

Road impressions of new models

DUCATI 48 C.C. SPORTS

by
**MIKE
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DUCATI lightweights have proved themselves over many years on the British market—and now they have a greenhorn in their midst: a two-stroke fifty! Is it a worthy partner of the others? The answer is an undoubted yes.

It looks like many Italian fifties and yet it has charm and character all its own. And at the price it is excellent value for money.

On the engine department the machine could not be faulted. The sporty power egg was a willing worker which gave an exhilarating performance when buzzed.

The gear change—through a twistgrip control—was slick in action and the bike would run up and down the scale with great verve. A disadvantage to such enthusiastic use, though, was the decidedly fruity exhaust note; this prevented full performance being used in town.

Speeds in the gears were 20 and 30 m.p.h. in bottom and second respectively. The jump from second to top was rather excessive and a change was always accompanied by a noticeable drop in revs.

Allowing for slight speedo-

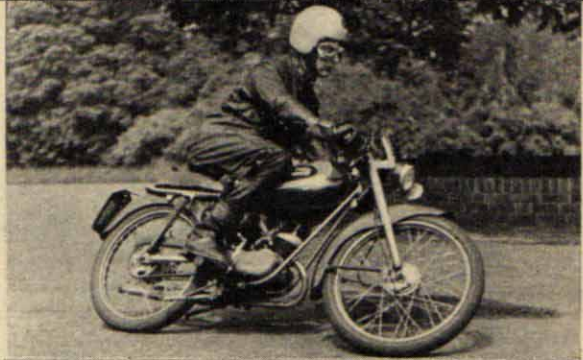
meter inaccuracy, top speed was just over 50 m.p.h. Cruising speed was about 40 m.p.h., given neutral conditions. And this for a fuel consumption of well over 100 m.p.g.

Slight vibration was transmitted through the handlebars and footrests, becoming more pronounced as the revs rose. However, it was not severe enough to be annoying.

STABILITY

Starting was easy once the correct drill was known. When cold, best results were obtained by flooding the carburettor and depressing the air lever before kicking.

The engine was easy to flood because of the extreme down-



Specification

ENGINE: Ducati 48 c.c. (38 x 42 mm) two-stroke single. Compression ratio, 9.5 to 1. Petroil lubrication; ratio, 16 to 1.
IGNITION and LIGHTING: CEV flywheel magneto. Direct-lighting coils. Twin-filament, six-volt 15/15w main bulb.
TRANSMISSION: Three-speed gear box with twist-grip control. Primary drive by helical gears, secondary drive by chain.
FRAME and SUSPENSION: Duplex cradle frame. Hydraulically damped telescopic front fork and pivoted rear fork.
TYRES: Pirelli 2.25 x 19in front and rear.
WEIGHT: 119 lb without fuel.
ROAD TAX: £1 per year.
PRICE: £89 19s 6d (including British purchase tax). Price includes speedometer.
CONCESSIONAIRES: Ducati Concessionaires, Ltd., 80, Burleigh Road, Stretford, Lancs.

draught of the carburettor. This had to be kept in mind, especially if the machine was to be parked for a few minutes, when it was imperative to turn off the fuel tap.

Handling was faultless. Similar fifties all seem to have inherent stability. Cornering the low, light sportster could leave no one in doubt that riding a Ducati 48 is great fun.

When delivered the clip-on handlebars touched the tank with the steering on full lock. This was easily rectified, however, by adjustment. The riding position, too, was improved.

All controls were conveniently placed (the rear-brake pedal is on the "British" side). The brakes were a trifle spongy, but were well in keeping with the machine's performance. Lighting, too, was up to standard.

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