



Newsletter

December 2022

A small job as always turns into something bigger.

Gino Rondelli

After decades of working on Commando's it is no surprise when a "quick" job turns into something bigger. I decided a few weeks ago that my Mk3 Commando needed some TLC over winter, mainly the swing arm bushes were worn and the rear wheel steering was becoming very noticeable, now as we all know the Commando is just two wheels held together with a rubber band. Add in a swing arm with more sloppiness than a prostitutes knicker elastic and you realise it was time to address the issue. Commando's are brilliant bikes and they continue to perform far better than they should do even after long term neglected maintenance, but eventually if you don't want to add to your stories of unplanned maintenance at the roadside action is required.

The Mk3 swing arm is different from the early ones, there is no grease nipple (which should be filled with EP140 oil and not grease!) The swing arm is sealed for "life" with a press fit Welch washer either side and a arrangement of "wicks" to help the oil flow, these wicks I realise do nothing but go very hard over 45 years and wick nothing as the EP140 obviously left for a better place decades ago.

Anyway I digress, first thing the primary side has to come off which on the MK3 is a laborious task but at least I got to check out the sprag clutch which was ok. Taking off the inner case gave me a chance to check out the front sprocket which was of course needing replaced. Rear wheel off, rear brake calliper and master cylinder removed, sprocket off, rear shock's disconnected then realise the oil filter housing has to come off to give access to the cotter pins. I found the best way to remove the cotter pins is to undo the nuts a little and

use a punch to knock them through, easing the nut off a few threads at a time, do not be tempted to try this too quickly or you will bend the threaded part of the cotter pin making it impossible to remove in situ (guess what) If you do bend them then you have to remove the gearbox and then the gearbox cradle in one along with the centre stand!

Now the bike looks like half a bike with lots of oily parts strewn across the garage, great fun. Removing the spindle means getting the Welch washers out (Drill the centre and use a self tapper to remove them, the manual suggests not to do this as metal filing will get onto the bushes but there is no way I intend reusing the bushes or spindle anyway)

I suppose assembly will be the opposite of disassembly as they say but it would be rude not to check out the gearbox while it's on the bench, and I may powder coat the swing arm.....

Like all those jobs you start off with a simple bit of maintenance in mind but then you realise you in too deep and are helping to keep the Norton spares emporiums solvent.

Nortons, bah Humbug, Merry Christmas!

Gino



More broken Commando news

You may recall, I failed to attend the Tattie Howkers meeting this year due to a badly running Commando. I was reasonably convinced the poor running was being caused by water ingress - there was certainly plenty of opportunity. When I checked it over in the comfort of a dry shed, I failed to find any obvious cause - no bare wires or dodgy connections and certainly no visible arcing when running it in the dark. But even when properly dried out (this is Argyll, so "dry" is a relative notion) it still didn't feel like it was running properly. I continued to search, stripped the carb, set the valves, checked the ignition switch and battery with my multimeter, but again no smoking gun (or smoking earth wire) was found. With it all back together the following Sunday I set out for a test ride and barely got a mile before it began to misfire and eventually died when I tried to u-turn for home. More roadside checking showed a lack sparks which mysteriously returned by themselves!

Anyway, to cut the sorry tale short, I sent the Pazon box off for testing, along with a "spare" I had under the bench. I thought it would be worth the cost of the postage just to know if they were serviceable or not. Not sure when I will get them back, last time I sent one off I didn't get any kind of acknowledgement, a replacement just arrived in the post one day with a letter telling me it was faulty and here was the warranty replacement.

In the meantime, to test the coils, I connected up the spare Boyer box I take on holiday with me. The bike ran, but worse than ever - I'm guessing the Pazon stator plate and Boyer box aren't entirely compatible

Anyway, more to follow...

EVENTS

February Sunday 5th, 10:00 - 16:00

Haggis Gathering Autojumble
Laurie Symington Agricultural Centre, Lanark,
Lanarkshire, ML11 9AX

The SCRMC jumble is planned to make a welcome return this year. I've got my pen booked and have started preparing some merchandise (sorting through the fishbox from under the bench). A great opportunity to clear some space and/or meet folk to blether with. You might even find a bargain!



I'll give you two quid and a Mars bar for it?

16th to 19th June 2023

National Rally - The Solstice Rally #2
Rob Roy Hotel - Aberfoyle, Stirlingshire
The NOC National rally is being held again in Aberfoyle. All reports from the previous rally made it a first class event (check Gino's YouTube video for confirmation).

Booking is now open and places are limited - to be sure of a place you want to get in quick. To book follow the link at <https://www.nortonownersclub.org/events>