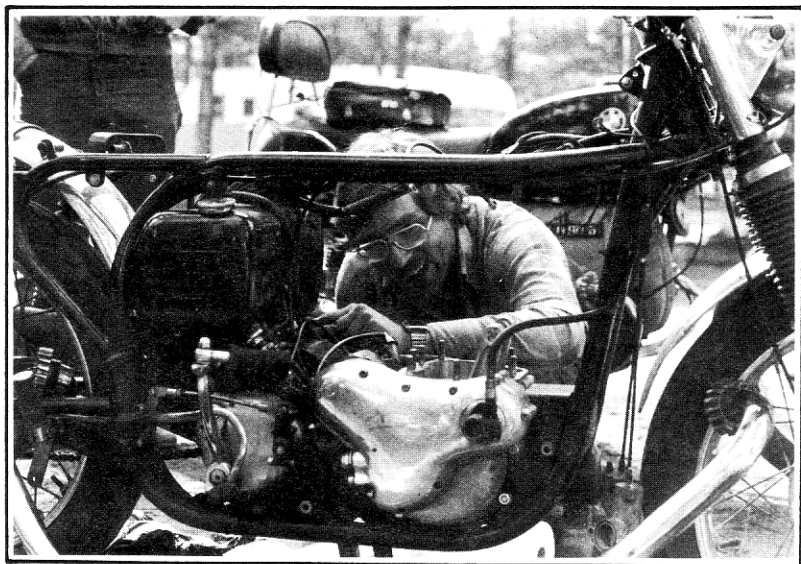


# Norton Notice

Volume 2 Issue 10

October 1979



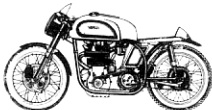
**Mike Hancock of Toronto Playing with his Featherbed at the Recent**

**NORTON Rally, with NORTON NEWS Editor Pete Kogut amused**



Published monthly by the  
Northern California Branch  
Norton Owners Club





The NORTON NOTICE is published monthly by the Northern California Branch of the NOC.

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## Advertising

Current and prospective members may place Norton-related ads in the TRADING POST by writing the pertinent information in as concise a form as possible and sending it to the Editor. Ads will normally run for two months, but may be renewed should the advertiser so desire. There will be no fee for any advertisement in the TRADING POST.

Commercial enterprises may advertise their goods and/or services in the NORTON NOTICE for a nominal fee, which will help offset printing costs and thereby support the Northern California Branch of the NOC.

Commercial advertising rates are:

	<u>1 issue</u>	<u>3 issues</u>	<u>6 issues</u>
1/4 page	\$5.00	\$13.50	\$25.00
1/2 page	\$9.00	\$25.00	\$45.00

## Input Wanted

Members and other readers are encouraged to submit to the Editor anything at all of general interest to Norton enthusiasts. The Editor will welcome any articles (original or otherwise), technical information, jokes, cartoons, travelogues, comments, photographs, or whatever else you might have that other readers would enjoy seeing, and will try to get everything in sooner or later. Please try to make handwritten items legible, if at all possible, and include a self-addressed envelope if you want your goodies returned. This is your newsletter, and your input is important. Please send it to the Editor.

ODD BODKINS (Reprinted with permission)



NOTE: Membership cards are here at last!!!  
Let me know if you need one.

Steve

## Membership Information

There are three categories of membership in the Northern California Branch of the NOC:

**FULL MEMBERS:** Full members are dues-paying members of the NOC, and therefore have full voting privileges at any general meeting of the NOC and all branch meetings, and also any privileges resulting from affiliation of the Club with any other organization. Full members must pay annual dues to the NOC in England (paid through the Secretary), in return for which they will receive the bi-monthly ROADHOLDER magazine, and may use the NOC Spares Scheme at any time.

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:** This category was set up so that any Norton owner wishing to get the NORTON NOTICE each month and be associated with the Northern California Branch can do so for a very modest fee, without having to join the NOC as a full member. Associate members do not pay NOC dues, and therefore do not have all the privileges of full NOC members. They do, however, have full voting privileges at all Northern California Branch meetings, and are equally welcome at all of the rides, meetings, and other functions sponsored by the branch.

**SOCIAL MEMBERS:** In order to allow Norton enthusiasts who do not own a Norton to be associated with the club, and thereby help them to find one to buy, the branch provides the category of 'Social Membership'. Social members do not have any voting privileges, but are otherwise welcome to participate in all branch activities. Social members will receive the NORTON NOTICE each month, and are encouraged to follow up on any leads regarding Norton motorcycles for sale. The Editor will try to help all social members in this regard, and would appreciate any help from other members.

## CURRENT DUES PAID AND PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED:

	<u>PAY:</u>	<u>RECEIVE:</u>
FULL MEMBERS:	\$25	<u>NORTON NOTICE</u> & <u>ROADHOLDER</u>
ASSOC. MEMBERS:	\$5	<u>NORTON NOTICE</u>
SOCIAL MEMBERS:	\$5	<u>NORTON NOTICE</u>

## Meetings and Rides

Northern California Branch meetings are held on the second Thursday evening of each month at a location announced in the newsletter.

Branch rides are generally held on the next Sunday, meeting at 10AM at a location also announced in the NORTON NOTICE. In the event of rain, the ride will be postponed a week.

## October Meeting: S.F.

This month's Northern California Branch meeting will be on Thursday, October 18, beginning at 7:30 PM. Our venue will be the always popular Edinburgh Castle in San Francisco. For those of you who've never been there, it's a Scottish style pub with a long list of British beers, ales and stouts, as well as some great fish 'n chips dinners, served wrapped in newspaper just as they do it in the U.K. The place is always lots of fun.

**AGENDA:** We'll be accepting nominations for new Branch officers, since President Bob Bausch wishes to step down at the end of the year, and I will also hand over the Secretary's job to some able soul. Please come to the meeting, and nominate yourself or a friend for one of these important positions. I shall publish nominations in the November and December newsletters, and members should vote by mail, phone or in person at the December meeting. The Treasurer's duties will, I understand, be handled by our current Treasurer, Carolyn Scott, who will want to work closely with the new Secretary in order to keep things going as smoothly as possible. Finally, Dick Swanson will be the new **NORTON NOTICE** Editor, and with the able assistance of Michael Heth and Brian Halton will have no trouble putting out this rag every month. Thanks again to these three guys for volunteering, and I wish them all the best of luck in the coming year.

I will be bringing along my slides from the Colorado trip, and those of you who were interested but didn't get a chance to see all the wild action at the NORTON RALLY and the there and back, can get another chance. I should also have some from the CSRG race meeting at Sears Point on October 7th, which was attended by a surprising number of Norton nuts. They should be pretty funny; those of you who were there know what I mean!

**DATE:** THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18TH  
**TIME:** 7:30 PM  
**PLACE:** EDINBURGH CASTLE  
 950 GEARY, SAN FRANCISCO  
**PHONE:** (415)885-4074

## October Ride: Sacramento, Sierras

The October ride is scheduled as an overnighter to the Sierras, and should be a magnificent ride. The autumn colors up in the mountains will be spectacular. Any members who can't make it for the whole weekend, but would like to join us for the Saturday ride to Sacramento, or for the afternoon ride into the mountains, will of course be most welcome. The plans are not set yet with regard to where we will camp or what we'll do on Sunday, so I encourage any interested Norton rider who wants to come along to go up with the group on Saturday.

We shall plan to leave from the Bay Bridge toll plaza parking lot (near Oakland/Berkeley) at 10:30 Saturday morning. Please try to be there no later than 10:00AM so that we can get off on time. The group there will probably decide to head up to Sacramento by the shortest route, Interstate 80, and so anyone wanting to join us along the way should have no problem. You'll hear us coming! I'd like to try to get up to Norm Kelley's house in Sacramento by 12:30 or 1:00, when I'm sure we will all be ready for a cold one. Norm hosted us royally the last time we had a Club ride to his place, and I'm sure we'll be well received again. Some of you may not know that Norm now has some eight Nortons (at last count!), all in beautiful running condition. Norm recently had to double the size of his garage as the bikes were starting to take over the house. Last time we were there his immaculate John Player Special was living in the dining room! Way to go Norm.

After a rest stop there at Norm's, where we should probably see the pictures from the 8,400 mile ride Norm and Pat took across the U.S. and Canada in July, we will head down to the famous Norton shop in Sacramento, Hall-Burdette. Mr. and Mrs. Burdette had prepared a splendid feast for the club the last time we stopped by, and I wouldn't be surprised if they have something planned for us this time as well. Let's hope we'll get a good group together and show the Burdettes and all the guys at the shop how much we appreciated their hospitality last year. That goes for you members and other Norton nuts in the Sacramento area! We hope to see quite a few of you this time, since we're bringing the ride right up to you.

**DATE:** SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20TH  
**TIME:** 10:00 AM  
**PLACE:** BAY BRIDGE TOLL PLAZA  
 SOUTHEAST PARKING LOT  
 (EASY ACCESS FROM 80)

## November Meeting

I recently visited a place in Palo Alto which some of you may remember as the venue for our March meeting. Back at that time it was called BESS AND THE BEEFEATER, but recently it's been remodeled and is now BARRINGTON'S. I was really impressed.

The manager said they'd be pleased to have us for our November meeting, and even offered to supply free hors d'oeuvres and half price drafts until 9 o'clock. This should be a great place to meet in the mid-peninsula area, and I encourage everyone who can to come. It'll be Thursday, 11/15.



Bar · Grille · Live Entertainment 7 nights a week from 9:00PM.  
 414 Emerson, downtown Palo Alto · (415) 325-4052.  
 · one block from Good Earth restaurant.

## Trading Post

All ads for the TRADING POST should be sent to the Editor, rather than given by telephone. Thankyou for your cooperation.

STEVE COBURN  
P.O. BOX 236  
LA HONDA, CA  
94020

### ••For Sale••

1975 Commando 850 Roadster. Black/gold, only 6000 miles, electric starter works! This bike is in excellent condition throughout: \$1500.

BLAIR GLENN  
20380 Seagull Way  
Saratoga, CA  
(408)255-1528

1973 Commando 850 Roadster. Black/gold, needs some work, but nothing major: \$800.

GREGG ACKER  
Redwood City, CA  
(415)366-1290 (weekdays after 4PM)

1973 Commando 850 Hi-Rider in parts:  
Engine: \$400, Gearbox (new rebuild): \$300,  
Transmission: \$200, Dunstall pipes(new): \$100,  
Front and rear rims, brakes, cables, lever: \$200,  
Tank and side covers (new paint): \$120,  
Oil cooler: \$35, lots of other parts.

DAVID PICKARD  
451 Donaldson Avenue  
Pacifica, CA  
(415)359-2469

1972 Commando Combat 750 Interstate. White, very clean condition, needs some carbox and crank work. Only 7000 miles. \$1300 or best offer.

RICH LUTON  
San Francisco, CA  
(415)564-9293  
(415)863-9405

1974 John Player Norton. Totally stock and in excellent condition. Must sell. Make an offer.

JAY BLANCHARD  
San Mateo, CA  
(415)574-8844

1975 Commando 850 Interstate. Primo condition! Only 6000 miles. \$1800 or best offer.

DAVID NEAL  
544 Pacific Avenue  
San Francisco, CA  
(415)788-7283 (days)

### ••Wanted••

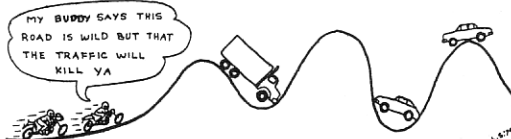
Wrecked Commandos in any condition. Particularly interested in engines, transmissions, primary parts, etc. to keep racing bike on the track. Will pay cash or trade for other goodies.

DAVID NEAL  
(415)788-7283 (days)

Left side cover (battery side) for 1971 to 1973 Commando Roadster. Must be fibreglas, pref. black.

RICH BRAND  
(415)325-7521

The goodie below is another of Linda Snow-Kogut's works of art, borrowed from the recently published USNOA membership listing. Thanks Linda, and hows about sending us one sometime? We love 'em!



Cliff McGillivray - President

UNITED STATES Norton  
OWNERS ASSOCIATION

525 Blackstone \* La Grange, Illinois 60525

312/579-0710

In an effort to promote more interaction between the NOC and the USNOA, at least as far as Northern California is concerned, I shall include a USNOA column in each issue of the NORTON NOTICE until the end of my term as Editor, and shall submit a column to next year's Editor, Dick Swanson, as often as warranted. I'd really appreciate input from anyone who's got something concerning the USNOA on his (or her) mind, regardless of whether or not that individual is a member of the USNOA. As many members are already aware, it is my hope that one of these days the two organizations will merge, at least in this country. After all, their purposes for being are identical, as far as I can tell, and it therefore seems only logical that they should become one. No doubt all this will come to pass in time.

For now, let me give you some important information about the USNOA here in the Northern California area. As mentioned in the September issue, there is going to be an organizational meeting and ride at the end of October to get the fledgling USNOA chapter in this area off the ground. On Sunday morning, October 28th, any Norton enthusiast interested in the USNOA should try to come to SkyLonda Corners (intersection of Hwy.84 and Hwy.35 near Woodside), between 9 and 10AM. That includes all NOC and USNOA members, as well as other Norton owners and Norton fans who think they might like to be a part of this chapter. As was pointed out last month in response to Gene Austin's query, no current USNOA member is automatically a member of the new chapter, but it is hoped that such individuals will want to be associated with the group. At this point my only intent is to get us all together so we can discuss the future of the Northern California Chapter. These are a few questions that come to mind:

Should the Chapter meet regularly?  
Should it elect officers?  
Should it have a newsletter?  
Should there be chapter dues?  
What should be its relationship with the already well-established Northern California Branch of the NOC?  
What role should the chapter play in the organization of the 1980 Rally?

No doubt there are many more questions to ask and try to answer, and I hope you will try to make it to the meeting on the 28th so you can air your opinions and find out what others are thinking. Please come even if you don't have a Norton running; it's your input we want, and it's important.

DATE: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28TH  
TIME: NO LATER THAN 10:00AM  
PLACE: SKYLONDA CORNERS (ALICE'S)  
INTERSECTION OF WOODSIDE ROAD  
(HWY.84) AND SKYLINE (HWY.35)  
PURPOSE: ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING AND  
RIDE FOR NOR. CAL. CHAPTER

Looking forward to a big turnout. Steve

## Technical Tips: Carl Mazel's Helpful Hints

Here are a few more helpful hints from Carl Mazel, who seemed in his latest letter to be somewhat put out by my "Mother Mazel" byline in last month's issue. Oh well, I surely do not want to arouse the displeasure of a most dependable contributor, and so I'll resist from now on. It'll just be "Carl Mazel's Helpful Hints" from now on. Here then are Carl's pearls of wisdom for this month. *Steve*

Pearls of wisdom??? I would prefer to call it self-preservation, this being in the form of preventive maintenance. First, having a good, comprehensive tool kit, and the ability to use it in a time of need. Being familiar with what wrenches go where so that in the dimness of a match flame you can readily fix anything. (Anything Carl?) The ability to patch a tube without taking the wheel out if necessary. Not easy, but sometimes it has to be done. This is not to make light of a situation, but rather to be aware of it, or to recognize it before it becomes a catastrophe and the rider a statistic. Human nature being what it is, we all tend to become lackadaisical and ignore warning signs. Besides, I have a Ph.D. in Human Nature, from the School of Hard Knocks. (Perhaps we should call him Dr. Mazel?)

In the old days the reliability factor of the machinery was directly proportional to the ingenuity of the rider. Most any problem could be solved, and usually was, over a sarsaparilla or two or sixteen. A rider on the side of the road was usually asked if any help could be given. Besides, you met a lot of neat people that way. In "Mother Mazel's Helpful Hints" last month I belabored the point of many things including electrics, and since that was written the following has taken place:

A young friend of mine (I know his father) has a Jap fizz machine. He complained of the alternator not charging enough to keep the battery up. In fact, before he checked anything, he bought a new battery, since his was new from the beginning of the new machine, 44,000 miles worth. (That's new?) Since he had a factory maintenance manual with a wiring diagram, I thought it would be duck soup. Wrong again. Everything in the wiring checked out perfect. Then he checked the wiring in the headlight and found an unsoldered wire, after he had purchased a rectifier assembly. A lesson to be learned: he had not checked all the wires as I had asked. Result: \$26.00 plus tax of unnecessary expense. Now I don't know about your bucks, but to me that hurt because a little extra time taken could've saved the day. I was not there at the scene of the inquest, so I'm not responsible, but I do feel bad because he didn't check it all as he had said.

What about spark plugs? LODGE plugs are tested, or used to be, at about 360 lbs. pressure. This was a guarantee that they would run in a good racing engine, and for a long time it was referred to as the professional man's spark plug because of the reliability factor. In fact they were used almost exclusively!

A lot of trouble can be avoided if some common sense is used. While this can come in many different forms, it goes like this:

### PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE

Tire checks,  
Routine checks all around the machine for any loose bolts, nuts, cotter pins, etc.,  
Cables with too much play,  
Loose wheels and bearings,  
Alignment of the wheels so they both go down the road in a single line,  
and many more things that are peculiar to the particular machine in the spotlight.

The correct amount of oil in the forks... if in doubt about whether or not it's the correct amount, empty them and refill. Heavy oil increases the damping action; lighter oil allows a softer rebound. However, remember that the oil does get warm and the thus changes the characteristics of the fork action. This means that a good approved shock fluid should be used. These have some sort of stabilizer in the oil so that it will not be changed by temperature.

Another thing I haven't yet brought up is vibration. Just because you don't feel it in the handlebars doesn't mean it isn't there. (But I thought all real motorcycles were supposed to vibrate, no?) Watch a float bowl while you run the throttle up and down and see if there is any fuel leakage or if it runs out the breather hole. How does the model run when you pour the coal to it? Does it hesitate and stumble at high revs or does it come on like a bomb? If it stumbles and coughs the chances are the spark plugs or ignition are edgy. A good high speed run can clean them off so they'll continue to work well, although sometimes this has just the opposite effect and they die altogether. If the plugs are new, then the ignition points and condenser are suspect. In the case of the magneto, when it is known to be ok, a recharge of the magnets usually brings on a rapid cure. This used to be a speed secret. In 1948 a friend of mine was running a J.A.P. single on dyno, and he found out just by chance that charging the magnets in the magneto gave up to 1000 more rpm. Even if he didn't use it all, it meant that the ignition was less likely to go sour during competition (sounds pretty trick to me). Magnetic materials have a peak, a plateau and a valley, at which time they will die or not give sufficient spark to fire an engine under load. The peak is right after charging and lasts only a short while. The plateau last for years, or so it seems. When it gets to the valley, it will run but not sustain high rpm.

Now, if you have any real live electronic aces up there, they might be interested in a new type of battery charger. If they are really aces, and would like to know of a system that will bring a lead acid battery back from the dead, they can write to me and I will send them the information so they can build a charger, and with some luck can do away with battery failure. That's the truth because I've tried it and it really works!

Please send all technical questions for publication in the NORTON NOTICE to:

CARL MAZEL  
10606 JORDON AVE.  
CHATSWORTH, CA 91311

Thanks for all you're doing for us Carl.

*Steve*

## The THIRD ANNUAL NORTON RALLY: Part 2: 'Fun and Games'

In last month's issue you read about the ride from San Francisco to Woodland Park, Colorado, the site of this year's NORTON RALLY. Not being so eager to bore everyone who has no interest in this sort of thing, and in the hope of keeping the rest of you hanging on the edge for a few weeks, I thought I'd save the actual rally report until this issue. So here goes.

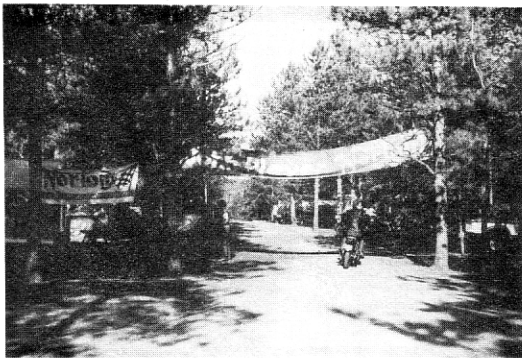
Riding into the Diamond campground that Friday afternoon, we were impressed by the number of Nortons and Norton-type people all over the place. It was beautiful! A real site for sore eyes, as they say. The biggest crowd was right around the registration desk, and so while my riding companions went to stake out a likely spot for our tents, I decided to check out the action. I soon discovered that people from all over the U.S. and Canada were there, many on Nortons (mostly Commando models), and some in the luxury of motorhomes and campers with their Nortons on trailers. What a way to go, I thought. Everyone there had gathered around this table and was registering for the weekend's festivities, and getting their name tags, motorcycle stickers, rally packets, and all sorts of interesting paraphernalia they had there. I found several things of interest, got all the registration procedures out of the way, made a contribution for the proposed (do you believe it?) "weenie roast", scheduled for a little later that evening, and did quite a lot of BSing with lots of Norton Nuts. It was really a gas to be there in the midst of all those Nortons and Nort owners, with the result that I completely forgot about the tent I might want later on. More to come on that!

As darkness began to envelope all of us, someone started the weenie roast, or at least a fire for it, and we all gathered around it with an ample supply of beer and stories to share with one another. Both flowed freely as the hours passed, and pretty soon it was very dark. The hot dogs and hamburgers were on the grills, a good hundred or so people were all gathered around sharing common experiences, and all in all we had a great evening. It's too bad that more Northern California members didn't make it, but there's next year... Suffice it to say that you guys missed a hell of a good time, and next year's will outdo it!

While all this weenie roast business was going on, the Rocky Mountains thunderstorm clouds were gathering overhead, and my old tent was still waiting to be pitched. When I finally got around to it, there was so little light I didn't really know what I was doing, but somehow managed anyway. And just in time too, for about 15 minutes later the light show began, and believe me, those of you who've never witnessed a thunder and lightning show over the eastern slopes of the Rockies just know what it's like. When the rain started coming down I honestly did wonder whether there'd be anything left of the Diamond campground the next morning. I just lay there in the tent, thinking about what I'd forgotten to pack up in the saddle bags, and wondering whether the scheduled Pikes Peak ride would be cancelled. The idea of climbing to 14,000 feet on a road of pure mud didn't really appeal to me. After the thunder died down, and the lightshow ended, the rain continued for a little while, soon putting me sound asleep. Ah yes, sleep!

Being in the sleep research field, I'm well aware of the fact that most of us remember very little of what goes on in our dreams. I know I am no exception. But that night, sleeping there in the midst of all those Nortons and all those CNNs, I'm quite sure all of my dreams were about the motorcycles and those people who rode them. It may sound kind of silly (how many times has every shrink had to listen to that old opening line?), but I really did feel pretty excited about the trip and the rally when I'd fallen asleep, and no doubt that excitement carried over into my REM sleep activity. I think I envisioned a line of over a hundred Nortons trying to get to the summit of Pikes Peak on a road of mud three inches thick. I saw us all there, with a feeling of accomplishment warming every cold body in the cold morning air. As they say, what a dream!

I got up with the sun on Saturday morning, to find that we had indeed gotten pretty wet in the rain, but that none of us had washed away. The sun would soon be hot, the air was very dry at 7,000 feet, and pretty soon everything would dry out. We headed off to Woodland Park and found a great little breakfast place. The main topic of conversation was the Pikes Peak ride, and how we would ever make it in the mud. A few locals assured us the road would be dry in an hour.



THE ENTRANCE TO THE NORTON AREA AT DIAMOND CAMPGROUND



OUR CAMPSITE WITH JOHN PADILLA CHECKING HIS ROADSTER

## 'The Incredible Pikes Peak Ride and those Crazy Field Events!'

After breakfast I hurried back to the Diamond campground only to find that the Nortons had all assembled in our absence, and were pulling out for the ride to Pikes Peak. I quickly got off the road, took a few pictures of the mass of Nortons heading down the road (one doesn't see 75 or so Nortons riding together every day you know!), and then joined the tail end of the motorcade. As we cruised through Woodland Park the looks we got from pedestrians and motorists were really incredulous. All those assembled bikes and the noise we made rolling through the town must have really blown some people away. What I enjoyed the most was the beautiful sound one hears when riding at the end of a long column of big bore twins, and I continued to enjoy it all the way to the toll gate at the foot of the mountain. There we all had to stop and one by one pay a \$3 toll to go on the one road up to the summit. It took about half an hour to get everyone through, but as we waited, we were able to soak up the sight and sound of all those Nortons. It was beautiful! Once through the gate, everyone took off on his

own, and so the ride up was, for the most part, a solo experience. At least it was for me. Several times I stopped to take a photo and each time I could hear the sounds of other Nortons on the switchbacks and short straights above me. I can think of no way to describe the sounds I heard. You had to be there I guess. If only I had thought to take a tape recorder along...Oh well. After riding on that dirt road for 20 miles or so, trying not to eat too much dust (not only was it not muddy as we'd feared, but there was a lot of dust all over the place), I soon got up to timber line and saw that there was still a long way to go. As the

air began to get a little thin at that elevation I noticed that the old "Black Dream" was getting unhappy. But we pressed on anyway, and at 14,100 feet saw the summit ahead. By the time I got to the parking area it was full of Nortons, and all the others were walking around or getting coffee to help warm their cold bods. It was brisk! The thing that most impressed me was the fact that I hadn't seen one single bike stopped on the side for any reason on my way up. In other words, 75 odd Nortons all climbed from 7,000 feet to over 14,000 feet without a single breakdown! Superb!

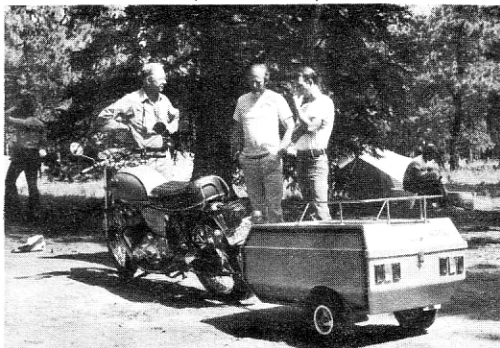
After an hour or so at the summit, where we had a great view of the city of Colorado Spgs. below, everyone started to head down again. I wanted to get some good photographs of Nortons coming around one of the hairpin turns, and so went ahead to find a good spot. I parked where I could not only photograph the bikes coming around the turn, but could also see them all spread out for miles below me. At one point I estimated that I could see over thirty on the various switchbacks down the side of the mountain. That is some sight, let me tell you. We all assembled near the bottom of the dirt part and then rode together past Pete Kogut, Editor of the **NORTON NEWS**, so that he'd get some good photographs. Once again, every bike made it to the destination without problems. Who was it anyway who said the trouble with English bikes is that they're always breaking down? Could've fooled me! Anyway, we all got back to town in one piece, and immediately started talking all about the ride. Everyone who'd gone was high as could be; the euphoria was really amazing. Although all the bikes had gotten plenty of

dust on them along the way, nobody was the least bit interested, and we all sat around wondering how long the high would last. For those of you who were there, you know what I mean. The rest of you will probably never know. Soon we learned that the "field events", to be held in a field next to the local Jap bike shop, would be starting soon. So we all took off again, rode through town and soon found the place. For the next three or four hours we did totally outrageous and yet appropriate things on those bikes. Many there were too drunk to even be riding, or so it seemed, and yet we were riding around in that field trying to win the "slow race" or the "three-legged race" like we really knew what was going on there. It was totally amazing! Can you see a line of thirty guys each with one leg tied to his partner's, all running to a line of

15 Nortons, firing them up with legs still tied together, and then racing across the grass to a finish line 100 yards away? It was wild, to put it mildly. The last event of the afternoon was the can toss, requiring the rider to ride as slowly as possible along a line while his buddy on the back seat tried to toss cans into the garbage cans some 20 feet away. That's hard to do even when you're sober! It gave me a great idea for next year's field events, which you will just to have to come to if you want to be a witness to something really crazy.



THE BIKES THAT WON THE AWARDS FOR BEST CAFÉ, TOURING, STOCK, AND OLDEST. CAROLLYN SCOTT (ABOVE) AND THE ONE AND ONLY BRIAN SLARK (BELOW CENTER) CHECKING THEM OUT!



## History of Norton "Golden Thirties"

### Part 2

This episode of The History of Norton column is the second part of the chapter entitled "The Golden Thirties", the fourth chapter of Dennis Howard's excellent book NORTON, published in 1972 by Ballantine Books. As always, I thank Mr. Howard and Ballantine for the use of this material. I hope you enjoy reading it. Steve

The frames on the racing Nortons were very similar to those used in 1929, but the engines differed considerably; gone was the traditional 'blister', housing the bottom bevel gear on the off-side crankcase half, and in its place was the now familiar rectangular box. The crankcases were heavily ribbed on their exterior faces, and the mainshafts were of larger diameter, as also were the valves, their return springs being doubled in both cases. The rockers were fitted with needle roller bearings.

While previously the engine possessed a tall and spindly appearance it now took on a more cobby look, no doubt contributed to by the addition of heavier finning on both barrel and cylinder head. Both Senior (500cc) and Junior (350cc) models had the relatively new cradle frames, although the larger machine was provided with extra torque-stays to prevent whipping from the greater power that would be developed. Eight-inch diameter brakes were fitted to both wheels.

Already it was possible to purchase a standard road-going Norton with a four-speed gearbox, but the TT models retained the former pattern of three close ratios operated by the foot-change mechanism as in 1929. To complete the Norton inventory extra large petrol tanks were fitted, and a gear-type oil pump. In order to ensure that an adequate supply of petrol-and-benzole reached the carburettor, double float chambers were added.

It had been the custom to give the TT machines an airing by entering them for an Irish classic early in the season, the North West 200, held on the Port Stewart-Port Rush circuit. During the practice period the works Nortons had been screamed for mile after mile in first gear, as part of a special test, without blowing up. Some test. But for all that the TT results were again far from pleasing with the four-valve Ridges making it nearly a hat trick in both Senior and Junior races. To compensate for the beating in the Isle of Man, Stanley Woods, still the most successful member of the Norton team, won several Grands Prix abroad. However the race enthusiast had not long to wait before he would see the Bracebridge Street 'ironware' dominate the Island.

How many really keen motorcycling types, lounging about the dispersal hut during the past war, eagerly awaited their turn to devour the pages of Motor Cycling and to read those famous articles by Graham Walker entitled 'Seen from the Saddle'? In one particular series Walker described in his usual brilliant journalistic style how the Rudge marquee lap by lap smashed the opposition in those 1930 TT events. In fact Nortons had really had their noses well and truly rubbed in the dust in the Junior race when the 350cc Rudge, straight from the drawing-board, punched home a one-two-three victory with its pushrod-operated, overhead-valve (four) design, and four-speed gearboxes to boot. The latter point no doubt provided Joe Craig with food for thought where his future Nortons were to be considered.

On the home front many modifications and additions were being made to the standard Nortons with detachable cylinder heads now available in the side-valve range. The new square oil tank and the petrol tank could be chromium-plated for an extra twenty-five shillings on all cradle-frame and two-port models. The Model 20 made its appearance as an inexpensive, but of traditional high quality, 490cc two (exhaust) port machine, and with a very much required item, a low lift spring-up stand. Handlebar instrument panels were also 'in' during 1930 and Nortons had produced a first-class design situated in the centre but just ahead of the handlebars, slightly tilted toward the rider for easy viewing.

Not listed in the range of Norton machines for 1930 was the Speedway model, although several were in fact produced. Most of the current manufacturers had jumped on the bandwagon when the newly introduced sport came to Great Britain during 1928, but in all fairness only the Douglas, Rudge and to a certain degree Scott, in the correct hands, were game contenders for victory laurels. Norton could provide a suitable engine, but in the frame department much was left to be desired. It must be appreciated that dirt track racing, as it was more often called, demanded a very specialised type of machine, one that was totally unsuited for any form of road use (Douglas was an exception), a device that was required to be in broadside for nine tenths of a race. The Norton took exception to this unfamiliar setting and was regarded as somewhat of a 'camel' to hold, and production ceased after a very short while, the factory being well able to employ their valuable time in producing models in their already well established range. Credit must go however to a then eight-year-old New Zealander, Alf Mattson, who won the Auckland Dirt Track Championships and numerous other events on a special machine. Mattson's frame was of his own construction, housing a specially tuned Norton ES2 engine. However, New Zealand and Australian dirt tracks were much larger than our own, with definite straights of sometimes about half a mile and did not place such a premium on the frame parts. Bill Lacey, speedman extraordinary, won the Wakefield Cup race at Brooklands on a specially bored-out Norton (586cc) at 108.27mph and in so doing became a Class D 750cc Champion for 1930. In the Swedish TT Gosta Anderson and Bertil Olsson were first and second on their overhead camshaft Nortons while Stanley Wood on his 500 job won the important French Grand Prix at an average speed of 75.7mph. Harold Daniell, later to become one of the 'immortals' of Norton racing successes, had tasted the delights of high speed swervery in his first Manx Grand Prix (Amateur TT) on a 'same as you can buy' CS1 model.

NEXT MONTH: A new chapter in this saga, "IN ASCENDANT", begins with a most exciting account of Stanley Wood's and Tim Hunt's ride in the 1931 German Grand Prix, as written for Motor Cycling by the highly regarded writer, Dennis May. Then we'll get into the tech. info. on the '31 Nortons.



## Letters to the Editor

I apologize for the absence of this marvellous column in last month's issue; I know many of you loyal NORTON NOTICE fans were disappointed (HA!). Anyway, here they are again, those wild and wonderful LETTERS TO THE EDITOR! *Steve*

Dear Editor Steve: I enjoyed very much the latest (Sept. '79) issue of NORTON NOTICE. The descriptions of the August ride and especially of the USNOA Rally in Colorado were exciting, to say the least...an unforgettable adventure. I look forward to the possibility of having next year's Rally in Northern California...my home turf. Speaking of the north state...there are at least two active members of the Northern California Branch way up here near Oregon: Rich Frank of Chico, and myself. Rich and I got together a few days ago for a high velocity chase over our mountainous speedways. His modified 1975 850 often left my 1971 Hi-Rider in the dust. Rocketing along on hairpin curves, he and I passed uncounted travel trailers...leaning far into the curves...crazed and grinning as the adrenalin shot through our veins. Pine trees whizzed by and bottomless canyons beckoned to the unwary biker; but we avoided danger on our trusty Dunlop tires. We toured through amazing hamlets such as Douglas City and Hayfork, in Trinity County...150 miles of good-surface, high-speed curves. We fantasized about enticing some of the Bay Area members up here some day...could fantasy become reality? From Northern California, HELLO!

Brian Reynolds  
Project City, CA

Dear Brian: Sounds like quite a ride! Perhaps we will get up that way one of these days. In the meantime, please keep those compliments coming in; they're greatly appreciated at this end I assure you. Hope to see you at the 1980 USNOA Rally, which will be up your way. Keep on NORT'N!

*Steve*

Dear Mr. Coburn: How did you like the Woodland Park rally? I really enjoyed it. It was my first rally and my first trip over 100 miles (that's the number in his letter - Steve). I was very impressed with you at the business meeting and am overjoyed that you are heading up the rally next year. You and Brian Slark will make a most capable team. I love Nortons and these club activities seem to really enhance those feelings. By the way, my love affair right now is with a '72 Combat (#220420), and she's a real beauty. I hope that I can become part of the chapter and see you at the rally next year.

Norman Turner  
San Antonio, TEXAS

Dear Norm: I appreciate your kind words, and I especially admire your enthusiasm. Too bad more of our members out this way don't feel as you do. Be that as it may, I am quite sure that the Rally in the Redwoods (that's what next year's USNOA Rally will be called) will attract many more Nortons than this year's, and am totally confident it'll be a great success. I will be looking forward to seeing you there, hopefully with a full contingent of Texas Norton Nuts.

*Steve*

Steve: Regarding your publication, NORTON NOTICE: it is FIRST CLASS - strictly FIRST CLASS. Congratulations on a fine job. If I can be of any help here in the midwest, please let me know.

Ron Sangster  
Sterling Heights, MICHIGAN

Steve: Staring at the noble mount I wonder what needs attention before next August rolls around. The carbs aren't worth much but that's been the case for ten years now. Nothing else seems to fit the N15 frame. I found some 'born again' Lakes (?) while in S.F. They should be here soon and I'll try them out this winter, but will probably cuss the Amals all the way down and back. I've been reading about electronic ignitions and they seem worth trying. Do you have any experience with these little wonders? But then the old points have never let me down, and \$100+ is an expensive curiosity. No, I guess the old bike could leave in the morning and be as ready as it could ever be, though a new paint job and seat cover would be nice. Poor Norton! It asks for so little that it is often neglected in the face of a budding collection of basket-cases. However, when it's time to "ride" it's the Norton that stretches its legs, not the Vincent or AJS or Ducati, etc. Except for the '54 Chevy pickup it's the only vehicle I have that I would take down the AlCan with blissful confidence in a lovely trip...was that early August or late August? I can't say for sure that I'll be at the largest gathering of Nortons in the history of the U.S., but believe me Steve, only something really disastrous or debilitating will keep Snort and me away. And we should have plenty of time for that beer I owe you. Well Steve, it's getting late and tomorrow holds a new outhouse roof, some shelves, laundry, dentist and a firewood run. Catch ya later,

Mark Stockslager  
Anchorage, ALASKA

Dear Mark: I do hope you've got that outhouse roof on by now! I hear it gets a little brisk up your way in the winter time. As for your Norton, I'll see what I can find down here in the way of carbs for the N15. Please let me know how those ones you got work out. I don't know too much about electronic ignitions. I have a Boyer on my Interstate, and it's given no problems so far. You might get in touch with Gene Austin if you're really interested; he has had a lot more experience with the things than I have and would be glad to give you any info you want, I'm sure. One thing I do know is that you can save a lot of money if you order them from England rather than buying them here. I doubt that you're in any great hurry, so that might be the way to go. The Norton Rally will be in early August next year, if all goes as planned, and I shall definitely be looking for you there. You might be able to find some CNNs (certified Norton nuts) in British Columbia or Washington who'd like to come down with you on the final leg of the trip, and I'll definitely let you know of any I hear from. Have a good winter, and Keep on NORT'N! *Steve*

### Odds and Ends

Many thanks to those members who have been so thoughtful in recent months and sent me their NORTON NOTICE envelopes. They will be re-used, and in the long run the savings to the Club will be significant. I encourage all members to save those things, and bring them to one of the club meetings. It'll be appreciated.

NORTON OWNERS CLUB stickers are available upon request from the Secretary. Pins, patches and large stickers are purchased from the NOC in England and resold to Branch members. We are currently out of them, but will reorder soon.

## "RON WOOD: A Nice Guy Who Builds Nasty Nortons"

This month's issue of MOTORCYCLIST has a very interesting article about Ron Wood and those incredible Norton flat-trackers he's become famous for during the past few years. With a title like "RON WOOD: A Nice Guy Who Builds Nasty Nortons" in the table of contents, and "RON WOOD: Hunting Harleys With A Red And Silver Gun" on the lead page, this article promises to be a real treat for the serious Norton nut. I'd like to thank Gary Broeder for telling me about it when I saw him up at Sears Point after his CSRG race, and also MOTORCYCLIST for letting me use parts of the article here. I highly recommend that you go out and pick up an issue while it's still on the newstands. It's a winner! Joe Scalzo wrote this gem, and the photography was done by Dale Boller, Editor of MOTORCYCLIST, as well as Pat Brollier, Dan Mahoney and Freud. In the hope that they'll continue to do articles about Nortons in the future, I plan to write to Dale Boller and let him know how interested we are. I hope others will do the same. If you'd like to, the address is: P.O.Box 3296,

Los Angeles, CA 90028

The article's pretty long, but I would like to give you a bit of the flavor of it. Enjoy!

On Oct. 9, 1976, a stimulating Saturday evening in Los Angeles, three small, scarlet and scrappy Nortons came tantalizingly close to embarrassing nine factory and privateer H-Ds and two factory Yamahas in the 20-lap National Championship inside the bare, weathered Ascot race track. An unaccountably timid ride by David Aldana on Norton No.10 resulted in a 13th place finish; a last-moment gearing change that was disastrous sent John Hatley's No.98 reeling backwards to 11th after leading the opening lap; and on delicate little No.44, Alex Jorgenson made a brilliant bid at pinning defeat on winner Jay Springsteen that failed by a mere bike length.....

Another 18 months spent racing all around the country had to elapse before Jorgenson finally got them a victory, again at Ascot, in the springtime National of 1978.....

Wood's insistence that his race equipment be pleasing to the eye and show "attention to detail" (the adjective "beautiful" is a bit flowery, he believes, for something with the firepower of one of his Nortons) is laudable, but Wood's compulsion to field the most light-weight motorcycles in racing has been achieved with difficulty. He has paid the price in breakage and disappointment. With one National victory and three track championships in the last four seasons, Wood's Nortons can fly around Ascot's half-mile, but on mile tracks like San José and Indianapolis, even ten-lap heats have in the past proven too long for their drilled swing arms and other flyweight goodies. One of Wood's ultra-light frames actually snapped in two at San José one year. A monocoque chassis weighing an incredible 139 pounds had to be discarded, with regret, for safety reasons. They seem to be fragile, Wood's Nortons do, but they are the best-handling machines in racing.....

When you should run across an article about our favorite motorcycles, and you think others might enjoy reading it too, please let me know about it. I may not have seen it, as was the case with this one, and I'd really appreciate your tip. And thanks again to Gary Broeder for telling me about this one. If you like it, go get the mag. *Steve*

Pinned on the wall of Ron Wood's office is a lament not shared, I trust, by the 55 employees of the Wood Lighting Fixture Company:

"I've been beaten, kicked, lied to, cussed at, swindled, taken advantage of and laughed at, but, the only reason I hang around this crazy place is to see what will happen next!!!"

By replacing "place" with "racing" one gets an extreme but not unfactual version of what motorcycles mean to Wood. He's experienced more drama than most.....

Following him through the door behind his desk, my feet left carpeting and clicked on spotless linoleum. We were in a well-lit room of perhaps 15 by 20 feet. In the middle of the room was a red Norton with the number 14 of Hank Scott, the gasoline tank missing, and the twin-cylinder 750cc engine laid open from its crankcase up. Along one wall of the room were shelves filled with cylinder barrels, crankshafts, pistons, gears, connecting rods, springs and Norton manuals. On another wall was a solvent wash tub, air hoses and an air compressor. On a third wall was a work bench with more engine pieces, tools, and shop rags. On the last wall were more racing pictures and some color pin-ups. From this tiny factory one man, in effect, battles Harley-Davidson.....

"Every time I have setbacks, some sort of engine failure with one of the Nortons," Wood said, "people seem to wonder whether I have enough spare parts to go on. They are the ones who consider my bikes antiques. In a way they are, because the engine design is better than 20 years old now. But I don't think of Nortons as antiques. I haven't had to go to outside sources for parts like I would if I were racing, say, a Yamaha. I use Norton connecting rods, standard gear train, cam timing and the same gears. The magneto is Lucas. I have Axtell cams and this year, in something of a departure for me, I'm using cast pistons."

The fact is, despite all the problems the English motorcycle industry has been having, I probably have enough Norton spares to keep me going for another ten years. The Norton people take good care of me. I probably have an easier time of it that way than a lot of privateers with Harleys. I know one Harley owner who's had a pair of engine case back-ordered for two years.....

To the disappointment of those who would travel a long way merely to see his machines race, Wood has recently scaled down his operation and goals. He just sold a second of his Nortons and now has just one. He doubts he will ever follow the entire National circuit as he did during 1977 when, expecting to frighten the Harley-Davidsons in the Midwest, he and Jorgenson scored no victories and not a solitary high placing.....

Winning might be easier if he capitulated and bought a Harley like everyone else.

"But not having a Harley may be the reason I like racing as much as I do," says Wood. "I enjoy being the underdog. Maybe it's the ham in me, but I dig it. Those are pretty bad odds when I look out at a mile track and see 15 Harleys and my Norton..... I like having fans come down from the grandstands and tell me, 'Hey, I love the sound of your motorbike.'".....

MOTORCYCLIST, Oct.1979

## A Great Day at the Races

About a dozen members of the Northern California Branch showed up at Sears Point Raceway on the 7th to watch the races sponsored by the Classic Sports Racing Group. Although the CSRG is primarily into classic racing cars, they decided this year to put motorcycle races on their program, and quite a few interesting machines showed up to thrill the crowd of enthusiastic spectators. We couldn't miss that Velo, owned and ridden by member Gary Broeder, who happens to be quite an accomplished racer and tuner in his own right, or the beautiful BSA Gold Star of member Alex McLean. And of course there was Frank Conley on his magnificent Excelsior Manxman. There were even two Nortons, a Manx 350 and a Dunstall Atlas, for the assembled masses from the Club to cheer on! Although most of us, including (that's right) yours truly, spent most of the afternoon in the paddock area socializing, I did watch the main motorcycle race from start to finish, and was very impressed with how well and how fast the old bikes ran around the course. More than the speed though, it was the sweet sound these machines made as they roared down the straight in front of the grandstands that really turned me on. It was beautiful!

While the cars were on the track, most of us from the Club were enjoying the good company we found there, as well as the good supply of beer provided by Jeff Pierce. A special thanks to Jeff from all of us who took advantage of his generosity. Other members present for the frivolities included Dan Bazzoli, Bernie and Cathy Birleffi, Charlie Taylor, George Chodorow, Gus Varetakis, Maya Peterson and Bill Sandford. I got some pictures of the races as well as the fun and games, and will bring the to the October meeting for anyone interested. *Steve*

## Events

DATE	TIME	PLACE	EVENT
10-18	7:30	EDINBURGH	OCTOBER NO.CAL.
THURS.	PM	CASTLE,SF	BRANCH MEETING
10-20	10:00	BAY BRIDGE	OCTOBER BRANCH
SAT.	AM	TOLL PLAZA	RIDE TO SIERRAS
10-28	10:00	ALICE'S	USNOA MEETING AND
SUN.	AM	SKYLONDA	RIDE - BE THERE!
11-15	7:30	BARRINGTONS	NOVEMBER NO.CAL.
THURS.	PM	PALO ALTO	BRANCH MEETING
11-18	10:00	HOJO'S	NOVEMBER BRANCH
SUN.	AM	SAN JOSE	RIDE TO MT. HAM.
12-?	?	EDINBURGH	DECEMBER MEETING
		CASTLE,SF	& CHRISTMAS PARTY

PLEASE let me know if there are events not listed that you think might be of interest to members of the Club. I'd particularly like to know about race meets, motorcycle auctions and rallies, and other such odds and ends that I don't always hear about. I really need your input on this. *Steve*

## Good Idea!

This month's good idea award goes to James Lansdowne, who suggested that the Northern California Branch buy one of the new Norton rotary jobs (WANKEL WONDERS?) as soon as they become available, so that we can have the first one on this side of the Atlantic and show it off at next year's Norton Rally in Northern California. Let's hear it for Jim for that great idea! Now who's got an extra \$8000.00 or so to donate to the cause?

### NORTON OWNERS CLUB, EMERGENCY AID - FRIENDSHIP LIST

I recently received a nice letter from Phil Cox, a member of the NOC in England, and the new Club Emergency Aid Scheme officer. As most of you no doubt already know, the Scheme is intended as a way of letting other members know who to call if the old Nort should (god forbid!) break down out in the wilds somewhere. Phil is getting ready to put together a new list, and has asked me to send him an updated E.A.S. list of our Branch members.

Dear Member,

The Club's 'Emergency Aid List' is there to help YOU. Just fill in the form below and return it to me and I will send you a list of members who are in the happy position of being able to help fellow members who are in need. It is not important that you offer all the facilities mentioned but it is important that you mark clearly (X) what you can offer. PLEASE give membership number.

- Accomodation - Means simply that you can put someone up overnight, on the floor if necessary.
- Transport - That you are able to go to a break down and retrieve the victim, and possibly his machine as well.
- Tools - Tools.
- Spares - If none yourself, someone nearby who can help.
- Garage or Workshop - Merely that you can provide somewhere dry to work on the evil machine. Few Nortons break down (?) but it can happen to you, and in any case many new friends can be made through this list.

RETURN TO: - STEVE COBURN P.O.BOX 236 LA HONDA, CA 94020 THANKS!

I wish to join /re-join the above scheme and can offer the following:-

ACCOMODATION \_\_\_\_\_ TRANSPORT \_\_\_\_\_ GARAGE \_\_\_\_\_ TOOLS \_\_\_\_\_ SPARES \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ MEMBERSHIP No. \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

# ODD BODKINS

(REPRINTED WITH THE PERMISSION OF DAN O'NEILL)

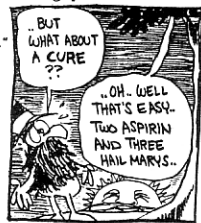
As always, I wish to thank Dan O'Neill and Glide Publications for allowing us to use ODD BODKINS here in the NORTON NOTICE.

In last month's episode, you may recall, Fred and Hugh were saved from Mr. Spanky and his gang at the very last minute by the Lesser Hoo-Hoo. Sporting some fake beards and old top hats thrown down from the Hoo-Hoo's tree, they were not able to be recognized, and Mr. Spanky went on in search of the Martian he's after.

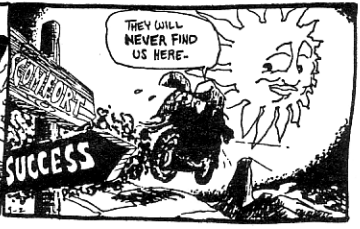
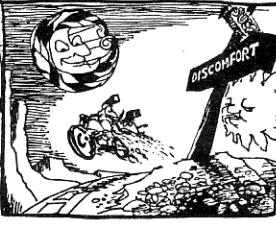
Now Fred has to deal with the "Gift of Tongues" which he received several episodes back from General Injuns. As you see, the Lesser Hoo-Hoo helps out once again, and soon our heroes are riding away on Big Norton. But since they are now Outlaws in the eyes of Amerika, they decide to go to the old west town of Discomfort, which is located somewhere in Montana, for those of you who've never been there. In Discomfort, as you see, they meet up with Five Dollar Bill O'Brady, the King of Outlaws. Which brings us to a turning point of sorts (see Vol.2, Issue 3).



Fred has FIVE tongues... says a Hugh...  
"Find a man with TEN ears..." says the HooHoo... "he'll know what Fred is saying..."



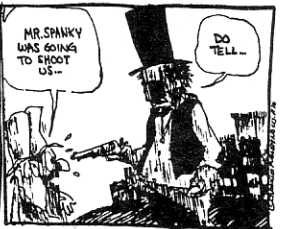
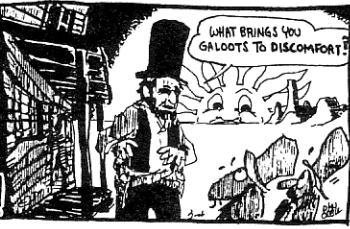
"but now you are **OUTLAWS** in the eyes of **AMERIKA**..." says the HooHoo... "and even I don't know the cure for that!!"



**IT IS TUESDAY AFTER LUNCH** and our heroes approach **DISCOMFORT!!**



**OUR HEROES FACE THE KING OF OUTLAWS FIVE DOLLAR BILL O'BRADY HIMSELF!**



**NEXT MONTH:** As you know, Fred, Hugh and \$5 Bill O'Brady all take off on Big Norton to counter-invade Mars. Their ride to Mars is rather exciting, to say the least, as is their landing when they get there. Since all this was covered in Issues 3 to 6, we won't bother to go into details here. Let it simply be said that their adventures on Mars were very interesting, and go on.

Our heroes find themselves in Hell. They come to the conclusion that it's a nice place to visit, but that they'd rather not live there. They search for \$5 Bill O'Brady, find him on the side of the road, condemned to the worst torment in Hades...the sound of his own voice. Heading down the road, they are chased by a new character, Virgo Rat, and then assaulted by a strange beast indeed, the Jabberwocky.