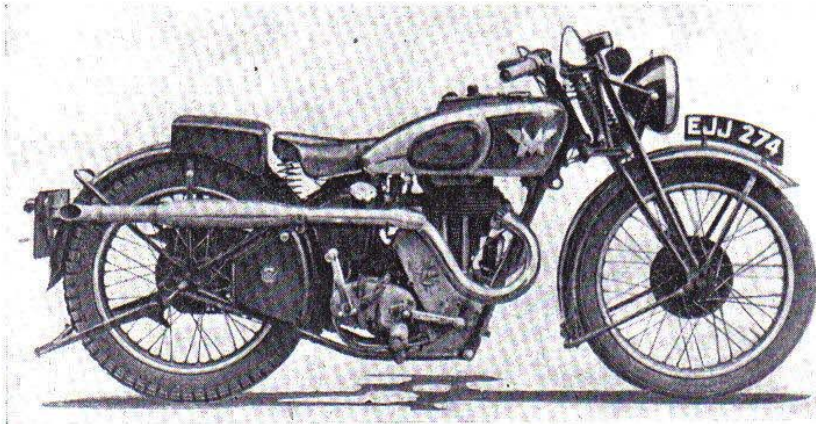


The 1938 498 c.c. Matchless Super Clubman



Road Tests

Recalled—No. 38

Services motorcyclists who have made the acquaintance of the 350 c.c. W.D. Matchless will be interested in this test of a larger capacity model from the same stable. The performance indicated in the graph (below) was obtained after a 1,000-mile run had been made under conditions all too familiar to Army motorcyclists.

"A MOUNT the virtues of which would be difficult to exaggerate" is high praise indeed. But when a performance such as that indicated in the graph reproduced on this page is recorded immediately following a virtually non-stop run of 1,000 miles, high praise is warranted. This is what happened to the 1938 model G.90 Matchless Super Clubman that was tested by "Motor Cycling" in December, 1937—and those 1,000 miles were covered at an average speed of 40.6 m.p.h.

Performance.—The long-distance tour consisted of 36 laps of a 27½-mile circuit, embracing sections of the Watford By-Pass, the North Circular Road, and the Barnet By-Pass. Four members of the staff rode the machine in relays, the engine being kept running when stops were made to exchange riders and refuel and to report to H.Q. Some brief details of each successive four-lap relay will show how the Matchless responded to such unusually severe treatment.

RELAY 1: 112 dark and somewhat foggy miles were ridden along roads in parts coated with ice at an average speed of 39.5 m.p.h., including three "duty" stops. RELAY 2: Four more laps, with more fog and ice, were covered in 2 hrs. 50 mins. RELAY 3: It was well turned midnight and the temperature seemed even lower, but the running time was reduced to 2 hrs. 37 mins. The average speed for the whole test thus far, inclusive of 12 stops, was 38.8 m.p.h.

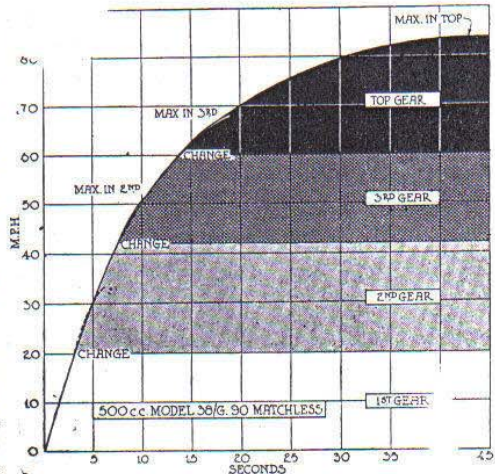
RELAY 4: Sleet was added to the climatic difficulties, yet the all-in average was raised to 39 m.p.h. RELAY 5: Dawn had broken at the end of the four laps, and the mean speed had crept up to 39.6 m.p.h. RELAY 6: A run in broad daylight improved the figure to 40 m.p.h., which was increased during RELAY 7 by a further .8 m.p.h. RELAY 8—the fastest of all—was commenced at 1.58 p.m. and concluded at 4.28, making the all-in average, over 883 miles, 41.06 m.p.h.

RELAY 9: Minor trouble was experienced—but quickly, though not completely, remedied, without stopping the engine—through a partially choked jet;

the mean speed, however, suffered by no more than 1½ m.p.h. Finally, a seven-mile run brought the total mileage to exactly 1,001, and it had been covered in 24 hrs. 38 mins. 15 secs., which works out to 40.629 m.p.h., inclusive of all stops. And the testers agreed that the model's normal cruising speed was anything from 55 m.p.h. to 60 m.p.h.

Then the carburetter was cleaned, a new plug was fitted, and the customary road-test data obtained. The bad weather precluded a flying attack being made on the measured quarter-mile, but from a standing start the speed recorded was 49.45 m.p.h. The maxima in the gears, together with approximate acceleration details, can be gleaned from the graph; we will merely add that the 84 m.p.h. in top was reached in precisely 42.8 secs. The use of both brakes stopped the model on a wet, tarred road from 30 m.p.h. in 34 ft.

Handling.—The model's handling can best be summed up in the following



quotations from the original report: "The machine was settling into its stride and was motoring beautifully, a delight to handle, and steering magnificently." "Even on icy roads . . . the mount felt as safe as houses. The brakes were very good indeed . . . there was scarcely any mechanical clatter." ". . . at no time were any risks run—a point which speaks volumes for the Super Clubman's handling."

Consumption.—15.03 gals. of petrol were used for the 1,001 miles, and only a quart of oil. Hence, the consumption details were recorded as "66.6 m.p.g." and "no appreciable loss" respectively.

Starting.—The principal feature of this test was that it was conducted without stopping the engine, routine performance figures being obtained mainly to emphasize the model's reliability.

Summary.—At the end of the whole business, the Matchless was just as good as when it had started. Everything had behaved splendidly, and the riders, although dog-tired, were full of praise. And the original report concludes: "When the machine was thoroughly examined, there was not an oil stain anywhere."

BRIEF SPECIFICATION

Engine: Two-port c.h.v., 82.5 mm. bore by 95 mm. stroke = 498 c.c. Cylinder head, rocker box and hairpin valve-spring chambers formed in one casting; valve gear, with springs, totally enclosed and positively lubricated. Lo-Ex piston; compression plate fitted. Dry-sump lubrication. Amal carburetter. Lucas magneto and separate dynamo lighting.

Transmission: Front chain enclosed in oil bath, rear protected by guard with deep panels on both sides. Burman foot-operated gearbox, ratios 5.0, 6.4, 8.8, and 13.3 to 1.

Frame: Full duplex cradle type, with triangulated front members. Matchless forks, with rebound springs. Spring-up rear stand.

Wheels: Taking 26-in. by 3.00-in. front and 26-in. by 3.50-in. rear tyres. Quickly detachable rear wheel.

Tanks: Petrol tank panelled in Aldwych red, capacity 3 gals.; illuminated instrument panel, incorporating lamp switch, ammeter, clock (extra), and detachable inspection light. Separate oil tank, capacity ½ gal.

Price: In 1938, £68 5s., including speedometer.

Makers: Associated Motor Cycles, Ltd., 44, Plumstead Road, London, S.E.18.