

# BABY BIMOTA

**DOES THE WORLD REALLY  
NEED A 400cc DB2?**

*In spite of its claimed 352-pound dry weight and tiny 400cc Ducati V-Twin, the DB2-J offers plenty of room for riders up to 6 feet in height.*



**W**HEN A EUROPEAN MANUFACTURER LAUNCHES A SMALL-bore version of a large-displacement model, it does so for only one reason: to increase sales in Japan, where a tiered licensing system based on engine size makes riding any bike with an engine bigger than 400cc an expensive endeavor. So when Bimota decided to launch the 400cc version of its Ducati-engined DB2 as the DB2-J, it seemed certain that the "J" stood for Japan, right? Wrong. What does it stand for, then? Would you believe, "Junior?"

Why does Bimota bother with a model that might seem to have very limited sales appeal? First, if someone else has done all the mechanical work concocting a smaller-capacity engine—as Ducati has done in developing the 400SS version of its six-speed, two-valve engine—producing a smaller version of your existing model can be done quickly and inexpensively. Second, Ducati has enjoyed surprising success with its half-faired 350SS/400SS machines in the past year. Might a similar market exist for a downsized DB2-J acting as an entry-level Bimota? To find out, a very limited number of DB2-Js have been built and sent to Bimota distributors worldwide—one each, roughly—to see if there's enough interest to put the bike

*Here are two clues to this bike's junior status: the "400" notation on the rear bodywork, and a slightly narrower rear wheel and smaller rear tire than found on the otherwise nearly identical 900cc DB2.*

