

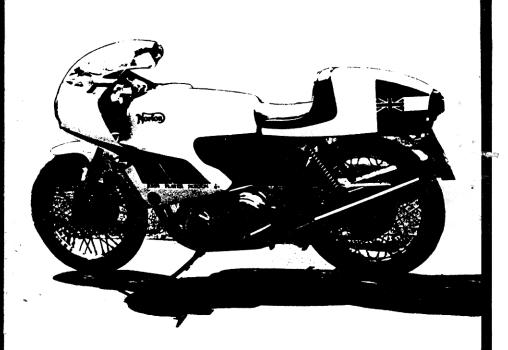
# Norton Notice



The Newsletter of the Norton Owners Club

No. 130

Feb, 1989



Me And My Shadow Steve Coburn's John Player Norton



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

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 c club rides, the NORTON N 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 Secretary/Treasurer. the Branch

Penewal dues are payable at the end of the individual's membership year, that month being designated by the last number of the 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 NOT available for \$18.00 per year. the NORTON NOTICE only This does not 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 bl-monthly issues or magneting members 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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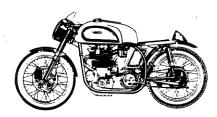
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# ORTON OWNER

### 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 necessible the official policy of the Norton Owners Club activities. sarily 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





# **UPCOMING EVENTS**

## Club Meeting Schedule

The club meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month, at 7:30 PM. The location rotates between Peninsula, East Bay, City, and South Bay locations

Feb. 9 San Francisco
Once more we are meeting at the
Harbor Light Pub, 780 Embarcadero
at Berry St. This is south of the Bay
Bridge, across from The Sailing Ship
Restaurant. They close at 10 so the
meeting will start promptly at 7:30.

March 9 Peninsula
Prince of Wales Pub
106 E. 25th Avenue
San Mateo, Ca
Great selection of beers and
dartboards in our private meeting
room.

April 13 South Bay Harry's Hoffbrau El Camino REal at Castro St Mountain View, Ca

## CLUB\_RIDES: Coordinated by Margie Siegal

Feb 12 Port Costa Run
Susan Wood leads a short ramble through the back roads of the East Bay, to an eccentric eatery near the Carquinez Bridge. The ride departs from TT Motors on Adeline in Berkeley at 10 AM. Call Susan at (415) 849-2518 for more info.

March 15 The Late Great
Mt. Hamilton (un) Freeze Run,
re-scheduled from Jan. due to nasty
road conditions, this time we'll have
wildflowers instead of frostbite. Meet
at Howard Johnson's, N. First St. in
San Jose 9:30 AM. The ride is long, so
we'll leave promptly at 10. Call Louis
at (415) 857-1835 for details.

March 26 Margies Birthday Ride Starring the Oakville Grade and some cake, More details next month

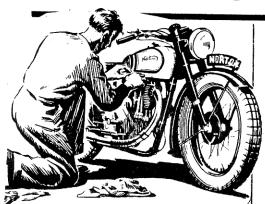
## April 2

Clubman's All-British Motorcycle Show and Swap Meet Santa Clara County Fairgrounds.

## April 30

Tulare Vintage Cycle Show and Swap Meet

# Alan's Wrench Tech tips and gossip from The Editor



Due to dangerous road conditions, last months ride was rerouted to Tres Pinos. As a result the schedule for the next few months has been revised, with the Mt. Hamilton run set for March. The Tres Pinos ride was well-attended with 8 Nortons and 3 other bikes present. We had generally dry roads and just enough cold to turn faces red rather than white. One patch of ice and/or sand on Summit Road set everyone a bit sideways but nobody went down.

The pace was Somewhat subdued for the next 10 miles or so. But when we reached route 129 in Watsonville, I admit to developing a heavy right hand. For the first time in my experience, there was not a single car in sight, all the way across 101. This stretch of about 10 miles of sweeping s-curves and smooth pavement is truly a Norton Road, provided there is no traffic. It left me with the feeling, "this is what life is meant to be", as the stress of everyday existence was blown away in the wind.

The meeting at Margie's was also well-attended, with about 18 members and guests present. The April All-British show was the main topic We discussed. need about volunteers to help represent the club. figuring 1-hour shifts at the booth and 2 judges for the Concours. Booth volunteers will get admission passes to the show: others pay \$5 at the door. Tom Keeble was volunteered for the judging but wasn't there to confirm his availability. The members present also voted to contribute \$50 to the racing efforts of Eric Swortsfigure. who will need several thousands for a full racing season. Eric has moved so his directory listing (under VIPs). was incorrect. Please contact him at the following address if you would like to help with this club-sponsored racing effort:Eric Swortsfigure

> 10880 West Estates Drive Cupertino, CA 95014 408 446 2738

I also neglected to list Phil Radford's Fair Spares America in the Shops and VIP section. This is one of the best sources of Norton Parts in the area and Phil is also a great guy, always helpful and very well-informed. Fair Spares can be contacted at:

P.O. Box 8224
San Jose, CA 95155
408 292-6563
Sorry about that Phil...



There are various cycling accessories that can ease or even eliminate the discomfort of winter riding. These include a fairing, good leathers, gloves and boots, thermal underwear (essential), and various kinds of heated vests and even heated handgrips (for those with sideways cylinders). I find that what gets cold first is my toes, so last month I bought a pair of electrically heated hunters socks. They run for 4-6 hours on a pair of 'D' cells, which can be the rechargeable kind if you ride a lot in the cold. I'm giving these a personal recommendation since my feet didn't get cold at all on the last ride. They're also great for working on the bike in a cold shop on winter evenings. I got mine for \$20 at Big Five Sporting Goods. Or you can order direct from Timely Products, 860 Honeyspot Rd. Stratford, CT 06497. The model is LS3.

At the meeting last month, someone brought a new edition of the USNOA Tech Digest, which looks like an essential part of the Norton Owners Library. It's 48 pages of good technical data and practical tips culled from Norton News. Order from Dick Herrick, 6704 Rubinaway, Lansing MI 48917 (517 323-0151) \$10.

Stock shares in the Norton Group can now be purchased in this country. Contact Phillip Caso for current listing price at 1-800-221-6824. And speaking of Norton Motors, John Covell has written a fine letter to Phil LeRoux, asking once again for some factory presence at the All-

British show. I hope we get more response than we did last year. The factory racing effort ended the year on a positive note, once the frame, suspension and carburation problems were sorted out. Here's a comment from Jim Greenberg's Pipeline column in the Feb. Cycle magazine: "The opposition consensus runs...'No one wants to discourage dear old Norton from having a bash at racing the rotary. But winning with it - that just can't be fair."

This months tech tip is copied Len Allens article in Norton Notice \*14 of February 1979:

"Proper maintenance of the swing arm on the Norton Commando is an easy task but may be the most neglected. On the 750, the proper lube to use is SAE 140 gear oil which is not too easy to find, but very little will last a long time. It is impossible to get 140 wt oil through the lube fitting, so I just unscrew it and put the oil in through the hole vacated. and then reinstall the fitting, I have found a nose-spray bottle to be the best oil dispenser, and if you look carefully at the top, you will find a joint at the end plug which can be easily removed with a knife. The tube in the plug should then be pulled out and the hole in the end drilled out to about 1/8 in. Fill the bottle with 140 weight gear oil and put the plug back in. You can now squirt in about 1/2 oz. of oil with no difficulty,"

That's all for this month. Pray for rain - we need it.



# Bleeding Brakes

by Louis Mendelowitz

Often people have brake problems which could be avoided by simple maintenance. Brake fluid is a hydroscopic fluid, which means it actively absorbs water out of the air. The rubber bellows in the reservoir of the Norton master cylinder is designed to prevent this, but some water vapor always gets by. If allowed accumulate. this water will eventually rust the pistons and other steel parts in the brake system. In addition, since the water in liquid form is heavier than the brake fluid. it will tend to settle in the caliper, where the heat from braking is most intense. Any water here will vaporize well before the brake fluid overheats. causing SDONGV response and brake fade under heavy use. To minimize damage maintain performance, your brake fluid should be replaced at least annually.

I use a suction pump, the type which can be found at most auto parts stores will do the job just fine. First I insert a length of rubber hose into the suction line from the pump. The tubing intended for small vacuum lines is a good fit on the Norton and will go over the bleeder and into the suction line.

Then I remove the top from the master cylinder and use some paper towels to sop up the fluid from the bowl. After topping up with fresh fluid from a new container I open the bleeder slightly and using the pump suck fluid through the system until the master cylinder is almost empty. Do remember to stop before the reservoir is empty, any air introduced will have to be bleed from the system before the brakes can be safely used.

I usually do three complete cylinder master flushes stopping but the main thing is to continue until the fluid stops being dirty and is perfectly clear. When the pump is full shut the bleed valve and drain off the dirty fluid before continuing. And while the valve is closed you might want to gently work the brake lever. Remember that if the lever is squeezed hard or released quickly with the cylinder removed there will be a spurt of brake fluid from the reservoir and that brake fluid, at least DOT3 or 4 will damage your paint.

I generally bleed the system at this time just to be sure that there is no air in the lines and to do this I take the length of hose that I use to connect to the pump and leaving one end on the bleeder I wrap the hose over something so that the line leaves the caliper going up and continues up for at least a few inches before

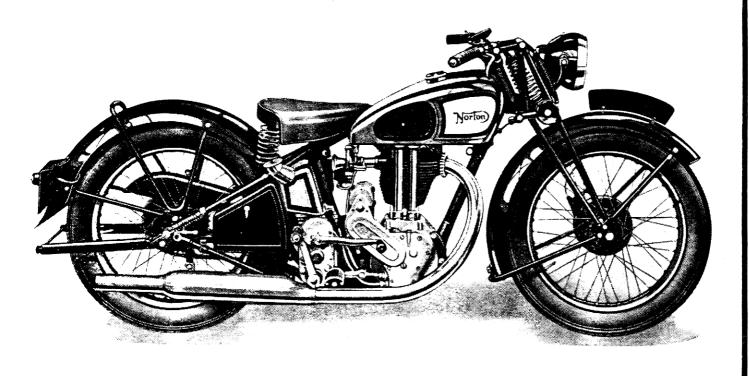
turning and descending into a jar of fresh fluid.

Now squeeze the brake slowly several times and then hold it compressed while you open bleeder slightly and then pull the lever to the bar. Be sure to close the bleeder before you release the brake lever. If you do this several times any air in the line will likely be forced out. Sometimes it helps to tap gently on the caliper, the lines and the master cylinder. If you are using a clear hose to bleed then you should be able to see that there are no air bubbles in the fluid and the lever should be firm and not 'pump up' when you squeeze and release it several times.

Now for a word about linings. Most of us are touring riders and don't keep our brakes hot enough to benefit from metallic linings. These tend to require a lot of pressure until they are hot and cool down quickly. far too quickly for normal riding. They also squeal. On the other hand the non metallic linings give much greater breaking power at pressure and are much less likely to be noisy. They also will fade under hard use and are good for town use and light touring. Ferodo pads are no longer available although these would be the first choice for the racer. Lockheed pads are only available in metallic and are very likely the most reliable quality but are more of a competition pad than most of us need.

They can, however work quite well if you have the skin of chrome removed from the disk, and local shops can have this job done. Then of course the disk will rust and deposit the rust on to your rim as the brake pads scrape it off, but such is life. Another good pad is made by SBS (now EBC I gather), The softest pads are the ones made in Taiwan. Each of these are good choices for different applications, so talk to your parts supplier before chosing.

You can drain the fluid pretty easily without the use of the vacuum pump mentioned, but it takes a while. Simply attach a piece of hose, preferably clear, to the caliper breather and open the valve about 1. turn. The fluid will drain out by gravity in about 5-10 minutes. You can then add some fresh fluid to flush the system, Wait another 10 minutes, top up the reservoir, bleed the master cylinder, and close everything up. all in under 1/2 hour.. So there's no excuse to avoid this essential and simple maintenance chore. I usually do it as part of my Spring and Fall oil change session. One last point, try to stick with the same brand, or at least same grade of brake fluid. Never mix DOT 5 fluid with the other types as it can fail in service, or so I've heard.



Code Word: FROME

**ENGINE.**—Bore 71 mm. Stroke 88 mm. 348 c.c. Push rod operated overhead valve. Totally enclosed rocker gear.

**LUBRICATION.**—Full dry sump—gear pump pressure feed to bearings and piston. Valve guide lubrication.

**SILENCER.**—Of scientific design, efficiently silencing the exhaust gases without interfering with engine performance.

**CARBURETTER.**—AMAL needle jet, twist grip control.

**FRAME.**—Of immense strength, built throughout in jigs, all joints are brazed. High tensile steel tube. Graduated section lugs are used.

**GEARBOX.**—Four-speed. Ratios: 5·17; 6·25; 9·15; 15·4. Positive stop change-speed lever (Patent No. 424.154). Gate control available if specified when ordering. Shock absorber incorporated in clutch.

OIL BATH CHAINCASE.—NORTON. Patent No. 406,599.

TRANSMISSION .- Hans Renold chains.

**BRAKES.**—7" Internal expanding, 1½" wide, smooth and powerful in operation, providing a feeling of security. Quickly adjustable.

WHEELS.—Quickly detachable and interchangeable, fitted with journal bearings.

TYRES.--26 × 3.25 Dunlop Heavy Cord.

**FORKS.**—Patent No. 387,550, fitted with rebound springs and hand adjustable friction disc shock absorber. Fork link adjustment provided.

**HANDLEBARS.**—Patent No. 419,336, rubber mounted, fitted with steering damper.

**SADDLE.**—Flexible top, mounted so as to give an exceptionally comfortable riding position.

**FOOTRESTS.**—Adjustable. Lugs are provided for fitment of pillion footrests.

**STANDS.**—Front and rear with additional prop stand, foot operated.

**PETROL TANK.**—2<sup>3</sup> gallons capacity. Chromium plated.

OIL TANK .- Chromium plated and lined.

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Electric Lighting extra: £5-10-0 (Solo).





# Art Sirota's Shoptaik A Brief History of the OHC Norton

In the beginning, Norton began manufacturing side valve singlecylinder motorcycles. James Norton himself took part in designing these early engines, around 1907.

In 1922 Norton introduced a new overhead valve engine which was to become known as the ES2. The factory had some initial success racing the ohv machines but by 1927 it had become apparent that a new engine based on overhead cam technology would be needed to keep Norton in the winner's circle. The pushfod singles would continue to be produced for many years as street machines, trials bikes and military cycles, but from 1927 through the mid-60's. Norton relied on the ohc engine to win races.

Walter Moore was the Norton engineer who came up with the first Norton ohc design to be produced. It was called the CS1, which stood for "camshaft1" and it made its racing debut in 1927. Moore decided to copy the existing design of motorcycle called the Chater Lea. This rival firm had in turn copied from the very fast ohv Blackburne engine. The first CS1 Norton looked almost exactly like the Chater Lea. At this time, Norton was

using a new type of cradle frame, considered very advanced for its day but the CS1 did not meet with a lot of racing success.

Velocette also had an ohe racing motorcycle, and they were doing very well with it. They had done some research using a stroboscope and had discovered the principle of valve overlap. Their success with this design put an end to the ohv engine in competitive racing.

Walter Moore soon left Norton to work for NSU in Germany where he developed an engine very much like the CS1. He claimed that the rights to the design belonged to him since he did his design work at home. So Norton Motors decided that a new ohe design was needed to stay competitive on the race track, and they promoted Arthur Carroll to the position of chief design engineer. Carroll started from scratch. keeping very little of the Moore concept. He decided instead to pattern his engine after the Velocette, but gave his creation many original touches. The fact that the road-going version of his engine didn't change much for the next 26 years indicates that he got it right from the start.

(continued on page 11)





So the newly designed Carroll engine made its debut in 1930, and Norton began a dominance of international Grand Prix Racing. Production of the Moore design ceased, but Norton continued to call the machine by the same name: CS1.

By 1932 the new ohc racing Norton became known 28 the International, while the street version was simply known as the CS1, through the thirties Norton continued supply side valve and overhead valve engines for such mundane purposes as daily transport. while International was considered to be a machine for the connoisseur. reasons for this were the close tolerances. special parts. and difficulty of assembly which made the machine expensive to manufacture. It however, the most efficient performer of Norton's engines.

In 1935 the fortunes of Norton took a turn for the worse when Arthur Carroll was killed in a motorcycle accident. 1937 saw the factory begin to experiment with the double overhead cam engine design. By this time Joe Craig was in charge of developing more power for the factory racers. During WW2, production was limited to the simple and rugged side valve motorcycles for the military.

The next time an ohc Norton was sold over the counter was in 1947.

The customer was Britain's highestpaid postwar entertainer, George Formby. By now the front forks were the telescopic type and the frame carried the plunger rear suspension. The racing ohc motorcycles became known as Manx Nortons and the street versions were called Internationals. The advent of featherbed frame gave the racing singles a new lease on life and the early fifties were filled with Norton successes on the racetracks of the world. The inter. however. available to the public on special order only. The factory did not cush sales of this bike because of the small profit margin they were able to make compared to ohy models. Even in 1938, a peak year of racing success, the Model 30 Inter accounted for only 3 % of Norton's total output.

By 1953 the International models all got the featherbed frame and by 1956 orders for this classic but dated machine had fallen off and Norton dropped it from the range. The racing Manx finally went out of production in 1963. So when you see an ohc Norton, you are seeing a very special machine, the epitome of handbuilt craftsmanship.

Art Sirota is a regular contributor to the Norton Notice. He is currently restoring a post-war International.



# Confessions of a Norton Buyer by lerry Kaidor

About six months ago, I was bombing up 880 in my '55 Triumph (car) and I passed a guy Commando His bike Was beautiful, it had those classic British Bike lines: functional and simple. So I drooled at the bike and he oogled the car for a few miles, and we both drove on.... but the demon seed was planted. I tried to rationalize it "well, it would be a good investment, better get one this year or you'll never get one at all..."

So I started combing the classifieds for a basket-case Triumph or BSA. My wife put her foot down. "You still have to paint the MGA, you have no time for another project..." True enough. I felt about passing up the basket Triumph and my wife must have felt bad for squashing the idea, because a few days later she showed me a photo of a Norton Command. "How would you like this bike for an anniversary present?" (drool). "It's in Sacramento, and stop drooling on the picture."

So we drove to Sacramento, My first impression: Can nonweightlifters ride these things? ("You too can have a grip of iron. Just send for our patented Norton grip exerciserl Operators are standing by.") My second impression: This thing is real fast! It sounds good, it looks great. I want it! So I paid the man his \$\$ and rode off into the sunset. The bike died three blocks away. After working up a good sweat trying to restart it, I finally turned the gas on and burbled on down the road, muttering to myself "UP to go SLOW, UP to go SLOW".

The next morning I surveyed my purchase in the cold light of day, and found some nasty surprises. The tank and seat hid the twisted and taped corpse of the once-proud Jos Lucas wiring harness. One points screw was stripped. A footrest stud was stripped. I am still surprised that the sidestand didn't fall off on the way home. The rear end of the exhaust system was SOLIDLY BOLTED TO THE FRAME.

A day of soldering and heatshrinking mended the wiring harness. A pleasant evening with torch and grinder fixed the sidestand. footrest stud and timing cover were helicoiled. And the required rubber mounts were found for the exhaust system. But what will tomorrow bring? I do admit that the Norton is an absolute joy to ride, powerful yet supple and drawing envious glances from passers-by. And my grip has vastly improved, at least in the left hand. Anybody want to arm-wrestle? The other day I took my lap bike out for a ride and was amazed at the contrast. It felt like riding electric-powered mattress. Anyone out there want a GSI 100?



# October Ride Report

by Eric Rhodes

On Sunday, Oct. 30. the scheduled club ride got away from Motors a bit late. Mendelowitz, Leo Christianson and yours truly were the only cyclists to appear at the start. Three brave. determined souls, untrammeled by the so-called "loyal enthusiasts" who were, no doubt, lying dead to the world after undignified indulgences of the previous night, or cringing in fear of the automotive hordes. Or whimpering about technical shortcomings...but digress.

We were further delayed just prior to the Richmond bridge by my rear hydraulic disk seizing up, as it has on many inopportune occasions... After a brief series of horrible imprecations and bleedings of the offending mechanism, we continued to the alternate meeting point at Lucas Valley Road, only to miss Don Dannmeier and a friend by a few minutes. Well, those are the brakes.

We rode out Lucas Valley Road and past Nicasio Reservoir, which was diminished to a few large puddles. In passing the Red & Black

> NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH TOOL LOAN-OUT PROGRAM

Get in touch with Harry Bunting if you need one or more of the following tools for working on your Commando. A refundable deposit equal to the replacement cost of the tool is required at the time you pick it up.

TOOL	DEPOSIT
exhaust lock ring tool	\$10
timing cover oil seal guide	5
clutch spring compressor	12
clutch locking tool	18
valve spring compressor	22
rocker spindle puller	25
crankshaft sprocket puller	12
timing pinion puller	20
gearbox layshaft bearing extract	or 15

Cheese factory, we spotted some European bikes, turned around, and discovered a small group which included 2 Laverdas, a Paso, and a "modern classic" Hardly Dangerous. Leo performed some carb adjustments on his Norton while Louis strutted up and down beside his Bavarian vibrator, muttering something about "tomorrow, the world..."

We headed into Novato for fuel and lunch, then decided to call it an early day. The had been cool in the morning but warmed up considerably by noon. Leo and I rode back to the East Bay in good time, Louis stayed to visit a friend nearby. An impromptu drag-race in Richmond yielded Triumph-ant results, at least off the line.

I'd like to try this ride again in the future; several maps are left over and the back roads of Marin provide a great setting. For those who failed to show, I'll accept written apologies as long as they're accompanied by appropriate remittance.

Harry Bunting 1165 Crandano Ct Sunnyvale, Ca 94087 (408) 736-6492



# **CLASSIFIEDS**

\_\_\_\_\_\_

The following list of parts is for sale or trade. Prices do not include shipping but most items can be shipped within 2 days for \$5-10. All

parts are in working condition:

Primary case in & out (1970)	\$100
Transmission (1970)	\$100
Roadster exhaust	\$80
Tach & speedo (both)	\$75
Speedo drive	\$20
Carbs 930 (pair)	\$30
Alternator Rotor & stator (ea)	\$30
Fork brace	\$15
Swing arm & trans cradle, g.c.	\$40
MKIII headlight w/harness, has	ì
some dents	\$25
Fenders (ea)	\$25
Rear wheel with hub, needs	
new chrome	\$30
750 oil tank w batery tray	\$25
Front fork complete, drum brk	\$80
Foot peg & brake pedal, fair	\$15
Clutch basket, good	\$20
above with chain	\$30
Early style light/horn switch	\$20

1974 850 Interstate, only 3000 mi on engine, needs sidecovers, front tire & exhaust, garaged 10 yrs. \$900

Bill Bernard, 122 Wessels Way, Templeton, CA 93465 or call 805) 434-2797 after 5 pm

/12

Wanted: Commando frame/rolling chassis or basket case with engine number lower than 134600 (1968-69). Must have pink slip and good title. Also wanted, 920cc engine (dunstall?) and Commando advertising brochures. John Paliwoda, P.O. Box 4303, N. Hollywood, CA 91607. 818 708-3345 eves /1

Wanted: cheap bike, running or not Call Louis 541-5088 /1

For Sale: Offer or Trade:
MK3 Bottom End
MK3 Gearbox Covers
MK3 Primary Case and internals
MK2 & MK3 Footrest, brakepedal
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Cerriani Roadrace Fork Bushes
complete 72-74 Ducati 750s
Contact Chris Nichols (415)965-4611

19

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