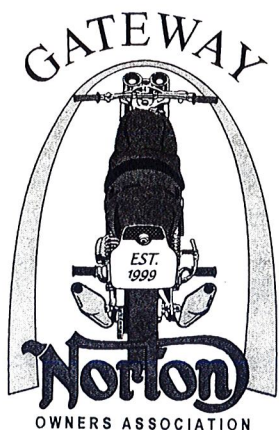


Gateway Norton Owners News #17



"To Promote the
Use and Pride of
Norton Motorcycle Ownership"
Compiled by Marty and Peggy Dupree
August 2003



FROM THE PRES

Here we are in the Dog Days of '03. It's been a bit hot but it's not bad if you keep moving-good words to live by! Since the last newsletter we did have a successful ride along the River Road and of course, Mid-Ohio-both were well attended. But the year isn't over-there is more on the horizon!

Once again, the Royal Enfield Rally is to be held in Steeleville MO the weekend after Labor Day, Sept 5-7. This is certainly close enough for a day ride or could be a nice overnight. Camping is available, and also a couple of small cabins. Great roads down that way & as Mel Heffron says, these guys are loony enough to be riding these old dinosaurs, so we ought to fit right in! Give Mel a call [(618) 466-5487] - he has the details.

And don't forget Rocky Top camping trip. Put in your request for leave time with the family, 'cause your presence is requested! The event will be held at Silver Mines State Park, just West of Fredericktown, MO. Mike French is ram-roddin' this event and details are provided elsewhere in this edition of GNOA News. Mike was telling me about some great destinations he'd like to make, such as Hwy 32, Pilot Knob, Big Springs, etc, so be ready to do some riding. Come on out-it will be a good time!

Rumor control has it that John Wuebbeling & Tom Mitchell are planning the second annual Fall Ride around Wentzville & Lincoln County. Details will be forth coming.

Who says the club doesn't do anything! But as always, the events require your presence to make them a success. So let's all try to come together for one or more of these three events. Hope to see you soon. Any questions please call!

* * * * *

SUBMIT ANYTHING FOR THE NEWSLETTER TO:

MARTY DUPREE

636-398-4049

madx2@worldnet.att.net

CLUB CAMPOUT**Back by Popular Demand**

When? September 12, 13, 14, or whatever of these days you can make.
 Where? Silver Mines State Park, near Fredericktown, MO

Mike has reserved a section of the campgrounds for the club. He says he will be towing his bike down with his pickup and is willing to deliver a minimal amount of camping supplies, but they must be delivered to his house well before September 12. Mike is pulling out at 7ish so don't hold him up - you know how he gets. Mike's number is 636-940-9365. [I expect a write-up about this for the newsletter! Editor.]

T-Shirt Update

[I got this e-mail from Bill right at layout time.]

Marty, I am sorry, if I missed the deadline for the newsletter. As usual I have been out of town. The 'T' shirts are coming. There was a misunderstanding with the graphics. I will explain when I see you and everyone. I expect the shirts in less than 3 weeks. These will be short sleeve Beefy T with front pockets. Some long sleeve also. Hope to see everyone soon. Bill Langer

JACK GEERS' RIDE

June 14, 2003

Mike French

On Saturday morning, June 14, Jack put on a "River Road Ride" to Pere Marquette for lunch. About eight of us met for breakfast at Jack's in Florissant for a fine assortment of donuts, coffee, fruit, juices and caviar.

Jack showed off his '66 Atlas project coming along nicely. It's a rolling chassis, finally. He's just now into the "easy part", i.e. engine and transmission (I think because these are being done in my basement?). It's going to be the business. An Atlas will surely be a welcome sight in our mostly Commando club.

In attendance were: Jack Geers, Mel Heffron, Ted Hoyer, Bill Langer, Tom Mitchell, Ron Sutton, John Wuebbeling and myself. Joe came for the caviar but couldn't make the ride. You know, "domestic stuff". I hope I didn't forget anyone.

We left Jack's and made our way to 367, then into Alton, up backroads at a relaxed pace to Pere Marquette State Park for lunch. If you've not been inside the Lodge you're really missing out - it's really cool!

Lunch was a deluxe affair, great food. We all cooled off and had iced tea. I tried my best to tell the most lies but everyone was in top form for this part.

We cruised back down the River Road with a nice breeze off the old Mississipp', adding to the really beautiful view. Back to Alton where most went their separate ways towards home. A great leisurely-paced ride. I don't think any Norton's even missed a beat and no tool kits came out - a rare sight indeed.

The 1969 Norton Mercury 650
owner: Bill Rueckert **purchased: 1982**

Most Norton and classic motorcycle enthusiasts that I talk to have never heard of this rare model. Many say, "What kind of Mercury." Little wonder, as the model was a very limited, one year production, made for the West Coast distributor from left-over factory bits. This was done after Commando production was in full swing.

The Mercury 650 was marketed as "A very affordable, no frills model", and was a total failure in sales. It was overshadowed by the popular Commando and the tide of Japanese imports.

Dealers with stagnant inventory of the Mercury 650 soon resorted to modifying and "customizing" models in stock to make them more marketable. The Mercury motorcycles that were sold in stock configuration soon were modified by subsequent owners. Therefore, it is rare indeed to find a totally stock, original example.

My Mercury was found in a one car garage at a home in Hazelwood. A co-worker mentioned it to me as "some kind of Norton single" owned by his uncle. It was in a state of disrepair, a partial basket case, as the primary drive was disassembled with most parts missing. Therefore, there was no means of turning the engine through to check for seizure or

compression. My purchase was made without the condition of the engine and transmission being known.

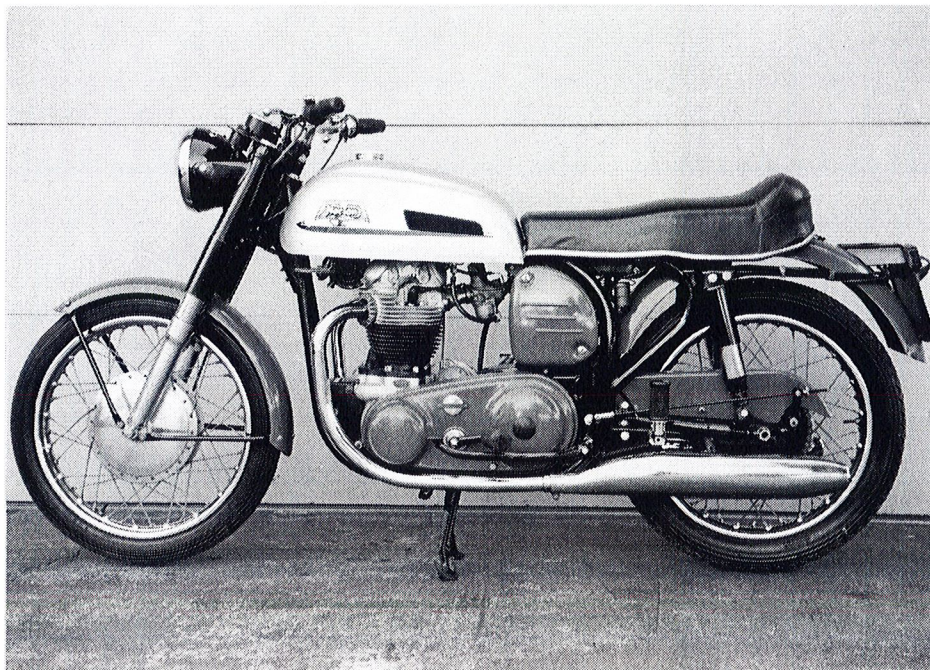
All of the primary drive parts had to be located: engine sprocket, clutch basket and plate assembly, chain, back side housing, etc. Most of these were purchased at Donelson Cycles. The original primary cover, which is stamped steel and painted the original Atlantic blue was with the machine. The painted fenders, oil tank, and tool box cover are original matching color.

With the primary drive completed, I then determined that the engine and transmission were defect-free and in outstanding, excellent condition. There were 2,600 miles on the clock, and the tires were original.

The Mercury has many fine features that enthusiasts seek today but were shunned 33 years ago such as:

- Featherbed frame - slim line
- Road holder forks
- 650 SS engine
- Single carburetor
- Atlas fuel tank and mufflers

It is a good possibility that this Mercury may be the only one remaining in the original unrestored condition.



[This is what I like - two perspectives on the same event. More pictures are scattered throughout this newsletter. Thanks guys. Editor.]

Spring Tune-up Steve Hurst

Sunday, May 18, the day dawned nebulous, as it was the second "Norton Day" of 2003. This one was hosted by member Kurt Baue at his abode in historic St. Charles. Club members started arriving around noon with most present at 1 p.m. Those in attendance were treated to an informal lunch of smoked ham, chips, potato salad and assorted libations.

Most members performed light maintenance on their bikes while others observed and offered assistance or advice. Some of the works performed were: Joe Jump, new front tire; John Wuebbeling, new fork springs; Mike French, fix oil leak and

four transmission fluid changes; and myself, new fork oil. I believe this was hosted by Kurt because his Norton hadn't run in a year and needed new tires and the most work of all.

Other members present were Bill Langer, Jack Geers, Tom Mitchell, Ted Hoyer, and Roger Yount. Roger rode his "Colorado Norton Works" bike and was asked by several members if he would like to exchange various parts, but he refused. Much was accomplished that day and a good time was had by all. Special thanks to Kurt for his hospitality and loan of tools.





Kurt's Norton "Fix It" Day! Tom Mitchell

This last May, our esteemed member Kurt Baue put on a rather fantastic fix-your-bike day. The weather was right and Kurt had everything ready to go. Places for bikes to be worked on were here and there, Kurt's tools were abundantly handed out, even the "Commando shed" was spotless.

Some of us changed fork springs (John and me), Mike replaced his engine drive side main seal (belt drive primary), Kurt's bike had various problems attended to, Bill Langer just installed a single carb setup (nice!), Steve did what (?), Joe's fastback had something done, Roger's "Colorado Norton Works" bike obviously needed nothing. Ted's bike needed some work but we didn't have that much time. I believe all these problems were fixed entirely and in a very professional way.

Precision repair and replacement was the order of the day.

You know, I personally think that a Commando work day is maybe more fun than anything. Why? Because like playing a sport, you learn a lot about your fellow Norton owner. Helping and encouraging each other, getting little or big problems solved, is great fun. Some are more gifted in repair than others, but sharing knowledge and a wrench, holding a fork tube, or checking front and rear wheel alignment together - it doesn't get much better than this. Finally, going for that follow-up ride and realizing that the problem is fixed. . . eureka! This is fun.

To top off the afternoon, does anyone remember the sumptuous barbequed whole ham Kurt made for us? That was worth it in itself. Thanks Kurt for a phenomenal day.

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[While checking other club websites, Joe found this article. Being concerned with safety we asked the author if we could reprint this in our newsletter. He graciously agreed and we are thankful.]

Group Riding Etiquette

by George Tuttle

Reprinted with permission from the North Texas Norton Owners Assn.

Although I have met and know most of you by now, you may not know that much about my own background. I retired from the Air Force fourteen years ago where I flew supersonic jets for twenty years. The last fifteen of which were spent flying tactical fighters, F-4 Phantoms and F-16 Fighting Falcons. During those twenty years, formation flying was a way of life. Many of the formations we flew dated back to WWI and earlier. Each particular formation was designed for very specific technical and tactical reasons using a healthy dose of common sense, all of which still apply today.

The same can be said for motorcycle formations and spacing during group rides. The aviation rationale, disciplines and some formations directly apply to motorcycle group rides. Your position within the group should be logical and based on common sense.

The following are a few common sense guidelines I use when riding in a group. Some are extremely basic but may be useful for the first time group rider or even for some of the more experienced riders who have simply not had an opportunity to give it much thought until now. Most of the following discussion is intended for group rides of around ten bikes or less. Larger groups may necessitate some modification and/or additions. Whenever possible it is best to match the skills, machines and riding/speed preferences of the group even if it requires splitting the main group into two or more sub-groups. The use of "he/him" is generic and applies to both sexes.

1) Your first priority must be safety. The fact that you are now riding in a formation should not increase your risk or that of others. For that reason everyone must ride their own ride in a manner that keeps them in their comfort zone. Never exceed your capability or comfort zone just to keep up. If the pace is too quick for you - back off until you feel comfortable. The group will eventually slow to your pace. There is no need to rush to avoid becoming lost or separated from the group.

2) Discipline is essential. When riding in a group, you automatically forfeit some personal autonomy. You should normally maintain your relative position within the group unless doing so would compromise safety. Randomly changing positions is an indication of an undisciplined rider, increases risk for everyone else and should not be condoned. There may be times when changing your position in the formation is the safe thing to do. But before you do, you should have a good reason and it shouldn't be frequent.

3) Trust your leader. This is a two-way deal. You should trust your leader and he must be competent to lead. A good leader will always take into account the equipment, experience and skill level of each rider. He needs to tailor his riding accordingly. A common practice I would like to see more of is a concise briefing by the leader just before the ride. Depending on the nature of the ride and the familiarity of those within the group, this briefing may only take a minute or two. As a minimum, the leader should outline the route and establish the overall tone

for the ride. Questions should be addressed before the helmets go on.

4) Pay attention and don't assume. This is so basic and elementary that it should not need to be addressed. However, far too many accidents have occurred during group rides where someone just stopped paying attention for a split second and ran into the person in front of them. Be aware of your spacing behind the rider in front in terms of time. Know your own reaction time and stopping capability and don't ride any closer in point of time. Never assume the rider in front will continue at his current pace and never look away for any longer than an instant.

When accelerating from a stop, especially in conjunction with a turn, don't assume the rider in front will continue to accelerate just because his brake light went out and he started to roll. He could subsequently see something that causes him to stop while you are looking over your shoulder for traffic and run into him. Unfortunately, this scenario has also played out all too often.

5) Each rider is directly responsible for the rider behind them. This enhances mutual support. If the rider behind you starts to fall back, so should you. If you lose sight of the person behind you, slow down for a while. If that doesn't work after a period of time - turn around. Something has obviously happened and he probably could use your help. As you can see, if the last person in the formation had his engine quit (ran out of gas) or crashed eventually the entire group would be at his aid. For larger groups the leader should identify smaller units that would stay together for such situations. If it is necessary to stop or if you decide to take a different route, it is essential that someone in the group knows where you are.

A good technique that makes it easy for the guy in front of you to see you is to position yourself so you can see his eyes in his mirror. If you can't see his eyes, he can't see you without

moving his head. This is even more applicable if he only has one mirror.

6) Type of formation (staggered, trail, line abreast) and spacing. This depends on your environment (weather, road type and condition, speed, congestion, etc.), and your mission. One extreme would be in heavy stop and go rush-hour traffic at very slow speeds. A close staggered formation with no less than nose/tail clearance (unless stopped) might be the smartest formation. In city traffic a closely spaced formation will discourage cars from "cutting" in. Leave them room and they may be tempted to cut-in. Better to tighten up the spacing a bit so cars perceive the group as a homogeneous unit.

The other extreme would be a "spirited" ride out in the hill country on a twisty open road with no traffic. Here the smart formation might be an extended trail just keeping the guy in front and in back of you in sight.

For me line abreast is strictly a "show" formation suitable for funerals, processions and such and has no place in an informal group ride. It diminishes your margin of error and increases risk of a collision. However, when pulling up to a stop, stopping two abreast is probably a good idea.

Unless briefed otherwise, during the course of a typical informal group ride your position (formation and spacing) should be fluid and dictated by the overall situation. You might find yourself going from a close staggered to an extended trail formation and back again all in a relatively short amount of time.

At times you may want to have increased spacing to avoid road hazards like rock chips while at the same time desire to keep the formation relatively tight. Two bikes riding close staggered in trail with other groups of two works well in this case.

Sometimes when on a two-lane road riding staggered and you find yourself on the left track it is a good idea to move over to the right

momentarily when on-coming traffic passes. This is especially true for larger vehicles like 18-wheelers. This is to have a little more distance and time in case something falls off; he veers towards you, or throws a "grit blast" in his wake.

7) Establishing the spacing. Because there are so many variables that could dictate the optimum spacing, number two in the formation should normally set the spacing for the group. Nobody else is in a position to logically set or change the spacing in a fluid environment. As such, the number two rider should be experienced and have a solid understanding of group ride dynamics. In city traffic you may need to frequently make minor deviations to the group spacing to avoid running in the blind-spots of other vehicles.

Although you may be number five and can't see number two, you would only need to maintain the spacing that number four has on three. In other words, set your own spacing based on the spacing taken by the guy in front of you. Don't exceed your comfort level in order to maintain spacing.

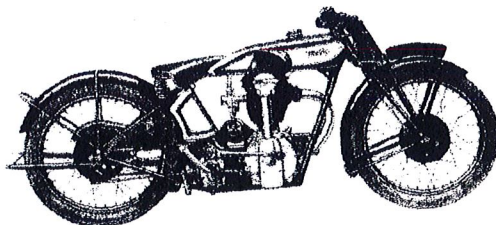
8) Speed and lanes. It depends. The leader initially sets the pace but eventually the slowest rider should normally determine it. If everyone follows the guidelines above then speed will take care of itself. A modification to this might be on country rides where there is a pre-ride agreement that the faster riders will be in the front of the group and the slower riders in the rear, and that the faster group will wait at all turn-decision points until the second group catches up. A common misconception is that going slower is always safer. Not true. On our superslabs, going slower can get you killed.

With few exceptions, the leader must tailor aggressiveness and average speed to the lowest level of capability in the group. Capability is defined and limited by skill, experience, machine or a combination of all three. Speed preferences should be discussed and agreed upon before the ride begins.

On multilane roads the group should strive to be in the same lane as the leader. However, don't compromise safety to get there. If a car cuts into the formation, analyze the best course of action to get back in formation. You might just want to ride it out behind the car for a while if other options aren't obvious.

Normally on our superslabs the leader should be in what he considers to be the safest lane for conditions. Many times with modern bikes and competent riders this is the furthest left lane going just slightly faster than the general traffic flow. This limits, but doesn't negate your vulnerability from the rear by the hyper-speeders. Generally the right lane has the most hazards in the form of exiting and entering cars at sometimes drastically different speeds. A middle lane also has its hazards. In a middle lane, you are subject to "crazies" on both sides of you and it is difficult to "isolate" the threat.

In conclusion, these are just a few of my thoughts on riding in a group. I'm sure there are other ideas, techniques or guidelines that I missed. I hope that this will stimulate a discussion on the subject and would like to solicit your thoughts and comments for future publication. The more we learn and talk about group riding the better off (and safer) we will be while riding in a group. Thanks for your time. Ride safe!



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GNOA Treasury Report 2003
updated 7-02-03

	<u>Debits</u>	<u>Deposits</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Brought forward from 2002			\$314.14
March 15	-----	\$ 50.00	\$364.14
April 1	-----	\$ 20.00	\$384.14
May 9	-----	\$ 20.00	\$404.14
July 2	-----	\$ 10.00	\$414.14

Record of Activities 2003

Jan/Feb	No Activity	
Mar	3-15	Received \$20 from G. Hollowich to apply towards club dues. Received \$10 from M. Prosser to apply towards club dues. Received \$5 from R. Yount to apply towards club dues. Received \$15 From J. Hughes as payment for club T-shirt.
Apr	1	Received from Mike Poirot \$20 to apply towards club dues.
May	9	Received from Ron Sutton \$20 to apply towards club dues.
July	2	Received from Lyle Perry \$10 to apply towards club dues.

CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale: 1973 Interstate 750 Combat. This premium high performance model is in pristine condition, with all the original fiberglass/plastic weight saving panels; seat pan, side covers, fuel tank (alcohol proof liner); a beautiful and very fast example with only 9,000 miles. It will be advertised in the Norton News (INOA), at \$5,000, but will be offered exclusively to GNOA and EMU members at a bargain price. Bill Rueckert 314-741-1022.

For Sale: Unpolished stainless steel spokes with nickel plated brass nipples for a "cotton reel" rear-hubbed Norton. When I ordered spokes for my ES2 from Central Wheel Components I was sent two rear sets instead of one front and one rear. \$50. Marty Dupree 636-398-4049.

A LITTLE LEVITY

A man is stranded on a desert island, all alone for ten years. One day, he sees a speck on the horizon. He thinks to himself, "It's not a ship". The speck gets even closer and he thinks, "It's not a boat". The speck gets even closer and he thinks, "It's not a raft".

Then out of the surf comes this gorgeous blonde woman wearing a wetsuit and scuba gear. She comes up to the guy and says, "How long has it been since you've had a cigarette?" "Ten years", he says.

She reaches over, unzips a waterproof pocket on her left sleeve and pulls out a pack of fresh cigarettes. He takes one, lights it, takes a long drag and says, "Man, oh man! Is that good!"

Then she asks, "How long has it been since you've had a drink of whiskey?" He replies, "Ten years!" She reaches over, unzips her waterproof pocket on the right, pulls out a flask and gives it to him. He takes a long swig and says, "Wow, that's fantastic!"

Then she starts unzipping this long zipper that runs down the front of her wetsuit and she says to him, "And how long has it been since you've had some REAL fun?" And the man replies, "My God! Don't tell me you've got a motorcycle in there!"

GNOA CAPTION CONTEST!!

Mike is never at a loss for words. What do you think he should have said at this instant? Your suggestions will be printed in the next newsletter. The winning caption judged by *yours truly* will win a year's membership to the club. Oh yeah, taking my cue from the Nixon Watergate tapes, all expletives will be deleted.



Mid-Ohio Report

I'm sure most of you guys know Brent Jones from the EMU-he rides around on an old Guzzi with a sidecar that always has a cooler in it. Well a couple years ago, Brent signed up for the Sea Bees Reserves & he was called up last month. He's now sitting in Kuwait doing Gen Set Watches & leaning up against a 50 cal *[and I thought the government showed bad judgment by giving him a motorcycle license. Editor.]* watching the ships come & go in the Persian Gulf. I've been e-mailing him (jbrentjones@yahoo.com) to keep him up on what's happening. Below is a short report on Mid-Ohio that I thought you all might enjoy.

So Brent,

Having a good time, are you? Not to rub it in, but I thought you might enjoy a short report from Mid-Ohio.

The Norton group from St Louis was well represented; Mike French, Steve Hurst, John Webelling, Jack Geers, Tom Mitchell, Mel Heffron, Dennis Spencer, Ron Sutton, & myself. I rode out with John & Jack with our bikes on a trailer but only as far as Indy, where the two of them let me off & I hooked up with another Norton guy (Bret) who we have been meeting at Honey Creek Campground for the last couple years. Bret & I had a spirited ride on two-lane blacktop across Eastern Indiana/Western Ohio, stopping at a few taverns along the way. It was about 230 miles from Bret's place to Belleville, where the campground is located. When we pulled into Honey Creek, Jack & John had already set up camp & along with my buddies (Steve & Tom), who had just arrived from Maryland, were standing by to greet us. Quickly set up tents, had numerous other carbonated malt beverages, then hit the rack for a short period of unconsciousness.

Got to the track early on Friday & jumped into the swap meet. It was bigger than ever this year, but I found the junk less desirable than in past years, along with being priced on the verge of laughable. I ended up spending \$1 for all my efforts. I passed on a good Guzzi deal though; it was a 1000cc Convert changed over to a 5-speed. It ran great, it was missing one brake hose, and it had the OEM Guzzi solo saddle along with an aftermarket dual saddle. \$1200 & at one time \$1000 would have bought it. I just didn't need another bike so I passed-probably shouldn't have. Got back to camp around 6pm where I hooked up with Mike & Steve for the first time-they got there Friday morning. Went out to dinner, then back to the campfire for refreshments & BS session. Mike & Steve had a great story about their sleep-over in a rest stop-truth is stranger than fiction! You'll have to ask one of them about it-I can't do the story justice!

Saturday I didn't even go into the swap meet. I spent some time in the Norton Corral, sponsored by the Ohio Norton Owners, & mostly spent time at different areas along the infield fence watching racing-had a great time! At 5pm I went to the Loop Frame internet list get-together. It's pretty cool to meet these guys face to face & see their bikes. Had some refreshments & talked to a bunch of guys. I met Mr. V-7 Sport, a guy who has 10 restored V-7 Sports! Also met Gordon of MG Cycles, who supplied many parts for your Ambo engine rebuild. We left there & went into the pits, where I saw Don Fromm-talked to him for a while & checked out his race bike & others too. The pits are really sweet there, especially for those in the garages (where Don was). Time went by fast & I had to beat feet back to camp, because Steve & Mike were putting together a strip steak dinner for all-we ate like kings! Back to the campfire for refreshments 7 more BS. Steve (from Maryland) made a speed run into town to get some supplies, including materials to make a blueberry cobbler in a Dutch Oven-we were stylin'!

Sunday morning came around too fast. Basically we broke camp, loaded up, & hit the road. I trailered back with Jack & John, getting home around 6pm. Biggest loss of the whole trip was I lost my gloves. Nobody fell down or got a ticket-all went well!

Hurry up & come back home so you can go with us next year.

J. Jump



"Yes officer, that's him. Fourth from the left."

Roger Yount's "Colorado Norton Works" bike.

