

SILVERSTONE'GAS-CAR' READY FOR WORLD MARKET

The jet-age takes to the road. The world's first gas-turbine car makes its bow at Silverstone. At the wheel is its designer, Maurice Wilkes. Facing a control panel that makes the model look far more complicated than it really is, driver Wilkes glides away to a smooth start. Within 14 seconds, the car-that-runs-on-paraffin reaches 60 miles an hour and is promptly christened the Whizzer. Warming up quickly, the 100 horse-power gas-turbine - located behind the driver - shoots the Whizzer up to 90.

Air-intake slots in the side panels and exhaust ports on top are the only things that make the turbo car look different. Yet there are only two controls - brake and accelerator. No clutch, no gearbox - only a reverse lever. Less than two weeks ago, the Whizzer's engine was still on the test bench. Its successful try-out gives Britain a world scoop. A question to Managing Director Spencer Wilkes - May we have some technical details on the engine please?

S.W. "I'm sorry but we want to keep that secret for a while yet."

His brother, Maurice Wilkes, has this to say:

M.W. "The car could be described as a learner's dream. It's one of the simplest cars I've ever driven. It has two pedal controls and one accelerator and brake and is very responsive to the accelerator."

1955 will see the Whizzer on the market - expert, of course!