



Rapidfire shifter (ST-7S20). This is worked by finger and thumb, very much like similarly named *dérailleur* shifters, and also has 'OGD'. At the time of writing this was not being imported, but such was the interest shown at York Rally that I believe it could now be worth making enquiries. (Madison Cycles Plc, Buckingham House East, the Broadway, Stanmore, HA7 4EA; 0181-954 7798.)



The accessible cable and pulley arrangement, by which the shifter controls the hub, is infinitely preferable to Sachs' inseparable cable and bulky click-box assembly. Adjustment is simple enough: align the two red marks when the red (4th) gear is engaged (a panel in the rear of the Dawes' chaincase unclips to provide access). And with no protrusions beyond the frame you needn't worry about accidental damage.

Finally we come to the brake. Both these hubs were the SG-7R40 model, with has the Inter-M, cable operated roller-brake attached. This brake can be removed from the hub (you'd have to fill the space it leaves on the axle with a washer or two) but I cannot see why anyone would want to because it is a quite excellent brake. The action is very smooth and progressive, providing superb control of the rear wheel with minimum risk of inadvertent skids, but nonetheless capable of locking it up (tested with a hundredweight of shopping in the Burley-



Cargo!).

The other version of this hub (SG-7C21) comes with an integral coaster brake – operated by back-peddalling. Through long use of the Pentasport I've come to appreciate the intuitive, cable-free and hands-free advantages of this simple and effective form of brake; according to reports from abroad the Shimano Inter-7 comes with a particularly fine example. Unlike some coasters, which are affected by the gear you're in (my Sachs is more powerful in bottom than top, but not by too much since a lot of the power comes from the servo-effect of the rotating wheel) Shimano's is operated directly by the sprocket. Unfor-

tunately I'll probably never have a chance to try it. Coasters have become almost unknown in Britain so Madison will not be importing this version.

Finally, how much might it cost to bring your bike into the Nexus century? I'm told that the Inter-7, with Inter-M and Revoshifter, should retail for something a little over £100. Not bad for these days I think.

And England?

As a postscript to this article I have it on good authority that Sturmey-Archer now also make a seven-speed hub, which they are supplying to cycle manufacturers abroad. No further details are yet available in Britain.



Mudguard safety

Only the other day I had a letter from someone claiming his life had been saved by a helmet after his front mudguard mysteriously collapsed. There's nothing mysterious about it. Mudguards collapse for a number of definite reasons: because they're too narrow or the bike provides inadequate clearance for the width of tyre used; because they're badly adjusted, dilapidated or bogged; because the rider's foot

overlaps it; or because something falls or is flipped into the wheel. All of these can make a mudguard catch on the tyre, but this would seldom result in anything untoward if manufacturers and dealers would not persist in supplying designs that are unsafe.

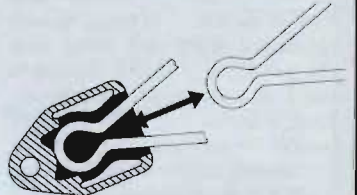
Time and again I have described the danger of single-stay plastic front mudguards. The first time was in 1986. A single pair of stays may be okay with a reasonably stiff metal mudguard, but plastic needs more support. And whereas old-fashioned celluloid guards (remember those? I don't) might have shattered into a relatively harmless shower of fragments, modern plastic is better. It's tough. It can stand the hard knocks of cycling life. Yes it is so good that it can be rolled right up and stuffed into the gap between the tyre and the frame until it jams solid! This stops the bike dead – but not the rider. The rider stops dead a little later.

Some mudguards are even so good they can do all this without forgetting what shape they're supposed to be and spring back

into it, more or less, immediately afterwards. Hence the mystery.

The photograph shows what happened to Alec Morley's bike when his mudguard did this. The accident was reported to me by his friend Hillary Adrian. While quietly riding along she saw him flipped into the air and onto his back. A helmet did not save his life, he was not wearing one; and although suffering a head wound, he did not lose consciousness. His neck was the most injured part. Sadly, after a year in Stoke Mandeville, he remains paralysed from this point downwards.

A double-stay front mudguard might have prevented this accident, but even these can sometimes jam the wheel. While the British trade has ignored my reports, this danger is being taken seriously by German manufacturers who are adopting alternative stay arrangements and have devised means to release the stays in the event of a jam. ESGE have been at the forefront of these developments and their latest device is the Secu-Clip. This simple plastic clip is fixed to the frame instead



of the mudguard stay, which then clips into it. The Secu-Clip is designed only for use with ESGE V-stays (where the double stay is bent from one piece of rod) and it certainly provides a secure fit. There seems no likelihood of its just jumping out, but a hard pull frees the stays instead of trapping the mudguard against the tyre.

Regular readers will know that I do not usually plug products, but this is a vital safety matter. Proper touring mudguards are not a fashionable accessory, so whereas ESGE used to be ubiquitous, shops now tend to stock only the cheapest. I advise anyone who wishes to avoid a very nasty accident to spend a reasonable amount of money and effort in seeking out good quality ESGE mudguards and fit the front one with these Secu-Clips.

Chris Juden