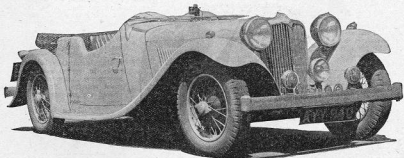


"THE MOTOR" RATIONALIZED ROAD TESTS

10,000 MILES WITH AN

S.S.I SPORTS TOURER

Comfort, High Performance and a Fine
Appearance the Main Features of a
Distinctive Model

THE 20 h.p. S.S.I. sports tourer has a very distinctive appeal. For £340 one can obtain a large, roomy and well proportioned car, capable of over 80 m.p.h. In addition, the general performance is excellent and the straightforward design and slow-running engine make travel restful and maintenance a matter of simplicity.

With the car reviewed, 10,000 miles has been covered in four months. A broken fan belt on one occasion has been the sum total of departures from reliability, and one of the strongest impressions remains the effortless performance and comfort which have made really long journeys untiring and rapid.

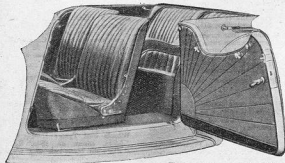
When the car was purchased from Henlys, Ltd., the running-in was begun according to a rigid schedule. Colloidal graphite was added to the sump and an upper cylinder lubricant was used in the petrol. For 1,000 miles 40 m.p.h. was not exceeded in top gear, and for the second 1,000 miles the speedometer needle was kept on the

right side of 50 m.p.h. During the third 1,000 miles, the maximum speed was gradually increased as the engine and gearbox became noticeably freer.

The results of this early handling seem to justify the care taken, for the engine, recently decarbonized, shows no traces of wear, and is extremely sweet and smooth running. Of straightforward side-valve design, the engine owes much of this smoothness to a stiff 7-bearing crankshaft with large diameter main and big-end bearings. The pistons are aluminium,



An excellent driving position
and convenient controls add
to the charm.



The 36-in. doors remove most of the
objections to a two-door body. They
make access to the comfortable rear
seats quite free.

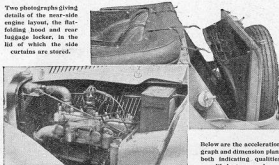
like the cylinder head—which gives a compression ratio of approximately 7-1—and the cylinder block is of chromium iron, indicating a long life.

Probably the first thing which impresses the driver when he takes over the wheel is the delightful synchromesh gearbox. Upward changes from first, second and third gears can be made at speeds as high as 25 m.p.h., 40 m.p.h. and 65 m.p.h. if desired. The speed with which one can change up has a most invigorating effect upon the acceleration, so that the figure for the standing 1-mile is a good one, meaning that one quickly regains a high cruising speed. This liveliness also makes one almost invariably the first away after a traffic-light delay.

THE S.S.I SPORTS TOURER

Contd.

Two photographs giving details of the near-side engine layout, the flat-folding hood and rear luggage locker, in the lid of which the side curtains are stored.



Below are the acceleration graph and dimension plan, both indicating qualities likely to appeal.

Equally important to the driver is the position of the controls. These are all well placed, with the racing-type central handbrake lever a model for position which could be followed with advantage by many other manufacturers, so closely does it lie to the left hand. The clutch and brake pedals are not quite so light in operation as a woman might wish, but are positive. The steering wheel, spring-spoked and of 18 ins. diameter, is well placed and a light grip gives full control.

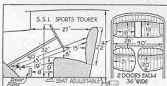
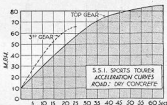
The steering gear ratio represents an excellent compromise. It is not particularly heavy when manoeuvring at low speeds, yet for general fast work is sensitive—in the good sense—and free from shock and dither. An idealist might wish for a slightly more direct, higher-geared feel when the car is going fast on a gusty day or for winding roads, but most drivers would find nothing to criticize in this direction.

The Performance

This brings us to the general performance. The low centre of gravity provided by the underlying frame, in conjunction with the long flat springs of low periodicity, makes the comfort of riding and the road holding outstandingly good, provided that the shock absorber adjustment is correct. This needs careful attention to give the best results. A personal preference inclines us to keep the André shock absorbers very tight on the front and very nearly as tight on the back. So adjusted, there is no roll, no pitching, little harshness, yet corners can be taken very quickly.

Two illusions frequently created by this model should be dispelled. One regards the visibility. In spite of the low build and long bonnet this is outstandingly good. Even with the original seating position a long section of the near-side wing could be seen below the sidelamp by a driver of medium height, whereas now, with the driving seat raised an inch (simply because a high seating position is a fad of the owner), the forward-view is remarkable.

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TABULATED DATA—S.S.I TOURER

CHASSIS DETAILS

Engine: Six cylinders; side by side valves; coil ignition; seven-bearing crankshaft; 73 mm. by 106 mm. (2,663 c.c.) Tax, £15.

Gearbox: Four forward speeds, with central remote control; synchromesh engagement of second, third and top gears. Ratios, 4.25, 5.63, 8.98 and 15.3 to 1.

PERFORMANCE

Speeds on Gears: Top, 84.5 m.p.h. (screen flat); third, 65 m.p.h.; second, 40 m.p.h. Minimum speed on top gear, 8 m.p.h.

Accelerations: From standstill through the gears to 60 m.p.h., 23 secs. Standing ¼-mile, 22½ secs. (average speed, 40 m.p.h.)

Topley Performance Figures: Maximum pull in lb. per ton on gradient, top, 220 lb.; third, 300 lb.; second, 460 lb. Corresponding gradients climbable at a steady speed are, 1 in 10, 1 in 7.5 and 1 in 4.75, respectively.

The other illusion concerns the ground clearance. Again the low build gives the impression that this must be very little. Actually the car has climbed Wrynose Pass and Hard Knott Pass, in the Lake District, without "grounding," and both are rough and rocky roads. Incidentally both climbs were made in second gear, except for a momentary change into bottom for the worst hairpins. This little trip also proved the adequacy of the steering lock.

Long Journeys

Long journeys to the West Country, Wales and Scotland, have proved the car's capacity for satisfying performance in convincing manner. A cruising speed of round about 70 m.p.h. can be held indefinitely on good roads, and the springing deals with bad roads in a way which makes

high averages possible, whilst the bump is taken right out of Lancashire cobblestones.

The detail work is appreciated by experienced motorists. The Triplex screen, for example, folds flat or opens upwards. The rear seats are as low as the front, giving really good protection and seating comfort, whilst a permanent armrest prevents sway. A luggage trunk at the back will take one large or two small suitcases. The weather equipment is well-fitting and rigid and the door-cutaways allow free elbow movement without admitting a draught to the small of the back. Head room with the hood up and leg room in all the seats are really good. A Wilnot stabilizer bumper is fitted at the front.

Petrol Consumption: Driven hard, 18 m.p.g.

Braking Efficiencies: Measured by Topley meter, using the pedal only, 92 per cent. from 30 m.p.h.; 85 per cent. from 40 m.p.h. Corresponding stopping distances are 32 ft. from 30 m.p.h. and 62 ft. from 40 m.p.h.

DIMENSIONS

Leading Measurements: Wheelbase, 9 ft. 11 ins.; track, 4 ft. 5½ ins.; overall length, 15 ft. 6 ins.; overall width, 5 ft. 5½ ins.; height (hood up) 4 ft. 9 ins. Ground clearance, 6½ ins.

Turning Circles: Left and right, 40 ft.

Wheels and Tyres: Dunlop "90" 5.5-in. covers, on 18-in. Rudge-Whitworth centre-lock wire wheels.

Weight: As tested with two up, 29½ cwt.; unladen, 26½ cwt.

Price: £340.