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M.G.15.

IT'S TEAMWORK THAT DOES IT!

by **GEOFFREY ASHTON**

CONGRATULATIONS to Len Shaw (Midland Centre) (co-driver M. E. Finnemore), Reg Holt (co-driver Ben Brown) and Peter Bolton (co-driver J. Walton) (all North-Western Centre members) on their magnificent achievement in gaining the first three places in their M.G. 1½ litre Saloons in Class I (1300 c.c. touring cars) in the recent R.A.C. Rally.

Sympathy to Geoff Holt, whose driving throughout was of equally high calibre, but whose hopes of a place were marred when gremlins unaccountably entered the 1½ engine in the middle of the Hard Knott test and lost him too many valuable marks.

Congratulations also to W. B. Caldwell and Miss J. Caldwell on gaining second place in Class II (1300-1600 c.c. touring cars) in their 1½ litre Riley; also to G. N. Dear and F. K. Humphreys for taking third place in Class V in their M.G. (up to 1500 c.c. sports cars).

Better luck next time to Riley enthusiasts T. Dargue, G. F. Hayward, A. P. Warren, A. H. Hesp, W. R. Sutherland and L. O. Sims, who entered teams, and all other Riley and M.G. entries.

In addition to taking all prizes in Class I, Messrs. Shaw, Holt and Bolton also did remarkably well in the general classification, being placed sixth, fifteenth and eighteenth respectively—no mean feat when you recall that 205 entries were accepted for the Rally, and the quality of the opposition was indeed formidable.

After Geoff Holt's gremlins had accomplished their dirty work, it was felt that they might transfer their attention to other makes, and to some extent they did. But the Holt brothers must have had some indefinable attraction for the mischievous imps.

"Borrowed!"

On the way back from the Goodwood tests the gremlin chief must have known that the loss of fifteen marks would put them out of the running for the class. Rapidly going through the list of penalties, he saw that short of wrenching off a silencer, blowing the horn fuse at the last minute and so on, the only method open to him was to damage a windscreen.

This was most effectively accomplished when the cars had about forty-five minutes in which to cover twenty-eight miles to the Hastings Control. A stone crashed into Reg Holt's screen, reducing visibility to nil. Bending low, Reg managed to gain sufficient driving vision by winding the screen to its full-open limit and thus arrived in Hastings with a few minutes to spare. Outside their hotel was an M.G. 1½ litre! What luck, thought Ben Brown, and, acting on impulse, one of their number was dispatched to find the owner, while the other five, working in perfect unison, took on a self-appointed task. In six minutes the cracked screen was out, and the new one, "borrowed" from the parked car, in position. They set off and checked in at the Control in good time. Just for the record, they were back in the hotel having tea before the Good Samaritan was finally located and told of what they had done to his car. Fortunately he agreed that the desperate measures were justified, although he didn't appreciate the prospect of meeting his wife off the London train in a screenless car.

He, too, however, refused to be daunted by the apparently impossible. Wasting no time on words, he drove straight to Messrs. Caffyns' branch in London Road, Hastings, and explained the situation rapidly to the manager, Mr. R. J. Thompson. Speed again was the essence of the contract, and the story has a doubly happy ending because, so expeditiously was the replacement screen fitted, that he was able to lose his way twice on the way to the station and still arrive before his wife's train, which was commendably punctual.

Those who have perused the full Rally results will appreciate how invaluable those fifteen saved marks were to Reg Holt.

M.G.s 1st, 2nd and 3rd in Class 1, R.A.C. CORONATION RALLY

(SUBJECT TO OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION)



Photographed before the start of the Coronation Rally are, left to right, R. E. Holt, J. L. Shaw and G. Holt with their M.G. 1 1/4 litre saloons.



The same three cars as on the left lined up in a different order at the Prescott test, held on the earlier stages of the famous hill.



A. P. Warren in his Riley 2 1/2 litre photographed at the Prescott night-time test. The only illumination was the cars' own lamps.



R. J. Wood-Martin in his M.G. "TD" at the Hazlewood test in Yorkshire, showing the typical narrow lanes in the Dales.



A. P. Warren (Riley 2 1/2 litre) in the manoeuvring test at Llandrindod Wells, alongside the lake. Crews dismounted for this.



N. Buchanan demonstrates Riley stability at Lavant Corner during the Goodwood test. Anti-clockwise direction was used.



Reg Holt (M.G. 1 1/4 litre) swings down into the underground car park at Hastings, at the end of the long road section.



J. L. Shaw (Class 1 winner) throws his M.G. 1 1/4 litre saloon round the pylons on the front at Hastings. Note the wet surface.