

Maintaining The Capitano

An easy-to-service Italian moped

DESPITE its impressive performance, the Kerry Capitano is of unelaborate design and construction, with the consequence that routine maintenance is quite straightforward. The majority of parts requiring periodical attention are immediately accessible and the carburetter in particular lends itself to speedy cleaning and adjustment. It can be detached from the engine either by loosening the clamping screw which holds it to the induction stub, or by removing it complete with the flange (take care of the sealing gasket) by which the stub is attached to the cylinder barrel. The latter course is advisable in the case of a major overhaul such as decarbonization.

Precautions

When the carburetter is free, the throttle cable and slide etc., can be removed; incline the carburetter to avoid bending and straining the throttle cable which does not have a great deal of room to move in. Precautions must be taken to protect the "innards" of the carburetter as the throttle slide, spring, and needle which are very vulnerable if left dangling down; a large piece of clean rag tied around them would be suitable. On the Capitano, due to its exposed position, the carburetter tends to collect a lot of road dust, and so it should be washed down thoroughly with petrol and a stiff paint brush before any attempt is made to dismantle it.

Two screws secure the top of the float chamber and under the latter is another gasket which should also be put aside.

At the bottom of the float chamber is a sludge trap which should be cleaned regularly to prevent fuel blockage. Inside the banjo union at the top of the float chamber is a small plastic and wire gauze filter (see diagram of carburetter) which will also collect sludge and requires similar attention. When re-assembling, take care to replace the tickler mechanism correctly.

To complete the overhaul of the carburetter, take out the needle jet and the main jet and clean thoroughly. The retaining screw at the base of the carburetter body must be removed before the needle jet can be reached. Any obstructions in the jet should be cleared by means of a bristle rather than a piece of wire as the latter may damage the soft brass. Wash also the air filter with clean petrol.

Faults

Tracing faults "by ear" is quite easy on the Capitano, on account of its open design. It is advisable to take advantage of this to check engine mounting bolts and other important points regularly. When testing this model, I found that a slight shuddering in the front forks when the front brake was applied was merely due to a loose fork crown cap. Early attention to these details will save more trouble at a later date.

Tyre pressures recommended are 25lb. and 36lb. for the front and rear respectively, but in dry weather, another 5lb. pressure in each will give better performance without noticeably affecting comfort. Weekly cleaning of the plug will also have a beneficial effect on the running of the machine; a wire brush does the job efficiently enough, but a proper plug cleaning machine leaves no doubt. Always check that the plug gap is correct after cleaning—it must be between .020 and .025, and this

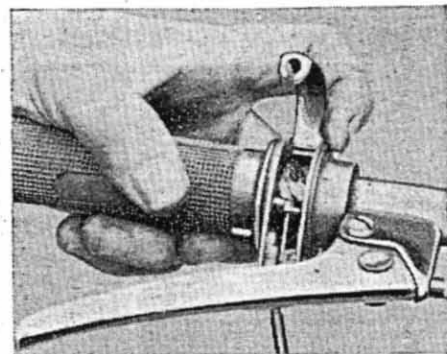
is something which is absolutely essential.

If the plug tends to foul up quickly, it may be that the fuel mixture is too rich; on the other hand, lack of power indicates a weak mixture. Although not as reliable a guide as for a four-stroke engine, the colour of the plug usually reveals whether the correct proportion of fuel to air is entering the cylinder. If the plug is extremely thickly coated with an oily carbon deposit, then the chances are that the needle needs to come down a notch, and if it is an orange shade, it should go a notch in the other direction. Ideally the plug should be a matt ebony colour, only slightly oily; the presence of whitish streaks may not mean anything, as modern petrol additives can cause this.

Owners of new machines may find that after 100 miles or so the engine will have loosened up and the carburetter needs re-adjustment for slow running. Before doing this, make sure that the engine is warmed up, and then very gradually screw out the slow running adjustment screw until the engine is just ticking over—the sound of the exhaust is the best guide for this.

Clutch Adjustment

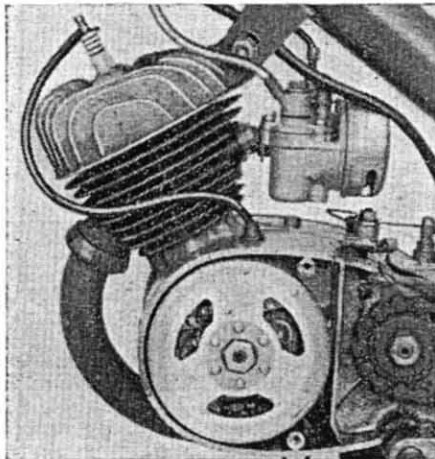
Any play in the clutch cable which can not be taken up by means of the cable adjuster can be eliminated by means of the clutch adjusting screw and this can be reached through an inspection hatch in the clutch cover plate. Remove the inspection cover and the



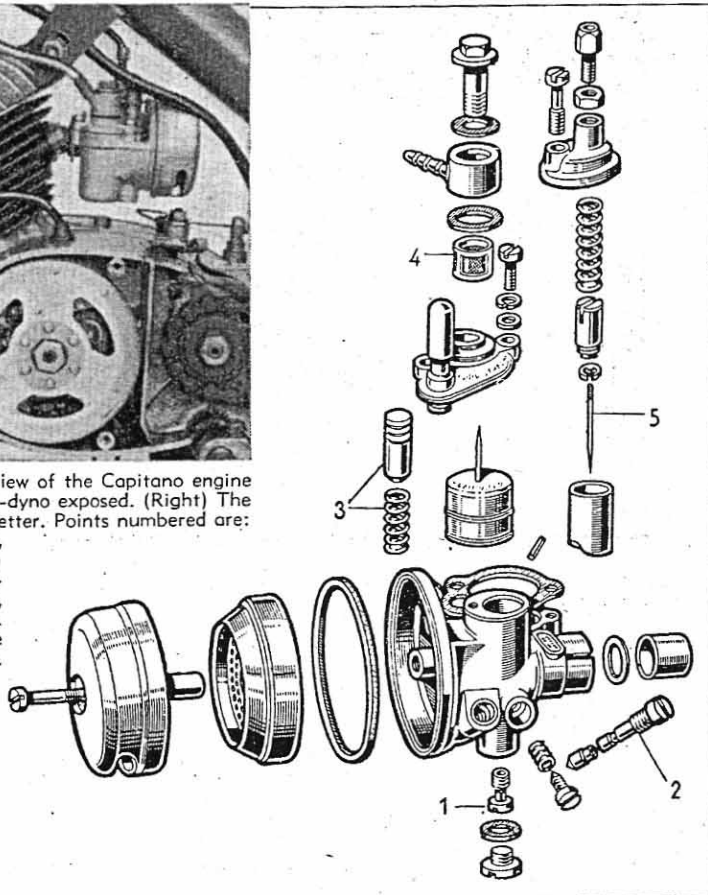
This twist grip allows easy access to the throttle cable.

outer clutch plate will be exposed; the adjustment screw is in the centre of this and is locked by a nut which must be loosened first. Gradually turn the screw in or out as required until the control cable has the correct length and then carefully retighten the lock nut. The amount of play at the clutch lever (and brake lever) in its normal position is a matter of personal preference but, generally speaking, about one sixteenth of an inch play is right.

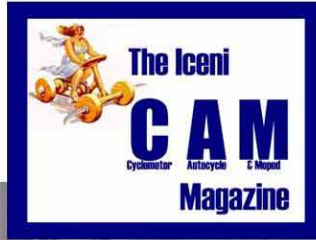
In view of the high speeds at which the Capitano is capable, lubrication is extra important, and if this is carried out conscientiously, little wear can take place in the working parts. The handbook for the Capitano contains instructions regarding points requiring lubrication, and recommended oils to be used. This and other intelligent maintenance will ensure that the owner of this machine will have many trouble-free miles of above average mopedding.



(Above) A side view of the Capitano engine showing the mag-dyno exposed. (Right) The Dell'Orto carburetter. Points numbered are: (1) needle jet, (2) main jet, (3) tickler mechanism, (4) filter, and (5) needle. All these require extra attention.



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