

DESMO LEANINGS



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

Volume 9 Issue 3

Autumn 2011

***Ducks Head West First Timer • Ducati 848 Project Bike
Ducati Dual Sport Ride • SS Diet***



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Greetings from il Capo

The summer is almost over and our last three events of the year are coming up in rapid succession. In this issue we have a report by a lady, Lenn Rainwater, who had never attended one of our rallies before. So this gives a fresh look at what we do at these events. Ducks Head West was small as usual, but that is nice because we all got to know one another. Attendance is still down at events by as much as 30%, so we are not immune to the trials of the current economy. We still manage to cover costs and have fun at the same time, but it would be better if we had more members take advantage of our events.

Our new-for-2011 feature called Tiny Tech Tips has been a hit, and several members have stepped forward with some pretty unique solutions to common problems when dealing with any bike, but some of them are tailored for Ducatis. Please feel free to contribute any ideas you might have. It is your chance to be in print.

The calendar is progressing more slowly than planned, but it is going to happen. Please keep a spot on your wall open for it. Again we have photos of members' bikes, and even though we are full for 2012, it is never too early to let us know about a bike and some photos you might like to submit.

Neale Bayly of Speed TV fame has shared another story with us in Bench Racing and provided a wonderful article about a long-term 848 EVO Dark. He was kind enough to allow me a few laps on this beast, and it is a lot more bike than my SS 1000 DS. It is quite a contrast to my air-cooled ride but fun nevertheless. I hate it when folks let me ride a special bike because then I want one.

The 2012 schedule of events is in this issue so be sure to look it over and mark your new calendar so you will not miss any events. When the club calendar arrives, it will have these events prelisted so your spouse will know you are already committed and not schedule a conflicting item.

Ride safe and come out and join us.

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Piazza Del Mercato

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MY VIRGIN RIDE WITH US DESMO AT DUCKS HEAD WEST

by Lenn Rainwater

Sitting in bar with friends a few years ago (and at age 42), I announced that I was going to get a motorcycle. Someone said, “You should get a Ducati!” Get a what??? Fast forward to now, and I happen to have the fortune to know and ride with Stevo Ehrnst, who is a Ducati aficionado. And it has started to infect me. Now that I know what a Ducati is, I think I might want to get one.

I was honored and excited when Stevo invited me to join him at Ducks Head West, even though I ride a BMW. I did promise that I wouldn't park next to the Ducatis and embarrass them.



Stevo and another friend of ours, Michael, and I arrived a day early on Thursday so we could join up with Marvin Jensen on Friday as he led us all around his neck of the woods. That is the ultimate—having a local, expert rider lead you on all the secret roads. No, I cannot share them with you, or he will kill me. He also knew a really cool—and hard to find—restaurant for lunch. I haven't had a day of such riding in a long time. Well, at least a month. Thank you very much, Marvin.

We arrived back at the hotel early enough to be able to have a swim before joining the new arrivals for pizza. I think Jim was expecting about 23 riders, and most of them had arrived by then. I loved seeing all the bikes parked together under the hotel canopy. Of course, I parked off to the side so as not to taint the image of those beautiful machines.

After dinner, we watched as Craig worked on his clutch, a good opportunity for me to see how a Ducati clutch works. Then I left the guys to tell lies and tall tales for the evening.

On Saturday, I joined up with the group Stevo led to



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- Track Day, Monday, April 9, Roebing Road, Bloomingdale, GA**
- Ducks Along The Blue Ridge (DABR), May 4-6, Mt Airy, NC**
- Track Day Monday, May 21, Carolina Motorsports Park, Kershaw, SC***
- Ducks Head West (DHW), August 10-12, Erwin, TN**
- Ducks Fly South (DFS), September 14-16, Hiawasse, GA***
- Track Weekend, September 29-30, Carolina Motorsports Park, Kershaw, SC***
- Track Weekend, October 27-28, Roebing Road, Bloomingdale, GA**

***Not confirmed**

Updated August 1, 2011

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Cumberland Gap—about seven riders. We lost a couple, and he stopped to reconnect with them, so Marvin led the rest of us on. At some point, Craig took over the lead, and I had a blast riding behind both of them. Such good riders. Again, some really fabulous roads with little traffic and lots of curves up, around, and through the mountains. We had great weather also.

Our group met in Cumberland Gap at the designated restaurant, and another Ducati group arrived there as well. The ride back was equally as great and exciting. We ran into a little rain, but not enough to make a difference.

Back at the hotel, another swim to cool off and relax, and a little liquid refreshment. By the way, if you want to buy beer at the convenience store next door, you HAVE to have an ID. It doesn't matter how old you are or how old you may look.



Then we watched Craig work on his clutch. Again. I wondered if this was something that I would need to do every time I rode if I bought a Ducati; I may need to rethink this. Actually, I think he was just part of the entertainment for the weekend.

Some more riders had arrived that afternoon, so we had a larger group for the Italian dinner, which was very good. Jim was an excellent master of ceremonies giving away swag to just about everyone. I had to leave the guys to tell lies and tall tales again, so I can't share any of that with you.

I found everyone to be very nice and accepting, and a lot of fun to ride with. Maybe if I'm lucky, they will let me ride with them again.



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Going MAD with il Capo

Story by Neale Bayly. Photos by Neale Bayly and F&S Enterprises

There's some old saying that the best laid plans of mice and men sometimes go awry, if my memory can reach back far enough to my misspent youth, and rolling into Virginia International Raceway too close to midnight for comfort it came back to me. What was supposed to have been a leisurely drive with Signore Calandro for a couple of days of track riding had turned into a nightmare driving 'round the country in search of tires. The good news was, arriving at the Lodge, Jim had secured a comfortable room and was all prepared with food, drinks, tools, and spares, and all I had to do was get my blood pressure down, snatch a few hours sleep, and get back on the original plan.

As usual, it had started with a casual conversation before quickly degenerating into my taking my new long-term Ducati 848 test bike and Jim's bringing his track bike to the Mid-Atlantic Ducati event with Aaron Stevenson's Cornerspeed school providing instructors. This would give me a chance to meet and hang with his people and try out my 848. I could put my recent modifications to test, and Jim could just kick back and enjoy riding without having to play organizer, host, track mother, etc., as he usually does at US DESMO events.



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Big foot in action

Thankfully, the tire debacle didn't deter the play, and, pitting up with Greg Yoder for the first day, we got down to the serious business of having some fun. I made a mechanical *faux pas* with the Ducati 848's rear wheel that we won't talk about, but by lunch-time all was well in our paddock, and we were turning respectable laps and having fun. The event was sold out, but there was never a sense of overcrowding on the track, and we



Aaron tells another joke but the message is serious.

enjoyed slightly lower temperatures than we've seen the past few months through the summer. I have been working with Fast Frank Shockley to slowly transform our 848 into a serious track weapon, and for this test Frank had installed a set of Termignoni slip-on pipes and the Ducati ECU, and he had taken the bike to his local dealer and dialed it all in. He had also gone through the brakes, set the suspension to where he thought it would be good for my weight, and taken off all the excess road

gear. With a set of Pirelli Superbike SCs in place and Ducati rearsets set to GP shift, I was soon lowering my lap times and getting familiar with both the Ducati and VIR.

My initial experiences with the 848 have not been good. Someone had really messed with the suspension before I got it, and it had also been crashed and a little neglected. Thankfully a trip to Frank's, a little intervention with some fine suspension tuning by David Lillard of Redline Performance Motorsports, and some coaching from the Cornerspeed staff meant that by the end of

the event all was good. Riding the Ducati is somewhat different from the inline four-cylinder machines I'm more used to, and I think it will take a few more sessions to get it right. There were some glimmers of hope though that showed the Ducati's potential, and decompressing with



Gentlemen start your engines

Cornerspeed instructor Chris "Hollywood" Cooke, who had been following me on his race-prepped GSXR1000, was encouraging. I had apparently taken his advice for correctly exiting No Name turn and, entering turn three, was able to put a small gap on him using the Ducati's amazing grunt through the turn before braking late into turn four. I was also able to gap another young rider on a Japanese liter-bike out of turn five through the esses the same way, and he was just as impressed with the Ducati's ability to power off the turn as was Chris. Of course I was as slow as molasses through some more important parts of the track, but at least I can see what is needed to improve and maximize the 848's strengths.

Jim put in some laps but was not terribly comfortable, as you will read in his report. He had no lack of enthusiasm for the bike's power or brakes;

I just feel we would have to spend some time setting up the pegs for his feet and converting the bike to standard shift to get him totally happy. He is very comfortable on his bike and didn't miss a session over the two days. Dividing our time between the track and shooting the breeze under the awning with Jim's friend and long-time US DESMO member Ken Reece was just what the doctor ordered. I came away feeling I am beginning to understand the Ducati 848, and now I'm eager to get back to the track. And, as always, happy to have spent time with il Capo in his natural habitat.



And now a few words from il Capo on riding the beast:

When Neale asked me if I would like to take a few laps on his 848 project bike, I was thrilled. Then the realization set in that I had sold my 999 and moved to an SS 1000 DS to get away from more power than I was certified to use. My SS weighs in at a modest 350 pounds



Neale shows Jim how to do it.



and 83 rear-wheel horsepower, where the EVO 848 is more like 410 pounds and 140 rwhp. How is a mere mortal to cope with all this?

VIR is not a track I have been to often, so that was also a factor in my fear of flying. I did several sessions

the suspension quite a bit smoother than my poor little Supersport, and the motor allowed me to ride the course in third gear. Did I mention it had GP shift and I was terrified I would forget? It was not a problem, as the wide spread of torque allow me to lug it way down to



Ducati on parade. Ducati of Charlotte brought some banners.

on my own bike to refamiliarize myself with the north course and then took the plunge. The ergonomics were set up for someone several inches shorter than I am, and, more critically, the foot pegs were made for size six. My size fourteen just did not fit!

I noticed the weight increase immediately, but I noticed the acceleration rate IMMEDIATELY! This thing can fly, but will I be able to hold on? The sensation of weight quickly disappeared, and I settled into the ride.

I love the progressive feel of the brakes and found



It is in the eyes; I think he is ready to ride.

about 3,000 rpm at turn one and still have good drive out of two. On the long straight, I really could have used fourth gear but decided discretion was the better part of valor. Besides, did I really need more than 125 mph on a borrowed bike?

The bike always felt planted and stable, and I could see myself getting used to it, but I would have to have different rearsets or at least foot pegs. My one complaint is the tachometer is impossible to read; I just prefer analog instruments—I am a dinosaur, after all.



BURKE'S GARDEN

By George Smith, Member #01261

Sometimes it can be hard to predict what will turn out to be a Good Idea. I found myself facing one of those decisive moments motorcycling on Virginia Highway 91 in mid-June. After an exhilarating half-hour of watching Don Sprinkle's BMW GS's taillight gradually recede while I found the gravel patches residing in every third or fourth curve, I came to an abrupt halt in the middle of the highway next to Don, staring at a gravel road climbing up over the next mountain. As I removed my helmet, Terry Shiels pulled up on the other side. We had left Charlotte that morning and passed through

600-pound sport tourer. It had so much new on it, that he literally polished it every time we stopped to ensure the freshness shone through. But he was a little less thrilled, and the Triumph did not have the dirt-seeker. My old Moto Guzzi V50 was a pavement-only machine, but it was light enough to handle gravel, and old enough for the prospect not to bother me too much.

If Terry had objected, I'd have joined him, and we would have gone in to Tazewell another way. The driver



Don on his GS BMW and Terry on his Triumph on the perimeter road inside Burke's Garden.

Saltville, Virginia, a few miles back, and our goal was Tazewell and a visit to Burke's Garden, reputed to be a stunningly beautiful pocket of rural tranquility in what is already a very quiet region of western Virginia's mountains. We now had to reach a consensus on whether to proceed on dirt, or turn around and find a paved route to Tazewell.

Don's vote was a no-brainer. His BMW GS boxer had all the options, including a dirt-road detection device. He would have ridden gravel all the way from Charlotte had such a road been available. Terry was astride his newly acquired Triumph Sprint GT, a stunningly beautiful



Don Sprinkle and the only dirt-worthy bike.

of the pickup truck flagged down by Don assured us that there was only seven or so miles of gravel and that the road was in good shape. His wife disagreed, but it was obvious Don didn't want to listen to her.

There's a powerful, unseen force among middle-



Llamas after visiting the barber.



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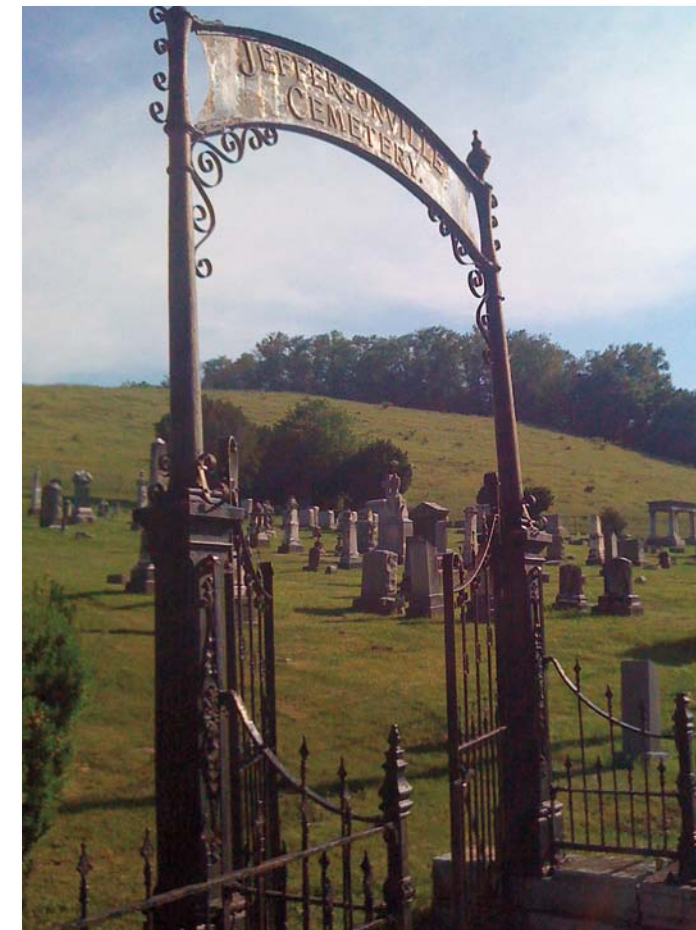
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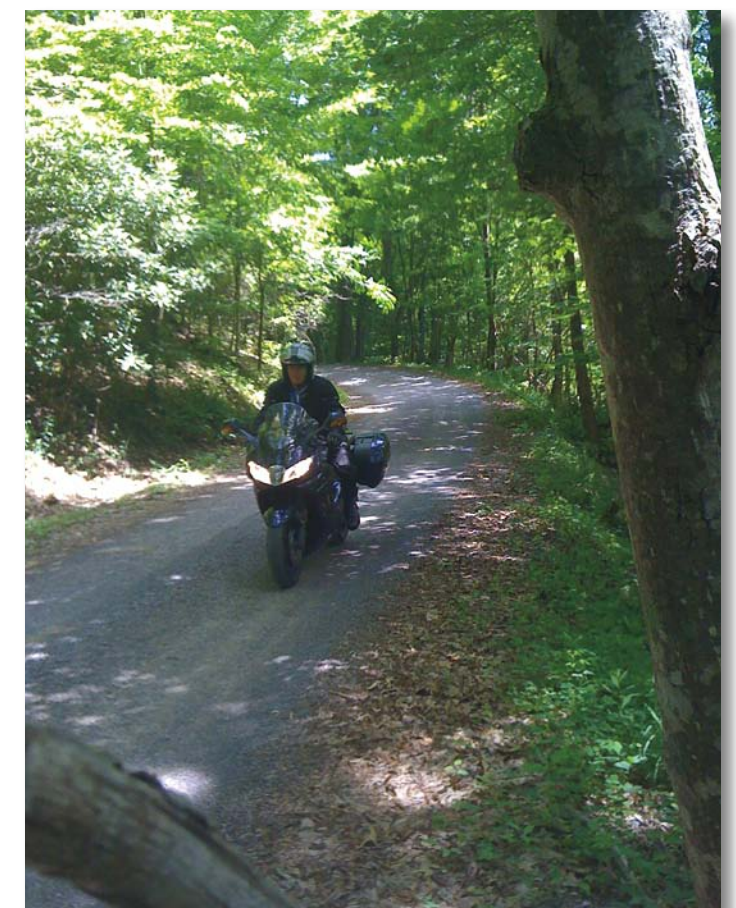
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Llamas and camels at one of the farms in the north side of the Garden.



Terry using all his bike-handling skills leaving Burke's Garden

aged motorcycle riders that sometimes causes a lot of trouble. The layman's term is "not looking like a 'wuss.'" So up the gravel road we went. And actually, it wasn't so bad! Recent afternoon thunderstorms meant we had



A farm in the Garden

little dust, the road grade was smooth, and the gravel was small and well packed. We sure didn't set any speed records, but progress was steady, until we rounded a left-hand hairpin and immediately pulled off for a view of the valley below and the first of many Kodak moments. There Don and I got to soak in a little of Terry's wisdom, gleaned from his years as a videographer. Terry has a great eye for lighting and composition, and I tried the rest of the trip to incorporate his hints. I also shared my photography wisdom with him, which is "take a s***load of pictures, and throw most of them away." Going slowly lets you see lots of wildlife, too, in the form



Small-bike riders learn to travel light!

of woodchucks, 'coons, and deer. They're certainly there during the rest of the ride, too, but if you're watching apexes and potholes, the animals pretty much fade into the background.

The rubbernecking we did on the rest of the ride to Tazewell pretty much undid Don's morning chiropractic session. I know why the old fighter pilots wore their silk scarves. The neck skin gets irritated from all the head-swinging. The landscape was such that you really couldn't help yourself, and after check-in at the motel, we all agreed that we our decision to take the gravel road really was a Good Idea.



We've just entered the Garden from Tazewell

Since Charlotte had experienced seventy-seven days in a row of 90-degree weather, we just had to get our pictures taken in front of the bank's time and temperature display Tuesday morning. Timing the shutter just right got a smiling rider with a 55-degree reading on the sign in the background. Next on the list during breakfast was to e-mail the pics to everyone in the heat back home.

After breakfast, Terry and I stopped at an old cemetery in downtown Tazewell for some photos. The shots you can get on camera phones can be amazing, but I kept complaining that I needed a different lens or other equipment to get a certain shot. Leave it to a professional like Terry to point out the obvious: "It's all we have, and we just have to work with it." That why he makes a living in visual arts, and I . . . Well, I just hope to find some way to actually MAKE a living before my time is up.

The fog lifted and the temperature crept up to comfortable levels as we made the 10-mile trip to Burke's Garden. Entering from the north, an exhilarating road cuts through the mountain, and suddenly you slow down to find yourself in an immense serving of farm stew in a bowl made of mountain ridge. Burke's was originally a mountain underlaid with sedimentary rock. Over the eons, the rock in the middle collapsed, leaving the mountain in the form of a ring to surround the crater-like valley. It's described as the highest valley in Virginia



Virginia is full of Dead People!

at roughly 3000 feet. Interestingly, this location was George Vanderbilt's first choice to build Biltmore House, America's largest private residence, but he couldn't convince a single resident of the valley to part with any land, so he ended up in Asheville.

Riding the lane-and-a-half wide perimeter road, it's easy to see the attraction. George had excellent taste, and the valley's residents were smart enough to ignore his money and hang on to what they knew was a Good Thing. At the General Store, the owner told us that we have one advantage over Vanderbilt: for the first time in recent memory, some Garden property was actually for sale, but probably still for Vanderbilt-sized money. I asked her where the best photo ops were in the Garden, and she candidly answered, "All of it."



Saltville, VA overlook. Source of the Confederacy's salt during the war.

Leaving the store, we rode clockwise for maybe a half-mile before the gloves came off, the camera came out, and I was trying to incorporate some of Terry's tips into my photos. When we saw llamas and camels at a farm another half-mile down the road, the gloves came off again and I decided just to leave them in the tankbag.

Any words to describe Burke's Garden are likely to be inadequate. The dictionary gives us "bucolic" and "pastoral." Suffice it to say, a visit should be on your bucket list. There is no lodging. There's one gas pump that's so old, the hand-written notice affixed advises the purchaser that gas actually costs TWICE what's on the pump. No place to eat. Many of the vehicles probably never leave the Garden because they have no



On the perimeter road in the Garden

tags. This isolation can't help but make you feel you've somehow stepped back in time, trapped in a period of history where everyone was on a party-line telephone and neighbors spanked each other's kids. In a nod to modernity, one of the houses did have a window-unit air conditioner.



There was a geocache located in this old brothel, north of Wytheville, VA.

After our delightful ride the day before, we didn't have as much trepidation about exiting on the gravel road to the south. Don said it was a little longer and crossed two ridges as well as the Appalachian Trail on



Terry Shiels on his new Triumph. We've just emerged into the Garden.

the way out. It did start out pretty steep and then got rougher and looser the farther we got in. Unlike the day before, ruts sometimes crossed the road and occasionally the rocks that mountain bikers call "baby heads" were

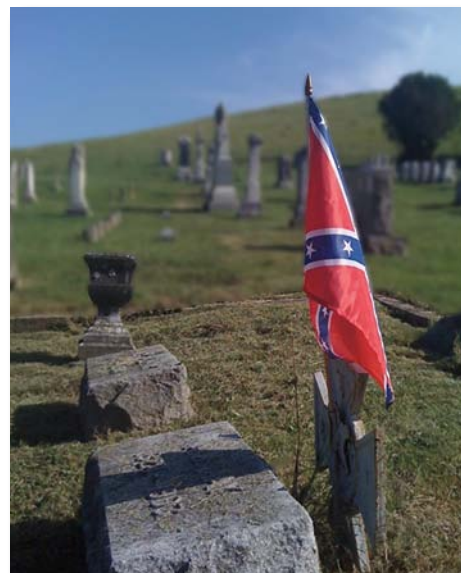
in the way. Don was in his element. I was coping. Terry was wishing for a miraculous loss of 200 pounds of bike weight and a way to peer through his fairing to help dodge the obstacles that seemed to get ever more numerous.

I really was sympathetic as even a very low-speed tumble on a road like this could cost hundreds of dollars while knocking off a good bit of the "new." The color finally returned to his face when we hit pavement 14 miles later.

One more stop to get some "tank bag condiments"—sauces, jellies, etc that I can't get at home. There were some more twisty parts coming down the mountain into Wytheville, Virginia, and again into Elkin, North Carolina. Terry was coming off a cruiser he used to own and is now riding the higher-performance Triumph, so with Don's help, he was developing a new set of skills to cope with the better bike and the better roads. One of this ride's appeals was watching his confidence and skills improve constantly. The other was being able to watch Don's smooth, effortless style. He makes it look so easy. I'm sure he scares himself from time to time, but you'd never know it!

Droning home on I-77 near Lake Norman, brake lights ahead lit up. Our stop was brief, but the northbound lanes, where the accident had occurred, were backed up for miles. Don looked over, flipped up his visor and shouted "Welcome Home! Let's do it again!"

Of course, Don. In a heartbeat!

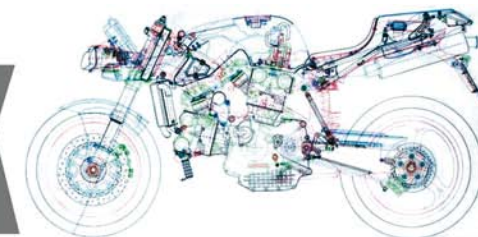


Virginia memories don't fade quickly.



George and Don in the Middle of Nowhere.

Tek Talk



SS 1000 DS DIET

By Jim 'il Capo' Calandro, Member # 00001

After deciding my reflexes have aged enough that a 999 was more than I needed for a track day bike, I bought a second-generation SS 1000 DS. It is less powerful than its predecessor, but it is much lighter. This all makes it easier to ride. After a full season, I fell into that old habit of thinking I needed a little more. Like everyone else, my budget is not as fat as in years past, so just opting for a big-bore kit and hot cams was financially out of the question. The next best thing to more horsepower is less weight.



New paint job and Aculine rearsets.

In keeping with my budget, my goal was to use as many parts I had lying around as possible. So it was off to the attic of my garage shop to see what wonders were there. Now not all the parts I found would fit my new track-day bike, but maybe I could engage in the barter system and still not have to part with my precious cash reserves.

The first thing I found lying around was a set of Carrozzeria forged aluminum wheels that I had purchased from Rick Tannenbaum at Cogent Dynamics (www.motocd.com) several years ago. They had been on my 888 SPO, and the buyer of that bike had wanted to have the bike as stock as possible, so I pulled them off and reduced the selling price. Now a lot of Ducati parts are interchangeable, but the early Ducati had 17mm front axles. Later they went to 20mm and eventually settled on 25mm. You might think pulling the 17mm bearings on the wheel and replacing them with 25mm

would solve the problem, but you would be wrong. The spacer between the bearings also has to be 25mm, and, to top it all off, the hub on a Carrozzeria wheel is a different width than a standard Ducati wheel.

Looking through my parts box, I found a Ducati spacer for between the bearings, but of course it was too long. After careful measurements, I had the proper length for this bearing spacer and for the wheel spacer that goes on the axle between the left fork bottom and the left wheel bearing. Remember, if the bearings are closer together on the after-market wheel, then the fork spacer must be longer. I mailed off the Ducati bearing spacer and the dimensions for the bearing spacer and the wheel spacer to Marvin Jensen, and he turned down the former and fabricated the latter. Considering the custom nature of what he did, he did not charge me enough, but that did not compromise the quality of his work. The rear wheel is a direct bolt-on, so now I could mount both wheels, saving about ten pounds and parting with only a few dollars!



Carrozzeria wheels and Galfer wave rotors.

The next effort was to lighten the parts that bolted to the wheels. I traded the two stock wheels to Rick at Cogent Dynamics for three Galfer wave rotors, which resulted in about another two pounds saved. I had a 520 composite rear sprocket that I had ordered from Rick for the Carrozzeria wheels when they were on the 888, and I had a 520 chain new in the box that I had gotten when



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I bought the 888. All I needed now was to order the front sprocket from Rick. Replacing all the 525 parts yielded another two pounds of saved weight. What is really nice about all this weight is it is all unsprung, rotational weight, the best type you can lose from a motorcycle.



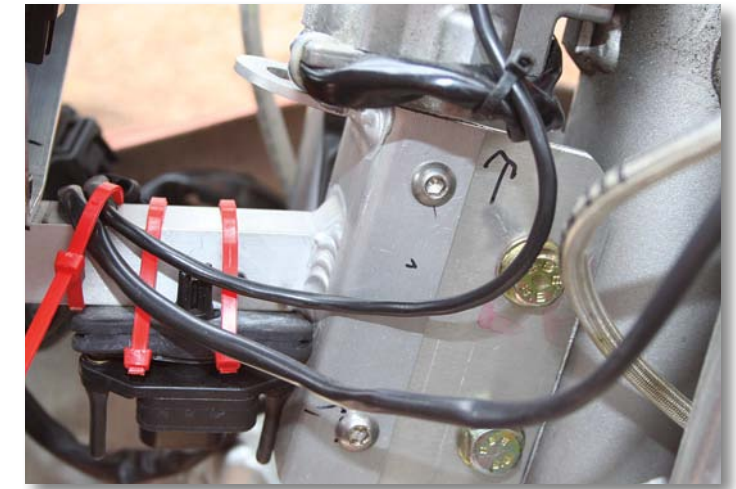
One millimeter of clearance, more would be wasted.

I had removed the mufflers—Termignoni high-mount aluminum slip-ons—and noticed that each can seemed to be heavier than I had thought they would be. The scales revealed they were six pounds each. As it would happen, my Paul Smart Sport Classic is parked right next to the SS, and it has a Shark system with a single muffler. Just



Composite sprocket, not as light as full aluminum but it lasts a lot longer.

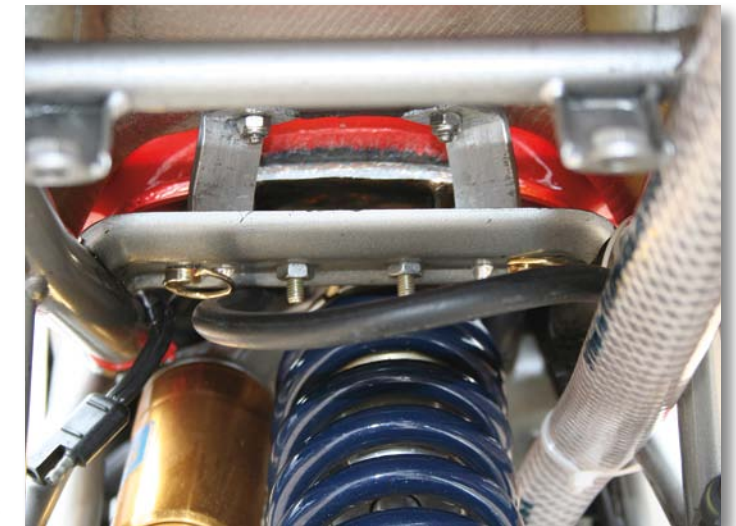
for kicks, I weighed the Shark muffler, and, wow, it was only three pounds! I remembered having a discussion with Carl Carpenter about an unusual purchase he had made. He was modifying the exhaust on his Sport Classic 1000S and needed a new ECU. Well, from Ducati this item was well over \$1,500. On the other hand, he could buy the full Shark system for a Paul Smart for around \$750, so that is what he did. Of course, the old system, less the ECU and air filters, was just sitting in his closet gathering dust. After taking the measurements of the Paul Smart system



999 aluminum fairing stay with support bracket for instruments on left and frame adapter on right.

and the SS several times, I called Carl and made him an offer for his closet parts. They fit and yielded a savings of ten pounds when you included all the muffler brackets they eliminated. Not only that, but the system merges the gas flow from both cylinders in the same direction, rather than the stock set up where they approach the junction from opposite directions. All this, and it has an internal dimension that is about 3mm larger.

The next thing I looked at was the fairing mount. The bike had come to me with a 999 fairing but the stock headlight and fairing mounts. This large, one-piece unit is all steel and not too heavy, but there was room for improvement. I was able to buy a used Yoyodyne 999



Seat mount for the 916 race tail section and seat.

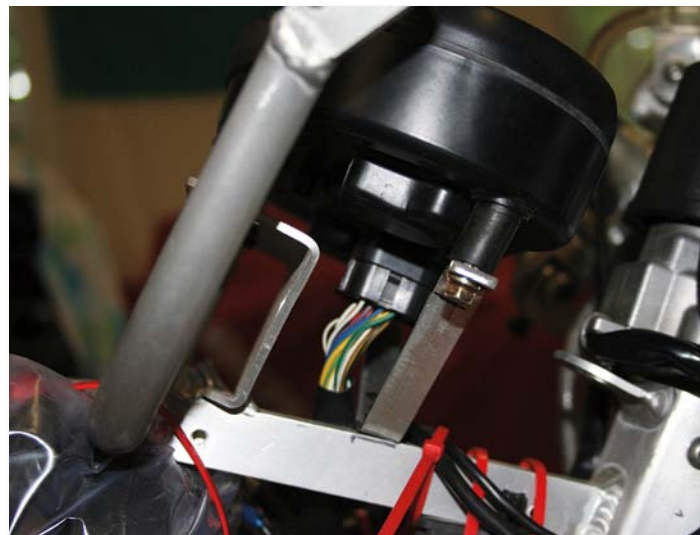
aluminum fairing stay for \$75, and, with a band saw and drill press, I made an adapter to mount the stay to the SS steering head. I also had to make a small V-shaped part to support the back of the instrument cluster. Two small brackets—one to hold the horizontal cylinder coils and another to hold the wiring harness junction—and it was all ready to roll. While I was in that area, I removed the left handle-bar switch, the front brake-light switch and wire, and the fast-idle cable. I replaced the

small half of the throttle housing with one from a 916, a part Craig Hunley was throwing away because it was damaged. This housing has a little button that advances the throttle to keep the bike running when cold. All this yielded around another two pounds.



The frame stops here!

The seat on the bike was a standard two-up seat with a fiberglass cowling to make it look like a Monoposto. My first thought was to cut the back half off the seat, but then I remembered the stock 916 seat I had from when I



Detail of the instrument mount.

put a Sargent seat on my 916 years back. I was trying to devise a mounting system when David Grogan stopped by for me to help him with some wheel bearing removal. He mentioned he had a seat/tail section from track body work that was in need of some repair but I could have. Free fit my budget, so I said yes. Well, it saved four and a half pounds! I did have to make a pair of front support brackets and one in the rear, but I just used the same method I did for the fairing-stay parts: I bought several widths and thicknesses of aluminum bar stock from Lowe's and then cut and bent it to fit. I even mounted them using Dzus fasteners I purchased from Race Bolts.

The seat had two large rubber plugs on the bottom that lined up perfectly with the frame rails, so the seat almost looks like it belongs there.

Rick at Cogent Dynamics suggested I replace the battery with a Speedcell lithium battery, about a seven-pound savings. So far, after two years and never being placed on a charger, the battery has had no trouble starting the bike. While I had the bike apart for the battery installation, I looked over the seat mounting. After some careful consideration, I cut off the steel subframe subsection that would have held the passenger, removing about 4.25 pounds. It looks wrong, but I did a stress analysis, and it has no load whatsoever, so I cut just behind the side triangulation and the horizontal cross bar. The seat sits just in front of all of this.

Next I contacted the DucShop and talked to Mark Sutton about the Hyper stacks he sold. He said that although they were for a Hypermotard, they should fit my engine, but he did not know if the kit would fit under the tank. Well, after I cut the combination battery and air box in half, there was room. I did have to get the rubber manifolds from my Hypermotard—they were left over from my big-tank conversion—and it all fit. Another two pounds bit the dust. The bike now makes a honking sound when it is being started, but, hey, it is a Duck!



Wellnut conversion to a Dzus fastener; the frame slider has since been removed by order of Fast Frank.

The remainder of the weight savings came from careful details such as removing the rear brake-light switch and wire and replacing steel bolts with aluminum ones in non-critical areas. All told, I was able to take off a little over 44 pounds and scaled in at 350 pounds with two gallons of gas on board. Now with the rule of thumb that every eight pounds is one horsepower, I figure I got about another 5.5 horsepower.

Never satisfied to leave things alone, I also added some radial brake and clutch master cylinders I scored from a fellow club member who was parting out his crashed 1098. This did not make the bike any lighter, but it sure gave the brake a better feel. All told, the total price for all these modifications was right at \$700.

Now of course I had spent a lot of money in the past on parts, but by now they had been just collecting dust, so this project put them all to good use. During all this, I was careful and measured everything. I also was diligent about looking up and using the correct torque values. I even safety-wired everything I could get to. Still, as they say, Murphy was an optimist!

My impressions from all this are hard to describe. It totally changed the bike because I had removed about 15% of its total weight. Everything happens faster now. It brakes harder, turns in quicker, and accelerates out harder than ever before. The acceleration increase is easy to deal with, except the front end does get light coming out of turns, so sitting forward is important. The turn-in was quite startling at first, but after I got used to it, I stopped running off the inside of turns. The most difficult thing to get used to is the ability of this bike to stop. I am going way deeper into a turn than I have ever done. What makes this really phenomenal is



Fabricated reservoir mount installed on inside end of bars. Clear brake hoses to prevent bubbles.

the fact that because of the lighter weight, it is actually traveling to the brake marker faster than before. I am by no means a demon late-braker, but I am getting a lot better. I just need a little more testosterone, and I will be able to do it.

I thought I would miss all the horsepower my 999 had, but this bike must be about 100 pounds lighter and is a blast to ride. I have a little trouble with the front end getting very light exiting a turn under full throttle, and it almost feels like I am lifting the front wheel. All that with only 83 rear-wheel horsepower as tested by the DucShop prior to my buying the bike. It may make more or less the same now, depending on what the Shark exhaust did, and I should bring it back to them to check the mapping on the PC3. I am still searching for more weight savings, and the latest suggestion is a composite tank. Unfortunately, they are about \$1,300 and out of this year's budget.

The bike is one of those that Ducati brought in for track use only, so horns and the like are long gone, and it will

never be a street bike. I am amazed at how light it is to push around in the pits, and I can push it up on my trailer without help. Of all the changes on the track, the one that I notice the most is the braking. I am not sure if it is weight alone, because I also cleaned out the calipers, replaced the



Lots of parts in a small place. Battery box now has fuse box, battery and Power Commander.

stock master cylinder with a radial one from a 999, and added the Galfer rotors and SPS sintered pads. Whatever did it, I find I brake way too early and sometimes have to gas it to reach the corner. It is smoother over bumps, much more flickable, and on the long straight between seven and eight at Carolina Motorsports Park I was able to keep up with a GSXR 600—he pulled me by only about one bike length. Keep in mind the bike is light, but I am not at 195 pounds plus gear.



Tight fit to battery box needed a little relief.

After two seasons, I am starting to consider adding some hot cams to get more power, proving I never learn. Actually, I think coming up with the ideas to modify the bike and doing the work was most of the fun anyway. As a friend once said, "You have to make your bike your own," and I have certainly done that, especially now that Greg Pettigrew made it so pretty with one of his trademark custom paint jobs.

Buckles by Tom Rolland



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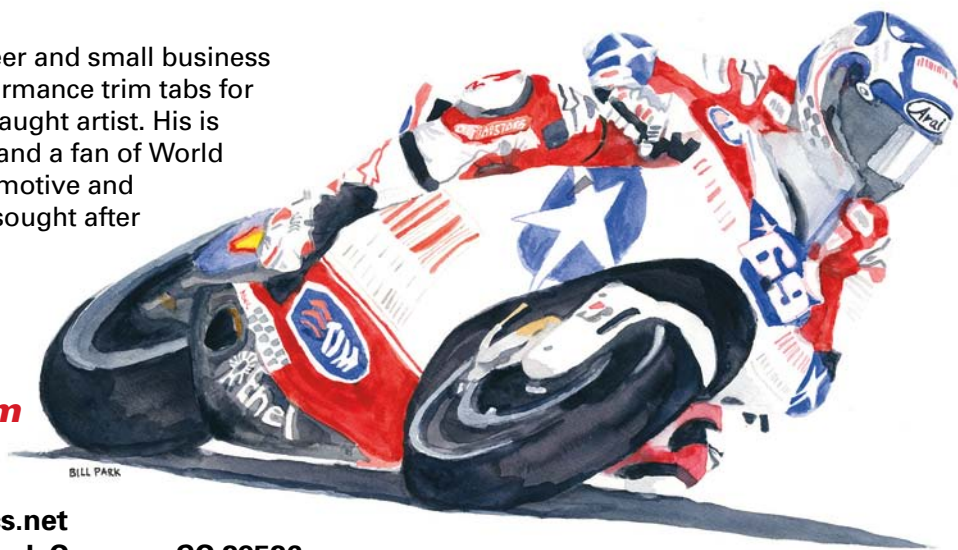
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Patent Pending

Claudio Castiglioni passes away.

Fri, Aug 19, 2011 — After a long-fought battle with disease, Claudio Castiglioni, MV Agusta President and patron of the Cagiva brand, passed away in a hospital in Varese, Italy last night.

While Castiglioni's entrepreneurial quest was born with the Cagiva brand, he will be remembered for his influence on Italian motorcycling as a whole, including Ducati. In fact, in 1985 Ducati was acquired by the Castiglioni brothers, Claudio and Gianfranco, only to be sold in 1996 to the American investment fund Texas Pacific Group who, in turn, sold its shares in 2006 to Investindustrial, the current owner of the motorcycle brand of Borgo Panigale.

It is with the utmost respect that Ducati celebrates the enthusiasm, passion, courage and determination of Claudio Castiglioni and his impact on Italian motorcycle history. We join his family, his company and the many friends and motorcyclists in mourning his death.

Thank you Claudio, we'll miss you!
Club DOC Office

TinyTekTip #3

A Double Tiny Tek-Tip

by Terry Boling, Member #00297

Sometimes doing a valve adjustment on a Desmo engine and having to change a closer shim is not much fun. Getting that first half-ring in the groove on the valve without dropping it or having the wrong angle can be quite tricky. One trick that has been floating around Ducati circles for years has been to use a little bit of wheel-bearing grease on the end of a small screwdriver. The grease will hold the half-ring in place, and the correct orientation on the screwdriver can make installation a lot easier. Also, when changing closer shims, especially on the vertical head, make sure you block the oil-return holes in the head. The last thing you want is to drop a half-ring into your case. A long rubber hose of the right diameter will fit nicely in the hole—and if it is long enough, you won't accidentally forget to remove it before reinstalling the valve covers.

We have a ton of these TinyTekTips, and we bet you do too! Send us your favorites and we'll print 'em and collect 'em on the web site.

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BENCH RACING

Tall tales of fact and "friction"

What once was lost...

by Neale Bayly, Member #01174

I will never forget that frigid winter afternoon the 1924 JD Harley was unceremoniously dragged from the back of a semi truck. Dull, lifeless, rusty, and forgotten, somewhere around five decades had slipped by since the bike was last ridden. I had headed for the workshop behind the Wheels Through Time Museum in Maggie Valley, North Carolina, where museum owner Dale Walksler had been entrusted with the task of breathing life into this 80-year-old motorcycle. I was there to document the story and didn't know I was about to be taken on an adventure, an adventure that would journey deep into my soul as Dale and I traveled back through the JD's and our personal histories.

Intensely energetic, 51-year old Dale has spent his entire adult life riding, collecting, and working on

changed, and the motor spun free. Buds became flowers, the sun now brought warmth, and we saw our first spark. Parts were fabricated, and new tires took their places. And then, as the first tourists rode into the valley, Dale's workshop reverberated with the sound of laughter and a booming 1924 JD Harley Davidson. Filling the place with smoke, the bike ran for the first time in 50 years. It was one of Spalding Grey's perfect moments. A moment of intense joy shared by two people who had embarked on a successful journey and become friends along the way.

Weeks later, on a warm summer afternoon, Dale rides the bike around for me to take pictures. It is another wonderful moment to see museum visitors enjoying this rare, old machine as a fully functioning motorcycle, not the lifeless carcass that first arrived. Enjoying the

Filling the place with smoke, the bike ran for the first time in 50 years. It was one of Spalding Grey's perfect moments. A moment of intense joy shared by two people who had embarked on a successful journey and become friends along the way.

American motorcycles, the museum a monument to his incredible passion. Out back, in the warm, quiet sanctuary of the workshop, we went to work on the '24, observed only by a handful of vintage machines in various states of repair. The work was slow and methodical, and working closely together we began to strip away the years of dirt, grime, and neglect the bike has silently endured.

This also gave us time to strip away some of our layers. As I learned the bike has the original frame and engine, so I learned about Dale's first motorcycle. I told him about my ride across the Himalayas of Northern India, and he told me how his incredible collection started. We talked about our families and our kids, and as the bike came back to life, so our lives came back to us.

Over the next months, as the five-o'clock shadow of green grew into a full beard of leaves across the neighboring mountains, so the '24 was reawakened from its deep sleep. A stuck valve was replaced, fluids were

sight myself, I realize that the '24 never stopped being a motorcycle; it just lay dormant for a time. Sitting by the river with my son, my thoughts roam to the many people I've met lately returning to motorcycling. They have never stopped being motorcyclists.

Just like the '24, skills have gotten rusty, but their passion has never died. It has been waiting for a re-awakening; parked for a time as children are raised, businesses grown, and careers attended to. Then a story read in a magazine initiates a visit to the local dealer. A friend starts riding, and a training course is taken. A machine gets chosen, and the adventure begins. The passage of time is erased, and the magic of motorcycling continues. A little older, a little wiser, but still with the same wide-eyed enthusiasm of youth they return. Journeys are planned, friendships developed, and, before long, as with the '24 circulating the peaceful grounds of the museum, it's as if they have never been away...



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