



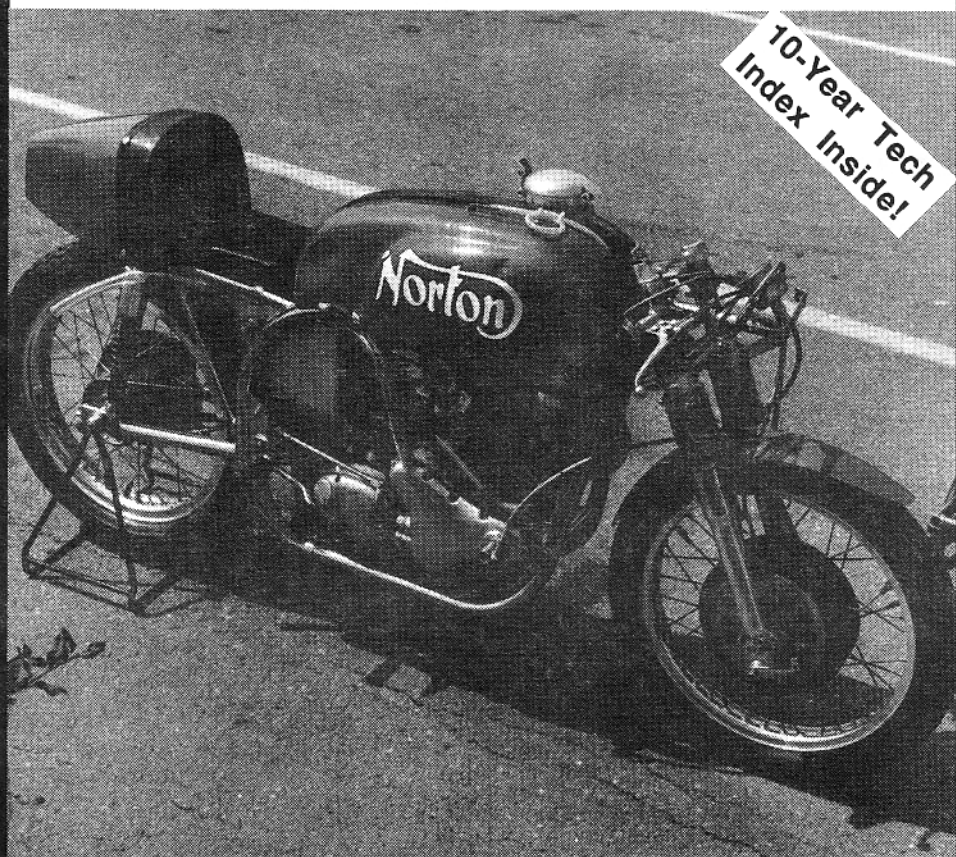
# Norton Notice



The Newsletter of the Norton Owners Club

No. 137

Sept., 1989



Racing Norton Prepared by Reg Pridmore

(Photo provided by Art Sirota)



# The Newsletter of the Norton Owners Club



## 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 \$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.

## \* CLUB OFFICERS \*

### PRESIDENT-EDITOR

Alan Goldwater  
1780 Chanticleer Ave  
Santa Cruz, Ca 95062 12  
(408) 475-7505

### V.P./RIDES

Margie Siegal  
625 Fairmount Ave.  
Oakland, CA 94611  
(415) 654-1933

### SEC/TREASURER

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

### RECORDING SEC

Art Sirota  
1281 Laurel Street  
Menlo Park, Ca 94025  
(415) 327-3167

### NOTICE PUBLISHER

Marick Payton  
301 West O'Connor  
Menlo Park, Ca 94025  
(415) 321-5083

### PARAPHERNALIA

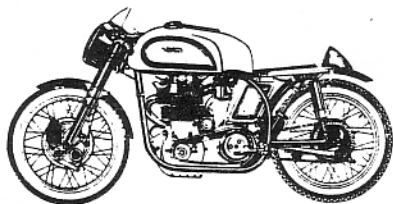
Robert Briscoe  
3232 Balboa Street  
San Francisco, CA 94121  
(415) 387-5593



### 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

### Club Rides

Coordinated by Margie Siegal

**October 15:** Ride through the Santa Clara Valley Wine Country. Led by Marick Payton. Leave San Jose Howard Johnson's (1st Street) at 10:30. End at Alice's.

Need ride leaders for November and December. Call Margie (415) 654-1933 before she calls you.

Attention all owners of John Player Nortons: If your JPN is in original condition and you would like to participate in a photo session for the 1991 NOC calendar, please bring your machine up to Alice's Restaurant in Woodside on Sunday morning, September 24. Let's try to get as many JPN's together as possible. For more information, contact Art Sirota at (415) 327-3167.

### Meeting Schedule

**October 12 San Francisco**  
Lake Merced Boathouse. Directions -  
- From East Bay: cross Bay Bridge, US-101 South to I-250 south. Exit at Ocean, west to 20th Ave., left 1 block to Sloat, left (west) to Skyline, 1/2 mile south to Hardley Dr. It's a left turn; park. From North Bay: come south on 19th Ave., turn R on Sloat, proceed as above. From South Bay, come north on I-280, take 19th Ave. exit, left on Sloat (somehow) and proceed as above.

November 9 San Mateo  
Prince of Wales

### Sec/Treas Report

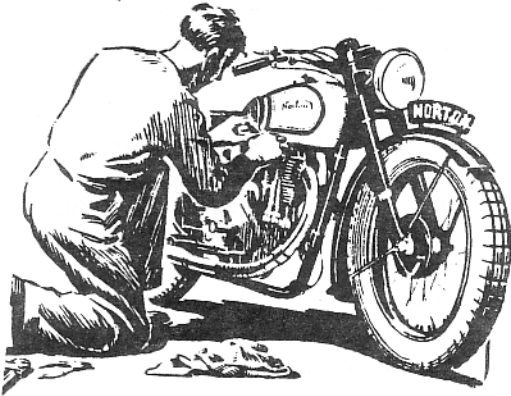
The membership of the club has slipped a bit to about 150 members. We currently have about \$1655 in the bank and the UK-NOC Branch Membership Secretary, Andy Sochanik has solved the problems with the members I mentioned in the June issue.

If we owe anyone money for the Annual Rally at Grover Hot Springs, please let me know.

The 1990 NOC calendar is about to be published. Peter Thistle has volunteered me to be the U.S. contract for the calendars. They will cost about \$10 each. I will provide more details in the next Norton Notice.

## Alan's Wrench

### Tech Tips and Gossip from the Editor



Anyways, you were there too, so you know all that other good stuff that we did. Ah, rallies were sure fun back then. Those were the days, alright.

#### The Editor Abroad - part 4

The ride from Heysham back to London was a long fast ride in mostly good weather, a relief after the frequent rain on the Isle of Man. We got in about 8pm and stayed only long enough to sleep and do some laundry. We got to the Dover ferry about 2 PM and just made the boat, so we were in Calais by about 4:30.

We had been told that visas were required for Americans to enter France, and also that bike travellers were seldom asked, especially with GB plates. This proved to be the case, as we were waved through at customs. We wasted about an hour looking in vain for a bank to change some money, but Calais doesn't cater to tourists and so we gave up in frustration.

With a full tank the Interpol's cruising range is about 220 miles, so having filled up at Dover, we could get to Paris without a fuel stop, and off we went. We found that the main service areas on the expressway accepted foreign currency anyway, so we treated ourselves to a proper French meal, best cafeteria food I ever had, complete with wine and several kinds of cheese.

Yep, I remember the '89 rally. Back in the days when you could jam over Donner pass at about 2:00 in the AM, goin' near 90 most of the way up the hill, then slowin' down to enjoy the sights goin' down. Nine kinds o' chili at Jerry Meadows, each one different and all good! Man, those were the days. Why, there was even good deals on parts at the swap down the road, fine wine at the Markleeville store, and a pancake feed on Sunday that wouldn't quit. Len and Dee Allen were great campsite hosts, bringin' all that gear over and even sharing their food!

Funny thing though. After all them jokes about beemers and stuff, then those beezer folks mostly showed up on Nortons anyway. And would you believe it - a guy actually riding an Electra. Started with the button and all, musta been the last one in the world on the road.

Brian Deely (Norton svc. mgr) had told us there was a camping facility in Paris, in the large Bois du Boulogne park, and a tourist office along the way had confirmed this. So armed with a skimpy tourist map we arrived in Paris about 11 pm and soon found the park. But the map was wrong and so we circled the park looking for camping signs. We soon came across the famous Ladies of the Night, advertising their wares along the boulevard, usually in outrageous deshabelle. Despite the distraction, we eventually found the campsite and got settled in.

The next day we quickly found that a motorcycle is the ideal vehicle for Paris. While the Parisian drivers lived up to their reputation for aggression, they were used to sharing the roads with motorbikes and scooters, and rarely hit us. Its acceptable to cut cars off if you can drive one handed and wave the other one in the air while doing so (see the article by I. Pushtit Holmes in this issue for appropriate hand signals). In addition, you can park a bike almost anywhere in Paris on the sidewalk. At the Musee D'Orsay, in the heart of the crowded left bank, we drove right up on the plaza and chained the bike to a lamp-post.

A few days later, at the Eiffel Tower centenary, we drove through throngs of people, past blocks of stalled traffic, within a quarter mile of the tower, and parked on the street divider right next to a Commando I had spotted. This was a wise move, because when the party was over and we left with 300,000 Frenchmen to drive home, many of the streets were impassible. The owner of the Commando wasn't Parisian, but lived in the suburbs

west of the city and offered to guide us out. What followed was a lesson in Gallic traffic dueling which turned my knuckles white. This guy could judge the gap between a bus and a taxi to the millimeter, and would cross two lanes of traffic in a split second if he saw an opening. It was all I could do to keep up, but by imitating his moves, I was able to keep him in sight. Certain parts of the Champs Elysee, for example, would be bumper to bumper on our side, but open on the opposite, so we simply drove as fast as we could on the wrong side, as far as oncoming traffic would allow, then ducked back in line.

After four days of sightseeing, museums, shopping and partying, we were ready to leave. Just for good measure, we got lost on the last night after a fine dinner with a French acquaintance we were ready to leave ("Oh no, one doesn't have escargot with a quail dish, it simply isn't done...." we ordered it anyway!). The drive back to Calais and thence to London was uneventful except with a minor discussion with a French customs officer over our missing visas. Since we were departing anyway there wasn't much they could do except shout in French. I shouted right back and waved my arms a lot, and they let us leave. Vive la France.

Our final day in London was just enough time for cleaning the bike and packing up. After a great meal of bangers and mash, I left the bike in the care of Pat Hayes, for crating and shipping, and with a fond farewell, we boarded the Lockerbee express (Pan Am 747) for New York and home. Pat later told me that he rode the bike up to the shipping company with Dave Airy, two Interpols side by side

along the motorway. At one point, feeling playful, they started waving motorists over as they passed and the poor blokes pulled right off the road, one after the other, thinking they'd been tagged by the cop-pers.

As with most trips, the return home was a bit of a let-down, but my memories of the trip, the video tapes I brought back, and most importantly, the people I met, are reminders that travel broadens and enriches in a way beyond price. I'm looking forward to the next trip already.

Just a few comments on the upcoming schedule. Marick will be leading an October ride to somewhere interesting (maybe a winery?). The October meeting will be at the Lake Merced Boathouse in San Francisco, where the food and beer is reported to be excellent. Thanks to Lynn Miller for arranging the meeting there. The rest of the schedule is wide open, particularly our Christmas Party / Annual General Meeting. As a backup venue for this event, there's always Harry's Hofbrau, where we had it last year. If anyone has a better suggestion or (wonder of wonders) wants to serve as a Club officer, please let me or Harry Bunting know. We also need ride leaders for November and December.

Finally, I'd like to commend Lou Caputo for the fine work he did compiling the technical index printed in this issue. This survey of virtually every tech note in the Notice during the last 10 years represents a lot of work and should be very useful to all of us in the future. Thanks, Lou.

## Meeting Minutes

Art Sirota, Rec. Sec.

### July

The meeting at the Prince of Wales Pub in San Mateo, 7/13, was called to order by Pres. Alan Goldwater at 7:30. Eighteen enthusiastic members were present. The meeting began with Alan's favorable report on the NOC Beach Bash held last month in Santa Cruz. It was agreed that we need a new meeting place in San Francisco and Lynn Miller volunteered to try and find one. Following this was a brief discussion regarding leaded gasoline.

The topic of discussion was smoothly transferred to our own rally to be held in August. Fees have been set at \$20 at the gate and \$15 if paid in advance. A volunteer is needed for the Chili Cook-Off at the joint BSA-NOC gathering in Sparks, Nevada, at Jim and Jerry Meadows' house.

Margie Siegal led off a discussion regarding the upcoming club ride for August. It was finally decided to meet at Mean Marshall's Motorcycle Shop in S.F. on August 13 in the morning and ride up to Sears Point to watch Eric Swortsfigure risk his life to keep Norton close to the finish line.

Harry Bunting gave a report on the state of the club treasury, which revealed that we presently have \$1400 in the bank, all our debts have been paid. We presently have 155 members.

Alan Goldwater gave a report on the details concerning the state of his Rotary Norton, which is being held by the U.S. Customs Department.

John Covell told about how Norton is treating hits stockholders. It seems they are sending him some very nice and informative literature while at the same time disqualifying him from continuing his status as a stockholder because he lives in the U.S. and does not have the proper license.

Alan and Harry gave a joint report on the state of the NOC spares scheme, which may be on the verge of being done away with.

Eric Swortsfigure gave a report on the progress he has made racing his Norton Commando and pointed out that the race last month at Sears Point was rained out.

While all this was going on, Robert Briscoe brought along all the NOC paraphernalia and spread out all the key fobs, tee-shirts, and decals on a table for members to purchase. The crowd outside was equally knocked-out by the impressive line-up of beautiful Nortons on one side of the street and John Covell's beautiful 1960 Chrysler Saratoga on the other.

### **August**

The meeting opened with Your Humble Recording Secretary signing a song composed while up at the recent INOC rally in Canada. This was a tough act to follow, but Alan Goldwater attempted it my opening a discussion regarding possible rally locations for the INOS rally to be held here in California. (Alan has volunteered to be the main organizer for this big event.) Members are encouraged to submit possible rally site suggestions to Alan during the next few months. Various members made some

suggestions including Mariposa Fairgrounds and the town of Quincy, CA.

The recent death of Norton enthusiast Carl Mazel was announced. His untimely death leaves the post of N.O.C. liaison officer vacant, and any members interested in securing this position should contact Alan Goldwater.

Alan bought up the subject of reducing the current membership dues in an effort to encourage new members to join. A vote was taken after a few minutes of discussion, and it was decided to reduce the dues from \$18 to \$15 a year.

Harry Bunting gave a brief report on the state of our bank balance. We have roughly \$1500 in our account.

The upcoming N.O.C. Christmas/Hanuka Party will be held in December at Harry's Hofbrau in Mountain View and members should begin thinking now about possible running for certain club officer positions, which are sure to become vacant. Alan announced that he will be retiring from the position of editor. Harry Bunting will no longer retain his position as membership secretary. Robert Briscoe is not going to serve any longer as paraphernalia officer, and I plan to step down as recording secretary.

Hans Melburg was annointed our new Public Relations Officer.

ynn Miller fulfilled his obligation to find us another meeting place up in the city. So we will be trying out the Lake Merced Boathouse in October. It's near the S.F. zoo and Lynn says that it is a great location for us.

The meeting adjourned with all 14 members gathering out in the parking lot to smell, touch, hear, and feel Alan's Norton Rotary Interpol 2 fire up and ride off into the night.

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## 10-Year Index of Tech Articles

Compiled by Lou Caputo

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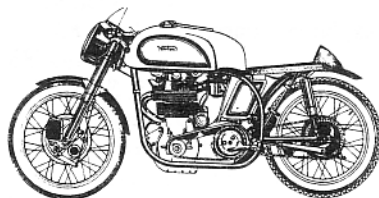
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1963 catalog drawing of Manx 30M and 40M

# Helpful Hand Signals

by I. Pushtit Holme

Here are some hand signals which can come in handy, (pun intended!) to aid communication while putting down the highway:

I just went on reserve  
and the next gas  
station is about 30  
miles up the road.



R

You brought your  
Trident by mistake.  
Let's go back and get  
your Norton.



W

I think my pistons just  
seized.



T

I just ran out of gas.  
Let's walk the rest of  
the way.



P

Your Trident just quit  
firing.



Y

I think one of my  
pushrods just got  
bent.



F

Your Commando just  
quick firing. Better  
coast to a stop.



Neat tunnel up ahead.



Q

Looks like I've  
installed another soft  
cam in my Norton.  
(Usually used by  
Chris Nichols.)



C

## Letters to the Editor

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Dear Norton Notice,

I thought I'd add fuel to the fire, so to speak, and give my opinions concerning the leaded/unleaded gas controversy.

One possible solution is to purchase high-octane leaded racing fuel, mix it with regular gas, and create your own brew. I take several 5-gallon gas cans to Rodriguez Speed Shop, 2970 Daylight Way in San Jose, (408) 227-6262, and buy 115 octane leaded race gas. When mixed in a concentration of four parts regular gas to one part race gas, this is supposed to give you 100 octane leaded premium.

My experience has been very positive. Suddenly you fine your Norton idles properly and never pings. Current price at this outlet is \$4.50 a gallon. Be warned that Rodriguez Speed Shop is closed on Saturday because that's when they go racing.

Another possible solution is a product called "Real Lead," which is put out by Octane Boost Corporation, 222 Town East Blvd., Mesquite, TX 75149. I purchase this stuff from a local auto parts store in Menlo Park. It comes in tall one-quart silver cans and costs about \$7 per quart. One quart treats 20-gallons.

This is not a lead-substitute, but is real tetraethyl lead. There is a warning

on the can that it is for use only in boat engines. It is unlawful to sell it in California as a fuel additive for any motor vehicle. This sounds perfectly all right to me because I recently had the experience of being told by the head supervisor at the Mountain View office of the DMV that motorcycles are motor-driven cycles, *not* motor vehicles.

At any rate, this product is convenient for long trips because it doesn't take up much room in the old saddle bags. Try to avoid spilling any on your skin, thought, because it has a reputation for eating large holes in a twelve-inch thick slab of concrete.

—I. Pushtit Holme

Dear Norton Notice,

Want to share the observations of a couple of old hands on the issue of whether Norton's need leaded gas. T. C. Christenson, builder of the famed Hog Slayer double Norton-engined drag bike, told a tech session at the INOA rally in Canada that he had never experienced a problem with valve seat recession on Nortons and didn't think lead was necessary. The folks at Raber's have told me the same thing. Sounds like we can do our part for cleaner air without doing a job on our engines.

—Marick Payton

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## Classified Advertisements

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**Attention all owners of John Player Nortons:** If your JPN is in original condition and you would like to participate in a photo session for the 1991 NOC calendar, please bring your machine up to Alice's Restaurant in Woodside on Sunday morning, September 24. Let's try to get as many JPN's together as possible. For more information, contact Art Sirota at (415) 327-3167.

**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.

**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).

**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.

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.

I really would like these things to go to someone who needs them and who would give me any kind of a reasonable price. Call and let's talk.

Ken Ward (408) 974-0083, days.

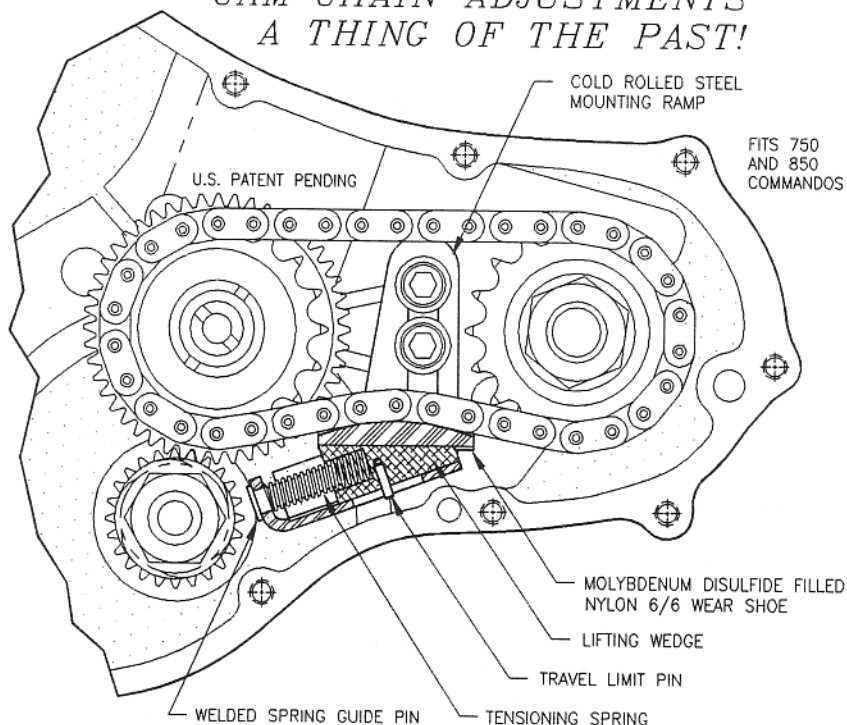
**For Sale - John Player Norton Production Racing fairing, never used. White gel-coat finish. Two lowers, one for standard pipes, one for tucked-in pipes. \$350 firm.**

Commando 6 gal tank and matching dual seat, black gel-coat finish, never used. This set was manufactured by Reg Curley. It's very predatory-looking, especially with low bars. \$450 firm. Call Richard Eyler at (408) 438-2442 /7

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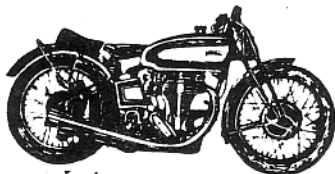
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