

Norton Notice

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

NO. 96

APRIL, 1986



Planning a trip this summer? Worried about those hard-to-get spares along the way? No need to fret my friend. Take along our handy "Norton Guide To Happy Motoring" and tour with confidence. Just stick to the West Coast. See pages 9-12



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH



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 \$25.00 per year.

Membership dues are payable to the Branch Secretary/Treasurer.

Renewal dues are payable at the end of the individual's membership year, that month being designated by the last number of the individual's membership number as located on the mailing label of the NORTON NOTICE or the membership card. For example, 745/2 denotes member 745 with dues expiring on the 1st of February.

All changes of address should go to the Branch Secretary/Treasurer, not the NOTICE Editor.

Subscription to the NORTON NOTICE only is available for \$15.00 per year. This does not include membership in the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club, nor does it afford any of the rights or privileges of membership in the NOC.

Membership in the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club entitles a member to monthly issues of the NORTON NOTICE and bi-monthly issues of ROADHOLDER magazine, which is sent directly from England, keeping members informed of Norton owners' activities worldwide. Membership provides voting privileges at all NOC and Branch meetings, and allows one to purchase Norton spares directly from England, at significant savings, through the NOC Spares Program.



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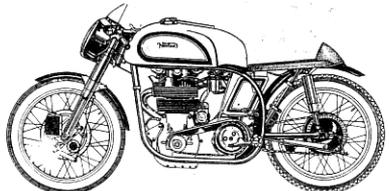
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4751 Elmhurst Dr.
San Jose, CA 95129
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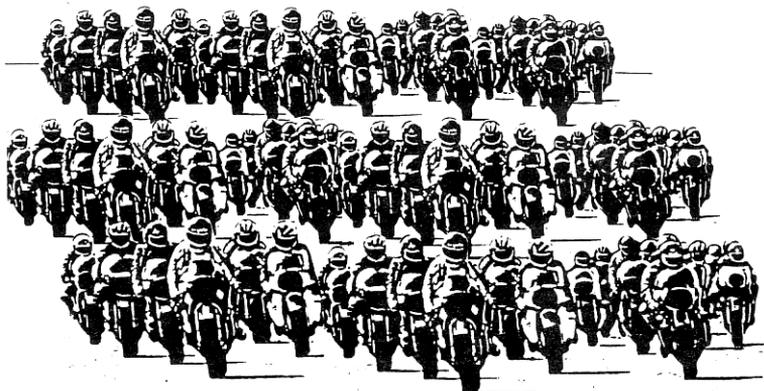
Important!

(Please take note of the following fine print.)

The object of the Northern California Branch of the Norton Owners Club is to promote, encourage and develop all motorcycling activities. The Club's members are owners of Norton motorcycles, and they often submit for publication in the Norton Notice technical tips pertaining to motorcycles of the Norton mark. Technical tips so published have been reviewed for technical content and are believed to be both acceptable and workable, but no guaranty 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

NOTICE: IN THE EVENT OF RAIN ON THE DAY OF A CLUB RIDE, THE RIDE IS AUTOMATICALLY POSTPONED ONE WEEK. ALSO, RIDERS SHOULD HAVE PLENTY OF OIL AND GASOLINE BY THE SCHEDULED DEPARTURE TIME AND ALL PERSONAL PROBLEMS TAKEN OF. IN OTHER WORDS . . . FULL TANKS AND EMPTY BLADDERS!

- | | | |
|------------|------------|---|
| March 30 | Sunday | Easter Morning Ride. See March NN for details |
| March 30 | Sunday | Sears Point AFM races |
| April 10 | Thursday | Branch meeting. Hotel Utah, 500 4th St., S.F., 7:30PM.
<i>Tech. session.</i> |
| April 13 | Sunday | Mt. Hamilton club ride. Meet at Holiday Inn, Livermore, 10:00 AM. See map p. 4. |
| April 20 | Sunday | Sears Point AFM races |
| April 28 | Saturday | West Coast Antique and Classic Motorcycle Meet, Tulare Fairgrounds. |
| May 17, 18 | Sat., Sun. | Morro Bay overnighiter. Details being worked out. |
| June 8 | Sunday | Swap meet at TT Motors, Berkeley. |

DOWN THE ROAD

- June 22 Sunday Huckleberry Flat Picnic Area in San Mateo County Memorial Park for the annual Norton beer bust. Old Timers ride beginning at Alice's.
- Sept. 26-28 Fri/Sat/Sun Rally Under The Stars III. Combined SDNC and SCNOC annual rally at Portrero Lake Recreation Area near San Diego. More details later.

The Norton experience



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

MARCH 13th MEETING NOTES

Thirty or thirty-five of us stalwarts enjoyed a superb meeting at the Class Reunion this month. Vance Brees's tales of the track were a magnificent contribution. First some announcements:

Scott: The Old Timer's Ride is June 22nd at Alices Restaurant with food and other stuff following at Huckleberry Flat. "Get those old singles and twins out of mothballs!"

Dave Crader: Overnighter to Morro Bay, 17th and 18th of May. Also, the late August rally will probably be up north, maybe along the Eel River above Eureka.

Scott: June 8th Swap Meet at TT Motors. Also, anyone interested in having a meeting at Malibu Gran Prix (Redwood City) to run those little cars around? See Scott.

Margie Segal: She's going to the IoM this spring and can stop by the Norton factory for parts. Anyone interested?

Mike Hanson: Cosworth Norton recently placed 2nd in the Battle of the Twins.

Nick Wiltz: There are some bad aftermarket parts showing up. For example, some soft, out of round camshafts. Check with him before rebuilding an engine with parts you're not sure of.

Art Sirota: CAMA rally April 26th in Tulare should be a winner. Treasury report-- \$1,000 in the bank and 240 members with new members more or less balancing those who drop out or who got lost. Probably the latter. Art also provided the evening's tech tip on rebuilding fuel lines for \$2.47 rather than buying new ones for \$20-\$25 each. The secret is using Ryan-Herco fittings; Art has a catalog or two.

Vance Brees provided a spell-binding hour with his tales of attempting to race Nortons, Guzzis and Harleys over the past 10 to 15 years. He sloughed over his remarkable successes (we all knew about those anyway) to focus on the bizarre and absurd events that befell him. These range from hitting a sheep on the road to Baker, Oregon, to meeting a huge hobbie on the wrong way round a roundabout at the Isle of Man, with no lights. Maybe, as he claims, it's because he's always been on low budget racing efforts, or maybe you've got to be a little weird to race bikes.

Anyway, if you missed his talk you missed

something exceptional [Without question-- Ed.]. Ask Vance how long it takes to lay down a bike doing over 200 mph at B'ville; be prepared to listen for awhile. Later this year or next year he plans to go back to Bonneville for a try at the "enclosed" bike record; something about 85% alcohol (in the bike) and very low drag profile. He will certainly have 30-35 Norton owners cheering for him.

Tim Coburn
Recording Sec.



SEARS POINT RACE RESULTS-- 3/2/86

A hard charging Lee Steinmetz locked horns with smooth Paul Gallivan (Tri) in the 750 Twins race and actually lead the race for four laps. At the finish, however, Gallivan took it with Steinmetz second and local NOCCER Mark Wiesendanger third. Lee finished thirteenth in the SUPERSTREET class race. Can Gallivan keep it running? Will Steinmetz learn the secret words? Stay tuned, racefans.

Norton OWNERS CLUB

Northern California Branch

MT HAMILTON RIDE
April 13

MEET AT Holiday Inn in Livermore
Close to Inter 580 and Hwy 84.

The ride will follow Mission Rd to San Antonio Valley Rd. We'll stop for lunch at the bar then continue to Lick Observatory for a look at some class Valves.

It should be beautiful out there with green hills, windy roads and spring flowers.

In case of rain the ride will reschedule to April 20.

Dave S. Wick

San Jose

Bar Lunch & Beer Stop

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

David Blewett	Berkeley, CA
Tom Papa	Woodcliff Lake, NJ
Mark Schroeder	Santa Cruz, CA
Marc Michon	Sonora, CA
Raymond Wiltshire	Sacramento, CA
Shane Harvey	Waukegan, IL

WELCOME BACK

Thomas Roberts	Decatur, GA
Ken Whitney	Berkeley, CA



EDITOR'S NOTES



SURVEY RESULTS

COMMENTARY ON THE HEALTH OF THE CLUB

As one who subscribes to more magazines and newsletters than you can count on your fingers and toes, I must say that the NOC is not only alive and kicking but one of the healthier clubs around. I've come to this conclusion from reading between the lines, observing what gets done, and noting how many members appear to be actively involved in promoting club activities. And while it is true that I have a behind-the-scenes look at one club (NOC) that I don't have with other clubs, I nevertheless believe that I have developed an accurate "feel" for an organization's vitality. Quite frankly I had expected that much good will would be promised but that ultimately, at least in the case of the NN, I would be alone-- left to sink or swim on my own. And this prediction was based not on personal abilities of NOC members, but rather on the general nature of volunteer organizations. Best intentions are often not realized not because of the lack of sincerity but rather because of lack of time.

Well, you need to know that, at least in my opinion, NOC members in general and the officers in particular are putting their time in. People are following through on commitments and getting things done. And it is a positive sign that no one person is doing it all. Just off the top of my head I can name seven people who, in addition to our seven club officers, have helped the club directly in one way or another: Gene Austin, Alan Goldwater, Phil Radford, Bob Marshall, Dick Rutter, John Covell, and Mike Rettie. Combine that with a survey response from over fifty members, good attendance at branch meetings, continuing strong support from Brit shops, and a hearty rider corps which continues to flash the Norton logo through towns even though it's cold and wet out there, and I believe it's fair to say that the future looks good. The rides have been crisp but from my vantage point at the rear of the pack nobody is in over his head and our safety record is good.

What, then, of the immediate future? The NOTICE will continue to need member input both for articles of technical interest and for comments which keep the officers in touch with members' interests. My energies, first and foremost, have been to make the NOTICE fun to read. While I recognize that the single most requested item on the survey was tech tips for Nortons, you must realize that these sought after gems don't come out of thin air. Those of you who don't have a copy of Commando Service Notes should write to Tom Borman (See "Paraphernalia"). Supplement this with Duntall's Norton Tuning (at your local shop or Hosking Cycle Works, RFD #1, Box 136, Accord, NY 12404 --32 pgs, 72 ill, \$8.50 + \$2.95 postage).

In the meantime I look forward to the spring rides and then on into SUMMER!!

low

SOME REMINDERS

1. All ads (typed, please?) should be directed to the Editor.



Well, we've had a great response to the survey. 22% of you (52 members) took the time to reply and some clear trends are evident. I'll report the ones of general interest and keep the details of managing the NN for a discussion with the executive members of the club. I've done up some bar graphs for those of you who like pictures (See p. 15).

In the "We need more" section many members would like more swaps (16 votes) and picnics/barbecues (15 votes). Hell raisin' (12 votes) was favored heavily in the early returns but selected less often as the weeks passed and late returns continued to dribble in. It sounds like the hell raisers are rarin' to go; maybe some could volunteer to organize swaps and/or picnics and kill two birds with one stone.

We had a strong response for North Bay rides (11), East Bay rides (11), Harvey's bar (8), and warmer weather (15). Nick and Dave have been informed of the first three, and Scot of the last one. Quite a few lamented the fact that they didn't live near the Bay Area and one asked for a ride "nearer Chicago."

The member who declared himself "first" in the "I consider myself" category wins the title as his was the only "first" recorded. We had one "Norton to the core" and one "edible". "Edible" also checked "desirable" and thus wins the "Stud Or Babe of the Month" award.

In matters mechanical (or electrical) the chief problem areas for Nortons appear to be the clutch (16), carbs (15), engine (14), electrical system (13), and gearbox (11). That doesn't leave much. Technical writers take note; write about anything-- you can't miss. Only two people mentioned brakes and I think I was one. I suppose it's comforting to know that when your steed fails at speed at least you can confidently bring it to a stop. I'm going to chuck that boat anchor I carry. One member's greatest concern was "getting home".

The number of Nortons owned is staggering (see bar graph). If you extrapolate the data to the entire membership we may collectively own about 380 Nortons. There were a total of 29 other British bikes named and a healthy dose of BMWs. Surprisingly, quite a few own Japanese machinery, though many admitted this apologetically.

We had 18 votes for buying another Norton (various models mentioned), 9 for Ducatis, 6 for BMW, 5 for Vincent, and 4 for the Rotary. Various other brands were mentioned but clearly the "Norton mystique" is beyond all others.

Many thanks to all of you. This survey has helped clarify areas of concern I have had and will, I hope, give us more of what we want from the club. Thanks too for the many encouraging comments-- this job does take time and I like to think that members are reading and enjoying the NOTICE.

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2. All renewals must be accompanied by a renewal form.
3. All badges, pins, etc. should be ordered from Tom Borman.
4. Branch meetings start at 7:30PM.

Thanks,
Art



\$ WANT ADS £



ALL ADS WILL RUN FOR TWO MONTHS UNLESS YOU RESUBMIT THEM IN WRITING TO THE EDITOR.

FOR SALE:

Primary belt drive conversion from Les Emery. New. \$180.00.

Rodger Sandula
(408) 978-0535

FOR SALE

1970 Dunstall Norton, not running but complete. Needs considerable work. \$500.
1976 Triumph Bonneville, runs well. \$1100.
1961 Chevrolet pickup, 6 cyl. 3 spd. Hauls both of the above. \$1,000.

Pete Wawro
3929 Fairway Ave.
Oakland, CA 94605
415-562-4518

FOR SALE

1. Used 932 Amal carbs, \$20. pair.
2. K&N air filter, used, \$3.
3. Early style headsteady, \$2.
4. Chainguard, used, no dents, \$12.
5. MkII oil tank, perfect, \$15.
6. Luggage rack, \$5.
7. Steel Roadster gas tank, no dents, \$45.
8. Steel Roadster side panels, \$15. pair.
9. Interstate pipes, need rechroming, FREE.
10. Roadster seat, like new, no rips, \$25.
11. Fastback gas tank, new, BRG only, \$95.
12. Fastback tail section, new, \$45.
13. Haynes latest Commando manual, new, \$10.
14. Pre-MKIII r/h rider's footrest support, \$15.
15. Pre-MKIII l/h brake lever and footrest support, \$25.
16. Atlas camshaft, used, \$7.

Art Sirota
Menlo Park
415-327-3167

WANTED

Front disc setup complete (Hub, disc, caliper, slider, brake lever, and reservoir). Also, front fork tubes for '72 Commando.

Rick Spero
2432 Bridwell Way
Hayward
(415)887-5848

FOR SALE

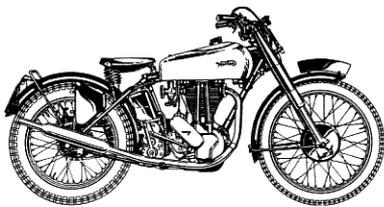
1. 1974 Norton Commando 850, very stock appearance but with many extras including 5 spd. trans (Fills in those annoying gaps in the 4 spd.), elec. ign., fork brace and Fox shocks (American made), excellent cond., great price \$1800/B.O.
2. Dunstall 1/2 fairing with dash for instruments and all bracketry, exint. cond., \$200/ B.O.
3. Leather bombardier type jacket, very warm for those cold early spring rides, sz 36, \$80.00/B.O.

Doug McCulloch
6103 Colby St.
Oakland, CA 94618

FOR SALE

1975 Norton MKIII Commando, 15,800 original miles, Boyer, perfect running cond., always garaged. \$1850 or thereabouts.

Ivan Crow
1508 L St.
Davis, CA 95616
(916)753-0120



Model 500T in 1954 version





LETTERS

Dear Lou,

In the latest newsletter you ask for accounts for the experience of readers who have purchased motorcycles in the U.K., for importation to the U.S. Thus you may be interested in the following story.

As a poorly paid engineer apprentice in the England of the late fifties, I always coveted a Velocette "Valiant". In case you're not familiar with the machine, it is succinctly described as a 200cc air-cooled flat twin, in fact a model LE adaptation in a conventional motorcycle frame. It wasn't very popular at the time and has since been dismissed as "not being renowned for going very fast, or very far, for very long-- but the engineering is fascinating." Despite this reputation, I decided that nearly thirty years after seeing the motorcycle for the first time, I'd acquire an example.

My first step was to place an advertisement in the CLASSIC BIKE want ads, describing the model, year, and condition (running, all sheet metal in place). I was more fortunate than most, in that I was able to insert the telephone number of my sister, who lives in the U.K. Obviously, though, there are other ways of handling replies.

I timed the placement of the ad so that it would appear in CLASSIC BIKE a few weeks before I arrived in the U.K., and, in fact, had received six responses, five from private owners and one from a dealer, by the time I arrived.

I didn't bother with the response from the dealer and two or three of the private owner responses weren't practical to follow up as they were too far from my London base. However, an analysis of the responses did suggest two conclusions. The first is that it is much easier to locate limited production, obscure model bikes in the U.K. than here (I believe that Valiant production was only 1,500 examples.). The second is that the price guide published every few months in CLASSIC MOTORCYCLING is functioning as a sort of Kelly "Blue Book". I can't otherwise account for the asking price from the private owners being within 10% of the CLASSIC MOTORCYCLE price guide.

To continue, I finally bought from a private owner a "Valiant" all complete, in fairly good shape with current Ministry of Transport road test certificate. This last item could be important if someone bought a bike and intended to ride it whilst on vacation and prior to shipping to the U.S. Without it I understand that insurance is involved.

For various reasons I didn't choose to use any of the export services advertized in the U.K. motorcycle magazines but instead, contacted a company which routinely packed and shipped household property. For approximately \$300 they claimed that if the bike were delivered to their depot they would separately compartment it within a standard shipping container and deliver the bike (fee included insurance) to the port of San Francisco. Not wishing to be bothered with separate crating of the bike I took up their offer. Readers might consider this form of shipping as an option although (and this remains to be seen; damage is more likely).

There remained the problem that the bike was in the west of England while the depot of the shipper I'd selected was in South London. The solution here was to have the bike stored on the premises of the private seller until I'd finalized the arrangements with the shipping company and whilst this was happening arrange for "Roadline", a national pickup and delivery service to transport the bike across country. Their fee was about \$40 and, having made the arrangement, all I needed was to give them a short telephone call to get on with the matter when all other arrangements were settled. Again, this way of doing things might appeal to some readers.

As of the present moment the bike is somewhere on the high seas. My shipper claims that I will next hear from his agent in San Francisco where I expect to pay customs fees. The bike itself should be removed from the shipping container without charge upon my arrival.

Sincerely,

Pete Hughes
200 E. Dana, Apt.
C-52
Mountain View, CA
94040

CHECKBOOK TIME

Dear Editor,

Just wondered if you'd mind having an ask around your branch for me to see if anyone on your side of the pond is interested in a Norton Interpol 2 rotary engine that I'm thinking of selling.

I regret that it isn't in perfect condition as the motorcycle it was removed from had caught fire. However, this engine is in remarkably good condition. It's mainly smoke damage and a couple of busted fins. The primary chaincase has broken off just behind the engine and will need either a new one or this one repaired which shouldn't be too difficult for some enterprising person with some know how and facilities.

Along with the engine I will provide photocopies of the spare parts list and also the workshop manual which gives full technical specifications, types of alloy used, exact frame measurements, bearings, etc. Front forks are Marozzochi, rear suspension Girling, brakes both front and rear are Brembo, and wheels are cast alloy by Grimmecc. With all that information it should be relatively easy for someone to become the first and only private owner-ride in the world of one of these machines, or at the very least a bike based on this engine.

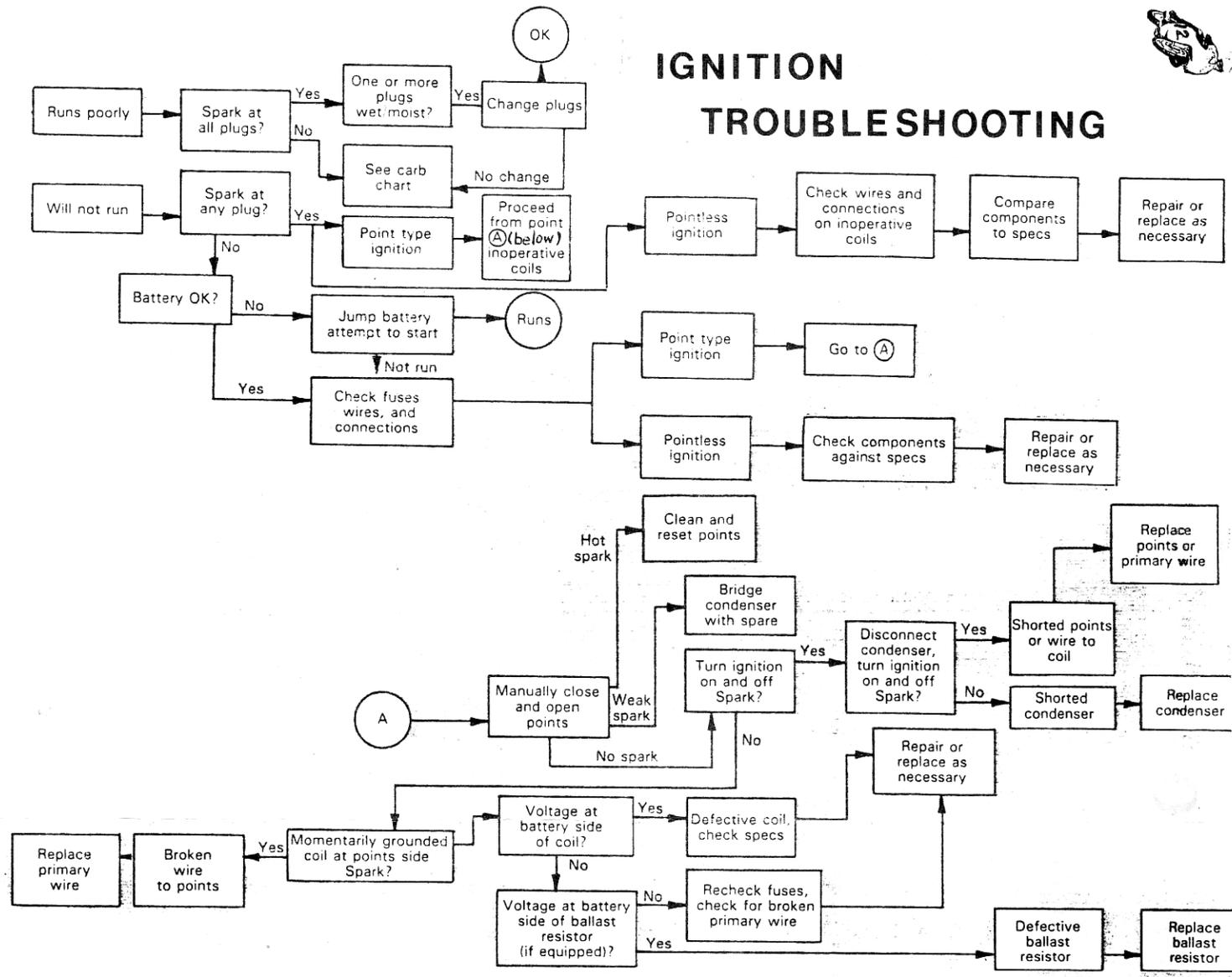
Norton estimates a price for the U.K. of around £5500 if ever they should decide to launch a production version of this bike. However, there are no plans at this time for any such launch so the earliest it could hit the streets now is 1987. To this must be added the fact that Norton is very worried by the liability laws that exist in the U.S.A., so much so that they are going to buy back any secondhand bikes that may come onto the British market when the police decide to sell. It is therefore extremely unlikely that you will see one of these machines in America before the end of this decade, if at all!!!

I'm asking for offers in excess of £4000 which I feel in view of what it would cost in the states should it ever get there plus its

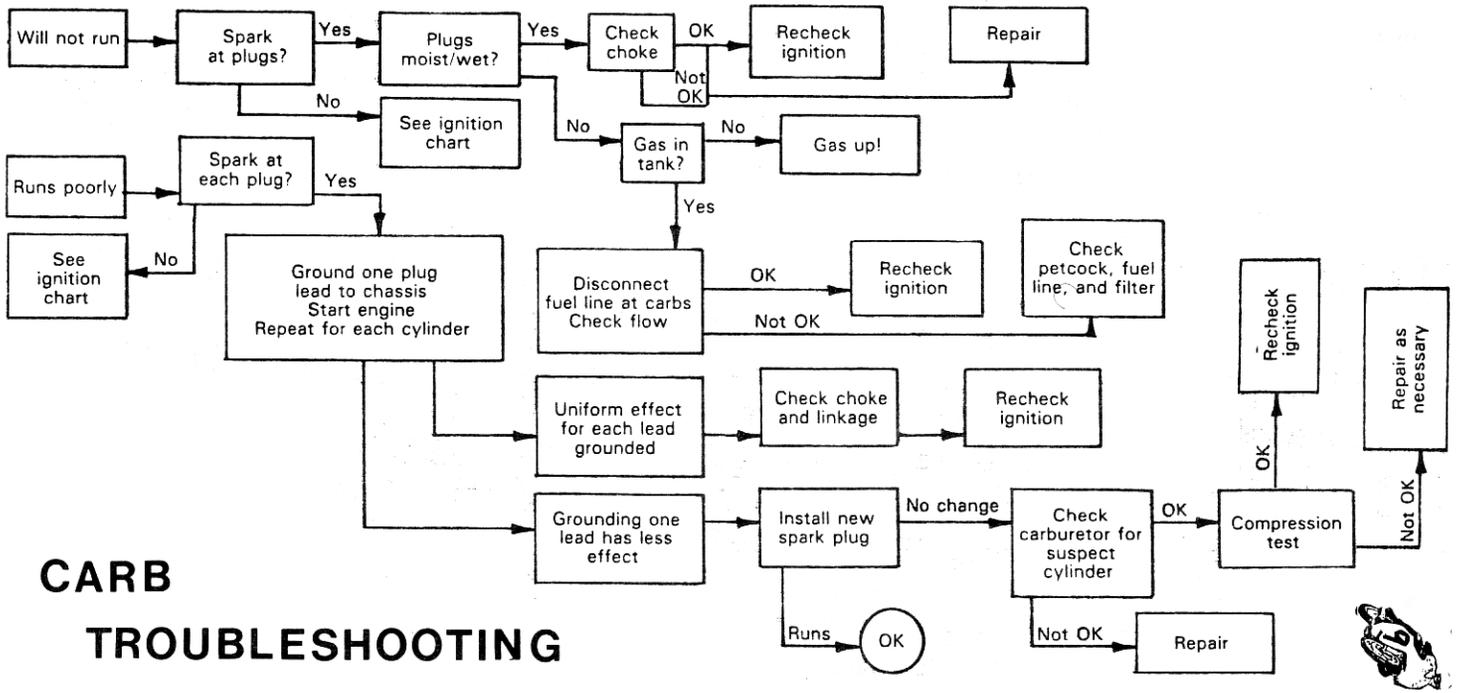
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IGNITION TROUBLESHOOTING



CARB TROUBLESHOOTING





THE Norton GUIDE TO

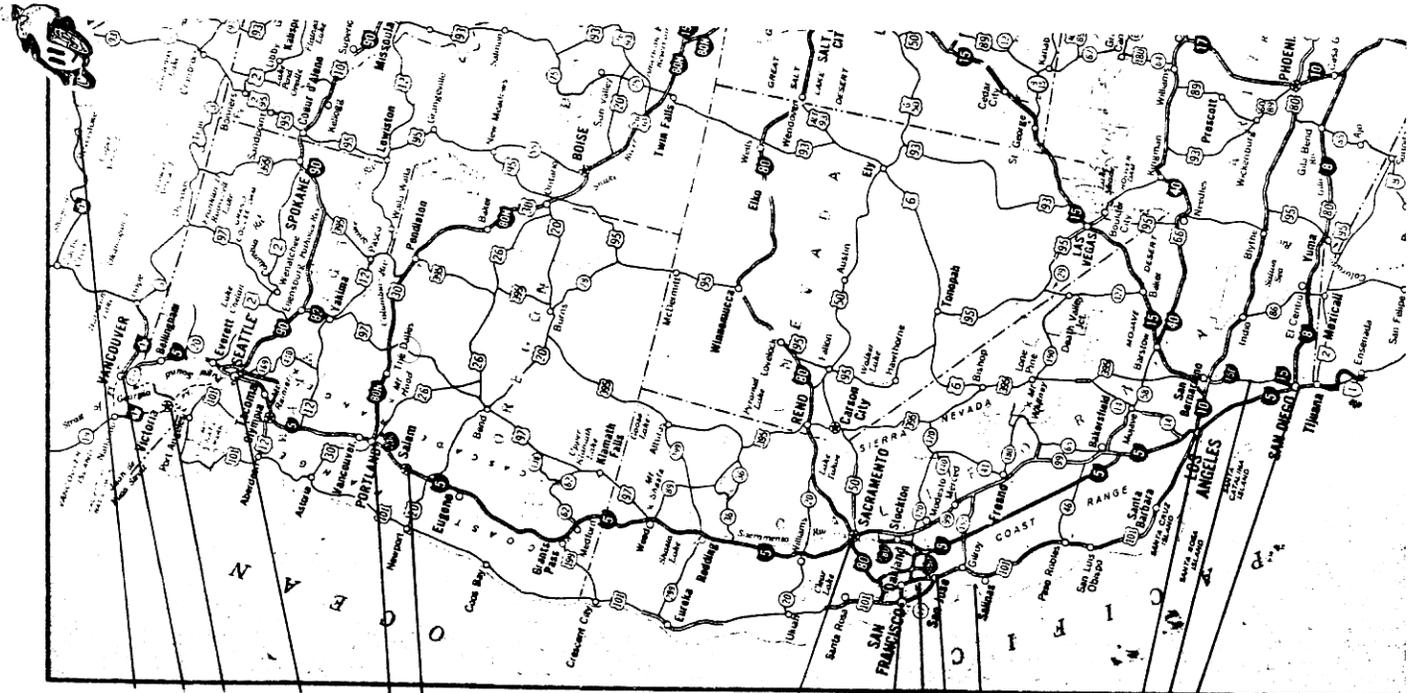
BRITISH MOTORBIKES

WEST COAST DIRECTORY

- 1 Sonny Angel Motorcycles 34 E. 18th St. National City (619)477-8120
- 2 Jack Simmons 17320 Santa Rosa Rd. Perris (714)787-8388
- 3 British Trader 6292 June Dr. Huntington Beach (714)842-4339 (eyes. only)
- 4 British Marketing 27324 Camino Capistrano #139 Laguna Niguel (714)843-2902
- 5 European Cycle Specialities 10301 Garden Grove Blvd. Garden Grove (714)530-2711
- 6 British Parts 13428 E. Telegraph Rd. Whittier (213)941-4440
- 7 ~~Continuing & Joy 10444 Sylvia Ave. Northridge (818)368-2159~~ CLOSED
- 8 Britalia Motors 2541 S. Rodeo Gulch Dr. #5 Soquel (408)476-3663
- 9 Rabers 1615C Almaden Rd. San Jose (408)998-4495
- 10 West Bay Cycle Dismantlers 750 San Antonio Rd. Palo Alto (415)494-8033
- 11 Munroe Motors 412 Valencia St. San Francisco (415)626-3496
- 12 TT Motors 2800 Adeline St. Berkeley (415)845-8235
- 13 G.P. Cycle 4721 Telegraph Ave. Berkeley (415)428-1663
- 14 Mean Marshalls 2705 San Pablo Ave. Berkeley (415)548-2532
- 15 Hal Burdette Motorcycles 2010 Del Paso Blvd. Sacramento (916)925-1797
- 16 F&W 5101 SE 17th St. Portland (503)234-3942
- 17 Hop's Specialities 1675 Fairgrounds NE Salem (503)362-4578
- 18 Cycle Hub 3602 NE Sandy Portland (503)232-9253
- 19 Eurosport 11576 SW Barbur Blvd. Portland, OR (503)245-1377
- 20 John's Cycle 2605 NE 55th Seattle
- 21 Poke's Cycle Co. 550 12th Ave. Seattle (206)322-2725
- 22 Hallard Motorcycles Box 6172 Station C Victoria, B.C.
- 23 British Motorcycles Ltd. 4250 Fraser St. Vancouver V5V 4G2 876-0520
- 24 British Isles Motorcycles Vancouver (604)595-8452
- 25 Arrow M/C Services Ltd. 15 W 2nd Vancouver V5Y 1B1 (604)879-7323
- 26 Bent Bike Ltd. 20701 #10 Hwy Langley V3A 4G4
- 27 Classic Cycle Site 10 RR#4 Salmon Arm (604)832-9558
- 28 **British Motorcycle Supply 2305W 43rd St. Renton, WA (206)251-0884**

Mileage chart... mileage determined by most direct driving route

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
(1) L.A.	--	1016	386	125	383	1193	456	1327	344	334
(2) Portland	1016	--	561	1137	611	175	668	317	656	733
(3) Sacramento	386	561	--	505	75	736	107	878	117	190
(4) San Diego	125	1137	505	--	525	1314	542	1452	462	442
(5) San Francisco	383	611	75	525	--	786	192	928	45	122
(6) Seattle	1193	175	736	1314	786	--	843	142	839	908
(7) S.L. Tahoe	456	668	107	542	192	843	--	985	197	272
(8) Vancouver	1327	317	878	1452	928	142	985	--	973	1050
(9) San Jose	344	656	117	462	45	839	197	973	--	75
(10) Monterey	334	733	190	442	122	908	272	1050	75	--



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16, 18, 19

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cont. from p. 8

rarity value as the only one for sale make it a reasonable proposition. I have also been told that, although I cannot say for sure, it's true that under English law if you have a bike or a car and that the parts for it are being manufactured that the company cannot refuse to sell the parts required to maintain and repair it. Due to my position within the NORTON OWNERS CLUB I feel unable to pursue that line with Nortons. Of course, anyone else may give it a try.

Well, there it is. If anyone wants to be the first owner-rider in the world they could do a lot worse than writing to me.

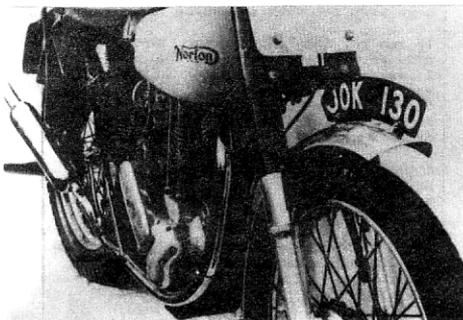
Good riding.

Yours faithfully,

Jim Wallis
10, Glebe Way,
Oakham,
Leicestershire,
LE15 6LX.
England.



Dated 1/2/86



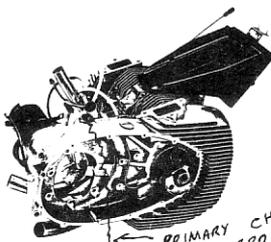
INSURANCE TIP

Having just completed an insurance company changeover involving motorcycle coverage, I have a suggestion to pass along to you.

My transaction allowed for a three day overlap in coverage on the chance that the mails might screw up (an unfounded belief I now realize after several months of using the mails actively). My agent was prompt in providing forms but when the forms were submitted to the insurance company several of the bikes were rejected for coverage under the plan submitted by the agent. Unfortunately there is no apparent reason why some should have been rejected and others accepted. Result-- no insurance on my Nortons. It has now been three weeks and frankly I'm getting the runaround (employee handling the file left suddenly, etc.).

The tip? Don't assume that your agent will know that the plan submitted to the insurance company will automatically be accepted. Wait until you receive confirmation from the new company that you are insured with them (policy statement) before you cancel your old policy. The few bucks it'll cost you for the extra time can be well worth it.

Lou



●The Norton rotary engine provides the power pulses of a 4-cylinder four-stroke engine without the complexity of valves and associated drives. The rotating assembly is in complete dynamic balance which ensures long life and vibration free running.

MEMBER SUGGESTION OF THE MONTH

I've really enjoyed the last few issues of the NN. How about getting one or all of the advertisers to put together some kind of drawing or contest, where the winner gets 60 seconds running through (and getting to keep) all the parts he (or she) can carry out of their shop?

[I've had my eye on that production racer for a while. Is it time to increase my weightlifting schedule?--Ed.]

Club is great! Not TOO organized, which I like. I can't make Sunday rides as I teach in church, and a few Sat. rides a year couldn't hurt (Say May and Sept.)?

I would like to see a club letter to England asking for the Wankel to be made available to us. Maybe even a group letter with other clubs? Say, 5,000 signatures.

Great NOTICE!

I have really enjoyed being a member. More tech tips would be great, hints on certain strange noises like my low rpm rattle in my clutch area, carb adjustments, maybe tips on ordering parts from England.

I own eight Nortons: 2 Commandos, 2 Rangers, and 4 Featherbeds from an ES2 to the Atlas. Keep up the good work. Being from Washington I don't get to California too often, but hopefully I'll get my financing together and be there for some of the fun.

I've enjoyed the NN and will remain a member even though I'm too far away to ride with the club-- we have a large group of riders in Portland and I may try and organize a NOC up here.

I am restoring a 1947 ES2 basket case and need only an original gas tank to complete my parts need. May the Vintage Gods prevail.



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRANCH

MORE LETTERS

I have to admit, my hind is growing soft and I start to appreciate comforts more and more . . . A paddy scooter that wants to roll all the time is a big temptation to leave the Snort behind. But, every time I feel my superhuman nature overpower me and I tromp down for that rewarding thump . . . thump . . . I remember why I keep him around and go out and have a hell of a good ride! Why even parked at a stoplight feeling my molars working free gives me a power of controlling time. My brain goes back as the wheels go forward.

With the sound and ruckus I command the scene. No one can think of anything but that bike (and that noise!) when he's around.

And how nice to rocket away when the light greens . . . big smile. Keeping oil at its level and loose bolts tight is a small price to pay for such a sedative. The machine becomes a great vibrator for shaking loose the tensions of the day.

Keep the ink flowing at NN and happy trails to you.

Those of us who ride the Dominator Twins are masochists. Dominators spread pieces all over the road, which are then usually run over by urban cowboys in 4-wheel drive trucks. "Ol' Nort" over the years has developed a bag of tricks, each one new, and sometimes amusing, all of which overshadow anything Joe Lucas, AKA "Prince of Darkness can think up.

I have owned a '71 Norton "Hi Rider" for ten years. I think Nortons, in general, are very special motorcycles. I've only owned one other bike—a 1956 BSA 250cc.

I enjoy the NOTICE . . . am too far away to participate in club activities . . . but appreciate all that you folks do for us in the "hinterlands". We have miles and miles of good roads up here [Yreka] and I invite one and all to consider a "Mt. Shasta" run some day. Any NOC member is always welcome to visit. Cheers!

ALL HAIL DEXTER FORD

The March issue of MOTORCYCLIST carries an article which gives the staff there a chance to pick the street-legal motorcycles THEY would buy if they were spending their own money. Good ole Dexter chose the 1974 Norton 850 Commando as his top pick with the following comments:

With an Interstate tank. Candy apple red. Mint condition. I think this is about the prettiest street motorcycle ever built, and I've been lusting after one since that snowy day I first saw it in the showroom at Boston Cycles. The Norton is the perfect interface between the classics of the '20s and '30s and the dazzlingly functional sport bikes of today-- which is to say I could ride it all summer (if the electrics hold out), drain the gas and stare at it in my living room all winter. The prices haven't started to climb too badly, but they will.
Atta boy, Dexter.

In Edmonton, Alberta, all bicycle riders must signal with the arm before making a turn. However, the rider must at all times keep both hands on the handlebars.

Dear Lou,

Just finished enjoying the current issue of NN. As a new resident of Portland (moved from Eureka in Nov.), I was pleased to discover no fewer than three shops that speak Norton. One of them is listed on page 13 of issue 95-- Eurosport. They deal primarily in Guzzis and such but have some Norton goodies lying around.

The second shop I've discovered is Cycle Hub located at 3602 N.E. Sandy, Portland (503)232-9253. The fellow who runs it is a wealth of Brit information and advice, and has a backroom of parts probably exceeding that of Marshall or T.T. His primary love appears to be Triumphs but there are several Nortons evident (as well as Ariels, a Sunbeam, and the assorted Rocket III). The only problem is that he is known among the Portland Brit riders and somewhat pricey. If you need it price is no object, and if you can't find it anywhere he probably has it.

The third, and my personal favorite, is a little shop called F&W, taken, no doubt, from the initials of the last names of the owners, who just happen to be Foxworthy and Worthington. They are located at 5101 S.E. 17th St., Portland (503)234-3942. Their motto: 'Fairly honest'. No used bikes for sale, but a wealth of parts and a good shop and mechanic(s). In addition, their shop is the hangout for the only person I have ever met with a genuine 'Norton' tattoo.

If you're down San Diego way, Sonny Angel is also very knowledgeable. The last time I was in I was admiring the Nortons in the corner when I was struck with the utter magnificence of the Vincent Black Shadow sitting there, right next to its brother Rapide. Fortunately, I carry a drool rag for just such occasions.

A small note and/or side bar. Back in 1970 I purchased my first Norton (a 650cc Mercury) from a gentleman in Spring Valley by the name of Mike Garrett. His shop was Mike's Speed Tuning. Does anyone out there know whatever became of Mike? I saw a custom casting from his shop at F&W the other day, but they don't know anything about him. I would like to see him again, if just to tell him I've recovered from the accident (1970) and am riding again.

Time once again to delve back into the world of Computer Programming and Systems Analysis. Sometime I'll write up my trip on the supposedly combined Northern and Southern Calif. Norton Owners Club ride and campout at Songdog Ranch over the Memorial Day weekend. It was exciting. I just wish some other of the Nor Cal group had made it.

Keep up the good work.

Alan Peterson
11950 S.E. Holgate
Portland, OR 97266



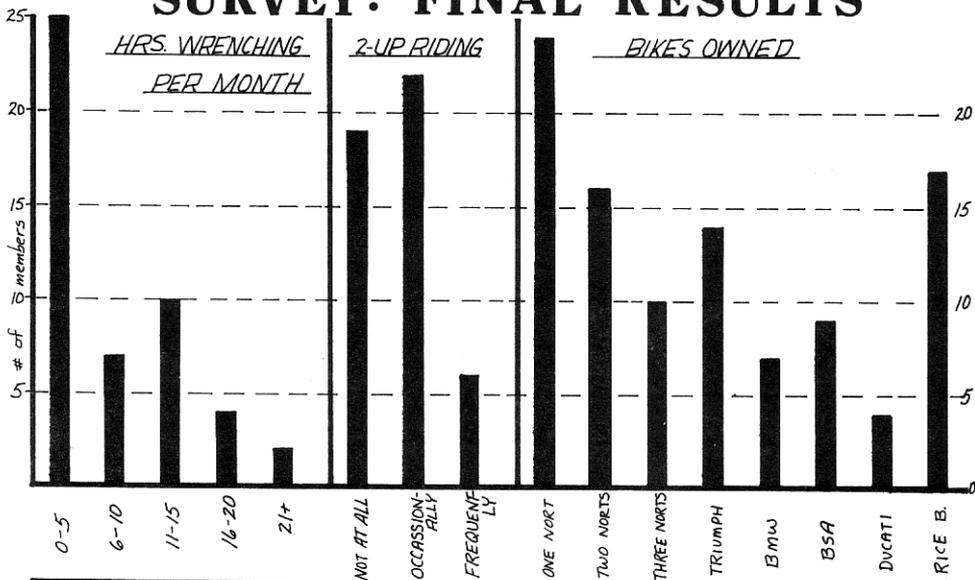
Six Phases of a Project:

1. enthusiasm
2. disillusionment
3. panic
4. search for the guilty
5. punishment of the innocent
6. praise and honors for the non-participants





SURVEY: FINAL RESULTS

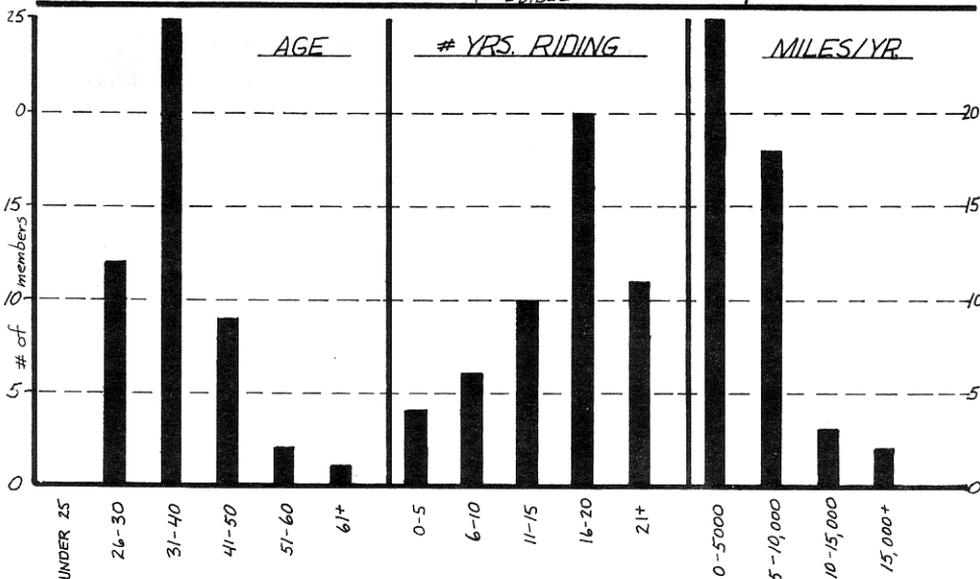


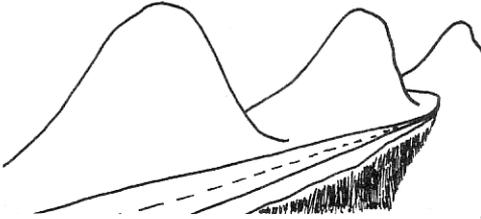
MAGAZINE PREFERENCES

- READERS
1. Classic Bike - 30
 2. Cycle - 26
 3. Cycle World - 14
 4. Classic Mechanics } tie - 11
 5. Classic Racer }

"I CONSIDER MYSELF":

- VOTES
1. HONEST - 28
 2. BIODEGRADABLE - 21
 3. PATIENT - 21
 4. DARING - 14
 5. DESIRABLE - 9
 6. FIRST - 1
 7. EDIBLE - 1





THE WANKEL WONDER

(The following magazine clipping was sent to the NORTON RAG, our friendly San Diego branch publication, by Blake Conway. Thanks, fellas.)

On paper, the Wankel-engined motorcycle is a world-beater. In practice, as the Japanese have discovered on and off over the past ten years, it has been a commercial disaster. I have jut ridden, in secret and highly unofficially, a British version which is an absolute revelation.

The Norton motorcycle company began work on its air-cooled Wankel project in the early Seventies. Norton Villiers Triumph (as the company is now known) has pursued the development of the bike ever since. Its machine, employing a twin-rotor Wankel engine of 600 or 1200cc (depending on how you measure a Wankel's capacity), is air-cooled and currently undergoing evaluation by the British police and military. NVT has refused to let journalists ride it, but an accommodating rider evaluating the bike gave me the keys and agreed to look the other way.

The bike's smoothness is incredible. Even with six-cylinder machines there is always some slight vibration from the reciprocating parts. Not with the Wankel. It feels like an extremely torquey electric motor, or a turbine. On the over-run it's so smooth it seems to be freewheeling. The engine revs to 8500rpm, and it revs so freely, that above that figure a rev limiter cuts the ignition.

Top gear is usable from below 30mph, giving a potential top gear speed range of 100mph if the claimed top speed of 130mph is accurate. Since 90mph comes up at 5500rpm a genuine cruising speed of 100mph is assured.

The machine I rode was fitted with full police equipment, including the specially calibrated speedometer and full fairing, made by CLP Composites Ltd. With that fairing and its superb power characteristics, the bike should make a first-class touring machine. By today's standards it's not a sportster since all the Japanese manufacturers produce machines with a maximum speed 20mph or so higher.

The handling is also beyond reproach. The Wankel doesn't display any of the nerviness of the latest nimble Japanese machines. Instead it comes deliberately and predictably, very much like an Italian machine, and that is praise indeed. The front suspension, and the entire braking system, is Italian. The rear suspension is British. In bends it refuses to weave or wallow; it just goes where it's pointed.

The Wankel's weakness is fuel consumption-- still not as good as it could be. Reasonably restrained riding averages some 40-45mpg, but this can drop to 35 or even 30mpg in town.

NORTON OWNERS CLUB

Will it ever appear on showroom floors? Rumors abound about the problems of making it meet forthcoming noise and pollution legislation. It's noisier than some machines, but still unobtrusive. Watercooling would seem an obvious step, but NVT will neither confirm nor deny whether they are working on this.

As far as pollution goes, The Wankel's rotors are lubricated in two-stroke fashion, oil being injected directly into the combustion chambers and burnt therein. Most two-strokes, unless fitted with power-sapping catalytic converters, are now illegal in the all-important United States market, and like two-strokes, the Wankel must produce a fair percentage of unburnt hydrocarbons.

At a projected retail price of 4500, the Wankel would compete with the top-of-the-range BMWs and be cheaper than the Japanese touring flagships. As an overall package, it's probably the finest touring bike I've ridden.

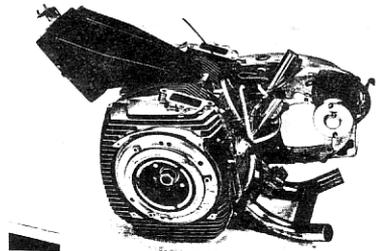
Neil Murray

THE POWER.

Designed, developed and manufactured by Norton Motors, the Norton twin rotor air cooled engine has been developed into an exceptional power plant ideally suited to its application in the Interpol 2 motorcycle.

It is light, very powerful and requires little routine servicing, with negligible downtime.

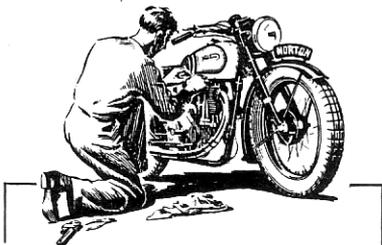
Being vibration free it reduces rider fatigue and ensures long life to the chassis and on board electrical equipment. This very reliable engine currently powers motorcycles operated by Britain's Police and armed forces.



THE FORCE.

Whatever its role the Interpol 2 provides a perfectly designed and balanced machine for constant duty anywhere in the world. It is lightweight, comfortable and its power plant requires little routine servicing, always ready to go and rapidly becoming the first choice wherever it is tried and tested.

Interpol 2 can be supplied as a fully equipped model or tailored to the customer's specific requirement.



TECH TIPS

TECH TIP--GEARBOX REBUILD

If you ever have the opportunity to rebuild your gearbox, do yourself a big favor and fit the 4th gear layshaft pinion with the slightly raised shoulder facing the layshaft bearing and the flat side facing third gear. Do not pay any attention to the instructions in the Haynes manual regarding the positioning of the 4th gear layshaft pinion. I wrote them a letter, and in their response they admitted that their instructions and their drawing were incorrect and that major damage could result from installing this gear incorrectly. O.K?

Another thing, Les Emery at Fair Spares says that you should replace the bronze bush inside the kickstarter shaft whenever you replace the layshaft bearing. Apparently this bush inside the kickstart shaft supports the right end of the layshaft, and if the bush if worn, undue stress will be placed upon the newly installed layshaft bearing. What nobody informs you is that this bush is NOT easily removed from the kickstart shaft. It is located in a "blind end", which means that you won't be able to get at it from the other side and drive it out. Heating up the shaft doesn't work either (I tried it!). So to remove the old bush, you'll have to purchase the correct diameter tap (3/4") and tap some threads into the bush. Now you can make a withdrawal tool with a 3/4" bolt, some nuts, and a spacer. It's cheaper than replacing the entire kickstart shaft. When you are ready to replace the outer cover on the gearbox, take a moment to wrap the end of the kickstart shaft with some masking tape and put some oil on the tape. That way when you offer the cover to the gearbox, the sharp splines on the end of the shaft won't out into the nice new rubber "O" ring that you installed in the cover.

Art

TECH TIP

When laying up a machine for a considerable time, it is a good practice to put a quantity of oil in each cylinder and then turn the engine over occasionally (perhaps once a month) to insure that the cylinders do not rust. Oil is a non-compressible fluid. If the quantity of oil in the cylinder exceeds the combustion chamber volume (the volume in the cylinder when the piston is at tdc), a connecting rod could easily be bent if the engine were spun over with the spark plug in place. If you are not sure how much oil is in the cylinder, it is essential that the spark plug be removed and the engine turned over slowly. Insert the spark plugs afterward.

CYCLE WORLD
June, 1969

PRE-SET AT THE FACTORY?

Some of you who have seen the oil pressure gauges connected to a couple of my Commando engines have asked me what purpose they serve. My standard reply is that the gauges give me a reading that serves as a reference point for determining the health of the engine, either real or imagined. I recently had an experience that proved the worth of the gauge on my Commando-engined feather-bed.

When I was rebuilding this particular engine, a pumped up 750 Combat, I noticed that the piston in the oil pressure relief valve was scored. I decided to use it anyhow because I knew the oil pressure gauge would help me decide whether or not to change the relief valve at a later date. For those of you who are not familiar with the oil pressure relief valve, it is the domed unit fitted to the rear of the engine timing cover above the banjo fitting for the rocker oil line. After getting the bike on the road and putting a few hundred miles on it, I finally decided that I wasn't happy with the existing oil pressure. I was only getting a reading of about 15 psi at 60 mph with the engine and oil fully warmed up. A couple other Commando engines that I've had got about double this pressure under the same conditions, so I included a request for a new relief valve in my next order of parts from England.

After the usual two month wait I had a new relief valve in my possession. Although the factory manual says the relief valve is "pre-set at the factory and requires no attention", I took it apart to see if there were any obvious defects or irregularities. What a pessimist, you say? Well, here's what I found. There were four shims between the spring and the piston instead of the one or two shims that I had seen in other relief valves. Because of having the oil pressure gauge I reassembled the valve with all four shims and installed it in the engine. Upon starting the engine I found I had about 100 psi at around 1500 rpm with the engine cold. I say about 100 psi because the gauge only indicates to 80 psi but the needle can go further until it reaches the peg. The manual says the relief valve is supposed to relieve pressure above 45-55 psi, so obviously I had a problem. I removed two of the shims and restarted the engine and found I still had too much pressure, so I removed one more shim, leaving one shim to hold a proper reading. I have another relief valve with two shims in the oil pressure relief valve so without a gauge or some other method of measurement you wouldn't know what the pressure was in your oil system.

Gene Austin
985 E. Grant Pl.
San Mateo, CA 94402

GOOD NEWS FOR TOOL FREAKS

Word just in from MOTORCYCLE NEWS (thanks, Phil) has it that Richmond Tools, part of the Bowater Industries Group, is releasing for sale "Metrinch" sockets which have 12 drive-teeth, alternately AF and MM. This means the same socket can be used both on 1/2 inch and 13mm nuts, a 3/4 inch on 19mm nuts and so forth. An eight piece 3/8th inch drive set should market for about \$12.00.

With a little bit of luck we may be able to reduce that clutter in the toolbox and have sockets that really work.



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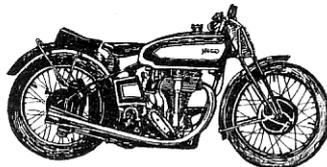
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