

In appearance and construction the Fox Cub is a genuine light motorcycle, not an adapted moped

ONE of the more interesting developments in the two-wheeler market during the past year has been the considerable interest shewn by the public in the new type of ultra light-weight motor cycle. Many of these machines are logical variations on well established mo-peds which, having achieved a useful power output from their engines plus the refinement of three speed gearboxes, no longer have any need for pedals. This is not always the case, however, and one machine that has been designed and built from scratch as a 50 c.c. motor cycle is the A.J.W. *Fox Cub* produced by J. O. Ball of Wimborne, Dorset.

The name of A.J.W. has been well known for many years past for a range of motor cycles from some very lively and rather unconventional lightweights to a massive 1000 c.c. Vee-twin, but this latest product under the name is entirely new and is a blending of Italian and British made components. The engine is a *Minarelli* of conventional layout and quality engineering with gear primary drive to a three speed gearbox with hand-operated change. Welded steel pressings form the main frame with telescopic front forks and swinging arm rear, the latter pivoting on self lubricating sintered iron bushed bearings with its telescopic spring units air damped.

The fuel tank holds over two gallons for long range cruising and the 23-inch wheels have centrally mounted brakes in finned hubs with a lining area of 11½-square inches each. A dualseat and pillion footrests are standard fitments but the size of the seat and indeed the whole machine are such that it cannot be efficiently used with two adults up—nor is there any reason why it should.

#### Handling

The one absolutely outstanding

feature of the *Fox Cub* on the road is its excellent steering. From the first drop of the clutch the feel of the machine inspires complete confidence and it is a matter of sober fact that we were happy to ride hands off at almost any speed on almost anything that could be called a road surface.

#### ROAD TEST REPORT:

50 C.C.  
A.J.W.  
Fox Cub

Road holding naturally comes into this and the suspension both fore and aft keeps the wheels firmly on the road at all times. This springing is not soft and rear end bumps can be felt through the rather narrow seat but the security felt in riding at all times makes up for any slight loss of comfort in springing.

Both brakes are first class and either could be used hard without upsetting the perfection of the steering while both together produced very quick stops. The rear brake is operated by a toe pedal under the right foot that seemed a little too close to the non-adjustable footrests for comfort but was dead right for leverage and movement. The same must be said of the kickstarter on the left side which started the engine very easily but sometimes caught the rider's foot on the rest when kicking from the saddle.

In judging the performance of an under-50 c.c. machine one has to be

careful to remember how small the capacity really is. This *Minarelli* has plenty of speed and is a glutton for work in the form of revs. The technique for getting the most out of it is to change up late and down early so that the power unit is turning over really fast all the time. Used this way the acceleration, except for the first 5 m.p.h., is lively and hills can be taken at over 30 m.p.h. in Second. Top gear produced a mean maximum of 42 m.p.h. with one way speeds under favourable conditions of up to the region of 50 m.p.h. The multi-plate cork insert clutch appears to stand up well to hard use on the get-away and both gearbox and primary drive remain quiet throughout the speed range.

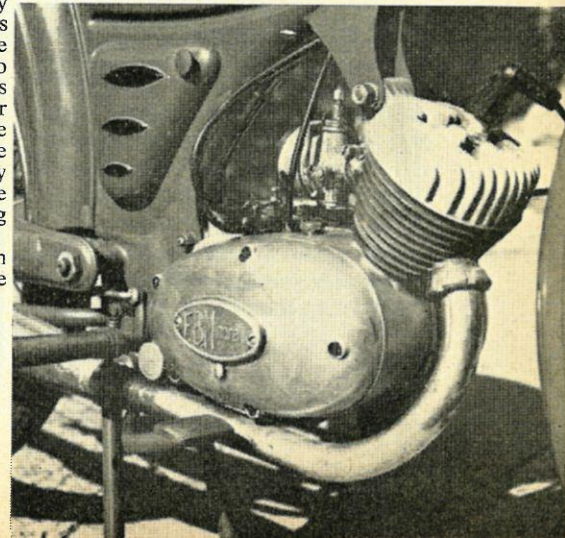
The exhaust system is well designed to provide a reasonable standard of silence without detracting from the very high performance but the machine could certainly be heard when the rider used the tactics we have quoted. It is worthy of note, therefore, that one can ride the *Fox Cub* quietly by keeping the revs down and exercising some restraint with the throttle hand. Driven this way the performance is that of a conventional mo-ped and it means that this versatile little motor cycle can be used for ordinary ride-to-work purposes as well as travelling fast on open roads.

Quality of finish is good, particularly in the bright parts, and the general appearance of the machine is most attractive. The lighting switch is handlebar mounted and convenient to use and all wiring is neatly and safely channelled.

#### Sound Specimen

Our criticisms of the machine are the hard and narrow seat and the non-adjustable footrests, both of which make the *Fox Cub* less comfortable than it should be at least for fairly big and heavy riders. The only other point we have to pick on is the lack

A close-up of the rubber mounted *Minarelli* engine



of a reserve fuel tap which prevents one using the adequate tank capacity to the full. We have mentioned these facts to the maker and understand that they are all under consideration for modification.

These are minor points only and apart from them we have nothing but praise for a thoroughly road-worthy and mechanically sound specimen of the ultra lightweight motor cycle class.

The *Fox Cub* is the sort of machine one rides mainly for the sheer fun of getting so much out of so little, but it is also capable of doing a regular job of work as personal transport, or would be if some sort of carrier were provided for the odd package or bag. Its light weight and extreme handiness make it attractive for off-the-beaten-track riding such as fishermen and climbers go in for while it is certainly tough enough to stand any amount of rough going. For the youngster having his first experience of motor cycling it is a perfect start but we are also of the opinion that many old hands who want to keep on in the game but find most conventional machines too heavy for pleasure will cast knowing eyes over this one and get a few more years riding out of it.

**SPECIFICATION**

**ENGINE:** "F. B. Minarelli" two-stroke single. Bore: 38 mm. x stroke: 42 mm. Iron cylinder, alloy head. "Dell 'Orto" carburettor with air cleaner. Enclosed flywheel magneto with 18-watt lighting coils.

**TRANSMISSION:** Helical gear primary drive to 3-speed gearbox with twistgrip change. Ratios: 11.65, 17.66 and 31.45 to 1. Multi-plate cork insert clutch in oil. Final drive: "Perry" chain with top run guard.

**FRAME:** "Cimmatti" box-section welded steel pressings with integral rear mudguard and built-in tool compartment. Telescopic front forks, swinging arm rear with semi-pneumatic damping. Fuel tank capacity: 2½-gallons.

**WHEELS:** 20-inch chromed rims on light alloy ribbed hubs with full-width hub brakes. "Michelin" or "Dunlop" 2-inch tyres, ribbed front, patterned rear.

**ELECTRICS:** 15/15-watt headlamp with handlebar switch, electric horn, illuminated speedometer in lamp body.

**WEIGHT:** 110 lbs.

**PRICE:** £91 13s. 6d. (Including P.T.)

**MAKERS:** J. O. Ball, Pilford Heath, Wimborne, Dorset.



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