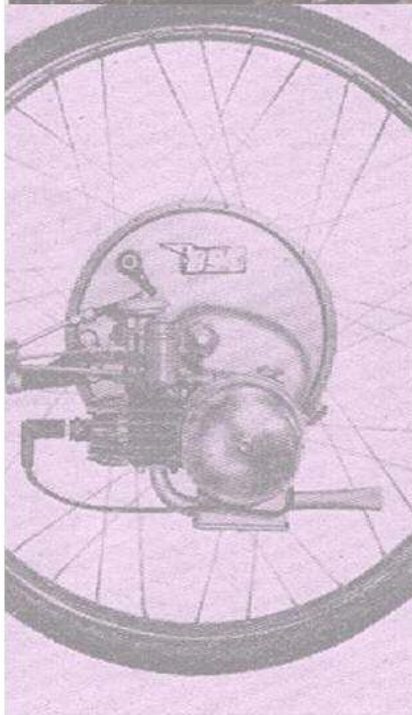


# IceniCAM Information Service



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# THE WONDER OF WOOLIES

**No one can compete with the Js on volume moped sales right? So how have Woolies and the Tomos cracked it, wonders Roger Willis.**

Right then, children, stop picking your noses and pay attention. Ready? Then we'll begin. Once upon a time there was a little Yugoslavian moped called Tommy Tomos. Now Tommy and lots of his brothers were taken on an exciting trip to England by an importer called *Dwek International*. When Tommy got there, Mr Dwek The Importer went round motorbike shops to see if he could find places for

levers, just like a pedal cycle, making him very easy to ride. He was also very *safe* to ride because his brakes worked very well and he was quite good at going round corners, unlike much of the opposition competing for homes, many of whom had silly little wheels. Tommy had big wheels, like a proper motorbike . . .

There were a few problems with Tommy, though. He had a kickstart that was better at



*Cheap and tasty — and clock that fork brace.*

Tommy and his brothers to live. The nasty, cruel shopkeepers just sneered at Tommy, saying that nobody would want an ugly moped like him. Mr Dwek tried to find Tommy a home by mail order, but that didn't work either. Mr Dwek was very sad and Tommy Tomos cried himself to sleep in the dark, lonely warehouse.

There was actually no good reason for people to be rude about Tommy. He was a practical and well-constructed moped. His 49cc, air cooled, two-stroke engine produced a modest 2bhp at 5500rpm, which was enough to make him bingle along at nearly 30 miles per hour. He didn't have any complicated gearshift, being equipped with a two-speed automatic box actuated by a pair of centrifugal clutches changing ratios according to engine speed. His frame was pressed steel with an integral fuel tank and a stepthru format. Tommy's front legs were telescopic forks and at the back he had a swingarm with shock absorbers. Both his brakes were operated by handlebar

laddering mummy's tights than it was at starting his engine. He also lacked any indicators or mirrors and he used messy old petrol mix.

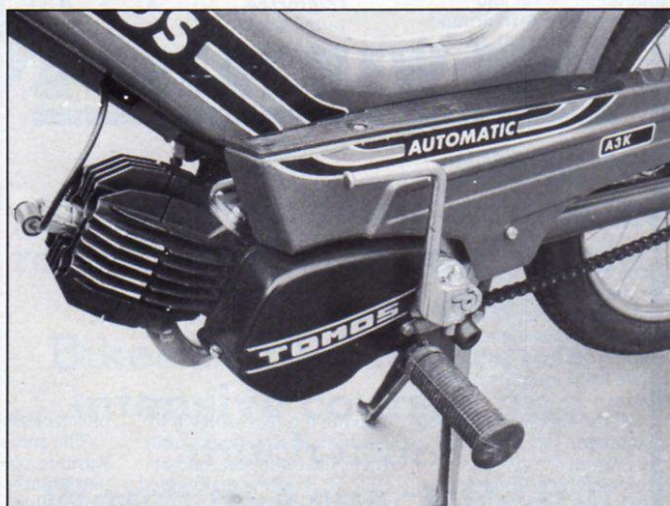
Nevertheless, Tommy's main advantage was that he was an extremely cheap little moped, selling for only £199 (£234.95 on the road).

Eventually, Mr Dwek had an extremely clever idea. He went to see Woolworth, a very big company with lots of very big shops all over the country. You've probably been to Woolies, children, and you must know that they sell almost everything except mopeds . . . Well, now they sell Tommy Tomos.

As the latest 'Wonder of Woolies', Tommy went on sale in over 200 of their branches. Mr Dwek recruited some 170 motorcycle shops to act as service agents in case any of Tommy's brothers went wrong. These shops only had to pay £37 for a spares kit and got paid £7 per hour for warranty work on Tommy. Through the summer months of 1983, Woolworth's sold 2098 of Tommy's brothers, capturing



*Tommy's mum takes him for a quick run to the shop.*



*Note running board for continental holidays.*

7.1 per cent of the entire moped market. Mr Dwek was very happy. Woolworth's was very happy. Tommy Tomos was also very happy because market research showed that it was women between the ages of 25 and 40 who were buying them. Lucky Tommy . . .

The joy at Tommy's astounding success and popularity was not universal,

however. Uncle Jerry at Honda UK raved with fury because he'd lost 4 per cent of his sales. Uncle Bertie at Comerfords International said, "We hate it".

Tommy Tomos had proved that he was no ugly duckling, but rather a beautiful swan disguised as the right product at the right price. The motorcycle trade remained





All the latest tack, even down to the 16in front wheel...

brilliant and long overdue. It can only increase the entire potential motorcycle market and that is good news.

So, kiddies, if your mummy is fed up with not being able to park the car in town or tired of waiting for the bus, drag her down to Woolies, march resolutely past the sweet counter and sit her on Tommy Tomos. She'll soon see how much fun Tommy can be. **WB2**

## SPECIFICATIONS

Model	Tomas A3K Moped
Price inc taxes	£234.95
Warranty	12 months
Customer Contact	FW Woolworth & Woolco stores

### ENGINE

Type	Air cooled, 2-stroke single
Capacity	49cc
Bore/Stroke	38 x 43mm
Lubrication	Petrol Mix
Comp. ratio	8.5:1
Carburation	12mm Bing
Ignition	Flywheel Magneto
Power (bhp)	2bhp @ 5500rpm
Torque (lb-ft)	na

### TRANSMISSION

Primary drive	Gear
Clutch	2 x wet centrifugal
Gearbox	2-speed automatic
Final drive	Chain
Overall ratios	na

### ELECTRICS

Power source	6V mag/dyno
Battery	None
Headlamp	Direct 20/25w

### CHASSIS

Frame	Pressed steel monocoque
Front susp.	Telescopic fork
Rear susp.	Swingarm with twin shocks
Front brake	Drum
Rear brake	Drum
Tyre type	Obiliceyo
Tyre sizes	16 x 2.25

### CAPACITIES

Fuel tank	1 gallon & 1 pint reserve
Oil	½ pint Valvomatic (gearbox)

### DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase	43in
Seat height	30.5in
H'bar width	25in
Grnd clrnce	6.5in
Rake/trail	na
Dry weight	97lbs

### PERFORMANCE

Top speeds (mean)	30mph (est)
Best one-way St ¼-mile (mean)	na
Test weight	na
Speed in gears	na
Fuel cons.	158mpg
Range	177 miles

### EQUIPMENT

Speedo, carrier	
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generally spiteful and peeved, though.

One Woolworth store in the south west of England received a visit from the police after an anonymous tip-off that they were selling unsafe mopeds that hadn't been PDI'd. (Dwek carries out the pre-delivery inspection before the bikes are supplied to Woolies.) A lot of motorbike shops who've never so much as seen Tommy Tomos are telling potential customers horrid stories about his unreliability. All the naughty boys and girls at *Which Bike?* couldn't break Tommy, though, which must say something, seeing as we manage to break almost all of our other toys.

The real point about Tommy Tomos is not just that he's a cheap set of wheels but that he is also a breakthrough for two-wheeled transportation. The idea of selling small bikes through high street chain stores rather than specialist motorbike dealers, where the average first-time (and female) buyer is likely to get an earful of smart-ass remarks and an overdose of confusion, is

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