday drive to the local breakfast joint.

It might not be the best looking in the litter, but it sure does sound great, handles well, and gets a ton of attention.

Now, when you get on the bike and fire it up, it really has the experience going. It undoubtedly has the best sound of any bike I have ever owned. Duh, it IS a Ducati!!!!

I am already on eBay looking for the next project for the winter. I have issues!. 



# Sport Riding Techniques

*How to Develop Real World Skills or Speed, Safety, and Confidence on the Street and Track*



**By John M. Rossi**  
*North East Regional Representative*

I met Nick Ienatsch, author of *Sport Riding Techniques*, at the grand opening of Exotic Motor Sports Ducati of Las Vegas nearly two years ago. Besides being a well-known motor sport

journalist, former AMA racing champion, and riding school instructor at Freddie Spencer's High Performance Riding School, Nick is an approachable and personable guy who is easy to talk to and offers a wealth of information about riding technique. Our schedules had us heading to different tracks that weekend, but we talked at length about the nuances sport riding skills for the street and track as well as the challenges faced by expert and novice riders alike.

*Sport Riding Techniques* is a beautifully designed and well-written book that

offers plenty of substance for the experienced sport rider yet is accessible to and concise for new riders without being intimidating. The soft-cover book is reasonably priced at \$24.95 and is a usable and practical book I refer to frequently. I read the book cover to cover during the 4-hour flight back to Boston and found real substance without being so overly technical that the sport we love becomes impossible to recognize through some near quantum-physics analysis, as many technical riding books in my library tend to do.

This is a usable motorcycle-skills improvement book. My highlighted sections and notes in the margins (as I do to almost

all of my books) make it an essential quick-reference guide throughout the riding season and off season as well. You will love the big, bold color photographs accompanied by straight-forward narrative that illustrates braking, steering, and acceleration techniques — all disciplined skills to be perfected in order to become a smooth and proficient rider in any condition and on any type of motorcycle.

The focus of the book is on skills development necessary to safely and proficiently control today's sport bikes that accelerate faster, brake harder, and cut through corners deeper than factory superbikes of a decade ago.

These technologically advanced motorcycles are exhilarating to ride; but to really get the most out of your motorcycle's performance capabilities, you need to develop your own personal performance and abilities as well. *Sport Riding Techniques* will help you hone

and perfect your skills, operate controls with even greater finesse, and apply race-proven techniques on the track — as well as on the street. Developing proper skills and safety habits will add to your motorcycling enjoyment and build your confidence. Regardless of your current riding ability, if you are ready to take your skills to the next level, and develop smooth and proficient riding techniques, Nick Ienatsch's *Sport Riding Techniques* is a wonderful tool. This book will help you analyze and safely explore the limits of bike and rider and develop real world skills for speed, safety, and confidence on the street and track.

*See next page for photos and ordering information.*

*"I believe in rider training and riding technology at all levels, whether you're racing for the MotoGP world championship or just enjoying a weekend ride. I know Nick has been writing about riding technique in the magazines for years, and I wholly endorse this book."*

—Kenny Roberts, three-time Grand Prix champion and leader of MotoGP's Team Roberts



## **Sport Riding Techniques**

*How to Develop Real World Skills or Speed, Safety, and Confidence on the Street and Track*

by Nick Ienatsch, with a foreword by Kenny Roberts



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## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

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# ***Desmo Owners Clubs World Presidents Meeting 2005***

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Ducati SpA again invited all Desmo Owners Clubs to send a representative to Italy for the World Presidents Meeting 2005. There were 82 Club presidents or representatives there this year, a record. Just for comparison, DOC clubs in 2000 numbered 22 and had 8,000 members. For 2005, there are 140 clubs with a total membership of 40,000! In 2001, 41 clubs attended the WPM versus the 82 for this year. Federico Minoli, the CEO of Ducati, explained that Ducati is ready to stand behind our clubs, and he is a member of a local club. Ducati has even invested in a new section of their web site devoted to clubs and their events. Go check it out when you get a chance ([www.ducaticlubs.com](http://www.ducaticlubs.com)).

Ducati is working with some local universities to start a Ducati foundation. The goal is to help safeguard the history of Ducati. They will start a historical registry for bikes older than 15 years. The goal is to allow owners of historical Ducatis to contact each other to help in maintenance and restoration. They are looking at the universities to start a course on motorcycle restoration and aid in technical questions from owners. There is hope this will lead to some form of help on the spare parts situation, a subject near and dear to the hearts of many owners of older Ducatis.

Something that bankers always ask Ducati when they are conducting a business discussion is who is a Ducati rider. After years of research it was found the only thing in common among the riders was their passion for Ducati motorcycles. That revelation has led them to the concept of looking at the Ducatisti as members of a

tribe, which has become the focus of all the new things you see Ducati doing. The museum, for instance, is free, unlike Ferrari where you have to pay. They had 35,000 visitors last year for both the museum and the factory tour.

A few years ago they started the Ducati Riding Experience in the factory parking lot. The goal was to teach women to ride. Now they are teaching at three levels and using race tracks. Desmo Challenge is a Ducati-only racing series that has really taken off. There is a special class for women only, and Ducati is sponsoring a team for this event. World Ducati Week is another example of a gathering of the tribe. They are already running spots on Italian TV for the WDW 2006!

Ducati has a large fleet of bikes that are for rent. The rental fee for Desmo Owners Club members is the same as what they charge employees. What I brought back from this meeting is that Ducati is really trying to make Ducati ownership a full experience. I know we see it here at US DESMO at our events. Everyone seems to have a great time and make new friendships. Track days see people helping others if their bike is not ready for the track. Rallies see friendships formed that continue on, and these folks reconnect at future rallies.

What does the future hold for Ducati? Bikes will be lighter and better handling. What is being done in each model line?

The SS model's prime selling point was that it was simple, light, and easy to ride. The Japanese have closed that gap with their

bikes' becoming so much lighter. This former advantage has to be regained to keep it a viable model.

The Multistrada was rushed to market, and they are looking at addressing several areas of improvement. The new seat is one example of an area that needed to be addressed and is now much better. The wild variations in fuel levels indicated by the fuel gauge is another area that needs attention.

The Monster is like pizza in that you can fix it any way you like it. Any changes to this bike will be evolutionary, not a major remake of the bike. Over half of the 40,000 units produced annually at Ducati are Monsters.

They will have a Ducati museum tent titled "Zero to 999". The list of bikes to be shown will blow your socks off. Be sure to bring your membership card to get into everything. Christian Pfiffer will be there doing his Monster stunt show. There will be Ducati-only camping, a hospitality tent, a band, technical sessions, demo rides, Sport Classic prototypes, pot-luck dinner, door prizes, and more. Visit the DesmOhio club's web site ([www.desmoohio.com](http://www.desmoohio.com)) and the Ducati North America web site for more information.

Ducati will have a hospitality tent at the AMA race events. It will be open to Ducati owners and one guest for each. They will also

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## ***What I brought back from this meeting is that Ducati is really trying to make Ducati ownership a full experience.***

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A question about the future of a Super Motard-style bike was asked but not answered.

Desmosedici is in development, but there are no plans on making it a standard production bike. There will be enough of them made to qualify for homologation, but there is no plan to race them in Superbike racing. They will remain a limited-edition bike (read "very expensive").


The Superbike had a recent update, so all changes there are going to be evolutionary.

There was a separate meeting for the club presidents from the United States, and several things were covered that only relate to the United States. The US MotoGP, of course, was one. Ducati Island will be the place to be, and if you do not have a ticket by now you are too late. If you are going, you need to visit the Ducati North America web site ([www.ducati.com/od/ducatinorthamerica](http://www.ducati.com/od/ducatinorthamerica)) to get a parking pass, and even then you need to arrive early to get a spot. They really anticipate a big turn out.

Vintage Motorcycle Days at Mid Ohio is another big event for Ducati North America.

allow clubs to have booths at these events, and US DESMO will be present at Barber, VIR, and Road Atlanta. Come on down and say hello and see some wonderful racing.

For WDW 2006, Ducati is looking to increase the presence of DOC North America. There is talk about organizing a container to ship bikes over for the event, but you would have to ship a bike you were willing to do without for almost three months as ocean shipping is very slow. There will be more information on this event as it gets closer.

Well, that is all the details from our World Presidents Meeting 2005. I am sure I forgot a few things, but I did take notes so you have what I was able to write down. Ducati is very interested in what we think both as a club and as individuals. They are looking to make and market what we want. Participation in the club is a big way to let them know. Come out and ride with us at one of our many events. Check out the Ducati club page and look for clubs where you might be traveling. They may have an event you would like to participate in, and they would be delighted to welcome you.. 

*Turn the page for pictures from the WPM 2005!*



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# ***BENCH RACING***

***Tall tales of fact and "friction"***

## ***THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY***

**By Vice President Clyde Romero, Jr.**

As some of you already know by now, I had an accident on the last day while instructing at Jennings in November 2004. It was all my fault, since I chose to go out on the track with marginal tires, which undoubtedly contributed to the loss of traction and hence my hitting the track. My injuries were a broken right hand and three cracked ribs. This is the good, since I will ride again. What saved me was the riding gear that I had on. My leathers and boots performed as advertised, and I did not get any road rash whatsoever. My gloves were Held, and even though I broke my hand from the impact with the track, my fingers and palms remained road-rash free. I hit the track on my back and right shoulder, and therefore my back protector played an important role in all of this, and once again no problem. In fact, I was able to get up right away after crashing. My helmet took a hit, as to be expected, and did its job as well.

The bad is the wreck itself. This is my first track wreck in 30 years of riding, so I will take it. My bike had frame sliders by Cycle Cat. Cycle Cat frame sliders worked in this case, although they don't always work and can sometimes cause more damage. I took the bike to Computrack for a check of the frame. This is where I saw what frame sliders will do to a bike besides save the frame. Cost was \$150 to inspect the bike and check for frame alignment, etc. When you take your bike there, expect them to hit you up for other packages that they sell. The only thing I don't like about Computrack is that you don't really know if they looked at your bike or not. There is no telltale evidence of work done on your frame whatsoever and especially if your bike does not need any work done to it, as was the case with mine. My bike had no body work

on it as it was destroyed in the crash, but I was pleased that my bike frame had no damage. Computrack will give you a receipt of the work performed, but that's about it. No alignment chart, figures, etc. I felt that Computrack did an adequate job and felt that they were fair with the assessment, as I had felt all along that my bike did not sustain any frame damage. If in fact you need your frame to be straightened, they can do it there, but the \$150 that you paid to see if in fact your frame was damaged does not go towards the cost of the frame straightening. I did inquire if the \$150 was deducted from the straightening job, and they said no. I think this is a bad business practice, as in reality your bike's frame-straightening process will cost you \$150 plus \$500 for a total of \$650.

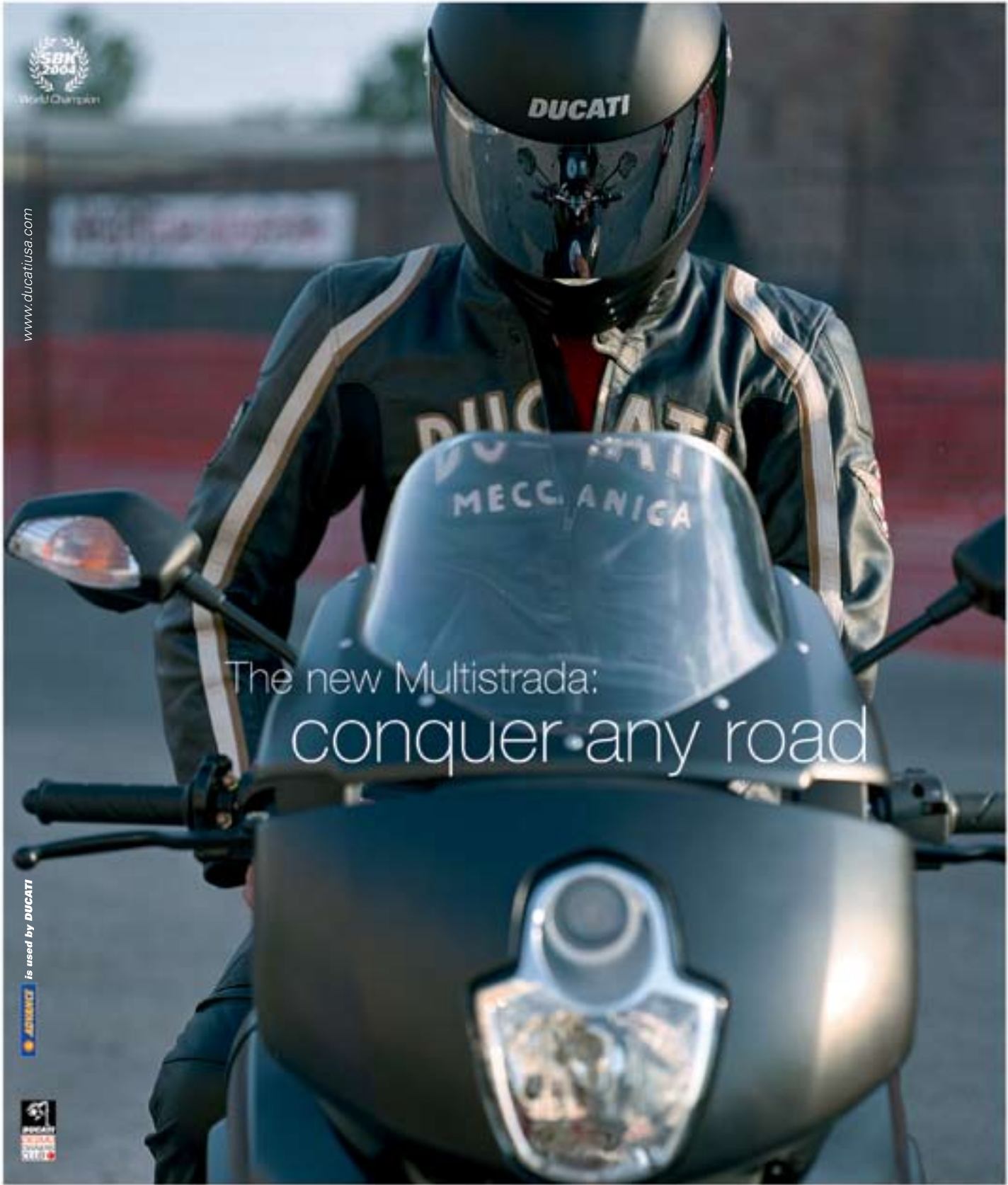
The ugly was the down time and the cost of repair. Check your insurance policy to see if you are covered for track events and schools. If this is the case, you are covered, and if you suffer a loss, it will not impact you financially. Fortunately, I was covered. I plan to be up and running for the 2005 season opener in March, and a lesson was learned: if your tire looks marginal, don't go out on the track. I had a replacement tire on hand but felt I could get away with not using it. I was sadly mistaken and paid the price needlessly. Also, excellent riding gear is a must. One of our students, who is a intensive care nurse, said it best: the cost of one day in an intensive care unit will easily pay for all of the best gear that you could wear at a track day, including tires. And you know, he was right.

**RIDE HARD, RIDE FAST!!!**





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# The new Multistrada: conquer any road

is used by DUCATI



The new Ducati Multistrada sets the standard for new-generation sport bikes. Whatever the road surface, you're in control, carving up the most challenging of curves with ease. Lighter and lower than its big brother, the new Multistrada is more agile and easier to ride – perfect for ambitious new riders. Delivering exhilarating performance with

impeccable road manners, the Multistrada's sporting heritage is evident from its race-bred twin-cylinder engine, signature trellis frame and high-performance components. With optional colour coordinated panniers and luggage rack, the Multistrada is ready for any challenge. The new Ducati Multistrada: conquer any road.

Ducati thanks the Italian Desmo Owners Clubs, the lead actors in the Ducati People 2005 campaign, for their support.

