

# Hailwood to make TT comeback

£80,000 titanium-frame racer will compete at 2009 Isle of Man TT



Twelve bikes will be made as a tribute to Hailwood's 1978 Isle of Man TT win on an NCR Ducati

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ITALIAN race bike builder NCR revealed this stunning MH TT at last week's Milan Show in Italy – and vowed that the bike will race at the Isle of Man next year.

The Mike Hailwood TT is an £80,000, limited run of 12 tribute bikes commemorating Mike the Bike's historic 1978 Isle of Man TT win, where he stormed to victory on an NCR Ducati despite a leg injury and ten years away from motorcycle racing.

Twenty years on, NCR has produced this bike in collab-

oration with the Hailwood family. Mike's son David Hailwood flew to Milan to unveil the bike.

The new machine is loosely based on a Ducati Sport Classic, but beyond the engine cases very little remains of the original bike.

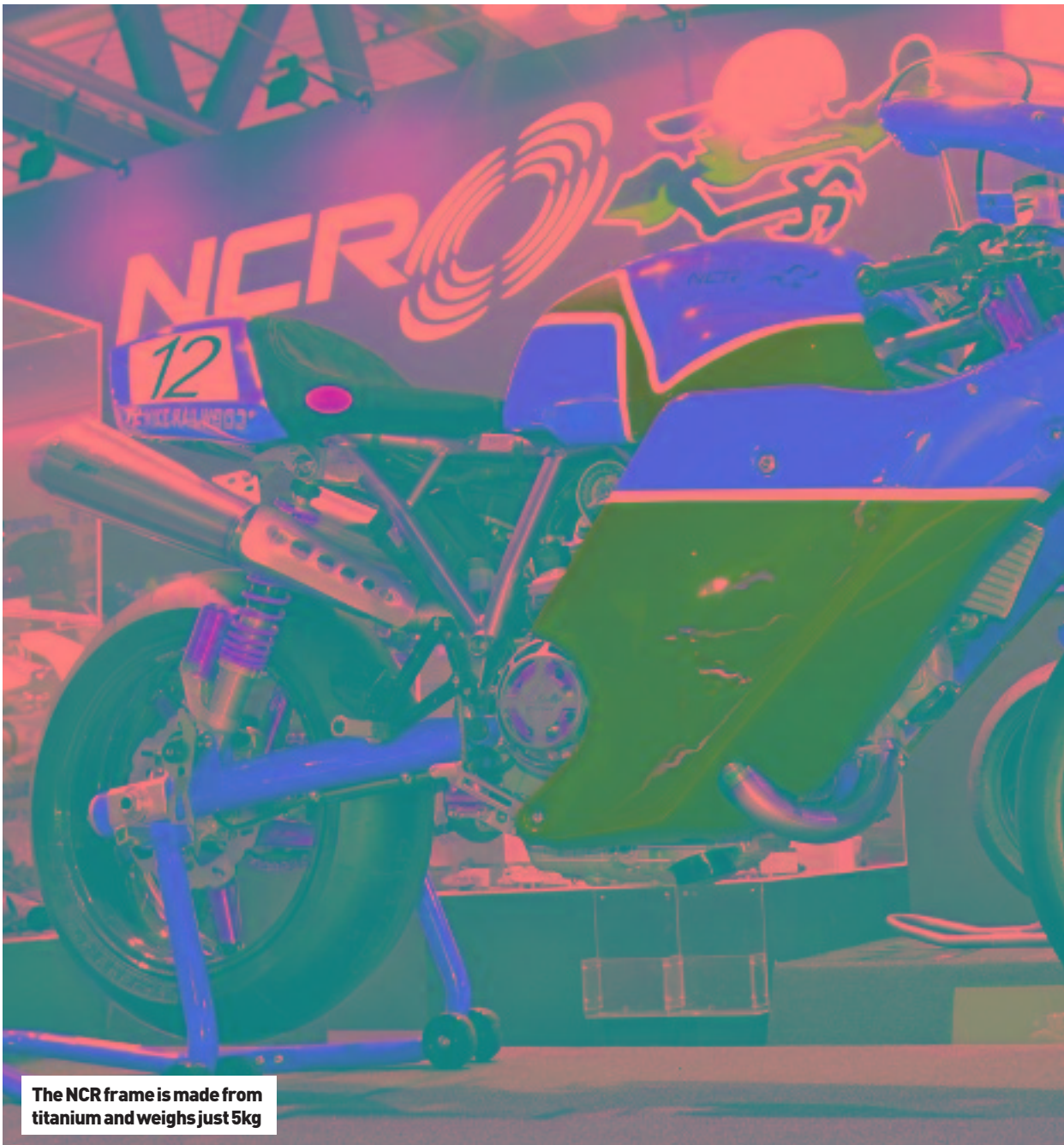
Hailwood told MCN: "We're going to be racing the bike at the TT next year.

**'We want it to be an iconic bike like the 1978 original'**

We've got to do some set-up work first, and we're looking at taking it to Daytona for a shakedown. I'd love to say I'm going to ride it but I won't. It will be somebody who knows their way around the place!

Hailwood revealed that the bike could spawn a road-going version. He said: "There'll be a limited number of road bikes but the priority is the race bike."

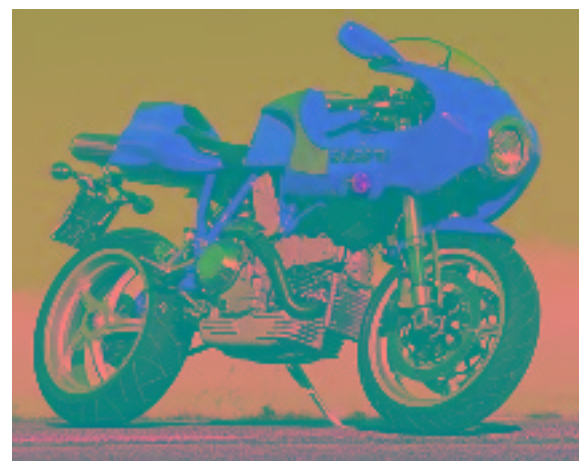
The asking price should include riding kit replicating Mike's original clothing and other extras. "We're trying to get a set of leathers made to look like the original Lookwells he wore. We



The NCR frame is made from titanium and weighs just 5kg



The fairing carries the same number as Hailwood's 1978 bike



Ducati launched its Hailwood tribute, the MH 900E, in 2002

## PIEROBON TRACK BIKE HITS THE ROAD

ITALIAN racing frame kit manufacturer Pierobon has released its first road kit.

Its race bike kit converts a donor Ducati SS1000 into a sweet-handling racer, and the road bike kit follows the same principle.

The kit consists of an aluminium lattice frame with a matching swingarm acting directly on the shock absorber. The original Ducati front end and wheels slot in.

The engine is fitted with fuel injection, wiring loom, clocks and ECU from the standard bike. And standard lights and exhaust are carried over. Price has yet to be announced.



Street legal Duke with Pierobon aluminium lattice frame uses the original Ducati front end, lights and exhaust

already have the helmet which X-Lite make."

The bike's key attraction is the minuscule weight – NCR claim just 136kg ready to ride. One of the most significant contributions is the NCR frame, which is similar to the original but made from lightweight titanium tubing instead of steel, and weighs just 5kg.

The swingarm is double-sided with twin fully-adjustable Ohlins race shock absorbers like the original Sport Classic. Hailwood said: "We wanted the bike to have a single-sided arm and a monoshock, but the TT is very demanding so we opted to stay with the double-sided swingarm."

The front end comprises

MotoGP-spec Ohlins FGR900 forks in a pair of adjustable billet aluminium yokes. Wheels are carbon-rimmed, magnesium-spoked

five-spoke Dymags and brakes are a pair of Brembo four-piston radial monobloc calipers. Completing the lightweight chassis is a full carbon fibre bodywork kit, and widespread use of titanium fasteners.

The engine uses the standard Ducati crankcases, but with a selection of very special NCR parts inside. Capacity is hiked to 1120cc with a crank machined from aluminium which is turned by a pair of single-ring, high compression forged pistons via titanium conrods.

The cylinder head is port-



MILAN  
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# Bandit 650 sharpens up for 2009



Half-faired version of the GSF650S gets a new cowling and headlights

**HOT** on the heels of Yamaha's new credit crunch-friendly XJ6, Suzuki has unveiled a new-look version of its big-selling Bandit 650.

Both the naked and half-faired S versions get sleeker headlights, newly styled frame covers, slimmer tail lights, re-shaped exhaust ends and new instruments.

The Bandit has a reputation for budget thrills and the new models are expected to be priced in line with 2008's £4449 naked bike and

The instruments on both models have been changed, with a single sleek housing featuring an analogue tachometer and LCD speedo, fuel gauge and clock, plus gear position indicator.

The Bandit, launched in 1995, got its last overhaul in 2007 when substantial changes were made to the engine. This time the Bandit's 656cc, liquid-cooled, four-stroke four-cylinder engine remains unchanged. The forks and rear suspension also remain the same.

Front brakes are fully floating 310mm discs with four-piston calipers, with a 240mm disc with dual piston calipers at the rear. Digitally-controlled ABS is optional.

The handlebars can be adjusted to one of two positions 10mm apart to increase comfort. And a system of reversible spacers allows the seat to be raised or lowered by 20mm.

The new models are 15mm longer than the '07 bikes, at 2145mm, and 10mm slimmer at 780mm. The Bandit 650's wet weight is 240kg, the Bandit S is 3kg heavier.

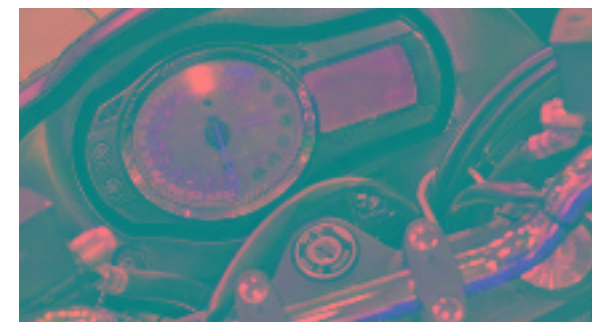
The new models come in blue, red, grey and black. The engine, finished in black, remains exposed.

## 'Both the faired and naked Bandits get a sleek new look'

£4799 half-faired model.

The half-faired version, the GSF650S Bandit, gets a newly-styled cowling, along with stacked high and low beam multi-reflector headlights. The half-fairing has storage to the left and right, and newly designed rear-view mirrors and indicators.

The naked GSF650N Bandit gets a new sculpted cover between the steering head and fuel tank, and a more angular headlight.



Two into one will go – instruments are now in a single housing



New Bandit has adjustable handlebars and seat height. ABS brakes will be an optional extra



Naked Bandit gets slightly revised bodywork and new headlight



Hailwood raced the original 900SS to victory at the 1978 TT

ed by NCR and contains titanium valves and a NCR race cam. A full titanium exhaust system finishing in retro style megaphone cans is made in-house.

The gearbox internals have gone under the lathe and have been lightened, and the clutch is a special slipper unit developed by Italian specialists APTC and NCR. Other details include a racing oil-cooler to help the air-cooled engine keep its temperature under control, an NCR wiring loom with ECU and a new digital dash. The result of the extensive work is 130bhp, which gives a power to weight ratio greater than most 1000cc superbikes.

It could soon be available through a UK importer –

David Hailwood's classic bike-building and restoration business Hailwood Restorations negotiating to become the UK distributor for parts and bikes.

Hailwood added: "NCR doesn't have a presence in the UK, but the bikes fit in very well with the Vincents I sell. The bike is an incredible product – it's a stepping stone in to a new world for Hailwood as well as NCR."

The MH TT is the second modern tribute to Mike the Bike – in 2002 Ducati released 2000 MH900Es based on a 900SS engine. The official machine was less of a replica than the MH TT – the half fairing wasn't quite authentic and it was a fraction of the price at £12,250.

## Honda 'yes' to space age V4

HONDA has officially announced it WILL build a radical new V4 superbike following what it says was an "overwhelming response" from customers to a stunning concept model at last month's Cologne show. The firm

intends to start production of the first V4 model in the first half of 2010. The V4 configuration will form "a part of the marque's future direction in the coming few years," says Honda.

■ For more on what that bike may be, see page 10



Futuristic looking Honda V4 concept revealed at Cologne