

# Norton Notice

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

NO. 99

JULY, 1986



ASSEMBLY INSTRUCTIONS:  
JUST FOLLOW THE ARROWS....



# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH



## Norton Notice

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

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

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

Membership in the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club is available for \$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 NOTICE Editor.

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.

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.



## CLUB OFFICERS

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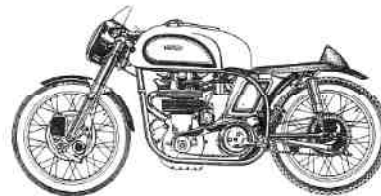
Dave Crader  
4751 Elmhurst Dr.  
San Jose, CA 95129  
(408)973-0838



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



1963 catalog drawing of Manx 30M and 40M



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**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!



- July 6 Sunday AFM races, Sears Point.
- July 10 Thurs. branch meeting. The Hot House, 4052 Balboa, SF, 7:30 PM. See map p. 14.
- July 12,13 Sat., Sun. Laguna Secs. BOTT is on Saturday.
- July 12,18 Sat.,Sun. Fort Sutter Chapter. AMCA Show and Swap Meet. Sacramento. Info: Dick Borchert, (916)967-2833.
- July 19,20 Sat., Sun. July club ride. Overnighter to Markleville. See p. 14.
- July 27 Sunday Picnic at John F. Kennedy Regional Recreation Area, Richmond. Marshall leads the way from his shop at 11:30 A.M. \$1.50 parking fee. BYO to Nevada Flats at JFR.
- Aug. 14 Thursday Branch meeting. Malibu Gran Prix in Redwood City (tentative).
- Aug. 17 Sunday AFM races at Sears
- Aug 23-24 Sat., Sun. August club ride. Destination, Sonora and exploration of the area. See p. 14.
- Sept. 12-14 Fri.-Sun. Annual Norton rally. Near Leggett. Note change of date. See Editor's page
- Sept. 14 Sunday AFM at Sears

**CONTINUING:**

- CMC Night Motocross. Every Wed. & Fri. night. Baylands Raceway, Fremont. Info: (415)851-2545.
- AMA Speedway Racing. Every Thurs. night, Baylands, 8:00 PM.

"Motorcycle World With Larry Hoffman", KTIM radio (100.9 FM), Sunday nights 10-11.

**JULY**

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# The Norton experience



# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

## A SON'S LETTER TO HIS FATHER

Jim Siemer is a NOCCER who currently resides in Washington, D.C. His son Mark is presently stationed in Iceland with the Air Force. The two used to ride together on the "back canyon roads of California" when they lived here. Mark recently sent his father the following letter:

**Thesis:** A Sunday ride on my Norton

**Purpose:** To entertain

**Audience:** Motorcyclist

Consciousness invades my body once again. It's Sunday morning, time for another ride on my Norton. A quick glance out the window indicates that it will be a beautiful day. The sun is streaming through the trees and there's not a cloud in the sky.

After half an hour of dressing and a quick breakfast, I go out to the garage. My father is already out there, carefully checking his motorcycle. Wheeling my Norton onto the driveway, I perform a quick "preflight inspection." After mounting my machine and engaging the choke, I kick it over. The engine roars to life, all 750 cubic centimeters singing out ready for the road. I give my dad a quick "thumbs up", and then we pull out onto the tarmac.

Attaining full road speed, well above the legal speed limit, I relax in the saddle. The low, cafe-styled fairing slices through the wind, making a whistling sound. The ascent up Questa Grade is a chore easily conquered by the powerful motor in my Norton. The musical sound created by our motorcycles fills my heart with pleasure.

Once over the grade, our exit is in sight. In only a few short moments we are going through the long sweeping corner, leaning over in full race position. The corner opens up and we slow down. Motoring through the small town of Santa Margarita, I think to myself that this is the last stretch of civilized road.

Every muscle in my body tenses as we turn onto Route 88. THE RACE IS ON! My dad on his 850 pulls ahead immediately. I steer into his draft and follow him closely through several gently sweeping corners. A quick glance at my speedometer shows our speed at just over 100 miles per hour.

My chance to pass Dad is approaching quickly. I know that I can pass my father in the fifteen miles per hour corner ahead. We begin braking as we line up for the corner. Leaning my machine over as far as possible, I pull past him. The footpegs are being ground away by the pavement as the corner unfolds before me. The direction of the road changes unexpectedly. With a slight steering adjustment and a shift of weight, my Norton accelerates smoothly through the corner. The road opens up into a long straightaway.

I suck behind the fairing and shift into fourth gear. With a loud roar that startles me, my father comes past. The smell of exhaust fills the air in his draft. Another glance at the speedometer indicates that we are pushing 110 miles per hour. Up a small rise and over the crest, my front wheel pulls up off the ground a few inches. The race is nearly over. The last chance for me to pass is in a series of tightly twisting corners ahead.

Coming to the end of the stretch, we barrel down on a hairpin corner. Braking as hard as possible, my front tire chatters slightly. I notch down two gears and dive into the corner. The two tires adhere firmly to the road, pulling me and my Norton safely through the corner. Now I am in a perfect position to pass my father. We follow the road as it snakes back and forth through a series of serpentine corners. Then our course opens up into a short stretch, leading into a sweeping left hand corner.

Sprinting for the corner, my machine sings out with joy. I have the jump on my father going into the corner and execute a perfect pass. This is the last sprint before the finish. A climactic end to the long course is at hand. I accelerate desperately to hold the lead, but to no avail as my father's larger machine pulls ahead at the finish.

We pull into the parking lot of our favorite restaurant and shut down. After removing my helmet, I give my dad the "thumbs up." There are no winners or losers in these races, just survivors. We survived to ride again next Sunday.

Mark J. Siemer



### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- 1. Marick Payton            Menlo Park
- 2. Jonathan Goldstein, San Francisco





## EDITOR'S NOTES



Howdy, folks. Welcome another advertiser this issue-- Marshall has broken down and is now offering 10% discounts to Norton owners. Bring your card and your best smile. And, while you're in the shop, you may just bump into what I hear are two of the best mechanics in the business-- Dennis Magri and Lee Steimers. Make sure you say hello to Mike Rettie too; he's the contented-looking guy on the counter. Nobody ever said Berkeley stood still for long.

John Covell sent us the article from CAR AND DRIVER and I think you'll enjoy it. Combine the reading with the video "V4 Victory" and you'll get a good feel for what goes on during TT week.

And Dick Rutter's been drawing again. Can't seem to stop that guy. I'm hoping to go out and bring you a view of some of his bikes.

Gene, Art, and Dave (Neal) I haven't forgotten you; I just plumb ran out of space in this issue.

The alert published in the NOTICE regarding radar near Santa Cruz was worth remembering-- I just overheard a TV report on how business for the local gendarmes there has been brisk lately. Throttle down and enjoy the scenery through the mountains.

I recently bought two stick-on temp gauges from Condar Company and while one went on fine (top of cylinder head of a Triumph, it's a relatively smooth surface), the other one wouldn't stick (top of the cylinder head of a Norton; it's rough). I wrote to the company and told them about the problem and they promptly sent me some more of their high temp double face tape. It still may not stick without some fin smoothing but I was impressed with the company's quick response.

Tom Borman is stepping down as Paraphernalia person after having handled this job since April, 1983. That's over three years, folks. At the moment Scot is going to handle the stuff until someone volunteers to take over. Scot prefers not to have to make the Post Office trips in order to carry on the "business" but can bring items to meetings, the Rally, etc. I talked to Tom about what is involved in managing the paraphernalia and he told me that we still have a fairly good stock of items (large T shirts excepted) and that requests usually run two or three a month. A selection of items needs to be brought to occasional meetings and to the BIG EVENTS. This is a chance for somebody to be of service to the club in an important way and the fact that Tom did it for so long is something that all club members should recognize.

Please let Scot know if you are interested in helping out.

At the June meeting we discussed the Annual Rally. The date has been shifted to Sept. 12-14. The location remains the same, French's Camp, near Leggett. I'll publish a map in the next issue of the NOTICE. Rumor has it that NOCCERS from the Portland area will be there. We'll be near the Avenue of the Giants and you can be the first on your block to rev your

Norton to 6000rpm inside a Sequoia tree. Gene has volunteered to demonstrate riding backwards on a Norton with a basket of eggs balanced on his head. Fishing is iffy at this point but I'll publish a lure in the next issue which is guaranteed to land anything that has gills.

At this point there is no organized ride from the Bay Area. But John Covell's experience on the Morro Bay ride and his subsequent advice to others makes a good deal of sense-- buddy up and anticipate problems before they play havoc with what is sure to be an enjoyable trip. And, while we're on the general subject, give that bike a good once over. This past weekend, winter corrosion (I think) finally caught up with my Triumph and, at 8 grand with my teeth chattering and my hands beginning to numb, one (or maybe more) of my electrical connectors loosened and the whole system shut down. I wiggled everything and got going again but realized to make sure my Interstate is healthy before I begin the 500 mile round trip.

Tickets for the Rally will cost \$20.00/rider and \$10.00/pillion if they are purchased in advance. We need as accurate a count as possible as the ticket price includes,

besides camping, a steak dinner. Tickets purchased at the camp will cost \$25/\$15. Send checks to Nick Wilts and he'll check you off at the campsite (no tickets mailed to you).

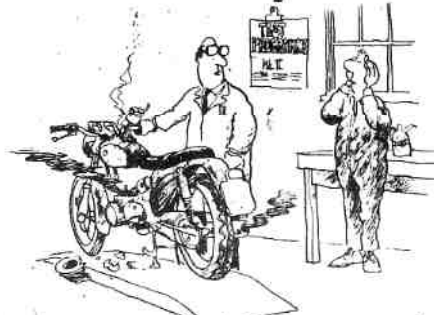
On other fronts, be sure to pick up copies of Classic Bike and Classic Mechanics this month (June and June/July respectively). Both are crammed with fine Norton reading and Classic Bike has a pair of mouth-watering Tritons featured.

And then there's Laguna. Hold onto your hats, folks; there's lots going on.

*Lou*

ONE CLAIM ONLY

There is  
no better petrol



"Write that down - maximum safe revs, ten thousand four hundred and thirty two."



REGENT  
PACKS PUNCH!





# \$ WANT ADS



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

**SPRING CLEANING SALE!**

- New parts for sale:
1. Commando oil filters, \$4 each
  2. Commando fuel line assembly #065192, \$8
  3. Commando Amal throttle slides, #3 $\frac{1}{2}$ , \$15 pr.
  4. Commando Amal gasket and seal kits, \$2 pair
  5. Commando upper throttle cable, \$2
  6. Commando chrome stem inlet valves, \$18 pair
  7. Commando pushrod set, \$20
  8. Commando cam chain, \$5
  9. Commando primary chain, \$30
  10. Commando steel clutch plates (set of 4), \$20
  11. Commando shift lever with rubber, \$12
  12. Commando '71-'74 chrome headlight shell, \$30
  13. Commando early chrome fork slider extension #060350, (2 3/4" long), \$20 pair
  14. Commando ferodo disc brake pad set, \$7
  15. Commando warning light assmilator #062054, \$5
  16. Forged aluminum clip-ons for Roadholders and other 35mm forks, \$50
  17. Atlas/Dommie fork top nuts (chromed steel) \$12 pair
  18. Atlas/Dommie rocker arm set, \$25
  19. ~~pair of silver and black plastic Dommie tank badges, \$12 sold~~

- Used parts for sale:
1. Atlas/Dommie front wheel assembly with SLS brake, \$25
  2. Atlas/Dommie rocker arm set, free
  3. Atlas/Dommie oil pump in excellent shape, \$20
  4. Commando Roadster exhaust pipes, \$10 set
  5. Commando 750 swing arm, \$15
  6. Commando valve lifter set in excellent condition, \$30
  7. Commando turn signal flashers, \$2 each
  8. Commando warning light assmilator, \$2
  9. Commando Lucas orange side reflectors, free
  10. Commando turn signal parts (a shoebox full), make offer
  11. Commando pre-MKIII rectifiers, \$4 each
  12. Commando pre-MKIII engine cradle and front mount, \$20

Hustle up on these used parts. Some of them will end up in the trash if I can't get rid of them soon.

- New publications for sale:
1. 76 page spare parts list for '48 & '49 models 1, 16H, 18, and ES2 and '46-'49 models 30, 40, 30M, and 40M. \$10
  2. 78 page spare parts list for 1950 models 1, 16H, 18, ES2, 30, 40, 30M, and 40M. \$10
  3. 42 page maintenance manual for International models 30 and 40 and Manx models 30 and 40. \$10

None of the above items include shipping, so include a reasonable amount if you want something shipped. Don't wait a couple of months to write concerning these items as I've been very successful with my ads recently.

Gene Austin  
985 E. Grant Pl.  
San Mateo, CA 94402

**FOR SALE**

**1974 Commando 850**  
Recently rebuilt from the frame out. Engine balanced by Branch Flowmetrics to 1/2oz. available as a roadster or an "Interstate/Fastback".  
Interstate/Fastback set-up consists of 6.5gal steel Interstate tank, Interstate side covers, Fastback seat, Fastback tail fairing and replica BMW 'S' fairing, all professionally painted to match. (See cover of January 1985 Norton Notice for a picture.)  
Equipment Includes:  
Amal MKII carbs, 3-phase charging system, Quartz/Halogen headlight, Albert bar-end mirrors, Flamm horns, braided steel oil lines, swingarm 'handling fix', spin-on oil filter, new exhaust system.

Price: \$1850 / offer

**ALSO FOR SALE:**

**Koni 7610 shocks** \$100.00  
• adjustable damping  
• low mileage

Call Tom Dorman at: (415) 282-9304 (hm)  
(415) 961-3600x240 (wk)

**FOR SALE OR TRADE**

1965 BSA A50 500 Royal Star twin. 80% complete, all orig. Needs engine rebuild but will still run. Ratty but original. \$800 obo or trade for 50's A10 in similar cond. or ?. Have truck, can travel.

Steran Morosky  
35819 Vinewood St.  
Newark, CA 94560  
(415)796-5881

**FOR SALE**

1967 Norton P11--rare Norton-Matchless hybrid. Full engine, chassis, and gearbox restoration. Lightweight, torquey beast. \$2500.

Corey Levenson  
(415)420-3231  
(415)836-3973

(Continued on page /6)





## LETTERS

Lou Capuro  
Editor, Norton Notice

Lou:

Some events that occurred on the recent Morro Bay ride (May 17th-18th), plus a conversation I had with Suran Meissner about them, prompt me to write and share my thoughts through the Notice.

First, it was a great weekend and a great ride. The stalwart company varied between about seven and ten as riders joined and left en route. And the weather was all that anyone could have hoped for.

During the ride, the group had a tendency to get spread out; the long distances to be covered may have had something to do with this. And, although for the most part restraint was shown and the speed laws not severely bent, I think no one wanted to be last in line. There was perhaps a subliminal fear of being left behind. I felt it myself when I was only near the tail, and sometimes I rolled on more throttle than I was really comfortable with, just trying to catch up when I'd had a temporary slow or halt. At the same time, however, when I knew there was another rider or two behind me, I tried to keep an eye on my (madly vibrating) rear-view mirror lest anyone be lost by my negligence. (Incidentally, that is one of the good arguments for riding with headlights on--much easier to see those following on a club ride.) Still, I feel that greater vigilance is probably needed on the part of myself and of most other club members on rides.

I got an object lesson on this point: we had finished a late lunch at the River Inn, Big Sur, and everyone was becoming eager to make it home. I was next to last away from the parking lot, and for two or three miles I cranked pretty hard, trying to keep sight of the taillights disappearing around the bend ahead of me. Then, out of the blue, the Dreaded Phenomenon--complete power failure, sudden and irrevocable. I was at the side of the road, helmet off and scratching when the last rider came around the curve, saw me and pulled over. We did some checking and found nothing discernably amiss; we didn't have adequate tools or equipment for a full analysis, but we narrowed it down to an ignition problem (no spark at all). And there was nothing more we could do.

To shorten the rest of a long story: two-up back to the River Inn, where a tow truck was found, Norton was towed (at the end of a long, jerky and definitely illegal rope) to the service station at Fernwood just south of River Inn, arrangements were made to store the bike until an opportunity arose to truck it to a proper repair shop, and we then doubled up our luggage on the back of the bike (don't ask me how) and the two of us rode all the way back to the Bay Area, arriving quite a few hours later than either of us had anticipated.

No, it wasn't a very comfortable ride from Fernwood to S.F., but the message is clear. I was fifty times happier perched on the back of a fellow NOCcer's Norton than I was standing at the roadside in Big Sur. Thanks to a responsible club member, I got home all right and the bike got squared away, too. And that is what it all comes down to: the club is only as good as we can rely on one another. To the extent that we take care of each other in time of need, we've got it made. I think there is some room for improvement, but, as my experience shows, we are doing all right. We only have to build on that.

My heartfelt thanks to the hero of the hour--Louis Mendelowitz, a scholar and a true gentleman. (And so patient!)

Not'naly yours,

John Currell

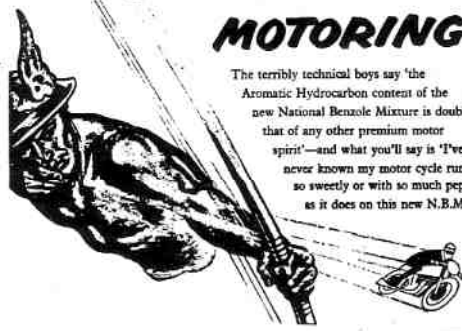
118 Seal Rock Drive  
San Francisco, CA 94121  
May 30, 1986

TREAT YOURSELF TO

## HIGH-AROMATIC

## MOTORING

The terribly technical boys say 'the Aromatic Hydrocarbon content of the new National Benzole Mixture is double that of any other premium motor spirit'--and what you'll say is 'I've never known my motor cycle run so sweetly or with so much pep as it does on this new N.B.M.'



JUST A PASSENGER

Going for a motorcycle ride after an abstinence of almost a year (pregnancy and birth) left me eager with anticipation when my husband asked me to join him for a ride. Donning a helmet and leathers, and hearing that Norton Commando warming up makes my mouth water. We're off! No, not sightseeing. In fact, who sees the sights?--we're after the curvy, twisty undulations. The time it takes to get out of the city is just enough to warm up the bike. My long braid flies in our turbulence. I hold Eric's jacket in front with my right hand. I slide my left hand down his thigh. Now I can feel what he's going to do without constraining him. Just moving my helmet over his shoulder so one eye can see to the oncoming traffic, I watch the road for any debris, potholes, critters and other vehicles. I watch closely as the curves get tighter and closer. I ride with only the balls of my feet on my pegs so I can support myself and so my weight will ride lower on the bike frame. Eric can feel me but not a pressure. We make a tight off-camber left. I feel my left buttocks and upper thighs tighten. We scrape pegs in our lean. We're on our way. Turn after turn I lean with Eric, but not so he feels me. Hard brake, hard brake, turn--drive off the corner.

Now we climb and I lean forward to conform to Eric. My muscles constrict to support myself. Cresting the hill I get a brief glance of distant mountains and hills. We start falling down the mountain curves--one turn after another. My toes are curled to hold myself, my thighs and buttocks constricted so as not to slide forward. I lean into the turns, trying not to initiate. Turn, fall, turn, fall, turn. I scream with enthusiasm into my helmet. I'm so lucky! The Norton's throaty song sounds great. I feel Eric's chaps slap my leg. I'll bruise, but who cares-- I'll remember.

We come to the bottom and a stop sign. Too small. For a brief second I flex my tired toes and let my weight down in the seat. I realize that my face is sore from grinning. My other muscles will be sore tomorrow. Take a breath; we're off again.

Anne Mills



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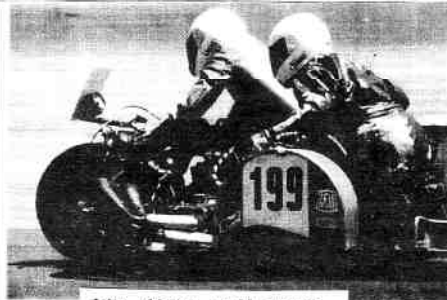
## TRAVELING ABROAD IN JULY?

The Norton Owners club will hold its first INTERNATIONAL RALLY, incorporating the 1988 Begonia Rally from 7/16-7/21. It will be held at the Dennenhof (Pine Garden), Manège Voor Hersenverlamden (Horse Riding School For Spastic People), Dennenreef, 9840, Nevele/Landerghen (near Gent, Belgium).

Of special interest to all European and Scandinavian [and U.S.] Noocers will be the attendance (time, weather, and other commitments permitting) of the Norton Rotary plus a Norton Motors Factory rebuilt and restored Commando. In attendance as a special guest will be John Hudson. If you would like to meet "Mr. Norton" as he is affectionately known, then be there. John will probably travel to Rally on his Mercury, so if you've never seen one in everyday use, come along.

This will be "The Rally" of 1988 if you are a Norton out.

N O R T O N



John, do you smell smoke?



Wait, Charles! There's a quarter on the track!

# FLO

## DYNAMICS

1150 Pike Lane • Oceano, California 93445 • 805-481-6300

### New Product Release

After much time and testing of intake systems, we have developed the ultimate in dependability and performance for your British motorcycle. This Dellorto pumper carburetor gives amazing response in all throttle ranges. Kit comes ready to bolt on with simple frame modification.

- Kit consists of:
- 38 mm Dellorto pumper carburetor
  - Polished aluminum intake manifold
  - K & N air filter
  - Barnett throttle cable

Sold retail \$249.00.

Discount available to qualified dealers.

Technical information available upon request.

Thanks for your interest in our products.

Sincerely,

Perry Kime  
FLO Dynamics

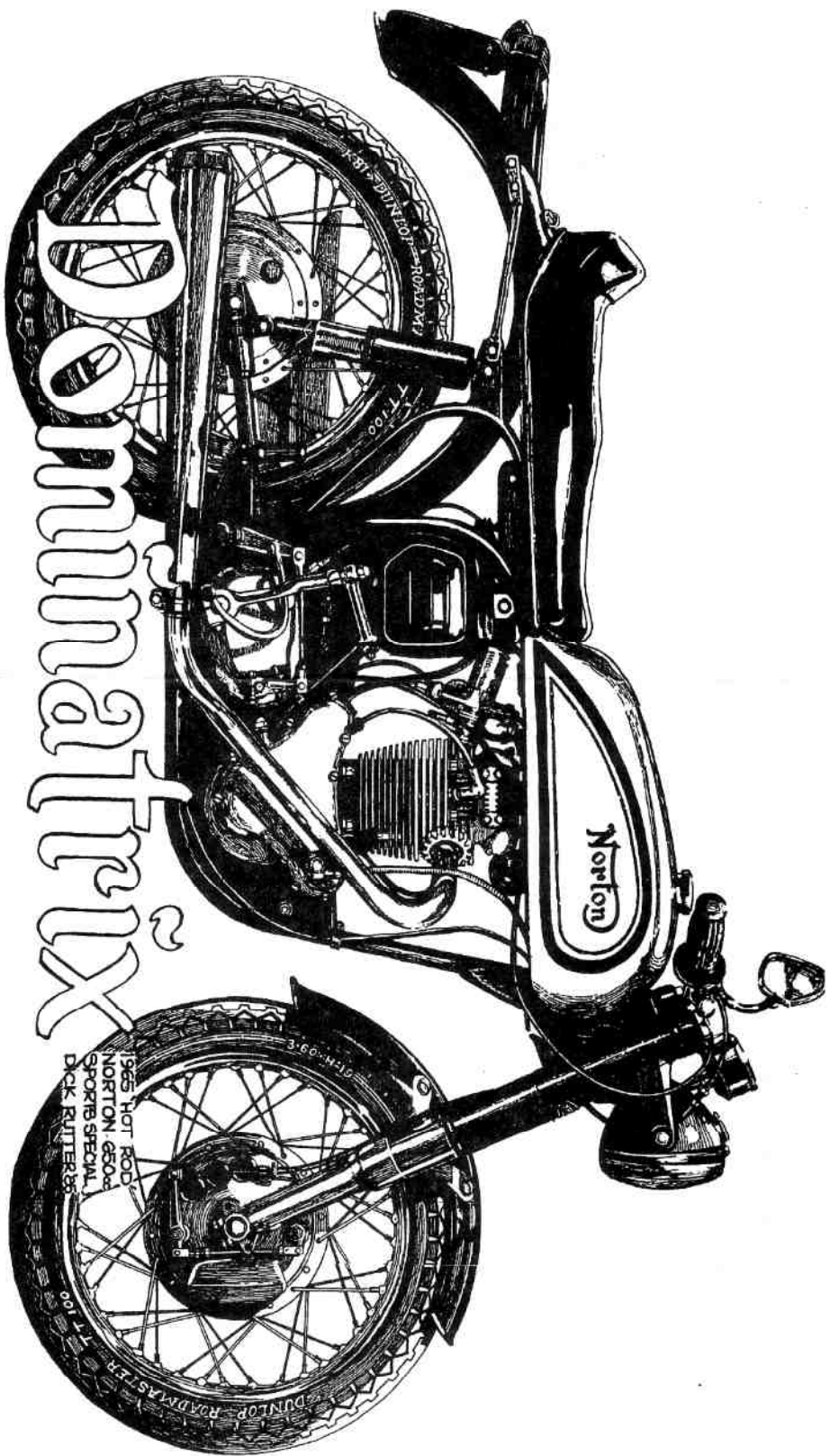
25% DISCOUNT ON 3 KITS  
TO NOC MEMBERS ONLY

### Triumph Belt Drive

For 1984 and later 650 and 750 twin. Developed by the world's leading belt drive manufacturer. Guaranteed to fit and work perfectly. Now only \$849 plus shipping. We also accept Mastercard and Visa by telephone. Dealer inquiries invited.

### No Lead Gasoline Conversion

For Norton Commando and Triumph Twin. These USA Import model British motorcycles were designed to use premium gasoline with 98 octane with 4 grams of lead per gallon included. As of January 1, 1986, the EPA has limited our gasoline to 92 with 0.1 grams of lead and caused big problems for the Norton-Triumph owner. Top end overhals don't come cheap but our Auto Advance Conversion does. We can overhaul your auto advance and modify the spark curve to use no lead gasoline and return it to you the following day for only \$85 plus shipping. Send \$38 and avoid COD charge.



# Dominatrix

**NORTON VILLIERS LIMITED**

NORTON MATCHLESS DIVISION  
 PLUMSTEAD ROAD, WOOLWICH  
 LONDON, S.E.18, ENGLAND

Telephone: WOOLWICH 1223

# Norton

REGD. TRADE MARK





# On the Mountain

*In search of Creg-ny-baa and the legendary Isle of Man TT.*

BY CHARLES FOX

\* Standing before her stone cottage in the English countryside, Mrs. Rose Glover brushed gray hair from the forehead of her countrywoman's face—English, beautiful, and strong—and looked with good-humored curiosity upon us strangers in our fancy car.

As a boy of fifteen, I explained, I'd lived a mile across the forest, in Marsh Green. I used to ride by on my bicycle to see my girl, down in the village. There was a house nearby then called "Creg-ny-baa." Behind its holly hedge was a blue box trailer with a "Castrol R" decal. "R" stood for racing, my passion. I wondered then where that name "Creg-ny-baa" had come from and what was in the trailer, but I was too shy to stop and ask.

Years later, living in New York, I heard a radio broadcast of a motorcycle race, "the legendary TT,"—the Tourist Trophy, motorcycling's Indianapolis—from the Isle of Man. The commentator said, "And here he comes now, down off the mountain through Creg-ny-baa." There was that name again, but from a different place. I remembered the house and the blue box trailer. Now, after 27 years, I'd come back to ask the questions I'd been afraid to ask as a boy, and to go to the island to see the TT races. But the name was gone, and so was the trailer. I wasn't sure which was the right house anymore.

Rose looked wistful. "I'm afraid you're too late," she said. "Mr. Scott—that was his name, Ozzie Scott—he died in January." Mr. Scott, she went on, had raced a Velocette and then a Norton. "My husband, Reg, was his mechanic. Every year they went to the TT races. Ooh, they were motorbike-mad, those two were. My husband had a Gold Star. He rode it to work every morning. 'Reckless Reg,' they used to call him. Mr. Scott called his big house 'Creg-ny-baa,' and the cottage he named 'Ballacraigne,' and one dog was Kep, for Keppel Gate"—which is another corner on the TT course—"and the other Duke, after the racer Geoff Duke."

Geoff Duke and his Manx Norton. That was motorcycle racing to us as boys. As austere and unforgiving as bare-knuckle fighting, carried on by solitary and somber-looking workingmen in black leathers, riding black machines. Stout, dark ale to the frivolous amber of our middle-class mild and bitter.

"I went with them to the island three times, I think it was," Rose continued. "I did all the fetching and carrying. All the womanly things." She paused. "I went to

Glen Helen to watch once, and once up on the mountain at Kate's Cottage." There was a long and thoughtful silence, and then she declared vehemently, "Oh, I know I'm not supposed to say it, but I will: those were the days."

In a borrowed Mercedes diesel station wagon, we swept north on the motorway at 110 mph to embark from Liverpool on a steam packet across the Irish Sea, a shallow sea, said to be among the cruelest. "It was very rough when it was rough," Rose had said. "Everything slid off the table, and they lashed all the bikes down." This afternoon, it was like glass.

We met a Manxman on the boat who told us about the island's 1000-year-old independent parliament and its favorable tax laws. He said that Joey Dunlop, an Ulsterman and this year's defending champion at the TT, or "King of the Mountain," had hired a converted fishing trawler to bring himself, his various Hondas, and his teammates over to the island after the race in Ulster. But the boat had struck a reef before it left the Irish shore and had sunk. "Britain's TT Team Sinks," the press had screamed. But no one had drowned, and all the bikes had been recovered. And he talked about two brothers from Sweden who had crashed their sidecar rig in practice and been killed. "It's a pity when they kill themselves," he said. "People blame the island, they say it's too dangerous. But it's not the island that kills people. It's their own mistakes."

The Isle of Man rose from the sea like a sleeping mastiff, head upon paws, shoulders rising to a 2000-foot hump. Snaefell. Riders call it simply "the Mountain." It slumbered now, an evening sun mantling its bulk in a subarctic haze. We docked at Douglas, where the TT starts and finishes, a Viking port built on a bay at the mountain's foot. Snarling bikes poured from the belly of the ship, up the ramp and into the town. We followed in the Mercedes. In the 200 yards from dock to promenade we entered a world of motorcycles and lost our majority status as automobilists. The air was perfumed with Castrol R and reverberated gently with the sound of thousands of big bikes. The Mercedes was surrounded by a leather-skinned, helmeted species that had come in pairs, perched astride their machines, to Mecca.

The machines were largely Japanese: Hondas, Suzukis, Kawasakis, Yamahas. It was a relief to see a BSA, Triumph, BMW, Ducati, Norton, Velocette, Vincent, Brough, Harley, or NUT. There was probably at least one, somewhere, of every kind

of motorcycle ever remotely popular. Motorcycles lined miles of promenade, parked on either side peg-to-peg. Motorcycles swarmed "the front" beyond which lay the sea, behind which were tiers of Victorian bed-and-breakfast boardinghouses with names like the Granville, the Midland, the Bayview, the Water's Edge, and, a concession to the times, the Las Vegas.

Walls and balconies were hung with banners advertising *Motor Cycle News*, *Cycle World*, the *Daily Mirror*, Shell and Castrol oil, and Dunlop tires. The Gaiety Cinema was showing "Big Screen TT Films and Videos." A "TT Cabaret" was advertised at the Villa Marina nightclub-restaurant. At our hotel, the Palace, there was a casino where the main attraction was a nightly wet-T-shirt contest.

As we drifted off to sleep, now and then we could hear someone ripping off a gear going up the hill from the promenade. A short shriek late in the night. One of the creatures in ecstasy.

In the morning we ate a large breakfast in the dining room, overlooking the front. The tide was low, the sky fresh from rain, the pavement drying. A horse-drawn tram went by, ridden by a solitary couple. We ate Manx kippers (smoked herring), caught perhaps by the fishing boat that rode at anchor in the bay before us. While we ate we read the weekly *Isle of Man Times*. There was a report on the coroner's inquest into the death of the Swedish brothers in the sidecar crash. The youngest, Sven Tomas Eriksson, 26, had been driving. His 30-year-old brother, Mats, had been the passenger. They had reached Alpine Cottage on the western shore of the island, near the town of Ballaugh. They were probably traveling at 150 mph or so when Sven started drifting over into the right-lane. But two local boys were already on the line, going for the gap. It closed. The local passenger said he had felt a brush but couldn't tell his driver till they'd finished the lap.

A witness, Mr. Joseph Portess, who had been outside his cottage watching the bikes go by, said the impact with the hedge had sounded almost like an explosion. "Both riders were thrown high into the air and the machine seemed to disintegrate."

The coroner recorded a verdict of death by misadventure.

I heard Rose saying: "They'd put up a big marquee and go out to practice very early in the morning when it was cold and misty and come back to these great big mugs of cocoa. More were killed in practice than in the races. Morning practice was

(Continued on page 13)

## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH



(Cont. from page 12)

quite greasy and there was often mist on the mountain, and some of them were awful mad before they'd even been round the course. If you know what I mean."

Up on the hill behind the hotel, they would be readying this morning for the Junior TT, six laps of the course for racing bikes no bigger than 250cc. A 42-year-old English Midlander, Tony Rutter, riding a 250cc Yamaha, was favored. After breakfast we went to the pits. There was the marquee, behind the pits on Glencrutchery Road. Outside was a concession stand advertising: "Bigger Sprockets, Lower Revs, Higher Speeds! Bigger Sprockets Here Friday." Opposite the pits was the cemetery. I remembered a friend in New York who had ridden here, telling of the first time he had come to race. "When we arrived," he had said, "an older rider took all the novices, to show us around. But first he took us across to the graves of one rider after another who had never gone home. Then he took us in a bus around the 38-mile course, and as we went he pointed out the place where each man whose grave we had seen had been killed. After that we were allowed to begin practice."

Scrutineers were going over the Junior bikes and the sidcar rigs that would race afterward. The sidcar rigs are a mixture of formula cars and drag bikes. The drivers lie on belly and knees. The passengers, on the left, clamber about on small platforms. Sidcars are slower than solos, but not by much. The quickest outfit through the speed trap was caught at 169 mph.

Bob Appleton, a sidcar passenger, was watching the scrutineers. He was in his early thirties, and he walked with a stiff leg. He and his driver, Mick Whitton, had had "an oil cooler burst at Quarter Bridge last Sunday, beginning the second lap. It dumped oil on the platform. As we started the last lap, I couldn't keep my feet. We finished sixteenth, but it's a great thing to even finish here." Of 188 starters, 50 finished the three laps.

Out of Douglas by the bay, through neighboring Onchan, we climbed onto the shoulder of the mountain along a narrow country road, winding through open country between stone walls. Ten minutes and 27 years it took to reach the little hotel that stands at the corner they call Creg-ny-baa. An old Irish couple who had come on the boat from Dublin, as they had since sometime in the thirties, had set up their chairs just above the outside of the turn. I set mine beside them. It's a 60-mph right-hander that slows the riders in their swoop off the mountain. From the Veranda, through the Bungalow, Brandywell, Windy Corner, the Thirty-Third, Keppel Gate, and Kate's Cottage, they drop down. The first machines, the commentator warned us, were starting down. At Kate's Cottage they burst upon the ear, cracking and popping on the overrun, the swift whoops as the riders shifted down. Then they were sweeping through, keeled over, knees and elbows reaching for the pave-

ment, straining to counter the machines' inclination for the outside bank. Now the engines blared solidly under acceleration once more, machine and rider bobbing upright, the rider "tanking it," flicking up through the gears, screaming between green banks topped with yellow gorse flowers, flat out to Brandish and gone from sight. Like falcons they swooped upon the town of Douglas, lying far below, beside the glittering sea.

The riders are started in pairs at ten-second intervals, as has been done since the first race, in 1907. So the man leading on the road is not necessarily leading the race, which itself becomes a rather abstract affair. Brian Reid was leading the Junior on a Yamaha 250EMC. He seemed unbeatable when Joey Dunlop stopped on lap two for fuel. There was no longer much talk of Tony Rutter.

We went back to the pits, listening to the race on the car radio. Dunlop left the pits and set a new Junior lap record of 111 mph, closing on Reid sharply. We watched the last two laps from the pavement on Glencrutchery Road near where the mountain road comes back into the town. Bikes went by a few feet away at 190 mph, accelerating hard.

A marshal stopped to ask if we were enjoying the race. More than he could know. The Isle of Man is an island in time. It is racing as it was in the Edwardian era: long circuits, demanding endurance of both rider and spectator. In return, it offers intimacy, a share in the excitement and the danger, and exacting payment for misjudgment. I remembered, as the bikes went by, going to Le Mans in my teens, crawling on my belly in the night onto the

grass verge beside the Mulsanne straight to watch the headlights of the Ferraris hurtling out of the darkness at 180 miles per hour, rocketing by at impossible speed not twenty feet away, sucking out my breath as they passed.

Reid broke Dunlop's record on the fifth lap, pushing it to 112 mph. But the fuel-filler cap on Dunlop's Honda was leaking, and he was being soaked in gas and half-blinded. Still, he held his position. Reid's Yamaha didn't come around on the last lap. It was out of gas at Hillberry, at the foot of the mountain, three miles from the finish. So Dunlop, who had won Sunday's Formula 1 race on a 750cc Honda, won his second trophy of the week.

We watched the sidcar race from under a tunnel of trees a few yards up the hill from the Ramsey hairpin. The machines howled through the village streets at 130, shifting down and down for the hairpin until the very air trembled. They burst into view, each passenger's hip skimming the asphalt an instant before he or she (there was a husband-and-wife team) shifted across to lean behind the driver as he opened the throttle for the charge up the Gooseneck onto the mountain.

The favored team, Mick Boddice and Chas Birks, led at the end of the first lap by half a minute. They looked that much faster. But as they came off the mountain at Governor's Bridge on the last lap, with a twelve-second lead and yards to go, a chain broke and a 36-year-old English motorcycle-parts dealer, Dave Hallard, and his passenger, John Gibbard, won. Twenty minutes later, a car drove past, flying a white flag. The roads were open again.

Wednesday was a day off for the racers, a day on for the spectators. (The first Sunday of TT week is officially known as "Mad Sunday" and unofficially as "Bloody Sunday.") We went out to lap the circuit in the Mercedes. There is an excellent videotape, "1" for Victory, of Joey Dunlop riding the course on a V-4 Honda, lapping at an average of 115 mph. The producers claim that he hits 180 mph. The camera on the tank shows the tach, so the film isn't sped up. It's a deathly ballet, flickering through light and shadow, keeling over to this side, then that, until your mouth dries and your neck grows tired from watching.

Dunlop's lap begins in town with a 140-mph plunge down Bray Hill, where the rider is advised to "keep your chin on the tank or you'll knock yourself out when you hit the bottom."

Dunlop speaks with a soft but pronounced Ulsterman's accent, a slightly harder and clipped Irish brogue. "You have to be careful for about three miles out," he says, "till the left side of your tires is warmed up." The world seems continually canted. "This is your first left," he announces. "Once you get through this wee town, your tires is ready."

"There's just bits of the course that I

(Continued on page 14)



Photo by [unreadable]



# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

(Cont. from page 13)

like. And bits that I don't. I kinda go from one bit I like to the next. I don't know all the names. I really like quick [pronounced "quack"] corners." Through the villages of Crosby and Greeba Bridge and on into the country, there is little else.

"I'm not fond of Ballacraigne itself. It's after, through Glen Helen and that. I really like that. I can really make a lot of ground on people from here to Ramsey. It's like the road races back home, all among trees, houses, walls, everything. I can judge the corner without seein' round it. There's a lot of walls around this bit here. You have to be careful." The world twists around the bike miraculously, as he says softly: "There's a wall comin' out of this one [corner] and a wall comin' out of the next one. It scares people, them walls, and it doesn't scare me. You can get through it all right, but you can hit your helmet against the side of the wall."

The road climbs from the Glen Helen Hotel, past Sarah's Cottage, banks and woods on either side. Dunlop has made mistakes but never fallen on the TT course. As the bike twists into the shadows under the trees, he talks about the signboards the crews use: "You can't see the board unless they hold it out before I come into sight. When I come round the left-hander, I'm lookin' straight at it. It's not so bad, really.

"This scares you, comin' through this wee town here. There's no footpath or anything; you're just riding between two walls. It's narra. And it's quack." By "quack" he seems to mean over 150 mph. As the lap unfolds, so do the pitfalls. Birds: "Especially in early-morning practice. There's not one year goes by that I don't kill two or three birds along here. I maybe don't kill 'em, but I hit them. It's not so bad hittin' 'em with yourself, but hittin' 'em with the bike—it's one of those things." Slower riders: "You're never so bad during the race because any of the people you're along with you know is quack men, not going to do anything sally." Chains: "Here's Ballaugh Bridge. It's a great place for broken chains." Jumps: "You land here by this wee hedge." Grease: "This next bit's always very damp and treacherous. You can't see it, because it's too dark."

Beyond Sulby, through Ramsey, around the hairpin, and up the Gooseneck onto the mountain at last. Here the unexpected once again: "This is the bit where I'm beat, from here onwards. I don't really know why. I just can't ride over the top of that mountain at all. I think because it's so open. I know it right enough, but I just can't ride it quick enough. . . . The mountain's one of those places where if you try to go quicker, you can make a mistake." Crossing the railroad tracks on the Veranda: "I don't like these next two or three lefts. I saw a lot of people getting hurt here. Not racing people, road people. It really catches you out.

(Continued on page 19)

## Announcing

JULY CLUB RIDE -- OVERNIGHTER

July 19 and 20

Destination: Markleville and Grover Hot Springs

Departure: Holiday Inn parking lot in Livermore off Hwy 580 at 9:30 A.M.

The ride will meander up Hwy 4 through Manteca to Ebbetts Pass and to Markleville. We'll visit the Hot Springs so bring shorts. Camping will be at or near the Carson River. Panty waists and lightweights can ride the 35 miles into So. Lake Tahoe for the night. The return ride will take us over Carson Pass on 88.

AUGUST "THREE POOLS" RIDE

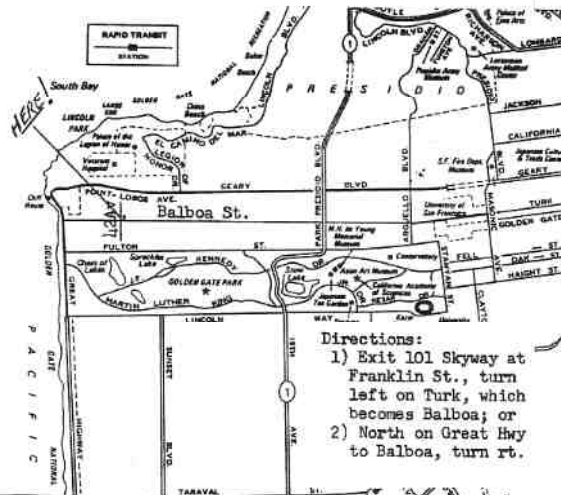
The August club ride will take place August 23-24. The ride will leave the Holiday Inn parking lot in Livermore at 10:00 A.M. Saturday.

The ride will proceed in a generally eastwardly direction to Sonora for lunch. From Sonora a short ride will lead us to the S. fork of the Stanislaus River to an undisclosed swimming hole(s). This swimming hole has everything one could ask for-- cliffs for diving, cliffs for jumping, falls for falling, pools for swimming, girls for watching, rocks for sunbathing, and enough water for everyone.

The fearless group will camp up Hwy 108 somewhere before nightfall.

Plan on planning early for this one-- a new Norton Experience!

Sensational







# TECH TIPS

Dear Norton Mechanics,

It appears that the ants are starting to crawl out of the woodwork over defective Norton parts (see article by Nick Wiltz in the June, 1986 NN).

Again the culprit is soft Norton camshafts. Ask Dave Kirst about finding himself in Kansas City, with a 1500 mile-old camshaft, with no cam lobes. Upon returning the camshaft to the place of purchase he was greeted with excuses like, "You broke it in all wrong," and, "What! You used multi-viscosity oil?" So poor Dave bought another cam that was probably on the same shelf as the defective (read soft) cam and decided to have it tested for hardness. Results-- mud, putty; the water out of my water softener is harder than this cam was.

Now-- he has eaten one cam, torn down his bike, lost precious May/June riding miles, has had to cough up for another cam and is paying to have it tested-- just to get a cam he SHOULD have gotten 1500 miles, 2 months, and approximately \$200 ago.

PLEASE check what you are buying! Vendors: admit that there is a problem with these parts. Get together and solve (harden) this problem.

Stay tuned for further details.

Patiently  
Nick Wiltz  
(408)978-8985

## SERVICE RELEASE

May 1972

No. N3/6

Retention of shock absorber segments.

1971/1972 Commando - all models.

Worldwide (for general distribution).

It is frequently found difficult to hold the cush drive buffers 062074 and 062075 in place in the rear wheel hub whilst the wheel is being fitted to the brake drum in situ.

Use an impact adhesive to retain the buffers in the hub and thus facilitate "blind" reassembly of the wheel to the brake drum. Note that the flat side of each cush drive buffer abuts to the brake drum paddle and the thick buffers bear the weight of the drive.

## SERVICE RELEASE

Thanks to Marshall for this Service Release.

Sept. 1971

(as overleaf)

4

No. N63

Exhaust pipe lockrings

All Commando

Worldwide (for General Distribution)

Exhaust lockring NM18092

In cases where slackening of the exhaust lockrings takes place, retightening may not provide a permanent cure. On new motorcycles now leaving the factory, tab washers part number 062412 and lockrings with shorter threads, part number 062464 are fitted for greater security. These tab washers and lockrings can be applied to earlier motorcycles to good effect. The existing lockrings NM18092, which have longer threads, can be used with tab washers but the greater clearance will allow the tab washers to move and perhaps chatter. For this reason the new lockrings are recommended.

The tab washers have 3 tabs, one to locate between the cylinder head fins and two tabs, one of which locates between the locking fins.

Locate the single tab of the tab washer between the cylinder head fins. Fit the exhaust with locking and tighten the lockring completely. Run the engine to working temperature and then, using a hammer and suitable drift, tap one of the tabs between the most convenient fins. Unintentional slackening of the lockrings is then impossible.

## CHAIN REPAIRS

Chain spares are of little use unless you have a chain-riquet extractor. The converse is equally true.

THE MOTORCYCLE  
23 May 1957

In the unlikely event of a chain breakage, the broken link can be removed without a rivet extractor with the aid of a triangular or half-round file and a pair of pliers. The side plates can be cut quite easily, using the edge of the file, and the remnant pulled clear of the rivets with the pliers. If difficulty is experienced in detaching the side plates from the rivets, the plan is to file through the plate at a position adjacent to the rivet.

R.B. Curtis  
Kirkham  
Lancashire  
11 July 1957

I jes bite 'um off.

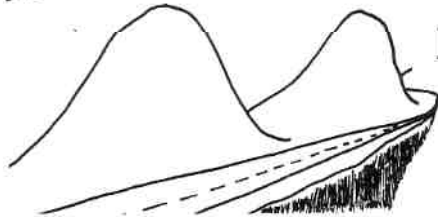
Stoner Jones  
Butte, Montana

(Continued on page 17)





# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH



## MORE WANT ADS

### FOR SALE

1972 850 Commando. Needs a lot of TLC. Stored over 8 years. \$500.

Richard Lee  
730 Emerson  
Palo Alto, CA  
(415)321-9510

### FOR SALE:

Summer clearout--used Commando parts

1. MKIII Roadster seat, small tear. \$25.
2. ~~Fair 34mm Amalg good cond. \$20. SOLD~~
3. 750 Commando swing arm. \$20.
4. ~~Complete Commando wiring harness (1991 MKIII). \$20. SOLD~~
5. Commando clutch hubs (inner and outer). \$35.
6. Glass Roadster tank, rough looking but sound. \$10.
7. Commando transmission cradles. \$5.
8. MKIII rear wheel, complete w/disc, cush drive, and sprocket. \$75.
9. MKIII rear wheel, hub and cush drive. \$30.
10. 850 front wheel, incl. disc. \$50.
11. Commando Roadster oil tanks. \$10.
12. Commando footrests. \$15. ea.
13. Commando front and rear brake callipers. \$25.
14. MKIII headsteady. \$25.
15. 750 Commando trans., complete. \$125.
16. MKIII swing arm and trans. cradle. \$50.
17. MKIII trans. case. \$35.
18. MKIII alternator (stator and rotor). \$70.
19. NEW Hi-Rider style stepped seat to fit Commando. \$35.
20. 1951 Indian "Warrior" 500cc engine, complete. \$150.
21. Assorted MKIII primary case internals, starter gear, etc. Call for your needs.
22. MKIII primary chaincases (pr.) \$60.
23. MKIII primary outer cover. \$35.

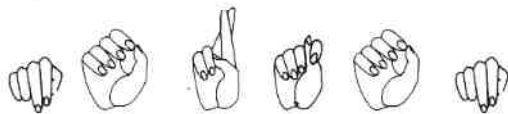
Phil Radford  
(408)293-4548  
Call mornings or wknds

P.S. HELP! Does anyone out there know a good use for the aluminum footrest mounting plates? I've got a mountain of the suckers!

Also from Phil:

24. 850 stainless rear fender. Good cond., \$15.
25. 850 center stand. \$25.
26. Oil filter mounting head. \$6.50. (With attached cradle \$5.)
27. N159 oil tank. \$25.
28. P11 transmission case. \$20.

**THE NORTON NEVER  
BREAKS VALVES.**



### FOR SALE

1970 Norton Roadster. Stored '72-'78, rebuilt by TT in '80. Dec. '83 new carbs; Dec. '85 new tires and relined brakes. Since then new batt., coils, air cleaner, short bars w/mirrors in grips, saddle, tankbag, paint. 6,000K on new engine (total 13k on bike). A good bike for any guy (or gal) who just likes to ride and doesn't want to have to rebuild. \$1700.

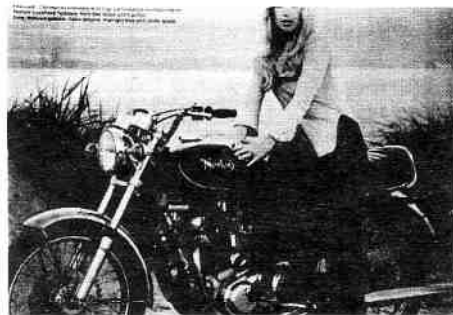
Also, 10' oab over camper, knotty pine interior. Mellow. \$500.

Jim Wahl  
4677 Piper St.  
Fremont, CA 94538  
(415)490-4478

### FOR SALE

Isolastic head steady. New from Fair Spares. \$35.00.

Rodger Sandula  
4317 Faraday Dr.  
San Jose, CA 95124  
(408)978-0535



# BEST BUYS IN TOWN

# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH



(Cont. from page 16)

**NATURE OF RELEASE:** Removing Cylinder Head in Frame  
**MODELS AFFECTED:** All Commando  
**DISTRIBUTION:** Worldwide  
**PARTS INVOLVED:** Cylinder Head and Fittings

## SERVICE RELEASE

**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 ancillary equipment (gas tank, coil cluster, exhausts and mufflers, head torque stay, three rocker covers, rocker oil feed pipe and carburetors 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.



## SERVICE RELEASE NO. N64

Heat damage to rear wheel cush drive.

1971 and later Commando

062074/062075 Cush drive buffers

Worldwide (for General Distribution)

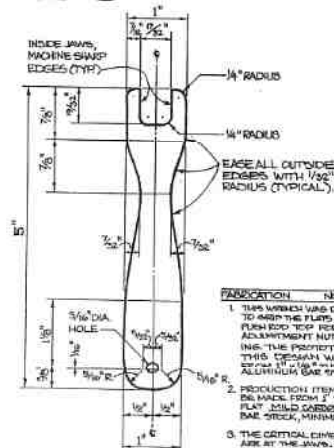
If the rear brake is adjusted incorrectly so that it binds, considerable heat will be generated. It is important to note that the polyurethane cush drive buffers will suffer permanent damage if subjected to excessive heat.

A secondary cause of excess heat in this area is a lack of lubrication at the brake drum bearing.

Take particular care in brake adjustment and bearing lubrication. Whenever the rear wheel is removed, check the condition of the cush drive buffers and renew if necessary.

**NORTON OWNERS CLUB**

The Unapproachable  
**Norton** 1961 ES-2 500cc. SINGLE  
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 25 MAY 1986  
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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

*Hall-Burdette*

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"Going downhill, after Greg-ny-baa it's really quick." To see it on camera is to enter another dimension. Even Dunlop concedes that here the speed becomes a factor: "You can just see the rev counter going up and up and up. It's really hard, going down. You can make a mistake quicker, run into the corners too fast. It's steep when you're going so quick."

In the Mercedes, between Glentraman and Parliament Square in Ramsey, we saw an orange machine, tanking it under the trees, with no muffler, doing at least 130 mph, in the opposite direction. On the mountain we were rear-ended by a Ducati whose rider panicked when he rounded a corner and saw us; he grabbed the front brake and went down. There was a lot of Levi's ground into his knees and a lot of pain on his face. Within moments, men in a van appeared and took him and his bike away. They were not friends but entrepreneurs who circulate the course on spectator days, charging ambulance fees and offering cash for fallen bikes.

Dunlop won the Senior TT on Friday on his 750 Rothmans Honda. His teammate, Roger Marshall, rode a 500RS. There was talk about a Honda-Suzuki Battle, but it was just talk. Dunlop led German Klaus Klein's Suzuki by sixteen seconds at the end of the first lap. Marshall was third. It was never closer. We watched from behind a telephone pole at the foot of Bray Hill.

Lap three saw Klein drop his Suzuki in front of Marshall at Black Dub (the fast, flat stretch before Ramsey). He was "okay," said the commentator. On the last lap, a marshal came down the hill and told us that Rob Vine had also crashed at Black Dub and was dead. Vine was an experienced rider, what Dunlop would have called "a quack man." As illustrator Tom Quinn put it, it was technology running into stone walls.

Dunlop's win was his third of the week. The only man to do this before was England's Mike "The Bike" Hailwood. Hailwood is a god on the island. He won three in '61 and again in '67, then retired, but came back twelve years later when the TT was being forsaken as either too dangerous or too poor, and won again. It put life back in the TT and forever challenged its opponents. Hailwood has been dead some time, but on the island they will never forget him.

Dan Gurney journeyed to the island to watch Hailwood ride his last TT. "Afterwards," Gurney remembered, "there were only a few of us gathered around the old grandstand as it was getting dark to watch Mike get his wreath. It was the victory of this man's incredible career, and he knew it. And we did, too, the few of us that remained. It was one of the most extraordinary moments of my life."

Hailwood had followed John Surtees, who had followed Geoff Duke, as King of the Mountain. I met with Duke, my boy-



Drawing by Thomas Quinn

hood hero. He held up. At 62 he is lean and nimble, relaxed, and unusually assured for a small man. He was dressed like a golf pro in a sweater, slacks, and loafers. He was world champion and won seven TTs from 1950 to '55. "To me," he said, "winning a TT was worth more than a world championship. The more difficult the race, the more satisfaction I got. I liked earning as much as I could, but it wasn't the main reason I raced. I'm not sure why these other fellows don't seem to feel that way. When I hear people say the TT is too dangerous, I remember Hailwood saying, 'Well, the twist grip goes both ways, doesn't it?'"

When we had crossed the Irish Sea again, we went to see Rose in her cottage. She was waiting for us, shortbread and curran cake baked, cricket on a large color television. "He was too old when he come to it, Mr. Scott," she said. "That was the pity of it. When Aunt died and left him the house and some money, he got the

bikes. But he was already a bit old. "Tina was his wife. She lived at 'Greg-ny-baa' first, and then she moved in with him, so she could tell you more about the end of things."

She thought for a while, then said, "Five years Reg has been dead. Just as he was coming up to retire. They know how to set that age, don't they?" She thought a moment more, and then she laughed. "We had a good time. I used to make it a sort of holiday. It wasn't much of a holiday, but it was lovely. Once, after the races, we sailed and left all our parts and tires and things on the dock. Pushed the bikes on and forgot the rest."

"But I wouldn't go back again now," she said. "I'd be too scared for them now." She rubbed her bare arms. "It's all right when you're all young and shivery." She paused again. "Do they still have that horse-drawn tram?" she asked. "It used to be dangerous getting on and off. And did you try the kippers? Best I ever tasted."