



THE NIPPY ULTRA-LIGHTWEIGHT 50 c.c.

ITOM

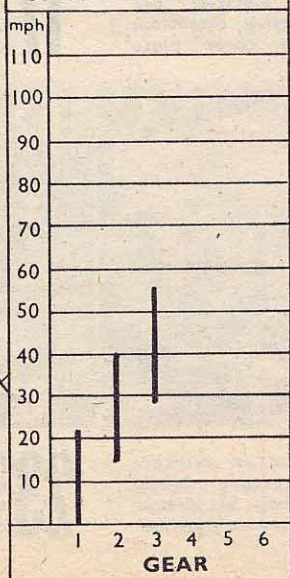


MOTORCYCLE MECHANICS ROAD TEST No. 55
 Vehicle Itom Competizione Price new £116-19-9
 Engine 50cc two-stroke air-cooled 3.2 b.h.p @ 8,500 r.p.m.
 Gearbox 3 speed twistgrip change
 Final drive Chain

GENERAL INFORMATION

Weight 106 lbs
 Saddle height 29 ins
 Turning circle 11ft 4 ins
 Is toolbox lockable No
 Is steering lockable No
 Fuel tank capacity 1 3/4 galls
 Reserve capacity 2 pts
 Oil tank capacity —
 Gearbox capacity 3/4 pt approx
 Fuel specified Super Petroil
 Overall consumption 112 m.p.g.
 Braking from 30 mph 33 ft
 Acceleration 0-~~40~~ ⁴⁰ mph 12 secs

SPEEDS IN GEARS



EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED

STANDARD FITTINGS Suede covered racing seat - chinrest, clip on bars
OPTIONAL EXTRAS Racing kit Four-speed gearbox

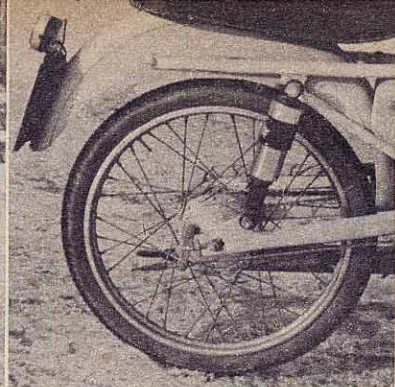
SPARES PRICES

Engine gasket set 3s 3d
 Set valves & guides
 Piston with rings 50s 0d
 Set of clutch plates 15s 0d
 Silencer 45s 0d
 Pr Exchange brake shoes 14s 0d

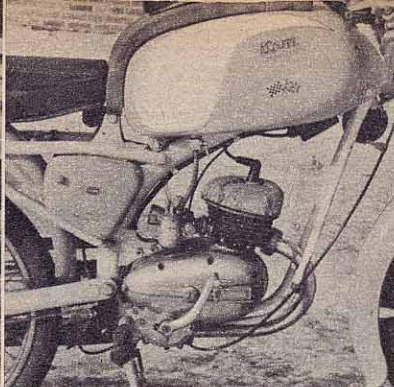
RATING CHART (points out of 10)	
Control positioning and adjustment	2
Instruments and equipment	1
Fuel reserve and tap operation	8
Ease of starting	8
Engine smoothness	8
Quietness of engine & transmission	7
Gearbox and clutch operation	8
Road holding	8
Braking efficiency	7
Comfort and ease of handling	4
Lighting efficiency	6
Stand operation	7
Tool kit	4
Overall finish	9
General performance & reliability	8
TOTAL (maximum points 150)	95



Rear of machine showing small rearlight. Note racing-type seat and low height of machine



Swinging arm rear suspension. Rod-operated rear brake which is easily adjusted at rear



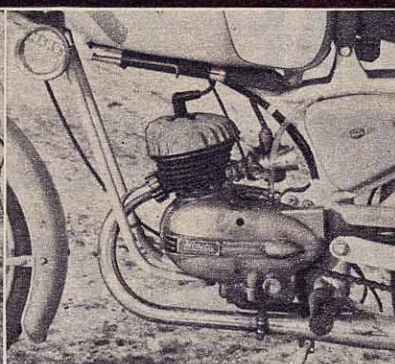
Engine unit of Itom showing racing carb. Also, the kick-start is kicked to the front



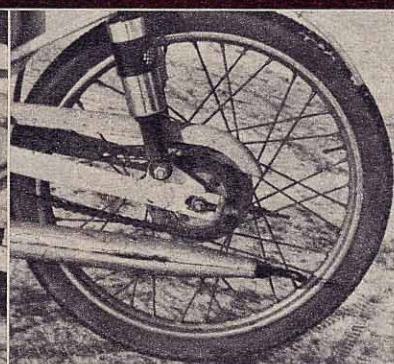
The front brake proved a good stopper. Other cable shown is the drive to the speedometer



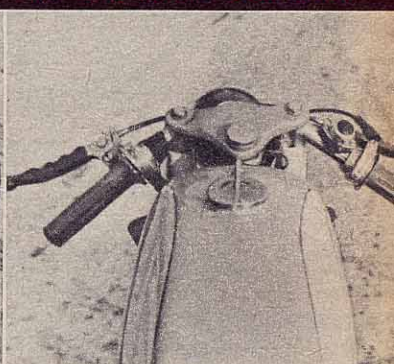
The mudguard moves with the wheel and valancing gives exceptionally good protection



Plastic breather pipe comes from gearbox. Choke slide is pushed in from side of carb.



The silencer works efficiently and directs oil from the rear wheel. Note small rear sprocket



Handlebar layout. Light and horn control on right. Note gearchange on the left bar

OVER 50 miles-an-hour, over 100 miles-per-gallon, first-class brakes and impeccable road-holding—all this from a motorcycle with an engine that has a bore not much larger than an egg cup. The Italians have long specialised in lightweight motorcycles and the Itom Competizione 50 c.c. machine is a good example of their skill.

This particular model is possibly one of the main instigators of 50 c.c. road racing, for many of the racing 50's seen around Britain's short circuits are modified versions of this motorcycle. We borrowed this Itom 50 from A. H. Tooley, Station Garage, Burnt Ash Hill, London, S.E.12, who are one of the largest Itom main agents and stockists of all spares for road or racing use.

First impressions of the Itom were its extremely lightweight sporty appearance, low riding position and simplicity of all controls. Ignition is by flywheel magneto with external high-tension coil and the 6 volt lighting is supplied direct by the 15 watt flywheel dynamo, as is the rather feeble horn.

Electrics are perhaps one of the weaker points on the Itom, but when one considers that a large percentage are stripped for racing anyway, then lighting is not so important. However, for road use, lighting could have been much better and a stoplight—which is really essential—should be fitted.

The frame is an excellent piece of engineering, incorporating lightweight telescopic front forks and swinging arm rear suspension. Despite its extreme

light weight, the Itom handled very well. Only in strong winds was there a feeling that the wheels could come unstuck from the road. This miniature motorcycle could be manoeuvred like a push-bike and at times even felt as though one were riding such a machine.

Starting the Itom proved no problem. It was a simple matter of switching on the fuel, tickling the carburettor for a few seconds, closing the choke slide and then prodding twice on the kick-start. There was no ignition key or switch and from the thief-proofing point of view this was a bad point. To stop the engine, a cut-out button is fitted to the underside of the headlamp.

Slipping the Clutch

With the engine running, first gear was selected with a scooter-type twist-grip gearchange. The machine has three gears, the ratios of which proved to be ideally spaced. However, the clutch had to be slipped slightly on take-up in first and could only be fully released when speed had reached about five miles-an-hour. In many ways, this is similar to the larger capacity sports motorcycles and the clutch stood up to this slipping treatment without trouble.

Maximum power from this tiny engine is available at about 8,500 r.p.m. and for the best performance it was necessary to build up the revs to near maximum in each gear before changing. The gearchange was clean and positive and the clutch only needed to be used when changing down through the gears.

Performance of this Competition Itom in standard trim is quite impressive. With

a small rider in prone position, maximum speed proved to be just over 55 miles-an-hour and although acceleration isn't out of this world, due to a three-speed box, a four-speed conversion is available from Tooley's.

Fuel consumption was excellent and we never returned less than 100 miles to the gallon. One important point was to see that only the best grade of fuel was used in this small, high-compression engine.

The riding position on the Competition Itom doesn't lend itself to to-and-from-work use. The clip-on handlebars and racing seat only really allow a racing-style crouch. Another point is that a pillion passenger cannot be carried on this particular model as no rear footrests are fitted and the seat would probably prove too small.

The lighting on the machine is controlled by a three-position switch on the handlebars. This gives main beam, off and dipped position and also incorporates the horn button. As mentioned earlier, the Itom has direct lighting with no battery for parking lights.

Braking on the Itom is very good. Both front and rear units are very well designed, although the rear seemed slightly more effective than the front. However, both were light and very positive in use and were perfect for the performance of the bike.

Throughout the entire test, the only trouble encountered was one of the gearchange cables parting. This was easily repaired and no other problems arose. The machine proved to be perfectly reliable and a very pleasant sporty lightweight to ride.

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