

MG DISCOVERS THE V8

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Since Leyland was determined to make no panel changes, new carburetion manifolding had to be devised. The twin SUs are now mounted in a peculiar fashion at the rear of the engine, with long air pickups that look like lobster claws going forward and down to the exhaust manifolds to pick up warm air. In hot weather, a bi-metal valve replaces the hot air cold. There are other changes like twin electric fans instead of the old belt-driven one.

The brakes are untouched, and I found them very good indeed, even in a 120 mph stop.

Inside, the B looks old, certainly, but it is still comfortable both for driver and passenger. The cockpit, however, is fairly confined and feels claustrophobic by modern standards. The rear "seats" are useless for all but storing briefcases and coats. But the boot, which you reach through that hatch-back door, is good.

In total, the MGB V8 is not as good a motor car as a current Capri 3-litre, which handles better, has the same top speed, has more room, is considerably quieter at high speed and costs something like \$800 less. A Reliant

Scimitar GTE is also a far better proposition than the B at a lower price.

If the B V8 ever does make it to Australia it will be decidedly poor value in the face of Datsun's 240Z and any of the Big Three performance-packed sedans or hardtops. It might have the MG name, but it won't be able to cope very well at all with our touring conditions and so the few good points it does have will be lost.

As I was about to leave the press release for the car, I started feeling sorry for the MG stylists who had told me they'd a pile of good ideas for revamping the MGB body to really make the V8 look good, and fresh. But their plans were squashed by Leyland management, who told them: just drop in the engine, thank you very much. How frustrated they must feel, I was thinking.

But then I asked what they thought of the Fiat X 1/9 design, without doubt the production sports car of the moment. Incredibly, the reply was that they hadn't even seen a photograph of it.

I didn't feel sorry very much longer. Just angry. I drove away in the V8 thinking it was just another Leyland cock-up, but one made harder to understand in the face of such promising new Leyland products like P76 and the Austin Allegro. *

MGB GT V8

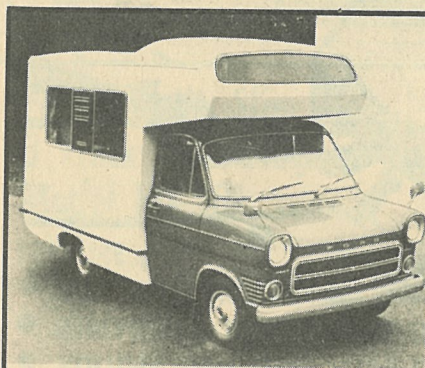
Engine	alloy V8
Capacity	3528 cc
Compression	8.25:1
Power (DIN)	137 bhp at 5000 rpm
Torque	193 lb/ft at 2900 rpm
Gear ratios:	
1st	3.138
2nd	1.974
3rd	1.259
4th	1.00
Overdrive	0.820
Rear axle ratio	3.071
Mph/1000 rpm, 4th	23.4 mph
Overdrive	28.5 mph

Acceleration:

0-30 mph	3.0 sec
0-40 mph	4.5 sec
0-50 mph	6.4 sec
0-60 mph	8.2 sec
0-70 mph	11.8 sec
0-80 mph	15.0 sec
0-90 mph	19.9 sec
0-100 mph	26.0 sec
Standing quarter-mile	16.4 sec
Fuel consumption overall	21.4 mpg

Dimensions:

Wheelbase	91.1 in.
Track front	49 in.
Track rear	49.25 in.
Length	12 ft 10.75 in.
Width	6 ft
Height	4 ft 2 in.
Fuel tank capacity	12 gallons
Weight	2427 lb
Turning circle	34 ft
Wheels	Dunlop 5J x 14 mags, steel rims



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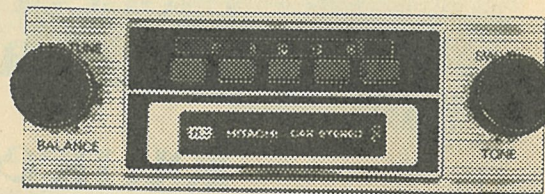
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