

Windsor

Carrera Sport

Road Test

by RICHARD JOW

This bike is one of only two models that Windsor of Mexico produces. That's right, Mexico, one of the later countries to join the world of bicycle manufacturing. But why not? They are hosts of the Pan-Am games, and Mexico does field some good riders. The cost of production is way down, and Mexico is right next to the U.S., the largest consumer of these two-wheeled vehicles.

If you're in doubt about the name, the Windsor is produced under license from Chiorda/Bianchi of Italy who recently started supplying some of the Swedish pro riders with their bikes.

This \$139 machine, their less expensive model, is assembled with almost all Japanese components. However, all the essential mechanical equipment is among the very best that's coming from Japan today. There's no stinting of quality in the components.

The running gear is all Japanese with Sugino supplying their less expensive Maxy II alloy chainsets, comprising 48/52 chainrings and 165 mm. length crank arms. With the Maeda Pro-Compe 14-32 freewheel and the factory-supplied chainrings we have ratios of 40.8 to 100.3 inches, and with the shorter cranks you can sure spin. But there are disadvantages. For a touring machine I personally would prefer a wider spread in the chainrings. For hillier areas a 42/52 combination might be good, with a 14-28 freewheel to cut down on the gear spread and weight a bit. Cranks of at least 170-177 mm. would do well for loaded down conditions.

Even with the extra wide ratios of the freewheel, the Sun Tour-GT rear derailleur didn't have any trouble climbing up and down the different cogs. Although lacking the surer feel of the shorter cabled-down tube controls, the ratcheted Sun Tour fingertip controls featured on this machine are still the smoothest and require the least amount of effort to operate of any that are on the market today.

The frame itself is fully lugged and built of straight gauge tubing. Sun Tour adjustable stop dropouts and front fork tips are used. Naturally, the eyes are retained for mounting various amenities.

I experienced some flexure in the frame during the time I had this machine, and with loaded panniers a bit more can be anticipated. But for a touring machine this is to be expected, and I used a 25-inch frame—long and more prone to flexure. The ride was easy on the tender parts, partially accounted for by the comfortable vinyl-covered plastic saddle which equaled the comfort of some of the top quality saddles being sold today. The bike tracked a straight line very easily without any undue effort on my part.

A plus feature on this machine is the inclusion of tubular tires which effectively cut the weight down from the normally clincher-equipped touring machines by at least 1½-2 lbs.

The only real drawback I could find in this \$139 bike was in the workmanship of the frame. One of the lugs on the head tube seemed not to have been brazed on as well as it should have been, and I could see daylight between the tube and the lug. This might be an isolated case, but if you're considering a Windsor, it would be a point to check.

At \$139 I feel the Windsor is one heck of a good buy, especially for someone just starting out in cycling—not a youngster, but somebody who is contemplating going into cycling seriously. This machine can give a taste of what a bicycle with good equipment is like.





WINDSOR CARRERA SPORT SPECIFICATIONS

FRAME: Straight gauge tubing, fully lugged; Sun Tour fork tips & adjustable stop dropouts

top tube: 23"
seat tube: 25"
chain stay: 17"
fork rake: 2"

bottom bracket height: 10 1/2"
wheelbase: 41"
weight: 26 lbs.

CHAINSET: Sugino alloy Maxy II w/ 48/52 chainrings & 165 mm. cranks.

DERAILLEURS: front: Sun Tour Compe-V
rear: Sun Tour GT
Both with ratchet fingertip controls

WHEELS: hub: Sunshine large flange - 36-hole drilling w/q.r.
rim: Windsor alloy tubular
tires: Vulcano tubulars
spokes: straight gauge

BRAKES: Dia-Compe centerpulls w/quick-releases and auxiliary levers

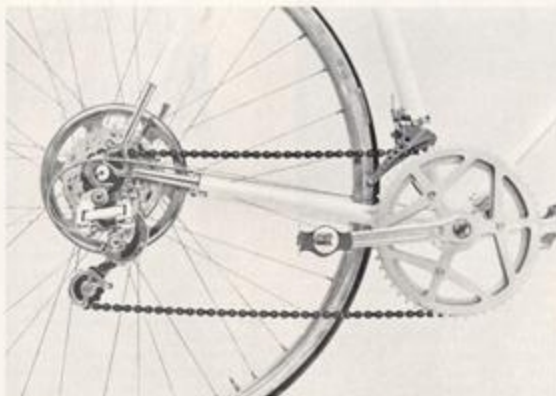
PEDALS: Steel rattraps

FREEWHEEL: Maeda Pro-Compe 14-32

BAR & STEM: Forged Compe alloy

COST: \$139.00

For more information about the Windsor, contact the U.S. distributor: West Coast Cycle Supply Co., 1241 East Watsoncenter Road, Carson, California 90744. (213) 549-2121.



Road Test: Windsor Carrera Sport

Finish:	
paint	3
chrome	3
lug work	5
dropout & fork tip joining	2
detailing	3
overall finish & workmanship	3
Handling:	
steering	2
cornering	3
undesirable frame whip	3
ride	2
overall handling	2

1: excellent; 2: very good; 3: good;
4: acceptable; 5: not acceptable

Left: Ratchet, fingertip controls and chromed head lugs are among the many extras offered as standard equipment on this bike.

Above: The only thing missing from the drive train is the toe clips on the pedals. The Vulcano tubulars are made in Mexico as are the rims.