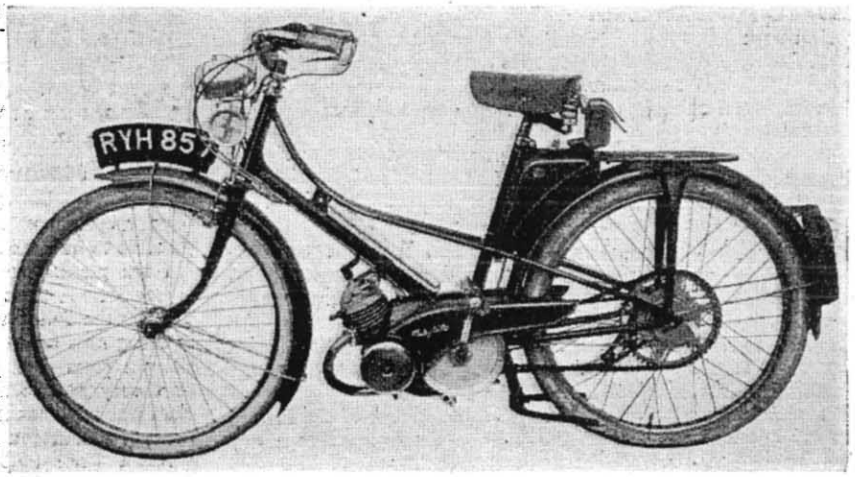
IMPRESSIONS OF CURRENT MODELS




## The 49 c.c.
# "Mobylette de Luxe"

IT is well over four years since *Motor Cycling* first tested an example of the 49 c.c. "Mobylette" two-stroke mo-ped produced by the French Motobécane concern. Since that time, the machine has remained in production with progressive modifications—the kind of history which one associates with sound basic design and economical manufacture.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the reputation which the "Mobylette" has established over the years should have rested upon economy (both in first cost and in operation) and reliability. To these qualities must be added simplicity of operation, for the "Mobylette" has remained essentially an example of the mo-ped built for "bicycle-style driving." Today, this ideal is brought yet closer by the introduction of the "de Luxe" version, incorporating an automatic clutch. With this component, the driver of the "Mobylette" has to take into account only the two factors familiar to any cyclist—motive power and brakes.

The controls, in fact, comprise only the two brake levers, a right-hand twist-grip and a thumb-operated choke trigger on the left-hand handlebar. Turned in the usual direction, anti-clockwise, the twist-grip opens the throttle; turned clockwise from the "closed" position, it operates the decompressor. The automatic clutch, centrifugally operated, comes into play when the road speed (irrespective of engine speed) exceeds 4 m.p.h.; similarly, it disengages when the speed falls below that level. The carburetter setting is such that the engine will idle with the twist-grip "closed."

Starting drill is simplicity itself. With the decompressor open, the machine is pedalled from rest until the clutch engages; then a "left-hand" turn of the twist-grip shuts the decompressor and opens the throttle, and the engine takes over. On the machine tested, this proved to be a completely trouble-free and practically instinctive process once the rider had become accustomed to the very slight snatch which accompanied clutch engagement. Over a test period of some weeks, during which the plug was not so much as removed for inspection, engine pick-up proved to be 100% reliable. The choke was required only for first-start-of-the-day in cold weather.

Even more important from the point of view of the ex-pedal cyclist is the fact that stopping involves no more than closing the throttle and applying the brakes; the clutch disengages (again with slight, but not disturbing, judder) at the 4-m.p.h. level and the machine comes to rest with the engine idling. Restarting is simply a question of pedalling for a yard or two until the engine takes charge again.

Strange and a trifle disturbing to the motorcyclist (although it would not be so to the new mo-ped owner) was the very low engine speed immediately after clutch engagement. Experience, however, resulted in complete reliance upon the astonishing flexibility of the "Mobylette" power unit, which proved its low-rev. pulling capacity not only after starting, but in prolonged slogging on steep gradients. This seemed, in fact, an engine which it was practically impossible to abuse.

*With its ultra-simple controls, the "Mobylette" handled easily in traffic.*

Top speed was well over the 25 m.p.h. mark; but that figure, for a machine of this kind, is of academic interest. More important was the fact that there was sufficient power, in conjunction with very effective brakes and the handling characteristics of a pedal-cycle, to enable the "Mobylette" to hold its own, or more, in normal town traffic. To this one should add that prolonged traffic riding involved less fatigue than upon any other two-wheeled vehicle which the writer has ridden.

The degree of shock absorption provided by large-section tyres was adequate over normal going, but a softer saddle might well be provided on a machine with an unsprung frame. In spite of the machine's light weight, there was no sign of frame whip.

Petroil consumption, so far as could be gauged in the absence of a speedometer, averaged about 170 m.p.g. under conditions which included far more traffic driving than open-road work.

The half-gallon tank has no provision for a fuel reserve; but against this is the ease with which the machine can be converted to direct pedal operation by moving a knurled knob on the countershaft belt pulley.

The direct-lighting set gave an adequate beam, but it can hardly be counted satisfactory for everyday use without a stand-by battery and the provision of stouter rear-light fittings. Points such as this, however, must be weighed against the fact that the "de Luxe" model sells in this country at £46 6s. 11d. inclusive—a remarkably low price for what is basically a very robust and reliable machine.

### BRIEF SPECIFICATION

**Engine:** 49 c.c. two-stroke single cylinder; bore 39 mm. by stroke 41.8 mm.; die-cast alloy cylinder barrel with steel liner and detachable alloy head; C.R. 6:1; petroil lubrication.

**Transmission:** Primary drive by endless Vee-belt to countershaft; final drive by chain; automatic centrifugal clutch.

**Frame:** "Open" type, with duplex top tubes; welded.

**Ignition and Lighting:** Novi flywheel-magneto-generator.

**Wheels:** 20 in. with Michelin 2.00 by 24-in. tyres front and rear.

**Tank:** ½-gallon petroil.

**Finish:** Black enamel; handlebars, wheel rims and details chromium-plated.

**Equipment:** Spring top saddle; luggage grid; tyre pump; tool bag and kit; centre stand.

**Weight:** 75 lb.

**Price:** £37 7s. 6d. plus £8 19s. 5d. P.T. = £46 6s. 11d.

**Annual tax:** 17s. 6d. (4s. 10d. quarterly).

**Distributors:** Motor Imports Co., Ltd., 158 Stockwell Rd., London, S.W.9.

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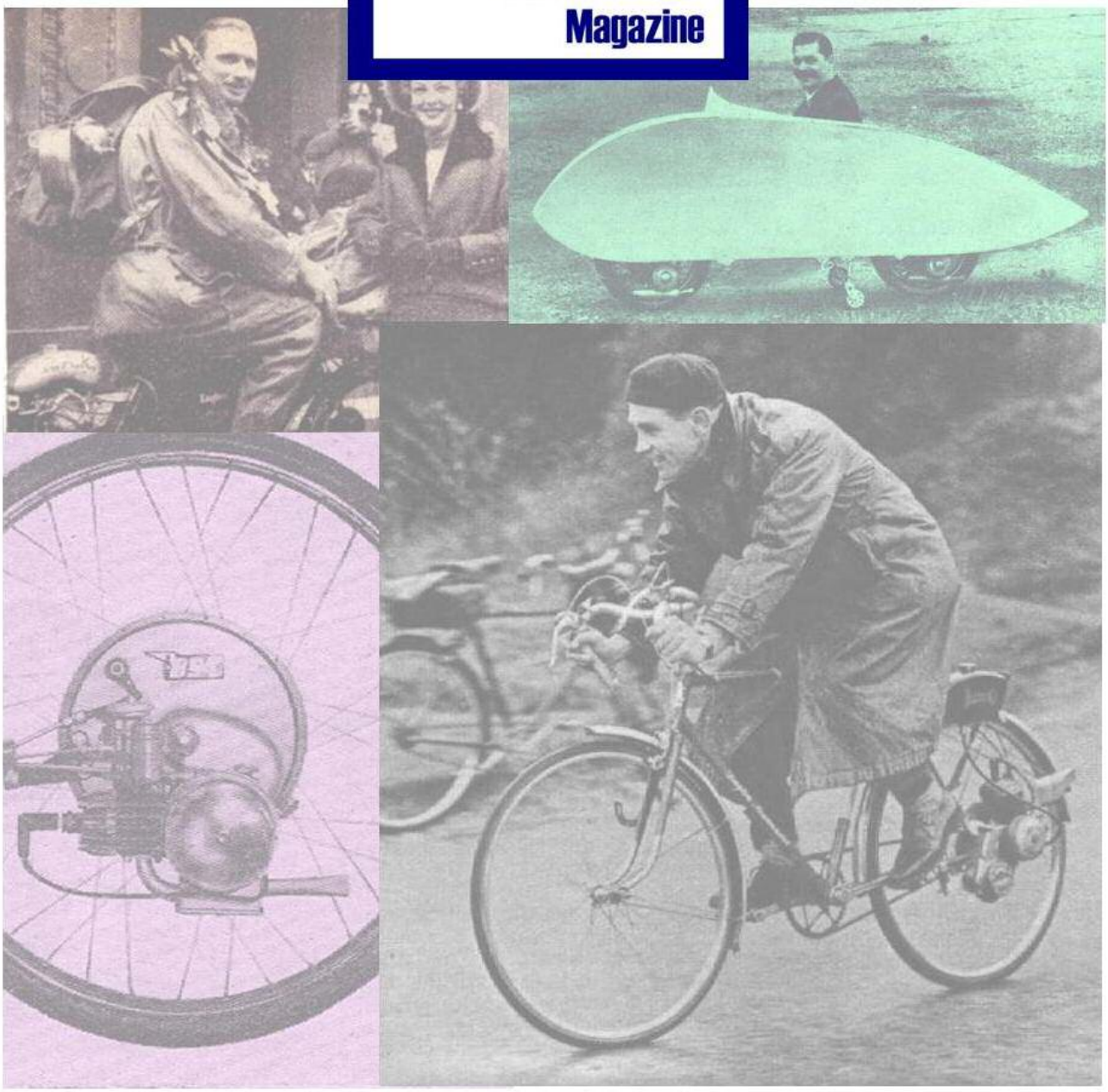

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