

Winter 1994

Volume 2 Number 1

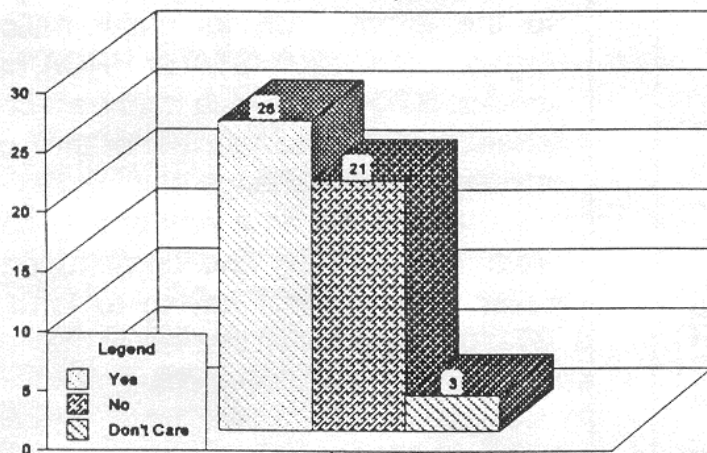
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## STOC Responses!

**Yes:** Information sharing, rally events, friendships. I would like an event lasting several days— for all in the country, **John Anderson, Wisconsin.** **No:** I'm a member of HSTA and am satisfied with it both as a club and with the ST1100 owner contacts, **Robert Lyon, Jr. Pennsylvania.** **Yes:** Organize rides and exchange technical information. I think an ST1100 Owners Club would be more appropriate as a subsection of the HSTA which is an all ready organized group. Most of our interests as ST1100 owners and theirs as sport touring riders are the same except for the technical information regarding our machines, **R.B. Brendt, Texas.**

### Form ST1100 Owners Club?

From 50 Responses



**No:** Too many clubs and splinter groups now. Small groups require a single identity to maintain. HSTA is a classic example. Starting as a V-4 club it fell to almost zero till all Hondas were invited, then all Sport Touring Riders. CBX stands out due to its very special application and vintage orientation. Venture Touring Society still has problems in maintaining

membership and growth. Suggest joining forces with HSTA and/or HRCA. Life expectancy of the club would be longer, **Gene Hubert, California.** **Yes:** Having a gathering of ST owners would be great. When I've gone to HSTA meetings, etc., *the ST isn't even looked at by the "wannabe racers."* Its tough getting any info at such meetings. Maybe if there were only ST's we would share more about our bikes, where we ride, and how we have set our bikes up. I've noticed the folks who have bought the ST and have kept them have a lot in common. The bike gets ridden! **Ross King, Washington**

"Newsletter for ST1100 Owners and Sport Touring Enthusiasts"

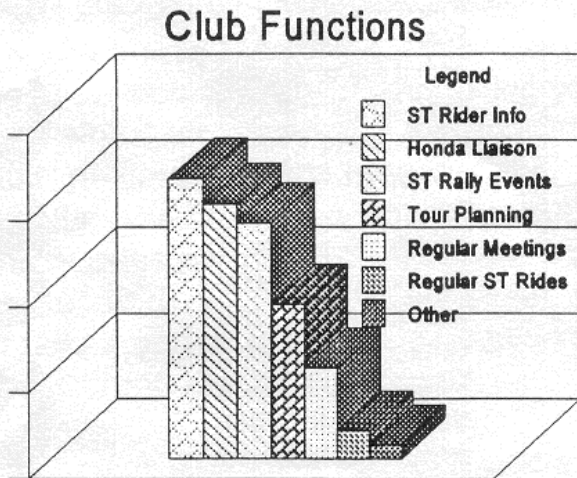
# ST1100 Newsletter

# ST1100 Owners Club

By **WG Norman**

By a 52% to 42% margin, the readers that responded to the most recent **ST1100 Newsletter** survey indicated that yes, they would like to form an ST1100 Club. The acronym **STOC** has already been suggested by Jim Petersen of Colorado.

The most important reason for forming a club, according to the survey, is to provide information for ST riders. The chart below indicates the ranking of other club reasons.



While the formation of the **STOC** could provide numerous benefits for ST1100 owners, I must confess that my vote was on the "No" side of the fence. Reason: I personally feel that the amount of time and effort need to properly organize, maintain, and grow a club is too much for the number of potential

members at this time. Secondly, while I am very biased towards the ST1100, I do not particular agree with the concept of "Model" organizations. I think they tend to reinforce the "Us against them" kind of thinking.

I would like to see **STOC** formed as somewhat of a step-club. My thinking is that in different parts of the country, different clubs and organizations seem to have stronger organization. If the **STOC** could act as an event liaison to other clubs and organizations, then ST1100 owners could have the best of both worlds. For example, if the CBX owners club plans an event, why not have the members of an **STOC step-club** "tag on" to the event. Or, as major national organizations like HSTA or HRCA have events, **STOC** step-club members could attend and take some time for their own meetings and exchange of information.

I see this as a way of benefitting from the planning and organization of other clubs without having to form an ST1100 organization that would duplicate many efforts of existing clubs.

Also, in looking at financial statements from clubs like the CBX Owners and Concours Owners Group, it appears the major club expense is the printing and mailing of a newsletter – something ST1100 owners already have.

Lastly, I was pleased to see that of the "Yes" respondents to the survey, almost 80% committed to putting time into the club. If you wish to begin forming a club let me know and I'll help the best I can by contacting other ST1100 owners. But someone's going to have to volunteer to take charge! Any takers?

## From The Publisher

Here it is 2 days before the official start of Spring and I'm finishing up the Winter newsletter. So much for planning on earlier release dates. I do hope you all received the post card I sent telling of the delay. If not, I do apologize again for not meeting my end of January mailing date.

I have already started on some of the material for the Spring '94 issue, so I hope to have it out well before summer.

1994 has been an extremely busy year for me so far. Before the 3rd week of February I had already travelled to Chicago, Denver, Phoenix, and Las Vegas, points in between, and put over 4000 miles on the ST. In the midst of all that, I went from a 3 day work week contract to a 5 day work week (Yuk!) – but because of the old necessity, \$\$, I had little choice. I'm only very grateful I already own my ST1100 now because I sure couldn't afford to buy one today.

And being a real glutton for punishment, I also signed up for the 1995 Iron Butt Rally – at present usage, my ST should have about 120,000 miles on it by the time the rally starts. So we shall see.

Once again, I do wish to thank all of you for your submissions, letters, and articles. If you look at Ross King's piece on page 11, you'll see something new for the newsletter – photographs! I hope to use more and more in the future, but I do need high quality, with good contrast in order to scan them and use them.

Which leads me back to some suggestions on your submissions. I do appreciate those who have sent in disks with their articles and letters. It really makes it faster and easier. So if at all possible, please use and IBM compatible format word processor or ASCII file for your submission.

Even with documents on disk, the

newsletter takes roughly 50–60 hours from start to mailbox. Unfortunately, the entire newsletter staff consists of one person. I'm hoping to add a couple of editors and would love to hear from any volunteers. As a small organization, the term "editor" needs to be read as "anything related to helping to get newsletter material, writers, etc., etc. etc., plus all the yet to be defined jobs." If you have some time and would like to help, let me know.

The date on your mailing label, such as **Spring 1994** indicates the last issue you will receive. All the Spring 1994 subscribers will get a renewal notice in a few weeks. Again, thanks for subscribing and I hope you enjoy this issue.

Grant

## ST1100 Newsletter

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## Windscreen Modifications

By Paul Blood

Previously, you asked about information concerning the cutting down of the stock windscreen. I was unable to meet your deadline for the fall issue, but now have time to sit in front of the keyboard for a few moments. About the modification:

The stock windscreen aimed wind turbulence at the top of my helmet and produced a back pressure that set up a head buffeting for the passenger. While living in Georgia I rode as a passenger on my bike for sixty miles. I wound up holding on to the chin bar of my Shoei to dampen the movement. This experience prompted discussion with a fellow ST owner, Don, about cutting the stock windscreen to a height that would leave the helmet in clean air. Don decided to have his modified and got a glass shop to do it for the unbelievable price of \$5.00. The only stipulation was that they weren't responsible for accidental breakage. He was pleased with the result and let me ride his bike to aid me in my decision as to whether to cut mine or not.

My wife and I both enjoyed the clean air so the following Monday I paid a visit to the same glass shop. They agreed to do the work while I waited and suggested that I remove the windscreen. I requested that a cut be made at the point where the windscreen

starts to make the vertical flip. Using a band saw they cut straight across at this point. Using the top edge of the cut piece as a guide, they marked the screen to obtain the correct curvature. Using the band saw again, they cut the corners to obtain the original shape. The top edge of the screen was then sanded and their work was done in less than fifteen minutes. After I re-attached the screen, all that was left to do was to cut the top molding. I removed the metal clips, trimmed the proper amount of molding off each side, replaced the clips and re-attached the molding. All of this was accomplished during my lunch hour. This modification accomplished the desired aerodynamic effects and as a bonus produced a sportier appearance.

One drawback is that if you don't like the effect, replacement windscreens aren't cheap.

### OFFICIAL DISCLAIMER BOX

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## LETTERS

The number of pages in the Fall Newsletter leads me to believe that there is no paper shortage in the Houston area. I found the numerous letters and comments from fellow ST owners very interesting. Keep up the tremendous effort.

After the STAR rally in Helen, Ga. last summer I purchased the Corbin rumble seat. I enjoy the firmness of this seat and the lack of leg burn that I experienced after several hours on the stock seat. The drawback to this seat is passenger room. The mounting point for the pivoting backrest eats up too much of the seating area. I noticed in Fred Ziglar's letter that he was successful in getting Corbin to enlarge the rear bucket area. I assume he has the canyon dual sport model, correct?

I trust Rock Rhoades now has his 160/70/17 ST23 mounted on his ST. From what I saw at the Crossroads, he can't afford to shave too many more body parts off on the pavement. I'd be interested to know if he has had anything touch down with the correct sized rear Avon.

**Paul Blood**  
Arizona

Two companies now make rear shocks for the ST:

Works Performance  
8730 Shirley Dr.  
Northridge, CA 91324  
(818)701-1010

A base version for about \$399, custom valved to your weight, riding style, etc. The other version is about \$489 and is also custom valved and has fully adjustable damping.

The other company is :

Ohlins Noleen  
16276 Koala Road  
Adelanto, CA 93201  
(619) 246-5000

Also to weight and riding specification. No other shock companies seemed interested - low demand/high cost.

A company called Factory makes the only carb jet kit I know of. It sells for \$85.99 through Dennis Kirk Catalog. They can be reached at (800) 328-9280. The kit is complete with jets, clips, shims, etc. and instructions. I found out through an owner who says the kit gave the bike even more impressive mid-range and top end. He did use it along with the K&N Air Filter. That's all for new parts and accessories. Hardware junkies, enjoy!

In the Fall '93 issue of the ST1100 Newsletter, Mr. Fred Ziglar of Illinois stated that the ST "Just doesn't sound like a sporting motorcycle. It's a good engine, just doesn't sound like it."

I AGREE! He also wrote of his experience with the VFR750 feeling and sounding more sporty. The feel is mostly the weight difference, but the sound is due to the different crankshaft firing order. The VFR 750 as of 1986, has a 180° crankshaft firing order. The ST1100 uses Honda's original 360° firing order, also

*(continue on page 14)*

## Winterizing My ST1100

By Mike Rowland

I live in Maryland where the winters are, let's see... average, better than some, worse than others. Although I ride into work now and again, I am primarily a weekend rider that will take time off work, on occasion, to go to a motorcycle rally.

It was getting to be late November, the weather was getting colder and my riding partners, my wife and brother-in-law, had already put their bikes up for the winter. My wife is from Houston and does not get along well with colder weather so we usually winterize her bike (Yamaha Seca II) towards the end of October. My brother-in-law rides an '85 BMW K100RS and usually rides in colder weather but this year he is taking an auto body class so that he can repaint his bike. He began taking his bike apart in October. I, on the other hand, continued to ride my ST1100, all by myself. I am sure I could have found other motorcyclists to ride with me, but this late in the year, I usually end up deciding to ride for an hour or so at the last minute.

I finally had to face the realization that due to hunting, traveling, and colder weather, I wasn't riding much any more and it was time to put my ST1100 up for the winter.

The next Saturday I ran up to the corner gas station, put some gas stabilizer in the tank and topped it off with gas. Returning to the warm garage, I changed the Oil and Filter and began my

search for the elusive carburetors in order to drain them. I don't have a shop manual yet so I began removing parts in an attempt to get to the carbs. Off comes the seat, the side panels, the plastic top over the air box, the top of the air box, the air filter, etc. Several parts later, whala! I can see the tops of the carburetors but the bottoms are still well hidden from view. I must have spent twenty minutes trying to figure out where to go from here. I just kept muttering to myself, "There has to be a trick to this". After my wife came out to tell me that we were going to be late for the Christmas party, for the third time, I decided that I would have to finish this project another day.

Over the course of the next two weeks, every other evening I went out to the garage, stared at the partially exposed carburetors, looked at the gas tank and the radiator, muttered "there has to be a trick" several times, then went back into the house.

Finally my brother-in-law came over, looked at my partially disassembled bike and said "It's easy, just pull out the gas tank, and the radiator, and you should have easy access to the bottom of the carburetors". Right, easy, I asked him if he had any idea what a gas tank with 7.4 gallons of gasoline weighs? That's when I decided that the easy way to do this was to NOT do this. I put everything back together and decided I would just have to suffer, and ride my bike through the winter.

As many of you know, with the wind protection of this bike, the only thing that gets cold is your hands. I'll just have to send off for some heated gloves. After

all, it has to be easier to wire a plug for the gloves than to drain those \*%#@\* carburetors.

I think we should petition Honda to recall all ST1100's in the northern half of the country and install fuel injection on them ! See you on the road !

*Obviously, Mike, you have failed to really study the owner's manual...draining the carburetors on the ST is so easy that there are **two** different methods.*

*Method 1: Use a rubber hose and syphon all gas out of the tank into an acceptable storage container. Next, and this is the part where you need to make certain you have proper protective clothing, such as a plastic face cover, hard hat, petroleum-product resistant rain suit, etc - also make certain you have extinguished all cigarettes, camp fires, etc. - firmly grab the ST carb draining handle ( it folds out from left side of the body panel just under the seat, many think it is for lifting the bike on to the center stand, but this is a misconception). Make sure you grab the handle **firmly** in you right hand. Next, reach over to the right hand grip of the handle bar with your left hand and grip the right hand grip firmly. Now, lift the ST directly over your head and hold for at least one full minute....the gas will drain out of the carburetors through the air intake ports. If this seems a little difficult, you may wish to try Method 2.*

*Method 2: Ride your ST until the red fuel "drain carburetors" light ( you may have thought it had a different function) illuminates. This light indicates that you are about to enter the drain*

*carburetor mode. Next, and this can be expensive, but at least you don't need to lift the bike over your head, buy a new home on a cul de sac. With the drain carburetor light illuminated, ride in a circle around the cul de sac until the ST stops running. Viola! Drained carburetors!*

*Hope these suggestions are helpful!*

*-Grant*

## QUICK TIP

Does your ST1100 ever shut down when you hit a hard bump? Or sometimes just a little bump? If it does and it won't start again until you have turned the ignition completely off, chances are you have a tilt sensor that is beginning to fail. A couple of owners, myself included, have had to have this unit replaced under warranty.

Also, if you wish to help your Honda mechanic save some time on this repair, let them know that it is relatively easy to get to through taking off the right mirror (also the easy way to change the clock light bulb). If not, they can spend a lot of time taking off a pounds of plastic to get to it.

Incidentally, this sensor does its job if you happen to drop the bike by shutting everything down. (I know from experience several times). If you do drop your ST and try to restart immediately after lifting it upright again (lift it while the adrenalin is still going or you'll need help - trust me!), remember, it will not start again until the ignition has been completely turned off.

## HONDA ST1100 FORK MODIFICATION

By Paul Taylor

Modern motorcycle manufacturing has become so refined that manufacturers build specific models to meet the needs of virtually every market segment. When Honda set out to build its BMW killer sport-tourer, they certainly must have asked themselves what their intended buyer most wanted. A soft, supple ride was certainly a high priority for their presumed audience.

It would be difficult to argue with the success of the ST1100 in meeting this goal. For flat-out touring, the ST is as smooth as a Goldwing, while offering substantially better handling in the twisties. That is no small praise. The ST, in stock form, provides a fine balance of sport and touring.

Honda, having achieved this, chose to make the front suspension non-adjustable by the operator. Perhaps their thinking was that the front suspension was so right for the majority of riders that no additional adjustment would be necessary. Maybe this is case of "Honda knows best."

As much as I like my 1992 ST, after 10,000 miles, I had some definite notions about how to improve the handling. Handling is, of course, an individual preference. Operating weight, riding style and other issues need to be considered. What works for me might not work the same for you. What I wanted was an ST that provided a firmer, more

sporting ride and to do this while operating at gross vehicle weight.

In my evaluation of the ST stock front suspension. I noted that there was excessive dive on braking. The bike felt unsettled in situations where the road was fast, twisty and bumpy. There was a tendency to skip across small ripples in the pavement. And the front end felt numb, lacking feel and feedback.

I contacted several companies that specialize in modifying motorcycle suspensions. After speaking at some length with DeWayne Jones, of Noleen Racing, I decided to have Noleen modify the forks.

DeWayne explained in detail both the modifications that Noleen would perform and their reasons for the modifications. "First of all," he said, "this is a very good fork. But it could be set up better."

"We feel that the spring rate is too soft, and that the progressively wound spring that Honda uses is difficult to tune over the entire range of suspension travel. We would start changing the stock fork springs for a straight rate spring of our own manufacture. The spring that we use will be based on information you provide. This way we start out with a spring that's tailored to you and the kind of riding you do. Next, we will revalve the fork for rebound. We drill a series of decreasing diameter holes in the piston to allow for a progressive rate of rebound damping. And then we polish the piston and tube to eliminate stiction. Then, we will overhaul the TRAC anti-dive unit. The spring is given greater tension and the stock steel piston is replaced with a



Teflon unit that we build. This will provide increased and more linear compression damping. Finally, we will assemble the forks and fill them with 7 weight Noleen fork oil. What you will have is a motorcycle with a much firmer ride and much better sport riding characteristics."

I sent my forks to Noleen and they returned them two weeks later. Compressing the forks by hand I thought that they were going to be too soft. But Noleen measures the compression from the middle of the stroke rather than at the top. When installed on the ST the results were even better than I had hoped. My ST now feels very different from when in the stock configuration. The ride is much firmer. There is almost no dive on braking. The front end stays more in touch with the pavement on rough surfaces. It no longer skips and hops over ripples. The sensitivity and feedback are greater. The cost for this work was most reasonable. Noleen charges \$89.95 for the base valve kit. The fork springs run \$79.50. The labor charge was \$189. The completed project cost a total of \$278.45, plus the shipping charges. These costs may vary depending on what you want done. The valve kit and fork springs are available for do-it-yourself installation. I am very happy with the results of this modification. The difference in handling is remarkable. I joke about it by saying that it turned my ST into a 700 lb VFR. And that's not a bad description. While your handling desires may be different from mine, I have no doubt that a suspension rework will improve your ST1100 and bring a smile to your face.

Contact:  
Ohlins Noleen Racing  
16276 Koala Rd.  
Adelanto, CA 92301  
(619) 246-5000

## Reader Classified

### FOR SALE

#### Custom Luggage racks for ST1100's

Tim Vipond - (713) 565-0530  
James Smith - (619) 669-4875

#### Tank Covers

Scott Dinger - (619) 689-1133 (w)  
(619) 457-7626 (h)

#### ST1100 Accessories

Ron Major PO Box 1024  
Temple City, CA  
91780

**Sound Off Priority Plus Rear Light Flasher**-\$25.00 or Free to someone who will install and write an article about it.

Grant Norman - (713) 463-3794

**Wind Deflector Wings** - Clear Plastic with mounting hardware - \$20.00

Grant Norman - (713) 463-3794

**Bearing Kits and Tools** - Anyone interested in helping to put together or in purchasing a complete steering head/wheel bearing changing kit for the ST1100 please contact Grant Norman. I'm looking to put together a complete kit with tools and video if enough people are interested.

## ST Life

By WG Norman

*Over the years, certain ST Life Lessons become apparent to the owner... I would like to print some of your lessons here next issue!*

One bad thing about removing and cleaning parts on the ST1100 while at a motel is you need to rent an extra bed for all the plastic.

When stopped at a light between two Harley's, you must watch your tachometer to see if your engine's still running.

When stopped next to a CBR it suddenly becomes apparent that maybe the stock ST seat and windshield aren't so bad after all.

When stopped next to a Goldwing or Venture, it suddenly becomes apparent that maybe they are!

When a motorcycle novice asks you if your ST is a Pacific Coast look at him bewildered and say, "Is your Acura a Civic?"

Don't let your 8 year old eat M&M's on the back of your ST while you ride if you do not want :

- a) Him "Bombing" the 4 wheelers
- b) Chocolate on the back of your leather coat or mashed into your new Corbin or jeans

Remember, **even the ST is sluggish** on a 3rd gear take off from the light.

You **know** just how **heavy** the ST is when:

- a) You forgot to put it the garage, your driveway is slightly uphill, and the keys are in the house
- b) When you drop it in any parking lot, but especially when in front of a crowded restaurant's window
- c) Any time you drop it in an intersection or any motorcycle rally
- d) When you attempt to put it on its center stand – barefooted
- e) Anytime its raining, sleeting, snowing, or hailing
- f) You run out of gas and have to push it across the street or off the freeway to the gas station
- g) After giving it to much throttle on a non-TCS model while turning right from a stop sign on a freshly Armoralled side of the rear tire.
- h) When you try to turn the front wheel by hand to clean the rim and tire that was under the front fender.

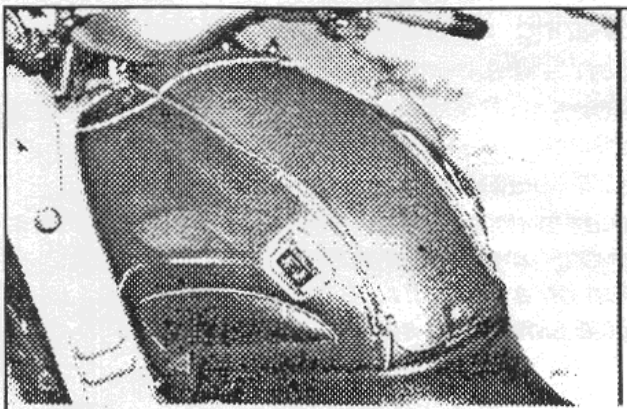
## Tank Bra and Bags

By Ross King

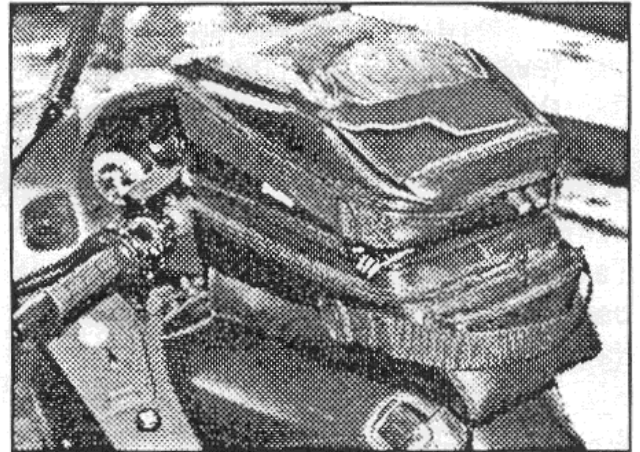
When I was in Europe in 1991, I saw a custom tank bag set-up on a Pan European (ST 1100) that really caught my eye. I've been trying to find out who made it and where I could get one ever since! Luckily I spotted another one on a Pan European parked on the sidewalk in Paris this past summer and noted the "Bagster" tag on the tank bra. When I got back home, I was surprised to find the rest of the information I needed: an ad for this same system offered by:

Capital Cycle Corp  
P.O. Box 528  
1508 Moran Rd.  
Sterling, VA 22170

I called their 1-800-642-5100 number and found that they order the systems from France and that they make them in colors that match the color schemes on many bikes. I ordered a black set for my ST1100 and about five weeks later mine arrived. I'm more than happy with the set-up which includes:



1. Tank bra complete with gas tank zipper opening and great hold-down points for the bag. It's a well-made, padded cover.



2. Two interchangeable bags (can be used alone or together): a. Sport Bag: 5" deep, 15" long, 10" wide b. Medium Bag: 7" deep, 15" long, 10" wide

When both bags are used together, the sport bag zips onto the medium bag. This combination adds up to about 39 liters of storage. Yes! I still can see my instruments! The built-in rain cover comes out of the zipper in the bottom of the Medium bag. The bag set-up is made of a leather-like material.

Both bags have clear plastic map holders built in. This set-up was \$250, delivered to Seattle. For years I had been using the largest Chase Harper tank bag (25 liters) and I considered it only OK: too flimsy when really expanded. This new set-up is superb--the bags are held very firmly in place. The bag(s) come off quickly and easily; both have handles for carrying.

## Two Heads Are Better Than One

By Dave Gorham

Texas. It's a land known for things big (everything), hot (food), and cold (beer). It's also known for two-headed drivers. I've seen them. I've driven most of this country, and nowhere have I seen more two-headed drivers than here, in Texas. Two-headedness is documented; backed-up by science. A quick stroll through your local carnival's side-show will show you two-headed chickens, snakes, frogs, a sheep. But I'm talking about people, like you and me. Driving cars. I see it every day, right here in Texas.

I was behind a two-headed driver today, on my way to work. I took a closer look. What I saw, unfortunately, blew my two-headed theory onto the shoulder. I saw two people, sitting very close, sharing space. It was an older couple, driving an older Chevy pick-up. The pick-up still had its show-room shine; its bumper sticker invited me to ask about their grand kids. Watching this couple drive along made me wish I had bench seats in my new pick-up. It made me think of all the other cars I've had - not a bench among them. I thought that I was missing some major piece of Americana.

You know, "American Graffiti", cruising, drive-ins, fogging-up windows. I reached for the radio to tune in the oldies station. That's when it hit me. How could I forget my favorite bench seat? Tonie and I have shared space

over a good bit of this country, all the while sharing the same seat and the same two wheels. I loved every click of the odometer. I've got to say though, that there were a lot of hard miles. And not the kind you think! There were no punches to the ribs, no kicks to the calves. There was no shout of "Slow Down!". No, Tonie liked the speed. Together we scraped pegs through corners and explored the upper reaches of the tach and speedo sharing space.

Passengers can be anything from irritating to helpful. A figidety passenger can actually steer the bike! As every rider knows, a passenger is as much a rider as the rider is a rider (but if your rider knew my rider, like my rider knows your rider ... wait, I'm getting side-tracked). Together, we've pushed our Ninja hard through the Texas Hill Country, the Southeast, New England and lots of places in between. As a passenger, Tonie did everything she should have, right along with me - sharing space. Tonie's got her own bike now, and riding side-by-side is quite different than riding two-up. I ride my bench solo now; my back exposed to the wind. But that's OK, because she's now experiencing all the great things that made us all get back on a bike that second time. Still, I miss sharing space with my Honey. Maybe I can find a bench seat for my pick-up, and keep that two-headed legend alive and well here, in Texas..

*Thanks for your submission, Dave. I want to encourage all riders of any motorcycle to submit material for consideration. After all, if its fun on a Ninja, it'll be fun on an ST also, just a little slower (for some, that is)!*

## AVON UPDATE

by Rock Rhoades

I said I'd keep you up to date on how the Avon ST22/23 tires worked for me. Well, it's mostly good news. I did indeed replace the 170/60 rear before 7,000 miles... I changed it at 6,277, though it probably had enough left above the wear bars to make it to 7,000. As I mentioned in my first tire article, the more-severe-than-average usage while that tire was on the bike probably makes an 8000-mile figure a fairer comparison with my other mileages. The 160/70 has over 5,000 miles on it so far, and best guess says it might go to 9,000-10,000 miles.

The 160/70 rear gave me back the cornering clearance I lost with the smaller-diameter 170/60. The 170/60 is designed for a 5 1/2-inch rim; mounting them on the ST's 4 1/2-inch rim pinched the sidewalls closer together to the point where the outer 3/4 inch of tread couldn't touch the ground (I'd ground hard metal parts first). The 160/70 gets feathered all the way out to the edges. Some of this, of course, is because I can lean the bike over farther with the larger-diameter tire. Pinching the 160/70 by mounting it on the ST's rim probably also negates any potential gains in contact-patch size compared to the stock profile.

The only negative comment I have about the 160/70 is that I have the same squirm on corner exits that I had with other stock-profile tires. Since I've had

this with all of the tall tires and none of the 60-series-profile tires I've tried, I'm convinced this is simply a function of a high-torque motor distorting a tall tire (longer rubber path between wheel and pavement). It's not anything threatening, anyway; it just requires that you stand the bike up quicker out of the corner to control the oversteer caused by the rear end creeping toward the outside of the turn.

The front tire has more than 11,000 miles on it now, and looks like it still has enough tread left to get up in the 18,000-mile range before hitting the wear bars: dramatically better than any other tire I've used, and doubly impressive given how well this tire sticks. I haven't had any headshake from them, but it may be too early to discount it as a problem because the Metzlers (for example) wore thinner before they started their tank-slapper attempts.

Now that I've been running the Avons in more varied weather, I've come to appreciate more fully what they mean about radials being cooler-running tires. In warm weather (warm here in Texas probably means HOT to most of you) I just take it easy for the first three to five miles or so, then I can get right into really aggressive riding. In cold weather (35-70 degrees or so) it takes quite a bit longer; I commute 15 miles to work, and the tires are just starting to stick by the time I arrive. If it's much below freezing, they NEVER warm up. It's like warm-weather riding in the rain: about 80% traction available. That's an acceptable trade-off for me, because freezing weather doesn't exactly put me in the

mood to go corner-carving, and that cool running is probably what explains these tires' exceptional mileage figures.

A few of you have called me about these tires, especially about the stock-profile rear that I had not yet reported on. I said in the earlier article that these are the most neutral-handling tires I've tried, neither falling into turns nor trying to stand up under braking; this still applies with the 160/70.

I've been running the stock air pressures in these tires (36 & 42) with good results. Dennis Elliott told me last night, however, that Avon recommends running 2 psi over both figures because of the higher weight of the ST compared to most bikes with these tire sizes. I think I'll try it and see if I can tell any difference.

For those of you having trouble finding these tires (some have been unable to find the stock-profile rear), I'll put in a plug for Eldon Rix, an HSTA member who owns and operates Cycles Unlimited in Pryor, Oklahoma, phone (918) 825-3326. He's as cheap as any of the mail-order houses. Tell him if you're an HSTA member, and tell him I sent you.

I hope this answers most of the remaining questions. If not, I welcome a phone call from anyone interested in anything else, even if it's just BSing about the ST or sport-touring. I'm at (817) 690-9222 evenings.

Yes, I'll do a closeout line when I (finally) wear these things out. As far as recommendations, though, I'll say that it will have to be a pretty severe problem in the tires' remaining life to sway me against them.

*(Letters - Continued from Page 5)*

used on the Sabre's, Magna's, and pre '86 Interceptor 500's, 750's and 1000's.

The 360° configuration has a flat drone sound while the 180° has a nasty growl like a Nascar Formula 1 engine. If I had one wish, it would be for Honda to use the 180° configuration on future ST engines and offer a retro-engine kit with new cams, ignition box, crankshaft, and anything else needed to make the engine sound as cool as the VFR. I know this would be very expensive to sell and then have installed, but just like I scratched up cash for my bike I'd find a way.

**Michael C. Anderson**  
Pennsylvania

I just read my first newsletter. I am pleased to hear and read about other riders from around the country.

It is great that you can take the time to keep us all informed on this great bike. I am especially impressed with the maintenance tips since I am a Technician by Trade.

I bought a 1991 ST used from my local Dealer. The gentlemen who owned this bike before took good care of it. My accessories include a 22" Rifle windscreen, Corbin seat with back rest, Maxia Monokay trunk system. I hope to maybe add more accessories later. My bike has about 14,000 miles on it now.

I have had many other motorcycles before and test rode many others until I fell in love with this machine. Now my wife

doesn't even mind riding on the back.

I have the wobble problem also that you and everyone else has been talking about. Mine is from 50 down to 45 with hands off and it more apparent when loaded with my trunk unit. I have had the dealer change the front tire to a Dunlop from a Metzeler. I have a Metzeler on the back and will soon change it. My question is it okay to mix brands? I think the bike handles great at this point. I also have a slight back-fire, but I plan to try the K&N filter. It seems also shifting is a little stiff and I was wondering if a different oil or thicker oil would help out.

Other than minor problems I feel Honda made the bike I have been looking for. Thanks for your efforts in this newsletter.

**Darryl H. Evans**  
North Carolina

*As for mixing tires, the only rule generally accepted is not to mix bias ply and radial tires. As for different brands of each type - go for it! I have finally settled on my favorite tire combination - I use the Metzeler bias ply for the rear and the Bridgestone Excedra for the front! As for stiff shifting, I've found that frequent oil changes - every 2,000 miles or so - keeps the shifting "looser" feeling for me. Also, you may wish to check and see that the lower plastic cover just above the shifter linkage is not rubbing against the linkage (common if the ST is dropped on its left side). As for the wobble, see the next letter from Tom McKiernan .*

*Grant*

Thanks for putting the effort into a great idea which turned into a great newsletter. All information so far has been quite interesting and helpful.

My contribution to the newsletter concerns the steering head bearings on our ST's. I have converted my ST to tapered roller bearings instead of the inferior ball bearings. But, first let me set the picture.

I have only experienced the infamous wobble slightly while decelerating with light grip on bars and when leaned into a turn at any speed above 15-20 MPH. This came to my attention at about 11,000 miles on the bike. I first thought was, it is just the rear tire getting worn in the middle (as I'm not in the upper 30% of the Ricky Roadracer crowd) and I was just up on the "points" while leaned over. New tire due at 13,900 miles. Changed the rear to Metzeler ME 55, but no change.

While waiting for the front to wear out, a friend converted his Hawk GT to tapered roller bearings for the steering head. HHMMM, I say! A quick cross reference of part numbers shows the OEM bearings as the same in a 380 lb. Hawk GT and a 700 lb. ST 1100, go figure! I quickly ordered a set from my dealer (insert plug here) Honda-Kawasaki-Yamaha of Middletown, Ohio. They obtained them through Hap Jones, part no. SSH903R which fits a number of other bikes. I paid less than \$50.00 for upper and lower bearings, outer races and dust seals.

I did the swap myself in one afternoon. After disassembly (same as

normal service procedure), my dealer removed inner race on steering stem and pressed on the new one. He was kind enough to loan me the proper driving tools for the races in the steering head. The wheel bearings were fine.

After reassembly, I felt an immediate difference during the test ride. I didn't feel that the front was loose before, but this baby is tight now. I tried several test procedures including slowing from 85 MPH to 35 MPH with hands off grips (but not far away), two finger throttle control with left hand off grip while leaned over at 50-60 MPH, on and off throttle movement while in a turn, etc. Not one wobble, wiggle, jiggle, shake or rattle was felt: only roll to the left, to the right and forward. This ST is rock solid and dead stable. I can't wait to put on a new front tire. This one only has 17,300 on it now.

I highly recommend this change to everyone. Happy Motoring!!

**Tom McKiernan**  
Ohio

I recently received your German mailing of the complimentary issue of your ST1100 Newsletter. I was very pleased to receive notification that a "User's" Newsletter is available.

I have been in Europe for the past seven years, and have spent many hours and kilometers in the saddle over here. I have participated in the last two annual Honda sponsored, "Pan-European" rallies, in both Switzerland and France.

I've had my ST for nearly two years now. I was in the States in February of

'92, bought the new machine from a dealer friend in Florida, took the bike to Daytona "Bike Week," brought it back to my friend for recrating for the shipment to Germany. The bike arrived in April and has since provided me with numerous hours of incredible riding pleasure. If you have experienced European motorcycling, you know what I mean, if not, it is something to behold. I have no doubts that of your American ST riders, I have accumulated more hours beyond 100 mph than any of them. This is not intended to imply reckless, high speed running, but merely to acknowledge that the German Autobahn system permits safe riding at these speeds. It is also worthy to note that the ST is more than capable of this sustained performance. I cannot make the same claim to time at speed when it comes to my fellow German ST1100 riders. They routinely traverse Germany at speeds considerably higher than 100 mph. The ST doesn't seem to mind, but the fuel consumption sure goes up. Cruise at 100 mph and you will be getting gas every 200 miles. Enough of these praises for the ST, I just felt that maybe a European opinion might be interesting for you.

Having attended Honda sponsored rallies for our model, I would like to see my CONUS ST associates have a similar opportunity. This year, 350 ST1100's assembled in the south of France for several days of excellent riding in beautiful country. This bike is very popular over here, and I heard that the rally organizers had to return several hundred applications. They just could not provide all the details for such a large



gathering. The 350 entrants represented 14 or so different countries. Being the only Americans, we felt unique. In spite of the multitude of languages, you can still communicate to fellow riders. It was a great time. I have copies of the commercially prepared Honda documentaries for both France '93 and Switzerland '92. If I can overcome the video format differences, perhaps I could supply you with copies. The European video format is PAL, and is not compatible with American NTSC video format.

Pertaining to your inquiry of associations with other clubs, I was a member of the International CBX Club. My previous bike over here was a CBX. It now just hauls me around Daytona each year during Bike Week. The club had somewhat of an international following. I'm not sure of how successful the international portion was, but I always enjoyed the newsletters. Once I sent my CBX back to the States, and began riding the ST, I lost interest in the CBX club. I am very enthusiastic about your newsletter and the possible formation of an ST1100 owners club. My job in Europe would not permit me to organize events, etc., but I could provide you an occasional European perspective article.

I will be in Europe for approximately two more years. If your newsletter is capable of printing pictures, I could also supply same. I am a motorcycling enthusiast with 35 years of enjoying this sport, and continue to get in as much riding and activities as the riding season over here permits.

I come to the States each March to attend the Daytona festivities. If you attend, drop me a note, and perhaps we could meet to discuss any European related questions.

The ST has a large ownership in Europe, and its riders are dedicated to it..

**Lloyd Hawley**  
Germany

*Sorry I couldn't make it to Daytona and meet with you and some of the other Newsletter readers - I just was too far behind in too many things (such as the Winter Newsletter, for one). Would like to hear about your European experiences and any other ST1100 European activities, so keep us posted. Also, I have a friend that produces video...I'll ask him about converting the PAL format to VHS and maybe some of our readers could borrow tapes in the future. Thanks for your letter and I hope you continue to enjoy the Newsletter.*

*Grant*

February 10, 1994

Honda Motor Company  
Anaheim, CA

Re: Apparent manufacturing problems with early ST1100's, and other things.

I would like to comment on the "wobble" problem attributed to the ST1100. My ST1100 is my 15th Honda motorcycle since 1968. Several of those, notably my '70 CB500 and all three Gold Wings, had some degree of wobble on

deceleration. Tightening the steering head bearings tends to relieve this problem. My ST1100 has shown no signs of wobble. However, my son's ST1100 would go into severe tank slap unless the bars were held firmly. This indicates to me some degree of manufacture's tolerance in the construction.

In addition, the front wheel bearings went south on my son's bike at 40K miles. That is not unheard of, but it's definitely outside my range of experience. Several owners have commented that, on inspection, they found their wheel bearings, as well as the head bearings, to be nearly dry. Could this have been an assembly problem? I intend to disassemble my bike (currently at 21K miles) to check these areas for proper lubrication. It shouldn't be necessary. Indeed, I've never had this concern with any of my previous Hondas.

Given the number of complaints of this type, I am surprised that you haven't issued a recall specifically to check this area on all STs. Seems like cheap insurance to me, compared to a potential law suit. I realize that bearings should be part of normal maintenance; but neither the owners manual nor shop manual contain a specific procedure for checking these areas. I check mine out of old habit. Younger owners may not be aware of the need. Every one I've talked with on this subject feels that tapered roller bearings in the steering head would be more appropriate, given the size and weight, as well as the intended use, of the ST1100. The same is true for the Gold Wing.

I have some other questions about

this bike. First, why no radio option? The radio designed for the PC800 works very well, and seems like a natural for the ST (and other models). Why not "generalize" the design and make it available to all? Second, why no self-cancelling turn signals? Several lesser models have them, and they are, potentially, a safety item. Third, how about more accessories; a taller wind screen and a luggage rack come to mind immediately. Fourth, and most important, where's the fuel injection. Put multi-port on the ST and mono-block on the Gold Wing. Benefits are increased mileage, easier starting, more consistent power. Down side is increased cost; so what! People are paying WAY premium prices for these bikes in the first place. What's another \$500 or so. Use some of the engineering knowledge available from the automobile side. Given the engine characteristics, the mono-block injection from my '88 Civic DX would have bolted right on the GL1500, with only a different manifold.

I've been told that the environment of a motorcycle is too harsh for the electronics. But it's already electronic. A few more solid state parts shouldn't make any difference. Other manufacturers are doing it; you've done it yourself. Give us fuel injection.

And VTEC, and dual programmed chips (economy and sport), and cockpit tuneable suspension, and AIR CONDITIONING, and, and, and,.. but I digress.

I love the ST. It is a good cross between an all out sport bike and the early Gold Wings. I had an '88 GL1500, on which I put 74000 miles; it was too big,

too heavy, and too cumbersome, for my mode of riding. And it gets lousy gas mileage. The ST has solved all those complaints for me.

**George Catt**  
Illinois

*Thanks for the copy of your letter to American Honda. The more we all write, the more results we will get, so everyone, please keep letting Honda know your concerns and likes.*

## Rear End Problems

**By Jim Alexander**

As many ST owners may know, there have been some reports of rear end problems.

I have the pleasure of personally confirming the problem. Last summer during a trip in Georgia, I noticed a significant amount of looseness in the rear end while mounting a new set of Avon ST radials. I also noticed how dry the splines and other parts of the rear end were. Since I normally have someone else do the tire work, I didn't know if this was normal, but re-greased everything as required. At this point I had 49,000 miles on the bike. I had no problems with the rear end the entire remainder of the 7,500 mile trip.

In September with 59,000 miles, I needed a rear tire so I arranged for another Avon ST, since I have a usual dealer I checked and found that they didn't

have an Avon in stock, so I called around and found a Honda dealer who did. During the tire replacement, I was informed that the rear end was dry and was about 40% gone so should keep and eye on it. During the month of December, it was time for a major service (64,000 miles), so I dropped it off at my usual dealer and mentioned I was concerned about the rear end and wanted it checked.

Later that day, I got a phone call confirming my worst fears ... the rear end was shot or very close to it. The service manager had already contacted Honda and had a preliminary OK to do a warranty repair, but it was going to need confirmation.

Parts were ordered and the OK came after an inspection of the old unit. After removal of the final gear assembly from the drive shaft, it was noticed that even the drive shaft joint (a splined joint between the final gear assembly and the drive shaft) was shot. I had the opportunity to see the parts and it wasn't pretty. You could actually see the affect of twist forces on the splines. In addition, the final drive flange and the rear wheel rubber dampers were replaced. The final drive flange is the round flange assembly with a splined end that fits into the final gear assembly and on the other side the five fingers that fit into the actual wheel. The Honda specified gear lube was definitely used during the re-assembly (NLGI No 2 - Molybdenum disulfide additive).

While it was a warranty replacement, I did see the bill going to Honda and it was over \$1,200 for the

entire job!

After the work was done, I checked both the owner's manual and the shop service manual for maintenance schedules covering the rear end. No where are these items specified as needing attention!

After another 4,000 miles, I decided to have both tires replaced and took it back to the same dealer who did the rear end work. During the rear tire change, we noticed that already some of the gear lube had flown off the drive flange fingers and splines. Also, we had noticed that a noticeable amount of dust had started to collect in the area. The mechanic took special precaution to make sure all part were greased properly when the rear wheel was replaced.

I guess the only comment would be to periodically spend time taking your rear wheel off, inspecting the condition, and re-greasing the whole thing. I wonder how many people will not put as many miles on their ST as I have in 2.5 years and will not experience the pleasure of rear end replacement during the warranty period but outside

*Jim - Thanks for your article on the rear end problems. I know newsletter reader Ramon Becerra knows what you're talking about - his rear end went out in the last leg of the Iron Butt Rally this last year. I, too, know what you're talking about...my entire rear (ST's rear, that is) was replaced under warranty at the same time they replaced all my bearings to repair the front wheel wobble, which, incidentally, still has not come back after 10,000 plus miles on the front*

*tire and all the new bearings. Thanks for writing, Jim.*

*Grant*

## 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  
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