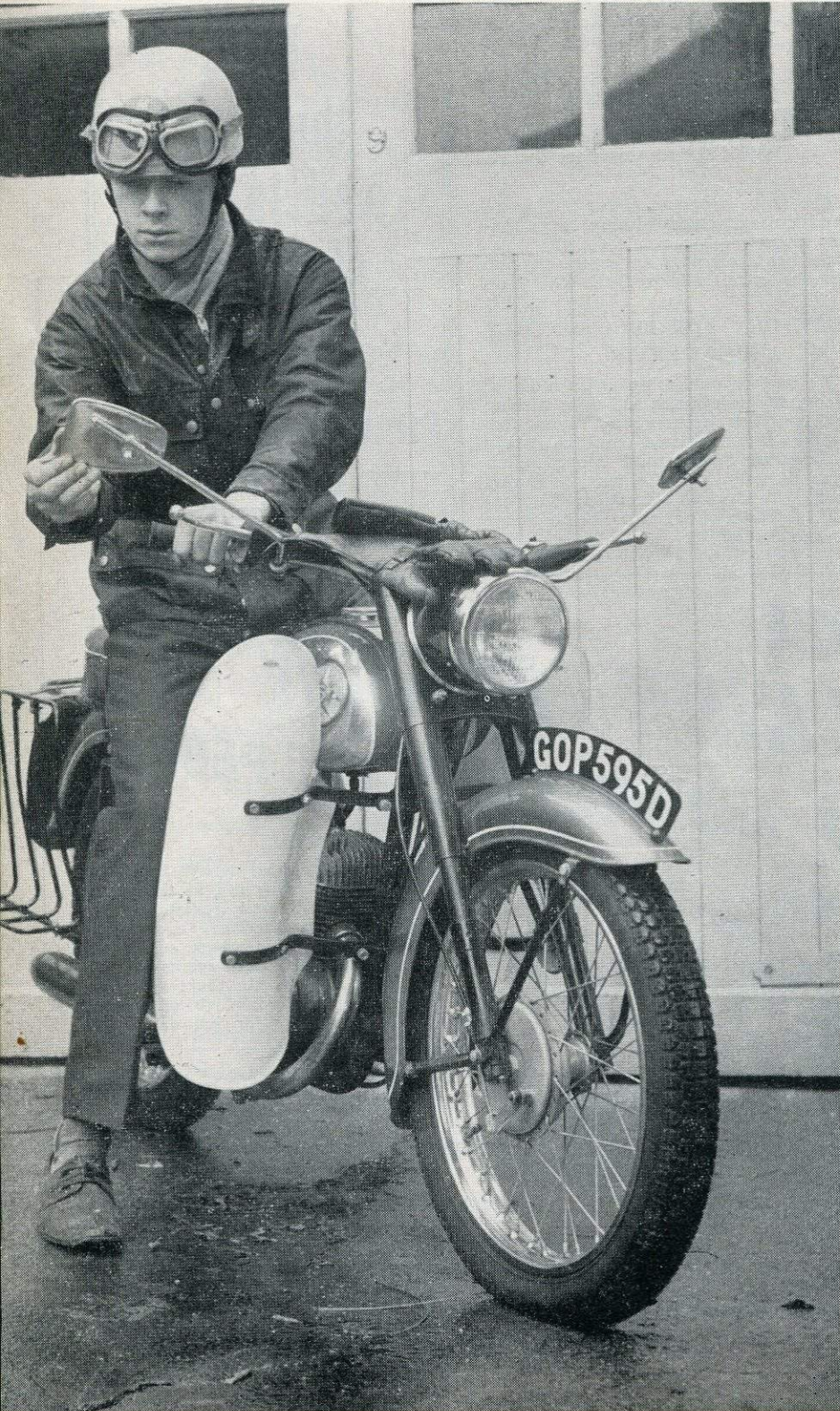


Jeff Hutchinson tries the new

'BEEZA' BANTAM

with a difference



● Mention the name Bantam to any two wheel type and the reaction you will probably get is, 'Oh you mean one of those funny little red bikes the GPO use'. Well that may have been the case in the past but the present day Bantam is a lively light-weight 175 cc machine capable of cruising at 60 mph plus.

Reason for the big improvement is that the engine has been considerably tuned and a lot of it completely re-designed. Porting has been altered and carb size increased from 7/8 in to 1 in. Bottom end has also been redesigned. Result is an increase of 2.5 bhp and an extra 1,250 rpm.

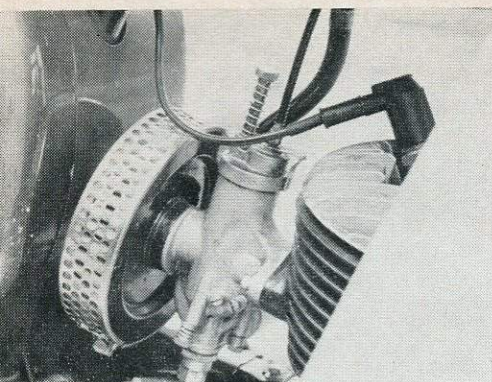
Lack of gears

These engine modifications have resulted in a far higher top speed of around 68 mph. Powerband has been widened through the extra tuning but with only three gears there is still too much of a jump between the gears. This means that engine must be well revved if there is going to be any instant power in the next gear. Latest export model is now equipped with a four speed box so it probably won't be long before the home market ones fall into line.

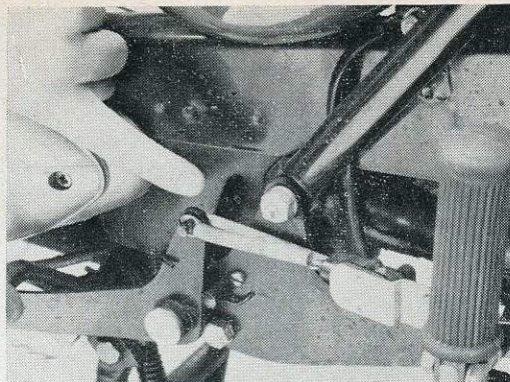
Main difference between the D7 Bantam, which is replaced by the D10 are the engine modifications for the exterior remains virtually unchanged. Engine has two piston rings instead of the old three, increased primary and cylinder compression and re-designed conrod.

Electrics have also been redesigned. Contact breakers have been moved to the right hand side of the engine to make room for the new Wipac alternator system which replaces old flywheel magneto system. Lighting is now very much improved and there is now an emergency ignition switch should the battery get accidentally flattened.

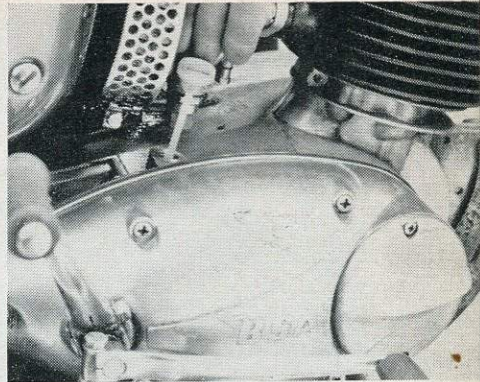
Bike we tested was also fitted with the Motoplas accessories made for it. These are legshields and rear carrier.



The latest Bantam has this bigger bore Amal Monobloc—up from 7/8th of an inch to an inch thanks to better porting.



A grease nipple at the swinging arm pivot stops bushes from wearing out too quickly. Stop light switch standard.



Gearbox filler plug has nylon dipstick attached. Also note the contact-breaker unit now positioned on the drive side.

The twin handlebar mirrors are fitted as standard. Legshields were made of glass fibre and however far the bike was thrown round corners they did not ground. Brakes are very good and brought the bike to a stop in just over 30 feet from 30 mph. Acceleration was 0-30 mph, in 4 secs; 0-40 mph, 8.8 secs; 0-50 mph, 14 secs.

Extra tuning of the engine has taken its toll on fuel consumption figures. On flat out running the figure was as low as 60 mpg but an average was nearer 80 mpg. Worse than this is that no reserve tap is fitted which means a very close eye must be kept on the level if you are not going to find yourself pushing it to the nearest garage.

Expensive looking

Handling was not to be faulted and driving in London traffic was a lot better than the old D7 because the engine tuning allows complete control over the bike with the clutch fully engaged. Bike was finished in

a dark blue, black and chrome which adds up to an expensive looking bike at the same low price. Price being £139 15s 0d without the accessories.

All through the test starting was very good and the choke had to be used first thing in the morning. Choke operation itself was not very good. This was a sprung plunger which was pressed into the carb body and turned to lock. Choke worked very well but trying to release it while still moving after engine had warmed up was a dangerous pastime. Only safe way was to stop, lean down and release the lock.

Dual seat was comfortable and there was plenty of room for a pillion passenger as well. Control layout was also well arranged with the levers in easy reach. Levers were also fitted with ball ends and were light and easy to use. Dipswitch is also mounted on the bars but the actual light switch for both parking and main beam lighting is mounted alongside the ignition switch in the headlamp shell.

WHAT YOU GET

Engine—173 cc single cylinder two-stroke. Vertical barrel, bore and stroke 61.5 x 58mm.

Gearbox and final drive-unit construction 3-speed box, foot change. Final drive single row exposed chain.

Capacities—Petrol, 2 galls, no reserve. Gearbox capacity measured to dipstick level.

Electrics—6 volt Wipac alternator system. Battery, rectifier, coil and horn mounted beneath the seat. Dimensions — weight, 226 lbs; height, 30½ ins; turning circle, 13 ft.

WHAT IT DOES

80 miles per gallon on 5 per cent petrol oil mix.

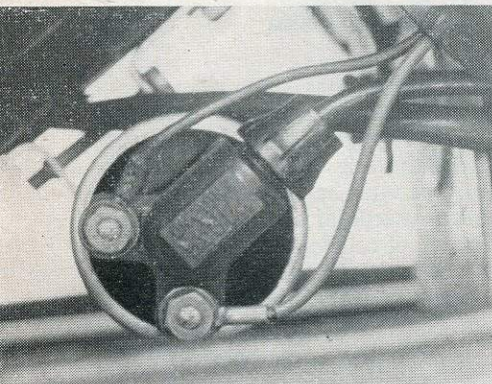
Acceleration—0-30 mph, 4 secs; 0-40 mph, 8.8 secs; 0-50 mph, 14 secs.

Maximum speed—68 mph.

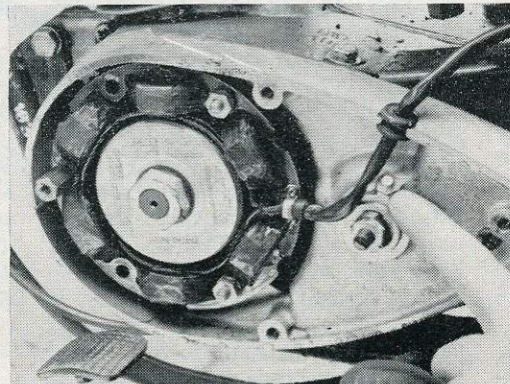
Speeds in gears—1st, 30 mph; 2nd, 47 mph.

Price (without extras)—£139 15s 0d

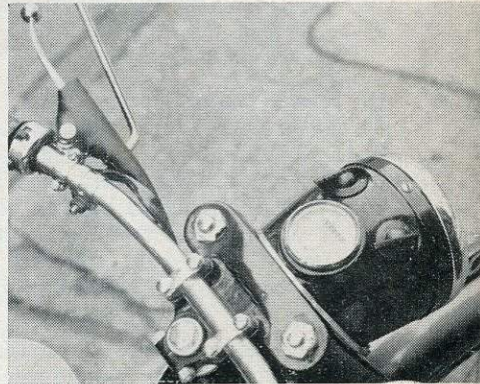
Suppliers—BSA Motorcycles Ltd,
Armoury Road
Small Heath
Birmingham 11



New alternator system utilises a coil and rectifier. These are both mounted beneath the dual seat. Easy to get at.

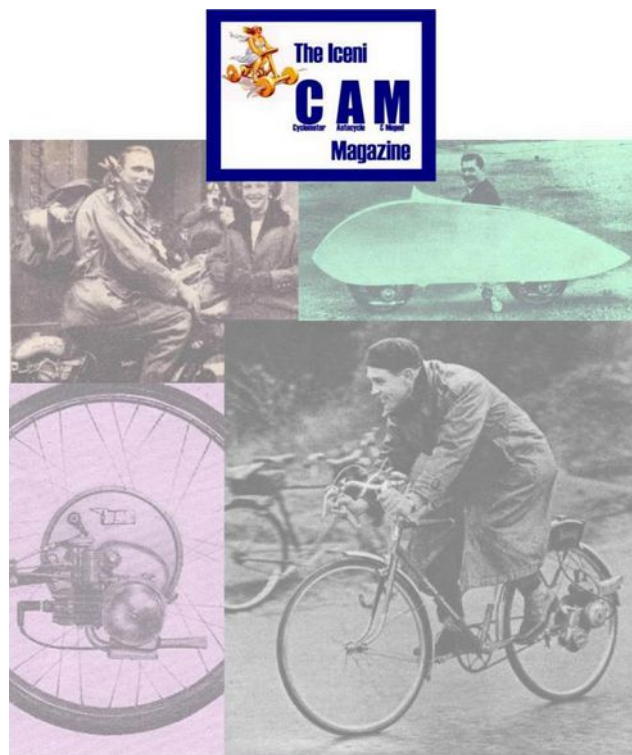


Here is the new Wipac alternator. Also shown is the grease nipple now included to lubricate the clutch thrust rod.



Handlebar layout is neat and uncluttered. Bike has ball-end levers, mirrors as standard items. Lever shrouds are extras.

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