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**WIN
THIS
MGB
GTV8**

Free 10th Anniversary Sticker

Class of '73



The MGB GT V8 was potentially one of BL's best cars. Paul Clark gives us a brief history of this rare Classic

WHEN British Leyland dropped the Buick-based Rover 3.5-litre V8 engine into the chassis of the MGB GT, the result was hailed by all and sundry as a very probable candidate for 'instant Classic' status. On paper the car had everything the discerning enthusiast could wish for — attractive styling, an excellent engine and the well-proven handling of the then 20-year-old MGB.

The sad fact is that only 2591 V8s were ever produced, the last one rolling off the Abingdon production line in September 1976. Even though the car was not a commercial success, the combination was probably one of the most successful transplants ever carried out and it endowed the MGB with performance never to be seen in the four-cylinder cars.

So what went wrong? Basically, the car was unfortunate in that it was introduced to the market at a time when the Arab nations were in the process of cutting their supplies of oil to the west over the conflict between themselves and the Israelis. Predictably, no one wanted to buy a car that was labelled as a 'gas-guzzler' and so sales suffered. The fact

cylinder brethren didn't help matters either, but *Autocar's* road test car was well-liked by the team who were particularly attracted to the silky-smoothness of the Rover V8 engine and the effortless performance it offered.

Initially, however, sales took off at a satisfactory level, mainly because of a good reception by the motoring press and the fact that the four-cylinder MGB was enjoying such a long and successful production run. The change-over to the black bumper models took place in October 1974 and production of the V8 dropped right down to enable the manufacture of North American spec four-cylinder cars to be stepped up to meet demand in the vitally important US market. From there it never really picked up again and the V8 ceased production in September 1976.

Many were sorry to see the back of this, the fastest and arguably the most refined of all MGs: there had been a constant running battle between the owners of the ill-fated MGC and the V8. There was no factory roadster version of the V8 produced but no one can deny that the coupé has earned its place in motoring history as one of the truly

Competition car

An outline of the work we've had done on our prize MGB GT V8



Our prize MGB GT V8 which we will be giving away at our Brighton Classic Car show to the lucky winner of our tenth anniversary competition. The first part of the competition is in this month's issue of T&CC — the next part appears in November's magazine

MANY readers who visited the T&CC marquee at our Knebworth Classic Car Spectacular on July 10 will have seen the MGB GT V8 we are intending to give away as first prize in our tenth anniversary competition, the first part of which appears on page 63.

MG enthusiasts won't need to be told that only 2591 V8s were ever produced at the Abingdon factory and that this model is arguably the most refined and delightful of all the MGBs.

The choice of the V8 for our prize car was simple: we wanted a car that was ten years old and which represented the Classic car movement in the true sense of the word. We also featured the V8 as a new car in the very first issue of T&CC back in 1973. As it is also the tenth anniversary of the MGOC we felt it would be appropriate to tie our efforts in with theirs to make 1983 a year to remember. The MGB GT V8 was therefore the natural choice.

The car we have chosen, with advice from the MGOC, is in remarkably good original condition

bearing in mind that it is ten years old. The previous owner had used it very much as a second car and consequently it has done a low mileage for its age — a yearly average of about 6500.

Even though it has been well looked after, the paintwork had faded somewhat so we decided to undertake a complete and thorough body refurbishment, which included a paint strip-down to the bare metal and replacement of any panels showing the slightest signs of corrosion — these included the sills, wing sections and offside door skin. The windows were removed for the respray in the original Damask red and all the new panels have been heavily treated with Waxoyl so that the end result of this first-class work will last for many years.

The car as displayed at Knebworth was resplendent in its new paint but at that time nothing else had been touched. Since then, we've attended to various other jobs including the fitting of a new exhaust system, new tyres, and a full

service has been carried out by MG V8 specialists Motobuild of Hounslow. The rear window was scratched so that has been replaced as have the front and rear bumpers and the grille, bringing the total value of the car up to an estimated £4000.

Mechanically, TYO 696M is in fine condition: the 3.5-litre V8 is a delight to drive behind, endowing the car with performance that no ordinary MGB could ever aspire to, with a top speed of 125mph and 0-60mph acceleration in around 8½ seconds. Fuel economy is strong too — the engine is relatively unstressed and the gearing high, especially in overdrive top, so an average of comfortably over 20mpg is easily attainable.

A visit to car valeting specialists Clean Machine in London's Herbrand Street (just off Russell Square) has ensured that the car is in peak condition and is ready for presentation to the lucky winner of our competition. It isn't a concours car — we never intended it to be. A Classic car such as this deserves to be driven and enjoyed — as indeed more Classics should be. 

Below, applying the finishing touches to the car at the workshops of R H Smart in Swavesey, where it received a complete and thorough body refurbishment including a windows-out respray and the replacement of several body panels



Win our MGB GT V8!

To celebrate *T&CC's* tenth year, your chance to win this desirable Classic

WHAT could be more appropriate? To celebrate the first ten years of *Thoroughbred & Classic Cars* we are offering this ten-year-old MG as first prize in our competition which is being run in the October and November issues of the magazine.

A decade ago our first issue included an article featuring the MGB GT V8 as a highly desirable new car. This car has gained Classic status and now you could win one.

The top ten entrants, including the first prize winner, will receive a year's free subscription to *T&CC*.

The MG Owners Club, who helped us to find the prize car and advised on its preparation, will give the overall winner an MGOC rally jacket, while the runners-up will receive an MGOC sweatshirt and a race hat.

How to enter

(1) Answer the questions right by ticks on the lines. Here's a clue: all the answers have appeared in October issues of *T&CC* over the last ten years!

(2) Buy the November issue which goes on sale from October 13, and complete part two of the competition.

(3) Send us both parts of the competition, properly filled in on the actual pages from *T&CC*. Sorry, but loose bits of paper and photocopies will not be acceptable.

This competition has been devised by, and will be judged by, the *T&CC* editorial team. No correspondence can be entered into over the results. The competition is open only to *T&CC* readers. Employees of Business Press International Ltd, their friends and relations may not enter. See next month's issue for final details. 

Only this cut-out page will be acceptable

The competition part one

1. In the first issue of *T&CC* we featured the post-war MG TC. What was the price (inc purchase tax) of this car in October 1947, to the nearest £?

- (a) £378 _____
 (b) £528 _____
 (c) £623 _____

2. Which Jaguar XK road car was the first to be fitted with disc brakes?

- (a) XK120 in 1951 _____
 (b) XK140 in 1954 _____
 (c) XK150 in 1957 _____

3. In 1975 we track-tested the car that Nuvolari drove to victory in the 1933 TT. It was an

- (a) MG K3 _____
 (b) MG J4 _____
 (c) MG F-Type Magna _____

4. The Jensen 541 was so called because it was the first series of the 1954 model

- (a) True _____
 (b) False _____

5. The Porsche 906 was

- (a) Front-engined _____
 (b) Mid-engined _____
 (c) Rear-engined _____

6. The Jowett company originated in

- (a) Bradford-on-Avon _____
 (b) Bradford, Yorks _____
 (c) Blackpool _____

7. A well-known personality scored his first win in a motor race in the Thirties with a Model T Ford in South America. He was

- (a) Eddie Rickenbacker _____
 (b) Juan-Manuel Fangio _____
 (c) Rudolf Valentino _____

8. The second generation Nash-Healey of 1952 was styled by

- (a) Tickford _____
 (b) Bertone _____
 (c) Pininfarina _____

9. Semaphore trafficators, as opposed to flashing indicators, were fitted to post-war Morris Minors and 1000s until

- (a) 1956 _____
 (b) 1961 _____
 (c) 1967 _____

10. Triumph's enthusiastic engineering chief, who was behind the company's ambitious programme in 1964 and 1965, was

- (a) Ken Richardson _____
 (b) Keith Duckworth _____
 (c) Harry Webster _____

Easy? Ten out of ten? Don't miss next month's issue with part two of our competition if you want to win our MGB GT V8!

Name

Address





A fine selection of MGs. Foreground from top clockwise: 1960 MGB V8, 1958 MG TA, 1955 MG TC, 1975 MGB (Dave Sylvester), 1955 MG TD, 1949 MG TC, MG Midget (Paul Savagel), MGA Twin-Cam, All T-Series cars courtesy of Octagon Sports Cars Ltd, Chart Sutton, Kent ME17 3RX, telephone 0822 844445 TC and TD currently for sale.