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2strokeBuzz #3

Your new year’s resolution for 1997: 
F*ck the MAN! It’s time for a revolution and I wanna see a bunch of scooters leading the victory parade. We only have to do one thing: THINK! The MAN is counting on apathy, ignorance, and laziness to fuel his machine.

I’m not talking about destroying Government or Big Business or Religion, I’m talking about making them serve *us* instead of the other way around. If the MAN is screwing you over, find a better way! Pay off those credit cards and cut ‘em up! Stop shopping at the Mall! Stop watching MTV! Live your life the way you want!

You’ve already made one important choice: Your transportation! The MAN HATES scooters! He can’t classify them, the pigs never know what to do with them, and they don’t understand what motivates us to ride them. But WE know! We don’t guzzle the MAN’s expensive gas! We support ourselves with parts and service and we never have to run crying to THE MAN.

So apply these principles to your whole life: do things in a way that avoids the MAN’s agenda! THINK when you buy a product or when you want to be entertained: Is this what I want? Or am I just being taken for a ride once again? It’s not radical or against the law, but it’ll bring the MAN to his knees!

For those of you who had to wait 6 months to receive #2, I’m sorry, there is no excuse. I got really far behind and consequently lost a big pile of orders that I unearthed in Mid-October and hopefully finally got out. If you still feel wronged, let me know and I’ll make it up to you.

I have a new organization method that should keep things under control in the future.

Wear a helmet, your mommy loves you. Even if she doesn’t, I do.

The soundtrack: Marquee Moon, Television; Box of Hair, Cub; Concorde, Modern Jazz Quartet; Double Nickels on the Dime, Minutemen; Songs about Evel (Knievel) compiled by Motorcycles’zine; Interstate, Pell Mell; Fully Realized, Charlie Rich; Guardian of the Machine, The Fumes; The Best of God Is My Co-Pilot; Now I Got Worry, The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion (Fuck Shit Up is the 2SB anthem); The Money Spyder, The James Taylor Quartet; The 4-track Adventures of Venice Shoreline Chris (what could possibly be better than low-fi SKA!!!? And I missed his show because THE MAN f*cked up my direct deposit and made me late!); and Devo’s Greatest Hits.

2strokeBuzz is published occasionally on the icy shores of Lake Michigan by Illnoise Publishing which sounds big and important but it’s really just:

Team2StrokeBuzz: 
Bryan Noise (Team Owner and Publisher); Vina Vroom (Team Captain and Editrix); Alfredo Mar (Team Mechanic); Keith Bedell, Andrea Sims, and Jon Vnuk (Team Photographers); Mr. Mark (2strokeBuzzLabs); Karl Bedingfield (Our man in Britain); and Jason Bell and Rob Syers (artists).

Nepotism reigns as Bryan and Vina are engaged to be married 4-4-98!
Always keep your parts organized and well-labeled.

When disassembling something with relatively few parts, use an egg carton (the styrofoam kind without holes) to sort the parts ‘til you need them. You can even write on the carton lid with a Sharpie® to label everything.

For disassembly on a larger scale, buy a big box of Ziploc® freezer bags in different sizes. The small ones that you usually use for illicit drugs are great for holding nuts and bolts. Label each one carefully with a Sharpie® and jam your notes in there, too. After a while it’s hard to tell those nuts and bolts apart, but your immaculate labeling job will see you through. Plus, there’s nothing more beautiful than seeing a whole scooter in Ziploc® bags!
vespa ET4
well, *is* it?

by karl bedingfield

Is it a Vespa or is it just piece of plastic crap with the Vespa badge sitting uncomfortably on the legshield? The debate will go on for days, weeks, months, years, God forbid!

Of course I am referring to Piaggio’s new Vespa scooter, the ET4 Timesurfer. Launched to coincide with Vespa’s 50th anniversary, the ET4 is being marketed extensively in Europe and is relying heavily on the Vespa name and heritage.

At $4000 (£2449) the ET4 doesn’t come cheap. So what is so special about this Vespa to justify its price tag, and more importantly will it be accepted by the traditionalist scooter rider?

The Vespa ET4 Timesurfer is definitely not what a lot of traditionalists had wished for. Many had hoped for a copy of a SS90 or GS160, but the ET4 must be seen as the Vespa for today’s market. Let’s not forget that when the PX200 and T5 Vespas appeared in the late 70’s, they too were dismissed by the majority. They are now the workhorse of many scooterists worldwide. Of course there had to be changes. Although it would have been nice to think that Piaggio took notice of the scooterist lobby, it must be remembered that we are a minority and for a new scooter to survive it has to be accepted on a far greater scale than the scooter clubs of this world.

The ET4 is a four stroke automatic. Yes, it’s auto everything - gears, choke, fuel tap. This engine purrs so quietly that I have to rev it at junctions just to make sure it’s ticking over. But there is nothing to fault this engine. Once run in you can expect speeds of over 65mph on the flat. Uphill is a different ball game. With the lack of manual gears going uphill can be embarrassing - One minute you’re flying at 65mph but approach a hill and as fast as you can say “drop down a gear” you lose 10-20mph.

The level of automation the ET4 provides does take some getting used to. After all there’s very little to do once you ride off. It’s just twist and go. I found no gear changing and no clutch quite relaxing after my initial reluctance. It can get a little boring though. No floor panel rear brake on this scooter either. It’s where the clutch lever used to be. But again, you soon get used to this positioning. The rear brake is a drum brake, as on all Vespas, but new to the Vespa is a front disc brake (about bloody time, too).

Riding the ET4 is sheer comfort. The suspension is superb and easily soaks up any bump or pothole you are likely to run into. I found the suspension a little too good when it came to taking tight corners. I always had the feeling of not being totally in control. But Piaggio have given the rider some choice. The rear shock absorber is adjustable to four positions. So I locked mine down to position 4 which should be for the rider and pillion passenger. This improved my cornering and improved my nerve 100%.

Piaggio have tried hard to make us believe their new product is as every bit as good as any classic Vespa they have produced over the last fifty years. The term “Retro” would be well-suited to
Piaggio’s idea of the ET4. The body is a steel monocoque, thus continuing the Vespa tradition and also maintaining the classic Vespa lines and bag hook. They also have an ET4 in olive green (your reviewer has this colour), this being the first colour they produced in the forties. Other than these observations this is where any comparisons with the Vespa of old cease. The floorboards and inner legshield and tool box are of plastic, though this is not obvious from appearances. I like the layout of the speedo and fuel gauge, it gives a retro feel, though a few of my friends told me it looked like something out of a Dan Dare comic!

As features go Piaggio have added all the requirements modern Europe demands including an Underseat helmet compartment (that’s removable to give you access to the engine), electronic ignition, and a clock. You also get an anti-theft immobilizer as standard. The anti-theft system is an integral part of the engine set-up—you have a master key that you use to program spare keys. Once you insert the key in the ignition it acts as a contact, and enables the engine. If someone steals the scooter and tries to hot wire it or use the engine, they will find it useless. The engine will turn over but will not create a spark. This along with a good padlock and chain through the toughened steel frame hoop should deter the most ardent of burglars.

I have now had my ET4 for almost two months. I have had some minor problems in starting the ET4, not used to auto choke and electronic ignition. My dealer tells me I am flooding it. Otherwise no complaints.

As to whether the die hard scooterist will ever accept it as a genuine Vespa remains to be seen. But with emission laws in Europe getting as stringent as those of the US, the four stroke engine will be here to stay at the two stroke engine’s expense. So what made me buy the ET4? I bought it because I wanted a scooter that was gonna be there for me 12 months of the year. I wanted a reliable machine for all kinds of weather. The ET4 is this machine and is gonna be my workhorse. When summer arrives I too will get my GS160 out for the rallies. But I would never use it 12 months of the year, I respect it too much. The ET4 is for now, is the 90s GS, Piaggio have to move forward if they’re gonna survive the next fifty years.

Check out Karl’s home page at: http://www.themod.demon.co.uk

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**Fig. 4.3. Save your speedo!**

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I met Minneapolis scooterists Kris Adams and Chris Anderson at my first scooter rally and have seen them at just about every rally since. Kris rides a lime-green Lambretta Jet200 and Chris always brings a mustard-colored Vespa 150 Super with Red Army markings.

One day at the record store Alfredo showed me a 7" by The Strike, and lo and behold, there were Kris and Chris! A few months later, The Strike played a show at Fireside Bowl and I went to see them, hoping to do an interview. They showed up five minutes before Dillinger 4 finished playing (they had car trouble) and hurriedly prepared for their set.

They were fantastic. In their short eight-or-nine song set, they kept everyone’s attention focused on their intense but catchy songs reminiscent of the Clash and early Jam. Chad Anderson (Chris’ older brother) growled forth thoughtful spiel as he and Micah Miller pumped away at their guitars in fast, tight, catchy riffs. Kris, who looked exhausted before the show, was now bouncing around, often filling with quick In the City-esque bass runs. Chris was working up a sweat in back keeping it all together, throwing in a dub or ska beat here and there. It was a great show, but I didn’t want to bother them with the interview after their hard day, so I got in touch with Kris later:

2SB: You’re still working with the Chad-Micah-Kris-Chris lineup that I saw at the Fireside, right? Has this always been the lineup? How did you all meet?

Kris: We’ve had the same line-up since we started the band in February 1993. Chad, Micah, and Chris (male Chris that is) are all from Winnipeg, Manitoba. Chad moved down to Minneapolis in 89 or 90, and Micah was down here going to school. They had talked about forming a band. Female Kris met Chad via the local scooter/mod group of friends, and she was searching for a band also. So the three of us got together, and later that month, Chad convinced his little brother, Chris “le petit canadien” to move down from Winnipeg to play drums. That’s the story.

2SB: Were any of you in other bands?

Kris: Chad was in a few hardcore/punk bands up in Winnipeg (DAC—Dangerously Americanized Canadians—who had a 7”, and some other bands that I can’t remember). Chris played drums with some friends up in Winnipeg, and I (Kris) was in the Fondue Set (silly little first band), the Wåhinis (I did back up vocals on second 7”), and I played sax in a local beat group, the Spectors.

2SB: You guys seem to have taken a particular disliking to The MAN, which
shows in your music. To begin with, you’re socialists, right?...

**Kris:** Yes, we share this disliking of The MAN. We’re all pretty leftist, Chad is more communist than Chris, Kris, and Micah, who are more socialist. Chad writes most of the songs, and a lot of them are union oriented, or about workers and worker’s rights, everyday people, social injustice and money, rebels, history and so on (notice the lack of love songs). We don’t have an official band agenda, but we have songs about what we’re interested in. “Kicking Ass for the Working Class” might be used in a video made by a union somewhere in Illinois or Indiana.

**2SB:** How do scooters fit in?

**Kris:** We don’t have any songs about scooters, even though I would love to have a whole bunch of cheesy, revivalesque songs like “SX220,” “I Ride Me Scoota,” “Sex on a SX,” and so on. (If any one else would like to be in a band like this, contact me!) We all have a scooter, except for Chad who used to have one (a 1963 Vespa 125) and he sold it to Micah. Chris has a Vespa 150 Super with Commie propaganda all over it and also a Jet 200 “racing-looking” bike with a stock engine. I have an SX200 with original paint and a rebuilt engine (just got it, I can stop buying scooters now!), a Vespa SS180, a GS160, a Lambretta Cento, a Vespa P200, a 1959 Vespa 125, a 1955 Vespa 150 (Italian), and a red 1964 Allstate 125. The only other scooter that I would like to have is a regular 1963 or ’64 Vespa 150, because the ride is so low to the ground, it feels like it hovers, and it hardly makes a sound, the engine just has this soft shhhhh sound to it.

**2SB:** Do you find a lot of scooterists to be pretty right-wing? Has this presented any problems for you?

**Kris:** I haven’t personally come across many right-wingers who are into scooterists, even though I have heard some white power B.S. at scooter rallies. Seems like they stay away from scooter rallies for the most part, especially due to the strong S.H.A.R.P. element at most of the rallies I’ve been to. It seems the ones you really need to look out for are the right wingers with money (the government in general) or those who want money, you know, the MAN, the ones in (bad) suits, the ones who control us, or think they do.

**2SB:** This is something that if anyone can clear up for me, you can... I'm not a mod (as you know) and it bugs me to hear a band called a 'mod band.' because I don't consider it a style of music...You don’t sound like the Style Council or (thank heavens) Oasis but you’re lumped in with them solely by how you dress, what do you have to say about that? What *is* mod music?

**Kris:** We have never called ourselves a mod band. There is/are mods in the band, and we definitely have influences in ’60s and mod revival as well as old skool punk. Some of us dress mod-ish to some extent, but we dress the same on stage as we do in everyday life. One thing about The Strike is that, if you’ve been to one of our shows... well... I think we create a weird atmosphere, because we don’t say much on stage, and there is an awful awkward but intense feeling that usually comes around, but were not up there being fakey, we are totally ourselves on stage, I mean we don’t stand up there and sing “we are the mods.....” or tell jokes or be amusing and obnoxious. Bryan, you ask what mod music is, well no one can even try to attempt to answer that correctly. I personally think that it’s how you define mod & modernism. Some say that mod music cannot be old music, and it must be something modern, rare, obscure, new, forward thinking, etc...so if you listen to 6T’s, I mean how modern is that? Others say it’s only music from the 6T’s during the time of the first mods (jazz, pop, reggae & rock steady, 6T’s ska), still others say it’s everything that ever had to do with modernism, including northern soul, mod revival, britpop, acid jazz, HUGGY BEAR? I don’t understand that one. I personally just pick what I like out of the group: northern soul, really cheesy mod revival, jazz, & 6T’s pop and some beat. Some of us in the band like a little bit of oi now and again. All of us like old skool punk, especially SLF & The Clash.

**2SB:** When I asked you to play at the Scooter Madness rally here in Chicago, you’re lumped in with them solely by how you dress, what do you have to say about that?
you blushed and said "We never play rallies." Why not?

**Kris:** No, we do not play scooter rallies, enough said. I don’t need to be heckled by people that I’m trying to impress… just kidding. I know for a fact that people don’t go to scooter rallies in the U.S. to go see bands play, most just want to check out the *babes*, get drunk & talk shit, and go for a too-long scooter ride in the country that makes your bum hurt. Then you wake up the next day hung over, eat breakfast at Country Kitchen or Denny’s (who are probably owned by the MAN) and then you go home. Or else The MAN has already kicked you out of the campground on Friday night.

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**The Strike**

**Discography:**
1. *Danger b/w Take Action* 7" (Johann’s Face, Sept. ’95)
2. *Victoria* EP (Cerebellum Records, winter ’95–’96) *Victoria, Fragile Life, Red Storm Rising, Ball and Chain*
3. *Takin’ a Detour* comp. (Detour, spring ’96) *Airwaves*
4. *No Slow, All Go* Comp. (Local punk Comp., summer ’96) *Never Break*
5. 7" w/ Dillinger 4 (Doin’ It for the Kids, fall ’96) *Fire Away, Ain’t Gonna Take It*
6. *Shredder* comp (Shredder, fall ’96) *Danger*
7. *Tribute to The Jam* (Detour, so far released only in Japan in Winter ’96.) *When You’re Young*
8. *A Conscience Left to Struggle with Pockets Full of Rust* LP and CD (Johann’s Face, Jan. ’97) *Where Did We Go Wrong, Kicking Ass…, Shallow, Open to Interpretation, Victoria, Waiting, 20 Years, Downpresser Man, Over There, Too Far Away, Win or Lose, You Can Forget It, Danger*, *Take Action*, *Never Break*, and a weird dub version* of *Downpresser Man* as a hidden track. (*=CD only)
9. *Johann’s Face* Comp. (Johann’s Face, Chicago, Early ’97) *Hang ‘Em High*
10. *Half Mast* Comp. (Half Mast, to be released/finished in 1997) *Kicking Ass for the Working Class*

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*Johann’s Face Records (1, 8, 9)*
PO Box 479146
Chicago, IL 60647

*Detour Records (1, 2)*
PO Box 18 - Midhurst
West Sussex - GU29 9YU
England

*The Strike (2, 5, pins)*
PO Box 14208
Minneapolis, MN 55414

*VespaSS180.aol.com*
**2SB:** Where do you guys fit in musically in Minneapolis? Do you play out a lot? What other bands (there and elsewhere) do you like playing with?

**Kris:** There really isn’t a mod scene in Minneapolis, but there is a great thriving underground punk scene with some awesome bands such as Dillinger 4, The Sateens, The Subversives, The Kung Fools, The Murderers… we play mostly all ages venues and basement shows here in town, you know, the MAN runs the clubs: he takes our money & doesn’t let the kids in. Not many kids in the punk scene have scoots, but a lot of them seem like they want one.

**2SB:** What’s the “scene” like for scooter-ing in Minneapolis?

**Kris:** Well, in the land of 10,000 frozen lakes, we put skis on our scooters and race the snowmobiles. Hee hee… but seriously, my grandfather has this old 1966 Skidoo, that feels, smells, drives just like my 1966 SS180. Our club is dwindling. Everyone is always too busy or just not interested in getting a group together and having a rally, but you never know, maybe next year. We only met maybe 3 times last summer and went on some rides about town. Sam Pitmon, Chris and I go to a lot of out-of-town rallies during the year, hopefully we can truck our scoots out to California this winter and do some riding. There really aren’t any shops (yet) in town, there’s been talk of opening one up but it hasn’t happened yet. There’s a few people in town who work on scooters, but honestly, I’d rather do the work myself than have someone else in town work on it.

**2SB:** What role do you have in the Pacesetters Scooter Society? I know you and Chris are active goodwill ambassadors, but did you guys actually start the club or run it or anything?

**Kris:** A bunch of us kids started the Pacesetters club here in Minneapolis. I guess we’re mainly a mod club since there aren’t any skins in it (none of the skins in Minneapolis really ride anyway, at least I haven’t seen them on their bikes for a long time). We started our club in 1993, or I should say, we put a name to a group of people in 1993 who actually have been in some form or another around since the 1980s. I think at one point in time it was called the Winona Riders, but I guess there weren’t any girls in the club then… There is a core of about 3 people who have organized things in the past, the line-up changes but I’ve been one of those three since 1990.

**2SB:** Anything else you’d like to add?

**Kris:** I’ve had some trouble with the MAN “titling” my scooters here in Minnesota, and the MAN has shut down a number of our shows, and the MAN shut down our very cool all ages club that could hold 500 kids, on the night of our first single release party, so yeah, we’ve had a lot of trouble with the man here in Minneapolis. The MAN don’t like scooters, and the MAN don’t like kids having fun! That’s why you gotta be trickier than them and keep on keepin’ on!

Since this interview, Chad moved to Chicago, so The Strike is now playing only occasionally. Their excellent LP/CD “A Conscience Left to Struggle…” came out in January.
The Adjusters have been playing around Chicago for a few years now, their reputation slowly growing as they rotated through several lineup changes. This winter, I went to see them at the Fireside Bowl in Chicago. A few friends had seen them a couple weeks before and were fairly impressed, but no one seemed prepared for what was about to happen. Ten or so people were crowded onto the tiny stage, and singer Daraka Larimore-Hall was standing on the floor in front of the stage for lack of room. Suddenly he yelled into the microphone and the whole band came together perfectly into what I later found out was a cover of an obscure Wilson Pickett song, “Miniskirt Minnie.” As I looked around the crowd, every mouth was gaping in surprise. This motley band of mostly University of Chicago students had apparently hit it’s stride.

I’ve seen a lot of singers ask people to dance, but after the first song, Daraka needed to remind people, everyone was too dazed to think to dance. At his suggestion, the floor instantly filled up and was packed with whirling mods and skins, all with giant smiles on their faces. The rest of the night, every song was perfect, they mixed their soul with ska and reggae, and closed with James Brown’s “Soul Power” with everyone chanting along, and “getting down,” literally. They had soul, alright, more soul than any “soul” band I’ve ever seen. It was the first time I’d seen a soul or blues or R&B band that wasn’t watered down either by years of playing the same songs or by total inexperience. This was the night The Adjusters’ skill caught up with their passion.

A week later I talked to Daraka, organist Matt Parker, and guitarist Jason Packer about the band’s history and future, their political views, and of course, scooters…

How did you all meet?
Jason: Daraka and I met ’cause we lived down the hall from each other a couple years ago when we both lived in the dorms.
Matt: I actually met Daraka when he saw me with Laurel’s scooter and he came up and just started talking to me. But that was way before the band started.
Daraka: That was the beginning of first year and I had just become a mod, like that summer, and I see this guy with a scooter, and I was just like “wow, you’re so neat,” and Matt was like, “Uh, yeah, maybe I’ll see you around.” (laughter) and then we met later, after the band had formed, at a party and we begged him to come play with us.

Matt, you’ve played keyboards…
M: I’ve been playing for a long time—
I played with the Donkey Show in
California— but I wasn’t in a band
or anything at that time, I was try-
ing to stay out of bands.

And you were in bands in California,
too, Daraka?

D: Yeah, I was in a band called the
Young Pioneers, a mod band, one
summer and before that I was in a
weird techno-punk band and before
that I was in an Irish Folk band. (laughter)

And you, Jason, were you playing
before the Adjusters?

J: No, I was just getting started on
guitar then.

M: But he’s a regular Steve Cropper
now!

D: Very disciplined!

How did you meet everyone else?

D: I’d been talking to the bass player
(Clay Harper) for a while about
starting a band, at that time he was
really into third-wave ska and we
would get into arguments where I
would say “The Bosstones suck”
and he would defend them.

Oooh, maybe we should spare
him...

D: Print that shit! He’s gotta
remember what he was like!

J: We weren’t going to be a ska band,
we were planning on being a mod
band but there were just all these
people around like ‘hey, there’s some
guy on the fourth floor that plays
saxophone!’ so we were like, “get
him!” and that’s how we sort of
started becoming a band. Then once
we were a band it was a lot easier to
get more people...

And it’s 11 people now, 12?

All: no, ten.

M: We’re stripped down to ten.

D: Our biggest we ever were was 12.

So you have to split the money from
shows ten ways? (Laughter)

D: We put all our money together…
put it into projects and recording

M: What money?

J: We made like what, $4.50 from the
last show we played?

D: We get paid really…badly.

And you've got Laurel's film shoot
coming up, and then maybe the
show with the Skatalites.

M: (joking) Yeah, probably.

J: Oh, yeah, we’re still thinking about
it… it seems like a good idea… We
heard they’re pretty good.

D: I don’t know how to express how
excited I am without sounding
ridiculous, especially when it gets
translated to paper, but that’s fan-
tastically wonderful!

How did you end up playing half
ska, half soul?

M: Actually we’re playing very little
ska, two or three ska tunes and a
couple reggae tunes.

So do you see yourselves going more
towards soul?

M: We’ll always have a few ska tunes.

J: The traditional stuff, we have to,
y’know?

D: But we want to add some more
latin soul boogaloo (laughter).

How do you come up with songs,
and get everyone to work togeth-
er?

D: The old way was there was this guy
in the band named Carter who
played trombone and he wrote a
bunch of of our original songs, but
he left the band. Now, Nick
Dempsey, our tenor saxophonist,
and Matt have sort of taken over
that role, of writing the skeleton of
something than the rest of the band
pitches in with the rest of the stuff.

M: But also Clay.

J: Just last week, we sort of went
around the room and got every-
one's idea for a song, and we came
up with four songs in one night.

M: Yeah, we have so much new materi-
al now, we don’t even have time to
learn covers.

D: Stuff coming out our butts.

M: Print that.

It’s easy to see who your influences
are, but what are you adding?

M: Guuuh...

J: I think that, especially in ska, our
strong point is the vocals, as far as
soul…

M: We rock out!

J: Yeah, we have fun.

D: I don’t think I’m that great
a singer,

M: (joking) Yeah, we have fun.

J: We have fun.

D: I don’t think I’m
that great
a singer,

M: We rock out!

J: We have fun.

D: I don’t think I’m
that great
a singer,
as we can, to help swing or give grooves to reggae songs—and that helps a lot—and we have a great organist. Nobody else can do that, you listen to other ska records, they just bury the organ in the mix…

J: I think we listen to and appreciate the music that we emulate better than most people, then try to bring our own stuff to it.

M: Then there’s the politics… Yeah, how are you related to Democratic Socialists of America?

D: Not everyone in the band is in DSA, I think four of us are in DSA, but definitely everyone is left of center. And all of us recognize how much of a good thing for American political discourse it is to rehabilitate socialism to some extent, I think everyone would agree that we’re not going to get anywhere as a country until we can talk about socialism without freaking out, thinking we’re talking about breadlines and Stalinism.

And Luxemburg Records…is that the Democratic Socialist label?

D: Well, yeah, it’s the DSA label, but I run it, so…

Do they have more records out?

D: Ours was the first, but we’re working on two compilations and in the spring we’re going to put out an Ani DiFranco/Billy Bragg split 7"

What’s the Modern Action Club?

D: It’s just a loose platform from which people can do cultural politics and revolution and crazy shit or whatever. We book shows…when it started in Santa Barbara, we would book shows and then have political speakers come and speak between bands. Around here, we publish the newsletter that the Adjusters hand out at shows that has, you know, funny stupid shit in it, but also some political stuff. The idea is to hook up with people like you, people like the Absolute Beginners club in NY, R.A.S.H. (Red and Anarchist Skinheads). Trying to get all these people together to see what we can do about politicizing the scene.

What difference can you guys make?

M: It’s awareness. One thing that really impressed the hell out of me is that if it weren’t for Jerry Dammers, I would never have known who Nelson Mandela was until he was freed years later, if he had been freed. I think that record did a hell of a lot for South Africa, and so I’m really impressed with the idea that music can make a difference,

D: Yeah, publicity.

J: I agree with Matt, I mean the younger kids, they might not understand a lot of what we’re saying, but it’s going to raise their awareness, and make them think about things… even if it pisses them off, which seems to happen sometimes…

Do you have problems with right-wing elements of the scene?

J: None of us have got in a fight yet!

M: Even some of them kinda like our music, at least.

D: I think the biggest thing we face is just general apathy among young people, and secondarily, the really deliberate apathy of skinheads, where especially traditional skinheads are more than apolitical. They’re antipolitical. They don’t want to hear about it, and the ridiculous thing about that is that walking around with your head shaved and looking somewhat like a freak, and glorifying all these working-class symbols and listening to black music, THAT’S POLITICAL. They are political, they just
don’t want to do any careful thinking about what their politics mean. That’s the sad thing.

You’ve said that one of your plans was to attract the ‘third wave’ crowd and give ‘em some politics…

D: Smack the shit outta those kids and make ‘em realize what the fuck is up! (laughter) The thing is, I’m half white and half black, so I don’t have anything against white kids getting into black music, even white kids taking black music and doing their own thing with it. Amazing shit happens when that happens…

Like Rock and Roll…

D: Exactly! Like Britain made a whole industry out of listening to what black Americans were doing, doing neat things with it, and selling it back to Americans. That’s cool…but there is something wrong with it when you don’t do any thinking about it, you don’t actually listen carefully to the original music, and you just do stupid shit with it like speed it up and get rid of the groove…that’s what third wave is, they’ve gotten rid of everything soulful. Then they wonder why the two-tone scene is one-tone.

M: Yeah, but I want to voice a little respect for really punk-ass attitude! When you get these bands…there was actually one at that Fireside show, they had really good spirit…Dr.

Manette?…they’re not playing authentic ska, but whatever they’re doing, they’re doing it with a lot of spirit. They’re not playing third generation versions of two-tone, they’re playing their hearts out.

On to scooters, I know Matt has a lovely red and black Allstate, what about the rest of the band?

M: I’m the only one with a scooter! Other people want scooters…

D: I think I’m the only one who really wants a scooter, who’s actually looked into getting one and everything. None of the other kids in the band, besides me and Matt, have any background in the Mod or Ska scene, Clay had a little background in the Ska scene, but again, his is like the Houston-Colorado third wave, sixth wave, whatever, thing.

Matt, what got you into scootering?

M: I was exposed to two-tone and stuff in junior high school, and at some point I read some article about the mods and I was starting to listen to soul at that time and I was like “Yeah…yeah, that’s it!” And I just kinda got into the scene and got the bike…I went to McDonald’s and worked there when I was underage, until they caught up with my paperwork, and y’know, saved up a few hundred bucks and bought that little red Allstate and I’ve had it for twelve years now.

Wow, the same one you’ve got now?

M: Yeah! It’s been through three engines, but it’s the same frame. That’s been my only scooter all along.

Daraka, what scooter do you want?

D: I’m looking for a smallframe. I don’t particularly want a fast bike, I just want a pretty bike. (laughter) And if it’s red, that’s a plus. I do have something to say: if anyone who reads this ‘zine has ever thought about ‘chopping’ a scooter, the Adjusters are going to find them…

M: I’m with you on that, that’s bad.

D: …and they will be Adjusted.

OK, now, for the last and toughest question: What can we do to stop our scene from fighting each other and focus their powers against The MAN?

D: Trying to get people to realize that the entire culture is constantly under attack by commercialism, big business, and capitalism in general. It’s a tough argument to make…and even if we get to that point, there will be arguments about how actually to fight. But to me, the most compelling way to make that argument, since so many people in the scene are really into looking to the past and admiring people that have done things in the past, is to point out that so many of our cultural heroes were radicals of some kind. When Arne Meyer, in his skazine, says that ska and socialism don’t mix…all you have to do is bring up Clancy Eccles or Jerry Dammers. He’s full of shit, that’s totally historically false. All of the great early Oi musicians were dedicated socialists, and it’s important to emphasize these things in order to rehabilitate politics in the scene.

M: I thought he said that ska and soul don’t mix…

D: He said both!

M: Oh, man...(laughter)

Opening for the Skatalites at the House of Blues was proof, these guys really had their act together and put on an impressive show in front of a huge, enthusiastic audience. Their new CD The Politics of Style on Jump Up Records was released on May Day and recreates their live sound and energy surprisingly well. Look out for them as they tour this summer.
Moe and Kristen planned it all; we met Columbus Day morning at Kim’s. Alfredo and Roger found conquistador statuary on Kim’s back porch and attached them to their scooters. We rode down to the start. About 18 scooters came, cool! We waited ages, finally everyone went to have a beer at the outdoor café across the street. Lyn left her scooter running for an hour so she wouldn’t have to push start it again, chugging exhaust all over the poor high school band behind us. The Jesse White Tumblers practiced their cool gymnastics next to us. We bought Italian Flags for our scooters. Italian Elvis came by. Finally, it started, we fell into place, went three blocks to the reviewing stand, did wheelies for the TV crew (who spent most of their time filming Rogers platform shoes, as we saw on TV later) and revved and honked at the kids. We went three more blocks and it was over! Hong’s protester friend came down and yelled at her. PC? maybe not, but it was fun! Mike did a quick repair to his Riverside (can I have my 10mm back, Mike?) and we went and had pizza. The service was very bad, but the case is still pending in court so I can’t talk about it. We went home and drank more. It got cold and I borrowed Moe’s jacket and I still have it. Sorry Moe. Thanks for setting it up, guys, it was great!
The Chicago Scooter Madness rally was one of the satellite rallies of the InterNat Scooter Rally ‘96, the Internet Scooter Club’s first pan-global rally.

Early-comers met Friday night at Tuman’s Alcohol Abuse Center for their legendary $2 pints of Guinness. Phil from Cleveland came in at 11:00 convinced that his girlfriend was going to dump him, ("you choose… the rally or me!" - ever heard that before? What did YOU do?) We calmed him down with a few pints. The out-of-towners all found friendly locals to stay with and headed back to their respective sofabeds.

We awoke to see a beautiful, sunny Saturday morning. On the way to Superdawg, Lyn’s purse popped open and showered girly stuff all over the road, which was pretty amusing. We got there to find a decent-sized group already forming. By 12:30 we were taking up half of the parking lot. Mark and Amy rode up on a P125 all the way from Springfield, easily winning the farthest ridden award. A video crew came from the cable access show “Rail 3” and interviewed us as we pigged out on fried onion chips and Superdawgs, with their mysterious garnish.

We headed north, about 25 scooters strong, into enemy territory: Evanston, a.k.a. the suburbs. It’s scary leaving the safety of the city, but there are some nice open roads with (gasp) hills, trees, and lakeside views. On the way up, Chicago Phil’s throttle linkage came undone, so I stayed to help (watch) him fix it. I unloaded Cameron from Champaign onto Phil’s scooter (Hey, Phil had a P200, I had a 150 Super with a rotting buddy seat,!) and we high-tailed it downtown to the Daley Center. When we finally got there, we saw hundreds of policemen. Hoping our friends hadn’t taken the Blues Brothers analogy too far and rampaged to the County Assessor’s office, we did a few laps around the block and saw no scooters. Finally we saw about half the pack in River North. Apparently they got to Daley Center.
just in time for a Ku Klux Klan rally, which they all honked and shouted at and generally disrupted as much as possible. We found everyone else at the Rock & Roll McDonald’s. Alf had taken everyone down Lake Shore Drive. Lyn and Vina went home, thinking it foolhardy to ride on LSD on 125’s, but this didn’t stop Tom on his Vespa 90. Tom seized. Surprise.

The party at Thurston’s in Lincoln Park was packed before I even got there, even though the Selecter and Mephiskapheles both were playing big shows elsewhere in town. Brian Woods took the first DJ shift, playing ska through the two hours of free Sam Adams. The bands started upstairs while Kim and Jen DJ’ed downstairs and I got to catch part of the Hideaways’ set. The laid-back guitar- and-snare ethereal surf duo was supplemented this time with a bass player, all of them wearing Lone Ranger masks. A few of the ska fans were not pleased, but those few got to go downstairs and hear Jen playing Chumbawumba. It was an eclectic night for music. Yes, I planned it that way.

Hi-Fi and the Roadburners came on and kept the audience whipping about in a loud, greasy, punkabilly frenzy. Soon, the crowd started to pack in and I could barely see their pom-padours flailing.

Deals Gone Bad played the last set, featuring their usual glorious mix of jazz-sleaze ska, sea chanteys and bad jokes. Mike Park, the singer, smoked cigarettes like he was getting them for free (which he was, he thanked Camel three or four times). Overall, my scheme to hear a wide variety of music at a rally was paying off, and thankfully, just about everyone else liked it too.

The next morning, after seeing Mark and Amy off on their long trip home and eating breakfast at the Wishbone, Vina test-drove Phil’s P-200, declaring it superior to the 125 Primavera I GAVE her. Ingrate. Phil went home and Merritt started talking to him again after a few days so everything worked out great.

Thanks to everyone for behaving and making it work. Thanks to Camel, Samuel Adams, Thurston’s, Tuman’s, Superdawg, The Matchbox, the bands and DJs, and everyone else who helped plan and spread the word.

On the left: Tom’s V90. On the right: Shoney’s 150 Super. The question: Which seized on Lake Shore Drive and which won best of show at Slaughterhouse?
WHERE'S THE MAN
WHEN YOU NEED HIM?

STORY- BRYAN NOISE    ART-JASON BELL

OFFICER OINK APPROVED

THIS GUY IN A BLUE L.T.D. CUT ME OFF AS I TRIED TO TURN SO I YELLED "ASSHOLE!" AT HIM. THIS WAS NOT A WISE MOVE.

HE PULLED SIDEWAYS INTO THE MIDDLE OF THE INTERSECTION AND TRIED TO GET OUT OF HIS CAR TO ATTACK ME! HIS WIFE AND KIDS WERE IN THE CAR AND THEY WERE ALL YELLING.

I FREAKED OUT AND RODE AROUND HIM AND TURNED RIGHT ONTO CHICAGO AVENUE.

kick back
and relax in lawrence, ks!
MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND (May 23-26)

• No Helmet Law in Kansas!
• $20 for beer & food for two days plus a patch!
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• Did we mention beer?

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MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

MAY
23rd-26th

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

call
lindsay and tom (913) 832-1834 or paul (913) 832-9584
for more info!
HE CHASED ME IN HIS CAR, TRYING TO DRIVE ME OFF THE ROAD LIKE ON STARSKY AND HUTCH... I CAME SO CLOSE TO THE PARKED CARS I HIT THEIR MIRRORS!

HE FINALLY TRAPPED ME BETWEEN HIS CAR AND A CAR PARKED ON THE SIDE OF THE STREET.

AS HE WAS GETTING OUT OF HIS CAR AGAIN, I MANAGED TO ESCAPE! I TURNED DOWN A ONE-WAY STREET AND THEN DOWN THE ALLEY.

BEHIND TRACIE'S, I RODE INTO A BUNCH OF BUSHEES, DROPPED THE SCOOTER BEHIND THEM, AND RAN UP ON HER BACK PORCH.

WE SAT THERE FOR AWHILE AND SAW THE GUY DRIVE BY 2 OR 3 TIMES LOOKING FOR ME. SO IF YOU'RE EVER IN CHICAGO...
Aside from being a far better painter than at least 1/3 of the hacks in the MCA, Jason publishes CAVE-MAN ROBOT and dozens of other fascinating things. Write:

JASON BELL, 3477 N. Broadway, Box 112, Chicago, IL 60657
**hardluck rally**

**st. louis, mo**

If nothing else, this rally had a great campsite. Oh, and great food. And a really great ride. And great turnout. And the weather was great. And everyone in the club was great. And the… OK, I'll admit it, this was a great rally!

First off, the campsite was perfect, it was a farm owned by a club member, and it was in the middle of nowhere, so there was no danger of getting hassled by the Man. It was divided by some trees into a loud party/food/scooter area and a quiet camping/sleeping area, which was a really good idea. I guess the only problem was that the road to the campsite was kind of bad, with huge rocks randomly protruding from steep hills, responsible for at least one smashed-up scooter as Jon Vnuk's P200E bounced headset-first off of the Milwaukee trailer on Sunday.

Similar hills resulted in a wild ride on Saturday. Being from Chicago, which is flat as a warm beer, made it difficult, no, terrifying, to maneuver though the hills and curves that make up the Missouri backroads we rode on. Some sadistic Department of Transportation official had the idea that spraying oil on the roads would keep the gravel down, which might be nice for cars, but I just about wet my pants on a few curves. Shifting on hills was new to me, too, so I just about stalled out several times, as the Hill People whizzed by me. But in any case, it was fun… in a horror movie kinda way.

One local scooterist wiped out pretty badly on her newly-restored Vespa, resulting in serious damage to both the scooter and her leg. After some quick first aid in a Taco Bell parking lot, we all rode to a bowling alley, and not being much of a bowler I played a few games of pinball and headed to the next rendezvous, a beach on a small river. Swimming was refreshing, hot day that it was, and even seeing Norm from Detroit in wet Y-fronts couldn’t mess up the good vibe.

Back at the farm, dinner was cooking while people took turns thrashing through the woods on the rat bike that Hard Luck had so graciously provided. A ramp was also set up for those so inclined, and people had the chance to perfect their “Flaming Burnouts” on a large sheet of plexiglass, an event I sorrowly missed. Eventually the poor rat bike met its end in the form of a huge tree stump, its yellow flashing siren quieted until (with a little hope) next year's rally.

Dinner was the best I've ever had at a rally, spaghetti with some really good chunky sauce, caesar salad, garlic bread,
because everyone had been drinking since 3:00pm and everyone was exhausted. The music was pretty out there, even by my standards, ranging from something that sounded like Marillion to garage rock to soul to funk, but everyone sat, dazed, around the fire for most of the night.

All in all, it was a very well organized rally. The turnout was excellent, and it was great to meet people from Georgia, Kansas and some other areas that don’t make it to the Northeast and Midwest rallies. Hard Luck is promoting this year’s rally as “the best in the Midwest,” and while Chicago is challenging their claim with a unified club and rally this year, I’d say that in ’96, Hard Luck was certainly the best in the Midwest.

The food… so good I was inspired to photograph it.

and brownies. Beer and soda were on hand 24-hours the whole weekend, a very nice touch.

After dinner was the tug-o-war (I forgot who won, ”sigh”) and the party, which seemed to lack direction, mainly

The Germans do some quick clutch repair on the sadly abused monster bike.
47

STROKE BUZZ

THE MAN! MR. MARK

50 words or less on my holiday vaca-
tion… Did anyone else have snow and
blizzard-like conditions around the
holidays? I’m not talking about a two
inch dusting, either…the problem of
looking out the window wondering
how to get to the store for more beer
becomes a challenge? As you may
know, snow is not conducive to
thoughts of riding or restoring scoot-
ers. Mostly, I sat around drinking tod-
dies and shoveling the walk so that I
could get to my mailbox.

Only after it warmed to a balmy
35F and the snow began to melt did I
consider my metal friends waiting in
the garage. After clearing a path and
peering in, I immediately felt itchy for
a ride. When the streets were finally
clear and I did get out to ride, it
dawned on me… Spring was only ten
weeks away! My restoration project (a
Lambretta TV Series 3) needed to be
finished before the rally season began.

After making a list of all of the parts I’d
need to buy, I called the local scooter
shop. Surprisingly, I found quite a few
new products to help us get that
restoration right.

Innocenti Lambretta
by Vittorio Tessera

Vittorio Tessera is one of the most visi-
ble scooter collectors in Italy. Like
Nigel Cox of England, Mr. Tessera’s
collection of original scooters is muse-
um quality. After years of collecting
and research, Mr. Tessera and Mr. Cox
put pen to paper and each wrote a
book on the Lambretta. Innocenti
Lambretta is Tessera’s 240 pages of pho-
Lambretta Innocenti: An Illustrated History, by Nigel Cox

Most scooterists will know Nigel Cox as the most prominent English-speaking collector of Lambrettas in the world. His museum in the UK has an astonishing number of rare original condition Lambrettas. With a mountain of period literature and Innocenti documents, Cox is an authority on Piaggio’s biggest competitor.

As a companion to Brockway’s Vespa An Illustrated History, Cox has written in English the Lambretta Innocenti An Illustrated History. With an arresting curvy cover of Jane Mansfield on a white TV175 Series 3, this book covers 120 pages from the Model A to the GP. It’s stuffed with photos and bits on the history of the Innocenti company. A full color photo section in the middle has some very eye-catching models.

An exceptional feature of this publication is the model information on each Lambretta. The model information is quite complete listing horsepower, speed, retail price (at release) and even the production numbers. I was quite startled to find that Innocenti manufactured only 18,000 of my favorite model; the TV175 Series 1. Retailing for around $20, this book is worth every lira.

New Vespa Patches & Pins

Piaggio has been promoting the Vespa as a way of life for 50 years. The Vespa is so endeared, that Italians have even designated a single word to the task of buying a Vespa. As a way of life, I’ve often wondered why Piaggio never had a successful fashion line to accompany their Vespa way of life.

Following the marketing success of Harley Davidson, Piaggio has released an entire line of shirts, jackets, shoes, ties, luggage and other sportswear products to take advantage of 50 years of Vespa success.

Much of the licensed Piaggio Wear will only be available in Europe. However, in the US, we are able to get some of the accessories. These include about dozen pins and patches smartly priced at $6.00 each. The Piaggio two-tone blue crest, a pair of children riding a Vespa, the Vesparetti wasp and Piaggio legshield wing are just a few of the designs available in enamel pin and embroidered patch. Make sure your local scooter shop has the entire line for you to choose from.

Metal Spare Wheel Cover

Starting with the Vespa GS in 1962 (VSB), every the top-of-the-line Vespa came with a spare wheel. Typically, the cover for the spare got lost or damaged over the years. Consequently, one of the hardest pieces to find for a Vespa restoration is the spare wheel cover. Today, these covers are being made once again. The metal cover fits the GS VSB models, the Super Sport and the Rally 180 and 200. This limited supply cover is about $55 at your local shop.

Speedometer and Speedo Lenses

The pie-shaped speedometer, shown here, is another item available for your restoration. With vintage speedos becoming increasingly difficult to locate, the alternative is this darling new item. This speedo will fit any...
Stop the Press!!  New Scooter Book!
Dave Turner has written a book with the most original title of Scooters. This 34 page look at the history of the motor scooter contains A to Z coverage of some the most notable machines. Chapters include a look at self-propelled children’s scooters and a glance at model and toy scooters. Ask for this 5” x 8” soft-cover book at a price of $7.95.

All of the above products should be in stock at your favorite shop. If not, take this zine in and show them what you want. All of the prices are suggested retail and should be accurate within a few bucks.

Cowling & Mudguard Trim
Perhaps one of the most difficult finishing touches for a vintage scooter is locating the proper trim. Finally, new trim is available! A four-piece set of trim is about $35 which includes mounting hardware.

Unlike the original rolled aluminum, the new trim is cast and will resist bending and denting much better. The trim shown in the above photo is for the Vespa SS, GT, GL and 150 Super models. Also available from better scooter shops is a set for the Vespa GS VSB models (1962 - 64) for around $100.

Once again, thanks to Victor of Big People Scooters (206-583-0160 fax 206-763-9640) for letting me assault his shop and rumble around taking these photos. As promised, I will feature those dress-up items and the elusive Lambretta floorstrips in the next issue. Stay tuned...

Contact Mr. Mark at:
shortwav@u.washington.edu
or check out his web page at http://weber.u.washington.edu/~shortwav

Shirts
The original green t-shirts are sold out, but new t-shirts will be available soon. I’ve got a couple workshirts left, call for more info.

Patches (shown half size) red and navy silkscreened on mustard fabric. It was free with #2, but you waited, and now it’s $2.00 ppd.

Pins are $1.25 ppd., 1” round, and available in white or black.

Vespa with the square headlight, like the GL, SS, GT, etc.

Shown with it are two new Vespa speedo lenses. On the bottom is the older style for the square speedos. This will fit the VNA, VNB, most Vespas and Allstates from 1958 to 1965. The pie-shaped lens fits the VBA, VBB, VS5, VSB and SS. Each lens is $15 and can give that yellowed speedo a new face.

Vespa with the square headlight, like the GL, SS, GT, etc.

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babe!

lyn, chicago, il

scooter: 1963 Lambretta li 125 Series III, tomato red and cream.
dream date: Someone who would help me push start my scooter. Then we’d have to keep riding it because if we stop, we’d never get it started again.
fave bands: Railroad Jerk, Bad Company, Thee Headcoatees.
scootering tip: The right boots and hair are just as important as the right spark plug and tires.
how do *you* stick it to the man: By remaining Chicago’s most-wanted traffic scofflaw!
motto: “Rehab is for quitters!” –from Dennis Rodman’s T-shirt