

FANTIC G.T.

bridging the gap between a moped and a motorcycle

You'd imagine that rude comments in road tests don't worry motorcycle designers at all. After all if they can sell their machines anyway why worry about a criticism from a road tester who probably doesn't like their PR firm. Well occasionally firms do take note of a road test comment, and on the even more remote occasion they may make some improvements to their production models in a year or so.

Fantic have managed to beat everyone at the improvement game. Before our road test of the TI appeared on the book stalls Fantic announced a new moped and guess what, it incorporates almost every improvement we would have liked to see on the TI, whilst keeping all the good features.

My own biggest moan about the TI was the smallness of the bike. Although I'm only five foot five the seat was too low and

not long enough for me to be able to slide back comfortably. The new GT uses what is basically the Caballero cross country frame which is bigger all round. Instead of being almost toy-like the GT has the feel and comfort of a full size lightweight motorcycle.

Seat height is still reasonably low at 30½ inches which seems to be a good compromise for most riders. The handlebars and controls are the same as those used on the TI which means they are also a reasonable compromise between being too high and too low and should be comfortable for most prospective owners.

The dual seat is now a real dual seat, I can see no reason why two people could not travel for short distances without too much discomfort. The only thing which could annoy some passengers is the position of the pillion footrests on the lower rear

suspension mounting bolts. This means that the passenger's feet are constantly moving up and down with the rear wheel, and the footrests are too far back to be really comfortable. Doubtless later production models will have the footrests mounted further

TI sounds like a road racer in full cry, and while the noise of a highly tuned motor may be music to some ears the general public don't like it. The GT has a much larger silencer which is a lot quieter. The exhaust note is still harsh and hard but now it

forward on the swinging arm.

Heart of the Fantic GT is the well tried and trusted Minarelli engine. The power plant looks the same as that used in the TI but there are in fact a number of detail modifications. Externally the only obvious difference is slightly different side covers which make the engine just a little narrower. Internally the compression ratio has been lowered from 12:1 to 10.2:1 and at the same time the power output is down to 6.5bhp at 8700 compared to the TI's 7.2 at 8000.

In practice the lower power isn't really noticeable, the bike seems to accelerate every bit as fast as the TI. This is probably due to the much wider power band. Certainly in town not so much use has to be made of the gearbox which means that the machine is very much easier to ride.

The engine modifications are almost certainly to do with the new exhaust system fitted. The

doesn't intrude on people and cause annoyance.

Whether it is the new exhaust or the slightly detuned engine nobody can tell but the new GT is much smoother to ride. Where the TI transmits a high frequency vibration which is noticeable through the handlebars the GT seems almost turbine smooth. Not having to use the engine revs so much during hard acceleration probably makes the bike feel smoother than it is, but over a reasonably long run I am sure the bike wouldn't be so tiring.

Rather than just build another moped Fantic designers have tried to produce a machine which can successfully bridge the gap between being a moped and a motorcycle. Quite a few mopeds can be converted into motorcycles, but the GT, arrives from the factory with a pair of footrests already in the toolbox. To convert to a motorcycle all the owner has to do is bolt on the footrests and buy a kickstart

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SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	Single cylinder two-stroke 38.8mm bore x 42mm stroke c.r. 10.2:1
CLAIMED POWER	6.5bhp at 8,700rpm
GEARBOX	Four speed
CARB	Dell Orto 19/19
IGNITION	Flywheel magneto
LIGHTING	6V 23W generator
BRAKES	118mm SLS drum
DRY WEIGHT	147lb



PERFORMANCE	
TOP SPEED	52mph
FUEL CONS. (HARD RIDING)	98mpg
SAPES PRICES	
pedal crank	£4.97
headlamp glass and rim	£3.02
throttle cable	£0.52
piston and rings	£5.96
kick start conversion	£18.35
retail price inc. VAT and makers delivery	£269
IMPORTER	Fantic Moto UK Fantic House, High Street, Romford, Essex

conversion kit. After notifying the right authorities the machine then becomes a real motorcycle.

Where most firms go wrong with their designing is that the converted machine still looks like a moped, whilst the GT has been laid out from the beginning to look like a motorcycle. They also leave large gaps where the tiny engine doesn't fill the large frame. The Fantic looks more together because the tank sits low and there is a large toolbox cum air cleaner box under the seat. The result is less vacant gaps and a far more motorcycle-looking appearance.

On the road the Fantic performs in much the same way as the TI model. Enough power to stay with normal traffic, good enough road holding to not get in anyone's way round corners and sufficiently powerful brakes to keep well clear of suicidal car drivers. At £269 including tax the Fantic is still one of the cheaper mopeds in its class, its just that now it represents even better value for money. The only surprising thing is that Fantic are still going to carry on producing the TI which is only twenty pounds cheaper. I know which one I would rather have!

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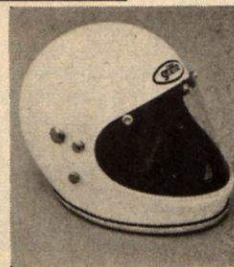
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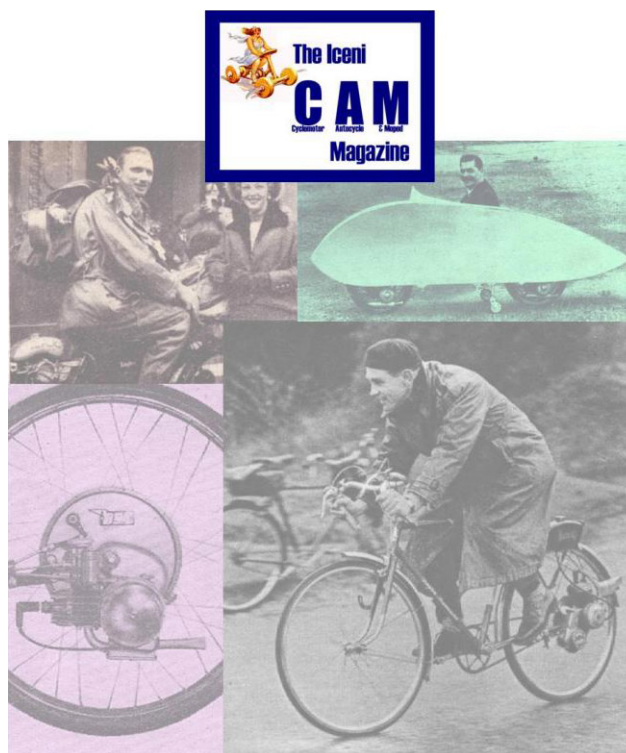


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