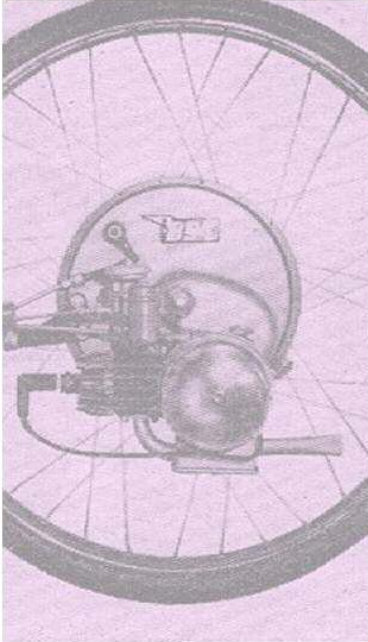
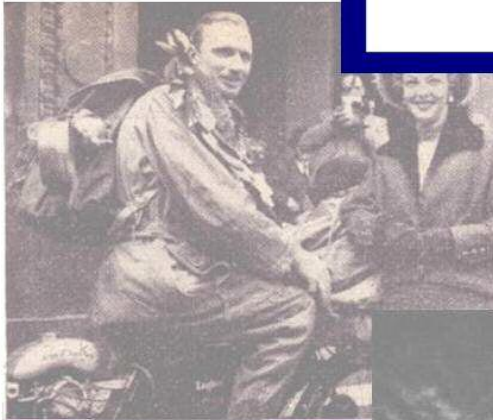


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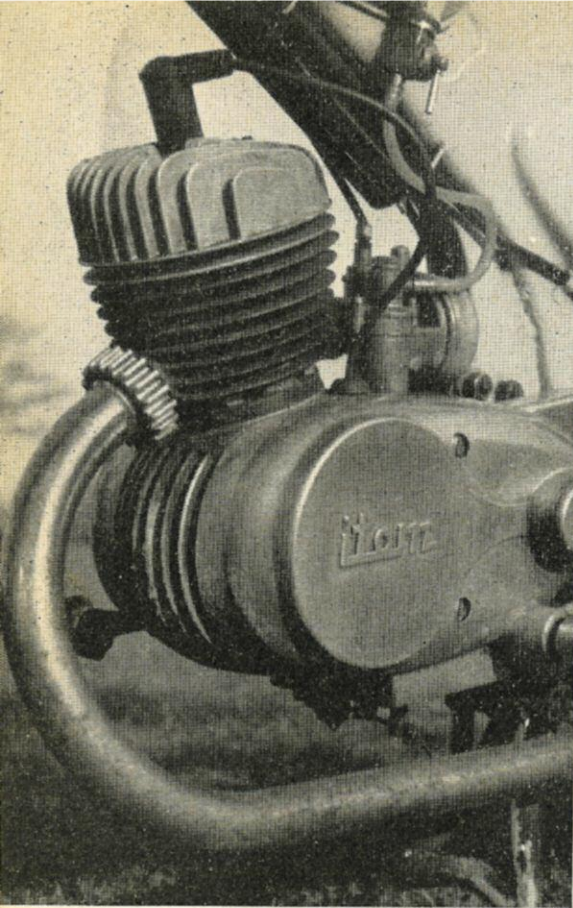


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ROAD TEST REPORT:

# The ITOM ESPERIA

An Italian machine of unusually high performance at a modest price



*The engine is the same as the ASTOR models already famous.*

THOSE riders who know that the Itom Astor light motor cycles make a practice of lapping race tracks at over 50 m.p.h. will expect something a little unusual in the performance of the *Esperia* mo-ped from the same stable and they will not be disappointed. Actually the engine of the mo-ped is the same as that of the standard model of the light motor cycle except for some modification of the crankcase to accommodate a two-speed instead of the three-speed gearbox. The other contribution and almost equally important, is that the wheels and brakes are the same on both machines.

The frame is of steel pressings welded up into a very rigid structure with integral 9-pint fuel tank. The front forks are also of welded pressed steel with leading bottom link suspension. The rear end is sprung on the swinging arm system with enclosed telescopic springs. A refinement unexpected on a modest priced mo-ped is paired tyres, ribbed front and lozenge tread rear, both 2-inch section on 18-inch rims.

Of 49 c.c., the engine is almost square with 39.5 mm. bore and 40 mm. stroke. Primary drive is by helical gears and final drive by chain

with top run guard. Both mudguards are deeply valanced, the rear one being part of the main frame. The headlamp is built into the front fork pressings and both saddle and handlebars are adjustable.

### Sheer Power

On the road one's first impression is of sheer power. The very positive location of the gear change twistgrip makes engagement of first gear easy and certain and the clutch takes up the drive smoothly without any need for gentle handling, then the engine takes over and revs up smartly to around 20 m.p.h. if the throttle is kept open. Actually there is no need for hard revving as a change up can be made at 10 m.p.h., and the lusty engine continues to accelerate the machine at a rate that few, if any, mo-peds can equal.

Maximum speed on the machine tested was 38 m.p.h., but this was not the limit of safe and comfortable revs. and higher speeds could be used on favourable grades. Perhaps the best feature of the power unit, however, is its ability to cruise indefinitely at around 30 to 33 m.p.h. without fuss or effort. Hill climbing is as much above the general run as the performance on the flat with a fine top gear performance for most main road hills and a really superb bottom gear climb that took everything we could find for it, including standing starts on one in eight, with ease.

Such performance standards naturally call for similar excellence in other departments and the *Esperia* meets all requirements in respect of steering, roadholding and braking. The standard braking arrangements in Italy for this machine are coupled cable-operated

brakes actuated by one hand lever, but the vagaries of British law prevent the use of this system here so the front brake is right hand lever operated while the rear has a heel pedal mounted so that it can be controlled with the foot in the normal "nine o'clock and three o'clock" positions. This arrangement has one advantage over the more conventional back-pedal braking systems in that the pedals themselves remain free to be turned backwards before kick starting.

Starting, by the way, is a first-time-every-time business by one firm kick on either pedal and, almost equally important, the tickover is dead reliable, quiet and free from fuss.

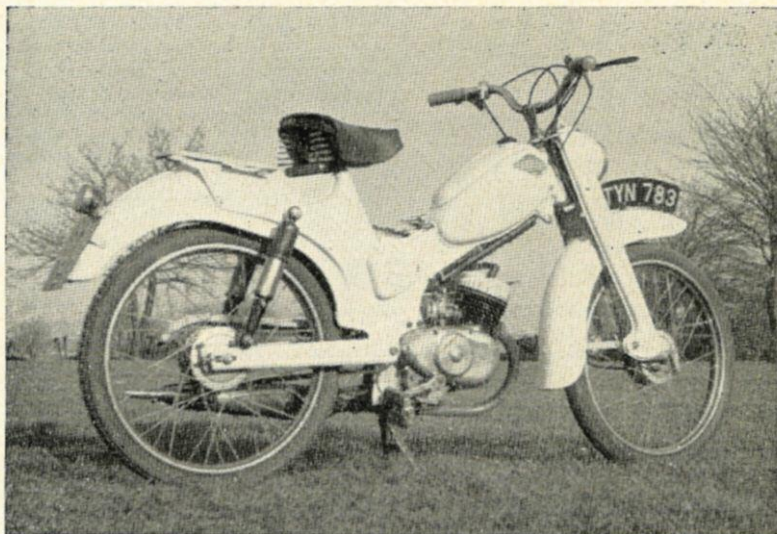
Steering and roadholding are also first class, notably so because of the high speeds of which the machine is capable. There is no weaving at 10 m.p.h. nor the slightest suspicion of dither at 40 m.p.h. and the brakes can be used really hard from any speed in safety. On bumpy roads the front fork suspensions clash somewhat with a heavy rider up but no discomfort is felt and roadholding is quite unaffected. The paired tyres undoubtedly help in providing the very accurate steering under a variety of conditions but most of the credit must be given to the good weight distribution and very rigid frame design.

### Not For Granny

Despite its excellent handling qualities and high factors of safety, the *Esperia* is not a machine for the purely utility rider who does not need its performance. The exceptional power output naturally presents problems in silencing and there is rather more noise than the average town machine should make. Much of this comes from the

intake and a larger air-cleaner/silencer would improve things considerably. Accessibility is very good but, conversely the exposed chain gets itself and occasionally the rider in rather a mess in bad weather. Essentially this is a sports machine, one that can travel long distances at high average speeds with real economy, safety and ease of handling as its desirable attributes. It handles equally well in traffic or on the open road and is ideal for real hard work in hilly country.

We found that the brakes on the test model squealed more than a little but this proved to be curable. The only other fault is the rather small and hard cycle type saddle fitted. When one considers its very modest price as against the sheer quality of its essential components, however, there can be no doubt that the ITOM factory have as good a winner in the *Esperia* as it has in its famous 50 and 65 c.c. motor cycles.



*Clean bold lines characterize the "Esperia". Both handlebars and saddle are adjustable for height.*

**SPECIFICATION**  
**ENGINE :** "Itom" single cylinder two-stroke, 40 mm. x 39.5 mm. 49.5 c.c., comp. ratio 7 to 1. Output 2 b.h.p. at 5,500 r.p.m., 2-speed gearbox with gear primary drive. "Dell'Orto" carburettor.  
**FRAME :** Pressed steel, welded with separate 9-pint tank. Pressed steel front forks with

bottom link suspension and built-in headlamp. Swinging arm rear with telescopic damped spring units.  
**WHEELS :** 18-inch x 2-inch with 22 x 2 matched tyres and 4½-inch full-width hub brakes. Stainless

steel spokes.  
**EQUIPMENT :** Toolkit in compartment in main frame, inflator, carrier and electric horn.  
**CONCESSIONAIRES :** Adimar, 61 Clapham Road, London S.W.9.  
**PRICE :** £71. 8s. 0d. (inc. P.T.).

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