

BRITAIN'S ONLY WEEKLY BIKING MAGAZINE

MOTOR CYCLE WEEKLY

ON SALE WEDNESDAY
WEEK ENDING 10th SEPTEMBER 1983 50p

SPENCER
TAKES TITLE
IN IMOLA
SHOWDOWN

MOTOR CYCLE WEEKLY

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BIKING MAGAZINE**

**ON SALE WEDNESDAY
WEEK ENDING
10 SEPTEMBER 1983**

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LEFT: New speedway world champion Egon Muller flanked on the rostrum by Billy Sanders and Michael Lee.

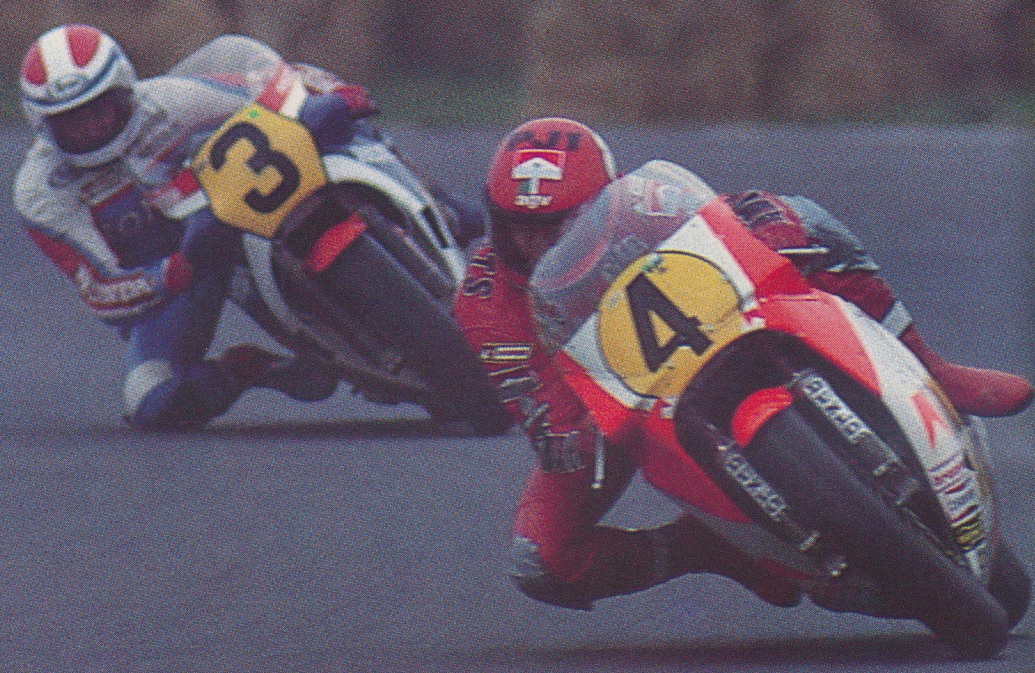
COLOUR LEFT: Freddie Spencer in a typical duel with Kenny Roberts.

- 4** **WORLD INDIVIDUAL SPEEDWAY FINAL:** Inform Michael Lee led a strong British contingent—Chris Morton, Kenny Carter, and Phil Collins—at Norden, West Germany, on Sunday, in the challenge for shale's supreme title. Stewart Boroughs reports on their success and photographer Trevor Meeks captures the action.
- 7** **SPEEDWAY GOSSIP:** Stewart Boroughs relates the off-the-track happenings at Norden and keeps in touch with events at home.
- 8** **WEEKEND SPORT:** Our roundup includes the Carrowdore 100 road race from Northern Ireland, the Greybeards trial, and world sidecar cross from Switzerland.
- 9** **FROM BAD TO WORSE:** The motor cycle industry in Japan and England is in big trouble as falling sales force cutbacks across the board. Read our news feature.
- 10** **SAN MARINO GP:** How Spencer clinched the title at the last gasp, Nick Harris and Peter Clifford also report on the 125cc and sidecar GPs and the only other class to be decided—the 50s.
- 14** **BOTH SIDES OF THE COIN:** Peter Clifford gets two views on the most thrilling world 500cc championship chase for years as he talks to victorious Freddie Spencer and disappointed runner-up Kenny Roberts.
- 18** **END OF AN ERA:** Next year will see the biggest shake-up ever on the world championship road racing front. The grands prix as we know them are over. Nick Harris reports.
- 20** **LEADING LINKS:** After all that excitement it's time to relax and who better to slow the heartbeat than Dave "Three wheels on my wagon and I'm still rollin' along" Richmond and another tale of sidecarring bold.
- 22** **OIL IN A DAY'S WORK:** What happens to the black stuff between being pumped from the North Sea and it arriving at your friendly petrol station. Technical Editor Peter Clifford gushes forth the information.
- 26** **CUSTOM CACHE:** A feature's breather and you're back with Dave Richmond, who's never afraid to get his hands oily. But he cleaned up in time to point the finger at Dave Crowshaw's Triumph Lowrider. Plus a swish-looking Swiss Harley in full colour.
- 28** **NEWS:** Bizarre in the bazaar—Honda's strange market ploy and Chris Bromham jumps for joy over 18 double-decker buses to beat Eddie Kidd's record leap. Just two of the stories in our three-page news section.
- 31** **STREET TALKIN':** Oh no—not again! But you can't keep a good man down, so Dave Richmond surfaces once more with another slice of motor cycle life as he sees it.
- 32** **SIX-PAGE NOSTALGIA SPECIAL:** Editor Graham Sanderson and Road Test Editor Mat Oxley relive their youth on Kawasaki's 750cc triple and the MV850—settling a few arguments in the process.
- 38** **ROAD 'N' RALLY** Arghhhhhhhhhhh.....
- 40** **CLUBMAN'S CORNER:** Easy, folks, you-know-who's got nothing to do with this page. Spike Wright presents a welcome change of face with his look at road racing at grass roots level.
- 41** **WHAT'S ON:** The weekend's sporting action previewed.
- 42** **YAMAHA DT175 ROAD TEST:** Baby of the MCW office, Paul Carroll, is also in reflective mood as he rides an up-dated version of the bike on which his motor cycle interests were weaned. Tadworth roundabout watch out!
- 48** **WRITE LINES:** Does Dave Richmond get too much space in MCW? Write and tell us. A free bottle of gripe water to the sender of every correct letter published.
- 50** **NEW PRODUCTS:** Need we say more..?
- 51** **WEEKEND SPORT:** Return to the major sporting action with full reports on British fortunes in the Moto Cross des Nations and the Classic Manx GP.



Canon

CHC



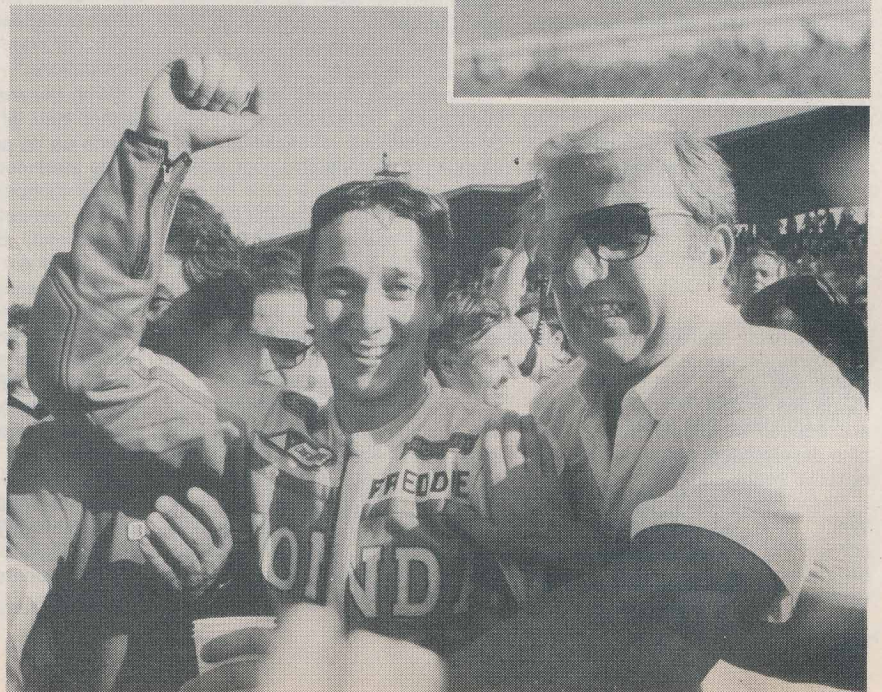
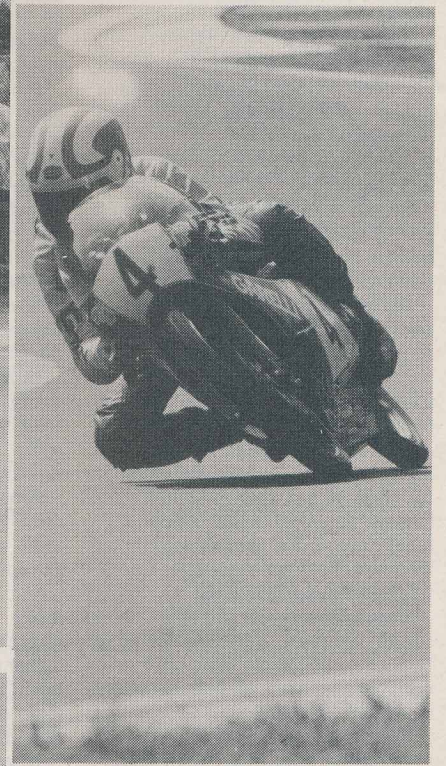
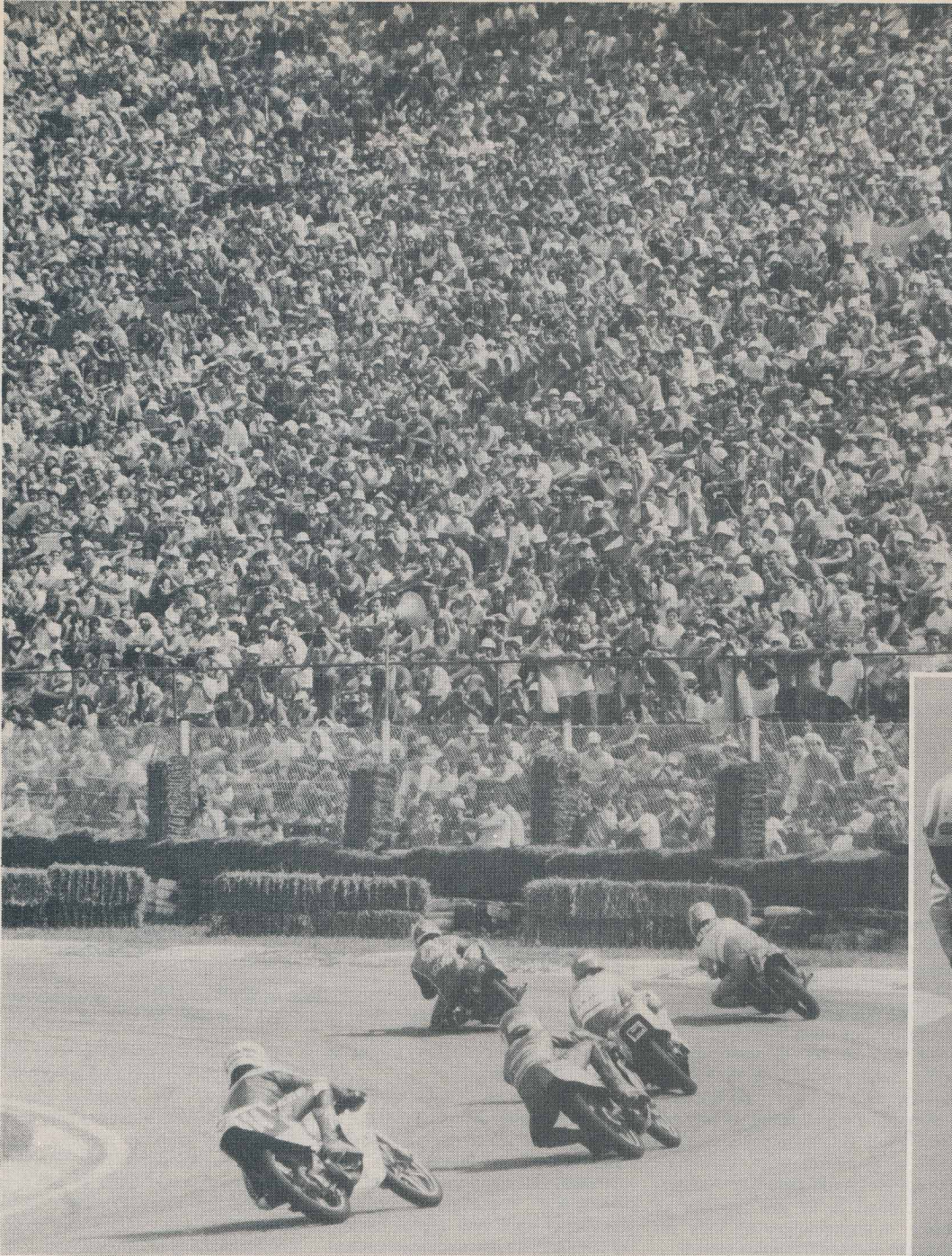
RIGHT: The GP season comes to an end as Kenny Roberts (Yamaha) takes the flag at Imola. But Freddie Spencer took the 500cc title for himself and Honda with a calculated second place.

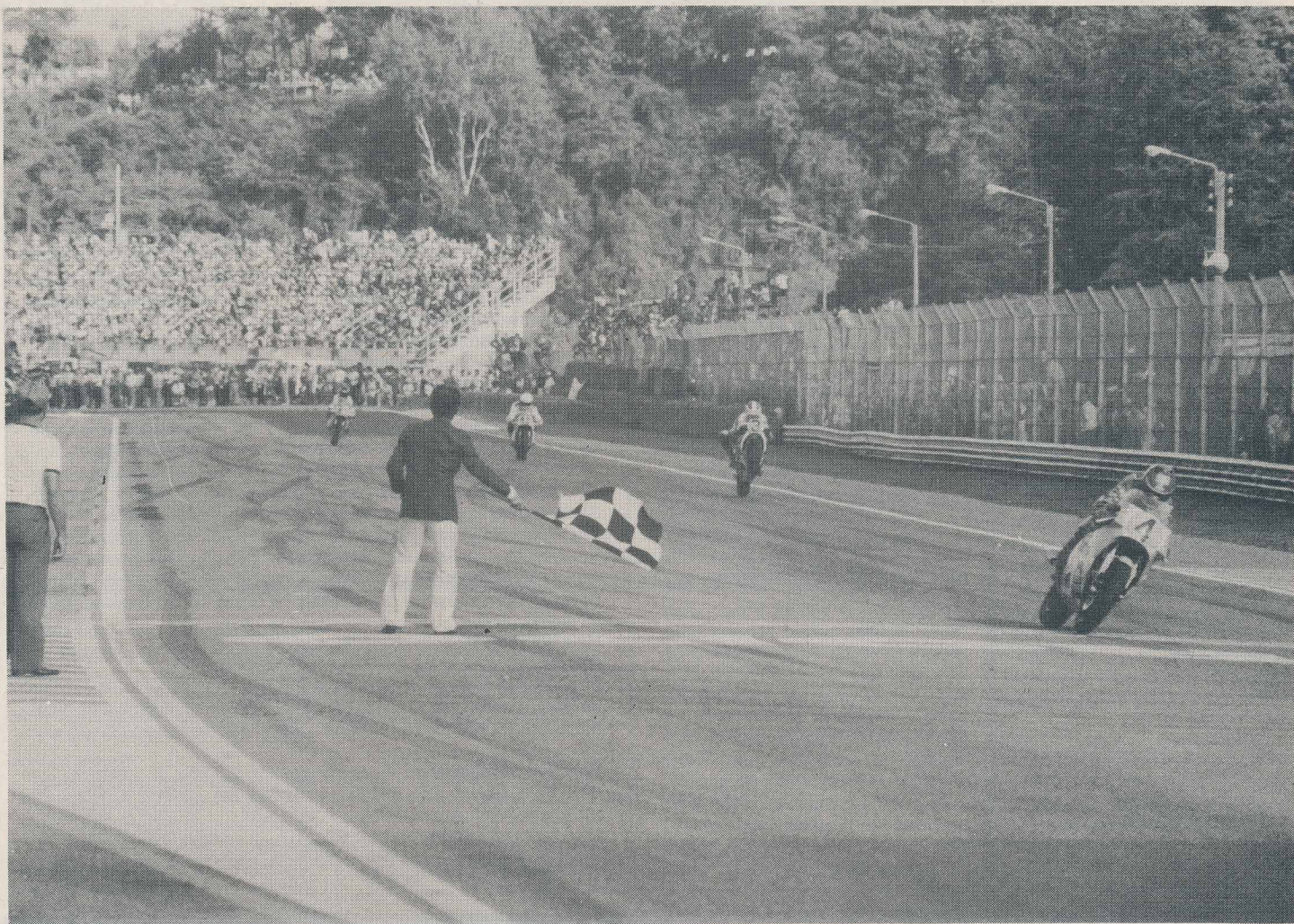
LEFT: Thousands gathered on the banks at Imola to witness the climax of the season. Here the crowd enjoys the typically frenzied 125cc battle.

BELOW LEFT: Predictably the pace set by Roberts and Spencer was too hot for their team-mates seen here. But Eddie Lawson (27, Yamaha) got ahead of Marco Lucchinelli (5, Honda) to finish a good third.

BOTTOM: New world champion raises an arm in triumph after becoming the youngest ever 500cc title holder in the race which brought Honda their first 500 championship.

BELOW: Spaniard Ricardo Tormo won the 50cc race with a new lap record but the title stayed with Stefan Durlinger.





FOUR weeks ago, after winning in Sweden, Freddie Spencer knew that second place at the San Marino Grand Prix at Imola would give him and Honda their first World 500cc Championship, and he duly obliged on Sunday controlling the race from beginning to end.

Kenny Roberts, riding the Marlboro Yamaha and five points down in the championship, tried all he knew to shake the 21-year-old from Shreveport, Louisiana, but although he won the race on probably his last grand prix appearance, he had to settle for second place in the championship.

"I gave it all I knew and tried to control the race," he conceded after 25 hectic laps in the hot Italian sun around the 3.13-mile circuit. "However there was nothing I could do with Freddie controlling things behind me, although I thought my team-mate Eddie Lawson rode brilliantly to finish third."

Lawson had to be helped to the medical centre following the race, suffering from exhaustion after putting everything into trying to relegate Spencer to that all-important third place. Despite failing, he had the consolation of fipping the injured

Takazumi Katayama for fourth place in the championship. No mean feat in your first year of grand prix racing.

Britain's hopes floundered in the tension and the sun, with Ron Haslam the best finisher in ninth place

Report: Nick Harris Pictures: Leo Vogelzang

despite handling problems on the works Honda. Chris Guy (Suzuki) was 14th and Steve Parrish (Yamaha) 16th, but Suzuki mounted Barry Sheene and Keith Huewen both retired.

Fans converged on Imola from all over Europe for the showdown of the decade and the tension and atmosphere was electric as the clouds cleared and the spots of rain that had fallen in the earlier 125cc race became a distant memory.

The Italians went wild as Spencer walked to the pole while Roberts, who was on pole position on the

Result: 500cc (25 laps, 78.29 miles)

	m	s	mph
1. K. Roberts (USA, Yamaha)	48	16.63	97.29
2. F. Spencer (USA, Honda)	48	17.86	
3. E. Lawson (USA, Yamaha)	44	23.99	
4. M. Lucchinelli (Italy, Honda)	48	36.02	
5. R. Mamola (USA, Suzuki)	48	42.71	
6. M. Fontan (France, Yamaha)	48	43.24	
7. R. Roche (France, Honda)	48	43.82	
8. B. Van Dulmen (Holland, Suzuki)	49	50.72	
9. R. Haslam (GB, Honda)	49	55.2	
10. A. Mang (W. Germany, Suzuki)	50	05.43	

The following completed 24 laps: 11. L. Becheroni (Italy, Suzuki); 12. W. Von Muralt (Switzerland, Suzuki); 13. P. Coulon (Switzerland, Suzuki); 14. C. Guy (GB, Suzuki); 15. M. Broccoli (Italy, Suzuki); 16. S. Parrish (GB, Yamaha); 17. W. Migliorati (Italy, Suzuki); 18. F. Ferretti (Italy, Suzuki); 19. F. Gross (France, Honda); 20. F. Sjoström (Sweden, Suzuki); 21. F. Biliotti (Italy, Honda); 22. E. Gschwender (W. Germany, Suzuki). **The following completed 23 laps:** 23. B. Nielsen (Denmark, Suzuki); 24. J. Ekerold (South Africa, Suzuki); 25. D. Papandreou (Greece, Yamaha); 26. F. Kasserer (Austria, Suzuki). **The following completed 22 laps:** 27. A. Hoffmann (Switzerland, Suzuki).

Lap Record: Roberts, 1m 53.36s, 99.46mph.

Old Record: Lucchinelli, 1m 56.92s, 96.43mph.

Final Championship positions: 1. Spencer 144; 2. Roberts 142; 3. Mamola 89; 4. Lawson, 78; 5. Katayama (Japan, Honda), 77; 6. Fontan 64; 7. Lucchinelli, 48; 8. Uncini (Italy, Suzuki) and Haslam, 31; 10. Roche, 22.

Practice leaderboard: 1. Roberts 1m 53.49s; 2. Spencer 1m 54s; 3. Lucchinelli 1m 54.65s; 4. Mamola 1m 54.96s; 5. Lawson 1m 55s; 6. Fontan 1m 55.23s; 7. Haslam 1m 56.39s; 8. Roche 1m 56.86s; 9. D. De Radigues (France, Honda) 1m 58.2; 10. Mang 1m 58.37s.

grid, rode his 500 Yamaha minus helmet to the line.

All the pent-up frustrations of four weeks of waiting for this vital moment erupted as the flag dropped and it was Haslam who led from the line, with Spencer and former-world Champion, Marco Lucchinelli (Honda), racing passed him on the flat out left hander with Roberts in fourth place.

Lawson made a bad start and was having to work at full stretch to try to give his team-mate the assistance he so desperately needed.

At the end of the first lap, Spencer led comfortably, with Lucchinelli doing a good job of holding up Roberts who was in third place. Frenchman Raymond Roche, replacing the injured Katayama, on the works Honda was battling for fourth place with Haslam who was already struggling with handling problems.

Lucchinelli, to the delight of the 100,000-plus crowd, kept Roberts off Spencer's tail for another two laps but once the Yamaha man was up into second place the stage was set for a battle of tactics that tested both Americans' nerves to the limit.

For four laps wily old Roberts kept showing Spencer his front wheel without actually passing him; trying to pressure him into making a mistake. But when it became painfully obvious he was not going to break he took the lead on the long left-hander after the start/finish straight and all Freddie had to do was hang on to him.

By this stage Lawson had overcome Roche, Randy Mamola (HB Suzuki) and Marc Fontan (Yamaha) to get up into fourth place and so accordingly, Roberts' tactics at the front changed.

He started to try to slow the pace to give Lawson a chance to catch Spencer and Lucchinelli. Nevertheless, the championship leader knew exactly what was going on and regained the lead at the first chicane and upped the pace to his own satisfaction.

Roberts realised his only chance was at the front, so he was back in the lead a lap later. Lawson, however, started to close dramatically on Lucchinelli and all was not lost for the Yamaha camp. Eight laps from the finish he at last squeezed past Lucchinelli and when Roberts got the news on his pit-board he once again tried to slow his pace down, especially in the chicane, to give Lawson a chance.

But once again Spencer was equal to the ploy and went back in front, with a little assistance from a back marker, just four laps from the finish. Roberts redressed the balance on the left-hander after the start/finish, but all eyes turned to Lawson who was putting in a super human effort to catch Spencer.

They raced into the vital last lap with Spencer less than one second adrift of Roberts and Lawson, realising all his efforts had been in vain, a further eight seconds adrift.

At the chequered flag Roberts saluted the cheering crowd, while Fast Freddie, pulled an uncharacteristic wheelie as he realised his life-long ambition. Lawson was a brave third, with Lucchinelli fourth after doing his bit for Honda in the early stages. Mamola was fifth following a race-long battle with Frenchman Fontan and Roche.

But day and the season belonged to Freddie Spencer and Honda, who took the manufacturer's cham-

pionship. And with Roberts, who decimated the lap record by over two seconds, promising to retire, it

looks like a combination that will take a tremendous amount of stopping next season.

50 GP

THANKS to Eugenio Lazzarini's injury during practice, Stephan Dorflinger was World Champion before he even started the 13-lap 50cc race. That was just as well as his Kreidler was slow to start and Ricardo Tormo on the works Garelli had a considerable lead by the end of the first lap.

Ian McConnachie started well on his Kreidler, but dropped down the field to finish thirteenth.

By lap four Dorflinger was up to second but Tormo was well ahead and won by 44 seconds to give Garelli the Manufacturers World Championship.

Result: 50cc (13 laps, 40.71 miles)

	m	s	mph
1. R. Tormo (Spain, Garelli)	31	06.67	78.51
2. S. Dorflinger (Switzerland, Kreidler)	31	50.9	
3. C. Lusuardi (Italy, Villa)	32	05.55	
4. T. Timmer (Holland, Casal)	32	8.45	
5. H. Klein (W. Germany, FKN)	32	17.85	
6. H. Spaan (Holland, SNRT)	32	17.94	
7. G. Ascareggi (Italy, Minarelli)	32	45.90	
8. O. Machinek (Austria, Kreidler)	32	5.56	
9. R. Scheidhauer (W. Germany, Kreidler)	33	9.36	
10. G. Singer (W. Germany, Kreidler); 11. C. Baert (Belgium, Kreidler); 12. R. Costa (Switzerland, Kroko).			

The following completed 12 laps: 13. I. McConnachie (GB, Kreidler); 14. T. Engl (W. Germany, Engl); 15. G. Tabernelli (Italy, GMC); 16. S. Kenu Mika (Finland, Kreidler); 17. H. Hammel (Austria, Sachs). **The following completed 11 laps:** 18. N. Casadei (Italy, Minarelli).

New lap record: Tormo, 2m 21.42s, 79.72mph.

Old record: Lazzarini, 2m 22.86s, 79.92mph.

Final World Championship Positions: 1. Dorflinger, 81; 2. Lazzarini (Italy, Garelli) 69; 3. Lusuardi, 38; 4. Looyestein and Spaan, 34; 6. Klein, 33; 7. Tormo, 25; 8. Bauer, 20; 9. Timmer and Scheidhauer, 17.

Practice leaderboard: 1. Dorflinger 2m 21.76s; 2. Lazzarini 2m 22.47s; 3. Tormo 2m 22.53s; 4. Spaan 2m 26.31s; 5. Klein 2m 27.81s; 6. Timmer 2m 28.64s; 7. Lusuardi 2m 28.88s; 8. Ascareggi 2m 29.73s; 9. Hammel 2m 29.92s; 10. Looyestein 2m 30.92s.

125 GP

ITALIAN Maurizio Vitali sent the home crowd wild by winning the 20-lap 125cc race on his MBA, while most of the fancied runners fell by the wayside.

However, full marks must go to the 27-year-old Italian, who kept his cool from the start, while the likes of World Champion, Angel Nieto (Garelli) crashed and Ricardo Tormo (MBA) and Fausto Gresini (Garelli) dropped out with mechanical problems as they battled for the lead.

Not only did Vitali celebrate his first Grand Prix victory, MBA also stole the manufacturers World Championship from Garelli, who failed to provide a finisher in the race.

Tormo, winner in the 50cc event, led from the start, but completely messed up the first chicane on the opening lap, a mistake from which Vitali took full advantage to snatch the lead.

Gresini soon joined them at the front and the trio pulled away from the pursuing field, although Nieto looked dangerous racing through

the pack after one of his customary bad starts.

Tormo made up for his first lap error by snatching back the lead at the same chicane. However, Vitali again redressed the balance a lap later, and Tormo then retired with a sick engine as Gresini took up the challenge.

On the ninth lap he was in the lead but within a mile his celebrations come to an abrupt halt when his chain jumped the sprocket and his race was run.

While all this had been going on at the front, Nieto had been closing on the leaders almost unnoticed. By half distance it only seemed a matter of time before he was in front, especially as Vitali was having to battle through the backmarkers.

However, five laps from the finish, and just when he was ready to take Vitali, Nieto crashed without injury.

Swiss rider, Hans Muller (MBA), was second, after a race long battle with Pier-Paulo Bianchi (Sanvenero), who was relegated to fifth place by Pier-Luigi Aldrovandi (MBA) and August Auinger (MBA).

Result: 125cc (20 laps, 62.64 miles)

	m	s	mph
1. M. Vitali (Italy, MBA)	43	13.08	86.96
2. H. Muller (W. Germany, MBA)	43	17.23	
3. P. L. Aldrovandi (Italy, MBA)	43	20.2	
4. A. Auinger (Austria, MBA)	43	21.5	
5. P-P Bianchi (Italy, Sanvenero)	43	22.48	
6. G. Waibal (W. Germany, MBA)	43	57.38	
7. H. van Kessel (Holland, MBA)	44	6.35	
8. W. Perez (Argentina, MBA)	44	26.7	
9. E. Klein (W. Germany, MBA)	44	40.3	
10. A. Strayer (Holland, MBA)	44	41.4	

11. H. Lichtenberg (W. Germany, MBA); **The following completed 19 laps:** 12. J. Hutteau (France, MBA); 13. B. Hassaine (Algeria, MBA); 14. P. Alojz (Yugoslavia, MBA); 15. P. Bolax (Czechoslovakia, MBA); 16. G. Succi (Italy, MBA); 17. T. Pedersen (Denmark, MBA).

The following completed 18 laps: C. Baert (Belgium, MBA).

New lap record: Nieto, 2m 06.03s, 89.46mph. **Old record:** Lazzarini (Garelli) 2m 7.93s, 88.13mph.

Final World championship positions: 1. Nieto (Spain, Garelli) 102; 2. Kneubhuler (Switzerland, MBA) 76; 3. Lazzarini (Italy, Garelli) 57; 4. Vitali, 59; 5. Tormo (Spain, MBA) 52; 6. Muller, 43; 7. Wickstrom (Finland, MBA) 42; 8. Bianchi, 40; 9. Gresini, 37; 10. Aldrovandi and Auinger, 30.

Practice leaderboard: 1. R. Tormo, 2m 06.73s; 2. Muller, 2m 08.06s; 3. Vitali, 2m 08.44s; 4. Bianchi, 2m 08.45s; 5. Nieto, 2m 08.86s; 6. Auinger, 2m 08.99s; 7. Kneubhuler, 2m 09.08s; 8. Gresini, 2m 09.08s; 9. S. Caracchi, 2m 09.29s; 10. Wickstrom 2m 09.45s.

BARRY SHEENE WRITES FOR MCW

THE grand prix season ended on Sunday at Imola and people were telling me it was my last grand prix race. I've certainly got no plans to completely stop grand prix racing next year although if I can not get some more competitive machinery I don't feel inclined to do a full world championship season.

All the rumours about Suzuki not producing works machinery next season were completely new to me but I've fixed up a meeting with Peter Agg and Denys Rohan of Heron Suzuki this week to try to find out exactly what is going on.

Back to Imola and congratulations to Freddie Spencer and Honda winning their first 500cc world championship which I felt they really deserved. Freddie rode a good sensible race as I knew he would. Of course he was in a super position with that five point lead but he



Me ole mate Johnny Cecotto came for a chat at Imola.

rode it just right especially when Kenny started to try and slow him down.

I had plenty of time to watch the race and the battle between Kenny and Freddie from pits lane after my Suzuki's Ignition packed up on the seventh lap.

Before we get the here-we-go-again letters, the Ignition packed up three times during practice and Keith Huewen and Phillippe Coulon had exactly the same problem.

During the whole grand prix

period we were doing a lot of work for the new film which was hard going because we kept having to go over the same things and people kept coming up to talk without realising the camera was rolling.

It's up to Donington for the weekend which promises to be a pretty good meeting and then on to Scarborough. I still don't know about the Swann series in Australia but don't believe all you read and hear because I'll be back next year,

Sidecar GP

WORLD champions Rolf Biland and Kurt Waltisperg won an exciting sidecar event, their LCR Yamaha beating off a race-long challenge from Alain Michel and Claude Monchaud in a similar machine, reports Peter Clifford.

Third were early leaders and last year's champions Werner Schwarzel and Andreas Huber in their Seymaz Yamaha, ahead of Egbert Streuer and Bernard Schneiders, who did enough to secure second place in the championship despite Streuer suffering from a debilitating virus.

The race was run in the morning, instead of being last on the programme as originally intended, because last time a sidecar grand prix was run at Imola the crowd invaded the track after the 500 race and the event never took place.

Biland led the race off the line, but for the first eight of the 20-lap race the first four crews battled it out in close company. Michel took the lead on lap seven and began to pull Biland clear of Schwarzel and Streuer.

In a lonely fifth place, Derek Jones and Brian Ayres fought with sticking throttles in their Yamaha engined LCR, but were well clear of the battle for sixth spot between Masato Kumano and Kunio Takashima and the Dutch pair of Hein van Drie and William van Dis.

Dennis and Julia Bingham retired on the third lap with a broken crank, and Steve Webster and Tony Hewitt stopped three laps later. Frank Wrathall and Phil Spendlove drove a well judged race for eighth place, taking three points which put them into seventh position in the championship.

Michel led until five laps before the end when Biland raced by. The French crew didn't give up though and were right behind the Swiss team as they started the last lap.

"I passed Rolf at the end of the straight, braking for the hairpin," recounted a sweaty Michel later,

"then I got the outfit sideways in the last chicane and he caught up again and passed us at the last left hander".

Mick Barton and Simon Birchall were unlucky to finish out of the points and, hence, just failed to make the top ten in the championship table.

Result: Sidecar (20 laps, 62.64 miles)

	m	s	mph
1. R. Biland/K. Waltisperg (Switzerland, LCR)	42	07.14	89.23
2. A. Michel/C. Monchaud (France, LCR)	42	08.64	
3. W. Schwarzel/A. Huber (W. Germany, Seymaz)	42	08.82	
4. E. Streuer/B. Schneiders (Holland, LCR)	42	53.25	
5. D. Jones/B. Ayres (GB, LCR)	43	29.63	
6. M. Kumano/K. Takashima (Japan, LCR)	43	29.63	
7. H. van Drie/W. van Dis (Holland, LCR)	43	32.92	
8. F. Wrathall/S. Spendlove (GB, Seymaz)	43	58.05	
9. T. Van Kempen/G. De Haas (Holland, LCR)	44	17.05	

The following completed 19 laps:

10. A. Zini/C. Sonaglia (Italy, LCR) 42 23.44
 11. M. Barton/Birchall (GB, Ireson-Yamaha); 12. M. Kooij/R. Van Der Groep (Holland, Kova-Yamaha); 13. Faivre/Gloor (Switzerland, Yamaha); 14. Huber/Mockl (W. Germany, Yamaha). The following completed 17 laps: 15. H. Hugli/K. Paul (Switzerland, LCR); 16. J. Modder/E. De Groot (Holland, LCR).

New lap record: Biland/Waltisperg, 2m 04.22s, 90.76mph.

Old record: Qini/Fargerli, 2m 18.03s, 81.68mph.

Final championship positions: 1. Biland/Waltisperg, 98; 2. Streuer/Schneiders, 72; 3. Schwarzel/Huber, 67; 4. Michel/Monchaud, 57; 5. Kumano/Takashima, 39; 6. Jones/Ayres, 34; 7. Wrathall/Spendlove, 22; 8. Ireson/Williams, 20; 9. Van Kempen/De Haas, 18; 10. Zurbrugg/Zurbrugg, 15.

Practice leaderboard: 1. Michel/Monchaud, 2m 4.12s; 2. Schwarzel/Huber, 2m 05 23; 3. Streuer/Schneiders, 2m 5.88s; 4. Biland/Waltisperg, 2m 6.53s; 5. Van Drie/Van Dis, 2m 6.90s; 6. Jones/Ayres, 2m 6.99s; 7. Van Kempen/De Haas, 2m 7.52; 8. Kumano/Takashima, 2m 8.76s; 9. Zini/Sonaglia, 2m 8.81s; 10. Wrathall/Spendlove, 2m 09.62s.

NEXT WEEK

SPORT

WELSH ISDE

When the ISDE last came to Wales back in 1961 Britain ran one of the most highly-praised events in the 17-year history of what is undoubtedly the world's premier off-road event. Yet it certainly wasn't the case of "didn't we do well", as Britain's Trophy teamsters would be first to admit. Alan Wright looks back at exactly what happened in Llandrindod Wells when the ISDE was last held on mainland Britain.

ROAD TEST

CAGIVA ALA ROSSA 350

Second new machine from the factory that could soon be Europe's biggest bike producer is a 350 four stroke trail bike. Editor Graham Sanderson put the ever-so-smooth thumper through its paces for this exclusive MCW test.

CAGIVA ALETTA ROSSA 125

Cagiva's latest 125 trail bike is a far cry from their efforts of yesteryear. Watercooling, single shock rear suspension and motocross styling put the Aletta Rossa well up with Honda's MTX and Yamaha's DT LC on specification. But how does it match up to the competition on the road? Find out in our exclusive road test.

FEATURES

RAID ORION 4

Major Read takes us on a step-by-step account of his fascinating journey to Aqaba via Istanbul, aboard his BMW R100RT. His experience of participating in one of the celebrated, French organised 'Raid' rallies makes colourful reading.

SPEEDWAY

German Egon Muller was the shock winner of Sunday's World Individual final. Stewart Boroughs delves into the background of the long-haired pop-singer-cum-speedway and long track star.

The winner

SECOND place in the final grand prix of 1983 gave a king-size measure of Southern comfort to Freddie Spencer. "As I accelerated out of the last corner towards the flag, I knew I had won the championship. Until then I was trying so hard to maintain my concentration that I didn't think about it," said the 21-year-old from Louisiana, smiling and seemingly unruffled by his race-long battle with Kenny Roberts as he was surrounded by a horde of journalists after becoming the youngest man ever to win the world 500cc championship.

"They always say that winning the first championship is the easiest, but this one has certainly been hard and I'm not sure it's going to get any easier."

It seems unlikely that being world champion will change Spencer. His modesty seems an integral part of his character and his charm would be more in keeping with the quiet refinement of a drawing room in the old Deep South of America than the fierce hurly-burly of the international

racing world. Spencer was genuinely pleased and surprised to receive a letter of encouragement from the Louisiana state Governor before leaving home for Imola.

It is an interesting coincidence that while Kenny Roberts' first introduction to Europe saw him beaten by Giacomo Agostini at the Imola 200 miler in April, 1974, Spencer had had his attention turned to this continent for the first time by Ago's Daytona 200 victory the same March.

"It was the first time that I had been to Daytona," said Spencer. "I remember that I raced in the Amateur 125 and was leading it when the bike seized. Watching Ago win the 200 was the first time that I had seen any European racers. I had never read much about it either because before Kenny came over there wasn't much interest in the States.

"Anyway", continued Spencer, "my roots are in dirt track racing and for a long time I didn't take any interest in anything else. I had been racing dirt track since I was six, and it wasn't until I was

eleven in 1973, that late in the year I started doing some road races.

"I really concentrated on road racing from 1977 on when I won four Western Road Race Association national championships."

At that time Spencer rode an amazing number of machines on race day. He had a 125 Honda for the 200 GP class, two almost identical bikes for the 400 and 410 production classes, a 750 Suzuki and a TZ250, and he was only fifteen!

"I used to ride ten races in a day", grinned Spencer. "I'd get off the 750 and go out on the 125 without even taking my helmet off. I loved the challenge and the variety."

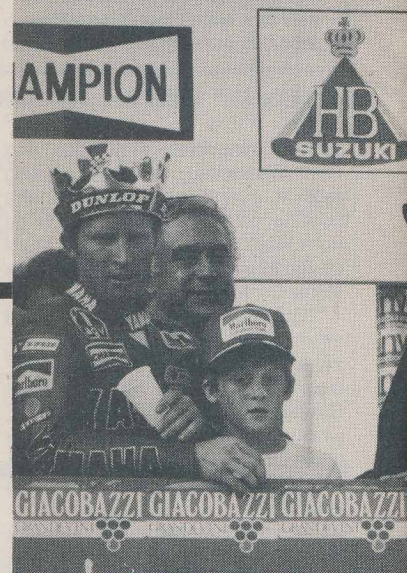
While Spencer was making the change from all-rounder to road racer in 1977, his now arch-rival Kenny Roberts was doing the

same. That was the last time when Roberts, ten years older than Spencer, seriously contested the dirt track races of the AMA Grand National championship before coming to Europe and the world championships.

While Roberts took Europe by storm, Spencer made probably the best association of his career as he teamed up with Erv Kanemoto. The two now seem inseparable and obviously have a very special working relationship.

"Above all, Erv is my friend," explained Spencer, "we have always got along real good and we understand each other perfectly. I trust him completely and he respects my riding. We commu-

RIGHT: Many pundits reckon Kenny Roberts is still entitled to wear the crown seen here at Imola. But for the time being at least it has been relinquished to the Boy King Spencer.



The loser

"THEY'LL have to buy a piece of England and make it California. That's the only way you're going to see me again," quipped Kenny Roberts as he sat subdued in the Marlboro bus at Imola on Sunday after missing out on his fourth world championship.

"I guess the Queen might have something to say about that so maybe we'll nip in and steal it while you guys are on your tea-break." In a more serious vein, the three-times world champion continued, "My kids need me more than ever now and they live in the States.

"I didn't really lose the championship today, but which moment do you pick out when that happens. We could have done with ten points in Monza when I ran out of petrol, or two points when I finished behind Lawson instead of in front in Yugoslavia. The one that gets me is Sweden when Spencer made a mistake but got the points.

"I reckon I owe him one, but I never thought of bumping him off today, it's not my style. It was close though, we rubbed shoulders a few times. If he'd been trying to win, we

probably would have hit each other but he didn't have to, all he had to do was finish second, so he only passed me when he saw Lawson getting close and wanting to push up the pace a bit."

The crowd that surrounded the Marlboro bus on Sunday evening will remember Kenny Roberts the racer, but to those who were closer to him there was also Roberts the joker and it has taken some people all of the last ten years to get used to his somewhat offbeat sense of humour. The way he derives the greatest pleasure from winding up those around him. The closer they are and the more dependent he is on their abilities to produce a winning machine, the more merciless his humour.

Eddie Lawson was amazed to see this side of Roberts first hand for the first time when they both went to Laguna Seca in February to test the new grand prix 500S.

"After he had ridden the bike 'Mike' Maekawa, one of the Japanese engineers, asked him how it was, Kenny shook his head, 'no good, Mike', he said, 'you might as well send it back to Japan and start

again, it's not worth going to South Africa with this bike'.

"Then", continued Lawson, "he was sitting on the bike, on its stand while Abe-san, another of the Japanese, was asking him questions. In between answers Roberts was making racing noises, then looking over his right shoulder saying, 'look out, here comes a Suzuki, yeeeeowe, goddam.' Then a few seconds later over his left shoulder, 'look out, here comes a Honda, yeeeeowe, goddame.' I thought, 'Jeeze Kenny, we'd better lighten up on these guys', but Abe didn't even seem to notice, he just kept his head down, writing in his note book. Later Kenny and I went out to dinner and he said what a good bike he thought it was, but he had never said so to them."

Dunlop's Peter Ingley, who has spent the last two years working with Roberts to develop the tyres that won him six grands prix this year, has also found him something of a special person to work with.

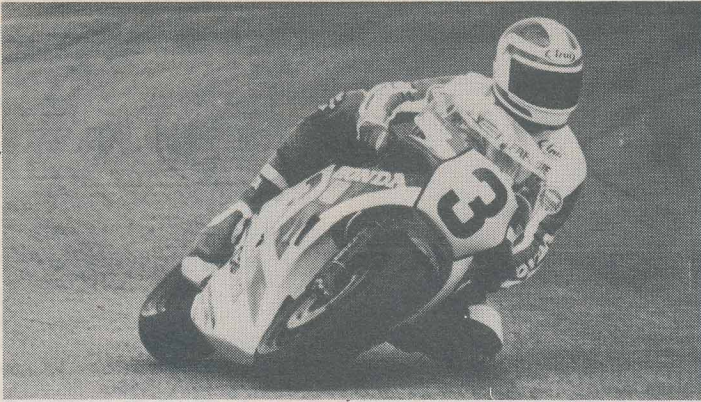
"I have never worked with anyone quite 100 per cent whether it is testing practice or racing. And he is just so fast. I have never found him

to be the limit. If the front tyre is no good, you fix that and he goes faster until the back tyre is no good or the suspension won't handle it. Fix that and he'll just go faster. He also has a very good technical understanding of what is going on with the bike and the tyres, and he is always thinking," said Ingley.

The fact that Roberts has always given 100 per cent is certainly the reason why he has become so popular with hundreds of thousands of fans as well as those who have worked with him. The Californian is happy that that is the way he will be remembered. "I'm glad that the world championship finished here in Imola where I started racing in Europe. I have had a lot of hard races here and I think the fans, especially the Italians, appreciate that.

"After I have retired", continued Roberts, "I don't think it will matter how many world championships I won. I want to be remembered for always giving 100 per cent on the track, not for shooting my mouth off

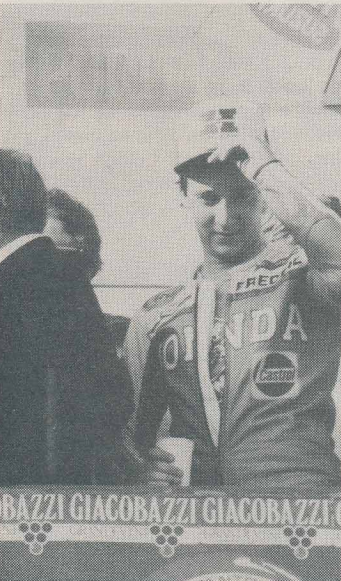
TALKS TO RIVALS FREDDIE SPENCER AND KENNY ROBERTS



Spencer en route to his first GP win of 1983 in South Africa.

nicate so well that when I come in during practice we hardly have to speak sometimes, we understand the situation just by looking at each other, the expressions on our faces."

Questioned about the fact that since joining Honda to race in the



outside it. That is why I wanted to win the championship for Yamaha. That is my job and it is a job I have enjoyed. I've not been in the business of promoting Kenny Roberts, my job has been to win races for Yamaha."

Roberts makes no secret of the fact that in certain respects he will miss grand prix racing, especially later this year when he feels he has had the best machine for a long time.

"This year is the first time for years that I have had the sort of motor cycle that I've been yelling for for ages. Ever since we left the piston port engine we've been hurting for the right sort of power. It wasn't something that Yamaha could do overnight, it took development. Up till this year the disc-valvers have had all the wrong sort of power, they have destroyed the tyres and the bikes have been handling fit to throw me off".

Not having been one to master foreign languages and living to play

the work on the machines. "I really appreciate the work that my father did since I was six until I was sixteen. He looked after the five road racers I was riding, everything. And what I appreciate even more is that at that point he realised that he had done all he could for me as a tuner. He wanted the best for me so midway through 1978 he spoke with Erv, who agreed to work with us. My father obviously put his personal feelings aside and Erv came with us for the first time at a road race at Lexington, in Ohio."

Erv remembers that first race

for that is that Erv has also been involved in racing all his life, with boats and go-karts as well as motor cycles.

"Racing has been my life also" said Kanemoto.

"It is very much the same whatever it is, it's all about playing strengths off against weaknesses. One of Freddie's strengths is his ability to say what is wrong with the machine. He doesn't have to spell it out, we think along the same lines so if he tells me something I can fill in the rest of the picture.

"Freddie is also very good at

'They always say that winning the first championship is the easiest, but this one has certainly been hard and I'm not sure it's going to get any easier . . .'
—FREDDIE SPENCER

States he had not won a championship, Spencer pointed out that since 1980 he had been in on the beginning of the race programmes.

"1980 was the first year of the superbike and naturally there were problems. Last year was our first grand prix year and we had to learn."

Before joining up with Erv, it was Freddie's father who did all

meeting, though not as one of their most successful. "The main race Freddie was in was the 250. It was a long race, as I remember, about 100 miles. Freddie was leading by 30 seconds or so when the throttle stuck open on the last lap and he crashed.

"But the friendship started their. We think alike," said Erv, "we have a very similar outlook on life and on racing. "One reason

compensating for a problem. You can see him working hard out there and he'll be going nearly as fast with something wrong as he would with the bike right. That gives you the chance to put it right and make it a bit easier for him."

Kanemoto worked with Spencer through '79 and into '80, when Erv tuned the 250 and 750 Yamaha while Freddie rode the Honda

golf, Roberts marks England as one of his two most favourite countries in Europe. The other is Italy. "The Italians have an easy way of life, it's very close to my style of living. I have always been guided just by my feelings, like Italians, doing what I feel is right. That is why I am leaving Europe now. I want to spend time with my kids. Who knows what I will feel like after six months' rest. Unless I can move my three kids to England though I don't think I'll be back, I can't see my ex-wife letting me do that."

tracks. I knew nothing about Europe, to American riders over here there was just some mountain that killed everyone", continued Roberts without mentioning the TT by name. That is all we had ever heard about. Europe was a bad place where people raced for no money—and it was—but when I started winning it got a lot more coverage in the States. Yamaha did a lot with publicity and people began to take notice.

"Then Randy came over as well in '79 and there was world series,"

do the world championships in '78. The decision was made at the end of '77 when they packed up the dirt track programme and there was nothing else for me to do."

That first year in Europe was hard for Roberts. He didn't understand the languages or the food, his wife hated it and Roberts also had to contend with new race tracks, and too little time to learn.

Against all the odds, though, he won the championships, the first of three in a row, beating title holder Barry Sheene by ten points. Win-

'I reckon I owe Freddie one, but I never thought of bumping him off today. It's not my style. It was close though, we rubbed shoulders a few times . . .'
—KENNY ROBERTS

Roberts' attitude to Europe has certainly changed since he first arrived in April, 1974 for the Imola 200, wearing the American number one plate as Grand National champion, a title he held again at the end of that season. He finished second to Giacomo Agostini then, after a lengthy fuel stop in the first leg and a shredded tyre in the second.

"I never wanted to come to Europe. It was Yamaha who wanted me to do it because April was an off month in the States from the dirt

said Roberts, referring to the championship that he and most of the other leading riders attempted to set up to replace the FIM world championship. "That will be my favourite, most important memory of Europe. It didn't happen in the end but it changed everything. The attitude of the organisers went 180 degrees about, afterwards they stopped treating us like animals. We don't scream at them now, we sit down and discuss things.

"Again, it was Yamaha's idea to

ning in his first year when up against it is something that Roberts remembers with special affection. "That was my best year for real gut riding, without having everything right. I didn't know the tracks and I had half the practice time of everyone else. I had only one bike and we had to change wheels all the time because I was the only one using Goodyears and the tracks were new to them too. I always had to ride damned hard. The bike was not that good and I had to force it to

The winner . . .

superbike. It was with the immaculate Kanemoto-tuned 750 that Spencer made his first trip outside the USA. Still only eighteen, he arrived at Brands Hatch as a member of the American Transatlantic team and stunned everyone by soundly beating Roberts, Sheene, Mamola, Crosby and everyone else to win both legs at Brands and help the Americans trounce the British in the series.

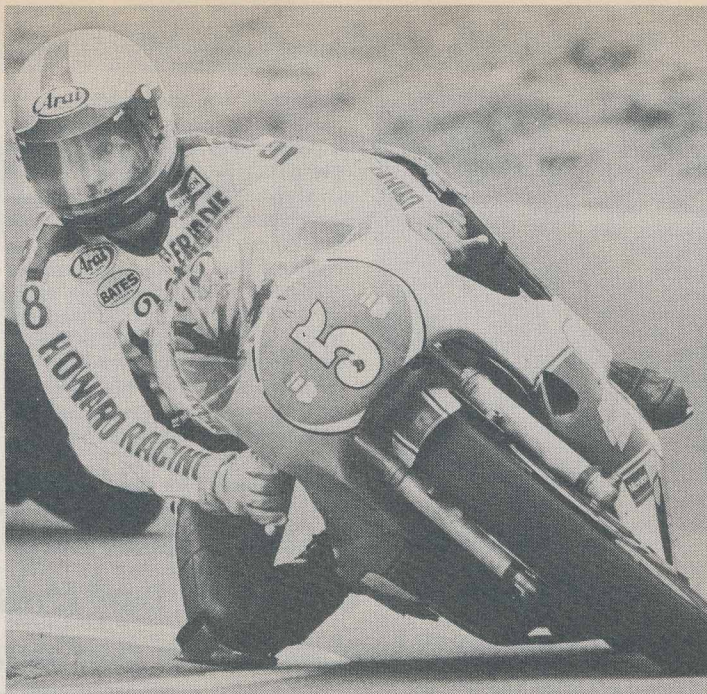
While Spencer rode solely for Honda in America in '81, Kanemoto worked for Barry Sheene at the grands prix and gained valuable experience for the following year's Honda GP effort with Spencer.

Spencer's first grand prix was almost as amazing as his first ride in Europe. At the Argentine GP he had a race-long battle with Roberts and Sheene for the lead, but finally finished third.

"That" said Spencer, "was when I realised that I could ride with Roberts at grand prix level."

Did beating Roberts then as he has done many times since, not seem a little sad, as King Kenny was the hero of his youth?

"If I still looked at things the same way as I did when I was twelve, yes. But it is a long time since I stood in the Huston astro-



Freddie Spencer made his European debut in the 1980 Transatlantic Trophy, riding an Erv Kanemoto-tuned Yamaha 750.

dome and wondered at his skill and determination."

After beating Roberts in three straight races at the beginning of the year, the 21-year-old had a 25-point lead over the three-times world champion. At no time though, right up to and including the last race at Imola, did Spen-

cer change his plan of attack. He always went out to win and to explain why he referred back to his school days.

"It was something I learned in high school basketball. If you are leading by thirty points, don't throw away the game plan that gave you the thirty-point lead."

Spencer may be the equal of Roberts when it comes to different race tactics and riding skills, but he could hardly be more different in his personality off the track. Always polite and friendly, he is genuinely pleased and almost surprised by the adulation and congratulations he receives. In fact he makes a conscious effort to maintain an even outlook on his success.

"I have been brought up with it, to a certain extent," says Spencer.

"Of course, here in Europe it is more intense but although I really appreciate all the fans and the press and everything, I try to make sure that I'm not overpowered by it. There comes a point when you have to stand back and not try and do too much. You cannot accommodate everything and if you try it becomes burdensome, an intrusion on your time, and you begin to resent it. I don't want to let that happen.

"I have the best of both worlds. I have the attention here and I can go home to a more normal life in Shreveport where people recognise me, but just say 'well done' or 'good luck' and leave it at that. That's why I go home all the time between races. I have been racing so long and I don't want to become stale. I want to be racing in Europe for a long time to come."

The loser . . .

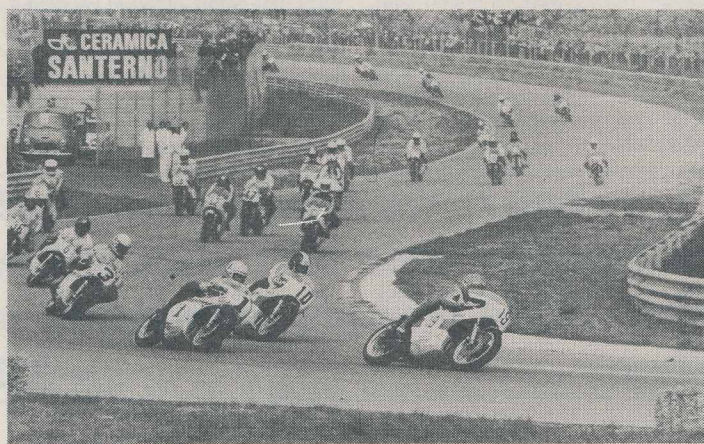
do things it didn't want to do. I've done that since, but not really pulled it off as well as I did then.

"I was very lucky to have Kel and Jan Carruthers around to show me where to go and what to do during the first couple of years. By 1980 I got used to it and began to like Europe. I think the competition has changed a bit since then. Spencer is so consistent. Honda certainly started this year ahead and I didn't think before the season that it would be so difficult for us to win. They had the advantage of starting the year with the power they needed and they could put all the development people on improving the reliability. If they had needed more power as well as reliability, we would have won the championship a long time ago."

Roberts considers that if he has had an advantage over Spencer this year it has been his, the machine's and the tyres' ability to be going as fast at the end of the race as at the beginning. "For instance Freddie only seems to test tyres for three laps and then pull in. Any tyre will go fast for three laps, I always do at least eight because I've got to see if it will last.

"Freddie goes so fast from the start that he cannot maintain the pace. I work up to it, making sure that I don't burn up all my concentration before the end. He is lucky

that he doesn't have a four-cylinder to lug around, if he did he'd be in even more trouble at the end of the race. The Honda doesn't have as much power as the Yamaha but it's easy to ride a slower, more manoeuvrable bike fast. The Yamaha definitely isn't manoeuvrable. Once it's committed to a line it stays on it.



The 1974 Imola 200 was Kenny Roberts' first race in Europe. He finished second to Giacomo Agostini. Here, Teuvo Lansivuori leads Agostini (10) and Roberts (1) on the first lap.

If something or someone gets in the way it's a real problem. Passing tail-enders is hard, that is why I ran off the track in Monza. The Honda can change direction quickly and so Freddie can get through traffic quicker."

The manoeuvrability of the Honda gave Spencer a big advan-

tage around the tight Anderstorp track, where the two had their now famous clash two corners from home. "I had given the race to Honda before we even got to Sweden, but I raced him all the way even though I hate the place. I wasn't upset that he won but I think he made a big mistake when we ran

never have allowed him to do it."

Going back to the manoeuvrability of the Honda, Roberts commented that if next year Honda had to build a four cylinder to keep up then Spencer would probably have to change his riding style.

"It has been a very close battle this year, a combination of the riders and the machines. Our bike is working well now and I think I am riding as well as ever, if I was in a frame of mind to go on next year it would be very interesting."

RACING HISTORY

1972: First senior years in USA Grand National championship, won first national of the year, Houston Short Track. Fourth in championship.

1973: Three nationals, including Short Track, Mile and Half Mile dirt tracks. Won AMA Grand National championship.

1974: Won six nationals, Mile, Short Track, TT Dirt Track and three road races at Road Atlanta, Laguna Seca and Tolledaga. Grand National champion.

1975: Won six nationals, TT, Short Track, Mile and Half Mile. Road races at Laguna Seca and Ontario. Second in championship to Gary Scott.

1976: Won four nationals, Short Track, two Half Miles and Riverside road race. Third in championship. Jay Springsteen number one.

1977: Won five nationals, all road races, at Charlotte, Loudon, and Riverside. Fourth in championship, Springsteen number one.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

1978: Four wins, Austria, France, Italy, England. World champion.

1979: Five wins, Austria, Italy, Spain, Yugoslavia, England. World champion.

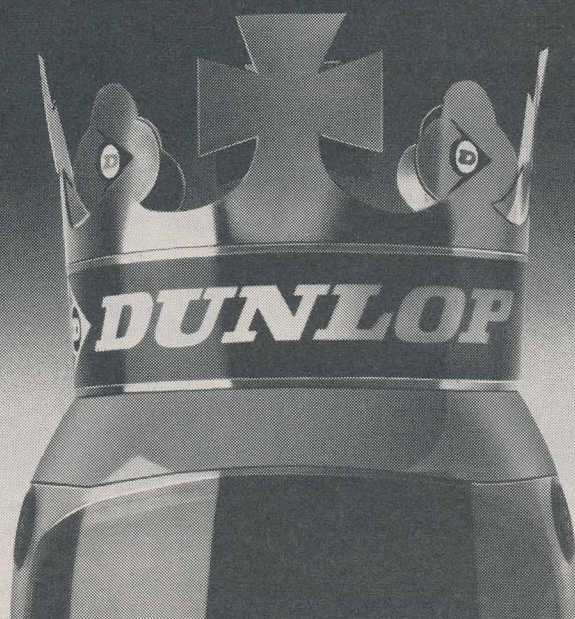
1980: Three wins, Italy, Spain, France. World champion.

1981: Two wins, Germany and Italy. Third in championship behind Marco Lucchinelli and Randy Mamola.

1982: Two wins, Argentina and Spain, fourth in world championship behind Franco Uncini, Graeme Crosby and Freddie Spencer.

1983: Six wins, Germany, Austria, Holland, Belgium, England, San Marino.

We're sure
the other riders
would like
to crown Kenny
as well.



New lap record 1m 53.36s. Average speed 160.056kph—99.457mph.

Congratulations to Kenny Roberts on winning the 500cc San Marino Grand Prix at Imola. Commiserations to the other riders. Maybe next year they should try using Dunlop tyres. 