

Road Tests of New Models

The 48 c.c. Itom Cyclemotor

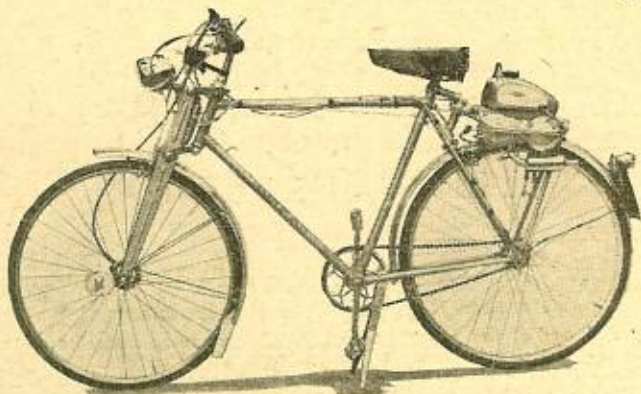
Italian-made Unit with Good Hill-climbing Performance:
Experiences with Sprung Fork

PERHAPS the first impression conveyed by the Italian-made Itom cyclemotor is one of elegance. The particular engine tested was fixed to a Norman sports cycle of roughly the same colour scheme of blue-green with cream panels, and it was generally agreed that it was one of the smartest cyclemotors ever to grace the Dorset House car park.

A number of points about the Itom show that the designers have not spared any efforts to supply an engine that will appeal to the discerning rider. For example, the compression-release valve has a small pipe fixed to it so that blowback is led into the silencer; there is a neat chromium-plated safety-bar round the left side of the engine to protect the light-alloy cylinder barrel in the event of a fall, and a most ingenious quick-release plastic cover is fitted to the plug. To remove this cover it is only necessary to give a slight tug on the h.t. lead.

Starting the Itom was simple provided the Dellorto carburettor was copiously flooded by means of the pump on the float chamber, and provided the air lever was closed. Then, with the throttle lever about one-third open, it was possible to achieve a start in about ten feet of pedalling. After a quarter of a mile had been covered, the air lever could be opened and ignored until the next cold start. Two-stroking was erratic until about 7 m.p.h. was reached, when the motor two-stroked perfectly until nearly full throttle. Although the engine would pull the cycle at speeds below 7 m.p.h., it was not possible to accelerate away readily unless assistance was given from the pedals to bring up the revs.

Above 7 m.p.h. the engine would respond to the throttle briskly and was so lively that first experience in thick traffic prompted caution to avoid catching up with the next vehicle too quickly. For very low speeds it was found that the best way to keep the machine under way was to pedal with the compres-



sion release open and, when circumstances permitted, to release the valve and use the engine. When the engine was hot, starting was simplicity itself. It was necessary to pedal only a very short distance with the decompressor raised, and with the throttle just off the fully closed position the motor would start with very little effort immediately the decompression control was released.

After about 50 miles had been covered, the Italian sparking plug failed completely, and a Lodge H.14 was substituted. This plug improved the starting and also resulted in a smoother-running engine.

The Itom excelled in fairly fast running on level roads and was quite capable of holding its own with average slower-moving traffic. With 20 m.p.h. on the speedometer, the engine appeared to be running well within its limits. At speeds much in excess of this, the exhaust note tended to be on the "hearty" side and the engine would start to "fuss." Fairly long runs did not affect the tune of the engine at all; at one time the machine was cruised for ten miles at about 20 m.p.h., and at the end of this trip, although the barrel was very hot, there were no signs of fading.

Hill-climbing capabilities, while not outstanding, were quite good, provided a run with the engine turning over rapidly could be made. One hill, which causes most cyclists to select their lowest gear, was tackled by the Itom at just over 10 m.p.h., with no assistance from the rider.

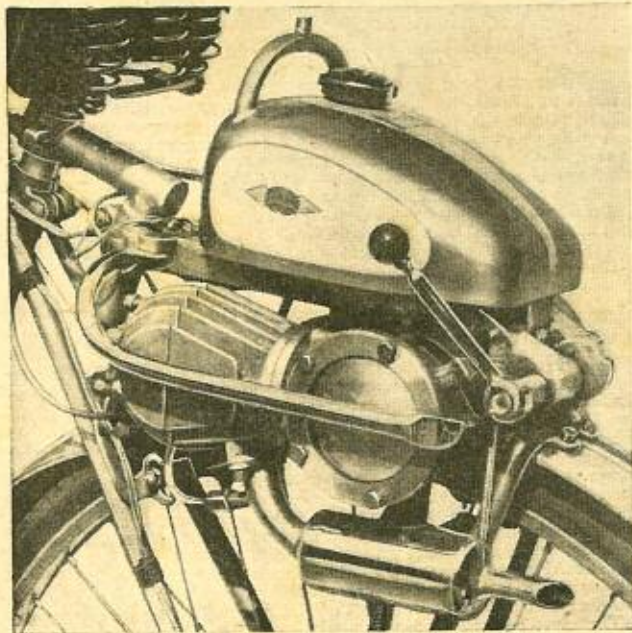
INFORMATION PANEL

SPECIFICATION: 48 c.c. (39 x 40 mm) two-stroke engine. Detachable aluminium-alloy cylinder head, alloy cylinder barrel with iron liner. Roller transmission to front or rear tyre. Petroil lubrication. Dellorto carburettor. 10 w A.C. lighting generator incorporated in flywheel magneto. Link-action front fork.

PETROIL CONSUMPTION: Approximately 170 m.p.g. in town conditions.

PRICE: Rear-mounted unit (without sprung fork), £27 15s. Front-mounted unit (with sprung fork), £29 15s. Spring fork, £3 15s.

SOLE CONCESSIONAIRES: George Grose, Ltd., New Bridge Street, Ludgate Circus, E.C.4.

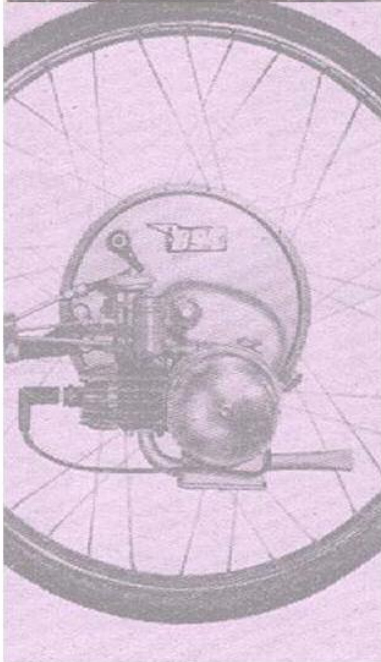


A safety-bar round the left side of the engine is a distinctive feature of the Itom

Mention must be made of the sprung fork supplied with the machine. The effects of all minor corrugations in the road surface, such as cobbles and small depressions, were eliminated most satisfactorily and the fork proved to be of great benefit for town riding. Anything in the nature of a pot-hole would cause the fork to bottom, but even in such a case there was not the violent shock that one associates with a solid front fork. Another benefit derived from this fork was the improved braking. Both brakes could be jammed on as hard as possible, yet there was no trace of deviation from line, or any other indication of instability. In the initial stages, a close watch on the friction-type shock-absorbers was desirable, for after about fifty miles they tended to bed down to some extent, and then the fork would clash readily. It was, however, the work of a minute to tighten these adjusters to the correct extent.

A potential source of worry to owners of foreign machines is the supply of spares. In the case of the Itom it is stated by George Grose, Ltd., that ample stocks of replacements are available.

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