

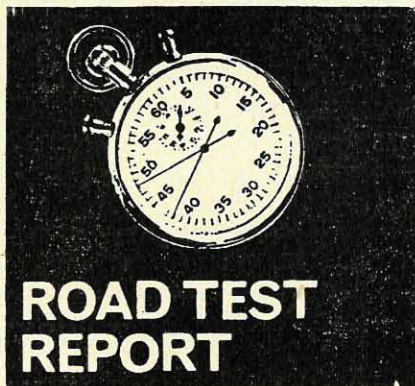
# THE SCOOTER

# with **POWER & PEDAL**

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**INSIDE:** Servicing Lambretta & Vespa; Road Tests; Yamaha feature



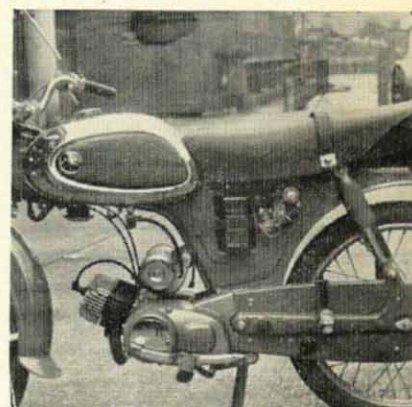
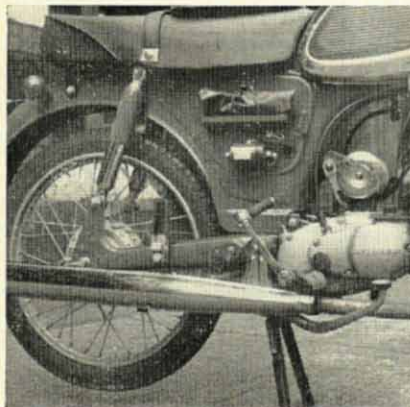


**T**HE Yamaha YF-1 is an attractive little beast with lines that would not disgrace a motor cycle costing three times this price. The finish is really superb with extensive use of red plastic and plastic coating. Front mudguard is in strong flexible plastic whilst the rear is in conventional metal with a rubber extension. The speedometer which incorporates a useful neutral indicator is neatly housed above, but joined to, the headlamp.

Amber direction indicators, fitted front and rear, are operated from a switch on the right handlebar. Dip switch and horn are on the left together with an efficient choke lever. The high-style petrol tank is chrome and plastic coated and fitted with rubber knee grips. Petrol tap is under the tank and ignition key fits just below the left side of the well-shaped dual seat. This key turns to three positions; off, on and night riding (lights). Manual clutch is on the left handlebar and gear rocker is by the left footrest. The folding kickstart and back brake are located on the right, as is the stylish plastic tool box, and battery housing is on the left. Pillion rests fold neatly upwards and all pedals and levers are cleanly finished off. The full length exhaust is very sleek with chrome plating.

#### Power Unit

Power unit is the Yamaha 50 cc. YF-1 high-performance rotary valve two-stroke engine. Yamaha have found that higher intake efficiency, larger intake port and no loss of fuel have greatly improved the engine in performance, power and economy. The ball-lock transmission is designed to enable gears to shift smoothly at any speed and the four-speed gear box allows the engine to run within its



Above: under the covers, left, a well-packed toolkit & H.T. coil; right 2 amp./hrs. battery for horn & flashers

# THE YF-1 YAMAHA

A sporty 50 c.c. motorcycle from Japan, tested by John A. Cade

most efficient rev range under any driving conditions. The entirely new carburettor has a built-in choke operated from the handlebar lever. This makes for easy starting in the coldest weather.

#### Starting

Starting is very simple. The ignition key, situated on the left below the saddle, is turned to the first position and the neutral light comes on. If the engine is cold, the choke lever is pushed to the left and one kick is enough to start the engine. First gear is engaged by pushing the left toe down once—let out the clutch and you're away. Depress the gear rocker again and this engages second and so on through the four gears. Pressure with the heel brings you down through the gears in the same way. The neutral light comes on each time neutral is engaged and this is particularly useful for riders used to the British system of having neutral

between first and second.

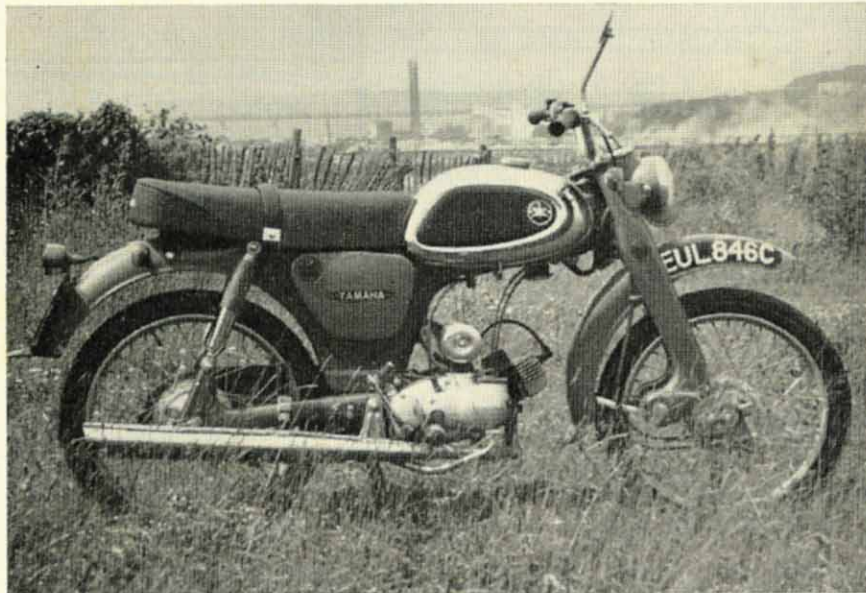
Lights are operated from the ignition key and are most efficient. Dipper switch is located on the left handlebar with the powerful horn. The Yamaha is a very slim machine and, because of this, the indicators are very close together. It is as well to make sure that adequate hand signals are still given even though the indicators are used. Remember that indicators are ideal on cars but not nearly so clear on motor cycles, particularly the slim variety.

#### Performance

For a 50 cc. machine the Yamaha has remarkable pulling power but, because it is only 50 cc., proper use must be made of the gear box to get the most from the machine. With a four speed box to play with this is by no means difficult. Gear changing is remarkably smooth but there is an unmistakable "plop" with each change. The manual clutch is not

needed once first gear has been moved into.

In the lower gears the bike is extremely frisky and it is hard to remember the small capacity of the power unit. Acceleration is good but, again, one needs to pay attention to gear changing. On hills the same thing applies and if the engine is allowed to labour, speed drops dramatically. Long steep hills in top gear are just not on. But engage third gear and this machine will climb the steepest incline at 30 m.p.h. That is no



mean achievement for such a small engine.

On the flat, 45 m.p.h. is about as much as I could get but I couldn't hold this speed for long and the slightest hill would knock the speed back to about 40 m.p.h. These light machines are not really designed with long distance travel in mind. For this you need something more powerful but, the *Yamaha YF-1* will do long distances quite happily. Only thing is, it will go steadily along at its own moderate speed and there is nothing you can do to hurry it up. Once the speedo is reading over 40 m.p.h. you can twist the throttle back until you're blue in the face but the machine hasn't got any more to give.

Of course, many riders honestly don't want more than 40 m.p.h. out of their machines and, indeed, this is often "top-whack" with more powerful machines. The old 125 cc. scooter would only do just over the 40 m.p.h. mark so, for a 50 cc. the

*Yamaha* is no slouch! For short journeys and riding in and around towns this machine is really ideal. For this sort of thing anything more powerful is just drinking petrol for the sake of it.

#### Roadholding

Being a lightweight motor cycle, the *Yamaha* grips the road surface like a limpet. The large wheels give perfect cornering at any speed and absolute safety on any road surface,

however bad. Brakes are first class and the dust and waterproof brake drums assure that they work effectively on the wettest of days. I found the front brake was so effective that there was a tendency to ignore the back brake completely. Of course, with the whole machine being so light, there is little momentum for the brakes to overcome. It is certainly nice to know that when you need to stop in a hurry you can do so with ease.

Riding position I found very comfortable and I liked being able to hold the tank between my knees. This is particularly reassuring when cornering sharply in high winds. The dual seat is well designed and the springing really a treat. The telescopic forks enable dips and bumps to be negotiated with maximum comfort.

The *Yamaha* does not incorporate any pretence at weather protection for the rider and, in bad weather, I quickly found that full waterproof garb was well worth having. Otherwise it's

mud from feet to knees and soggy clothes from there up. Still, one can't expect scooter comfort on light motor cycles without buying a lot of extras. I honestly think it better to invest in a set of lightweight waterproofs.

#### Good Value

Only complaints I have are pretty trivial. The model we had for testing needed slight adjustments to the gear rocker and rear brake pedal. The service manual is very instructive and includes a set of very useful "troubleshooting charts". A good set of tools and a spare plug are neatly stowed in the tool box. The spare plug is a good idea as no British made plugs are made for the *Yamaha*. Another point worth bearing in mind is that no British tyres are available for this machine as yet but negotiations are taking place with Dunlop's to provide this service.

The *Yamaha YF-1* is a sound little machine made to a very high standard and is certainly good value.

#### SPECIFICATION :

ENGINE: Rotary valve 2-stroke. Air cooled. Bore: 40 mm. Stroke: 40mm. Capacity 50 cc. Compression ratio 7.1:1  
FRAME: Backbone type monocoque. 1½-gallon tank.

SUSPENSION: Leading link front, swinging arm rear. Shock absorber front, Neidhart rear coil spring and oil damper.

TRANSMISSION: Wet, multiple disc clutch. Constant mesh 4-speed gearbox.  
WHEELS: Tyres, 2.25 × 17. Brakes, Internal expanding.

ELECTRICS: Flywheel/magneto. 6 volt lighting. 15/15W head, Tail 3/10W Flashers 8W. H/bar dipswitch and electric horn.

PRICE: £107 15s. 8d.

CONCESSIONAIRES: Mitsui & Co. Ltd., 117 Denmark Road, London, S.E.5.

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