



From Oct 15<sup>th</sup> 1953.

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## MOTOR CYCLING

### LONG DISTANCE CYCLEMOTOR TEST

48 c.c. Britax-Cucciolo Averages 41 m.p.h. for 32 hours



*Peter Walsh flat out towards the finish of the test.*

BY covering 1,315.2 miles in 32 hours, including stops for repairs and replenishment, at an inclusive average speed of 41.1 m.p.h., a British Britax cyclemotor, powered by a production Italian 48 c.c. o.h.v. Cucciolo engine and two-speed gear unit, last week-end convincingly demonstrated its reliability, and also its economy, for it consumed petrol at the rate of 163 m.p.g. in the process. The test took place on the 2.4-mile-long perimeter of the Thruxton aerodrome, in Wiltshire, and was observed by a number of independent witnesses from the Vintage, Maidenhead and Andover clubs. The principal timekeeper was Mr. A. J. Shaw, of the Reading club, and a meticulous log was kept of every lap time, of each repair, adjustment or replacement and of any incident taking place during the run. Management of the test was by Mr. Arnold Jones, of the Britax concern, who also took spells in the saddle. Originally it had been planned to run the machine continuously for 48 hours, from 10 a.m. on Friday last, but fog clamped down on the venue on both Friday and Saturday nights and the test was suspended when the safety limit had been reached.

The riders were, in addition to Mr. Jones, Derek Wright, Brian Blake, Ken Daws, Peter Walsh and Bob Dendy. A volunteer, Howard German, of the Vintage club, took Daws' place about half way through when the latter had to give up through illness. So well was the machine running at the end of the test that a well-known visitor, Mr. Jack Sutton, of the South-Eastern Centre, was invited to ride the last three laps.

From the outset, the pace of the little machine was set by Wright who covered the first 40.6 miles in 1 hr. 3 min. Half-an-hour later the make-and-break points were adjusted. At 86.4 miles the plug was changed. Misfiring occurred soon after and the engine was dismantled to change the exhaust valve, which showed signs of seizure—the only mechanical fault revealed during the test. When 183 miles had passed, the magneto condenser failed and was replaced and the points were again adjusted. After 8 hr.

31 min., with 286 miles on the clock, the 2-in. rear tyre burst, the rear wheel rim buckled and the wheel had to be changed. At 10 p.m. on Friday, after 12 hours' running, the fog was down to "ten-tenths" and Mr. Jones wisely decided to stop the test which was resumed, in conditions of some mist, at 5.45 a.m. on Saturday. Wright, opening the day's run, came off on the wet track and damaged a footrest and a wheel, necessitating repairs. Save for a rising wind, all went well until 986 miles had been covered when the rear tyre punctured and was replaced in 6 min.

The machine had been running for 27 hours (many of them in darkness with the standard 6 v. direct lighting in operation) and 1,070 miles had been registered, when fog again made it necessary to suspend operations. The mist did not lift sufficiently on Sunday until 6.20 a.m., when the Britax was again wheeled out and was fitted with a waterproof plug cover to save it from the foggy, foggy dew.

Later, sunshine flooded the aerodrome and early arrivals for the Vintage M.C.C. sprint meeting were coming in as the test finished, at 11.10 a.m. The total time occupied had been 31 hr. 54 min. 9 sec. and the engine, as the machine came in for the last time, sounded as healthy as it had when it set out. The barrel and piston were removed immediately the machine was stopped and the engine examined. There was no sign of wear or damage; the piston, the rings, the ring lands and barrel were in perfect condition; a layer of hard but easily removed carbon had accumulated on the exhaust side of the piston crown, but carbon on head and valves was negligible; the plug was clean and the valves in excellent fettle. A fair amount of oil, however, was seen on the outside of the engine. Altogether, the engine can be said to have stripped almost perfectly.

In the test, Shell "Premium" fuel, purchased from a local garage, Shell X100 oil, Champion plug, Dunlop tyres and a Renold driving chain were employed. The handlebar operated gearbox gave ratios of 7.24 and 13.5 to 1.