



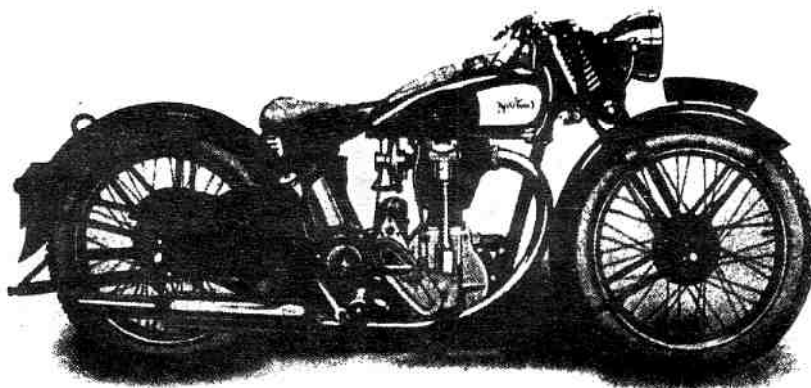
Norton Notice



The Newsletter of The Northern California Branch

No. 128

Dec, 1988



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MERRY CHRISTMAS

HAPPY NEW YEAR



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH



Norton Notice

is published by the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club. Its purpose is to inform and entertain members regarding all aspects of the Norton motorcycle, including history, technical advice, and preservation of the marque.

NORTON NOTICE is a reflection of its readership, who are encouraged to submit any article, technical tip, photograph (original or otherwise) as long as it is in good taste, so that other Norton enthusiasts may enjoy it. For Branch members who cannot attend club meetings or club rides, the NORTON NOTICE affords an opportunity to share experiences and information with the membership of the Branch, and to bring the Branch members closer together.

The deadline for items to be submitted for publication is the 15th of each month.

Membership in the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club is available for **£10.50 (pounds sterling) + \$18.00**

Membership dues are payable to the Branch Secretary/Treasurer.

Renewal dues are payable at the end of the individual's membership year, that month being designated by the last number of the individual's membership number as located on the mailing label of the NORTON NOTICE or the membership card. For example, 745/2 denotes member 745 with dues expiring on the 1st of February.

All changes of address should go to the Branch Secretary/Treasurer, not the NOTICE Editor.

Subscription to the NORTON NOTICE only is available for \$18.00 per year. This does not include membership in the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club, nor does it afford any of the rights or privileges of membership in the NOC.

Membership in the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club entitles a member to monthly issues of the NORTON NOTICE and bi-monthly issues of ROADHOLDER magazine, which is sent directly from England, keeping members informed of Norton owners' activities worldwide. Membership provides voting privileges at all NOC and Branch meetings, and allows one to purchase Norton spares directly from England, at significant savings, through the NOC spares program.

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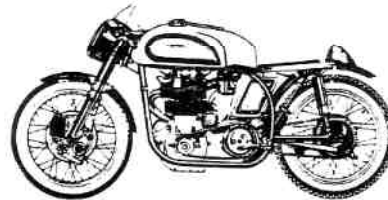
1780 Chanticleer Ave.
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

NORTON OWNERS CLUB

Important!

(Please take note of the following fine print.)

The object of the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club is to promote, encourage and develop all motorcycling activities. The Club's members are owners of Norton motorcycles, and they often submit for publication in the Norton Notice technical tips pertaining to motorcycles of the Norton marque. Technical tips so published have been reviewed for technical content and are believed to be both acceptable and workable, but no guarantee is made or implied that they will work correctly, nor is any liability assumed by either the Norton Owners Club or the authors for any problems resulting from use of these technical tips. The Club also assumes no responsibility for the acts or omissions of its members in connection with Club activities. Norton Notice articles or other material express the authors' views only and not necessarily the official policy of the Norton Owners Club or its Northern California Branch. The editor reserves the right to accept, reject or alter all editorial and advertising material submitted for publication. Advertising published does not imply endorsement of products, goods or services. Now you know.



1963 catalog drawing of Manx 30M and 40M



UPCOMING EVENTS

CLUB RIDES:

Coordinated by Margie Siegal

December 3 David Hedges will host a **Spagetti Feed**, prepared by **Maya Abe**. The ride begins at Alice's on Skyline at 12 Noon.. This is a joint event with the European Motorcycle Assoc., so the turnout should be pretty good, Note also that this is a **Saturday** event, giving us an extra day to recover from the red wine. Overnighters welcome. If you miss the ride down, David lives at 8325 Fremont Avenue, Ben Lomond, Ca

January 15 Mt. Hamilton freeze ride or some such winter wildness, led by Louis Mendelowitz. Get yer longjohns and woolen socks out.... Meet at Howard Johnson's on North First St. in San Jose. The ride leaves promptly at 10:00 am. In event of rain, call Louis for rescheduling info at (415)857-1835

Club Meeting Schedule

The club meets on the 2nd Thurs. of every month. Meetings begin at 7:30 pm unless otherwise noted.

Friday, Dec 9th

PARTY PARTY PARTY

Harry's Hoffbrau

399 El Camino (near Castro St.)
Mtn. View, Ca

This is our Cristmas Party and Annual General Meeting. The food at Harry's is excellent and the private meeting room is comfortable and clean. "Election" of officers for 1989 is the main item on the agenda.

East Bay Meeting Jan 12th
at Margie Siegal's house
625 Fairmount Avenue
Oakland, Ca 94611
(415) 654 1933

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH TOOL LOAN-OUT PROGRAM

Get in touch with Harry Bunting if you need one or more of the following tools for working on your Commando. A refundable deposit equal to the replacement cost of the tool is required at the time you pick it up.

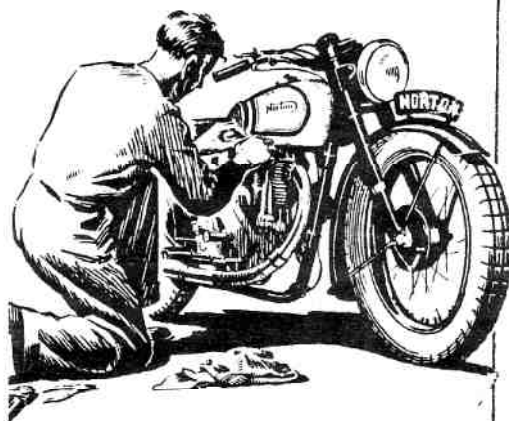
TOOL	DEPOSIT
exhaust lock ring tool.....	\$10
timing cover oil seal guide.....	5
clutch spring compressor.....	12
clutch locking tool.....	18
valve spring compressor.....	22
rocker spindle puller.....	25
crankshaft sprocket puller.....	12
timing pinion puller.....	20
gearbox layshaft bearing extractor..	15

Harry Bunting
1165 Crandano Ct
Sunnyvale, Ca 94087
(408) 736-6492



Alan's Wrench

Tech tips and gossip from The Editor



John Burdette is about to close the doors of Hall-Burdette after 40 years as Sacramento's Norton dealer. Although I've never done business there, I have received rave reports from many satisfied club members in the past. In addition, John helped support the club for many years as an advertiser in the Notice. I'm sure his services will be sorely missed by the Norton owners of the Sacramento Valley. Luckily, John's ace mechanic Thor Berke will be continuing in business at the same location. If you want to offer farewell thanks to John or offer new business to Thor, the address is 2010 Del Paso Blvd, Sacramento, CA.

My ride to Tres Pinos last month was cancelled due to some serious rainfall, which we did need. I covered the ride route the day before and found some neat back roads and

generally good surface conditions. The Restaurant at Tres Pinos, called the Feed Lot, has a great salad bar, generous portions of steak and seafood, and a wide variety of beers and wine. I look forward to rescheduling this ride in 1989 under more placid skies.

I continue to receive literature from Bikers Rights groups around the country. This month's item is from Bikers Against Manslaughter, started by attorney Russ Brown. They are offering a Helmet Information Card, part of which I have reproduced below. While straddling the line between 'biker lifestyle' advocacy and more mainstream political activism, they seem to be well organized, offering a 24-hour free hotline for emergency or accident aid, 1-800-4-BIKERS (424-5377).

Last weekend I found some time for a Sunday ride. The Combat had been sitting in the cold for weeks and was **very** stiff to kick over. After getting myself warmed up enough to remove several layers of clothing, I decided to check the plugs, expecting them to be wet. Wrong.... dry as a bone, even after tickling the carbs several times and kicking, and kicking and..... I checked the spark, which was ok, then dribbled some gas into each plug hole and replace the plugs. It fired on the first kick, but

(continued on page 5)

**Alan's Wrench - continued**

wouldn't idle. Aha, I says, hungry little beast wants more fuel, so I twisted the idle mixtures in a quarter turn or so (remember, these screws control the amount of air, not fuel, so less air means richer mixture). Push the ticklers, two kicks to prime, turn the key, and that wonderful deep rumble filled the driveway, nice and even on both pipes.

After a good warm-up I headed up Woodside road towards Alice's and breakfast. There was lots of slow traffic and rather than live dangerously, I stayed in line, idling up the hill in 3rd at about 30 mph. Well, by the time I got to the summit, both plugs were thoroughly fouled and the poor bike would barely run. Ah, the perils of winter cycling. After a quick plug-cleaning and a twist of the idle mixtures back out, all was well. I wish they were all that easy to diagnose and fix.

The Annual General Meeting and Christmas Bash is coming up next week (Friday, Dec. 9th), at Harry's Hoffbrau in Mtn. View. Our meeting there last month was well attended and the private meeting room coupled with the wide variety of reasonably priced meals make this the best meeting spot I've seen since Rick's in Palo Alto closed. On the agenda for the meeting are two items of importance: the election of officers and the final ratification of our independent existence as a club. You voted overwhelmingly in favor of making membership in **either** the Norton Owners Club-UK and/or the

United States Norton Owners Association strictly optional. Since we are all now equal and full members of this group irrespective of other associations, **we must have a name**. While our membership comprises both a branch of the NOC and a chapter of the USNOA, we are collectively a group in our own right. Proposed names so far include Norton Club of Northern Calif., N. Calif Norton Owners Association, Northern Nortons, Roadholders (already used by a rocker group, I think) and the Noccer League (a dark horse, but has a nice ring to it, don't you think).

Anyway, if you want to have a say in the naming of your club, please attend the AGM on Friday the 9th. If you are unable to attend, absentee ballots will be accepted up to 1 Jan 1989. The election of officers will be strictly by those present at the meeting, where candidates can be seduced into accepting by the free flow of intoxicating spirits.

As the year closes I'd like to thank you all for sharing my thoughts and mechanical adventures over the past 12 months. Unless someone else wants to experience this satisfaction, I'll be continuing for another year as editor, but that's it, no more. (honest). Your contributions and suggestions are essential to the Notice and invaluable to the spirit of the Club, so please write. Have a happy holiday season and new year of good health and safe motorcycling. Shiny side up.



Art Sirota's Shoptalk

Re-fitting the cylinder barrels to the crankcase on a Norton twin can be an easy job if you combine the right tools with the right technique. You can do it all by yourself.

Prior to reassembly, have the cylinders measured with a micrometer to determine if they need re-boring and honing, or just honing. Invite a friend over to remove all traces of old gasket material from the mating surfaces of the crankcase mouth and cylinder barrels. Carefully clean both surfaces with acetone or similar solvent and a clean rag. Purchase some piston ring clamps if you do not already have a pair.

Apply some clean engine oil to the piston rings and skirts. Compress the rings into their grooves with the ring clamps. Apply some Loctite Plastic Gasket or Loctite Gasket Eliminator to the top of the crankcase mouth. Do not worry about using too much as this product is anaerobic; that is, it dries only in the absence of oxygen. Any excess on the outside can be wiped off later with a rag; any excess on the inside of the motor will mix harmlessly with the engine oil. Don't use the cylinder base paper gasket, it isn't needed if either of the above products is used.

Position the cylinder barrels over the crankcase and begin to press the pistons into the bores. Hold the barrels in such a way that the bottom surface is parallel to the crankcase deck; that is, do not tilt the barrels either front-to-back or to one side. Now, with one quick motion press the pistons up into the bores. While supporting the barrels, look down and check to make sure that all of the piston rings are up in the bores. The next part is tricky because you have to keep supporting the barrels while not letting go of the pistons as you remove first one, then the other piston clamp. You can do it easiest by taking all the weight of the barrel with one hand while undoing the clamps with the other hand. Be careful not to touch or smear the gasket compound on the crankcase top.

Whew, the hard part is done. Now gently lower the barrel down over the crankcase studs. Don't forget to remove your foot from underneath first. On the 750 motor, you must start the nuts onto the base studs while the barrel is still about 1/2 inch away from the case, otherwise the bottom of the fins will be too close to the stud ends. This is also the time to fit stainless cylinder base nuts instead of the stock ones which

(continued on page 11)





The **UNITED STATES NORTON OWNERS ASSOCIATION** was formed in 1974 by a Virginia-Washington, D.C. based group of Norton riders concerned with the future of the Norton motorcycle. From this "local riding club" base we have expanded into an organization with an international membership of over 4,000. The purpose of **USNOA** has always been the enhancement of communication between Norton owners and the preservation of the Norton motorcycle.

The **CANADIAN NORTON OWNERS ASSOCIATION** was formed as a sister association in 1981 to encourage greater communication with and between Canadian riders. It is hoped that fellow enthusiasts in Canada will join in the effort to make **CNOA** a successful partner in preserving the past and insuring the future of the Norton in North America. Formation of local chapters is encouraged as local comradery is essential in the total enjoyment of the Norton experience.



BOTH ASSOCIATIONS work together and benefit from each other's experience. Our goals and services are expanding. We have over 2 dozen regional and local chapters providing locally scheduled rides, meetings and rallies. The national organization offers technical assistance, parts and service sources, classified advertising, and a forum for member originated modifications and maintenance procedures that are not found in the service manuals. The annual National Rally is held in a different part of the country each year so that all members might be able to attend a Norton convention without the need to ride cross country to get there. Past rallies have entertained nearly 500 Norton people with agendas including tech and accessory sessions, local tours, concours judging, field events, Norton movies, live entertainment and campfire gabfests. If you have never seen an International or an "S" model Commando, the National Rallies are the place where they seem to show up.

USNOA/CNOA presently offers three publications that are of great value to the Norton-oriented rider. The *Norton News* is the club's bimonthly newsletter and contains a "Nuts & Bolts" column concerned with maintenance, parts availability, and procedures useful in keeping Nortons on the road the face of dwindling local dealerships. The column is edited by Brian Slark, who has over 20 years of factory experience to draw from. *NN* also offers a free classified section to members, a Feature Bike (examples of some of the finer or more unique Nortons in existence), a Racing section,

accessory news, **AMA** updates, letters, feature articles dealing with owning and riding Norton motorcycles and the latest news on developments at the Norton factory.

Our *Parts/Service/Membership Directory* is an invaluable aid to the touring as well as the local Norton rider. It contains names and addresses of the membership as well as all the dealers in Norton parts and service that we are aware of. It is very handy for on-the-road assistance or those hard to find parts needed for winter rebuilds. The *P/S/M* is published approximately every 18 months.

USNOA/CNOAs also offering the *Technical Digest* containing all the maintenance bits that appeared in the first issues of *NN*, as well as all the applicable Norton service bulletins we have in our files. This is at least as valuable as any service manual you may now have, as it covers the practical "home grown" fixes that have been contributed by members over the first five years of the club's existence. The *TD*, in conjunction with a shop manual and your owner's manual, covers nearly every aspect of Commando maintenance and repair.

Our Library has a good and ever-growing selection of reprints from original magazine articles which prove invaluable if you are restoring a Norton or if you simply wish to know more about a certain model.

Dues are only \$15 (US Funds) a year and include both the *NN* and the *P/S/M* as well as the comradery of fellow Norton enthusiasts.

USNOA/CNOA MEMBERSHIP FORM DUES: \$15 PER YEAR

Make checks payable to "USNOA" or "CNOA" accordingly. Help us save some time, *Please use this form*. Check the appropriate category and note which address to send this form to.

- NEW MEMBERSHIP
 ALL RENEWALS

To:
Sue Ballard
RD.4, Box 4435
Mercer, PA 16137

- NEW CANADIAN MEMBERSHIP

To:
Bob Bennison
1801 King St. N.W.
Cranbrook, B.C.
Canada VIC 4Y7

Member Number _____ (USNOA or CNOA Renewals Only)

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State/Province _____

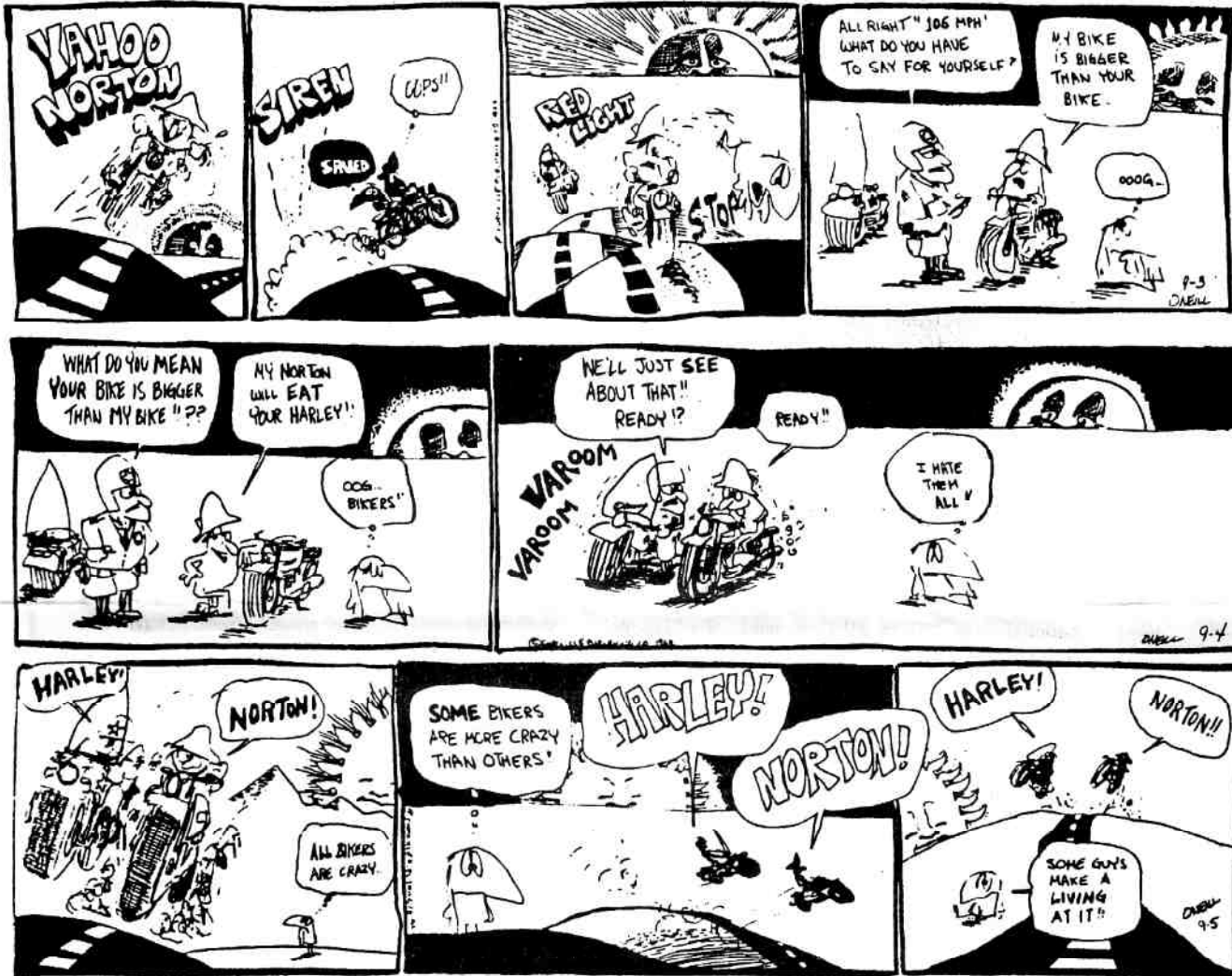
Zip/Postal Code _____

Telephone _____

Nortons Owned/Engine # (i.e. 72-750/200500) _____

TEN YEARS AGO

ODD BODKINS (reprinted with the permission of Dan O'Neill)
 As promised last month, Bruce the highway patrolman is going to take on Hugh in a crazy road race to determine whether Big NORTON is as fast as a CHP Harley. Hope you like it.



U.S.A. Helmet Laws Guide



History of Helmet Laws.

1966 U.S. Department of Transportation threatens to withhold millions of dollars in highway funds from states failing to enact compulsory helmet laws. By the end of 1967, 45 states had instituted the requirement.

1968 49 states enforce helmet laws. Only Ronald Reagan, then governor of California, refuses to sign the bill.

1969 Illinois repeals the helmet law as unconstitutional.

1975 President Gerald Ford signs a transportation bill which prevents the withholding of federal highway funds from states that do not enforce a mandatory helmet law. By 1977, 23 states repeal or amend their helmet law.

1980 With South Carolina amending their law to under 21, only 19 states retain a full mandatory helmet law.

1982 Louisiana becomes the first state to reinstate compulsory helmet law.

1988 Oregon and Nebraska pass full mandatory helmet laws, becoming only the 2nd and 3rd states to do so since 1968, as opposed to 31 states that have repealed the law or amended it to exclude most adults.

This Helmet Fact Card

compliments of





Art's Shoptalk - continued

rust. Tighten the nuts down in the correct order to the specified torque of 20 ft-lbs.

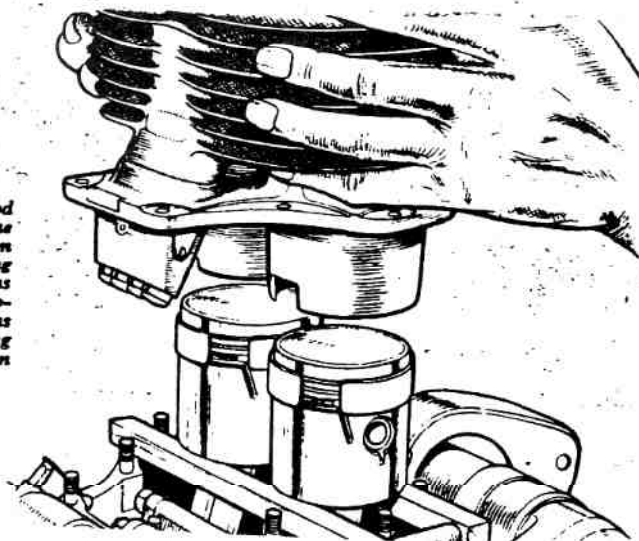
Here's a couple of details from my own experience. First of all, if you are fitting new rings to used pistons, use a ring expander tool to prevent broken rings or scratched pistons. Check the side clearance of the rings in the piston grooves especially if refitting old rings. Too much clearance here will allow the rings to rock in the groove, preventing them from ever seating. Always check the end-gap of the rings even if the shop says they already did it. It's easy and will buy you some peace of mind. Remove the rings from one piston at a time and note the position for reassembly in the same groove. Push each ring into the bottom of the bore, using the piston to line it up square in the barrel. Now measure the ring end gap with a feeler gauge. The recommended clearance is .010" min. If the gap is too big, that's

probably ok but if too small, the engine will surely seize as the piston expands more than the barrel. You can correct the end gap with a fine file, but be very careful not to nick the other surfaces.

When refitting the barrel to the crankcase, you can support the barrel flange on some pieces of wood about 1 in square, laid across the crankcase, while you remove the piston clamps. This will help prevent the clamp pieces from coming to rest inside the motor. Of course operator error is still possible, but take all the help you can get. See the factory recommendation below.

Finally, the base nuts can be accurately torqued by using the special Norton curved box wrench (p/n 12093). The small end fits the base nuts, sometimes requiring a bit of grinding on the wrench head to clear. The large end will accept the 1/2 in. square drive of a torque wrench. Be sure that the torque wrench handle is at right angle to the body of the wrench so that the reading will be accurate.

The factory method when refitting the cylinder block on twins is to fit ring clamps to the pistons which are then supported on two lengths of wood measuring about 1 x 1 1/2 x 7 1/2 in





LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

9/25/88

Dear Norton Notice,

A Norton motorcycle club seems like the best place to go for information about Nortons for sale. I am looking for a 1969 to 1972 Norton 750, with the later style rubber engine mounts, rear brake on the left and shifter on the right. I plan to use it frequently and do much of the maintenance myself. I have never owned a Norton before but have always liked them. Their exhaust always sounds good and they have a special look to them - the engine, frame, location of the fenders, etc. I got to borrow a friend's Royal Enfield 750 for a week or so, back in 1975 and that really sold me on the handling of English bikes. Even though that bike was fairly heavy at rest, it felt very sure once it was moving; slow-speed turns were very easy and I never felt that it would suddenly wobble and fall. Higher speeds were also very sure - going out Carmel Valley Road from hwy 1 it seemed to blend into the corners by itself. The Enfield was an experience I will never forget.

Hopefully a Norton is a little more practical than an Enfield, when it comes to upkeep, replacement parts, etc. Plus I would really hate to wear something out that is as rare as hen's teeth, unless I had my own machine shop and foundry. Anyway, a Norton has got to be at least as nice to ride as a Royal

Enfield twin and probably more practical if it is to be ridden regularly.

Anyway, I would like to join your club and begin to learn about such things as carburation, ignition, and major items like suspension, brakes, transmission and clutch. I hope to end up with a solid '69-'72 750 with a small tank (*roadster*). Drum brakes are ok, I'm not out to try and spit in Death's eye. I look forward to receiving the Norton Notice and attending some of your gatherings.

Cordially,
Soren David Tubergen
San Francisco

Being the owner of a 1968 Royal Enfield, I can agree with you as to the handling and difficulty of obtaining parts. I think you will find that the Norton feels a bit heavier at rest (higher center-of-gravity) and handles better at high speeds than the Enfield. The engine character is quite similar between the two, but the Norton gearbox is far superior to that of the Enfield, as is the longevity, due to a better lubrication system. Many of the technical items you mentioned are discussed in detail in our club Service Notes, available from Robert Briscoe, the paraphrenalia officer of the club. Watch the classifieds at the back of the Notice to find a machine which suits your requirements. And welcome to the club.



CLASSIFIEDS



For Sale: 750 Commando air cleaner \$7
Luggage rack \$15, Norton belt buckle
(pewter) \$5, Fiberglass 's' type side
covers \$10 ea, 's' exhaust dogleg
bracket \$5. Art Sirota 327-3167 /12

Wanted: 69-72 Commando, will also
consider 850's. This will be my first
Norton, so I will probably need
technical data and parts info. Thanks
Soren D. Tubergen, 245 Northpoint
#414, San Francisco, Ca 94133 /12

For Sale: 1957 Model 77 in very good
condition. It's about 80% complete and
has a fresh top end. Asking \$1800.
Call John Tristad at (408) 279 1816
/9

For Sale: Offer or Trade:
MK3 Bottom End
MK3 Gearbox Covers
MK3 Primary Case and internals
MK2 & MK3 Footrest, brakepedal
MK2 & MK3 Gearbox Cradles
Hepolite 850 +.020 Pistons, new
Wanted:
Disk brake fork sliders
Speedo drive, any condition
Straight Con.Rod #23258-R10R
850 PreMK3 Crank & Cases
Cerriani Roadrace Fork Bushes
complete 72-74 Ducati 750s
Contact Chris Nichols (415)965-4611
/9

The following list of parts is for sale
or trade. Prices do not include
shipping but most items can be
shipped within 2 days for \$5-10. All
parts are in working condition:

- Roadster tank and side covers \$75
- Swing arm & trans cradle, g.c. \$40
- Dunstall 2-1-2 system, fair cond.
painted black \$45
- MKIII headlight w/harness, has
some dents \$25
- Stainless rear fender, g.c. \$25
- Front fender, fair cond. \$25
- Rear wheel with hub, needs
new chrome \$30
- 750 oil tank, good cond \$15
- 750 frame w/swingarm, fair \$40
- Early commando fork yokes gc \$30
- Early commando taillight, g.c \$15
- 750 center stand, g.c \$20
- front forks w/sliders, g.c \$50
- front sliders only, g.c \$15ea
- Foot peg & brake pedal, fair \$15
- Clutch basket, good \$20
above with chain \$30
- Early style light/horn switch \$15
- Early model side stand, g.c. \$15

Also for sale:
1974 850 Interstate, only 3000
miles on engine. Has electronic
ignition, needs sidecovers, master
cylinder, front tire. Garaged & not run
for 10 years. \$900
1970 750 Roadster, in parts, no
engine, asking \$500.

Bill Bernard, 122 Wessels Way,
Templeton, CA 93465 or call
(805) 434-2797 after 5 pm

/9

(continued on page 14)



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

MINUTES OF THE 11/10/88 MEETING OF No. Calif. NOC

We seem, finally, to have found an excellent South Peninsula site. Harry's Hofbrau in Mountain View, thanks to the diligent scouting of Harry Bunting. The 15+ members present readily approved it for the annual Christmas Party and election meeting, to be held 12/9. The food is good and bounteous, as is the choice of brews. The meeting room was both roomy and quiet.

Anticipating the coming election, and recalling the recent difficulty in securing willing candidates for club offices, a motion was passed to make membership in the club free for the President, Vice President/Ride Coordinator, Norton Notice Editor and Secretary/Treasurer. Additionally, the club will pay half the cost of membership in the NOC and/or INOC for these officers.

Harry reported that the club has approximately \$1600 in the bank. Membership is about 170, down slightly.

The club continues to struggle with what to call itself, now that it is no longer an official branch of the NOC. The favored proposal at the meeting seemed to be Northern California Norton Association but, given the lack of consensus for this or any other suggestion, a decision was postponed until the December meeting.

TIRE WEAR MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE

--Marick Payton

Last spring I restored a basket case 850, trying to keep costs to a minimum. This meant leaving it shod as I found it. After a good bit of work and \$500 in parts, it was again roadworthy. Well, not quite. It seemed hard to initiate a turn with this bike, relative to my sweet handling Combat, and, once a turn was initiated, it had a tendency to fall in to the turn.

Foolishly trying the hard stuff first, I rebuilt the forks and reshined the swinging arm and isolastics. All good moves, but none really solved the problem. Finally, the advent of wet weather and a pronounced tendency for the rear end to slip around therein caused me to carefully examine the rubber. The front tire seemed fine but the rear had worn very flat across the tread, obviously having been ridden most of its life on straightaways.

A light dawned: to turn I was having to force the bike over the edge of the rear tire, almost an inch-and-a-half off the centerline. Once it had rolled onto this edge, it naturally tended to roll on over it. Needless to say, a new rear tire restored the notable crisp, light, stable handling for which Nort's are famous.

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1 yr	\$60	\$120	\$240

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Munroe has three mechanics that are familiar with Nortons and have been for a number of years. We can replace exhaust ports with the head on the bike and don't know of anyone else who can. The job looks like original factory! Call for a quote on shop prices. We also have a good Norton parts supply.



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