



Dear Andover Norton Customer,

Though we have been busy with projects, this did not stop our team from having the best month ever. Thank you all for your support, looks like we are doing something right!

The V4 Norton

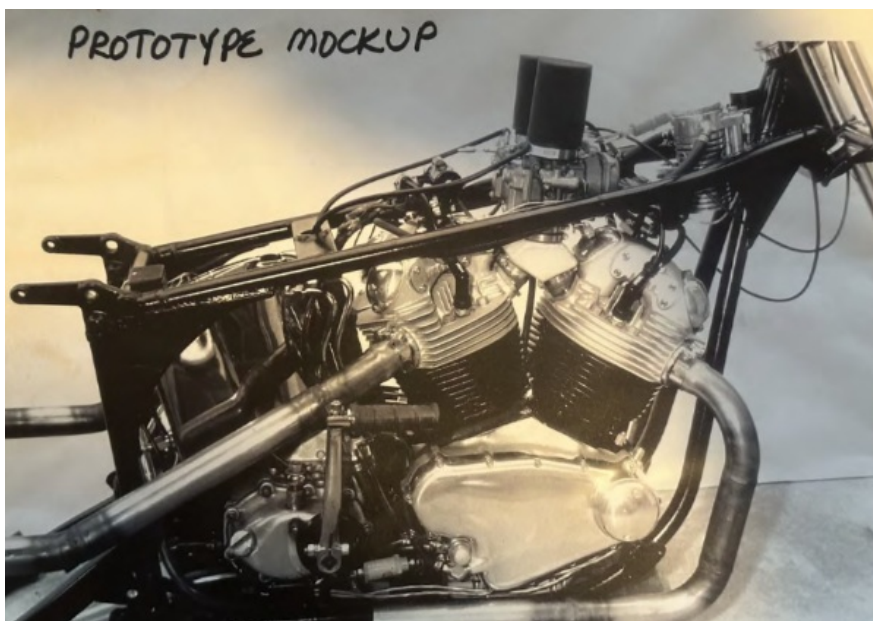
Ha! I thought this will catch you out. You probably think of the Ricardo-designed current Four, but this one is much earlier. Customer Scott Somers wrote to us in November and I hope he will forgive me that it took me two months to take his story up.

Before I do, I'll tell you why Scott's letter rang a bell. When I started my first shop in a disused lorry garage in central Hamburg in 1980, we had a customer whom we called "Reserve-Jesus". Imagine a skinny, tall Hippie character with beard and long hair on a pre-unit Triumph and you get the idea.

His real name is Michael and he later started importing Harley parts and accessories from Taiwan and became a very successful wholesaler of these. At that time he was still searching for a great business idea and one day he came up with pictures of, he thought, a sensational new design based on using two Commando top halves on a common crankcase, thus creating a 1.5 litre or a 1.7 litre V-twin.

Michael was pretty disappointed when I broke into laughter and said that was a ridiculous idea. My main reason was the inherent tendency of the rear top half overheating, being fully shadowed by the front one and thus getting virtually no cold air to it. That, plus the length of the engine assembly, the weight, and the resulting top heaviness in the chassis. Remember we talk two cast-iron cylinder barrels here with each weighing around 11kgs, plus heads at about 6kg (empty, add the internals).

For me the main point of riding a Commando was the manageable weight and the light handling. At the time I still rode a Vincent Series D alongside my Nortons so I knew about motorcycles unwilling to take tight turns quickly.



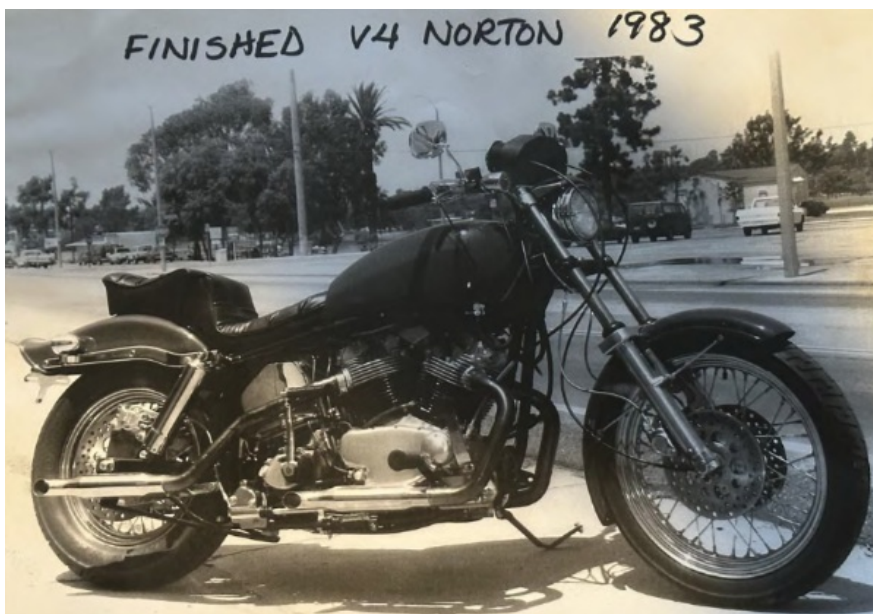
Above: Mock-up, tellingly based on a Harley chassis.

Scott wrote: "In the early 1970' through to the mid 1980's a Company in Southern California", H.P.I. became a "Big Deal" with regards to Hot Rod Nortons. The Founder of the Company, George Gjonovich along with Mike Talbot and Greg Sanders were the Driving Force behind the Company. I am very close friends with Mike Talbot and I think this story may need to be shared. Mike is not getting any younger, George Gjonovich has passed away and Mike is not sure about Greg Sanders. H.P.I. was also involved with Drag Racing. Both helping their customers and also running their own Norton Powered Dragsters."

Asking Scott for more information he wrote: "I just spoke with Mike Talbot and here's more info. There were two running Prototypes. The first prototype was the "Mule". They ran over 2500 miles on it. The photos are of the second one. It was a runner, using what was learned from the "Mule. Again a Harley Chassis and Transmission." (which reminds me that Kenny Dreer on what is now the 961 used an aftermarket Harley gear set)

"A set of forks and disc brakes (Double) from a Honda 750 as was the gas tank. Mike mentioned that they were working on a "Shoe String" budget. The engine was 1800cc's. The barrels were 850 (828) that were bored and sleeved to 940cc's. It ran two Mikuni constant velocity carbs. It was very smooth. No overheating issues, even in the heat of Southern California. It did have a 6 quart oil tank, and again monster torque. The rear tire(s) had very short life spans because of the torque.

Lastly, Mike mentioned that the second bike ended up in the hands of Greg Sanders who may still be alive and living in Southern California. The Mule ended up being a "parts" bike for the second prototype."



Above: The finished article. Not my idea of the ideal Norton, but then tastes differ.

I did mention to Scott that European, especially Continental riding differs vastly from the American style where 0-60mph traffic light starts are the main criterion and after the start the rest of the ride is rather sedate and within the strict speed limits. I wonder how the, in American conditions, non-overheating engine would behave given a free Autobahn and no speed limit with a young and hungry rider on the controls....

That said, what a job to take on just out of enthusiasm and curiosity with no realistic perspective as a business option.

Our Bikes:

Joe's 1960 30M:

Some may remember I had a rather frustrating time with the Manx at the race meeting in Rijeka in 2022. Every time I went out on the track the bike started to misfire as soon as it got to normal temperatures. The first time it cut out so suddenly I seriously believed the engine was kaputt.

Since the engine started and ran normally back in the paddock and fuel flowed freely the only reason left was the ignition, i.e. the magneto. Since my friend Herbert can't do mags anymore after the death of his friend who used to re-wind these, I asked Angela Hemmings who they used as a repairer for racing mags. I just caught the man in the month he retired, so the search started again. Ashley then found a magneto repair shop with a good reputation, so we sent the mag off sometime in early summer and I got it back before Christmas.

However, thanks to having a successful January in my German shop, I only got round to fitting the mag in the last week of January. I hate nothing more than timing a mag on a cammy Norton. I wonder how they did it in production but assume they did it with the engine on the workbench and only then put it into the frame. Though frankly, with these cammy engines being shoehorned into the chassis I am not sure if I ever tried that, and if it is possible.



Timing disc 13.1735 stuck to the crankshaft end with putty, thin paper strip between the points. Pulling lightly on the paper shows when they open.

The real challenge is to do it alone. All was much simpler if one person, with the crank in the correct position (in my case 38°BTDC) turned the mag cautiously until the paper strip starts to pull out and another person then, with a cautious blow, secures the sprocket on the mag shaft from the right hand side of the bike so the mag stays in the ideal position. Now try to do this single-handedly! Took me more than an hour to get everything to line up alone. Every time I checked something had slipped.....

Now everything should be fine. The mag repairer also put a cable on the mag so I can retard it with a lever on the handlebars. Now he wants to tell me where to fit that lever! These Manxes have the brackets for brake and clutch lever welded into position, and since mine has a 1962 double duplex front brake that lever and the balance beam for the two cables blocks short space between lever bracket and stanchion.

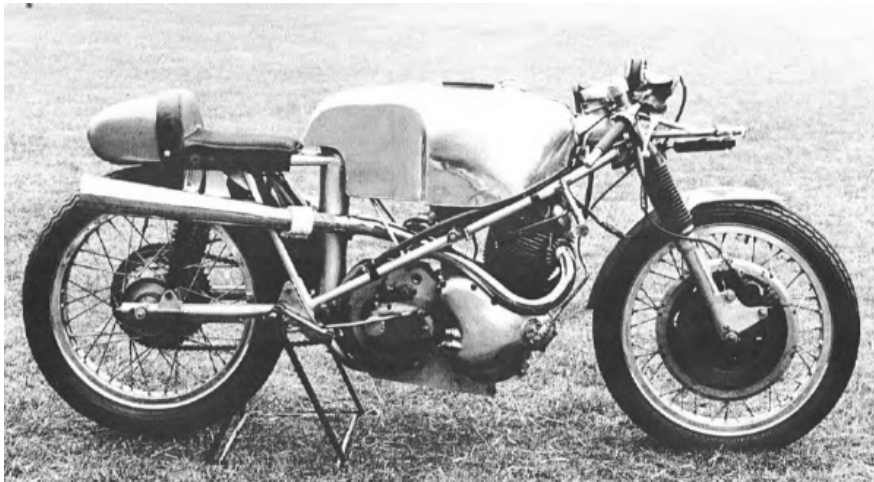
Up to now, I always had the ignition fixed in fully advanced position and, quite frankly, that worked since I started racing Manxes in about 1995, so either I have an inspiration where to fit that ignition control lever or I'll just go back to the good old full-advance scenario.

The "Iceni Norton":



Rainer Zumach has finished that project for me and I think it looks pretty good. I asked Paul Dunstall about the project which is undoubtedly a carbon copy of his 1969/70 Norton racer and he wrote:

“The spine frame was Eddie Robinson idea which he designed in detail and I can't remember if Eddie got Colin Seeley to weld it together or perhaps it was Ken at Reynolds Tubes. The Spine frame was an immediate success with Ray Pickrell winning I think 17 races and breaking 5 track records that year.”



Above: Paul Dunstall's spine frame racer in 1969/70

As I write this the “Iceni” is being exhibited at the “Bremen Classic Motorshow” following the wishes of local Norton owners. I look forward to my first test ride on the “Iceni” though I have neither the illusion nor the intention to break track records these days. 30 years ago that was very likely a different story!



The Icen project completed.

Simon's Bit **New Seat Bases**

Andover Norton is introducing a range of Norton Commando steel seat bases made to original factory specification and pressed from new tooling.

These high-quality products will be supplied in a black gloss powder coated finish.



SEAT BASE 750 FASTBACK
(PAINTED)

[Shop](#)



SEAT BASE 750 'SS' 'S' & 'R'
TYPE (PAINTED)

[Shop](#)

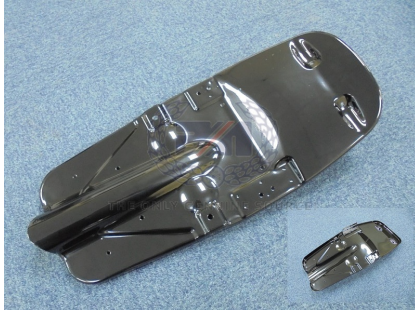


SEAT BASE 750/850
ROADSTER Pre-850mk3
(PAINTED)



SEAT BASE 750/850
INTERSTATE Pre-850mk3
(PAINTED)

Shop



SEAT BASE 850 ROADSTER
Mk3 (PAINTED)

Shop

Shop



SEAT BASE 850 INTERSTATE
Mk3 (PAINTED)

Shop

Price: £129.50 + carriage/VAT (where applicable).
Availability: end of February 2024.

Discussions are taking place to secure a UK source of complete Commando seats using Andover Norton's bases. Further news to follow.

Karl's Bit

Andover Norton Events

With warmer weather on the way, we have a number of upcoming events that we will be attending to mark on your Calendars.

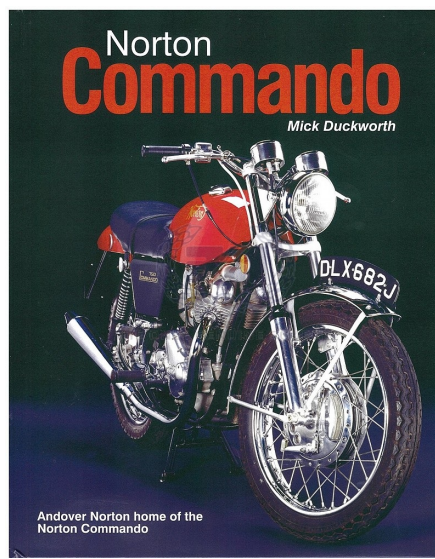
The International Classic Motorcycle Show Staffordshire Showground - 20-21 April 2024



<https://www.classicbikeshows.com/stafforda/>

We will once again be at the Stafford International Classic Motorcycle Show. Our Trade stand will be in the Main Hall along with a display of bikes from our collection.

We will also be joined once again by the Legendary Mick Duckworth, Author of the "*Norton Commando*" and "*Joe Craig making Norton Famous*" books and he will be hosting signing sessions over the weekend.



Shop

VMCC Members & Norton Owners Club Meet
@ Sammy Millers Motorcycle Museum -
Wednesday 15th May



<https://sammyiller.co.uk/event/vmcc-members-norton-owners-club-meet/>

A number of the Andover Norton team will also be at the VMCC and Norton Owners Club meet at the Sammy Miller Museum. So feel free to chat to us if you are also looking to attend.

Andover Norton Open Day - 18th May



The most important event of all! Our Open Day is on the horizon and we look forward to meeting you as we open our warehouse to guests and visitors.

Our team will be present to chat to along side your fellow riders, and we will be aiming to fire up a few of our special bikes, such as the [F1R](#). Both a Coffee bar and Food Van will be available all day.

So mark you calendars, if you have not already, and we hope to see you there!

The 47th gathering of the INOA - June 17th - 21st



<https://nortonrally.com/>

For our Readers and Riders across the Atlantic!

Andover Norton will be visiting, as Karl and Ashley will be joining the 47th INOA Gathering and Ride out at the Lincoln / Woodstock KOA Holiday campground near Woodstock, New Hampshire.

They are looking forward to meeting and chatting with our American readers and enjoying some of your favourite riding routes!

New Name, Same Service!

As we approach our 1st Birthday for our Workshop, we just wanted to say "**Thank you!**" to everyone who has entrusted us to look after your motorcycles.

With that and our expansion into other classic motorcycle makes and models, we have decided to rebrand our workshop into...



Andover Classic
MOTORCYCLE WORKSHOP

Unit 6 Wooler Park, North Way,
Andover SP10 5AZ, England

01264 359565 (option 3)

www.andover-classicmotorcycleworkshop.co.uk



NORTON / TRIUMPH
REPAIR - SERVICE - RESTORATIONS

ALL MAKES AND MODELS



www.andover-classicmotorcycleworkshop.co.uk



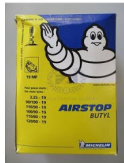
Available for your repair, restoration or storage needs, the **Andover Classic Motorcycle Workshop** is the place to go. Accepting all classic makes and models, and booking slots for Spring are currently available.

If you are looking to have some work done on your bike, why not get in touch? you can send your enquiries to info@andover-classicmotorcycle.co.uk

Back In Stock

A range of previously out of stock items has now been resupplied, as Social Simon details below.

BACK IN STOCK THIS WEEK



ANDOVER NORTON
THE ONLY GENUINE SOURCE!



BRAKE DRUM & SPROCKET (CUSH DRIVE) 42T

Shop

INNER TUBE 19"
MICHELIN/CONTI
(3.25,
4.10,90/100;100/90;1
10/90)

[Shop](#)



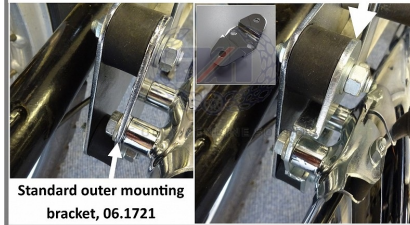
FEELER GAUGE 32
BLADE
IMPERIAL/METRIC

[Shop](#)

SILENCER MOUNT
BRACKET (STEPPED
VERSION) CHROME
PLATED

[Shop](#)

Stepped bracket 06.1721/S gives 3/8" (10mm)
extra silencer to kick start lever clearance



Standard outer mounting
bracket, 06.1721



AIR FILTER FRONT
PLATE (CHROME)

[Shop](#)

**That's all for now, so until next
time!**

The Team at Andover Norton



Andover Norton International Ltd

Unit 6 Wooler Park, North Way, SP10 5AZ, Andover

This email was sent to {{contact.EMAIL}}
You've received this email because you've subscribed to our newsletter.

[Unsubscribe](#)

