



Even with the hood down the MG-B can be quite comfortable inside, thanks to the windup side windows.

THE B MAKES ITS DEBUT

Newest addition to the sports car field, the MG-B is faster, handles better and is far more comfortable than the MG-A.

By IAN FRASER

THE world's most popular sports car, the MG, has a great reputation to uphold and the newest version of the famous marque—the B—does it admirably. With a cubic capacity of 1.8 litres it is the biggest post-war MG—and the fastest.

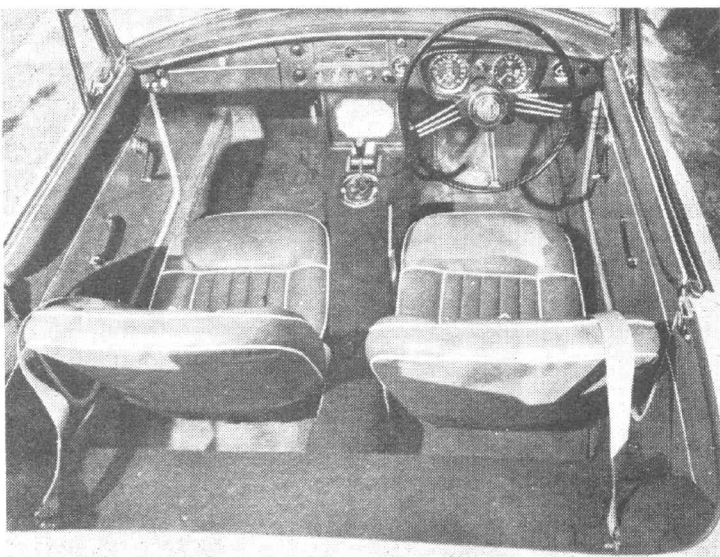
Not only is the B bigger in power than the superseded A, but it is also the first MG roadster (in Australia) to use unitary construction to make the car both stronger and lighter than the almost out-moded separate chassis arrangement.

Of course, the most important change is the bigger engine. Jumped from 1622 cc to 1798 cc (by using a re-cored version of the BMC B-series block) there is an immediately obvious improvement in the car's torque characteristics. The B is a third and top gear car. It will pull from as low as 15 mph in top and 10 mph in third.

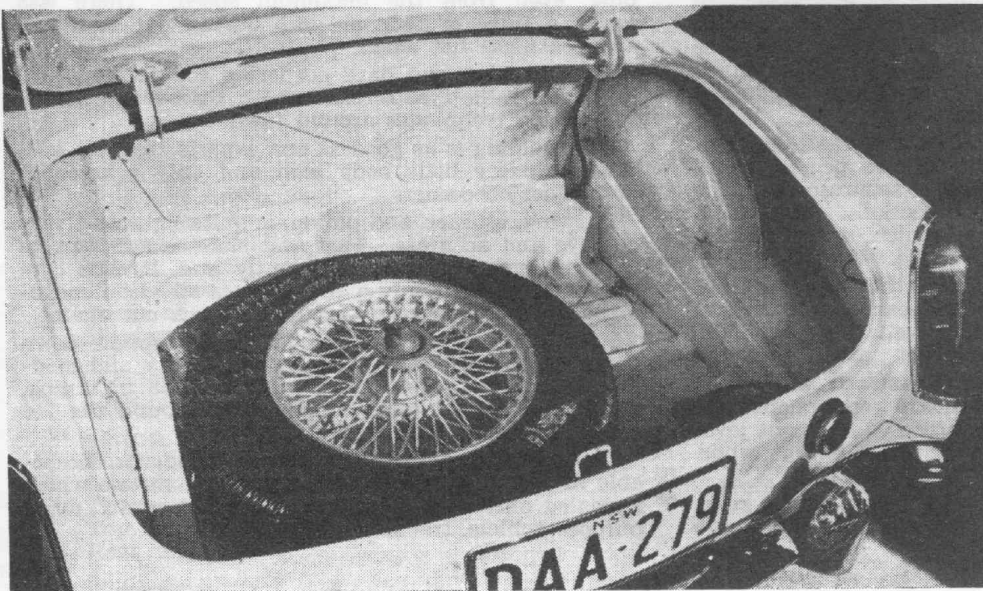
Of course, being a sports car it is not intended that this kind of driving is the usual thing. Sporting drivers get their fun by changing gears, not by flogging along at low speeds. However, just for the record the B does not mind pottering. We spent many hours of our test running in dense traffic and never once did the engine go outside its correct temperature range.

Developing 94 bhp at 5500 rpm the engine has an 8.75 to 1 compression ratio which does not agree with local fuel mixtures. We encountered running-on problems almost every time the engine was closed down, but there was never a trace of pinging.

Coupled to the engine is a normal, four speed gearbox with synchro on the upper three ratios. Only on very rare occasions is it necessary to select low when the car is on the move so great is the flexibility in second. Only very fast changes will beat the synchromesh and cause that nasty crunching noise which



Cockpit is large and comfortable. A third person can be accommodated in carpeted section of cockpit.



Weather equipment takes time to erect, but makes the MG-B reasonably wind and waterproof in bad conditions.

Luggage space is reasonable when hood and tools are removed, but soft bags are best proposition.

was common to most BMC gearboxes of couple of years ago.

The clutch, light in action, showed no signs of slip during our test and to its credit it was one of the easiest and smoothest clutch mechanisms we have encountered for some time.

Pedal placement is not particularly satisfactory for the sporting driver since it is not possible to heel-and-toe when braking and changing down simultaneously. Nevertheless the handbrake—ratchet, not flyoff—and the gear lever are well placed, along with all the minor controls.

Some confusion can occur when operating the electrical switches at night. It is all too easy to reach across and turn off the headlamps instead of the wipers.

Instrumentation is good. The dials are neatly arranged in front of the driver. Naturally the speedo and tacho take pride of place with fuel contents gauge and the combined oil pressure and water temperature dial flanking them.

Even a very tall driver can find a comfortable, long-arm position behind the wheel. The seats have a very wide range of adjustment and they give excellent support. The squabs do not tilt forward unless you have a spanner and five minutes, which can be awkward when you are trying to stow bulky goods—such as a third passenger—in the carpeted area behind them.

Make no mistake, this is a roomy car inside. We had no trouble accommodating a third person for distances up to 100 miles. Two young children would find the space just fine.

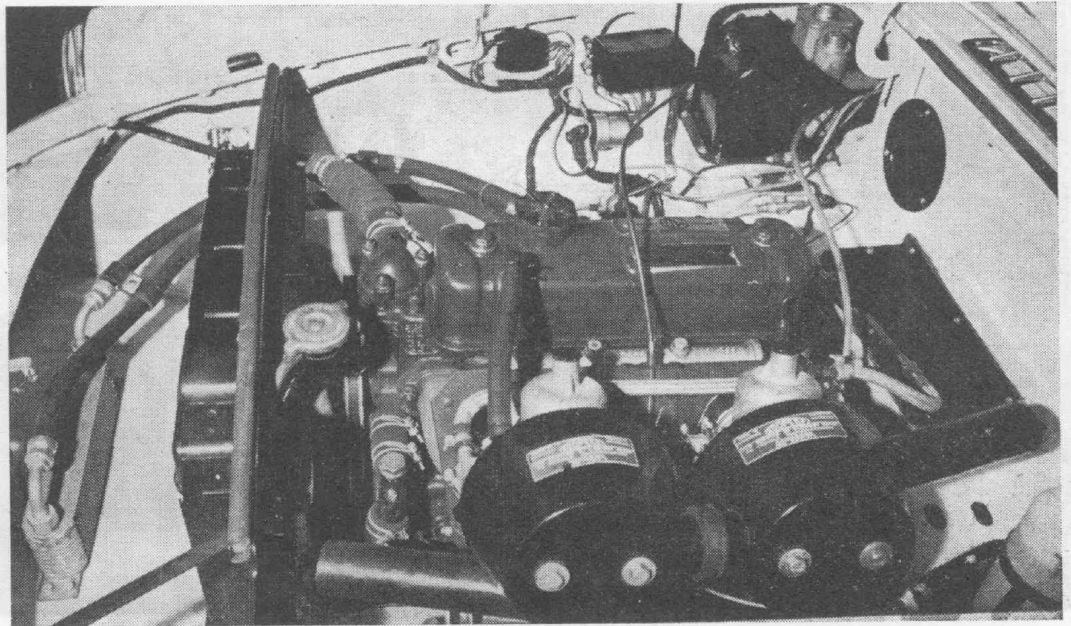
Quite a lot of mechanical noise is transmitted to the cockpit, which can be tiring on a long trip. Wind noise is at an acceptable level when cruising fast, although even with hood up it is far from draughtproof.

The wind-up windows of the new car make a world of difference to comfort and convenience. Frameless, they have ventilation panels and do not rattle in the thick doors which house them.

WHEELS FULL ROAD TEST

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Engine is smooth and powerful. It is the BMC B-series enlarged. Oil cooler up front is standard.



With the weather equipment in place, visibility in all directions is good, although a heating system would be a worthwhile extra if only to keep the windows free from mist in cold weather. The wipers self park and sweep a large area of the screen. A screen washer is standard equipment.

Getting the hood up and down is something of a task which is best attempted with two people rather than one. The plastic top itself is separate from the bows which come apart in two sections. The whole lot is then packed into the boot which, unfortunately, restricts the available luggage space.

The boot locks externally with the key it shares with glovebox lid. The complete car can be locked quite securely, although however well the doors lock, a determined thief could easily get into a soft top.

Out on the road the MG-B is fast. It will cruise all day at 80 mph. The standard equipment oil-cooler keeps the engine temperature to a decent level so there is little risk of cooking the bearings when the car is being thrashed.

Disc front brakes are used and drums at the rear. The combination makes for very sure and fast stop-

ping, even from the maximum speed. There was never a trace of fade or grab during our test, just an occasional hot smell.

Both braking and hard cornering are accompanied by considerable tyre scream which discourages forceful driving techniques around town.

Roadholding is as good as one expects from an MG. There is very little body lean and only a trace of understeer on corners.

Steering, by rack and pinion, is quite light and very positive and accurate. Fast and slow corners can be lined up smoothly and confidently and, if slide correction is needed, only a few degrees of wheel movement are necessary to straighten things out again.

Hard driving will get the fuel consumption down below the 25 mpg mark. A mixture of city and moderately hard country driving will return 25 to 28 mpg, which gives the tank a range of up around the 250 miles between refills.

The modernisation of the MG to standards acceptable in 1963 has transformed the car from one which appealed only to the sporting driver to a useful, dual-purpose vehicle, tractable and comfortable. #



wheels ROAD TEST

TECHNICAL DETAILS

MG-B

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE:

Cylinders	four, in line
Bore and stroke	80.26 by 88.9 mm
Cubic capacity	1798 cc
Compression ratio	8.75 to 1
Valves	pushrod
Carburettor	twin SU
Power at rpm	95 bhp at 55 rpm
Maximum torque	110 ft/lb at 300 rpm

TRANSMISSION:

Type	manual
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RATIOS:

First	14.21
Second	8.66
Third	5.35
Top	3.91
Rear axle	3.91

SUSPENSION:

Front	independent coil
Rear	semi-elliptic
Shockers	telescopic

STEERING:

Type	rack and pinion
Turns, L to R	3
Circle	32 ft

BRAKES:

Type	disc, drum
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DIMENSIONS:

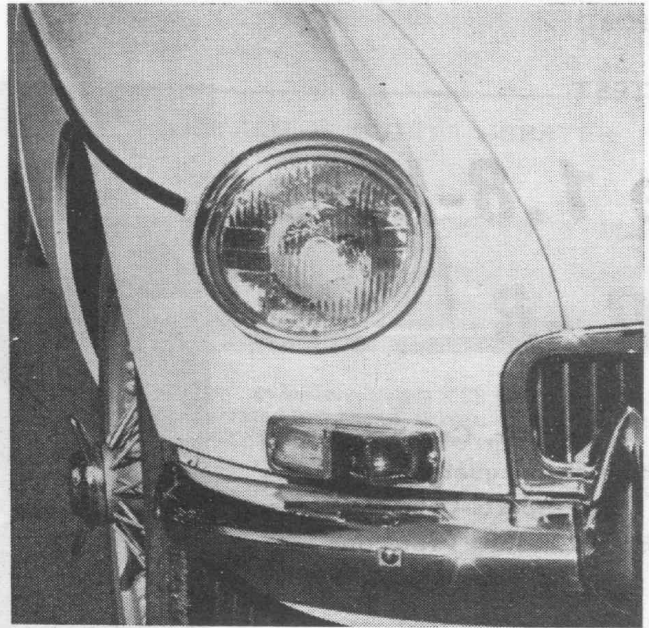
Wheelbase	7 ft 7 in
Track, front	4 ft 1½ in
Track, rear	4 ft 1½ in
Length	12 ft 9½ in
Width	5 ft
Height	4 ft 1 in

TYRES:

Size	5.60 by 14
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WEIGHT:

Kerb	17½ cwt
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PERFORMANCE

TOP SPEED:

Fastest run	103.3 mph
Average of all runs	102.1 mph

MAXIMUM SPEED IN GEARS:

First	29 mph
Second	48 mph
Third	78 mph
Top	103.3 mph

ACCELERATION:

Standing quarter mile:	
Fastest run	18.5 sec
Average of all runs	18.7 sec
0 to 30 mph	3.1 sec
0 to 40 mph	4.7 sec
0 to 50 mph	8.3 sec
0 to 60 mph	11.2 sec
0 to 70 mph	15.9 sec
0 to 80 mph	23.7 sec
20 to 40 mph	9 sec
40 to 60 mph	8.9 sec
60 to 80 mph	14.1 sec

GO-TO-WHOA:

0-60-0 mph	15.5 sec
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SPEEDO ERROR:

Indicated	Actual
30	29.5 mph
40	39 mph
50	48.7 mph
60	58.5 mph
70	68 mph
80	78 mph

FUEL CONSUMPTION:

Overall for test	25 mpg
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