

ROAD TEST REPORT

CREDETTE

49 c.c. SCOOTER

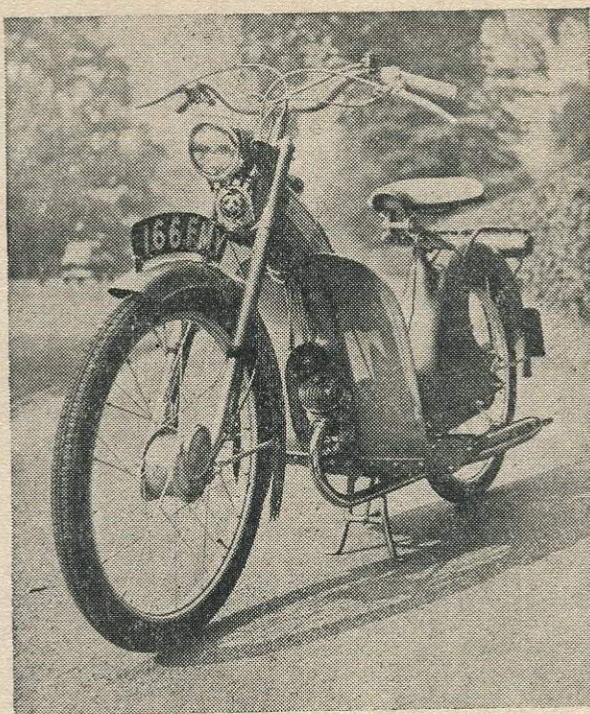
THE arrival of the continental scooters of the 50 c.c. class in this country has been eagerly awaited although the description of the machines as scooters may not be altogether accurate in view of the fact that they bear little resemblance to the vehicle types that have swept Europe in the larger classes. These new lightweights, which have developed logically out of the autocycles as the engine performance of the under 50's and the provision of two-speed gearboxes made the pedals unnecessary and as the demand for increased rider protection made itself felt, are catering for the same market as the conventional scooters, however, and belong in that class.

The 49 c.c. B.T.S. *Credette* is frankly a variant of the *Credette III* luxury autocycle. The pedals have been replaced by footboards, hand starting is provided that operates from the seated position, a considerable degree of machine enclosure is afforded and legshields are neatly incorporated in the design.

A very high power output for an engine of this capacity is the 2.2 b.h.p. of the JLO unit fitted. There is a two-speed gearbox controlled from the left handlebar twistgrip with a visible gear and neutral indicator. The clutch is of the dry multi-plate type and a shock absorber is incorporated. The fly-wheel magneto provides ignition current and also lighting current to the output of 17 watts.

The frame or chassis is a steel pressing and incorporates the fuel tank in the curved front down member and the deeply valanced rear mudguard at the other end. Front suspension is by telescopic fork with built-in rebound springs

A new vehicle type with a big future is this lightweight scooter.



and full width hub brakes are provided to both wheels. Wheels are 23in. x 2in., new here but already an established standard size on the continent.

On the Road

First, and last, impression on each trip with the *Credette* is sheer handiness. There is a naturalness about the riding position that makes the rider feel at one with the machine all the time and at all speeds. A soft and very well sprung saddle makes for comfort and the controls are easy and light in operation.

Engine performance is quite startling. The getaway in first gear is very lively and no careful handling of the clutch is required; a slight blip of the throttle and the clutch lever could be dropped casually. Top gear, moreover, can take over at any speed from about 5 to 15 m.p.h., so flexible is the power unit, and once moving no

downward changes are called for unless the machine is actually brought to a standstill.

By fairly hard revving 15 m.p.h. could be reached in first gear, while the maximum in top appeared to be in the region of 30 m.p.h., but the newness of the unit at the time of testing prevented a positive figure being obtained.

Hill climbing is first class, top gear being held for anything up to 1 in 12 with ease while first is intended literally for the climbing of mountains. The fairly wide ratio gearbox naturally made one feel that another gear in between would be handy as a gradient of 1 in 10, for instance, meant either slogging hard in top or revving mightily in first, but it must be admitted that neither choice seems to distress the engine in the least.

The wide hub brakes are more than ample for the needs of the machine, the front being smooth and powerful and the rear smooth and very powerful indeed. Unfortunately the toe operated pedal

of the rear brake is so positioned that a fairly long legged rider cannot work it without lifting the whole foot from the floorboard, which makes smooth operation difficult. Starting is as easy as stopping although unusual in method. A cross handle is set alongside the engine on the left side attached to a cable and bobbin. The pull is so easy that it is difficult to believe that the engine is really being turned over at all but it is, most effectively and the start is always easy and certain. There is a thumb trigger for operating the choke alongside the twistgrip throttle on the right handlebar.

Top marks must be awarded for steering and stability, both well above average by either autocycle or scooter standards. With the machine crawling at less than walking pace the feet stayed naturally on the footboards and a straight course was easily maintained. At the other end of the range the same positive feel is afforded when coasting downhill at speeds up to 40 m.p.h. Deliberate attempts to

invoke skids by locking the rear wheel at various speeds failed to do more than create slight tailwag.

Weather protection from the knee high legshields and footboards is very good. Clothes cannot get splashed and the excellent mud-guarding kept the machine itself clean. It is not expected, of course, that aprons and windscreens will be fitted to this class of machine as a rule but the idea would appear to be practicable if some sacrifice of performance were acceptable.

Summing Up

It was to be expected that so powerful an engine as the JLO unit used in this machine would make itself heard and felt. There is both mechanical noise and vibration, the latter most noticeable in a period just around 20 m.p.h. and smoothing out above that speed. There is so much power in the little engine that we feel a little could be sacrificed to smoothness and silence.

Apart from this, and a preference for a heel pedal to make rear brake operation easier, we have nothing but high regard for the *Credette*. It is, as this journal has pointed out before, a new vehicle type and cannot be directly compared with any existing machines on the British market. There is little doubt, however, that there is a large potential market for this class. It affords a really useful performance with a high degree of comfort and safety and at a very low cost both in purchase and running.

Autocyclists may deplore the "bigger and heavier" line of development, although in this case the machine is actually smaller than the average autocycle, but we feel that once the power output of the 50 c.c. engine and the incorporation of the multi-speed gearbox had made pedals unnecessary it became only logical that the enclosure and extra comfort of the light scooter should take their place.

We forecast that there will be many present cyclemotorists and autocyclists on *Credettes* next year.

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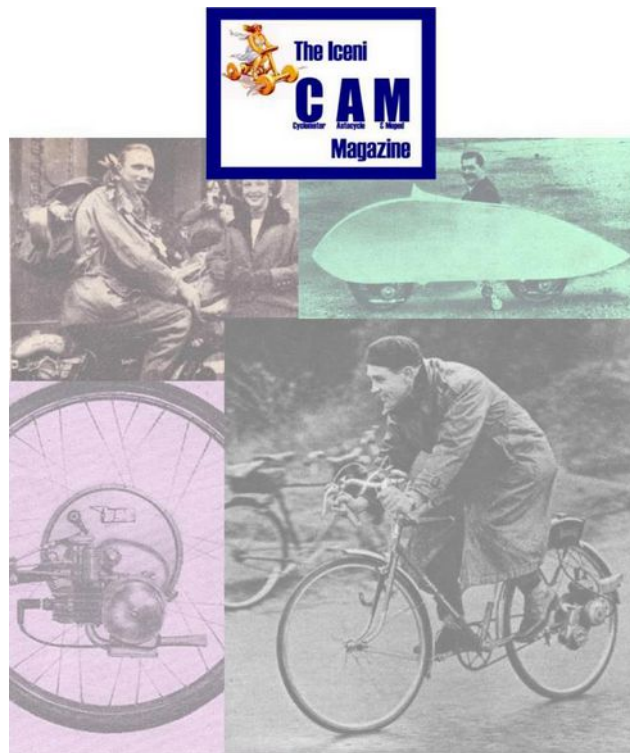
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