

Sir,

Recent correspondence in these columns in connection with various pre- and post-war saloon cars of above average interest and quality prompts me to write a few lines in praise of an excellent small car to

634 MOTOR SPORT, JUNE 1970

which I have seen little or no reference in recent years by your readers—namely the MG series “YA” and “YB” 1½-litre saloons of 1947-53.

I have owned and driven both of these models and in fact still run a “YB” for everyday motoring, including a number of longer trips to race meetings, etc.

Two years ago this car completed 3,000 miles on a Continental tour with four up entirely without mishap of any sort. It was driven continually at speeds around 70 m.p.h. on autoroutes, etc., often in very hot weather in Southern France and Italy and only consumed three pints of Duckhams during the entire trip. This I would consider exceptional as these engines are not noted for their oil economy, and in fact usually leak from the side plate and rocker cover.

Although I would not expect this model to enjoy the popularity of the “T” series MG sports cars, I am surprised at the apparent lack of interest in these saloons which share much in common with their two-seater counterparts and are much more practical for the family enthusiast. They are also most pleasant cars to drive, having rack and pinion steering and the excellent MG coil and wishbone i.f.s., including anti-roll bar, the basic design of which has been carried right through to the MG-A and MG-B.

Whilst having this excellent mechanical specification it retains the appearance of an elegant small pre-war saloon, having a “real” bonnet and radiator with external filler cap and separate headlamps. It also has a most substantial chassis, underslung at the rear, complete with built-in hydraulic jacking system, a sun roof, hide upholstery, rear window blind, opening windscreen, and adjustable steering column. Later models also have 15-in. wheels which are suited to the full range of modern tyres.

On the debit side, I am not happy with the brakes, which require very high pedal pressures, but plan to put matters right in the near future by fitting MG-A 1600 front disc brakes and a servo. Also the car could be considered underpowered for its safe handling, even for its day, but I have found the fitting of twin carburettors and a little factory recommended tuning as per contemporary sports models to transform performance by a most useful margin.

I would be most interested to hear any of your readers’ experiences in connection with these cars, and also hope that not too many will be allowed to reach the “banger” condition that one tends to see so often. Even MG Car Club Meetings rarely produce examples. I have seen one or two advertisements in MOTOR SPORT for apparently well-kept specimens, so perhaps they are beginning to be recognised as a model well worthy of preservation.

Kesgrave, Suffolk.

MICHAEL GREEN.