

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## The C-Type from Enduro



**Joining the ranks of high-quality 're-creation' cars, made in the spirit of the originals but with modern materials and finish, is the C-Type from British manufacturer Enduro. It's true to the original shape of Jaguar's early '50s Le Mans-winner, but a brief test proves it to be a surprisingly user-friendly car that can be driven on a 'fun' day out or even in mild competition.**

Built in Coventry, the home of Jaguar, the Enduro is an all-metal two-seater designed and manufactured by a company with a wealth of knowledge of modern motor racing and CAD-CAM construction, yet retaining (with a little tweaking, see below) the glorious lines of the earlier car. It has a fabricated steel tubular chassis in the spirit of the original (but much stiffer) and the aluminium body is made in the same fashion as the Morgan Aero 8 or the latest aluminium cars from Jaguar and Audi. Fully designed on computer, and based on original drawings, the sheet metal of the body is 'blown' by high pressure air into a mould, making several sections that are then welded together.

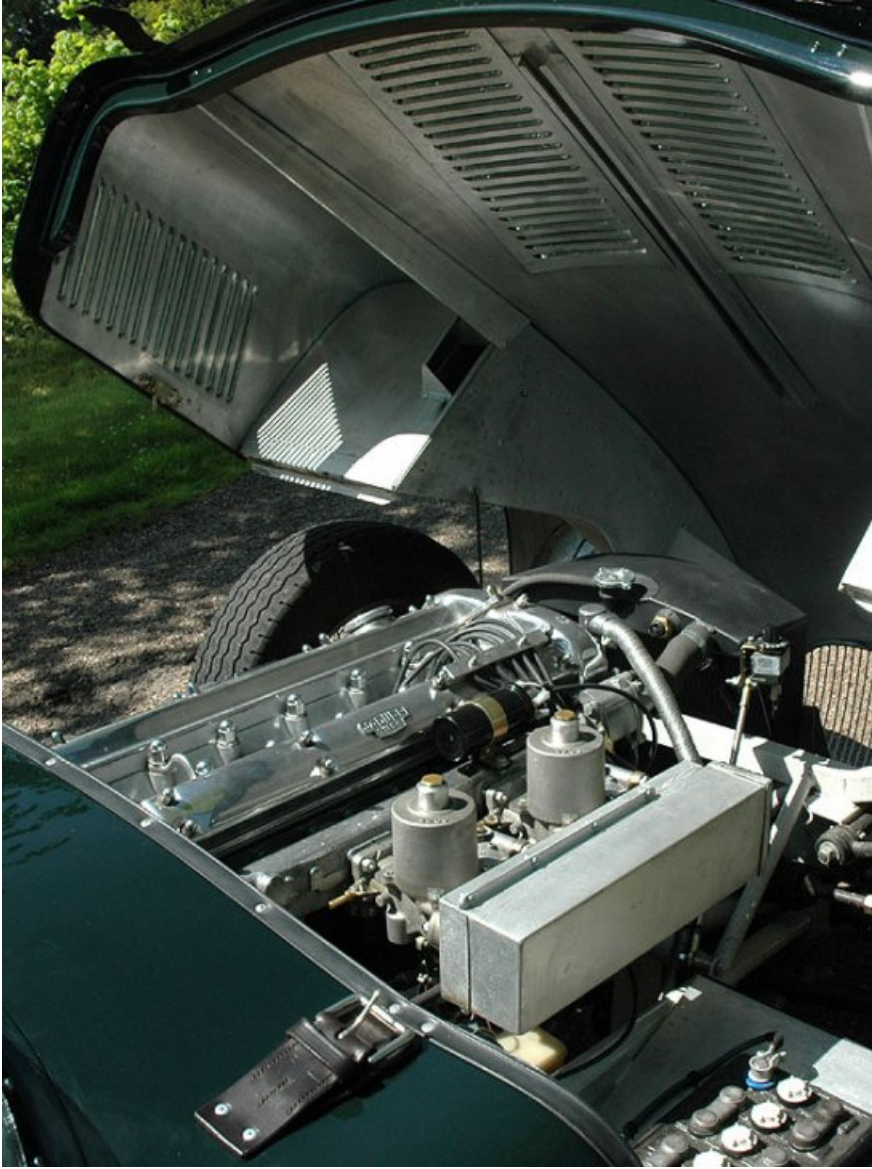
The result is an extremely stiff, yet light, body that does away with hours of hand beating and finishing and has that reassuring solidity of metal rather than glass-fibre. It's extremely strong and rigid too – as was proved by frequent clambering over the passenger's side (true to the 1950s car, there is only a driver's door on the demonstrator, although production models will have two) into the car. The leather seats and Hardura interior trim are as waterproof as can be with there being no hood, while the dash even contains instruments by Smiths (as the original) made in the correct diameter and 'look' but containing modern electrics.



Power is of course supplied by a six-cylinder Jaguar XK cast-iron block/alloy head engine. Although Enduro can supply uprated engines, the standard 4.2 litre twin-SU carburetted unit should provide plenty of performance for most, the extra capacity over the 3.4 litres that equipped the original cars making for a relaxed torquey drive with enough sparkle to see off most modern machinery.

Purists may specify the optional Moss four-speed gearbox, but the five-speeder we drove in the works demonstrator had an easy short throw made even simpler by the light clutch and the lever's closeness to hand, just inches away from the big wood and aluminium steering wheel. Braking is via servo-assisted discs (something only the Factory 1953 Le Mans cars had) and the steering is rack and pinion, with the exhaust

exiting under the passenger's side in keeping with the original 'C'.





Enduro have made one or two changes to the bodywork, purely with the aim of making it more user-friendly on today's busy roads (and meeting the latest regulations), none of which you'd notice unless pointed out. The cockpit is a tad wider for comfort, the headlamp apertures have been enlarged for more effective lighting, and at the back twin lamps replace the tiny originals.



### **On the road**

Settling behind the steering wheel the view ahead is dominated by the large steering wheel and period dashboard. With the demonstrator finished in a 'Le Mans 1953' trim of two adjustable aeroscreens and a full-width sculptured polycarbonate windshield, on a nice early summer's day there's nothing else to separate you from the elements and the view is perfect for placing the car on those imaginary apexes at Goodwood or Dundrod.

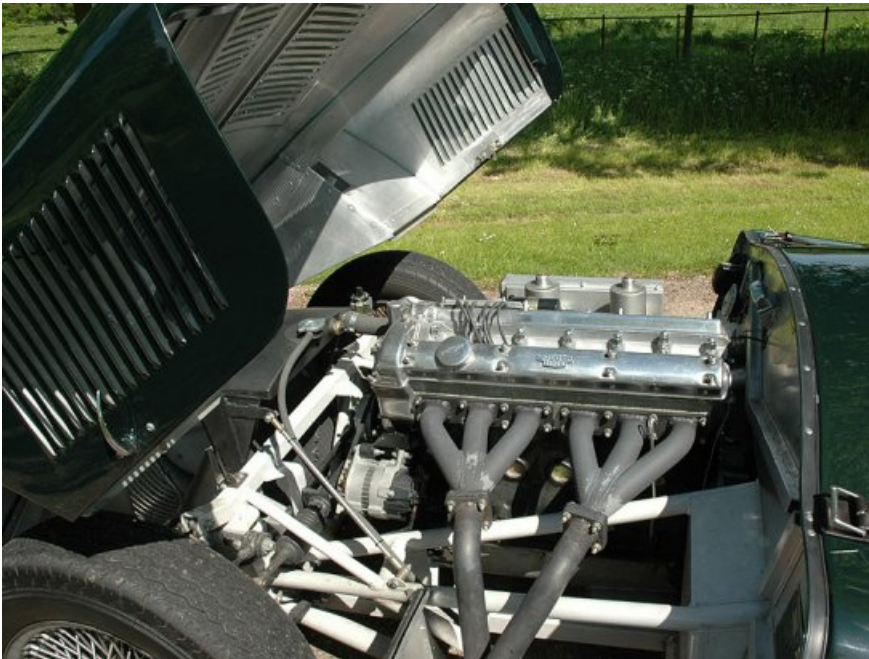
Enduro are introducing an adjustable seating position via seat runners, so my initial criticism of a nice distance for the 'wheel spoilt by the pedals being too close for comfort is not relevant to production cars. They'll also be changing the pedal proximity as heel and toe changes are difficult with such a gap between throttle and brake. The gearbox has a nice action with the short lever snicking from cog to cog and the demonstrator's low axle ratio (installed for the timed runs on the Isle of Man TT course you can see below) producing strong acceleration in any gear.



The braking and handling will not leave those used to the manners and conveniences of modern motor cars at a loss. There has evidently been a lot of work matching suspension componentry and tyres to ensure that quite a lot of grip is coupled with a comfortable ride. On a brief test drive I did not get any heart-stopping 'will it/won't it' braking moments, but by and large the 4-pot front (two at the rear) callipers did the job and would probably carry on in that position for quite a while.

We mixed up some B-roads with a good run down a dual carriageway around the 90 mph mark. This is where a flying helmet and goggles transcend affectation and become useful, nay vital, on a long journey like a trip to Le Mans to watch either the modern, or classic, running of the event that launched so many models into motoring folklore.

Like the C-Type Jaguar.





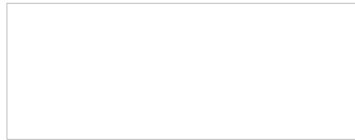
Enduro have done an excellent job in making a well-made, reasonably priced machine, true to the early car's performance that is fun to drive with good performance and safe handling. I can imagine it being a nice car on a track or to enter in hillclimbs and low-key 'Club' rallies.

And most important of all it passes the pride of ownership test - you can get out and look back admiringly at it, with a big smile on your face.



**Story:** Steve Wakefield

**Photos:** Classic Driver/Legends - Strictly Copyright



*The Enduro C-Type is available from two authorised distributors in the UK, Legends Automotive and Beaulieu Garage. Prices start at £45,950 including VAT (17.5%), with an optional extra list that includes metallic paint, Moss 4-speed gearbox with overdrive, stainless steel exhaust, Weber carbs and wing mirrors.*

*The car comes with the following warranties as standard: 10-year anti-corrosion on the chassis, 6-year anti-corrosion on exterior paintwork and 12 months standard new car (or 12,000 miles) mechanical.*

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