

# ARIEL 3

ROAD TEST by R.H.C.

It's registered as a 'Tricycle' it's British; it's easy to ride, easy to park, easy on running expenses and just called the Ariel 3, presumably because the BSA/Ariel combine could think of no other name. Equipped with a two-stroke engine of only 49 cc, the Ariel 3 is undoubtedly aimed at the commuter and the shopping housewife, though it should excel as a runabout for the entire family.

It is ridden just like a two wheeler—you lean the front wheel over when cornering but the two rear wheels housing the engine unit remain firmly on the ground. At low speeds, however, there is no need to maintain balance as the front half stays upright. I deliberately swerved the machine at 20 mph from side to side, and leaned it over at rakish angles, but I could neither turn the machine over or produce a front or back wheel slide. The main frame of strong pressed steel is pivoted at the rear axle to allow banking when cornering. Two torsion bars enclosed in the main frame limit the angle of bank and also stabilise the machine when it is parked. The 4" diameter brakes are controlled from the handlebars, the front brake lever being on the right, the rear one on the left. The rear brake can be locked on when the vehicle is parked unattended.

The frame also encloses the pedalling mechanism which is pri-

marily used for starting the engine but a 'free-engine' device is fitted to enable the machine to be pedalled if necessary.

To start the Ariel 3 you just sit on and pedal, turn the right hand throttle twist grip and the engine fires almost at once. Thereafter speed is controlled purely by the throttle—there are no gears or clutch. To stop the engine the twist grip is closed completely to shut the throttle and open the exhaust valve in the cylinder head. For cold starts there is a choke operated by a lever on the left side handlebar.

The drive is taken by a centrifugal clutch through a toothed belt to an intermediate shaft from which the final drive to the rear wheel is by an enclosed chain. One end of the crankshaft carries the flywheel magneto which provides sparks and a 6 volt output for lighting. The opposite end of the crankshaft carries the centrifugal clutch.

All wheels are interchangeable, retained by three nuts and fitted with 12" x 2" tyres—there is mounting provision over the engine for a spare wheel.

The seat column is an integral part of the frame and the saddle pillar is adjustable for height. The very comfortable spring saddle together with the damped suspension fitted to the front wheel ironed out all the bumps.

Lubrication is by conventional two-stroke 24-1 petrol oil mix and the tank holds 6 pints. The manufacturer's figure for fuel consumption of 125 mpg gives approximately 93 miles for a full tank, and a tank full for something like 7s 6d makes for cheap commuting. A speedometer is not a legal requirement and was not fitted so it was not possible to check consumption. A 28 miles per hour maximum speed (checked on an



The machine is deliberately tilted to show the maximum angle of tilt when in use.

accompanying vehicle's speedo) was obtained on a level road under normal conditions.

Accessories available in addition to the spare wheel are a rear wire luggage basket and windscreen with fitted rear view mirror.

Road Tax is 50s and the insurance rate quoted by BSA is £2.

#### SPECIFICATION

##### Engine:

Single cylinder, two-stroke. 40 mm bore x 38 mm stroke 49 cc.

1.7 bhp at 5,500 rpm Compression ratio 7:1.

Flywheel magneto, lighting 6V 17W

##### Suspension:

Front—trailing link with micro-cellular polyurethane blocks for

shock and rebound load damping. Oil-less pivot bushes, ball and needle bearings.

Rear—Tro-Torque suspension. Twin torsion bars for banking control and suspension self-righting. Semi-floating drive axle. Final drive ratio 12.55:1.

##### Dimensions:

Length 63". Width 23". Rear wheel track 15".

Seat height—28½" to 36" adjustable. Handlebar height—38" to 40" adjustable.

Weight—95 lb.

Price—£110.

Manufacturer—BSA/Ariel  
3 Armoury Road, Birmingham 11.

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