



# Norton Notice



The Newsletter of the  
Northern California Norton Owners Club

No. 184

September, 1993

**Alan Goldwater and friend  
at the INOC Rally in Havana, Illinois...  
IN A HARLEY GOLF CART?!**



**Bob Marin of the Chicago NOC looks on as  
Alan's passenger wishes he was on a Norton**

**Also inside: Tech Tips galore, and a new feature!**



is published by the Northern California 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.

The *NORTON NOTICE* is a reflection of the 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. (Good taste is somewhat optional, but hey- this is a group of bikers we're talking about here... that's why we have an editor.)

*The deadline for items to be submitted for publication is the 20th of each month.* The *NORTON NOTICE* welcomes contributions submitted electronically. Material in MS Word or Aldus Page-maker on a Macintosh 3.5" disc is ideal. You may also send it directly to the editor via modem at the telephone number listed for the Editor; set your telecom software for 8/n/1, use the XMODEM file transfer protocol, and just ring up the Editor who is home most evenings.

Membership in the Northern California Norton Owners Club is available for \$20.00 per year. 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 listed on the mailing label of the *NORTON NOTICE* and the membership card.

**All changes of address should go to the Branch Secretary/Treasurer- not the *NOTICE* editor.**

The Northern California Norton Owners Club is affiliated with both the Norton Owners Club of England and the International Norton Owners Association. Interested persons can join these two organizations per the terms described on the Branch membership application form.

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### IMPORTANT (Please take note of the following fine print):

The object of the Northern California Norton Owners Club is to promote, encourage and develop 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 members 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 materials 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.

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## Upcoming Events

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### Club Rides Schedule

*September 12:* the Old Timer's Ride and Club Picnic (yes, the BSA Club is invited again!)

*October 17th:* Hollister Ride

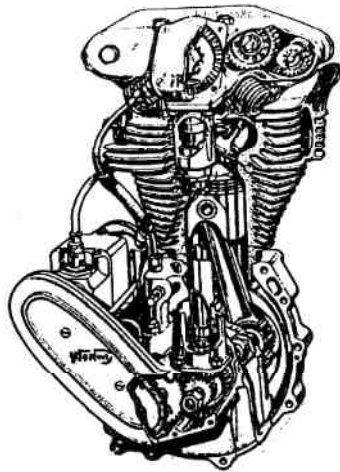
*November 14th:* Santa Cruz Ride

*December-* no Club ride- Christmas Party

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### Activities at a glance...

*September 12- The Old Timer's Ride*  
Same time, place, cast of characters and channel as last year. Huckleberry Flat is excellent that time of year.



### Meeting Schedule

*The Club meets on the second Thursday of each month. The meetings are SUPPOSED to start at 8:00 PM. If you get tired of bench racing, bring a newspaper to read.*

September 9- *South Bay*  
*Ken Armann's Shop*  
851 McGlincey La., Campbell, CA-  
...tech sessions, bench racing, grub, etc.

October 14- *Peninsula*  
*The Prince of Wales Pub*  
off 25th Avenue, San Mateo  
Great food, great grog, and tons of vibes.

November 11-  
*Harry's Hoffbrau*  
Near Castro Street, Mountain View

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### Graphics Contributions

**Photography:**  
Steve Coburn, Alan Goldwater,  
Lou Caputo

**Press Production and Halftones:**  
John & Carrie Follett:  
*White Oak Press, San Carlos, CA*

# Norton

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**My Point of View ....**

by Joe Edwards, President

Wow!, Great!, *Out of Sight!* This is Too Much! Best that I've Seen! This Has to be an Amusement Park! These are just some of the comments that we heard during the Gathering of Nortons at the Dardanelle Resort. The sun was bright and the roads were wide open and fast. This year at the Gathering of Nortons we had a great group of people and bikes. There was a great 1963 BSA, Mike Pollack rode an out of sight Triumph. We had a Kbike from southern California ridden by a great pal, Gene Sherbank. Gene now does understand why the Norton is the King of the Tight curves. The group this year showed some return of last years folks and a few new faces. All in all we had about 22 motorcycles and 30 folks having an outstanding time. The weather was with out a doubt the best it could have been. Some of the group visited Markleville, some Bridgeport, another made the 249 mile swing to Yosemite. So as you can see, we had some great times both around the fireplace and riding.

The folks at the Dardenelle Resort really made us feel great, they let us know that they would like to have us back again next year, if the club would like to make the trip. You know as you sit back and look at the vintage that made the Dardelle trip, you realize that a lot of the folks behind the scenes make all this possible. When we needed parts, we have places like Phil Radford at Fair Spares, Bob Raber at Raber Parts Mart, folks on the other side of the bay like Mean Marshalls. Let us not forget Munroe Motors whose folks do a great job covering the City. Also how many of us out there have had the hands of Bill Mankins at Rabers, Jim Carton over in Berkeley, who has that touch of British Bikes and other makes. Also the guy can bend a few corners on that red Norton of his. He also is the type of guy who will go that extra mile to keep those Nortons on the road. Now how about the guy they call THE

DOCTOR, Ken Armann. Now those of you who have had Ken touch your bike, you know that he really gets to know each and every one of you. I was with Ken one Sunday at Alices, darn if he did not have an interesting story about each and every bike. And, of course, each and everyone was great.

Those of you who have made a trip to Ken's shop know that Bench Racing does abound. Least we forget those lessons on staying well and taking care of your Norton. Also you know that Phil Radford, when not up to his ears in keeping Nortons parts line open all over the country, is always willing to keep them running, the Brit bikes that is.

You know, I guess we are kind of spoiled in this part of the country, to have some of the greatest parts and service you can have. Having a cup of coffee with Bob Raber or talking with Bill when you can, about fast bikes and great quite moments in the country, a shop filled with great motorcycle history. Letting Ken Armann tell you his great tales of catching that big fish and sending it back to motor (sic) nature. All in all, no matter who may sell parts or service, without the help of those folks, the Norton might not be so well seen on the roads we all travel. I know that some of you out there, do all your own work on the Brit you own, but is it not a great feeling to have all that help so close at hand. So, if you will, please let them know how we feel. Let me touch on one more thing, we have the Old Timers Ride coming up the 12th of September. Keep in mind it all starts at Alices Restaurant at 9:30 A.M. We will be at Huckleberry Park getting ready to serve a good meal. Also remember, we will be taking nominations fo officers in the Northern California Norton Owners Club for 1994. I hope to see you at the next meeting.... THATS MY POINT OF VIEW!!

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## Minutes of August Meeting

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The August 12th meeting of the N.C.N.O.C. was called to order at approximately 8:15 P.M. by Grover Buhr.

The meeting place was Norton's Bar and Grill in the Clarion Hotel in Millbrae.

Joe Edwards and Brad Green got off to an early start of the Gathering of Nortons at the Dardenelles. With both the President and the Vice-President gone and no motions to be voted on this was a very casual meeting.

Grover reminded all in attendance of the busy weekend for Norton riders. This is the weekend for the Gathering of Nortons and Jerry Joliffs Delta Days Ride.

Under Old Business Grover took time to remind all that the September venue for the meeting will be Ken Armann's British Restoration and Motorcycle Repair on September 9th. Ken's wife will supply food, donations will be accepted after the meeting.

The following weekend is the Old Timers Ride and club Picnic (possibly the largest event of the year for the Norton Club). Remember this is also the time to nominate new officers for the club.

Jerry J. stated that any one interested in the Delta Ride should meet at 9 A.M. Sunday at Highway 84 and Mission Blvd.

Grover was looking for help moving Saturday August 21st.

Lou C. gave a brief report and shared pictures of the National Event in Illinois. Approximately 350 people attended. Lou mentioned that the 20th anniversary National in 1995 will be held

in New York, and 1996 will be in California again. Possibly Quincy.

John Bria was seen selling pins and shirts.

John Covell stated that Southern California Bike will start listing Norton Club events.

With many member headed to the Dardenelles there were only 16 members and guests at the meeting. Two new members signed up. Six Nortons were spotted in the parking lot.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

*Respectfully submitted,*

**Duncan Furguson**



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## Whazz Happ'nin

*...regional news of the NCNOC*

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### Peninsula Report

*by Jerry Jolliff*

I feel that I should apologize to the NCNOC for suggesting we use the Clarion Hotel (Norton's Restaurant) for the past August 12 Club Meeting.

Although my intentions were admirable and even though Joe Edwards backed me up by calling and confirming the use of the sign facing the freeway, "...the best laid plans of mice and men sometimes go astray." No sign. No parking. No separate waitress. So separate room. And so, we need to come up with a new venue in The City or close nearby to it. Let's come up with some new ideas and take a vote on somewhere next meeting.

How do you feel about this?- I suggest that we hand-walk a "store copy" of the Norton Notice into all the motorcycle shops and pin it to the "for sale" bulletin boards. The reason is that "Ned A. Norton" might read it, see how active we are, want to join our club, and thereby increase our revenues.

### East Bay Report

*by Duncan Ferguson*

Delta Daze..... I met Jerry in Niles at about 8:30 A.M. for a wake up Irish Coffee prior to the ride to Bethel Island. To our surprise when we went out to start our bikes it was raining. What a way to start a ride. With the roads wet, we passed on Morgan Territory Road and took Vasco Road instead. (Not a bad alternative.) Not as twisty but medium

curves allowing lots of speed.

The people of Bethel Island put on a Delta Daze every year. This year featured a 50's Bash with a car and motorcycle show. Approximately 200 cars and 25 bikes. Wearing our Norton shirts and parking our bikes in front of the local watering hole got us at least 2 free drinks (coke of course).

All kidding aside, wearing the Norton shirts we were stopped many times and asked if we were the owners of the beautiful bikes parked on Main Street. Jim from Winters, Jerry and I enjoyed all that attention.

It took at least two hours to take in the site of all the show cars and bikes. We did enjoy the BBQ but left before the bands started to crank it up.

Prior to heading home we bumped into Harry, Grover, Lou, John Bria and Alan Mueller. Vasco Road is as fast as you would care to make it but remember it is well patrolled - even in the air and radar is used - as well as used by boaters and campers.

THANKS again Jerry. I really enjoyed the ride !!

On August 8th, I took a ride up to Alices Restaurant — it was nice to see so many British bikes in the area.

I had planned to go on the 3 Bridges run with Brad Green, but last minute problems with the battery changed my mind. Something about H4 headlights wanting so much of the juice. I heard from a couple of friends after the ride that it was a little cold crossing the Golden Gate Bridge but over all well worth the trip. The run started in Oakland, crossed the Bay Bridge, then the Golden Gate Bridge

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to Sausalito for a stop then across the San Rafael Bridge. I plan to make this run next year.

The Fremont Iron Rides put on their annual Full Moon Poker Run out of Sunol this month. I did make this event. A lot of fun was had by all. My buddy Ken K. took the trophy for best chopper with his 1957 Harley. The East Bay sure does have some nice roads to take the Norton on.. See you in Niles..... LET'S RIDE !!!...

## South Bay Report

by *Maya Lai*

This month took me to Santa Fe. It was hot and dusty but over all it was fun. I saw two Norton Roadsters, two Triumph Bonnies and two BSA Victors. I guess that everything travels in twos down there. I stopped at the local bike british bike shop, which was in Albuquerque, Southwest Cycles. Specializing in our usual, but with the fringe benefit of Japanese bikes, which were strewn everywhere. You could bearly walk through the place, the nicest thing they had there was the Cat. If anyone ever calls Raber's place a dump, I suggest that you go to this shop It will definately open your eyes.

I also went to the New Indian show room. Very nice, I have heard alot of mixed comments about the shop but if all goes well, I think Harley-Davison may have some good competition. It seems that when they had first opened the show room they were fire bombed. Interesting to see who did that. The natives or HD people. The Indian was on it's way to Sturgis.

We will see.

The Norton gathering was great. It was the first time in a long time that I was able to get Carollyn away from her drafting table. The weather was nice and Carollyn, Bruce McGregor, Mice Pawlak, and Chester had the camp site. Tom Dable, and Alan G. and some others huddled around our great camp fire watching for falling stars. The sound of all the Nortons brought back memories of the Rally's sound of Roaring Nortons everywhere.

Over all, It was great fun to be with the guys.

## NOC Member Profile

NAME: Al Mueller

AGE: 52

CITY RESIDENT: San Carlos

MARITAL: Married, two sons (20 & 22)

OCCUPATION: Dentist

NOC MEMBER SINCE: 1991

HOW FIRST BECAME INVOLVED WITH NOC: Knew John Bria, who told me about the '91 rally and that seemed like fun.

CLUB OFFICES HELD (YEARS): N.N. Editor (1994)

NORTON(S) OWNED, DESCRIBED:

'75 Commando Mk3 Roadster 850

OTHER MAKES OF MOTORCYCLE: '82 Suzuki 550 GSL

WHAT FIRST INTERESTED YOU IN THE NORTON? John had one, Ken Armann had 'em—sounded good; took a ride, it felt good too.

OTHER HOBBIES/INTERESTS OF NOTE? Music (banjo), photography, tennis.

FAVORITE MOTORCYCLING ROAD/RIDE: Skyline Blvd. and SR 84 down near Pescadero. (I also found a great one on Vancouver Island.)

IF YOU COULD REDESIGN THE NORTON, WHAT ONE THING WOULD YOU MOST WANT TO CHANGE? HOW AND WHY? The electric start—one that worked without having to be repaired.

FAVORITE/MOST EMBARRASSING EPISODE ON A NORTON? I laid it down one time while it was standing still. My bootheel slipped! [Yeah, right.]

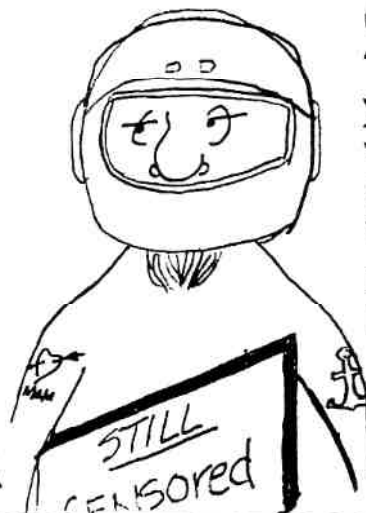
*Thank you!*

# Clayton 'n Gus

by Andy McKerral

Uh, Gus... don't look now,  
but yer *Nekkid!*  
Weren't you goin'  
RIDING?

Yep.



'member what  
Covell said?...

"...th most fun  
you can have  
with your clothes  
ON?"

Well... I thought  
I'd take the  
PLUNGE!



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## **In Search of the Perfect Norton**

*By Robert Newman*

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### **SUBJECT:CAMPING TOILET KIT**

In my opinion, a motorcycle camper should be prepared to hit the road within 30 minutes of deciding to go. Impossible? Not if your equipment is already prepared and standing by.

Under the general heading of luggage, this article will focus on one essential component of a motorcyclists equipment...the Toilet Kit.

We want it to be (1)small, (2) mess free, and(3) effective.

Hiking stores carry a pouch with a length-wise zipper about 2 1/2 x 4 x 8 inches made by Outdoor Products. Though small, it easily holds your necessities.

Starting with body soaps, avoid bar soap and plastic soap boxes unless you want a slimy mess in a leaky box. Instead fill a 4 oz. squeeze bottle with liquid body soap which is dispensed through a little nozzle in the cap.

The same goes for shampoo, but use a different type of squeeze bottle to avoid confusion. Squeeze bottles are usually available from hiking stores but a washed out Elmer's Glue

bottle works also. Opt for the flattened ones rather than the round ones. They fit better in the pouch.

Here again, the flattened stick deoderants are best, such as Mennen Speed Stick.

Throw in a toothbrush. No plastic case is needed. Use a small tube of toothpaste (4oz) or less.

Use a small, plastic non-breakable comb.

A face cloth will also serve as a towel. Just wring it out and it becomes very absorbent though still damp. Towels are bulky and only a bit more effective, so don't sweat being without one.

An option on the towel is a synthetic absorbent material called **PACK TOWEL** which rolls up to less than the size of a paper towel core.

Other items - scissors with stainless blades and plastic handles, razors of the disposable type, a sewing kit from the hiking store, a plastic mirror, lip balm, sun screen, bug repellent, dental floss. etc....

Set your assembled kit on the shelf with other camping equipment and you will be a lot closer to leaving than you are now....

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## *Cool-Tec*

Oil Coolers for the Norton Commando motorcycle



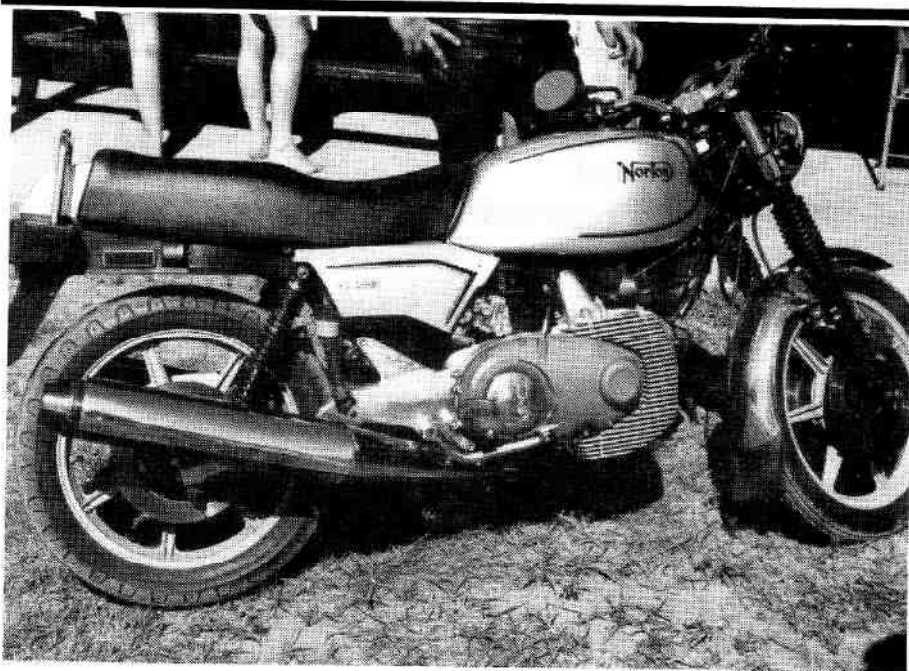
- Replaces stock side cover, using original bolts
- Solid-state design - no hoses or fittings to leak oil
- Install or remove easily in just minutes!
- Lowers oil temperature by up to 15 degrees

Prices:	primer finish	\$99.95
	painted, with decal	\$129.95

please specify black, silver, red or primer  
and 750, 850 or MkIII decal

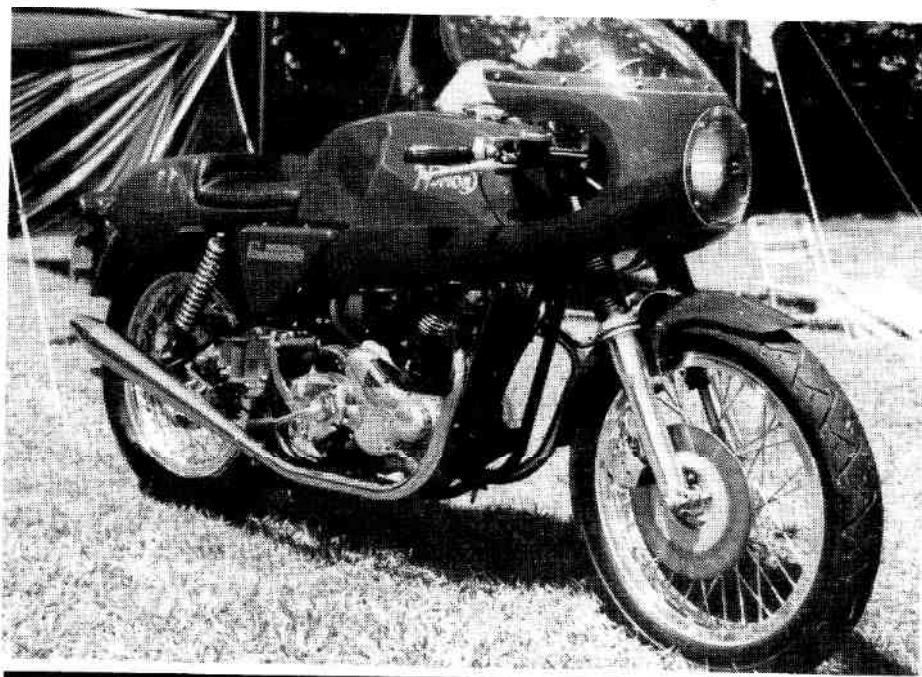
Available from:  
Magic Devices  
1780 Chanticleer Avenue  
Santa Cruz, CA 95062  
(408) 475-7505

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What a great way to spend your winter...

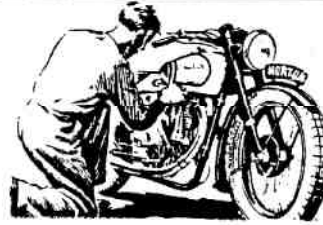
building class iron



## Alan's Wrench

Tech Tips and Gossip by  
Alan Goldwater

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This is the first of a series of articles describing ongoing research. The broad emphasis will be on the use of conventional engineering practice to improve the Norton motorcycle. My goal is to understand the failure modes and design limits of the Commando since that is what I ride, but the principles and techniques will apply to any air-cooled motorcycle.

One of the most often-discussed issues in bench-racing sessions is that of lubricants. There seems to be a consensus that modern multigrade engine oils are preferable to the single-weight specified by the factory, offering better lubrication and longevity. For many years I used a leading brand of 20w-50 and found that most other Norton riders concurred in my choice.

About a year ago on a long ride I encountered a performance limit of the Commando which led me to question this choice. On a ride to Sacramento my engine suddenly started to seize. I noticed the loss of power and stopped immediately, so no damage was done, but when I checked the engine oil, I found it had turned into a watery brown liquid with a smell of burned hamburger grease! I wasn't totally surprised, since it was close to 100 that day and we had been riding hard. What did surprise me was how fast it happened, since the oil was

fresh when we started, less than 200 miles back.

Prompted by this event, I did some research into the thermal behavior of oils. Modern oils are carefully formulated from a variety of oil "feedstocks" and several other chemicals are added to enhance various properties. Some common additives are plastic polymers (viscosity improver), zinc (resists scuffing), and detergents (sludge prevention).

The maximum thermal specification of an oil is the flash point. This is the temperature at which the lightest ingredient will vaporize enough to burn, and is a good indicator of the peak temperature limit of the oil. Most major-brand 20-50 oils have a flash point of 425-440 degrees F. Some breakdown and oxidation occurs at lower temperatures and a few manufacturers also quote a maximum continuous service temp. (275-325 F.) I recently found three oils which have somewhat higher flash points, AMSOIL (482), Havoline Formula3 (465) and Pennzoil GT Perf. (460). I also found Kendall GT-1 rated at only 390.

Next I researched the thermal behavior of the motorcycle. I used several thermocouples to measure temperature at various spots around the engine and oil tank. For a test track I chose Highway 152 through Casa de Fruita. This road has a

flat straight section ten miles long, with easy turn-arounds at both ends. It also offers steady, high ambient temperature and little wind. Test runs of 10 miles were found to be enough for engine temperatures to stabilize at various steady speeds. Oil temp required 20 miles to stabilize.

Here are some typical temperatures at a steady highway speed of 65 mph in 90 degree still air:

cylinder head - 275: cylinder base 230: cam cover 210: engine oil intake 190. At a steady 75 mph these temperatures were all about 10 degrees higher.

During the testing I noticed an interesting effect. At the end of each test as I exited the divided highway and slowed to a stop, the cylinder head temp shot up to around 325 and as I idled the motor it continued to rise. It would stay over 300 up to around 40 mph, and would gradually drop as speed increased. The oil temperature also rose, but much more slowly. An extended period of idling (10 minutes) produced a maximum of 375 degrees at the right rear head bolt, and Lou Caputo says he measured around 400 degrees at a spark plug! This points out the extreme sensitivity of head temp to air flow over the fins.

To summarize what I have learned so far:

- 1) The Norton Commando is capable under extreme riding conditions of experiencing engine temperatures which cause rapid breakdown of commonly used oils.
- 2) The only place on the engine where such extreme temperatures can occur is

the cylinder head.

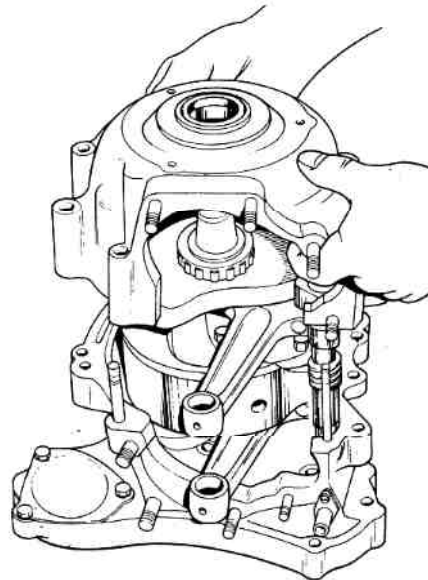
- 3) The condition which is most likely to create oil-destroying temperature is reduced airflow over the cylinder head, especially following or combined with high-speed or uphill riding.

- 4) All oils are not equal and some differ greatly from the norm in their maximum temperature rating.

Things To Avoid:

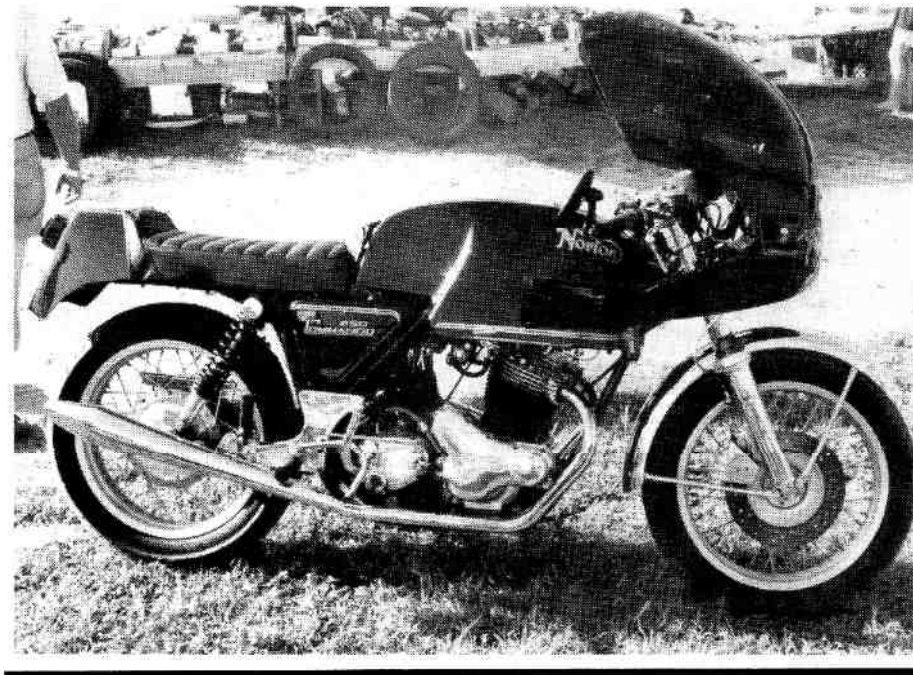
- 1) Kendall GT-1 oil
- 2) Drafting behind trucks
- 3) Riding hard with tailwind
- 4) Being stuck in traffic

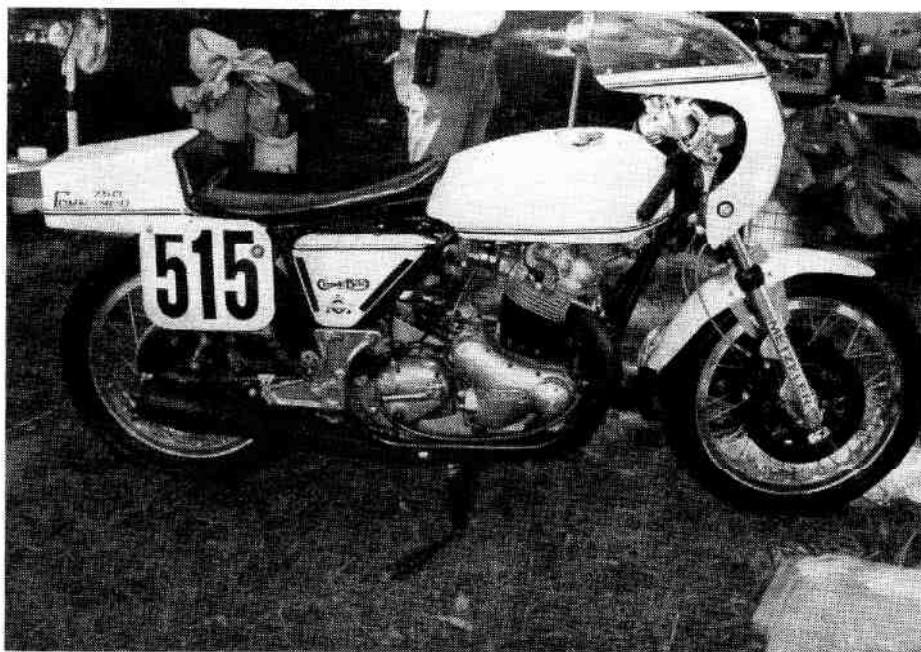
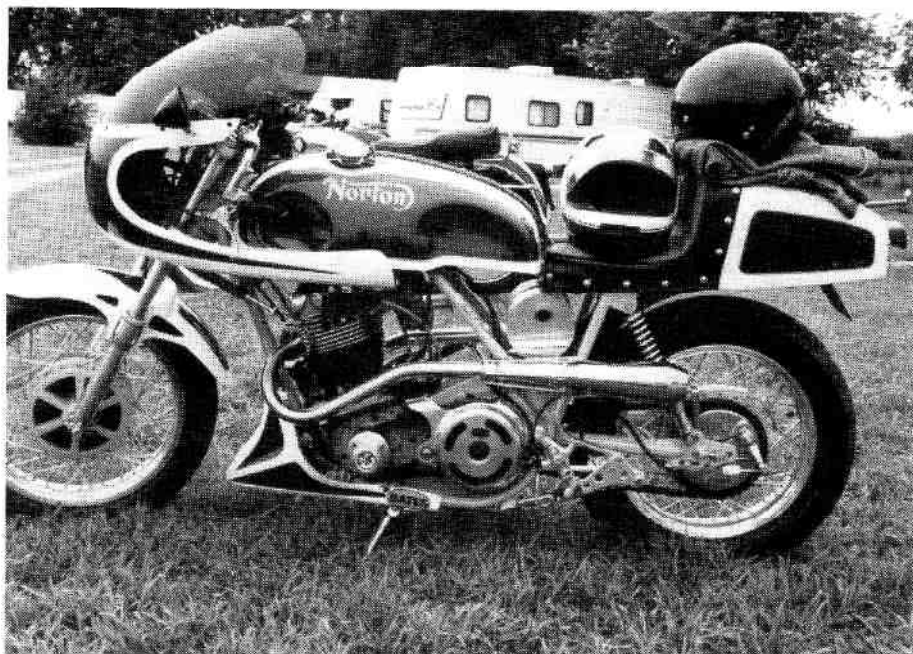
Next month, I'll present additional research and propose some solutions to this particular limit of Norton performance.





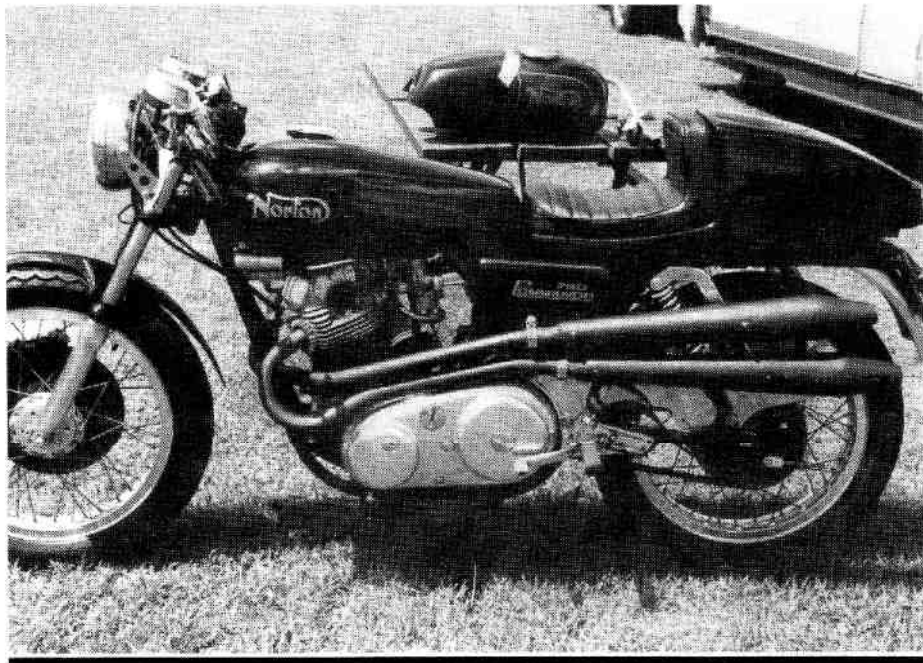
That's what rallies are for... to **FLAUNT IT!**







...some more great "Meat Shots" from the  
INOC Rally in Havana, Illinois  
*courtesy of Lou Caputo*





## Classified Advertisements

**Wanted** Information of any kind on 1963-65 on Norton Electra- pictures or tech. info. Call Lani or Stan at (510) 793-0704

**Wanted:** BMW System 1, 2, or 3 helmet. Size, paint, visor, cushions unimportant- sound construction IS, however. Call Tom O'Donnell at (408) 356-9353 any time/leave msg.

**Wanted:** 2 into 1 exhaust pipes. Any condition. Needed for my '58 Nomad so I can use it for the Old Timer's Ride. Any help appreciated. Call Steve at (408) 476-1319.

**Wanted:** Interstate Side Covers- call Herb Poppe (818) 248-8135

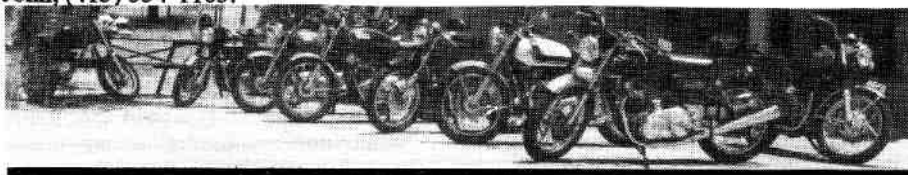
**For Sale:** 850 head-bare-needs finishing- RH4 w/ contoured ports-\$95.00; 850 bronze valve guides (new)- set of 4-\$30.00; 850 cylinder barrel-std.- \$130.00; 850 cylinder barrel +.040" NEW bore- \$190.00; 850 pistons +.020 and +.040 NEW- machined w/ valve clearance pockets- w/ rings and pins- \$165.00 set; 850 pistons- used but good- \$50.00; 850 ring sets +.020 and +.040- \$50.00 set; 850 Mark 3 rear hub drive star NEW- \$30.00; new buffers- \$12.00; Genuine Norvil fairing front bracket- NEW- \$50.00; Williams Type "S" exhaust system- beautifully handmade-\$160.00; FOR THE MOTION PICTURE PURIST!: 16mm Bolex camera- \$500.00. WANTED: 750 RH5 head or RH6 head, 5-speed gearbox. Prices negotiable (maybe)... call Chris Nichols at (415) 965-4611

**For Sale:** One matched pair Amal carburetors (32 mm) w/manifolds and a K&N air cleaner. These came off my Commando Mk.3 when I converted to Mikuni. They work, but no warranty as to how soon they'll need resleeving. \$50. John, (415) 334-1183.

**For Sale:** '75 Mk III 850 Roadster, Gilmer primary drive, single 36mm Amal carb; H4 headlamp, Dunstall 2 into 1 into 2 exhaust, Grimeca front master cylinder, -3 braided hose. \$2500 or ....**For Sale:** '68 P-11A Ranger, mostly original appearing. Matching frame, engine and G/box Serial Numbers. Non original stuff: very hot photocell triggered ignition and Marzocchi twin disc front end off Ducati, -3 braided hose, Grimeca master cylinder. Needs one-off T-stem made; installed item is Mickey Mouse. Includes COMPLETE spare P-11 engine with engine plates and matching SN G/box (earlier magneto equipped version) and extra Police alternator. Have owned it over ten years, ridden 10-20 miles total. Engine appears to have never had head or cylinder removed! There aren't many of these around. A must have for the Compleat Norton Fanatic! Could include service tools, Whitworth stuff. Call Tom Davenport, 415-924-6558.

**For Sale:** 1974 Commando. Interstate tank, black, custom paint. Rita ignition, top end rebuilt. Very recent high output alternator, luggage rack, saddle bags. \$2,800 OBO. Call Clark Samson (415) 927-4559.

**For Sale:** 71 Commando. Fresh red paint, new seat, new Dunlops, rebuilt trans., Konis, rebuilt front end, new Isolastics- all stock-runs great. No leaks. Factory manual- extras- Fred Twigg tuned and ready to ride anywhere. Has oil filter added. \$2,700, or trade for???- Call Chaz at (707) 578-1712



**Norton TRIUMPH**  
**DUCATI CAGIVA**  
**MOTO GUZZI**  
**MUNROE MOTORS, INC.**

MOTORCYCLE  
 SALES - SERVICE - PARTS

SINCE 1958

Munroe has three mechanics who 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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