

Mobylette

de Luxe Mk. II

Centaur looks at a 1961 model from one of France's oldest moped manufacturers

Specification

Engine: Single cylinder, 2-stroke, with twin transfer ports; 39 m.m. bore X 41.8 m.m. stroke = 49.933 c.c. capacity; c.r. 6.5:1; output 1.7 b.h.p. at 5,800 r.p.m.; Gurtner B.10 carburetter.

Transmission: Engine-shaft mounted automatic clutch working on centrifugal system; V-belt primary and chain rear drives.

Frame: Pressed steel construction; rigid rear and telescopic front suspension.

Tank: 2-gall. capacity.

Wheels and Hubs: Full-width 3 1/2 in. diam. alloy hubs with 23 x 200 white-wall tyres and drum brakes, both handlebar operated.

Equipment: Tool bag and tools; centre stand; luggage rack, pump.

Dimensions: Weight 75lb.; height 3 1/2 ft.; wheel base 3 1/2 ft.; overall length 5 1/2 ft.

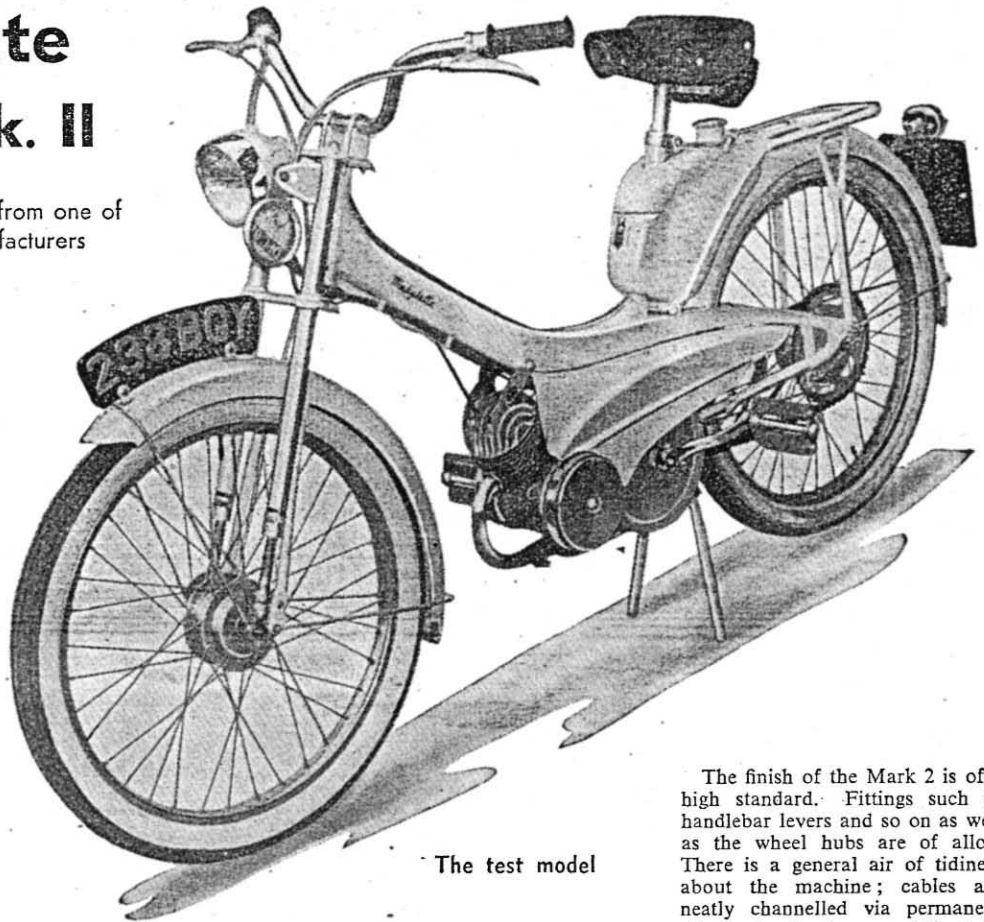
Finish: Cream with chrome and alloy fittings.

Concessionaires: Motor Imports Ltd., 7, Gresham Road, London, S.W.9.
Price: £55 19s. 6d. inc. P.T.

A NAME which has become synonymous with automatic mopeds ever since they were first introduced, the Mobylette family now numbers nine, ranging from the baby Standard model at £44 9s. 10d. to the daddy of them all, the Luxamatic with dual seat at £89 19s. 6d. Occupying third place in order of seniority is the de luxe Mark 2 model and it is this machine which we have chosen to test. It is not only representative generally of the whole range, but also of the class of automatic moped which is used in great numbers in this country and abroad by people requiring an efficient dependable form of transport without too many trimmings.

To keep the price of the de luxe Mark 2 (called hereafter the Mark 2) down to the £55 19s. 6d. mark, a fairly economical approach to design has obviously been necessary. The result is an unelaborate but perfectly adequate machine with a performance which, if not outstanding, is quite satisfactory and likely to meet with the requirements of all who use it.

The main advantage of the automatic moped over the moped with the gearbox is its simplicity: simplicity in design, handling and servicing. The design of the Mark 2 is simple indeed, but by virtue of its clean uncomplicated lines, it is a most attractive machine. A neat pressed-steel frame is used, and with the fuel tank situated out of the way immediately under the seat, leaving the down tube clear, there is plenty of leg room. Mounting and dismounting is unobstructed, a point which skirt-bound women will appreciate. The engine and rear chains are both shielded by two neat covers which protect the rider. Keeping it light has another advantage, for at 75lb., the Mark 2 is easy to pedal or lift around if necessary. The average-sized person will find the dimensions—height 3ft., wheelbase 6ft.—ideal, and for the larger rider there is a six-inch seat height allowance, and also provision for altering the angle of the handlebars, though not the height. The telescopic front forks and the well-sprung seat provide adequate insulation for the rider from the average road surfaces, particularly in view of the machine's top speed of 30 m.p.h. Really bad knocks got through, as they probably would with much more elaborate suspension. With a low centre of gravity, road holding is good while steering is nicely balanced, the comfortable 3ft. 6in. wide handlebars giving 100 per cent control. Being an automatic moped, there are only three controls on the handlebars—left hand side, the rear brake, right hand side, the front brake, and the twist-grip throttle control on the right too. A good point is the incorporation of the decompressor control with the twist grip; it is operated by rotating the twist grip in the opposite direction required for operating the throttle. The brakes were found to be completely capable of stopping the machine efficiently and smoothly at the speeds of which it is capable. The quick action was particularly approved.



The test model

The finish of the Mark 2 is of a high standard. Fittings such as handlebar levers and so on as well as the wheel hubs are of alloy. There is a general air of tidiness about the machine; cables are neatly channelled via permanent clips under the frame and the twin cables leading from the handlebars are sheathed in plastic tubing which not only keeps them together, but protects them from chafing against metal surfaces. The finish of the paintwork is of the same high standard. Other points noted indicate that the rider's point of view has been taken in consideration a great deal. For instance, the legs of the centre stand are sturdy and wide apart so that the machine is not easily knocked over. Also, although fitted with a return spring, the stand remains in place until pushed back even when the machine is lifted clear off the ground. The luggage rack is of sensible size and location.

On the debit side, it is considered that of all the possible places for the fuel filler cap, the most inconvenient one has been chosen. Topping up the 6-pint tank with a pipe was awkward, with a tin almost impossible. It is also considered that the lighting facilities were no more than nominal, although the rear light was quite satisfactory.

Operating the Mark 2 is fool-proof. It can be mastered in a matter of minutes by anyone who has ridden no more than a bicycle before. The automatic clutch ensures that even in an emergency stop the engine will not stall. With the engine already running, pedal assistance is not necessary for a standing start, but it is considered that in city traffic, acceleration from stand still is not quick enough, so some assistance would normally be needed. Extremely steep hills would also call for some pedalling, although this was not the case on the test hill which has a maximum gradient of 1 in 10.

Performance

Maximum speed:
Flying 1/10th mile, 30 m.p.h.
Standing 1/10th mile, 18 m.p.h.

Acceleration:
No pedal assistance.
0-10 m.p.h., 5 sec.
0-20 m.p.h., 14.5 sec.
0-30 m.p.h., 21.6 sec.

Economy:
At 20 m.p.h., 151.4 m.p.g.
At 30 m.p.h., 131.5 m.p.g.

Hill climbing:
Time for hill: 1 min. 42.5 sec.
No pedal assistance.
Test hill 0.5 miles long; max. grad. 1 in 10; average grad. 1 in 16.

Braking:

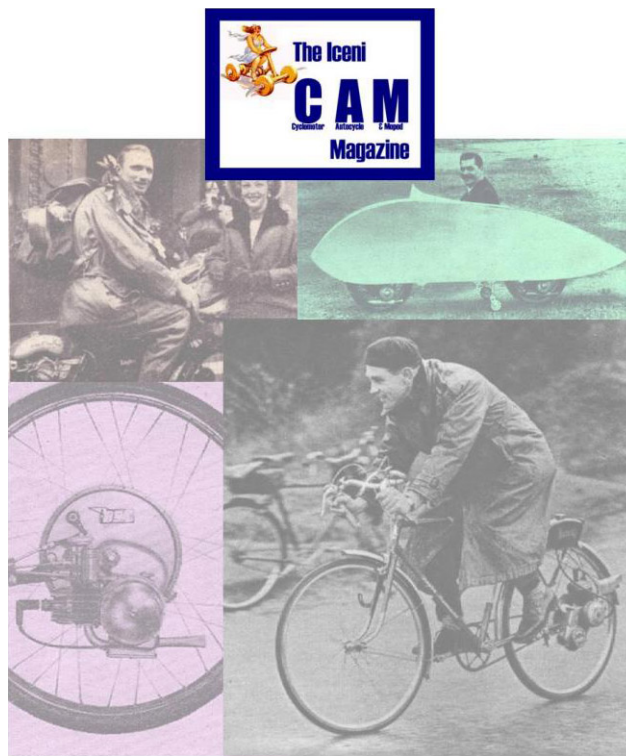
	Front	Rear	Both
At 20 m.p.h.	25ft.	33ft.	17.5ft.
At 30 m.p.h.	45ft.	46ft.	31ft.

Pedalling:
Maximum pedalling speed, 15 m.p.h.
Comfortable pedalling speed, 9 m.p.h.
Tester's weight: 150lb.
Conditions for Test: Dry, windless day.

Servicing the Mark 2 has also been simplified as far as possible. The engine and components are quickly accessible when the engine cover is removed, and the engine itself can be removed from the frame quite easily. For quick wheel removal, the rear forks have forward drop-out ends, and also approved is the simplified brake-mounting anchor which has a wing-nut fastening. Both brake cables have sensible adjusters at the levers.

In conclusion, it was considered that the Mark 2 is an ideal form of transport for those who have little or no mechanical knowledge.

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