

# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

by John Twist

Q: I own a de-toxed 1973 MGB and am looking for more power. What can I do? Is it possible to retrofit earlier distributors and carbs. Is it possible to fit a 3-main engine into the MGB?

James McCarthy 83-3877  
Colorado Springs, CO

A: I suggest you first put your MGB into a wonderfully tuned state. Use the schedule found elsewhere in this section as a guide for tuning. Time the engine at 15° BTDC at 1500 rpms, and use ABD needles in the HIFs. This is the least expensive solution.

If you want to change carbs and distributors, use the 40897 distributor common to all MGBs 1963-1967, and the HS type SU carbs with #5 needles (although because of your elevation the #21 needles are something to experiment with), and the Smith's PCV valve. This should make some difference in the way the engine runs!

Finally, if you want to convert to a 3-main engine, it will be necessary to have the front of the first motion shaft ground down to the 3-main spigot bush size -- and a hole will have to be drilled around the starter location. This last option is a lot of hassle, and I'm not certain that it will boost the BHP enough to rationalize the cost.

Another option includes fitting the Rajah Turbo charger, available from England. THAT makes a difference.

Q: I have a 1976 MGB which has an erratic idling problem when the weather is not. On a "cold start" the engine idles about 850, but after warm, it idles down to about 500 -- yet sometimes it idles correctly at around 850. any suggestions?

Kevin Johns #84-4674  
New Milford, New Jersey

A: Kevin -- After ensuring that your compression is OK, the valves are set correctly, the ignition wires are OK and the plugs are clean, you can begin to inspect the carburetion side of the engine. Ensure that the PCV system is OK and that none of the hoses are pinched or broken.

With the Stromberg adjusting tool, ensure that the mixture is set correctly. Test this by lifting the piston ever so slightly. You should note an increase of 50-100 rpms. If the rpms climb higher as the piston is lifted higher, then the mixture is too rich. If, on the other

hand, the rpms fall immediately as the piston is slightly lifted, then the mixture is too lean. You want an increase of 50-100 rpms.

Wait for the car to cool, then start up the car. It should idle about 1800 rpms. Increase the idle screw as necessary. Wait for the engine to come to operating temp, then adjust the idle screw which carries the locknut so that the idle speed is about 850. Adjust the screws in that order!! First the spring loaded screw, then the fixed screw. Make slight future adjustments with the spring loaded screw.

Q: I recently installed an overdrive gearbox "D" type into my 1967 MGB/GT, complete with vacuum switch, relay, gearbox switch, and dash control switch. There is not a lot of information about this control, and I'm a bit confused about the operation of the unit below 30 MPH in reverse, and when changing from 4th to 3rd while still in overdrive.

Brian Collacott  
Windsor, Ontario

A: Brian -- The electrical controls on this unit seem cumbersome, but each component serves a vital purpose. Working from the gearbox to the dash: 1) Lockout switch -- this switch allows power to the overdrive solenoid only while the gearbox is in third or fourth. Without the switch in place or working properly it would be possible to use overdrive in first or second, during which the torque would wreak havoc with the small clutch in the OD. Further, if the OD is engaged while the car is reversed, the internals of the unit can break up, 2) The relay and vacuum switch work together to effect a smooth change from OD to direct drive. There seems to be no problem engaging the OD, but without the vacuum switch and relay in the circuit the change out of OD is particularly harsh -- with potential damage to the OD clutch, 3) The dash switch is either "in" or "out" and it makes no difference at what speed the OD is engaged -- it works in both third and fourth. But, a word to the wise! The overdrive is intended for high speed, I cannot imagine any reason even to use OD in third. It is for highways.

More information of a technical nature lies in section Fa of the MGB workshop manual.

## Technical Information

If you have any technical information that you believe other readers could benefit from, please send it to "AMGBA Technical Information", P.O. Box 11401, Chicago, IL 60611.

