

## FEMINA TESTS

## The "Lady Lightweight"

A CLAUD BUTLER OPEN-FRAME MACHINE OF RIGID DESIGN—STRENGTH IN THE RIGHT PLACES, BUT WITH LIGHTNESS AND EASY RUNNING



Note the interesting design of the "Lady Lightweight."

IT is with a special pleasure that I take the place of "Nimrod" in this issue to present my first test report in the pages of *Cycling*. The pleasure is born of the real enthusiasm I have for the machine I have been riding these past few months. It is the "Lady Lightweight," made by Claud Butler (East Hill, Wandsworth, London, S.W.18), and it has passed every test imposed upon it with full satisfaction.

The reader will note at once from the illustration that the frame of this model is of unusual design. It is an open frame of a particularly rigid type, and after a thousand miles of riding of all sorts, including a tour of Devon and Cornwall, I am satisfied that it justifies the designer's enterprise. One does not need to have a mechanic's mind to see how such an assembly makes for strength. The frame I found to be virtually whip-proof; the rear triangle rigidity being more noticeable than is the case even with a man's type of frame of normal shape. Yet the machine is comfortable withal, providing an up and down resilience equal to any well-made lady's mount of usual outlines. Incidentally, this machine is only 1 lb. heavier than a diamond-framed machine of like size and similar fittings. With d.c. hub and one brake it scales 25 lb.

As will be seen from the picture, the top tube is unusually high, to provide the correct alignment with the extra

stays to the rear fork-end. This was at times a slight disadvantage. When shopping or town riding—I usually wear skirts on such expeditions—a graceful dismount calls for a little skill if one wishes to avoid a lace, leg and hosiery show. Nevertheless, I would not have that tube lowered one single inch, for I must confess to a personal anxiety on the score of the adequate strength of some open-frame models of ladies' sporting lightweight. Of course, my worst fears are when the two tubes from the head are parallel and close together. The top tube should slope away from the bottom member so as to meet the seat tube towards its middle. The "Lady Lightweight" top tube is probably fitted at the best mechanical point for maximum strength, and my confidence in it is of like measure. I did not choose the best of roads during my Cornish trip and there were rough patches over which I sawed and buckjumped in a way no ordinary lightweight would appreciate without some sign of whip, if not weakness, sooner or later—but my Butler stood the test well and gave me a sense of security such as I have when on a masculine bicycle.

Before I tell you about the rest of the bicycle I have been riding, it is right and proper that I should quote from the Ladies' page of the C.B. catalogue: "These Claud Butler designs are built up specially for each customer, as

is usual with all C.B. products." So that you may buy a "Lady Lightweight," the specification of which will differ in almost every particular—except the frame—from the one I have been testing. Apart from extras such as variable gears, the "Lady Lightweight" is priced at the following basic figures:—With Brampton fittings, £8 10s.; C.B. fittings, £10; and B.S.A. or Chater-Lea fittings £11 15s.

The frame is of H.M. tubing throughout, with the Reynolds resilient fork, although, regarding this last item, any design can be had to order. Frame sizes available are 19-in., 20-in., and 21-in.; the wheelbase is short, 41 ins., and the centre of the bracket is 10½ ins. from the ground.

The wheels are built of 26-in. Endrick rims and double-butted spokes. The standard model has a double-cog rear hub, although the machine I have been riding is fitted with a Sturmey-Archer three-speed hub and expander brake. The tyres can be Dunlop or Palmer speed, or others as desired.

The saddle is a Terry Club, but here, again, one of the Brooks Champion series or any other can be specified.

## Bars and Brakes.

The bars are my own flats, which I prefer for the all-round purposes to which I put the machine rather than the drops sent with the bicycle when it first reached me. But any bend may be had, either celluloid-covered or in chrome finish, on an adjustable stem.

Being equipped with a freewheel, I specified a front Cantilever brake, in addition to the rear hub. One brake is in the normal specification and whether this be hub or rim, Cantilever or lightweight calliper is at the free choice of the purchaser.

The finish of my "Lady Lightweight" is Cambridge blue, with white "No-weight" guards, the centre ribbing of which is enamelled blue to match the frame. The saddle top is also blue, to give a really attractive finishing touch to the complete ensemble. All bright parts, including the front and rear fork ends are chromium-plated. Other finishes are black, silver, golden or any flamboyant shade.

A bicycle has another sort of finish besides its enamel and plate; it is the finish that indicates to the observant eye the quality, or otherwise, of the workmanship that is built into it. The refining details of the "Lady Lightweight" leave nothing to be desired, and this fact, coupled with the excellent performance of the machine under all conditions, prove the thoroughbred qualities of this Butler product. But I am convinced that the noticeable ease of propulsion, especially on the up grades, is due mainly to the frame design, which, by its rigidity, transmits all the thrust into wheel drive.