

A Centaur Road Test Report

HMW LUXUS

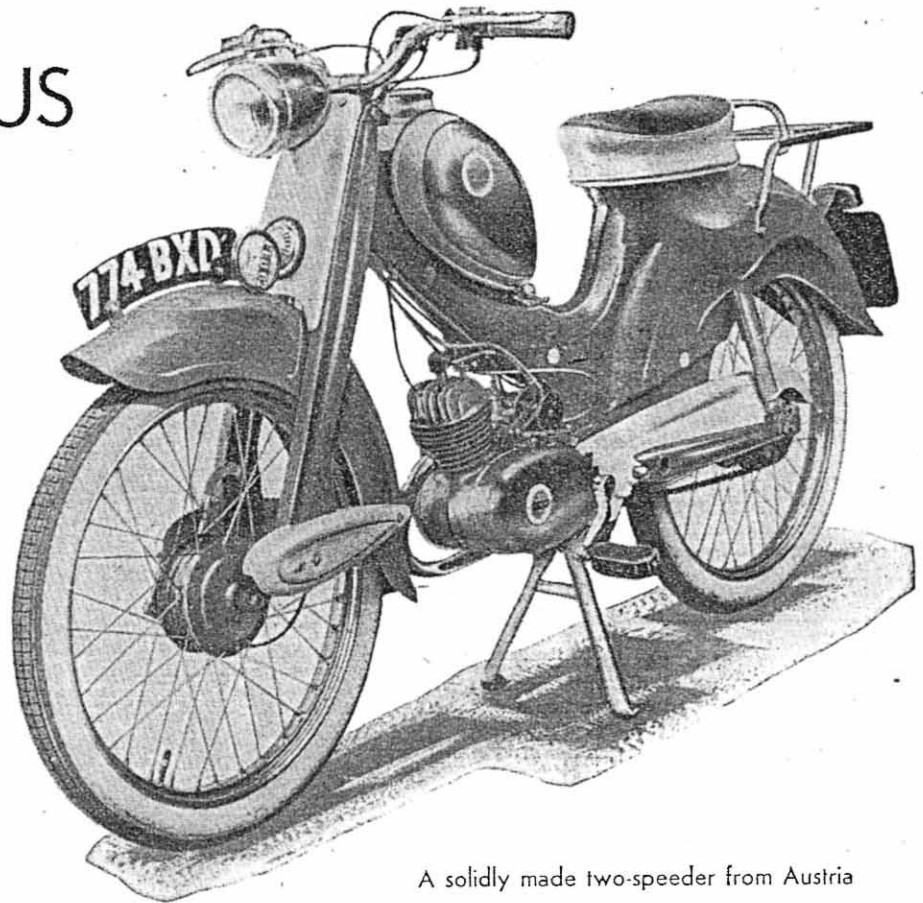
YET another range of mopeds to make their debut at the Cycle and Motor-Cycle show last November were those on the HMW stand, although strictly speaking it was more of a re-introduction. Up to two years earlier when the original agents in this country stopped importing these Austrian machines, they had been establishing themselves as one of the foremost makes on the market. The range consists of a single-speed model, a two-speed model, and two three-speed models, and I chose the two-speed Luxus as it is fairly representative of the other models and is within the popular price bracket at sixpence under £80.

Let me say first of all that this really is a man-sized moped. It's big in every respect, from the performance of the 2.2 b.h.p. engine to the huge and commendably practical luggage carrier. At 119lb., it could hardly have been meant to be classed as a light motorized bicycle, or if it was, it certainly has not hatched out as one. Made from pressed steel, the frame has unusually generous and definitely attractive lines. The rear portion is almost scooterlike in depth of valance and width, and this fact has been exploited to the full. When the spacious and comfortable seat is raised, it reveals a roomy interior tool and pump compartment which will take most of the miscellaneous paraphernalia carried by moped riders. Those disdaining the secret cavity, will find the luggage carrier with its spring clip able to cope with most things they would wish to carry.

Again, the big conception of design is seen in the fuel tank. Lucky indeed the owner of this machine, who will not be constantly required to "fill up"; all of 1.65 Imp. gallons go into this chromium plated monster, through an agreeably large and conveniently-sited fuel aperture. Despite the large tank, however, there is no lack of leg room for the rider, and all round comfort is well provided. I was able to find a more satisfactory riding position than I have on many mopeds, although no height adjustment is available for either handlebars or seat. Apart from a slight tendency to squeak when under stress, a characteristic not uncommon in leading link forks, the suspension was efficient and effective. As for road holding, I discovered a curious fact: when carrying a particularly heavy although not bulky load on the carrier, I found that a good deal of oscillation commenced in the steering, which became uncomfortable when one hand was removed from the handlebars. Otherwise, with a normal load, the steering was stable and responded well. Stability was most noticed and appreciated when the brakes were applied sharply. Even with the locked rear tyre skating merrily over the road surface, the low centre of gravity and balanced weight distribution kept the machine upright and steady.

There must, I suppose, always be some difficulty in deciding on the gear ratios for a two-speed engine, where both a reasonable low speed performance and a practical top speed is sought, but the HMW people seem to have hit upon as good a compromise as any. Bottom gear has a range of from 5 m.p.h. to 20 m.p.h. and standing starts are quite smooth with a normal rider, although with my 190lb. some clutch slip was necessary. Change up to second gear was smooth, provided the engine was at maximum r.p.m.; less than that, and the engine was inclined to stagger a little, though it picked up again easily. In second gear the engine operated down to 14 m.p.h. without any appreciative loss of acceleration power, or sign of distress. One small point marring the gear change was the twist grip gear change which showed a marked bias towards first gear and frequently refused to find neutral.

On the test hill, the HMW proved to be a slow but steady climber, and there was no question of pedal assistance being necessary. When re-starting on a steep incline, however, its extra weight became a disadvantage and considerable clutch slip was needed. Surprisingly, the main source of noise from the engine was not, as one might expect, the exhaust system, but the carburetter air intake, from which issued forth an exaggerated bronchial wheeze. For some reason, which I failed to discover, the engine of the Luxus started to exude small drops of oil from the moment I took delivery, with the result that the rear whitewall tyre became distinctly less white and my best light tan shoes acquired a



A solidly made two-speeder from Austria

not unattractive mottled effect. Otherwise normal road dust and rain spray were efficiently halted by the front and rear guards.

Of the accessories on the Luxus, two came to my notice particularly, by their respective performances. One was the speedometer; mounted in the chromium-plated headlight, which was large, easy to read, and also extremely accurate; the other, the centre stand, stood at too perpendicular an angle, so that when the machine was facing down any sort of incline, it was in danger of running forward off the stand. A more acute angle would cure that.

Lighting from the 6v. 17w. supply was adequate with a good beam on both normal and dip beams, operated by a three-position switch.

Finally, and appropriately, the finish. This is good, and the colour system of blue and grey with large chromium panels on the tank gives the machine a bright clean appearance. The word Luxus is derived I imagine from "luxe" the meaning of which is apparent. This machine justifies its name.

Specification

Engine: Single cylinder 2-stroke, with reverse scavenging; 38 m.m. bore X 44 m.m. stroke = 49.8 c.c. capacity; c.r. 6.5:1; output 2.2 b.h.p. at 5,500 to 6,000 r.p.m.
Transmission: Multi-plate clutch in oil; 2-speed gearbox in unit construction with engine.
Frame: Pressed steel, with leading-link front, and swinging arm rear, suspension.
Tank: 1.65 Imp. galls. capacity.
Lighting: 6v. 17w. from flywheel magneto.
Wheels and Brakes: Front and rear full-width hub brakes; chromium-plated rims fitted with 2.25 X 23in. whitewall tyres.
Equipment: Tool kit and pump, speedometer mounted in headlamp, centre stand, luggage rack.
Finish: Blue and grey, with chromium panels on tank, and chromium fittings.
Dry weight: 119lb.
Concessionaires: Atlas Motor Co. Ltd., Atlas Wharf, Berkshire Road, London, E.9.
Price: £79 19s. 6d.

Performance

Maximum speed:
 Flying 1/10th mile, 30 m.p.h.
 Standing 1/10th mile, 19 m.p.h.
Acceleration:
 No pedal assistance.
 0-10 m.p.h., 3 sec.
 0-20 m.p.h., 8.5 sec.
 0-30 m.p.h., 17 sec.
Economy:
 At 20 m.p.h., 157 m.p.g.
 At 30 m.p.h., 124 m.p.g.
Hill climbing:
 Time for hill: 1 min. 42 sec.
 Second gear engaged at 0.25 miles.
 Test hill 0.5 miles long; max. grad. 1 in 10; 1 in 16 average grad.
Braking:

	Front	Rear	Both
At 20 m.p.h.	23ft.	26ft.	16ft.
At 30 m.p.h.	51ft.	57ft.	34ft.

Pedalling:
 Maximum pedalling speed, 8 m.p.h.
 Comfortable pedalling speed, 6 m.p.h.
Tester's weight: 190lb.
Conditions for test: Calm, dry.

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