

India's First Two-Wheeler Magazine!

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# BIKE

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INDIA

POSTER  
NORIYUKI HAGA  
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## MANIAC MACHINE

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is Go...

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MACHISMO  
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New Bullet



NEO BEGINNING!  
TVS HEADS TO INDONESIA

Adil Jal Darukhanawala

## Cagiva finally finds an Indian ally in Kinetic Engineering

The news that Italian bike maker Cagiva has contracted Kinetic Engineering Ltd. to make parts for its range of bikes and then upped it to make complete bikes is a welcome one for the Indian motorcycle industry. It is also great that a famous name like Kinetic Engineering Ltd. should get this contract from a high profile European bike maker.

It however isn't that difficult to understand why because keeping the high European production costs to one side, Kinetic's recent moves with Italjet (where it bought the design rights to some six or seven Italjet scooters) and also its previous tie-up with Piaggio for the Luna moped

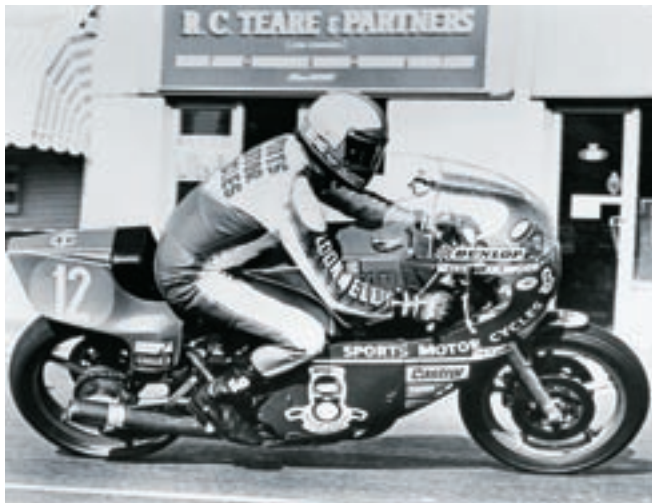
and latterly with engine maker Motori Morini has made it fairly well respected in the land of Lamborghini and M V Agusta.

Speaking of M V Agusta, KEL first got orders for some components from Cagiva for its range of M V Agustas and from here there was no turning back. It is also a measure of how well KEL has progressed on the quality front given its previous track record that bodes well for the company's future orders.

The amazing thing about the tie-up is that some years ago, Cagiva came close to tying up with KEL's bigger neighbour in the Chinchwad - Akurdi industrial area in Pune - Bajaj Auto. Cagiva and Bajaj

Auto had discussed ways and means to co-operate and had in fact even lined up a slew of scooters which the Indian giant would have made for export as well as for the domestic market. However with the bottom falling off the Italian scooter market and Bajaj acquiring critical strength in technological matters and production techniques, the Cagiva deal was put off.

It now remains to be seen as to how the Cagiva - Kinetic deal pans out and whether the Indian company will try to do an Italjet with Cagiva. And yes one other thing, especially for Kinetic Engineering: from mopeds to superbikes, it has been a momentous run. Hope it runs long and strong.



## HAILWOOD'S NCR DUCATI

Everyone from my generation who has followed top flight motorcycle sport will know that it was a Ducati 750 Desmo with which the great Mike Hailwood returned to the Isle of Man TT and made mincemeat of the works Hondas in the F1 TT race.

Unfortunately not many give credit to the small team which built that Ducati which was entered for Hailwood by the British importer Sports Motorcycles. In fact even I was unaware as to the exact details of who had built the red and green machine with which Mike rewrote the history books and thrashed the top riders half his age. Until the last month that is when we got in touch with Michele Poggipolini of the Poggipolini Group who own NCR Factory. In the course of our interactions on the Ducati-based Millona One Shot racer, Michele enlightened us as to the founding fathers of NCR Factory were the ones who built Mike 'The Bike' Hailwood's TT mount and that with this success they became better known. And the rest, as they say is history.

## INDIAN BIKE SPORT: WHY WE HAVEN'T GOT FAR

As you must have made out from the opening page of this month's issue of the magazine, we have tried to drum up some enthusiasm for our road test editor's honour at being invited to ride in the Centenary TT at the Isle of Man. Aspi Bhathena has been scheduled to ride in the Past Masters Lap of Honour at the 100th running of this great festival of speed on two-wheels and also in the Champions Classic Parade thanks to his being the only Indian ever to have figured on the leader board of those who have competed and come back with a bronze replica.

Aspi gained his bronze replica after his stunning ride on the Bill Smith Motors prepared Honda NSR250 in the 1987 250cc Production TT and that I believe remains the pinnacle of any Indian rider in bike sport to date.

Of course we did have the likes of Sherif Dyan race in Sri Lanka, Singapore and

Malaysia as also the brothers Raja and Raju who were truly great riders. In fact their duels with Aspi at Sholavaram and Sriperambudur are the stuff of legends.

So why didn't the likes of Aspi, Raja, Raju and many others didn't go far in international bike sport? Today we have a few Indians racing in support classes in Malaysia on steps thrus and Super Sport machines but that I believe is through their own endeavour. It amazes me that countries like China, Thailand and Malaysia have begun to get their youngsters into the 125cc and 250cc Grand Prix races and we with the second largest bike market in the world have been unable to put in place a support system for our budding riders to make it to the international level.

There are many reasons but the most important of them all is that our national federation is so chock-a-block with the car-wallahs that the bikers are marginalised.

In fact much of the federations' revenue is generated by the bikers but it is the car guys who decide policy for them, make rules as well on certain occasions for them.

Our clubs have to shoulder some of the blame as well. None of them has been able to look beyond their own events and turf. If it were left to a few like minded individuals, we could have had classes for scooters and mopeds proliferate, make production racing lucrative and easy for any and everyone to enter and try and reward, nay defray the costs of as many budding racers as possible.

Take China which has placed a handful of riders in the 125cc GP class. The Chinese federation has picked a leaf from its Spanish and Italian counterparts and invested in bikes and technical support for their riders and made them go through the grind. If you don't invest you don't reap. Sadly the Indian federation doesn't believe, or even worse, doesn't know, this fact of life.

# MILLONA ONE SHOT

Floats like a butterfly, stings like a bee, best describes this Italian dazzler by the NCR Factory. Lighter than a CBR125 yet quicker than a Fireblade, it is the ultimate track tool. And looks mighty tasty too!

Story Adil Jal Darukhanawala  
Photography NCR Factory



What you are looking at is not just the ultimate drool tool but also one of the hottest bikes created expressly for fun on the run, or to put things bluntly in focus, a proper track day bike. And while to many it might look like a Ducati conversion, it is more than that because just like a Bimota it is also a specialist approach, rather one with even more exclusivity and boasting high tech in its complete make-up.

This Ducati-engined bike is the NCR Millona dreamed up by the long-established Italian tuning firm NCR Factory based in Ducati's hometown of Bologna itself. Part of the high tech Poggipolini Group headed by Michele Poggipolini, the firm has been established since the mid 1970s and its first major success came courtesy Mike 'The Bike' Hailwood who rode the Ducati Desmo made by NCR Factory and entered by Sports Motorcycle in the 1978 F1 TT. From then on NCR hasn't looked back and it has made a run of stunning bepsoke motorcycles since then which have not only caught the eye but have also been very effective tools for those involved in the sport and for those who love to use a thoroughbred for road as well as track use.

The 2006 NCR Millona was the bike to beat in the 2006 Ducati Desmo Challenge and also the Italian Supertwins Championship. Last year it went on to take 20 wins out of 25 races in Italy and completely annihilated its rivals. And this year it is



on song to do the deed once again thanks to the 2007 version being even lighter and more powerful. In fact NCR says that the new full blown Millona One Shot (a rather ridiculous name for a glorious motorcycle) has a 20 per cent better power to weight ratio than a Honda Fireblade! The bike tips the scales at 118kg dry - some 49 kilos less than the latest ZX-6R to put things into perspective and with

carbonfibre bodywork penned by Aldo Drudi (Know him but can't place him? He's the one who does Valentino Rossi's helmets) the Millona One Shot positively oozes with goodies galore. Beginning with the frame which is a special trellis job conjured up by NCR Factory, it comes with a custom-built, machined-from-solid aluminium Mupo shock which is the holy grail as far as

adjustability is concerned with high/low speed damping tweaks built in. The substantial swingarm is a unique handcrafted device and a veritable work of art in high grade aluminium once again. NCR offers two versions of the Millona as far as the chassis frame goes: the first one has a trellis made from humble chrome-moly tubing while the second option is a special aluminium tube frame which pegs chassis weight down to just 3.9 kilos! The bike packs in Brembo superbike brakes an Ohlins upside down front forks. The designers have made for the steering angle to be adjusted and the bike's 17 inch magnesium wheels come shod with 120/70 rubber up front and 190/55 R17 at the rear. The 2 into 1 into 2 exhaust system, made from titanium is another great detail and if you can care to see the slipper clutch cover and the solo race seat plus that superb fairing, the Millona oozes class through and through.

The bike employs the two-valve Ducati Desmo motor but it has been totally worked upon by NCR Factory which has replaced the internals with its own pistons, barrels, valves and con rods to up capacity to 1200cc and peak power to hit 121bhp. This now means that the power to weight ratio is a mean 1.02bhp per kilogram. Eat your heart out all you Honda Fireblade freakos who can only get to 0.95bhp per kg. The bike comes complete with inbuilt datalogging gear and has that race winning edge and feel to it.

A work of two-wheeled art like the NCR Millona doesn't come cheap though. The basic Millona S and the Millona R come with the chrome moly frame and the Ducati 1000DS engine but the full blown Millona One Shot depicted on these pages gets the special NCR Factory motor upped to 1200cc and that lightweight aluminium frame plus the all adjustability in the steering, and suspension. Dripping with titanium, magnesium and carbon fibre, the Millona One Shot, like all NCR Factory products is handcrafted to order.

Interested but don't know who to ask? Write in to NCR's Michele Poggipolini (this fine bloke's on [m.poggipolini@ncrfactory.com](mailto:m.poggipolini@ncrfactory.com)) and he will be able to quote you a huge figure sans customs and shipping. If the Millona One Shot's killer looks don't get you, its price surely will! Prepare to be stunned! **BIKE**

## WINNING SOUND OF THUNDER



If you do not race a bike made specifically for track operation then you are wasting it, we think. Seems the NCR Factory and its customers follow this same dictum and unlike many others who mollycoddle their exotic machinery, the Millonas have been thrashed on the race tracks and they have emerged triumphant.

This year, the NCR Factory's Walter Bartolini (above) took a great win astride the works Millona One Shot in the Sound of Thunder event during Daytona Bike Week in March. Walter Bartolini, the lead rider for NCR Corse was the most successful race in the Italian Ducati Challenge last season, winning six of the seven races he entered on the Millona One Shot.

Seems NCR Racing's DNA from the Hailwood Desmo of 1978 remains unrestrained and pure to this very day. Forza NCR Ducati!

