



# Norton Notice



The Newsletter of the Norton Owners Club

No. 139

Nov., 1989



Alan Goldwater and Harry Bunting make a stop on the way to the hot springs, INOA Rally 1989.

# The Newsletter of the Norton Owners Club

## \* CLUB OFFICERS \*



## 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

**\$15.00 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 \$18.00 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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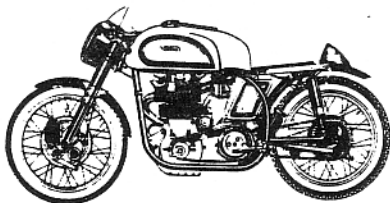
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## NORTON OWNERS CLUB

### 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 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

### Meeting Schedule

**November 9** San Mateo  
Prince of Wales

**December 16** Alice's Restaurant  
See Alan's "Wrench" for details.

### Club Rides

**November 19:** Marick Payton will lead a ride from Alice's to Pescadero, then on to Half Moon Bay for lunch. 10 AM.

### A Bike Is Not a Car

Owners of motorcycles in California should be aware of a recent decision holding that the term "auto" as used in insurance policies cannot reasonably be understood to include vehicles having fewer or more than four wheels.

Jeffrey, a minor whose own car was inoperative, was riding a borrowed motorcycle (of undescribed make) and carrying Robert, another minor, as passenger. They collided with an uninsured car and Robert was killed. Robert's parents sued, alleging negligent driving by Jeffrey. Jeffrey was an insured under his parents' insurance policy, which included uninsured motorist coverage, but the insurer refused to defend the lawsuit. It contended that a motorcycle is not an "auto" as the term was used in the policy's extension of coverage to temporary substitutes for a covered automobile. The superior court of Los Angeles County concluded the insurer was right. It did not matter that Jeffrey's kaput Volkswagen was covered; a bike is not an automobile.

The case: Royal Indemnity Company v. Rolofson (1989) 213 Cal.App.3d 373

—Reported by John Covell

### NOC CLASSIC CALENDAR

**15-full color photos**

**\$9.50 for members of both  
local and British NOC**

**\$10.50 for the rest of us.**

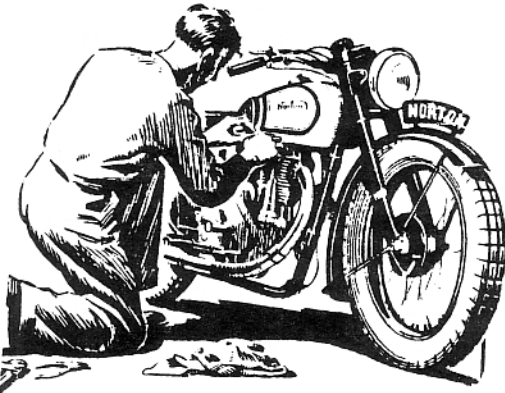
Contact Harry Bunting

(408) 736-6492

1165 Crandano Ct.  
Sunnyvale, CA 94087

# Alan's Wrench

## Tech Tips and Gossip from the Editor



We had a surprisingly good turnout for the Dick Mann rally last month. Six Nortons and five other bikes made the ride from T.T. Motors out to Brentwood. Once there, I eventually saw about 30 other club members and know of several others who were there that I didn't run into. There were a lot of British bikes and comparatively few vintage U.S. machines (excepting the flat-trackers) compared to previous years. Also lots of Norton parts at the swap area. In particular, several boxes of "new old stock" factory spares were bought as a lot by one of our members, who has promised to share the wealth at reasonable prices. Look for a big classified add in a future issue.

Then there was the Richter ride on the 18th. I wasn't home in Santa Cruz

when it hit, and I expected to come back to a disastrous pile of junk. To my relief, none of my bikes (I have five now) fell, although they all moved a bit. My biggest loss was a 15-year collection of nuts, bolts, electronic parts, light bulbs, and plumbing stuff which turned into "tossed hardware" on the floor. Even inside the parts cabinets, every drawer had one of each, as if the whole thing had been picked up and shaken like a dice cup. I saw weeks of booring work in my future, sorting one by one....Could have been worse though. Art Sirota had a whole row of bikes go over like dominos, and Louis Mendelowitz was narrowly missed by a toppling dirt bike. I hope none of you were hurt or made homeless.

The biggest disruption for me has been the closing of Highway 17, since I commute to Menlo Park several times a week. I'm finding that my knowledge of the back roads gained through years of Norton riding is paying off. I take a different route every day and although the trip takes twice as long as btq ("before the quake"), there is seldom much traffic. The ridge route (Summit to Skyline) has proved the fastest, and Alpine/Page Mill the slowest. I avoid route 9 because that's the route recommended by the CHP. So far, the only serious damage I have seen is all on 17, where an entire hillside moved over the roadway. They have been running

the big 20-yard dump trucks around the clock for a week now, and have barely made a dent in the pile of dirt, so don't expect to ride your bike over that way any time soon!

At the September meeting we decided to have the Christmas Party/AGM at Harry's Hoffbrau in Mtn View in the absence of any better idea. Well Tim Coburn had that better idea and contacted the new owner of Alice's Restaurant up on Skyline. They were quite willing to host a private party, and so after considerable discussion at the October meeting in San Francisco, we voted to hold the event on Saturday the 16th of December in the afternoon at Alices. This plan has several things in its favor. First, Alices is a motorcycle landmark and a great ride destination. Weather permitting, this will be the December club ride. Second, they are willing to plan a menu to our liking at a reasonable cost. Third, we will have the place to ourselves when it comes to holding the meeting. Fourth, the afternoon time frame should cause less conflict with members previous commitments, and result in a better turnout.

Here is a tentative schedule for the party: meet at Rabers or Mean Marshall's at 12 Noon, ride over to Alices arriving at about 1:30. There will be hors-d'oeuvres and punch, with dinner served at about 3 pm. The Annual General Meeting and election will be held at 5 pm. Art Sirota will be bringing his guitar (on a Norton of course) and says that anyone who wants to can join in. Mouth harp players are

especially welcome. In event of bad weather or excess inebriation, several vehicles will be available to get people off the mountain safely. Finally, there's been some talk of a party-after-the-party but nothing official yet.

If you have any special requests for the menu or other questions about the schedule, please call me at 408 475-7505 or drop me a line. This plan is a bit of a gamble weather-wise but could be a great event if the sky is clear. We can only hope.

This is our first year as an INOA chapter, which I hope will mark a closer interaction with Norton riders all around the country. It's none to soon to start organizing the International Norton Rally of 1991 which we will be hosting. Here are some of the major tasks which need to be handled:

- 1) Site selection and liaison
- 2) Public relations
- 3) Banquet and food planning
- 4) Field events
- 5) Rides and tours
- 6) Raffle / door prizes / trophies
- 7) Rally sign-in / paraphernalia
- 8) Chase vehicles / first aid

Most of these can wait until next year for the details. Nevertheless, if you're interested in helping with one or more of these areas, it's not too soon to start. Eventually I want to see a rally committee with a person responsible for each area of concern. I see some hard work ahead, and also a lot of fun and satisfaction. If we share the work, our satisfaction will be that much greater.



The one area which most needs to be a group effort is the selection of a site. This is absolutely the key to a good rally, and therefore requires the most care and thought. We are looking for a campsite or other facility in the Northern California/Nevada area which meets the following requirements:

- Capacity: 300+ people
- Tent sites: 100 minimum
- 10-20 RV sites with hookups
- Showers: at least 6 with hot water
- At least 4 flush toilets or 8 pits.
- Level terrain with some trees
- Good water supply
- Restaurants and motels/cabins nearby
- Good riding roads nearby.
- Covered or enclosed meeting / dining area.
- Cooperative local residents / officials

Most important of course, is the scenic value of the site. Look for a lake or river (or beach if a coastal site) nearby. Historical site or other local attraction would also be a plus.

On the facing page of this Notice is a list of possible sites taken from the CSAA campsite book, courtesy of Lou Caputo. If you have been to one of these, or live nearby, please send me your impression of the place, and whatever details you can remember about the facilities and surroundings.

If you hear of a possible site not listed, by all means let me know, or better yet check it out, then let me know. If you do visit a site, please DO NOT approach

the owner or manager yet about a rally. Just check out the facilities and get a mailing address and phone number. We need to be careful in this regard, as many sites will initially cringe at the word "motorcycle" and may need to be courted or sold on the idea.

Another event which needs some advance planning is the All-British Clubmans Show on April 1. Burton Kranzel is our event chairman and will welcome any assistance. We need volunteers to man the Club booth and to represent us in the Concours judging. I would also like to see a better variety of Nortons on show. For example, if you have a Norton road racer, flat-track bike, sidecar rig, or even a chopper, please consider bringing it for display. If you want it trailored to the show, Burton can help arrange it. Call him at (415) 261-8252 for details.

## Bulletin

East Bay Noccers who are used to cruising Tilden Park in the Berkeley Hills will want to slow down and enjoy the views more now that Officer Moustache (we are old friends) has a new toy: a radar gun. The motorcycle officer was last seen on Wildcat Canyon Road drawing a bead on unwary motorists.

The State granted the Park District its request for radar just a short while ago. I don't know how long the program will last.

—Reported by Lou Caputo

## Rally Site Candidates

Sites which look especially promising are marked with a \*

State parks are a long shot since group reservations are generally not accommodated

### Tahoe/Sierra Region

Calaveras Big Trees State Park  
State Highway 4  
Arnold, CA

\*Pine Cliff Resort  
June Lake, CA

\*Barrett Cove Recreation Area (Lake McClure)  
State Rt 132  
La Grange, CA

\*Scotts Flat Lake Recreation Area  
Nevada City, CA

\*Bear River Lake Resort  
Pioneer, CA

\*South Lake Tahoe-Eldorado Recreation Area  
Hwy 50  
South Lake Tahoe, CA

\*Tahoe Pines Campground  
Hwy 50  
South Lake Tahoe, CA

\*Tahoe Valley Campground  
Hwy 50  
South Lake Tahoe, CA

D.L. Bliss State Park

Highway 89  
Tahoma CA

Sugar Pine Point State Park  
Hwy 89  
Tahoma, CA

Donner Memorial State Park  
Truckee, CA

River Rest Campground and Trailer Park  
Washington, CA

\*Mariposa County Fairground  
(home of the BMW 49-er rally)  
Mariposa, CA

### Way Up North

\*Lake Siskiyou Campground  
Mt. Shasta, CA

Mt. Shasta KOA  
Mt. Shasta, CA

\*Camper Corral  
(near 101)  
Klamath, CA

Camp Klamath  
Klamath, CA

### Other Possibilities

Pismo Coast Village  
Pismo Beach, CA

\*Town of Markleeville, CA

This list is just a start. If you know of other sites which may meet our needs, please let me know.





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## Wrestling with the Norton Gearbox

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by Lou Caputo

I thought it was odd that all those gold specks were coming out in my primary chaincase oil. My Norton has been good to me over the years but for it to start producing gold was too much to ask. But, like most of us, the oil changes, chain tightenings and cable lubings all came at the last minute. I set off for Canada secure in the knowledge that the bike would once again bring me through. (Well, actually, it was in the back of my truck.)

I attributed the mild surging to my worn out carbs. Or, maybe I hadn't tightened the drive chain enough. The oil which began to drip and smear itself all over the underside, well, we were giving the bike one hell of a workout, up there in the boonies in Washington and Canada. But, when I got stuck in fourth gear I finally had to concede that all was not well. With half of the gear oil gone I finally had to acknowledge that my Interstate and I were in for a serious talk.

A strip down revealed that my sleeve gear bearing seal was not doing its job. The sleeve gear bearing had lost its race. And the sleeve gear bushes? Try as hard as I might I couldn't find them. Little gold things they were. Now I wonder ...

The gears were in tiptop shape and after cleaning up the mainshaft, replacing the bearings and bushes, and assembling all with extreme care I buttoned up the outer cover, added oil and sealed the inspection cover with a kiss. We're on the road again and shifting has never felt better.

And so, when Scott Frankel revealed that his MkIII had been down for a year with a mysterious tranny ailment, I, of course, jumped up and announced that I could fix it. We trucked his stuck-in-fourth Nort to my garage and gleefully began the teardown. We pored over the diagrams, consulted all the manuals, and triumphantly reassembled everything, secure in the knowledge that we had freed the gears. FREE THE GEARS! It has a nice ring to it.

After the fourth or fifth reassembly (my mind started to cloud over at this point), Ken Whitney came over and said, "Youse guys has got the take the primary apart." I responded, "Right!" and we stripped all the little pieces out of that MkIII primary chaincase. We took that inner cover off, blessed it, examined everything under powerful lights, and put it all back together again. I reassembled the tranny and called Scott to announce that that we were ready to go—bring your helmet, your leathers, a roadmap and get ready to RIDE! It was hard to start, even with the resleeved Amals, but then it had been sitting for a year. When the smoke started to rise from the primary I shut it down.

The stator had committed an unnatural act with the rotor. Even today, many weeks later, if you put your nose close enough to this paper you may be able to smell that unnatural smell. Mothers brought their little children indoors, fire departments from as far away as . . . but, I digress.

We approached the bike once again,

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this time with solemn, bowed heads. And then I noticed something. The layshaft fourth gear might or might not locate fully on the layshaft, depending on the gears orientation to the shaft. In one case it would locate fully home on the splines, in another it would leave about a quarter inch gap.

As for the stator, it appeared that the only way to adjust the gap between it and the rotor was by varying the adjustment on the chaincase center stud (pre MkIII's don't have the chain tensioner bracket and it's possible to enlarge the stator mounting holes slightly to gain some play for the rotor/stator gap.). We carefully changed the adjustment on the center stud, testing for excessive rocking of the inner cover, and cleaned up the rotor and stator.

In the meantime, Corey Levenson had wandered over. Before putting on the outer gearbox cover he had first placed the ratchet plate in the knuckle pin roller. This made it much easier to put the cover on since all you had to do then was fit the shifter spindle into its bush and into its linkage. He bowed to our thunderous applause and I quietly shed a tear thinking of the number of times I had done it the manual's way.

Ten minutes' worth of residential street testing had the mothers out looking for their children once again. Shifting was not butter smooth but, then, many parts were new and they may take awhile to get to know one another. There's a false neutral every now and then between fourth and third but we appear to have the situation in hand. It was a good feeling watching Scott

## A True Story

by I. Pushtit Holme

I was out late one recent night in a foreign country. All my money had just been stolen by some hoodlum riding a Harley. It was raining. I was shivering badly as I entered the only hotel in a remote mountain town. Nobody looked very friendly. I inquired about a room, but was told they were full up. I sat down at the bar and asked the bartender if he would accept a check. He just sneered. A local bully pushed his way past a throng of unfriendly looking ladies and grabbed my wallet out of my trembling hands. A hush fell over the crowded room as all eyes turned in my direction.

Just then my wallet landed in an open position with my Norton Owners Club card face up. A smile broke across my tormentor's face and he asked, "Heck, amigo, what kind of Norton you got? I got a wideline featherbed frame with an 850 in it!" Before I could answer him, three or four of those local ladies sauntered up to me and began to caress my hair and invite me over to their houses for drinks. The owner of the hotel personally invited me to stay in the hotel's best room, which he claimed had just become vacant. I was soon feasting on the most sumptuous meal of honey-baked venison and chives.

Moral: Your NOC card, don't leave home without it.

## Earthquake Prep.

by I. Pushtit Holme

Next time a genuine California Earthquake strikes, be prepared! Here are a few suggestions on how to avoid unnecessary damage.

First (and simplest) move. Iowa is beginning to look more and more attractive as a safe haven for motorcycle collections. Unfortunately, all your license plates will have "The Corn Belt" written on them. Buit nothing is perfect. The last time they suffered from earthquakes in Iowa feathers hadn't been invented yet.

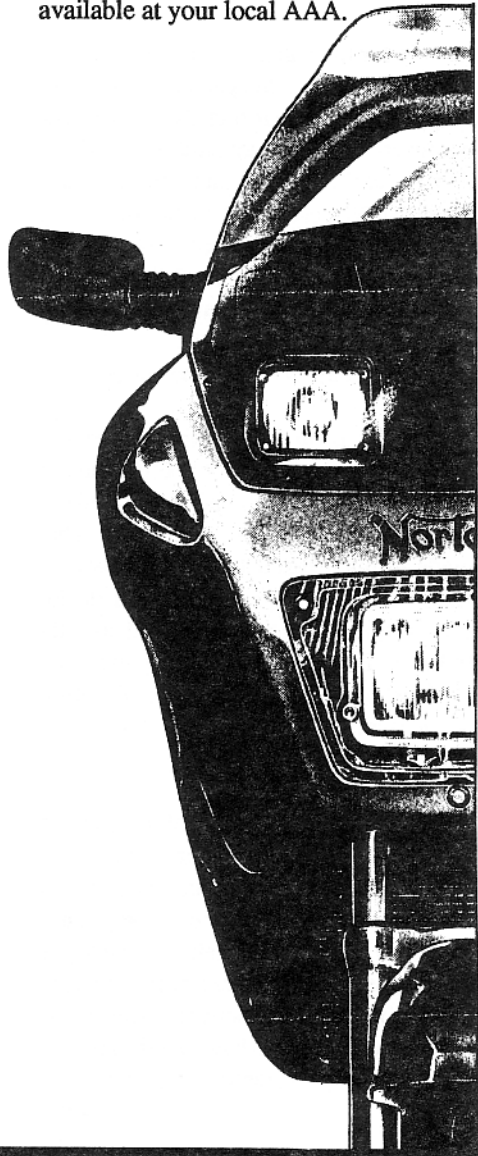
A less drastic measure is to stuff cheap and plentiful filler material on all sides of your Norton to cushion a fall should an earthquake strike. Old stock certificates from AMC or Norton Motors are highly recommended for this purpose.

Another alternative to moving is suspending your machine from the rafters of your garage. I tried this using bungee cords and received a nasty welt on the neck as I drove off and forgot to unhook the end of the cord. Ooooo that smarts!

A recent study conducted by the University of Common Sense revealed that bikes are less likely to fall over if all the air is removed from the tires. The conclusions at UCS indicate that you should put off fixing that flat. However it should be kept in mind that researchers at UCS are not always that reliable as they also drew the conclusion in that same report that affixing a sidecar to a bike makes the whole machine *more* likely to

tip over during an earthquake. But it should be helpt in mind that they conducted this test immediately after another test determining the effects of LSD on sleep-deprived university researchers.

So there you have it. The choices are yours. Maps for the state of Iowa are available at your local AAA.



## Classified Advertisements

For Sale: Widder electric vest, new, size 40. \$50;  
Snap On "British Standard" sockets, 3/8 inch drive, set of 12, \$80.  
Call Biff Erickson (415) 681-9131 /11

For Sale: Mikuni carb kit for Commando. Used but works fine. \$50;  
Bubb 2 into 1 exhaust, \$10;  
BMW "S" fairing with all the trimmings, \$150.  
Jerry Kador (415) 349-5913, eves. /11

FOR SALE: Original John Player Norton in very good, stock condition except for re-upholstered seat (Corbin), stainless steel brake line and Dunlop 591's. Approx. 11,000 carefully ridden miles on the clock as of August '89. Always garaged and meticulously maintained. Serious inquiries only, please. Steve Coburn, (804) 296-2814, R.D.5 - Box 327, Charlottesville, VA 22901. /9

FOR SALE: Triumph Bonneville Special, stock, 1979, beautiful, collector-owned, only 2K. Always garaged. Run weekly. Virtually new and perfect. \$2950. Will Guyan, (707) 884-4300, Box 65, Gualala, CA 95445 (100 miles north of City). /9

FOR SALE: Genuine Norton Commando Fastback petrol tank, new, \$150. Single Mikuni carb conversion, complete, used but in perfect condition, \$65. 18" rear wheel for Atlas or early Commando, includes new Dunlop K81 TT100 tyre 4.10 H 18 tire and Dunlop rim. \$50. Art Sirota, 1281 Laurel St., Menlo Park, CA 94025, (415) 327-3167. /9

For Sale - Mk3 roadster seat with metal base, excellent cond. \$35; Mk3 factory workshop manual \$15, orig.; Fastback petrol tank, new \$150. Call Art Sirota (415) 327-3167. /10

For Sale - 1974 Norton Commando 850 Mk II, clean. \$1,000 spent, fully reconditioned. Ready to ride. \$1,500. Call Dave (415) 887-2689. Hayward. /10

**Wanted: Commando suitable for building into Vintage racer. \$1000 to \$1500. Please write Stefan Fielding-Isaacs, PO Box 50791, Palo Alto, CA 94303.**

Used Norton Parts: 750-850 frame, good and straight; 750 sub-frame and swingarm, both good; Mk3 wiring harness, complete; Mk2 parts: headlamp shell & rim, chainguard, front fender, footrests, levers, instrument cases, set of clutch plates, auto-advance unit, stock dual seat, primary chaincases, K&N air filter for Amals, STD bore Hepolite pistons, Sebring electronic ignition, turn signal switch, cahincase inspection plugs, some cables, reflectors, coils, points plate.

New Norton parts: Boyer Ignition for 750/850, tail lamp fairing, replacement seat cover, new set points, exhaust nut lockrings.

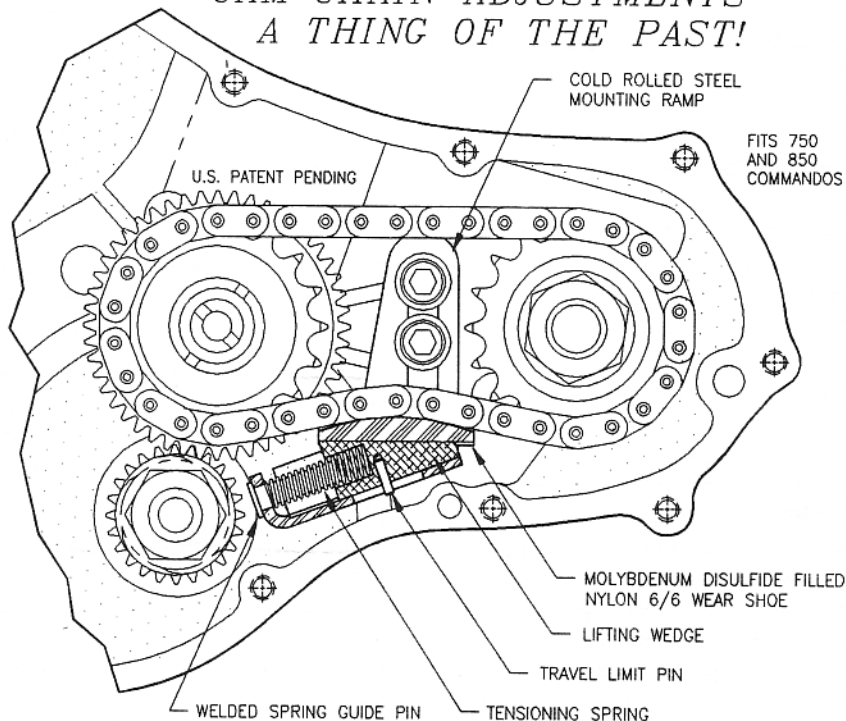
Norton parts wanted: 23" front brake hose (rubber or stainless), Mk2 mirror stem, usable Dunlop K-70 Gold Seal 3.50x19 tyre.

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Ken Ward (408) 974-0083, days.

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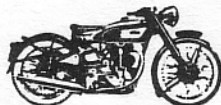
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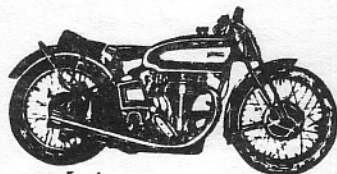
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Call for a quote on shop prices. We  
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