

PRACTICAL SCOOTER & MOPED

Special Track Test
Vespa Engine Rebuild
Going Abroad Guide
Used Bike Road Test

MARCH 1967

2 SHILLINGS



'Practical Scooter' tests one of the hottest bikes around and finds searing performance on the...

SHATTERING SPECIAL

• **Head down, wind it in third – and then snick it into top and take another handful. The scooter surges forward, and the long grey ribbon of the main stretch past the grandstand at famous Brands Hatch leaps up to meet you.**

At the end of the straight the speedo on the Arthur Francis 250cc Lambretta special is nudging 80 mph and you need that handful of potent front disc brake to slow it down before you crank it over for infamous Paddock Hill bend.

The occasion was a special 'Practical Scooter' test on the road burning Arthur Francis special which boasts a super conversion kit linked with a redesigned silencer and exhaust and a host of other goodies.

The result of this heady cocktail is a mile-eating monster with a performance which borders on the shattering, even for a tester

who is used to riding full-blown racing motorcycles.

During the day's outing at Brands Hatch, the Lambretta showed a clean pair of heels to the more-than-surprised owners of at least three racing bikes out on the track at the same time—including one 350cc capacity mount.

In an attempt to compare the Arthur Francis special with the Supertune Lowline 225 Lambretta, we compared lap times put up by tester John Houslander on each, and found that there was barely one second between them. He circulated consistently at 1 min. 20 secs. on the Supertune bike, and at 1 min. 21 secs. on the Arthur Francis special—and the latter test was on a rain soaked track, too.

To achieve the 250cc conversion, Watford dealer and specials builder Arthur Francis tried a number of different cylinder barrels sandwiched between a more-

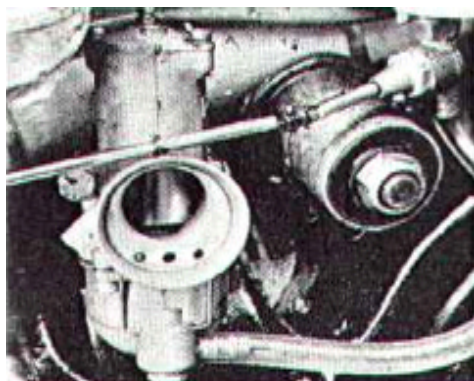
or-less standard Lambretta SX 200 bottom half and cylinder head.

Reason for this is that the standard SX barrel will not enlarge to much more than 225cc in safety. It can be increased to a greater bore, but the wall then becomes almost paper thin.

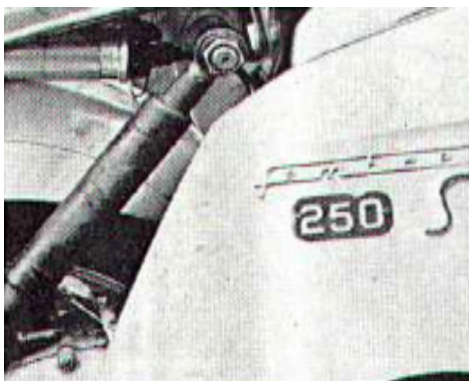
The solution was to try a totally different barrel, and after some lengthy experiment an alloy one was found that fitted.

On the track test model we rode, the engine was also fitted with the latest concentric 1 3/16 in. Amal carburettor on a made up angled manifold.

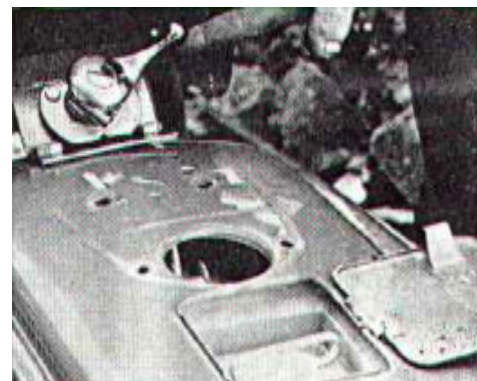
The gearing was based on the ratios from a 125 Pacemaker Lambretta, and it was definitely under-geared even for the tight and twisty Brands Hatch circuit. After entering the main straight in third and winding it up to its maximum of about 65 mph in this gear, the change into top could be



Original carburettor had been replaced with the latest concentric 1 3/16in Amal type. Starting remained just as simple.



Solid rear suspension units were fitted which meant a bumpy ride even on the track. 'S' type and 250 badges are fitted.



Seat hinged up in the normal way to allow access to petrol tank as well as special choke control. Not yet connected.

made very soon afterwards. A peak indicated speed of just around the 80 mph mark was reached regularly breasting the slight rise past the start and finish line.

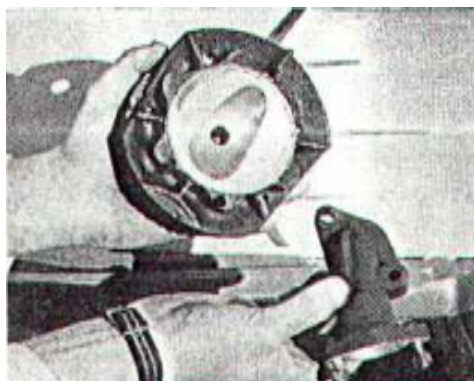
Arthur Francis told us that the overall gearing could be quite easily altered by changing the size of the main drive sprocket. It was possible to vary the size by one, two or, even three teeth he said, and this made quite a range of ratios possible to suit uses.

The bike we tested was very much a track model, with solid rear suspension—a welded-up unit which is often used by the sprinting enthusiasts. It definitely is not the suspension for road racing especially at a track with a lively surface like Brands Hatch.

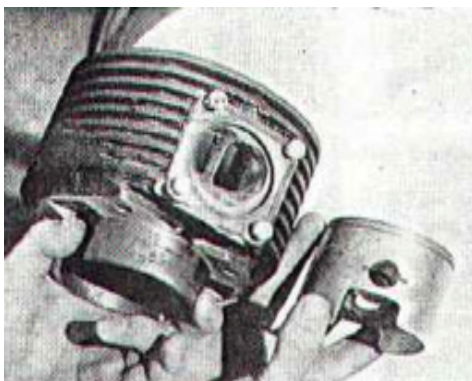
On some corners the front wheel was more often in air than on the ground and the throttle had to be used with some caution when exiting from bends to prevent the scooter imitating a frightened kangaroo. The long racing dual seat fitted to the bike—another Arthur Francis goodie—meant that six-foot John Houslander had to sit right back, and this contributed to the lightness on the front wheel.

Although the model we tested was strictly designed for the track, Arthur markets the bike for road use complete with a special two-tone spray job at £75 extra to the list price.

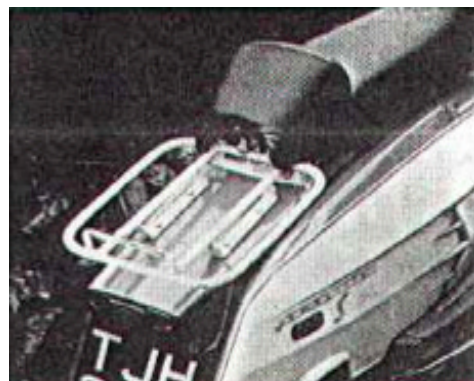
The road-going version has a deeper piston skirt which gives more power lower down. Plus a considerably quieter exhaust system. It is also equipped with normal rear suspension.



Special head was fitted which had a central plug. Inlet manifold also had to be made to take the new carburettor.



Alloy racing motorcycle barrel was much modified to fit into the Lambretta bottom end. Piston skirt was also cut down.



Humped racing seat was fitted and the machine finished in an attractive two-tone colour scheme. See the cover shot.