



WHEN Pierre Terblanche presented the 999 to the world in 2003, he copped more than a few rotten tomatoes in the face – and deservedly so. Not only was the sexiest motorcycle on the planet replaced by the ugliest, but Terblanche had also lost thousands of sales for Ducati worldwide.

The bike has always been seen as an ugly duckling and there were huge sighs of relief when the mighty 1098 was unveiled for 2007.

The 999, however, has not gone to a completely watery grave. The bike is coming back into demand on the Australian second-hand market and there are standard examples out there in the mid-\$20,000 price range at the moment.

I don't think the stock bike will ever become a complete classic, however if you can nab yourself a good 999S or R then you're onto something. The S was up around the \$35,000 mark when new so you'll get good value with a used buy.

With doubtless success internationally, including WSBK and BSB titles, the 999 really was a good race bike when the budget permitted. Here in Australia, however, there were few who braved the 999 on the track. Craig McMartin was our most successful 999 pilot, taking his S to numerous Pro Twins and BEARS championship victories, and Peter Martin, owner of this bike, also persevered with the sometimes-wayward chassis until he got it right.

We managed to spend a day with the machine at Eastern Creek and have to admit, this thing is a weapon!

THE BIKE

Owner Peter Martin originally raced motocross in the 1970s and early 1980s but when he first laid eyes on the infamous Ducati 916 in 1995, he just had to have one. After successfully campaigning the bike for eight years, Peter upgraded to the 999S in 2003.

Says Peter; "I purchased the bike new from Fraser Motorcycles. I got temporary rego and headed off for a 600-kilometre loop where it rained almost all the time! Regardless, the bike was a blast. It handled well and had plenty of power. I knew there was potential there."

"As soon as the bike was run in I stripped all the road gear off and put that in storage, then proceeded to build a bike that I have been developing now for five years. Craig McMartin also raced his for a similar time.

Peter's bike has been through many fazes over the years but here, in its final development stage, it's a pretty trick bit of kit.

The engine is fresh thanks to Ducati Penrith and has had extensive cylinder-head work. The heads have been ported and flowed and the crankshaft flywheel has been lightened. A Speedmoto water-pump cover and Nichols crankcase breather are fitted along with Samco radiator hoses, and Peter uses a standard gearbox with a race shift pattern and an SP Electronics quickshifter, however the clutch unit is a high-spec Suter slipper clutch with an MPL clutch basket. The clutch has a 1600N drive spring 750N BTL spring for slip. Ducati sintered clutch plates get the torque to the back wheel and the clutch is actuated via an MPL slave-cylinder and Beringer master-cylinder and lever...

Exhaust gasses exit via a Ducati Corse factory 57mm titanium and stainless steel system with Termignoni factory mufflers. The stock Marelli 54mm throttle-bodies are retained, however a custom Sportsbike filter is used and carbon-fibre ducting. Fuelling and ignition is controlled by a Haltech E11 ECU, which has 14-channels tuning parameters like fuelling, ignition and individual cylinders. The E11 can also support on board data logging, a

