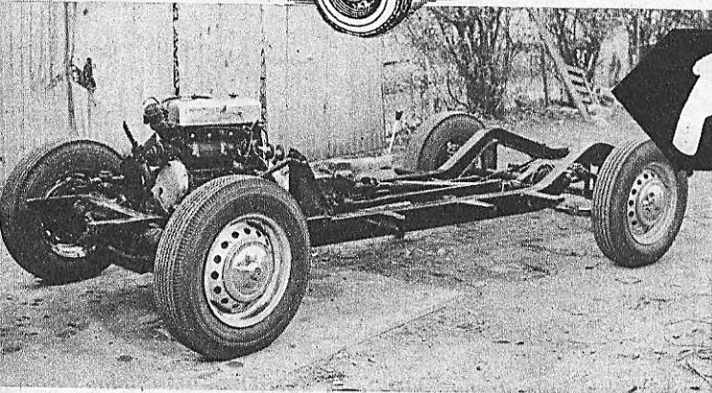


You can convert your MG

FROM THIS

TO THIS

in 28 hours!



1.—Old TD body has been removed, chassis cleaned and painted. Radiator goes on next, lowered 3 inches.

FIBREGLASS body shells to suit various car chassis have been on sale for years in U.S.A. and Britain. Fitted easily and quickly in the owner's backyard, they are the answer for the motorist who longs for a classy, streamlined sports car but hasn't the money to splurge on a factory job.

Now the idea has reached Australia. Sydney engineer Nat Buchanan, who trades as Buchanan Motors and is already known for his handsome fibreglass specials, has perfected and marketed a fit-it-yourself body shell for MG's.

Sleek and modern, it fits the TD or TF chassis—and the TC as well, with a slightly different arrangement of mounting brackets, supplied as part of the body.

Ready to fit, the shell costs £255;

but those who are prepared to do some extra work bonding the various panels together can get them in kit form for £150.

Two Modern Motor staff members watched the conversion of an MG TD to Buchanan body from start to finish and timed all the operations. They reported that the car's owner and his helper took 28 hours to complete the job, which means that any two men should be able to do it in a long weekend.

All parts, including the plywood floors (which are not supplied, but must be cut to a pattern that comes with the body) mated well together. Only adjustment consisted of trimming one curve on the plywood panel cut to fit under the dash.

The work went smoothly and there were no snags. Only power tool was

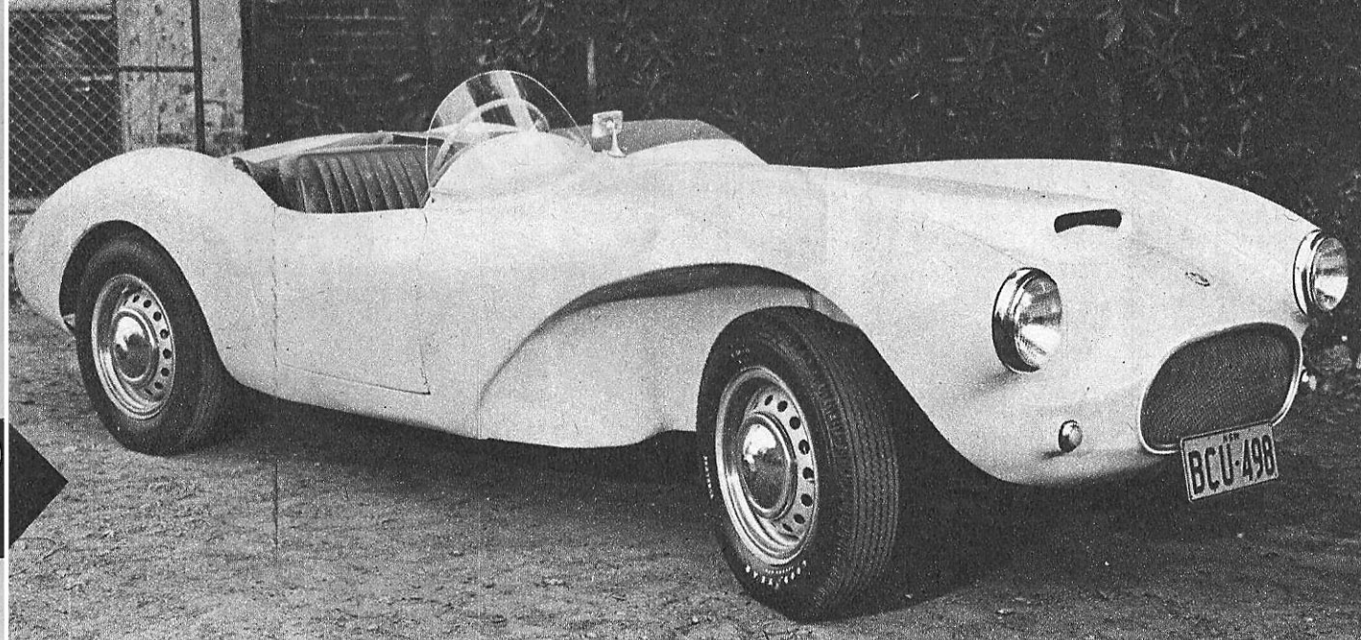
a drill; a hand-brace would have done as well but would have slowed down the job a little, as there were quite a lot of holes to drill.

Pictures show how the work progressed, but here are some additional details.

The two men took eight hours to strip the TD down to the chassis and get it ready for the shell. They also fitted a special bracket (supplied) to lower the radiator by 3 inches, because of the low bonnet.

The petrol tank was slipped in through the boot opening; but it can, if preferred, be installed on the chassis before the body is lifted on.

The owner didn't bother about a glovebox, but one can be easily provided on the passenger's side. Treatment of the dash is an example of the manufacturers' attention to detail.



Here at last—an Australian-made fibreglass body shell to suit TC, TD, or TF chassis. You pay £255 and fit it yourself

Its surface has an embossed leather-grain pattern which looks remarkably like real leather when painted.

Nat emphasises that the plywood board under the dash is not a stiffener for the body, which has ample strength and rigidity; it is there merely to provide a deep "bedding" for the instruments.

Spray-painting is done in the same way as with a metal body; finish is best if undercoating is applied generously.

Because the body is designed to take TF headlights, the TD owner had to buy a pair; they cost £16

new. Other lights, also non-standard, came to just on £5. The perspex racing screen cost £5, too. Buchanan also makes a full-width screen which sells for under £30.

The owner had TF bucket seats fitted previously to his car; but the TD's normal one-piece seat fits the cockpit as easily.

No radiator grille is supplied; the one on this car was made up from aluminium mesh used in some radio and TV set speakers. Mesh mustn't be so fine as to impede air-flow.

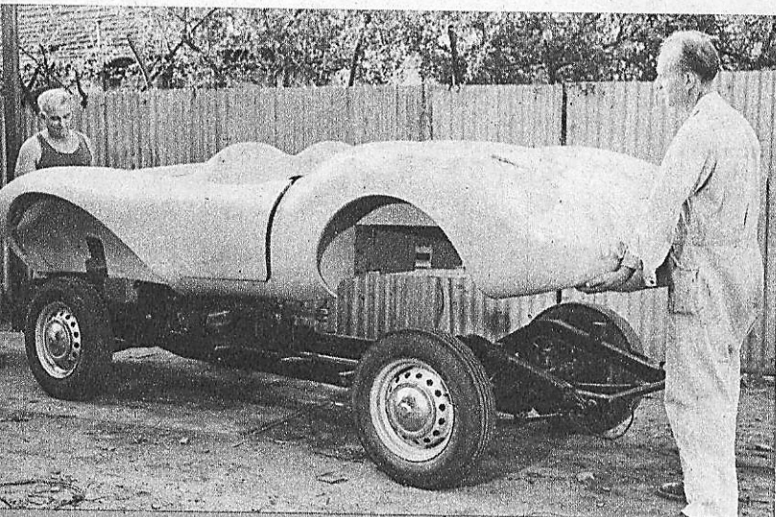
The new body lightened the car by 4cwt. A brief run showed much im-

proved acceleration and cornering, plus a top-speed boost of 4 m.p.h.

The old TD body and headlights were in good condition and fetched £150, reducing the actual cost of this conversion to £190. And in case you're interested but haven't got an MG, a used TD will cost you between £500 and £600—and TC's can be had for as low as £350.

But get in early; present output is only two bodies a week.

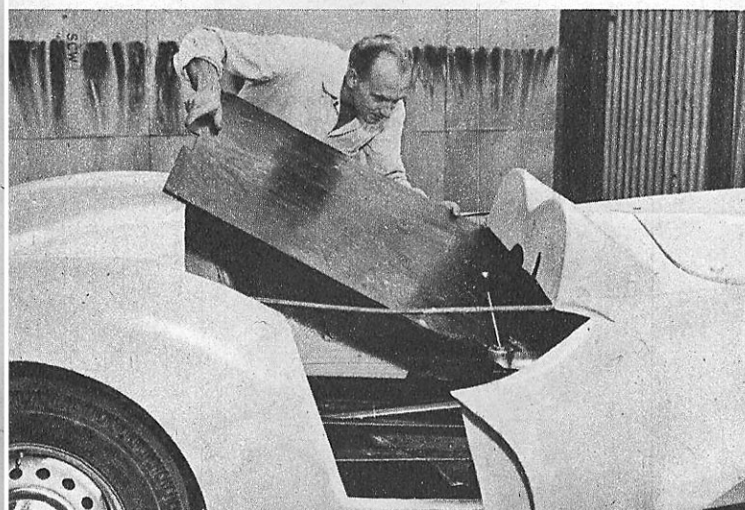
Of course, if you happen to run an older-model Prefect or Anglia, you may prefer to wait a while. Nat will soon have a shell to fit those, too.



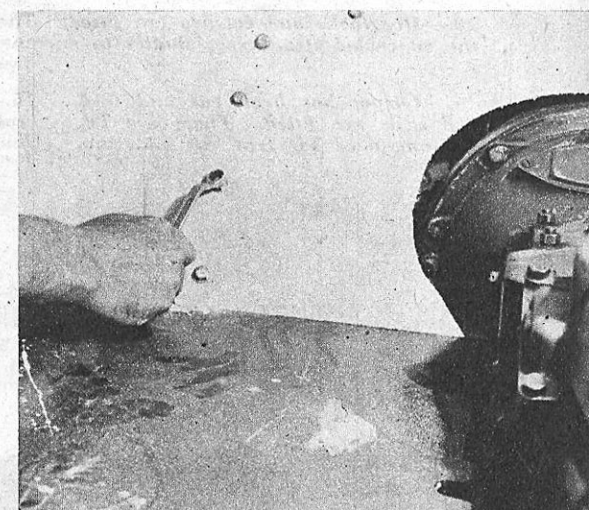
2.—On goes the new shell, complete with mounting brackets. It weighs only about 100lb.; so boys have removed two leaves from each rear spring, replaced front coils with softer units.



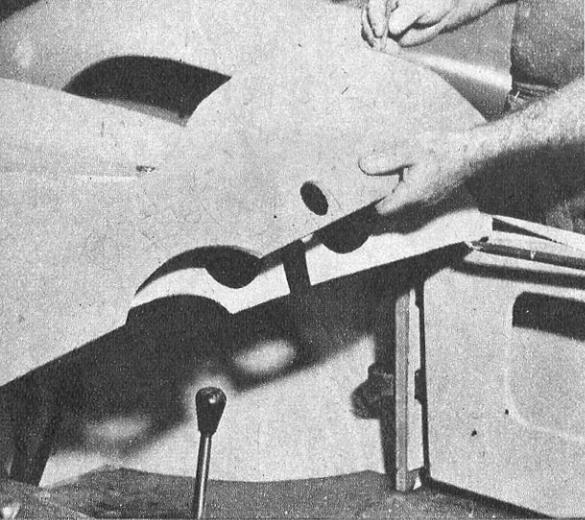
3.—Fuel tank, under boot, will be covered by flat floor. Outlet and gauge unit are positioned to match existing connections.



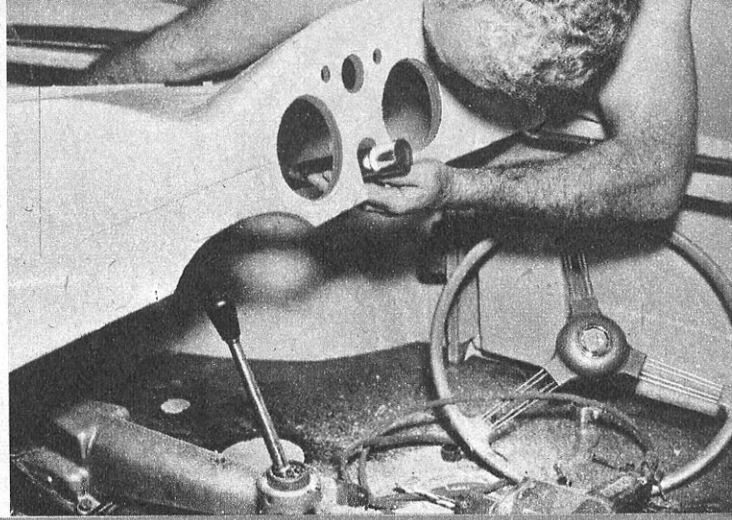
4.—Wooden floorboards are cut to a pattern supplied with the body, then slipped into position to check the fit. Bolted to both chassis and shell, they are an important part of the structure.



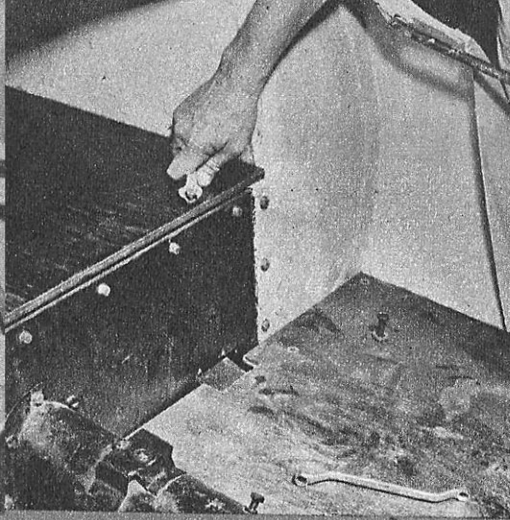
5.—Floors fit o.k., so the boys proceed to tighten bolts holding body to bulkhead brackets, then those on rear chassis mounts.



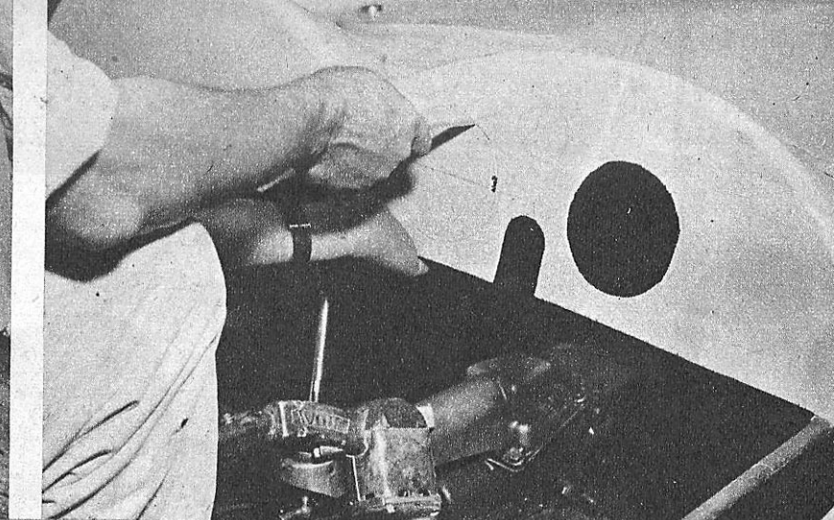
8.—Plywood backing board is cut to fit under dash, checked and marked for holes and trimming.



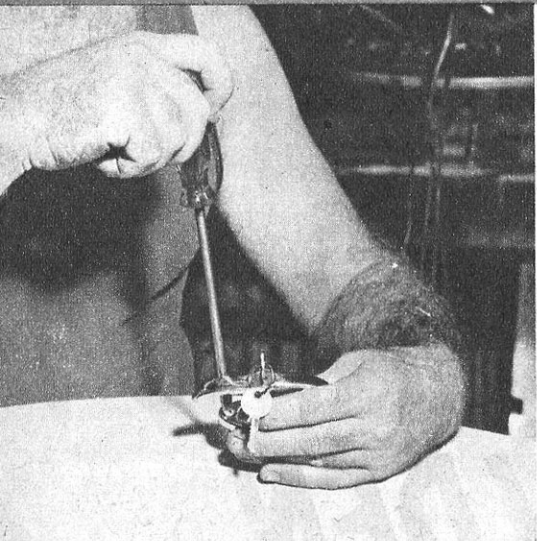
9.—With backing board in place, steering-column is installed. Instruments will go in after car is sprayed.



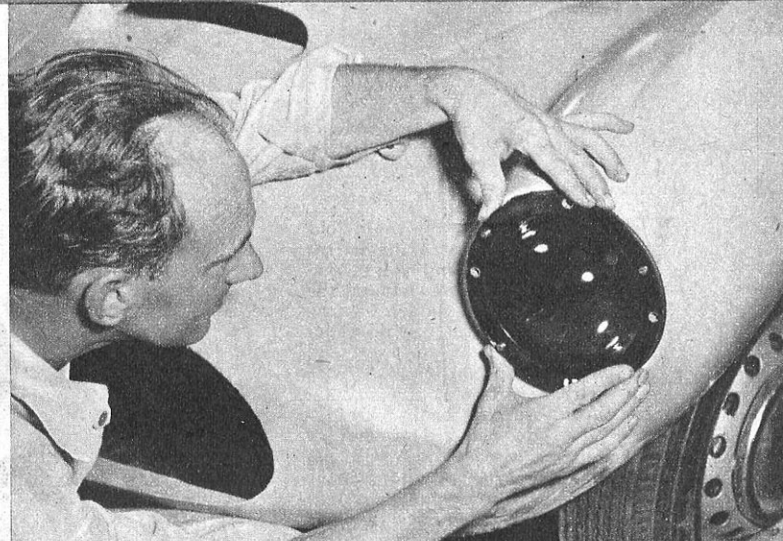
6.—Floors of cockpit and boot are bolted down (one man works below).



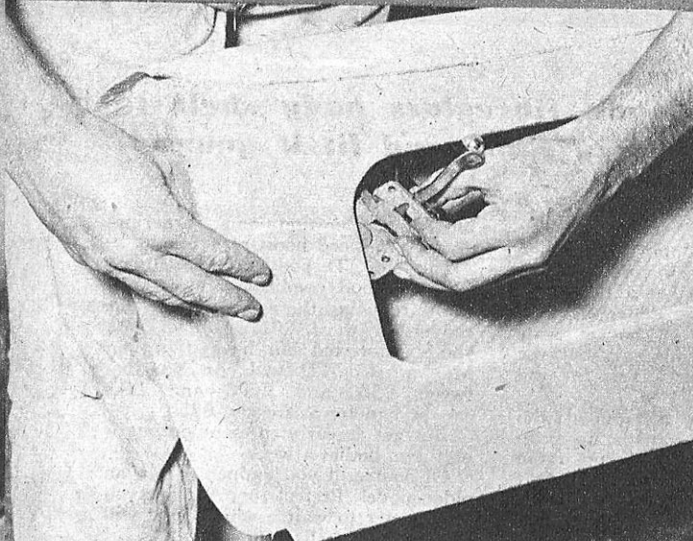
7.—Holes are marked out and cut in the dash to take TD's instruments and steering-column. Hacksaw blade does the job easily, neatly.



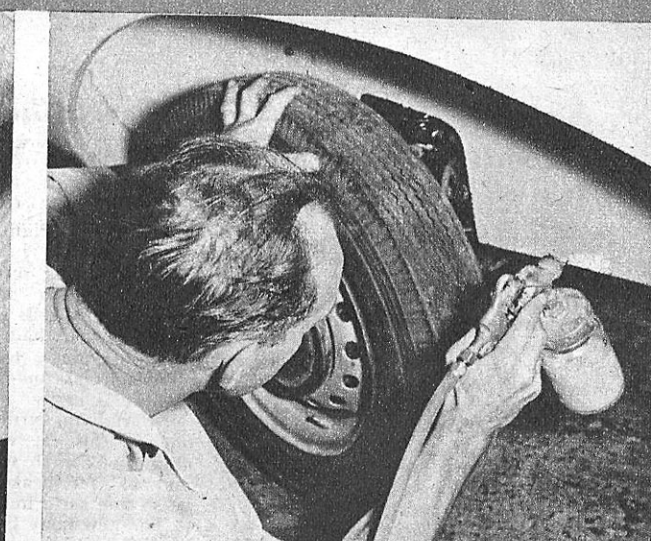
12.—Duco is dry, so boot lock goes on; then bonnet catches and other minor metalwork.



13.—Headlights are TF type, must be bought as extras if chassis is TD or TC. Parking, tail, stop lights come next.



10.—Doorlocks and catches are fitted. They are of the concealed strap type, similar to current MG A's.



11.—Body is undercoated and sprayed before external fittings are installed: no masking-off worries.

16.—A check on tyre pressures, and car is ready for tryout. No grille supplied, but you can make one easily from metal mesh, as this owner did.

17.—We timed job from start to finish; it took two men 28 hours, and they didn't hurry. If you want body protection, bumperettes of XK120 type will fit car perfectly.

14.—Carpet has been cut and laid, and seats are fitted. These are TF, but one-piece TD type fits o.k., too.

15.—Cockpit is finished off with TD instruments and controls, also crash pad and racing windscreen. Pad and screen are extras, and you can get a full-width screen from Buchanan Motors if you prefer.

