

# CENTAUR VISITS NSU

And takes a look at  
one of the largest  
concessionaires  
in the country



No, that is not Centaur  
on the left!

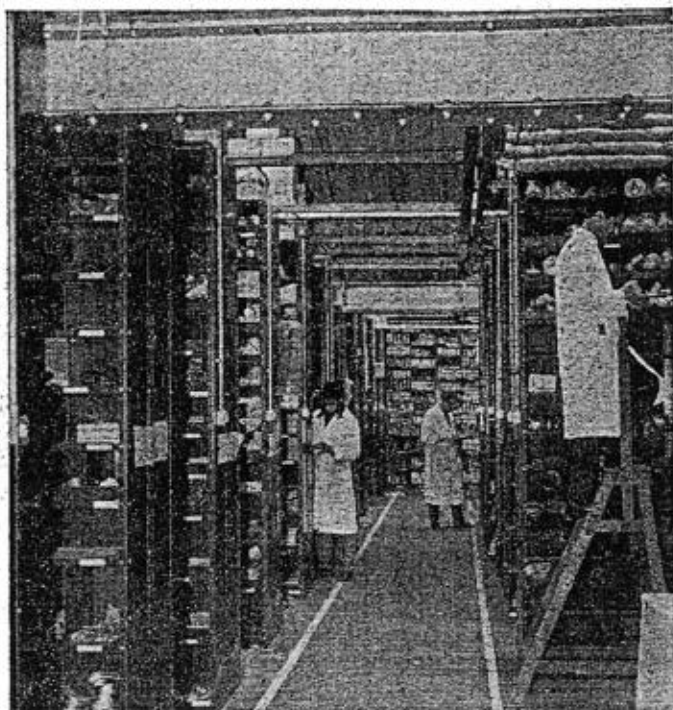
OVER 150,000 NSU Quickly mopeds sold, a stock of spares worth more than £200,000 and 120,000 sq. ft. of floor space divided between several depots—these are the proud claims of NSU (Great Britain) Ltd. after seven years' operation in this country and the Commonwealth. In fact NSU machines were first imported by Vincent Engineers (Stevenage) Ltd., in 1951, from the main German factory at Neckarsulm, Wurt, (which, in case you don't know, is between Stuttgart and Heidelberg), but it was not until the concession was taken over by the present company that sales really got under way.

When I visited the main "factory" (as the 150 employees call the buildings at 134-6 King Street, Hammersmith, London, W.6) I was impressed by its size and efficiency—it does in fact comprise half the total depot floor area. By far the largest section is the spares department, with its subsidiary order interpreter and dispatch departments. The service department has a building to itself where 10 or 12 mechanics attend to repairs that are beyond the scope of the local dealer, or come from out-of-the-way spots (for example the Outer Hebrides) where there is no local dealer anyway.

NSU (Great Britain) Ltd. are in fact part of Layford (Automotive) Ltd., who handle the Bianchi and Cazenave group of mopeds. NSU also handle the Prima scooters, the Max motorcycle and Prinz light cars, but Quickly mopeds are their fastest selling machines.

Perhaps the commonest grumble among moped owners is the difficulty of getting spares, but after seeing the huge stocks of NSU spares at Hammersmith, and watching an order pass through the various checking, recording and dispatching departments, I came to the conclusion that few of the grumblers could have been NSU owners.

Nearly every order comes from a dealer—direct orders are usually only handled when the customer has no local dealer—and each order



Spares are selected from open racks.

may contain anything up to a hundred items, but usually between five and 20. When it reaches Hammersmith it goes straight to the order interpreter department, supervised by W. H. Roper, who told me that over a third of the orders have to be checked for inaccuracies, which, he added, wastes both the company's money and customer's time. He receives about 500 orders a month, and in the last six reckons that he has handled over half-a-million items.

Once an order has been checked it is passed to the spares department. Spares are arranged on open shelves and each item or group of items is sealed in a polythene bag as it is selected. This makes it very easy to check an order, and ensures that none of the smaller parts get lost. I was told that spares for the new S/2 23, or for that matter any new machine, always arrive before the model is on the market.

When the items have been selected they are checked and an invoice is then drawn up with its sets of duplicates (each invoice cost NSU 3s. 6d.) and the order goes to the packaging department. A telephoned order can be dispatched within half an hour of it being taken.

## Year's Guarantee

The Quickly is one of the very few mopeds with a year's guarantee, but when I visited the guarantee department, supervised by J. Randall, I was told that in spite of this very few machines are replaced. His job is to check the validity of guarantee claims, though initially this is left to the dealer.

Repairs are carried out by 10 trained mechanics, who are equipped with specialized tools and heavy welding equipment. Each tool is hung over its shape outlined on a board—no-one has any excuse for putting a tool back in the wrong place. Repairs to all the Layford Automotive products are made here but it is unusual for them to handle more than two or three Quicklys a week. Most of these require major overhauls.

Distribution is carried out through area dealers who are supplied with about 50 machines at a time; they sell them to local dealers.

NSU believe that the dealer is the best person to carry out repairs, for as soon as a machine is sent back to the main depot travel charges will be added to your bill, and of course the job will take longer.

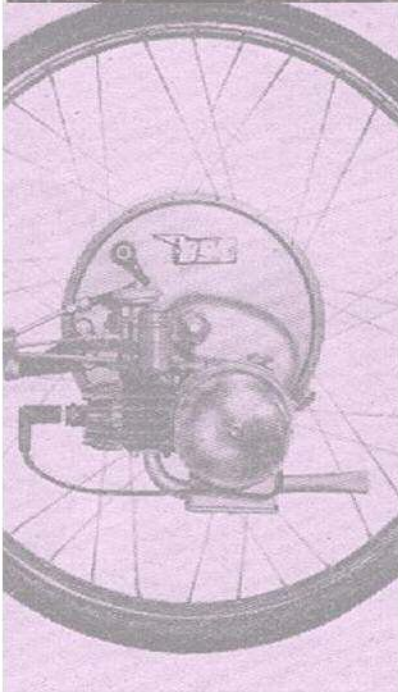
When a shop agrees to sell NSU machines they are supplied with packs of spares (usually about £50 worth), made up of those parts which experience has shown are most likely to wear. As his sales expand the dealer will build up his spares accordingly, so that the customer has immediate over-the-counter service with the more common parts. Any part not in stock can quickly be ordered by post, and if any repair job is beyond the scope of your local Quickly man it will either be dealt with by a travelling service man, the nearest main depot, or in extreme cases, the Hammersmith service department.

"Very efficient," you may say, "but it's sales that count." Well, the new Quickly S/2 23 was introduced at the worst possible time of year, January, and within a fortnight the first batch of 500 had sold out.



Mechanics work on two Quickly mopeds. The name of the mechanic in the foreground is Russ Engineer!

# IceniCAM Information Service



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