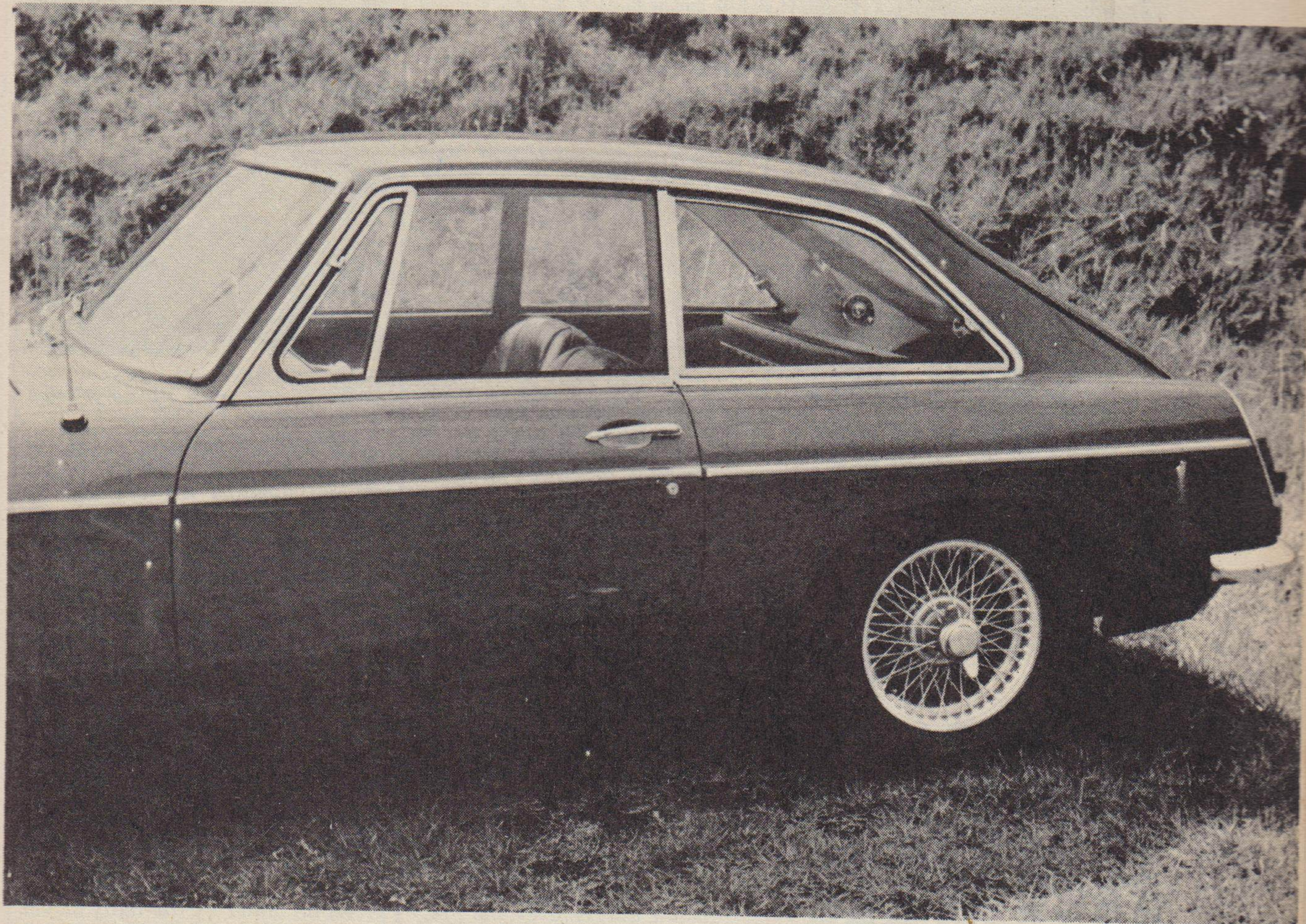


SCOOP: LOCAL MGB GT!



A Sydney firm puts a locally made MGB GT on the market at \$800 cheaper than the fully-imported units.

By Rob Luck

BIG news! A Sydney-built MGB GT will be released to sports car buyers next month. It will be the first all-Australian GT sports machine ever to hit the local market as a complete unit. It will sell for under \$3600. In almost every respect it will be identical with the English-made MGB GT imported here in small numbers at nearly \$4400. How do they do it? In two ways — first the car is completely built locally (and therefore not subject to crueiling import duties); secondly it uses better quality Australian materials available at a lower cost than overseas ones.

The car is mechanically identical with the imported units. It starts life as a normal MGB roadster rolling off the BMC Zetland (Sydney) production line. Then Gordon Stewart's Sydney Sports Car Centre (Blakehurst) takes charge and trailers the new car to its workshops. A pre-moulded completely reinforced fibreglass top is laid in place and grafted to the body (immovably). It is permanently sealed against water and dust. The rear area is gutted and fitted out with new plus two seating area (identical to imported units in BMC's own local trim). Headlining, carpeting and all upholstery is genuine BMC mate-

Local car is virtually indistinguishable from fully imported English units, but has slightly lower profile, less heavy chrome moulding treatment. Interior is identical, standard of finish high.

rial. The car is resprayed, brightwork added, interior given the final touches (lamps and so on) and it is ready to be shipped back to the showroom floor. *It carries the full factory warranty.*

The keen eye will detect a few differences. The English MGB GT uses a deeper windscreen, quarter vents and side glasses than the roadster, but the local car uses the existing components. This gives a slightly sleeker, lower profile without detracting significantly from interior room.

We followed the car (secretly) through its long 12-month development program. Headed by the vigorous agitations of Stewart's Eric Lane and Barry Chenoweth the conversion was carefully perfected stage-by-stage using an imported unit as the workhorse. Various materials were tried and discarded, hinges, handles, brightwork and other parts were made and remade until everything was perfected. The release date was put back several times to make sure the final product was flawless.

We'll bring you a road test on this stimulating machine very soon: Gordon Stewart is currently putting miles on a road test car for us. Meanwhile, remember you read about it here first. #