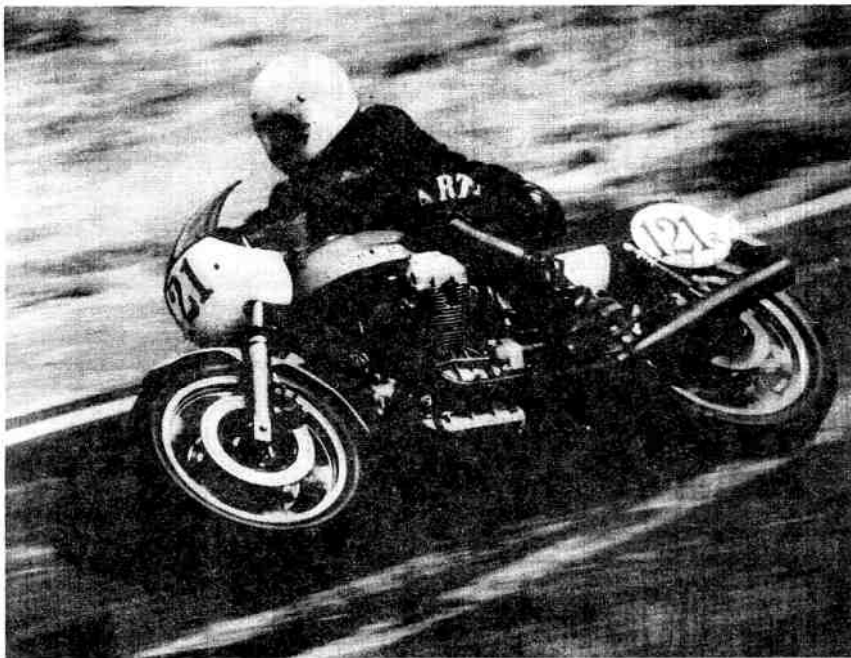


# Norton Notice

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

NO. 95

MARCH , 1986



**1977 \*\* VANCE BREESE AT  
SEARS POINT**

SEE PAGE 5



# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH



## Norton Notice

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.

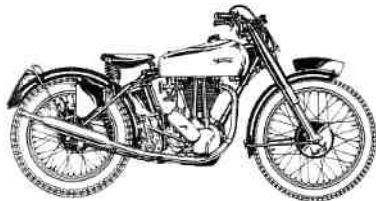
The deadline for items to be submitted for publication is the 15th of each month.

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



Model 500T in 1954 version

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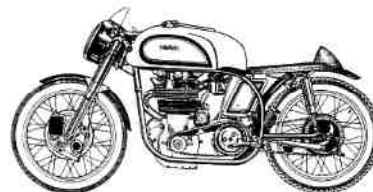
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Membership in the NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH of the NORTON OWNERS CLUB entitles a member to monthly issues of the NORTON NOTICE bi-monthly issues of ROADHOLDER magazine, which is sent directly from England, keeping members informed of Norton owners' 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.



1963 catalog drawing of Manx 30M and 40M



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**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 TAKEN OF. IN OTHER WORDS . . . FULL TANKS AND EMPTY BLADDERS!

March 2 Sunday AFM opening at Sears Point

March 13 Thursday Branch meeting at the Class Reunion, 2700 El Camino Real, Palo Alto, 7:30PM. The speaker will be Vance Breese. See article page 5.

March 18 Sunday King City Club Ride. See article page 8.

March 30 Sunday Easter Morning Ride. See article page 12. Loosely sponsored by Mean Marshall's, TT Motors, GP Cycle. European and American bikes only.

March 30 Sunday Sears Point AFM races.

April 10 Thursday Branch meeting.

April 13 Sunday Mt. Hamilton Club Ride. Meet at Rabers, 10:00 AM.

April 20 Sunday Sears Point AFM races.

April 26 Sunday West Coast Antique and Classic Motorcycle Meet, Tulare Fairgrounds (Former Visalia meet).

### DOWN THE ROAD

May 4 Camel Pro Mile Dirt Track, Santa Clara Fairgrounds, S.J.

May 18 Sears Point Camel Pro Road Race (Tentative)

May 31- June 2 IoM

July 13 Laguna Seca

Sept. 14 Camel Pro Mile, Santa Clara Fairgrounds, S.J.

# The Norton experience



# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

The following is the conclusion of John Foyston's story about Bike Week at Daytona.

The cops did arrive about a minute later, scowled in disbelief at the 3 quarts of oil in the middle of the road, and proceeded to direct everyone around it until they cleaned it up. Herein is another unique facet of Bike Week; namely you really have to screw up in a big way to even get the police to glance at you... we're talking major-league infractions. Oh, it can be done, and certainly was on a regular basis, but the ante is so high that most mortals are ensured of an almost bust-proof weekend. How bad is your forgetting to signal a turn gonna look amidst whole squads of guys on chromed KZ1000s practicing for the Daytona 300 right there on Atlantic Blvd., or the aforementioned school of RD Squids paddling and lurching out there in front of God an everybody, or almost anybody on a Harley riding with a blood alcohol level that approached numbers more comonly seen in discussions of the National debt... Through it all, the cops would just sit there chatting among themselves and doing the only sensible thing; watchin' the show. I'm sure the police blotter for the week reflects a whole bunch of arrests but anybody who gets busted during Bike Week does it the old-fashioned way...they earn it'...

Another great thing about Daytona is the fact that everybody is primarily out to race, party, and ride; not everybody makes it out to the track, in fact I'd say that a good number never see a race, but people are there ordinarily for having a good time and there is remarkably little inter-species harassment. Dick and I proved this by boldly walking into the Boot Hill saloon and ordering a beer. The Boot Hill is kinda like the Harley mecca, I guess; the bros regard it with the same reverence that a more sensible person would reserve for Dr. Taglioli's office or something. I mean the Boot Hill Saloon is supposedly where Willie G (Davidson) has his ear to the ground, sniffing out all those designs for the new Harleys. In reality, the place is just another smoked out tavern furnished in early-post-war-Berlin and absolutely swash in chopper bros and broettes of all descriptions with the black-shirt-with-somekinda-cable, dirty ol blue jeans type predominating.

"Hey Dick, you feelin' a bit conspicuous?" I asked. "Y'know, now that you mention it, it does seem that we may not fit in totally..."

"Yeah, I said, "I'm beginning to suspect the sports coats we're wearin'..."

But as I've mentioned, we weren't hassled in the least. We stood and had a couple of beers and waited for the show? What show? You ask. The "It's two AM and the bar is closed and all you dudes gotta go out and start yer choppa" show and it is, friends and neighbors, one of the greatest shows on the planet.

As we've discussed before, there are a number of good reasons for most of the Harleys at Bike Week not starting on the first kick. Or, in some cases, the fiftieth kick. These can be as diverse as dirty points, no mag, no rear piston, grossly elevated blood levels, wrong phase of the moon, low barometric pressure, etc., etc. When any two are trying to start at once, you observe any or all of the above-mentioned problems in a mathematical progression, when three or more are being started the probability of all of them firing and running within any time-span perceptible to humans plummets to virtually all. Picture three average choppers; now, try to imagine how many burned valves, scored cylinders, smoked rings, sacked valve springs, oval valve guides, trashed main bearings, torched big-ends, low batteries, weak coils, fouled plugs, etc. There are between the three of them. None of 'em would be a treat under the best of conditions, right? Now imagine the state of yer average Bike Week Party-till-ya-hallucinate biker; I mean we are talkin' major-league multi-substance abuse here. The concomitant loss of motor control combines with another trait of yer average bro to make for a most entertaining spectacle. The trait of which I speak is a unique sort of attitude-towards the mechanical vicissitudes of his mount. Where most modern riders are not even aware of the machine under them, the Harley rider is only too aware of the ephemeral nature of all things mechanical and simply accepts whatever outrageous behavior his bike dishes out with an almost enviable stoicism. Where you or I would probably assume that if the bike doesn't start by the third or fourth kick something is wrong and needs to be looked into, no such considerations clutter the mind of the real chopper bro. They will simply kick until either the bike starts or until they die.

Now that we have the background out of the way, we can settle back and enjoy the show. By the time that the Boot Hill closes, there must be at least a hundred choppers out front. That means that most of those guys are gonna be out there reeling on kick starters at one time. With so much going on; remember that Main Street with its hundreds of moving violations every minute, is slowly 'paddling and lurching' past the parking lot, I had to narrow my concentration to the two guys behind me in the gas station parking lot next to the tavern. They were real standard Daytona issue; scruffy (you already know what kinda tee-shirt they were wearing...) massively wasted, and ready to RIDE BRO! Well, almost ready, first there was the little matter of getting them scoots running'. The diversity of machinery at Daytona is literally mind-boggling from the trickiest stuff you've ever seen to the most awesome rolling equipment violations imaginable; suffice it to say that these guys owned bikes that were closer to the lower end of the scale, not total rats but it did look as if the average maintenance period, if any, was reckoned in years, not weeks. They stagger out to their bikes and immediately assume the position universally adopted by the bros which consists of kicking with the right leg whilst kneeling in the saddle with the left knee. This position along with the anesthetic effects of that good Daytona beer are responsible for the seemingly endless kicking sessions that these guys regard as just a part of life. Well, our heroes began to kick without further preliminaries, adding their bit to the cacophony of Main street. What with all the Harleys sulking at once, it sounded kinda like the Dinosaur graveyard in Fantasia or so KA CUUNNGG, WHUFFA, WHUFFA, POP! KACHUNG, BOOM, WHUFFA, WHUFFA, WHUFFA, WHUFFA, GRRRRRRRRHHH, WHUFFA, WHUFFA, SUMBITCH MUDAFIGGENPIZZASHIT, WHUFFA, CHIUUGA, WHAP WHAP, CHUG SUMAFUGENBITCH, WHUFFA POP, POP 'Diddis heard that she almost caught'!

Good lord, the heat, the noise, the choking fumes from tortured rings and maladjusted carburetors, the curses of the bros ringing out, the clatter of large pieces of metal hitting one another in ways never intended by the factory, you simply can't imagine the scene. Dinosaur graveyard? That's not giving credit where it's due; we're talking the seventh ring of the inferno here.

Anyway, our heroes are earnestly applying themselves to the kickstarter levers and nothing much is happening so I turn my attention to another guy right in front of me trying to start his rig. Being the hopeful sort, he applies his thumb to the electric start button and waits for the answering roar of the engine: WHIRRAWHIRRAWHIRRAWHIRRAWHWHIRRAWGRRRRNCHHHH, click clic clic clic clic. Well, there's nothing to do but start flailing away like everybody else which he commences without delay. I can see him out of the corner of my right eye and the other two guys off to my left, and for one weird timeless, Daytona instant, all three of them are rising and falling in perfect, almost hallucinatory unison, laboring away in stoic silence punctuated only by the gnash of kickstarters and the occasional muffled curse.

The final score: two of the bikes started within 5 or 10 minutes, the third, a clapped out Elebra Glide roughly the size of a small tract home, required the enlistment of several more bros to bump start the truculent beast within the 40 foot confines of the gas station lot. Needless to say, several drunken passes were required, all of them hovering on the brink of disaster, before it too was goaded into reluctant life and ridden off into the gathering darkness.

There is a theory that if you were to put a hundred monkeys into a room with a hundred typewriters and unlimited paper at some point in the next thousand years, one of them would type out the complete text to Hamlet, letter perfect. (I imagine that any of 'em could do a script for 'Love Boat' in an hour or so.) In the same vein, I theorize that were all the chopper bros in Daytona given time and beer enough, that sometime in the next thousand years, they would get all their bikes started at the same instant! I further theorize that this would not be an especially good moment to be in Daytona.

## ANTHONY'S LAW OF THE WORKSHOP:

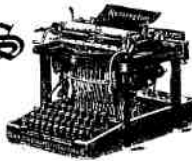
Any tool, when dropped, will roll into the least accessible corner of the workshop.

## COROLLARY TO ANTHONY'S LAW OF THE WORKSHOP:

On the way to the corner, any dropped tool will first always strike your toes.



# EDITOR'S NOTES



## ON BRINGING IT BACK

Recently, while rummaging through the first issue of BRITISH CAR AND BIKE, I came across an article about buying and importing a British vehicle. The article was slanted towards cars, but as I knew that Phil Madford had recently imported an ES2 I thought we might be able to get a closer view of the problems, costs, etc. for motorcycles from him. Phil was kind enough to write me detailing his experience.

First, he knew exactly what he wanted. A friend in the NCC in England was asked to look for a mid to late 1930's 500cc ohv single cylinder Norton in either restored condition or as a restorable runner with no parts missing. One was located, photographs sent, and Phil called the seller. The bike was purchased at the seller's price (£1200) and three IMO's (cost \$15) were sent to the friend who arranged for a viewing to verify the photos. He paid the fellow, took the bike, and left it at Phil's mother's for Phil's arrival from the IOM TT races. The bike could have been taken directly to a shipper. Phil collected the bike and took it to a local international freight forwarder himself. He paid cash in advance, between £400-£500, which included the crating.

The bike was shipped to Oakland and the shipper notified Phil of its arrival. The shipper here relieved Phil of \$100 plus an additional \$25 for fork lift service. Phil writes, "There are no restrictions or EPA regulations to worry about because the bike was manufactured before 1976 (cutoff year not for certain -Ed.). It was for my own use and not for resale. The bike belonged to me. I had the British registration documents with me. Because I had not owned the vehicle for one year or more I should have paid import duty. But I think the customs officer liked Nortons and just waived it."

One significant side aspect to the shipping is that the more bikes you buy the cheaper it is to ship them in one lot. Three bikes, for example, would be approx. £800-£1,000, depending upon the choice of shipper. CLASSIC BIKE has shippers listed who specialize in motorcycles.

The choice of which bike to buy will, to a large extent determine the savings realized. If you scan the bikes for sale in CLASSIC BIKE it would appear that there are no real bargains in Britain at the moment as they are caught up in a restoration craze. Indeed probably the only feasible way to come out ahead in this game is to either have someone who can do the search for you in England as Phil had or combine the purchase with some other reason for being in the market for a used bike. You could use the bike as your means of transportation. You

could pool the resources of friends here and buy several in England. Perhaps rebuild costs would warrant having internals redone and custom parts substituted for stock ones before the bike is shipped to the states.

Whatever the case, Phil figures he paid 50% of what it would have cost him for the same bike here. It can be done.

I'm sure readers of the NN would be interested in hearing from you if you have imported a bike from England recently. Drop us a line if you think your experience can give us a better picture of what's involved in bringing 'em back.

Lou

## 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 (415) 968-2020  
1401 Gilmore St.  
Mountain View, CA 94040

## SPECIAL!! BE THERE!!!

Through Art's energetic efforts the March 13 meeting at the Class Reunion will feature the versatile Vance Breese. Vance is currently the President of AFM, has been a very successful road racer, and recently (Summer, 1985) broke a land speed record at Bonneville aboard his HD. The man has guts. In a recent CITY BIKE interview he described an experience at the salt flats:

"I went a little over 200 down [the flats], but on my way back I had a problem. You see I normally adjust the clutch as I shift to put a little more free play into it, and I usually do that around 160mph. But there were some rough spots on that run so I had to wait. I was probably running over 190 and when I went to fiddle with the clutch the wind got under me and yanked me right off the bike! I went straight up, both feet off the footpegs, only my throttle hand was still holding onto the bike. Somehow I remember thinking about Superman, remembering how they showed him when he wanted to land, he'd put his head down, so I did. I looked down at the gas tank and the wind slammed me back onto the bike! It took me another half a mile before I could get completely back on the motorcycle."

The meeting promises to be a great evening.

Lou

Dear Editor,

I would like to make the membership aware of the assistance Alan Goldwater is providing to the club by taking care of all the mailing labels for the NOTICE. So thank you very much, Alan, and keep up the good work!

Art



## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

|                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Neil Peacock   | LaFayette, CO   |
| John Howe      | Vallejo, CA     |
| David Lunsford | Santa Clara, CA |
| William Taylor | Sacramento, CA  |

|              |                   |
|--------------|-------------------|
| WELCOME BACK |                   |
| Richard Eyer | Boulder Creek, CO |





## LETTERS

The Norton mystique is beyond all others. First they did what they did with one cylinder. If you couldn't count you had no problem. One was the number to deal with and that was that. That they handled was the next factor. If you have never ridden an overhead camshaft single in good fettle, you have not ridden a motorcycle that was really fun. I should digress for a moment to qualify that statement. There were motorcycles that were delicate and very fast for their size. The KSS Velocette was the best of these. It was a 350cc ohc single that was in a rigid frame. Not too light, but adequate. The ohc 500cc Inter Norton was next. It came two ways, rigid or with the plunger frame (garden gate). Their weight was about 400lbs give or take a few pounds. They both handled very well, but because they didn't start to run till past 4000rpm they didn't really give the kind of performance that was thought to be there. It wasn't until after they had let some air into the cylinder that they responded in kind. Remember, they only came with 7.22 to 1 compression ratio. If you look at the recommendations of the old Ethyl Corp. which was 10 octane fuel was as good as necessary. 7.2 octane fuel was as good as necessary. The fact that the Norton combustion chamber was an excellent one meant that any fuel you got would work. Right after WWII white gas was the cheapest. Yep, appliance fuel now, was then only six cents a gallon. In those days it was very neat. Also, a point to remember was that the Norton had a reputed 29 hp in the best of conditions. It wasn't until they started raising the compression ratio that better fuel was necessary. Then, white gas had an additive of benzol. A little bit would stop the knocking and it would run over 100mph. So much for the Inter.

Now, as the single camshaft Manx was concerned, it had a different weight of flywheel assembly for lower inertia and narrower flywheel assembly for additional stiffness. The crankpin was narrower by some 1/8 inch, but its size was the same o.d. as the Inter. The difference was the rollers for the Manx were 5/16 X 5/16, as opposed to the Inter's of 1/4 X 1/4. The Manx had two rows of twelve rollers each, while the Inter had three rows of each. The outer race was 1/8 inch larger on the Manx. The carb on the Manx was bigger with the resultant horsepower increase. That the camshaft timing was the same on both the Inter and Manx was a bit of an indication of how fast the Inter could be made to go. True, they became a little bit touchy and explosive when you did all this, but who the hell cared? When the engine got edgy you heard it and responded in kind. Sometimes you didn't catch it in time; then you walked.

Then there were the Indians, Harleys, and all of the oversize strokers that were very fast for a little while. I had an 1100cc JAP that would stand on end from 100mph. It was a lakes job, but that is another story. In truth each enthusiast had his or her god of two wheels. The English motorcycle revolution after WWII was indicative of the trend that the ex-GL's were ready for R & R. That they were successful with even Joe Lucas equipment is less an achievement than some of the places that were visited on board the motorcycles of the time. The engines were reliable for the time, and the real proof of that was the high mileage that was put on them. True, the generators were only 36 watts, but that was sufficient for the time. Most riding was done

in the daytime anyway. However, if you remember Ohm's Law, Power equals Volts Times Amps, so 6 volts equaled 6 amps which was enough to put a 1.5 amp charge while you were riding at night. The Lucas magdyne of the time had a big fiber gear driving a small gear on the generator. I don't remember what the ratio was, but suffice it to say that it worked. However, unlike their automotive counterpart, which was relatively slow rpm-wise, the regulators were very, very touchy. When you got one working you didn't fool with it. The maintenance of the battery was another thing. Most batteries were forgotten until they were almost dry. Then the regulator went crazy and the generator blew the solder off the commutator connections. The square four people had the Indian four three brush generators with the distributors and points on the end. The Harley had an extra winding so when the lights were on the battery was still being charged at a good clip. I don't remember how many amps, however.

That I deal only in singles you already know. However, if there is somebody in your group who is in need I would be very glad to try to help in whatever way I can. I am an RHP bearing dealer and also an Alpha crankpin dealer. I am by nature very small, so any requests would have to be covered by a cash deposit, but I don't mind writing to Alpha. I can usually get a crankpin in about three to four weeks. I have my 1986 trade price list, so it would not be anything to pass any information along. In the meanwhile I hope you are both healthy and well, and I shall remain

Sincerely,

Carl Mazel  
10606 Jordan Ave.  
Chatsworth, CA 91311  
(818)882-0895

### EARLY SURVEY RETURNS

Thanks to those of you who have already returned the survey forms. Our statisticians are winding up the computer and should produce a report by next month. In the meantime if you haven't filled out your form please take a minute and mail it off. Here is a sampling of some of the comments we've received to date:

Just wanted to let you know you're doing a super job on the NOTICE. Your style and ideas have made the newsletter easier to read. And we Norton riders need all the help we can get.

Also, I want to thank Phil Radford and Tom Mullen for the fine work they did to make the club a better one. Good job guys.

I only wish I could go on some of the rides, but I live on the Central Coast [CA] and it just makes it too difficult. But I hope to see you all at the Morro Bay Run. Be there! P.S. Is that really Art Sirota on the cover of last month's issue? He looks too young from what I heard.

I like receiving the NORTON NOTICE monthly. I have contributed to it several times in the year since joining and I think it is a good magazine "as is". The only improvement I might suggest is more tech tips each month. And a plane ticket to California.

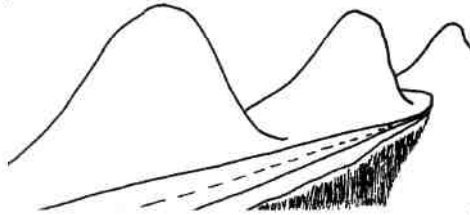
How about some See and Do tech sessions for us monkeys who are new to Nortons? I ain't ashamed.

(See page 9)



# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

## FEBRUARY RIDE SYNOPSIS



## RIDE REPORT

### SKYLINE TO SKYLINE 1/19/86

Well, thanks to Ma Nature and Scot Marburger's sins it was a wet one today. About a dozen riders gathered at TI Motors in Berkeley under cloudy skies with every intention of making it to Alice's dry. Once we got Nick pointed in the right direction, we rambled off through the hills and enjoyed some twisties which had been dampened only slightly by a light mist. After a slight delay in which it was decided that Phil either took a wrong turn, or b- couldn't keep up with the pack, we headed for the San Mateo Bridge. In Hayward heads turned as the herd thundered through, lead by the two Throaty Ducks. About that miss, Dave . . . . Louis Mendelowitz demonstrated to the locals that Nortons do indeed have massive torque by outgunning everything in sight. Bob Bausch breathed a sigh of relief that we were moving through town at a legal speed. At the bridge toll, John Covell set a new club record for plying the most times (single rider category).

At a stop on the top of Skyline some members (those with the foresight to bring raingear) donned swimsuits and fins while the rest of us looked on in amusement. The rest of us got wet as the skies had by now begun to open up. We spread out at this point: those of us who could see moving faster upon than those of us who had thoughts only of slippery tires. I was delighted to ride alone for awhile, away from those noisy Nortons. We passed practically no other riders in either direction proving once again the hardness (or is it foolhardiness?) of the Norton rider.

The stop at Alice's was refreshing, especially as there were many other Nortons already there. Phil had, as it turned out, taken a wrong turn but had arrived before everyone else and seemed quite comfortable and relatively dry when I arrived. It was suggested that in the future we designate one rider to carry a flag atop a pole to help Phil along.

After hamburgers, omelets, and coffee we began to filter off one by one into the afternoon. In many respects though it was wet this was a successful ride, especially when you consider that the majority of people at Alice's were Norton enthusiasts. And, while I don't want to recommend that we ride only on rainy days, it certainly was uplifting to see so many Nortons and other European marques and so few Brand X's parked outside the restaurant.

Lou

**NORTON OWNERS CLUB**

10:00 AM-- A dozen or so Norton riders, some on beautiful Nortons, some on Harley cafe 750's, and a new BMW K100 ridden by Tom Borman. The weather was clear but crisp, and the roads were twisty but fast. It was nice to have the chance to be involved in a club sponsored peg scrape-a-thon. Even Art was hanging off the side of his bike, a rare sight indeed!

The ride meandered generally south to Mt. Madonna Inn without losing a single rider to one of the small wineries that sit at the side of Hecker Pass Road. At the inn, after counting the accumulated riders-- about 15 at this time-- a Sunday brunch was eaten by most.

Remembering some folks up at the Kennedy Meadows Norton Rally who were camped adjacent to us, and remembering them saying they owned the Mt. Madonna Inn, and remembering that I didn't have any money with me, I went in search of them. Lucky for me they were both in the bar, and lucky for me they remembered me, and lucky for me I liked beer. I accepted a Bud on the house. For what it's worth-- this elderly couple thought that the motorcyclists at the rally were the most polite, well behaved, and quiet bikers they have ever met. I believe that the two leftover steaks we gave them helped in formulating that opinion.

Back on the road and down 152 we all returned home by different routes. The end mileage back to San Jose totalled 120 miles. A beautiful day in all.

Nick

### UPCOMING RIDE \*\* KING CITY

The King City ride leaves from Rabers European Cycle Works, 1815 Almaden Road, which is near the south intersection of Almaden Rd. and Almaden Expy. The two easiest routes to get to Rabers are:

1. Take Vine St. exit south off 280. Follow Vine south-- it merges with Almaden Blvd. to form Almaden Expy. At that point where Almaden Expy. crosses railroad tracks, Rabers will be on spur road to right. Take Almaden Rd. or San Jose Ave. right.
2. Take Tully Rd. exit west off 101 just past the 280/880 exits. Cross Monterey Hwy, at which Tully Rd. changes to Curtner Ave. Follow Curtner under Almaden Expy. to stoplight at Almaden Rd. Turn right (north) and Rabers is on the left after about 1 1/2 mile.

How's that for easy? If you still can't find it call the ride organizers and we will all plan to meet at YOUR house.

The route for the King City ride will be south on 101 to 25. Maps will be handed out. This is a long day ride-- approx. 250 miles--a tuneup for what's to come this summer. So have the Snorts purring. Lunch will be eaten near King City.

Nick





# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH



(CONT FROM PAGE 7)

The newsletter is very good overall and seems to be getting better. I especially enjoyed the Daytonas by John Foyston. He had me rolling on the floor with laughter. Those Harley riders are the same nationwide.

Unfortunately I live too far away to partake in club activities-- especially working 5-6 days a week. Since my in-laws reside in San Leandro a Sat. night affair is not out of the question.

As far as bikes and repairs go, my 2 ES2's are waiting patiently for rebuilding. The 750 Dunstall is as reliable as a rock and much more fun.

How about a map with article on Norton/Brit shops San Diego to Canada and East? A list like this would (maybe) encourage more "Norton" touring with confidence.

THREE NEXT MONTH...

## NOTES ON TYPE

Dear Alex.

Even as I sit here a huge mob has gathered outside my front door, placards in hand, bullhorns to the lips, waving and shouting, stomping and jumping all demanding larger type for the NN. Well, actually it ain't exactly a crowd. In fact, Alex, you were the only one to mention the problem. But I take it seriously and so Alex, just for you, this type is 115% normal size. Try it with and without your glasses. Any difference from the rest of the page?

The more I thought about it, however, the more complex the issue became. I mean, suppose we did use larger type. The following could result:

1. Older people would take more of an interest in Nortons due to better access to tech tips, notices of club rides and branch meetings, and want ads. Alex, would you want to be in front of some 75 year old grandmother on a Commando who tries to overtake you on a hairpin turn?
2. Little children, just at the threshold of reading, would be able to decode the large letters and find out where our meetings are. Who wants little kids running amuck in our hallowed meeting halls?
3. Riders of brand X machines would recognize and flock to the unbelievable bargains in our want ads. After the initial windfall profits, we Norton owners would be without our handy spares source, forced to send to faraway places for life's necessities. Tied to our lifeblood by the US mails. Does a more ominous threat exist anywhere?
4. We might force US manufacturers of magnifying lenses out of business thereby pushing thousands of US workers into hard times.

5. We wouldn't be able to offer club members as many new ideas and improvements to their Nortons per issue. This is offset by the fact that if members don't contribute new ideas and improvements for their Nortons we won't be able to offer any new ideas and improvements for their Nortons.

So you see, Alex, the issue is not as simple as it first appeared. Besides, isn't there something totally absorbing in sitting at a steady table (no jarring or you'll lose your place), with just the right light (no glare or the line is lost forever), and with peace and quiet (concentration is essential). It's a mystic rite, Alex. Shhh.

Lou



## COLD WEATHER STARTING PROCEDURE

1. Turn on petcocks
2. Free the clutch
3. Switch on ignition
4. As above





# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

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Norton Owners - T.T. specializes in European motorcycles and offers complete parts, service, and machine shop for all the wonderful bikes we sell.

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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.



412 VALENCIA ST.  
SAN FRANCISCO 94103  
PHONE 626-3496



# WANT ADS

E



ALL ADS WILL RUN FOR TWO MONTHS UNLESS YOU RESUBMIT THEM IN WRITING TO THE EDITOR.

**FOR SALE:**

1969 BSA Lightning. 650cc. Nonrunner. 75% complete. Good restoration project or parts bike. \$275.

Phil Radford  
(408)293-4548  
(Morns. or wknds.)

**FOR SALE**

New petrol tank caps for early Model 7, 88, and 99. Twist-on type. \$5 each.  
Used 932 Amals. \$25/pair.  
Aluminum speedo and tach cases. \$5 each.  
K & N air filter, used. \$4.  
Early style headsteady. \$4.  
Chainguard, used, no dents. \$12.  
MK2 oil tank, perfect. \$15.  
Norton Lockheed front disc brake complete, with hub, rim, slider, spokes, and good condition K81 Dunlop. \$90.  
Luggage rack. \$5.  
Steel Roadster gas tank, no dents. \$45.  
Steel Roadster side panels. \$20/pair.  
Interstate exhaust pipes, need re-chroming. \$20/pair.  
Reverse cone Norton silencers, excellent cond.. \$25/pair.  
Roadster seat, no rips, like new. \$25.  
Misc. handlebars, free.  
1972 rear wheel with K81 Dunlop. \$30.  
Stainless front and rear fenders. \$15 each.  
New original Fastback gas tank. \$95.  
New Fastback tail section. \$45.  
New Fastback seat. \$55.  
Used Girling rear shocks. \$10/pair.  
Commando headlamp ears, need re-chroming, free.  
Plastic license plate frame from T.T. Motors. used, original. \$375 (Very rare!).  
Used 6 volt coils. free.  
Used 12 volt coils. \$5 each.  
Haynes latest Commando workshop manual, new. \$15.  
Pre-MK3 right hand rider's footrest support. \$15.  
Pre-MK3 left hand footrest support and rear brake lever. \$25.

Art Sirota  
Menlo Park  
415-327-3167

**FOR SALE:**

Primary belt drive conversion from Les Emery. New. \$180.00.

Rodger Sandula  
(408) 978-0535

The restoration of your Vintage Norton begins with the removal of your first nut.

Art Sirota

**FOR SALE:**

1. New forged aluminum clip-ons for Roadholders and other 35mm fork tubes, \$50.
2. New sintered bronze 850 clutch plate set, \$45.
3. New Commando steels clutch plate set, \$25.
4. New Atlas clutch plate set, \$20.
5. New Commando hardened clutch center, \$45.
6. New Commando primary chain. \$35.
7. ~~Used black CSP fork brace for disc brake Commando. Will also fit drum brake models with spacer. \$40. SOLD~~
8. Used Craven rack for Commandos with all hardware, clamps, and Craven support braces which connect to passenger peg mounts, \$40.
9. ~~Stewart Warner oil pressure gauge with stainless steel hose and mounting piece, all hardware, and cylinder head oil pressure adapter. \$40. SOLD~~
10. Used pair of servicing 32mm concentric Amal carbs, \$30.
11. ~~Used Commando steering damper kit #064247 with original instructions and parts list. \$30.~~
12. Cambray cast aluminum wheels for '71-'74 Commando. WM3-19 front and WM4-18 rear with new Roadrunner tires and speedo drive. Ready to bolt on, \$400.
13. New Amal concentric carb slides, 3 1/2 cutaway, for 30 and 32mm carbs, \$16 a pair.

'73 (actually 10/72) 750 Commando with long range fastback tank, seat, and sidecovers. Has combat engine with lowered compression, dual 32mm Mikunis, Boyer ignition, new Roadster exhaust system, and cast aluminum wheels with new Roadrunner tires. \$1,500 with cast wheels or \$1,200 with stock wheels and new Sport Elite tires.

Write for more information.  
Gene Austin  
985 E. Grant Pl.  
San Mateo, CA 94402

**WANTED**

Front disc setup complete (Hub, disc, caliper, slider, brake lever, and reservoir). Also, front fork tubes for '72 Commando.

Rick Spero  
2432 Bridwell Way  
Hayward  
(415)867-5048

**THE NORTON NEVER  
BREAKS VALVES.**



# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

## EASTER MORNING RIDE

The alarm went off at 3:15 AM. I stumbled around a bit, disoriented, and slowly began to realize that I was actually out of bed. I made my way to the coffee and tried to remember how to heat it up. I returned to my bedroom and started to assemble my garb for the ride. THIS kid was going to be toasty. The thermals went on with a bit of a struggle, the turtleneck got stuck on my nose and I lurched into a chair. No problems-- just slow down a bit. Plenty of time.

Boots on, jacket zipped up, helmet on, gloves on, gate open, wheel out the beast. Kick through, prime, ignition on, KICK! It started! Lights on, feather the throttle-- the whole goddamned neighborhood is asleep. Short warmup, first gear, feather, feather, we're off! We'll just take it easy down this hill... No motor!! What the #!?!\$&! I can't see a bloody thing! Push, push. Uphill. Take off the helmet, take off the jacket. Sweat streaming down. Collar wet, crotch starting to feel damp. Uphill, uphill, HOME! Wheel the beast back in. Run inside, change the keys, unlock the Dunstall, wheel it out. KICK THROUGH-- we're off!

I floated through the streets-- strange glow from yellow lamps-- and arrive 20 minutes late at the BART station. They're gone! I can catch them. Off to the freeway-- beeline to the toll. "You seen any motorcycles come through here?" He looks down at the throbbing Norton. "Yeah, but you can catch 'em on that. They went through 15 minutes ago."

Floating over the bridge, hunched over past San Quentin, starting to cool a bit, past the ferry, onto 101. Off at Mill Valley. No chance now-- these guys will be too fast on the Mt. Tam road. Lean left. No chance, but we'll try. Then WHISTLE!! There, in the darkness, 30 or so Britbikes, waiting, ready to roll soon, waiting for SF riders.

And so began my Mt. Tam ride two years ago. The sun came out as we rode on 1. Breakfast with good company, a leisurely ride home-- Great Day. See you there March 30.

Checkpoints:  
(Primary EB) Ashby Bart station, Berkeley, 4:00 AM  
Toll Plaza Richmond/San Rafael Bridge, 4:30 AM  
GS Bridge parking lot 4:15 AM (for peninsula and SF riders)  
Tam Junction, 5:00 AM

Destination: Russian River and wine country, breakfast on the way

European and American bikes ONLY. If rain, ride is cancelled.

If you get lost, put your ear to the ground in Marin County and just LISTEN.

Lou

### AFM SCHEDULE AT SEARS POINT

|             |                    |
|-------------|--------------------|
| March 1-2   | July 27 (GOC)      |
| March 29-30 | August 16-17       |
| April 19-20 | Sept. 14           |
| May 4       | Oct. 12            |
| June 8      | Oct. 25-26 (4 hr.) |
| July 5-6    |                    |



What follows is the second and final installment of the interview with Lee Steinmetz.

LC: Before each race what are the critical parts you look at?

LS: When the cam was coming apart I was pulling the barrels off before each race but I've had it on for three races now. It's time to have another look. I torque the head, adjust the valves, check all of the mounting bolts, change the oil, drain the sump and refill it, check the chain, the wheel bearings.

LC: What kind of a chain is it?

LS: It's a DID rollerless chain, Diamond XDL.

LC: What about the steering damper?

LS: It's a Yamaha one and I think I put 30W fork oil in it. They're completely rebuildable but not adjustable. It's got an aluminum body and seems to work pretty well. I could use a little bit more steering damping but like I say, I'm still sorting it out.

LC: What pressures do you run in the tires?

LS: If I remember correctly I'm running 28 in the front and 38 in the back and I'm getting about 9lbs rise in the front and 6 in the rear consistently.

LC: What kind of gas do you use?

LS: I'm using ERC. I wasn't getting detonation with the other motor but I'm sitting 10.8 to 1 compression ratio now. I haven't tried pump gas in it so I don't know if it would detonate or not.

LC: Is there any vibration at all?

LS: It's real stable. I use the 850 frame and when I had the triple clamps made I had them machined straight. It seems like Norton made three or four different triple clamps for the Commando. The early ones seemed to be parallel and straight. In the 850s they kicked the steering head out a degree and then kicked it in at the triple clamps giving it more trail. And so basically I went with an 850 frame and 750 steering geometry to give it a slightly longer wheelbase. It's real stable; doesn't want to do anything weird. But you have to be careful in transitions -- when you're only partially leaned over and not hard on the gas or hard on the brakes.

LC: Assuming equal rider skill, how would you rate this bike against others in your class?

LS: In the AFM I'd say it was right up there, in my class anyways. God, that's a tough one! At Laguna I was practicing with the open bikes and we were all out at the same time -- and it was keeping up with XR1000s. I wasn't pulling them but they weren't pulling me either so as far as power goes I think it's real good. It keeps up with a lot of the Jap bikes.

LC: What caused the crash?

LS: That was a real funny one. I was playing with the suspension -- I had softened up the rear springs -- and I hit a bump and the tire was there one minute and gone the next. I don't remember, I got knocked out. But like it was there and then it wasn't. I can't really call it rider error but I guess I could. Let's see, the first practice session last season I had a slide stick and that caused me to crash but that was because the cable was frayed. That



# TECH TIPS

## FOYSTON LIVES !!!!

From the not-so-far North, deep in the damp, dark forests of Oregon, comes the lusty cry of member John Foyston. With Norton in his heart and European bikes on his mind he writes:

The disc front Commando uses more hose and pipe for the front brakes than almost any hydraulic system this side of the shuttle. On a bike that we were redoing at the shop it was obviously going to be necessary to replace most of the lines due to corrosion; an expensive process. The bike had BMW style bars and I realized that it was possible to route that 40" long 'Hi-Rider' hose, 06-3540, directly from the master cylinder to the pipe from the caliper. There is enough hose to do the job safely and neatly and it eliminates two hoses, one bracket, two special nuts, and one hydraulic pipe. As an added bonus, we will sell the 'Hi-Rider' hose for \$15, for less than our cost because, yes, we've got a bunch of 'em!

John Foyston  
Eurosport, Inc.  
11576 S.W. Barbur Blvd.  
Portland, OR 97223  
(503)245-1377

## AMAL CARBS

(The following appeared in the June, 1977 issue of CYCLE WORLD.)

For CYCLE WORLD readers with Amal-equipped motorcycles, here is a worthwhile modification. After the first 10,000 miles, and on all pre-1975 Nortons and Triumphs, the installation of Amal up-date kits is advised. A redesign of early interior parts. The three piece combination of jet needle, needle jet, and jet holder provides greatly improved low speed running because of better taper design.

Another part that will improve performance on the English concentric is the Viton-tip float needle, which steadies idle significantly. The seat in the float bowl must be tapped up or down to regulate float level of the plastic float. About 1-2 mm below the gasket joint surface is a popular setting. Additionally, fuel height in the twin carburetors should be matched.

Jack Schally  
CYCLESPORT MOTORS  
St. Paul, MN

### 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 mark. Technical tips so published have been reviewed for technical content and are believed to be both acceptable and workable, but no guaranty 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.

## SERVICE RELEASE

July  
1977

### CATEGORY OF RELEASE:

No. N56



### HELP WANTED

I particularly liked the member suggestion that the NN publish a list of Brit shops to "encourage more 'Norton' touring with confidence." I have a good list of shops in the Bay Area and So. Cal but I need more names and addresses from the Oregon/Washington area. Take a moment and send me the name of your favorite shop. Deadline Mar. 15.

Lou



### NATURE OF RELEASE:

Fouling between H.T. leads and head steady.

### MODELS AFFECTED:

1971 Commando - all models.

### PARTS AFFECTED:

062263 H.T. Lead.

### DISTRIBUTION:

Worldwide (Trade Only)

### EXPLANATION:

If the H.T. (spark plug) leads are incorrectly routed, fouling takes place between the leads and cylinder head steady. Continued fouling will damage the insulation and cause shorting to ground (earth).

### ACTION:

Re route both H.T. leads to pass over, not under, the gross over portion of the rocker oil feed pipe.



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was my own fault. The second time was rider error: I braked too hard going into turn 6, slid the front wheel, and then drove off into the dirt.

LC: How would you describe these tires?

LS: They're a soft compound, Dunlops. After about half a lap at Sears I'll start pushing them. After a lap they're fine. When they're brand new they take a little longer.

LC: I'm curious about your reaction to the Sears track.

LS: Well, it's got a lot of turns but they're not fast turns.

LC: How would you compare it to Laguna Seca or Willow Springs?

LS: I didn't like Willow but that was my first race coming back after I crashed so I was still real scared and even though I finished first I didn't have a good race. I felt really bad with my performance.

LC: What's the average speed around Willow?

LS: You mean mph? (Paul Gallivan, nearby - it's 92 at Willow and Sears is 75-78.) Yeah, it's much, much faster.

LC: So what's the top speed you would hit on the Norton?

LS: Let's see, I had it geared for 128 but it was only pulling about 124. But that's just a guess.

LC: What's your top speed at Sears?

LS: I'm geared for 118.

LC: Where is that on the track?

LS: Before they put the chicane in it was between 11 and 1, going into 1.

LC: Are they going to keep the chicane?

LS: From what I've heard they are. The track wants to run it. What the AFM wants to do I'm not sure. The AMA's going to be running it. (Paul Gallivan -- The AMA guys go into turn 1 at 135. Renfrow was dragging his knee through start/finish.)

LC: What else can we tell our readers?

LS: Well, it wanted to be an 810 at one time but the barrels broke. That's when it weighed in at 315. I had a Dunstall 810 kit on it. I ran it in the Open class for its first race and was in fourth place when I crashed passing somebody who wasn't in my class. That was real stupid. That's when I noticed that the barrels were cranked and so we had to go back to being a 750. But the Dunstall barrels were really light; that's why it weighed in at 315. There's another 810s going back to the iron barrels.

LC: What about the rear brake?

LS: It's got a disc and a Kosman hub but I don't use that brake much.

LC: What kind of rims are these?

LS: DID aluminum. I haven't mentioned the battery. I started out using a gel cell. I'm running a total loss system because I don't have an alternator -- I cut the crank shorter so that it would give me more ground clearance on the left side. I tried using a gel cell but after I had two of them fail I went back to lead acid. Yuasa makes the gel cell but I don't recommend using them: I've seen four

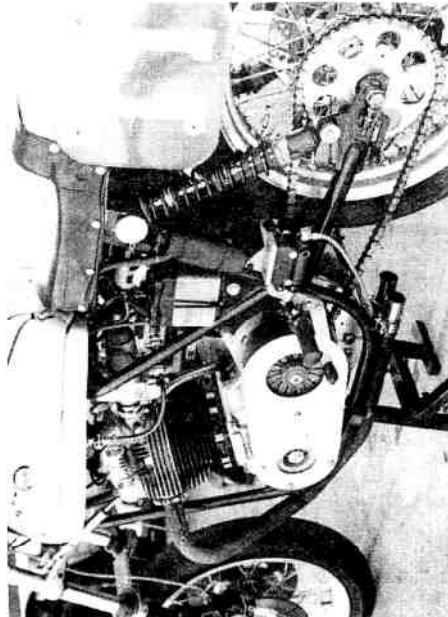
of them go bad now.

LC: Any problems with the rear shocks so far?

LS: No, they can be rebuilt and the damping is adjustable. They're one inch longer than stock and so are the Marzocchis in the front. By the way, I run the Isoastics pretty tight and I recently put a Norvil head steady on which seemed to work pretty well at Sears. I went down to Willow and the bolts came out of it, out of the head, because the plastic it came in melted. And so I was getting some strange wobbles in turn 8 which is like a 120mph sweeper.

LC: Assuming you had limited access to the parts you've installed so far, what would you estimate the cost of the project so far?

LS: Boy, that's a real tough question. What I've actually spent is probably around three grand. But I've had lots of people help me, like Dennis Echeverria and Dan Marvin down at Norman Racing have helped me out quite a bit with machine work. I guess a rough number would be six grand but it's really hard to say.



LACK OF STORAGE SPACE FORCES LEE TO HANG RACER FROM BEDROOM CEILING JOISTS DURING OFF SEASON

### MAKE AN EDITOR HAPPY

While it is true that I am one notch above hunt and peck, I do spend a lot of time typing for the NN. You can help by typing your letters, ads, tech tips, etc. and by observing these two simple rules: 1- Single space; 2- set margins on your typewriter to twice the width of the column in the NN (set to 4"). You will have a long and healthy life if you do this.

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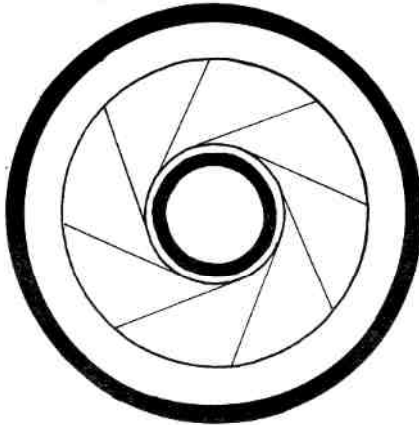


NORTON CLUTCH SLIP

(The following appeared in the May, 1973, issue of CYCLE WORLD. It was submitted by a reader, R.W. McIntyre of Cleveland Heights, Ohio.)

In response to a recent complaint of clutch slippage on a Norton Commando, I suggest the following:

1. Using a spring tool (see Commando workshop manual), remove clutch spring and plates.
2. Radially groove both sides of each fiber plate (see below).



3. Use 30W nondetergent oil. Oil builds up in the plate interface and causes slippage. The grooves allow spring pressure to squeeze out the film build-up.

This is foolproof, cheap, and simple--only be careful with the diaphragm spring. Use the compressor or risk splitting your melon.

Comments by Gene Austin: The above letter doesn't explain what tool to use in making the grooves, but a file, saw blade, grinder, or sander could be used. A few cautions are in order here:

1. Avoid sharp corners at the bottom of the groove. Try to have a smoothly contoured groove so that cracks don't form.
2. Don't go very deep into the plate. You only want a path for excess oil, not any large objects.
3. Don't line up the grooves on opposite sides of the plates. Stagger the grooves so that the thickness of the plate isn't reduced from both sides in the same cross-sectional area.
4. Don't breathe the resulting dust from this operation because of the possible asbestos hazard.

Due to the 1973 date of the above letter, it applies to the fiber 750 plate. Has anyone resorted to grooving the bronze 850 clutch plates, or have you found beadblasting the bronze plates to be sufficient? According to the editor, all comments are welcome, and I'd also like to hear them.

*Gene*



A LITTLE SOMETHING HARVEY PUT TOGETHER


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