



SILVERSTONE 1952: *The Production Touring-Car race at the Daily Express meeting saw Dick Jacobs win the 1,100 c.c. class with his M.G. YB saloon. Here he is leading a Riley in that event.*

On race day Phil made a wonderful start and fairly shot away on the outside of the circuit. I have no idea what happened to Ted Lund, but I vaguely remember taking the inside of the course and passing Ascari who made a slow start in his Ferrari, only to be repassed again as his car gathered speed and I had to collect a little grass to give him room. Things soon settled down once the 2-litre cars had got away, and I found Ted on my heels and Phil in front going great guns, in among the H.R.G.s and Grimley in his Jupiter. Ted and I had a brief ding-dong together and we entered Beckett's Corner very much mixed up, with Peter Clark and Christie in H.R.G.s. Phil, who by then had pulled out about 20 to 30 yards lead, suddenly found the corner a bit much and did a little ploughing, frightening me so much that Gerry Ruddock and Christie pulled quite a bit out of the bag. For the rest of the hour it was a lesson in slip-stream with Christie and I passing and repassing fairly often. About two or three laps from the end Christie must have wound the H.R.G. up just a little too much and he blew up at Club Corner.

I was then about 15 or 16 secs. behind Gerry Ruddock and by all accounts he really drove a magnificent race to win the class. The final result of the 1½-litre class was:—

1. Ruddock (H.R.G.), 71.78 m.p.h.; 2. Jacobs (TD Mk. II), 71.27 m.p.h.; 3. Lund (TD Mk. II), 70.36 m.p.h.; 4. Phillips (TD Mk. II), 70.35 m.p.h.

Production Car Racing with M.G.

THE next meeting was to be the Silverstone *Daily Express* production car race on 26th August, 1950, and the same three drivers were to pilot three Mark II TDs. Practice soon showed that despite all the modification the extra weight of the TD Mark II was sufficient to affect performance and practice on Thursday produced:—

George Phillips	2.35 (67.09 m.p.h.)	fastest lap
Ted Lund	2.33 (67.97 m.p.h.)	" "
Dick Jacobs	2.34 (67.53 m.p.h.)	" "

—which was no better or very little better than the TCs of the previous year but at least it showed all three cars to be very much in the same condition.

The engines were running with 8.6 to 1 c.r. pulling a 4.875 to 1 rear axle. We all noticed that, due to the difference in gear ratio between third and top being greater than the TC, with a maximum of 5,800 r.p.m. in third, when we pulled into top, the revs dropped to something near 4,300 and the car was sluggish until it reached 4,500-4,700 again. Obviously there was nothing we could have done about the gear ratio but we all complained about valve bounce at 5,800 or thereabouts in third. Once more the 1949 arguments started when we discovered that to enable the cars to run with such high compression on 80 octane, sodium-cooled valves were being used. These valves have a much larger stem and obviously weigh a lot more than the normal Mark II large valves

Five Years of Competition—From TCs to Magnettes

(Conclusion)

By R. W. (Dick) Jacobs

and explained the reason for such a low peak r.p.m. We argued with John Thornley and Reg Jackson for some time that if we could have an extra 400 r.p.m. in third we would then be getting somewhere nearer 4,800 when we changed into top, which is a point very near the peak of the b.h.p. and the car would pull top gear much more smartly.

As a result of these arguments, on the following day we arrived for practice to find Phillips's car untouched, Ted Lund's still at the factory with the head off and my car converted to normal valves. Phil took his car out and managed 2.34, just one second better than the Thursday best; poor Ted sat on the pit counter feeling very put out, but anxious to see what improvement there might be with my car. I put in a lap of 2.27, just 7 secs. faster than the Thursday and everyone was happy about using the lighter valves. Telephone calls were made and work started immediately on Ted's car down at Abingdon. Phil's car was whistled back to the works as quickly as possible. Whilst everyone was very pleased, it was not until later that evening that we realized that this good lap was exactly the same time as the untuned TC of the year before.

The Jupiter, which had run out of road at Becketts for a short time, was fifth at 68.89 m.p.h. and Peter Clark (H.R.G.) closely followed him at 68.88 m.p.h.

Naturally everyone was very pleased in the M.G. camp, with three cars starting and finishing in such close order. In the previous year Eric Thompson's H.R.G. had won the class at 70.89 m.p.h. and this year both Ruddock and I had bettered that speed with 71.78 m.p.h. and 71.27 m.p.h. and Ted Lund and Phil had put in speeds very nearly as fast as the previous class winner.

It is rather interesting that early in practice period we had had such a lot of trouble over the number of revs in third; when these cars were altered to increase the revs, the lap times had definitely improved. In the actual race all three M.G.s returned an average speed greater than their respective best practice laps, and after the initial lap the gear lever was not used by any of us. We just motored around as hard as we could in top. I will not try to explain that one.

Enthusiasm at Abingdon had stepped up a bit after Silverstone and with only a short time before the T.T. every effort

was made by John Thornley to get the R.A.C. to accept the fullest Mark II tune, i.e., with 9.3 to 1 c.r.; as it was printed in the Mark II catalogue they finally agreed. In the meantime, Syd Enever and the development staff were busy testing 9.3 to 1 engines on 80 octane fuel, fortunately with very satisfactory results.

It was obvious to drivers that competing in the T.T. would cost quite a bit of hard cash as well as time and, although we had received no expenses whatever for previous events, we decided to ask beforehand in order to avoid any disappointments later. John Thornley made all the arrangements for shipping, cabins and hotels and so on, and as Ted Lund lives right on top of Liverpool, Phil and I decided not to claim any expenses except from that city.

Racing in Ireland normally calls for a medical examination of the drivers at the scrutineering, but in this case the R.A.C. arranged forms for each driver to have completed by a doctor and posted direct to the Ulster Automobile Club.

The team of cars was sent, each with its own mechanic, to arrive in Liverpool early on the Tuesday morning for loading on the ship, and the original Mark II TD, which I had used at Blandford, was also taken up by Alec Hounslow, the chief mechanic, as this was to serve as spare car for practice. So with John Thornley, Joanne Thornley and Reg Jackson in attendance and four mechanics, we had plenty of official support. Our personal party was arranged to arrive in Liverpool at around 5 p.m.

We had a good crossing, breakfast on board and were met in Belfast by Bill Adams, the boss of the Northern Ireland Nuffield distributors. He laid on a Morris Oxford and a Minor for our party to use and a large amount of workshop space at the rear of one of the showrooms. We were taken first to the Queens Hotel and then to the garage.

Scrutineering took place in a disused hangar near the airport about seven or eight miles outside Belfast and as far as I can remember there were no great snags. Most of our party crowded into the Oxford and toured around the circuit to study conditions; altogether we covered nearly 400 miles, continuously lapping the course during every spare moment before the race, in our efforts to memorize the corners and bends, of which there are about 25 in the 7-mile circuit.

During the practice periods I cannot remember the actual times and apparently I have no records, but I do remember it was very wet and that the H.R.G. of Peter Clark and Wisdom's Jupiter were faster, both having got below seven minutes whilst we were just over seven minutes. We all complained of poor brakes and as a result, on the Friday, the cream spare car was used for practice while the mechanics stripped out the brakes on the other cars.

Friday was one of those rare occasions in Northern Ireland when the sun shines and we were all set to take turns practising on the cream car which was not really fully prepared, having had no

attention since Harry Lester drove it at Silverstone three weeks before.

Ted Lund was out first and put in a lap at 6 mins. 50 secs. I took over and managed 6 mins. 48 secs. and poor old Phil just started as the rains came on the other side of the circuit. We at the pits were not aware that half-way round he had struck water and got very anxious as his time mounted up to over seven minutes. At last he came in bringing the rain with him and using nice homely expressions to describe his opinion of Irish weather.

The comparison of times, 6 mins. 48 secs. and 6 mins. 50 secs. against 7 mins. 28 secs., does prove what an immense difference the wet can make, as we usually were very close to one another in practice and in this case, we all used the same car. Peter Clark's H.R.G. had done 6 mins. 38 secs. and the Jupiter 6 mins. 28 secs. which was 20 secs. faster than the best M.G. So you can imagine that the night before the race we had very little to cheer about.

I think I should here explain, for the benefit of those of you who may not know, that according to the regulations all spares had to be carried and wheel changes made with the normal jack supplied. The fuel was 80 octane and not more than one mechanic could assist the driver and then only at the pits. Petrol tanks were sealed and any refuelling was from a sealed gravity tank.

The chief topic that evening was Moss and his Jaguar, who had lapped at 81.39 m.p.h. which was 5 mins. 28 secs., some 9 secs. faster than the next Jaguar driven by P. Whitehead, but there was much rumour that the tyres would not stand his cornering on a course with so many bends if the roads were dry. The only other piece of unusual news was that Nick Haines (Jaguar) had tried to climb a tree and nearly succeeded.

The following day, the great day again (to me they were all great days, despite the fact that I get shocking butterflies in the stomach and nearly smoke myself to death) it was very windy and cloudy. Rain started just as we got to the course at about 11 o'clock. Spirits sank lower as the time went by and the rain got heavier.

A few minutes before 2 p.m. the drivers lined up on the opposite side of the road to their cars, most of them dressed in the most peculiar looking variety of all-weather clothes and without exception, all scared stiff in case the self-starter should fail.

We were standing very quietly during

that awful 30 secs. before the flag fell when suddenly I had a shocking panic that I was going to slip over or something when I ran to my car . . . well it is difficult to explain but it boils down to the fact that I was mentally talking to myself and I kept thinking: "You've got three hours to get there, take it easy", and I kept this up for nearly every corner for about three laps. I was, in fact, told to get a move on by the pit staff at the start and regret to say I made the worst possible getaway and was last car off, except for Wisdom, whose Jupiter would not fire easily.

At the end of the first lap we thought that the weather could not possibly get any worse and I went through the pit area with thumbs up, close on Phil's tail. I did not realize it then, but we were leading the 1,500 c.c. class and as we climbed up to take the Devil's Leap I hung on in third and passed Phil with the valve gear making so much noise that even he complained.

Just after leaving Wheeler's Corner, we were overtaken by a fast-moving Jupiter and despite the fact that we really wound the Midgets up down the straight, he pulled well away from us.

The next lap round, not having seen anyone, I began to think that possibly Wisdom was the only 1,500 c.c. car ahead in our class. Any thought I may have had about settling down was soon stopped, as the pit boys gave us a faster signal and so the fourth lap started with even more determination.

Peter Clark had been unfortunate enough to have to use his handbrake when approaching the hairpin and it had stuck on. Marshals helped him lift the back of the car so that the road was clear and then they disqualified him for receiving assistance. He was very mad as well as very wet, and it really was hard luck as, by all accounts, he was motoring very nicely.

We had still no official signal indicating position in the class and despite continuous O.K. signals, there had been no cancellation of the faster signal, so on we pressed, still raining. At the end of eight laps the 1½-litre positions were:—

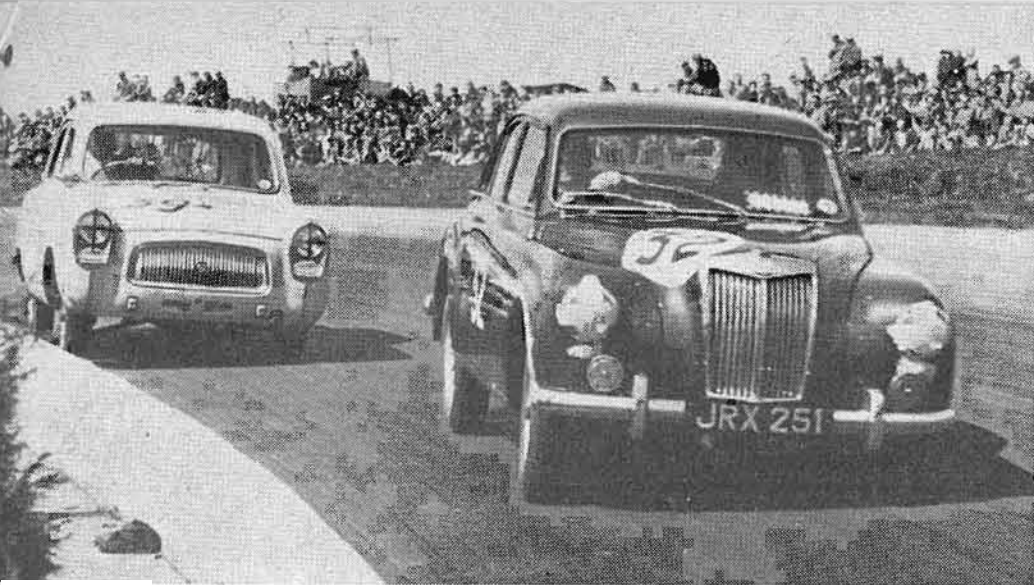
1. Dick Jacobs, 57 m. 26 s.; 2. Ted Lund, 58 m. 9 s.; 3. George Phillips, 59 m. 0 s.

and 2 mins. 7 secs. behind in fourth position was Joe Flynn.

Now Joe is a typical big-hearted Irishman and it was a wonderful effort on his part to be in front of all the H.R.G. boys. He had blown his motor up on Thursday and had been working day and night to get the engine out,



TIME OFF. Dick Jacobs taking some well-earned relaxation in another form of motoring sport—doing a driving test in an M.G. TD.



DAILY EXPRESS Silverstone again, this time 1955, when Jacobs won his class once more. Driving an M.G. Z.A. Magnette he is seen here leading a Ford Prefect.

rebuilt and run-in in time to start, and it was more or less a standard TC!

Twelve laps saw the position unaltered except that Buncombe (H.R.G.) had displaced Flynn's TC. The weather was now officially described as "Torrential Rain" with visibility very bad near Wheeler's Corner due to the clouds coming down.

With about 25 minutes to go, I noticed the fuel gauge flicker and I reckoned that if it was working correctly I could just about scrape in, so decided not to stop for fuel. Round about this time I received a slower signal (which was a change) and although it was not intentional, I apparently then proceeded to do my fastest lap for which I was duly reprimanded by the pit staff afterwards.

On arriving at the foot of the Devil's Leap on the last lap, to my amazement I saw Phil and Ted frantically waving to one another. Phil soon passed Ted who was running his car round at about 30 to 40 m.p.h. I caught Phil up and decided to follow him in and we crossed the finishing line nose to tail. We stopped at the pits, but despite our soaked condition we were made to do the lap of honour that the regulations called for.

We later found that Ted had stopped for oil but had left it a little too late. Fortunately, his big ends held until the last lap and he finished the course. The official results being:—

1. Car No. 49, Jacobs, 189.892 miles (63.2 m.p.h.).
2. Car No. 50, Phillips, 182.621 miles (60.87 m.p.h.).
3. Car No. 48, Lund, 180.99 miles (60.33 m.p.h.).
4. Car No. 41, Buncombe, 179.342 miles (58.78 m.p.h.).

It was a very wet but happy crowd in the back of the Morris Oxford on the way back to Belfast. Throughout this appalling weather Freddie Crossley had maintained a lap chart, and he received a very complimentary letter from the company afterwards congratulating him.

By the end of 1950 it was fairly certain that Abingdon would not be producing anything new and would therefore not be inclined to enter a team of cars in 1951 racing. The demand for TDs in the States was increasing and I suppose a little of this demand was due to success in racing.

The three TDs were sold by the company to the three drivers at list price, plus purchase tax, plus extras, plus more purchase tax on the extras and, as compensation for the mileage they had already done, we got some extra wheels and free service in event of trouble.

This left 1951 a very open season and

although we were now each the proud possessor of a M.G. TD Mk. II it was not certain what it meant in terms of production car races. It was quite obvious that Jupiters intended to replace H.R.G.s as the main opposition and from what had happened at Dundrod it was equally certain they were capable of beating the M.G.s. As there were no more official stages of tuning permissible to the TD, the only thing left to do was to ensure maximum reliability and prepare the car carefully.

The B.R.D.C. production car race had been put forward from its usual date in August to Saturday, 5th May, and I sent off my entry on 13th March to ensure an acceptance. By this time, I regret to say, there had been an epidemic of broken valves which had not so far struck my car, but rather than chance it any further I fitted a standard cylinder head with normal size valves. This, I was told at the works, would cost me three to four b.h.p. but I felt safe and that is half the battle.

The first day of practice arrived and Freddie and I piled into the TD and drove to the circuit without any trouble and when our turn came we were scrutineered and practised with the minimum of ballyhoo. Phil was in Luxembourg photographing the 500 c.c. Grand Prix for AUTOSPORT and had got his wife and his right hand man to bring the car up for scrutineering, but he was not able to practise at all.

I suppose I had put in about five laps when Freddie Crossley called me in saying I was doing around 2 mins. 23 secs. which was better than last year by some 4 or 5 secs. so I packed up. When the official times were announced Ted Lund and Bert Hadley (Jupiter) had done 2 mins. 23 secs. We had just pipped them by one second, so feeling quite pleased, we returned home and did not go up on the Friday owing to business affairs. As it happened, Friday was a filthy wet day and best two in our class were Ruddock (H.R.G.) and Hadley (Jupiter) with 2 mins. 37 secs. and 2 mins. 31 secs.

The race started with Bert Hadley's Jowett Jupiter leading the class and Ted Lund and I dicing for second place. The M.G. speeds must have crept up slightly and towards the ninth lap and at the start of the 10th, I was right on Hadley's tail in the Jupiter, and getting alongside at Club Corner, but I had not a hope of beating him on maximum speed. Apparently the M.G. being so close was worrying to Bert Hadley and he started using third much longer than he had

been earlier. On his 15th lap approaching Club Corner something came out of his exhaust pipe and I went by.

My "pit" was unofficially on the straight between Woodcote and Cope Corners and as I had been receiving gestures indicating that I had left the brakes on and "similar get cracking" signals, it was very pleasant to see three figures dancing with pleasure and signalling first in class, with a few seconds lead over Ted.

The shock came next lap but one, when I received 2 mins. 23 secs. lead. I thought they must be mad and proceeded to boot it as hard as ever. Then, half-way down Hangar Straight I found Ted parked on the grass. This was bad luck, but rather proved our point in changing to small valves, as Ted had broken one and ruined his engine.

We finished first in the class at 72.66 m.p.h. with a fastest lap in 2 mins. 18 secs. (75.36 m.p.h.). Ruddock (H.R.G.) was second at 70.25 m.p.h. and Brown third at 70.23 m.p.h. We were very delighted at this success because the factory had tried twice to win this class, and we had done it finally at a speed greater than it had ever been won before.

1951 Tourist Trophy Race

It was obvious that we should be well out of pocket if we entered the TDs in this event, as by now the Jupiter turn of bad luck must change and it was only as a result of a tempting £50 expense money to starters not entered by a factory that Phil and I decided to go. To our surprise all shipping space on the normal route was full up and we had to book by Coast Lines from Preston to Larne. Both Phil and I had developed troubles in our engines and we were virtually running-in new cylinder blocks when we left for Preston.

The convoy consisted of George Phillips in his TD, Freddie Crossley in my TD, my wife and I and half the garage equipment and spares in our Morris Minor. We had a very pleasant trip up, but received an awful shock when we saw the ship. It with a 3,000-ton tank-landing ship with absolutely no amenities and above all it was dry. Frantic last minute trips were made but nothing like sufficient stocks were laid on for a horde of Aston Martin, Frazer-Nash, Allard, Jaguar and M.G. characters.

However, we had a decent crossing which took twice as long as it should do and arrived in Belfast in time for lunch next day.

Incidentally, we had called in on Ted Lund at Coppull, near Preston, the previous day on our way up and found he was still running his car in, and he doubted whether he would be able to practice at any great speed. He arrived quite safely the day after us and we all passed the scrutineers without much trouble. I had to fit another front hub due to a loose race housing and Phil had trouble with the medical when requested for specimen of coolant but everything went off well in the end.

During practice it was obvious that the

Lesters, Coopers and Jupiters had the legs of the TDs but what was most disconcerting to Freddie and I was that Jim Sparrowe, who in those days normally drove a Morgan, had taken over Hartwell's TD Mk. II and was slightly faster than we were.

Anyhow, we finished fifth in the class with Jupiters first and second at 68.71 m.p.h. and 68.59 m.p.h. and at 67.63 m.p.h. the late Peter Reece in the Cooper third. Sparrowe was fourth in the TD at 66.24 m.p.h. and I rolled in at 65.26 m.p.h., just one mile per hour slower, with Ted about $\frac{1}{2}$ m.p.h. slower behind. Did somebody say where was Phil? Well, we found him in the beer tent quite happy, thank you, except that his "star-spangled" clutch had given out early on.

During the winter of 1951-52 it was obvious that the international regulations would allow Coopers, Lesters and similar thinly-disguised specials to become eligible for production car races and I decided to dispose of the TD as soon as I heard that the B.R.D.C. and *Daily Express* were interested in running a production touring car race. Touring cars over 750 c.c. being saloons with four seats, my thoughts turned to the M.G. YB saloon which came out early in 1952.

When it was suggested at Abingdon that a team of YBs should run they appeared horrified, and the supply position was so bad that I finally realized no one was going to be very interested in helping.

Then a most appealing letter was written to Tom Sangster, the Nuffield sales manager, and he very kindly pulled the necessary strings to arrange delivery, through the proper channels and at the proper price, of one maroon M.G. YB saloon. Practice day was 8th May and we received the car on 14th April, giving just three weeks to run it in and prepare it. Not much time really. The regulations were strict and the only tuning possible was careful valve grinding, accidentally slipping in 150 lb. valve springs and change of carburettor choke size.

During practice we could not get near Hadley's times but we could cope with Marshall and Bennett, all three being Jowett drivers. It was fairly obvious

that Hadley's car was something special, and being a works entry he was anxious to wipe out the previous year's blow-up in the Jupiter.

When the race started it became a dice between the Marshall and Bennett Jowetts, and the M.G. Bert Hadley took the class lead and was pulling out two or three seconds a lap. I found I could beat the two Jowetts round the corners but was not quite fast enough on the straight. After a lot of swearing about them getting under my heels I finally managed to get the two Jowetts on the outside of the M.G. on Copse Corner, and one of them slid too much, forcing the other on to the grass and this gave me about two to three seconds lead on that lap.

After shaking off the two Javelins, I was just leaving Becketts when Stirling Moss in the Mk. VII Jaguar lapped the M.G., and with typical Stirling Moss sportsmanship he waved me into his slipstream; apart from being scared of blowing up I was delighted to arrive at Stowe still with Stirling, and this helped to put me in sight of Bert Hadley in the class-leading Jowett. The M.G. caught the Jowett on the last but one lap, just in time to see more steam leaving his exhaust, and the M.G. won its class.

The year 1953 again saw the same M.G. YB entered for the *Daily Express* production car race, this time with another YB entered by the editor of AUTOSPORT, Gregor Grant, to be driven by my old friend and team-mate George Phillips; opposition in the class came from Austin A40, three Jowett Javelins and one Simca and one Riley. For this event Stage II tuning was permitted and naturally the Jowett boys took full advantage by fitting Jupiter engines.

The M.G. again won the class after its annual slipstream act from Stirling Moss's Jaguar, Wright's Javelin was second and George Phillips came in a close third barely 8 secs. behind, although suffering from a badly-slipping clutch.

For the 1954 event I started my overtures at the factory in January and February in an effort to persuade John Thornley to enter a Magnette for me, but the politics in force at the time seemed to prevent John from giving a

definite answer and finally we decided to enter the old YB again. John most kindly offered to help in any way he could. There had been another change in regulations permitting almost any modification providing the bore and stroke were unaltered. Much work was done to meet the new opposition in the class from the Borgward entered by Ian Metcalfe, to be driven by Jack Fairman. Actually this was another success for the car whose registration number was UHK 111 making three firsts and completing its competition life.

The year 1955 saw a renewed interest in racing on the part of John Thornley and by now, with the support of B.M.C., things looked brighter. Production races were still very scarce but the usual Silverstone event led to an entry by B.M.C. of a Magnette suitably tuned and with the support of Alan Foster and John Waller in privately entered Magnettes a Class 1, 2, 3 was pulled off, lap times over 10 secs. faster than the old YBs best being achieved. Something to be said for the extra 250 c.c.

Five consecutive production car races at Silverstone; five M.G. successes in the $1\frac{1}{2}$ -litre class, a record only excelled by Jaguar in the over 3,000 c.c. class.

From 1950-1955 inclusive, M.G. cars entered production car races six times at Silverstone for the B.R.D.C. *Daily Express* meetings, once at Blandford, twice at Dundrod for the T.T., making a total of nine events resulting in:—

7 Class Wins
4 Class Seconds
4 Class Thirds

The greatest personal satisfaction from this series of production car races has been the pleasure of getting to know and appreciate the efforts and friendship of men like John Thornley, Syd Enever, Alec Hounslow, Freddie Crossley, George Phillips and all the mechanics and helpers whose support and enthusiasm made it possible. Not forgetting the B.R.D.C. and the *Daily Express* whose far-sighted policy has made the Silverstone meetings an annual encouragement for all the many spectators and competitors who are interested in this type of racing.

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