

THE B.R.D.C. Silverstone Meeting necessitated a Stop-Press report and entailed a strenuous time. But I knew I should survive it as soon as I threaded a brisk exit from London in a 1¼-litre M.G. saloon. It is a car that appeals on first acquaintance by reason of its compactness and good driving position.

I had been anxious to try this car ever since I tested its sporting brother, the TD Midget two-seater. I felt that a combination of that car's willing performance and excellent handling qualities with four seats and a roof over my head would be just about ideal for business-cum-pleasure motoring. This the M.G. soon confirmed in all but one important detail. Propelled by that trustworthy push-rod o.h.v. engine it put its speedometer needle to 60/65 m.p.h. without apparent effort and kept it there. It possessed extremely usable acceleration in its two higher gear ratios, that made light of traffic muddles and, as ever, I liked the gear-change, although for some indefinable reason I felt a good steering-column appendage might be a thought more rapid the first time I've ever had this impression. In third gear the speedometer would show over 50 m.p.h. if you wanted it to. The steering was light and very accurate and this M.G., with the well-tried coil-spring i.f.s., went round corners well, with a tendency, however, to oversteer, and to become skittish at the back in the wet. The disappointment lay in the suspension, which had too much undamped movement at the back, so that riding in the

THE 1¼ -LITRE M.G.

back seat was fatiguing and to some people sick-making.

The cornering and steering were so good as to make this suspension flexibility surprising and I feel that were the car mine, Harry Lester or someone else who knows about M.G.s would be able, by attention to damping and tyre-pressures, to get, rid of this surprising shortcoming, which I didn't expect to encounter in an M.G. But I can only comment on a Press car as I find it.

To discuss the steering in detail, there was good castor action, the inevitable modern "disconnectedness", and return motion only over really rough roads. The brakes were entirely adequate and progressive in action, if just a little on the harsh side. The clutch needed care for smooth engagement. The gear-lever was nicely placed, except that I objected to having my knuckles barked every time the passenger opened the cubby-hole lid while I was preparing to select a higher ratio! There was some noise in the indirect gears on the over-run.

The engine gave audible evidence that it shares the enthusiast's dislike of present-day petrol. but didn't run-on when the sparks were extinguished. It really was a most willing little unit, a bit noisy perhaps, but a very ready starter from cold and asking no oil or water in some 500 miles. Its fuel consumption, in those hurried miles, was

appreciably better than 30 m.p.g., too.

Externally this TD series M.G. saloon looks like a car. Internally it is well appointed, with a pleasing facia layout, although I never could remember which of the several identical knobs did what. Oil pressure sat contentedly at about 50 lb./sq. in. throughout the test.

The bucket front seats held you snugly, some people even finding them a trifle cramped. The luggage locker was of good size and with no tricks as to access. The window winders in the front doors were located near to floor level, which drove me nearly insane when, alone and in a hurry, I wanted to alter the setting of the passenger's window, because von arc a better driver than I am if you can do this and continue to keep on the road. Unless your left arm is longer than mine, when the oddly-placed winder may be easier to reach! The solution, I know, is to stop the car—but most of us are in a hurry these days. In all other respects this 1¼-litre M.G. saloon is just the job when you are in that state. It is capable of good average speeds and gives considerable driving pleasure while achieving them. It gives, too, a sense of dependability and not a single snag arose during my acquaintance with the car except for the loss of some oil from a front-wheel hub, a trick the TD Midget also played, you may remember, and one which new cars shouldn't. Otherwise, full marks to the Nuffield Organisation for a brisk little sporting saloon costing £525 that is handy and economical as a family-car and a good deal safer than some.—W. B.

Originally printed in *Motor Sport* – October 1950