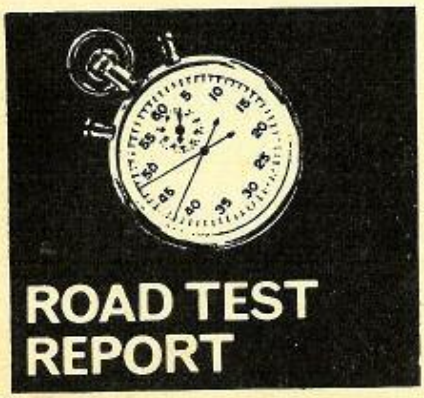
RALEIGH RUNABOUT

A new, no-frills utility moped

THE new *Raleigh "Runabout"* which made its first public appearance at the Blackpool Show is a serious effort by the largest British manufacturing group to make and market a true utility powered bicycle that is priced for a wide popular sale as everyday transport for the million. It has no frills, is sturdy, light, simple and low priced, a machine that anyone can ride, safely and economically.

British built under *Motobecane* patents, the main components are the same as those already well tested on the dearer *RM.4* model. The pressed steel frame is the same, although it looks very different because the fuel tank on the new model is over the rear wheel. The all-alloy engine and the transmission are, of course, identical with the other model with such distinctive features as chrome bore alloy cylinder and roller bearings to big and small ends and a peak power output of 1.4 b.h.p. at a reasonable 4,500 r.p.m.



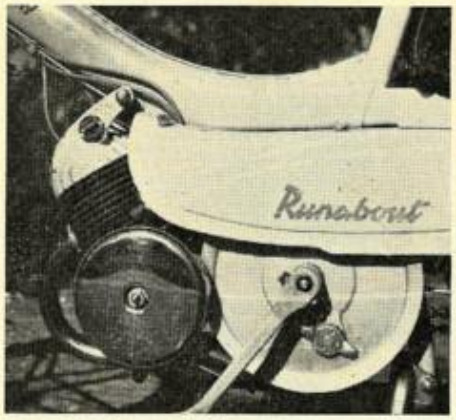
A double acting automatic clutch takes up the drive pedalled at about 5 m.p.h. or permits kick starting with the machine on the stand. Primary drive is by belt to a large aluminium countershaft pulley which also carries a turnbutton switch to engage or disengage the engine drive at will in case accidental fuel shortage or an unlikely breakdown require the machine to be pedalled.

Most noticeable thing about this low-priced machine is the use of rigid front forks which in turn enable a caliper type front brake to be fitted, actually a heavy duty export fitment from the standard *Raleigh* range. Both saddle and handlebars are adjustable for height. Wheels have endrick rims and stainless spokes. Tyres are 23 x 2 inch.

Neat steel panels on each side, secured by coin slotted knurled screws cover the rear of the engine, the carburettor and the top runs of the two driving chains. They provide adequate protection for the rider's clothing from any oil or grease that may be around. Access for maintenance is easy and a particularly good point is that the makers have recognised that the most important maintenance job an owner can do on a two-stroke engine is decarbonising the exhaust system and have designed to meet this need. The pipe comes away easily and in addition there is a trapdoor type opening in the bottom of the silencer that enables the whole inside to be cleaned without removing the box from the machine.

Predictable

Perhaps the best thing that can be said about a machine designed for doing a job of work is that there is nothing unpredictable about the handling and performance of the *Runabout*. The choke control is by a small trigger under the left twistgrip used only and briefly for a cold start. We usually started the machine on its sturdy central stand by a single for-



Specification

Engine:

Two-stroke single, all alloy with hard chromed bore., 39mm. bore × 41.75mm. stroke., capacity 49.9 c.c., Compression ratio 6.5 to 1, output 1.39 b.h.p. at 4,500 r.p.m., Needle roller bearing small end, roller big end and ball mains. Carburettor: GURTNER BA.10 540.D.

Wheels:

Plated steel rims, stainless spokes, 23 × 2—inch tyres, finned hub rear and caliper front brakes, both hand operated.

Transmission:

Automatic centrifugal clutch, Vee-belt primary drive and ½ × 3/16-inch roller chain secondary., Overall gear ratio: 13.8 to 1., Independent chain drive for pedals.

Frame:

Welded pressed steel beam with tubular seat pillar and oval section rigid front forks. Fuel tank with integral carrier over rear wheel, capacity: 1¼-gallons. Domed steel mudguards. Adjustable soft-top saddle and handlebars. Central stand.

Electrics:

NOVI 120X flywheel magneto with external H.T. coil and 18-watt lighting coil. 6v.-15w. headlamp and 6v.-3w. tail., electric horn.

Price:

£46.14.6d. (Including P.T.)

Manufacturers:

Raleigh Industries, Ltd. Nottingham.

ward kick on either pedal, one kick was invariably enough to start and the engine throttled down to a steady and reliable tickover within five seconds.

Starting by pedalling took some 10 yards, the twistgrip being turned outwards to operate the decompressor and the throttle opened as soon as the clutch engaged. On level ground no pedalling is needed to help the engine get away smartly from standstill but we found it easy to improve acceleration from standstill by pedal assistance up to 10 m.p.h. A standing start on 1 in 10 without pedalling proved possible if somewhat slow and the demonstration proved that disabled or elderly riders need not exert themselves to ride this machine on normal roads.

The clutch is very smooth and one is never quite sure at what point it actually engages. We trickled along at walking pace quite comfortably and without fuss and then moved off smoothly by simply banging the throttle wide open. The claim that anyone who can ride a bicycle can ride this mo-ped is fully justified.

Disc brakes are now common on the faster cars and what is a caliper but a disc brake? However, we were surprised how smooth and powerful this front brake proved to be. It could stop the machine with a 13-stone rider quite easily by itself and with both brakes together the stopping power of the test machine frankly surprised us.

The rigid forks are the main concession in the design to low price and simplicity and we made a special point of judging their adequacy throughout the test. There is no denying that they are less comfortable than springs but the difference is not felt on normal urban roads until the speed goes above 25 m.p.h. On the other hand the excellent and positive handling in traffic is very largely due to the firmness and sensitivity of the steering and any ex-cyclist would feel completely at home with this sort of handling. On bad surfaces the only answer is to keep the speed down in the 15-20 m.p.h. range and let the 2-inch tyres cushion the ride.

From about 15 m.p.h. up to its maximum of 30 m.p.h. acceleration is quite lively and the engine is responsive to the throttle, but at the top end of the range a fair amount of vibration can be felt, mainly through the handlebars, and exhaust noise also becomes noticeable. At its worst the *Runabout* could not ever be called noisy and with a few hundred miles of coke in the exhaust system things will almost certainly quieten down considerably, but reporting on the test machine as we found it we suggest that the most comfortable cruising range is 20 to 25 m.p.h. on good roads.

By using the wide range of adjustment on the seat pillar and handlebars the riding position can be made comfortable for any riders between five and six feet tall. We found the saddle fairly comfortable for short distances but would have liked something larger and softer for more than half an hour's riding at a time.

Lighting is simple but effective, the single beam headlamp and large built-in tail lamp both providing a really good light and still being adequately visible at a tickover. The single beam has to be kept in a dipped position, of course, but the range is well up to the normal cruising speed of the machine.

Right for the job

Judged on its merits for the job it has to do the *Runabout* comes out very

(Runabout Road Test—continued)

well indeed. The open frame layout is practical and sensible for either sex in everyday clothing; the one-and-a-half gallon fuel tank will ensure no more than a once-a-week fill for most riders and will take a complete gallon at a time when required. Its filler cap is sensibly set right at the tail where any spillage is unimportant and it can be got at with the tank top in use as a carrier, which it is designed to be.

Only one standard finish is available, an off-white for the frame and forks, side panels and saddle with dark green tank and mudguards. We liked it very much but one young rider remarked that "That's just the kind of green old men have their bicycles in" and another opined that there ought to be some choice so that one could have a different colour from the bike next door.

Our own main point of criticism was the elaborate and apparently German made fuel tap that provided no Reserve position, but the very smallness of this criticism indicates that this *Raleigh* is just about right for its job.

petroil problems

by G. R. Haigh

"USE two per cent mixture only." How many proud owners of shiny new scooters have stood scratching their heads when confronted by these words, either painted on the filler cap, or in the instruction book?

Achieving the correct mixture means using one part of oil to fifty parts of petrol, and the conscientious owner who wishes to be exact is sometimes at a loss to know how to obtain the right fuel for his machine.

One answer is for him to mix it himself, but many scooterists do not wish to go to this trouble. It is surely not asking too much, they argue, to be able to go to a filling station and buy the proper fuel for their machine in the quantity they require?

With this in mind, I visited three large, and one small filling-station in and around a large town, with the object of finding out if they were aware of this new and growing demand for very high-ratio petroil mixture.

The first call was made at a large new filling-station run by an oil company new to this country although well-known abroad.

It was obvious that they had no intention of cultivating the new two-stroke trade. They would not sell less than half a pint of oil, and obviously the owner of a two percent machine would not be able to refuel here—unless he had a three-gallon tank!

A small filling station selling a well-known but not very common brand of petrol produced an attitude only a little more helpful. The man here knew nothing of ratios and percentages, and would sell only a quarter of a pint of oil or more—all right for 16-to-one machines.

At both these places, a request for "a gallon at fifty-to-one," would not have been fulfilled satisfactorily.

The other two calls were at large filling-stations operated by world famous, well-advertised oil companies. The contrast with the first two places was marked. Both knew about two percent mixture, and both could supply it on demand.

The first of the two stations had a mixing pump which supplied up to twenty-five-to-one mixture. The oil company had issued a direction that buyers of fifty-to-one mixture were to be served with half twenty-five-to-one mixture and half neat petrol. The manager was co-operative, and had a friendly attitude towards scooterists.

This was true also of the manager of the last station called at. Here there was a mixing pump which was adjustable for a wide range of ratios including fifty-to-one. The accuracy of the pump is tested about every three months by representatives of the oil company.

It would obviously be a mistake to draw too many conclusions from visits to four filling-stations. It does seem, however, that at least two of the major oil companies are alive to the demand for two percent mixture, and this may well be true of other firms. This means that a scooterist should have little difficulty in finding a petrol station to supply the mixture he requires. It may be, of course, that the pump attendant is not in the know, and for this reason, if blank looks are met with, the request should be carried to the foreman or manager. Few places which value their reputation will turn away a customer who approaches them in a reasonable way.

Just one reminder—don't act as if you own the place, you're only spending five bob after all!

book reviews

FOR SPORTS FANS

Tackle Motorcycle Sport This Way by Anthony Davis, 12s. 6d.
(Stanley Paul & Co.)

The range of events and the various regulations which come under the heading Motorcycle Sport is very large and complex. Mr. Davis has tried to categorise and describe them all in detail and the result is a very comprehensive yet most readable guide.

Though intended mainly for motorcyclists, the scooter enthusiast or club sports secretary will find this little book invaluable. If you want to take up any form of two wheeled sport, this book will tell you how to go about it and what sort of machine is required. Rallies, trials, scrambles, road racing, sprinting and sidecar sport are all covered, and the organisation and effect of the A-C.U. and N.S.A. outlined.

MANUAL FOR B.S.A. SCOOTERS

The Book of the B.S.A., Sunbeam and Triumph Tigress Motor Scooters
by John Thorpe, 6s.
(Pitman's Motorcyclists' Library)

Latest of the detailed, semi-technical pocket books in Pitman's series covering most popular machines, this one is written by well-known motorcycle journalist, John Thorpe. He has left nothing out of his book, which should prove invaluable to novice and experienced owners alike.

There are numerous clear technical drawings, plus wiring diagrams and a chapter on suitable tools. Though mostly concerned with fault tracing and correction, routine maintenance and overhauls, there are chapters on basic mechanical principles and scooter riding. Full marks to Mr. Thorpe.

The publishers have wisely given the book a plasticised jacket, but it is a pity they did not use larger type inside and more frequent cross-heads and sub-titles. A greasy amateur mechanic may have trouble in finding and keeping his place in the step-by-step descriptions buried in pages of solid type.

TWO LISTS

Rally Equipment. The full list of rally and navigational aids available from Swan Libraries, 27 Corbets Tey Rd., Upminster, Essex. They stock maps, books, compasses, spotlights, opisometers and other find-your-way gadgetry.

Vespa Dealers. If you ever want to know where the nearest dealer or service agent for Vespa is, you can get this book from Douglas (Sales & Service), Bristol. All dealers are listed, county by county.

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The Iceni CAM Magazine
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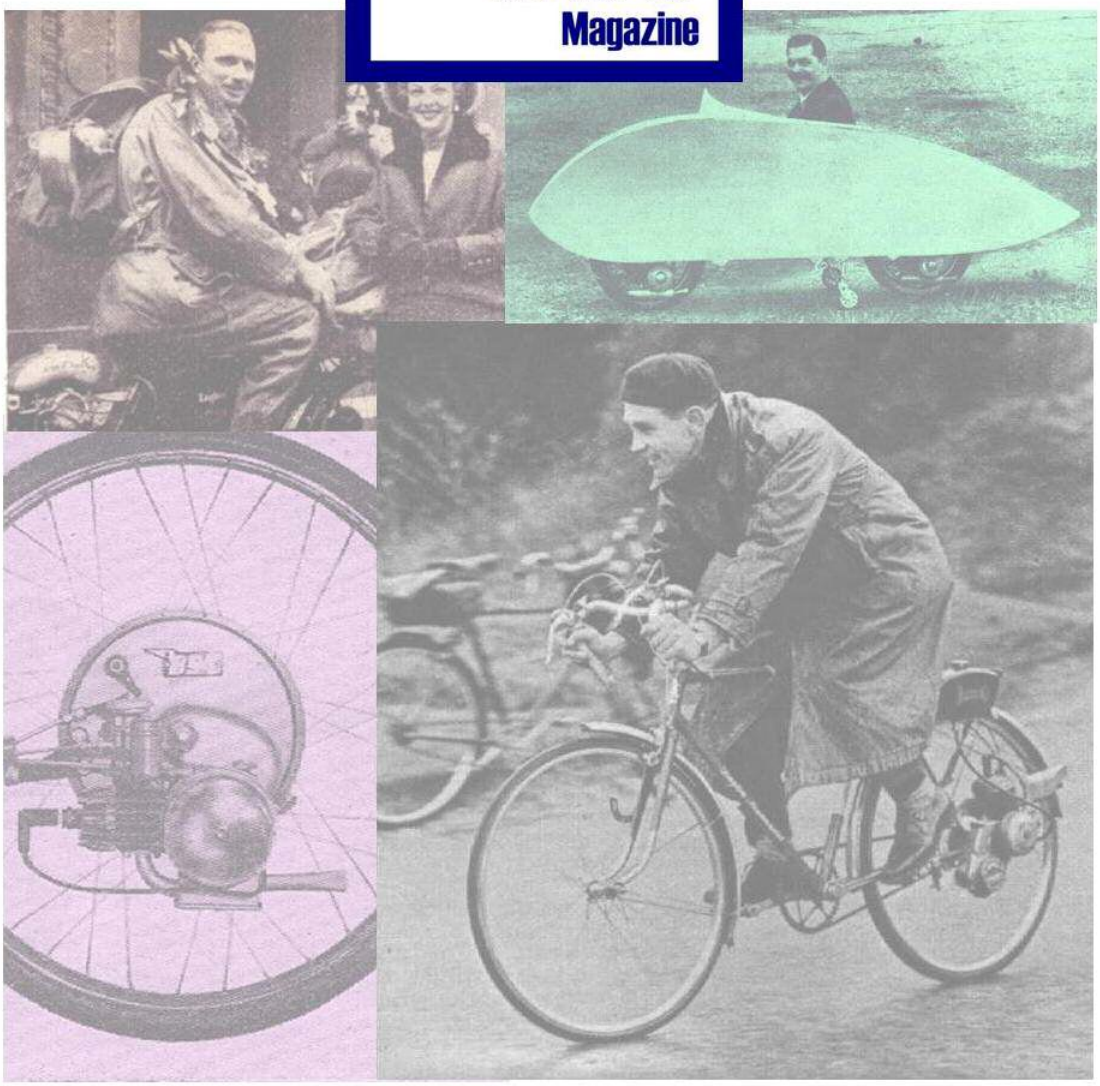

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