

# Norton Notice



The Newsletter of the Norton Owners Club

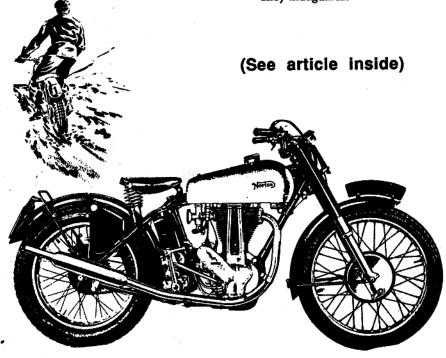
No. 146

Jun. 1990

A single purpose machine designed and built solely for reliability trials. 490 c.c. single cylinder, all alloy overhead valve engine. Totally

## 500 T

enclosed and automatically lubricated. Folding kickstarter. Lightweight frame with undershield, side and rear stands, 100% steering lock. Narrow alloy mudguards.



#### 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 \$1500 per uear

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 \$19.00 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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## NORTON OWNERS CLUB

Importanti

(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.

## Upcoming Events

#### Club Rides

June 16-17 (Sat.-Sun.)

Sierra Ride/Chili Cook-Off (Jointly w/ BSAOC)

July 15 (Sun.)

South Bay Ride (tentative)

Aug. 11-12 (Sat.-Sun.)

**Dutch Flat Overnighter** 

Sept. 16 (Sun.)

Old-Timer's Ride (Meet at Alice's)

Oct. 14 (Sun.) Pumpkin Ride (tentative)

Nov. 3 (Sat.) Northbay All-British Ride (Members only) w/ Ariel, BSA, & Enfield Owners

Dec. 16 (Sun.) Mt. Hamilton (tentative)

#### Meeting Schedule

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

Jun 14 -- East Bay Gino's Pizza, 2629 Ashby (near College Ave), Berkeley, CA

July 12-- San Francisco
Lake Merced Boathouse. Off Skyline
Blvd. Great food, nice room with bigscreen cycle racing videos and a lingereshow!

August 9 -- Peninsula

The Prince of Wales Pub on 25th Ave in San Mateo offers a wide selection of beers and a private meeting room with dart boards!

Sept. 13 -- South Bay
Harry's Hofbrau, El Camino near Castro
Street. Mountain View

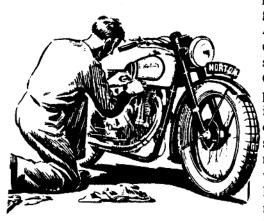
#### Special Events

The Fort Sutter Chapter of the AMCA is having their 8th Annual Antique Motorcycle Show and Swap meet July 14 & 15 in Sacramento at 23rd Avenue under I-80. Contact Dick Borchert (916) 967-2833.



### Alan's Wrench

#### **Tech Tips and Gossip from the Editor**



Following four hectic (and expensive) days at the emissions lab in Berkely, I finally have a test result which shows the Interpol Rotary meeting EPA requirements! Lots of fine tuning and some major exhaust modification yielded a margin of about 40% below the required emissions, while driving a 1500 lb inertial load (smallest available flywheel on the dyno). This leaves ample margin for the EPA's "deterioration factor" and the calibration tolerances of the test system.

Along the way, I've learned some valuable lessons about the Rotary, and about the EPA testing procedure in general. First, everything on the bike has to be right. One test run had to be aborted because the clutch was both dragging and slipping. Sound familiar? Sure enough, when I stripped the clutch, I found the usual thick oil gunk and hot spots on the plain disks. I checked them for warp on a

piece of plate glass and they were ok, so a general cleaning, and back in they went. After refilling the primary with ATF, the clutch is rock-solid and shifting is buttery smooth. This clutch is so much like the Commando part we love and hate, that the plates are interchangeable. The ones used in the Rotary are thinner though, so nine of each (bronze and plain) are used instead of the Commando's five. They are narrower as well, so only the plain plates will fit in the Commando clutch housing. I've been told you can fit seven Commando bronze and six Rotary plain in the Commando clutch this way, making a totally slip-proof unit. These plates can be ordered through your local Norton dealer: ask for Norton part #69-0558 (price unknown).

Now that the hard part is over, I can begin the mileage accumulation (15000 km, or 9000 miles) required for certification. Weekend rides over the next month might accumulate 2500 miles or so, leaving 6500 miles to be ridden in July if I am to meet my August 15th deadline. My plan is to ride to the INOA National Rally in Wisconsin, then to Seattle, and home I'm hoping to leave around Tuesday, July 10, arriving in Wisconsin on Saturday the 14th for the British Bike Cooperative Rally. From there it's about 200 miles to the National which starts on Wednesday, so there will be a couple of days to recuperate between parties. I have to be in Seattle on the 26th for a family reunion, so I'll leave Wisconsin on Sunday the 22nd.

The problem with this plan is that as (Continued on page 12)

## Minutes of May Meeintg

The meeting was called to order by President Alan Goldwater at 8:40 p.m. at Harry's Hofbrau in Mountain View. Alan announced the upcoming Locke ride and an absent Lynne Miller's admonition about preventive maintenance was relayed to the assembled masses.

The rotary Norton's hydrocarbons are coming down, at 1100 ppm, headed towards a goal of 400 ppm. Good results with Beacon gasohol, he said.

The '91 INOA Rally is still in planning. A positive response was received from the Tahoe Valley Campground, with a possibility for an August date. Brad Green noted that we must inform all prospective attendees that the rally will be at some distance from the Bay Area.

Eric Swortsfigure, the Burnout King, told the story of how he split his cases with the engine still in the frame. The crowds loved it, chanting "Norton! Norton!" as they vied to catch the fragments of fender, tire and tail light. Details of the total destruction were given, not for reprinting in a family publication.

The NOC raffle bike is progressing at Andy Belcher's house, where he's polishing it. Tom Dable has donated a frame. The club needs to have a rebuild party at some point. Unless an earlier event is organized by a volunteer, we may shoot to have it ready by the '91 Clubman's show. It's also possible we'll hang onto it

until the '91 International Rally.

Don Danmeier gave details about the joint BSAOC/NOC Sierra Ride in June.

Stan Beneveds noted he distributed a bunch of club memberships forms at Tulare, so we may be picking up some So. Calif. members. Membership generally is still on the upswing, currently about 175. The Treasury is in good shape, too, Harry Bunting reported.

A new series of club t-shirts will go into production soon, Stan said; so if you like the current shirt move quickly. They're nearly gone.

Art Sirota mentioned a local British machinist, Tom Hart, who he says does excellent work. Art also introduced Steve Blaauw, a new member and a 1931 International owner. (Tom Hart was also present.)

Meeting adjourned at 9 pm. Attendance about 30.

-John Covell, Recording Secretary



1963 catalog drawing of Manx 30M and 40M

## The Simplest Norton

#### by Art Sirota

The 500T was the last trials bike made by Norton. It was produced in very limited quantities from 1949 to 1953, and proved to be very successful both for the factory teams and private owners. Geoff Duke, Arthur Humphries and Les Archer all had many victories riding the 500T.

One of the attractive aspects of restoring a 500T is its simplicity. Besides the obvious fact that it has only one piston and two valves, it has no wiring harness. no coils, no rear suspension, no headlight, no fuse, no tachometer, no ignition switch, no mirror, no ammeter, no swingarm, no kill button, no tail light, no electric starter. no turn signals, no dimmer switch, no neutral light, no brake light switch, no reflectors, and no fairing. It does have an all-alloy engine with overhead valves, the old-type of pre-war four speed upright Norton gearbox, and many special parts used only on the 500T, including petrol tank, exhaust system, scalloped front brake hub, special front fork yokes to provide the unique rake, and special frame. All the special parts are now almost impossible to find but, hey, don't you just love a challenge?

The 500T that I recently purchased was once owned by none other than our very own Harvey Loucks!! In fact, there is a photo on the back page of Norton Notice #40 from September 1981 of Harvey adding some oil to the 500T on the one club ride he rode it on. I remember how scruffy and tattered the whole affair looked. (I am referring here to the bike, not Harvey.)

Soon after that club ride, Harvey sold the machine to Mark Wilcoxen, another NOC member. Mark began the restoration almost immediately. Over the course of the next few years he completely rebuilt the engine, had almost all the re-chroming carried out, obtained a new exhaust system, and obtained many of the missing parts.

However, Mark finally decided that he had taken on too many projects and made the tough choice of selling the 500T. So the bike is now in my garage in a very disassembled state and I plan to finish the job Mark started. If anybody out there could help me locate a 500T tool box, I would be most grateful. You might have seen the newly-rebuilt engine on the Norton club stand at the recent All-British Show on April 1. My goal is to have the machine completed sometime this summer and ride it in the dirt out in front of Alice's

#### Ride Report

Our May ride to the Delta was cancelled due to rain. After calls from Alan in Santa Cruz and new member Steve Famuliner in Citrus Heights confirming that it was, in fact, raining all over Northern California we decided the the safe thing was to cancel and reschedule the ride. A new date will be set at the June 14 meeting in Berkeley at Gino's Pizza.

The June ride is the Sierra Ride and Don has a flyer elsewhere in the *Notice* to explain it.

The July ride on the fifteenth will be (Continued on page 7)

#### Letter to Editor

Editor.

A response to the rash (road) of articles sent in by I. Pushtit Holme from Mr. Thackery Washer N.O.S.:

Dear Holme,

After reading your last two articles in the *Norton Notice* I find it very difficult to hold my tongue. Therefore, I am suggesting the following:

In response to your article on pilot jet clean out, I suggest that perhaps your problem is caused by wax build up left from over polishing. This is a common problem usually found in Holme's with too many Nortons. Keep in mind that I, Thackery Washer N.O.S., have been intimately involved in the construction and development of Nortons since the beginning and am absolutely qualified to make such a statement.

In response to your article on Mail-Order Business start-ups, I will only reply that my previously unpublished private address is as follows:

> Dovecote Mill Tripple Stile Lane Chippingsoddington Leicestershire, England.

In response to your "True Story" I have only to say that it is a typical Freudian fantasy put forth by one not quite sure on which side to stand when pushing it home!

In response to your earth quake prep article, I felt somewhat queasy when I read it and felt that your whole idea was based on a shaky premise.

In closing, I would just like to say that

the next thing I suppose we will have to put up with is 500T stories!

The saving grace is that Mr. Holme does, in fact, attempt to ride his Nortons as should we all. Remember, NORTON stands for Norton Owner Riders Traveling On Nortons.

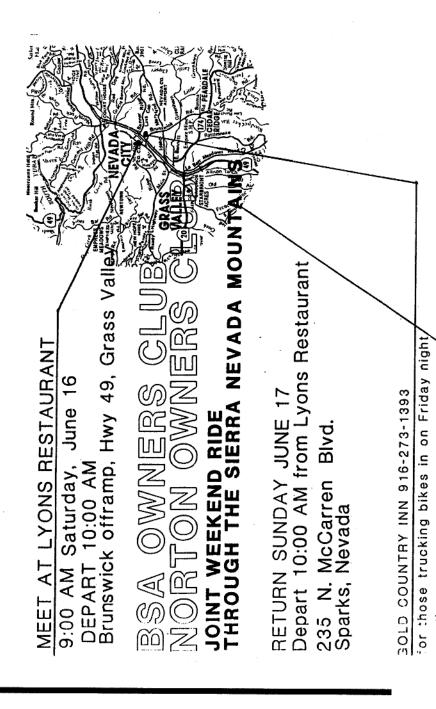
Yours truly, Thackery Washer N.O.S.

#### Ride Report cont.

(Continued from page 6) a ride up the Silverado Trail with a lunch stop in Davis at the Sudwerk German Brew Pub or another local hot spot. We'll meet at 9 a.m. in front of Marshall's so we can get an early start. Please feel free to call me about any of the club rides. I like to have an idea how many people plan on going on any given ride. My number is (415) 334-2042.

We have had some great rides this year so far and I know that we have some more good ones coming up. The breakdowns have been minor up until now and I think that they could possibly have been avoided with some basic checks the week before. I like to check cables, oil. tyre pressure and electrics and gearbox levels. While you have the cover off to inspect the gearbox level be sure to check the bottom end of your clutch cable and the alignment of the pull. In checking mine recently I discovered that I had only three strands left and the pull was way out of line. After replacing the cable and realigning the pull I now have a clutch that is smooth and easy to pull. A general check of nuts and bolts will prevent embarrassing bits falling off, Enough of this! See you at the next meeting and we'll set a date for that great Delta Ride.

-Lynn Miller





#### ... Side Trips

Yet ; another installment regrading the joys and foibles of Norton ownerhsip

by Andy McKerral-Belcher

It appears to have arrived again, that glorious time of the year when the days are long, the nights can be as long or as short as you want (depending upon who you spend them with), and the wait in line to get a friggin' set of valve cover gaskets at West Bay Cycle can extend to Cupertino. Yes, brothers and sisters, it's another potentially balls-to-the-wall, no holds barred kickass Bay Area Summer, where motorcycling is unexcelled by anywhere on this planet. Thanks god.

For those FEW individuals who dimly remember in the dimmest of dim pasts. way back in Middle Earth, you may be mildly curious to learn the current fate of the "li'l bastard" 750 Commando which the Club purchased for an auction fund raiser. Although torrently inundated by innumerable requests from thousands of fellow Nortonites to restore this beast to its original pristine "killer" condition, I nonetheless modestly declined all those generous offers and have been steadily engaged in a dogged RACE AGAINST APATHY! (If the foregoing paragraph reeks of pregnant sarcasm, then it damn well better . . . I worked harder on this thing than I have on my OWN bike!)

The single greatest challenge was to eliminate the rather nasty gouge from the primary chaincase outer cover. This bothered me a great deal, mostly because the replacement cost would be enormous and, also, because Marick Payton, the only donor of any parts, time or encouragement for the last two months, didn't have that item stored in his garage. [Editor's note: We now have the very generous donation of a frame by Tom Dable.] So, I set about to find a way to repair it.

Lemme tell you about heliarc or TIG welding . . . gawd, I'm in the wrong business! That sort of work means a serious depletion of jing from the ol' pockets. I got bummed. I tried various "liquid metal" formulations, all to no avail; the stuff looks like plastic with silver glitter mixed in. Bletch, Well, what worked was an unexpected resource from a marginally attended booth at the San Jose All Clubman's British Motorcycle Swap Meet.

Although the guy's apporach was that of an "Honest Bart's Snake Oil Hair Restorer and Potency Rejuvenator" sales pitch, I could immediately see the potential application of the man's product. Called "Alumibraze," the material resembles short lengths of clothers hanger material made of aluminum; however, that's where the resemblance stops. It's an allow of aluminum, zinc, copper, bismuth, silicon. and magnesium with a Brinell hardness of 85, which is a good average hardness for the "alloy" types used Wolverhampton parts for all those years.

The stuff's melt range is from 713 to 735 degrees F., which is way lower than the vaporization point for your basic generic chain case alloy. What impressed me, though, was the demonstration the guy used to show that the braze/weld was stronger than the surrounding material.

The spec sheet on the material indicated a tensile strength of 47,000 PSI, which exceed MilSpec M-R4208 and FAAMC M-2302. If the result was truly a molecular bond as promised, then the applications for motorcycle repairs, particularly the EXPENSIVE ones, would be overwhelming.

I handed the guy an ATM note, and received 26 rods, two sizes of stainless steel wire brushes, and a guarantee that if I didn't save \$100 per rod in repairs, he'd refund my money. Oh, well. Monoxodil is supposed to grow hair, too. . . .

So, I took the stuff ome and stuck it in an unobtrusive niche of the garage where it stayed for about a month and then, after trying all the other alternatives on the primary chain case of the Club Bike, it dawned on me that all I had to do was go to OSH in Redwood City, buy a pipe sweating rig for \$12.00, and prepare to ask the snake oil salesman for my money back.

I still can't get over it. Propane. All it took was a stupid propane torch. I heated the case after thorough cleansing and abrading, as per the instructions, until the rod would "streak" when touched to the surface. Then, I worked the molten material into the road rash and gently agitated the rod so that most of the oxide and slag would float to the top of the fill spot. I let it slowly air cool, and afterwards used a high speed Dremel tool to contour and grind the repair to the proper point where my normal 3 stage surface restoration would take over. Other than a VERY slight silvering effect where the alloy of the rod separated during cooling, the sumbitch looks PERFECT. The material absolutely adores 600 grit wetor-dry, and tolerates extreme buffing with rouge or Simichrome without the slightest hint of galling. Impressive.

But what about Real Repairs? The nasty, high tensile strength problems that hit you in the wallet and make you wish for six good numbers twice a week? Well, having practiced on the Club Bike, it was now time to test my skills on my Mark III. One of the retaining holes in the Electric Starter Flange had been broken loose long ago by some heavy-handed torque freak, and the fool at least had the decency to leave the broken part bolted into the starter. With a heavy heart and a stout belt of Bass Ale, I disassembled the mess, cleaned the oil from the assembly, abradeed and deoxidized the surfaces, tinned both pieces as per the instructions, and reheated the assembly of two clamped pieces. Well, it certainly LOOKED good ... but the proof was when I bolted the started back in. It seems as solid and true as a new casting. [Editor's note: Andy has subsequently learned that, in this case, appearances were deceiving as this bonding did not hold.1

I highly recommed this stuff if you want to repair and conserve your British "aluminium". The person to contact is Dick Johnson, at 740 Sandydale Drive in Nipomo, CA 93444. His phone number is (805) 929-1347. So much for rave reviews and unsolicited product plugs. Back to the subject at hand.

My work on the Club Bike has now evolved to the point where the time has arrived to actively solicit assistance in the form of club member parts donations. (This is in small print because I don't want anyone to have their Karma upset by requesting such a heretical notion.) Nonetheless, in order to increase the bike's value, and thereby the Club's profit margin as a result of this auction, the following parts are needed:

- 1. A rear brake switch
- A COMPLETE tach cable, with drive pin intact
  - 3. Alan's tach lens repair
- 4. Someone willing to strip, prefinish and repaint the side covers. They're fiberglass, so all you Corvette owners out there get off your ass and sand some fiberglass.
  - 5. A rear drive chain guard
  - 6. A grab bar
  - 7. An isolastic mounting
- 8. A used (but serviceable) center stand: the one that came with the bike is cracked and split in two places and rewelding it is neither safe nor recommended
- 9. A tall light assembly of approximately 1981 vintage; the one that came with the bike is cracked and very badly weathered. I tried to clean it up, but it tends to electrically short out of it's own accord.

#### 10. Some decent used fork stanchions.

Because they are somewhat badly weathered and not polishable, it'd be nice if someone could get a hold of a couple of polishable mudguards. Other than the above mentioned items, that's pretty much it. I managed to actually repair the wire harness and get everything electrical to function safely and correctly.

A general rule of thumb, and a notso-subtle hint to any prospective weekend wire weavers out there is: IF IT'S LUCAS ...ESPECIALLY IF IT'S CONNECTED TO A NORTON WIRE HARNESS . . . DON'T MESS WITH IT!

Hokey dokey, bro's & sis's, I'm done rubbing my shoe leather on this soapbox. My telephone number is (415) 322-4054, should your conscience bother you and your pride in your club be disturbed. In the meantime, bear in mind that motorcycling and sex have one fact in common: both suffer equally in performance and pleasure is the rubber isn't properly inflated.

#### Wrench continued

(Continued from page 4)

yet I don't have any company, and it's not the kind of ride I look forward to doing solo. I would welcome any company on all or part of the trip, including non-Norton bikes and/or a pickup or van. The idea is to rotate the rider on the Rotary so that 1) I don't get too saddle-sore and bored. and 2) so that other people get a chance to experience how great a touring bike it is. Having a truck along as chase vehicle would lift the burden of worry from the trip but isn't a must. Another bike (and rider) or two along would give plenty of backup and company, and we could still swap bikes for some variety. So if you're planning to attend the INOA Rally please get in touch with me. My schedule and route can be flexible, except for Seattle which is a family committment. But then

(Continued on page 13)

#### Classifieds

FOR SALE: 1975 MkIII, 6,500 original miles, black and gold, \$2,700 or trade; 1974 JPN, 8,700 miles, \$6,000 or trade. Robert G. Allan, PO Box 82633, Kenmore, WA 98028. (206) 486-6040 /5

FOR SALE: used Borrani vallanced alloy rim, 3.18, \$20; used Jones chromed rim, WM;3.19, made in England, perf. cond., \$25; Dunlop Gold Seal K70 tyre, 4.00X18, made in england, excellent cond; Dunlop tyre, make in england, 3.25X19, free to good home; new Fastback petrol tank, \$245; handlebar, new chrome, flat style, \$12; handlebar, used but excellent cond., slight rise style, \$8; Haynes Commando workshop manual, \$7; Haynes pre-Commando twins workshop manual, \$7. Art Sirota (415) 327-3167.

FOR SALE: '74 JPN only 5k miles. All original, like new. Has Boyer, spare new black exhaust and more. Once seen, will buy. \$7000 Call John Watts (206) 527-8254.

#### Wrench continued

(Continued from page 12)

I could always ride straight back here, then fly to Seattle and still make it by the 26th...

I also have some progress to report on the 1991 Rally. I have gotten a positive response from two of the three potential sites in South Shore: Richardson's Resort and the Tahoe Valley Campground. Both are large sites with full services and a

separate group camping area. However, neither has a large enough dining/meeting area for our group (500+ expected). Our options are to meet off-site (like Harrahs, or an Elks lodge) or hire a large tent with folding tables and chairs. This is 'way down the road though, since the first problem is choosing between the two sites. Richardson's has been very highly reccommended by several people, but the Tahoe Valley site is larger (40 acres!). I'm hoping to visit both these places in the next month, perhaps on the way back from the Chili Cook-off in Reno. In the meantime, comments and reviews are welcome.

P.S. Were you at "Kawasucki Day" at Alice's on Sunday? It was a real nonevent, but there sure were a lot of bikes there. Nice day for riding too.

NORTON A.J.S. TRIUMPH B.S.A

**VELOCETTE** 

## MANX MOTORS

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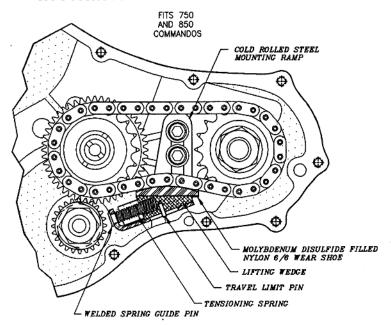
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#### The Newsletter of the Norton Owners Club





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