

M.G. MAGNETTE TWO-SEATER

No. 886 (*Post-War Series*)

WHEN one has had a car in one's care for several days, driving it under the assortment of conditions represented by town traffic, pottering on by-ways, with an occasional steep hill or two, and leavened by sections of good, fast, main-road running, and then, finally, when one has taken the same car to Brooklands and tested it for maximum performance, there is a good basis for fair judgment to be passed. The opportunity is all the better when, as in the case of the M.G., it has been possible in the course of time to follow the successive stages of development through the various models, with plenty of practical experience of their behaviour.

So it is with the latest N Magnette that one comes to it knowing the characteristics of the marque, but naturally expecting to find the most recent model an improvement. Even so, one is not prepared for the very great advance which the N model shows as against earlier types of M.G.s of approximately the same size.

It is not just that the car is fast—its true potentialities in this direction are not easily appreciated until it comes to be taken to the track; it is that it *feels* so very much better. Speed is one thing, and a matter of importance, perhaps sometimes over-rated, to some people; but vastly more important is the manner of a car's behaviour. For, as a rule, it is likely to be driven even by an enthusiastic owner at speeds nearer 50 m.p.h. than its maximum, and the greater part of the joy of owning a real sports car lies in the more normal handling of it.

Acceleration, certainly, is essential to this kind of car, to give which, with a not big engine, revs are the vital essence, and those revs must be maintainable without any suggestion that something is going to break. This engine seems veritably to delight in revs, yet it remains delightfully smooth and quiet, and feels so remarkably happy that the driver quickly gets into the habit of revving "for fun," thereby obtaining a vivid performance.

Latest N Model a Delightful Car to Handle

It must not be supposed from what has been said that it is a sixty- rather than an eighty-mile-an-hour car; the distinction lies principally in the road and opportunity available. It is not surprising that with the makers' knowledge of racing, and with the 1,287 c.c. engine that the N Magnette has, it should be capable of giving as high a speed as 80 m.p.h. What comes as a revelation is the ease with which on Brooklands that speed is reached and held, the rev needle hovering between the 5,000 and the 5,500 marks, the whole mechanism feeling as one, and with no sense of adventure attached to such speeds.

It is a sports car, yet it is not harsh in its riding, wherein the use of hydraulic shock absorbers for the back axle no doubt has some considerable effect, the frictional type being retained in front. It is not noisy, either mechanically or in the exhaust; with the same setting of shock-absorbers, the same tyre pressures, and without change of any kind being made anywhere, it is a car perfectly suitable for ordinary running about, for conveying, for instance, an elderly passenger around the country, yet immediately afterwards, and without factory

experts being in attendance, the car can be put over the half-mile and record close on 82 m.p.h. (81.45 m.p.h. actually). This was given as the best figure on a practically calm day, with the windscreen lowered but with the normal full equipment in place, the driver only being on board. The best timed speed over a quarter-mile with the windscreen raised normally was 76.27 m.p.h.

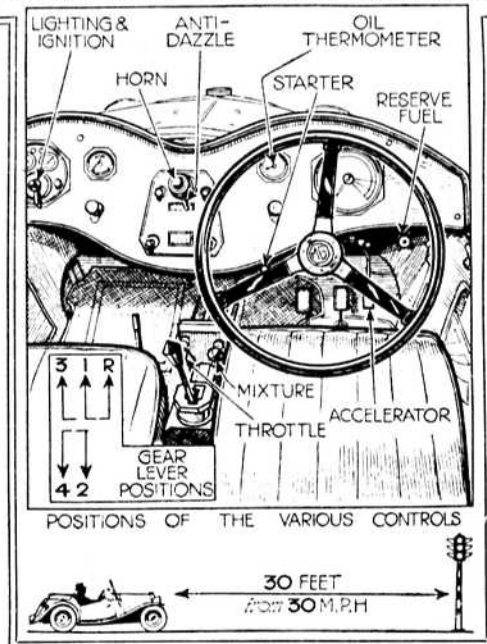
On a suitable safe road, with the screen in position in the ordinary way, 75 m.p.h. is a speed which can be got up to with ease and considerable satisfaction. With quite ordinary methods, and changing up fairly early, 50 is registered almost automatically; the way in which the car runs at this speed makes it delightful to keep up, practically irrespective of bend and curve, so rock-steady is the car on the road.

M.G. MAGNETTE N TWO-SEATER

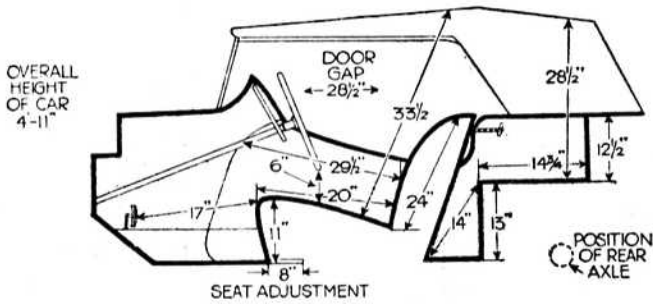
DATA FOR THE DRIVER

12.08 h.p., six cylinders, 57 84 mm. (1,287 c.c.).	Tax £12.
Tyres: 4.75 18in. on knock-off wire wheels.	
Engine—rear axle gear ratios.	Acceleration from steady speed. Timed speed over 1/2 mile.
10 to 30 m.p.h.	20 to 40 m.p.h.
20 to 40 m.p.h.	30 to 50 m.p.h.
5.125 to 1	13 sec.
11.9 to 1	9 1/2 sec.
6.98 to 1	9 sec.
5.125 to 1	13 sec.
	14 1/2 sec.
	16 1/2 sec.
	80.72 m.p.h.
Acceleration from rest through the gears to 50 m.p.h.,	16 1/2 sec.
Acceleration from rest through the gears to 60 m.p.h.,	22 1/2 sec.
Speed up Brooklands Test Hill from rest (1 in 5 average gradient),	19.37 m.p.h. (on first and second gears).
Acceleration up 15 yards of 1 in 5 gradient from rest,	3 1/2 sec.
Turning circle:	30ft.
Tank capacity 10 gallons, fuel consumption 24 m.p.g. (approx.).	
12-volt lighting set: 8 amps. at 40 m.p.h.	
Weight: 18 cwt. 2 qr.	
Price, with two-seater body, £305.	

(Latest car described in "The Autocar" of March 30th, 1931.)



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But the difference compared with most ordinary cars is that, when it is wanted, there is instant acceleration available from that speed onwards on top gear; or, better still, of course, with a quick drop down to third—a movement of sheer joy to the practised driver with the latest gear box, the revs being taken right round to the "five-five" mark if he so chooses—almost exactly 60 m.p.h. on third gear.

To pass, or to climb really fast, in this way is an experience in motoring which is difficult to excel; the whole running of the car spells efficiency, and, a good point on this N model, there is no ostentation about the exhaust note. Actually, 6,000 is not by any means an unheard-of figure with this engine, but the red marking on the dial leads one to treat 5,500 r.p.m. as a usual limit, which gives 36 m.p.h. on second, and just over 20 on first gear.

The big dial in front of the driver is essentially a rev counter, an intelligent instrument for the owner of a car such as this, but there is an inner ring of readings on which are plotted the equivalent speeds on top gear. The instrument proved very close to accurate in its speed readings,

the maximum m.p.h. figure during the fastest timed run being 83 or so.

Apart from the performance, the most striking thing about the car is its feeling of solidity without, however, seeming "dead." One soon has the feeling of being able to do almost anything with the car on corners. This, and the acceleration, coupled with brakes having big drums of racing pattern, which do their job really well, yet never give the impression of being fierce, make high average speeds a matter of course when required.

An excellent angle has been given to the steering column, the wheel comes in an ideal position for power of control over it, both arms being inside the body of the car. Though very light, the steering is properly accurate. The seats themselves are very comfortable.

Behind the seat there is a genuinely useful-sized compartment for baggage. On the chassis one outstanding provision is a system of grouped lubricators which, communicating by pipe lines to various bearings, reduces lubrication almost to a pleasure.

