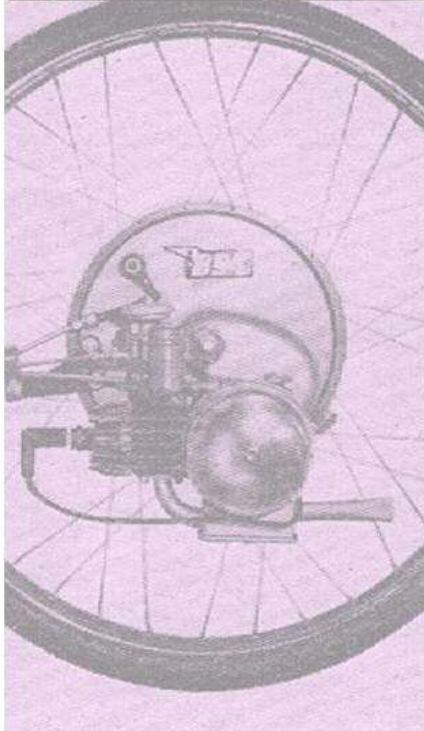
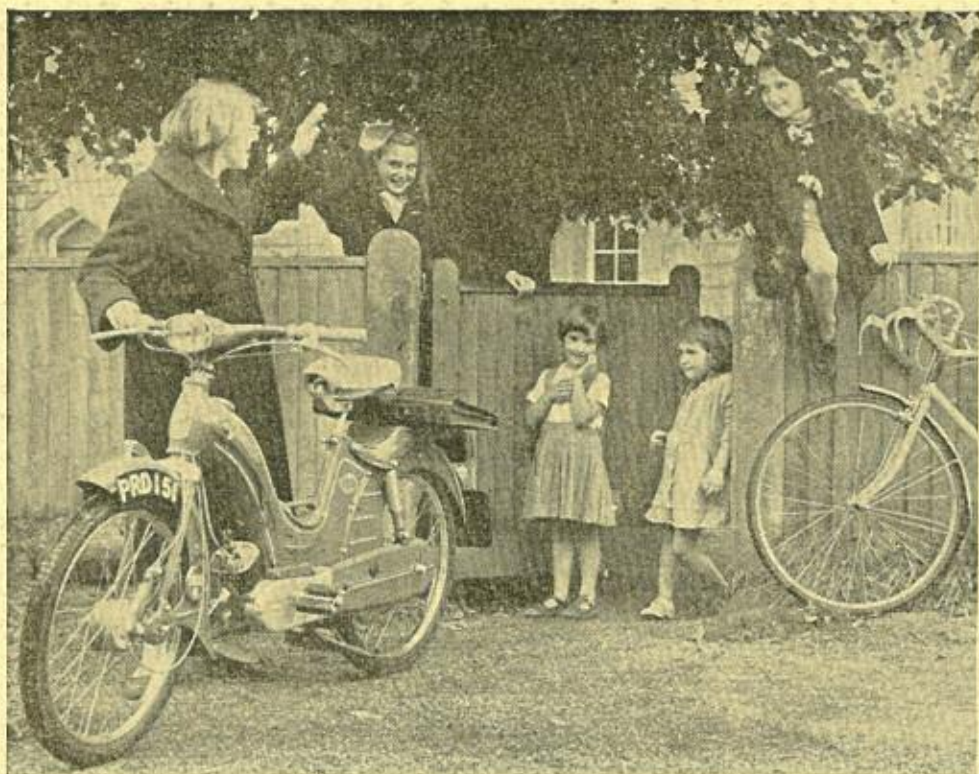


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## VICTORIA "VICKY 4"

A Positive-stop Three-speed Gearchange is a distinguishing feature

**D**IFFICULTY in locating the middle gear easily and with certainty is a charge often levelled against three-speed mopeds and one, alas, which is largely true. There is normally a good deal of knack required in engaging second gear on a three-speed, twist-grip change. Now the problem has been solved, for on the Victoria "Vicky 4" which I have tested recently an ingenious positive-stop device has been incorporated, making it impossible to miss a gear, providing the cable is correctly adjusted.

Positive stops are, of course, almost standard wear on motorcycles, and a "built into the gearbox" moped version was, it's true, shown by a small Italian constructor at Milan last year. The Victoria system is singular, however, in combining the stop into a normal three-position twist-grip, so that there is no guesswork at all left in the gear-changing.

In practice, I found that the scheme worked wonderfully. To change from bottom gear, I merely pulled out the clutch and rotated the grip upwards until it would go no further. I then released the clutch — and there was second gear. A similar action engaged the third "cog."

Downward changes were equally simple. Out with the clutch, twist the grip forward, release the clutch again when the grip stopped, and that all-too-often elusive middle gear was home first time. Neutral-finding was not difficult, and Victoria have thoughtfully provided an "over-ride" in the form of an auxiliary lever. Press this with the thumb, withdraw the clutch, and you can twist the grip throughout its full range of movement without hindrance from the stop.

I found the device to be of great value in traffic, enabling full use to be made of the "Vicky's" not inconsiderable acceleration with no fear of spending valuable seconds sorting out a missed gear. It proved equally important for slowing, too, enabling me to slip smartly through the gears whenever I wished. Only one dull point — the "over-ride" lever pro-

jected rather too far for comfort, and on several occasions I jabbed my thumb on it, rather painfully.

So much for the Victoria's outstanding new feature. What of the machine as a whole? I found the "Vicky" to be a very pleasant tourer, with a fair turn of speed, good road-holding and steering, and excellent brakes.

Whether in two- or three-speed form, the Victoria engine is always smooth and powerful, and on the "Vicky 4" — thanks to the "Frankfurter Topf" silencer with which the machine is equipped — next-door to silent. Since considerable care has been taken to silence the induction as well, the rider of a "Vicky" is rarely conscious of an engine note

### The VICTORIA at a Glance

**Maximum Speed:** 33 m.p.h. in 41 sec. from rest.

**Economy:** 130 m.p.g. at 20 m.p.h.  
100 m.p.g. at 30 m.p.h.

**Braking:** From 20 m.p.h. From 30 m.p.h.  
Both brakes .. 12½ feet 27 feet  
Front only .. 25 feet 55 feet  
Rear only .. 32 feet 63 feet

**Load carried during test:** 200 lb.

**Engine:** Victoria two-stroke; 38 mm. bore x 42 mm. stroke = 47 c.c.; c.r. 8 to 1; 2.4 b.h.p. at 5,500 r.p.m.

**Gearbox:** In unit with engine; three speeds, with handlebar twist grip control; positive-stop device with manual over-ride, incorporated with twist grip; gear primary and chain final drives; kick starting.

**Frame:** Welded-up from steel pressings; swinging-fork rear and leading-link front suspensions.

**Tank:** 4-gal. capacity.

**Lights:** Head and tail lamps fed direct from Bosch flywheel magneto-generator.

**Wheels and brakes:** Both brakes 3½-in. internal-expanding in full-width light-alloy hubs; quickly-detachable rear wheel; light alloy rims and rust-proof spokes; Continental 2.00-in. x 23-in. tyres.

**Equipment:** Horn; luggage carrier with rubber securing strap; centre stand; tool box; pump; speedometer; number plates; licence holder.

**Finish:** Dark blue enamel, with chromium-plated details.

**Makers:** Victoria-werke a.g., Nuremberg, Germany.

**Concessionaires:** Europa Imports Ltd., 183a Oxford Road, Reading, Berks.

**Price:** £83 14s. inc. P.T.

... just a well-mannered and subdued purr sensed, rather than heard, above the rush of the wind.

Hill-climbing is good, the third ratio taking care of the toughest inclines, and the model pulls well at low speeds in traffic, with ready response to the throttle.

Handling and suspension go hand in hand — given good springing, good handling is an almost natural corollary. Both are good on the "Vicky 4," though a previously-noted tendency for an over-strong rebound action on the rear legs is still present on this latest model.

With the riding position I am less happy. As taken over, I found the handlebars to be too wide for comfort, especially as the saddle is mounted relatively well forward. Thus after 50 miles or so one began to feel a trifle cramped. It proved possible to slide the throttle grip inwards by an inch, but no similar adjustment was possible on the left bar.

That point apart, I have no criticism to make of the three-speed version of one of the best-established mopeds. With the introduction of their positive-stop twist-grip, Victoria have made a very real contribution to moped design — a contribution which may, perhaps, lead to the general adoption of three-speed gearboxes. But for a pioneer machine the "Vicky 4" is very docile, and very luxurious, indeed!

CENTAUR.

## WEATHER PROTECTION

### Keeping Dry

**I** USED my moped—or, to be more accurate, a selection of other people's mopeds!—for my daily return trip of 68 miles to and from the office. Train-bound friends and car-cramped neighbours frequently ask me if I never tire of getting wet, and are usually amazed when I tell them that I probably suffer less from the weather than they do.

It's a fact, though. The moped rider who dresses for the job, with decent leggings and foot covering; a substantial riding coat; gloves, goggles and helmet; can travel 50 miles through a downpour, and arrive far drier *inside* than the man who has walked, in gent's nannies and raincoat, 200 yards from his local bus-stop.

This point I proved to my wife years ago. Having ridden home in atrocious weather—stair-rod rain all the way—I was greeted by tender cries of "Poor chick!" and "Beastly bikes!"—until I peeled off my protective outer layers to reveal a very warm and dry "Centaur," who had suffered nothing worse

than a dampened jaw!

The sympathy evaporated, and has never fully returned . . .

### Handlebar Muffs

**Y**OU'LL remember my enquiry about ways and means of beating numb thumb when mopedalling on frosty mornings? Nobody has yet come up with the 100 per cent answer to the problem, but reader W. Edmonds, of Cinderford, writes to remind me about those useful fittings, handlebar muffs.

These are usually of felt-lined leathercloth, and are clamped to the handlebar. A wire frame holds them open around the clutch and brake levers, and the hands and wrists slip cosily inside, where they are well protected. I can vouch for the efficiency of this type of hand-protector, but I have my doubts regarding the practical aspects of their use on mopeds, save for single-speeders. The need for a fairly large degree of twist-grip (and, therefore, clutch lever) movement inside the left muff might rule them out.