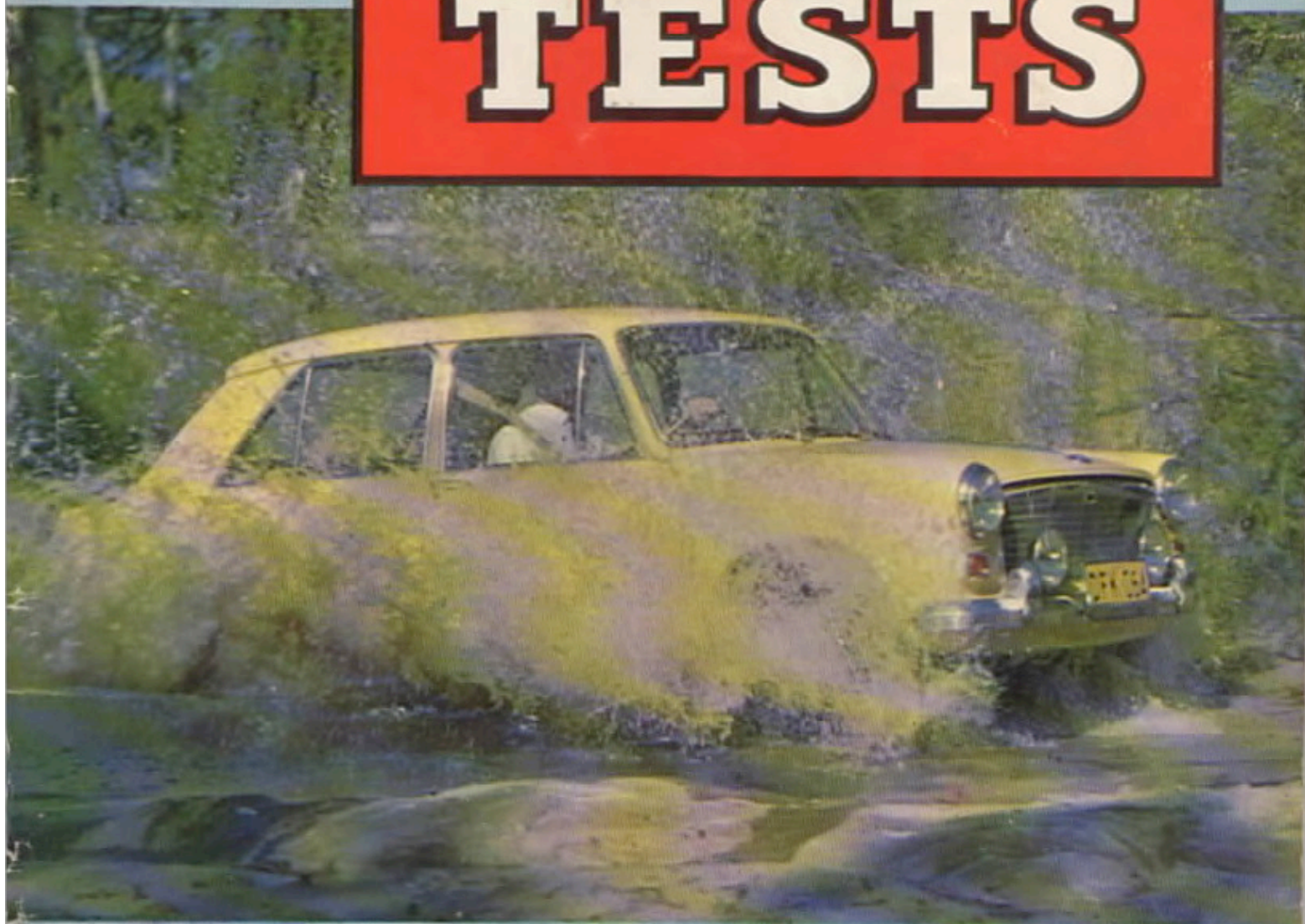


THE
SYDNEY MORNING HERALD
MOTORING AUTHORITY
PRESENTS COMPLETE
PERFORMANCE DATA ON
CURRENT MODEL CARS

STURT GRIFFITH'S ROAD TESTS



3/-

1955 EDITION

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£1,395

The latest B model M.G. sports is such a different car from its M.G. A predecessor that any detailed comparison of the two is rather pointless.

M.G. B



THE B model has an entirely new car structure, being of unitary design with longeron stiffeners.

Also its engine is larger, with substantially greater outputs, and the new body is far more spacious than its predecessor, and in particular it now has a useful (if not large) boot.

On my country test, I found the M.G. B an exhilarating car to drive. It has a really good top gear performance, it responds excellently at lively touring speeds, and it handles precisely and promptly on winding roads, or when overtaking at speed.

A characteristic which it shares with the A model is a feeling of solidity which is unusual in a sports car weighing well under a ton. The M.G. feels one robust and rigid piece of car as it takes fast corners and as it rides over rough country roads.

One is always in a quandary as to whether the M.G. is a competition car. The B model can obviously be super-tuned to give competition performance, but my own feeling is that the car is designed essentially as a rally car or a plain "sports" for pleasant and fast motoring, in which department it really shines.

Observations

The car submitted for test had a number of optional extras, in the form of a detachable hardtop, heater and braced tread tyres. It was not specially tuned, but rather was in touring trim.

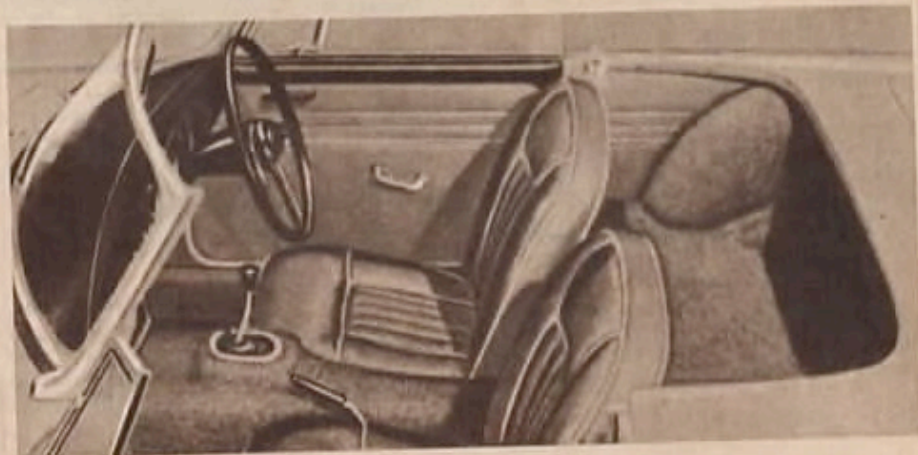
There are a number of shortcomings in the M.G. B, as in most cars. The occupants' footwells are not adequately ventilated, the screen pillars are bulky and the mountings for the Australian-made hardtop are obviously inadequate and permitted much thumping. This latter defect would not, of course, apply to the soft-top, which is the standard fitment.

On the operational side, second gear is somewhat low for best performance (although it does allow the car to climb practically anything without using the unsynchronised first gear), the muffler is suspended only 5in from the road and takes a bad bashing on stony roads and there is much reaction transmitted through the steering over rough surfaces. Also, considerable dust entered the boot.

But in spite of these shortcomings, I thoroughly enjoyed my day in the M.G. and I admired its interior appearance, its new spaciousness and its comfort.

Hill Climbing

The gearing for top has been very astutely selected to give good hill climb-



The traditional layout of the MGB features more comfortable seats, a conventional gearshift and well-placed controls. The seats are covered in high quality stretchable and grained leather cloth.

ing and excellent acceleration in the 70 m.p.h. cruising zone. The M.G. will therefore take most hills in top with a 3cwt load, but one naturally slips into third if the climbing is winding or slow.

The gears and speeds on the test hills were:

LETT RIVER HILL (2 miles with acute bends, maximum gradient 1 in 8½): Third gear in a particularly lively climb at 40-42-64 m.p.h.

FITZGERALD MOUNT (1 mile long, average gradient 1 in 11, maximum 1 in 10): Top gear at 50-56-51 m.p.h.

The energy ratios, based on the test loaded weight of the standard car, are: Torque to weight, 101lb-ft per ton; power to weight, 90 b.h.p. per ton. Top gear gives a road speed of 17.9 m.p.h. at 1,000 r.p.m. on the standard tyres.

Cruising And Acceleration

The M.G. bowls along in an effortless manner and its cruising speed is high. It is also accompanied by noticeable wind-noise around the windows and a whine from the differential of the test car on the overrun. There is not, however, excessive road or engine noise transmitted to the interior.

The maximum torque is developed at 54 m.p.h. in top, which suits this style of car, more particularly as the engine remains flexible down to town speeds. At full throttle from a crawl in top, the engine smoothed out at 20 m.p.h. and started to deliver from 35 m.p.h.

The acceleration times were:

THIRD GEAR: 20 to 40 m.p.h. in 6.5 secs., 30 to 50 m.p.h. in 6.2 secs., 40 to 60 m.p.h. in 6.9 secs.

TOP GEAR: 20 to 40 m.p.h. in 10.9 secs., 30 to 50 m.p.h. in 9.4 secs., 40 to 60 m.p.h. in 9.1 secs.

0 to 50 m.p.h. in 8.9 secs., using first and second gears.

Handling

The suspension of the M.G. is basically firm and it shows marked differences in the way it rides over different types of road. On average bitumen surfaces it does not tremble much and is comfortable, but on stony roads there is pronounced tremble and the steering kicks quite badly.

Over really rough, potholed roads there is no sign of bottoming, but the car reacts rather heavily to bad holes.

Cornering is excellent. The M.G. enters the bends easily and with the steering quite light and it shows about neutral characteristics, tending toward oversteer on acute bends.

On dry bitumen, the car cornered very safely and its behaviour and control were conventional. Roll was moderate (with front stabiliser bar fitted) and tyre squeal negligible.

The rack-and-pinion steering requires three turns from lock-to-lock and the turning circle is compact at 32ft.

The Lockheed braking system incorporates 10½in discs in front and drums in rear. It is unassisted, but pedal pressures are always moderate and the

wheels can be locked.

Braking results are very good and free from fade in touring use. The handbrake quietly stopped the car down the Victoria Pass (1 in 8).

Body And Design

The M.G. B open body is modern in external line and traditional in interior arrangement. Two soft and slightly shaped seats are provided and in this case there is a bench behind them which would take small children (headroom 27in, kneeroom 7in) or which serves as a very capacious luggage compartment.

There is good leg and headroom and the seats are covered in high-quality stretchable and grained leathercloth, with thick rubber cushions. Between them is the usual deep tunnel, carpet covered, on which the gear-lever and handbrake are mounted.

With the heater fitted (and fan on) there was an inadequate draught of cold air to the legs, and none to the feet of the occupants, which became uncomfortably hot.

A glovebox is fitted in the fascia, and a key is required to open it for safety reasons. The fascia top is soft padded and covered in black leathercloth, while the fascia board is crackle-finished.

The boot is of good size, spoilt by the spare wheel flat on its floor. Nevertheless, it will easily accept several good-sized suitcases and other weekend luggage for two, or a number of sets of golf clubs, if not buggies. The boot is quite innocent of lining or matting, and is a potent source of noise.

The curved screen is robustly mounted, and it co-operates with wind-up windows, each with a small vent panel. The soft hood has a large perspex window and quarter windows.

Driver's Layout

As may be expected from this stable, the driver is well accommodated and his controls are nicely to hand. One would, however, prefer some dispersal of the five minor controls in the fascia

centre.

The gearshift and handbrake could not be better placed, the pedals are correctly aligned, move in a natural direction, and are well separated. The dip-switch is just too high to lie under the repose position of the left foot.

The seat adjusts through 7½in, the wheel is well spaced from the body, but the rear mirror is much too narrow for its job. The wipers clear a goodly portion of the screen, and rather meagre washing-jets are available.

The movement of the gearshift is short and precise, and its synchro accepts snatch changes.

The instruments comprise large circular dials for tachometer and speedometer, and small dials for fuel, oil pressure and engine temperature.

The fuel figure of 30.8 m.p.g. is not wonderful, and gives the rather low result of 33.9 ton-m.p.g., and a fuel-speed factor of 1,530. The fuel tank is good for 308 miles on tour.

The cylinder dimensions are 80.3 x 89mm, and on the compression of 8.8 to 1, some detonation and running-on was encountered on super fuel. In England, 100 octane fuel is recommended.

Two 1½in S.U. carburettors are protected by individual Cooper paper-element filters, and the 8½ pints of oil are passed through a full-flow filter and a cooler ahead of the normal radiator.

A diaphragm clutch is used, and its operation is reasonably light, with a smooth engagement. The overall gear ratios are: top 3.9, third 5.4, and second gear 8.6 to 1.

Suspension is by coils and wishbones at front, and semi-elliptics in rear. A front stabiliser bar is standard and lever-type dampers are used.

The period for oil change and lube (10 points) is 3,000 miles, and for the filter is 6,000 miles.

Although quite conventional from the technical viewpoint, the M.G. B gives a fine sporting performance, and is a particularly pleasant fast tourer.

The car was submitted for test by The British Motor Corporation Pty. Ltd., the manufacturer. ●

ABOUT THIS CAR

INCLUSIVE PRICE: Base model £1,395.

BODY: Two-seater, individual seats each 18in wide. Rear children's bench (or luggage space), 36in wide. Reasonable rear boot. Detachable soft top.

DIMENSIONS: Length 12½ft. Wheelbase 7ft 7in. Track 49in. Clearance 5in. Tyres 5.60 x 14in. Fuel tank 10 gals. Weights: standard car 18½ cwt; test car 19 cwt plus test load 3 cwt.

MECHANICAL: Four-cylinder engine of 1,798 cc capacity, developing 98 gross horsepower and 110 lb-ft torque. Four-speed, floor change transmission. Front disc brakes. Integral construction on conventional suspension.

PERFORMANCE: Maximum speeds (in touring trim): top 101 m.p.h.; third 84 m.p.h.; second gear 56 m.p.h. Accelerates 0-50 in 8.9 secs. Touring fuel consumption 30.8 miles per gallon at 45.2 m.p.h. over the test route.