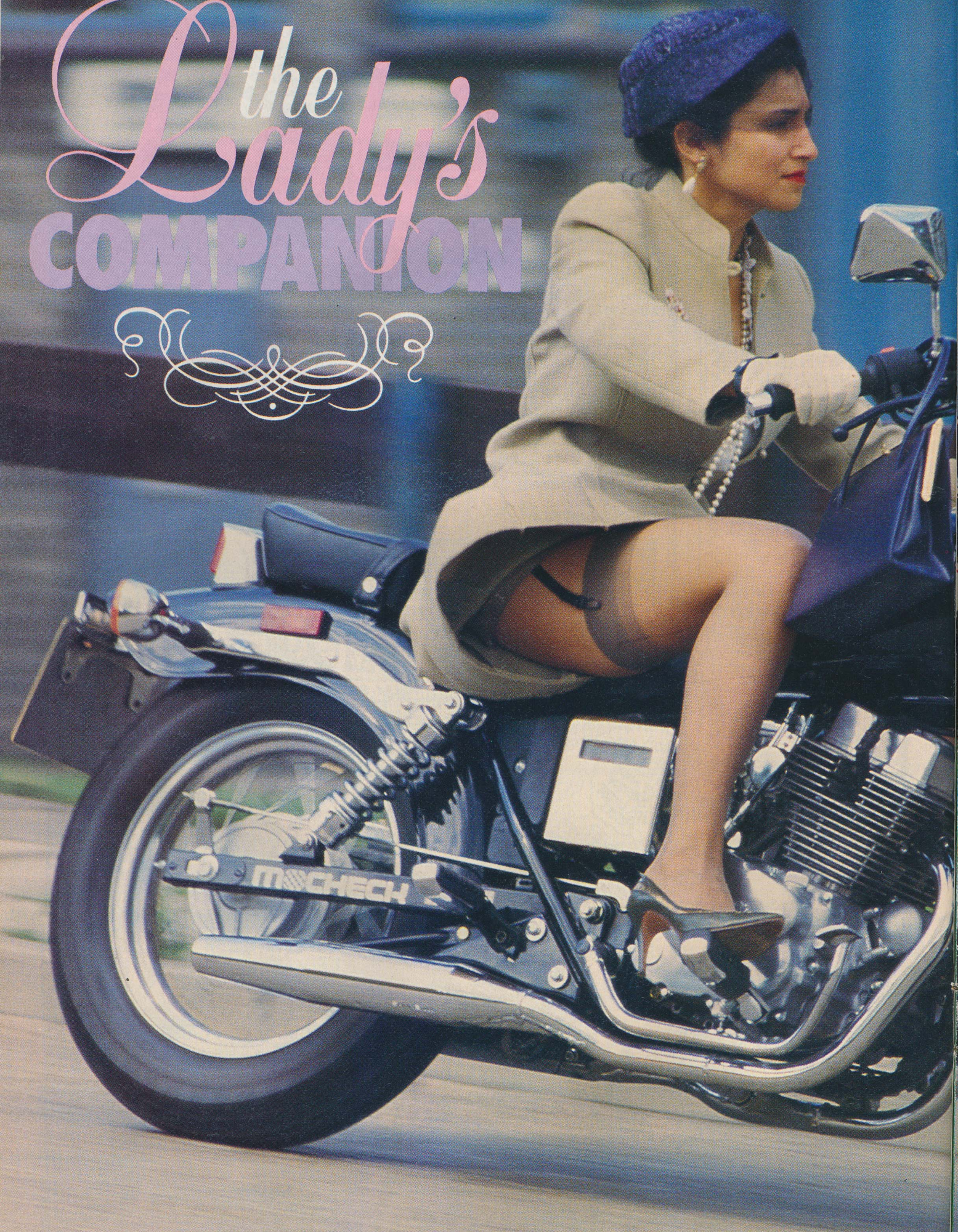


# The Lady's COMPANION





*Why ever one should want to admire one's elbows in these dinky vanity mirrors. I can't possibly imagine*

***Vivacious Patricia Devereux gets her directrices, epithets and little lace hanky twisted with excitement over Honda's cutsie-pie 250 Rebel***

**T**ravelling can be so tiresome. Trolley buses, taxis and especially the Tube can be such a harrowing experience one often has to take a restorative cup of Earl Grey after even the shortest of journeys. But, it seems, a lady must endure this ordeal if one is to retain any morsel of independence as there are few alternatives: motor cars are so

expensive and such a devil to park whilst popping down to the Women's Institute on Friday evenings. Bicycles are all very well for a short trip to the corner shop, but anything longer brings more than just a rosy glow to the cheeks and is thus quite impractical.

Yet maybe there is another option that could fulfill even the busiest gel's travel requirements without running ▶

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◀ away with the housekeeping budget — a motorcycle. A few of you might have already experienced this type of transport, maybe as a pillion on your husband or boyfriend's steed, but now it is your turn to take the controls and, heeding that example to us all, Barbara Cartland, "aim for the stars".

Of course it would be quite ridiculous for me to suggest that you should attempt to ride anything as imposing as a full size motorbike. No, what has prompted my suggestion is the arrival of a truly woman-sized bike, something called a Honda Rebel — a real motorcycle with the feminine touch.

Everything about the Rebel has been designed with convenience in mind. The dainty but plush upholstery is low enough for a mere slip of a girl to perch her pert derriere on. Keeping those fragile stiletto heels in place and preventing any chance of developing unsightly calf muscles men seem to grow from using a leg-operated starter, the Rebel employs the very latest electric method, requiring little more than the caress of a button to set wheels in motion.

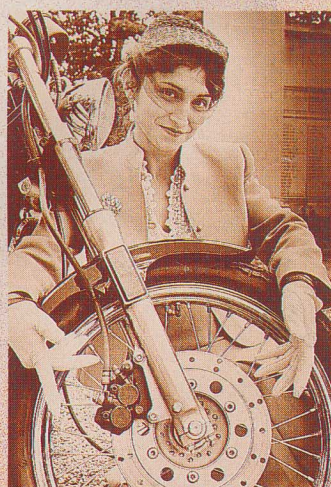
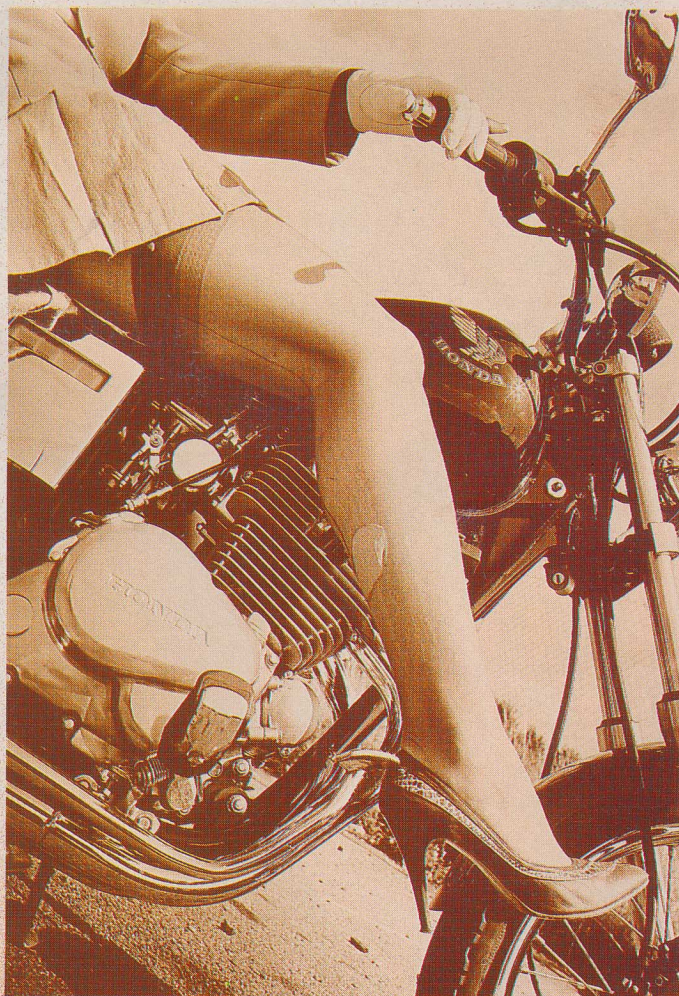
Once on the move, memories of all those tedious tap dance classes you attended as a girl will come flooding back as you dance up and down on the gear pedal to maintain a brisk rate of progress. This may feel like something of a chore at first, but just think of what a well turned ankle you'll be able to boast as a result.

Beauty should never be neglected in any of a lady's pursuits so it's reassuring to know that the Rebel is fully equipped with not one, but two vanity mirrors — surely they have no other purpose — in which lipstick or mascara application can be monitored

whenever necessary. It was whilst undertaking such an adjustment to my make-up as I waited for the traffic lights to change, that I was informed by a rather unkempt looking gentleman — surely not a successful man, as according to Barbara "men in top jobs never have dirty shoes or long hair", both of which he sported — astride a fearsome-sounding machine, that this petite scooter was nothing more than a "cheap hog copy."

This rather puzzling comment — I could see no parallel between a male pig and the Rebel — was later explained to me by a more experienced motorcycling companion, as meaning that the Honda had been designed to resemble, in both looks and sounds, something called a Harley Davidson; apparently a brand of American motorcycle famed for its copious vibrations and something called stump-pulling torque. How peculiar.

Strangely enough though, vibrations are apparent on this little treasure too. A rather stimulating buzz can be felt through all points of contact should you venture up to speeds of more than 50 mph. I found myself getting quite carried away on several occasions, so be warned not to get too lost in your tingling emotions or you could have a teensy-weensy accident. (And I *don't* mean, er, down below. . . .)



(Above) Care must be taken to avoid snagging stockings on rebellious protuberances (Top right) There's ample room for an ample rear (Bottom right) How marvellously clever and thrifty of Honda to find such an important task for their surplus quiche pans. . .

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Care must also be taken when travelling round corners. Whilst the seat may be low enough to allow even the most petite woman to install herself with her dignity intact and the footrests may be suitably close so as not to display too much of one's hosiery, the resultant proximity to the road does mean that the 'rests can scrape on the tarmac so easily that over-zealousness in cornering could lead to straightening more than your stocking seams.

If you happen to find yourself travelling at a speed which threatens to unsettle your perm, not to worry as the Rebel is just as keen to slow down as you are. Just apply a light pressure to the right hand lever and you'll soon be back to a more manageable velocity with the help of the rather attractive front flange dish-shaped brake. Do be careful not to squeeze the lever too hard or you might find that the bike becomes a bit unsettled as

the front suspension is softer than even the very lightest victoria sponge cake.

"In the deepest darkness, there is always a flickering light if one looks hard enough" Barbara reminds us, but I'm afraid how ever hard I strained my eyesight, I could not see the road after dark when riding the Rebel. There was little doubt that the lights were actually switched on as they do so automatically when the ignition key is turned. But try as I might, and I'm sure it wasn't just the gin, I couldn't see further than two feet in front of the mudguard once a romantic sunset had occurred. Maybe carrots are the answer, although my friend Diedre always swears by a cucumber at bed time, for some reason.

But oh! How the bike shines on a summer's day. Lustrous black coachwork and lots of yummy chromium make the Rebel a really glamorous eye-catcher. Being, as it is, also available in fetching shades of blue and red, finding a matching shade of nail varnish shouldn't be a problem for the fashion-conscious.

Obviously keen home economists amongst you will be wondering just how many savings are going to have to be made around the home in order to buy one of these motorised bicycles. Well, I'm afraid to tell you, but you're going to have to save an awfully large number of washing powder vouchers if you can't persuade your loved one to finance the purchase, as the Rebel costs far more than a roll-on and a string of cultured pearls.

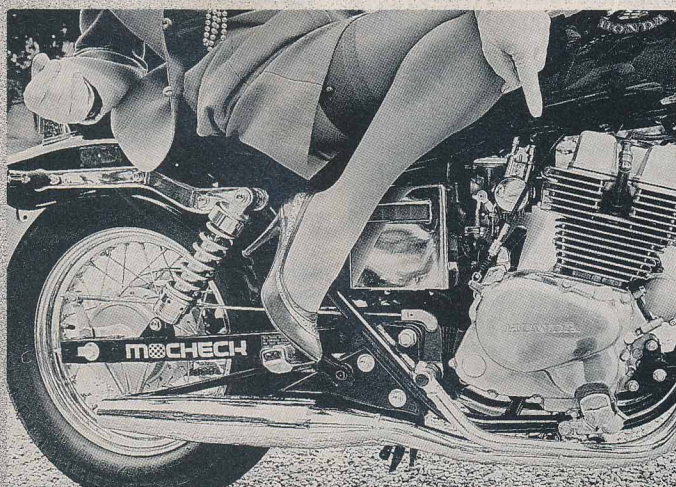
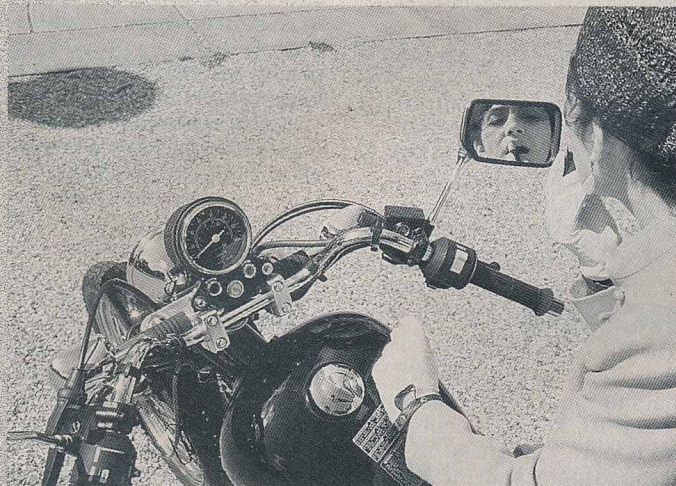
Surely though, any woman who can wiggle when she walks should be able to muster enough charm to secure this object of transport desire. If your most beguiling pleas to hubby are unsuccessful, why

not suggest a his 'n hers matching set as the Rebel is also available in a small man-sized 450cc version too. Both offer penny-pinching frugality, keeping you away from ruining your manicure in petrol stations for weeks at a time, and are just so utterly convenient you'll soon be wondering however you managed before the Rebel's arrival. Stand on charm or start saving now and you'll soon be the envy of all your friends still waiting in the bus queues. Kiss goodbye to the commuter blues and be a bit of a rebel, girls, *without* ending up pushing a pram. . . ■

HONDA CMX250C REBEL	
Price (inc taxes) .....	£1599
Importer .....	Mocheck, 24-28 Clapham High St London SW4. (01-720 6072)
Guarantee .....	12 months/unlimited mileage
Engine .....	Four-stroke parallel twin
Bore x stroke .....	53 x 53mm
Capacity .....	234cc
Comp. ratio .....	9.2:1
Carburation .....	single Mikuni
Gearbox .....	5-speed
Electrics .....	12V

CYCLE PARTS	
Tyres .....	Bridgestone
Front .....	3.00 x 18
Rear .....	130/90-15
Brakes, Front .....	Disc
Rear .....	Drum
Suspension, Front .....	Telescopic fork
Rear .....	Twin shock, 5 position preload
Stockings .....	Aristo 15 dernier run-resist
Lingerie .....	Marks & Spencer (of course)
Lipstick .....	Max Factor Crushed Coral

DIMENSIONS	
Wheelbase .....	1460mm (57.5in)
Dry Weight .....	136kg (299.7lb)
Fuel capacity .....	10.5litres (2.3gal)
Bust .....	36in
Waist .....	24in
Hips .....	36in



(Top) The machine's only feminine failing is a lack of lipstick holder (Above) Vibration from this engine thing can give a girl absolutely super dreams (oh, is that really a joke? How witty of me!)