



THE VESPA T5 VNX5 IN DETAIL

The T5 (officially the PX125 T5 but we'll just forget about that) was introduced in 1985 ostensibly as a sporting scooter in tradition of the GS150 and 90SS. In truth, the market for such a club sports scooter had long since disappeared. But the T5 did allow those restricted to 125cc to enjoy performance comparable to that of a PX200E. The essence of the new scooter was a revised engine featuring a shorter stroke, five transfer ports (hence, T5), a strengthened crankshaft, a bigger carb and a higher compression ratio. All this allowed the engine to rev to about 1200 rpm more than a normal PX 125 of the time, and produce 11bhp as compared to 8 for the standard product.

The T5 engine was widely lauded in its day for the power provided from only 125cc, but time has slightly dulled its reputation. Piaggio claim a similar output for the later 125 PX without any T5 type modifications, 12 bhp from the resolutely non-sporting ET4 125 from 1996, and no less than 15bhp from the current 125 GTL. Such is progress.

The basic frame was the usual P range item - the strangely shaped rear end being an extra section spot-welded on. The headset was completely new with a rectangular headlight and very up-to-date instrumentation that included a fuel readout, a digital rev counter and various warning lights. A rather attractive headset encased the whole thing. Elsewhere there was a new mudguard and horn casting, a plastic storage tray above the tool box, a spoiler on the bottom of the legshields, wheel discs and self-adjusting brakes.

The T5 was produced between 1985 and 1990. though the engine was an option for the standard PX125 as the "T5 Classic" right up to 1998. These were for export only and mostly sold in the UK, while a final disc braked version (the T5 Millennium) was exclusive to the UK in 1999.

The original T5 was produced in red, white, black, blue and metallic grey. Though there are slight discrepancies in the quoted production figures it is believed that about 36000 were produced plus around 5000 electric start versions.

The T5 has always had a minor cult following in the UK. This is possibly due to its production coinciding with the peak years of the scooterboy scene- this model becoming something of scootering symbol that owed nothing to the original mod or mod revival scenes. In truth there is no real overall performance gain to be had over a

P200 of the same era, but some prefer the T5's peakier engine characteristics and appreciate the various different features. Whatever, the T5 now has an established place in Vespa history, and many regret the fact that Piaggio never produced a 200cc version.