

## SCOOTER WEEKLY Road Test No. 17 MANURHIN

"Hobby de luxe"

Type: 74 c.c. Two-stroke

Price: £138 14s. 4d. (Inc. P.T.)

Concessionaires:

A.F.N. Ltd., Falcon Works,  
London Road,  
Isleworth, Middx.

### Specification

**Engine:** 74 c.c. fan-cooled single-cylinder two-stroke; 45-mm. bore by 47-mm. stroke; c.r., 6:1; claimed output, 3 b.h.p. at 5,000 r.p.m.; air cleaner on Bing carburetter.

**Transmission:** Automatically variable gearing incorporating centrifugally controlled clutch; primary drive by Vee-belt and expanding-contracting pulleys; countershaft drive to output sprocket; final drive by chain.

**Frame:** Single tube basic structure; pressed-steel bodywork.

**Wheels:** 16-in. spoked type with steel rims; 2.75-in. Michelin "Zig-Zag" tyres; 4½-in.-dia. brakes with full-width radially finned drum at front and offset drum at rear.

**Lubrication:** Petroil; test ratio 20:1.

**Electrical Equipment:** Flywheel generator with external H.T. coil; 4½-in.-dia. headlamp; rear light; horn; combined horn button with light and dipswitch on left handlebar; ignition cut-out with drive and idling control on right handlebar.

**Suspension:** Telescopic front forks controlled by hydraulically damped springs; rear springing by swinging forks with adjustable rubber buffers.

**Fuel Tank:** Under saddle, 1.5 gal. capacity; three-position tap, 2 pints reserve.

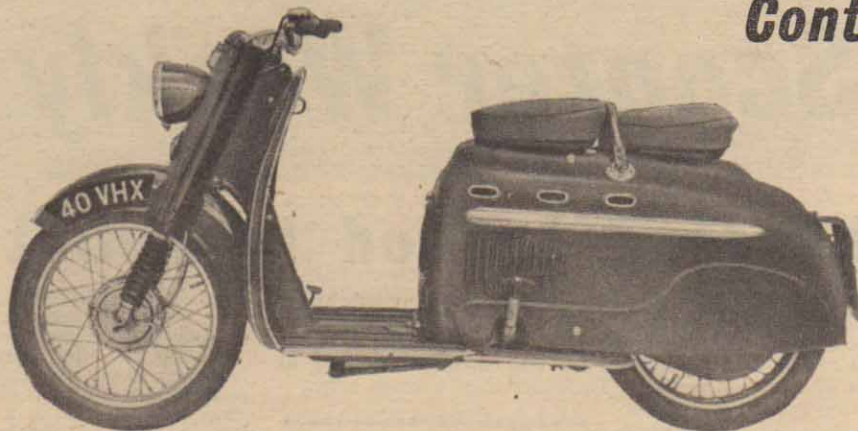
**Major Dimensions:** Overall length, 76 in.; width over handlebars, 24 in.; height over handlebars, 37 in.; seat height, 31 in.; certified kerbside weight, 182 lb.

**Colours Available:** Choice of red or blue for de Luxe model; green only for Standard model.

**General Equipment:** Kit of tools; hand-operated recoil starter; 60 m.p.h. speedometer; pillion footboards and seat; luggage hook; prop-stand; steering head lock; tyre pump.

**Annual Tax:** 17s. 6d.

# Automatic Transmission—Simple Control



FROM its general styling, it is obvious enough that the Manurhin "Hobby" was not designed just yesterday. In fact, it can be regarded as a fully developed machine: starting life as a German D.K.W. design and product and fitted with an automatically variable transmission, the "Hobby" was later redesigned to have an automatic clutch, while production was shifted to France. The name Manurhin, incidentally, is compiled from the words "Manufactured" and "Rhine" a simple aid towards remembering how to spell it!

It is interesting to note that the sheer simplicity of control of this machine has made it quite a favourite with self-drive hire concerns and we feel sure that its sturdiness of construction has also influenced their choice.

### First Impressions

The experienced scooterist is somewhat taken aback by the sheer lack of controls on the handlebars! There is the twist-grip for the throttle, a three-position "drive/tick-over/

stop-engine" switch, the front-brake lever and the combined headlamp and dip-switch.

The only other riding control is the rear-brake pedal. The finish is a trifle sombre, but it suggests good quality, and the condition of quite elderly machines seen on the roads shows that this is in fact the case.

The speedometer is well set up and fitted with an easily read "traditional" dial, while the handlebars are adjustable for grip angle. A brief-case hook on the frontal apron is noted with approval.

### The Stand—and Starting

The "Hobby" designers have decided that a prop-stand is the best possible wear and they have fitted a good one which is easy to operate and which holds the machine securely. The problem of wheel removal is simply overcome by laying the machine on its side.

The starting drill for the "Hobby" brings to light one point worthy of criticism: the location of the fuel tap. It is placed—we might say hidden—behind a trap door under the saddle nose in a position which almost ensures dirty fingers. A simple extension would overcome this easily.

The choke can be operated through the slots in the same trap-door without difficulty. From cold, one closes the choke, sets the handlebar engine control at the central position, half-opens the throttle and then pulls the handle of the recoil starter, located on the nearside of the machine. Two or three brisk tugs suffice to get the engine going.

With a hot motor, we found the choke still necessary, but with a closed throttle, otherwise the drill was as above. Once the engine was warm, the tick-over was perfectly reliable.

### The Engine

The outstanding features of the "Hobby's" D.K.W. engine are

its quietness of operation and, bearing its 75 c.c. size in mind, its acceleration. Our performance graph shows how quickly the speed rises from a standstill and this, of course, was of great use in traffic.

There is little more to say about the power unit: it was well silenced, did not vibrate and it did its job adequately and without any fuss whatsoever. The decades of D.K.W. two-stroke experience show their worth!

### Performance, Transmission, Brakes

With this machine the performance and the transmission are so closely bound together that they must come under the same heading. That the brakes, too, are concerned in this will be readily appreciated from the words which follow.

Belt drive gives noteworthy smoothness and the sheer simplicity of merely opening the throttle (handlebar control set full left) and gliding away was highly enjoyable, even if, at first, the experienced rider was left making a few scrabbling motions with his left hand for a clutch lever which didn't exist!

There is no jerking as the transmission changes gear for there are no definite gears to engage. What happens is that the diameters of the belt pulleys automatically alter under the combined influences of speed and load (e.g., hill-climbing or rapid acceleration) so that gear changing is an almost constant happening except when cruising at a steady speed on a flat road.

It would be so easy for a design of this nature to be not quite right that one marvels at the manner in which the "Hobby" transmission is so very right for all types of road condition. Starting away on a very steep hill with two heavy people aboard was perfectly simple, the only symptom of this maltreatment being slight groaning sounds from the belt as it tried (unsuccessfully) to slip on the drive pulley.



Noticeable by its absence is the clutch lever! The switch-like control on the right handlebar is the "drive/tick-over/stop-engine" device while matching it, on the left, is the lighting switch cluster.



The "Hobby" in its element. The automatic transmission and delightful handling of the machine made it ideal for traffic-threading yet it was equally pleasant on hilly or flat country roads. For teaching learners, it was delightful!

white, leaving the rider free from any thoughts of fused bulbs. On dip, the beam had a flat top. Control of the lights is from a switch on the left handlebar which proved to be slightly tricky to work for the first mile or so with gloved hands, but thereafter was operated without thought or difficulty.

The frontally mounted horn was not loud, but gained some advantage over its contemporaries by virtue of its unobstructed position.

**Accessibility**

There is little to worry the "do-it-yourself" rider about the servicing of this machine: indeed, the lack of a true gearbox makes it even simpler than usual and the use of belt drive means that there is little oil with which to contend when parts are being stripped.

The complete rear cowling

The general riding technique was to open the throttle and just leave it there, letting the transmission deal with hills. The engine has been designed to withstand this sort of treatment and is well cooled.

When the throttle is closed with this type of transmission the gear ratio either rises or stays in "top," so there is little braking effect from the motor. Thus, the rider must apply the brakes rather earlier than would normally be the case.

To cope with this situation and with the additional fact that the brakes must slow the engine as well as the machine, an extra powerful rear brake has been fitted. It will be noted that no separate front and rear braking figures are given on the accompanying graph and such figures would, for the reasons stated above, be quite unrealistic.

What matters is the overall stopping distance with both brakes and the manner in which the machine behaves on the road. On both counts the performance was splendid. Both brakes were

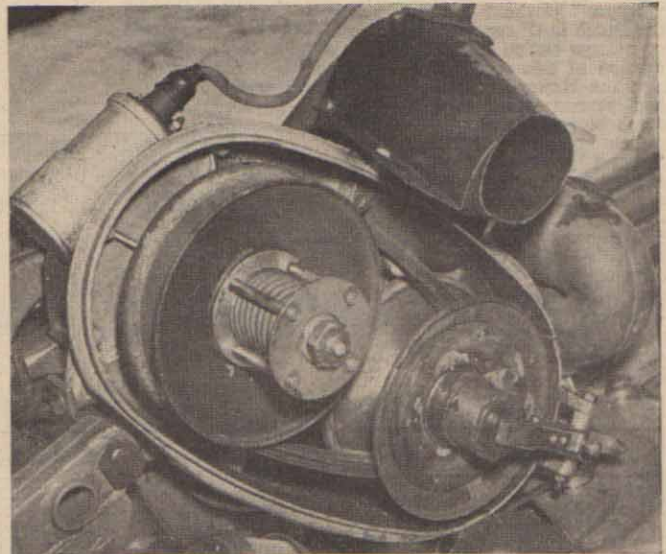
progressive and the front one was notable for being quite free from any trace of sponginess and its stopping power was directly in ratio to the amount of pressure applied.

The rear unit, as we have already said, is an extra powerful one as it has to cope with slowing the engine and this very fact made it smooth and eliminated all tendency to lock the rear wheel except at very low speeds. In fact, it is clear that the engine, transmission and brakes have been designed as a complete unit.

Fuel consumption was a regular 103 m.p.g., both in and out of town. The speedometer was 5 m.p.h. fast while the mileage recorder was "dead on."

**Comfort and Steering**

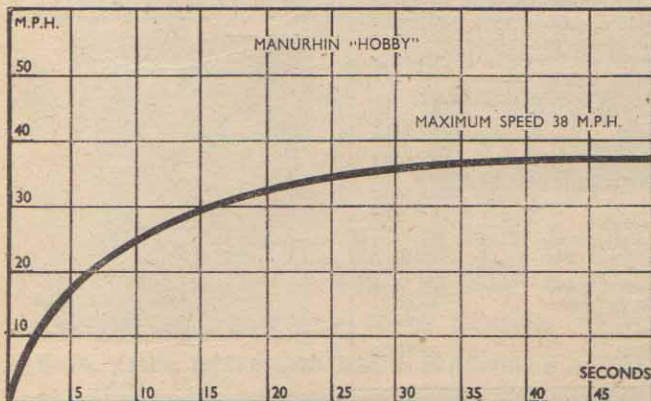
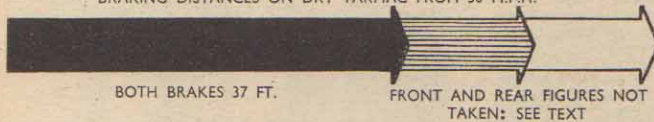
The twin seats of the "Hobby" have fairly stiff foam rubber in them and this material struck us as being exactly right for the job, holding the rider firmly in place and insulating him from road jars so that long distance runs could be completed with the absolute minimum of fatigue.



The secret of it all. Looking remarkably simple, yet obviously the outcome of considerable thought and experiment, this is the variable-ratio belt drive with its cover removed. The cone-faced pulley halves move inwards or outwards, thus altering the diameters upon which the belt runs.

**PERFORMANCE IN A NUTSHELL**

BRAKING DISTANCES ON DRY TARMAC FROM 30 M.P.H.



These seats combine the good attributes of both dualseat and saddles, each rider having his or her "own place" without any loss of "oneness." Foot room is ample for the largest clod-hoppers.

The springing was found to be very firm but as the saddles provided satisfactory insulation from road shocks this firmness was welcomed, for it gives the machine hairline steering on bumpy bends and it can be thrown about on wet or dry roads with full confidence. Quite a few racing motorcycles would be improved if they had such steering.

**The "Electrics"**

The lights fitted would be adequate for a machine capable of 60 or more m.p.h. Yes, they were that good; the beam had ample spread, range and depth and came up swiftly from tick-over speeds.

At high revolutions there was no sign of the light getting too

comes away easily and both wheels drop out after their spindle nuts have been slackened. We have mentioned that the machine should be laid on its side for this job and for some obscure reason, no petrol spills while this is being done. Since there is no battery, there is no acid to worry about.

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Combining as it does many of the virtues of the mo-ped, light motorcycle, scooter and expensive car, the Manurhin sits firmly on four stools, falling between none of them. Standard and de luxe versions are available (the former costing £122 8s. 8d. for a less-embellished finish, but nevertheless incorporating all the major chassis and mechanical virtues of the de luxe model) and both give the promise of enjoyable and reliable transport with a performance quite adequate for run-of-the-mill scooting.

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