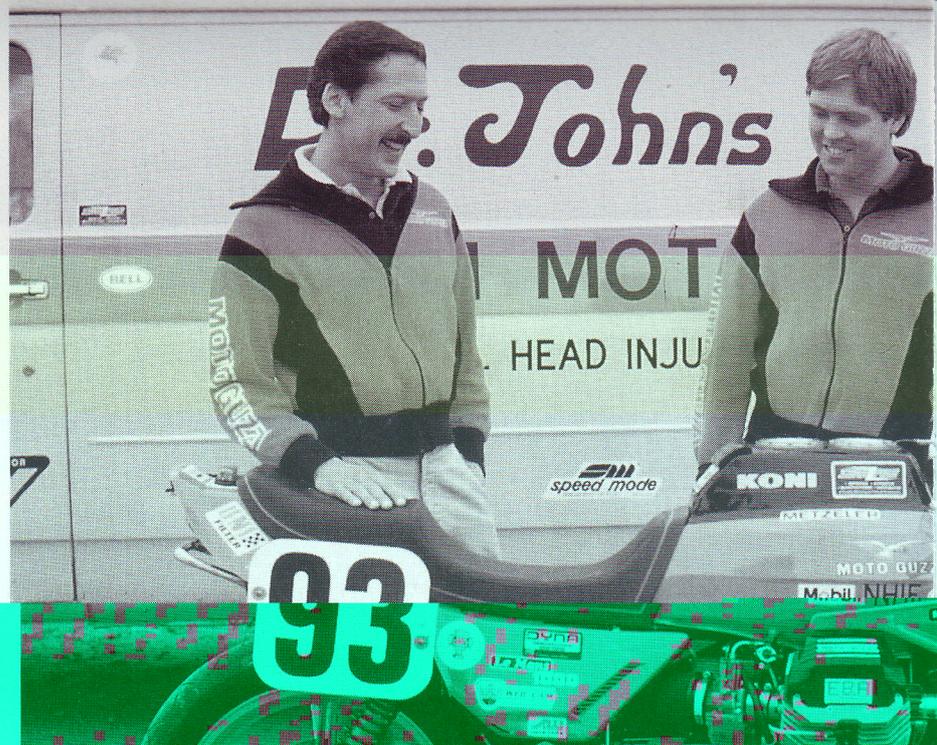


**THE  
FASTEST  
GUZZI  
IN THE  
WEST**

combustion which actually offers more power in certain rev ranges. We have about twice the squish area with the LM3 head but around 30 per cent less combustion space, so we've ended up with a higher port velocity, faster combustion and a cooler running engine. We still only have single-plug ignition, but we can run 4° less advance than with the big valve heads – that's 30 to 31° against 34 to 34.5°.'

Instead of the standard Dellorto carbs, Wittner runs a pair of 41.3mm flat-slide Lectrons, tapered to 40mm to boost mixture velocity: 'We get a strong signal at the discharge port: you can whack those slides wide open at anywhere above 5000rpm and the engine will respond without a stutter. Plus our fuel economy improved with the Lectrons, and they weigh half the Dellortos.'

Dr John admits that the Guzzi now runs a 'very aggressive set of cam profiles: you have to, to get a twin to run as fast as this does!' The camshaft currently employed is the 17th of a series ground to Wittner's specification by Webb Cams, another Californian operation, who have been invaluable in assisting with the develop-





braking system for 1986, entailing both foot brake and hand lever operating both front and rear discs, with a car-type system to alter brake balance to suit individual rider preference and varying track conditions.

I've ridden quite a few twin-cylinder motorcycles, both road and racing, but I can't ever recall sitting on one that felt as

solid, rugged and durable yet powerful as the Dr John's Guzzi. But first appearances are deceptive, as is the whole comportment of the Dr John's machine. It pulls like a tractor from low down, usable power becomes available at anywhere from 4800-5000rpm upwards, with a redline for test purposes of 8000 (although the team do go to 8300rpm when necessary) and the well-matched ratios of the surprisingly sweet-shifting close-ratio box, you have seemingly unlimited power on tap. But it does feel crude and rather lumbering at first, especially compared to the 750 Ducati I'd just been riding. But once biker and rider are both into their stride, the Guzzi's personality changes, and it blossoms into a willing, and responsive mount - albeit a steeplechaser rather than a sprinter, in spite of its impressive record in shorter races.

for fear of loading up the rear wheel and freezing the suspension, causing hop on the overrun with the torque reaction of the shaftie engine. This did happen in one place, where the track runs steeply downhill into a tight right hander, but it was mainly my fault. I wasn't always able to squeeze hard enough on the soggy front brake and blip the throttle, so the

flywheel inertia made itself felt and started the rear wheel chattering as it locked up under the reverse loads. Usually it sorted itself out by the time I cranked into the hairpin, though, and more practice would probably find a way round this particular problem.

But it is vital to keep the Guzzi on the power, especially through fast sweepers; as I found once I started experimenting with lines at Loudon's Turn Two, a fast left-hand sweeper followed immediately by a 180° right. Frustrating the Guzzi through the fast left on the power meant that I ended up on the wrong side of the track for the right, so by heading into a drinking a late apex, while easing the throttle halfway through the turn to avoid running too wide, I found I could end up more or less in the right place. And those

Metzellers really are impressive - it was

