

# BBC Member Featured British Motorcycle

## Rare 1971 Norton Commando "SS"



by Rich Reed long time Wisconsin BBC member

**W**hen the BBC rally was held at Plymouth, I would take a bulletin board along for people to post ads, notes, etc. In Oct. of '91, I was cleaning the basement, and came upon the bulletin board, with all the notes still attached. Scanning them over, I noticed a "for sale" ad for a Norton Commando SS. I never heard of this model, and thought maybe it was a mistake, and was really an S model. Surprisingly, the number listed was a local number, and the guy lived 5 miles north of my house! I felt it was my "duty" to check it out. And the rest, as they say, is history. The SS became my winter of '91-'92 project bike.

The bike was probably 85% stock, and in fairly good mechanical condition. However, sitting in the back of a garage for many years takes its toll. Research on this particular model showed that it was only made during a 5 month run in '71, thus its rarity. Also, it was only sold in the U.S. to meet the demand for a "street scrambler", (SS). The model was available in two colors: yellow, or tangerine. The raised front fender, 5" headlight, strengthened handlebars, high exhaust, and engine skid plate set this model apart from other Commando models. The 2 gallon fiberglass tank is visually attractive, but not very practical, and it doesn't like gas with ethanol!

Improvements that I made on the Norton include: painting & chroming, new tires, adding electronic ignition, lining the gas tank, valve job, having the carbs bored & sleeved, and installing new fork tubes, (thanks Bos). I used the bike for many of the BBC functions last year, and it has never run better!

Photography/Layout by David Denmark, BBC Photo & Web Guy