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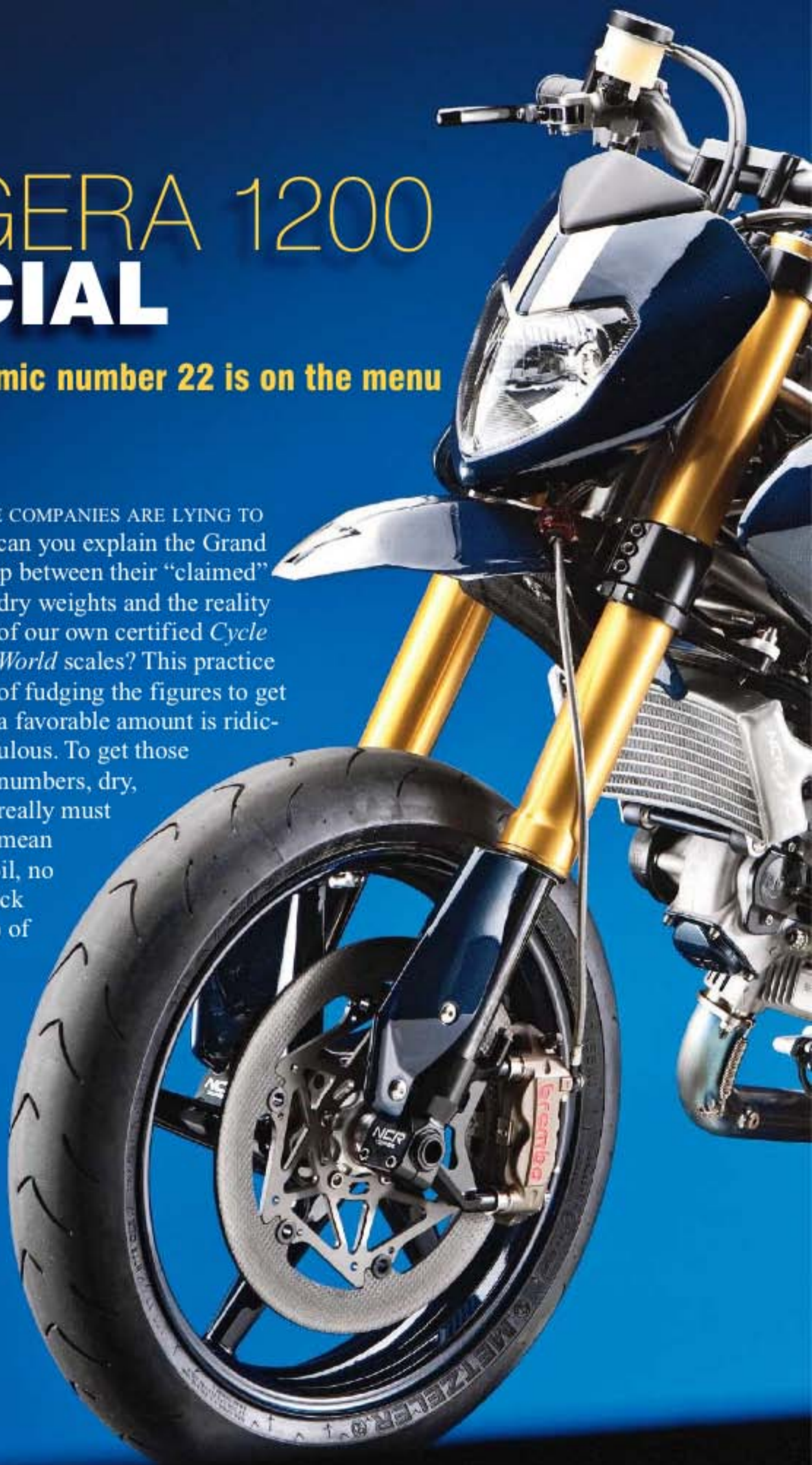
# NCR LEGGERA 1200 SPECIAL

**Eating Lite: Atomic number 22 is on the menu**

BY BLAKE CONNER

**B**IG MOTORCYCLE COMPANIES ARE LYING TO you. How else can you explain the Grand Canyon-like gap between their “claimed” dry weights and the reality of our own certified *Cycle World* scales? This practice of fudging the figures to get a favorable amount is ridiculous. To get those numbers, dry, really must mean

*dry*—like no fuel, no oil, no coolant, no fork or shock oil and not even a drop of battery acid.











**Shark-like teeth on the titanium footpegs will hopefully keep your feet from slipping. Fine finishes abound on the Leggera.**

One company that shoots straight and hits the target time and again is Italy's NCR. Back in 1967, when the company was born in Borgo Panigale, it got its start turning production Ducatis into over-the-top racing works of art. NCR's belief that everything can be improved upon, made lighter and pack more performance rings as true today as when Mike Hailwood rode a Ducati 900 NCR to victory in the 1978 Formula One World Championship at the Isle of Man.

If there is one thing that defines NCR it is weight, specifically the lack thereof. When your company is tied at the hip to the Poggipolini Group—specialists in components and fasteners

made from exotic metals such as titanium, magnesium and aeronautics-grade aluminum for Formula One and MotoGP racing—"light" is the mandatory mantra.

Someone, somewhere, always has to push the limits. Thankfully that's the case over the course of human history, or we'd still be beating our dinner over the head with a big stick and eating it raw. So when we rolled this \$140,000 "customized" NCR Leggera 1200 Special (which once, in a land far away, used to be a Ducati Hypermotard) onto the *CW* scales with NCR principal Joe Ippoliti looking on, it came as a surprise only to *us* that the street-legal machine regis-





**Öhlins 46mm fork with Ti-nitride coating and NCR Corse billet bottoms are held by NCR triple-clamps made from "avionic" aluminum. Öhlins shock features NCR Corse valving.**

tered a feathery 295 pounds! The dry weight for the already ridiculously waiflike standard Leggera 1200 reads 347 lb. on the specification sheet. Considering that latter figure is 73 lb. less than our last Ducati Hypermotard S test unit, it's almost inconceivable how NCR pared another 52 lb. from the machine you see here.

Ippoliti describes the necessary efforts to reduce this Leggera 1200-based



machine to the absolute limit of lightness: "The major difference is that every single bracket, every holder and every bolt on this Leggera is titanium, including the shock-mount bolts. The swingarm is constructed from machined billet, sheet and gussets in Grade 9 titanium [alloyed with 3 percent aluminum and 2.5 percent vanadium]. The swingarm alone required 23 jigs to assemble and then weld together and is very difficult to work with due to the material's hardness."

Extreme measures had to be taken to shed 125 lb. from what in stock form is already lightweight. The billet Ti sidestand shaves 2.2 lb. alone. Using a single ceramic-carbon Brake Tech disc up front was made possible by the bike's low weight and the Monobloc Brembo's powerful bite. Custom c-f BST wheels further lower weight, unsprung especially.

Carbon-fiber bodywork with an altered tailsection and front fender features a clearcoat tinted to produce an amazing blue hue, while allowing the weave's beauty to peek through. A Schedoni Alacantara seat has accommodations for a passenger hidden under the rear cowl.

Riding the Leggera on the street was nerve-wracking at first; I didn't want to wad up this Porsche Turbo-priced beauty. But with a power-to-weight ratio better than that of most current liter-class repli-racers (other than the BMW S1000RR or Ducati 1198 S Corse), it was impossible to restrain myself from riding it hard, especially after I figured out that it was ridiculously easy to pull wheelies in any

**Details like this titanium gas cap are simply amazing and a part of the reason NCR was able to shed 125 pounds from the weight of a stock Ducati Hypermotard.**

of the first four gears. When told of my immature behavior, Ippoliti just smiled. He clearly knows what a bike like this is for.

You don't charge \$140 Large for a motorcycle without hot-rodding the hell out of the spinning bits. NCR starts with a billet stroker crank and then casts new cylinders to accommodate the 102mm, high-compression Pistal pistons that are attached to billet titanium connecting rods; everything is balanced and blueprinted, of course. NCR race cams, titanium valves, Ducati superbike alternator, magnesium engine covers and c-f valve covers contribute to an engine that is 26.4-lb. lighter than stock.

A curved oil cooler provides significantly more cooling capacity than the stocker, which is necessary because this bike makes 110.2 hp and 85.2 ft.-lb. of torque, 30 and 16 more, respectively, than the showroom-stock Hyper. Capping the 45mm-diameter Zard titanium headers, the shorty MotoGP-style megaphone blares a loud soundtrack.

If NCR is an air-cooled artist, then this Leggera 1200 Special is one of the company's true masterpieces. And if you think, like I did, that there can't possibly be a market for bikes such as this, then you, too, are mistaken. NCR moves around 15 of the \$76K Leggera "base" models a year. My God, people, where did I go wrong?! □



# NCRMILLONA16

A carbon and titanium beauty based on a Ducati Desmosedici, but offering so much more (and less)

BY JOHN BURNS

**G**iorgio Nepoti and Rino Caracchi started something special when they formed NCR and turned out their first Ducati special more than 40 years ago, an excellent tradition that lives on in the form of the amazing new NCR Millona 16. Acquired by the Poggipolini Group in 2001, NCR continues the work of turning out beautiful, hand-built motorcycles packed with the finest components and workmanship. NCR's right down the street from Ducati, in San Lazzaro di Savena—and you can almost picture the lunch that led to the Millona 16: Say, what you gonna do with all those Desmosedici motors you got lying around? Dunno. Take one! And pass the breadsticks...

When it comes to an engine like this desmodromic V-Four, less bodywork is more: The M16's abbreviated carbon-fiber frame and fairing show off the 200-plus-horsepower MotoGP-derived beast in all its titanium/magnesium glory. NCR has always been about power-to-weight, and for this machine it's decided to go ahead and just whack the ball out of the park: NCR says the M16 weighs 319 pounds without fuel—that's about 6.6 lb. less than the current MotoGP minimum. That's *incredibly* light.

The M16's carbon-fiber frame/swing-

arm are NCR's own design, complete with improved airflow to the engine through the steering head. The fuel tank, fairing, subframe/tail, fender and wheels are all carbon, as well. Mechanical parts (save things like the crank/cams, etc.), says NCR, are either titanium or aviation-grade aluminum.

NCR has been known for its partnership with titanium experts Poggipolini (Ferrari Formula One's supplier of choice), but the recent acquisition of ultra-high-grade carbon-fiber-company ATR Composites has given NCR access to major expertise in this arena. Expect more from them, and for proprietary c-f wheels to grace customer M16s.

"The final product is slicker and lighter than what we anticipated," said NCR's Joe Ippoliti. "For example, we anticipated the exhaust to weigh 7.8 lb., but after some work, the final exhaust including springs is 5.2 lb. Ducati OEM is 21 lb. The same goes for our new wheels. The quality of the carbon fiber is unrivaled in the motorcycle industry, and we hope people will see the difference."

Suspension is lifted directly from the Harley-Davidson Iron 883 Sportster, just kidding. Naturally, you wouldn't be caught dead on this thing with anything but



the latest, top-line Öhlins GP suspenders, tuned in-house by NCR Corse. An FGR000 43mm inverted fork (carried in adjustable-offset triple clamps) and a TTX ride-height adjustable shock carry this oh-so-light load. Brembo Monobloc brake calipers work on ultra-light Brake Tech Axis ceramic-composite discs.

The latest in NCR-developed electronics are also part of the package: traction control, data acquisition and recording, and real-time fuel remapping should be enough to keep the Millona 16 in the fast group at any track day; you just have to hope it won't require Casey Stoner skills to keep it between the curbs. An AIM MXL Pista dash relays pertinent info to the rider.

Paint and graphics, should you wish to hide any of the gorgeous carbon weave, are wide open, and NCR says the bike will be produced only upon request; price is \$160,000, in addition to a Desmosedici donor bike! Interested? Place your order at [www.ncrfactory.com](http://www.ncrfactory.com). Bring lire... □

