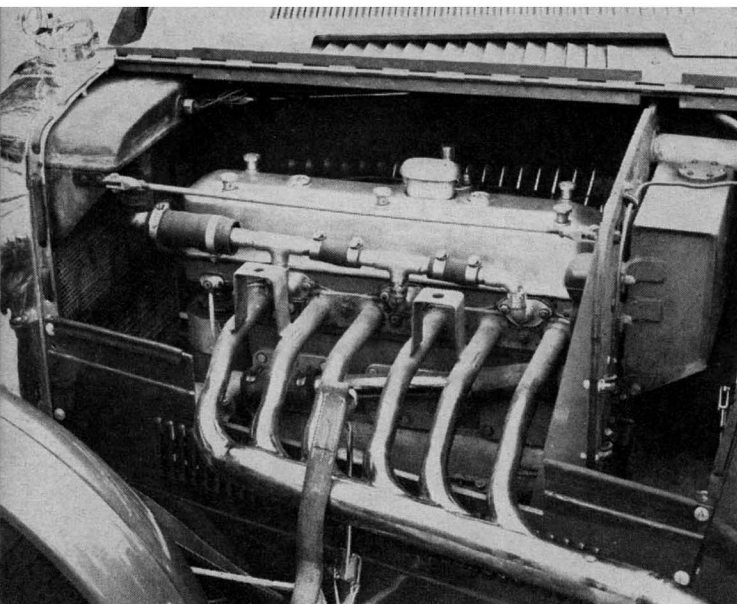


SALON

Six cylinders, with bore and stroke of 57 by 71 millimeters, give 1087 cubic centimeters. A total of 120 brake horsepower is realized at 6500 revolutions per minute. The crankshaft has four main bearings. The two center ones are carried in circular webs; after attaching these to the shaft, the entire assembly is inserted into the block through one end.

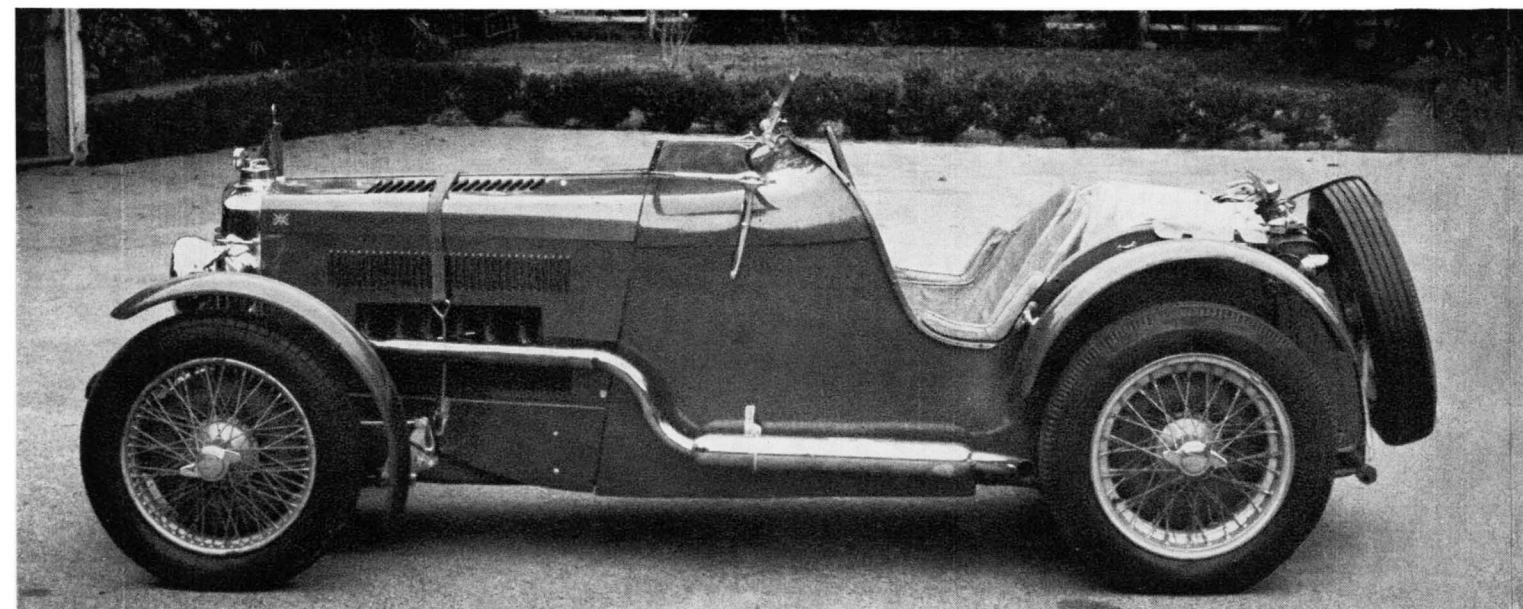
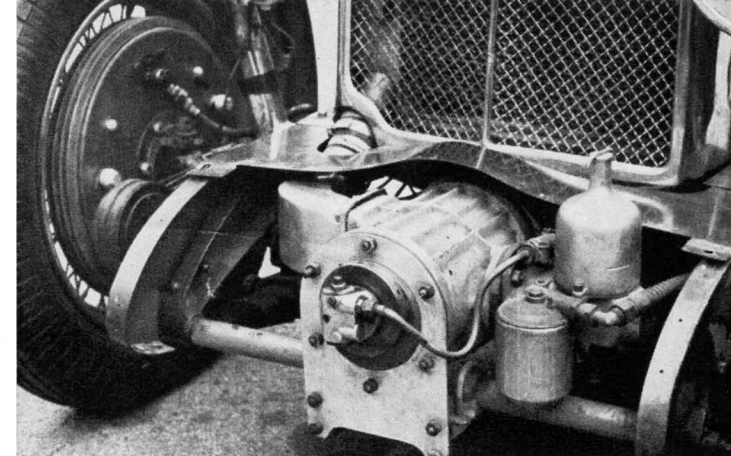


## MG K-3 Magnette

*For our money, the best MG they ever made*

PHOTOGRAPHY: POOLE

Here is the reason why an 1100-cubic centimeter sports car engine was not so ludicrous as it might have been back in 1933: the mammoth supercharger. It was driven through a built-in reduction gear and ran at speeds as high as 4900 revolutions per minute, or 75% of engine speed. With its aid, horsepower rose to 120.



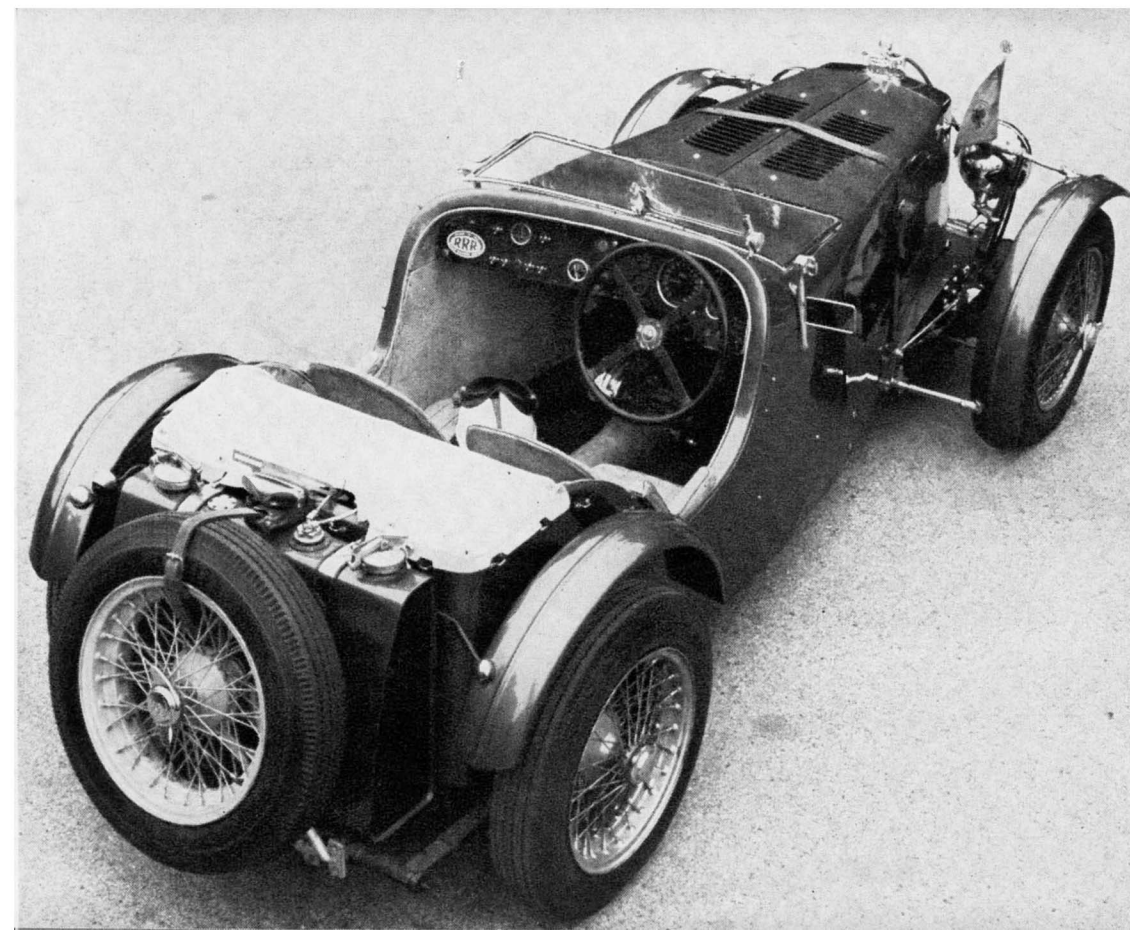
IN THE various chronicles covering the pre-war period of racing, there is none more enduring than that of MG, "the magic midget." Starting in 1923, Cecil Kimber and his group of enthusiasts built a line of dual-purpose sports/racing cars that enjoyed a really remarkable series of successes in international road racing competition. In 1935 they moved into Grand Prix racing with the R-type single seater, and then disaster fell. The MG company was acquired by Morris Motors, Ltd., and that concern decreed (to its everlasting infamy) that there should be no more MG racing cars—*sic transit gloria mundi*.

But preceding this catastrophe, the MG reputation was forever insured by the type K-3 Magnette. This fine machine was one of the last MG racing cars built. Not the fastest car in the world, it was surely the fastest in its class. Mechanically, it represented real advances for that period: the K-3 engine is small even by today's standards, and its 1087 cubic centimeters seem almost laughable when compared with the gigantic sports car engines of that time. There was, of course, one small item that kept things stirring around at a very respectable rate: the car sported a supercharger of really formidable size and output, which resulted in 120 brake horsepower at a trifling 6500 revolutions per minute.

Another innovation was the car's gearbox, which was of the pre-selector type in which the desired gear is chosen in the usual manner but the shift is delayed until the clutch pedal is depressed and then released. The benefits to be derived from this system are most apparent on a very twisty circuit, where one can become so busy just keeping the car under control that changing gears is a matter of wherever and whenever the opportunity presents itself. The pre-selector transmission was, therefore, a handy device to have in spite of the weight penalty that it entailed. The remainder of the car was not unlike any other high quality machine among its contemporaries.

The K-3 Magnette will always represent to us a high point in the field of pre-war sports cars; it was, and still is, something of an enthusiast's dream, occupying a very special place in the history of the sporting automobile. We might even go out on a limb and say that it is, to this day, the best MG ever built.

The K-3 pictured is one of three in Harry Crown's collection and is not a concours car. Crown believes a car is to be driven, so the K-3 gets used.



Without a person to scale it by, the little 6-cylinder MG takes on no definite size. The tires, like those of preceding cars in the Magnette series, were 4.75-19 inches, and the wheelbase was 94 inches. The tread measured an even four feet. In the lower view, the driver's control for the epicyclic pre-selector gearbox can be seen by the steering wheel's lower rim. Three final drive ratios were available: 4.89:1 (standard), 4.33 and 5.78. With these ratios and the 4 speeds forward, a variety of circuits could be met confidently.



*On the introduction of a new and much more civilized Magnette,  
a longing look backward at the romantic K-3*

**ILLUSTRATION BY TOBY NIPPEL**

