

(Left) Besides being neatly styled the fuel tank is easily removed from the frame. (Above) The headlock anti-thief device is a simple yet effective mechanism.

PEUGEOT STYLE

Centaur comments on some of the design features of this French moped

SINCE a moped is generally regarded as a utility vehicle styling does not play a large part in its manufacture—at least this was true several years ago. Engines were attached haphazardly to frames of tubular construction, while the tank, a hurriedly knocked-up item consisting only of flat surfaces, was hung somewhere above the engine.

This was in the days when there was not much competition and when price alone was the only governing feature. Nowadays, a manufacturer who wants to sell his mopeds has to pay some attention to what it will look like, with the result that the strengthened bicycle-type of frame has all but gone out of fashion.

It is, of course, impossible to talk of styling on a moped without relating it to practicality but nevertheless I thought there were several features of the Peugeot which scored on both. Because several attractive and interesting items are incorporated on the handlebars I began my examination there.

Neat Handlebars

Neatness on the nearside section of the bar is effected by mounting the rear brake lever as part of the dummy twistgrip giving clean, smooth outlines unlikely to catch on hand or glove. The choke, intended for operation by the thumb on the left hand is pivoted on a screw which goes straight into the handlebar. Thus a mounting clip is avoided. The horn button is the only intruder in this neat lay-out for it consists of a cheap cylinder held on by a metal strap with the wire zig-zagging away.

The other side of the handlebar is much neater since throttle twist-grip, front brake and decompressor lever are all part of the unit. I am glad to see that the sets of cables from both sides of the bars are held together by plastic sheathing, which tidies things up and protects the cables.

According to normal contemporary practice the speedometer is unobtrusively mounted in the headlamp shell. The latter is small and is held by rather tinny brackets. A larger nacelle arrangement would be a great improvement.

At first glance the forks appear to be rigid for there are none of the

chromium plated collars usually located at about the half-way mark on telescopes. They are therefore a pretty unobtrusive feature and if the strengthening bracket behind detracts slightly from their appearance, it is nevertheless a necessity and has been incorporated without any fuss.

One particular pleasing item is the front mudguard (and for the same reasons, the rear mudguard). Moped styling depends a lot on the shape and looks of mudguards, and the ones on the Peugeot are excellent. There are no apparent seam marks where different sections have been pressed together, while the lips are straight and clean. Simplicity has paid off in this department.

Both brake hubs are full-width which prevents the lopsided effect given by earlier types of drum which only protruded inwards an inch or so. Both hubs are also finned. I know this gives better cooling, but do the brakes of mopeds become so desperately overheated? Absence of fins would make the drums far easier to clean.

The engine fairings are without reserve the best I have ever seen. They are delicately radiused and give the impression of being made specially to cover the Peugeot's engine, unlike some other makes which sport fairings apparently hammered out from old biscuit tins. A slight flaw occurs on the nearside where, for some reason, the rear end of the chainguard is a separate piece of metal held rather crudely by two brackets. Luckily the point where the extension meets the engine fairing is well hidden by the rear damper.

Practical Carrier

Emphasis was placed on the practicality of the carrier in the road test, and it is one of the few standard carriers which has specific provision for the subsequent addition of panniers. The whole thing could have been done a little neater but it seems churlish to criticise when so much has already been done.

Apart from the normal accessories such as handlebars, wheel-rims and engine parts, the tank and the rear dampers are the only non-powder blue painted features. The former has in fact got chromium-plated sides which are slightly concave. I wondered whether the "dents" were designed to accommodate the rider's knees but in fact the knees do not come very near the tank. Just decoration for decoration's sake, and fairly negligible at that.

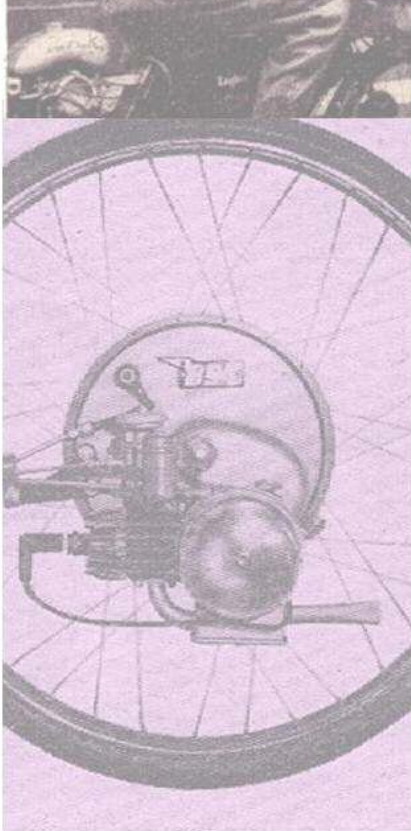
In common with other automatic clutch mopeds the exhaust system is commendably hidden. The exhaust pipe widens dramatically within an inch of the exhaust stub and the silencer is installed almost beneath the crankcase.

Which leaves only a couple of things to be examined. The saddle is of synthetic rubber "pan" design. Its generous lines do not add to the general appeal but familiarity with such saddles and the comfort they offer, more than compensate for this.

Finally the rear number plate. Unusual in that it sports a large circular reflector below the numbering, it could be immensely improved if the "hole" between the mudguard and the top mounting of the plate were filled in.

The Peugeot is not an aggressively styled machine and although it does not fall into the extreme utility category it is of fairly conventional outward appearance. Nevertheless it has a host of desirably neat and unobtrusive features.

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