

## ROAD TEST REPORT:

# NORMAN "NIPPY III"

**N**EWEST of the new range of Norman machines for 1960 is the "Nippy III", the first single speed mo-ped to be marketed by this company. It has many components in common with the other two models in the range, including the main frame section, leading link spring forks, 23-inch wheels with full width hubs and neatly shrouded handlebars.

The most noticeable difference is that the single speeder is unsprung at the rear end and has an oval section tubular steel seat stay arrangement integral with the carrier instead.

Produced specially for the Norman Company and bearing their name, the engine is of Italian manufacture by MI-VAL of Brescia. It is a neat unit of conventional layout with its primary drive gear, clutch and pedal shaft built up in unit with the crankcase. The unit is not shrouded and everything on it is very accessible.

A neat appearance feature common to all three models is a white plastic moulding which forms the body of the headlamp, mounting for the electric horn and a non-rusting, unbendable front shield for the steering head and fork assembly. It is easily removable to provide



access to the wiring. Both mudguards are fully valanced and the front one extends noticeably well forward to eliminate any upward spray that might blow back on to the rider.

### Rideability

The charm of the single speeder is its casual and comfortable rideability and the new *Nippy* has this charm in full measure at anything over 4 m.p.h. A combination of low pedal gearing and a modest power output at very low speeds makes getting away not quite so casual as it is on current auto-clutch machines, but once over walking pace with the clutch right home the machine handles itself.

There are no gears to change and apparently no need for them as acceleration is very lively and the power curve of the engine provides plenty of pull all the way from about 500 to 5000 r.p.m. This absence of a gearbox means that there is no mechanical noise and gives a solid and direct feel to the transmission. Even on up grades, where the pedals have to be twiddled to get going, the engine takes over at about 8 m.p.h. and accelerates steadily up most normal main road hills.

Mean maximum speed on the machine tested was 27 m.p.h. and this is reached quite quickly and easily. On a slight down grade the

### SPECIFICATION

**ENGINE:** "Mi-Val single cylinder two-stroke, bore 38 mm. x stroke 42 mm., capacity 47.6 c.c. Compression ratio 6.5 to 1, output 1.5 b.h.p. at 5,700 r.p.m.

**CARBURETTOR:** "Dell'Orto" with air cleaner and choke.

**MAGNETO:** Flywheel "Ducati" with 6-volt/17-watt lighting coils, spark plug "KLG" F.70.

**TRANSMISSION:** Primary drive by helical gears through multi-plate clutch running in oil, secondary drive by single chain with

top run guard. Overall gear ratio 16 to 1.

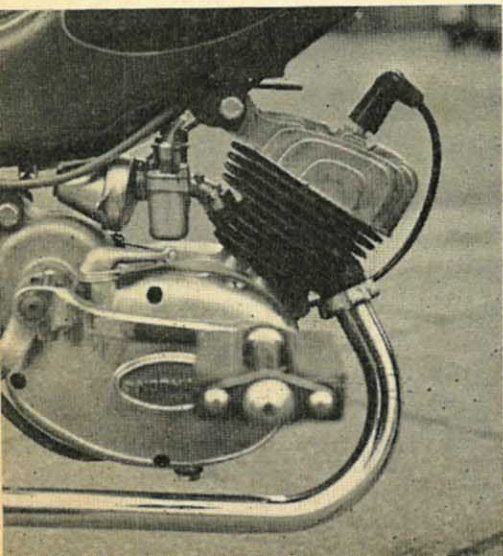
**FRAME:** All welded pressed steel with integral fuel tank. Pressed steel bottom link front forks with coil springs and rubber snubbers fully enclosed. Tank capacity 9½ pints. Fuel/oil ratio 20 to 1.

**WHEELS:** 23-inch x 2-inch "Dunlop" Autocycle tyres on plated rims, full-width hub brakes.

**WEIGHT:** 104 lbs. in road trim.

**PRICE:** £56 14s. (including P.T.).

**MAKERS:** Norman Cycles, Ltd. Beaver Road, Ashford, Kent.





revs continued to mount smoothly and over 30 m.p.h. was frequently exceeded for long periods during the test as it was actually smoother than the 25 to 27 m.p.h. range. If in no hurry a cruising speed of 20-22 m.p.h. cuts out all vibration and is very quiet indeed.

The standard of silence is indeed very good and even when the *Nippy* was being used in a way that lived up to its name in urban streets it was observed that interest was being shewn only by those of the public who saw it coming. No heads were turned by noise at any time.

Excellent standards of steering and general easy handling inclined us to use the performance to its maximum on fast trips through traffic. The brakes are well up to their work, the rear one being particularly efficient and very smooth in action, a point not always praiseworthy on back pedal brakes. Wet roads made no difference to

the safe road holding but the front springing seemed a shade too firm for cushion comfort. On the other hand it is impossible to clash the springs even on really big bumps and the forks appear to have been designed to provide an adequate safety factor for use on bad roads.

Comfort rating is definitely good, apart from that slightly stiff springing. Handlebars and saddle are adjustable and most riders will be able to get a position to suit individual requirements. All controls fall nicely to hand, including the combined two-way lighting switch, horn button and ignition cut-out on the left handlebar.

A sturdy tubular central stand is so placed that it holds the rear wheel firmly clear of the ground and thus facilitates starting by kicking down a pedal. The *Dell'Orto* carburettor has both tickler and strangler but we found that either served to guarantee a second kick start even in cold weather. Once

warmed up the engine starts at the slightest touch, either by kicking or wedalling away.

Lighting, from a 17-watt coil in the flywheel magneto, is good by mo-ped standards and the horn makes an audible warning noise over most of the speed range. Another point that attracts favourable comment is that the fuel tank has adequate capacity for a full gallon of petrol *plus* oil to be put in on top of the reserve supply and that the tap is sturdy, leak proof and accessible enough to be operated with a heavily gloved hand from the saddle.

#### Sound Investment

We find very little to criticise in the new *Nippy*. The very low pedal gearing makes it difficult to help the engine until the revs have dropped below the effective power range and we would prefer much

(continued on page 126)



# SMITHS

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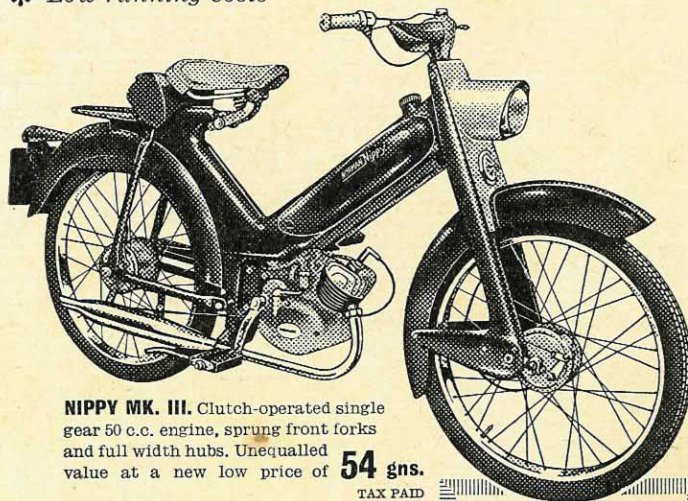
*Norman "Nippy III" (continued)*

higher ratios, but this is certainly a matter of individual opinion and Norman's tell us that their own checks on this ratio correspond to the engine makers ideas. The hand operated clutch is efficient and not critical to handle. Many riders prefer it to the automatic type so that the drive can be disengaged at will. The machine is simple to ride and easy to learn on.

From the business angle, the idea of using a single basic design for a range of three models obviously makes for economic production and cheap and efficient service. Engineering is sound and there is not a shake or rattle on the whole machine and it would appear to be a very sound investment for anyone wanting a practical and economical means of transport.

# Here it is! a NORMAN for only 54 gns.

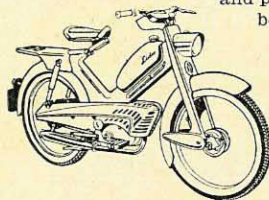
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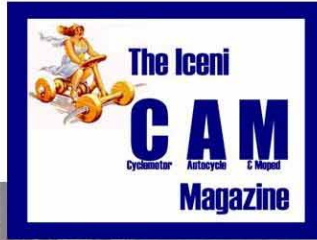
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