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The Press Office



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HERE COMES THE HOVER SCOOTER

- your mount of the future?

A remarkable machine demonstrated at Long Ditton, Surrey, today suggests that motor cycle enthusiasts may soon literally be riding on air! No one in Europe, and only a handful of people in the U.S.A. had seen anything like this before.

Brought over from the States by the popular journal THE MOTOR CYCLE for display on their stand at the International Cycle and Motor Cycle Show opening at Earls Court next Saturday, (12 November) the Hover Scooter is saucer shaped and 9 ft in diameter. As with conventional scooters it has a saddle and handlebars and is powered by a motor cycle engine - but there the similarity ends.

It hovers happily along a few inches from the ground on a cushion of air and carries one person. It can be adapted also to take two riders and is equally manoeuvrable over land or water.

Harry Louis, Editor of THE MOTOR CYCLE, who has studied the machine said: "The Hover Scooter principle is simple. A propeller forces air through the body of the machine to an outlet in the underside of the base. At the outlet are over 100 vanes, coupled venetian blind fashion, which can be moved through 45 degrees by the handlebar. The thrust of air on the ground makes a cushion on which the scooter floats. Steering is by altering, with the vanes, the angle at which the air hits the ground and by the "pilot" moving his weight according to the direction in which he wants to travel. The outer body is made of a new type plastic-covered synthetic rubber and the inner shell is of foamed plastic which renders the machine buoyant on water. Weight of the Hover Scooter is about 200 lbs."

Who knows the possibilities of such a vehicle? The makers, Rhoades Incorporated of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, think there is something in the idea. So do the research team of Princetown University where the first embryonic Hover Scooters were tried out.

E N D

DEREK PAGE, Press Officer

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PRESS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS DIVISION

**Fenwick House,
289/293 High Holborn,
London, W.C.1.**

DAY: CHAncery 7694/5/6 NIGHT Grimsdyke 135
 CHAncery 6013 ELStree 2263

WORLD'S FIRST HOVER SCOOTER

Car Hire Chief To Market

One Man Hovercraft in Britain

George Hall, the head of one of the largest car hire firms in this country, Autohall (Car Hire) Ltd., stumbled on this revolutionary method of transport, the Hover Scooter, during a business trip to America. "I immediately saw the the unlimited possibilities of a machine that could carry one or two people over land and water with equal ease", said Mr. Hall. "and I made up my mind that I would introduce the Hover Scooter to Britain with a view to marketing it".

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The Hover Scooter has been developed by Mr. Charles Rhoades, head of Rhoades Incorporated who, with his chief engineer Mr. Carl Mikan, has flown over specially from America to demonstrate the machine. Associated Illiffe Press Ltd. have sponsored all the arrangements for transporting the scooter to this country and it will be exhibited on The Motor Cycle stand No. 20a at the Cycle and Motor Cycle Show at Earls Court from Saturday, November 12 to Saturday, November 19.

Based on the principle of the Hovercraft, the Hover Scooter rides on a cushion of air at a height of about six inches. Air is drawn in through cowling at the front of the machine by a specially designed four bladed propeller 26" in diameter with a blade pitch of 16 degrees. The propeller is powered by a 250 c.c. twin cylinder two stroke motor cycle engine running at about 5000 r.p.m.

The air is continually forced into the circular vacuum moulded plastic base of the machine, 9 ft. in diameter, which contains an inner moulded chamber filled with polystyrene foam, enabling the Hover Scooter to rest on water.

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The air flowing over this aerodynamic inner float chamber is expelled downwards through an annular orifice at the periphery of the base at an angle of 45° towards the centre of the machine. This annular orifice contains 116 small plastic radially mounted vanes spaced at regular intervals, which are interconnected in the same manner as a venetian blind. These vanes have an angle of movement of 45° and are activated by the handlebars of the Hover Scooter. Turning the handlebars moves the vanes and deflects the air so that the machine rotates on its axis.

Lateral movement is obtained by tilting the machine in the direction in which one wishes to travel; and is effected by the operator leaning physically in the direction intended.

By tilting the machine forward the air to the rear of the machine is subject to loss of propulsion through air spill, due to the rear of the machine being lifted away from the surface over which it is travelling, while the closer proximity of the air to the surface at the front gives greater thrust and propels the machine forward. The same applies to any lateral movement of the Hover Scooter.

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Thus steering the machine is somewhat like that of a conventional motor scooter. For speeds over 15 m.p.h. two fins are fitted on to the base to give added stability. The plastic body is a product of the U.S. Rubber Company, and is a new lightweight plastic known as Expanded Royalite.

The machine will obviously have many uses and it has been suggested that companies with off-shore drilling rigs would find the Hover Scooter of tremendous value for transporting men out to the rigs. Its ability to travel over water makes it very valuable for rescue purposes at coastal resorts. Similarly the inspection of sites by contractors of motorways, bridges and buildings on ground unsuitable for normal transport is simplified by this new method of transport.

The advent of the Hover Scooter may well bring a new lease of life to the inland waterways of Britain.