

Easy Rider-the NVT Moped

In city traffic, few modes of transport equal a simple, utilitarian moped for sheer practicality. We tested NVT's 'Easy Rider' automatic model and found that it performed well as a plain little workhorse.

Since NVT (Norton Villiers Triumph) put together their last 850 Commando, the bikes they make are no longer wholly British. Their range of mopeds, trials and children's bikes are assembled in the UK using mostly foreign parts. But this is not a new concept – the British motorcycle industry has a long history of producing national and foreign hybrid machines named after the assembler or frame builder. NVT's Easy Rider uses a Moto Morini engine, and other Italian equipment, fitted on a clever single tube frame.

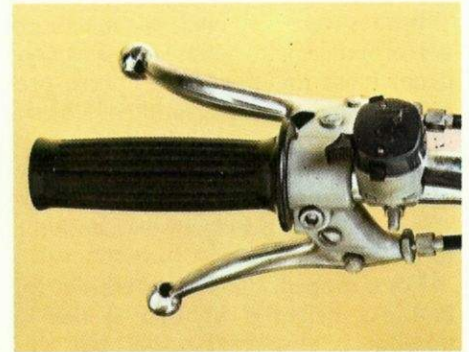
On the road

We found it easy to start this moped.

By putting the machine on to its centre stand the pedals double up as a kick-start. Even on cold mornings, all we had to do to get an easy, first time start, was to turn on the petrol tap, which has a nice positive click-stop action, push the choke lever down, pull in the clutch lever, give one of the pedals a quick kick and release the lever as the pedal reached the bottom of its stroke. The engine spluttered into life obviating the wild pedalling often necessary when starting machines of this type. A small amount of throttle also facilitated the starting procedure. After a few minutes warming up, the bike pulled happily away without stuttering. With the first handful of throttle the choke clicks off

automatically – a neat idea.

Once the bike is going there is very little to think about, apart from concentrating on the road. To pull away you just open the throttle and as the revs climb, first gear engages automatically. The bike changed smoothly into second gear at about 20 km/h (13mph) and motored happily around all day at speeds up to about 50 km/h (31mph).



The left-hand end of the bars has the rear brake and clutch levers with the horn and light switch



The 2-stroke motor is unremarkable, except to say that it performed well and was perfectly oil-tight and reliable. Lack of power was at first a trifle disconcerting. Getting used to the slow moped pace and riding style proved easy. The lack of speed and acceleration on roads uncluttered with traffic felt peculiar. In dense jams, this machine really proved its worth. With its tiny turning circle and extreme manoeuvrability, the bike was able to move through traffic and the narrowest of gaps. In cases of extreme blockage, the bike proved light enough to be picked up and carried over any obstruction.

Surprisingly, for such a small, light machine, it actually handled well enough for us to notice. The rigidity of the massive tubular frame which also doubles as a fuel tank and gives the bike a pleasant uncluttered look could account for this.

Suspension is by friction damped forks on the front and sturdy damped shock absorbers on the rear swinging arm. This combination was good enough to deal with most bumps and ripples in the road, but large potholes had to be avoided as the bike bounced

Riders both large and small found this moped ideal for town travel and handy parking

and lurched as both front and rear suspension bottomed.

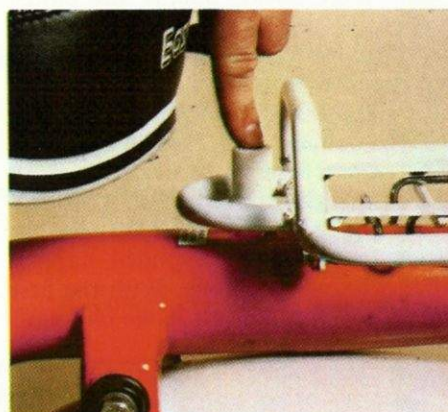
Despite its top speed of only 50 km/h (31mph), there were times when we found the machine quite exciting and fun to ride. The bike could be leant over quite a long way, and provided that the pedals were kept up, cornering, even in wet weather, proved quite safe. We found that riding with feet up on the platform was not a good idea. It was far safer, and more comfortable, to keep both feet on the pedals, otherwise, on a really tight bend there was a considerable risk of a pedal touching the ground. Far better to keep the pedals in a level position.

Brakes were well up to the machine's performance, with a single leading shoe drum front and rear. They were progressive and powerful and, of course, unaffected by wet weather. The back brake especially was excellent. It says something for the tyres that despite very strong braking pressure, we were unable to lock the back wheel.

For a moped, the lights were not too bad. As bright a lighting system as possible is always desirable, but with only 23W being produced by the fly-wheel generator, obviously the headlight could not produce dazzling beams. However, once the machine was moving the dip and main beam positions provided adequate illumination for night-time town use. It was only while



Rear chain adjustment is by snail cams, a great aid to quick and easy chain tensioning and wheel alignment



You have to press this button to fill the tank to its maximum of about 4 litres (7 Imp.pt)

throttle return, or to set the throttle open. Pressing the horn button produced an amusing note from the hooter, not unlike the sound produced after eating too many baked beans. Anyway, it certainly attracted attention.

Just behind the well-padded, comfortable saddle is a useful carrying rack with a spring clip for holding small objects. Even more useful is the large wire top-box that NVT offer as an optional extra. In fact there is quite a range of accessories available for the Easy Rider, including legshields, panniers, a windshield and mirrors although it would have been nice to see these as standard.

When we subjected the bike to constant town riding the really miserly petrol consumption of around 50 km/l (140mpg) gave the bike a range of around 200 km (125 miles) with the 12 litre (7pt) fuel tank. The bike runs on a petrol premix of 20:1 petrol to oil ratio. This means that the correct mixture of oil and petrol must be put into the fuel tank separately. Because of the shape of the fuel tank, an air lock release button is fitted to the rear of the tank. You have to press the button to allow the tank to be filled to its maxi-



The rear rack has a spring loaded clip which is quite handy for small pieces of shopping or bags



Transmission oil is checked with the dipstick on the top of the right engine case under the platform

imum capacity. This procedure is a little awkward, but simple.

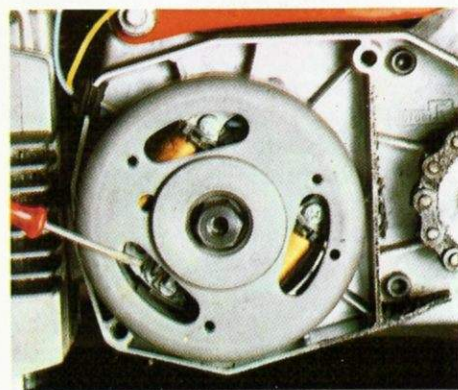
In the workshop

Maintaining the Easy Rider took minimum effort and attention. Apart from topping-up or changing the transmission oil at the recommended intervals, only the points gap and ignition timing needed checking to keep the bike running sweetly and reliably. The single drive chain (a good feature – some mopeds have two), can be swiftly adjusted by undoing the rear spindle nuts and turning the snail cams until the required play is obtained.

NVT certainly seem very confident that nothing will go wrong, the tool box on the bike carries only a plug spanner. Adjustment of the Dell'Orto carburettor is very simple.

Summary

As a practical little workhorse you will find it hard to beat this little moped from NVT. It does everything a moped should and is simple and cheap to run, and with its excellent handling, is a pleasure to ride.



Beneath the left engine casing is the flywheel magneto with the contact breaker points

stationary, especially in the middle of a road, waiting to turn, that better lights would have been an advantage. The rear light unit is the same shape as the one on an 850 Commando.

Controls could not be simpler. On the right there is a throttle and the front brake lever. On the left, the rear brake lever, clutch and a single unit containing horn-push, engine kill button and light switch. All controls were easy to operate, and as a bonus the throttle has a friction screw to adjust the rate of



The single frame tube gives an uncluttered look to this practical moped.

Service data

Plug type/gap: Bosch W175 T30/
6 mm (25 thou)
Timing: 25° BTDC (2.5 mm)
Idle rpm: Approx. 1,500
Engine oil: 2-stroke oil
Transmission oil: SAE 10/40
Tyre pressures: Front 1.2 kg/cm²
(17psi)
Rear 2.1 kg/cm² (30psi)

Fuel consumption

Average: 50 km/l (140mpg)

Performance

Top speed: 50 km/h (31mph)
Maximum power: 1.95 bhp at
4,500 rpm
Maximum torque: At 4,500 rpm

Technical data

Engine

Type: Air cooled 2-stroke single
Bore: 40.0 mm
Stroke: 39.0 mm
Capacity: 49.6 cc
Compression ratio: 7.8:1
Carburation: Dell'Orto SHA 14 12
Induction: Piston ported
Lubrication: 20:1 Premix

Transmission

Type: 2-speed automatic
Clutch: Centrifugal
Overall top gear ratio: 1:6.15

Frame

Type: Large diameter single spine
tube
Front suspension: Friction damped
telescopic forks
Rear suspension: Non-adjustable

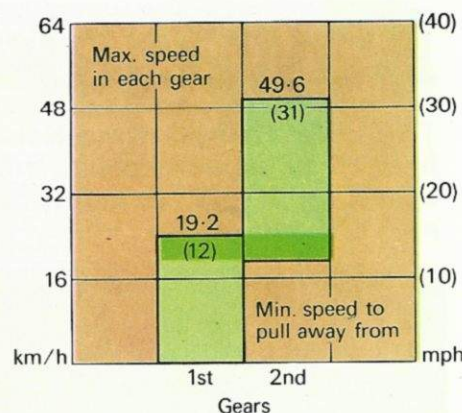
friction damped shock absorbers
Overall length: 1,690 mm (66.5in.)
Overall width: 720 mm (28.0in.)
Dry weight: 48 kg (102 lbs)
Seat height range: 760–860 mm
(30–34in.)
Front brake: SLS drum
Rear brake: SLS drum
Front tyre size: 2.25-17
Rear tyre size: 2.25-17

Electrical

Ignition: Flywheel magneto with
ignition coil and points
Generator: 23W flywheel magneto
6V

Capacities

Fuel tank: 4 litres (7 Imp.pt)
Transmission oil: 0.6 litres
(1 Imp.pt)



Handling characteristics

(marks out of 10)

In slow town traffic	10
Manoeuvrability in traffic	10
Braking in the dry	8
Braking in the wet	8
High-speed cornering	—
Rough road cornering	6
High-speed motorway	—
Country cruising	—
Two-up touring	—

Service schedule

Every 160 km (100 miles):

Check tyres
Check chain tension
Check transmission oil level
Oil control levers and cables
Check lights and horn

Every 2,400 km (1,500 miles):

Remove and clean air filter element
Clean and set spark plug gap

Every 3,200 km (2,000 miles):

Check and adjust contact breaker
gap
Lubricate contact breaker cam heel
Decarbonise silencer

Every 4,800 km (3,000 miles):

Strip, clean and reassemble carb
Change transmission oil

Every 6,400 km (4,000 miles):

Clean and re-grease centre stand
Clean and re-grease pedals
Grease swinging arm
Clean, grease and adjust steering
head bearings
Re-grease wheel bearings
Strip, clean and re-grease telescopic
front forks

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