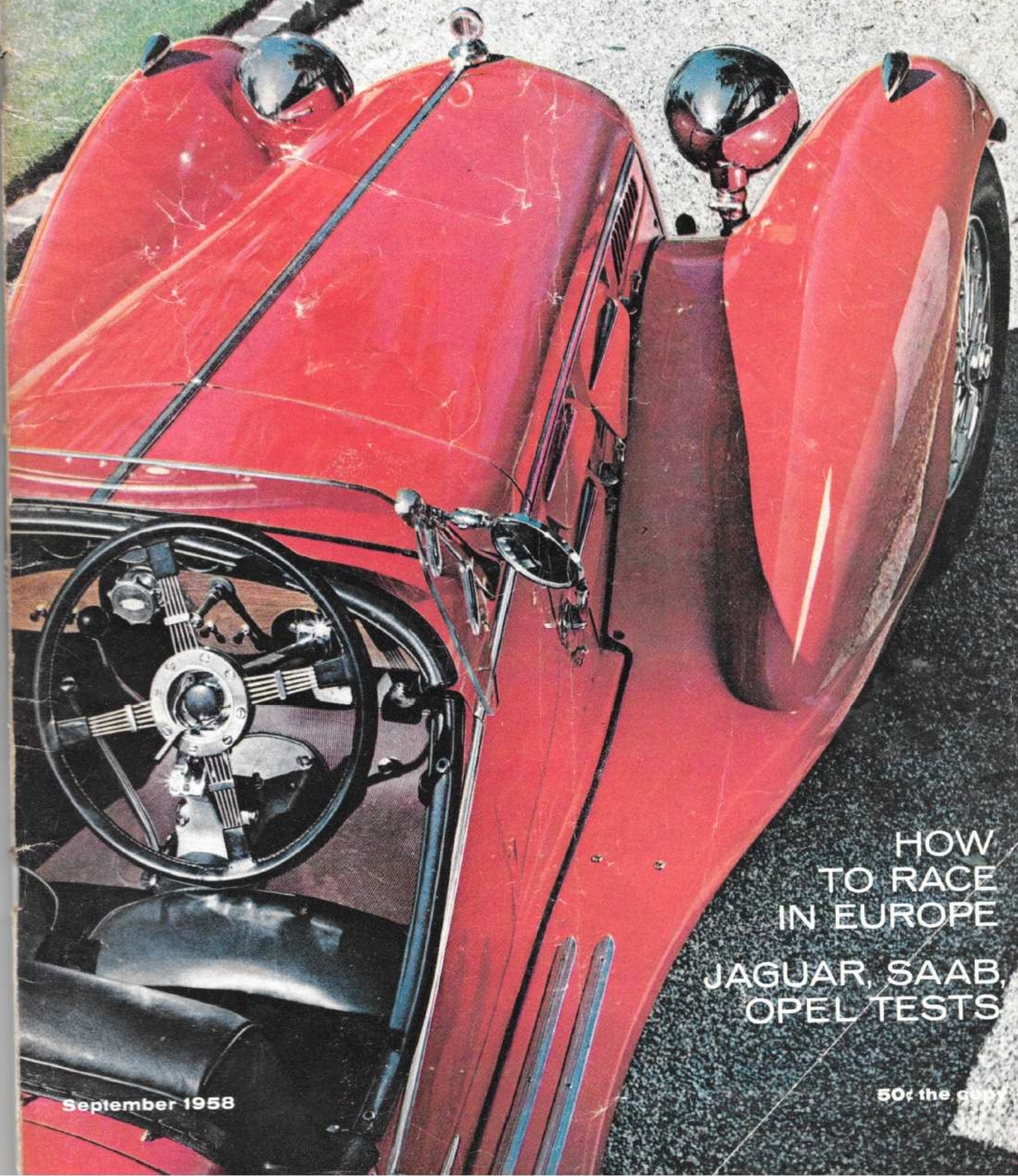


# ROAD & TRACK

THE MOTOR ENTHUSIASTS' MAGAZINE

9/58



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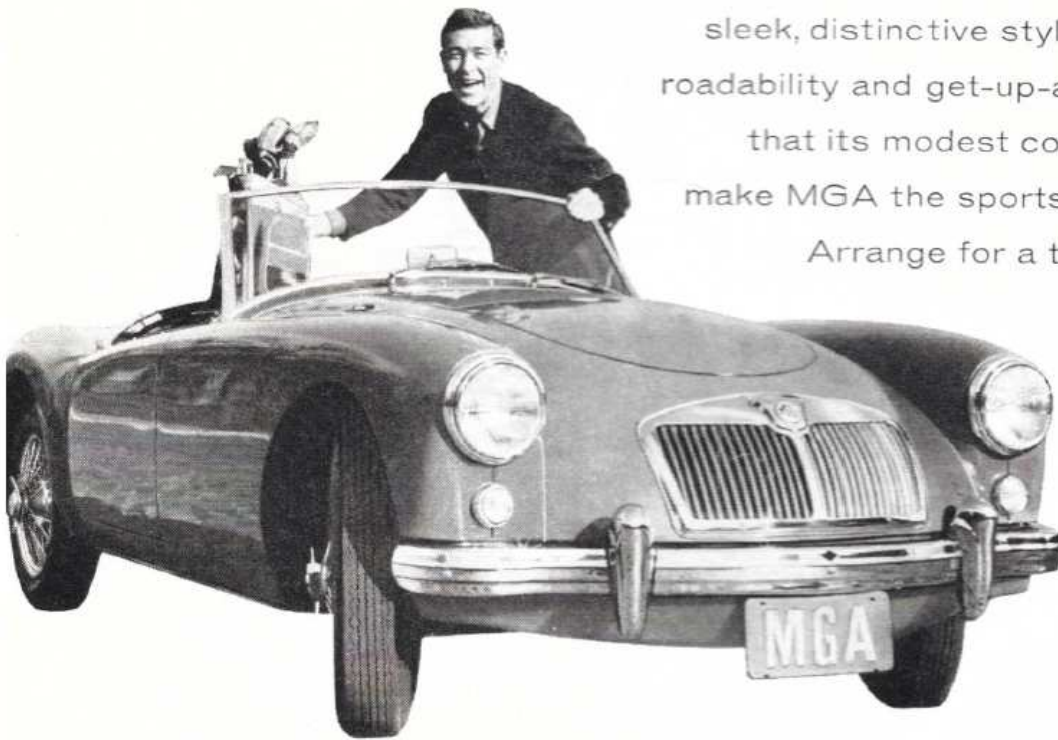
September 1958

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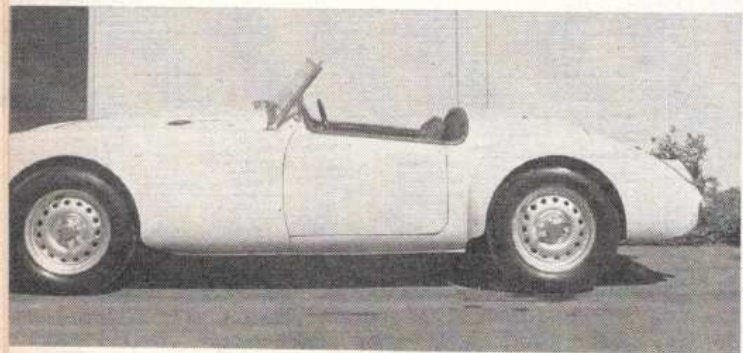
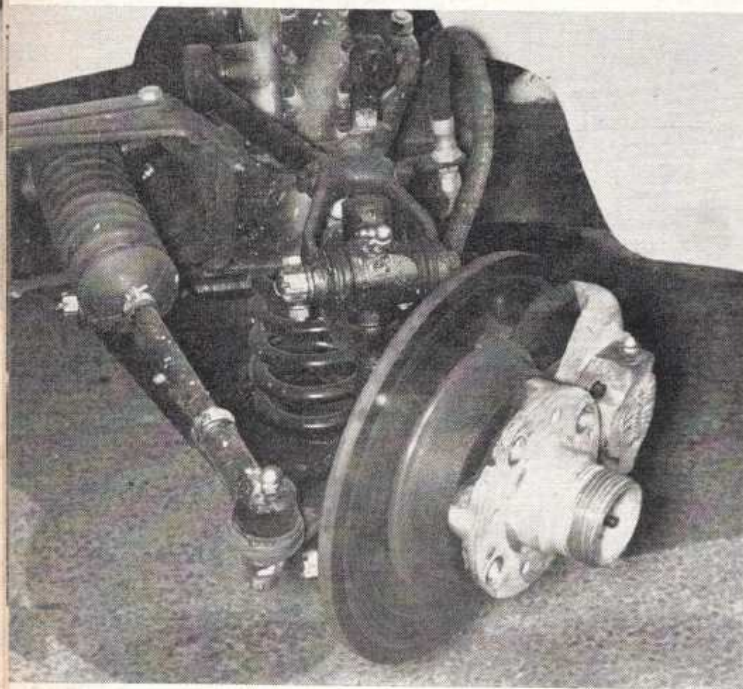
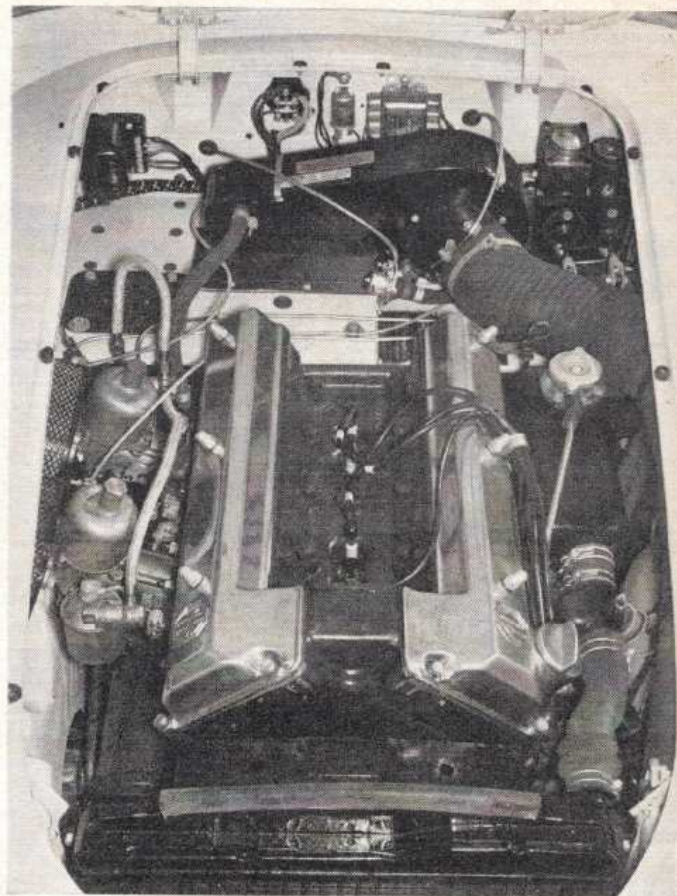
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# TWIN CAM MG-A

*MG-A gets new lease on life with 1600 cc,  
double overhead cams and 107 bhp.*

PHOTOGRAPHY: POOLE



**T**HE EXISTENCE of an experimental double-overhead cam MG is not news to Road & Track readers. The real news is that the dohc version of the MG engine is now in production.


Externally the only visual evidence of what lies concealed under the hood is the special Dunlop disc wheels with knock-off hubs. The rest of the car is essentially MG-A in all details except the following:

- 1) The twin-cam engine has 1588 cubic centimeters, by virtue of a cylinder bore increase from 2.875 to 2.969 inches.
- 2) Dunlop caliper-type disc brakes are used.
- 3) Tires are 5.90-15 "Roadspeed" instead of 5.60.
- 4) The frame is specially braced for added torsional rigidity.

The rest of the specifications are the same, including an 8-inch clutch, 4.30 axle ratio and suspension details.

The twin-cam "1600" engine has an aluminum cylinder head with a 9.90 compression ratio. It develops 107 brake horsepower at 6500 revolutions per minute. The camshafts are driven by a duplex roller chain and the cam followers are described by MG as "inverted buckets." The bottom end of this unit is considerably different from the standard BMC "B" series engine. There is the larger bore obtained by suitable core changes, a heavier crankshaft with thicker cheeks, lead/indium bearings, racing-type connecting rods (non-split upper end) and a new oil pump of the eccentric rotor type.

As for performance, the new 1600 should do much to restore interest in the under-1600 cc production class. The curb weight will be within 20 or 25 pounds of the standard MG-A and the resultant figure of 20.6 pounds per horsepower (with driver) would indicate a potential that might give even a certain \$6000 German import (the one with 120 bhp) some real trouble in both sales and competition.

Available as either a roadster or as a coupe for about \$3500, this is a car which we can hardly wait to test. 

## AIRFLOW'S WATER FLOW . . .

I was very pleased to see the Airflows mentioned in R&T. However, I would like to take issue with you on a couple of points. The radiator on my 1934 Chrysler Airflow 8 is down-flow, not cross-flow. So are the other Airflow radiators I have seen. Further, my Airflow has a heavy and rugged, if not rigid, frame to which the body is held by bolts and nuts! As to the tricks used to install the 8-cylinder, in-line engine, the chief one was to add several inches to the hood and to the body panels just in front of the doors. Oakland 18, Calif. Robert C. Castner

All the early press releases mentioned the cross-flow radiator, but we cannot recall actually seeing it. Thanks for the correction.

We said "a few design tricks kept the extra inches of length down to a minimum," and that "unit frame and body . . . compromised a bit," etc.

## CRUISING SPEEDS . . .

On page 8 of the 1958 Road & Track Road Test Annual, what do you mean by giving the VW a top speed of 70.2 and a cruising speed of 123.0? Is the 123.0 with a 3.8-liter Jaguar engine installed?

Du Bois, Pa.

W. Cochran

The column labelled cruising speed should have included the word "theoretical." The cruising speed quoted is given on our revised data panel as the "equivalent mph" corresponding to the engine speed at which the mean piston speed is 2500 feet per minute. This is the usual convention, taken as relatively safe for long periods of continuous operation. Some engines will stand up longer at 3000 ft/min than others at 2500; it depends on many complex factors, of course.

A good, general rule for safe high-speed cruising is to install (and watch) an oil temperature gauge. A temperature of 250°F is safe for most engines, 275°F is borderline and 300°F usually means expensive noises in a very short time, even with a loose (well worn) engine and copper/lead bearings.

## WEAR INDEX? . . .

In the June issue's "Miscellaneous Ramblings" you predict a relation between feet per mile and cylinder wear. Moreover, you present a "Wear Index" built up of revolutions per mile and feet per mile.

This is indeed marvelous. Most scientists declare that a very great deal of the cylinder wear is caused by corrosion during starting and warming up. I do fail to see any connection between your Wear Index and the corrosion under the conditions mentioned.

Jonkoping, Sweden

Sven Wicklund

We have had other letters which are rather critical of our Wear Index. There is ample reason for criticism on the score that our Index is an oversimplification. It is, and we considered including all sorts of variables including load factor. We did not consider cold-starting corrosion because this should be nearly the same for all engines. However, we dropped all complications in favor of simplicity.

We admit that the R&T Wear Index does not consider all factors contributing to engine wear, and it does perhaps over-emphasize the engine's stroke. It was designed merely to serve as a rough and simple guide (in the absence of anything else), and it is surely more valid than piston travel per car mile.



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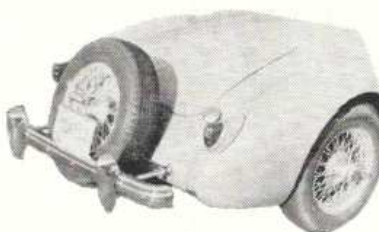
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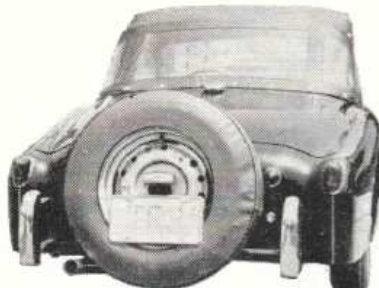


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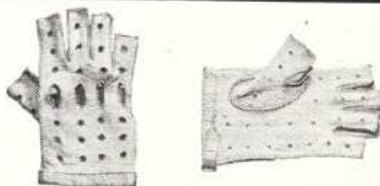
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