

SABRE TATTLER

Official Newsletter of:

HONDA V-4 SPORT TOURING ASSOCIATION

112 Bishopgate Road

Columbia, South Carolina 29210

Tel. 803/781-4293

THERE HAS TO BE A FIRST NEWSLETTER, AND THIS IS IT...! AUGUST, 1982

A Greek philosopher once said that a journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step. That step was taken last March when I became the proud owner of a 1982 Honda Sabre! Someone else said that when two Americans meet they form a committee right on the spot; and, if three or more meet, they start a new organization! Well, we DO have a club; it is alive and well, and we welcome each one of you (and those that certainly will follow in the months to come!)

A person with true friends is rich indeed. My association with motorcyclist through the years has endowed me with many wonderful friends, some of whom I see only once in a great while. However, this is truly one of the benefits of riding out into this country of ours! I hope to meet each one of you in the coming months (and years) and I trust that you will form some lasting friendships as a result of belonging to the Honda V-4 Sport Touring Association. Before I get into some discussions concerning the club itself, please allow me to introduce myself to you...

I am 48 years old, a native of New Hampshire and an Air Force veteran, serving from 1951 to 1955. I married a South Carolina gal, Lynn by name, and settled here after my release from active duty. After I graduated from college in 1961, Lynn and I moved from Newberry (about 35 miles up the road) to Columbia (the capital city) where we have lived for the past 21 years. My full-time job is being Information & Education Officer for South Carolina State Parks. In addition, I play electronic piano in a country & western band, and am organist and choir director at a local Episcopal Church to which we belong.

Lynn is a telephone operator with Southern Bell, and works the night shift. We have two daughters, Julie, 21, who is entering her senior year at the University of South Carolina, where she is majoring in nursing. Our younger daughter, Laurie, 17, will be a senior this fall at Irmo High School. She plans to attend USC and will probably major in Journalism. We have a dog and cat, and live in a Cape Cod house in the Coldstream subdivision in northern Columbia...come and see us!

A motorcycle is my means of both transportation and recreation, and I ride practically 365 days a year. For the past several years I have averaged 12 - 15,000 miles a year. Only ice on the road will put me in a four-wheeled cage! Bikes that I have owned over the past thirty years (my, how time flies when we are having fun!) include Whizzer motorized bicycles, a Cushman motor scooter, an Indian Scout, BSA Golden Flash, Triumph Speed Twin, a handful of Hondas, four BMWs, a Yamaha 750 triple and a Suzuki GS850, the bike that I traded in on the Honda Sabre.

Lynn and I have done quite a bit of touring throughout the Southeast. I have made a couple of solo runs to New Hampshire plus one cross-country ride to California in the early 70's. We have done quite a bit of camping, although we will probably do an equal amount of motel camping in the future. I enjoy camping and cooking when making solo runs. In summary, believe me when I tell you that I am a very, very enthusiastic motorcyclist! And.....I love my Honda Sabre!

Through the years I have been actively involved with other motorcycle clubs. I founded the BMW Owners of South Carolina and was its first president. We hosted a National Rally with more than 1100 members attending. I was State Representative for Lemans America, a club for Suzuki owners. Last year we hosted the National Camp-In with 125 members attending from all sections of the country.

I really hadn't given any thought to forming a club for Honda V-4 owners when I bought my Sabre in March. However, my enthusiasm for the bike was so overwhelming that I decided to "test the waters" to determine if there was sufficient interest to merit organizing such a club. Last spring DAVE NICOLSON entered the picture to give me many good ideas and some much-needed support. Dave, also a member of Lemans America, had also bought a Sabre and wanted to pitch in and help. As many of you may know, it takes time to publicize such an effort, so I got busy and wrote all the major magazines. In addition, I came up with other possibilities for promotion, and enlisted them all. Those of you that are receiving this newsletter heard about the club from a variety of sources. That brings us to the present, and to the bright future that I am certain is just around the corner!!!

For the time being, we have two club officers. I am Founder and President, and Dave Nicolson is Vice-President. I don't believe in weighting a club down with an overabundance of officers, but we will certainly add others as time and the need arises. Dave, member number 2, lives at 1427 Bayshore Drive, Kemah, Texas 77565; telephone 713/334-1909 is his home phone. Dave is an Aerospace Engineer with NASA, and runs a cycle accessory business...Kemah Sabi...as a sideline. His only bike is a red Sabre. At 49 years, he is one up on me. His wife, Judy is a registered nurse and consultant. Dave, who rides about 12,000 miles a year, has been riding for 28 years. On a scale of 1-10 he rates himself as a "10" (and we will be looking to him for expert assistance with mechanical problems!) His Sabre is equipped with a Saeng fairing for cold weather riding (now replaced with a Tracy fairing), KG Engineering rack, backrest, saddlebags and case guards, plus a Chase-Harper Compac tank bag set-up. He is also a member of the Retreads and Helping Hands, and is a skeet-shooter.

Dave and I communicate weekly by mail, cassette and telephone concerning the club and our ideas for its development. Please feel free to contact either of us anytime you have questions, need assistance or want to suggest ideas for the club to consider. The club belongs to each one of us, and we will get out of it in direct proportion to what we put into it! Don't be bashful...we want to hear from you, and will do our best to help you...

REASONS FOR FORMING THE CLUB...They are many, but let me mention a few. Unlike some clubs which may be open to owners of any model of a brand, we feel that the features of the Honda V-4 will promote a camaraderie among the membership. I like to think that the owner of a Honda V-4 is a unique individual who appreciates a very special machine, one that will undoubtedly be followed by others of different displacements.

LOGO...Dave Nicolson and I swapped ideas back and forth, and the result that you see here was Dave's "brainchild." Future uses of the logo for such items as a decal, patch, etc. will probably utilize red and blue on a white background.

THE NAME OF THE NEWSLETTER..."SABRE TATTLER"...came from Ed Quin, a Suzuki rider from Houston, Texas. Also a member of Lemans America, Ed and Dave were talking about possible names for the newsletter, and Ed mentioned "Sabre Tattler" as an offshoot of "Sabre Rattler." We liked it, so we're using it, with a big "thanks!" to Ed! Ed rides a full dress Suzuki GS 1000, but maybe we can persuade him to get a V-4 one of these days and join with us. Thanks again, Ed..you done good!

A membership card is being developed and will be available shortly.

The club card with my name at the bottom can be used by members to recruit new prospects. Each member can put his name, address and phone number on the back. I have additional copies for members at no charge.

The yellow information sheet can also be given to prospects, or can be posted at Honda dealers and other locations that might be seen by V-4 owners. Again, I have additional copies upon request at no charge.

AN INFORMATIVE NEWSLETTER IS A "MUST"...Here's what Dave Nicolson has to say about a newsletter (and I agree with him 100%). "We should have one every two months (every month when we're rolling good). It should be heavy on who, where and what the membership is doing, plus club events. It should be light on general technical information, but provide tips on problems and their solutions as they develop with time. It should also provide information concerning the fit and function of accessories."

The content and format of the newsletter will undoubtedly change as we grow, but (for better or worse) this is it for the present. Its success will depend upon the material that you provide, the questions that you ask (or answer for others). I am the Editor (at a salary equal to my ability!), so let me know what you'd like to find on these pages...!
for

MEMBERSHIP in the club is/a family (including spouse if applicable). To simplify bookkeeping, all memberships will be renewable each January. The initial membership fee is easily calculated by multiplying the number of months remaining in the present calendar year by \$1. A couple of you sent \$10; you have a credit towards your 1983 membership dues.

MONEY IN THE BANK - Well, we haven't much, but I have opened a bank account in the club's name. It would not be possible to have progressed to this point without the assistance of Ken Rhodes, a friend who is a partner in a local printing company...Dependable Printing...who has helped us get on our feet. I have some time and a lot of interest and enthusiasm, but my funds are spoken for by my various (and numerous) creditors! I can only tell you that the value of printing done to date has amounted to several hundred dollars! I don't plan to accept charity indefinitely, but without Ken's help we wouldn't be here today!

PUBLICITY is getting the word out and around, and I can tell you that it takes time for this to happen! In addition to the letters to all major motorcycle magazines, I have placed an ad in ROAD RIDER. You may have seen our first one in the August issue, which also had a fine feature on the Sabre and Magna. Two other mentions of the club in this issue were in the Club Listings and in the "For Your Information" column. The ad in the September issue will be the same, but I have changed the copy for the October and November issues. I will probably continue the ad in ROAD RIDER, as the cost (\$5 an issue) is reasonable and I think that it will reach prospects for our club. My letter to the AMA magazine has resulted in several of you learning about the club, then joining.

Each of you can help in your own way to publicize the club. Only you can know just how this can be accomplished. Member #4...Charles "Moose" Musteen of Rogers, Arkansas, is really getting the word out to the people! He drives a truck in a 500-mile radius from Rogers, and has been putting posters up in Honda shops over over that part of the country! You might consider putting a few cards and yellow posters in your tank bag, saddlebags (pocket?) just in case that your travels might bring you to distant locations where our club is unheard of.

WHERE WE ARE...We have nine members to date; South Carolina - 2; Texas - 1; California - 3; Arkansas- 1; Montana - 1; Washington - 1. In addition we have prospect inquiry letters/materials out to the following: Arizona - 1; Indiana - 1; Massachusetts - 1; Colorado - 2; Pennsylvania - 1. I am certainly pleased with the results to date, for I consider this club to be an exclusive group. However, let's not keep the good news to ourselves...let's spread the word...!

AMERICAN HONDA...This company did not reach the "number one" position by sitting back and doing what they wanted! They listen to their customers, and they want to hear from you! Of course, your first line of contact is your local Honda dealer. However, if you have a problem or need assistance that you are unable to secure from your dealer, contact American Honda. I have been corresponding with Mr. Michael A. Nixon, Consumer Affairs, AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR COMPANY, INC., Post Office Box 50, Gardena CA 90247. You may also want to make note of the company's Customer Service telephone number: 213/321-8680. I was getting impatient for delivery of my Hondaline sport fairing (as are some of you!) and called Customer Service. The lady located a fairing in New Jersey, and my dealer had it within a few days. If you have been unable to obtain a part or accessory, please be patient! As of last week, Honda's computer showed the sport fairing back-ordered in both colors (red and black). Next year's models will probably be painted different color(s), but the head of our local Honda parts department assures me that Honda will clear out all back orders.

While on the subject of Honda's sport fairing, I will tell you that I like it better than any fairing I have ever had on a bike! The windshield could be a little taller (and I have communicated that opinion to American Honda), but, all things considered, it works just great!

Thanks to Mr. Nixon, I have a listing of Honda dealers in the country. It is for information only, and may be incomplete, but it may be useful to us as we try to publicize our club. Let me know if I can provide a list of cities in your area or state where Honda has dealers.

PRODUCT UPDATE - You should be getting a letter from Honda concerning revisions of the service specifications applicable to the V45 Sabre and Magna. You will be asked to make an appointment with your dealer to have these revisions/updates performed. Some of these include an additional sealing of the left air cleaner; an exchange of the FOIL cable (which some of you have been having trouble with); a lowering of the final drive oil level to 110 cc (3.7 oz.); and a adjustment of the valves using two feeler gauges for each valve that shares a common rocker arm.

SERVICE MANUAL...Part Number 120527...has been back-ordered. Several of you have been trying to get one, and a few have contacted American Honda about it. Our dealer recently got three that were on back order (and one of those is now in my possession!) So...if you have been having problems, ask your dealer to check the computer about its availability. I paid \$21.95 for mine, and am enjoying getting better acquainted with my Sabre. I doubt if I will ever need to know how to pull the engine, but I am learning more about what makes my Sabre tick!

ACCESSORY SOURCES...Here are the names, addresses and toll-free telephone numbers of three companies that are making accessories for the Honda V-4s. These are in addition, of course, to Hondaline, which has a sport fairing, case guard and saddlebags.

LARCO ENGINEERING, INC., Isanti MN 55040; 800/328-4631
(case saver; luggage rack/backrest with round or square tube platforms)
KG ENGINEERING, INC. 115 Front Street, Woonsocket RI 02895; 800/556-7355
(backrest/luggage racks; saddlebags; case guards/savers)
ASCHCO, INC., 1900 Troy St., Dayton OH 45404; 800/543-7844
(backrest/luggage rack)

Other companies will certainly be developing accessories for the V-45s; pass the information along, and we will share it with other members!

PRICES FOR PARTS - Some of you have paid varying prices for parts. One part mentioned by several of you is oil filters. Prices have ranged as high as \$12-\$13. My suggestion is to inquire about the price from your local dealer. If you are not satisfied, contact American Honda. I would not suggest that you attempt to use a substitute oil filter. To do so would void your warranty and possibly ruin your engine! I have confidence that such prices will level off and even out in time. An oil filter is good life insurance for your engine. In spite of Honda's recommendation to change the oil and filter, I will change mine at one-half the recommended mileage interval. My preference for oil is Castrol GTX 10W-40. What are you using? What about gasoline...are you using regular leaded, regular unleaded, super unleaded? What about additives? Although I have no proof that it is beneficial, I usually add a couple of ounces of Marvel Mystery Oil with each tank of gas. I know...you are saying that any benefit to the engine is a mystery, and I guess that you are right! Anyway, it makes me feel good, so I do it...!

ALREADY...A WRECKED SABRE! Last week I received a letter from Steve Papasidero, Parts Manager for RECYCLE, 614 Railway Street, Daytona Beach FL 32014. Tel. 904/258-3535. He says..."We here at Recycle have a brand new V-45 Sabre Honda with exactly 45 miles on the odometer. The bike has a bent frame, but the engine starts and runs perfect. We will take a reasonable offer for the bike. For details, call me between 9-5, Monday through Saturday; ask for Steve."

CASSETTES - A GOOD WAY TO COMMUNICATE! Moose Musteen and I have been exchanging cassettes for a couple of months, and I can tell you that it's a quick, easy and economical way to communicate with one another! I have access to a tape recorder, so drop me a cassette in the mail and I'll fire a reply right back to you! Give it a try...you'll find that you can say a lot in a few minutes, and the tape will record it all!

PRELIMINARY PLANS ARE UNDERWAY FOR OUR FIRST NATIONAL RENDEZVOUS...! The location has not been firmed up, but we are giving serious thought to having such an event in 1983. Give us your thoughts and ideas on the subject; what time of year you would like such an event to be held; other thoughts that come to your mind. We think that the first such an event should be held at a central location, and are considering northwestern Arkansas. More details later, but, in the meantime, we wanted you to know that we hope to meet ALL of you next year at our event...The Honda V-4 STAR '83...(yep, that stands for Sport Touring Association Rendezvous!) My saddlebags are already packed...!

SABRE, MAGNA...WHAT MODELS TO INCLUDE (OR EXCLUDE) FROM MEMBERSHIP? This question has been posed by several people, and pondered by Dave and I during the early days when we were beginning to pull ideas together. While I hesitate to generalize, I would categorize the Sabre as a "sports tourer" and the Magna as a "boulevard cruiser." Incidentally, Roger Hull had a humorous comparison of Sabre and Magna riders in the August issue of ROAD RIDER. We decided not to put the name of any model in the club's name. Rather, the brand...HONDA... the engine classification (V-4) and the use that we thought would be more in keeping with those that would want to join our club...SPORT TOURING. I think of a "sports tourer" as a bike that handles extremely well in the corners, but also is an above average tourer. I think of the owner of such a motorcycle as a person who rides a lot, and who would think nothing of heading out for a distant state (or the other side of the country) at the drop of a hat! However, we feel that each owner should decide for himself (or herself...!) if they are interested in belonging to the Honda V-4 Sport Touring Association. We think that some clubs have made a mistake by including too wide a variety of models. We believe that Honda has other varieties and sizes of V-4s in the works. We fully expect to see a 1000 c.c. V-4 next year, and possibly a smaller version...maybe a 500 cc. Models more suited to touring are another possibility. For that reason, we chose the name of the club to reflect our thinking, and we hope that you agree. My personal opinion is that the club will appeal more to Sabre owners than to Magna owners, but we sincerely hope that each and every member will derive satisfaction from belonging. I know just what Moose Musteen means when he says (on more than one occasion on his cassettes)... "I LOVE MY SABRE..."

GREETINGS TO OTHER NEW MEMBERS (after all, we're ALL new members...!)

003 - Dick Robert, Route #3, Box 1635, Libby, Montana 59973. His telephone number is 406/293-6780. Dick, 38, is a banker; his wife, Ann, is a realtor. In addition to his new Sabre, he has a Suzuki trials bike. Like myself, Dick has added the Hondaline sport fairing. He's been riding for 25 years; other hobbies include hunting, fishing, river rafting, hiking, skiing and travel.

004 - Charles Walter (Moose) Musteen, Jr., 1104 W. Rozell, Rogers, Arkansas 72756. Tel. 501/636-4914. If you're wondering why folks call him "Moose," maybe it's becuz he's 6'4" and weighs 275 pounds! Moose, 42, is an over-the-road truck driver for Wal-Mart Stores. His wife, Roslyn, who also rides her own bike, is Assistant to the Treasurer of Wal-Mart. Other bikes in their stable include a 1973 Moto Guzzi, a 1980 Honda Hawk 400, a 1972 Ducati 450 and a 1974 Suzuki 185. Moose, who has been riding for some 26 years, has added a Tracy fairing to his Sabre. Moose used to hunt (that's a switch! I thought that we were supposed to hunt him!) but now enjoys target shooting and just plain "plinking." He's a member of the AMA, the Moto Guzzi National Owners Club and the Retreads.

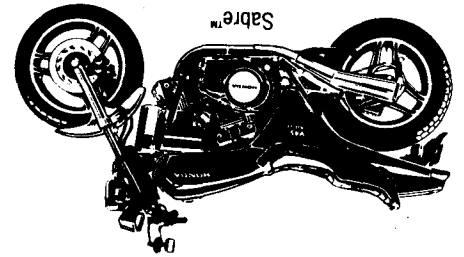
005 - Angelo Damante, 5920 Shaker Drive, Riverside, California 92506. Tel. 714/686-3332 (business). Angelo, 30 years old, owns a Magna, and is General Manager of a Mercedes - Peugeot dealership in Riverside. His wife, Ursula, is a domestic engineer (housewife). Angelo has been riding for 8 years, and has added only a case guard to his Magna. Horses are another hobby (quite different from the horses under the gas tank of his Magna!) Like others, he mentions having great difficulty in obtaining parts and accessories. Have patience!

006 - Steven A. Broughton, 7711 Capistrano Avenue, Canoga Park, California 91304 Tel. 213/348-4323. Steve, 26, is a security guard, and is (happily!) unattached. Other bikes that Steve owns in addition to his Sabre are a CB900C, MB-5 and Express (of the Honda variety) and a Kawasaki 350 Mach II. He has added a case guard, and plans to install a fairing (possibly a Vesco Rapid Transit) and Krauser Starlet saddlebags at a later date. Other hobbies include target shooting, hunting and "going to the Rock Store on Sunday!" That sounds like fun!

007 - Patrick H. Halstead, 612 Hoge Building, Seattle, Washington 98104. Tel. 206/623-8715. Pat, 41, is a lobbyist for class 1 railroads in the state of Washington. His wife, Beverly Kay, is a Director of Public Relations. Pat, who has been riding for 25 years, owns three Hondas, a '71 CM70, a 68 CM91 and a '65 CB160. Please notice that he does not own a Honda V-4 (yet...!) He says..."I am including my check for the balance of the year to help the Club off the ground and because I believe I will be Sabre-mounted soon." He also belongs to the AMA, the Vintage Japanese Motorcycle Club, the Classic Motorcycle Club of Washington and the Rider Touring Club. Other hobbies include old, special-interest cars, photography and video gear. Pat has already provided a number of excellent ideas and suggestions that we will be considering and discussing in future issues. Thanks, Pat!

008 - Barney Murphy, 428 Weddell Street, Columbia, S.C. 29204. Tel. - 803/788-5793. Barney, 20, owns a Magna and is employed as a Dispatcher. He has been riding for 8 years. He has added a small windshield and a case guard. Barney likes to fish and practice Tae Kwon Do (karate).

HONDA SABRE V-4



The Ultimate Sports Tourer

112 Bishopgate Road
Columbia, S.C. 29210

HONDA V-4 SPORT TOURING ASSOCIATION



009 - Cal Knecht, 11046 Charnock Road, Los Angeles, California 90034. Tel. 213/839-5868. Cal, our senior member at the present time, is 61 years young and is retired from Pacific Telephone Company. His wife, Connie, is a housewife. In addition to his Sabre, Cal has a '78 Honda 750 Automatic. He's been riding for forty years, and rides 12 months a year. He would like to add a Hondaline sport fairing and saddlebags. He lists travel trailering as another hobby. Cal has already passed information about the club to two other Sabre owners in his area, and says that there are HUNDREDS in the greater Los Angeles area! Sounds like Cal will have some company.

This newsletter has dragged out a bit longer than I originally planned. In fact, I have had to edit some material (which I will hold and use in the next issue). Please understand that the club and everything that we are doing these days is subject to change. By joining at the outset, you have a direct input as we begin to establish a routine or format for doing things. If you like what we're doing, that's fine! If you don't, or think that we should consider doing other things, that's fine also! However, don't keep these things to yourself...write Dave Nicolson or me and tell us about them! We want to hear from you!

I will try to publish the next newsletter around the end of September or early October. My original intent was to print four pages, but this one wound up being eight pages (not counting what I cut out!) I plan to keep extra copies on hand to mail out to prospects. If I have not discussed some of the problems that you wrote to me about, don't think that I've forgotten about you, or thrown your letter away. We'll get around to ALL of them, I promise! In the meantime, let me bring this epistle to a halt so that I can get it printed and in the mail to you. Remember that a club is no stronger or better than its members! Put something into it and you'll get more than your share in return!

Safe riding,

Dana L. Sawyer
Founder and President
Honda V-4 Sport Touring Association

P.S. Motorcycling is more fun
when you share it with someone!
Find a new member...thanks!