

# Norton Notice

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 7

OCTOBER 1978



IS NORTON IS ALIVE AND WELL IN CALIFORNIA ?

A HEALTHY GROUP OF NORTONS AND OWNERS GATHERED IN FRONT OF THE VERY  
POPULAR ALICE'S RESAURANT ON SKYLINE BOULEVARD IN WOODSIDE - SEPT. 17

IN THIS ISSUE:

TRADING POST - P.3

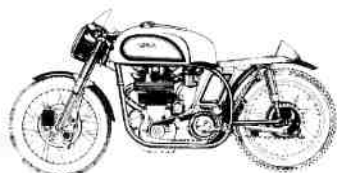
OCTOBER MEETING AND RIDE INFO. - p.3

TECHNICAL TIPS COLUMN - p.4

SEPTEMBER MEETING REPORT - p.5

ODD BODKINS - p.6

A PUBLICATION OF THE  
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

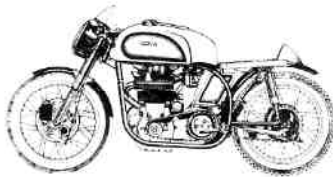




The NORTON NOTICE is published monthly by the Northern California Branch of the NOC.

#### Branch Officers and Editors

Stephen Coburn  
Secretary-Treasurer  
P.O.Box 236  
La Honda, CA 94020  
(415)747-0326 HOME  
(415)497-6601 WORK



Copyright 1978

All articles and advertisements printed in the NORTON NOTICE are for the sole use of current and prospective members of the Northern California Branch of the NOC. Permission must be obtained from the Branch officers before any material contained in this publication may be reproduced.

#### ADVERTISING

Any individual may submit Norton-related advertisements to the Branch Secretary, to be printed, free of charge, in the next two installments of the TRADING POST. Ads may be renewed by contacting the Branch Secretary, but will otherwise run for two months. In order to make the job of the Secretary/Editor a little easier, all ads should be in writing, and should be as brief and as legible as possible.

#### MEMBER INPUT

All members are encouraged to submit any articles, photographs, technical information, jokes, or other materials which may be of interest to the readers of NORTON NOTICE, to the Branch Secretary.

#### MEMBERSHIP

Any person may join the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club as an Associate Member by completing the Branch application form and paying the annual dues (\$5). Any person owning a Norton at the time of application may also become a full member of the Norton Owners Club (NOC) by paying the additional NOC membership annual dues (£7,\$15). All Branch members receive monthly issues of the Branch newsletter, the NORTON NOTICE, and are entitled to participate in all Branch functions. Only full members of the NOC receive the bi-monthly issues of NOC magazine, the ROADHOLDER. Distribution of the ROADHOLDER, as well as payment of all NOC dues to the NOC Membership Secretary is the responsibility of the Branch Secretary-Treasurer. Cheques sent to the Secretary-Treasurer must be made payable to the Norton Owners Club. Every member receives an NOC membership card, which will clearly indicate the membership status in the case of associate members. The card will also indicate date of expiration of membership, and dues should be paid to the Branch Secretary-Treas. prior to the expiration date.

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

All members are requested to notify the Branch Secretary as soon as possible of any change of address or telephone number. Failure to do so will result in non-delivery of all Branch mailings.

#### MEMBERSHIP LISTS

An updated membership list will be printed periodically by the Branch Secretary and will be sent to all current members. In order to increase interaction among members and ease the difficulty of obtaining spares and mechanical advice, the machines owned by each member will be included in the membership list, as will an up-to-date listing of area dealers, mechanics, parts suppliers, etc.

TRADING POSTFOR SALE

1959 Norton Nomad drag bike. Highly modified 600cc engine incl. head work and Lucas K2FR racing magneto. Engine is assembled, bike is not. Spare frame and engine with many engine and trans. spares. \$600/Offer for the whole lot.  
JOE CAPORALI: (415)521-7687

1969 Norton P11 Ranger. Norton engine and running gear on Matchless frame. All original and in good running cond. Will accept best offer. (Good idea)  
TOM EARLE: (408)353-1060

1974('75?) Norton Commando. Selling parts. Complete engine: \$600. Trade.  
BILL SANDFORD: (408)739-7714

1975 Norton MkIII Interstate. Cherry condition and ready for cross-country trip. Recently rebuilt engine. Will consider trade-in. \$1600/best offer.  
DENNIS MAGRI: (415)586-7756

Stock MkIII mufflers in "peachy keen" condition. Make an offer.  
COREY LEVENSON: (415)681-2619 evenings

1973 rear brake drum and wheel asbly with both foot rests. (how's that?)  
MICHAEL ALBERTOLI: (415)332-8792

Full fairing for Norton Commando. J.C.Whitney version of early Vetter Windjammer design. ABS plastic, black, with mounting hardware. Make offer.  
STEVE COBURN: (415)747-0326

WANTED

1973 or 1974 Commando 850, good cond.  
JEFF POPJOY: (415)352-2299

Exhaust pipes for Commando 750, side stand for 1970 Commando, front fender, Interstate or Roadster seat(any cond.)  
DAVE CRONIN: (415)566-3119

ATTENTION ALL ADVERTISERS:

Please remember to let me know if you want your ad renewed or discontinued. Otherwise, all ads will run for two issues, and will then be dropped.

To place an ad, write down all the pertinent info on a postcard and send to the Branch Secretary(N.N. Editor):  
STEVE COBURN  
P.O.Box 236  
La Honda, CA 94020

OCTOBER BRANCH MEETING

This month's meeting will be held once again at what seems to be our most central meeting place. The members present at the September meeting felt that we should try to get the maximum attendance for the election of our new President. Pease try to come if possible.

DATE: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12

TIME: 7:30PM

PLACE: EDINBURGH CASTLE

950 GEARY, SAN FRANCISCO

PHONE: 885-4074

OCTOBER BRANCH RIDE

The ride this month is going to be on the Saturday after the meeting rather than the Sunday as is traditional. Although most of you who responded to the questionnaire we sent out last winter stated a preference for Sunday rides, there was a significant group who preferred Saturdays. So now you folks who never seem to make it will have your chance. I must say that I do have an ulterior motive of my own. I was unable to go on last month's ride because of an AYSO coaching commitment, and will be similarly tied up on Sundays until mid-November. And since I really enjoy the rides our Branch has had since I've been in the Club, I am going to schedule the October and November rides for Saturdays. I hope nobody objects.

DATE: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14

TIME: 10:00AM (will leave at 10:30)

PLACE: DUMBARTON BRIDGE TOLL PLAZA  
TAKE HWY. 84 EAST FROM THE  
PENINSULA AND WEST FROM THE  
EAST BAY. WE'LL MEET IN THE  
PARKING LOT JUST EAST OF THE  
TOLL PLAZA (OFTEN WINDY).

Carollyn Scott made the suggestion after the September ride, if you could call it that, that I should outline a possible itinerary for the ride. Well, I'm not too sure that it'll work, but here goes. We will head east on Hwy. 84 at 10:30, and turn off to the north when we find a nice road up in the east bay hills. We will try to find a nice place to stop for lunch at around 12:30 or so, and then do some riding up around Tilden Park or the Sacramento River delta area during the afternoon.

TECHNICAL TIPS - SUSPENSION SYSTEM - CHANGING THE FORK OIL

Last month I covered the cam chain and auto advance unit. I did not discuss the tune-up procedure, but I feel there is one important step which should be emphasized. The Norton Commando is timed at full advanced timing, 28° BTDC (before top dead center), using an advance lock washer to hold it at full advance. After the timing is set, either by the static method or with a timing light, it is best to remove the advance lock washer and recheck the timing at 3000 RPM with a timing light. Sometimes the timing will change when the washer is removed.

This month I will cover the suspension system. One of the main reasons Norton Commandos handle so well is that their suspension is compliant. In other words, it does what it is supposed to do, and no more or no less. As the bike ages, this is not always true. The front forks have a spring and oil damping system. This oil has to be changed at least every 5000 miles; it is desirable to do it even more frequently. In operation, the lower leg slides up and down on a bronze bearing at the top and a steel bearing at the bottom. As they move, metal particles wear off and mix with the oil, causing more rapid wear. Dirt also gets into the oil past the slider seals. When the bearings are worn, the forks will bind and the front wheel will wash out.

Changing the fork oil is a rather simple job. You will need a thin 9/16" open-end wrench and 1&5/16" wrench. I recommend a box-end as it can also be used to remove the counter shaft sprocket nut. The first step is to put the bike up on the center stand and weight the rear to get the front wheel off the floor or ground. The two large nuts on top of the forks should then be unscrewed. They will not come off completely since the fork springs are attached to them. After both nuts are unscrewed, lift the front wheel and they will come up exposing the springs. On top of the spring is a 9/16" nut. Using the two wrenches mentioned above, unlock the nuts and remove the large one. Let the wheel down, and drain the oil by removing the drain plugs. At the lower end of each fork leg is a large slotted screw, which is the drain plug. A word of CAUTION here: there is a fiber washer under the drain plug screw which you don't want to lose.

After the oil has been drained and the plugs and washers reinstalled, it is time to replace the oil. 150cc of 20W nondetergent oil is recommended. Most auto parts stores have it, and a whole quart will cost less the bike shop fork oil, which is the same stuff. The only difficult part of this job is to get the oil back in. It will not just run in, as the air in the forks must have an escape route. I found a simple solution at the McDonalds Golden Arch. (Now we all know why Len has gotten a bit rotund! Ed.) Use two soda straws, and insert them about two inches, one on each side between the spring and slider wall at the front. As you pour the oil in, suck the air out at the same time. (I've had greasy french fries before, but an oil milk shake?) You will not get any oil in the straw; at least I haven't as yet.

After the oil is in, and has run down below the springs, raise the front wheel again to expose the springs, and replace the large nuts. Be sure to put the larger washer and the speedometer and tachometer on before doing this. After both nuts are locked, lower the wheel and screw the large nuts into the forks with finger pressure only so as to prevent cross threading. Then tighten them down with the wrench. The whole job should take about a half an hour, and the bike always seems to run better afterwards, even if it is only in the mind. The fork bearings will last longer though; that is for sure.

Len Allen

Since there seems to be a little space left over here, I would like to use it to encourage all members to send in a contribution to the TECHNICAL TIPS page. It may seem as though Len Allen has his column syndicated, and that no others will be printed. Not so at all, folks. Please feel free to write down your own suggestions if you ever get the urge, and likewise if you disagree with any of the "words of wisdom" printed here, don't hesitate to let others know.

Steve



SEPTEMBER BRANCH MEETING

Last month's meeting was held at the very rustic Redwood Inn up in the Oakland Hills, and did succeed in luring some of our east bay members out of their garages for a few hours. As well as consuming an adequate volume of beer, the group actually held a relatively orderly meeting and voted on a few noteworthy issues.

Firstly, nominations were accepted for the vacant office of Branch President. Bob (the Originator) Bausch had been previously contacted by yours truly, and had agreed to serve as President if elected. Maya (Miss Enthusiasm) Peterson had informed me at the Laguna Seca races that she would like to be a candidate. Gene Austin, who declined the nomination, put up the name of Dave Cronin, who has subsequently also declined. Your current Secretary/Treasurer is still very enthusiastic about the NORTON NOTICE, and will continue in his present capacity for the time being. We therefore have two (2) nominees for President: BOB BAUSCH and MAYA PETERSON. It was agreed at the meeting that we should hold the October Branch meeting at our most central venue, the Edinburgh Castle in San Francisco, where we could hold the election. Please try to come to the meeting if you can; if there is absolutely no way you can attend, you are encouraged to vote by mail. While at it, you can give me a little feedback on the NORTON NOTICE. Constructive criticism would be greatly appreciated, and anything of general interest to the Branch will be printed in the next issue. Please send all postcards, letters, etc. to the Secretary:

Steve Coburn  
P.O.Box 236  
La Honda, CA 94020

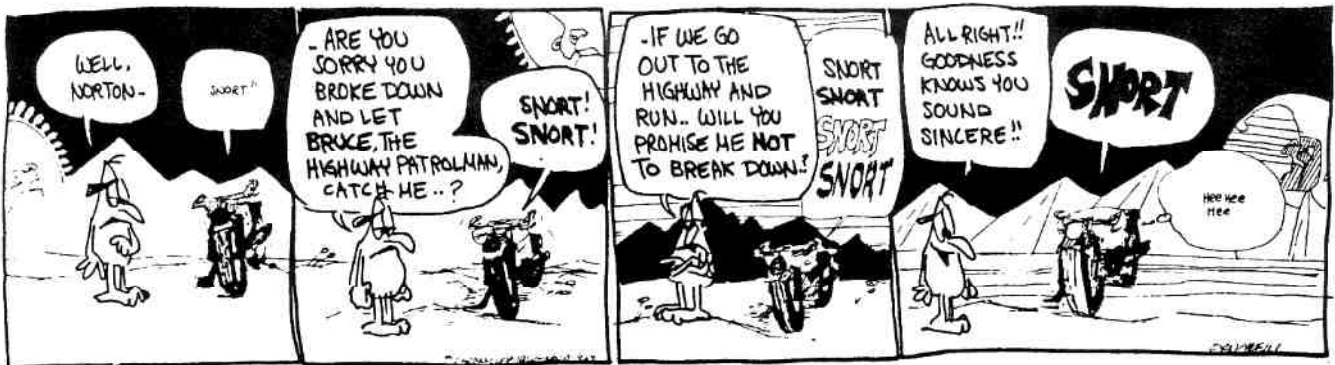
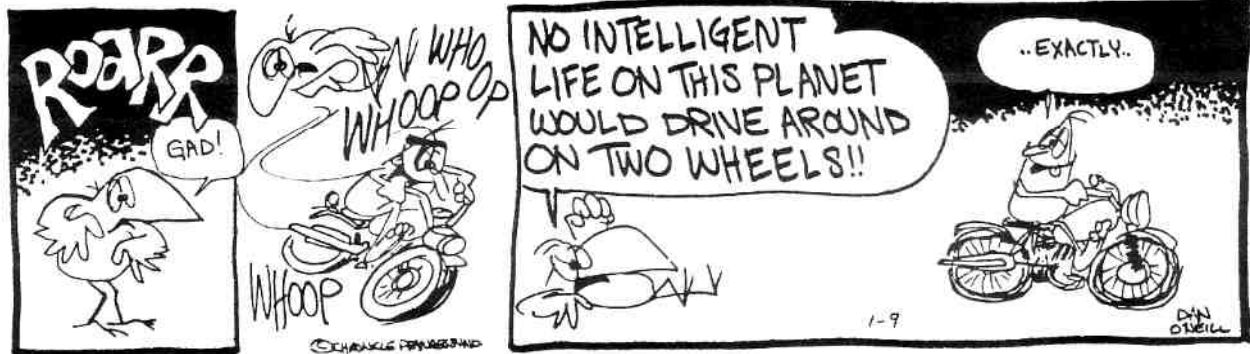
The next item of business concerned the proposed new Branch logo designs. The vote of the group present was unanimous in favor of the beautiful Union Jack/Stars 'n Stripes design submitted at the August meeting by Bob Bausch. This design, in red, white and blue, will therefore be the official logo of the Northern California Branch. I hope to get some business cards, and possibly even some formal stationery printed with this logo in a few months. I may even try to get some tank badges and lapel pins made if I can get them for a reasonable price. We'll see.

The first effort will be to have some T-shirts silkscreened. It was decided at the meeting that a blue and red on white would work best, even though the white might tend to show dirt a little more readily. Unfortunately, since we are getting a 2-color silkscreen, we must decide on one background color. Having a blue and white design on red was suggested, but this would involve an additional \$17.50 initial set-up fee. Bob's second design will be on the back of the shirts, and will be silkscreened in red and black. The two designs are being touched up by Bob to make them camera-ready, and I will take them to the T-shirt people in Redwood City (ABCRAFT) as soon as possible. I hope to have the finished product at our next meeting. I plan to order four dozen heavy weight type T-shirts in an assortment of sizes (yes, there will be enough smalls and mediums this time). If anyone wants a "French-cut" shirt or a tank top, I will get some, but please let me know immediately if you do.

Next on the agenda was an announcement from your "always willing to try a new idea" Secretary that he has an attractive amateur photographic model who is willing to pose on a Norton in the buff. Much to my surprise, there were no real objections to putting a slightly spicy photograph on the cover of NORTON NOTICE in the near future; on the contrary, the group seemed to like the idea. So... if your kids or your grandmother are in the habit of opening your mail, you might want to nab the NORTON NOTICE as soon as it comes. I am planning to use my own Commando Roadster for the shots, but if anyone out there has a particularly photogenic John Player Special or Manx (Frank?), or Atlas (Lloyd?), or CS-1 (Gene?), or whatever, and would like to see it immortalized in the soon-to-be-famous NORTON NOTICE, please let me know. Needless to say, the photographic sessions will be private, but my hot tub will be available while you're waiting, and our friendly "model" may even want to jump in too! How can you turn that down?

This month's installment of ODD BODKINS was chosen especially for those NORTON fans who were wondering why NORTON was always breaking down. Needless to say, the NORTON is quite dependable, and so there had to be another reason. Hope you like it folks!

(Reprinted with the permission of Dan O'Neill)



Next month: Hugh, Fred and NORTON roar off to Petaluma, Bug Capital of the World!