

MOTOR CYCLIST

10 BEST FOR \$10K

RACER
REPLICA
HELMET
BUYER'S
GUIDE

- » BMW F800S
- » BUELL XB12R
- » DUCATI M695
- » HARLEY NIGHTSTER
- » HONDA CBR600RR
- » HONDA VTX1300
- » KAWASAKI Z1000
- » SUZUKI V-STROM 650
- » TRIUMPH SPEED TRIPLE
- » YAMAHA V-STAR 1100

PLUS!

THE 4 BEST USED BIKES FOR \$10K

- » '04 BMW R1100S
- » '04 H-D DYNA SUPER GLIDE
- » '03-'06 DUCATI 999
- » '01 HONDA GOLD WING

WET AND WILD!

ALL-NEW LIQUID-COOLED BUELL 1125R

FACTORY CHOPPER!

2008 HARLEY-DAVIDSON ROCKER

BLACK BIKE WEEK
GOES BIG!

OCTOBER 2007



\$4.99 U.S. / \$5.99 Canada

MC TESTED

WORDS: Lon Rozelle PHOTO: Heli

HELI BARS

Think of it: a Ducati 999—or any other hard-core, clip-on-equipped sportbike—with true long-distance riding comfort.

Right. And Ashlee Simpson really *does* sing her own songs.

Luckily for those with a penchant for clip-ons, there is a remedy for those aching wrists and lower back, and it's a heckuva lot cheaper than trading in your beloved but uncompromising Duck for a Gold Wing—Heli Bars.

According to company literature, Heli Bars give 999 riders 1.5 extra inches of rise, are positioned three-eighths of an inch farther apart and are angled a half-inch farther rearward. The important measurement here is the first one—1.5 inches may not seem like much on a cruiser with ape-hangers, but on a 999 it's nirvana. The extra bar height rotates the riding position rearward just enough so that neck-cramping from craning your head to see forward is a thing of the past. Most of my riding is stop-and-go commuter stuff on city streets, and while the Ducati isn't always happy in this

environment, the higher bars make 999 commuting much more agreeable. I've also noticed I have better throttle control with the new bars in place, as the bars' angle allows you to rotate your



wrists more freely.

Bar position fore and aft at installation is critical. Position them too far rearward and you'll pinch your thumbs against the tank; too far forward and you'll bust your knuckles against the fairing. Experiment and find the position that works for you. There are no markings on the bars to guide you; it's strictly trial and error.

The instructions tell you to remove the top triple clamp. What they don't tell you is that you need a special Ducati tool to do that. Shop Foreman Michael Candreia didn't have one handy, so he did it the old-fashioned way—he hoisted the front end in the air, loosened the pinch bolts, dropped the fork tubes and removed the stock bars. According to Candreia, installation was fairly straightforward with no real problems, and took a couple of hours to accomplish. He didn't have to replace any cables, either.

If you own a 999 or any bike with cramped ergos, Heli Bars are probably the perfect mod for you.

HELI MODIFIED, INC. HELI BARS

Price: \$269

Contact: Heli Modified, Inc.

www.helibars.com

VERDICT

Do what they're claimed to do—give your aching wrists a break. Easy mod at a reasonable price.