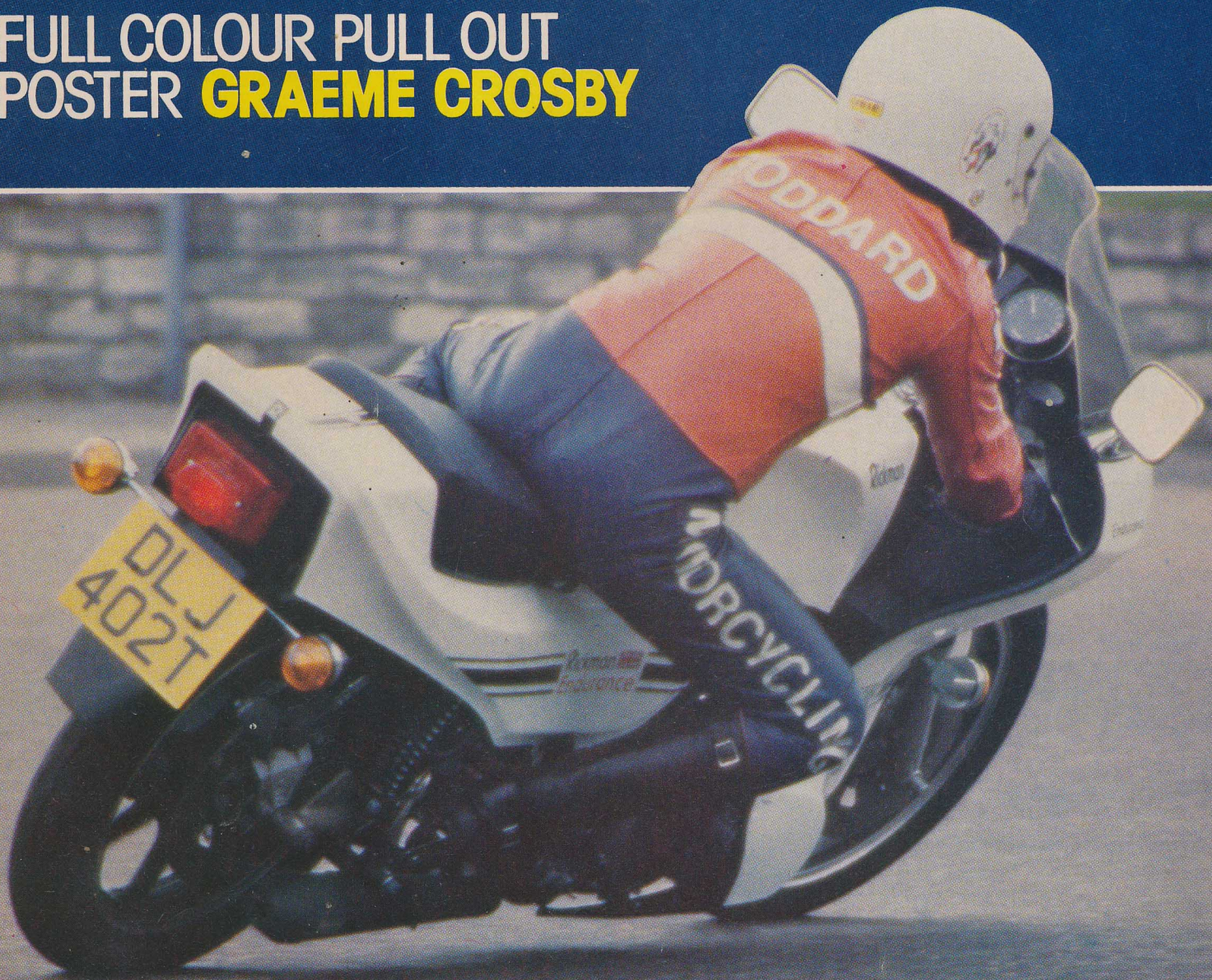


MOTOR CYCLING

50p

JANUARY 1980

FULL COLOUR PULL OUT
POSTER **GRAEME CROSBY**



Bike Tests

Yamaha 650 Special Marathon

Rickman-Kawasaki 1000

Fantic & Gilera 50s on the trail

Features

It's no Guarantee... read the small print!

Workshop

Yamaha Trail irons service guide

MOTOR CYCLING

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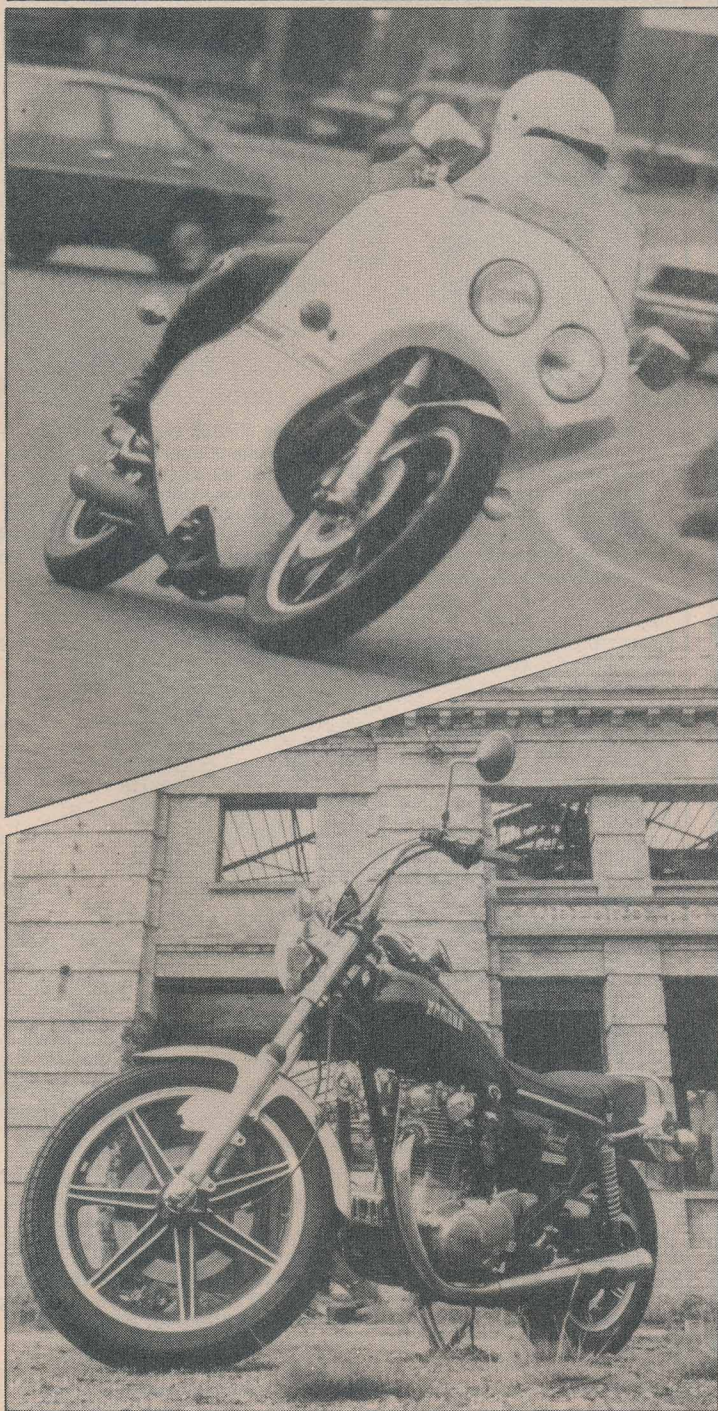
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Restricted Rough Riders

Fantic and Gilera 'fifties' . . . can they take the rough with the smooth?

YOU'RE sixteen, you want a bike and you want some fun. We all know that and so do the manufacturers. So how do they help you to make fun out of 30mph? And how much of what looks like fun is for real and not just marketing propaganda?

There are plenty of racey-looking mopeds around, but it's heartbreaking to see them tarted up with clip-ons, rear-sets, expansion chambers and so on with the rider desperately crouched over the tank. What's he

got? No more power, lots of noise and probably neck ache.

That's no way to ride and enjoy it. So what's the alternative? Anyone worth their weight in speed restricters will enjoy mud pies and gungey puddles — anyway it doesn't hurt so much when you fall off — and there are plenty of potential off-road mopeds around. But how good are they?





Trail Impressions



We chose a couple of non-Jap enduros and put them through the 'trail trial' drill, namely a fair few escapades on our favourite off-road spots, normal tussling with traffic and not forgetting a visit to the ultimate off-road tester — Sammy 'number one' Miller.

Here's what we thought of Italy's Gilera 50 Enduro and Fantic Caballero Regularita 4M...

Nowadays there is as much choice in styling of 50cc bikes as there is with 500cc machines.

A prospective moped buyer can choose from a simple, spindly step-thru right through to a sharp-looking sportster with mag wheels and disc brake.

But for their looks, there is one thing about which there is no choice — top speed. So whatever illusions of grandeur a striking-looking moped may have created, they are dispelled as soon as the throttle is opened and the bike inches its way along. Fortunately, the Gilera was not quite so disappointing as most restricted mopeds might be. It quite obviously had a fraction more 'oomph' than the Fantic as we ran them side by side on the road and over rough tracks, but it wasn't quite enough to safely overtake a double decker in a 30mph limit. However, it did allow us to be first away from the traffic lights in front of a Puch Maxi.

The Gilera 50 itself is not new. In fact it's been around since 1974 with various modifications, the most obvious of these being the replacement of pedals with footrests when they were no longer a legal requirement.

There are now two types of Gilera 50, an enduro model and a trial model. They are basically the same underneath, the only real differences are to the paintwork and small styling features. Our test machine was the Enduro model and it had an upswept exhaust system, competition plates, engine mud flap, a tank pouch and single seat. The Trial version has an exhaust system that's neither up nor down, plus a dual seat and pillion footrests. Unfortunately, these are of no real value except on the shortest of trips as the moped has just about sufficient power to cope with one person.

Starting the 50cc Gilera engine was something of a ritual as it needed a few

Restricted Rough Riders

minutes to warm up and just wouldn't be ridden away before it was ready.

With the choke full on, the Gilera would generally fire first kick, but then there had to be some juggling with the heavy throttle and gradual dispensing with the choke before it would rev freely.

Once it was out on the road, warmed up and revving high, the rider could begin to enjoy a reasonably comfortable ride. This was marred slightly by the kickstart which didn't fold away properly or fit snugly in with the rest of the bike. Instead it niggled at the rider's right leg.

The left leg had no peace either. The stiff gear lever action made heavy work of the gearbox and when changing down it was very tempting to clout it with your foot rather than nudge it into the next position. Apart from that, gearchanges were often wrought with panic, trying to summon up more power to get out of tricky situations.

Even though the gear ratios were well spaced and Sammy Miller thought the five-speed gearing was as suitable as it could be for this restricted engine, the motor needed to be kept buzzing on a very narrow power band. This meant the rider was continually shifting through the gears to keep the Gilera on the move, which hardly encourages tolerance of a stiff and notchy gearbox. Clutchless changes were even less positive.

Stalling, particularly on the rough, is a problem as the kickstart is not connected to the primary drive shaft, which meant neutral had to be found before any further action. This involved clicking through the gearbox and rocking the bike to and fro in order to find it.

Appealing wheeling

The extra bit of 'poke' that the Gilera seemed to be blessed with was taken advantage of by everyone. By following the classic routine of revving hard and dropping the clutch, the front wheel would lift and it's amazing how much appeal that has. We motorcyclists are all kids at heart.

The exhaust note seemed to have a touch too much 'oomph' behind it too and Sammy didn't seem too keen on its chances of passing a noise level test. But we were assured the exhaust note falls within EEC regulations.

Whatever happened to the mythical moped fuel consumption, where one gallon of petrol would take you anywhere from nought to infinity and back again? There's a point where a 50cc engine reaches peak efficiency, but when it's choked with restrictors it begins to decline again.

The Gilera handbook actually quotes a fuel consumption of 84mpg. And since that should be the more impressive side of the truth, we were surprised to obtain a maximum of only 63mpg. This is what our fuel meter read and as it didn't appear right, we ran the fuel tests again and found our



Italiano trail machines — Fantic and Gilera 50's are basically road going mopeds with off road styling.

63mpg figure was correct. Obviously, the need to keep buzzing the motor at maximum revs to obtain any indication of performance or power takes its toll in fuel costs.

When we tested the Gilera 125 GRL (Oct 79) we complained about the centre stand getting in the way and snagging over logs and so on. The Enduro 50 also has a centre stand which is a rarity on an off-road machine. Trail machines are usually fitted with a sidestand.

Sammy Miller actually had some praise for the centre stand for reasons that should concern us all, that is ease of bike maintenance. When checking the oil level and tensioning the chain, for instance, a centre stand saves getting a box out or asking a mate to prop it up.

When we first rode the Gilera something felt a bit strange about the riding position, but it wasn't until we were riding on the rough that we realised what it was. The handlebars were set too far forward, giving the rider the impression that the bike was longer than it actually was.

Whether this is a standard position or someone big and gangly had been riding the test bike before us we don't know.

Anyway, we slackened off the four handlebar bolts with an Allen key from the Fantic toolkit (none of those in the Gilera toolkit fitted) and moved the bars back in line with the forks so that we could see the front wheel and this improved the riding position.

Rough on the tough

Because the machine has a short wheelbase, the bike is easily forced off line when hacking over a bumpy course. This makes it hard to handle and gives the impression the steering is at fault.

Add to this the very soft front suspension and the result is not very impressive. Although our test machine wasn't very old it

felt as if the front forks were already worn and there was evidence of seepage around the fork oil seals. The rear suspension gave a comfortable ride on the road, but, despite its three-position adjuster, very easily bottomed over the rough stuff.

It's ironic that the Gilera is dressed up in off-road livery which is mostly for show and of no practical value yet the tyres are not suitable for anything but off-road surfaces.

The rear tyre is described as being a 'moto-cross type' in the handbook and it certainly looks like one. Tyre manufacturers, however, do not recommend moto-cross tyres for road use and so they must be ridden with care, especially in wet conditions. There is no legislation about off-road tyres except if the tyre manufacturers marks its suitability for use actually on the tyre itself. So these particular tyres are apparently quite legal on the road.

The electrical side of the Gilera is very basic and the switchgear is cheap and nasty. There is no way of locking the ignition though there is a precautionary steering lock.

The front and rear lights are powered by the alternator and therefore illuminate in parallel with the engine speed — that's another reason for keeping the revs up.

Really they are just a gesture and serve only to be seen by and at maximum revs they fulfill that purpose.

Everyone knows that a moped is a very basic form of transport and the Gilera is no more than this. To be fair it is no less either for it was reliable and fulfilled a certain role.

But despite its colourful livery the Gilera 50 Enduro is just a quiet little moped that wants to be left to its own devices and not pushed too hard where it doesn't belong...

Gilera Technical Specification

Engine

Quite pokey for a restricted 50cc motor. Fairly heavy fuel consumption and a very noisy exhaust note.

Engine: Single-cylinder, two-stroke.

Bore x stroke: 38.4mm x 43mm.

Displacement: 49.8cc.

Lubrication: Crankshaft by 25:1 petroil mixture; gearbox and clutch by oil thrower.

Carburettor: Float type Dell'Orto 14/14.

Air filter: Paper element.

Transmission

Gear ratios are good, though a great deal of gearchanging is needed to get the best from the peaky engine.

Clutch: Multi-plate in oil bath.

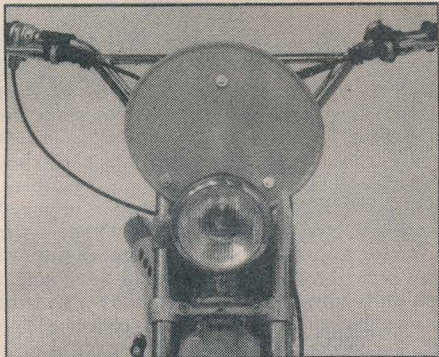
Gearbox: 5 speed constant mesh. Primary drive with helical gears 1:4.235 (17/72). Secondary drive roller chain with rubber flexible coupling between hub and wheel.

Frame and Forks

Short wheelbase is detrimental to the handling and control of the machine off road. Front forks are much too soft.

Double cradle tubular frame.

Front telescopic forks with rear swinging arm and three-way adjustable shock absorbers.

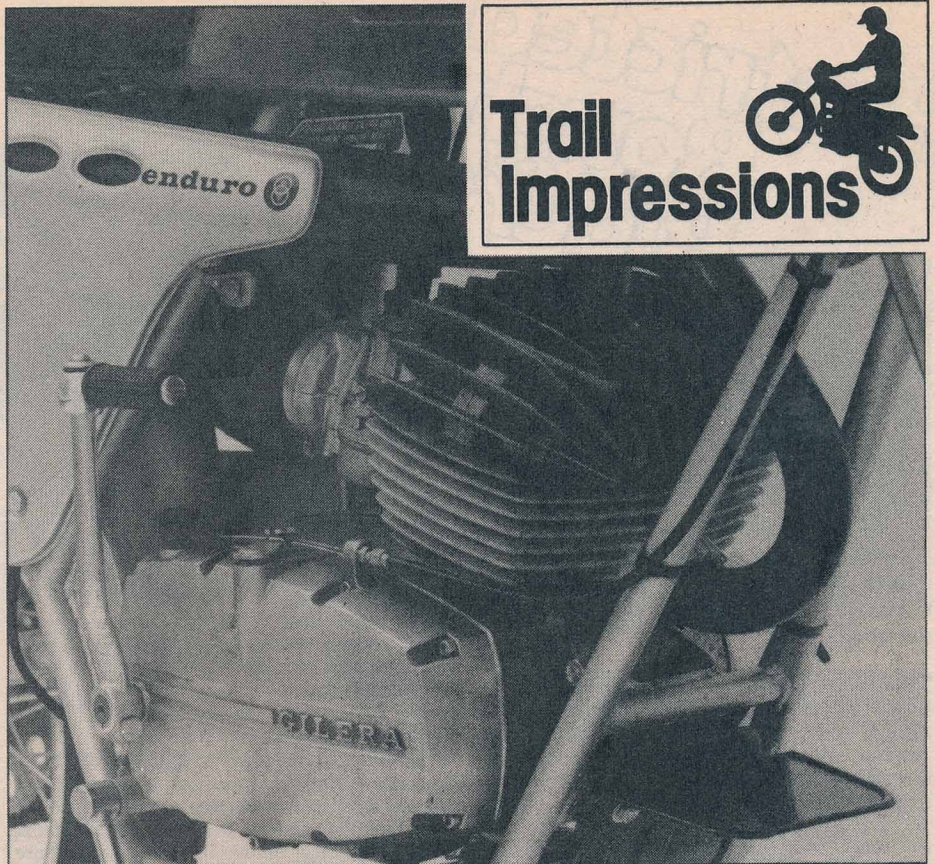
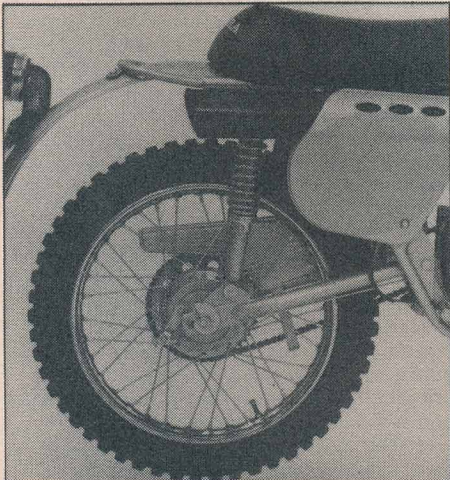


Wheels and Brakes

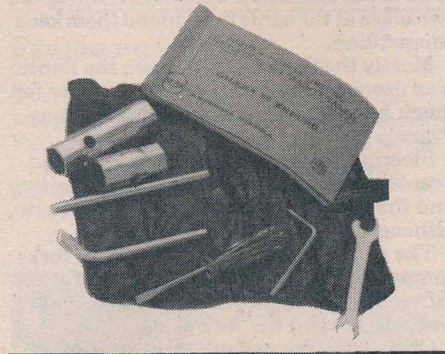
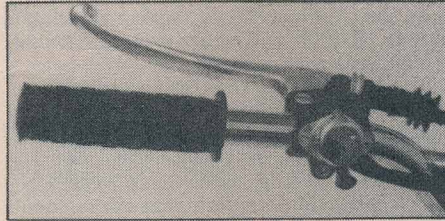
Moto-cross styled tyres rather dubious for road use but fine for off road. Brakes worked well and were water resistant. Front and rear light alloy brake drums with internal expanding brake shoes.

Tyres: Front — 2.50 x 19R universal

Rear — 3.00 x 17in. knobbly (moto-cross type)



Powerful 50cc Gilera engine is well protected by the engine mud flap.



Trail Impressions



Electrics

Lights for anything more than fulfilling legal requirement were very poor. Hooter was a joke.

Ignition: 6v 18w Flywheel magneto ignition with HT coil.

Spark plug: Bosch W240 T2 or equivalent.

Headlamp: 6v 15w.

Tail lamp: 6v 5w.

6v electric horn.

Dimensions

Very light and easy size for any sixteen year old to cope with. Big enough though for an average sized rider to be comfortable over a short distance.

Wheelbase: 1190mm (46.8in.).

Max length: 1880mm (74in.).

Max width: 810mm (31.8in.).

Max height: 1090mm (42.9in.).

Ground clearance: 220mm (8.7in.).

Weight: 73kgs (162lbs.).

Fuel tank: 1.5 galls.

Equipment and Finish

Quite sporty looking with competition plates, and tank pouch. Seven-piece toolkit and handbook are kept in the unlockable pouch. Steering lock and cut-out switch fitted. Crankcase stone guard and engine mud flap.

General

Test machine supplied by: Douglas (Sales and Service) Limited, 1 & 2 Oak Lane, Fishponds Trading Estate, Bristol BS5 7XB

Price: £376.41 inc VAT (plus £11 delivery). Available in Arcore red only.

Restricted Rough Riders

Fantic 50 handles well on the road and can cope with the rough as well.



One of a famous range

The Fantic Motor Co. specialises in the design and manufacture of lightweight machines with the emphasis on 50cc engines so there's plenty of choice for moped hunters. But apart from their ordinary road-going mopeds, Fantic are probably more famous for their on/off-road range, the Caballero's, of which there are several.

There's the Caballero 50 RC for instance, built for competition and basically an off-road machine that can go on the road. Our test machine, the Regularita 4M, is basically a road bike that can go off road, although it doesn't actually look that way.

It has high-rise mudguards, knobby tyres, competition plates, in fact all the right trappings and with the sleek black tank, it adds up to a very tasty looking bike.

So, how does it go? It was a temperamental starter and, just like the Gilera, needed plenty of time to warm up before it would make a move. With the choke full on, it has to be kicked over without using the throttle, for when cold any amount of throttle killed the engine. However, if it was left too long ticking over on choke, the plug would oil up.

Starting needed the technique of gradually opening the throttle until the motor picked up and revved freely. If this routine was adhered to everything was just great, except for possibly a bruised toe, because on the downstroke of the kickstart, your foot ends up under the footpeg.

The Minarelli engine revved freely and in turn the throttle was light and responsive, but out on the road the bike seemed to be all revs and no go.

Powerless

Sammy Miller's comments were that it was way down on power and very quick to run out of steam — as he stood there in the stream bed having stalled in first gear on the first slight slope! He did the very same trick over some rocks, too. The poor, little restricted Fantic just couldn't cope with heavy off-road running.

In spite of its low power, the motor proved reasonably flexible. Constant gearchanging wasn't necessary and the Fantic was more controllable at slow speeds than the Gilera, because the revs would pick up more quickly from a closed throttle.

Sammy thought most of the off-road problems were down to the four-speed box. It needs closer ratios, plus another gear, which will allow a lower first gear for using maximum power at slow speed on the rough.

Fantic do actually make a Regularita 6M with six speeds, but apparently, because people complained that six gears were too

many on the road, they offer the alternative four-speed. If six is too many and four not enough, what about a 5M?

Seventeen-year-olds with restricted Fantics will be pleased to know that the importers do supply conversion kits for under £30 to increase performance. The kits include carburettor and silencer modifications, though any alterations to top speed means it is no longer a restricted moped and has to be re-plated.

A Fantic 50 tested in a very early issue of *Motor Cycling*, before the new moped law returned about 100mpg. On our '79 test machine, the results were more encouraging than the Gilera at 83mpg, but considering a Honda CB100N will return around 100mpg, it still isn't good enough.

The handling on the Fantic is without a doubt superior to that on the Gilera. It could cope better with being ridden off road and thrown around a bit. Not only did Sammy Miller do his thing, which usually means bending the number plate, but our resident moto-cross-come-trail-bike-racers, riding the two bikes at the same time, found them keen competition.

Mostly the Gilera won because the Fantic was down on top end power, but riders felt much happier with the handling on the Fantic.

Steering, especially at slow speeds and over tricky ground, was much more positive and the suspension was far more adequate, although not beyond bottoming.

The superior damping in the front forks compared to the Gilera made a lot of difference although, yet again, there was oil weeping around the fork seals.

One very obvious fault, and Sammy actually marked the spot by denting it on a rock, is the routing of the exhaust system. Unlike any of the Caballero's, which have pipes that tuck up out of the way, the Regularita's exhaust pipe curves under the frame before venturing to the right-hand side of the bike and pointing towards the sky. Since Fantic got it right with the first Caballero, it's a pity to mess it up on the Regularita for even though it is supposed to be predominantly a road bike it does have off-road potential.

And, talking of it being predominantly a road bike, the tyres which cater very well on the mud felt very strange riding on tarmac. It is possible to virtually pin point which chunk of rubber was in contact with the road. They felt especially slippery when cornering in the wet.

The brakes weren't very good as the front

drum was much too spongy and ineffective for road use and more suitable for off-road where you don't need a powerful front brake.

The rear brake was alright, but after one dip through a deep puddle, water had leaked in and it took a while for the brake to dry out and work properly again.

Sammy complained about the design of the brake anchor slots on the wheel hub which locate with the lug on the forks. After a while, the slots wear which means that when braking there is always play and possibly a clunking between the forks and front wheel. This is a fault common to many machines, and was evident on the Fantic.

Snail adjusters

Both the Gilera and Fantic are fitted with snail cam adjusters on the rear wheel. These adjusters have protruding thumb levers which make adjusting the chain easy, but the way they were positioned on the Fantic meant that if by chance they were knocked upwards, creating a space between the adjuster and swinging arm, the alignment and security of the wheel could be affected. It's quite simple to swap them over so that they turn upwards in the direction of the thicker wedge as a precautionary measure.

Like the Gilera, the Fantic has no ignition lock, so it is an open invitation for anyone hanging around nearby to take it for a joy ride. A very sturdy chain and padlock should do the trick, but if the Japanese can provide a conventional key for the ignition system, why can't the Italians?

The lights on the Fantic worked well enough when the engine was running and revving high, but if it stalls, then you have no lights. It would be preferable if moped manufacturers also supplied a big three-tone air horn, as can be fitted to a push bike, when they can't provide an electric horn that actually sounds like one.

Both the Fantic and Gilera horns sounded like a wet lamb going through a mangle and were barely distinctive from the noise of the engine.

If you want a proper off-road machine, then Fantic has something else for you. But if it's basically a road-going moped you want, then how much in the way of an electrical system, including indicators, are you sacrificing for off-road looks? There are many combinations of looks and practicality available on the moped market and it's a difficult choice.

However, the Fantic and Gilera make moped riding look more interesting . . .

Fantic Caballero Regularita Technical Specification

Engine

More free-revving and responsive than the Gilera, but very quick to run out of steam. Better fuel consumption than Gilera but there should still be better mpg from a 50.

Engine: Single-cylinder, two-stroke Minarelli.

Bore x stroke: 38.8 x 42mm.

Displacement: 49.6cc.

Lubrication: Engine by 25:1 petrol mix.

Separate lubrication system for gearbox and primary drive assembly.

Carburettor: Dell'Orto SHA 14/12.

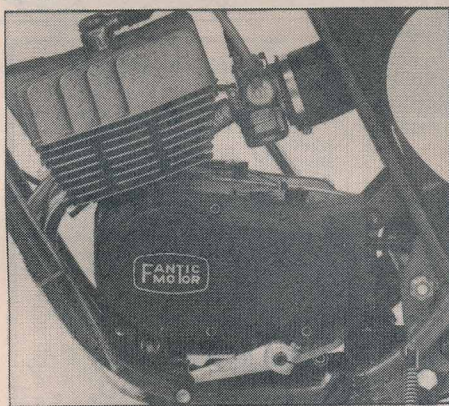
Transmission

Four-speed version proved to have inadequate gearing, though there is a choice of a six-speed model too. As on Gilera, kickstart works in neutral only.

Clutch: Wet, multi-plate type.

Gearbox: Four or six-speed constant mesh, ratios 4.615:1.

Chain 1/2in. x 3/16in. Final reduction ratio 2.84:1.

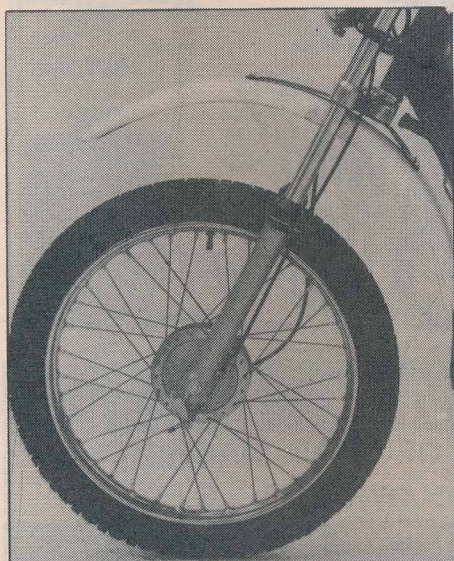


Wheels and Brakes

Brakes were rather poor and suffered through the puddles. Tyres have moto-cross styling which gives a strange feel on tarmac. Front and rear internal expanding drum brakes. Metzeler 'SIX DAY' tyres.

Tyres: Front — 2.50 x 19in.

Rear — 3.00 x 17in.



Trail Impressions



Fantic's Regularita 4M could do itself a favour by improving the gearing. 6 speed model available.

Electrics

Very basic alternator-powered lighting provides minimum legal illumination. Virtually non-effective hooter.

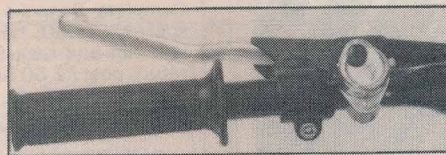
Ignition: 6v 23w flywheel magneto with external coil.

Spark plug: Bosch W225 T1.

Headlamp: 6v 20/20w.

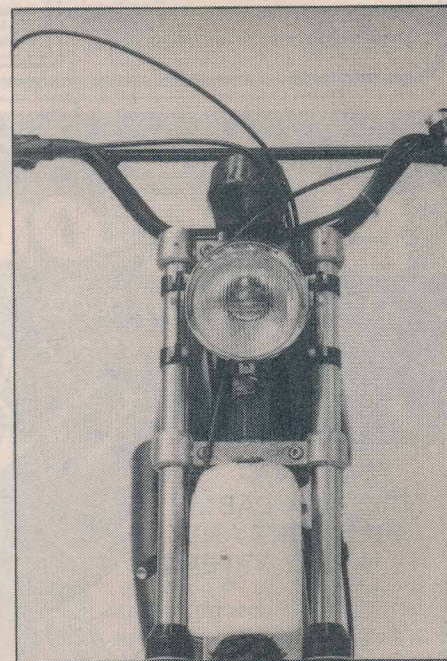
Tail lamp: 6v 3/15w.

6v horn.



Frame and Forks

Overall handling was quite good with adequate suspension and positive steering. Full cradle frame. Front telescopic forks with rear swinging arm and five-way adjustable shock absorbers.



Dimensions

Pleasant size to be comfortable on; light and well-balanced and easily retrieved when riding on the rough.

Wheelbase: 1260mm (49.6in.).

Max. length: 1900mm (74.8in.).

Max. width: 900mm (35.4in.).

Max height: 1160mm (45.6in.).

Ground clearance: 235mm (9.2in.).

Weight: 74kg (164lbs.).

Fuel tank: 1.3 galls.

Equipment and Finish

Looks quite smart and striking. Five-piece toolkit and handbook supplied.

General

Test machine supplied by: Barron Eurotrade Ltd. High Street, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 1TR.
Price: £428 inc VAT — four speed £449 inc VAT — six speed.

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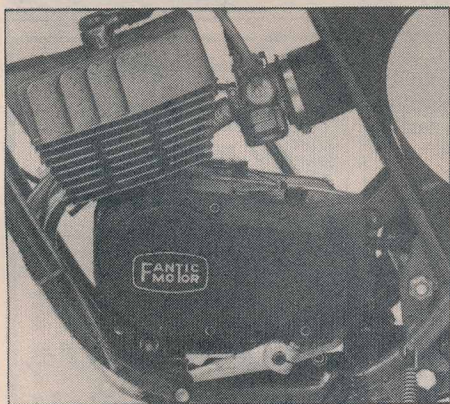
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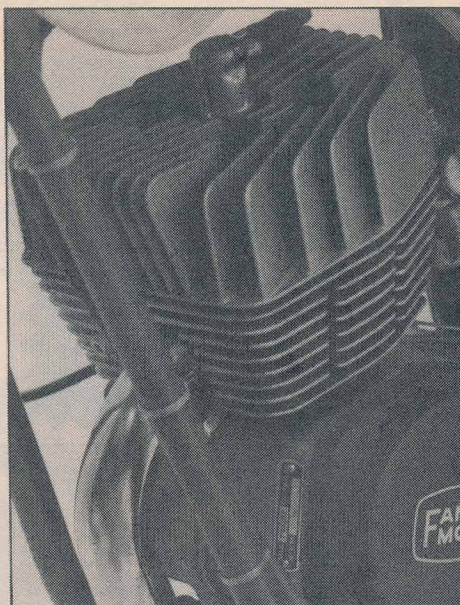


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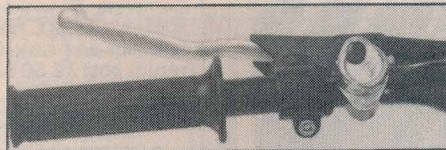
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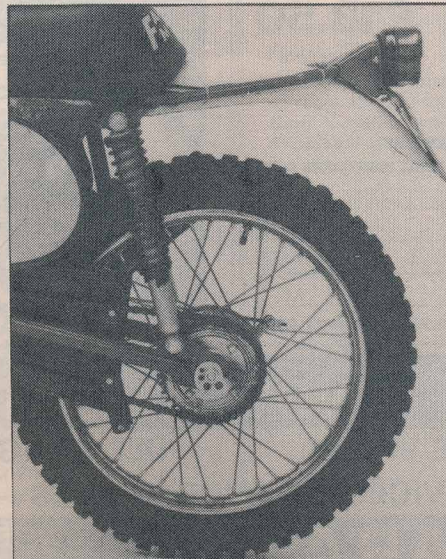
Tail lamp: 6v 3/15w.

6v horn.

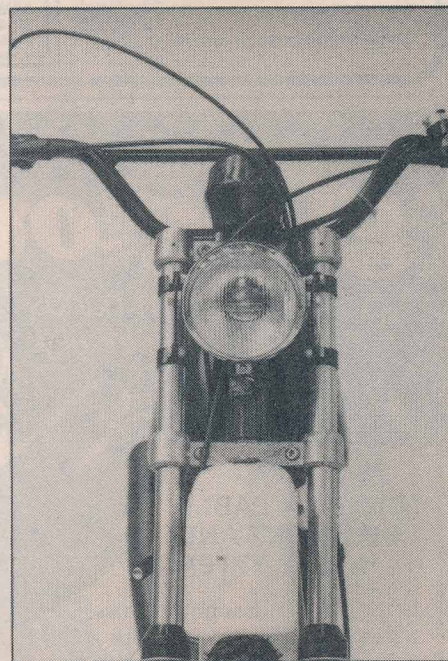


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