



VOL 40 #12 December 2022

From The Editor:

The very best for Christmas and the New Year. We're looking forward to a great 100th anniversary of our beloved MG marque. There will be celebrations across the world as well as here in the US. The big one will be at the Lime Rock Historic Festival labor day weekend, Sept 1-4.

You'll find an article from Classic Motorsports by famed designer Pete Brock on his first car, an MG TC and how the classic lines of that auto influenced him. For those of you not familiar with Pete Brock, he was the man who penned the legendary Cobra Daytona Coupe for Shelby. Later ran the equally legendary BRE Datsun racing team. The man is truly a treasure of experience and as good a writer as he is a designer.

We'll go back in time to a road race held in upstate New York – the Callicoon races. An amazing glance at early sports car events. A track that still had gravel portions, little spectator amenities or safety, yet a wonderful weekend at the beginning edge of our sport. The races were held only 1 year due to safety reasons.

Canada announces a \$100 discount on entry to their 2023 VARAC race if you sign up by Dec 31. Don't worry, you won't be charged until April 1st.

John Twist gives us his expert advice on winter storage. While reading this in December might be a bit late, I know all of you in the colder regions have done the work to protect your cars. But University Motors and John will give you more insight into the process.

This issue is a bit long, but I think it will provide a bit of time to relax, read and enjoy the spirit of the season

Callicoon Sports Car Races



The OSCA of Al Garthwaite on the starting grid gets last minute advice from the crew.
Photo: Ozzie Lyons www.petelyons.com

What? You've never heard of the Callicoon Races? Ridiculous! You've heard of Watkins Glen, Bridgehampton, Elkhart Lake, Put-in-Bay and even Brynfan Tyddyn. But maybe not the races near Callicoon, New York. They were held, just once, in 1953 on a long 8.5 mile course on the public roads only a 3-hour drive from Watkins Glen. It's in that little corner where three states meet: NY, PA and NJ – not far from Port Jervis.

They were, technically, the 1953 Sullivan County Sport Car Races, and entrants included Fred Allen's MG, David Ash in his MG Special, Lake Underwood in an MG (before he started racing Porsches), Bill Wonder, Tony Pompeo in his Siata, Al Garthwaite in the OSCA, Charlie Schott in his much-modified Jaguar, Gordon McKenzie in his first race and Erwin Goldschmidt in the #99 Keift MG. The 8.5-mile course (a tenth of a mile longer than Le Mans!) was mostly a macadam surface with a 2-mile unpaved section and even some gravel on the two sharpest turns. "The course ran around the base of a mountain," Bill Wonder recalls. "It had steep hills, narrow bridges and concrete abutments."



Robert Newman, race announcer, picks up the microphone for a message, at the 1953 Sullivan County Sport's Car Race. Photo: Ozzie Lyons www.petelyons.com

The main promoter, says David Ash, was Lou Schultz, a New Jersey car dealer. According to Jim Donick of the VSCCA, the event was sponsored by the New Jersey Sport's Car Club and the Delaware Youth Center. It was run June 28, 1953. A.J. Roth was the Chief Steward, technical inspection was in Carl's Garage Friday and Saturday, and there was a physical exam Friday in the Western Hotel at 8 pm. After the 11 o'clock drivers' meeting, there was practice on Saturday. The races began at 11 on Sunday. Bill Wonder recalls "the traffic was not shut off for practice, making for a few close calls."

Watkins Glen-founder Cameron Argetsinger was placed on the entry list at Sullivan County, too. His black Jaguar 120 roadster was even assigned a number, 22. But he had not actually entered the race. "The organization was loose. And the safety was even looser. This was the year after the fatal accident at Watkins Glen. I went down and drove the course, which was quite interesting. The course went along a valley through the mountains and was very wooded.



Charlie Schott, in his Jaguar Special, looks off to the side at a crew member? Corner worker's flag? Who knows?

Photo: Ozzie Lyons
www.petelyons.com



Almquist, an early supplier of speed equipment, mostly for modifying domestic cars, appears at the Callicoon race with a clever mobile display. Photo: Ozzie Lyons www.petelyons.com

“SCCA did not sanction the race, it was a local group. I was very concerned about the safety of the event and I telephoned after the race. Luckily, it had been a safe one.”

According to information supplied by Argetsinger, the event was initially offered by the town to the New York Region, of SCCA. Others including the Road Racing Drivers Club and the Westchester Sports Car Club looked at the course and determined that it was too dangerous. One problem was the number of flag stations required for a course of that length—20 of them!



This MG driver is belted in with a war-surplus-aircraft seat belt. The helmet appears to be one borrowed from a football player. Photo: Ozzie Lyons www.petelyons.com

Someone who looked danger in the eye and laughed was Gordon MacKenzie. "It was actually my first race," he says. "I got involved as an accident. A friend of mine had a sports car dealership. He showed me an entry blank for the Sullivan race. I said 'that sounds like fun.' I filled out the entry and sent it in. There was no competition license required—I later started a drivers' school that issued licenses. The course was on regular country roads.

"They used an interval start for the last race, with every car flagged off at about 3-second intervals. I had a Jaguar, in the class with Charlie Schott in his Jaguar Special and Trevor McKenna in the much-modified XK120."



The Stanwycks XK-120 gets a little out-of-sorts as it comes around on lap five.
Photo: Ozzie Lyons www.petelyons.com



The beautiful OSCA of Al Garthwaite, at speed. This was a 1,340-cc car that preceded the 1,500-cc MT4s. Photo: Ozzie Lyons www.petelyons.com

Also starting with the Jaguars was the curious Altemus Auto Banking Special. As Henry Wessels recalls “It leaned into the corners, something like the Bill Milliken Chamber Car.”

“From the start you would go uphill,” McKenzie continues, “to a ninety-degree right hander, to a straightaway with a slight bend in it. There was an arch of trees and the light through the trees caused a kaleidoscope effect. Then you came out of it on a short bit of road to another ninety-degree right, to downhill, a sweeping bend to the left where the bank ran down 40 or 50 feet, then back to a right and then to a bar on a 130-degree corner, back to the start/finish straight which would take you up a grade through the woods to the paddock and the finish line.

“I forget what the entry fee was, but for \$5 you could buy an FIA license. Fifty cars were entered. I signed up for the big race and they told me to put #13 on my car. I arrived with my XK120 and a steel GI helmet which I planned to wear in the race. Bill Wonder was there and he sold me a Cromwell helmet for \$10.

According to information supplied by VSCCA secretary Tony Carroll, four races were run at Callicoon: The Fremont Trophy race, at 11:00 am was an all-MG event; the Callicoon Trophy Race at 12:45 pm for cars of 1,250, 1,500 and 2,000-cc displacement; the Delaware Valley Trophy Race at 2:30 pm, for cars of 1,500 and 2,000-cc and the Sullivan Country Trophy Race at 3:45 pm for Jaguars.

Results from the Motor Racing Research Center in Watkins Glen show that two MGs crashed in the first race, on the road between Obernburg and Fremont Center. One of them was probably Erwin Goldschmidt's because he is not listed in the results. "That is my recollection, too," says Bill Wonder, "that Goldschmidt went off the road." The 5-lap, 42-mile race was stopped and restarted, and the leader was a Singer running exhibition, not for position. Actual 1st place went to George Rave with 2nd to Joseph Ryan in a photo finish with Mike Rodney both in TDs.

Lake Underwood drove an MG there before he had a string of Porsches, including Carreras and a 550 Spyder borrowed from Briggs Cunningham. The MG was a Mk II TD with a modified suspension and engine. He remembers the course. "That was a hairy thing. It went through the hills and dales of southeastern New York—on rough surfaced blacktop. Erwin Goldschmidt was in my class with a highly modified MG. I really don't remember where he finished, or where I finished either!"



The 1951 Porsche of Klaus Rexroth corners briskly and kicks up a little dirt in the barnyard turn just before the long 3-mile straight. Two miles of the course were on dirt roads. Photo: Ozzie Lyons
www.petelyons.com



The #29 MG of Gordon Morris is closely followed by the MGs of Norman Hylander (#45), David Ruggles (#18) and Walter Decker (#20) during Saturday practice. Morris would later have an accident, preventing him from racing on Sunday. Photo: Ozzie Lyons www.petelyons.com

"I didn't race," says MG-racer Ed Licht, "because I'd flipped my MG the day before. I went down to watch a friend race, Gordy Morris from Oneonta, New York. He had a shop there he called Morris Garage. His wife Tavia was an artist. He was racing a TC and got carried away. He lost it in a turn at 85 mph, hit a rail and flipped. As soon as he crashed, people came running over. He was semi-conscious. He sat up and said, 'I think I've gone off the road.' Then he collapsed. When he woke up, he was in the hospital. Sparky Smith and I went up to his shop two days later. He was stiff, but no injuries."

A report sent by Mark Steigerwald of the Racing Research Center notes that, due to time lost by the two MG accidents—Goldschmidt and Morris—officials decided to combine the second (Callicoon Trophy) and third (Delaware Valley) races for cars between 1,250-cc and 2,000-cc. The two races were scored separately. On the second lap, two Singers went off the course in different places and the red flags were put out. In the recollection of longtime Alfa driver Henry Wessells, Al Garthwaite won this combined race in the blue-and-red ex-Julian Cagianca #42 OSCA, which Otto Linton later raced.

Bill Wonder drove a modified MG in the next race on the program. "I drove a car that Joe Giubardo and I built in his shop out on Long Island," he says. "It was an MG TD with cycle fenders, lightened body, 1,330-cc engine with Lincoln Zephyr pistons, a Harman Collins cam, Mallory dual-point ignition and 1-1/2" SU carbs. We took a 3rd in that car and they gave us a big trophy. It was 3-feet high!"

After the restart, Bill Wonder's orange MG was 2nd followed by Lake Underwood. On the 4th lap, Underwood made the pass and held 2nd place to the end of the Delaware Valley contest. Garthwaite's 1,100-cc car drove like a 1,500-cc machine—he averaged 68 mph with a fastest lap of 70 mph. In the other race, the Callicoon Trophy, an MG beat two Porsches! Robert Daley was 1st in an MG, with Klaus Rexroth 2nd in a Porsche and James Kilgore 3rd, also in a Porsche.



The MG-TC of James Miller sits in the paddock wondering whether or not to change its tires.
Photo: Ozzie Lyons www.petelyons.com

A local family backs its farm truck up to the race course, just behind the communications wires, to see the event. A little like the hydroplane races coming to Findley Lake once a year—very exciting stuff!
Photo: Ozzie Lyons



In race four, the Sullivan County Trophy Classic, Charlie Schott was 1st in a special-bodied XK-120 Jaguar racecar, followed by John Stanwycks in a production XK-120 and Norman Joseph in an XK 120. And 120 mph is just what the cars were doing in the 4-mile straight between Fremont Center and Schaferszak Corners. Schott's winning average speed was 71 mph, and he did the fastest lap of the day at 75.5 mph on lap four. His Jag almost did not last the event—he got the checkered flag with black smoke pouring out of his exhaust pipe.

Historian Bill Green says that participation by SCCA members was discouraged because they thought the course was dangerous (it was!). "It was supposed to benefit the Callicoon youth," he notes, "but it didn't make any money because it cost too much to set up race communications around the 8-1/2 mile course." The race with all its flag stations and haybales cost \$6,000 and did not bring in that much from concessions, entry fees and admissions. The event had been advertised in both Motorsport and The New York Times.



Gordon MacKenzie's gray Jaguar accelerates down the 3-mile straight from Fremont Center to Schaferszak Corners. Photo: Ozzie Lyons www.petelyons.com

In a summary of the event, Ruth Sands Bentley, wife of Siata driver John Bentley, noted that it was actually a nice race. The 10,000 spectators were well-behaved; officials were not too, well, officious; there was plenty of parking space; and local people welcomed the racers. "They couldn't have been friendlier," is the way she put it. Drivers praised the sanctioning clubs and course-workers, noting that they were never out of sight of a flagman. Bentley noted that the course had "wonderful possibilities" and that with widening, paving and chopping down trees, "it could become the finest road course in the USA."

The opportunity never came because, unfortunately, due to safety reasons and financial concerns, 1953 was the one and only year for the sports car races at Callicoon, New York.



Greetings, MG Vintage Racers!

Registration is open on Motorsport.reg for VARAC's Vintage Grand Prix at CTMP (Mosport) June 15-18, 2023.

For those of you who don't know the event, it is run on the iconic Mosport Grand Prix circuit - a high-speed 2.5 mile track, home "in the day" to F1, Can Am, USAC, F5000, Trans Am etc, with all the famous drivers from those series. You'll truly be competing on motor racing's "hallowed" ground.

You get lots of track time, plus the well known VARAC parties – a BBQ Thurs, banquet and live band on Friday, and a paddock crawl with Larry Smith's favourite band, the Mudmen, on Saturday evening.

For MG racers, register in your Vintage Historic group, as well as two special races. The two special races:

- > MG vs Triumph race, with awards for top MG's and the Tony Simms Cup, and
- > the Nations Cup -this year, Mazda vs the world.

Note: group racing is by lap time or “bracket” . This enables close racing, as well as eliminating high speed differentials in your group. If you are unsure of your group/bracket drop me a line and I can help.

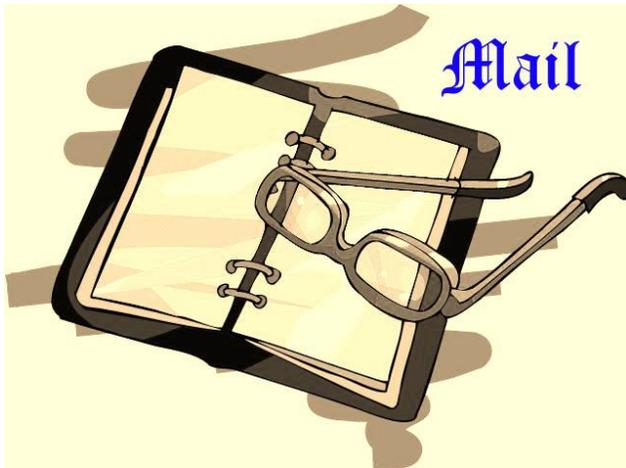
Register now!

So.. you might be asking why register now? Well.. a few things..

1. Savings of \$100 until the end of 2022.
2. No financial penalty – VARAC won't charge you until April 1
3. We're limiting run group size to ensure orderly starts and good, focused racing. To avoid missing out, sign up now. -

Any questions? Drop me a line.

Dave Good davewgood@yahoo.ca



Hi Dave,

Ed McCord here from Burlington, Wisconsin. I am an active MG TD racer in the VSCDA and, along with several of my fellow midwest racers, am very interested in participating in the Lime Rock event and possibly Watkins Glen a week later.

I believe that we would have about 8 T-series (one pre-war) and several other non T-series pre-war cars.

Could you please let me know what we need to do to sign up for the event and assure racing spots for us? Some members of our

group may be MGVR members and those of us who are not will want to join so perhaps you could give me some guidance on that too.

Thanks and regards,
Ed McCord

Greetings to you all.

I want to first thank you for the opportunity to participate in this year's historic weekend celebrating the 100th anniversary of the MG marque. Our annual gathering British by the Sea held the first Sunday in June will also be honoring that centennial celebration. The Our next monthly meeting will be in January at which I will discuss our support of the festival. If there are any possible perks for members who attend the festival, in particular the Sunday in the Park event I would gladly pass on that info.

Please feel free to pass on any suggestions or questions for me.

Thanks again for the chance to be part of this significant event in the MG world.

Al Nosenzo
President
CTMG Club

MGVR - Empire Drivers / VSCCA/ HRG Lime Rock June 2 & 3, 2023

Registration is now open for the Empire Cup

This event has always been oversubscribed and many years we have had to turn racers away. This is two full days of un-muffled racing at Lime Rock Park. Lime Rock only has a few weekends a year when the cars can be un-muffled. This is one of the weekends.

Unlike most VSCCA events this event does have timing & scoring for the race car groups. We will have some sort of party Friday evening at the track, everyone is invited.

Charles Bordin
cbordin123@aol.com

For Sale



I have a nice set of factory SC/CR gears for MGB 4-synchro gearbox for sale. Please contact me at dickmoritz@aol.com

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Two A.R.E. mag wheels. These aluminum wheels still have the threads to hold the faux spinners. The wheels are 5.5" wide and are the real 1960's product. \$200 for the pair, shipping extra. Wheels only, the tires have been dismounted.



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Peter Brock: My first car | Column



By Peter Brock

Dec 13, 2022 | Classic Motorsports



Photograph Courtesy BRE

Classic design never fades. It may take some time for that truth to sink in, especially if you're a 14-year-old kid searching for his first set of wheels. But scoring your dream and getting it right the first time is something that stays with you forever, because there's no room for compromise after that.

My first car was a '49 MG TC. It set an aesthetic standard that introduced me to a world of fine automobiles, incredibly interesting people, and a design ethic that would affect and influence the rest of my life. My TC didn't run when I bought it because it had a blown engine that made the price affordable. Its condition hardly mattered—just that I'd somehow managed to acquire it.

There was nothing in the world as beautiful or more important than the mechanical freedom that I knew it would someday deliver. I wouldn't drive it on the street until I was 16, but just having it to study and work on was an incredibly satisfying experience.

Its mere presence in my life became a silent introduction to a welcoming community with common interests. My new mentors graciously overlooked my age and mechanical naiveté, sharing their knowledge and considerable skills to help me learn and make my car run.

That static interim also gave me an unexpected gift: the many hours of silent contemplation that allowed me to absorb and mentally replay every line and mechanical detail of my TC by just closing my eyes. Its perfect stance and proportions, even though I had no idea then what those terms meant, imprinted themselves in my mind's eye and provided a solid foundation for every design I've evaluated or created since.

Even though MG TCs were the only variants of that famed marque when they first became available in America, their classic lines provided an elegant aesthetic anchor from which I judged a whole new world of wheels. (Later, the iconic lines of a beautifully crafted Ford '32 hotrod served as a similar reference point in that separate, wonderful world of hand-built cars.)

I knew absolutely nothing about cars at the time, but I was lucky enough to have a next-door neighbor who owned and raced an MG. Just seeing and hearing it for the first time was a revelation. Its tall, 19-inch wire wheels and sweeping, full-fendered lines, combined with the ripping cadence of its race-prepped engine when it fired up, were instantly imbedded in my psyche. I'd never seen or heard anything like it, but knew instantly that I wanted more.

Eventually there were great rides through the twisting, tree-lined back roads of Marin County. There were fast, cross-country caravans with other racers to events that really opened my eyes to a world I never knew existed. I couldn't get enough then, and still can't; fine automobiles became a way of life for me that persists to this day.

I had no idea then that MG had previously built a PA or the handsome, supercharged TA before the war. I also didn't know that still more beautifully designed and built SS Jags, Rileys and ERAs—and the supremely proportioned Vanden Plas Squire—even existed. There was so much to learn!

I was so disappointed when I saw my first MG TD. How could they possibly compromise the TC's handsome lines?

That's when a stopwatch gave me a whole new understanding of the importance of improved engineering. My previous standard of exterior beauty was only part of the total package. Better brakes, steering and suspension provided safer speed and extra comfort.

The TD, with its softer lines, was the transition to the handsome new TF, which somehow comfortably combined the TC's classic prewar appearance with the future. The realities of cost, production and changing priorities in a constantly changing market all combined to affect design and taste.

That all changed with the MGA, of course, which marked the emergence of a whole new era of English design. Aerodynamics had become an important factor. The T era had passed. The MGA was a better-engineered car in almost every way—except it didn't have that exceptional, stunning quality of design that the TC etched in my mind. First impressions teach and affect your life forever.



think we would all agree the TC is simply, just perfect

WINTER STORAGE

Ask a dozen MG owners how each of them stored his MG last year and you will receive a dozen different answers. Methods range from abandoning the MG under a tree in the front yard, to complex routines involving raising the MG off the ground and removing the seats. There is not a "proper" method as each owner has slightly different considerations and requirements -- yet there are basic rules to follow in any storage procedure that will reduce the probability of damage during storage. In addition to the normal precautions for freezing temperature, some thought must be given to location, access, traffic around the stored MG, humidity, rodents, etc. It is important to develop a plan that you can easily follow and that you implement before winter shows its icy Arctic fury.

DAMAGE WE HAVE WITNESSED!

Damage during storage results from neglect or abuse – and we've "seen it all!" Cars stored without antifreeze resulting in cracked blocks, burst radiators and heaters; old gasoline evaporated until all that's left are giant, hardened blocks of varnish knocking around inside the tank; gasoline lines, fuel pumps, and carburetors plugged with gooey aged petrol. Dented fenders, cracked glass, perforated soft-tops caused by carelessness or accidents from adults and children -- corroded chrome, scaly undercarriages, frozen brakes and mildewed interiors from damp storage. But the damage from rodents is most pervasive – those nasty creatures burrow into the seats, the bonnet insulation, the interior – even the exhaust pipe. We have found nests in the boot, fender wells, pedal boxes, inside the heater boxes and air cleaners, in the folded tonneau...nearly everywhere. We disassembled an engine once to find a mouse next INSIDE a cylinder. We've removed 20 pounds of dog food from the engine bay! One MGB had a perfectly round hole the size of a silver dollar gnawed right in the middle of the top (it had remained folded down all winter).

BASIC RULES

Freezing temperatures require a 50/50 solution of antifreeze and water to prevent the coolant from freezing in the engine block, radiator, or heater. A full tank of gasoline reduces the amount of water that can be absorbed by the petrol and slows the rate at which the gasoline turns to varnish. Fresh oil in the sump reduces bearing etching, caused by dirty, acidic, contaminated oil. Topped off master cylinders reduces water contamination in the hydraulic lines.

Store the MG with the hood (top) up, windows and vents closed. The folding hood (or soft top) can develop nasty creases when left folded throughout the winter. Closed vents and windows make it more difficult for small furry creatures to foul or devour parts of the MG. It's always nice to clean the MG's interior prior to storage -- discarded bottles and cigarette butts do not enhance the interior bouquet. Ensure that the boot (trunk) is dry. The boot seal is not always positive, and some moisture can collect on the floor. Left to nature throughout the winter, this can rust the floor or inner fenders about the boot area. Discharging an entire can of WD-40 (or similar product) on all the engine components, especially the bright metal or aluminium parts (carbs, coil, anti-run-on valve, etc) easily protects the under bonnet (engine-bay). A large piece of plastic on the floor protects the underside of the MG from moisture rising up through the concrete

Finally, take the MG on the last run of the season allowing it to heat up fully. A half-hour run is wonderful. This will evaporate all the moisture in the exhaust and engine. Park the car in its

winter home and leave the handbrake OFF. If you will not see the MG until Spring, either remove the battery to a heated environment – or fit one of the new constant maintenance battery chargers and simply leave the car plugged in all winter. If you cover the MG, use cloth, never plastic.

STORAGE CONSIDERATIONS

Consider the following questions and make your own storage plan from these concerns:

- 1) Location --Will the MG be stored close to home or in a barn forty miles distant? Will the MG be stored inside or outside?
- 2) Access -- Will the MG be locked in a building to which you will have little or no access, or will it be available every day? Will it be possible to drive your MG during the winter or will it be positioned in the corner of the garage?
- 3) Traffic -- Will the MG be isolated from movement, or will the family Vista Cruiser discharge four energetic, careless children who will open doors against it?
- 4) Humidity --Will the storage area be very dry or will there be a puddle of melting snow forever swilling under the MG?
- 5) Temperature. Will the storage temperatures be room temp, just above freezing, or dead cold?
- 6) Animals --Will the family cat use the soft top as a springboard, will Spike jump against it, are there furry rodents which may use the MG as a hotel or find the leather seats tasty at mealtime?
- 7) Owner Maintenance -- will you really have the opportunity, inclination, time, and resolve to visit your MG every week or month?

INSURANCE

Insurance is a MUST -even on your stored MG! Always keep a theft/damage/vandalism/fire policy in effect on your MG. MGs are still stolen; garages collapse under the weight of snow; nasty neighborhood children may wish to redecorate your MG --or worse; and fire is always a possibility. This comprehensive insurance is very inexpensive, and you simply cannot afford to be without it. Be certain to establish the value of your MG with the insurance agent before the loss!

SYSTEMS PROTECTION

1) ENGINE: Fresh oil will adequately protect the engine for several months of relatively dry storage. If you are going to store the MG longer than the winter, or if the humidity is high, then start the engine at regular intervals and allow it to warm up (with the garage door open, please). If this is not possible, introduce oil into the cylinders (perhaps six squirts from a normal oil can). Turn the engine over slowly, before replacing the plugs -- by the crank in the earlier models or pushing while in fourth gear -- as this moves the oil throughout the head, pistons, and valves. Cover the tailpipe outlet with duct tape to prevent moisture (and rodents) from entering the exhaust system. Cover the air inlets at the air cleaner(s) with tape to keep moisture from the carb internals and cylinder head.

2) IGNITION: Normally there are no preventive measures, but if you are going to store the MG for several years, oil the distributor cam. Even moderately damp storage will corrode the

points. If the engine fails to quickly start the next season, drag a piece of fine sandpaper through the points to remove the oxidation.

3) COOLING: Ensure the cooling system is filled with a clean 50/50 solution of glycol antifreeze and water. Some owners suggest that Armorall or a similar product can extend the life of the radiator hoses.

4) FUEL: If you plan just a winter's storage, then a full tank of gasoline with the addition of a can of "dry gas" or "Stabil" is satisfactory. If you plan to store the MG for a year or more, then drain the float bowls to prevent a build-up of varnish and oxidation of the metering needle. Leaded gasoline purchased years ago seems to last forever; gasoline purchased today goes bad after a year or so. Starting the MG with "old gas" or "bad gas" requires fresh gasoline in the carburetor just to get the engine to start running. Sometimes starting fluid (carburetor cleaner or ether) is necessary. Once warm, the engine will run on old gasoline.

5) CLUTCH: Two problems can occur in long term storage: the clutch hydraulics can leak; and the clutch disc can rust to the flywheel or pressure plate. Exercising the pedal on a regular basis can avoid these trouble spots. Damp storage is a real problem with the clutch and aggravates this rusting. Start the MG and drive it fore and aft – even a couple of feet – every so often!

6) SUSPENSION: Winter storage causes no problems with the suspension. Very few MG owners place their MGs on jacks for the winter -- but if this is done, place the stands under the outer portion of the front A Arms and under the leaf springs where the U bolts surround the axle and spring. This keeps the suspension from dropping away from the body and straining the shocks and the rebound rubbers/straps. If you place the MG on stands, then reduce tire pressure to 10-15lbs. Whether on stands or on the ground, be certain to move the wheels a couple of times during storage. Several rotations work well to prevent the bearings from rusting and will prevent flat spots from developing on the tires. .

7) BRAKES: Rolling the MG back and forth prevents the brake pads from rusting to the rotors (just as the clutch disc can rust to the flywheel). Operate the brakes on a regular basis to prevent the cylinders from freezing. Some owners back off the adjustment on the brake drums so that there is no chance of the shoes rusting to the drums – this also allows the cylinders to move farther while exercising the pedal. Exercise the handbrake, too! Rapidly work the handle, up and down, to keep the cable and linkages free. Store the MG with the handbrake OFF!

8) BATTERIES: No battery will hold its charge forever. If the battery charge is reduced far enough, the electrolyte freezes, the case cracks, and the battery is ruined. If you store the MG in freezing temperatures, then you must charge the batteries several times throughout the winter. Use a "trickle charger" or run the engine to recharge the battery(ies). Sometimes it is easier to remove the battery! On the 1977 and newer MGBs with the electric clock, remove the bottom fuse in the fusebox. This stops the drain (albeit tiny) caused by the clock. Next to the coolant in the radiator, the batteries are one of the two most important considerations in winter storage.

One of the truly "new and improved" devices is the battery monitor. This unit checks the battery voltage on a regular basis (minutes? seconds? milliseconds? I don't know) and if the

battery voltage falls below a certain mark, a tiny charge is made – then the unit rechecks the voltage and the cycle repeats. These are truly wonderful units!

9) BODY: To prevent oxidation or scratching, cover the MG with a cloth mitten. Plastic is NOT suitable. Plastic does not allow the MG to breathe and can exacerbate oxidation and rusting. If you plan to store the MG in a heavy traffic zone (the family garage, for example), then additional protection is in order. Thick cardboard, a suitably supported piece of wood, or even an old mattress suspended from the ceiling prevents damage from winter tools and car doors. If the bonnet or boot lid will be used for a shelf (even if just to place groceries in transit), then more protection (such as a thick blanket) is in order. Humidity is the body's enemy. Make every effort to keep the floor dry!! If you plan to store the MG outside, then keep the car well ventilated and do not allow snow to pile up, under and around the car. Park the MG on a large sheet of plastic to keep the MG dry.

Expend a whole can of WD-40 in the engine bay and on the wheels – REALLY! Another truly wonderful

improvement is the car bag. Some of these are giant envelopes into which you drive your car and zip closed for the season. Others have blowers to keep air circulating.

10) INTERIOR: Low winter humidity dries leather seats, allowing them to contract and crack. Prepare the leather with LEXOL to keep the hide supple. Mice cause the greatest damage to interiors! They eat the seats, the foam, the carpeting, the wiring insulation – they eat EVERYTHING!! Close off access to the interior. Keep the vents tightly closed. Erect the hood (soft top). Close the windows. Some owners remove their seats prior to storage. Several dishes, filled with mothballs, in the footwells, on the battery compartment, in the boot and in the bonnet will repel most mice. Use the “Old Fashioned” mothballs – naphthalene.

Develop your plan and store your MG carefully!
We'll see YOU and YOUR MG next summer!

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Parting Shots

