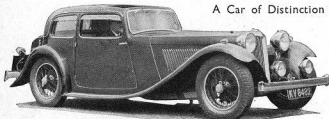


## RATIONALIZED ROAD TESTS

## THE 20 H.P. S.S.I SALOON

A Car of Distinction with Fine Road Characteristics



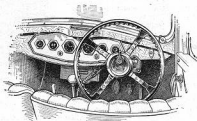
The handsome lines of the S.S.I are due to good proportions—viewed from every angle.

SPORTS cars have passed through a stage of evolution during the past few years and instead of the raucous machine of high horse power, popular a few years ago, the modern sports car is a refined and trim machine capable of really high speeds yet withal quite docile and easily handled. The 20 h.p. S.S.I saloon is definitely a car of the sporting type, yet from the points of view of quietness, smoothness in running, soft suspension and body equipment, the model under review compares in a very favourable light with its ordinary touring counterpart.

## Not Exaggerated.

Without making an attempt to exaggerate the ultra modern lines of the car the designers have somehow hit upon a layout which is at once striking to the eye, yet the body is of quite reasonable capacity. Four people and their luggage can have a very comfortable ride in the S.S.I, the front passenger and driver having more than an ordinary amount of leg room, whilst wells in the rear compartment give a high degree of comfort and sufficient room for all practical purposes. Despite an exceedingly low roof, a 6-ft. driver can sit at the wheel with his hat on and never once touch the roof, even on a bumpy road.

This view from the driving-seat gives a good impression of the ornamental instrument board.



It is difficult to decide which feature in any good-quality modern car is the outstanding one, and we feel something of this in describing the behaviour of the S.S.I, for it performs very well indeed in all important matters. One might say that a good 20 h.p. engine ought to be powerful nowadays and the gearbox ought to handle with facility and be quiet, at any rate on the three higher ratios, whilst brakes and so on should be of sound design and construction. In the matter of suspension, however, there are many divergent opinions which confuse the issue for the designer. We can pay a compliment to the producers of the S.S.I by stating that an ideal combination of spring strength and damping effect seems to have been achieved in the 20 h.p. car under review.

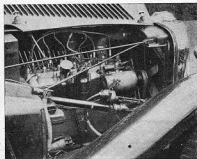
In the first place it may be mentioned that the car always seems to be under control, no matter whether one is traversing really rough road surfaces at around the 50 m.p.h. mark, or streaking down a hill at about 80 m.p.h. The front of the car remains

steady and the steering does not appear to be at all prone to shimmy or wobble. The rear springs are over 42 ins. long and are outriggered from the frame side members. Thus a wide spring-base is achieved, thereby helping to create a steadiness on corners which is so essential to good road characteristics. One can corner at the maximum speed permitted by tyre adhesion without any sense of insecurity and, thanks to a low centre of gravity, there is, within practical limits, no possibility of turning the car over.

## The Performance.

In traffic the engine fires regularly at a speed as low as 5 m.p.h. on top gear and will accelerate readily without it being necessary to handle the throttle with any great amount of finesse. On the other hand, by utilizing the gearbox with its silent second, third and top speeds one can slip through traffic very quickly indeed and quite unobtrusively.

It is, however, on the open road where one really begins to appreciate the charm of the car. To sit behind the long bonnet and scuttle and feel the car literally devour a long ribbon of road has to be experienced to be appreciated. On ordinary level going the speedometer, which, by the way, was carefully checked and found to be reasonably accurate, can be run up to 77 m.p.h. with little fuss, whilst under slightly favourable circumstances such



This illustration shows that the long bonnet is not mere ornament, being very satisfactorily "full of engine."

## THE 20 H.P. S.S.I. SALOON—Contd.

as on a down-grade or with a following wind, 80 m.p.h. can readily be exceeded—good going for a relatively large car with a more or less orthodox engine.

Hill-climbing matches the top-gear performance on the level, for the car can maintain a steady speed of 40 m.p.h. up a gradient of 1 in 10 without any suspicion of faltering, whilst on the highest indirect gear the car will literally roar up hills of the 1-in-8 or 1-in-9 order. A point worth recording at this juncture is the fact that a speed of nearly 60 m.p.h. can be reached on third, so that tourists in hilly country should have no qualms about tackling long, steep passes where most of the climbing would have to be done in third or even second.

### 1 in 6 at 25 m.p.h.

To climb a slope of 1 in 6 to 1 in 7 at around 25 m.p.h. is no mean achievement, yet we actually did this in second gear on the S.S.I. Gear changing is a perfectly simple matter providing the clutch is fully depressed. The short gear lever which, by the way, is very handily placed on the top of a "remote" control, requires little care in actuation, for the synchronizing clutches to the gears which are most frequently used, i.e., second, third and top, ensure that the meshing dog-clutches are spinning at equal speeds.

In a car with the speed proclivities of this S.S. model the brakes should be fully up to their work, and in this matter there is no cause for complaint as the car can be brought to rest from 40 m.p.h. in slightly more than 60 ft. using the pedal only. At higher speeds the efficiencies are also high, so that the car may justifiably be termed thoroughly "safe." Bendix type shoes operating in 12½-in. diameter Millenite cast brake-drums are free from any grabbing tendency, although the duo-servo mechanism gives a relatively light pedal pressure. A point of interest is that the hand brake is accessibly placed, and as it actuates the



Fine finish is also characteristic of the interior. Note the deep seats.

shoes in all four drums it can be used in an emergency.

The bodywork is really well equipped, the interior being upholstered in Vaumol hide throughout, a range of colours being available to match-up with the general scheme. A special windscreen has a swept top rail and radiused corners. It opens from the bottom upon concealed hinges, which make allowance for the dimensional interference caused by the curved rail. Trafficators are concealed in the body sides and Triplex glass is fitted.

There is a large luggage trunk built unitwise with the rear panel. This has recently been considerably increased in size so that large suitcases and golf clubs may now be carried quite easily. A spare wheel cover is cellulosed to tone with the main colour scheme.

Altogether, then, the S.S.I. is a car for the connoisseur who requires an automobile of outstanding appearance with a good all-round performance. The price of £345 is distinctly moderate, and as the fuel consumption is over 18 m.p.g., discriminating motorists of moderate means should be able to indulge their taste.

## TABULATED DATA

### CHASSIS DETAILS.

**Engine:** Six cylinders; side valves; coil ignition; chromium iron cylinder block; bore, 73 mm.; stroke, 106 mm.; (2,663 c.c.); tax, £20.

**Gearbox:** Four forward speeds with synchromesh engagement for second, third and top; central remote control; ratios, 4.75, 6.52, 10.04, and 17.1 to 1.

### PERFORMANCE.

**Speeds on Gears:** Top, 77 m.p.h.; third, 57 m.p.h.; second, 35 m.p.h. Minimum speed on top gear, 5 m.p.h.

**Acceleration:** Standstill through the gears to 70 m.p.h., 37 secs.

**Tapley Performance Figures:** Maximum pull in lb. per ton on gradient: top, 230 lb.; third 320 lb.; second, 520 lb. Corresponding gradients climbable at a steady speed are, 1 in 10, 1 in 6.8, and 1 in 4 respectively.

**Petrol Consumption:** When driven hard, 18.6 m.p.g.

**Brake Efficiencies:** By Tapley meter, using the pedal only, 90 per cent. from 30 m.p.h.; 80 per cent. from 50 m.p.h. Corresponding stopping distances are 14 ft. from 20 m.p.h.; 63 ft. from 40 m.p.h.

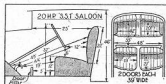
### DIMENSIONS ETC.

**Leading Measurements:** Wheelbase 9 ft. 11 ins.; track, 4 ft. 5½ ins.; overall length, 15 ft. 6 ins.; width, 5 ft. 5½ ins.; height, 4 ft. 7 ins.

**Weight:** As tested with two up 1 ton 7 cwt.

**Turning Circle:** 38 ft. diameter.

**Price:** £345.



In addition to a useful top gear graph, the S.S.I. possesses excellent acceleration on the indirect ratios.

