

OVER THE BIRDSVILLE BY BIKE

THE MAGAZINE OF MOTOR CYCLING

40c*

two wheels

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Test
Special

ALL THE
AGUSTAS
750-350-150

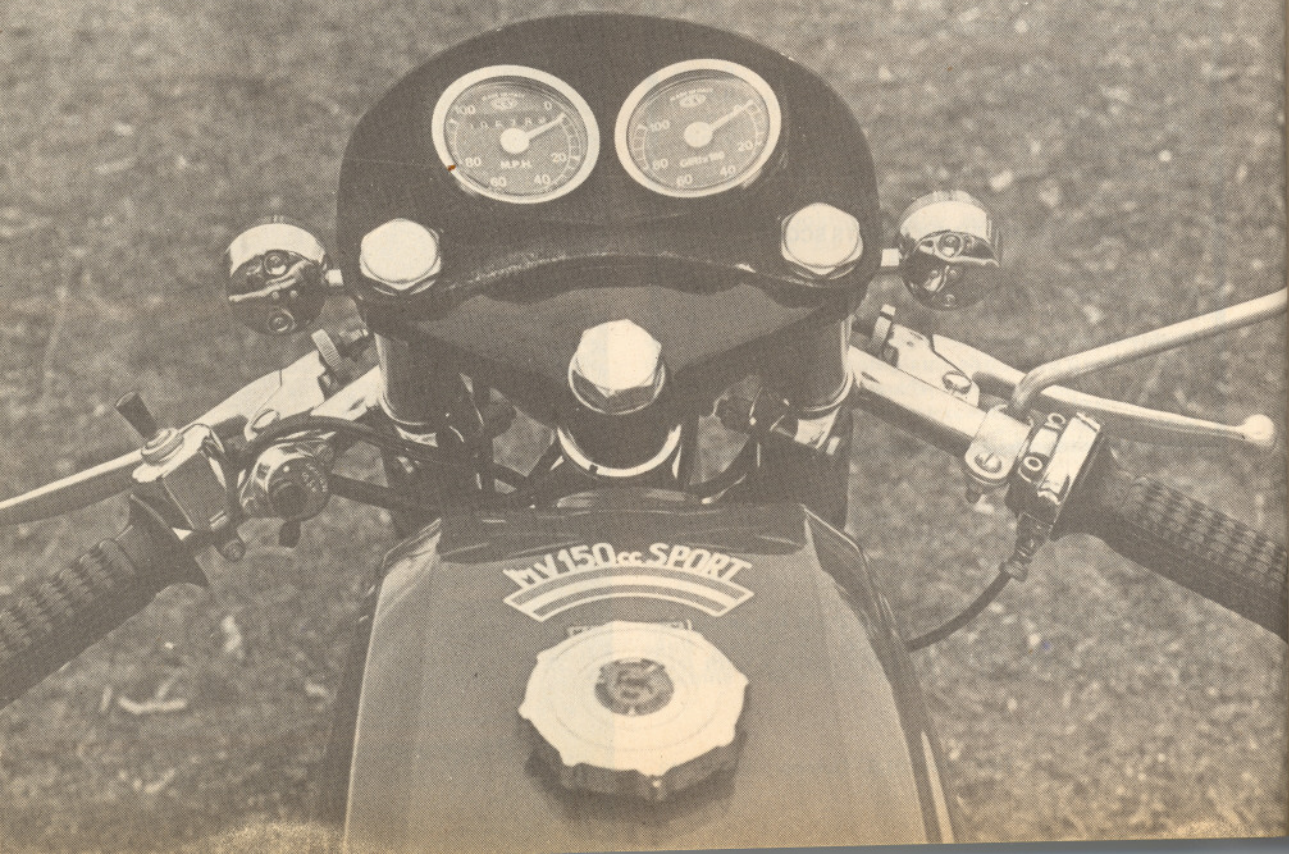
BOB SHARP—OUT FOR THE RECORDS

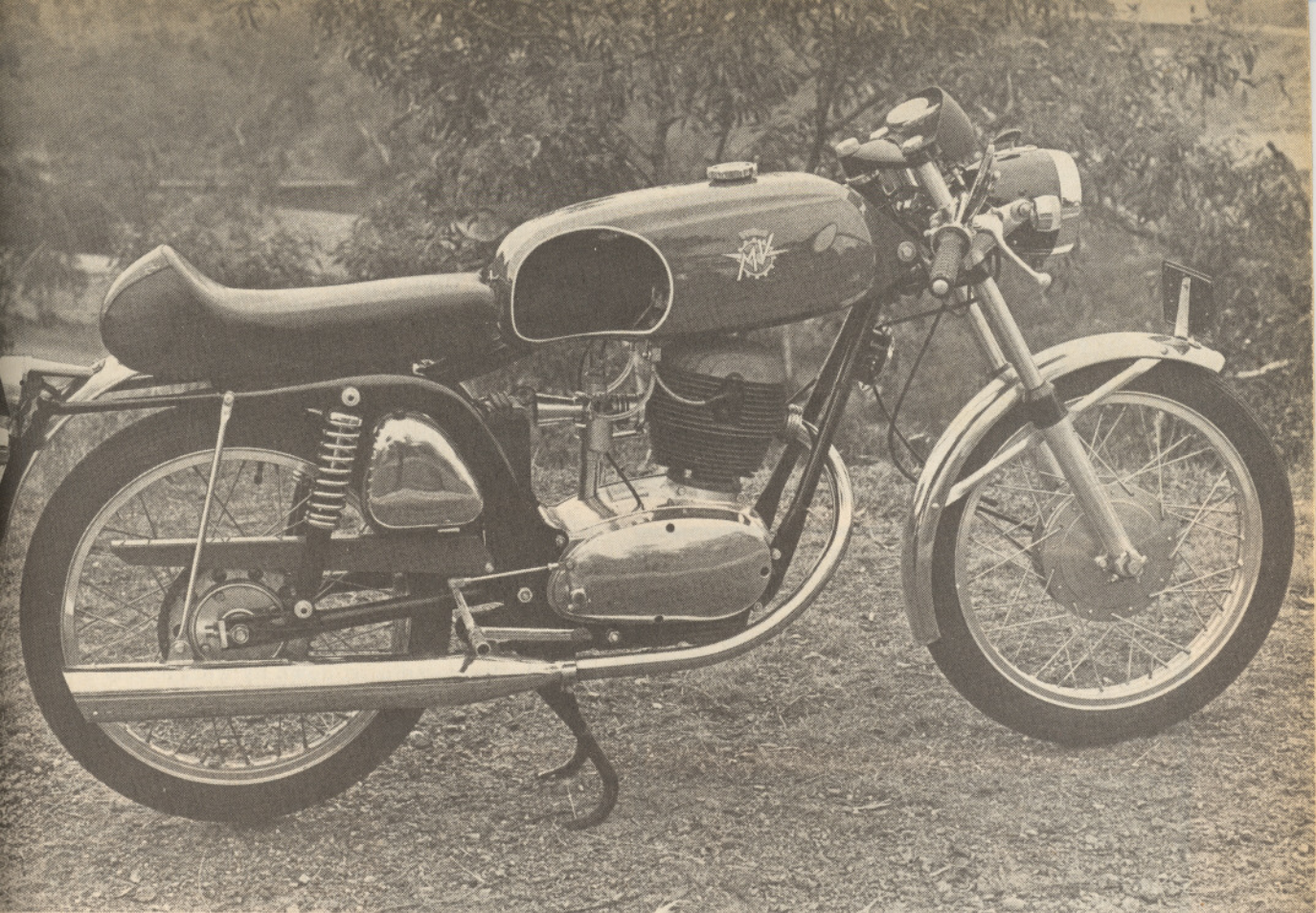




MV AGUSTA 150

boy-racer's
boy-racer!





The few who take their fun riding seriously might buy an MV 150. But it's hardly an International star like big brother!

PLAYING boy-racer on the MV150S is a "natural".

It is small in size and weight, and the racing-type riding position is enough to induce anyone to put their head on the tank and ride it flat out.

Not that the top speed and acceleration would be anything to write home about, but between the tight turns, it's not what speed you do but the way you do it that counts.

At the heart of the smallest MV is an engine which was designed nearly 20 years ago — like the frame. The motor is strong in having a three ball bearing and roller big end bearing crank, which drives a single camshaft to operate the pushrods and valves. It is a pity the barrel has to be cast iron for it not only looks out of place on this little sportster but must be considered a weight handicap.

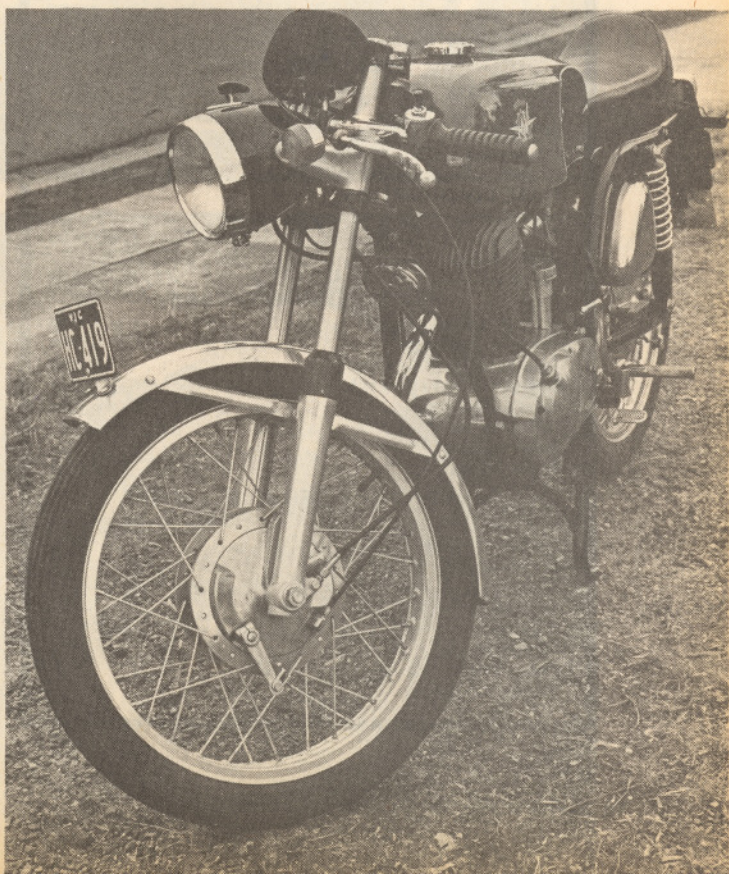
The output of 12.5 bhp (DIN) may not be much by Japanese standards but it is certainly enough to push the 150 up to 21, 34, 51, 65 and 72 mph in the gears. But as nearly 8000 revs send a fair few tingles through the bars and pegs, limiting the revs to a comfortable 5500 gives 14, 22, 35, 44 and 55 mph.

Although the clutch is unbelievably light, and the gears effortless to operate without declutching, the transmission must be criticised for the unavoidable false neutrals and its habit of jumping out of gear.

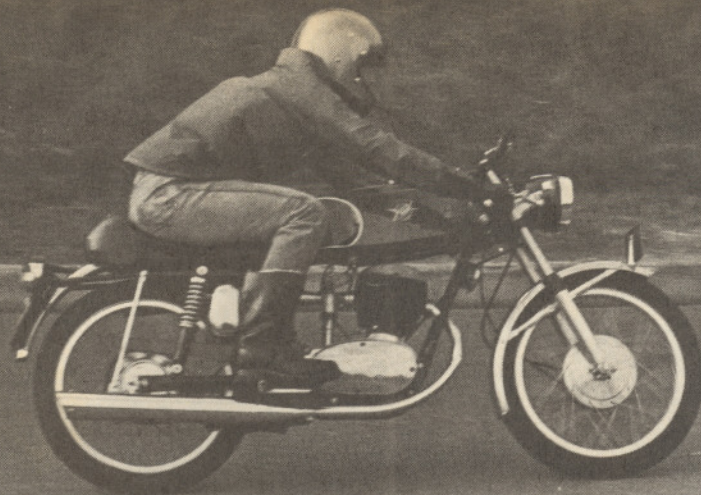
With hardly any weight to support, the frame does a fine job. Those twin front downtubes make this

Curiously, the 350's design is more pleasing in a smaller bike. The 150 is the prettiest little single around.

The operation of the front forks is particularly impressive, but the front brake is only fair.



Again, the 150 has an impressive instrument panel, but the dials offer approximations only.



SPECIFICATIONS

MAKE MV
MODEL 150 S
PRICE \$719

ENGINE: 150 cc single-cylinder ohv with cast iron barrel. Flywheel magneto. 59.5 mm x 54 mm bore and stroke, 9.7:1 compression ratio developing 12.5 bhp at 7600 rpm.

TRANSMISSION: Gear drive to wet multiplate clutch. Five-speed constant mesh gearbox. One up, four down.

FRAME: Tubular using engine as stressed member with double front and single top tubes.

SUSPENSION:

Front: Telescopic fork (one way damping).

Rear: Swinging arm (non-adjustable units).

BRAKES:

Front: 6 in. single leading shoe.

Rear: 5 in. single leading shoe. 18 in. wheels.

CAPACITIES:

Fuel tank 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ gal

Oil tank3 pints

Transmission3 pints

DIMENSION:

Weight 248 lb

Wheelbase 51 in.

Overall length 78 in.

Overall width 24 in.

Overall height 39 in.

Seat height 29 in.

Ground clearance 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.

PERFORMANCE.

ACCELERATION:

0 to 60 mph 9.1 sec

SPEED:

Maximum 72 mph

Comfortable cruising 40 to 58 mph

FUEL CONSUMPTION:

High speed 79 mpg

Cruising 103 mpg

BRAKING:

From 30 mph 29 ft

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE

Change plugs 1 min

Remove rear wheel 8 min

Adjust contact points 12 min

Check transmission oil 1 min

Check tappets 15 min

Adjust brakes 4 min

Adjust chain 6 min

Top up battery 4 min

HOW DO THE FINER POINTS SCORE

(Out of 10)

Instrumentation 4

Seat comfort 3

Tool kit 4

Quality of finish 8

Vibration 5

Lighting 5

Positioning of controls 9

Spares availability 4

layout better than the one on the 350. However, the back end of the frame still has the "boomerang" tubes. The front forks are impressive and easily the best we have ever seen fitted to a lightweight. Their diameter and overall strength would make them suitable for a 350 by some standards and it is a pity that the front end is let down by what is only a fair brake.

The rear units are not adjustable and tend to be slightly on the hard side for normal riding. As a result road bumps are sent up through the saddle, which after a few miles feels like a housebrick, and makes the ride uncomfortable. But on fast bends they complement the front end and give excellent handling. All the bottom fittings are tucked up well out of the way so nothing grounds no matter how far down the bike is leant into a corner.

Due to the overall light weight and good balance the bike can be thrown around even when a rider has committed himself to a line on the fastest of bends. This, combined with the clip-ons and rearsets make the 150 tremendous fun on tight, twisty roads.

Our main complaints about the ride were the vibration when the engine is revved — it rattles the rubber-mounted tank and unscrews the top off the carburettor — and (again) the useless CEV instrumentation. At best, it offers only an approximate guide to what speed and revs the bike is doing. The instrument panel deserves better. It is a well-made and shaped alloy casting finished in attractive crackle black paint.

Though the motor remained reasonably oil tight, the huge filler cap cum breather dipstick hole does let out a steady trickle.

As with the 350, the only complaint on the quality was the thin chrome on the exhaust and its brackets.

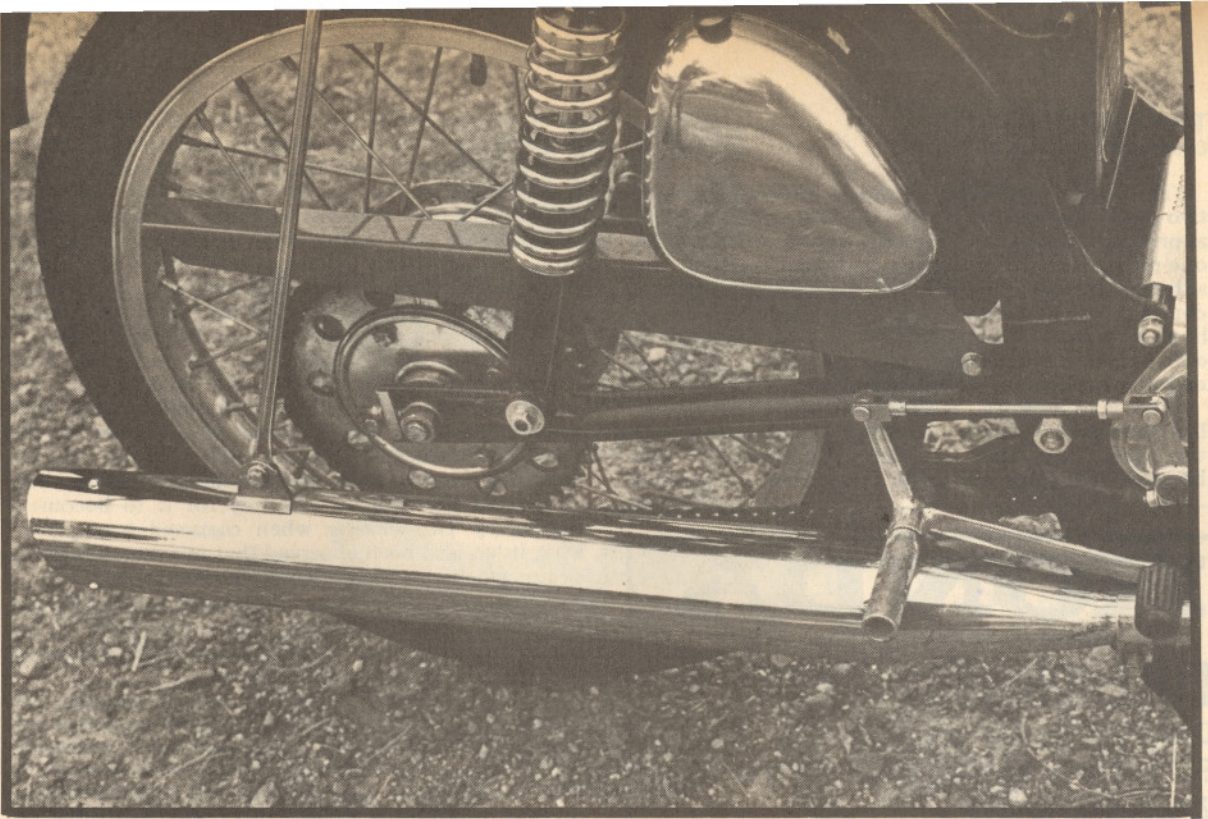
We were horrified to find that after hitting what seemed to be only a mild bump on the road, the rear rim had a flat spot. No name is on the rims but the alloy must be very soft and future owners should be especially careful when using tyre levers.

A few little things that are annoying included a poor-quality tool kit, the handbook printed in Italian and the weak headlight.

But the bike certainly has economy going for it — 100 mpg even around town — and the overall quality of the alloy castings and paintwork, is impressive. Talking of the color, this is one MV that is not "all red"; the frame is black and looks all the better for it.

At more than \$700 the 150S is on the expensive side but it is a boy-racer of the first order and a constant source of pleasurable riding.

We enjoyed "racing" it to the office for a week and we can recommend it for the man who needs a fun bike, but wants one with a bit of character — and of course there's something in the name! *



Built to last — and never more evident than in the proportions of the chain guard. Rear suspension units are not adjustable. Note rear-set foot controls.

Protrusion from crankcase on other side is filler/breather/dipstick. Motor is rated (perhaps conservatively) at 12.5 horsepower DIN.

Still MV and still distinctively original.

