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BRITISH SPORTS CARS

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FRAZER NASH

One look is enough to tell you that the Frazer Nash Mille Miglia is built for racing. An ingenious spaceframe enables its center of gravity, and therefore the entire car, to be kept extremely low. It is clad in an aerodynamic alloy jacket.

Even before the war the creations of Frazer Nash Ltd, established in 1924 by Captain Archibald Goodman Frazer Nash, but under the ownership of the Aldington family since 1926, enjoyed the discreet charm of exclusivity. In the 10 years after 1947 things did not change: a population of only about 100 cars flew the flag for this small company. Nonetheless, London Road in Isleworth, Middlesex was a premier address simply because of the great impression its products made on the racetrack.

All Frazer Nash cars from the post-war period featured two constants of German origin. The chassis, a tubular frame with independent front suspension with A-arms and a transverse leaf spring and live rear axle with longitudinal torsion bars, was designed by former BMW engineer, Dr Fritz Fiedler. He continued his interrupted career in England, as a kind of living reparation payment and human encore for the design plans of the engine for the BMW 328, now owned by H.J. Aldington.

In slightly modified form this found a home under the hoods of Bristols and was also made available to Frazer Nash—a six-cylinder model with side-mounted camshaft and cubic capacity of 1971cc, delivering 110 bhp and even more in various engine tunes, with the relevant four-speed gearbox. The company's various creations took on an individual profile thanks to the different bodies, all in-house designs and sometimes strikingly attractive.

First came the Grand Prix which, despite the hints at the loneliness of the single-seater in its name, was in fact a two-seater. Its similarity to the BMW 328 prototypes with the large vent in the hood, which were successful in the 1940 Mille Miglia that had been downgraded to the Gran Premio Brescia, was no accident: it probably was one of them. After its rebirth as a British car it suffered the fate of the loner whose line dies with him.

It was followed by the High Speed, also known as the Competition, a narrow, cigar-shaped two-seater with close-fitting, motorcycle-type fenders, removable headlights, an exhaust system fitted outside the body, and the spare wheel on the left side of the body, the whole lot tipping the scales at just 1510 lb (685 kg). It was available with spoked or solid wheels and a whole range of gear ratios and rear-axle reduction ratios, the least expensive costing £2237 including purchase tax. Externally only the slightly modified BMW kidney grill revealed its continental origins.

Finishing as runner-up behind a 3.3-liter Bugatti on its debut at Silverstone was just the first entry in a long catalog

MILLE MIGLIA

of sporting success. Following its third place at Le Mans in 1949 with Norman Culpan and H.J. Aldington at the wheel behind the victorious Ferrari Barchetta Tipo 166 driven by Lord Selsden and Luigi Chinetti, the High Speed was renamed the Le Mans Replica. This model achieved 25 sales and dominated the 2-liter class on British tracks. Yet it also had greater ambitions further afield: driving the nimble Frazer Nash, Stirling Moss won the British Empire Trophy in 1951 while Franco Cortese was victorious in the Targa Florio of the same year, the first win by a British car since the inception of the Madonie race 50 years previously.

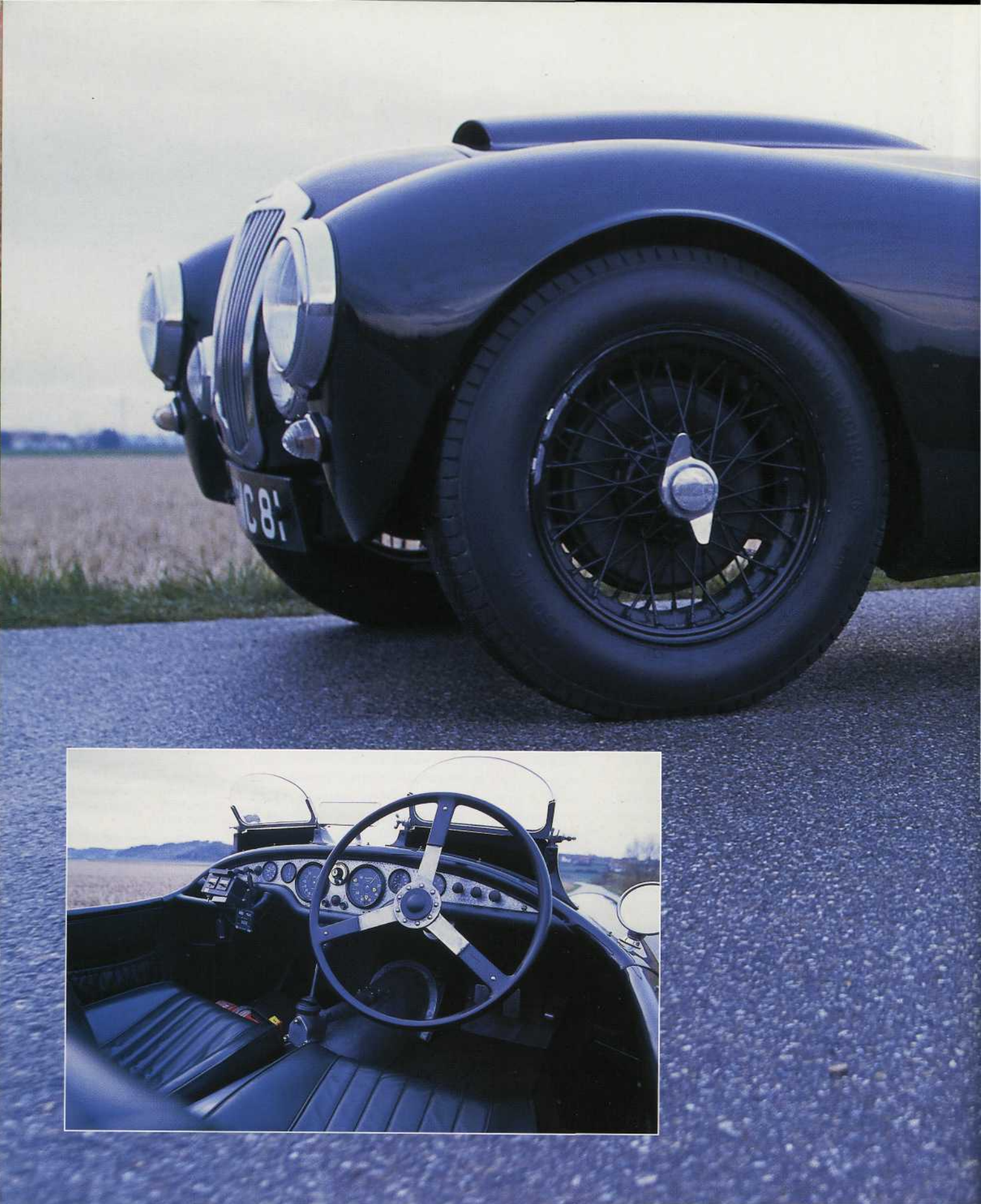
But the real proof of the Le Mans Replica's versatility was demonstrated in 1952 with victories in the Sebring 12 Hours, the Rallye Soleil, and the Rallye Aix–Madrid–Aix. Its endurance capabilities had already been demonstrated by Anthony Crook at Montlhéry in France in November 1951 when he covered 200 miles (320 km) at an average speed of 120 mph (193 kph). An absolutely standard, much-used and somewhat flogged car later managed 0–60 mph (up to 100 kph) in less than eight seconds and reached a speed of 115 mph (185 kph) at 5500 rpm. The reporter warned that nothing much happened below 3700 rpm and that it was important to make good use of the gears.

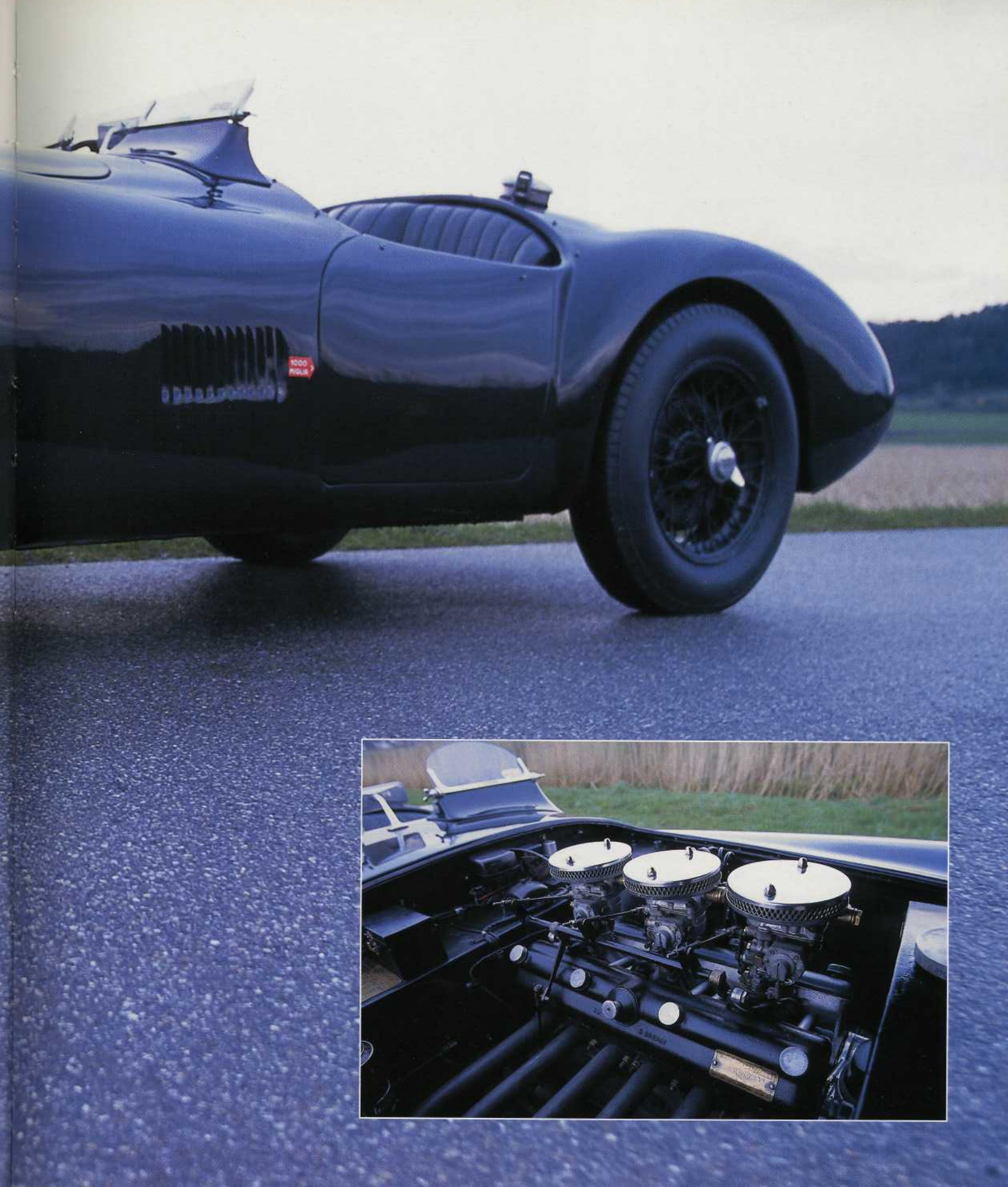
The Mille Miglia type, introduced in 1950, was merely a more aerodynamically tweaked version of the Le Mans Replica. A Formula Two model was also based on this, although it was clearly overshadowed by the Cooper Bristols.

1952 saw a revised version make its appearance at Earl's Court, which was a good 110 lb (50 kg) lighter, principally because of its slimmed-down 200-series chassis, and boosted to 132 bhp. In race trim, such as Ken Wharton's 1953 car, it even had a De Dion axle. Eight Mk II models were built in two years, while an elegant coupé named Le Mans in a tiny production run of nine units closed this particular chapter in Frazer Nash's company history in 1953.

However, the speedy racers from Isleworth carried on winning for a little longer yet, such as in 1954 in the Coupe des Alpes with O'Hara Moore and John Gott—just because it had become something of a habit.

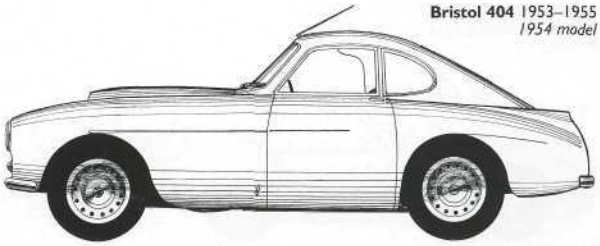
Following pages: The Grand Prix, High Speed, Le Mans Replica, and Mille Miglia models are variations on a theme. They all contribute to the good name of Frazer Nash in motor sport. One shared feature is the Bristol 2-liter straight-six in a variety of tunes.





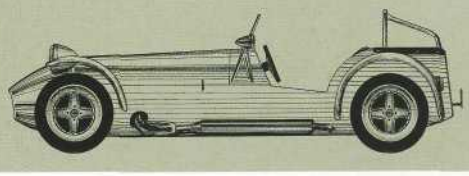
Bristol 404 1953–1955
1954 model

Engine	*Configuration*	in-line six-cylinder
	Displacement	1971cc
	Bore and stroke	66 × 96 mm
	Carburetion	three Solex 32 BI downdraft carburetors
	Power	107 bhp at 5000 rpm
	Transmission	four-speed manual
Chassis	*Frame*	platform frame with box girders
	Front suspension	upper wishbones, lower transverse leaf springs
	Rear suspension	rigid axle, longitudinal torsion bars
Dimensions	*Wheelbase*	96 in (2445 mm)
	Length × width × height	173.3 × 68 × 54.8 in (4400 × 1727 × 1390 mm)
	Weight	2293 lb (1040 kg) (curb)
Maximum speed		105 mph (169 kph)



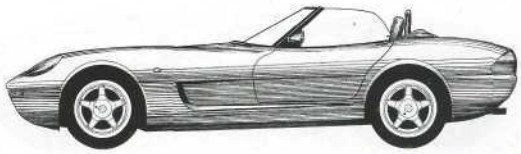
Caterham Seven from 1973
Caterham Seven HPC 1992

Engine	*Configuration*	in-line four-cylinder, two overhead camshafts, four valves per cylinder
	Displacement	1998cc
	Bore and stroke	86 × 86 mm
	Carburetion	twin horizontal Weber 45 DCOE carburetors
	Power	175 bhp at 6000 rpm
	Transmission	five-speed manual
Chassis	*Frame*	tubular frame
	Front suspension	wishbones, coil springs
	Rear suspension	De Dion axle, coil springs
Dimensions	*Wheelbase*	88.7 in (2250 mm)
	Length × width × height	133 × 61.9 × 42.9 in (3380 × 1570 × 1090 mm)
	Weight	1301 lb (590 kg) (empty)
Maximum speed		126 mph (202.7 kph)



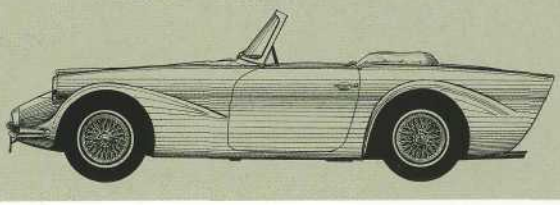
Caterham 21 1994–2000
2000 model

Engine	*Configuration*	in-line four-cylinder, two overhead camshafts, four valves per cylinder
	Displacement	1795cc
	Bore and stroke	80 × 89.3 mm
	Carburetion	electronic fuel injection
	Power	190 bhp at 7500 rpm
	Transmission	six-speed manual
Chassis	*Frame*	tubular frame
	Front suspension	wishbones, coil springs
	Rear suspension	De Dion axle, Watts linkage, trailing arms, coil springs
Dimensions	*Wheelbase*	87.7 in (2225 mm)
	Length × width × height	152.9 × 62.3 × 41 in (3880 × 1580 × 1045 mm)
	Weight	1433 lb (650 kg) (curb)
Maximum speed		137 mph (220 kph)



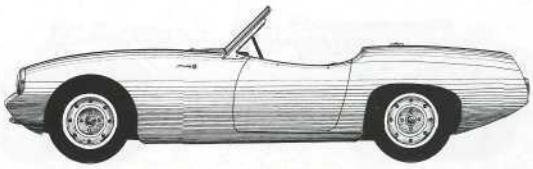
Daimler SP250 1959–1964
1962 model

Engine	*Configuration*	V8
	Displacement	2548cc
	Bore and stroke	76.2 × 69.85 mm
	Carburetion	twin SU HD 6 semi-downdraft carburetors
	Power	140 bhp at 5800 rpm
	Transmission	four-speed manual
Chassis	*Frame*	box frame with diagonal crossbracing
	Front suspension	wishbones, coil springs
	Rear suspension	rigid axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs
Dimensions	*Wheelbase*	92 in (2337 mm)
	Length × width × height	160.8 × 60.7 × 50.9 in (4080 × 1540 × 1292 mm)
	Weight	2090 lb (948 kg) (curb)
Maximum speed		120 mph (193.6 kph)



Elva Courier 1958–1968
Elva Courier Mk II 1960

Engine	*Configuration*	in-line four-cylinder
	Displacement	1588cc
	Bore and stroke	75.6 × 88.9 mm
	Carburetion	twin horizontal SU H4 carburetors
	Power	78 bhp at 5500 rpm
	Transmission	four-speed manual
Chassis	*Frame*	tubular frame with crossbraces
	Front suspension	wishbones, coil springs
	Rear suspension	rigid axle, coil springs, trailing arms, Panhard rod
Dimensions	*Wheelbase*	90 in (2286 mm)
	Length × width × height	154 × 59.5 × 46.5 in (3912 × 1511 × 1180 mm)
	Weight	1429 lb (648 kg) (curb)
Maximum speed		103 mph (165 kph)



Frazer Nash Mille Miglia 1950–1952
1952 Model

Engine	*Configuration*	in-line six-cylinder
	Displacement	1971cc
	Bore and stroke	66 × 96 mm
	Carburetion	three Solex downdraft carburetors
	Power	101 bhp at 5000 rpm
	Transmission	four-speed manual
Chassis	*Frame*	tubular frame
	Front suspension	upper wishbones, lower transverse leaf springs
	Rear suspension	rigid axle, longitudinal torsion bars, triangulated anti-roll mechanism
Dimensions	*Wheelbase*	88.3 in (2240 mm)
	Length × width × height	150 × 57.9 × 50.8 in (3810 × 1470 × 1290 mm)
	Weight	1808 lb (820 kg) (curb)
Maximum speed		124 mph (200 kph)