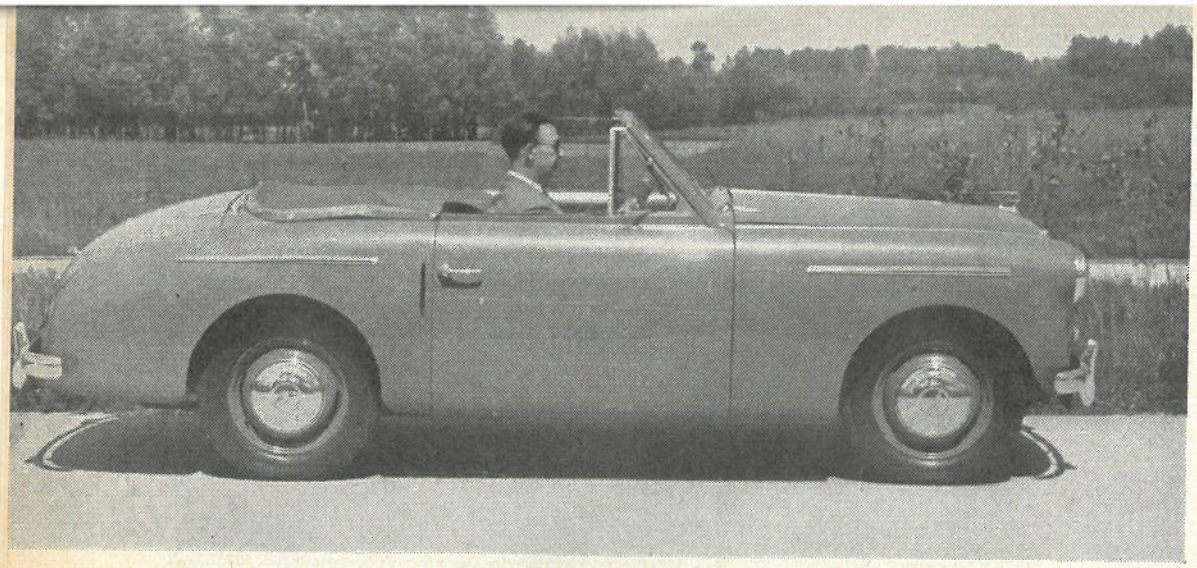


ROAD TEST

THE AUST

A Lively Co
Maximum and

(Left and right) There is a d Continental influence in the body-styling of the Austin A40 S Front-end treatment is unusua similar to that adopted on Jensen "Interceptor".

THE success of the four-seater sports-convertible A40 Austin is proof that there is a considerable market for modern versions of the small capacity two/four-seaters which had such a vogue in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Realizing that the A40 saloon was an above-average performer in the under 1½-litre category, the Austin Motor Co., Ltd., wisely decided to produce a high-performance car built to conform to present ideas of an open/closed vehicle.

Longbridge designers did not make the same mistake that others have made. Instead of attempting to utilize the body-pressings of the existing saloon, a completely new body-styling was prepared by Jensens, which at once struck a happy medium between the out-and-out sporting vehicle, and what used to be referred to as a sports-tourer.

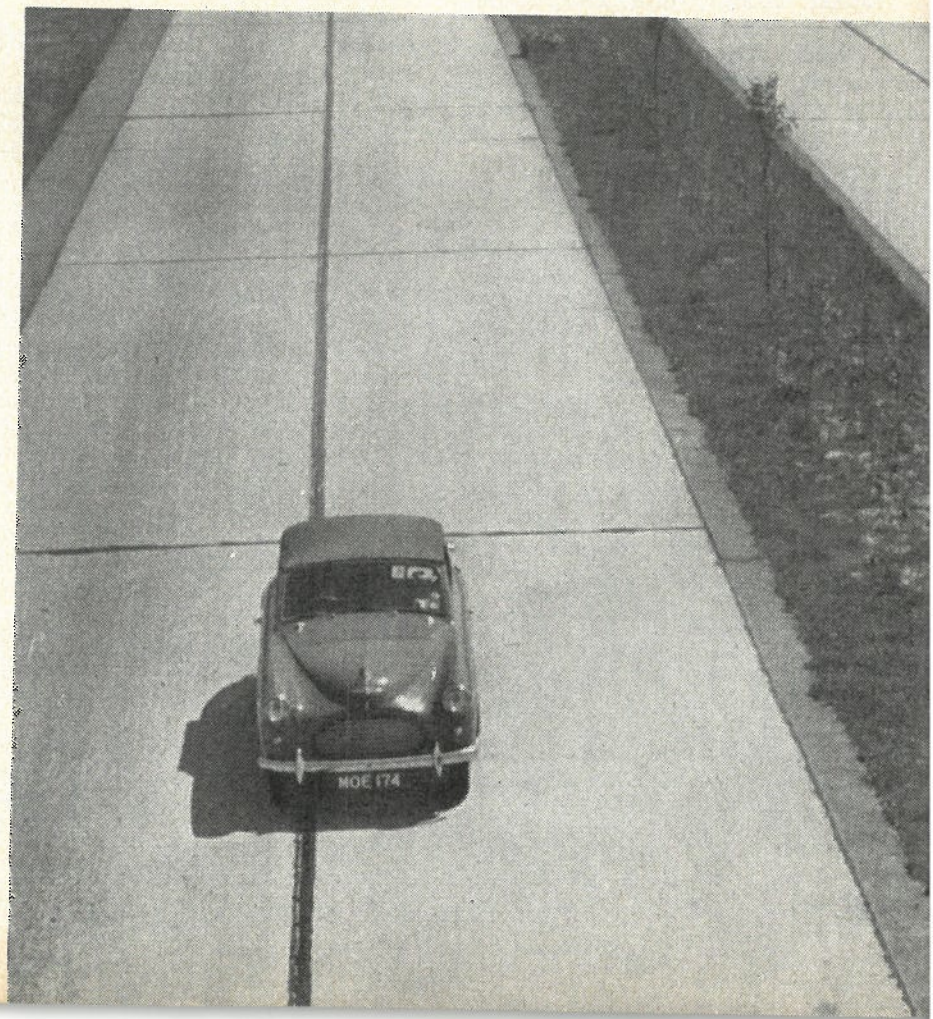
The aim was to produce a comfortable convertible, which would not only have a cruising speed in excess of the A40 saloon's maximum, and much superior acceleration, but would perform effortlessly and with the minimum possible fuel consumption. During the course of a road test covering nearly 1,500 miles, AUTOSPORT fully agrees that Austins have accomplished exactly what they set out to do.

The provision of a twin-carburetter SU lay-out, special cylinder-head incorporating larger inlet valves and ports, and certain internal modifications, have resulted in a greatly increased power-output from the o.h.v., four-cylinder, 1.2-litre engine. Actual bench figures for the engine are 50 b.h.p. at 4,800 r.p.m.

One of the most outstanding features of this lively unit is its exceptional smoothness at all speeds. Until valve-bounce intervenes at well over the maximum speed, there is not the slightest trace of vibration or any roughness whatsoever. This would seem to indicate that a great deal of work has been put into the balancing of the crankshaft, and ensuring freedom from excessive movement in the valve rockers—often the cause of much mechanical clatter in small capacity o.h.v. units.

Apart from the fuel-pump, which is awkwardly positioned owing to the inclined carburetters and their attendant air-cleaners, accessibility of all engine components is admirable. Even sparking-plugs can be removed without the aid of a box-spanner or socket-wrench, which is rather unusual these days. A point that the manufacturers could note, however, is that the height of opening for the alligator-type bonnet could well be extended. On several occasions heads made violent contact with a particularly lethal portion of the bonnet top!

Steering and road-holding are beyond criticism, and there is no evidence of excessive over- or under-steer characteristics. There is, however, a slight amount of judder apparent at over 75 m.p.h., which does not, however, affect directional stability in any way. The suspension is very good indeed, and Belgian *pavé* can be traversed at speeds which would have been impossible on the older, non-i.f.s. Austins. A slight rolling is apparent



The A40 Austin Sports, travelling at about 80 m.p.h. on the famous "Goldie Gardner" stretch of the Jabbeke-Aeltre motor-road, near Ostend.

A40 SPORTS

e with an 80 m.p.h. rage Speed Potentialities



when cornering very fast, but there is no tendency to heel over, or feel anything to suggest that the car has any "tricks".

The Girling brakes are powerful and free from any signs of fade. They required only slight adjustment after over 1,000 miles of really hard motoring, and it was unnecessary to top up the level of the hydraulic fluid.

Weather-protection is first-rate, and raising or lowering the well-fitting hood is a one-man job, occupying, at the most, a couple of minutes. The hood itself stows completely out of sight behind the rear-seat squab, and a tonneau cover is also provided.

The makers have given a good deal of thought to luggage accommodation, and the rear locker, which also contains the spare wheel, can house a surprisingly large amount of baggage, a feature not always to be found on small capacity sports-cars!

Maximum speed is a genuine "80". In one direction over a flying quarter-mile, 82.1 m.p.h. was obtained, and in the other, 78.3 m.p.h.—giving a mean average speed of just over 80 m.p.h. The car can be cruised indefinitely at 70 m.p.h., and we must admit to holding 80 m.p.h. on the speedometer for over 10 miles on the Ghent-Ostend motor-road, better known as the Jabbeke-Aeltre Autostrasse.

Acceleration is good, and the steering column gear change possesses none of the indefiniteness found sometimes on this type of control. A lighter flywheel would, however, enable much quicker changes to be accomplished, but as the A40 sports is obviously not intended as a true competition car, this is merely a quibble.

We do feel, though, that the choice of gear ratios could be improved. In our opinion, third gear is rather on the low side, and is apt to lead to over-revving when attempting to keep up high average speeds in hilly regions. The same thing is apparent on "third gear" corners, when a closer ratio between top and third would be far more advantageous.

Nevertheless, the Austin has a remarkably good capacity for maintaining useful average speeds, and is, in addition, far less tiring to drive over long distances than many cars having engines of more than double the size.

A strong argument for the immediate introduction of higher-octane fuels is contained in the petrol consumption figures recorded with the Austin. On pool, a steady 40 m.p.h. cruising gait resulted in 8.8 miles being covered on a measured quart. On return to this country, the same test was carried out with a measured quart of Belgian Esso "Super" (about 78 octane). The same stretch of road was used, and exactly 10.4 miles were covered before the test tank emptied. Thus 6.4 m.p.g. more was attained with "Super" than with the lower octane pool. Overall fuel consumption, including speed and acceleration tests and mainly Continental motoring, worked out at 29.5 m.p.g., a figure which no doubt would have been bettered if "Super" had been used throughout.

As regards technical specification, the chassis is practically identical to that of the "Somerset" saloon—the current A40 model, with modifications to give the additional strength and rigidity in keeping with a more sporting performance. The frame is of welded pressed steel, with box-section side members and front and rear cross-members. To give added torsional and diagonal strength, the entire centre portion is stiffened by cross-bracing and completely boxed in.

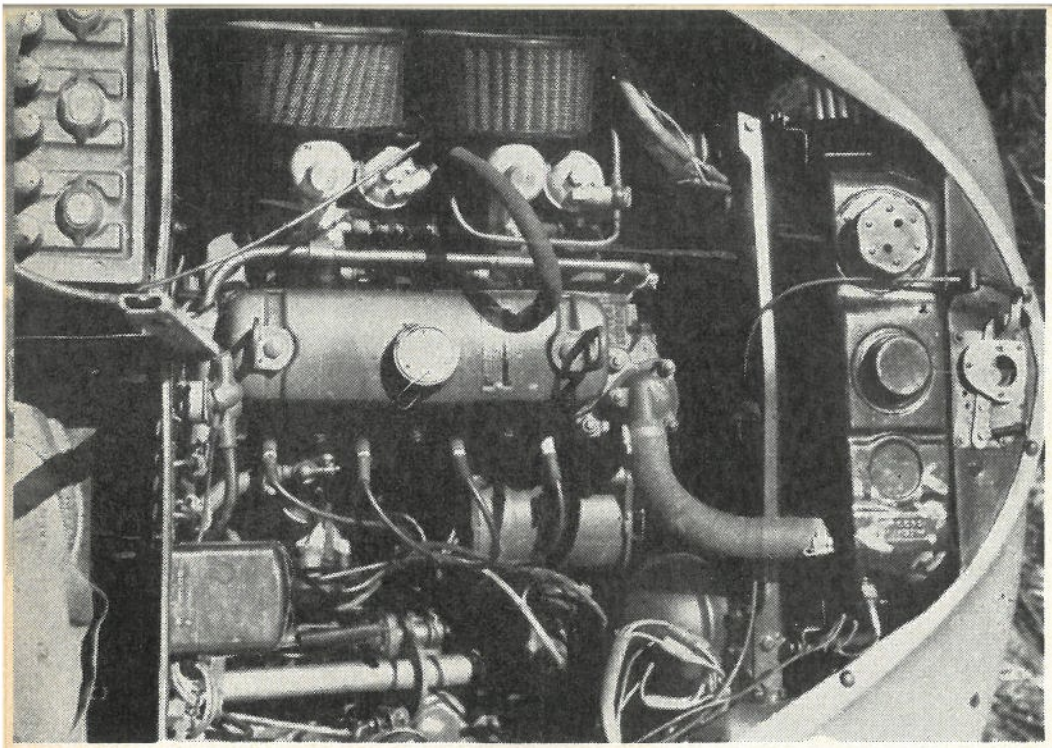
Independent front suspension is supplied by vertical helical springs, and wishbones mounted on Metalastik rubber bushes, controlled by Girling double-acting, hydraulic dampers. At the rear, long semi-elliptic springs are underslung and mounted on rubber bushes. The dampers are interconnected by an anti-roll torsion bar.

Steering is via a cam-type gearbox and twin, ball-jointed track-rods are carried well in front of the chassis cross-member. Ratio of the gearbox is 14 to 1.

Instruments are well laid out, a large dial speedometer being flanked by oil pressure, ammeter, fuel and water-temperature gauges. The last-named is calibrated up to 212 deg. F, the highest reading obtained being 168 deg. F, whilst climbing in the Eifel mountains. Normally, the engine appears to run at 162-164 deg. F.

The headlights are fairly powerful, and are provided with the modern, double-filament "dipping" bulbs. Visibility is, on the whole, excellent, although the nearside windscreen pillar offers something of a blind-spot. With hood raised, there is plenty of headroom, even for occupants of six feet and over. A low rear seating position is assisted by the provision of deep wells in the floor.

One feature, which rarely receives honourable mention in road test reports, is the ease with which the



Lay-out of the main engine components is seen in this view. The two S.U. carburetters each have separate Vokes oil-wetted air-cleaners.

The Austin A40 Sports—*continued*

car can be cleaned. The absence of any awkward depressions or protuberances in the smoothly contoured body makes the operation extremely simple.

Summing up, the A40 Sports is an excellent buy for people who like their pleasurable motoring in a car which possesses practical advantages for everyday use, and yet has a performance closely allied to that of a pukka sporting machine. The term "sports" is, we feel, a misnomer. It is indeed a great pity that British manufacturers cannot coin a phrase similar to the "Gran Turismo" adopted by Italian makers, to distinguish their products from the normal production "tourers", and out-and-out sports-cars!

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car Tested: Austin A40 sports 4-seater, price £586 (plus £347 1*s.* 1*d.* P.T.).

Engine: Four-cylinders, 65.48 mm. x 89 mm. (1,200 c.c.). Pushrod-operated overhead valves, 50 b.h.p. at 4,800 r.p.m., 7.2 to 1 compression ratio Twin S.U. carburetters. A.C. mechanical fuel pump. Lucas coil and distributor.

Transmission: Borg and Beck 7¼ ins. clutch, 4-speed Austin gearbox with steering column control; ratios 5.14, 7.89, 12.52 (synchromesh) and 20 to 1. Hardy-Spicer open propeller shaft, spiral-bevel rear axle.

Chassis: Welded pressed steel frame with full-length, box-section side members; front and rear box-section cross-members, and cross-bracing in centre. Helical springs and wishbones front suspension (independent). Semi-elliptic rear (underslung). Double-acting, hydraulic dampers. Girling hydraulic brakes with 2LS front. Ventilated disc wheels with 5.25 x 16 ins. Dunlop tyres.

Equipment: Lucas 12-volt lighting and starting. Built-in heater and demister. 8¾-gallon rear petrol tank with anti-theft cap. Oil pressure, fuel, water-temperature and ammeter gauges. Combined speedometer and trip-recorder.

Dimensions: Overall length, 13 ft. 3¼ ins.; width, 5 ft. 1 in.; Height (hood raised), 4 ft. 9 ins.; Wheelbase, 7 ft. 8½ ins.; Track (front), 4 ft. 0½ in. (rear) 4 ft. 1½ ins.; Ground clearance, 7½ ins.; Turning circle, 37 ft. 6 ins.; Weight (dry), 19 cwt. 18 lb. (as tested) 22 cwt. 11 lb.

Performance: Maximum speed, 80.2 m.p.h. Speeds in gears, 3rd 53 m.p.h., 2nd 37 m.p.h. Standing quarter-mile, 22.8 secs., 0-50 m.p.h. 16 secs., 0-60 m.p.h. 23.8 secs.

Fuel Consumption: Steady 40 m.p.h. 41.6 m.p.g. (Esso "super"—see text). over-all (driven hard), 29.5 m.p.g.

SUNTER'S DAY AT REDCAR

XK 120 Jaguar Breaks Kilo Record by over 11 m.p.h.

ONLY five out of the 16 events at the Redcar Sand Races last Saturday were for cars, but these were well worth watching and the organizers, the Middlesbrough and District M.C., might have arranged a more interesting meeting had they increased this number by doing away with a few of the rather dull, one-mile motor-cycle sprints.

The star of the day, without any doubt, was T. Sunter with an XK 120 Jaguar which had just been returned to him following "Stage 3" works tuning. Last year with this car he established a club record for the Flying Kilometre of 106.52 m.p.h. and on Saturday broke this at 117.73 m.p.h. No other car came anywhere near the Jaguar's speed, R. P. Scott's 4½-litre Lagonda being a poor second at 74.75 and the remarkably slow 1,100 c.c. Cooper-J.A.P. of T. Johnson third at 66.5 m.p.h.

Later in the afternoon some first-class handicapping on the part of Mr. L. H. Lumby resulted in a fine 20 mile race for cars up to 1,500 c.c. supercharged and 4,500 c.c. U/s. A grand tussle for first place developed between Sunter in the XK 120 and F. Harrison in his F.H.N. Special. The latter car, which won the duel, is basically a Marshall blown Ford 10 h.p. engine fitted into an old chain drive G.N. chassis. This machine, excellently handled, gained the lead after five laps at which point the XK (limit car) was fourth. Sunter, incidentally, did the first lap of two miles at 81 m.p.h. from a standing start; not bad going through soft sand and pools of sea water. Harrison, by lapping at an average of 62.23 m.p.h., just stayed ahead of the rapidly approaching Sunter who had reached second place at the end of seven laps and was averaging 71.79 m.p.h. Third place was taken by H. Edwards in a smart looking TB M.G. which went rapidly enough along the straight, but crawled round the bends. Presumably this was done to prevent sand and salt water being thrown up into the engine—a sensible idea, but hardly racing.

The second sports-car handicap event, of five laps for similar cars, was an easy win for Sunter, again limit man, with a speed of 73.26 m.p.h. Second was Edward's M.G. and third C. K. W. Schellenberg in a rather unusual looking 1,087 c.c. four-carburetter Brooklands Riley.

Each event had to begin exactly to time to prevent the tide encroaching on the track before the end of the meeting. This resulted in the first car race, a one-mile event for cars up to 850 c.c. blown and 1,500 c.c. unblown, being a family affair. R. V. Russell in a Jupiter beat his brother in a saloon Javelin by 7 secs. these being the only two cars to start, the other entrants either having not turned up or not having their cars ready to race.

JOHN LISLE.

RESULTS

(Car Events)

Event 1 (Cars up to 850 c.c. S and 1,500 c.c. U/s, 1 mile): 1, R. V. Russell (Jupiter), 1 min. 4 secs.; 2, D. Russell (Javelin), 1 min. 11 secs.

Event 2 (Cars up to 1,500 c.c. S and 2,500 c.c. U/s, 1 mile): 1, F. Harrison (F.H.N. Special), 51.6 secs.; 2, E. Reynolds (M.G.); 3, C. K. W. Schellenberg (Riley).

Event 3 (Attempt at Flying Kilometre Record): T. Sunter (Jaguar XK 120), 117.73 m.p.h., new record.

Event 4 (Cars up to 1,500 c.c. S and 4,500 c.c. U/s, 20 miles): 1, F. Harrison (F.H.N. Special); 2, T. Sunter (XK 120); 3, H. Edwards (TB M.G.).

Event 5 (10 mile sports handicap): 1, T. Sunter (XK 120); 2, H. Edwards (TB M.G.); 3, C. K. W. Schellenberg (Riley).

REVUE TECHNIQUE AUTOMOBILE

AU SERVICE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

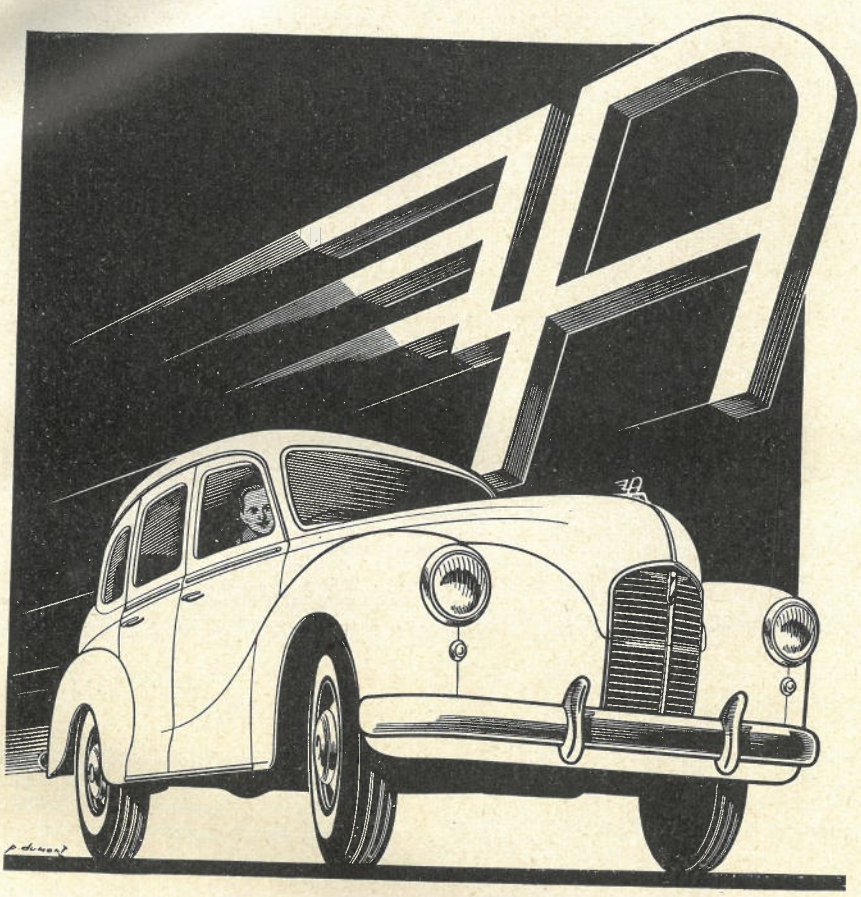
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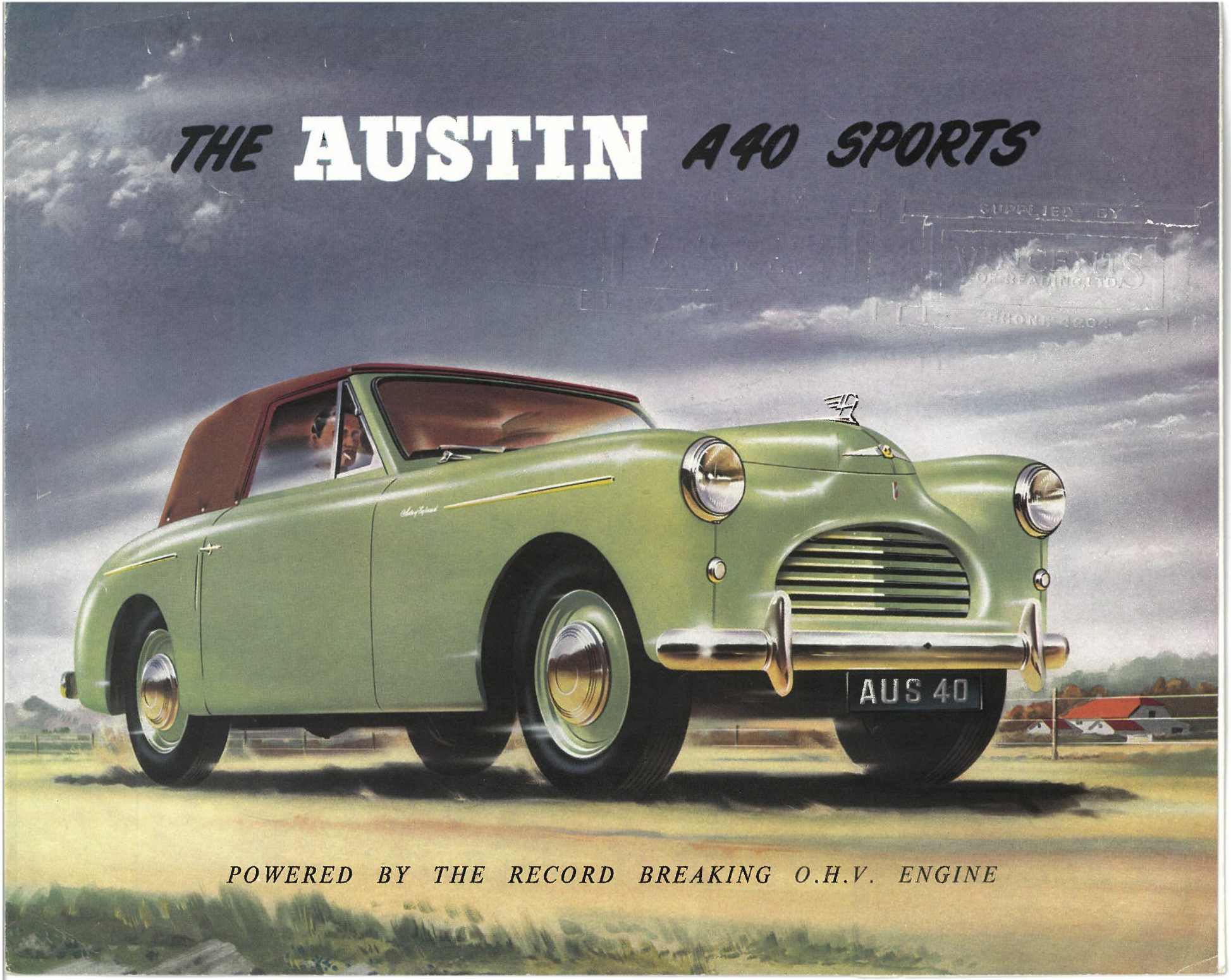


AUSTIN A-40

SÉRIES GS2 - G2S2 - GV2 - GP2 - GQU2

La réalisation de cette étude a été facilitée par le « Manuel de Service » de la AUSTIN MOTOR CO LTD, Birmingham (Angleterre).

THE AUSTIN A40 SPORTS



POWERED BY THE RECORD BREAKING O.H.V. ENGINE

SPECIFICATION

ENGINE.—Bore 2·578 in. (65·48 mm.) ; Stroke 3·5 in. (89 mm.) ; Capacity 73·17 cu. in. (1,200 c.c.) ; b.h.p. 50 at 4,800 r.p.m. ; max. torque 62 lbs. ft. at 2,400 r.p.m. ; Compression ratio 7·2 to 1.

Cylinders : Four cylinders cast integral with crankcase. Full length water jackets. Detachable cast iron head carrying overhead valve rocker gear and connections for the heater unit.

Crankshaft : Forged steel crankshaft supported by three detachable "Thinwall" bearings.

Connecting Rods : Forged steel with detachable "Thinwall" big-end bearings.

Pistons : Split skirt pistons in aluminium alloy with alumilite finish. One compression, one taper and one oil control ring fitted.

Camshaft : Forged steel supported by three "Thinwall" bearings. Cams of patented design for quiet operation. Drive by Duplex roller chain from crankshaft with tensioner ring of synthetic rubber to ensure quiet chain operation.

Valves : Overhead valves operated by push-rods. Exhaust valves of heat and corrosion resisting steel. Inlet valves of silicon chrome alloy steel. Valve oil seals are fitted.

Lubrication : Pressure gear pump forces oil to all main, big-end camshaft and overhead-valve rocker-shaft bearings. Holes in the big-end bearings provide for jet lubrication of the cylinder walls, and the front camshaft bearing provides a controlled feed of oil to the timing chain. Both main and big-end bearing oil feeds are of a patented design which ensures longer crankshaft life. A by-pass filter is fitted. Oil capacity 7 pints (3·98 litres) plus approximately 1 pint (·56 litres) for external filter.

Cooling : Circulation by centrifugal type pump with thermostat control. Patented radiator to prevent loss of cooling water through expansion. Cooling system capacity 13 pints (7·39 litres).

Ignition : Coil and battery ignition with automatic advance and retard and additional vacuum control.

Dynamo : 12-volt fan ventilated unit with compensated voltage control.

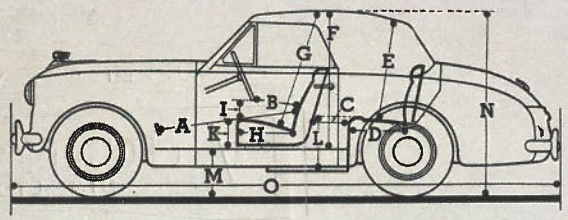
Starter : Lucas unit operated with manual control.

Fuel System: Fuel from a rear tank of 8¾ gallons (39 litres) capacity is fed by an AC mechanical pump to twin S.U. carburetters with twin intake silencers. The rocker cover vent pipe is connected to the air cleaner and the aluminium alloy induction manifold incorporates a stainless steel hot spot.

Mountings : Flexible, inclined "live" rubber mountings, front and rear, with integral torque reaction stops.

CLUTCH.—A flexible dry single-plate Borg and Beck clutch is employed with a spring cushion drive. The clutch pedal is isolated from the clutch housing by a special adjustable linkage. Clutch diameter 7¼ inches (18·4 cm.).

GEARBOX.—The gearbox has four forward speeds and reverse, with synchromesh engagement for second, third and top gears, and steering column control. The gearbox third motion shaft is extended in a special housing which provides additional bearings for propeller shaft load. Oil capacity 2 pints (1·14 litres).



LEADING DIMENSIONS		English	Metric
		ft. in.	
Pedal to Seat Squab ...	A	3 6½	1,08 m.
		3 2	0,97 m.
Steering Wheel to Seat Squab	B	1 2½	0,37 m.
		10	0,25 m.
Distance between Seats ...	C	1 1	0,33 m.
		8½	0,22 m.
Rear Seat Cushion Depth ...	D	1 5	0,43 m.
Height over Rear Seat ...	E	2 8½	0,83 m.
Maximum Interior Height ...	F	3 6	1,07 m.
Height over Front Seat ...	G	3 1	0,94 m.
Front Seat Cushion Depth ...	H	1 6	0,46 m.
Front Seat Cushion Width		1 9	0,53 m.
Steering Wheel to Cushion ...	I	4½	0,11 m.
Front Cushion above Floor	K	10½	0,27 m.
Rear Cushion above Floor ...	L	1 4⅝	0,43 m.
Minimum Height—Floor to Ground	M	1 3½	0,39 m.
Overall Height	N	4 9½	1,46 m.
Overall Length	O	13 3¼	4,04 m.
Overall Width		5 1	1,55 m.
Scuttle Width (at knee height)		3 11½	1,20 m.
Body Width over Front Seat ...		4 1⅛	1,25 m.
Rear Seat Maximum Width		3 3	0,99 m.
Wheelbase		7 8½	2,35 m.
Track (front)		4 0⅜	1,23 m.
Track (rear)		4 1⅛	1,26 m.
Ground clearance		7½	0,19 m.
Turning circle		38 0	11,58 m.
Luggage Compartment—Height of Opening		1 7½	0,50 m.
Luggage Compartment—Width of Opening		3 10	1,17 m.
Luggage Compartment—Depth of Platform		2 9	0,84 m.
Luggage Compartment—Capacity		13 cu. ft.	0,37 cu. m.
Approximate Weight, less spare wheel, tools and fuel		18 cwt. 44lbs	934 kg.

TRANSMISSION.—Open propeller shaft with Hardy Spicer needle roller bearing universal joints. The sliding sleeve is supported by a plain bearing in the gearbox rear cover and on the sliding splines of the third motion shaft ; both are lubricated from the gearbox.

REAR AXLE.—Spiral bevel three-quarter floating type in "banjo" type casing. The pinion is carried by pre-loaded taper roller bearings. Oil capacity 2¼ pints (1·28 litres).

OVERALL GEAR RATIOS.—5·14 ; 7·88 ; 12·5 ; and 20·73 with 26·6 reverse.

ROAD SPEEDS AT 1,000 R.P.M.—Top, 14·65 m.p.h. ; Third, 9·57 m.p.h. ; Second, 6·03 m.p.h. ; First, 3·62 m.p.h.

STEERING.—Special Cam gear steering with ratio of 14 to 1 and provision for taking up wear. Spring spoke 17 inch (43 cm.) diameter steering wheel with central heraldic design. The tubular steering rods have Austin type ball joints with large hardened bearing surfaces and oil seals. Right- or left-hand steering is available.

SUSPENSION.—Front : Independent coil springs. Wishbones mounted on Matalastik rubber bushes with shoulders to take thrust loads. Control by double-acting hydraulic shock absorbers.

Rear : Long semi-elliptic reverse camber springs, underslung and mounted on rubber bushes. They are controlled by double acting hydraulic shock absorbers, interconnected by an anti-roll torsion bar.

BRAKES.—Girling hydraulic on front and rear wheels. The hand-brake is of the pistol grip type and is mounted under the fascia close to the steering column. The front brakes are of two-leading shoe design.

WHEELS AND TYRES.—Pressed steel disc wheels with ventilation slots. Large chromium wheel caps. Spare wheel carried on floor of luggage compartment. Tyres : 5·25 × 16. Dunlop E.L.P.

JACKING.—Stevenson jack operated by a wheelbrace from inside the car to lift either right or left side of the car.

FRAME.—Welded pressed steel frame with full length box section side members and box section front and rear cross members. The centre part of the frame is stiffened by cross bracing which ensures great torsional and diagonal stiffness.

ELECTRICAL.—12-volt battery of 38 ampere-hour capacity at 10 hour rate ; positive earth ; built-in head- and side-lamps ; head-lamps have double filament bulbs for dipping ; foot controlled dip-switch ; twin built-in stop- and tail-lamps ; rear number-plate lamp ; direction indicators ; horn ; dual windscreen wipers ; provision for interior heating and air circulation with windscreen demisting.

INSTRUMENTS.—Oil and fuel gauges ; ammeter ; speedometer with trip and total readings ; water thermometer ; ignition and headlamp beam warning lights.

COACHWORK.—Two-door, four-seater sports model ; all-metal sound-insulated body ; folding hood ; rear window in hood can be released by zip fasteners to permit additional ventilation when hood is raised ; safety glass windscreen, door windows and deflectors ; rear opening doors with concealed hinges ; combined barrel-type ignition, door and luggage boot key ; bonnet lock controlled from inside the car ; leather upholstery ; adjustable, close mounted front seats ; thick carpets with felt underlay ; attractive fascia panel with closed glove compartment ; central control panel, and full range of instruments in front of driver ; unusually large luggage boot.

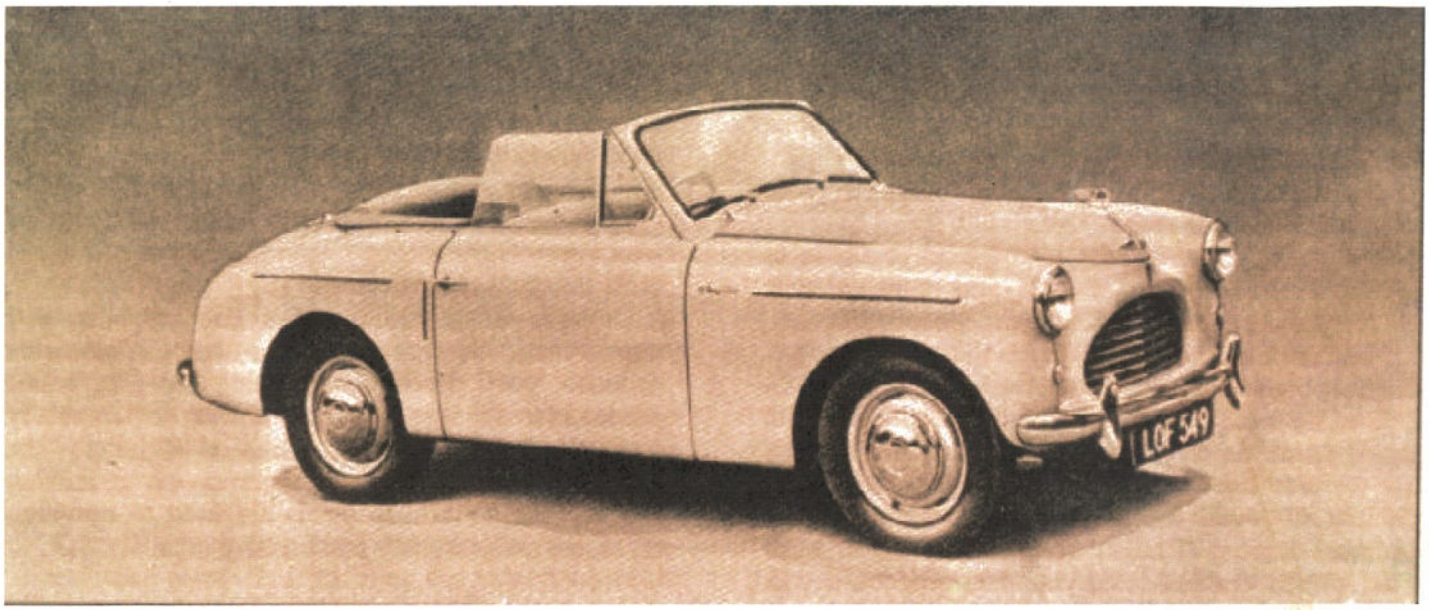
The goods manufactured by the Austin Motor Company Limited, are supplied with an express Warranty which excludes all warranties, conditions and liabilities whatsoever implied by Common Law, Statute or otherwise. PRICES.—The company reserves the right to vary the list prices at any time. SPECIFICATION.—The Company reserves the right on the sale of any vehicle to make before delivery without notice any alteration to or departure from the specification, design or equipment detailed in this publication.

THE AUSTIN MOTOR COMPANY LIMITED
LONGBRIDGE · BIRMINGHAM

Printed in England

Publication No. 803/A

Austin A40 Sports Convertible



The Sports version is a complete breakaway from even the previous post-war Austin styling., but the result is very pleasing when viewed from any angle. The clean smooth lines and sloping screen produce a smart , sporting four-seater. (The body was by Jensen - compare the A40's looks with the Jensen Interceptor, also tested in 1951.)

From that excellent car the Austin A.40, which in saloon form has sold in great numbers all over the world, has evolved an appealing new convertible of sporting character that has much to commend it. This has been so far produced chiefly for export, but there can be no doubt that in any country it would be well received, not least in Great Britain. It has the merits that rank high in assessment of a car, of being modestly priced by current reckoning, of being interesting and satisfactory to drive, providing a useful performance from an engine of quite small size, and of proving rather remarkably economical in fuel consumption. Add the advantages of a body that when closed is weatherproof and has winding windows, comfortable seating, and a decidedly modern appearance on pleasingly balanced lines, and there is the picture of a car very much of these times, possessing a wide basis of appeal.

DATA FOR THE DRIVER

AUSTIN A.40 SPORTS

PRICE, with convertible body, £525, plus £293 3s 4d British purchase tax. Total (in Great Britain), £818 3s 4d.

ENGINE : 10.6 h.p. (R.A.C. rating), 4 cylinders, overhead valves, 65.48 x 89 mm, 1,200 c.c. Brake Horse-power : 50 at 5,000 r.p.m. Compression Ratio : 7.2 to 1. Max. Torque : 61 lb ft at 3,000 r.p.m. 14.65 m.p.h. per 1,000 r.p.m. on top gear.

WEIGHT (in running trim with 5 gallons fuel) : 19 cwt 1 qr 21 lb (2,177 lb). Front wheels 53 per cent ; rear wheels 47 per cent. LB per C.C. : 1.81. B.H.P. per TON : 51.5.

Probably the most favourable impression initially received is of the comfortable character of the bodywork and of the protection afforded. It is in the coupe category and not that of the old-style open tourer. The head can be

TYRE SIZE : 5.25—16in on bolt-on steel disc wheels.

TANK CAPACITY : 8½ English gallons. Approximate fuel consumption range, 28-34 m.p.g. (10.1-8.3 litres per 100 km).

TURNING CIRCLE : 38ft (L and R). Steering wheel movement from lock to lock : 2½ turns. LIGHTING SET : 12 volt.

MAIN DIMENSIONS : Wheelbase, 7ft 8½in. Track, 4ft 0½in (front) ; 4ft 1½in (rear). Overall length, 13ft 3½in ; width, 5ft 1in ; height, 4ft 9in. Minimum Ground Clearance : 7½in.

ACCELERATION

Overall gear ratios	From steady m.p.h. of 10-30 sec	20-40 sec	30-50 sec
5.14 to 1	13.3	13.6	14.7
7.88 to 1	8.5	8.9	10.9
12.50 to 1	6.2	—	—
20.08 to 1	—	—	—

From rest through gears to :—

	sec		sec
30 m.p.h.	6.7	60 m.p.h.	27.4
50 m.p.h.	17.6	70 m.p.h.	41.7

SPEEDS ON GEARS :

(by Electric Speedometer)	M.p.h. (normal and max)	K.p.h. (normal and max)
1st	16 20	26 32
2nd	28—34	45—55
3rd	44—53	71—85
Top	77	124

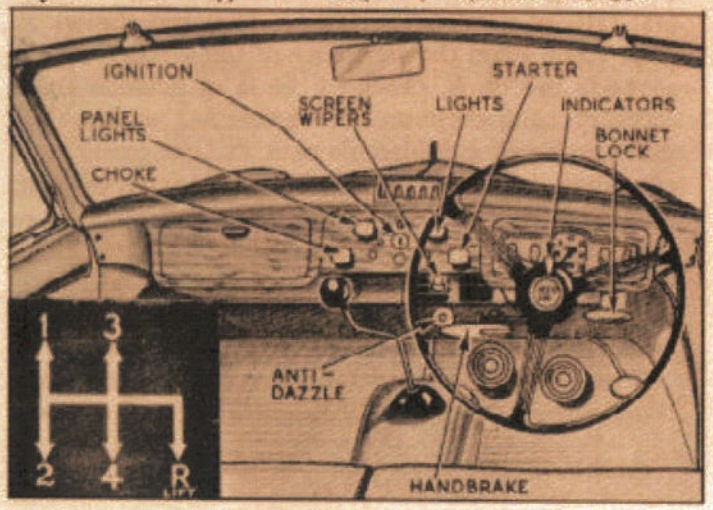
Speedometer correction by Electric Speedometer :—

Car Speedometer		Electric Speedometer m.p.h.
10	=	11.0
20	=	20.5
30	=	30.0
40	=	38.5
50	=	48.0
60	=	57.0
70	=	68.0
80	=	77.0

WEATHER : Dry, warm : slight wind.

Acceleration figures are the means of several runs in opposite directions.

Described in "The Autocar" of October 20, 1950.



folded down to give an entirely open car in suitable conditions, but for bad weather use it is little, if at all, inferior to a saloon as regards the protection afforded.

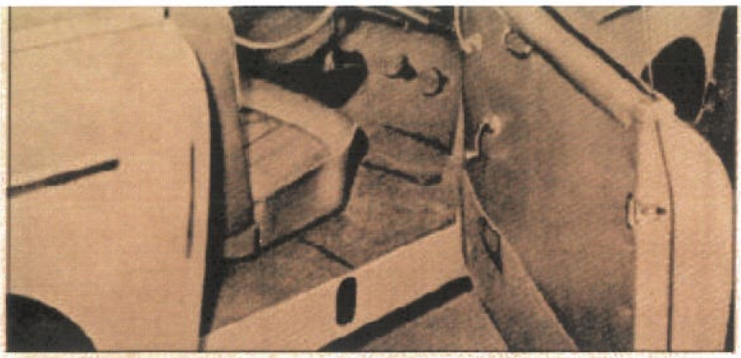
A useful performance is available. Acceleration from the lower speeds is not startling, but is more than adequate, and the rate is unusually well maintained, for the size of the engine, into the region of 50 m.p.h. and above. A still better view is taken of the car when it is seen how well it covers distance on a main-road journey. It can be cruised at around 60 m.p.h.-not, it is true, without noise and it can do better than 75 m.p.h. genuine speed. Impressions of the performance were apt to be affected by the speedometer being more nearly accurate than very frequently applies today, with, for instance, a plus margin of only 2 m.p.h. at an indicated 70.

Distinctly good average speeds can be made, and the car's reasonable overall dimensions make it fit in well on crowded main roads or in narrow country roads. The engine is basically that of the saloon, but it is fitted with two S.U. carburettors and produces 50 b.h.p. at 5,000 r.p.m. The gearing, including top gear, is the same as for the saloon; total weight is approximately the same, but the performance figures recorded by the convertible are most noticeably better than for the saloon model previously tested.



The low mounted, kidney-shaped

Even on low-grade fuel there is very little pinking, this tendency being apparent only at the bottom end of the range if the car is made to pull away quite hard on top gear, whilst no running-on was experienced during normal use. Top gear flexibility is very good, a smooth minimum from which acceleration can be obtained without changing down being 8 m.p.h., though the method implied is not necessarily advanced as representing an ideal way of handling a small-engined car.



that it would make a very good showing over the poor roads of less developed territories. There is a highly satisfactory feeling of rigidity about this car, and notably so of the scuttle structure for an open car necessarily lacking the stiffening influence of a steel roof. In passing, it will be recalled that it is an example of this model that is at the present time engaged on a round-the-world trip (see Austin records & achievements for a photograph). Long-distance observed tests conducted by the manufacturers themselves at relatively high speeds in the past year or two have pointed emphatically to the stamina of the A.40 components.

The steering deserves praise. It is firm and accurate, has some castor action and does not tend at all noticeably to overstecring tendencies. It is reasonably light for low-speed manoeuvring. The brakes, which are the Girling hydraulic system, provide rather exceptional retarding power and go a long way towards increasing in a most important department the carefree feeling that in general this car induces on the road. They stood up well to a considerable amount of hard use. The hand brake, although controlled by a modern pull-and-push lever under the facia, is also noticeably more efficient than is usual nowadays.



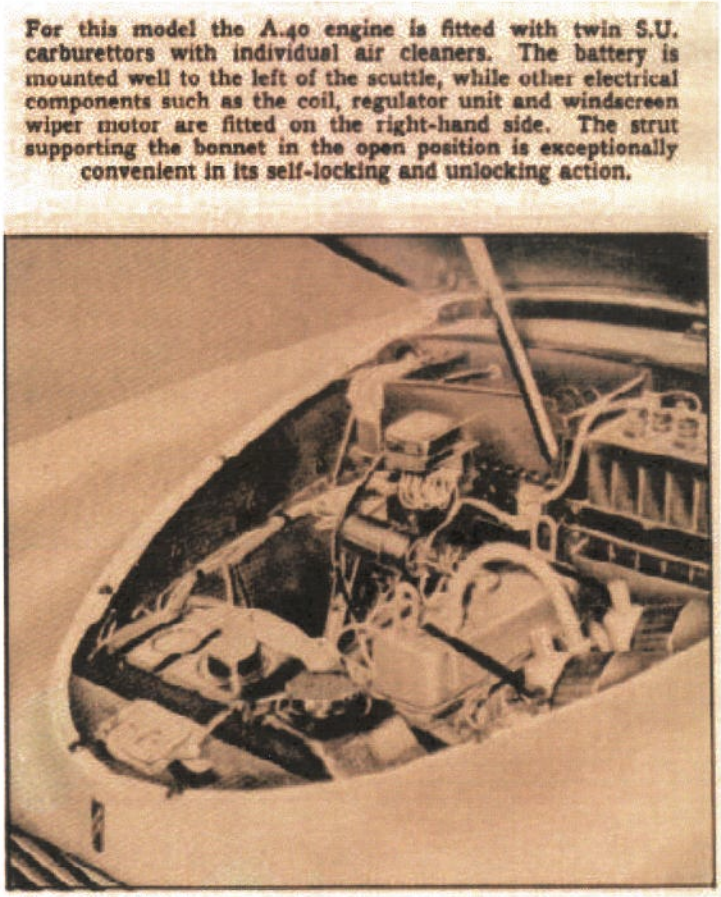
The wide, deep locker houses the spare wheel and tools; it has a self-locking support to hold the lid in the open position, and when closed it is firmly locked by two bolt-action catches. The bumpers wrap round the "corners" of the rear wings to give increased protection.

What may now be referred to as an old-style central gear lever is retained, to the satisfaction of a great many drivers. On this model of the A.40, however, it is a quite long and light cranked lever which has a certain amount of spring about it, and it did not prove to be an ideal example ot this form of gear change, the passing of which on modem cars is often lamented. It would nonetheless be preferred to a steering column change by most users of this type of car in particular, even though it inevitably makes difficult the carrying even for short distances of a third occupant in the front seat, as would otherwise be possible in view of the fact that the seats form in effect a one-piece bench, yet are divided centrally for individual adjustment. The synchromesh on second, third and top gears is effective for general purposes, although with fairly quick movements of the lever it could be overriden on this particular car, which had been given exceptionally hard work in the clutch and gear

box.

Good support is provided by the front seats. A comprehensive view is obtained in the mirror through a quite large rear window of flexible material. Incidentally, this panel can be entirely removed, being held by zip fasteners, to permit additional ventilation in hot climates with the head raised. In addition there are pivoting glass ventilating panels forward of the main drop windows. There is that modem brightness of interior finish which has an appeal today. A careful touch of detail is the soft padding in an elongated half-circular roll, trimmed to match the main upholstery, along the top rail of the doors in the region where the driver's and front passenger's arms come in contact with the sides of the body. Wind noise is not specially apparent with the head raised, but there is a certain amount of flap from the head material and its stiffeners. Noise level is greatly reduced, as usually applies, when the car is in open trirn, and in suitable weather it becomes a delightful full "tourer". Leg and also head room in the rear seats is restricted, but is sufficient to make the car a useful four-seater on occasion.

Instruments are clear to read, immediately in front of the driver, and include an engine water thermometer as well as an ammeter and oil pressure gauge, although a clock is not included. Lighting of the instruments at night is rather bright without means of adjustment of the intensity. The cubby hole in the facia is of really practical size. The note given by twin horns is usefully penetrating. A considerable leg reach is involved in using the foot-operated dip switch. There is very good luggage space.

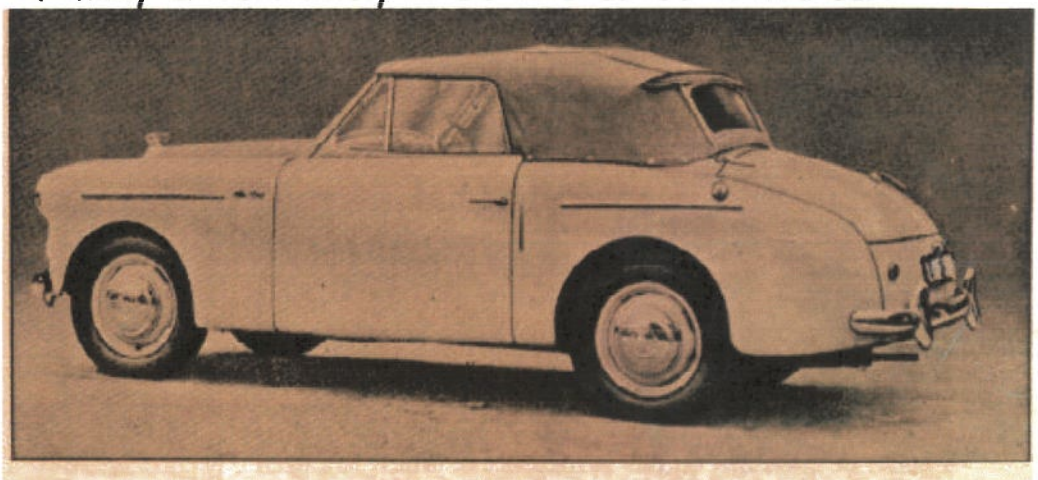


For this model the A.40 engine is fitted with twin S.U. carburettors with individual air cleaners. The battery is mounted well to the left of the scuttle, while other electrical components such as the coil, regulator unit and windscreen wiper motor are fitted on the right-hand side. The strut supporting the bonnet in the open position is exceptionally convenient in its self-locking and unlocking action.

Starting was at all times immediate, and the engine quickly gained working temperature from cold in air temperatures between 50 and 60 deg F, with very little use of the mixture control. As always with current Austin models, the patented radiator system whereby loss from expansion is prevented results in the water level remaining unchanged day after day. In all, some 1,200 miles were covered in the comprehensive test carried out. That extremely live organization, the present-day Austin Motor Company, has produced in this model a specialized type of car that gives the impression of living up to the reputation of the make for sound service in owners' hands.

intake presents an easy entry for cooling air, yet permits a low overall bonnet height. The one-piece bonnet is fitted with plated external hinges of a similar pattern to those used on the luggage locker lid. Good forward visibility is provided by the wide windscreen, mounted in rubber.

Speeds on the indirect gears can be quite high if the willing revving abilities of the engine are fully utilized, when naturally it makes itself heard. Good fun could obviously be had with one of these models in competitions of the more restrained kind, and there is an excellent reserve of power for tackling stiff gradients. The usual 1 in 6 hill barely called for second gear and would not have done so but for a baulk from other traffic. Indeed, third gear climbing abilities are exceptional for a car of this size, and one feels that a higher third, and perhaps second gear as well, would be an improvement in the hands of many drivers likely to be interested in this car.



With the hood erected the car has coupé comfort. A well-balanced appearance is provided by the rear wing treatment, and the circular section wheel openings permit quick wheel changes and tyre pressure checks without having to remove cover plates. Decorative chromium strips are fitted to the body above the wings. The rear window can be opened by means of zip fasteners to increase ventilation.

Although it has the touch of the sporting about it and certainly offers the amenities of fresh air to those who are attracted thereby, it is in every way an admirable example of general-purpose car. It handles well. Fairly firm coil spring independent front suspension in conjunction with rear half-elliptics gives good wheel adhesion, and bends can be taken quite fast with zest and a feeling of maintained safety, on either wet or dry roads. Excellent in promoting confidence quickly is the arrangement of the driving position. The driver sits well above a spring-spoked steering wheel of comfortable diameter and at the right angle for convenient control, with also a first-rate view of both front wings in an unusual degree. In a right-hand drive car, leftward vision is subject to the at times rather severe restriction, especially in circumstances of joining a converging road, that this type of body imposes in greater or lesser degree as compared with a saloon with its greater area of glass.

The facia is sprayed to match the car exterior, while the instrument panel and large locker are placed in front of the driver and passenger respectively. Simple but neat describes the door trim. The folding door pull is fitted below a padded protective strip. A pocket is provided in the bottom corner of the doors.



Although firm in the lateral sense, as already indicated, the suspension takes up shock well and its behaviour suggests

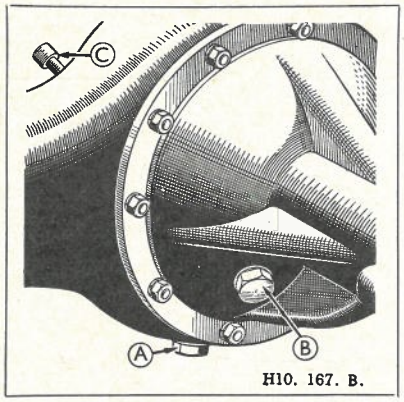


THE AUSTIN 'A40' MODELS

RUNNING AND MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS

THE AUSTIN MOTOR CO. LTD.
LONGBRIDGE, BIRMINGHAM
BOX 41 G.P.O.

PUBLICATION No 881/A FEBRUARY 1952



THE REAR AXLE

A is the drain plug, B the filler plug, and C the breather.

The plug also serves as an oil level indicator. Therefore, do not replace the plug at once, but give time for the superfluous oil to run out if too much has been injected. This is most important, because, if the rear axle is overfilled the lubricant may leak through to the brakes and render them ineffective. Wipe away the excess oil from the casing.

Steering Column: Lubricate the felt washer at the top of the steering column by adding a few drops of light machine oil through the oil hole in the steering wheel hub close to the steering column.

Battery: Ascertain the state of charge of the 12-volt battery by taking hydrometer readings. The specific gravity readings should be:—

Fully charged	...	1.280–1.300
Half charged	...	approx. 1.210
Discharged ...	...	below 1.150

These figures are for an assumed electrolyte temperature of 60 degs. F.

Check that the electrolyte in the cells is just level with the tops of the separators. If necessary add a few drops of distilled water. Never use tap water as it contains impurities detrimental to the battery.

Never leave the battery in a discharged condition. If the vehicle is to be out of use for any length of time, have the battery removed and charged about once a fortnight.

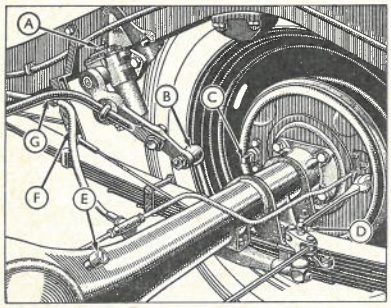
Brake Supply Tank: Inspect and refill to the correct level, which is one inch from the top of the container. Use only the recommended fluid.

EVERY 3,000 MILES

Sparking Plugs: Remove the plugs and clean off all carbon deposit from the electrodes, insulators, and plug threads with a stiff brush dipped in paraffin. Alternatively the plugs may be taken to the local Austin dealer for cleaning in a special machine.

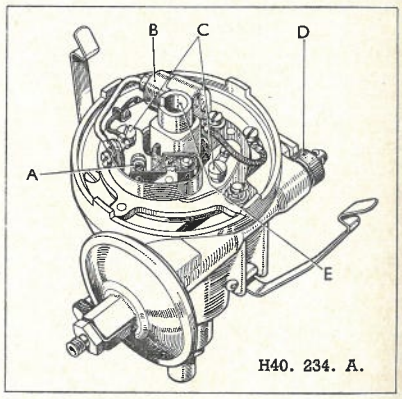
Clean and dress the plug points and reset to the correct gap of .018 in.

Before replacing the plugs check that the copper washers are in a sound condition. Never overtighten a plug but ensure that a good joint is made between



REAR SUSPENSION

A—Shock absorber filler plug. B—Rubber ball joint. C—Brake adjuster. D—Brake balance lever. E—Rear axle breather. F—Brake linkage. G—Anti-roll torsion bar.



THE DISTRIBUTOR

A—Contact points. B—Condenser. C—Contact adjusting screws. D—Micrometer adjuster. E—Cam and drive-shaft oiling point.