

CROWD CONTROL

After watching the Elkhart Lake road race, I began to wonder if the problem [crowd control] is being met with the most effective measures. The crowd there (estimated at 40,000 to 50,000) showed those of us who were flagging at corners the complete inability of a few to cope with so many, no matter what steps were taken. The crowd's only desire seemed to be to fight amongst themselves for the privilege of being hit and spread-eagled on a radiator. This sacrificial desire varied with the popularity of the car and its driver. While an MG seemed incapable of instilling this feeling, a Cunningham's passing brought a rather frightening glint into the eyes of all. Those in the front ranks who seemed content to just watch were given a helping push forward into the paths of the cars by those behind (good samaritanism or eagerness of those behind to get forward and meet their demise?).

It seems to me that the only answer to good crowd control is the establishment of paddocks and enclosures at various vantage points around the circuit. Obviously, all the enclosures would not have the "best" view; however, everyone that goes to the theater cannot sit in 8th row center. There are probably people who would like to sit on the stage and watch the actors, but rules require them to sit in the seats provided for them. Why cannot this rule apply to circuit racing? Certainly many would like to sit on the curb with their legs stretched out on the tarmac, but for the safety of both drivers and spectators, they should be confined to predetermined areas where their actions can be regulated and where needs such as refreshments, etc., can be easily attended to. The practice has long been established in England, and establishment of it here may in some way delay that unfortunate time when one regrettable accident may spell finis to one of the finest and most colorful amateur sports this country has seen.

Chicago, Ill. Milton McN. Traer

BUYING A USED CAR

I intend purchasing a used car soon . . . something in the \$700-\$1000 class. The I admire the beauty of some of the Detroit products, I confess a complete ignorance of their technical workings.

I thought perhaps you could enlighten me as to some of the pitfalls a used car buyer can fall into. Any information you can supply me will be gratefully appreciated.

Chicago, Illinois Don Lemm
Unless you are a mechanic or a professional car buyer, there is only one way to buy a car safely. Take the car you are interested in to a reputable mechanic. Pay him to check it from stem to stern. Then you'll know the worst . . . and the best. And you'll save money in the long run.—Ed.

JAGUAR XK-120 VS. CHRYSLER SARATOGA

I disagree with your account of a Chrysler Saratoga out-accelerating an XK-120. The XK must have been a sick dog.

In the Spring, at our 1/4 mile standing start trials, the fastest XK time was 16.80 sec. The dog XK's were in the low 17 sec.

My blown MG TC's time was 18.25 sec. The quarter mile was measured by a surveyor and an electric timer was used. It was most accurate. The Saratoga's best time was 18.70 sec. [Road and Track's road test], so it could hardly outdo any XK around Columbus.

Columbus, Ohio Philip B. Miller
Our Jaguar XK-120 test (R&T May, '51) produced a standing 1/4 mile in 18.3 sec. Admittedly, the clutch on this car was in poor condition. Tests by our British counterpart, "Motor," gave 17.0 sec. However, we only said the Chrysler could out-accelerate the Jag to 60 mph.—Ed.

SUBSCRIPTION CROOK

Last August a man who said he was a salesman for Road and Track came around soliciting subscriptions. I gave him a subscription for 12 months and paid him by check.

He gave me a receipt and signed his name. I have not yet received my first copy. He is a crook!

Dublin, Georgia Fred Flanders
There are no subscription agents working directly for Road and Track. Only well-established major subscription agencies are authorized to sell subscriptions for us. Don't be gypped . . . ask for credentials and make your check out to the agency rather than the individual.

—Ed. (Continued on page 52)

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ROAD and TRACK

The Motor Enthusiasts Magazine

FOREIGN CAR SERVICE

Altho it may be pleasant to be "carried away" by the beauty, performance, economy, or prestige of an imported automobile, a practical consideration of service available must be made.

When buying a foreign car, inquire as to the service facilities available, the stock of spare parts, and . . . the cost of these necessities. Many manufacturers, British in particular, have made great strides toward a realistic solution of these problems . . . some foreign car dealers now offer service and parts stocks equal to, or better than, that available for any Detroit product. But, like the domestic cars, there are a few who concentrate on sales and neglect service. Likewise, these are a few repair-bill-hijackers . . . who should be avoided like the plague.

These few "bad apples" can spoil the pie unless they are eliminated . . . and this the manufacturers and distributors should do for their own welfare. The consumer should protect himself by obtaining unbiased opinions and actual prices before placing his business. Avoid that "bad taste" by choosing a "good apple."

LONELY MG TD MARK II

Some of the American sports car race rules must amaze our British friends . . . for example, the case of the Mark II MG.

When the TD series MG first made its appearance, sports car racing enthusiasts immediately put up a cry of "suspension too soft", and "needs more oomph." So . . . obliging Lord Nuffield brought forth the Mark II version of the TD.

This should have made everyone happy . . . here was a model which was safer and more reliable in competition—slightly faster . . . a true stock production sports car. But look, some of the recent race rules have given it a double whammy by specifically barring Mark II from competition in the under-1500 cc stock production sports car class. Those who purchased the Mark II with the intention of competing in stock category now find they have a racing orphan.

Stock production *should* mean that at least 50 cars have been built and 500 are on order . . . regardless of improvements.

We should maintain fairness in sports car racing . . . why penalize a manufacturer for producing a better automobile.

RALLY VS. RELIABILITY RUN

Of all motor sports, the rally is the most universal. And well named, too, for every type of vehicle and enthusiast may join the "get-together."

Recently, however, the misnomer "reliability run" has been substituted for the long-accepted title when naming such events. Consider the illogical application . . . what reliability is being tested or proven? If the vehicle is unable to with-

stand mild touring conditions of a legal-speed Sunday drive (which a rally is), then an overhaul or new car is indicated. What else can be measured in terms of "reliability" . . . watches, road signs, contestants? No, this terminology died with the advent of reliable motoring . . . 25 years ago!

Besides, why use such a long phrase when "rally" is quite adequate?

December, 1951

Vol. 3, No. 5

CONTENTS

Palm Springs Road Race	4
Aston Martin Road Test	6
Reno Road Race	6
Technical Correspondence	8
Misc. Rambles by the Tech. Ed.	10
Alfa Romeo by Touring	11
Super Gizmo	13
Mercedes 300S	14
Salon—Saoutchik Talbot	16
Speed Was His Spur	17
Rolls-Royce	18
Talbot by Stabilimenti Farina	22
Ferrari by Ghia	24
Maserati 2000 by Vignale	26
Saoutchik Talbot	27
47 Honest MPG	28
1952 Simca	30
2.7 Blown Alfa	31
Zagato	32
OSCA 1100	34
Dat Queen	36
Dolomiti Race	37
Pinin Farina	38
Convoir Race	40
	41 & 51

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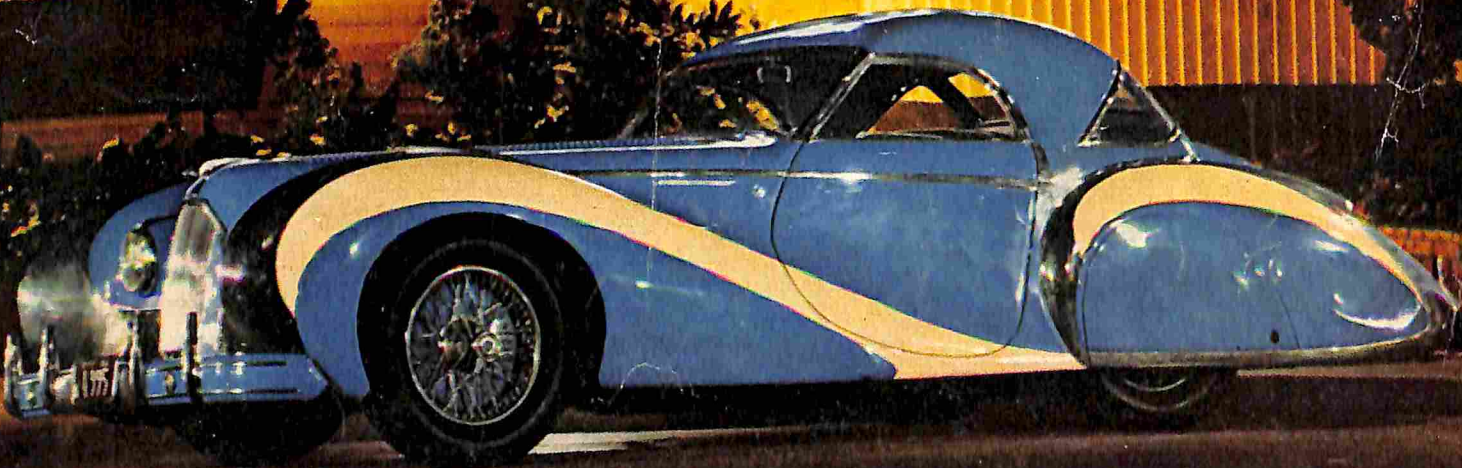


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SEE PAGE 17

The Motor Enthusiast's Magazine