ROAD TEST REPORT:

Two-Year Test of a PALOMA DASL

JUST two years ago we road tested a *Paloma DASL* (Report published October 1959) and we liked it so much so that at the end of the test a friend of ours who had ridden it bought the test machine for his own use.

A year later he still liked it so much that he bought another of the same model and passed on the first machine to his student son, who is still riding it. Thus we have had the rare opportunity of following the career of an actual test machine in daily use over a period of two years and we feel that this is a report of unusual interest to other users.

Work Horse

Our Mr. A. Uses his machines as work horses with a daily job to do. In his case most of the work consists of short trips, one to five miles at a time, in a suburban area with some pretty steep hill climbing involved. Some long trips have been undertaken at weekends, London to Cambridge and London to Canterbury being typical examples. On these trips the very high cruising speed of the *Paloma* is much appreciated enabling 30 m.p.h. averages to be maintained. Mr. A. who has ridden most of the mo-peds that have been on the British market and made systematic comparisons of performances, considers that his mount is faster on both average and maximum speeds than ninety per cent of the others and he finds this factor well worth while both in saving time and in pleasure of riding.

Starting has always been good and is part of the general high standard of reliability that is the most appreciated feature of the machine and troubles have been few.

There was the accident of a front brake cable breaking and wrapping itself round the front hub. This strain broke the brake anchor plate stub from the fork tube and the whole front fork had to be replaced. A more intelligent or interested dealer might have had the damaged part re-welded but this was not even suggested. The clutch is now requiring attention (probably new linings on the primary pair of shoes) and a couple of new sparking plugs have been fitted during the life of the machine.

Maintenance When Needed

Neither Mr. A. nor his son finds the time and energy for routine maintenance and the general rule has been for them to keep an eye on condition and do what is necessary when the occasion arises. This is fairly common practice for mo-peds in daily use and the test under these conditions is a reasonable one.

The present owner cleaned out the silencer after 2,500 miles but his only regular maintenance has been cleaning the exhaust port about every 700 miles. This is to maintain top performance on which he is keen, but the first 2000 miles was covered without any attention to the engine at all and left it still running well. Belt and chain tensions are watched but not all that closely.

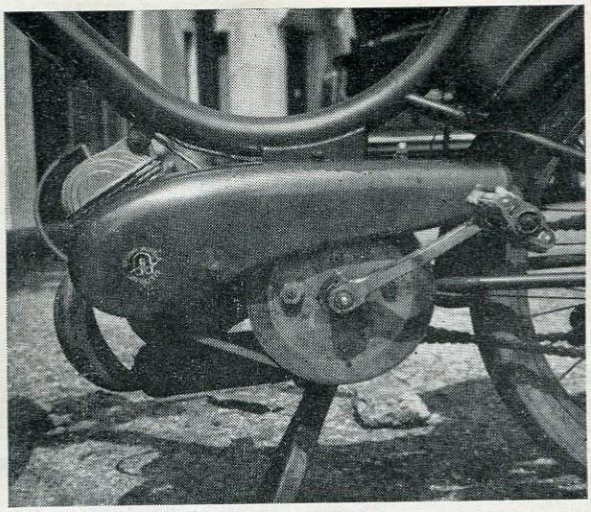
Belt adjustment produced the one technical design complaint, the movable lower engine mounting which sets belt tension. The owner says that the through bolt has to be tightened "to near breaking point" to keep the pull of the driving from shifting the setting.

External finish has suffered from all-weather use and lack of any looking after at all. The paintwork has stood up well except where actually bumped or scratched and small rust patches have formed, but the chrome work is no longer handsome and is past recovery except by re-plating. Like most two-strokes in Britain, this *Paloma* is slightly over-oiled on conventional dispenser mixture and some of the oil has spread itself over various parts of the machine, preserving the finish well at the expense, probably of some soiled clothing.

With something between 5,000 and 6,000 miles to its credit the machine has proved light on replacements. The original tyres are almost unmarked, chains little stretched and the original belt still serves. The sturdy carrier is not infrequently used and there is a lopsided single pannier permanently attached which does not appear to have bothered the rear wheel spokes as has happened on some other mo-peds. The brakes, which are still first class, have received nothing but occasional external adjustment since new and the breakage of the front brake cable was almost certainly due to lack of lubrication.

The single tube frame of the *DASL* model is strong and free from whip and the machine still steers hands off as well as when new. Comfort rating is high, largely because of the fact that both saddle and handlebars are adjustable so that a rider of almost any shape or size can make himself at home. The lighting, although not regarded as a strong point by either of the owners, has given no trouble at all and the original bulbs are still in use.

Two views of the very efficient Lavalette engine with automatic clutch Centrifugally operated weights bring a direct drive into operation at around 9 m.p.h.



Outside Service

Mr. A. and his son do not work on their machines for fun and are not equipped with tools and workshop so they have tried to use local servicing facilities as far as possible. These have not proved satisfactory with either of the two agents within easy reach. However, the concessionaires' spares service is good and the younger Mr. A. has made up his mind to do his own work in future rather than rely on outside service and he comments that the machine is of simple and straightforward design that presents no difficulties to an intelligent novice mechanic. In any case very little work is required, at the moment only the clutch overhaul and that after two years of continuous town riding.

Satisfied Customers

Both generations are more than satisfied and both say firmly that of all the mo-peds now available they would again choose *Paloma* if they were buying now. Reliability, comfort and sheer handiness are the strong points they like and they both find that the 36 m.p.h. maximum speed is something that is worth having on the longer runs while the hill-climbing power is very useful in their hilly home district.

An all round fuel consumption average of 120 m.p.g. is satisfactory in view of the high average speeds demanded and the major proportion of town work involved. The lack of a reserve fuel tap position is a point of criticism.

Maintenance is easy and the **DASL** requires little attention either to power unit or cycle parts. This machine has made a couple of well satisfied customers.

SPECIFICATION

ENGINE: "Lavalette" two-stroke single, Bore 40mm. x stroke 39.6 mm. capacity 49.6 c.c., compression ratio 6.1, output 1.8 b.h.p. at 4,800 r.p.m. "Gurtner" 12mm. carburettor with self-cancelling choke, air filter.

TRANSMISSION: "Multimatic" centrifugal clutch mounted direct on mainshaft. Primary drive by Veebelt to countershaft with disengaging switch for pedalling. Final drive by separate chains.

FRAME:: Single tube main frame with rigid brazed up rear end, telescopic front forks. 10½-pint tank front mounted behind seat tube with incorporated carrier.

ELECTRICS: VM/BB flywheel magneto with 6-volt, 106 watt lighting coil. Bulbs, 6-volt, 1-amp front, 12-volt, 0.4-amp rear.

WHEELS: Plated rims on alloy hubs with stainless steel spokes. 23-inch x 2.00-inch whitewall tyres.

PRICE: £55 2s. 10d. (Inc. P.T.).

CONCESSIONAIRES: Europa Imports, Ltd. Arkwright Road, Reading, Berks.

SCOOTER TOUR FOR THE B.B.C.

JUST returned from a Lambretta holiday in Nice, Bob Danvers-Walker, well-known radio and television announcer, is full of praise for this inexpensive way of touring the Continent.

Next February, in the B.B.C's "Holiday Hour" broadcast, there will be a recording of his trip with descriptions of the places he's visited and the people he interviewed.

"There's no more exhilarating way of travelling," says Bob, "But watch out for wind turbulence created by your luggage overhang and top hamper. Be careful of the varying cambers of the roads you'll be travelling on. Above all, don't attempt to do too great a mileage each day unless you're a seasoned Continental tourer."

Living in Ealing, Bob started his journey from Speedway Cars (Acton) Ltd., where he was given a "good luck" send off by Mr. Jack Hornsby (see photo).

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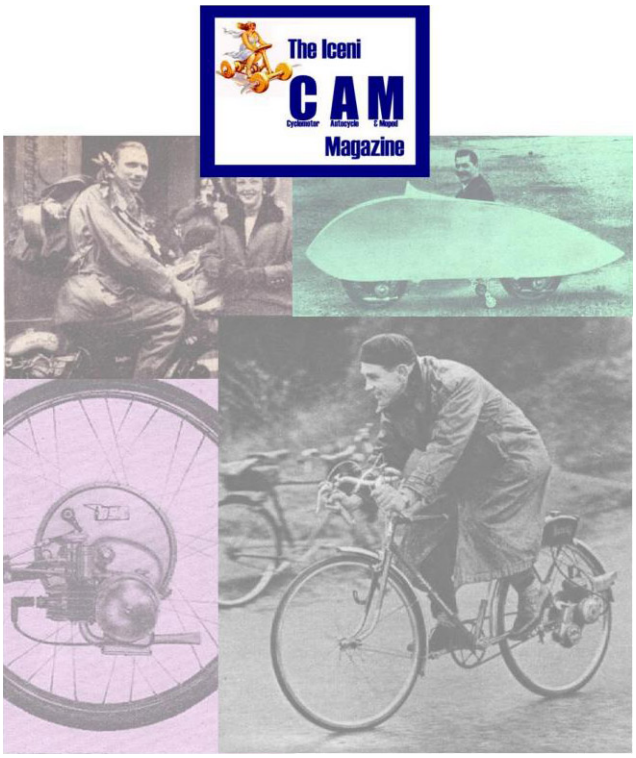

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