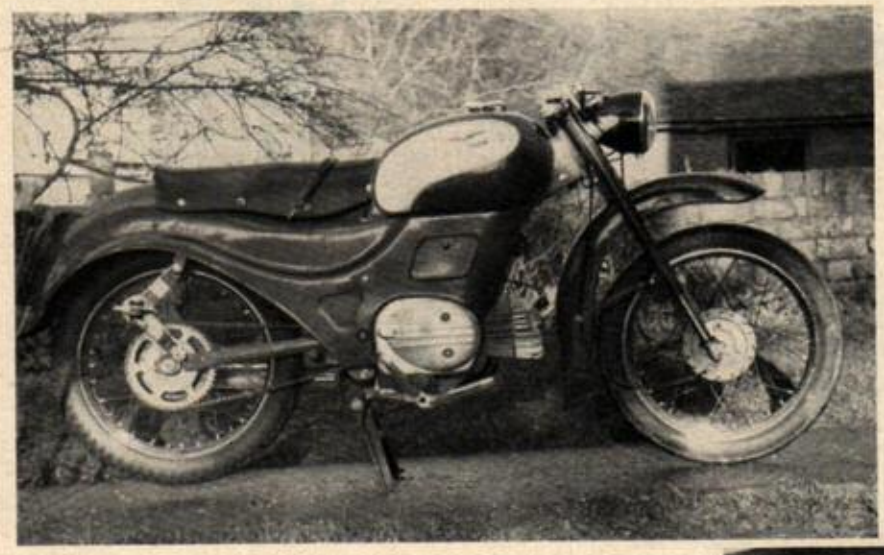
THEY'D NEVER HAVE

by

ROGER MAUGHFLING

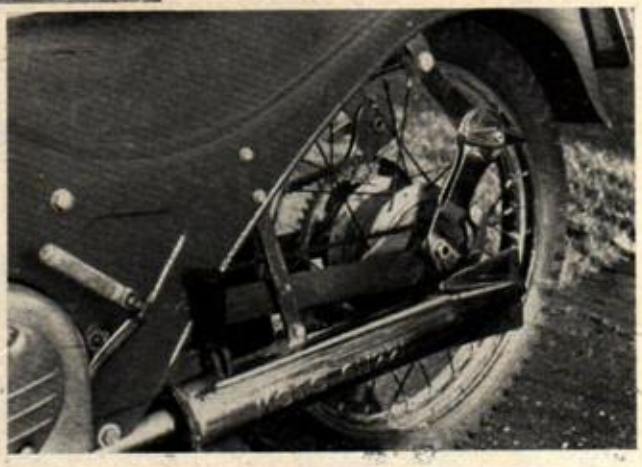


Obviously a direct descendant of the famous racing singles, the Moto-Guzzi Zigolo is a true motor cycle though of only 98 c.c. Friction dampers (BELOW) *allow for adjustment to the rear suspension*

THERE was a time when anything less than a three-fifty was sniffed at by the real enthusiast—nothing smaller was considered a "man's mount". Today the advent of so many new two-fifty four-strokes and in particular the popularity of lightweights for trials and scrambles have changed all that and, thanks to development, even 100 c.c. machines are suitable for serious work without such drawbacks as appallingly low power or frequent seizures and overheating.

In this class comes the Moto Guzzi Zigolo—very obviously a direct descendant of the famous horizontal racing singles from the Italian factory at Mandello and quite the best ultra lightweight that it's been my pleasure to try for some years.

For the connoisseur who courts an inexpensive runabout, the youngster without too much cash or the "ride to work" man who wants something cheap to run but a little different from the run of the mill, the Zigolo comes near to being the ideal. Consider the facts in a nutshell. Costing just under £130, the Mark 2 Zigolo—the latest version—has pivoted fork rear springing, telescopic front forks, cast



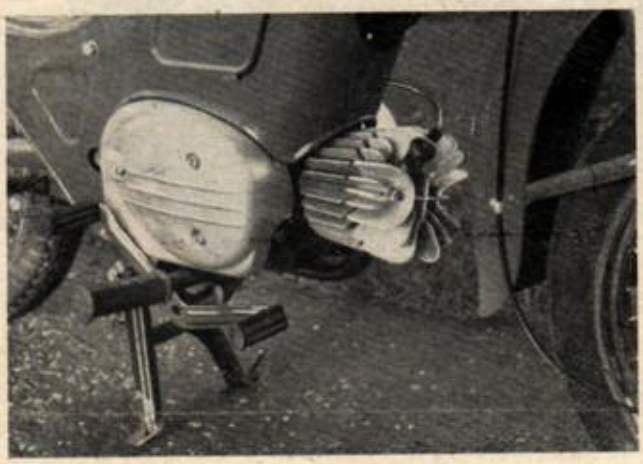
light alloy full width hubs front and rear, almost complete enclosure by virtue of its pressed steel bodywork, a three speed foot change gearbox, a dual seat of adequate proportions, a fuel tank holding no less than three gallons and a six-inch headlamp . . . all these as part of the standard specification.

Allied to all this is a cruising speed (one up) of 40 m.p.h. plus under give and take conditions and a fuel consumption of 124 m.p.g. (this was the figure attained over the whole of the test period).

Like most continental machines the kickstart pedal is on the left. Unlike (unfortunately) many British lightweights however, the kickstart could be operated lustily through the whole of its stroke without fear of catching one's foot on a footrest so that the left hand location was of little disadvantage while, in any case, the motor started first kick almost every time either hot or cold. Only trouble when cold starting was the need to flood the carburetter—normally a simple thing but (at any rate on the test machine) more easily said than done due to the tickler being situated behind the bodywork with access by means of a little door with a very stubborn catch. A somewhat larger knob or a lighter catch spring would rectify this bother.

Once one had got used to the race-machine-like riding position, handling of the Zigolo was pluperfect and steering truly "hairline". Nothing grounded however far the model was cranked over and both front and rear suspensions

The diminutive engine retains the horizontal mounting which has for so long been "typical Guzzi". Claimed power output is 4 b.h.p. at 5,200 r.p.m.



BELIEVED IT!

REALISTIC ROAD TEST No. 6

worked well and possessed a good range of movement. The rear springing is adjustable for stiffness by means of (typically Moto Guzzi) friction dampers, but it was felt that the front forks were rather too soft. Rubber in compression is the medium for the rear suspension with a cylindrical block of rubber situated between two plates just above the forward end of the rear fork.

Contrary to what one might imagine from a casual glance at the machine, the bodywork does not also serve as the main frame although it does supplement it. A single large diameter tube runs from the centre stand pivot lug to the steering head and carries the rear fork pivot and the engine mounting lugs.

While the riding position was comfortable for local runs, and, indeed, may well have aided the handling qualities, the low handlebars were rather too low for long runs and after a couple of hours or so one tended to ache round the neck and shoulders. The seat was large enough for two people of medium size while generous (very generous indeed at the rear) mudguarding afforded excellent protection from water on the roads. Because of the enclosure no stray oil or fuel was able to find its way on to one's clothing.

All controls were light in operation and particularly full marks went to the clutch and gearchange. No clutch adjustment was needed during the whole of the test period and there was never the slightest trace of slip or drag, while the gearchange pedal movement was light and sensibly long without being too long and neutral was easy to find. The pedal is of rocking or heel and toe variety but (except perhaps as a concession to clean shoes) there seemed little point in having the heel part so easy was the movement.

Located on the left side of the bars, the combined horn, lighting and dip switch could be worked without removing ones hand from the grey plastic grip, while light from the headlamp when on main beam was more than adequate for the machine's speed. Current for lights, horn and the ignition coil is supplied direct by a flywheel generator and the wiring system is so simple that even the least knowledgable owner should be able to trace a fault in emergency.

SPECIFICATION

ENGINE
98 c.c. horizontally disposed single-cylinder two stroke. Bore, 50 mm.; stroke, 50 mm. Induction controlled by crankshaft driven rotary valve. Cast iron cylinder barrel, light alloy head. Non deflector piston. Compression ratio 6 : 1. Claimed b.h.p., 4 at 5,200 r.p.m.

GEARBOX
Three-speed foot controlled and built in unit with engine. Primary drive by helical gears. Overall ratios: Top 7.384; second, 12.65; bottom 19.39 : 1.

FINAL DRIVE
By exposed chain.

FRAME
All welded single tube backbone type supplemented by pressed steel bodywork. Pivoted fork rear suspension controlled by rubber cylinder in compression and with adjustable friction dampers. Undamped telescopic front fork.

WHEELS
Both with cast light alloy full width hubs and 17 in. steel rims. Front tyre 2.50 in ribbed; rear 2.75 in. studded.

PRINCIPLE DIMENSIONS
Weight (unladen) 172 lb.; wheelbase 49 in.; overall length 75½ in.; overall width 24½ in.; overall height 35½ in. Seat height 30 in.; ground clearance, 5½ in. Fuel tank capacity 3 gallons.

PRICE
(Including purchase tax and import duty) **£129 19s. 6d.**

BRITISH CONCESSIONAIRES
Motor Imports Ltd., 158 Stockwell Road, London, S.W.9.

Generous mudguarding affords excellent protection from mud and water—though here the tester surely is taking his job to the extreme limit

Potency of the 5 in. diameter brakes was fully in keeping with their appearance. Using both brakes on a dry tarmac surface it was possible to stop in 38 ft. from 30 m.p.h. and neither brake seemed affected by frequent use or by water.

As already mentioned, it was possible to cruise at 40-plus under give and take conditions. This without crouching at all and wearing full riding kit. All out maximum when more lightly clad and lying on the tank was an indicated 53 under favourable conditions. So well did the motor pull that even on long climbs speeds seldom dropped below 40.

So much for performance. Let's look below the enclosure at the power unit—a unit with many novel features and excellent ones at that when it comes to maintenance. Removal of three set screws allows the nearside engine cover to be taken off to reveal the flywheel generator while a further cap has to be taken off the flywheel itself in order to get at the contact breaker points. By modern standards the unit may not be a sleek "power egg" but it is functional in the extreme.

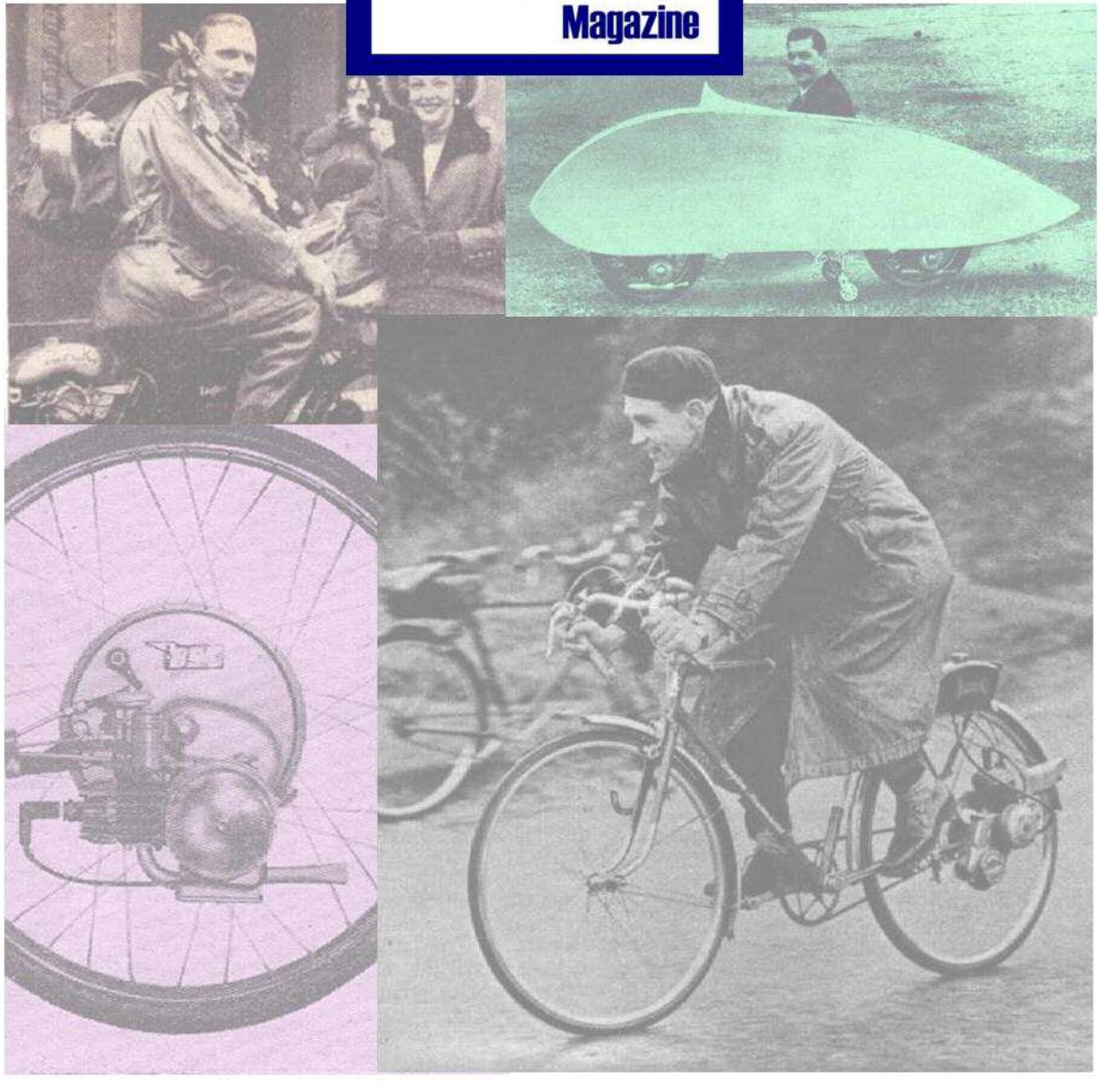
An overhung crank drives the clutch by helical pinion and is supported by a ball and a roller bearing (both massive) while the big end is of needle roller pattern and, if neccessary, can be replaced without need to remove any more than a cast plate from the offside of the crankcase and the cylinder and piston.

Unlike the majority of two-strokes, the Moto Guzzi has a rotary induction valve and does not rely on the piston to open and close an induction port in the cylinder. The rotary valve is housed in the casting forming the offside end of the crankcase and driven by the crank. A light alloy cylinder barrel and domed piston are employed and compression ratio is 6 : 1. Maximum b.h.p. is 4 and developed at 5,200 r.p.m.

During the test period the front brake needed adjustment once and likewise the rear chain. This latter task evoked some criticism because the box spanner provided in the tool kit would not fit both wheel nuts. Apart from these two small tasks no maintenance was required at all and the plug was not even looked at.

IceniCAM
Information Service

The Iceni
CAM
Cyclemotor Autocycle & Moped
Magazine



www.icenicam.org.uk