For Your Bookshelf – “Triumph TR2, TR3, TR3A & TR3B – Your expert guide to common problems and how to fix them”

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Reviewed by Kieron Fennelly

Author: Paul Hogan

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This quintessentially 1950s sportscar was arguably the best of its ilk, significantly quicker than the rival MGA and deservedly popular. It remains so today and most cars have been restored with many imported from the US which took the bulk of production at the time.

Almost seven decades on these cars will sell for £25-30,000 and can make a tempting purchase for the (usually) older enthusiast who knows how to enjoy a vintage car and who would subscribe to the adage “it’s not how fast you go, but how you go fast.”

Paul Hogan is one such owner and his guide to owning a TR2 or 3 is both an absorbing read while offering practical maintenance advice. The book rightly assumes its readers will be at least be reasonably conversant with traditional overhead valve engines, but it does not attempt to be a Haynes Guide. Its soft cover format is no good for the workshop (it won’t stay open) and when the author describes dismantling the engine for example there is none of the step-by-step methodology of Haynes: The owner is expected to know how to judge

crankshaft wear or remove the timing chain, a tricky operation, adds the author.

On the other hand, the Haynes guides were written when owners really were looking after their cars in front of the house; Hogan rightly assumes today's owner will probably have recourse to Neil Revington or other Triumph specialist. But he is not beyond good, basic advice, citing his own experience that electronic ignition for example offered little improvement over classic points and although he describes how to fit an oil cooler, it simply is not worthwhile he thinks unless the owner intends to go racing with his TR. In the same vein, if the owner decides the replace the coil springs, he should ensure they are of the correct spring-rate. A car famous for its overdrive on three gears it seems most of the TRs sent to the US did not have overdrive. This can be fitted retrospectively, says the author, but is an expensive operation.

Published in 2019, Paul Hogan's book on the TR6 was similarly informative though at £12.99 in A5 format and soft covers, it seemed expensive. His TR2/3 work in the same 140 page A5 format should at least have hard covers at the price which is now £19.99.

VERDICT

Informative and useful for owners today, and based on first-hand ownership experience, but not cheap at £20 for a softback.