

# Norton Notice

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

750cc

**BERLINER**  
MOTOR CORPORATION  
*Hastbrook Heights, New Jersey*



**Norton**

**COMMANDO**

For more details, Norton Commando 750 cc is available in the Norton Superstore. Cycling performance.



NO. 77 SEPTEMBER 1984

# Norton Notice

The Newsletter of The Northern California Branch



is published monthly 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.

Deadline for items to be submitted for publication is the 21st of each month.

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MEMBERSHIP IN THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH OF THE NORTON OWNERS CLUB IS AVAILABLE FOR \$25.00 PER YEAR.

MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE PAYABLE TO THE BRANCH SECRETARY/TREASURER, WHOSE NAME IS SHOWN ABOVE.

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 NUMBER 745 WITH DUES EXPIRING ON THE 1st OF FEBRUARY.

ALL CHANGES OF ADDRESS SHOULD GO TO THE BRANCH SECRETARY/TREASURER, NOT THE NORTON NOTICE EDITOR.

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.

Subscription to the NORTON NOTICE only is available for \$15.00 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.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

|              |            |  |                            |
|--------------|------------|--|----------------------------|
| SEPTEMBER 13 | 7:30 P.M.  | RICK'S SWISS CHALET<br>4085 EL CAMINO WAY<br>PALO ALTO | SEPTEMBER<br>MEETING       |
| SEPTEMBER 16 | AFTER NOON | SANTA CLARA COUNTY<br>SAN JOSE                         | AMA MILE<br>RACES          |
| SEPTEMBER 23 | 9:00 A.M.  | BAY BRIDGE TOLL<br>PLAZA PARKING LOT                   | NEVADA CITY<br>OVERNIGHTER |
| OCTOBER 6    | EVENING    | CAL-EXPO FAIRGROUNDS<br>SACRAMENTO                     | AMA MILE<br>RACES          |
| OCTOBER 11   | 7:30 P.M.  | UNDECIDED  | OCTOBER<br>MEETING         |
| OCTOBER 21   | 10:00 A.M. | SAUSALITO PERRY<br>LANDING                             | WINE COUNTRY<br>RIDE       |

NOTICE! In the event of rain on the day of a club ride, the ride is automatically postponed one week. Also, riders should have plenty of oil and gasoline by the scheduled departure time and all personal problems should be taken care of. In other words....  
FULL TANKS AND EMPTY BLADDERS!

Ahh, summertime! All of the events almost make up for the wet, cold weather of last winter (if you can even remember back that far). The NOC summer rally is history; if you weren't there you'll never believe the great time everyone had: perfect weather, good company, excellent campsites, and the most scenic Norton road in the world. When we weren't riding bikes or drinking beer, there were \$400 worth of door prizes to give away. Below is a list of the winners (almost everyone won something) along with the contributor of the gift. My thanks to the Norton bike shops that so generously donated the prizes, they didn't have to but they still did. You might show your thanks by buying your next set of points or belt drive primary from one of them.

A. Goldwater--Eclipse Tank Bag--TT Motors, R. Billings--\$25 Gift Certificate--TT Motors, W. Wolbertus--Dunlop KBI Tyre--Rabers European Cycle Works, W. Wolbertus--\$25 Gift Certificate--Rabers European Cycle Works (Will bought two rally entry fees), A. Driskell-- \$50 Labor Gift Certificate--Rabers European Cycle Works, C. Berleffi-- NDC Tee Shirt--N. Cal. Branch NOC, Scot Marburger--Set Norton Rubbers-- Ed Brooks, E. Billings--Set Norton Rubbers--Ed Brooks, K. Becht-- Workshop Manual--Ed Brooks, Phil Radford--Decoke Gasket Kit--Ed Brooks, K. Becht--Decoke Gasket Kit--Ed Brooks, G. Formo--Decoke Gasket Kit--Ed Brooks, T. Muller--Engine Sprocket Puller--Ed Brooks, J. Young--Header Pipes--Bub Enterprises, S. Meisson--\$25 Gift Certificate--Westbay, R. Watkins--\$25 Gift Certificate--West Bay, B. Berleffi--\$25 Gift Certificate--West Bay, G. Austin--\$25 Gift Certificate-- West Bay.

Apologies to those whose names got mutilated, but Phil was writing in the dark to get the names down and his records aren't the most legible.

A special thanks goes out to the folks at the Ventena campground for giving us the chance. I think we kind of dissappointed them with all the noise and corruption we DIDN'T make. Also my personal thanks to Pat Austin for keeping me from burning the weiners Saturday night.

As usual, the hard core of the club provided the inertia to get the thing off the ground in the

first place: Gene Austin for finding Ventena and making the arrangements with them, Phil Radford for tracking the money and the raffle assist.

This month features still another overnighter ride, one I've been making on my own for the last two years. You won't believe the swimming hole we'll be near, and Nevada City always provides good food and suds. More details appear elsewhere in the notice.

Well that's enough for now, I'll see you on the road.

Scot

## SAFETY WARNING

We at the Norton Notice received the following bulletin from the California Department of Highways this past month. Unfortunately, it was not published in time to prevent a most unfortunate accident which happened to one of our members.

WARNING! Certain motorcycles (most notable Norton Commando) are equipped with anti-theft devices which, when activated, cause the steering wheel (sic) of the cycle to remain at full right or left lock in spite of the best efforts of the driver to turn the wheel (sic) in any other direction. Since this device is activated by a key, and since the key is usually kept on the same key ring as the ignition key, the steering can not be unlocked when the motorcycle is in motion. It is therefore the recommendation of the Department that drivers of motorcycles equipped with these anti-theft devices disable the devices before starting the motorcycle. Correct disablement of the anti-theft device may be verified by turning the steering wheel (sic) from lock to lock before starting the cycle. Failure to do so may result in the motorcycle running in tight circles until the driver becomes too dizzy to keep the vehicle upright. The ensuing fall may end in injury or, on rare occasions, death.

Scot

## VIBRATIONS

Welcome to the club the following new members:

Dave Caruso of Concord, California  
Stephen Breacain of Oakland, California  
Ken Bechthold of Woodland, California

I thought I would get in touch with the new U.S. liaison officer just to say Hi, and see who he was. From his reply to me it would seem he's been around Norton's for quite some time. He rode competition Ariels from 1936 to 1940. Came in 14th in the 1948 Daytona 200 riding a Manx Norton. It was a low finishing position, he tells me, because of a bad spark plug and falling off the bike in the north turn coming off the beach. Geez, I thought, and all this before I was even born! Anyway he still owns two Cammy Nortons, an Inter and a CSI. He visited England this year and attended an NOC function there and also the Isle of Man T.T. races and saw Dave Roper win the first race for classic motorcycles in the Island. Incidentally, Dave Roper is the first American to win a T.T. race, ever. Also whilst in England, he visited the Norton factory in Shenstone and rode the new rotary Wankel. It seems that if anyone is intending to visit England in the future, then the opportunity of getting a complimentary ride on the new Norton is a distinct possibility.

The new liaison officers name is Bob McKeever and his address is Box 135, Brookville, Maryland, 20833. He would like to hear from any Noccers who are passing by or have good ideas as to how to promote the Norton Owners Club in the USA.

Well, the annual Rally came and went at Big Sur this year. Old faces and new ones and beautiful weather. Lots of tall trees, and on Saturday night tall stories that just got taller as the night went on. Also, sausages that seemed to get hotter. Many thanks to Scot Marburger and Gene Austin for putting so much work to make it the success that it was. Also, many thanks to all the dealers who donated hundreds of dollars worth of door prizes, which were eagerly received by the lucky winners.

## JOB OPPORTUNITY

Or better said, an opportunity to help out in the smooth-running of the club. Someone is needed to take over the mailing of the Norton Notice once a month. That is, stuffing the envelopes, sticking on the mailing labels and stamps and taking them to the post box and mailing them. This is an immediate opening for a conscientious person. Irregular hours, negligible pay, prospects boundless and is rewarding work. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER. Please send resume and bribe to me.

Phil Radford  
1020 Ellis Avenue  
San Jose, CA 95125

Phil Radford

Mike,

I'm writing to say I think the factory service notes are a great addition to the Norton Nettee. I am enclosing copies of the instruction and troubleshooting sheets I received with the following products: Lucas Rita electronic ignition, Lucas RM-24 powerbase alternator and charging system, and Boyer Bransden electronic ignition system. I thought this information would be useful to anyone who bought one of these units without/or lost the instructions, as well as anyone considering purchasing one of these units. I have not had any trouble with the Lucas Rita in four years of use. I have two Boyer units, one of which had an amplifier box failure after two weeks of use and was covered by warranty. I feel that the Lucas unit's components are of higher quality and better engineered, although the Boyer unit is a good unit.

For those fearful of an amplifier failure when out of town, you can purchase a spare box direct from Boyer-Bransden before you leave. However, I should point out that Lucas states that if there is something wrong with the box it will fail in a short time. In other words, if it doesn't break after three or four months, it won't break for a long, long time.

I was an automotive dealer mechanic for 11 years and my experience with electronic ignition systems is that they are very reliable. Failure can usually be traced to one of three things:

1. (and most common) Bad electrical connections, usually a poor amplifier box ground.
2. Vibration. The Lucas unit's biggest advantage over the Boyer is its rubber mounting system.
3. Excessive heat. The mounting location on Nortons should make this type of failure almost non-existent.

Information please! I recently acquired a brand new set of alloy roller tappets for a Commando. I do not know who made them. (Possibly Dunstall or Norton for a short stroke 750.) Does anyone know who made or makes roller lifters and roller cams for Nortons? Better yet, does anyone out there have a roller cam they want to sell? Does anyone have any experience with roller lifters--do they break, can you operate them with less valve lash, a la Harley-Davidson? Please call or write.

Charlie Kuss  
1671 Electric Ave.  
Lackawanna, N.Y. 14218  
(716) 824-7887

P.S. I almost forgot. Regarding the electronic ignitions, the Lucas amplifier used on Triumphs, Nortons and BSA twins is the same. If you have a Lucas unit go bad on the road away from home, you can get one from a Triumph dealer--part number 47270 (1982 Triumph parts book).

## THE VIEW THROUGH THE WINDSCREEN

I had planned to write a series of columns about camping out and traveling on a Norton when I returned from my trip a few years ago but never got around to it. Now I'm around to it and I guess better late than never is the best way to look at it. This is the end of the outdoor season for most of the folks around the country and as the sporting goods outlets try and clear out their camping merchandise now is the best time to buy any stuff you might need. I found one thing out about camping that I didn't know before I started on my trip and that was that no matter what you do everything is going to get chewed up and dirty when you go camping for any length of time. I thought that if I tried to take care of my things they would stay in good shape, but noooooo.... they got all torn up. If I had it to do over again I would buy all seconds and save the money. Since many of the best outdoor equipment companies are in the Bay Area they have their seconds shops in our area. A second is merely a cosmetic flaw in a product and will not affect performance. I did buy a Sierra Designs tent that was a second and the only thing wrong with it was that one of the pockets on the inside was sewn on upside down. It doesn't even affect the use of the pocket as you just reach in from underneath and put things in. I saved about \$150 over the cost of a "first quality" tent and now that I've had it out in the mud and rain and wind it looks pretty ratty. The point is that I was able to buy a much better tent by buying a second than if I had bought "first quality". One thing about camping equipment is that you just can't overbuy on performance. There will come a day when any dormant capability inherent in the design or construction of a high quality camping product will be put to use. The tent that I did buy is kind of fancy for a "once in a while" type camper like me, but on my trip cross country we stopped to camp out in Badlands National Park and that night a tornado touched down about 20 miles away and it was so windy where we were that RV's and Camper Trucks were blown over and every other tent in the campground was literally blown away. I had to stand outside of the tent and hold it down for about 2 hours during this helatious windstorm and it stayed put, but if it wasn't for the fact that one of the characteristics of the tent's design is it's ability to spill the wind it would have taken off like the rest of them and it really would have been difficult to keep going on the trip. The extra money spent was worth it when it came right down to it. The same thing goes for the sleeping bag you buy. Because I bought a very good sleeping bag, one that is really better than I need in our California climate, I have never been cold on a trip. I've gone camping at all times of the year and at various elevations and no matter what the conditions I've been comfortable. Now shivering all night might

not be that bad for a night or two, but doing that night after night is really going to wear you out. If you're thinking of getting out and going for a few weeks or so, or going to a place like the Rockies or the Canadian Rockies, then I might point out that when I was there in July it snowed for two days and it wasn't freak weather. Buy a good one. WM

## MONO HOT SPRINGS RIDE REPORT

Early in the week before the overnight ride to Mono Hot Springs I called Gene Austin to make sure I knew where the meeting place was for Saturday morning. After confirming the place, Gene said he knew of only three of us who would be going for sure.

When Saturday came, I was up early to stop at a favorite spot for breakfast, then on to Coyote where we were to meet. As it turned out, besides Gene one other guy did show up, Nick Wilkes, a recent new member. At around 9:15 we decided no one else was going so two Nortons fired up, but Gene's refused to rumble. I was going to give Gene a hard time here, but since he missed a great weekend I won't. I'll just say of all the Nortons, I'm surprised his would fail to start.

Nick and I were left to represent the official Norton Club overnight ride. A fairly uneventful ride followed with the exception of 101 degree at Madera, until we reach the timberline of the Sierras. At this point the scenery got better, but the Norton power got lower. Elevation does this to Nortons. Five and a half hours after the start we were saying hello to several club members at the Mono Hot Springs campground. These had left at different times, all before Nick and I.

For those of you who don't go on these rides I'd like to say you missed another great one. Tom Dabel described this area as "a magic land"! No doubt about that. Some of us sat in the springs in the late evening watching shooting stars and heat lightning to the east. It's not too surprising the beauty of this area since it is part of the John Muir Woods.

To close, I'd like to say I enjoy the enthusiasm of new members like Nick and hope to see more on these overnights, both new and old members.

David Crader  
1475 DeRose Way #157  
San Jose, Ca. 95126

## THOUGHTS ON TRANSISTORIZED IGNITION

(Reprinted from the Sept. '72 issue of Cycle magazine)

Britain's brightest sparks: For those that understand it, ignition is a necessary evil; for those that don't, it is merely evil. For sure, nobody actually swears by ignition, but many racing men willingly do a great deal of cursing when it goes dead.

Five years ago (1968-Ed.), Stan Shenton, boss of England's Boyer of Bromley, could trot out a patter of profanities with the best. In those days, B-of-B ran Triumph production motorcycles in "Standard Machine" events, and raced them with success--ignition frailties permitting. In common with other racing Triumphs of that period, the Boyer bikes contracted the diminishing-power malady, especially during the latter stages of long distance races. Shenton easily recognized the symptoms and identified the carrier. It was crude "make and break," with its in-built capacity for wear and tear, which gradually retarded the spark as the miles rolled by. Soon, the conventional set-up became Shenton's pet hate. The contraption was clumsy and inaccurate, it was appalling in concept and iron-age in engineering; so many things, that it temporarily defied the Shenton descriptive powers. But an associate filled in. In this fashion: "There are these two pieces of metal, y'know, and they are indirectly bashed apart by another off-center bit of metal, y'know. Then there's this spring which slams them shut again." That the fire was hopefully arranged relatively to engine rotation by a mass of whirling weights and springs, was added reason for the Boyer crew wanting to rid themselves of the hated system.

So Shenton almost naturally turned his thoughts to transistorized ignitions, and he took his work along to Ernie Bransden, a young lecturer in electronics. Bransden agreed to cooperate, and pretty swiftly he had a printed circuit, transistor, capacitor, diode, condenser scheme on paper. That was no problem; arranging the components into a lightweight, compact and rugged motorcycle ignition unit was something else. Fortunately, Bransden proved a bit of a motorcycle fiend himself and, along with Shenton, drew up a demanding specification for the Boyer-Bransden ignition. The system would be supplied in simplified bolt-on-kits, requiring no machining and no special tooling aids for assembly. The transistor amplifier pack had to be protected against vibration, water, oil and shock. Additionally, generated heat should be minimal, allowing virtually unlimited choice of location for the "black box." So the Boyer-Bransden Ignition was born.

Two years later, the system had undergone sufficient research, development and testing for small-batch production to begin. By then, Shenton had two main worries. One, the market would be flooded with transistor ignitions. Secondly, maybe the Great Motorcycling Public was unprepared for fit-and-forget DIY ignition--meaning the B-B equipment would be blamed for external troubles and customer ignorance. The market wasn't saturated (it was hardly touched), but Shenton was right on point number two. Almost the first complaint from your average motorcyclist came from a fellow who'd parted with many Pounds Sterling for someone's super goodies-filled special; great in every respect apart from Boyer's lousy misfiring ignition. (That complaint nearly gets Shenton going. He insists electronic ignition can't misfire--it's either all go or total stop.) As it turned out, a trashy ignition switch was at fault. One week later, another owner of the same brand of special arrived with an identical moan (and identical fault). Experience has since demonstrated that most times the Boyer equipment is blameless.

Even Doug Hele's personal-transport Trident gave a condition of intermittent ignition failure when Boyer equipped. So back in went the Joseph L ignition, which functioned. Indeed it did, until dying stone cold late one night leaving the subsequent inquest to uncover a broken wire in the cable harness. Obviously, before complete breakdown, the poor electrical contact was acceptable to create ignition through the standard equipment. But, in the Boyer box instance, the erratic contact sent signals to the amplifier and caused the apparent misfire and grief.

As more Boyer units filtered into private hands via mail ordering, the need for customer-proof modifications became evident. One simple addition now placed the 12-volt legend prominently on the epoxy moulding, since people will keep trying to run their non-generator racers on 6-volt batteries. These odd interpretations of the fitting instructions arise because two six-volt coils (wired in series, of course) are specified for twin-cylinder machines. The system will fire-up on a fully charged 6-volt battery, leaving the owner enjoying a great five minutes or so before the deathly hush. Luckily, this causes no damage, but does tend to wear the Shenton patience.

More serious have been the misguided efforts by the semi-technical to put one over on Bransden's expertise, usually by fitting different voltage coils to obtain a better spark. Such experiment invariably ended disastrously, and was directly responsible for a safety diode being introduced into the circuit. Now when the system is over-abused, the diode blows and saves the remaining encapsulated components. The diode can then be replaced--but only in the Boyer service department.

The safety factor was increased umpteen times by incorporating a modification to permit HT current to pass along the generator pulse lead. The need to cover such an improbable contingency emerged from one perfectly installed system, wired by no lesser personage than Paul Dunstall. When carrying out the timing procedure, Dunstall inadvertently completed a circuit through himself, the plug terminal and the printed-circuit stator plate, and transmitted a HT message to the amplifier--with obviously detrimental results.

Shenton believes they now have every eventuality covered, and each kit comes with a one-year guarantee. Once fitted, the Boyer ignition should require no further attention. "The only trouble," says Shenton, "people get so carried away with the infallibility, they ignore the electricians completely until it's too late."

Shenton guarantees that every single electronic mini-item is tested before assembly and the complete amplifier is test run before final packaging. Even so, a small percentage of duds slip through, and Shenton is unhappy about that. Worse, if one or other of the handful of electronic components goes phut, it's likely to happen early in its operating life.

Because the benefits of Boyer's ignition were especially noticeable on the race tracks, Shenton had it homologated for Production Machine racing and listed as options by BSA, Triumph and Norton Villiers. In 1971, the Peter Williams works Nortons were sparked by Boyer in such important races as the Thruxton 500-miler and the Production TT. Unfortunately, the Isle of Man partnership was strained a little when the magnets on the Boyer rotor worked loose and the whole thing eventually disintegrated. It won't happen again. Nowadays, the full circle rotor has milled locating slots, each magnet is secured by a screw and permanently fixed with an epoxy adhesive.

Electronic ignition is undoubtedly a desirable refinement, the actual degree of desirability depending on the type and make of motorcycle. On the production racer Norton Commando it becomes virtually an essential, considering the hell of a battering the normal contact breaker gets from chain snatch. The inherent weakness was illuminated in no uncertain fashion during strobe light comparison tests. At 6,700 rpm, the position of the sparks varied up to 8 degrees with production equipment in place. When the Boyer ignition was substituted, the spark was held with outstanding accuracy at peak rpm. Stabilizing the spark gave an immediate 2.5 bhp plus on the dyno. Initially, the increase was restricted to high rpm, but altering the basic timing produced a constant improvement throughout the range. In fact, effective power came in at a lower figure.

The 1972 Boyer production target is 800 units, expanding the range of kits which is already claimed as the largest in the world. At present (1972--Ed.), bolt-on kits are specified for BSA, Triumph and Norton twins, BSA-Triumph triples, Honda fours, Yamaha racers, and 250/500 street and 500 racing Suzukis. The Norvil-built Commando racers earmarked for the USA are fitted with Boyer ignition; in England the majority of racing teams

running British Superbikes are Boyer converts. On the Continent, the complex URS "four" (World Champion winning sidecar 1971) has relied on the British equipment, from the Helmut Path days through to Munch. Up to date, the latest Bromley feasibility study on overseas machinery concerns Harley-Davidson.

So far, production schedules have been geared to a sales policy of "if you want it, come and get it--cash down, no credit." Nothing attempted in the promotional line can be described as wild, advertising is definitely low-key.

Looking to the future, the Shenton-Brandsen partnership is developing other electronic aids to efficiency. One exercise in mini-ignition squeezes the entire electronic essentials into the space beneath a Trident's contact breaker cover, but the device unlikely to reach production. In a far more advanced stage is a novel solid-state electronic tachometer, designed to cater for the spark-every-360-degrees Boyer ignition.

In the process, Shenton has shifted the Boyer of Bromley activities away from pure motorcycle selling towards the manufacture and marketing of high performance equipment. Shenton also offers a classy tuning service for Triumph owners, and supports British 750cc racing with two Trident-powered specials.

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motorcycles

## SERVICE RELEASE

NO: N.14

NATURE OF RELEASE: Removing Cylinder Head in FrameMODELS AFFECTED: All CommandoDISTRIBUTION: WorldwidePARTS INVOLVED: Cylinder Head and Fittings

EXPLANATION: It is apparent that there is some confusion amongst dealers and owners where it is considered impossible to remove the cylinder head with the engine in the frame, without removal of the cylinder block at the same time. The cylinder head can be removed and re-fitted with very little difficulty by the following means.

ACTION: Assuming all ancilliary equipment (gas tank, coil cluster, exhausts and mufflers, head torque stay, three rocker covers, rocker oil feed pipe and carburettors on manifolds) has been removed, slacken all rocker adjusters completely, remove five nuts below and five bolts above the cylinder head and separate the cylinder head from the cylinder block - if necessary a light blow under the exhaust ports on the head with a hide mallet will dislodge the head. All that now prevents the head from being lifted clear is the presence of the pushrods. A second operator is now required, the first to lift the head whilst the second lifts all four pushrods clear of the rocker arms which are then pivoted well clear of the valve stems allowing the pushrods to slide past into the rocker box portion of the head. The pushrods will lift sufficiently to clear the cylinder block whilst the head is lifted out to one side, clear of the frame.

Reassembly requires a similar technique with the pushrods recessed as far as possible into the cylinder head. The longer pushrods are the inlets and are fitted inboard. As the head is slid into position between the cylinder block and frame rails the pushrods are dropped through the pushrod tunnels and located on the cam followers. The head is then lowered into position and if necessary the rocker ball ends can be engaged with the tops of the pushrods.

NO: N.16.

NATURE OF RELEASE: Adjustment procedure for Stop Light SwitchMODELS AFFECTED: Commando - All EditionsDISTRIBUTION: WorldwidePARTS INVOLVED: 031621 Stop Light Switch

EXPLANATION: If the stop light switch is positioned incorrectly, it becomes the stop for the rear brake pedal with the result that the plastic body fractures. A simple adjustment procedure as outlined below will prevent such damage.

ACTION: Slacken the nuts and screws holding the switch, to the plate with slots, on the brake pedal. Set the rear brake pedal to suit the riders preference - this is done by adjustment of the stop bolt and locknut. Adjust the rear brake cable to the desired setting. Move the switch up, a little at a time, until the switch plunger is central to the abutment and until the least depression of the pedal causes the stop light to illuminate. Nip up the switch securing screws and allow the pedal to return to rest, ensuring that the switch is not fully compressed before the pedal stop is reached.

JULY, 1970.



No. N17

NATURE OF RELEASE: Horn adjustment.

MODELS AFFECTED: All Commando.

DISTRIBUTION: U.S.A. only.

PARTS INVOLVED: O32010 Horn.

EXPLANATION: To meet Federal Legislation it is necessary for the horn to be kept in proper adjustment. There is an adjuster screw with locknut for this purpose, working on to the centre of the horn diaphragm. The horn is mounted just above the swinging arm pivot. If there is any doubt that the horn is working at full efficiency, it must be dismantled from the motorcycle since there is insufficient room for adjustment in situ.

ACTION: The horn should be mounted by the bracket in a vice whilst adjustment is carried out. Connect one horn terminal to a 12 volt battery in a good state of charge. Now touch a lead from the other battery terminal to the second horn terminal. This should be momentary contact only, not sustained contact which could damage the horn. The horn should sound loud and clear but if it does not, hold the slotted adjuster with a screwdriver and slacken the large hexagonal locknut. Now, by turning the adjuster in or out in 1/16" intervals and sounding the horn each time, the best position will be found. Hold the adjuster whilst the locknut is tightened and finally check that adjustment has not been lost, by sounding the horn again. If all is well, the horn can be refitted on the motorcycle.

August 1970.

NO: N.18

CATEGORY OF RELEASE: 3 (See over)

NATURE OF RELEASE: Stiff Clutch Action.

MODELS AFFECTED: All Commando.

DISTRIBUTION: Worldwide.

PARTS INVOLVED: O6-0715 Clutch Operating Arm.

EXPLANATION: Following Service Release N.12 on this subject, we learn that in some cases dealers have been fitting the ATLAS clutch arm O40029, in lieu of the Commando clutch arm O6-0715 in an attempt to cure stiffness. The ATLAS arm is unsuitable for the diaphragm clutch of the Commando since it provides insufficient lift. This results in clutch drag and in order to compensate, the tendency is to take up clutch free play and clutch slip will result. The polishing operation on the Commando clutch arm has been improved on production and this has given a much better clutch action.

ACTION: Where the problem of stiffness persists after the clutch cable route has been improved, remove the gearbox outer cover to gain access to the clutch arm. Relieve the end track of any burrs or roughness and burnish. First with a coarse, then a very fine grade of emery paper. Ensure that the body on which the clutch arm pivots has not turned as the locking ring has been tightened. If it has, the clutch arm will not move vertically and the clutch cable will distort as the operating arm pivots. To reposition, slacken the locking ring, turn the body as required and re-tighten the ring. Reassemble clutch arm with a smear of grease on the end track.

AUGUST, 1970.

NO: 19.

CATEGORY OF RELEASE: 4 (See Over)

NATURE OF RELEASE: Operation of Steering Lock.

MODELS AFFECTED: All Commando.

DISTRIBUTION: Worldwide.

PARTS INVOLVED: O30175 - Steering Lock and Keys.

EXPLANATION: Would all concerned please note that the steering lock is intended to be operated with the handlebars turned fully to the right. Locking in any other position, whilst rendering the machine useless to a prospective "joy rider" type of thief, does not provide a sufficient deterrent to the more serious thief who would find illegal removal facilitated by the ability to manoeuvre either left or straight ahead. Riders should also be cautioned on the potential danger of immobilising the motorcycle in such a way that it could still be driven in a straight line.

NO: N.20

CATEGORY OF RELEASE: 3/4 (See over)

MODELS AFFECTED: All Commando

NATURE OF RELEASE: Timing cover gasket interchangeability.

DISTRIBUTION: Worldwide (Information for general use)

PARTS INVOLVED: Timing cover gaskets, T2236, O60719, O61092.

EXPLANATION: On all Commando engines, the pressure release valve in the timing cover discharges surplus oil through a drillway in the timing cover and crankcase back to the inlet side of the oil pump, instead of merely allowing it to escape through an open hole into the timing chest as on all earlier Norton twin cylinder engines.

As this drillway crosses the timing cover to crankcase joint face, the gasket used must have an additional tab or loop to seal it and gasket part number T2236 does not have this. Therefore T2236 must not be used in any Commando engine. We learn that certain spurious gasket sets currently available and identified as suitable for the Commando contain a timing cover gasket to the T2236 form which is quite unsuitable.

Commando timing cover gaskets O60719 and O61092 differ in that O61092 is intended for engines with the camshaft driven contact breaker and thus has an additional tab or loop to seal the drillway for the contact breaker low tension feed wire.

It will be noted from the above that O61092 gasket will service all previous Norton twin models 7,77,88,99, 650 and Atlas. This gasket is thicker than previous conditions and effects the compression of the rubber seal between the oil pump outlet and timing cover.

ACTION: Before renewing a Commando timing cover gasket, make sure that it connects and prevents leakage at all holes in the joint face. Using the thicker O61092 it may be necessary to shim up the rubber seal at the oil pump to achieve 0.010" of compression through in the majority of cases it will be found that the correct compression is achieved by the use of the seal without shims.

NO: N.23

CATEGORY OF RELEASE: 5  
NATURE OF RELEASE: Spares Notes  
MODELS AFFECTED: Various  
DISTRIBUTION: Worldwide (Trade Only)

Please note the following:-

- (1) ATLAS Cylinder 24237A serviced by: 060396A Cylinder 1 off  
 (up to eng. No.114869) 25494 Ring 2 "  
 060401 Bolt 4 "  
 060400 Head Gasket 1 "  
 The top spigots of the early ATLAS cylinders occupied a recess in the cylinder head. When the Commando cylinder is used, the rings fill the spigot recesses in the head. Open out the four bolt holes in the cylinder head to accommodate the thicker bolts.
- (2) ATLAS cylinder 25323 serviced by: 060396A Cylinder 1 off  
 (from eng. No.114870) 060401 Bolt 4 "  
 060400 Head Gasket 1 "  
 Open out the four bolt holes in the cylinder head to accommodate the thicker bolts.
- (3) We have ceased to supply front brake linings 060812 as separate spares requirements due to the fact that linings must be ground to size after fitting. We now only stock brake shoe complete with lining 060006.
- (4) It is most important for the required standard colour to be stated when ordering Fuel Tanks, Oil Tanks, Side Covers and Tail Fairings. The colour should be suffixed to the part number viz "06110R RED."
- (5) On plated parts where there has been an alternative finish ie: chromium or cadmium suffix the finish required.

OCTOBER, 1970.

NO. N28

CATEGORY OF RELEASE: 4 (See over)  
NATURE OF RELEASE: Cam chain tension  
MODELS AFFECTED: Commando with cam driven contact breaker  
DISTRIBUTION: Worldwide (for general distribution)  
EXPLANATION:

It is found that slackness of the cam chain can result in snatch, jarring shocks being delivered to the contact breaker and auto advance mechanism. This causes premature wear on these parts. We specify that the chain tension should be checked at 5000 mile intervals but, naturally, any obvious slackness evidenced by noise in this area should be taken up, irrespective of mileage. Adjust the cam change tendons to between 1/8" and 3/16" slack (that is, up to down movement) on the top run of the chain. To do this necessitates removal of the contact breaker and auto advance mechanism (use the withdrawal bolt 06-1334 for the auto advance cam). Next take off the timing cover, and the cam chain and slipper tensioner are exposed. The oilway exposed by removal of the cover must be blocked by one of the timing cover screws (see owners handbook) to prevent the loss of oil. Note that chain tension can only be adjusted correctly if there is no play in the intermediate spindle.

To check the chain tension, remove the sparking plugs so that the engine will turn easily and use a 9/16" Whit. socket or ring spanner on the camshaft sprocket nut and turn slowly anti-clockwise so that the lower run of the chain will be kept tight on the slipper and a true check of the tension can be made on the top run.

In this way the spanner will control the alternating load of the valve springs on the camshaft and it will be easy to find any tight spot to which the tension should be adjusted as described.

To increase chain tension, loosen the two nuts securing the slipper and lift it a little at a time, checking at each stage after nipping up the nuts whether the tension is correct. When the correct tension is achieved secure the slipper nuts to 180lb. in (15lb. ft).

It is most important when refitting the timing cover to use the camshaft oil seal guide 06 - 1359 to avoid damage to the seal in the timing cover.

## TROUBLE SHOOTING GUIDE

by Art Sirota

| Trouble   | Possible Cause   | Remedy                                      |
|---|--|---|
| motorcycle runs fine, but only wants to turn in circles                                       | steering lock left on  | unlock steering lock with key               |
| horn fails to sound loud enough to attract much attention                                     | you're riding a Commando   | wear a red shirt or a loud tie              |
| red and blue flashing lights in mirror  | officer is trying to pull you over for vehicle infraction          | unscrew and discard mirror                  |
| failure of anyone at Alice's restaurant to act friendly when you pull up for Sunday breakfast | Phil Radford has passed the word along that your dues have expired | renew your membership as soon as possible   |
| engine fires only on one cylinder   | check to make sure if you're riding a single                       | if it's a twin, replace motor with a single |
| machine continues to make odd noises after engine is shut off                                 | you've installed a radio on your bike and forgotten to turn it off | disconnect radio and install it in your RV  |
| loud popping noise while cruising down freeway  | pillion rider is chewing gum and popping it in your ear            | make passenger spit it out                  |
| sudden, unexpected increase in headlight intensity  | pilot bulb has fallen out of speedometer case                      | put it back and eat some carrots            |

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 bike. A refundable deposit equal to the replacement value of the tool is required at the time you pick it up.

| TOOL                             | DEPOSIT |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| timing cover oil seal guide..... | \$ 5.00 |
| rocker spindle puller.....       | \$25.00 |
| crankshaft sprocket puller.....  | \$12.00 |
| clutch spring tool.....          | \$12.00 |
| clutch locking tool.....         | \$18.00 |
| valve spring compressor.....     | \$22.00 |
| exhaust nut "C" spanner.....     | \$10.00 |
| timing pinion extractor.....     | \$20.00 |

Harry Bunting (415) 968-2020  
1401 Gilmore St.  
Mountain View, Ca. 94040

*\*Paraphernalia\**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 4 1/2" STICKER N.O.C.   | \$1.00  |
| 2" STICKER N.O.C.   | \$ .50  |
| 2 1/2" X 3 1/2" N.O.C. STICKER<br>( RED, WHITE, AND BLUE )                            | \$ .75  |
| N.O.C. KEYFOB   | \$1.50  |
| 4 1/2" EMBROIDERED PATCH  | \$2.50  |
| LAPEL PIN, BRANCH LOGO  | \$1.25  |
| T-SHIRTS - N.O.C. AND BRANCH<br>VARIOUS SIZES AND COLORS CALL OR WRITE<br>FOR DETAILS | TOM BORMAN<br>2600 BELMONT CANYON ROAD<br>BELMONT, CALIFORNIA 94002<br>(415) 595-1954 |

If you ordered a t-shirt through Tom contact him to pick it up. They're in.

FOR SALE

1975 Norton 850 Interstate 14,000 miles  
excellent condition, runs well \$1,500.  
Clark (415) 979-5237, eves 825-1192

FOR SALE

1) 1973 Norton 850 Commando, new top end,  
new exhaust port threads, good strong  
runner, needs a little cosmetic work but a  
good value at \$1150 441-2655

FOR SALE:

1. Early Commando instrument bracket, \$10.
2. Early Commando central oil tank, \$15.
3. Early Commando clutch, \$25.
4. Akron WM3-18 alloy rim for Commando  
rear, \$30.
5. Smiths speedo and tach, original equip  
for '75 Ducati 860GT,  
\$125/pair.
6. Harley Sportster new rear disc  
conversion, \$150.
7. Commando engine cases (#206500), free,  
left side blown.

Dave Crader (408) 295-4968 home  
(408) 736-7205 work

WANTED:

1. Dunstall dual disc front end or parts for  
same.
  2. Roller lifter cam.
  3. Big bore kit.
- Willing to swap or trade for high  
performance parts; call me, I've got lots  
more parts--tanks, wheels, engines,  
transmissions, etc.

Charlie Kuss  
1671 Electric Ave.  
Lackawanna, N.Y.

(716) 824-7887

FOR SALE

'70 blue Roadster. Lots of improvements done  
to a very reliable bike. Have original parts  
in addition to Boyer ignition, front disk  
brake, single Mikuni, oil filter, etc.  
\$1250 / b.o. Rick Pearson (916) 722-7677

FOR SALE

1973 Norton Commando 850. Excellent  
condition, recent top end overhaul, new  
clutch and battery. 17,000 original miles.  
Some spare parts \$1250 or B/O (916) 451-3207  
Arthur Green  
5331-6th Ave.  
Sacto, Cal. 95820

FOR SALE

1969 Commando. Stock early roadster in good  
mechanical condition with 19,000 miles.  
Asking \$900, including a few extras.  
Bill Lear (415) 493-3962 eves & weekends

FOR SALE

1975 MKIII Commando. Low miles, super paint  
by Pres. Marburger and it runs great. Stock  
except for paint, new Duneloil pipes, air  
filters and S&W shocks. Original parts are  
included plus tools and manuals. A good deal  
for \$1200. Call Ken Reid (415) 332-1378

FOR SALE

1974 Norton Roadster, Black, 2000 original  
miles, original owner- looks and runs as if  
still in dealers showroom. Has tank cover,  
H-4 light and europa bars. Many spares,  
literature and tools go with the bike.  
\$2000. Joel Hansen (408) 353-1824

WANTED

Norton 500c.c. single to buy, must be 99%  
there and a runner! Call Dave Kerst 10a.m.  
to 12p.m. any day at (209) 835-7468

FOR SALE

Roadster seat: used but in good shape, fits  
MKIII ( it has the hinge) \$25  
also front fender, dent from oil cooler and  
rivits broken, but only \$5  
and 2 Amal (used) 932's ( bodies only) w/3  
1/2 slides \$10  
and 1 rear master cylinder (pitted) but only  
\$10  
and Dunlop Racing tire! ( good tread)  
4.25/85V18 Kr91 \$20  
Also Lucas horn ( works) for MKIII or ? \$10  
also Shoei fairing ( no windshield) square  
light hole (black) \$10  
Dave Kerst (209) 835-7468

FOR SALE

- 1) 1972 Norton Commando 750c.c. combat  
engine, front disc brake, new 850 swing arm  
conversion, rebuilt transmission. 850 oil  
filter fitted, new bearings in rear wheel,  
850 seat. goes well and was my regular bike  
until my new 850 came along, have adoption  
papers ready for good home \$1200 or B.O.
- 2) 1970 Commando 'S' type cylinder head,  
complete plus bottom end, crank needs  
regrind \$55
- 3) Commando 'S' type central mount oil tank  
complete plus mounting bracket \$25
- 4) Good selection of Dominator 88 and 99  
aluminum heads, cylinders, bottom ends,  
cases, etc.
- 5) Pair Armstrong rear shocks for mid-50's  
featherbed, rusty but sound \$15
- 6) 1-pair Dominator 88 pistons +.060, used  
but in good condition \$20
- 7) 1-pair Dominator 88 std. Hepolite  
pistons with pins, brand new still in box  
\$40  
Tel Phil Radford (408) 293-4548

FOR SALE

'75 850 in very good condition with 13,000  
miles on it. I've had it since new and have  
kept it up. \$1500 Jim Halliday  
(415) 621-2464 work  
665-8196 home  
897-2067 mom's

**FOR SALE OR TRADE FOR ????:**

New and used

Atlas mufflers, \$65 for the new ones, offers for the used ones. 850 style headlamp shell, serviceable condition, \$10. Footrest mounting plates, \$5 each. Battery box complete with air filter, \$15. WM 2 x 19 Akron alloy rim, \$30. Drum brake fork sliders, offer. Misc. brake and clutch levers and posts, offers. New pattern kickstart lever, \$15. 2 fork top nuts, offers. K & N single carb filters for Amal concentrics, \$2 ea. New rear hub spinner, \$3. Old style 750 head steady \$5. Misc. rear fenders, offers. Roadster oil tank, \$15. Honda? master cylinder, \$15. Drilled rotor, master cylinder, caliper, slider for Norton disk brake setup, \$125 the set. Pair Girling shocks, \$15. Rare notched clutch center, complete with antique grease and burned on oil, offers. Misc. handlebars, stock and superbike bends, offers. Roadster style grab rail, \$15. 2 pair car coils, \$5/pr. Used primary chain, good condition, \$5. Clutch diaphragm spring, \$3. Single phase rectifier, guaranteed, \$10. Primary case plugs, \$50 each. 3 swing arm/subframe combos, \$37 each. 2 frames, one 850, one 750, \$100 each. 2 WM2 x 19 chrome rims, \$25 each. One pair new Interstate side covers, \$25 the set. Call Scot at 415-455-8776 and leave a message (preferably concise and polite as to what you need).

**FOR SALE OR TRADE FOR:**

1973 Norton Fastback style Commando, 750 motor, Boyer ignition, new 30mm Amal concentric carbs, new valve job (guides, valves, seats), 850 style head steady, oil filter kit, WM3 x 18 rear wheel with Dunlop K291 tires (excellent tread), disk brake front end, many more refinements too numerous to mention. Too many Commandos for sale. \$1275 or trade for 1981 or later Honda XR or XL 200 or 250 trail bike or interesting Norton single. Call Scot at (415) 455-8776 and leave a nice message.

**FOR SALE**

Pre-AMC Norton gearboxes. Early type with external linkage, and one later type. \$200 each

Norton ES-2 engine, frame, oil tank, and broken gearbox \$200

Norton Atlas (?) engine lower end. Rough, but crank turns \$30

Brand new fiberglass 7 gallon tank and seat in Rickman blue to fit Commandos \$500

Used fiberglass Commando tanks. \$50 each

1970 Commando "S" in original yellow. Needs work and parts. \$400

John McCoy  
385 Tully Road  
San Jose, Ca. 95111  
(408) 295-4341  
NOC member

**WANTED:**

1. Late '50's Lucas headlamp with switch, ammeter and speedo built in.
2. Battery and accessory boxes for 56-58 Norton single or '59 Nomad scrambler.
3. Exhaust nut for Norton single.
4. Front engine plates for 56-58 Norton single.
5. Complete front end for 56-58 Norton single.
6. Dynamo for 56-58 Norton single.
7. Lower rear fender for 56-58 Norton single.
8. Gas tank side panels (chrome) for 57-58 Norton single.

David Crader (408) 295-4968 home  
(408) 736-7205 work

**FOR SALE:**

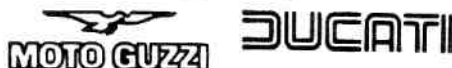
1. two 1969 Fastback oil tanks, G.C., \$15 each.
2. 1969 Fastback seat, has one small rip on bottom of cover, otherwise G.C., \$40.
3. two sets N.O.S. fiberglass Interstate sidecovers (white), \$38 a set.
4. 1968 Fastback tail section with Norton emblem, V.G.C., \$45.
5. B.N. 1974 Roadster right sidecover, metalflake blue with silver decals and striping, \$32.
6. set B.N. 750 Commando exhaust pipes, \$62.
7. set B.N. "S" model exhaust pipes, \$110.
8. pair 30mm Mikuni carbs with cables and throttle, V.G.C., \$100.
9. pair 30mm Amal MK-2 carbs, E.C., \$120.
10. pair 32mm Amal concentric carbs, rebuilt with new slides and viton float needles, E.C., \$60.
11. 1975 Hi-Rider gas tank, original paint (black and gold), G.C. \$50.
12. 1975 Hi-Rider seat, G.C., \$40.
13. pair 1973 fork assemblies, straight, \$75.
14. 1982 Harley-Davidson electronic ignition system complete with coil, \$85.
15. 1974 850 Norton crankshaft w/rods, std journals, V.G.C., \$80.

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Lackawanna, N.Y. 14218  
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*Hall-Burdette*

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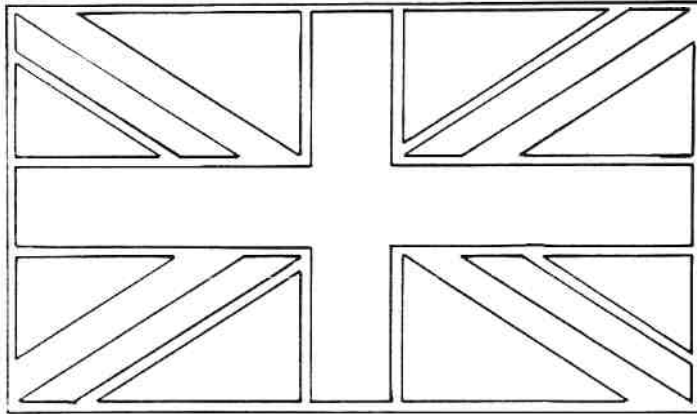
Munroe has three mechanics that are familiar with Nortons and have been for a number of years. We can replace exhaust ports with the head on the bike and don't know of anyone else who can. The job looks like original factory! Call for a quote on shop prices. We also have a good Norton parts supply.



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## FOURTH ANNUAL



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