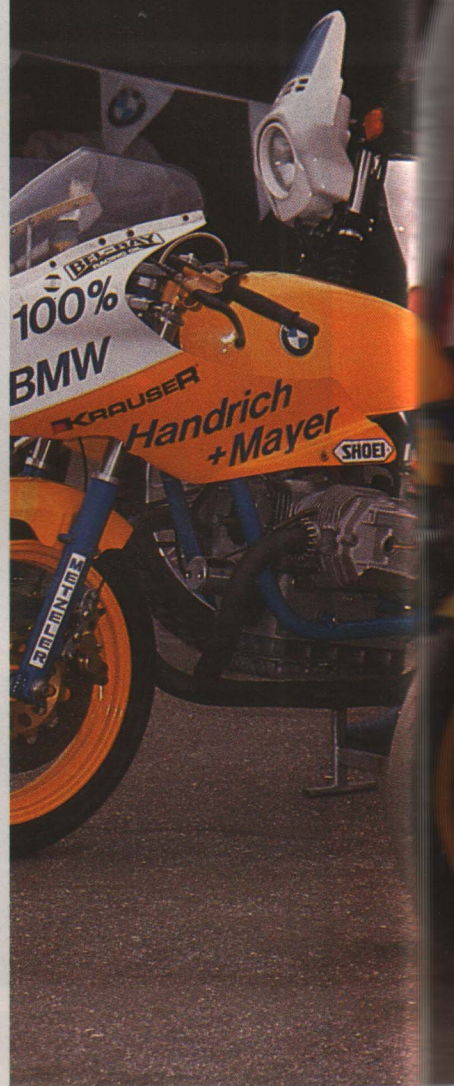


LESS CYLINDERS MORE RACING



Paul Lewis climbs back into his smile suit after narrowly not winning on the RS750 with the RS500 tail and Honda Superbike front end. Right: Team BMW came from Handrich and Mayer in Germany and AMS Fuji in Japan. One used a Krauser space frame, the others had a Japanese Beater and a jacked up BMW frame with paralever rear ends.



Armen Amirian and Patrick Gosling at Daytona

The promoters of the Daytona Motorcycle races like to refer to Bike Week as the World's Most Motorcycle Event. The town of Daytona calls itself "The World's Most Famous Beach". Whether or not one agrees with those two claims, it's hard to argue that the race marks the beginning of the new motorcycle season for many of the world's bikers.

After a year of hearing the politicians tell us the economy is faltering, the environmentalists say that the sky is falling, and the sages of the bike business report that the bike business is pushing up daisies, people needed something positive to uplift them. If Bike Week is any indication, this is going to be a great year for motorcycles. There were more entries in more classes than for a long time. The pits were bristling with new bikes and oddball specials from around the world. Riders from all over the U.S. as well as Canada, Australia, Japan, England, Germany, and many other countries gathered for races that have no international points to be won. The week started out on the right foot on Monday with tight Vintage racing and nice weather. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday were so cold and wet that many Harleys climbed back on their trailers and went home. Panic set in as tuners could not jet properly or test tires, and riders had only brief semi-soggy practice sessions after a long winter off. Friday the sun returned and the intensity of racing thawed out everyone's mid-week chills.

BIG BOOMERS

The Twins class came about when promoters realised that many race fans rode two cylinder European and American bikes and were not overly enamoured by Japanese multis. The plan seems to have worked, for the number of entries and fans for the big boomers far outranks their actual market share. The modified class can still be run by a part-time privateer. The top three placers were a Guzzi, a bevel drive Ducati and a belt drive Ducati.

The Pro-Twins class has become the unofficial tinkers class. No one can out-think, out-dollar, and out-build the factories in the Superbike class. And if you did one year, the odds are you couldn't keep it up for long. The Twins GP class offers an outlet for the

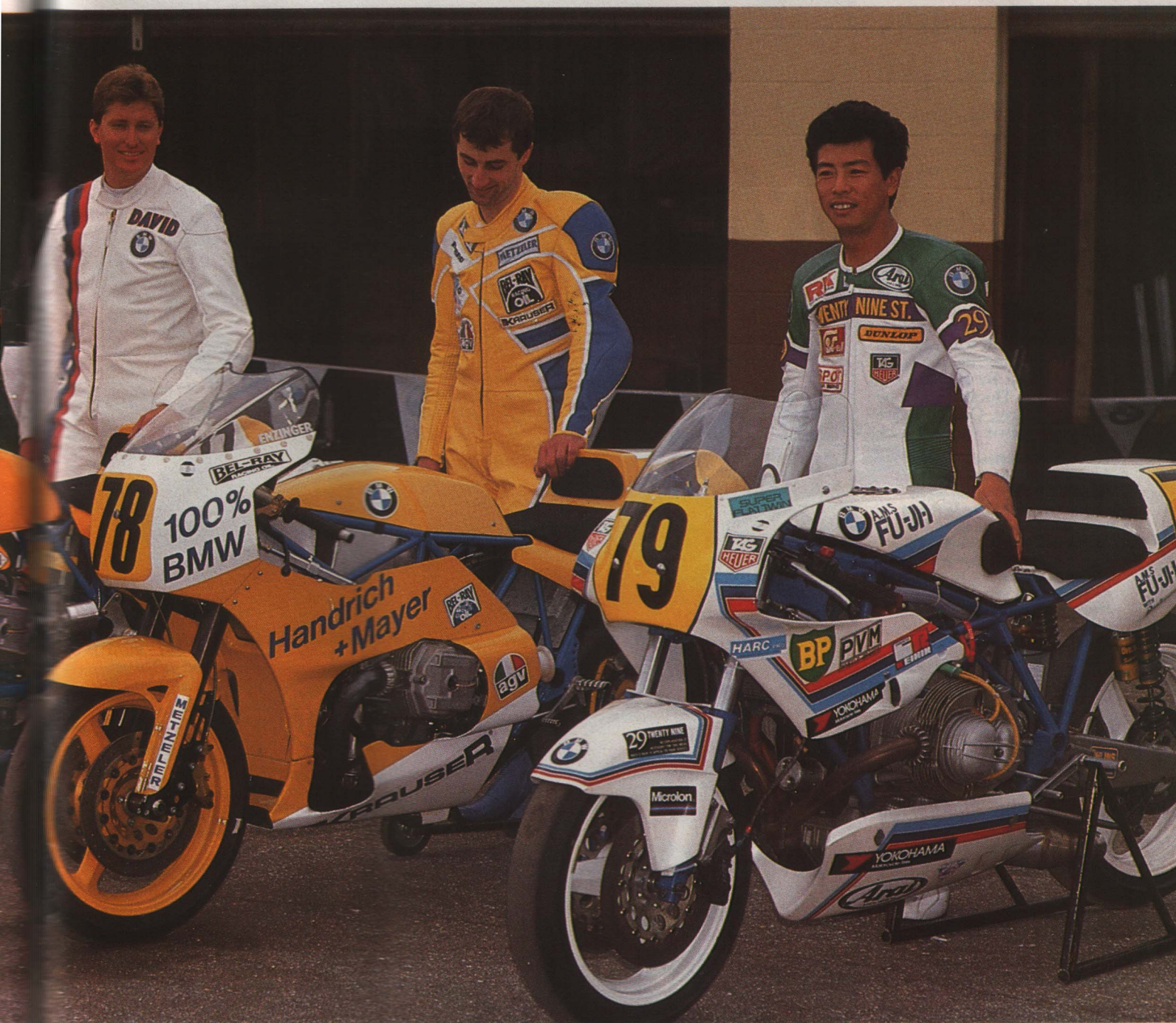
creative backyard mechanics and small shops.

TEUTONIC TWINS

For the first time since 1981, the BMW factory saw fit to bring a team over to contest the Twins race. Two bikes built by Handrich and Mayer in Germany and one bike from the AMS Fuji team in Japan were shipped over (complete with mechanics and spares), along with one German and one Japanese rider. David Emde, the fastest American to race a BMW in the last 10 years, was recruited to ride the second H+M bike. Reggie Pridmore, British ex-patriate and former BMW Superbike racer, was convinced to sign up as back-up rider should one be needed.

The Japanese entry placed 2nd in the 1988 BOTT races in Japan. Various Japanese go-fast

PERFORMANCE BIKES



bits were used such as a 41mm Yoshimura/Showa front end and brakes as well as 39mm CR carbs. An outfit named "Beater" built the tube space frame. The engine is a fairly stock 2-valve twin plug affair. Overall, the fabrication work and general attention to detail was exquisite. Ironically, the team cast an extra deep oil sump as well as welded on fin extensions on the heads to help keep the bike cool in the Daytona heat. By mid-week, when temperatures were in the low 40's (F), this began to look like a bad idea. However, race day did warm up quite a bit.

The H+H bikes both used heavily modified Krauser 4 Valve heads and roller cams. One machine used a braced up stock R100 frame while the other utilised a Krauser bird-cage (so named for it's use of short straight tubes) frame. All

three bikes used some from of Paralever rear. In qualifying, the H+H 4 valvers were faster than the Fujii bike.

Despite being down on power compared to the more modern engines in the class, the bikes finished 7, 10 and 11th.

A SPECIAL THAT WORKED

Martin Adams, a Kentucky real estate developer, bought an RS750 engine made in Japan, designed for use on the dirt tracks of America; recruited two American mechanics that work for Honda Racing Corp in California, commissioned a chrome moly frame in Wales; bought the rear end off of an RS500 GP bike; borrowed the front end from a Honda Superbike; and put Paul Lewis, an Australian rider

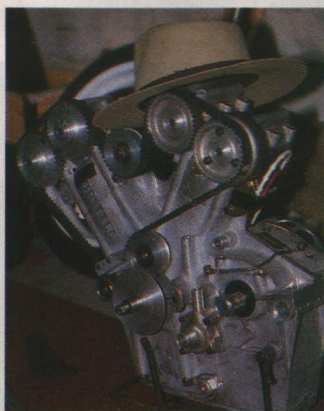


Reworked Krauser four-valve heads featured on the Pro Twins BMWs which finished 7th and 10th.

LESS CYLINDERS MORE RACING

on the whole conglomeration. The result was a beautiful, light, fast, bike that was ridden like the boogie man was chasing it. The effervescent Lewis changed from the Dr Jekyll keeper-of-the-biggest-smile-in-the-pits to a Mr Hyde road-racers-eat-their-young personality when he climbed on the Commonwealth racing twin. He took the lead in the Pro Twins GP class and held it until the last lap when he was passed by the immaculately prepared Fast By Ferracci 851 (now 888cc) Ducati ridden by Dale Quarterly. Once the race was over, Lewis climbed back

Below: the Britten carved from solid V-twin in a home-grown carbon fibre frame proved very fast but was not a very good conductor of electricity. Right: Dale Quarterly on the FBF 888 Ducati. Below right: Two RSC 600 Honda heads were joined to this Pantah bottom end only to suffer electrical problems.



into his smile suit and said that that was about the toughest Race of his life. Not bad when you consider he had an air-cooled, single cammed, carbureted bitsa up against the twin-cam, fuel injected, Desmodromic holder of the Pro Twins GP 1 plate. Now all the bike needs is a new rider, for Lewis is off to ride the World Superbike Series on an RC30.



AND A FEW THAT DIDN'T

Eli Schuss, Hollywood movie special effects man, hired Homer Knapp (ex-Team Honda Machinist Extraordinaire) to graft a set of Honda RSC 600 single Radial Four Valve Heads, barrels, and cylinders onto a Ducati Pantah

bottom end. The result was dubbed a "DUCONDA," and showed great promise, only to drop out with electrical gremlins.

Australia's Britten engineering came to Daytona with a home-made engine. Except for buying the trans and clutch out of GSXR Suzukis, and piston and valve blanks, the entire

engine was sand cast or machined by Britten. The water cooled, fuel injected, belt drive twin cam, 4 valve engine hung from a carbon fiber chassis and swingarm. The rear shock was mounted vertically in front of the engine, operated by a pullrod. Again, much potential, but out of the running when an electrical connector came loose.

PERFORMANCE BIKES

SUNDAY

All week long, many of the jaded purists walked about the pits claiming that the only real races of the week would be vintage and Pro-Twins. How wrong they were. John Kocinski, Kenny Roberts protege, came to Daytona with a 250 GP Yamaha to ride. Since he was in town anyway, he figured he'd ride the 600 Supersport. Starting from the last row (docked a lap in the heat race for a disagreement with an AMA official, therefore qualifying last), he blazed through the pack, passing early race leader Tom Stevens. Stevens crashed trying to play catch-up and Kocinski won the race by a margin of over 13 seconds. Yamaha should be pleased with their new 600s, for they captured 9 of the top 10 places.

It seemed that the only question about the 200 Mile Superbike race would be by how much Yoshimura Suzuki's Doug Polen would win. Qualifying first for the grid did nothing to disprove this theory. However, the track at Daytona has no favourite sons. Right from the green flag things started to happen. Yoshimura's Scott Russell, who qualified second, was run into on the starting grid so hard that his rear tire flattened. The bike was fixed and the race restarted. Polen did lead early on, only to drop out with a leaking oil cooler. Kathlene Coburn's amazing exploding Yamaha lubricated the entry to the chicane, causing 3 other riders to crash (unhurt). The racers were led around by a pace car for 4 laps while the mess was cleaned up. One by one, the pe-race favourites disappeared with all forms of mechanical



Above: Kocinski went from the back row to the front fairly successfully on his 600. **Left:** John Ashmead, surprised winner of the Superbike, passes the petrol resistance test. **Below:** Team Suzuki try not to spill any.

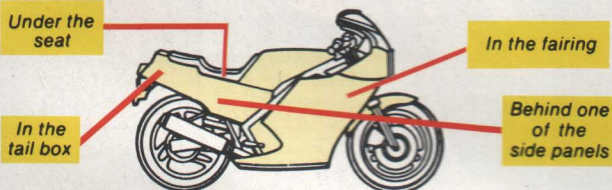


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LESS CYLINDERS MORE RACING

ills. By the later stages, Jamie James, the last of the Yoshimura wrecking crew, held the lead, only to come in for an emergency gas stop on the second to last lap handing the win to privateer John Ashmead (who thought he was battling for third) on Honda.

Suzuki should not feel too bad, for only 2 of the first 13 Superbike finishers were mounted on other brands. The man who many consider to be the greatest dirt track racer of all time, Jay Springsteen, finished 9th on a Yamaha. He has announced that this will be his last year racing on the dirt, but not his last year on pavement. Dale Quarterly held second place on his Ducati 851 for many laps, only to drip out when one of the pick-ups on the injection system failed. the Doug Chandler ridden/Rob Muzzy (the man who built Lawson and Rainey's Superbike winners) tuned Kawasaki was considered a dark horse favourite, but the flu sidelined Chandler. Considering that a sick Chandler on a bike that Muzzy only had to work on for a month came in 4th in the 750 supersport, it's a fair bet that the Kawasaki Superbike will be a force to be reckoned with this year.

Dr John's Guzzi came to Daytona with new heads and pistons, titanium rods, revised valve gear, Weber fuel injection

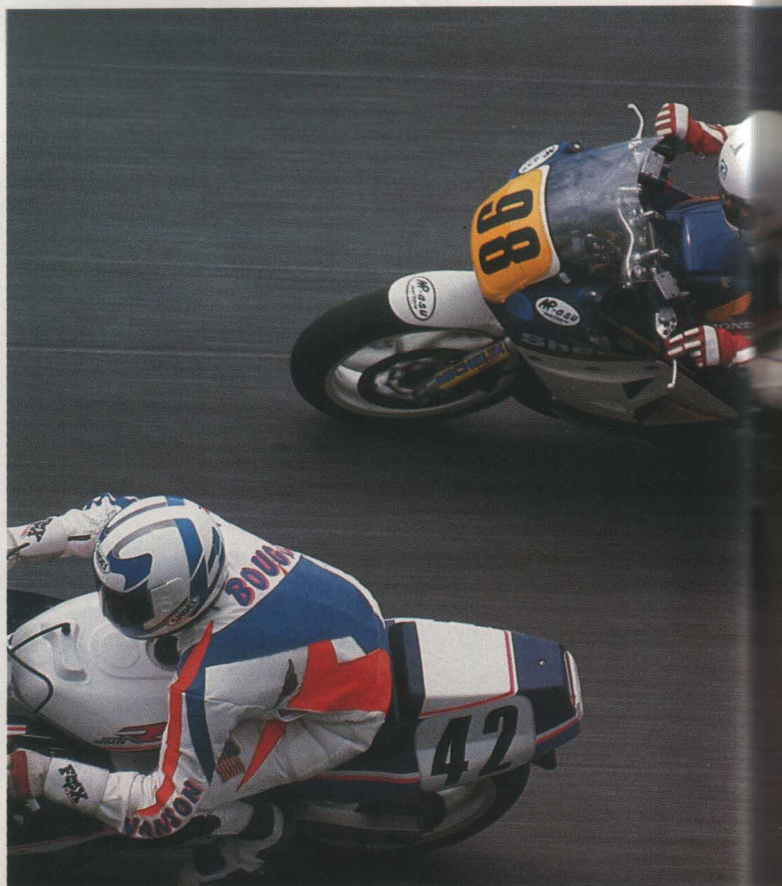
with 52mm throttle bodies, and new bodywork. In the Pro Twins GP race, the new fairing collapsed inward at the front, limiting the movement of the front wheel to about an inch. Doug Brauneck fought the semi-rigid front end for a few laps, only to have the motor retire when a timing belt tried to consume a pebble and broke. The Fast By Ferracci 851 Ducati Pro-Twins ran and looked beautiful. Their Superbike entry was another matter. Getting the bike only the Friday before the race, all the team could do was a minor check-over. It was determined that last year's Twins engine was faster than the new factory Superbike engine, so the motors were swapped after Friday's Twins race.

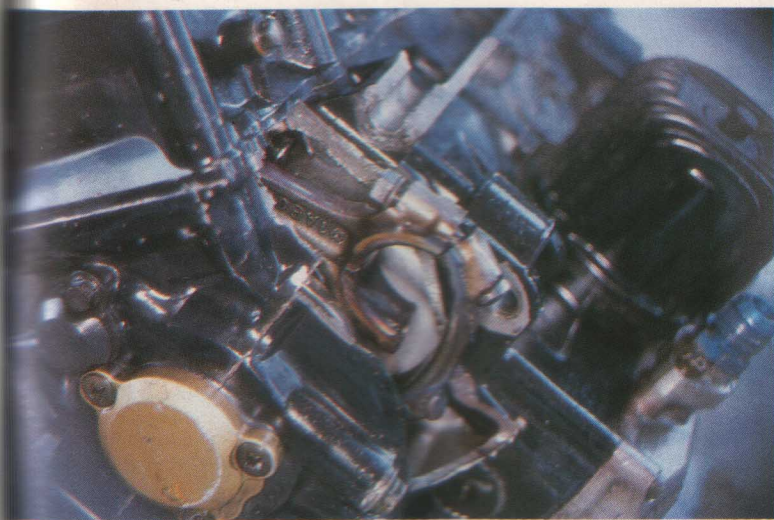
250 GP

John Kocinski proved that his #1 plate was no fluke last year, winning the 250 GP with a margin of 43 seconds. Earlier in the week, he was overheard describing the art of fairing bashing. "You've got to pull up beside the guy and wait till your front wheel is ahead of their footpeg, and knife 'em. Hit too early and you don't have the leverage and you fall." If you say so . . .

FAST FEMS

Suzanne Brightbill, the only American woman contesting the entire '89 US Superbike series, got her immaculate GSXR750 on the last row of the superbike grid. She managed to pass a few riders, but by the 15th lap she was out with a





Let a girlie borrow your FZ and see what happens.



The Racing Reverend made several appearances, including this one.



Pics: Patrick Gosling

dead clutch.

"The Fastest Female Superbike Team," as Canadians Kathlene Coburn and Toni Sharpless refer to themselves, arrived in Daytona without bikes to ride. Toni found a team with a 600 Hurricane that had run the endurance race the previous weekend, but had not entered (which she did) the 600 supersport. Rain limited practice and made correct jetting impossible. Nonetheless, she finished the race, placing 51st in a field of 80.

Rich Delgato, who had broken his collarbone in practice, lent his FZ750 Yamaha to Kathleen. Despite being way down on power, Kathleen qualified mid-pack. On the fourth lap of the race, the #4 connecting rod decided to step out for a bit of fresh air, ending her ride.

The only top 5 female finisher of the week was Maria Batsleer who placed 4th riding an Indian in the pre-1940 vintage class.

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