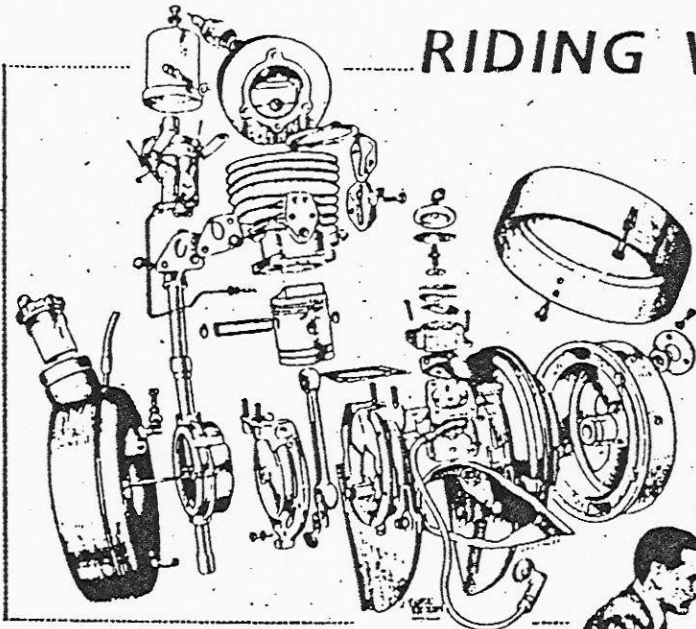


RIDING WITH ONLY 45 c.c.

"Motorcycling" obtains First-hand Impressions of the Velo-Solex Motorized Bicycle



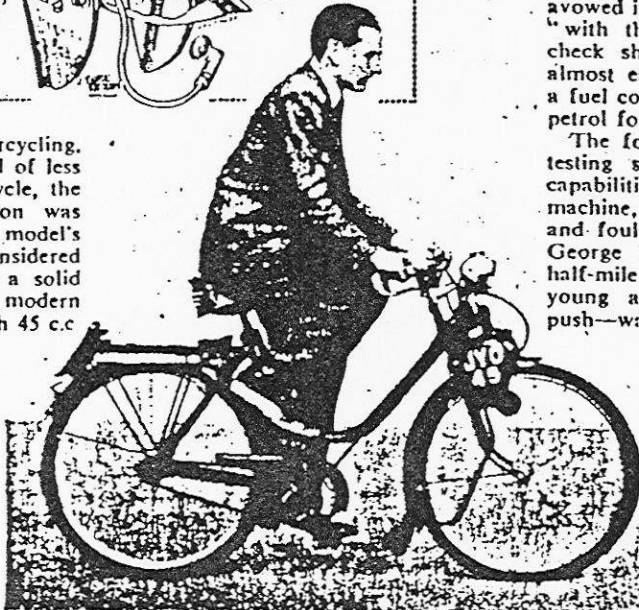
Innermost details of the 45 c.c. Velo-Solex two-stroke engine, showing the unorthodox, floatless carburettor and the tiny diaphragm fuel pump.

At Preston Park an escort of young cyclists on sports machines, firing questions, admiring the layout, and commenting on the abnormal silence of the engine, drew alongside. The clock of St. Peter's indicated 8.15 p.m. as the Velo passed, making the time for the 55 miles 4 hrs. 40 mins.

This average speed of 11½ m.p.h. would probably be equalled by a good touring cyclist. If so, then the makers of the machine have fulfilled their avowed intent—to provide a pedal cycle "with the work cut out." A quick check showed the petrol tank to be almost empty, which meant that, with a fuel consumption of 250.5 m.p.g., the petrol for the trip had cost 6d.

The following Sunday was spent in testing still further the hill-climbing capabilities of this fascinating little machine, and in trying—by fair means and foul—to induce roller slip. King George V Avenue in Hove—a steep half-mile ascent up which even the young and energetic cyclists usually push—was ridden non-stop, albeit by

IN the early days of motorcycling, when many machines disposed of less power than the modern autocycle, the run from London to Brighton was regarded as a measure of a model's capabilities. Thus it was considered that this journey would form a solid basis for the road test of a modern "ultra-lightweight"—the French 45 c.c.



On the right is seen the Velo-Solex costing under £50 with P.T., in action. The machine to which the power unit is fitted is a bicycle specially built for the purpose.

Velo-Solex motorized bicycle, which is to be produced in this country by Solex (Cycles), Ltd., 223-231, Marylebone Road, N.W.1.

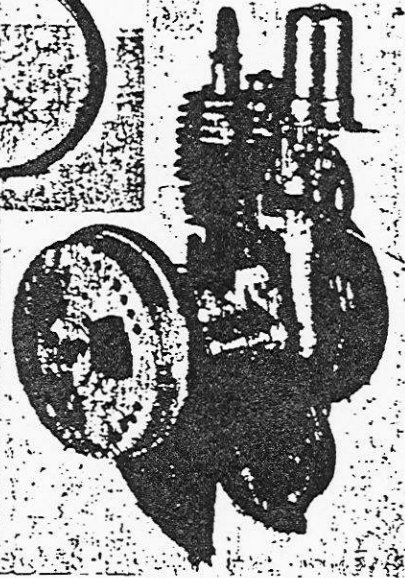
A sunny Wednesday afternoon saw the Velo-Solex setting off from Henly Hall, the depot of the London distributors. The remarkable degree of silence achieved was at once noticeable, and at times it was difficult to hear whether or not the engine was running. A chance to test the model's behaviour in London traffic was afforded almost at once, the little machine sliding effortlessly through four consecutive Oxford Street traffic jams. The steering was positive and light in operation, probably due to the well-known propensity of front-wheel drive for pulling the machine in the required direction.

At 5 p.m., just 1½ hours after leaving Henly Hall, a stop for refreshments was made at a Coulsdon pull-up café. Here the Velo-Solex attracted considerable attention from the drivers of various heavy lorries, who displayed interest in the potentialities of the marque. On the road again after a 15-minute halt, and a few miles farther south the writer overtook a homing pedal-cyclist.

"That's a natty gadget!" he exclaimed. "What'll it do?"

"About 16 m.p.h. on the level." "What!—without pedalling?" How much does it cost?" queried the cyclist. The information that the price, including purchase tax, is £48, was given, and, as one of the lesser spurs of the North Downs loomed up, the cyclist dropped behind, while the Velo-Solex chuffed up the slope—a few revolutions of the pedals near the crest sufficing to keep up the speed.

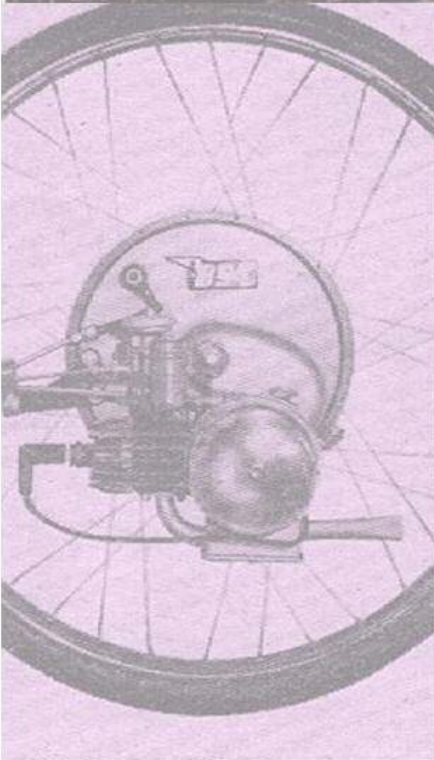
The light was failing at Sam's Half-way House, near Horley, and the Sussex border was reached by dusk. Crawley's quiet streets were left behind and the Velo-Solex commenced the long climb into Pease Pothage. Here early pedal assistance was given, but it was possible to sit at ease on the sprung saddle, with only one hand on the bars, while surmounting the hill. A relatively level stretch led to Handcross, where Handcross Hill necessitated the rider's assistance, after which occasional pedalling was called for in the undulating Wealden country. The passage through the South Downs to Pyecombe—where the model passed a cyclist pushing his mount when at only a third of the way up the rise—was the only part of the journey where really vigorous pedalling was necessarily resorted to.



The complete unit, showing the flywheel magneto-generator, which provides current for ignition and lighting, with the cover removed.

dint of hard pedalling. The only hill upon which the model failed was a short, steep climb in the same vicinity. Several muddy, unsurfaced lanes were traversed and even ill-treatment resorted to in the process. By letting go the decompressor too suddenly when starting—the rear wheel was made to rise clear of the ground, yet no trace of slip between the carborundum-faced roller and the tyre could be seen.

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