

DESMO LEANINGS



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

Volume 1 Issue 1

Spring 2003

A look inside our first Issue....

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- The Other Twin from Bologna
- 2003 Schedule of Events



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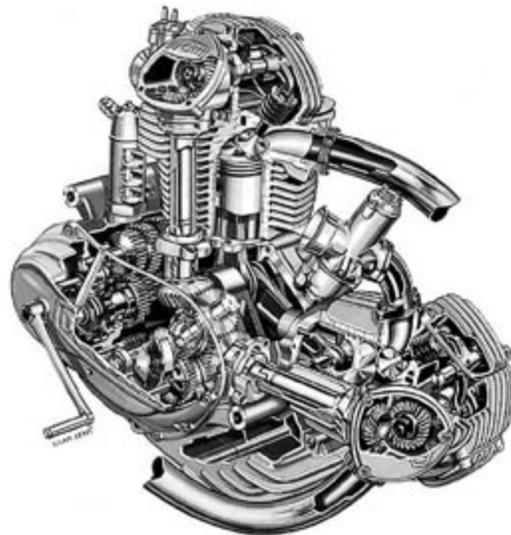


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Greetings from il Capo

Welcome to US DESMO, the new Ducati Owner's Club of the United States. This is an exciting time for us as this is the first issue of Desmo Leanings, our first year as a club and the first effort in almost 15 years to have a truly national Ducati Club. This will only thrive if we all get involved. Big things, like the effort Bob Lattanzi and Terry Wyse have put forward to insure the membership cards were made and the newsletter got to the printer, gave us the start we need. What we need now is for y'all to come forward with both ideas and support for the club. This club belongs to all of us, so let's make it work!

For those of you who are wondering who Jim Calandro is and why is he doing this let me explain. I have benefited from an early retirement from my job so I now have the time. In the past seven years I have worked with the Canadian club but now that I am able, I want to make the US club happen. I have been an avid motorcyclist for over 30 years and a Ducatista since 1990 when I learned the secret hand shake. I am an engineer by training, US Military Academy, and a salesman by avocation, thirty years. I feel this unique background will allow me to have the organizational skills to set things in motion, run an event and the marketing savvy to promote them.

Our first year is an ambitious undertaking with three track days at two different tracks and four weekend rallies in four different states. Some are old events from my DOCC days; three events are totally new. The web page, www.usdesmo.com, is new as well as this newsletter. Ducati NA and Ducati SpA have both given us encouragement and have promised assistance. We have made membership cards, stickers and patches for the club. As the club expands we are going to need more volunteers in more distant areas so we can bring this level of activity to everyone. All we need are good roads and good people.

There is only one way to prove if this is the right direction for the club. Come to as many events as possible and see if this is really the most fun you can have with your leathers on!



Jim Calandro
Capo



Jim Calandro il Capo
Clyde Romero . . . Consigliere
Bob Lattanzi. . . . Consigliere
Terry Wyse Consigliere

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Programma degli Eventi

Desmo Owner's Club Event Registration Form

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Shirt Size (for Rallies only): _____

Pre-Registration Fee enclosed: _____

Rallies:	\$30 USDesmo members	\$40 non members
Track Days:	\$100 USDesmo members	\$125 non members

Events

- March 31**, Track day at Roebling Road, Savannah, GA
- April 25-27**, Ducks Along the Blue Ridge Rally, Mt. Airy, NC
- May 19**, Track day Carolina Motorsports Park, Kershaw, SC
- June 27-29**, Ducks Head West Rally, Greenville, TN
- TBD**, August Ducks Move North, Oak Hill, WV
- Sep. 12-14**, Ducks Fly South, North, GA
- Oct. 6**, Track day Carolina Motorsports Park, Kershaw, SC

Mail completed form to:

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Osservazioni

Congrats on the new club and newsletter, Jim! We've needed an American voice for Ducatisti since the DIOC vanished over the horizon. Count me in!

Best,

*Gene Rankin #0097
ListMaestro, BevelHeads*

Dear Editor,
I would like to congratulate Jim Calandro for getting the US Ducati club up and running. I know what a great deal of time and effort he spent on this project. Rumor has it that he had to quit his job in order to devote enough time to this club. I am really happy that we are no longer under the auspices of our neighbors to the Great White North. I will no longer feel that I have to start every statement with "Hey". Even more important, we can now give up Moosehead Beer and start drinking a good American Beer like Heineken.

Good Luck,

Richard Brandeis #0004

*Send your comments,
kudos and complaints to:
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Piazzo del Mercato

DUCATI 750 PANTAH RACEBIKE

Originally built by PCS - Daytona

750 cc Monster cylinders and heads, FBF 88mm Pistons, 38 mm Mikuni flatside carbs, Verlicchi swing arm, White Power rear shock, White Power U/D forks Full dual Brembo front brake system, Marchesini 3" front wheel, Honda F2 4" rear wheel, Vortex clip-ons.

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Bill Birchfield

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Dolomite Tour

Part One

Article by
Christiane Weissbach-Berger
and Stephen Battisson

Photos by
Stephen Battisson

Steve whom I met via this list had come to see me for a holiday on the bike, riding his YB6 all the way down from Gothenburg to Linz, so now there were two Bimotas to be thrashed around. Let us assure you, you can hardly find two bikes more different from each other. After a week of short trips here in the region it was time for the real treat! I had not really planned the trip in detail but there were some roads I simply considered as a 'must' for me to show Steve.

We leave on Monday, August 26th, hectic and late for various interesting reasons. ;-) After meeting up with Christian on his DB2SR in very warm sunny weather in Gmunden, where a red carpet had been put on the ground only to have our three Bimotas photographed, we head for the first landmark pass, Grossglockner (2575 m), with three really fantastic faster passes - Pass Gschütt (964 m), Dientner Sattel (1357 m) and Filzensattel (1292 m) - as a warm-up. Christian is just along for the day trip and reluctantly turns back at the top of Dientner Sattel mid afternoon.

Steve: "Over the top of Grossglockner was an eye-opener, temperature dropping probably 15°C and with the odd patch of damp road as you climbed and climbed. First indication my new Continental tyres on the YB6 were not the grippiest on the planet came with a quite decent but wholly unintended and scary power slide as the big Yamaha engine cleared it's throat powering out of a hairpin half way up. Both bikes ran like hairy goats over the passes, the Mantra worse as it was chronically rich anyhow, not even able to take full throttle at high rpm. Taking a quick look at the precipitous drop to my right I decided that a little more respect was in order."



Hot tip for riding the Grossglockner is to arrive at the tollbooth shortly after 6pm. Not only does the toll halve to a still not inconsiderable 8,5 Euro but most importantly the traffic level drops dramatically, especially the dreaded tour busses. We have an almost traffic-free run to the summit and Steve even rides up to the Edelweiss-Spitze and enjoys the view, while I wait at the parking space Fuschertörl taking some photos, enjoying the last warm rays of sun surrounded by breathtaking scenery. (You know, tight switchbacks are not my favourites and the ones up there are even cobblestone, so....) Many photos later we decide it's high on time to leave if we want to reach Iselsberg, our destination for the night, still in daylight.

The next day greets us very unfriendly with pouring rain in the morning and a very disappointing weather forecast. And some Italians coming from the South tell us it's even worse there. It is really tempting to just leave the bikes parked and hang around, but we then decide to put on the wets, get on the bikes and see what happens. And the decision turns out right, it is slightly wet but not really raining anymore. At San Candido we stop and consider the options. Dolomites are not highly recommendable with wet roads, so we take a



South-Eastern turn towards and over the Passo di Monte Croce (1636 m) to end up in Santo Stefano di Cadore, by which time the sky has cleared up and we get rid of the wets. The

Dolomites now lie West of us, but the road maps show a promising lap of less than 70 km towards the East via Cima Sappada (1286 m), Forni Avoltri, and Prato Carnico over Forcella Lavardet (1542 m) bringing us back to San Candido. As it is only 2:00 p.m. we decide to give it a try and we are rewarded with spectacular views - clouds like huge white blankets over the mountaintops, the road a still slightly wet glittering ribbon of black tarmac, the soil in the forests breathing mist. On top of Forcella Lavardet we discover that the road we had intended to take is closed down for who knows which reason, so we are forced to take two more passes - Sella di Razzo (1760 m) welcoming us with a herd of cows amidst the road leaving their slippery droppings everywhere, followed by Sella Ciampigotto (1760 m). We consider to overnight at the height of the pass but as it is still too early for dinner we push on a little further passing Auronzo to find a really charming place for the night at Tornede right in the middle of nowhere.



Passo Fedaia

What a gorgeous morning! Blue sky with white clouds and dry roads. Well done to wait one day before we get onto what I had planned for Steve as an 'Introduction to Real-European-Alpine-Bikeriding', and I had really chosen the 'top of the pops'. We start with an ascent to Lake Misurina (1750 m). >From there we take the challenging toll-road leading up to the Parking of the Tre Cime di Lavaredo at an altitude of 2344 m. Again it is 8 Euro but I think it is worth every single cent! Here you are really standing at the foot of these three famous mountains with an absolutely fantastic view of more than 270 degrees towards the Dolomites. After a nice chat with two Spaniards on their Ducatis we ride down again, myself very careful, as the road is really steep, the hairpins are really tight and last time I had been here was with the much easier to handle little Guzzi. >From Misurina we go via Passo Tre Croci (1809 m)

and Passo Falzarego (2105 m), one of my all-time-favourites, to the famous Sella-Lap. We take it counter-clockwise, starting with Passo Pordoi (2239 m) with 33 switchbacks up and 26 down, followed by Passo Sella (2244 m), Passo Gardena (2121 m) where we have to put on the wets as it starts to rain again and ending with Passo Campolongo (1875 m). After eight passes for the day it is high on time to start to look out for a place to stay over night, and we find the 'Festungshotel Al Forte' at Pieve di Livinallongo between Passo di Campolongo and Passo di Fedaia. 'Bikers Welcome' reads the sign. A fortress of World War I that had been converted into a Hotel, with a stunning view from the balcony, some nice amenities after a long day's ride like a Sauna, an excellent restaurant, suggestions for bike tours including copies of the relevant maps, and, very interesting, a 10% discount for bikers. Highly recommended!!

A relaxing Sauna, a fantastic dinner and a cosy bed are the best treatment for a tired biker, so the following morning we are fit, refreshed and ready for some serious riding. First target is Passo di Fedaia (2047 m), recently included in the Giro d'Italia bicycle race, so the tarmac is absolutely fantastic and the scenery is... well... Dolomites! I'm already fearing for Steve's state of mind due to optical overload with towering mountains and he really is telling me he starts to mix up passes and places and views, everything being a bit of a blur. No wonder... Because after Fedaia I present him Passodi Costalunga (1745 m). And I am honoured by being allowed to ride the YB6 to the summit. Pure bliss! Unfortunately the Lago Carezza is so extremely crowded with tourists that we just head on, very much regretting not to be able to have a closer look at the lake which we glimpse is an unbelievable shade of green through the trees. But the descent along the creek, with red cliffs towering left and right recompenses us for this miss and we have a reason to come back someday with hopefully less tourists.



Steve: "Those mountains are really awesome for a bloke from a relatively flat country, moments stick in your mind from a ride like that; like five minutes after departure on Wednesday, still getting settled on the bike, coming to a clearing and being hit with towering groups of mountains on all sides; glancing in the bike's mirror late one afternoon and seeing nothing but distant cliff face, lit to a dusty pink by the descending sun; grabbing a look back down after about the 25th hairpin on Passo Pordoi and seeing nothing but layers of road disappearing below you. Wow, nothing really prepares you for the experience of riding in a place like that. As Christiane pointed out to me, I have almost certainly done more hairpin turns in the last two weeks than in the preceding 30 years riding in Oz! :-)"

Then comes the comparatively boring stretch past Bolzano, but both of us find it almost relaxing to just sit on the bikes on a completely normal road. What follows turns out to be Steve's favourite for quite some time. Passo Mendola (1363 m). Hairpin turns separated by long stretches of very fast kinks left and right, racetrack quality surface, and a swathing run along the sheer cliff face half way up. Steve even forgets to take a single picture as he is completely enchanted with riding. And then it's my turn again... I had been torturing

Steve for days with it! One of my favourites, Passo Tonale (1883 m) is coming up and the only thing I wanted was to ride it on the YB6. Steve hands me his keys 15 km before the pass-height, no real hairpins but extremely fast wide corners... Sure I blew several of my fuses on the ride up there... But on the summit we swap bikes again (sigh, I could really get addicted) and start to look for a place to overnight. We find it quite some time later in Capo di Ponte after we had to put on our wets again as it was raining Cats and Dogs. Again it turns out to be a good place to stay and even our bikes find a dry place for the night.



By now it is Friday and our target is Breganze, cradle of the famous Laverda marque. We are both a bit tired of riding and so decide to take the easiest route. We head on normal roads to Brescia, then take the Autostrada to Vicenza and head up to Breganze. It is the mayhem of Northern Italy, the temperature and population density increasing exponentially as you leave the mountains, something to just cross as fast as possible.

As Steve is normally a Laverda-Man the following days are dedicated to his passion for that marque and reward me with unforgettable memories. For Sunday we have a prearranged a meeting with Piero Laverda who very graciously shows us a number of very tasty Lavs, last but far from least the V6, and takes us on a ride into the hills North of Thiene and the Valli di Pasubio - his so called 'riding university'. This day will stay in my memory as something very special. Very few women I suppose have the chance to not only 'ride along with a legend' but also get excellent advice on how to improve their skills.

The next week is spent tripping around the 'local' area, taking a taste of what the region has to offer. First day we do some accessory shopping at the many motorcycle shops around - how does near top-of-the-range gloves at the Alpine Star factory outlet for 25 Euro sound? Oh, yes, I remember discussions on the Bimota list about annoying low fuel lights on DB models.... Usually, if you are carefully checking the daily mileage, trying not to exceed a certain limit before fuelling up, it is not a problem. Still.... a slightly different way of riding, a lot of stop and go, the Mantra running too rich plus your thoughts out in the blue can make you find yourself by the side of the road with a completely empty tank.... Luckily the next fuel station is just about two km away and we find a way to get the Mantra there, even if it is everything but easy given the density of traffic.

to be continued...

The Other Twin from Bologna...

*Article, photos and restoration
by Jim Calandro*

I have always had a liking for bikes that never were what you could call main stream. When I was riding the Japanese bikes I fell in with an SR 500 Yamaha for just that reason. As that even became too common for my tastes I started looking at the Italian bikes that had always fascinated me but were either too expensive or I was afraid of their reliability. Many of the magazines had made it sound like anything that was not Japanese or German was doomed to leave you beside the road.



My first foray into the Mondo Italia was a Ducati 851 sport. They have become almost common as of late but back ten years ago that was a big step for me. A second Ducati, F1B, was a little less common and even had a race pedigree. A Guzzi was quick to follow and I was hopelessly involved with the land of the red bike. Before I realized it the 851 was gone but replaced by a Bimota db2 and two Laverda triples. I could now safely go out and not meet myself coming the other way. I was happy until a good friend, Craig Hunley, showed up one day with a Moto Morini 3 1/2 Sport and had just bought a 3 1/2 Strada as a back up bike and potential donor.



Now let me tell you at 6' 1" and 210 lb. I had not really considered a Morini as adequate for my needs but Craig let me ride both bikes and I

was amazed. Power, while not breath taking, was more than I expected and they could get up to speed in a reasonable amount of time and keep up with our Sunday morning rides. The real hook was when it came to the turns. These little bikes just flew. In a way you have no choice because if you loose speed in the turn you WILL get left behind by your riding buddies. They are light and just flick into a turn with almost no movement. You do not even feel like you are counter steering and all you need to do is look where you want to go and you are there. I had to have one of these for myself and began my search.



...or my search for a Wee-Vee

The local paper was out of the question as Charlotte is not a big city and if there were a Morini floating around here one of us would have known where it was. I checked Motor Cycle Shopper, the Old bike Journal and the internet with no luck. Craig had found his in the Italian Motorcycle Owners Club newsletter so I ran an ad there saying I was looking. I got a call from Canada but the bike did not sound like what I was looking for and was very far away for me to check out. I did find one or two in California but again the distance made me fearful of the deal and I passed. Both were 500s and I felt that would be better with my weight so I kept looking. Craig felt so sorry for me he even offered to sell me his Strada but I passed waiting to see what the fates had in store for me.

I went to the IMOC classic bike show in August of 1997 and saw several Morinis on display and even one for sale. It was a newer Strada with cast wheels and disc brakes but was priced almost as high as the 500s and looked like it need some cosmetic work. As I was standing and looking over the various Morinis a gentleman came up and we began discussing the merits of such a diminutive bike. Turns out he had two 500s, a runner and a parts bike, and he might be willing to sell. As we talked it turned out he lived about ten minutes from my sisters, where I was staying. We exchanged phone numbers and made a date for me to come over and view the bikes. I had even trailered my bike up for the bike show so I had a way to get

the Morinis home. When I called the next day to get directions to go over and see the bikes, even had my check book with me, my new friend told me he had a case of the dreaded "sellers remorse" and the bikes were not for sale. I went home to North Carolina with just the one bike I started with and I figured it was just not meant to be.



After I had been home for a month I was eating breakfast and reading the paper as I usually do. I looked at the classified for bikes just in case some thing interesting would show up. There in black in white was a listing for a 75 Moto Morini 3 1/2 Sport with 2,495 miles. I called Craig at work to tell him and it took me three times to convince him that it was in our local paper. "No one around here has a Morini" and we both knew it. I was in shock and did not even want to call but told him

I would call that evening. Craig called right then and called me back and said to meet him and gave me directions. I had to go as he just might get weak and buy the bike before I had even seen it.

Well the bike was both good news and bad news. It was a 75 3 1/2 Sport with wire wheels and the four shoe drum brake. The bike had been restored ten years ago and had been driven a few hundred miles and then parked. The bad news is that it had spent the last few years outside under a tarp. The tank, side covers, seat and instruments were perfect and everything worked. From there down the ravages of corrosion had taken their toll. The wheel were almost white with aluminum oxidation and the spokes and nipples had lots of rust. The exhaust pipes had rust and so did most of the other steel parts. The battery had leaked acid and the battery box, swing arm, frame and center stand no longer had paint but instead a unhealthy coating of rust. After some protracted negotiations we were only \$200 from settling on a deal. I decided to go home and think about it and see if the seller would come down a little more, there is not a big market for Morinis. As we got in the car Craig gave me one of those looks and said " a drum braked Sport is the most collectable of all Morinis, if you didn't buy it at that price, I will!" Talk about pressure! I called the seller and we split the difference, I came back the next day with my trailer and took it home.

I took everything off the bike with the exception of the motor and the wiring harness. I wrapped the harness around the motor and covered both in newspaper and proceeded to sand and then paint the frame and all the other black parts on the bike. Polish and polishing wheels were purchased and I went after the chrome, stainless steel and the aluminum. About 100 hours of brute force later, the bike started to look like I wanted it to. I replaced almost every nut, bolt, washer and spacer and started to reassemble the bike. Next I ordered new fork tubes and seals as the chrome was so pitted it damaged the seals.

As I researched the bike and what it should look like I found out that it had black and gold logos which were early 80s style and should have silver and white. Also the seat was a dual seat from the same period and a solo seat with a large hump was right. A call to North Leicester Motorcycles revealed they had the correct logos reproduced and a NOS seat and would I like a

nice set of Paulo Tarozzi rear sets to complete the package. Learned that pounds sterling are a lot of US dollars and that there is a lot of shipping and duties to pay but the parts were worth it. I have been constantly amazed at how available parts have been. It has taken a little looking but they have always been available.

After three months of waiting the bike was ready and I got the insurance, tag and took it over for the state inspection. It passed and I went for a ride. I have not ridden a street bike with drum brakes in over twenty years and picked up a lot of cornering speed as I found out they do not work as quickly and with the same authority as the disc brakes I have become accustomed to. I am also learning how to switch from left foot shifting to right foot and have made some interesting down shifts as a result. Despite all this I ride the Morini more than anything else I have and have gotten more grins per mile and per dollar than any bike I have ever owned. And yes I do not see myself coming down the road.



What's a Rally all about?

Many of you have asked for an idea of what to expect at a US DESMO weekend rally so here goes. Our rallies are three-day affairs. How far you have traveled and what time you arrive on Friday will govern what you will do. Those who have arrived early form informal groups and go exploring in the area. The official start of the event is registration at 6 PM in the meeting room at the hotel. Those who have pre-registered pick up their free T-shirt. Everyone gets a rally packet that includes a map of the Saturday ride, dinner ticket, door prize ticket, and a list of times for various events. The club provides pizza and soda and most sit in the meeting room to visit and eat. Others head out for the parking lot to look at the bikes, bench race, and see who is showing up late.

Saturday morning we all gather at the hotel lobby for a continental breakfast. Around 9 AM we then review the ride and break up into smaller groups. We try to limit group size to eight or less and ask riders to ride with people of similar riding abilities and interest. We want everyone to be safe! The destination is a restaurant, about 100 miles, and should take between two and three hours. Lunch is an informal pay as you go affair. Because of the number of groups and the length of the ride we do not all get there at the same time and it keeps us flowing through the restaurant.

After lunch we form into small groups again. It is good to change groups here if the one you have been in is not suited to your riding style. The ride back to the hotel is usually 150 miles and takes from four to five hours. One thing that has become apparent over the years is that with a full stomach and a long ride you will become tired. Most of the roads are picked for exciting ride qualities so it is important to take a rest stop once or twice along the way. It will not make your weekend any fun if you go "agricultural". Also remember these are public roads so you need to exercise caution.

After a rest at the hotel and a chance to bench race we head out for dinner. Depending on the rally it will either be at a restaurant or catered to a meeting room. Of course the food is Italian! After dinner we have door prizes, awards, and all the photo opportunities you can stand. We head back to the hotel and engage in more bench racing and other assorted lies. ☺

The Sunday schedule depends on how long your ride home is. Some just pack up and head out. If you live close enough to allow a short ride several of us will head out for an hour or so run to a restaurant for breakfast. Our first rally eight years ago had seventeen riders, the biggest to date had just over one hundred. Normally we expect between sixty and eighty riders to attend. People who have ridden up on Saturday morning to see the show are very disappointed as we are all out riding. Now that you know what to expect, come join us!



Jim Calandro
Capo



**Track Day • October 2002
Carolina Motorsports Park**