

Y-type shows competitive streak

The Y-type was not endowed with a surfeit of power and with a heavy body and over-engineered chassis to lug around, seems an unlikely competition car. However, the fact that some were driven competitively, and fared rather better than their specification would lead you to expect, must mean that they had hidden talents. The truth was that a combination of good handling and roadholding, meticulous preparation, and determined driving, made them competitive in their class in a number of widely-varied events.

The name most associated with circuit racing the Y type is Dick. Jacobs Dick was the proprietor of MG dealership, Mill Garage, and heavily involved in racing MGs. He constructed a lightweight, aluminium-bodied racing special around Y-type components in 1950, but gained greater fame at the wheel of the YB saloon he entered in the 1951 BRDC Production Touring Car Race at Silverstone.

The nearly-new car ran in standard trim and won its class against stiff opposition from the Jowett team.

Driving the same car he repeated this success the following two years, a remarkable feat. Dick later bought the last Y-type chassis to leave the Abingdon production line and fitted this with a fibreglass coupé body.

In the early post-war years the Monte Carlo Rally was a very



A YA Saloon in club competition in the 1950s.

important event in the calendar, and attracted a large British entry and much media attention. In 1950 Betty Haig was teamed with

'The nearly-new car ran in standard trim and won its class against stiff opposition from Jowett'

Barbara Marshall in a Y-type in what turned out to be a difficult rally. Their MG was not one of the five cars to reach the final control without penalty, having been involved in an accident early in the event. The

following year another Y-type, driven by Major and Mr. Pownall, was one of the Glasgow starters and this time the car did make the finish, in 45th place overall.

The R.A.C. Rally is the best-known of the British rallies and in the 1950s consisted of long road

sections punctuated by a series of special driving tests held on race circuits and seaside promenades.

In the 1951 event Len Shaw entered the ex-Betty Haig car and was placed third in class, first in class going to Jim Readings in another Y-type. In 1953, three YBs were entered by the factory. Driven by Len Shaw, Reg Holt and Geoff Holt, they took the team award with the car driven by Len Shaw placed sixth overall against strong opposition.

Reproduced by kind permission of MG Enthusiast – originally published March 2002. Subscription to MG Enthusiast can be obtained at www.mg-enthusiast.com or by telephoning +44(0) 1924 499261.



Len Shaw in the YB he owned right up to the time he died. Here he ascends Wrynose Pass in the 1953 RAC Rally. The car is now in the museum at Gaydon. Betty Haig and Barbara Marshall with their Y-type prior to the 1950 Monte Carlo Rally. Poor weather meant that just five cars finished within the time, the Y-type was late at final control following an earlier crash.