

The car which has captured the imagination of many seekers after performance, the 1½-litre Jowett Javelin.

MOST of the cars so far reviewed in this feature have been what are known in the motor trade as Phase I and Phase II models—in other words, post-war editions of types that were in production before the war, modified to a lesser or greater degree, but still essentially continuations of familiar types.

This month, Phase III enters the arena, that classification representing genuinely new designs; and, by a coincidence, two such cars come under review together—the Jowett Javelin and the 1¼-litre M.G. Both are rather remarkable cars and both set standards in their own particular spheres which give a line on the shape of things to come.

As happened last month, I have had to enlist the aid of "G.G." to carry out the tests on one of the new models and his findings and impressions of the M.G. are given at the end of this feature.

The Jowett Javelin

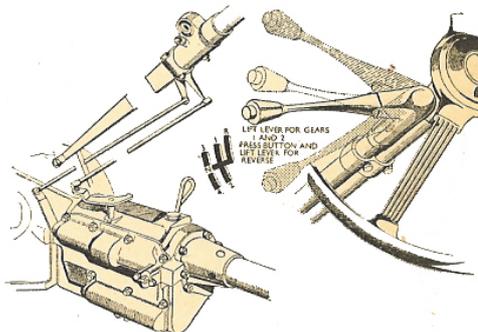
THE performance of the Jowett Javelin I can only describe as startling—not, let it be added, in the way that prompted motorists of old to advertise models as "too fast for owner," but in the sense that its acceleration and, in particular, its top-gear capabilities approach more nearly to American standards than those of any 1½-litre car I have driven.

Perhaps the most notable performance of the Javelin whilst it was in my hands was to climb Fish Hill, Broadway, in top gear; and to do it, moreover, with no call for exceeding the 30 m.p.h. limit at the foot or for indulging in heroics on the corners.

After recording that, I need hardly add that top gear suffices for all normal main road running and a good deal of other motoring besides, which would call for a change down on the average small or medium-powered car. On hills, in fact, the drill with the Jowett is reversed and one changes up rather than down. I found myself doing this on many occasions after being checked by traffic or a sharp corner, in circumstances where all normal experience would suggest remaining in the lower gear or even being forced to make a further change down; and on the sort of hills that the average 1½-litre car will just take in top, foot hard down, it was often necessary to ease the throttle because the speedometer needle was reaching indiscreet regions.

As will be gathered from the performance figures, top gear acceleration is in keeping with hill-climbing (the two qualities are, of course, closely allied) and the liveliness of the Javelin in overtaking is most marked in both town and country traffic conditions.

So far as cruising speed is concerned, the touring maximum of over 75 m.p.h. gives a good hint of what to expect and a stretch of ten miles covered in just that number of minutes on one occasion, showed that expectations were not unwarranted. A genuine 60 m.p.h. (65 m.p.h. on the speedometer) is the speed one is apt to adopt for most main-road running, even when no hurry exists.



Explanatory sketch of the Javelin steering column-mounted gear lever. Note the extremely compact gearbox.

H. C. HASTINGS, in his critical road review, "Motoring the New Models," deals with—

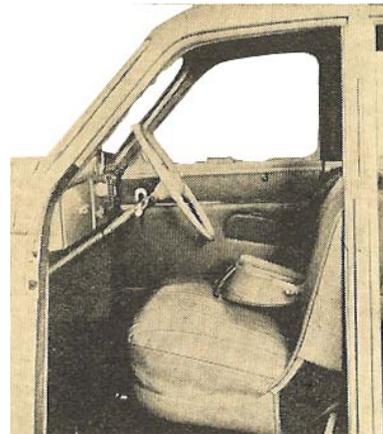
Two Very Striking Newcomers

Having recorded these exceedingly favourable impressions, I must, in fairness, state the debit side of the case. Mechanically, the engine seemed rather noisy and there was some tendency for one cylinder to cut out at speeds of the order of 20 m.p.h. or less in top gear. The model tested was, however, a prototype on which sound-deadening had not (for experimental reasons) been fully carried out; on the production models, I am prepared to find my criticism on the score of noise invalid. So far as the tendency to misfire at low speeds is concerned, doubtless a little attention to carburation or ignition (or both) would have eliminated that fault, too.

On other aspects of performances, no allowances have to be made: The brakes proved very good indeed, the steering accurate with no trace of kick back, the cornering qualities above average (especially on long, fast corners) and the torsion-bar suspension soft but not "floppy."

JOWETT JAVELIN PERFORMANCE

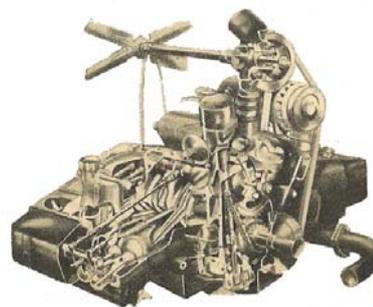
Touring Maximum (mean timed quarter-mile after three-quarter-mile run): 75.6 m.p.h. **Speeds in gears:** 51 m.p.h. (3rd), 33 m.p.h. (2nd). **Acceleration:** 0.5 m.p.h. through the gears, 14.8 secs.; 20-40 m.p.h. (top), 8.8 secs.; 30-50 m.p.h. (top), 9.5 secs. **Gradient climbable in top:** 1 in 9. **Petrol Consumption** (40 m.p.h.) cruising: 36.0 m.p.g.



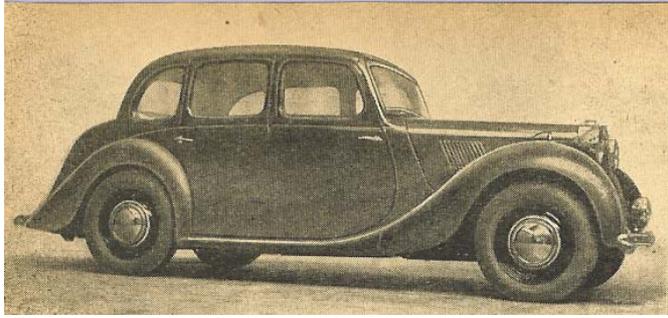
A novel departure on the Javelin is the provision of a centre arm-rest for the front seat.

The controls, on the whole, are well arranged and, although one found it a little queer, initially, not to sit directly behind the pedals (owing to the narrowing of the body to give wheel clearance), that fact was forgotten after only a few minutes at the wheel.

The general arrangement of the whole body has obviously been arrived at after careful thought and without fear of breaking with convention. I was particularly impressed with the wide bench-type front seat with single winding adjustment and central and side arm rests . . . with the flat floor which makes three-abreast a comfortable possibility at front and rear . . . with the excellent visibility (aided by the quick-acting window controls) . . . and with the well-schemed provision for luggage.



Where the Javelin performance comes from; sectioned drawing of the o.h.v., horizontally-opposed four-cylinder engine which develops over 50 b.h.p.



A welcome addition to the ranks of high – performance light saloons, the handsome 1¼-litre M.G.

THE 1¼-LITRE M.G. SALOON

SNAPPY performance has always been a by-word where the marque M.G. is concerned (writes G.G.). As manufacturers of sports cars for nearly a quarter of a century, vehicles which proudly carry the famous octagonal motif on their radiators are usually outstanding in their class. This is certainly true of the new 1¼-litre M.G. saloon.

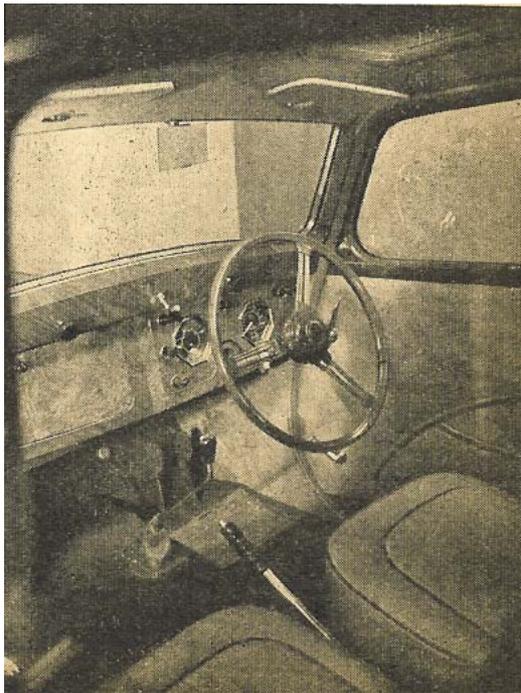
1¼-LITRE M.G. SALOON PERFORMANCE DATA

Touring Maximum (mean timed quarter-mile after three-quarter-mile run): 67.1 m.p.h. **Speeds in gears:** 41 m.p.h. (2nd), 60 m.p.h. (3rd). **Acceleration:** 0-50 m.p.h. through the gears, 16.7 secs.; 20-40 m.p.h. (top), 10.7 secs.; 30-50 m.p.h., 13.8 secs. **Gradient climbable in top:** 1 in 10½. **Petrol Consumption** (40 m.p.h. cruising): 36 m.p.g.

It is not labelled a sports car, nor is it even described as a sports saloon; the car is purely and simply the 1¼-litre saloon. Whatever the appellation, I can best describe it as yet another Abingdon thoroughbred.

Having had quite a considerable experience with different types of M.G., I do not hesitate to state that this new saloon possesses a degree of refinement not previously found on any but the largest pre-war M.G. productions. In my opinion, even those fine cars fall far short of the 1¼-litre in respect of suspension and mechanical silence.

I tried looking at the car from the M.G. enthusiast's point of view. Despite the easy-clean 16-in. wheels and "family" bodywork, it is unmistakably M.G. The same low-built sleekness always associated with cars having a racing history is there.



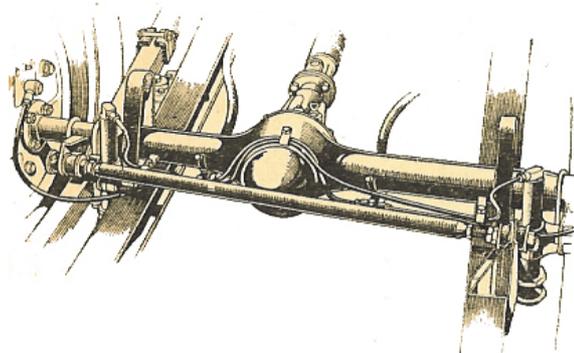
From an aesthetic standpoint, the interior treatment of the M.G. will please the most critical. The steering-wheel is of the adjustable type.

So soon as I sat in the car I felt that it was just right. Funny how some cars give the feeling that they were built specially for one. There was no looking around for where all the controls should be. Everything felt exactly as if I myself had planned the location of starter, gear lever, choke and so on, whilst specifically choosing the ideal spots for the various instruments.

The M.G. is an instant starter, even in very cold weather. The choke is used for the first few engine revs., and then forgotten. Warming-up is rapid and there is an absence of that all-too-common hesitation and stalling which usually produces angry horn-tooting from people behind, and is so embarrassing in busy traffic lines.

On the open road, the 1¼-litre quickly finds its happiest cruising speed, which is 55-60 m.p.h. This gait is apparently effortless. Indifferent road surfaces don't mean a thing to the well-designed suspension system. The behaviour of the "helical with wishbones" i.f.s. is an eye-opener to one used to the somewhat hard M.G. springing of former years. Also, the rear end does its work unobtrusively and without the least sign of bounce, bumping or roll.

The gearbox is a delight to handle. Changes up or down can be made as rapidly as on any manually controlled box I have ever used. This fact, combined with remarkably good acceleration, makes the 1¼-litre M.G. a fine, high-average car.



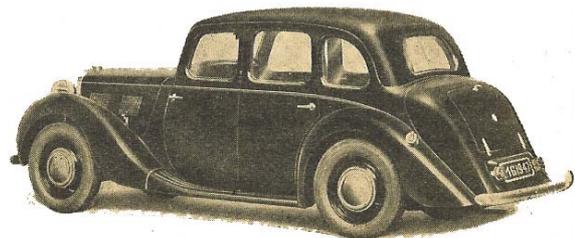
The combination of a well-designed i.f.s., and the "sway-control torsion bar fitted to the rear, produce first-rate road-holding on the 1¼-litre M.G.

So far I haven't mentioned steering. Some drivers might find, at first, that it is more direct than the normal run of cars. However, after a few miles, I will wager that they will feel perfectly at home. The directing of that M.G. saloon round fast bends gives one the satisfying feeling that the art of driving will never be lost so long as there are cars available of the calibre of M.G.

It is obvious that fast, safe driving has been carefully considered by the M.G. designers. The Lockheed hydraulic brakes are excellent, whilst for night driving the lights are as good as any I have struck on any post-war vehicle under 3 litres.

Passengers have told me that the comfort of the rear seat is first rate. Apparently there is no suggestion of that undulating motion usually experienced by rear-seat travellers in medium-sized saloons, often accompanied by violent pitching on rough roads.

As this car will make a very strong appeal to the ex-sports-car man now running to a family, might I suggest that the makers of the M.G. 1¼-litre study the possibilities of a 2-door model? Apart from special locks, or straps, I cannot see any method of preventing small children from fiddling with door handles and window winders—a fault common in most four-door saloons these days.



Sensible mudguarding and a large luggage locker in the tail are features of the well-proportioned M.G.

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