

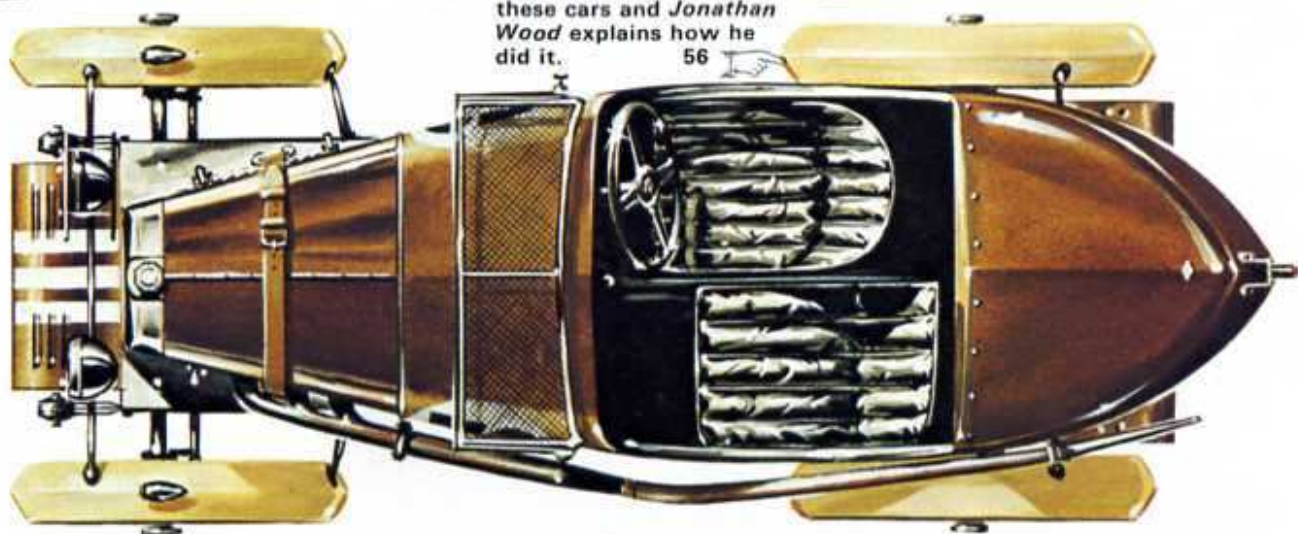


MGM TYPE

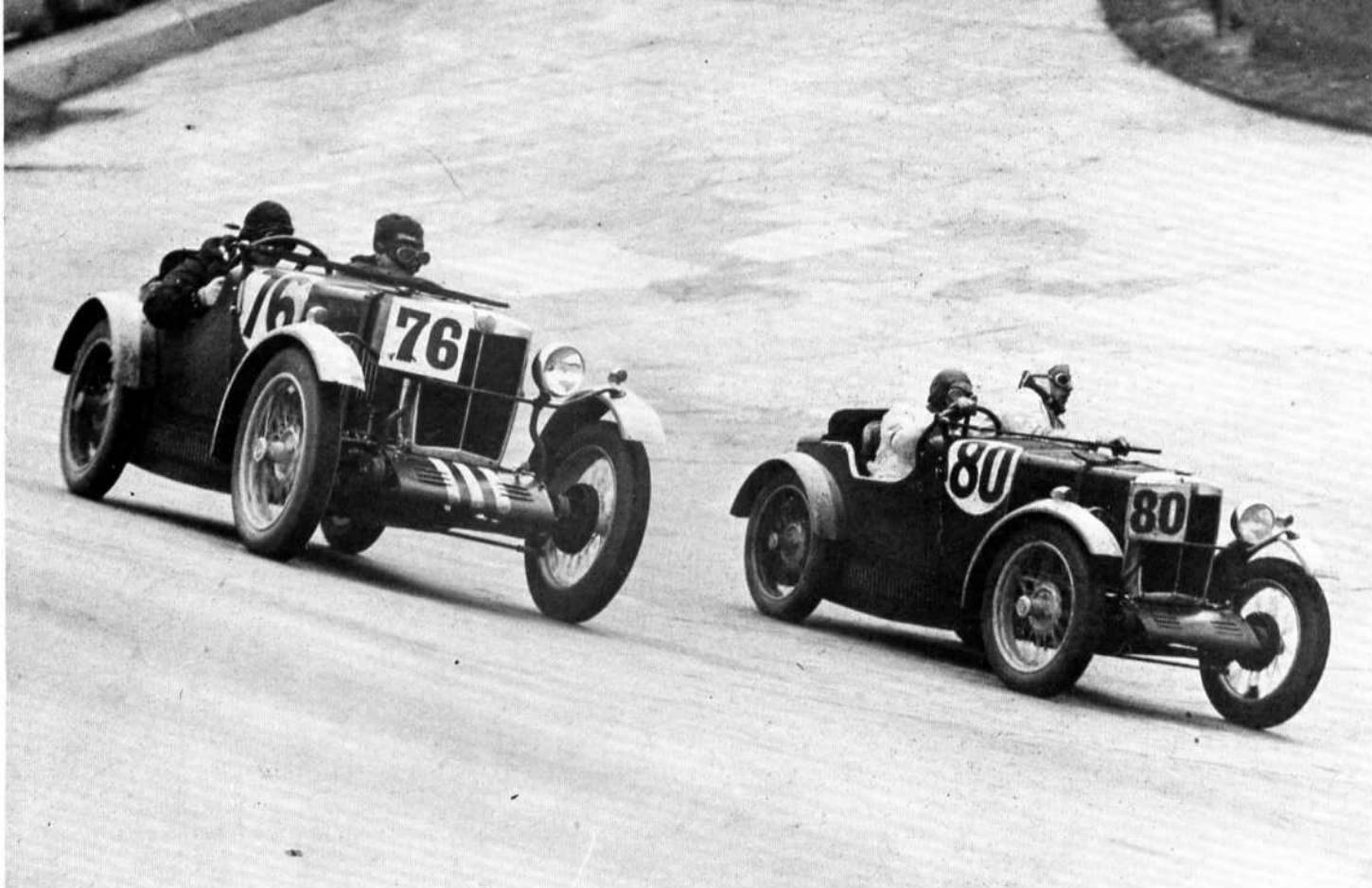


James Leech's splendid paintings show the Randall/Montgomery M type, one of the three Midgets that won the team prize in the 1930 Double Twelve race at Brooklands. Overleaf is David Cooksey's charming modern replica of one of these cars and Jonathan Wood explains how he did it.

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M-types in action during the 1930 Double-Twelve race at Brooklands. The cars shown are driven by Randall/Montgomery and Stisted/Black.

REPLICA motor cars, for better or worse, seem to be well and truly with us. They vary in my opinion, from the acceptable to the plain ghastly, for so often the true spirit of the model escapes in a welter of modern anachronisms. However as far as Dave Cooksey's 1930 M-type MG Double-Twelve replicas are concerned, the reverse is true. The interpretation has a truly authentic ring, the result of careful attention to detail and a thorough knowledge of the marque.

However, before detailing the Cooksey replicas, some background of the race that so firmly set the M-type on the map would perhaps be appropriate. The 1930 Double-Twelve was held at Brooklands on May 9th-10th, being staged in two 12-hour stints because nearby Weybridge residents protested at the cars being run continuously for 24 hours.

As F. Wilson McComb recounts in his Profile on the M-type, C. J. Randall, an enthusiastic amateur (where would motor racing have been without them?), persuaded the MG factory to prepare a team of three cars for the race. The model, which had been announced at the 1928 Motor Show, used a conventional enough channel section chassis and half elliptic suspension all round, but the power unit was a sophisticated 847cc overhead camshaft unit, a pedigree which hailed from the Wolsley concern which Morris had taken over in 1927. A notable feature of the design was the camshaft drive, which also embodied the armature of a vertically driven dynamo. Unfortunately because of the camboxes' proximity to the unit, lubricant found its way, aided and abetted by gravity, to these prominent electrics. The two-bearing crankshaft was also later to prove a limiting factor. The new models with their light, though stylish fabric bodies, appeared at Brooklands during 1929, but the following year's Double-Twelve was an opportunity for the new model to show its competition spurs in earnest.

As recounted, Randall had persuaded the factory to prepare a team of three cars for the race, though they varied from the production model in several important respects. Firstly the bodies, which were finished in smart brown fabric with cream wings, were about an inch narrower than standard having cutaway doors, and also flat scuttle top. The valances were also lower than normal, while an undertray was fitted behind the

engine and ran the full length of the car. At the front end the headlamp brackets were reversed, no doubt to reduce the frontal area, while the bonnet was reinforced by a single strap.

There were also a number of underbonnet differences. Firstly the engines were tuned, and a 1½-in downdraught SU fitted in place of the conventional horizontal 1½-in unit. The scuttle-mounted petrol tank contained nine gallons of fuel, four more than the original. The method of delivery of fuel to this downdraught carb is open to conjecture as the layout didn't permit gravity feed to operate. On what is thought to be one of the surviving cars a small Autovac is fitted, although an Autopulse electric pump may have been used. If anyone could shed any light on the petrol-delivery of these Double-Twelve cars, we'd be most grateful. Also a Brooklands exhaust system, as befitted the venue, was fitted, though this did render the passenger's door unopenable!

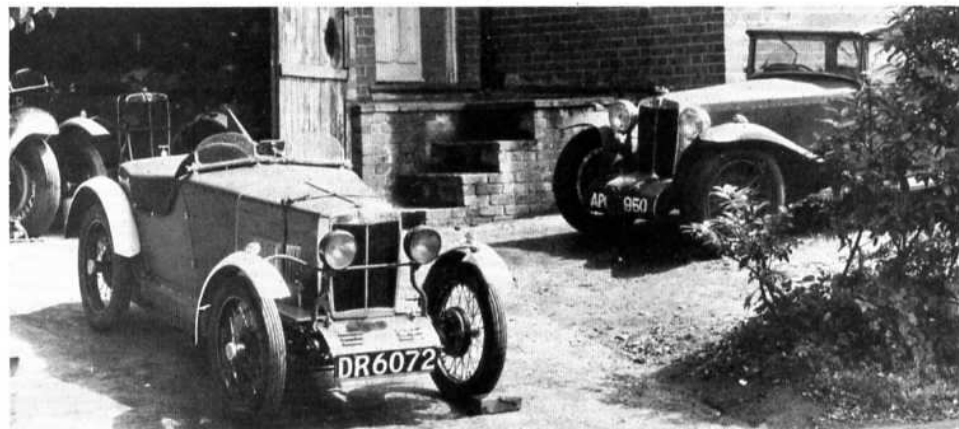
As to the race itself, the drivers of these factory prepared cars were the aforementioned Randall who drove with F. M. Montgomery, then Lt-Cdr Townend and Robin Jackson while G. Roberts partnered A. A. Pollard. In addition two similarly prepared M-types were entered by H. H. Stisted

and Norman Black and Miss Victoria Worsley with D. G. Foster. A sixth M-type driven by F. Ivins and E. A. Hearne had also been similarly prepared. The race resulted in a triumph for MG, with Randall and his two colleagues winning the team prize. For he, Stisted, Townend, Roberts and Miss Worsley achieving 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th in their class being beaten only by a pair of 1100cc Riley Nines and they also got overall placings of 14th, 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th. The Midget's average speeds varied from 60-23mph to 57-72mph for the 24 hours, while the Stisted/Black entry covered one lap at a sensational 72.45mph.

These successes certainly set the seal on the marque's competition record during the thirties, and it was hardly surprising that after the race, a Double-Twelve Replica model was announced, of which 19 were made. It was sold for £245, compared with the standard Midget's price of £175.

This was then the background to the model of which Dave Cooksey, a technical publisher of Wokingham, Berks has produced such excellent replicas. Fortunately Dave was no stranger to replica coachwork, or the throaty little overhead camshaft M-type engine. His first vintage car was

Some of the Cooksey stable. The edge of the 21/60 Wolsley can be seen in the garage, alongside the second replica, with Will Fraser's car in the foreground and Dave's 1933 MG KB Magnette on the right.



MGM TYPE....

a 1930 Morris Minor which shares the same power unit as the MG, and after thoroughly restoring that he set about building his first body. This was on a 1924 Bean 14 that was more or less mechanically complete plus a few fragments of surviving bodywork. Dave set about and designed and built an extremely presentable open four seater tourer body for the Bean which bore the hallmark of all his later work. Yet the body looked so original its recent manufacture would hardly be questioned. It was an excellent start. He followed this up with the restoration of another 1930 Minor with a touring body by Duple, and built a complete van body for it exactly following the original specifications.

Then at the beginning of last year Dave started off on his most ambitious project to date. He had already acquired a couple of 1930 MG M-type chassis and decided to build them up as Double-Twelve replicas, though he stresses that his cars are intended to be copies of those used in the race, rather than the model that was subsequently offered to the public. By this time he had collected a good collection of parts, some of the chassis components coming from an unfortunate M-type that had spent a destructive nine months in the river at Walton-on-Thames, but that is another story...

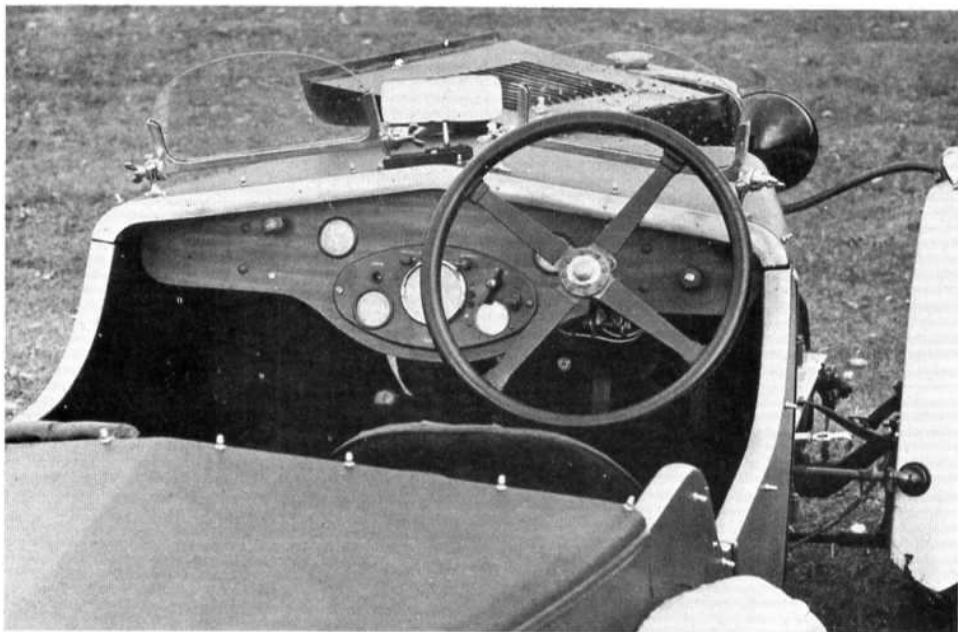
Although well versed in most matters M-type, Dave liaised with Mike Allison of the MG Car Club, who owns what is thought to be Victoria Worsley's actual Double-Twelve car.

The original method of body construction was faithfully copied (Dave is a great believer in adopting original construction techniques wherever possible). The frame work is made from ash, and there's also a good helping of plywood in the body. It may be of some interest to note that when M-type was current Carbodies of Coventry used to supply Midget bodies to MG for £6 10s each! All the woodwork was cut out with a Black and Decker jigsaw attachment, which only just survived the experience, but Dave reckons it stood up manfully in the circumstances, bearing in mind he cut sufficient parts for two bodies. The brown exterior fabric was purchased from B and M Latex, of Station Road, Addlestone, Surrey, though when it came to trimming the interior he had to farm out the leather seat pleating as he doesn't possess a suitable sewing machine. Naturally both cars were given thorough mechanical overhauls, the engines being re-built by TIK of 39 Anns Hill Road, Gosport, Hants. The first car, which Dave built for a friend, Will Fraser of Marlow, Bucks, was finished the day before the VSCC's April Silverstone meeting, being registered DR 6072. It competed there and I later had an opportunity of driving it, rather appropriate — at the Brooklands Society's reunion at the track. The car was finished off with the traditional cream wings and handsome Brooklands exhaust system which Dave made in conjunction with a nearby engineering firm and a local welder. Soon afterwards the second car was completed (reg no GF 7859), and both M-types were at the VSCC's autumn meeting at Thruxton, Will managing a third place of handicap in one of the races. Although both cars are now fitted with aero screens, Dave intends to replace these with full width gauze screens which also featured on the original cars. As an historical postscript it may be interesting to note that it is thought two M-types from the actual race survive, one being Mike Allison's car while what is thought to be the Randall/Montgomery car is owned by Geoff Mansfield, of Hatfield, Herts (see *Classic Car*, April '74). Also one example of the contemporary replica survives.

Now that Dave has completed his Double-Twelve project he's got to tidy up a 1931 Wolseley 21/60, for his wife, Wendy. This having been completed, he's going to make a start on another major MG project. Not so long ago he purchased a 1931 C-type Midget chassis and now the MG Car Club has confirmed that it is from an ex Goldie Gardner car. If the standard of restoration Dave has achieved with his other MGs is anything to go by, this C-type Midget should really be worth waiting for. ●



Dave's own Double-Twelve replica in the final stages of completion. He is now running it as his everyday car.



Above, what the driver saw. The cockpit of Will Fraser's car. Below left, nearside of the engine, note downdraught SU. Right, the other side of the engine, and how remarkably uncluttered it is!

