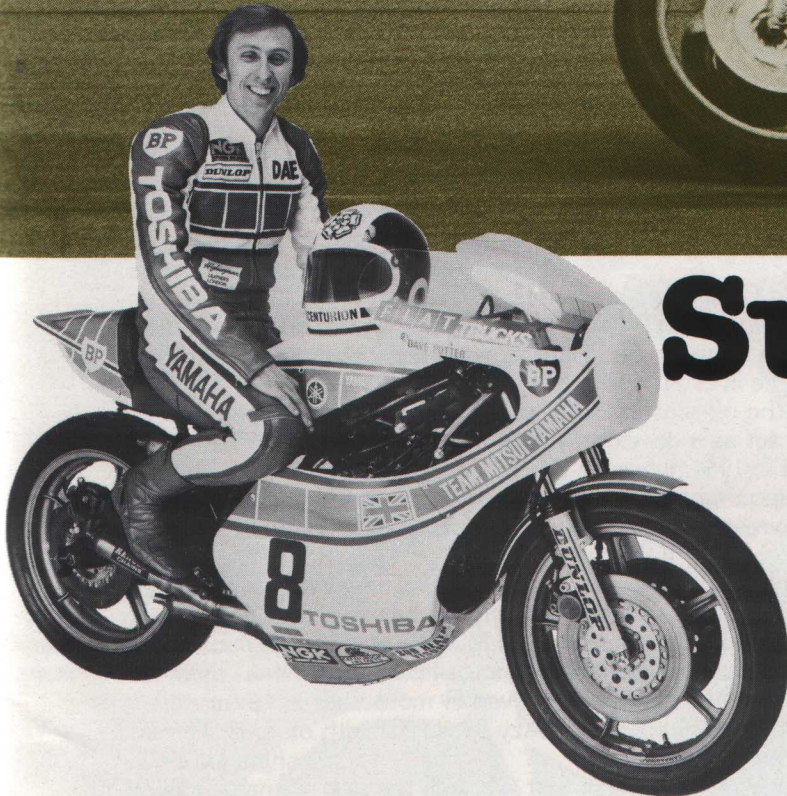
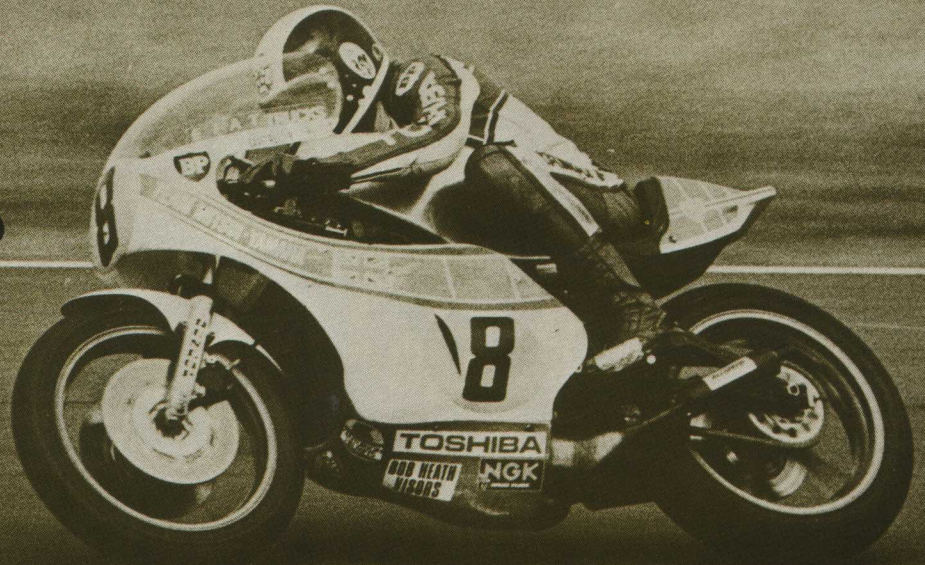


Dave Potter



Superbike Champ

The most prestigious Championship series in British road racing is the MCN Superbike Series, sponsored by big-selling British newspaper "Motor Cycle News" and the Duckhams Oil Company. Over the season it features rounds at all the major English racetracks - Brands Hatch, Mallory Park, Oulton Park, Snetterton, Donington, Scarborough and Cadwell Park - and attracts top international stars from the British ranks.

In past years the series has been the almost-exclusive property of Barry Sheene and his Suzuki....but 1979 was a Yamaha year.

Thanks to likeable rider Dave Potter and engine-builder Ted Broad, the Team Mitsui Yamaha 750 swept the title up in storybook fashionPotter caught and passed his closest rival on the last bend of the last lap of the last race of the series!

Even more incredible is the fact that Potter rode the whole season with a broken collar-bone pinned in place. Only after he had clinched the title did he go to hospital to have the bone properly set and the pins removed. Dave broke the collar bone in the very first race of the season, when he unavoidably hit a fallen rider at Donington Park. The doctor who treated Dave knew that he was a professional racer and gave him the choice of an immediate pinning operation or six weeks out of action for the bone to heal in the natural way.

A professional racer needs to race to earn a living, so Dave naturally chose the pinning operation. He missed the first round of the Superbike Series but just ten days after the operation was in the saddle for the TransAtlantic Trophy Series. Critics said he never should have been riding so quickly but he confounded them by being the second-best scorer on the eight-man British squad that got a drubbing at the hands of the Americans.

Then came Crash Number Two. While dicing with Ron Haslam, his season-long rival in the Superbike Series, Dave hit a patch of water at Oulton Park and slid off. One of the three pins holding his collar-bone together broke loose and it was back to hospital again ... this time for the insertion of a bracing plate and four holding screws! Throughout the season the collar-bone aggravated Dave, and more crashes at Cadwell Park, Silverstone and Sugo, Japan didn't help. Despite all this, however, he managed to pile up enough points in the series to pull level with Ron Haslam with just one round to go.

The final round was at Brands Hatch ... and everything hinged upon it. Potter sat in Haslam's slipstream for most of the event, riding a tactical race, assessing where his rival was slower than he, and vice versa.

"With six laps to go I knew that I would have to do it on the last lap" said Dave. "The shoulder was hurting me and I didn't feel that I could handle the pressure if I went by him earlier and then had to fight to hold him off. I just had to surprise him on the last lap.

"I knew that he was slower than I was out of the last corner so I decided that had to be the place. If I got him there, he wouldn't have a chance to get back. It was all or nothing".

"Get him" Dave did ... he took a tighter line than Ron, squeezed by him and cut him off from his faster exit line.

Dave shot across the finish line less than a bike's length ahead! A spectacular finish to a spectacular season-long battle between two of Britain's best.