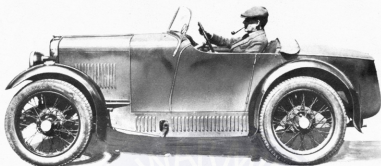


"THE AUTOCAR" ROAD TESTS

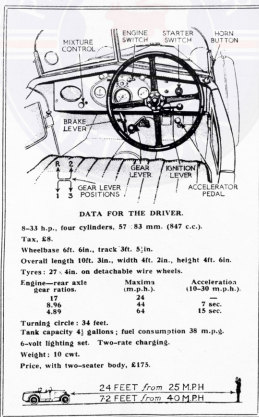


No. 61.—M.G. MIDGET TWO-SEATER

An Extraordinarily Fascinating Little Car: Comfort at Speed.

NOT only has the M.G. Midget a fascinating appearance, but it goes so exceedingly well. Sixty to sixty-five miles an hour with it are not adventure but delight. It sits down on the road like a thoroughbred and at high speed feels more like a big car than a tiny one. Nor does it fuss when travelling quickly.

All cars seem to have a speed to which a sensitive driver settles down automatically. Some call it the "cruising speed," others the "kindest" speed. On the Midget this speed is 50 m.p.h. However, too much stress must not be laid upon the upper end of the performance scale, although for its size the car is decidedly fast, for there is plenty of flexibility, and on top gear it is possible to crawl along in traffic behind a slow-moving vehicle and get away quite smoothly again. In this respect the redoubtable S.U. carburettor and the battery ignition play their



parts. Acceleration on top gear from very low speeds is notable for its smoothness more than for its rapidity, though the latter is pretty useful.

From 25 m.p.h. onwards on top gear acceleration is very brisk, while on second gear the little car fairly leaps away, as the figures in the table show. The gear change needs knowing. Changing is not difficult to accomplish after a little practice, but at first the shortness of the gear lever and the short travel of the clutch pedal are disconcerting. The clutch takes up the drive smoothly, and at the end of an hour one is accustomed to the process.

The speeds claimed by the makers for the various gears are, on first 20, second 40, and top 60 m.p.h. The claims are modest and the car will exceed these figures quite easily, though at 25 on bottom gear and at 45 m.p.h. on second there is a period of valve bounce. Although the exhaust has

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a fairly healthy crackle when the throttle is wide open, the car itself is not unduly noisy; there are no annoying mechanical sounds, and the indirect gears do not shout about their work.

When the car is bowling along at 20 or so in the streets of a town the wary policeman is more interested in the look of the car than in the noise it is making. In confined spaces the Midget is very easy to manoeuvre, for the steering is light and quick, and one can twist and turn rapidly through traffic. At high speed on the open road the car can be steered comfortably with one hand. It is very steady even over poor surfaces, really remarkably so in view of its small size.

Where the Infant Shines.

It is perhaps on hills that this infant phenomenon really excels. It will shoot up a straight 1 in 10 grade on top gear. One particular hill of this kind was approached at 52 m.p.h. and crested at 33 m.p.h. on top. Another 1 in 10 gradient, with a sharp turn at the foot which quite precludes a rush being made, was very nearly climbed on top. Steeper hills of the type which reach a maximum of 1 in 6 served to show up a surprisingly vivid second gear. They were surmounted on second at speeds varying between 32 and 38 m.p.h. This car is most excellent at hill-climbing.

Petrol consumption on a car of this nature depends very largely upon the way in which it is handled and the speed at which it is driven. The makers claim that the consumption lies between 37 and 45 m.p.g., according to circumstances. Over a run of 50 miles, including one or two hills, and driving fairly fast, the consumption worked out at 38 m.p.g., which is an economical figure in view of the liveliness of the car.

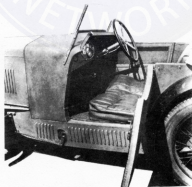
Not the least satisfactory feature is the brakes. They are effective, do not require a lot of force on the pedal, and do not show any tendency to lock an odd wheel. Also they are smooth unless applied with extreme



Front view of the M.G. Midget.



Over the whole top of the tail is a hinged lid.



The driving compartment.

violence. Each brake has an adjustment for its cable, and these are fairly accessible. There is also a single main adjustment for all four brakes under the floor boards, beneath the driver's feet. This adjustment is not very accessible.

As regards other matters of accessibility: the battery is below the driver's legs and is quite easy to reach. The engine oil filler and dipstick are on the off side and, with the ignition coil, the make-and-break and the distributor, as well as a drain-cock at the base of the radiator, are quite accessible. The sparking plugs, which are at a slight downward angle, can easily be tackled with a spanner, except that nearest the dashboard, this one being screened by the coil. On the near side of the engine is a detachable oil filter; on this side also lies the electric starting motor, while the cut-out and junction boxes of the electrical system are attached to the forward side of the dash.

Smart and Up to Date.

Outwardly the car is smart and up to date, with its striking radiator, fat filler cap, detachable dumb-iron shield, cycle type wings, and side valances. Actually the wings are carried on the car, not on the axles, and are rigidly attached. The two doors are extra wide, and it is easy enough to enter or leave the car. The screen is a fixed V type.

Pneumatic upholstery is employed and the seat is adjustable; also the back squab is movable, not only fore and aft, but can be set as to angle as well. Just behind the seat is a compartment in which the hood stays are carried when

out of use. Over the whole top of the tail is a hinged lid, and in the compartment beneath is stowed the spare wheel, whilst above it is fair space for luggage.

Altogether the M.G. Midget is an extraordinarily fascinating little car, both to look at and to handle on the road.