TRIUMPH CARS

100 YEARS

ROSS ALKUREISHI

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motorbooks

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Triumph's TR range propelled it into the sports car big league.

PREFACE

Two becomes four

A natural progression from two wheels to four saw the birth of the Triumph motor car. Endowed right from the start with a reputation for reliability, ruggedness, and sheer quality of finish, the marque's output would go on to conquer the sports car sales and competition worlds, all the while thrilling its drivers. Those who bought a Triumph did so because they suspected that to do otherwise would be sheer folly.

With its original 'Quality Light car', Triumph set the tone for the standard that all its subsequent motor cars would follow. A small car in miniature, it proved without compromise and immediately charmed the motoring press, masses, and competitors.

Its diminutive Super Sevens and Southern Crosses kickstarted a competition charge that would form a rich vein throughout the company's existence, whether the model in question was a sedan, roadster, or coupe.

The 1930s saw a distinct change of direction with some of the company's most sensational output, even if the fiscals didn't quite live up to the vehicles' collective promise. Somewhat rashly, the motorcycle aspect of the business was jettisoned, and alas, everything would come tumbling down when the company entered receivership.

After World War II, it would be resurrected and revitalized by the Standard Motor Company, before coming up with the perfect formula (tractor-derived engine, and all) in the shape of its TR line of sports cars, to conquer the booming export market.

It would not be all sweetness and light though, with economic challenges (even during its most successful times), always hovering just behind the scenes. Its cars, however, managed to continue to captivate the marque's fans.

The British Leyland years, against a backdrop of economic woe, political turmoil, and organizational chaos, saw it incredibly come under the same banner as some of its rivals. Its famed quality of workmanship would take a hit, too. And yet, still the sales and competition successes came.

A final marque/badge engineering ignominy couldn't save the brand, even if it righted some of the quality wrongs. Having survived going out of business once, it would suffer the same fate at the beginning of the 1980s. This time to the chagrin of many, and the relief of others, there would be no resurrection.

The purpose of this book is to celebrate the marque's output in all its guises, its thrills and spills in competition, the men behind the machines, and (some of) their political machinations, but most of all, to talk Triumph.

The company moved quickly from having bicycles manufactured for it, to designing, producing and selling its own. Its underlying success allowed it to branch out into, at first, the new world of motor cycles, and subsequently, that of the motor car.

INTRODUCTION

From sewing machines to motorcycles

The late part of the 19th century saw the first boom in wheeled personal transport: the bicycle. Swiftly followed by the second: the engine-endowed cycle or 'motorcycle'. By the start of the 20th century, the advent of four wheels had arrived, and frenzy ensued as all manner of manufacturers, arrivistes, bicycle, motorcycle, and even sewing-machine makers–their numbers swelling to around 250 worldwide by 1920–fought to develop, produce, and sell their new 'motor car' wares.

Young German immigrant Siegfried Bettmann's Coventry, England-based company, S. Bettmann & Company, began by importing sewing machines from Germany, before buying into the bicycle boom and selling units constructed for it by the William Andrews company of Birmingham. To these he gave the name 'Triumph', a word he reasoned could be understood in almost any European language.

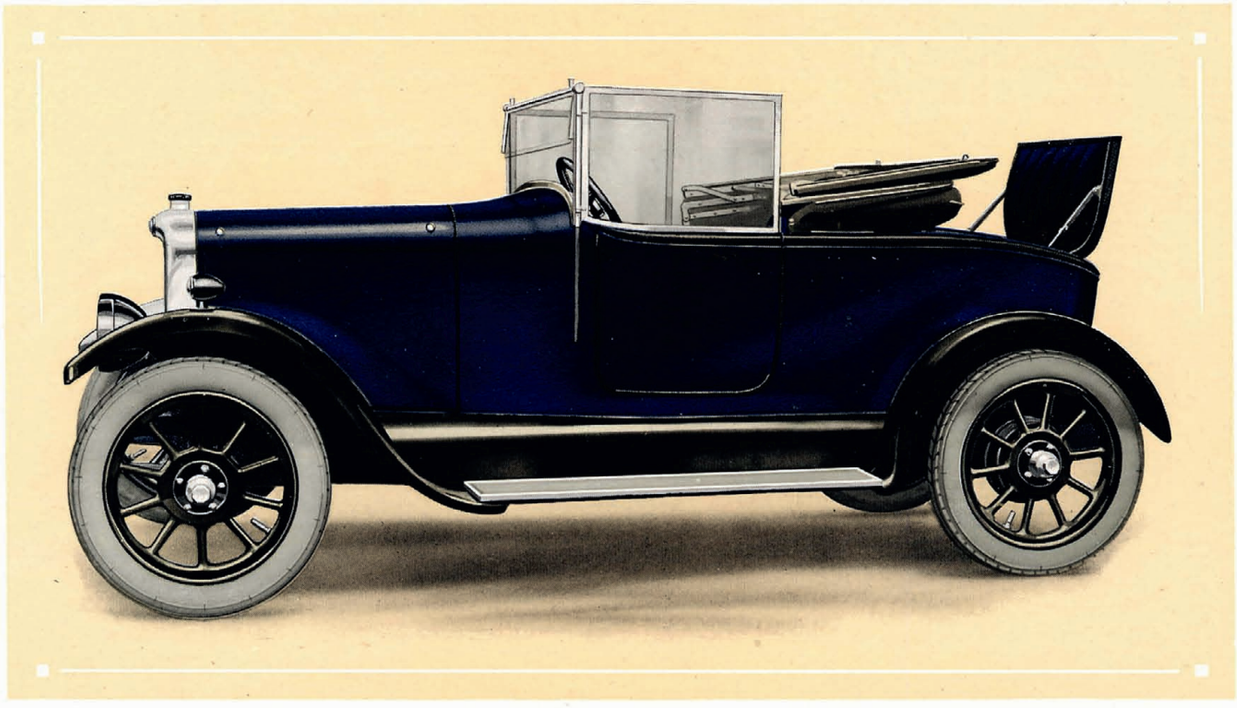
The sharp-minded Mauritz 'Maurice' Johann Schulte, who hailed from Nuremberg, the birthplace of Bettmann, joined the growing company as a partner in 1887, and his business savvy immediately complemented Bettmann's marketing expertise.

A move into manufacturing its own bicycles swiftly followed, with the new concern registered as the Triumph Cycle Co Ltd. As its wares (initially for export only) began to gain a name in the home market, investment from the Dublin-based pneumatic tire firm Dunlop changed the company's financial landscape.

A move to larger premises in Priory Street was followed by, at Schulte's insistence, diversification into the exciting new world of the motorcycle. In 1902 a modified and strengthened Triumph cycle frame had a Belgian Minerva 2¼hp engine with belt drive strapped to it–the company's first motor-driven product. Three years later, manufacturing its own 3hp engines began, and sales rose progressively from 533 units in 1906 to 3000 units in 1909.

The outbreak of World War I proved pivotal for Triumph, which provided some 30,000 motorcycles with their belt-driven 550cc engines, Sturmey-Archer gearbox/clutch, and chain-belt transmission to the Allied forces. The monikers 'Frisky Triumphs' known by the public and 'Trusty Triumphs' by the military were both indicative of the brand's growing reputation for performance, build quality, and reliability. The war also introduced Bettmann to Staff Captain Claude Vivian Holbrook, son of newspaper magnate Colonel Sir Arthur Holbrook. Having been impressed in his dealings with Captain Holbrook during the war years, Bettmann had the board invite him to become Triumph's general manager in 1919.

Ever forward-thinking, Schulte, who had pressed Bettmann to move from bicycles into motorcycles, now advocated a similar diversification into four-wheeled vehicles. Just as before, Bettmann, arguably the more conservative of the two, wasn't convinced. However, Schulte had an ally in Holbrook, and an exciting new age would soon dawn with Triumph's first ever motorcar shortly forthcoming.



TRIUMPH "TEN" WITH ALL-WEATHER BODY—OPEN

A SMALL car with the big car's comfort. Beautifully proportioned, roomy, and in appearance distinguished. In power, speed and comfort it is something more than a small car, yet with all the economy of one.

The bodywork is an example of the finest craftsmanship, and modelled on the most artistic lines, wide and deeply cushioned, appointments in perfect harmony and luxurious without being extravagant.

Beauty is the dominant note of the Triumph "Ten," linked with efficient and lasting service.

1

AN INITIAL ‘TRIUMPH’

THE QUALITY LIGHT CAR

Booming motorcycle sales (both to Joe Public and to the Allied military machine during World War I) allowed Triumph to diversify and fund an attack on the new and burgeoning four-wheel vehicle market. Its 10/20 proved an instant success, providing buyers with the same level of quality and workmanship that its two-wheel customers had come to expect. That first model heralded the way for the pioneering 13/35, with four-wheel hydraulic Lockheed brakes–a first on a production motor car.

Triumph’s 1923 seven-page ‘Preliminary Announcement’ preceded the arrival of its new motorcar and advertised the Ten as “a small car with the big car’s comfort,” whilst shining a light on its engineering and design highlights.

Schulte had experimented with a tri-car as far back as 1903 but had not taken that prototype any further. In 1919 he oversaw another, this time a 2-liter side-valve sedan. That same year *The Autocar* hinted that the Triumph Cycle Co Ltd may be preparing to enter the light motorcar market with its own product, stating, "its advent will be awaited with considerable interest, in view of the quality material and workmanship which have made the Triumph motorcycle famous."

Still to be convinced about the move, Bettmann oversaw the exit of Schulte from the company, ostensibly for retirement purposes but more likely due to differences in vision. However, Bettmann then proceeded to buy the shop and fittings of the recently defunct Dawson Motor Company in 1921. Its car, produced for two years, had featured an exotic overhead-valve, overhead-cam 1795cc engine, but sold only 65 units that necessitated overly high pricing.

Now, with the space to manufacture an automobile, Holbrook became the driving force behind the new vehicle. Announced during April 1923, the Triumph 10/20 heralded an exciting new era for the company.

1923: TRIUMPH'S QUALITY LIGHT CAR

The 10/20–so named by the combination of RAC horsepower (based on bore and not stroke) and actual hp–certainly resembled the Dawson car, but that was where the similarities ended, as the Triumph car had more prosaic underpinnings. That is not to say that it did not have interesting design aspects.

The 1393cc engine in particular had a simple and easy to manufacture design. It had novel elements such as 'masked' inlet valves, 'slipper' pistons, and a separate valve chamber at the side of the crankcase extension that worked to produce better efficiency and a quieter valve operation. It was designed by Harry Ricardo, who had produced the first ever, innovative overhead-valve, air-cooled cycle engine for the company.

More orthodox was the remaining running gear, with a channel-section box frame chassis with riveted crossmembers, a four-speed gearbox (mounted on a separate sub-frame), semi-elliptic leaf springs, Hotchkiss drive, spiral bevel gears, and ball-bearing rear axle. Worm-and-roller steering, conventional rear-drum brakes, and Lucas electrics completed the specification. Bodies for two-seater, four-seater, and Weymann-type four-seat sedan styles came via the Regent Carriage Company of Fulham Road, London.

A NEW CAR
UNDER AN OLD NAME

QUALITY is the most potent factor in determining the value of a car. Deprived of this vital force, pride of ownership which is so inherently strong in every motorist no longer exists, and motoring loses all its pleasures due solely to lack of road worthiness.

The Triumph name has ever been associated with the finest quality. This quality has not stopped short of the material used but has embraced the equally important factors of craftsmanship and finish. It is a name inseparably linked with established worth and leadership.

To the Triumph probably more than any other manufacturer is due the wonderful progress and popularity of motoring in at least one of its forms, and there is no question that quality has been the vital element directing this advancement. Quality again prevailed when the British and Allied Governments secured well over 20,000 Triumph Motor Cycles for the service of despatch riding in the Great European War.

In conceiving the new Triumph car we recognised the paramount importance of quality, making every use of our accumulated experience, and have aimed to provide a car of comfort, a car easy to handle, control and understand, and above all a car of the utmost reliability. In this we believe we have been successful, and in the Triumph "Ten" offer the purchaser a car that will render lasting satisfaction.

In appearance it commends itself to the most cultured taste, and its road riding qualities are aptly expressed by those who have thoroughly tested it out as "The small Car with the big Car's feel and comfort."

The design of the body is graceful and distinctive, the seating is as comfortable as it is possible to conceive, and the appointments in every manner are thorough and in harmony.

TRIUMPH MOTOR CO., LTD.

Coventry, 1923.

A CAR WORTHY OF ITS NAME

Triumph's open letter pledged to bring the same quality and workmanship that the company had become famed for in the two-wheeled world to that of the four.

Always destined to be a businessman, Siegfried Bettmann founded S. Bettmann & Co before overseeing its transformation from a sewing machine agent to an industrial producer of cycles, motorcycles, and then motor cars under the Triumph name.

FATHER OF THE MARQUE

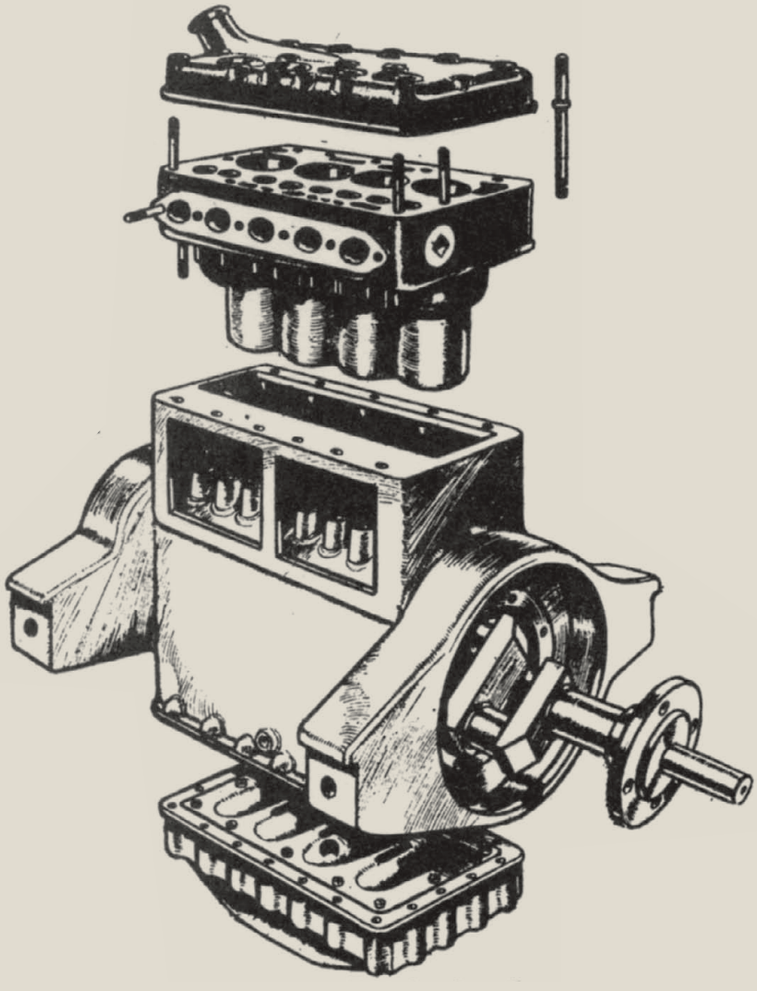
Born in 1863 to Jewish parents in Nuremburg, Germany, Siegfried Bettmann had a good quality education before arriving in England 21 years later. His father, an estate manager for a wealthy Bavarian landowner, had ensured a comprehensive schooling in business that would go on to serve his multilingual son well.

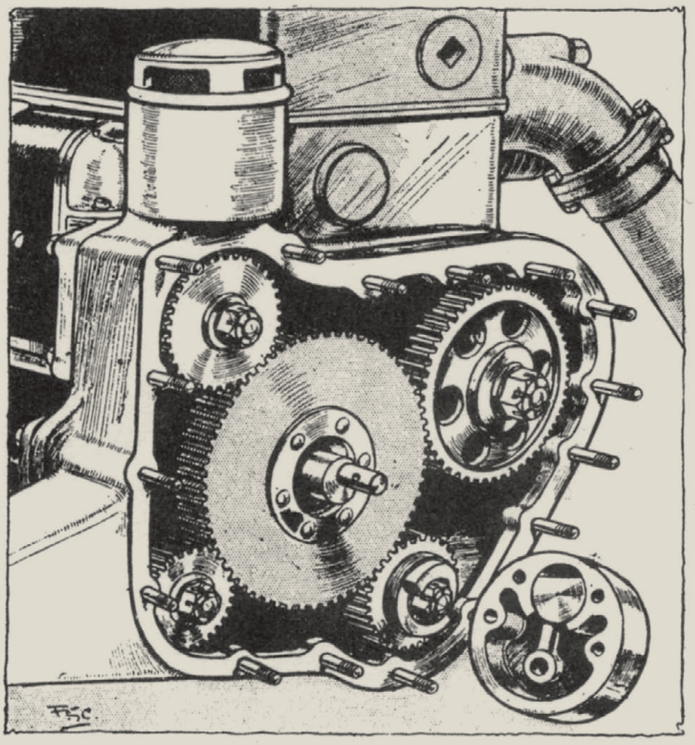
Starting as a publisher's clerk at Messrs. Kelly & Company of London, Bettmann soon moved on to become foreign correspondent in the same city for the Ohio-based, White Sewing Machine Company. After a minor disagreement with his manager, he left and formed S. Bettmann & Company, basing it in the city of Coventry. The company would act as an agency for various German firms before diversifying into manufacturing and going on to great success, under its eventual brand name 'Triumph'.

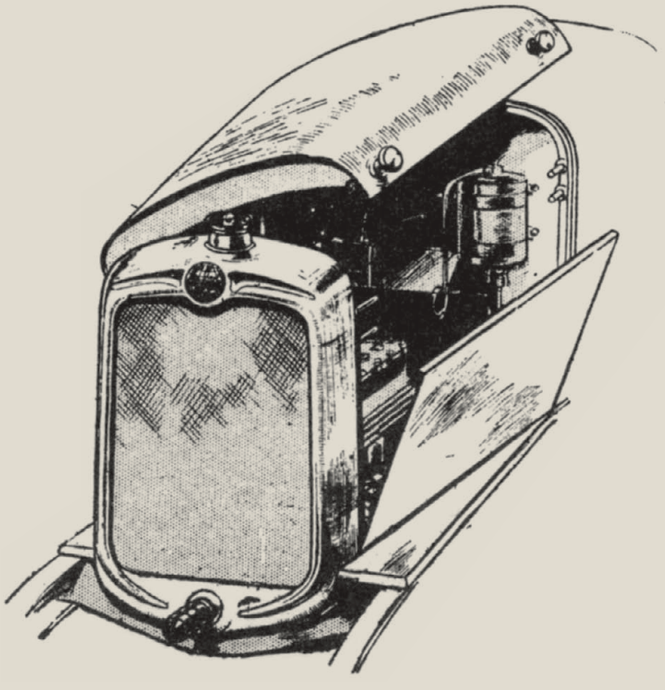
Borne from this, he entered local politics becoming a founding member (and later president) of the Chamber of Commerce, a member of the city council, and eventually Coventry's Lord Mayor.

Intriguingly, he also had a short spell as chairman of the Standard Motor Company, the concern that would come to Triumph's rescue postwar and which ended due to the outbreak of World War I. Unfortunately, anti-German sentiment would also see the cessation of his mayoral role. In another interesting aside, Bettmann would also be offered the opportunity to purchase William Morris' company, which would spawn its eventual arch-rival, MG (Morris Garages), during the postwar years when it fell into financial difficulties.

Bettmann would sell his controlling stake in Triumph in 1936 for approximately £50,000, having already ceded control to Holbrook, but he maintained links with the company for the rest of his life.







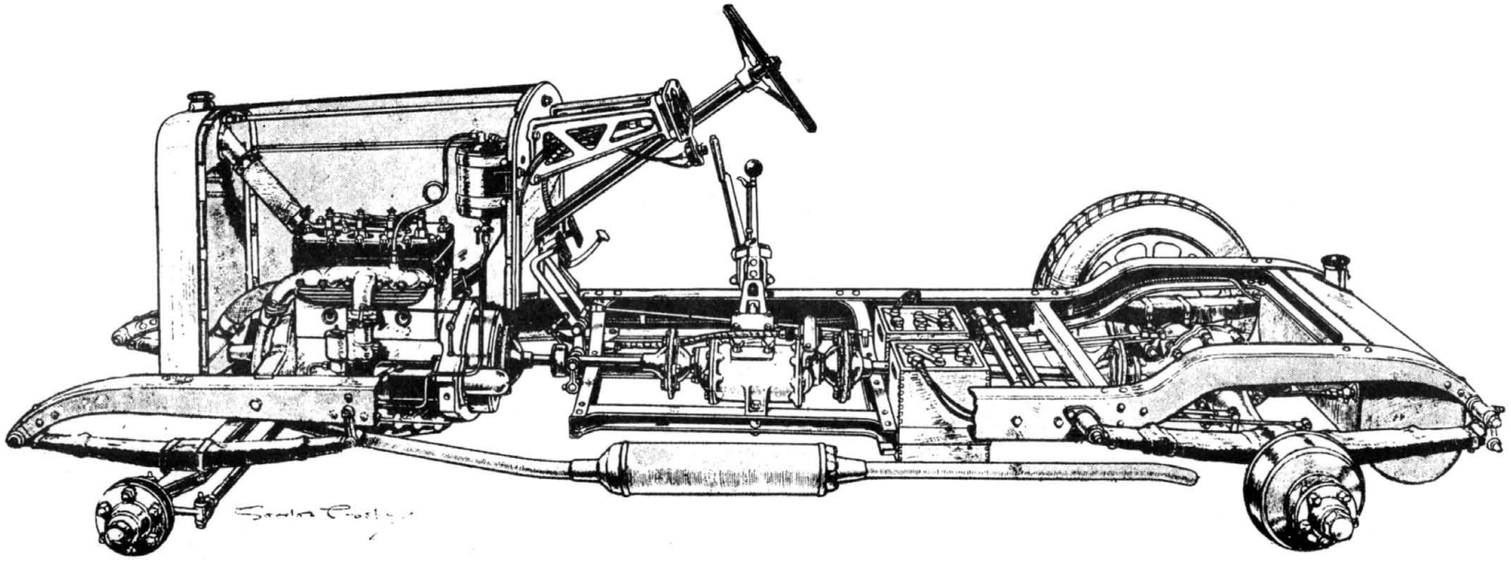
An exploded view of the Ricardo engine demonstrates its simplicity. Aluminum 'slipper' pistons were fitted with the cylinder bores rolled rather than ground for a glass-like finish. A fabroil wheel between the wheel on the crankshaft and the rest of the gears helped ensure quiet timing gear. An ingenious three-piece hingeless bonnet allowed for excellent access to the engine compartment.

Featuring bodywork by the Regent Carriage Co, the closed two-seater 10/20 proved an attractive and exceedingly well-constructed motor vehicle.

Overseen by draughtsman Arthur Alderson, although still technically a Lea-Francis employee working on contract, the new vehicle's design and fabrication were completed to the same high standards as the company's motorcycle output.

With a contemporary Morris Cowley 12hp costing £150, the 10/20's £430 to £460 asking price (depending on model) sat considerably higher than comparable vehicles but was reflected in fit, finish, and performance. With 23.4hp @ 3000rpm, the 1900lb (862kg) 10/20 quickly proved itself a capable enough performer and one that was easy to drive and very reliable to boot.

Accordingly, it sold well.



The simple, strong chassis had a clean and well thought-out design.

TRIUMPH'S FIRST 'SPORTS' CAR

Perhaps Triumph's first 'sporting' car is a more accurate title for this section. The adaptations made to the new 'Sports 10/20' certainly changed the driving nature of the model.

The aluminum over wood framing body that replaced the Tourers' steel constructed units had the single biggest effect, reducing curb weight by a staggering 18 percent to 1568lb (711kg). In came a 'fully turbulent' cylinder-head with better breathing and revised gear ratios for faster acceleration, as did Hartford dampers all round.

Not only did this new addition perform better and have improved fuel economy of over 40mpg, its body had elegant cycle wings and duck-back that offered a somewhat sleeker profile that hinted at the improved performance.

The Autocar called it "an intriguing car" and a "neat specimen" before adding that it "burbled like a semi-Brooklands racer." The magazine also acknowledged that some of the engine tweaks made it a touch less usable at low speeds, but again praised the craftsmanship and construction of the vehicle.

Meanwhile the 62mph (100kph) that a Triumph 10/20 Sports achieved along the Railway Straight at Brooklands, scintillating for a vehicle with an engine capacity of just 1393cc, more than proved its performance capabilities.

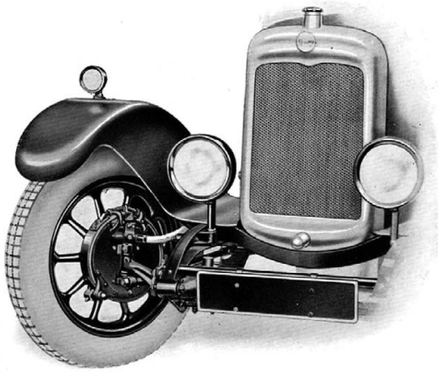
The delicate lines of the Sports 10/20. Its combination of a lightweight body, tuned engine, and comfortable seating found praise from the period motoring press.

1924–1929: STOP THE PRESS

The initial sales success of the 10/20, which equated to a handful of cars a week, buoyed Bettmann but much to his chagrin had a different effect on Holbrook in that it stimulated him to develop a new model. The Triumph 13/35 arrived at the 1924 Olympia Motor Show. Bigger with a 108in (274cm) wheelbase and considerably heavier, this new five-seater sedan had an 1873cc four-cylinder engine that followed the same basic design as its smaller stablemate's, a three-speed gearbox, a single dry-plate clutch, Hotchkiss drive, and spiral-bevel geared rear axle.

Again, Triumph trimmed the cabin luxuriously, but its biggest selling point, despite its reasonable retail price of £495, was its four-wheel Lockheed hydraulic brakes, the first British production car to have them and a sign of the future. These operated by way of contracting bands, rather than internal expanding shoes, and could pull the 13/35 up to a dead stop from 40mph (64kph) in less than 100ft (2.5m).

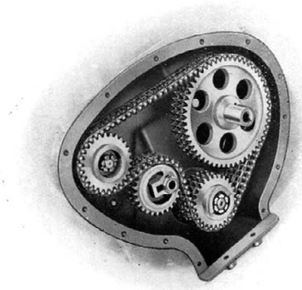
At a time when drivers of motor cars applied the brakes, said a prayer to the motoring gods, and crossed their fingers in the hope of somehow stopping, the introduction of the Triumph's new brakes prompted the Royal Automobile Club to issue a press release in September 1925 asking for consideration in their use. "The R.A.C. desires to urge upon drivers of cars fitted with four-wheel brakes, the need for extreme caution in their use, and the necessity for giving adequate warning to the following traffic when about to apply them . . . the majority [of other road users] have no experience of four-wheel brakes, and therefore do not appreciate their remarkable retarding effect."

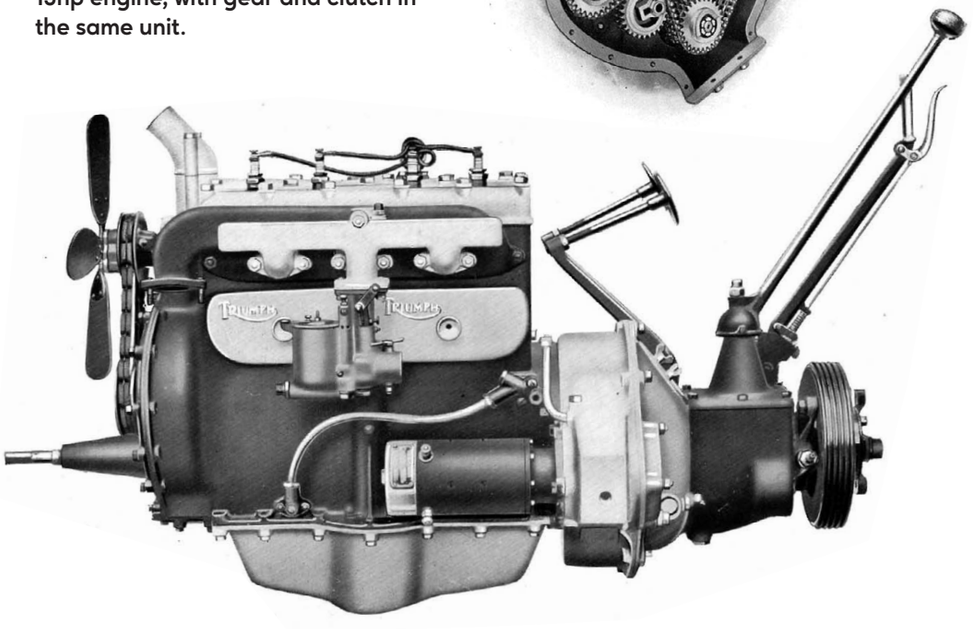


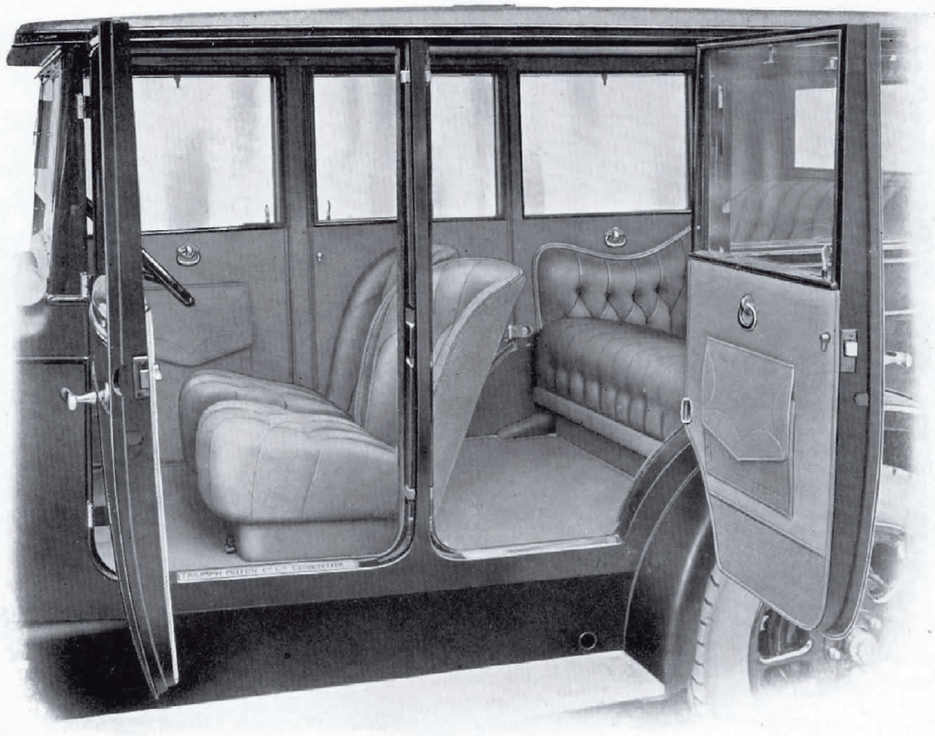
(ABOVE) Four-wheel hydraulic Lockheed drum brakes first appeared on the 13/35 model and would be used on subsequent models, including the company's future 'small' cars.

(BELOW) Bold, elegant, and upright—the Triumph 15 coachbuilt sedan.

(BELOW AND RIGHT) The innovative automatic tensioning device designed to keep the timing chain at the correct tension for the duration of its life. A close-up of the left-hand side of the 15hp engine, with gear and clutch in the same unit.







INTERIOR OF THE 15 H.P. TRIUMPH SALOON.—Four wide doors with pocket and flap on each ; automatic window-lifts to all doors and quarter lights instantly adjustable ; large rear window with blind ; adjustable front seats; rear seat accommodates three adults comfortably ; all cushions wide, deep and beautifully sprung ; upholstery in best quality striped cloth to match paintwork. Scuttle ventilator operated from instrument board ; roof ventilator ; electric roof light ; floor carpets in front and rear and every requisite, including cigar lighter and ash tray. The equipment is complete down to the smallest detail.

A bigger 15/50 arrived in 1926 with a bored-out 2169cc engine, 112in (284.5) wheelbase, and adjustable bucket-type front seats replacing the 13/35's fixed items. This would be the first Triumph model to be exported mainly to antipodean countries.

The 10/20 phased out in 1929, and Triumph now had its eye on the roaring success that rival Austin was having with its sporting Austin Seven 7hp model.

The Clay Lane works had expanded considerably over the past few years, multiple agencies had been set up to handle the company's wares, and Triumph had just recruited one of the designers of the original Austin design, draughtsman Stanley Edge.

The time for a gamechanger was nigh.

Triumph 10/20 Sports	
Data	1923–1926
Models	Two-seat Sports (£425)
Construction	Box frame chassis, separate aluminum body
Length	140in (355.6cm)
Track	Front/Rear - 46in (116.8cm)
Height	n/a
Wheelbase	102in (259.1cm)
Weight	1568lb (711.2kg)
Engine Size	1393cc
Engine Format	4-cylinder
Carburetion	Zenith carburetor
Max Bhp	23.5hp @ 3000rpm
Max Torque	n/a
Gearbox	4-speed
Automatic	n/a
Axle Ratio	4.18:1
Steering	worm-and-roller
Front/Rear Suspension	Beam axles with two longitudinal semi-elliptic leaf springs, Hartford dampers
Tires	Mounted on detachable wire wheels
Brakes	Rear expanding-shoe drum brakes
0 to 60 mph	n/a
Top Speed	55mph (88.5 kph)
Fuel Economy	40+mpg (US, 33.3+mpg)

(OPPOSITE) Right from the start Triumph motor cars were renowned for the quality of fit and finishings, no more so than in their interior environments, as this page from a period brochure shows.

TRIUMPH CARS

SUPER SEVEN AND SCORPION SIX-CYLINDER

MANUFACTURED BY
TRIUMPH MOTOR CO. LTD.
COVENTRY. ENGLAND

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Telegrams: Triumfcar, Coventry.

LONDON: 218, Great Portland Street, W. 1. (First Floor.)
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BLOEMFONTEIN AVENUE, UXBRIDGE ROAD,
SHEPHERD'S BUSH, LONDON, W. 12.
Telephone: Shepherd's Bush 2322. Telegrams: Triumserv, Shepherd's London.

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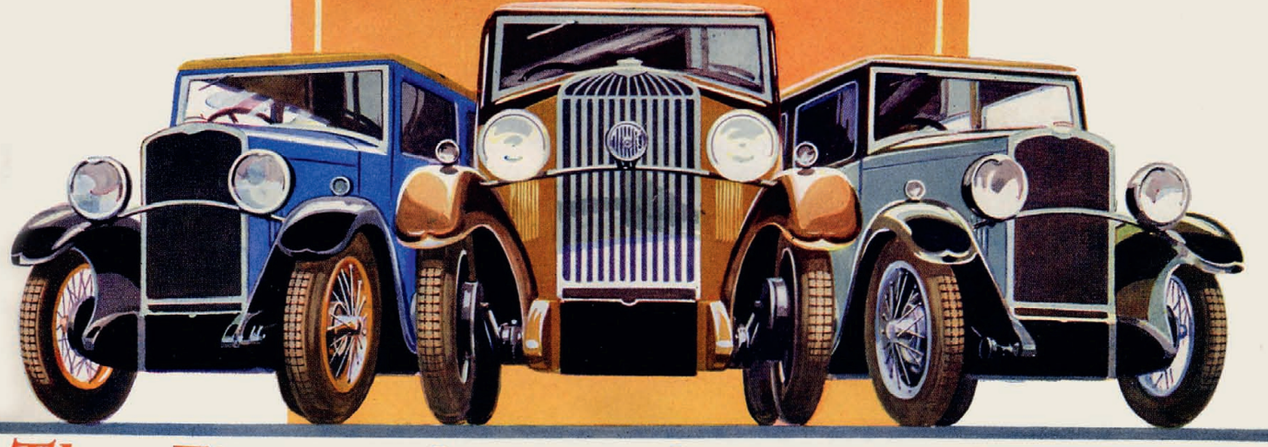


The Finest Small Cars in the World

K 153

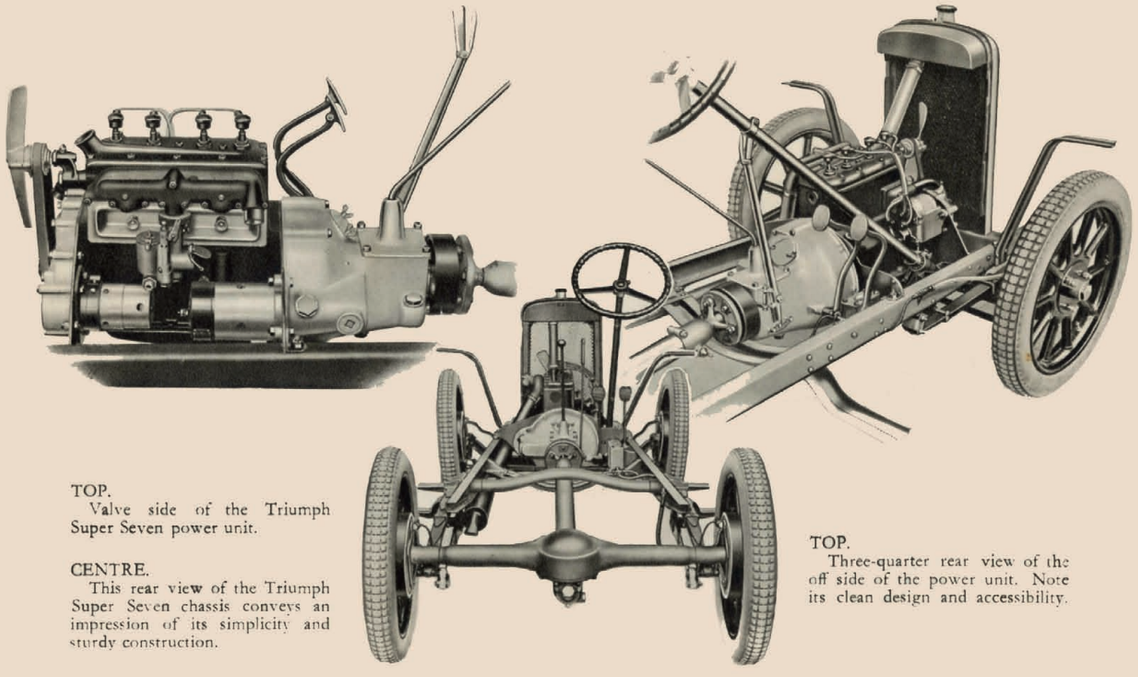
2

SEVENS, SCORPIONS, AND SOUTHERN CROSSES

SPORTING ORIGINS

Whilst the early-to-mid 1920s roared with a seemingly unstoppable economic boom in the western world's largest economies, the decadent and carefree nature of that time would soon come to an abrupt halt with the 1929 Wall Street crash. As great fortunes disappeared overnight, political turmoil reigned, and the world entered a decade of severe financial austerity, it was fortuitous then that Triumph had released its smallest and most economical model some two years earlier. The Southern Cross and six-cylinder Scorpion models would join it to bring real variety to the small car game.

Austin's runaway success of the Seven prompted Triumph to try and bag its own share of the action; the build quality and performance of the resulting Super Seven saw it earn the right to be billed as "The Finest Small Car In The World."



TOP.
Valve side of the Triumph Super Seven power unit.

CENTRE.
This rear view of the Triumph Super Seven chassis conveys an impression of its simplicity and sturdy construction.

TOP.
Three-quarter rear view of the off side of the power unit. Note its clean design and accessibility.

Enough has already been said to indicate that in every way the Triumph SUPER SEVEN is an exceptional small car and some of its outstanding features are listed on this page.

Many of these features, such as the hydraulically operated brakes have never before appeared on a car of this class, and it is certain that never before have so many desirable items been collected together in a single specification at so attractive a price.

The wonderful performance of the Triumph SUPER SEVEN is explained by the care taken in selecting each item in the specification and the skill displayed in blending all these features into one harmonious whole.

A road test of the Triumph SUPER SEVEN will be a revelation of just how good a small car can be, and whatever the requirements or whims of the driver may be, the little SUPER SEVEN will answer them all with a smoothness and efficiency that will establish beyond question its claim to be the "FINEST SMALL CAR IN THE WORLD."

Triumph-Lockheed hydraulic internal expanding brakes of latest self-filling type.

Three bearing crankshaft.

Forced feed lubrication to all engine bearings and timing chain.

Automatic timing chain tensioner.

Underslung worm drive axle of exclusive design giving exceptional accessibility.

Long, semi-elliptic front springs.

Worm and wheel steering gear with adjustment for wear.

Rigid frame, of 3 in. deep by 1⅜ in. wide by ⅛ in. thick section with 1¾ in. diameter tubular cross member and two channel cross members.

Enclosed gear drive for speedometer.

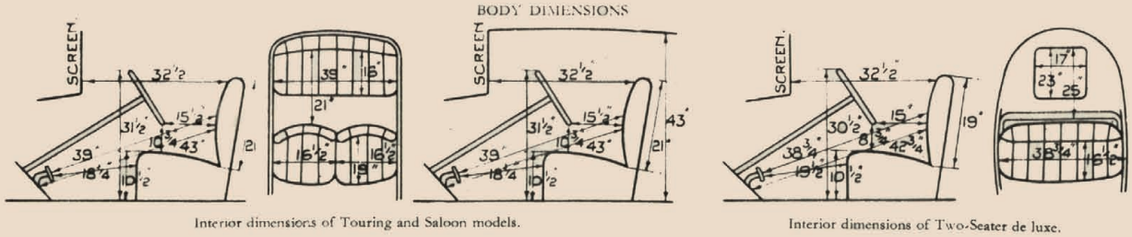
Dunlop Balloon tyres, 4 in. section.

Shock absorbers all round.

Hot spot inlet manifold.

Radiator, exceptionally large and handsome, solid nickel casing.

BODY DIMENSIONS



Interior dimensions of Touring and Saloon models.

Interior dimensions of Two-Seater de luxe.

The simple yet unsurprisingly rugged chassis and running gear of the Triumph Super Seven.

In 1927 the smallest class of road cars offered no-frills, peppy, value-for-money transport. In the United States, Ford and its Model T dominated, while in Great Britain, Austin had followed a similar formula with its best-selling Seven.

Triumph's entry into this market saw it offering something entirely new: a small car with a high specification. Priced higher than the Austin and not therefore in direct competition, it looked to offer buyers performance one rung up the ladder and even, in a first for this type of car, a touch of luxury.

1927–1928: A NEW TYPE OF SMALL LIGHT CAR

The Super Seven came with a three-speed gearbox and engine designed by Arthur A. Sykes. The simple 832cc side-valve engine followed a similar design to that of the 15hp, although its Ricardo head and masked inlet valves had been dropped. This robust little powerplant (and it would prove this undoubtedly very soon) had a three-bearing crankshaft and camshaft, a vertical Zenith carburetor, two-port induction, and four-port exhaust manifolds. It produced a healthy 21hp @ 4000rpm.

The sturdy ladder chassis with an 81in (206cm) wheelbase had beam axles at both ends, with semi-elliptics leaf springs at the front and quarter elliptics at the rear, and the detachable 4.4in x 18in (11cm x 45.5cm) wheels featured Dunlop low-pressure tires. But undoubtedly the biggest surprise proved to be the inclusion of four-wheel Lockheed hydraulic brakes. Journalists hailed this. *The Light Car* magazine praising the inclusion of something that, until that point, had only been seen in larger, more expensive machines. The engine's three-bearing crankshaft (again, something not usually seen in such small-capacity powerplants) also received acclaim.

On the styling front, too, Triumph seemed to have come up trumps.

WALTER BELGROVE

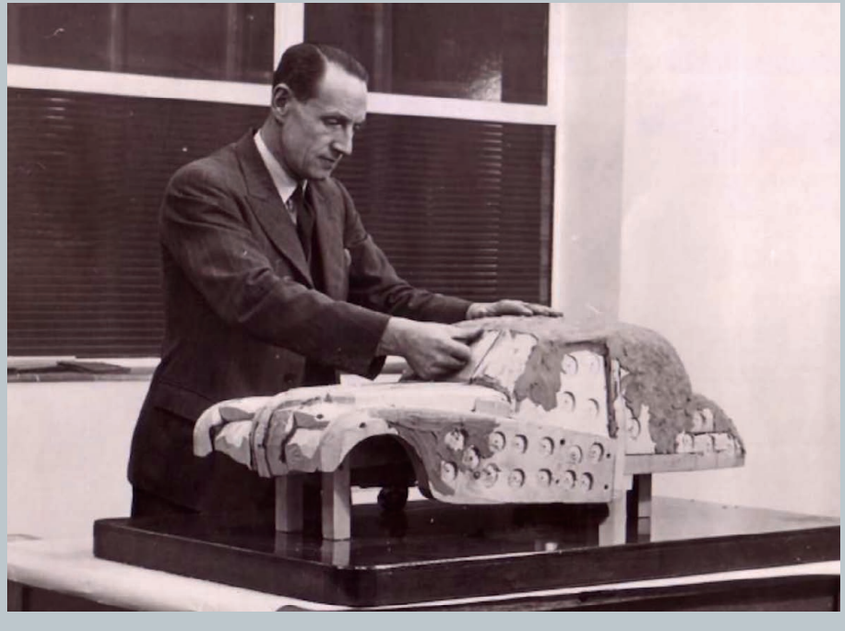
Born in Liverpool, Walter Belgrove attended that city's College of Art before moving into automotive design. The multi-talented artist joined Triumph as a coachbuilding apprentice just as Super Seven development began.

Known for his sense of fair-play and skilled at the art of self-preservation (important in such a large and often incestuous organization), he had quickly risen to become Chief Body Engineer and bring structure to what had loosely passed for a design team when models were created piecemeal and by sheer force of will by a collection of draughtsmen.

Also a gifted sculptor, Belgrove was the first British designer to design cars in three-dimensions using clay. The flowing lines of his prewar designs would see his reputation grow, and postwar he would go on to create the vison for Triumph's new TR.

A long-running dispute with fellow senior manager, strict disciplinarian, and engineer Ted Grinham would come to a head at the 1955 Motor Show with Belgrove walking out on the company.

Belgrove would spend his remaining career as a freelance stylist.



Walter Belgrove was a creative car designer and a talented artist too.

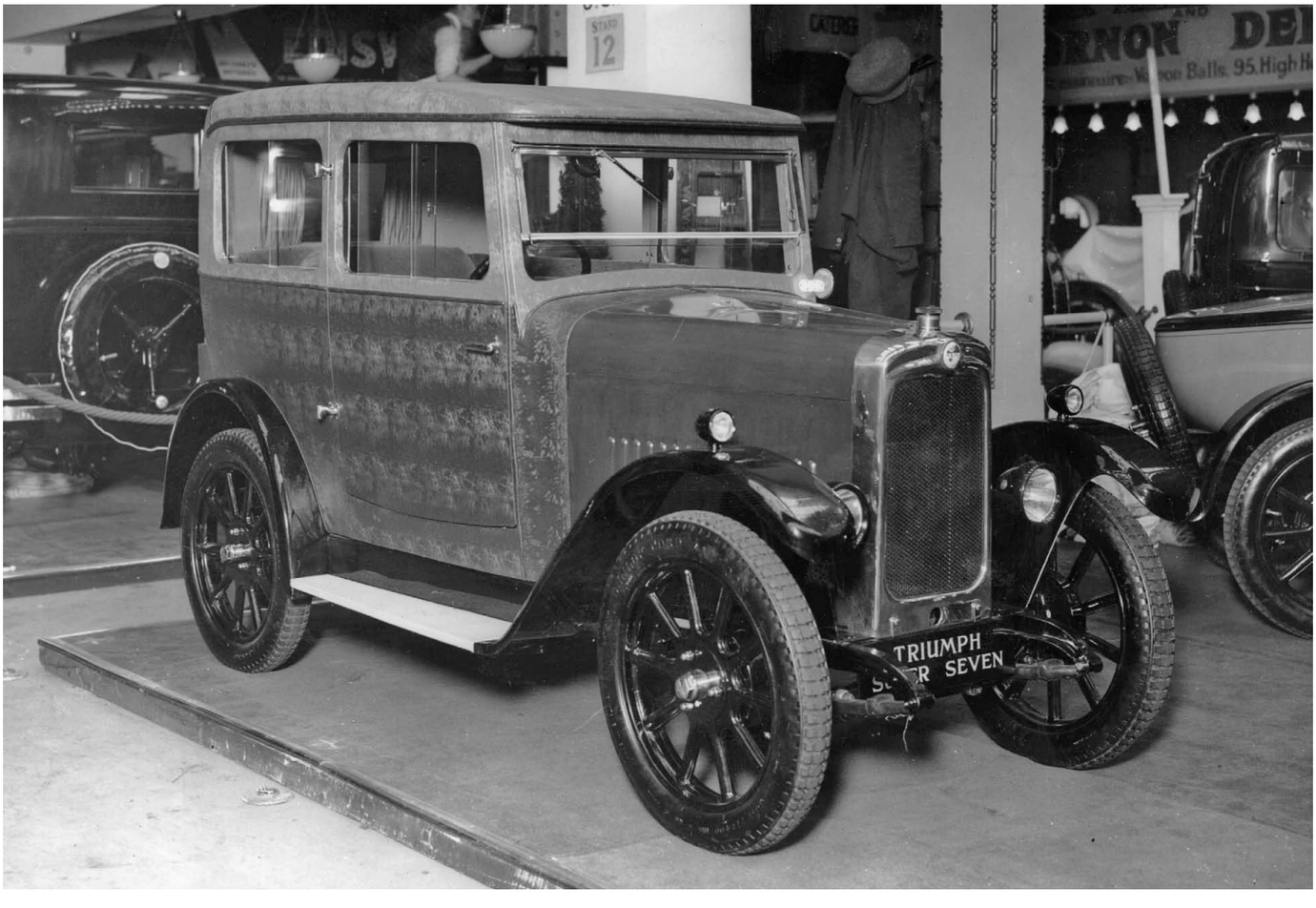
The company offered five standard body types and one custom body type for the Super Seven. The entry-level Popular Tourer cost £149 10s. Its combination of a low built frame, a raised snout, and high sides lent it a chirpy exterior demeanor, as well as good all-round weather protection.

One step up the food chain sat the Tourer de Luxe. For an additional £18, the exterior gained rounded door corners, domed wings, and a waistline band, along with a choice of four duotone colors, wire wheels, five lamps, and vacuum-operated windscreen wipers. Interior carpets were fitted front and rear, and there was a clock. The identically priced Two-Seater de Luxe (the only two-seat option, the rest were two-door/four-passenger variants) came as per the Tourer version save for the duck-back body with an occasional 'dickey' seat in the rear. A special black and primrose duotone color scheme could also be specified for this model.

At £187 10s, the Fabric sedan followed the Weymann build method, which saw the body covered in blue, brown, or red material. This provided a cooler interior environment in summer and cold weather protection in winter.

For another £5 the coachbuilt sedan took matters upmarket, with all available accessories allied to a 15/50 mimicking exterior and interior with pneumatic upholstery. The top-of-the-range £200 Gordon England sedan followed a patented method of construction that saw its flexible body mounted to the chassis on top of absorbent rubber blocks for a more cossetted ride. An interior of genuine leather, a roof ventilator, and safety glass also came as standard. Other custom bodies could be fitted to a bare chassis that could be had for £113.

At launch, *The Autocar* noted of it, "the roadholding is excellent and the stability leaves nothing to be desired on the wet as well as dry roads . . . the brakes are conspicuously good." The magazine also commended the smoothness of the engine and how it responded to prolonged hard driving, although the cramped cabin (indicative of the small light car breed) came in for minor criticism.



A Super Seven Fabric sedan on the Triumph stand at the 1927 Olympia Motor Show, London.

1929–1930: A TRUE SPORTS CAR

The 1929 model year saw five lamps become standard, with more room for rear footwells and pneumatic upholstery for all but the Popular Tourer. Sedans gained an integral luggage box (it had been previously tacked on the rear), a polished instrument board, and dash lights.

From a competition point of view, the Super Seven proved competitive from the start. Victor Horsman championed two examples (with custom Monoposto bodies) over a period of three years. The first with a hand-built special camshaft, modified cylinderhead, 7:1 compression ratio, and twin Amal carburetors proved victorious at Brooklands in its first race, the 75mph (121kph) Long Handicap at Easter, lapping at 90mph (145kph) thanks to a 4.5:1 axle ratio. It would generally finish best in class, until he swapped steeds for a new (and less successful for him) supercharged unit.

Donald Healey piloted one to an impressive 7th place overall on the epic 1930 Monte Carlo Rally, with the Super Seven coming home as the first British car to finish, following that up the next year with victory on the Brighton Rally.

Unlike MG, which, under Cecil Kimber, set sporting achievement as its raison d'être right from the start, Triumph hadn't yet developed the knack of shouting its successes from the factory rooftop, at least not with regards to Healey's achievements.

That's not to say that it stayed mute. Of more interest were the Super Seven's various achievements in long distance road trials in the United States and most notably Australia and New Zealand. G. A. Woods drove from New York to Vancouver via San Francisco, returning by an even more challenging route that took in Pendleton, Chicago, and Niagara, covering an astonishing 3,538 miles (5,694km) in eight and a half days, at an average of 458 miles (737km) a day. In New Zealand, a team of drivers earned an endurance record after driving 10,000 miles (16,093km) back and forth between New Plymouth and Auckland, crossing the main mountain range 40 times. In the 1930 Australian RAC trial, Sevens finished 1st, 2nd, and 4th in the up-to-1000cc class, while the Brisbane-to-Sydney light car record fell with the 672 miles (1,081km) covered in 22 hours and

The supercharged Super Seven Sports–a feisty little charge.

SPORTS VERSION OF THE SUPER SEVEN

The new Sports version of the Super Seven came equipped with a duck-tail endowed alloy body and, of more consequence, a Cozette-supercharged engine.

Often seen on Amilcars or offered as bolt-on upgrades for Citroens and Renaults, this simple pump followed the Roots principle of feeding air to the engine quicker than it could be used, thus creating a pressure increase between the supercharger and intake unit and making for a more powerful fuel detonation.

The result certainly proved to *Motorsport*'s liking, which said in its December 1929 issue, "At near on full revs, however, the familiar whine which gladdens the heart of the enthusiast becomes manifest, and the Triumph is a glutton for revs." The magazine also praised the "amazing power" of the brakes, the roomy interior, and as was now expected of the company's products, the excellent levels of finish and refinements.

Although the actual power output remained unstated, the magazine was in no doubt of its benefits to performance and summed up, "any one [sic] wanting a really fascinating little car with a red-hot performance and low running costs, this Triumph Seven would take a lot of beating."

Accordingly, it would become the go-to model for any Triumph fans with competition aspirations.


27

10 minutes. Perhaps the most remarkable antipodean feat belonged to Perth Triumph dealer P. W. Armstrong who travelled from Perth to Sydney via the Outback in a standard Two-seater de Luxe at considerable personal risk. He covered the 2,954 miles (4,7541km) in eight days and six hours, with just one set of plugs and a replacement fanbelt the only required maintenance. He then promptly drove back.

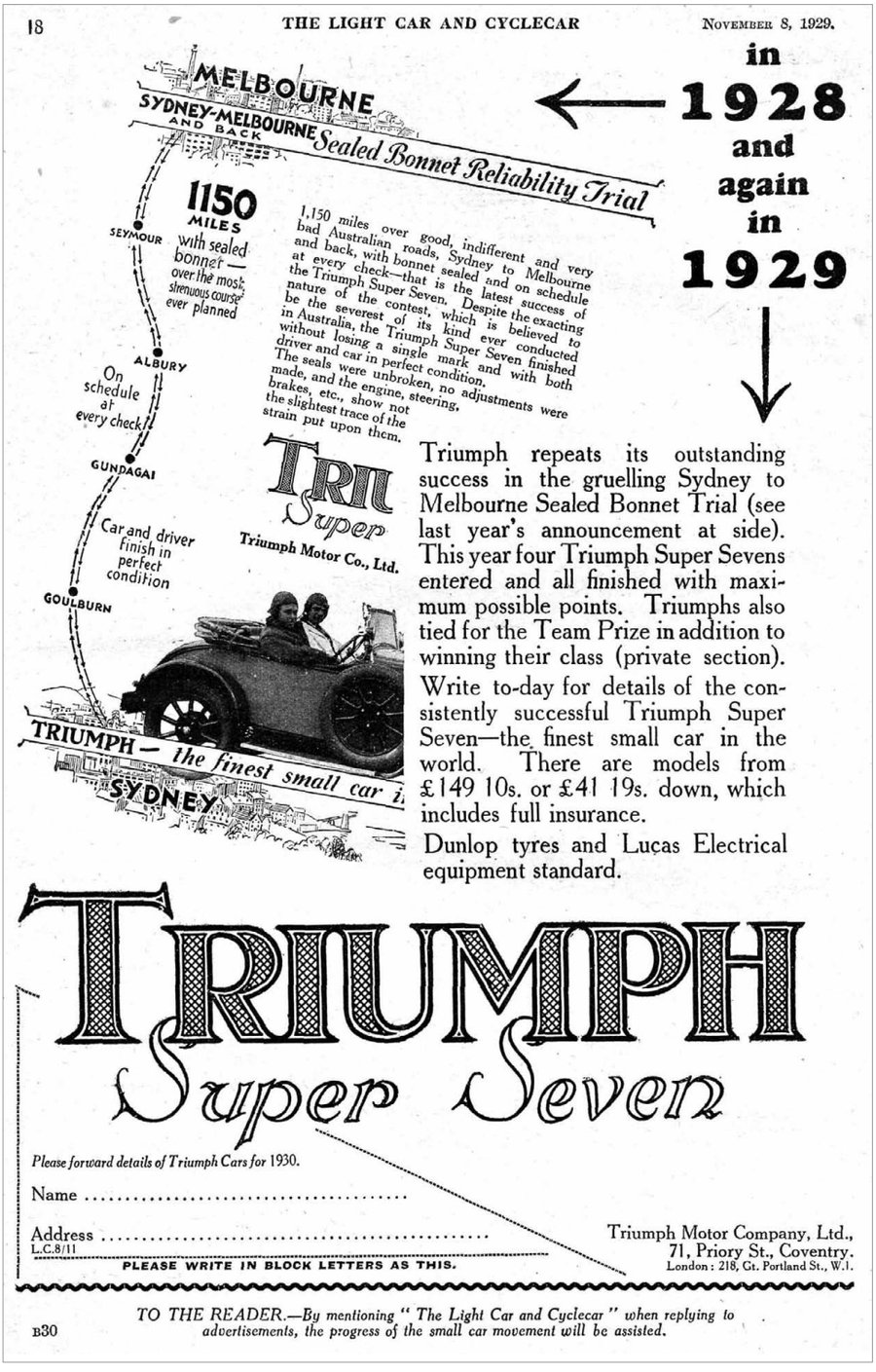
These feats provided the initial source for the legend of Triumph ruggedness and reliability that would become a byword for the company's products over the next four decades.

For the 1930 model road cars came a new radiator with three new body styles, including an intriguing Sedan-Landaulet with extra room in the rear and a wider range of color options. Triumph also finally phased out its 15hp model.

1931–1932: EVER DECREASING FISCALS

A new Pillarless sedan followed and looked to entice new clientele, but business slowed as the Depression deepened and took a tighter grip. Bettmann invited local landowner and fellow Coventry manufacturer Lord Leigh to join the board as Chairman, while Lt Col Holbrook became Assistant Managing Director (he would eventually succeed Bettmann in 1933).

In a bid to hook owners of larger cars looking to economize and downsize, Triumph followed the growing trend for small six-cylinder cars that began with Wolseley's Hornet. It developed a small six-cylinder stablemate based on a Super Seven type chassis, with a slightly higher specification that included semi-elliptic leaf springs front and rear, silent-bloc mounts for the engine, Dunlop Magna wire wheels, and safety glass as standard. The new Scorpion had an engine 50 percent physically larger, yet it remained only 5¾in (14.5cm) longer. Derived from the Super Seven unit, the powerplant had



(ABOVE) Wins on the Sydney-Melbourne and Back Sealed Bonnet Reliability Trial in 1928 and 1929 were just two of a number of epic long distance successes around the world.

(OPPOSITE) V. E. Horsman's Triumph Super Seven (number 27) leads the Blower Bentley of Henry Birkin (car number 1) on the 1930 RAC Tourist Trophy at the Ards circuit in Ulster, eventually won by Tazio Nuvolari. Horsman would have more success with his monoposto race cars.

the same bore and an 80mm stroke, a four-bearing crankshaft and camshaft, and produced 25bhp. That allowed it to hit a heady 65mph (105kph).

Triumph advertised it as "Silent, powerful and dignified . . . the least expensive luxury Six in existence today." Whilst the latter was no doubt true and the Scorpion shifted well with that familiar smooth six-cylinder refinement in power delivery, the heavier engine upset the handling, leaving it anything but dignified when things got twisty.

A longer, lower, and wider Scorpion MkII with the petrol tank shifted to the rear end of the chassis for better weight distribution, and hydraulic shock absorbers looked to rectify matters as De Luxe models now came with a four-speed gearbox. It would quickly morph into the larger Twelve-Six, a four-door sedan, with more cabin space thanks to a bigger rear end. However, small Sixes would soon go out of fashion; engine thirst and higher taxes made them less attractive than 'fours', which, with the adoption of rubber engine mounts, were now less prone to causing chassis vibrations.

In 1932, two more small light car models would join the range: the Super Nine and the Southern Cross 8.9hp. Both featured a Scorpion chassis, 12-volt coil ignition, and a brand new outside-sourced engine. This 1018cc 'four' came courtesy of engine manufacturer Coventry Climax and had a new inlet-over-exhaust design, with the spark plugs located over the exhaust valves and combustion chambers. A lusty little engine, it provided both vehicles with distinctly sportier demeanors.

The Scorpion may have featured a straight six-cylinder engine, but its compact nature meant that the vehicle was only a little longer than a Seven.

A MIDGET BEATER?

In a bid to go toe-to-toe with the MG Midget, the diminutive and perkily styled Gnat came into being. This featured an alloy body and a non-blown engine in a high state of tune, with a larger carburetor, special inlet manifolding and combustion chambers, polished valve ports, and a tuned Vortex silencer combining to raise power by 10 percent to 23.1hp @ 4000rpm.

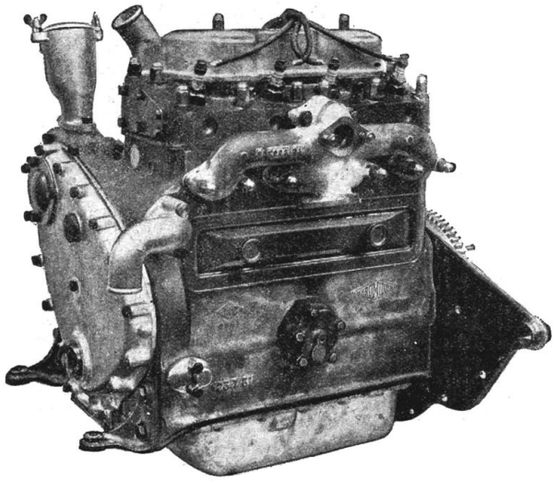
Five duotone color schemes were offered, with the wings and radiator painted in a contrasting color. It had a windscreen that pivoted (perfect for competition work at Brooklands), a sprung steering wheel, and octagonal (yes, octagonal!) speedometer and rev counter surrounds.

Motorsport hailed it as a "large car in miniature," and enthused further about its handling characteristics, high-revving engine, and of course, the brakes, before summarizing, "the whole car possesses many attractions to the owner who wants a neat two-seater, cheap to run, and with a performance which enables him to hold many much larger and most costly vehicles on the road, and to stand a good chance in competitions."

Sadly, it wouldn't prove the best-seller Triumph had hoped for, or last quite as long as MG's diminutive competitor—in all its various guises.

Seemingly endowed with all the ingredients for success, the short-lived Gnat went out of production almost as soon as it arrived.

With just two patent clips holding its drop head in place, it only took a few seconds to lower it–another first in a car of this size.



The Coventry Climax unit with its innovative inlet-over-exhaust design.

The £197 10s Super Nine resembled its chassis's donor, while the £225, alloy paneled Southern Cross, named after the constellation that lit the company's favorite export market, had four seats and high bodied, raffish aesthetics.

With trading profits down by 44 percent and no dividends for shareholders this year, Triumph cut prices to try to increase volume sales. If things were slow in terms of motor car sales, then motorcycle sales were faring even worse. On the bicycle front, things were even worse with the board sanctioning the sale of the original bicycle business to Coventry Bicycles, against Bettmann's wishes. For many within the company, their vision of the future consisted of four wheels.

A SPECIAL USE OF TRIUMPH MECHANICALS

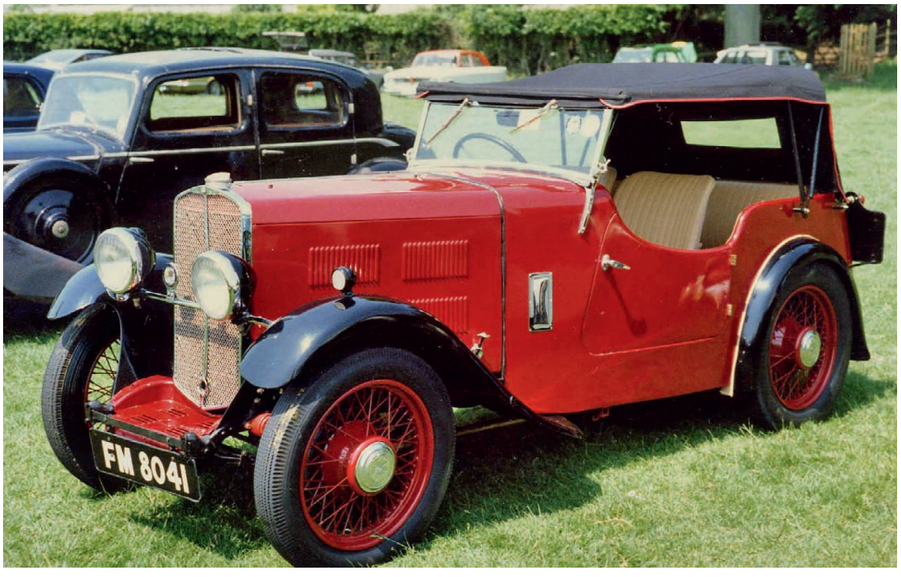
In 1932, the Vale Engineering Company of Maida Vale, London, became the first company to use underlying Triumph mechanicals for production of its own vehicle, with its Vale Special.

The Super Eight's 832cc engine, gearbox, rear-axle, four-wheel hydraulic brakes, and clutch were mated to a custom-built underslung, rigid chassis. In came a higher 5.75:1 final drive (a 5.25:1 option allowed for a higher top speed, at the cost of outright acceleration), a lightened flywheel, and a modified SU carburetor. Live axles front and rear, and a rather unique track-rod free steering set-up–each front wheel was steered by a drop arm from a cross-shaft carried across the chassis–endowed the low-slung and rakish-looking sports car with pin-sharp maneuverability. Retailing for £192 10s, the little road racer proved capable of a 70mph (113kph) top speed. *Motorsport* was "much struck by the way it handled and the care with which it was built."

A Gloria engine could be had from 1934, as could a 1476cc Gloria Six endowed variant. In May 1935, the order of a Mr. I. F. Connell (endowed with a custom-built four-cylinder Coventry Climax complete with Centric supercharger) impressed *Motorsport*. Producing 97bhp @ 5700rpm, this 1.5-liter beast had a close ratio gearbox and could break the 100mph (161kph) barrier, albeit at a cost of £625!

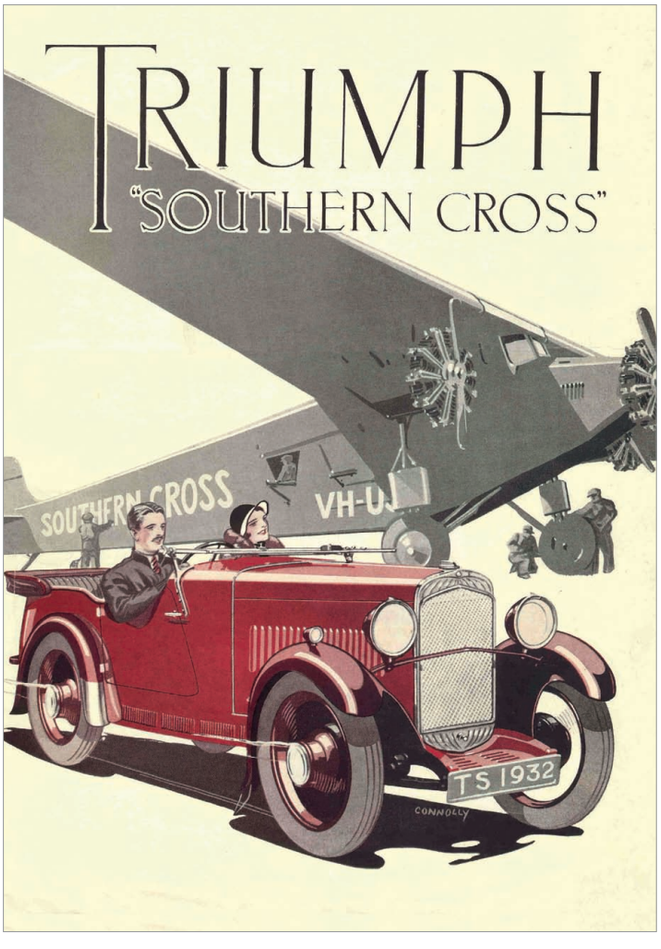
Production ended in 1936 with around 100 vehicles built. The company paved the way for others to follow, with Marendaz following quickly after (also in 1932) with its 'baby' Bentley, six-cylinder vehicle.

The Vale Special: advertised as "The Hand Made Car At A Mass Production Price" and aimed at the discerning enthusiast.



Last of the Super-based Southern Cross line, the popular designation would later reappear on its successor.

With its Salmon and Sons aluminum-paneled body, the gutsy Southern Cross provided dapper looks with higher performance abilities. In both 8.9hp and later 9.8hp forms, it became a favorite of Triumph enthusiasts.



1933–1934: A FINAL FLOURISH

The Super Seven bade farewell after selling 14,850 units, and in its place came the Super Eight, its nomenclature more reflective of the engine's 7.9hp RAC rating, and perhaps what the original model should have been known as all along–although you can forgive Triumph for hanging on to the hugely successful Austin Seven's bumper, at least initially.

The chassis had been modified to accept semi-elliptic suspension at all four wheels, with hydraulic dampers coming in at the rear. In came a four-speed gearbox, with a 'silent' double-helical third gear and slightly larger bodies. As the highest specified example of the Triumph powered breed, the Super Eights provided the best 'Super' experience, both in terms of driving, interior accoutrements, and finish. Just three models remained: the Pillarless Sedan de Luxe, the two- and four-seater de Luxe, and the Tourer de Luxe. All cost £155.

Yet another model arrived in the shape of the Ten, another derivation Scorpion chassis/Coventry Climax engine derivation, while the new Southern Cross 9.8hp replaced its predecessor. This sports car provided effortless performance, with *Motorsport* hailing its dual-purpose competition/pleasure nature and the engine's ability to rev all day long in the upper limits of its rev range (4600rpm–4900rpm) and propel the little tyke along at speeds of up to 70mph (113kph).

Alas, now 70 years old, Siegfried Bettmann retired, 'gently' forced out in a bloodless coup led by Holbrook, with whom he differed considerably in terms of vision for the company's future.

Only the Super Eight's Pillarless Sedan de Luxe model survived for 1934, with time eventually being called on the final version of Triumph's first real sports car. The other 'light car' models swiftly followed.

What came next, would be entirely different.


AYE 11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SUPPLEMENTARY
PAGE TO THE
TRIUMPH CAR
CATALOGUE

March, 1933

KV 4003

TRIUMPH TEN SALOON

A COMFORTABLE, roomy, low-built Saloon with sports car acceleration and performance. 10 h.p. "Southern Cross" engine, rubber-mounted on chassis frame, bore 63 mm., stroke 90 mm., capacity 1122 c.c., 3-bearing crankshaft. Lucas Automatic Starting System—Solex Easy Starting Carburetter. Four-speed gear with Silent Third. Lockheed Hydraulic Brakes with special 12-in. diameter drums. Special Radiator design. Hydraulic Jacking installation.

The body is hand made and of very pleasing lines, the low roof gracefully blending with the longer bonnet and dignified curve of the rear panel. It has six lights, four wide doors and generous seating to accommodate four in easy comfort. Adjustable bucket seats in front with Leveroll fittings, Pneumatic upholstery at back and all seats in real leather, pockets on all doors. Flush-fitting sliding roof. "Protectoglass" throughout, dual-arm windscreen wiper, winding windows to all doors, roof light, carpets front and rear, ash trays.

COMPLETE EQUIPMENT IS PROVIDED INCLUDING :

Illuminated instrument panel with clock.
Speedometer.
Oil Indicator.
Petrol gauge.
12-volt electric lighting.
Powerful Biflex Head Lamps.
Streamlined side lamps.
Finger-tip control.
High-frequency electric horn.
Luvax hydraulic shock absorbers.
Spring gaiters. Bumpers.
Folding luggage grid.
Magna wheels.
Metal tyre cover for spare wheel.

Available in two exclusive duo-tone colour schemes ; Black and Maroon or Black and Blue.
Treasury rating 9.8 h.p. Annual tax £10.

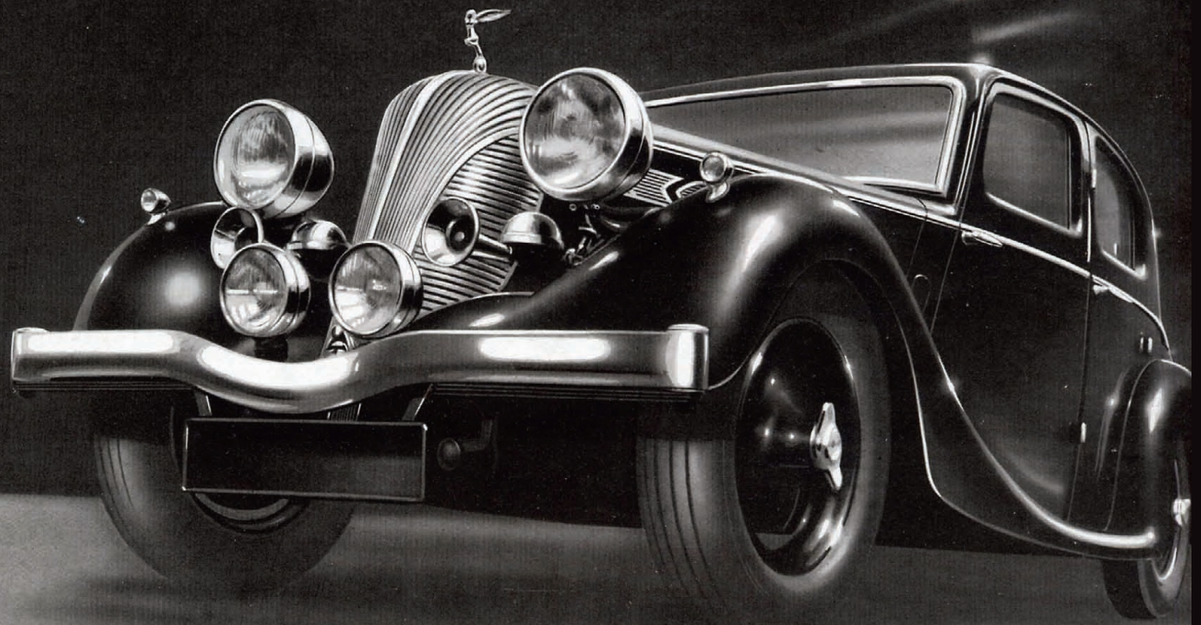
PRICE *at works* £225

(THIS SPREAD) The new Ten and its Southern Cross stablemate would cross over and continue to be sold after the arrival of the new Gloria models.

Triumph Super Seven	
Data	1927–1932
Models	Popular Tourer, Tourer de Luxe, Two-Seater de Luxe, Fabric Sedan, Coachbuilt Sedan, Gordon England Sedan (£149 10s-£200)
Construction	Ladder-type chassis, separate steel body
Length	118in (299.7cm)
Width	51in (130cm)
Height	62in (157.5cm) to 65in (165.1cm)
Wheelbase	81in (205.7cm)
Weight	1064lb (482.6kg), sedan 1288lb (584.2kg)
Engine Size	832cc
Engine Format	4-cylinder
Carburetion	Zenith, B&B, or Solex carburetor
Max Bhp	21hp @ 4000rpm
Max Torque	n/a
Gearbox	3-speed
Automatic	n/a
Axle Ratio	5.25:1
Steering	worm-and-wheel
Front/Rear Suspension	Beam axles with semi-elliptic leaf springs at front, quarter elliptics at rear, friction-type dampers
Tires	4.40–19in tires on detachable steel-spoke or wire wheels
Brakes	Lockheed hydraulic brakes all round
0 to 60 mph	n/a
Top Speed	60mph (96.6kph)
Fuel Economy	40+mpg (US, 33.3+mpg)

TRIUMPH

"DOLOMITE"
"VITESSE"
"GLORIA"
CARS



"THE SMARTEST CARS IN THE LAND"

3

THE ‘GLORIAS’ THIRTIES

ALL CHANGE IN TERMS OF STYLE

With Bettmann sidelined and soon to be gone, it would be time for an entirely different type of Triumph. The Frank Warner-designed Gloria proved a voluptuous seductress and no mean performer to boot. In, too, came racer and motorcar designer Donald Healey and with him an all-new, go-getting attitude that would see the car transformed into a successful competition steed. His Triumph magnum opus would prove a non-starter, with a fiscal slide exacerbated by the sale of the motorcycle arm, eventually resulting in the cessation of business.

Managing director Claude Vivian Holbrook’s stewardship saw Triumph move in an entirely new direction, expanding its offerings and focusing on striking new designs.

Now with free reign, Holbrook set about building his vision for the company. Key to that would be cars of an entirely different aesthetic (out would go strong, sturdy, and in many cases diminutive, replaced by vehicles of grace and beauty) as well as sporting prowess and performance.

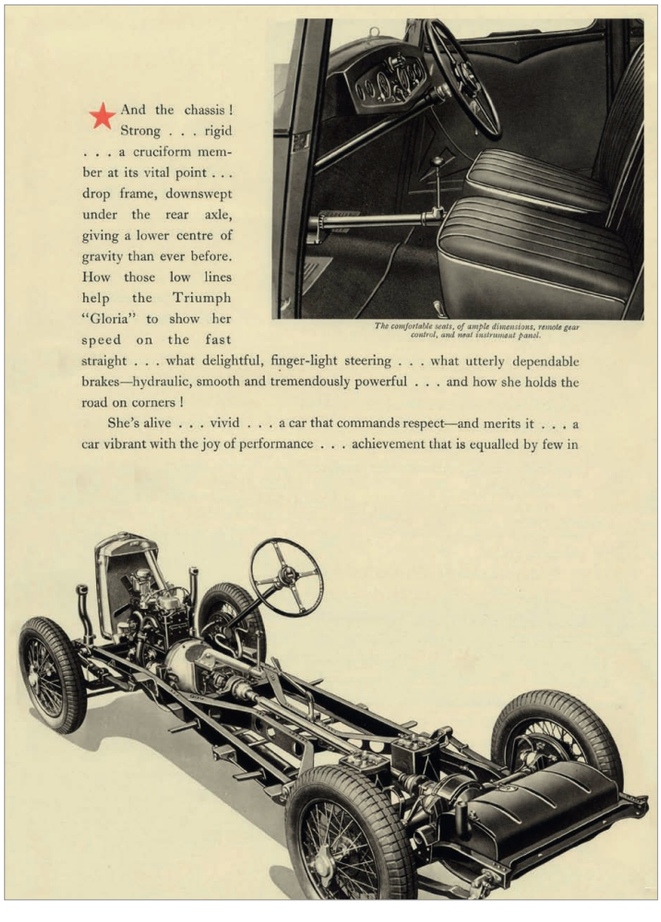
A whole host of staff were recruited to allow work towards these goals to begin, including Charles Ridley as works manager and his sons Charles Jr. and Jack, the latter of whom would become a test and competition driver. Donald Healey, a spirited individual and an inveterate, and very successful race, trial, and rallying driver, would also shortly arrive as Experimental Manager.

Debuting at the October 1933 Monte Carlo Rally, the new Frank Warner–styled Gloria wowed the assembled audience with its sultry, low-slung looks. Here was a car for the man that appreciated the sensuous form, antithesis to the masculine forms of more brutal performance machinery like Bentley's Blower. And be in no doubt, it would prove itself quite a performer too.

Manufacture used a multitude of components from outside companies, such as Lockheed, Coventry Climax, and Lucas, and took place at several sites. Rolling chassis were made up at the Priory Street factory before being driven the short distance to a now greatly expanded Clay Lane/Briton Road plant for partial completion. A road test east of the city followed, with completion of wooden frames in the Clay Lane body shop. Sixteen SWG Birmabright aluminum panels were added in artisan fashion, wheeled, and beaten on slave bodies, by both Chilvers Coton in Nuneaton and Henry Caton Ltd, Coventry.

Underneath the skin sat a conventional chassis with leaf springs, underslung at the rear, and with a cross-braced cruciform framework that dipped under the floorboards and rear axle line, which allowed for Warner's

The Gloria Speed Model Tourer four-seater retailed for £285, but for an additional £40 the Gloria Competition Tourer had an identical spec with Telecontrol shock absorbers, a lighter frame, oversize Fort Dunlop tires, and a larger petrol tank with a quick release filler cap among the modifications.



The same rigid frame chassis (with channel section side members, outswept and underslung at the rear) in either four- or six-cylinder form underpinned each Gloria model. Lockheed hydraulic brakes came as standard, and permanent jacks were fitted to the front and rear axles.

outrageously low-profile styling. Patented cut-down doors on the Tourer further accentuated this.

Mechanically, an ENV remote change gearbox could be partnered either to a 1087cc four-cylinder unit on the 9.5 Four, which output 40bhp @ 4500rpm and produced 54lb ft of torque, or a 1476cc six-cylinder unit on the Gloria Six for 44.7bhp @ 4000rpm and 67lb ft of torque. 'Special' models for each would see this increased by around 6-8bhp and 2.5-3lb ft. In came a new banjo rear axle with spiral-bevel gears, screw-and-nut steering, 12in (30.5cm) hydraulic brakes, and a cable-linked handbrake on the rear wheels.

Vaumol leather over pneumatic seat cushions in the cabin, safety glass, Biflex headlamps, permanents DWS jacks, and a metal cover for the spare wheel were indicative of a high level of specification.

1933–1936: MOUNTAINS AND VALLEYS

Seven Gloria models were made available ranging from £285 to £340. Road-testers found that rather than a gentle and sedate drive, the Glorias belied their looks with each returning a hard-driving and thoroughly satisfying experience. Handling proved top-notch, as did high-speed stability and engine performance. The gearbox had a particularly pleasing action and, as per usual, the brakes were considerably superior to those of direct competitors' machines.

Top of the tree sat the alluring Speed Model Tourer, but of most interest to those within Triumph was the Sports Gloria (shortly to be renamed the Gloria Monte Carlo). Developed by Healey for a tilt at the rally of the same name, it featured a revised rear end suitable for tough road conditions, twin spare tires, and an extra-large 17-gallon (64-liter) fuel tank. Dunlop knock-off wire wheels and Sessions jacks front and rear were fitted, as were alloy fenders and an electric master switch. A 1232cc, 10.8hp engine replaced the 9.5hp unit with twin downdraught 30mm Zenith carburetors fitted.

Unfortunately, with a sense of anti-climax, the new model wasn't ready in time for the 1934 running of the event, so Healey had its engine (which was) fitted in 10hp Southern Cross chassis equipped with huge 16in (40.5cm) wheels. Healey would finish the event in 3rd place overall with the others in 6th an 10th, proving their durability, competitiveness, and ensuring plaudits aplenty in the British motoring press. The first fruits of Holbrook's vision of sporting success for the marque had been achieved.

The March 1934 front cover of Motor Sport celebrates Donald Healey's 3rd place finish in the Monte Carlo Rally. With the dedicated competition model still not ready, its 1232cc engine found its way into a 10hp Southern Cross chassis fitted with a quickly and radically modified Gloria Monte Carlo body.

Purposeful and elegant in sedan form, the Gloria-Vitesse model had lower and more streamlined bodywork. All Vitesse models featured a multitude of engine tweaks, including a higher-lift camshaft, larger valves, polished ports, and higher compression, to improve performance and set them apart.

A two-seater Gloria Southern Cross sweeps around a corner on a motoring trial in Devon in 1935. With their shortened Monte Carlo chassis, they would prove adept little sporting cars.

Seven Triumphs–Southern Cross and Gloria sedans–also started the punishing 1,800-mile (2,897km) Alpine Trial that year. The event began in Nice and took in the 49-hairpin Stelvio pass and even wilder terrain in Austria on its way to Yugoslavia. Every single one made it to the finish, with Triumph the only team not to drop a point. Holbrook himself formed part of the team, alongside Jack Ridley and Vic Leverett. Healey, though, had been a very busy man and not just on the competition front, as something truly spectacular sat in the wings: the Dolomite project.

Tooling expenses on both the motorcar (for the Gloria) and motorcycle front (the new vertical-twin model) saw the company make considerable losses during this time, so much so that some began viewing the latter as a distraction from the main 'game'.

The Eights and Tens were dropped in 1935, with model improvements made across the board. Most, except the 1087cc 9.5hp-equipped entry-level model, were now powered by a 1232cc 10.8hp unit. The Six also saw capacity increased to 1991cc. The Gloria received a new Walter Belgrove designed single-winged female radiator mascot, while a sportier, higher-specification version of the Gloria arrived: the Gloria Vitesse.

With a higher compression ratio and other engine modifications, including larger valves and polished ports, this provided a 4bhp hike in 4- and 10bhp in six-cylinder forms, respectively. However, in total there were now a bamboozling 15 models available, including eight Cross & Ellis custom-bodied variants such as the Golfer's Coupe, and Walter Belgrove's radical six-cylinder, aerodynamic Flow-free Coupe. Despite *The Autocar* calling it "a modern conception . . . graceful and quite individual," the latter didn't sell well.

Belgrove's two-seater Southern Cross models were better received. His first entirely individual design was based on a shortened Monte Carlo chassis. However, sales still took a hit on the previous year's 2,000 units. Only the creditor's goodwill and Lloyd's Bank continued lending allowed the business to continue.

Production needed to be increased. When Holbrook purchased the former White & Poppe engine to become the 'Gloria Works' manufacturing plant, it signaled the end for the motorcycle business, which Mr. Jack Sangster of Ariel Motorcycles, Birmingham, bought lock, stock, and barrel. Incidentally, it would prosper once again in fresh hands.

In a bid to stimulate sales, the four-cylinder sedan had its price cut from £360 to £288 by replacing items such as the chromium-plated radiator shutters. Would it have an effect? Only time would tell.

(continues on page 46)

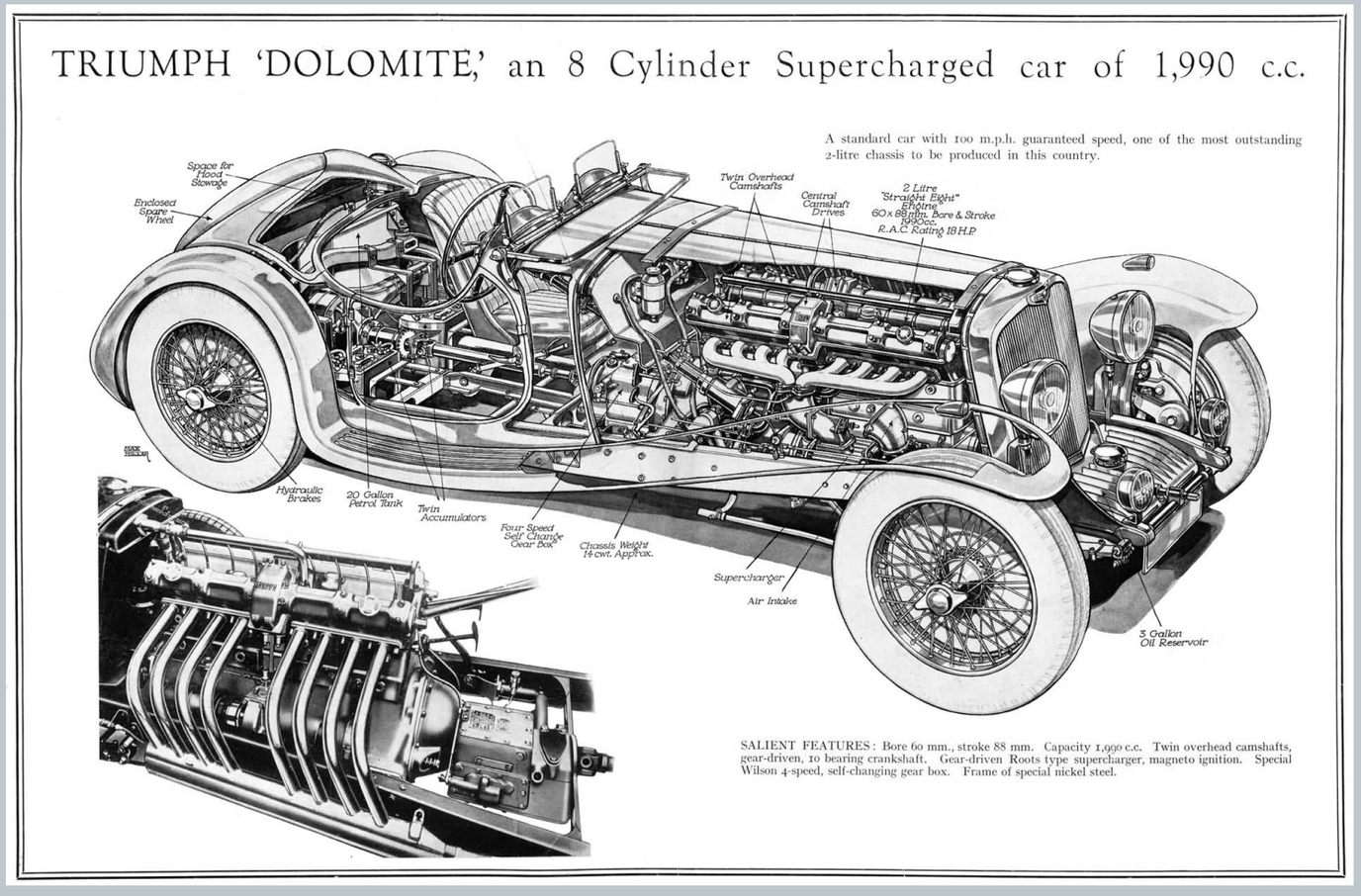
ITS NAME IS DOLOMITE

If you're going to name a model after a spectacular mountain range, it needs to be good. The moniker Dolomite had first been proposed in a Gloria model that never saw production. It's safe to say that the new Dolomite was and remains the finest Triumph ever engineered.

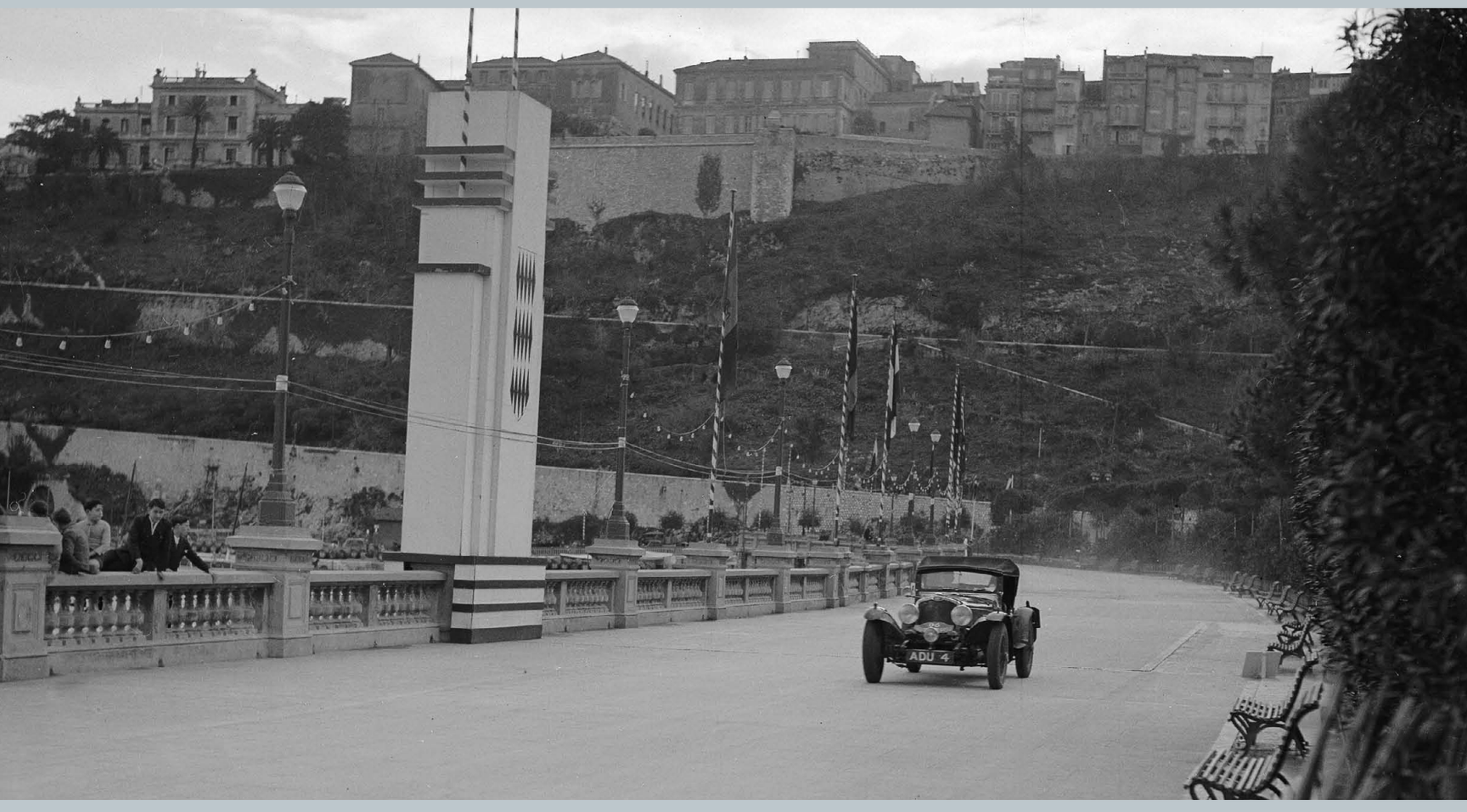
Donald Healey's brainchild to bridge the gap between Great Britain's small-capacity buzz-boxes and large-capacity high-speed behemoths aimed to compete with the plethora of middle-capacity Continental machinery in this sporting space. Using the Alfa Romeo 8C 2300 as his muse–and with the Italian company's full knowledge–Healey essentially reverse engineered the model with some tweaks and design changes for good measure.

The result proved spectacular: a majestic supercharged 2-liter, straight eight-powered motor car, with an imposingly glorious Frank Warner–designed body that could hit a top speed of 110mph (117kph). Underneath sat a 104in (264cm) wheelbase, with a ladder-type chassis, beam axles, semi-elliptic leaf springs front and rear, Hartford dampers, and a spiral-bevel-geared rear-axle (with 4.0:1 or 4:5:1) final drive ratio.

The fine detail though revealed the sheer level of engineering. Huge 16in (40.5cm) drum brakes fabricated with Elektron steel liners, aluminum alloy Ferodo-lined shoes, and Lockheed hydraulic actuation were phenomenally powerful for the time, and works of art. The engine, cast



The reverse-engineered Dolomite, an ode to Alfa Romeo's 8C 2300, proved a technological masterpiece in every way. Its twin overhead camshaft, 2-liter straight 8 engine, with Roots-type supercharger provided it with a RAC rating of 18hp and ferocious performance.



Donald Healey driving Triumph Dolomite 'ADU4' on the 1935 Monte Carlo Rally. He would collide spectacularly with a train during the night, at Gråsten in southern Denmark, on an unprotected level crossing.

in two blocks of four bolted in line and with twin overhead camshafts, combined with a twin-choke Zenith carburetor, Roots-type Supercharger (running at 1.5x the engine speed and at 10psi), and five-bearing crankshaft engine for an output of 120bhp. A Wilson-designed pre-selector gearbox from Armstrong-Siddeley dealt with the huge torque. Copious use of light alloys for the engine, body, and chassis ensured curb weight came in at 2100lb (952.5kg), with the latter's flexibility (particularly at the rear end) helping to endow it with first-class roadholding.

Healey would pilot Dolomite No. 1 (registered ADU 4) on the 1935 Monte Carlo Rally but in a terrifying incident collided with a train at an unguarded railway crossing, destroying the engine and almost costing its driver his life. Of course, the inimitable Healey would be back the following year, this time in a non-blown 2.4-liter version in which he would achieve a reasonable 8th place overall.

Unfortunately, Triumph's ever-tightening financial circumstances saw Holbrook nix the whole project–just two cars, three chassis, and six engines had been built. The projected sale prices of £1,050 for the chassis and £1,225 for a compete car remained just that; however, there's no doubt that the reflected glory of the design had done the marque no harm at all.

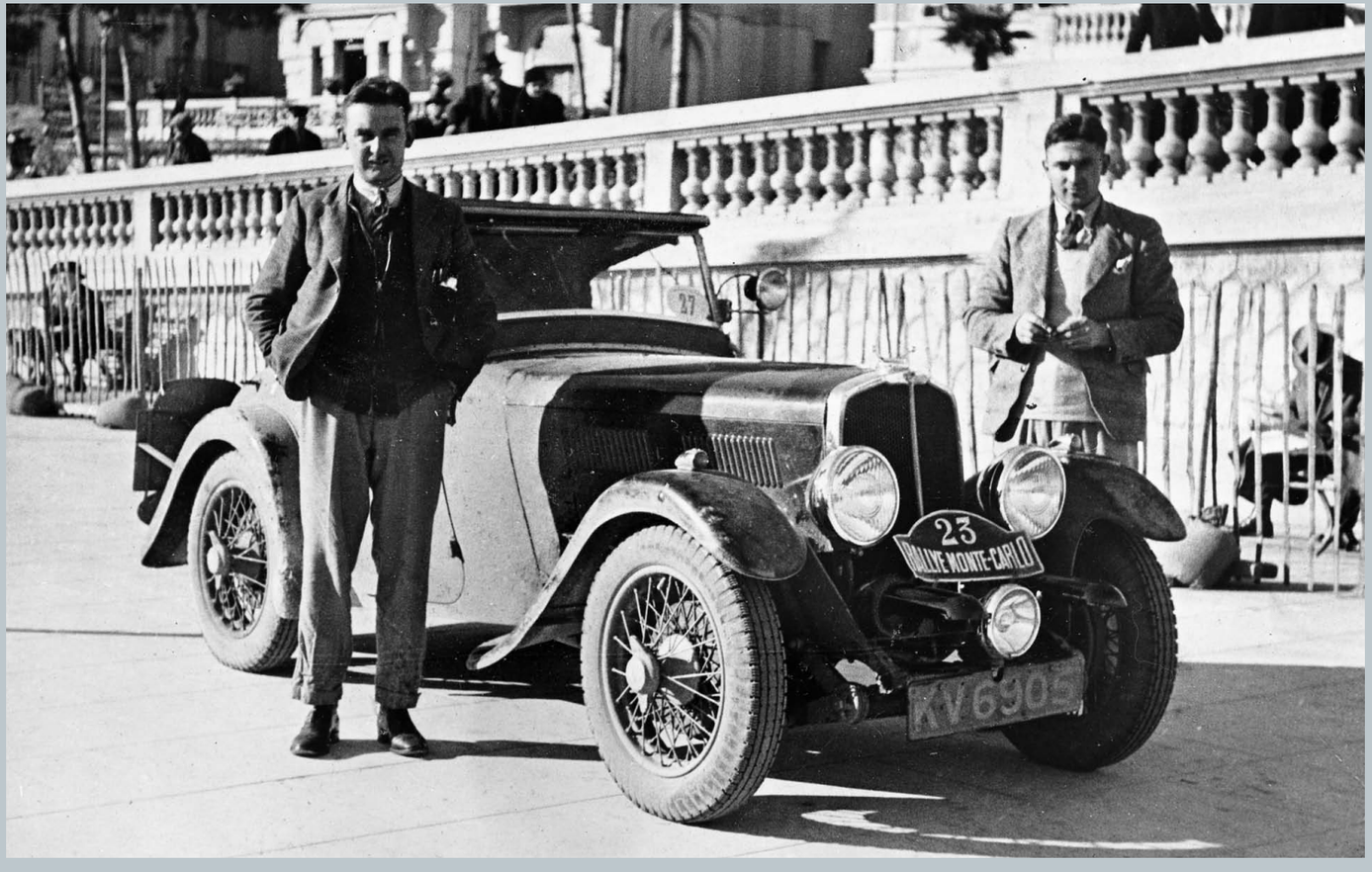
THE FULL MONTE

If 1934 had proven a success, then even better followed, if not for Healey himself, in 1935. The tortuous Monte Carlo Rally, with its 12 different starting points dotted across the European continent and multitudinous driving conditions, terrains, and tests, offered the ultimate endurance challenge to manufacturers, who if their steed rose to the top, could then crow to the masses and (hopefully) clean up on the sales front.

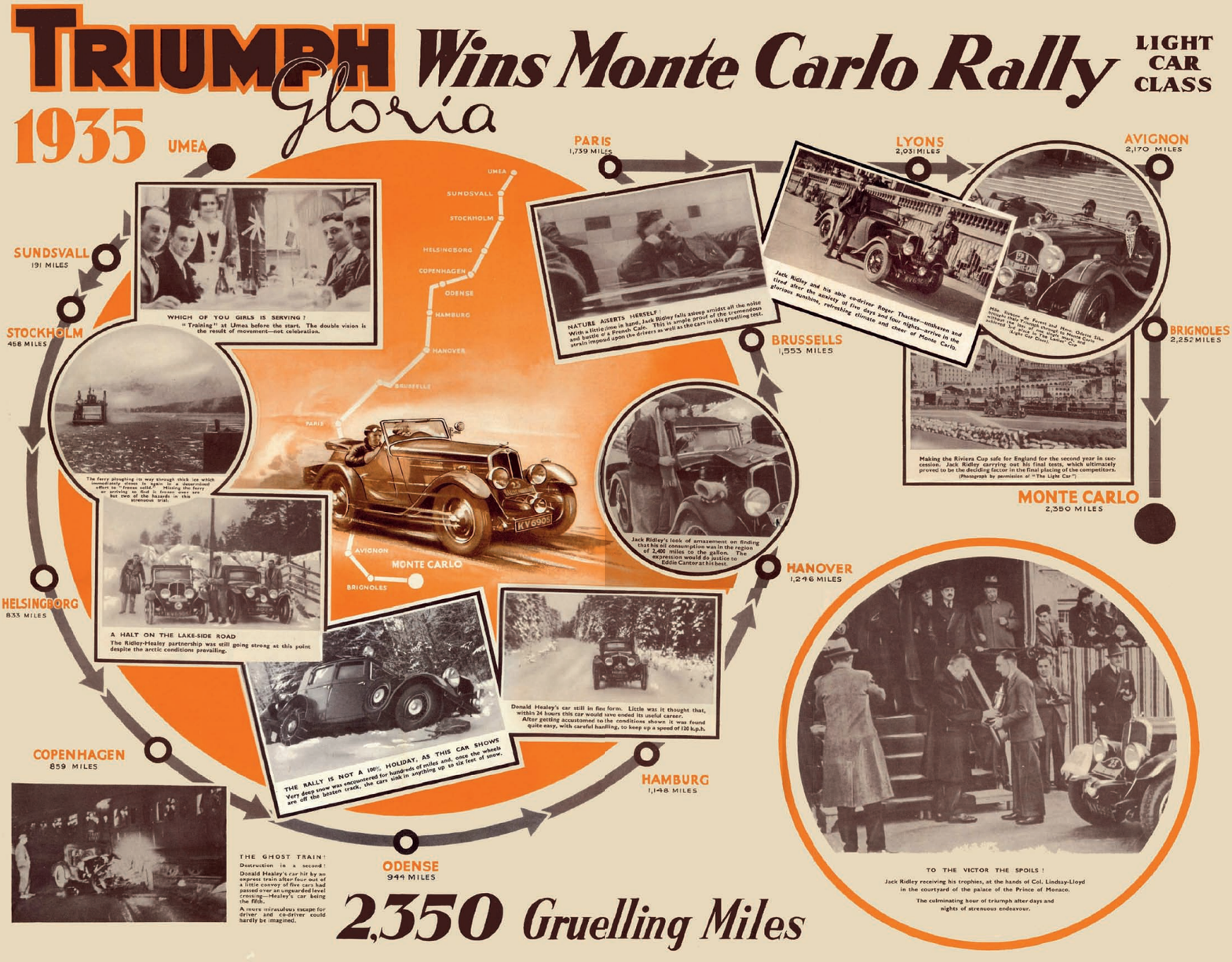
This time the Glorias *were* ready and ultra-competitive right from the start. From their Umea starting point (just 200 miles [321km] from the Arctic Circle) in Sweden, driver Jack Ridley and co-driver Roger Thacker powered south through the country in ice-cold but thankfully snow-free conditions. By Copenhagen they had covered 833 miles (1,341km), but that was just an appetizer. Hamburg, Hanover, Brussels, and Paris were dispatched, before the slog south through Avignon and Brignoles to the finish in Monte Carlo.

That wasn't the end of exertions though, as the driving tests including the famous 'wiggle-woggle' handling and 'flat-out' speed evaluations kicked in. The Triumph duo, however, had a trump card in the Gloria's trunk that they had fitted at Avignon: a Centric supercharger, rigged up for the final sections and chain-driven off the front-end of the camshaft. This provided the Triumph with an extra performance kick and allowed Ridley to speed past much larger capacity cars.

The result was a hugely impressive 1st place in the 'light car' class and 2nd place overall–behind Ch. Lahaye's 5¼-liter Quatersous Renault. Triumph's competition aspirations had been met, and it could now reflect in the Gloria's glory.



(ABOVE) Winners Ridley and Thacker pose for a victory snap with a mud-covered KV 6905 in Monte Carlo.



A detailed Triumph advert celebrates Jack Ridley and Roger Thacker's epic Light Car Class win on the 1935 Monte Carlo Rally. The post-crash remains of ADU4, Donald Healey's Dolomite, can be seen in the bottom lefthand corner.

(continues from page 41)

On the sales front, 1936 demonstrated that rationalization hadn't worked–less than 1,000 cars found homes. Cue more lending and a share issue offering more stock to raise further capital.

1937–1938: ALL CHANGE

The third generation of cars saw another addition to the model hierarchy, with the new Dolomite. No relation to Donald Healey's straight-eight masterwork, this one now sat firmly at the top of the tree, with the Vitesse mid-level and the Gloria 1½-liter as the base model.

All featured Walter Belgrove styling and Triumph–designed and built overhead valve/crossflow cylinder-head engines, with the exhaust and inlet ports sitting at opposing sides for easier cooling and an improved four-speed gearbox with synchromesh on 2nd, 3rd, and 4th. The Dolomite and Vitesse could both be had in 14/60 (1767cc, four-cylinder) and 2-litre flavors. The previous generation Gloria Fours with their Coventry Climax engines could still be had for a short period, before their departure saw Triumph without a dedicated sports car for the first time since Donald Healey's arrival.

The Dolomite also featured a 'waterfall' die-cast grille (one that would have looked more at home across the pond on a Chrysler or Hudson) that polarized public opinion and sent conservatives into a frenzy. *The Autocar* received a letter signed 'Real Radiator' that opined, "an achievement in mechanical construction is not necessarily an achievement of mechanical beauty . . . How often one hears nowadays, 'what a beautiful looking car' and 'from the radiator backwards.'" Owners of modern BMW vehicles, look away now!

To maximize sales, the design team bowed to pressure and introduced the 2-liter Continental Sedan endowed with the more moderate Vitesse radiator grille. While the Gloria 14 now offered the larger 1767cc four-cylinder engine, special order Avon dropheads could also add a glamorous touch. There's no doubting the quality of the cars, but competitors such a SS were offering vehicle models just as good and often at lower prices. Road tests remained overwhelmingly positive, with the lighter Vitesse widely considered to offer the best driving experience of all.

Sales and finances improved in 1937 with a profit just over £35,000 in the nine months to December, but it would be mere short-term relief. Merger talks with Riley amounted to naught. With the model line-up beginning to look a touch uninspired, thankfully spirits were lifted by the arrival of the sleek Dolomite 14/65 Roadster Coupe.

(continues on page 50)

The svelte rear-end of the 14/65 Dolomite Roadster took its lead from the lines of the original Dolomite.

(OPPOSITE) A source of much controversy–the new Dolomite's die-cast front grille.

Too brash for conservative British tastes? The all-new Dolomite saw a departure in styling and a serious (for that read divisive) bit of bling up front.

THE ARMY MAN

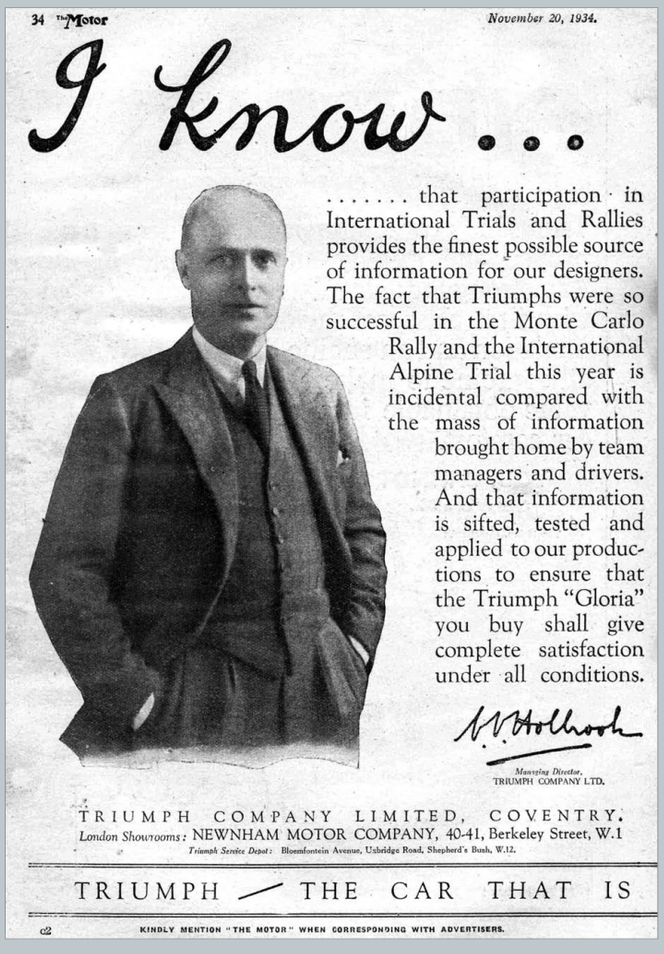
Born in Portsmouth in 1886, Claude Vivian Holbrook rose to become a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army Service Corps during World War I, where he had responsibility for motorcycle procurement.

This brought him into contact with Siegfried Bettmann and the Triumph Cycle Co, which he would join at the cessation of hostilities. A pleasant and highly enthusiastic man, he would form an effective team with Bettmann–even if, on occasion, their respective visions differed radically. It would be Holbrook that persuaded his cautious boss to buy the Dawson Motor Company and its premises, and then for Triumph to pursue the construction of its own motor car.

After Bettmann left the company, Holbrook would take its products in an entirely different, if not fiscally successful, direction. The company's output during the 1930s–dashing, elegant, and sporting in character–reflected the man and even today is still recalled with great enthusiasm by marque enthusiasts.

Donald Healey recalled Holbrook as "a fine gentleman, not an engineer but a good leader. I enjoyed working for him." He also proved to be a fine driver, piloting many a Triumph himself in rallies with considerable success.

After the ignominy of the company's demise, he would rejoin the army and serve in a staff post gaining the rank of full colonel, before retiring in 1943. He would go on to gain a knighthood and live until 1979.


34 The Motor November 20, 1934.

I know . . .

. . . . . that participation in International Trials and Rallies provides the finest possible source of information for our designers. The fact that Triumphs were so successful in the Monte Carlo Rally and the International Alpine Trial this year is incidental compared with the mass of information brought home by team managers and drivers. And that information is sifted, tested and applied to our productions to ensure that the Triumph "Gloria" you buy shall give complete satisfaction under all conditions.

J. V. Holbrook

Managing Director, TRIUMPH COMPANY LTD.

TRIUMPH COMPANY LIMITED, COVENTRY.
London Showrooms: NEWNHAM MOTOR COMPANY, 40-41, Berkeley Street, W.1
Triumph Service Depot: Bloemfontein Avenue, Uxbridge Road, Shepherd's Bush, W.12.

TRIUMPH — THE CAR THAT IS

c2 KINDLY MENTION "THE MOTOR" WHEN CORRESPONDING WITH ADVERTISERS.

This period advertorial in *The Motor* saw Managing Director Claude Vivian Holbrook lauding the company's motorsport successes. Alas, his reign would be over by 1939.

(continues from page 46)

1939: THE END IS NIGH

A six-cylinder Dolomite Roadster Coupe joined its smaller four-cylinder sibling in 1939. The Roadster Coupe proved a concours success, while the four-cylinder–although slower than the Southern Cross–achieved some class success in rallies such as the RAC.

The line-up had been further trimmed and now included only Dolomites and the entry-level Triumph 12. At one end of the scale sat the £425 six-cylinder Dolomite Royal, the most luxurious sedan ever produced by the company and at the other, the £285 12.

The writing though was firmly on the wall. Small operating profits were overridden by large operating losses and the bank pulled the plug. Accounting firm Gibson & Ashford acted as receivers, with Donald Healey facilitating a sale on its behalf to Thomas Ward & Co of Sheffield.

Holbrook's grand vision and the vehicles that had used the advertising slogan "the smartest cars in the land" were no more. The sale of the motorcycle business had been a mistake, and the cars, while certainly striking to behold, luxurious, and enjoyable to drive, proved to be the wrong ones for the those straightened times.

All that was moot though, because as the world held its collective breath, cataclysm approached.

THE DOLOMITE ROYAL SALOON

THIS magnificent car is one of the finest examples of high grade English coachwork that has ever been offered as a production model. Exclusively designed and manufactured in the Triumph factory, refinement and careful taste are evident in every detail.

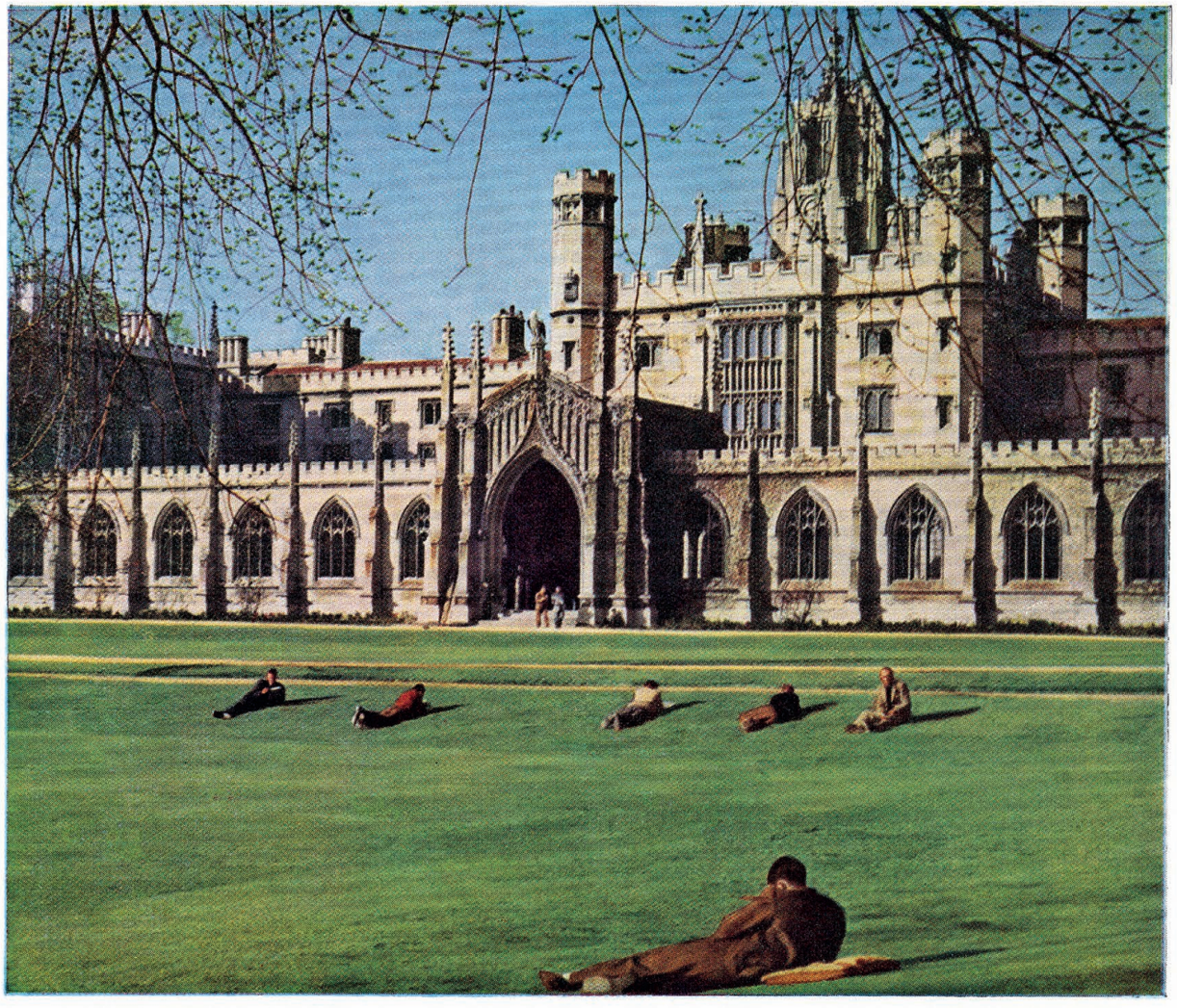
The distinctive and beautifully executed die-cast radiator imparts an air of character and superiority which is adequately supported by the car's performance, appointments and finish. Roomy enough to accommodate five adults in comfort it is nevertheless of sufficiently moderate dimensions to make it extremely easy to control under all circumstances. Anti-drumming aluminium panels, deep luxurious Dunlopillo seats, real mahogany instrument board and mouldings, large dial instruments, interior lighting, soft carpeting and all details are of the very best style and quality providing a constant sense of satisfaction to driver and passengers. Particular attention has been paid to rear seat comfort and travel in these fast, silent, smooth-running machines is a thrill which never palls and gives comfort in road travel seldom—if ever—equalled. The exceptionally wide and deep windscreen and windows make the car particularly enjoyable for touring owing to the wide vision which is obtained. The luggage boot is particularly commodious and possesses the great advantage of being wide enough to accommodate golf bags laid flat on the floor thus leaving the interior of the car completely free for passengers. The steering column is telescopically adjustable for length and the rake may be altered by the loosening of a nut.

The prices which include twin mellotone horns, two fog lights and a very lavish equipment are £375 on the 14/60 four-cylinder chassis and £425 on the six-cylinder 2-litre chassis. Wheel discs, if required, are £10 10s. 0d. extra.

THE DOLOMITE ROYAL SALOON

The finest version of the finest cars in the land, and one final flourish–the beautifully built and luxurious finished Dolomite Royal sedan.

Triumph Gloria Monte Carlo	
Data	1934–1935
Models	Tourer and Coachbuilt Sedan (£325)
Construction	Ladder-type chassis, separate aluminum body
Length	154in (391.2cm)
Width	60in (152.4cm)
Height	61in (155cm)
Wheelbase	108in (274.3cm)
Weight	2000lb (907.2kg)
Engine Size	1232cc
Engine Format	4-cylinder
Carburetion	Two Zenith carburetors
Max Bhp	48hp @ 4750rpm
Max Torque	n/a
Gearbox	4-speed
Automatic	n/a
Axle Ratio	5.22:1
Steering	screw-and-nut
Front/Rear Suspension	Beam axles with longitudinal semi-elliptic leaf springs, Hartford, later Andre, adjustable dampers
Tires	4.75-18in tires on wire wheels
Brakes	12in (30.5cm) hydraulic brakes all round
0 to 60 mph	n/a
Top Speed	75mph (121kph)
Fuel Economy	n/a



All that's best in Britain...

Our famous universities, with their colleges set amid peaceful quadrangles and shaded lawns, are more than detached seats of learning ; within their walls is enshrined not only the greatness of Britain's past but the hope for its future . . . . . from them come new ideas and new techniques . . . embodied, too, in the products of the Standard Motor Company are the latest achievements of engineering research and design, making them truly representative of 'all that's best in Britain.'

The Triumph Mayflower

Manufactured by
The Triumph Motor Company (1945) Ltd., Coventry
A subsidiary of the Standard Motor Co. Ltd.
London : 37, Davies Street, Grosvenor Square, W.1.
Telephone : MAYfair 5011.

TRIUMPH CARS · STANDARD CARS · STANDARD COMMERCIAL VEHICLES · FERGUSON TRACTORS

4

ON A RAZOR'S EDGE

A POSTWAR RESURRECTION

With its Coventry factories laid bare by war and the Triumph marque resurrected in name only, the time was nigh for a new approach. In came product rationalization, de rigueur in the 1950s and to become even more widespread in subsequent decades. First attempts ranged from the okay to the very decent, with a touch of driving pleasure to be had. Thrust forward by the dictatorial Sir John Black, this postwar export sales proving ground would turn out to be vital in the development of what came next.

Period Triumph Mayflower (and Standard Vanguard) advertising lent heavily on British imagery, including its iconic universities, all things royal, and other famous landmarks.

As per the rest of the automotive industry, during World War II Triumph's factories turned their hand to helping the war effort. The German Luftwaffe laid them to waste during the infamous Coventry blitz of November 14, 1940, alongside vast swathes of civilian infrastructure, homes, and most notably, the city's cathedral.

With hindsight, it turned out that Thomas Ward & Co had only ever been interested in asset stripping its new purchase. This signaled a slow death-knell for the marque that German bombers sped up during the Coventry Blitz, with many of the Triumph factories (and contents) destroyed.

The British motor industry, now dominated by big industrial concerns including Rootes, Austin plus the Nuffield Combine (including Morris, Riley, Wolseley, etc.), and the Standard Motor Company, was now in the process of reorganizing itself for production when the war finally ended.

Over at the Standard Motor Company, combative and fiercely ambitious managing director Sir John Black had big plans for the company. With one eye on SS (soon to become Jaguar), to which it had supplied many of the parts for vehicles prewar, he had watched with envy as William Lyons grew it from a tiny body supplier to a small-scale manufacturer of rapid and glamorous sports cars–one with a burgeoning reputation.

He resolved to take the fight to his rival, and when it became known that Thomas Ward & Co was ready to sell the remains of Triumph, he quickly snapped it up–albeit, at an incredibly high price of £75,000. However, he had what he wanted–a name with the sporting prestige necessary to forge ahead with his plans.

Triumph was back.

1946–1948: REBIRTH

When they appeared, the new Triumphs had no connection to the company's unsuccessful prewar models. Rather, they used numerous components from the company's Flying Standard, including the back axle, 1776cc ohv four-cylinder engine, and its independent front suspension. Rationalization had become the byword for this new era, and the motoring public would have to get used to component sharing between marques and indeed models.

(continues on page 58)

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY MISSED

Judged too old for active service and instead employed to design and develop war vehicles, the effervescent Donald Healey began planning (during the Blitz of Coventry, of all times) a new car.

Working in his spare time with a band of Rootes employees (stylist and body engineer Ben Bowden and salesman James Watt) and expatriate Italian chassis designer with experience at Alfa Romeo and Maserati, A C 'Sammy' Sampietro, they would have 'The Triumph' ready to show to manufacturers by 1943/44.

They termed it that because Healey fully expected it to have Triumph running gear, and indeed to be produced by the company in whatever guise it reappeared. Ward, already deep into the process of asset stripping Triumph, feigned interest only to turn it down, and so 'The Triumph' became 'The car'.

Now with a Riley engine and gearbox, Healey would put the car into production at his own Warwick premises and under his own name. It would go on to inspire the Healey 100, which he would then sell to Austin to be built at Longbridge.

The rest is history, as it stunned on its debut and swiftly sold like proverbial hotcakes in the United States and elsewhere.

Originally intended to be a Triumph, BMC snapped up Donald Healey's brainchild and marketed it as the Austin Healey 100. It swiftly took the North American sports car market by storm.

The Triumph 1800 Roadster's lines harked back to the prewar era and were well resolved in some respects and less so in others. Standard's Flying Fourteen sedan provided many of the mechanicals.


DDP 646

Sharing a chassis with the 'Razor Edge' sedan, the Roadster could seat three-abreast in the front and also featured triple windscreen wipers and a Dickey seat.

(continues from page 54)

Due to rationing of sheet metal, the simple Ray Turner designed chassis was of a tubular steel design. Senior draughtsmen Frank Callaby and Arthur Ballard designed the Tourer model in-house, while Mulliners of Birmingham completed a Razor-Edge style prototype, to Sir John Black's tastes. It didn't meet them, so was redesigned utilizing the same key style (although the design attribution of both the 1800 and successor sedans remains, to this day, disputed).

Priced at £967, the Roadster 1800 and 1800 Town and Country sedan were released in March 1946; supply shortages in this new postwar world meant that those placing orders could face a significant wait for supply.

The drop-top featured neo-classic styling that proved somewhat controversial and harked back to yesteryear. It could accommodate three abreast in the front and had an occasional 'dickey' seat at the back (the second to last British car to do so—the last being the Allard Clipper) with a second windscreen that could be raised. It looked somewhat doughty compared to sleek modern competition, and its modest underpinnings ensured that it remained more tourer in nature than its Roadster moniker suggested.

The public agreed and just 2,501 units would be constructed. The sharp-edged sedan fared a little better securing a decent section of middle-class buyers with 4,000 finding homes.

THE TRACTOR 'SIDELINE'

Irish tractor manufacturer Harry Ferguson's wares had been produced prewar in small numbers by the David Brown organization in Great Britain and Ford in Detroit, but he hooked up with the Standard-Triumph in 1945 signing a new deal for it to produce his vehicles at its Banner Lane plant.

Despite difficult relations between the two companies' protagonists, this proved successful to both, and shortly it would sustain the car manufacturer (indeed 70 percent of profits would shortly come from tractor production) as sales of the Standard Vanguard dropped due to intense competition.

In 1953 Harry Ferguson dropped the bombshell that his company would merge with Massey-Harris of Canada. The board voted to end the contract, but the hard-headed Sir John Black promptly took it upon himself to sign a fresh 12-year deal without the board's knowledge, this would hark his own demise.

Late summer 1946, Standard-Triumph Managing Director Sir John Black sits atop the very first Ferguson TE20 tractor produced by the company. It featured the same basic wet-liner engine that would power the first few generations of its upcoming sports car.

Originally released as the Triumph 2-liter sedan, this sharp-suited model very quickly became the 2-liter Renown. A limousine model with a 3in (7.5cm) longer wheelbase could also be had for a short period before being unceremoniously dropped due to a lack of sales.

1949–1954: THE SECOND COMING

The new year saw both the Roadster and Sedan replaced by new 2-liter variants—with the latter now known as the 2000 sedan, before a much modified version was introduced as the "Renown" in autumn 1949. Flying Standard production and supply of its engine to Jaguar had stopped, so it made sense in this rationalized world to bring in the big brother's unit. This wet-liner engine would swiftly gain a reputation for extreme ruggedness and become a mainstay of the new TR sportscar range until 1967. Accordingly, the Vanguard's three-speed gearbox and rear axle (in 4.625 flavor) joined it. Optional Laycock overdrive arrived the following year, stretching the legs of both variants and making for more relaxed cruising.

Eager to grind his fellow motoring oligarchs' sales into the ground, Black commissioned a small sedan. With one eye on the U.S. market, to which the U.K. supplied an astonishing 95 percent share of exports, this car would mimic the 'razor-edge' styling of larger Triumph sedans, notably with a similar rear aspect and modified Renown radiator grille.

The company expended £1 million in capital developing its new Mayflower–the moniker chosen after the ship that carried Pilgrims to Massachusetts Bay back in 1620. Economical, roomy, and with a high level of specification, Black held high hopes for its chances.

The formula looked good on paper; the new car offered a tough and quiet four-bearing crankshaft, 1247cc side-valve engine–an evolution of the Standard Flying Ten's; excellent visibility thanks to thin A- and B-pillars that allowed for large glass areas; a capacious trunk made possible by mounting the spare wheel under the trunk floor; independent front suspension with coil springs; a semi-elliptic endowed rear axle; hydraulic dampers all round; and an all-synchro, three-speed gearbox (one of the first). U.S. options included full leather, a radio, and a heater. All export vehicles gained cut pile carpets, while home market buyers received rubber matting–although some dealers gave cars duotone paintjobs to jazz them up.

(continues on page 62)

The 2000 featured more oomph (alas, still not enough) and still had the Dickey seat.

The new Triumph Mayflower at launch during the 1949 British International Motor Show at Earls Court Exhibition Centre.

The finishing lines for the Standard Vanguard, Triumph Mayflower, and Triumph Renown at Standard-Triumph's Canley factory in 1952.

(continues from page 59)

To say that the resulting vehicle's styling–designed by Leslie Moore at Mulliner, and some Walter Belgrove front end input, with high cabin, traditional radiator grille, and slab flanks–proved divisive is an understatement, and with just 38bhp, it's criminally underpowered compared to U.S. competition. Consumers in the United States regularly covered vast distances in a day and truly monstrous ones annually. They also tended to be averse to vehicles that required anything other than the most basic regular maintenance.

The three-speed box proved a mite undercooked and limited performance, as the engine proved not flexible enough without sufficient torque at low rpm. Chief engineer Ted Grinham had insisted on this as a cost-cutting measure, much to Harry Webster's chagrin. 0–50mph (0–80kph) took 23sec with top speed limited to 63mph (101kph).

Offsetting this, it proved decidedly characterful to drive and was well-built in the extreme. Coupled to that, the interior space proved class leading. Four people could be accommodated with absolute ease. A figure of 86.8 percent inside vehicle space utilization had never been seen before–the Kaiser, its nearest rival in those terms in the United States, had just 80 percent.

Triumph advertised the Mayflower as "the light car of elegant British styling and unusually handsome appearance, designed for comfortable family motoring." New York importer Joe Ferguson, brother of tractor manufacturer Harry, ran Fergus Motors importing many British marques including Triumph and thought it ungainly on first sight, but asked Tom McCahill for his opinion; he replied, "it's a hell of a looking car and if it's half as bad as I think it looks then I'm going to blast it wide open."

Writing in *Mechanix Illustrated*, he said that it had, "more acute angles than you can find in the uplift ads." However, having spent time behind the wheel in terms of its handling, he followed that up

by stating that it stuck to the road "like a tar stain on a white shirt. The more I drove it the more I liked it." His final compliment, "a mighty little atom" completed a 360 turnaround.

Over in Great Britain, Michael Brown of *The Autocar* had similar praise: "actually this is a car of many attributes . . . it cruised sweetly at 40mph (64kph) as an aristocratic and quiet little carriage."

An awkward looking Mulliner's designed drophead coupe soon joined it, but Standard-Triumph quickly dropped it due to high manufacturing costs required to strengthen the bodyshell.

At the end of 1949, the 108in Standard Vanguard's box-section pressed-steel chassis, complete with coil spring and wishbone front suspension and steering gear, replaced the previous set-up. The Renown continued to sell well, but Roadsters still shipped relatively slowly, with 650 sold by this time.

The 2000 Roadster would cease production the following year, being neither fast nor sporting enough to make inroads on MG's TC in both export and home markets. In fact, just 184 examples of both the 1800 and 2000 Roadsters had been exported–miniscule numbers.

A limousine version of the Renown with a 3in (7.5cm) stretched wheelbase arrived in late 1951. Unfortunately, Black's vision for executive middle-class transport failed to take off. Just 190 examples were constructed, with the build process being incredibly convoluted and involving a huge host of panel, glass, and trim changes. At some point during the remainder of the year, the standard Renown would receive the (marginally) more commodious limousine's chassis, although this appears to have been a Mulliner-led modification.

By June 1952 demand had fallen (that familiar prewar Triumph failing). Prices were cut accordingly from £925 to £775, but the opposition–including the £995 Rover 75 and £865 Sunbeam Talbot 90–continued to outsell the Renown.

On the Mayflower front, things proved a bit better. Buyers who got past its looks, and there were many, found it quite a lovable little rogue, and 34,000 were sold, with a healthy 17,605 exported, before production ceased in 1953. The Renown Sedan would last into the next year before it too disappeared.

As a postwar appetizer and vehicles of exportable potential, it had been a case of a little good and a little not so good. The Roadsters were decent enough, if a touch flawed, in their execution. However, Standard-Triumph's next attempt at a drop-top sports car would be very different and would yield exceedingly different results, especially in the pivotal North American market.

Key to it would be the formidable Vanguard-sourced 'wet-liner' engine.

THE DRIVEN AUTOCRAT

Sir John Paul Black couldn't have been any further removed in nature from Triumph's previous boss, Lt Col Holbrook. Shrewd, dynamic, and with more than a flash of ruthlessness running through his core, he was the ultimate love 'em or hate 'em figure.

Born in Kingston-upon-Thames in 1895, he served in the RNVR and Tank Corps during World War I, attaining the rank of captain. Postwar he joined the Standard Motor Company at the invitation of its founder R. W. Maudslay becoming, within a year, both a director and general manager.

He would be outright managing director by 1934. An autocrat by nature, he would dictate company policy by sheer force of will and commanded a very loyal following amongst the company's 'troops'. Several questionable business decisions towards the end of his time at the company saw the board use an accident as a passenger in a Swallow Doretti prototype as an excuse to force him out.

A renowned bon viveur in his spare time, he retired to a company-owned bungalow in Wales.

Black died on Christmas Eve 1965.

(ABOVE) The short-lived drophead coupe version of the Mayflower. Time-consuming and expensive to build, just 11 of these bespoke vehicles were constructed.

(RIGHT) Period advertising for both the Mayflower and Renown followed an 'All that's best in Britain . . . ' theme. Many thought the former was aesthetically challenging, but even they couldn't deny the model's sheer drivability and stupendous use of interior space.

Triumph 1800 'Town and Country' Sedan	
Data	1946–1949
Models	Sedan (£650-£775)
Construction	Ladder-type chassis, separate steel body
Length	175in (444.5cm)
Width	63.5in (161.3cm)
Height	63in (160cm)
Wheelbase	108in (274.3cm)
Weight	2828lb (1282.8kg)
Engine Size	1776cc
Engine Format	4-cylinder
Carburetion	Solex carburetor
Max Bhp	63hp @ 4500rpm
Max Torque	92lb ft @ 2000rpm
Gearbox	4-speed
Automatic	n/a
Axle Ratio	4.86:1
Steering	cam-and-roller
Front/Rear Suspension	Independent with transverse leaf-sprig, upper wishbones, lever arm dampers/live rear axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs, anti-roll bar, lever-arm dampers
Tires	5.75-16in tires on 3.5in rims
Brakes	10in (25.4cm) x 1.5in (3.8cm) drum brakes all round
0 to 60 mph	n/a
Top Speed	n/a
Fuel Economy	n/a

Triumph Mayflower Sedan	
Data	1949–1953
Models	Sedan (£370-£450)
Construction	Ladder-type chassis, separate steel body
Length	154in (391.2cm)
Width	62in (157.5cm)
Height	62in (157.5cm)
Wheelbase	84in (213.4cm)
Weight	2016lb (914.4kg)
Engine Size	1247cc
Engine Format	4-cylinder
Carburetion	Solex carburetor
Max Bhp	38hp @ 4200rpm
Max Torque	58lb ft @ 2000rpm
Gearbox	3-speed
Automatic	n/a
Axle Ratio	5.125:1
Steering	cam-and-lever
Front/Rear Suspension	Independent with coil springs, wishbones, telescopic dampers/live rear axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs, telescopic dampers
Tires	5.00-15in tires on 4.0 rims
Brakes	8x1.5in (20.3x3.8cm) drum brakes all round
0 to 60 mph	23sec
Top Speed	63mph (101.4kph)
Fuel Economy	33mpg (UK)/27.5mpg (US)


TRIUMPH

5

TWO LITTLE LETTERS: TR

A NEW LOW-COST SPORTS CAR

The 20TS prototype proved the basis for The Standard Motor Company's first attempt at a sports car, with which to take the fight to MG and Morgan. Its development led directly to the new TR2, and this 100mph (161kph)-plus model's simplicity and ruggedness would prove to be its biggest assets, both on the road and in competition. Shown at the 1953 Geneva Motor Show, the 90bhp Vanguard-engined tyke proved to be a superlative little machine, one that seriously punched above its weight and was further improved in its various TR3 iterations.

A 1960 promotional advert shows a hardtop-endowed TR3 parked up in central London, with its lady driver quite rightly admiring its sleek lines.

By 1950 Great Britain had become the world's largest exporter of motor vehicles. MG stood atop of the sports car tree, having single-handedly created a market for its two-seater roadsters. In 1948 in a first, it had produced a U.S.-market-only model of its TC, and then benefitted directly as sales of its TD successor went into orbit two years later. Jaguar, too, had followed quickly on Abingdon's coattails, although its spectacular six-cylinder XK120 targeted buyers considerably further up the food chain.

Large companies, such as the Nuffield and Roots Groups, Ford, and Vauxhall, were now dominating, and at their respective helms stood a number of highly ambitious and larger than life characters–sharp elbows and covetous glances at competitors most definitely prevailed.

For Sir John Black and the Standard Motor Company, it was no different. With MG's reputation on the up and up and Jaguar taking plaudits aplenty, the sports car exporters stood firmly in his crosshairs. The question was: how to compete? The last of its vehicles with even the faintest whiff of a sporting image lay firmly in the company's past.

Realistically the might of the Nuffield Group negated trying to mount a takeover of MG, so his glance fell on tiny Malvern-based Morgan. Standard had a long history of supplying it with engines, first of all in 1939 with a special ohv 1247cc unit from the Standard Flying Ten for its 4/4, and currently with the 2088cc Standard Vanguard engine for the Plus 4.

Hubris, however, got the better of him, and having expected a done takeover deal, in December 1950 his advances were firmly rebuffed by the fiercely independent, family-owned minnow. A more belligerent type may have pulled the supply of engines, but to his credit he didn't.

Instead, he continued with due diligence, seeking out the opinions of others in the motor industry, including *Motor* editor Christopher Jennings (recently returned from the United States) and J. B. Ferguson, Harry Ferguson's brother, at Fergus Motors in New York, who both confirmed his own inkling that a gap in the U.S. market did indeed exist.

A Jaguar XK 120 is displayed proudly in the foyer of the Brown Palace hotel in Denver, Colorado, in August 1953. Sir John Black had looked on enviously as both MG and Jaguar carved their respective pieces of the U.S. sports car market, but his brainchild would soon join and, in terms of outright sales, surpass both of them.

TRX–A NON-STARTER

Towards the end of the Triumph Roadster's production life, Black had given Walter Belgrove the go-ahead to design and style its successor. No doubt with one eye on Jaguar, Black dictated that it should be a full-width roadster, beautifully trimmed and finished to highest of standards.

Belgrove based the prototype TRX on the 94in (2.4m) wheelbase Vanguard rolling chassis. Its lines proved to be a mixed bag. There's no doubt that the combination of panels, many of them with double curvature, provided a thoroughly modern aesthetic, but it was a touch bulbous at the front end, with an overtly upright windscreen. The complex double skinned, light alloy panel construction also ensured that bodies would be expensive to construct.

Further complication and cost came by way of electro-hydraulic seats and headlamps, as well as a high-end power hood. The fiscal saving grace came by way of utilizing existing mechanicals, so in came the Vanguard's 2088cc engine (marginally tweaked in twin carburetor form, but for just a 3bhp power hike to 71bhp) and three-speed transmission with overdrive as standard. However, utilization of existing mechanicals couldn't entirely offset the other costs, with the projected ticket price coming in at a thoroughly hefty £975–a price that would ensure it was the most expensive Triumph yet.

Belgrove actually had the TRX penned by 1947, but delays (prototype construction was farmed out to Helliwells of Walsall, Staffordshire) meant it wasn't ready for its motor show debut until 1950, at which it garnered a decent amount of interest. Just three prototypes were constructed (one of which bore an experimental cross-flow cylinder head), but delays meant momentum had stalled. Negotiations were entered into with various Italian carrozzerias, notably Touring of Milan and Pininfarina of Turin, regarding production of bodies, but it was clear to all that, by now, the TRX had become a non-starter.

Black then performed a complete about-turn, and what followed would be this prototype's polar opposite.

A complex and expensive beast, the lavishly finished TRX also included a number of electro-hydraulic features, including seats and front headlamps. Just three prototypes were constructed.

1953–1955: A BRAVE NEW LOW-COST WORLD

Gone were illusions of direct competition with Jaguar, replaced instead with thoughts of slotting in somewhere mid-market between its outputs and those of MG. The key to doing so would be to build down to a budget, and Black decreed that he wanted a cheap and simple sports car, but one capable of at least 90mph (145kph). Looks were, to him, relatively unimportant; if anything he preferred traditional lines, and he stated to designer Walter Belgrove: "I don't care if you design a traditional MG."

With lessons learned from the expensive TRX folly, he made just £16,000 in tooling available (a paltry amount) for the new 20TS (TS for Triumph Sports) prototype, with the design team left in no doubt that this new sports car would have to be a parts bin special.

Chassis man John Turnbull used a Standard Flying 9 unit as a basis–with a track of 85in (216cm), it was just shy of the 20TS's target 88in (234.5cm)–but had to rework it significantly to accept independent front suspension (a must to compete with MG). This involved designing pressed towers and welding them to the front of it, while a bolt-on tubular crossmember running around the front of the engine bay improved lateral rigidity.

In came the Mayflower Saloon's independent front suspension, with a narrow-track version of its rear axle endowed again, due to cost, with cheap-and-cheerful half elliptic leaf springs and lever arm dampers.

Up top, Belgrove fashioned a simple but handsome two-seat, open-topped bodyshell. Stubby tailed, in part due to chassis length limitations, and with a traditionally rear-mounted spare wheel, its lines with sleek cutaway doors were otherwise modern. Internal panels remained flat in shape for an easy to construct and simple structure; in fact the fenders were joined to the body by nuts and bolts, and thus easily removable and replaceable (a positive in terms of both repair costs and insurance).

Power naturally, came from the supremely rugged four-cylinder Standard Vanguard engine, here with cylinder liners fitted to reduce capacity to 1991cc (for 75bhp @ 4300rpm) and to allow it to compete in the FIA Sports Car Class D category for engines from 1500 to 2000cc. The biggest changes

The bob-tailed 20TS prototype (here dirty after workshop testing) combined both modern and traditional design elements. The latter would disappear on the production TR2.

May 20, 1953. Ken Richardson settles into an MVC 575 for the famed high-speed Jabbeke run. An aerodynamic cockpit cover and wheel spats helped the streamlined prototype achieve an average speed of 124.095mph (200 km/h).

applied to the transmission, which, although also from the Vanguard, required considerable reworking to accommodate a fourth gear. Laycock overdrive would be optional.

Pre-existing electrical items were fitted with 9in (23cm) Lockheed drum brakes and low-cost steel disc wheels that completed the package for its July 24 unveiling at the Earls Court Motor Show. Also making its debut there was the Nuffield Group's Austin-Healey 100, which although more curvaceous came with a significantly higher ticket price. Despite some reticence from public and press alike (memories of the TRX abounded), the reception proved overwhelmingly positive.

An encouraged Black had originally envisaged production of just 10 cars a week, later upped to 10 a day, again raised expectations to 20 a day with Mulliners now lined up to produce bodies. He also had a secondary new target in mind: 100mph (161kph). If it was good enough for the Healey, then it would be good enough for the Triumph; something though, would have to be done about that undercooked chassis.

In came race engineer Ken Richardson who had worked on the BRM Grand Prix car, tasked with reworking the car mechanically and performance testing it. At his behest, the design team set to work redesigning the chassis. In truth, it was all new, and significantly stiffer thanks to the addition of strengthening plates, but retained the same dimensions for ease of tooling. Crucially though, the rear side members still under slung the rear axle.

To meet the 100mph (161kph) target, the engine had its compression ratio raised to 8.5:1, and connecting rods redesigned, as well as having a modified camshaft and manifolding fitted: the net result was 90bhp @ 4750rpm.

Belgrove reworked the body, adding a modern luggage boot with opening lid (a la 'Healey 100') and finding space under the boot floor for the spare wheel. The stub-tailed rear end gained 10in (25cm) for an altogether more visually pleasing derriere.

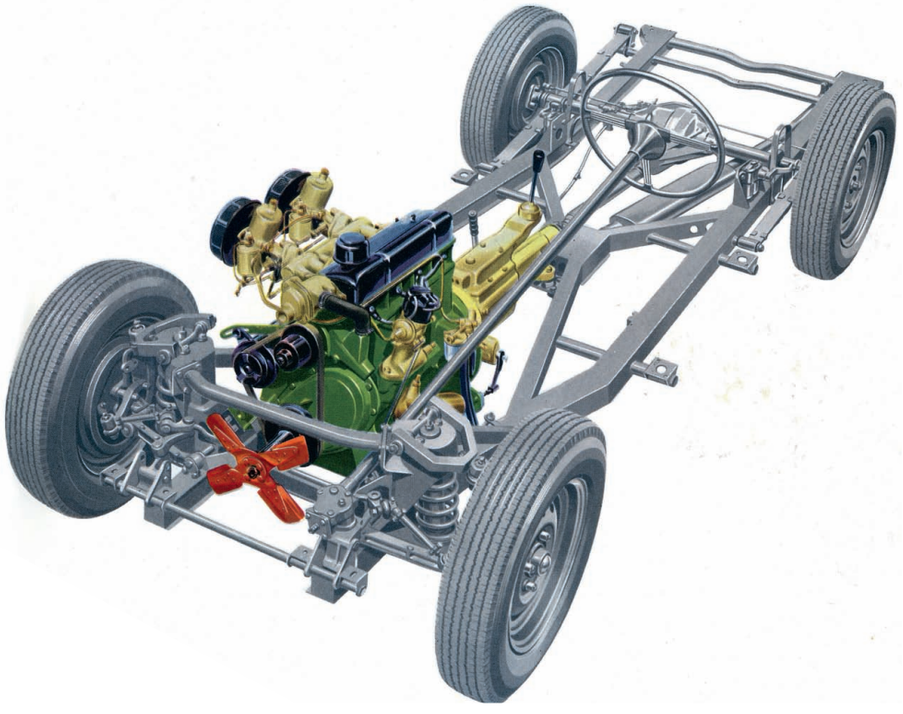
The reworked car debuted at the Geneva Motor Show in March 1953, with Ken Richardson taking to the pavé at Belgium's Jabbeke motorway on May 20 for timed high-speed publicity runs in the prototype MVC 575. Despite having gained 140lb (63.5kg) (now up to 1848lb [838kg]), Triumph's new steed didn't disappoint, achieving an average 124mph (200kph) in low-drag form and an exceptional 109mph (175kph) in touring trim.

Motoring press reaction to the new sports car was highly complimentary. *Autocar* had carried out a road test in January of that year, concluding: "The Sports Triumph is particularly good value for money. It has fine performance and it is also very economical on fuel. Added to these qualities, it is fun to drive."

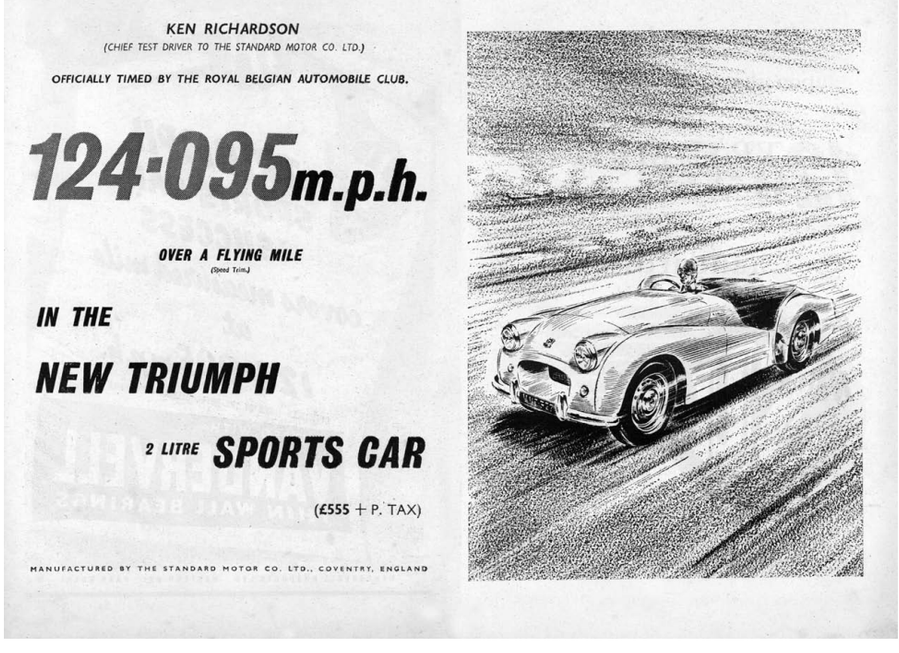
While Stateside *Road & Track* had, as far back as September 1953, stated that the model "deserves special recognition because of its low price and very high performance," but it had to wait until April 1954 to road test it. Headlined "Tiny, Rapid 2" it enthused about price ($2,448, with overdrive), performance (0–60mph [0–97kph] in 12.2sec/top speed 103mph [166kph], as tested), and economy (30–34mpg) and commented: "we didn't expect the fun element when driving it." Furthermore, it fully expected the little TR2 would worry many an owner of more expensive and powerful homegrown products of Detroit on American roads.

In Great Britain a basic price of £555 (although it swiftly rose to £595) meant that rather than slotting in mid-market as originally intended, it went toe-to-toe with the £535 MG TD (and later TF). Rumors abounded of Abingdon refusing to let its considerably slower and thirstier steeds out for comparative road tests.

There were issues. Production took a while to get up to speed, and customers reported issues with the harsh uncompromising ride, brakes, and overtly loud exhaust system. The 'long'



The simple, but effective TR2 chassis. Its underslung side members limited rear suspension travel and led to somewhat lively ride characteristics. Buyers were happy to forgive that, given the sheer performance clout on offer.



One of many period adverts heralding Richardson's Belgian success. The TR2's basic £555 price brought 100mph+ (161km/h) performance to an altogether new demographic.

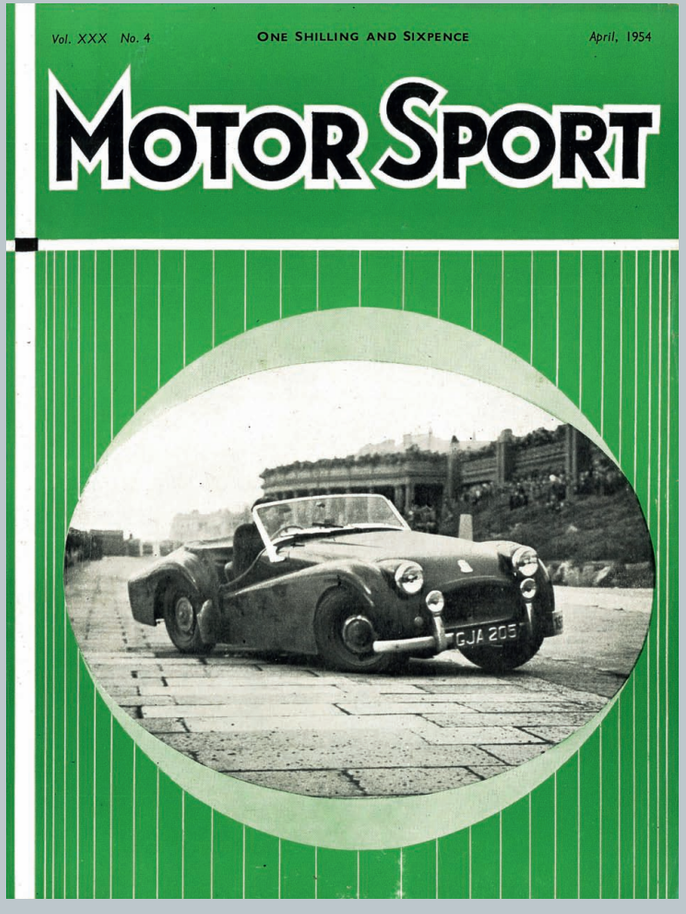
OFF TO A COMPETITION FLYER

Despite the rush to make a North American sales buck, Standard wisely kept 50 new TR2s behind in Great Britain (200 went to the U.S. in 1953) for competition work in the hands of privateers.

The model's first major outing came at the RAC Rally in March 1954. With two starting points, Blackpool in the north of England and Hastings in the south, it was billed as the 'Rally of the tests' thanks to its combination of road (circa 2,000 miles [3,219km] via England, Wales, and Scotland), circuit (Goodwood, Oulton Park, and Silverstone) and hill-climb (Prescott Hill) work.

To say it proved a success is an understatement, as Johnnie Wallwork survived the thick fog and Rally's sometimes tortuous routes and challenges to power through and take 1st place in the '1,601-2,600c.c.' category and 1st place overall at the Blackpool promenade finish, with Peter Cooper 2nd overall in his own TR2 and Bill Bleakley 5th overall in his. Even better followed, with Mary Walker winning the ladies' prize and proving the little sports car equally agreeable for pilots of the female persuasion.

Rivals MG and Austin-Healey did take the 'Up to 1,600c.c.' and 'Over 2,600c.c.' categories, but there could be no denying that this was a triumph for Triumph, and it set the template for the next three years of rallying dominance. Of course, the reflective glory could only help Stateside where the 'win on a Sunday, and sell on a Monday' mentality reigned supreme.



The April 1954 front cover of *Motorsport* celebrates Johnnie Wallwork's success on that year's RAC Rally epic. Pictured at the Blackpool Promenade finish line, GJA 205 led a veritable feast of TR2 finishers.

Walter Belgrove's design is both stylish and purposeful. The front radiator opening came in for a touch of criticism, but there's no doubt that it endowed the car with a distinctive personality.

doors, too, were a source of complaint, both visually (there was a considerable gap between front and rear fenders) and practically (they had a tendency to catch on curbs).

Alick Dick had replaced Sir John Black earlier in the year and drove the improvements. By the October Earl's Court Motor Show, the TR2 had a new center section with more substantial sills and 'short' doors, which not only looked better but further stiffened the body shell. Brakes were improved, exhaust system issues rectified, and, as Standard realized it could up profits, the list of options vastly increased. In addition to a heater, overdrive, leather interior and Dunlop Road Speed tires, buyers could now specify knock-on wire wheels, stiffer competition suspension (for true masochists only!), aero screens, wheel spats, and a metal cockpit cover, among other items.

Meanwhile, on the competition front, just three months after that RAC Rally success, Scottish dealer Bob Dickson, who had achieved 14th place overall in another TR2, in conjunction with Edgar Wadsworth, had become one of the first drivers to experience success trackside,

The pert and pleasing derriere has a 'modern' opening boot panel and hides an access hatch behind the registration plate for the spare wheel. Note the racing style gas filler cap.

achieving a highly creditable 15th place at Le Mans–an incredible achievement given the pure competition nature of most competing machinery.

Ken Richardson and Maurice Gatsonides then attacked the Mille Miglia, finishing 28th out of 365 starters, astonishingly with 16in (40.5cm) wheels the only thing to differentiate their car from a production model. Further success came at the Tourist Trophy in Dundrod, Northern Ireland, with the six TR2s entered all finishing and the prestigious Team Prize awarded. John Bolster in *Autosport* commented, "never has a team prize been so well deserved. It underlines the Triumph performance at Le Mans and must have made many people reach for their check books."

As a TR starter, the TR2 certainly whet the appetite, and yet U.S. sales would peak in the summer of 1955 (1,261 would find a home there that year), releasing some 1,700 cars for sale in Great Britain.

There's no doubt it was a decent start, but better was still to come.

(continues on page 79)

TR-2

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*** ACTUAL TEST FIGURES**

43.5 mpg at 30 mph.	**41.5 mpg at 50 mph.**
45 mpg at 40 mph.	**36.5 mpg at 60 mph.**

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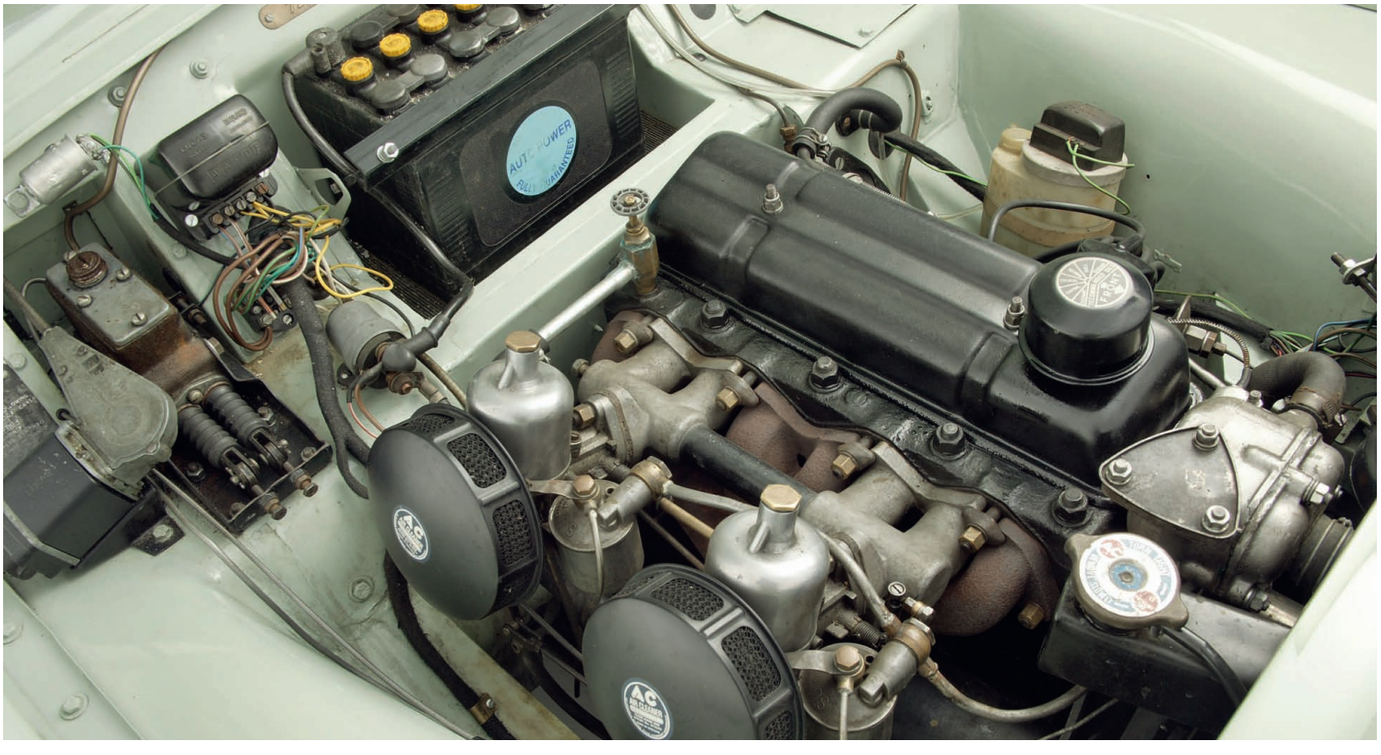
Period U.S. advertisement focuses on low ticket price, impressive economy, and the fact that, despite being a sports car, the vehicle is female friendly in the extreme.

The well-appointed cabin is at odds with its budget price tag and is surprisingly spacious. Bucket seats provide excellent support, while nicely laid out instruments offer a clear view to the driver.



The famous four-cylinder Standard Vanguard engine, here in 2-liter 90bhp form, provided rugged and long-lived power. Its cylinder liners ensured that any future rebuild would be a pain-free and relatively quick process–something that proved a bonus on the racing front.

A BROTHER FROM ANOTHER MOTHER

Sir John Black sprung a surprise when he gave the go-ahead for supply of the TR2's engine, transmission, and running gear for coachbuilder Eric Sanders' Doretti sports car project.

Sanders's finances came from Tube Investments, sold several generations, and incarnations previously by Jaguar's Sir William Lyons, and the products of his Swallow Coachbuilding Co Ltd (1935) of Walsall would be aimed firmly at the U.S. West Coast and indeed the Coventry-based manufacturer's market.

Sitting on a more advanced tubular chassis with a 7in (18cm) longer wheelbase and twin 3in (7.5cm) chrome-molydenum side members reinforced with strengthening plates, designer F. G. Rainbow produced an elegant design with serious Ferrari-esque styling echoes. Double skinned, its inner 22swg steel skin welded to the chassis for extra strength with 16swg alloy outer panels bolted on, it provided a significantly stronger bodily proposition than the TR2. That, of course, translated to an increased curb weight, and therefore somewhat reduced performance (1.5sec slower in the 0–60mph [0–97kph] sprint), as well as marginally higher fuel consumption.

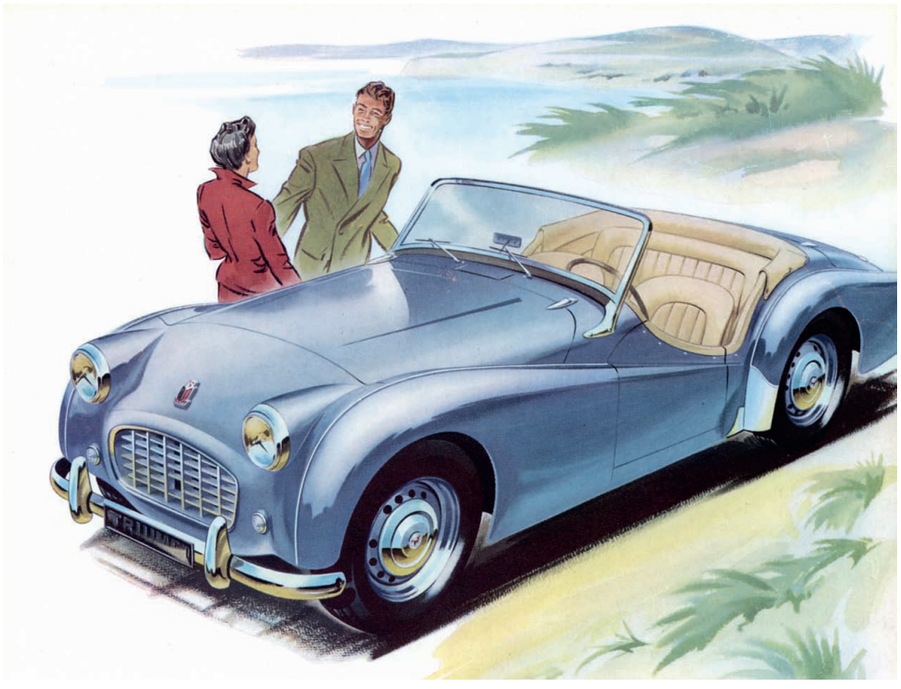
The most significant difference came in a leather-trimmed interior finished to an altogether higher standard and which, at 5.5in (14cm) wider allowed, at first glance anyway, passengers more breathing space.

First impressions were good. *Motorsport* commended both Doretti's svelte lines, which it said "drew admiring glances," and that luxuriously finished interior. Pricing at £1,102 (£230 more than a TR2) wasn't an issue, as it felt like a premium product. Performance came in for praise. With the transmission set further back for 50/50 weight distribution, it felt well balanced and radius arm rear suspension helped counteract the wheel hop common to cars with under slung chassis designs at the rear.

However, several cabin aspects, including limited luggage room, an upright and restricted driving position, and the transmission tunnel's considerable cockpit intrusion, came in for mild criticism. The instrument set-up (speedometer in front of the driver and tachometer before the passenger) also drew the comment, "the first faint suspicion dawns that the car has not been laid-out by experienced fast-car drivers."

Still, Sander's company constructed 276 examples by 1955. However, having suffered an accident in one, with Black's enthusiasm waning, and rumblings from Lyons that he would pull Jaguar component supply from Tube Investments if it continued to support an XK120 rival, a single fixed head Coupe and just a handful of MkII 'Sabre' prototypes would ultimately be the midlands concern's car-building swansong.

The Swallow Doretti brought a Ferrari 166 Barchetta-esque aesthetic to the TR2/3 formula. Here actors Van Johnson and Deborah Kerr take a break from filming *The End of the Affair* for a quick spin in one.



(ABOVE) The TR3 saw more power and an egg-crate front grille for a more resolved-looking front end. In 1957 an optional GT pack became available to circumvent competition rules introduced by the French government in the aftermath of the infamous 1955 Le Mans accident.

(RIGHT) Standard pulled a rabbit out of its hat with the 1957 introduction of front brake discs as standard. Suddenly a car conceived with frugality in mind became an innovator (in the U.K., at least). Disc manufacturer Girling, quite rightly, made a bit of noise about it.

(continues from page 75)

1955–1957: UPPING THE ANTE

The new TR3 arrived for the 1955 October Motor Show with relatively few styling changes. Stainless steel beading now adorned wing joints, exposed hinges had chromium plating, but it did deal with one of its predecessor's biggest criticisms–the front end came in an 'egg-box' grille for a more resolved look.

On the mechanical front, bigger 1.75in (4.5cm) SU carburetors and enlarged ports saw power output rise to 95bhp, while a 4:1:1 competition axle became available. Modified cockpit panels released a few inches extra space and a small occasional rear seat could now be specified.

There was some to-ing and fro-ing in terms of cylinder heads, with a modified Le Mans unit from the 1955 TR2 racers incorporated on road cars for an extra 5bhp, but supply couldn't always keep up with demand. A high port head would eventually replace it with power output sitting at an identical 100bhp.

The biggest influence from the French 24-hour race came in the braking department. Of the three cars entered, one had been fitted with all-round Dunlop disc brakes, while the other two had Girling front discs allied to 11in (28cm) rear drums. The infamous crash involving Pierre Levegh's Mercedes-Benz 300SLR and Lance Macklin's Austin-Healey, which claimed over 80 lives, overshadowed a strong finish of 14th for Dickson, 15th for Richardson, and 19th for Leslie Brooke. Although many believed Standard to be experimenting with brake discs with its production cars in mind, it still provided a shock at the 1956 Earl's Court Motor Show when it revealed the new front brake disc endowed TR3.

A model constructed on ultra-parsimonious principles had in an instant become a pioneer as the first British series production car to be thus endowed. The stronger Vanguard III rear axle arrived at the same time as

(continues on page 82)

The wide grille (incorporating side lamps) of the TR3A considerably changed how it looked, giving it a more grown-up and less toy-like appearance. Note the Triumph name now proudly spelled out across the hood's lower edge. Headlamps are further set back in the nose.


TRIUMPH
WEA 248

(continues from page 79)
a GT pack (a new steel hard top that bolted to the body in eight places and lockable door handles) that allowed the TR3 to be classed as a GT machine and thus sidestep the French government's ban on sports cars competing in road races. Huge success followed in that year's Alpine Rally, with TR3s taking the first five places in class and six prestigious Coupe des Alpes.

Further competition success followed at Sebring with three of those same Alpine rally cars sold on competing, and Triumph's U.S. chief Alan Bethel winning his class alongside Rothschild and Johns. On the production car side, sales had gone into orbit, with Standard selling 6,681 TR3s in the months January to August–6,181 of those crossing the Atlantic bound for America, with just 500 at home.

The good times had started.

1957–1962: 'A PRECEDES 'B

A new model arrived in September 1957, although Triumph did its best to hide the fact. With smoother frontal styling thanks to a revised nose and full-width grille, incorporating side-lamps, and standardized locking door handles and boot, this fresh take on the TR3 theme was destined entirely for export, at least until January 1958.

Eventually acknowledged as the TR3A, exterior badging nonetheless remained the same. Larger 86mm liners and pistons became available as an option, raising torque to 127lb ft, although the 2138cc rally-proven engines had been available for some time. Improved brake calipers allied with a reduction in rear drums size to 9in (23cm) strengthened stopping power.

Come the 1957 edition of the Alpine Rally and the Big-Healeys were by now becoming seriously competitive. With a capacity increase deemed too expensive to pursue, Richardson secretly had 87mm tractor liners fitted; the increase in power staved off the threat with Keith Ballisal and Alain Bertaut's TR3A leading the pack of British

A TWIN CAM FOR LE MANS

Despite the above title suggestive of machines designed and built purely for racing, the specially constructed TRS cars for the 1959 Le Mans race were far from it. Their four-cylinder twin cam engines (code-named 20X) had indeed been authorized by Alick Dick for the race, but ultimately with road car production in mind; as such, Triumph's race cars remained as far removed from their competitors as ever.

The increased 3¾in (9.5cm) length of the new powerplants saw the chassis, itself by now looking ever more primitive, enlarged by 6in (15cm) to accommodate it, with reinforcing plates welded along its length. Glass fibre body panels (three times thicker than metal bodied car, and just as heavy) designed to ensure they resembled the production car did nothing to offset a hefty curb weight of 2135lbs (968.5kg), which ensured they would be the heaviest cars in the race.

The twin cam unit itself was of conventional construction and had a 9.25:1 compression ratio and a hefty five-bearing crankshaft, as well as two twin-choke SU carburetors. Despite being larger, it came in lighter at 438lbs (198.5kg), and despite not being in a high state of tune (by now somewhat expected of Triumph's racing output), it was good for an altogether healthier 150–160bhp, and thanks to its rather prominent twin timing gear covers it quickly gained the sobriquet 'Sabrina' after the busty English glamour model. Four-wheel Girling disc brakes were fitted all round, as was a heavy-duty rear axle, but as far as the suspension was concerned, a front-roll bar and stiffer dampers provided the sum total of tweaks.

Richardson's competition team made the strange choice of fitting cooling fans, something deemed unnecessary by almost all other teams due to the race's high-speed nature, and these would rupture, puncture, and end the first two cars' races. The final car, driven by Peter Jopp and Dickie Stoop, had its removed during a pit stop, but, sitting in 7th, oil pump drive failure brought its adventure to an end.

The year 1960 would prove much more successful, with Ballisat & Becquart, Leston & Rothschild, and Bolton & Sanderson bringing the 'Works' cars home in 15th, 18th, and 19th, respectively. However, despite being similar in construction, by now with their prototype 'Zoom' bodies they bore little resemblance to their predecessors.

Triumph had its eye on the future.

The Triumph team cars for the 1959 Le Mans 24 Hours race wait for the commencement of the race. Despite significantly more power, thanks to twin-cam endowed engines, retirements meant that not one would cross the finish line.

Better followed in 1960, although, thanks to their prototype bodies, by now the cars bore little resemblance to their TR2/3 progenitors. Keith Ballisat and Marcel Becquart led them home, achieving an impressive 15th place overall.

The svelte hand-formed aluminum lines of a Triumph Italia. *Road & Track* declared that it "could be one of the most desirable cars ever put on the road."

manufactured cars and winning another Coupe des Alpes.

Yet another derivation arrived in 1959, this time a hand-built take on the theme. Triumph delivered unmodified 2-liter TR3A rolling chassis to the Vignale works in Turin, Italy, where they were fitted with very fine-looking Giovanni Michelotti penned bodyshells.

Just 329 of the wire-wheel endowed Triumph "Italia" sophisticates would be constructed, most in left-hand drive and the majority sold to well-off Italian clientele.

Standard constructed an astonishing 61,567 TR3A models, with most of these sold by the end of the 1950s. Come the start of the new decade, the company found itself in dire financial straits, necessitating a takeover by Leyland Motors.

1962: 'B FOLLOWS 'A

Triumph's great new hope, the handsomely styled TR4, had arrived in 1961, but influential North American dealers cried foul come the 1962 cessation of TR3A production. Convinced that the new car appealed to a significantly different market sector, their combined pressure led to a run-off TR3B model.

The first 500 cars (with TSF chassis numbers) were fitted with 1991cc engines, while the remaining 2,831 had 2138cc units. Almost all had the TR4's all synchromesh gearbox and all were left-hand drive.

This was a final hurrah for the classically styled TR–a car that had come from humble beginnings to conquer the U.K., U.S., and race and rally fields across the world.

Triumph TR2	
Data	1953–1955
Models	Roadster (£555-£625)
Construction	Steel ladder-type chassis with separate steel body
Length	151in (383.5cm)
Width	55.5in (141cm)
Height	50in (127cm)
Wheelbase	88in (223.5cm)
Weight	1848lb (838.2kg)
Engine Size	1991cc
Engine Format	in-line 4-cylinder
Carburetion	Twin SU carburetors
Max Bhp	90bhp @ 4800rpm
Max Torque	117lb ft @ 3000rpm
Gearbox	4-speed manual, overdrive optional
Final Drive Ratio	3.7:1 (3.03:1 with overdrive)
Steering	Cam and lever
Front Suspension	Independent with coil springs, wishbones and telescopic dampers
Rear Suspension	Live axle with semi-elliptic leaf springs and lever-arm dampers
Tires	5.50-15in crossply
Brakes	10in (25.4cm) drums, front; 9in (22.9cm), rear
0 to 60 mph	11.9sec
Top Speed	103mph (166kph)
Fuel Economy	32mpg (US, 26.65mpg)

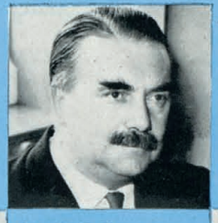
Triumph TR3, as for TR2 except:	
Data	1955–1957
Models	Roadster (£650-£680)
Weight	1988lb (901.7kg)
Max Bhp	95bhp @ 4800rpm/100bhp @5000rpm
Brakes	11in (27.9cm) drums, front; 10in (25.4cm), rear
Triumph TR3A and Triumph TR3B (TSF series), as for TR3 except:	
Data	1957–1961, TR3a; 1962 TR3B
Models	Roadster (£699)
Weight	2050lb (929.9kg)
Brakes	9in (22.9cm) drums, rear
Triumph TR3B (TCF series), as for TR3A except:	
Data	1962
Engine Size	2138cc
Max Bhp	100bhp @ 4600rpm
Max Torque	127lb ft @ 3350rpm

The Motor

EVERY WEDNESDAY
ONE SHILLING

THEIR VIEWS COUNT

STANDARD TRIUMPH



R. E. C. Jennings, THE MOTOR
"On corners, the Triumph Herald is particularly pleasing... Not only does it offer what many people want, but it also possesses in high degree that elusive quality of charm..."

Patrick Mennem, DAILY MIRROR
The Triumph Herald Saloon—"I cruised in it without fuss at 65 m.p.h. and still had 10 m.p.h. in hand... It is easy to handle..."

Keith Challen, NEWS OF THE WORLD
"After testing the new Triumph Herald over the mountain roads of County Kerry I can say ... this car captured my enthusiasm immediately. The coupé version is one of the prettiest I've seen."

Gordon Wilkins, OBSERVER
The Triumph Herald—"I do not know any other small car which offers such a combination of riding comfort and road holding."

W. R. Paulson, EVENING NEWS
The Triumph Herald—"Most remarkable of all, the price of the Saloon is only £702 inclusive of heater, and the Coupé only £28 more."

Laurence Cade, THE STAR
The Triumph Herald—"In my opinion, more nearly conforms to the average motorist's ideal than any other."

Basil Cardew, DAILY EXPRESS
The Triumph Herald—"Over the mountain-roads and cart-tracks the Herald behaved like a sports car in the road-holding and sureness of steering touch. Put that down to the four-wheel independent suspension."

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Available now... the sensational Triumph Herald Saloon with all the vivid performance of the powerful coupé twin-carburettor engine which can be fitted, with instruments, for £35. 8s. 4d. extra. The engine develops 50½ b.h.p. (gross) at 6,000 r.p.m., has a top speed of 78 m.p.h. and gives 40 m.p.g. at a constant 50 m.p.h. That extra carburettor makes all the difference: 0 to 50 m.p.h. in 16.2 seconds!

TRIUMPH Herald

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6

HERALDING THE FUTURE

THE BEGINNINGS OF A NEW DESIGN ERA

With just its TR3A in production, Triumph's attention turned to designing a sedan to accompany it. A dearth of proposals from its in-house styling team saw Italian stylist Giovanni Michelotti (already on an informal retainer) tasked with its design and given a free hand. The resulting sleekly styled Herald proved to be a little charmer and an undoubted sales success in multiple territories, as well as ushering in a new age of distinctive Michelotti-designed models. Elsewhere, its stable mate, the Vitesse, offered small capacity, six-cylinder family thrills.

Hear ye, hear ye! The positive views of seven prominent Great British motoring journalists herald the arrival of Triumph's new family steed via *The Motor's* front page.

By the late 1950s and its TR sports car apart, Standard-Triumph's product range looked decidedly uninspired. Harry Webster had his administrators draw up a list of four-letter 'Z' codes for future projects and the first of these 'Zobo' would be the little Standard 10's much-needed replacement.

Managing Director Alick Dick's requirements were clear: it had to be cheap to tool-up, able to accommodate a variety of body styles on the same basic underpinnings, and as Standard had factories in India, Australia, and South Africa, easy to assemble in supplied 'knock-down' form.

A separate body-chassis arrangement with bolt-on body sections made both fiscal and manufacturing sense, the latter, given the difficult road conditions the vehicle would encounter in some overseas markets. Even if to the press and motoring public alike, witnessing the current rush to monocoque construction, it appeared to be a retrograde step. This would allow the chassis to be used as a jig, something that would help avoid the significant costs of supplying standalone jigs and welding frames for the overseas cars, and shortly become important on home market cars.

A problem existed, though. Having lost its chief stylist Walter Belgrove, who had walked out in 1955 after one too many squabbles with Ted Grinham, in-house inspiration proved elusive. "In the dictionary a Zobo is described as a Tibetan pack animal of indeterminable sex, halfway between a bull and a cow," recalled Harry Webster. "Believe me, somehow or other that is what the damned thing looked like, at first!"

Consultant Michelotti tried successfully to influence the in-house design team's proposals but to no avail. On a trip to Italy, Webster left his daughter and wife in the car when popping in to see him at his studio. During the ensuing conversation he stated, "we're wasting our bloody time," which he later recalled, "was like a red rag to a bull." Within three to four minutes, having been asked what he would do if starting with just a bare chassis, the Italian had sketched the Herald.

On returning to his car at midnight, Webster, who had been caught up in the creative moment, found his family members fast asleep in the car–a mild paternal oversight; however, Standard-Triumph had its new model.

Michelotti sketched the smart, sharp suited lines of the Coupe first (in next to no time), and that led directly to the Sedan, Convertible, and later Estate and Commercial Van versions.

GIOVANNI MICHELOTTI

Born in Turin on October 6, 1921, Giovanni Michelotti would go on to become one of the most prolific automotive designers of the 20th century.

His journey began at Stabilimenti Industriali Farina, where, as an apprentice, he studied under renowned stylist and designer Count Mario Revelli di Beaumont. World War II brought his time there to an end, but in the postwar era, Michelotti became a-pen-to-rent, essentially an independent, freelance designer who worked for a variety of carrozzerias, and for Michelotti this included Vignale and Allemano.

His designs including the 166MM, Inter and the one-off 250GT Europa Ferrari produced for Princess Lilian de Réthy of Belgium, among a host of Alfa Romeos, Lancias, and Maseratis.

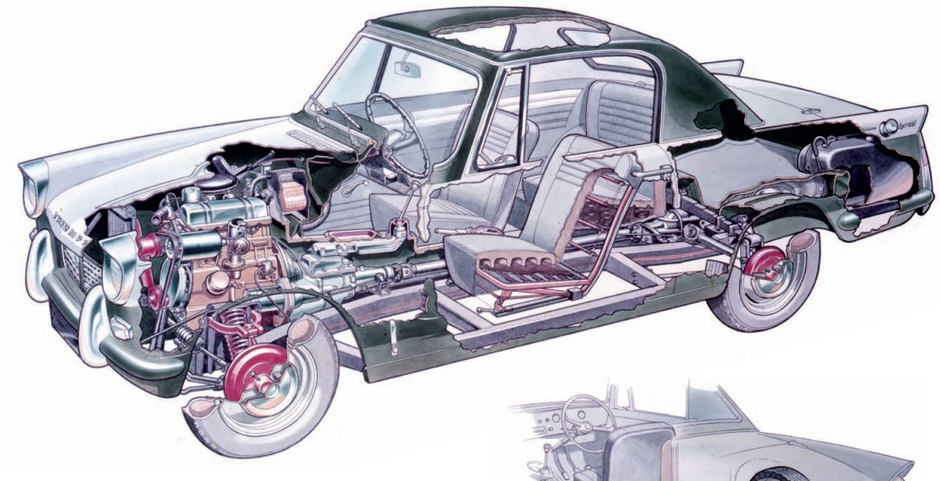
Standard-Triumph commissioned him to design the Triumph TR3 Speciale (also known as 'the dream car') in 1957, which served as a test-bed for the relationship between the British manufacturer and the young Italian designer. He brought it in on time and for just £3,000. That same year, Michelotti penned the Fiat 1200 Wonderful, the first car to have what would later, thanks to Porsche, become known as a 'Targa' top, and be seen first on a production model with the Triumph TR4.

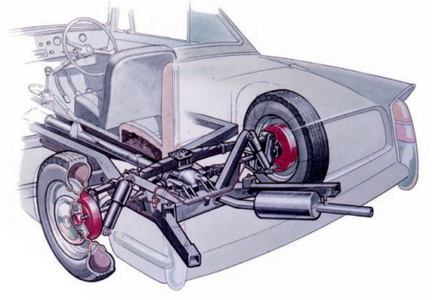
Deemed a success, the Speciale saw Standard-Triumph place Michelotti on retainer as house stylist and so began a wonderfully productive association. First up came the Standard Vanguard Phase III; ironically, this proved one of the sources of fuel for Walter Belgrove's explosive walkout. Following that were multiple generations of Triumph all sporting that distinctive, sharp-suited, brooding front-end style, with models such as the Herald, TR4 and TR5 variants, Spitfire, Toledo, Stag, and Dolomite.

Famed for both his sartorial elegance and ability to produce sketches almost on demand, Michelotti would ultimately have a direct hand in the design of over 1,200 vehicles. The Hino Company employed him as the first non-Japanese to design a car with its Contessa, while BMW's 'Neue Klasse' came from his pen and had a central influence on its future design language.

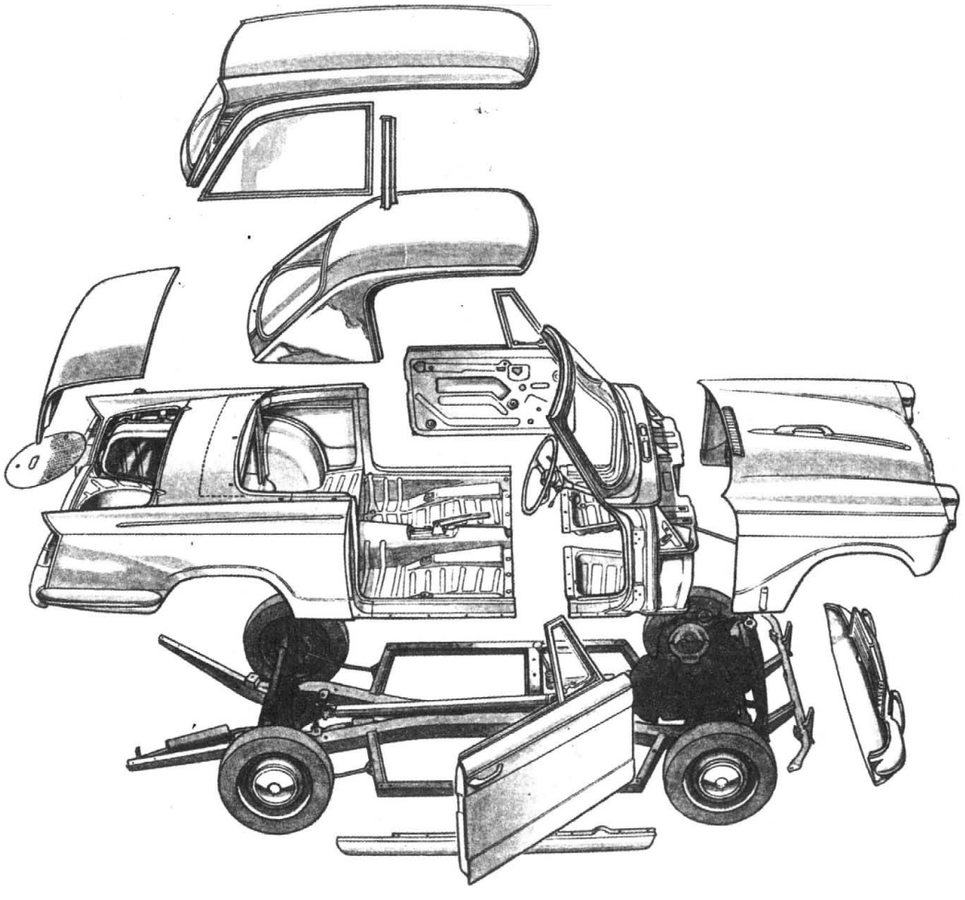
There's no doubt that Michelotti, both in period and in later times, held a lower profile than leading lights such as Marcello Gandini and Giorgetto Giugiaro. But the sheer list of companies he worked for, models he designed, and firsts that he achieved, mean that he deserves to be spoken of in the same terms.

Michelotti (on the right) was a prolific designer, famed for producing sketches on the spot. Here he discusses his design of the Plymouth Silver Ray with constructor Enrico Nardi.





The new small Triumph's mechanical specification proved far easier to agree upon than its design. Disagreements saw the new model's release pushed back until 1959.



This composite drawing from the April 1959 edition of *Autocar* shows the build-up of the various body sections that caused so many initial quality control challenges.

1959–1961: BODILY CHALLENGES

Alick Dick's foresight in negotiating with Mulliners of Birmingham after Austin's takeover of Fisher & Ludlow proved to be essential. When approached regarding the continued supply of bodies, BMC supremo Leonard Lord uncompromisingly told the Standard-Triumph where to go.

Vignale had provided prototype Coupe, Sedan, and Estate bodies for the trifling sum of £10k (a veritable bargain), but there was still no agreed plan on where to build the cars. Snapping up Mulliners and bringing it in-house in July 1958 helped, but a planned £2,000,000 assembly plant at Canley wasn't due to come on stream until 1960. So, with no other option (and harking back to the prewar coachbuilding process) manufacture would have to take place in sections and at various locations, with the final car then bolted together at Canley. From a quality control perspective, that chassis come jig suddenly took on even more importance.

Pressed Steel, Mulliners, the Forward Radiator Company, and Hall Engineering in Liverpool contributed to providing the seven units and three major assemblies that the launch Sedan and Coupe models comprised. Amusingly, Standard-Triumph would snap up the Fisher & Ludlow Tile Hill factory–now of no-use to BMC, after the cessation of Standard Pennant body supply–and also bring it into the somewhat convoluted process.

On the specification front, all-wheel independent suspension and rack-and-pinion steering hinted at sophistication, but in reality, the body-on-frame design, transverse single leaf rear suspension (with its simple swing-axle layout), and simple 948cc Standard 10 engine meant that it was conservative in the extreme, although the 45bhp twin carburetor option and Coupe versions (on which that was standard) could be had from the start. At £495 (£545 for the Coupe) ticket price sat considerably higher than competitors

The rear three-quarter shot shows the forward leaning nature of the Coupe's lines. The sedan's and convertible's are better resolved. Finned rear wings are definitively of the era.

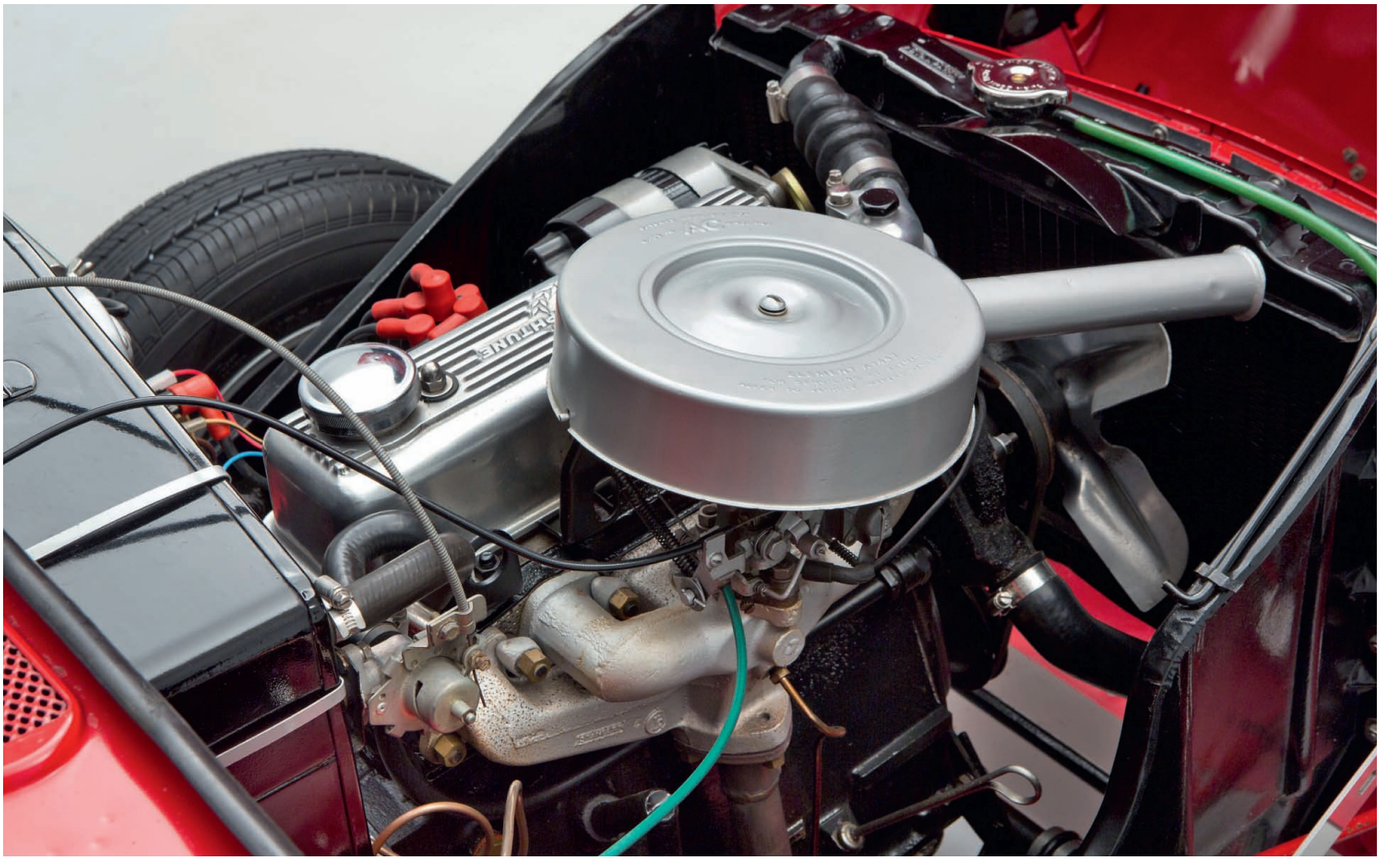
such as Ford's (£400) Anglia, but that looked as if it came from a bygone era and drove turgidly by comparison. The soon-to-follow, game changing, (£496 195s 2d) Austin Mini would be a different matter.

The motoring press, however, soon got over their reservations and the motoring public quickly followed. *Autocar* in its June 1959 Road Test praised the 48 variations available on the driver's seat and the "sweet running" engine, "very good" gearbox, "commendable" brakes, and "high standard of roadholding," signing off with, "it is difficult to envisage it being anything but a resounding success." *Motor* in June 1960 commended the stylish Coupe version, something it said buyers usually found "mostly available in the luxury category." Stateside in February 1961, *Motor Trend* could only see benefits from the cheap cost and ease of repairs that the method of construction allowed for, while also reporting on the Herald-Climax special offered by racing World Champion Jack Brabham's garage, which would happily drop an 83bhp Coventry Climax engine into a standard car for customers.

There were teething troubles, though. Body fit and finish required work that stiffened matters up: a propensity for water leaks, and need for extra gussets and brackets. Under braking the jacking-up of the rear wheels had a tendency to roll oversteer, which combined with crossply tires caused matters to get a tad hairy. Less prone to this, the Coupe with its lower-set suspension afforded a sportier drive. In the 1959 RAC Rally, a trio prepped by Ken Richardson's department had taken second place in the team prize pipped only by the 'works' TR3As.

A stylish convertible arrived in 1960 with an Estate version and 'Courier' commercial van shortly after, and more power with the 51bhp, 1200cc engine the following year, which also saw new owner Leyland place a renewed emphasis on build quality. Better stopping power with optional disc brakes arrived that same year, as did a cheaper entry-level Herald S to pinch sales from Ford's Anglia, albeit for just four years, before being phased out.

The biggest change would come in 1962 with an entirely new model.



One-liter four is pretty much un-burstable and endowed the model with perky power delivery. The whole hood with fenders arches forward for first class accessibility.

1962–1965: SILKY SIX

Harking back to 1930s British motoring when small-capacity six-cylinder engines were prevalent, the 'new' Triumph Vitesse featured the Standard Vanguard Luxury Six's SC engine–here, under-bored at 1596cc for a silky smooth 70bhp and 92lb ft torque–squeezed (just) under its restyled bonnet, by moving the radiator matrix forward.

This 100 percent increase on the original Herald's 35bhp saw the chassis significantly strengthened via heavily boxed-suspension members, deepened backbone members, and a new differential housing. In came a close-ratio gearbox, standard front discs, and an optional overdrive. Styling differences were limited to the incorporation of four headlamps, by kinking up the front fenders and hood. It was simple but effective, lending it a look (in both sedan and convertible forms) described in period as 'oriental', and which would pave the way for the brooding Triumph Sedans that followed.

While no road-burner, the Vitesse name (which means 'speed' in French) did at least supply more of that than the standard Herald. Maximum speed sat at 90mph (145kph) with the 0–50mph (0–80kph) taking 12 seconds, but you would have to find £837 0s 3d for the pleasure. In May 1962 *Motor* said, "The engine is smooth and quiet, the acceleration good and the general impression of effortless performance most noticeable in a car of this size." It also found favor in the U.S., where it was marketed as the more masculine sounding 'Triumph Sports Six', even if its lack of cubic capacity rendered it somewhat of a curiosity. In December 1962 *Motor Trend* stated, "Now they introduce the Sports Six to make a firm bridge between their utility and sports series. In this respect the Sports Six is an unusual package." Before finding that, "its character decidedly favors fun," and commending its practicality, economy, and comfort.

On the Herald front the up-market 12/50, with standard sunroof, front disc brakes, heater, and 51bhp, arrived in 1963. That same year Vic Elford drove a special 2-liter Vitesse prototype on the Liege rally–without success, after it burnt out due to fire.

(continues on page 98)

DRIVING THE OCEAN WAVES

The Herald would lend its chassis and mechanicals to a number of small-scale manufacturers' models, including the Fairthorpe Electron EM III and the Bond Equipe, but perhaps the most interesting involved only the supply of its 1147cc engine and ancilliaries.

In 1961 German engineer Hans Trippel began constructing a civilian amphibious vehicle called the Amphicar. This chassis-less convertible had a boat-shaped lower front extremity, door seals that squeezed into position in the water, and two rear-mounted nylon propellers to propel it. Bodywork colors included the suitably named Beach Sand White, Regatta Red, Lagoon Blue, and Fjord Green.

Mated to a bespoke Hermes two-part land-and-water transmission (offering four- or two-speeds, respectively), which allowed the wheels and propellers to be operated individually or separately, the engine thrust the little craft to a heady 70mph (112.7kph) on land and 6 knots (7mph) in water–seeing it quickly termed the 'model 770'. When submerged, the front wheels acted as rudders–albeit, somewhat inefficient ones–and once on land, the propellers were mere surplus-to-requirement adornments at the rear of the vehicle. Luckily, the interior had a bilge pump should anything go wrong.

Production lasted seven years, with 3,878 machines sold and of that, 3,046 going to the U.S. Sadly the advent of ever tightening regulations saw the U.S. market closed to the car, and with 90 percent of its market gone in an instant, the Amphicar was no more.

An Amphicar 770 in its natural habitat. Despite a similar appearance, the 948cc engine is the only thing that the Herald provided.

The Weathershields sunroof, fine mesh radiator grille (with no central pillar), and the off-white wheels mark this as an 'up-market' 12/50 model Herald. £56 more than a standard 1200 bought you a smoother transition and 28 percent more power.

The six-cylinder heralded (no pun intended) Michelotti's 'oriental' bonnet styling to differentiate it from the four-cylinder model. Here, a period U.S. advertisement sings its 'Smooth 6' praises.

A PERKIER VITESSE

Vic Derrington had in the 1920s originated and pioneered the tuning industry, when his Kingston-upon-Thames based concern V. W. Derrington Ltd started production of silencers requested by competitors of the nearby Brooklands racing circuit to assuage the noise-related complaints of local residents.

In 1928 the company became the first to offer twin-carburetor conversion kits for popular road cars, while postwar it diversified into providing components to the burgeoning Formula One race class–most notably exhaust systems–while continuing to provide upgrades, including its sought-after 'lightweight' series of steering wheels for a multitude of road cars.

Its Triumph Vitesse tuning offering included a fully modified cylinder head, with larger valves, and reshaped and enlarged inlet and exhaust ports; an increased 9:1 compression ratio; triple SU downdraught carburetors; a tubular exhaust manifold; and a dual pipe exhaust system.

At £108 10s it didn't come cheap, but with top speed rising from 89mph to 99mph (143kph to 159kph) and 2.6 seconds knocked off the 0–60mph [0–97kph] time (to 15sec; 0–50mph [0–80kph] took just 9.9sec), the results proved highly satisfactory. Those with lighter pockets could opt for a mix'n'match approach to pick and choose which adaptations to purchase.

Autocar in its September 1963 'Tuned Car Test' found that the car pulled away easily in top gear from 10mph (16kph), the engine had increased flexibility, and the only downsides were increased fuel bills (mpg fell from 25.1 to 18.4) and a standard clutch that struggled with heavy footed standing starts.

There's no doubt it sounded and went well, but its assertion that "the healthy exhaust note–not too loud nor too soft–from the twin tail pipes being as much like a V-12 Ferrari as a 'Six' will get" perhaps had to be taken with a healthy dose of sodium chloride.

Perhaps best known for its high-performance exhaust systems (Formula 1, and also later for Indy Car and SCCA race cars), V. W. Derrington Ltd also offered tuning packages for a wealth of popular road car models, including the Triumph Herald and Vitesse.

The ultimate version of the Triumph Herald/Vitesse family: the 2-liter MkII, with all-synchromesh gearbox and improved rear suspension.


E 107G

No it's not an Estate version of the Amphicar, rather a last-of-the-line four-cylinder 13/60. Note the twin headlamp version of the Vitesse bonnet.

(continues from page 92)

1966–1971: THE FINAL FURLONG

The final six years of production saw no major changes for both models, save for two fresh powerplants and a mild facelift (and model name change) for the Herald. In 1966 the Vitesse received the new GT6's 2-liter, 104bhp engine and two years later, in MkII form, an all-synchromesh gearbox and re-jigged rear suspension featuring wishbones and lever-arm dampers.

The 13/60 arrived in '67 with a bigger 1.3-liter, 61bhp engine and a twin-headlamp (single, each side) version of the Vitesse hood.

Both would continue to sell well until their respective demises in 1970 (13/60) and 1971 (Vitesse). While neither model in all their various guises could be termed high-performance machines, there's no doubt that they provided a family-friendly combination of frisky semi-sporting styles and first-class practicality. With sales peaking at just over 52,000 in 1963/1964, and total volumes of 513,995 Heralds and 51,212 Vitesses, there's no doubting their inherent popularity, or the fact that they provided the accompaniment to Triumph's sports car fare.

Triumph Herald	
Data	1959–1961
Models	Sedan (£495), Coupe (£510), Convertible (£540)
Construction	Steel ladder-type chassis with separate steel body
Length	153in (388.6cm)
Width	60in (152.4cm)
Height	52in (132.1cm)
Wheelbase	91.5in (232.4cm)
Weight	1764lb (800.1kg)
Engine Size	948cc
Engine Format	in-line 4-cylinder
Carburetion	Solex carburetor (or two SU carbs)
Max Bhp	35bhp @ 4500rpm (45bhp @ 6000rpm)
Max Torque	51lb ft @ 2750rpm (or @ 4200rpm)
Gearbox	4-speed manual
Automatic	n/a
Final Drive Ratio	4.875:1 (4.55:1)
Steering	Rack and pinion
Front Suspension	Independent with coil springs, wishbones, anti-roll bar, and telescopic dampers
Rear Suspension	Independent with transverse leaf spring, swing axles, radius arms, and telescopic dampers
Tires	5.20-13in
Brakes	8x1.25in (20.3x3.18cm) drums, front; 7x11/4in (17.8x6.99cm) drums, rear
0 to 60 mph	30.4sec (25.5sec)
Top Speed	72mph (115.9kph) (75mph; 120.1kph)
Fuel Economy	32mpg (US, 26.7mpg)

Triumph Vitesse, as for Triumph Herald, except:	
Data	1962–1966
Models	1600 Sedan (£608-£626), Convertible (£649-667)
Weight	2004lb (kg)
Engine Size	1596cc
Engine Format	6-cylinder
Max Bhp	70bhp @ 5000rpm
Max Torque	92lb ft @ 2800rpm
Gearbox	4-speed manual, overdrive optional
Automatic	n/a
Final Drive Ratio	4.11:1
Brakes	9in (22.9cm) discs front
0 to 60 mph	17.6sec
Top Speed	91mph (146.5kph)
Fuel Economy	25mpg (US, 20.8mpg)


SWP 261V

7

SPITFIRE AND THE GT6

AN EXALTED NAME FOR ANOTHER MICHELOTTI MASTERPIECE

Giovanni Michelotti penned a stunning new Roadster based on a shortened Herald chassis and mechanicals. The Triumph Spitfire proved to be a longstanding sales success through various iterations, ultimately going on to outsell the TR range by a considerable margin and proving its longevity in the competition arena to boot. Just as with its donor car sibling, it too spawned a six-cylinder variant and the GT6 offered GT kicks at an entry-level price point.

Spitfire: The perfect name for Triumph's new sports car and one that would propel it to success in multiple territories, including the all-important North American one.

Project 'Bomb' in all its glory. The production Spitfire 4 would differ very little from Michelotti's original vision.

Standard-Triumph initially considered the Herald Coupe for its small sporting car variant, but perfectionist Giovanni Michelotti didn't think it looked anywhere near sporty enough–certainly if it was to go toe-to-toe with the likes of Donald Healey's budget 'Frogeye' Sprite roadster, which had met a positive response on launch, certainly in terms of available performance if not entirely in terms of looks.

Never one to need active encouragement, Michelotti had penned an alternative for Harry Webster to take to the board. Codenamed 'Bomb', the flowing lines of the Italian designer's sketches were an immediate hit, and in September 1960 it gave the go-ahead for a prototype. The canny Webster had, by now, already sent a 948cc Herald Coupe to the Italian in advance. Working at his usual breakneck speed, Michelotti had 'Bomb'–a two-seater roadster utilizing Herald mechanicals, on a shortened 83in (210cm) wheelbase–ready, and back on its way to Blighty within the month.

Where it promptly sat, under a dust sheet in the experimental department, for several months due to the company's spiraling financial difficulties. The perfect storm of TR3A overproduction, falling U.S. sales, and a fast-deteriorating U.K. economy saw it losing in the region of £600k a month. The solution came in the form of a merger (de rigueur at the time in the U.K. motor industry), not with Rover as first sought, but confirmed on December 5, 1960 with Leyland.

The new owners had plans for expansion. When newly installed managing director Stanley Markland encountered the 'Bomb,' he was

stunned. “It’s amazing–no more, no less. But how could it have been forgotten?” he said to Webster, before starting it up and taking it on a tour of the warehouse; on his return he said, “it’s very good and we’ll manufacture it.”

With the board rubber stamping Markland’s decision, development continued apace. Steel or glass fiber had initially been considered for the body, but due to minimal experience with the latter (other than with its TRS racers) the decision was made to go with the former. Forward Radiator tooled up for production in pressed steel, while the chassis—a standard MK2 Herald (1200) unit—had already undergone considerable modification to strengthen it; in had come strudy box section sills, negating the need for outriggers and side rails, to create a strong backbone frame and increase beam and torsional strength. To avoid one of the Herald’s biggest criticisms, its flimsiness, the bodyshell was spot-welded and brazed where necessary to aid rigidity.

Suspension remained basically the same but with the rear suspension radius arms pivoting from the bodyshell, rather than chassis crossmembers. Changes to Michelotti’s original prototype were limited to raising the top line of the doors to allow the winding windows to fully retract. Front disc brakes were added, while on the engine front, the 948cc unit was ditched with more power coming via a tuned version of the Herald 1200 engine. In came twin SU HS2 carburetors, a higher compression ratio, and a ‘hot’ camshaft, while the inlet and exhaust valves were revised and an improved exhaust manifold fitted.

Finally, the ‘Bomb’ moniker was unceremoniously dropped. Triumph’s new small sports car would have a name to stir the emotions: the Spitfire 4.

Spitfire 4 bodies and chassis await unification. The overall structure of the car proved surprisingly rigid.

Spitfire 4 bodies in the paint shop at the Canley factory. Their achingly pretty outlines proved attractive to buyers from the start.

AN ENGINE FAR FROM STANDARD

Developed in the early 1950s for Standard-Triumph's new small car project (hence its 'SC' moniker), the 803cc overhead valve, four-cylinder unit had a simple three-bearing crankshaft design and in its first Standard 8 guise output of just 26bhp.

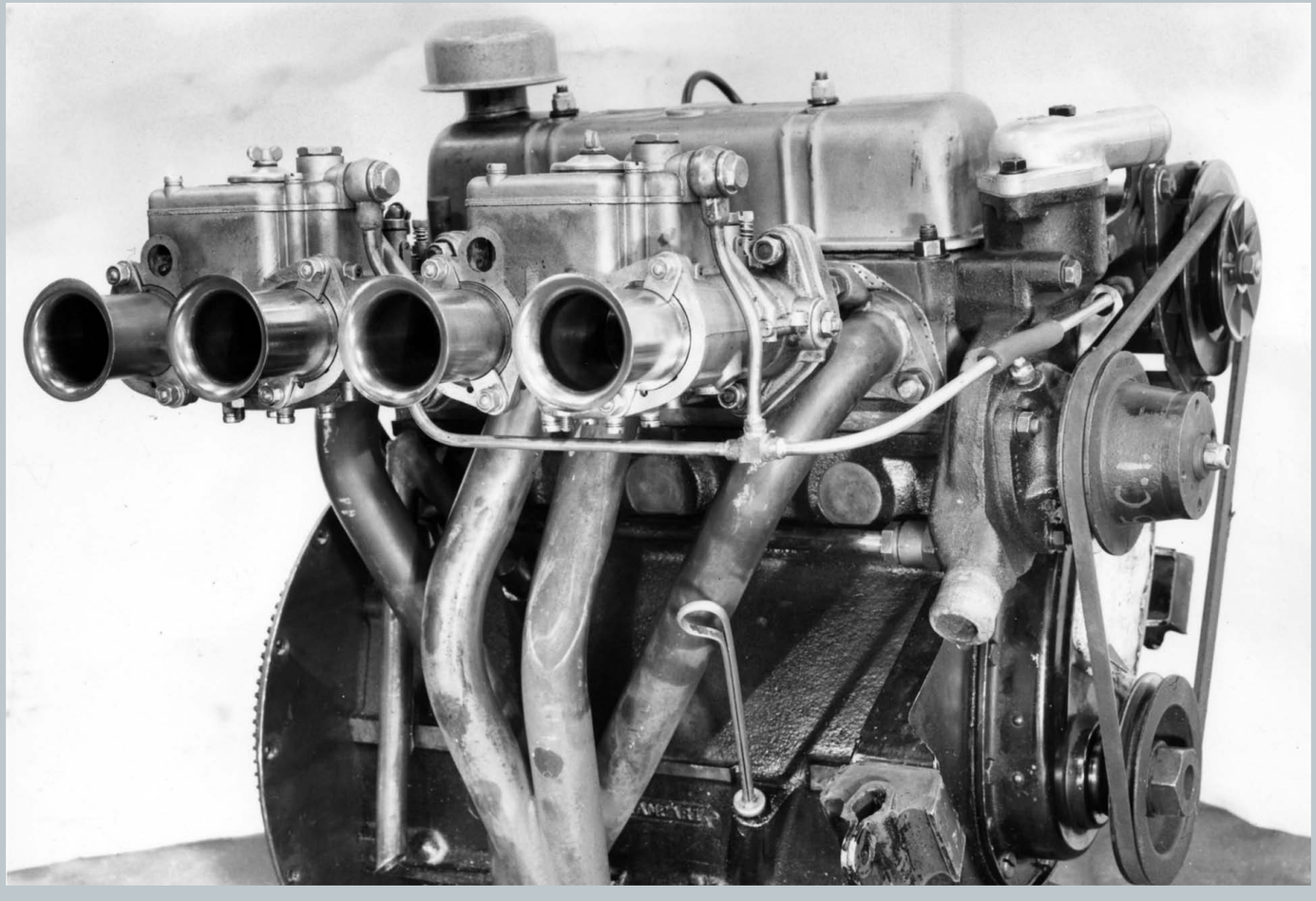
Engine capacity would rise to 948cc and power output to 33bhp in the 1954 Standard 10 (tuning kits could see that taken even higher, to 42bhp), with the model proving surprisingly adept in rallying and circuit racing–Jimmy Ray and Brian Horrocks taking an outright victory, in a 'works' prepped car, at the 1955 RAC Rally.

The engineering department experimentally stretched the engine to six cylinders, essentially by adding two extra ones to the end of the existing design, and this 85bhp twin carburetor, 1998cc unit would make its production debut in the 1960 Standard Vanguard Luxury Six. It was later seen in smaller 1596cc form in the Vitesse and in its original size in the Vitesse 2-liter GT6 and Triumph 2000.

By increasing the stroke, capacity rose to 2498cc, and in came fuel injection for the 150bhp TR5; this unit would also go on to power numerous 2.5-liter Triumph sedans, both in fuel injected and normally aspirated forms.

Its four-cylinder configuration would find a home in the Herald, Spitfire, many other sedans, and even a future MG! The ultimate development of the four-cylinder unit, the '70X', powered the 1964 and 1965 'works' race and rally cars. These saw custom-designed eight-port cylinder-heads (iron for race, alloy for rally) with revised camshaft profiles, improved inlet and exhaust manifolds, 'wild' camshafts and dual twin-choke Weber carburetors, allied to a free-flow exhaust, for 109bhp @ 7300rpm at Le Mans in 1965 and a phenomenal 117bhp @ 7000rpm on the 1965 Alpine Rally.

All engine variants had a reputation for ruggedness and durability, while in both four- and six-cylinder high performance forms, there's no doubt that they had each travelled a very long way from their low-power, low-fuel consumption originator.



The Le Mans 70X Engine featured an eight-port, iron cylinder head and produced a lofty 98bhp @ 6750rpm. This would rise to 109bhp @ 7300rpm the following year, and a screaming 117bhp @ 7000rpm for the 1965 Alpine Rally cars–a different planet in terms of power when compared to the original unit.

Michelotti's elegant and simple lines proved an immediate winner with the North American motoring public. This is Spitfire chassis #1 in full flow.

1961–1965: FRENZY

Revealed at the 1962 London Motor Show at Earls Court on October 17, the positive reaction by the motoring public and professionals alike to Standard-Triumph's new sports car proved prescient for what would be an 18-year, largely unchanged, production run.

Michelotti's stunning bodywork caused delight, of course, but the high level of specification (especially front disc brakes and IRS, unheard of in sports cars this price) caught the eye of would-be buyers. Up against a by now prettier 'de-frogeyed' MkII Austin-Healey Sprite and, in a twin-pronged marque sales approach by BMC, a badge-engineered MG Midget sibling, the Spitfire 4 could more than hold its own. That extended to the performance front, where the 63bhp @ 5750rpm and 67lb ft @ 3500rpm of torque propelled it to a top speed of 93mph (150kph), with 0–60mph (0–97kph) taking 15.4secs–7mph (11kph) faster, and a full 2.9secs quicker. Wind-up windows, which BMC's pair wouldn't have until 1964, were merely a bonus!

Triumph's then American public relations manager later recalled the reaction Stateside: "The dealers raved about the new car. They knew it had value when they saw it, and also knew that the MG Midget/Austin-Healey Sprite twins were no match for it."

Once again Standard-Triumph had taken the fight to its bitter rival and pulled out a trump card. The 'Spitfire' moniker was inspired, especially in its main target market–a country infatuated with all things 'Brit'. Whereas the TR2 had been a bit of a visual bruiser compared to its period rivals, there's no doubt that in an instant the Spitfire was the genre's looker, as well as its performer, and a sales frenzy quickly ensued.

Supply proved the only problem for Standard-Triumph, which had rushed the Herald out only to be bitten by the high level of warranty claims, but this improved in early 1963 when the company saw its North American market share jump significantly with overall sales increasing by a huge 30 percent.

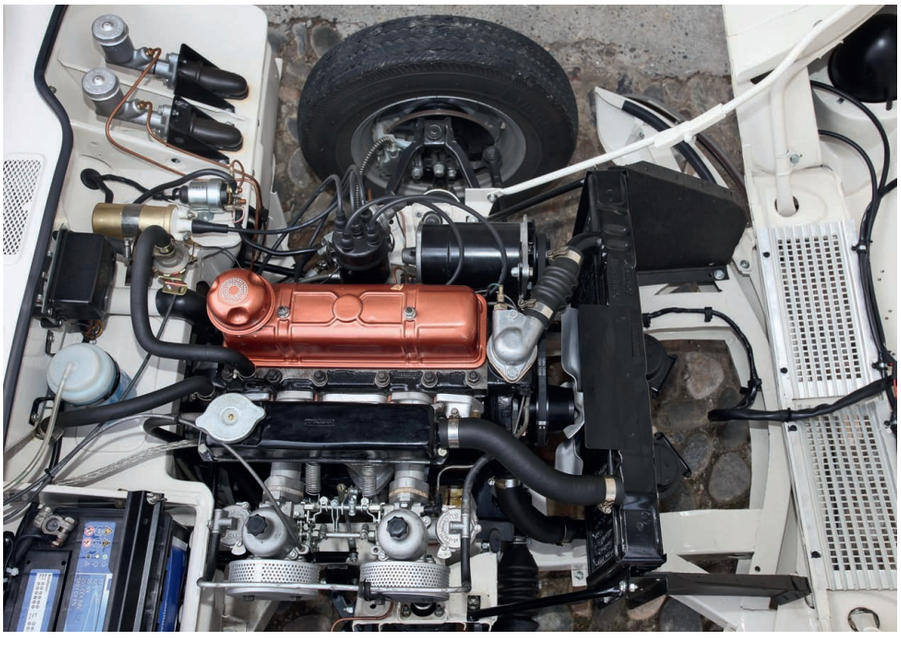
In its April 1963 road test, *Motorsport* summed up the reasons for its success: "The Michelotti-styled body, flat and shapely, is not only among the most pleasing of present-day small sports cars but it has the luxury of wind-up glass windows instead of detachable sidescreens and a good, rigid hood, which blends well with the lines of the body . . . The little 1147cc Triumph is purely a sports car, lively, fun to drive,

(continues on page 108)

The delicate rear end proved a suitable foil for the Spitfire's front. Most cars came with pressed-steel wheels and chrome hub caps, if not the whitewall tires.


TRIUMPH

As per Triumph's previous output, the fit and finish proved a notch up on competitors' wares. Sports seats offered occupants ample support, while centrally mounted chrome-rimmed instrument dials supplied a subtle touch of interior bling.



The four-cylinder 1147cc engine hailed from the Triumph Herald but underwent 'hotting up' to raise power output by an impressive 22bhp, to 63bhp @ 5750rpm. That was good enough for a 90mph+ (145km/h) top speed and 15.4 sec 0–60mph (0–97km/h) sprint time.

(continues from page 105)

making appropriate noises–a travelling motor-race–and sticking well to the road." Summing up: "if it stands up to hard driving, should soon be a best-seller in the small sports-car class." And if there's one thing Triumph sports car aficionados knew, it's that the company made products that did just that.

Sales of 20,950 units compared to 16,471 in 1963 for the combined Spridget figures prompted the development of the more practical MkII Midget/MkIII Sprite, while on the racing front, Ed Barker took the first of what would be an incredible 29 SCCA National Championship titles (the last of these, some three decades after the cessation of the model's production) in the 'G' Production Class.

In period advertising, its rivals played heavily on their respective racing heritages, but in the U.S. the Spitfire was off and running, and elsewhere Leyland had plans for its new sports car.

THE SPECIALISTS

Despite TRS success with the team prize at Le Mans in 1961, Leyland canned the competition program in a cost-cutting exercise. However, in the topsy turvy Triumph comp world, Harry Webster soon had it back up and running under the stewardship of Graham Robson, and what's more, with significant funding to pursue the building of highly specialized machinery.

Nine cars were constructed in total: four for Le Mans, four for the factory rally team, and one semi-factory run car. All used the 1147cc '70X' engine, but with the Experimental Department looking after the Le Mans racers, and the Competitions Shop, the rally cars.

After a three-year hiatus, Triumph returned to the Circuit de la Sarthe. Run in the Prototype 1.3-liter class, its cars featured lightweight alloy shells fitted and Perspex windows for weight-saving, with glass-fibre roofs (taken from the prototype Spitfire GT) for improved aerodynamics and thus high speed on the straights. In came the robust TR4 gearbox aiding transmission longevity, while the twin-Weber carburetor endowed engine had an 11.75:1 compression ratio, revised camshaft profiles; tuned inlet and exhaust manifolds and a free-flow exhaust system combined with those for 98bhp.

Suspension modifications were less involved, with adjustable dampers fitted, overall stiffness increased, and improved rear geometry. The latter two ensured pilots had to be on their toes (or rather, fingertips) in the corners due to the fruity effect on handling. Completing the package were 9.5in (24cm) brake rotors and larger rear drums.

Four cars were prepped, but three entered (ADU 1B, ADU 2B, and ADU 3B); two succumbed to accidents, but David Hobbs and Rob Slotemaker piloted ADU 2B to 21st overall and 3rd in class, just behind two Alpine-Renault A110s, hitting a lofty 134mph (215.6kph) on the Mulsanne Straight to boot.

ADU 6B with Rob Slotemaker at the helm on the model's debut: the 1964 Alpine Rally. Note the centrally-mounted hood light.

Peter Sutcliffe and Peter Harper's Shelby Cobra Daytona Coupe looms large in the rear-view mirror of Jean-Jacques Thuner and Simo Lampinen's works Triumph Spitfire. Alas, the Scuderia Filipinetti entered Cobra would retire, while the little Triumph achieved a noteworthy 13th place overall.

(continues on next page)

On the rally car front, which had to be based on production vehicles and where aerodynamics were not as key, heavier steel shells were used and clad in external alloy panels. Initially fitted with hardtops, these were replaced with fixed fastbacks for the 1964 Tour de France, with a prototype all-synchromesh gearbox fitted. ADU 5B, ADU 6B, and ADU 7B entered the grueling 4,000-mile (6437km), multi-discipline event with '5 and '6 quickly succumbing to its extreme demands on the first day of competition. However, Rob Slotemaker carried the Triumph torch for the remaining nine days, putting the home favorite Alpine-Renault A110s to the sword and powering '7 to a highly deserved first in class win. Further rally success came with a class victory in the Paris 1000km and in the GT category of the Geneva Rally.

Even better results would follow in 1965. As a taster, the works team entered the 12 Hours of Sebring under the stewardship of the renowned Kas Kastner, finishing 29th overall, 2nd in class (Ed Barker/Diane Feuerhelm in ADU 4B), and 30th, 3rd in class (Bob Tullius/Charlie Gates in ADU 2B), albeit archrival MG's Midget took the honors.

At Le Mans–with decreased curb weight, thanks to a smaller gear box, rear drums, a thinner steel chassis and an alloy cylinder head, and improved handling thanks to a limited-slip differential–with top speed now hitting 137mph (220kph), rally team drivers Jean Jacques Thuner and Simo Lampinen took 13th overall and 1st in class (in ADU 4B), with Claude Dubois and Jean Francois Piot one place behind (in ADU 3B). With rule changes outlawing many of the Spitfire's modifications, on the horizon, this would be its last outing in international racing competition.

Rallying continued briefly, with 1st and 2nd pace in the Geneva Rally and a prototype win for Lampinen on the French Alpine Rally before the cessation of all activities.

The Spitfire's competition career had been short, sharp, and successful—during which it had put many a more fancied competitor to the sword, achieved impressive power outputs from its small capacity engines, and proven that swing-axle suspension could indeed be effective in a competition environment.

The Triumph Spitfire, driven by Ed Barker, Duane Feuerhelm, and Mike Rothschild, holds off the Chaparral 2A of Ronnie Hissom and Bruce Jennings on the 1965 12 Hours of Sebring.

The GT6 Mk1 at the 1966 London Motor Show held at Earl's Court. Its fastback styling and six-cylinder power combined to make it supremely desirable.

An overdrive became optional in October 1963 (again trumping the Spridget pair), with a steel hardtop and wire wheels following the year after. Like the Herald, the swing axle still caused issues with the rear wheels tucking in, but dealers sought to negate this with camber compensators; this was small beer though, as just as with the TR2 it proved a thoroughly exhilarating car to pilot. It had also inherited the Herald's superb 24ft (61cm) turning circle and a similar front-hinged bonnet design, lending it excellent maneuverability and serviceability.

By the end of March 1965, an incredible 47,753 Spitfire 4s had been sold.

1965–1967: TIT-FOR-TAT AND THAT GT6

The Spitfire/Spridget sales war entered a phase of tit-for-tat improvements made by the respective manufacturers, but with the higher-spec Spitfire always seeming to stay just that one step ahead. Released in March 1965, the new MkII featured a 4bhp hike in engine power, up to 63bhp (significant, given BMC's products now had 59bhp) a diaphragm-spring clutch, and more luxurious seats.

It still outsold its rivals, despite costing $200 more in the U.S. *Car and Driver* voted it 'Best GT/Sports Car under $2,500' and summed up its reasoning thus: "Maybe it's the IRS, maybe it's the slightly better performance, but for some reason or another, the Triumph Spitfire was a clear-cut choice for the honors."

The big news for 1966 was a new GT variant. One had been in consideration for some three years, and Michelotti had produced a prototype with a sleek fastback roof and opening tailgate transplanted on to the Spitfire's body. While undeniably handsome, power was lacking due to the extra weight. The solution came from the Vitesse Sports Six. Initial testing found the 1588cc six-cylinder form, shoehorned in with the adoption of a large bonnet bulge,

The rear hatch opened to allow access for luggage stowage on the parcel shelf behind the seats. Period testers noted the similarity in design to the E-type and labelled it the Jaguar's 'little brother'.

Raising the bumper by 9in (23cm) to meet U.S. Federal safety legislation resulted in the MkIII's bumper giving the model what some termed a 'bone-in-teeth' look.

wanting (just as buyers were finding it in its Vitesse application). Instead, the engineering team fitted the larger 95bhp, 2-liter unit. To this it added the competition Spitfire all-synchromesh gearbox and a 3.27:1 (3.89:1 with overdrive fitted) rear axle to cope with the extra oomph, likewise larger discs and Girling brake calipers.

The resulting car, handsome in extremis, proved instantly desirable. MG's MGB GT had already begun developing this new 'baby GT' market, but the GT6 was on its tail and once more, with six-cylinders and stronger performance Standard-Triumph held the bragging rights. There was, however, a problem . . . the Spitfire's swing-axle suspension had made the transition pretty much unaltered, save for a transverse leaf spring. With considerable extra power, the sometimes-worrying handling characteristics exhibited in the donor car proved terrifying in the new beast, especially if the pilot had the temerity to lift off the throttle mid-corner.

Despite this, it received plaudits aplenty in the U.S. and sold well in all markets. U.K. motoring journalists were somewhat less forgiving, with *Autocar* stating, "We feel it is a pity that the limitations from the continued use of swing-axles should detract so much from what is basically such a good car and we urge Standard-Triumph to make improvements without delay."

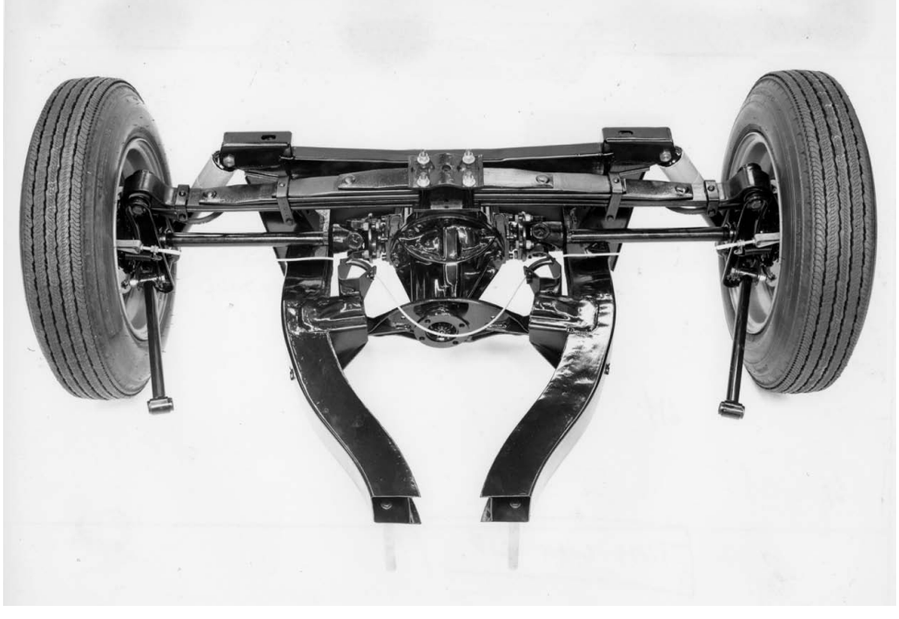
On the Spitfire front, 1967's MKIII, with its 'bone in teeth' raised front bumper, improved hood design, and walnut interior trim, featured a new 1296cc engine (from the 1300 sedan) fitted with the TR5's eight-port cylinder head. Its 75bhp once again lifted it out of reach of BMC's by now 65bhp Midget MkIII/MkIV Sprite.

The model returned to the 12 Hours of Sebring, with Richard Kondracki and Ray Pickering finishing 32nd overall and second in class, and by the year-end 100,000 Spitfires had been produced.

1968–1975: IMPROVEMENTS ACROSS THE BOARD

Financial difficulties saw BMC merge with Leyland Motors to form the British Leyland Motor Corporation in 1968, and archrivals Triumph and MG incredibly, operating under the same banner. Leyland was the senior partner, and Triumph-centric Donald Stokes at the helm proved good news for Triumph, which assumed a higher place in the funding and resourcing hierarchies.

That year also saw comprehensive changes to the swing-axle rear suspension introduced on the MKII GT6 (GT6+ in the U.S.), if not as many on its little brother. Inspired by the Cooper F1 race cars of the 1950s, this saw driveshafts no longer of fixed length and revised wishbones with rotoflex couplings in addition to UJs in the driveshaft fitted that pivoted between the chassis frame and wheel's hub cover, and it transformed the handling. With the TR5's cylinderhead and a perkier camshaft now in situ, it proved quicker too.



The uprated swing-axle suspension of the Triumph Spitfire MkIV. The GT6 model had received an improved set-up a full two years earlier.

Although the price rose from £800 to £860, the car offered an overall better driving proposition. External styling changes aped those of the Spitfire MkIII, while the cabin gained a better ventilation system and an optional rear seat for exceedingly small children.

Car and Driver's readers voted it 'Best Sports/GT' model in its class, although its editors were not of the same opinion calling it, somewhat curmudgeonly, "a bleak, unfun, hard-to-drive sports car–which is to say, no sports car at all."

Perhaps they had read one too many MGC reviews? Period GTs based on sports car underpinnings sometimes proved ripe for a hammering in the press. Irrespective, it continued to sell well.

In 1969 combined Spridget sales outstripped those of the Spitfire for the first time, although that would prove to be a blip that wouldn't be repeated. However, the 1970 arrival of MkIV saw the model finally receiving an upgraded swing-axle suspension set-up. Unsurprisingly, just as with the GT6, road manners improved beyond measure.

Michelotti comprehensively restyled the body, incorporating a sharp Kamm tail with fresh horizontal taillight clusters (something that had become a trademark look for Triumph derrieres for the 1970s), smoother styling cues, and subtly aggressive wheel-arches. In came the all-synchromesh gearbox from the Toledo, replacing the all-synchro MK1 unit, while inside the instrument cluster now sat directly in front of the driver.

Allowing for the new DIN system of measuring engine output at the wheels, power remained the same, but with the new car heavier, the 0–60mph (0–97kph) time rose 1.7secs to 16.2secs and top speed dropped 5mph to 90mph (8kph to 145kph). Worse still came in the United States with the

As this period advert image shows, the Spitfire MkIV received a revised rear-end that bore a resemblance to other Triumph models of the era–most notably, the Stag.

beginning of a new decade of ever tightening safety and emissions laws, with engines ever more strangled with more and more 'smog' equipment. In fact, the U.S. MkIII had already experienced the first wave of this, but the MkIV would go from 58bhp in 1971 to 48bhp the following year, before perking up again in 1973 and '74 to 57bhp. On the plus side, management had pulled the Austin-Healey Sprite entirely in 1970, and the MG Midget had to fight the same battles.

The new GT6 MkIII also arrived in 1970 and featured the same Michelotti styling tweaks, as well as U.S. engine power output issues (90bhp down to 79bhp).

With federal rules tightening, an energy crisis in play, and more powerful rivals, such as the new Datsun 240Z, better placed to absorb emissions impacts, the GT6 was pulled in November 1973. It had been a niche buy, but despite that a reasonable seller, with 40,926 shifted in total and of that, 24,581 had gone Stateside. Racing wise, it had met some light success in SCCA racing but couldn't be considered in the same stratosphere as its little brother.

The GT6 Mk3 featured the same styling changes as the Spitfire MkIV, in addition the hood power hump was lowered and widened. And while the MK1 and MK2 GT6s saw their biggest market in the United States, this shifted for the MK3 with most being built for the U.K.


GT6
ABW 214L

The £10.5million Speke No.2 plant opened to great fanfare but would close less than nine years after it opened, amid a sea of union-led fury, managerial incrimination, and severe cost-cutting.

A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Despite a wish to expand further near its Coventry base a new assembly hall, dubbed the 'Rocket range' at Canley would open in 1961–Standard-Triumph felt significant government pressure to opt for one of its 'development' areas in South Wales, Scotland, or Merseyside.

Desperate to achieve self-sufficiency, during 1959 it had snapped up Liverpool Hall Engineering (Holdings) Ltd, lock-stock-and-barrel in a £2million deal and set about enlarging and modernizing what would become its Speke No. 1 plant. This relocation came with a caveat that the company commit to building a new major factory at the site–something it did with the £10.5million standalone Speke No.2 division in 1970.

The Liverpool site had progressed from producing Herald bonnet assemblies and TR4 bodyshells, to those for the Spitfire and GT6; while little brother would go on to produce Dolomite, Stag, and next generation TR models in their entirety, negating the need for the costly two-way transporter traffic between Merseyside and Coventry.

Sadly, the whole enterprise would come to an abrupt close during the worst excesses of the British Leyland years, with matters brought to a head by a tumultuous combination of industrial action, shoddy workmanship, and managerial strife.

1975–1980: THE LAST DANCE AND A 'TRIUMPH' OF SORTS OVER MG

The final Spitfire iteration saw the introduction of the 1493cc engine from the 1500 sedan, to offset enforced performance losses. All good for the non-U.S. models, which rose to 71bhp @ 5500rpm and saw it hit a top speed of 100mph (161kph) thanks to a higher 3.63:1 final drive. Despite the increase in cubic capacity, U.S. power and torque figures remained identical to its predecessor.

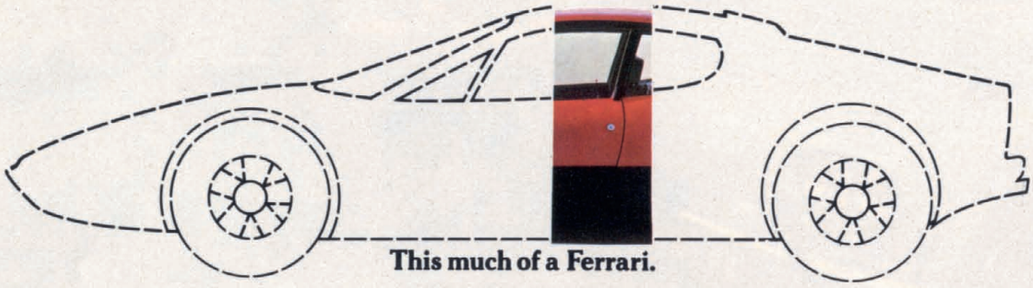
However, with a 2in (5cm) wider rear track and larger diameter anti-roll bar, this proved to be the best handling of all Spitfires, and total annual sales remained strong peaking at 21,189 in 1978, a figure only bettered by the Spitfire 4 back in 1964.

In the ultimate insult to its longtime rival MG, British Leyland took the (pragmatic from a business perspective, horror-inducing to MG aficionados) decision to fit the Midget 1500 with the Triumph engine!

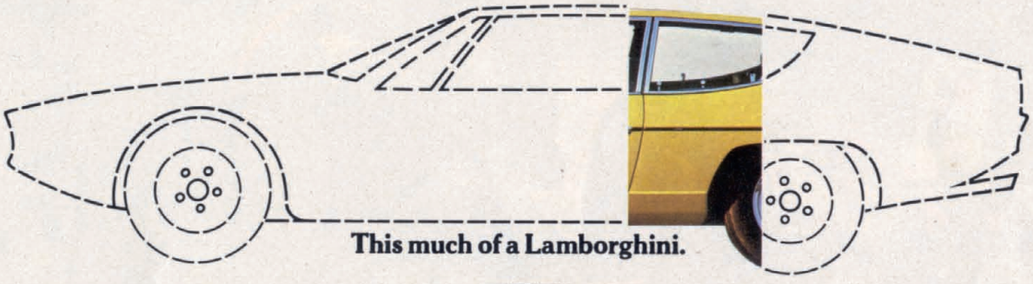
U.S.-bound cars gained large energy absorbent bumpers in 1979. With ever increasing difficulties there (California rules could no longer be met), production ended in August 1980–it had outlasted the Midget by eight months. Triumph built 314,332 Spitfires of all denominations, with 242,918 of those going to the United States. It had also outsold the poster-boy TR range by a ratio of 2-to-1.

In the model's final road test, *Road & Track* lamented, "few tears were shed over the MG Midget, BL's companion car to the Spitfire, when it was dropped in 1979. But the passing of the Spitfire is not so easy to accept." Although, perhaps *Car and Driver*'s statement, a full ten years earlier, describes the little sports car's best: "Everyone starts in a Spitfire, or something similar, and we don't know anyone who looks back at the experience with anything other than great fondness. It is confined and harsh of ride beyond all reason, and you love it."

How much of a luxury sports car can you buy for around £2000?



This much of a Ferrari.



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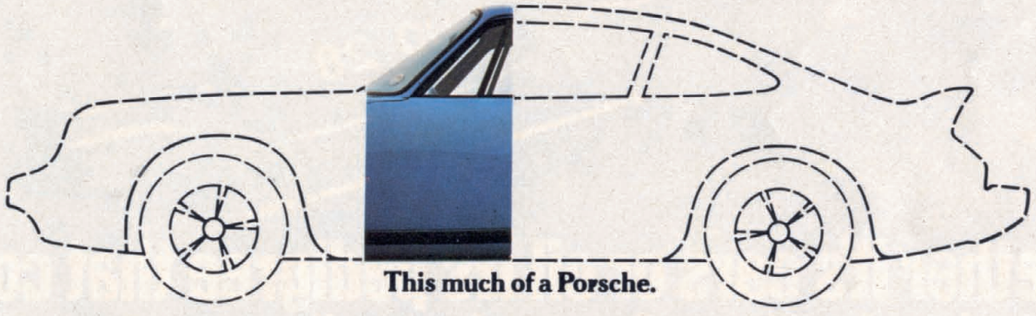
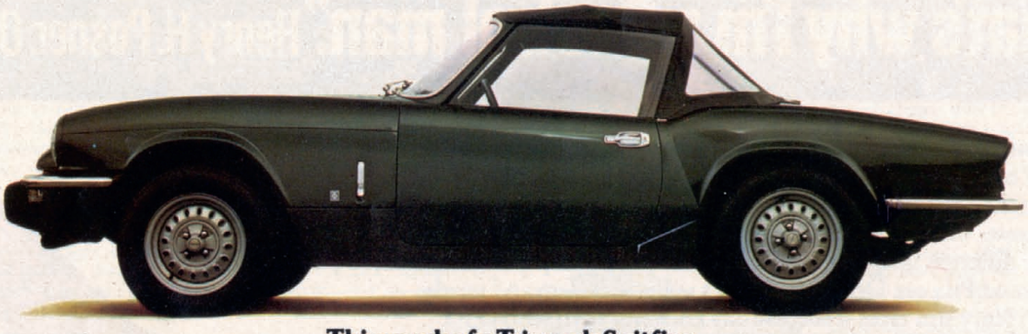


This much of a Porsche.



This much of a Triumph Spitfire.

Don't sell the stately home. Don't hock the family heirlooms.

For the price of a few cases of rather special wine, you can buy a Triumph Spitfire.

A real sports car that gives you all the joy of sun, wind and growling cylinders if you want them, and all the luxury of deep reclining seats, thick carpets, and immaculate finish, if you don't.

0-60 in 11.3* seconds, rich walnut fascia, outstanding road holding, and inertia reel belts.

And with 33 mpg* you've got to be an Oil Sheikh not to appreciate the Triumph Spitfire.

Triumph

From Leyland Cars. With Supercover.

Triumph Spitfire £2,041.65p price includes seat belts, car tax and V.A.T. Delivery and number plates extra.
*Source, What Car (average m.p.g. figure).

Triumph Spitfire MkI	
Data	1962–1965
Models	Convertible (£530)
Construction	Steel ladder-type chassis with separate steel body
Length	145in (368.3cm)
Width	57in (144.8cm)
Height	47.5in (120.7cm)
Wheelbase	83in (210.8cm)
Weight	1568lb (711.2kg)
Engine Size	1147cc
Engine Format	in-line 4-cylinder
Carburetion	Two SU carbs
Max Bhp	63bhp @ 5750rpm
Max Torque	67lb ft @ 3500rpm
Gearbox	4-speed manual, optional overdrive (from autumn 1963)
Automatic	n/a
Final Drive Ratio	4.11:1
Steering	Rack and pinion
Front Suspension	Independent with coil springs, wishbones, anti-roll bar, and telescopic dampers
Rear Suspension	Independent with transverse leaf spring, swing axles, radius arms, and telescopic dampers
Tires	5.20-13in
Brakes	9.0in (22.9cm) discs, front; 7x1.25in (17.8x6.99cm) drums, rear
0 to 60 mph	15.4sec (sec)
Top Speed	91mph (146.5kph)
Fuel Economy	32mpg (26.7 US, mpg)

Triumph GT6 Mk1, as for Triumph Spitfire, except:	
Data	1966–1968
Models	Coupe (£800)
Construction	Steel ladder-type chassis with separate steel body
Weight	1904lb (863.6kg)
Engine Size	1998cc
Engine Format	in-line 4-cylinder
Carburetion	Two Zenith-Stromberg carbs
Max Bhp	95bhp @ 5000rpm
Max Torque	117lb ft @ 3000rpm
Automatic	n/a
Final Drive Ratio	3.27:1
Tires	155-13in tires on 4.5in (11.4cm) rims
Brakes	9.0in (22.9cm) discs, front; 8x1.25in (20.3x6.99cm) drums, rear
0 to 60 mph	12.0sec
Top Speed	106mph (170.6kph)
Fuel Economy	25mpg (20.9 US, mpg)

(OPPOSITE) Last of a great line: the Spitfire 1500. Triumph aficionados could allow themselves a cheeky smile or two, as MG's Midget 1500 provided the ultimate humiliation with its rival's engine powering it.


A TR 60K

8 GENERATIONS TR

VARIATIONS ON A SUCCESSFUL THEME

The release of the sultry, Michelotti-penned TR4 had U.S. dealers all a flutter but led directly to resounding competition successes there (and a lack of them elsewhere). The short-lived TR5 followed, donning six cylinders and fuel injection–the latter, a first for a British production car–and a lusty 150bhp. However, with its looks by now lagging almost a decade behind contemporaries, Triumph turned to German coachbuilder Karmann, who in 1969 provided the ultimate top-and-tail job resulting in the 'all-new', mechanically much-like-it-was-before, TR6.

The TR6, a last hurrah for the traditional separate body and chassis TR line; pictured here with another great, Tower Bridge.

The development of a new TR had been in discussion for a number of years, with styling proposals as early as 1956 and management eager, if not yet desperate, for a successor. TR2/TR3 sales success, however, ensured a double-edged sword, as the new car would have to be better in every department.

A TR4 'Zoom' project featuring the twin cam 'Sabrina' engine, a 6in (15cm) longer wheelbase, widened wheel track, and rack and pinion steering proved to be a non-starter. So did the proposed 'Conrero' Le Mans project, with just one prototype built, due to be undertaken with the Italian tuning house, as financial difficulties (bad in the late 1950s, but come 1961 it would be losing £600,000 a month) started to bite. With TR3A sales in freefall, the need had become ever more pressing, so Standard-Triumph took the somewhat underwhelming decision to develop the new car on the old car's same basic chassis–so far, no better.

Engine matters remained much the same, with power from the 2138cc four-cylinder engine (optional on the TR3A since 1959) as standard, or the 2-liter unit on request, while rack and pinion steering and a fresh, all synchromesh gearbox provided some small margin of mechanical improvement. Meanwhile, in the exhaust department, an extra silencer behind the rear axle line refined matters somewhat.

The major difference came from Michelotti's all-new steel-pressed bodyshell. Longer, wider, and lower than the TR2/3's, it used the best features of three prototype outlines (two 1959 'Zoom' designs and the 1957/58 'Zest'), its wider, wind-up window- and padded fascia-endowed, cabin prioritized comfort, while its striking lines with full height frameless doors, a curved windscreen, and less defined wings, brought aesthetic modernity to the TR party.

Up top, a unique hard top was, in essence, the first production appearance of what Porsche would later term the 'targa' top and go on to sell in generation after generation of its 911. The new top featured an alloy casting surrounding the rear window, which provided roll-over protection and allowed the steel center panel to be removed. Although this couldn't be stowed inside the car, a soft 'Surrey' top would also be supplied.

One of the 1959 Triumph TR4 Zoom Prototypes, which lent some of its physical attributes to the finished outline (most notably from the A-pillar back), has a distinct Ferrari look to its front-end.

Mean, moody, and magnificent: Michelotti's masterpiece, the Triumph TR4. Surely one of the, if not the, best looking Triumph sports car.

Expert at delivering to short timescales, Michelotti had the prototype ready by 1961 and Triumph had its replacement. However, U.S. dealers, on finding out that it would be both heavier and no faster than its predecessor, were not happy.

1961–1964: ALL'S WELL

The concerns that had precipitated the development of the TR3B turned out to be nothing more than a storm in a teacup, as North American buyers flocked to buy the new car, despite being significantly cheaper at $2,365, the last TR3B wouldn't sell until early 1963.

Who could resist the seductive lines and heart-thumping power of the TR4, after all? Michelotti had produced a beautiful looking automobile; from its brooding front end–softened by bonnet 'eyelids' but endowed with latent aggression thanks to a carburetor-clearing power hump–to sleek wings now more integral to the design and a clean-cut, squared-off tail, it was a joy. Triumph, whose prior sporting output had always had an element of the ugly duckling (Austin Healey's Sprite had taken on that mantle), now had an alluring design that could go toe-to-toe with its competitors' prettier wares.

Douglas Armstrong, in his October 1961 report for *Cars Illustrated*, certainly agreed, "The Italian Michelotti has been mainly responsible for the bodywork and he must be awarded full marks for the operation." Others though, including *Road & Track* in February 1962, who like many liked the rough and tumble image of the marque, thought it only partly successful, somewhat harshly calling it "rather attractive in some respects, but it fails in others."

The body, pressed and assembled at the Hall Engineering factory in Liverpool, had other benefits. It was fitted to the chassis as a single

This image shows the metal center section of the unique roof design removed. Today, we would describe it as a 'Targa' thanks to Porsche's much better-known use of the design in later years.

unit, and with a deep gearbox tunnel welded to the floor and connected to the integral instrument panel, it provided twice the torsional stiffness. The chassis too was more rigid, thanks to channel section spacers welded to the outside of its box-section members. In combination this allowed for softer suspension settings, which in unison with the wider track and sharp rack and pinion steering improved both the ride and handling. Some though still found it too harsh. "The ride on a second-class surface is something less than comfortable. The longitudinal semi-elliptic leaf springs are identical to those of the TR3, so the same choppy ride is inevitable . . . one cannot help wondering how a long-standing fault of the TR3 was permitted to live on in the TR4," stated *Car and Driver* in April 1962.

Performance remained very similar to the TR3, although 60lb (27kg) heavier tweaks to the TR4's engine (86mm liners and pistons rather than 83mm, and combustion chambers with chamfered edges) provided 100 'honest' horses to offset the increased heft. Reviewers welcomed the cabin's step up in class with modern accoutrements and increased space–2in (5cm) wider and 3in (7.5cm) longer–and also the synchromesh gearbox, although the hard top's convoluted 29 snap fasteners less so.

The TR4 sold well from the start. Although the model never quite hit the TR3A's circa 20k sales height (in 1959), circa 16k (15k in the U.S. and 1k at home) in 1962 certainly wasn't too shabby.

That same year saw three main changes: the front suspension geometry tweaked; the braking system received smaller and lighter Girling front brake calipers; and the arrival of the company's 'in-house' Zenith-Stromberg 175CD carburetors. As a joint project undertaken with manufacturer Zenith, the latter used the non-patent protected elements of the SU carburetor it had used to date and offset the considerable cost of paying for them.

Standard-Triumph's on-off competitions department, shutdown in the aftermath of the Conrero cancellation but quickly reopened, ran a rally team of four lightweight TR4s. These cars with alloy bodies, up to 130bhp, and modifications including limited-slip differentials proved only very moderately successful. Their best result: taking the team prize in the 1962 RAC rally. However, up against the all-conquering Austin-Healey it was clear they were out of their depth, and April 1964 saw their last competitive action.

Elegant rear end treatment hides a larger 5½cu ft of trunk space, with additional storage available behind the seats.

ANOTHER BROTHER FROM YET ANOTHER MOTHER

"This conversion, exceptionally well carried out for L. F. Dove by Thomas Harrington Ltd, Dove achieves exactly what it set out to do, turning an open two-seater into a very practical grand touring coupe for parents and two-children," stated *Autocar* in its June, 7, 1963 road test of the Dove GTR4.

That had, of course, been coachbuilder Harrington's aim. Having already worked its 'magic' on the Sunbeam Alpine, and now commissioned by Wimbledon-based dealer L. F. Dove, it quickly turned its attentions to the Triumph TR4, looking to provide yet another, significantly more affordable alternative to the now defunct Aston Martin DB MkIII–a car that, endowed with a rear-hinged hatchback door, had itself offered significant grand touring appeal.

This it did by removing the TR4's rear deck and replacing it with a bespoke full-length, glass-fibre roof section incorporating that all-important hinged tailgate; allied to this were special rear side windows hinged at the front for ventilation, while it repositioned the fuel filler car vertically at the rear and added a new, larger 15-gallon fuel tank. The latter, relocated to the roadster's boot pressing, also allowed bespoke rear seats (fabricated by Harrington to match the front bucket seats) to be added, effectively turning the car into a +2.

For children at least, anyway, the car's 2ft 8in (81cm) rear headroom was the limiting factor. Increased use of felt padding and sound-deadening material helped refine cabin matters further, while prospective buyers had to find £1,250 to buy one, a significant premium on the standard roadster. The roofline could only be described as angular and sat somewhat at odds with the TR4's otherwise graceful lines.

Standard-Triumph offered its warranty, but due to the extra weight (532lbs [241kg] heavier) acceleration took a hit with it making a standing ¼ mile (0.4km) in 18.4 seconds (against 17.6sec). That said, its superior aerodynamics did help it reach 0–100mph (0–161kph) 3 seconds quicker.

Harrington constructed just 55 examples before Standard-Triumph competitor Rootes Motors Limited, one of the coachbuilder's biggest patrons, took umbrage and had it pull the plug.

Harrington's roofline on its Dove GTR4 is more angular and arguably less well resolved than the one on its earlier Sunbeam Alpine conversion. Dark green body color masks it better than others.

The glass-fibre roof section contains the hinged tailgate, which helps turn the TR into a practical GT. Inside, the bespoke rear seat is perfect for two children (or exceedingly small adults).

Bonnet bulge necessary to clear the twin carburetor set-up, which from 1962 saw the 'in-house' developed Zenith-Stromberg units replace the SUs of previous iterations.

Come 1965 and an impressive 40,253 units of the TR4 had been sold. Even in its final year, the model received praise from the world's motoring press, with *Australian Motor Sports* in January 1965 calling it, "rugged, fast and stable." The antipodean publication was behind the curve though, because, even though the standard TR4 remained on sale, a significant change had occurred the previous year.

1964–1967: CHASSIS SHENANIGANS

It would have made sense for the TR4 to use a more sophisticated rear suspension set-up at launch, but with funds supremely tight, it was a non-starter. Wind-up windows were only given the Leyland go-ahead when it became clear that they were cheaper to the alternative side-screens.

The model's supremely tactile rack-and-pinion immediately shone a distinct light on the suspension shortcomings. In 1962 the MGB and other rival sports cars demonstrated that they didn't need to leave you feeling like you had gone ten rounds with either Sonny Liston or Henry Cooper, depending on your country of origin. By comparison, there could be no hiding place for the TR4's antediluvian ride quality and tendency for 'bump steer' when cornering enthusiastically.

The answer finally arrived in 1964. The company had first used independent rear suspension on its 1959 Herald sedan. Harry Webster and his engineering team at Fletchamsted decided on an adaptation of the current Triumph 2000 sedan's semi-trailing wishbone and coil spring system. Part swing-axle and part trailing arm in design, it was (naturally) the cheapest layout available. The new TR4 variant would have lever arm damping, and unlike the big sedan that used telescopic dampers, there was no room for those without extensive body modifications.

To accommodate this, in came a radically different chassis. Once again resistance from U.S. dealers had a

(continues on page 134)

TRIUMPH AFTER TRIUMPH ON NORTH AMERICA'S TRACKS

Postwar, the Sports Car Club of America's racetracks provided the perfect proving grounds for North America's up-and-coming amateur racing drivers and in low-cost British sports cars many found their perfect steeds; marques such as MG, Morgan, and Sunbeam helped talented wheel men to excel, while in the classes dealing with more expensive machinery, the likes of Jaguar, AC-Bristol, Austin-Healey, and Frazer-Nash, did the same.

To all of those, add Triumph–incredible, considering up until 1952 its parent company didn't have a sports car in its inventory. The SCCA's disused airfield circuits, and racing formula of matching cars of equal performance together (no matter engine capacity nor weight), proved a match made in heaven for the diminutive roadster. Bob Salzgaber took the 1954 E Production class championship in a TR2, but, while the advent of disc brakes would further improve its abilities, it would be the 1960s that brought unprecedented success.

Bob Tullius romped to the 1962 Group E title in a TR4, seeing himself immediately bumped up to Group D the following year, which incredibly (or not, given the formidable reputation he was busy carving in the world of amateur racing) he then also won.

'Kas' Kastner, Standard-Triumph's Western zone service supervisor and no mean racer himself, had also begun to form a name as a tuner of note. In 1963 he prepared a team of three TR4s for the Sebring 12-hour race–with engine building taking place in the garage at his family home. Modifications included shaping and smoothing the ports, and fitment of a 'D' competition camshaft and lightweight pushrods, plus a set of four-branch exhaust headers, a heavy-duty clutch, a limited-slip differential, and a competition flywheel. On the suspension front, a torsional front anti-roll bar, rear traction bars, stiffer springs, and up-rated dampers improved matters. With an output of 150bhp, the lightweight racers proved to be formidable weapons, taking 1st (Peter Bolton and Mike Rothschild) and 2nd (Charles Gates, Ed Diehl, and Robert Cole) places in the 2.5-liter GT class. Standard-Triumph was the only complete team to finish.

Bob Tullius successfully ran Triumph TR4s in SCCA competition between 1962 and 1967. He would later pilot the TR6, TR7, and TR8 models (as well as Jaguars XJ-S and V12 XK-E) to more victories under the British Leyland banner. Pictured here on May 31, 1964 at the Bridgehampton Memorial Day.

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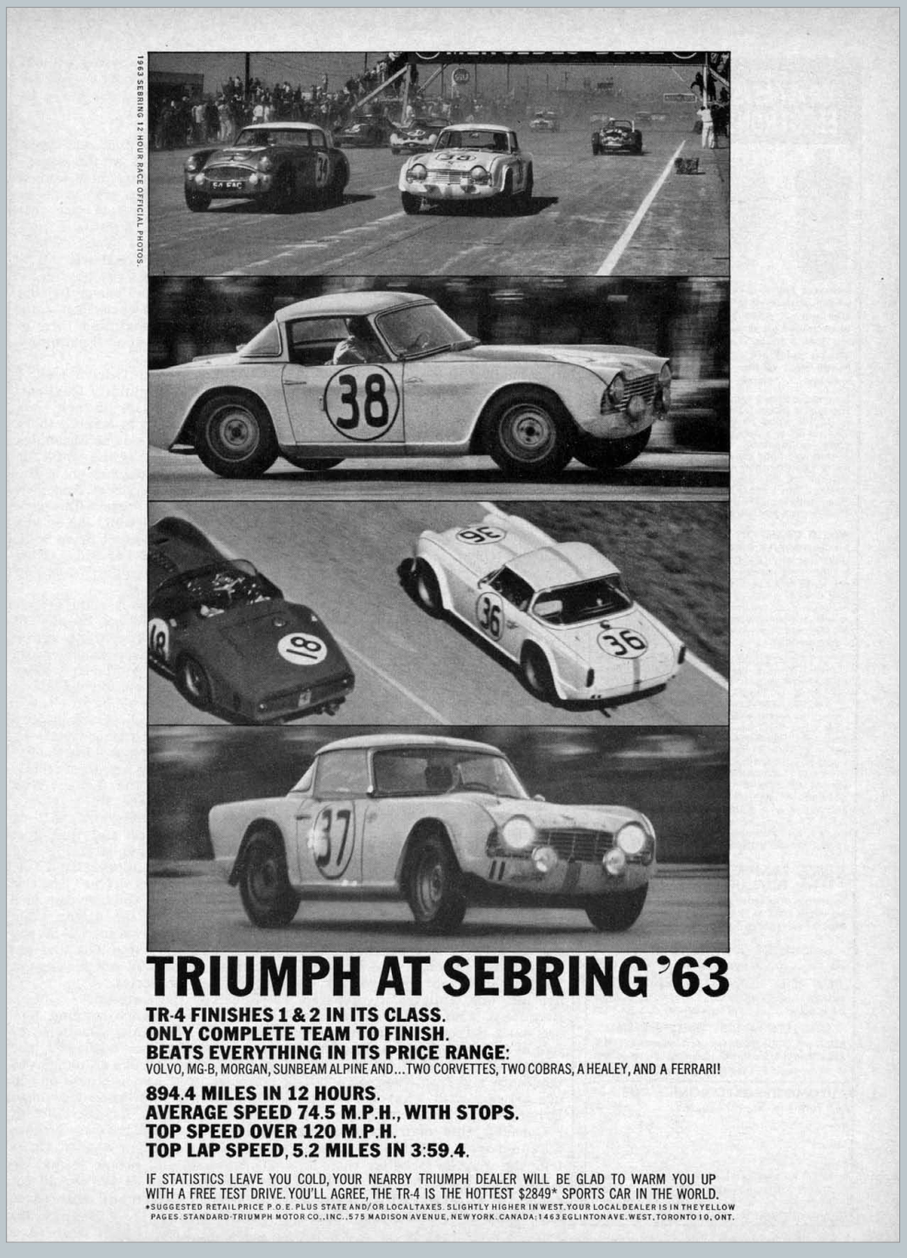


Advertising stated, "beats everything in its price range Volvo, MG-B, Morgan, Sunbeam Alpine and . . . two Corvettes, two Cobras, a Healey and a Ferrari!"—and why not? Standard-Triumph was the only complete team to finish the 1963 12 hours of Sebring.

TR4 success continued into 1964, with Tullius again successful in the Group D, and 1965 winning three of six Group D divisional championships; the new TR4A won the Pacific Division's D-Modified and the 'old faithful' TR3 four Group F titles.

In 1966 was yet more success at the Sebring 12 hours, with a team of Dayglo TR4As winning the Pepsi Cola team prize (finishing 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in class). That year Kastner even prepped a car for straight-line competition at Bonneville Salt Flats, achieving a top speed run of 128.20mph (206kph)–relatively competitive, given the 137.31mph (221kph) class record–to prove it a true multi-purpose sports car. By now though, with the arrival of the Porsche 911 as a direct competitor, and even with sprint engines now outputting in the region of 155–160bhp, many racers had begun moving on to the more competitive Spitfire.

This striking period U.S. advert for the TR4A talks of "Simmering Power. Burnished walnut. Breezy People," only deeming to mention "and heading over bumps it won't shake your fillings loose" and the independent rear suspension (optional in the United States, but standard in the home market) in the small print below.

Innovative design combined sidelights (moved from their original positions on the grille) and indicator repeater lights.

(continues from page 130)

profound influence as, worried about the extra cost implications, they placed pressure on the company to ensure that a live axle variant could still also be constructed and sold. As such, it had a dual-purpose design with two cross-member-like bridges: one in front, on which top springs were mounted, and a smaller one behind the rear axle to locate the lever arm shock absorbers. The latter could be removed on the live-axle car, with the semi-elliptic leaf springs instead mounted on brackets.

The four-cylinder wet liner engine was retained (a 2499cc dry liner unit was tested, but with no discernible gains in output) albeit, fitted with a new camshaft and a twin-pipe exhaust system for a marginal 4bhp increase.

The exterior gained a new grille, and side and indicator lights neatly incorporated into chrome flashes on each flank. A much improved and easier-to-use soft-top hood, diaphragm-sprung clutch, and alternator instead of a dyno were included, while in the cabin, walnut veneer appeared and the rear seat option disappeared.

New badges were added, with 'IRS' proudly displayed underneath the rear TR4A one. It was certainly worth shouting about. While not quite in the TR3 disc brake adoption category, it did give Triumph another first in that all passenger cars in its range now had four-wheel fully independent suspension while also giving the model bragging rights over rivals.

Well received, the TR4A righted many of the previous cars' suspension wrongs. In May 1965 *Road & Track* praised the model's newfound cornering abilities, saying, "The change in ride due to the new suspension is also little short of remarkable." It did, however, counter this with, "The effect of the independent rear suspension is almost all good," citing a "disconcerting amount of fore-and-aft pitching" and propensity for the suspension to bottom out–you can please some of the people. Presciently it also said, "We think the car could be improved by replacing the noisy old 4-thumper with the smoother and more modern 6-cyl engine from the Triumph 2000."

The TR4A sold well (28,465 in total), but not as well as the TR4, which in turn hadn't sold as well as the TR3A. At 2240lb (1,016kg), the 1964 TR was no faster than the 1957 car–engine matters were coming to a head.

The letters IRS (on all U.K. cars, and some U.S. cars) below the model badge denotes the fitment of independent rear suspension on a TR4A.

1967–1968: POWER TO (SOME OF) THE PEOPLE

With archrival MG pursuing its six-cylinder 3.0-liter MGC and a projected 145bhp, the Triumph TR line by comparison suddenly looked distinctly out of puff. Its four-cylinder unit had been developed as far as possible, so the engineers turned to the 2000's six-cylinder unit. Although slightly longer, it could be slotted home with a modicum of modifications, used with the existing transmission, and came in a few pounds lighter than the existing unit–win, win, and win.

However, producing 90bhp as standard and just 5bhp more in the GT6 prototype form, restricted cylinderhead breathing held it back and limited output to around 110–115bhp–far short of the minimum 125bhp the next TR would need. Adoption of triple Weber carburetors and a wild camshaft, a la racing variants, was out for a road car even one already as hairy as a TR.

In the end engineers Harry Webster and John Lloyd increased stroke to 95mm (bore couldn't be increased any further) by widening the cylinder block by 9.5mm, with capacity rising to 2498cc. This didn't significantly increase power but produced outstanding torque. The solution for the former came by way of Lucas fuel injection (a consideration because of increasingly tight U.S. emissions regulations), which *did* allow fitment of a wild camshaft–in this case a 35-65-65-35 sedan racing unit–taming it just enough for road use.

The resultant engine provided an even-better-than-hoped-for 150bhp, but it was the way it did so that impressed. TRs had always attracted phrases like 'hairy-chested', 'manly', and such, and this flexible, smooth, but exceedingly gruff new unit fitted that image to a T–and then some. Even better, the MGC's somewhat compromised six-pot proved the source of much hand wringing both at Abingdon and in the press, and therefore its absolute antithesis. The new car also provided two

Unlike Triumph's usual 'bargain basement' sports cars, the one-off prototype Fury has a monocoque body fabricated in pressed steel, a tuned Triumph 2000 engine, and a sophisticated suspension set-up–unsurprisingly, it didn't go into production as it was too expensive.

VARIATIONS UPON THE TR THEME

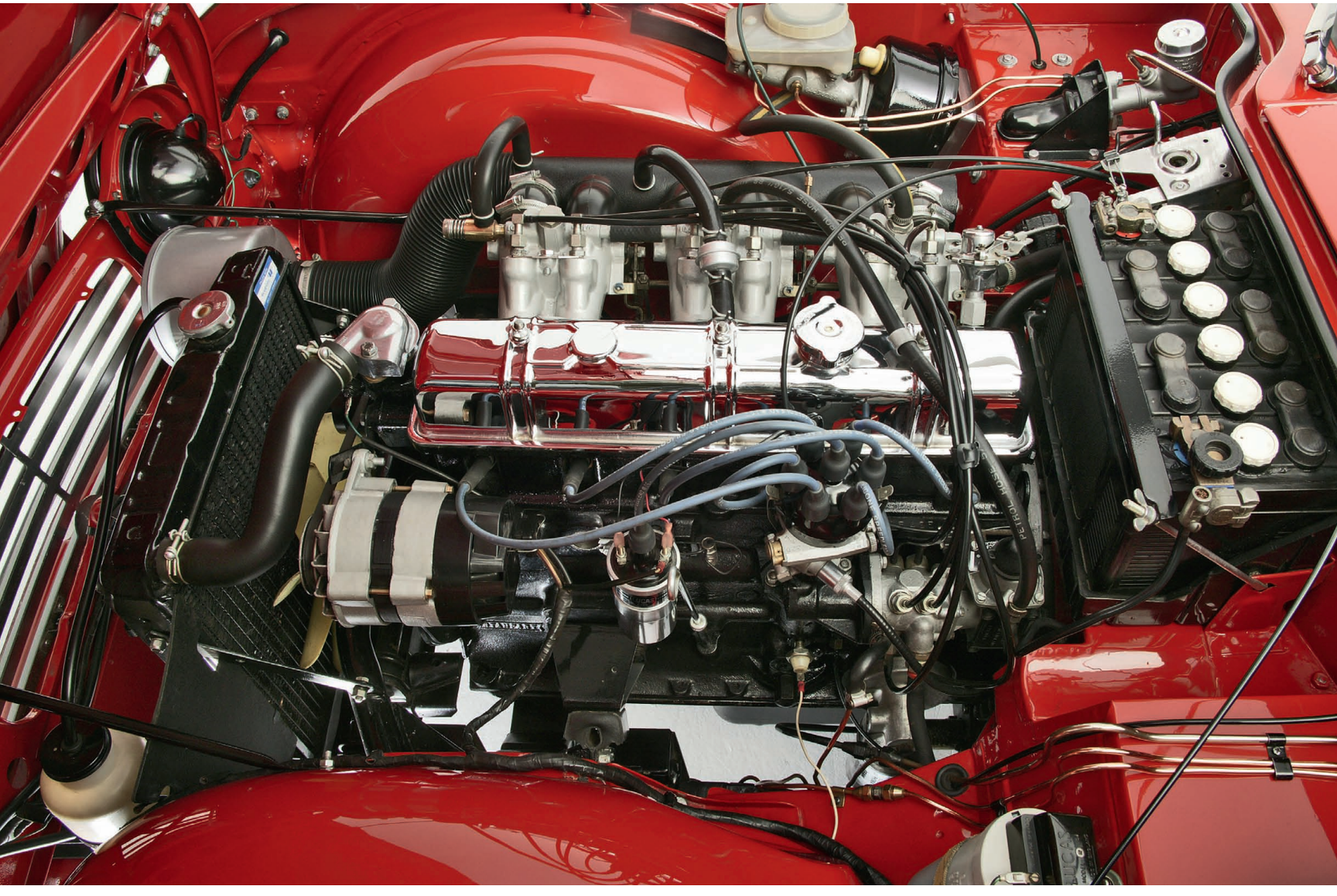
To keep its sports car range relevant and test new ideas, as well as gauge public opinion, Triumph periodically embarked upon prototype development. The Zest and Zoom projects had already demonstrated the benefits to be had from this process, while the Twin Cam had simply been abandoned.

During the early 1960s, three others would fall into the latter category. The first, the 1960 TR3B (B standing here for Beta, not the B of the North American sanctioned model), saw a widened body produced on an experimental TR4 chassis. A serious contender for production, its lack of wind-up windows and aesthetics firmly anchored in the previous decade counted against it.

The second, and perhaps most intriguing, 1965 'Fury' had an all-new design that was as far removed from the traditional TR set-up as possible; with a monocoque construction in pressed steel (a first in an open sports car for Triumph), a modern six-cylinder engine (a developed version of the Triumph 2000's unit, and another first), and a thoroughly up-to-date suspension set-up with MacPherson struts at the front and semi-trailing arms and coil springs at the rear. Only the rear axle and transmission were shared with the production TRs. The body, by Michelotti naturally, with its lithe lines and double-swoop front three-quarter profile, had much more in common with the Spitfire.

Ultimately though, cost would put paid to the Fury concept. However, like all the best Triumph prototypes, lessons learned, its essential essence would live on in the 1966 six-cylinder GT6.

'Wasp' could be considered one project, although the reality saw multiple attempts to create a TR4B, before the short-lived TR5 appeared with six-cylinder power but wearing the emperor's old clothes.



The six-cylinder TR5 engine in all its fuel-injected glory–good for a smoothly delivered, but decidedly hefty 150bhp and 164lb ft of torque!

important bragging rights: the company's first six-cylinder TR and the first British series production car to be endowed with fuel injection.

Other adaptations included strengthening the final drive and driveshafts, raising the axle ratio to 3.45, stronger springs, modified trailing arms, and wider 4.5in (11.5cm) wheels; brake disc diameter also rose to 10.875in (27.5cm), with a dual circuit system now as standard. The cabin had several safety-led tweaks, including padding for both dashboard and steering wheel, and seat safety catches so they wouldn't spring forward under heavy braking.

Ironically, the fuel injection system couldn't be made to meet U.S. emissions regulations. The engineers were amazed to discover that with a lower 8.5:1 compression ratio, a milder 10-50-50-10 camshaft and careful tuning, an engine endowed with Zenith-Stromberg carburetors, could meet the regulations. The downside was just 105bhp, albeit 143lb ft of torque.

As regulations evolved over the next few decades, the U.S. motoring public would have to get very used to viewing higher-spec European cars from across the pond.

Road & Track in December 1967 welcomed the new engine and

Triumph made much of the fact that the TR5 (with its race-proven, Lucas fuel injection system) was the first British production sports car to be thus endowed.

(LEFT) TR250 badge indicates the U.S. market only, twin-carburetor-fed model; on the other hand, U.K. models had a TR5 PI badge (indicating 'Petrol Injection').

subsequent personality change, "it has been given a smooth 6-cyl 2.5-liter engine in place of the old 4-banger and this popular sports car is thereby refined and improved in almost every way." It also refrained from crowing with regards to its earlier request for this very change or mentioning the 150bhp home market FI car, which was currently wowing reviewers.

Motor in May 1968 said, "this magnificent power unit is the answer to the enthusiast's prayer . . . it explodes its torque on to the road with effortless ease to the accompaniment of a melodious howl from the exhaust which must delight even the most decibel conscious ear."

Yes, some of its earlier criticism's (scuttle shake and body dither on bad surfaces) remained, but this was all about the engine and the statistics were superb: 164lb ft of torque, up from 132lb ft; 142bhp (net), up from 104bhp; 20 seconds knocked off the 0–100mph (0–161kph) time; 30–50mph (48–80kph) reduced from 8.8 seconds to 7; 0–60mph (0–97kph) from 10.5 seconds to 8.1. And all this despite higher gearing!

In September 1968 *Car & Car Conversions* summed up what many were thinking, "it's certainly one of the sportiest sports cars you can buy." Although, in its current guises, both in the home market and United States, that wouldn't last too long–just 17 months to be precise.

1969–1976: TOP AND TAIL, SIR/MADAM?

Reinvention has always been the currency of the motoring world, but it takes on a critical mass when applied to sports cars. Six years is a long time in that particular arena and, despite its fresh powertrain, by the late 1960s the wire-wheel endowed TR5 looked just a bit staid compared to fresh-faced competitors such as Alfa Romeo's and Fiat's respective spiders–something had to be done.

Credit to Karmann, the front-end treatment makes the TR6 look like an entirely new model. Gone is the bonnet bulge (that was redundant, but still present, on the TR5) for a smoother and sleeker but still muscular look.

With Michelotti engaged elsewhere, in stepped Karmann of Osnabruck. The brief was simple: a new, striking body to be produced on existing sub-structures (floor, scuttle, screen, doors, and inner panels); manufacturing tools to be produced, ASAP; and, of course, in true British Leyland fashion, all on a minimal budget.

That Karmann succeeded in all the above is a credit to it. The 'new' TR6 used a simpler, re-designed front end, with the bonnet losing the by-now unnecessary power-bulge and radiator grille mounted higher. At the rear, in came a Kamm-tail for a more truncated look. The contemporary fashion of matte black replacing bright work, and with the radiator grille and rear panel finished identically, addition of modern Rostyle wheel trims (subsequently deemed a bit naff, and swiftly replaced by dished and perforated steel disc wheels), and a new one-piece hardtop completed a thoroughly revitalized visual package.

It's a similar story at the rear, with the squared-off Kamm tail, horizontal light clusters (replacing the TR5's vertical units), and use of matte black working to provide a fresh aesthetic.

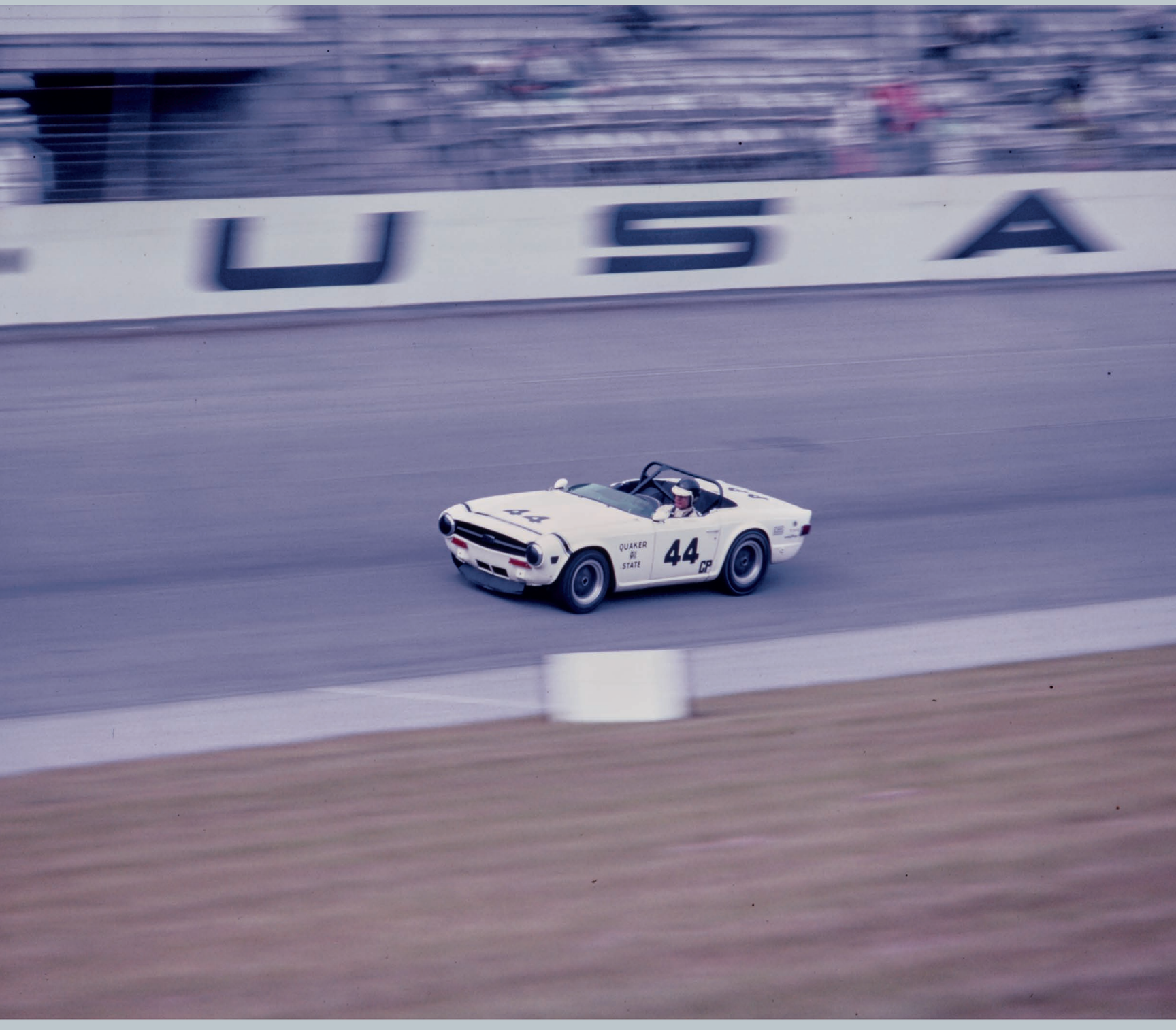
Perforated silver wheels quickly replaced the Rostyle trim items. Wire wheels, even if they somewhat fought against the modern look, remained an option.

Inside, the cabin received new seats finished in perforated Ambla plastic. In came a fresh hood design, with zip-detachable rear screen, wider 5.5in (14cm) wheels, and a beefier 0.625in (1.5cm) front roll bar to combat the chassis's tendency to switch rapidly from understeer to oversteer if the driver lifted off the throttle during enthusiastic cornering. Talking of chasses and mechanicals, these remained standard IRS TR5 or TR250 items–the new cars named simply TR6 or TR6 Carb for the United States. Finally, trunk storage increased from 5.1 cu ft to 6.

Impressed with designer Gerhard Gieseke's imaginative sleight of hand, *Road & Track* stated, "This is one of the rare facelift jobs that comes off," although it did offset that with, "The vintage body makes itself known in the driving compartment." Perhaps the only thing more impressive is the fact that Karmann managed the whole process, tooling and all, in just 14 months. Reporting in April 1969, *Autocar* also liked the new "smoothed out" styling, and of the driving, it remained "very much a masculine machine" and one that was still "exhilarating to drive."

Given that timescale, a 200lb (90.5kg) weight penalty could be forgiven and generally was, as it extended the lifespan of Triumph's much loved, original TR sports car recipe by another eight years.

Model changes remained relatively minimal throughout production. In 1971 was the introduction of the stronger Triumph Stag gearbox, with its wider ratios and increased flexibility. Rake adjustable seats and an updated Laycock J-Type overdrive (replacing the A-Type) arrived in 1973, with the optional wire wheels now phased out. A new Thoroughbred race series in the U.K. saw a return to the winner's podium, with Reg Woodcock powering to the 3-liter class and further wins in the reinstated Prodsport series.



The famous Group 44 TR6 of Bob Tullius, resplendent in white with green stripes, here racing on November 26, 1969 at the ARRC Race of Champions at Daytona.

THE ADVENT OF GROUP 44

Faced with a choice between his career at Kodak and racing, Bob Tullius chose the latter. Foregoing his amateur status, in 1965 he teamed up with fellow racers Brian Fuerstenau, a phenomenally talented engineer, and Dick Gilmartin, a Madison Avenue advertising executive, to form Group 44 Inc on America's west coast.

This new racing concern aimed to provide a professional one-stop shop–race preparation, racing results, and, most importantly, resultant publicity–in terms of all aspects of the sport. This would go on to offer safety classes and driving schools in the local vicinity in the build-up to events, ensuring maximum publicity for the sponsors' advertising buck. With Gilmartin securing sponsorship from Quaker State Motor Oil (it had remained principal sponsor for decades), the new company could begin forging its legend, and soon its race cars, with eye-catching green stripes on white livery, became a mainstay on tracks and more importantly, its drivers on winners' rostrums.

Given Tullius's history with Triumph and then current TR4 steed, and the fact that his other partners currently raced one (the former a TR3 and the latter, a Spitfire), a continued relationship with the marque (and later with others under the 'new' British Leyland umbrella) was inevitable. Once Kas Kastner had persuaded the SCCA to accept fuel injection, in 1969 Tullius piloted a TR6 with huge success, regularly putting rivals such as the Porsche 911 and Datsun 240Z to the sword in Class C.

Although the company raced many marques and models (among them MG and Dodge) with enormous success, it was to British Leyland that it became integrally linked. Tullius would win the 1975 SCCA B Production Class in a V12 Jaguar XKE and the '77 and '78 Trans Am series in an XJ-S. He had return to racing Triumphs with the new TR7 and TR8 models, before taking Jaguar back to Le Mans for the first time in a generation with the XJR-5 in 1984.

Group 44's Triumph racing roots would lead directly to representing other British Leyland marques, which resulted in a return to Le Mans in 1984 for Jaguar. Here is the XJR-5 of Bob Tullius, Brian Redman, and Doc Bundy in action.

(continues on next page)

The 'Quaker State' Group 44 TR8 of Bob Tullius and Brian Fuerstenau thunders 'round Watkins Glen on the 1979 6-Hours Endurance race.

The last TR6 (a U.S. carb car–note the large bumper overriders) rolls off the Canley production line in 1976. The future TR would be a very different beast.

The following year saw the introduction of a new 18-58-58-18 camshaft to meet tightening U.S. emissions regulations. Redesigned manifolds saw a slight power rise for U.S.-bound cars to 106bhp, but top end power took a hit for all variants. U.K. (now designated CR) cars saw power output fall from 150bhp to 124bhp, although the decrease was lower than first seems, as the latter was to stricter DIN standards and the former CP-designated cars, SAE.

Further minor styling and cabin tweaks ensued. British Leyland did an impressive job of keeping the model relevant, and most importantly, abreast of ever stricter U.S. regulations–the model's bumper overrider design proved far less convoluted than MG's solution.

By the mid–1970s, TR6, still with its old-school separate chassis design that under slung the rear axle and necessitated sitting low in an uber narrow cabin, had sold a walloping 94,619 units in seven years–more than the TR2-through-TR3B and TR4-through-TR5 variants had in their respective pomps. Contemporary sports car buyers' changing tastes that were by now much less predisposed to masochism meant the writing was on the wall. The final U.K. car left the factory in February 1975, with U.S. carb cars remaining on sale alongside the TR7 until July 1976.

It had been one hell of a ride.

First and last of the traditional TR line. All had narrow cabins because of the chassis design, which necessitated the inhabitants sitting low between the narrow side members. All, too, had sporting personality and performance aplenty, thanks to their rambunctious four- and six-cylinder engines and hard-riding natures.

Triumph TR4, same as for TR3A except:	
Data	1961–1965
Models	Roadster (£750)
Length	153.6in (390.1cm)
Width	57.5in (146cm)
Weight	2128lb (956.2kg)
Steering	Rack-and-pinion
Tires	5.90-15in
Triumph TR4A, same as for TR4 except:	
Data	1965–1967
Weight	2240lb (1016kg)
Max Bhp	104bhp (net) @ 4700rpm
Max Torque	132lb ft @ 3000rpm
Rear Suspension	IRS, with coil springs, semi-trailing arms, lever-arm dampers
Tires	6.95-15in
Triumph TR5, same as for TR4A except:	
Models	Roadster (£985)
Weight	2268lb (1029kg)
Engine Size	2498cc
Engine Format	6-cylinder
Fuel Injection	Lucas indirect fuel-injection
Max Bhp	150bhp @ 5500rpm
Max Torque	164lb ft @ 3500rpm
Gearbox	4-speed manual, overdrive optional
Final Drive Ratio	3.45:1 (2.82:1 with overdrive)
Tires	165-15in radial-ply
0 to 60 mph	8.8sec
Top Speed	120mph (193kph)
Fuel Economy	19.6mpg (US, 16.32mpg)
Triumph TR250, same as for TR4A except:	
Carburetion	Twin Stromberg carburetors
Max Torque	143lb ft @ 3000rpm
Tires	185SR-15in radial-ply
Triumph TR6, same as for TR5 except:	
Models	Roadster (£1020-2335)
Front Suspension	Anti-roll bar
	Post ‘72 models
Max Bhp	124bhp @ 5000rpm (DIN)
Max Torque	143lb ft @ 3500rpm
Triumph TR6 (federal), same as for TR250 except:	
Front Suspension	Anti-roll bar
	Post ‘71 models
Max Bhp	106bhp @ 4900rpm (DIN)

9

SPORTING SEDANS (PART 1) AND THE STAG

TOE-TO-TOE WITH RIVAL ROVER

After a near miss merger, the Triumph and Rover tribes went to war with their respective 2000 series sedans. This tête-à-tête battle saw improvements made to both sides' wares, including the pioneering introduction of PI (petrol injection) for the big Triumph, before incredibly, both marques ended under up under the same corporate banner after all. Meanwhile, a Michelotti prototype led directly to the Stag, but its fresh V8 engine–developed instead of the utilization of its rival's unit–proved undercooked, with resultant engine woes on both sides of the Atlantic.

A 1970 promotional brochure showing a Triumph Stag and couple outside the Hotel de Paris in Monte Carlo; the model would target the former sports car–owning family man.

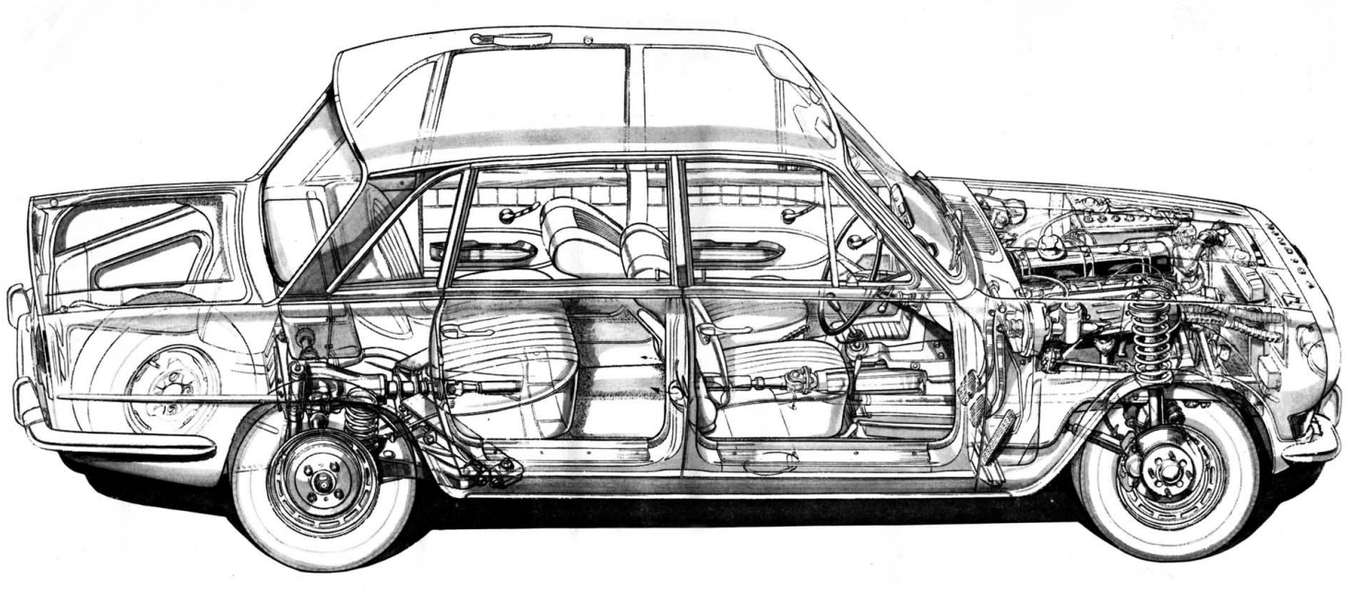
The Standard-Vanguard's proposed 'Zebu' replacement complete with notchback rear pillar, and created in-house by Standard with some styling touches by Michelotti, had to be canned at the prototype stage. Invited in to view it, *Motor*'s editor Christopher Jennings told the assembled audience, "I think it's beautiful, but confidentially I must tell you that you'll be accused of copying." The source of this assertion, of course, was the upcoming Ford Anglia 105E, which already had that particular design feature.

A proposed venture with the American Motors Corporation to alter its Rambler compact car for the European market came to nothing before the new project 'Barb' got the go-ahead. This had an incredibly short 24-month turnaround time–challenging, as only the engines and gearbox would be carried over, everything else would be new.

Project Zebu featured an interesting reverse-slope rear window. One problem though, unknown to Standard-Triumph, was that rival Ford had a very similar body design in the offing.

In 1961 Michelotti duly conjured up a swift piece of magic (chosen ahead of a Standard Studio's Les Moore design), while Pressed Steel was given the job of tooling up and then constructing the four-door monocoques. Power would come from the Standard Six's six-cylinder engine in either 1596cc or 1998cc forms, although the former soon saw itself ditched after one road-going prototype, 5264 VC, was tested and found wanting. Rack-and-pinion steering, MacPherson-strut front suspension, and semi-trailing link independent rear suspension, as well as the Six's four-speed gearbox, completed the technical specs.

A lack of experience with the new body construction process caused some initial issues, especially with suspension pick-up points. Sturdy chassis legs at the front, a huge steel crossmember running under the front seats, and at the rear structural members welded to the floorpan were fitted but resulted in excessive vibration during testing. The engineering team solved this by using a V-shaped steel cross beam at the rear, mounted via rubber bushes, and spreading the twisting load



Cutaway line drawing shows both the mechanicals and interior space of the 'three-box' Triumph MkI design. The short trunk would be lengthened for the MkII.

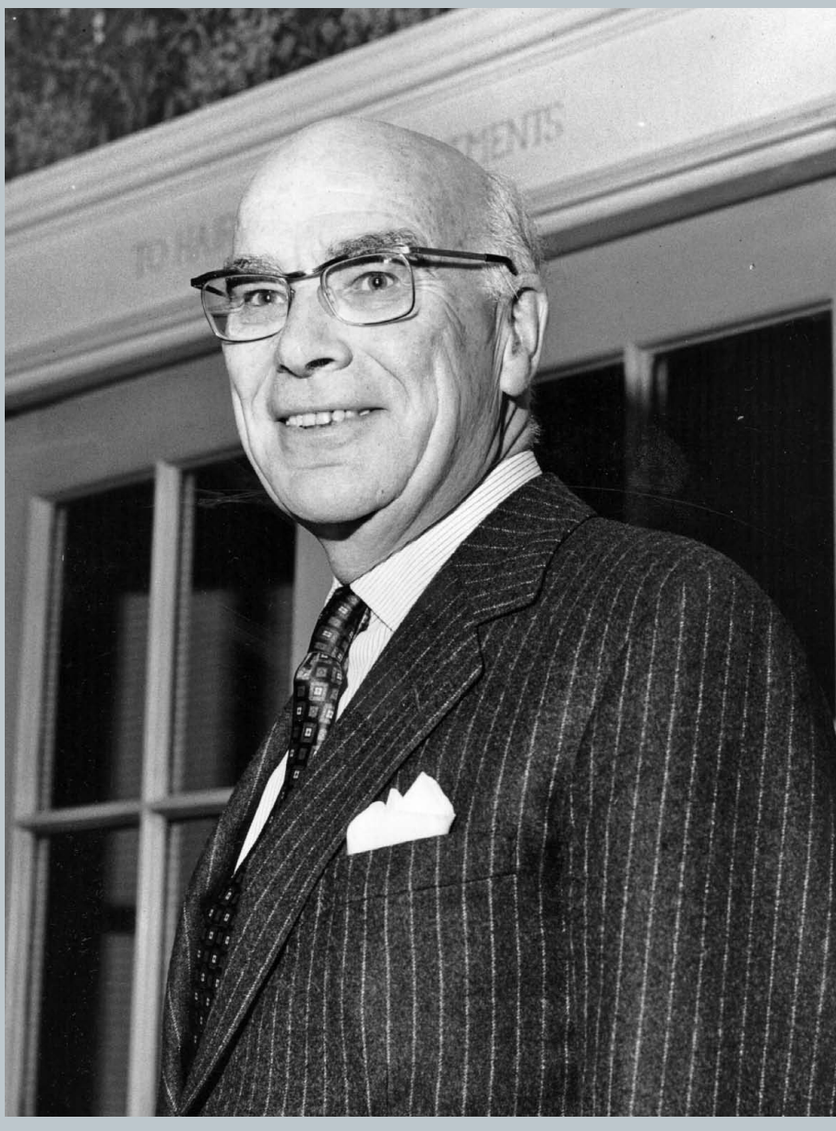
DONALD GRESHAM (LORD) STOKES

Born in Plymouth as son of the city's traffic manager, Donald Stokes was destined to enter the automotive industry. After leaving school, he took up an engineering apprenticeship with Leyland Motors in Lancashire. At the outbreak of World War II, he joined the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers regiment, rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, and serving with both distinction and the intense and dynamic style that would later become his trademark in the business world.

After becoming Standard-Triumph's sales director, Stokes would subsequently remain *the* principal player in the Triumph story, even as his own ascendancy in the various guises of its corporate overseer continued. Knighted in 1965, Stokes served as deputy chairman and managing director of the Leyland Group, until taking up what the *Financial Times* called in 1968, "the toughest job held by any boss in Britain"–Chief Executive of the newly formed British Leyland Motor Corporation.

Made a life peer the following year, Lord Stokes became Britain's most outspoken businessman, known for his colorful language and buccaneering approach. Sadly, the company's performance failed to live up to his enthusiasm and overtly positive profit projections, and that high profile of his didn't prevent a thorough dressing down from Prime Minister Harold Wilson when summoned to his holiday residence, Chequers.

The setting up of an inquiry, carried out by another ennobled industrialist, Lord Ryder, signaled the end of his reign. After the enforced nationalization of British Leyland in 1975, he would stay on as honorary president for a further two years, and after that, go on to live to the ripe old age of 94.



Like many automotive industry bosses in Great Britain at the time, ex-army man Lord Stokes combined an iron will with an indefatigable confidence in his own abilities.

The 2000 MkI combined smart styling with smooth six-cylinder power and upmarket (for its mid-market pricing) interior accoutrements.

of the rear axle casing (again mounted via rubber bushes). Ironically, it would later become clear that Rover and its P6 development had the same issue.

Like other models, production would use multiple sites, and incredibly, this lower, longer, sleeker, and more sophisticated replacement sat ready within the allotted timeframe.

Just one question remained: What to call it? A Standard or a Triumph. The latter had been in the ascendency for over a decade now and it had a renowned sales winner in its TR range, while the word 'standard' had taken on new period connotations of something that was average, cheap, or basic. As the last Standard Ensign De Luxe rolled off the production line at Canley in May 1963, the PR people began readying the Triumph 2000 for launch.

1963–1967: OFF TO A FLYER

Introduced to the public in October 1963, the Triumph 2000 immediately went head-to-head with Rover's own 2000 model. Both companies had been firmly aware of the other's plans. Triumph had been confident that in its smooth six-cylinder engine it had the better powerplant, but decided to up the quality of cabin fittings and finishings.

It also used the period until cars arrived in showrooms, four months later, to loan them to buyers via dealerships and use the resultant feedback to fine-tune them–rival BMC on the other hand, had a poor reputation for involving the paying customer in the development process.

Pricing sat at £906 for the basic versus £1,046 for the Rover, and it also offered overdrive and an automatic option. The Rover had the better top speed, but in all other performance stats Triumph's offering was superior.

Autocar greeted it thusly, "This new Triumph advances a full rung up the social ladder," and continued, "All in all, this new Triumph 2000 seems to have golden prospects." *Motor* agreed, praising its "attractive and luxuriously equipped unitary-construction body."

On the rally front, the Competitions Department entered three cars in the Spa-Sofia-Liege Marathon in August 1964, only for all three cars to succumb to rear suspension woes when crossbeam mountings broke away from the floor pan pressings–at least this resulted in reinforcement for all future production. Thus endowed, driver Roy Fiddler achieved 6th place on that year's RAC Rally. A 5th place

finish would follow a year later, putting the Rover 2000s and Ford Cortina GTs to the sword. The new model was proving itself rugged, and the 1998cc engine easily tuned for a reliable 150bhp.

In the U.S., *Road & Track* sampled one in October 1965, calling it, "A nice car," although "pricey". Perhaps the most damning statement was: "For the man that wants more than bread, but can't afford caviar." The problems were that it was just too damn slow and small for that market. At $2,995 before options, it simply couldn't compete with American mid-price cars like the $2,400 Pontiac Tempest, and that's before you factored its 90bhp power output (versus 140bhp or 285bhp, in six-cylinder or V8 forms). Accordingly, the North American push fizzled out.

In Great Britain though, mid-market buyers fell into one of two camps: Triumph or Rover. Once into its stride, it averaged staggering annual sales of 22,600 versus its rival's 17,800–and that was for 2-liter cars, over their entire 13-year lifespan!

With Group 3 regulations having given way to Group 2, Roy Fiddler and Alan Taylor took an outstanding win in the RAC Rally Championship (which included the RAC Rally, itself) of 1966.

Standard cars received a fascia facelift in 1966, with five-door estate and sedan variants soon coming on stream; the former seeing off competition from a 'fastback' proposal and constructed by Carbodies of Coventry, after Pressed Steel asked for £400,000 for tooling to make it. Triumph's Coventry factories were thriving and struggling to keep up with demand.

Roy Fiddler and Alan Taylor's triumphant Triumph 2000 during the RAC Rally round of the 1966 European Rally Championship.

1968–1969: PI AND REFRESH

With cheaper rivals circling and then surpassing the 2000 in terms of performance, and the new TR about to receive a six-cylinder engine, it became clear that the model required more zip.

The rally cars had been tuned for 150bhp, but at the cost of refinement. Cue the new PI (petrol injection) TR5 engine for the sedan. De-tuned from 150bhp to 132bhp, this allowed more flexibility in the power band–perfect for a GT, where accelerative prowess wasn't necessarily the be-all and end-all.

Aesthetic differences for Mk1 PIs were subtle in the extreme and consisted only of an 'injection' badge over the dummy air-intake on the bonnet, new badging on its rump, black vinyl and a PI badge on the quarter panels, and TR5-style dummy-Rostyle wheel covers.

The new unit provided a 46.5 percent increase in power with a further 30 percent of torque. The nature of its delivery impressed Bill Boddy, writing in *Motorsport* in April 1969, "The bigger PI engine is an impressively smooth and powerful unit, very responsive to the squirt injection," even if he wasn't overly enamored with the overall package.

The new British Leyland behemoth formed in January 1968, and finally Triumph and arch-rival Rover sat firmly under the same banner–previous mooted mergers had been the reason each had been aware of the other's proposed 2000 model. More wide-ranging stylistic changes arrived in October 1969 with the MkII. Michelotti's refresh took the model in an entirely different direction, replacing the earlier car's somewhat dowdy, anchored in the 1950s, look with a fresh, sharp 1960s suit. The interior, too, received a significant update for a more cohesive and higher standard finish.

Bigger news would arrive shortly in the shape (albeit, pretty familiar to this new MkII) of a soft-top sibling.

(continues on page 160)

The Canley factory in 1966. A production line with a white 2000 MkI sedan in the foreground and a matching little brother 1300 behind it . Other colors were available, as the darker hued 1300 in the background shows.

Triumph show 'em a clean pair of wheels.

(1, 2, 3, in their class)

For this year's RAC International Rally the conditions were particularly swinish. The snow came thick and fast and early.

So did the dropouts. Less than half finished. Engines, transmissions, suspensions, and bodies took a real beating.

And storming in as one, two, three in their class—the Triumph 2.5 P.I.—the first British saloon with petrol injection as standard equipment.

If you needed proof of our statement 'Triumph put in what the others leave out', you've got it. In triplicate.

BRITISH LEYLAND TRIUMPH

RAC INTERNATIONAL RALLY OF GREAT BRITAIN, 1969. CLASS 6. PRODUCTION TOURING CARS OVER 2,000cc.

1	2	3
Triumph 2.5 P.I. Andrew Cowan & Brian Coyle.	Triumph 2.5 P.I. Paddy Hopkirk & Tony Nash.	Triumph 2.5 P.I. Brian Culcheth & Johnstone Syer.

Three team cars started, three finished. The best team performance by British Cars.

Results are subject to official confirmation.

The new PI (petrol injection) models proved successful in the 1969 RAC International Rally of Great Britain. As this advert demonstrates, British Leyland made the most of that fact.

For the duration of its production life, the Triumph models would go head-to-head with its rival Rover's corresponding offerings. Here a 'Project Innsbruck' MkII Triumph 2000 fends off a Rover P6 2000TC.


TRIUMPH
2000
RCH 811L

THE TOUGHEST RACE IN THE WORLD

John Sprinzel developed his Daily Mirror World Cup Rally to coincide with the start of the 1970 soccer World Cup competition in Mexico City. This grueling 16,000-mile (25,749km) London-to-Mexico would test its competitors and cars to their absolute limits.

With Lord Stokes firmly on board, this undertaking would energize, inspire, and occupy Abingdon's Competitions Department for a full 12 months prior to its start. Department head Peter Browning stole a cheeky march on rivals Ford by lending an ex-Scottish Rally 2.5PI to Sprinzel to carry out his route surveys, with the proviso that he provided feedback on its performance.

Given a healthy operating budget by the normally supremely frugal Stokes, Browning promptly sent three MK1 PIs to South America to recce and survey the task ahead. Armed with detailed knowledge of the job, he ordered six exceedingly special MK2 monocoques. British Leyland played down the level of preparation given to them, but it's comprehensive in the extreme and included foam-filled sills, alloy panels aplenty, flared arches, engine bay vents in the front wings, cool air intakes in the roof, comprehensive strengthening, a bulge on the trunk lid to accommodate a second spare wheel, and an alloy roll bar. Mechanically standard (150bhp engine, Stag-type gears, and a limited-slip differential), the cars were fitted with two Marston safety fuel tanks, in addition to the normal one, for a huge 32-gallon (145-liter) capacity. Demonstrating the engineers' eye for detail, the fuel injection systems had adjustable fuel/air ratio (mixture) control from inside the car to allow for altitudes that would range from sea level to 16,000ft (4.8km) in the Andes.

Lord Stokes turned up for the start inside Wembley Stadium on Sunday morning, April 19, and waved off the four 'works' cars and two privateer entrants. Given the financial outlay, the pressure to win was considerable. BL would also look after three Austin Maxis (one with H.R.H. Prince Michael of Kent driving) and a Mini Clubman. Additional tension came from the fact that while Triumph had constructed what equated to high-speed tanks, Ford turned up with lightened and strengthened Escort sports cars; its crews were also two-up, rather than the three-up of the PIs.

West and Central Europe was dispatched with ease, before the first real test in the Serbian mountains, even then it would be a walk in the park compared to what would follow in South America. They reached Lisbon in seven days, with all competitors and cars spending two weeks aboard the SS *Derwent*.

The Triumph teams were aghast to find that rough sections in Uruguay and Argentina had been regraded and were now practically motorways, but the PI's higher top speed put it at an advantage versus the Escorts. Andrew Cowan wrote his car off in a near fatal accident in Argentina, while a second-place Ford went off the road on the last Panama City-to-Fortin leg (a relative doddle at just 51 hours and 30 minutes). After an exhausting and punishing race, the team finally celebrated Brian Culcheth's 2nd place (on seeing the Fords, he had made a calculated gamble to go with a two-up crew) and Paddy Hopkirk's 4th place–both incredible achievements.

Unfortunately, Stokes didn't share the same view, and Browning cited this perceived failure for the departmental foreclosure that swiftly followed.

A huge crowd gathered to see off the entrants of the 1970 Daily Mirror World Rally. One of six MkII 2.5PIs, here, car 92 (Evan Green, Jack Murray, and Hamish Cardno) readies for the start.

Car 88 of Brian Culcheth and Johnstone Syer sweeps past a suitably unimpressed policeman. The only two-man team in Triumph's line-up would take a well-earned 2nd place on the epic rally.

The familial resemblance is clear even if it's powered by an all-new engine. The sleek Stag targeted a grown-up former sports car-owning demographic.

(continues from page 153)

1970–1975: THE STAG–A CAR DEFINITIVELY OF ITS ERA

If the 2000 was the darling of the middle classes, then the new Stag was to the 1970s born. Pilots simply required an open-top shirt, medallion situated against hirsute pectorals, and a handlebar moustache to complete the perfect formula–lashings of Old Spice aftershave remained optional.

This is exactly the image of the driver Harry Webster had envisaged buying one from the start, curing the age-old problem of the 'arrival of a family, prompts sale' sports car adverts, seen regularly in the second-hand car classifieds. It could also snare the post-family older man, with cash to spare and a yearning for reliving their sporting youth.

The concept itself hadn't come from Webster though, instead in 1965 it was Michelotti's idle fingers (a spare hour or two equated to that for the Italian) that styled a four-seat convertible prototype on an old 2000 test car. A convertible based on the model had been mooted two years earlier but turned down due to minimal sales projections. The 1960s, however, were now in full swing and Webster spied an opportunity.

By the time his new 'Stag' appeared in 1970, the shortened 2000 wheelbase had undergone substantially more reworking than first intended. The new car did resemble its sedan sibling (it had the same grille style, lights, and front/side indicators, and a similar-looking rear end, and indeed interior) but almost every body panel differed, with bespoke tooling required for manufacture. Despite a stiffened floor and sills, and to solve scuttle shake issues, it had also gained a funky T-bar rollover solution.

There were more mechanical similarities with almost identical suspension set-ups (save for a front anti-roll bar) and an up-rated version of the same transmission, but in came bigger front discs and rear drums, as well as power-assisted steering as standard.

The biggest single difference, however, lay under the bonnet. The 2.5-liter Triumph engine had been considered, as had the Rover V8, but in the end Triumph decided to march to a new tune.

Initial press responses to the new car were positive on both sides of the

The defining feature of the T-bar helped to eliminate scuttle shake by significantly straightening the roofless car's structure.

Atlantic. All recognized that it wasn't an out-and-out sports car, but a high-speed GT with decent mile-munching capabilities–it helped, too, that the V8 sounded so blooming good. Euro-spec cars, endowed with twin Zenith-Stromberg carburetors, had a reasonably strong power output, but the anti-smog endowed federal cars returned 18bhp less.

Engine reliability issues quickly became apparent, lending Triumph its own unwanted MGA Twin-Cam moment, with an estimated two-thirds of the total 2,871 U.S. cars experiencing issues of one sort or another. An update, later termed the 'MkII,' arrived in 1973–with cast-alloy road wheels as standard for federal cars and overdrive for all manuals–as did a global fuel crisis. Combined with this and ever-tightening Federal regulations that British Leyland wouldn't financially commit to meeting, the Stag found itself unceremoniously discontinued in what senior management had initially hoped to be its prime market by the end of the year. Sales of 5,508 units that calendar year would be the model's best, with ever decreasing annual totals after that.

Elsewhere, the engineering battle to keep the V8s reliable continued unabated. Interestingly, in 1972 Rover-Triumph had been set up as a division with British Leyland, even if cooperation between the two entities proved negligible. The 2000 series of both marques continued to go head-to-head.

Triumph introduced the 2500TC model in May 1974 (identical in every way to the 2.5-liter model, save for the substitution of the PI equipment by twin SU carburetors, deletion of the anti-roll bar and tacho, plus a few trim changes), with the troublesome 2.5PI discontinued eleven months later and a new top-of-the-range 2500S arriving at the same time. The 2000 also became the 2000TC, in this final product reshuffle.

1976–1977: END GAME

The 2500S proved a sales success, at a much need time. Continual developments to the running gear had resulted in a machine that handled in a superior fashion to its early predecessors, while sharp styling and interior accoutrements helped to justify its £558 price differential over the £2,713 2500TC.

Fitting the hardtop transformed the Stag into a rakish-looking 2+2 Coupe. Careful, though, the heavy item required two people to do so.

The all-new V8 in all its glory. In period it proved troublesome; luckily thanks to post-production fixes, modern owners can enjoy it as its designers originally intended.

By 1977 though, the writing was on the wall. The last of the Triumph 2000-line left Canley in May, with the final Stag following a month later. In the final analysis, the Triumph 2000-line had bettered its competitor, selling a total of 316,962 versus 248,959 (albeit Rover also sold 80,017 V8 Rovers). That though would be scant compensation because the successor for both marques' models, that had so long been allowed to battle it out under the same umbrella, would be a Rover: the SD1.

On the Stag front, it never quite lived up to its undoubted potential–it would take aftermarket fixes and developments for it to do that. Triumph head Charles Spencer 'Spen' King would later recall of the Triumph Engineering team's attempts at fitting the Rover V8 engine (too high, it was claimed) in the Stag prototype, "I think they didn't want it to fit, they wanted their own V8 engine."

Understandable of course given the two marques rivalry but, with the benefit of hindsight, undoubtedly the wrong decision.

APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION

The Stag would have an all-new V8 engine to power it. Well, not quite. In fact, the Saab 99 had been using half of the design for several years now, in its Triumph-designed and built, 45-degree canted, single-overhead camshaft 'slant-four' engine. That Lewis Dawtrey's original design had been V8 in nature, from which the four could be derived, adds a touch of irony to the backstory that'll be explained shortly.

Reunited with a second SOHC Saab engine in a V, the Stag engine did not have twice the capacity due to the need for a shorter stroke to avoid the balance weights fouling the pistons. Initially intended to be 2.5-liter in capacity, this was soon stretched to 3 liters in the pursuit of increased low-down torque. A larger bore offset the shorter stroke and allowed for bigger valves, with chain-driven camshafts chosen for oil-tightness and to keep overall engine length shorter. These camshafts could be removed without disturbing anything else thanks to innovative slanted bolts. Other features from the Saab unit remained the same, including the location of the distributor and water pump driven by one of the camshaft chains.

The iron-block/alloy head, five main-bearing crankshaft V8 had a compression ratio of 8:8 and timing of 16-56-56-16 for flexibility through the rev range, and with two Stromberg carburetors (chosen as they met current California emissions standards) fitted, it produced 145bhp (net).

Autocar's June 1970 engine study reported, "Triumph quite rightly stress that the tremendous amount of work done on the Saab engine, especially in the reliability and durability fields, can in large measure be read across to the vee-8. Since Saab are now apparently satisfied that the four is the most durable engine in Europe this bodes well for the life of the Stag." Inspired stuff, and logical in its thinking.

Unfortunately, and ironically given the above, the V8 would quickly gain a reputation for both overheating due to blowing a head gasket (resulting in cylinder-head warping) and running its bearings. This resulted in high guarantee claims, and no doubt put many prospective buyers off.

To this day, Stag fans roll their collective eyes whenever the in-period engine woes are raised in books, magazine articles, or general conversation (especially if the latter happens to be with an MG owner).

"Ello, ello, ello, trouble with ze headgasket, monsieur?" Advertised as having been fitted with a 'Custom-built engine', the big question is: Should it have been?

The 1974 line-up saw the 2500 and 2000 model receive the TC 'Twin Carburetor' designation.

A final hurrah, the 1975 2500S came fully loaded, with more power and torque, better handling, and more equipment. As per the Stag, 14in (35.5cm), five spoke alloy wheels that came as standard, are an identifying feature.

Triumph Stag	
Data	1970–1977
Models	Coupe, Convertible (£1,562-£6,180/£1,527-£5,904)
Construction	Steel monocoque
Length	173.8in (441.5cm)
Width	63.5in (161.3cm)
Height	49.5in (125.7cm)
Wheelbase	100in (254cm)
Weight	2807lb (1273.2kg)
Engine Size	2997cc
Engine Format	V8-cylinder
Carburetion	Two Zenith-Stromberg carbs
Max Bhp	145hp @ 5500rpm
Max Torque	170lb ft @ 3500rpm
Gearbox	5-speed manual (optional o/d, standard from Oct '72)
Automatic	Optional BorgWarner
Final Drive Ratio	3.7:1
Steering	Rack and pinion, power-assisted
Front Suspension	Independent with coil springs, MacPherson struts, anti-roll bar, and telescopic dampers
Rear Suspension	Independent with coil springs, semi-trailing wishbones, and telescopic dampers
Tires	185-14in, 5.5in (14cm) rims
Brakes	10.6in (26.9cm) discs, front; 9x2.5in (22.9x6.4cm) drums, rear, servo-assisted
0 to 60 mph	10.4sec
Top Speed	115mph (185.1kph)
Fuel Economy	20.6mpg (US, 17.2mpg)

Triumph Stag (Federal), as per Stag, except:	
Data	1970–1973
Models	Coupe, Convertible
	1972 model
Max Bhp	127hp @ 6000rpm
Max Torque	142lb ft @ 3200rpm
	1972 model
Max Bhp	127hp @ 5500rpm
Max Torque	148lb ft @ 3500rpm


SPJ 61M

10

SPORTING SEDANS (PART 2)

A COMPLEX PRODUCT LINE-UP

The Leyland Motors baby 2000 range began life endowed with front-wheel drive, but quickly morphed to include rear-wheel-drive offerings. Bodily shenanigans, with a number of short nose/tail, long nose/tail combinations, further added to the confusion, before the rear-wheel-drive Dolomite range cemented itself as the only offering—and the wildly successful Dolmoite Sprint proved to be the best of all.

The mean and moody Triumph Dolomite Sprint proved one mighty hot sedan both on the road and on the racetrack.

The breadth of Triumph's small car range can be confusing to understand for those new to the marque, but it started out simply enough. Codenamed 'Ajax', the new monocoque vehicle saw itself heavily influenced by designer Alec Issigonis and his Mini over at Longbridge—even if it was promoted more as a limousine in minaiture, compared to a volume economy car. In came fashionable front-wheel drive, and IRS, although it didn't benefit from a transverse layout.

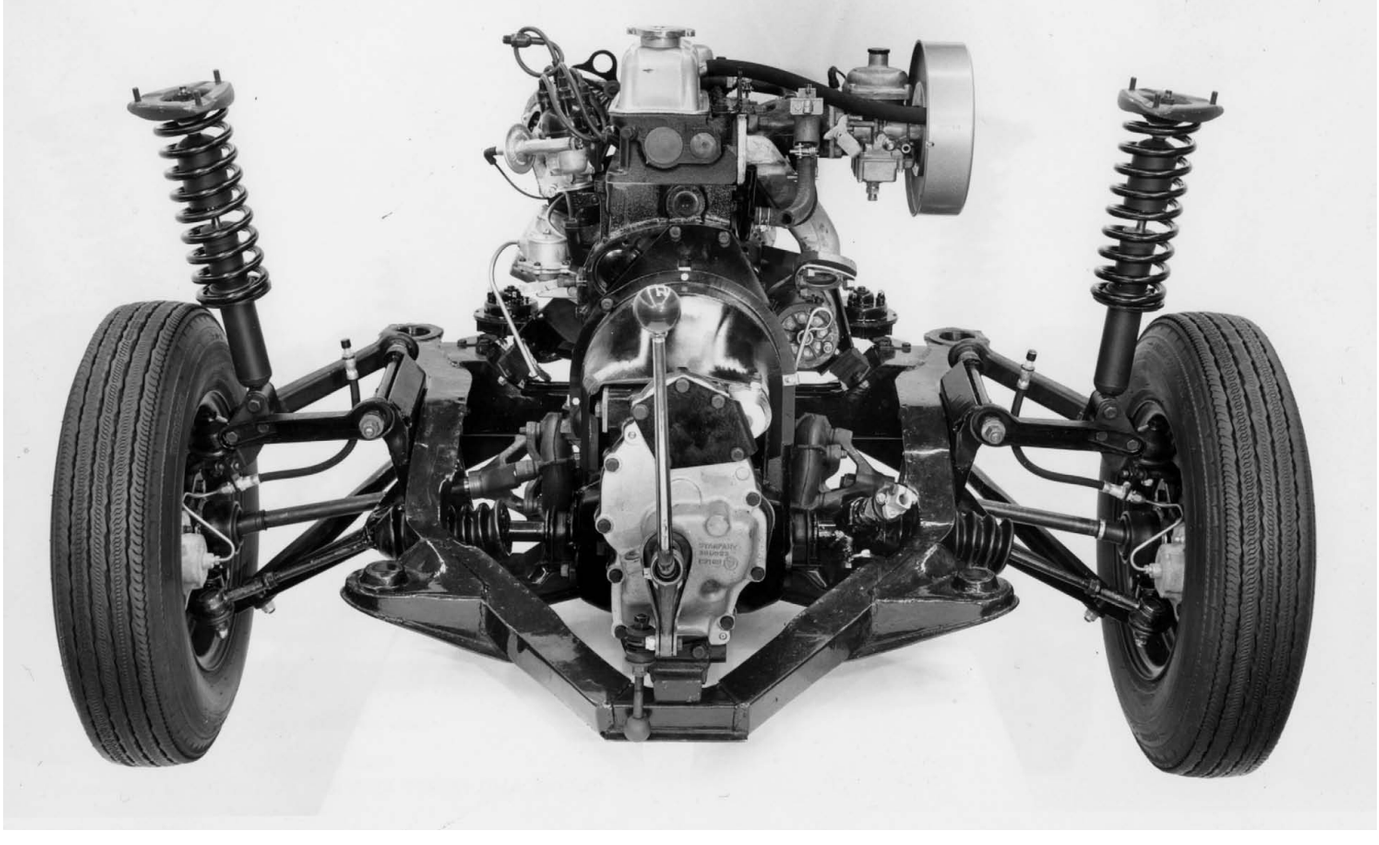
The engineering team instead chose a longitudinal engine position, situated in a long (for a small car, anyway) 96.6in (245cm) wheelbase. The engine was a bored out 1296cc version of the Herald unit, featuring the 8-port cylinderhead from the racing/rallying Spitfires, that sat on top of its transmission, forward of the gearbox, mounted beneath the crankcase and, unlike the Mini, gearbox and engine oil kept separate. In came all-round independent suspension to maximize the car's handling abilities.

Michelotti worked to a 'mini-2000' brief, producing a complementary four-door style (planned two-door and estate versions never progressed past the planning stage) with a delicate familial resemblance. Initial plans for the model to replace the still, strong-selling Herald as well were quickly shelved, with the newly named Triumph 1300 pushed more upmarket (via sumptuous interior trim and fixings) to fill a perceived gap in the company's offerings.

1965–1969: ANY FLAVOR, AS LONG AS IT'S 1300

Launched at the 1965 Earls Court Motor Show, the 1300 provided a nice mix of reasonably peppy performance, cabin space for four (five possible, if the three rear occupants breathed in), and a high level of finish. The single carburetor engine output 61bhp @ 5000rpm and produced 73lb ft of torque, propelling the 2016lb (914kg) car to a top speed of 85mph (137kph) and devouring, or rather slowly nibbling, 0–60mph (0–97kph) in 18.5secs.

CAR magazine liked the offering, with a judging panel including Stirling Moss, Gerard 'Jabby' Crombac (French magazine *Sport Auto*'s editor), and John R. Bond (publisher of *Road & Track* and *Car Life* in the U.S.) voting it Car of the Year for 1965/'66.



Inspired by the Mini, the new Triumph 1300 featured a front-wheel-drive layout with the engine mounted on a sub-frame. The gearbox and final drive sat underneath ensuring the whole assembly remained compact.

THE ‘SAAB’ LINK

Renowned for its two-stroke-powered motor cars, by the early 1960s Swedish manufacturer Saab started looking at designs to move upmarket. With little knowledge of four-stroke designs, it enlisted the help of British Engineering company Ricardo, going so far as developing prototype small engines of 1300cc and 1500cc capacity.

Costs, however, quickly became an issue, and worried about the overall development risks Saab became interested to know (via Ricardo, which had links with Standard-Triumph) that the British manufacturer was already developing an engine of similar design.

With a deal struck and an estimated 35,000 units by 1968 requested by the Swedish manufacturer, Triumph’s ‘slant-four’ overhead cam engine was developed and then productionized. Meanwhile, Triumph wouldn’t have its own vehicle ready for some time yet due to strikes postponing its launch.

The heavy Saab 99 came out in 1967, with the 1709cc unit producing 80bhp @ 5000rpm fitted with a single Zenith-Stromberg carburetor and endowed with an 8.8:1 compression ratio. Bigger and better things followed, with Saab first adopting the unaltered 1854cc engine before developing its own 2-liter version and fitting firstly Bosch fuel-injection for 110bhp, and then turbo-charging it for 145bhp in the ferociously accelerative Saab 99 Turbo.

The Swedes would continue using the same basic design into the 1980s, with the very early 900 models also using it. In fact the engine that powered the 2.0- and 2.3-liter Saabs up to 2010 could have their lineages traced back to Triumph.

Saab’s advertising campaign for the 99 made no mention of its engine’s Triumph origins, merely stating “And a more powerful engine, 1709cc.” Its later B20 2.0-liter version was developed in-house and different to that of the Triumph TR7.

The Michelotti-penned lines of the 1300 followed the lead of its six-cylinder 2000 big brother. They met with the approval of buyers from the start, and *CAR* magazine would endow the luxurious little sedan with its 1965/66 'Car of the Year' award.

Triumph provided more oomph with the 1300TC in 1967, endowed with twin-SU HS2 CV carburetors, and revised camshaft and distributor profile that raised matters to 75bhp @ 6000rpm and 75lb ft @ 3000rpm. It would be all change for the model's next evolution, however.

1970–1972: DIVERGENCE

The 1300 models had sold a solid 148,350 units by the time production ended in 1970, making them one of Triumph's biggest seller. However, the FWD platform hadn't delivered the roadholding or handling benefits expected, and first costs and the customers' service and guarantee experience were also below the desired levels.

The new British Leyland company had also decided upon a product strategy to be implemented during the upcoming decade that would ultimately see Rover building its big cars, Triumph

The 1969 Triumph Manx prototype—a two-door version of the Ajax project—would be launched as the Toledo in 1970.

This front three-quarter profile shows the 1500's long-nose/long-trunk combination. Power delivery still came via the front wheels, and the gearbox input shafts were strengthened.

responsible for medium-sized sedans (that took advantage of its sporting heritage), and Morris the smaller and cheaper vehicles. However, that would take time. Jaguar meanwhile, continued as best it could—trying to keep itself as separate as possible.

A drastic rethink at the end of 1967 had seen the arrival of a two-pronged approach: project 'Manx II' ('Manx I' had been a short-lived short-tail concept) was an up-engined and re-styled FWD variant to be sold at a higher price, and project 'Ajax III' was a cheaper model that reverted to a rear-wheel drive set-up. Both would be constructed on the same platform, necessitating considerable reworking of the 1300 floorpan to accept both drivetrains and provide pick-up points for either a live rear axle or beam dead axle. In the end the new models were ready for release by August 1970.

The restyled Triumph 1500 had a longer boot and nose, and a long-stroke 1493cc engine, while retaining front-wheel drive with the 1300's IRS replaced by a simpler trailing arm/semi-trailing arm set-up. This was an example of Spen King's brilliance, as the simpler suspension set-up worked better than the 1300's costly IRS. While on the other hand, the cut-price (in Triumph terms) Toledo (initially in two-door form only, but with a four-door arriving in 1971) kept the 1296cc engine and the short boot (and rear styling, matched to a simpler front end) but was now rear-wheel drive.

Just to confuse matters in 1972 Triumph, spotting a gap in the market between its 1500 and 2000 models, resurrected one of its most famous names to fill it: Dolomite. This 'new' model featured the larger 1854cc slant-four engine Triumph was building for Saab under its bonnet, the body and brakes of the 1500, and the Toledo's transmission.

At £1,397.37 including taxes, it sat firmly within the sticker prices for the models directly above and below. With 91bhp and a four-speed synchromesh gearbox (an automatic could be had as an option), as well as the Toledo's live, four-linked rear axle and divided propeller shaft (although stiffened and fitted with a front anti-roll bar as standard), it proved a thoroughly sporting and chuckable little sedan, and one capable of a top speed of over 100mph

The 1972 Triumph Motor stand at the London Motor Show, Earl's Court, with the new twin-headlamp Dolomite and single-headlamp Toledo in the foreground.

(161kph), even without the optional overdrive. Its black 'egg-crate' grille, twin headlamps, and matte black sills and rear panel only served to further accentuate this, but something even better was to follow very shortly.

1973–1975: THE DOLOMITE GOES HIGH-OCTANE

Peter Browning, head of MG's Abingdon Competition Department, while scouring British Leyland's multitudinous product range for an ideal competition car, first proposed a Morris Marina and then a Triumph Toledo–both to be powered by a specially constructed twin cam version of the Saab engine. Lord Stokes vetoed both, ensuring British Leyland adopted the status of also-rans in the burgeoning fields of sedan car racing and rallying.

With the twin cam idea poo-poohed, Spen King, after discussions with corporate advisors from Coventry Climax and Jaguar, suggested the possibility of a 16-valve version of the Dolomite's slant-four. Whilst these four-valve-per-cylinder designs had been seen in the field of racing, no production car had yet been endowed with one.

Released in 1973, and despite its looks echoing the old Triumph 1300, the Dolomite Sprint proved revolutionary. Endowed with its innovative 16-valve head (unlike other designs, still utilizing just a single camshaft) and twin SU side-draft HS6 carburetors, the 1998cc engine output a stonking 127bhp @ 5700rpm and 146.5lb ft of torque. In came the stronger 2.5/TR6/Stag gearbox and a new rear live axle with a TR6 crown-wheel-and-pinion, while the suspension came from the 1850 Dolomite. Ferodo 2430 lined front brake pads, larger TR6 drums, a 3.02:1 vacuum servo, and a pressure-reducing valve on the rear to reduce the tendency for locking-up under a heavy foot completed the braking picture.

On the visual front, a vinyl roof, small front spoiler, and GKN cast-alloy wheels (also a first as standard on a production vehicle) were the only additions, while the interior retained the high finish of other Dolomite models.

The overall package cost £1,460 and provided a car capable of a 116mph (187kph) top speed and a 0–60mph (0–97kph) time of 8.7secs–rapid figures for a diminutive sedan! And ones capable of giving even the market leader BMW a run for its money. Accordingly, advertising executives had a field day: "The Dolomite Sprint. Takes you from 0 to the magistrates (sic) court in 11.4 seconds," "One day even Alfa may have a 16-valve single overhead camshaft engine like ours", and "If the Dolomite Sprint's too fast, you could always buy a BMW 320i", just some of the taglines it inspired.

Triumph also launched the 1500TC (for twin carburetor) in October that same year, replacing the 1500, but now with RWD instead of FWD. It kept the 1500's interior and body trim but used the Dolomite's long-boot bodyshell and now offered an automatic gearbox as an option.

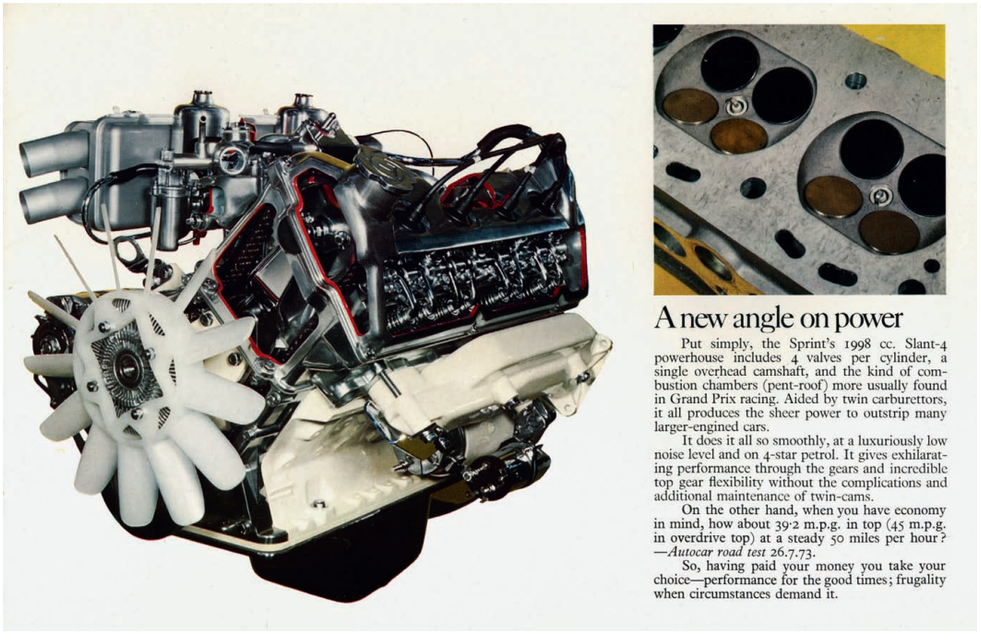
However, despite what was now essentially an eight-year-old body style, 1973 was all about the Sprint.

It revitalized the Competition department, which applied for FIA Group 2 homologation (requiring 1,000 to be constructed) shortly after its announcement. Suspicious, its inspectors descended on the assembly hall at Coventry, only to be shocked by the sight of row after row of completed 16-valve cars. Some competitors did offer 16-valve kits to customers but only half-heartedly.

In July 1973 *Motorsport* said of a recent short test drive in one that it "left a lasting impression of what a splendid concept this extremely rapid car is." And that, "The Sprint combines the Escort [RS's] handling and performance delights with an extraordinarily high standard of appointment, comfort and relative silence. Perhaps the most staggering thing is the torque and flexibility."

Time to take to the track.

(continues on page 177)



In a first for a mass-produced vehicle, the award-winning 16-valve 'Sprint' version of the slant-four engine featured four valves per cylinder. Its simple but sophisticated single overhead camshaft design won the U.K. Design Council's Award for 1974.

The 1500TC–the letters standing for 'twin carburetors'. But equally here, it could denote 'twin children'. The Triumph 1500 was the only car in history to start its life as FWD and end it as RWD with the same engine.

The new Triumph Dolomite Sprint is a nice, quiet, luxurious, utterly civilized car.

And laps MIRA* at 116mph

The Dolomite Sprint is a truly new concept in British motoring. It has all the comfort and luxury you've come to expect from the Dolomite. A unique new powerhouse of an engine that makes it the fastest 4-door production saloon under £2,000. Plus a lot of extra refinements.

Take the new Slant 4 engine first. It features 16 valves, a single overhead camshaft, and combustion chambers more usual in Grand Prix racing. Aided by twin carbs, you get performance you can feel in the small of your back – like 0-60 in 9·2 seconds, 0-100 in 28·5, and 40-60 in top in 9·0. Also the Sprint has lapped MIRA* (Motor Industry Research Association) test track at an impressive 116 mph. And all on 4-star petrol.

Now look at some of those extra refinements. Of course the front air spoiler, alloy

wheels and low profile radial tyres look good. But they give you a safer, more stable ride, too.

Matching up on the inside there's Broadcord 'Bri-Nylon' upholstery, plus carpet and a walnut veneered dash. Along with fully reclining front seats and a steering column adjustable for height and reach – so you tailor your own driving position.

Your hands need never leave the wheel to operate the main controls. And the stylish new instrumentation includes Triumph's superb 8-light 'All Systems Go' dial.

Whether you want to pack 110 autobahn miles into every hour or purr gently down country lanes, the Sprint is the luxurious, utterly civilized way to do it. And the Sprint lets you do it for several hundred pounds less than the comparable imports it out-performs.

Triumph Motors
British Leyland UK
Limited, Coventry.
Tel: 020 3-75511.

Triumph

Individual cars for individuals.

Triumph Dolomite Sprint

From British Leyland – makers of the best-selling cars in Britain

Triumph's advertising for the Sprint took the sales fight firmly to its rivals, emphasizing both its outstanding performance prowess and the model's inherent civility.

A SUPER SEDAN

The Dolomite Sprint's racing and rally potential came as no surprise, and Ralph Broad, who had liaised and advised the RAC on its Group 1 regulations for the forthcoming 1974 National Saloon Car Championships, approached Triumph with a view to fielding a team.

Having struck a deal, his Broadspeed team went to work blueprinting the engine, fitting a new camshaft (raising power from 124bhp to 174bhp) and a modified sump to counter oil surges during fast corners. Extensive suspension testing undertaken also provided insight into the best set-ups like progressive springs front and rear, with Bilstein gas dampers at the former, and Koni adjustable dampers for the latter for different circuits, while the original brakes and tires were developed continuously in season.

With Andy Rouse and Tony Dron at the helms, the Broadspeed team secured the Manufacturer's Championship in its first season. Better still, in 1975 Rouse took the Driver's title. The Sprint proved an able rally weapon, too, its highlight coming that same year on the Lombard RAC Rally, with Brian Culcheth and Johnson Syer taking the 2-liter class and Group 1 win outright and finishing 16th overall.

Dron went close to the sedan title again in 1977, and the Sprint soldiered on (gaining twin-choke Weber carburetors and ventilated disc brakes along the way), but, with its competitiveness on the wane, its thoroughly successful race had run by the end of the following year.

The Triumph Dolomite Sprint proved both a successful race car and an extremely competitive rally weapon. Understandably, British Leyland played heavily on this in its period advertising campaigns.

The 1977 Dolomite range in all its glory. The square-headlamp Dolomite 1500 tempted Toledo (1300) owners to trade up, while the Dolomite 1500HL inherited the Dolomite 1854cc body and interior but was powered by the venerable long-stroke all-iron OHV engine.

(continues from page 173)

1976–1980: DESCENT

Nationalization of British Leyland in 1975 shook the company and all its constituent parts to the core, with a March 1976 product rationalization brought about by the Ryder report resulting in the confusing range being simplified—the short-tail Toledo was phased out, with all remaining models named Dolomite and now based only on the long nose/long tail bodyshell and styling of the original Michelotti 1300 car. Two models—the Dolomite 1500 base model with square headlamps, and the Dolomite 1500 HL (for High Line)—replaced the 1500TC, with the Dolomite 1850HL and Dolomite Sprint completing the line-up.

As the end of the decade approached, and with the Dolomites now showing their age, a final runout 1500SE (special edition) with black paintwork and silver stripes arrived. Chronic funding issues had hampered the development of a successor, an SD2 prototype (in essence a smaller relation of Rover's SD1, based in part on TR7 underpinnings) proved a non-starter.

The final Dolomites were constructed during August 1980. The models in all their guises had proven successful for a marque not chasing volume with total sales of over 400,000 units, and 22,941 Sprints alone sold—a huge number for a high-performance model.

Alas, like other sporadic success stories elsewhere, ultimately this wouldn't be enough to save what was a fundamentally flawed industrial concern. First up though, the marque's next sedan would be entirely different in its concept and execution. In fact, some wouldn't consider it worthy of bearing the Triumph name at all.

CAR OF THE PEOPLE

Nothing sums up the 1970s like the curiosity that is the Panther Rio. As the decade lurched from financial crisis to financial crisis, Bob Jankel's Byfleet, Surrey-based, Panther Westwinds concern offered the perfect solution: a luxury four-door sedan, based on the Triumph Dolomite.

How better could the company boss show solidarity with the workers than ditching his Rolls-Royce or Bentley for a cut-price bit alternative. Of course, it would still have to have a touch of ostentatiousness here and there.

Powered by an 1854cc engine or in the Especial variant (with eight-spoke alloy wheels, overdrive, and tinted glass as standard) a Sprint unit, all visual trace of the donor car disappeared via the skilled Panther craftsmen. In came hand-rolled and beaten alloy panels, pin-striping, and a lowered roofline, as well as rectangular quartz-halogen headlamps and slab-fronted, stainless-steel grille for a Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow(ish) aping profile.

They foisted the same attention to detail on the cabin with burr walnut, Connolly leather, and thick wool carpets the order of the day. If buyers wanted more, options included an automatic gearbox, air conditioning, an electric sunroof, leather headlining, and even a television—so much for austerity!

Roughly 250kg-to-300kg (551lb-to-661lb) in extra weight nipped a bit off the respective Dolomite models' performance figures. However, with an asking price of £9,445–compared to just £3,283 for a Dolly Sprint and £7,500 for a Jaguar V12 sedan–there were unsurprisingly (or surprisingly, depending on your point of view) just 38 takers by the time production ended in 1977.

The Panther Rio–a peculiar mix of artisan coachwork on a Triumph Dolomite base, allied to an up-market interior. A luxury car of the people? Not many thought so.

Triumph Dolomite Sprint	
Data	1973–1980
Models	Sedan (£1,460-£4,186)
Construction	Steel monocoque
Length	162in (411.5cm)
Width	61.75in (156.9cm)
Height	54in (137.2cm)
Wheelbase	96.6in (245.4cm)
Weight	2214lb (1004.3kg) (2295lb with o/d)
Engine Size	1998cc
Engine Format	4-cylinder
Carburetion	Two SU carbs
Max Bhp	127hp @ 5700rpm
Max Torque	124lb ft @ 4500rpm
Gearbox	4-speed manual (optional o/d, standard from May ‘75)
Automatic	Optional BorgWarner
Final Drive Ratio	3.45:1
Steering	Rack and pinion
Front Suspension	Independent with coil springs, wishbones, anti-roll bar, and telescopic dampers
Rear Suspension	Live axle, coil springs, radius arms, telescopic dampers, and anti-roll bar
Tires	175-13in, 5.5in (14cm) rims
Brakes	8.75in (22.3cm) discs, front; 9x1.75in (22.9x4.5cm) drums, rear, servo-assisted
0 to 60 mph	8.7sec
Top Speed	116mph (186.7kph)
Fuel Economy	25mpg (US, 20.8mpg)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TRIUMPH
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11

LAST OF THE TR LINE

ALL CHANGE FOR THE FINAL HURRAH

With Triumph and MG now grudging stable mates, amongst others, under the British Leyland banner, the corporate giant found itself burdened by a surfeit of marques and models. It proceeded to blunder its way through the strike-laden 1970s and early 1980s. Its new 'wedge' styled TR generation was controversial but would ultimately prove successful, with the TR7 outselling all previous generations. Alas, the gruff V8-powered TR8 simply arrived too late.

Two icons together: the wildly successful Group 44 TR6 and TR7 Coupe race cars.

The TR6 refresh had been a stopgap to sate the market. Everyone at Triumph no doubt believed that a successor, and preferably one that did away with the separate body and chassis arrangement, was required.

Over in the United States, Bruce McMaster later recalled about the current frustrations and the business case, "Production constraints permitted an annual supply of only 9,000 TR6s to us from Coventry, whereas sales demand was from two- to three-fold this number. Average dealer gross profit on the TR6 was four times that for a Buick, at the time, which meant that on a meaningful equivalence basis, 9,000 TR6s were the match of nearly 40,000 Buicks."

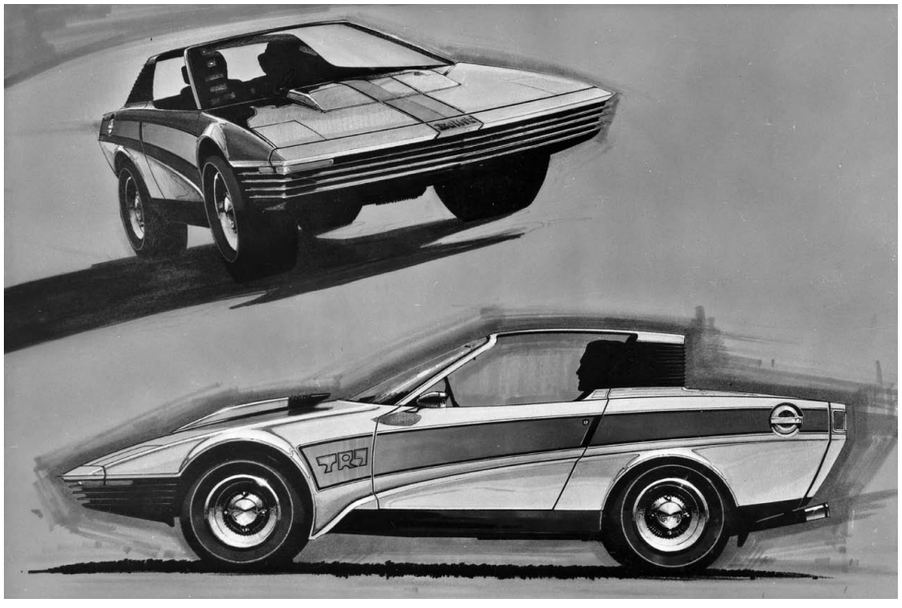
That pressure ensured that its principal market, with all its incumbent automotive legislation and its motoring public's distinctive tastes, would play *the* key role in the planning of the new TR.

Given the working title 'Project Bullet', the new car would be developed alongside 'Project Lynx', a more up-market 2+2. With Harry Webster having moved to the Austin Morris section of the newly formed British Leyland Motor Company, Bruce McWilliams, himself now British Leyland Inc. Vice President, was tasked with arranging a fact-finding trip for new Triumph head Spen King and British Leyland Central Planning's Mike Carver.

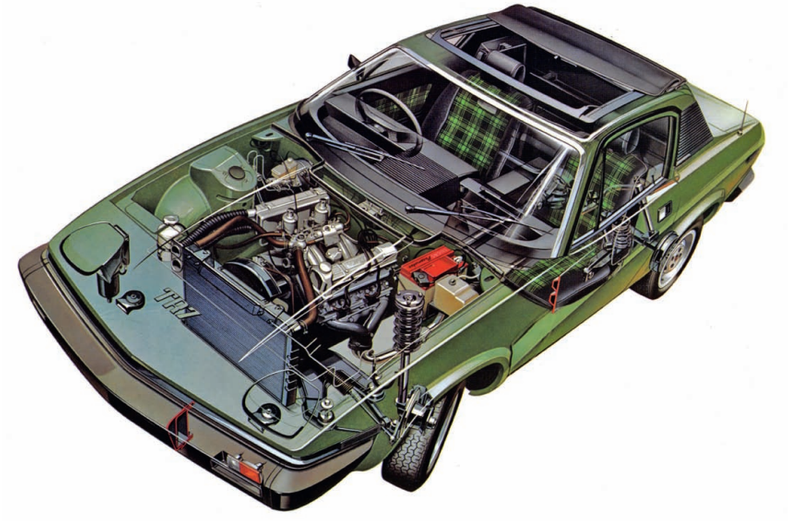
On meeting with a variety of dealers, journalists (including from *Road & Track*), and Triumph racing drivers and race engineers were surprised to find that what was wanted was a good old-fashioned, front-engine, rear-wheel-drive sports car–one with no fancy shenanigans such as a mid-engine layout, fuel injection, or independent rear suspension. Most notably, this would nix thoughts of adapting the latest fashion in sports car engine layout and see the planned GT6 rear wishbone suspension ditched for a live rear axle.

Central Planning (a bureaucratic and somewhat muddled entity) also made the error of placing all its chips on red, only to see them come up black. The latest draft of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards had suggested that after emissions and impact protection, and to cut down on roll over fatalities, the next target would be the open-top sports car. British Leyland preempted this by deciding that Project Bullet (and the upcoming Jaguar XJ-S) would have a roof. Yes, the next TR would be a tin-top!

There was another more pressing matter, too: styling.



Harris Mann's 1971 styling concept 'Project Bullet' combined a futuristic edge and a dynamic aesthetic, but the design that he considered 'rather wild' would find itself somewhat watered down come the production of TR7.



The new TR7 ditched its predecessors' separate chassis/body set-ups in favor of a much stronger monocoque construction with the steel roof integral to the structure. This would later make engineering a drop top version a substantial undertaking.

A CONTROVERSIAL MANN

Born in London in April 1938, Harris Mann began his career as a draughtsman apprentice at coachbuilding company Duple before deciding to emigrate to the United States. There, he worked for a short period of time for renowned designer Raymond Loewy's studio in New York before a recession saw him out of work after just six months and once more heading back to the United Kingdom.

National service in the army followed for six rather than the standard two years due to a crisis in Germany. Then he made a brief return to Duple and then had a period at Rootes division Commer as a commercial vehicle draughtsman and design engineer. His next stop was Ford as a feasibility engineer, but after viewing his personal portfolio, his then boss Roy Hayes gave the go-ahead for Mann to join the design team. He would work as an integral team member on the Ford Escort and later Capri models.

When Hayes left for the British Motor Corporation, he came back to his former employer and poached a number of employees, including Mann. Within a year Hayes had left and Mann took charge of the large Exterior Design Team, where he now began his stint as one of the most contentious designers of the late 1970s and early 1980s.

First up came the well-proportioned Morris Marina, followed quickly by the doughier Austin Allegro and ill-at-ease Austin Princess–although, for the latter two, engineering challenges and necessary adaptations meant neither finished car presented as originally intended. A futuristic and well-received Zanda mid-engined concept, however, saw him in pole position to design the new tin-top Triumph sports car. His design for Project Bullet, informed by Bertone's Carabo and the original Stratos show cars, incorporated much of what he felt the North American motoring public currently favored in terms of styling and defeated an in-house Triumph effort to be chosen.

Mann would stay at Longbridge until 1983, having a hand in the Austin Metro and styling an alternative (dismissed in favor of a Rover design) for the Maestro. His time there saw him experience the worst of British Leyland's death-by-committee culture and inevitably resulted in compromising some of his designs.

Freelance work saw among others BMW, Subaru, and the freshly risen MG Rover engage his services, with the latter seeing him working on the short-lived V8-powered MG XPower SV project, alongside design director Peter Stevens.

Echoes of the TR7 can be seen in Mann's well-received Austin Zanda concept. He credited this show car to him securing the job of designing the new Triumph sports car.

British Leyland designer Harris Mann's vehicles would provide no end of controversy; somewhat unfair with hindsight, as many of his concepts were compromised and tainted by the company's period build quality and industrial workplace issues.

1971–1974:
PRE-PRODUCTION COMPROMISE

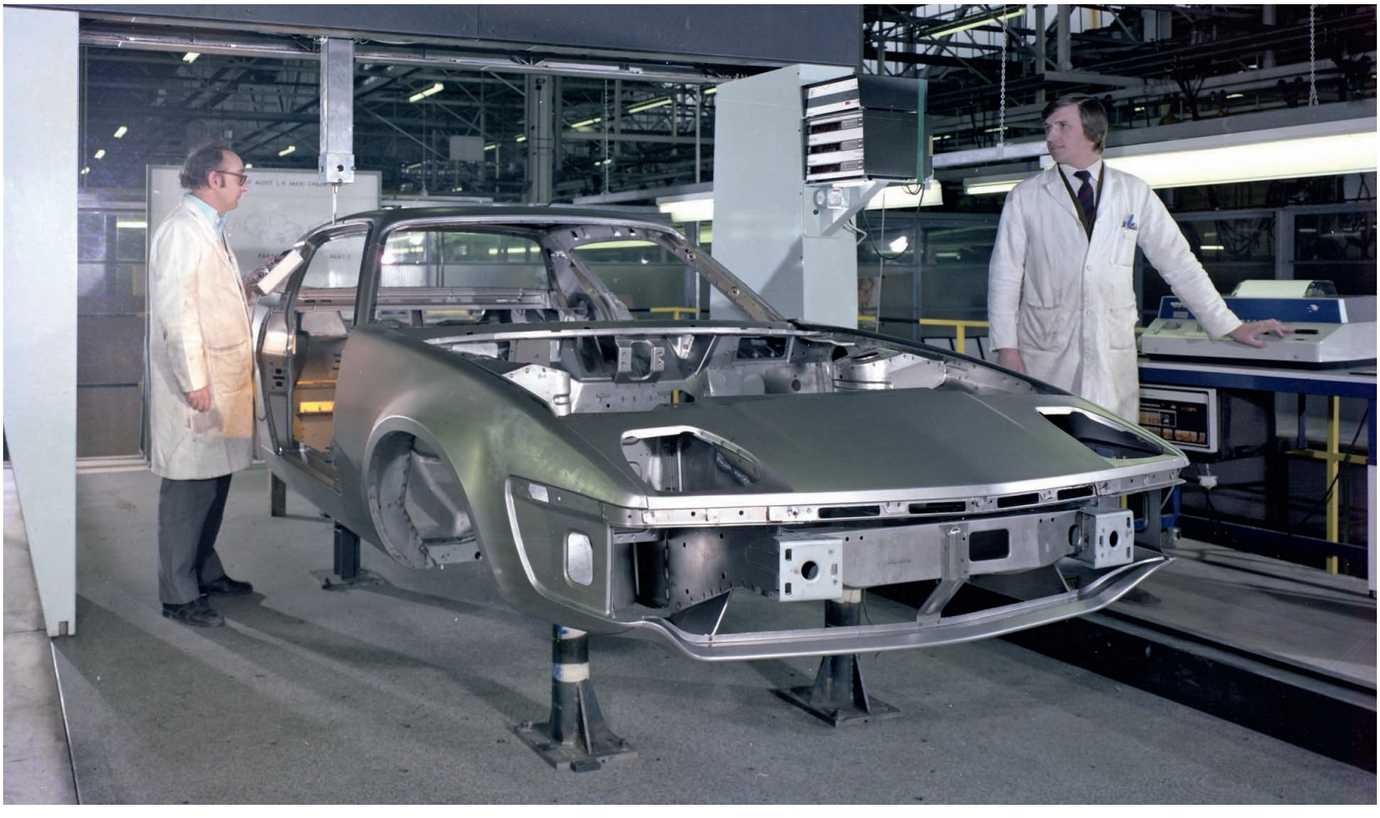
Canley may have lost out on the styling of the new TR, but it was tasked with engineering the car, and that would prove something of a double-edged sword. In a bid to meet ever more stringent U.S. regulations, and even second-guessing some (i.e., the roof), this would be the safest Triumph sports car ever constructed.

After Chairman Lord Stokes rubber-stamped a decision in April 1972, it would also be the first to be made in its entirety at one site: Speke, in Liverpool. This would have later repercussions, as we'll see, both in terms of continued production and plant viability.

By May of the following year, the peril to open-top sports cars had passed and with it the threat to replace MG's MGB with the TR7, earning the former a stay of execution. A mooted badge-engineered MG version of the Triumph lingered on but eventually faded.

TR6 magician Karmann couldn't provide the tooling within the projected timeframe, so Austin Morris's body engineering division had the task foisted upon it. This was no minor or inexpensive undertaking, as the monocoque structure called for a platform chassis with strong sills and floor pressings, box-sections aplenty for extra strength, and a stressed top, not simply the tacking on of a roof. It had strong pillars integral to the structure to endow it with inherent strength. Other considerations, enough to give the engineering team collective migraines, included U.S. impact and crash reactions (tested via 5mph [8kph] and 30mph [48kph] concrete block tests), minimum bumper heights, and, of course, drag.

In fairness to Harris Mann, at each stage this resulted in compromising the sleek lines of his original design; with the rear end raised and roofline lowered, it made the new TR appear somewhat beaky although provided an aerodynamic drag factor of just 0.396 (compared to the TR6's wind catching 0.44). Ditching the separate chassis/body arrangement solved the perennial TR issue of an ultra-narrow cabin, but further widening it resulted in a full 7in (18cm) of extra width. This was good news for non-standard sized sports car fans the world over. Legroom, too, came in 3in (7.5cm) better. Modern in design, the cabin also benefitted from supportive seats with excellent adjustability and simple controls easily to handle.



British Leyland's Speke factory in Liverpool may have looked cutting-edge, but machinations there (industrial, managerial, and quality) resulted in delays to both the convertible and V8 versions. Indeed, production would eventually shift to the midlands once Michael Edwardes enforced its closure.

The TR7 retained a futuristic front-three-quarter profile, and its wedge-shaped lines were very much of its time, but U.S. press, dealer, and aficionado reactions ranged from perplexed to nonplussed to outright horror.

Polyurethane moldings on thick steel bumpers provided a reasonable looking (when compared to competitor MGs offering) solution to the low-speed impact issue. Pop-up lights used a Fiat X1/9-type electric design, with Lucas providing modified windscreen wiper motors for the purpose.

Having initially considered offering a range of engines, the new car would now be powered–after the Dolomite Sprint's 16v head failed emissions tests–by a stretched 1998cc version of the iron-block/alloy-head 'slant-four' that the company had been providing Saab with for years. Crucially though, with one eye on the future, the engine bay was large enough to take the in-house 'Rover' V8.

A dual-circuit braking system, with 9.75in (25cm) front discs and 8in x 1.5in (20cm x 4 cm) drums, provided stopping power and 5.5in (14cm) pressed steel wheels with 175/13in (444/33cm) radial tires were fitted.

The rear-three-quarter profile is less well resolved with a particularly high rear deck. Unkind period descriptions likened the roof to the turret of a tank.

Front suspension came by way of simple Ford-style MacPherson-strut front suspension, top located to the deep sides of the engine bay, with coil springs at the rear. The four-speed gearbox was a Morris Marina item, offered without overdrive as there would eventually be an optional five-speed. In a first for a TR, the 1.8 BorgWarner Type 65 auto transmission (also filched from the Marina) could also be specified, albeit a year into production. Finally, in came the beam axle from the Dolomite with respective final drives of 3.63:1, (and eventually) 3.9:1 and 3.27:1 to make the most of each.

Fitted with two Stromberg 175CD SEU carburetors and electronic ignition, the four-cylinder engine produced 92bhp @ 5000rpm and 115lb ft of torque. However, there were misgivings within Triumph that its less than inspiring character may prove somewhat underwhelming, especially in direct comparison to the original un-burstable TR4 and torque-laden TR6. It was at least lighter than the TR6's unit, which helped the TR7 come in at a curb weight of 2240lb (1016kg) (compared to its predecessor's 2390lb [1,084kg]).

In two worrying developments that both portended the future, the Quality Control department identified 300 technical issues in pre-production cars, with each requiring 24 hours of manual rectification. In November 1974, a strike saw the first four TR7s due to cross the pond and be presented to American motoring journalists stuck firmly in the U.K.

THE NAME'S POND

Quiet and determined, but with a wicked sense of humor, in combination with Triumph's TR7, TR7 V8, and later MG's 6R4 steeds, Tony Pond provided British rally fans with a rollercoaster underdog experience for the best part of a decade. It helped, too, that he was fast–bloody fast.

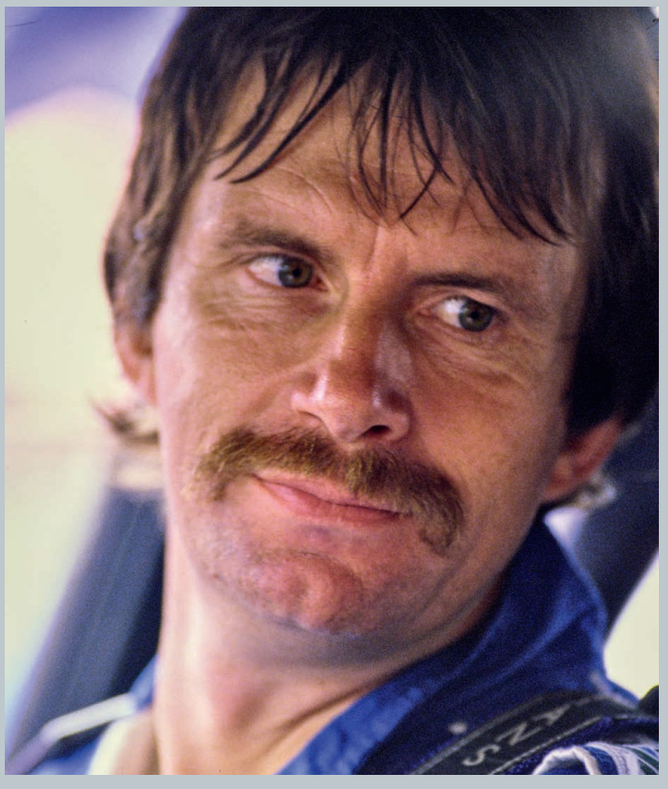
Starting out in a privateer ex-works Ford Escort RS1600, he quickly progressed to a spot in the Dealer Team Opel lineup, gaining his first victory with Mike Broad on the 1974 Burmah Rally. He switched to British Leyland in 1975, which had high hopes for its new TR7 sports car. But the by-now ultra-specialist nature of rallying and half-hearted manufacturer financing meant a delay before the cars were ready to compete.

Victory on the 1976 Raylor Rally's loose surfaces gave British rally fans a chance to celebrate, as did, to a point, a strong showing on the RAC Rally in which he occupied 2nd place before suspension woes brought his race to an end. The Belgian Boucle de Spa title followed in 1978, but it was the arrival of the new TR7 V8–so named, as the company's showrooms currently only had the four-cylindered model to ship–that brought torque-laden to the rally show.

Pond would thrill at its helm for the next few years, taking the fight to the big manufacturers and gaining notable victories on the challenging Ypres 24-hour Rally in 1978 and 1980, as well as a hugely impressive 4th place overall on the 1978 RAC Rally.

After a short spell at rival Talbot, Pond returned to the British Leyland fold only to see the rally program pulled due to a lack of financial backing–a crying shame, just as the model's development seemed to be peaking.

Fiat had approached him about a switch in 1978, during which its Fiat 131 Abarth would go on to claim World Rally Championship. But loyal to the last, Pond is best remembered for giant-killing drives at the wheel of the Leyland wedge, his first-class developmental input of the cars he piloted, and of course, that famous handlebar moustache.



The all-action driving style of Tony Pond won him many admirers, especially in the hierarchies of rival (and more successful) teams. He would eschew all advances and remain loyal to British Leyland to the probable cost of personal achievement.

Tony Pond, aided by co-driver Fred Gallagher, powers his TR7 V8 round a corner on his way to a 4th place overall finish in the 1978 World Rally Championship RAC Rally.

1975–1976: THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME (IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE)

With the grand unveiling slated for January at the Boca Raton Hotel in Florida, British Leyland finally managed to ship 35 cars across to the United States. These would be presented to a select group of motoring journalists, dealers, and employees for their delectation. A problem existed: the vehicles, which were constructed from a mixture of mass-production and handmade parts due to tooling delays, were of such poor quality that it sent the PR staff of the company's North American subsidiary into a nervous frenzy.

A slick North American campaign, devised by U.S. advertising agency PKL Advertising, saw the TR7 described as "the shape of things to come." Rally success would see this corrupted into "the shape of things that win."

They fired off an SOS to longtime Triumph ally Group 44 Inc, with Bob Tullius sending his entire staff after crew chief Lawton 'Lanky' Foushee had carried out a scouting mission to survey the scale of the problems. Cue furious activity under a covered tent, as they somehow managed to cobble together 17 reasonably presentable examples of the company's new TR offering. They offset as best they could a host of problems, including poor fit and finish, substandard paint, and damage received during transportation.

When the assembled group was finally allowed to sample the cars on Saturday, January 18, their reaction could best be described as lukewarm with a distinct touch of froideur. So far removed from what had gone before, the TR7's styling in particular invoked curiosity bordering on puzzlement. That was shortly mirrored by press reactions worldwide, while disbelief bordering on anger were the emotions from dyed-in-the-wool Triumph fanatics. Not only had six cylinders become four, but the glorious hardcore Roadster was no more and, in its place, sat a wedge-shaped, hard-top coupe.

Car and Driver led with a striking red TR7 on the front cover of its April 1975 issue, with the headline, "TR7: A Major Triumph." In the feature, technical editor Patrick Bedard stated, "The proportions are all wrong; the body is too thick at the cowl." He also lamented that the styling hinted at a mid-engine layout when in fact it had a traditional arrangement, before going on to extol the spacious cockpit and general comfort, then summing up, "Make no mistake: the potential of this car is great." *Road & Track* 's issue that same month had a detailed technical analysis of the model, in which it said, "If it's tough getting good results from engines these days, at least the U.S. government hasn't yet regulated handling. Here is where the TR7 is miles ahead of any Triumph sports car ever built." Such words saw initial sales get off to

Monocoque construction meant occupants no longer had to be shoehorned between the chassis members and resulted in a decidedly roomier cabin. Funky colors and logical controls met with rave reviews.

a good start, but the same build quality issues that Group 44 Inc had worked so hard to rectify on the press sample cars would soon rear their head again on the production ones. The only thing that seemed to keep the baying mobs sated was the fact that relatively, the car cost so little in the first place.

There were misgivings, however, and not just about the aesthetics. Come May 1976 and the European launch, and these would be repeated. In September, *Motor* said, "The TR7's strong points are its comfort and drivability, its spacious and attractive interior and instrumentation and its excellent ventilation system–but it's let down by a noisy engine, dated transmission and not very good visibility."

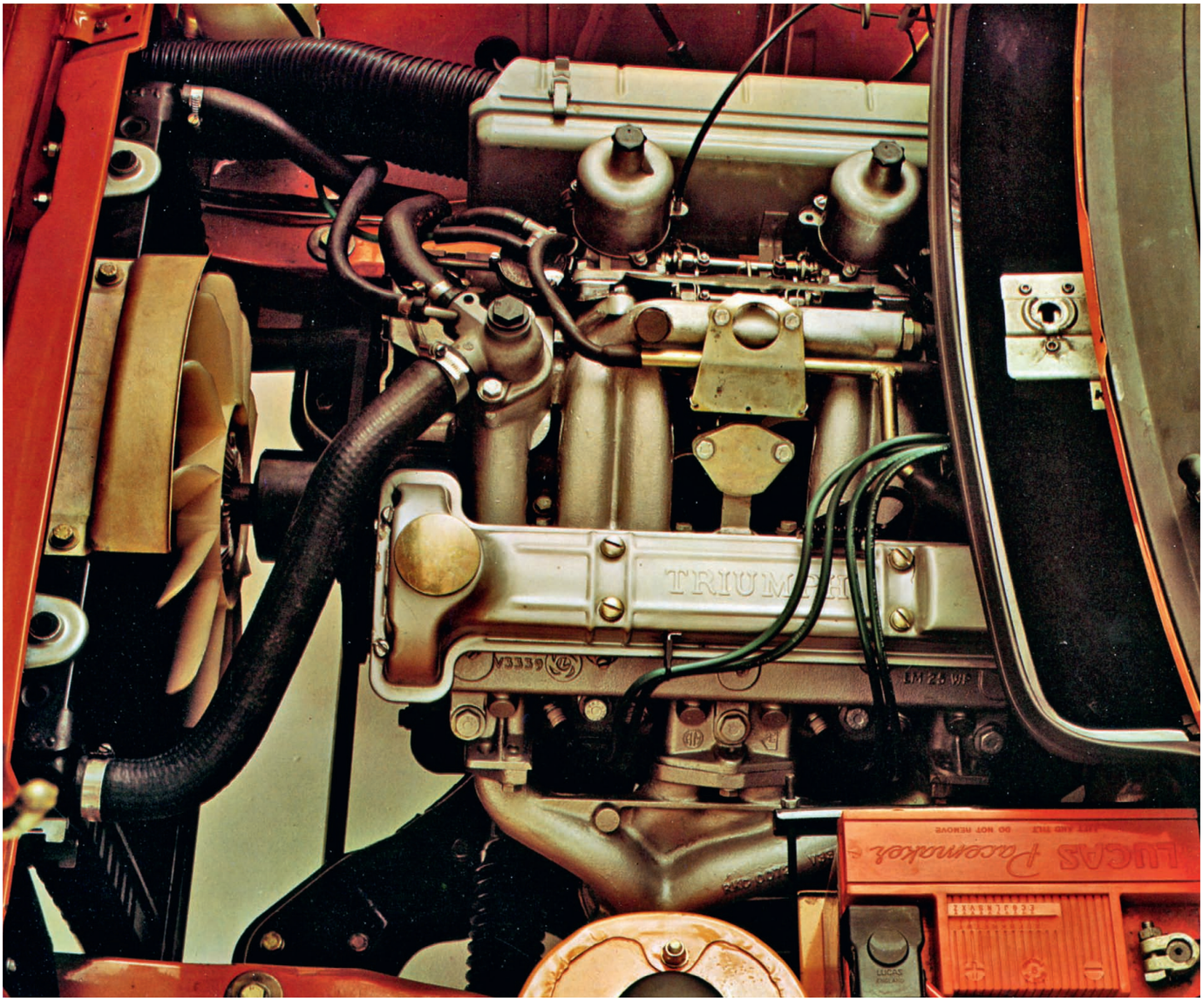
Higher power and torque outputs, thanks to the removal of federal smog equipment, of 105bhp @ 5500rpm and 119lb ft ensured better, although still not scintillating, performance figures of 0–60mph (0–97kph) in 9.6sec (1.4sec quicker) and a 112mph (180kph) top speed (up 3mph [5kph]).

As sales began in Europe, they stalled in the U.S. The initial pre-production scouting mission now seemed like a very long time ago, but perhaps the one piece of advice from the feedback had in fact been left unsaid. When the collectively gathered Americans stated they wanted a 'traditional' British sports car, they had all surely expected a Roadster.

(continues on page 192)

Undoubtedly less stressful than the model's haphazard introduction to U.S. press and dealers (rescued thankfully by Group 44), its U.K. release proved a snazzy affair.


BRITISH
LEYLAND
TRIUMPH



Whilst rugged, the four-cylinder engine had neither the character of the original TR2's unit or the torque-laden output of its predecessor's six-cylinder engine. Thankfully, delectable handling characteristics somewhat redressed the balance.

(continues from page 189)

1977–1978: 4 BECOMES 5

The superior LT77 five-speed gearbox had arrived in October 1976 as an option, only to be deleted in January '77 and reintroduced as one again a year after, mated to a stronger rear axle shared with Rover's 3500, which transformed elements of the drive and significantly lengthened the TR7's legs. The rear suspension now sat 1in (2.5cm) lower and tires had a wider 185/70 R13 profile.

Another new arrival came in the form of Michael Edwardes, a senior management addition who would be equally brash as any union firebrand and would soon be shaking things up considerably. Right on cue, a four-month strike at the Speke hijacked production with the aftereffects felt for almost 12 months. Edwardes responded by shutting the troublesome Speke No.2 plant and transporting TR7 production lock, stock, and barrel to Canley.

At the same time the mooted Sprint and Lynx models, both of which had made it to the prototype stage and indeed held up both the drop top and V8 versions, were finally canned.

(continues on page 197)

JEAN GENIE

U.S. giants Coca-Cola and Levi-Strauss teamed up during 1978 to commission three bespoke, four-speed TR7 coupes to be offered as first prize along with £500 spending money as part of a joint 'All Summer Long' promotional competition.

Entrants had to list as many different words as possible from the letters 'ALL SUMMER' that were at least four letters long, with no plurals or proper nouns, and submit their answer with six Coca-Cola ring pulls or bottle closures.

Each car featured a bright red exterior color with a white Coca-Cola swish running down each wing and across the hood, reminiscent of the Starsky & Hutch Gran Torino color scheme. The cars had Wolfrace alloy wheels, while inside the cabin used denim material for the seat centers and headrests, door cards (replete with 'jean' pockets), and sun visors. As a finishing touch, popping the trunk revealed a funky miniature 12-volt fridge–perfect for storing your cool soft drinks, although Pepsi likely would have been strictly off limits.

And the exotic location the company chose to create these marketing masterpieces? Luton, England. StarVans duly obliged and the rest is, as they say, history–albeit at its most refreshing.

(BOTH) If the exterior stood out, then the denim-clad interior could only be called unique. Toss in a 12-volt fridge in the trunk, and fizzy beverage swilling jeans wearing winners had the ultimate in British Americana.

Unique paintwork, replete with swoopy Coca Cola bottle lines on both flanks and the hood, and Coca Cola/Levi badges gave the competition cars a distinctive look.

0-60 in 9.6 seconds. 114 mph 5 speed box. Breathtaking mid-range acceleration. Superb handling and roadholding.

Driving a TR7 is like going into orbit.

Sadly though, it will soon be a blast off from the past. Because after this Autumn, the TR7 will no longer be made.

So it's already a collector's item and the countdown has started. For availability see your local Triumph dealer today, or telephone the TR7 hotline on 021-779 2296.

And right now your dealer could offer you an exceptional trade-in deal. Plus, if you buy a TR7 before September 30th, 1981, he'll give you details of a TR7 competition that's out of this world.

You could win a fortnight's holiday for two in Florida, USA, flying by Concorde, staying in a first class hotel and including a trip to Cape Canaveral.

So take off in a TR7 and by the time you come down to earth again, you could be at the most famous launch pad in the world.

TRIUMPH TR7

Performance figures: Manufacturers data.

"Houston, we have take-off." An advertising campaign prepares the convertible version for launch. Understandably, the new TR7 convertible saw sales of its tin-top sibling nose-dive. Cue numerous dealer enticements to offset this.

(continues from page 192)

1979: OFF WITH ITS HEAD

Just as adding a stressed hardtop to the TR7 had been a comprehensive undertaking, so too had the reverse. Whipping off the top, required the car to be re-engineered. In came an inverted U-shaped box section between the seats linking the rear door shuts, while the quarter panels now extended down and anchored in the sills. Despite this extra strengthening, the scuttle panel and windscreen required fitment of a front bumper comprised of a box section steel armature pivoted in the middle with weights at either side to help achieve 'harmonic balance'.

A 'cut'n'shut' prototype (courtesy of Turin-based Michelotti) had been constructed back in 1975, but the export drop-top didn't land in dealerships until June 1979. The sticker price sat at $7,995, $300 more than the fixed-head coupe. The U.S. motoring press welcomed the good-looking new arrival and its return to Triumph's roadster roots, although they noted that in terms of actual driving, identical complaints to the tin-top remained.

European buyers would have to wait a further seven months for the convertible's debut. In the U.K., pricing differentials were reversed with the open-topped car cheaper (£5,959) than the closed (£6,176) thanks to alloy wheels being standard on the latter and only optional on the former.

The motoring press were in no doubt that the TR7's looks had benefitted considerably from the transformation. *Autocar* said there was "almost universal acclaim for the attractive lines of the TR7 drophead." Adding that, "the wedge shape and raked windscreen give an impression of speed and smoothness of line to the Drophead that tended to be spoiled by the awkward roof shape of the fixed-head." While *CAR* in a piece titled "Seventh Son Is a Ragtop at Last" rejoiced that, "No longer does that fine, cutting snout sweep into an unhappily truncated turret. . . . Open the car up and suddenly you can see what designer Harris Mann was striving for but never achieved with the fixedhead."

Accordingly, the new model began outselling the old, by a ratio of 9:1. Meanwhile, over in North America, an even more exciting development had arrived. *(continues on page 200)*

The car that the TR7 should always have been? The convertible's outline certainly proved more harmonious than the fixed top's. Considerable strengthening required to the car's structure delayed its appearance by years, rather than months.

THE WILD ONES

While British motorsport fans had to make do with plucky performances and a rally win out of the blue now and again, in North America three very different men provided significantly more success: rally driver John Buffum, Bob Tullius and his ultra-professional Group 44 Inc, and 'garagista' privateer Ken Slagle.

Buffum, who would quickly gain the gun slinging sobriquet 'Stuff'em Buffem', would go on to become the most successful U.S. rally driver with 11 national titles, began rallying (in a Porsche 911T) when stationed in West Germany with the U.S. Army and achieved a 12th place finish on the arduous Monte Carlo Rally in 1969. Back in the States, he piloted a Mini Cooper, a Ford Escort, and another 911 before settling on the Triumph TR7. Partnered by his ex-wife Vicki Gauntlett, he had an inauspicious start failing to finish in his first four races. Victory at the Canadian Rallye Pistons les Wapitis proved a catalyst though, as they powered to the North American Rally Racing Association (NARRA) title, also taking the SCCA Pro Rally Championship along the way, by winning six out of the final nine rallies.

Arguably, his most thrilling victory came in 1979 partnering Doug Shepherd. With the V8 engine now finally cleared for competition in North America, he went toe-to-toe in a TR8 with Rod Millen in his rotary-engined Mazda RX-7. In an epic ding-dong championship battle, Buffum wrecked his car in the 'Press on Regardless' Rally in Houghton, Michigan, leaving him neck-and-neck with Millen on four victories apiece–and crucially, without a car. Cue the airlift of a European rally TR8 to get him back in the game and, when Millen rolled his Mazda in the Championship decider at the Frontier Hotel Nevada Rally, Buffum's second place saw him take his fourth consecutive SCCA Pro Rally Championship.

Over at Group 44 Inc, Bob Tullius had continued his Triumph success story with five consecutive TR7 wins in the 1976 SCCA Production Class D, prompting British Leyland to release a North American Victory Edition model, complete with competition-type spoker wheels, a vinyl top, and racing stripes.

Focus then turned to the TR8, which the company developed with aggressively aerodynamic GRP bodywork and an alloy spoiler in the Lockheed wind tunnel at a huge cost. A maiden victory at the 1979 Watkins Glen Six-Hour Trans-Am race on July 7 was followed by further victories. Putting Detroit iron to shame on a regular basis saw a punitive weight penalty enforced by the governing body, which Tullius believed at the behest of rivals. This resulted in a shift entirely to IMSA, in which it had been competing sporadically in the GTO class, from SCCA.

With 360bhp from its long-stroke 3989cc engine and a 2,560lb (1,161kg) curb weight, it was capable of 0–60mph (0–97kph) in 4.3secs, 0–100mph (0–161kph) in 9.6secs, and a top speed of 150mph (241kph). Tullius said, "More than any other car I've driven, this one has a balance and agility that are close to perfection." He backed up that assertion with results, claiming a GTO class win and sixth overall behind Dick Barbour Racing's Porsche 935K at the 1980 12 Hours of Sebring, Triumph's highest ever placing there and one that equaled rival MG's best.

A one-two finish for Adams, now competing in a second car, and Tullius followed at the Daytona International Speedway. Having been legislated out of what was an odds-on championship victory in the Trams-Am category, Group 44 had to be satisfied with 2nd place overall in the IMSA GTO class–no mean feat considering some of the big-block Chevy V8 powered rivals it had been up against.

Arguably, even more impressive were the successes of Ken Slagle, a systems engineer at IBM during the day. His Slagle Racing team consisted of himself, his wife, and three young children. Having cut his teeth hill climbing a TR3B and winning the 1966 Pennsylvania Hillclimb Association Championship, Slagle progressed to racing Spitfires and secured the 1975 F-Production National Championship at Road Atlanta in a 1500.

After dalliances with TR7 and TR8 Coupes, neither of which proved particularly competitive, it was the arrival of the Convertible TR8 that proved pivotal. Slagle, who had always carried out his own engine, suspension, and bodywork and painting, was this time responsible for everything, including the roll-cage design and fabrication.

The 1980 season proved a false start when Logan Blackburn's Nissan 280ZX clipped his rear bumper at 125mph (201kph) destroying the car, with Slagle lucky to escape with just a cracked sternum. However, after rebuilding the race car, he came back stronger the following season, and at Bridgehampton Road Race Circuit, he pipped Paul Newman's Datsun 280Z to qualify for the Road Atlanta run offs–and edge out the film star. This he also won on his way to securing a memorable C-Production National Championship title.

From the red, white, and blue livery of John Buffum's rally cars to the green and white Quaker State colors of Group 44 Inc and striking yellow with an orange stripe (and unique cheese wedge-shaped trailer) of the Slagle cars, the North American motor sport public had multiple hero Triumph TR7s and TR8s to revere.

The fierce, wind-tunnel developed IMSA GTO Triumph TR8 of Group 44 Inc. Piloted by Bob Tullius (and Bill Adam), it prepares for battle at the Mosport 6-hour race.

'Stuff 'em Buffum', the most successful North American rally driver. Accomplishments on that continent would see him cross the Atlantic to take up 'works' drives for British Leyland's competition department.

The one-family run Slagle Racing team proved incredibly successful. Not bad for the brainchild of a privateer pilot who still held down a day job with IBM. Starting with a TR3B, Ken Slagle would pilot many of the marque's models, culminating in this highly developed TR8.

(continues from page 197)

1980: IT'S FINALLY HERE!

It's no secret that the TR7 had always been destined to house the Rover 'Buick' V8. Pre-production TR7 V8s had been developed back in 1974 alongside their four-cylinder brethren. However, the dysfunctional nature of the British Leyland entity and its workforce saw delay, after delay, after delay. If Triumph fans thought their wait for the drophead version was long . . .

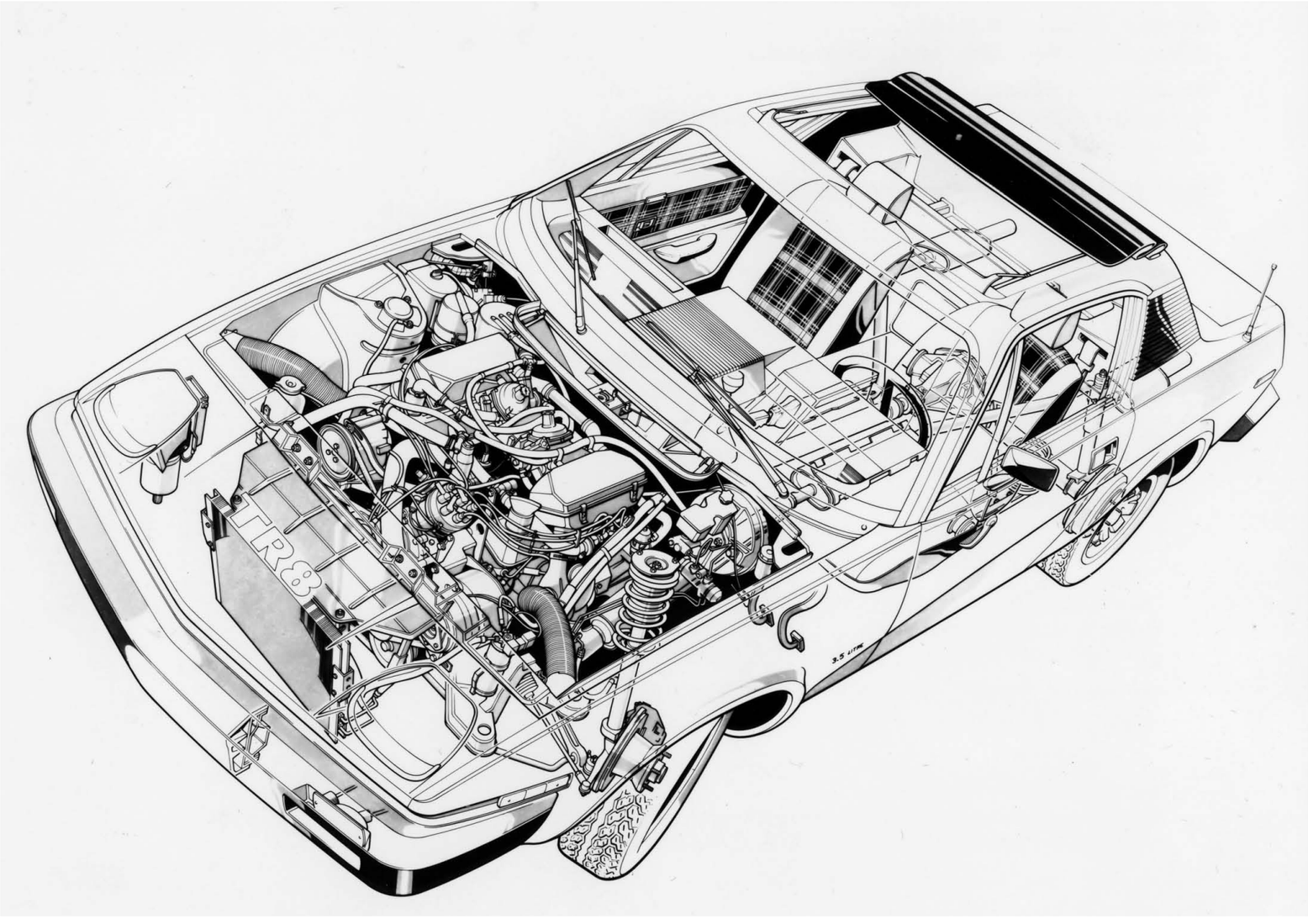
Speke had produced a handful of pre-production TR8 Coupes in 1977 that even made their way Stateside for pre-release publicity shots, before the inevitable strike action once again put the kibosh on matters. Production Coupes and Convertible TR8 sales in the United States began in 1979. In 1980 production once again shifted, this time from Canley to Rover's Solihull plant, which qualified as a minor change in the company's ever-morphing manufacturing landscape.

All interested parties could be forgiven for viewing its eventual international launch on April 13, 1980, as a mirage or dream scene worthy of being written into a future U.S. soap opera, so long had they waited. It was here in the flesh, though.

The TR7 body required minimal changes in housing the V8 engine, just different engine mountings. In came firmer shock absorbers and spring rates, with the battery shifted to the boot to offset the marginally heavier engine. Larger brake pads aided stopping power, and a beefier 3.08:1 rear axle handled the extra power and torque.

Rover had bought the rights to Buick's compact light alloy V8 back in 1967 when the U.S. concern had already moved on to all iron designs of similar weight, and had been developing and using it ever since. In its current 3528cc form, with a compression ratio of 8:1 and fitted with twin Stromberg 175CDSET carburetors it had be good for 133bhp @ 5000rpm and 174lb ft of torque; meanwhile with Lucas/Bosch K-Jetronic fuel injection, a three-way catalyst, and an exhaust oxygen sensor, the Californian-bound model had a higher power output by 3bhp, although torque was down 9lb ft. *(continues on page 205)*

The 1977 Triumph TR7 V8 prototype featured a 'Sprint' badge. Production delays resulted in a considerable lag before U.S. customers sampled it. Feel though for those in the U.K. as the model never made it to those shores before it was cut—making it the rarest TR of all.



This cutaway drawing shows the V8 engine shoehorned into the engine bay. It was an easy fit, as the model had originally been designed to take the unit.

(ABOVE) 'Triumph', 'TR8', and '3.5-liter' badges (the latter two with zingy strobe effect) lent the only overt visual differentiation between big and little brothers.

(RIGHT) Californian-bound TR8s forewent twin Stromberg carburetors in favor of cleaner electronic fuel injection and additional 'smog' equipment. This is the very first chassis number thus endowed.


TR8
3.5 LITRE
KHP 533V

Triumph returned to Le Mans in the form of a 500+bhp, twin turbocharged TR8 model. Aided and abetted by wild aerodynamic accoutrements, and only lightly supported by the factory, it ultimately proved unsuccessful in both 1980 and '81.

(continues from page 200)

Both featured alloy wheels as standard, new 'strobe' decal badges on the hood and trunk, 3.5-liter transfers on the wings, a leather-bound French copy of a Moto-Lita type steering wheel, a twin exhaust system, and an Alford and Alder hydraulic power steering rack for a sharper and easier 2.8 turns lock-to-lock (compared the TR7's 3.88).

For a U.S. motoring press kept waiting, the initial response bordered on the ecstatic. In its June 1980 issue, *Road & Track* tested 0–60mph (0–97kph) time as 8.4secs and top speed at 135mph (217kph), and stated, "Just when it seemed as though we would never again see another mass-produced, lusty-hearted convertible sports car, here comes the Triumph TR8 . . . one that will outrun every other sports sedan and sports car this side of $15,000. Just as encouraging is the source of the news. Its maker is Triumph." Two months later, *Car and Driver* extolled, "The TR8 looks exactly like a TR7 except for twin pipes and a few stickersstickers. . . . There's enough grip here to make your ears bleed, the kind of agility that race drivers appreciate in off-season." It reckoned the $12,000 sticker price to be a bargain and the best news to be, "eight whole cylinders to ram the world through the windshield and out the rear-view mirror."

1981: THE END IS NIGH

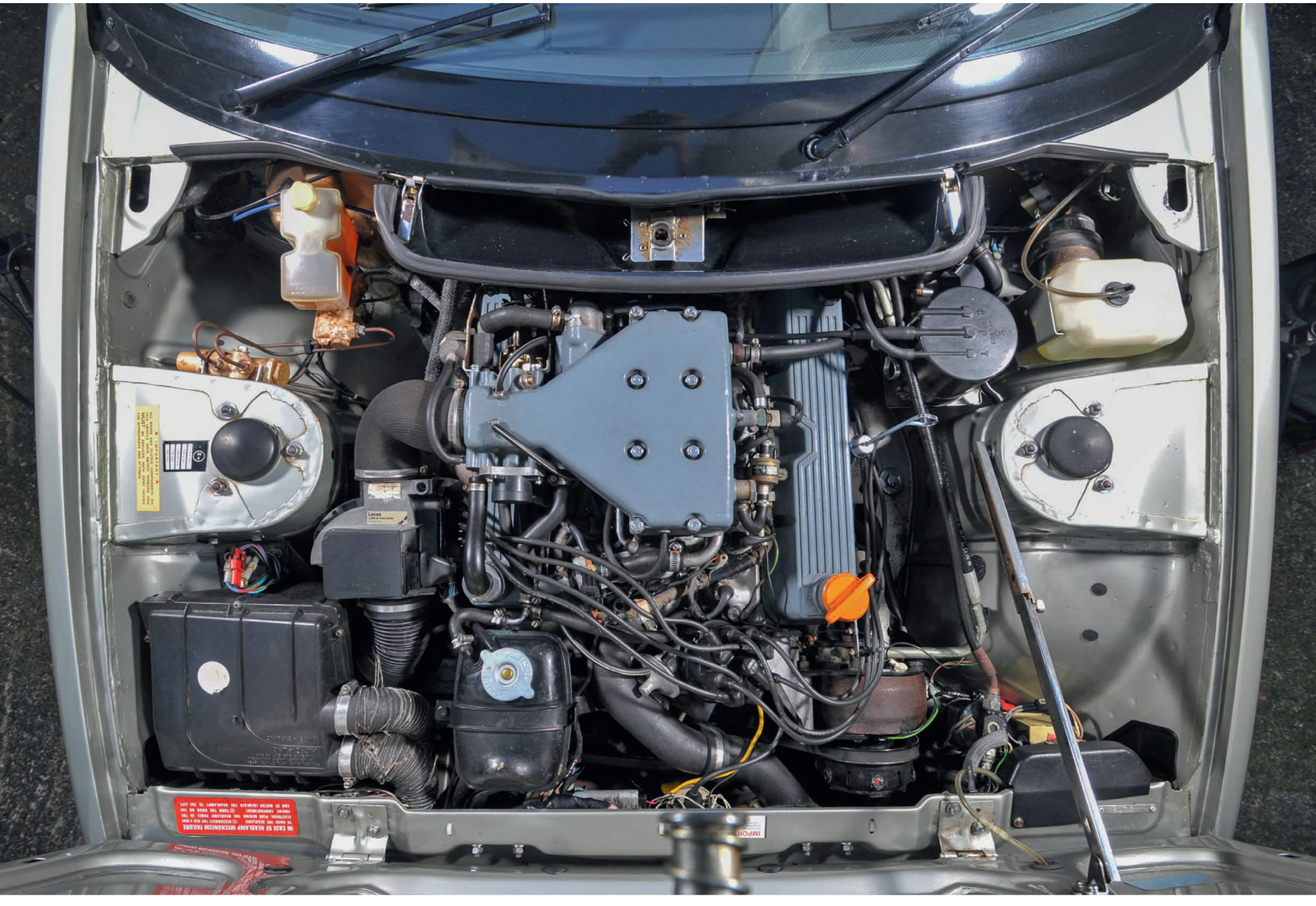
With cars shipping across the Atlantic and dealerships finding North American homes, Brits found their appetites thoroughly whet. In fact, Peter Robinson's June 1979 preview of a pre-production U.S. TR8 in *CAR* declared, "The acceleration is hefty. . . . There is power everywhere in every gear" and he hinted at 155bhp from a Euro-spec engine. The small matter of six years since the four-cylinder car's launch and three since the TR7 V8 rally car appeared added to the enthusiasm.

For Triumph aficionados there's no doubt that when it finally appeared, this Euro-spec TR8 would be the true successor to the 150bhp six-cylinder TR6. However, just as hopes had been built up, they would once more be dashed. The company was in severe financial peril and the strong pound had made loss makers of its North American sports car offerings. British Leyland pulled the plug and not just on U.S. exports, but the whole sports car caboodle–the final car rolled off the production line on October 5, 1981.

An estimated 2,634 TR8s had been constructed, with a handful of coupes and around 25 U.K. spec drophead coupes believed to have been among those. Such were the vagaries of the global financial market at the time, that the pound plunged, seeing the remaining stock transformed into money-spinners–c'est la vie.

For British Leyland, history had repeated itself. The TR8 arrived far too late and did not sell well; it should have been available at launch. Just like its failure to put the Rover engine into an MGB Roadster and market it in the United States, it had missed yet another golden opportunity. The total volume of TR7 sales (112,368) demonstrated that the appetite for an affordable Triumph sports car remained supremely strong–imagine what it would have been like for an eight-cylinder powered one, in the spiritual home of the V8 engine, right from the start.

If the arrival of the TR7 had inflamed Triumph devotees, then in terms of what followed next, they hadn't seen anything yet.



Fuel-injected V8 engines had higher power outputs than carburetor units, with marginally less torque. Both propelled the sports car into an altogether different performance league.

Triumph TR7 (Federal)	
Data	1975–1981
Models	Coupe, Convertible
Construction	Steel monocoque
Length	164.5in (417.8cm)
Width	66.2in (168.1cm)
Height	49.9in (126.8cm)
Wheelbase	85in (215.9cm)
Weight	2355lb (1068.2kg)
Engine Size	1998cc
Engine Format	in-line 4-cylinder
Carburetion	Two Stromberg carbs, Bosch L-Jetronic fuel-injection
Max Bhp	92hp @ 5000rpm
Max Torque	115lb ft @ 3500rpm
Gearbox	4-speed manual, (5-speed, optional 1976-77 then standard)
Automatic	Optional BorgWarner Type 65
Final Drive Ratio	3.63:1 (3.27:1, Auto; 3.9:1, 5-speed)
Steering	Rack and pinion
Front Suspension	Independent with coil springs, MacPherson struts, anti-roll bar, and telescopic dampers
Rear Suspension	Live axle, coil springs, radius arms, anti-roll bar, and telescopic dampers
Tires	185/70-13in or 175/70-13in radial-ply
Brakes	9.7in (24.6cm) discs, front; 8x1.5in (20.3x3.8cm) drums, rear
0 to 60 mph	11.3sec
Top Speed	109mph (175kph)
Fuel Economy	34.4mpg (US, 28.6mpg)

Triumph TR7 (Non-USA), as per Federal TR7, except:	
Data	1976–1981
Models	Coupe, Convertible (£2564-£2281)
Carburetion	Two SU carbs
Max Bhp	105hp @ 5500rpm
Max Torque	119lb ft @ 3500rpm
Fuel Economy	26.4mpg (US, 22mpg)

Triumph TR8 (USA-only), as per late TR7 model, except for:	
Data	1980–1981
Models	Convertible
Weight	2565lb (1163.5kg)
Engine Size	3528cc
Engine Format	V8-cylinder
Carburetion	Two Stromberg carbs, Lucas fuel injection (California)
Max Bhp	133/137bhp @ 5500rpm
Max Torque	174lb ft @ 3000rpm/ 168lb ft @ 3250rpm
Final Drive Ratio	3.08:1
Steering	Power-assisted rack and pinion
Lucas fuel-injection standardised on all cars for 1981 model year	
0 to 60 mph	8.4sec
Top Speed	120mph (193kph)
Fuel Economy	18.5mpg (US, 29.7mpg)


A241 OTT

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A FINAL 'TRIUMPH'

THE ANGLO-JAPANESE COLLABORATION

In a last-ditch attempt to keep the Triumph name germane, and more importantly to plug its limited production line-up, British Leyland embarked upon a partnership with the Japanese car manufacturer Honda. The resulting Triumph Acclaim, in essence a rebadged Honda Ballade but crucially built in the U.K., proved to be a thoroughly able and reliable little charge. Ultimately though, both its production and subsequent sales success would prove to be nothing more than the final dying embers of the marque.

A new hi-tech Triumph courtesy of the land of the rising sun.

British Leyland purchased the rights to build a Triumph 'version' of the first-generation Honda Ballade for sale in the U.K. Mechanically and almost visually identical, it proved astonishingly well made both compared to its contemporaries, and what had gone before.

Come the late 1970s and British Leyland found itself in the unenviable position of scrabbling for fiscal survival; a decade of falling standards and internal strife had taken its toll.

With its new small car project, the Austin Metro (LC8), not due until 1980 and its larger Austin stablemate, the Maestro (LC10), a further three years after that, its executives had identified a gaping need for a stopgap model.

No stranger to badge engineering, that simply wasn't an option by this time as British Leyland's production cupboard looked decidedly bare. Its Triumph marque had past history sharing components, most famously supplying its 'slant-four' engine to Swedish manufacturer Saab. However, with little in the bank, and its engineers and facilities engaged on vital future projects, the company's need went beyond component or indeed platform sharing. It required a new vehicle, lock, stock, and every single smoking barrel.

The search started in 1977 and considered a vast variety of potential partners, chief among them Renault and Chrysler Europe, before settling on Japanese manufacturer Honda.

With contact made in August 1978, negotiations began and rapidly led to a collaborative strategy. The new 'Triumph Honda' vehicle would be based on the saloon derivative of the Civic hatchback, the Ballade–with minimal exterior styling and absolutely no mechanical deviations. The interior though would be bespoke, designed and made in Britain.

The British press broke the story in April 1979, with chairman Michael Edwardes forced to state the following month, "BL will manufacture a new passenger car designed by Honda which will have a high technical specification and will be a Triumph."

By utilizing Honda's manufacturing expertise and mechanizing large parts of the production process, British Leyland hoped to produce a car of superior quality to its predecessors. Although Japanese by design, it had been constructed from British steel and on British pressings. Factor in the interior, and the final product could claim to be almost entirely 'British'-made. It aimed to source 70 percent of its components locally, which eventually rose to 80 percent. The last sentence of Edwardes' May statement sounded ominous, certainly for European manufacturers, "BL will have exclusive rights to sell it in the EEC and Britain."

TURNING JAPANESE

British Leyland's partnership with Honda came with its own pressures, as its workforce would have to prove it had the ability to put together a Japanese-designed product to standards that, if we're being honest, were at the opposite end of the scale to the majority of the company's 1970s output.

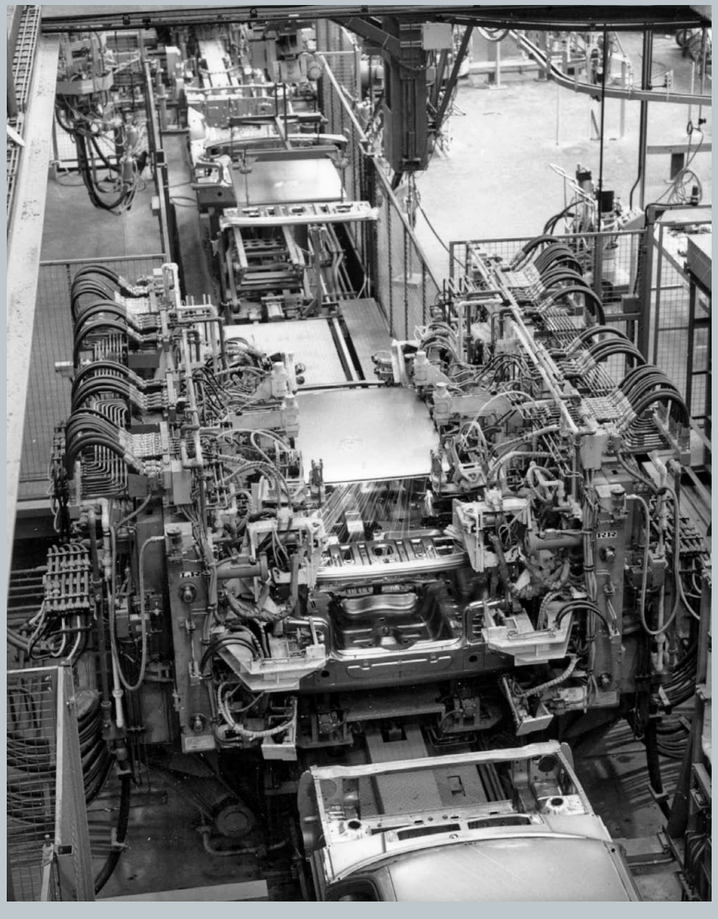
Initially the Canley and then Solihull sites were considered for construction, before the final decision settled on Cowley. Although it would be produced alongside the Austin Princess/Ambassador and Morris Ital, considerable investment saw a thoroughly revised and modernized production line constructed. This included huge state-of-the-art hydraulic presses at the Pressed Steel Fisher (PSF) plant that turned out complete one-piece Acclaim body side panels, as well as other major panels. Constructed by Wilkins and Mitchell and Hydraulic Engineering of Chester, these behemoths (the first of their kind in the U.K.) tightened production costs, while notably improving quality. Completed panels found their way to the body framing and sub-assembly area, where the 2,700 welds required for body construction were applied. Of these 550 were delivered automatically via complex multi-welding machines.

Investment in the Acclaim project totaled £70 million with £35 million of that just for a new paint shop alone. This used the then new cathodic electrocoating process to ensure a first-class finish. After completion of mechanical, electrical, and trim work, the finished vehicles visited a purpose-built £1 million testing rig to ensure tight quality control of the final product.

The end result certainly impressed *Motorsport*. Reporting on its recent visit to Cowley in its November 1981 issue, the magazine forgave the unofficial stoppage that cut it short to enthuse "very worthy successors to the small Triumph saloons of recent years they are too." Although it tempered that by also stating, "on the road performance is nothing to shout about." A July 1982 recall, with 20,000 Acclaim customers contacted due to a small number of rear suspension bolts working their way free due to a lack of torque, saw the magazine in a more belligerent mood, as it stated definitively, "Things don't change."

To be fair, that proved merely a minor blip (cured by the addition of a retaining clip) with the Anglo-Japanese production line's output proving superior to previous British Leyland output in every single way.

A significant proportion of the newly developed Triumph Acclaim production line comprised of automated construction, including an automated framing jig.



In search of a higher quality end product, completed vehicles were subjected to a number of post-production checks. Here, a Triumph Acclaim passes through the robotic dry leak testing station.

1981: TOTALLY EQUIPPED TO TRIUMPH

Edwardes wrote a strongly worded letter to *The Times* one week before the car's October 1981 release to offset accusations of it being nothing more than a Japanese Trojan horse. He also had to threaten to shut down the whole British Leyland group if workers followed through with the threat of a November strike.

That said, there could be no denying the Acclaim's entirely Japanese heritage. Triumph enthusiasts, brought up on a diet of hairy-chested sports cars and sporting coupés, were instantly aghast. However, the car's specification, build quality, and road performance all impressed–albeit, the latter, only to a moderate degree.

Three models were made available: the entry model HL; the mid-range HLS with halogen headlamps, remote mirrors, and a body side rubbing strip; and the range topping CD with luxurious velour interior, electric windows, headlamp washers, and low-profile tires. Prices began at £4,688 and rose to £5,874. A more basic L model followed in 1982, which had no clock and only one speaker.

All models had an identical mechanical specification and were powered by the same sophisticated all-alloy, 1335cc overhead-cam, four-cylinder engine. This produced 70bhp and could be mated to a five-speed manual gearbox or optional three-speed 'Triomatic' unit. All-round independent suspension came via MacPherson-strut suspension (located with transverse links at the front and trailing arms at the rear) and coil springs, with a front anti-roll bar. Brakes were servo-assisted discs at the front, drums at the rear, with twin, diagonally opposed hydraulic systems.

In terms of performance, buyers got a 92mph (148kph) top speed and a car that would 'devour' 0–60mph (0–97kph) in 11.9 seconds. However, it excelled in terms of fuel consumption, something consumers remained acutely aware of, given various oil crises that remained fresh in the memory. It returned an average of 32mpg and more if driven with restraint.

The October 1981 edition of *Motor* proved to be akin to a love letter to the model, both in editorial (front cover and fifteen pages coverage) and advertising terms (with full-page Dunlop and Michelin Acclaim adverts, among numerous others). The magazine called the car "a capable all-rounder" and summed it up somewhat paradoxically by stating, "buyers who value traditional Japanese virtues now have no excuse for not buying British."

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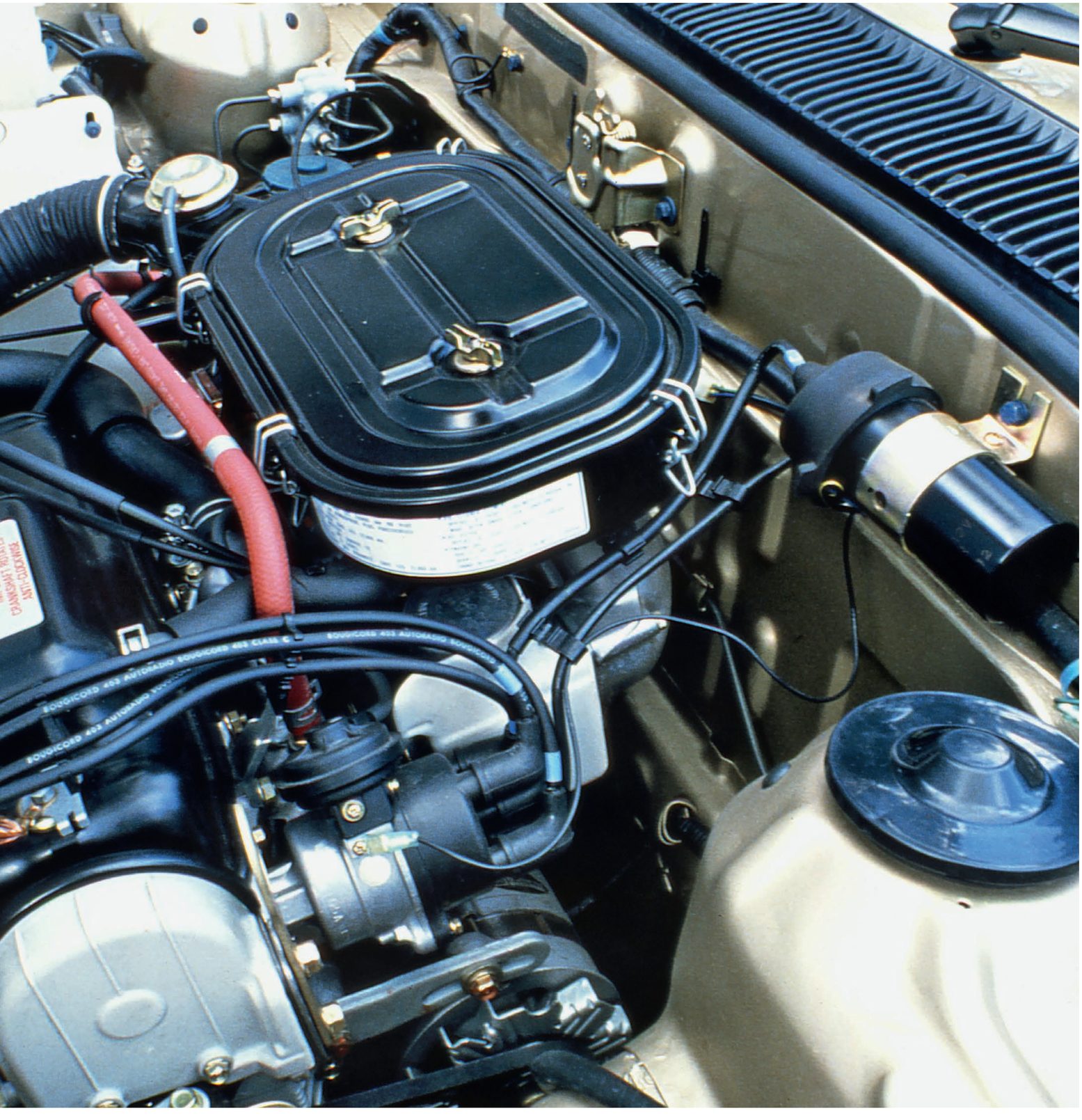

The 1335cc version of Honda's OHV four-cylinder engine (producing 70bhp) powered all British Leyland variants.

WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 10 · 1981 · 45p

Motor

ACCLAIM: A TRIUMPH FOR BL !
First full road test·Technical analysis·
Four-colour cutaway drawing·

RUNNING REPORTS
Fiat Panda
Datsun Bluebird
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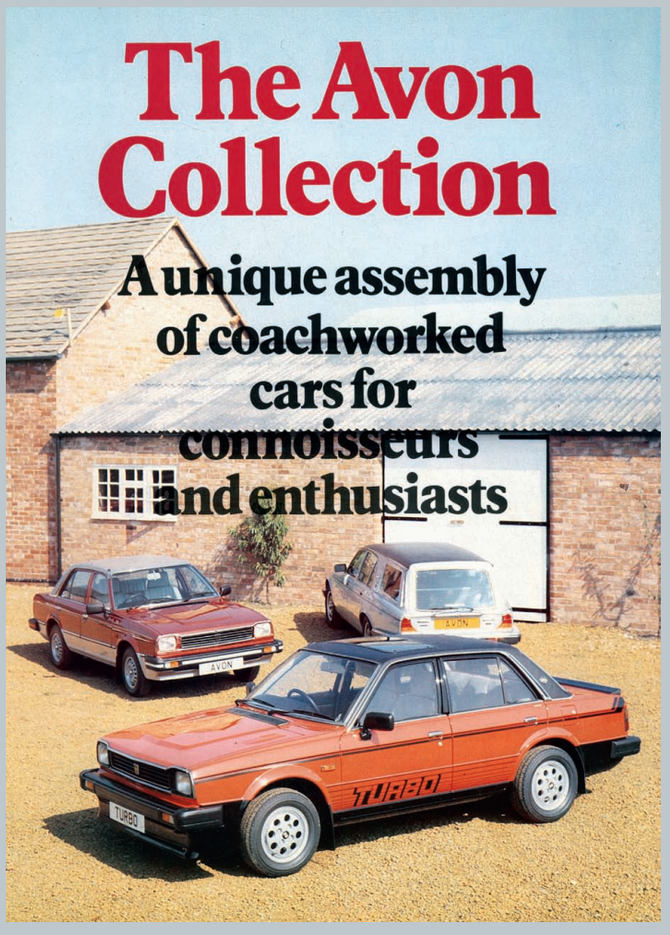
AVON CALLING

Warwick-based Avon Coachwork had already worked its magic on the Triumph Acclaim in the form of its £1,569.75 cosmetic upgrade, which included numerous exterior flourishes (two-tone paintwork, coach lines, vinyl roof, and extensive use of chrome) and an über high-end cabin (leather trimmed seats, burr walnut dashboard, and Wilton carpets), when in May 1983 it revealed the Avon Turbo Acclaim.

Jumping on the in-vogue, forced induction bandwagon seemed an inspired move, even if the sedate steed chosen appeared a somewhat odd choice. In came a Garrett AiReasearch T3 turbocharger allied to an intercooler, with specialist Turbo Technics of Market Rasen over-seeing its installation and fettling. It had 6psi of boost that saw the standard car's power and torque figures (70bhp and 74lb ft) rise to a healthy 105bhp and 123lb ft. The 0–60mph (0–97kph) dropped to 9.0 seconds, with top speed rising to a claimed 116mph (187kph). However, the biggest difference could be seen in the fifth gear 50–70mph (80–112kph) sprint, which was more than halved taking 7.5 seconds (compared to the original's snail-like 16.8 seconds).

Aesthetically, the Turbo retained Avon's two-tone paint and coachlines and added a deep front air dam, rear boot spoiler, 5.5in (14cm) Lunar 'moon' alloy wheels on wide rubber (205/60) and of-the-time, in-your-face 'TURBO' decals. Toss in figure-hugging seats and an optional hand leather-stitched Nardi steering wheel, and the sticker price of £2,990 (on top of the donor car) looked like a bargain. Or not.

Compared to period rivals, Avon may not have produced an out and out road-burner (the small capacity all-alloy engine proved the limiting factor), but there's no doubt that the (very) limited number it made significantly improved the Acclaim's performance stats.



Ladbroke Bodies undertook specialist conversions of Land Rovers, Range Rovers, and Jaguars, before being renamed Avon Coachwork in 1982 and turning its attention towards the Triumph Acclaim.

(OPPOSITE) *Motor*'s October 1981 front cover claims "A Triumph for BL!"

SIR MICHAEL EDWARDES

The idea of a Triumph Acclaim chapter may itself be unpalatable to Triumph enthusiasts, but a sub-section dedicated to Edwardes is no doubt anathema. And yet, the South African businessman had a large impact on the marque.

Edwardes took the British Leyland reins in November 1977 in a febrile atmosphere of almost constant dispute between management and unions. His forceful outlook could be garnered from his many statements, which included, "BL is the anvil on which every one of society's ills is beaten out," and he came to be regarded as a prime exponent of Thatcherism.

His five-year recovery plan saw 12,000 redundancies and multiple plant closures, but with no personal loyalty to marques and their respective histories, only to profit. He's best recalled as the man who diluted the marque's legacy and whose strategies ultimately saw Triumph vanish from the motoring world.

The irony is that he departed at the end of his contract in 1982, with British Leyland having never made a profit. Although it could be argued that his actions, unpalatable as they were, remain responsible for large subsections (for example, Jaguar Land Rover and Mini) of the company remaining in existence to this day, albeit under different ownership.

Edwardes inherited a deeply troubled company and had to make unpopular decisions; chief among these, were ones that led to the final demise of Triumph.

The cabin provided the only area where British craftsmen could put their stamp on the car. That said, it remained fairly functional in character.

(continues from page 212)

1982–1984: THE END

In August 1983 the French government claimed the Acclaim had just 40 percent EU content, so it should be classified as a Japanese car. It limited Japanese cars to 3 percent of the French market, and with BL wanting to import around 6000 Acclaims into the country, the number of Japanese imports would have to drop by 2000 to compensate. However, the EEC Commision ruled that by taking into consideration the car's bodyshell, glass, tires, wheels and other components, that it was in fact 73 percent European. The Italians had also complained but withdrew theirs after signing a deal to produce Nissan Cherries in its own factories, wearing Alfa Romeo badges.

British Leyland by mid–1984 was now called the Austin-Rover Group, and quite rightly received absolutely no kudos for the engineering behind the Triumph Acclaim project. The Acclaim did, however, break down the final barriers of suspicion that up until then foreign cars garnered, as well as improving beyond measure the company's methods of production.

In its three years of production, it also provided a decent seller, with 133,626 units made and many sold in continental Europe as well. Never before had a marque shifted its purchasing demographic so seismically; young to middle-aged sporting enthusiasts gave way to the elderly bingo-playing generation.

The U.K. never received the 1488cc 80bhp engine available in Japan, and by mid–1984 with the next generation Honda Ballade imminent, a change of strategy heralded the end for the Triumph name. The company's new car would be called the Rover 200.

Collectively, Triumph enthusiasts the world over sighed in relief.

Unlike other marques and models, there would be no return for Triumph. The name lives on only in two-wheeled form–apt perhaps, given the company's origins. Siegfried Bettmann would no doubt approve.

The possibility of an electric sports car bearing that name or foreign ownership is nil, and for that, enthusiasts can be glad. Instead, their collective focus can rest entirely on generation after generation of hairy-chested sports cars, hard-charging sporting sedans, and beautifully constructed motorcars.

Each one of them a Triumph of engineering.

Triumph Acclaim	
Data	1981–1984
Models	Sedan (£4668-£5575)
Construction	Steel monocoque structure
Length	161.2in (409cm)
Width	63in (160cm)
Height	52.7in (134cm)
Wheelbase	91.3in (232cm)
Weight	1784lb (809.2kg)
Engine Size	1335cc
Engine Format	in-line 4-cylinder
Carburetion	Twin Keihin carburetors
Max Bhp	70bhp @ 5750rpm
Max Torque	74lb ft @ 3500rpm
Gearbox	5-speed manual
Automatic	3-speed Hondamatic
Final Drive Ratio	4.642:1
Steering	Rack and pinion
Front Suspension	Independent with MacPherson struts, coil springs, and anti-roll bar
Rear Suspension	Independent with with MacPherson struts, trailing arms, and coil springs
Tires	155/80-SR13in or 165/70-SR13in
Brakes	8.47in (21.5cm) discs, front; 7.1x1.0in (18x2.54cm) drums, rear
0 to 60 mph	11.9sec
Top Speed	92mph (148kph)
Fuel Economy	32mpg (US, 26.65mpg)


AAB 925A

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

ROSS ALKUREISHI turned to motoring journalism in 2009, learning his trade as staff writer at *Classic Cars* magazine, before entering the perilous world of freelance journalism; there, whilst having his backside strapped in all manner of vintage, classic, and modern machinery, he thrived, and continues to do so. Today, the passion remains as strong as ever, even if his current Lancia Fulvia Sport Zagato restoration tests his patience. His first book project, *The Complete Book of Classic MG Cars*, saw him tackle the hardback format for the first time and was received to (semi) rave reviews. To this new title, he brings a soupcon more experience, as well as the same informative, entertaining, and high tempo writing style.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE WORLD OF TRIUMPH motor cars followed my deep dive into its rival MG marque and has proven equally interesting, pleasurable, and stimulating. I would like to thank the people who have supported and helped me in producing this book.

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