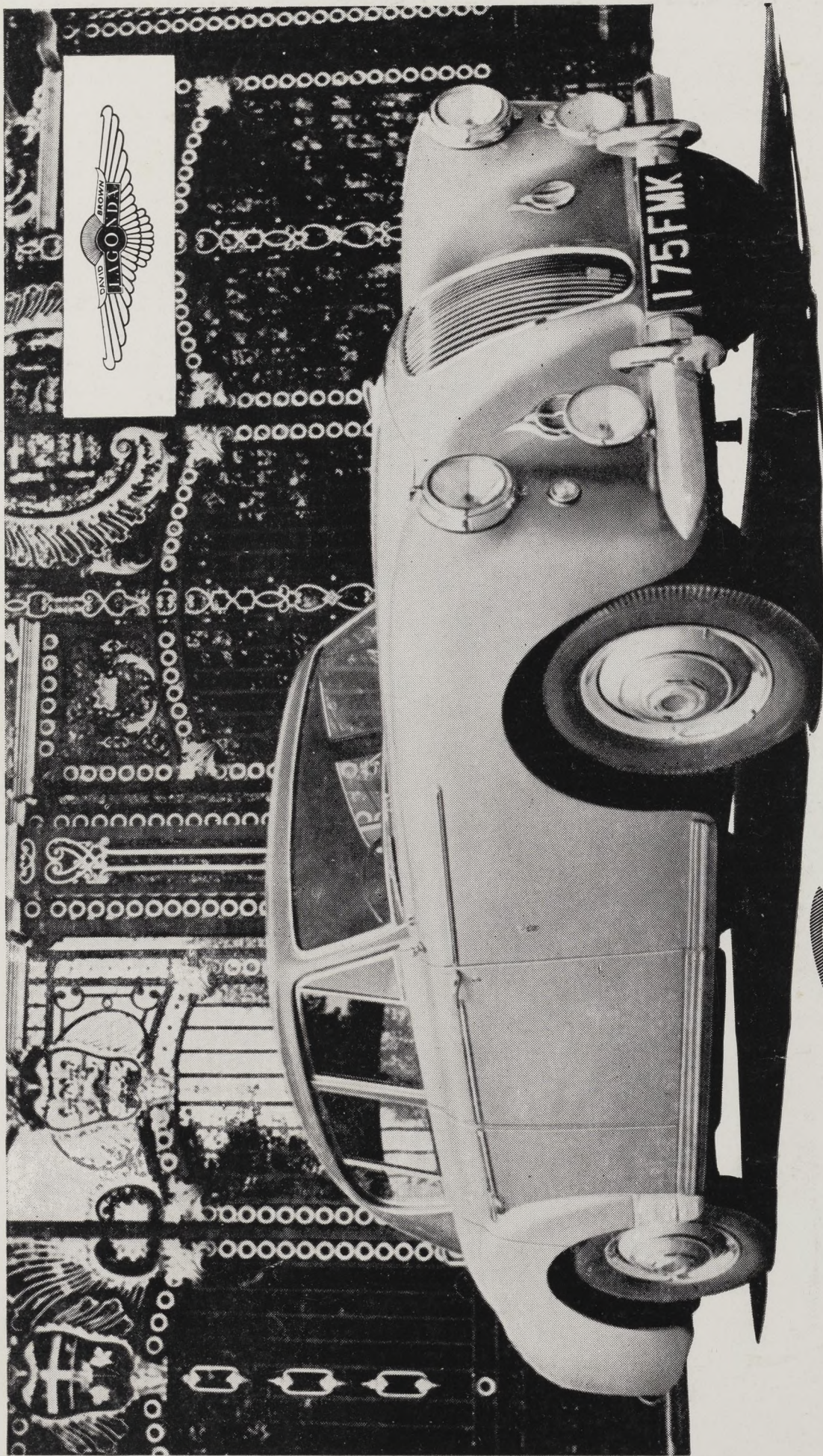


THE *Lagonda*

No. 32

Autumn 1959





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Lagonda

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the craftsman's art... all, in due and just proportion find
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THE MAGAZINE OF THE LAGONDA CLUB

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EDITORIAL

OWING to the recent dispute in the printing industry, the publication of this issue has been unavoidably delayed. (Well it's a new excuse, anyway!).

The last issue had a horrible number of mistakes, some small, some large, and some dreadful. Members either (a) are very unobservant, or (b) are very forbearing, or (c) never read the Magazine at all because few remarks have been made. We naturally prefer (b). Misplaced captions are in the classic tradition of a well-known contemporary and some of the other kinds of error can usually be blamed by an editor on someone else, but the Editor must personally take the blame for saying that Mr. Brian Johnston started the Crow's Feet Rally, whereas it was of course Mr. Raymond Baxter. We therefore wish to apologise to both these gentlemen.

"Letters to the Editor" in this number has had to be headed "Letter to the Editor." At pub meets members seem to find enough to talk about, views are aired and theories propounded. So if you do not think you can face writing an article on your pet subject, do at least send a Letter to the Editor about it, because this can and should be one of the most interesting parts of the Magazine.

THE COVER PICTURE

JOHN LESTER looking for his 2-litre Engine.

Photo : MASON

which incorporates The Lagonda Car Club and The Lagonda 2-litre Register, aims to bring together owners of these fine cars for the exchange of knowledge and technical information, to provide help, and to organise social and sporting meetings.

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Dinner Dance 1960. In view of the response last year, the Committee are going to "chance their arm" again and hold another dinner dance and prize-giving on Saturday, Jan. 16, 1960. So that you will remember where to go, it's the Pavours Arms again, and full details will be in the Winter number of the Magazine. Make a note of the date now because the success of this depends on you, and you, and you. . . .

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We are pleased to welcome Jim Whitehead and his wife who are over here for a few months from Australia. Jim did not bring his fine collection of Alvis and Lagondas with him, but one of his jobs while over here is to look for something "interesting" to take back to add to the collection. He hopes to promote interest in matters Lagonda when he returns home, but in the meantime he will be one of the judges at the A.G.M. Concours. As he knows what a clean engine looks like, you had better get polishing now!

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Do Charles Green and Richard Hare hold the record for the longest drive in a 2 litre? Having taken part in a continental rally they drove from Sete in the South of France to London with only the odd stop for food and drink. About 800 miles in 22 hours!

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"It was a terrifying apparatus. The most effective model was one produced by the Lagonda Car Company, which fired a mixture of diesel oil and tar and had a range of about 100 yards. It had a flame 30 feet in diameter and used 8 gallons of fuel a second." Not the first blown 2 litre but the Flame Thrower produced in 1940. From *The Secret War, 1939-1945*, by Gerald Pawle.

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Bill Briggs voluntarily surrenders to the Editor his Road Fund Licence (expired) for the first quarter of this year. Details of the car appear as follows:—HS 6399 Private Wagonda. Bill comments:—

ANNOUNCEMENTS

I have looked up WAG in the dictionary and it says:—

To cause to move to and fro, to shake, to swing. n.a. merry fellow.

So I gather from this that a WAGonda owner is a merry fellow who swings, which causes car to shake and move to and fro!

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From an American local paper:—

"A new automobile steering system is being developed which may give drivers the same quick, direct control over their cars that Grandpa was able to achieve with the old-fashioned tiller, says U.P.I.

"Another benefit from the new 'variable ratio' steering system, according to Bendix Aviation Corp. engineers in South Bend, Ind., will be the possibility of redesigning the steering wheel to improve the driver's vision of the road and instrument panel.

"They said the wheel could be replaced with 'handle-bar grips' or a half-wheel similar to that of an airplane.

"What may make all this possible is a combination of power steering with a mechanical device that automatically changes ratio as the wheel is turned from straight-ahead to the right or left.

"This should result in more direct, positive and quick control of the car, according to the Bendix engineers, reducing the distance the steering wheel must be turned before the automobile's wheels respond."

Or, of course, you could just have high geared vintage steering.

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Once more this question of the name "Lagonda" and its origins has cropped up. Some years ago the Lagonda National Bank of Springfield, Ohio, U.S.A., wrote to Lagonda Limited on the subject, and the following notes were subsequently supplied by the Bank:—

"Buck or Lagonda Creek joins Mad River west of Springfield, having absorbed Beaver

NEWS AND REPORTS

Creek on the other side of this city: It is said that the Shawnees (a local tribe of American Indians) used the word Lagonda, and while the meaning may not be different, it is more euphonious and has been combined with other names as Lagonda Chapter D.A.R., Lagonda Club, Lagonda Bank and Lagonda Hotel. It is a swift running stream on which at least twenty mill sites have been located. When strangers are shown Buck Creek they inquire about Lagonda."

And from the *Springfield Sun* :—

"One thing Springfield did do. The name 'Lagonda,' given by the Indians to the creek flowing through the city, was translated Buck Creek, and the name was lost in the stream, although it remains the title of a number of the city's corporations. Lagonda is said by the best authorities to be a corruption of the Wyandot 'Ough Ohonda,' meaning Buck's Horn. The French pronounced it La Ohonda and this became Lagonda."

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Unfortunately it has not been possible to include a report on the Bentley Drivers' Club Silverstone meeting in this number of the Magazine but members will be able to read about everything that

happened to the Lagonda entries either in the News Letter or in the Winter Number of the Magazine.

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Lt.-Cdr. T. D. A. Kennedy, R.N., has sent this photograph (below) of what was said to be the first Lagonda in Kenya. The photo was taken about 1928. Any other claims?

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Michael and Pat Bosworth now have a small daughter—all congratulations.

We understand she has already offered to marshal on the November Rally.

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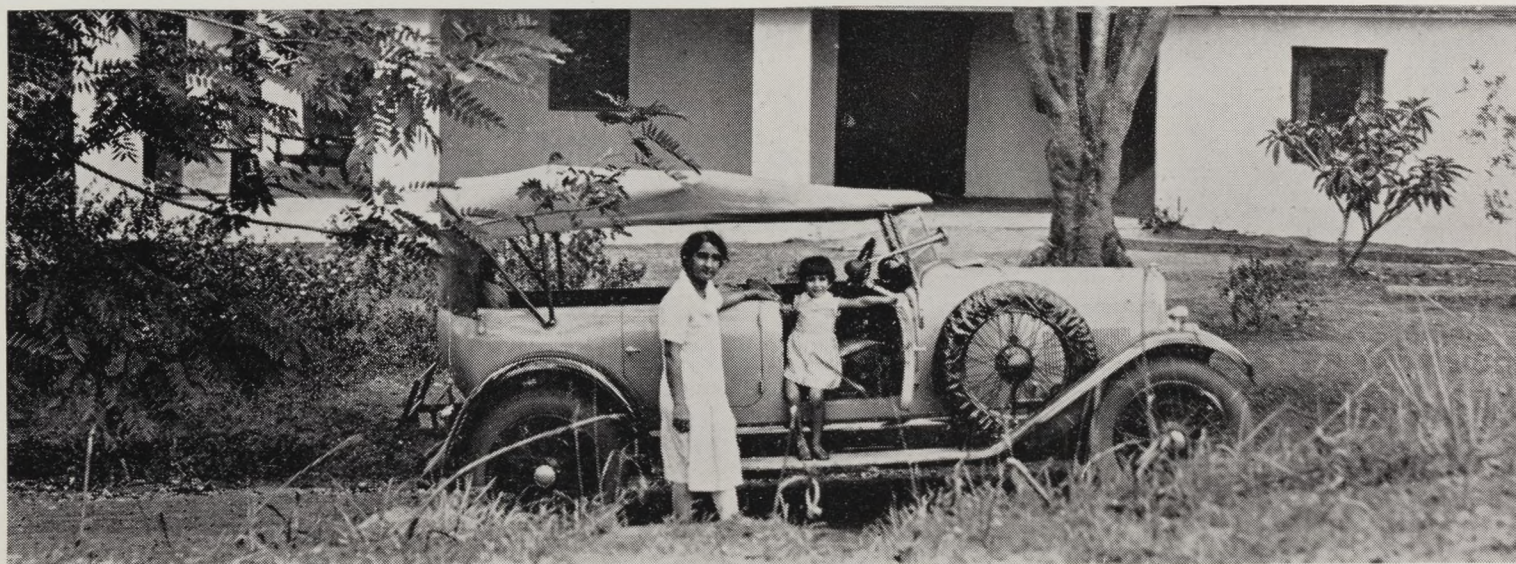
To William and Gareen Hartop a son, Jonathan, to add to three daughters, one diesel engine, two 2-litre's and one dog.


Fox Trophy

FOLLOWING the Northern Rally the positions for this Trophy (best performance in club events) are:—

Charles Green	175 marks
Ray O'Beirne	144 ..
Tony Loch	125 ..
Mike Wilby	120 ..

There is a long way to go yet and plenty of time for you people that haven't yet entered for anything to have a go and reach the top of the list.





Southern Rally 1959

WHAT was probably the last Southern Rally to be held at Heston for some time took place on Saturday, May 23, in bright sunny weather. It was organised by Bill Michael, with former Treasurer, Charles Elphinstone, as Clerk of the Course, Richard Hare as Chief Marshal, and Ivan Forshaw and Ben Walker as Stewards.

An entry of 31 was received and 29 cars came to the line. This was not as many as we had produced in the past but those who entered thoroughly enjoyed some interesting tests which proved to be laid out with sufficient skill to enable a representative of every type of Lagonda present to achieve a place, the first five places overall being taken by 2 litre, V.W., Rapier, L.G.45 Rapide and M.45 Rapide respectively.

This event is one of the Club's major sporting contests of the year and is worth better support than has been received lately. The Southern Rally is not a car wrecking effort, but a nice enjoyable day of mildly competitive motoring. It is hoped in future that special novices' awards

Oh ! it's hot—Doc. Young (LG45R) in Plug
Changing Test.

Photo : MASON

in appropriate classes will encourage more people to have a go.

The overall winner this year was C. S. Green, who drove with his usual polished efficiency and was completely unperturbed by striking the odd marker drum. His 2 litre has quite remarkable step-off and must be the most lively example of this classic type in existence. It is beautifully maintained and a credit to its owner. Charles' success was marked by high places throughout the event. He was in the first three in five out of the eight tests and in Test 1 he made the fastest time of all, while his plug change was the best by an appreciable margin. The only test where he did not really shine was in the Acceleration and Braking Test where he was beaten by most of the $4\frac{1}{2}$ litres and even by one of the 16/80 brigade.

In Class I, Alan Audsley drove Billy Michael's 11.9 with great aplomb to achieve sixth overall position. This is an excellent performance in an 11.9 which is not remarkable for acceleration and is equipped only with two wheel brakes. The clutch stop, a non-standard modification, having been removed to prevent undue strain on the transmission, both Alan and his wife elected to start all tests in second gear instead of using bottom. The honour of the male sex was upheld in the result, but it is only fair to Nancy to say that most of her points were dropped in the plug change, where perhaps Alan's superior experience of changing plugs on this somewhat plug-hungry engine gave him an advantage!

The premier award of the day having gone to Charles Green, two further awards were available in Class II. Ray O'Beirne drove his 16/80 with precision and skill and succeeded in winning the Class Award. In the Acceleration and Braking Test, by delaying his braking to the last possible second, he made the second best time of the day, in spite of formidable opposition from the $4\frac{1}{2}$ litres and also from the other makes. His performance in the "Get Weaving" test was also outstanding, being fourth overall and handsomely leading his class.

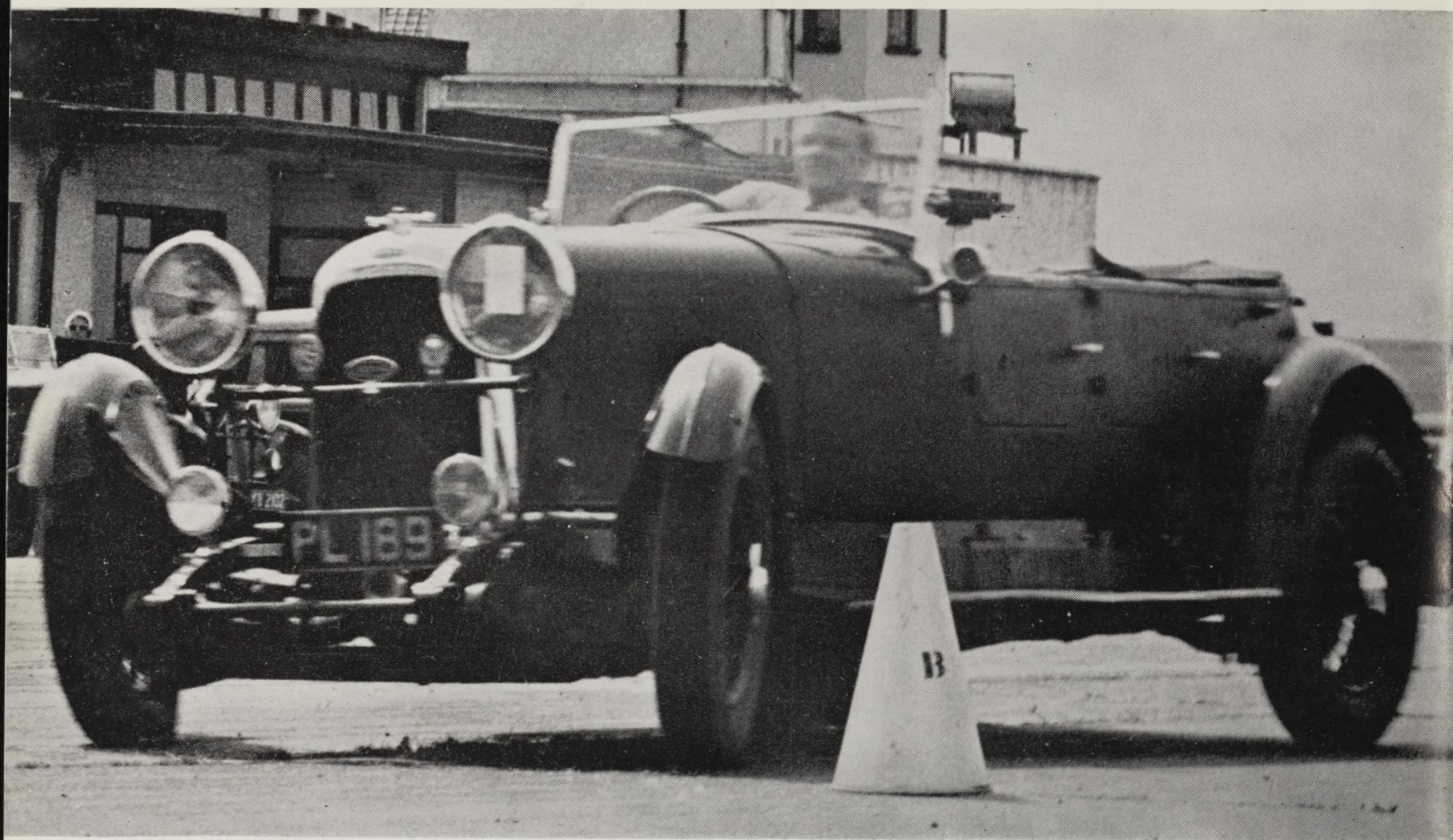
Denis Stratton, forsaking his usual role of Marshal and having a go in his $3\frac{1}{2}$ litre tourer with a 3 litre engine, secured the Award of Merit in this class by the comfortable margin of 62 points over Ridout (2 litre) who was third. Stratton's plug change was extremely rapid, his 442 points being second overall. The car is as big as an M.45 Rapide and, lacking the torque of the $4\frac{1}{2}$, his performance was very meritorious.

Woollard was well in the running for a place in this class until the last test in which he dropped quite a number of points as compared with the leaders. If he had not taken rather a long time about this it is quite likely he would have won an award.

In Class III, " $4\frac{1}{2}$ litres and Rapiers," in spite of the earnest endeavours of the organisers to equalise the handiness of the Rapiers by the superior acceleration of the $4\frac{1}{2}$'s, Barnett in his very smart 4-seater Tourer Rapier "pressed on" to win the Award by a margin of 123 points, from James Crocker in his $4\frac{1}{2}$ litre Rapide. In fact, he was only 46 points behind Charles Green the overall winner.

When it is remembered that points were awarded on the basis of one point for a **fifth** of a second it can be seen how close these three cars were. His performance was consistently good and he succeeded in making the fastest time in tests 1 and 3, and was second fastest in tests 5 and 8.

Our Chairman, James Crocker, was able to use the great acceleration of his Rapide effectively to secure first place in the Acceleration and Braking Test and also in "Get Weaving." He was particularly neat in the Parking Test but was unable to overcome the handicap of so large a car against the superior agility of Arthur's well-driven Rapier. Mike Wilby, driving his M.45 Rapide in serious competition for the first time, did very well to secure third place. He suffered from the disadvantage of his car being fitted with very high ratio steering which makes it hard work at low speed, the muscular effort involved in steering this car at driving test speeds being even greater



The Winner shows how—Charles Green wasting no time round the pylons. Southern Rally, 1959

Photo : MASON

than the normal $4\frac{1}{2}$ litre ! In spite of this he was second overall in acceleration and braking, second overall in reversing, and second overall in the parking test. He made by far the best $4\frac{1}{2}$ litre time in the Fast-Slow Test. The garaging and "Get Weaving" tests which placed a heavy premium on light steering cost him marks, and he was obviously less practised at changing $4\frac{1}{2}$ litre plugs than James Crocker !

Doc. Young, who had come all the way from Malaya, via a newly acquired practice in Paignton, to take part in this Rally, secured fourth position in his class. He achieved a very creditable first place overall in the parking tests and did very well in the garaging and "Get Weaving." We hope that his performance will encourage him to try again in future Club events.

Tony Loch in his M.45 was second in the

class in the garaging test and second in the class in the parking test, but he does not seem to have had sufficient plug trouble to make him really fast at changing the things, and he also dropped points on other tests, finishing below Doc. Young and Ron Newman.

Ron Newman was one of the few who elected to change a wheel instead of changing a plug. This gave him 100 bonus marks and as a result he was second best in his class on this particular test, being beaten only by the very rapid plug change which Barnett made on the Rapier.

Whitman in the LG.6 Saloon beat Doc. Stratton, also in an LG.6, for the saloon car award. The Saloon LG.6 has much better visibility than Stratton's Drophead Coupe, running with the hood up to qualify for this class. The difference in the result between

these two was mainly accounted for by the very much more rapid plug change which Whitman managed.

In the Other Makes class, Maurice Leo's consistent and precise handling of the V.W. secured him first place, beating the other V.W. driven by Roger Greenway by quite a comfortable margin. In fact, he handled his rear engined car so well that he was defeated in the Rally as a whole only by Green in his 2 litre and the Rapier of Barnett. He made the fastest time of all in the Garaging Test and was second equal in the Reversing Test. In the Fast-Slow Test he was third overall. Greenway, who was second in this class, was just that little bit slower than the class winner right through except in the plug changing, where he left his engine running while he changed a plug! This saved him nearly 100 marks as compared with his rival, but still could not put him in front.

It was very nice to see Bob Wright out again in competition. Our immediate Past Chairman performed with enthusiasm in his

rather hotter than standard 1.5 Riley. He slung this car about with great zest, and succeeded in being the best in his class in the Wiggle Woggle and third in his class in the Fast-Slow Test. Again he was not as fast as he could have been in plug changing. If he had equalled either Maurice Leo or Roger Greenway he would certainly have got a Class Award.

Adrian Whitelegge's well-kept standard 4½ litre Bentley was not as nimble as the 4½ litre Lagondas, although he performed neatly without many penalties and gave "tone" to the "other makes" class.

Peter Bartleet's D.S.19 having baffled the staff on the Fast-Slow Test, found that for driving tests its hydraulic brain was not quite as rapid as the standard human ones issued to Lagonda owners.

ANALYSIS

A careful analysis of the driving test results shows that no one test was so predominantly important that it completely overshadowed the others in the results. The only test in which really high marks were earned was the plug changing or wheel changing test and in this particular test high marks were earned by practically everybody. Among the award winners in this test the marks varied by as much as 177. In the Garaging Test the maximum discrepancy between award winners was 142; in the Parking Test 103; in Reversing 71; in the Fast-Slow 117, and it is only fair to mention here that one of the award winners lost 175 marks, which was the worst figure but one of all competitors for this test; Acceleration and Braking the discrepancy was 34, and for the Wiggle Woggle 36.

The Committee wishes to thank the Marshals and Officials who worked so hard to make the event a success, especially those who arrived long before the event started to lay out the various tests, and stayed on afterwards to clear up the mess; in particular Charles Long who transported the equipment from Sutton and Peter Walshe who wielded a mighty hammer!

(Results overleaf)

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VIGilant 3116



Harry Gostling's Continental 2-litre takes a handful of lock on the Southern Rally

Photo: MASON

Abridged Results

Premier Award.

C. S. Green

2 litre Tourer

Class I. 1st Award
2nd

A. Audsley
Mrs. A. Audsley

11.9 2-seater
11.9 2-seater

Class II. 1st Award
2nd
3rd

R. B. O'Beirne
D. Stratton
P. N. Ridout

16/80 Tourer
3 litre Tourer
2 litre Tourer

Class III. 1st Award
2nd
3rd

A. E. Barnett
J. W. T. Crocker
M. H. Wilby

Rapier Tourer
LG.45 Rapide
M.45 Rapide

Class IV. 1st Award
2nd
3rd

M. Leo
R. Greenway
R. Freeman Wright

V.W. Saloon
V.W. Saloon
1.5 Riley Saloon

Lagonda Saloon Award
2nd

P. G. A. Whitman
Dr. H. J. M. Stratton

LG.6 Saloon
LG.6 Coupe

“Disco Volante.”

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A Two-Litre Diesel Lagonda

AS a result of the letter from Tony Loch in the Christmas number of the Magazine a number of letters and details have been received and for all of these we are grateful. Sandy Kirk has been kind enough to send the block for the illustration to this article.

We are indebted to Professor Pattenden of the Royal Military School of Science, who was responsible for the work done on this engine, for the following article which we reproduce with grateful acknowledgement. In its fairly early stage of running the car was tested by *The Autocar* and a short article about it appeared in the issue of October 5, 1934.

"My experiments in the field of Diesel engined cars originated in a request from a firm, for whom I used to design small petrol and paraffin marine engines, for the design of a marine diesel of about 8 h.p. per cylinder at 700 r.p.m. At first they insisted on using side-by-side valves and although I protested against this on the score of a very inefficient combustion chamber, I did produce, and they made, such a design.

This was a failure for several reasons. It was very difficult to start (largely owing to considerations of space limiting the flywheel dimensions) and at best never exceeded a b.m.e.p. of 80 p.s.i. and that with a very dirty exhaust. The trials of this persuaded the firm to go to overhead valves but as the engines had to be operated by unskilled labour, they insisted on horizontal, or nearly horizontal, valves which could not cause damage due to faulty adjustment or breakage. The engine was to be roughly of the same dimensions—5" bore 7" stroke—but I was asked to consider also a similar one of 3½" bore and 4½" stroke, to run at 1,000 and 1,200 r.p.m. I felt that they laid the

failure of the side valve engine on my design rather than on the requirements of side valves and resolved that I would get enough design data by conversion of some suitable petrol engine. Review of available types showed that the 2 litre 4 cylinder Lagonda was the most promising and, accordingly, I bought for £35 a complete car of 1926 vintage in 1932. Its condition was rather worn. Probably it had run 80,000 to 100,000 miles, but this engine is exceptionally strong and it was quite capable of rejuvenation.

After 1,000 miles test on petrol, the engine was dismantled and the bearings scraped in. Considering its age, the crank-pins and journals were surprisingly good, less than .0015" ovality being found. The cylinders were reground to .030" oversize and new pistons to my design were procured. These changed the flat top to a straight cone with slight truncation of the apex. It was intended to insert the injector in the plug hole and spray round the piston cone. This design raised the compression ratio to 17.2 : 1.

Whatever type of injector I used, water cooling of it was out of the question, except by flooding the cylinder head, but I thought it worth trying with what air-cooling the injectors could get from the fan. (Later I had to use the fan drive for the fuel pump, so they did not even get that.)

So far as fuel feed was concerned, the autovac was useless since I was going to run with an open air intake so the simplest thing was to fit an electric pump. I bought a S.U. petrolift, which gave trouble throughout the life of the car, to the extent of making it necessary to carry a spare. This was mainly due to dirt in the fuel, while if an adequate filter was put on the suction side of the

petrolift, it refused as often as not to make the suction. All the same it did not prevent trials proceeding to any extent.

It was clear to me that I must use Bosch injection equipment, so I approached Messrs. C.A.V.-Bosch who were most helpful. At that time no diesel engine of such a small size had been produced and there were no data to work on. They were able to offer P.F.1 A pumps—that is the smallest size with 7 m.m. stroke, and no camshaft. They advised 4 m.m. plunger diameter and gave me their recommendation for cam profile. I fitted four of these pumps on special plates on the inlet camshaft and made split cams to fit this shaft. These distorted in hardening and caused trouble by shifting in use so that the timing got altered.

As to nozzle, C.A.V.-Bosch were less certain. They thought the normal differential nozzle would be useless with these pumps at the speed I required. At that time Bosch in Stuttgart had produced some very small open type nozzles and they recommended that I should try these. They proved very difficult to fit accurately and it was essential to get sprays in the right place because I was using 2 holes at 100° which would get the sprays between the piston and the cylinder head without touching the valve only if correctly placed. However, we contrived to get the fitting reasonably good and eventually re-fitted the “dieselised” engine in the car and towed it until it started. I had then no facilities for brake testing the engine, so a road test was the only thing. To start with the power was hopeless and the exhaust frightful. We ran for about half an hour one still evening in a Kentish valley and after that the valley was black haze as far as the eye could see!

I had intended to inject at 25° before T.D.C. and finish on full load at T.D.C. and the pump timing gave this. I tried therefore spraying one nozzle on to the whitened fly-wheel, while the other three cylinders ran the engine light at 2,000 r.p.m. The wash-mark showed an injection period of 110° ! The pumps were above suspicion, so the trouble must have been due to the nozzles.

I therefore borrowed four normal “closed” nozzles and holders, using four holes 0.2 m.m. diam. with an included angle of 80° . This smaller angle was necessary since the larger nozzle could not enter the combustion chamber. The result was astonishing. The engine started at once on the starter and gave reasonable power with a passable exhaust. The car could be driven now, but the split cams would slip, and that meant half an hour of messy and blasphemous work to reset them on the road. I determined therefore to fit a block pump with its own camshaft. The difficulty was that at that time Bosch were not making the A size as a block, so I was compelled to use the B size (10 m.m. stroke). Once again I resorted to borrowing, this time from a large (but derelict) engine, the pump having 8 m.m. diam. plungers. I was told, of course, that this was much too large and could not possibly work. Actually, the engine was again transformed and the car readily accelerated to 50 m.p.h. on the road with a nearly clean exhaust. This was improved slightly by patient trial-and-error adjustments of timing and injection pressure. The car was then put into regular use. The first trouble was breakage of the pump driving chain. This was a $\frac{1}{2}'' \times \frac{1}{8}''$ cycle chain and exposed. It was replaced by a $\frac{3}{8}'' \times \frac{3}{16}''$ chain, enclosed in a sheet metal case with an automatic tensioner, and gave no more trouble. But after about 5,000 miles the camshaft chain broke and as the pistons struck the open exhaust valves they received flats on their conical crowns!

Incidentally, this happened at night and I was able to get a new piece of chain and fit it with an electric torch as the only illumination (apart from reflection from the lamps) in under two hours, which speaks well for the original engine design. [Professor Pattenden is very modest.—Ed.]

About 1,000 miles later, No. 4 exhaust valve rocker broke and the car had to be driven 50 miles home eight-stroking in No. 4 cylinder and exhausting that cylinder through its inlet port—a noisy proceeding. Shortly afterwards No. 4 gudgeon pin broke,

wrecking the piston but luckily nothing else. However, as I had to strip completely, I inspected all parts and found hair cracks in all the big-end bearings. Since this was the original white metal I was not unduly dismayed but thought it might be better to try a stronger alloy and so got the rods copper-lead lined centrifugally. In 300 miles the noise told me that every rod was loose, so I stripped again to find all the lead gone and copper big-ends scoring the crankpins to destruction. There was nothing for it but to reline with white metal and regrind the crankpins. After this the bearing gave no more trouble.

This car covered in all about 14,000 miles as a C.I. engine, with no trouble apart from those mentioned above. Top speed was 65 m.p.h. at 4,000 r.p.m. Exhaust was then filthy. A smoke-stop was fitted but it was not effective above 3,000 r.p.m. Injector cooling was satisfactory due to fuel flow while the engine was running but if one stopped with the engine really hot the injector valves would seize and it usually meant waiting half an hour or more for the engine to cool or flooding the head with cool water before the engine could be turned. One did not stop the engine for more than 30 seconds, therefore, unless it was to be idle for some time!

Fuel consumption averaged about 39 m.p.g. Oil consumption was entirely due to frequent changing made necessary by severe sludging. At one period of running when the exhaust was never very clean, the suction filter had to be cleaned every 400 miles, as it was then so sludged that the pump could not get oil at anything like high engine speeds.

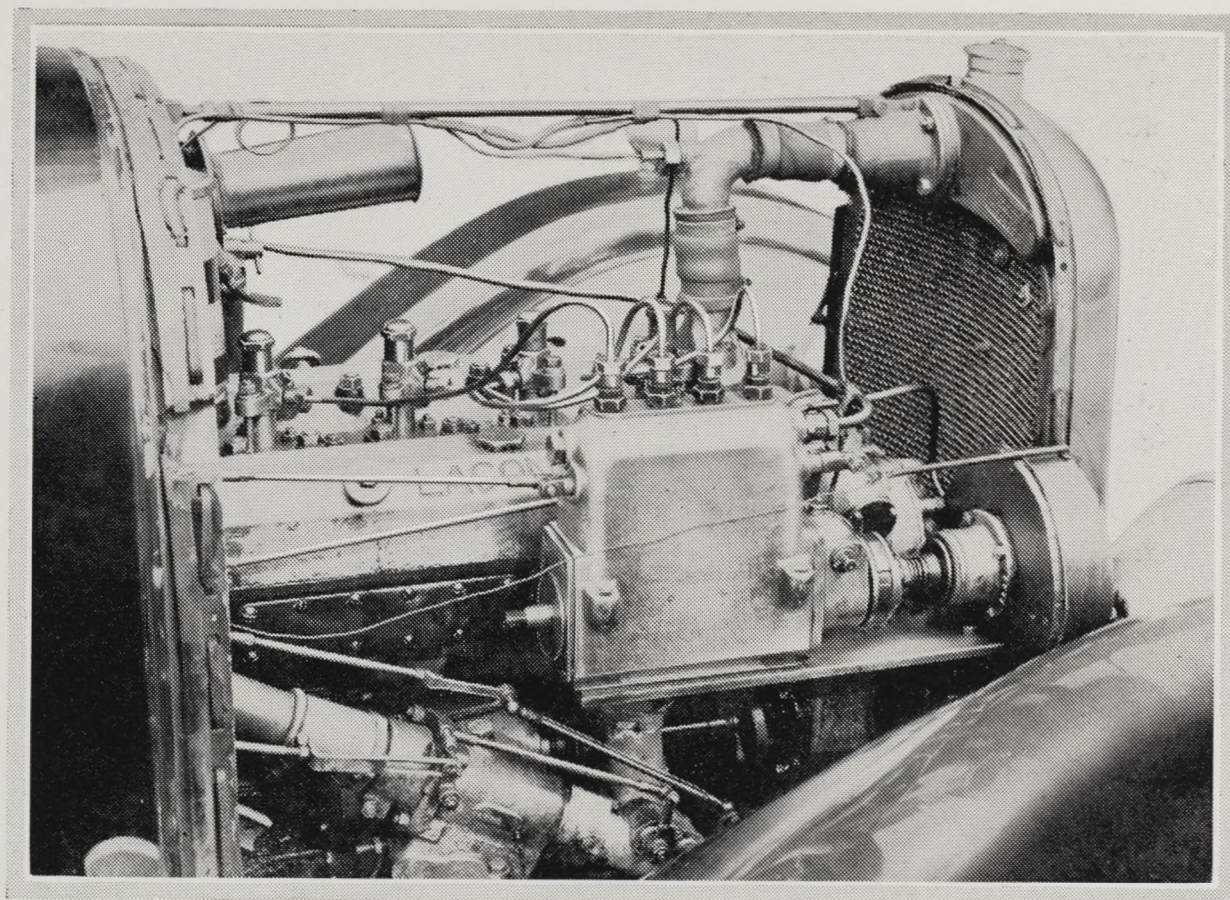
No governor was fitted, the accelerator rod being connected directly to the pump control rod, which made idling very difficult. At traffic lights one became expert at holding out the clutch with the left foot, while the right toe held the foot brake and the right heel operated the accelerator. But on the whole the car was easy to drive, accelerated well and pulled admirably at low speeds in top gear. Several runs of 350

miles or more per day were made without undue fatigue. The worst thing was the air inlet which, being open, was very noisy. A Burgess type silencer was fitted and after some experiment this trouble was cured. There was some "diesel knock" but the engine was not very rough.

At this point it was decided to purchase a second engine so that tests on one could proceed while alterations were being made to the other. Again a complete car was bought (£18), this being cheaper than the engine, but it was in very bad condition. However, all improvements suggested by No. 1 could be incorporated in No. 2 engine, and gear drive for the pump was substituted for the chain. By this time Bosch were producing a 4 cylinder A size pump, and we fitted one, a P E 4A 60 (6 m.m. diameter plunger) with a pneumatic governor. The whole layout was cleaned up but trouble occurred immediately since with the recommended venturi the maximum engine speed was 1,000 r.p.m. Idling at 300 r.p.m. was good. Eventually the venturi was discarded, a butterfly throttle in a parallel tube being sufficient. Idling speed increased to 400 r.p.m. but maximum was now 4,000 r.p.m. Performance was virtually the same as No. 1 engine.

We were therefore ready to try variations and started with the combustion chamber. The cavity piston being popular, an attempt was made to put a cavity in a hemispherical piston crown on which flats had been milled to clear the valves. By varying the cylinder head gasket thickness, this could give a compression ratio up to 21 : 1. The performance was very poor compared with the straight cone. The high compression ratio, of course, gave excellent starting (we never, at any time, used pre-heating—there was no room for any kind of heater plug) but the running was rough.

The next step was to increase the cup and put a cone in the middle of it, giving something of a "Toroidal" form. This was very little better, but I thought some organised swirl would help it so I put in half shrouded inlet valves. They made no appreciable



The engine as converted.

difference. (It has lately interested me to see that an Austrian design of Armoured Car engine uses an identical combustion chamber. This engine gives a good performance to its vehicle, but it is generally considered a very poor power unit as such.) Something very like the original conical piston appeared to be the best.

Next we tried different pumps. I had already made contact with E. H. Engineering, Ltd., and they lent me a pump. It gave good running but had the maddening fault of airing up if a nozzle valve leaked. The car would stop and on lifting the bonnet one would see fuel streaming from the top of the petrolift. This meant cleaning all injectors and repriming the whole system. However, the firm enabled me to test the engine on a Froude dynamometer in their works. We never got the engine quite right with this pump and 70 p.s.i. b.m.e.p. at 2,500 r.p.m. seemed to be its limit.

Scintilla Ltd. also lent a pump. This was of the "hydraulic spring-injection" type, a

beautifully made and rather attractive design. It was not any use, however. The engine could only be started by towing the car and the "diesel knock" could be heard half a mile off but idling was smooth and regular. I think we could have got much better results but the spring-injection system is not suited to high speeds and it did not seem worth the effort.

I was then able to test the whole car (No. 1) on a chassis dynamometer. The results were disappointing, until all the losses had been assessed. With the P.E. 4B 80 pump, No. 1 engine gave a corrected b.m.e.p. of about 80 p.s.i. at 2,500 r.p.m.

The foregoing experiments provided sufficient experience to produce a good marine diesel even though in this case the cylinder dimensions were much larger and the speed much lower. Thus the primary object was attained. The car ran so well, however, that it attracted some attention and it seemed possible that a small car engine could be designed on something like these lines. At

the time of most of the running, diesel oil cost 4½d. per gallon, so that the car was incredibly cheap to run. But the addition of 8d. to the tax killed interest. The poor performance as compared with petrol and the dirt and inconvenience of diesel oil were scarcely offset by the lower fuel cost.

For two years before the war I did practically nothing on either car as I was playing with petrol injection and spark ignition and in any case this was only a spare time job.

In 1939 I was moved away from home and saw no possibility of doing any more until after the war. The house was let and the cars, which were outside, had to be got rid of. I kept the best engine, and all the injection equipment and (with much regret) sold the rest for scrap at 30s. each.

After the war I reconditioned the remaining engine and ran it again on a test brake. It had deteriorated somewhat but we pressure-charged it to about 1¾ atmosphere absolute and got 120 p.s.i. b.m.e.p. at 2,000 r.p.m. with a specific fuel consumption of .55 pts./bhp/hour. The engine was in the Heat Engine Laboratory of the Royal Military College of Science for a few years but due to lack of space it had to be moved and is now in store."

Stop Press

Professor Pattenden has very kindly given the remaining engine to the Club and Bill Hartop has undertaken to instal it in a chassis and try and get it motoring again.

The Steward and The Competitor

IT HAS recently come to the attention of the Committee that a competitor at one of our events felt himself to have been "hard done by." Unfortunately this information was received some time after the event and little could, at that stage, be done about the affair.

Perhaps some of our newer members are unaware of the action they should take in making a protest over a point of doubt arising at a Club competitive event. In brief the aggrieved member should approach the "Steward of the Meeting" and record his story. If this is done the Steward will immediately sift the evidence with the organisers and, in most instances, an amicable solution can be arrived at on the spot, to the mutual benefit of all parties.

The Steward is what might be called a "buffer party." He is chosen invariably as being a member experienced in competitive events and one who has a more than passing knowledge of the rules governing motor sport—in other words the rulings of the R.A.C. relating to the sport. His responsibility is to ensure that the meeting is run in accord with R.A.C. regulations and that

safety precautions are effective and he must take immediate action to prevent any occurrence that might not be in the interests of the sport.

At the end of the meeting it is the Steward's duty to prepare a report for the Competition Department of the R.A.C. giving details of any irregularities or incidents and in particular the circumstances of any accidents. This report clearly gives an indication of the efficiency of the organisation effort of the event, the skill and behaviour of the entrants and, sometimes, regrettable information relating to accidents and brushes with the civilian authorities.

All members are advised to make use of the Steward inasmuch as he is specifically present to assist entrants in difficulties and a prompt appeal will often resolve difficulties both amicably and immediately. One word of warning! It may pay to read *The Motor Sport Year Book* (R.A.C., 2s. 6d.) first as this contains all manner of things such as general competition rules, organisation of competitions, insurance, etc., and it is as well to make sure you are right before you complain!

C.S.R.-W.

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by MAURICE LEO



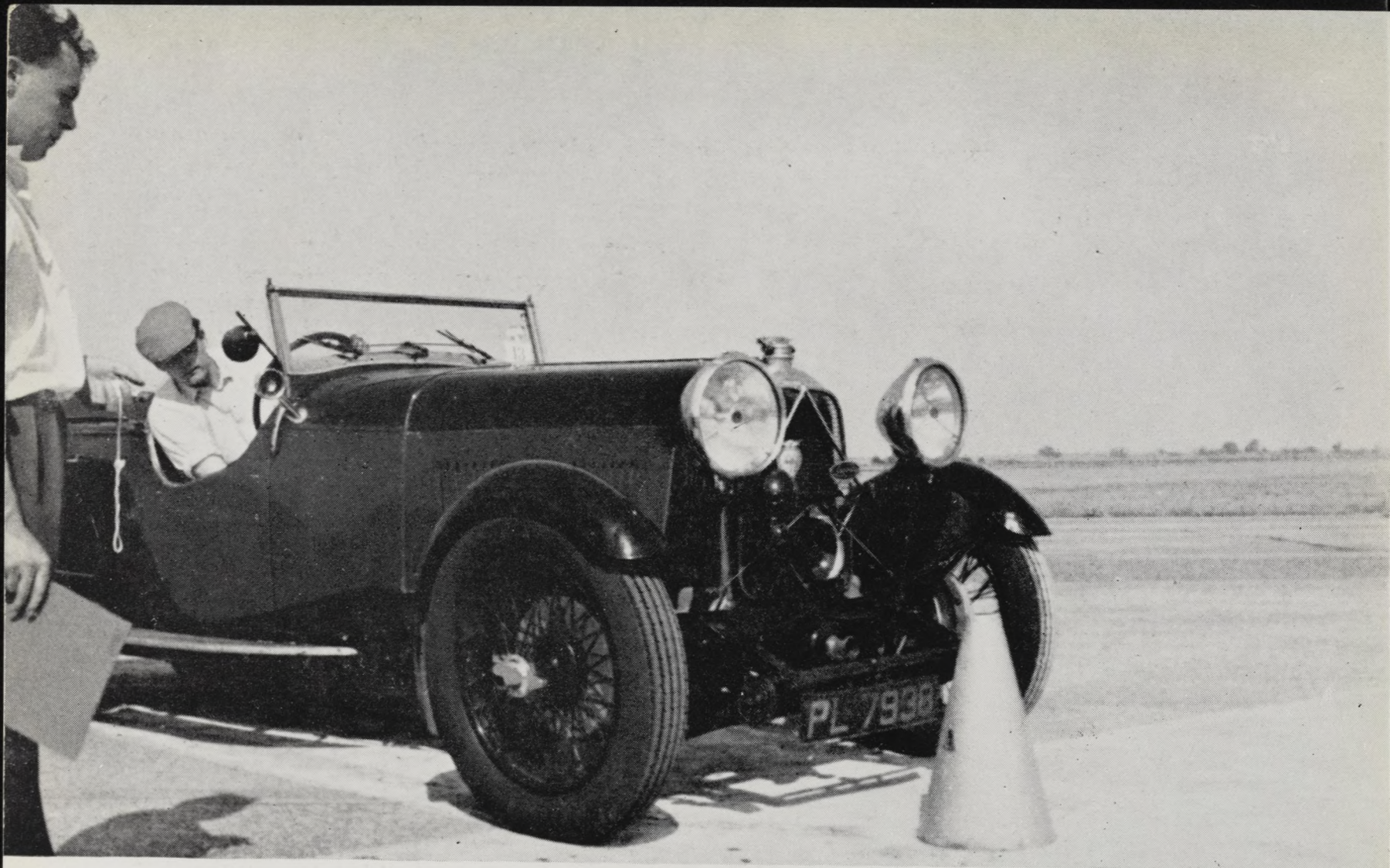
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Obank's 2-litre makes careful contact.

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Northern Driving Tests in July

EVEN WITHOUT any corroboration from the Air Ministry roof, it was very obvious that Sandtoft Airfield was HOT. People told stories of boiling on the way; oil was almost as runny and a rash of deck-chairs and parasols turned the day into a social occasion. The fine weather and good publicity drew many unacknowledged spectators in what, had they been older and/or of the right make, would have been motor-cars. Why the aforesaid F.W. and G.P. did not draw more of our own members to compete will be enquired into. There were 14 entries of which 10 were from the North. This leaves 143 people (excluding the marshals) who presumably are not interested in this sort of meeting. One fully realises that 120 of these people have paid their subscriptions in order to have access to spares and information, and that they are not even reading this: but surely even these enjoy looking at proper motor-cars? For the remainder,

in our unusual desire to please everyone, we shall try next year to find somewhere nearer the centres of population, in case this is it! On the other hand perhaps it is all too much trouble!

And what did those who did come see? Modestly, we have persuaded another hand to write up the tests from the driving seat and this is about people and cars (no William, there were no VW's). The focal point of a good deal of interest was Henry Coates' 10 month gestation period 4½ litre Lagonda special: an excellent piece of hybridery which is yet entirely Lagonda and which performed extremely well on its first time out. There is a certain fitness, one feels, in having bodywork which is contemporaneous with the rest of the car, as in this case, instead of hiding last year's cheese under a pseudo-modern fibreglass cheese-dish. In a sort of contrast, the description "as new" was demonstrated by a visiting V.12 saloon, the bodywork of which it was impossible to fault: this car is for sale at a very reasonable figure and enquiries can be redirected. At the other end of the power scale was Brown's pointed-tail Austin 7 (one of the aforesaid Noddycars) which serves its owner while his 2 litre is a-rebuilding.* This little vehicle should have done well in the "Other makes" class but developed a gearbox malady and declined to have a second try at the tests; as some of these were of a type which required the first go to be in the nature of a "recce" this was a serious handicap in the final marking. Gearbox gremlins also attacked a marshalling Morris

*(Editor's Note. — Ignorant Southerners much intrigued by references to Noddycars. May we please have full definition for next Magazine?)

Minor—this might well be the first instance of a B.M.C. gearbox actually preferring to be in gear!

If one agrees with the doctrine that there are only two kinds of Lagonda Club members, 4½ litre owners and prospective 4½ litre owners, it becomes necessary to ensure that these large cars stand some sort of chance in Driving Tests, where at the first sight of the multiplicity of adjacent pylons, one might expect the shorter and the narrower to get there faster and more freely. However, at Sandtoft, by making some of the tests the "rangy" sort, a balance is established in which power makes up for perimeter. All of which seems to leave 2 litres out in the cold, though it is unfortunate that Giles and Schofield got disheartened and did not make a serious attempt at completing the tests. Wouldn't it be nice if we could have a sort of 2 litre Register, set apart from the Lagonda Car Club and those nasty big push-rod engines, with its own badge, probably based on the be-balled 2 litre filler-cap, and then we could have events just for these cars, to which no one at all in the North would come and that would drive the Hon. North Registrar mad, but as it would not be anyone we know it would not matter! But away to the Meadows: that Capt. Loch won again in an M45 says something for something, presumably for his spirited driving with military precision, as it says in my notes (where it also says that the Loch profile is a disturbing influence on one's womenfolk). He was particularly adept at Test Two (kerbside parking and length judging), the sort of test that sorts out those people who use their cars in town from those who use them in the garage.

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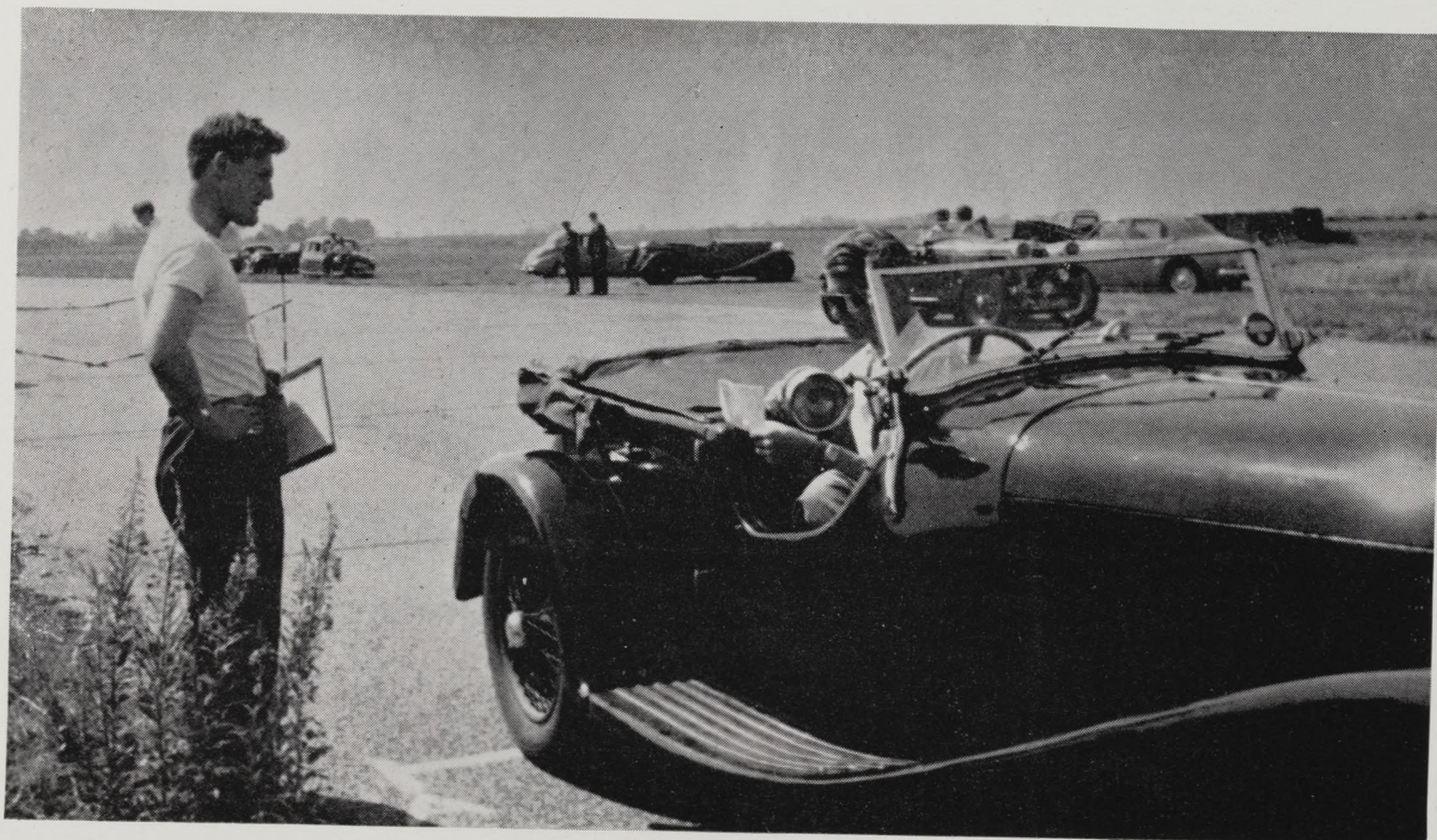
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This is the first year that the Allison Memorial Trophy has been awarded. It is left to the discretion of the organisers to reward some particularly meritorious performance so it has been given this year to F. W. Naylor for a very creditable effort in what might be considered a fairly unsporting motor (long chassis LG45 saloon). One feels that it is easy to be competitive in a tourer, though, heaven knows, quite a few people are not, but when a new member shows this sort of zeal for the marque regardless of the type owned, it is A Good Thing. Naylor's especial contribution to this rally was the provision of innumerable, obviously un-partisan, marshals, many of whom promised to buy Lagondas for the next meeting. Other awards went more or less as one expected. It is patently obvious that practice makes something or other and the same names crop up in the awards list. New boys should remember, though, that there is always room at the top, as they say in the well-known film "Lagonda and a Riviera Tan." One of the well-practised who made some room this year was Mike

Wilby, in the now-Wilby M.45R (we resist the temptation to put "ex-Coates") who had difficulty in finding the circumference of this machinery and spoke longingly of the ex-Wilby Rapier (all right in this case as offhand we can't remember the name of the new owner). The next owner of the present-Schofield 2 litre is going to have a garage full of extraneous decorative bits and pieces if he subscribes to the view that Lagondas knew what they were doing when they designed coachwork and that there is an especial virtue in the simple, uncluttered line of the vintage sports car. It is a pity, with such an obviously well-maintained car, that the silver stars and stickers mentality intrudes and we prescribe a dose of V.S.C.C. membership.

We hold to the opinion that the Citroën D.S.19 is the Only Modern Motor Car and it was interesting to see Peter Bartleet competing in this in contrast with a 14/60. He was fantastically slow in Test Seven (Slow-Fast-Stop), 57 secs. over the slow section against the next nearest of 32 secs. but was at a disadvantage when stopping. He



Test two : Loch and marshal—sort it out!

Photo : B. DEARDEN-BRIGGS



The Assemblage.

Photo : B. DEARDEN-BRIGGS

touched markers, due to the axial bouncing which follows braking and it was necessary in each case to judge where to stop in order that the bounce would do the touching. That he finished so high in the general classification was due to very capable driving and steps may well have to be taken in future events to ensure that modern motor-cars do not win. The other modern entry, the M.G. TD of Mrs. Harrison was driven in a very creditable fashion, and, trying to leave aside one's personal prejudice, these cars must be good for something, and driving tests are probably it.

Among the spectators were three or four D.B. 2.6's, non-members who had seen our publicity and come along to see their antecedents perform. It is fully realised that the future strength of the club will probably depend upon the membership of D.B. Lagonda owners, but Thanks to God, not yet, not yet! Rather more interesting was the 4½ Bentley coupé of Bryan Randles, who has parted with his L.G.45 tourer and moved higher up the ladder, finance-wise if not in discrimination. It is always encouraging when people continue their membership into the desert of their Lagondalessness—do they do it because they like us? (Can't think.—Editor.)

Back at the Crown Hotel, Bawtry, where the social part of the event was to take place, ex-rallyists were conspicuous by their

tans and while they drank-dined-drunk-danced-drunk, a few outcasts worked out the results. Unfortunately they mutinied when faced with the complicated formulae required for two of the tests and insisted on being fed: hence the provisional results did not appear until quite late in the evening, which was a good idea as no one could see straight enough to query them. Next year a simplified marking system will be adopted based on "Right," "Wrong" and "Disqualified."

Thanks to a lot of people who worked hard on a hot day the rally was enjoyed by a few people who probably worked just as hard. The latter, presumably, got some pleasure from it; all the former have is our gratitude for their help. B.D.-B.

Results

Premier Award	...	Capt. A. J. Loch
Award Class II	...	R. B. O'Beirne
Award Class III	...	D. H. Coates
Award Class IV	...	P. G. Bartleet
Award of Merit: Class III:		Dr. J. H. Rider
Allison Memorial Trophy:		J. W. Naylor.

DON'T FORGET

NORTHERN Pub Meets: Second Thursday: Ram's Head, Disley, on A6 outside Stockport. Last Thursday: Half Moon, Skidby, near Hull.

THE NORTHERN RALLY FROM THE DRIVING SEAT by Gravelliaire

SAME EXPANSE of concrete; going to be hot—is hot in fact. Still it's calm now we've left all the tinware going to the sea. Maybe an ass not to be in the sea, too. Familiar faces, new ones too. Nice sensible cars with wheels at each corner. Glad we came—hope they've started using quart glasses at Crown—tests? oh, tests—and then we can go on to the Crown?—Hope Jimmy's got plenty.

LINE UP! Start with front wheels on line. We can manage that all right; driver in car—should be possible, hasn't rained so it won't have shrunk; engine running—it brought us here, but one never knows—cross line as often as possible with near front wheel—that's the one we can't see

—awkward; keep twiddling the wheel and hope for the best. Splendid slide on the gravel, apt to slide through the garage though, must get all the brakes to work at the same time before November.

Oh, Blast! Kerbside parking. If it had been a real kerb we could have done it fine—still it's the same for all of us. Marshals not quite clear which way we were to face for start. Car opposite might get bent if we turn with the watch on, so do it all backwards. Seems hardly the thing to prospect on foot; anyway we would probably get the wrong tuft of grass; wave marshal back from seat—wave him back 'till we've room for an antic. Judgment, not fireworks, to get good marks here.

Optimum route—very tricky—doesn't seem to have taken long—done one twice? Cuss, go and do the one we missed—not so quick after all. Think next time—start at left and take alternate ones, then second from left and ditto, easier to remember. A jolly and original test.

Ace of clubs. This cross affair gives them too many ideas! Into each arm in turn and touch the centre marker each time—realised half way round second time that one could see right dumb iron and impinge that without infringing rules—rather nice—for those with good nerves.

Devil's circle. He put some of my female relatives in charge, but that did nothing to lessen centrifugal reaction. Take plenty of rope and go like smoke—rope won't have time to touch ground. Great fun.

Chicane—always thought it was something to do with cards. Bit of a card who thought up this one. Beautiful loose gravel too—never read new Dunlop price lists before doing this—the observing marshal inciting one to extremes—left-right-left—a bit tight that one, at least for the heavy metal—they should make up on acceleration though. I'm sure that cone moved just as I approached—can I do it again? No? Pity—a splendid test—for the less studious!

Slow-Fast-Slow. An old chestnut but a worthy chestnut. The event is for machinery that we go to work in and thread

traffic in and this encourages us to be able to do just that decently and with dignity. No apologies necessary for its continued use.

Le Mans start, or get in quick. If Mr. Duff had not been so hasty in 1924 we would have been able to drive off in a seemingly manner and try and see if we could hit the gap at the other end. No grumbles from the person's point of view, but there is always something on the car that takes a piece out of the unmentionables. A graceful (we hope) leap, switching on in flight, hope we can reach the steering wheel before the car is away (once was in seat, engine running, clutch out, gear engaged but one leg over steering column) posts far too near, aim for middle and hope for best—brakes working fine, at least the near front one—seem an awful lot of rocks about—Is that all? Can we go to the Crown?

Two pint shandies please—have one too? Make it four.

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BACK TO THE OLD DAYS

CUSTOMS and trends in any society do not remain constant but are subject to continual change—our Club is no exception. However, some revival is often of benefit, and the following paragraphs will outline what many considered a good custom but one that appears to have lapsed.

It was usual for a member who had received good treatment at a garage (or had bought spares and suchlike reasonably) publically to announce this pocket-saving firm so that others could equally benefit. Likewise the not so good firm was mentioned, our editor then printing a version that was not considered libellous! Much of this information may still filter into our noble scion of Spares (Forshaw), but he is clearly in no position to have the time to make this information public to members in view of his other duties.

The Editor would welcome such tales **be they good, be they bad** and will publish the relevant information for the good of all hard-pressed Lagondarites. C.S.R.-W.

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Some Odd Lagondas

By Henry Coates

THE purist may cock an eye, but sometimes it is quite fun to do something that those at Staines had not seen fit to do—or at least had not owned up to. They could almost be accused of hybridisation themselves at times. Perhaps they ran short of engines, or cash, but we all know now the origin of the engines fitted to 16/80 and 4½ litre models. That information was never divulged to the public at the time—the dashing new 16/80 had its nice new engine—6 cylinders for smoothness—described in the press, with no mention that it had been hauling Crossleys around for years. It was not only Lagondas. Jensen used a “side valve V 8 of 30 h.p.” while representatives of Derby could be reluctant to admit any resemblance between post '31 Bentley and Rolls-Royce components.

Perish the thought that one should try and make out that Lagonda Motors were incompetent oafs of doubtful morality. They turned out some very fine cars and more power to them if they were able to get the sort of engine they wanted off the peg. From time to time others have rung the changes a bit, with varying success. The racing machines—team and individual—are already fairly well documented. As regards performance, most Lagonda models could have been more potent if they had not been designed round a potential cargo of four stout passengers, all of whom would complain bitterly if they felt a draught.

However, here are a few less well-known efforts:—

The F.M. Special.

F for Fenson, M for Montefiore. Mr. Sebag Montefiore wished to have something rather good for rallies and Mr. Fenson designed him this machine which was completed in chassis form in about 1935.

The chassis was Invicta, the usual very low one but in this case one that had been intended for the 5 litre supercharged model that did not materialise (Raymond Mays was tied up with that venture, but that is digressing from Lagondas). It is the engine that interests us—a 2 litre Lagonda. It was supercharged, by a Villiers in the usual place, but geared to run at 3 times engine speed. The cylinder head was reputed to be special, with 14 m.m. plugs. Those plugs do not of course necessarily imply a non-Lagonda head, but the valve covers were of unusual shape, so the head might be non-standard. Transmission was by pre-selector gear-box with an epicyclic over- (or under-) drive in front giving top gears of about 3.7 and 4.1 to 1. Information is not available as to which was the axle ratio, or what was the origin of the axle. There was no clutch and brakes were hydraulic. Total cost about £3,000.

It was intended to fit a light two-seater body, but the original owner was unfortunate enough to fall out of an aeroplane and the subsequent owner rather swamped it with a heavy drop-head coupe—possibly one from an Invicta. In this form it was driven into the West Country and up the more exciting hills in those parts by H. S. Linfield of *The Autocar*. He found the get-away not so hot but taking advantage of the magnificent stability and the willingness to rev of the engine—in all the 8 gears available—he was able to cover the ground very rapidly. The engine was noisy and hard at low speeds, but settled down at an easy and comfortable cruising 60 m.p.h.

This engine, by the way, is still owned by Bill Noble, who can usually be found behind the bar of the Coach and Horses on the third Thursday.

The look of the car was Invicta, but the radiator was non-standard, sloping, with an outline reminiscent of Lagonda. The low bonnet line entailed the magneto lying on its side.

Gardners used a 16/80 as a sort of test bed for their light four cylinder diesel engine—"Light" is relative of course as it is probably a good deal heavier than the Lagonda engine it replaced, and of course of greater capacity. A rear axle ratio of 3 to 1 was used, but a wide ratio gear box. The ubiquitous Mr. Linfield motored this machine to Wales in 1935 and had a very good run. Apart from the tick over the engine was decently smooth. Performance was probably better than an unblown 2 litre, though not up to the supercharged model. A maximum of about 83 m.p.h. was obtained, and fuel consumption averaged 45 m.p.g. This car is believed to be still in existence at the Gardner works.

A member, J. Shaw, covers a prodigious mileage each week in an L.G. saloon fitted with a Gardner engine. He previously used an M45R saloon so fitted, and regularly attained a consumption rate of 40 m.p.g.

Soon after the war there was for sale in Southport a very lovely 2 litre. The chassis had been shortened a little and a fairly modern two-seater body fitted—good lines and quite dashing-looking but also very comfortable and "traditional." It was supercharged. It was sold but has been lost sight of, unless some member has seen it, or even owns it. Someone had been rather misguided in fitting a strong stay between the front of the dynamo and the lamp cross bar. It would appear to have entailed some odd stresses when the chassis flexed.

Some characters at Rochdale once fixed a Humber Snipe engine into a Lagonda chassis. The only report to hand is that it went like a scalded cat—a trifle uncomfortable for the occupants one would think.

Alvis gear boxes are considered a good idea in some quarters and appear in both 2 litre's and M45's. One owner got tired of bending 3rd gear in his 3½, so fitted a Maybach box. Considering the usual suck business rather fussy, he set about arranging

manual operation. He managed it, but three gear levers sprouted from the centre of the floor.

Another individual started a special with some Lagonda bits. He shortened the chassis, shortened the steering column, set up some already very set up springs and wondered why the shackles would not meet them, then offered up a Ford V8 engine. Now came the big decision—whether to do without an engine or steering gear—there was not enough room for both. After some weeks of mental and actual tossing up he still could not decide, so the chump who sold him the bits had to buy them all back and charter a lorry at great expense to collect them.

A late 3 litre, with Wilson box, was fitted by a Clever engineer, with a fluid flywheel from a Daimler. He ran short of room so let it go with one universal betwixt flywheel and gear box. It was not long before the car was seen at another engineer's having another universal fitted. On the same car, the Bowden type control for the gear control got stiff, so was chucked away. A tiny lever was fixed direct to the arm on the box. Selection, pre- or otherwise, was now a matter of conjecture. The writer once drove the machine, in this state, through Manchester at 5 p.m. on a wet day. With the fluid flywheel, the thing would move away with reasonable content on any gear, so the frequent traffic stops were no real embarrassment on that account. What did cause anxiety was that the reverse stop was lost along with the proper control and even a fluid flywheel would not provide forward motion with reverse selected on a Wilson gear box. It is not unusual for persons in a violent hurry—competitively or otherwise—to be a little uncertain in which direction they are likely to continue to proceed. Uncertainty as to which direction one is likely to commence proceeding is a trifle disturbing, with an omnibus a couple of feet from the tail lamp.

Someone once inserted—but that's not a Lagonda tale—no Lagonda parts, or members, were involved—

Thought on the Lagonda World

by Tony Osman

IT'S STAGGERING how ignorant I am about the motoring life. I'm always realising that I don't know the answers to quite simple questions. For instance, where do members of the Lagonda Club live? This particularly interests me because, although I've only ever owned one Lagonda at a time, I seem always to have been concerned with keeping it out of other people's way. Actually, this does seem to be a major problem of all motorists. It's pretty well reached the point where it is much more difficult to be peaceful when one's car is stationary than when it's moving.

I've only to get into a bath for someone to ring my doorbell and ask if I'd mind moving my car a few feet, as its present position prevented their getting a good swing into their garage. I was once fetched out by somebody who asked me to move, as if I didn't, she would have to reverse out.

Other Lagonda owners, though, obviously lead a different life. Most of those I talk to at pub meetings seem to own three functioning motors and a vast collection of bits. Where is all this stored? Some of the members, I realise, live on farms with, as I visualise it, their motors snugly housed in barns and presumably their cattle snuffling gloomily around the fields looking for a dry place to lie down. There's another group that keeps its cars in rather distant garages and uses a small modern car as a sort of dinghy to reach their Lags. But how do the rest manage? Do they live in splendid two-garage (or three- or four-garage) houses? Do they run commercial garages, or do they (it's just occurred to me) simply have gardens with their cars lined up in them?

There's another point that fascinates me about club members. They're never discouraged by the amount of work that needs doing on a car. Strictly speaking, all that I know is they are never discouraged by the amount of work that needs doing on my car. I pretty well have to make a note in my diary to get enough time to change the plugs or, in fact, to do anything that I regard as being outside the range of pure maintenance but people are always coming up to me with phrases like "Why not take the crankshaft out?" Close rivals for being the phrase I liked least are "You've got the basis of a good car there," and "The first thing to do is to get hold of another chassis."

Part of the trouble is that I knew nothing whatever about motor cars when I bought my first Lagonda ("You'll soon learn, old boy, if you've got a two-litre," people at the club told me). I have, at that, learned a few things, I suppose. For instance, that a quart of oil doesn't make much difference to the oil level. Nor, indeed, to the oil pressure—they were both startlingly low on my original motor. I've found out that living at the top of a hill is fine if your car is mildly difficult to start in winter but that a thoroughly temperamental car ends up at the bottom still not started, leaving you to wait despondently for a tow up again. I've also learned, to be just, that one forgives the motor all its caprices when you are burbling along a not too cluttered road in the sunshine with the hood down.

Someone in a novel I was reading recently referred to a group of men as "talking about cars in the affectionate terms one usually uses for talking about one's ex-mistresses." The author was a Canadian, which has to be borne in mind. I don't know many people who talk about their mistresses, affectionately or otherwise. But I do see what he was getting at. It is difficult not to feel affectionate about one's ex-car. In fact, it sometimes seems that that is the only time one does feel affectionate about it. I'm sure that that must be a point of difference—one must like even the most

temperamental mistress during, so to speak, the period of possession. But I've known people reminisce amiably about cars that they blatantly loathed while they owned them—cars that stopped in the middle of the night in Bodmin Moor and wouldn't stop in the middle of the day in Piccadilly Circus. It's striking how, once they've got rid of the cars, the ex-owners look back on their foibles with benign good temper.

In a way though, it's an illuminating comparison, motors and mistresses. For instance, one always returns to the same type; one never learns. I've got another two-litre. I feel happy with it and consider it pretty satisfactory. But it isn't perfect. But then, I don't suppose mistresses often are, either.

Neale Edwards sends this photograph from Cambridge and writes at some length about the car, ending: "Incidentally the Thing on the radiator cap is a horse brass and the Thing looking at it is my sister."

N.B.—Letters sent care of the Editor will not be forwarded.



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V.S.C.C. Silverstone Meeting

July 25, 1959

IN A VERY large and interesting entry the name Lagonda appeared several times in the programme and, what is more, in the results.

The members who did so well on our behalf were John Barker, with a neat 2-seater Rapier, and our old friends Bill Michael and Donald Overy. Several other members were either doing some job of work or supporting the beer tent, or of course both.

Barker took part in two races but from the look of his handicap it was clear that he was going to pay for his very good drive at Oulton Park recently, and so it was. In spite of some very fast but steady driving in which he held off a Lancia Aprilia he couldn't quite get in the first three, but we hope that he will come out again and the handicapper will be kinder to him. They are sometimes, you know!

Bill Michael's first race was the Light Car handicap and just as everyone was wondering how the 4½ became a "light" car, out from the paddock trundled the 11.9 looking oh so smart in a nice new coat of dark blue paint. He had to start on the same mark as some more powerful Humbers but by dint of starting when the flag was raised rushed—well, trotted—off into the distance ahead of the others. The technique is very simple: you put it into top, foot hard on the floor, hide out of the wind under the steering wheel and keep going. This he did and it was interesting to see that the 11.9 was as quick and steady through the corners as any other Lagonda. Towards the end of five laps it looked as if he might be in the first three but a sudden loss of power let the scratch man through at Woodcote on the last lap to steal third place. The loss of power was traced to a push-rod having

jumped out through over-revving, but no damage was done. We already hear mutterings about stronger valve springs!

Another handicap saw Donald and the Scarlet Woman start in the middle of the field with a blown 1750 Alfa Romeo. At the start there wasn't much in it but first time round Donald had a small lead and, pressing on with great determination, he inch by inch drew away. No time to lose your head this, with people all around you, and so on the last lap Donald closed up to take a very neat third place and the Alfa only five feet behind. A very good race with the first three very close together having started at very different times.

Following the big race of the day which looked like a line-up at Brooklands twenty years ago and turned out to be a benefit for E.R.A.'s, Bill appeared having now changed to his more usual mount of the 1936 team car. On the 5 seconds mark with a big field in front and of all things an E.R.A. behind, his chances didn't look very good but he said he would do what he could. A good get-away which put him almost into Copse before the scratch man left meant that the E.R.A. was held off longer than one might have expected. Finally on the third lap the racing car was by but Bill hung grimly on until the speed rose so much that he was spending most of his time going sideways out of the corners. Now it is well known that cars go slower sideways and so the E.R.A. dwindled into the distance, now way out in front of everyone else.

Not knowing where he now was in relation to anyone else, Bill pressed on and as the scratch man crossed the line Peter Binns and the Riley from limit were in the middle of Woodcote and the team car pounding down past the "100 yards" board. The

run in wasn't quite long enough and so it was another third place to Lagondas.

The last race of the day saw Bill out again with three E.R.A.'s behind him now and in front such things as Bugatti, Invicta, Bentley and many others. Apart from the true racing cars, the other man to watch was the Spa Aston-Martin of Freeman. He always chases the Lagonda and this time gave Bill five seconds start. One by one they were away, everyone well warmed up to this racing business by now. One or two cars were quickly mopped up but a 2.3 Bugatti

wasn't giving much away and there was Freeman doing all he could some little way back. At last not daring to look at the rev counter Bill urged himself past the Bugatti and now the way ahead looked fairly clear. The Aston and the E.R.A.'s still couldn't get within striking distance and in a fast and well run race the light blue car shot quickly over the line to win. WELL DONE indeed and a fitting end to a day of racing where the few upheld the Club name so well.

"Flare Path."

The Prototype Rapier

ANOTHER historic car joins the Club in the shape of the first Rapier ever.

It is now owned by Peter Cripps (that is him under the hat) and will be out and about as soon as it is screwed together in the engine department. Peter has promised to let me have a drive and it will be interesting to see how it measures up to the normal production car.

The prototype, which first saw light of day towards the end of 1933, differs a lot from the other cars, although I expect that by now the "tin" sump fitted hurriedly for the 1933 Motor Show has been removed! The wheelbase is much shorter at 7' 7", it being lengthened on the production cars as

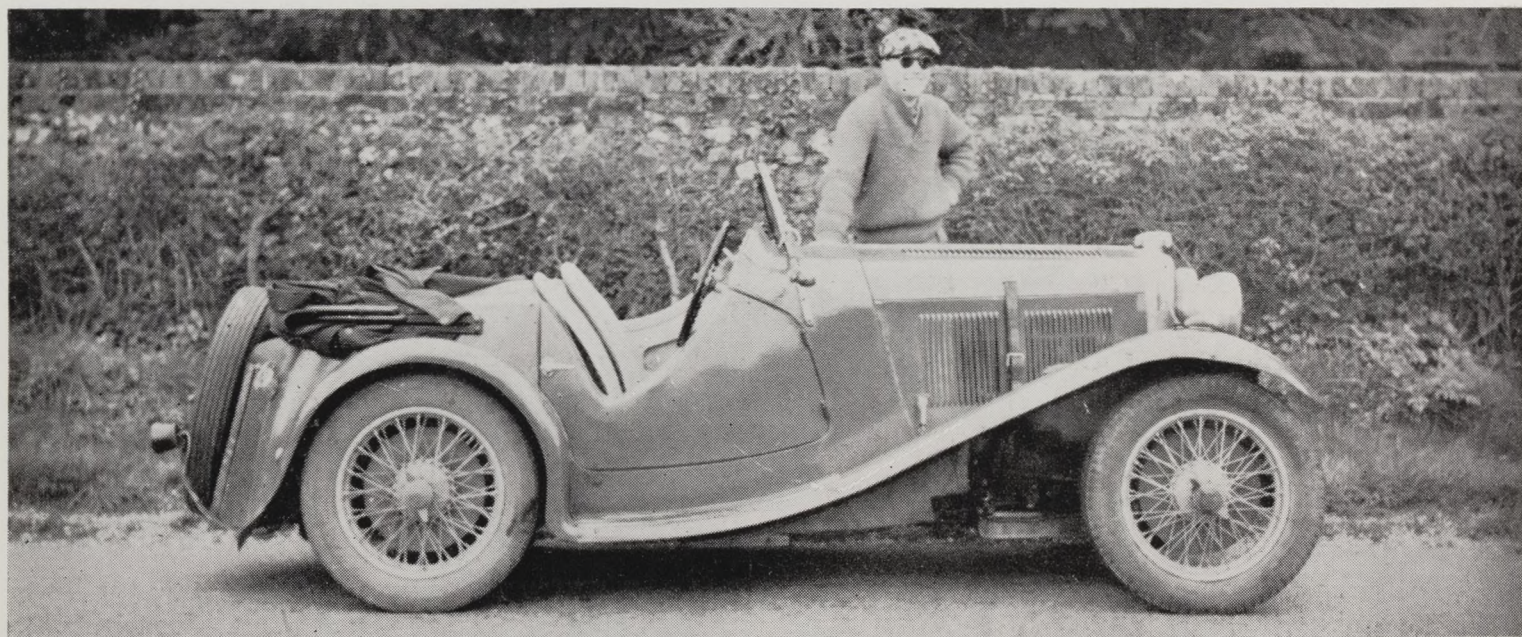
the body builders said they couldn't get a decent 4-seater on that length. They may well be right when one looks at this beside the later Abbott bodies.

The prototype body was built by Whittingham for Keville Davis and March, who also dealt with Wolseley Hornets, so the resemblance isn't so surprising.

Apart from a shorter drop arm on the steering, the main differences were in the engine, which has a split chain case, twin Zenith carburettors, different oil filter position and ignition arrangements—I wonder if all these things are still there to-day? Hurry up and bring it out, Peter!

Full report in due course we hope.

M.H.W.



CORRESPONDENT

4, Lancaster Garages,
Hampstead, N.W.3.
20th July, 1959.

Dear Sir,

I was most interested to read James Crocker's article "Wake Up, Everybody" in the last issue of the magazine.

I must say I heartily agree with his sentiments, having done a lot of "hand grasping" in the past, but feel in spite of what he says this particular rally is expensive and consequently it does not seem to attract "first timers," which is a pity, because it is one of the best events of its type.

I have competed in this event for many years in the Rapier and it is on this score I think his cost table somewhat misleading. I must hasten to add that bearing in mind his profession I know he would not deliberately confuse people, and I am sure the costs he shows are compiled with great care, but all the same my sum is a bit different to his.

The real reason of course is that it just is not possible to carry two navigators in a Rapier (I remember James was frightened in the front, so what about being in the back!). Anyone in the rear seat would have to share it with tins of petrol, coats and other rally needs, and quite frankly one sits so high and gets so thrown about that the driver would have to pay the navigator instead of the other way about! Seriously, the man in the back could not be a great deal of use so we now have a crew of two.

My cost looks like this:—

	£	s	d.
Maps		7	0
Breakfast		14	0
Lunch		—	—
Beer	1	0	0
Petrol	4	0	0
Entry fee	2	12	6
	£8	13	6

say £4 7s. 0d. each, or if the driver pays the entry fee it is £3 1s. 0d. for the navigator and £5 12s. 6d. for the driver.

In the days when it continued on Sunday morning with the hill climb at Firle (at the same entry fee, by the way) one stayed the night at Eastbourne, and this in my view made the rally, but the cost did not seem greatly different. Perhaps petrol was cheaper? Anyway for this week-end my brother and I used to share the total cost which with the extra meals, hotel rooms, etc., used to be just £5 a head, rather better value than the present set up I would suggest.

I do not know quite what all this proves except I agree with James that it would be a pity if this excellent event was held no more. There are all too few "proper" rallies for Vintage type cars and we should do all we can to support them, but I feel the B.D.C. would do well to consider returning to the old form or to shorten it to the lines of our own most enjoyable November Rally. In any case I hope they run it again next year as I have saved up my entry money and am sure this is the best way to spend it!

Yours sincerely,
Mike Wilby.

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