

The following is an extract from a fuller article in *Cars and Car Conversions* magazine, November 1979 entitled:

## A feast of MGs

### Standard VA -Frank Vautier

Driving the YA racing saloon is an incredible experience. Its handling could only be described as in the galleon class: fantastic roll angles, terminal understeer and quite easy to capsize in some desperate dog fight. But with its T-series racing engine giving something like 90bhp - double the power it was designed to take - it can be cornered in a spectacular fashion providing you have a lead-lined right boot. Ease up on the accelerator and you could be in trouble.

The engine felt great and gave the impression that it could take a lot of punishment. It was a good job, too, as this little-modified saloon didn't even have a rev counter! "Just change at 20, 40 and 60mph," said

long-time owner Frank Vautier. After charging round trying to keep up with the K3. I came in to admit that I got rather excited and changed up at 70mph at one point. "Don't worry, it happens to me too," said Frank. The biggest problem for me at first was the gearchange. The lever felt like a Scot's walking stick and it was very easy to get the wrong gear. The brakes were excellent, with their heavy, solid, pedal. Like the J2, the body did not really feel as though it was an integral part of the car. It certainly felt much bigger, more like a cathedral on wheels in comparison. This feeling was heightened by rays of sun shining through the windows, giving a reflection that made me think the passenger door was starting to open every time I took Paddock Bend I But once I'd established confidence in this eccentric racing machine, it proved how good it can be. The harder you drove it the better it got, proving to be quite controllable I providing you kept the power on. And when I plucked up courage to take it off in a bend, all the car did was to give a mighty lurch and assume a slightly different angle of attack could be useful in some circumstances! The ride was uncommonly comfortable for what amounted to a pre-war MG (the Y series saloons were designed before the war although they were produced after it), doubtless because of its softer (and independent from) suspension, and longer wheelbase. It still felt pre-war, however, with its whippy chassis.

It's a tragedy that there doesn't seem to be anybody else to give this car a race. The YA must be one of the prettiest saloons ever made and it is certainly one of the most charming. Such is the development that goes into the T-series to which it is so closely related and which it competes against, that its bulk and weight proves to be a great handicap. But thank goodness, this one is still racing, it presents such a great spectacle.

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