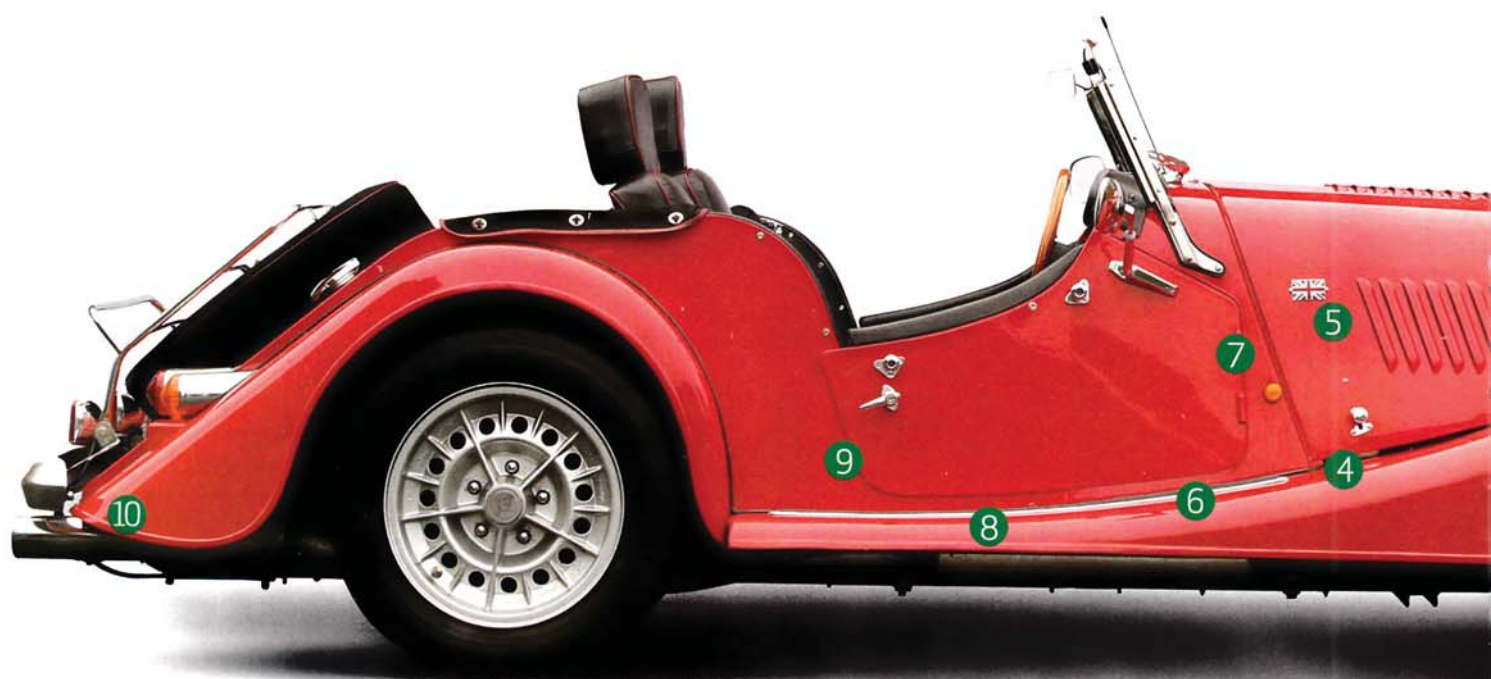


MORGAN PLUS 8

The gruntest of Morgan's trad-Brit roadsters makes a great classic purchase, as **Malcolm McKay** explains

PHOTOGRAPHY TONY BAKER



Always sought-after for their uncompromised sports-car image plus effective retro styling and construction, Morgans are wrapped up in a legend that keeps them in an economic bubble. Depreciation is virtually unknown, demand is always high and values are remarkably stable and predictable.

Scarcely affected by the recent soaring of prices for contemporary machinery, Morgans are in danger of being left behind – making them overdue for a surge themselves. As one of the most desirable models that sold steadily for 35 years, the Plus 8 certainly has to be one of the safest investments in the classic car park right now.

Shoehorning the Buick V8 into the Plus 4 chassis was a challenge, ably fathomed by race engineer Maurice Owen. It necessitated a new collapsible steering column and an electric cooling fan. An alternator, triple wipers, foglamps and hazard lights joined the spec, too. As soon as production was under way in 1969, the Plus 8 grew in width and wheelbase, making it slightly more spacious than other models. About half have aluminium rather than steel bodywork (or a mix), so check carefully which you are viewing.

Ally is lighter and less prone to corrosion, but it is more susceptible to dents and paint falling off.

Plus 8s were successful in competition, driven by Charles Morgan himself as well as Rob Wells to win the 1978 and '79 Production Sports Car Championships. And for decades it was one of the fastest-accelerating production cars, putting many much more expensive vehicles to shame.

In true Morgan tradition, the Plus 8 was progressively developed and it's important to verify the spec of cars that you are considering. Try to keep in mind that many changes listed in the *Timeline*, such as fuel injection, were optional at first, only later becoming standard equipment.

If neglected or driven particularly hard, a Morgan can need a full chassis or body rebuild after as little as 15,000 miles, so don't be obsessed with low mileage. Maintenance and condition are crucial and a Plus 8 will happily exceed 150,000 miles without overhaul if it's well looked after. While new chassis are not expensive and every part is available or can be made, a full restoration is very costly due to the hand-built, individually finished nature of the cars.

While prices are consistent, the earliest and latest cars, plus special editions such as the Le Mans 62, can command a premium of up to 25%.



Early car on test, by statue of Henry Richard in Tregaron



2003 Anniversary Edition marked 35 years of production



Rot spots

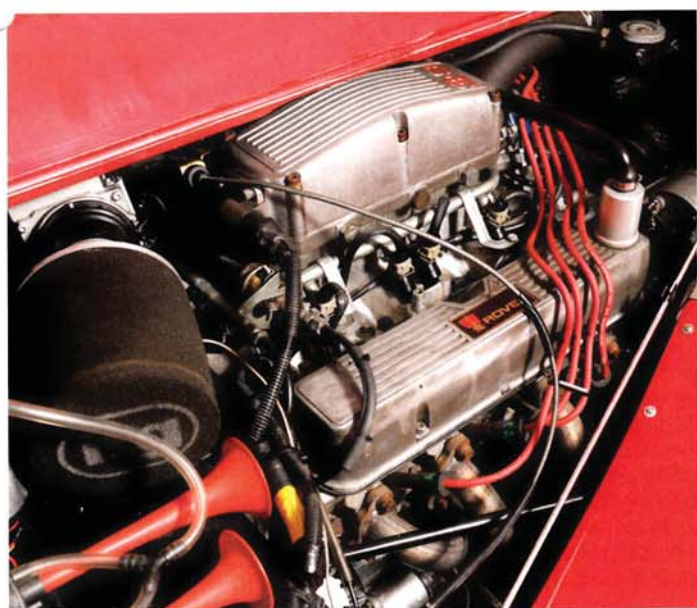
- 1 Outer front wings (if steel)
- 2 Front chassis crossframe (also for crash distortion)
- 3 Cracks by engine mountings
- 4 Steel inners at bulkhead
- 5 Bulkhead uprights
- 6 Chassis webs/box sections under floor (rust/cracks)
- 7 A-posts (wood): lift door
- 8 Wood sills: check pins holding trim on sill are tight
- 9 B-post: pull/push with door open; it should not move
- 10 Crossmember, esp at main chassis rails; spring hangers



Check **hood** and **sidescreens** are present and fit well: they should be leak-free (a new mohair hood is £895). A **tonneau cover** is a useful bonus, too (£395)



Some patina is charming but the **leather** and **wood** trim is costly to replace if it's too far gone. Walnut **dash** (£288) with lockable glovebox was optional from '89



Understressed and durable if properly maintained, the Buick-Rover V8 engine runs on low oil pressure (35psi-plus at speed hot). Lift oil-filler cap to check for mayonnaise (head-gasket failure) and check history for cooling system maintenance. A noisy top end and slack performance means that cams are worn. A rebuild costs £3-6000



Alloy V8 will silt up a **radiator** in no time if the corrosion-inhibitor level is not kept up. So study the temperature gauge and service history and look for signs of leaks



A worn **gearbox** spoils the car and can be tricky to rebuild, notably Moss and early Rover units. Late five-speeds are best: transplants in earlier cars are not unusual



Famed sliding-pillar **front suspension** needs very frequent lubrication: check it's had it. Converting to hard chrome-plated kingpins increases longevity



Inspect condition of **alloys**: all Plus 8s had them except wire-wheel option from '93. Limited-slip diff was standard, too: the axle should be silent and leak-free

Like any Morgan, yet more so with its powerful V8, a Plus 8 is brilliant on a flat, twisty road, but the ride is harsh over poor surfaces, which can unsettle the car



On the road

A certain level of shake and rattle is inevitable on rough surfaces – Plus 8s are firmly sprung – but excessive shuddering may indicate a weakened structure and the need for an expensive body and chassis rebuild. Get an expert review if you are in any doubt. Cuprinol treatment for the wood frame came in 1986, optionally at first, and rust protection was gradually introduced.

Plus 8s began with the same foot-pedal-oiled front suspension (needing a pump a day, or every 200 miles) as Plus 4s, though with stiffer stub axles and beefed-up brakes, plus chunky 185x15 radials on alloy wheels. The steering was always heavy – especially as tyre sizes increased – but excessive stiffness indicates a lack of servicing. Some slack is inevitable pre-1983; thereafter the rack should be free of play. The much better Gemmer steering box fitted to later four-cylinder Morgans can be fitted to pre-'83 Plus 8s.

The Rover engine is reliable and durable provided alloy corrosion is avoided; pay careful attention to all parts of the cooling system. Infrequent oil changes will lead to rapid camshaft wear. Stromberg carburettors gave least power, while parts are hard to source for the '90s Lucas electronic fuel injection. Later GEMS-injected cars can have engine-controller problems, but specialists can fix them. The Moss gearbox on early cars lacks synchro on first and needs a measured change – parts are difficult to find.

Brakes seize due to infrequent use – which is a common trait – so test them for effectiveness. A servo was fitted up to 1981 and post-'93, but in between a fair shove is needed if braking hard.



Plus 8 melds vintage feel with E-type-baiting acceleration

OWNER'S VIEW Dave Flanagan



Flanagan is a recent convert: "I rebuilt a TR3A and ran it for 20 years, eventually replacing it with an Alfa GT 1600 Junior, wanting more comfort on tours. It was great but I missed the rawness of the TR, so looked for a car to complement the Alfa: a Morgan seemed perfect. The torque and burble of a V8 were too much of a temptation. I looked at a few before buying this 1990 pre-cat 3.9 from Scotland. I have now covered just over 2300 miles. You could never describe it as refined: I am getting used to the wincies from my wife in the passenger seat on a rough road, but it is in its element on smooth sweeping bends. With the top down, it is really enjoyable but windy at motorway speeds; the sidescreens make it a more relaxed drive. With the hood up, it is very cosy with a good heater."

The knowledge

WHAT TO PAY

Show/rebuilt	£40,000
Average	£30,000
Restoration	£20,000

TYPICAL PRICES

Chassis 4/5-speed	£1032/1140
Water pump	£121
Fuel pump 3.9	£289
Brake master cylinder, inc servo '93-on	£232

CLUBS & FORUMS

Morgan Sports Car Club
01384 254480, www.mscc.uk.com

BOOKS

Morgan Plus 8 Scarlett, Haynes **Original Morgan 4/4, Plus 4 and Plus 8** Worrall & Turner, Bay View **Morgans to 1997** Bell, MRP **Morgan 100 Years** Morgan, O'Mara

SPECIALISTS

Lifes Motors 01704 513270 **Richard Thorne** 0118 983 1200 **Melvyn Rutter** 01279 725725 **Allon White** 01234 750205 **New Elms** 01747 858334 **Harpers** 01923 260299 **Tudor** 01630 652596 **Brands Hatch Morgans** 01732 882017 **GEE** 01453 832113 **Berrybrook** 01392 833301 **Beamish** 01207 288760 **Perranwell** 01872 863037 **Techniques Motorsport** 01462 835500 **Williams** 01454 315112 **Vintage Wings & Radiators** 0161 202 6247

TIMELINE

1968 Oct Plus 8 launched, with 168bhp V8
1969 Chassis widened 2in; alloy body option
1972 Rover all-synchro 'box replaces Moss
1973 Wider track, higher diff but only 143bhp
1975 Sports Lightweight (19 built)
1977 155bhp SD1 engine and 5-speed gearbox; new-look dash, 4in wider body, alloy bumpers replace chrome, new alloys, 205/70 tyres
1983 Electronic injection; 192bhp; rack steering
1986 Corrosion and rot treatment; galvanising (chassis), powder coating and Cuprinol
1990 3.9-litre: 235lb ft; rear telescopics replace lever arms; catalytic converter, initially optional
1993 Wires optional; Lockheed brakes
1994 Rover R380 five-speed gearbox fitted
1997 Long-door, deep-dash cockpit, airbags (optional at first); 4.6-litre 220bhp opt (300+ sold)
2000 GEMS fuel injection replaces Lucas 14CUX
2002 Le Mans 62 edition, white hardtop; 40 built
2004 Plus 8 dropped

FACTFILE

Sold/number built 1968-'04/c6000
Construction Z-section steel chassis and steel or aluminium, wood-framed roadster body
Engine all-alloy, ohv 3528/3946/4555cc V8, twin SU/Strombergs or Bosch/Lucas/GEMS injection; 143bhp @ 5200rpm-220bhp @ 5000rpm; 200lb ft @ 2700rpm-260lb ft @ 3500rpm
Transmission 4/5-speed, 3/4-5-synchromesh manual, driving rear wheels via limited-slip diff
Suspension: front sliding pillars, coil springs, telescopic dampers **rear** live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs, lever-arm dampers (later telescopics)
Steering cam and peg, 2.4 turns lock-to-lock, then rack and pinion, 3.4 turns
Brakes 11in disc front, 9in drum rear, with servo (although not from 1981-'93)
Length 12ft 9in-13ft 3in (3886-4039mm)
Width 4ft 9¾in-5ft 7in (1467-1702mm)
Height 4ft-4ft 4in (1219-1290mm)
Wheelbase 8ft 2½in (2495mm)
Weight 1926-2442lb (876-1110kg)
0-60mph 6.7-5.6 secs **Top speed** 120-133mph
Mpg 18-30 **Price new** £2925 (1975)

INSURANCE

£251.90, for a Londoner, 30, full no-claims and clean licence on a garaged '90 Plus 8 as second car, value £30,000, 5000 ltd miles. RH: 01277 206911.

THE ALTERNATIVES



TRIUMPH TR6
 Undercutting the Plus 8 new and now, not much slower and rather more comfortable, the

TR6 is still a macho sports car with great looks. Beware rot, neglect and slower carb models.

Sold/no built 1968-'76/91,850 **Mpg** 21-30
0-60mph 8.2 secs **Top speed** 120mph
Price new £2602 (1975) **Now** £13-25,000



TVR 350i-450SE
 Even faster than the Morgan, especially top speeds, the Wedges look a bit dated, but

sound amazing. Cheap and great fun if sorted, though beware chassis rot and water damage.
Sold/no built 1983-'91/2618 (all) **Mpg** 18-28
0-60mph 6.3-4.6 secs **Top speed** 130-150mph
Price new £16,320 (350i, 1985) **Now** £5-15,000

One to buy £29,950

Year of manufacture 1986 **Recorded mileage** 79,228 **Vendor** Brands Hatch Morgans, Kent; tel: 01732 882017 **For** very much a driver, but does polish up **Against** GRP wings, but they're practical

This former racer has been stored for five years and partly returned to road trim. So the extinguisher system and race seats have gone, but it retains the John Eales 3.9 unit, freshened up not many miles ago (dynoed at 253bhp), now with probably one season under its crank. Its clean oil is just over full and it still has a heater. The straight-cut T5 'box was rebuilt at the same time.

Cosmetically it's pretty sound, with a few sink marks in the otherwise even paint over a straight aluminium body, slightly propped-open bonnet and no pings in the glassfibre wings. Its three-piece Image alloys are unscuffed, with scrubbed 2011 Yokohama A048s and an almost fried spare.

The seat leather and the hood are decent, and it has an aftermarket wheel plus gearknob (and an extended handbrake). There's a large oil light and an extra temperature gauge for oil and water.

It starts easily and, though notably fiercer than standard issue, it's perfectly tractable, and indeed was driven to races. The clutch is heavy, but you don't need it much because there's lots of torque. On a damp day on old, cold tyres we didn't push it, but it's plenty quick and the brakes – discs all round, with adjustable balance – are smooth. The oil pressure reads 50psi at 2000rpm, healthy for a Rover V8, and the coolant is steady at 85°C.

Basically a Plus 8 plus for about the same as an average standard car, it would be ideal as a drive-it-there and slap-the-numbers-on-it hillclimber.



Tidy Jag Solent Blue paint; Plus 8 will come with new MoT



A few racer telltales remain, but cockpit is generally good



John Eales motor has an aluminium rad and oil catch tank



Morgan's enduring appeal lies in its timeless looks and raw character. Plus 8 grew 9in wider over years

Our verdict

There are few cars better supported by specialists and club, or with such stable, gently rising values. There are also few cars more uncompromised in their target of wind-in-the-hair motoring on smooth roads, so be sure you and your partner are going to enjoy that before buying one! Find a well-maintained example or negotiate a good price for a project.

FOR

- Unbeatable classic looks
- V8 burble; gobs of torque
- Near-guaranteed appreciation in value
- Beats hot hatches at traffic lights

AGAINST

- Really hard ride
- Rudimentary weather protection
- Deteriorates rapidly if not cherished
- A chassis-plus-frame rebuild is costly

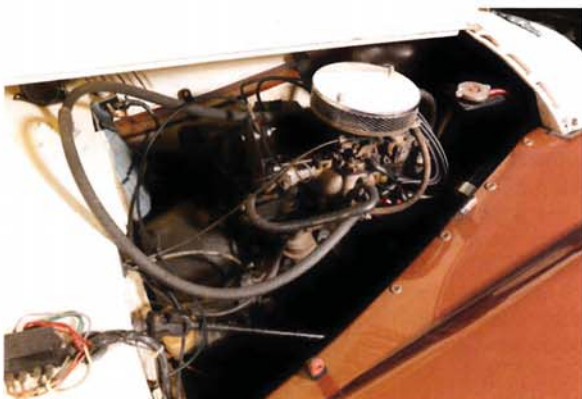


From top: in its element on a flat, bendy road; classy cockpit, with timber and leather upholstery; eager crossflow gives strong performance in light 4/4



Morgan 4/4

Sold/number built 1968-'82/3480 (Series VI, 1600) **Engine** all-iron, ohv 1599cc Ford Kent 'four', Weber carburettor; 84bhp @ 5500rpm; 103lb ft @ 3600rpm **Transmission** four-speed manual, RWD **Suspension: front** independent, by sliding pillars, telescopic dampers **rear** live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs, lever-arms **Steering** rack and pinion **Brakes** discs, with servo **Weight** 1620lb (735kg) **0-60mph** 9.6 secs **Top speed** 104mph **Price now** £10-17,000



In life, everything changes except a Morgan. Its first 4-4 – four cylinders, four wheels – arrived in 1936. Underneath sat the now classic layout of a Z-section chassis, sliding-pillar independent front suspension, a live rear axle on semi-elliptic leaf springs, mid-mounted gearbox plus worm-and-peg steering. An ash frame was bolted to the chassis and clothed in steel panels – replaced by aluminium in 1945 – with a four-seater tourer arriving in '46. And that is basically your lot.

Easy to sneer at, isn't it? But there's so much more to owning a Morgan. It's a way of life: top always down, couple of bags strapped to the back and off for a long continental tour. Then there's the sense of community, plus a rich vein of humour running through all club engagements – you don't take yourself too seriously with a Mog – and high residual values.

The 4/4 slipped out of production in 1950 – replaced by the peppier Plus 4 – but returned five years later, and with the famous cowled grille, as an affordable route into Morgan ownership.

Running gear may change with the times – the '70s was an all-Ford affair, with assorted Kent crossflows – but the essentials remain constant. "They never sell below £10,000 and for that it'd require a lot of work, but a top '70s example could fetch £17,000," says Sarah Hutton of Brands Hatch Morgans (www.morgan-cars.com).

Thanks to www.beaulieugarage.co.uk

Alkureishi says...

I know I shouldn't, but I do love a Morgan; they provide such no-frills, weekend blastery and never fail to put a smile on your face.

This two-tone Cream over Russet Brown example, with lovely tan leather upholstery, is currently for sale at Beaulieu Garage, and looks simply glorious.

Storage space is at best minimal, and manipulating the hood and sidescreens a time-consuming exercise, but there's plenty of room behind the three-spoke Moto-Lita wheel, and for long legs in the footwell. The 1.6-litre Ford Kent engine fires lustily,

engage first, off with the flyaway handbrake, adopt gung-ho arm over the door driving position and we're all set.

The view down the long louvred bonnet is epic and, shorn of its usual Ford clothing, the engine sings sweetly with each throttle depression. Yes, the stiff front suspension and live rear axle aren't the height of sophistication – or even close – but you can instantly see why this car has inspired, and continues to inspire, so many.

Next stop, Tuscany?

STAR FEATURE CHARACTER
Pipe and slippers image masks weekend blaster persona

The scores

SPORTS PERFORMANCE

(out of 40)

Handling	6
Acceleration	7
Braking	5
Tactility	6
TOTAL	24

EVERYDAY PERFORMANCE

(out of 40)

Everyday usability	7
Ease of maintenance/ parts availability	7
Practicality	6
Hood erection	5
TOTAL	25

MONEY MATTERS (out of 20)

Value for money	4
Running costs	4
Insurance	5
Investment value	3
TOTAL	16

CASE HISTORIES

WE TEST THE CLASSICS THAT YOU CAN BUY



MORGAN PLUS 4

Year of manufacture 1997 **Recorded mileage** 3480 (see text)

Asking price £26,750 **Vendor** Allon White, Cranfield, Beds;

tel: 01234 750205; <https://allonwhite.co.uk>

WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price £24,976 **Max power** 133bhp **Max torque** 136lb ft
0-60mph 7.5 secs **Top speed** 118mph **Mpg** 30

This Rover-engined Plus 4 has the optional aluminium body (as well as the wings), plus further extras including organ-type throttle pedal, walnut dash, doorhandles, bonnet strap and extra running-board tread rubbers.

It's had localised repainting, but there are no stars or dings in the wings. The wheels are unkerbed and shod with Avon CR338s, dating from 2006 and about half-worn. The original is still on the spare. The hood, tonneau and sidescreen bags are in good shape. There's a *Moto-Lita* steering wheel, the leather is just settling, while the dash veneer and lacquer are excellent, bar a crack across the glovebox lid. This one has the recessed frame for extra seat travel. The speedo was changed in 2013 reading 29,002 miles (which also appears on the 2012 MoT, so add a few more) and doesn't quite match – the only replacement available had a red needle. So the real mileage is about 32,500, backed up by old certificates.

The paperwork includes a copy of the factory invoice, service book with 13 entries and sundry bills afterwards. It was most recently serviced (by the vendor) in July. It had a cambelt change in 2004, but, if it hasn't had one since then, it will be swapped before it leaves the building.

The motor is tidy and had a new ECU in 2014. Coolant is visible in the header tank though slightly rusty (the blue silicon hoses are correct for the year), while the oil is very clean and just over the maximum mark. It starts easily once past the immobiliser, typically rather tappety until warmed through. Oil pressure when up to temperature is 3.5bar, rising to 4bar at higher revs, with coolant steady at 95°C.

This is a remarkably supple and rattle-free Morgan, with nice, light steering and a good feel, plus a better gearchange from the R380 'box than the slightly hefty-shifting LT77 that preceded it. It doesn't have the immediate prod of the V8, though there's plenty of go. The brakes are so unremarkable they must be just right, pulling up straight, progressively. It comes with the handbook, bills and service history, plus MoT until 13 July.



SUMMARY

EXTERIOR

- Straight; part-refinished

INTERIOR

- Leather wearing well; just a light crack on the glovebox lid

MECHANICALS

- Low mileage and feels it

VALUE ★★★★★☆☆☆
For More economical than a Plus 8, but it isn't that much slower

Against It's almost Plus 8 money
SHOULD I BUY IT?

It's a lovely driver with no needs. And you don't have to 'watch' it all the time as you do with the V8 version – especially in the wet



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Lancia Aprilia Volpini barchetta RHD - 1937

In my opinion, if not THE than surely one of the most famous Aprilia barchettas in the world!

Fantastic history, belonged to Lancia works-driver Ippocampo and has impressive racing pedigree.

Completely overhauled respecting this famous barchetta's originality by our classic car workshop for 2013 Mille Miglia, to which this Aprilia Volpini participated faultlessly and once again in 2014.

Do you fancy driving the Mille Miglia? With this historic Aprilia Volpini you are 100% sure to be accepted.

Price: 388.000 Euro



Stanguellini 1100 mono-albero MM-barchetta LHD - 1951

One-off Stanguellini, initially being the only Vignale Cabriolett built on a tubular chassis. Sold new to Belgian race enthusiast who participated at the Liège-Rome-Liège and Tour de Belgique Automobile in 1951.

Later in life transformed into barchetta exactly as 1951 Mille Miglia Stanguellini barchetta participant. Participated in 2007 at Historic Mille Miglia.

In excellent condition immediately ready for more historic competition fun. Well described in Stanguellini book by Orsini/Zagari.

Price: 275.000 Euro



Bandini Maserati barchetta LHD - 1953

The only Bandini which was fitted from original with a Maserati engine. Initially 4 cylinder, now A6 1.5 liter 6 cylinder in line + triple twin Weber carbs.

Beautiful racing history in the USA (Sebring, Nassau, Thompson, etc...). Completely restored under supervision of Bandini experts in Italy in 2003. Very well documented.

This barchetta has it all: unique, famous racing history, super sexy looks, superb quality, Maserati power, glorious sound, great potential for all historic competition events in the world.

Price: ASK



Lancia Flaminia Sport Zagato RHD - 1960

Very unusual 1-st series (99 ex. produced) in RHD (apparently only 3 ex. produced).

Is listed in Zagato archives for export to Australia. First owner Mr. Malcolm Fraser (Prime minister of Australia).

Very well preserved and still in excellent sound original condition. Beautiful presentation inside-out. Engine was upgraded to 3C specification. Runs beautifully!

A unique opportunity for the Flaminia Zagato enthusiasts wanting a RHD model.

Price: ASK



Lancia Appia Pininfarina Coupé LHD - 1961

Rare (only 1.087 Appia PF Coupés were produced), 3-rd series (with most powerful 60 HP engine + central gearshift) and very exclusive Italian little beauty!

Fully restored by previous Swiss owner to proverbial Swiss quality standards. Can the combination of exclusivity, rarity and quality still be affordable?

Yes it can!

Price: 55.000 Euro



Osca 1600 GT2 Coupé Fissore LHD - 1962

One of only 21 Coupés built by Carrozzeria Fissore (the majority of the in total 128 examples of the 1600GT produced by Osca were coachbuilt by Zagato).

Tubular chassis neatly coachbuilt by Fissore half steel and half aluminium. Power (105 HP) comes from beautiful twin overhead cam 1568 cc engine fed by 2 twin Weber carburetors. Still in excellent condition after full restoration in the 80-ies. Great Italian GT to drive!

Price: 168.000 Euro

Many more quality classics for sale. Please ask for our stocklist or visit our website:

www.marreyt-classics.com

MORGAN'S MOMENT OF MODERNITY



The once-unloved Plus Four Plus has become highly desirable, says **Richard Heseltine** as he samples an immaculately restored example – one of just 26

PHOTOGRAPHY MALCOLM GRIFFITHS



You have to hand it to him: not many men would dare to be seen in public rocking a diamond-cushioned Barbour jacket, a nose ring and an under-chin Quaker-style beard. Our new friend is clearly a man who knows his own mind. He is maybe the 578th bystander to interrupt our photoshoot thus far, but not the first to come over all quizzical of eyebrow on learning the car's identity. He is, however, the only one to insist that he knows better. "But it can't be," he sniffs. "I mean, it doesn't look like a Morgan."

He has a point, but then the Plus Four Plus is no ordinary Morgan. For starters, it has a roof, minimal lumber content and – brace yourself – a body made of glassfibre. Heck, it even has wind-down windows and a lockable boot. Nevertheless, the model bombed first time around and has only recently become sought-after. The car pictured here realised a six-figure sum at auction last year.

To understand its place in marque lore, first you need to scroll back to the early 1960s. It was a decade of great uncertainty for the Malvern perennial. These days, we tend to think of Morgans as being nostalgic throwbacks, venerable remnants of motoring history that just happen to still be in production, but that wasn't the case half a century ago. Outwardly at least, it

appeared as though the world had changed, but nobody in the Pickersleigh Road factory had noticed. That wasn't strictly true, however. Second-generation principal Peter Morgan was all too aware that the firm's outmoded offerings would suffer in comparison with more advanced products from the likes of MG, Austin-Healey and Triumph. As he recalled in *C&SC* in 1984: "When I commissioned the car, I really did think that the '30s body style of our cars was dying. Demand was very small in Europe, and only the United States – which took 87% of our production in 1962 – kept the market alive."

The decision to build the Plus Four Plus followed the detailed study of an EB Debonair,



one of the more credible kit cars of the day. Not that its maker, EB Plastics of Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent, was your typical men-in-sheds 'specials' outfit. In addition to offering a range of bodyshells for the DiY car builder, the firm also produced lorry cabs for companies including ERF and Foden. Impressed by what he saw, Morgan instructed EB founder John Edwards to design and develop a new body that would fit the existing Plus Four chassis without modification. He wanted something similar to the Debonair, but insisted that it bore some family resemblance to existing Morgans. No pressure then.

Edwards kept to the brief. The only changes deemed necessary to the chassis were a pair of sheet-steel extensions that were bolted either side of the proprietary 2.1-litre Triumph four-banger, linking the front suspension mountings to the bulkhead. Morgan then put the prototype through its paces on a tour of France and Spain that highlighted a problem that never really went away. In a regular Plus Four, loads would be absorbed through the chassis and timber body frame, if only in part. You expected a degree of flex. Not so here, the new strain being massively more rigid than its predecessors. There were fears that this would lead to the glassfibre shell breaking out in stress cracks.

That said, the Plus Four Plus was, for the most

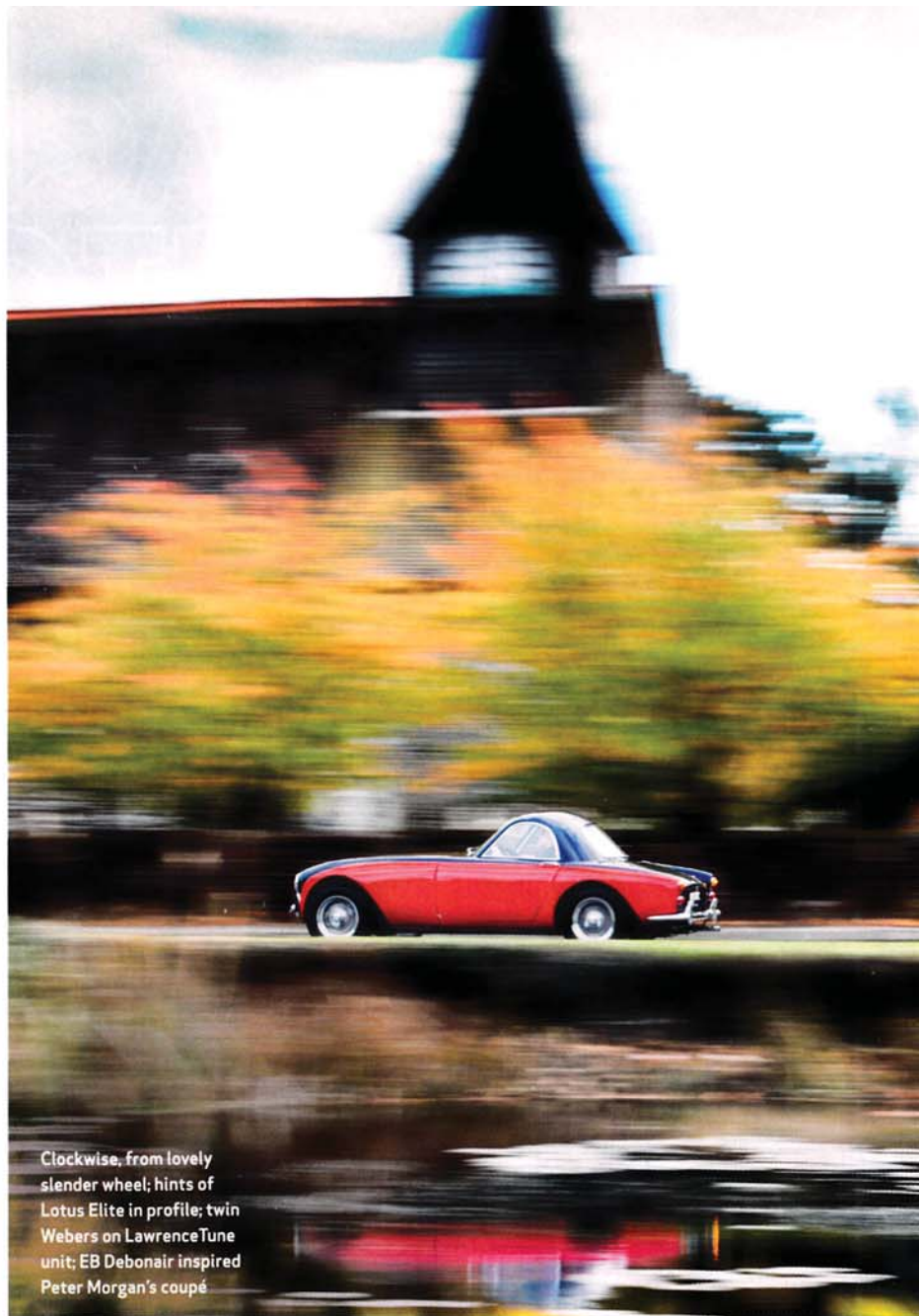


part, warmly received by the media. John Bolster was particularly effusive after testing the prototype for *Autosport* in 1963.

'In a veritable cloudburst, I drove along Ross Spur in sheets of spray, reaching 105mph,' he enthused. 'The famous controllability of the Morgan was fully in evidence, fast curves being taken at speed in complete confidence.'

There was, however, an issue that hobbled the debutant from the outset. Unveiled at that year's Earls Court Motor Show, Morgan's bold new baby was crippling expensive: £1276 when a 4/4 cost £684. So you had to *really* want a Plus Four Plus. Sadly, few did and series production coughed and spluttered before flatlining. Even within the works, interest soon began to ebb. The last car was completed in 1967, a year before the Plus 8 arrived and revitalised the firm. Just 26 were built (plus a further two bodyshells), nine of which stayed in the UK. Ten headed Stateside while the remainder escaped to Canada, The Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland and Japan.

'Our' car was the fifth made. Chassis A5558 left the Morgan factory on 24 December 1963, destined for the marque's concessionaire for Western Canada, Sterne's Garage, which operated out of British Columbia. Company founder, George Beatty 'GB' Sterne, was a prolific race winner in Canada and America's Pacific North



Clockwise, from lovely slender wheel; hints of Lotus Elite in profile; twin Webers on LawrenceTune unit; EB Debonair inspired Peter Morgan's coupé

West, despite not venturing on track until he was in his early 40s. He did much to promote the make in competition and would retain the Plus Four Plus until June 1974, when he sold it to Dr David Reid of Princeton. At some point during his 20-year ownership, the car underwent a change of colour from black to Robin's Egg Blue. Third owner Dennis Glavis of Santa Monica, California, initiated a full-blown rebuild after acquiring the car in 2004. This stretched to its current two-tone arrangement. The Morgan went under the hammer at RM Auctions' London sale in September 2014 and made a whopping £128,800 – that's quite a turnaround for a car few wanted in period. It's amazing the difference that half a century makes.

For a vehicle that has historically been viewed as a momentary aberration or, at the very least, a misstep, it's no great surprise that demand is now outstripping supply, and by some margin. The Plus Four Plus is rare and it's pretty. That said, photos really don't lend a sense of scale. The Morgan appears tiny up close, dainty even. It is 12ft 8in long and 5ft 1in wide, so it's dwarfed by modern hatchbacks. The styling is perhaps a little plagiaristic, too. From certain angles, there are distinct overtones of Jaguar XK150 and



Lotus Elite, but the outline is beautifully proportioned, the corporate grille being thoughtfully integrated, although the curvy cabin top is perhaps a bit too stumpy to be fully convincing.

The narrow door aperture and low roof ensure that the Morgan isn't the easiest of cars to get into. The cabin is stark, with a bench seat-back and individual squabs, the classic white-on-black gauges being easy to read behind the attractive – and decidedly '50s – wood-rim wheel. It's not uncomfortable, but you do feel a little perched, while the pedals are close-coupled and slightly offset. There is a reasonable amount of head and elbow room, although a sense of claustrophobia still lingers. It also gets a little toasty because the windows don't lower all the way within their ill-fitting chrome surrounds. Intriguingly, the only wood in the entire structure is located in the floor and the back bulkhead.

Under the rear-hinged bonnet – another first for a Morgan – sits a 2138cc TR4-spec 'four', which was fed in period by twin Strombergs. An uncomplicated unit, it originally produced 105bhp at 4750rpm and 132lb ft of torque at 3000rpm, according to Morgan's press bumf, but the exact spec of this engine remains unclear.

The LawrenceTune rocker cover and twin

Webers are obvious signifiers that it isn't strictly standard. Once on the move, you're left in no doubt because it's decidedly more rev-happy than you remember. The Morgan feels significantly faster than the quoted 0-60mph time of 12.5 secs suggests. This is a speedy little car.

And a noisy one. The Plus Four Plus has plenty of urge, but little in the way of refinement. While the Triumph engine will pull from as little as 1000rpm in top, such is the available torque, it is never quiet – not even close, which isn't quite in keeping with the GT ideal. The four-speed Moss 'box, meanwhile, isn't slow-witted so much as ponderous: it doesn't like to be rushed.

What's more, you are constantly aware that you're driving a car that is more pre-war in make-up than the visuals imply, not least because suspension seems to have been an optional extra. Yet it is huge fun to drive, particularly on twisty B-roads. It rides much like any other Morgan from the period – in that its cruising altitude seems to be no barrier to maintaining forward velocity, bouncing around on its cart springs, but it is utterly predictable. Faithful, too. The brakes – discs front, drums rear – work extremely well, but then they have only 825kg to arrest.

Despite a fair amount of flex through the wheel, the steering is direct without any dead spots, and there's plenty of seat-of-the-pants feel. You are acutely aware of *everything* because every wrinkle in the asphalt, every change of camber, is transmitted directly to your contact points.


As *Autocar* pointed out in its period test: 'This is essentially [*sic*] a car for good roads since the



suspension has limited travel and is ultra-firm.' Indeed, it's hard not to wince after some of the harder landings. Nevertheless, you would need to have a heart of granite not to break out in a broad smile driving this car.

But there can be no railing against the injustice of it all: how the Plus Four Plus could have been a world-beater had it not been snookered by fate. Or something. It was doomed from the outset, although Peter Morgan insisted that his firm didn't lose money making it. He also believed that the styling didn't exactly aid its chances. Not because it was too modern to appeal to the old guard, but more that it appeared to be too old-fashioned to potential punters in the go-go '60s. He may have had a point: up close, it looks more like a product of the mid-to-late '50s.

Leaving aside a one-off Plus 8 coupé and the SLR racers, there wouldn't be another fixed-lid Morgan until the Aeromax arrived in prototype form at the 2005 Geneva Salon.

What really did for the Plus Four Plus was this: punters craving vintage thrills also craved vintage style; they wanted Morgans to be Morgan-shaped. Nor was it sophisticated enough to attract a new audience. Heritage has long been the starting and returning point for Morgan, the Plus Four Plus being an evolutionary anomaly. But it's precisely because of its outsider status that we find it interesting nowadays. There's probably a lesson in there somewhere. 

Thanks to Morgan owner Mark Cooper and DTR Sports Cars: 020 8645 5050; www.dtrsports.com

'YOU WOULD NEED TO HAVE A HEART OF GRANITE NOT TO BREAK OUT IN A BROAD SMILE DRIVING THIS CAR'



From top: elegant Morgan script on four-in-one Smiths instrument; neat Hillman Imp rear lights in fins; Plus Four Plus feels rapid with hot engine



1967 Jaguar E-Type S1 OTS • 18k original miles, all original "Survivor"



1954 Chevrolet Corvette C-1
all original "Survivor" 2335 original miles



1954 Lester-MG T51 Alloy Coupe
1-off w/1950's Race History, MM eligible



1971 BMW 3.0CSL Lightweight "Prototype"
#29 of 169 w/Carbs, original Colorado Orange



1974 DeTomaso Pantera GTS
all original "Survivor" 3085 original miles



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Aston Martin DB4 RHD, 1960.



Porsche 911 SWB FIA, 1965.



Porsche 911 2.4S Targa, 1972.

BMW 327/328 Sports Cabriolet, 1939.
Cape Cobra Ford GT40 track car, 2005.
Citroen DS19 Chapron, 1963.
Corvette C2 Coupe FIA, 1965.
Chevron B16 BMW FIA, 2004.
Denzel WD1300 Super Sports, 1954.
Fiat 1100A Barchetta, 1946/68.
Fiat Topolino Barchetta, 1951.
Jaguar E-Type Lightweight FIA, 1964.

Lotus Elan S2 - "26R" FIA, 1965.
Renault Sport Spider Europa Cup, 1996.
Renault Sport Spider, ex Benoit Jacob.
Porsche Carrera GT1 racing, 2004.
Siata 300BC 1100 barchetta, 1953.
Sighinolfi BMW, 1954. Targa Florio history.
TVR Griffith 200/400, 1965.
Venturi 400 Trophy, 1992.
Volpini Lancia Aprilia MM barchetta, 1937.

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CASE HISTORIES



WE TEST THE CLASSICS THAT YOU CAN BUY



MORGAN PLUS 8

Year of manufacture 1997 Recorded mileage 6624

Asking price £30,995 Vendor Richard Thorne Classic Cars, Grazeley Green, near Reading, Berks; tel: 0118 983 1200; www.rttc.co.uk

WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price £33,285 Max power 190bhp Max torque 235lb ft
0-60mph 6.1 secs Top speed 124mph Mpg 20

This immaculate Morgan is a one-owner car, and he's only selling it to buy a new Plus 8. The exact mileage is unknown because the odometer started massively over-reading before it was changed in 2007. Five stamps in the service book show that it leapt from 6000 to 27,000 between services so, judging from that and the old MoT certificates, the true total could be anywhere between 14,000 and 20,000 miles.

This is one of the last short-door Plus 8s, with a galvanised chassis, and, as you would expect, it's in excellent shape. It was ordered with a long list of extras such as wire wheels, aluminium body and wings with scuttle roll-bar and passenger side mirror. The Morgan has possibly never been out in the rain, because the hood and sidescreens look unused. The plywood floorboards are dry and clean, too, plus the hide upholstery is only lightly creased and worn. The walnut dashboard – another extra-cost option when leather was standard – is also perfect.

The front wings were respayed a while ago and there are a few tiny star-chips in the nearside rear mudguard that will be sorted before sale. The standard exhausts are in good shape and there's a little surface rust on the wheel rims, which again will be cleaned up by the vendor. The tyres are new-looking Pirelli P6000s, with an unused spare.

The 3.9-litre Rover V8 shows some light corrosion, and is fronted by a replacement aluminium radiator and thermostat housing. Its coolant is full and pink, plus the oil golden and to the top mark on the dipstick, although the Morgan will be serviced again before it leaves RTCC.

The engine starts instantly, showing 3½ bar oil pressure at warm tickover that never budes, and 13.8 on the voltmeter. It's taut to drive but not crashy – which counts as an almost fluid ride on a Morgan – and everything works as it should, from the gearbox synchros to the brakes. There's plenty of prod, of course, with that lovely V8 woofle.

It will be sold with the original bill of sale and delivery slip, a new MoT plus the owner's manual and a fully stamped service book.

SUMMARY

EXTERIOR

• Straight; shiny; minor blemishes will be rectified prior to sale

INTERIOR

• Lovely veneer; hide barely worn

MECHANICALS

• Healthy; just serviced again

VALUE ★★★★★☆☆☆

For A nice vintage of Plus 8 that's in excellent order

Against Chrome rims are a bit flash
SHOULD I BUY IT?

It scores highly in just about every way – ideal for a blast of a crisp morning. And winter is always a great time to buy a sports car



Bilfabriken där sågspånen yr

Brittiska Morgan är en unik sportbil. Karossen kan inte rosta, men väl ruttna om den vansköts.

Sportbilen Morgan 4/4 (fyra hjul och fyra cylindrar) har byggts enligt samma koncept allt sedan introduktionen 1936 då den kompletterade den trehjuliga motorcykelbilen 3 Wheeler. Karosseristommen byggs fortfarande av askträ. Och det finns ingen orsak att tro att fabriken skulle såga ett fungerande koncept.

Morgan Motor Company, som inledde produktionen 1910, är världens äldsta bilfabrik som ägts av samma familj ända från starten. Fabriken finns i Malvern, Worcestershire, känt för sin Worcestershire Sauce.

HANTVERK OCH HI-TEC

Morganfabriken andas både konservativt hantverk och högteknologi. Här samsas modellen 4/4 med sex andra modeller, alla med klassiskt sportbilstuk. I fem av dem är askträet en gemensam nämnare. Super-sportbilarna Aero 8 och Aeromax är byggda enligt den nyaste teknologin. 3 Wheeler byggs sedan några år i en retroversion, men har inte trä i konstruktionerna.

Fabriken sysselsätter ca 200 personer. I lagerhyllorna ligger omsorgsfullt radat askvirke. På snickeriet sågar, hyvlar och slipar bilbyggarna träbitar som fogas samman till karossramar. De bekläs med handknackad aluminiumplåt till läckerbitar för sportvagnsfrälsta världen över.

I sadelmakeriet skapar personalen inredningar av läder i önskad kulör.

Olavi Tupamäki i Grankulla är en av ca 20 Morganägare i Finland. Han beställde sin Morgan +8 år 1990 och hämtade den på fabriken sju år senare. I dag lär kön inte vara längre än tre år.

– Fabriken var gammalmodig, men stämningen avslappnad. Tepasen varade en halv timme och under den spelade personalen kort, berättar han.

Sorglös, men ett litet bekymmer lider fabriken av. England drabbades för några år sedan av askpest. Därför importeras askvirket nu från Tyskland.

Enligt Olavi Tupamäki är en av fördelarna med trä att det, speciellt i kombination med aluminium, gör bilen klart lättare än om den byggts av enbart stål.

– Nackdelen är att träet kan ruttna, men



FOTO: PETER NORDLING



FOTO: PETER NORDLING

Olavi Tupamäkis Morgan: British racing green, ekerfälgar, instrumentpanel och ratt av trä samt inredning i läder.

inget material är evigt, påpekar han.

En Morganägare vårdar i allmänhet ömt sin ögonsten, så risken för röta är liten. Dessutom behandlar fabriken träkonstruktionerna mot både röta och mögel.

Beträffande säkerhet och hållbarhet konstaterar Olavi Tupasalo att också Morganbilarna genomgått de krocktester som krävs för att en bil ska godkännas för trafik.

Om olyckan är framme kan också nya trädelar beställas både av fabriken och andra tillverkare. Olavi Tupamäki berättar om en Morganentusiast som tillverkade alla trädelar själv då han renoverade en bil.

POTENT RACER

Motorn i en Morgan är minsann inte träig. Olavi Tupamäkis är bestyckad med en potent fyraliters V8 i aluminium från Rover. Den ger, efter trimning, 240 hästar och en topphastighet på 240 kilometer i timmen. Från stillastående till 100 kilometer i timmen går på ca 5 sekunder.

Än priset då? Fabriken prislista är närmast riktgivande eftersom varje bil byggs enligt kundens önskemål. I Finland finns ingen importör. På den svenska generalagenten Morgan Centre Swedens webbplats är en två år gammal Morgan 4/4 prissatt till



FOTO: MORGAN MOTOR COMPANY

Morganfabriken har ett eget snickeri.

340 000 kronor (ca 37 000 euro). En 23 år äldre bjuds ut för 240 000 kronor (ca 26 000 euro). Till priset ska den, som importerar en bil, lägga den finländska bilskatten.

På fabriken säger man att värdet på en Morgan består. Men skicket kan inte förbises. Dessutom kan penningvärdet förändras.

Eftersom bilarna är få är också utbudet av begagnade litet, speciellt som traditionen bjuder att bilarna går i arv från far till son. •

TEXT: PETER NORDLING

'It propelled Morgan into a new league'

For nearly four decades, the original Plus 8 blended tradition with epic performance.

Ross Alkureishi discovers whether the latest BMW-powered incarnation measures up

PHOTOGRAPHY **TONY BAKER**





YYV 65H

Anyone entering the visitors' car park at Morgan's Malvern headquarters this morning has to do a distinct double-take, for there sits a 1969 Plus 8 and next to it – Matryoshka doll-style – is the current iteration. We're admiring the lines of the steroid-fed big brother as the firm's head of design Jonathan Wells appears with Tim Milvain, owner of the '69 car.

"What do you think?" asks Wells. Underneath, the latest incarnation is pure Aero 8, which means a bonded and riveted aluminium chassis plus modern BMW running gear. The traditional lines of the original have been replicated, and all of its essential ingredients – long louvred bonnet, curved radiator cowl, triple wiper blades and double-swoop profile – are present. And yet, size difference aside, there's an aggressive and raw look to this new roadster.

"The design team was very conscious of the 8's heritage and didn't want to create a pastiche, or wedding car," says Wells. I point out that the massive alloys and naked carbon fibre seats are somewhat lairy for the marque: "We deliberately

dress this car to show that you could either have it very modern like this, or to more traditional tastes." A fair point considering that, in period, the cast-magnesium alloy wheels that replaced the usual wires for the original Plus 8 must have appeared similarly of another age.

"There were real challenges and constraints in stretching that small classic body to fit the Aero's chassis," Wells explains. The flat back panel in particular could have ended up looking like a wall, and other areas required the subtle addition of curvature to break up the mass. "Overall it's proportionally correct, and we feel that it has all the essence of the original."

And it's the 1969 car that I'm going to sample first. Lifelong Morgan owner Milvain – he also has a 1936 F4 three-wheeler and a '69 4/4

**'IT COULD ACCELERATE
FASTER THAN A JAGUAR
E-TYPE, AND WAS MUCH
LESS EXPENSIVE'**

Competition that he bought new – takes charge of the modern Plus 8.

The cockpit is tight in the earlier Morgan. You sit close to the steering wheel but the Restall bucket seat – which replaced the flatter original – is well padded and supportive. Flush rocker switches, Smiths gauges and an Ambla-covered dashboard lend the cabin a basic, focused sporting ambience. Its V8 engine starts with a deep, yet almost polite, exhaust burst; the later car, on the other hand, explodes into action with a guttural quad-tailpipe yelp. Time to leave: we've just made enough noise to awaken even the company's famous stuffed owl, and those ancient Malvern Hills await.

Ancient is a word that can be applied to landscape and automobile alike. It had certainly been used to describe the design of Morgan's four-wheelers long before the arrival of the Plus 8. Using pre-war engineering principles, a traditional frame-type chassis was married to a fully detachable ash-framed, metal-panelled body. Beneath the surface lurked sliding-pillar independent front suspension, a live rear axle or semi-elliptic springs, a mid-mounted gearbox



and worm-and-nut steering. Bodywork could be to any design, of course, from a choice of one...

With the release of the Plus 8 in 1968, however, Morgan at least dipped a toe into the modern world. Let that juxtaposition sit awkwardly for a moment, and then consider that its decision to install V8 power in a lightweight chassis gave the new car searing pace. Power was up by more than 50% compared to the Plus 4, torque by 60% – and yet the weight increase was minimal. The result was that it was faster than a Jaguar E-type roadster from 0-60mph, as well as being considerably less expensive.

Three years earlier, Peter Morgan – son of founder ‘Harry’ – had been looking for more power than the 105bhp that was on offer from the existing Triumph ‘four’. He turned his attention away from the Canley firm’s new 2½-litre straight-six – too long and too high – to Rover’s recently licensed all-alloy V8. This 3½-litre Buick-designed powerplant looked perfect, but delicate negotiations were required after Rover became part of the Leyland Motor Corporation.

Engineer Maurice Owen took charge of the new model’s development. To accommodate the

V8, the traditional Rubery Owen-made chassis was lengthened by 2in, widened slightly and a number of joints strengthened to cope with the huge jump in torque; the engine itself was actually lighter. A Land-Rover inlet manifold kept the twin SU carburettors low enough to fit under the bonnet, although early cars’ air filters still required manual manipulation with a hammer to allow for the bonnet hinge.

The result was – and is – one prodigiously fast Moggy. Pushing the roller throttle pedal results in instant surge. Gearchanges through the Moss ‘box take a little practice, but once you get the timing right that tactile little lever aids progress beautifully. Even under heavy load the exhaust note remains refined and the power delivery smooth, but over rougher patches of road the suspension demonstrates its teeth-chattering shortcomings. Through tight corners, however, there’s plenty of traction and little body roll. The heavy steering can be a bit physical but win the fight and it enables you to thread that long bonnet exactly where you want to.

The Plus 8 comes into its own in a straight line; acceleration in second and third gears is



Clockwise, from main: original Plus 8 is nicely proportioned – it received a wider body in 1976; the cockpit is a tight fit and features a basic but clear dashboard; chassis had to be altered to accept Rover’s all-alloy V8 powerplant; neat ‘finned’ alloy wheels replaced traditional wires





From top: monstrous BMW V8 engine gives 367bhp in this latest incarnation; dashboard evokes the old style but with modern electronics; multi-spoke wheels cover enormous discs and calipers; more room inside thanks to the use of Aero 8 platform; sweeping profile is the later car's best angle



startling and you're able to see why so many choose this car for its effortless long-distance touring ability – the post-1976 five-speed Rover gearbox lengthens its legs still further.

I'm reminded of something that the motoring journalist LJK Setright once said: 'Either you like Morgans for what they are... or you suffer.' The original Plus 8 provides such an exhilarating experience that for me it's definitely the former.

There's nothing like the turn of a century approaching to concentrate the mind. Towards the end of the last one, Morgan began contemplating a new car, something that could showcase its traditional engineering skills and take it forwards into the next millennium. The result, launched at the 2000 Geneva Salon, shocked the motoring world. The Aero 8 had a bonded aluminium chassis, exterior panels shaped using an aerospace superforming technique and wish-bone suspension. It also had an interesting 'modern' take on Morgan's old-school styling.

This flagship model once again propelled the company into a new league of performance. Power came from a 4.4-litre BMW M60 V8 that initially produced 282bhp, enough to drive the

'MORGAN BEGAN BY DESIGNING A CAR THAT WOULD TAKE IT INTO THE NEXT CENTURY'

Aero 8 from 0-60mph in 4.8 secs. With these technical leaps forward came a price of £68,000, before extras. It survived through four series to become the current Aero SuperSports and Coupé, but, with the old Plus 8 having been replaced in 2004 by the V6 Roadster, there was a growing demand to see a V8 in that traditional body style. In 2012, Morgan therefore took the underpinnings of the latest Aero 8 and designed a 'new old' body to fit, creating the Aero Plus 8.

A by-product of using the larger chassis is that there's more room in the new car's cabin. Lift yourself over the wide sill and you drop into a seating position that's supportive and affords an excellent field of vision. The interior is well presented with colour-coded dashboard and contrasting leather, while all the Aero 8's modern



MORGAN PLUS 8

Sold/number built 1968-2004/6130

Construction steel chassis, ash frame, steel body panels

Engine all-alloy, ohv 3528cc V8, twin SU carbs; 160bhp @ 5200rpm; 210lb ft @ 2750rpm

Transmission Moss four-speed manual, no synchromesh on first gear, RWD

Suspension: front independent via sliding pillars, coil springs, telescopic dampers rear live axle, semi-elliptics, lever-arm dampers

Steering worm and nut

Brakes discs/drums, with servo

Length 12ft 8in (3861mm)

Width 4ft 9in (1448mm) **Height** 4ft 2in (1270mm) **Wheelbase** 8ft 2in (2438mm)

Weight 1979lb (898kg)

0-60mph 6.7 secs **Top speed** 124mph **Mpg** 21

Price new £1477 18s 4d **Now** from £35,000

MORGAN AERO PLUS 8

Sold/number built 2012-date/122

Construction aluminium bonded and riveted tub, ash frame, aluminium panels

Engine all-alloy, ohc 4799cc V8, fuel injection; 367bhp @ 6300rpm; 370lb ft @ 3400rpm

Transmission six-speed manual or auto, RWD

Suspension independent, at front via cantilever upper arms, wishbones rear double wishbones; coil springs, telescopic dampers f/r

Steering power-assisted rack and pinion

Brakes ventilated discs, with servo and ABS

Length 13ft 6in (4120mm) **Width** 5ft 9½in (1770mm) **Height** 3ft 11in (1200mm)

Wheelbase 8ft 3½in (2530mm)

Weight 2425lb (1100kg)

0-60mph 4.5 secs **Top speed** 155mph

Mpg 23 **Price new** £85,200

paraphernalia is in place, but packaged more discreetly. There are twin airbags – something that renders the steering wheel a little lacking in character – but traditional sidescreens.

Hit the starter button, blip the throttle and an aural riot breaks out just behind your head; it's all very un-Morgan-like. Depress the light clutch pedal, find first and take off. If the original Plus 8 is prodigiously fast, then this is something else again. The big V8 propels this retro-vintage spaceship forward at warp speed.

With 367bhp and no traction control it's easy to spin the wheels, and in the wet you'll need warning signs deployed. The view down that long bonnet is inspiring, but it's a lot wider so it requires more care through traffic than its nimble predecessor. Stopping power – via massive AP Racing calipers and discs – is very impressive and there's ABS as standard.

It acquits itself well on the twisty stuff, too. The hydraulically assisted steering has improved since the first Aero 8 and the chassis is miles ahead of the 1969 car. The ride is firm and it'll still fidget on uneven road surfaces, something it shares with its predecessor, but any Morgan aficionado will forgive it that and be familiar with how to harness its power. With such an outrageous soundtrack and epic performance, the whole experience is scintillating.

Milvain and I spend the remainder of the afternoon hopping in and out of the cars, getting a real feel for how they compare and how the new one has evolved. We eventually return to Malvern and compare notes over a cup of tea.

"Morgan must be given credit for making the new Plus 8," he says. "It's a fabulous sports car in its own right and I could grow to love it, but it's just too wide for the Cotswold roads near me."

Both of these models did similar things for the marque in terms of an increase in performance, but perhaps the Aero Plus 8 is all the more impressive given the complexities of modern production. It's a huge task for a firm with only 10 engineers and limited resources to create a car of such ability and which complies to the same standards as its competitors. Whereas enthusiasts used to buy a Morgan instead of an MG, nowadays it goes into battle against Porsche *et al.*

"I'm quite happy to keep my Plus 8 and just enjoy driving old cars," concludes Milvain, and for me that's the crux of the matter. The new car is a phenomenal performance machine, and comes with a price-tag to match, but the original benefits from the charm and patina of age. In fact, running gear aside, it was old even when it was new. So while the Aero Plus 8 is a welcome addition to the company's range, perhaps after another 45 years of production it'll be able to stand closer comparison with the original.

Both models prove one thing, however, and that is how Morgan remains unique among car manufacturers: a trendsetter, yet thankfully one that is firmly set in its ways.



The 1969 car looks positively delicate next to the Aero Plus 8; note the difference in tyre profiles. Right: fake 'spare-wheel cover' helps to disguise later model's vast width



Auton ulkomailta tuoneiden ja valtion välinen 10-vuotinen taistelu jatkuu



Korkeimman oikeuden ratkaisun mukaan jopa kymmenet tuhannet auton Euroopasta tuoneet ovat maksaneet perusteettomasti niin sanottua elviä.



Käytetyistä tuontiautoista peritty liikaa veroa

Suomen valtio kärsi jälleen kerran tappion tuomioistuimessa. Tällä kertaa Tullille ja hallinto-tuomioistuimille tuli ikäviä uutisia kotimaisesta korkeimmasta oikeudesta (KKO 2013:58).

Päätöksen mukaan Suomi oli perinyt autoveron yhteydessä nk. **elviä** vastoin unionin oikeutta ja EU-tuomioistuimen päätöstä. Valtio velvoitettiin korvaamaan ulkomailta auton tuoneelle unionin oikeuden rikkomisesta aiheutettu vahinko, koska valtion todettiin syyllistyneen syrjintään. Auto, josta elvi oli virheellisesti määrätty, oli tuotu Belgiasta Suomeen vuonna 2003.

Vastaavanlaisia tilanteita, joissa autontuojalle ei ole vielä

palautettu **perusteettomasti määrättyä veroa**, on eräiden arvioiden mukaan noin 30 000 kappaletta. Nämä autojen Suomeen tuonnit ajoittuvat vuosiin 2002-2005.

Tulli on ilmoittanut, ettei se vapaaehtoisesti tule palauttamaan perusteettomasti kerättyjä veroja. Tällä hetkellä Tulli kuitenkin vastaanottaa vahingonkorvausvaatimuksia. Tullin tulokinnan mukaan on oikeudellisesti epäselvää, onko oikeus vahingonkorvaukseen vanhentunut, mikäli auto on tuotu Suomeen ja verotettu **ennen vuotta 2006**.

Tulli on tiedottanut, että se ei käsittele vahingonkorvausvaatimuksia, ennen kuin velan vanhentumista koskevien säännösten oikeasta soveltamisesta on saatu yleisen tuomioistuimen

lainvoimaisia ratkaisuja. Tämä merkitsee sitä, että lopullisen ratkaisun saanti voi kestää useamman vuoden.

Elvin lyhyt oppimäärä

Autoa Suomeen maahantuotajansa määrättiin aikaisemmin autoveron lisäksi myös arvonlisävero, joka ei ollut kuitenkaan oikeata arvonlisäveroa. Autoverosta perittävä arvonlisävero ei siis ollut arvonlisävero, vaikka siitä käytettiin tätä nimeä.

Vero oli käytännössä maahan tuodun auton toinen autovero tai **autoveron lisäosa**, joka perittiin autoveron perusosan yhteydessä. Tätä autoverosta perittävää arvonlisäveroa alettiin kutsua ei-arvonlisäveroksi eli elviksi vastakohtana arvonlisä-

Mikä elvi?

Elvi on maahan tuodun auton toinen autovero tai **autoveron lisäosa**, joka on peritty autoveron perusosan yhteydessä. Tätä autoverosta perittävää veroa alettiin kutsua ei-arvonlisäveroksi eli elviksi vastakohtana arvonlisäverolle eli alville.

verolle eli alville.

Autoverosta perittävästä arvonlisäverosta on kiistelty yli kymmen vuotta. Asiaa käsiteltiin Euroopan yhteisön tuomioistuimessa Siilinin tapauksen yhteydessä (C-101/00). Tällöin kysymys oli ensisijassa siitä, onko autoverosta perittävän arvonlisäveron periminen kielletty Euroopan yhteisön arvon-

lisäverodirektiivin nojalla.

Syyskuussa 2002 antamassaan ratkaisussa Euroopan yhteisen tuomioistuin katsoi, että autoverosta perittävä **arvonlisävero ei ole direktiivissä tarkoitettu arvonlisävero**, eikä direktiivi siis estä sen perimistä. Lisäksi tuomioistuin totesi, että elvin periminen ei saa johtaa syrjivään verotukseen.

Myöhemmin eli maaliskuussa 2009 Euroopan yhteisen tuomioistuin (nykyisin Euroopan unionin tuomioistuin) teki päätöksen, jonka mukaan, **elvin periminen oli syrjivää**, koska toisesta jäsenvaltiosta maahan tuodusta käytetystä tai uudesta autosta kannetun elvin määrä ylitti Suomessa jo rekisteröidyn, samanlaisen ajoneuvon arvoon sisältyvän elvistä jäljellä olevan määrän.

Syrjiväisyys oli seurausta siitä, että arvonlisäverollisilla maahantuoijilla eli esimerkiksi autokauppiaille oli oikeus vähentää elviä arvonlisäverotuksessa. Vastaavaa oikeutta ei ollut yksityishenkilöillä eikä myöskään yrityksillä, jotka toivat autoja Suomeen esimerkiksi työsuhteautoiksi eli arvonlisäverotuksessa vähennyskeltottomaan käyttöön.

Päätöksen jälkeen **autoverolakia muutettiin ja elvin määrääminen lopetettiin** 1.4.2009. Lisäksi Tulli palautti erityislain perusteella perustetomasti maksuunpantuja elvejä yksityishenkilöille, mikäli auto oli tuotu Suomeen vuosina 2006-2009.

Palautuksia maksettiin myös tilanteissa, joissa elviä koskeva asia oli käsiteltyssä oikaisuvaatimuksen tai valituksen takia vaikka auto oli tuotu Suomeen ennen vuotta 2006. Lisäksi maksuunpantuja elvejä palautettiin hakemuksesta yrityksille, jotka eivät olleet voineet vähentää elviä arvonlisäverotuksessa vuosina 2006-2009.

Purkuhakemukset ja huojennushakemukset hylättiin

Osa auton maahantuoijista, jotka eivät saaneet väärin perittyä elviä takaisin, tekivät tuomion

purku-hakemuksia korkeimmalle hallinto-oikeudelle (KHO) ja huojennushakemuksia Tullille. Kaikki hakemukset sekä Tullissa että KHO:ssa hylättiin.

Korkein hallinto-oikeus julkaisi kaksi vuosikirjaratkaisua (KHO:2010:44 ja KHO:2010:45), joissa purkuhakemukset hylättiin. KHO totesi päätösten perusteluissa, että vaikka vuonna 2009 annettusta tuomiosta (C-10/08) ilmeni, että EU-oikeuden tulkintaa oli tullut soveltaa jo ennen tuomion antamista, tuomion purkuun ei ollut edellytyksiä, koska tuli ottaa huomioon vaatimukset tehokkuus, vastaavuus- ja oikeusvarmuusperiaatteen toteutumisesta.

Osa autojen maahantuoijista ei tyytynyt hallinnosta saatujen päätösten lopputulokseen, koska he nostivat vahingonkorvauskan- teita valtiota vastaan kärjäoikeuksissa. Yksi näistä tapauksista on julkaistu (KKO:2013:58).

Autoilijan vahingonkorvausvaatimus hyväksyttiin kaikissa oikeusasteissa eli kärjäoikeudessa, hovioikeudessa ja korkeimman oikeudessa. Päätöksen perusteluissa todettiin, että valtion rikkomus on ollut riittävän ilmeinen korvausvastuun syntymiseen.

Päätöksessä sivuutettiin osa Suomen kansallisista vahingonkorvaussäädöksistä, koska unionin oikeuden periaatteena on, että jäsenvaltio on velvollinen korvaamaan sen syyksi luetut yhteisön oikeuden rikkomisesta aiheuttamat vahingot, jotka ovat aiheuttaneet ylimmän oikeusasteen päätöksestä. Lopputulos perustui myös siihen periaatteeseen, että kansallisilla säännöksillä ei saa tehdä korvauksen saamista käytännössä mahdottomaksi tai suhteettoman vaikeaksi.

Mikä on Euroopan unionin tuomioistuin?

EY-tuomioistuin (Euroopan yhteisöjen tuomioistuin) on nykyinen Euroopan unionin tuomioistuin (ECJ), joka toimii Luxemburgissa. Tuomioistuin ratkoo Euroopan unionin sopimuksiin ja säännöksiin liittyviä oikeuskysymyksiä. Tuomioistuimen nimi oli vuoteen 2009 asti Euroopan yhteisöjen tuomioistuin. Nykyisen nimensä se sai Lissabonin sopimuksessa.

Tee vaatimus elvin palauttamiseksi

Auton Suomeen Euroopasta tuoneen kannattaa tehdä Tullille vaatimus elvin palauttamisesta, mikäli auto tuotiin Suomeen vuosina 2002-2005 ja elviä ei ole aikanaan vähennetty arvonlisäverotuksessa eikä sitä ole saatu takaisin.

Korvausvaatimuksen tekemistä helpottaa valmis lomake, joka löytyy Tullin internetsivuilta www.tulli.fi. Vaatimuksen voi tehdä myös vapaamuotoisesti.

Vaatimuksessa on mainittava autoverovelvollisen nimi, henkilö- tai y-tunnus, osoite, puhelinnumero, mahdollinen sähköposti-osoite, ajoneuvon tuonti- ja verotusvuosi sekä pankkitilin numero mahdollisen korvauksen maksamiseksi. Otsikoksi pyydetään kirjoittamaan "Vahingonkorvausvaatimus elvin palauttamiseksi (KKO 2013:58)".

Hyvä uutinen jo oikeusjutun nostaneille

Korkeimman oikeuden päätös on hyvä uutinen niille, jotka ovat jo nostaneet valtiota vastaan oikeusjutun. Pääosa auton maahantuoijista ei kuitenkaan ole nostanut vahingonkorvauskannetta valtiota vastaan eivätkä kaikki varmaankaan ole myöskään vaatineet syntyneen vahingon korvaamista valtiolta.

Tulli puolustaa edelleen valtion kassaa, sillä ajan kulumisen merkitsee Tullin tulkinnan mukaan sitä, että useimpien autoilijoiden vahingonkorvaus-oikeus on jo vanhentunut. Vanhentumisen osalta asia on **oikeudellisesti vielä epäselvä**, sillä julkaistu korkeimman oikeuden päätös ei sisältänyt ratkaisua sen osalta, **mistä alkaen** oikeus vahingonkorvaukseen on alkanut vanhentua.

Nykyiset tulkintakysymykset

Vahingonkorvausoikeus vanhentuu nykyisen kansallisen lain mukaan **kolmessa vuodessa**.

Vanhentuminen voidaan **katkaista** oikeudellisin toimin tai vapaamuotoisella ilmoituksella, josta selviää vahingonkorvauksen peruste ja määrä kohtuudella edellytettävällä tavalla. Korvaussaatavan täsmällisen sisällön yksilöintiä ei edellytetä. Katkeamisesta alkaa uusi kolmen vuoden määräaika.

Lisäksi vahingonkorvauksella on absoluuttinen vanhentumisaika, joka on **kymmen vuotta** vahinkoon johtaneesta tapahtumasta. Eräät vahingot on kuitenkin rajattu kymmen vuoden säännön ulkopuolelle (henkilövahingot ja ympäristövahingot).

Keskeinen kysymys tämän hetken elvitaistossa on se, **mistä katsotaan alkaneen vahingonkorvausvelan vanhentuminen**.

Toinen kysymys on se, voidaanko katsoa, että autontuoja olisi jossakin vaiheessa tehnyt valtiolle ilmoituksen, jonka voitaisiin katsoa katkaiseen korvausvelan vanhentumisen. Useimmat hakivat muutosta autoverotukseen ja siinä yhteydessä Tullin eli valtion edustajan tietoon tuli elviin liittyvä vaatimus, jossa se pyydettiin poistettavaksi. Lisäksi moni teki lisäksi tuomionpurkuhakemuksen ja/tai huojennushakemuksen Tullille.

Vahingonkorvausvelka alkaa vanhentua siitä, kun vahingonkäräjät on saanut tietää vahingosta ja siitä vastuussa olevasta. Vanhentuminen alkaa myös siitä, kun vahingonkäräjän olisi pitänyt tietää vahingosta ja siitä vastuussa olevasta.

Silloin kun arvioidaan, mil-



Olavi Tupamäki on tehnyt verovalituksen vuonna 2004 yksityisesti maahantuomastaan englantilaisesta vuosimallia 1997 olevasta Morgan +8:sta. Tupamäen elvi-saatavat 4-litraisessa V8:lla varustetusta Morganista ovat 1 950 euroa plus korot.

Elviin liittyvä taistelu todennäköisesti vielä jatkuu eri oikeusasteissa.

loin vahingonkäräjien olisi pitänyt tietää vahingosta, arvioinnissa on merkitystä myös sillä, mitä vahingonkäräjien tulee ymmärtää. Vahingonkäräjällä on kykyjensä mukainen **selonottovelvollisuus**.

On siis mahdollista, että eri henkilöiden osalta valtion vahingonkorvausvelan vanhentumien alkaa **eri ajankodasta ja eri perusteesta** sen mukaan, minkälaiset kyvyt auton maahantuojan katsotaan omaavan.

Elviä perusteettomasti maksaneen kannalta olisi edullisinta, että yleinen tietoisuus syntyneestä vahingosta ja oikeudesta vahingonkorvaukseen katsottaisiin syntyneen korkeimman oikeuden päätöksestä **8.5.2013**. Tämä merkitsisi sitä, että veronpalautuksia olisi tulossa useille kymmenille tuhansille elviä maksaneille.

Tullin tulkinnassa lähdetään

sen sijaan siitä, että oikeus saada vahingonkorvausta perusteettomista elvin maksuunpanoista on **vanhentunut**, mikäli auto tuotiin maahan **ennen vuotta 2006**.

Elvin maksuunpano todettu syrjiväksi

Elvin maksuunpano todettiin Euroopan yhteisön tuomioistuinten päätöksellä 19.3.2009 **syrjiväksi**. Tämän takia suhteellisen selvää lienee se, että vahingonkorvausoikeuden vanhentumisen ei voida katsoa alkaneen ennen 19.3.2009.

Tulkinnallisempaa on se, voidaanko edellyttää, että tavalliset yksityishenkilöt ymmärsivät jo tuolloin, että heille oli syntynyt vahingonkorvausoikeus valtiolta myös tilanteissa, joissa auto oli tuotu Suomeen ennen vuotta 2006.

Tulli ja valtiovarainministeriö tiedottivat tuolloin, että elvin palautukset koskevat vain vuosia 2006-2009. Elvin takautuva palauttaminen perustui auto- ja arvonlisäverolain muutoksenhaku aikaan, joka on **kolme vuotta**.

Tulli on tehnyt myös parhaansa sen suhteen, että mahdollisimman harva lähtisi hakemaan rahojaan takaisin, sillä Tulli tiedotti korkeimman oikeuden langettavan päätöksen jälkeen 9.7.2013, että kanneoikeus asiassa on Tullin mielestä vanhentunut, eikä uusia kanteita voida enää pätevästi nostaa vahingonkorvausoikeudellisella perusteella.

Tullin tulkinnan mukaan vanhentumisaika alkoi **viimeistään 19.3.2009**, jolloin Euroopan yhteisöjen tuomioistuin antoi tuomion C-10/08 asiassa. Tätä näkemystä vastaan on ainakin se, että unionin oikeudessa on katsottu, että kansallisilla säännöksillä, kuten kanneoikeuden määräaika koskevilla säännöksillä, ei saa tehdä korvauksen saamista käytännössä mahdottomaksi tai suhteettoman vai-

keaksi. Toinen kysymys on se, voidaanko tavalliselta kansalaiselta edellyttää sitä, että hän ymmärtää ja seuraa Euroopan unionin tuomioistuimen päätöksiä ja suomalaisen eduskunnan lainsäädäntöä.

Päätöksiä tulossa

Tätä kirjoittaessa on tiedossa, että Helsingin käräjäoikeus tekee todennäköisesti syyskuun lopussa elvi-asiassa lisää päätöksiä. Elviin liittyvä taistelu todennäköisesti jatkuu vielä hovi oikeudessa ja myös korkeimmassa oikeudessa.

Taistelun lopputulos on epäselvä, mutta nyt kannattaa tehdä Tullille **vaatimus elvin palauttamisesta**, mikäli auto tuotiin Suomeen vuosina 2002-2005 ja elviä ei ole aikanaan vähennetty arvonlisäverotuksessa eikä sitä ole saatu takaisin. Palautusvaatimus **keskeyttää vahingonkorvausoikeuden vanhentumisen**, mikäli asia ei ole ehtinyt jo aikaisemmin vanhentua. ■

CASE HISTORIES

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MORGAN PLUS 8

Year of manufacture 1992 **Recorded mileage** 18,917
Asking price £29,500 **Vendor** Melvyn Rutter, near Stansted, Essex;
 tel: 01923 725725/726605; www.melvyn-rutter.net

WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price £24,821 **Max power** 190bhp **Max torque** 230lb ft
0-60mph 6.1 secs **Top speed** 121mph **Mpg** 20.1

This galvanised-chassis Plus 8 has had much money spent despite its tender miles, with bills for £7500 in the past decade for cosmetics including paint (which sadly includes the wiper arms: must have had some left over) plus new seats, hood and carpets. There's a full service history from Melvyn Rutter, the last stamp from 2005 at 14,831 miles. Its extras include a Moto-Lita wheel, stainless luggage rack and side exhausts, badge bar, rod mirrors, mesh grille and Cibie spotlamps, plus chrome rear light and reflector plinths and latest-type fuel caps. There are also Aeroquip brake lines, plus a shallow lockable storage box in the passenger footwell.

The paint is good save a couple of bubbles on the nearside front wing and hairline cracks around the headlamps. Its alloys aren't scuffed. There's a mint P6000 spare, plus the same on the front – but half-worn and 20 years old so they want changing – and barely used Michelin Pilots on the rear.

Inside, there's a German-type dash with VDO instruments and excellent veneer; Aero-type high-back seats (not the originals), sporting unworn leather; plus a roll-hoop and harness, though the standard belts remain, too. The hood, sidescreens and mohair tonneau cover are excellent.

The motor is clean and tidy – its oil golden and to maximum – with no leaks, plus coolant a good colour and to level. The alloy V8 fires instantly and the sidepipes give a lovely crackle. Oil pressure is 45psi at anything over tickover when warm, right for a Rover V8, while temperature settles at 80°C. The steering is light, with a tiny hint of play at the straight-ahead; there's a little shake though the wheel, but that'll be flat-spotted tyres from standing. The firm brakes bite strongly: just as well because Plus 8s at 950kg are enormously accelerative and this one's right up to the mark.

The price looks keen compared with an early narrow-body V8, or against Big Healeys, which have been on the up. It will be sold with a new MoT, tax until the end of November and a nice registration number, too.



SUMMARY

EXTERIOR

● Impressive; some new paint with only a few minor blemishes

INTERIOR

● Mostly fresh, and looks it

MECHANICALS

● Low mileage and feels healthy

VALUE ★★★★★★☆☆

For Super overall condition

Against The front tyres might be better on the back

SHOULD I BUY IT?

Needs nothing so appears a good bet, though if you need a slightly more discreet example Rutter has one of those as well



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1955 Jaguar XK140 FHC BRG/Tan. CWW. Stunning with 5-Speed. Well restored some time ago. £49,850



1996 Aston Martin Virage Volante Buckingham/Cream. 24,000 miles. Perfect. £29,980



1951 Jaguar XK120 Roadster Green/Green Suede, C-Type seats, Monza Cap. Nut & bolt rebuild. £79,800



1972 Aston Martin V8 F.1. Auto Green/Black. Lovely original car. £29,750



1955 Rover 60 Dove Grey /Red hide. Simply the finest. £7,450



1954 Bentley R Type Manual. Blue over Black/Grey hide. Power Steering. Show condition. £29,850



1963 Austin Healey 3000 MK11A White/Ice Blue – Blue trim. Older restoration. Ready to use. £26,980



1955 Triumph TR2 Red /black leather. Stunning rebuilt car. £23,650



1972 TRIUMPH TR6 Red/Black. Show condition. £14,990



1990 Mini Cooper BM. Rebuilt and better than new. £5,650



1974 Porsche 911 Carrera 3.0 RS Historic Rally Car. Rebuilt engine- winning car. £49,850



1977 Triumph Spitfire 1500 Canary Yellow / black leather. £5,450



1972 Lotus Europa FIA Historic Race Car. £26,950

1976 TR8 FIA Race Car
 All the right bits – could develop further. £5,990

1991 Nissan Figaro £4,980

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 Morris Major 1930. Folding roof, full restoration.....£13,750	 MGC GT1968. Manual with overdrive, Oseli engine. Alloys. Leather. Sun roof. Outstanding.....£15750	 Austin Healey Frogeye Sprite.1959. UK car. Restored in the 80s. Chrome wire wheels. Wood rimmed steering wheel.....£13,950
 Triumph GT6. Coupe Overdrive 1973. 20,000 miles in last 30 years.....£9750	 MGA 1600 Mk II. Roadster 1961. Crossflow head. 5 speed gearbox.....£27,000.	 Jaguar MKV11 'M'. Auto. 1956. 30,000 miles from new.....£27000
 BSA Coupe. 1934. One of only 2 built. Recent ground up restoration.....£10,000.	 MGB Roadster. Overdrive. 1973. 200 miles since total nut and bolt rebuild. Historic road fund licence.....£13,750	 Morris Mini. 1959. Full ground up restoration costing in excess of £12,000. All correct early production features.....£12,250

Morris Mini. 1959. Full ground up restoration costing in excess of £12,000. All correct early production features.....£12,250
 Austin Healey Frogeye Sprite. 1959. Recent rebuild. 1100cc engine. Wire wheels.....£14,500
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CASE HISTORIES CLASSIC & SPORTS CAR
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MORGAN PLUS 8

Year of manufacture 1998 Recorded mileage 39,150

Asking price £36,000 Vendor Fernhurst Motor Co, West Sussex; tel: 01428 653924; www.fernhurst-tvr.co.uk

WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price £34,639 Max power 190bhp Max torque 230lb ft
 0-60mph 6.1 secs Top speed 121mph Mpg 20.5

This Morgan, a 3.9-litre car with Range Rover-derived fuel-injected V8 featuring a 'hot-wire' air-mass sensor, has been very well looked after – to the extent that the previous owner (from '09) treated it to power-assisted steering, possibly making it unique. The fully stamped service history includes the great and the good of the Morgan world, with the first few stamps from Wykehams, then Berrybrook, and the most recent for the 55,000-mile service at Richard Thorne's last year at 38,827 miles.

The body is straight and the paint excellent, and what bits of the chassis we could see are rot-free. The wheels are unmarked, shod with half-worn Avon CR338s, with an unused XV1 on the spare. The hood and sidescreens, though not on the car, are said to be excellent. The front dampers look new and surface-rusted track-rod ends are the worst thing you'll find beneath.

The leather, on custom-made seats fitted in 2010 according to the paperwork, is all in good nick. The only scuffing to the interior is around the driver's doorhandle and there's a heated windscreen. The dashboard and veneers are unmarked and excellent.

The motor isn't concours, but there are no leaks. The oil is clean and to level, the coolant full and pink. It starts instantly, making a lovely noise though the exhausts are in good shape, and shows at least 3bar oil pressure when warm, rising to 4bar with any revs. The motor sits on 80°C when on the move; stop for a minute or two and the electric fan cuts in.

According to the accompanying paperwork, the engine has been chipped (with a Tornado X36), and it certainly feels lively. The electrically powered steering, fitted at a cost of more than £1500 in '09, makes manoeuvring a doddle, but does remove some confidence in front-end grip, especially in the wet. If you aren't keen, it would be fairly easy to disconnect or remove. The car is sold with spare keys and the original Morgan handbook, plus full service history, MoT to mid-October and tax until the end of July.



SUMMARY

EXTERIOR

● Solid and shiny; no stone-chips

INTERIOR

● Excellent leather and veneers

MECHANICALS

● Lots of power and noise; good service history; drives nicely

VALUE ★★★★★☆☆

For Power-assisted steering

Against Power-assisted steering

SHOULD I BUY IT?

If you've always wanted a Morgan, but found the steering heavy at low speeds, this is the car for you. The splendid condition and service history speak for themselves



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1991 +4. 2.0 Rover. Royal Ivory with mulberry leather. Black weather equipment. Chrome wire wheels. Moto Lita steering wheel, walnut dashboard, radio, spot lamps, 2 owners. FSH. £21,950.



1969 Morgan +8 3.5 Rover V8. Racing green with black interior. 29,000 miles only, this is one of the most original early +8's in the world. Previously sold by us. £55,000.



2009 4/4 Competition. Sport black with tan leather interior, tonneau, door pockets. Black wire wheels. Mesh grille. 10,328 miles. 2 owners. £30,950.



Brand new unregistered Morgan 4/4. 1600 Sigma. Sport Red, black leather interior, 5 x black wire wheels. Radio CD. Door pockets. On the road price £33,250.



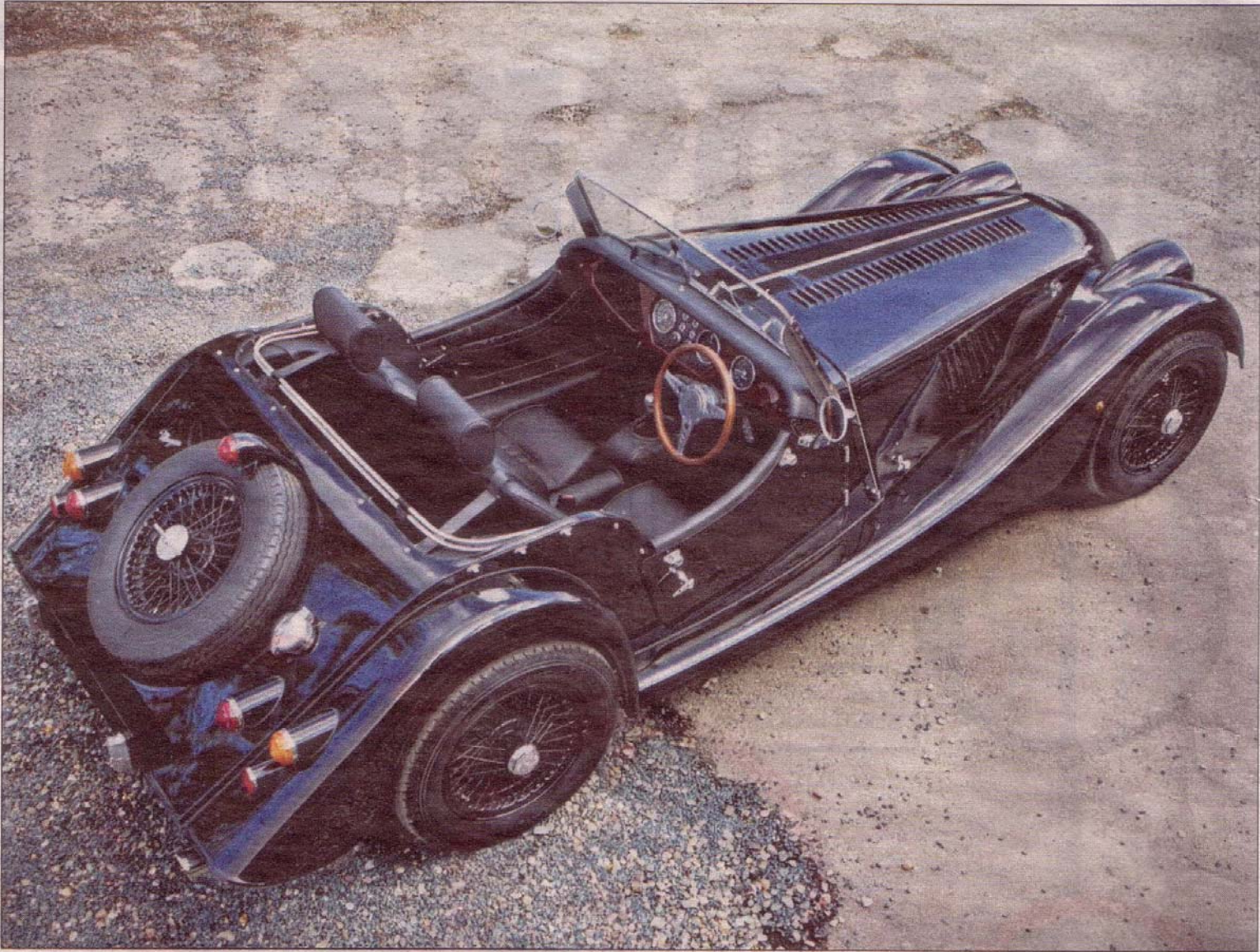
Brand New 4/4 Sport. Ivory with saddle brown leather interior, tonneau, door pockets. Black wire wheels, painted dashboard, sports seats. £32,212 on the road.



Brand New Plus 4 - 2.0 Duratec. Sport Green with stone leather. Green weather equipment. Sports seats, stainless wire wheels, walnut dash. £41,915 on the road.

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IKONI Morgan 4/4 esiteltiin ensimmäisen kerran 1936, ja siitä on tullut eripuolilla maailmaa intohimoisten autoharrastajien rakastama ikoni.

Valmistetaan käsityönä

Brittiläiset Morgan-autot valmistetaan yhä käsityönä.

Valmistetaan käsityönä

Brittiläiset Morgan-autot valmistetaan yhä käsityönä.

Morgan Motor Company on yritys, jonka brittiläinen H.F.S. Morgan perusti vuonna 1906.

Vuonna 1936 esitelty 4/4-malli oli Morganin ensimmäinen nelipyöräinen malli. Aiemmat olivat verotussyistä kolmipyöräisiä.

Siitä lähtien autoa on valmistettu samantyyliisenä aina näihin päiviin asti.

Nyt Morgan on valmistanut mallista juhla-version - Morgan 4/4 75th Anniversary Editionin.

Anniversary-versioon on tarjolla kolme väri vaihtoehtoa: musta, punainen ja valkoinen.

Auton tunnistaa pitkittäisen sivuraidan merkinnästä: 4/4 75. Muita yksityiskohtia ovat puusomisteet, kromatut peilit, 15-tuumaiset mustat pinnavanteet ja mustat nahkaistuimet.

Auto valmistetaan yhä käsityönä alumiinista. Vuosikymmenien kuluessa 4/4:n sisäosaa, turvallisuusseik-

koja ja moottoreita on päivitetty ajankohtaisemmiksi (alkuperäisiin Climaxeihin verrattuna), mutta kori ei ole juurikaan muuttunut vuosien varrella. Myös kuumu on käsikäyttöinen ja samanlainen kuin alkuaikoina.

Autossa on perinteiseen tapaan tilaa kahdelle, kojelauta on mahonkia, sen pyöreät laitteet ovat samantyyliisiä kuin Smithin aikoinaan ja klassinen ohjauspyörä on kiillotettua alumiinia, mutta istuimet ovat mukavammat ja turvallisemmat kuin ennen.

Moottori on moderni 2-litrainen Ford Duratec, 145 hv. Kiihtyvyys 0-100 km/h 7,2 sekuntia, huippunopeus noin 190 km/h. Auto on kevyt kokonaispainon ollessa 920 kg. Arvioitu hinta, ilman veroja noin 46 000 euroa.

PAOLO TORRETTA



Kojelauta on mahonkia ja klassinen ohjauspyörä on kiillotettua alumiinia.



Autossa on perinteiseen tapaan tilaa kahdelle.



Auton tunnistaa pitkittäisen sivuraidan merkinnästä: 4/4 75. Sama teksti toistuu konepellillä.

CASE HISTORIES

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MORGAN 4/4

Year of manufacture 1969 **Recorded mileage** 81,304
Asking price £14,950 **Vendor** Robin Lawton, Bordon, Hampshire;
 tel: 01420 474919/07710 364945; www.robinlawton.com

WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price £988 **Max power** 86bhp **Max torque** 92lb ft
0-60mph 9 secs **Top speed** 106mph **Mpg** 28

This four-owner 4/4 is in delightful order. It was repainted quite early in its life by the factory – over the original white – but the best bit is that the body is very tidy, with none of the splits and star-dings often seen on cars of this age: steel wings help here. The chassis looks in fine condition, too. All of the chromework is good and the steel wheels ride on a decent set of correctly narrow Firestone F560s. All of the weather gear is smart, the sidescreens in their own bag, and there's a tonneau cover.

The car appears all-original. The vinyl seats, probably the ones it left the factory with, are in good shape, plus the dash and instruments are all present and correct. There are a few small splits in the wheel's plastic covering where it meets the spokes, entirely consistent with the car's age.

Under the bonnet, the 1598cc Kent engine has been mildly tarted-up with paint and a chrome pancake air filter. The coolant and lubricant levels are both topped up and recent, with decent antifreeze strength.

The engine starts instantly with a little choke, with just the right amount of tappetiness from the pushrod motor. It drives very nicely, tracking true and with a slick gearchange, though the steering is typically slightly stiff in places and doesn't self-centre with any urge.

There are no shakes from the structure – or rattles from the bits bolted on – so it's as tight a Morgan of this vintage as you are likely to find. It's not quick, but cruises happily at 55-60mph, and the Ford motor will rev if you need to up the average a bit, while showing a steady 50psi of oil pressure, the temperature reading sitting on 'N' in the middle of the dial. The Kenlowe electric fan cuts in after a few minutes idling and the unservoed brakes need a shove, but they pull up straight and effectively.

This Morgan comes with a decent history file, including a spare key, plus a socket wrench for the locking tax-disc holder, owner's handbook and sales brochure as well as an MoT valid until March 2012.



SUMMARY

EXTERIOR

● Excellent body, with no stone-chip damage and nice older paint

INTERIOR

● Probably original; in good fettle

MECHANICALS

● Drives tightly; good oil pressure

VALUE ★★★★★★☆☆

For The car has clearly been well-maintained, and is in super order

Against Outright performance,

but then it's just right as it is

SHOULD I BUY IT?

If you like the vintage appeal of Morgans but need a four-seater, then it's a serious contender

Car-a-holics

Chesterfield, Derbyshire, UK



PORSCHE 550 SPYDER.

Hand built exacting replica, all new Porsche parts, engineered to the highest standards, blindingly quick! 300 + BHP tuned & modified 993 Porsche engine. Just 12,000 miles. Tubular space frame with aluminium, carbon fibre & GRP body panels. 600kg. The power to weight ratio is sensational & the drive & handling is spectacular. Porsche adjustable suspension & professionally set up. Interior finished as original, with drilled aluminium pedals, leather racing seats & harnesses. Export & registration to anywhere in the world included. £69,995



MERCEDES 230 SL 1964 PAGODA

Manual 4 speed. Wonderful unrestored condition with just 22,400 miles & MOTs to the 80's. In fantastic rust free original condition. Perfect Pagoda & soft tops. Red leather. Drives superbly & mechanically excellent. £39,995

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Mercedes Benz 300 SL



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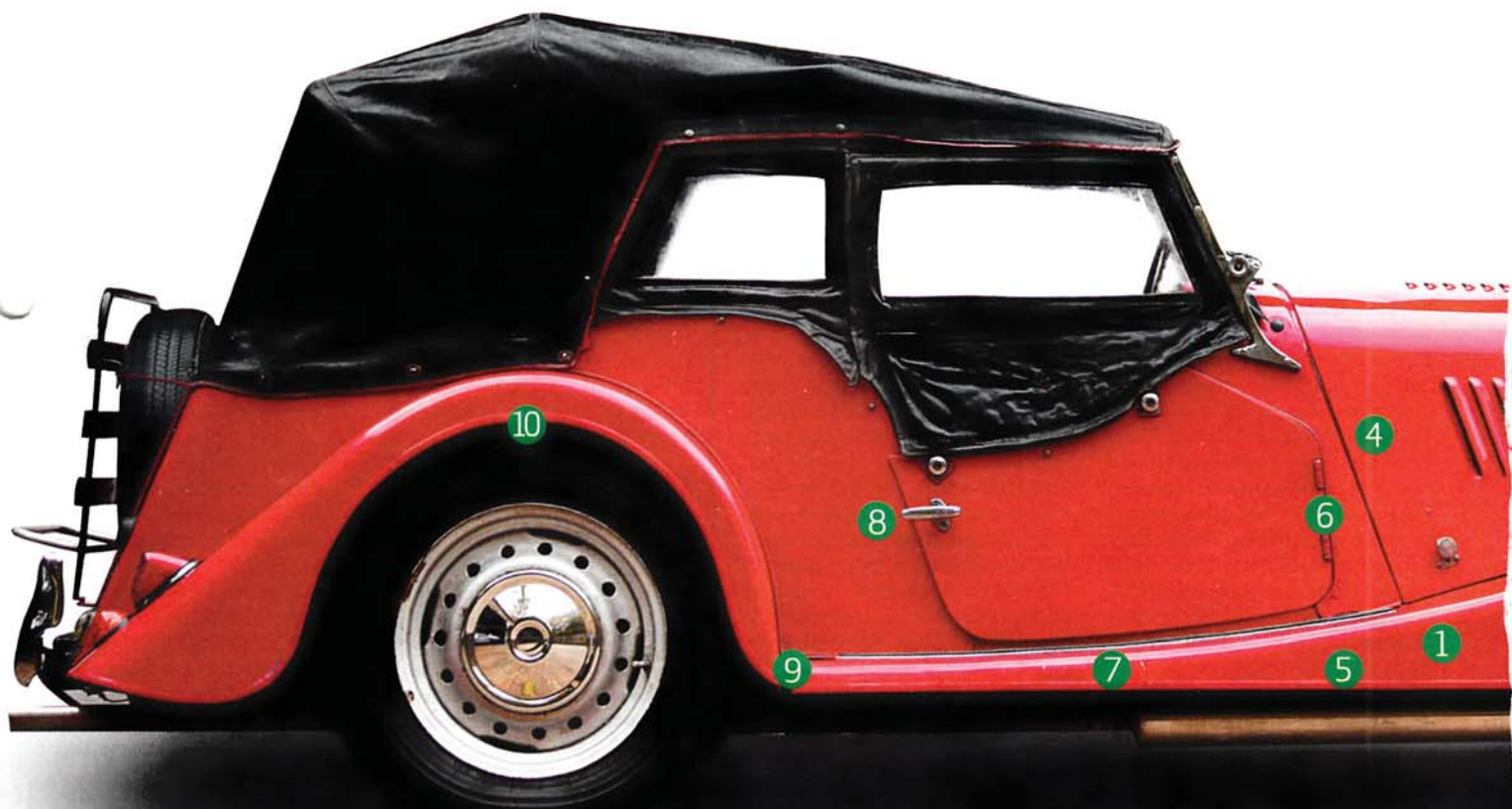
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MORGAN 'FOURS'

The eternal British sports car just gets better with age, as **Malcolm McKay** explains

PHOTOGRAPHY TONY BAKER



Most attempts, even by the factory, to bring Morgans up to date fail: the pre-war look remains in strong demand from the UK's most successful British-owned car maker. As a new car, they've been an anachronism for decades – '50s tests referred to their primitive nature. Yet they have continued to be painstakingly hand-built for a waiting list of eager customers who value them for their unique character, their oh-so-British craftsmanship and their seat-of-the-pants driving experience.

Yes, they have the worst ride over poor surfaces, due to an outdated and wear-prone front suspension first seen in 1910. Yes, they are cramped and noisy, particularly with the hood up. But that is the experience owners cherish. With flexing chassis, stiff springing and limited grip, Morgans still captivated road testers in the '90s, once they overcame initial misgivings to enjoy their predictability, tremendous feel and the sheer fun of controllable four-wheel drifts.

The four-cylinder cars offer the best value for money and, depending on the model, more than adequate performance is available in a Plus 4 or a late 4/4. Plus 4s were effective competition cars

and are now sought-after for classic motor sport.

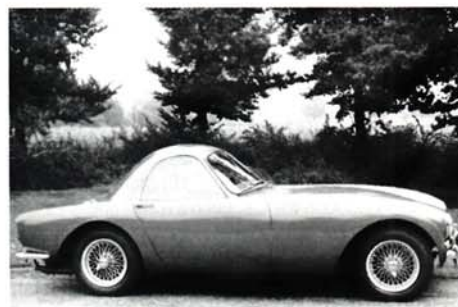
As a classic purchase, Morgans are timeless and there's lots of choice. Early 4/4s have a charm all of their own and a true vintage feel, but are slow and parts can be hard to find. By the mid-'60s, 4/4s had Ford running gear with a decent power-to-weight ratio, which steadily improved and can easily be tweaked with readily available kit.

Morgans don't last long between rebuilds: if they don't shake themselves apart, they rot. Galvanising came in '86, four-pot calipers and a servo in '93 and airbags from '97. 'Wide body' on '90s cars means wider wings and wheels on Plus 8 chassis. All chassis, ash frame and body parts are available, but not cheap; nor is a leather retrim.

Prices don't vary dramatically between ages; Rover twin-cam Plus 4s and Ford Kent 4/4s are currently good buys. Expect to pay £2-3k more for a two-seater than a four-seater, and a similar premium for an ally-bodied car. Ally panelwork saves 50kg but is more corrosion/crack-prone, notably around the arches where it is rolled over thick steel wire. TR-engined Plus 4s are desirable, with more than £60,000 asked for a rare, glassfibre-bodied Plus 4 Plus and up to £150,000 for a Super Sports with race history. The factory will provide a chassis-record certificate for £75.



John Dangerfield guns SS through Woodcote at Goodwood



Plus 4 Plus didn't prove popular: 26 were built, 1963-67



Rot spots

- 1 Wings (steel), where stone-chipped; inners by bulkhead
- 2 Chassis crossframe
- 3 Chassis can crack adjacent to engine mountings
- 4 Hardness of wood uprights
- 5 Chassis webs each side of bulkhead (rust/cracks)
- 6 A-posts (wood) – lift door
- 7 Wood sills: check pins that secure trim aren't loose
- 8 B-post should be solid
- 9 Crossmember, particularly where welded to main rails
- 10 Rear inner/outer wings (if steel), adjacent to beading



Meadows, Moss, Ford, Fiat and Rover 'boxes were used. Problems are rare, but check for worn synchro and dip clutch in neutral to hear layshaft noise



Original Burman/Cam Gears steering box becomes loose and floppy with age, but can be rebuilt. The Gemmer box fitted from 1984 is precise and durable



All engines, except maybe early 4/4s, were understressed and most cover few miles, so engine problems are unlikely if serviced regularly. Look for signs of overheating, notably with alloy units, or oil smoke, and listen for rattles or rumbles. Check cambelt replacement schedules have been followed, where relevant



Instrumentation is generally reliable, but post-'76 switches are weak. Relays on more recent cars can suffer from corrosion if unused for long periods



Only in 1982 did Morgan start using preservative, immersing the wood in Cuprinol from '86. Frame rot common and costly to sort so inspect carefully



Hood is rarely used: it is a pain to put up or down and dramatically increases noise levels inside when driving, but its condition can be a bargaining point



Sliding-pillar IFS is responsible for the very hard ride and prone to wear if not greased often, because grit gets in. A full rebuild (20-25k miles) costs c£500



This 1954 'flat-rad' Plus 4 is for sale for £17,500 at Harpers: 01923 260299; www.harpersmorgan.co.uk

On the road

Whichever model you are looking at, history is important: try to find out how well the car has been cared for by previous owners and how many times – and how well – it has been rebuilt.

On younger models, engines are unlikely to be worn unless servicing has been neglected. On Ford CVH-powered cars – said by some to be the best Morgans of all: simple, reliable, rapid and perfectly balanced – neglect leads to rapid cam and tappet wear. Listen for tapping and check for lacklustre performance. Cooling is important on all of them: radiators do not last for ever (10 years is a fair guide); they silt up and engines with aluminium heads can distort if overheated.

The unusual Z-section steel chassis does flex, and rot – the body flexes in harmony, but over time and hard driving it can shake itself to pieces. The Morgan signature sliding-pillar front suspension wears out in 20-25,000 miles (less if not frequently greased), so check that all seems well screwed together when driving. The car should feel like a go-kart: unforgiving ride, lively performance and immensely predictable handling. Expect some play in pre-'84 steering but it shouldn't wander all over the road. Check the age of the tyres – more than 10 years old will be hard and 20-plus will be dangerous, as will tyres of any age that have been left sitting flat.

Pre-'93 brakes can be upgraded with four-pot calipers (c£600), and by fitting the late master cylinder with integral servo (c£350). Removing a leaf from the semi-elliptic rear springs of four-seaters is recommended for a gentler ride, unless you carry very heavy loads.



Any Morgan feels sporty, ideally on a smooth road surface

OWNER'S VIEW Hedwig Rodyns



"It all started in 1972 with a three-year-old 4/4 Competition," recalls Rodyns. "It was one of the cheapest used sports cars that you could buy that could do 0-100kph in less than 10 seconds – important at the traffic lights! It was sold for a profit after four years' hard work and replaced by a younger 4/4: more comfort, with seats instead of a bench. In '79 – after a two-year wait – our new 4/4 four-seater arrived to take us all over Europe. It is still our daily driver, after a hard life of circuit racing (with a tuned Kent engine), lots of rallying and a necessary rebuild I did when the car was five years old. We are also restoring a 1939 Series I Coventry Climax. A 4/4 will be the car I will drive to the end of my life."

The knowledge

WHAT TO PAY

Show/rebuilt Plus 4	£22-28,000
Average two-seater	£15-19,000
Restoration	£7500-10,000

PARTS PRICES

Chassis, 4/4	£525-735
Chassis front crosshead	£465.06
Wood sill board pre-'97	£58.54
Brake master cylinder pre-'60 4/4	£92.14
Radiator	£400-556

ON THE WEB

morganhistoryinfo.services.officelive.com;
www.morgancarnews.com; www.gomog.com;
www.morgan-motor.co.uk

CLUB

Morgan Sports Car Club
01384 254480; www.msccl.co.uk

BOOKS

Morgan 100 Years M O'Mara Books
Original Morgan 4/4, Plus 4 & Plus 8 MBI
Morgans to 1997 MRP Morgan Haynes

SPECIALISTS

Morgan 01684 573104 **Melvyn Rutter** 01279 725725 **Harpers** 01923 260299 **Tudor** 01630 652596 **Brands Hatch Morgans** 01732 882017
Lifes Motors 01704 513270 **Richard Thorne** 0118 983 1200 **Techniques Motorsport** 01462 835500 **Vintage Wings & Rads** 0161 202 6247

TIMELINE

1936 4/4 launched, 1122cc Coventry Climax
1938 4/4 four-seater added, followed by Drophead Coupé; 820 built pre-war
1939 Standard ohv 1267cc for 4/4; few made
1946 4/4 production revived; 495 built to 1950
1950 Plus 4: 2088cc Standard, curved grille, faired-in lights; 90bhp TR2 '54; 100bhp TR3 '56
1955 4/4 511 with 36bhp 1172cc Ford 100E engine, three-speed 'box, sloping tail (386 built)
1960 Plus 4 SS with Lawrencetune TR engine
1961 62bhp 1340cc 109E in 4/4 SIV (114 made)
1962 Plus 4 receives 2138cc TR4 engine
1963 1498cc Cortina engine for 4/4 SV (639)
1968 4/4 gets 78bhp Cortina GT engine (3513 built to '82); Plus 4 (4585) replaced by Plus 8
1971 96bhp 1.6 Ford Kent for 4/4; then 98bhp 1.6 Fiat twin-cam from '81 (to Nov '85, 96 built)
1982 100bhp CVH replaces Kent in 4/4 (1652)
1985 Plus 4 back: 122bhp 1995cc Fiat twin-cam
1987 138bhp Rover M16 24v replaces Fiat
1991 4/4 gets injected 114bhp CVH (187 built); 121bhp 1.8 Zetec in '92; Plus 4 gets T16 Rover
1997 Longer doors, airbag facia, ally wings on Plus 4; dropped in 2001 but returns in 2005
2003 4/4 replaced by similar Runabout to '06

FACTFILE

Sold/number built 1936-date/c16,500
Construction Z-section steel ladder chassis, wood-framed aluminium or steel body
Engine iron/alloy 997-2138cc 'fours' with carb(s) or injection; 34-138bhp; 53-131lb ft
Transmission three-five speeds, driving rear wheels
Suspension: front sliding pillar **rear** live axle, semi-elliptics; lever arms/telescopic
Steering worm & nut to '84; recirculating ball; rack in '99
Brakes mechanical drums; hydraulic from '50; front discs '59-on (Plus 4); '61-on 4/4
Length 11ft 8in-13ft (3555-3960mm)
Width 4ft 6in-5ft 4in (1370-1625mm)
Height 3ft 10in-4ft 4in (1170-1320mm)
Wheelbase 7ft 8in-8ft (2335-2440mm)
Weight 1500-1995lb (680-907kg)
0-60mph 28.4-7.6 secs **Top speed** 75-115mph
Mpg 20-35 **Price new** £13,500 (Plus 4, 1988)

INSURANCE

£223, for London driver aged 30, full no-claims, clean licence on a garaged '88 Plus 4 as 2nd car, value £20k, 5000 ltd miles. RH: 01277 206911.

THE ALTERNATIVES



PANTHER LIMA/KALLISTA

Well built, reliable and mostly cherished. The biggest worries are

rust on early Limas and aluminium corrosion on Kallistas. A full respray can be costly on either.

Sold/no built 1976-'91/2640 **Mpg** 22-26

0-60mph 7.9 secs **Top speed** 111mph

Price new £11,250 (2.8, 1988) **Now** £7500



LOTUS/CATERHAM 7

Sold mostly as kits in the UK, Sevens give the ultimate go-kart-on-the-road feel with

stunning pace. Most do few miles so last well; check for rot in lower tubes/stress cracks.

Sold/no built 1974-'90/c3700 **Mpg** 29-35

0-60mph 5.5 secs **Top speed** 115mph

Price new £10,692 (1700SS, 1988) **Now** £8500

One to buy £17,950

Year of registration 1989 **Recorded mileage** 56,438
Vendor Brands Hatch Morgans, Borough Green, Kent; tel: 01732 882017 **For** super condition, good colour, keenly priced **Against** highish mileage (for a Morgan)

This Rover M16-engined Plus 4 two-seater has desirable options including a fold-down 'screen, roll-bar and luggage rack. The three-owner car (the last since '94) has clearly been well looked-after: its deep BRG paintwork is lustrous, with only minor chips on the vulnerable front wings. The matching hood fits well and is in similarly fine condition. Underneath, the chassis appears rot-free and well sealed; what you can see of the wood frame is solid, too, and the rear dampers look recent. The engine bay tallies, with clean oil, to level, as is the coolant, and no obvious leaks, but the gearbox and diff are a bit oily and there's surface corrosion on the track rods.

There are no external handles, but both doors open and shut easily with a reassuring click and don't sag – a sign of strong A-posts. The leather is soft and supple, with barely a blemish even around the door-shuts, and the dash is excellent.

The injected twin-cam fires almost instantly, settling to an 1100rpm tickover with 5bar oil pressure (6bar hot under load) and about 13.5V charging. After a short drive, the water temperature sits steady at about 80°C, just below halfway. Heavy at parking speeds, the precise box steering soon lightens and the short-travel, five-speed 'box is slick. The unservoed brakes need a decent shove but give excellent feel, and the ride is firm yet the car feels remarkably taut. It will come serviced, with a fresh MoT, and is taxed to July.



Painted wires mint; plenty of tread on 195/60x15 Pirellis



Optional Moto-Lita wheel immaculate, as is car's tonneau



ITG air filter improves breathing and gives sportier sound



Fun, forgiving handling and excellent grip, but bumps upset balance

Our verdict

Drive any example – from pretty much any era – and you will soon know if a Morgan is for you. If it is, look at all the options and pick the model that best suits your needs: 1990s cars are more usable than earlier models and are currently well priced. Bear in mind that the cars wear out at low mileages and neglect or rot will be expensive to put right.

FOR

- Zero depreciation, even on the most recent cars
- Sheer fun motoring with hood down on (smoothly surfaced) byroads
- About as 'green' as car manufacturing gets
- Archetypal sports-car style

AGAINST

- Very hard ride on most models
- Noisy and uncomfortable, especially hood-up
- Rapid deterioration if not looked after

A century of **THRILLS**

Graeme Hurst gathers together six of Morgan's most exciting sports cars to discover the appeal of a great British icon as it turns 100

PHOTOGRAPHY TONY BAKER



There's nothing quite like driving a Morgan – even the latest Roadster, the modern, emissions-friendly replacement for the Plus 8. It's thrilling and alarming in equal measure. Thrilling because 223bhp in a car that weighs just 940kg means 135mph and 0-60mph in 5.4 secs, serious figures in anyone's language. It's also alarming to indulge in that sort of performance – and you just have to – knowing that you're strapped into a car made of wood. Ok, it's not entirely wood, but timber-framed with light-alloy panels wrapped over it – like they used to make cars before the war.

And therein lies the paradox behind the success of Morgan, which has now been in business for a century. Ever since HFS Morgan's first trike hit the Cotswolds lanes in 1909, the firm has determinedly done things its own way. That way hasn't changed much in more than 70 years, but it has ensured that Morgan is still with us long after many of its contemporaries have been consigned to the history books. With a reputation for a bone-jarring ride and enough scuttle shake to scramble an egg, a Morgan's appeal has perplexed those outside its die-hard band of enthusiasts.

Yet Morgan is truly a cornerstone in our heritage, and it's still run by a Mr Morgan. Through times of lean and plenty – and there have been many of both in the motor trade over the past century – Morgan has rarely broken with tradition. Its roots lie in trikes but, since 1936, the firm has successfully evolved the same anachronistic – though charming – four-wheeler shape.





1947 MORGAN 4/4 SERIES I

Sold/number built 1936-'51/1315 (inc 164 DHCs)
Construction steel Z-section ladder chassis, with ash-framed steel, alloy body **Engine** ohv 1267cc 'four', Solex 30FAI carb; 38 bhp @ 4500rpm
Transmission four-speed manual, with synchro on top two, driving rear wheels **Suspension: front** sliding pillars, coil springs, telescopic dampers **rear** live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs, Hartford scissor-type friction dampers **Steering** Burman Douglas cam and peg **Brakes** cable drums
0-60mph 25 secs **Top speed** 80mph **Mpg** 35
Price new £505 **Price now** £25-30,000

Morgan's roots go back to founding father HFS. Son of a Herefordshire clergyman, 'Harry' Morgan pursued his natural bent by studying at Crystal Palace Engineering College, before taking up an apprenticeship with the Great Western Railway. But like WO Bentley, another train apprentice, he was enthralled by the rapid emergence of self-propelled vehicles. By 1906 Morgan had set up a garage trading in Darracq and Wolseley cars, before operating a bus service. A lack of demand led to him to build a Peugeot V-twin motorcycle that evolved into a three-wheeler version at Repton School and Malvern

'THE REVERSE-GATE 'BOX AND PRECARIOUS HANDLING ARE ALL PART OF THE 4/4'S CHARM'

College in 1909, assisted by engineering master William Stephenson-Peach (C&SC, June).

The prototype trike used the same Peugeot motor and featured sliding-pillar, coil-sprung front suspension attached to cross tubes that acted as a beam axle – a trademark arrangement that survives in the Roadster today. A year later the three-wheeler was launched at the Olympia Motor Show and formed part of the booming cyclecar trend. It proved a profitable line. By 1914, Morgan was selling nearly 1000 cars a year, with demand boosted by the cheaper road tax, which – at £4 – was half that of a four-wheeler.

The trikes were huge fun, too, thanks to their sharp handling and generous power-to-weight ratios that brought hundreds of owners success at local hillclimbs and race tracks.

Fast-forward to the '30s and rapid production improvements at rival car makers brought serious competition at the bottom end of the market. In particular, Herbert Austin and Henry Ford had made 'proper' cars affordable. Morgan had to compete without compromising its sporty character. Enter the 4-4 – for four wheeler, four cylinder (or 4/4, post war). With captivating styling and an ash-framed body, this was the path to Morgan's future – one longer and brighter than surely HFS himself could have imagined.

Morgan sourced a larger, 1112cc Coventry Climax engine for the new 4-4 roadster. Even with just 34bhp on tap, the model continued the trike's reputation in competition, completing the RAC Rally in 1937 and coming second in class (and 13th overall) at Le Mans in '38. A year on, Morgan teamed up with Triumph – which built the Climax units – to increase performance with the overhead-valve Standard Special, as fitted to the 1947 example featured.

Affectionately known as 'flat-rads', these 4/4s are highly collectable (this is one of just eight Drophead Coupés in the UK) and it's easy to see why. The combination of the upright '30s styling and simple mechanicals give it a unique personality and the Drophead's higher door line makes you feel pleasantly ensconced. Performance initially seems genteel – it still only packs 38.8bhp, after all – yet it'll get to a brisk-feeling 50-55mph surprisingly quickly. But by then the





Left: train driver Tedman was instantly drawn to 'God's Wonderful Railway' registration – he worked for the GWR. Above, from top: simple sprung wheel in basic cabin; car is one of eight Standard Special-engined Drophead Coupés known to survive; twin steel spares locked in place with proud crest



From top: full-width dash, with lovely Smiths gauges, rev counter nearest to the driver and speedo over to the left – Moto-Lita wheel is a more recent fitment; TR engines were used from 1954 to '69; fabulous perforated steels; owner Harris bought the crashed car and restored it with Super Sports-spec bonnet

1947 4/4



High Wycombe-based train driver **Terry Tedman** bought his 4/4 in the mid-'90s because of its GWR registration number: "I was working for Great Western Rail at the time and just had

to have it." Tedman purchased the part-restored project and rebuilt its mechanicals. He reckons the car's simplicity is its key attraction: "There isn't anything on it that I can't do myself and I love playing with it," explains Tedman, who had a Plus 8 before. The former parachute regiment soldier is also a huge fan of the marque's character: "Morgans are completely individual because no two are built alike."

1962 PLUS 4



Colin Harris bought his Plus 4 as a wreck in '72. "It had been badly damaged down all one side and the front was gone," says the retired production engineer, who restored it over four years. "I bought wings

and rebuilt the rear bodywork. The bonnet had rusted, as had the door bottoms." He then had to sort the rotten frame and has since done so many miles that the engine wore out: "It started to smoke a few years ago and I rebuilt it to 2.2 litres." Harris still has a trike that he bought as a runabout while restoring the Plus 4: "There's a buzz about a Morgan. It's the way they look and feel to drive – they're just fun cars."

1962 MORGAN PLUS 4

Sold/number built 1954-'69/3734 (TR engine)
Construction steel Z-section ladder chassis with ash-framed steel and alloy body
Engine ohv 1991cc 'four', twin SU carburetors; 98bhp @ 4800rpm; 128lb ft @ 3350rpm
Transmission four-speed manual, no synchro on first, driving rear wheels **Suspension:** front sliding pillars, coil springs, telescopics rear live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs, lever-arms
Steering Cam Gears cam and peg
Brakes discs front, drums rear
0-60mph 9.7 secs **Top speed** 100mph **Mpg** 30
Price new £949 15s 3d **Price now** £21,000



front wings seem more effective at pioneering flight than covering the wheels and the handling feels a little precarious. The cable-operated brakes take some getting used to as well, but only because of the momentary snatch as they even the load from side to side, which is a little disconcerting. But the most disorientating aspect is the reverse gate of the Meadows gearbox: first and second are where you'd expect to find third and fourth. You have to concentrate while double-declutching into second or first – both of which lack synchro – but that's all part of the charm.

The 4/4's hand-crafted, distinctly pre-war feel led Morgan to introduce the Plus 4 in 1950, the Plus designation signifying extra oomph. With MG's T-series offering superior pace, Austin-Healey's 100 boasting true 100mph ability and the supply of Standard Special engines drying up, Morgan adopted Standard's Vanguard unit to boost performance. Also new was the waterfall-style grille, yet the flat front would continue until 1954 – the same year that Triumph's two-year-old TR motor was adopted for the Plus 4.

Right: four-seater is ideal for those who crave the Morgan experience and want to take their kids, too; dash filled out over the years, with contemporary parts-bin pilfering – Moto-Lita wheel again; Ford Kent four-cylinder engine was a Malvern staple from 1968 to 1981. Below: enduring shape survives to this day



Just a couple of minutes behind the wheel of the Plus 4 is enough to reveal the step-change in speed. The seating position is cramped for anyone over 6ft, but the gruff, raucous exhaust note and impressive torque of the TR engine lend the car a whole new persona. It feels more capable of being thrashed and enjoyed. There are still plenty of links with its pre-war 4/4 heritage, though, such as the wood-panelled dash and central instruments, plus the recalcitrance of the gearbox – in this case the infamous Moss unit. It needs well-judged changes to avoid graunches, yet time them right and you can revel in the torque and the car's predictable manners. There's a humble honesty about the no-nonsense Plus 4 that rapidly endears it to you.

The car's extra urge brought success at La Sarthe when Chris Lawrence won the 2-litre class in '62. The result had a sweet irony for Morgan, because Lawrence's Plus 4 had been refused entry the year before, allegedly because it looked too old. The Le Mans spoils boosted orders and Morgan capitalised on demand by

1981 4/4



Harrow-based **Jerry Rae's** 4/4 is typical of why people appreciate a Morgan's reliability. "It's done more than 80,000 miles and I've hardly had to touch it mechanically,

apart from some work to the head," explains Rae, who bought the car when it was only a year old. "I was looking for a sports car and was originally going to get an MG to restore, but I didn't have time to so went for a nearly new Morgan. We had a young family at the time and needed a four-seater."

The 4/4 has done a continental trip just about every year since and gets used all year round. Over nearly three decades, Rae has added a 1963 Plus 4 as well as a couple of '30s three-wheelers to his stable, but the 4/4 is still his favourite. "My wife regards it as hers," he adds. "She says 'forget it – sell one of your own cars' whenever I think of selling it to upgrade."

1981 4/4 FOUR-SEATER

Sold/number built 1968-'81/3513 (Ford Kent engined) **Construction** steel Z-section ladder chassis with ash-framed steel and alloy body **Engine** ohv 1599cc 'four', twin-choke carburettor; 86bhp @ 6000rpm; 100lb ft @ 3600rpm **Transmission** four-speed manual, driving rear wheels **Suspension: front** sliding pillars, coil springs, telescopics **rear** live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs, lever-arms **Steering** cam and peg **Brakes** discs front, drums rear **0-60mph** 10.8 secs **Top speed** 102mph **Mpg** 26 **Price new** £6260 **Price now** £11,000



creating the Super Sports. Based on the Le Mans car (TOK 258), it featured a tuned and balanced engine and lower body line. A cheaper version with all-steel body and less highly tuned engine followed, known as the Plus 4 Competition.

Morgan cemented its new-found success by reintroducing the 4/4 in '55 as a more affordable, entry-level option. Slightly lower and narrower than the Plus 4, the 4/4 re-established a long association between Morgan and Ford that continues today. This resumed with the new sidevalve 1172cc Anglia engine, followed by various capacity hikes until the crossflow 'Kent' overhead-valve unit was fitted in '68. It became the mainstay of 4/4 production for 13 years.

The featured car is one of the last built before the Kent's demise and Morgan's brief adoption of Fiat twin-cam power and ultimately Ford's overhead-cam CVH unit. With just 1599cc you'd expect the 4/4 to feel a tad gutless, particularly in bulkier four-seater form, but the low gearing more than compensates. The engine is eager to rev, too. Once spinning above 3500rpm, it picks up pace handsomely and will give the beefier Plus 4 a run for its money. The car feels nimble and lighter than the Plus 4, though the Cortina-derived 'box lacks the meaty feel of the Moss unit. Inside, it's almost plush: by the '80s Morgans boasted modern rocker switches and headrests – there was even a fresh air heater.

Having to rely on proprietary power units has been the only aspect to force the small company's hand. When TR4A production ceased in '67, Morgan had to find another engine. At the same time, Rover offered the new all-alloy Buick-derived V8 that it had acquired under licence. A

hastily contrived Plus 4-based prototype showed its enormous potential and the Plus 8 was born.

Featuring a wider track and substantially more cabin room, for many this is the seminal Morgan: the model that epitomises the firm's philosophy of marrying traditional looks with modern performance. It was also when the company realised the value of its distinctive styling – no more dalliances such as the glassfibre Plus 4 Plus coupé – so the appearance remained largely unchanged until the Aero 8's launch in 2002.

Step into a Plus 8 and it's immediately obvious why it's so coveted. The abundance of torque from the lazy V8 propels the Plus 8 into a different league. Squeeze the throttle and you simply surge off the line, with none of Plus 4's mechanical fuss. Plant your foot and you'll hit 60mph in 6.5 secs, before you've even thought about third gear. The charge continues each time you swap cogs and makes the Plus 8's 124mph top end feel entirely believable. The wide track and 70-profile rubber also make the car feel infinitely more planted and confident than the earlier cars,

though there's still a healthy trace of scuttle shake and jitteriness on rough surfaces to remind you where the underpinnings came from. The steering is noticeably heavier but surprisingly precise for a box – Plus 8s only gained rack and pinion from '83 – and there's more cockpit room to let your arms do the work. The floor-hinged pedals are ideal for heel and toeing, too, and the high backrest lends more support. All in all, it's a more comfortable place to be if you've an eye on the south of France for your next holiday.

If the Plus 8's monumental production run (6232 all in) made Morgan seem complacent, then the Aero 8 is the proof that it wasn't content to sit on its laurels. The first truly all-new design since the 4/4, the Aero 8 was the brainchild of design engineer Lawrence (of '62 Le Mans fame) and then-new boss Charles Morgan. Its bonded aluminium monocoque and all-round double wishbones broke new ground for the conservative firm, as did the tie-up with BMW to use its latest quad-cam, 4.3-litre V8. Initially slated for its cross-eyed headlights (courtesy of short-

Clockwise, from right: car sports 195/70 R14 radials on distinctive alloy wheels; roomier cabin features comfortable, high-backed seats; torquey twin-carb V8 had SUs originally (or Strombergs from '81) – injection optional from '84, standard in '87; note extendable door mirror, another Morgan constant



1981 PLUS 8

Sold/number built 1968-2004/6232

Construction steel Z-section ladder chassis, with ash-framed steel and alloy body **Engine** ohv 3528-4555cc V8, twin carbs or injection; 143-220bhp @ 5000rpm; 202lb ft @ 2700rpm-220lb ft @ 3600rpm **Transmission** four- or five-speed manual, driving rear wheels **Suspension: front** sliding pillars, coils, telescopics **rear** live axle, semi-elliptics, lever-arms **Steering** cam and peg (rack from '83) **Brakes** dual-circuit discs front, drums rear **0-60mph** 6.5 secs **Top speed** 124mph **Mpg** 20.5 **Price new** £8970 **Price now** £17,500

1981 PLUS 8



Elizabeth Clutterbuck

inherited her Plus 8 from a family friend nine years ago.

"It belonged to Derek Evans, who used to build three-wheelers at the factory," recalls Clutterbuck. "He spoke

to Peter Morgan when he wanted one and managed to jump the waiting list, which was about six years at the time but he got his in six weeks. Derek chose the colour and his wife Gwen the grey leather. They also added a towbar so they could tow their caravan." With just 44,000 miles on the clock, the nicely patinated Plus 8 hasn't needed any major work, apart from having the alloys refinished.

Clutterbuck's parents have taken the car to France a few times, yet she uses it mainly on weekends and sunny days: "I love the noise that it makes and the view across the bonnet – it's just fantastic, but then I was brought up in a Morgan family so I may be biased."



2004 AERO 8

Sold/number built 2002-present/830 to date

Construction aluminium central monocoque, with aluminium panels over timber frame

Engine dohc-per-bank 4398cc V8, 32 valves, electronic fuel injection and engine management; 286bhp @ 5400rpm; 324lb ft @ 3600rpm

Transmission six-speed manual, driving rear wheels via limited-slip differential

Suspension: front single upper links, wishbones

rear double wishbones, coil-over dampers f/r

Steering power-assisted rack and pinion

Brakes vented discs all round

0-60mph 4.8 secs **Top speed** 160mph **Mpg** 22

Price new £62,000 **Price now** £40,000



Clockwise, from far left: quad-cam 4.3-litre BMW V8 doesn't look anything special yet it'll take the car to 60mph in 4.8 secs; hood folds rapidly, but sits uncomfortably Beetle-style on rear deck; epic grip on 225/40 ZR18 Pirelli P Zeros; cabin blends engine-turned dash with wood veneer

sighted VW Beetle parts-bin raiding), the Aero 8 quickly won acclaim for its sensational speed. Here was a Morgan that could mix it with supercars, yet still boasted plenty of traditional touches to make it feel as if HFS had a hand in its creation. No other Morgan has such phenomenal roadholding and braking, giving you the confidence to exploit its 286bhp. With 0-60mph taking just 4.8 secs, the Aero 8 is blisteringly fast and the deep bellow from the exhaust plants you plumb on the Mulsanne straight. Prod the throttle and you could be in a works GTN racer.


If the Aero 8 was a radical departure, so was its price: £55,800 was Porsche 911 money in 2002 and far too much for Plus 8 buyers to stomach. The trouble was that the Plus 8 was about to lose its engine, because the long-in-the-tooth Rover unit had started to fall foul of increasingly stringent emissions regulations. Relief came in the form of Ford's 3-litre V6, which Morgan slotted into a largely similar body, but the new engine meant the end of the beloved Plus 8 moniker.

'THE AERO 8 COULD MIX IT WITH SUPERCARS YET FELT AS IF HFS HAD A HAND IN ITS CREATION'

Gone, too, sadly was the muted V8 burble that hinted at the Plus 8's barely concealed character. It's replaced by the smooth but higher-pitched tones of a multi-valve V6. It's almost as quick as the Aero 8 (5.4 secs to 60mph), though the sliding-pillar front, live-axle rear set-up puts the Roadster's handling firmly back in Plus 8 territory, particularly when you're exercising the engine in anything but a straight line.

From inside, it feels even closer to the Plus 8: you can still see the white lines flash by over the cutaway doors while the wind pummels your cheeks. Plenty of the controls are familiar, too, such as the fly-off handbrake. In fact, the only

real additions are an electronic odometer in the speedo and a tailored leather bag that you take with you to keep valuables secure – a practical solution to circumvent the lack of a boot.

It's that evocative blend of tradition – underpinned by quiet evolution – that makes Morgan unique. Head over to Malvern for a tour of the factory and, amid the rows of hand-formed panels and piles of ash frames, you'll quite likely spot the new £124k Aero SuperSports or the remarkable Hydrogen-powered LIFEcar that made its Geneva motor show debut last year. Whichever it is, you'll clearly see the link to 'Harry' Morgan's first four-wheeled, four-cylinder car and the unmistakable, hand-crafted character that has thrilled – and occasionally alarmed – owners the world over. 

Thanks to The Morgan Sports Car Club (www.mscc.uk.com), Richard Thorne Classic Cars (0118 983 1200; www.rtcc.co.uk) and Beaulieu (01590 612345; www.beaulieu.co.uk)



From top: classy piped leather in cabin, optional Moto-Lita apes flat-rad's sprung wheel; Ford 3-litre V6 lacks bottom-end torque of Rover V8 yet it's only half a second slower to 60mph than Aero 8; trad look with wires but on 205/55 R16s; classic feel, too, with sliding pillars at front and live-axle rear

2004 AERO 8



"The slightly extravagant styling persuaded me, but it still looks like a Morgan should," says **Roger Cherry**, who part-exchanged a Plus 8. "I saw it at Richard Thorne's and couldn't stop thinking

about it." The Aero follows classics including an Alfa Romeo SZ and a Lancia B20, but Cherry has been swayed by Morgans thanks to the social scene: "There are a lot of people in the club who share the same philosophy on life." The car's improved practicality helps: "Having a boot means you can lock things away and if it rains you just swing the roof over and clip it down. With the Plus 8, it was a bit like camping."

2007 ROADSTER



Andy Low adores the thrill of his car: "It's got some real belt and I love the noise it makes. You feel duty-bound to overtake people so they can hear it go. You can't park it anywhere on the coast on a

summer's day without people stopping to admire it – like an English Heritage moment"

Low loves its idiosyncrasies: "It leaks water into the cabin and you can't reach the radio while you're belted in, but that's what you expect." The lack of luggage space isn't a problem either: "If you're taking a bird away for a weekend you just have to tell them to wear a fur coat because there's only space for a change of knickers!"

2007 ROADSTER

Sold/number built 2004-present/1027 to date

Construction as Plus 8 **Engine** dohc-per-bank

2967cc, 24-valve V6, fuel injection;

223bhp @ 6150rpm; 206lb ft @ 4900rpm

Transmission five-speed manual, driving rear

wheels **Suspension: front** sliding pillars, coils

rear live live axle, semi-elliptics; gas-filled

telescopic f/r **Steering** rack and pinion

Brakes discs front, drums rear

0-60mph 5.4 secs

Top speed 135mph **Mpg** 28.9

Price new £35,231 **Now** £38,000





JUHLASSA MUKANA Morgan +8 vuosimallia 1997. Väri British Racing Green. 4-litrainen V8-moottori, 240-hevosvoimaa. Auton paino - 1050 kiloa.

Klassikot juhliivat Turussa



SEIJA VUORELA

SUOMEN hienoimmaksi urheiluautotapahtumaksi sanottu klassikkoautojen Classic Sportscar Concours d'Elegance pidetään jo 13. kerran Turun Kaksikerran Harjattulan kartanossa sunnuntaina 14.6.

Tilaisuuden teemoina ovat 100 vuotta täyttävä Morgan ja 90 vuotta täyttävät Bentley ja italialainen korifirma Zagato. Paikalle

odotetaan 200-300 autoa ja mukana on myös klassikkoharvinaisuuksia ja maa-hantuojen erikoismalleja.

Tapahtuma on kaksijakoinen alkaen lauantaina 13. päivä Aboa Rally Storico -ajolla. Helsingistä tulijat lähtevät kello 10 Bembölen kahvituvalla Kehä III:lta ja reitti seuraa Kuninkaantietä. Lounas nautitaan Fiskarsissa ravintola Kupari-pajassa yhdessä Turusta ja Tampereelta päin tulijoiden

kanssa. Ajo jatkuu edelleen Turkuun, jossa "Varikkomakasiinilla" (Murtomaantie 1) odottaa kello 19 alkaen tv-kokki **Aki Wahlmanin** valmistama iltabuffet.

Varsinainen Concours d'Elegance alkaa sunnuntaina klo 10, jolloin autot saapuvat paikalle etunenässä Concours-kauneuskilpailun osallistujat. Kilpailun arvosteluluokkina ovat avoautot, coupèt ja "best of the show".



First stop on the Malvern line

Morgan's debut three-wheeler prototype has been faithfully recreated to mark the company's centenary. **Mick Walsh** meets its dedicated builder and drives the template for the Malvern trike

PHOTOGRAPHY **TONY BAKER**

Main: restorer Chris Booth at speed. Right: Dorothy Morgan, Harry's sister, tries the prototype for size; note its relocated calcium carbide headlamp





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MORGAN

The remarkable story of Morgan stems from a bare-bone Peugeot-powered three-wheeler prototype. The sporty single-seater that kick-started it all – developed by company founder HFS ‘Harry’ Morgan – is long gone. But, thanks to Chris Booth, a passionate marque enthusiast since 1960, that debut design has been reborn to help celebrate the centenary of Morgan, the oldest privately owned car manufacturer, which has sustained its links with Malvern since its launch.

Harry Morgan, the son of a wealthy and hugely supportive Herefordshire clergyman, turned to engineering early in his education, first at Crystal Palace and then at the Great Western Railway works in Swindon. Aged 23, Morgan opened a garage in Malvern in 1905. After various business ventures, including the area’s first bus service, he started work on a machine of his own design based around a 7hp Peugeot V-twin from an abandoned motorcycle project.

In 1908, with the help of respected engineering teacher William Stephenson-Peach and with access to the workshops of Malvern College, Morgan devised a novel cyclecar. The exposed transverse V-twin up front drove through a single backbone chassis-cum-torque tube to the rear wheel via dog clutches, a bevel two-speed ‘box and chain drive. The prototype’s most remarkable feature was its independent front suspension by coil springs and sliding pillars, a design that continues right up to the current Roadster. The prototype – completed towards the end of 1909 – was briefly tested in the college grounds and then licensed CJ 743 for the road. It

became a familiar feature around Malvern as Harry used it for business trips and for visiting his family. With constant use, the cyclecar was quickly developed, with enlarged brakes, a bigger petrol tank, mudguards and lighting.

The new motoring craze was just dawning and Morgan was soon receiving enquiries for his machine. Driving had been the preserve of the wealthy, but Morgan saw the market potential for the fast-growing breed of cyclecarists. Patents were applied for and the new model made its debut at the first Olympia Motorcycle Show in November 1910. Despite enthusiastic press reports and trialling success, orders were scarce.

By the following summer, Morgan had built a JAP-powered two-seater with a conventional steering wheel replacing the tiller. From then there was no stopping the new firm, funded by his father and based in a small factory in Malvern Link. What happened to the prototype isn’t known, but it was probably broken up or cannibalised for later cars. The idea of recreating it began after a conversation with Peter Morgan in 2002, as Booth recalls: “We were at a Morgan club AGM dinner and the discussion turned to the company centenary. ‘Wouldn’t it be fun to build a replica of a prototype Morgan?’ Peter suggested. That sowed the seed and I started thinking about how it could best be done.”

The first challenge was finding a Peugeot 700cc V-twin engine: they’re rare, and much in demand with veteran motorcycle enthusiasts. “We had various options, including a replica motor,” says Booth, “but I was keen that it should be original to keep the project as authentic as possible. The expensive route would have been acquiring a motorcycle with a Peugeot engine,

so a friend, Luc Ryckart, advertised for a motor in Belgium and France, initially without luck.” Then Ryckart spotted a display engine with a local Belgian motorcycle dealer who only agreed to sell when he eventually retired. After its delivery *en route* to the Beaulieu Autojumble, Booth enlisted Dave Pittuck to rebuild the motor, which they soon discovered was in a pretty poor state with odd pistons and mixed castings.

With the engine sourced, Booth, aided by Morgan historian Martyn Webb, started planning the rest of the project: “There was a lot of head-scratching and studying of the few historic photographs that survive. Peter gave me a large

‘THE COIL SPRING AND SLIDING PILLAR FRONT END CONTINUES TO THE CURRENT ROADSTER’

blow-up of a famous shot of his father at Stoke Lacy that had hung on the factory wall for many years. It’s the second-oldest picture and provided lots of crucial details. Martyn scaled up some good drawings from those. With no bodywork other than the seat, the single backbone chassis had no bottom tubes so was very clear.”

The design evolved during the first year, so Booth had to choose a specific stage to recreate: “It had to be the single-seater and I particularly liked the version with the single, centre-mounted headlamp. We soon discovered why Harry moved the lamp. Mounting a calcium carbide

No secrets with Morgan cyclecar’s very exposed chassis; driver sits above bevel gearbox; tiller steering is ultra-direct, due to long drag-link



light on a petrol tank above the engine wasn't such a good idea, particularly because the engine really shakes it about when it's running."

The next challenge was sorting out the Bevel gearbox, which was clearly different from production versions: "The casing was bolted rather than soldered on to the torque tube. I made up some drawings and Maurice Cross fabricated the 'box for me. Working out how the casing bolted on to the tube was one of the most difficult areas."

Booth then set to with the rest of the chassis: "The key question was what we could adapt from other early Morgan parts. There are not many lugs used in the chassis and Colin Wilson supplied those, together with rear forks, steering components and silencers. The rear hub was modified from an original design while the front hubs are also period parts. Bob Haynes provided the extra lugs while new wheel spindles, a countershaft and propshaft ends were made by club member John East. It was key that we had correct narrow rims and beaded-edge tyres for an authentic look and these came from Ron Farthing. Flywheel, clutch, sprockets and hub fittings were modified while the oil pump, Brown & Barlow carburettor and levers were sourced at autojumbles or came from my old stock."

Progress on the chassis took off when Charlie Jenner came over for a weekend in March '06 and, finally, after long hours in Booth's workshop, they had something on which to hang all of the parts: "Dave Pittuck did a great job of the engine. Once I'd made the mounting plates and the chassis was on its wheels, we started to think about the somewhat minimal bodywork."

Booth eventually decided on the fourth prototype body style with the encased petrol tank:

"There was a lot of trial and error with pieces of wood and heavy plastic sheet before I started making up the mudguards, seat back, plus petrol and oil tanks from lead-coated steel. Once it looked right, Colin Wilson added the swages on the mudguards and Jane Wood made the seat upholstery." By chance, at Beaulieu in 2007, Booth found a broken Miller headlamp that perfectly matched the old photographs. The rim was missing and the glass was broken, but Peter and Lee Appleyard of Vintage Headlamp Restoration did a great job. It's now fully plumbed into a generator: "The MoT tester judged it as decoration and didn't ask to see it working."

With the project well under way, Webb met a relation of an early Morgan employee: "It turned out that his grandfather had drawings dated to 1910. The pencil lines were very faded but Martyn managed to redraw them. The information relating to the bevel gearbox was too late but it at least proved we weren't far out."

With the centenary looming fast, Booth really focused on the project in 2008, making up the gear, brake and clutch linkages: "In the pictures there didn't appear to be a handbrake mechanism although an extra drum was visible, so I made up something that looked appropriate. The footbrake is narrower to allow the high gear chain to pass behind it. This necessitated a pattern and a new casting by Colin [Wilson]."

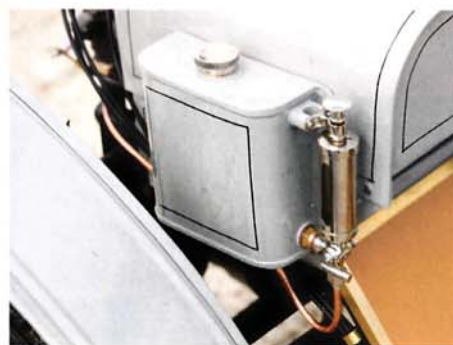
The unfinished project was displayed at the Abbey Hotel, Malvern in October and Booth completed the painting, pipework and cable fitting over the winter. It was at last ready for its first trial run on 29 January: "The engine leaked everywhere so we adapted a flap valve similar to the JAP design, which has now made it oil-tight.

We also fitted different sprockets to lower the gearing." Booth had to work hard to sort the teething problems, with an entry accepted for the imminent London to Brighton Pioneer Run, plus he'd nervously loaned the trike to Morgan for the Geneva Motor Show in late February: "It was away for three weeks and arrived back from Switzerland the day before the run. At the Epsom off, the engine started easily but quickly stopped. Eventually we discovered a broken solder joint in the ignition and, once that was sorted, we completed the 52 miles without problems."

Peter Morgan sadly passed away in 2003 and never saw his father's prototype reborn, but he'd be proud of Booth's efforts for Morgan's big birthday year. This summer the cyclecar will make an emotive return to Malvern and retrace various local routes that Harry would have driven with the first Morgan.

Just after its successful Pioneer Run, Booth invited C&SC down to his marvellous Morgan museum in Rolvenden, Kent for an exclusive test. Rather than brave the public roads and impatient traffic, we arranged to use the nearby Hole Park estate. With peaceful rolling avenues, a grand Georgian house and horses grazing in the fields, it felt uncannily authentic as the little grey trike chattered around the grounds.

Like any veteran machine, the first Morgan takes familiarity to start. First you switch the petrol tap and, when it's cold, prime the carburettor until it floods. With the oil tap closed, you next pull up the oil plunger, then open the tap and push down the measured lubricant into the engine. This has to be done every five miles. As Booth advises: "It's best to wait for a clear straight before thinking about oiling, or better still do it



Clockwise, from above: rear fork with twin gears, hand and foot brakes plus reversed springs; manual oil system with plunger and tap; spindly sliding-pillar suspension, gas lighting canister and pepper-pot exhaust

when stationary at junctions." Ergonomics were not a consideration for Harry Morgan, because the stretch to the oil plunger and tap requires the driver to shuffle forward – not an easy task at speed while holding the sensitive tiller steering and taking your hand off the throttle.

With fuel, oil and spark ready, you retard the ignition and set a little throttle; both are lever controls mounted on the left of the seat. Next you lift the exhaust valves with another lever and then begin cranking the starting handle. Once the engine is spinning, you drop the exhaust valves to regain compression and the big V-twin clatters into life. Advance the ignition, re-adjust

'IT'S EASY TO PICTURE HARRY WHIZZING BY CHARABANCS AROUND THE MALVERN HILLS'

the throttle and only then can you climb aboard.

The gearlever is down on the left side, with first pulled out and second slotted back through neutral to the inside. The cone clutch requires a smooth action, but once the linings bite the engine willingly chugs off with strong torque as you increase the revs using the throttle lever. First gear is low and rarely used other than for starts and steep hills. Clutch depressed, stretching down to push in the gearlever across and the big gap to second immediately drops the revs as the engine loads up. With less than 5cwt (560lb) to push, the 700cc Peugeot motor gives spirited

performance and the Morgan rattles along at an easy 30mph. Sitting over the torque tube, you feel all of the tappety vibrations from the engine as it shakes the wings and the headlamp at low speeds but it smooths out as the revs rise.

The trickiest challenge is mastering the tiller steering, which is very direct and easy to over-correct. For the first 100 yards my route is snake-like and I'm glad I don't have to swap hands to signal for right turns. Once you relax, though, the light, sharp action becomes as natural as handlebars on an early bike. I don't have the confidence to attack hills and the gearlever has a habit of jumping into neutral as you throttle down to prepare for double-declutching, but Booth is already working on that problem.

Once you're motoring, it's easy to picture Harry Morgan whizzing by sluggish veteran tourers and long charabancs around the Malvern Hills en route to the family home at Stoke Lacy Rectory. No doubt local horsemen cursed this experienced young motorist and his agile trike. The foot and hand brakes work separate contracting linings either side of the rear wheel and are surprisingly effective. Yet, as with all early cars and motorcycles, it helps to be psychic to prepare for emergency stops.

Thankfully the private roads were clear, but turning around without reverse is a performance. The 1909 Morgan's light weight at least makes it easy to push. At one stop a lady walker offers to help. "I thought it was a disabled vehicle," she jokes after learning of the Morgan's historic significance. Who could have imagined that this spindly, Spartan machine would lead to three-wheeler production right up to the final batch of Ford-engined F-types in 1952? CLASSIC



Clockwise, from above: complete chassis with backbone torque tube; body style was planned in timber; Walsh adapts to sensitive tiller steering



Chris Booth

The founder of the remarkable Morgan three-wheeler museum in Rolvenden, Kent has owned and restored most model types from 1913 Sports (above left) to the last Ford Ten-powered F-type

What was your first Morgan three-wheeler?

When I was a teenager, I lusted after new Messerschmitts and Berkeleys but ended up buying a Matchless SuperSports in 1960. The big attraction was that you could drive it without reverse gear with your 'bike test. A year later I passed my car test in the same Morgan with reverse refitted. Back then – when I joined the Morgan Three-Wheeler Club – it was mostly Ford-engined F-types. People used to joke about the two-speeders.

What's the ideal Morgan trike?

That's a tough one because they all have individual characters. I think that the early family models are very underrated and are useful for carrying a picnic and the dog. The sidevalve water-cooled Matchless is torquey and smooth. It's one of best touring engines, but a 1928 Aero with an overhead-valve, water-cooled JAP motor would be a top choice. Oddly, it's a model I've never owned.

What are your plans for the centenary?

I'm looking forward to taking the 1909 recreation back to Malvern College where it was built in the engineering workshops with the help of William Stephenson-Peach. He was an innovative engineering pioneer who encouraged and nurtured Harry Morgan's talent.

Where will be the best place to see Morgan three-wheelers this year?

There should be a good turnout at Prescott on 26 July, with plenty of international entrants.

Any other projects to finish?

Now that the 1909 car is done, I want to focus on completing the restoration of Harold Beart's highly developed streamlined Blackburne-powered Brooklands racer. It was the first cyclecar to break the 100mph barrier. My problem is that Beart re-engineered and strengthened the design so much with his own modifications, which makes it more of a challenge to rebuild. I also have a 1913 four-wheeled Morgan to complete.

See www.morganmuseum.org.uk or call 01580 241234 for further details



£15-20k modern classic Morgan Plus 8



From top: bewinged badge; waterfall grille and triple wipers give trad looks; torquey V8; interior a mix of old and new; hood works well; handsome alloys

For an enthusiast looking for vintage character in a young, reliable package, the Morgan Plus 8 delivers without the replica stigma. Since 1969, demand for the Malvern-built hot rod has never faltered and, after production ended in 2003 following the phasing out of the faithful Rover V8, there's been renewed interest and an upturn in values.

The Plus 8's raw appeal is not everyone's cup of tea, but for those hooked on its diehard charm it's usually a long-term affair. On a sunny day on clear country roads, a first-rate Plus 8 is a stirring experience. Exposed by those cutaway doors on leather bucket seats in a traditional cockpit, there's no more romantic car to live out those vintage fantasies for less than £20k.

Thanks to its torquey V8 heart, the Plus 8 will live with most sports cars provided the route is smooth enough. And few sound better when gunned hard. For that thrill behind the long, louvred bonnet it's easy to forgive the heavy brakes, cramped pedals, crude damping and skittish road manners.

Recently sold for £18,450 by respected Morgan specialist Allon White (08701 120872; www.allonwhite.co.uk), this 1983 Connaught Green Plus 8 boasted long-term single ownership and a recent engine swap for an uprated 3.9. Clearly enjoyed and cared for after

many European road trips and club tours, it's far from mint but nicely patinated. "There's a premium for very early cars, but £16-£20k buys a tidy, high-mileage '70s car," says Allon White sales manager Phil Benfield. "The longer you keep them, the better they appreciate. Mechanically they are strong, but wood frame repair is expensive."

New owner Edward Perrot is a Morgan addict, having owned five since 1972, and this year he and son Tom have come up with the perfect arrangement: joint ownership. With Tom away with the army for much of the year, there appear to be few problems over sharing the Morgan. "My motoring started with an MG J2," says Perrot senior, "so Morgan's old-fashioned style has always appealed. It's quick and great fun but, unlike other fast cars, it always gets a good reaction."

"It's also surprisingly practical," reports 27-year-old Tom. "We recently carried bedding and food for eight friends on a Norfolk weekend. And the insurance on a shared policy is a fraction of what a TVR or Porsche would cost."

To non-converts, Morgans will always be relics. But for wind-in-the-hair thrills and pure, tactile character, the Plus 8 is hugely rewarding. If you dream of Spitfires or 'Blower' Bentleys, it's the only option within our budget. There's nothing else quite like it. **MW**



FACTFILE

Sold/number built 1968-2003/6233 **Construction** steel chassis, steel/aluminium body over ash frame **Engine** all-alloy, pushrod 3528cc V8, with twin SUs **Max power** 160bhp @ 5250rpm **Max torque** 198lb ft @ 2500rpm **Transmission** five-speed manual, driving rear wheels **Suspension: front** independent, by sliding pillars, telescopic dampers **rear** live axle, leaf springs, lever-arm dampers **Steering** rack and pinion **Brakes** discs front, drums rear, with servo **0-60mph** 6.7 secs **Top speed** 125mph **Mpg** 20 **Price new** £10,486 (1981) **Price now** from £14,000

TROUBLE SPOTS

- 1 Focus on the condition of the body and wooden frame: first check wings for electrolytic reaction between steel and aluminium panels
- 2 Worn hinges and loose sill screws are a tell-tale clue to rot around the critical door frame. Repair is labour intensive and costly (£1200 a side)
- 3 Look for rot between wings and bulkhead: poke around in hidden areas

OWNER'S VIEW

"I used to ride under the tonneau in Dad's Morgans and was sorry when the Plus 8 had to go for school fees," says Tom Perrot. "So I suggested to Dad we buy another: I felt I owed him. The brakes and tight pedals took some adjustment after moderns, but it's fun and quick. I'm looking forward to taking it on a European tour with my girlfriend, it's made for those Alpine passes."



THE RIVALS

HAWK 2.6
Sold/no built 1996-date/c50
0-60mph 8 secs **Top speed** 120mph
Mpg 25 **Price new** £5000+ (kit)
Now from £15k
Classic style and simple mechanicals for a fraction of the price of a real Ace.



BMW Z1
Sold/no built 1989-'91/8000
0-60mph 7.9 secs **Top speed** 136mph **Mpg** 24
New £37,728
Now from £15k
First and bravest of the Z cars, with sweet 'six' and cool retractable doors.



RENAULT SPORT SPIDER
Sold/no built 1995-'97/1250
0-60mph 5.8 secs **Top speed** 156mph **Mpg** 28
New £25,950
Now from £15k
Wacky roadster scores on novelty, but expensive and very exposed.





Vanhan Morganin kyljessä kelpaa poseerata. Liepeillä riitti paitsi totisia autoharrastajia myös silmänpalvoja.

Kiiltävät brittiurheiluautot keräsivät ihailijoita messuilla

Kiiltävät brittiurheiluautot keräsivät ihailijoita messuilla

Hämeenlinna
Tuuli Topelius

Suomen Morgan-kerhon jäsenet yhdistivät voimansa ja päräyttivät asuntomessuille lauantaina riviin kahdeksan peltistä rakastaan. Autojen ympärillä riitti ihailijoita.

-Aivan mahtava nähdä näitä näin paljon yhdessä. Täällä on hieno otos uudemmistakin autoista, sauvolainen **Seppo Katajainen** innostui.

Hiukkasen autohulluksi itseään tituleeraava mies ihailee Morganeissa ajatonta tyylikkyyttä.

Morgania mies ei kuitenkaan itselleen tilaisi, vaan tahtoisu Suomen oloihin helpommin soveltuvan, lähes yhtä linjakkaan Volvo Amazonin.

Morganit ovat Suomessa harvinaisuuksia

Koko Suomessa Morganeita on vain viisitoista, kun Ruotsin puolella ja Saksassa autoja on molemmissa lähemmäs tuhat.

-Minkäs teet, kun on köyhä maa, kerhon jäsen **Olavi Tupamäki** naljailee.

Halvimman auton hinta lähtee kipuamaan 60 000 eurosta ylöspäin. Tupamäki sanoo, ettei hänen autonsa tule koskaan myyntiin. Suurin osa kerhon jäsenistä onkin jo testamentannut autonsa edelleen omille lapsilleen. Auton erikoisuus on se, ettei sen arvo koskaan putoa toisin kuin muissa merkeissä.

Morgan-autot ovat harvinaisuuksia ympäri maailmaakin. Vuodessa tehdään linjoilta pukaataan ilmoille vain kolmisensataa kappaletta, joista jokainen tehdään tilaustyönä. Kaikki autot tehdään käsityönä. Odotuslista on seitsemisen vuotta.

-Minä tilasin omani 1990 ja 1997 vuonna sain sen pihaan.

Herrasmiesten urheiluauto

Linjakas englantilainen malli on

säilyttänyt muotonsa vuodesta 1937. Yleisin väri on yllättäen totutun punaisen sijaan vihreä.

-Vihreä on perinteinen brittiläisen urheiluauton väri. Tämä on todella nätti, mutta samalla yksinkertainen ja askeettinen. Se on täydellinen, ei sitä voi muuttaa.

Ulkopäin ei välttämättä huomaa, minkä ikäinen auto on, niin hyvin omistajat rakkaitaan pitävät. Kerhon jäsenet kunnostavat ajokkejaan itse, koska vanhojen autojen korjaamot ovat harvinaistumassa. Autot käyvät talvikäytössäkin, mutta lähinnä niillä ajellaan kauniilla kesäkeillä.

-Olen ajanut talvellakin, ja lämpimämpää tuolla on kuin moottoripyörällä. (HäSa)



Englantilainen urheiluauto Morgan kestää käyttöä vuosikymmenet.



Hämeenlinalainen Eveliina Hakkarainen otti rohkeasti tuntumaa 50-vuotiaaseen urheiluautoon. Tytön isän Pasi Hakkaraisen mukaan kaikki mikä kiiltää kiinnostaa.

MX-5 HOW TO BUY THE No1 ROADSTER



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FOUR EVER

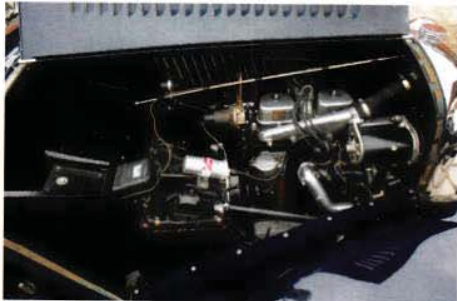
Four-cylinder Morgans aren't just cheaper than Plus 8s, for many they are a more thrilling drive. **James Elliott** agrees

PHOTOGRAPHY TONY BAKER & JAMES MANN



FOUR
STAR





Sucking eggs for grandmothers, part one: there are a few guiding formulae in life that are essentially incorruptible. Take rock music: Lou Reed said that you can't beat two guitars, drums and bass and, however people try to innovate, he's still right. And so it is with sports cars: for me, front-engine, rear-drive is sacrosanct in any proper roadster without a mid-engined hunchback. It's all about balance, and the best balance in a light car is afforded by a light engine. Upset that balance, nudge the weight distribution too far forwards with a big, heavy lump and, while you add the peripheral thrill of neck-snapping straight-line speed, more often than not you sacrifice the syncopation that is the car's *raison d'être*.

Sound rather patronising? Perhaps, but necessary, because all too often people seem to forget that the fundamental joy of a sports car is its ability to usurp outright muscle through stealth and agility, to upset the odds in getting from point A to point B when the two are separated by more than an arrow-straight runway.

And few companies have as much experience of this as Morgan. It is not just the Morgan family's credo of belligerence that has kept it churning out four-pots since the 1930s and creating the world's longest continuous(ish) production, it is the demand from its customers. The launch of the revelatory Plus 8 – better balanced than

most larger-engined sportsters thanks to the lightweight all-alloy Rover/Buick lump – did little to dent its traditional market, but merely added a different breed of buyer to the roster.

Main dealer Richard Thorne reckons the four-pots' appeal is easy to pinpoint: "They are very strong, they have a very long wheelbase, and they are very well balanced which makes them great sports cars. They are easy to drive, safe, strong cars. And they are cheaper than the Plus 8.

"The four-cylinder cars are always portrayed as 'entry-level' Morgans, but, despite being pretty

'A few modern traits have crept in, but otherwise they are still barely out of the primordial sludge. And that's how people like it'

affordable, they are far more than that. They barely depreciate, they are reliable, economical, they have their own character and parts are readily available. Plus, it is all about delicacy of handling and nimbleness. In a four-cylinder car you can slide it at 50mph rather than 90mph and really enjoy your driving. And that is what swings it for a lot of people. It's not about 0-60mph times, it's about fun and feeling, accurate responses and the purity of the original concept."

There are two essential rules of thumb: 4/4s tend to be 1800cc or less and on a narrower chassis, Plus 4s 2 litres and on a wider version of essentially the same chassis. All have excellent weight distribution offering tail-happy opportunities while a few modern traits, such as brake servoes and telescopic dampers, have crept in over the generations, but otherwise they are still barely out of the primordial sludge in terms of motoring evolution. And that's just how people like it.



It started in the mid-1930s with the then 4-4 (the hyphen became a slash post-WW2). A small 1582lb sports car costing under £200, neither sophisticated nor spellbindingly quick, but charming in spades. The snug cockpit has more room than contemporary MGs, the taut sliding pillar front suspension limits travel so the ride is hard, the Meadows crash 'box far from the demon it is made out to be with four gears in a reverse pattern, and the 1122cc Coventry Climax a willing performer, coaxing it along easily at 60mph-plus. Enough to scare the cable brakes at least.

The upgrade to the 2-litre Standard engine, however, takes it into a different league, the all-iron unit amazingly tractable despite being fed by a single Solex. There's synchro too on the conventional-layout Moss 'box, but you don't need it because you barely have to use the gears once you are rolling. As with the first-series car, the live rear axle contributes to engagingly skittish cornering.

It gets better still with the first of the TR-engined Plus 4s, offering more than double the horses at 90bhp from the 1991cc engine, fed by twin SUs. This 1953 model started life as a flat-rad but, with the announcement of the facelift, the royal ivory example was unwanted and a new front end was grafted on to help shift it. It was eventually bought by Rootes rally driver Tiny Lewis who competed widely in it, including the 1955 RAC.

Its competition history – which has been pretty much continuous since then – and a hefty restoration a couple of years back show in its set-up and it is a phenomenally well-sorted car, pulling strongly in all gears, the back end sliding easily, but far more difficult to dislodge entirely. There are telescopic dampers at the rear and front discs, and you notice. Big time. Of all the four-pot Morgans we tested, it was the obvious must-have model, the perfect combination of ancient and modern in a usable, enjoyable car. According to the *cognoscenti*, this heavy tractor lump is the engine that transformed Morgan in the

Royal Ivory 1953 Plus 4, an early TR-engined car, started off as a flat rad but had a makeover to help it sell. Lovely cream and black dials, speedo on passenger side. It has been campaigned for the past 50-odd years, since being bought in 1955 by 'Tiny' Lewis, whose nickname it now shares



FOUR
STAR



**Like father, like daughter
RICHARD AND HELEN THORNE**

Morgan four-pots have a fantastic competition history and remain a favourite with clubman's racers, rallyists, sprinters and hillclimbers. Triumph-engined cars in particular punched above their weight when perceived to be past their sell-by date and the crowning glory was a Lawrencetune Plus 4's class win at Le Mans in 1962.

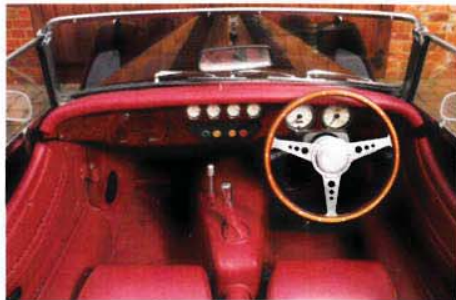


"The beauty of Morgans is that they are competitive and eligible for so many events at an affordable price," says main dealer Richard Thorne. "The traditional clubman's element really appeals – most people still drive to events in their cars, take part, have a lot of fun, and then drive home again."

Thorne himself has been competing since 1969, starting with a Hillman Imp, through a mass of Lancias to a '70s Roadsports Plus 8. As close to his heart as any is the Plus 4 he calls "Tiny" after its original owner, Rootes driver Tiny Lewis. Thorne bought it in 2001 as a modified 2.4-litre hillclimber, returned it to spec, tackled the Rally of the Tests and raced with the HSCC.

And 26-year-old daughter Helen is keeping it in the family, on the verge of her first season in another special Plus 4 (below). First owned by Peter Askew, "Pearl" has the lighter Cortina GT engine, giving a real performance advantage. Pearl's particular appeal is that it competed in the first all-Morgan Bentley Drivers Club challenge race in 1966, and Helen hopes to enter the same event this year. Before that, dad will give it a shakedown test: the Classic Rally Association's 3000-mile Winter Challenge.





1950s and it is hard to disagree. The motor made it into not just a competitive car, but one capable of cleaning up in its class.

The start of the modern era is marked with the 1991 Connaught green Plus 4 on the optional wire wheels. Sounds like a big gap, but in Morgan terms all that has been skipped are a few developments and engine options before the real revolution – again a comparative term when it comes to Morgan – started in 1993.

There is still sliding pillar front suspension (as there is today) and a live rear axle with lever-arm dampers. The chassis is still the same basic design as both cars have used (only slightly revised) since the mid-1950s. Packing a 1994cc Rover M16 fuel-injected 16-valve engine and offering a heady 138bhp, it's only about 100lb heftier than its predecessor. The interior is glitzier but only because it doesn't yet wear a patina, give it another 40 years for the ivory Smiths instruments to fade and it will be indistinguishable.

Our two brand new cars look the part: the shape is classic, but the comfort and appointment in the cockpit – the surety of the buttons and features, the furnace blast of the heater – while simplicity itself, is bang-up-to-date. Importantly, all these cars are now built on a Morgan Roadster

chassis offering more width to the cockpit and more space in the footwells. Even so, all around there are ancient characteristics – such as the flat screen – and thankfully this is true in the driving too. The hard ride, the way a new Zetec-engined Plus 4 Plus chirrup its wheels even changing up to third with the right inputs and its throttle steer is a touching reminder of how much character has been syphoned from most modern cars.

Similarly, prod the accelerator only slightly mid-corner in last-year's Duratec-equipped Plus 4 and it slews engagingly before taking hold and rocketing forward. Of the two, the Duratec is by far the most satisfying – it buzzes with a high-revving verve that the Zetec can't match and begs to be driven with brio – and presents a shockingly good amount of motor for its mid-20k price-tag.

Either can happily be used as an everyday modern car with not just the comfort, but the peace of mind that millions spent on crash-test-

This is the modern world: well, as modern as Mogs get. Above: '91 Plus 4 with 138bhp Rover unit, next to 2005 Duratec-powered model, which Elliott reckons is the best of the modern-era cars, with brilliant response from free-revving motor, still sliding pillars and live axle underneath though

ON ALL FOURS...

1936 Launch of the 4-4 (below, with Peter Morgan), the company's first four-wheeler, with four-cylinder Coventry Climax power. Sliding-pillar independent front suspension, cross-braced steel chassis, leaf-sprung and friction-damped rear, wooden floor, ash frame, steel bodywork, Girling cable-operated drums, fly-off handbrake, direct steering (later cam and peg), four-speed Meadows gearbox



1939 Standard ohv engine announced before production suspended for WW2

1946 Moss 'box replaces Meadows

1950 4/4 (renamed post-WW2) replaced with Plus 4 (63bhp from 2088cc Vanguard engine)

1954 Flat rad replaced by familiar curved grille, Triumph TR2 engine introduced. TR-derived engines would be in use until 1969

1955 4/4 returned with Ford sidevalve power and three-speed Ford 'box (Ford engines, from 100E to Kent GT, would power 4/4 until 1982, then again through CVH and Zetec to present day). Rear restyle brings trademark tail; cam-and-peg steering and hydraulic brakes added

1956 TR3 engine standardised in Plus 4 (Chris Lawrence-tuned Super Sport arrived 1960)

1961 4/4 gets front disc brakes standardised on Plus 4 the previous year

1962 S5 4/4 gets Ford 1.5-litre ohv unit

1963 Plus 4 Plus launched (right)

1968 Plus 8 (with Rover V8 power) supplants Plus 4

1981 Fiat 1.6 twin-cam usurps Ford Kent in 4/4. First five-speed 'box (Fiat's own)

1985 Plus 4 reintroduced with 2-litre Fiat twin-cam and five-speed 'box

1987 2-litre Rover M16 twin-cam for Plus 4

1991 Rover T16 and Knight rack and pinion for Plus 4 (replacing Gemmer recirculating ball).

Fuel-injected Ford 1600 for 4/4, which wouldn't get rack and pinion for a decade

1993 Plus 4 adopts variation of Plus 8's chassis for more internal space. Telescopic rear dampers and lower front spring rates introduced. 4/4 gets 120bhp Ford 1.8-litre Zetec. Since then, engine changes have been variations on the Ford theme right up to the 1.8 Duratec (chain-rather than belt-driven) in the 4/4

2001 For the first time, all cars are built on a modified Roadster (formerly Plus 8) chassis.

Wider cockpit and more room in the footwells

2006 4/4 turns 70. To mark the occasion the company is turning out 142 special editions (below) – two for each year of production – at a few pence shy of £28k. The new model may boast the latest must-have modernisms, but each pair is equipped with the accoutrements of its era: fold-flat 'screen, steel wheels and hubcaps (or optional wires) or sheepskin bonnet strap. Perhaps, rather than trying to recreate past glories, the world's major manufacturers could learn a lesson from the masters of keeping the flame alive.



ing and development bring with them. According to the dealers, most people assume that the cars haven't undergone the same rigorous testing – including side impact – as their modern hatch, but they are wrong. The truth is that the Morgan family had a stark choice: fork out a fortune for the research or watch the perception of its cherished brand slide towards the specialist and kit car market. And the latter simply wouldn't do.

But then the dealers also say that most people who turn up still envisage the company just as it was projected in *that* 25-year-old television programme with generation-long waiting lists (it's actually a year) and a bunch of Fred Dibnah's dipping Rich Tea biscuits into mugs of tea (from a pot, no new-fangled bags thanks). It is probably only fair that a company that trades so heavily off tradition also has to carry the occasional historical albatross. And John Harvey-Jones is still Morgan's.

That said, there is something about the modern Morgan that makes it pertain only to a higher motoring faction. While they may pass muster as a modern driving machine, you wonder how much trouble anyone who learned how to drive on computer games and anodyne front-wheel androgyny could get into on the road.

On the other hand, there can be something heartless, almost contemptuous about the rapidity with which ringing in the new sounds the death knell for the old – whether PlayStation one? – so it is all the more satisfying and gratifying when the old endures. Not just survives, but thrives. Somehow, the very existence of a Morgan four-pot is as life-affirming and reassuring as Marmite or *The Sky at Night*. Long may it last. ■

Thanks to everyone at Reading-based Morgan and Lancia specialist Richard Thorne Classic Cars, which owns or is selling all of the cars featured. Call 0118 983 1200 for further details or see www.rtcc.co.uk



FOUR
STAR



BUYING A FOUR-CYLINDER MORGAN

WHAT TO PAY

Values of most cars fall between £10–25,000 depending on condition, which neatly brings them up to the prices of entry-level new cars.

The big exceptions at the top end are the 101 Plus 4 Super Sports, competitive racers that are eligible for most events. Evidence that people are latching on to this long-undervalued model was presented with the recent sale of a car for £63,000. Best buys according to Richard Thorne are the cheaper Fiat-engined cars that can be had for £10–12,000 and are the rarest of the more recent four-pots.

He explains: "They are generally not as sought after as CVH-engined cars because the Italian twin-cam puts people off even though it is a complete jewel, one of the most successful engines of all time and nothing to be scared of. They are the real secret best buys because nobody really seems to be aware of them."

Also cheap are the underpowered sub-1-litre Ford-engined cars (starting with the 100E).

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Morgans are simple machines using plenty of readily available proprietary parts making spares easy to find and restorations easy to carry out.

There are few major areas of concern, but the ash frame is the most important, especially around A-posts and sill boards. Open the doors and stand back: if they droop it might be hinge pins, but A-posts might need specialist attention.

There are no water traps in the Z-pattern chassis, which can be patched, and even a rotten one can be replaced for under £4000.

On cars with mild-steel bulkheads and inner wings, water can get trapped between them, causing corrosion. This is not structural, but is a difficult repair and can be pricey.

WHAT TO READ

Morgan Cars 1936–'60 and 1960–'70, Morgan 1968–2001 (Brooklands); *Illustrated Morgan Buyer's Guide*, Ken Hill; *Morgans to 1997*, Roger Bell; *The Four-Wheeled Morgan*, Ken Hill; *Completely Morgan Four-wheelers 1936–'68 and from 1968*, Ken Hill; *Original Morgan 4/4, Plus 4 and Plus 8*, John Worrall and Liz Turner

THE CLUB

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SOME OF THE SPECIALISTS

Morgan Motor Co (01684 573104), Richard Thorne (0118 983 1200), Nick Whale (0121 772 4250), Brands Hatch Morgans (01732 882017), Melvyn Rutter (01279 725725), Wykehams (020 7589 6894), Perranwell Garage (01872 863037), Allon White (01234 750205), Lifes Motors (01704 531375)

'Dealers say that most people still envisage the company just as it was projected in *that* 25-year-old tv programme'





1986 Morgan +8

Owned by George Dow
 Since March 2002
 Bought for £25,000
 Miles covered 21,000

Mog loves the rough of Spain

I have been fortunate to enjoy many marques, including Healey, MG, Mini, Lotus, Jaguar, Porsche and even a Jensen Interceptor as well the necessary mundanemobiles for daily transport. So, in 2002, I strayed well away from the beaten track carved by so many years spent in the garage under rusted cars and bought a concours 1986 Morgan +8 that had been rebuilt by a Morgan expert for his personal use and to show. I was put on to it by a Canadian internet Morgan acquaintance who I met while surfing the web.

Having learned much about what a Morgan might be I was dubious about its possible reliability, but my wife Sandra, who had had enough of sailing and sea sickness as an annual holiday treat, decided we should go touring in the newly acquired Morgan. Thus, with loads of tools and spares taking up precious storage space, we headed off to Le Mans for the 24 Hours in 2002 to witness the effort that the Morgan team and supporters put into the event.

Having managed to get to LM in one piece from central Scotland, I was gaining confidence in the Mog's ability, so we carried on and jaunted around Normandy and Brittany discovering as many back roads as we could before heading home to



Castle in Andalucia: easily losing yourself is one of the joys of touring southern Spain



Dusty road to Ronda, Portugal-bound



Watch out for the bugs in the south!



Excited kids, Chinchón, near Madrid

via the Plymouth-to-Santander ferry down to Lake Vinuela, a few miles inland from Málaga, stayed there a week discovering the back routes and small towns and villages of the area, before taking a week or so to head back to the ferry using as many minor roads as we could find, diverting into Portugal in the very enjoyable process. Again, we had much sport finding accommodation.

The Mog has fared well on the first trip to France, covering about 2500 miles, and about 4500 miles on the following two trips. I replaced a fan belt in France the first year, spotted during the obligatory morning checks following some very enthusiastic driving.

In Spain this year, as we headed



Le Mans in 2002 was first trip for Morgan – two more runs to France followed

Clydebank after a very enjoyable couple of weeks in France.

In 2003 we headed off in the Morgan yet again. With no fixed destination in mind and with a B&B booked for the first night in France, we headed south with hopes for further accommodation based on internet cafes and mobile phones.

After a few days we got as far as a very hot Sorrento where we stayed for four days. During the trip down it got hotter and hotter, culminating in being caught in heavy traffic in a tunnel in Naples at a time when the Italians were finding things too hot to bear! Sitting behind a V8 with a hot gearbox at one's thigh and a hot exhaust running very close to the other thigh can make one wonder about one's sanity, and thus induce the inclination to fantasise about the value of an electric hood and aircon.

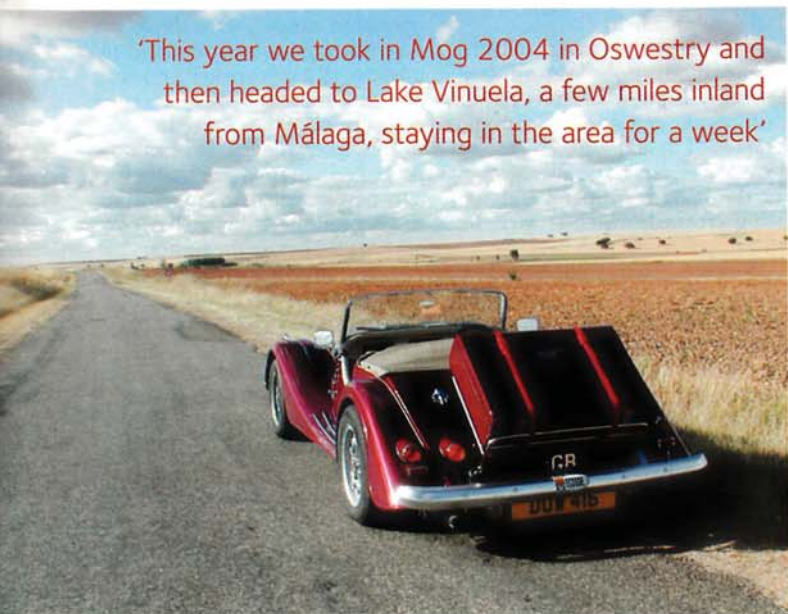
However, driving the Amalfi coast early in the morning as the mist gave way to the sun on my birthday was more than worth sweltering in the company of big trucks and traffic in one of those autocaverns that the Italians specialise in creating. Leaving Sorrento, we bumbled back towards home using country roads where practicable and staying in a mix of hotels and Agriturismos from Tuscany through to northern France.

This year we took in Mog 2004 at Oswestry in June and then headed

downhill into Bainou on Spain's Atlantic coast, the Mog misfired and dropped power, with an accompanying slight smell of petrol. One of the Strombergs' moulded rubber elbows had split and was leaking. *No problema...* My Morgan owner carries the correct diameter tubing to make just such a repair in a jiffy.

A good Morgan is a reliable vehicle and just as willing to take on the frost and snow of wintertime Scotland as the sweltering heat of the Med in June, and cope with some pretty rough roads in the process. I have been pleasantly surprised by my Morgan's capability and it can even manage in excess of 30mpg while touring, which makes things a little more gentle on the pocket than it might if I were able to use a real GT more suited to the task, if somewhat less adventurous.

'This year we took in Mog 2004 in Oswestry and then headed to Lake Vinuela, a few miles inland from Málaga, staying in the area for a week'



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Against tappet noise

WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price £15,436 Max power 190bhp Max torque 220lb ft
0-60mph 6.7 secs Top speed 124mph Mpg 18



With the Plus 8 just out of production, any car at around £20,000 is worth a look. This one had been in stock at Berrybrook, a reincarnation of the old Phoenix Garage, for about three weeks. It has worn two private numbers in its time and the good history shows that for the first part of its life it was serviced by the Morgan Motor Company for its first owner who lived in Rugeley, Staffs. It spent some more time in Suffolk on another private number before coming to the west country. The suspension was overhauled in 1998, at around 26,000 miles.

Bodily it is in good shape, with good door and bonnet fit and no stone-pings in the steel wings. There are the beginnings of a little rot in the inside front corners of the footwells but nothing serious yet.

There's a stainless-steel luggage rack and chrome door handles, both good, although the reflectors of the colour-coded Cibie Oscar driving lights are just starting to corrode at their bottoms. The side screens and hood look almost unused.

The chassis looks in good shape, with just one bumper bracket under the rear having 'eased'. Exhausts look fairly recent. Alloy wheels, unique to the model, are in good shape, and the Avon CR338 tyres are almost unworn, with the spare being a hardly used Pirelli P6. Only the attractive oxblood leather wants some help; it's cracking and could do with feeding or Connollising.

Antifreeze is fresh and full, oil is on the level, and the toolkit is present and correct on the scuttle. The engine fires readily, and settles down to 70°C and 45psi, running, which is normal for a Rover V8.

One tappet was sticky, however, and did not 'pump up' on a two-mile test drive, but might free off given more time. Otherwise suspect cam wear. The chassis is commendably shake and rattle free, with nice taut steering, and performance is strong, with a tremendous induction roar through the non-standard foam filter. The brake pedal has a long travel but the car pulls up well in a straight line. MoT runs until March and the car will be sold with either three, six or 12 months' mechanical warranty depending on how much you haggle on price.

VERDICT

Well-driving, honest car



Good interior - seats want love.



Fuel-injected Rover 3.5 engine

CARS

VALUES

	BUILT	SHOW	AV	CC	MPH/0-60	C&S
Capri 3000GT/3000E	1969-74	3500	1350	2994	122/8.4	May 1987
Capri RS2600/RS3100	1970-74	7500	3400	2637	126/7.3	Aug 1990
Capri II/III 2.0	1974-86	2750	650	1993	110/10.4	May 1987
Capri II/III 3.0	1974-81	2800	750	2994	118/9.1	May 1987
Capri 2.8i	1981-87	3400	950	2792	127/7.9	Mar 1999
Capri 280 Brooklands	1987	5200	2600	2792	99/n/a	
Escort Mexico	1970-74	4000	1900	1599		Dec 2002
Escort RS1600	1970-74	8000	4500	1601	113/8.9	Dec 2002
Escort RS2000	1973-74	5000	2200	1993	111/9	Dec 2002
Escort RS2000 Mk2	1976-80	4250	1600	1993	112/8.6	Dec 1995
Escort RS1800	1975-77	8500	5000	1835	114/9	
Granada Coupé Ghia	1975-77	3500	1150	2994	111/10.3	Nov 2001
Granada Ghia saloon	1974-77	2900	900	2994	113/9.1	Nov 2001
Sierra RS Cosworth	1986-87	11,000	6000	1993	145/8.2	
FRAZER NASH						
Le Mans Replica/Replica 2	1950-53	120,000	75,000	1971	114/9.6	Feb 1988
GILBERN						
GT coupé (1.0/1.6/1.8)	1959-67	5000	2250	1588	94/13.8	Aug 1994
Genie	1966-70	5500	2250	2495	115/10	Jun 1984
Invader	1969-74	6000	2500	2994	120/10.7	Jun 1992
GINETTA						
G4 (1.0/1.5)	1961-69	17,500	11,000	1499	108/9.7	Aug 1998
G15	1968-74	7500	4000	998	115/9	Aug 1998
G21 1800/1800S	1971-78	7000	3800	1725	120/8.5	Feb 2001
GORDON-KEEBLE						
GK1/II	1964-68	22,000	12,500	5395	137/7.5	Oct 1998
HEALEY						
2.4 Elliott saloon	1946-50	14,000	8500	2443	107/14.6	
Silverstone	1949-50	30,000	21,000	2443	110/n/a	May 1986
Abbott 2.4 dhc	1950-54	20,000	11,000	2443	100/14.7	
Tickford 2.4 saloon	1951-54	14,000	9000	2443	105/14.6	Mar 1987
G-type Nash-Healey	1951-54	22,000	12,000	4138	108/11.5	May 1995
HEINKEL						
Cabin Cruiser/Trojan 200	1956-65	4750	2250	198	60/...	Jan 1984
HILLMAN						
Minx Phase III-VIII dhc	1949-56	4000	1750	1390	73/29.7	
Minx Phase III-VIII saloon	1949-56	2300	900	1390	73/29.7	
Californian coupé	1953-56	2800	1250	1390	74/29.7	May 1989
Minx Series I-III dhc	1956-63	4250	1600	1494	80/23.6	
Minx Series I-III saloon	1956-63	2200	850	1494	79/23.6	
Super Minx I-III dhc	1962-64	4400	1800	1592	83/19.5	
Super Minx I-IV saloon	1962-66	2200	700	1725	86/17.9	Sep 1987
Hunter GLT	1966-77	2000	650	1725	96/13.9	Feb 1993
Hunter GLS	1972-76	2750	1000	1725	108/10.5	Feb 1993
Imp/Super Imp	1963-76	2000	600	875	80/25.4	Mar 2002
Imp Californian	1968-70	2250	850	875	81/22.1	Mar 2002
Avenger Tiger/Tiger II	1973	2500	1000	1599	100/12.2	Aug 1994
HONDA						
S600/800 convertible	1967-70	7000	3000	791	96/13.4	Jul 1990
S600/800 coupé	1967-70	5000	1800	791	96/13.4	Jun 1987
CRX	1984-86	1800	650	1488	112/8.5	Apr 1999
HRG						
1100/1500	1939-55	30,000	17,500	1496	83/18.1	Jun 1997
HUMBER						
Super Snipe MkI-III	1945-52	6500	2200	4086	80/24.5	Feb 2002
Super Snipe dhc	1949-50	15,000	9000	4086	80/22.7	
Pullman/Imperial II-IV	1948-54	7500	2700	4138	82/24.5	
Hawk MkIV-VI	1951-57	4500	1700	2267	80/23.8	
Super Snipe MkIV	1953-57	6750	2300	4138	91/16	Aug 1996
Hawk SI-IV	1957-67	4250	1500	2267	83/20.6	
Super Snipe SI	1958-59	4750	1900	2651	92/19	
Super Snipe SII-V	1960-67	5000	2000	2965	100/16.2	
Sceptre I/II	1963-67	3000	1000	1592	90/17.1	Jul 1995
Sceptre III	1967-76	2500	750	1725	98/13.1	
ISO						
Rivolta IR 300/340	1962-70	17,500	9500	5359	142/8	Jan 1995
Grifo 5.4 Sel/II, Chev/Ford	1963-74	26,000	17,500	5359	159/6.2	Nov 1994
Grifo 7.0 Sel/II, Chev/Ford	1969-74	32,000	22,500	6998	170/n/a	Nov 1994
Fidia 4dr saloon	1969-74	9000	4000	5359	135/8.1	Jul 2000
Lele coupé	1970-74	11,000	5500	5359	145/7.8	Feb 1987
JAGUAR						
SS100 3.5 sports	1938-39	120,000	82,500	3485	100/10.4	Oct 1990
XK120 alloy roadster	1949-50	65,000	30,000	3442	125/9.8	Jun 1996
XK120 roadster	1950-54	44,000	21,000	3442	125/10	Jul 1987
XK120 dhc	1953-54	40,000	19,000	3442	120/12	Jul 1987
XK120 fhc	1951-54	35,000	15,000	3442	120/12	Jul 1987
XK140 roadster	1954-57	48,000	22,000	3442	121/8.4	Jul 1987
XK140 dhc	1954-57	44,000	19,500	3442	121/8.4	Jul 1987
XK140 fhc	1954-57	36,000	16,000	3442	129/11	Jul 1987
XK150 3.4 roadster	1958-60	43,000	20,000	3442	132/7.5	Sep 1996
XK150S 3.4 roadster	1958-60	53,000	27,500	3442	136/7.3	Sep 1996
XK150 3.8 roadster	1958-60	48,000	21,500	3781	134/7.5	Sep 1996
XK150S 3.8 roadster	1958-60	55,000	26,000	3781	135/7.2	Sep 1996
XK150 3.4 dhc	1957-60	38,000	17,000	3442	123/8.5	Sep 1996
XK150S 3.4 dhc	1957-60	43,000	21,000	3442	136/7.3	Sep 1996
XK150 3.8 dhc	1957-60	41,000	19,000	3781	130/7.5	Sep 1996
XK150S 3.8 dhc	1957-60	50,000	24,000	3781	135/7.2	Sep 1996
XK150 3.4 fhc	1957-60	24,000	12,500	3442	124/8.5	Sep 1996
XK150S 3.4 fhc	1957-60	28,500	16,500	3442	136/7.3	Sep 1996
XK150 3.8 fhc	1957-60	26,000	14,000	3781	130/8	Sep 1996
XK150S 3.8 fhc	1957-60	36,000	19,000	3781	136/7.6	Sep 1996
21/2-litre/MKV 2.5 saloon	1947-51	18,500	8500	2663	87/17	Nov 1
21/2-litre/MKV 2.5 dhc	1947-51	35,000	17,000	2663	87/20.1	Nov 1
31/2-litre/MKV 3.5 saloon	1947-51	22,000	10,000	3485	97/14.7	Nov 1
31/2-litre/MKV 3.5 dhc	1947-51	40,000	18,000	3485	90/16	Nov 15
MkVII/VIII	1951-56	16,500	7000	3442	101/13.6	Aug 11
MkVIII	1956-59	15,500	6500	3442	107/11.6	Aug 11
MkIX	1958-61	19,000	7500	3781	114/11	Aug 11
MkX	1961-64	10,000	3500	3781	120/10.8	Jun 21
MkX 4.2/420G	1964-70	13,000	3250	4235	122/10.4	Jun 21
2.4 saloon	1955-59	13,500	4750	2483	102/14.4	May 15
3.4 saloon	1957-59	10,000	6250	3442	120/9.1	May 11
2.4 Mk2	1959-67	14,000	4500	2483	96/17.3	May 11
3.4 Mk2	1959-67	20,000	6500	3442	120/11.9	May 11
3.8 Mk2	1959-67	26,000	8000	3781	125/8.5	Feb 19
240	1967-69	13,000	4000	2483	105/12.5	May 1991
340	1967-68	16,000	5500	3442	123/11.9	Apr 1991
S-type 3.4	1963-68	15,500	5000	3442	114/13.2	Oct 1991
S-type 3.8	1963-68	18,000	5750	3781	122/9.9	Oct 1991
420	1966-68	12,500	4000	4235	125/9.4	Feb 1991
E-type 3.8 roadster	1961-64	38,000	21,000	3781	149/7	Sep 2001
E-type 3.8 fhc	1961-64	27,000	12,500	3781	151/7	Sep 2001
E-type S1 4.2 roadster	1964-67	42,500	24,000	4235	157/11	Sep 2001
E-type S1 4.2 fhc	1964-67	28,500	13,500	4235	150/7.1	Sep 2001
E-type S1 4.2 2+2	1964-67	19,000	9500	4235	139/8.9	Sep 2001

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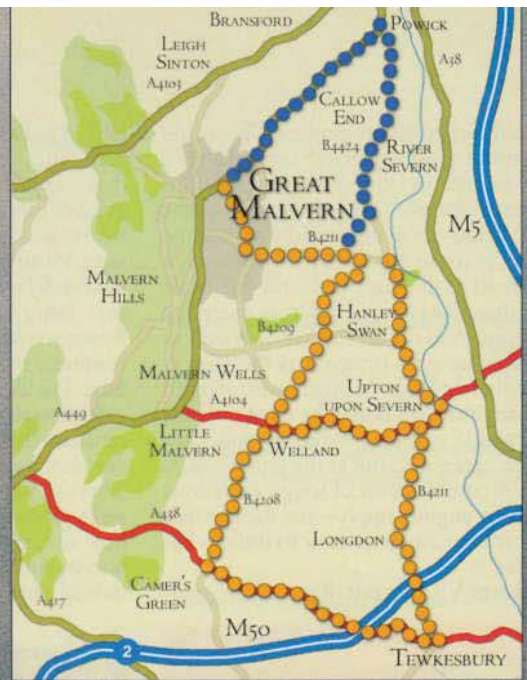
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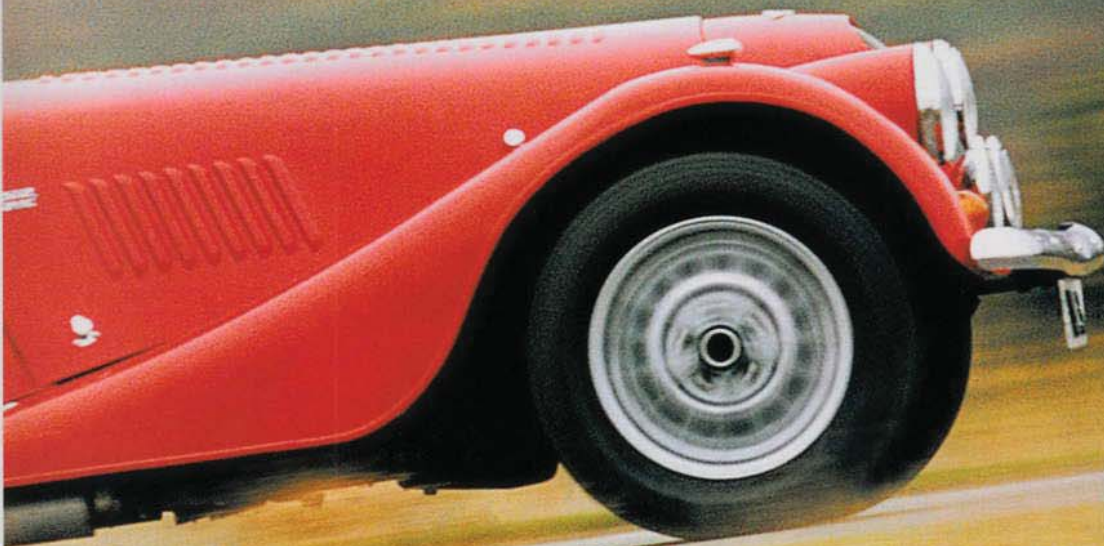
THRILLS



Morgan has stopped making the car that saved it, the Plus 8. Paul Hardiman takes a treasured example to meet its makers, and drives the factory test route



Blue dots mark original test route, others show later extensions



The floorboards are timber. The inside has the comforting welcome of an old scout hut. And that's just the factory. But not for much longer. Massive upheaval has meant a clearing-out of much of the old regime at Morgan, to make way for the new Aero 8, a curious blend of the high-tech and the traditional. Waiting lists have fallen from five years to around one. And the car that's moved over to be overtaken by such progress is the Plus 8, legacy of the late Peter Morgan, who steered the company through one of its most difficult phases. It was 35 years in production and, after the last few cars rolled out at the end of 2003, no more. A combination of tough emissions laws, faltering engine supply – and the fact that the new car is so much quicker to build – has finally killed it.

“The Rover V8 goes out of emissions regu-

lations at the end of 2004,” confirms Charles Morgan, third generation head of the family that founded the company in 1913. “It's been a great engine, and spares will continue, but we have to keep type approval in all markets. We've got a V8 anyway, the BMW in the Aero 8, and the Ford/Jaguar V6 will go into the roadster so that shape will continue. It's lighter than the Rover, so weight distribution is better. The 4/4 continues too, with the I4 Ford Zetec in a year's time. We like to keep two engine suppliers.”

Although the atmosphere in the factory remains that of unhurried skill, honed over decades, more than the product has changed. There's a new workshop at the end of the yard, and a glossy new reception. Ring the company now and, rather than the boss picking up the phone, you'll get a ghastly American-inflected switchboard. But some delightful touches

remain: the stuffed owl in the dispatch shed to dissuade birds from flying in and soiling the immaculate new mohair hoods, and the canteen is in a corner of the trim shop, where the last batch of 35th Anniversary Plus 8s is being completed: all already sold. They look little different from the first V8 cars that appeared in 1968, Peter Morgan's master plan to broaden the appeal of the traditionally built car and, even more boldly, take it back into America.

Yet under the shiny paint plenty has changed. The track and bodies were progressively widened, starting in 1973, rack-and-pinion steering arrived in 1983; front wings were changed to one-piece from Superform in 1997, although edge finishing and fitting of headlight pods was still carried out by hand at the factory. The bodies are built from bought-in laser-cut blanks rather than being individually snipped



Centre: Vanessa Lee with Bjorn Lie and Knut Hallan and 4/4 rally car, Charles Morgan and Chris Lawrence, who developed Aero 8 racer.
Above: now 4.3-litre with Holley



out by hand. The last engines displace 4 litres, controlled by computers, and run catalytic converters. A multitude of different arrangements of instruments and control stalks has been used: the latest cars even have a tilt-adjustable steering column.

But none of them quite has the rugged simplicity of the original Plus 8, arrived at by little more than Maurice Owen transplanting the all-aluminium, Rover née Buick 3½-litre V8 into a beefed-up Plus 4 chassis, of the type that Morgan has been using since 1936. Total development cost was £14,000. Early cars used straight 185x15 radials – taxi-sized tyres – rather than today's low-profiles. Time has moved on at Morgan, leading some owners of earlier Plus 8s to hang on to them, according to marque expert and dealer Richard Thorne.

Vanessa Lee bought hers almost 24 years ago. It's in fine fettle, having been rebuilt with a new chassis and a bit more grunt 10 years ago. All parts are available from Morgan's spares dept, which used to be administered from behind a sliding shutter in the first of the village-hall sheds. It's a narrow-bodied car, holding its wings tight into the elegant nose. Settle behind the big wheel in the upright seat – adjustable recliners did not appear for the model's first 34 years of production – aim the long nose out of the dispatch shed, where it left in 1972, swing right and turn left and we're out on to Pickersleigh Avenue, first step on the traditional Morgan test route, in use in various permutations since HFS Morgan, Peter's father and the current manag-

FACTFILE

MORGAN PLUS 8

Construction Z-section steel ladder chassis with five tubular crossmembers, ash body frame, steel/aluminium panels, canvas hood

Engine 3528cc all-alloy pushrod 90° V8, two SU HS6 carburettors

Max power 160bhp @ 5200rpm

Max torque 210lb ft @ 3000rpm

Transmission four-speed manual, synchro on all all forward gears

Suspension: front sliding pillars, coil springs, telescopic dampers **rear** live axle, leaf springs, lever-arm dampers

Steering Cam Gears worm and nut

Wheels 5½x15in Dunlop alloy

Tyres 185VR15

Brakes: front Girling 11in solid discs **rear** Girling 9x1¾in drums, vacuum servo-assisted

Length 12ft 8in

Width 4ft 9in

Height 4ft 2in

Kerb weight 17.7cwt

0-60mph 6.7 secs

Top speed 124mph (hood up) 118mph (down)

Mph/1000rpm in top 22

Mpg 18.3

Price (1968) £1477 18s 4d

Price now £25,000 (show), £17-20,000 (average), £10,000 (restoration)

ing director's grandfather, set up business here. The first factory was at the Morgan garage on the Worcester road, and the current site was used as an additional workshop, but operations moved there in 1913. Even today, every new car goes out on road test before dispatch, although new owners can collect their cars from the factory. Thorne drives each of the cars he sells from the factory back to his Grazeley Green headquarters.

The road winds and dips past the traffic lights of the Worcester road, residential until the shops at Barnards Green, where you take a left from the double roundabout, and then keep left at the fork towards Gualford and past the *Bluebell*. Gualford Road opens out into a long, wide avenue as we swap the town for the wide-verged Worcestershire countryside, feeling the grunt from the Holley-carbed 4.3. In high-compression form from the Rover P6, the standard twin-SU carbed 3528cc gives 160bhp, unlike the low compression Range Rover spec 135bhp version in one of the Plus 8's contemporaries, the MGB GT V8.

Even with standard engine, the early cars, with Rover four-speed rather than the original Moss 'boxes, are the most accelerative – a quicker, cheaper alternative to the Porsche 911. The 'box itself has a tight change in the gate, but in neutral it flops about and finding first is sometimes tricky. There's a lift-sleeve detent for reverse. This one's original engine now lives in the shed waiting for a rainy day. The extra grunt was added because at the time Vanessa, 2001

LOVE IS...

Vanessa Lee put down her deposit for a Plus 8 when she was just 18. But she couldn't wait and, aged 21, found this second-hand one for sale and has had it ever since: "I'd always wanted a Morgan – I'd always been into cars – and when I was 18 my mum gave me the £50 deposit for my birthday. When I was 21 my dad asked me if I wanted a party or money. I said money. I couldn't wait for the new car, so I found this advertised in *Exchange & Mart*, in Lincolnshire, seven years old. It had originally been Life's demonstrator. I went to see it with my uncle, who'd got me into cars – it was the first one I'd seen and it was just what I was looking for. When the new car was ready to be built I would have had to sell this and the Plus 4 I bought in 1982 to pay for it, so I let it go.

"I met my husband through it – he had three-wheelers. He asked me out the day I bought the Plus 4, which I hillclimbed from 1992-'99. I've thought about hillclimbing this one, but you'd have to modify it so much. I've been around Curborough for the driving school, though."

The car was rebuilt on a new galvanised chassis 10 years ago, re-using the original body: the ash frame was pretty good, needing only a few repair sections. With hillclimbing in mind, the engine was built by Lester Owen, using a four-barrel Holley and performance headers: "Then the original owner wrote, asking to buy it back."



Paul Matty Sports Cars Hillelimb Champion and 2002 Scratch Award winner in her Lotus 61, had plans to 'climb it. Outwardly standard, it's a most effective device. Using the improved Gemmer steering box, the steering is heavy when manoeuvring and when turning into corners, but as soon as the car is in transition it lightens up, giving superb feel, and messages come from the back of the chassis too. Morgan diehards joke about the stiffly sprung Z-channel frame giving half an hour warning of rear-end breakaway. Even then, it remains totally benign, though there's always the grunt to break traction and chirp even the excellently grippy Avon CR338s. "It lets you break all the rules," Vanessa says. "Not like the Lotus - you have to drive that properly." The strange roller-tipped throttle pedal is nice to use, and makes heeling and toeing easy.

If you're south of Malvern on the B4211, you might periodically see Morgans on trade plates turn right into a nondescript little white road signposted to Hanley Swan. Take it. For a short distance this is a gloriously swooping, well-surfaced, and most of all empty, rush between well-trimmed hedges to this pretty village. Over the crossroads by the duck pond and there's a little more of the same before Welland, which opens out on to Castlemorton Common, with the Malvern hills on your right. It's the classic Morgan location and many photo shoots have taken place here over the years. From here, the route varies, and testers find their own way back to Malvern Link and the factory. Nowadays, the faster Aero 8s have to go out and run on the motorway, conveniently close to sections of the M50 and M5, as their engine brains need time to 'learn'.

The Plus 8 embodies the spirit of this family firm like no other. It retains all of the traditional features - simple chassis, sliding-pillar front suspension and live axle, ash frame - wrapped in simple flat steel or aluminium panels. Yet, contrary to popular belief, the factory is not resistant to change - its policy has always been constant, but prudent, improvement. After a proposed takeover from Rover didn't happen, it obtained permission to use the V8 engine via GM, and the resulting 125mph car with vintage looks but faster acceleration than an E-type became an instant hit. The non-synchro Moss 'box fitted to the first V8 cars from 1968 gave way to the Rover four-speeder in April 1972, then the 77mm gearbox from the Rover SD1 from 1977. More latterly, the Range Rover five-speeder has been used "which gives a much nicer shift" says Thorne: "The SD1 cars [with



Top left: elegant alloys used until 1977. Top centre: Vanessa and Geoff Brewer, who started at the factory in 1955. He probably worked on this car, but says: "A lot of them looked like this then"

lower compression] are the least loved, but the sleeper, I think, is the Rover four-speed – probably the best value for money. These start from £17,000, and mine's still blowing them away in racing. Next best are the 3.9s, which used telescopic dampers at the rear, from '93, and which retail for £22-25,000. There's very little difference between retail and private prices because the margins aren't that high. There aren't many of them and private sellers usually have an inflated idea of what their car is worth. Long-door cars from 1997, with galvanised chassis and steel bulkheads, should last 100 years."

Some of the gradual changes are easier to spot: the wider wings are the most obvious, but others are more subtle, as Vanessa points out: on the tops of the rear wings at the panel joints there's beading, and the paint cracks off over the screw heads over time. On later cars, the skin is

'The Plus 8 embodies the spirit of this firm like no other. It retains the traditional features - simple chassis, sliding-pillar front suspension and live axle, ash frame - wrapped in simple flat steel or aluminium panels'

simply folded over. Thorne confirms that the factory has changed its methods over the years: "When Sir John Harvey Jones analysed Morgan rather negatively in 1990, advising the company had better change radically or die, that was fantastic publicity. But I don't think he quite understood the relationship between the factory and the customers. They did improve production flows with a new paint shop and build time came down from 8-10 weeks for a two-seater to four. Jig-building the frames helped, so they could go on any car."

The Aero 8's high tech but simpler extruded aluminium structure is simpler and faster to build, but retains the ash body frame because, says the factory, it fares better in certain crash situations. Also you suspect there's a reluctance to turn its back on every aspect of the past – and a commitment to a loyal, skilled workforce. But, under the gloss, all is not rosy: the message is that not enough enthusiasts like the Aero car, keeping interest in the Plus 8 strong. "There aren't any about," says Thorne, a Morgan dealer for 22 years. "That's partly because the 35th anniversary model has reminded people there won't be any more, and there's been a resurgence of interest in the past few months. I'm getting a couple in, but I expect them to move quickly. Prices had softened a little in the past couple of years because of the general demise of the supercar market. When the Aero 8 came out, Morgan diehards had to have one, which left a glut of Plus 8s on the market, but these have worked through now."

When buying, Thorne says, there are a few crucial checks to make: "If you're looking at one, you can see everything – it's important to get underneath but it's very easy to get a handle on it. The chassis rails are open section and the wings are single skinned. The things to beware of are frame rot – they were Cuprinol treated



ANNIVERSARY WALTZ

It seems incredible, but the 35th's list price is a gnat's off £40,000. No wonder the legendary waiting list was down to around 12 months. The Plus 8, as it reached the end of its run-out year 3½ decades after launch, grew reclining seats, tilting steering column and associated modern switchgear, a high-level brake light, even a CD player. Under the skin, there's rack-and-pinion steering, and the V8 has now been bored to 94mm to give 3946cc, 190bhp and 225lb ft of torque, driving through a five-speed gearbox. Wheels are now optionally up to 16in diameter, dampers are gas and oil filled and front brakes now have four-pot calipers. Yet your new Plus 8 still comes with a quaint throwback to tradition, a can of touch-up paint, sealed with tape.

With zero miles on the clock, this 35th Anniversary is defiantly hand-built and the quietest, tightest, most refined Plus 8 ever, yet there's still a wicked woofle, and that easy squirm of the tail to remind you that it's the real thing. The leather-trimmed seats are comfortable, the aluminium gear and handbrake knobs neat, only the nasty plastic steering wheel and the flexure of the clamp-up column disappointing but, under all this, the real thing lurks.



from 1993 – sagging doors and a general feeling of floppiness. Steel-bodied cars bubble around the wing joints, and the most troublesome place is the bulkhead down in the footwells. It's awkward to get to and it's important that you pull the carpets back and shine a torch in there. They can be patched in situ but it's tricky. Although the factory will build and fit a new body starting from about £3000."

Whatever the exact year of manufacture, the Plus 8 is a timeless expression of the purest sports car. Some years ago, Soichiro Honda, another of the rare breed of motor makers with his own name hanging over the door, predicted that there would be only five motor companies remaining by 2000, then added: "And Morgan."

That sentiment was perhaps because Morgan had appeared impervious to change, even though it has updated when necessary. Charles Morgan knows he has to look forward, even if that means leaving his most popular model behind. "The Plus 8 really is Peter's car," says Richard Thorne. "He believed in giving people a lot of performance at a reasonable cost – and it's really his legacy." How poignant that both he and his car should pass in the same year. ♦

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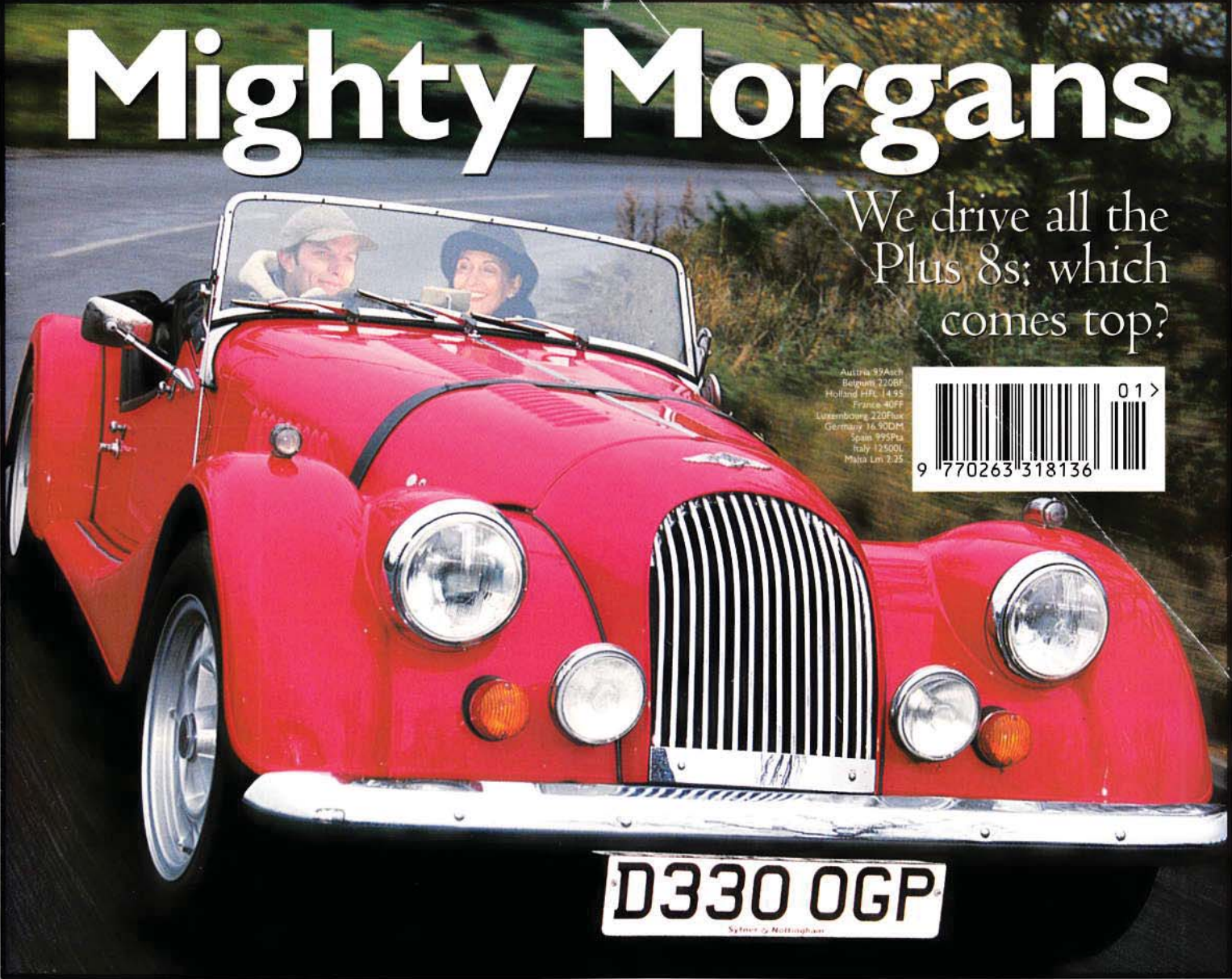
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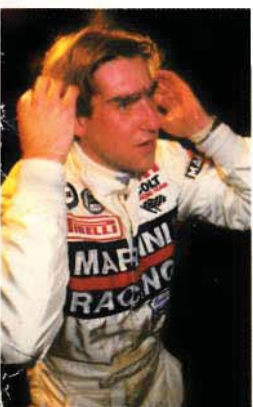


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Just because Morgan's time-warp styling continues year after year, decade after decade, people tend to think that nothing ever changes. Think again. This quintet of Plus 8s reveals just how much Morgan's rocketship has altered in specification and driving character through its 30-year lifespan, even if the basic building blocks – separate chassis, ash body frame, V8 engine and sliding-pillar front suspension – have remained. If you've ever fancied buying a Plus 8, here's the low-down on how the character of this quintessentially British evergreen has evolved over the years.

1969

The original Plus 8, launched in 1968, is the fastest carburettor-fuelled version, owing to its particular combination of lightness, gearing and power. The 0-60mph time of 6.7 secs, achieved by *Autocar*, is quicker than any production E-type, although superior aerodynamics allow the Jaguar to pull away above 90mph.

Driving this example, the 36th built, shows how Morgan tailored the car for acceleration. Although the engine is brilliantly flexible, close-ratio gearing and the V8's seductive exhaust note encourage you to use the four-speed Moss gearbox to the full, even if it doesn't have the snappiest change. The lever's crisp action and short throw suit a sports car, but sluggish synchromesh means that shifts can't be hurried – and the way the knob is tucked under the dashboard makes it awkward to reach. Nowadays the vintage character of the Moss 'box adds to the desirability of early Plus 8s, but at the time Morgan was forced to use it because Rover initially mated the V8 to automatic transmission only.

Compared with later versions of the V8, this one sports a 10.5:1 compression ratio – a high figure made possible by the availability of five-star petrol. These days there can be some hesitancy at low engine speeds, but everything clears from 2000rpm to give wonderful thrust up to the 5200rpm red line, equating to 115mph in top gear – *Autocar* must have over-revved to clock a 124mph top speed. Maximum power is 151bhp at 5200rpm and there's 210lb ft of torque at 3000rpm. One amusing under-bonnet feature is the cylindrical air-filter box: Morgan had to whack a big dent in the top to make it fit below the bonnet hinge.

Handling is just what you'd expect from archaic suspension, by leaf springs and lever-arm dampers at the back and trademark sliding pillars at the front. When the road is smooth and dry the Plus 8 behaves predictably, with controllable power oversteer on demand – but it's perilously easy to unstick the back in the wet. Hit a bump in mid-corner, though, and you quickly know about it: the car becomes skittish and easily knocked off line. Cam and peg steering adds to the vintage feel, having little self-centring and some free play. But the car's narrow build makes it easy to point.

Climbing aboard can be a struggle because there's so little knee room below the standard Astrali steering wheel, but the shapely seat is cosy. Only the rev counter is seen through the wheel, as other instruments and switches are gathered in a central panel, with the speedometer furthest away so that it can't be seen with a half-tonneau in place. Unlike all later Plus 8s, the heater is a 'fug-stirrer' ahead of the

MICHAEL BAILLIE



BROADER APPEAL

Now eight inches wider than the original, Mark Hughes charts the evolution of Morgan's character-building Plus 8 tourer



same ratios as before but for having direct fourth supplemented by an 0.79:1 fifth giving 27.6mph per 1000rpm, allowing a loping motorway gait and improved fuel consumption. The gear lever is easier to reach because it's nearer the driver, a consequence of chassis revisions allowing the powertrain – by now supplied by Rover as a complete assembly – to be moved backwards, giving better weight distribution and underbonnet clearance.

Sitting at a crossroads in Plus 8 evolution, this particular car still has carburettors, which changed from twin SUs to Strombergs in 1981. With the adoption of the five-speed 'box, Plus 8 specification fell into line with the Rover SD1 family, to which the fuel-injected Vitesse was added in 1983. So Morgan was able to offer a fuel-injected Plus 8 as an option from 1984, and standard from 1987.

This Plus 8 lacks a brake servo, the Girling Powerstop unit fitted to earlier cars having been deleted in 1981. Noticeably more pedal pressure is needed, but otherwise the Girling braking system remains unchanged from the earliest models, and more than adequate for the car's performance. Discs are fitted only at the front, drums sufficing at the rear – as they still do on current Plus 8s.

One detail about this car epitomises the quirkiness of Morgan history. Although built after April 1986, it lacks the scuttle-mounted side indicator repeaters that became mandatory at that time. Apparently a good nine months went by before the company realised it was building cars that weren't strictly legal...

1994

The big difference here is in performance, for this car has the 3.9-litre Range Rover engine introduced in 1990, complete with fully mappable 'hot-wire' fuel injection. By 1994, all Plus 8s were fitted with a three-way catalytic converter, which brought fuel-system changes that caused torque – this engine's defining feature – to increase from 220 to 235lb ft, the peak occurring at 2600rpm in both cases. Such pulling power at low revs is a distinct difference from the earliest Plus 8. That car thrives on good use of the gearbox, but flexibility is so enhanced with the 3.9 that gearchanging, if you want to drive lazily, can be all but abandoned once on the move. Flooring the throttle at 30mph in top gear makes this Plus 8 leap forward with almost as much force as in the lower gears, and at higher speeds the surge is electrifying. While 0-60mph is the best Plus 8 figure yet at 6.1 secs, the most telling statistics are incremental direct-gear comparisons with the Moss 'box version: 20-40mph is 4.2 secs against 5.0, while for 80-100mph the margin widens to 6.1 secs versus 7.4.

One minor change introduced with the catalyst is a sealed fuel tank with only a single filler, on the right-hand side of the tail panel. Previously there was always a second filler, which had the twin advantages of giving speedier refuelling (thanks to the venting permitted by opening the second cap) and enabling the car to be filled from either side.

Handling is more assured on this Plus 8, thanks to the long-overdue introduction of telescopic rear shock absorbers in 1990. These anchor the back end much more securely, especially on bumpy roads, but do nothing for ride quality, which remains sportingly firm – but not harsh – on all but the smoothest surfaces. So



Tight fit but cosy in early car; gearlever under dash' is awkward



Wider Rover 'box (from '72) means pedals are more cramped



Dash redesigned from '77 – main instruments in front of driver



Optional walnut veneer in '94 model; seats don't recline that far



Current car has bespoke VDO instruments plus mods for safety



popular are telescopics that many owners retro-fit them to earlier cars.

Braking is another area where modern Plus 8s have been improved in feel and efficiency, following a major 1993 revamp that saw the old Girling system replaced by Lockheed components. Front discs now carry four-pot calipers, a servo reappears (this time a new design combined with the master cylinder), the fly-off handbrake is operated by cable rather than rods, and the rear drums are self-adjusting. Interior appointments could be quite lavish by this stage, thanks to a lengthening options list. This Plus 8 has the walnut-veneer dashboard – complete with lockable glovebox – that had been available from 1989. By now there were three choices of seats, this car having the so-called recliners (they don't actually recline much) whose deep padding definitely adds long-distance comfort. A map-reading lamp is also useful, as there's no other interior lighting.

1999

Coming up to date, the 4.6-litre Plus 8 is an even wilder machine, offering so much torque that the rear wheels can be made to spin in third gear in the dry. Even more than previous Plus 8s, this current version can be driven as the

FACTFILE

Morgan Plus 8 (1969)

ENGINE

3528cc V8, 10.5:1 cr, twin SU HS6 carbs

Max power 151bhp @ 5200rpm

Max torque 210lb ft @ 3000rpm

PERFORMANCE

Top speed 124mph **0-60mph** 6.7 secs

Price new £1478 **Price now** £18,000

Morgan Plus 8 (1976)

ENGINE

3528cc V8, 9.35:1 cr, twin SU HI F6 carbs

Max power 143bhp @ 5000rpm

Max torque 202lb ft @ 2700rpm

PERFORMANCE

Top speed 122mph **0-60mph** 7.1 secs

Price new £3978 **Price now** £16,000

Morgan Plus 8 (1986)

ENGINE

3528 V8, 9.25:1, twin Stromberg carbs

Max power 155bhp @ 5000rpm

Max torque 198lb ft @ 2750rpm

PERFORMANCE

Top speed 124mph **0-60mph** 6.5 secs

Price new £12,498 **Price now** £16,000

Morgan Plus 8 (1994)

ENGINE

3946cc V8, 9.35:1 cr, Lucas/Bosch fuel injection

Max power 190bhp @ 4750rpm

Max torque 235lb ft @ 2600rpm

PERFORMANCE

Top speed 125mph **0-60mph** 6.1 secs

Price new £24,898 **Price now** £25,000

Morgan Plus 8 (1999)

ENGINE

4555cc V8, 9.35:1 cr, Lucas/Bosch fuel injection

Max power 220bhp @ 5000rpm

Max torque 260lb ft @ 3600rpm

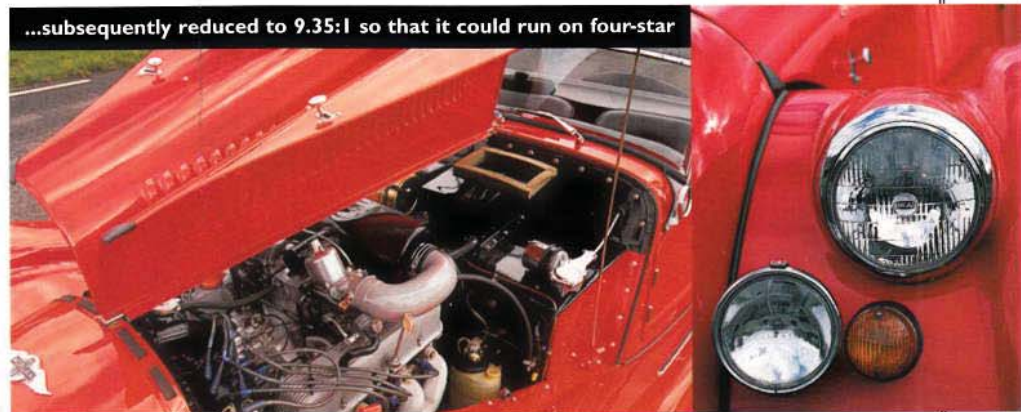
PERFORMANCE

Top speed 128mph **0-60mph** 6.0 secs

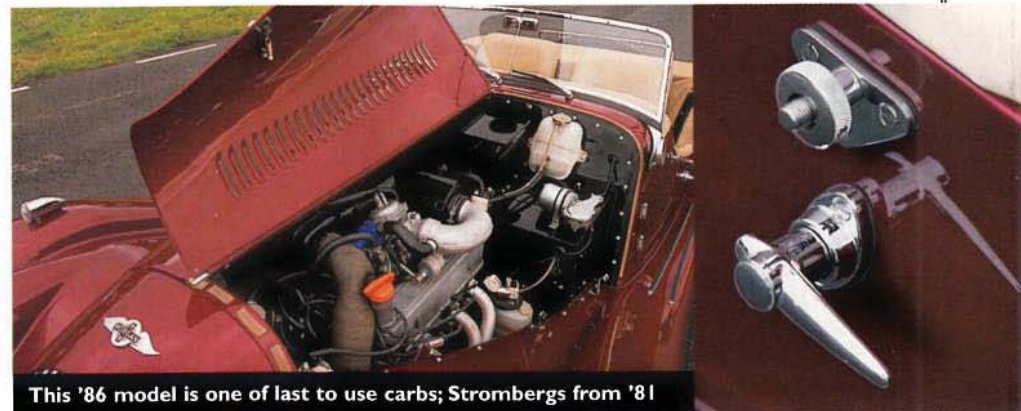
Price new £34,639 **Price now** £36,000



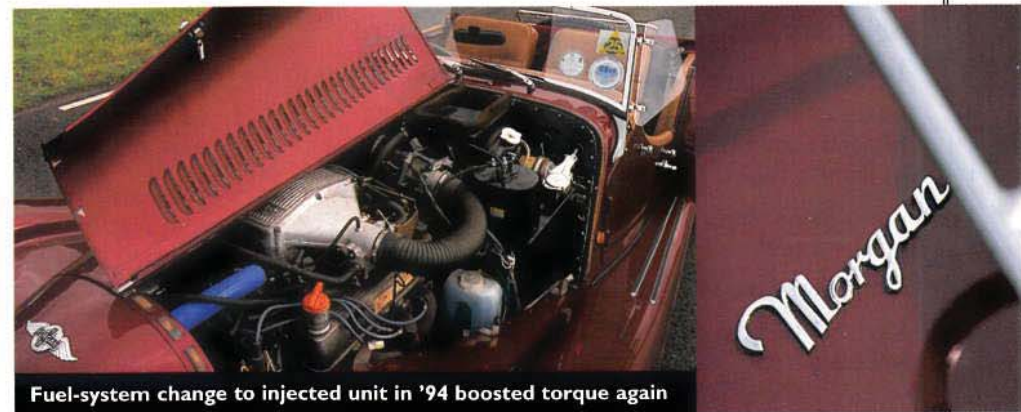
Buick-derived V8 sports 10.5:1 compression ratio in original car



...subsequently reduced to 9.35:1 so that it could run on four-star



This '86 model is one of last to use carbs; Strombergs from '81



Fuel-system change to injected unit in '94 boosted torque again



...but current 4.6-litre has even more; gorgeous wires optional

mood suits, with performance lighting up anywhere in the rev range thanks to a lavish spread of torque. The peak is a fantastic 260lb ft at 3600rpm, although maximum power of 220bhp at 5000rpm isn't significantly better – but then you never need to rev that high. This is the quickest Plus 8 yet, capable of 0-60mph in 6 secs and a top speed of 128mph.

Even though the overall look is similar, this car shows that the most significant changes to the Plus 8 occurred recently, in August 1997. Many of the modifications were driven by legislation, none more so than cockpit changes to allow airbag installation. The need to meet legal dimensions for airbag inflation forced Morgan to increase the distance between dashboard and seating, giving a roomier cabin. The dashboard is further forward, doors are lengthened by 1½in, seat travel is usefully increased, and there's much more room for knees and legs. Out of sight, there are differences in every piece of the ash frame.

Structural improvements extend to the way the car is made, in keeping with quality gains first seen when Morgan began treating the ash frame with preservative in 1986. The engine bay has stainless steel panels on either side, while the chassis is now galvanised as standard. Broad wings, wider than ever before on cars fitted with optional chromed 7Jx16 wire wheels, are created by a new single-piece manufacturing process called Superform, whereby molten aluminium is sprayed into a mould at high temperature. Durability promises to be far better than the previous wings, which, whether in steel or optional aluminium, were prone to corrosion because of their three-piece construction and the use of moisture-trapping wired edges around the wheelarches. Another new dashboard layout accompanies provision for airbags. The four small dials are now arranged in a square in the centre, surrounding a winking red lamp for the standard immobiliser. Morgan badges in the speedo' and rev counter reveal that these are now specially made by VDO, and the odometer is an electronic display that lights up with ignition. Twin column stalks – taken from the Land-Rover Freelander – provide a more elaborate range of functions.

Many other details reflect the onslaught of type-approval requirements. A high-level brake lamp is fitted above the external spare wheel, and side-repeater lamps now sit in the front wings. Pliable covers, in rubber or plastic, protect numerous sharp edges, such as hood-frame fittings or the ends of wiper blades. Cars are now delivered with wing-mounted side-lights disconnected (their lighting intensity falls below legal requirements), while the factory supplies sidescreens as a gift, thanks to their frowned-upon Perspex panes.

This current Plus 8 may be bigger and heavier than ever before, but it's also faster, better handling (thanks to the width of track and tyres), more comfortable, greener and safer. It remains Morgan's state-of-the-art flagship until the next evolutionary step. ♦

Thanks to owners Bob Cragg (1969), Paul Parken (1976), Kevin Vernon (1986), Colin Peters (1994) and Jeremy Lewis (1999), and to John Worrall of Heart of England Morgans (01299 250141) for organisational help.



Behaviour predictable on smooth roads, but skittish over bumps



This '76 car lacks rear bumper, one of many options at the time



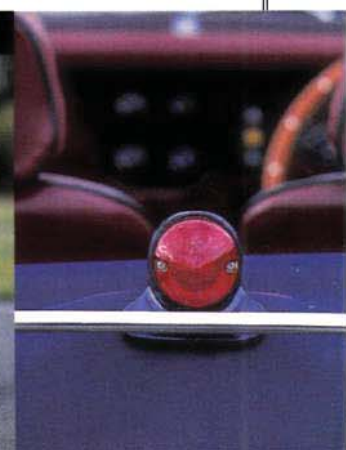
No servo from '81 to '93, so brakes need a lot more pressure



Telescopic rear dampers (from '90) improve roadholding no end



Current model handles even better, with wider track and tyres



Legenda

Morgan

Aitoa brittilälaatua jo vuodesta 1909



**ei kuole
koskaan**



Morganeissa käytetään nykyään Fordin ja Roverin moottoreita. Tässä on rivistö Fordin 1,8-litraisia nelikoita, jotka kulkeutuvat vähitellen 4/4-mallien konehuoneisiin. Plus 4:n moottori on Roverin kaksilitrainen nelonen ja Plus 8:n pata saman valmistajan veeaksi. Tehot 121/134/185 hv.



Morgan on käsityötalon mestarinäyte. Tässä naputellaan kaarevaa korin palaa oikeaan muotoonsa. Kilkatus peltityöhallissa on niin helvetillinen, että ilman kuulosuojaimia siellä viihtyy vain hetken.

Morgan. Sehän on se museoauton näköinen vempele, jota tehdään jossain Englannissa. Kyllä nuo engelsmannit ovat sitten hulluja.

LAURI LARMELA
KUVAT KIMMO KIENANEN JA
REINO LAUKKANEN

Vuonna 1881 Suomi oli Venäjän suuriruhtinaskunta, C.G.E. Mannerheim 14-vuotias pojankloppi ja Englanti maailman mahtavin valtio.

Kaukana Lontoon humusta, Herefordshiren maaseudulla eläi muuan pastori H.G. Morgan.

Juuri tuona vuonna pastorin vaimo Ruth synnytti poikalapsen, jolle annettiin peräti kolme etunimeä, aivan kuin Mannerheimillekin. Pojasta tuli H.F.S. Morgan.

Ensimmäinen kolmipyöräinen

Alemmat koulut käytyään H.F.S meni Crystal Palacen teknilliseen oppilaitokseen. Nuorukainen löysi ensimmäisen työpaikkansa rautateiltä. Hän aloitti 18 vuotiaana G.W.R. Railway Worksin suunnitteluosastolla teknisenä piirtäjänä.

Vuonna 1906 H.F.S ryhtyi yksityisyrittäjäksi. Hänellä oli Malvern Linkissä bussifirma ja autoliike, joka edusti Wolseley ja Darracq -merkkisiä himmeleitä. Bisnes pyöri sen verran

mallikkaasti, että H.F.S. sai kerättyä kasaan oman auton hankkimiseen tarvittavat rahat. Tai no, eihän se oikeastaan ollut auto, vaan kolmipyöräinen moottori-ajoneuvo, jolla oli oikein hieno nimikin: Eagle Tandem. Ajeltuaan tovin tällä kahdeksanhevosvoimaisella häkkyrällä H.F.S. sai loistoidean: Minähän rakennan tällaisen itse!

H.F.S osti seitsemänhevosvoimaisen Peugeot-moottorin, ja asensi sen putkirunkoisen kolmipyöräisen keulalle. Morgan numero 1 oli syntynyt.

Tilauksia tulvimalla

Ensimmäinen Morgan oli kokolailla onnistunut konstruktio. Jäykkä runko loi sille oivan perustan ja etupään erillisjousitus antoi kohtalaiset ajo-ominaisuudet. Teho-paino -suhde oli ennenkuulumattomat 90 hv/tonni. Potkua siis piisasi.

Alunperin herra Morgan ei suunnitellut tekevänsä kuin yhden kolmipyöräisen rakkineen. Hänen luomuksensa sai kuitenkin niin paljon kehuja, että H.F.S. päätti valmistaa muutamia kolmipyöräisiä myyntiin.

Vuoden 1910 Olympia Motor Showssa oli esillä neljä- ja kahdeksanhevosvoimainen Morgan-kolmipyörä. Kummatkin olivat yksipaikkaisia ja moottorit olivat merkkiä J.A.P.

Näyttelyssä kävi ilmi, että yksipaikkaisille veikeille ei oikein ollut kysyntää. Niinpä herra Morgan toi seuraavana vuonna näyttölle kaksipaikkaisen kolmipyörän.

1912 tilauksia tuli niin paljon, että herra Morgan kääntyi isompien autotehtaiden puoleen, ja pyysi heitä tekemään kolmipyöräisiä alihankintana. Morganin pyyntöihin ei kuitenkaan suostuttu ja niinpä hänen oli laajennettava konepajaansa, ja tehtävä autot itse.

Näin syntyi Morgan Motor Company. H.F.S oli sen toimitusjohtaja ja hä-



nen isänsä hallituksen puheenjohtaja.

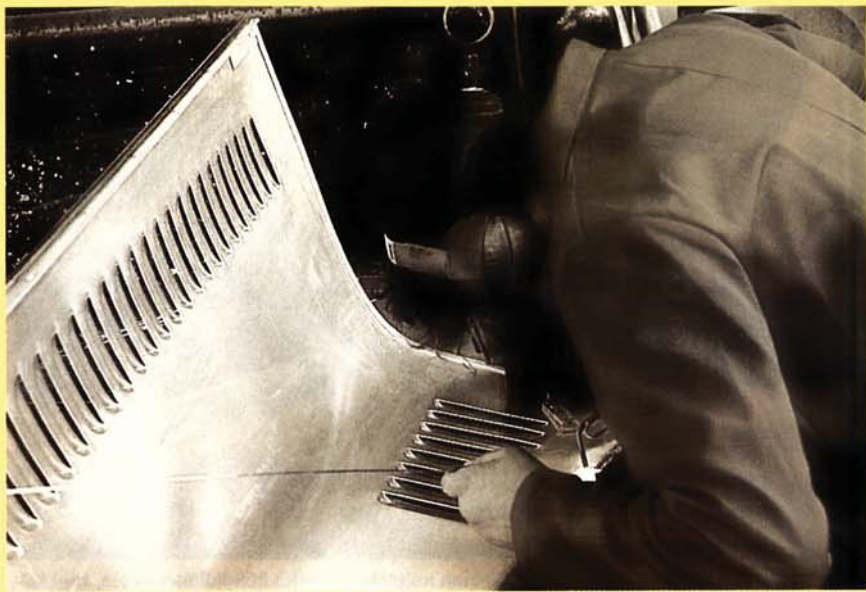
Neljännän pyörän vallankumous 1936

Ensimmäisen maailmansodan aikana kolmipyöräisten tuotanto hiipui, kun tehdas määrättiin varusteluolosuhteiden palvelukseen.

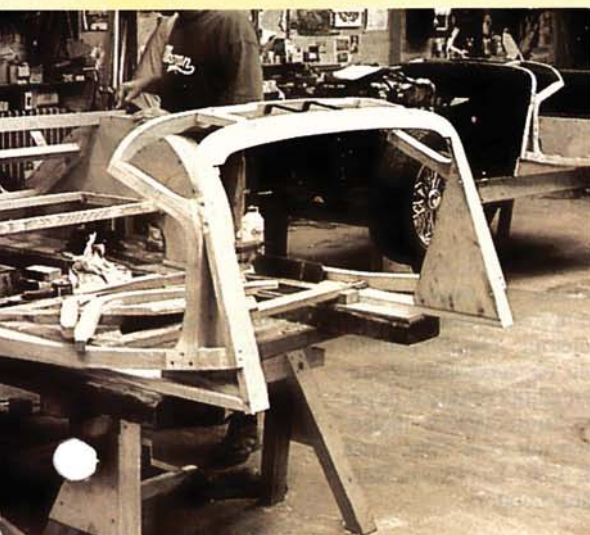
Sodan jälkeen, vuonna 1918, Morgan Motor Company muutti Malvernissa paikalle, jossa se edelleen toimii.



Useimmat tilaavat Morganiinsa alumiinikorin. Olli koppa sitten terästä tai alumiinia, naputtelua ja mittausta riittää ennen kuin kaarevat muodot ovat kohdallaan.



Morganissa on perinteiseen tapaan kaksi konepeltiä eli kummallekin koneen kyljelle on omat luukkunsa. Tässä on käsitellyssä toisen luukun alareuna. Peltiosat tulevat tehtaalle raakaprässättyinä, mutta ne viimeistellään omin voimin.



Morganin sydän on saarnipuusta hellyydellä ja rakkaudella koottu korikehikko. Valmistuttuaan se upotetaan puunkylälämpöaineeseen. Sitten sen päälle aletaan naputella koripeiteä.

Puolet viintiin

Morganeita tehdään tasaisen rauhalliseen tahtiin. Viikossa valmistuu keskimäärin kymmenen autoa: Neljä Plus kasia, ja kolme kumpaakin nelisynteristä mallia. Viintiin tuotannosta menee noin puolet. Morganit käyvät hyvin kaupaksi mm. Saksassa, Ranskassa ja Italiassa.

Keskimääräinen uuden Morganin odotusaika on viisi vuotta. Myyntijohtaja Day kertoi, että heillä on asiakkaitaan sveitsiläinen lääkäri, joka tilaa aina uuden auton luovutushetkellä seuraavan Morganin. Nyt miehellä on menossa viides "Mog", ja

kuudennesta on tilaus jo väässä!

Morganin tehtaalla voi vierailla, vaikka ei olisikaan jonoistalla tai seuraamassa oman autonsa valmistusta. Ilmoittautumalla toimistossa saa useimmiten luvan kiertelyyn. Tehtaan työväki suhtautuu vierailijoihin hyvin ystävällisesti, ja vastaillee mielellään kysymyksiin.

Morgan Motor Company löytyy Malvernista helposti. Täydellinen osoite on Pickersleigh Road, Malvern Link, Worcestershire, WR14 2LL, England.



Ennen verhoilua ja kojelaudan kiinnittämistä johtoniput on saatava järjestykseen. Morgankaan ei kulje ilman sähköä!

Herra Morganin konstruktiio osoittautui niin onnistuneeksi, että sitä ei tarvinnut vuosikausiin muuttaa juuri lainkaan. 1920-luku toi mukanaan sähköstarrin ja -valot sekä jarrut etupyöriin. Vuoden 1931 Morganissa oli jo kolme vai-



detta eteen ynnä pakkii!

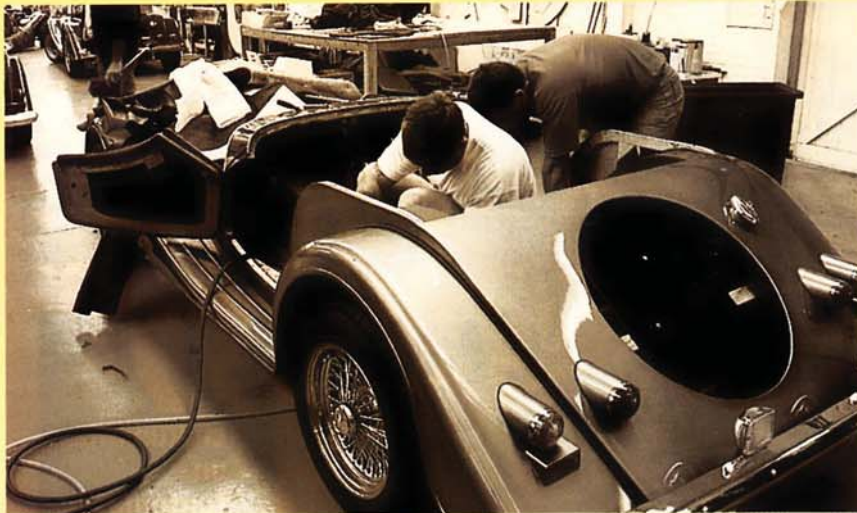
Vuonna 1936 tapahtui vallankumous. Lontoon ja Pariisin autonäyttelyissä oli esillä nelipyöräinen Morgan. Sille annettiin nimeksi Morgan Four Four, eli neljä pyörää ja neljä sylinteriä. Autossa oli teräsrunko ja saarnipuuisen kehikon päälle naputeltu alumiinikori.

Kaksipaikkaisesta roadsterista tuli heti menestys. Se sai rinnalleen nopeasti nelipaikkaisen version ja kovakattoisen coupén. Myös kolmipyöräisten mallien tuotanto jatkui. 1930-luvun lopulla Morganin verstailla intou-

SIVULLLE 68



Tähän autoon on tilattu kaunis pähkinäpuinen kojelautta. Koska liukuhihnaa ei ole, tehtaalla ei ole koskaan varsinaisesti kiire. Niinpä työkalut voivat ihan rauhassa lojua puolivalmiin kojelaudan päällä.



Loppusuora hämmöttää: Maali on pinnassa ja kori ryhdissä. Vuorossa on ohjaamon verhoilu ja muut sisustustyöt.

duttiin omaperäisiin kokeiluun. 1937 nelipyöräiseen Morganiin asennettiin 1098-kuutioinen Coventry Climax -kilpamoottori, joka kehitti 42 hevosvoimaa. Auto nappasi luokkavoiton Le Mansissa vuonna 1939.

Teräs kortilla sodan jälkeen

Toinen maailmansota keskeytti autojen valmistuksen. Niiden sijasta Morganin verstailla väsättiin osiamm. Oerlikon-ilmatorjuntatykkeihin ja lentokoneisiin.

Vuonna 1945 Morganin väki palasi Kruunun palve-

Kuuden vuoden odotus palkittiin – uusi Morgan Suomeen

Malvern on pieni ja uinuva kaupunki Englannin ja Walesin rajaseudulla. Lontoosta sinne ehtii autolla reilussa kahdessa tunnissa. Morganin punatiilinen ”tehdas” on kaupungin laidalla.

Kävimme paikan päällä viime elokuun alussa todistamassa iloista perhetapahtumaa: Suomalaismiehelle luovutettiin ihka uusi Morgan Four Four, jota hän oli odottanut kuutisen vuotta!

Morganin hankkiminen on ainutlaatuisen hidas ja monipolvinen prosessi. Juha Varis kiinnostui Morganista 1990-luvun alussa. Hän kirjoitti tehtaalle, ja kyseli mahdollisuuksia auton oston. Koska Besmec-nimisen firman Morgan-maahantuonti oli tuolloin lakannut, tehdas ilmoitti, että

auton voisi ostaa Suomeen suoraan tehtaalta.

Tehdas kirjasi mappeihin suomalaismiehen kontaktitiedot, ja odotus alkoi. Tämän vuoden alussa tuli Malvernista Suomeen pitkään odotettu viesti: Myyntijohtaja Dayn alikirjoittamassa kirjeessä kerrottiin, että jos Mr Varis haluaa Morganinsa, on hänen tehtävä sitova tilaus pikimmiten. Tilaus tehtiin, ja se vahvistettiin maksamalla tehtaalle ennakkomaksuna osa auton hinnasta.

Juha Varis kävi Malvernissa maaliskuussa. Silloin täytettiin yksityiskohtainen tilauslomake. Juha Varis otti autoonsa galvanoidun rungon ja punaiseksi maalatun alumiinikorin. Kojelautaan tuli pähkinäpuuta ja istuimiin nis-



Vaikka Morgan näyttää mobiililta, se on uusi auto. Niinpä sen pitää kiiltää.

luksesta omalle tehtaalleen. Terästä oli vaikea saada. Niinpä Morganin korit naputeltiin alumiinipelistä, jota oli sotakoneteollisuuden jäljiltä runsaasti tarjolla. Ensimmäisenä tuotantoon tuli Four Four, jossa oli 1267-kuutioinen Standard-moottori.

H.F.S. Morganin poika P.H.G. Morgan tuli tehtaalle töihin vuonna 1947 vapauduttuaan armeijasta. Hän otti vastuulleen tuotekehityssinööriin ja teknisen piirtäjän työt.

Vaikka sodasta oli ollut jo muutama vuosi, ei ollut edelleen kortilla. Englannin hallitus säännösti sitä tiukalla kädellä. Vain ne autotehtaat, joiden autot kelpasivat vientiin, saivat reilummin tuota kullasta-arvoista materiaalia käyttöönsä.

Morgan hankki itselleen edustajat USA:sta, Kanadasta, Etelä-Amerikasta, Australiasta, Etelä-Afrikasta ja manner-Euroopasta.

Four Four -malli kävi ulkomailla mainiosti kaupaksi, mutta kolmi- ja nelipyöräisille ei tuntunut olevan minkäänlaista kysyntää. Niinpä niiden valmistus päätettiin lopettaa vuonna 1950. Viimeiset 12 kolmi- ja nelipyöräistä oli laivattu Australiaan jo neljä vuotta aikaisemmin.

PS. Morgan 4/4 maksaa tehtaalla 17 830 puntaa eli reilut 120 000 markkaa. Plus 8 on huomattavasti arvokkaampi: 28 470 puntaa eli noin 200 000 markkaa.



Triumphin moottori keulalle

Vuonna 1947 kävi ilmi, että Standard-tehdas ei pystyisi jatkossa toimittamaan Morganille sen haluamia moottoreita. Oli siis pakko etsiä uusi voimanlähde. Vuonna 1949 rakennettiin prototyyppi, jossa oli Vanguardin 1,8-litrainen moottori.

nen ja peräti 68-hevosvoimainen. Plussan runko oli vankempi kuin Four Four -Malissa. Vaihteistona käytettiin nelipykäläistä Moss-laatikkoa ja taka-akselina oli Salisbury 4-1.

H.F.S. Morganin poika P.H.G. Morgan eli tuttavallisemmin Peter kilpaili Morganeilla aktiivisesti. Ralleista ja radoilta kerättiin kokemuksia, joita hyödynnettiin siviilimallien kehitystyössä.

Vuonna 1954 Morganin keulamootoja pyörästettiin siirtämällä jäädytyn korin sisäpuolelle. Konehuoneeseen ängettiin Triumph TR 2:n moottori, jossa oli peräti 90 hevosvoimaa. Kahta vuotta myöhemmin moottori vaihtui satahevosvoimaiseen neloseen.

Tuolla teholla kevyt alumiinikorinen Morgan kulki kuin raketti: 0-400 m -kiihdytys sujui 16 sekunnissa. Aika on kunnioitettava vielä tänäkin päivänä, mutta 1950. Se sai nimen Plus Four.

Lopullisen version moottori oli 2 088-kuutio-

Plus 8 tuli 1968

Vuonna 1962 Christopher Lawrence parinaan Richard Sheppard-Baron voitti Morganillaan Le Mansin -ajojen kaksilitraisten luokan. He ajoivat vuorokaudessa reilut 3 600 kilometriä keskinopeudella 150 km/h. Kisan jälkeen sankarit ajoivat Morganissa takaisin Englantiin kuin tavalliset turistit!

Samana vuonna tehdas esitteli viidennen sukupolven 4/4:n. Siinä oli 1 500-kuutioinen Ford-moottori aiemman 1 340-kuutioisen sijasta.

Vuoden 1963 Lontoon autonäyttelyssä oli esillä

Morgan Plus Four Plus. Se oli kaksipaikkainen umpiauto, jonka keulalla oli 105-hevosvoimainen Triumph-moottori. Kovakattoinen coupe ei ollut asianharrastajien mieleen, ja niinpä sen tuotanto lopetettiin jo kahden vuoden päästä. Tupla-Plussia ehdittiin tehdä vain 26 kappaletta.

1966 Triumph-moottori alkoi olla tiensä päässä, ja Morganin keulalle oli etsittävä taas uusi voimanlähde. Roverilla oli tarjolla uusi täysalumiininen veekahdeksikko. Kevyt ja kompakti moottori sopi mainiosti Morganin nokalle.

Näin syntyi Plus Eight, joka esiteltiin vuonna 1968.

Vuonna 1984 perinteiset kaasuttimet saivat väistyä, kun Roverin vinkkelin päälle ruuvattiin polttonesteensuihkutusjärjestelmä. Neljä vuotta myöhemmin kahdeksikon iskutilavuus kasvoi 3,9 litraan.

Pitkään uinunut Plus Four heräsi eloon vuonna 1985. Sen keulalla pörisi Fiatin kaksilitrainen tuplannokkamoottori. Samana vuonna H.F.S. Morganin pojanpoika, Charles aloitti työt Malvern Linkin tehtaalla.



Ihkauusi ja uudennahkea Morgan 4/4 suomalaisen viljapellon laidalla. Morganin muodot ovat niin ajattomat, että kuva voisi olla yhtä hyvin 1930-luvulta.

Elävä käsityöläismuseo

Morganin tehdas on uskomaan paikka. Mieleen tulee hakematta käsityöläismuseo tai veneveistämö. Moottorit, akselistot ja muotoon prässätyt koripellit tulevat Malverniin alihankkijoilta, mutta kaikki muu tehdään itse.

Liukuhinna on Morganilla tuntematon termi. Ei sillä oikeastaan olisi käyttöäkään, sillä vuodessa saadaan valmiiksi noin 450 autoa.

Koska liukuhinnaa ei ole, Morganin aihiot työnnetään tehtaalla työpisteestä toiseen. Tehdas on sopivasti rinteessä: Kokoontulo alkaa maan päällä, ja valuessaan alamäkeen Morgan valmistuu hiljalleen.

Morganit tehdään edelleen samoilla menetelmillä kuin

1930-luvun ensimmäiset Four Four -mallit. Kaiken perusta on erillinen teräsrunko. Siihen ruvataan kiinni lehtijousitettu jäykkä taka-akseli ja kierreousitettu liukupilariperiaatteella toimiva etuakseli.

4/4:n moottori on Fordin 1,8-litrainen Zetec, josta irtotaa 121 hevosvoimaa. Plus 4:n pata on Roverin kaksilitrainen nelonen, jossa on 134 hevosvoimaa. Plus 8:n moottori on kaikkien tuntema Roverin kasi, joka potkii 185 hevosvoimaa.

Kun moottori ja vaihteisto on saatu paikalleen, rungon päälle istutetaan saarnipuusta koottu korikehikko. Sen päälle naputellaan varsinaisen kori. Jokainen Morgan on

yksilö, ja niinpä peltien sovittelu paikoilleen ei käy aivan käden käänteessä. Voin väkua, että koripajassa naputellaan peltiä niin, että korvia särkee!

Kun kori on saatu ryhtiin, se puretaan jälleen osiin, ja osat viedään maalaamoon. Värjätty osat pannaan taas nippuun, ja raakile työnnetään verhoiluosastolle. Siellä tomerat tädit ompelevat kuhunkin Morganin juuri sellaiset penkit, jotka ostaja on tilannut.

Lopulta on vuorossa sähkö- ja viimeistelyosasto. Kun viimeiset helatkin on saatu ruuvattua kiinni autoon, vuorossa on koeajo. Sen jälkeen uusi Morgan on luovutusvalmis.

The Morgan Motor Company has been producing hand-built,
80 years from its Malvern workshop.
these cars their **enduring appeal**

prepared to wait

FIRST CLASS
#61997



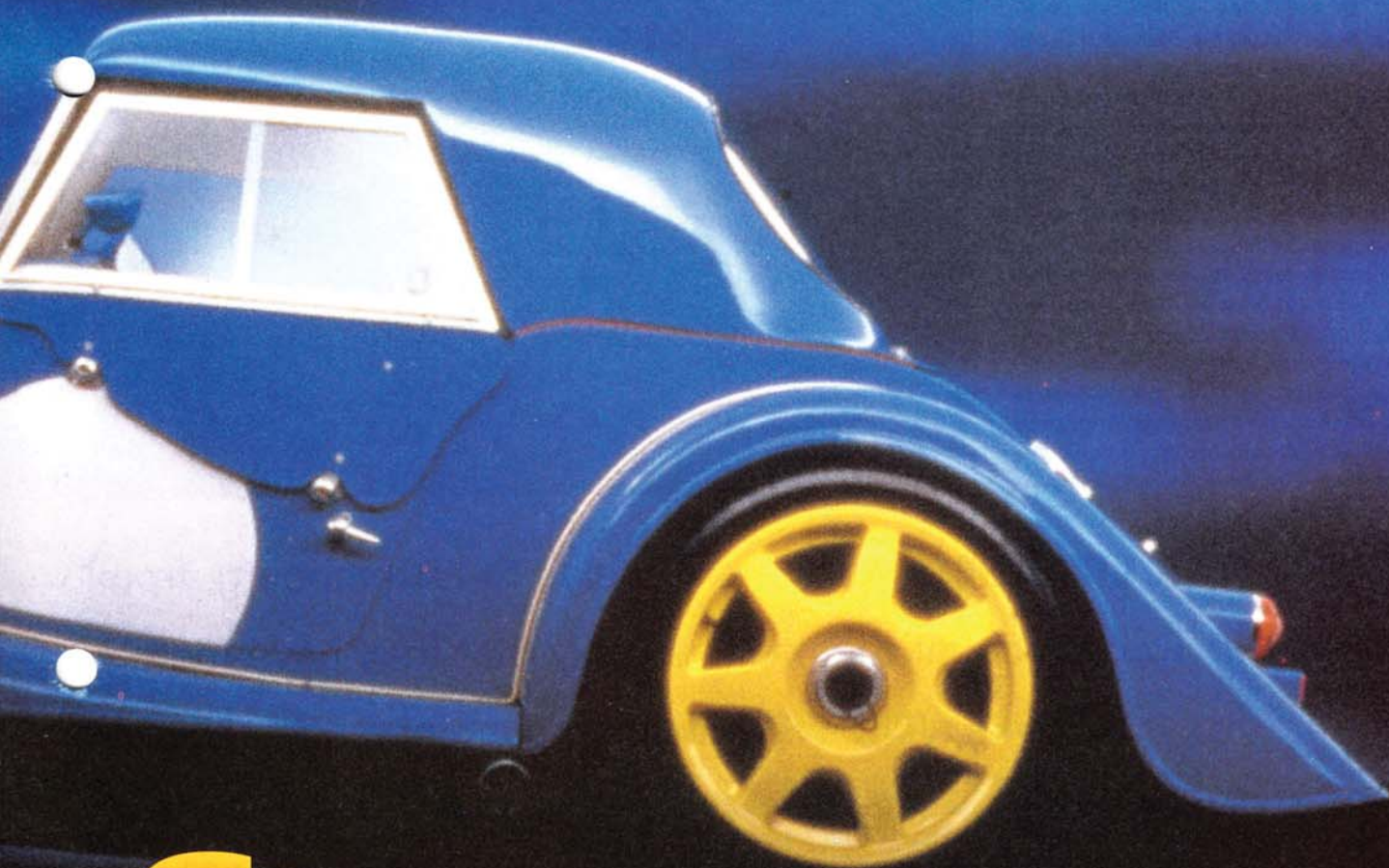
Driving

bespoke sports cars for over

Jeffery Taylor went there to find out what gives

and why people are

up to seven years to take delivery



force

In a process that was born in the economic gloom of the post-Second World War years, and one that has gathered considerable momentum over the last decade, the stark Trinity of market forces, recession and the chase after ever decreasing profits has exacted a merciless toll on the world's motor industry.

The Wartburg and Trabant – gone; Seat – gone; the Zil teetering and Lada in deep trouble with \$1.7 billion of debt, and still counting. Fiat has cancelled dealerships on a global scale and last November the Lotus marque was finally plucked by Malaysia's Proton. Last month one of the most romantic names in British car manufacturing, Lagonda, a symbol of between the wars elegance and quality, finally ceased production.

But tucked away in Britain's heartlands, at the foot of the Malvern Hills in Worcestershire, one of the world's most highly successful, least productive, modestly structured and superbly skilled motor manufacturers is showing the world how it should be done.

The Morgan Motor Company, if all things were equal, should not exist on the strength of an annual output of 500 units, but it has been producing its hand-built, bespoke motor cars from its workshops since 1912. The factory has no mechanized production line, but customers from Los Angeles to Luxembourg, from Tokyo to Toronto count themselves lucky that they have merely a seven-

grandson of the firm's founder, H.F.S Morgan, and current joint chairman with his semi-retired father, Peter, 76, is the family's ability to recognize a successful formula – and stick to it. 'There's an obvious advantage in not making too many of these cars,' says Charles. 'Consumer products made in huge numbers go out of fashion, and lose their value, very



Customers from Los Angeles to Luxembourg, from Tokyo to Toronto count themselves lucky that they have merely a **seven-year wait** for their custom-made vehicles

year wait for their custom-made vehicles.

Compared to the worldwide hunger for the Morgan, the prices asked for the product seem almost reasonable to pay for a legend, ranging from \$30,070.60 for the 4/4 1800 cc model to the top of the range 3.9 litres Plus Eight Fuel Injection at \$46,928. And with an annual turnover of \$16 million, and an estimated market value of \$80 million (the Lotus/Proton deal was struck for \$128 million), the urge to break out of its small town, hands-on and customer-led production patterns and capitalize on the car's rarity value must appear irresistible.

But the secret of the Morgan's enduring staying power, observes Charles,

quickly. The rarity factor is essential. 'We've been profitable for the past 30 years,' he adds. 'A boast that most other car manufacturers cannot match.' In other words, if something is worth having, it is worth waiting for, and if it isn't broken, don't fix it.

The Morgan Sports Car's attraction is unabashed nostalgia. The leather strap around the long bonnet, the open cabin, the sit-up-and-beg mud-guards are all redolent of a Thirties world of traffic-free motoring all but lost in most developed countries today.

But when H.F.S Morgan, an engineer by profession, first patented his three-wheel motor car in 1909, the open road,

wind in the hair, romance in the air-style driving was very much a reality. The first Morgan Runabout, with its 8 h.p twin cylinder engine was tiller steered and, with its single seat, was mounted on a rigid frame with independent suspension, and proved to have acceleration equal to any other car of the day. And every component, apart from the J.A.P engine, was constructed by the enthusiastic H.F.S in his clergyman father's garage.

But the car, though popular with his friends, did not attract the attention H.F.S desired when he entered it in the Olympia Motor Show a year later. He decided on introducing a wheel to replace

the steering tiller – and another seat. When exhibited at Olympia the following year, the new model so caught the public imagination it formed the centrepiece in a Harrods window display, the only motor vehicle ever to do so in the famous department store's history.

In 1912 the name Morgan was heard for the first time in racing circles with H.F.S' record-breaking exploits at Brooklands. So successful was the three-wheeler that it was penalized by having to start a lap behind its four-wheeled competitors at Brooklands, and in the French Grand Prix at Amiens the Morgan trounced a strong Continental four-wheeled field despite a halt to repair a puncture.

Little alteration was made to H.F.S' original design as it broke record after record, until 1936 when a four wheel Morgan was exhibited in both London and Paris. Called the Four Four, indicating four cylinders and four wheels, the car had a full width steel chassis and the body was an ash frame panelled in aluminium. The magic combination had the strength of a coachbuilt vehicle and the lightness of a sports car. The Four Four was an instant success – and still is.

'We still follow my grandfather's basic construction pattern, and rely on the enduring appeal of coachbuilding,' elaborates Charles.

The Morgan reputedly is the last car in the world entirely built by hand by skilled craftsmen. 'One can philosophize that hand-fashioned objects each retain something of the craftsman who made them,' he continues. 'But in reality, here we develop high skills of carpentry (each car has an ash wood frame made in situ from wood seasoned for 100 years); panel beating (somewhat akin to silversmithing only on a large scale), and upholstery (leather hides are treated as though they were tissue paper).' And the Morgans are not alone in passing the firm down through the generations.

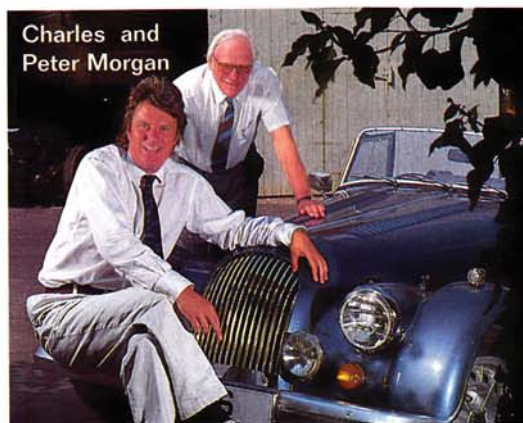
The Halls (Trim and Wood Shops, the Coles (Exhaust Department, Sheet Metal and Paint Shops) and the Brewers (Sheet Metal and Machine Shops) have

all handed on their skills to their sons as enthusiastically as the Morgans. 'We buck today's trend in manufacturing of doing away with human beings,' says Charles. 'In the car industry, mass production is the norm, but over the years we have established an infrastructure of skills and high standards that would make it impossible to start this factory up from scratch today.'

'We constantly re-invest,' he says. 'The car may look very traditional, with its bonnet straps, luggage racks and exposed spare wheels.' It certainly does, and though some critics compare driving the boxy Morgan to pushing a bungalow through the air, Charles insists that it is a fallacy to think the Morgan is not aerodynamic. 'The car is 10 times faster and three times as economical today as it was 40 years ago,' he states. 'It is also absolutely bang up-to-date on all the environmental and safety standards.'

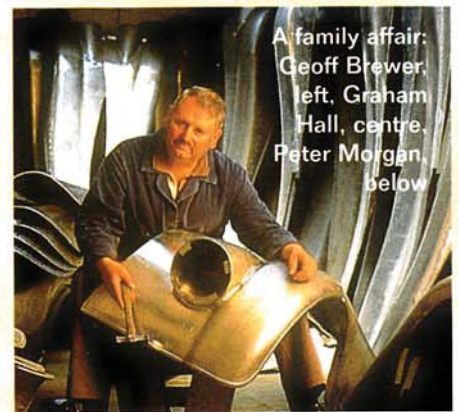
'Development in the car industry is very expensive – ask Ford or Vauxhall. Getting through the ever advancing emission, noise and crash tests is not a cheap exercise. And we sell a lot of cars in California, the most exacting market in the world.'

If further proof were needed of the international respect commanded by the Morgan Sports Car, over 50 per cent of its production is exported overseas. Over 32 Morgan Owner Clubs are dotted about the globe – Johannesburg, Oslo, New York and Paris, to name but a few, and in Britain club membership is counted in thousands. Bearing in mind

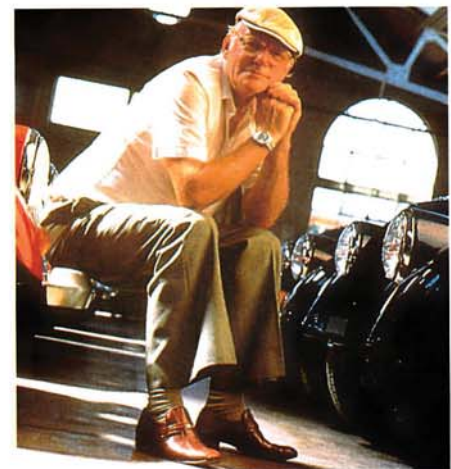
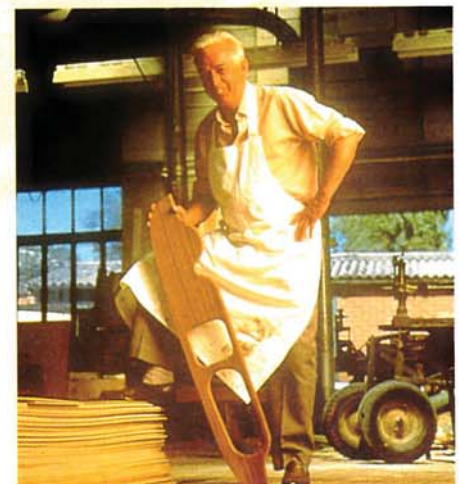


that of the 30,000 cars produced since 1936, 20,000 are still on the road, the high number of devoted owners comes as no surprise.

But enthusiasts still buy a Morgan because, first and last, it is a sports car and the highlight of any owner's driving career is to compete in the Morgan Sports



A family affair: Geoff Brewer, left, Graham Hall, centre, Peter Morgan, below



Car Championship. Founded by the Morgan family in 1987 at the Silverstone race track as an annual championship to allow owners to participate in a one-make competition, the event now covers the whole of Europe.

Shortly before his death in 1959, and with magnificent British understatement, H.F.S Morgan said, 'The motor trade has been...a most interesting business.' Thanks to his vision, and his family and workforce who still rigorously eschew the temptations of the easy buck, the Morgan sports car will continue to 'interest' enthusiastic drivers for many years to come. **f**

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HEURES DU GRANDE BRETAGNE



Words: Richard Meaden, Dan Strong, John Barker and Roger Green. Pictures: Kenny J

FOUR V8-POWERED BRITISH SPORTS CARS SIT WAITING IN THE SUNSHINE. ON THE STROKE OF THREE, THEIR CREWS SPRINT ACROSS THE TARMAC, FIRE THEM UP, AND HEAD OFF AROUND BRITAIN. THEY WON'T STOP UNTIL 24 HOURS ARE UP. OR UNTIL SOMETHING BREAKS...

It was supposed to test the cars, give them a real work-out. Four British V8s pounding around Britain for 24 hours virtually non-stop, racking up around 5000 miles between them. You'd expect a bit of overheating, a minor breakdown or a puncture at the very least, but no. Our bespoke Brits didn't miss a beat. It was their crews that got overheated, came close to breakdowns and, in one case, nearly had a punch-up.

Why did we decide to drive around Britain for 24 hours? Lord knows, but they do a similar thing in France about this time every year, so we decided to have our own adventure. What, we wondered, does it feel like to drive for 24 hours, to spend a whole day jammed into the same seat holding the same wheel? Well, now we know, or at least we have a set of memories that we believe explain the whereabouts of our four teams on the day in question. Thing

is, these recollections have got more gaps than Jimmy Tarbuck's family album. Sleep deprivation? Just say no, kids.

The starting point was Castle Combe circuit, Wiltshire. There was no set route, simply an outline map of the UK dotted with 50 locations, each worth five points. The more places you visited, the more points you picked up. However, Land's End was worth 50 points, John O'Groats 100 points, and there were five bonus points for each race track, car maker, airport and famous bridge. Add in 20 points for every 100 miles covered and a myriad strategies and routes emerge.

At 3.00pm the TVR Griffith 500, Marcos Mantis, Morgan Plus 8 and HMC went their separate ways, destined only to meet 24 hours later at the same spot. Before then, in some dark hour, all eight drivers and co-drivers would come to the same conclusion: it was a very, very silly thing to do.

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HEURES DU GRANDE BRETAGNE



TEAM MORGAN PLUS EIGHT

Drivers: . . . Richard Meaden & Anthony Fraser
24 hour total: . . . 1461 miles
Average speed: . . . 61mph
Average mpg: . . . 19.8

In hindsight it wasn't an especially cunning plan. While we reckoned the others would play a tactical game, sticking to the southern half of the country and mopping-up lots of locations, the real challenge was to go for a whopping mileage and head for John O'Groats. The fact that we were in the most archaic car, without a radio or ventilation system, only served to make our attempt more heroic (or stupid).

It was bright and sunny when we left Castle Combe so we decided to leave the roof off. Charging through the leafy lanes of Wiltshire towards Cirencester and the M5, the Morgan was an entertaining companion, but once onto the three-lane stuff the woofly exhaust note gave way to deafening wind noise. Our first fuel stop came just north of Birmingham and our ears were already suffering from a kind of ringing, post-rock-concert tinnitus. Some swiftly scoffed chocolate bars soon raised our spirits before resuming the long slog up the motorway.

At a steady 80mph the Morgan's fuel tank gave us a cautious range of 180 miles, which equated to a two-and-a-half hour stint at the wheel. Our route straight up the M6 was dull but effective, and by 7.20pm we'd reached the Scottish border. A quick detour to Gretna Green gained us



Gretna Green: cafe, craft shop and, er, 'marriage room'



Meaden and Morgan Plus Eight about to elope together

our first points of the journey before we headed North once more. Like fools we felt John O'Groats was just around the corner, but ploughing up the A9 three hours later, feeling cold, tired and dwarfed by the snow-capped mountains near Aviemore, the full scale of the journey hit us. We were now officially in the middle of nowhere.

Unlike the others, who were probably little more than 250 miles from Castle Combe at any one time during the 24 hours, we were now the best part of 700 miles from the finish. Fatigue was a real problem, as was the constant battering from the elements, and it was 1am when we arrived at a dark, bleak John O'Groats.

After 10 hours' driving, we spent exactly ten minutes taking pictures and pouring our two emergency cans of petrol into the tank. Our fuel range was still worryingly marginal as it was over 100 miles to the nearest 24-hour filling station, and we appeared to have barely half a tank of fuel. The prospect of a night marooned in the highlands sent a chill through our bones.



Co-driver Fraser shows off the bugs on his teeth

We made it, just, despite several close encounters with rabbits (two squashed, one stunned) and deer, one jumping over a wall in front of us, the other strolling along the A9. This was my hardest stint, driving from John O'Groats to Perth in one hit. My eyeballs felt like someone had attacked them with a cheese grater.

A spectacularly fiery dawn broke as we crossed the Forth Road Bridge. Heading through Edinburgh and Berwick-on-Tweed toward Newcastle, the worst was seemingly behind us. We'd done more than 1000 miles in less than 16 hours.

A quick visit to Newcastle United's ground gained us a few more points



Meaden puts a brave face on decision to go topless



Is that it? John O'Groats: straight on for Greenland



A landmark piece of historic engineering heritage. Oh, and that's the Tynes Bridge in Newcastle in the background

Before we headed towards Hexham and the outstanding A686. Here the Morgan excelled, flexing its bulging V8 muscle and displaying an impressive amount of grip. Shame the suspension shook our eth loose. After the adrenaline subsided

'My eyeballs felt like someone had attacked them with a cheese grater'

and we returned to the M6, both Fraser and I were so utterly knackered we were both teetering on the edge of sleep. How the boys at Le Mans can race and stay awake for 24 hours is beyond me.

There was nothing for it but a detour onto slower but more stimulating roads. It meant our chances of completing the distance in time were slim, but the alternative was a sleep-induced shunt. In the end we were late, by 15mins to be precise, but after 1461 miles we didn't think that was too bad. Win or lose, it was one hell of a drive. **RM**



Parting shot. Ah, to feel the wind in your hair...



What a difference a day makes. After 24 hours on the road, Anthony can still manage a smile. Dicky's already asleep



TEAM HMC Mk IV

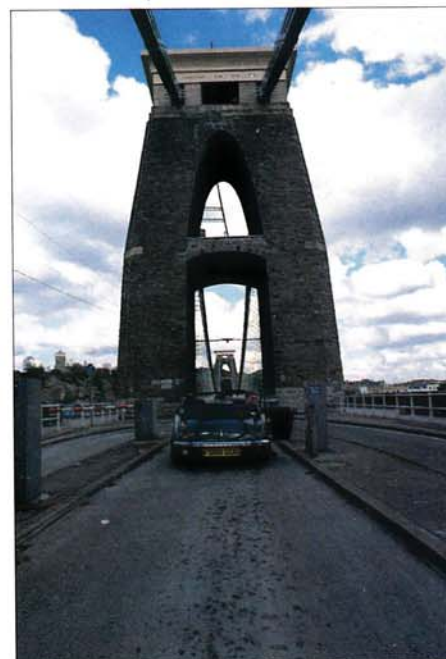
Drivers: Roger Green & Andy Morgan
 24 hour total: 1199 miles
 Average speed: 47.3mph
 Average mpg: 22.7

At half past midnight, Stonehenge is dark. Very dark. So dark, in fact, the only clue Andy and I had to its existence was a car-park sign. There could have been some weird Druid sacrificial ceremony taking place in the



gloom for all we knew. Not that we wanted to waste time finding out. Andy took a quick snapshot of the signpost, jumped back into the HMC, and we sped away. It was only then that I finally realised just how mad this was. Having already been on the road for 10 long hours, we were yet to reach halfway.

Our first port of call was Bristol's Clifton Suspension Bridge, but unfortunately we hadn't bargained on traffic jams. The first hour saw a measly 27 miles on the trip meter, something ▶



Team HMC take the Clifton Suspension Bridge

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HEURES DU GRANDE BRETAGNE

we had to improve on to complete our masterplan, although the slow motion did give us the chance to pose. The classic lines of the HMC (as tested in *PC*, May 1996) drew admiring glances from the hundreds of students relaxing in cafes and bars (the university must have been closed) and the lusty Rover V8 throbbed away as we burbled by. Finally out of the jam, we gave our modern Healey its head, making up the lost time on the run to Lands End and 50 bonus points.

The HMC proved an excellent steed for this marathon: softly sprung, comfortable and with no lack of pace. A 911 pilot would attest to that, being unable to out-run us away from roundabouts. Only the depressingly high number of hidden Gatsos tempered our enthusiasm.

Team TVR had decided on the same route and we continually passed each other each time the thirsty V8s demanded



There's nothing old-fashioned about the way it goes

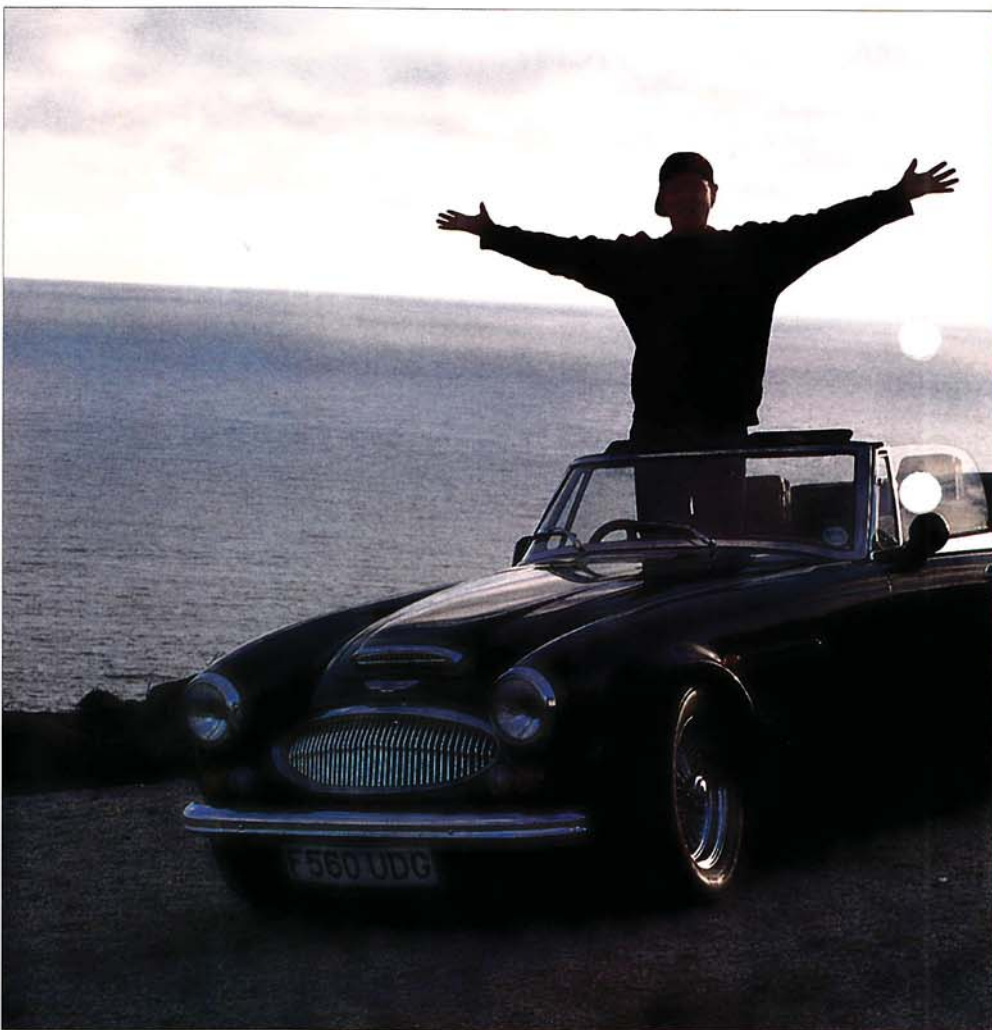
more fuel. We caught and passed them for the last time crossing the Tamar Bridge and hoped they hadn't followed us along the south coast to Brighton. After a quick photo outside the Grand at 2.45am, watched with curiosity by a couple of boys in blue, we headed north to London and the major part of our plan.

A quick glance at the rules showed that lots of miles meant lots of points, and in 24 hours a trip to John O'Groats would be possible. But to attempt such a feat, you surely had to be a few sandwiches short

Pictures: Roger Green, Andy Morgan



HMC left Ferrari for dead; like its driver was asleep...

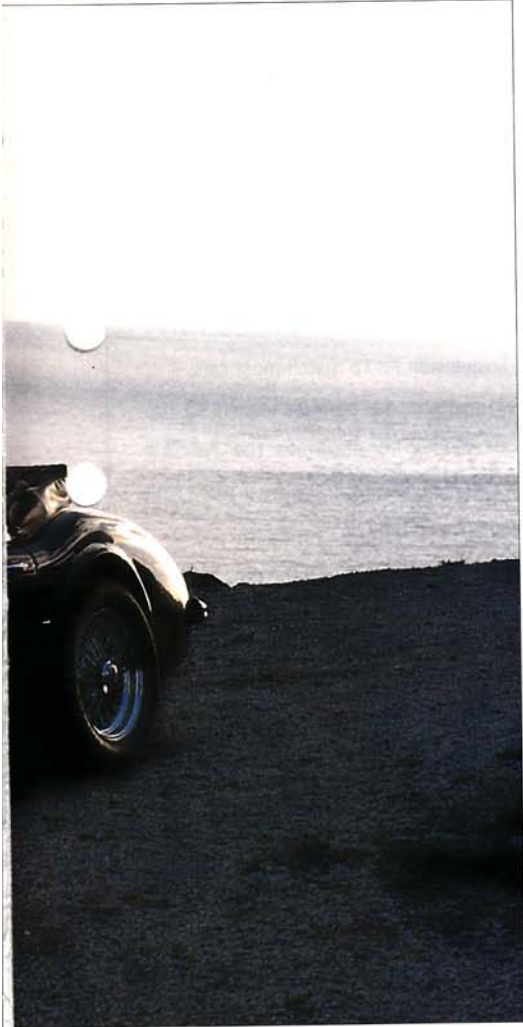


Above: Tower Bridge was just a blur. Right: Land's End



A brief touchdown at Stansted Airport

of a picnic. With five points for every famous bridge, London would make up for it, and at daybreak we started criss-crossing the Thames, the HMC looking particularly dramatic in the early morning light against the city backdrop. No time to admire the view, though –



Tyred out (sorry, just couldn't resist it)

we had to escape before the commuter crawl delayed us further. Snetterton next, and a B-road blast provided the perfect antidote to the tiredness now setting in. And what a blast it was, roof down, foot down, twin exhaust pipes blaring, rear tyres squealing as the back end arched sideways in the tighter turns. It sure got the adrenaline pumping again. A doughnut at the circuit (not the sugared variety), and then onto our last location, Cambridge, before the sprint back to Castle Combe, and the worst section of all.

We hadn't slept for 30 hours, and on the M4 concentration became increasingly difficult. Just as well the tonneau began

'A B-road blast provided the perfect antidote to the tiredness now setting in'

to come adrift – the effort of holding it on kept me active, and awake. This was the only thing that went wrong with the HMC. At the end it felt like it could do it all over again. Sadly, the crew couldn't have lasted another 24 minutes. **RG**



TEAM TVR GRIFFITH 500

Drivers: John Barker & Jim Hall
24 hour total: 1124 miles
Average speed: 46.3mph
Average mpg: 19.7

Bits of my life are missing. I don't expect to have total recall of the last 24 hours but there are some substantial chunks that I think I really ought to remember. After all, I was driving at the time.

I can remember being at Silverstone and arriving in Banbury, but the bit in between is fuzzy. At any other time, those twisting miles in a woofling, writhing Griffith 500 would have etched themselves onto my consciousness, but at 5.30 in the morning, 15 hours after first grasping the TVR's lacquered wood rim, the experience slid straight off my memory, like a fried egg from a Teflon-coated pan.

I felt numb. So much information had gone in through my senses, a seemingly unending stream of stimulation, that there was no more room. From nowhere, a Gary Larson cartoon popped into my head: in a classroom a boy with a tiny head has his hand up and is saying, 'Can I be excused, sir – my brain's full'. And then I can't get it out of my head and it plays over and over, like a cerebral screen-saver.

There had been highs and lows, the last peak coming two hours earlier when a Pro Plus-assisted surge convinced me that the run from the Dartford Tunnel to Luton Airport was no more than **▷**



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HEURES DU GRANDE BRETAGNE



Land Rover – supplier of V8s to the sports car industry

popping to the corner shop. I felt like I could go on forever, back to Castle Combe for the finish and beyond. My co-driver, Jim, didn't feel that way, as he noted at the time: 'It's 3.30. I'm knackered. And it's only just past half way.'

Despite baking sunshine, the only time the Griff's roof had been down was for the opening photo. Tiring wind buffeting and sunstroke? No thanks. We stopped to eat a couple of times, too, demolished a couple of bags of sweets, and I saw off half a packet of tobacco; my rate of consumption increased in direct proportion to my tiredness.

Circling Birmingham, the mid-day traffic seemed particularly heavy, until it dawned on us that it was the rush hour. I ached inside, deep down. Remarkably, my outside felt fine; not even a desensitised bum after the 870 miles of cat's eyes, expansion joints and washboard motorway concrete that punctuate the journey from Bristol to



You're gorgeous. Griff takes a breather in Cheddar Gorge



Racking up the points: a quick pit-stop at Silverstone...



... and a flying visit to Jaguar's R&D centre at Whitley



Another race circuit (this time it's Donington) and another five points in the bag for Team TVR

'It was bizarre... somewhere out there were six other people, equally shattered'

24

HEURES DU GRANDE BRETAGNE

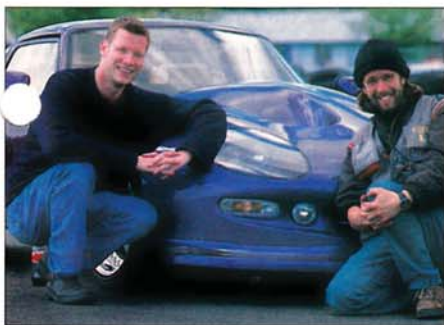


Morning in Newport Pagnell, home of another great Brit

Land's End to London to Luton to Banbury to Coventry to Derby to Brum. Only six hours, half a dozen locations and 250 miles to go.

It struck me as bizarre that we weren't alone, that somewhere out there were six other people equally shattered. My dawn peak had long since burned away, along with the cotton-wool mist that had brimmed the fields. The sine wave of my highs and lows had by now straightened out and was running below the line, getting lower all the time. At that point, a Pro Plus merely propped it up for a while.

You probably can't understand how upset we were when we got caught in a sudden downpour half an hour from the finish. In less than five minutes the hard-earned road grime and dried insect snot coating the car was virtually jet-washed away. When we rolled up at Castle Combe, in brilliant sunshine once more, it looked like the Griff had only been around the block. Mind you, compared to the Meaden and Fraser, we had. JB



TEAM MARCOS MANTIS

Drivers: Dan Strong & Kenny P
24 hour total: 874 miles
Average speed: 37.1mph
Average mpg: 22.6

A rich mixture of anticipation and excitement coursed through our veins as Kenny P and I crossed the Castle Combe startline. Spending 24 hours with a 352bhp sports car is an



'We'd decided on a Le Mans-style two hours on, two hours off strategy'

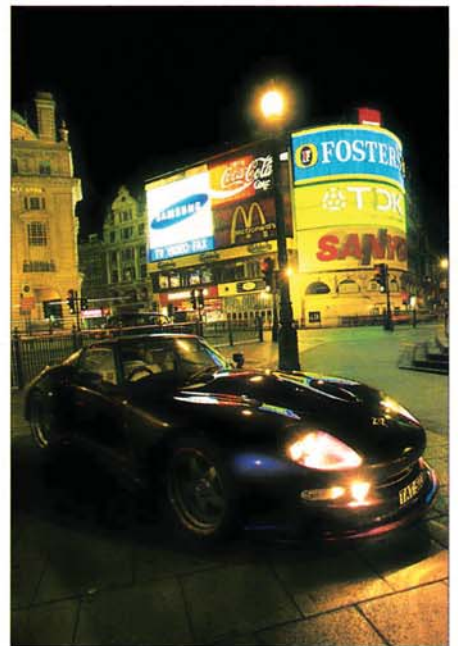
attractive prospect in anyone's language. The fact we'd be driving virtually non-stop wasn't concerning us too much; after all, we'd got something none of the other teams had – a proper roof.

The Mantis looks similar to the LM but has a quad-cam 4.6-litre V8 from the Ford Mustang. It's a great engine that loves to rev (Marcos claims 0-60 in 4.1secs) and it's a credit to Marcos's chassis that it gets all that power onto the road.

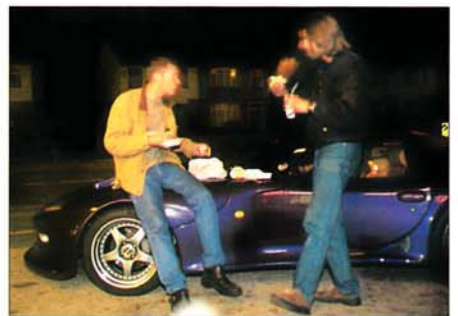
With two of us sharing the wheel, we'd decided on a Le Mans racer-style 'two hours on, two off' strategy; I was happy, Kenny was happy, and after a fantastic late-afternoon drive across the Welsh Brecon Beacons we'd decided this challenge was going to be a breeze.

London, 12 hours later, and my views had changed. It was 3.00am and we'd travelled through Dorset and Wales, to Blackpool and Preston, and driven the length of the M6, completing just half our challenge. We looked like plague victims, and felt even worse. Dozing while Kenny was at the wheel had given me a headache, a foul tasting mouth and eyes that didn't want to open, let alone focus.

The Mantis was shaping up a helluva lot better than we were though, despite a clatter from the engine (which thankfully didn't get any worse) and fading brakes. It was going down a storm with the locals, too, and as Kenny out-dragged



So that's two hours taking pretty pictures, followed by...



...two hours scoffing food. It's an interesting strategy

every car in sight on route to Piccadilly Circus, a girl travelling in a taxi shuffled to the window nearest us, raised her right hand and closed her thumb and finger together to form an 'O' that signalled whole-hearted approval. I doubt she'd have looked so keen had she seen the state of the drivers, but it lifted our spirits.

Stopping to take pictures in Piccadilly drew a sizeable crowd, keen to identify the car. Suggestions ranged from Aston to Corvette, and it was described as 'bitchin', amazing and awesome. They didn't know what it was, but I think they liked it. ▽

Pictures: Kenny P

24

HEURES DU GRANDE BRETAGNE



One big squirt removes a million squashed bugs



Aberdare: home of the Welsh Motorcyle GP. Yes, really

Photos finished, it was time to press on and believe me, after the Gatso-infested roads around London, the motorway leading to Brighton at four in the morning is a pretty special place – deserted, three lanes wide and mirror smooth. It curls in a series of long sweeping bends, just perfect for the Marcos.

Even though I was beginning to feel seriously tired, the Mantis felt great. The exhausts' growl makes the hairs on the back of your neck stand on end – you

ld be riding in a NASCAR, or flying a WWII bomber across Europe. A couple of road workers spotted us coming, and pointed and waved; the Marcos's visual impact, like the soundtrack, is huge.

It's a tiring car over huge distances, but rewarding for that very reason. You've got to tell it what to do every inch of the way; it's not a car that'll let you take your mind off the job for a second. So Kenny and I didn't. And that's probably why, when we arrived at the Castle Combe finish exhausted and tense, but still fired up with enthusiasm, we both agreed we didn't want to give it back. DS



And the winner is...

Last across the line, spluttering that he'd been hard done-by because he'd visited three coasts and had to put up with the demands of the official photographer, was Dan in the Marcos. The Mantis crew seemed to prove that harmony inside the car produces good results, because they were scowling at each other when they eventually turned up at Castle Combe, one and a half hours late, and recorded a measly 265 points.

However, it was a photo finish for the podium places. The nice boys in the HMC had obviously done their homework, discovering a loophole in the rules that allowed them to zig-zag every bridge in London, claim they were all famous, and bag a sackful of points. But so too had Team TVR, and at the very moment they added Tower Bridge to their tally, at an hour past midnight, two mad buggers in a Morgan reached John O' Groats, drew breath, and pointed their windswept and interesting hairstyles southwards.

Although the sunburnt Roger and Andy covered more miles in the HMC, their journey proved less productive than Team TVR's. The sensible brothers in the Griff, both ex-Jaguar, mined a rich seam of Midlands car makers that allowed them to cruise

back down the M5 to the finish, confident of victory. But it was closer than they'd guessed, and they beat the HMC boys by just 12 points.

Victory goes then... to the loonies in the Morgan. They didn't get many bonus points, they didn't stop driving, and at the finish they looked like they'd staggered out of a nuclear holocaust. In other words, they deserved it. ●

THE RESULTS

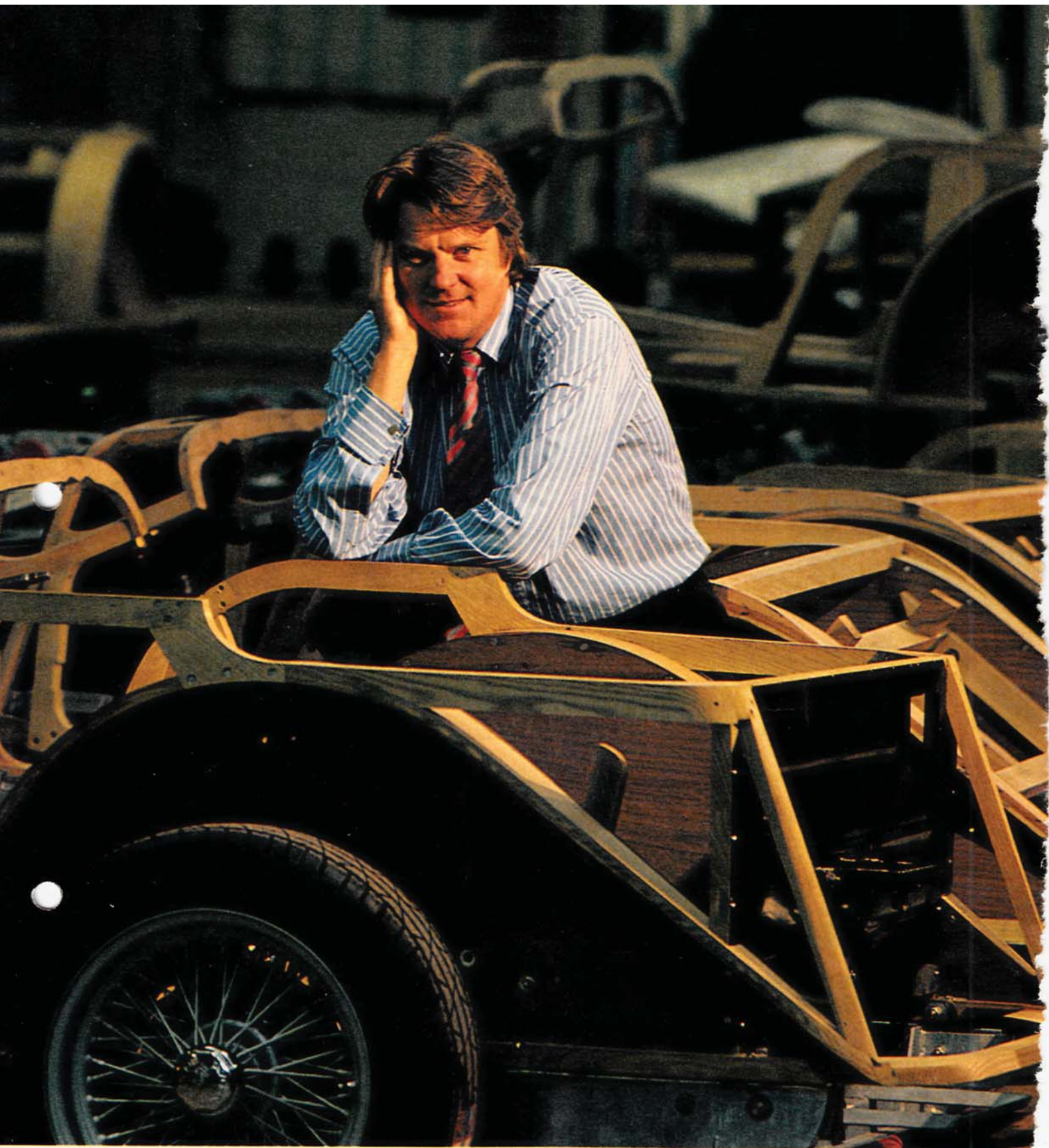
1st Team Morgan	436points
2nd Team TVR	430points
3rd Team HMC	418points
4th Team Marcos	265points



Specification

	Morgan	TVR	HMC	Marcos
Engine	V8, 3947cc	V8, 4998cc	V8, 3947cc	V8, 4800cc
Max power	190bhp @ 4750rpm	340bhp @ 5500rpm	190bhp @ 4750rpm	352bhp @ 6000rpm
Max torque	235lb ft @ 2600rpm	350lb ft @ 4000rpm	235lb ft @ 2600rpm	330lb ft @ 4800rpm
0-60mph	6.9secs	4.8secs	6.0secs (claimed)	4.1secs (claimed)
Top speed	122mph	151mph	140mph (claimed)	170mph (claimed)
Price	£29,328	£34,595	£39,750	£43,995





Karosseriebau im alten Stil: Tradition ist für Charles Morgan Geschäftsgrundlage

PORTRÄT
Charles Morgan

Der Morgan danach



Maßgeschneidert:
Lederverarbeitung

Junges Blut in der Führungsspitze der Morgan Motor Company? Schlimm genug, daß dort kürzlich die Position der Rückleuchten verändert wurde. Da muß der Gedanke an einen studierten Kunstgeschichtler, dem im zarten Alter von 42 Jahren die Geschicke der letzten echten Briten-Roadster anvertraut wurde, selbst bei toleranten Morgan-Verehrern Besorgnis auslösen.

Charles Morgan – das walte die traditionsversessene Kundschaft – tritt zwar kein leichtes, aber ein beneidenswertes Erbe an. Die kleine Sportwagenfabrik am Rand der idyllischen Malvern Hills im Westen Englands ist das älteste in Familienbesitz befindliche Automobilunternehmen der Welt. Großvater Harry, besser bekannt unter seinen Initialen H.F.S., hatte den heute 130 Mitarbeiter zählenden Betrieb 1912 ins Leben gerufen, Sohn Peter lenkte ihn seit 1958 durch die Höhen und Tiefen der Nachkriegszeit.

Den Vorsitz der Company hält Peter Morgan zwar noch immer, aber im Alltagsgeschäft gibt nun Filius Charles den Ton an – eine fließende Wachablösung also, denn in strategi-

schen Fragen, fügt Charles artig hinzu, sei der Seniorchef unverzichtbar.

Das beruhigt. Noch mehr beruhigt, daß der junge Morgan außer dem Namen offensichtlich über eine weitere Voraussetzung zum Bau der gleichnamigen Sportwagen verfügt: Er ist nicht einfach nur britisch, er ist very british. Sätze wie „ich fühle mich sehr geehrt, für ein Unternehmen arbeiten zu dürfen, das mein Großvater gründete“, sind bei ihm kein einstudiertes PR-Gefasel, sondern normaler Sprachgebrauch. Würde er künftig neben den klassischen auch gern modernere Autos bauen? „Ich glaube nicht, denn für mich ist ein Morgan keineswegs altmodisch.“

Womit das Gespräch bereits in gefährliche Nähe eines Fettnäpfchens gedriftet wäre. Wer den Morgan als Relikt aus vergangenen Zeiten empfindet, womöglich gar als aussterben-



Handgeklopft: Blechverarbeitung

den Klassiker, ungeeignet für den modernen Straßenverkehr, riskiert scharfen Widerspruch, gefolgt von einem abrupten Ende der Unterhaltung.

„Was Außenseiter nicht erkennen, ist die große Zahl der Veränderungen, die am Auto, aber auch innerhalb des Unter-

Wenn bei Morgan die Generationen wechseln, dann betrifft dies nicht die Produkte, sondern den Produzenten. Jetzt ist Charles, der Enkel des Firmengründers, an der Reihe, Automobilbauer in der dritten Generation.

Fotos: Schmid



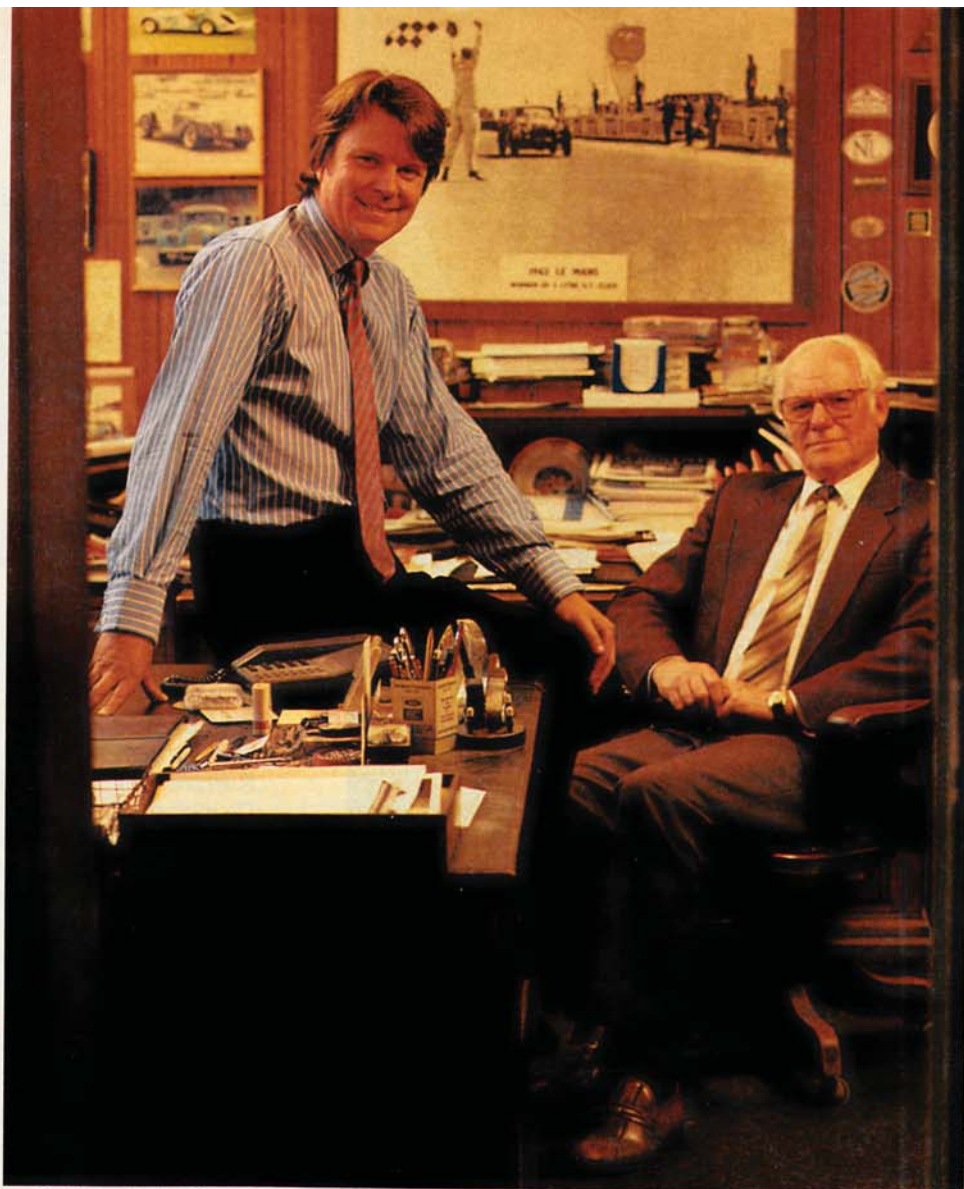
Gut Holz: 94 Teile für einen Holzrahmen

nehmens vorgenommen wurden," präzisiert Charles. „Weil unsere Fabrikgebäude noch so aussehen wie 1919 und sich auch das Produkt äußerlich seit 1936 nicht drastisch gewandelt hat, glauben viele, nichts würde sich ändern.“

In der Tat liegt der Verdacht nahe. In den niedrigen Backsteingebäuden am Ende der Pickersleigh Road in Great Malvern scheint die Zeit stillzustehen. Bei einem Streifzug durch die zehn Abteilungen, von der Chassismontage bis zum Trim-Shop, wo junge Damen an alten Nähmaschinen Leder und Verdeckstoffe maßschneidern, erinnert die Morgan Company an ein lebendes Museum. Schreiner zimmern aus abgelagertem Eschenholz kunstvoll Karosseriegerüste – 94 Einzelteile, von Hand zusammengeschaubt, benötigt der Zweisitzer, 114 Teile der Rahmen der viersitzigen Ausführung.

Beim Verschalen mit handgeformten Blechen nehmen die Karosserien sodann jene Gestalt an, an der die Zeit seit Jahrzehnten spurlos vorüberging. Etwa 100 Morgan-Exemplare verteilen sich in verschiedenen Stadien der Vollendung über das Fabrikgelände. Lläuft

Sakrosankt: Teepause bei Morgan



Im Chefbüro: Sohn Charles und Vater Peter führen das älteste Familienunternehmen der Autobranche

Wenig Neues: Chassis-Montage



Lieber von Hand: Die Tradition bleibt gewahrt



„ICH GLAUBE NICHT, DASS DIE JAPANER EIN MONOPOL FÜR GUTE IDEEN HABEN“

Charles Morgan

alles nach Plan, erreichen pro Woche zehn von ihnen die Auslieferungshalle.

Daß es künftig noch ein paar mehr werden, ist für Charles Morgan bei aller Liebe zur Tradition beschlossene Sache. „Ja, es stimmt, die Lieferzeiten zur Zeit acht Jahre, sind zu lang“, gibt er zu. Etwas Geduld müsse ein Morgan-Kunde freilich auch in Zukunft walten lassen. Schließlich handele es sich um handwerklich und nach individuellen Wünschen gefertigte Autos. „Ideal wären drei Jahre bei einer Jahresproduktion von 800 Exemplaren.“

Derzeit sind es bei voller Auslastung gerade 500. Unterwirft sich da am Ende auch Morgan, bislang eine der letzten Bastionen gegen die Invasion der Elektronenhirne, der Macht der Computer? „Unsere Kunden“, wehrt Morgan ab, „legen Wert auf Handarbeit. Das ist, was manche Unternehmensberater nicht verstehen, einer der Gründe, warum sie einen Morgan kaufen, und schließt rechnergesteuerte Produktionsabläufe aus.“ Nicht ausgeschlossen sei dagegen eine bessere Abstimmung der einzelnen Fertigungsstadien, über die sich künftig erheblich Zeit sparen ließe.

Etwaige Zweifel an seiner fertigungstechnischen Fachkenntnis räumt Charles Morgan spätestens während der anschließenden Erörterung dieses Lieblingsthemas überzeugend aus. Das überrascht um so mehr, als der junge Morgan zu Beginn seiner beruflichen Karriere mit der familiären Automobilbau-Idylle wenig am Hut hatte. „Sieben phantastische Jahre“ lang arbeitete er als Kameramann des englischen TV-Senders ITV in unterschiedlichen Krisengebieten, berichtete zuletzt aus dem umkämpften Afghanistan und gründete schließlich seine eigene Nachrichten-TV-Agentur.

Seine Beschäftigung mit den hauseigenen Sportwagen vollzog sich derweil vorzugs-

weise auf Rennstrecken, kulminierend im Jahr 1978, als er mit seinem Morgan Plus 8 sämtliche Läufe der englischen Production Sports Car-Meisterschaft gewinnen konnte.

Erst 1985 kehrte er ins stille Malvern zurück, aus freien Stücken, wie Vater Peter nachdrücklich betont. Daß Charles neben dem nötigen Stallgeruch auch die richtigen Ideen mitbrachte, bewies er sogleich mit einer einschneidenden Veränderung des Lackierverfahrens. Weitere Qualitätsverbesserungen folgten, womit er sich binnen kurzem als Produktionschef qualifizierte.

Vom Talent des Juniors profitieren unterdessen auch andere Bereiche. „Ich glaube nachgewiesen zu haben, daß ich ein Auto ziemlich gut bewegen kann“, formuliert Morgan in vollendetem Understatement, und das sei für einen Hersteller von Sportwagen auch unerlässlich. „Man muß unterschiedliche Autos beurteilen können, um zu erkennen, was am eigenen Produkt gut oder schlecht ist.“

Was künftig besser werden solle, falle im übrigen unter das Betriebsgeheimnis. Die Bemerkung „neue Werkstoffe schließe ich nicht aus, sofern sie traditionell verarbeitet werden“ muß genügen und bezieht sich auf Experimente mit Aluminium-Sandwich-Blechen im Chassisbereich.

Unantastbar sei jedoch der Charakter eines Morgan, „die Ehrlichkeit und Einfachheit des Konzepts“. Da vertraut Charles Morgan, der den engen Kontakt zu den Kunden noch intensivieren möchte, auch in Zukunft der Prinzipientreue der hartgesotenen Morgan-Gemeinde. „Obwohl üblicherweise das Aussehen als die Hauptattraktion eines Morgan gilt, ist das Fahrerlebnis noch immer der wichtigste Kaufgrund.“

Der Morgan Mk. III, so scheint es, ist ein Morgan von rechtem Schrot und Korn.

Wolfgang König



Erst

wischte er

ihr eins aus,

dann blickte er

endlich durch.

Schmutz, Insekten und Ölfilm auf der Windschutzscheibe trüben schnell den Blick fürs Wesentliche. Die Lösung: **Caramba Scheiben-Reiniger-Konzentrat** in die Scheibenwaschanlage! Und der Scheibe kräftig eins auswischen. Schon nach dem ersten Wisch blicken Sie wieder durch. Alles klar?

Caramba

Caramba. Der Scheiben-Reiniger.

LiteraTour

Ausgewählte Neuerscheinungen: Morgan, Auto-Design, Motorsport.

Heute und Morgan

Wer sich einen Morgan zulegt, tut das immer aus Liebe. Die krachledernen Roadster aus dem mittelenglischen Städtchen Malvern Link sind für autophile Puristen so etwas wie Heiligtümer. Wer dem Morgan-Mythos zu verfallen droht, den Weg zum Importeur jedoch mangels ausreichender Finanzen scheut, findet nun Trost bei seinem Buchhändler: Der schwedische Motorjournalist und Morgan-Jünger Bengt Ason Holm pilgerte nach England und blickte hinter die Kulissen der kleinen Autoschmiede, die im Prinzip noch wie in den dreißiger Jahren produziert. Nach einer kurzen Firmenhistorie schildert Holm in Text und Bild systematisch die Entstehung eines Morgan. Technokratischer nähern sich die Briten Liz Turner und John Worrall dem Mythos: Ihr großformatiger Bild-



band wendet sich an Besitzer und Restauratoren. Liebevoll und außergewöhnlich detailliert werden alle Morgan-Modelle seit den Anfängen der dreißiger Jahre vorgestellt. Erstklassig sind die Aufnahmen seltener Modelle. Das Buch ist wohl das umfassendste Morgan-Kompendium in deutscher Sprache, das erhältlich ist. Ihm wurde daher auch eine ganz besondere Ehre zuteil: Charles Morgan, Sohn des Firmengründers Henry Frederick Stanley Morgan, schrieb höchstpersönlich das Vorwort. Sein Urteil über Buch und Autor: geschrieben von einem Spezialisten für Enthusiasten.

Bengt Ason Holm, *Berühmte Autofirmen – Morgan*, Motorbuch-Verlag, 39,80 Mark
John Worrall und Liz Turner, *Das Original: Morgan*, Heel-Verlag, 78 Mark

Auto in Form

Das Auto fasziniert – immer noch und immer wieder. Das Design eines Autos entscheidet – zunehmend mehr als bei anderen Produkten – über seine Position im Markt. Christoph Reifenrath diskutiert in seinem Buch ausführlich alle ästhetischen Gesichtspunkte zum Thema Auto. Das über 300 Seiten starke Werk profitiert von der gelungenen Bildauswahl, die den stellenweise trockenen Text etwas auflockert. Von den Anfängen erster Styling-Konzepte über

die Vorstellung aktueller Automobil-Designs bis hin zu Studien zukünftiger Wagen reicht die Palette. Große Karosserieschneider wie Guiseppe Nuccio Bertone oder Giorgio Giugiaro werden in Wort und Bild vorgestellt. Immer getreu dem Motto: Form follows vision.

Christoph Reifenrath,
Automobil Design,
Econ-Verlag, 98 Mark



Als die Vorfahren vorfuhren



Kennen Sie den Scampolo Typ 600, den Polensky von 1947 oder den Holbein HH48 mit dem Sechszylindermotor? Kennen Sie etwa nicht? Dann sei Ihnen das Buch von Reinald Schumann ganz besonders empfohlen. Der Autor

erinnert sich auf 286 ausführlich bebilderten Seiten sehr genau an die vielen Eigenkonstruktionen, die damals am Start waren, an heute verschwundene Marken oder die motorsportlichen Gehversuche etwa von Porsche. Man weiß: Die Rennen brachten damals bis zu 300 000 Zuschauer auf die Beine; man weiß jedoch kaum noch, was da tatsächlich geboten wurde. Schumann: „Eine zusammenhängende Darstellung hat es nie gegeben.“ Jetzt gibt es sie – Kulturdenkmal und nostalgisches Lesebuch in einem.

Reinald Schumann, *Motorsport in Deutschland 1945–1955*, Motorbuch-Verlag, 88 Mark

GEMEINE VERSCH

Manchmal braucht man das Dach über dem Kopf. Sechs Cabrios vom Morgan Plus 8 bis zum VW Golf zeigen im Praxistest beträchtliche Unterschiede:

Der Aufwand reicht vom Fingerdruck bis zum Fingernagel



Morgan Plus 8

Zwischen A wie auf und Z wie zu liegen beim Morgan rund drei Minuten sowie 23 Haken und Ösen



Fotos: H.P. Seufert

LUSSACHE

Langzeit-Rekorde besonderer Art kann der englische Morgan für sich verbuchen. Seit 1936 trägt er das gleiche Kleid, geliefert wird er frühestens zwei bis drei Jahre nach Bestellung, und wenn er endlich da ist, dauert es noch einmal gut drei Minuten, bis er sich als das präsentiert, was er im Grunde seines Wesens ist: die einzig wahre Inkarnation des britischen Roadsters.

Unverzichtbare Requisiten dieser Fahrzeuggattung sind seitliche Steckscheiben und eine abnehmbare Dachplane, die sich über einem leichten Gestänge wölbt. Obwohl Morgan-Importeur Harald Merz beteuert, daß es auch schon mal jemand in 70 Sekunden geschafft haben soll, sind drei Minuten für die Metamorphose

vom geschlossenen in den offenen Zustand realistisch, wenn man sich strikt an die eiserne Regel hält: „Der Morgan-Fahrer fängt immer von hinten an.“

Zwei Druckknöpfe außen und fünf innen sind dort die erste Hürde, je drei Drehknöpfe sichern die Flanken. Nach einer halben Drehung ums Heck und einer viertel Drehung der Knöpfe geben sie die Plane so weit frei, daß man auch die zehn Druckknöpfe an der Windschutzscheibe lösen kann.

Bei niedrigen Temperaturen zieht sich der gewebeverstärkte Kunststoff aber so zusammen, daß es fast unmöglich wird, das Verdeck zu schließen, was vielleicht das hartnäckige Gerücht erklärt, wonach Morgan-Fahrer sowieso immer offen fahren. ▷



Alfa Romeo Spider

In 27 Jahren Bauzeit ist das Verdeck des Alfa Romeo Spider geblieben, was es war: ein einfaches und in 19 Sekunden vollversenkbares Roadster-Verdeck ohne jede Fütterung



Audi Cabriolet

3115 Mark und einen Knopfdruck von 27 Sekunden kostet es, damit das Dach des Audi automatisch in der Versenkung verschwindet. Doch angesichts des mühelosen Serienverdecks läßt sich leicht auf den Elektroantrieb verzichten



Der Alfa Spider, nun auch schon 27 Jahre unter uns, macht die Wahl zwischen den beiden Aggregatzuständen deutlich leichter. Gerade mal 19 Sekunden vergehen, bis die beiden Verschlüsse an der Windschutzscheibe gelöst sind und das Verdeck mit einer schwungvollen Armbewegung hinter den Sitzen verschwindet. Man braucht dazu nicht einmal auszustiegen, es sei denn, um die umständlich zu bedienende und schlecht passende Persenning aufzuziehen.

Eine Autogeneration später sind die Cabrio-Konstrukteure dem Stein der Weisen schon dicht auf der Spur. Elf Sekunden sind gewiß keine schlechte Zeit, um das gefütterte und im-

merhin vier Menschen Schutz bietende Dach eines VW Golf zu öffnen.

Und nicht nur die mühelose Bedienbarkeit spricht für die Konstruktion: Sie überzeugt als Meisterstück an Dichtheit, Paßform und Solidität, gereift schon in langen Jahren beim Käfer Cabrio und längst mit der Annehmlichkeit einer beheizbaren Glasheckscheibe ausgestattet. Allein die Bedienung der Schutzhülle für das darniederliegende Dach mit etlichen Klettverschlüssen, Druckknöpfen und Haltebändern kann nicht ganz überzeugen.

Für das Swift Cabrio sieht Suzuki eine dreiteilige Kunststoffabdeckung einfallen lassen, die den Stauraum hinter

Cabrio-Verdecke zum Nachrüsten: Anbieter und Preise

	Härtel Cabrio- verdecke Mühlstr. 16 7440 Nürtingen Tel. 07022/932320	KHM Kraftfahr- zeugtechnik Martinsstr. 41-43 7300 Esslingen Tel. 0711/353064	P+P Cabrio- verdecke Postfach 7901 Beimerstetten Tel. 07348/6662	Schuster-Verdecke Falkendieker Str. 6 4901 Hiddens- hausen 3 Tel. 05221/61009	Speed + Sport Postfach 10 42 27 7000 Stuttgart 10 Tel. 0711/475796	J. F. Stanley + Co. Großneumarkt- straße 24 2000 Hamburg 11 Tel. 040/351947	Südcabrio Postfach 53 8024 Oberhaching Tel. 089/6135033
Stoffverdecke	alle gängigen Seriencabrios	alle gängigen Seriencabrios	alle gängigen Seriencabrios	alle gängigen Seriencabrios	alle gängigen Seriencabrios	alle gängigen Seriencabrios	alle gängigen Seriencabrios
Preise ohne Einbau ab DM	880,- VW Käfer	595,- Fiat 124 Spider	580,- VW Karmann Ghia	840,- VW Golf	830,- VW Käfer	845,- Fiat 124 Spider	1126,- Alfa Spider
Kunststoff- verdecke	alle gängigen Seriencabrios	alle gängigen Seriencabrios	alle gängigen Seriencabrios	alle gängigen Seriencabrios	alle gängigen Seriencabrios	alle gängigen Seriencabrios	alle gängigen Seriencabrios
Preise ohne Einbau ab DM	580,- VW Käfer	435,- Triumph Spitfire	295,- MGA	550,- VW Golf	510,- VW Käfer	475,- VW Käfer	536,- VW Go
Farbvarianten							
Stoff	9	22	15	12	14	10	12
Kunststoff	9	40	14	9	16	5	12
Montage ab DM	450,- Triumph Spitfire	300,- Fiat 124 Spider	500,- VW Käfer	700,- VW Golf	550,- Alfa Spider	keine Montage	keine Montage
Garantie	6 Monate Material und Verarbeitung	1 Jahr Material, Verarbeitung und Paßgenauigkeit	1 Jahr Material und Verarbeitung	2 Jahre Material und Verarbeitung	1 Jahr Material, Verarbeitung und Paßgenauigkeit	6 Monate Material und Verarbeitung	6 Monate Material und Verarbeitung

Preisbeispiele für Verdecke in Serienqualität

	Mazda MX-5	VW Golf	Härtel	KHM	P+P	Schuster	Speed + Sport	J. F. Stanley + Co.	Südcabrio
in DM	942,10	644,40	895,-	890,-	850,-	850,-	650,-	870,-	805,-
in DM			560,-	557,-	840,-	560,-	530,-	536,-	

Ein neues Verdeck ist, je nach Material und Beanspruchung, alle vier bis zehn Jahre fällig. Die meist billigeren Kunststoffverdecke sind in der Regel nach vier Jahren erneuerungsbedürftig. Gute Stoffverdecke halten etwa acht Jahre lang, unter günstigen Voraussetzungen wie Winterschlaf und sorgfältiger Pflege auch zehn bis zwölf Jahre.

Die Kosten für ein Kunststoffverdeck à la VW Golf, Opel Kadett und Ford Escort Cabrio sind etwas mehr als halb so hoch wie für ein

Textildach aus Sonnenland-Stoff, wie es Mercedes, Porsche oder BMW verwenden. Für die Montage müssen etwa zwei bis drei Tage kalkuliert werden.

Wichtig ist das Know-how des Fachmanns, damit das Verdeck dicht bleibt, straff sitzt und faltenfrei die korrekte Dachlinie bildet. Eine gute Verdeck-Werkstatt hält Schablonensätze für alle gängigen und einige exotische Cabriodächer bereit, nach denen ein Computer die 15 (VW Käfer) bis 31 (Drei-

er-BMW) Einzelteile millimetergenau zuschneidet.

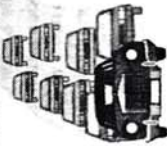
Während man also von der Selbstmontage abraten muß, lohnt sich der Preisvergleich zwischen Autohändlern und freien Betrieben. In der VW-Werkstatt kostet ein neues Golf-Verdeck mit etwa 1200 Mark deutlich mehr als bei den genannten Anbietern (siehe Kasten). Ähnliche Relationen gelten auch für die Kunststoffplane des Mazda MX-5, die beim Vertrags-händler mit 1230 Mark zu Buche schlägt.

Legendaa saa jonottaa vuosia

HS 19 APR 93

Brittiläinen Morgan valmistetaan saarnipuusta ja teräksestä maailman vanhimmassa autotehtaassa

Euroopan autoteollisuus



HANNU LEINONEN
Helsingin Sanomat

MALVERN – Kun Charles Morganin näkee työhuoneessaan, häntä ei millään voisi uskoa maailman yhden legendaarisimman autotehtaan johtajaksi ja omistajaksi.

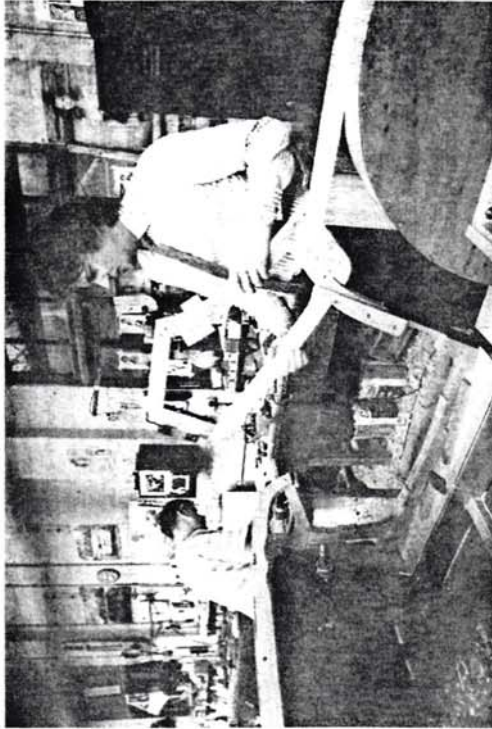
Työhuone on pieni koppi vanhan tehdasrakennuksen varoosivaraston nurkassa. Tuoli ja pöytä kuin nurkkapöytä. Konekolon tuoksu on aito ja pläkkisevien vasaroiden kiihtynyt häiritsevä selvä.

Kun Morgan sitten siirtyi tehdassaan estrellikseen tuotantoon, ei asiasta kuitenkaan voi olla epäilystä. Charles Morgan on yhtä Morgan kuin autonsakin. Tyylikäs, mutta hienostelematon.

Maailman vanhin vää toimituksessa oleva yksivälinen autotehdas pyörii kuin autoteollisuudessa ei olisi viime vuosikymmenten aikana tapahtunut mitään. Morganin tehtaalla ei puhista tuntuu onnesta tai juhlusta yhtään mantraa, vaikka muiden on laman puristuksessa ollut pakko alkaa niin tehdä.

Ise asiassa Morganin autotehdas Malvernin pikkukäytävällä Birminghamin eteläpuolella on menestyksen tunnus. Morganin kauniin ja kalliin Morganin kullutua.

Morganin mukaan odotuslista oli hänen isänsä mukaan hyväksi yhtiölle. Se on ollut osa Morganin legenda jo yli 20 vuotta.



Morganin puuosat valmistetaan yli satavuotiaasta saarnista.



Charles Morganin mukaan Morgania pitää jonottaa kahdeksan vuotta.

kevyempi kuin tavallinen japanilainen pikkuauto.

Morganin tehdas muistuttaa monin paikoin suomalaisista veineistä. Morganin puosapöytä ovat ilmeisesti suomalaisista virkaveljistään erottuakseen nauhanneet tehdassaan erittäin laadun autourheiluun erottuakseen. Mattomasti liittyvät pin-up-tyttöjen kuvia.

Moottorit Morganin on ai-
na hankittu ulkomaan. Nykyisin Morganin nokalla hyrräivät Fordin ja Roverin koneet.

Saarnipuu pitää rakenteen keveänä

Kaikki kolme valmistuksessa olevaa Morganin mallia ovat perusrakenteeltaan alkuperäisiä. Itsekantavan teräsrungon päällä on yli satavuotiaasta kovasta japanilaismuovista. Ohuista räkksellä ja alumiinilla.

Puun suuri osuus auton rakenteesta tekee Morganista kevyitä. Raskaimkin Morgan on

neen hyrystessä valmiina vastaan maan vauhtia himoavan käskyt. Morgan ei ole vaikea kuvitella, mikä Morgan on välttämättä muiden autotekijien kokemien lämmönsäntien ja mikä sen suosio on parhaimmillaan.

Morganin unelmaan ei kuulu turhua elektroniikkakärsiä tai japanilaismuovia. Unelma on ratti, kaasu ja tien pyrähtäminen. Kuomu suhisee ikävästi.

Kaikkia ei voi saada näillä satatellen saarnilla.

Morganin menestys perustuu Charles Morganin mukaan tehtaalla työskentelevien 130 työntekijän ammattitaitoon. Tehtaalla ei ole edes puhuttu lukuhil-

nosti tai rationaalisuudesta. Charles Morgan huokuu tyytyväisyyttä kertoessaan jättäneensä noudattamatta Britannian tunnetuimman yrityskonsultin suosituksen toimimaan järjestyksessä ja laajentamiseksi.

Charles Morganin mukaan käytettyjen Morganin hintat ovat niin hyvät, että auto itsessään on vakaa sijoituskohde. Senkään vuoksi ei massavalmistusta voi edes harkita, vaan yhtiön on laajennettava tuotant-

toaan hyvin varovasti. Charles Morganin mukaan 600 Morgania meni helposti kaupaksi jo-
ka vuosi.

Halvimmat Morganin saa Britanniansa rehellä 16 000 punnalla eli noin 140 000 markalla. Kallein malli maksaa normaaliarvoistaan varustettuna 26 000 puntaa eli noin 230 000 markkaa.

Yli puolet Morganista menee vientiin. Niitä liikkuu paljon erityisesti Saksassa.

Britanniasta tullut erikoisautojen kotimaa

Morganin markkinaosuus Bri-

tannian erikois- ja urheiluautojen markkinoista on vain 2,7 prosenttia. Talouslama ei ole viime vuosina koetellut Morgan-yhtiötä lainkaan niin pahoin kuin sen suurempia kilpailijoita. Eriyksen pahoin taantuma on tuonut muun muassa Rolls Roycen ja Jaguarin XJS-mallin markkinoille.

Britanniassa toimii 13 pientä autonvalmistajaa, joita Morganin ohella tunnetuimpia ovat Aston Martin ja Lotus. Vaikka erikoisautojen markkinat ovat parin viime vuoden aikana ra-
juusti pienentyneet, uskotaan erikoisautojen menekkiin jatkossakin paljon, että Roverin suunnittelee tuovansa kuuhuisan MG:n takaisin sarjatuotantoon. Normaleilla teillä liikkuvien erikoisautojen runsaasti kilpailijaa rakennetaan runsaasti kilpailijoihin tarkoitettuja autoja. Lähes 90 prosenttia maailman radalle tulevista autoista rakennetaan nykyisin Britanniassa. Myös Morganin kilpailija oli-
laan käyttämättäsi vuosien tauon jälkeen.

Italian ylpeys, Ferrarin kilpailu siirtyi vastikään Britanniaan rakentamaan F1-
autojaan. Britten ajajayhteisö Nigel Mansell ajaa Yhdysvalloissa Dorselissa Britanniansa rakennettua Lola-autoa, jossa on brittiläinen Cosworth-moottori.

Brittiläisten erikoisautojen valmistuksen ja siihen liittyvän alihankinnan parissa työskentelee yli 50 000 ihmistä. Autoista saadot viennit ovat yli kolmen miljardin Suomen markan luokkaa vuodessa.

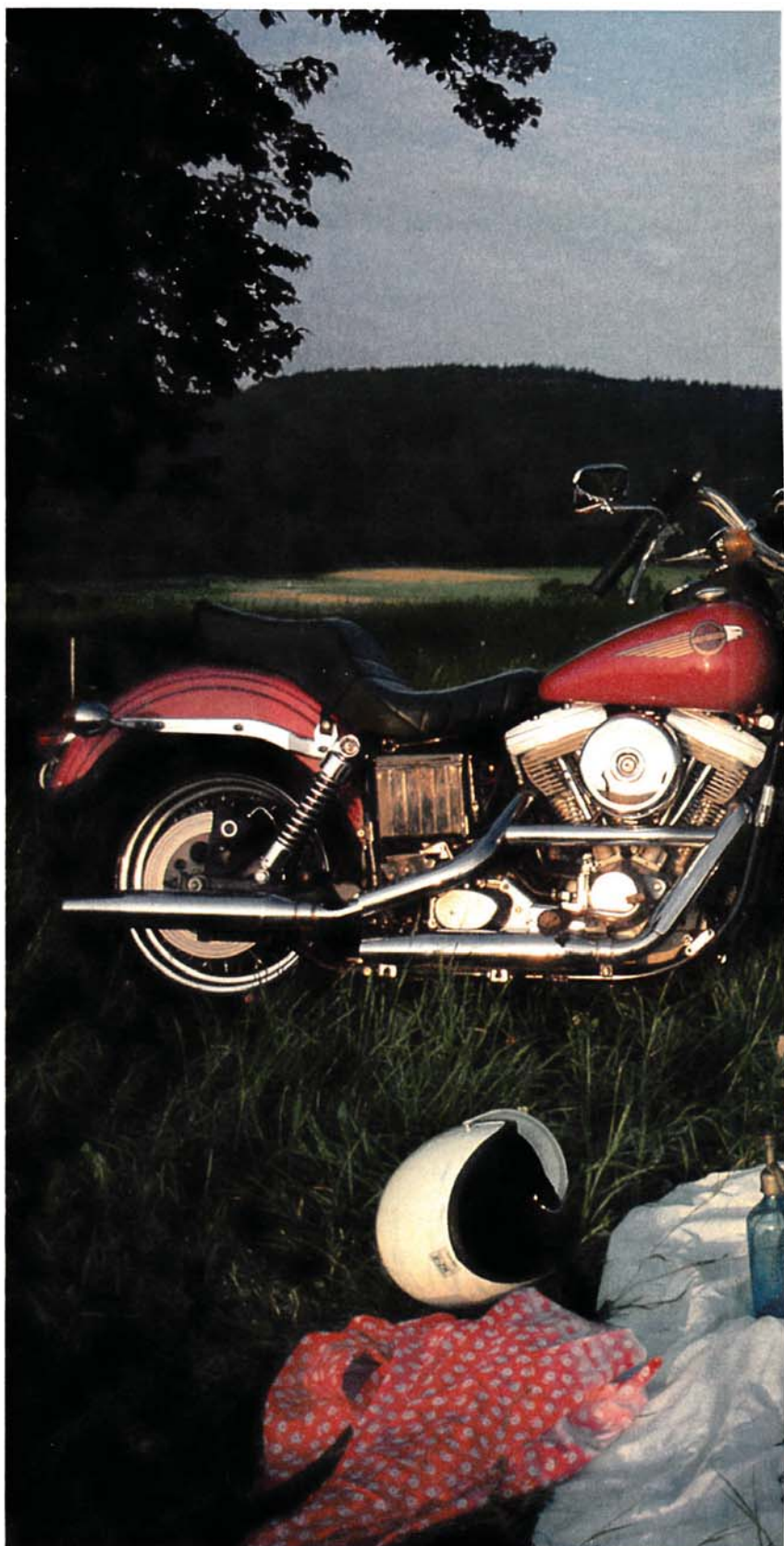
MANN LIEBT VAU

Der Morgan Plus 8 und die Harley-Davidson Fat Bob ergänzen sich wie kaum ein anderes Paar. Gemeinsam ist beiden der V-Motor, die klassische Lösung, um viel Hubraum um eine Kurbelwelle zu versammeln, aber auch das klassische Erlebnis antiker Technik.



Es war natürlich im berühmt-berüchtigten verflixten siebten Jahr, als mir die große Liebe begegnete. Ich hatte bis dahin eine überaus zufriedenstellende Liaison mit meinem Morgan 4/4, einem Auto im Outfit der dreißiger Jahre mit zuverlässiger Ford-Mechanik und 84 PS für nur 800 Kilogramm Roadster pur.

Doch meine große Liebe begegnete mir unter der ausgestopften Eule, die Mäuse aus der Morgan-Auslieferungshalle in Malvern Link fernhalten soll. Der mausgraue Plus 8 hatte nur 36 Kilometer auf dem Tachometer, war also ein neues Auto – sofern





Sekt und Selters: prickelnde Kraftentfaltung in schmuckloser Konstruktion



Emanzipation des V: Auf einsamen Landstraßen bieten V2 und V8 gleichberechtigten Fahrspaß



Moment mal: 108 Millimeter Hub für 97 Newtonmeter



Maximallösung: so viel Motor wie möglich in so wenig Auto wie nötig



F
at Bob

und Plus 8 sind viel zu faszinierende Spielzeuge, um sie im Alltagsverkehr zu verschleiben – mag ihre technische Substanz auch dafür taugen



Stil-Leben: klassische Motorisierung vor antikem Eigenheim

das ein Morgan überhaupt sein kann. Ich fuhr ihn für den süddeutschen Importeur Harald Merz nach Stuttgart, gut 1200 Kilometer durch den nassen Winter 1982 über graue Autobahnen im Schmuddelwetter.

Der Regen trommelte unablässig auf das spartanische Verdeck, die drei Mini-Wischer mühten sich redlich um Durchblick, aber mein Herz wurde groß und weit voll inniger Zuneigung zum satten Ton des Rover-V8, und als ich mich in Stuttgart meiner klatschnassen Hosen entledigte, wußte ich: „Das ist es.“

Trotz des ausgesprochen erbärmlichen c_w -Wertes von 0,69 (offen) trieben ihn die 157 PS zu einer Höchstgeschwindigkeit von 202 km/h – ein tosendes Erlebnis, das den Orkanen des letzten Winters jeden Schrecken nimmt. Das Auto mußte her.

Sechs Monate später war es soweit. Er war schwarz wie die Sünde, mit duftendem Connolly-Leder gefüttert, hatte sieben Jahre auf dem Buckel und erst 22 000 Kilometer auf der Uhr. Für 35 000 Mark war er mein. Von diesem Tag an stellte sich bei mir jene ruhige Gangart ein, die Fahrer potenter Auto-

mobile kennzeichnet, denn in der Kraft liegt die Ruhe.

Diese Gelassenheit kennen alle Plus 8-Fahrer, sofern sie im letzten Vergaser-Modell unterwegs sind. Der Rover-Leichtmetall-V8 erreicht sein Drehmoment-Maximum von 267 Nm schon bei gemächlichen 2500/min, der nächste Gangwechsel steht spätestens bei 3000/min an.

Die Kraft des einst bei Buick geborenen Achtzylinders reicht in jeder Übersetzungsstufe für kräftigen Schub, und wenn es denn ein GTI-Fahrer verlangt, auch für fette Striche auf dem

Asphalt. Schließlich reklamiert der Firmenslogan „The first and last of the real Sportscars“, daß man ausschließlich in Malvern Link wisse, wie ein Sportwagen auszusehen habe. Und nach traditionellen Maßstäben liegen die Engländer auch völlig richtig. Bis heute gibt es keinen anderen Roadster mit V8-Motor, der nur rund 900 Kilogramm wiegt und keinen, der mit gerade mal 157 PS (Vergaser-Version) so gut geht. Und trotz einfachem Leiterraum und hinterer Starrachse erreichte der nur 1,14 Meter flache Oldie bei einem Sportwagen-Vergleichstest in auto motor und sport höhere Kurvengeschwindigkeiten als ein Porsche 944.

Offen fahren im Morgan verkörpert zwar die größtmögliche Annäherung an die reinste Form der motorisierten Fortbewegung namens Motorrad, kann dieses aber auch als Minimalprinzip eines urigen Frischluftautos nicht ganz ersetzen. Deshalb stellte sich schon bald die Frage nach einer passenden Zweirad-Ergänzung zum Plus 8. Eines war von vornherein klar: Sie mußte ebenfalls eine Traum-V sein.

Die nahtlose Entsprechung zum Morgan Plus 8 liefert auf dem Motorradsektor Harley-Davidson. In Milwaukee pflegen die Ingenieure seit 1909 das Dogma, daß zwei Zylinder für ein Motorrad völlig ausreichen, wenn nur Hubraum und Drehmoment reichlich eingeschenkt sind.

Ganz in der Schule des Hochleistungs-Motorenbaus der dreißiger Jahre haben die Ingenieure das Maß für den Hub mit 108 Millimeter denn auch sehr durchzugsfördernd und gleichzeitig rekordverdächtig gewählt.

Die letzte große Technik-Revolution von Harley-Davidson heißt Evolution und markiert einen Motor, der in seinen konstruktiven Grundfesten fest auf den Erkenntnissen von 1909 wurzelt – daß sich nämlich zwei Zylinder raumökonomisch am besten in V-Anordnung um einen gemeinsamen Hubzapfen der Pleuellwelle versammeln, daß die Pleuellwelle unten zu liegen habe und über ellenlange Pleuellstangen die Ventile steuert.

Der lange Hub sorgt für eine Leistungscharakteristik, die so gar nichts mit den modernistischen Erzeugnissen fernöstlicher Provenienz zu tun hat. Wo ein japanischer Vierzylinder noch asthmatisch röchelt, hat eine Harley ihren Leistungszenth schon lange überschritten. Kenner schätzen die Harley Evolution-Motoren aus dem glei-

chen Grund wie den Rover-Motor im Morgan Plus 8: Beide sind einfache Konstruktionen von absoluter Alltagstauglichkeit, und beide vermitteln das Vintage-Feeling von klassischer Motorisierung.

Dennoch kann auch ein moderner Klassiker etwas weniger oder etwas mehr klassisch sein. So bemängeln Morgan-Fans bei den Rover-Einspritzern den subjektiv lascheren Antritt bei niedrigen Drehzahlen, und Freunde klassischer Harleys monieren bei den neuen Modellen einen gummigelagerten Motor und den Antrieb über Fünfganggetriebe und Kunststoffzahnriemen.

Deshalb ist für die Anhänger der reinen Lehre eine Fat Bob die letzte echte Harley, mit ihrem starr im Rahmen verschraubten Motor, Vierganggetriebe und Kettenantrieb eine stete Prüfung für die Solidität der Füllung im Backenzahn.

Meine erste Begegnung mit der Fat Bob war in einer Tiefgarage. Der Druck auf den Anlasser läßt diesen kläglich unter der Last der Verdichtung winseln, doch eine Pleuellwelleumdrehung später zappelt der Pleuellwelle-Lenker in den Händen.

Das Anfahren gelingt fast ohne Gaspedal, 14 Kilogramm Pleuellwellenschwungmasse sind nicht so ohne weiteres abzuwürgen. Als Harley-Fahrer entwickelt man schnell ein sensibles Gefühl für seine Maschine. So stellt sich auf einer Fat Bob weniger die Frage nach der passenden Gangart für seine Reisen, als vielmehr diejenige, wie die Gänge zu sortieren sind, damit die Pleuellwelle nicht aus den Pleuellwellenbüchsen vortritt. Das gelingt am besten im Bereich von 3000 Touren. Hier liefert der 1,34 Liter-Motor fast schon sein maximales Drehmoment, schüttelt dem Fahrer nicht den Tascheninhalt aus seiner Jacke, sondern dröhnt nur ganz gelassen seinen Milwaukee-Soul-Beat in die Landschaft.

Drehmoment schafft Ruhe und nimmt erfolgreich jede Hektik beim Fahren ab. Die Kraft, die aus dem Drehmoment Souveränität schöpft. Die beruhigende Ansammlung von Newtonmeter ist die Verbindung von Morgan- und Harley-Fahren und macht beide so unvergleichlich.

Fat Bob und Plus 8 sind viel zu faszinierende Spielzeuge, um sie im Alltagsverkehr zu verschleifen, obwohl ihre technische Substanz dafür sehr wohl taugt. Genuß an antiker Technik stellt sich aber viel eher ein, wenn man auch antiquierte Straßenverhältnisse herstellt.

Wir haben unseren Picknick-Koffer schon am Samstagabend gepackt und sind nach dem Wort zum Sonntag zu Bett gegangen. Pünktlich um fünf hat der Wecker geklingelt, und der V8 im Morgan hat sich schüttelnd warmgemacht und nach zwei Minuten alle acht Zylinder zur Arbeit überredet. Wir haben eine Landstraße dritter Ordnung ausgewählt, Harley und Morgan mit maximal 2500/min sanft gewinkt und erst in den Pleuellwellensektionen auf stillen Straßen dem satten Drehmoment freien Lauf gelassen.

Um sieben Uhr hatten wir unsere Picknick-Wiese erreicht. Wir lauschten dem rhythmischen Knacken der sich allmählich im hohen Gras abkühlenden Pleuellmotoren, und die heiße Luft über der geschlitzten Morgan-Haube ließ beim Frühstück das Morgenrot über dem Horizont erzittern. Als die Kirchenglocken läuteten, stand schon fast der Rückweg auf dem Programm.

Vor dem Mittagläuten sollte man zu Hause sein. Dann kann man immer noch mit dem GTI oder der ZX-10 an den Baggage-see fahren.

Heiner Buchinger

TECHNISCHE DATEN

Morgan Plus 8 (1978)

Achtzylinder-V-Motor, Bohrung × Hub 88,9 × 71,1 mm, Hubraum 3532 cm³, Verdichtungsverhältnis 9,35:1, Leistung 115 kW (157 PS) bei 5250/min, maximales Drehmoment 267 Nm bei 2500/min. Fünfganggetriebe.

Leiterrahmen; Einzeldradaufhängung, Schraubenfedern, Teleskop-Stoßdämpfer vorn; Starrachse, Blattfedern, Öldruck-Hebelstoßdämpfer hinten. Radstand 2490 mm; 14 Zoll-Räder vorn und hinten; Leergewicht 828 kg.

Höchstgeschwindigkeit 202 km/h, Verbrauch 12 L/100 km Super. Preis (1978) 30 250 Mark.

Harley-Davidson 1340 Fat Bob (1985)

Zweizylinder-V-Motor, Bohrung × Hub 88,8 × 108,0 mm, Hubraum 1338 cm³, Verdichtungsverhältnis 8,6:1, Leistung 43 kW (59 PS) bei 5000/min, maximales Drehmoment 97 Nm bei 3200/min. Vierganggetriebe.

Doppelschleifen-Rohrrahmen; Teleskopgabel vorn, zwei Federbeine hinten. Radstand 1600 mm; Speichenräder 19 Zoll vorn, 16 Zoll hinten; Leergewicht 272 kg.

Höchstgeschwindigkeit 165 km/h, Verbrauch 6,5 L/100 km Normal. Preis (1985) 19 900 Mark.

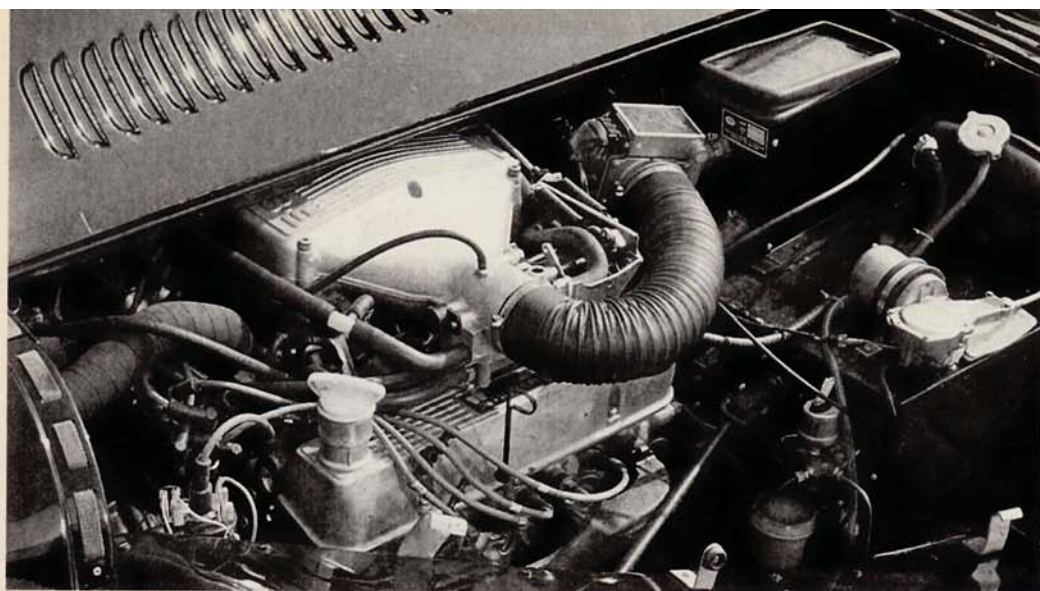
IMPRESSIONEN

Morgan Plus 8

Die Ur-Sache



Wahrhaft klassisch:
Der Entwurf der Morgan-Karosserie
stammt von 1936



Der 3,9 Liter-V8 hat die Fahrleistungen nochmals verbessert

Der britische Morgan sieht zwar aus wie immer, aber er hat jetzt 3,9 Liter Hubraum und zwei Katalysatoren im Auspuff. auto motor und sport-Autor Götz Leyrer fuhr das neueste Modell und meint: Der Morgan ist noch lange nicht von gestern.

Ein Morgan im Frühling – da müßten die Tester eigentlich nach dem Zündschlüssel Schlange stehen. Aber der Präsenz des „first and last of the real sportscars“ zeigen sich eben nur wenige gewachsen. Wolfgang König, den nur ein blindes Schicksal in der Pfalz statt auf den Britischen Inseln zur Welt kommen ließ, benutzt gerade sein bevorzugtes Nahverkehrsmittel: die Fähre von Calais nach Dover. Und sonst? Nur faule Ausreden. „Die Federung ruiniert meine Bandscheiben“ oder: „Die Kuppelung bringt mich um.“ Und noch schlimmer: „Es ist doch immer wieder das gleiche.“

Ist es eben nicht. Schließlich gibt es in Malvern Link eine Entwicklungsabteilung. Keine Denkfabrik natürlich wie bei Porsche, kein architektonisches Denkmal wie bei BMW. Dafür einen zierlichen, weißgestrichenen Würfel, gleich neben dem Feuerwehrteich, nicht viel größer als ein ordentliches Redakteursbüro. Da wird über die Morgan-Zukunft nachgedacht, und der Fortschritt ist von unaufhaltsamer Beharrlichkeit. Oktober 1976: Fünfganggetriebe. Mai 1984: Benzineinspritzung und Zahnstangenlenkung. Und jetzt: 3,9 Liter statt 3,5 Liter Hubraum, dazu für jede Zylinderreihe des von Rover stammenden Achtzylinders ein Katalysator mit Lambdasonde, geschickt versteckt unter dem eleganten Kotflügelsschwung gleich hinter

den Vorderrädern. Die Abgasreinigung kostet etwas Leistung – der Plus 8 hat jetzt 182 statt 193 PS, dafür aber mehr Drehmoment (308 Nm statt 298 Nm) bei weniger Drehzahl (3500 statt 4000/min).

Die gute Nachricht: Der Leichtmetall-V8 ist ganz der alte geblieben, bullenstark, mit gnadenlosem Durchzug schon bei niedrigsten Drehzahlen. Eigentlich müssen sie sich bei Buick heute noch die Haare raufen, daß dieser Motor in den sechziger Jahren an die Engländer verkauft wurde.

Entgiftet wurde, noch eine freudige Botschaft, nur das Abgas, aber nicht der Auspuffton. Schon im Leerlauf ertönt jenes vertraute Brummeln, das eben nur ein V8 mit doppelten Auspuffrohren zuwegebracht. Und beim Gasgeben ballert der Morgan richtig los, tief grollend zunächst und dann mit einem hämmernden Aufschrei, der zweifellos gewisse Suchtgefahren in sich birgt. Morgan-Fahren, das ist schon deswegen klar, muß man offen. Nur dann wird es auch zum akustischen Erlebnis. Bei zugeknöpftem Roadsterzelt dagegen herrscht gemeiner Lärm. Mechanische Geräusche dringen aus dem nur dünn gepolsterten Mitteltunnel, der Fahrtwind wird zum Orkan, zerrt an den seitlichen Steckscheiben, die verständnisvoll nachgeben und bei hohem Tempo Spalten auftun, durch die man mühelos eine Hand nach draußen strecken kann.

Offen, gar mit demontierten Seitenteilen, ist es Sport. Der Sturm zaust die Haare, aber er malträtiert nicht das Trommelfell, der ungefilterte Kontakt zur Mechanik wird zum Vergnügen. Denn der Achtzylinder beantwortet den Tritt auf das zierliche Rollengaspedal mit einem mächtigen Antritt, die Gänge rasten kurz und knackig ein, die Beschleunigung macht sämtliche High Tech-GTI dieser Welt zu harmlosen Papiertigern.

Der Morgan ist eine Herausforderung, kein Auto, das Fahren zur spielerischen Nebensache macht. Ein harter Bursche, der mit Nachdruck angefaßt werden will, in dem der Fahrer Fahrer ist und nicht Passagier. Arbeit ist das, wenn man schnell sein will – eine Stunde intensives Morgan-Training auf kurvenreichen, welligen Landstraßen wird zum Fitneß-Programm.

Natürlich liegt es nahe, mit einem so großen Motor in einem leichten Auto behaglich dahinzubummeln, den fünften Gang einfach drinzulassen und die unerhörte Elastizität dieses Antriebs zu genießen, denn die ist in der Tat rekordverdächtig, spürbar besser noch als beim alten 3,5 Liter-Modell. Aber sportlich fahren, die Motorkraft ausnutzen – das erst ist das wahre Vergnügen, obwohl oder gerade weil der Morgan ein Fahrwerk besitzt, das schon vor 20 Jahren altmodisch war. Nicht, daß er schlecht liegt. So-

Fotos: H. P. Seufert

Windstärke acht:
Morgan ganz offen



Fast wie bei
Rolls-Royce:
Armaturenbrett
in Wurzelholz

IMPRESSIONEN

Morgan Plus 8

lange die Straße einigermaßen eben ist, sind respektable Kurvengeschwindigkeiten möglich, wobei sich der Grenzbereich dadurch ankündigt, daß die Vorderachse hoppelnd nach außen drängt. Sie ist zweifellos das antiquierteste Bauteil am Morgan, begrüßt jede Bodenwelle mit freundlichem Nicken, springt auch schon einmal auf größeren Unebenheiten, läßt Stöße ins Lenkrad dringen und verleugnet mit Konsequenz die seit langem erhärtete Tatsache, daß zur Aufgabe einer Aufhängung nicht

nur Radführung, sondern auch Federn gehört. Aber um die Achse zu ändern, müßte der ganze Rahmen umkonstruiert werden, und dazu will sich in dem kleinen weißen Würfel niemand durchringen.

Die starre Hinterachse, vom Importeur Merz in Stuttgart gern durch Koni-Stoßdämpfer statt der vom Werk installierten urweltlichen Hebel-dämpfer gebändigt, ist dagegen längst nicht so schlimm wie ihr Ruf. Zum einen bringt der Morgan dank einer bissigen Differentialsperre seine hohe Leistung auch in engen Kurven gut auf den Boden, zum anderen können die dicken Blattfederpakete in der Tat bisweilen

beim Federn ertappt werden. Allerdings sind ihre Manieren nicht frei von einer gewissen Heimtücke. Ganz harmlos aussehende Straßenwellen bedeuten bisweilen einen kurzen, trockenen Stoß ins Kreuz, andere wieder, vor denen sich der Fahrer schon erwartungsfroh im engen Cockpit verkeilt, werden dann wieder auf ein so erträgliches Maß gedämpft, daß man geneigt ist, dem Roadster anerkennend auf die blecherne Flanke zu klopfen.

Langweilig, das ist klar, wird es im Morgan nicht – man muß also wirklich nicht bedauern, daß es im wurzelhölzernen Armaturenbrett (gegen Aufpreis) keinen Platz für ein Radio gibt. Der Plus 8 fördert die Konzentration aufs Fahren, und das trägt sicher auch mit dazu bei, daß Unfallreparaturen beim Importeur zu den Ausnahmen gehören. Zumal dieser Sportwagen auch noch in einer weiteren Hinsicht gegen den modernen Trend schwimmt. In ihm wird man nie die Geschwindigkeit unterschätzen – im Gegenteil: 120 km/h fühlen sich schon an, als wären es 180.

Viel hat sich also nicht geändert am Morgan, wofür sich bestimmt nicht nur der Autor freundlich bedankt bei der kleinen Company in Malvern. Ein bißchen teurer ist er eben wieder geworden. Aber was soll's? Nach der Unterschrift im Kaufvertrag bleiben immerhin fast drei Jahre zum Sparen. □

Zum Vergleich

Fahrzeugtyp	Morgan Plus 8 3.9	Morgan Plus 8 3.5
Motorbauart/Zylinderzahl	V/8 ¹⁾	
Hubraum	cm ³ 3914	3532
Bohrung × Hub	mm 94,0 × 71,1	88,9 × 71,1
Leistung	kW (PS) bei 1/min 134 (182) bei 4750	142 (193) bei 5280
Max. Drehmoment	Nm bei 1/min 308 bei 3500	298 bei 4000
Leergewicht	kg 948	936
Beschleunigung	in s	
0–80 km/h	4,4	4,8
0–100 km/h	6,4	6,8
0–120 km/h	8,6	9,6
0–160 km/h	15,7	17,9
1 km mit stehendem Start	26,7	27,6
Elastizität	in s	
60–100 km/h (IV. Gang)	5,5	6,7
80–120 km/h (V. Gang)	7,9	10,8
Höchstgeschwindigkeit	km/h 205	204
Testverbrauch	L/100 km 13,2 S ²⁾	11,6 S ³⁾
Preis	DM 69 840,-	62 950,-

¹⁾ V = V-Motor; ²⁾ Super bleifrei; ³⁾ Super

VERGLEICH

Roadster

Ohne Filter

Roadster sind Autos für schöne Stunden
und vor allem auf das Eine aus: Sie wollen das Fahren
aufregend machen. Donkervoort Super Eight,
Morgan Plus 8 und TVR 350 i zeigen, was sie können.



Nur wenige Zentimeter trennen den verlängerten Rücken des Fahrers von der Straße. Er wird es zu spüren bekommen. Rohe Späße sind es, die ihn erwarten. Sein Kopf wird von Orkanwinden massiert werden, seine Augen sich rot verfärben. Tränen werden fließen,

nicht nur wegen der Zugluft, sondern wegen des schieren Vergnügens daran. Der aufdringlich röhrende Auspuff wird die Trommelfelle strapazieren, Krach genug, um sich nach zweistündiger Autobahnfahrt matt geschlagen zu geben. Autofahren ohne Filter verschafft solche Erlebnisse,

zu genießen nur im echten Roadster. Die Betonung liegt auf echt. Zweisitzig zu sein, dazu möglichst offen und sportlich, genügt nicht. In einem Mercedes SL etwa wird sich das exquisite Roadster-Vergnügen niemals einstellen, obwohl sich auch dieses Auto Roadster nennt. ▷



VERGLEICH

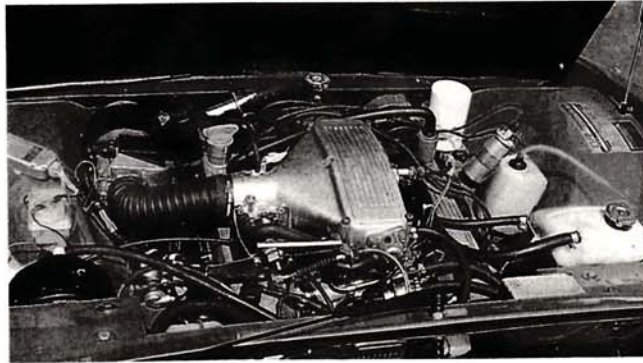
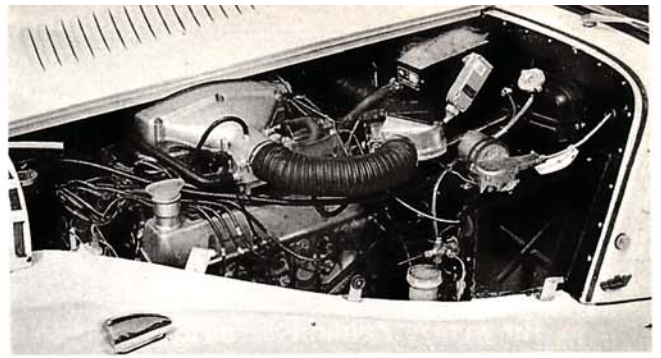
Roadster

Ein Roadster ist aber auch Weltanschauung. Daß sie vor allem in England gedeiht, spricht Bände. Doch heute muß man tief ins Unterholz der Automobillandschaft vordringen, um fündig zu werden. Dort, in der Subkultur kleiner und kleinster Hersteller, blühen sie noch, Roadster in allen Schattierungen. auto motor und sport greift sich drei Beispiele heraus. Ausgerechnet aus den Niederlanden kommt Beispiel Nummer eins, ein technisches Gerät, das sich unter dem unmöglichen Namen Donkervoort vorstellt und auch sonst unmöglich mit gängigen Automobilvorstellungen in Einklang zu bringen ist. Sein zigarrenförmiger Rumpf hängt tief zwischen den breitspurig ausgerichteten Rädern. Für den ahnungslosen Betrachter schwer faßbar: Ein schmaler Ausschnitt am hinteren Ende und ein rudimentärer Windschutz sollen den legalen Transport von Menschen ermöglichen. Dieses Konzept basiert auf dem englischen Super 7, einem originellen Scherz, den sich einst Lotus ausdachte und der heute noch von Kleinhersteller Caterham in Umlauf gebracht wird. Die Holland-Version unterscheidet sich im wesentlichen durch etwas mehr Leistung und mehr umbauten Raum.

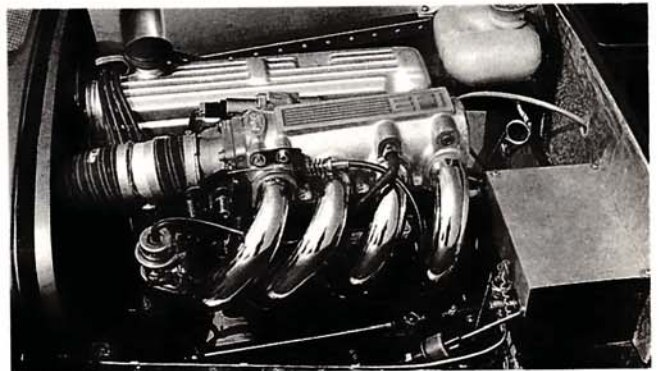
Rein britisch bleibt Roadster-Beispiel Nummer zwei. Verantwortlich zeichnet TVR, ein Sportwagen-Hersteller, der sich in den letzten Jahren auf der Insel zum angesehenen Lotus-Konkurrenten emporarbeitete. TVR-Spezialität sind auffallend geformte Kunststoffgebilde auf massiven Rohrrahmen-Fahrgeräten, kräftig, simpel und selbstverständlich offen – Eigenschaften, welche den TVR als waschechten Nachfolger verflossener Briten-Roadster legitimieren. Gefahren wurde das keilförmig ausgebildete Modell 350i, die moderne Alternative zum nostalgisch rundlichen TVR 290 S.

Jede Roadster-Betrachtung wäre unvollständig ohne den

Unter der Flügelhaube im Stil der dreißiger Jahre Technik von heute. Im Morgan arbeitet ein V8 von Rover



Schön garniert, aber von bürgerlicher Herkunft der Donkervoort-Antrieb. Er kommt direkt aus dem Ford Sierra



Rover-Power auch im TVR. Der kompakte 3,5-Liter mit elektronischer Benzineinspritzung löst preiswert Leistungsprobleme

Zum Vergleich

Fahrzeugtyp	Donkervoort Super Eight	Morgan Plus 8	TVR 350i Convertible
Motorbauart/Zylinderzahl	R/4	V/8	V/8
Hubraum	1994 cm ³	3532	3532
Leistung	86(117)/5500 kW(PS) bei 1/min	142(193)/5280	147(200)/5280
Max. Drehmoment	163 bei 4000 Nm bei 1/min	298 bei 4000	298 bei 4000
Leergewicht	698 kg	936	1166
Zul. Gesamtgewicht	925 kg	1100	1445
Beschleunigung	in s		
0-60 km/h	3,4	3,2	3,9
0-80 km/h	5,3	4,8	5,4
0-100 km/h	7,6	6,8	8,1
0-120 km/h	11,1	9,6	10,9
0-140 km/h	15,5	12,6	15,4
0-160 km/h	22,8	17,9	20,9
1 km mit stehendem Start	29,1	27,6	28,8
Elastizität	in s		
60-100 km/h (IV. Gang)	8,1	6,7	7,4
80-120 km/h (V. Gang)	12,8	10,8	11,0
Höchstgeschwindigkeit	184 km/h	204	213
Testverbrauch	L/100 km	S* 9,7	S 13,8
Preis	DM	51 000,-	62 950,-

*S = Super

VERGLEICH

Roadster

Morgan Plus 8, die Inkarnation des Roadster-Gedankens. Sie stammt aus der Kinderzeit des Automobils. Das verleiht dem Morgan jene historische Autorität, die ihn unter Roadster-Menschen unantastbar macht. Seit 1936 blieb er im großen und ganzen unverändert, was dazu führt, daß Hard Core-Morganeers alles, was danach kam, für traurige Fehlschläge halten, einen Morgan Plus 8 selbstverständlich ausgenommen.

Aus der Sicht des Roadsterologen läßt sich an dieser Einschätzung schwer rütteln. Als Lehrstück in Sachen Roadstertum ist der Morgan unübertroffen. Die Freude an der motorisierten Fortbewegung ist hier das Thema Nummer eins. Der Morgan verspricht sie schon im Stehen. Nur wenige Autos reizen so unwiderstehlich zum Einsteigen und Losfahren wie ein geparkter Morgan. Dabei verzichtet er völlig auf gängige Lockmittel. Styling ist bei Morgan ein Fremdwort. Die Funktion diktierte einst die Form, deshalb wirkt sie heute noch vielversprechend. Dem Motor gehört hier der beste Platz im Chassis, das macht die Motorhaube lang und den Karosserieüberhang kurz. Der Kotflügel ist Kotflügel, das Armaturenbrett ein Brett und die Windschutzscheibe eine Scheibe und keine Klarsichthülle. Mensch und Gepäck müssen sich der spartanischen Funktionalität unterwerfen. Luxus und Überfluß widersprechen dem Prinzip. Entsprechend Raumangebot und Ausstattung: Zwei Personen füllen das Passagierabteil des Zweisitzers optimal aus, die tief ausgeschnittenen Seiten eröffnen zusätzliche Freiräume. Ein Gepäckträger am Heck bietet Raum nach Bedarf. Die Anzahl der Koffer bestimmt das Normvolumen.

Man mag es angesichts dieser Lektion kaum glauben: Letztlich ist auch der Morgan keineswegs der Vertreter der reinen Lehre, für den er gemeinhin gilt. Roadster-Tugen-

den in letzter Konsequenz bietet erst der Donkervoort. Da gibt es dann auch keine Trittbretter mehr, die ohnehin nicht betreten werden, und keine Türen, die das Fahren mit geschlossenem Verdeck erleichtern und so den Roadster-Gedanken untergraben. Konsequenz auch die Innenmaße: Weil Roadster-Fahren zu Recht als betont egoistischer Zeitvertreib gilt, beschränkt sich das Raumangebot auf 1+1-Format, wobei die Zusatzperson dank physischer Nähe vortrefflich als Heizkörper eingesetzt werden kann.

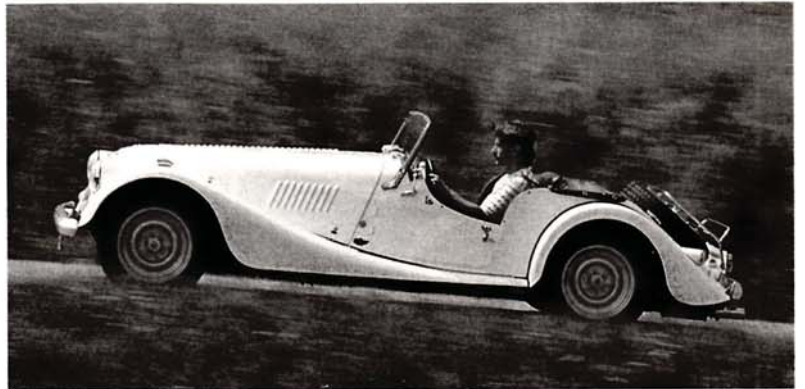
Da wirkt der TVR wie aus einer anderen Welt. Türen mit elektrisch versenkbaren Scheiben, abschließbarer Kofferraum, aufklappbarer Überrollbügel, Targadach, was bleibt dann noch von der Roadster-

Idee? Sicher, streng genommen hätte der TVR in diesem Vergleich nichts verloren. Und doch gibt es einen gemeinsamen Nenner, denn auch hier steht der Komfort nicht an erster Stelle, auch hier resultiert die Freude am Fahren aus der Auseinandersetzung des Fahrers mit Maschine und Umwelt, auch im TVR bleibt das Fahrerlebnis ungefiltert vom Zeitgeist der High Tech-Ära. Daß der TVR Anpassung voraussetzt, zeigt schon die Unterbringung im Innenraum. Ein mächtiger Zentralrohrrahmen schiebt die Insassen in zwei schmale Sitznischen, eingemauert zwischen dem hohen Mitteltunnel und den bis in Kinnhöhe reichenden Türen, was je nach Verfassung Geborgenheit oder Beklemmung vermittelt. Der ersehnte Kontakt mit der Umwelt spielt

sich hier bei geöffnetem Verdeck ausschließlich in Kopfhöhe ab, dort allerdings in der bei einem Roadster geforderten Intensität.

Fahren um des Fahrens willen lautet die Devise, und dazu gehört beim Sportwagen selbstverständlich eine Extraportion Mumm. Es zählt zu den Prinzipien des Roadsters, daß auch diese Forderung mit möglichst einfachen Mitteln zu erfüllen ist. Roadster haben es in diesem Punkt ja auch leichter als gewöhnliche Autos. Ihr Konzept, die Konzentration auf das Wesentliche und die Beschränkung auf überschaubare Technik, belohnen sie mit geringem Gewicht. Da braucht es keine schwindelerregenden PS-Zahlen, um dynamisch überlegen zu sein. 117 PS (86 kW), zur Verfügung gestellt von einem

Strikte Funktionalität macht die Form des Morgan klassisch und besonders einladend. Da braucht es kein Styling



Die extreme Keilform verleiht dem TVR ein unverwechselbares Profil. Frische Luft gibt es nur in Kopfhöhe

Die Karosserie des Donkervoort bleibt Rudiment, ein Roadster in letzter Konsequenz. Selbst auf Türen wird verzichtet



VERGLEICH

Roadster

gemeinen Ford Sierra-Motor, genügen dem Donkervoort, um über forsche GTI-Buben und ehrgeizige BMW-Dynamiker lachen zu können. Bei einem Spatzengewicht von 698 Kilogramm kommen auf jedes PS lächerliche 5,9 Kilogramm. Ähnlich günstig die Versorgung im Morgan: Sein altväterlicher Leiterraum bringt ihm zwar im Vergleich zum grazilen Gitterrohrrahmen des Donkervoort zusätzliches Gewicht (936 kg). Doch üppiger Hubraum und die ausreichende Mehrleistung des von Rover bezogenen 3,5 Liter-V8-Motors sichern dem Alten sein schon legendäres Durchzugsvermögen. Der Leichtmetall-V8 ist nicht nur leicht und kompakt. Er wird auch vergleichsweise wohlfeil angeboten, kein Wunder, daß ihn auch TVR favorisiert. Sein Antrieb entspricht jenem des Morgan bis auf die Auspuffanlage. Da es hier aber mehr zu schleppen gibt (1166 kg), fallen die Fahrleistungen etwas zurückhaltender aus, ohne daß sich der Sportwagenfreund deshalb sorgen müßte. Gerade beim Roadster sind Fahrerlebnisse ohnehin nicht in Zahlen auszudrücken. Auf die kunstvolle Mischung subjektiver Eindrücke kommt es an. Im Donkervoort mit kaum wahr-

nehmbaren Handbewegungen am winzigen Lenkrad auf den Millimeter genau durch Kurven zu huschen, fast liegend und in Augenhöhe mit Hund und Katze, verschafft solche Eindrücke. Oder der Kampf mit dem störrischen Morgan-Fahrwerk, das Lenkrad dicht vor der Brust, der Blick auf die von Entlüftungsschlitzen aufgeraute, endlose Schnauze. Auch das Korsett von poliertem Holz und weichem Leder im TVR kann entzücken.

Die Pflicht des Roadsters ist es, die Sinnesorgane des Menschen anzusprechen. Dazu gehören selbstverständlich die Ohren. Da stört es auch nicht, daß unter den voluminösen Hauben der drei gewöhnliche Massenkonfektion steckt. Hauptsache der Ton stimmt. In der entsprechenden Optimierung zeigen die beteiligten Hersteller denn auch großes Können: aggressives Röcheln mit metallischem V8-Stakkato, die charakteristische Note des TVR, dumpfes Grollen mit sattem Schlag, die typische Begleitmusik des Morgan. Der Donkervoort übt sich in schmetterndem Trompeten. Fürs Gewissen: Katalysator-Versionen der drei Modelle sind in Vorbereitung.

Fest steht schon jetzt, daß ein Roadster das Umwelt-Bewußtsein weit mehr schärft als gewöhnliche Autos. Direkter kann der Kontakt zur Natur



Donkervoort-Ausschnitt im 1+1-Format, ein maßgeschneidertes Plätzchen für egoistische Vergnügungen

Auch Radaufhängungen können schön sein. Freilegende Donkervoort-Technik, verchromt zum Vorzeigen



Enge Sitznischen vermitteln im TVR Geborgenheit, poliertes Holz und weiches Leder erinnern an englische Traditionen



beim Autofahren nicht sein, in guten wie in schlechten Zeiten. Denn das schützende Verdeck ist zumindest im Morgan und Donkervoort nur Trostpflaster. Allein der TVR wird geschlossen zu einer schon fast coupéartigen Behausung. Den intensiven Kontakt nach draußen unterstreichen die Fahreigenschaften. Gewiß, die Federungen des TVR und – überraschenderweise – des Donkervoort wollen die Insassen schonen und lassen sie über manche Bosheiten des Straßenprofils im unklaren. Doch die Kommunikation mit dem Fahrer bleibt eindeutig, die Rückmeldung durch Lenkrad und Sitzfläche deftig. Ganz ohne Filter arbeitet bekanntlich der Morgan, dessen ungeschminkte Botschaften den Fahrer auch bei gemächlicher Fahrt in Atem halten.

An dieser Stelle noch ein paar Bemerkungen zum Thema Sicherheit. Gängige Vorstellungen von aktiver und passiver Sicherheit stoßen bei Roadstern zweifellos ins Leere. Hier ist vor allem der Fahrer für die Sicherheit zuständig. Wiederrum ist es die Offenheit dieser Autos, die das Bewußtsein schärft. Roadster wiegen ihre Fahrer nicht in falscher Sicherheit. Sie verleiten zu angepaßter Geschwindigkeit und erziehen zur Konzentration – Roadster-Fahren als Verkehrserziehung. *Wolfgang König*

Der TVR verzichtet nicht auf modische Stilmerkmale. Doch der wohltemperierte Auspuffton ist zeitlos



Schöne Aussichten im Morgan. Brett mit Armaturen und Vorbau-Skulptur wecken Erwartungen, die nicht enttäuscht werden

Bekenntnis zum einfachen Leben. Türgriffe außen kosten beim Morgan Aufpreis. Man kann sie sich sparen





Fotos: H.D. Seufert

Der Unterschied zeigt sich schon beim Kauf. Wer beim BMW-Händler einen Z 1 bestellen möchte, wird freundlich befragt, welche von vier möglichen Farben es denn sein soll. Morgan-Importeur Harald Merz in Stuttgart erkundigt sich viel lieber, ob der Käufer seine fünf Sinne noch beisammen habe und ob seine Zahnplomben fest genug sitzen, um einem Plus 8 gewachsen zu sein.

Es ist schon viel geschrieben worden über die gnadenlose Härte des Morgan-Fahrwerks – Zeit also, hier einiges zurechtzurücken. Es mag an den besser gewordenen Straßen liegen, sicher auch daran, daß der Importeur die vorsintflutlichen Hebelstoßdämpfer an der starren Hinterachse gern durch Koni-Elemente ersetzt: So schlimm ist der Morgan gar

nicht. Klar, von der tatsächlich ungewöhnlich ausgewogenen Abstimmung des High Tech-Fahrwerks im Z 1, das gute Federung mit überragendem Potential in Kurven verbindet, bleibt er Lichtjahre entfernt. Aber er zeigt eine Härte, mit der man leben kann, und er vermag in Kurven eine Querschleunigung aufzubauen, die nicht von schlechten Eltern ist. Wahre Sportwagenqualitäten treten hier zutage, solange der Morgan nicht über Bodenwellen springen muß – verbunden freilich mit einer Herausforderung an den Fahrer, die dem Z 1 völlig fremd ist.

Denn der läßt sich mühelos wie ein Spielzeug fahren, mit erstklassigem Handling und wie von selbst einrastenden Gängen. Der Morgan-Fahrer leistet dagegen Arbeit. Die

Heute und Morgan

Lenkung erfordert einen gewissen Nachdruck, die Bremse schätzt ein kräftiges Männerbein, das Getriebe gibt sich knochentrocken. Morgan-Fahren, das ist Roadster-Genuß pur, fernab jeder Verweichlichung der modernen Zeit, ungefilterte Auseinandersetzung mit einer Technik, die eine Brücke schlägt zwischen Vergangenheit und Gegenwart.

Davor haben die Götter allerdings ein bißchen Schweiß gesetzt. Während der Z 1-Besitzer gerade 30 Sekunden braucht, um das perfekt sitzende Verdeck verschwinden zu lassen und die Türen elektrisch zu versenken, ist der Morgan-Fahrer gut drei Minuten mit zahlreichen Druckknöpfen beschäftigt, bis das primitive Roadster-Zelt verschwunden



**Zwei verschiedene Roadster-Welten:
der hochmoderne BMW Z 1 und der britische
Morgan, in seiner Grundkonzeption
über 50 Jahre alt. Ein unfairer Vergleich?**

ist und die seitlichen Steck-
scheiben abmontiert sind.

Das Ergebnis ist größtmög-
liche Offenheit – keineswegs
weniger als beim Z 1. Nur zieht
es dort noch mehr; bei voller
Öffnung erfassen die Luftwir-
bel auch Körperteile, die damit
gar nicht gerechnet haben.
Beim Morgan beschränkt sich
der Sturm im Cockpit auf zau-
sendes Zerren bis in Brustbein-

höhe, der Rest des Menschen
ruht geborgen in einer dunklen,
von Motor und Getriebe kräftig
aufgeheizten Höhle. Dafür
freilich bläst der Wind auch im
geschlossenen Morgan, es reg-
net bisweilen ein wenig, man-
che Morgan-Piloten wollen so-
gar schon Schneegestöber im
Innern beobachtet haben. Den
Z 1 läßt sogar eine Waschanla-
ge völlig unbeeindruckt.

Aber daß er perfekter ist,
besser verarbeitet und auch auf
schlechten Straßen fast frei von
Geräuschen und Verwindungs-
erscheinungen – das ist ja nun
wirklich keine Überraschung,
sondern ganz einfach Stand der
Technik. Schließlich entstand
der BMW in einer Entwick-
lungsabteilung, die viel größer
ist als die gesamte Morgan-Fa-
brik. Die ursprüngliche Primiti-
vität des Morgan hat natürlich
auch ihre Vorteile. Weil am
Plus 8 nicht mehr dran ist als
unbedingt notwendig, wiegt er
knapp über 900 Kilogramm –
ganz erheblich weniger also als
der BMW, der für ein so zierli-
ches Auto mit Kunststoffkaros-
serie sehr schwer geriet. Ein
Blick auf die Motorisierung –
acht Zylinder und 3,5 Liter
Hubraum beim Morgan, sechs
Zylinder und 2,5 Liter beim

BMW – läßt somit erahnen,
daß dem britischen Oldie zu-
mindest in dieser Beziehung
keine ernsthafte Konkurrenz
erwachsen ist. Der Z 1 läuft ge-
wiß nicht schlecht, dank seiner
aerodynamisch geglätteten Ka-
rosserie ist er im obersten Ge-
schwindigkeitsbereich sogar
überlegen. Der Morgan, der
vor der Erfindung des Begriffs
Design entstand und so aus-
sieht, weil – Originalton Peter
Morgan – ein echter Sportwa-
gen gar nicht anders aussehen
kann, rennt bei 200 km/h gegen
die Mauer des Luftwider-
stands, und daran haben auch
die Leistungssteigerungen ver-
gangener Jahre nichts geän-
dert.

Aber in der Beschleunigung
hat der BMW keine Chance.
Um dem mit unerbittlich zu-
packenden Antriebsrädern da-



Was die Motorisierung angeht,
ist dem britischen Oldie
mit dem BMW Z 1 keine ernsthafte
Konkurrenz erwachsen

Zeitgemäße
Ergonomie
und klare
Instrumente,
aber zu
wenig Ablagen
im Z 1



Der Morgan
verdeutlicht
in schöner
Schlichtheit
den Begriff
Armaturenbrett



voneilenden Morgan einigermaßen folgen zu können, muß der Z 1-Fahrer sehr konsequenten Umgang mit dem Gaspedal pflegen und den Motor ständig bis zum Drehzahlbegrenzer hochdrehen. Die Motorisierung wirkt nicht gerade souverän; bis 4000/min säuselt der BMW ohne rechten Biß vor sich hin. Darüber bemüht er sich redlich um den einem Sportwagen angemessenen Nachdruck, ohne aber für ein wirkliches Beschleunigungserlebnis zu sorgen. Samtig und zurückhaltend ist dieser Motor – zu friedfertig, um in einem Roadster Laune zu machen.

Während der Antrieb zu den wenigen Schwächen des Z 1 gehört, wird er beim Morgan zur Droge, die alle sonstigen Unzulänglichkeiten vergessen läßt. Der Leichtmetall-V8 von Rover, einst bei Buick in Amerika konstruiert, darf mittlerweile zu den gelungensten Beispielen britischen Motorenbaus gerechnet werden, wobei in diesem Zusammenhang seine hohe Zuverlässigkeit erwähnenswert ist, die dem Morgan eine Sonderstellung in der Ahnengalerie englischer Roadster beschert.

Ernsthaft belastet wird der V8 in dem leichten Zweisitzer ohnehin nicht. Ihn bis über 5000/min auszdrehen, erweist sich als völlig unnötig, weil er schon zwischen 1000 und 4000/min soviel Beschleunigungskraft entwickelt, daß un-

Zum Vergleich

Fahrzeugtyp	BMW Z 1	Morgan Plus 8
Motorbauart/Zylinderzahl	R/6 ¹⁾	V/8 ²⁾
Hubraum cm ³	2494	3532
Bohrung × Hub mm	84,0 × 75,0	88,9 × 71,1
Leistung kW (PS) bei 1/min	125(170) bei 5800	142(193) bei 5280
Max. Drehmoment Nm bei 1/min	222 bei 4300	298 bei 4000
Verdichtungsverhältnis	8,8:1	9,8:1
Gemischaubereitung	elektr. Kraftstoffeinspritzung Bosch Motronic	elektr. Kraftstoffeinspritzung Lucas-L
Kraftübertragung	Fünfganggetriebe Hinterradantrieb	
Leergewicht kg	1291	936
Zul. Gesamtgewicht kg	1460	1100
Beschleunigung in s		
0–60 km/h	3,7	3,2
0–80 km/h	5,7	4,8
0–100 km/h	8,4	6,8
0–120 km/h	11,8	9,6
0–140 km/h	16,2	12,6
0–160 km/h	23,0	17,9
0–180 km/h	31,7	26,7
1 km mit stehendem Start	29,4	27,6
Elastizität in s		
60–100 km/h (IV. Gang)	11,0	6,7
80–120 km/h (V. Gang)	16,7	10,8
Höchstgeschwindigkeit km/h	219	204
DIN-Verbrauch in L/100 km	Normal	Super
Bei 90 km/h (V. Gang)	6,7	9,5
Bei 120 km/h (V. Gang)	8,2	10,5
Stadtverkehr	12,6	11,0
Testverbrauch L/100 km	11,2	11,6
Innengeräusch in dB(A)		
Stand	55	60
Bei 50 km/h	66	72
Bei 100 km/h	77	81
Bei 130 km/h	81	85
Bei 160 km/h	86	90
Bei 180 km/h	89	93
Preis DM	85 000,-	62 950,-

¹⁾ R = Reihenmotor; ²⁾ V = V-Motor

wissenden Mitmenschen, die den Morgan für einen gut restaurierten Oldtimer halten, nur ein fassungsloses Kopfschütteln übrigbleibt.

Die klassische Tugend amerikanischer V8-Maschinen, bereits aus dem Drehzahlkeller soviel Schub zu liefern, daß man höchst selten zum Schaltknüppel greifen muß, ist hier in reichlichem Maß vorhanden. Sie bringt dem Morgan jene überlegene Gelassenheit, die den Hubraum als besten Freund des Menschen erkennen läßt.

Genüßliches Dahinrollen gelingt im Morgan deshalb besonders gut. Als Reizstoffe genügen der Blick über die lange Motorhaube mit ihren vielen Schlitzen und die dumpfe V8-Melodie des Motors; Gedanken an Kurvengrenzwerte verblassen zur Bedeutungslosigkeit. Beim Z 1 gehören sie fast schon zum Pflichtprogramm. Der Fortschritt der Neuzeit zeigt sich nun hauptsächlich darin, wie ein Wiesel durch Kurven zu wedeln, Tribut zu zollen der Kunst der Ingenieure, die im Buch der Bodenhaftung eine neue Seite aufgeschlagen haben.

Der Autor bedauert an dieser Stelle, die Kaufentscheidung nicht leichter gemacht zu haben. Aber leider ist da noch nicht einmal die Lieferfrist hilfreich: Zweieinhalb Jahre sind es beim Morgan, 30 Monate beim BMW Z 1. Götz Leyrer

Morgan Plus 8 (OLD!!!)

KIIIREINEN MOHIKAANI

Aina kymmeneen vuoteen vevyvät toimitusajat eivät lanista Morgan-ihailijoita ympäri maailmaa. Pieni, askeettiselta näyttävä roadster on, erityisesti tehokkaimpina +8-mallina, klassisten urheiluautojen jos ei aivan viimeinen niin kyllä kiireinen mohikaani.

Auringonlaskun värittämiä peltoaukeita vasten pieni avoauto on kuin konjakkikermakastikkeessa, yllellinen makuelämys herkkusuulle. Autolla ajaminen pelkäsi harrastukseksi on kuin pala epätodellista maailmaa. Hetki vailla kiirettä, murheita ja pelkoja.

Vihreät niityt näkyivät ilmeisesti Morgan-perheen unikuviissa jo 30-luvun lopulla. Tuolloin syntynyt auto tosin ei poikennut ajastaan, mutta Morganin pysyminen pääpiirteiltään ennallaan näihin ja varmasti tuleviinkin vuosiin asti on ollut radikaali linjanveto. Se on vaatinut uskoa siihen, etteivät kaikki maalaismaiset huku tehtaanpiippujen tai

asumalähiöiden alle. Aavistusta siitä että etenkin keski-ikäisissä miehissä itää nostalgia, joka ei petä virtaviivaisten ja nopeiden kilpailijoiden edessä.

Kaikki nämä arvailut Morganin tekijöiden aatteista saivat voimaa koeajolla, joka auton henkeen sopivasti suoritettiin pienen puutarhamaisen Sigtunan kaupungin kaduilla ja sivuteillä Ruotsissa. Miljöövalinta oli kaikilta osin oikeaan osunut; sivuteillä saatoin hyödyntää moottorin tehoa ja kaduilla liikenne oli niin hiljaista, että hitaalla vaihteistolla ja raskailla hallintalaitteilla selviydyin suurien ruuhkien aiheuttamiselta. Saatoin vain kuvitella millaisen sekamelskan olisin saanut aikaan vaikkapa Mannerheimintien aamuruuhkassa yrittäessäni epätoivoisesti ykkösvaihdetta päälle.

Haaveilu vihreistä niityistä saa vahvistusta Morganin epäkäytännöllisyyden lisäksi alustarakenteesta, joka soveltuu moitteetta ainoastaan hyvápintaisille teille. Etupyörien joustovara on pieni

ja jousitusteho siksi poikkeuksellisen vaatimaton.

Moottori kotisaarelta

Morgan Plus 8 esiteltiin syyskuussa 1968. Se palautti Morganin nopeaksi autoksi, aiemmat ja nykyisinkin tuotannossa olevat

TEKSTI JA KUVAT JORMA VÄLIMAA





Kuukauden auto



Autossa olevan kilven mukaan Morganin huipumallin tyyppimerkki on +8. Yhtä oikeita ovat kuitenkin ilmaisut Plus 8 ja brittitapaan Plus Eight.



nelosmoottoriset versiot ovat suoritusarvoiltaan korkeintaan tyydyttäviä. Plus 8 (jonka nimi voidaan yhtä oikeasti kirjoittaa +8 tai Plus Eight) tuo mieliin ehkä 50-luvun kultaiset vuodet, jolloin Morgan Plus 4:llä ajettiin Le Mansissa luokkavoittoon asti.

Omaa moottorituotantoa ei Morgan ole harjoittanut koskaan. Plus 8:aan Peter Morgan, tehtaan nykyinen johtaja, halusi ison V-moottorin AC Cobran tapaan. Apua hän haki ensiksi Amerikan puolelta, mutta keikeitavana ollut Buickin moottori sai väistyä Roverin V8-moottorin edessä. Morgan sai kunnian olla ensimmäinen urheiluauto, jossa kyseistä 3,5 litran voimanolaitetta käytettiin. Se mahtui helposti koriin kätköihin. Tosin Plus 8:n kori on vajaat 10 senttiä pikkumalleja leveämpi, mutta nopeasti katsoen koreissa ei keskinäisiä eroja huomaa.

Roverin kahdeksikkooa ruokitettiin kaasuttimin, ensin Strömbergin ja myöhemmin SU-kaasuttimin, vuoteen 1985, jolloin tehoa nostettiin Lucasin polttoaineen-suihkutuksella. Hevosvoimamäärä nousi 155:stä 190:een.

Toinen merkittävä parannus toteutettiin jo 1972, jolloin Roverin vaihdelaatikko korvasi vanhan Moss-vaihteiston. Viides pykälä siihen lisättiin viisi vuotta myöhemmin. Injection -mallin tulon yhteydessä vaihtui myös ohjausvaihte hammastangoksi.

Peltiä puun päälle

Morganin erikoisuus on muiden autotehtaiden jo kauan sitten unohtama coach-built puurunkorakenne. Korikehikko on tosiaan puuta, lattia jopa vaneeria, ja käsin taotut peltiosat on kiinnitetty sen päälle. Rakenteen osalta ratkaisu on hyvä ja pitää auton painon alhaisena (vain 830 kiloa), mutta kestävyytteen vanha





Morgan Plus 8

ratkaisu tuo ongelmia. Lukunottamatta lämpimiä maita on Morgan ilmastollisille oikeille al-
tis. Puu kerää herkästi kosteutta
itseensä ja aiheuttaa korille ruo-
stumisriskin monissa kohdissa.
Morgan onkin laskettava aidoksi
harrasteautoksi, melkein pä kuin
veneeksi, jolle on tehtävä vuosit-
tainen kevätkunnostus. Puuosien
terveys on syytä tarkistaa usein ja
uusia vahingoittumaan alkaneet
kohdat.

Tavanomaisen peltikorin vaiht-
toehdoksi tehdas on vuodesta
1975 lähtien tarjonnut alumiini-
koria, jossa vain konepeitto (tai
peitot) on tavallista peltiä. Eri-
koiskorin lisähinta on Suomessa
6.000 markkaa. Summa on var-
sin kohtuullinen, koska alumiini
poistaa ruostumisriskin. Hoita-
matta sekään ei silti ole ikuinen.

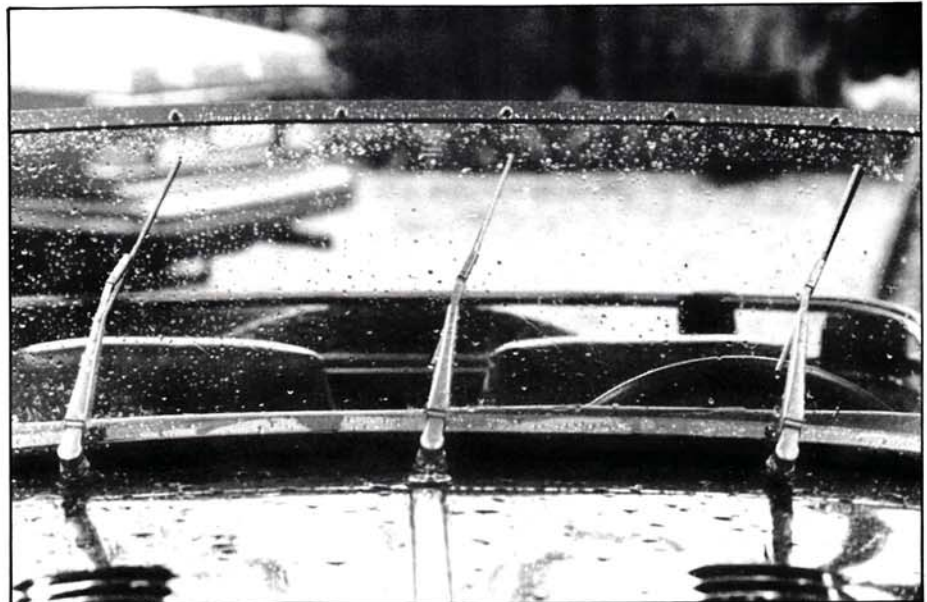
Morganin alusta on perin kon-
servatiivinen. Jo mainitusta ly-
hytliikkeisestä eturipustuksesta
käytetään nimitystä Morgan
"liukutangot". Ne muodostuvat
kahdesta päällekkäin ladotusta
kierrejousesta. Rakenteen ainoa
solvä etu on pyöräkulmien pysy-
minen samana. Kielteisiä piirtei-
tä vaillinaisen jouston lisäksi on
osien nopea kuluminen. Taka-
päässä Morgan käyttää lehtijou-
sitettua jäykkää akselia. Sekin
on taipuvainen pompotteluun ja
renkaiden otteen irtoamiseen
tiestä vähänkin vaativissa olo-
suhteissa. Nopeassa ajossa hyvill-
lä teillä alusta toimii hyvin, mut-
ta ei muissa tilanteissa.

Päivän- paisteeseen

Plus 8:n kojelauta on perinteitä
vaaliva ja siksi varsin vaatimat-
ton. Suora paneeli on syväty
keskeltä mittareiden ja hallinta-



Ajattoman tyylin merkkejä ovat pyöreälinjainen etusäleikkö ja pyöreät valonheittimet.



Tuulilasi on niin matala, että pyyhkijöitä tarvitaan kolme.

laitteiden upotusta varten. No-
peusmittari on kuljettajasta kau-
impana. Sen sijaan kierrosteno-
soitin on upotettu suoraan kul-
jettajan eteen. Virtalukko on et-
sittävä vanhanaikaisesti kojelaud-
dan alta.

Morganin ovet ovat pienet ja
tyylikkäästi yläosasta nahalla
verhoillut. Kiinteitä ikkunoita ei
ole vaan kehystetyt pleksit on
kiinnitettävä erikseen sufletin
ylösnoston yhteydessä. Sisään
autoon pääsee suhteellisen vai-
vattomasti, mutta täysimittaisen
miehen on hivenen notkistettava
jalkojaan pystyn ohjauspyörän
alle.

Suomeen tuotavissa autoissa

on nahkaverhoilu vakiona. Tuoli
itsessään on loivasti muotoiltu,
mutta pitkät istuinosat antavat
poikkeuksellisen hyvän tuen reisil-
le. Ajoasento on vanhahtava,
kun ohjauspyörä tulee lähelle
kuljettajaa. Polkimet ovat lähel-
kään toisiaan matalan kojelauden
alla näkymättömissä. Kauaksi
kojelaudan alle karkaa myös
vaihteenvalitsin, jota toivoisi pa-
rikymmentä senttiä taaemmaksi.

Näkyvyys on hyvä, vaikka
Morganissa istutaan matalalla.
Tuulilasi on juuri ja juuri niin
korkea, että se ohjaa ilman kul-
jettajan pään yli. Se on niin pit-
kämäinen, että kurailmoilla sen
puhtaanapitoon tarvitaan kolme

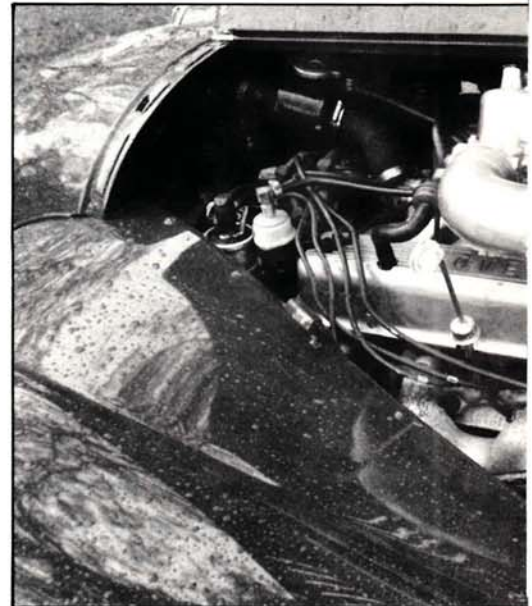


Kojelauta on pelkistetty ja ohjaamon tilat juuri ja juuri niin suuret, että iso mies sinne jotenkin mahtuu.



Morganin sivulasit ovat edelleen irtonaiset. Niitä harvoin kuljetetaan edes mukana, vaan ne odottavat sädepäiviä autotallissa.

Roverin V8 mahtuu hyvin kaksiosaisen konepeiton alle. Kuvassa on vanha kaasutinverso. Nykyisessä Injection-mallissa on tehoa 190 hevosvoimaa.



Morgan Plus 8

pyyhinsulkaa.

Koeajon tein ilman kuomua, vaikka suurimman osan aikaa taivaalta tippui vettä. Ohjaamon suojaamiseksi asensin kuitenkin tonneau cover -puolipeitteen paikolleen. Tästä seurasi se ikävä kokemus, että peitteen päälle kasautunut vesi lensi silmilleni vastaantulevien rekkojen aiheuttamista ilmavirroista. Samoin tuulilasiin virtaava vesi vaikeutti näkyvyyttä. Pyyhkijöistä ei ollut apua, koska vesi valui ikkunan sisäpuolella!

Puikkelehtiminen Sigtunan kapeilla kujilla osoittautui rasakaaksi ajotouhuksi. Ratinpyöritystä ja vaihtamista ykkösen ja

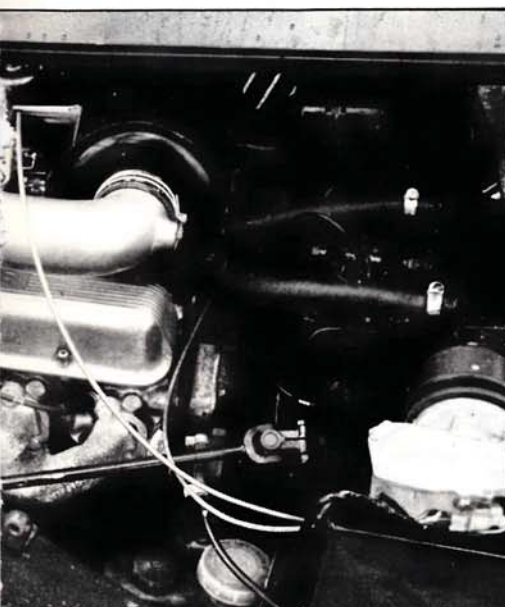
kakkosen välillä vaatineet tiukat kadunkulmat olivat ikäviä, joten en viipynyt taajamassa yhtään kauempaa kuin pakolliset kuviot vaativat. Suoran tien auetessa eteeni saatoin painaa kaasua reilusti ja päästä nauttimaan Morganin parhaista piirteistä. Suorituskyvystä, nopeasta ohjauksesta ja liikkumisen vapauden tunteesta. Morgan on tehty tällaisia tilanteita varten, erityisesti kaunin kesäilman aikana. Silloin niin kuljettaja kuin vieressäistujakin voivat nauttia olostaan.

Puolessa vuodessa omistajaksi

Morganeita tuotetaan vain kolmen auton päivävuuhdilla. Siksi useissa vientimaissa sitä joutuu jonottamaan 5 - 10 vuotta. Tuo-

KILPAILIJAT

	Morgan Plus 8	Lotus Excel	Porsche 911 Cabriolet	TVR 350i Cabriolet
Moottori	V8	4-rivi	6-boxer	V8
Iskutilavuus ksm	3528	2174	3154	3528
Teho hv	190	182	231	190
Huippunopeus	210	215	245	230
Kiihtyvyys				
0 — 100 km/h s	5,4	6,9	6,2	6,6
Hinta mk	315.000	385.000	575.000	—
Koeajo SC n:o	8/87	4/86	4/86	4/86



tanto on myyty vuosiksi eteenpäin, mutta siitä huolimatta autoin voi Suomessa saada jopa puolen vuoden jonotuksella. Syynä moiseen joustamiseen tehtaan taholta on jalansijan saaminen kylmässä maassamme. Tosin toistaiseksi yhtään Plus 8:aa ei Suomeen ole myyty. Morgania mahantuova Besmec Ky on tehnyt kaupat kuitenkin Ford-moottorisesta 4/4 -versiosta.

Plus 8:n 315.000 markkan hinna on luonnehdittu kohtuulliseksi. Summa toki on suuri harasteautosta, mutta toisessa vaakakupissa painaa elävän legendan maine, hyvä varustelu ja erinomainen suorituskyky. Plus 8 on nopea urheiluauto, sillä pienen painonsa ansiosta se ehtii nollasta sataan vain 5,4 sekunnissa. Tehtaan ilmoittama huippunopeus on 210 km/h. ●



SuperCar Fakta

Morgan Plus 8 Injection

Tyyppi: 2-paikkainen roadster, moottori edessä pitkittäin, takaveto
Hinta 315.000 mk
Maahantuojat: Besmec Ky Espoo, puh. 90-4522262

Moottori

Rakenne: nestejäähdytteinen V8, 16 venttiiliä, nokka-akseli sylinteriryhmässä
Sylinterimitat: 89×71 mm
Iskutilavuus: 3528 ksm
Puristussuhde: 9,3
Polttoainejärjestelmä: Lucas suorasuihkutus
Teho: 142 kW/190 hv/5200 rpm
Vääntömomentti: 290/29,6 kpm/4000 rpm

Voimansiirto

Vaihteisto: 5-nopeuksinen, käsivalintainen

Jousitus

Edessä: Morgan "liukutangot"

Takana: jäykkä akseli, lehtijouset

Ohjaus

Rakenne: hammastanko
Ohjauspyörän kierroksia: 2,5

Jarrut

Edessä ja takana: levyjarrut

Vanteet ja renkaat

Vannekoko: 6,5×15
Rengaskoko: 205/60 VR 15

Mitat ja paino

Pituus: 3960 mm
Leveys: 1600 mm
Korkeus: 1320 mm
Raideleveys edessä/takana: 1320/1350 mm
Akseliväli: 2490 mm
Omapaino: 828 kg

Suorituskyky

Kiihtyvyys 0 — 100 km/h: 5,6 s
Huippunopeus: 210 km/h

AUTOKORISARJAT SUORAAN MAAHANTUOJALTA EDULLISESTI



AUTORAKENNESARJAT

Kit Cars

KUVANSINTIE 2 VARKAUS P. 972-162499

Himmel hilf

Begegnungen mit dem Roadster,
der offensten Form des Offenfahrens.

Die Schwaben sagen „Roddschr“,
aber auch sie wissen nicht immer,
was damit eigentlich gemeint ist. Der
Roadster ist nämlich nicht einfach
nur ein Cabrio mit zünftigem Namen,
sondern ein ganz eigenständiges

Fotos: Moesch



Morgan und Co

offenes Auto. Wenn man so will, vertritt er den Gedanken des Offenfahrens am konsequentesten, indem er die Funktion des Verdecks auf das absolute Mindestmaß beschränkt. Der Roadster ist Cabrio pur – ohne Zugeständnisse an Komfort oder Sicherheit.

In der Terminologie für offene Automobile steht der Roadster für ein Auto mit ungefülltem Verdeck, das im Bedarfsfall vollkommen hinter den Sitzen verschwindet. Tief ausgeschnittene Türen und Steckfenster sind ebenfalls Charakteristika des klassischen Roadsters, den es in dieser urtümlichen Form nach dem Kriege aus deutscher Fabrikation überhaupt nicht gab. Zu Recht moniert Hans W. Mayer in seinem Buch über deutsche Cabrios, daß der Begriff häufig falsch verwendet wurde. So war der Mercedes 300 SL in der strengen Offenhierarchie kein Roadster, sondern eher ein Spider – ebenfalls mit einem ungefülltem Verdeck zwar, aber auch mit Kurbelventilern.

Keinerlei Komfort-Zugeständnisse also beim Roadster, ganz ähnlich wie beim Speedster, dessen Verdeck nur für akute Notfälle gedacht ist und der ebenfalls über Steckfenster verfügt. In der Auto-Landschaft der Vergangenheit blieb er, mit dem Styling-Merkmal der abgeflachten Windschutzscheibe, nahezu ebenso einmalig wie in der Gegenwart. Der einzige Speedster von Rang war der Porsche Speedster auf der Basis des berühmten 365-Coupés – in den fünfziger Jahren als preiswertes Exportmodell für Amerika zu Ehren gekommen, heute da wie in der alten Welt eine gesuchte und teuer bezahlte Rarität.

Das klassische Roadster-Land hieß und heißt noch England. Die Roadster von MG, Triumph oder Morgan haben den Gedanken vom besonders offenen Offenfahren in einprägsamster Weise verkörpert, und

nebenbei fanden die Roadster-begeisterten Engländer sogar noch Zeit, dies kompromißlose Wind- und Wetter-Vergnügen auch auf viersitzige Fahrzeuge auszudehnen. Während es im Roadster nur vorne zieht, sind im Tourer auch auf den Rücksitzen mühelos Luftströmungen nachzuweisen. Was für Na-

Nur bei Morgan ist alle Roadster-Vergangenheit noch Gegenwart. Neben den klassischen Zweisitzern der britischen Marke aus Malvern Link gibt es auch noch den viersitzigen Tourer, selten verlangt und ausschließlich mit Vierzylindermotor lieferbar. MG, Austin-Healey und Froschaugen-Sprite machten, jeder für sich, ein Stück Roadster-Geschichte. Der Sprite, zu Lebzeiten zumindest auf dem deutschen Markt nicht sonderlich beliebt, ist der historische Beweis, daß Roadster-Gefühle auch mit 46 PS möglich sind

men; der eine duftet nach großer Reise, Fernweh und gut verpackter Familie, die schon den Undichtheiten eines Sunbeam-Tourers von 1923 mit sorgfältiger Verpackung zu trotzen sucht. Und dann der Roadster; er klingt ganz so, wie er heißt, nach Straße, nach Fahr-Erlebnis.

Die bewußt gewählte Primitivität bei dieser Art Auto ist dabei mehr als ein Stilmittel. Der Roadster-Gedanke bringt das Thema Offenfahren sozusagen auf den Punkt und ist damit gleichzeitig ein Gegenpol zum Komfortangebot des üblichen Automobils, auch des modernen Cabrios – mit seiner Zwei-



Morgan Plus 4/4



MG A



Austin-Healey 100/6

▽ Austin-Healey Sprite



und Viertürigkeit, seinem – laut Definition – hermetisch abschließenden Polsterverdeck und dem daraus meist resultierenden Buckel in zusammengefaltetem Zustand.

Beim Roadster schließt nichts dicht, und das Besondere an ihm ist: Man nimmt es nicht

übel. Die öffentlich praktizierte Abkehr von den gemeinen automobilen Wertmaßstäben ist brachial und verlangt totale Zuneigung und eine gewisse Leidenschaft. Wer dauerhaft Roadster fährt, kann ein harter Mann sein. Er kann es aber auch nur sein wollen.

Dem offensichtlich begrenzten Kreis der Offenauto-Masochisten steht auch nur ein sehr begrenztes Angebot gegenüber. Als eine Art Dauerwurst ist in diesem Zusammenhang der Morgan Plus 8 zu nennen, 1970 erstmals in die Bundesrepublik importiert und seither immer noch besser verkäuflich als lie-

ferbar. Die Neuauflage des legendären AC Cobra namens AC Mark IV stammt ebenfalls aus England und ist mit dem original 5,7 Liter-V8 ein Beschleunigungswunder (Testbericht in Heft 25/1983). In 4,9 Sekunden auf 100 – da weiß man endlich was es bringt, das gefütterte Verdeck zu Hause zu lassen. ▷



Porsche Speedster

▽ AC Mark IV



Der Porsche Speedster erschien 1954 und unterschied sich vom Cabrio durch niedrigere Türen, eine kleinere Windschutzscheibe, Steckfenster und Notverdeck. Sein Ende kam 1958. Der AC Mark IV, Nachbau des legendären Cobra, hebt das Roadster-Vergnügen in die Preisregion jenseits von 150 000 Mark

Morgan und Co

Und dann gibt es hier noch den Donkervoort Super 8, dessen Ähnlichkeit mit dem Cobra nicht nur im Roadster-Stil besteht. Auch dieses Auto ist die Nachempfindung eines klingenden Vorbildes – in diesem Falle des alten Lotus Super Seven.

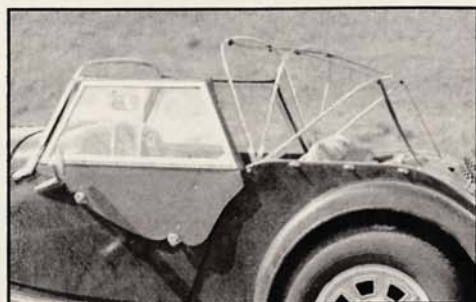
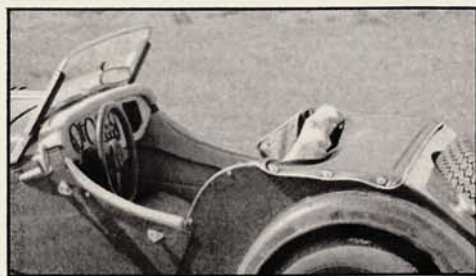
Genau 1,07 Meter mißt der Donkervoort in der Höhe, und auch deshalb findet man den Begriff Roadster gut gewählt. Der Fahrer sitzt nur wenige Zentimeter über der Straße, und bis es so weit ist, hat er ausreichend Gelgenheit, über die Kunst des Weglassens beim Automobil nachzudenken. Türen gibt es nicht, sondern nur klappbare Lappen, das Verdeck besteht aus der angedrohten dünnen Plane, und wer im Regen fährt, bekommt durch die vielfältigen Ritzen nicht nur Luft, sondern auch Wasser verstreicht.

Nun, vom Motorrad her ist man noch Schlimmeres gewohnt, da muß immerhin das Roadster-Verdeck am Leibe getragen werden, aber zweifellos ist es – Enduros mit abnormer Sitzhöhe eingeschlossen – leichter zu besteigen. Beim Donkervoort wird dies zum rituellen Vorgang nach genau festgelegten Spielregeln: erst der rechte Fuß, dann ein Stückchen vom ganzen Körper, schließlich der linke Fuß. Wer Pech hat, klemmt ihn zwischen Seiten-

wand und Lederlenkrad fest und geht so einem ungewissen Schicksal entgegen. Falls die Rettung mit den eigenen Händen gelingt, folgt die Belohnung umgehend. Man sitzt sehr profiliert in der engen Sitzschale, beobachtet den Verkehr aus der gerne bei weniger aufregenden Anlässen zitierten Froschperspektive, sieht Kotflügel

und Lampen vor sich mit dem Wind kämpfen und wird, zusammengekauert hinter der winzigen Windschutzscheibe, zum Teil der Maschinerie.

Die Heizung ist nur ganz grob regelbar; man kann wählen zwischen ganz durchgebratenen Beinen und dem ja auch im Restaurant wünschbaren



Im Gegensatz zum Cabrio sind Öffnen und Schließen des Roadster-Verdecks mit Mühen und größerem Zeitaufwand verbunden. Geübte Morgan-Fahrer schließen das Zelt in sieben Minuten, ohne daß dies einen Bestwert markierte. Auch aus dem Guinness-Buch der Rekorde geht nicht hervor, wo die Grenze liegt

à point, und dazu gibt es gelegentlich, auch wenn der Straßenbelag nichts Böses erahnen läßt, einen Tritt von der hinteren Starrachse. Er läßt alle Überlegungen, ob dieses Auto vielleicht doch auf längeren Strecken eingesetzt werden könnte, im Keime ersticken.

Das archaische Fahrerlebnis im Roadster à la Donkervoort mit Zug, Tritt und Gebrüll aus zwei Liter Hubraum erscheint nicht nur als wohl konsequenteste Abkehr von allen anderen verweichlichenden Formen des Autofahrens, sondern erinnert auch daran, daß Roadster ehemals Autos für die weniger Begüterten waren. Die Schlichtheit ihres Aufbaus schlug sich auch in der Preisliste nieder. Mitte der fünfziger Jahre kostete etwa ein Jaguar XK 140 als Roadster nur 18 975 Mark, während der Preis der Coupé-Version auf knapp über 20 000 Mark stieg. Und auch beim legendären Jaguar E zeigte das Preisgefälle zwischen Roadster (26 000 Mark anfang der sechziger Jahre) und Coupé (27 000 Mark), daß einst nicht Sportlichkeit oder Abhärtung Vater des Roadster-Gedankens waren, sondern schlicht und einfach ein günstiger Preis.

Von diesen Ursprüngen ist heute nichts mehr zu spüren, auch nicht beim Morgan, dem wohl bekanntesten Roadster auf dem deutschen Markt. Abgesehen davon, daß es ihn gar nicht als Coupé gibt, steht er mit seinen Minimal-Türchen, den Steckfenstern und dem Zweimann-Zelt darüber in V8-Version mit knapp 60 000 Mark in der Preisliste. Nichts für Sparer und Rechner also, alles aber immer noch für die Genießer des Fahrtwindes, für die Eitlen oder auch für die Zweifler am automobilen Fortschritt. Denn das Vergnügen des Fahrens ist unabhängig von technischer Perfektion. Das harte, enge, zugige Automobil mit nur zwei Sitzen, keinem Kofferraum und noch weniger c_w -Wert rührt die Herzen. Der Roadster ist kompromißlos; nirgendwo sonst wirkt das Auto so mobil.

Klaus Westrup



An sich ist die Entscheidung für dieses Auto ganz einfach. „Einen Morgan muß man akzeptieren wie den Himalaya. Andernfalls sollte man sich lieber mit angenehmeren Dingen beschäftigen, Schmetterlinge sammeln zum Beispiel.“ Diesem Fazit eines renommierten amerikanischen Autotesters ist eigentlich nichts hinzuzufügen, außer, daß es den Nagel voll auf den Kopf trifft.

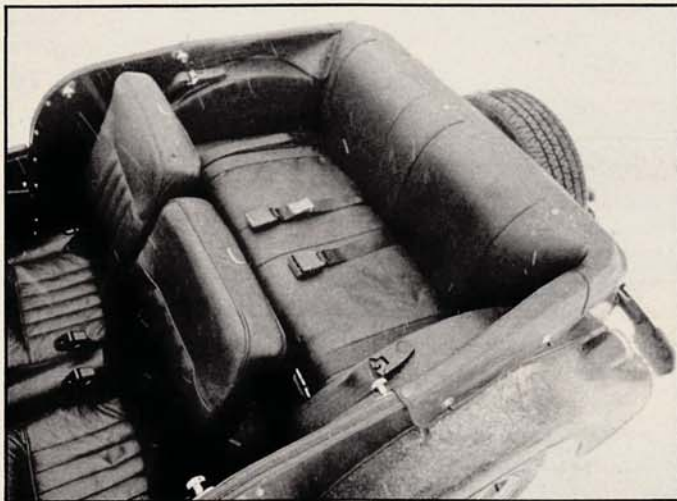
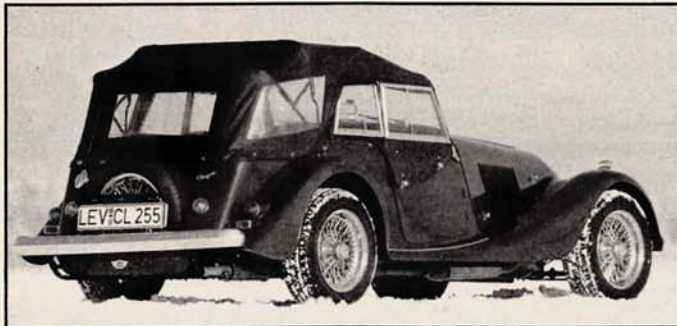
Im Grunde könnte es der Autor sogar bei diesem Kernsatz bewenden lassen und nach Hause gehen. Ein Morgan ist. Allein das wird dem echten Morgan-Mann genügen. Aber natürlich läßt sich die berechnete Forderung der Leser und Chefredakteure, wonach ein Test auch eine sachliche Beurteilung zu sein habe, nicht vom Tisch wischen. Hier deshalb ein weiterer Versuch, zu verstehen, was dieses Auto kann und wo es im sozialen Gefüge hingehört.

Der Grund für diesen erneuten Anlauf ist im übrigen höchst aktuell. Es handelt sich um ein völlig neues Modell, das zweite schon in dichter Folge. Nachdem die Morgan-Werke im vergangenen Jahr den neuen Plus 8 Vitesse herausbrachten, werfen sie jetzt den neuen Plus 4 auf den Markt – ein sicheres Indiz, daß die renommierte Marke aus Worcestershire auch in Zukunft im harten Konkurrenzkampf der Autoindustrie ein gewichtiges Wort mitzureden gedenkt. Angesiedelt zwischen dem Morgan 4/4 und dem großen Plus 8 repräsentiert der Plus 4 ab sofort die neue Mittelklasse der Modellpalette.

Wie bei Morgan üblich, knüpft auch hier das Styling wieder harmonisch an die Linie der übrigen Produkte an. Wer genauer hinschaut, wird bemerken, daß es identisch ist. Firmenchef Peter Morgan konzentriert sich erfahrungsgemäß vor allem auf die technische Weiterentwicklung seiner Autos. Gerade der neue Plus bietet in dieser Beziehung eine Fülle von Überraschungen. So wird der aufmerksame Beobachter eine

Zwei plus zwei

Test Morgan Plus 4 Fourseater Mehr Leistung, mehr Technik, mehr Sitze: Morgan stockt auf.



Fotos: Seufert

neue, leichtgängigere Kugelumlauf-Lenkung finden. Die in 17jähriger Arbeit entwickelte und erstmals im Plus 8 Vitesse gezeigte Zahnstangenlenkung bleibt den größeren Modellen vorbehalten – aus Kostengründen.

Damit nicht genug: Zur neuen Fahrwerkskomponente kommt beim Plus 4 modernste Antriebstechnik. In der Tat bietet ein Blick unter die zweigeteilte Motorhaube umwerfend Neues: einen Achtventiler-Vierzylinder mit zwei obenliegenden Nockenwellen, Kennfeldzündung, elektronischer Einspritzung und Schubabschaltung. Hie und da taucht die Aufschrift Magneti Marelli oder Fiat auf, was bei allem den Briten eigenen schwarzen Humor in diesem Fall keineswegs scherzhaft gemeint ist. Vorurteile gegen-

über einer solchen Invasion italienischer Technik in diesem britischsten aller britischen Autos sind allenfalls auf emotionaler Ebene berechtigt. Warum sollte sich ein Vierzylindermotor eigentlich besser für den Morgan eignen, nur weil er wie bisher von Ford stammt?

Die Entscheidung, Technik preiswert in Italien zu kaufen, geht durchaus in Ordnung. Zwei Liter Hubraum und 122 PS (90 kW) kosten bei Fiat offenbar deutlich weniger als zu Hause im Ford-Laden. Der neuen Maschine ist der Einsatz im Sportwagen außerdem keineswegs fremd. Zuletzt arbeitete sie im Fiat Spidereuropa.

Wer beim Anblick des Testwagens eine merkwürdige Karosserie-Mutation auszumachen glaubt, liegt übrigens durchaus

richtig. Tatsächlich ist der Leser Zeuge einer Weltpremiere. Was er vor sich sieht, ist der erste Test eines viersitzigen Morgan. Ganz neu ist diese Karosserie-Variante indessen nicht. Es gibt sie bereits seit 47 Jahren. Bisher aber wagte sie noch niemand zu testen.

Dabei scheint doch der Viersitzer von besonderem Reiz. Muß sich der Morgan-Fahrer im herkömmlichen Zweisitzer wegen

Viersitzer im Winter: Raumangebot auch hinten, viel Bewegungsfreiheit, Fondpassagiere bringen Schubkraft ins Heck

dürftiger Mitfahrgelegenheit zwangsläufig den Vorwurf von Egoismus gefallen lassen, steht hier einer Nutzung für Gruppenreisen oder Familienausflüge nichts im Weg. Die vier Sitzplätze unter freiem Himmel wirken sogar ausgesprochen einladend. Um Platz für die Rücksitzbank zu schaffen, erhält der Viersitzer ein Steilheck mit senkrecht stehendem Ersatzrad. Der Erfolg: 90 Millimeter Normknieraum, 420 Millimeter Sitztiefe, unendlich viel Kopfraum. Zusammen genommen müßte das dem Morgan in einem Vergleichstest zweifellos die volle Punktzahl einbringen.

Bei geschlossenem Verdeck sind allerdings gewisse Abstriche hinzunehmen. Schließlich handelt es sich bei diesem Karosserie-Konzept um einen sogenannten Tourer – ein viersitziger Roadster also, dessen einzig wahre Form bekanntlich die offene Form ist. Unter dem als Notbehelf vorgesehenen Zelt-dach kommt deshalb höchstens vorne Gemütlichkeit auf. Hinten droht Klaustrophobie, was auch damit zusammenhängt, daß an einen normal verlaufenden Ein- und Ausstieg nicht zu denken ist. Der einfachste Weg aus dem Fond des Morgan führt nach oben, nicht jedoch ohne zuvor den Wetterschutz zu entfernen.

Der zuletzt genannte Punkt ist weniger banal, als er zunächst wirkt. Denn erfahrungsgemäß



Test Morgan Plus 4

suchen die Herrschaften im Morgan-Fond auch unterwegs gerne spontan das Weite. Die Ursache liegt in einer Morgantypischen Lösung des Zuladungsproblems. In Anbetracht der höheren Hecklast erhält der Viersitzer ein etwas strafferes Fahrwerk in Form zweier zusätzlicher Blätter in den hinteren Blattfeder-Paketen. Hinzu kommt der Umstand, daß die Fondpassagiere hoch über der Hinterachse Platz nehmen dürfen. Beides zusammen garantiert intensiven Kontakt mit der Umwelt. Bei schneller Fahrt empfiehlt sich jedoch das Anlegen der serienmäßigen Rückhaltegurte, vorbeugend ergänzt durch eine Fliegerbrille.

Die Nutzung des Viersitzers als Familienkutsche setzt zweifellos spartanische Erziehungs-ideale voraus, wobei die prügelharte Federung auch die

Vornesitzenden nicht ungeschoren davonkommen läßt. Wo ein zweisitziger Morgan Bodenebenenheiten noch überrollt, eckt der Viersitzer bereits an. Größere Wellen in der Fahrbahn münden in Hell Driver-verdächtige Weitsprünge. Dabei ist es nicht der Flug, der einen normalen Menschen schafft. Es ist die Landung.

Mehr als eine Landung pro Tag können sich – anatomisch betrachtet – nur fortgeschrittene Morganeers leisten.

Einige Worte noch zur ausländischen Motorisierung. Die Fiat-Maschine erweist sich auch in der Praxis durchaus als adäquate Kraftquelle. Schließlich lehnen sich hier 122 PS gegen

nur 891 Kilogramm. In Verbindung mit einer knackigen Fünfgang-Schaltung und der satten Traktion der Antriebsräder lassen sich Fahrleistungen realisieren, die dem sportlichen Anspruch des Morgan gerecht werden. Die Meßwerte für den noch taufrischen Testwagen sind dabei sicher nicht das letzte Wort. Ein Plus 4 im Ge-



Technische Daten und Meßwerte

Morgan Plus 4

MOTOR

Wassergekühlter Vierzylinder-Reihenmotor vorn längs, fünffach gelagerte Kurbelwelle, zwei oberliegende Nockenwellen (Zahnriemenantrieb), Ventile über Tassenstößel betätigt, thermostatisch gesteuerter elektrischer Kühlerventilator, elektronische Kraftstoffeinspritzung (Bosch L-Jetronic).

Leistung 90 kW (122 PS) bei 5300/min, spezifische Leistung 45,1 kW/L (61,2 PS/L), Hubraum 1995 cm³, Bohrung x Hub 84,0 x 90,0 mm, Verdichtungsverhältnis 8,9:1, maximales Drehmoment 175 Nm bei 3500/min, mittlere Kolbengeschwindigkeit bei Nenndrehzahl 15,9 m/s.

KRAFTÜBERTRAGUNG

Hinterradantrieb, vollsynchronisiertes Fünfganggetriebe, mechanisch betätigte Einscheiben-Trockenkupplung.

KAROSSERIE

UND FAHRWERK

Viersitziges Cabriolet mit zwei Türchen, Kastenrahmen mit Kreuzverstrebung.

Vorn Einzelradaufhängung mit senkrechten Führungsrohren, Schraubenfedern, hydraulische Teleskopstoßdämpfer, hinten Starrachse mit Längsblattfedern, Kolbenstoßdämpfer,

Schnecken-Rollenlenkung, hydraulische Zweikreisbremse mit Servounterstützung, vorn Scheiben-, hinten Trommelbremsen, Feststellbremse auf die Hinterräder wirkend. Felgenreife 6 J x 15, Reifengröße 195/60 VR 15.

ABMESSUNGEN UND GEWICHTE

Radstand 2440 mm, Spur vorn/hinten 1190/1240 mm, Außenmaße 3890 x 1510 x 1270 mm, Innenbreite vorn/hinten 1150/940 mm, Innenhöhe vorn/hinten 950/720 mm, Sitztiefe vorn/hinten 440/420 mm, Knickmaß 890-1060 mm, Normknieraum 90 mm, Sitzraum 490-650 mm, Wendekreis rechts/links 10,6/11,5 m, 3 Lenkradumdrehungen, Lenkraddurchmesser 360 mm, Tankinhalt 39 L, Leergewicht 891 kg, Gewichtsverteilung vorn/hinten 44,9/55,1%, zulässiges Gesamtgewicht 1100 kg, Zuladung 209 kg, Personenindexzahl 2,5.

FAHRLEISTUNGEN

Höchstgeschwindigkeit (Drehzahl 5600/min, V. Gang) 177 km/h

Beschleunigung	
0- 60 km/h	4,3 s
0- 80 km/h	6,7 s
0-100 km/h	10,0 s
0-120 km/h	14,7 s
0-140 km/h	22,7 s

400 m mit steh. Start	17,0 s
1 km mit steh. Start	32,2 s

Elastizität	
40-100 km/h (IV. Gang)	14,8 s
60-120 km/h (V. Gang)	22,3 s

Tachometerabweichung

Anzeige	effektiv
50 km/h	46 km/h
100 km/h	93 km/h
130 km/h	121 km/h
140 km/h	130 km/h
160 km/h	150 km/h
Kilometerzählerabweichung	+1,2%

INNENGERÄUSCH

Bei 50 km/h	74 dB(A)
Bei 100 km/h	85 dB(A)
Bei 130 km/h	92 dB(A)
Bei 140 km/h	96 dB(A)
Bei 160 km/h	100 dB(A)

KRAFTSTOFFVERBRAUCH

Verbrauchswerte im Test	
	in L/100 km
Minimalverbrauch	9,4
Maximalverbrauch	12,6
Testverbrauch	10,7
Kraftstoffart	Super

WARTUNG

Inspektion	alle 10 000 km
Ölwechsel	alle 10 000 km

PREIS

Morgan Plus 4 DM 50 700,-

Jetzt mit Leistung aus Italien: o sole mio?

wand des leichteren Zweisitzers und auf der Höhe seiner Leistung dürfte in Höchstgeschwindigkeit und Beschleunigung deutlich mehr zu bieten haben. Dennoch: Motorische Faszination bleibt nach wie vor Sache des ausschließlich zweisitziger lieferbaren, aber achtzylindrigen Plus 8.

Der Plus 4 ist übrigens keine Erfindung des Jahres 1985, sondern eine Wiederauferstehung. Plus 4-Varianten entstanden bereits in den fünfziger und sechziger Jahren, damals allerdings mit einheimischen Triumph-Motoren. Ein Auszug aus einem zeitgenössischen Plus 4-Test des US-Fachblatts „Car and Driver“: „Unser Technik-Redakteur erledigte die Beschleunigungsmessungen, stieg aus und fuhr mit dem Zug zurück. Die arme Seele – es ist doch alles nur eine Frage der Einstellung.“ So gesehen ist der neue Plus 4 ganz der alte.

Wolfgang König

Rosa Zeiten

In Stuttgart sorgt ein ungewöhnlich lackierter Morgan für Gesprächsstoff.

Auf Schnee ist es besonders toll“, sagt Harald Merz und kommentiert: „Meiner Frau gefällt das halt.“

Was der schwäbische Automobilhändler mit dem Hang zum Britischen – er verkauft unter anderem Morgan-, Aston Martin- und Rolls-Royce-Wagen – damit meint, treibt eingefleisch-

nicht mehr so schlimm“ hinreißen läßt.

Um diesen einmaligen und in der offiziellen Farbkarte von Morgan nicht vorgesehenen Ton ab Werk zu bekommen, waren persönliche Gespräche mit der Führungsspitze des in der Grafschaft Worcester ansässigen Traditionsunternehmens

notwendig. Und erst, nachdem der Verkaufsleiter vergeblich auf den Umstand verwiesen hatte, daß solchermaßen lackierte Autos in London nur von „bad girls“ bevorzugt würden, wurde der Auftrag angenommen. Verwirrung löste er noch genügend aus: Der in Ehren ergraute Cheflackierer schützte angeblich beim Sprühen die Augen mit einer Sonnenbrille, und Peter Morgan äußerte sich beim Betrachten des fertigen Produkts kopfschüttelnd: „Sehr ungewöhnlich.“



Foto: Seufert

Alles rosa: Merz-Auto, Uta Merz, Merz-Haus

ten Morgan-Fahrern die Tränen in die Augen: Frau Uta ist nämlich seit sechs Monaten mit einem Vierzylinder-Morgan unterwegs – und der ist in einem strahlenden Rosa lackiert.

„Für Leute, die stundenlang über die exakte Schattierung des einzig wahren Racing green diskutieren, ist das schon ein Schlag“, gesteht Harald Merz seiner Kundschaft ein, die sich aus Loyalität zu ihrem Händler gelegentlich zu dem versöhnlichen Satz „Wenn man länger hinschaut, ist es eigentlich gar

Frau Uta Merz ficht dies nicht an. Sie liebt Rosa, und so ist nicht nur der Morgan rosa – auch das Haus ist in jenem Ton gehalten und desgleichen ein größerer Teil der Garderobe. Über das Interesse an ihrem Auto kann sich die zweifache Mutter nur wundern: „Das ist doch ein Auto wie jedes andere – oder?“ Im Prinzip ist ihr Mann gleicher Meinung. Er fährt zwar einen dunkelgrünen Morgan Plus 8, benutzt hin und wieder aber das Auto seiner Frau. „Allerdings“, setzt er hinzu, „nur bei Dunkelheit.“

U.B.

Über- Morgan

Test Morgan Plus 8
Zum 75jährigen
Firmen-Jubiläum mit
mehr Leistung und
neuer Lenkung.

Von Wolfgang König

Fieberhaft forscht der automobile Fortschritt nach neuen Opfern. Bis in die entlegensten Winkel dringt er vor. Nun überfällt er sogar die letzte Bastion des traditionellen Automobilbau-Handwerks. In der Morgan Motor Company, versteckt auf den Malvern Hills im Westen Englands, wo Autos

Fotos: Seufert



Test Morgan Plus 8

noch im Stil großer Meister des Kutschenbaus entstehen, herrscht die technische Revolution. Elektronik breitet sich

aus. Schon vor Monaten munkelten unterrichtete Kreise von einem schwarzen Kasten im Holzgerüst einer Plus 8-Karosserie. Die technische Leitung des Unternehmens versuchte damals, ihm ein Kabel mit

Mehrfachstecker einzupflanzen.

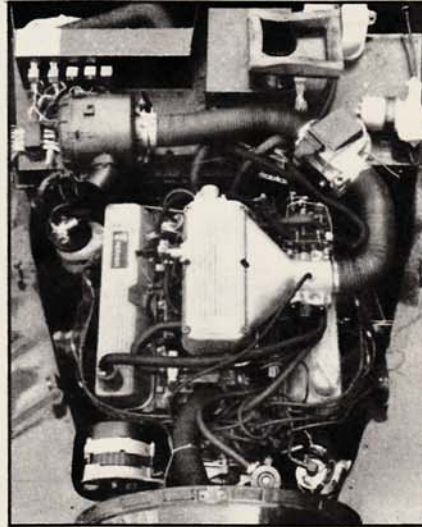
Nun ist es soweit. Das zu kurz geratene Kabel konnte im Zuge der Entwicklungsarbeiten passend verlängert werden. Der

erste Morgan mit elektronischer Benzineinspritzung war geboren. Seit der Erfindung des vierten Rads im Jahr 1936 – damals entstand der erste Vierrad-Morgan – ist dies zweifellos die bedeutendste technische Errungenschaft des Hauses. Die Rolle des Einspritz-Plus 8 als historischer Meilenstein wird noch durch eine weitere Neuheit untermauert. Die Entwicklungsabteilung in Person von Maurice Owen und Chef Peter Morgan himself, hinter einem Garagenter abseits des Fabrikhofs arbeitend, erfand die Zahnstangen-Lenkung – jene jedenfalls, die mit der schon seit geraumer Zeit (seit 1913) bevorzugten vorderen Einzelaufhängung harmoniert.

Zwei schwerwiegende Gründe mehr also, diesen harten Männer-Sportwagen wieder einmal unter die Lupe zu nehmen:



Tradition: Frischluft-Abteil der Holzklasse



Fortschritt: Einspritz-V8

Technische Daten und Meßwerte

Morgan Plus 8

MOTOR
Wassergekühlter Achtzylinder-V-Motor vorn längs, fünf-fach gelagerte Kurbelwelle, zentrale Nockenwelle (Kettenantrieb), Ventile über hydraulische Stößel betätigt, thermostatisch gesteuerter Kühlerventilator, elektronische Kraftstoffeinspritzung (Lucas-L).
Leistung 142 kW (192 PS) bei 5250/min, spezifische Leistung 40,9 kW/L (55,3 PS/L), Hubraum 3530 cm³, Bohrung × Hub 88,9 × 71,1 mm, Verdichtungsverhältnis 9,75:1, maximales Drehmoment 285 Nm bei 4000/min, mittlere Kolbengeschwindigkeit bei Nenndrehzahl 12,4 m/s, Ölinhalt Motor 5,5 L, Kühlsystem-Inhalt 11,1 L, Batterie 12 V 68 Ah, Drehstromlichtmaschine 1000 Watt.

KRAFTÜBERTRAGUNG
Hinterradantrieb, vollsynchronisiertes Fünfganggetriebe, Einscheiben-Trockenkuppelung.

Übersetzungen: I. 3,321, II. 2,087, III. 1,396, IV. 1,0, V. 0,833, R. 3,428, Achsantrieb 3,31:1, Geschwindigkeit bei 1000/min im V. Gang 41,6 km/h.

KAROSSERIE UND FAHRWERK
Zweisitziger Roadster mit zwei Türen, Leiterrahmen aus Profilstahl, aufgesetzte Stahlkarosserie, Holzrahmen, auf Wunsch Leichtmetallkarosserie.
Vorn Einzelaufhängung mit Führungsrohren, Schraubenfe-

dern, Teleskopstoßdämpfern, hinten Starrachse mit Blattfedern, hydraulische Hebelstoßdämpfer, Zahnstangenlenkung, hydraulische Zweikreisbremse, vorn Scheiben-, hinten Trommelbremsen, Feststellbremse auf die Hinterräder wirkend.
Felgenreife 6½J × 15, Reifengröße 205/60 VR 15.

ABMESSUNGEN UND GEWICHTE
Radstand 2490 mm, Spur vorn/hinten 1320/1350 mm, Außenmaße 3950 × 1600 × 1240 mm, Innenbreite vorn 1270 mm, Innenhöhe vorn 890 mm, Sitztiefe vorn 454 mm, Wendekreis rechts/links 11,5/11,6 m, 3/5 Lenkradumdrehungen, Lenkraddurchmesser 400 mm, Kofferraumvolumen nach VDA-Norm 140 L, Tankinhalt 62 L, Leergewicht 936 kg, Gewichtsverteilung vorn/hinten 45,7/54,3%, zulässiges Gesamtgewicht 1200 kg, Zuladung 264 kg, Personenindexzahl 3,1.

FAHRLEISTUNGEN
Höchstgeschwindigkeit (Drehzahl 4900/min, V. Gang) 204 km/h

Beschleunigung	
0- 60 km/h	3,2 s
0- 80 km/h	4,8 s
0-100 km/h	6,8 s
0-120 km/h	9,6 s
0-140 km/h	12,6 s
0-160 km/h	17,9 s
0-180 km/h	26,7 s
400 m mit steh. Start	14,7 s
1 km mit steh. Start	27,6 s

Elastizität	
40-100 km/h (IV. Gang)	10,5 s
60-120 km/h (V. Gang)	15,7 s

Tachometerabweichung	
Anzeige	effektiv
50 km/h	47 km/h
100 km/h	92 km/h
130 km/h	119 km/h
160 km/h	147 km/h
180 km/h	166 km/h
Kilometerzählerabweichung	+4,8%

KRAFTSTOFFVERBRAUCH	
Normverbrauch nach DIN 70030 (Liter/100 km)	
Bei 90 km/h im V. Gang	9,5
Bei 120 km/h im V. Gang	10,5
Stadtverkehr	11,0

Verbrauchswerte im Test (Liter/100 km)	
Minimalverbrauch	9,5
Maximalverbrauch	16,8
Landstraße ca. 80 km/h Ø	11,7
Autobahn ca. 135 km/h Ø	14,0
Testverbrauch	12,5
Kraftstoffart	Super

LENK- UND PEDALKRÄFTE	
Lenkung im Stand	117 N
Lenkung bei Fahrt	50 N
Kupplungspedal	190 N
Gaspedal	50 N
Bremspedal bei 80%	
Verzögerung	470 N

PREISE	
Morgan Plus 8	DM 53 800,-
Zusatzausstattung:	
Leichtmetall-Karosserie	1 180,-
Lederpolsterung	1 560,-
Gepäckträger	346,-

Vorzüge

- Erstklassige Fahrleistungen
- Hohe Elastizität
- Günstiger Verbrauch
- Sportliche Fahreigenschaften
- Gute Traktion

Nachteile

- Harte Federung
- Geringe Bodenhaftung
- Knappes Raumangebot
- Primitives Roadster-Verdeck

Mängel am Testwagen

- keine

auto motor und sport konnte gleich den ersten auf dem Kontinent gelandeten Einspritzer und nebenbei die eigenen Redakteure exclusiv auf Herz und Nieren prüfen. Man sieht dem Morgan die technische Revolution nicht an. Im Gegenteil: Zumindest außen hat sich nicht das Geringste verändert – und das nun schon seit 30 Jahren. Auch im rustikal eingerichteten Innenraum ist der Fortschritt schwer zu finden. Sicher, der Kenner notiert größere Sitzlehnen, die nun wie Grabsteine im engen Morgan-Cockpit stehen. Einen Fortschritt markieren sie indessen nicht. Doch da ist noch eine schwarze Schachtel

Test Morgan Plus 8

hinter dem Handschuhfach. Hätte sie den Aufdruck „Empire made“ – keiner würde sie als Stilbruch erkennen.

Ihr Innenleben verkörpert indessen ganz den Stil der neuen

Warum den Einspritzer, werden sich Morgan-Freunde angesichts der bestechenden Qualitäten des gewohnten Vergaser-Triebwerks fragen. Entwicklungschef Owen klärt auf: „Wir haben uns lange darauf gefreut, denn wir wünschten uns schon immer etwas mehr Leistung.“ Das ist natürlich

Doch es besteht kein Grund zur Panik. Von Leistungswachstum und Elektronik ist zunächst nichts zu spüren. Alles scheint wie gewohnt – der satte V8-Schlag, dessen akustische Autorität sich durch geringere Restriktionen im Auspufftrakt noch problemlos stärken läßt, und die üppigen Kraftreserven

setzt der neue Einspritzer an. Wer wie gewohnt schaltet, wird seinen Wert niemals schätzen lernen, denn die besonderen Meriten des elektronisch unterstützten V8 liegen zweifellos im oberen Drehzahlbereich. Wo es dem Vergaser-Motor schon zu hektisch wird – etwa ab 4500 Umdrehungen – strotzt der Einspritzer gerade vor Temperament. Auf dem Drehzahlmesser sind 6000/min nun eine gern gesehene Marke.



Blick zurück: Fahren im Stil der dreißiger Jahre

Zum Vergleich

Fahrzeugtyp	Morgan Plus 8	Morgan Plus 8	Ferrari Mondial Cabriolet	Mercedes 500 SL	Porsche 911 Carrera Cabriolet
Hubraum cm ³	3530	3530	2927	4973	3164
Leistung kW (PS) bei 1/min	142 (192) 5250	115 (157) 5250	177 (240) 7000	170 (231) 4750	170 (231) 5900
Testverbrauch L/100 km	12,5 S	12,0 S	15,5 S	16,3 S	13,9 S
Preis DM	53 800,-	50 190,-	119 400,-	78 261,-	74 200,-
Beschleunigung in s					
0- 60 km/h	3,2	3,5	3,7	3,9	3,1
0- 80 km/h	4,8	5,5	6,0	5,7	4,5
0-100 km/h	6,8	7,5	8,2	7,9	6,0
0-120 km/h	9,6	10,8	10,7	10,8	8,6
0-140 km/h	12,6	14,6	14,7	14,8	11,1
0-160 km/h	17,9	21,1	18,7	19,7	14,7
0-180 km/h	26,7	-	25,7	26,4	18,8
1 km mit stehendem Start	27,6	28,8	28,3	28,5	26,0
Höchstgeschwindigkeit km/h	(V.Gang)204	(V.Gang)202	(V.Gang)242	(IV.Gang)228	(V.Gang)248

Zeit. Es handelt sich um ein Elektronengehirn, das nun für die angemessene Fütterung der acht Zylinder im langen Morgan-Bug verantwortlich ist. Zwar stammt dieser Leichtmetall-V8 immer noch aus dem Rover 3500. Hier arbeitet jedoch eine Einspritz-Version – aus der sportlichen Vitesse-Variante des Rover bereits seit einigen Monaten bekannt.

verständlich, doch andererseits war der Plus 8 mit rund 930 Kilogramm Eigengewicht und 157 PS (115 kW) Leistung auch bisher nicht untermotorisiert. Eher im Gegenteil. Nun sind es 192 PS (142 kW). Das dürfte dem Temperament des sportlichen Briten zwar noch einmal deutlich einheizen, sensible Fahrernaturen läßt es indessen frösteln.

schon bei Leerlaufdrehzahl, die Morgan-Fahren wie immer schon zu einem Fest für Drehmoment-Schlemmer und Freunde gehobener Elastizität macht. Auch Drehzahl-Verächter durften sich bislang im Morgan bestens aufgehoben fühlen. 3000 Touren genügte, um weder dem Fahrer noch etwaigen Verfolgern etwas zu schenken. Doch exakt hier

Für den Plus 8-Fahrer bedeutet dies natürlich eine klare Abkehr von alten Gewohnheiten. Der Schalthebel, bislang unterwegs ziemlich unberührt, gewinnt an Anziehungskraft. Auf Landstraßen und Autobahnen ist jetzt auch der Aufenthalt in den Gängen tieferer Ordnung durchaus reizvoll – wenn auch wegen der hier losbrechenden Beschleunigungsreserven meist nur von kurzer Dauer.

Kein Zweifel: Die Fahrleistungen eines 192 PS starken Morgan sind atemberaubend. Rein gefühlsmäßig, auch akustisch, erinnern sie schon etwas an die Dragster. Sachlich in Zahlen ausgedrückt reicht es dazu zwar noch nicht ganz. Dennoch verfehlen auch die entsprechenden Werte ihre Wirkung nicht. Sie verzeichnen, vor allem im unteren Geschwindigkeitsbereich, nicht nur eine klare Überlegenheit gegenüber der Vergaser-Version. Sie stellen den Morgan auch auf eine Stufe mit den prominentesten Aushängeschildern der modernen Sportwagen-Schickleria (siehe Vergleichstabelle).

Klar – auf der Autobahn sieht der Morgan in dieser Runde ziemlich alt aus. Daran konnte auch die Leistungsspritze nichts ändern. Zu sehr trotz der klassischen Roadster dem Fahrtwind, als daß schon 35 Mehr-PS genügen, um jenseits der 200 km/h-Marke einen nennenswerten Vorsprung zu erzielen. Doch nichts ist unwichtiger als das. Spitzenwerte dieser Art werden im Morgan als relative Größen entlarvt, die nichts mit der absolut spürbaren Freude am Fahren zu tun haben. Im

Morgan genügen dazu schon 160 km/h, oder auch nur 80. Manchmal, vor allem bei schönem Wetter unter freiem Himmel, kommt sogar schon im Stand Fahrfreude auf.

Eine gewisse Kämpfernatur muß man natürlich voraussetzen. Gegen den Wind beispiels-

werk, daß sich offenbar selbst ein Morgan nicht ganz dem Zug der Zeit entziehen kann. Tatsächlich markiert nämlich die Lenkung einen besonders folgenschweren Schritt nach vorne. Denn weit mehr noch als der Einspritzmotor verändert die Zahnstange den Charakter des Morgan. Galt es früher in

Doch Entwicklungschef Owen hält noch eine weitere Überraschung in petto. Die schon seit Jahren prophezeiten Teleskop-Stoßdämpfer an Stelle der hinteren Hebel-Antiquitäten nähern sich der Serienreife. Schon jetzt verrät Owen: „Normalerweise stößt man im Morgan gegen die erste Bodenwel-

W. Flaving in Unna deutscher Morgan-Importeur, seinen Einspritzer schon jetzt mit modernen Koni-Stoßdämpfern versehen – eine Modifikation, die dem Morgan ohne Zweifel gut ansteht.

Weht also, so stellt sich dem Morgan-Freund angesichts die-



Keine Last mit dem Lenken: Die neue Zahnstangen-Lenkung macht den Morgan handlicher.



weise, oder überhaupt gegen Naturgewalten jeder Art, vor allem jene, die vom Auto selbst ausgehen. Wie in keinem anderen Serienauto wird hier die Umwelt noch buchstäblich erfahren – nicht zuletzt die Bodenbeschaffenheit, die sich den Insassen, praktisch unzensiert vom Fahrwerk, in aller Deutlichkeit mitteilt. Im übrigen zeigt jedoch auch das Fahr-

Kurven mit einem störrischen, den typischen Handbewegungen des Fahrers nur widerwillig folgendem Lenkrad zu kämpfen, geht es heute schon fast wie von selbst: leichtgängig, exakt, wenn auch etwas indirekt. Erstmals in der Geschichte des Plus 8 kann bei der Beschreibung der Fahreigenschaften von Handling gesprochen werden.

le, überspringt die zweite und trifft die dritte. Nun berührt man sogar die Straße dazwischen.“ Daß dies so ist und die bessere Bodenhaftung nicht nur das Fahrverhalten befruchtet, sondern auch etwas Federungskomfort beschert, kann auto motor und sport bereits bestätigen. Voreilig hatte Besitzer Harald Merz in Stuttgart, zusammen mit Kenneth

ser Anhäufung neuer Technik die bange Frage, bei Morgan ein frischer Wind? Es kann mit einem beruhigenden Nein beantwortet werden. Die Morgan Motor Company feiert jedoch gerade ihr 75jähriges Jubiläum, und das verpflichtet. Schließlich gehört man nicht zum alten Eisen.





Peter Morgan, Purveyor of Fun

"Of course, we've never had mass appeal."

• Greatness lies, perhaps, in small virtues accumulated.

Peter Morgan, in gray suit faintly worn and bare, like all the rest of the place, sat at his desk contemplating the secret of his company's survival. He drew on his cigarette, exhaled the smoke, and said: "Father was able to make things that really *worked*, terribly cheaply. I've never been able to make things more cheaply since he died. Besides, he was an awfully clever business manager, he played his cards a bit carefully, and," he smiled and added hastily, lest he appear immodest, "we've had a bit of luck with it all."

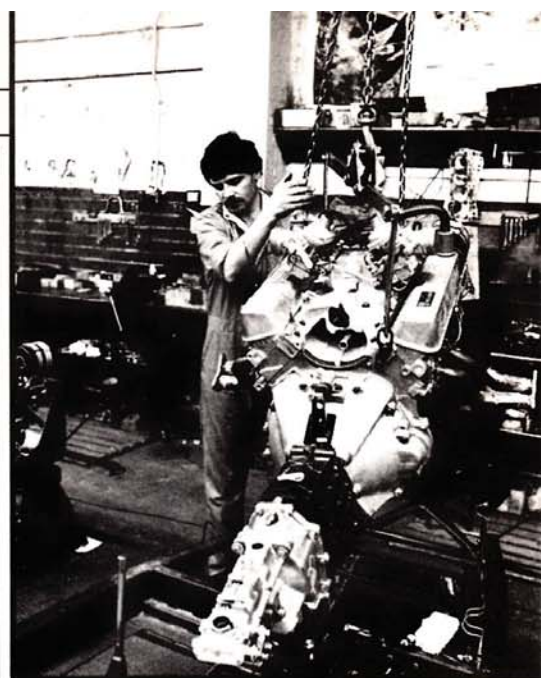
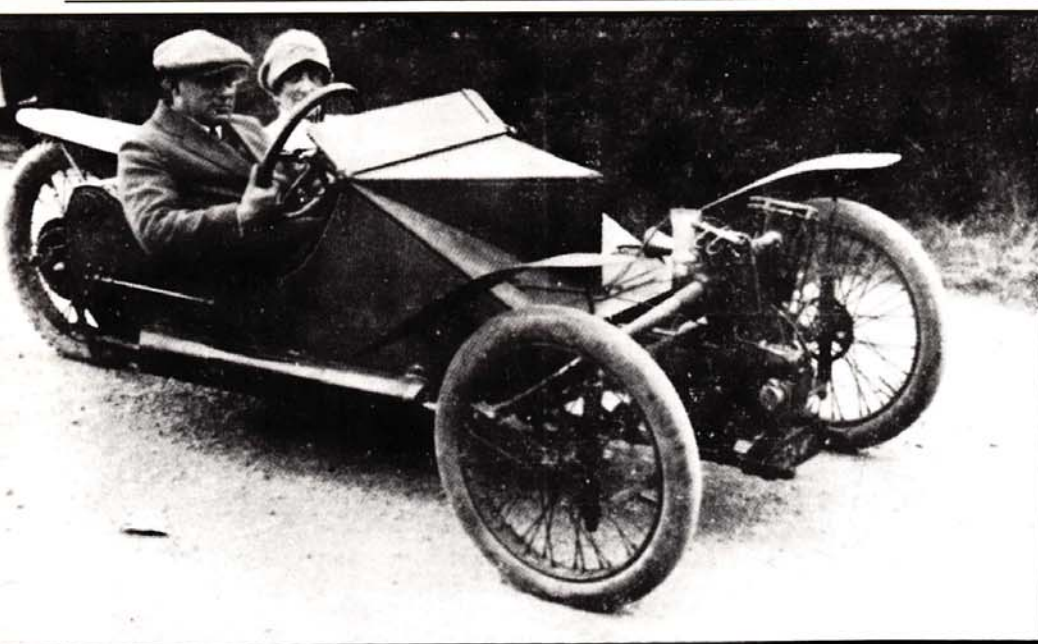
Peter Morgan, the embodiment of affability, loose and lanky, brushed his graying hair back with his fingers. His desk was before a frosted-glass window that masked the gray of an early winter's day in Malvern Link, a country town beneath the hills that

BY CHARLES FOX



stand like ramparts on the border between England and Wales.

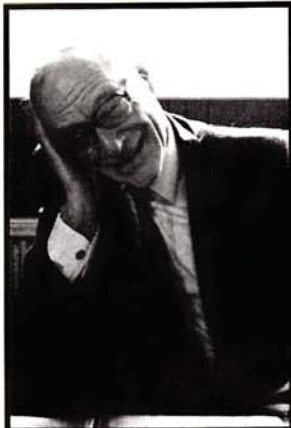
"And perhaps we've gone on, the two of us," he continued, "by never producing too many cars." He considered the truth of this an instant and then added with conviction: "I've seen more people go out of business from making too many cars than I have too few. Very much so. Look at the medium-sized makers here in England that went out. Like Jowett and Riley." He leaned forward, the jacket of his suit falling open, to stub out his cigarette in an ashtray piled with butts. "I admit Father had a big year. In 1923 he made 50 cars a week. Twenty-four hundred cars. Oh, yes, all three-wheelers. But then the Austin 7 came out. Yes, you could say it was England's Model T Ford, I suppose. It was designed in '23 and appeared two years later. After that, Father's three-wheeler business just



Left: Company founder H.F.S. Morgan and his wife in a 1919 Sprint. Above: Today, the V-engine horsepower is supplied by Rover



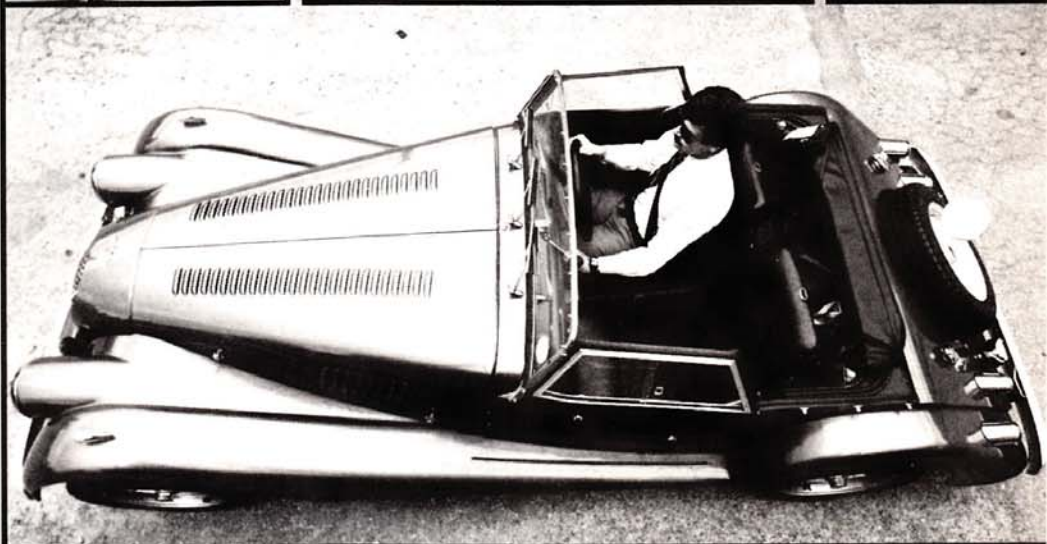
Why would anyone want a classic British sports car? "Why not?" asks Peter Morgan, the 65-year-old managing director of the 76-year-old firm.



went down and down and down. Of course the three-wheeler was a much better performer, but come to load carrying it wasn't in the hunt compared to the four. And fairly quickly after the Austin, the Morris Minor and then the Model Y Ford appeared. Father's four-wheeler didn't come along until 1936."

He pointed to the opposite wall. "That's Father, behind you, in his first car," he said. In a fading, wood-framed photograph, a man in a cloth cap and an overcoat sat back on what looked like a giant shoe-lathecum-bathtub on three wheels (the third being at the back). He had a serious look, like one who is about to set off from Pompeii with the grave news. The face was rounder and fuller than the son's, which wasn't surprising, considering that Father was 28 (this was 1909) and his only son is now an energetic 65.

"He was a lovely man," Peter Morgan said. "Not an extrovert, but then not an introvert either. No," he went on in that light, brisk voice that seemed always on the brink of laughter, "no, he didn't hunt or shoot. Motorsport was what he loved, although it was always tainted a bit for both of us, I'm afraid, by our *having* to do well. In the early days especially, you see, before anyone's

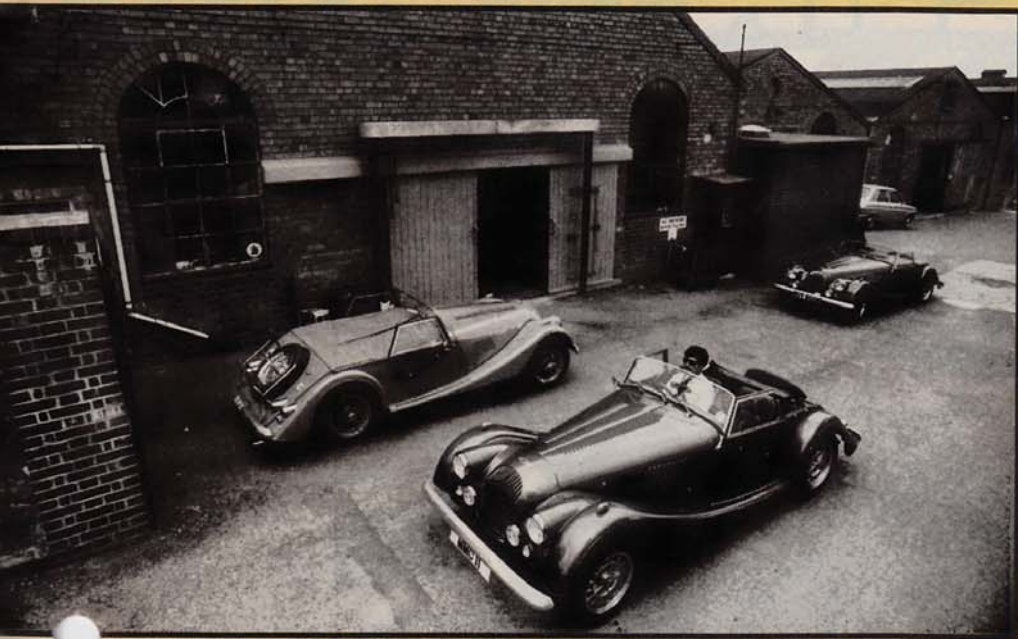


car had a reputation, you had to *show* that your car could *do* something. Father took that first car up to the motor show in London in 1910, got about five orders, then couldn't find anyone to build them. So he borrowed £3000 off his father, the Reverend Prebendary H.G. Morgan of Stoke Lacey, and built them himself. Thank heavens.

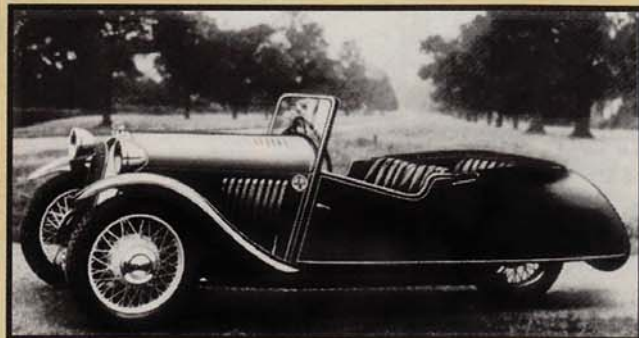
"A prebendary is a man who stands in for the bishop, in the cathedral, but who actually owns his own parish. In those days you bought your parish, rather like a doc-

tor buying a practice. Well, actually it was Great-Grandfather who bought it. His forebears were merchant people in London."

In those days, in England, as he pointed out, the eldest son inherited the estates, the second went into the army, and the third joined the church. England might well have been a great industrial power then, but still, industry and business, or commerce, were not things that a gentleman involved himself in. Even if his forebears had been merchants. Thus the gentle people of



Even though Morgan introduced its first four-wheeled automobile in 1935, trike production lasted another sixteen years. The 1936 F-type (below) used a four-cylinder Ford engine.



Malvern Link frowned upon young Morgan's venture.

"Malvern is a spa town," Peter Morgan said. "It's surrounded by schools. They hated the idea of industry. But last year they did give us a civic reception for our 75th anniversary, so I think we've been forgiven." He puffed on his cigarette and smiled. "What they all asked Father at that first motor show he went to was, 'Why don't you build a two-seater?' So he did. It had a very good power-to-weight ratio." He paused and waved a long hand at the window behind his head. "Father always had to go up all those hills to see Grandpa in Stoke Lacey, so the car had to. We've always tried to maintain that. In 1912 Father set a record at Brooklands racetrack of 60 miles in the hour. Well, almost. He was a few yards short, actually." He waved a hand again, this time to dismiss those few ingrate yards, as the family must have been doing ever since the day. "It was pretty remarkable really," he said. "When you consider that the land speed record then was only about 120 miles an hour."

In the Morgan history book there is a photograph of Father about to start on his record run at Brooklands Motor Course (the first banked oval speedway, built at the same time as Indianapolis). The little Morgan three-wheeler in the photo has white,

oversize bicycle tires. Father wears a leather flying helmet, a coat and a tie, and he grasps the steering wheel with gloved hands. He is glancing over his right shoulder at something, perhaps listening to the crackle of the exhaust note from the 1100cc twin JAP engine mounted on the nose of the tiny car. All around is the broad expanse of Brooklands' damp concrete, under a misty sky. Behind the car stands a group of nine onlookers, all in overcoats, two in top hats. Mrs. Morgan stands in hat and veil. The timekeeper, Mr. A.V. Ebbelwhite, wearing a muffler and a derby hat, is by the car, looking at his watches. It is indeed a serious business. They stand on the threshold of the machine age, ushering in that which will quickly destroy their values, the way of life as it has been for centuries. The Great War is less than a winter away. All this we now know. And that in the next hour H.F.S. Morgan drove his little car 59 miles and 1120 yards.

"You were allowed to make a very few cars during the First World War," Peter Morgan continued. "Shells, mostly. Munitions were what Father made. He lost two fingers on one hand. But he was ready to start producing cars immediately afterwards, before anybody else was, and the demand was huge. He made a lot of money. And, unlike me, he didn't have to pay

any taxes. He cut the price of the car from £250 to £95, because as he always said, 'You must build at a profit, but don't try to make a killing.' He invested the money wisely, and after that it didn't honestly matter whether the cars made money or not. It was an investment company, really." Father, it would be said today, had it made.

"He did make money on the cars, though. There were legions of people making three-wheelers then, but BSA was his biggest competitor. However, they did what Father didn't: they overestimated the market. They thought the huge demand was endless. Of course it wasn't. There was the Austin 7. The four-wheeler."

There was also, directly after the First World War, and after four daughters, born to Mr. and Mrs. Morgan a son, Peter. "I believe they were quite pleased," he conceded. "I wasn't conceived on the Six Day Trial," he said, "but I was carried through it. That's the gospel." English "trials" were cross-country motoring competitions modeled after horse trials, as was almost everything else having to do with the automobile in those days, including horsepower. Trials were, and still are, over-hill-and-dale affairs with a lot of mud and loose stones and spinning wheels and passengers bouncing in their seats to make traction and the sound of raw hands clapping.

"Oh, yes," he went on, "I remember things from the start. Father had a door straight from his study into the machine shop. I remember whirring wheels and pulleys and flapping bells." There was the image of a small boy standing in the doorway to Father's study, looking up.

"He was a great family man. Every Easter he would take us away to the sea at Bournemouth. We took a house in Cornwall in the summer. You could drive the car right down onto the beach then. Load it up with all the family and towels and beach things and picnic basket and drive down onto the sand. And then, with a bit of luck, in the winter we'd go skiing in Switzerland. Father didn't like to ski. He used to skate. My third sister and I, we were the keen skiers. Father just liked the atmosphere.

"We went to Grindelwald because it was on the railway. Father began on the railways, you know. He was an apprentice engineer to W. Dean, one of the great chief engineers of the Great Western Railway. W.O. Bentley started the same way, of course. Only he was with the Great Northern Railway. When I met him, he said the only reason that GWR locomotives were faster was that we had better coal in South Wales." He laughed.

"In 1935 Father introduced the Morgan four-wheeler. It was quite acute of him really. Admittedly, there were a lot of other four-wheeler sports cars around: MG was strong, Singer, Hillman. Yes, Riley, although of course," he pointed out gently, "Riley was rather more expensive. And Frazer-Nash, as you say, although he never



In charge since 1959, Peter Morgan is the current keeper of family tradition.

did a lot. But the Morgan Plus 4 got off the ground quite nicely, although it never really had much of a chance, with the war coming along.

"We weren't allowed to build any cars this time, and afterwards we started up again rather more slowly. Five cars a week. I came back from the army, and Father gave me a very lowly task in the machine shop. You couldn't get steel unless you exported a certain amount of what you made, and that's what killed the three-wheeler, I'm afraid. It just didn't export." He shook his head at the foreigners who didn't know enough to love such a machine. "People laugh at it and say, 'Blacksmith job,' but the thing is, it worked. And awfully well. I hate to admit it, but I actually think that the specifications for the three-wheeler were rather more modern and better than what we've got now. Although, don't get me wrong, what we've got now is a fine, strong car, well tested over a period of time. Anyway, the last three-wheelers were made in 1950. Well, I believe one or two were made in 1951.

"And then, in 1958, when the general manager, Mr. Goodall, retired, Father said to me, 'Well, I think you're good enough,' and in I went. We had a year together. Quite a successful one really. He lived down in Maidenhead. He had since 1935, when he went down there to get away from the hassle of the factory. He used to come up and stay at my house on Tuesday and go back on Thursday, but this time he drove up on Friday for my children's school half-term. He collapsed on Saturday during breakfast. My ex-wife went to the school and we got him into bed and he died on the Monday. Heart attack. I didn't want him to go and neither did he, but I was glad to get it over with. It was the right way for him to go. I'd been awfully worried about how he would be when he couldn't drive. It would

have been terrible for him. As it was, driving his Morgan all the way up from Maidenhead on the Friday and dying on Monday was marvelous.

"Four months later we celebrated our 50th anniversary. It was a sad affair without him. I did manage to get a few drivers together, although in those days there wasn't the emphasis there is on owners today, and we had a lunch at the Abbey Hotel in Malvern. I thought, 'Well, at least we won't have to do anything else now for another 25 years. If we make it.' Of course I never dreamed we would.

"It wasn't easy, because when he died, the money was divided up between us children and the cars suddenly had to make a profit if they were going to continue. I got all the chaps together at the works and told them, 'Right, now we've got to do something to keep going. We've got to make a go of it.' And they did. They were very good about it.

"After that, things got very bad for everybody in the car business. Nobody was selling anything. I thought perhaps we should try changing the car. I'd tried it once before, when Father was alive. Of course I was young then and eager for change, and I was keen on modeling, so I made a model. I didn't say anything to Father. One day I just brought the model in and showed it to him. He sat here, at this desk, and looked at it. Then he just said, 'Hmm. Not bad. Now run along and work up a four-seater.' Of course that was impossible and he knew it. Four seats was always difficult with the Morgan." It was a fact of life he recognized with a nod.

"America was what kept us going then," he continued. "One year we sold 87 percent of our production in America. And then in 1962, America seemed to go into a slump, and our agent there didn't order a car for eleven months. So it was tricky.



Above: Morgan's coupe production consisted of 26 Plus 4 Plus cars. Below: a 1930 three-wheeler that established a record at 116 mph.



That's about when I brought out the new fiberglass car. At the motor show. I put two new ones on the stand with three old ones. I didn't have the nerve to discontinue the old one. And just as well. People came up to me at the show and said, 'Well, I don't know how much I like that one. Looks a bit like a Lotus at the front and a Jaguar at the back.' So I scrapped the car and soldiered on. And in the mid-Sixties the old car started selling again, and we've never looked back since.

"Personally," he suggested, "I think it's a reaction to the computer-designed car. They all have to come out looking the same, don't they? A box on four wheels. Whereas the Morgan looks like a car the way people imagine a car *should* look. I mean, a child can see it very clearly: the wheels are here, the engine goes here, the spare wheel goes here, and we sit here and drive with this.

"Of course, we've never had mass appeal. A lot of people would like to own a Morgan. They like the idea, but when they take a closer look, they change their minds. I'll be honest: I can give you more reasons *not* to buy a Morgan. They've got a soft top, so you haven't got the comfort of a sedan and you can't lock them up. And you can't really leave them on the street, because there's no lockable boot. What you have got are a couple of tremendous advantages: you've got real *style*, *performance*, and *handling*, and a car that's *more fun* than anything else on the road."

That's it, of course. Peter Morgan sees himself as what he has been all his life: a purveyor of fun. The man is a product of his environment. He's his own best—and probably only—advertisement.

"I'm not really proud of our long delivery delays," he said without prompting. "And it's largely fictitious. Five or six years ago there was a premium on cars, and I got

Driving force.



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PETER MORGAN



The American-specification Plus 8 (shown above in 1977 trim) is currently propane-powered.

a lot of speculative orders then. So while it's true that at the moment we're working on '78 orders, as I told the people at this year's motor show, if you put your order in today you can expect a car in three years. Maybe less."

On the other hand, Bill Fink, who imports Morgans into America through San Francisco, has a standing quota of as many as two cars a month and can supply a car in weeks, conforming to all federal standards.

"Our fortunes waned in America," Peter Morgan said, as though speaking of something as remote and inevitable as the phases of the moon, "when Rover failed and withdrew from the market. The federal authorities then wanted us to do a 10,000-mile emission test on the aluminum Buick V-8 which Rover had been using and which we were using, and of course we couldn't possibly afford it. Bill Fink very industriously got around this by converting the car to propane. I hear propane can be a little difficult to find sometimes on Sundays." He smiled and lit another cigarette. "If we had a gasoline-powered engine in the States, it would be as big a market as all our other markets combined, but we've been through that one: a fluctuation in the economy and, through no fault of the car's, we'd be in serious trouble." For an instant there was the image of Morgan upsetting the U.S. economy.

"Anyway," he went on, "I couldn't just double production. I've got to train all my people. I can't just go out onto the street and say, 'Hey, come and build a Morgan.' I've also got to balance production between departments so they all keep busy, which is tricky. No, as I say, what I'd dearly love to do is build one more car a week. Twelve's the most we could build here anyway. After that we'd run out of space."

We left his office and went to look at the space. Which is to say, the factory.

"It stands on about eight acres, I think," Peter Morgan said as he led the way. What there was to see took up a great deal less: a series of adjoining shops built of red brick with faded blue woodwork, with sliding doors and skylit roofs, each shop about 60 yards long and 20 wide, standing on a gentle slope.

"Father began building here during the First World War. He always regretted having to build on a slope," the son said.

In the finishing shop, at the top of the slope next to the office, Tony Bough was touching up a silver Plus 8, bound for C many. "There'll be a big lorry round to pick this one up in a day or so," he said, as if the matter of what went on beyond these walls was still faintly mysterious to him, though he'd been with Morgan for more than 40 years. He'd started in the machine shop in 1940, Mr. Bough said, and after that he was in repairs for a while. "Then I come up 'ere. I started working for 'is father, of course. 'E's a good man to work for, is Mr. Morgan." Mr. Morgan was returning from taking a telephone call in the office. "Well, cheerio, sir," Mr. Bough said.

Fifteen cars stood awaiting delivery, shining, flawless. It was like being in the stockroom at F.A.O. Schwarz the week before Christmas. Plus 4s, 4/4s, Plus 8s, in greens and reds and black and silver. "The key," Peter Morgan claimed, "is in getting the manning levels right to keep the flow of cars going smoothly. I can't have people sitting around twiddling their thumbs. And in a department like the metal shop I've sixteen people, whereas in the electrical shop I've only got three. So it's quite difficult, you see? Not to mention holidays and things."

In the erecting shop, below the finish shop, engines and axles and wheels were being mounted on chassis. A half-dozen men moved about in blue overalls. Light came through glass in the roof. The men glanced briefly up at Mr. Morgan and continued. It might as well have been 1934. Or '24, come to that. But for that fourth wheel, of course.

"We've put about 40,000 cars on the road." He paused and turned. "We don't make a lot, but we've been going at it for quite some time. Eight cars one week, nine the next, and then here and there we slip in a rebuild—cars that get sent back to us for an overhaul."

"The men work on their own time." We descended into the metal shop, where metal panels were being tapped into shape around ash body frames, in the traditional

**BUYING
SECONDHAND**

Morgan



ALTHOUGH there is only a small, and specialized, demand for Morgan sports cars, there is one very good reason why we should survey the marque in this series — that the waiting list for new ones is about seven years long! It would be easy enough to suggest that Morgan, at Malvern Link, are building yesterday's cars for today's customers — it would be more accurate to suggest that at the moment they are building them for mid-1970s customers.

The current Morgan is a classic while it is still in production, for the general design, chassis layout, and styling have not altered since the first four-wheeler models were introduced in 1936, though there seems to have been almost constant change in engines, and transmissions. In every way, a Morgan is a traditional type of sports car built for traditional customers, and it would be fair to say that it has no competitors. If you are in the secondhand market, either you want a Morgan or you do not — there are no half measures.

To keep this survey down to manageable lengths, however, we have limited analysis to the 1.6-litre four-cylinder models built since 1968, and the 3.5-litre Rover V8-engined car announced later in 1968. Both cars are still in production.

Defining the pedigree

In the period considered, there are Morgan 4/4s and Morgan Plus 8s — four-cylinder and eight-cylinder cars respectively. Although the wheelbase of the eight-cylinder Plus 8 is 2in. longer than that of the 4/4, all cars are built on the same separate chassis frame, which is of simple ladder-type construction, with those famous, and unique, Z-section side members (not channel, or box-section).

Front suspension of all Morgans is a coil and sliding pillar system (invented before the First World War, and only changed in detail since then), which is nominally independent, but is very stiffly sprung as not to make much difference, while rear suspension of the live axle is by half-elliptic leaf springs, and lever-arm hydraulic dampers.

Steering on all cars is by a worm and nut system, there are front wheel disc brakes and rear drums, and centralized chassis lubrication is ensured by a once-daily dab on a little button in the driver's footwell, which actually forces a modicum of engine oil through pipes to parts of the front suspension.

In 15 years, total 4/4 production stands at around 4,000 cars, while about 2,300 Plus 8s have been built. In almost every week at Malvern Link, nine or 10 new cars are completed.

Engines

In January 1968, the 4/4 1600 (an updated version of the 4/4

Series V) was introduced, with two versions of the cross-flow 1,599 c.c. Ford Kent engine, one having 64 bhp, the other (the Competition) 84 bhp, and these were backed by a four-speed, all-synchromesh, single-rail Ford gearbox. From the autumn of 1970, however, the lower-powered engine was dropped.

There was no other change until the beginning of 1982, when Morgan dropped the Kent engine, and introduced a choice of engines in its place. Customers could either have the 96 bhp Ford CVH single-cam engine of 1,596 c.c. in carburettor form (as used on the original Escort XR3 and — now — the 1984 model Fiesta XR2), or the Fiat 131 twin-cam of 1,585 c.c. and 98 bhp.

The Plus 8 was conceived around the light-alloy Rover V8 of 3,528 c.c., which has been used in every car built. In its original form it was rated at 143 bhp, but from the beginning of 1977 the updated SD1 type of engine, with 155 bhp (DIN) was fitted instead. In each case, the engines have had two SU carburettors, and been identical in all but detail with the units being fitted to Rovers of the day.

Transmissions

All the Ford-engined 4/4s have had the excellent all-synchromesh Ford gearbox, and from the spring of this year the latest Sierra-type of five-speed unit became standard. The rare Fiat twin-cams, for their part, have the appropriate Fiat gearbox, which has always had five speeds.

The Rover-engined Plus 8 transmission situation is more complex. At first, the Plus 8 was introduced, with the separate, centrally-mounted, Moss gearbox (from the obsolete Plus 4) retained. This had four-speeds, no synchromesh on first gear (and precious little on the upper ratios), and was rigidly connected to the engine by an alloy tube.

From May 1972 this box was discarded, to be replaced by the four-speed, all synchromesh, Rover 3500S gearbox, which was in unit with the engine. Finally, from January 1977, at the same time as the updated SD1-type engine was standardized, the new five-speed all-synchromesh SD1 gearbox was also fitted. This is still standard on current-model Plus 8s.

Body style and choice

All these Morgans have the same basic style of body shell, which is 1930s in outlook, and is built up on a wooden skeleton frame. There are two-seater open sports versions of all types, which have a small stowage area behind the seats. However, there is also an open four-seater version of the four-cylinder cars only, the rear seats being placed up above the back axle. Because of the rear seat position, there is no luggage space of any nature in a four-seater Morgan.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE

	4/4	Plus 8 4-speed	Plus 8 5-speed
Tested in Autocar of:	Not tested	12 Sept 1968	15 July 1978
Specification:			
Engine size (c.c.)	1,599	3,528	3,528
Engine power (DIN bhp)	86	143	155
Car length	12ft 0in. (4/4)	12ft 3in. (Plus 8)	12ft 3in. (Plus 8)
width	4ft 8in.	4ft 9.5in.	5ft 2in.
height	4ft 4in.	4ft 4in.	4ft 4in.
Boot capacity (cu.ft.)		2-seat 4.5 cu.ft., 4-seat Nil	
Turning circle		— approx 40ft 0in. —	
Unladen weight (lb)	1,625	1,979	2,128
Max. payload (lb)	430	430	430
Performance:			
Mean maximum speed (mph)	102*	124	123
Acceleration (sec):			
0-30mph	—	2.3	2.2
0-40mph	—	3.5	3.5
0-50mph	—	5.2	4.6
0-60mph	10.0*	6.7	6.5
0-70mph	—	8.6	9.0
0-80mph	—	11.8	11.4
0-90mph	—	14.5	15.4
0-100mph	—	18.4	20.2
0-110mph	—	25.7	31.0
0-120mph	—	42.9	—
Standing ¼-mile (sec)	17.2*	15.1	15.1
Consumption:			
Overall mpg	31*	18.3	20.5
Typical mpg — easy driving	40*	24	26
— average	34*	20	22
— hard driving	28*	17	18
Mpg at steady 70 mph	—	26.3	23.9
Fuel grade	4-star	4-star	4-star
Oil consumption (mpp)	n.a.	500	600

*Estimated figures

CHASSIS IDENTIFICATION

	Series	Chassis No.
4/4 1600 models		
January 1968: Model introduced to replace Series V model, chassis and body the same, but engine became 1.6-litre cross-flow Ford Kent unit.		
First chassis numbers: 2-seater	B	1600
Competition 2-seater	B	1605
November 1968: 4-seater version of Competition introduced at:	B	1740
Competition 4-seater		
October 1969: Plus 8 facia style adopted at:		
2-seater	B	2014
4-seater	B	2031
Competition 2-seater	B	2017
November 1970: Standard power engine (64 bhp) discontinued, all cars now with 84 bhp. From:		
2-seater	B	2276
4-seater	B	2081
January 1974: Models continued unchanged. Chassis numbers at this point:		
2-seater	B	3198
4-seater	B	3198
January 1977: Aluminium-panelled body style optional. From:		
2-seater	B	3905
4-seater	B	3905
January 1982: Change of engine, from Ford Kent ohv, to choice of Ford XR3 (ohc) or 1.6-litre Fiat twin-cam. At chassis number	B	C6000 (Ford) F6000 (Fiat)
March 1983: 5-speed Sierra-style gearbox on Ford-engined cars, from:	B	C6255
XR3-engined cars		
Plus 8 Model		
September 1968: Rover V8-engined model introduced, as direct replacement for TR-engined Plus 4. With 2 in. longer wheelbase than Ford-engined 4/4 but same basic style/engineering. With cast-alloy wheels, only 2-seater body. Original cars with separate 4-speed Moss gearbox:	R	7001
May 1972: Moss gearbox discontinued. Cars now built with Rover 3500S all-synchromesh box in unit with engine. No style changes. From:	R	7482
October 1973: Higher axle ratio (3.31:1-vs-3.58:1) and wider tracks, from:	R	7660
October 1975: Sports lightweight version of same body style made available, from:	R	7983
January 1977: Sports lightweight discontinued, and light body panels now optional for any order. From:	R	8186
Updated (155bhp) Rover SD1 engine, and all-synchromesh 5-speed gearbox adopted, with different facia, bumpers, etc. From:	R	8200
March 1982: Automatic choke Stromberg carburettors on Rover engine, from:	R	9067

ENGINE AND BODY AVAILABILITY

Engine	Ford Kent ohv	Ford Kent ohv	Ford CVH ohc	Fiat Twin-Cam 2 ohc	Rover V8 ohv	Rover V8 ohv
(DIN bhp)	64	86	96	98	143	155
2-seater Open	1968-70	1968-81	1982-83	1982-83	1968-76	1977-83
4-seater Open	1968-70	1969-81	1982-83	1982-83	—	—

Note: The same basic body style has been used throughout the 15-year period. Morgan have never supplied the Plus 8 as a four-seater.

APPROXIMATE SELLING PRICES

On this occasion, we cannot publish charts of values, for two main reasons. One is that there is still a multi-year waiting list for new Morgans (more pronounced on four-cylinder rather than Rover V8-engined models), which means that unscrupulous buyers can sell a delivery mileage 4/4 for more than they paid for it. The other is that Morgan values have more to do with condition than with age.

4/4 models: A Morgan restoration expert, Melvyn Rutter, of Little Hallingbury, near Bishop's Stortford, tells us that almost any car with a current MoT certificate, that is a reasonable runner, is worth more than £2,750, but that any early 1970s 4/4 in good average condition and in regular use is worth more than £4,000. A late 1970s car is certainly worth up to £6,000, while a very recent XR3 or (more rarely) Fiat-engined 4/4 usually sells for up to £8,000. The current new-car price of a 4/4 2-seater, for those who prudently ordered some years ago, is £7,861 for an XR3-engined 2-seater - we have certainly heard of delivery-mileage premiums of £500 to £1,000 being achieved in recent months.

Plus 8 models: The same sort of reasoning applies to these cars, as to 4/4s, except there no longer seems to be a delivery mileage premium, as the market for large-engined Morgans has sagged in recent years. Nevertheless, a barely road-legal Plus 8 will usually fetch £3,000, complete with serious body rot, while the other extreme is the £8,000-£9,000 usually needed to buy a low-mileage 1981 model. You should not need to pay up to £10,000 for any secondhand Plus 8, unless it is very special, in magnificent condition, or is literally straight out of the showroom. The Plus 8's new-car price, at the time of writing, is £10,496.

When the cars were introduced, all had steel skinned bodies as standard. From the autumn of 1975, however, a Sports Lightweight version of the Plus 8 became available, in which most skin panels were in aluminium instead of pressed-steel.

From the beginning of 1977, however, the Sports Lightweight was dropped as a separate model, and henceforth all Morgans could be provided with aluminium panels as an option.

The choice of secondhand Morgans is strictly limited, for some-

SPARES PRICES

	4/4 Ford Kent	4/4 Ford XR3	4/4 Fiat T.C.	+8 Rover V8
Clutch pressure plate (new)	-	-	£22.88	£68.50
Clutch driven plate (new)	-	-	£30.78	£38.75
Propeller shaft universal joint repair kit	£9.17	£9.17	£9.17	£11.62
Back axle assembly (exchange)	£355.00	£355.00	£355.00	£495.00
Brake pads - front (set, new)	£14.45	£13.65	£13.65	£17.65
Brake shoes - rear (set, new)	£16.26	£16.26	£16.26	£16.26
Suspension dampers - front (pair)	£27.00	£27.00	£27.00	£27.00
Suspension dampers - rear (pair)	£55.00	£55.00	£55.00	£55.00
Radiator assembly (new)	£107.55	£115.00	£115.00	£151.73
Front wing panel - Steel	£127.92	£127.92	£127.92	£140.49
Front wing panel - Aluminium	£186.58	£186.58	£186.58	£203.28
Bumper, front (new)	£82.76	£82.76	£82.76	£82.76
Bumper, rear (new)	£82.76	£82.76	£82.76	£82.76
Windscreen, laminated (2-seater)	£153.45	£153.45	£153.45	£153.45
Windscreen, laminated (4-seater)	£165.15	£165.15	£165.15	n.a.
Exhaust system complete	£124.41	£106.54	£115.14	£330.50

* Parts supplied through a Ford dealer, not by Morgan. All the above prices include VAT at 15 per cent.

thing like half of the 500 new cars built every year are exported.

In general, by the way, service is best gained by visiting a Morgan dealer, or a specialist restorer. Parts supply is mainly good (the cars are still in production, of course) but some items from

older versions are both difficult to find and expensive. The Morgan Motor Co build new spares if they see a continued demand for parts. Engine, gearbox, alternator and starter motor replacements are not available from Morgan themselves.

What to look for

Almost every new Morgan is bought by a private motorist, but it is a sad fact that many are neglected during their early, and middle, years. Although the Morgan's design is simple in many ways, so is the method of manufacture, and many details may require attention after the first few years.

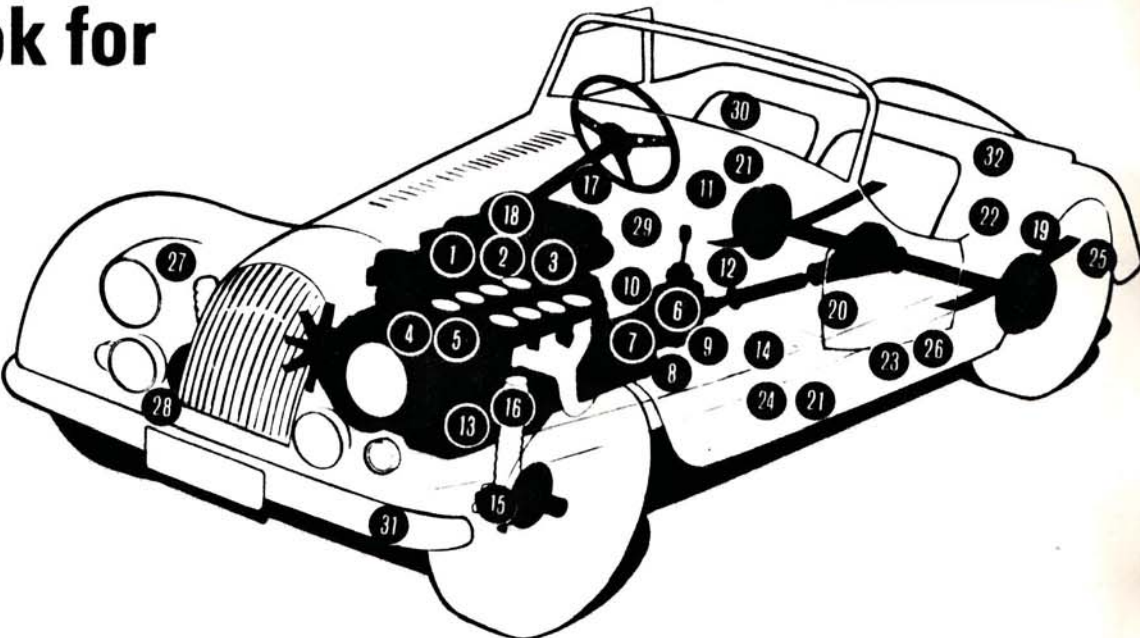
Mechanical

In general, engines fitted to these Morgans have quite an easy time, for the cars are light and, to be frank, do not have superlative traction. All types should last up to 100,000 miles before needing a major overhaul, but look out for noisy valve gear on the Fords (1) and Rovers (2), and for any signs of premature corrosion around the Rover V8 (3).

The Plus 8s tended to be undercooled at first, so look for any signs of overheating on earlier cars (4). At the same time, be sure that the engine oil is not getting too hot (5), which is often a sign of previous hard usage, or a drop in pressure.

We do not recommend Plus 8s with Moss boxes (6), for they have very light synchromesh and a slow change, even when new, and are a real chore when old. The lack of synchromesh will make itself clear in a test run (7). Note that spares for this box are very difficult to find these days. The Rover four-speed box always feels nicer than the SD1-type five-speed, which may be quite notchy (8), but the synchromesh should still be effective in either case (9). You should have little cause to complain about Ford boxes - if there are synchromesh problems, the box is certainly in its old age (10).

The brakes, in general, are well up to the job, but if there is no servo assistance, we recommend that this should be added at a



later date (11). There is quite a history of handbrake failure, due to the cable nipple stripping out at the lever end of the assembly (12).

The story on chassis and suspension items is that rust should not be a serious problem, but cracking may occur around the engine mounting holes in the side-members (13), and where the cross-members are welded to side-members (14), with another trouble spot being identified at the bottom of the suspension pillar mount (15).

Look for front suspension wear if the daily dab of engine oil lubrication has not been carried out (16). This manifests itself in steering wobble at about 50 mph (17), which is not helped if the steering box has developed wear (18). Front and rear dampers should still be very hard, but have a look at rear leaf springs, which may sag, and break a leaf (19).

Body and trim

→ The body frame is mainly of

unprotected wood - ash or ply - and may rot, especially around door hinge posts (20), sill boards (21), rocker panels (21) and elbow rails near the rear wheel arches (22). Rocking the doors, when half open, can tell you a lot about the condition of the frames, and the hinge posts.

Aluminium panels last longer than steel equivalents. With steel panels, look for rusting around the side panels under the doors (23), the base of the wrap-over scuttle panel (24), the rear body panel in splash areas (25), and the bottom of the door skins themselves (26). Another obvious rust spot is the joint between headlamp pods, and the front wing pressing (27), while the wings themselves eventually rot at their joints with the rest of the bodyshell (28).

Restored cars (many already have been, when less than 10 years old) are usually a good buy, for they have often received more pre-assembly attention to the body framing, and to the panel skins themselves (29).

Interiors suffer if they have been left open to the rain often, but most cars were built with vinyl seats and panels which seem to last better. Leather, in this respect, is a mixed blessing (30).

You may find that some chrome fittings have rusted quite badly (31), but at least replacements are easily available, and you may also need a new hood and/or a tonneau (32), which can also be found. Hoods, incidentally, are best if individually made and fitted.

As a final point, do not buy a modern Morgan unless you are something of a masochist who doesn't mind discomforts, howling draughts around ill-fitting side curtains, and other ailments like "Morgan elbow" caused by adopting the approved driving position and getting your clothes wet. Expect to have to do more maintenance, and restoration, than with more modern cars - and for that reason, we hope that you will get to know the location of your nearest Morgan specialist. □

RoadTest



MORGAN PLUS 8

A legendary car with a cult following, Morgan's formidable Plus 8 lives on, and how!

WE LAST tested a Morgan Plus 8 14 years ago. A carefully crafted anachronism, assertively old fashioned in everything but performance, we concluded that it was simply unique. And very quick.

Since then, men have walked on the

moon, the micro-chip has revolutionised computer technology and the energy crisis has changed the face of motoring. But the Plus 8, like the Rock of Ages, doesn't change. With the advent of cars like the Panther Lima and Brooklands (née J 72), it's no longer

unique, but with demand necessitating a delivery time that runs to years rather than months for each of the three Plus 8s that emerge from Peter Morgan's Malvern premises every week, the Panthers pose little threat to the big Rover V8-powered Moggie.

The inevitable detail modifications which accompany the production of any car have been modest but significant in the Morgan. In the days when Rover's 3.5-litre Buick-derived V8 came from the factory with automatic transmission only, Morgan mated it to a dreadful four-speed Moss manual gearbox (like that fitted to early Jaguars). Today, the Rover's engine and five-speed gearbox are supplied as a package to Morgan who only alter the position of the clutch and fit "bannana" type exhaust manifolds before installing it. The Girling system brakes (discs at the front, drums at the rear) have also been improved. But perhaps the most

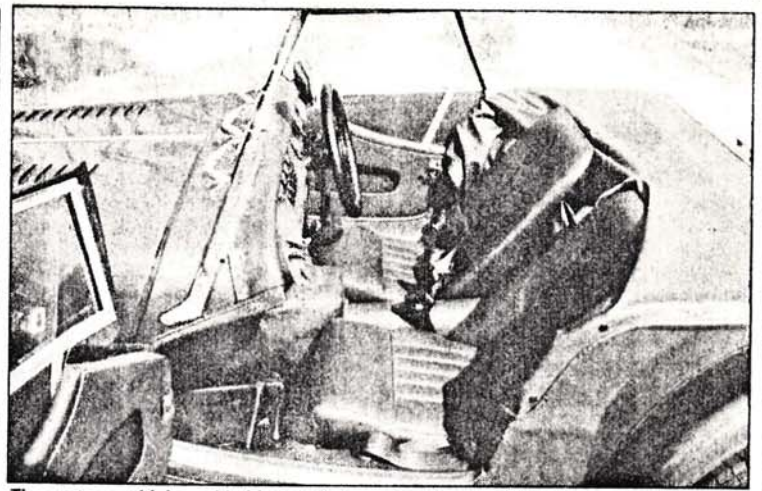


important concession to today's technology is the recent adoption of fat 205/60 VR Pirelli P6 tyres on wider (6in instead of 5.5in) 15in alloy wheels. Inside, the fascia — basic but not rudimentary — has been tidied up and the hood operation refined.

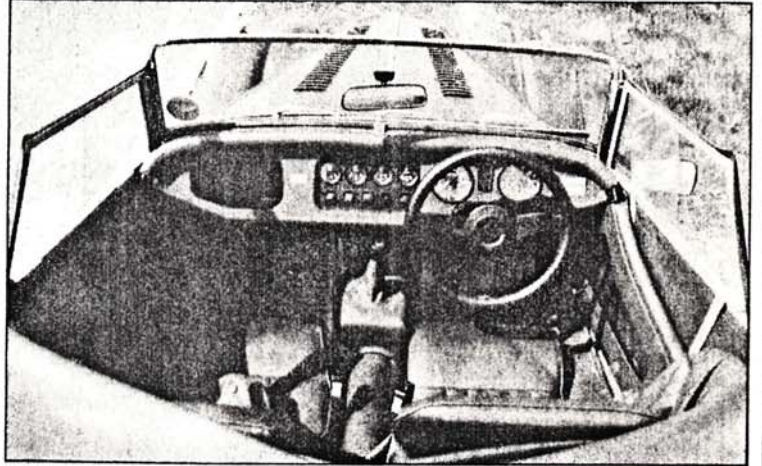
But essentially the Morgan Plus 8 is the same as ever. There's the graceful yet aggressive steel and aluminium body which is supported by Z-section side members and boxed cross members and rests on an ash frame; the Vintage sliding pillar front and leaf-spring rear suspension; and the antiquated cam and peg steering. New car specifications don't come more nostalgic than that.

Assuming you could walk into a showroom tomorrow and buy a Plus 8 (which you can't), it would cost £10,496. Whether this represents good value for money clearly cannot be judged objectively beyond the obvious fact that you get plenty of performance-per-£. A lot depends on your appreciation of such nebulous qualities as character and style and individuality. But that's not to suggest that the Morgan has the monopoly on charisma in the fast car ranks. The area of the market in which it competes is blessed with a rich variety of desirable machinery. Cars like the mid-engined Lotus Esprit S3 (£13,979), the semi-convertible Reliant Scimitar GTC (£12,490), the open-top version of TVR's Tasmin (£12,744), and Porsche's rapid 924 Turbo (£13,998), while lower priced exotica can be had in the shape of the mid-engined Lancia Monte Carlo Spyder (£9240).

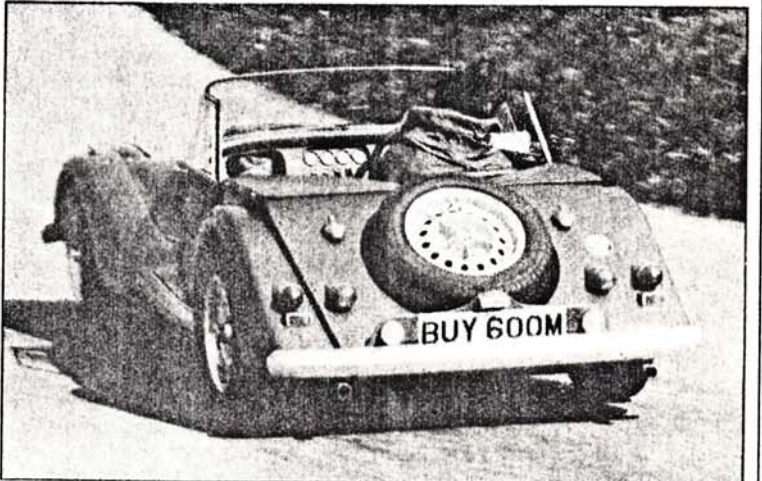
These days, Rover's superb 3530cc all-alloy V8 has a compression ratio of 9.35:1 (in 1968, it was 10.5:1) and develops 155 bhp (DIN) at 5250 rpm with a wallop of 198 lb ft of torque at 2500 rpm. We need only to add that the Plus 8 tips the scales at a comparatively modest 17.8 cwt to complete the picture of a high performance car, despite the far from aerodynamic form its blunt shape must present to the air. Top speeds are often rather academic with fast open top cars like the Morgan since it can become physically painful to travel at more than 90 mph with the hood down, while the level of wind noise tends to prohibit going much faster with the hood up. Suffice it to say that the Plus 8 is good for more than 120 mph in short blasts, though even at this speed the long-legged (27.4 mph/1000 rpm) gearing ensures



The seats are thinly padded but well shaped and supportive



The fascia is businesslike, but the fly-off handbrake is a bit of a stretch on the far side of the transmission tunnel



that revs are kept down to a leisurely 4380. So high speed cruising involves no mechanical strain, at least.

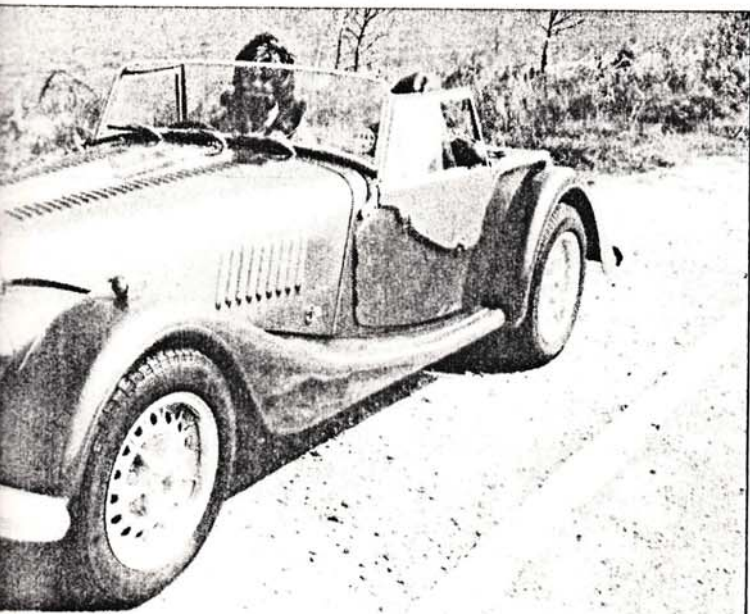
What's more remarkable, though, is that the long gearing imposes not the slightest penalty on flexibility, which speaks volumes for the big V8's torque spread. In fact, its punch from low revs is right in the supercar class. Even in fifth, it covers the 30-50, 40-60 and 50-70 mph increments in just 5.3, 5.5 and 5.6 sec. Drop down to fourth (still 21.7 mph/1000 rpm) and the same increments are disposed of in a mind-blowing 4.1, 4.4 and 4.7 seconds. What this means is that, should you wish, you need never change out of fourth (apart from getting rolling) and still have enough performance to see off most quick cars, however slick their drivers' gearchanges. Just to put this into perspective, in fourth the Morgan accelerates from 30-90 mph in 15.2 sec. *Through the gears a quick two litre*

like the Lancia Monte Carlo takes 19.4 seconds. Even the earnest Capri 2.8 Injection driver (14.9 sec) wouldn't be able to get away from the lazy Morgan driver.

Neither would the Lotus Esprit driver away from the traffic lights. Aided by the fat footprint of the P6 tyres and a limited slip differential, the Plus 8 catapults off the line to reach 30 mph in just 2.2 sec and 60 mph in 6.7 sec. The Lotus pips it to 60 mph (6.5 sec) and pulls away thereafter as aerodynamics begin to play their part. But the Esprit is well over £3000 more expensive than the Moggie and unless you buy a Sunbeam Lotus (£7948, 0-60 mph in 6.8 sec) or the component-form Caterham 7 Twin Cam (£5916, 0-60 mph in 6.0 sec) there simply isn't anything else for less money with similar performance.

Figures aside, the Plus 8's usable performance is immense. In the light-weight Morgan, Rover's V8 is a giant of

continued over



an engine, a reservoir of smooth power that can be unleashed from 500 to 5000 rev in any gear to devastating effect. Overtaking is effortless and ultra safe. Above 5000 revs the engine becomes a little harsh and throbby, but you're less aware of this with the hood down. Then all you hear is the unmistakable exhaust burble of a fine, small-block V8, which all our testers found addictive.

Accepting that the Morgan's performance was exploited to the full, its overall consumption of 20.8 mpg is a reasonable result and not significantly worse than the consumptions returned by its mostly slower rivals; the class average is around 22 mpg. Our usually reliable Transflow meter was out of order during our MIRA session, so it was not possible to measure the Morgan's consumption at steady speeds. However, it would not be unreasonable to expect 25 mpg in reward for restraint and, on that basis, the car should travel around 340 miles on every 13.6 gallon tankful of four star.

Rover's five-speed gearbox can be excellent and the one fitted to the Plus 8 was among the best we've tried. Not blessed with the lightest of actions, the stubby lever can nevertheless be snicked through the well defined gate with confidence and speed. The clutch is rather heavy but exceptionally smooth and progressive. With so much torque to hand, the spacing of the ratios is rather academic but, at 6000 rpm, the first three gears run to 39, 62 and 93 mph.

The Plus 8's sliding pillar and coil spring front suspension dates back to 1911 and the first Morgan three-wheelers. To put modern generation tyres at the business end of such an antiquated and unsophisticated system might seem a bad idea. But according to Peter Morgan, the suspension is ideally suited to the low-profile P6s since, even when subjected to high cornering loads, it keeps the wheels perpendicular to the road, which is as it should be if the square-shouldered Pirelli's are going to grip to maximum effect.

This would certainly seem to be the case on smooth sweeping bends. Here the Morgan can generate quite extraordinary cornering forces and feel superbly stable. On more typical roads, however, the Plus 8 remains something of a brute, though not an unlikely one. It isn't a car whose steering wheel you casually control betwixt forefinger and thumb. When you want to get a move on in the Morgan you must take a firm grip of the steering wheel with both hands and drive it.

One problem is the car's initial understeer, which gives the effect of reluctance to turn into a bend, es-

pecially if the approach is bumpy. Once committed to a line, however, the understeer can be effectively neutralised by feeding in the power while, on tighter bends, the same ploy can be used to kick the tail out — though if the bend is a particularly bumpy one it doesn't need much prompting. Around town, the steering is undeniably heavy with only mild self-centring, though it does tend to free-up with speed. There is about an inch of free play in the steering too, which doesn't engender a feeling of precision about the straight ahead though fortunately the car tracks reasonably straight and true at speed.

Over big bumps and humps the ride is diabolical and the Morgan can actually take off, but the small bump ride is contrastingly quite good, which may be a side benefit of the P6's low inflation pressures. The brakes perform well, with a good combination of progression and power.

The Plus 8 is a strict two-seater with no boot but enough space behind the seats to squeeze a couple of squashy overnight bags. Legroom is restricted only inasmuch as the footwells are rather narrow and constricting though the pedals themselves are well spaced and ideal for heel and toe gearchanges. The driving position places the steering wheel close to the chest, which is no bad thing in view of the leverage it affords on the heavy steering, while the thinly padded seats are more comfortable than they look.

The plain and simply furnished interior can seem a little claustrophobic with the hood up and seeing out at acute junctions can be a problem. Taking the hood off, however, is a straightforward exercise and, if the weather is right, open-topped is the only way for the Morgan to be. If the side screens stay in place so will your hair-do up to about 50 mph, but even at 70 mph the buffeting remains gentle. Otherwise, they can be removed by unscrewing a knurled wheel and stowed, with the hood, under the tonneau behind the seats. The heater needs to be powerful and is, while the instrumentation is both comprehensive and reasonably clear, only a couple of the minor dials being obscured when the tonneau cover is fitted over the passenger side. This, like the hood, is well made and reflects the generally high standards of finish evident throughout the car.

Old fashioned it may be, but the Morgan Plus 8 must rank as one of the world's great cars. Elegant yet electrifying, it marries such disparate elements like no other car. Peter Morgan has been careful to preserve that and we think he's right. When the world is full of standardised shoe boxes, it's cars like the Plus 8 we'll miss most.

MOTOR ROAD TEST No 24/82

MORGAN PLUS 8

PERFORMANCE

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Wind	0-10 mph
Temperature	57°F/14°C
Barometer	30.5 in Hg/1032 mb
Surface	Dry tarmac/adam

MAXIMUM SPEEDS

Estimate	mph	kph
Terminal speeds:		
at 1 mile	85	137
at kilometre	107	172
Speeds in gears (at 6,000 rpm):		
1st	39	63
2nd	62	100
3rd	93	150

ACCELERATION FROM REST

mph	sec	kph	sec
0-30	2.2	0-40	1.8
0-40	3.4	0-60	3.0
0-50	4.7	0-80	4.7
0-60	6.7	0-100	7.2
0-70	9.0	0-120	10.3
0-80	12.2	0-140	15.6
0-90	17.0	0-160	21.6
0-100	21.8		
Stand'g ↓	15.0	Stand'g km	28.5

ACCELERATION IN TOP

mph	sec	kph	sec
20-40	5.4	40-60	3.2
30-50	5.3	60-80	3.5
40-60	5.5	80-100	3.5
50-70	5.6	100-120	3.9
60-80	6.7	120-140	4.7
70-90	7.6	140-160	6.9
80-100	9.8		

ACCELERATION IN 4th

mph	sec	kph	sec
20-40	4.2	40-60	2.6
30-50	4.1	60-80	2.7
40-60	4.4	80-100	2.7
50-70	4.7	100-120	3.3
60-80	5.5	120-140	4.1
70-90	6.5	140-160	5.6
80-100	8.0		

FUEL CONSUMPTION

Overall	20.8 mpg
	13.6 litres/100 km
Govt tests	NA
Fuel grade	97 octane
	4 star rating
Tank capacity	13.6 gallons
	62 litres
Max range*	340 miles
	547 km
Test distance	534 miles
	859 km

based on an estimated 25 mpg touring consumption

NOISE

	dBA	Motor rating*
30 mph	74	21
50 mph	81	34
70 mph	93	79
Maximum†	88	56

*A rating where 1=30 dBA, and 100=96 dBA, and where double the number means double the loudness

†Peak noise level under full-throttle acceleration in 2nd.

SPEEDOMETER (mph)

Speedo	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
True mph	28	38	48	58	68	78	88	98
Distance recorder:	4.7 per cent fast							

WEIGHT

	cwt	kg
Unladen weight*	17.8	904
Weight as tested	21.5	1092

*with fuel for approx 50 miles

Performance tests carried out by Motor's staff at the Motor Industry Research Association proving ground, Lindley.

Test Data: World Copyright reserved. No reproduction in whole or part without written permission.

GENERAL SPECIFICATION

ENGINE

Cylinders	V8
Capacity	3528cc (215.1 cu in)
Bore/stroke	88.9/71.1mm (3.50/2.80in)
Cooling	Water
Block	Aluminium alloy
Head	Aluminium alloy
Valves	Pushrod ohv
Cam drive	Chain
Compression	9.35:1
Carburettor	Twin SU HIF 6
Bearings	5 main
Max power	155 bhp (DIN) at 5250 rpm
Max torque	198 lb ft (DIN) at 2500 rpm

TRANSMISSION

Type	5-speed manual
Clutch dia	9.5in
Actuation	Hydraulic
Internal ratios and mph/1000 rpm	
Top	0.792:1/27.4
4th	1.000:1/21.7
3rd	1.396:1/15.5
2nd	2.087:1/10.4
1st	3.321:1/6.5
Rev	3.428:1
Final drive	3.31:1

BODY/CHASSIS

Construction	Separate chassis; part steel, part alloy body on ash frame
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SUSPENSION

Front	Independent by vertical sliding pillars; coil springs; telescopic dampers
Rear	Live axle with semi-elliptic leaf springs; lever arm dampers

STEERING

Type	Cam and peg
Assistance	None

BRAKES

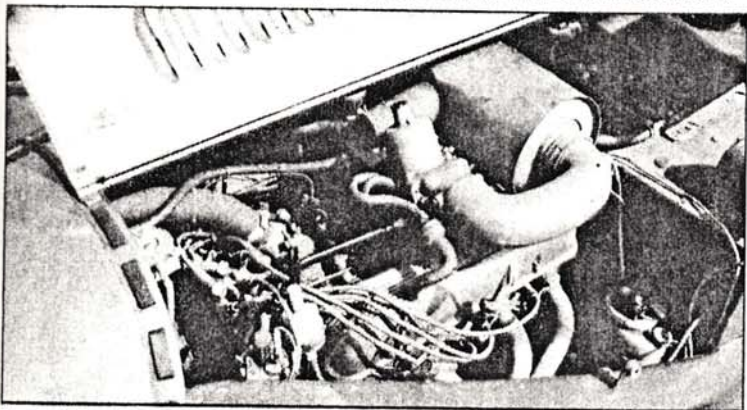
Front	Discs, 11.0 in dia
Rear	Drums, 9.0 in dia
Park	On rear
Servo	Yes
Circuit	Split front/rear
Rear valve	No
Adjustment	Manual

WHEELS/TYRES

Type	Alloy, 6½ x 15 in
Tyres	Pirelli P6, 205/60 VR 15
Pressures	20/20 psi F/R (normal) 22/22 psi F/R (full load/high speed)

ELECTRICAL

Battery	12V, 50 Ah
Earth	Negative
Generator	Alternator, 65 amp
Fuses	3
Headlights	
type	Cibie Halogen
dip	100 W total
main	120 W total



Centre-hinged bonnet allows good access

Make: Morgan

Model: Plus 8

Maker: Morgan Motor Co Ltd, Pickersleigh Rd, Malvern Link, Worcs WR14 2LL

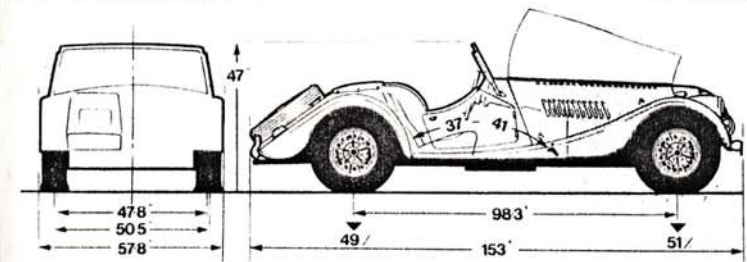
Tel: 06845-3104

Price: £8425.00 plus £702.08 Car Tax plus £1369.06 VAT equals £10,496.14

The Rivals

Other possible rivals include the Datsun 280ZX Targa (£10,871), Ferrari 308 GTSi (£22,699), Fiat X1/9 (£6,345), Mercedes 280SL (£16,930), and Panther Brooklands 4.2 (£22,950)

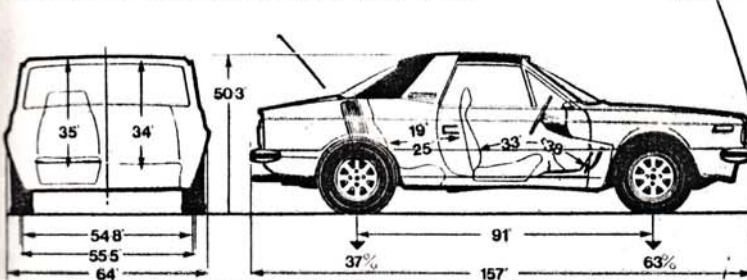
MORGAN PLUS 8 £10,496



Power, bhp/rpm	155/2500
Torque, lb ft/rpm	198/2500
Tyres	205/60 VR 15
Weight, cwt	17.8
Max speed, mph	125e
0-60 mph, sec	6.7
30-50 mph in 4th, sec	4.1
Overall mpg	20.8
Touring mpg	—
Fuel grade, stars	4
Boot capacity, cu ft	N/A
Test date	May 15, 1982

Perhaps the last remaining example of the true sports car. Combination of vintage chassis and low-profile Pirelli P6 tyres gives tremendous grip on smooth bends (though bumps can make life interesting). Rover V8 has huge low and mid-range punch and 5-speed gearbox is a joy. Classic looks, fine finish. Nothing like it in the right conditions.

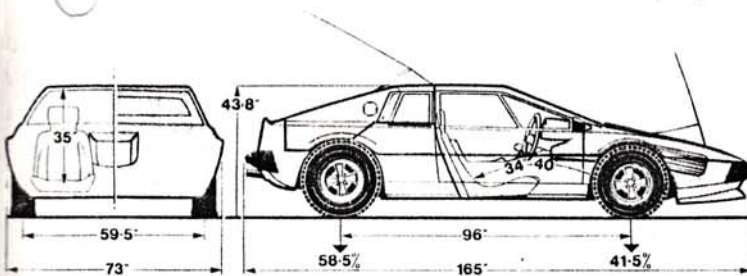
LANCIA MONTE CARLO SPYDER £9,240



Power, bhp/rpm	120/6000
Torque, lb ft/rpm	126/3400
Tyres	185/65 HR 14
Weight, cwt	19.7
Max speed, mph	115.8
0-60 mph, sec	9.0
30-50 mph in 4th, sec	6.9
Overall mpg	23.3
Touring mpg	28.0
Fuel grade, stars	4
Boot capacity, cu ft	6.3
Test date	May 30, 1981

A car of uneven ability, Lancia's revised Montecarlo no longer misbehaves in the wet, has excellent roadholding and good handling and brakes, a comfortable ride, and good performance with reasonable economy. Comfortable for medium size drivers but badly cramped for tall ones, instruments badly placed, and heating and ventilation poor. Worst fault is excessive engine noise which some testers considered unacceptable; others enjoyed the car despite its failings.

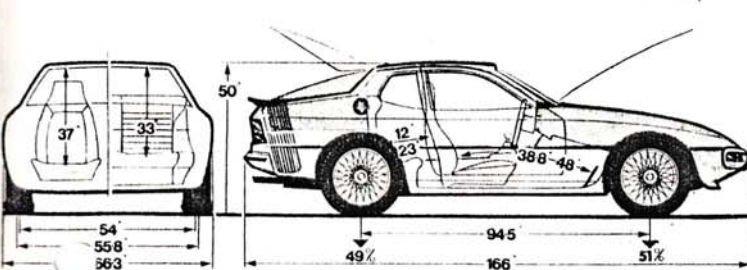
LOTUS ESPRIT S3 £13,979



Power, bhp/rpm	160/6500
Torque, lb ft/rpm	160/5000
Tyres	195/60 VR 15; 235/60 VR 15
Weight, cwt	21.0
Max speed, mph	135e
0-60 mph, sec	6.5
30-50 mph in 4th, sec	6.9
Overall mpg	23.1
Touring mpg	24.5
Fuel grade, stars	4
Boot capacity, cu ft	6.6
Test date	August 22, 1981

A very much improved car in its latest S3 form, with outstanding handling and roadholding and a comfortable ride. Excellent performance backed up by impressive economy, safe brakes and a reasonably good gearchange. Greatly reduced noise levels make it much more pleasant to drive, but very poor visibility (worsened by stray reflections in instruments and glass division) is an inherent fault. Fair accommodation for two people with soft luggage.

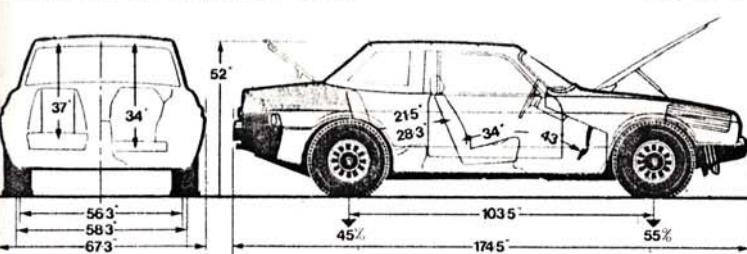
PORSCHE 924 TURBO £13,998



Power, bhp/rpm	170/5500
Torque, lb ft/rpm	181/3500
Tyres	185/70 VR 15
Weight, cwt	23.7
Max speed, mph	140†
0-60 mph, sec	7.0
30-50 mph in 4th, sec	8.8
Overall mpg	21.0
Touring mpg	—
Fuel grade, stars	4
Boot capacity, cu ft	4.8
Test Date	January 26, 1980
†Estimated	

Turbocharged version of Porsche's 2-litre, four-cylinder, front-engined but rear wheel drive 924. Performance when the turbocharger is on boost is in the supercar class, but is poor at low speeds and revs — claimed to be better on latest models, as is fuel consumption, which was excellent even in 1980 form. Too much road noise, poor ventilation, low-speed handling and gearchange are minor flaws in an otherwise superb machine.

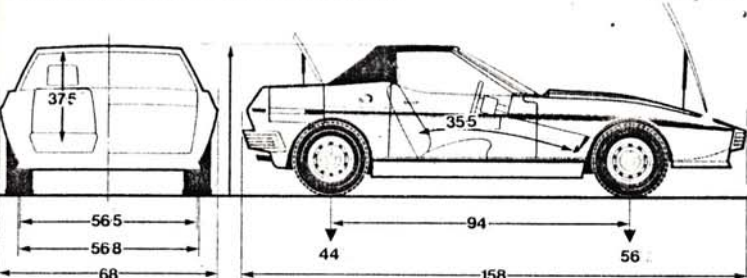
RELIANT SCIMITAR GTC £12,490



Power, bhp/rpm	135/5200
Torque, lb ft/rpm	152/3000
Tyres	185 HR 14
Weight, cwt	26.3
Max speed, mph	114.1
0-60 mph, sec	9.7
30-50 mph in 4th, sec	8.5
Overall mpg	23.7
Touring mpg	27.4
Fuel grade, stars	4
Boot capacity, cu ft	6.6
Test date	June 14, 1980

Using the same formula of four seats and a soft top, the Scimitar GTC plugs the market gap left by the Triumph Stag. Like the GTE on which it's based, the GTC, now powered by the 2.8-litre Ford V6, combines flexible performance with impressive economy in an attractive, if expensive, package. Precise handling and excellent hood are plus points a hard ride, dated interior and poor gearchange earn black marks.

TVR TASMEN CONVERTIBLE £12,744



Power, bhp/rpm	160/5700
Torque, lb ft/rpm	162/4300
Tyres	205/60 VR 14
Weight, cwt	21.5
Max speed, mph	128e
0-60 mph, sec	7.8
30-50 mph in 4th, sec	8.9
Overall mpg	22.4
Touring mpg	—
Fuel grade, stars	4
Boot capacity, cu ft	3.5
Test date	April 18, 1981

Plugging the gap between ordinary and exotic sports cars, and one of the few traditional convertibles left, the Tasmin has strong performance (albeit not in the same league as the Morgan), powerful brakes, satisfying transmission and comfortable interior for two. Plush finish, good ventilation and respectable ride reflect TVR's increasing maturity. Good fuel consumption but too much wind noise; steering kick-back we criticised in our test is now claimed to have been eliminated.