Stay Cool Dude! *by Harry Mac Lean*

I recently read an article in which a so called expert claimed that water is the best coolant to use in an MG, or any early car for that matter. This could not be further from the truth. Overheating problems can be caused by many things other than just hot weather. For a couple of reasons, you should be running a 50/50 mix of antifreeze. First, if you have that mixture in your car you don't need to worry about Michigan winters as it will be protected down to about -40°. Secondly, antifreeze boils at a higher temperature than water, so will help prevent boilover. If you are having a overheating problem with your LBC then the very first thing you should check is the radiator cap. Later LBCs are pressurized at about 15 lbs and for every one pound of pressurization the boiling temperature of the coolant increases 3°. Pure water boils at 212°F but under 10 pounds of pressure, it won't boil until it reaches 242°F degrees. If you use a specialized radiator coolant the boil-over temperature will be even higher.

Radiator caps are checked using a radiator pressure tester and it takes only about 5 minutes to do this. The next thing to check is the radiator itself. This can be done by getting the car hot, that means driving it about 20 miles or so, then shutting the car off and putting your hand against the radiator core in several spots — it should be warm all over. If it has cool or cold spots then the radiator either needs to be "rodded" out or replaced. If there are loose fins on the radiator then the whole thing should be replaced because that is a sign of impending failure.
If the car continues to overheat then you probably should have the head gasket checked, this being an MG weakness. Don't forget the thermostat. A 180°F 'stat' is a good choice for an MGB. Anything lower and your car will not get the best fuel mileage because running cooler reduces the fuel burn rate inside the engine.

One last but very important thing. IF YOU EVER OVERHEAT YOUR CAR, WAIT UNTIL IT COOLS DOWN BEFORE OPENING THE RADIATOR CAP! Otherwise, a very dangerous situation could occur that can result in bad scolding, especially if you hear cracking and popping noises inside the cooling system. Also, if you wait, you may not have to use so much coolant fluid to top-up the system.