

SafetyFast!

SINCE 1959
NOW IN INDIA



VOLUME 2 | AUG 2020



www.mgmotor.co.in

Here's to the **#OneYearTogether** with India!

Dear readers,

Hello! It gives us immense pleasure to present to you the second issue of SafetyFast! in India. We are overwhelmed by your response for the inaugural issue of this magazine from the world of MG. It is our constant endeavour to keep our readers informed and updated of the developments at MG and we hope that Safety Fast! will help us do that.

The month of July was and has been very special for us. In July, we completed one year of MG Hector on the Indian roads and the encouragement of our first anniversary was felt by all our teams. It has definitely pumped up our motivation level and made us feel excited for the future. We launched #OneYearTogether to mark the virtual celebrations, considering the pandemic.

But that was not all! We launched one of the most awaited SUVs of the year – the all-new 6-seater MG Hector Plus – the sibling of your favourite MG Hector to a great response. As always, we are overwhelmed by your love and trust. We hope you are test driving one soon, if not already done!

In the present times, if we could bring out this issue for you, the credit for this goes to our very dedicated and hardworking editorial team. This issue, again, is a perfect fusion of our glorious past and our evolving present that is eager to take a confident stride towards the future. You will find some wonderful stories about some of the iconic MG machines, our motorsport DNA and social initiatives that we have taken under MG Sewa.

We hope you would enjoy reading this issue as much as we enjoyed creating this. Please keep sharing your feedback. It encourages us to put more efforts and helps us improve every time.

Take care!

ZS EV



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HECTOR[®]

THE INTERNET CAR



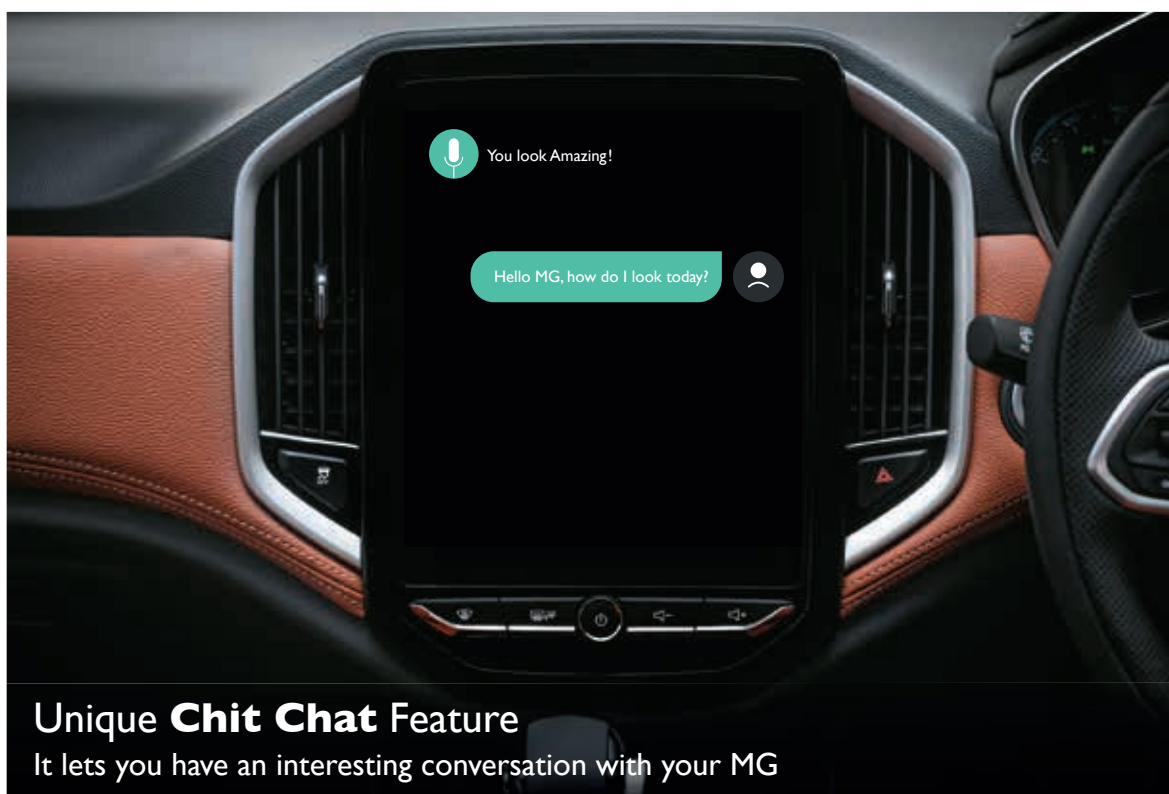
***Welcoming a
new member to
the MG family***

***The all new 6-Seater
HECTOR PLUS***



As July saw us celebrating **#OneYearTogether**, it delivered a doubled up excitement for us as we introduced the sibling of MG Hector – the MG Hector Plus. Thanks to all of you, within a span of one year, MG has become one of the most loved brands of the country and is being recognized for pushing the boundaries of auto-tech innovation.

Our third SUV in India, one of the most awaited cars of 2020, the all new HECTOR PLUS is loaded with elegant exteriors, luxurious interiors and a host of exciting smart features. The Hector Plus is an outcome of our constant interaction with the customers and integration of their feedback into the product. The all new Hector Plus is focused on fulfilling the need of more personal space for our customers.



Unique **Chit Chat** Feature

It lets you have an interesting conversation with your MG



Dual Pane **Panoramic Sunroof**



Smart Swipe Feature Open the Tailgate with swipe of your foot

IT'S A HUMAN THING TO RESPECT EACH OTHER'S PERSONAL SPACE

There are so many things that connect us – ideas, cultures, geographies and at the same time, we live in a shared world. We share moments, we share journeys, we share our dreams, we share the world we live in and yet, at times we crave for our own space.

Introducing MG HECTOR PLUS that extends to you the comfort of extra space, even if you're not in the driver's seat. It offers you the luxury of space to let you be and enjoy the break you need. So that while you share the journey, you can celebrate your personal space too.

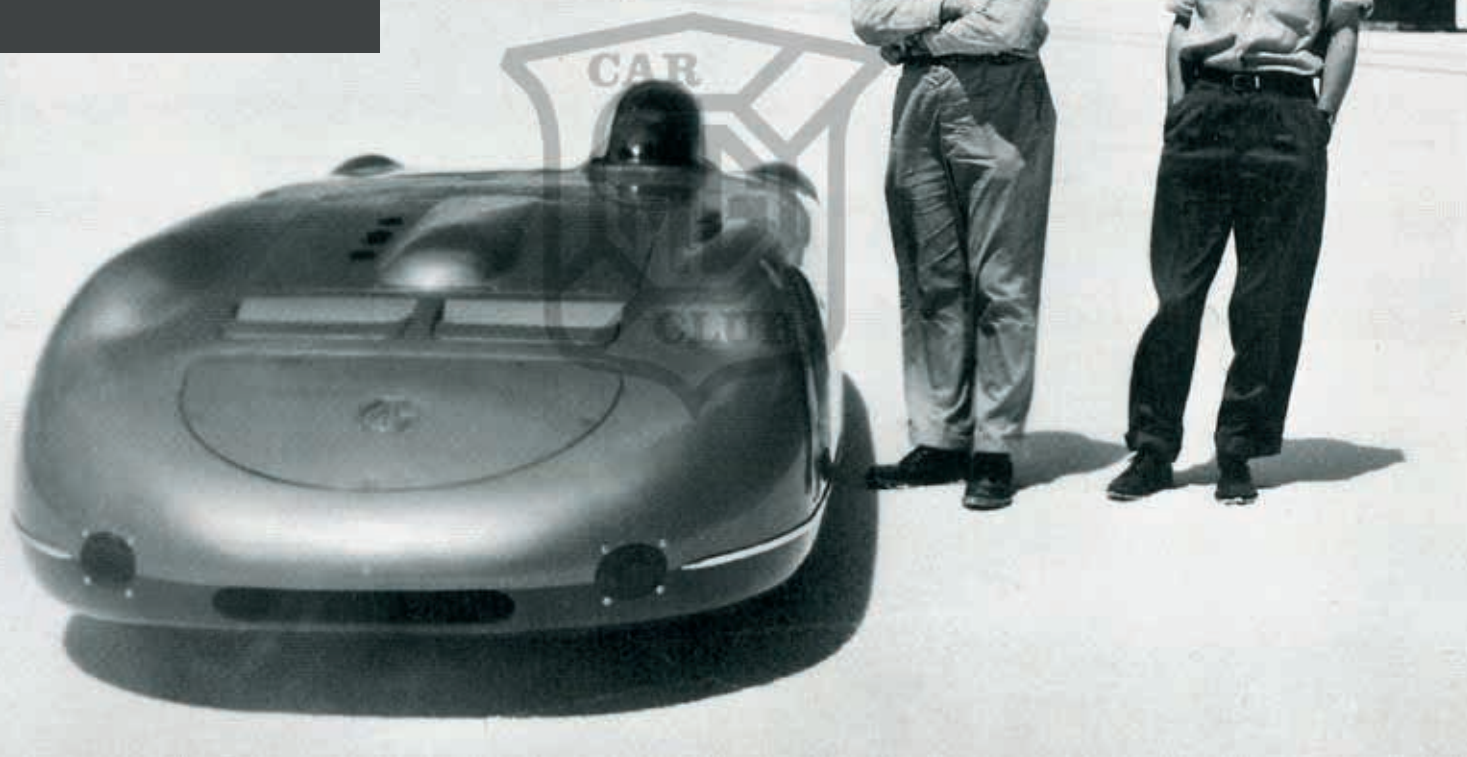


Experience the car yourself. Book a test drive today.

THE ALL NEW 6-SEATER HECTOR PLUS



George Eyston (left),
Ken Miles (right) ready
to attack the 12-hour
Class F Records in EX179



HOW **MG** HELPED FORD BEAT FERRARI

By Adam Sloman

Le Mans '66 was one of the biggest films of the year 2019, telling the incredible story of how Ford broke Ferrari's dominance at the 24 hours. But what part did MG play in the story?

At its heart, Le Mans '66 (or Ford v Ferrari as it's known in the US) is the story of two friends – one world-renowned, Carroll Shelby, the other a hero to motorsport fans in the know, Ken Miles.

Shelby was the all-American hero – a former World War II test-pilot, who in peace-time turned to motorsport, making his debut in May of 1952 at the wheel of an MG TC. Shelby won his first race, which entitled him to a second, and later that day took on bigger, faster cars from the likes of Jaguar and he beat them, too. He would quickly graduate to more exotic machinery, but it was the MG that cemented Shelby's desire to succeed on the circuit.

“I still had a lot to learn, but I knew how to go fast. The MG changed my life, because from that point forward, I knew I wanted to be involved with racing and sports cars.”

In 1959 he would take an Aston Martin to victory at Le Mans, but

shortly afterwards he was forced to retire – a heart condition made it too dangerous for him to compete, so while his career on track had been cut short, a new chapter was opening up for Shelby as a constructor.

Ken Miles' most successful MG Special, 'Flying Shingle' which he won many a California sports car race in, to the embarrassment of more exotic, supposedly faster, machinery



Ken Miles' story could not be more different than that of Shelby's. Born near Birmingham, in his early years he raced motorcycles, and at the age of 15 became an apprentice at Wolseley Motors. He too fought in the Second World War – Miles served in the Territorial Army, becoming a tank commander, and was part of a unit that fought on the beaches of Normandy on D-day.

Post-war, Miles demonstrated a huge talent for motor racing,

competing in Alvises, Bugattis and Alfa Romeos. In the early 1950s, Miles and his wife relocated to California, where he would find work as an MG service manager and he began to compete with the Sports Car Club of America.

Miles would build his own car, based on an MG TD. It won its first race and quickly drew attention up and down the West Coast of America. The car was simple, but its simplicity only served to underline Miles' talent as a driver.

Never one to rest on his laurels, Miles set about developing his next car, a more advanced, MG-based special, nicknamed 'The Flying Shingle' thanks to its swooping body and low ride-height. It was quicker, smaller and lighter than that first special and his success in the US meant Miles found himself as part of the MG team entered the 1955 Le Mans, competing in EX182. Miles and teammate John Lockett would pilot the MG to 12th place, making it the highest placed MG.

Unfortunately, the 1955 Le Mans would be remembered not for the



The MGs leaving Abingdon, being driven by the mechanics, and heading to the 1955 Le Mans where Miles et al were to put the EX186 cars through their paces



Car 41 competing in the 1955 Le Mans, piloted by K Miles and J Lockett, here flat out on the straight

MG's return to the race after a 20-year absence, but for the worst disaster in motorsport history, as 83 spectators and French driver Pierre Levegh died following a major crash.

The events of 1955 led MG to disband its works team and withdraw from racing and Miles returned to the US, and following a difference of opinion with MG General Manager and director John Thornley, moved away from MG.

The following year, Miles took MG EX179 to the Bonneville Salt Flats, setting 16 international 1500cc Class 'E' records, including 170.15mph for 10 miles and 141.71mph over 12 hours. His final race in an MG came in the Flying Shingle, in 1956.

As the likes of Porsche began to make their presence known in motorsport, Miles moved with the times, competing in a Porsche-powered Cooper special, racing against another icon in MG's history – Phil Hill.

As the 1950s drew to a close, MG's focus was on its record-breakers, something Miles felt to be of little benefit, taking to print in the US magazine

Miles taking victory in the Flying Shingle at the 1955 Palm Springs Road Race



Competition Press. He believed that MG still had the potential to succeed internationally, but that the marque was held back, constrained by the management of the British Motor Corporation. “The results of high speed or endurance runs are highly predictable,” he said, adding: “The results are in the bag before the car ever leaves the factory.”

Miles clearly had a passion for MG and a desire to see it racing amongst the best, but in the end, neither the budget nor the political will within BMC existed to push MG onto the global motorsport stage and Miles would move.

In the early 1960s, Miles would become lead test driver for Shelby, playing a key role in the development of the AC Cobra. Other work would see him help develop the Sunbeam Tiger, before in 1964 he would take a key role, alongside Shelby, in completing the development of the Ford GT40 – a car in which he would win the Daytona 24hrs, the Sebring 12hrs and, if not for company politics at Ford, the 1966 Le Mans 24hrs.

Tragedy would strike a year later in 1967 when, while testing Ford’s next GT racer, Miles’ car flipped, crashed and caught fire. He was 47 years old when he died.

*Gordon Whitby (left)
and Ken Miles (right)
with his stock MG TD
at the San Francisco
Golden Gate Race*



Miles would be inducted into the Motorsport Hall of Fame in 2001 and is considered one of the founding fathers of US road-racing. His contribution to motorsport should not be forgotten and he deserves to be more widely

remembered than he has been – hopefully his and Shelby's story, told so well in Le Mans '66, will change that. However his achievements before the 1960s should be noted, too, as should all he achieved behind the wheel of an MG.

Le Mans '66 – The film

Brilliantly acted and beautifully shot Le Mans '66 is a must-see for any fan of motorsport and classic cars. Every scene is packed with some of the most stunning cars you'll see on the big screen, with some nice mentions of our marque of choice! Matt Damon is brilliant as Carroll Shelby and you cannot help but cheer for Christian Bale's Ken Miles. This is a film that deserves to be experienced on the big screen.



Shelby the record breaker

Every MG enthusiast knows the story of Stirling Moss and EX181, but what is less well known is that had things turned out differently, we might well have seen Carroll Shelby setting those records. In 1959 Shelby visited Abingdon to test a Spridget-based record breaker. Despite the best efforts of those involved, the Spridget project was shelved, and in the end EX179 would return to Utah in 1959.



Carroll Shelby sitting in the shelved EX219 car at the MG Factory in Abingdon.



Carroll Shelby sitting in the cockpit of EX181 with Alec Hounslow looking on.



HECTOR[®]

THE INTERNET CAR





From MG, With Care: Expanding MG Sewa Footprints Further

As this year rolls on, one may realize what we are going through could be a pause, but it is helping us all reset our priorities. The year 2020 has made us stay home, led us back to things we did not have or could not find time for, and brought us together as a community. With our key focus on community service, MG kick started MG Sewa to help the society and contribute towards its welfare. A lot of our initiatives started small, with the hope of being able to make a ground up change. And some of them have already taken roots and are growing bigger. We feel grateful for the same.

FROM A SMALL BEGINNING TO A BIG MOVE

To help India fight the pandemic better, we decided to do our best to help enhance the production of indigenous ventilators. We joined hands with one of the leading manufacturers of ventilators in India – MAX Ventilator, based out of Vadodara, Gujarat. The collaboration was focused on assisting the overall production of ventilators by addressing specific areas of the supply chain, IT system and manufacturing processes and help MAX scale up for this time of need.

What started as a small step soon became a big move. In the first month, together with MAX Ventilator we produced 100 ventilator units. But neither MAX nor MG teams were satisfied because we knew we could do more. Hence, we decided to amplify the production capacity further. With our expertise in large scale production and technical knowledge of MAX Ventilator, we soon managed to augment the monthly production capacity to 300 ventilators in a month.

The production capacity can be enhanced up to 1000 ventilators per month, depending upon the demand, especially from the government hospitals to help meet the shortage of the life-saving medical devices in the country.

Our teams dream big as we work towards doing more for the community, for people of India under MG Sewa.





‘PARENTS FIRST’: EXPANDING SANITIZATION SERVICES FOR THE WELL-BEING OF YOUR PARENTS



The battle against the pandemic requires our efforts at multiple fronts. On the eve of the first anniversary of MG Hector, we launched the one-of-its-kinds initiative – MG Sewa ‘Parent First’. ***Designed for the safety and well-being of our customers’ parents during the present times, MG Sewa ‘Parent First’ kick started its journey by offering a full car sanitization service for their cars. To ensure that this service can be availed by customers across India, it covers cars of any brand, make and model.***

The service is provided to our customers’ parents at their doorstep by our well trained staff members who ensure not to leave any stone unturned for your parents’

well-being and safety. Within a span of less than a month, our teams have sanitized over 1000 vehicles, which we feel proud of.

The love and warmth that we have got in last one year of being in India is inspiring and overwhelming. We are hopeful and sure that sooner or later, this pandemic will go away, but not our sense of responsibility as we continue to do more for the betterment of our community!



ZS EV



THE MG METRO CUP

A unique and exciting world of motorsport

The MG Metro Cup has been running for approximately three decades now, but its appeal shows no sign of diminishing. For proof, look no further than two Metro-mad families.



From the outside looking in, the world of motorsport can look daunting. Granted, at the top level it's mostly young blokes taking time away from their tax havens in Monaco and getting paid millions – hardly something that most of us can relate to. But what if we told you that you could still get that all-important green-light adrenaline rush in a familiar three-door hatchback, and all amidst a classless and welcoming atmosphere? Step forward the Drayton Manor MG Metro Cup.

Started in 1992, the Cup is organised by the MG Car Club and caters for both A-Series-powered MG

Metros and their K-Series Metro/Rover 100 successors. It's long been about providing an easy way into motor racing for drivers with a limited budget, but it's a lot more than just a stepping stone.

The championship continues to attract a wide range of participants regardless of age, experience or gender. For evidence, you need only look towards two particularly closely-knit families – the Javes and the Trevetts.

Generation game

Both families bring a lot to the championship, but together their contribution is even more remarkable. Having joined forces from the very beginning, they now contribute an arsenal of drivers, committee members and helpers spanning three generations, not to mention four race-ready Metros.

At the root of it all are 71-year-old Dave Javes and 75-year-old Dick Trevett, who

share the orange MG Metro Turbo, car 96. The red MG Metro Turbo wearing number 95, meanwhile, is driven by Dick's 24-year-old granddaughter, Kyla Birdseye, who shares the car with her mum and Dick's daughter, 47-year old Mel. Then there's Mel's 52-year-old fiancé Richard Garrard, who runs both a white MG Metro Turbo and a K-Series GTi.

But the involvement doesn't stop there. Emma Cross and Kim Javes are Dave's daughters, and though they don't drive, both are a vital part of the racing family. Emma is instrumental in the success of the championship in her role as co-ordinator, while Kim is the series' registrar. With both of their kids also heavily involved at race meetings, it is fair to say that both of these Milton Keynes-based families have Metro racing in their blood.

The strong relationship between the two families extends back to the late 1960s, when Dave and Dick began watching RAC rallies together as members of the Milton Keynes and District Motor Club – a group that both families are still heavily involved with. Both have a strong engineering background, with Dick having run Trevett Engineering Ltd since 1982.





“A friend of ours wanted to run a car, and because of our engineering knowledge, he asked us if we’d help,” remembers Dick. “Basically, we haven’t taken our hands off his car ever since, because we bought it from him after two years!”

Purchased in 1993, that car was the orange MG Metro Turbo they still campaign to this day. It already had an illustrious history, however, having been raced to multiple title successes in the old Rover-backed Metro Challenge by

the legendary Peter Baldwin. Initially Dave and Dick competed in the MG Cup. After racing with other MG grids for a few years, they switched to the MG Metro Cup and have taken turns to complete a full season ever since.

Naturally, Emma, Kim and Mel all got involved, and it soon became the norm for their children to attend too, despite being as young as three weeks old. “I’ve been going to every race meeting with Dad and Dave since 1993,” says Mel.



Mel met her fiancé Richard in 2002, and by 2004 he'd joined the grid. "I watched Dick race, absolutely loved it and thought 'I could do that'," he reports. "I'd done nothing else before, but went and did my ARDS, bought a car and got out there." Fast forward a decade, and it was time for Mel's daughter Kyla to take to the track. "I went to my first-ever race when I was four months old, so I've grown up with it," Kyla explains. "My ARDS licence was my Christmas present at 17, and I'd only been driving for a year when I started racing. My first race was in 2014 at Silverstone, on the National track," says Kyla further.

A couple of seasons ago, Richard added his K-Series Metro to the fleet, completing a quartet of race cars between the two families. The old car hasn't sat idle, though, as family friend Mark Wilson took over the controls for 2019. He was only planning to do one or two races, but true to form he loved the paddock environment so much he ended up doing the full season.



Warm welcome

The families have enjoyed plenty of success over the years. Dick says, “It’s a great weekend away with friends and the racing just comes on top of it. It’s very friendly – if somebody breaks down, you get half a dozen people giving you a hand,” Dick continues, “If you’re stuck for a part, there will be someone in the paddock who will find it for you. We had a breakdown at Donington this year and somebody lent us a cylinder head all ready to run – they actually went home and got it for us.”

Emma recalls an incident at Cadwell several seasons ago: “On the Saturday, one of our drivers had brake failure and ploughed straight into the barrier at the hairpin. He was ready to give up, but within two hours people had called around the local suppliers and scrapyards and got replacement bits delivered. They were all working on it under torch light until midnight, and though he missed the first race, he managed to get out for the second one and came in the top six!”

“ *One of our drivers isn’t bothered about winning, he’s just out there for the whole package of atmosphere and friendliness, and that little bit of adrenaline rush on the grid.* ”

“Our ultimate aim is to have everybody starting and finishing a race, and for everyone to enjoy themselves with clean, fun racing,” she adds. “I know I’m a bit biased, but I do feel we have ticked those boxes.”

Of course, the elephant in the room when encouraging people to race Metros is a perceived lack of cars. MG Metros are now rare in any guise, and they haven’t made any form of Metro, even the Rover 100, for more than 20 years.

We shouldn’t underestimate the impact of nostalgia as an attraction either – many potential racers in their 30s and 40s will have grown up with MG Metros and can now afford to race them. On top of that, the Metro has gained a retro-cool following amongst younger enthusiasts. In any case, later cars are still relatively plentiful, and you can even race a five-door version if you so desire.



Go your own way

The four cars you see on these pages are all prepared by Dave, Dick and Richard on various weeknights and weekends, with Kyla lending a hand when she can. Kyla reckons the knowledge she has gained has been invaluable in understanding how the car is running and spotting any problems, but you don't have to be a mechanic to go racing. As Emma explains, some people do all the mechanical work themselves, while others send the car away and just do the driving.

For what appears to be a humble little hatch, the Metro is a car full of surprises. Not only did it help carry the Octagon forward in the dark days of the early 1980s, it played a starring role in a race series that helped fuel the careers of BTCC legends like Tim Harvey and Steve Soper. Even reigning champion Colin Turkington cut his teeth in a Metro, having won his first-ever title in the 1998 Northern Irish Metro Championship.



Original Article:
Mighty Metros
By Jeff Ruggles published
in the SafetyFast!
UK edition.

GLASGOW TO MONTE CARLO BY MIDGET

By Ken Brown

So, you have thought about it, perhaps dreamed about going to the Monte Carlo Heritage, Classic or even the full Monte, the Historic. So, how and when? Well, back in a pub in Edinburgh, I asked a mate of 30 years if he was up for being a co-driver, and that was how it all started.



THE REBUILD

The summer saw a 1,000-mile tour of the Scottish Highlands and Skye in my MG Midget. It was a great tour with my eldest daughter, Charlotte – however the engine went through three litres of oil. Time for a rebuild ahead of the Monte.

After doing some research into what I wanted to do, and who I could trust, I took the car into Engine Services at Musselburgh. We agreed on a full rebuild taking it to stage two fast road, which would improve performance but meant it would still be driveable on the road.

I visited the garage each Saturday morning when the team kept me up to date with the findings.

The final outcome, an unleaded stage two head, the block bored out by 60thou, new pistons and rings, each piston drilled out to the lightest, the same with con rods. A new crank was required due to the damage by a thrust bearing. The crank was balanced along with the new clutch and flywheel.

The new engine would run hotter, so a larger radiator was installed and the old oil cooler was upgraded. This also removed the risk of any of the metal parts from the remains of the thrust washer found in the sump being elsewhere in the system.

With a long-term view, the decision was also taken to replace the four-speed gear box with a five-speed unit from Frontline Developments. We installed a road fast cam and to get the best of this, along with a four-branch performance manifold, but kept a two-box exhaust pipe to minimise the noise levels.

Next came a few challenges. As the compression had increased from 120 to 150 psi the existing starter had to be upgraded to a high-torque starter, the fuel pump was changed over to an electric pump with a regulator, onto the carbs, although they had appeared fine when in the original setup. The old seals and wax stats were leaking, so were replaced. Then finally, the old distributor, with a 20-year-old electronic Parana conversion kit, was changed for a new all-in 123 unit.



Next stage a final balance and tune. Now only two weeks away from the Monte, I needed to run the engine in with the breaking-in oil. 550 miles were covered going up and down the box, going up and down hills to Oban and back, as well as a few other places. The difference was brilliant. The engine just wanted to keep on pulling uphill.

The five-speed box was great. Before at 3000rpm was a speed of 50mph and now with the fifth gear was 64mph.

I took the car back to the garage on the Sunday night to let Joe finish off the checks and for an oil change.

In the meantime, I had met with the Scottish chaps to organise the Scottish start of the Monte Carlo. Both Douglas Anderson and Craig McGibbon were enthusiastic about my interest in the event and extremely welcoming and helpful. Craig passed on an invaluable list of prepping, spares, and accommodation locations.

There was a list of questions. We covered dates, locations and accommodation.

In short, there are three elements:

- A Heritage run starting in John o' Groats, Aberdeen and Glasgow running to Dumfries.



- The Classic, starting in Glasgow going to Monte Carlo, via a few check points, including an overnight stage starting in Reims and going to Valance.

- The Full Monte, starting from different countries. In the UK, the send-offs from Glasgow, then Banbury, and Reims which is the start of 14 stages over three days finishing in Monte Carlo. There were several requirements for both cars and crew to qualify, and entry is always oversubscribed.

As time passed towards the deadlines for entry, and the work on the car continued, the only option was that we would follow and continue with the cars all the way to Monaco. Douglas was delighted and offered for us to run as car zero, going first over the ramp to lead the team on the route to the Auld Girth Pub in Dumfries.

The weekend before, the final prep consisted of: fitting the hard top, replacing the rear brakes, adjusting the handbrake, and oiling and greasing all the relevant areas. A practice fitting with the snow chains was a bit of a test.

The spares were packed, using all the space possible in the boot. This allowed for a small waterproof bag of clothes on the boot rack,

and a small personal bag behind the seats.

I was aware the car might be difficult to see at night, so I applied some red reflective tape on the back bumper and two white reflective strips on the hard-top roof. Finally, a set of mud flaps were added front and rear.

On the Wednesday morning, after a few final tweaks, it was time to go.

THE EVENT



My mate Paul arrived. We quickly packed his gear and set off for Glasgow, but after five miles the rear tyres needed more air as they were wallowing. We reset these at 35 psi and by the time we were at Glasgow 40 psi, which was much better. A redistribution of some tools in the passenger foot well also made a difference.



The start was located at Clydebank, at John Brown's shipyard.

We attended the briefing, added the final stickers to the car, and headed for the ramp to set off at the front of the 80 cars that had assembled. What an honour. **Just before the countdown Brian came with a microphone to have a chat. As he knelt down and rested his arm on the wing mirror it fell off, the crowd laughed and said "Do you think you'll make Monte Carlo?"**

We drove off the ramp, the crowds clapping, cameras flashing. Paul was navigating: hand maps, GPS, and a phone map to see the best routes though the city to avoid heavy traffic.

Several cars tooted their horns as we passed them. With the car badged up, wow, we were heading

to Monte Carlo, only 1,500 testing miles to go.

Once on the A roads, the spotlights made a big difference to seeing the road. It wasn't long before a few of the faster cars caught us up and passed, but we were in it for the long haul.

After a lovely reception we were in and out of the first check point very quickly. This was the end of the journey for some who had travelled from John o'Groats. We continued on to Dumfries and then Penrith for the second fuel stop of the day. Paul took over driving and we crossed the A66 and met up with a couple of work colleagues in their 20-year-old SLK, who were going as far as Reims. We carried on to the stop for the night at Barneby Moor.

The next morning the crowds waved us on our way as we headed for Banbury. After a quick fuel stop we headed down the A1. This was where the wing mirror just fell off the driver's side! The next minute of conversation was surreal – Paul took on the challenge to find another mirror en route. An hour later we dropped into an Austin Healey garage; with mirror in hand we headed to Banbury.

The reception on arrival was brilliant. We parked up, quickly had some tea and sandwiches that had been kindly laid on and returned to the car to fit the mirror. Nothing was straightforward, but in half an hour the door was stripped, the bolt on the new mirror cut down in length as it fouled window. All back together, off we went, heading for

the ferry at Dover. The forecast was snow so we went for it, arriving with three minutes to spare, to the relief of those we had arranged to meet at 5.00pm.

However, by next morning it had melted and we decided to go and get the front wheels rebalanced at a garage. All I can say is that the French use a different term. It's fun trying to explain when they don't use the term rebalance, but with a few hand signals we got there, and the front wheels were done.

We rendezvoused at the check point garage, on a very compacted, snowy forecourt. We were now getting it, great comradeship. So off we headed to Reims. Craig warned it was a bit of a circus atmosphere. As we arrived, we were ushered into the main square even though we were only following, but lost in translation, we parked up below the magnificent Cathedral.

As the afternoon continued, car after car appeared. I believe 350, classics, all prepared and ready. The crowds were poring over the cars, cameras snapping away, some asking if we had just come from Glasgow in disbelief.

We watched the majority of the cars head off before returning to the Midget. As we tried to move the heras fencing, an armed officer



with a sub-machine gun insisted we went over the ramp, so we did not argue. The rain was pouring, the crowds cheering as we were in the only MG Midget and they loved it, cameras flashing, us up on the big screen. **Down the ramp and off we went. I had to back off the throttle as the rear slid just a bit too much on the wet cobbles, which entertained the crowd.**

Next morning we were up and headed off to Valance, too. The fifth gear made a big difference to fuel economy on the motorway, as well as reducing engine noise. As we passed the trucks the wheels seemed massive and much taller than the car, but with lights on and high viz strips we kept a good eye on other vehicles.

On several occasions cars passed,

slowing down, drawing level and then camera phones would flash, then a wave as they sped off again. As we headed for the centre of Valance, we noticed several groups of policemen at junctions. Little did we know at this point that they were there due to the fuel price protesters.

We headed back to our accommodation, avoiding the protesters, as all the cars from the event were safely parked in a football stadium. The following morning, the big day: up into the Alps 1,200m, and down into Monte Carlo.

We fuelled up again, and as we headed out of the city, we saw the roundabouts with protesters and fires burning old pallets to keep them warm. The roads were great and clear, with the snow-capped





mountains ahead. We played some music and discussed the option of routes. As we climbed, the satnav showed the hairpins ahead. The engine was pulling well. Although the roads had been cleared, the snow lay on the verges, not a place to go off as the drop offs were very, very big. With just over 100 miles to go, a noise started developing from the nearside wheel bearing. The noise became more prevalent with every hairpin bend.

What could we do? We backed off on the speed, changed the route to a straighter road, and carried on, determined to make Monto Carlo. We'd review how to sort the problem without a spare bearing then.

As we descended into Monte Carlo the temperature was getting warmer, from minus to plus 17°C. We certainly noticed the difference. We were almost there. A young lad was staring at us as we passed a Ferrari, which made me laugh. As we reached the sea front we were ushered in, and met Douglas. We went up onto the ramp, got out and got the photo.

Yes, we had done it. What an achievement!

It was time for a plan. We had three nights and two days in Monte Carlo. We contacted our mate Murray in Scotland and he was able to source and post out a wheel bearing. We headed off to the hotel, to collect our suitcase with our kilts which had been sent ahead.

During these two days the speed trials took place in the mountains. We had planned to watch but did not want to risk damage to the car.



The bearing arrived the following afternoon. In the front car park of the bay with crowds gathering, we jacked the car up, stripped the hub out and replaced the bearing, twice until we were satisfied.

That afternoon the other 350 cars arrived, ready for the final night stage. We returned in the evening along with the crowds to watch the cars heading off, each getting a send-off going over the ramp. By next morning they had returned, and the champagne flowed, the empty bottles left on top of each car.

The next day just before heading off, we met an Asian man on holiday with his extended family. He had

seen the car and wanted to sit in it. It made his day, even though not a word of English was spoken. We poured the spare gallon of fuel into the tank and headed for Germany, stopping at the next fuel station.

The car was running well, apart from in the towns where the carbs seem to be suffering from heat evaporation, and the wheel bearing was holding up.

Then next morning, as we came into Newcastle, the wind was still strong, and in the daylight the spray could be seen blowing off the waves. As soon as we berthed, we headed north and in just over two hours were back in Edinburgh. Almost 3,000 miles round trip.

What an adventure, a great time shared with a great mate. Will I do it again? Watch me.



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Founded in 1930

***Headquarters
at Abingdon***

***For MG owners,
by MG owners and
of MG owners***

***Not-for-profit
organization with
approximately a few lakh
members worldwide***

***Celebrates its
90th year
anniversary
in October***

***Hector, ZS EV and
Hector Plus fall
under SUV Registrar***

***Fourth official
MG Car Club in Asia***



THE MIGHTY



By Colin Grant



How it all began

The MGB GT V8 came about due to an entrepreneur, called Ken Costello, seeing an opportunity to place a bigger engine into an MGB. The 'B' was originally designed to have a V4, hence the enlarged engine bay, but that never materialised, instead relying on the evergreen 'B' Series engine.

Costello chose the Rover (Buick/Oldsmobile) V8, which after development fitted in perfectly. This was something that British Leyland had considered, but then dismissed on the grounds that it would not be possible unless costly re-engineering of the body shell was carried out. But after hearing about the Costello V8, Leyland boss Donald Stokes, asked to view the car. After seeing it, he was very impressed and Costello even allowed BL engineers to study the conversion. Stokes decided that MG should produce a production version, but in GT trim only. This was launched in mid-1973, being developed on a very tight budget

which made the end result all the more gratifying for the MG staff involved.

The all-alloy V8 was a natural for the MGB, being a similar weight to that of the cast iron B-Series engine, and therefore not affecting the excellent handling characteristics of the car.

Therefore the V8 was to become the perfect partner, combining handling, comfort, and power to match. The only downsides were the high fuel bills and the fact that it looked so similar to the standard MGBGT but cost much more.

The fuel crisis, that followed the Middle East war, brought an end to many big-engined cars and MG followed suit in 1976 by dropping the V8 from their line-up, after only 2,591 had been made.

A delightful surprise for an MG Lover

Having had a 1974 Damask Red MGB GT V8 for four years back in the nineties, it was a pleasant surprise to be offered the chance to rekindle my relationship with the model after an offer by MGCC Director, Dave Saunders, to try his car.

This is a pre-production rubber bumper car, one of six, and was the second rubber bumper car produced. The original paint colour was Harvest Gold but later painted Black Tulip by a previous owner. Dave purchased the car in September 1983.

“Hopping into the car I found everything came back to me. Pulling the choke and turning the key brought the car to life with that familiar burble from the exhaust. Blipping the throttle gave you the sense that there was a beast waiting to be unleashed from under the bonnet. Backing it out of the Club’s garage reminded me it took a firm grip of the gear stick when finding reverse.”

Out on the open road and with a grin on my face, I took to the old factory test route that was used for the V8s back in the 1970s. These used to be quiet country roads with their unspoilt, picturesque villages, complete with country pubs and quaint churches. But today they are rat runs to avoid using the A34 that has become more like a large car park than a major route between Winchester and Birmingham. But I was pleased to find on the day I drove the V8 it was fairly quiet, which gave me the feeling of what it was like to be a factory tester in those far-off days.

Dave’s car is really well sorted and felt like a new car. It still retains many of the original items that many people changed over the years. Aftermarket parts are fitted though, such as the exhaust manifold and steel exhaust system, together with a Moto-Lite steering wheel, although Dave has retained the original items.

The power delivery is just awesome and the torque from the V8 engine is just amazing, so much so that you could almost pull away in top! Overtaking is just a breeze; no changing down as I would have done in my standard ‘B’ – just push the accelerator down and away you go.

The standard seats have been re-covered in leather, and are plush and comfortable, and I would feel happy going on a long journey in them. The ride and handling is typical MGB, doing everything well but giving you the driving experience we miss so much in modern cars. Brakes are adequate, but even with a servo fitted still need a firm push, but they did pull up evenly with no pulling to one side.

Once back at the Club, I took time to look round the car and am still impressed by the Dunlop composite wheels shod with wider 175 tyres, the discreet V8 badging and, inside, the impressive load area for a sports car, where with

the rear seat down you have more than adequate space for the weekly shop or boxes of bric-a-brac when attending your local boot sale. The front passenger compartment has leg room that caters for the tallest of people. All the controls are laid out for easy access and this car is fitted with inertia reel seat belts and an optional Britax sun roof.

A really enjoyable experience, although I find it hard to believe that my V8 was worth around £5,000 back then, when a similar car today will fetch between £20 to £35k dependant on condition and history. How times have changed.

MGB GT V8

Capacity: 3,528cc

Power Output: 137bhp at 5000rpm

Original Colour: Harvest Gold/Black Interior

Commissioned: 9th August 1974

Mounted: 16th August 1974



GREEN VY



By Martyn Morgan Jones | Photos: Gez Hughes

POWER PLAY

Until well into the 1950s, the legacies of war were dramatic and tangible. The UK was virtually bankrupt. There was the paucity of raw materials which would, quite literally, shape the automotive industry.

To replenish its war-depleted coffers, Britain urgently needed to re-establish itself as a global exporter. The phrase 'Export or Die' became the government's edict to businesses, especially car manufacturers.

Playing both, the survivalist and the patriotic cards, MG's role in the export drive was significant, with many TCs finding homes abroad. Its replacement, the TD, similar in appearance but rather different under the skin, also proved hugely popular.

*In 1952, approximately 11,000 TDs were produced.
Almost 10,000 went to North America.*

Yet, a sea change was occurring. Consumers, particularly in North America, were demanding more style, greater reliability, bigger engines and more than a degree of technical merit.

IN WITH THE NEW

MG wasn't blinkered to these changes. Indeed, with the TD's replacement in mind, the company had been finessing the design of UMG 400 (EX 172), the Enever-built and rebodied TD. In 1952, a prototype of EX 175 was shown to BMC management. It was not approved by BMC at that point of time. Therefore, as a stop-gap measure, MG launched the TF.

Thanks to the clever and temporising tactics by MG, and the sharp decline in sales, predominantly in North America, BMC chief Leonard Lord got convinced that a new MG, one that had style as well as substance, was needed. In June 1954, Lord gave Abingdon the go-ahead to develop the EX 175 project into a production car. The new design was named EX 182.



■ FAST FORWARD

The result was the stunning and revolutionary MGA. Announced in September 1955, here was an MG that traded on traditional core values, such as craftsmanship and quality. Yet, crucially, it looked and felt as if it belonged to the 1950s. The styling, the polar opposite to its predecessor, was sublime. It could nudge 100mph too. The new MGA had not only grasped the export baton; it was well and truly sprinting with it. Sales were excellent.

Nevertheless, John Thornley, MG's General Manager, and Syd Enever, MG's Chief Designer (and considered to be the 'Father' of the MGA), weren't content. They wanted to enhance the MGA's already-good image by introducing a high-performance version – a halo model; one that could undercut Porsche (which held a large market share in North America with various iterations of its 356) – and also knock it off the racing podium. Cue Twin Cam.

CHANGES

Two prototype Twin Cam engines were trialled: Appleby's Austin version and Palmer's 1489cc 'Morris' unit. Finally, the Morris version, which was based around the recently-introduced B-Series block, was chosen.

The B-Series, as debuted in the Magnette, was productionised at 1489cc. However, to be competitive in motor sports, the Twin Cam blocks were duly modified on a special line at Longbridge, to 1588cc, before being delivered to Morris Engines in Coventry for build-up.

The result was an engine that produced 108bhp at 6700rpm. It was quite an ingenious design too.

Because it could handle the power, the standard B-Series gearbox was utilised. Braking was taken care of by Dunlop ten-and-three-quarter inch disc brakes all round. Save for the steering rack being mounted further forward (due to the engine being longer), the chassis remained largely standard.

The MGA Twin Cam, which actually ended up being a much more specialised project than BMC had originally approved, was launched in July 1958. However, its engine still required lots of improvement to be really ready to win the heart of the customers.

FEEDBACK AND RESPONSE

Responding to the feedback from crucial North American market, BMC took the necessary action. It decided to discontinue the production Twin Cam in May 1960, after just 1,788 Roadsters and 323 Coupes had been produced.



WINNING THROUGH

Nonetheless, the Twin Cam had its moments of glory – and is worthy of many accolades. Driven by John Gott, PRX 707, the first works Twin Cam to be officially entered into an international event finished fourth in class and 10th overall on the 1958 Liege-Rome-Liege Rally.

SRX 210, a very famous Twin Cam indeed, raced at Le Mans three times. In 1960, it finished first in class and 12th overall. Bob West, who owned this car until 2005, remembers it fondly.

"It was a fabulous car. Well-balanced, with great brakes. And the 1762cc engine, which gave nearly 140bhp on Webers, was a delight. So tractable too."

Racing is the Twin Cam's 'raison d'être' of course, and there are quite a few examples competing successfully, and reliably, today.

HOMAGE

MG Car Club member Mark Tossell bought his first MGA, a 1958 Roadster, in 1995 – and has been smitten ever since. "I'd been a MG fan for quite some time," says Mark, smiling. "But when I first set eyes on an MGA, it was love at first sight. The lines are stunning. To me, it's the best looking MG ever. The other great thing about the 'A' is it's old enough to have a wonderfully classic charm, but can also keep up with modern traffic. It's a glorious car."



■ IMPRESSIVE AND SPECIAL ■

This Twin Cam, which is sublimely built, detailed and finished, certainly possesses the wow factor. The chassis is impeccably balanced, the brakes impressive, but it's the engine that truly deserves the superlatives. It's a wonderful and potent evocation of Palmer's original design intent and so, so capable. Silky smooth, surprisingly quiet, remarkably tractable, and perfect for road, race or hill-climb/sprint use, it makes this particular Twin Cam very special indeed.

TECH SPEC

Chassis

STEEL BOX SECTION

Wheelbase: 7ft 10in

Track Front: 3ft 11.9in

Track Rear: 4ft 0.08in

Suspension

Front: Independent, lowered coil springs, Wishbones,

Lever arm dampers

Rear: Live axle with semi-elliptic leaf springs, Lowering blocks and lever arm dampers

Steering

Rack & Pinion

Turning Circle: 32ft

Brakes

Front and Rear: 103/4 in Disc
Cable-operated parking brake

Wheels

Dunlop Peg-drive Steels

Tyres: 185/65/15 radials

Engine

4 cylinder DOHC

Modified and converted
five-bearing MGB block

Belt-driven

Twin Weber 45DCOE
carburettors

Gearbox

Five speed manual,
synchromesh on all
forward gears

Performance

Max. Speed: 135mph (est.)

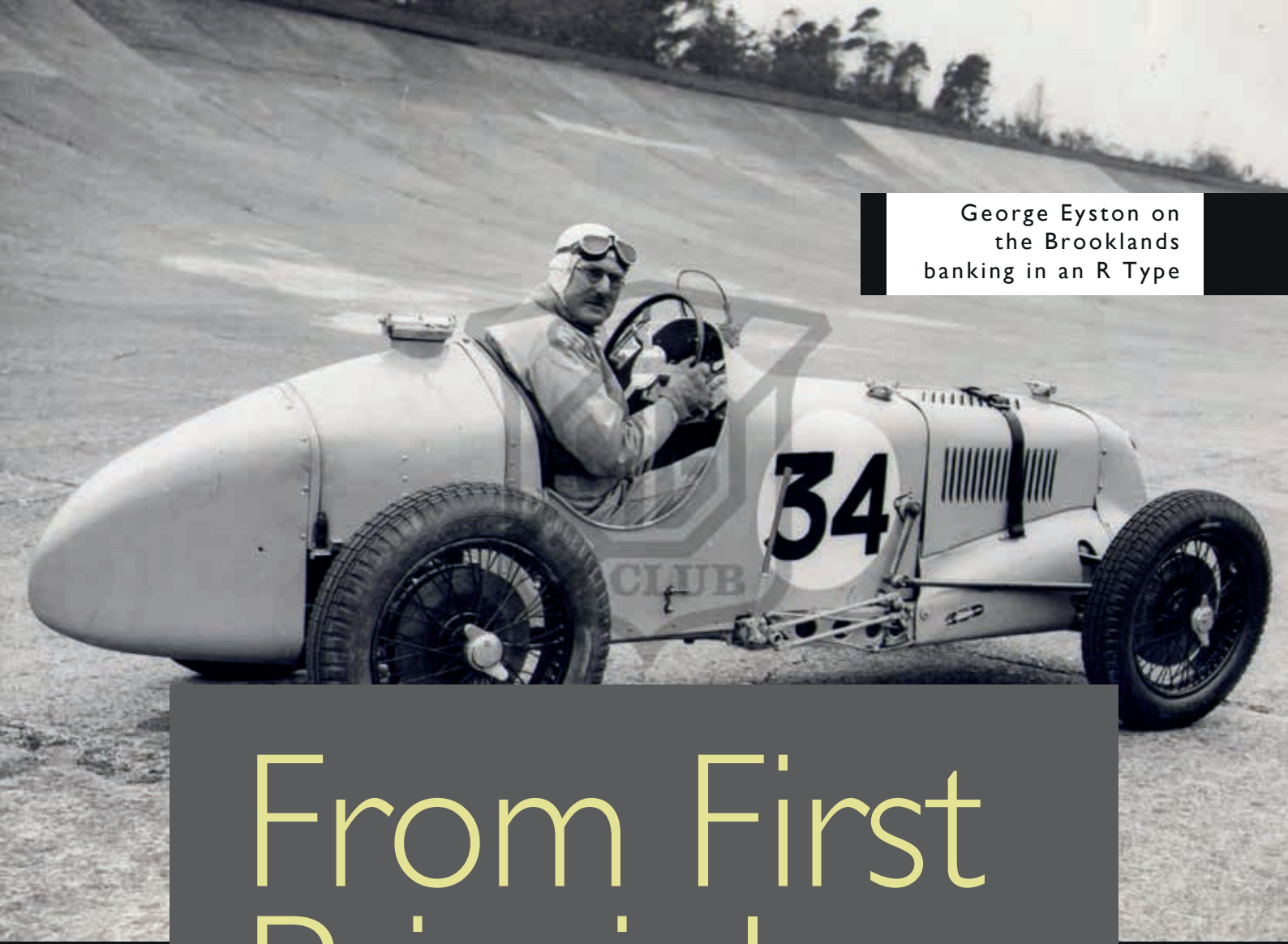
Acceleration: 0-60mph
6 secs (est.)

Overall fuel consumption:
25mpg (est.)



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A black and white photograph of George Eyston driving an MG R Type open-wheel race car on a banked track. The car is light-colored with the number 34 on its side. Eyston is wearing a racing helmet and goggles. The background shows a steep, grassy bank.

George Eyston on
the Brooklands
banking in an R Type

From First Principle

By Laurence Pomeroy Junr.

Tracing the history and reviewing the salient features of the R Midget, reprinted from a 1935 issue of The Sports Car Magazine.

This article is a testimony to the rich heritage of MG and captures the chronological evolution of one the iconic MG cars. It gives us a glimpse of how MG has successfully curated the masterpieces of auto tech in every era.

“Always to excel and to be superior to others,” wrote Homer some 3,000 years ago, yet these words might well be considered the inspiration of the MG racing policy which has resulted in the production of a brilliant new design called the R Type Midget.

Before proceeding to a description of the leading features of this new design, it would, I think, be as well to explain that all MG cars designed for racing purposes have to be produced on a commercial basis, that is to say, made in a certain minimum quantity and sold at a price which will at least cover their design and construction.

From this policy follow certain important consequences, notably:

- 01 The design must be reasonably easy to produce, and involve no highly expensive alloys or machining methods which would raise the price to a point where the car was no longer saleable.
- 02 The car must be reliable in the hands of the racing private owner, and it must also be possible for him to drive the car safely at its maximum speed.
- 03 The amount of money spent initially on the designs and development work must be quite small.

The number of purchasers for this type of car is necessarily limited, and even £1,000 spent on experiment amounts to £100 a car when ten are built.

Bearing in mind that the cost of producing a new model car in America is usually reckoned at a minimum figure of £200,000, that the latest German racing cars are estimated to cost £7,000 to £8,000 each, and that as far ago as 1914 it was considered impossible to produce a racing car for under £2,500, it might be thought that the conditions governing the MG cars were such as to make a competitive design of pure racing car almost impossible.

History, however, has proved this to be far from so, and in respect of our reputation in international competitions the British industry is, I think, very deeply indebted to the brilliant work of the MG designers, who have made superlative bricks with but little straw when compared with their Continental rivals.

With this in mind, we shall be able to appreciate the magnitude of the task confronting the MG engineers when they set about producing the latest R Type car.

One might indeed reasonably ask why, in view of their convincing superiority in Class H in 1934, they should have departed so far from the orthodox.

The reason is that the general layout of the previous types was designed in 1932 when the 750cc engines were producing about 55 hp, giving a top speed in road-racing trim of about 94-96 mph. In 1933 the hp was increased to around 75 by raising the supercharge pressure to 18 lbs per sq inch, which, at that time, represented the peak of supercharger efficiency. The rise in speed corresponding with this made it apparent that the general layout was not quite equal to the power which could be developed by the engine, but, as is common knowledge, numerous successes were gained by these cars during the year, both at home and abroad.

Blowing 28 lbs

“ For 1934, experiments were made to see if the engine would operate satisfactorily in conjunction with much higher supercharge pressures than had been used on any engine previously. ”

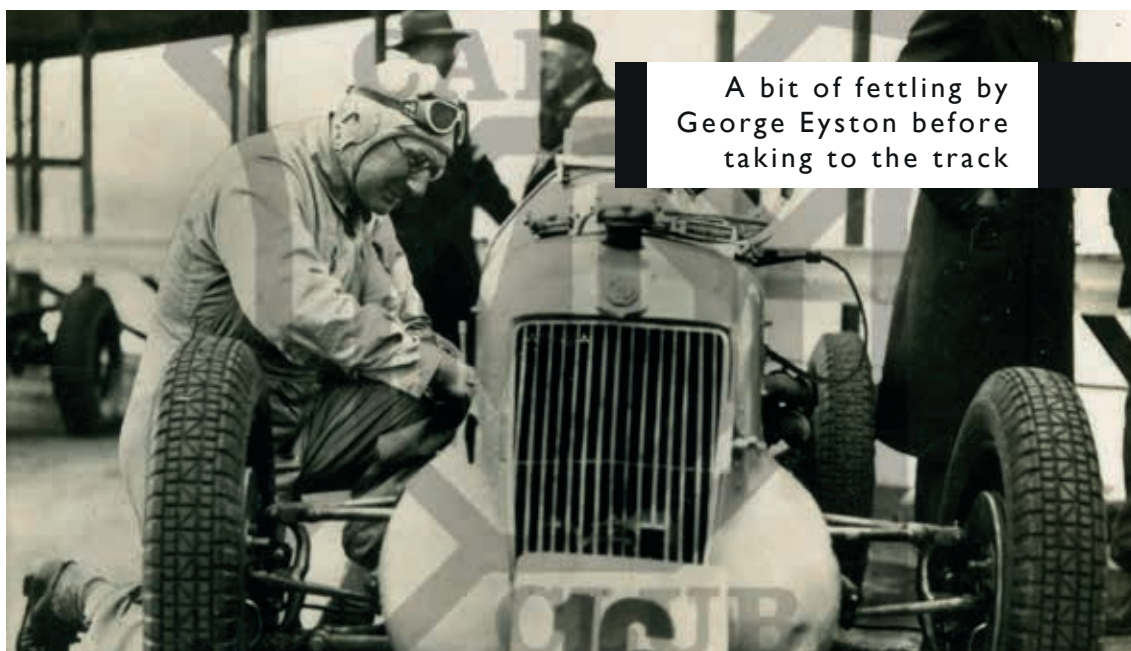
This became possible by virtue of the rapid strides which had been made in supercharger design. A three-bearing crankshaft was employed, and the engine surpassed the most sanguine expectations of all concerned by producing

well over 110 hp with 28 lbs supercharge pressure, representing at one fell swoop an increase of 40 per cent. on the previous year's engine.

Such an astonishing increment in hp made it evident that the cars would be very much faster than any road racing 750cc hitherto made, and, to cope with this, a new and larger chassis was built for the Q model car, as it came to be called. These cars were widely raced in 1934, and achieved some striking successes at Donington, Brooklands and elsewhere, where they established themselves as being on a par with very much larger cars from the viewpoint of both maximum speed and acceleration.

During 1934, however, we saw a clear demonstration of the superiority of cars with independent suspension, it being particularly noticeable that they obtained a much better wheel grip than their conventionally-sprung rivals, and were thus able to use full throttle from low speeds without wheel spin on surfaces where such a procedure had previously been impossible. This was obviously a most valuable characteristic for cars with very high hp in relation to their size and weight, of which the Q Type was an outstanding example.

The designing staff at the MG works, therefore, set about a most exhaustive survey of the possibilities of independent suspension, including a thorough mathematical analysis of all the problems involved, and the making of many models in which the behaviour of the car under various conditions could be closely studied.



A bit of fettling by George Eyston before taking to the track

As a result of these studies, they concluded that independent suspension was a most valuable feature for racing cars, but that it must be applied to all four wheels where existing methods of application left a great deal to be desired. Once having established the value of the principle, its adoption was inevitable, and a tremendous amount of work was put into the design of a system which avoided the disabilities present in other motorcars, the final design well exemplifying, in the words of Lord Fisher, that “No difficulty baffles great zeal.”

Such is the lineage, and such the considerations which have resulted in the R Type.

Some readers will know that the foundation of the chassis is a member which is forked at the front to hold the power unit, which, with its Wilson gearbox and Zoller compressor, is substantially similar to the Q type.

Engine Changes

Internally, the main alteration consists of the use of stiffer connecting rods, apart from which the engine as a whole bears a resemblance to the ordinary P type. This is almost unbelievable when one realises the enormous hp which is extracted from it.

It will be noted that the part of the frame which is not tubular is box section, the whole being electrically welded and providing a form which is about eight times as stiff as anything previously used, and over 50 lbs lighter.

A great deal has been written in the weekly press about the use of torsion bars for the front and rear springing, and I think this principle is well known to most people on account of it having been used now for some little time by the Citroen Company, and demonstrated by them at the 1934 Olympia Show.

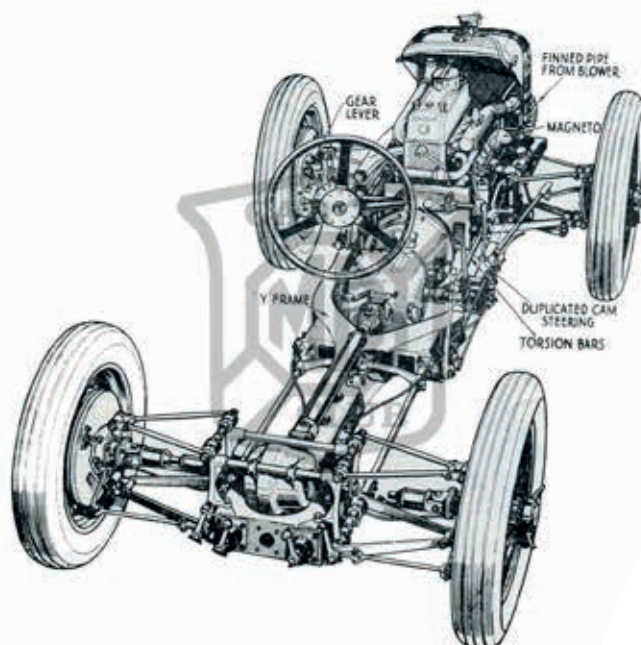
It is in the detail layout of the connecting links between the wheels and the torsion bars where the ingenuity and care in design are evident.

It would, I fear, almost be necessary to write a book on the lines of Euclid to describe thoroughly the precise reasons for the layout adopted, but what, within the limits of this article, I am able to do is to call attention to the rigidity of the whole structure.

It will be seen that at the front end of the car there are triangular members, and these are so laid out that the front wheels move up and down without any variations in track, with extremely low stresses from brake torque effects, and with a complete appreciation of the steering problems involved both when operating under conditions of hard braking and on rough surfaces.

The steering gear in itself is not less ingenious than the rest of the construction, consisting as it does of a Bishop layout with two cams and rocker arms geared together in such a manner that any kick from the wheels is not transmitted through the gear. Each cam and rocker arm works an individual A push-and-pull rod going to each front wheel.

The R Type chassis was a complete breakaway from the previous MG design



Rear Suspension

At the back end of the car it will be noticed that not only are there triangulated members to guide the wheels in their up and down motion, but also that there are special steel arms to hold the wheels perfectly steady and parallel to themselves and to the frame.

The whole of these layouts have been designed so that under the worst possible conditions a wheel will break or bend without damage to the link structures, whilst as a consequence of the very large reduction in unsprung weight it has been found possible to almost completely eliminate friction from the springing, since the torsion bars, which constitute the main springs, have, of course, no friction, and the shock absorbers are of the hydraulic type.

It is consequently reasonable to expect that the car will combine steadiness at full speed with a degree of comfort far above present racing car standards.

This, of course, is all to the good, because, with the single-seater bodies provided, maximum speeds in the region of 130 mph will probably be obtained. Moreover, as stated before, by reason of the MG policy the cars are designed for use at this speed by ordinary men, and not solely under the guidance of super-drivers and ex-motorcycle riders whose powers of endurance, and judgment in knowing which way a thing is going to jump next, are so much above the average.



Doreen Evans having fun in a Bellevue Garage R Type

A Classic Type

Mr. H N Charles, BSc, head of the Technical Department of the MG Car Company Ltd, in a paper read before the I.A.E., stated that previous MG racing cars did not constitute classic types of design such as were exemplified by such cars as Peugeot, Sunbeam, Mercedes, and so on.

No longer would such a statement be admissible without manifestly false modesty, for the design of these R type MG racing cars departs so radically from accepted practice for road and track work that they must be considered as being something that is entirely new and fresh.

We may admit that Byron was justified in asking: "What is the end of fame? 'Tis but to fill a certain portion of uncertain paper," but one feels that these cars will not be valued solely by any fame they may achieve in competition successes.

They will also, I believe, in due course be looked upon as the prototype of a new type of motor car, and one which, I am sure, will not only sustain, but also enhance, the prestige both of the MG Car Company and of England.

“ All through its 9 decades long journey, MG has kept auto tech innovation at the helm of affairs. This is the reason why MG could maintain the tradition of coming up with iconic speed machines in every era. The journey still continues and we expect many more milestones along the way. ”



Kenneth Evans at the wheel of his R Type during the BRDC British Empire Trophy Race

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Ankit Mishra, Kanpur





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