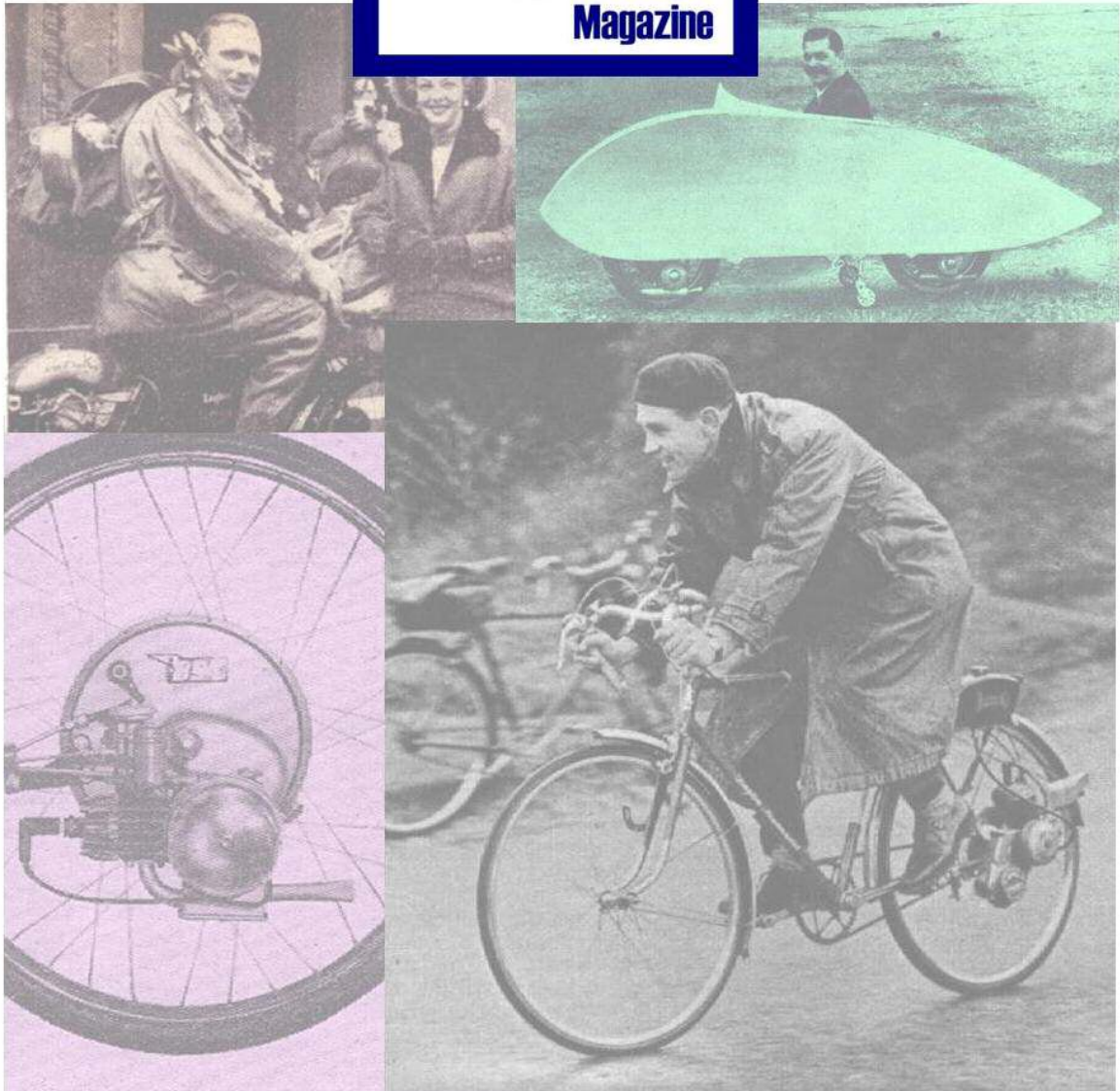


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THE PALOMA D.A.S.L.

A lively French moped
tested by "Centaur"

IT would not be inaccurate to describe the average moped as a "utility" machine. True, it is possible to use it for touring purposes as many people have proved, but in the main the moped is a vehicle for getting its rider from A to B and back.

With this assumption made, it is only a short step to saying that normally the moped will spend a good deal of its time on roads carrying plenty of traffic and therefore should be designed to work happily under these conditions.

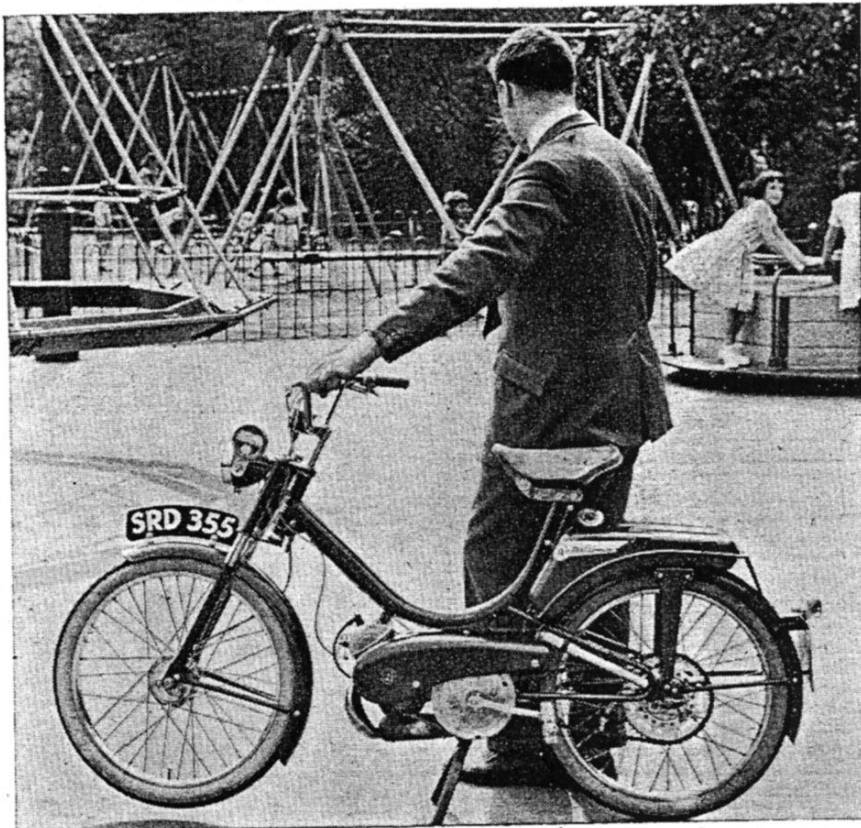
After 500 odd miles on the Paloma D.A.S.L., I have come to the conclusion that the designers had every point in mind when they created this model. If you are contemplating buying a moped for use between office and home, and that journey is, like mine, totally through suburbia, the Paloma should figure high on your list of possible mounts. And not only because it behaves well in the city streets. This sturdy moped has a fair turn of speed and you will not be left behind on the open roads.

The foremost attraction is of course the Lavalette engine with its Multimatic progressive clutch. It is the latter device that takes the fatigue out of traffic travel.

Starting is childishly simple. The petrol is turned on and the rider merely pedals away. At low speed weights forced outwards by centrifugal force, engage the clutch and the engine starts. The only controls necessary after that are the throttle and the brakes. To stop at an intersection or at traffic lights, you shut down the throttle and pull on the brakes. Below a certain speed the clutch disengages and you may coast gently to a standstill with the engine ticking over. To move away again the throttle is opened, the engine revs, increase, the clutch engages and the wheels turn.

This not only simplifies the frequent stopping and starting which occurs in thick traffic but it also improves the handlebar layout. With no clutch to consider the makers have been able to put the rear brake lever at one end of the handlebar and the front at the other end. In this way the various compromises of brake lever above clutch lever or back-pedal brake have been avoided.

Once I had adjusted the brakes I found



Childsplay! Fitted with the Multimatic progressive clutch the Paloma D.A.S.L. makes riding through traffic as easy as standing on a roundabout.

them powerful and positive. This was particularly acceptable for the engine is a lively unit as the acceleration figures show.

Only the front end of the Paloma is sprung and this is achieved by telescopic forks. As a person who pays particular attention to riding comfort, I confess I expected some rather rough travelling. I was wrong. All but the worst bumps are absorbed in the front forks whereas the saddle protects the rider as efficiently as an air cushion, at the rear.

Without any adjustment the riding position was entirely satisfactory. If I wanted I could crouch a little to reduce wind resistance, and not lose control of the machine, and in the normal upright position I travelled quite lengthy distances without noticing any insidious aches and pains.

Two relative novelties which I appreciated on my Paloma were the petrol tap and the twist grip. The petrol tank is located behind the saddle and combines to provide a makeshift carrier. The tap which controls the flow of petrol is located on top of the tank and simply consists of a brass headed knurled screw which is screwed out about half a dozen revolutions to turn the petrol on. It is easily accessible and requires no feats of finger strength to operate it.

The twist grip is normal apart from a guide nut which moves up a slot indicating how much throttle is being used. This is a handy check which enables the rider to see whether or not he is taking too large handfuls of throttle on hills.

One other advantage about the Paloma is that it is good to look at. With the petrol tank at the rear the general lines are clean and satisfying. The engine is partially covered by two easily detachable fairings the screws of which will yield to a penny or some other coin if a screwdriver is not forthcoming.

Surprisingly, the Paloma needed a little pedal assistance on the hill test. Previously it had climbed every hill before it with spirit although I don't think this included one as steep as the test hill.

Apart from that there is only one point of criticism I would level at the Paloma and that is the paint finish which at some sections, seemed thin and wore rather quickly. To prevent this on the petrol tank luggage carrier a raised rack or three chromium-plated bars would be very acceptable.

Fuel economy is excellent and coupled with the initial low cost of the moped, the Paloma D.A.S.L. is a practical as well as a desirable proposition.

Performance

Maximum speed:			
Flying 1/10th mile, 35 m.p.h.			
Standing 1/10th mile, 17 m.p.h. (without pedals).			
Acceleration:			
0-10 m.p.h., 4.5 sec., 0-20 m.p.h., 9.5 sec. 0-30 m.p.h., 21 sec.			
Economy:			
At 20 m.p.h., 175 m.p.g.; At 30 m.p.h., 112 m.p.g.			
Hill climbing:			
Time for hill, 2 min. 15 sec.			
Pedal assistance from 0.4 miles.			
Test hill 0.5 miles long; max. gradient 1 in 10; average gradient 1 in 16.			
Braking	Front	Rear	Both
	At 20 m.p.h. 20ft.	22ft.	12ft.
	At 30 m.p.h. 46ft.	62ft.	35ft.
Peddalling:			
Maximum pedalling speed: 15 m.p.h.			
Comfortable pedalling speed: 9 m.p.h.			
Tester's rating: fair.			
Tester's weight: 220lb.			

Specification

Engine: Lavalette two-stroke: 40 mm. bore x 39.6 mm. stroke = 50 c.c.; effective power, 1.8 b.h.p.; normal speed, 4,800 r.p.m.

Gearbox: Fully automatic with Multimatic progressive clutch; no lubrication or adjustment required; pedalling or kick start; 14 mm. nut on pedal-shaft pulley renders engine independent of cycle.

Frame: Tubular construction; telescopic front forks; rigid rear end.

Tank: 1½ gallons with special screw tap for easy access.

Lights: Head and tail lamps fed direct from flywheel magneto generator.

Wheels and brakes: Both brakes 4½ in. alloy hub, internally expanding; chromium plated rims; 23 x 2.00 white wall Michelin tyres.

Equipment: Luggage carrier combined with petrol tank; tyre pump; number plates; centre stand.

Finish: Mercedes blue, black or beige, with chromium plated details.

Weight: Approx. 65lb.

Concessionaires: Euronora Imports Ltd., 183a Oxford Road, Reading, Berkshire.

Price: £55 2s. 10d. inc. P.T. Legshields extra at £2 7s. 6d.