



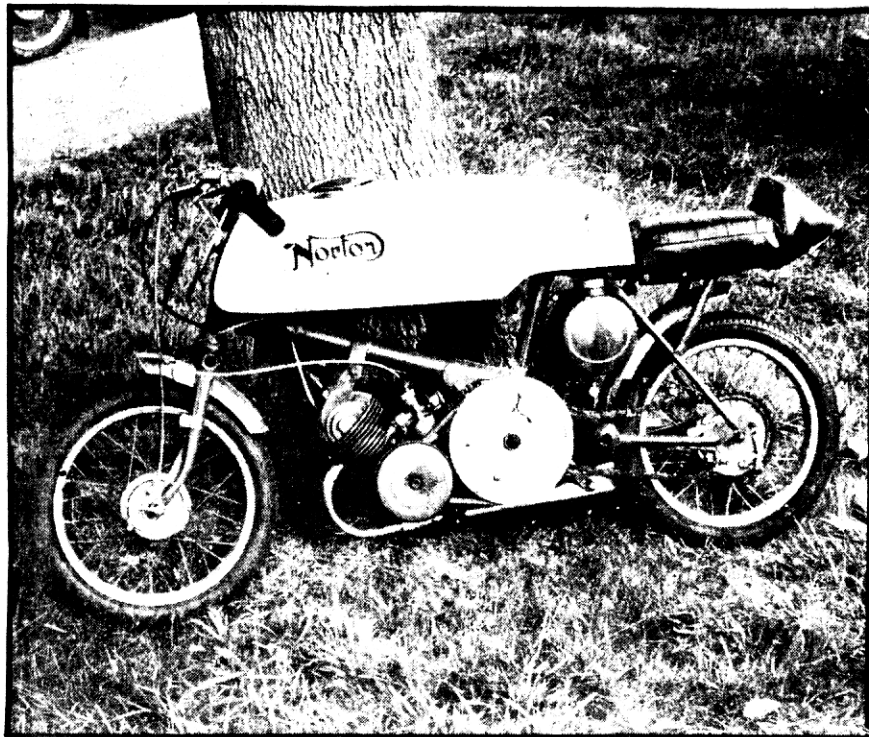
# Norton Notice



The Newsletter of The Northern California Branch

NO. 120

APRIL, 1988



**EXTRA!**  
**NORTON WINS WORLD S.R. PRIZE**  
**DETAILS INSIDE - PAGE 4**



# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH



## Norton Notice

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

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

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

Membership in the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club is available for

**\$10.50 (pounds sterling) + \$18.00**

Membership dues are payable to the Branch Secretary/Treasurer.

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

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

Subscription to the NORTON NOTICE only is available for \$10.00 per year. This does not include membership in the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club, nor does it afford any of the rights or privileges of membership in the NOC.

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

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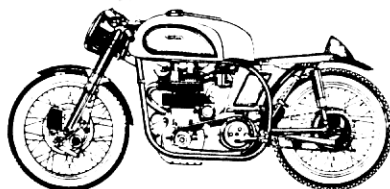
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San Francisco, CA 94121  
(415) 387-5593

## NORTON OWNERS CLUB

#### Important!

(Please take note of the following fine print.)

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



1963 catalog drawing of Manx 30M and 40M



## UPCOMING EVENTS

FROM THE LAIR OF THE RIDE  
COORDINATOR  
MARK YOUR CALANDER:

APRIL 10: First Formula 1 Grand Prix at Laguna Seca. Meet at Howard Johnsons on North First Street in San Jose. 9 A. M.

APRIL 30 - MAY 1: Tulare Vintage Rally.

Take a truck, pick up spare parts, lose your savings. Or ride down and just enjoy the show. Camping (and HOT SHOWERS) right on the Fairgrounds premises. Riders can meet at Casa De Fruita on 152, near Pacheco Pass, 12 Noon on Friday 4/29 (or 10 AM on Sat 4/30 - ed.),

MAY 22: I have been talking with Joe Montoya, AFM pres. We can have this date as NORTON DAY AT THE RACES. We could all go to Sears Point, with admission two dollars off at \$8.00 each, if we pay in advance. They will provide a special place to park our bikes. We can put up the Union Jack and Norton Banner and cheer on the people in the club who race. Afterwards we can find an eatery, or pack picnic lunches. Suggestions?

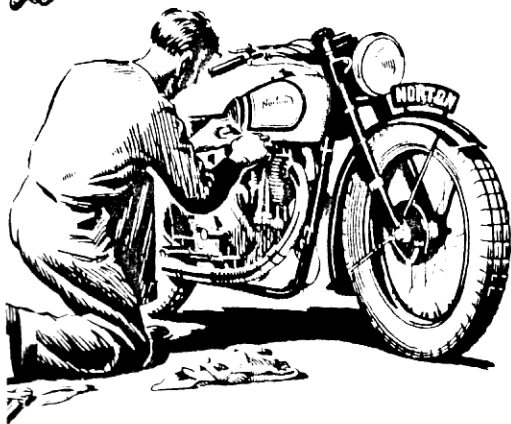
DOWN THE ROAD: June ride to be arranged, July Santa Cruz Beach Bash, Morro Bay English Iron overnighter, August Annual Rally. Volunteers step forward please.



### CLUB MEETING SCHEDULE

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| (San Mateo)   | April 14 |
| Prince of Wales Pub<br>106 E. 25th Ave<br>San Mateo           |          |
| (San Francisco)   | May 12   |
| Zuka's Restaurant<br>Gilbert and Bryant Sts.<br>San Francisco |          |
| (San Mateo)   | June 9   |
| Prince of Wales Pub   |          |

NOTICE: Riders should have plenty of oil and gasoline by the scheduled departure time and all personal problems taken care of. In other words... FULL TANKS AND EMPTY BLADDERS. In the event of inclement weather phone the ride leader to find out about the status of the ride.



## Alan's Wrench

Tech tips and gossip from  
The Editor

---

Good Evening, Noccers. Coming up in this segment we'll have details of the continuing saga "Fix Your Own Commando". First though, the News. In a reassuring move, Norton boss Phil Le Roux has issued a firm denial that the Company are gradually moving away from motor cycles, despite announcements that Norton have taken over the London No 1 Club and licensed the Company name and logo to a line of sportswear. Le Roux explained 'Every bike costs about L2000-L3000 to produce and that quickly eats into our capital...But if you have other interests, it means that if there are hiccups in the motor cycle side, you don't go out of business.' The Norton company made a loss of L314,000 in the year ending 8/87, prior to the 100-unit sell-out of the Classic at L6000 per.

In a suprise move Norton have captured the World Silly Racing Championship with a new machine, the 76cc Subjugator S, featured on our cover. Our inside sources have revealed some details of the machine, which is powered by an unusual 26:1 compression 3-stroke diesel with 90% Nitro fuel and freon injection cooling. The motor is constructed mostly of monocrystalline boron composite with titanium crank and rod. Net output is thought to be about 135 bhp at 25,000 rpm. Total weight is 107 lbs dry, 175 with a full fuel load (12 gal.). Handling is said to be 'brisk'.

This issue of the Notice marks ten full years of continuous publication, an achievement of which we can all be proud. The names and tenure of all those who contributed to this record can be seen in the NN Honor Role which precedes the first ever "NN Ten Years Ago", an excerpt from Notice #1. There was actually a March, 1978 newsletter, called "The NOC News" but that doesn't count as a real Notice.

I'd also like to acclaim those few who have maintained their branch membership for the entire ten years, but I don't know who they are. Anybody care to guess...Bob Bausch is one clear contender. Thanks, Bob.

- cont'd



And now for another episode of the thrilling Garage Opera, "Fix Your Own Commando". Last month we left our Hero (me) with a worn out front Isolastic and no washers. Soon after, the Masked Man from England came to his rescue with some white disks and rubber donuts.

After cleaning up all the parts, I assemble the complete unit on the bench with the white spacers, but without shims. After tightening the through-bolt, I measure the gap at .060 in. Using 1 .035" and 4 .005" spacers, I reassemble the unit and measure (huh?)... .001 in. clearancel Actually, I couldn't get a feeler gauge in but the end caps spun free so I guess it was about .001. After some head scratching, I turn the unit over and prestol there's the .005 gap. It seems that the spacers are not perfectly flat and a burr on the edge was tilting the gap. After messing with it for a while I get it to look straight at .005 all round. Disassembled the unit and covered the internal parts with silicone rubber lubricant (Dow Stopcock Grease). Now the tricky part - putting it back on the bike.

I quickly find that while the complete unit comes off the bike with the spacers worn out, it won't go back on with new parts installed, as the frame tubes are about .050 narrower than the mounting tabs. Ok, try sliding it up from underneath, oops, there goes the end cap, and the shims, covered with grease, fall to the floor. This happens several times and finally I get tired of removing dirt and

dustballs, and delete the remaining grease. I don't ride in the rain anyway.

After some headscratching and knucklebusting I finally come up with a play which works. Assemble the unit dry, with the white spacers missing. Hold it in line with a piece of dowel, and with the spacers missing it slides right in place. Be careful not to pinch the rubber caps between the flat end pieces and the mounting tabs. After the case bolts are reinstalled, push out the dowel and pry back the rubber caps, at which point the spacers can be slid in place. Line up the parts again and push the large through-bolt home. A final check with the feeler gauge and I find (gulp) 1 thou. again.

No excessive vibration though. After a quick spin around the neighborhood, I check the clearance again and find (whew) .005, just what I wanted. My guess is that there was some dirt or misalignment of components which caused the gap to be skewed again. After some healthy flexing by the ol' Long-Stroke, everything loosened up and straightened out.

After several hundred miles, my first impression has been confirmed: the Isolastic adjustment does indeed have a radical, positive effect on the handling and overall feel of the machine. It still doesn't measure up to the Featherbed standard of excellence, but is acceptable, whereas before the fix it was bad enough to be dangerous.

Next month we'll service the carbs and lube the cables, required maintenance for a summer of Happy Motoring. See you at the show.



TWISTGRIP TWADDLE

Owing to the necessities of publishing, this is being written a couple weeks before you're reading it, so there's no point in my exhorting you all to get out and attend the All-British MC Show. Most of you did, anyway. And had a good time, too. Thank you all for coming.

Regarding upcoming events, please see Margie's column elsewhere in this ish of the **Notice**. But one thing I will mention, which is pretty far down the road yet, is the strong likelihood that we'll join with the California BSA Owners Clubs for their Morro Bay ride this summer. So, rather than around Memorial Day as it's been in the past, we would be doing it July 30/31, a few weeks after the Santa Cruz beach bash. Do think about joining us for these events. No, it is not too far to ride for a weekend!

An idea has been rattling around in my head for a while now, so I'll run it past y'all; please let me know if you love it or hate it. What I've a mind to do come next January, by which time there will be a new prez, is start a regular monthly column in the **N.N.** about the law as it affects motorcyclists. By this I do not mean one of those "legislation watches" that tries to alert folks to nasty bills making their way through the Assembly or Senate; those already exist. What I have in mind is

rather a scope on what's been happening to motorcyclists on the road and in the courts of this great state. But not necessarily restricted to California.

Specifically, I have access to computerized law search services that can pick out, at the touch of a few keys, court decisions involving motorcycles. I can even look for Norton cases--from any jurisdiction in these United States, current or many decades back. Ought to make some interesting reading, wouldn't you think? And make no mistake: These cases can and do affect your life, since we live under a system known as the Common Law, which means that any published appellate decision can shape the way things are done subsequently.

I bounced this off Lou Caputo a few weeks ago--had to retrieve it from Oregon (just kidding, Lou)--and he thought I should include a kind of legal Q & A, too. That is, if people want to write in with specific questions, I might dig up such answers as are available, for the edification of all. That's the part I'd especially like to hear from you about: Do you think you'd find such a service interesting? Do you have questions you've been unable to get answers to, relating to motorcycling, from your priest/rabbi/guru? Once the heavy mantle of the presidency has been passed on, I'll have time for this kind of thing (I hope).

Let me know. See ya on the tarmac.



## **Norton Notice** **Role of Honor**

## **TEN YEARS AGO**

*The following is an excerpt from NN #1 of April 1978:*

*The Norton Notice was started in April 1978 by Steve Coburn and Robert Marshall, and has published uninterrupted until this day. The following Members have served the Branch well in this achievement and are deserving of our thanks:*

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| 4/78-12/79 | Steve Coburn<br>(Bob Marshall, pres.)                     |
| 1/80-12/80 | Michael Heth<br>and Brian Halton<br>(Steve Coburn, pres.) |
| 1/81-12/81 | (Harvey Loucks, pres)                                     |
| 1/82-2/82  | Bob Marshall<br>(Art Sirota, pres)                        |
| 3/82-1/83  | Gene Austin   |
| 2/83-12/83 | Brian Halton and<br>Robert Briscoe<br>(Tom Dabel, pres)   |
| 1/84-12/84 | Michael Heth<br>(Scot Marburger pres)                     |
| 1/85-12/85 | Tom Mullen  |
| 1/86-12/87 | Lou Caputo<br>(John Covell, pres)                         |
| 1/88-12/88 | Alan Goldwater  |

"If anyone hasn't noticed yet, the newsletter has taken a new form in hopes to stimulate member participation and distribute information concerning activities, meetings, rides, etc....

"A few words about Club finances: The recent dues increase brought about some grumbles from members and rightly so. Current exchange rate is about \$1.90 per pound and with England dues at L7 per year we are left with about \$2 a member per year to run the club. This must include mailing costs of newsletters and Roadholder magazines, so our finances are slim. No club dues have been used for the newsletter but rather a small grant has been obtained to see if this type of newsletter is feasible.

*Verry interesting... how little some things have changed in 10 years. I wonder who the anonymous benefactor was who bankrolled the first Notice? Anyone care to tell? -ed*

THE UNAPPROACHABLE  
**Norton**



## Letters to the Editor

=====

March 13, 1988

Dear Norton Notice,

Part of the advantage of belonging to the Norton Owners Club is supposed to be the priveleged access to the NOC spares scheme. Has anybody out there had any success in actually obtaining any Norton parts lately through the spares scheme? I haven't. Over the past five months I have written letters of inquiry to the club officers supposedly in charge of "Heavy Twins" and "Single Cylinder" spares. Each letter contained two international reply coupons, return envelope, my NOC membership number, and a list of parts that I needed.

After writing 5 letters and receiving no reply at all, I wrote to Jim Wallis, chairman of the NOC Executive Committee, to try and find out the problem. Mr Wallis wrote me a very nice two page letter which made some things very clear. It seems that several years ago, just prior to Colin Newman taking over as spares officer, the NOC spares scheme had been mis-managed, bungled, sabotaged, and robbed. Eight Thousand Pounds Sterling was missing. Colin Newman himself has a full-time job and cannot presently devote much time to answering letters or sending out parts.

According to Jim Wallis, "Colin has had some ups & downs with employment and has recently spent several weeks working in China. Now that he is back home he does not return from work until about 8:30 pm and cannot start attending to NOC business until 9 at night."

Also according to Jim Wallis, "Roger Deadman packed up as a spares officer just over a year ago. He constantly resisted returning his papers. When we did prise them out of his grasp, we found quite a lot of unopened mail, uncashed cheques, etc." "Andy Bawdon too it seems, has been having difficulty attending to club business partly because he has been in the process of moving house for some time."

The bottom line here seems to be that if you need spares for your Norton, you are on your own. The NOC is of no practical help at all. In view of all this poor service it seems ironic to me that they have chosen the present time to raise NOC annual membership dues. If anyone has had different luck with the club spares scheme than I have, I would appreciate it if you would write to the Norton Notice and share your experiences with the rest of us.

Thank You  
Art Sirota

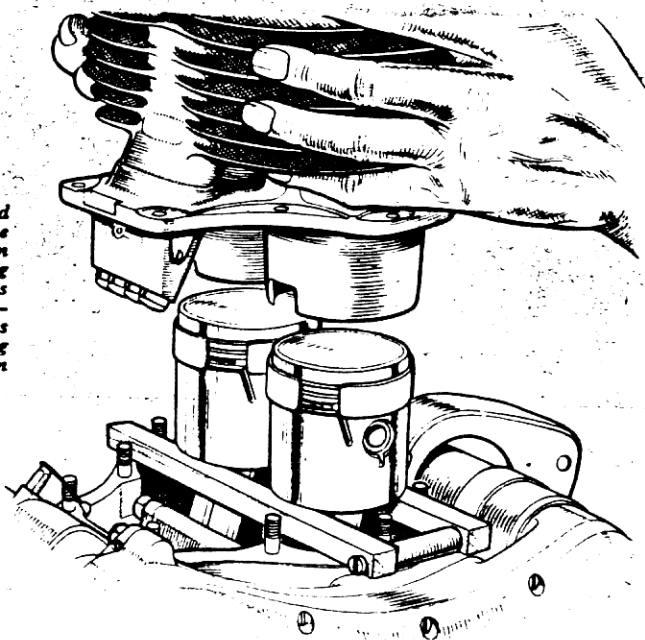


(from *Jupiter's Travels*, by Ted Simon, 1979, Penguin).

"The bike is tired also, but that is only a figure of speech. I do not credit the bike with feelings. If it has a heart and soul of its own I have never found them. People I meet are often disappointed that the bike does not even have a name. They often suggest names (The 'Bug' is top favourite) but none of them seem to do anything for the bike or for me. For me it remains a machine, and every attempt to turn it into something else strikes me as forced and silly.

"But it is not *just* a machine, not by any means, and I respect it totally for the very special thing it is. I know that all its idiosyncrasies, the things that make it different from any other motorcycle, are the result of what we have gone through together. The way I sit, my touch on the throttle, the speeds I travel at and the mistakes I make are what fashioned it into something uniquely connected with me. Like those intricately carved slabs of stone I have been looking at, my bike records the passage of time and events....It has been moulded by me and it has really become an extension of myself.

The factory method when refitting the cylinder block on twins is to fit ring clamps to the pistons which are then supported on two lengths of wood measuring about  $1 \times 1\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ in





## **CLASSIFIEDS**



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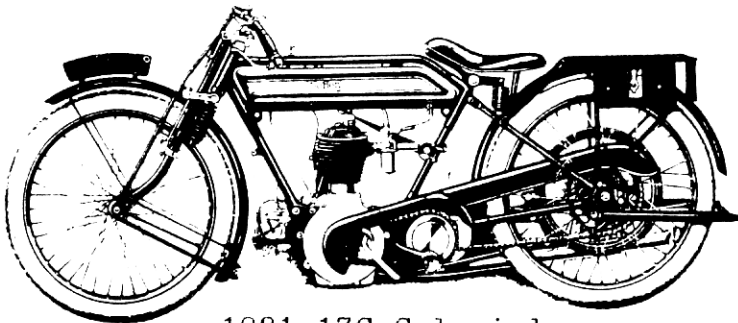
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original fenders and toolbox for my  
1950 Model 7 twin. Any plunger-  
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fenders are unique to the Model 7 and  
have a ridge down the center. Contact  
the Editor at 408-475-7505. /3

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featherbed swinging arm frame, center  
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clutch, 376 carb. Also want short  
stroke Matchless G80CS cylinders with  
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Neil Peacock, 8845 Elgin Drive,  
Lafayette CO 80026 (303) 499-1175  
/3

For Sale: Norton Dunstall Head and  
barrel 810 cc.,w/piston and ring set  
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6287 /3

For Sale: 1974 850 Commando Basket  
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Also, 1967(?) Honda CB450 'Black  
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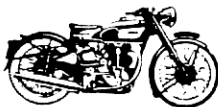


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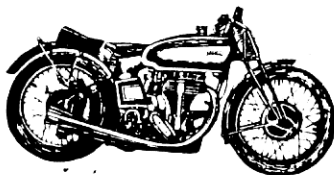
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