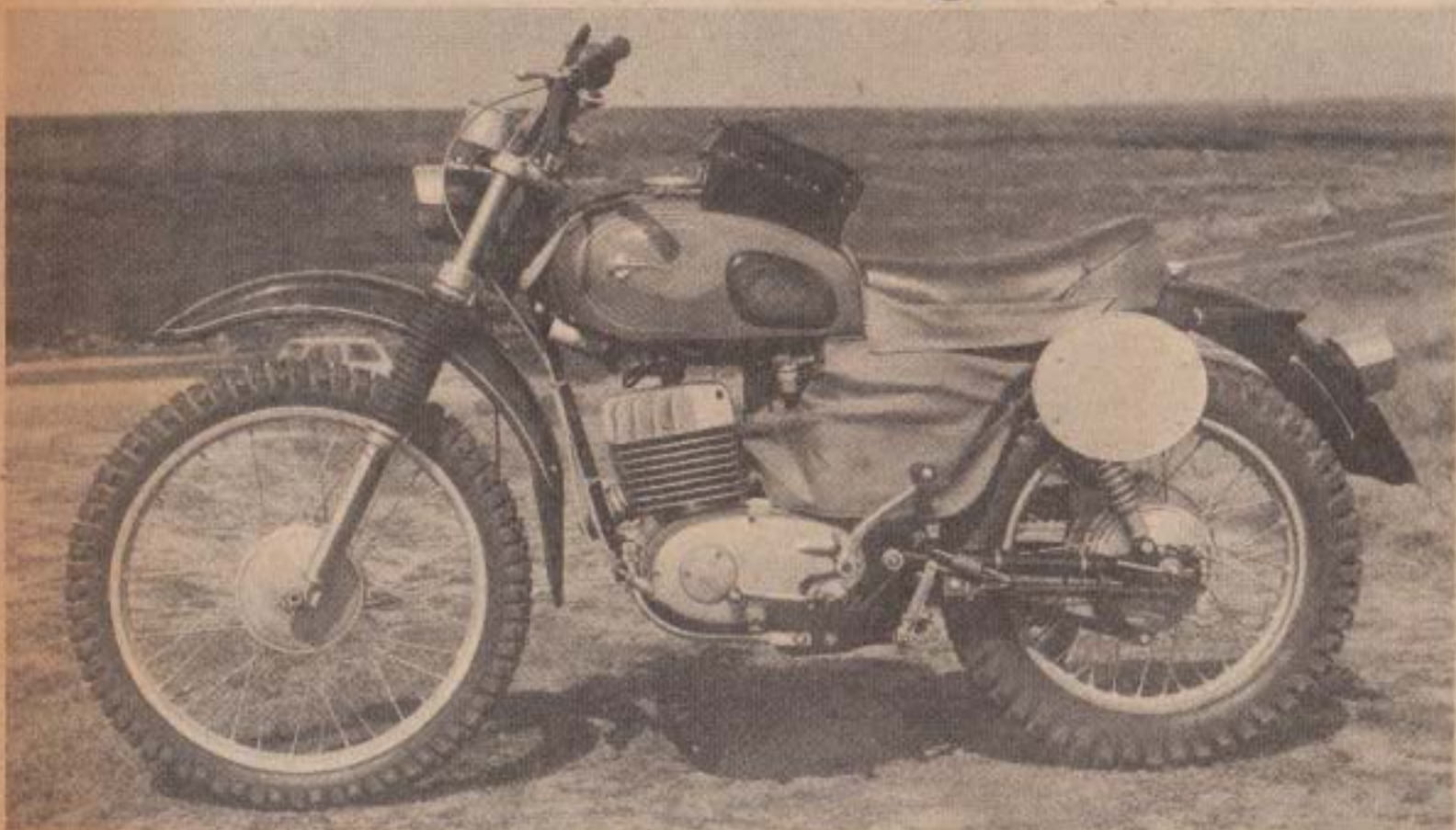


The nearest thing to . . .



AN INSTANT GOLD MEDAL

by Peter Fraser

WITH SIX wins in the past seven years, the East Germans have virtually monopolised the ISDT Trophy contest. Their team men have ridden superbly, but as much credit goes to the two-stroke MZ machines used. Their record of reliability is almost without blemish. Evolved by relentless development over the years, the latest models are a remarkably successful blend of toughness and performance.

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standing on the rests over severe rough-stuff, sitting down for less-rough going and face-behind-the-filler-cap tucking in for special tests.

The all-alloy, single-cylinder two-stroke engine is a painstakingly developed version of a unit which first made its appearance as far back as 1954, with the accent on simplicity and well-proved design features.

on acceleration. The gear ratios suit the power curve and could be selected quickly and positively. Few two-fifties could match the zest of the MZ when it was on its way and full use was made of the gear box.

The gear pedal is on the left. Bottom is selected from neutral by a downward movement, upward for the four higher ratios. By easing the throttle

drum enshrouding the rear sprocket. This system works well and has the merit of allowing chain tension to be checked simply by moving a gaiter up and down.

The ISDT job comes with full equipment. The ignition feeds two sparking plugs, each with its own coil mounted under the tank. Should a plug foul or a coil fail the other side of the

The kilometre speedometer includes a trip recorder, and fuel tank can be removed very quickly. On top of the tank is a neat, leather box with transparent face for carrying route card.

Contents of the box include a comprehensive set of spare control cables, a pump outfit and a first-aid kit. Finish of the frame and

men have hidden superbly, but as much as it goes to the two-stroke MZ machines used. Their record of reliability is almost without blemish. Evolved by relentless development over the years, the latest models are a remarkably successful blend of toughness and performance.

Now British MZ agent Wilf Green, of Sheffield, has imported a small batch of the production ISDT two-fifties. They come with full ISDT equipment — even riding-number plates are included — and, at today's price levels for specialised machines, are excellent value at £469.

A ride on rocky moorland going quickly showed at least one reason why the MZs are so successful — control. The tubular, spine-type frame seemed as flex-free as any frame could be; it was noticeably taut on really rough going. Equally impressive was the suspension damping at front and rear, yet there was ample movement, particularly in the 8in range of the front fork.

Over rocks and gullies or

when riding in ruts, the MZ would keep going in the right direction with a minimum of correction by steering or body lean. For keeping down fatigue on long-distance rough-stuff rides, this bike would be hard to better.

Slide off

At 303 lb, it is not ultra-light but it is, of course, built to be around at the finish of six days of punishingly hard work. For this reason, the fuel tank and mudguards are in steel; if light alloy were used, the weight would be pruned but at the expense of probable damage in even a mild slide-off.

The footrests, too, are robust and intended to take rough treatment. They are sensibly placed and, in relation to the well-padded seat and 32in-wide handlebar, provide a comfortable riding position. The layout is a good compromise for

standing on the rests over severe rough-stuff, sitting down for less-rough going and face-behind-the-filler-cap tucking in for special tests.

The all-alloy, single-cylinder two-stroke engine is a painstakingly developed version of a unit which first made its appearance as far back as 1954, with the accent on simplicity and well-proved design features.

Although the test machine had covered only a small mileage and was too tight for sustained high speeds, it was obvious that the 80 mph-plus of actual ISDT jobs was on tap.

The engine gave of its best when turning over at moderate and high revs. It would be wrong to suggest that it was short of power at small throttle openings, but it did not give the gutty slogging power just off stalling point expected from engines designed for British super-sporting trials. These characteristics illustrate again the for-the-purpose design of the MZ — it is an ISDT bike, not a short-course special.

With the engine revving freely, performance was distinctly zippy and really punchy

on acceleration. The gear ratios suit the power curve and could be selected quickly and positively. Few two-fifties could match the zest of the MZ when it was on its way and full use was made of the gear box.

The gear pedal is on the left. Bottom is selected from neutral by a downward movement, upward for the four higher ratios. By easing the throttle opening slightly, neat, quick, upward changes through the closely spaced gears could be made without operating the clutch.

Powerful

Mounted on the left end of the crankshaft — therefore running at engine speed — the clutch operated over a short range of lever movement and was slightly fierce by British standards. With care, however, it could be eased in sensitively for a smooth getaway.

Both brakes were light in action and powerful, yet easily controlled — ideal for riding on slippery surfaces. The kick-starter crank is on the left side; it could be operated without difficulty and the engine was a ready starter. No more than two prods were ever necessary.

A lengthy, upswept exhaust system is fitted, with an ample guard for the rider's leg. The system is, of course, designed specifically to match the engine characteristics but it also keeps noise down to an acceptably low level.

Though by no means unique on continental machines over the years, the MZ retains full enclosure of the rear chain by means of flexible gaiters over the two runs, with a light-alloy

drum enshrouding the rear sprocket. This system works well and has the merit of allowing chain tension to be checked simply by moving a gaiter up and down.

The ISDT job comes with full equipment. The ignition feeds two sparking plugs, each with its own coil mounted under the tank. Should a plug foul or a coil fail, the other side of the system can be brought into use by a switch located on the right just below the seat.

The wheels (the front has a light-alloy rim) are shod with scrambles-type tyres. Projections on the shoulders of the rear rim are used instead of security bolts to prevent tyre creep. Both wheels are quickly detachable.

SPECIFICATION

ENGINE: Capacity and type: 243 cc (69 x 65mm) two-stroke single with light-alloy cylinder (with iron liner) and head. Bearings: crankshaft supported in three ball bearings lubricated from gear box; caged needle-roller big end and small end. Petroil lubrication. Compression ratio: 10 to 1. Carburettor: BVF concentric with 30mm-diameter choke; cold-start jet operated by handlebar lever. Air filter with washable gauze-and-fabric element. Three fuel filters. Claimed power output: 27.5 bhp at 5,500 to 6,000 rpm.

TRANSMISSION: Primary by helical gears; secondary by fully enclosed $\frac{1}{2}$ x 5/16in chain. Clutch: wet-type multi-plate with bonded friction facings, mounted on engine mainshaft. Five-speed gear box.

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT: Ignition by six-volt battery and coil, with duplicate coil serving second sparking

The kilometre speedometer includes a trip recorder. Sump and fuel tank can be removed very quickly. On top of the tank is a neat, leather box with transparent face for carrying route card.

Contents of the box include comprehensive set of tools, spare control cables, a puncture outfit and a first-aid kit.

Finish of the frame and parts is black with the fuel tank red. Gold lining lends a distinctive touch to the tank and mudguards.

Without question, the two-fifty MZ, properly ridden, is good enough to go the distance in an ISDT and, because it comes fully prepared, is especially attractive proposition to the average private owner.

plug. Charging by 60-watt dc generator through voltage regulator to 12-amp-hour battery. Headlamp: 35-watt, 35mm-diameter with main and dipped beam. Two fuses.

FUEL CAPACITY: 3 gallons.

BRAKES: 6in-diameter front and rear with finger adjusters.

TYRES: Fiesse 2.75 x 21in front, Pro-mant 4.00 x 18in rear.

SUSPENSION: Telescopic front fork with progressive-rate springs and two-way hydraulic damping. Pivoted fork controlled by spring-and-hydraulic units with two-position adjustment for load.

DIMENSIONS: Wheelbase, 52in; ground clearance, 9in; seat height, 32in; unladen.

WEIGHT: 303 lb.

PRICE: £469, including British purchase tax.

ROAD TAX: £5 a year.

MANUFACTURERS: VEB Motorradwerk Zschopau, 936 Zschopau/Sa, DDR, Germany.

CONCESSIONAIRES: Wilf Green, 269 to 373 Abbeydale Road, Sheffield.



For many years MZ ISDT machines have had the advantage of full rear-chain enclosure. An alloy casting surrounds the rear sprocket and the top and bottom chain runs are in plastic gaiters. A comprehensive range of tools is provided with the machine and are carried in the tank-top container, which has a transparent upper face to serve as a route-card holder. The seat is removable after the plastic knob located behind it is undone