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Cover

Chris Walker - Le Mans winner, Donington WSB hero, and the man to challenge Ducati supremacy in Britain. (Andrew Northcott)

Richard Branson (Steve Fletcher); Jamie Robinson (Clive Challinor); Dorian Romboni (Mark Wernham); James Whitham (Clive Challinor); MV Agusta (Kel Edge); James Courtney (Allstair McCook); Adrian Archibald (Terry Howe); Steve Hislop (Mark Wernham); Chris Walker (Steve Fletcher).

Gary Pinchin

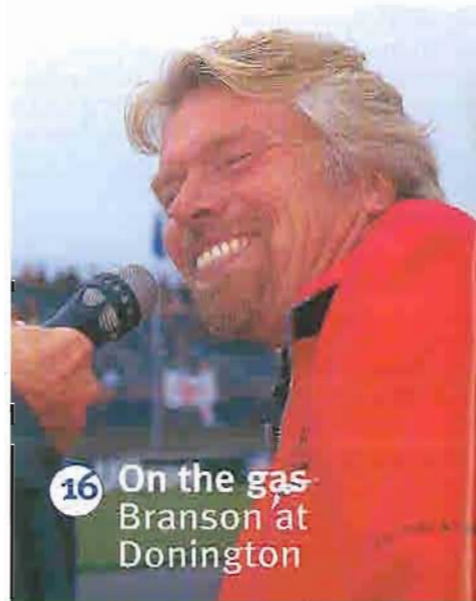
Super Donington

The Donington World Superbike round was pretty impressive by many standards. First off, the 60,000 crowd was the biggest ever for the World Supers at the circuit. And what a brilliant performance from Chris Walker to keep his British championship Kawasaki ahead of the factory green machine of Akira Yanagawa. After 'Walks' helping Hizzy and Sibleau to a comprehensive Le Mans 24 hour race win, his storming Donington effort underlined, yet again staked, his claim for a regular ride on the world stage.

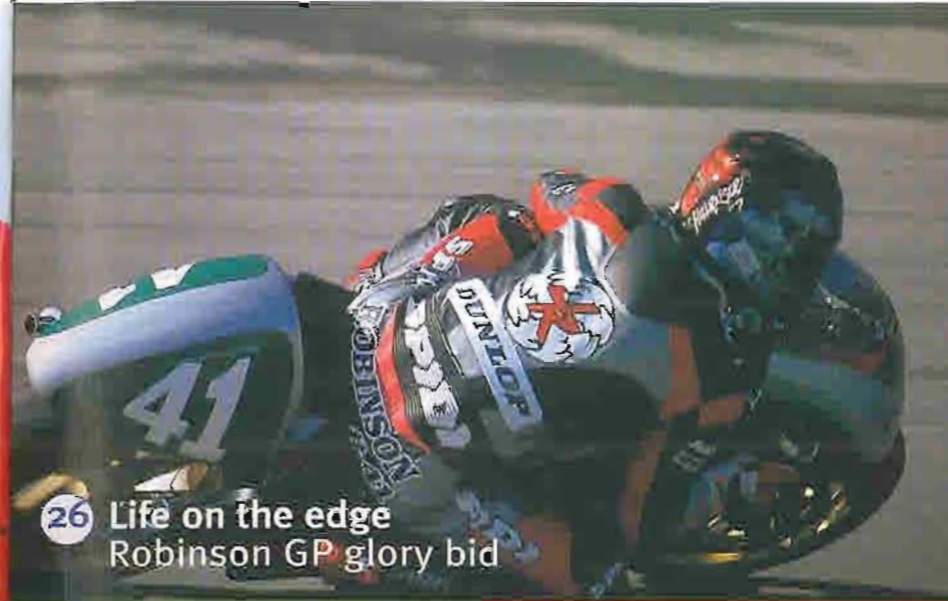
Also on the list of Donington achievements was Whitham's incredible performance sliding the Beglarida Yamaha to a Supersport World Cup win - in a class with arguably even greater strength in depth and more competitive machines than the World Supers. Whitham's hard-charging antics were a joy to behold. No wonder Modenas was on the phone calling him up for a GP ride the following week. But if only Richard Branson would dip into his pocket for the cash to run a two-man Virgin team. Mind you, it's hard to understand why Belgarda doesn't bite the bullet and put Whitham on Guareschi's R7 and slot the Italian back into the Supersport class. Whit and Haga on the same team. The 'no fear' team.

Still wallowing in Donington glory, don't forget the brilliant efforts of Carl Fogarty and Iain MacPherson. These two are going to be season-long title contenders. But, hey, you always knew that?

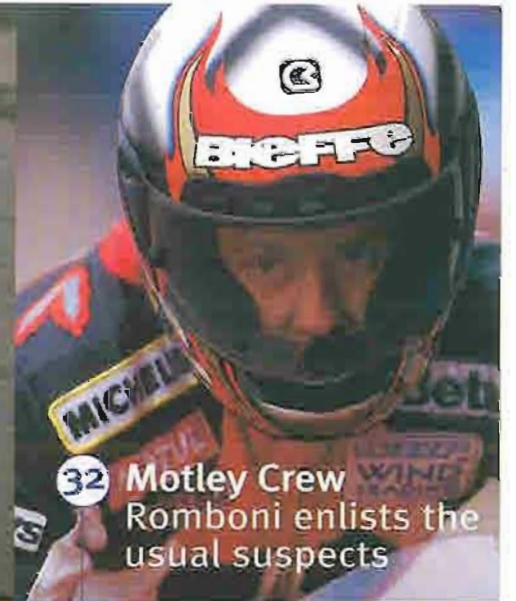
The one big downer for me, though, was the realisation that this could be the last World Superbike round at the track. The contract has ended. Robert Fearnall has stuck by the series ever since the first WSB round in 1988. And, believe me, it's not all been good times and huge crowds. We should thank him for his enthusiasm and foresight. The strength and popularity of Superbike racing in the UK is largely down to his initial investment.



16 On the gas Branson at Donington



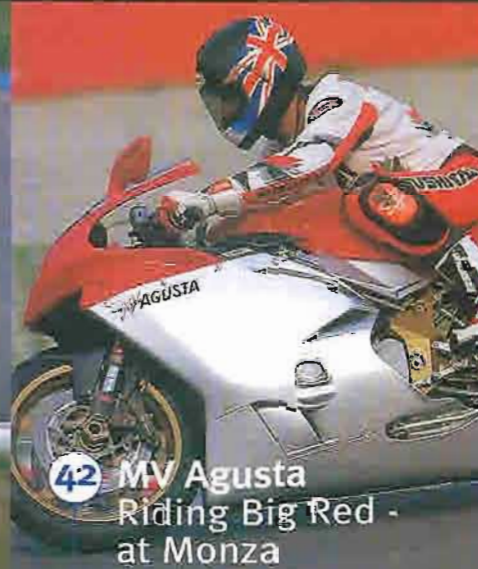
26 Life on the edge Robinson GP glory bid



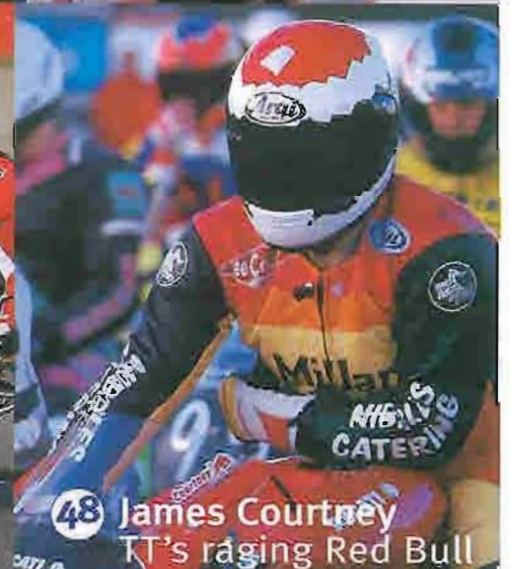
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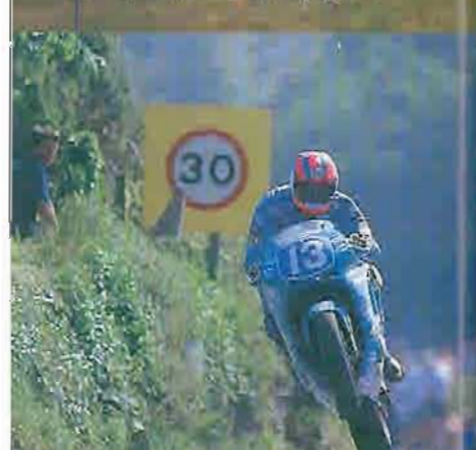
38 Busy Whitham 500, GP500. And now? 750?



42 MV Agusta Riding Big Red - at Monza



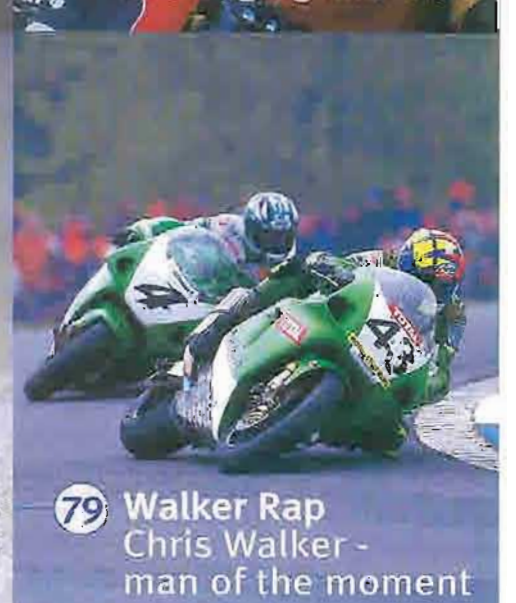
48 James Courtney TT's raging Red Bull



52 Mountain Prospects TT '99. Who's riding what



54 Marathon men The effort of endurance



79 Walker Rap Chris Walker - man of the moment