

AUTOS ABROAD: THE ELDER FOXES

WITH ALMOST contemptuous ease, two grand old men of the Italian industry stole the show at both Paris and London auto salons. For sheer glamorous looks and the promise of matching performance, nothing else could approach the Dino V-6 sports coupe, designed by stylist Pininfarina and built on a rear-engined Ferrari chassis. Every motorist must at some time or other have longed for a Grand Prix racing car with a second seat and a roof—which is just about what the delicious Dino represents.

Builders of "commercial" sports cars in Europe are incredibly slow to apply racing experience. Few of them have yet noticed that cast light-alloy road wheels replaced the wire-spoked center-lock variety on the circuits many years ago. Every car on the start line of a Grand Prix road race nowadays has its driver reclining just behind the front suspension, and the engine behind him just ahead of independently sprung rear wheels, but who catalogs a car of that sort for other than racing use? Alas, even Porsche, which builds its 904 model sports-racing coupe on these lines prefers to put the engines of its fully-equipped cars behind the rear axle. Ferrari and Lotus sell their cus-

tomers front-engined sports cars, though racing exclusively with models which have the engines between driver and the rear wheels.

YES, THE DINO is crazy, but so are most of this world's pleasures crazy. Just 31.5 in. high at the roofline, the Dino is a car one cannot see into even when on bended knee beside it! But if one is determined, he can enter the Dino in spite of its being about 20 in. lower than a Mustang and, as there isn't an engine in front, it is also possible for the driver to see where he is going. The hood drops so low between the front fenders that the four headlamps in its nose are far below legal height and would cast impossible shadows beyond every road undulation. There is a spare tire, stowed flat above the transaxle and ample baggage room for two non-electric toothbrushes which would fit into little inglenooks behind the seats, formed where a reverse-curvature vertical rear window's ends sweep back to join the body sides.

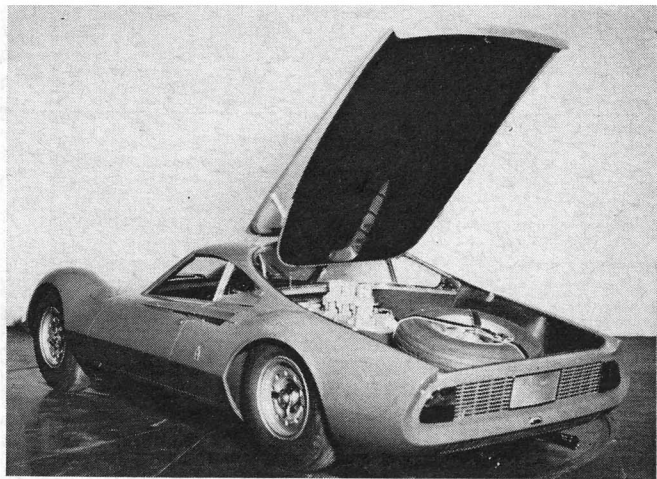
Few, if any, of these rear-engined 121-cu. in. Dinosaurs are likely to be sold, though Fiat will use its engine at the front of a marketed sports car. Oh, for some of its style and race-bred en-

gineering to be applied commercially! In comparison, such new sports cars as are offered for sale for 1966 appear old-fashioned before they reach the showrooms.

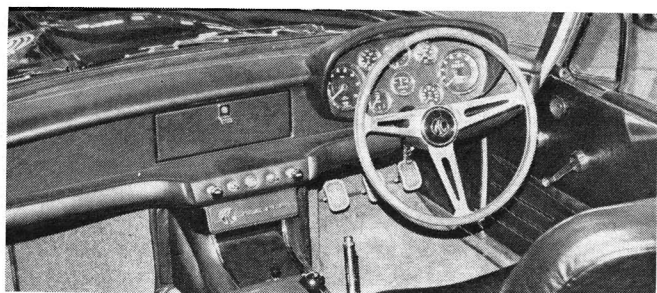
Adding 6 in. onto the wheelbase of the latest Shelby Cobra 427-cu. in. sports car's tubular frame, and having Frua build luxurious Italian convertible bodywork onto the American-powered English chassis, is no doubt a very good idea indeed, yet the AC which results is a very beautiful, very old-fashioned sort of car. There will probably be a brisk demand for the new Jensen Interceptor sports car with Chrysler V-8 engine and de Dion rear suspension, at less than half the price of an Aston Martin or the 4-wheel driven Jensen FF sedan. Once again, though, the front-engined proportions of the Interceptor are those of yesterday rather than of tomorrow. Pininfarina's body on the Ferrari Dino V-6 is only a dream car, yet the first maker to apply some of that dream to an everyday sports 2-seater, and provide interior heating and a small luggage compartment in a car perhaps 40 or 42 in. high, surely will wake up very busy, sought after and very, very rich!

—Joseph Lowrey

BLEND OF GP racing engineering with sports car styling came from elders Ferrari and Pininfarina.



LUXURY TRIM, functional instrumentation enhance AC's melding of Italy, America and Great Britain.



CHRYSLER ENGINES, 273 or 383 cu. in., power the yesteryear styling of the Jensen Interceptor.



ENGINE BY Cobra, body by Frua and chassis by AC result in a very beautiful old-fashioned car.



JOSEPH LOWREY PHOTOS