

IT'S certainly different—so different that passers-by stopped to take a better look when I was testing the Kerry Capitano Mini-Truck. Of course, this is the normal reaction when seeing a completely new type of vehicle for the first time. Do you remember the crowds that used to form whenever a scooter or "bubble car" stopped? Who bothers to stop and stare now? You will soon get used to seeing *Capitano* Mini-Trucks all over the country.

The nearest thing to the Mini-Truck in appearance is the good old horse and cart. Front half is a *Capitano* moped unit with what looks like a trailer fitted behind. However, you cannot detach the rear and drive off—unless you are clever enough to ride a one-wheeled moped!

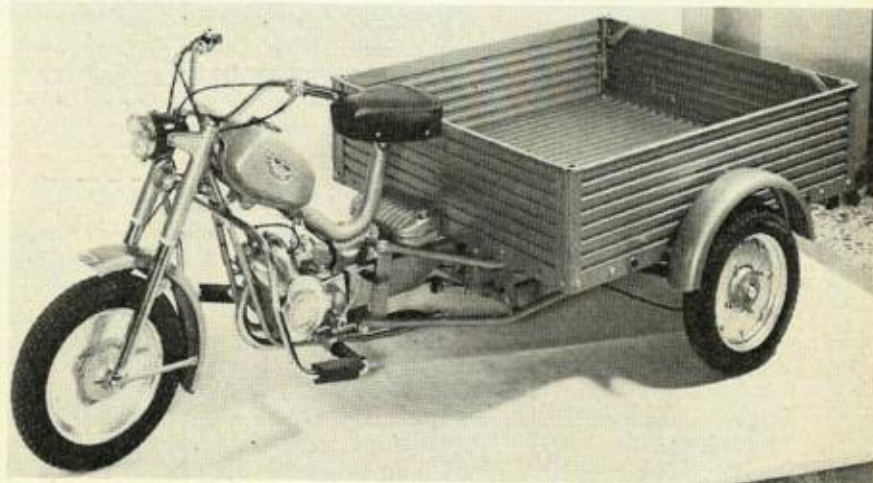
The Mini-Truck I had for testing was a prototype and many extra refinements will be added to the production models which should be available by early March. Power unit is the 50 c.c. Kerry engine which is kick started. I found the engine started with the first or second kick even in really cold conditions. The kick pedal folds away automatically nine times out of ten after each kick. I would stress that this should be unfolded with a flick of the foot, not the hand. My thumb has a fair gash to prove the point!

The three-speed gear box is operated from a twist grip control in the normal scooter manner. Clutch on the left handlebar and throttle, hand-brake, horn, lights switch and cut-out on the right. Foot brake, which operates on both rear wheels, was easy to use and most efficient. One of the extra refinements to go on production models is a ratchet hand-brake for parking. This will be essential for parking on hills.

The well-sprung body has a carrying capacity of 5 cwt. although I didn't put more than half this weight on board while testing. The tailboard, which is also dropped with ease, is fitted with a hinged number plate so that long loads can be carried with the tailboard down and number plate still visible. A spare wheel carrier is fitted under the truck body. All three pressed-rim wheels are fully interchangeable. Behind the saddle is fitted a neat tool box containing a really comprehensive set of tools, from spanners to foot pump.

I have driven most types of scooter and three wheeler from time to time

and can honestly say that the Mini-Truck is unique. I would certainly not advise anyone to drive one straight into heavy traffic without first trying it out in quiet streets. I found that however slowly I pulled away, the Mini-Truck wanted to go round in circles. The whole outfit seemed to be intent on toppling over sideways and more than once I found that my foot had shot out to steady the truck. It felt a little like a motor-cycle combination the first time the sidecar jumps and it left the same horrible

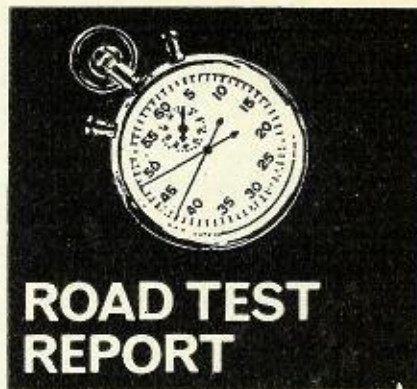


feeling that something is not quite right.

However, after only five to ten minutes of gingerly driving through back streets with little traffic to worry about, I suddenly got the "feel" of the machine and was able to drive with confidence. Within a short time, I was able to drive the Mini-Truck through some of London's busy main roads.

One other snag for those used to riding scooters is the width of the truck, about four feet at the rear including wheels. I found a tendency to take left-hand turns so sharply that the nearside wheel bumped the kerb. The first time this happened it came as quite a shock as I was already well round. After a time one gets used to leaving plenty of room for the rear to follow. Of course, the same applies when aiming the truck towards a small gap in traffic. It would never do to forget the large rear section has to come through as well.

The whole outfit is very stable and rides extremely well even over the most bumpy of roads. The feeling that the truck would topple over, which I mentioned above, had no real founda-



## KERRY CAPITANO MINI- TRUCK

### Details:

50 c.c. £175.0.0, carrying capacity 5 cwt;  
90 c.c. £192.0.0, carrying capacity 9½ cwt;  
Body Cover £23.0.0; Battery £3.0.0; 35  
m.p.h. 100 m.p.g.

tion and I don't think it could be tipped over in motion even if every effort was made to achieve this. The rear can easily be lifted, however, to assist parking in a small space.

As no speedometer was fitted I cannot take issue with Kerry's on their claim of 35 m.p.h. top speed. It does seem somewhat optimistic particularly with a full load on. Although, I must admit, as the Mini-Truck warms up it gives better and better performance.

Starting from cold, I found it necessary to change down on almost every gradient but this did improve as the vehicle warmed up.

A 90 c.c. Mini-Truck will also be produced and this will give the extra power to any user who really requires it. Kerry's are also making available, as optional extras, a fibre glass driver's cab and a pressed steel body cover. The driver's cab will be fitted with a windscreen and windscreen wiper and will be open at the sides to give ease of access. This would give full weather

and extremely low running costs. Just to top this lot—the truck can be driven by a 16 year old.

There are no end of possibilities for the Mini-Truck. Even my old window cleaner was interested, he reckoned that it would be ideal for carrying his ladders and buckets around. The same could apply to sweeps with their brushes and small builders, plumbers and the like with their tools and equipment. Every time I thought of one type of prospective user another two came to mind—the list is endless. The



Opposite: the standard model; above, with cab and body fitted

protection for the driver and would certainly make life a lot happier for anybody driving a Mini-Truck all day. The body cover will give the same protection for goods being carried.

I have no doubt that the Mini-Truck could do long runs if necessary but the driver would not be exactly comfortable. No, it is obviously designed for short runs with many local deliveries and pick-ups. For this it is ideal. It must be the cheapest commercial vehicle of any kind available today. Running costs are hardly worth thinking about, with 100 m.p.g. and easy servicing, you could almost say that the running costs don't exist. At £175 for the basic model, every small trader could afford to run one. Large concerns could well use a small fleet of these Mini-Trucks for all their local deliveries and servicing calls. Think of the fantastic saving. Under half the cost of the cheapest van, Road Tax of £5 per year, low insurance rates

Mini-Truck certainly has the makings of a winner!

I tried loading up with some heavy cartons and was surprised how many the truck held. With the basic model, goods can be just dumped in position from any angle. The sides are about a foot deep and solid items do not even need to be fastened in at all. The suspension is good and there is little bounce to bother about.

I did notice that children generally took a great interest in the truck and, being so low, I can well imagine the fun that would be had in jumping up and down in the back should it be left outside unattended for long. This would not be a problem with the body cover fitted.

In conclusion, I enjoyed driving the truck and look forward to testing the 90 c.c. model with a driver's cab as soon as this is available. I would not hesitate to recommend the *Capitano* Mini-Truck to everybody who is looking for a really economical form of commercial transport. J.A.C.

## RIDE SOUTH, HIRE A TENT

**F**AMILY camping in the South of France has so far been more or less limited to the motor car or caravan camper because of the amount of kit present day luxury camping demands.

This is a picture which is now changing and luxury camping for the two wheel traveller is now available at a delightful camp, "le Colombier" at Frejus on the Cote d'Azur.

For the very reasonable hire charge of 18 guineas a week (20 guineas in July and August) four people can spend a first class camping holiday with all the latest tentage and gear which is found already erected on arrival and even with nothing to do on departure except pack the bathing kit and ride away.

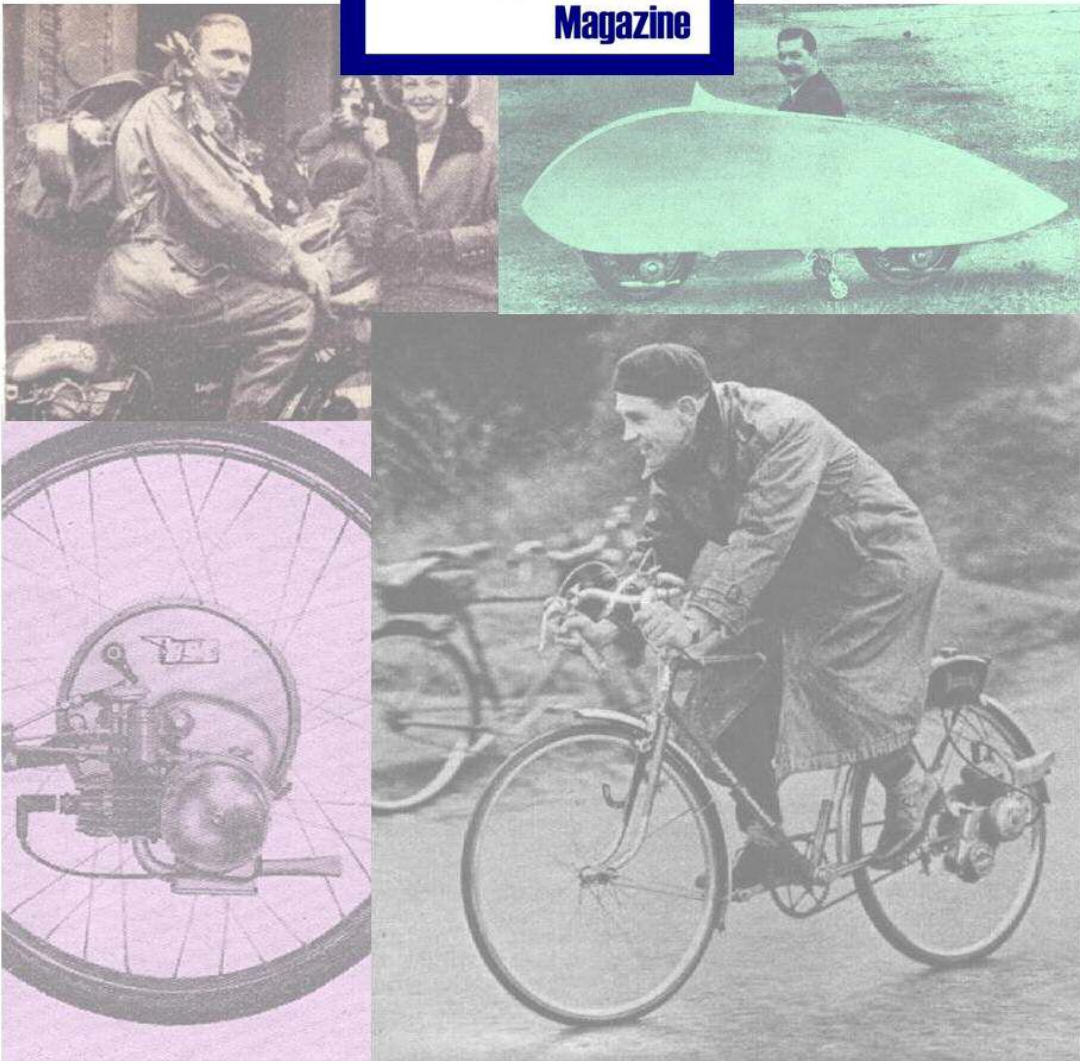
The accommodation includes a large French frame tent with outside canopy and two inner tents, mattresses and carpets and bamboo matting in the living area. Table, chairs, cooker, crockery and cutlery are all provided. The camp has a *Michelin* 5 star rating and has swimming pool, playground, club bar and restaurant. It covers 30 acres of hilly, wooded country and has all the requirements of a full and varied holiday within its own bounds.

This is the ideal way of enjoying a luxury holiday without having to spend money on kit or transport. The campers can travel light by scooter and enjoy touring on the way, certain of a home at the end of the journey. Details from: SELECTA SITE (EUROPE) 113, Penhale Road, Portsmouth, Hants. (Portsmouth 20085).

## SCRAMBLE DATE CHANGE

New date for Scramble (cancelled 7th March) is 28th March at Houghton Conquest, nr. Ampthill, Beds. If you have not got your entry in, don't worry, you can sign up on the spot. All details about Lambretta Club sporting events from Bob Wilkinson, Lambretta Concessionaires Ltd, Trojan Works, Purley Way, Croydon, Surrey. Look out for big feature on the Club in *P&P* next month.

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