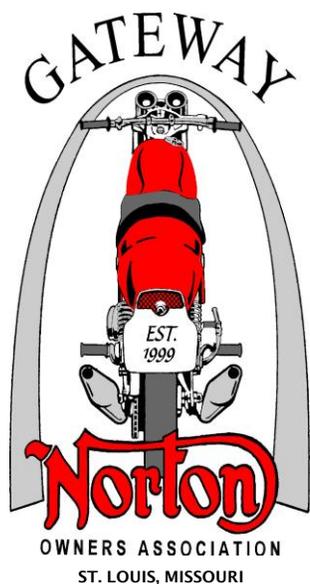


Gateway Norton Owners News #63



**"To Promote the
Use and Pride of
Norton Motorcycle Ownership"**

Compiled by King Mike and Steve Hurst
2nd Quarter 2017



Minutes from the Spring Meeting

May 6, 2017

Meeting was called to order by Club King Mike at 1:00 pm. Membership was announced at 48 members. New Business was open and discussed

with possible rides coming up. A need for articles for the newsletter. Thanks to Steve Hurst for a demonstration. John Wuebbeling said he will be hosting a fall ride in October. The fall Weenie Ride will also be happening again date to be announced. Treasury report was called for and given by Steve Hurst. (See newsletter for after meeting update.) Trash Pick up report was given by Steve with attendees thanked for showing up and participating. Activities ride to the Springfield Mile race was talked about by Gary Highfill for May 28th. Indian has been winning. Meet at Tony's Ranch House at 9:00am for ride to the race on Sunday. A Barber Fall Festival was talked about with a group transport. The King said he may host a August Tech session/meeting date to be announced. Thanks were given to Kurt for hosting the excellent Meeting and refreshments on such a fine day! Motion was called for and seconded for adjournment at 1:45pm. Special thanks to Tom Mitchell for taking the minutes for me as I cannot remember all this after a while.

Steve Hurst

Kings Korner

So... a lot has happened with technology lately! Agreed? Several years ago I went nuts with halogen everything on my Commando,; H4 headlight conversion, Krypton instrument bulbs, 2057 shake-proof taillight bulb, I even tried a 100 watt bluey colored headlight bulb that would fry bugs before they hit it. Poor old 45 year old alternator...(Which reminds me, of the last thing that crosses a bugs mind before it hits your H-4 headlight? His ass.) Seriously... Led bulbs are the way to go friends. They draw sometimes 1/10 the amperes and deliver 4X the lumens in some cases. I recently changed all the fluorescent bulbs in my basement to Led's, to save energy and reduce my footprint. WOW what a difference.. I Realized I needed mo Light on my 47 Norton after experiencing total darkness in the Tunnels of the Blue Ridge Parkway last year. Scared the Crap out of me and I aint scared of nothing! So went on-line to a British place, called Regulators and Dynamos and got a new regulator and spruced up the old Lucas Dynamo, changed it to pos. earth... Why you ask? ...because my ground wires are red, and I don't think backwards too well, lately.. I had to put a reminder sticker on my battery that said this vehicle is wired neg. earth and the red lead is negative! Confused? It got a bit brighter, and thought I was in tall, well-lit cotton, but a putt down the ol' river road said otherwise.

These same fine folks had just what I thought I needed.... A 6 volt, Positive earth, pre-focus, dipping, Led bulb, but they were quite proud of it. I bought hook, line,& sinker. Heck, let's get an Led 6 volt pos. ground tail light bulb too! Only another 6 Quid .

I must say, I was amazed at what happened. According to my 60 year old amp gauge, the pilot draws twice the amps as the Led does, and.... I CAN SEE.... In the dark! The tiny taillight is now visible too!

Guess what I did next? Bought 2 Led Instrument bulbs for the Speedo and Tach. On my Commando. Wow another epiphany. So.... Let's see what I can do for the Commando headlight. I already had the H-4 conversion, but was a bit concerned about my positive ground condition, I thought about backwards wiring once more and got a bad

headache. Most Led bulbs are polarity sensitive and this problem caused a lot of thought. ...Send a pos. signal from my headlight switch to the bulb for hi-lo and a neg. (hot) signal to the base of it? More backwards thought. I got one for motorcycles on E-Bay for about \$17.00 with a miniature cooling fan in the rear of it. (cute) Plugged it in, and couldn't believe what I saw. Seemed it was not polarity sensitive. No more backward thinking. I saw the Light, No more darkness. Just delight. Hi- beam? Don't need it! Highly recommended.

The Norton Starter Motor.
Dale Knaus May 2017

The following is a long-winded description of the trials and tribulations of getting a working starter motor on a Norton.

When I bought my 1975 Norton Mk III Commando from Bill Henderson in 2001, it came with a Boyer ignition and a Mikuni carb. All it ever took was one or two kicks to start, even after setting all winter. But the starter motor would start the bike only when it was warm, I seldom even tried it unless the motor had been run and warmed up, and then only if the motor died at a stoplight or something like that. In other words the starter motor was very weak, and turned the motor over slowly.

When I overhauled the engine a couple of years ago I looked at the starter motor. It was close to being shot. It was full of rust from years of gas draining onto it and flushing out any remnants of lubricant or rust preventative coatings, and the brushes were severely worn. Anticipating returning the bike to electric start someday, and since the motor was out of the frame and it was easy, I went ahead and installed very large diameter wiring from battery to solenoid, solenoid to starter, and the ground (Positive) from battery to the frame, thus assuring very low current drop in the wiring during starter motor engagement. I also put in a new starter sprag during the overhaul.

A year later when I was having starting problems with the bike, I installed a PowerArc ignition system. One of the advertised advantages of the PowerArc unit is its ability to perform well at a lower voltage than the previous old Boyer ignition system. It was said that when the starter motor was pulling hard the battery output voltage would drop below the threshold the Boyer was happy at. One thing about the PowerArc is that when the ignition is turned on, the first time the engine turns over the unit sets the timing and then on compression it makes a spark.

I have been having starting problems for some time now, often taking 10 or 12 kicks to get the old girl started when cold. (I even occasionally resorted to using ether starter fluid). Warm starting has not been a problem. The electric starter wasn't even strong enough to engage the sprag; it would just turn slowly and make noise. Last summer when Mike French worked on the bike, he installed a larger battery for me, once again looking forward to using an electric starter.

So the time came this spring to get the electric starter motor repaired or replaced.

I took the starter apart, and found that the brushes were now just small nubs, totally shot, and both fell off the wires very easily. The armature's bearing surface was worn and corroded on the brush end, and the bushing at that end (originally 3/8" ID X 1/2" OD) was now about 7/16" ID.

I checked with Carl Donelson, and he had a Chinese made replacement starter (doesn't look stock, but is supposed to be a better starter) and new old stock armature and brushes for my original Prestolite manufactured starter. As most of you know, Prestolite is an American company who supplied the Norton factory with the starters. These are reportedly the same starters used on some outboard engines of that era. (Prestolite also made Sportster starters, but they are not the same, and turned backwards from the Norton units.) According to Carl, the original starters are more than adequate if the wiring size to them is increased and the battery is kept in good shape.

My next stop was Gary Hollowich's machine shop, to get his opinion on machining the old armature end bearing surface, which had some pretty deep pits from corrosion. This would make it necessary to make a new bushing for that end of the motor, sized to the newly turned armature OD. After some discussion, Gary advised I go to Starter and Alternator Tech located near Granite City Steel, and check with them.

There I spoke with the grandson of the owner, who was learning the trade. He advised I come back the following Monday and speak with Rick who is his grandfather and the shop owner.

The next day I stopped at Donelson's and bought a new armature and brushes, and then bought a new bushing from Branneky Hardware.

Later, I discovered that I had lost one of the springs for the brushes, and when I cleaned up the brush plate realized that one of the brush holders was badly corroded and in need of replacement.

Back to Starter and Alternator Tech, I spoke with Rick, who initially thought I was bringing in “some foreign starter” which he didn’t want to work on. But after seeing the Prestolite he said he probably had a brush plate and spring, and agreed to work on it. By this time I had re-evaluated my soldering capabilities, so I left the starter with him to solder in the brushes and reassemble.

At the end of the week his son, the middle generation working there, called me to pick up the repaired starter. I didn’t talk with Rick again, but learned he had some trouble figuring out the reassembly since the unit was completely apart when he first saw it. But they figured it out and had it together and working.

When I went to reinstall, I discovered the drive end was installed 180 degrees out – putting the electrical connection on the bottom, but that was quickly and easily resolved. They had added a quick paint job to the case, which I spent a little time making better but it is by no means a concourse finish.

This spring I went through the bike and changed the oils in the engine, primary, and transmission, checked timing again, checked valve settings, installed a new horn, and generally just went over the bike to insure roadworthiness. Installing the starter was the last item on the list.

Now for the test. Turn on the gas. Set the choke. Turn off the headlight. Turn on the ignition key. Hit the starter button.

The engine spun fast – and fired on the second revolution. WOW. As of this writing, I’ve started it several times, cold or hot, and it spins fast and starts immediately every time.

Hopefully it will continue to do so, and will last another 40 years. And Carl was right, the original starter motor is more than adequate for the job.

Trash Pickup Update

Steve Hurst

On Sunday June 11, we had our second pickup of the year (there will be 4) 5 club members were present with 8 bags of trash collected. I want to thank all who helped. Our next date will be Sunday July 16at 10:00am and again on Saturday Sept.16 also at 10:00am.Hope to see you there!

I would like to thank Bill Henkel for stepping forward to do the newsletter when I "retired" from the post. I also want to apologize for not contributing things to make the newsletter a success. It is not the editor's job alone to write the newsletter. Everyone should submit at least one item each year. By doing that we will have a newsletter that is interesting to read and will come out on time. Thanks again, Bill.

Want ad:

Wanted: Motorcycle related paper items. Pictures, postcards, flyers, business cards, matchbooks, ticket stubs, race programs, decals, stickers, manufacturer brochures...almost anything. What do you have cluttering up your house/garage? Let it clutter mine. Marty Dupree 636-386-4049 madx2@centurytel.net

THE SPEEDWAY RACES OF PARDUBICE, CZECHOSLOVAKIA

by Marty Dupree

(Race labels from my ephemera collection)

This was from a Czechoslovakian Site

Golden Helmet still attractive

Hladěna and Trnka were riders who started motorcycle speedway races in Pardubice on the grassy oval of the racecourse in the late 1920s. Soon after that, on 29th September 1929, the East Bohemian Automobile Club organized the first year of the Golden Helmet of the Czechoslovak Republic here (the name as well as the non-traditional trophy were also thought up by both aforementioned pioneers). Zdeněk Pohl won the first Golden Helmet with exclusively Czechoslovak participation, other years could register riders from other countries and winners were also often from abroad.

The Golden Helmet was organized each year until World War Two, and soon returned to the grassy oval after the war was over. František Hladěna, who lost his life due to his participation in resistance during the war, did not live to see it, however. The first post-war Golden Helmet in 1947 was seen by a record number of 130 thousand spectators enthusiastically applauding to Hugo Rosák, the Czechoslovak winner. In 1949 and 1951 two more meetings took place but after the communists took over control of the country the famous race slowly declined and later was not organized at all.

Fortunately in the early 1960s, ten years later, a group of local enthusiasts renewed the Golden Helmet and so three more meetings were ridden on grass with great interest shown by the general public in the period from 1961 to 1963. Unfortunately, three fatal accidents occurred during those races, which contributed to the decision to move the race to a typical speedway stadium in nearby Svítkov in the end.

Since 1964 the further history of the Golden Helmet has therefore been recorded on the oval in Svítkov every year; the race is ridden with the use of the unique eliminative system which is considered to be the most just in the world. In 2008, the Golden Helmet enjoyed its 60th year and is therefore the oldest speedway race on the planet.

A unique exhibition mapping the history of the famous race with a great number of exhibits, first of all the most precious trophies – golden helmets, was opened in Kaňka's hall in the East Bohemian Museum having its seat in Pardubice castle on the occasion of this jubilee year.

Ole Olsen from Denmark is the most successful Golden Helmet winner with seven victories; but riders from Australia and the USA also enjoyed the prestigious Pardubice trophy in addition to Europeans.

Gene Tella, who represented former Abyssinia, i.e. Ethiopia, in Pardubice during pre-war years, was probably the most exotic participant in the Golden Helmet.

Ivan Mager and Barry Briggs, multiple world champions from New Zealand who used to come to Pardubice for more than 10 years, were the most unlucky Golden Helmet riders; neither ever managed to get hold of the longed-for trophy.

The most tragic Golden Helmet race was in 1961, when German rider Erich Stiegelmaier and local Libor Dušánek did not survive a collision during training. Ari Bastian Poldevaart from the Netherlands (1934), Jaroslav Němeček (1947), Antonín Vilde (1963) and – in the oval at Svítkov – Luboš Tomíček (1968) became other Golden Helmet victims. One Bohemian garnet in the shape of a blood drop is on the trophy – Golden Helmet – to commemorate each victim of the race.

Antonín Kasper is the only name under which two different Golden Helmet winners are hidden – the father won the last race on grass in 1963, the son was successful twenty-eight years later.

Tomáš Topinka became the last Czech winner of the Golden Helmet in 1996.

From Wikipedia

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RACE FORMAT

Exclusionary groups - Twenty four riders are divided into four exclusionary groups of six riders. Three runs are held in each exclusionary group. Riders change in individual runs according to a predetermined key starting position. Six riders together compete on the track in each single run. Three best riders advance from each exclusionary group to quarterfinal stage of the race. Two best results obtained from three runs are counted into the classification results of each individual group. The rider can skip any ride.

Quarterfinals - Quarterfinal groups consist of twelve riders advancing from the exclusion round and twelve seeded riders. They are divided again into four groups of six riders. Three quarterfinal rides take place in each group. Three best riders advance from each quarterfinal group in the semifinals.

Semifinals - Twelve riders are divided within two semifinal groups of on the basis of the results of the quarterfinal groups according to the rolling keys. Three runs in each semifinal group are held. Riders change in individual races according to a predetermined key starting position.

Finals - Riders of 1 to 3 places of semifinal groups advance to the finals to compete for Golden Helmet. Riders of 4 to 6 position then participate in small finale of 7 to 12 place in the race.

This race, held in 1935, was won by Herm. Gunzenhauser from Germany. Second place: Eric Bertram from Germany. Third place: Leopold Killmeyer from Austria. There were 40,000 people in attendance to watch 53 riders from twelve countries.

The 1936 race was again won by Herm. Gunzenhauser.
Second place: Hans Buttler, Germany.
Third place: Eric Bertram, Germany.
Attendance was down to 30,000 but there were 66 riders from fourteen countries.

There were no races held in 1937. They were cancelled due to the national economy.

1938: This year must have made the home town population crazy with excitement. There was a clean sweep of the top three positions by Czechoslovakians.

First place: Frantisek Juhan
Second place: Stanislav Václav
Third place: Jan Lucák

Attendance was 35,000 with 43 riders from seven countries.

There were no races held from 1939 through 1946 due to World War II. When the races resumed in 1947, there must have been an enormous pent-up demand to get their minds off of what the world had been through.

The attendance for the 1947 race was 130,000! From that year forward the races were held every two years.

Results were:

First place: Hugo Rosak, Czechoslovakia
Second place: Karl Killmeyer, Austria
Third place: Miloslav Spinka, Czechoslovakia

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Hope everyone enjoyed this newsletter and chances are you need to send me your dues. \$5.00. Steve
966 Weybridge Ct West St. Charles, Mo 63304. 636-634 0033