VICTORIA "PRECIOSA"

A German Scooterette of Outstanding Design, Available with or without Pedals

A NOTABLE feature of the 1958 Earls Court Show was the upsurge in scooterette designs, many of them dispensing with pedals altogether. Of these machines, perhaps the most æsthetically-styled was the Victoria "Preciosa" — a smart three-speeder, which is offered in two versions. One of these has the normal pedals fitted to its Victoria M. 51 engine; the other offers footrests, with pedal-controlled rear brake and a kick-starter. It was this version which I selected for test, curious to discover how a "noped" performs. Weather protection and comfort are, of course, the major aims of a scooterette designer, and it took me only a few miles to discover that the man who dreamed up the "Preciosa" had nothing to learn on either score.

I collected the machine on a bitterly cold day, when a damp fog hung over the entire country, and visibility was down to 50 yards or so. Under such conditions, the moped rider is normally very vulnerable indeed to cold, yet I was able to ride the "Preciosa" without donning leggings of any kind, simply with my top-coat wrapped well around me.

From the start, then, I was favourably impressed by the efficiency of the machine's front shielding. Later in the test, when I had encountered greasy roads and pouring rain as well, still without soiling my unprotected trousers or shoes, I was able to note that the "Preciosa" offers protection as good as that of any large-scale motor scooter, and certainly which is in effect a sturdy box-girder, the engine is sweeter than ever. Accessible through a wide hinged cover in the frame well, it gave no trouble, save for the whiskering of a couple of plugs.

On level roads, the "Preciosa" cruised at between 25 and 30 m.p.h., the speed quickly falling off on hills to roughly 22 m.p.h., when it would settle down to pull well. Second gear would deal with really tough inclines — almost the entire length of Gipsy Hill, in London, could be taken in "second" — and one still had the comforting thought that there was another gear to come! This lowest gear would suffice for gradients of 1 in 5.

Despite the largish frontal area of the machine, the fuel consumption proved to be on the miserly side . . . better, in fact, than that obtainable from many less luxurious mopeds.

Handling was excellent, save for the hefty rebound action of the rear swinging fork — a long-standing fault with Victoria machines. This led to some rear-wheel "patter" on rippled surfaces, but never anything of disconcerting, still less dangerous, proportions. This point apart, the springing was superb, the Earles-type front forks, especially, having a soft, float-on-air action.

Unfortunately — and unusually for a Victoria — the brakes did not live up to the promise implicit in their sturdy external appearance. True, the roads were wet when the figures were obtained, but even so I had an impression of sponginess which I could never wholly eradicate. The fault lay with the rear brake . . . the front was noticeably superior.

Excellent lighting is a feature of the machine. The lamp is of oblong-lens type, built into the front forks, and it gives a very good light indeed, though on the test model it appeared to cast its beam uncomfortably close to the machine.—CENTAUR.

Performance

Speed:
Maximum, 33 m.p.h. in 29 sec. from rest.
Flying 1/10th mile, 30 m.p.h.
Standing 1/10th mile, 19 m.p.h.

Acceleration:

0-10 m.p.h. 2.5 sec.	0-25 m.p.h. 17 sec.
0-15 m.p.h. 6 sec.	0-30 m.p.h. 23 sec.
0-20 m.p.h. 10 sec.	

Economy:
At 20 m.p.h., 174 m.p.g.
At 25 m.p.h., 151 m.p.g.
At 30 m.p.h., 113 m.p.g.

Hill-Climbing:
Time for hill, 1 min. 48 sec.
First gearchange at 0.15 miles.
Second gearchange at 0.35 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.	29ft.	40ft.	21ft.
At 25 m.p.h.	54ft.	72ft.	40ft.
At 30 m.p.h.	80ft.	100ft.	60ft.

Pedalling: Not applicable.

Tester's Weight: 200 lb.

Specification

Engine: Victoria two-stroke; 38 mm. bore x 42 mm. stroke = 47 c.c.; c.r. 6 to 1; 2.4 b.h.p. at 5,500 r.p.m.

Gearbox: In unit with engine; three-speeds, with handlebar twist grip control; positive-stop device, with manual over-ride, incorporated with twist grip; gear primary and chain final drives; kick starting.

Frame: Welded-up from steel pressings; swinging-fork front and rear suspensions.

Tank: 1-gal. capacity.

Lights: Head and tail lamp fed direct from Bosch flywheel magneto-generator.

Wheels and Brakes: Both brakes 3½-in. internal-expanding in full-width light-alloy hubs, quickly-detachable rear wheel; light alloy rims and rust-proof spokes; Continental 2.25 x 23-in. whitewall tyres.

Equipment: Horn; luggage carrier with spring securing strap centre stand; tool box; pump; speedometer; number plates; licence holder.

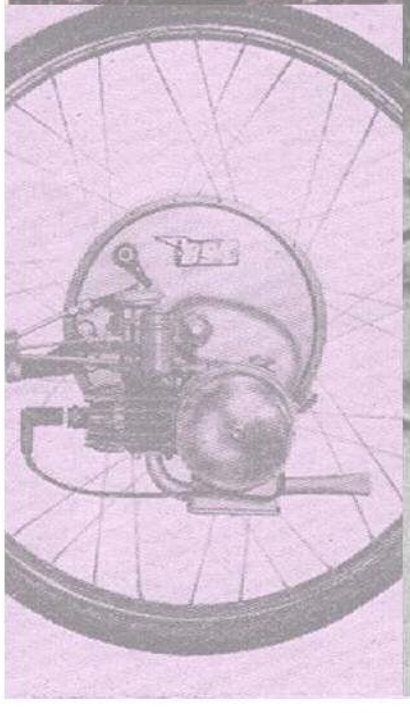
Finish: Duo-tone blue enamel, with chromium-plated details.

Makers: Victoria-werke a.g., Nuremberg, Germany.

Concessionaires: Europa Imports Ltd., 183a Oxford Road, Reading, Berks.

Price: £104 3s. 3d. inc. P.T.

Magazine



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