

A SMIDGE OF MIDGE HISTORY

by Doug Pelton, From the Frame Up, LLC

“The Midge” is the mascot that has adorned the MG for many years. It is an eye catcher and head turner whenever it is sighted. But what is the history of this flying mosquito and was it really a production item offered by MG?

Automobile mascots (hood ornaments) became a very popular item in the 1930's. Many marquees strove to craft a mascot that would typify their branding of grace and elegance. Jaguar had the “Leaping Leopard”, Rolls the “Kneeling Lady”, and Auburn the “Flying Goddess”. Today, the Midge seems to exemplify this same level of beauty. However, this has not always been the case.



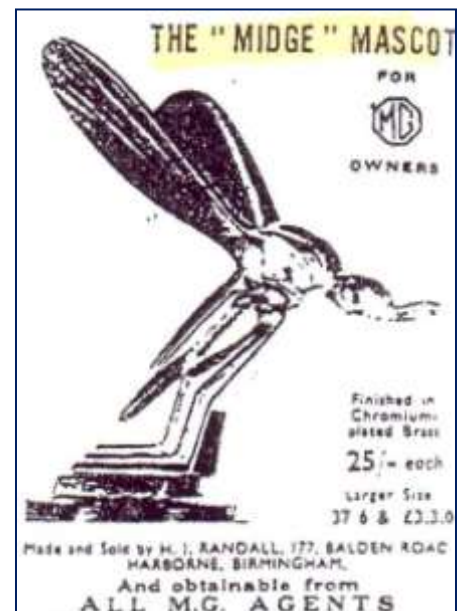
An initial sighting of the Midge was found in an advertisement of the May 1934 issue of “The MaGazine”. The ad confirms that the Midge was produced by H.J. Randall, Birmingham, England and was designed especially for MG car owners. It was also offered in 2 sizes: large and small.

According to historian Mike Worthington-Williams, “The MG Midge was only found on the 1935 ‘P’ type MGs. However, despite its intended use for only the ‘P’ type, it did appear in factory literature and was primarily sold as an accessory by University Motors Ltd, London acting as an MG agent.”

Late, in the July 1936 issue of “The Sports Car”, the previously referenced ad was repeated but instead now included the MG logo and words: “Obtainable from All MG Agents”. So this seems to affirm that a privately offered Mascot had been sanctioned and adopted by MG.

However, the Midge had a short life. According to Worthington-Williams, the image it projected was found a little undignified and was therefore only formally offered with the 1935 ‘P’ Type.

An original 1st issue Midge can be identified with the marking “Reg Applied For”. Physical characteristics include chrome plated brass body, the proboscis (beak) is horizontal, and the lettering on the left base is: “MG CAR CO.” The later production marking added RD 786849.



The Midge has proven to be a lasting icon for the MG community. As one unidentified MG owner stated, “while the Midge is elegant in shape and form, I cannot imagine MG allowing such an inelegant, nay ugly, detail as a gnat’s proboscis to adorn their fine machinery. However, a Midge now adorns my TC.”

As always I welcome comments and corrections: Doug Pelton, doug@FromTheFrameUp.com

Editor’s note: The Midge is once again available from Doug.

*Written by: Doug Pelton
July 7, 2011*

