

Batavus HS50

Batavus is Holland's leading manufacturer of bicycles and mopeds, and 55% of production is exported.

Apart from the top-of-the-range Mk 4S (which is powered by a Fichtel & Sachs engine), the Batavus mopeds use Laura engines of 48cc; these two-stroke units produce 2.4bhp.

The HS50 is a motor-cycle-style moped built to the specification of the British Batavus importers, Harglo Ltd. Like the other Laura-engined models, the HS50 has single-speed transmission with automatic clutch and can reach a top speed of 35mph.

Due to the nature of the

centrifugal clutch, initial acceleration is very poor and renders the machine very unstable for the first few yards. However, once the bike is under way, the rate of acceleration increases. In fact, after a few seconds, when the engine reaches its power band, the little 90lb machine rockets forward and starts making up ground on geared mopeds that have no trouble in beating it away from a standstill.

Front suspension of the HS50 is by telescopic forks with internal springs, while the rear is by a pivoting fork with the engine on the forward end to counterbalance the rear wheel.



The handling of the machine demands a great deal of care, as the steering is very light and, perhaps, the forks are mounted too near the vertical plane. This is all very well when manoeuvring through traffic but, when travelling at more than a walking pace, the whole feels quite unstable and twitchy.

This does not, however, detract from its cornering power which is really impressive. Despite using thin bicycle-type tyres, the HS50 corners beautifully and even a novice rider can lean the machine over at quite absurd angles into corners. The only thing one has to remember is to

turn the pedals so that they do not ground.

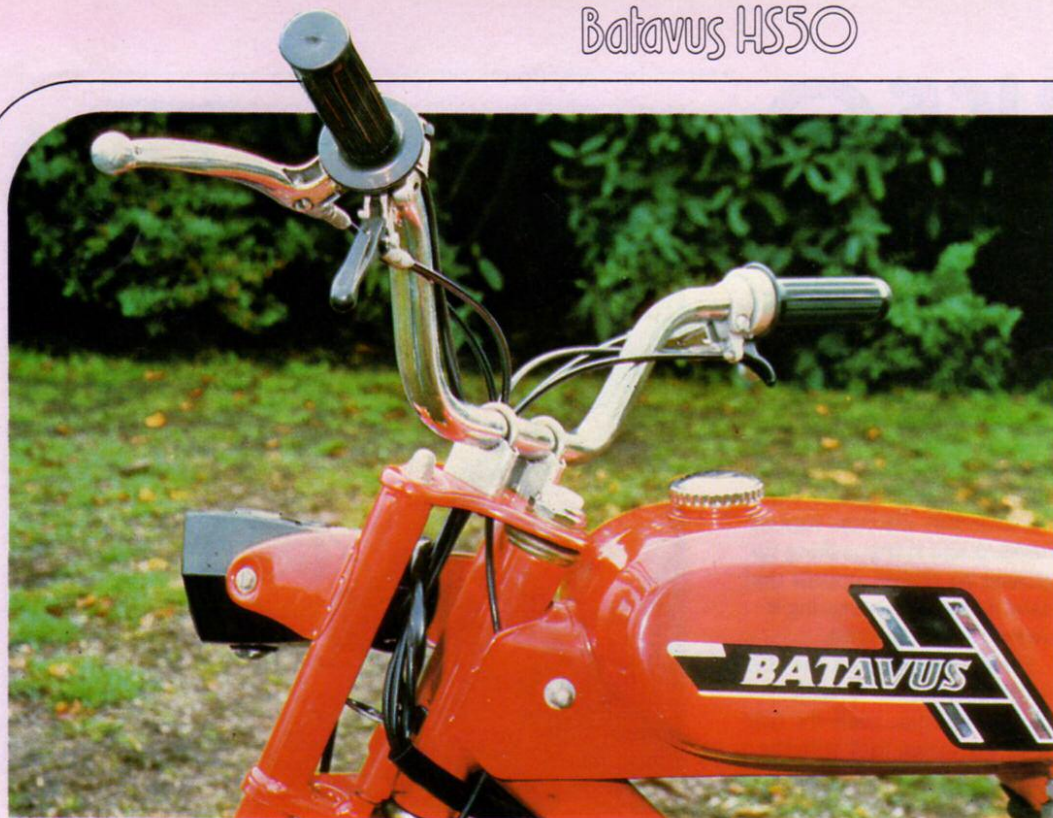
Due to the light weight of the Batavus, the small drum brakes are quite efficient; in fact, it is quite easy to lock both wheels on the driest of roads with just a firm grip on the handlebar-mounted levers.

When the HS50 winds itself

up to a fair speed, it is affected by gusty side winds, and much concentration is needed to keep travelling in a straight line. Also, the bike is prone to bounce around on bumpy surfaces and, again, needs to be held fairly tight.

The HS50 uses a Bosch generator for its 6V electrical

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system and, of course, requires no battery for its magneto ignition. The headlight is rather puny, but should be adequate for in-town average-speed riding; indicators are an optional extra.

The HS50 is quite fairly priced for a motor cycle-style moped and, if one accepts its handling and lighting deficiencies, it is well worth a look.

Engine

Air-cooled single-cylinder two-stroke Laura Motoren unit. 40mm (1.57in) bore × 38mm (1.49in) stroke = 47.78cc (2.91cu in). Maximum power (DIN) 2.4bhp at 5000rpm. Cast-iron cylinder barrel and aluminium-alloy head. Compression ratio 7:1. 2 rolling-element main bearings. 3 ports, reed valve. 1 Encarwi S22 carburettor. Pedal start used in conjunction with clutch-lock lever.

Transmission

Belt drive from engine to centrifugal clutch; chain drive to rear wheel. Clutch-lock lever on handlebars.

Suspension

Front – telescopic forks with internal coil springs; rear-pivoting fork mounted on 'silentblocs' with engine positioned ahead of pivot as counterbalance.

Brakes

Drums front and rear.

Wheels

20in × 2in front and rear.

Tyres

20in × 2in front and rear.

Weight

90lb (40kg).

Tank capacity

1 $\frac{1}{4}$ gals (5 litres) petrol with reserve tap.

Seating

Single saddle, no pillion.

Performance

Maximum speed 37mph. Fuel consumption 120mpg.

