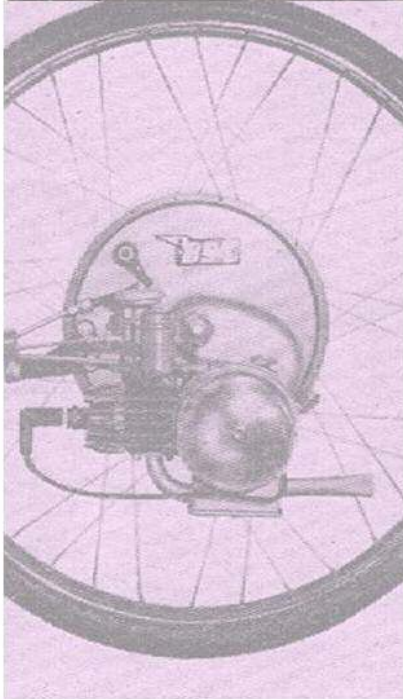


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ITOM ESPERIA

A high performance 50c.c.
Moped from a famous Italian
factory

THERE are very, very few machines of 50 c.c. which can produce so many superlatives as the Itom Esperia, the eyebrow-raising product of the Turin concern whose machines have virtually dominated British 50 c.c. racing, and whose tourers are bywords for power and reliability.

Outwardly, there is nothing in particular to distinguish the two-speed Itom Esperia from any other two-speeder. The engine looks conventional enough—very clean in its lines—while the pressed-steel frame with its swinging-fork rear end, and the pressed-steel swinging-link forks, are obviously sturdy, without being in the least bit unusual. But put this highly conformist engine into this highly conformist frame and the result is a moped which can produce performances which make the riders of bigger machines sit up and disbelieve their eyes.

High Cruising Speed

A top speed of 37 m.p.h. is, in itself, good. What is even better is the fact that the Esperia can cruise a couple of miles an hour short of this speed for as long as petrol remains in the tank, without evincing any signs of tiring. In fact, the harder the Itom is driven the better it appears to enjoy life.

Not, of course, that 35 m.p.h. cruising is obligatory for an Itom rider. I frequently kept a gentle hand on the throttle and enjoyed purring through our local lanes at no more than 15-20 m.p.h., at which speed the engine hardly appeared to be working at all. Yet when a 1 in 5 hill loomed up a twist of the right-hand grip sent it zooming up, half the distance being covered in top gear, and the remainder in the lower gear, in which the power is such that one is tempted to think that the

Spring Overhaul (contd.)

left or right then take it to a cycle repairer for new parts to be fitted.

Spin the wheels in turn and note their truth radially and sideways, and test for loose spokes. A few loose spokes can be tightened at home, but a wheel that is well out of truth should be handled by a professional. Swirl the hubs out with paraffin and re-oil, remembering that the left hand cone is the one for adjustment. Remove lock nut and cone; examine for wear. A uniform groove on the cones is not serious, but if the "casing" is worn through in places the hubs should be replaced.

Examine rim brake blocks for wear and replace where necessary. Adjust the brakes so that when the blocks are "off" they are only just away from the rims. Examine Bowden wire for broken strands. Hub brakes should be left alone if functioning properly. But disconnect the control wire and note the range of movement of the actuating arm. Refit to bring the brake on early without danger of the arm getting to the end of its movement.

Lubricate all bearings with thin oil through "interior" nipples so that the oil flows outwards to wash out the dirt.

H.H.E.



Clean lines, a powerful two-stroke engine giving above average performance and good handling qualities make the Itom Esperia an excellent little machine.

Itom could be coaxed up the side of a house! The power seems to come in as soon as the throttle is opened, and continues to come in, smoothly, right up to top speed.

This shows itself in the acceleration, too. It is an exhilarating machine, this Itom, and the manner in which it can be hurled through traffic is little short of amazing. With first gear in use, the machine responds to the throttle like a thoroughbred to the rein, and even London taxis have to give the Esperia best when it comes to covering the run from, say, Ludgate Circus to Paddington, in a hurry.

Solidity

Of course, all this performance would be useless if the cycle parts weren't up to standard. In the Esperia, however, they complement the engine perfectly, giving hair-line steering; great comfort; and a general feeling of solidity and "rightness" which makes the Itom feel 100 per cent safe from the moment one first straddles it. I, for one, cannot fault either the frame or the engine... save in the slight question of an exhaust note which might have come straight from a race-track! This stridency is the only draw-back to using the Esperia's full performance in town or—worse still—at night.

It is unduly loud, and could well be given attention in Turin.

Both clutch and gearbox seemed virtually indestructible, and needed no adjustment throughout a long and severe test. Occasionally, I found it a little difficult to avoid missing a gear unintentionally, as a result of a rather sloppy gear control, but if one kept an eye on this possibility the gearbox could be classed as one of the sweetest yet fitted to any moped of any nationality.

A performance such as the Esperia gives demands good brakes. The Itom has them. Though British laws have required the fitting of an independent means of operation for the rear brake, this is really only a "legal fiction," since both brakes are coupled, and all effective braking is thus done from the lever on the right handlebar. This is an excellent system, giving just the sensitive sort of control which is necessary, while enabling the brakes to be used to their full potential—which gives very smart pull-ups indeed.

Finally, lighting. This is direct, and it is very good. One obtains a long and penetrating beam, with a courteous "dip," and thus one can still use the amazing Esperia to the full, even at night.

CENTAUR.

Performance				Specification	
Speed:				Engine: Itom two-stroke; 39.5 mm. bore x 40 mm. stroke = 49.5 c.c.; c.r. 7 to 1; 2 b.h.p. at 5,500 r.p.m.	
Maximum, 37 m.p.h. in 29 sec.				Gearbox: In unit with engine; two speeds, with handlebar twistgrip control; gear primary and chain final drives; kick starting.	
Flying 1/10th. mile, 35 m.p.h.				Frame: Welded-up from steel pressings; swinging-fork rear; swinging-link front forks.	
Standing 1/10th. mile, 20 m.p.h.				Tank: 1½-gal. capacity.	
Acceleration:				Lights: Built-in lights fed direct from flywheel magnetogenerator.	
0-10 m.p.h., 2 sec.		0-25 m.p.h., 15 sec.		Wheels and Brakes: Both brakes 4½-in. internal-expanding in full-width hubs; coupled operation, with separate rear brake pedal; chromium-plated rims and rust-proof spokes; Ceat 2.00-in. x 22-in. matched tyres.	
0-15 m.p.h., 5 sec.		0-30 m.p.h., 20 sec.		Equipment: Electric horn; tool kit; integral tool box; luggage carrier; centre stand.	
0-20 m.p.h., 9 sec.		0-35 m.p.h., 25 sec.		Finish: Grey enamel, with chromium-plated details. Alternative schemes to order.	
Economy:				Weight: 96 lb.	
At 20 m.p.h., 155 m.p.g.		At 25 m.p.h., 120 m.p.g.		Concessionaire: Adimar, 61 Clapham Road, London, S.W.9.	
At 30 m.p.h., 105 m.p.g.				Price: £71 8s. inc. P.T. Speedometer £2 17s. 6d. extra.	
Hill Climbing:					
Time for hill, 1 mtn, 28 sec.					
Change top/bottom at 0.2 miles.					
Test hill 0.5 miles long; max gradient 1 in 10; average gradient 1 in 16.					
Braking:					
At 20 m.p.h.		Front		Rear	
At 25 m.p.h.		—		—	
At 30 m.p.h.		—		—	
Pedalling: Not possible.					
Tester's Weight: 200 lb.					