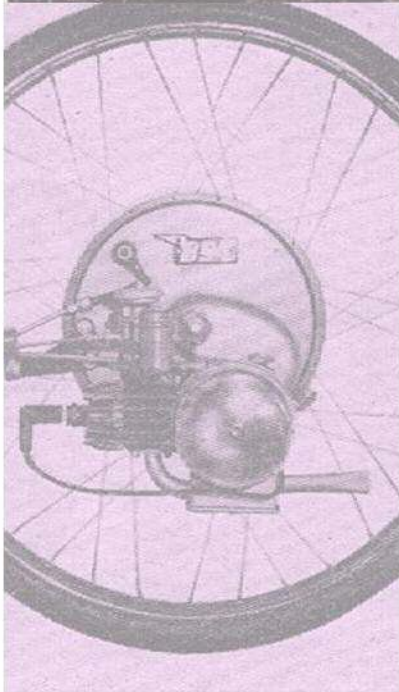


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SPECIFICATION

Engine: M51 two-stroke; 38 m.m. bore x 42 m.m. stroke = 47 c.c.; compression ratio, 7.2 to 1; output, 2.4 b.h.p. at 4,500 r.p.m.; Bing carburettor.

Gearbox: Two-speed, handlebar twist grip controlled; triple plate clutch operating in all both.

Suspension: Telescopic front suspension; swinging arm rear

Wheels and Brakes: 23in. x 2 1/2in. tyres; front brake, cable operated; rear brake, back-pedal operated; both brakes expanding internally in full width hubs.

Tank: 2-gallon with 0.6 pint in reserve.

Frame: Pressed steel construction.

Lights: Flywheel generator; 6v. 15w. headlamp; 2w. tail light.

Equipment: Pump, tool kit, centre stand, carrier.

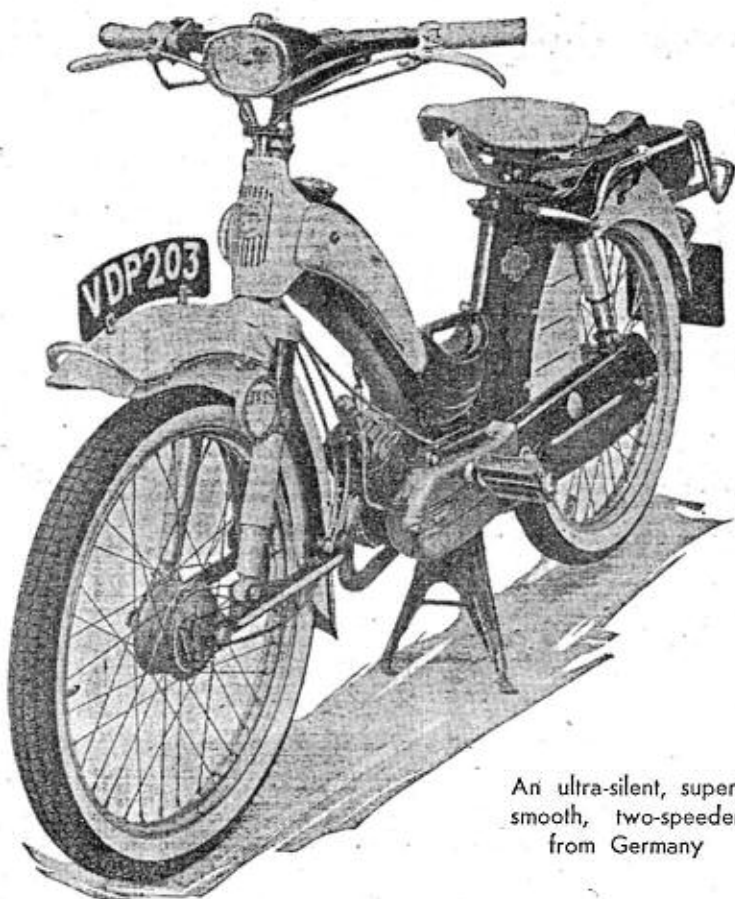
Finish: Black and cream with chrome embellishments.

Weight: 95 lbs.

Concessionaires: Europa Imports Ltd., Arkwright Road, Reading, Berks.

Price: £79 18s. 4d. including purchase tax.

Extras: Windscreen £3 19s. 6d.; legshields £3 10s.



An ultra-silent, super-smooth, two-speeder from Germany

Centaur road tests the

VICTORIA LUXUS

ONE of the unusual features of a moped road tester's life is that he usually rides machines which have very little on the mileometer. As with other new vehicles, things often take some time to settle down on a moped, and the result is that despite being as impartial and understanding as possible, the tester may criticise an apparently unsatisfactory component which subsequently beds down and gives little trouble. On top of this, performance may improve fractionally with use.

As I have pointed out, I try to make allowances for the possibility of improvement in new machines, and it is therefore interesting to test a moped which already has over 1,600 miles on the clock and is well embarked on its useful life. This describes the Victoria Luxus which has already seen service with its concessionaires, Europa Imports Ltd. of Reading, and which was loaned to us for test.

In the past I have been rather harsh about the twist-grip gear-changes fitted to a number of mopeds. But on this Victoria it is certainly a most delightful feature and certainly equals in smoothness, speed and precision, the previous out-and-out winner in these stakes.

Does this seem a rather trivial introduction to a moped road test? Those who answer "Yes" cannot have had too much experience of riding multi-speed mopeds. The gearbox on a 50c.c. power unit is meant to be used, and if changing gear is wearisome, then riding the moped ultimately becomes wearisome. The two-speed Luxus gear-change was so good as to encourage experimental throttle blipping on downward changes and split-second upward changes to maintain engine revs while ascending inclines.

The Victoria power unit is a well-tryed and trusted friend which will propel the Luxus comfortably at just over 33 m.p.h. Small engines are not usually flexible but in this instance the generality is untrue. Accelerating, I normally changed at about 17 m.p.h. on the speedometer, but I found that it was not necessary to change down for any but the worst corners and the revs quickly picked up afterwards. Naturally, like all two-strokes, the unit was happier at high revs and in fact there was a surge of extra power at approximately 25 m.p.h., from whence it was possible, given optimum conditions, to push the speedometer needle round to a peak of 40 m.p.h.!

Starting the Luxus required a simple though set procedure. A small trigger which depressed a strangler slide, mounted on the carburettor "lid" in the frame was always operated when starting from cold, and the engine would then start after an average of three "kicks." When the engine was warmed up, however, gentle pedalling with first gear engaged was sufficient to restart. Fuel consumption worked out at about 125 m.p.g.

Before moving on from the engine, mention must be made of the super efficient silencer. Of lengthy, characteristic German pattern, it reduced the engine note to a sound which can only be described as a cross between a buzz and a whine, and which was almost inaudible while wearing a "space" helmet.

Superb Suspension

Perhaps the most striking feature of the Victoria is the suspension which is truly superb. The rear springing is conventional swinging arm and damps out completely all the rude shocks which bestrew our far-from-perfect roads. The front forks have Earles-type suspension and promote a most majestic feeling of security. I translated this feeling into actuality by throwing the machine as hard as I could into several "well" corners and yet the majesty never departed.

The only criticism I have of the suspension concerns the "pan" pattern saddle which tends to tilt the rider backwards when compressed. Modification of this component would be very simple for the owner.

The seating position, except for this unfortunate backward tilt, was excellent and despite the fact that the handlebars are comparatively narrow, I did not hanker after any more control. Because the steering is rock steady, the bars provided are more than adequate even at low speeds. Both clutch and front brake levers were handily placed.

Provided one is *au fait* with the use of the back-pedal brake the brakes are better than average and a stop from 20 m.p.h. could be achieved in 12 feet. Although recognising its inevitability with multi-speeders I confess it takes me some time to get used to back-pedal braking, so I was quite content to use the efficient front unit.

Lighting is often a rather problematical issue but I found the Victoria headlight quite good as moped headlights go and was able to use it to some effect on really dark streets.

The rear carrier is a workmanlike job designed to carry much more luggage than is usual with most mopeds, and the smallish tool container is located at the very back of the carrier. This could profitably have been twice the size at least. The tyre valves fit the connection on a normal garage compressor and so maintaining tyre pressure is no problem. The weather remained fine—surprisingly—during the test and weather protection remained untried. However, a look at the deep valancing on both mudguards, suggested that they do their job efficiently.