

Centaur Road Tests the

PEUGEOT BBV

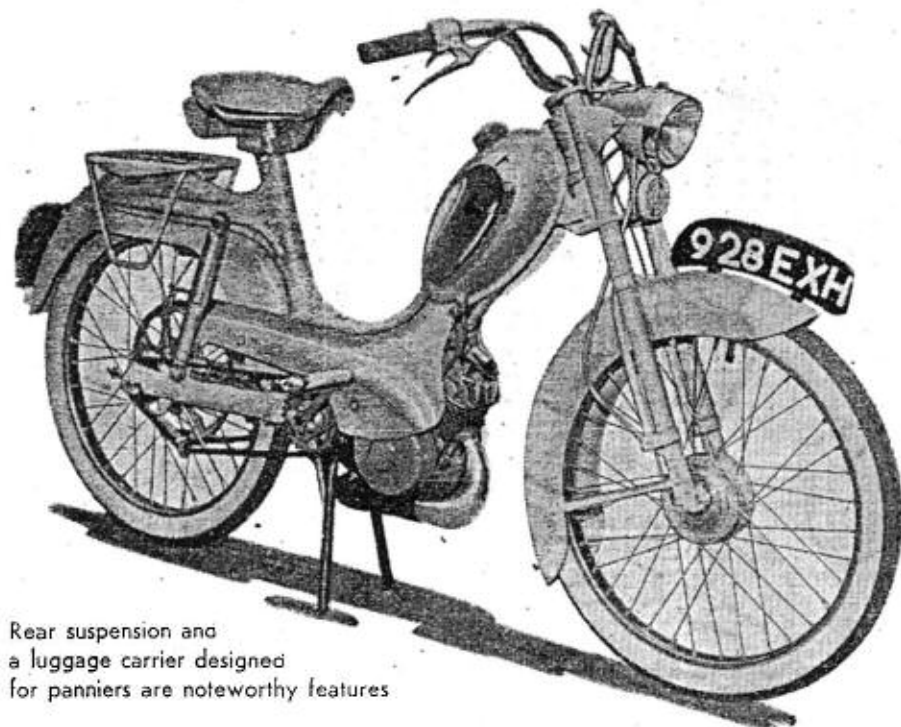
An up-to-the-minute moped from
a famous French manufacturer

WHEN scanning any road test report, it is the most natural thing on earth to glance first at the maximum speed. In our associate journals *Motor Cycling* and *Motor* these figures are set out prominently since performances vary considerably between different machines and the reader is eager to know whether if he buys vehicle A he will be able to out-accelerate Mr. Jones in his vehicle B.

This immediate interest is carried on into the moped world and whenever we answer a telephone or letter query on any specific make, the question "What is the top speed?" usually crops up. Naturally we give it because of this interest, but in view of the fact that moped top speeds in my experience vary only between 29 and just under 40 mph, we do not attach any great prominence to this fact.

Differences

Because the 50 c.c. engine in road-going trim has a pretty clearly defined ceiling when it comes to top performance, and because road tests seek to give the differences rather than the fundamental similarities between different machines, our reports are mainly concerned with these differences. All of which leads me to the latest machine in for test—the Peugeot



Rear suspension and a luggage carrier designed for panniers are noteworthy features

SPECIFICATION

Engine: Peugeot, single cylinder air-cooled two-stroke. Bore 40mm., stroke 39mm., = 49cc. Output 1.8 b.h.p. at 5,500 r.p.m. Compression ratio 6.4:1
Gear Box: Single speed with fully automatic centrifugal metallic powder clutch. Primary V-belt drive and final chain drive; overall gear ratio 1:13.55; pedal or kick starting
Ignition and lighting: Peugeot—flywheel magneto dynamo, output for lights 6v./17w.
Carburettor: Gurtner carburettor.
Frame: Open welded steel tubular construction; telescopic front forks, rear swinging arm suspension.
Fuel tank: Capacity 1.1 gallon.

Wheels and Brakes: Chromium plated steel rims with white wall tyres 23 x 2in., hand-operated front and rear brakes of internal expanding type, full-width alloy hubs with large braking surface.
Equipment: Central stand, tool kit and tyre inflator.
Finish: Blue (two tone).
Fuel Consumption: 155 m.p.g.
Weight: Approx. 88lb.
Size: Overall length, 5ft. 9in.; width, 2ft. 6in.; height, 3ft. 4in.
Concessionaires: Scooter Repair Service (Balholm) Ltd., 91 Nightingale Lane, London, S.W.12.
Price: £84.

BBV—a make which makes a welcome re-appearance in these columns after an absence of nearly three years

The Peugeot's top speed is just under 32 m.p.h., a level which might be improved after the engine has been fully run in. It is fitted with an automatic clutch, as are many other mopeds. Right then, what are the differences?

Seating Position

The first noticeable difference is the seating position. When I first bestrode this machine, I felt uncomfortably high in the saddle. This sensation lasted only a few seconds after which I discovered that the seating position is entirely suitable and, coupled with the unusually shaped upswept handlebars, makes the Peugeot suitable for lengthy distances.

The saddle is of pan design and has a rubber seat. It is rather unyielding but after a couple of hundred miles I imagine that anyone used to this saddle would find another rather uncomfortable.

Brake levers are nicely flared for optimum leverage without necessitating an enormous stretch for the hand. Whether or not there is any advantage in having a minutely curved section right at the end of the lever I do not know, but I find it comforting. Given longish fingers it certainly allows the brakes to be operated by single digits.

Decompressor (necessary when starting) and strangler levers are handily placed, the former being suitable for manipulation by the index finger on the right hand and the latter by the left thumb.

The engine pulls away very firmly from a standstill and when starting the engine for the first time I was taken unawares. I was standing on the pedals at the time and the firing cut in so quickly that I was all but tilted back over the saddle.

The braking is excellent, and what is more the effort is shared evenly between the two brakes. This desirable trait induces the rider to decelerate by squeezing on both levers gently instead of merely hauling on one and forgetting the other. From 20 m.p.h., it was possible to stop in 10ft. by applying both brakes firmly.

Firm Rear Suspension

Quite a number of "automatic" mopeds are not equipped with rear suspension, but the Peugeot is an exception. The positioning of the rear damper is unusual in that the bottom mounting is well in from the rear spindle and the upper mounting point is almost below the saddle. This results in firm rear springing, which if not super-comfortable certainly gives good cornering characteristics.

The front telescopic forks are also on the hard side although they do their job quite adequately. There is no pitching forward when the front brake is applied.

I regard the Peugeot's engine fairings as being the most cleanly lined I have ever seen and therefore the tank, which is a smoothed-off cylinder comes as rather a disappointment, slightly spoiling the general lines. However it holds a sensible 1.1 gallons which makes it possible to get in a gallon of petrol and the oil, without flooding fuel all over the place.

During the past few weeks I seem to have been extremely lucky with the weather and have never been out on the roads in anything more than a light shower. Thus at the time of going to press, the Peugeot's spray protection was untested. The front wheel is heavily shrouded and from past experience I would estimate it to be extremely effective.

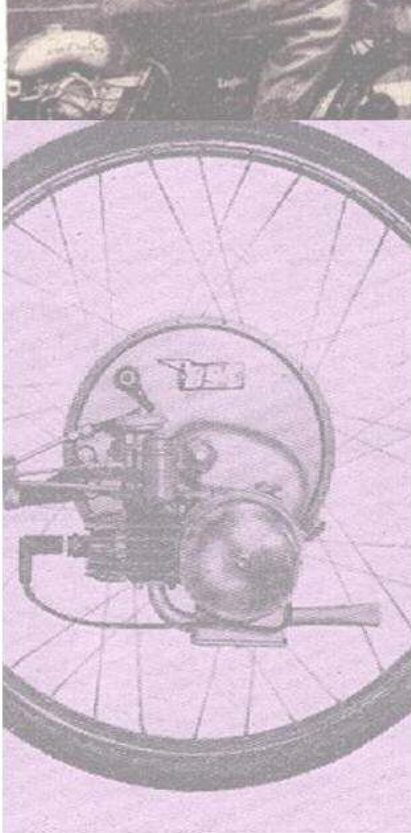
Various small points are praiseworthy. The control cables are all doubly protected by their normal plastic covering and wider gauge polythene tubing, at the point where excessive wear occurs—a foot or so from the levers.

Tools are supplied in a small rubber bag attached to the saddle.

Although small, the rear carrier is intelligently designed for it incorporates two vertical sections on either side of the wheel which form the basis of pannier carriers, as well as giving extra holding points for fastenings.

In brief, an enjoyable machine, which, unlike some mopeds with automatic clutches, is suitable for both crowded road work in towns and also for the wider, more open, spaces.

IceniCAM Information Service



www.icenicam.org.uk