

ISSUE No8 £2.60

# Supermoto Magazine™

Mar/April 2003

## Factory Rep!



## & Emily!

- CCM R30 2003
- Husaberg 650e
- Suzuki D-RG500!

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# Taxed & Tested

**W**ere you one of the 7000+ supermoto-fans at the Donington finals of this year's Winter Series? If not, why not? Okay to the hardened SM race-fan the circuit layout may not have been ideal, but for Joe Public the weekend's sideways shenanigans really brought the sport to the fore. For me the really interesting thing about the Donington event was not the pit lane full of tuned race tackle, but the sheer number of street-motos in the car park.



Jeez, I've never seen so many motards sporting tax discs - some of them still in date! So that's where all of the road-legal SM bikes have been hiding up till now. But the way I see it, the rapid growth of the supermoto market throws up its own problems. For instance, unless you are actually competing on your bike at the weekend, just what do you actually do with it? Apart from wheelies, stoppies and hunting down other bikes in the twisties? What we need are more road-biased activities, whether it be unofficial clubs, track-days, ride-outs, holidays or simply more dealer supported events. Undoubtedly these are beginning to happen - we know of one London dealer who regularly runs Friday night ride-outs for his customers (after a BBQ at the showroom), down to the infamous Chelsea Bridge. And SM riding holidays both at home and abroad are beginning to appear within the pages of this very magazine.

And whilst supermoto is undoubtedly a rebellious, dirt-influenced culture which owes its roots to the racing scene, we will be trying our best to include as much street-life as we can cram into the mag. We'll also try to bring you features on the cheaper way to enjoy SM, whilst still featuring the latest tricked up 'Factory' tackle. Hey it's a tough job...

The point being of course that supermoto is a very broad church. Racing is important but the real numbers are in the street scene. So come on guys (and gurls), tell us what you've been up to on your supermotos. Send us in pictures of your bikes and your lifestyle (the ruder the better, obviously). Write to us and tell us what you want to see within SMM, you never know we may decide to feature you and your bike within these hallowed pages. The sport is growing fast but it's the whole scene which matters. If you care about it as passionately as we do, you'll want to tell people about exactly what it is that spins your crank.

Donington proved one thing, that in sheer weight of numbers supermoto is getting too big to be ignored. And think about it; there isn't another form of motorcycling in which the people that do it - that's you and us - have so much control. From building our own bikes to doing with them just what we want, how we want. Now that's the kind of freedom that the average sportsbike owner won't even be aware he's missing out on, simply because he doesn't know any better. But maybe soon, he will. The word is out there and spreading fast - supermoto rocks. We've known it for a long time. And now it seems everybody else is waking up to it, too...

**See you out there:  
Dave 'Clairvoyant' Cornish**

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# RETRO- Spective

**The first in a series of blasts from the past. Chris Evans reminisces over a sexy French SM...**

**W**hen road registered supermotard bikes first started to get popular in France in the early '90s, this RG500-engined DR Big was without doubt the meanest machine on the streets. I first saw it lurking around a west Parisian dealers, Suzuki La Defence, where I used to get my DR350 fixed, and

I have to admit that from a distance it looked so 'production' that I didn't immediately clock exactly how trick it was. A closer look however quickly established that it had been built with the most fantastic attention to detail.

When I finally plucked up the courage to enquire further about the bike (and of course ask if I could have a ride), I discovered that it had been built by a mechanic called Michel who

worked there, and who in a previous life had been responsible for building Suzuki France's hugely successful endurance racing bikes. That explained the quality of construction but also gave a clue as to its purpose. Remember, this was the epoch when top road racers were taking on the cream of off-road talent in the extremely prestigious, annual Guidon d'Or. And apparently the bike had been built with the idea of it being leant to a

top American rider - Kevin Schwantz was mentioned in hushed tones.

Whether Mr Schwantz had ever been consulted I never found out, but I do know that in the end the bike was never ridden in anger around a racetrack. Instead it remained the property of Michel who used it to commute to work and to pop

*'It had been built by a mechanic for the extremely prestigious Guidon d'Or race...'*

down to the local boulangerie for a baguette or two. Whether it would have been any good on a closed circuit I'm not really qualified to say (though I suspect not), but having had a brief spin on it I have to say that as the ultimate round-town pose it had few peers. The engine hadn't been tuned in any way

DR Big Attitude. Back in the days when you could still buy a two-stroke roadbike, Suzuki's square-four RG500 mill provided the motorvation for a very unusual French SM special...



STORY: CHRIS EVANS; PICS: AUSTIN MILLER





## RETRO-Spective

Multiple spansies are a dead-giveaway that something special lurks in the DR Big's engine room...



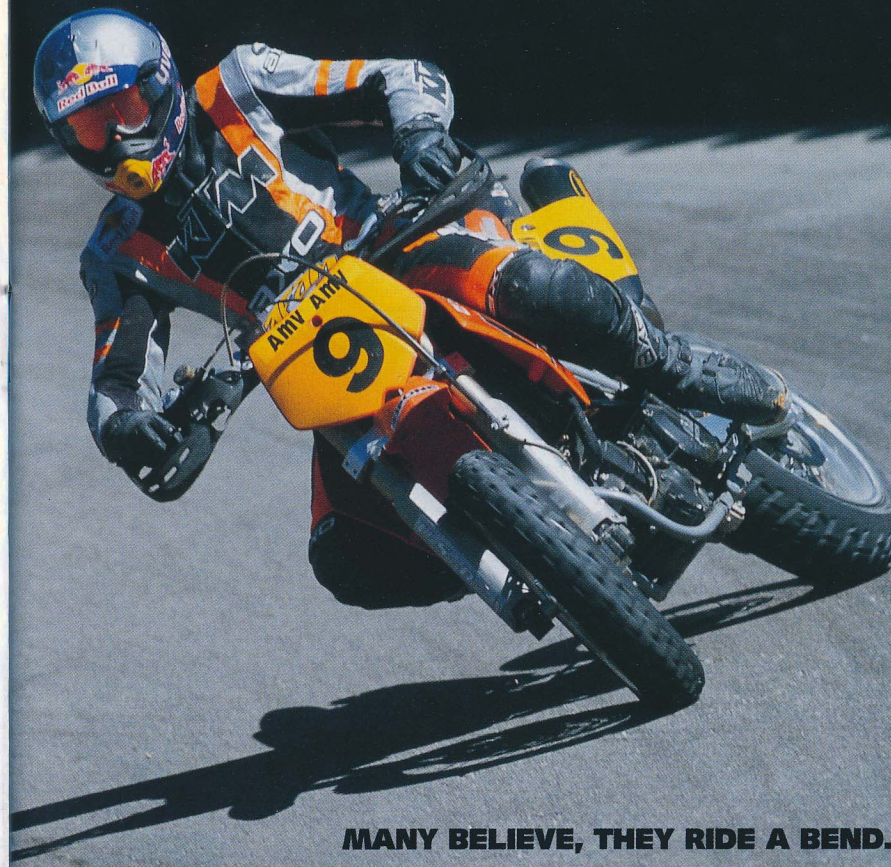
and it was therefore surprisingly rideable at low revs. Hit the power band though and it was a whole different story..!

Much as I enjoyed my brief ride, what I really loved about the bike was its street sleeper looks. Admittedly the four spansies hanging out the back were hard to miss, and the bulk of the engine gave it

a certain muscular presence, but the fact that Michel had opted to keep the original colour scheme simply added to the bike's appeal. The other thing I loved was the obvious care that had gone into building the thing. Like all gifted mechanics, when Michel talked about the bike he gave the impression that it had been a doddle to knock together.

He claimed, for example, that getting the engine to fit wasn't remotely complicated at all and was achieved with the simple expedient of cutting the frame in two and adding some slightly longer frame tubes. Except that you could only see the join if you looked extremely closely and that the fit and finish of every single part was of a similar high standard.

What has become of the bike now I have absolutely no idea, but I do know that the bar we used as a backdrop for the photos was knocked down very shortly afterwards. At the time I didn't even know how appropriately it was named. Roughly translated in English 'Au Quart du Tour' means 'off like a rocket'...



**MANY BELIEVE, THEY RIDE A BEND. FEW DO IT.**

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