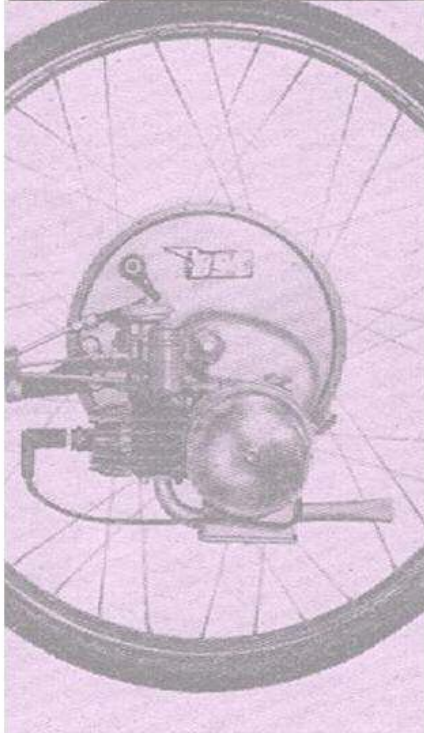


IceniCAM Information Service



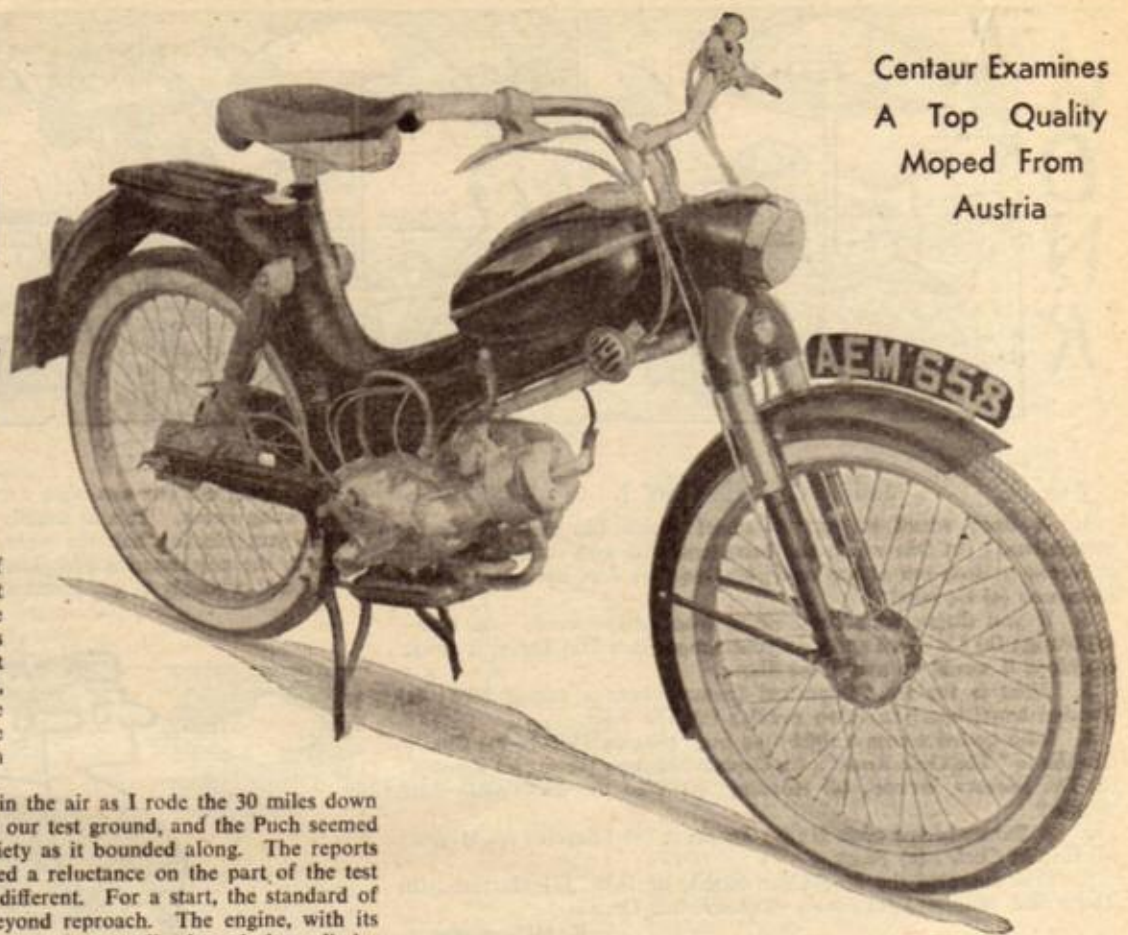
www.icenicam.org.uk

ROAD TEST REPORT

PUCH

MS 50 V

Centaur Examines
A Top Quality
Moped From
Austria



THIS seems to be the time of the year when we usually test a Puch moped—in early '58 we put the MS 50 L through its paces, and in spring last year it was the Puch Scooterette. Now, as the grass grows greener once again, I've been putting the question to the latest model from this famous Austrian concern.

Spring, in fact, was very much in the air as I rode the 30 miles down through the Surrey countryside to our test ground, and the Puch seemed to sense the general feeling of gaiety as it bounded along. The reports of the earlier models tested showed a reluctance on the part of the test riders to find fault; I can do no different. For a start, the standard of the workmanship and finish is beyond reproach. The engine, with its fan-cooling, is beautifully compact, and streamlined, and the cylinder itself is enveloped in a neat aluminium cover for the purpose of the forced cooling; and of course, it protects the rider from such as oil at the same time. The carburettor is fitted with an air filter of such disproportionate size that it is difficult to recognize it as such at first sight. Its effect, however, leaves no doubt at all, as it reduces the air intake to a whisper. Effective, too, is the small squarish silencer (not unlike an Olde Englishe bed-warming pan) slung unobtrusively under the engine.

The Puch is deceptive in size. It looks smaller than it actually is, as the dimensions prove. They are: height 39in., wheelbase 45.9in., max. width 24.6in. and overall length a little under six feet. Both saddle and handlebars can be raised or lowered to suit individual taste, and for really tall riders there are extra-long handlebars available which allow another six inches. The seat is of the "pan" variety and is extremely comfortable even on long journeys. It consists of two independent layers of rubber which give a soft cushioning effect, and the seat is also spring hinged at the front for further shock-absorbing.

What is not an illusion, however, is the fact that the Puch is low-slung. It seems to be built as close to the ground as possible, and, as is to be expected, the low centre of gravity brings first class road-holding and stability. During all the miles I rode the Puch, I felt that I was on

top, both literally and metaphorically. When cornering, I was able to hold it over with perfect confidence—and the 5.5in. ground clearance was ample on the sharpest of bends.

I could find no complaints with the steering either. In the first place the rider is positioned so that he has the best possible control, and secondly, the oil-damped front suspension, of unique design, is as steady as the proverbial rock.

The performance which the 2.3 b.h.p. engine produced was as impressive as its solid appearance had led me to expect. The gears allowed a tremendous amount of flexibility, and at no time did the engine show signs of distress. In bottom gear (engine to gearbox ratio 1 : 3.25) the machine will run along with the throttle closed at two or three m.p.h. without the engine showing signs of stalling and still able to pull away instantly. The maximum speed in this gear was 10 m.p.h. Again, in second gear (1 : 2 ratio) the engine was still happy at five m.p.h., able to accelerate rapidly from that speed; below five m.p.h., with no throttle opening, the jerks set in, but still the engine refused to stall. The maximum speed was 20 m.p.h. in that gear. In top gear (engine-gearbox ratio 1 : 1.26), 10 m.p.h. was the minimum at which the engine was happy, but again it could run lower without stalling.

The acceleration figures show that the Puch is no sluggard when the throttle is opened, and that extra low bottom gear gives a big boost at traffic lights when it is most needed. The gear change was marred slightly by an over-sensitive twist-grip which frequently refused to get home, particularly in second gear. Even after constant practice, I was unable to master this.

All this adds up to show how suited the Puch is to either city, where tortoise-style travel for long periods may be necessary, or hilly country where stiff gradients will be encountered. The forced cooling insures that the engine will not suffer from long spells of low gear work in hot conditions. On the hill climbing test, the Puch took the test hill in its stride without requiring bottom gear. On the steep 1-in-10 stretch I deliberately stopped and restarted—without any trouble at all. Starting, incidentally, was first kick almost every time, and any reluctance was quickly overcome with the use of the choke which is operated by a handy "dash-board" type lever at the handlebars. One point where I thought the Puch did not excel was its braking power. True enough, the brakes were adequate, as the figures in the data panel show, but in view of the better-than-average standard of almost everything else, I suppose I expected more.

A Bosch flywheel produces a 6v. 17w. electrical output which provides a good headlight beam and a reasonable horn note. Other equipment includes a first class centre stand, and a carrying handle situated over the engine at the centre of balance.

Specification

Engine: Two-stroke single piston with reverse scavenging, forced-air cooling by radial blower; bore, 38mm.; stroke, 43mm.; capacity, 49cc.; c.r. 6.5 : 1; output 2.3 b.h.p.

Carburettor: Bing, 12mm.

Transmission: Three-speed gearbox in unit construction with engine; roller chain from gearbox to rear wheel; multi-plate clutch in oil bath.

Tank: Capacity 1.21 imp. gall.

Wheels and brakes: Both wheels fitted with knock-out spindles and 23 x 2.25 white wall tyres; internal expanding brakes, front handlebar lever operated, rear back-pedal operated.

Equipment: Horn; centre stand; speedometer in headlamp; tool kit.

Finish: Black with chromium fittings.

Weight: 121lb.

Concessionaires: Ryders Autoservice, Knowsley Road, Bootle, Liverpool 20

Price: £82 10s. inc. P.T.

Performance

Maximum speed:
Flying 1/10th mile, 30 m.p.h.
Standing 1/10th mile, 17.5 m.p.h.

Acceleration:
0-10 m.p.h., 2.5 sec.
0-20 m.p.h., 6 sec.
0-30 m.p.h., 14.5 sec.

Economy:
At 20 m.p.h., 173 m.p.g.

Hill climbing:
Time for hill, 1 min. 39 sec.
Second gear engaged (from top) at 0.2 miles.
Test Hill 0.5 miles long, maximum gradient 1 in 10; average gradient 1 in 10.

Braking: Front Rear Both
At 20 m.p.h. 44ft. 25ft. 20ft.

Peddalling:
Maximum pedalling speed, 13 m.p.h.
Comfortable pedalling speed, 9 m.p.h. Tester's rating: Fair.

Tester's weight: 190lb.

Conditions for test: Damp road surface, 5 m.p.h. breeze along course.