

ROAD TEST REPORT

First Impressions of the NORMAN NIPPY

THROUGH the co-operation of Messrs. George Grose of New Bridge Street, E.C.4., we were able to make a short test of one of the first available models of the Norman "Nippy".

This machine, it will be remembered, was announced just before the Earl's Court Show and was the first public indication that the British makers were taking up the challenge of the continental machines that have been successfully invading the market for some time past. Actually the *Nippy* closely follows a well tried continental design and is, at first at any rate, to be fitted with a *Sachs* engine/gear unit. Both appearance and specification, therefore, follow the line of current convention.

The 47 c.c. engine is in unit with a two-speed gearbox and clutch, final drive being by single chain. The main frame member incorporates the fuel tank and there is a pleasing harmony of line about the curve of the frame and the balancing lines of the deeply valanced mudguards and cowlings. The forks, which are of the popular bottom link type, have an unusual flat box-like structure in the upper part which incorporates the built-in electric horn and headlamp. The saddle is hinged at the nose and adjustable for height and angle.

Controls are the normal layout of right twistgrip for throttle, left for gear change, hand lever front brake and back pedalling rear. No decompressor is fitted, but there is an ignition cut-out button in the lamp switch assembly on the



handlebar. Tyres are 23in. x 2in. and full width hub brakes are provided on both wheels.

Easy to Ride

The *Sachs* engine is already known for smoothness over a wide range of revs and for certain starting and positive tickover. This one proved no exception. It started first kick of the pedal in neutral pulled away from standstill in first gear without effort and revved up smartly and smoothly. The change up was normally made at about 10 m.p.h. or a little higher if in a hurry or on an upgrade.

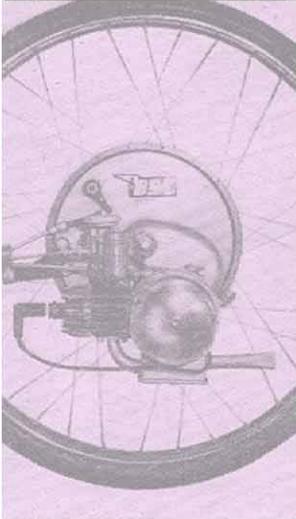
Actually the engine is almost a top gear job and it was quite possible to get away on the clutch in top without pedalling. Most grades are taken with ease and the low first gear is a reserve that should literally tackle mountains. This machine was not run-in and no speed figures were taken, but it appeared to have a maximum in the region of 27 m.p.h.

Most interesting was the ease of

handling. A brand new machine being sat on for the first time usually feels a little strange, but the *Nippy* inspired perfect confidence from the first turn of the wheels and slipped through heavyish traffic without any conscious effort on the rider's part. Steering is good and bends and corners were taken at good speeds, usually without touching the brakes. The 2-inch tyres afforded a comfortable ride and good roadholding, but the forks have a limited travel only. They did not bottom, even on the biggest bumps deliberately ridden over but they had the slightly disconcerting way, common to the type, of riding up when the brake was applied. Perhaps for this reason the front brake had the accent on smoothness rather than grip and could not be made to lock the wheel. A really quick stop could be made with both brakes used hard together.

On the whole we found the *Nippy* to be a very good example of the modern "mo-ped" type of machine, good to look at, easy to ride and with an adequate performance for all probable uses.

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