

# Powering Your MGB —

Some further considerations offered  
by Harry Mac Lean

After reading the articles in the past month's newsletter I thought that I would add an opinion. I mean Rick is always looking for stuff to put into the paper. The article I recently read dealt with putting a V-8 engine in your MGB. While this is a nice looking and high horsepower option for your MG, always keep a couple of things in mind.

1. The availability of engines. While Chevy and Ford V-8's may be readily available, the 215 C.I. Buick/Olds/Rover engine will be harder to find as well as cost lots of dollars.
2. The weight of these engines in your MG. Chevy and Ford small blocks both weigh around 550 lbs as an assembly; that's without such things as flywheels or alternators, etc. But true we are talking here about a small block with the possibility of 700-800 horsepower.

Now we get to the meat of things.

3. Your drivetrain. Transmissions can be changed but rear-ends cannot be reworked without a lot of trouble and with 700 or even 250 horsepower an MGB rear end will not last all that long.
4. Your braking system. Now MGB's are light little cars weighing in the neighborhood of about 2,500 lbs with driver and passenger. The braking system wasn't designed to stuff a small block V-8 engine into it. Plain and simple. It has a 9 inch rotor and drum brakes on the rear. As far as I know different systems are not available for MGB without considerable expense.

Another option for MGB's is the recently released BLOWER kit from MOSS. This kit is a bolt on option. All of the above things would not be a concern as you would add only about 200 lbs (maybe) to your front end. Plus it would be Cheaper and, according to Moss, reliable. It is supposed to add 70% torque increase which starts at about 1,200 rpm and goes to 4,750 rpm. This is the most useful area in which the engine runs and drives the car. The horsepower increase is said to be 95%, but this is misleading when

you read their own charts. This is because they are taking the horsepower output at 4,500 rpm on a stock engine and 5,500 rpm on the blower modified engine. All the parts are included in this kit including an Alternator and a cast iron water pump. They evidently don't think the aluminum water pump will hold up. This system is priced at \$2,895 from Moss.

One of the only problems is that this is only available for 1966-74 MGB's and your engine better be in decent shape for this.

One other option that can be considered is the V-6. Now why would you put a V-6 in a MGB when you can install a V-8? Well here's a couple of reasons. First, they are a heck of a lot lighter than a V-8 I'll deal mostly with the Chevrolet small block V-6 due to experience with it but keep in mind if you are a Ford lover it is just as feasible. Secondly, you can install one of these to any year MGB with less much trouble than is required for a V-8. Let's deal with the 2.8-3.4 60 degree V-6. Why 60 degree? Well because it is a more straight up motor and hence it takes less room on the sides of your engine compartment. I have seen this done to a MG coupe. The 2.8 motor with fuel injection and a 5 speed transmission was installed in this car. It was pirated from a Camaro. The majority of Camaros built from 1987-present were had 2.8 , 3.1 or 3.4 liter engines in them. How many do you think are in junkyards? A lot, so I'm talking availability here. By the way a 2.8 with fuel injection in stock form puts out about 140 hp — and you get better driveability with fuel injection vs. a carburetor. A 3.4L engine puts out about 180-200 horsepower in stock form. The V-6 would give you more room, just what you need. in an early MGB. The other big advantage to the 60 degree engine that I've discussed here is that it actually weighs LESS than a current 4 cylinder MGB engine. So now the only thing you have to actually worry about is your rear end when you add that much horsepower. Also the Ford camp has the Mustang II that has the same motor as Ranger pickups. One thing to keep in mind here is do not use a front wheel drive motor in an MGB, the reason being is the starter motor is on the wrong side. Keep in mind what I've given you is an opinion and nothing more and offer some things to mull over when trying to decide whether to go to a V-8, V-6, or what have you.

Happy motoring



*The Moss MGB Supercharger unit*



*A 60° V6 installation*