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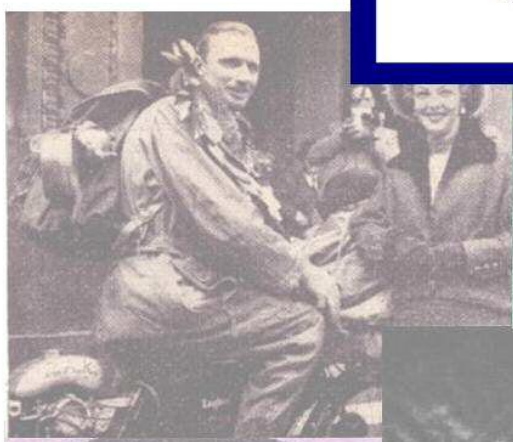
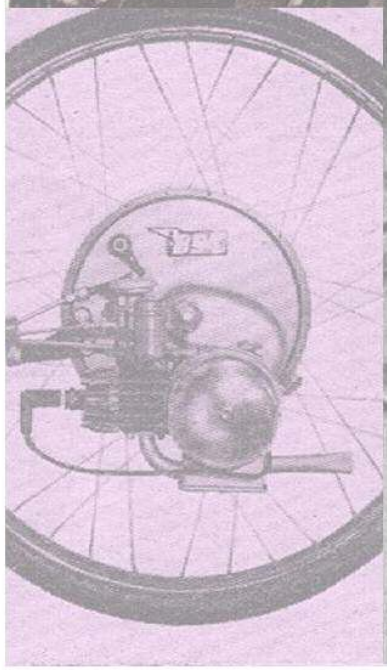
Cyclemotor Autocycle & Moped



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ROAD TEST REPORT:

ITOM ESPERIA

3-Speed has best of two worlds

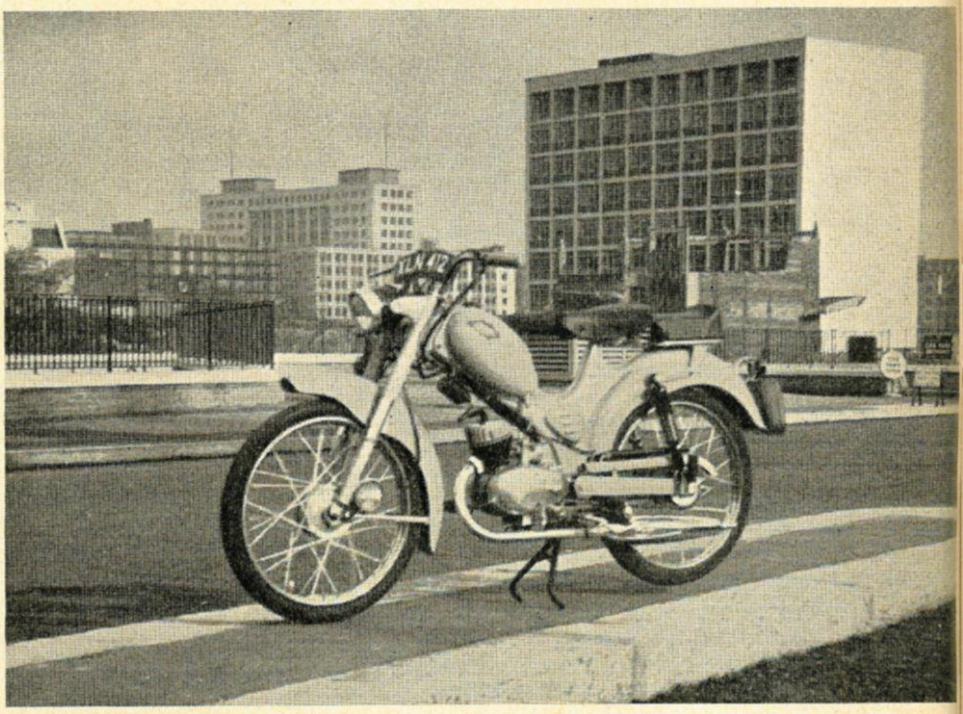
THE name of *Itom* in this country is associated mainly with the remarkable successes of this *marque* in 50 c.c. racing, a field in which both sheer speed and reliability play equal parts. But in fact there are also genuine utility mo-peds in the range and these also claim attention because they give a lot of performance for their money.

As a new recruit to the range, the 3-speed *Esperia* mo-ped claims the best of both these worlds as it is a mo-ped of very reasonable weight and price but it has the engine of the famous *Astor* light motor cycle in its original form, with pedals. The result as can well be imagined, is a mo-ped of quite remarkable liveliness and high engineering quality at ordinary mo-ped cost.

In outward appearance the new *Itom* differs from the existing 2-speed model most noticeably in that it has telescopic forks instead of the pressed steel, bottom link types and by the shape of the drive side of the crankcase. The frame is a rigid all-welded structure employing swinging arm rear suspension with oil-sealed telescopic spring units. Paired 2in. tyres are fitted to the 18in. wheels with full width finned hub brakes. Both mudguards are deeply valanced, the rear one being part of the main frame assembly and supporting a strong carrier.

On the test machine this carrier held a pillion seat and neat folding pillion footrests were fitted to the lower securing bolts of the suspension units. Thus equipped the machine is quite capable of carrying passengers and we understand that many buyers are asking for this type of equipment. Alternatively, of course, this carrier is suitable for quite heavy luggage as for touring or the carrying of tools etc.

Both handlebars and saddle are adjustable for height and angle so that any size and shape of rider can be comfortably accommodated.



The new Itom Esperia in the new London. The road is A.11 in the Barbican

The *Astor* engine is most noticeable for its excellent finish, both inside and out, and for the use of an external high tension coil mounted above the engine on the underside of the main frame beam. The power unit is of "square" dimensions and offers 2 b.h.p. at 5,500 r.p.m. with a 7½ to 1 compression ratio. Primary drive is by helical gears to the 3-speed gearbox which is twistgrip controlled. Final drive is by chain with top run guard only.

Flexibility

Naturally the performance on the road of this machine is very good indeed. Acceleration from standstill through the gears left most urban traffic standing and the top speed of a fraction under 40 m.p.h. on the level could be maintained almost indefinitely. The gear change has no positive stop device which makes it easier to select the right gear from a stop but means an occasional miss at Second on the way up. (For some inexplicable reason we never missed that change on the way down.) As with the motor cycle edition of this very efficient gearbox, there is no mechanical whine whatsoever from the indirect gears and very little from the primary drive. Indeed the standard in this direction is as good as anything we have ever tried.

Exhaust noise also is an improvement on the 2-speed *Esperia* we tried last year and at modest throttle openings is quiet. When the full power and revs of the engine are being called upon, however, a healthy purr (no more than that) makes itself heard.

A remarkable feature of the engine is its flexibility and the rider always has a choice of gears for any particular set of circumstances. One can poodle around quietly at 12 to 15 m.p.h. in Top or hold the throttle open to over 30 m.p.h. in Second to choice. Climbing is well above moped average and no test hill available could worry the machine in Bottom gear (24·8 to 1).

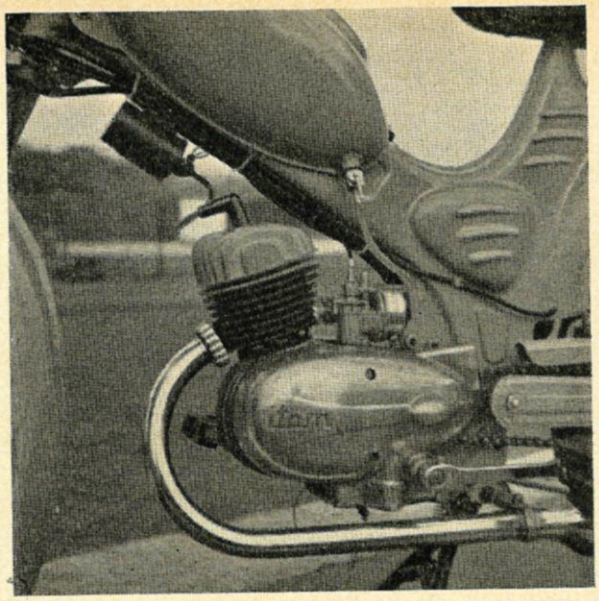
The telescopic forks provide little, if any, more movement than the bottom link type on the 2-speed model but the steering of the new model is definitely an improvement on all types of road surface. In this respect the standards are equal to those of the tubular framed motor cycles and hands off riding provided no thrills at all even over bumpy surfaces. The *Itom* is not a heavy machine and its ease of handling invited some throwing around in the course of the test

ing around in the course of the test without skids or falls being experienced.

Why Mo-ped?

We must admit that we can see no reason at all for the fitting of pedals to this machine as they are only used as kick starters and are not as stable and comfortable as footrests. Furthermore the heel operated rear brake could rarely be used to its high maximum efficiency because the movable pedal did not provide a firm fulcrum on which the foot could rock. The front brake is a very powerful stopper and did all that was called for in London traffic.

The general impression is of a very sound machine in the sport class but able to play a dual role for everyday utility riding as well as it is flexible enough to be ridden quietly and effortlessly in town whilst having the power and speed for longer range work as well. Apart from the brake pedal already mentioned and the rather exposed chain drive that can rub against the trouser leg when the machine is being parked, we find it hard to fault this latest *Itom* product.



Note the external H.T. coil and the fine finish of the engine

SPECIFICATION

ENGINE: "Itom" two-stroke single, 40 mm. x 39·5 mm., 49 c.c. compression ratio 7·5 to 1, claimed output 2 b.h.p. at 5,500 r.p.m.
TRANSMISSION: 3 - speed hand operated gearbox 12·6, 16·3 and 24.8 to 1, gear primary drive through multi-plate clutch in oil. Pedal gear in box with single chain drive.
WHEELS AND TYRES: 22in. x 2in., ribbed front studded rear tyres, 4½in. i.e. brakes.
ELECTRICS: Flywheel magneto with external H.T. ignition coil and 6-volt, 15-watt lighting. 15/15-watt headlamp electric horn.
FRAME: Pressed steel all welded beam type with integral rear mudguard and carrier. Swinging arm rear forks, telescopic front.
PRICE: £84 (including P.T.).
CONCESSIONAIRES: Adimar, 61 Clapham Road, London, S.W.9.