THE Lagonda

No. 53

Winter 1965

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THE Lagonda MAGAZINE

Issue No. 53 **Winter 1965**

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

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FRONT COVER: An early photograph at Staines of a *new* 2-litre. (Photo by courtesy of *Autocar*.)

NOTES AND COMMENT BY THE EDITOR

CHRISTMAS IS UPON US AGAIN ALL TOO RAPIDLY but the Club can look back over the past twelve months with reasonable satisfaction. The Club's finances are in order and we have seen some new faces competing at Club events during the season; there was a good turnout at the recent A.G.M.; and the early season Dinner/Dance was its usual success.

Glancing through some *Motor Sports* that were published in the early nineteen-fifties it was immediately noticeable how many vintage and classic cars were on the market. In one month alone there were about fifteen Lagondas for sale and in the *Lagonda* Winter 1954 there were seventeen Lagondas advertised for sale. A contrast to the present time. This emphasises how important it is to preserve the marque and not let Lagondas fall into disrepair and eventual scrap. The Club is fortunate to have amongst its members many who are knowledgeable in the maintenance and repair of all the various models and their advice is freely available to those in need of help.

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Everyone in the Club will I am sure join the Committee in wishing MIKE WILBY and his bride the very best of luck in their future together. (It must have all started when he shaved off his moustache!)

* * * *

In this issue appears an interesting and informative article by BILL MICHAEL on the 4½-litre six cylinder Lagondas. This has been reprinted by request from Magazine No. 15 which is in short supply. It is hoped that this will prove a useful source of reference on the development of these cars during the period 1933-1940.

* * * *

The Committee and your Editor would like to take the opportunity of wishing all Club members both at home and abroad a happy and trouble-free motoring year during 1966.

NEW SPRINT MEETING

A RECENT INFORMAL CHAT WITH THE BENTLEY Drivers' Club resulted in the suggestion that they might be prepared to invite us to their CURBOROUGH Sprint Meeting next May.

Curborough is an interesting 900 yard sprint course with very good facilities for both competitors and spectators in above-average comfort. Situated near Lichfield in Staffs., it has very easy access from the Motorways and would give us the opportunity for a new type of event. In view of the doubts that we have about next year's Brands Hatch Sprint this is an opportunity that we should *not* let slip by. It is up to all of us to make a big effort because unless we can offer GOOD SUPPORT the B.D.C. will rightly not give us the chance again.

Therefore, would all those interested in taking part send a postcard NOW to James Woollard or Mike Wilby (26 Howitt Road, Hampstead, N.W.3). You will not be firmly committed but it will give the Club some idea of the number of likely entries. Out of courtesy we must let B.D.C. know quickly, so WRITE NOW please.

"Let's go and phone old Forshaw—smack in the middle of 'The Avengers'."

NORTHERN NOTES
from Herb Schofield

THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE 1965 SEASON FOR MOST southern members may have been the sight and sound of the two DB V-12 Lagondas in action at Silverstone, but for me it was David Hine winning a 5-lap race at the July V.S.C.C. Silverstone Meeting in our "special" LG.45. In truth we are more than pleased with our machine, which in September 1964 was merely a pipe dream project. Less than twelve months later it had been placed four times at the nine race and sprint meetings it had entered, and is now we claim on *pure acceleration* the fastest pre-war Lagonda in current competition use—thanks to a recently fitted and extremely good Sanction III engine.

All the above may sound rather like blowing one's own trumpet—this is quite true of course, but nevertheless is proof that two novice drivers and mechanics, can with a limited amount of cash (in our case under £70), and a heck of a lot of hard work build a racing Lagonda.

South Yorkshire Car Enthusiasts' Club Sprint Meeting Sept. 1965

A very good entry here in the combined vintage and P.V.T. class with various examples of Lagonda, Alvis, Railton and Bentley. The class was won by Frank Sowden's very special 8-litre Bentley, with Schofield's LG.45 2nd, and P. Barker's 4-litre light sports Railton 3rd (he was also at the Brands Hatch Sprint). Other Lagonda Club members competing included Roy Paterson —4½-litre Special and Alan Brown—2-litre Special.

The circuit situated at Sandtoft Airfield is worthy of mention for it is a very tricky and interesting course of just under 1 mile. Over 130 cars were competing ranging from Mini cars to sports racing Aston-Martins and Formula Junior racers. The organisation of the meeting was superb and was by far the best we came across during the 1965 season. I understand there may well be a class for pre-war cars at the next meeting, and I hope that we can provide even more support—the event is certainly worthy of it.

NORTHERN NOTES CONTINUED—

The Future of the Northern Secretary

It has been found extremely difficult in the 1965 season for me to be a proper Northern Secretary and at the same time have an active competition season. In 1966 I expect to be competing in more events. The simple solution to the problem would be to find a new Northern Secretary to take over the job after the next AGM. However on the assumption that this might prove difficult a solution might be to split the North into two sections, and have a North Western Secretary and a North Eastern Secretary. On this basis I would be prepared to stay in office as North Western Secretary (if anyone wants me), and we would only have to appoint a secretary for the Eastern region. All this would halve the work and make life easier.

Perhaps I could have the views of Northern members on the above. Please *do* let me have your feelings in the matter.

As It Comes

DEARDEN-BRIGGS completes the rebuild of his vintage 3-litre—a very lovely motor car indeed. This winter he starts work on an 11·9 for his wife Pat. DENNIS ROBERTS adds an LG.45 tourer to his collection and passes on to ALAN BROWN the dying remains of an LG.45 drop head coupe, which Alan is rebuilding, helped by a vast collection of spares purchased from CHRIS HORRIDGE by Alan, David Hine and Herb Schofield. HUGH GASPER acquires an LG.45 saloon from the HINE/SCHOFIELD équipe and DAVID HINE fills the space left in the garage with acres of LG.6 picked up in Surrey.

Many thanks to Northern members for supporting events in 1965 and a special well done to RICHARD WILLIAMS of Ruthin who picked up a class award in the Northern Driving Tests—his first competitive event. This proves it can be done and might even encourage the 95 per cent. of Club members whom we never see or hear from to come along next season and have a go.

I still need lots of photographs of Northern members and their cars for our series in the magazine, the following active names spring to mind: Ryder, Turner, Beardow, Unsworth, Ogden, Brown, Raines and McDonald.

To continue, JOHN BEARDOW puts back on the road his coachbuilt M45 tourer after a rebuild—lovely black seats. A tatty Lagonda Rapier tourer was spotted recently outside a house of ill-repute in Manchester by an anonymous member who had apparently got his dates and times mixed up. The Rapier was *not* carrying the Club badge. From casual observation it would appear that the DEARDEN-BRIGGS household will shortly be blessed with a further increase in family, thereby proving that Dearden does not spend *all* his time working on Lagondas!

CARS ON THE DANCE FLOOR

EACH OCTOBER THE BENTLEY DRIVERS CLUB descend on the Dorchester Hotel for their annual dinner and dance and through the kind invitation of their Committee a representative of the Lagonda Club was amongst the 375 members and guests present.

The ties between the two clubs are further strengthened at functions like this and it was possible to chat about future co-operation to some extent.

The Lagonda Trophy (given by the club on the occasion of the B.D.C.'s 21st birthday) is presented to the fastest lap by a Bentley at Silverstone during the year and for the first time went to a modern model, Bill Bradley's Mark VI Special. This should give Lagonda Club members ideas because 2·6's. can often be picked up quite cheaply and with mild tuning to the engine and all the lumpy saloon coachwork cut away it should be quite a swift device. Hold the modern roadholding and brakes and a lap in 1 min. 15 sec. should be easy.

After the presentation of the awards which followed a most satisfying meal very good music

made the young and energetic shake the food down and gave the young and lazy and the old and lazy the chance to look at the cars. This was not an excuse to nip outside and have a crafty drink because five most splendid Bentleys were arrayed around the floor. As this happens every year presumably the Hotel management have faith in the oil tight qualities of the cars and looking at these magnificent examples it was obvious that they would be too proud to drop anything.

It was difficult to know which was the most desirable, the ladies all loved the 1939 Gurney Nutting sedanca de ville (and no wonder); Frank Sowden's sports/racing 8-litre had been envied all the year at the race meetings, the Speed Six chassis aroused the technical minded whilst the Mark VI looked 12 days not 12 years old. Perhaps the epitome of Bentley motoring was seen in the "Le Mans dream", a rebuild of an 8-litre as it might have been if the Company had raced this model back in 1930. As the dancing finished the lights dimmed—then with headlamps ablaze this magnificent machine rumbled to the centre of the floor, no less a person than Frank Clement, he must have done more laps at Le Mans than most, in the passenger seat. A wonderful ending to a wonderful evening.

"FLAREPATH"

COMPETITION NOTES

BY THE TIME YOU READ THESE NOTES THE competition secretary hopes to have moved to a new address, about 4 miles from Silverstone, which of course means that he will be nearer his work, and more suitably placed geographically, to entertain members after meetings! The actual location of the new residence will only be made known to those members who regularly compete in events and thus qualify for such entertainment as may take place!

If anyone wishing to send in claims for awards has not done so by now, it is far too late for 1965, as the awards list has already been made out ready for the dinner-dance. However this may serve as a reminder to do so next year, and for those of you who were not at the A.G.M., the competition year starts and finishes with the A.G.M. and any claims should be sent in by the end of November. Events entered in a Lagonda in another club do count towards annual trophies, provided they are recognised by the R.A.C., but unless your committee are informed of your extra-mural activities they can only place you on your efforts within the club.

Entries

One of the most difficult tasks for the H.C.S. is to get members to enter for events in GOOD TIME! The few are very good, reliable and punctual, but the majority are tardy in the extreme. Needless to say if everyone sent in their entry forms the day the regulations arrived, everything would be perfect, but there seems to be an unlimited number of reasons for not doing so, for instance:—"I didn't realize the closing date was so soon" or "I didn't want to enter till the last minute old boy, in case the car broke down after I'd paid!" These, and many more. It takes months to organise a rally or driving test meeting, all we ask is that you, the shy competitor, get both your car and yourself organised well in advance of the date of the meeting, send in your entries in good time, and you will find that your enjoyment of the day will be greatly enhanced by the elimination of that last minute rush!

Finally on this subject, if you do receive a personal note reminding you of an event, please be good enough to reply, even if you are not entering; also if you are normally a regular competitor and for some reason you are not going to compete for several meetings, a card in the post would at least tell the organisers who not to expect!

Looking back on 1965, the club has been very well supported in the various events during the year. Perhaps because of the unseasonal weather, the more social type of event has suffered most from lack of entries. On the other hand, driving tests, sprints and race meetings are well up on average, the climax of the season undoubtedly being the weekend of August 21/22nd, two days of great excitement for all those who attended the B.D.C. meeting at Silverstone on the Saturday, and our own sprint meeting at Brands Hatch the next day. The debut of the two D.B. V.12s. of Crocker and Leo in the B.D.C. 10 lap Invitation Race caused a stir among all present; both cars were driven consistently and well, when you consider that the drivers had still to learn how to use all that power, without overdoing it!

The Lagonda 7 lap handicap which followed

shortly afterwards was again very exciting, and a masterpiece of handicapping by the competitions sub-committee! That Bryn Edwards in his M.45 managed to OVERTAKE Maurice Leo's V.12, at Woodcote on the inside to pip him at the post by only one second, bears out the devilish cunning of the handicappers, and could only have been foreseen by such a formidable combination of brainpower as Hare and Wilby. The results of the race with best lap times is set out below:—

BENTLEY DRIVERS CLUB—SILVERSTONE
21st AUGUST, 1965

7-LAP HANDICAP RACE FOR LAGONDA CARS

	Place	Time	Best Laps
B. EDWARDS	1	10–30·2	1–25·2
M. LEO	2	10–31·2	1–15·4
H. L. SCHOFIELD	3	10–40·0	1–32·6
D. D. OVERY	4	10–53·2	1–31·6
A. BROWN	5	10–54·6	1–43·0
R. N. KERRIDGE	6	10–54·6	1–34·6
A. YOUNG	7	10–56·0	1–36·0
J. SEDDON	8	11–02·0	1–38·6
R. GEE	9	11–03·6	1–42·0
J. M. READ	10	11–13·6	1–39·2
R. A. ROBARTS	Retired		

Fastest lap: M. Leo Time 1–15·4
Speed 76·77 mph.

Winner's speed: 66·41 mph.

After such an exhausting day at Silverstone, competitors were looking a little haggard at Brands Hatch at 8.30 a.m. the next morning. However a very successful day followed with James Crocker winning his class. Chris Lee winning the Lagonda handicap award, Bryn Edwards and Ron Gee winning other class awards.

At the time of writing, the future of the Brands Hatch sprint is uncertain, but our fixture list for 1966 will include a sprint meeting if at all possible. The November handicap will definitely be ON in 1966, so will the April Social and the Woburn Abbey picnic. If support for these events is as good as the others, then your committee's cup will indeed be full!

J.C.W.

AGM REPORT

by Arnold Davey

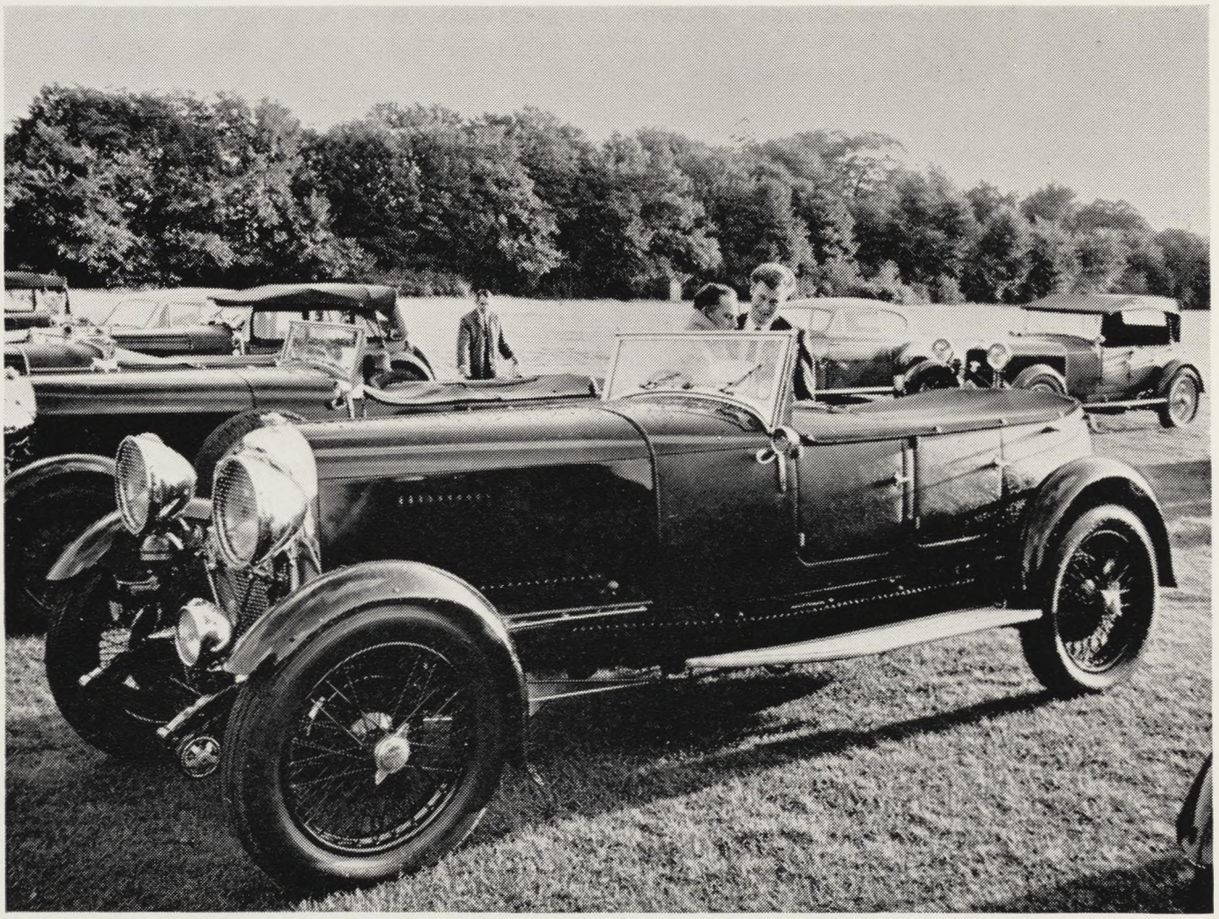
WHEN HARRY GOSTLING WAS TAKEN SICK AND HAD to hand over the running of the AGM to James Woollard he omitted to pass on the name and address of his personal ju-ju man who always arranges good weather. As a result we had only a normal summer day so that there was far more sheltering under trees than engine-inspecting going on. At least it made it easier to get everybody into the hall when the meeting started.

James Crocker opened with his traditional welcome to members and guests; he explained about Harry's illness and expected that the meeting would want to pass on its best wishes. He told how financial matters had taken up a lot of the Committee's time since the crisis in early summer when it was found that we were nearly broke, the scrapping of one issue of the magazine being one result. This was the reason for the proposed increase in subscriptions which would be dealt with later.

There were two guests present from Aston Martin Lagonda and James mentioned that Mr. Stott, their spares man, had been very helpful with the David Brown V-12s. This led him neatly into a short account of the Leo équipe's season. (Maurice owns all of the green one, 3DPC, and shares the blue one, 4DPC, with John Goslett.) James is allowed to drive one of them in return for his help in preparing them, this work earning him the proud title of "King of the Bodgers" from Maurice. James suspected that the rash of "House for sale" signs near the Leo's was not unconnected with the advent of the V-12s.

Mr. Sid Church, one time body trimmer at the Lagonda works at Staines had been expected as a guest but unfortunately had not appeared.

Valerie May's Secretarial Report came next with Valerie admitting that it was very difficult to find something new to say when the work remained much the same, but took longer. She apologised for the delay in supplying car badges,



G. Seaton's immaculate 3-litre tourer. *Photo: Arnold Davey*

which were now available, but at increased cost. Similarly, tie prices have been increased and the printers of the handbooks had wanted to put their charges up by fifty per cent. This we couldn't swallow, so the Committee had cast about for a new printer, which takes time, but the results should be satisfactory. Earl Kulgoske was now preparing a regular American newsletter which would go out to U.S. members with the normal one. Due to the high American postal charges it was cheaper to do it this way than to send it out from its editor direct. Valerie finished with her thanks to the various people throughout the club who help her during the year.

The Treasurer's Report was much longer this year than last, when Peter sat down before anyone could think of any questions. This year he had done a complete overhaul of the books, had had the assets revalued, making us £143 richer on paper, and generally taken a hard look at the financial structure. The result? Even after cancelling a magazine we were still £180 in debt. Peter then went on to recount the story of The Tri-car Affair, enlarged on by James Crocker in due course. In case anyone hasn't heard it all, here it is.

When the rest of the Sword Collection was auctioned in the spring the Committee felt it would be a good thing if the club were to buy the Tri-car contained in it. As this would probably be the last chance we would ever have of getting our hands on one, a scheme was hatched whereby various members of the club were prepared to put up the money to buy the thing and would be repaid later, either by instalments or by an appeal to all members. There wasn't time to organise an appeal before the date of the sale. Eventually James Crocker and Charles Green went to the sale armed with £500 of the various members' money plus £100 of their own. They had a word with Michael Sedgwick beforehand and he reckoned £325 would be a fair price. You will have read of the crazy bidding that day. The Tri-car opened at £500 and was sold to a gent. from Denmark for £725 without our party ever opening their mouths. If they had, it would have gone higher still. Since the only comment on the car's condition was an indrawn breath followed by a slow shake of the head I think we

were well out of it. A pity, all the same. The Chairman wrote to the new owner, inviting him to join the club but got no reply.

It was this affair and the accompanying search of the club's piggy-bank for ready cash which set Peter Densham off on his overhaul with the results mentioned above. Subscriptions can only be altered by a General Meeting, but the Committee could, and did, put up the entry fee and its members waived their expenses; the summer magazine had gone but we were still in the red. Hence the proposed subs. increase. Were there any questions?

There were. Dozens. Answers to them disclosed that each issue of the magazine cost roughly £250 and each issue of the newsletter £30. So that four times 250 plus twelve times 30 equals £1,360. Our income is about eight hundred times thirtyone and six, say £1,260. It'll never work. As if that wasn't enough two members tried to pay their subs. with dud cheques this year, all duly recorded on the balance sheet. As was an item of profit on sale of spares—two pounds. Surely, someone asked, this was not all the profit Ivan made in a year? It was explained that Ivan Forshaw, seller of spares was nothing to do with Ivan Forshaw, Technical Adviser; that he had invested a very large sum of money in his stock and premises and his returns are his own affair. The two pounds had come from Harry Gostling who had sold some 2-litre bits on the clubs' behalf.

James Woollard's Competition Report was more peaceful than the previous lively items. He explained that the fixture card foul-up was due to the addressing company and thanked Mike Wilby and Richard Hare for their help with handicaps and things. As from now the competition year ends at the AGM and any event between the AGM and December 31st will count towards the following year. Therefore any award claims for 1965 should be sent in right away. Looking back on this year, some of the highlights had been Geoff Purnell's amazing 1·35·2 in a 2-litre at Silverstone, the reappearance of the V-12s and the close finish of the Lagonda handicap at the Bentley meeting. Driving tests continue to be very popular but the lack of road

Dr. Gale's Class 1 winner—an LG6 coupé. *Photo: Arnold Davey*

710 b.h.p. combination! The two V-12's at Overstone. *Photo: Arnold Davey*

rallies suitable for our cars makes it difficult to gauge what kind of support might be forthcoming. Pursuing this line, he asked the meeting how many members would enter a November Rally if it were revived. About twenty-five people put their hands up. "Take their names", said the Chairman.

An attempt to organise a picnic at Woburn in July had been scuttled by the weather, despite which a handful of members attended including some never previously seen at meetings, so it was proposed to repeat the idea next year. A member criticised the running of the Brands Hatch sprint by the A.C.O.C., in that members of the promoting clubs ought to be given priority in entries over the invited clubs. This was a sore point on both sides, James replied. The sore point being that they ARE given priority, but always enter TOO LATE and then only after a telephone reminder. So the remedy lies at hand. Enter early and you'll get in. Another point queried was that the new Ministry of Transport rules for rallies exclude pre-1930 cars from some obligations. Did this apply to P.V.T.s? Nobody knew the answer to this one, but it seems most unlikely; where would you draw the line? "The Bentley Drivers Club never issue individual lap times", said an aggrieved competitor, "can they not be recorded and published?" He was promptly given the job.

The Concours results were read out at this point, being as follows:—

Class 1-4½ litres—

1st	Dr. N. H. Gale	LG.6
2nd	R. H. Matarasso	LG.45
3rd	B. J. H. Martin	LG.6

Class 2-Others—

1st	G. A. Seaton	3-litre
2nd	G. C. Thorneycroft	3½-litre
3rd	R. I. Last	3-litre

The Chairman thanked the judges, Messrs. Kerridge and Preece for their efforts and went on to introduce the Northern Secretary, Herb Schofield, who, blunt as ever, admitted that he had been far too busy competing to do much secretarying and threatened to hive off the north eastern area on to anyone willing to do it. He suggested that the adverts now appearing in *Motor Sport* would be better placed in the V.S.C.C. Bulletin. I gather we may have both next year. After asserting that the best sporting event of the club wasn't in the fixture list, even though it took place in the middle of Manchester,

THE A.G.M. CONTINUED—

Herb handed over to Ivan Forshaw, the self-christened "Mad Mullah of Lagonda Farm".

Under gentle baiting from Peter Densham, Ivan had promised us a genuine new joke, although I am not clear whether we got it. What he did do was to tell us the story of his spares service and how it had grown from the early days of airless tyres and octagonal pistons to the present day, when he had £12,000 worth of new parts alone, plus umpteen tons of second-hand. All at his own risk. He was well aware that the future life of the cars lay in his stores and hoped that the members were confident that he should carry on. They were indeed, a vote of confidence being passed unanimously.

We now came to the rather dubious bit where one third of the Committee "rotate". What this means is that, forced to retire by Rule 9, they all propose each other again and get back. This year there will be one new face at Gracechurch Street, that of Ron Kerridge.

Amid a great shuffling of papers we came to the proposed raising of subscriptions. Several speakers had made it glaringly obvious that they must be raised and, after considerable discussion, the Committee had proposed new rates of £2 for ordinary members, £2 5s. for family members and £1 10s. overseas. What were the meeting's views? Trevor Peerless proposed a rival scheme of putting up the rates by a pound (to £2 11s. 6d.) of which ten shillings would be refunded after two attendances at club events. This was swiftly amended to £2 10s. when the Treasurer said he would resign at once if the odd one and six were kept on, as it drove him mad when adding up the incoming subs. One member thought that the Peerless scheme would result in eight hundred entries for the first two events of the year, as everybody would want his ten bob back as soon as possible. Quick as a flash, Trevor replied that this could be overcome by making the refund deductible only from the following year's subs, thereby encouraging continued membership. This produced another gasp of horror from the Treasurer, appalled at having to check whether each member had or had not attended two club events.

Sidetracks opened up in all directions from here on, but finally the rebate scheme was voted out and a simple £2 10s. subscription was substituted and this was agreed. Scottish members at once applied for overseas membership, but unsuccessfully. We then turned to family membership. There was an examination of what family membership consisted of and what one got for it. One minority view held that family members should pay less, not more. Eventually a series of votes reached the perhaps unexpected decision that the family sub. should be fifty shillings, the same as the ordinary one. In other words, all wives are automatically full members. The overseas subs. were put up last year, and the Committee's proposal of thirty shillings was accepted.

The meeting was formally closed by James Crocker who had a proof of the Christmas card design to show prospective buyers, remarking that to get a proof by September the drawing has to be done in May and the accounting drags on until the following January. A full-time job! Although the meeting ended officially at a quarter to six a fair proportion of it was observed in the "Swan Revived" at Newport Pagnell until a much later hour, when it became obvious what is meant by the rotation of Committee members—it's all in the mind.

NOTES FROM NORTHERN IRELAND

WHILE I AM WRITING I THINK THE LAST NEWS YOU had of Lags. here was in 1963 when Frank Storrs reported a First and Second in that year's Craigantlet Hill Climb. Last year, 1964, we of course were handicapped out but had fun, the highlight of that year being in the Ulster Spring Rally when both Storrs and Whitehead in a 2-litre savaged stone walls at Lord Dunleath's farm where we had lunch-time driving tests (a nice exercise in keeping any possible claims inside the club).

In this year's Craigantlet Hill Climb, Frank's wife Erica and my wife Valerie were to drive but Frank was too optimistic about an overhaul and had not finished the car in time so VALERIE did it alone and won the Vintage and Post Vintage handicap event with a gross time only 2 seconds slower than my own best time last year! (She is only 5 ft. high and 8 stone) which means that I am on the look out for a sporty Lagonda so that we can *both* compete and I have a 1939 Rolls Wraith Saloon to swop if anyone is interested.

J. LONGRIDGE.

NEW DISCOL

—now better than ever!

This is the season when new car models receive much prominence. But what about reviewing which petrol to use.

For maximum and exhilarating performance choose NEW DISCOL, of course.

This is also the season when carburetter icing, that little understood phenomenon becomes still more important as a cause of indifferent engine performance—or actual engine stoppage.

The Alcohol in CLEVELAND DISCOL takes good care of that.

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NEW

The petrol "with Alcohol"

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MORE JOTTINGS FROM SCOTLAND

IN OUR LAST NOTES WE MENTIONED A SHORTAGE of post-war cars and now find that one exists and the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Spalding, are to join our small but select band of car polishers and self employed plug changers. We also noted that the Tri-car left our native heath, and this after at least one of us had prepared a suitable Motor House, its true, even period lighting. Ron Siggins left our aforesaid native ranks and departed for Irish shores their gain is our loss, and no doubt the purveyors of diesel oils in the Emerald Isles have taken note. His departure ends the fleet discount which he and James Crerar enjoyed.

We have enjoyed two social meetings at Melville Castle (delightful place—wine along sometime) at which some new faces and some familiar ones had turned up, many of them complete with cars. Jonathon Abson presents his new wife, whom we welcome to the Club and Mr. and Mrs. Brownlie turn up with their baby.

One of the big events in the Scottish members' little note books (full of big end clearances both theoretical and existing) is Iain Macdonald's Border Rally. An English event! Life is full of anomalies. Alas, we all trooped back without winning. We really must do better next year.

At this very moment T.V. featured the motor show and, get a load of this, a 1965 1750 Alfa Romeo — the announcer tells us they are going into production. And why not? The only question is why did they stop? We noticed with great disappointment that this is the only manufacturer taking this step. However, others may follow. This raises all sorts of beautiful possibilities. The Lagonda stand at the '66 show besieged by people waving cheques and demanding immediate—if not earlier, delivery of their low chassis 2-litre, or copy of the "Scarlet Woman". As I gaze into my garage and see, lurking where it has savaged more than one toe cap, my lovely n/s half shaft I realise that the day cannot be far away when my priceless stock of perrot shafts, half shafts and cam shafts will lose their scarcity value which they assume in sordid discussions with my Bank Manager. Stop! get a grip, it may not happen, at least it would give the opportunity to personally test that lovely three year guarantee (renewable).

We must not persist with this line of thought, a nasty man tells me that the trend could go the other way and result in a flood of '56 Populars.

May your valves never burn.

J. MCKELLAR-CAIRNS

Menage à Trois

ON MAY 27TH I WAS A BACHELOR AND HAD TWO 2-litres, a continental saloon KY 2712 and low chassis tourer OV 6190. I had owned the tourer rather longer than the saloon but was very fond of both of them. They had seen girl friends come and go and had really begun to feel their position was impregnable. They would never let matters get out of hand; if I ever seemed to be taking out any one girl too consistently the front of OV 6190 would begin to twitch with axle tramp till the poor girl was twitching in unison with nerves; the saloon would fill with exhaust fumes and the poor girl would be delivered to her fond parents ashen grey and barely conscious; in either case the worst conclusions would be drawn and next time Daddy would answer the telephone, "no, Carolyn has to wash her hair this evening . . . . . yes and for the next six evenings in succession. . . . . yes and every night the week after also . . ." and so that would be that. Many bachelor members of the club will be all too familiar with this heartbreaking and frustratingly common course of events; I am writing for their benefit. You do not have to buy a modern car, there is another solution to the problem.

I now have the same two 2-litres and a wife. Gabby, my wife, arrived from Australia in January of this year, KY 2712 the saloon was, of course, the current car. Exhaust fumes are a special feature of this car and are always the first ploy, Gabby after the Australian summer merely appreciated the warmth and shut the windows tighter; not to be outdone the car shed the silencer three times in about three minutes going down the Cromwell Road. "I hate being the first to arrive at a party" said Gabby. Second gear broke, the magneto shook loose and so lost the timing, the clutch packed up, the windscreen wiper broke (very subtle, the passenger then has to work it by hand) and there were two punctures. But all this was of no avail, Gabby was beginning to actually grow fond of the car and to make disparaging remarks about other makes.

Then Spring came and the saloon was taken off the road and OV 6190 taxed, insured and made ready for use. Now this car's forté has always been axle tramp so I took the perhaps unfair precaution of changing the front axle for

a high chassis one which does not tramp. The first trip in OV 6190 with Gabby was also the first after the winter and one of over a hundred miles; you may say that a few troubles were to be expected but OV 6190 excelled itself, I will not bore readers with a recital of the troubles, but we did not get back to London till about three in the morning; I thought some slight apology might be in order and muttered something to the effect that it was the first run after the winter, etc. Gabby must, I think, have been too tired to protest properly and replied that the occasional stops (not breakdowns note) did enable her to light a cigarette which she found difficult when the hood was down.

There were one or two occasions after that when OV 6190 showed a bit of temper but generally speaking we settled down into a reasonably happy menage à trois. In fact I was sufficiently confident in the car by the time the wedding came along to invite it to come on the honeymoon with us which it did covering over 1000 miles of very inferior French roads without any major mishap.

The Moral?—Providing one takes as much care over choosing a wife as over choosing a car there is no reason why they should not live happily together.

Footnote: the oil stains seem to be disappearing from my clothes, is this ominous for our future happiness together?

PIERS BESLEY

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5th, 1966

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Honeycomb Radiator Leaks

THIS ARTICLE MAY INTEREST THOSE MEMBERS WHO have radiators with the original honeycomb core, which leaks badly, but cools the engine sufficiently well to warrant its retention. The cost of recoring a radiator of this type can be as much as £70 to £90, in "honeycomb"; I am not referring to those rather nasty filament blocks. The following items for repairing the honeycomb will be found useful.

1. 1 kit of David's Isopon.
2. Scissors.
3. Small piece of waxed paper.
4. Bottle brushes—see text.
5. $\frac{1}{4}$ pt. black Valspar.
6. 1 artist's brush—see text.
7. 1 stirrup pump, with odd pieces of rubber tubing and hose.
8. Bundle of ordinary pencils.
9. $\frac{1}{4}$ in. drill.
10. Patience.

First of all, flush the radiator with some descaling solution, there are plenty of these available on the market. Do this job really well, and by the time you will have finished, you'll wish that you'd have put on some Wellington boots. Drain the radiator—if there is any water left in it—and let it dry.

Take hold of one of your small bottle brushes, which should have a thin wire (Woolworth's do a nice line at 6d. each) and trim bristles to within $\frac{3}{16}$ in to $\frac{1}{4}$ in. of the wire. Push the brush through and withdraw it twice in *each* and *every* hole! (Except those that meet the shell, for they are too small) this will take you the best part of a day. It should be quite hard work to push this brush through; if you find it easy, you are not doing the job properly. I found this job easier by removing the radiator, and supporting it between two boxes, and working over it, sitting down. When this has been done, a pile of vintage flies, stones, putty, scaling deposits and other forms of miscellaneous gunge will be lying on the floor. The worst part of the job is now done.

Assuming that you have removed the radiator, fit a small removable bung in the overflow pipe *inside*, and make sure that the radiator cap is airtight. Leave the short hose on the small pipe at

the bottom of the radiator, and with the assistance of odd bits of rubber tubing, adhesive tape and jubilee clips, fix the said hose to a stirrup pump. Place the radiator in warm water, (why work in cold?), and pump gently. Remember, these things aren't inflatable, so just pump sufficient air into the thing to build up a slight pressure. If you can't then see the radiator for froth, report to Forshaw for a replacement or to Sercks for a quote, and read no further. However, two dozen different streams of bubbles will be seen and heard.

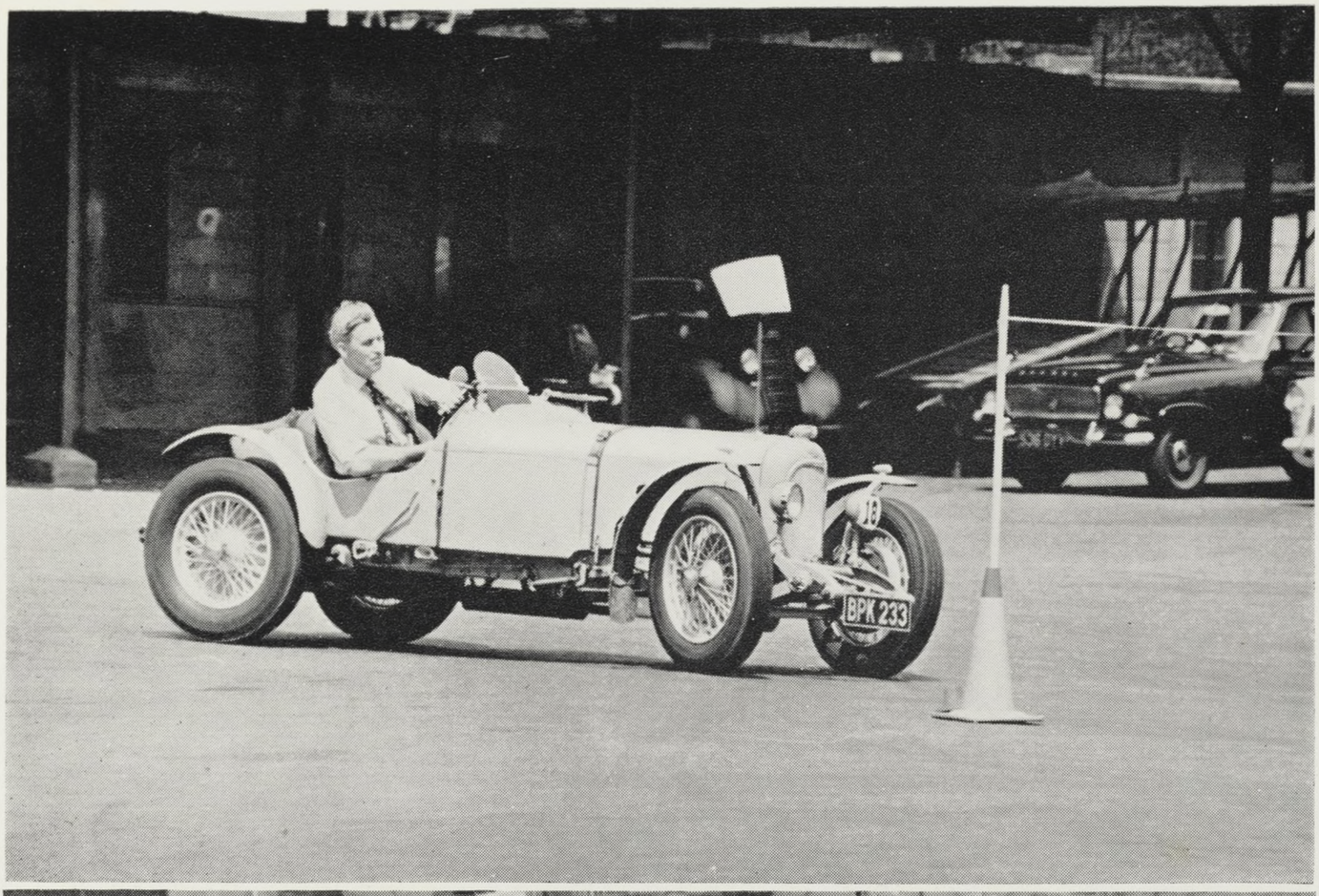
Now I'm only going to concern myself with two types of leak; firstly an "interior" leak, which has occurred *inside* the honeycomb; secondly, an "edge" leak which normally happens when the core receives a knock, blow or scrape of some kind.

With regard to the interior leaks, place one pencil in each guilty hole—pencils fit nicely. As this is probably your first effort at this form of repair, start at the back first, and make sure that the "flat" end of the pencil is within $\frac{3}{4}$ in. of the edge. Cut a small piece of paper the same size as the hole, and drop it in after the pencil. Do this with all interior holes this side. Next, mix the Isopon as per the instructions. With the aid of a slightly shaved pencil, fill each hole within $\frac{1}{4}$ in. of the edge, leaving a clean "finish" inside the hole. This can be tricky; I put another piece of paper, cut to size, on top of the plug, and pressed it *very gently* "home" with a pencil. Leave for 2 to 3 hours, and do *not* withdraw pencil, as suction will cause the plug to collapse. After this time, the plug will be three-quarters set, and you will be able to "pick" the hole clean, but do not disturb the plug. When the Isopon has finally set, rest the radiator on its bottom or side, and gently withdraw pencils, watching plugs for any sign of movement. There should be none. The pencils will not have stuck to the plug, due to the paper "gasket". Now the other sides of the holes must be filled in. A little difficulty may be encountered here, for you will have an air lock to contend with, and no pencils to work on. The job is really quite easy if care is taken. Just fill the hole with a plug as before, and pick clean in the same way. If the holes are plugged when the radiator is lying on its front or back, the consumption of Isopon can be quite frightening, as it will eventually fill the whole hole. With the method as recommended, only about one-third of a hole is filled with Isopon. Give the plugs at least 24 hours to really harden, and test in bath. There should be no interior leaks.

Now to edge leaks. Using pencils again, place the blunt end of a pencil within $\frac{1}{4}$ in. to $\frac{1}{2}$ in. of the edge of each hole surrounding the split. Fill these holes as before, but leave the Isopon $\frac{1}{16}$ in. *proud*, having pressed it well and truly home, *and in the crack*. If the edge leaks on the back and front of the radiator are not surrounded by the same holes, repair the edge leaks of both sides in one operation, with pencils. If a front and back "edge" leak are sharing the same holes, repair one side at a time, with pencils, as before. Assuming both sides have been repaired, test as before. There should be no leaks. Remove the radiator from the bath, and let it dry. Take a $\frac{1}{4}$ in. drill ($\frac{5}{16}$ if you dare) and drill the centre of the plug right through, so as to retain the honeycomb effect, leaving a thin slice of Isopon in the hole, on to which the "proud" piece is keyed. If there is an interior leak in the same hole as well, use a $\frac{3}{4}$ in. plug, and countersink $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. If you really want to chance things, you can paper the proud edge down a little. If you do this, you should carry out the bath test again.

If you are now satisfied with the repair, paint the core with black Valspar which will withstand boiling water and high temperatures. I found that the best way to do this was to use a white bristle artist's brush, a little bigger than the hole. Dip the brush in the paint, and by rolling the brush handle in your hands, work the brush into the hole, as per valve grinding. One dip in the Valspar per hole please, and don't be mean with the paint. As long as $\frac{1}{2}$ in. of the hole is completely painted, that will suffice. This painting will take a long time, but when its finished, and the radiator is polished, the effect will be surprisingly good, for the countersunk plugs and the edge repairs will hardly—if at all—be noticeable. Mount radiator, and don't forget to REMOVE THE OVERFLOW BUNG.

TREVOR PEERLESS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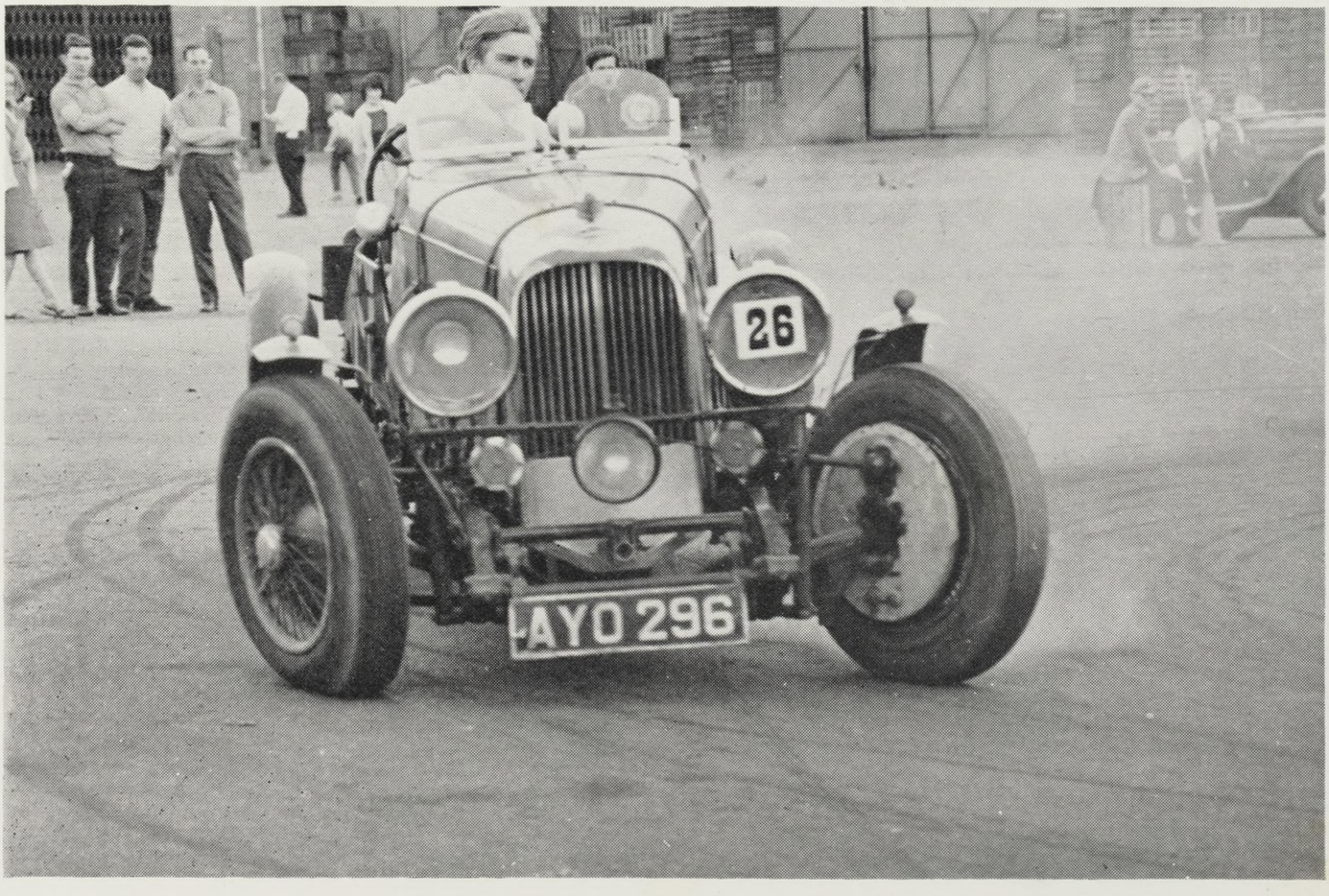
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AYO 296

IT'S ALL IN THE MIND

Three cars, three corners, and no doubt three different thoughts in the minds of the drivers.

RON KERRIDGE in BPK233, his delightful supercharged Rapier, has the air of a man who knows his work well. The Rapier is being firmly and accurately placed very close to the pylon and Ron is thinking that any second he can put his foot hard down, bring the back round and away with seconds saved.

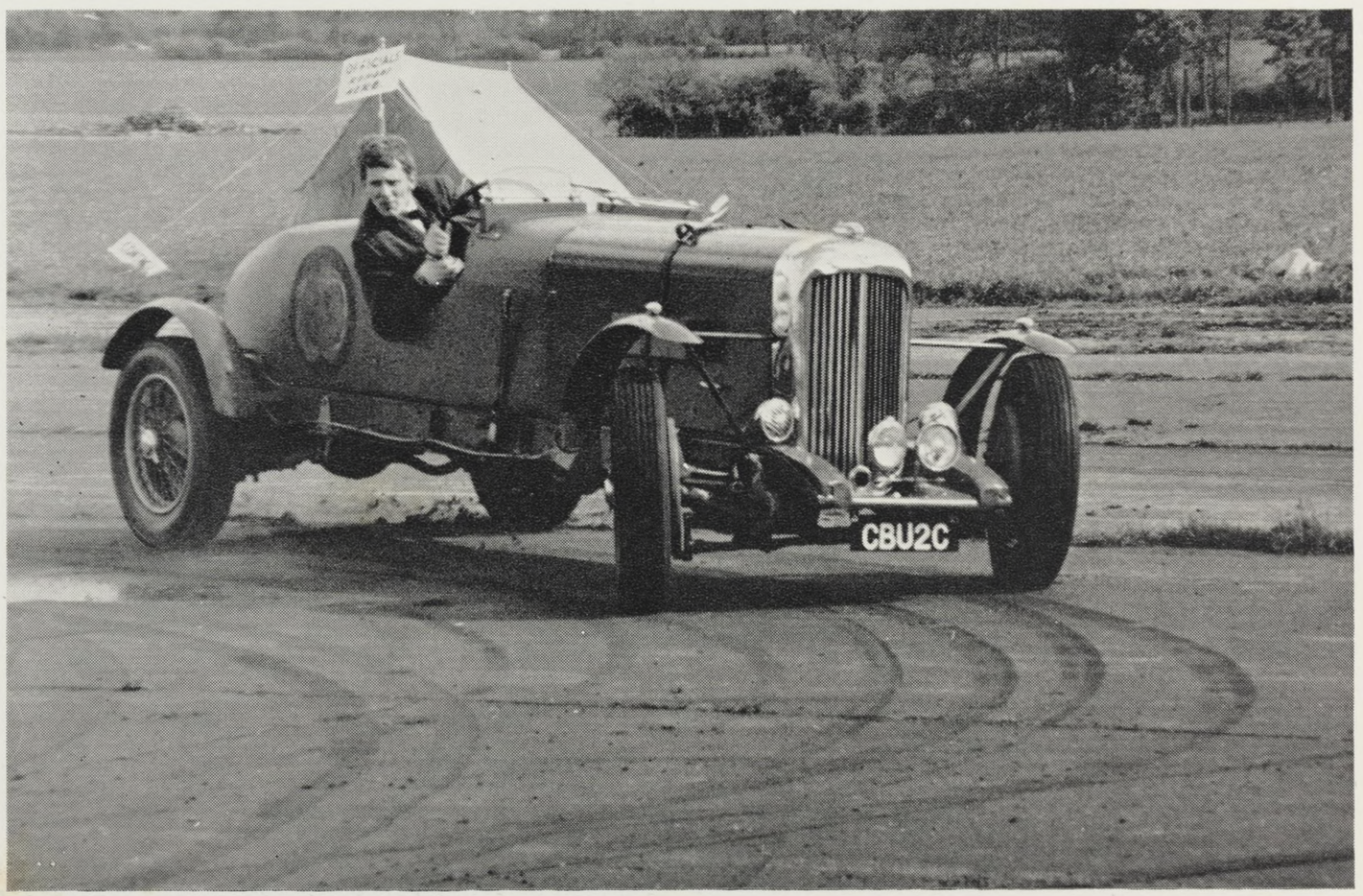
OR is he thinking . . . "Heavens the revs are up to 6500 in bottom gear. I'd better slack off even if it means hitting the pylon!"

RICHARD ROBARTS in AYO296, his much lightened M45 has the far-away look of a man searching for a pylon while his car drifts wide. Dick is thinking that with the M45's poor lock that if he holds on tight the car's speed will bring him round.

OR is he thinking . . . "Wish I'd remembered about the rule of 'slow in—fast out'. Bet the front tyre is nearly off the rim."

HERB SCHOFIELD in CBU2C, the newly-created LG45 Special, is thinking that the good stability of his car aided by some rear wheel spin will get him round the pylon in good time.

OR is he thinking that . . . "I hope that this rubbish is over quickly so that I can nip into that Club in Manchester on the way home."



A Brief History of the SIX-CYLINDER 4½-LITRE LAGONDA

By L. S. MICHAEL

THE SIX-CYLINDER 4½-LITRE LAGONDA WAS INTRODUCED at the Motor Show of Autumn 1933, and continued in production in various forms until 1940. It was a successful design from the outset and several club members are still getting excellent service from examples first registered in 1933.

In this outline history of the type, it is proposed to deal separately with engine; chassis; coachwork; and performance. The Competition history does not come within the scope of this article.

M.45 Engine

The 1934 models, as those shown in the 1933 Motor Show were called, are known as type M.45. They employed the Meadows 4½-litre engine, which had already been used to good effect in two Invicta cars. In a slightly different version it was a successful marine unit, in which role incidentally, it was rated to give 100 b.h.p. for continuous operation at 2,800 r.p.m. Therefore this proprietary unit was by no means an untried design in 1933; nevertheless, all engines used by Lagonda's then were either built up in the Lagonda Works, or stripped and reassembled. They were fully run in on the bench before being fitted to their chassis.

The M.45 was a push rod OHV motor, the cylinder head being roughly an inverted bucket in shape, with two valves of 1·69 in. diameter working side by side in it. Two S.U. carburettors bolted on to an aluminium manifold so designed that each instrument dealt with three adjacent cylinders. The exhaust manifold was on the opposite side of the engine, and terminated in a central pipe that led to the expansion box. No attempt was made to provide separate pipes from each port, nor even to conduct the gases away at all freely. This design, which involved two right angle bends close to the exhaust valves, remained unaltered on all except those "Rapide" models which had external exhaust pipes.

The Dual Ignition was by BTH magneto firing the plugs on the inlet side, and a coil and distributor firing the exhaust side plugs. The two plugs in each cylinder were, of course, both intended to operate on each firing stroke, separate switching being provided merely for test purposes.

The cylinders were 88·4 m.m × 120·6 m.m. and the pistons were usually Specialloid with three rings above the gudgeon pin and one below. The steel con rods, machined all over, were split at the "small end" where the gudgeon pin was secured by a pinch bolt. The counter balanced forged crankshaft ran in four plain main bearings, and was equipped with a Lanchester type vibration damper at the front. The sump held 2½ gallons of oil which was cleaned by a simple gauze filter. The cooling system held 5 gallons of water and a thermostat operated the radiator shutters. It is interesting to note that only the most expensive of the 1954 Rolls Royce chassis, the Wraith, retains this refinement.

The Standard M.45 had a compression ratio of a little more than 6 : 1. No figures are given in the instruction book nor in the contemporary motoring journals. No B.H.P. figures were published, but Invicta's claimed 110 at 3,200 from the similar engine they installed in their so-called 100 m.p.h. models. There seems some reason to suppose that the Lagonda version produced slightly more power, as the maximum permitted r.p.m. was 3,800.

The M.45 engine was most reliable, but inclined to be very oily. Even at the modest compression ratio at which it operated, to keep it oil tight it was necessary to tighten the nuts holding the block to the crankshaft fairly frequently. It this was not done, the tendency for the block to pull off the crankcase made the engine extremely dirty.

The M.45 Rapide Engine

The M.45 continued unaltered in 1933-34-35, but in 1934 the first of the "Rapides" were produced. They were influenced by the successful FOX and NICHOLLS TT and Le Mans cars, and the number of 3½-litre chassis frames left over from that then superfluous model. There were several important differences between the M.45 and the M.45R engine, and there is no

doubt the M.45R is a better job, especially as regards durability. The compression ratio was raised to between 6·6 and 7 : 1. Heavier con rods were used, the small end boss was 1·31 in. O.D. against 1·28 in. of the M.45; in addition the con rods were not split to allow the pinch bolt to grip the gudgeon pin. Instead the gudgeon pin was merely located by a bolt that did not exert pressure on it. The omission of this split in the con rod makes it much stronger at the little end. The overall depth of the M.45R rods across the web was also greater, being 1·26 in. against 1·06 in. The crankshaft was increased in size too, the big end journals having $\frac{1}{8}$ in. greater diameter.

In addition to more robust reciprocating parts an extra stud was fitted at the front of the crankcase to assist in holding down the cylinder block.

It should be mentioned here that the dimensions given above and later on were obtained by direct measurements of the parts concerned. When taking these measurements, it was found that no two components even in the same engine were *absolutely* identical, so they may differ slightly from the designed dimensions. It seems quite impossible to obtain definite and authentic figures, from any known source of information; that is why it was found necessary to measure the actual components, which were either unused or on which a known amount of machining had been done.

In the M.45R a Scintilla horizontal magneto replaced the BTH and a Tecalemit full flow oil filter replaced the wire gauze. Again no B.H.P. figures are obtainable and the rev. limit remained 3,800. Nevertheless, this engine must have been distinctly more powerful as the maximum speed of the Rapide was approximately 5 m.p.h. higher and the acceleration more rapid than the M.45 with no substantial difference in weight or frontal area.

The LG.45 Engine

The following year (1935) the LG.45 was introduced. The first version of the engine the Sanction I, was virtually identical with the M.45R and the catalogue issued by the Lagonda Motors that year claimed 140 b.h.p. for it. It is generally considered that the LG.45 Sanction I had a slightly lower compression ratio, 6·6 : 1, than the M.45R, but it is impossible to find authoratative contemporary figures. The LG.45 Sanction II which followed in early 1936 differed from its predecessor only in that Twin Scintilla Vertex Magnetos replaced the coil and mag. arrangements.

At the 1936 Motor Show the LG.45 Sanction III, also with the Twin Vertex Magnetos, was produced. This engine owes something to the influence of W. O. Bentley who had by then joined Lagondas. It had a completely redesigned cylinder head. The carburettors bolted directly on to the head, which had an internally cast induction manifold designed to give greater turbulence to the charge. The exhaust valves were just over 1/10 in. smaller in diameter than the inlet valves which were approximately 1·7 in. in diameter, thus being some ten-thousandths of an inch larger than the M.45 and LG.45 Sanction I and II inlet valves.

The reduction in size of the exhaust valves increased the speed of gas flow at higher revs, and the new head undoubtedly gave better results at the top end of the speed range. Incidentally, the red line on the rev. counter was moved up to 4,000. The cooling of cylinders 5 and 6 was improved by the addition of an extra water transfer at the rear of the block.

All who have owned both M.45 and LG.45

Sanction III models will confirm that whereas the earlier engines start to get short of breath at about 3,000 r.p.m., even in the gears, the Sanction III will rev. freely to over 4,000 r.p.m. except of course in top, where it would represent well over 100 m.p.h.

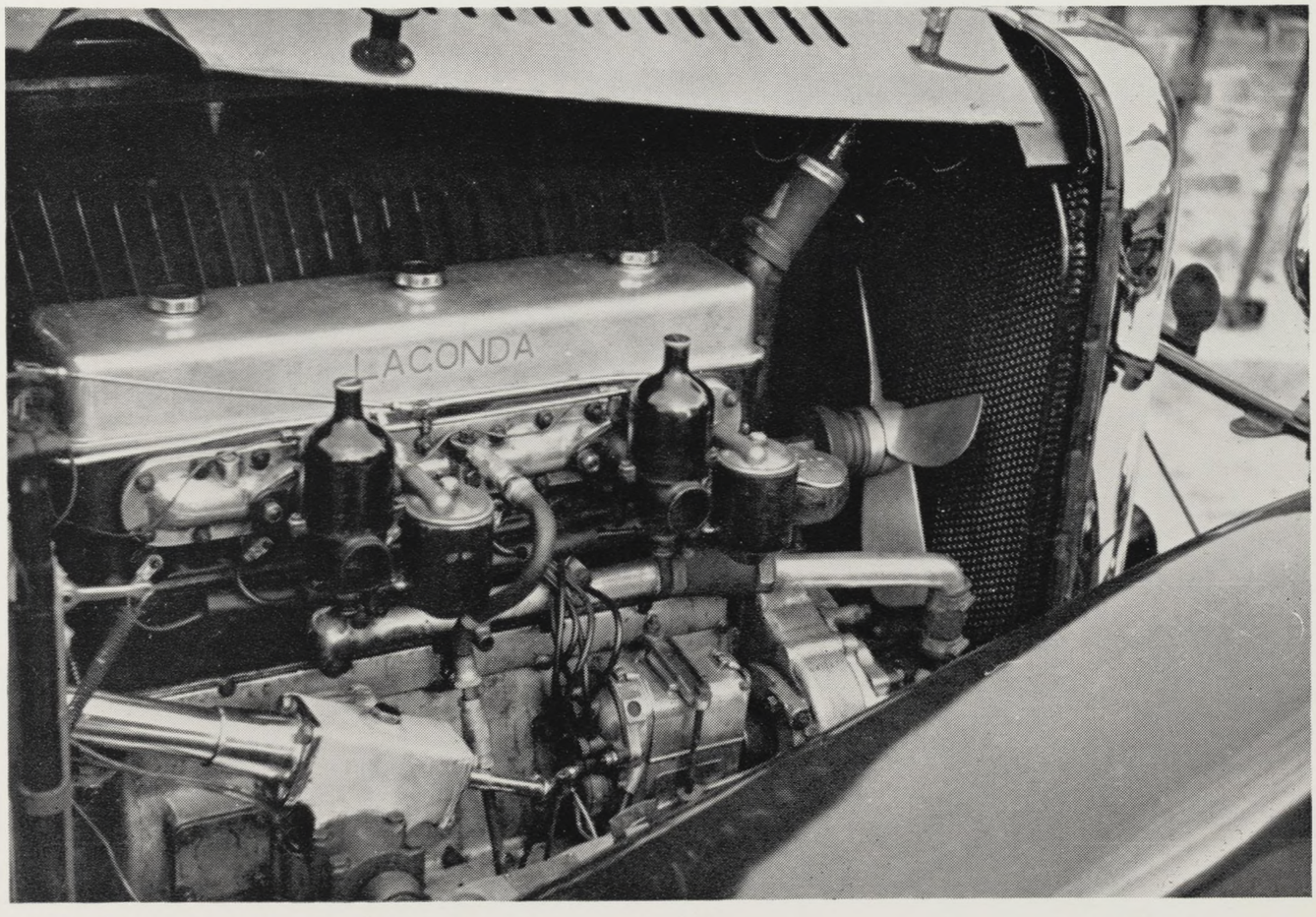
Once more the real power output of these engines remains a mystery, but the figure of 140 b.h.p. claimed in the 1935 (1936 models) catalogue was repeated in the motoring press as being the power output of the 1936 team cars, which were prepared for Le Mans and actually ran in the French G.P. and at Spa. It seems unlikely that *both* these figures can be correct, for the team cars were capable of pulling 29 cwt. along at a speed approaching 118 m.p.h. and one of them, further lightened by the removal of the front brakes, *averaged* 113 m.p.h., when achieving third place in the 500 mile race at Brooklands.

In 1936 the LG.45 Sanction III Rapide was also introduced. This was based on the engines prepared for the team cars. The main difference from the normal Sanction III being the improved exhaust system. Separate pipes led from each port, the front three and the rear three merging into two pipes that came out through the side of the bonnet. These pipes, still separate, led into a large common silencer. In addition the compression of the Rapide was higher than the ordinary version. The Sanction IV engines produced for the LG.6 has no important differences from the Sanction III, and no higher power was claimed for it.

The Lagonda catalogue for 1938 gave the ordinary cars 140 b.h.p. at 6·68 : 1 compression; no B.H.P. figures were issued for the Rapide but the catalogue stated:—"The compression ratio can be raised to 7·5 : 1 at the option of the purchaser".

The M.45 Chassis

The M.45 (1933-34) chassis was a substantial "ladder" structure of 10 ft. 9 in. wheel base, braced by six stout cross members. The suspension was conventional by rather stiff semi-elliptic springs each controlled by two Hartford friction dampers. One pair on each axle were tele-controls adjustable from the driver's seat. Bishop



The M45 engine room. *Photo: Andre Kenny*

cam and roller steering gear was employed. This chassis was quite different from the previous Lagonda chassis, all of which had been based on the old 2-litre.

The brakes were an excellent vacuum-servo assisted system, the durability of which was such, that today, it is still working efficiently on almost all M.45's on the road. The servo mechanism demands no special attention and it has been introduced recently on some expensive high performance 1954 models. It has been said that the servo motor was added because the original design required enormous pedal pressures, but this criticism can be levelled at most systems *designed from the first* to operate with servo assistance, as anyone who has driven a Rolls Royce with a defective servo knows.

The relatively light pedal pressure required by the 1933-34 cars contrasts favourably with the Girling brakes employed on later chassis. This is not to imply anything against the latter, which pull up a 34 cwt. car in 30 feet from 30 m.p.h.

Girlings were first used on the 1934 T.T. cars prepared by Fox and Nicholls, and subsequently were included in the specification of the 1935 Le Mans winner. It seems likely that they were adopted because they were appreciably lighter than the servo brakes while adjustment and balancing could be carried out very rapidly. Furthermore, sudden engine failure, which might occur in racing, would render the servo inoperative.

The clutch for the M.45 was of Meadows manufacture with a solid centre plate and a type of clutch stop which, when properly adjusted, permitted gear changes as fast as one could move the gear lever.

The T.8 gearbox had no syncromesh but there was dog engagement of 3rd and top. It was a delightful unit, very trouble-free and one which allowed easy clutchless changes by any fairly skilful driver. The overall gear ratios were:— 1st. 11·52; 2nd. 7·36; 3rd. 4·76; Top 3·66.

Nineteen-inch wheels were fitted, and plain bearing universal joints were employed.

The whole chassis was constructed in a high-class manner; such refinements as grouped Tecalemit grease nipples, concealed battery master switch, P.100 headlamps and spot lamp, etc., making it clear that nothing was sacrificed on the altar of economy.

M.45 Rapide Chassis

The chassis introduced in 1934 for the first "Rapides" was called the M.45R. This employed the same frame as the short-lived 3½-litre model. It was of 10 ft. 3 in. wheel base, but, being at the front, of more massive proportions than the M.45; it weighed just as much as the longer wheelbase car. The centre of gravity of this model was further forward than the M.45. Having driven several examples of both M.45 and M.45R, I would say that no improvement in handling is achieved by the use of the shorter chassis. If anything, the M.45 handles better, but that is offset by the superior performance of the M.45R engine. It is worth noting that no team cars used the M.45R chassis. The 1934 T.T. cars and 1935 Le Mans team had the 10 ft. 9 in. chassis with approximately M.45R engines; and the 1936 team cars had LG.45 chassis also of 10 ft. 9 in. wheelbase.

The M.45 Rapide chassis had Girling brakes and the semi-elliptic springs were each damped by Girling-Luvax Vane type Hydraulic shock absorbers and Andre-Hartford tele-controls. The *Autocar* in describing the Rapide in 1934 stated that the rear springs had slight negative camber under load. The specialists in these cars today advise the same spring setting as the M.45, which is a distinct positive camber. I have had the springs on my M.45R set up both ways and can say that the positive (M.45) setting gives a more comfortable ride, but makes the back end noticeably more skittish when cornering fast.

The clutch on the M.45R was the same as its predecessors but the T.8 gearbox had a free wheel built on to its rear end. This device was only current for one year, and was not up to dealing with 33 cwt. of car and the high torque of the engine, if it was kept in use all the time. Very few still work today. It is rather pleasant to drive one of these cars with the free wheel functioning, as the brakes cope easily with the extra work required of them, and the use of the clutch pedal is rendered nearly superfluous. These early Rapides were equipped with 19 in. wheels. A built-in hydraulic jacking system, which could be operated from inside the car, added to the already extensive standard equipment.

The LG.45 Chassis

The LG.45 chassis, as far as the frame was concerned, was similar to the M.45, being of 10 ft. 9 in. wheelbase. It had Girling brakes, and the springs were much more flexible than on the earlier cars, still damped in the same way as the

M.45R. The ride was much less harsh than in 1934-35, though more body sway on corners was the penalty. An 11 in. Borg & Beck clutch replaced the Meadows unit. This operated more smoothly and with less shocks to the transmission, but it is a fact that the Lagondas so fitted are a trifle less quick off the mark than the cars equipped with the Meadows clutch. The G.9 gearbox was introduced with synchromesh on 3rd and Top, but it was less durable than the T.8 and when used in competitions has very often proved troublesome. For example, Maurice Leo broke 3rd. speed constant mesh gears twice on his LG.45 Sanction I Tourer, which was never even raced. Goodhew broke 3rd. speed three times and 2nd. speed twice in two seasons' racing. It is most unusual to hear of such trouble with the original gear-box.

The overall ratios on the G.9, as fitted to Sanction I and II LG.45's were:—1st. 11·63; 2nd. 5·98; 3rd. 4·48; Top 3·58. These cars were fitted with 18 in. wheels. Gear ratios for the LG.45 Rapide were:—1st. 8·66; 2nd· 5·66; 3rd. 4·30; Top 3·31.

Tecalemit automatic chassis lubrication replaced the grouped grease nipples. Oil was piped to every point on the chassis requiring lubrication, except the universal joints. Each time the clutch was depressed a supply of oil was forced along these pipes.

The LG.45 chassis made for the Sanction III cars in 1937 differed slightly from the preceding LG.45's. The G.10 gearbox replaced the G.9. It was very much stronger and easily transmitted the 220 b.h.p. of the Le Man's twelve cylinder cars. This gearbox had synchromesh on 2nd, 3rd and top and was operated by a central gear lever instead of the right hand lever which had graced Lagondas prior to 1937. The overall ratios were:—1st. 11·63; 2nd. 5·98; 3rd. 4·48; Top 3·58. Eighteen-inch wheels were used and Luvax ride control shock absorbers were featured In addition to the 10 ft. 9 in. chassis an 11 ft 3 in. chassis was produced.

The LG.6 Chassis

The last of the 4½-litre chassis was the LG.6. This was the first Lagonda six cylinder with I.F.S., the springing medium for which was long torsion bars. Semi-elliptics were retained at the rear, but were mounted outside the frame. This 10 ft. 7 in. chassis frame was very different from the previous models. It was a W. O. Bentley design, much more rigid than its predecessors, being a cruciform braced structure somewhat heavier than that of the conventionally sprung cars. Luvax ride control dampers were employed, and Lockheed Hydraulic brakes with twin master cylinders replaced the Girlings. An alternative long chasis (11 ft. 3 in.) was available with lower final drive ratios. The G.10 gearbox was used with overall ratios as follows on the short chassis cars:—1st. 11·63; 2nd. 5·98; 3rd. 4·48; Top 3·58. The LG.6 Rapide had the following ratios:—1st. 10·76; 2nd. 5·53; 3rd. 4·14; Top 3·31. Equipment was even more lavish than before and these cars always seem quieter, more powerful and very much smoother than the LG.45s.

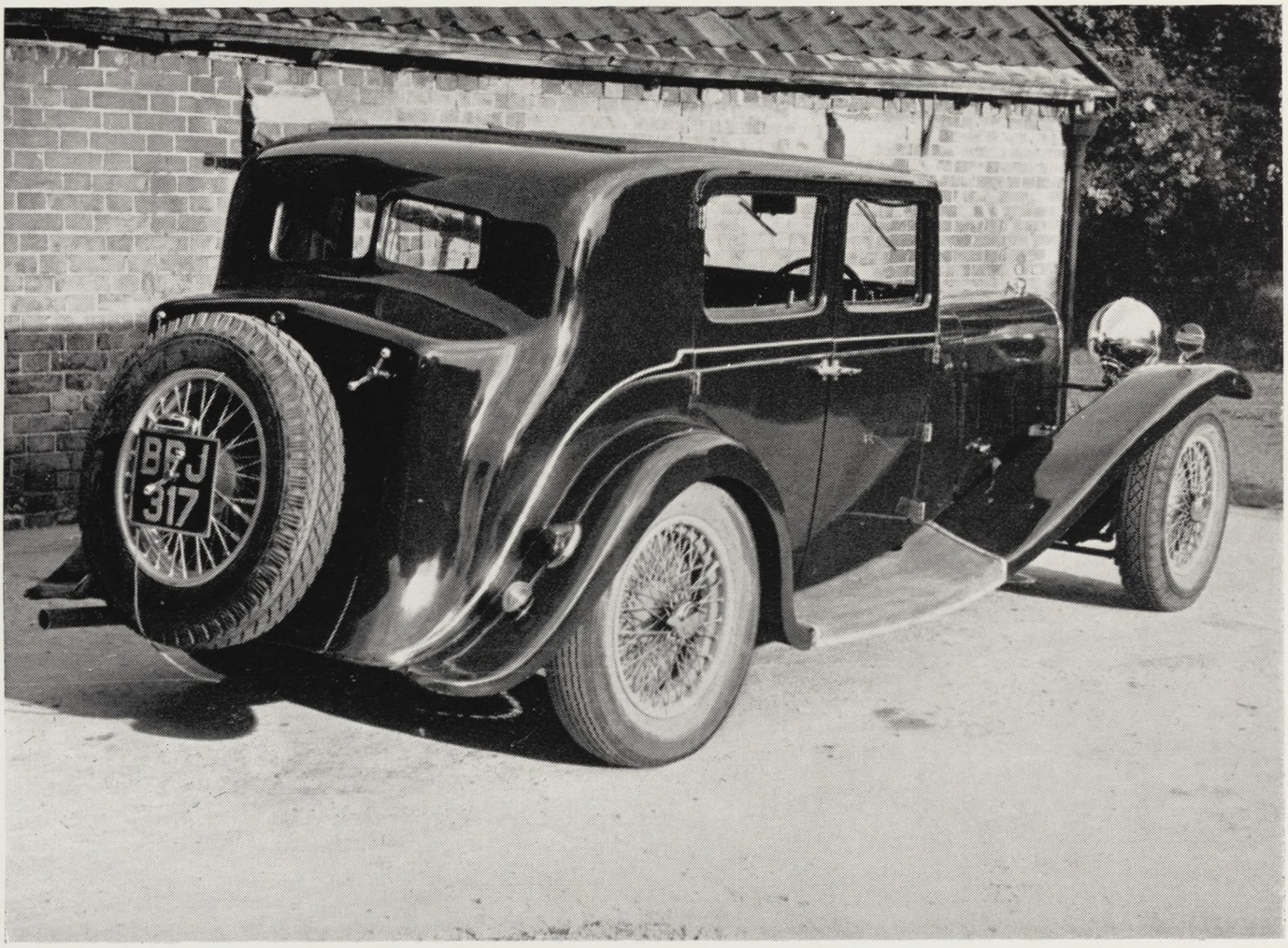
There is little doubt that it was one of the finest 4½-litre chassis produced before the war. Its considerable weight, while limiting the performance to an all out top speed of about 95 m.p.h., contributed greatly to its long life. The condition of the average LG.6 in use today, 14 to 15 years old, is as a rule, quite outstanding. Both body and chassis are free from rattles and all the small items, such as windows, door catches, etc., work as well as when they were new.

In 1938 when the LG.6 made its debut, it was an advanced chassis design. It is one of the few cars in the high performance luxury class that had a form of independent front suspension, that remains effective today, even when compared with the ride given by the most modern vehicles.

The six cylinder 4½-litre Lagondas have not been remarkable for mechanical innovations (except possibly the LG.6 chassis). They have followed well tried methods and have been developed steadily. The quality and quantity of materials, and workmanship, has always been of of a very high standard, no cost-saving skimping being evident in any detail. The result is they all wear exceedingly well, and not a single "dud" model can be found in the series. In their day, they provided very nearly the best performance obtainable from a British made production car, not only as regards performance figures, but in their manner of going too.

The Coachwork—Closed Bodies

The 4½-litre was supplied either as a complete car or as a chassis for the attention of specialist coach-builders. It is significant that by far the majority were supplied with Lagondas' standard coachwork. This is attributed to the excellence of the design and workmanship of the catalogued



The M45 Saloon. *Photo: Andre Kenny*

bodies, because these cars were among the most expensive British cars of the thirties, and were supplied to customers, many of whom could have well afforded specialist bodies, had they desired them.

Freestone and Webb produced some nice drop-head coupes on the M.45 of such sound construction that, even twenty years old, they are still in good order, but they were not superior in either line or construction to the DHC which Lagonda's themselves offered at a slightly later date. Mulliner, Hooper, James Young, Van den Plas, Mayfair and Lancefield have all had bodies mounted on these chassis, but most enthusiasts agree that the makers' own coachwork had an even better appearance.

The M.45 Saloon was a pillarless four seater with a rather small luggage boot, and spare wheel mounted on it. It looked very long and lean and the bonnet seemed huge in relation to the rest of the car. It was much admired in its day, and in spite of the pillarless construction, was free from rattles, draughts, and other weaknesses. These bodies have worn remarkably well, due in part, no doubt, to the small size and weight of the doors. Some Saloon bodies were fitted to the M.45R chassis. They followed closely the lines of the $3\frac{1}{2}$-litre Saloon. They, too, were mostly pillarless, but do not have quite the style of the M.45.

The LG.45 Saloons were much more "modern" in appearance, the lines were fuller and more rounded and the spare wheel was mounted at the off-side of the scuttle in an enveloping case. The other side of the scuttle had a similar case which held tools and the controls of the jacking system. The boot was larger and a rounded box in shape. The pillarless construction was abandoned in favour of a conventional four-door design, and a sliding roof was provided for the first time. This body gave more passenger room, though it was by no means a five-seater, and greater attention was paid to sound damping. On the relatively rare long chassis some coach-builders

mounted limousine and Sedanca de Ville bodies.

The LG.6 Short Saloon on the 10 ft. 7½ in. wheelbase was a much more pleasing design than the LG.45, and it compares to its advantage, with the traditional type of coachwork offered by Rolls Royce and Bentley as standard, even in 1954. Although it is a big car, with smoothly flowing lines, it looks compact and purposeful, as well as glamourous. It is still only a four-seater, giving plenty of room and comfort in the front seats and slightly restricted space in the back, considering the size of the car.

A Saloon of rather similar lines was offered on the 11 ft. 3 in. chassis. It gave more leg room to the rear passengers, and usually had separate front seats but could be supplied with a disappearing division, when required to be chauffeur driven.

A Saloon de Ville was also sold. This was on the 11 ft. 3 in. chassis and was intended to be a full five-seater. It was higher and wider than the other saloons and was usually supplied with a wind-down division. A Thrupp and Maberly seven-seater Limousine on the 11 ft. 3 in. was also catalogued.

Open Coachwork

Drophead coupes were available on all chassis and the chief change was from the long sweeping wings in the M.45 with rear mounted spare wheel to the more enveloping rounded wings with side mounted spare on the LG.45 and the LG.6. The boot on the LG.6 was also of a nice swept design, the whole impression being rather more luxurious.

The earliest M.45 Tourer had a traditional four-seated body. It was a three-door type with no driver's door and deep cutaways for the driver's and front passenger's elbows. This was a rather narrow body and in many people's view is the most graceful and pleasing of all in spite of the externally stowed hood.

The M.45R Tourer was a two-door design with completely disappearing hood. It was almost identical with the 3½-litre, except for a larger radiator. This was a good traditional design too, which like the M.45 had long sweeping wings, but I always think that it looks less graceful and more bulky than the longer wheelbased M.45. The spare wheel for the M.45R was mounted either at the side or on the boot lid.

The LG.45 Tourer was a departure from tradition. The body was wider and higher, the doors had no cutaways, all the lines were more rounded out, and there was decidedly more room inside than hitherto. It had a disappearing hood and was an attempt to provide a really comfortably, fully openable touring car without going so far as a drophead coupe, which at that time never looked really good when the head was folded down. Two large spare wheel covers were mounted on each side of the scuttle, one of which did carry a spare wheel, the other carried tools and the control mechanism for the hydraulic jacking system. This feature was continued on all 4½-litre models except the Rapides, until production ceased.

The LG.45 Rapide was a compact narrow two door four-seater with external exhausts. The doors were well cutaway, and the hood was fully disappearing. The spare wheel was concealed in the tail. The lines were more rounded than the M.45R with the 1937 conventional idea of "streamlining". Nevertheless, even today these cars look functional and very attractive. Bearing in mind the limitations imposed by the radiator, they have quite a reasonable frontal area.

Some LG.6 Rapides were produced in 1938. These did not have external exhausts and were really a development of the ordinary LG.45 Tourer, being much roomier than the LG.45R and giving the impression of a shorter bonnet line. In 1939 the Rapide Sports Tourer was dropped altogether, and a very handsome three-seater drophead coupe, with concealed spare wheel and fully disappearing hood replaced it. Presumably, for sports car racing, had the war not intervened, a suitable body would have been mounted on the twelve cylinder 10 ft. 4 in. chassis on the lines of the car that gained third place at Le Mans, and the six cylinder would have retired from the competition field.

Performance

In considering the performance of these cars, attention should be drawn to the figures given in the table of data. These were extracted from *Autocar* Road Tests. Many owners may think that they are unflattering, but it should be borne in mind that not only does performance vary slightly from day to day, but different examples of the same model can vary very considerably, to say nothing of the human element in the Tests concerned. Different results were recorded by each of the several journals carrying out performance tests on each model.

To emphasise this point still more, an L.G6 Saloon, which shows a mean maximum speed of 91·4 actually lapped Brooklands at 98 m.p.h. in October, 1938, as reported in the *Autocar* of that time, while an LG.45 Rapide, according to the contemporary issue of *The Motor*, achieved 108 m.p.h. on the same track, in spite of the fact that one could only manage a mean 100·3 for the *Autocar* road test. Both these results were achieved with the cars in standard form. Furthermore, everyone knows that the LG.45 Rapide brakes are, in fact, the most effective of all the 4½-litre models, yet it recorded the worst braking figures of all those in the *Autocar* tests of Lagonda cars!!

Road tests were carried out with a crew of at least two throughout, usually on a distributors' demonstrator that had been driven by all sorts of people and some inaccuracies in performance testing cannot be helped. For the sake of consistency when making comparisons the *Autocar* figures are accepted throughout.

The most striking thing about the performance of the 4½-litre is how little the actual figures improved between the introduction of the model and its cessation. The M.45 Saloon managed 0-60 in 15·8 and 0-70 in 22·2 seconds. The last of the LG.6's did 0-60 in 16 and 0-70 in 21·5. The latest model being credited with a mean maximum speed of 91·4 and only 1·4 m.p.h. better than its forerunner. These figures are so close that allowing for errors and so on, the performance of the two cars can be regarded as identical as far as mere stop-watch records are concerned.

Throughout the period 1933-40 these figures remained better than any current British production Sports Saloon. The 4½-litre Bentley, although achieving a slightly higher maximum, had substantially inferior acceleration. It can be said that these two cars, both in turn owing much to W.O.'s magic hand, represented the finest high performance luxury cars of the thirties. The only other British car that comes near is the 4·3-litre Alvis, introduced in 1937. The standard of luxury and riding comfort of the Alvis was not in the same class as the Lagonda or Bentley. Its performance figures were nearly identical to the Lagonda with a very slightly lower maximum speed.

It is evident that the company considered that the acceleration and top speed achieved by the M.45 Saloon were sufficiently far ahead of its few rivals, for nothing better to be required for many years. More power was extracted from the engine, but this was used to propel heavier, more luxurious coachwork, with greater frontal area at roughly the same level of performance.

The LG.45 Saloons were much more comfortable than their predecessors. The ride was smoother and a greater degree of silence was achieved. They were a good deal less tiring to drive on a really long journey, though in town the steering seems a trifle heavier. On the whole, it was a better, though less lively car, which did manage a slightly (1 m.p.h.) higher top speed, while its comfortable cruising speed was a good 5 m.p.h. higher.

The LG.6 Saloons were outstandingly good by any standard. They were lighter to steer than the LG.45, not only because the steering gear ratio was lower, but because of the design of the front end of the chassis. The handling of the LG.6 is certainly lighter than the model it succeeded, and they seem even better balanced. The change in steering ratio does not affect controllability. The riding comfort is outstanding and a

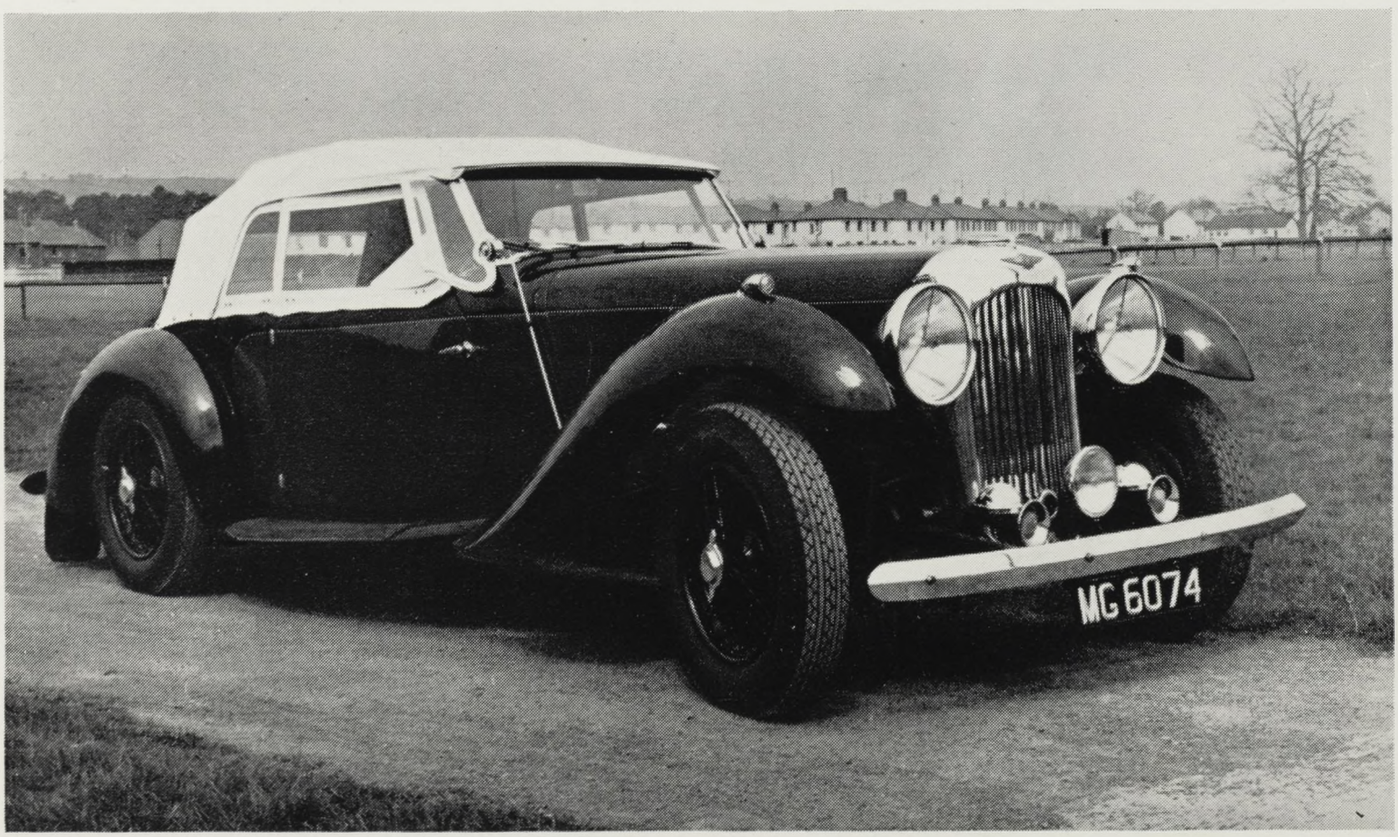
still greater degree of silence is achieved. The comfortable cruising speed of the LG.6 was a good 5 m.p.h. higher than the LG.45, that is anything up to 75-80 m.p.h. The only British pre-1940 car that merits comparison with it is the 1939 Overdrive 4¼-litre Bentley; this vehicle is somewhat lighter to handle, both in general and as regards individual controls, and it is perhaps a shade more silent, but its performance is decidedly less sparkling, and its ride noticeably inferior to the LG.6.

When the performance of the open Sports Models is looked at, it is evident that considerable progress took place. The original M.45 in 1933 had a mean top speed two up of 93·7. By 1937 the LG.45 Rapide had increased this figure by 7 m.p.h. when tested by the same journal; and by 10 m.p.h. for another contemporary tester; at the same time 70 m.p.h. was reached in 18·4 seconds, an improvement of 3½ seconds. It is, however, surprising to note that the M.45R of 1935 came to within 2 m.p.h. of the 1937 LG. maximum speed and was actually quicker off the mark from 0-50. My own slightly modified M.45R was a good deal faster round Silverstone than Doc. Young's standard LG.45R, and as my brakes were then fitted with the wrong linings, Doc. Young's driving was much more enterprising. Nevertheless, I do believe that the *average* LG.45R is more than a mere 2 m.p.h. better than the *average* M.45R. They are a full hundredweight lighter and certainly handle better unless the M.45R has its front wings removed.

They were the Sports car "par excellence" of the thirties, combining remarkable speed and acceleration with tremendous stamina, as witness their performance in T.T.s, 500 mile races, and the 24 hour races at Le Mans and Spa.

Some LG.6 Rapides were produced in 1938; they were not subjected to *Autocar* Road Tests, but it is doubtful if they went as well as the LG.45R, being somewhat heavier. The 1939 LG.6 Rapides were drophead coupes heavier still, and were also not up to the 1937 cars as to sheer performance.

At the bottom of the data table, as a modern yardstick, the figures for the Mk.VI (large bore) Bentley, with manual gear box, are included. It only remains to say that the pre-war Lagondas which have been considered here, bear comparison in every way with the most modern luxury cars, and bring with them an air from an era when quality could still be sought regardless of cost.



Michael Deakin's LG6 coupé. *Photo: Gainsborough*

TABULATED DATA OF SIX CYLINDER 4½-LITRE LAGONDAS
(Weights given are as tested, includes some Petrol, Oil and Water)

Type	Year	Model	Price	Weight	Brakes at 30 m.p.h.	ACCELERATION				SPEEDS IN GEARS					M. P. G.	REMARKS
						0–30	0–50	0–60	0–70	1st	2nd	3rd	Top Max.	Top mean		
			£	cwt.	feet											
OPEN MODELS	1933	M.45 Tourer	795	32½	31		10	15·4			50	80	95·7	93·7	16	Test, 27.11.33
	1934	M.45 Rapide	1,000	33	28		9·4	14·6	21				100·6	98·4	15	Test, Dec. 35
	1936	LG.45 Tourer	1,000	35¾	29		12·6	17·2	24	28	56	77	96·8	93·0	16	Sanc. I Test, 10.3.36
	1937	LG.45 Rapide	1,050	31¾	35	4·7	10·3	12·8	18·4	41	64	82	103·6	100·6	16	Sanc. III Test, 4.6.37
CLOSED MODELS	1934	M.45 Saloon	950	35½	32		10·4	15·8	22·2	30	50	80	92·7	90·0	17	Test, 13.4.34
	1935	M.45R Saloon														
	1937	LG.45 Saloon	1,125	39¼	35	5·5	11·7	17·3	23·4	29	56	77	93·8	91·0	16	Sanc. III Test, 9.4.37
	1938	LG.6 Saloon	1,195	38½	33	4·9	11·3	16·4	23	30	54	73	95·7	91·4	15	Test, June 38
	1939	LG.6 Saloon	1,295	39½	32	5·2	11·3	16	21·5	30	56	75	94·7	91·4	16	Test, 17.4.39
	1952	MK.VI Bentley	2,875 (Basic)	36¼	33	4·5	10·2	15·2	20·1	36	54	85	100·0	—	16	Big Bore Model For Comparison

An Interesting Lagonda
by MAJOR JOHN CLARKE, M.C.

A PLEASANT MORNING WAS SPENT RECENTLY examining and trying out a very interesting Lagonda which has been thoroughly worked on by that well-known Cape Town motoring personality, Mr. E. Chalenor Barson. Mr. Chalenor Barson started building Barson specials in England in 1928 and produced altogether sixteen interesting and potent cars which he raced at Brooklands, Shelsley Walsh and Prescott. I remember racing against him at Crystal Palace when he made a dramatic excursion into the undergrowth whilst driving a borrowed Frazer Nash. He brought number 15 with him to South Africa powered by a 2-litre Lagonda motor, and then built No. 16 here, utilising a 4½-litre straight-eight Alvis engine. Mr. Barson was the first post-war chairman of the Amateur Automobile Racing Club and is on the General and Competitions Committee of the R.A.C.

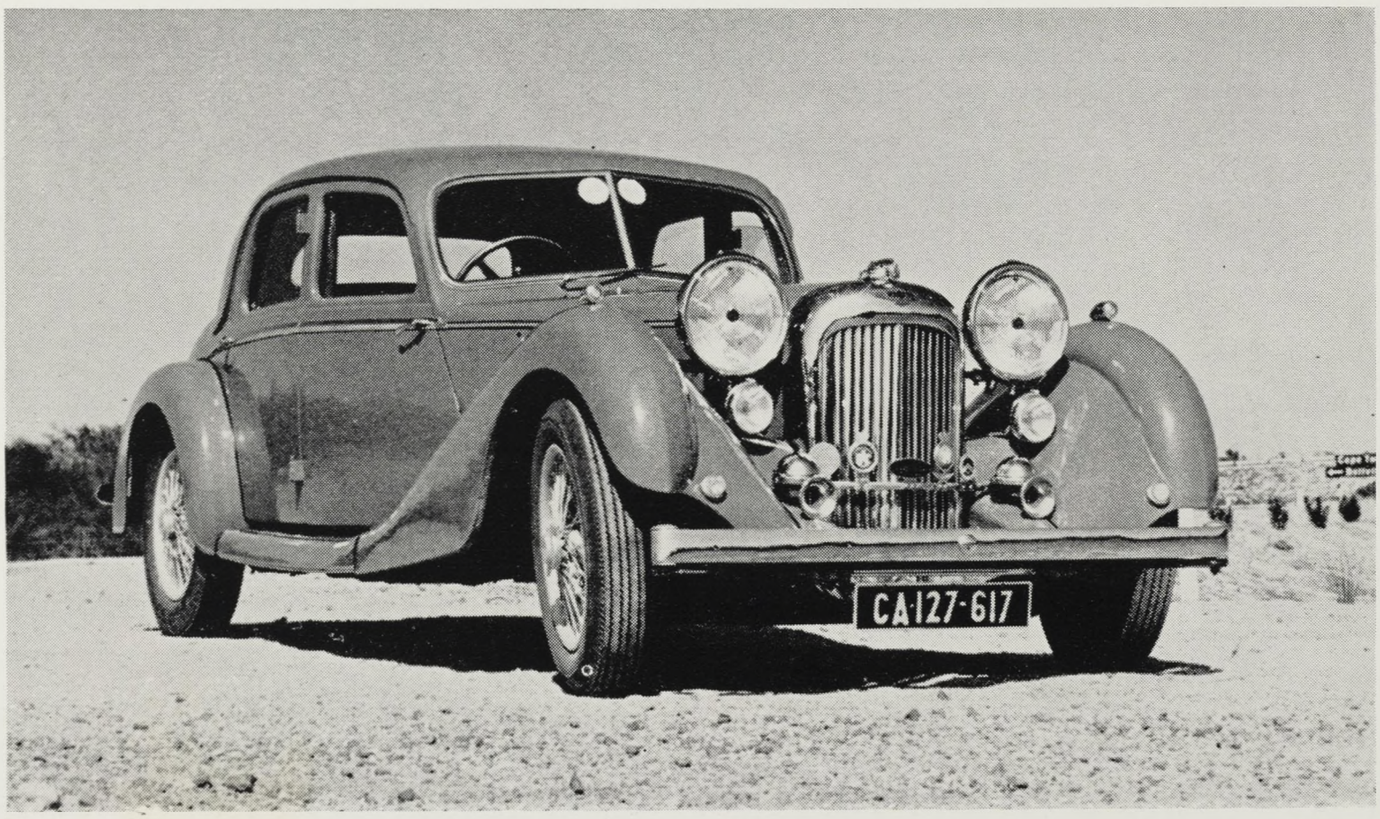
It was largely due to his efforts that proper scrutineering was organised for motor racing in South Africa, and he is presently Chief Scrutineer of the R.A.C.

Prior to the Lagonda, Mr. Barson's last restoration was a Rover Meteor which unfortunately broke a crankshaft.

The Lagonda is a 1935 LG45 4½-litre, the first of the breed which received the attention of W. O. Bentley when he joined the firm. The car was purchased in 1960 in a tired condition and sporting a Rover body; this has now been replaced very neatly but with much modification by a Riley 1½-litre body. The Lagonda gearbox has been replaced by an Alvis speed 25 box with central change, causing an increase in the wheelbase of ⅞ in. The steering wheel has been moved forward six inches on the shaft, and the pedals have gone as far forward as possible. The Riley running boards and rear wings have been retained but have been widened by 2½ inches.

The front wings are Lagonda, as are the headlamps, which are now however set wider apart. Only the outer shell of the Riley body has been used; the inside timber work and upholstery is new, and the top is fibre glass made without a mould and necessitating a lot of sweat and tears smoothing down the rough surface.

The engine has been brought up to 1937 specification in relation to porting, and extra water-cooling has been supplied to the rear cylinders.



The Riley/LG45. *Photo: CAR, S.A.*

Two modern 1¾ in. S.U. carburettors have been fitted and there are two magnetos, a Scintilla and a Scintilla Vertex. The radiator has been dropped five inches and moved in front of the axle, but the bonnet length is approximately the same as on the original Lagonda body. Two petrol tanks are fitted, giving a capacity of 20 gallons.

When sitting in the car one gets an immediate impression of the lowered radiator; originally one sat well down in a Lagonda with everything high in front, but in the Barson Lagonda you definitely look down on the works department. One cannot help but admire the workmanship of this conversion, which is highlighted by the aluminium and laminated wood steering wheel made by Mr. Barson himself. Great engineering ability and ingenuity is evident throughout and the car handles beautifully, with plenty of urge.

Lagondas were first built by an American, Wilbur Gunn, at Staines in Middlesex in 1904. Gunn originally intended to be an opera singer, but preferred the magic of automobile engineering. He called his cars after the Red Indian-named Lagonda Creek on the Great Lakes of America. His first products were twin-cylinder tri-cars made completely in his workship except for the carburettor. Four-wheeled cars appeared in 1907 as four-cylinder 20 h.p. or six-cylinder 30 h.p. models. Most of the original output was exported to Russia. In 1913 a very advanced light 1100 c.c, four-cylinder light car was produced giving 50 m.p.h. at 50 m.p.g. for only R270. In 1925 the firm made a completely radical change of policy and produced the famous two-litre fast tourer. The engine was rated at 12·8 h.p. and has twin camshafts. By 1928 80 m.p.h. was achieved with the speed model. I was fortunate in owning one of these and remember it as an extremely comfortable and pleasant car to drive.

It was very reliable and a particularly good starter in all weathers and gave the very low petrol consumption of 28 m.p.g. I later purchased a supercharged model that reduced the m.p.g. to 18 but gave 90 m.p.h. and quite a lot of extra urge low down. The latter car had a fabric body but still weighed one and a half tons. The two-litres were discontinued in 1932 and were followed by the bigger Meadows-engined cars developing to the LG45.

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FIRLE HILL CLIMB

SEPTEMBER 1965

THIS OCCASION BEING THE FIRST TIME THAT YOUR correspondent has seen this particular event some pre-conceived notions that he held about it were soon shattered upon his arrival in the Paddock on this fine Sunday morning in September. "A gentle, leisurely event . . .", "One of the quieter meetings in the Club calendar . . ." These were the impressions he had always had about Firle. The Paddock lies in a natural bowl enclosed on one side by the sheer ramparts of the South Downs and this served as an echo chamber for all the cars below. Earnest grim-faced men were to be seen making last minute adjustments to their cars. Engines were bursting into thunderous life to be ready for the practice runs that were to be completed before lunch. Despite the prevailing impression of chaos, more due to haphazard parking of the competing cars than anything else, two lines of competitors were soon in position on the approach lane to the starting line and it was obvious that the Bentley Club marshals had got everything under control.

At this juncture it was interesting to see the area of placid calm that surrounded the white XK 120 of James Woollard. No frantic last-minute tuning here . . . indeed there was James seated comfortably in the cockpit deeply engrossed in a manual of some kind and munching sandwiches passed to him in a steady flow by his butler/mechanic Jeff Ody. Perhaps the book was a detailed description of rival competitors' form? Perhaps a geographical treatise on this particular section of the South Downs? Or a journal on local weatherlore in case of inclement weather later in the day? Closer inspection revealed none of these theories correct as our worthy Competitions Secretary was casting an appreciative eye over the latest edition of "Playboy". This spelt absolute CONFIDENCE.

Meanwhile the many spectators were clambering up the severe slopes to take up their viewing positions. The course is shaped like an elongated S in reverse with two blind corners at the top and bottom bends—the top bend being especially severe in both radius and gradient. The finishing line is at a point some 25 yards from the apex of

this latter corner on still sharply rising ground. Climbing the heights to take up a vantage point soon showed that the writer was not in the best of physical shape as his wife and companions were soon moving ahead with that surefooted agility reminiscent of the Alpine goat. The air was definitely thinning out at this altitude and he was beginning to regret leaving behind his Sussex-type crampons and that Austrian-type hat that he had bought some five years ago but which he had never the courage to wear in anything less than a ten-tenths fog. The sound of an engine's rising revs and the shriek of protesting rubber announced that the first practice run had started and this spurred him to greater effort and he joined the rest of his party on the slopes just opposite the final bend which afforded an 80 per cent. clear view of the road.

It was soon to be realised that this event was a serious business and not child's play. The moment of truth appeared to be just before the finishing bend where the gradient increased rapidly and the road disappeared round the blind corner. Those whose gearing demanded it had to perform a mighty fast change-down whilst lining the car up for the corner and at the same time keeping the engine speed up for the dash over the line. Easy enough for those rarer individuals with three hands and feet.

The event was divided up into no fewer than fifteen classes with five classes for Bentleys and one each for Lagondas, Aston Martins, Jaguars and MGs. The remaining classes were based on various engine capacities and provided interesting batches of the above-mentioned makes together with Porsche, Loti, Austin Healeys and ACs.

The morning practice period passed without too much incident although some of the heavier cars proved a handful on the last bend where the steep grassy banks lining this section acted as natural barriers to wayward rear ends. There was no set order for competitors during this practice but an efficient announcer kept the spectators informed on who was what and where. Times were rattled off over the Tannoy as soon as the cars had passed the finish. Of individual performances during the morning Owen's Lister Jaguar, Barker's Alton Jaguar and the Cobra driven by Boothby all became early contenders for F.T.D. Maurice Leo's Le Mans V-12 seemed to suffer from lack of power, Ron Kerridge climbed neatly and quickly in his Rapier as did Donald Overy in the red Mercedes. Most of the Bentleys burbled up with deceptive ease—Sowden's grey 8-litre in particular being extremely fast and giving the crowd full value for money.

After lunch racing began in earnest. In Class H (2601 c.c.—3500 c.c.) Overy in the Mercedes returned 32·86 and 32·76 and James Woollard 33·74 and 33·79. Fastest time in this class was an DB3S with 27·07 and 26·42. Unfortunately Wills' Rapide was a non-starter in the Over 3500 c.c. Class, but Geoff Hibbert produced creditable times of 35·60 and 35·71 in his M45. Doc. Young's 3½-litre ran out of breath halfway up. Leo in the V12 started well on his first run but overdid things on the straight bit and gave everyone a nasty moment (and himself no doubt) when he clumped both banks and finished sideways across the road. Luckily not much damage was caused. Nothing daunted he returned the excellent time of 28·23 on his second run. Fastest in this class was the Alton Jaguar with scorching times of 26·51 and 26·05. We had one representative in Class G (1500 c.c.—2600 c.c.) S. H. Firmin driving an Aceca. His times were 32·04 and 31·99.

Then came the Lagonda Handicap with seven starters out of nine. Hibbert (M45) could not

better his earlier performance and returned 39·31 and 35·12. Doc. Young (3½) lost even more breath. The much lightened M45 of Richard Robarts attracted the commentator's attention for some light banter. Ernie Feltham drove The Scarlet Woman neatly and consistently as did Ron Kerridge in his Rapier, who is always a pleasure to watch. J. F. Organ in the standard Rapier produced a net time of 27·90. Leo's V12 gave him no problems with two powerful climbs of 29·54 and 27·63. The outcome was that scratch man Leo won the Handicap by 0·05 of a second from Kerridge whose net time was 27·68 with a 7 second allowance. Robarts and Organ tied for third place.

The Jaguar Class which followed produced some fireworks and was won by Miles (3·8). The overall fastest time of the day was by Tindell (Lister Jaguar) with 25·88 which won him the Embassy Trophy presented by W. D. and H. O. Wills Ltd.

Next year the writer hopes that the organising authorities will introduce a rack railway or a chair lift to take him to his eyrie otherwise some weeks of intensive training will be necessary prior to the event. A jolly thought would be to have a meeting at Firle with everyone competing on foot in a mass start. That would make interesting reporting!

A. W. M.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Information Please

Dear Sir—I have just purchased (rescued) from a scrapyard a 1933 16/80 Weymann pillarless saloon. Registration number is FG 8787. I would like to know if anyone has any useful tips on how to go about renewing the rear woodwork and metal. The back, from the rear doors is one piece of steel. Several edges are corroded through and cannot be replaced by welding *in situ*. Is it possible to take off the whole metal shell from the woodwork? Apart from the rear wheel arches the woodwork is very sound. Ivan Forshaw is supplying me with many missing parts. Any past history of this vehicle would be welcome.

P. W. CLARK,
44 Ludlow Avenue,
Whitefield, Manchester.

Dear Sir—Just a line to appeal to you to find someone to write an article on the history of the Lagonda Car Ltd. I'm afraid that my knowledge is sadly lacking on this subject.

The name of W. O. Bentley also fascinates me. There must be room for plenty of writing on his relationships with the Lagonda Co. and Bentley.

The different models of the larger cars (I am a Rapier owner) confuse me and I have no-one to ask about these things over here! A list of models and their engine sizes would help—hope you don't think I'm *too* ignorant!

Perhaps you have an article or two tucked away in past issues—I've only been a subscriber since 1961.

Thank you for your very much appreciated work as editor, also of course your wife's wonderful efforts too!
Yours faithfully,

JOHN BARNES,
St. Saviours, Guernsey.

(L. S. Michael's article in this issue should provide some useful information for our correspondent. Editor.)

Lagonda Lap Times

Dear Sir—With reference to Elliot Elder's letter in the Summer/Autumn issue I agree most whole-heartedly that the performance of his Rapier and Jon Abson's driving of it deserve the highest praise. Between them they have made a near standard Rapier perform better than a good many people thought possible.

However to get things in proper perspective I think it should be remembered that at the meeting to which Elliot refers the car was in far from touring trim. It was raced without wings, lamps, dynamo, second seat, silencer or tail pipe. In fact as the car does not boast a speedometer it is doubtful if it complies with the legal requirements for road use!

This brings me to the point of Lagonda lap times and I must confess that when I said Michael's LG45R is the fastest pre-war Lagonda I had in mind normal cars that are driven to and from the meetings and not racing cars as I think he will agree Daniel Richmond's car is. It is assumed that the year 1935 and this strange Formula Litre (Libre) are both printer's errors but 74 m.p.h. is around 1 min. 18 sec. only 1½ seconds quicker than Michael's time.

LETTERS *continued*

To add another question to Elliot's final point, can he find a Rapier that has lapped Brands Hatch in 1 min. 10 sec. and climbed Firle in under 30 seconds? I know a 4452·664 c.c. Lagonda that has!

"FLAREPATH",
London.

Northern Views

Dear Sir—Despite running the risk of upsetting Mr. Peerless I nevertheless feel that I must reply to his article "A Member Comments" in the last issue of the magazine, the bit about Lagonda exports.

Mr. Peerless is probably correct in stating that at the present time there are sufficient vintage cars to fulfil the present demand, although this is rather like saying that there are enough attractive girls to go round. Unfortunately, like girls, some Lagonda cars are more sought after than others, these, the Rapides and Drop Heads of the late thirties are the models the Americans desire, and who can blame them? These cars are now rare, truly represent the height of Lagonda achievement and are the models which we cannot afford to lose. Whether exported cars are cherished more is poor compensation, and is in any case probably no longer true.

I have been interested in Lagonda cars for many years and would like to think that in the future we may still be able to enjoy the sight of these fine cars at our meetings without having to rely on photographs from overseas members in the magazine.

In truth I find the case argued by Mr. Peerless completely logical, as indeed I would if he advocated that we should export cars to help the balance of payments problem! It is nevertheless a view that I personally find somewhat disturbing, and would like to think that there are enough enthusiasts (not fools) around to ensure that our exotic models, at least those we have left, remain in this country.

The final remarks made by Mr. Peerless are noted. There are in this world some things more exciting than 2-litre acceleration, one of them is 4½-litre acceleration, another would be 'that' girl in the back seat of a V-12 coupe.

HERB SCHOFIELD,
Hollingworth, Cheshire.

JPG 492

Dear Sir—I have some information about this car which was mentioned in the Summer/Autumn issue of the Magazine.

There has been a change of owner and the car is still in Nottingham where it is kept in the open air. The body appears to have deteriorated since the photograph that appeared in the article was taken. Mechanically it is unsound, the spare wheel is missing and the interior is very tatty. It seems that the car is being offered for sale to an American who wants to restore it. This would seem the best thing to happen as clearly everyone has lost interest in the car over here.

ANDRE KENNY,
Sudbury, Suffolk.

FOR SALE

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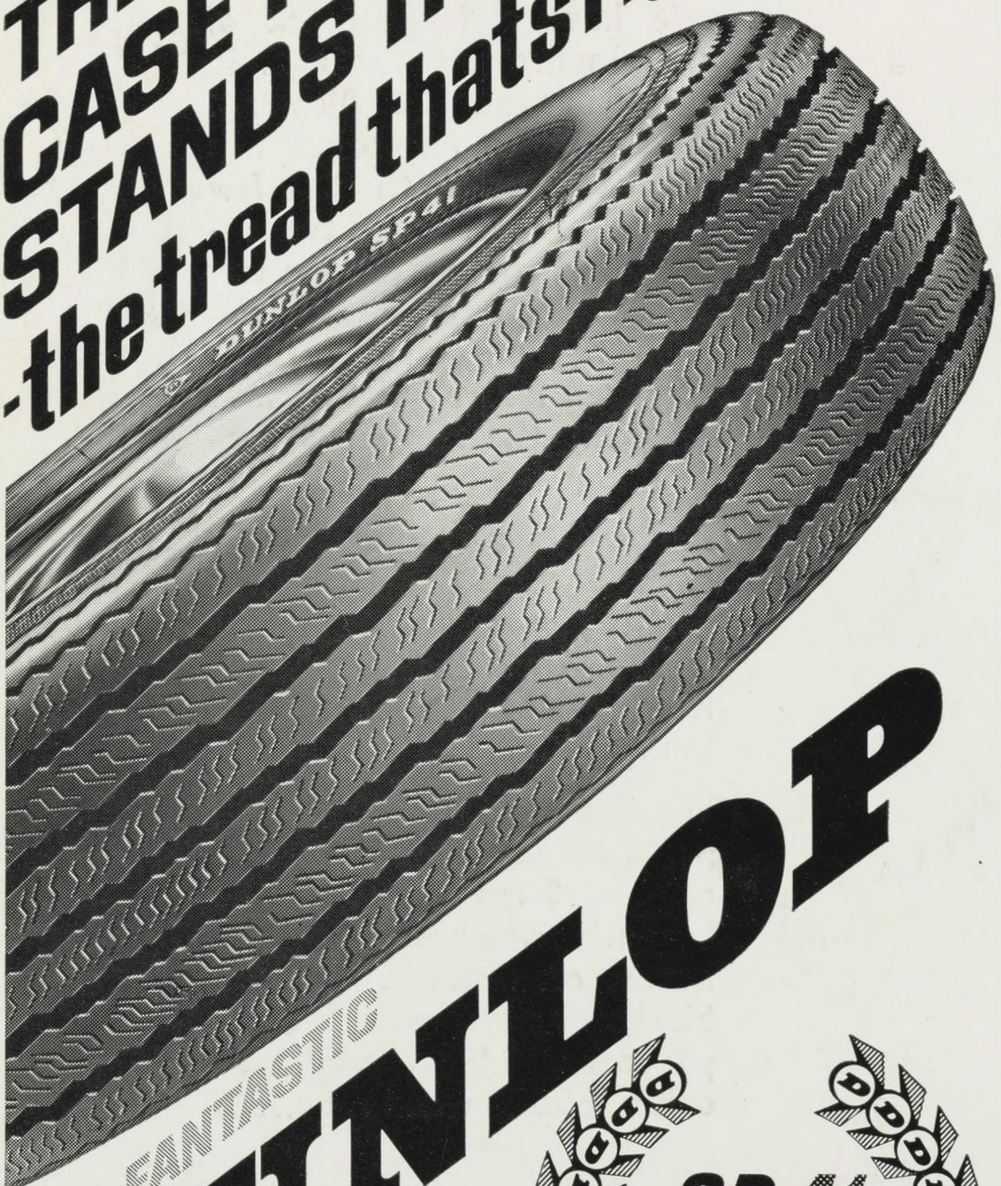

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