



MOTOBECANE "MOBYMATIC"

The 1959 Version of a French Moped
with Automatic Gear and Clutch

INGENUITY can hardly go farther, now, than it has gone on the 1959 version of the Motobécane "Mobymatic" which, in addition to the well-tried automatic variable gear, is also equipped with the Dimoby double centrifugal clutch. This means, in short, that this geared moped has fewer controls than many a cycle, and only as many as, say, a tourer equipped with a hub gear.

Previous machines in this series have had only a single clutch, and have therefore been of pedal-starting type. This latest "Mobymatic," however, can be kick-started, providing the machine is on its stand. When the engine starts, the rear wheel begins to revolve. Thus before taking it off the stand the rear brake is applied, and thereafter the "Mobymatic" is handled like a normal single-speed moped.

With the engine running, get-away is simply a matter of opening the throttle. This done, the first-stage clutch takes up the drive, and the machine moves off. The second-stage of the clutch cuts in at about four or five m.p.h., and from there up to the 30 m.p.h. mark the gear automatically changes to make allowance for gradient and load. When the rider wishes to stop, he simply closes the throttle and applies the brakes, whereupon the "Mobymatic" obligingly comes to a halt with the engine ticking over quietly. This sort of thing, on a car, would cost £590!

Since my previous test of the "Mobymatic" several detail improvements have also been made. The top mounting for the engine has been completely redesigned, and now incor-

porates substantial rubber bushes. These have made an amazing difference to the smoothness of a moped which was, already, a very smooth performer. Now, the power is delivered without any noticeable vibration, giving a feeling of silky smoothness which is, of course, enhanced by the belt primary drive. The spring tension mechanism has also been redesigned, and now incorporates a hair-pin type spring.

The speed potential of the "Mobymatic" gives a sustained cruise of nearly 30 m.p.h. without any fuss whatsoever, while on down-

Many farms, like this one on the Burstow-Horley road, are delighted to sell direct to the public, and a "Mobymatic" can thus help pay for its keep in reduced household bills.

hill stretches I found that the machine would soar up to nearly 40 m.p.h. on the over-run. When tested, the moped was not fully run in. Even more performance could, therefore, be expected later.

Of course, the traffic manners of this French job are superb. To move away from lights, for instance, the rider merely opens the throttle wide, and gives a boost with the pedals to obtain really superb acceleration off the mark.

Much the same thing applies to hills. Bottom gear is on the highish side — an inescapable drawback with a gear of this type — and consequently pedal assistance is needed at points where, say, a three-speeder would be pulling hard in "bottom." On the other hand the pedals are well placed for such assistance to be given without tiring the rider, and on the general run of hills the "Mobymatic" is probably quicker than more conventional machines, since the unit can select just the right gearing for the circumstances.

No Exception

Economy, as previous tests have shown, is pretty well synonymous with Motobécane, and this latest version is no exception to the rule. However, the need for a reserve tap is reiterated.

No change has been made in the well-tried suspension systems fitted to this machine, and it is doubtful if any are needed. Neither front nor rear springing bottomed during the test, and both dealt with every sort of surface — from major highways to unmade roads — without fuss or complaint. Rider comfort was aided by the saddle springing, though I would prefer a wider and softer saddle top.

Besides being efficient, the "Mobymatic's" brakes have the desirable refinement of delicacy of operation, since both are hand-controlled. The cables can also be adjusted from the saddle — a very useful point.

In fact, I have only one major criticism to make of this excellent machine — the headlamp is, I think, not as powerful as one could wish, and it lacks any means of dipping. An improvement in this direction, added to the very real advances made already, would set the seal of perfection upon a machine which is already excellent, and which offers most remarkably good value for money.

CENTAUR.

Performance

Speed :			
Maximum 29 m.p.h. in 25 sec. from rest.			
Flying 1/10th. mile 27 m.p.h.			
Standing 1/10th. mile, 19 m.p.h.			
Acceleration :			
0-10 m.p.h.,	3 sec.	0-20 m.p.h.,	10 sec.
0-15 m.p.h.,	5 sec.	0-25 m.p.h.,	18 sec.
Economy :			
At 20 m.p.h., 205 m.p.g. At 25 m.p.h., 160 m.p.g.			
Hill-Climbing :			
Time for hill, 2 min. 5 sec.			
Pedal assistance required from 0.25 miles.			
Test hill 0.5 miles long; max. gradient 1 in 10;			
average gradient 1 in 16.			
Braking :			
At 20 m.p.h.	Front	Rear	Both
At 25 m.p.h.	18ft.	29ft.	14ft.
	38ft.	52ft.	30ft.
Pedalling :			
Comfortable pedalling speed, 8 m.p.h.			
Tester's Rating: easy to pedal.			
Tester's Weight: 200 lb.			

Specification

Engine: Motobécane two stroke; 39 mm. bore x 41.75 mm. stroke = 49 c.c.; c.r. 6 to 1; 1.35 b.h.p. at 3,400 r.p.m.

Gearbox: Infinitely-variable, automatic, expanding-pulley gear employing vee-belt primary transmission; automatic centrifugal-type double clutch operating at engine speed; chain final drive.

Frame: Welded-up from steel pressings; telescopic front forks; plunger rear suspension; integral fuel tank.

Tank: 1½-gal. capacity.

Lights: Built-in head and tail lamps, fed from Novi flywheel magneto-generator.

Wheels and Brakes: Both brakes 4-in. diameter; internal-expanding in full-width hubs; chromium-plated rims and spokes; Hutchinson 2.00 in. x 23 in. tyres.

Equipment: Electric horn; speedometer; centre stand; luggage carrier; tool box; tool kit; tyre pump.

Finish: Blue enamel, with chromium-plated details.

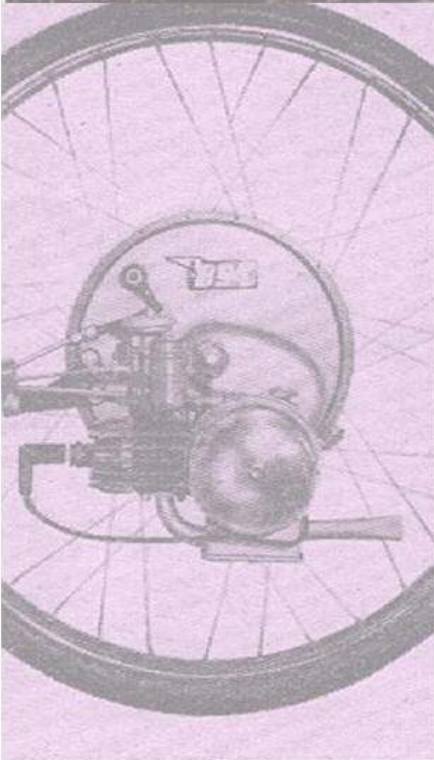
Weight: 62 lb.

Makers: Ateliers de la Motobécane, Paris.

Concessionaires: Motor Imports Co. Ltd., 158 Stockwell-road, London, S.W.9.

Price: £69 19s. 6d. inc P.T.

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