

Summer 1993

Volume 1 Number 2

What Me Wobble?

First, let me thank all of you who subscribed to the **ST1100 Newsletter**. The response has been tremendous! Obviously, there are many, like myself, that are wanting more information on the ST1100 and have found it hard to find. For those non HSTA members, I do want to mention there is another source, in HSTA's **STARReview**, Mike Morris editor, Rod Eastwood edits the "ST1100 Corner." Lots of useful information in those pages. More on how to contact them later.

The response to my informal survey appears later in this issue, but let me first say this: "Dear American Honda, the ST1100 DOES have a front wheel wobble problem!" **Over 50% of the respondents to the survey said they experienced a front wheel wobble.** Some have gone to great lengths with their dealers to get the problem resolved which has been somewhat, but not totally successful. And still, my last call to American Honda several weeks ago was

answered, "We have no reported problems of front wheel wobble on the ST1100." Well, as you will see later in this issue, I have written and expressed my concern but also the concerns of others so now American Honda does know. **However, if you are experiencing a wobble problem, then you must also write and let American Honda know, it is the only way they can understand just how many ST1100 owners are experiencing the problem.**

Now for the positive side of the response...with the exception of the wobble and some other various minor problems, like myself, it appears we all **love this bike!** In the survey results I will go into much more detail, but lets just say for now, **Honda has made one of the greatest motorcycles of all time in the ST1100.** And all of us were smart enough to buy it!! So lets give ourselves a well deserved pat on the back. Great job! Great Ride! I'll see you on the road. Ride Fun!

Grant

ST1100 Newsletter

Another Approach to ST1100 Headlight Replacement

by R. G. "Rock" Rhoades

Like Grant Norman, who wrote the "ST1100 Headlamp Halogen Bulb Replacement" article in the inaugural issue of the ST1100 Newsletter, I have converted my ST1100 to 55/60 halogen headlamps. However, I went the extra step and carved on the headlight housing.

Most auto parts stores carry the standard 55/60 H4 bulbs for about six or seven bucks. Not only is this bulb much cheaper than the \$32 Honda replacement, I can find it almost anywhere when I'm on the road. This argument alone convinced me to go ahead with the conversion, not to mention the advantages of seeing and being seen with a brighter headlight.

To convert your headlight housing to accept an unmodified 55/60 H4 bulb, you'll need the first ST1100 newsletter article, a Dremel Moto-Tool or similar small portable grinding tool, and a cylindrical plastic cutter head.

Start by following the first nine steps outlined by Mr. Norman in the first ST1100 Newsletter. At that point, remove the headlight adjustment knob (one Phillips setscrew). If you must rotate the knob to get to the setscrew, note the original setting.

Under the adjustment knob is a nylon jamnut. Remove it (water pump pliers work well - just be careful not to be too heavy-handed) and the washers under it, keeping the washers in the right order.

Now you can follow steps 10 and 11 of the original article. In step 12, instead of placing those towels on the front fender, lay them on your workbench. In step 13, be careful, because the housing will not now hang by the control cable as outlined in the article. When you pull the housing out of the fairing halves, simply pull the adjustment cable assembly out with it.

With the headlight housing face-down on the towels, place a 55/60 bulb in each receptacle and use a felt-tip pen to mark the location for cutting the index notches in the plastic housing. In each receptacle, one notch will be new, while the other will be merely an extension of the existing notch for the 45/45 bulb.

Using the Dremel tool and square cutter head, cut the new housing notches to accommodate the tabs on the standard bulb. Be very careful not to cut too deep. If they're not the same depth as the original notches, the new bulbs will be out of focus, or out of alignment,

OFFICIAL DISCLAIMER BOX

ST1100 Newsletter is a publication of WG Norman, and is not affiliated with any of the following organizations or companies: American Honda Motor Company or any of its dealers, Cycle Sports, Ltd., Honda Sport Touring Association (HSTA), American Sport Touring Rider's Association (ASTRA), Lone Star Sport Touring Riders Association (LSSTRA), American Motorcycle Association (AMA). While information in this publication is intended for the use of the reader, *ST1100 Newsletter* and its publisher, WG Norman, assume no liability for its correctness or accuracy. Operation of a motorcycle requires both good safety and maintenance procedures and if the reader has any doubts whatsoever as to the validity of any information in this publication, he or she should consult with an authorized American Honda Dealer. Plain and simple, if it sounds dumb, don't do it!

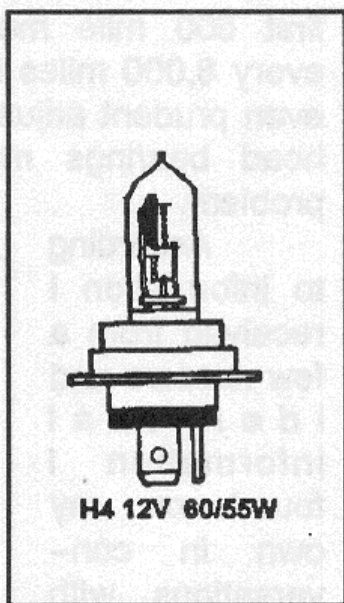
or both. It's also a good idea to wear eye protection and a dust mask.

When you set the 55/60 bulbs back into the receptacles, they won't fully seat because the two little tangs on the bulb will not fit over the wider boss in the housing. Again, mark the boss with a felt-tip pen and carefully cut them to the appropriate width. I found this easier to do with a small, triangular cutter head.

The bulbs should now seat fully into their receptacles, and be easily secured by the retaining wires.

Before you start reassembling everything, lay the bulbs aside and thoroughly clean the headlight housing inside and out. The grinding job will have generated quite a bit of fine, white, plastic dust, and a lot of this will end coating the inside of the headlight lens. If you skip this step, it will negate much of your gains in headlight brightness. It's difficult to clean the inside of the lens, but an artist's brush and some patience will help. While you're at it, insure that the drain hole at the bottom of the lens is clear. You're ready now to reassemble everything.

When you are mounting the headlight assembly into the fairing halves, route the adjuster control cable back into its original location. The cable is square where it fits into its housing, so make



sure it lines up and seats fully. After the headlight housing is secured, reinstall the washers in the original stack-up on the adjuster cable, and reinstall the nylon jamnut, being careful not to over tighten it. Reinstall the adjuster knob and return it to its original setting.

As a final step, of course, check the adjustment of headlight aim.

With my headlight housing modified to accept the 55/60 bulb, I can easily change a burned-out bulb with no more tools than are in the factory tool kit. Because the ST1100 has the luxury of a second headlamp, and because replacement 55/60 bulbs are so easily found, I no longer carry a spare bulb in my emergency repair kit.

One last note: this modification will allow even higher wattage H4 bulbs (55/100, 80/100, 100/130) to fit, but I do NOT advise you to use them. The wiring may or may not handle the extra wattage; I don't know for sure. The plastic headlight housing itself, however, will not tolerate the huge increase in heat that these bulbs generate (don't ask me how I know). For the record, too, bulbs larger than 55/60 are not street-legal.

"Rock" Rhoades, Texas

If you would like an 8.5 X11" reprint of the original ST1100 Bulb replacement article Rock refers to in his article, send either a SASE or \$1.00 to:

"Bulb"

ST1100 Newsletter

PO Box 840566

Houston, Texas 77284-0566

Wobble Concerns

by W. Grant Norman

Okay, so over half of the subscribers to the **ST1100 Newsletter** have experienced a wobble problem with their ST. What can be done about it? First, after all my inquiring I would like to make it clear that 1) I am no mechanical expert or engineer 2) This response to the problem is *my "best guess"* from reviewing material from many different sources and 3) If it is ever going to be completely fixed it must come from American Honda Motor Company. Therefore, it is important that you let Honda know of the problem by writing to:

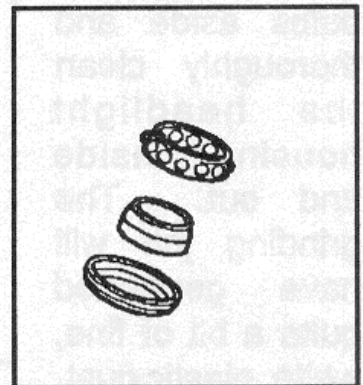
**Silvio Carrara, VP Motorcycle Division
American Honda Motor Company
1919 Torrance Blvd
Torrance, California 90501**

Many have indicated to me that various motorcycles will have a front-end wobble at certain speeds. Some more severe than others, the ST, in my opinion, being one of the more severe. Although there are many contributing factors, from what I understand, a lot of it has to do with the rake of the front-end. The ST has a fairly steep rake which is one of the reasons so many of you listed "handling" as one of its great features. The downside, of course, could be it may be a contributing factor to the wobble. The key word, however, is *contributing...*and I feel this is where much of the confusion about an overall

fix. If it were just one thing that caused the problem, then maybe just one thing would be a fix. But there are many variables that come into play.

On most motorcycles, the steering head bearings are key to the stability of the front end and the elimination of the wobble. Keeping the front wheel stable requires periodic maintenance of these bearings by tightening them to the specified torque levels indicated in the ST1100 service manual. According to the manual, this should be checked the first 600 mile maintenance and then every 8,000 miles there after. However, even prudent adjustment of the steering head bearings may not resolve the problem.

According to information I received from a few readers and identical information I found on my own in conversations with people at



Lower Bearings - These "ball" type bearings may be part of the wobble problem.

Woody's Wheel Works, a motorcycle trueing shop in Denver, the ST1100 seems to have rather small "ball" bearings in the steering head instead of a better "tapered roller bearing" set up. Also, reader Charles Mourer indicated not only that the tapered roller style bearing was the preferred type of bearing for this application, but also that his ST had arrived with virtually no bearing grease! I know what he is talking about since my ST also had no bearing grease

in the front and rear wheel bearings – which destroyed those bearings (but were replaced under warranty!) Point being, adjustment alone may not be the answer.

Other suspects in the wobble are listed in the ST1100 shop manual: bent rim, worn front wheel bearings, faulty tire. These are all good possibilities as being contributors to the "wobble" I personally noticed a more solid feel to the front-end when the dealer replaced my wheel bearings, but then, I noticed a more solid front-end when they just recently replaced my anti-dive piston. So again, I think it may be naive on anyone's part to believe one thing has fixed the problem.

This, again, is another good reason for contacting American Honda to recommend the fix – they are the only ones in the position to recommend a complete procedure and have it happen across the country through a service bulletin to their dealers.

Along with steep rake, wheel bearings, bent rims, faulty tire, steering bearings, there are some other culprits that surface. One is the fork springs themselves, which some comment feel a little mushy and therefore opt for a stiffer after market spring like those offered by Progressive. Others still swear by fork braces (my brother's CBX is very stable with its brace) although I've not spoken with or heard from any ST owners using a brace. And then, we also have the other end of the bike – rear wheel alignment and bearings – some suggest that if these are out of alignment, the wobble will be transmitted up front.

Lastly, the ones that seem to get the most blame (and the ones I blamed

first!) the tires! In the response to the survey results that follow, you will see that poor ole Metzeler has taken a pretty severe "wobble beating." For me, the case is not settled until American Honda settles it, so I won't say anything about the Metzeler's except, yes, my ST wobbles with the ME33 Laser on front, but, it also wobbles with the Honda OEM Dunlop, Avon Radial, and Dunlop Radial. In fact, the only tires that never wobbled were the first two sets of Honda OEM Bridgestones. So in my opinion, Metzeler's may be doing much of the wobbling but I tend to feel their only fault is they seem to be the favorite tire of ST1100 riders!

Lastly, there are two other factors we ST riders can control to help eliminate the wobble problem. 1) Tire pressure 2) Loading. I've personally found that the Metzeler's **must** be inflated to their maximum of 42 psi or there will be more wobbling. I've also found that excessive weight in the rear will cause more front-end wobbling. Finally, I've found that even though at 6,000 miles there is plenty of tread on the front Metzeler, it still needs to be changed, so I bite the bullet and do it!

So until we hear of the official Honda recommended fix, the best I feel we can do is: 1) Keep tires inflated properly 2) Watch the loading 3) Make certain a competent mechanic tightens the steering head bearings to the specified torque requirements and checks for enough grease 4) Be aware that between 40 mph to 50 mph there is a possibility of a wobble (even if your ST1100 hasn't done it before) so ride aware. 5) **Write to American Honda about the problem.**

SURVEY RESULTS

WOBBLE	Yes 51%	No 49%
Tire Brand		
Metzeler	65%	
Dunlop	22%	
Michelin	9%	
Avon/Etc.	4%	
Noticed @		
1- 10K	33%	
10K - 20K	53%	
20K +	13%	

Mechanical Problem	Favorite Features	Annoyances
1) Tire Wobble (26)	Engine Power (20)	Wind Noise (10)
2) Fuel Shutoff (2)	Handling (11)	Wobble (6)
3) Dry Bearings (2)	Everything (9)	Seat (5)
4) Engine Mount (1)	Looks (7)	Ergonomics (4)
5) Oil Pres Send (1)	Comfort (7)	Hand Protection (4)
6) Voltage Reg (1)	Luggage (6)	Vibration 4K RPM (4)
7) Squeaks (1)	Fuel Tank (6)	Too Heavy (4)
8) Drive U Joint (1)	Ride Smoothness (6)	Turn Signals (1)
9) Shaft Collar (1)	Fairing (3)	No Radio (1)
10) Brake Rotor (1)	Versatility (3)	No Accessory (1)
11) Brake Switch (1)	Mirrors (2)	Looks (1)

SURVEY RECAP

Overall, I think American Honda Motor Company should be extremely pleased with the rider satisfaction on the ST1100. With the exception of the wobble problem and wind noise complaints, there does not appear to be any consistent problem or dislikes about the ST. What is **not** reflected in the survey chart is, excluding wobble problems:

75% Report No Problems

I can see why in a recent conversation I had with a Service Manager at a Honda/Suzuki dealer he made the comment to me, "I wish **all** the bikes we did warranty work for were ST1100's, it'd sure make my job a lot easier!" I think we can all be pleased with the dependability of the ST.

We also LOVE that engine...there were several comments about the smooth power band, acceleration, and torque. I for one find myself being kind of a half-throttle kind of guy, not realizing just how much power is there until I really need it!

Handling, for a bike that weighs closer to a Goldwing than a CBR900, the ST handles great. In fact, reliable inside sources have told me a certain "Rock" of an ST rider kept up and even passed some CBR900's on his ST riding the famous Deals Gap. That's handling (but don't try that one at home folks).

Everything! Many of us didn't want to pick just one thing - and I think that is the category that makes the ST so great.

If you want to interstate across the country...fine, do it in comfort and with hard shell luggage...going sport riding, drop off the bags (not really necessary, however) and head for your favorite twisties...commuting through town? The ST handles the traffic with agility and grace, and the liquid cooling even keeps us running smoothly when stuck in stop and go traffic. What a Great machine!

Quick Tip: To use an inexpensive small automotive oil filter wrench on the ST's smaller filter, cut about an 8" piece of a bicycle inner tube and wrap it around the ST's oil filter. Put the small automotive filter wrench on the filter and you'll find it can now grip it just fine. (Make sure you get a narrow band filter wrench so you can easily get the wrench over the filter between the crash bar tubing. Also, remember the shortest hex bolt of all the bottom cover bolts goes in the last hole of the cover back under the brake pedal.

ST1100 Newsletter

Published By:

WG Norman
PO Box 840566
Houston, TX 77284-0566

Voice(713)463-3794
Fax(713)855-9191

Published four times per year. Regular subscription rate \$12.00 per year. Single issue price \$4.00. Please submit letters and articles to the above address.

(C) 1993 - WG Norman - All Rights Reserved

Been Gouged Lately?

By W. Grant Norman

Sorry to say it, but yes, there are some dealers out there that will gouge you if you are not careful. About 2 years ago I decided to get the Hondaline Back Rest for the ST1100. It was listed at one dealer at \$149.00. They even had one in stock, but I was several hundred miles from home and decided to wait until I returned to Houston. Unfortunately, when I returned to Houston, no one had it in stock except for one dealer. I ran over to them and was told it would cost \$179! I replied, "I thought the Honda suggested retail price was \$149." He said "No it's \$179!" I looked at him puzzled and he then picked up the phone and called another Honda dealer to check the price. "Yep, it went up to \$179!" (I later called the same dealer and was told \$149) Since I was leaving on a 4,000 mile trip with my 8 year old on the back in a few days, I didn't want to argue and went ahead and purchased it.

On my return, I called American Honda and found out that I had been gouged. Worse than that, there was nothing American Honda could do about it...dealers are free to sell product at what they can get for it. The lesson made me very wary of just walking into a Honda dealer and asking for a price. The following listing is from what I have found to be **two reputable companies**, one a Honda Dealer, one a private shop. I've tried to list the most common items that may be used:

Southwest Honda/Suzuki Parts - Kerry Rudy (713) 772-7775

Headlight Bulb - Honda	each	34.76
Oil Filter - Honda		8.50
Spark Plug - CR8EH-9	each	4.75
Air Filter - Honda		57.66
Fuel Filter		13.60
Honda 10W40 Oil - Gallon		10.95
Dash Bulbs - each		2.18
Front Honda Brake Pads - each set		33.10
Rear Honda Brake Pads - each set		36.61
Honda Radiator Coolant		19.50
ST1100 Shop Manual		40.00
Dunlop Honda OEM Front Tire		99.95
Dunlop Honda OEM Rear Tire		148.95
Metzeler ME33 Laser		109.95
Metzeler ME55 Metronic		149.95
EBC Brand Brake Pads - each set		25.95

Cycle Sports, LTD.

Owner - Ken Fontenot (713) 690-9802

Headlight Bulb - Honda		24.19
Oil Filter - Honda		8.62
Spark Plug - CR8EH-9	each	NA
Air Filter - Honda		43.38
Fuel Filter		8.00
Honda 10W40 Oil - Gallon		NA
Dash Bulbs - each		1.38
Front SBS Brake Pads - each set		23.36
Rear SBS Brake Pads - each set		26.06
Honda Radiator Coolant		11.61
ST1100 Shop Manual		36.00
Dunlop Honda OEM Front Tire*		88.16
Dunlop Honda OEM Rear Tire*		134.06
Metzeler ME33 Laser*		103.46
Metzeler ME55 Metronic*		139.46
EBC Brand Brake Pads - each set		NA
K&N Air Filter HA0002		36.86
Fram Oil Filter		8.09
Aftermarket 45/45 Head Lamps each		15.26
*Plus \$2.00 State Tire Disposal fee		

In addition to these two, I've also found reasonable and fair pricing at Plano Honda. They can be reached at:

Plano Honda

Parts - Mickey Hunt (214) 422-4703

Details, Details, Details

By W. Grant Norman

Cleaning the ST1100 probably is one of the easiest maintenance functions we can perform. Over the years, I have settled on some specific products to help with the cleaning and maintaining. I'm sure you have your favorites too, but here is what I've found to work.

Honda Pro Spray Cleaner and Polish. If I were to have only one thing to use to clean the entire bike, this cleaner and polish would be the one. It can be safely used on every exposed part and is also excellent on helmets and visors.

Meguiars Mirror Glaze 17 Professional Plastic Cleaner. In my years past I remember the smell of the plastic canopy cleaner we used at the glider airport to clean the cockpit canopy – an awful familiar smell in this product! I've used this to clean the windscreen, but also to take scratches out of the black finish, even scratches out of my kid's glasses.

Meguiars Deep Crystal Carnauba Paste Wax. On the black finish, I've found this wax to be great. It leaves a beautiful finish and seems to wear well.

STP Son of a Gun Protectant. I started using the STP instead of Armor All when I saw how much less it cost. I use it on all rough finish grey plastic parts and hoses and black covered cables, and the seat.

For the small part of aluminum on the sides of the ST, I use **Mothers Mag & Aluminum Polish.** Here, however, I

found that the polish pulls all the dirt and black out of the aluminum. Then to clean it off, I use some of the **Honda Pro Spray Cleaner and Polish** and it shines like new.

Luggage hinges, key holes, foot peg hinges, other miscellaneous small metal places I rely on **WD-40.** Also good for cleaning tar or other oil based crud off of metal and plastic.

Lastly, for the sides of the tires, being very careful NOT to get any on the tread part of the tire, I use **STP Son of a Gun One Step Tire Care.** It does a good job of blackening up the sides of the Metzlers.

If you have any special cleaning products or methods to share with the readers, please send them to:

ST1100 Newsletter

PO Box 840566

Houston, TX 77284-0566

K&N Air Filter

15,000 miles on the K&N Air Filter, Part # HA-0002 and I'm happy to report everything is fine. However, I did have one minor problem that I feel may have been air filter related. Shortly after installing the K&N., I found some occasional backfiring (same thing happened, only much worse when I tried the Fram CA351 auto filter) I think the ole ST was breathing too easily, and this lean condition may have been the cause. I cleaned the K&N using **K&N Air Filter Cleaner** and water then re-oiled it with **PJ1 Air Filter Oil.** I'm happy to report no backfires at all, and the filter is probably only good for another million miles!

Reader to Reader

This section of the *ST1100 Newsletter* is reserved for the readers comments and experiences. If you wish to respond to one of the readers with additional questions or answers, send your question or answer to:

Reader to Reader

ST1100 Newsletter

PO Box 840566

Houston, TX 77284-0566

After I have copied the information for use in the next newsletter I will forward your information directly to the person to whom you are responding. If you do want it forwarded, please include a stamped envelope with your response.

I was pleased to receive the ST1100 newsletter and have enclosed my check to cover the next four issues. I have not as yet experienced any wobble problem on the ST but then I only have 19,000 miles on it (second set of tires Metzlers) due to the lack of time to ride. I did have a similar problem on my last bike a FJ1100 Yamaha. The problem was never really solved but I found that it was very sensitive to front tire pressure, and wear particularly cupping of the front tire.

The wobble only occurred on deceleration and usually when I had one hand off the bars. It was easily controlled with both hands on the bars. I have installed a Krauser top box, but the thing which improved this bike is the installation of a Corbin seat. This lowered the saddle slightly and made the bike more controllable at parking lot speeds. It is more comfortable too. Coming to the ST from sport bikes I have not opted for higher bars or windshield and in fact have considered cutting the windshield off slightly. I plan on retiring next March and rectifying the lack of miles on this bike with some long trips. Good luck on the newsletter. I think that it will be useful.

"Lou" Leonard Berkley, Ohio

Enjoyed the ST1100 Newsletter very much. I've got a 1991 model but since I bought it used with very low mileage I haven't done much maintenance on it yet. My only long trip so far has been to Helen, Georgia. I think the newsletter is a great idea as I plan to do much of my own maintenance. Keep me on your mailing list. I will keep you informed if I learn anything interesting.

Barry Berndt, Texas

Just before hibernating my ST, I replaced the OEM edging around the windshield with Saeng's Stealth edging. Big improvement! With the OEM I had a tendency to crouch down 3" or 4" quite often and enjoy the quieter zone. Not now, there's no difference crouching down or not.

Raymond Cadieux, Quebec

Dear Grant,

Thanks for sending the ST1100 Newsletter. I liked the content and look forward to the next one. At the Ride for Kids in Dana Point recently I followed another ST1100 which had the rear turn signals wired as running lights also. Can you do a "How To" feature on this? Any tips on intercom systems? A rider name Andy Cocoran of Costa Mesa made a beautiful windshield for his ST1100, perhaps a story from him?

Dennis Erdman, California

*Thanks for the suggestions, Dennis. I'll make you an offer you may find hard to refuse: the running lights set up you asked about was probably done by a **Priority Plus** from Sound-Off Safety, Inc. I have one here in my hand that I won on a ride a couple years back. I will send it to you for free IF you will install it on your ST1100 and write an article for me about it for the Fall issue. As for intercom systems and custom windshields, well readers out there, let me hear from you! Grant*

I seem to have some vibration around 4,000 RPM. Does this happen to others? Many, including Honda, recommend draining carburetors for winter storage, but neither the owner's manual or shop manual says how. I called Honda, but no help. I have added the SAENG edging to a Rifle +4" shield with success to reduce wind noise. Keep up the good work!

Bill Luring, Vermont

I and others have also experienced the vibration around 4,000 rpm. I know of no particular fix for it, but I've found changing plugs seems to help if it starts getting real buzzy. Any suggestions from others? - Grant

This is a good idea to share information to other riders of this great machine. I am a serious endurance rider as well as sport/touring enthusiast. My previous bikes were Goldwings on which I won the 1991 "Iron Butt" Rally and 1992 "Utah 1088" Rally, and finished in the top 10% of other events such as the "Nevada 1100" , "California 24 Hour Rally," etc.

My 1992 ST1100 ABS-TCS will make this type of riding much easier and enjoyable. Enclosed is a partial list of modifications to make this machine more comfortable, convenient, and most important safer for a serious rider.

All of these products are my development, except for the electronics, many in the third stage of design because nobody offered anything similar.

I may have to take you up on your offer since each one of these modifications make a good article.

1) Handlebar Mounts: Adds 2 1/16" All standard cables, etc. 2) Running light Brackets - no cut plastic - mounts to top motor mounts - machined from 1" thick 6061-T6 3) Electronic Self-Cancelling Turn Signals - 18 second re-triggerable - interruptable - 4 way capable. 4) Rear rack - 22" x 11" to accept Markland Goldwing Trunk Bag 5) Passport Radar Detector Mount - 12V DC 5 Watt Audio Amplifier - 6) Custom Seat - Travelcade, Pramount, California

7) Chase Harper 1100 Tank Bag - 4 point mounting 8) Variable intensity quartz-halogen map reading light 9) Honda Liquid Crystal Voltmeter/Temperature left over from my 87 Goldwing 10) I.C.O. Electronic Speedometer-odometer accurate to a few feet per mile, calibrated to wheel size. 11) 1/4" Plexiglass spacer to use Fram CA351 Air Filter \$3.50 locally vs. \$50.00 for Honda replacement 12) Electronic wake up alarm - 1/2 to 8 hours variable 13) Auxiliary fuel tank - fully automatic - closed system - 10.7 US Gallons Total - removable 14) Aluminum, engine coolant heated handlebars - variable from ambient to 170 degrees F - no power use. And others in development.

Ron Major, California

You probably have more modifications than anyone I know. Thanks for all the information. I would like to hear more on any of your modifications...like you say, there's a story in each one. Best wishes on this year's upcoming Iron Butt Rally and would like to have a nice article from you on how the ST handles the rally. - Grant

Michelin has a new tire, A89 Front, M89, Rear. Sizes are available for the ST. I'm curious to know how they work.

Sonny Morgan, Texas

Well readers, what's the word on Michelins? - Grant

I think the newsletter is a great ideal I'm more than happy to enclose my eight dollars for a years subscription plus

two dollars and a 3.5 HD disk for your "simple" program to calculate the proper shims.

I have been riding since 1974 and have put on a little under 200,000 miles in that time a good portion of which was two up touring. We started with a CB500 than a 750 Sabre and now the ST. The ST was purchased in late December of 1990 and now has 35,500 miles on it.

I have added the following accessories to the bike. 1) Luggage rack made from the top of a rack made by Honda for a 600 Transalp with a base of one-eight aluminum. 2) Radar detector 3) Rifle windshield (20") 4) J&M intercom system 5) K&N Air Filter 6) Basic motion alarm by VI Electronics (\$100.00) Now to answer your Questions.

Front tire wobble: YES I have experienced front tire wobble on my ST. Facts: While in California in June 1991 I replaced the front and rear tires. They were the original and had only 9,033 miles on them but I felt due to the length of the trip home and to be on the safe side new tires were in order. I did NOT experience a wobble with the original tires. My replacement tires were Metzeler ME-33 front and ME a Metronic rear. The tires were balanced and air pressure was maintained at the recommended pressure. Shortly after the installation of the tires I developed a front end wobble while decelerating usually around 35 -45 miles per hour. I increased the pressure to 42 lbs in the front and 44 lbs this helped to some extent but the wobble was still there. At 16,124 miles I adjusted the steering head bearings. The wobble was still there. At 18,740 miles although the tires still had sufficient tread

left I replaced them with Pirelli MT-08 & 09. The wobble was gone. I have since replaced the Perilli with Dunlop Sportmax ZR Radial and still no wobble. The only conclusion that I can draw is that the wobble was caused by the Metzeler front tire. I have used the same type of Metzeler on the front of my 750S with no problem.

Synopsis:

0-9,033 Original tires NO wobble
 9,033-18,740 Metzler tires experience front end wobble
 18,790-35,562 Pirelli and Dunlop tires and NO wobble.

Mechanical breakdowns: None (if the bike breaks down tomorrow it's your fault for asking this question.

Most annoying: Wind noise and lack of hand protection.

Greatest feature: The ability to sport tour in comfort. hard bags, 7 1/2 gallon gas tank, enough power for my ability and when the roads begin to curve it leans and leans. Over all its a great bike. My wife and I will be at STAR-93 in June and look forward to meeting you and discussing our STs. Ride Safe,
Thomas L. Murphy, New York

Sorry I couldn't make it to Helen and meet you...bogged down in work.

Dear Grant,

Sorry it's taken so long for me to write back. I intended to weeks ago. Been real busy! I enjoyed your inaugural issue of the ST1100 Newsletter'. In reading I gather that your mechanical

skills or ambitions are greater than mine. I wouldn't attempt the valve job as in my case it would be an issue of time, skill & patience, but I could get excited about the halogen bulb replacement!

I also wanted to bring you up to speed with my wobbling story. Brought my bike in the last week in March for new tires, 24,000 mile servicing and to check the steering head as a possible cause to the wobble. I also left a copy of your article from Rider. While I was at the shop, I spoke with a Honda factory sales rep. who just happened to be on site I explained my situation and also made mention of yours as well. He first stated that he wasn't a technical rep. but implied that his knowledge was probably better than average. He explained the wobble as a phenomenon in motorcycle fork & frame design called "transition" and that it is different and present in all bikes, but more noticeable in some than others. This is something that I had been told once before, from a reliable source I can no longer remember. The key design variables involved are rake, trail and frame & fork stiffness and their reaction to cornering, braking, accelerating forces, etc and to combinations of these forces. I asked about tires and he mentioned that tires don't usually cause a problem more so they react and provide feedback (the service manager wasn't with us, but said the same thing in a different conversation) . He said as a rule of thumb the more rake, the slower the speed at which the transition occurs. For example, a Harley with an extended fork might see a wobble at 25 mph. I know my Goldwing wobbled at 35 mph (decelerating w/hands off the bar, only)

My ST, with new tires and adjusted steering head, yes, still wobbles ever so slightly at 50 mph when decelerating and is totally gone at 45. Based on my experience, this theory holds water, but I question why I've never seen it in any articles or other publications and whether it was just a well rehearsed pseudo-technical/sales pitch. In any event, my vote is still not cast. Like you, the "ST-Wobble Demon" doesn't scare me as he is barely noticeable and I wouldn't trade for any other two-wheeler on the market today, except maybe for the ST1100 ABS-TCS!

I also wanted to tell you about a custom Honda dealership I came across out in Denver. I was there the first week in April on business. had a little free time and happened upon this custom shop. They had two ST's that they had outfitted with an integrated AM/FM cassette, CB, radar detector system with headsets, speakers, antenna, rear mounting bracket and handle bar controls. It was very clean & professional looking job. They also had a 3-wheel conversion for the 6-cylinder Goldwing which looked factory! I'm on the top of the fence when it comes to all these accessories! Having owned a loaded '88 Goldwing, I can appreciate all those little extra luxury items, but at the same time I know they can be a distraction. Plus, in the three seasons with my ST I've grown very fond of her handling capabilities and have focused my concentration on the more aggressive and more fun "sport-riding." Plus I've gotten back into a good habit and prefer the manual directionals. But, you could sell me the 'Wings reverse

system. Incidentally, I asked them if they'd had any complaints or experience with the wobble issue and he said not really. However, he was a firm believer of having a properly adjusted steering head and running maximum tire pressure on the ST. Thus, for your information, the dealer address and person I spoke to is:

Lakewood Honda, LTD.
Contact - Bart Mann
7576 W. 5th Ave
Lakewood, CO 80226
(800)426-3967

I just recently joined the Honda Riders Club and wish to also join the HSTA, but have been unable to find a valid phone number or address to contact. If you have any information, could you please get in touch. I'd appreciate it. Cheers.

Wendell Palmer, New Hampshire

You can reach Honda Sport Touring Association at :

Elbert E. Silbaugh
Membership Director
9310 167th Ave NE
Redmond, Washington 98052-3739
(206)882-0224

Dear Grant,

Enclosed is a \$10 check and a 3 1/2 " computer disk for my one year subscription to your ST1100 newsletter and a copy of your valve setting program. I think that a newsletter dedicated to the ST1100 is an excellent idea and applaud you for organizing it.

I decided to write this letter to comment on a few things in regards to

Honda ST1100's. First, my experience with front wheel wobble. The ST1100 that I purchased in May 1990 came with Dunlop tires. I experienced front end shake upon deceleration that was most pronounced at 45 MPH from when the bike was new up until 6400 miles when I replaced the original tires with a set of Metzlers. The shake on deceleration at 45 MPH was very pronounced and startled me a few times when I forgot that it was going to happen. I talked to people at Honda of America about the problem and they told me it was caused by the steep rake they had on the forks that enabled the bike to be very responsive to turning. In any case when I put on the Metzlers the majority of the shake went away. I still believe that Honda should be responsible to correct this potentially dangerous situation.

Overall it is a very good motorcycle yet has a few flaws. The seat forces me into the tank (or plenum) cover and pushed my knees into the fairing side panels when I ride the bike. My knees would get sore every time I rode the bike for more than an hour. Honda offered an accessory package (part # 08P59-MT3-A00) consisting of 2 soft rubber pads that can be attached to the fairing sides. Installing these pads has effectively stopped my sore knee problem.

Another thing that helped was a Hartco sheepskin seat cover that I installed which has helped prevent me from sliding forward on the seat as much.

As I'm sure you know the windshield is too low for most riders and I have replaced it with a taller 22 inch

Rifle windshield.

The horn is a joke. I've heard of people replacing them and wondered if you knew of a kit that can be installed so you can hear the horn.

Another annoying problem is a whistle from the opening below the windshield with certain speed and wind conditions. There was a fix in one of the HSTA newsletters some months ago that involved smoothing the sharp edges of the cowl openings. I tried this but the whistle still exists.

I thought your article on setting the valves was very good. I have set the valves on my bike and would offer the following that you may have done but did not mention in your article. I use .0045" and a .0075" feeler gages on the intake valves with a go no go process to ensure that the clearance is correct. On the exhausts I use .0085" and a .00115" feeler gages. Personally I always set the clearances to the low limit to gain any extra valve lift that this provides. Another tip after reinstalling the cams is to spin the engine over several times with the starter while the kill switch is off and then re-measure the clearance for the valves.

Changing the antifreeze, normally a very easy job is quite a chore with the ST1100 because of the location of the drain plugs.

You mentioned the high price of a replacement air filter. K&N makes a replacement filter for the ST1100 that you can service by cleaning in your laundry tub with the special K&N cleaner and then re-oiling the filter with K & N oil. This is more economical than replacing the expensive stock Honda filter when it becomes dirty. Also the

K&N unit (K&N part # HA 0002) is far superior in air flow and filtering capability to a standard Honda paper filter. I have used K&N's on race bikes for years with excellent results. They will flow more air when dirty than a stock Honda filter will when new!

One other suggestion Please print future newsletters on 8 1/2 X 11 inch paper so I can file the issues in a loose leaf notebook. Good Luck,
L. Douglas Pippin, Michigan

You and others were right about the 8.5" X 11" format....thanks for the suggestion.
- Grant

First, let me say I think this newsletter is great and will enjoy the information shared about my favorite subject, my ST! I've toured through all the Western United States, a couple of Canadian Provinces, and down to Key West, all within a year and a month and still held a job! I couldn't stop, even now it's really difficult not to head out.

The bike performed flawlessly and was very forgiving of mistakes when I was first learning to ride it. The size of it seems to throw some people. At times when someone who has never seen an ST will exclaim "My God, it's huge!" I have been on a first date and the woman said "Isn't it too big for you?" So much for the ego.

I have a question about the ST. Twice during heavy braking the rear will slide (which I expected) usually to the right, and the engine stalled, and the only way it could be restarted was by turning the ignition key off then back on, I assume to get the fuel pump back on.

Being as the two incidents were near "close calls," I thought a controlled test would be in order. I found a wide open parking lot shortly after a thunderstorm, accelerated up to 30 mph and locked it up. Rear tire slid to the right, engine stalled. I repeated this at different speed and the bike was consistent with its behavior. In most of the situations, letting the clutch out, using the regular start button, anything would be better than to have to take a hand off the bars to restart the engine.

I have experienced the wobble you have referred to with several different brands of tires. I have improved a few things on my bike for functional means only, nothing mechanical and I'm sure you'll be interested in them, but I'll save them for the next newsletter.

Shane Sheffield, Texas

May want to check your bank angle sensor or fuel cut-off relay -Grant

Thank you very much for sending me a copy of your very first issue of the ST1100 Newsletter. I really enjoyed it and think it is a wonderful idea.

I would also like to say something about the ST1100 wobble which gets talked about a lot. I have a '92 ST and have not had much trouble with a front wheel wobble yet. even though it is over a year old and has 23,000 miles on it. I did have a problem with the forks "bottoming out" quite often, and with further investigation found that the forks had been changed for the '92 model and even that Progressive's ST replacements would not

work on the '92. My mechanic did manage to make it better by inserting more something—or—others into the fork to make it stiffer and I have not experienced that problem since then. But I did wonder if this new fork setup was not Honda's way of trying to fix the wobble problem. The only slight wobble I have experienced was at around 10,000 miles and went away immediately with a new front tire and tightening of the front bearings. I learned a long time ago that bikes do not like it when you take both hands off the handlebars (neither does the MSF), so I disregard those complaints. I would be interested to hear if this wobble problem occurs on the '92 and/or '93.

Thanks again for allowing me to be one of the chosen first 100 to receive a copy of your newsletter. The only problem I have with it is that it is printed on legal size, so is difficult to make a file of them. Otherwise, the information is great and I look forward to seeing the next one.
Yours,

Alison Taylor, California

I just received the first issue of the ST1100 Newsletter. Nice job! Reading through it was almost like reading a replay of the past 28 months that I've had with my bike. I've been through the headlight deal, I have the headshake, and I've pondered the ins and outs of doing my own valve adjustments... :)

My bike is a black 91. It just turned 18k today. I bought it new from a dealer in Poughkeepsie, NY (Dutchess Recreational Vehicles) along with a close friend, Chris, who bought its twin. We got a GREAT price for them, better than any new price I've ever heard for an ST — \$7500! Last fall I saw a Blue-Book price of \$7800, retail. :) :)

I've added a variety of accessories and personal touches. The long or short list? Hell, this is just e-mail, how about the

long list...

Honda Scuff Kit, Hondaline backrest, Hondaline bag liners, Targa tank cover, 22" Rifle smoked windscreen (just sold to Chris, I'm getting a 24", replacement), Vista-Cruise, Johar Superbike foam grips, 100/55 headlight bulbs, Passport radar detector and custom bracket, Lighter plug for accessories in left fairing pocket, CB antenna mount I work as a staffer at Americade, running mini-tours. Two years ago Mike Corbin loaned me a Rumble Seat to try for the week. I loved the rider section. But when my SO arrived on Friday and tried the passenger section, she found it too short, front to rear. Back to Mike went the Rumble Seat, and off I went to Dutchess Rec to order the backrest. I tried to convince Mike that a Dual Canyon Sport with the removable backrest was a better way to go, but he wouldn't listen! :(The hinge of his Rumble seat consumes about three inches of passenger section. Not cool unless your SO is Twiggy. Here's a few ideas I've applied to the ST. First of all, I HATE UNSANITARY WORK. I'll wait a long time to come up with the "perfect" solution to a need or problem rather than implementing a hasty, unsightly fix. I need a CB while running mini-tours. I found a perfect way of mounting an antenna that works with or without the backrest. I took a strip of stiff aluminum (scrap from work) about 1" wide, 5" long and about 1/8" thick. I drilled a hole at one end for the antenna mount, and holes at the other end to match the right side passenger handle's bolts. Then I removed that handle and placed the bracket between the handle and tailsection. I inserted a couple of flat washers between the bracket and the grommets to space the bracket away from the bodywork. With a K4 Redstick attached I whipped it all around and there was no chance of contact with paint. In order to reattach the forward part of the handle, I used a rattail file to notch the bolthole in the

handle till I could bolt it back down. To the casual observer there's no difference in appearance, but the right handle sits about 1/4" higher due to the bracket and washers. The best thing was that removal of the bracket left the bike totally unblemished except for the notched grab handle.

When I got the backrest, things were even easier. I moved the bracket to the top of the backrest mounts. But I did have to taper the shape of the bracket with a file to match the contours of the backrest mount. Initially I just routed the antenna wire along the bracket and under the body work by going between the seat and the tail section. Recently I used a Dremel tool to notch the body work beside the rear grommet for the grab handle and routed the antenna through there.

I also discovered that the K4 Redstick could be stowed entirely below the seat. There's a small clear passage in the internals that runs along the forward portion of the rear fender (look, you'll find it!). I slip the antenna into this passage and swing the end into the tool compartment area. The combo of the antenna wire and unrestricted antenna itself often made latching the seat annoying at best. I fabricated an 'S' hook from coat hanger and gave it a quarter twist. I attached this hook to the inner part of the bolt that mounts the tail section bracket to the rear of the main-frame. Now the antenna is under control, the wire no longer runs between the seat and body work, and the seat latches fine!

To power the CB I added a Radio Shack lighter plug socket to the rear vertical wall of the left fairing pocket. After doing the same thing with my Concours, I learned that the socket needed to be angled slightly upward to prevent gravity and vibration from shaking the plug loose. I ran a single hot lead up to about the fairing pocket area to power the CB and the Passport. I found a great way to tap into the electricals

WITHOUT cutting or otherwise intruding into the wiring harness.

Snap out the fuse box and look at the backside. On the unprotected side are two hot leads that are each connected to terminals that feed two fuses each. These metal terminals have a notch in its middle that securely holds a male blade connector and provides an excellent *switched* hot lead. Of course, you have to add your own fuse for your accessories, but again, it's sano.

What else?... Well, I mounted an Eclipse Sportpak tankbag. The harness loops on the steering head and below the seat that Honda provided are great! I had my sister (a seamstress) sew some elastic loops to the top of the Targa cover to keep the Fastex buckles from flopping around. Now there's no concern over leaving the straps in place without the tankbag mounted.

I also got an Eclipse tail pack. This holds my sleeping bag and air mattress perfectly. The built-in bungees also securely hold my three-man dome tent without resorting to extra straps or other anchors.

With the gear described, I'm ready for anything -- without looking like Ma & Pa Kettle's youngest boy on tour! In fact, I plan to ride from Vermont to the USGP in Monterey, CA with this set-up.

Problems? Only a few. The only outright failure was the bulb for the clock! My local dealer (that didn't sell me the ST but did sell me two other bikes -- an '83 VF750F and an '83 XR350R) scoffed at a warranty claim for the bulb, and for the \$1.85 cost of the bulb I wasn't going to argue.

What was more of a pain was trying to get a replacement left fairing pocket cover. I never liked the material of the cover that came with the bike -- limp when hot, and rigid enough when cold to the point of tearing with use. When I saw the silver '91's, I immediately noticed the switch to a softer more rubber-like material. After over a year

of nearly constant pleading with Honda, and my dealer in NY, I finally got the replacement -- MUCH BETTER. I no longer fear ripping the cover in half just by opening it on a cold morning.

Last, the naugahyde material of the pouch on the backrest ripped long the zipper after a year of use. Again, seamstress-sister Pat to the rescue. I suggest getting someone to re-enforce that seam ahead of time. When I started reading the newsletter, I couldn't believe that you were writing about EXACTLY what I spent the last couple weeks of winter working on -- getting H4 bulbs to fit! However, I went ahead and notched out the retaining ring. No big deal, except getting the headlight shell out. If I had your newsletter, I could've saved a lot of wrench turning in the cold!

I stripped every piece of body work from the side panels forward to finally free the upper fairing panels that blocked access to the shell. I was worried more about having to mangle H4 bulbs on the road. I don't generally carry dikes with me, so I wanted a slip-in fit. But what I found curious was that you decided to pull the shell anyway. I was able to install the bulbs, before the notching, just by pulling that small access panel below the steering head. I bought and installed them in Connecticut, but it wasn't until nightfall in Massachusetts that I realized that my right light was aimed at the treetops on the left side of the road and the left light was aimed to the right!! I had to use my high beams at all times just to light up the road in front of me enough to see. It wasn't until I got home to Vermont and compared the bulbs that I learned the error of my ways.

Oh, did I mention that I put in 100/55W bulbs? No ill effects at all. And the brighter high beams are a Godsend. It wasn't until your newsletter that I realized that the stock bulb was not an H4 and was only 45/45W. I thought I was dreaming that the 100/55W bulbs just slipped into the

Interceptor and Concours without trouble. Now I know that the ST is the odd one. And I had no trouble at all with play between the bulb and socket.

Tires... The bike came with Dunlop 505's. I was pretty happy with 'em but not thrilled enough to buy another set for replacement. I've always run with Dunlop Sport Elites on the Interceptor and the Concours and it was a big step for me to make the switch to the Metzlers. Except for the head shake, I've loved the Metzlers. They stick great, handle well, and lack that vague feeling in the rear that the Dunlops had. I got about 9k on the Dunlops and the same with the Metzlers. I never felt the head shake with the Dunlops, but the Metzlers started their St. Vitus dance at about 4k. Chris is just replacing his original tires and decided on the new Pirelli bias belted ones for the ST (I don't recall the model). He hasn't had 'em mounted yet, so we don't know what they're like. My friends on GENIE report a mixed review of the new ME33 and ME55A radials. Dunlop wants me to go with K591's. I want decent mileage like the K505's and the Metzlers gave. What do I do??? Will the headshake go away with a fresh set of tires? I've always assumed so. But I never noticed it with the Dunlops, and Chris reports no problems with his set of well worn Dunlops now. Are you finding that the headshake is more related to the mileage/age of the bike or the condition of the tires? If a fresh set eliminates the problem, I'd expect it to return as they wore down.:(:(

All in all though, I LOVE the bike. Right after the CBR1000F Hurricane came out I kept telling the Honda reps at all the rallies to make a "Concours" out of it and they wouldn't be able to get me to buy it fast enough! Well those reps kept telling me "No dice." So about three months before the ST was announced I bought a used '86 Concours. Three months later I was

heartsick. Seven months later when I got the chance to ride the new ST at Americade I was in a lather. That fall, Chris and I put our deposits down on them. I kept the Concours another year and a half before I sold it.

There's NO comparison between the bikes. I usually liken them to comparing an Acura to a Yugo. The fit and finish, balance, comfort, quality of design are in a different league on the ST.

I still disagree with the mags about performance between the two. Though the ST has a great motor, the Concours has a GREAT motor. Maybe it's the gearing and the five vs. six speed tranny, but the Concours felt like a hot-rod and had the great sound of a healthy in-line four. You grab the loud handle on the Concours and you're movin'!!

The ST's power is much more refined. Not surprisingly, much like the Interceptor's V4. Don't get me wrong, it moves. But a seat of the pants impression leaves me believing that the Concours was faster. The magazine tests say otherwise. I especially appreciate the lower engine rpm at speed in top gear. I kept looking for a seventh gear on the Concours!

Though I wish it had ABS and TCS, I think the nearly \$4k difference in price between what I paid and what the new bikes are selling for was a good deal. Too bad you can't retrofit... :(

Anyway, this one's a keeper; and finally gets my vehicle stable into Zen harmony again :) -- 5 Honda motorcycles; ST1100, VF750F, XR350R and 2 CB400F's and my Acura Integra.

I fully expect to watch the hundred-thousands digit on the odometer turn over *at least* once.

Good to know you, Grant. Write back here or e-mail to T.CARDINALI on GENie. Sorry for the long letter, but it was waiting to get out! Expect a check in the mail for the

newsletter.

Grant...

Sorry for the L O N G delay on my reply. I don't frequent CIS very often. GENie is my favorite haunt. You REALLY should check it out. We have a HUGE motorcycle contingent there. Well, the last month has been a great one for riding. I work as a staffer at the Americade rally in Lake George, NY and this year was better than ever. I'm a Mini-Tour Captain (Bill Dutcher's title, not mine!) Things heat up the week before for us, as we pre-ride our routes and attend the staff meetings. Our ride from Lake George to Basin Harbor Resort in Vermont along the shore of Lake Champlain was fantastic. One bout with rain was the only downer for the entire week.

I had to be at a good friend's wedding in Rochester, NY on Saturday, so after a 200 mile day of mini-tour captaining I hit the road for another 300 miles to Rochester. A better day for a wedding couldn't be had and it was great to see old friends from school and work. On the way to Rochester, I learned that Sting and the Grateful Dead were playing at Rich Stadium in Buffalo and after seeing my friends off, I hit the road west to try to see the show.

The ride to Buffalo was unmemorable until stumbled into a poker run in western NY that had a checkpoint at an ice cream stand that I decided to stop at. Had I known early enough and registered, I could've won a trophy for longest distance travelled! Anyway, the show was great and the ride home on Monday wrapped up a great week.

The following weekend was Laconia, another long story in itself, and well, now I'm back!

Let me give you postscript on the ST letter...At Americade I bought a new Corbin Dual Canyon Sport saddle for the bike. This

seat is identical to the Rumble Seat except that it lacks the backrest. This is exactly what I asked Mike Corbin to make two years ago, but he answered an emphatic, "No! The Rumble Seat is our main product now." Of course Mike wouldn't listen to me when I told him that his hinge design gobbled up too much of the seat and that I'd prefer it without the backrest and with more passenger space (at the insistence of my co-rider!). Anyway, the Dual Canyon Sport has a shape identical to the Rumble Seat but without the backrest. I got one of his salesman to do a "scoop job" on the passenger section, much to my co-rider's delight! After I get the seat (it was a custom order), I'm going to send in the pad from the Hondaline backrest and get it covered to match the seat. Next, while walking down Canada Ave. (the main drag in Lake George) I spotted a red ST with something unusual and I went nuts. This rider from Massachusetts had a friend fabricate a rack out of 3/16" steel rod that was attached to the Hondaline backrest frame! It was PERFECT! EXACTLY what I've been looking for the past two years. The pouch was sacrificed, but so what! I wanted a place to attach my tent and Eclipse Fast Pack and this was it! His design gave me the inspiration to build my own. That's in the works now. I'll take photos and send you details for the next newsletter.

I also received the 22" Rifle windshield during A'cade and the improvement over the 20" was incredible. Everything I'd hoped it would be. Wind noise dropped 100% and the comfort level improved immensely. Sorry Grant, but I wanted to hold onto my stock windshield.

I also added an Eclipse electric vest to the equation. Highly recommended for extending the riding envelope into the cold night and the spring and fall months. The biggest news is in the headshake situation. I asked my mechanic to look at the

headbearings when I had it in for the 16k service last fall. He said they were fine and that it was because of the worn Metzlers. Well, about six weeks ago I replaced the Metz's with a new set. Headshake still there. I told my mechanic and this time he decided to adjust the bearings. He went to the tight end of the spec range, and viola! Headshake gone... completely...

A neat little wrinkle was that the night before the bearing adjustment I looked at the 'new' tires (with about 500 miles on 'em) and discovered several razor slits in the tread blocks on both the front and rear. No deeper than the tread blocks, definitely not into the cords. It was safe to ride >now< but I was worried how they'd be with 7,000+ miles (I got 9,000 from the previous set of Metz's). I told the parts man at the shop and they decided to replace the tires for me. He later told me that he thinks a man in the shop did it while cutting the shipping straps from the tires. Anyway, they didn't have the tires in stock and had to order them. I couldn't wait. Americade started that weekend, and I needed the bike, plain and simple. I wound up keeping the tires for the week and rolled up 2,500+ miles before they were replaced to the tune of \$348!! (But no charge to me!) Not bad... Considering the mileage of the tires, this was good for nearly \$100 worth of riding! I'm a happy customer!

While in Lake George I got to ride Chris's bike with the Pirelli Matches. What a difference! The rounder profile of the Pirellis made the bike feel like it had power steering! The Metzlers feel truckish by comparison. I'm gonna consider them for '94. I think I want to finish out this season and the cross country trip with a known quantity. And I think on a long trip the more stable Metzlers would be a better ally when the fatigue level is increasing. The Pirellis make the bike feel like it shed about 200 pounds!

All of this is leading up to my dream vacation in September. I'm riding the ST

from Vermont to Monterey for the USGP!

Well, this summer's been turning out as it should. I'm spending more time riding or working on the bike(s) than I am plunking at the keyboard! :) I have a few updates since the last letter to you.

I think I told you already that I bought a new seat from Corbin. I still haven't received it (YET!!) but I did send out the pad from the Hondaline backrest to have it covered in matching material. I've called them for the past three weeks and each time I'm told, "It's still out on the production floor, but should ship by the end of the week." Yeah, right... ;(

I also described a rack to you that I saw on another ST at Americade. Well, I picked up the materials for it a little over a week ago. It took a bit of searching around here, but I finally found a shop to fabricate it for me. The first place that thought they could do the job gave me an estimate of \$80 (2hrs @ \$40/hr) and couldn't commit to completing it for at least four weeks! :(This was a respected industrial welding company in the Burlington area. But after asking some other people I was pointed to another local company that specializes in making welding supplies and equipment. I knew I was in better hands when the job foreman said, "Let's get our 'motorcyclist' to help you with this."

This guy was very willing to listen to my ideas for the design and made some good suggestions of his own. Knowing that \$\$\$ was a concern to me he offered to let me help with the cleanup work on the welds, etc. to keep the labor charges down. In the end he said that it would take 1 to 1 1/2hrs and at \$30/hr the cost would be \$30 to \$45 !! All right!! The best part was that he said he couldn't get to it 'right away' but figured he could have it done by Monday... I brought it in on Thursday!! YEEHAAAA!!!!

Before I'm all done, I have to mount it and decide how I'm going to incorporate

my CB antenna mount. The mount that I had been using won't work with the rack. Instead, I'm going to have a tab welded to the rack for the mount. After that it's time for sandblasting followed by powder coating to match the gray of the Hondaline backrest frame. My rack design differs significantly from the one I saw at A'cade in two ways. Mine will be bolted to the bike using the backrest/passenger handle bolts (longer ones will be required -- about 10-15mm) rather than being permanently welded to the backrest frame. This allows me to use either the backrest or rack independent of the other. Mine is being fabricated from 3/8" steel rod whereas the other one was made from 1/4 or 5/16" rod. I think I told you 3/16" rod in my last letter (that's what the owner told me, but after looking at a photo of it I think it was larger). Regardless, the 3/8" rod should provide the carrying capacity I'm looking for.

The other project going on concurrent with the rack is the fabrication of a set of bar risers (not 'bar-backs'). I searched every accessory catalog in the Champlain Valley and could not find bar risers anywhere. So instead I enlisted the help of a good riding buddy and machinist to make them for me. I bought a 1 x 2 1/2 x 12" length of aluminum bar stock, used the top bar clamp as a guide for profile and had it. This is enough material for two sets of risers (The infamous Chris wants a set too). I think I'm gonna settle on a 1 1/2 to 2" rise, but it's always easier to remove material than to add it later! :)

Total cost for materials \$15 - \$10 for the aluminum bar stock, \$5 for the steel rod and 1/8" steel bar stock for the rack. I discovered that any amount of rise is going to require longer brake and clutch hoses. This is kinda tricky considering the design of the ST's front brake lines (go look, you'll see what I mean). I spoke to Ben at Russell Performance and he suggested using a

double banjo bolt at the master cylinder and then running individual lines to each caliper. Instead I think I'll run a single line to the left caliper and use a double banjo bolt there to run the other line to the right caliper. This would keep the configuration close to stock and simplify routing. It will also be cheaper since the crossover line would be shorter than a line from the master cylinder.

Anything else? Hmm... I traced the outline of the damper screw access from a red '92 side panel and plan to cut a hole for it in mine. I think that's about it for now...Looking forward to the next issue of the newsletter...

Tom Cardinali, Vermont

Tom, I think you need to show a little more excitement about your ST! Just kidding... Actually, I appreciate your several letters on CIS E-Mail and I am glad to print all your interesting enhancements to the ST. Check your E-Mail; I'm sure some readers will have questions for you and I'll forward them to you. - Grant

Quick Tip - If wind noise on the ST1100 is a problem for you try this \$1.99 fix. At the local drug store they have self adjusting soft foam earplugs called Noise Filters from Cabot Safety Corporation. On a recent 850 mile out and back trip I tested these earplugs with my stock ST1100 windshield. To my surprise, not only were they comfortable, but I could actually hear **better** than without them - they cut out all the wind noise frequencies that I'd been used to hearing. Now - I don't ride far without them!

That Extra Spark...

Readers are invited to send in their nominations for That Extra Spark for recognition of motorcycle related excellence. Too often, we run into problems - and it is always easy to complain. Instead, however, maybe we should try to focus on those individuals that do the best they can for us and our motorcycling. This issue I would like to recognize the following.

Mr. Clayton Elmer and **John**, service manger and assistant at Southwest Honda/Suzuki, Houston, Texas. Clayton and John both have provided excellent warranty service for my ST1100 over the last 2 1/2 years. Virtually every item I brought to their attention was repaired quickly and without question....**Ken Fontenot** owner of Cycle Sports, LTD, Houston, Texas. Ken and his people spent several hours trying to analyze and repair the front-end wobble on my ST1100. Though his final conclusion was that it was probably a factor of the design of the bike, he spent a lot of extra time and money on trying to resolve the problem for me....from Phil Kolehmainen on the Motorsports Forum on Compuserve comes the following:

Back last March I paid for a year of MTS (Motorcycle Touring Service?) membership. I think it cost \$45 or thereabouts. For this, they send you a bunch of stuff you don't want, and a membership card with an emergency 800 number for their emergency service.

We have done lots of miles and never needed MTS. Until yesterday. I was about 30 miles from home on my 77

CB750 when the battery started to poop out. I kick started it a couple of times, but eventually there was not enough left for a spark, and I was dead in the water. Apparently the charging system gave out, and the headlight etc. finally drained the battery.

I called the 800 number on my cellular phone, and the nice folks there got right on the job. In about 10 minutes I got a call back from a local towing company, and 5 minutes later a confirming call from MTS. They had checked, and found that the local dealer was closed. So they arranged to truck me and the bike back to my house. The truck showed up about 45 minutes after my first call and off we went. Home, with bike in the garage, and no charge whatsoever.

I figured the \$45 was well spent for peace of mind even if I never needed emergency service. Now I figure I'm ahead of the game.

I highly recommend this outfit. One thing that's good about them is that they include both my bikes for the same charge. If I had used GWRRA for example, I'd have been out of luck.

Last chapter – I put a charger on the battery overnight & drove it to the dealer at oh-dark-hundred hours this morning, and all should be well in a few days.

Quick Tip – The red "hot" ignition wire on the ST runs on the lockable fairing pouch side. With a few tools and high amperage toggle switch, a "dead switch" is easily made that is in the lockable fairing pouch – effective anti-theft for \$3.

Computer Bikers

When not on the road, a large number of riders are active on the computer networks and BBS services. Compuserve, one of the commercial services has quite a few visitors to it Motorsports Forum (if you want to have free information from them, let me know and I'll have it sent to you). Also, there are a number of other motorcycle BBS's out there. If you have a computer, modem, and communications software, you can reach these two of these at the numbers listed below:

HSTA BBS (408)261-0938
Modem Set Full Duplex, None. 8, 1

Motorcyclist BBS (703)709-6318
Modem Set Full Duplex, None. 8, 1

You can leave messages for the **ST1100 Newsletter** at either of the above BBS's or address them to WG Norman, 72163,2245 on Compuserve.

ST1100 Luggage Rack

HSTA member and Goldwing rider Jim Smith manufacture's a luggage rack for the ST1100. He can be reached at (619) 669-4875. Another HSTA member and ST1100 rider, Tim Vipond, also makes a custom luggage rack for the ST1100. Tim can be reached at (713) 565-0580. If anyone purchases one of these racks, you guessed, please write a short evaluation for the next newsletter.

ST1100 Newsletter

P.O. Box 840566
Houston, Texas 77284
(713) 463-3794 Voice
(713) 855-9191 Fax

August 3, 1993

Mr. Silvio Carrara
VP Motorcycle Division
American Honda Motor Company
1919 Torrance Blvd
Torrance, California 90501

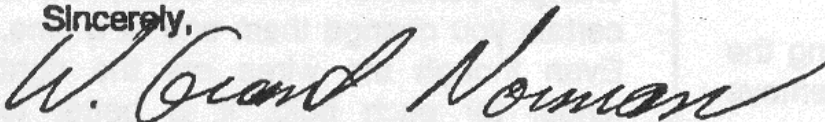
CERTIFIED # P 315 757 605

Dear Mr. Carrara,

On behalf of myself and readers of my **ST1100 Newsletter** we would like to make you aware of a potentially hazardous problem with the Honda ST1100 motorcycle. Over 26 readers and myself have reported a front-end wobble that occurs on this motorcycle at speeds from about 40 mph - 50 mph.

Several of us have had many Honda dealers attempt to repair this problem, with marginal, but no real success. I hope you will understand the urgency of Honda looking into this matter and coming up with a recommended repair. Other than this, virtually all of our readers say this is the greatest motorcycle they have ever owned. Thank you for your attention to this and I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



W. Grant Norman

PS - The ST1100 owners listed below have indicated to me that wish to be included in this request for a fix for this problem.

Alan G. Arndt, Leonard Berkley, James D. Buckerfield, Carl B. Chalfant, Brent Fieber, Stefan Hamilton, Mike Hepler, William J. Hughes, Bill Johnston, Ron Major, Wyatt Martin, Dick McCoy, Neil Meckelborg, Joe Mehal, Sonny Morgan, Charles C. Mourer, Thomas L. Murphy, Douglas C. Neal, David L. Ow, Wendell Plamer, Larry Ribbeck, Brad Richelson, Tom Riley, Bill Rogers, M. & M. Rowland, Shane Sheffield, Brad & Robin Teets, Don Tillar, Daniel J. Weber, Eric Wolcott

NEW DASH LIGHTS

By W. Grant Norman

One of the simplest procedures on the ST1100 is the changing of the dash lights. I was never quite satisfied with the stock bulbs that were just not very bright at night, so when one of the bulbs burnt out, I took the opportunity to change to a brighter and different colored bulb.

I always liked the amber color of the dash lights of my wife's Pontiac Sunbird, so I decided what the hey, I'll make the change to the ST. These are the 4 lights that illuminate the tachometer and speedometer. I purchased 4 standard auto amber instrument lights, 12 Volt 2.5 Watt instead of the Honda specified 12 Volt 1.7 Watt. The .8 increase in wattage per light appears to have had no effect. However, once again let me remind you this is not within Honda's specification so if you decide to make the change it may have an adverse effect on either the electrical system or the instruments they illuminate.

1) Remove 5 screws holding the windscreen in place and remove windscreen.

2) Remove 2 screws and trim clip (center black button on black garnish piece right under the HONDA logo) then remove garnish (you need to pull each top corner out to the right and left, respectively) and be careful not to break the slot tabs on the edge of the garnish.

3) Remove the 4 screws, bottom two are in recessed holes, from inner screen (grey piece that covers instrument

panel). Lift off the pane and you will see the white plastic back of the instrument control panel.

4) Locate the 4 instrument bulbs on the back of the panel. They have two wires going to them, one green, one brown/white striped.

5) Choose a bulb you wish to change first. Grip the two wires close to the black rubber bulb socket and pull it straight back out.

6) Pull the bulb (stock ones have a cute little blue condom on them) much like removing a bulb from Christmas lights.

7) Replace the bulbs with your new bulb of choice (they are listed earlier in the "Gouged" piece or you may purchase your bulbs from a standard auto parts store).

8) Replace the other 3 bulbs following the same procedure.

While under the "hood," you'll notice the line of warning lights on the upper portion of the instrument panel. These all require a little higher wattage 12 Volt 3.4 Watt bulb. If you need to change some of these bulbs, make certain you change them one at a time. Even though the wires are the right length for each bulb, it is better to change only one at a time to avoid mixing them up. A low oil warning light shining in your high beam warning socket would not be fun to find out about later.

Save any good bulbs you may have left over...wrapped in plastic/foam wrapping they are light and easy to put in fairing pockets for emergency. As for the blue condoms...well....uh...another time.

ST – Safety

By W. Grant Norman

"It'll move if it has to!" I gave the old man in the parking lot my standard answer about the ST. I *still* usually get at least one or two inquiries a week when I park. I've got the lines down pretty pat now, "No, it's not *just* a touring bike, but it can be used for that, no, it's not a Ninja, but it can move if it has to." It's always interesting how curious people are about the ST.

As a daily rider, I take a lot of the things I tell people for granted. My whole *style* of riding is based on having plenty of torque and pickup when I need it, usually less than a gear away. So, when making left turns from a stop sign during rush hour traffic I can easily squeeze into a brief window that any four wheeler would be crazy to try for. And that's the point of this safety thought.

When driving my wife's Pontiac Sunbird, I still have the same 4 cylinders and upwards towards 100 horse power, but also I got an extra 2,000 pounds with me that makes it quickly apparent to me that *I'm not* on the ST. The other day, when I had some warranty work done on the ST, I borrowed the dealer's Nighthawk 750 for a couple of quick errands. I mentioned earlier that I was a half-throttle kind of guy on the ST. I quickly found that the Nighthawk wasn't going to let me half-throttle anything if I were to survive in the Houston traffic. Point being...know your ride and its limitations...it could be very costly if you forget you're not on the ST.

Submitting Material

This publication is for you, the reader, and it is very important that I hear from you. In order for it to provide the most information available, I need to receive information from a wide variety of resources. Therefore, I urge you to please write and send in your experiences or any "How To" article for the ST. Future issues are going to cover even more detail such as brakes, coolant changes, and even items such as timing belt changes, clutch, and so on. The list is endless, but I need your help.

This issue has exceeded its planned length by about 12 pages, but I wanted to include all of the excellent letters. In the future, however, try to limit any letters to about 1 to 1.5 pages. Articles can be longer, and if you would like to submit photographs, please send only black & white (you know that stuff you see late night on Nickelodeon). The newsletter is composed and printed using Word Perfect 5.2 for Windows, so almost any word processor data format on IBM compatible 1.44 mb or 1.2 mb disk is greatly appreciated. However, if you do not have a computer, cleanly typewritten material is also appreciated since I do have a flat bed scanner and can scan it and automatically get about 95% of the text. But even if you do not have access to either a computer or a typewriter, please send in your hand written comments and/or articles.

Submit all materials to:

ST1100 Newsletter

WG Norman

PO Box 840566

Houston, Texas 77284-0566

Again thanks for your support and I sincerely hope you have enjoyed this issue. Fall issue deadline is October 15, 1993 so get busy!

Companies Mentioned

Southwest Honda-Suzuki
8200 Southwest Freeway
Houston, Texas 77074
(713)772-7771 Sales - Bo Burns
(loves to sell ST's!)
(713)772-8907 Service - Clayton Elmer
(713)772-7775 Parts - Kerry Rudy

Plano Honda
202 W. Parker Road
Plano, Texas 75075
(214)422-4703 Parts - Mickey Hunt

Cycle Sports, LTD.
9802 Clay Road
Houston, Texas 77080
(713)690-9802 Owner - Ken Fontenot
Parts, Service, Cycle Rescue

K&N Engineering
PO Box 1329
Riverside, California 92502
(714)684-9762

Progressive Suspension
11129 G Avenue
Hesperia, California 92345
(619)948-4012

Woody's Wheel Works
2225 S. Platte River Dr.
Denver, Colorado 80223
(303)936-0232 Greg Henderickson

Motorcycle Touring Services, Inc.
3430 E. Flamingo Road Suite 348
Las Vegas, Nevada 89121
(800)999-7064

Sport Touring Clubs

Honda Sport Touring Association
(HSTA)
9310 167th Ave NE
Redmond, Washington 98052-3739
Elbert E. Silbaugh, Membership
Director
(206)882-0224

American Sport Touring Rider's
Association (ASTRA)
PO Box 672051
Marietta, Georgia 30067-0035
Jeff Adams, President
(404)443-2614

Sport Touring Riders Club of Colorado
(STRCC)
2006 Capulin Drive
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80910
B.J. Ondo, Director
(719)635-3719

Lone Star Sport Touring Riders
Association (LSSTRA)
395 Morgan Mill Road, Box 24
Stephenville, Texas 76401
Terry Jenkins, President
(817)965-7056