

ROAD TEST

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THE AUTOMOBILE
BUYER'S GUIDE

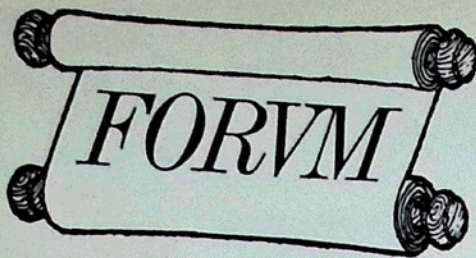
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ADVERTISING.



ROVER TOPS THEM ALL
IN FIRST RESULTS OF MILLION MILE SURVEY

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I was truly shocked by "The Ball Joint Racket" from the March issue of ROAD TEST. I wasn't shocked at the fact that a little old lady was taken for \$60.00 as I know that some front end shops operate in that fashion. I was shocked by the fact that so much was written with so little research behind it.

I gather from your article that you feel no one ever needs ball joints, since Mr. Baggie (sic) has 75,000 miles on his Buick. I have gone 75,000 miles without needing a brake relining, but I'm not going to say that most drivers should get 75,000 miles out of their brake lining. And while writing this down in shorthand, my secretary advised me that she has a battery with four years on it that's still operating ... does this mean that people who replaced their batteries after two or three years were cheated? Some people get 12 or 15,000 miles out of a set of tires while others get 35 or 40,000 miles on the same make vehicle ... does this mean one of them was cheated? You also feature one manufacturer's ball joints, while other people including McQuay-Norris and Thompson Products have similar products and some have even higher quality.

How would someone have done so much writing with so little research.

Robert C. Calderone
Advertising & Sales Promotion
Manager
McQuay-Norris Mfg., Co.
St. Louis, Missouri

Our research for "The Ball Joint Racket" consisted of taking a 1965 Mustang with ball joints certified as meeting factory standards to eight different wheel alignment shops for service. At seven we were told it would be impossible to align the wheels since our ball joints were hopelessly worn.

As Mr. Bagge correctly pointed out there are three major causes of ball joint failure. We chose Moog only because they had an office near ours. — Ed.

In your February 1968 issue you stated that the TR-4A IRS was being phased out. Are there 1968 model TR-4s or are all the 1968 models TR-250s. And if there are 1968 TR-4s will they be the last? I don't want to buy a last of a kind.

Henry Dickson
Nashville, Tenn.

There are 1968 TR-4A IRS models but as soon as all the four cylinder engine blocks are used up there will be no more. No production plans have been announced for the Pete Brock/Kas Kastner designed TR-250K but if it should make the scene it will make all previous TRs and many other production sports cars as out of date as Conestoga wagons. — Ed.

I have been told by many people that the margin of speedometer error can be as great as 20 mph when traveling at high speeds. It is true there is a slight error but this much? Can you tell me if this is true. We were speaking of the Corvette's 160 mph speedometer at the time. If this is true is there any way it can be corrected after the car is purchased?

Mike Muhan
Teaneck, New Jersey

While it is possible, speedometer error seldom goes higher than 10% but it is often this much off. Most good speedometer repair shops will correctly calibrate your instrument. It is a curious fact that speedometers and odometers are almost invariably fast. This works to the advantage of the factory and the dealer in warranty matters, and is also helpful to car rental agencies. It is worth the small expense to have a speedometer and odometer set correctly so that when they show 50,000 miles you have not in reality only traveled 40,000 miles. — Ed.

Have you tested the NSU Ro 80? If so could I get a reprint of the article?

Frank Valle
Washington, D.C.

Ro 80 test in the next issue, Frank. — Ed.

I was wondering if you could give me a few facts on the following products, STP and Bardahl. I heard you were supposed to publish a report on them but so far I find nothing.

The way I have it understood STP is mostly a viscosity increaser. My view is, say a normal 10-30 oil with the recommended STP would then be somewhat on the order of 15-40. The idea behind it is just to thicken the oil when it's warm. They may have a few other things mixed in with it but this is basically the main idea. Right or wrong?

With STP being on the market for some length of time isn't junk but I did hear once that if used for a long period of time say 40-60,000 miles it would cause a heavy varnish coating. True or false?

Now to Bardahl. Bardahl is mostly an extreme pressure agent. Right or wrong? OK, my question is if a person mixed both products either full or half strength what would happen and what improvement would it make over the normal oil.

The reason I am asking these questions is I have bought a 68 VW and am stationed down in North Carolina. The summer is extremely hot at times and I am scared of oil breakdown. Some say an air cooled engine runs cooler, I don't know, but even though I'm covered by warranty, I'm curious to the answer of these questions.

David Wieszczeinski
Fayetteville, North Carolina

Right on both counts, Dave. STP users have reported no problems with continued use. Mixing should likewise cause no problems except to your checkbook. With a new engine your VW should not need either. Good oil recommended by the factory has both additives and should be all you need. — Ed.

I think it's time you discussed the Mercedes Benz (diesel). Great claims are made for their durability and economy. They are not as rare as one may think, and here in N. Y. there are frequent opportunities to buy them second-hand.

Leonard Schneide
Brooklyn, N. Y.
It's in our futures file, Len. — Ed.

Devoted to automobiles, other vehicles and automotive products, ROAD TEST is designed to present the complete facts about cars, trucks, accessories, equipment and automotive products without fear or favor. To insure the complete honesty of its editorial approach it does not accept advertising from any manufacturer whose products are a part of this field.

A ROAD TEST report on a vehicle is the end result of much more than a mere 'test drive' by a junior editor or writer. It is a compilation of the opinions of a group of experts (whose automotive experience encompasses many years in all phases of car design, construction, sales, racing, repair and testing) arrived at after thorough going analysis of many factors which do not ordinarily enter into the average magazine's tests.

The results of the investigations made by each specialist are combined into one overall presentation which reveals, in narrative form, the general findings and opinions.

For easy reference important data are reduced to chart or tabular form. Thus specific information is available at a glance.

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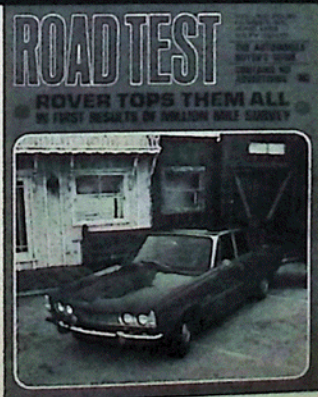
THE FIRST MILLION MILES

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ABOUT THE COVER

Photographer David Gooley found this interesting setting on one of the many fabulous movie sets in Southern California. Film used for the photo was Agfachrome, the camera a Hasselblad, the car, 1968 Rover Automatic.

ROAD SIGNS



with Sportomatic and the Carrera six. None would admit to being frightened but there was evidence of sweaty palms.

* * *

In a precedent setting case, a superior court jury has awarded damages to 23-year-old David Wilcox of Woodland Hills, California. Wilcox was made a quadraplegic as a result of an automobile accident.

The decision was against Volkswagen, held to have produced a "defective design" in its 1956 cars.

Since there were no major suspension design changes in VWs until 1968 the door has been opened to numerous additional suits by persons injured as a result of Volkswagen's alleged instability.

The jury will now decide what portion of the \$5 million claim to award Wilcox who, six years ago, was changed from a vigorous teenager into a helpless cripple.

Attorney Toxie Hall Smith, representing Wilcox, brought out expert testimony to back up his claim that a Volkswagen could, under certain conditions, be rolled over while traveling only eight miles per hour.

* * *

Since the Nationalist Chinese Government prohibits the importation of fully assembled cars Honda has reached an agreement with San Yang Industry Co. of Taipei to assemble Honda N600 cars and TN 360 trucks on the tiny island empire. Production is expected to begin this summer with a target of 500 cars a month.

San Yang has been assembling Honda motorcycles under a similar arrangement since 1962.

* * *

Parts houses across the country will soon be stocking a sealed beam headlight which continues to glow even though the main filament has burned out. The unit, called Guard-Glo is being produced by the Wagner Electric Corp. of Newark, N.J. Retail price of the new safety headlamp will be about 50c higher than the present type.

One of the new Datsun PL510 models has successfully passed its most severe impact safety test. An important design feature of the economy import is its front and rear sections, designed to collapse on impact at a controlled rate.

This sedan was stopped at an intersection when it was rear ended by an 11 ton truck traveling approximately 30 mph. The force of the impact drove the Datsun into the path of an eight ton truck.

The shortening operation reduced the car's overall length by three and a half feet. There were no injuries.



* * *

It is refreshing to have an engineer admit to an area of ignorance especially in his own field.

Engineers at the University of Michigan Highway Safety Research Institute, acknowledging that safe handling of a car depends to a great extent on how its tires grip the road, admit they know very little about how the rolling tire and the road interact.

The key, of course, is friction. But even though friction has been studied since the time of Leonardo da Vinci, there is still no fully adequate theory to explain it.

This very lack of concrete knowledge has spurred an intensified research program at the university.

* * *

Raised eyebrow dept. Herb Caen in the San Francisco Chronicle reports seeing a Volkswagen occupied by two girls with a 'Just Married' sign on the back.

* * *

The recent case in which an officer of the California Highway Patrol claimed that he was fired for writing too few traffic citations brings to mind an ill-kept secret.

Most newsmen in metropolitan areas will verify that traffic officers in their cities operate on a quota system of citations. A conscientious rookie cop who writes motorists for only flagrant violations is soon on the carpet before his superiors for not filling his unwritten quota. He learns fast 'that his salary' depends on revenue to the city coffers from fines levied against motorists. Fines which may or may not be fairly imposed.

In Los Angeles the quota is determined on the number of 'greenies' a traffic officer turns in at the end of his shift. 'Greenies' are the officer's copy of written citations. The story is duplicated in virtually every large city.

The evil in this system is compounded by the insurance companies who blindly overlook the role played by consenting city officials. In almost every case, insurance premiums go up proportionately with the number of citations received.

* * *

Southern California Porsche dealers, sales managers & salesmen were recently students in a special school of high performance driving held at Orange County Raceway in Southern California.

The object was to teach Porsche sales people how to demonstrate the German sports car. The theory being that if you were unable to drive the car well you most certainly were in no position to demonstrate its handling potential.

Members of the motoring press were invited to visit the school whose faculty included such international driving talents as Rick Muther, Don Wester, John Timanus, Alan Johnson, Don Pike, Dennis Harrison and Miles Gupton.

A number of automotive writers rode with the racers in 911's, 911's



MADISON AVENUE *'Folly of the Month'*

Auto makers are looking with ever increasing favor on greater use of aluminum in their products. Compliance with Federal Safety Standards has decreased the amount of bright metal found in automobile interiors and aluminum, being low gloss and anti-glare fits the bill nicely for eye pleasing trim.

Radiators, it is expected, will soon be made of aluminum for longer life and decreased weight. Another application will lie in electrical components.

Aluminum fabricators are expecting use of the metal in automobiles to double in the next ten years.

* * *

All the steering wheel and transmission locks in creation won't do a bit of good if sales of so-called "master key" sets are permitted to continue.

Ostensibly sold for use by garages and parking lots, the keys are readily obtainable by anyone with larceny in his heart. All that is required is \$4 and a six cent stamp. No identification of the buyer is necessary. For

\$6.95 the would-be car thief also may purchase, by mail, a tool which allows one to enter cars without keys.

Several bills aimed at curbing the sale of these keys and devices have been introduced in Congress but have been buried in the avalanche of other anti-crime legislation.

On the brighter side, police investigators who have sent for the keys find that many don't work. Also, it is still a fact that most stolen cars are those which have been left unlocked and with keys left in the ignition.

* * *

If you get an uneasy feeling that somehow your 1968 car is costing much more than the announced increase, you are quite right.

Without any announcement, most of the manufacturers have dropped from the standard equipment list a number of items and placed them on the "optional at extra cost" roster. An example is Ford's electric clock which was standard on the Fairlane

and now costs an extra \$15.59.

In some cases the car makers are installing smaller engines as standard equipment and charging extra for the engine that was standard last year.

Another gouge to the consumer's budget is in the increased price of certain options. A "decor group" that was formerly \$84.25, this year brings \$110.25.

A comparison of the 1967 and 1968 issues of *Car Price Magazine* makes interesting, albeit depressing, reading.

* * *

Possible good news for motorists in the ruling by New Jersey's insurance commissioner Charles R. Howell.

Henceforth auto insurance companies must use a portion of their investment income to offset future rate increases. New Jersey is the third state to adopt this regulation.

* * *

Buick got the jump but Ford is not far behind in the introduction of a model assembled in California for Californians.

The Mustang GT/CS features horizontal taillights, (non sequential), spoiler lip on the trunk lid, rectangular fog lamps, a black-out front grill, competition type hood latches, fiberglass deck lid and side scoops.

Price for the /CS (for California Special) will be about \$195 more than the Mustang Hardtop.

* * *

Many of our regular readers will remember that in 'ROAD TEST Tests the Tests' (August 1967) we stated that frequent tune-ups are necessary to keep smog devices on late model cars functioning.

We have just received a press release from General Motors which reads in part:

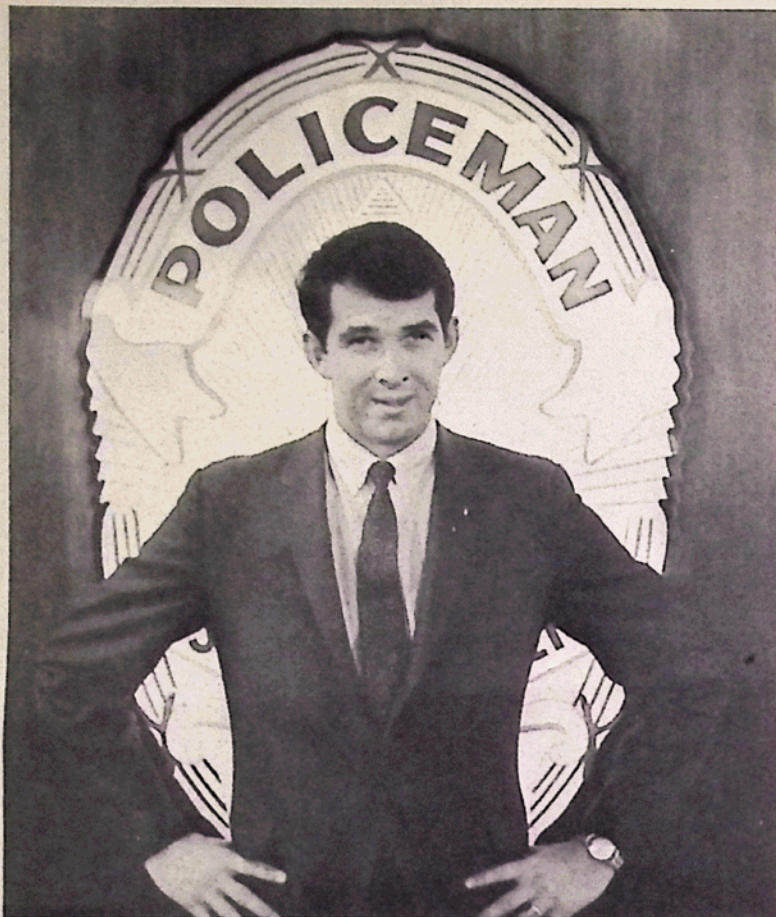
"Requirement of a periodic engine tune-up must be seriously considered if attempts to alleviate the nation's air pollution by reducing automotive exhaust emissions are to succeed in critical areas like the Los Angeles Basin, a General Motors spokesman said today."

Makes you wonder if politicians and GM spokesmen employ the same speechwriter.

Continued on page 66

ON THE CHOPPIN' BLOCH

By Byron Bloch



"Cur of the Year" . . .

One of our illustrious competitors, Motor Trend, has an annual feature known as "Car of the Year." Having watched this sham award for so many years, I feel compelled to now put it where it belongs . . . On The Choppin' Bloch.

Motor Trend has awarded Pontiac its "Car of the Year" award in 1959 (for its "wide-track"), in 1961 (for the Tempest), and in 1965 (for styling and engineering leadership) . . . in addition to the recent 1968 award to the Pontiac GTO.

Let's tackle 'em one at a time, before pouring it on the 1968 GTO.

The 1959 "wide-track" Pontiac was a scant fraction of an inch wider than a lot of its contemporaries, and even a bit narrower than some. (Better tires would have been a more significant help to improve handling.) The "wide-track" ploy was primarily an advertising gimmick, and Motor Trend apparently caught the fever.

The 1961 Tempest was cited by Motor Trend as "unquestionably a prototype of the American car for the Sixties" . . . with its unique

transaxle, flexible driveshaft, four-cylinder engine option, and overall sensible size. Within three years thereafter, Pontiac dumped the costly and unreliable transaxle, flexible driveshaft, and the four-cylinder engine . . . and increased the overall sensible size in the traditional ploy of "bigger means better."

The entire 1965 Pontiac line was given the Motor Trend award, despite contradictory remarks that all models had "the same handling and ride qualities" . . . followed by descriptions that showed marked differences among the obviously different cars . . . typical Detroit barges.

And now for the 1968 GTO. Talking in generalities about styling and safety and performance, Motor Trend makes a fetish about the GTO's plastic front bumper, which is supposedly a major safety and styling advance. Hah! For one thing, it affords much less shock-absorbing protection than the "water bumper" invented and now being mass-marketed by John Rich, of Sacramento, California.

And if the GTO really is an expression of safety in design, how come it hides its tail-lights deep and

low and vulnerable within the regular-metal rear bumper. And how come it hides its headlights from side view by means of those ridiculously-extended fenders. And how come the fade-away rear fender tips are hidden from view, and thereby cannot aid the driver in backing up. And how come the GTO has such bulging, unprotected side panels, that can get easily banged up in a parking lot. And what about the GTO's reliability and durability, its economy and ease of maintenance and repair, its emission of toxic air pollutants . . . to mention only a few factors that Motor Trend conveniently ignored.

How on earth could the February issue of Motor Trend, which was essentially written in November of 1967 . . . only two thin months after the '68 GTO was introduced . . . call the GTO the "Car of the Year?" What if it fell apart after the typical consumer had put 10,000 miles on it? What if, like the infamous 1961 Pontiac Tempest, it turned out to be a troublesome car?

Also, what about the fact that the Pontiac GTO is essentially identical to the Buick Skylark GS models, and the Oldsmobile Cutlass 4-4-2 models, and the Chevelle SS models? As alike as peas in a pod . . . how about the fact that the same February, 1968, issue of Motor Trend carried 9 full pages of advertising paid for by Pontiac and its suppliers. (Every ad, by the way, complimented the GTO for getting the award.)

The almighty dollar . . .

In the Sports Car Annual (January 1968) edition of this column, I noted that the auto manufacturers were adding two sets of shoulder belts or harnesses to each new car . . . for which the auto manufacturer paid about \$3 to the shoulder belt manufacturer.

Add on a couple of dollars or so for the installation costs and the slight reinforcing of the roof panel, and Generous Motors and Ford and Chrysler had incurred a total cost increase of about \$5 or \$6 per car.

Yet when the shoulder harnesses became mandatory on January 1st, to comply with the new Federal Standards, the auto makers announced a price hike of about \$25 per car . . . which they, in their very own news releases, had attributed solely to the addition of those same two shoulder belts. In short, they were charging the consumer about \$25 for bolting in about \$3 worth of mandatory safety belts!

Our representatives in Washington, D.C., were notified by myself

and others (including the ever-vigilant Ralph Nader) about this apparently arrogant price increase by the auto makers. Senator Walter F. Mondale and Senator Warren G. Magnuson stood up for us, the auto-buying consumers, by publicly chastising the auto makers for such flamboyant profiteering. Subsequently, Senator Abraham A. Ribicoff's government operations subcommittee probed into the cost and pricing of safety features and equipment.

The response from the auto makers? So far, they've swallowed hard (like the cat who just ate the canary, and got caught in the act!) . . . and, lo and behold, pretended that what they really meant was not what they had said a few weeks earlier. The pricing battle still rages . . .

You, the concerned auto-buying consumer, can help fight these exorbitant price increases for mandatory safety equipment. Express your views in a brief note to Senators Mondale, Magnuson, and Ribicoff . . . at the Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. (If you like, tear out this page and send it along with your own comments.) And, of course, urge your fellow consumers to do likewise . . . Speak out!

Safety seat is on its way . . .

ROAD TEST featured the revealing saga of the remarkable Kinematic Safety Seat System (and the co-joined plight of the individual inventor) in a four-part series, culminating in the March 1968 issue with the strong recommendation that the seat should be evaluated by the National Highway Safety Bureau.

I'm pleased to report that relevant data, views, and comments were officially submitted (in the required ten copies, of course) to the Bureau on January 22nd of this year. (Reference: 23 CFR Part 255, Notice No. 67-5, Docket No. 2-1.) Now let's see how the Bureau officially responds to this major safety innovation.

Perhaps a hint of the Bureau's positive interest relates to its reliance on data obtained at the Cornell Aeronautical Laboratory, of Cornell University, in Buffalo, New York. The Cornell Lab recently announced that it planned to evaluate specific new car-seat concepts, including the (Kinematic) tilting seats. Robert A. Wolf, the perceptive director of Cornell's renowned Automotive Crash Injury Research program, is apparently quite interested in scientifically evaluating the Kinematic Safety Seat System . . . and, undoubtedly, his data and conclusions will be forwarded to the Bureau. Godspeed!

The law and the lemon . . .

Whoops! You say you're stuck with a shoddy and defective car . . . a "lemon?" You claim the snobby dealer and his nasty service manager refuse to correct the ever-recurring mess that your Panther V-8 keeps turning into? And the manufacturer, good ole Generous Motors, has even stopped sending you those hollow-sounding form letters?

Ah, but you're going to get even. You're going to sue!

That is, you'd like to sue . . . but you're not quite familiar with the plan of attack. Who could you sue . . . the dealer or the manufacturer, or both? On what specific legal grounds could you sue . . . or would you find that there's no legal precedent nor "cause of action" to support your suit?

Well, in the manner of the law that we abide by in these United States, there's such a thing as a "landmark decision" . . . so named because of its importance in establishing a new legal precedent and cause of action whereby you could base your own legal action on analogous grounds. In the area of shoddy and defective cars, there is, I am pleased to report, such a landmark decision . . . as you could also have learned by consulting any competent lawyer, especially one who handles "product liability" cases.

If you'd truly like to plunge into the matter of defective cars and warranties, and the relationships between auto manufacturers and dealers and the consumer public, then go to your local law library (or the law book section at most university or main city libraries); and look up the case of "Henningsen versus Bloomfield Motors." You'll find it in a set of law books known as *The Atlantic Reporter*, 2nd Series, Volume 161, Pages 69 through 102. The legal decision was decided in favor of Henningsen (the plaintiff) and against Bloomfield Motors and Chrysler Corporation (the defendants) on May 9th, 1960. Victory for the consumer!

Just to whet your appetite, here's one of the points made in this landmark decision:

"Where a manufacturer of automobiles puts a new automobile in the stream of trade and promotes its purchase by the public, an implied warranty that it is reasonably suitable for use as such accompanies it into the hands of the ultimate purchaser."

Practice what you preach? . . .

The definition of "hypocrite" is "one who pretends to be pious or

virtuous without really being so." Now, with all this hue and cry between the auto industry and the National Highway Safety Bureau, regarding the pros and cons of the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, wouldn't it be interesting if both the auto industry and the Bureau turned out to be a bunch of hypocrites? Let's take a look . . .

The National Highway Safety Bureau is headquartered in the Donohoe Building, at 6th and D Streets SW, in Washington, D.C. Behind and beneath the building is a parking area which houses the automobiles that are daily driven by the Bureau's staff. Now, you'd think that virtually all of those cars would be properly equipped with the recommended (by the Bureau) array of safety equipment and attributes . . . like shoulder harnesses, anti-whiplash head restraints, proper size tires with ample tread still on them . . . all features which are quite easily affixed to virtually any car, and for a few dollars at most.

I had occasion to be in Washington, D.C., recently, and went to the Donohoe Building in the normal course of events. Just as a matter of curiosity, I went to the Bureau's parking area to check over what I had anticipated would be some truly safety-equipped cars. Yep, you guessed it! Virtually no shoulder harnesses. Undersize and almost-bald tires. An occasional anti-whiplash head restraint . . . though typically of flimsy design, and not adjusted properly. Seat belts . . . many of which were jammed under the seat cushions, obviously with the intent of never or rarely using them.

Meanwhile, back upstairs at the National Highway Safety Bureau, another letter was being drafted . . . to warn the auto industry for its hypocrisy in merely paying lip-service to safety. "Practice what you preach," it said, "and set a fine example for the consumers."

And what of the auto industry? Take Ford, for example, with more than fifty safety experts working diligently in a new multi-million dollar Automotive Safety Research Center, in Dearborn, Michigan. With all their money to play with in investigating safety, you'd think those safety researchers would make sure that their own new or almost-new Fords would have all the latest safety features . . . even if they had to list each item as a bona fide expense for professional purposes. Guess again. I checked their parking lot, too, and found a feeble array of safety-equipped cars. Hypocrisy was rampant . . . and sad to see. ♠

ROAD TEST

owner report

**ROAD TEST INVITES
CAR OWNERS TO
JOIN IN THIS
SURVEY:**

NO SIGNATURE REQUIRED!

Motorists are asked to be frank, but fair in completing this questionnaire. Completed forms will enable us to make a million mile report on each make and model car. If an owner wishes he may send in more than one report, one on each car owned or more than one report on the same car, one when quite new, the other after considerable mileage.

**send to:
ROAD TEST SURVEY
P. O. Box 22253
Los Angeles, California
90022**

- 1 Occupation: _____

- 2 Sex: _____ Age: _____ Marital status: _____
- 3 Income bracket: Under \$5,000 _____
\$ 5,000 to \$ 8,000 _____
\$ 8,000 to \$10,000 _____
\$10,000 to \$15,000 _____
\$15,000 to \$25,000 _____ over \$25,000 _____
- 4 Education: High school, 1 2 3 4 College 1 2 3 4 5 6
(please circle highest grade)
- 5 Number in household: _____
- 6 Number of cars owned in immediate family: _____
- 7 Make and model: _____ Year: _____
- 8 Period of ownership: _____ years _____ months
- 9 Mileage covered: _____
- 10 Average fuel consumption in town: _____ m.p.g.
- 11 Average fuel consumption on the open road: _____ m.p.g.
- 12 Most-liked features: _____

- 13 Disliked features: _____

- 14 Has the car given trouble? (Yes/No.): _____
- 15 If so, what? _____

- 16 Is it dustproof? _____ Weatherproof? _____
- 17 Is the car receiving dealer service? (Yes/No.): _____
- 18 If so, is the dealer service _____
Excellent? Good? Fair? Average? Poor? Shocking?
(Please ring the word which applies)
- 19 If not dealer service, why not? _____

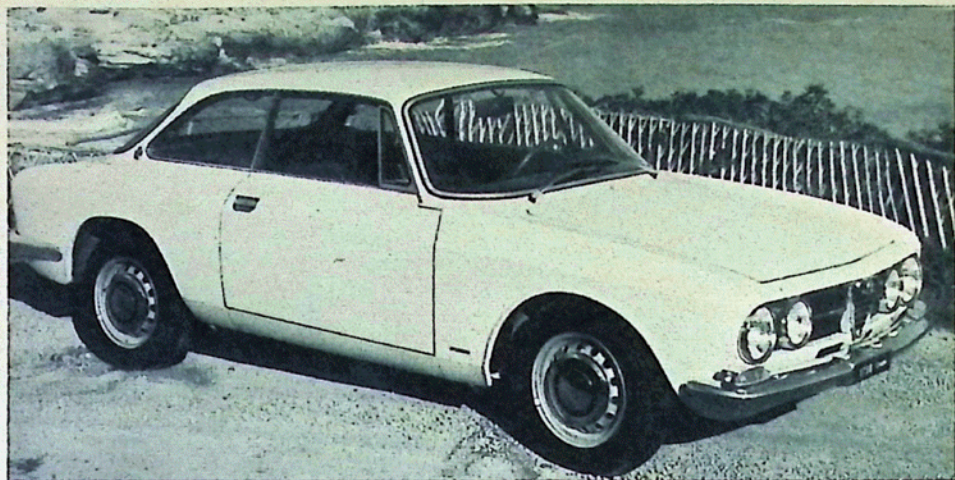
- 20 Other makes/models considered before buying: _____

- 21 Reason for choosing present car: _____

- 22 Probable choice next time: _____
- 23 Additional comments: _____

ROAD TEST / EUROPE

By Carl Wagner



Alfa Romeo 1750

Alfa Romeo's new 1750 line is an addition to the range of 1300 and 1600 Giulia models, all of which remain in the production program as previously. Basically, the Giulia 1600 engine has been bored out from 78 to 80 mm and the stroke has been increased from 82 to 88.7 mm, giving the 1750 a displacement of 1779cc — which is much closer to 1.8 liters than to 1750cc. Actually, the 1750 designation alludes to the legendary pre-war models and is not completely accurate as regards to engine displacement.

With the new displacement increase the old 1300cc Giulietta engine, dating from 1953, now appears to be at the very end of its potential. Very little has been changed, mechanically, on the powerplant over that of the 1600 Giulia version: As a matter of fact, the 9:1 compression ratio, the two dual, horizontal Webers and even the timing of the intake valves are identical. The maximum power of 132 bhp (SAE) at 5500 rpm of the dohc, in-line-4 is up by 20 horsepower over that of the Giulia 1600 Super and the torque of 137.3 lb.-ft. is up by 25%. This latter figure is attained at 3000 rpm.

It is interesting to note that a 13.5% displacement increase has brought an 18% power gain and 25% greater torque, all of which goes to prove that the basic design was a very healthy one indeed — especially when

Newest addition to the Alfa-Romeo line is the 1750 with engine displacement of 1800 cc. The 1750 sedan is an entirely new model while the coupe and roadster are externally the same as the 1300 and 1600 models.



Interior of the Alfa 1750 conforms to all U.S. safety standards. All instruments except speedo and tach are to the driver's right and canted in best aircraft tradition. Shift lever location is a new departure.

considering these increases to be over the last 1600cc version.

The sedan, GT coupe and roadster all use the new 1750 engine. There is no external difference over that of the 1600 with regard to the Pininfarina

roadster, which looks just like the previous Duetto Spider. The Bertone Coupe, however, has a new 4-headlamp grille and the hood-mounted air scoop of the 1600 is missing. The sedan is entirely new. It too is designed by Bertone and the lines of the Berlina, as the sedan is called, are much smoother than those of the Giulia 1600. The sedan's wheelbase has been increased from 98.8 in. to 101.2 in. and the front track of all 1750s has gone up to 52-in., with the rear track at 50 in. Overall length of the 1750 Berlina is up by 10 in., to 173 in. leg room for the rear-seat passengers benefitting from this.

The leatherette interior is all new and the dashboard conforms to the U.S. safety standards. Speedometer and tach are two large, separate, circular instruments in front of the steering wheel with the other gauges clustered to their right. The central gearshift lever now protrudes at a sharp angle from underneath the dash, this also being the case with the 1750 coupe and roadster.

The ratios of the 5-speed transmission remain identical to those of the 1600 but the rear-axle ratio has been lowered to 4.3:1 on the sedan and 4.1:1 on the coupe and roadster. The 4½x15 wheels have been replaced by new ones with dimensions of 5½x14 but despite the smaller wheel diameter the disc-brake diameter has been slightly increased. The 4-wheel ATE discs utilize a Lockheed-Bonaldi servo system. The sedan's seats have been upholstered in a new leatherette material and the folding rear-seat central arm-rest has a storage compartment.

With the exception of the GTA coupe and the Duetto Spider all other 1600s have had their front tracks increased to 52" and the Osi-designed and built 2600 4-seater sedan has finally been taken into the Alfa production program. This car made its first appearance at the 1965 Geneva Salon and has been shown at most auto shows ever since. Finally all the production snags have been elim-

inated and it joins the standard 2600 Bertone and the special 2600 Zagato Coupes in the line-up, along with the spider and the standard 2600 sedan.

Citroen-Maserati

There's grist in the rumor mill! There comes a point, however, when fact can be fairly well separated from fancy, like wheat from the chaff, and this point has been reached in the sub-surface agreements that have been going on between two rather unlikely partners: Citroen and Maserati. What, one asks, does an old-line Paris firm like Citroen which is renowned for very unorthodox, but strictly practical, sedans have in common with a producer of top-line GT automobiles, *pur sang* products which are lineal descendants of F-1 machines and sports racing cars?

Prestige — that's what! Mercedes-Benz once built a rather pleasant car designated as 300. It wasn't very big, and it also wasn't very powerful, but it could cruise along at 100-plus all day — just like the DS 21 built by Citroen, coincidentally — and it was also the top-line sedan produced in Germany at the time. So, naturally, it was supplied as transportation for "den Alten," the late Chancellor Conrad Adenauer. As the story goes, "der Alte" once complained about limited leg room and so forth, but being rather well acquainted with the erstwhile 300, we just can't bring ourselves to believe the limited-leg-room ploy and so deduce (perhaps erroneously); that the "and so forth" was the prime factor. Under this ambiguous quantity we conjure up visions of diplomats based in Germany cruising around in Lincolns, Cadillacs and Rolls-Royces while "der Alte" would step into the sacrosanct interior of his 300 with only half the power under the hood and two-thirds the sheet metal surrounding him as compared to the chariots of other governments; not to mention having to receive foreign VIPs in a more humble official limousine.

So we are told that one day he complained about limited leg room and suddenly Mercedes-Benz confronted us with the 600 — and we defy *anyone*

to get complexes while riding in one of those! Now back to the earlier comparison between MB 300 and Citroen DS 21 and we should like to point out that the latter is today the top-flight sedan produced by displacement-conscious France. And what, do you think, does "le Grand Charles" use for local transportation? That's right, a black DS 21! We hear cries of "limited leg room" all over again! Matter of fact, it appears that it's been heard all the way to Modena. Maserati, located in that northern Italian city, has a fine reputation for building high-performance powerplants and the Citroen people very wisely put the question to themselves of why they should invest many thousands of Francs in the development of a high-performance engine when Maserati's great experience in that field can be tapped for considerably less.

So it seems that, after the demise, a number of years ago, of the big, Chrysler-powered Facel Vega sedan and coupe, France will once again see a large prestige car in its national production. The fact that Citroen will build it, puts the whole project on firm footing. At this point we can begin with educated guesses. The Maserati-designed engine will probably be in the 3-liter category and will have either a single overhead camshaft or possibly be of the dohc configuration, with the latter being the most likely as Maserati has built only double-overhead-camshaft units since 1954. If fuel injection will be utilized it will probably be the Lucas indirect system which Maserati has also been employing these past years. Although a 3-liter engine doesn't seem like a big unit for a prestige car, it would be the

largest passenger-car powerplant produced in France today and with present combustion-chamber design, high compression ratios and modern materials, the specific output should be very respectable.

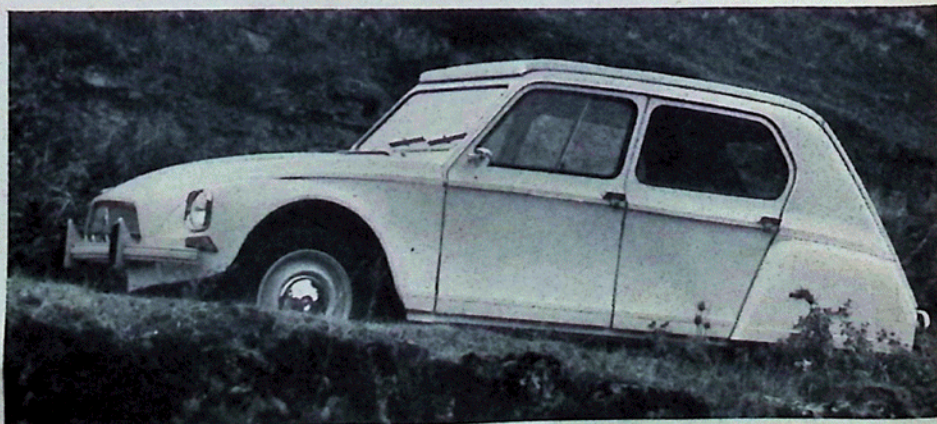
Chassis design would most likely follow the ID/DS principle with hydro-pneumatic suspension and a relatively long wheelbase, but whether the front or the rear wheels will be driven is a matter for conjecture. The transmission would either be fully or semi-automatic. Citroen's design crew, which must have been apprenticed either to Dali or Picasso, will make sure that the new luxury car's body elements will set a style which will remain in vogue for many years to come, and now all we can do is to sit back and wait a year or so to see just how close the facts will follow fancy.

Citroen DS 19/21 Cabriolet and Dyan 6

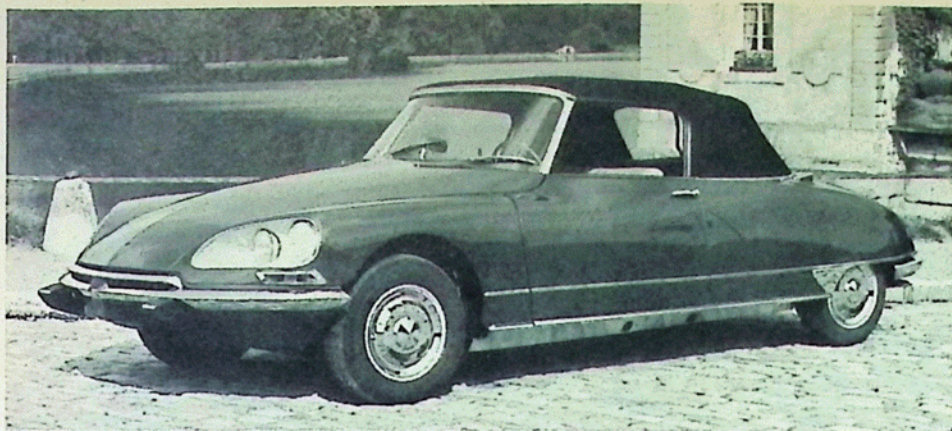
Meanwhile, Citroen has been busily supplementing its present program. The DS 19/21 Cabriolet (convertible) has been brought up to date mechanically and with regard to the newly designed front. The swiveling iodine-vapor headlamps which are connected to the front wheels and turn along with them are standard, as are the self-leveling driving lights which illuminate the road at the identical height regardless of the load being carried. A standard 4-speed transmission may be specified in place of the semi-automatic unit.

In the DS 19 version of the Cab-

Citroen's new Dyan 6 has half again the displacement of its predecessor. 602cc engine develops 28 hp at 5400 rpm. Top speed is a reputed 68.3 mph.



ROAD TEST



The Citroën DS 19/21 Cabriolet (convertible to us) has swiveling headlights connected to the front wheels. In the DS 19 version the 90 hp engine is used. The DS 21 model has a larger engine, develops 109 bhp.

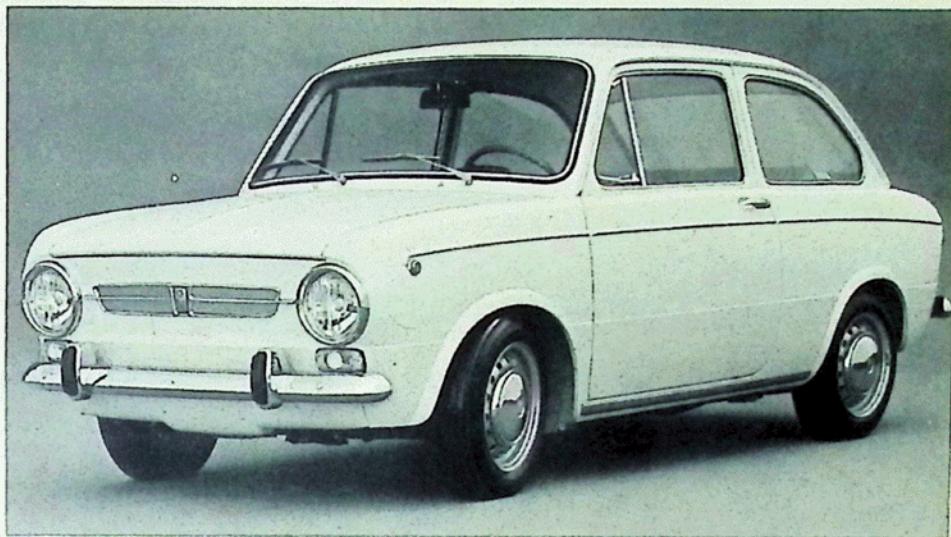
riolet 90 bhp (SAE) is developed at 5250 rpm while a bore and stroke of 86.0 x 85.5 mm give a displacement of 1985cc. In DS 21 form 109 bhp (SAE) is produced from a 2175cc swept volume resulting from 90.0 x 85.5 mm bore and stroke dimensions.

Having introduced the new Dyan several months ago, Citroën now offers this intermediate model which lies between the 2 CV and AMI 6 with a more powerful engine as an option to the 425cc version. The larger engine is derived from the AMI 6 powerplant, having the same 74 mm bore and 70 mm stroke, resulting in a displacement of 602cc. While this may not appear as being breathtaking, it is nevertheless a relative increase of almost 50% in swept volume! In this version, 28 bhp (SAE) is developed at 5400 rpm as compared to the 21 horsepower of the normal version, while the torque has also gone up to 31.8 lb.-ft. (SAE) at 3500 rpm. Besides the larger, more-powerful engine, everything else remains unchanged from the standard version and this new model is designated as *Dyan 6*. Its top speed is quoted as being 68.3 mph against the standard version's 62.1 mph.

Fiat 850 Special

Fiat has introduced a more powerful and luxurious version of the 850 sedan, the Fiat 850 *Special*, with an additional 10 DIN horsepower extracted from the 843cc powerplant,

disc brakes at the front and a new and elegant interior. The extra power was obtained through the development of a new cylinder head having a 9.3:1 compression ratio and using a two-barrel carburetor. The power output is now 47 bhp (DIN) at 6400 rpm while maximum torque amounts to 43.3 lb.-ft. (DIN) at 3600 rpm, the crankshaft speeds of both quoted figures being higher than the com-



The new model from Fiat is designated as the 850 Special. 10 additional horsepower have been extracted through cylinder head and carburetion modifications.

Interior of the Fiat 850 Special has been re-designed for greater comfort, can seat five in relatively cozy quarters.





Wood rimmed steering wheel is standard on the Fiat 850 Special. The knick-knack tray ahead of the gearshift is handy for sun glasses and cigarettes.

parable speeds of the standard version.

Wider rims and 145x13 tires have been adopted in conjunction with the new front-disc-rear-drum brake configuration.

The new interior features a redesigned rear bench for better accommodation. Together with the individual front seats it is covered in vertically pleated leatherette. The padded dash is also covered in this material but is a mat black and there is a parcel shelf beneath. A wood-rimmed steering wheel is standard.

The 850 Special may be identified from the exterior by a new front motif, a thin chrome strip along each side, and new, ventilated wheel discs.

Lamborghini Bertone 4 Posti

Bertone has done it again! And once more in combination with the new force in high-performance machinery: Lamborghini. Between coachbuilder and designer, this team has come up with an honest-to-goodness, 4-seater GT car of the very highest performance potential, the Lamborghini Bertone 4 Posti. Bertone has worked with standard Lamborghini components: the 3929cc (82x62 mm bore and stroke) V-12 with double overhead camshafts on each bank developing 325 horsepower at 6500 rpm, as well as with the 4-wheel independent sus-

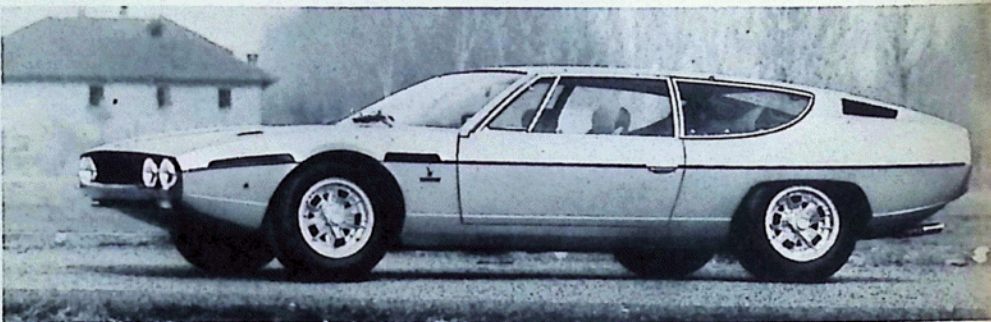
pension consisting of parallel wishbones and coil springs with coaxially mounted shock absorbers.

The wheelbase of the standard, front-engined, rear-wheel-drive, box-section platform was increased by 4 inches, to 106 inches and very careful research was undertaken by Bertone with regard to optimum placing of the driver's seat *versus* the controls so that there would be adequate leg room for all four occupants. The engine was moved forward and the front and rear tracks also slightly increased.

The position of the spare wheel was lowered and two fuel tanks were placed one on either side, at the rear, so that they would not intrude into the trunk space. Everything was done in order to be able to retain the standard overall dimensions of a GT car yet provide really adequate comfort for four as well as a large trunk.

The front seat backs are reclining and all seats are equipped with head rests. The front-quarter vents swivel, the side windows are power operated and the rear side windows are hinged at the top edges and swing upward. Air is extracted from the rear quarter panels which guarantees a proper flow in the passenger compartment. Besides all this, air-conditioning is supplied as standard equipment.

The instruments are clustered in front of the steering wheel in two separate planes for ease of observation and all switches are positioned on the front of the central transmission tunnel which runs the length of the passenger compartment, separating the seats from each other. Two pairs of dual headlamps are placed at the outside edges of the wide grille which sweeps across the entire front. The hood-positioned air intakes, one at either side, supply air to the interior.



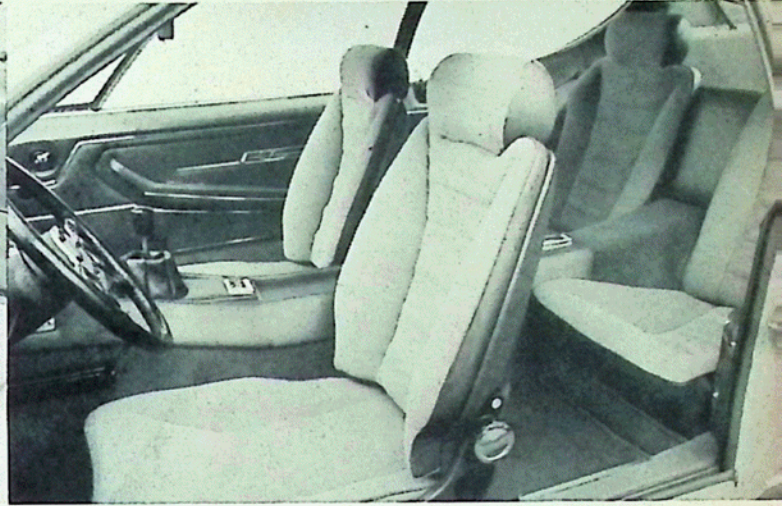
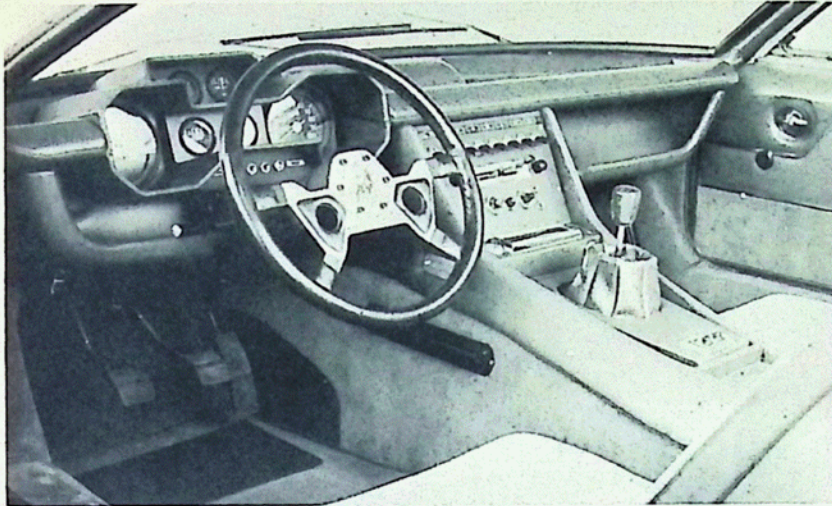
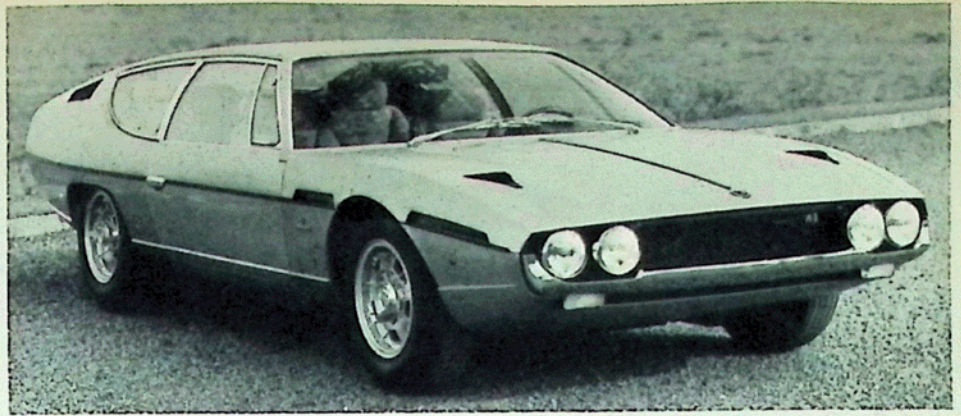
Bertone's newest masterpiece, his two plus two design for Lamborghini. The standard four liter coupe chassis has been lengthened by four inches. The Marzal idea car furnished much of the inspiration for the new production model.

Rear viewing from the Lamborghini Bertone 4 Posti is in two sections. The top half is meant for highway travel, the lower section (egg crate) for parking and reversing.



Hood scoops on the new Lamborghini are functional, supplying air to the interior of the car.

Interior of the 4 Posti Lamborghini Bertone represents sheer luxury. Front seat backs are reclining. Instruments are centered while controls are clustered above the center console.



A further unusual feature is the two-piece rear window. The upper portion is raked at a steep angle and provides excellent visibility for objects at a distance, when viewed through the rear-view mirror, while the lower portion is flat and vertically positioned, and covered by a grille of widely spaced, vertical bars. This portion of the rear window is used for close-up parking and backing maneuvers.

A great deal of sound-proofing material has been added to make the interior as quiet as possible. Bertone

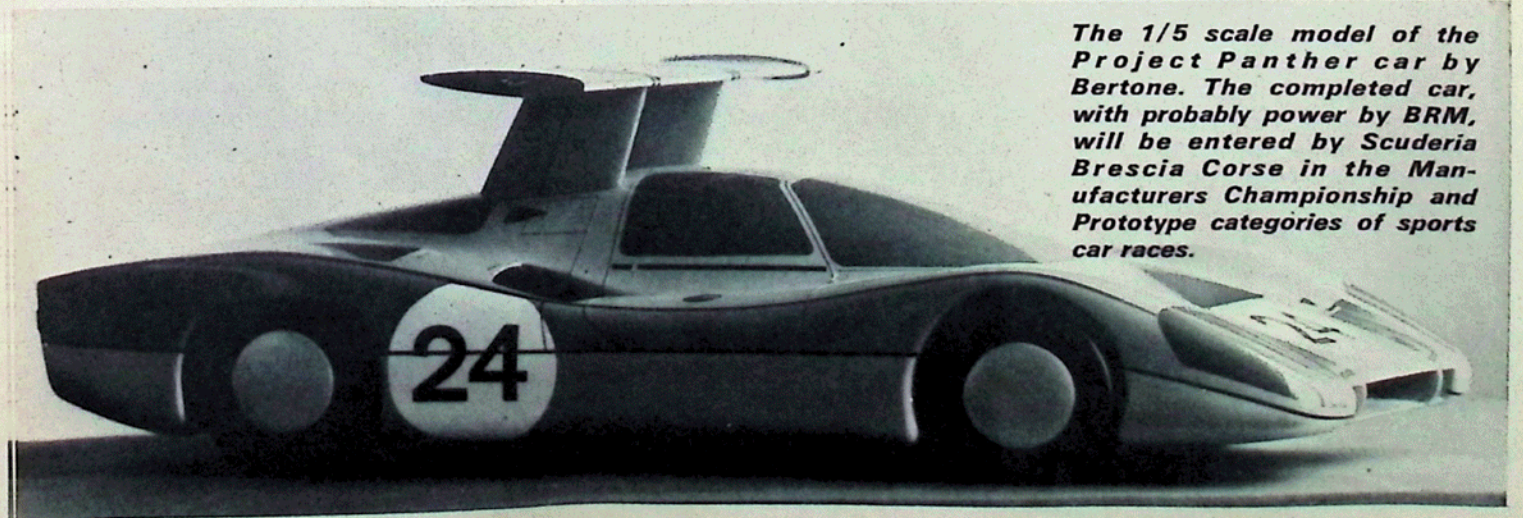
states that many of the features which were employed in the Lamborghini *Marzal* idea car of last season were employed in the *4 Posti*.

The Panther Project by Bertone

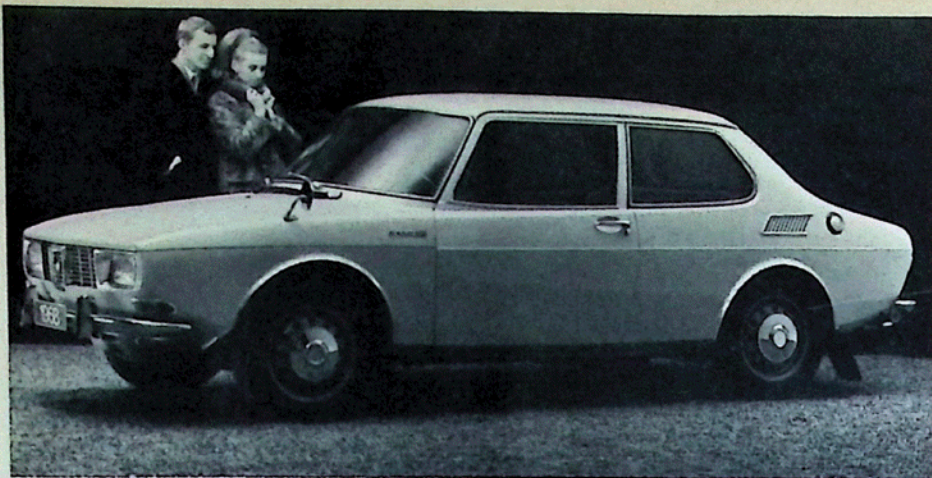
Scuderia Brescia Corse have recently announced their plans for a new series of cars which they plan to enter in the Manufacturers' Championship and Prototype categories. The president of this group, Signor Belponer, has recently released the

photograph of a model of a prototype car for which Bertone has designed the body, and which has been developed with the cooperation of Umberto Maglioli.

This scale model is 1/5 size. The actual car, to be tentatively introduced at the Geneva Show, will probably be powered by a 3-liter BRM V-12 derivation of the Formula-1 engine. This would put it into the Manufacturers' Championship and not the Prototype category. I will have more on this project after the Geneva Show.



The 1/5 scale model of the Project Panther car by Bertone. The completed car, with probably power by BRM, will be entered by Scuderia Brescia Corse in the Manufacturers Championship and Prototype categories of sports car races.



Designed by Sixten Sason, the new SAAB 99 eliminates the 'double ugly' image long associated with the marque. It is still compact but surprisingly roomy in the interior.

From the rear the new SAAB shows the greenhouse rear window for improved vision from this section. Styling resembles some domestic Pony cars.

SAAB 99

SAAB has recently released information regarding a new, larger model which will be built alongside the present 95 and 96 types. At this writing, several pre-production prototypes have been built and extensively tested and the final production version will crystallize out of the experience gained with these cars. With the possible exception of some minute details, the production body form has been finalized as have most of the principle technical details and components and the car will look much the same as is shown on the photographs of the pre-production series. The manufacture of the SAAB 99 is slated to begin in late '68.

Plans for the new 99 were made as early as the middle '50s and by 1958 a number of preliminary sketches had been submitted by Swedish designer Sixten Sason. These proved to be the basis for the 99's final body shape. By 1960 studies of the current SAAB line as well as cars of competitive manufacture had crystallized the basic design philosophy of the new model, which was projected to meet new standards of comfort, performance and exterior shape that would dominate the automotive field throughout the 1970s. Then, in the fall of '62, with the basic concept as well as the exterior decided upon, the question of what type of engine would be used to power the SAAB 99 was taken into consideration.

SAAB studied many possibilities including, among others, the Wankel rotary unit. The detailed evaluation of the many engine alternatives was given to the British engineering firm

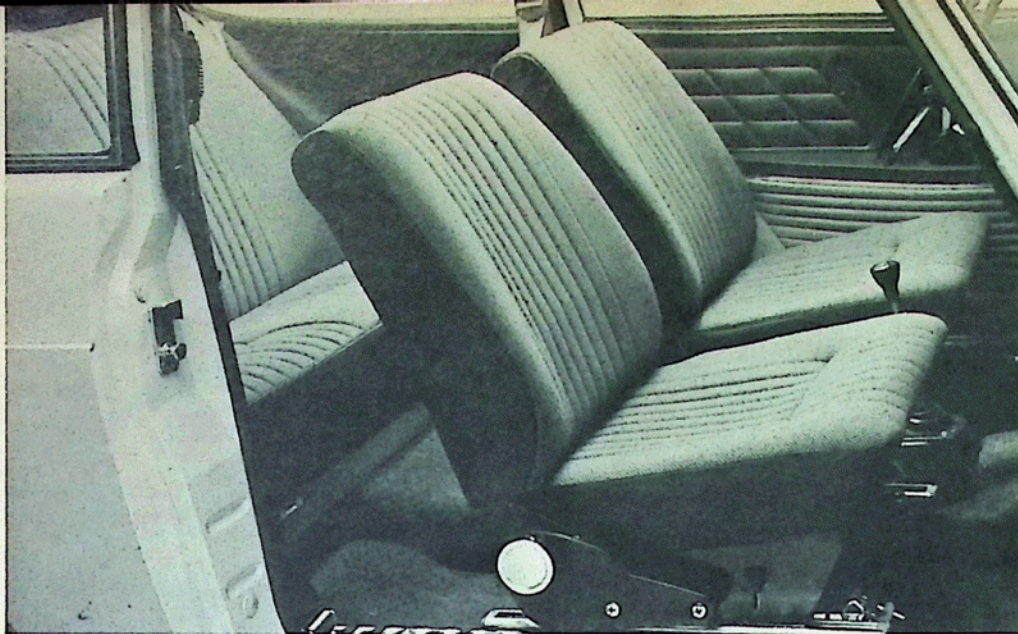


of Ricardo & Co. Engineers Ltd. and the final choice was a straight-4 with five main bearings and a single overhead camshaft. The British firm built some twenty test engines of this type which were delivered to SAAB in the fall of 1963. Tests at Trollhattan determined that this was the ideal type of powerplant for the projected 99 and then, through contacts with the Leyland Corporation, it was discovered that both firms had plans for similar engines for the future. It was decided that the two corporations would seek to coordinate their engine production and this led to a contract being signed on February 18, 1965, in Stockholm. The first driving test of a hand-built prototype took place in June of that same year and then, in January 1966, the car was sent on a two-month test run over Swedish winter roads, in temperatures as cold as -50° F! Further tests were con-

ducted during the summers of '66 and '67 and the Trollhattan factories of SAAB are now being expanded to meet the new production of the 99 at an estimated cost of \$20,000,000. It is planned to produce 70,000 cars annually by 1970. The Standard Triumph division of the Leyland Group will build the engines in England under SAAB quality control.

The overall concept of the car is typical of SAAB. It is front-wheel driven as all SAABs have been since 1950, when the Swedish aircraft firm decided to go into the automotive business. It has compact outside dimensions coupled with a relatively large and spacious interior. Safety has been foremost in the minds of the designers and to this end the well-known system of a rigid passenger compartment and front and rear sections which crumple under impact have been utilized. The wind-

ROAD TEST



SAAB 99 interior has front seats adjustable at the front edge for height. The rear seat bench folds forward and the rear seat back folds down to double cargo space.

shield pillars are of double section to prevent the roof from collapsing should the car roll over, and the rear quarter panels have also been strengthened.

SAAB's cross-over, dual-circuit brake system is employed. This was first introduced in 1964 and is unique in that one circuit controls the right front and left rear wheels, while the other acts on the left front and right rear pair. Also unique for front-wheel-drive cars is the hand brake which operates the two front brakes instead of the rear set thereby preventing rear-wheel lock-up when used as an emergency brake (which is hardly likely in view of the fact that there will always be a 50% braking effort on hand should one circuit fail). Disc brakes are employed at all four wheels. A rear-brake compensating device is utilized.

The five-main-bearing, sohc-4 is mounted in line with the longitudinal axis of the chassis but it is tilted towards the right at an angle of 45°. Interestingly, the single dry-plate clutch is placed at its front, with the drive to the transmission being taken via bevel gears. The fully synchronized 4-speed transmission is located underneath the crankcase, being separately lubricated. The differential is immediately behind the transmission and this set-up has the advantage of concentrating the weight of the engine and drive train directly over the front wheels, much the same as in the Oldsmobile Toronado, with the exception that in the

Toronado's case the torque converter is at the rear of the engine, *versus* the SAAB's front-mounted clutch.

Bore and stroke of the SAAB 99's powerplant are 83.5 — 78 mm, giving a 1709 cc displacement. Maximum power comes to 87 bhp (SAE) at 5500 rpm and torque is 97.65 lb.-ft. at 3000 rpm with a relatively flat torque curve over a large engine-speed range — 72.3 lb.-ft. are available between 1000 and 5000 rpm. Compression ratio is 9:1. The block is of lightweight cast iron while the head is of aluminum alloy, with the breathing being accomplished via the cross-flow method whereby the intake and exhaust manifolds are on opposite sides. Carburetion is by a special Zenith-Stromberg 175 CD unit which gives instant cold-weather starts plus a good degree of operating economy across the power range.

Front suspension is by parallel wishbones and coil spring with coaxially mounted telescopic shock absorber. The coil spring has its lower mounting on the upper wishbone. At the rear there are upper leading and pressed-steel lower trailing arms supporting a rigid axle. Attached to each lower trailing arm, and in front of the axle, is a coil spring and a hydraulic shock absorber in that order. A Panhard rod is also employed. The fuel tank is mounted behind the axle and between the rear wheels. This rear suspension geometry is particularly well thought out and the entire suspension system, with relatively soft spring rates, has been designed to

provide a smooth ride even over rough surfaces.

A great deal of thought has also been given to the interior. The dash is fully padded and the instruments are white-on-black in circular dials. The floor-mounted, stubby shift lever has short throws and the foot pedals are suspended. The individual front seats are adjustable for height (at the front edge) as well as for reach. The backrests may also be tilted and adjusted for rake. The rear seat bench may be tilted forward against the front-seat backrests, and the rear-seat backrest folded flush into the floor well practically doubling the already capacious trunk space!

As befits a car built for Nordic climes a very efficient heater/defroster system has been incorporated with separate outlets to the rear passenger compartment. These may be separately regulated. Through ducts in the doors, the front side windows can be defrosted as can the rear window, which has an individual defroster control.

The 2-door, 5-seater body is of unit construction, and with its gentle curves, rounded sills and belt line, and wedge shape, it offers a very individual appearance. Rectangular headlamps are employed and the only side ornament, other than the type designation placed above and behind the front wheel arch, is the grille underneath the rear quarter panel. This is functional and exhausts the interior air, acting as an extractor. The body has an exceptionally low drag coefficient of only 0.37.

The car has been designed with radial-ply tires as standard equipment. Preliminary tests have demonstrated an above-average roadability over all kinds of road conditions. The 99 is the first all-new car for SAAB in eighteen years and it seems that a really thorough research and design program has yielded an end product which will be produced for most of, if not all of the 1970s. ♠

FOR THE COLLECTOR

Who wants to be Informed

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- 16 Is it dustproof? _____ Weatherproof? _____
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(Please ring the word which applies)
- 19 If not dealer service, why not? _____

- 20 Other makes/models considered before buying: _____

- 21 Reason for choosing present car: _____

- 22 Probable choice next time: _____
- 23 Additional comments: _____

is true of publications such as *Hot Road*, *Rod and Custom* etc. which appeal to an even more narrow interest, albeit large and highly enthusiastic audience.

Magazines such as *Popular Mechanics*, *Mechanix Illustrated* and *Consumer Reports* have sections devoted to matters automotive but since this represents only a fraction of their editorial concern it certainly cannot be said to be their justification for existence.

Therefore we rightly felt that a magazine devoted solely to the interests of the automobile buying public, one which did not accept automotive advertising and thus was in no way obligated, was needed. ROAD TEST Magazine was born.

We brought a different approach to the field of automobile testing. Other magazines conduct their tests and make their reports on the basis of their experience with one car of a given make. Often these reports are the findings of one staff member who will have spent a varying amount of time in the example car.

Such tests, although indicative, are not fully valid. There are many variables in the production of a device with 10,000 parts and one sample may not be representative of a production run in the hundreds of thousands. There are also variables in the degree of excellence at the dealer level who has the task of preparing the car for customer delivery. Thus any one example tested by one man or a small group of staff members cannot be representative of all cars in that model line.

To overcome this built in weakness ROAD TEST has, from the start, employed a different technique in its testing procedure. By retaining a representative group of consultants who are automotive men but not regular staff writers we have a broad cross section of knowledge and experience as well as a highly diversified number of owned automobiles in the possession of those consultants.

So it is that when we test, for example, a Ford product we are able to

draw upon the experience of several consultants who are and have been Ford car owners. In other words, we do not rely upon the subjective opinion of one or two staff members who might drive a given car for a few days or a few weeks. Each car is given painstaking review by *all* the ROAD TEST consultants then a consensus report is made and finally reduced to readable form by staff members who have accompanied the subject car through all phases of the testing operation.

This, you might think, would be sufficient to bring you a completely objective and thorough analysis of each car offered as tested in the pages of ROAD TEST.

While we think it is the best method offered by any automotive magazine our procedure to date still has not been the ultimate in being conclusive. There have been gaps in our information. For not one of us, staff member or consultant, has enough hours in his life to put each car through a million miles or more of daily use. Furthermore, it is never possible to completely weed out remnants of personal bias toward or against a particular make or model.

SURVEY TO PROVE WORTH

The ROAD TEST survey is designed to fill the gaps and by sheer weight of numbers eliminate any possible taint of prejudice.

Hundreds of owners reporting on one particular model of car will provide us with a wealth of detail that could be gained in no other fashion. Individual preferences and prejudices are certain to appear, but repeated complaints viewed from the objective plateau of thousands of reports will carry incontrovertible weight. The ROAD TEST Owner Survey should, therefore, prove to be of great value to our readers. We will be able to tell you first hand what features owners of a given model like best about their cars, what parts or accessories have given the most and the least amount of trouble. This data will not only be

based upon our own findings, but on the collective experience of owners whose mileage totals in the millions.

We will learn just what features of any given car are the most likely and the least likely to give trouble over a period of ownership. The most satisfying aspects over the long range will become common knowledge.

Your responses to the ROAD TEST Owner's Survey are becoming an invaluable asset in our continuing efforts to provide the most comprehensive and most informative automotive magazine in the field.

Rover tops owner's survey

The painstaking analysis of each survey report form received has been a task filled with rewards and excitement. ROAD TEST readers are an articulate group and your responses have provided deep insights into your strongest preferences and most vehement complaints.

We have selected as the subject for our first in-depth report on the ROAD TEST Owner's Survey the most appreciated automobile — based solely on an analysis of what its owners have to say.

That car is the Rover 2000.

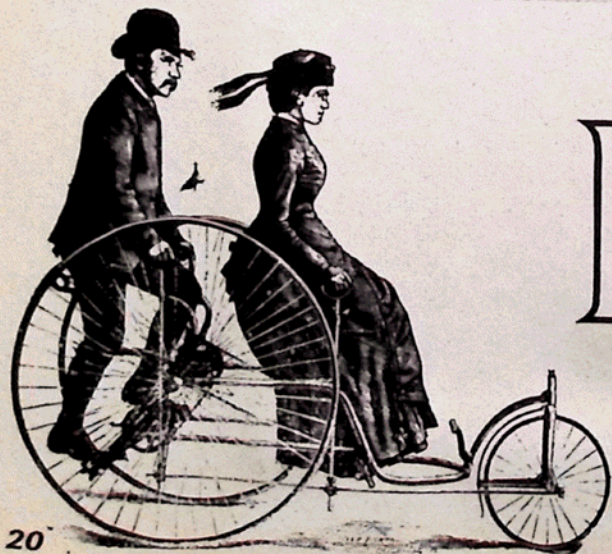
The weight of evidence is overwhelming. Reports have been received on no less than 63 different makes and models of cars, both domestic and imported. Even though Rover is not one of the top 10 imports sold, more survey forms were completed on Rover than any import except Volkswagen.

Of present Rover owners, 87.6% (the highest figure) state firmly that their next and only choice will again be Rover. On the scales of likes and dislikes the balance tilts so far in Rover's favor that there is material to fuel an ad man's dreams for a lifetime. Also number one among non-owners but those considering imports is Rover.

In every such weighing of factors there must, inevitably, be a loser. Not one present owner of a Chevy II said he would consider buying the car again. ♠

Responses to the ROAD TEST Owner's Survey put Rover far in front both as the car most likely to be re-purchased by present owners and most desired by non-owners considering an import in its price range.



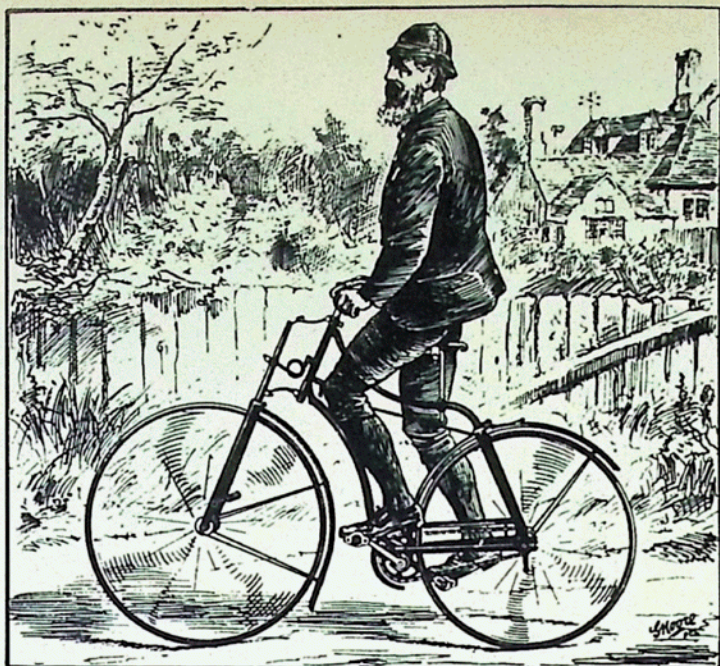


ROVER
MEMORIES

THE
'Special Rover'
Bicycle.

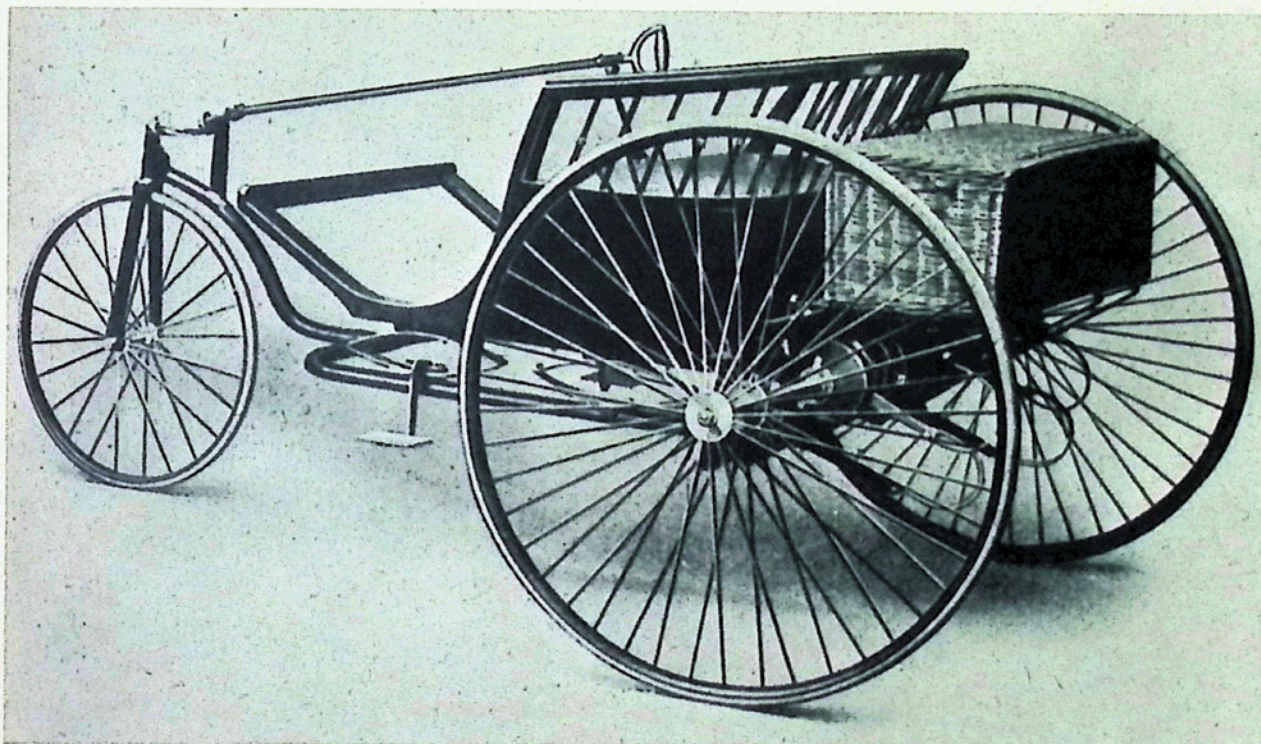
(Patented and Registered.)

As ridden by the
RIGHT HON.
VISCOUNT BURY,
President of
the National Cyclists'
Union



The founder of the Rover Company invented the rear wheel drive bicycle shortly after 1885. At that time the firm was known as Starley and Co. Ltd.

In 1888, Starley designed and manufactured this motorized tricycle with a horizontal electric motor under the seat. Steering was by a shovel handle and a pinion working on a toothed quadrant.



BICYCLES, Motor Cycles, Automobiles, Jet Cars. Sounds like the history of transportation. Actually, it is the story of the Rover Automobile Co.

The company owes its beginning to two engineers, John K. Starley and William Sutton, who joined forces in 1878. Their chief interest was the making of bicycles. They did invent a new kind of bicycle, a rear driven safety bicycle called the 'Rover,' which, having wheels of the same size front and rear, set the pattern for the modern cycle.

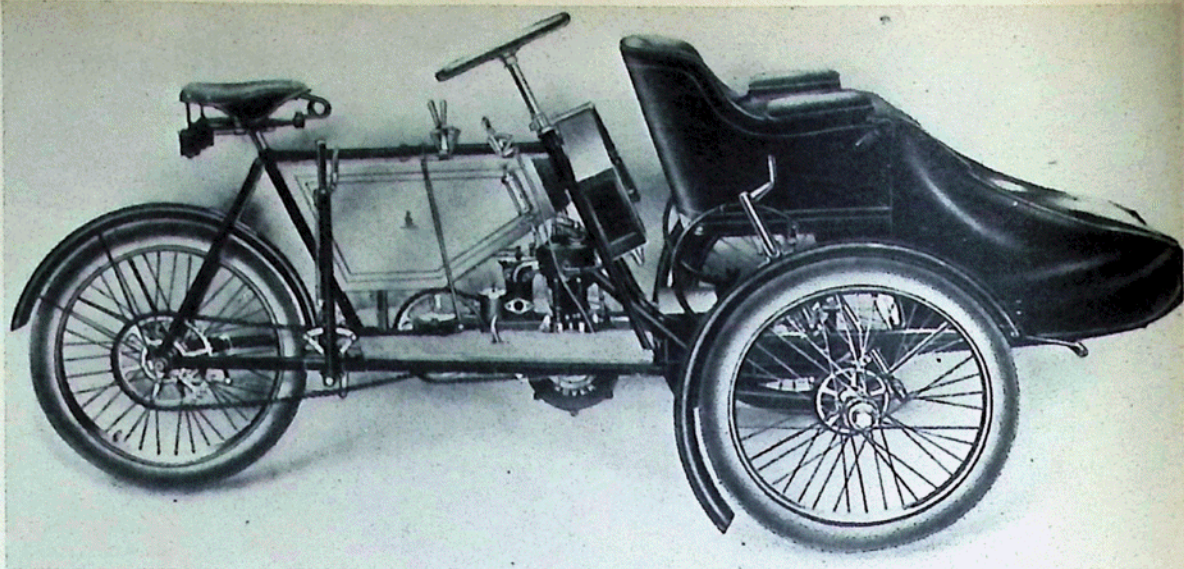
With passing years, Rover ex-

panded its product line, first adding motor cycles and then automobiles. In 1904, a little 8 HP car drove down to Bexhill in Sussex, England to take part in speed trials on closed roads. It didn't win but was beaten only by a more powerful car. A report on the race stated "The name of the company producing the car is sufficient guarantee for the workmanship that has been put into it. . . . It will be watched with great interest because of its many points of peculiar novelty of design." A statement that could well describe the current model 2000.

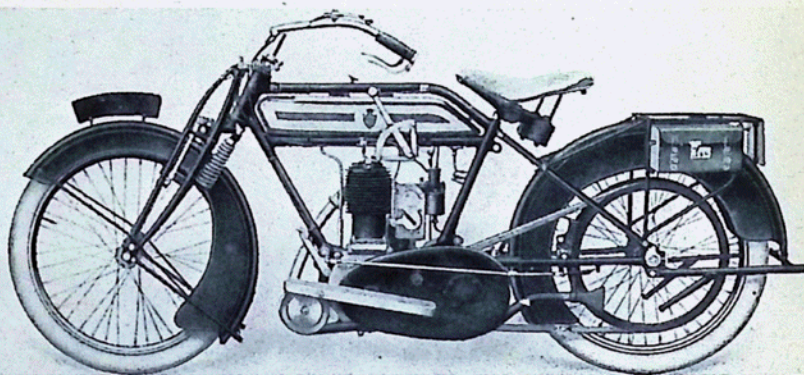
Until the 1920's, Rovers continued

to sell a simple, robust, well-made economy model possessing many advanced features. The frameless single-cylinder 8 HP presaged the box girder section supporting engine, clutch, gearbox and back axle; which has periodically been 're-invented' under various guises such as 'unit construction,' ever since. The car had three forward speeds and could romp along at a merry 28 mph with owners claiming over 40 mpg. Rovers never claimed more than 35 mpg; a modesty trait which the company still maintains today.

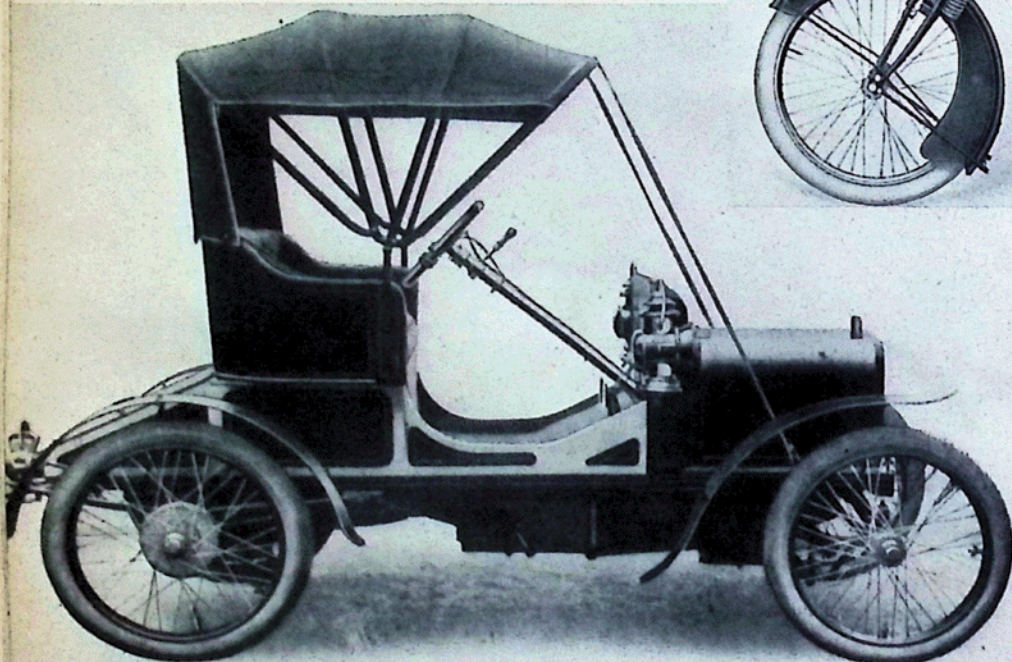
The 'between war' years saw the



Rover continued the manufacture of motorized tricycles. The 1905 model exposed its passengers to the elements.



Although Rover was primarily in the automobile business it was many years before production of motorcycles came to an end. This model was made in 1915.



In 1904 the Rover Cycle Company began production of automobiles. The eight hp featured the revolutionary Rover carburetor which was widely adopted in the industry.

company grow and continue production of what became accepted as high quality cars. In the late twenties, the first of the six cylinder engines was built. The engine was a clean and beautifully machined unit. The cylinders were cast in unit with the upper portion of the crankcase. The crank ran in four large bearings. The upper end of the cylinder barrel was enlarged to form the combustion space, and the face of the detachable head was a plane surface in which were the valve ports and valves. Thus a machined chamber was obtained without any intricate operations.

22

Other features worthy of note were the aluminum pistons, the main bearings with white-metalled, phosphor bronze shells, and the aluminum sump which permitted easy access to the engine when removed.

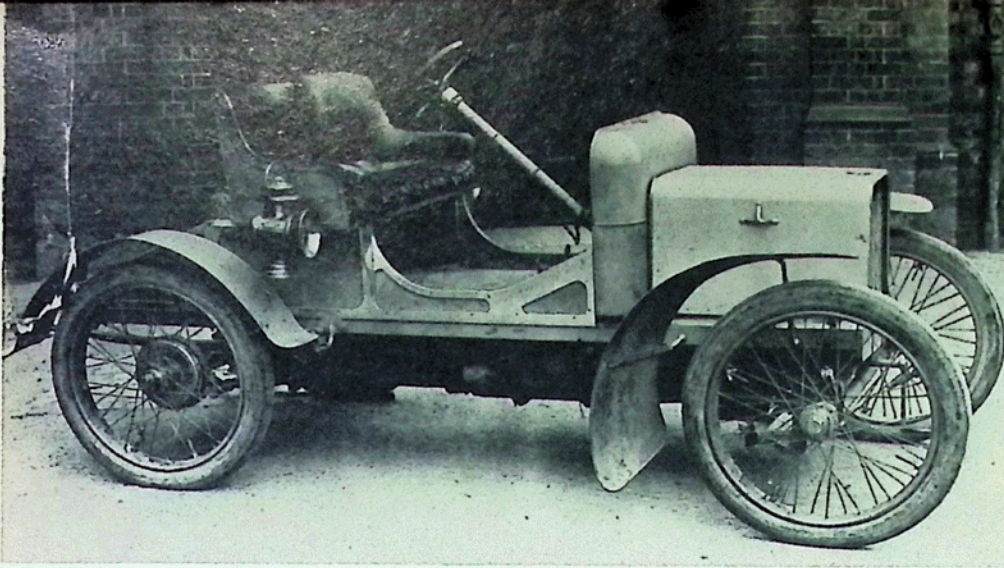
This highly satisfactory engine formed the foundation on which all subsequent Rover engines were based until 1947.

During the war years, Sir Frank Whittle, the inventor of the jet engine, worked with Rover engineers in the production of jet engines for the Meteor aircraft that went into operation at the end of World War II.

This led to the investigation of the possibilities of using a gas turbine for road vehicles.

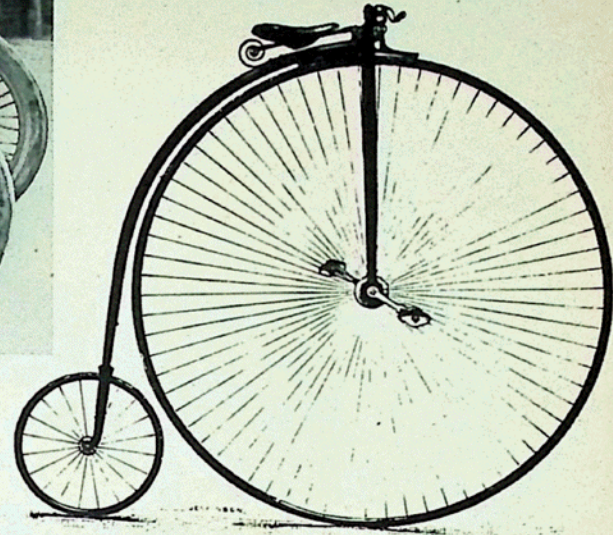
In March of 1950, the world's first gas turbine car was demonstrated to the press at Silverstone Racing Circuit and later established the first world speed record for Gas Turbine Cars at 151.965 mph in June of 1952. Several additional experimental cars were built and in 1963, Rover joined forces with the BRM Racing Organization to enter the Le Mans race with a turbine car to compete in the special category section and to aim to win the 'once-only' prize of 25,000

ROAD TEST

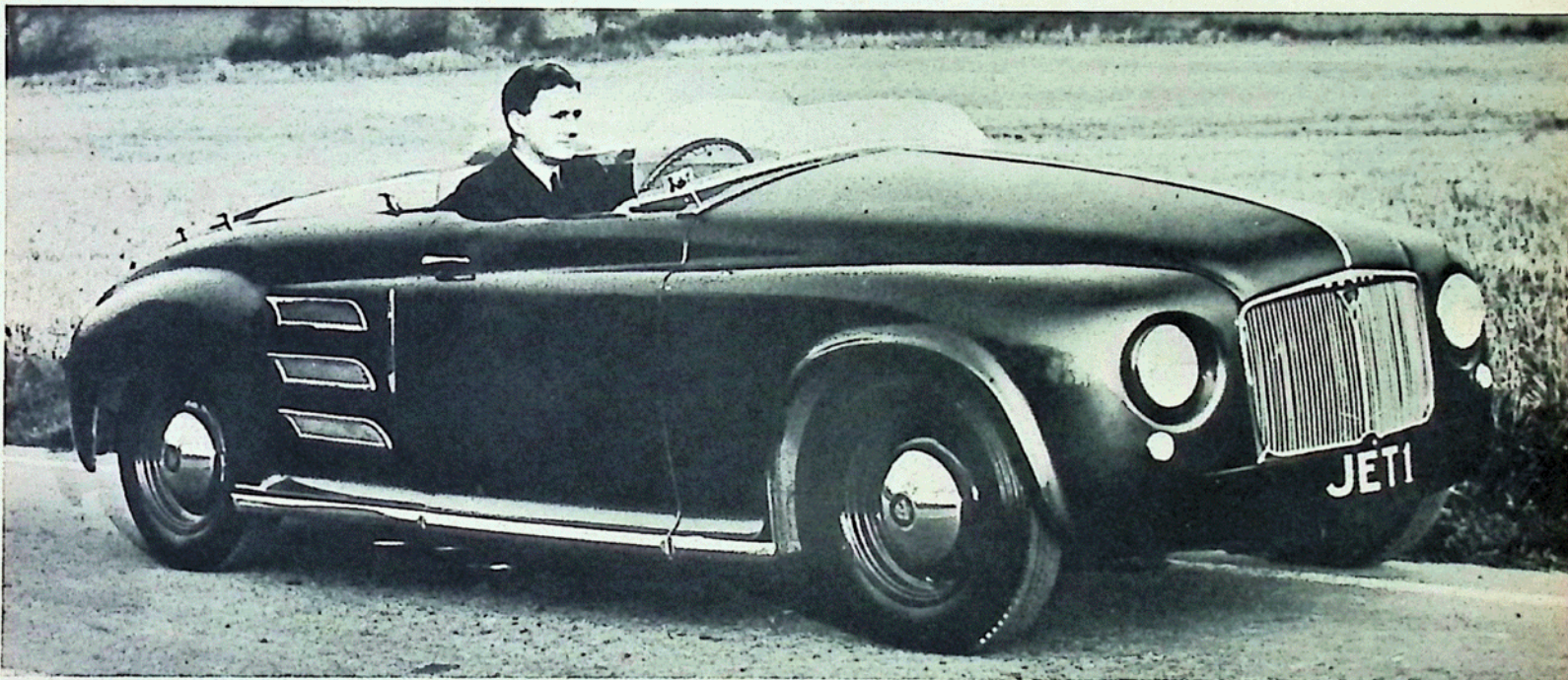


The 6 hp Rover Meteor of 1904 was meant for fair weather touring only. The side lamp was an optional extra. Wire wheels, however, were standard.

The world's first gas-turbine car, the Rover Jet 1 was introduced in 1950. Top speed was 152 mph but fuel consumption was astronomical.



There were several models available in the Rover bicycle line in the 1880s. Sizes ranged from 48 in. to 60 in for the main, driven wheel.



Francs for the first gas turbine car to average more than 150 kph (93.225 mph) for the 24 hours. In the race, the Rover finished at an average of 107.84 mph.

Another company offshoot as the result of World War II was the Land Rover. This vehicle obviously owing some inspiration to the Jeep which had been widely used by Allied forces. The Land Rover was first introduced in 1948 and is currently made available in no less than 37 variations.

In 1957, a design study known as P.6 was instigated and the first

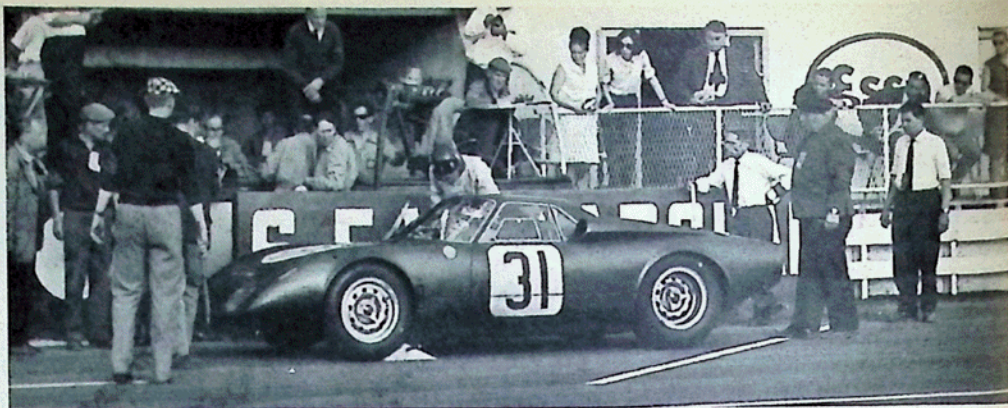
prototype appeared in early 1959. This is the present Rover 2000, the subject of this test.

The construction concept was so revolutionary, compared with any other Rover vehicle, that a completely new factory was needed to handle the project. In 1960, work began on a \$30,000,000 facility to produce the 2000. All through the development to the last engineering prototype in early 1962 and into production models introduced in late 1963, testing and modifications went on at a steady pace. Since 1963, a tremendous number of hours have been

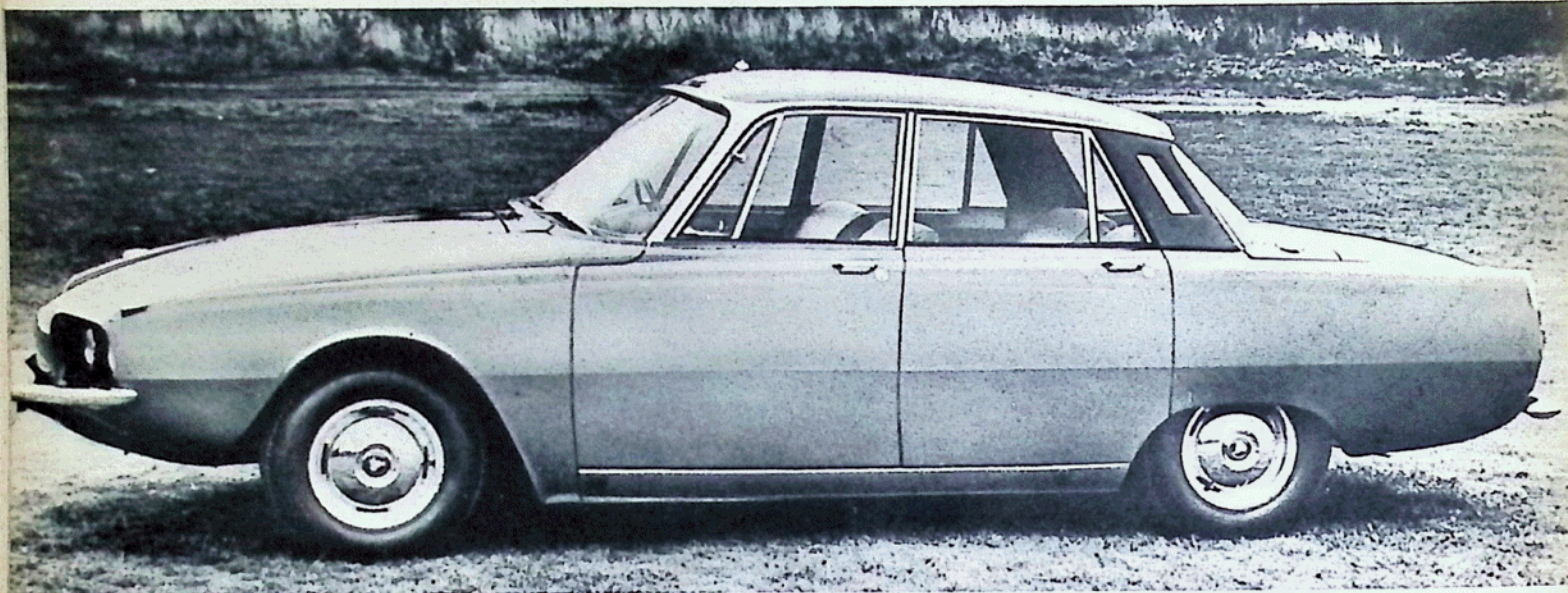
devoted to further refinements at the Rover proving ground. The current 1968 model can be described as the culmination of some ten years of research and development.

Ninety years of quality manufacturing is certainly a reputation to be envied. Pioneering in safety right from the beginning is also a refreshing outlook. The current model is another example of this philosophy. It may come as a surprise to many that there is *no* actual Safety Department with a staff of Safety Engineers, rather, the entire engineering staff from the Technical Director

With gas turbine by Rover and chassis by BRM, racing history was made at the 24 hours of Le Mans.



The passenger prototype of the Rover gas turbine was introduced in 1962. The car is still undergoing testing, has not been offered for sale.



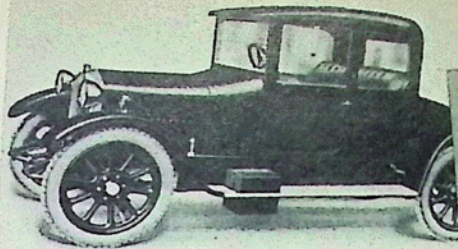
downward is vitally concerned with this matter. They are *all* Safety Engineers.

The demand from the lawmakers is for a "crashproof" car, which while being desirable is also not as immediately practical as they would wish. Rover has, on the other hand, recognized its moral responsibility in the field of safety and has produced a machine that fulfills as many of the ultimately desirable features as possible within the present state of the art. At the same time, the car has certain commercial appeal to the public and doesn't look like a tank stuffed with down, a layman lawmaker's idea of a safety designed vehicle. Rover also appreciates that a car that does not sell will save no lives. ♠

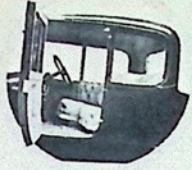
The Land Rover was introduced in 1962. This four wheel drive vehicle was designed to traverse impassable terrain with maximum reliability.



ROVER



The 14 h.p. Rover Limousine Coupé



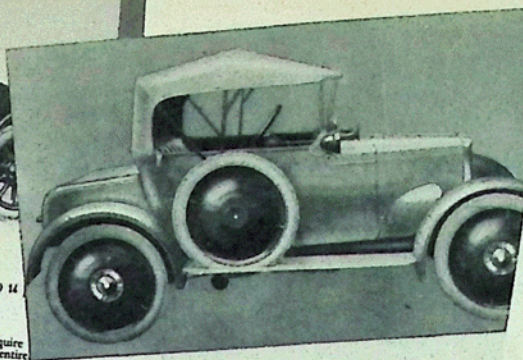
The interior of the Rover Limousine Coupé. Ample headroom and room for luggage.

Professional men who require smart, dignified, and entire weatherproof car will find the 14 h.p. Rover Limousine Coupé eminently suited to their needs. Undoubtedly this is the most handsome car of its type on the road. The body is roomy and free from rattles, whilst the combination of adjustable screen, sliding windows, and roof ventilator renders it comfortable in all climatic conditions. There is a dickey in the back to hold two persons, and a considerable amount of luggage may be carried.

PRICE £585

See the TRIPLEX (over 24 in.)

"THE ROVER SET THE

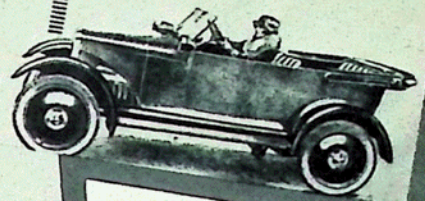


EVERY effort has been made to give the car a low seat position, and plenty of room for tall owners is left in the driving seat. The spare wheel is fitted in a very handy position. The hood and screen keep the occupants as warm and dry and comfortable as on the most expensive car. The horn is fitted through the dash so that it is handy to the driver's hand, and does not get wet in rainy weather and spoil one's gloves every time it is used. A nicely shaped and large box forms the back of the car with plenty of room inside for tools, spare petrol and oil, accumulators, etc. and a considerable amount of luggage can be strapped on top.

SEEDS— and WORDS

Being a résumé of the 8 h.p. ROVER'S achievements during 1923, and some Press comments regarding them

8 H.P. ROVER MODELS AND PRICES:
 2-SEATER "CHUMMY" } £139
 4-SEATER } £145
(on above basis)



ROVER 12 h.p. FOUR-CYLINDER CAR: DOCTOR'S COUPÉ



£400

Top 40. H.P. 42

Three speeds, gate change, worm drive back axle, Bosch magnets, full inside spacers to front and back axles, steel wheels made detachable, and complete set of internal body fittings.

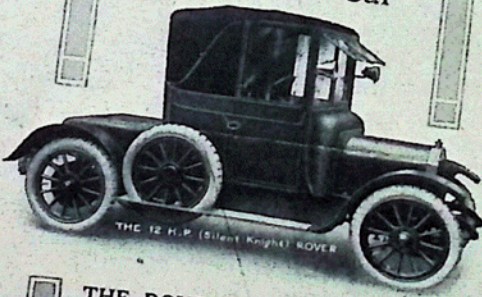
Entrance from both sides.

For full specifications see p. 11

Complete Car £400

Internal body fittings, and spare Sany's wheel, with steel stud-tire, electric side and rear lights, two acetylene head lamps with separate generator and horn.

THE ROVER COUPÉ or Doctor's Car

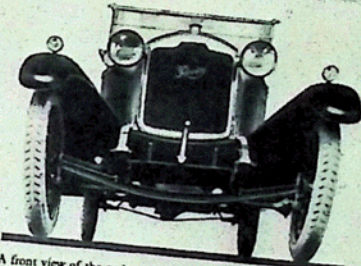


THE 12 H.P. (Silent Knight) ROVER

THE ROVER CO., LIMITED
 COVENTRY

LONDON: 23-25, New Oxford St. (Corner of Shaftesbury Ave.), W.C.
 LEEDS: 35, Collyer Street.
 LIVERPOOL: Central Hall Buildings, Rowley Street.

ROVER



A front view of the 14 h.p. Overcast Model Rover Car, showing the sturdy front axle and steering details. No part of the chassis is within 10 inches of the ground.

Equipment of the 14 h.p. ROVER

THE cost of the 14 h.p. Rover includes a number of items which are not universally included in the standard equipment of a car. They are, however, fittings which nearly every purchaser desires, but which he frequently has to purchase separately as "extras."

The photograph on page 9 reveals a number of the fittings which are included as standard in every Overcast Model 14 h.p. Rover. It does not, however, show the luggage grid, which is fitted at the rear end of the chassis and which folds up when access to the petrol tank filler cap. The leather covers on the rear springs retain the lubricant between the leaves and prevent squeaks.

The really complete kit of tools, and the manner of disposing them in the rear door, is readily apparent, as is the pocket for the side

curtains in the back of the front seats. Both the front and the side curtains are thus prevented from damage through rattling about in the car.

The two spare wheels are carried on the right-hand side of the car, being supported by a well in the footboard.

On the dashboard are seen the clock, the handy pocket for containing maps or small parcels, the engine starter control buttons, the switchboard with dash lamp, the throttle control mechanism, and the speedometer. The control buttons for the electric horn is mounted on the right-hand side of the body, while the bulb of the wind horn is also easily accessible to the driver's hand.

A revolving spotlight (see photograph) is fitted to the roof of the car.

ROVER 18 h.p. FIVE-SEATED BODY

A PERFECT TOURING CAR

Top 40. H.P. 42

Worm drive, four speeds, gate change, handi dual ignition, full inside spacers to front and back axles, being last-axle, torque and valveless, and wheels made detachable.

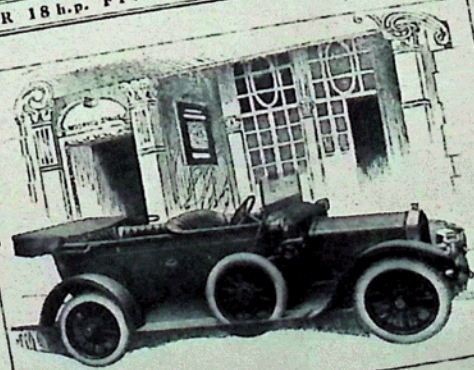
For full specifications see p. 11

Finished Car - £450 (if leather body)

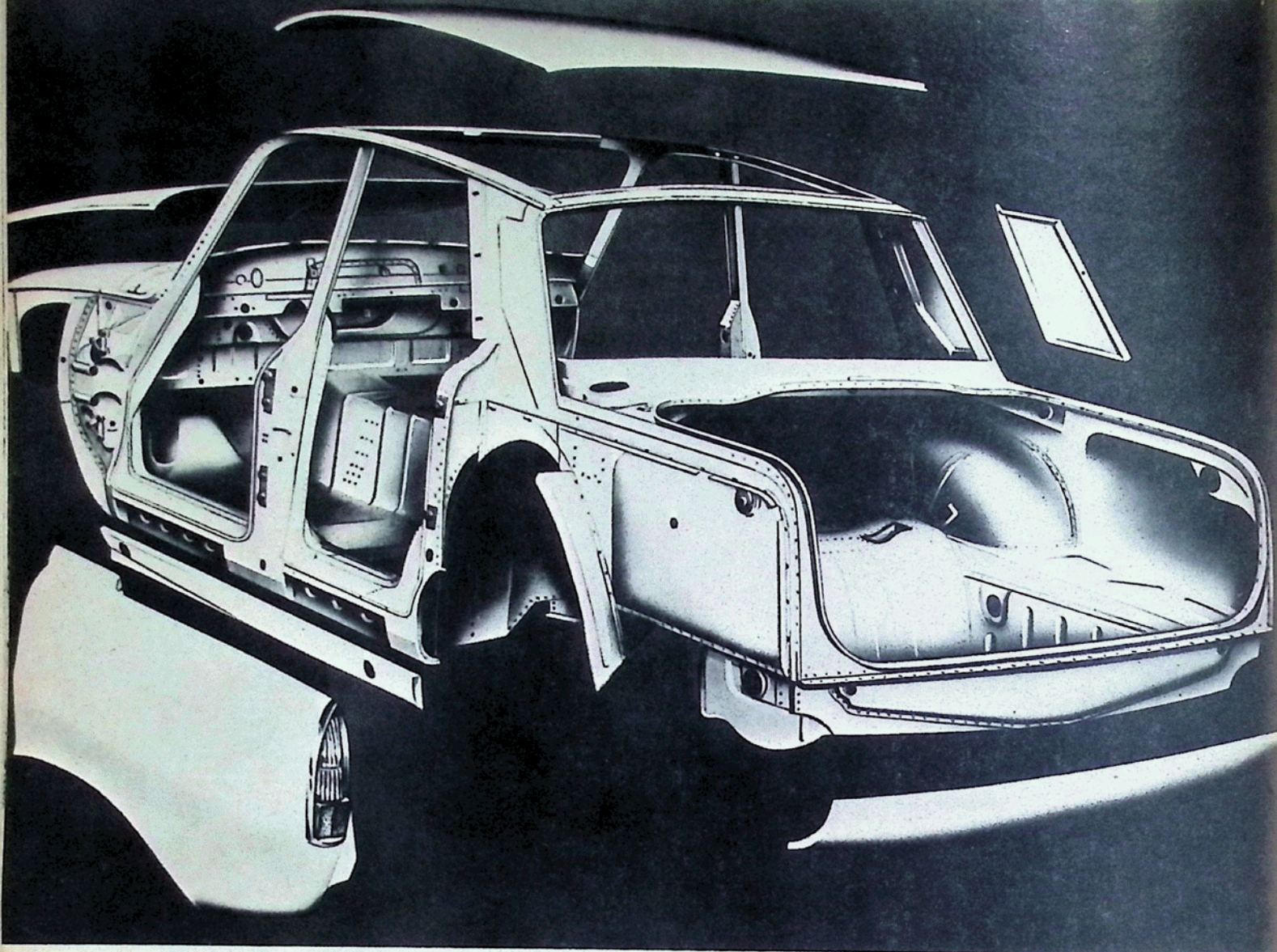
if 20" x 20" tires - £475

Finished Car - £425

Complete - £465 (not leather)



Complete Car - £500
 Chassis, complete with 4 wheels only, tires and spares - £375
 Including front, screen, two acetylene head lamps, separate generator, gas valve and one tail lamp in lamp (selective extra), horn, spare wheel and steel stud-tire.



ROVER ENGINEERING

Why can't everybody make a car this good?

IN ALL considerations, the Rover 2000 has to be one of the best engineered cars in the whole wide world. From basic structural concepts to provisions for passenger comfort and safety, it ranks head and shoulders above the ordinary, the mundane and the mass-produced. The Rover 2000, it would seem, is a custom-designed sports sedan, manufactured in quantity.

The term "sports sedan" lends the key to understanding why the 2000 is as it is. The chassis/body/power-train concept is more that of an out-and-out sports car than it is that of a multi-passenger family sedan. In fact, the Rover's chassis and suspen-

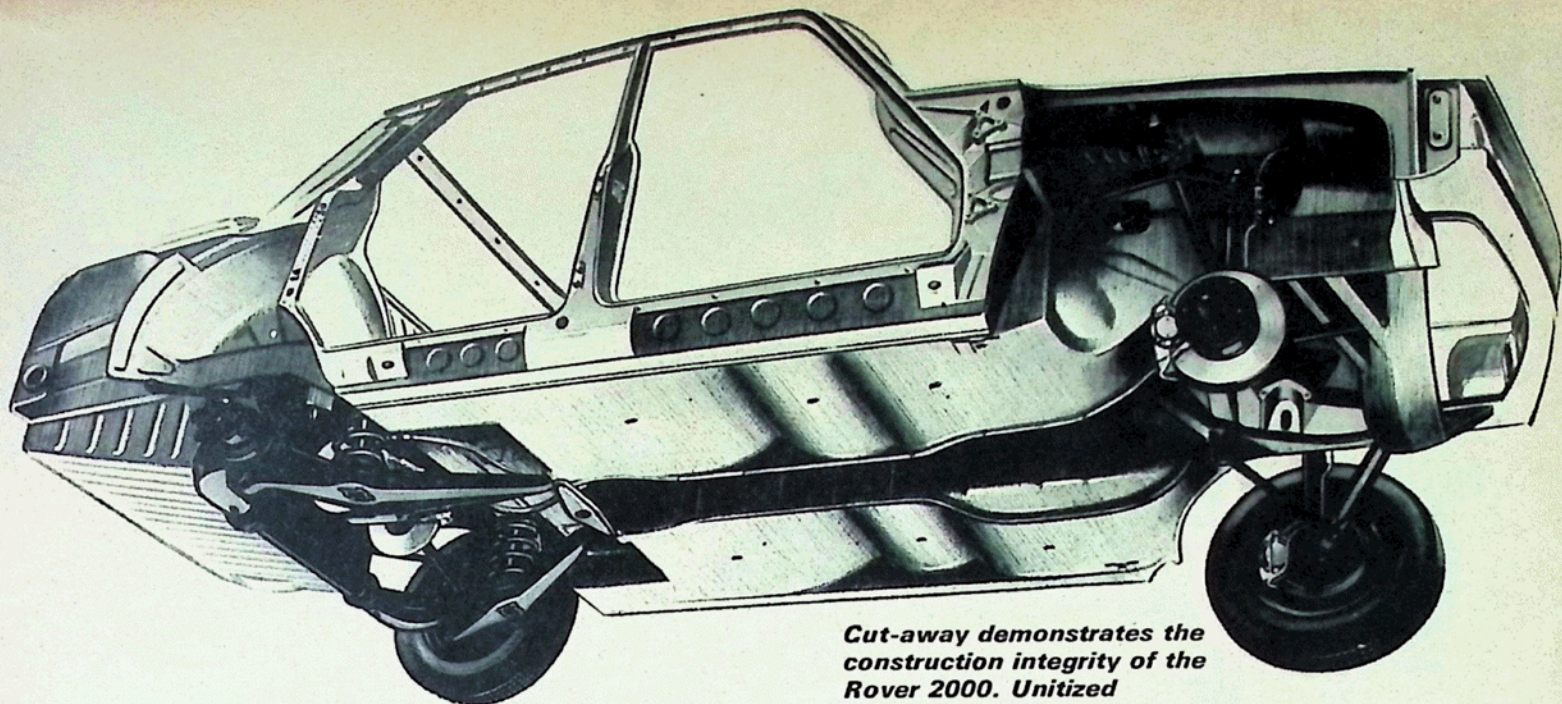
sion probably are far more exotic than most similarly-priced sports cars. If it weren't for the fact that the 2000 has four doors, it could successfully be called a sports car.

The sports car attitude begins at the ground, where Rover shoes its 2000 series cars with radial-ply tires. No messing around with excuses about how suspensions are incompatible with such harshness-producing tires; Rover just up and equips the car with the best kind of tires for all-around driving. There's no problem with suspension because that is designed in harmony with the tires. Of course, Rover uses 165-14 Dunlop SP 41 radials, and places them

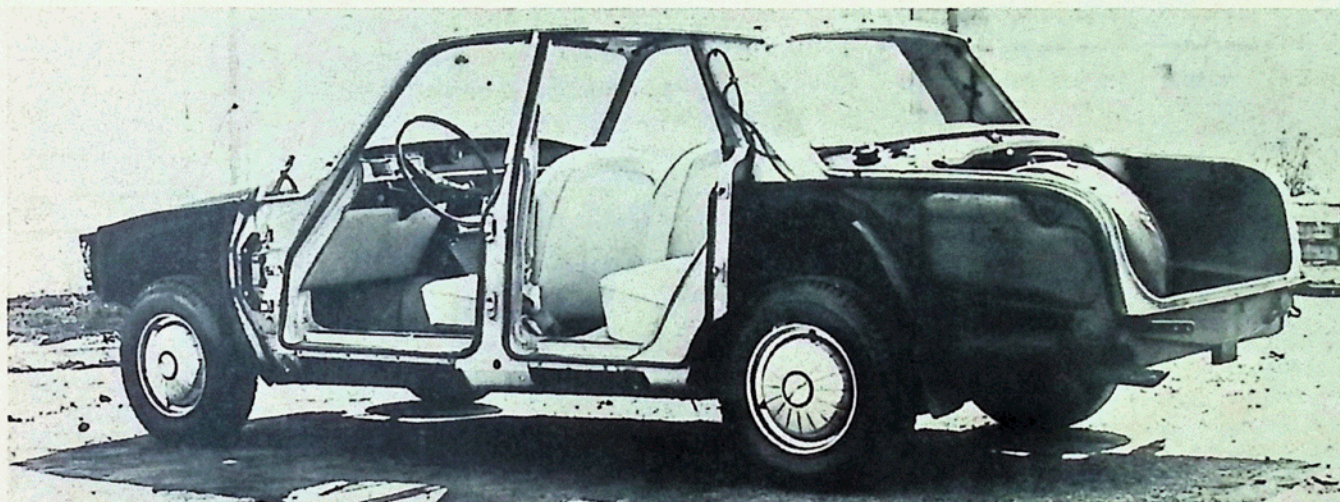
on 14 x 5-in. rims. Why radials? Longer wear, as much as three times longer, even under 'enthusiastic' driving conditions, may be expected. Better steering and stopping responses are insured, whether the roadway traveled is wet or dry. And, better fuel economy is gained because the radials have less rolling resistance than do similar-sized conventional ply tires.

Then, for stopping, Rover lays on disc brakes at all four wheels. The discs are solid rotors with dual opposing-cylinder calipers. Where most European cars have disc-drum or all-disc systems, too, Rover goes the extra step and puts the rear discs in-board, at the differential end of the

ROAD TEST



Cut-away demonstrates the construction integrity of the Rover 2000. Unitized structure has great strength.



With body panels removed, the strength of rigid understructure is revealed. Sheet metal carries no stresses.

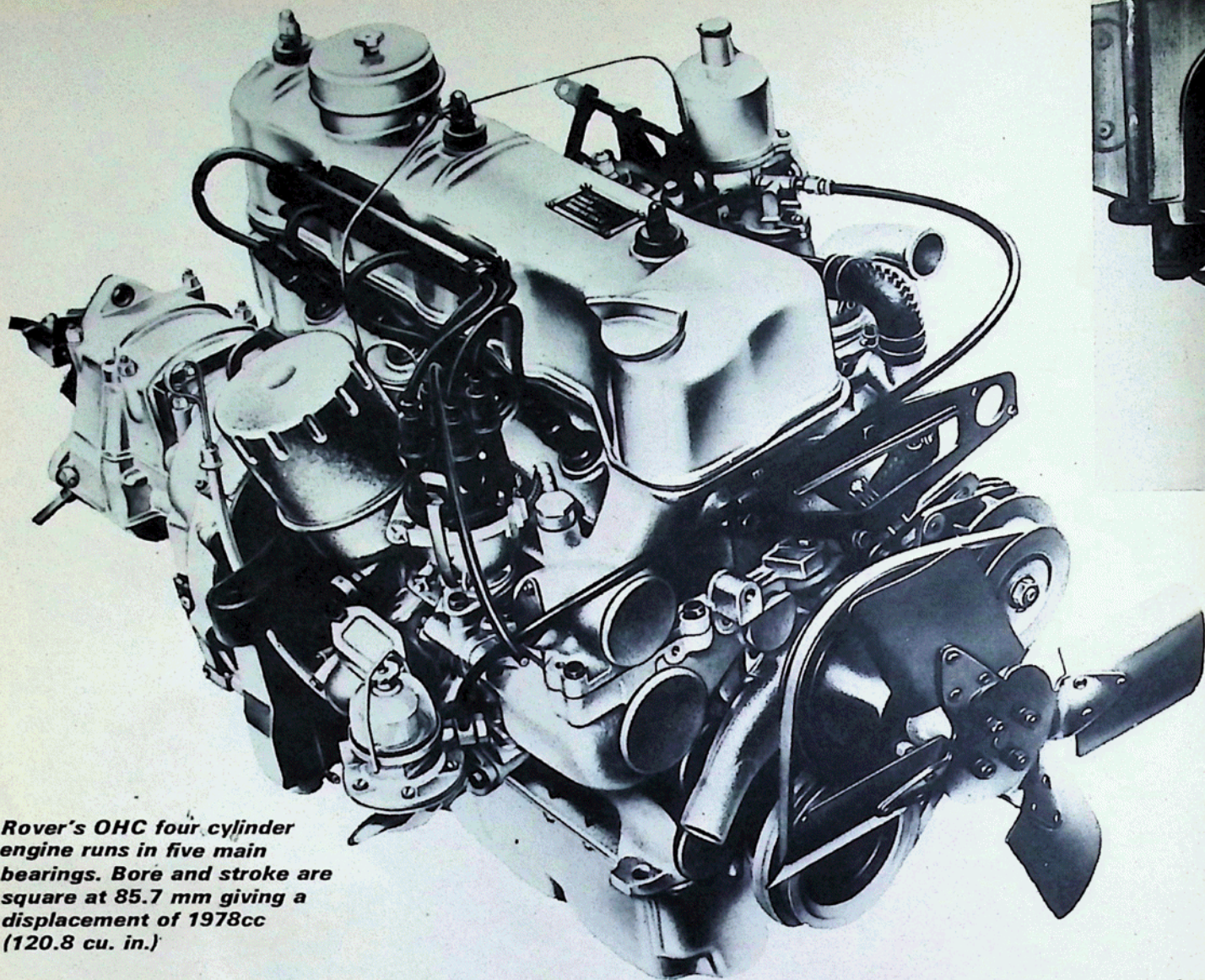
half-shafts, where size isn't dictated by the wheel diameter and where cooling is better. Unsprung weight, i.e. wheel, tire, driveshaft, etc., is thus reduced, an important factor in the design of any light, high performance vehicle. The front brakes are outboard, at the wheels, where they, too, can cool best. The handbrake on the Rover is mechanically actuated, operating on the rear wheels, and is separate from the normal braking system. The dash light which reminds the driver that his parking brake is on also is circuited to signal him when fluid becomes low in the hydraulic reservoir.

The suspension systems really boost Rover out of the sedan class. The rear is fully independent, as should be expected for this type of car, but it uses the de Dion system whereby wheel-to-pavement rela-

tionship is precisely maintained under all conditions. The de Dion tube is hollow and lightweight and extends across the chassis behind the wheels. The outboard ends of the tube curve around to form the hub-carriers. The chassis-mounted differential drives the wheels through articulated half-shafts. Wheel geometry is further maintained by Watts link leading and trailing arms. The forward arm mounts the coil spring/shock absorber unit.

As might be expected, the front suspension is just as unusual as the rear. Though the layout is in general a MacPherson strut type, it has its own Rover-inspired application. MacPherson strut front suspensions are very popular with European designers these days because they are low in weight, give good geometry without a lot of ironwork projecting

here or there and are reasonably economical to build. The major flaw in the MacPherson concept is that it requires an inordinately high fender line because the long strut carries its coil spring at the upper end. It also tends to raise the roll center higher than some designers like. Rover engineers and stylists got together and developed a new system. The MacPherson's lower A-arm and long strut were retained, for their light unsprung weight, but the coil spring was moved back to the firewall where it is compressed by means of a bell-crank off the strut. This transfers some major loads off the front fender and substructure sheet metal to the firewall/cowl area which, in unit body construction, is the strongest portion



Rover's OHC four cylinder engine runs in five main bearings. Bore and stroke are square at 85.7 mm giving a displacement of 1978cc (120.8 cu. in.)

of the car. An anti-roll stabilizer bar also is incorporated at the upper end of the suspension, for lessened body lean during cornering maneuvers. The steering system is worm and roller, with the gearbox also mounted on the firewall. The resulting short steering column shaft precludes the necessity for the collapsing device now included on most other cars sold in the U.S.

In all, the front sheetmetal of the Rover 2000 is particularly well designed for passenger protection as well as for good looks. There are no extra rigid members necessary in its construction, and in crash situations the Rover front end will crumple predictably rearward, absorbing the kinetic energy of the impact. The firewall bulkhead is even designed to deflect the engine unit downward in the event of a head-on collision instead of directly into the passenger

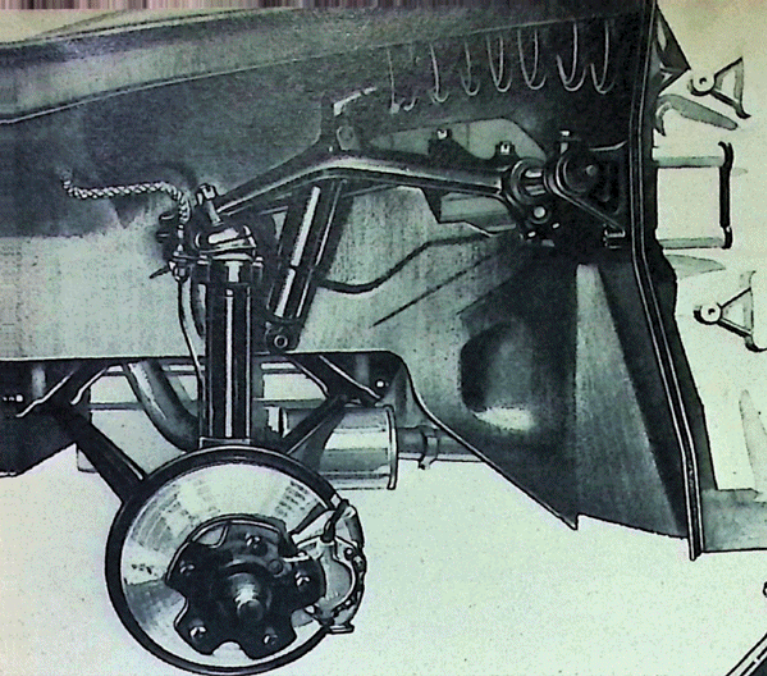
compartment.

The body itself is unitized as this gives the most strength with the least weight. The cowl-to-rear seat back portion is the strongest, for optimum passenger protection, with the front and rear ends "softer" for impact absorption. The fuel tank location is integral with the body design, being located behind a steel bulkhead behind the back seat and over the differential. This keeps the tank out of the rear fenders and out from under the trunk floor, both areas highly susceptible to damage and subsequent tank rupture during impact deformation.

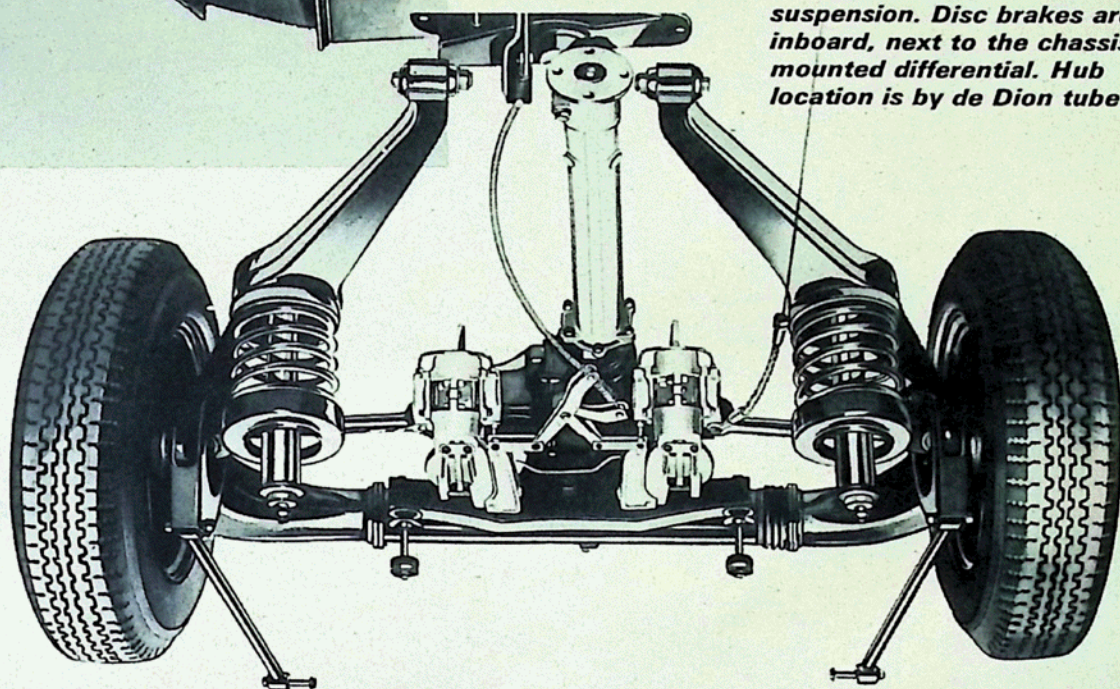
The safety/protection theme is carried throughout the car, though the Rover's best sales feature is the fact that the car is so overdesigned that the ordinary driver cannot possibly get into trouble from overdriving. It is completely forgiving in

its handling characteristics simply because it is so well designed. A safe car, we maintain, is one capable of being driven safely, no matter what the conditions are, and the Rover 2000 certainly falls in that category.

The interior design reflects Rover's thoughtfulness toward its customers. Seats are contoured for optimum driving and riding comfort for four good-sized adults. The front seat backs are infinitely adjustable for rake through a friction-locking device that also prevents their forward fall on hard deceleration or impact. The seat backs also are padded for protection. Arm rests and visors are padded, too, and the normal glovebox is supplanted by two huge bin-type lockers which tilt out of the dash to contain all the odd paraphernalia of family driving. The shift lever for either the manual or automatic transmission is located on



Rover front suspension utilizes McPherson strut with unusual location of coil springs. Effort is taken to the extremely strong firewall bulkhead.



Details of the Rover 2000 rear suspension. Disc brakes are inboard, next to the chassis mounted differential. Hub location is by de Dion tube.

the driveshaft tunnel console, and this console extends forward and upward to house the radio and controls. Padding here is a bit sparse.

The instrument panel has the look of careful design with the speedometer placed as high and far away from the driver's eyes as is possible. Why? Shifting the eyes from road to speedometer calls for refocusing, and the task is made quicker and easier by the more distant speedo face. Controls and switches, are laid out horizontally across the face of the dash and these projections, we feel, need better protection and/or location to prevent passengers from being pitched into them on impact. This is academic if the fine shoulder harness is used.

The basic power of the Rover 2000 comes from an upright, water-cooled four-cylinder engine of 1978 cc (120.7 cu. in.) displacement. The overhead

camshaft power plant has perfectly "square" dimensions with a bore and stroke of 86 mm. each. This gives it fairly high-revving capabilities, and its 99 horsepower peak comes at 5000 rpm. The twin-carburetor TC version, which also has higher compression and a hotter camshaft, boasts 124 hp at 5500 rpm. Both engines utilize side-draft SU carburetors. The overhead cam is internally chain-driven, and lubricated by engine oil.

Rover offers two transmissions with the 2000, one for the 2000 TC. The standard unit is a four-speed all-synchromesh manual-shift transmission which carries ratios of 3.63, 2.13, 1.39 and 1.00:1. The optional transmission is automatic, available only on the 2000, and is an adaptation of the Borg-Warner three-speed. This has a torque converter with three forward speeds in a planetary gearbox.

Naturally, the automatic gives up a bit on performance to the four-speed, but makes up for it in convenience.

Final drive for the Rover 2000 is 3.54:1 which with the 165-14 tires gives the car some 19.5 mph for every 1000 engine revs. This is just a bit short-gearred for a car with such high potential cruising ability, producing 3600 rpm at 70 mph freeway travel. The engine is stout, with main bearings between each crank throw, and is fully capable of coping with such speeds without undue stress.

The best summation we can give on the Rover 2000's engineering qualities is to repeat the remark we overheard at a press showing. A noted German car fancier was examining the 2000 and lapping up its mechanical sophistication, when he turned to a friend and said: "It looks like it was designed at Mercedes-Benz!" ♠



FROM THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Comfort and convenience beyond fondest expectations

FOR A TESTER to sit once more behind the wheel of a Rover 2000 after a two year absence is akin to the Christian returning to the temple for a quick revive; it restores the faith that somewhere, someone is

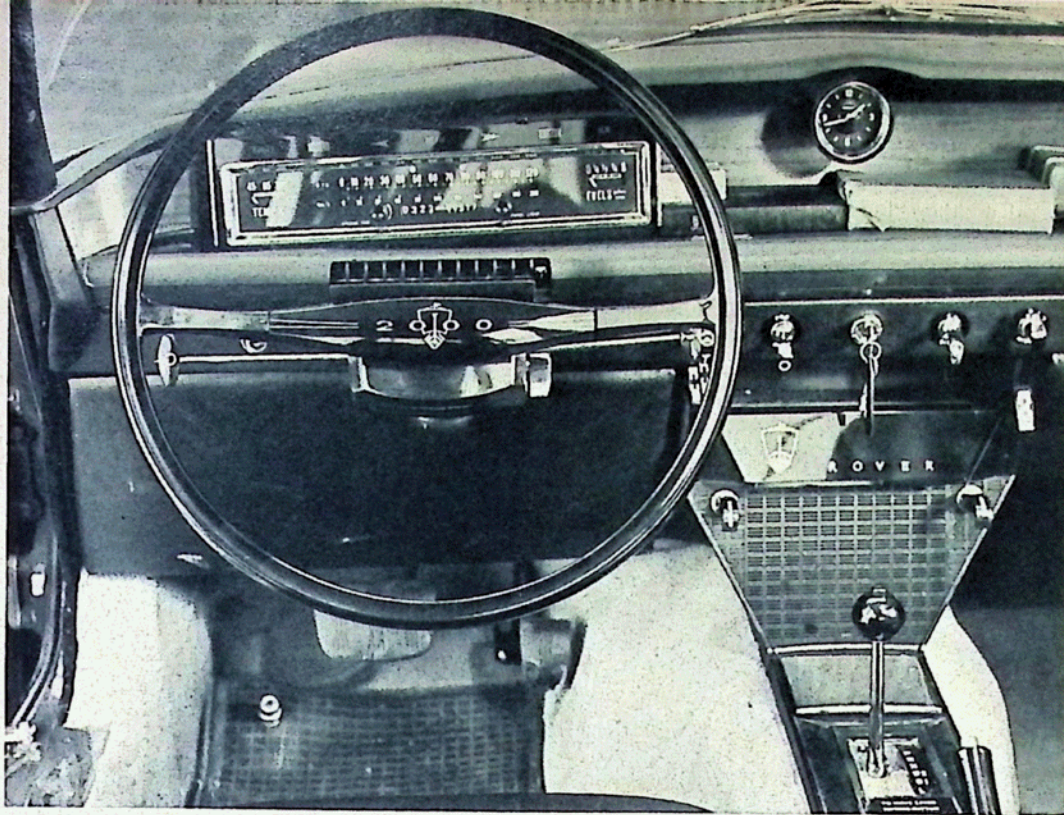
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looking after the motorist.

The car bristles with ingenious items and equipment that are all designed to reduce fatigue and provide the driver with full control at all times and make it a pleasure to *drive* the car.

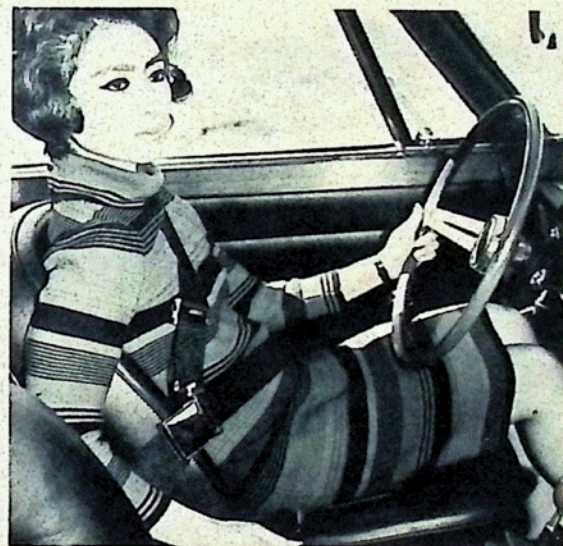
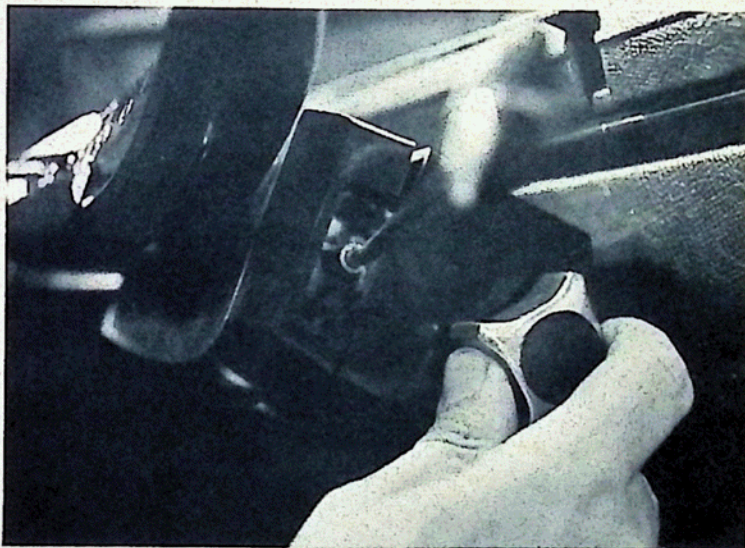
The steering wheel at first acquaintance feels unnecessarily large (diameter 17½-in.) but this is soon forgotten and it certainly allows for lots of leverage to be exerted if needed. It can be raised or lowered over an inch by means of an alumi-

ROAD TEST



Instrument layout is placed in the driver's direct line of vision. No dangerous distraction searching for information.

Ladies can use the shoulder harness with complete comfort. Adjustment is infinite for accommodation of the petite or full figure.



Large knob on the right of the steering column raises or lowers the steering wheel to the most comfortable position.

num knob on the right hand side of the column.

The Rover is one car that you step down into and for the tall driver, this feature is a blessing. One of the major complaints from tall drivers in sporty type cars is that when seated in the normal straight leg driving position, any movement of the left foot towards the rear causes the knee to rise a proportionate amount and invariably make contact with the steering wheel. This is not so with the Rover. By virtue of the higher floor to

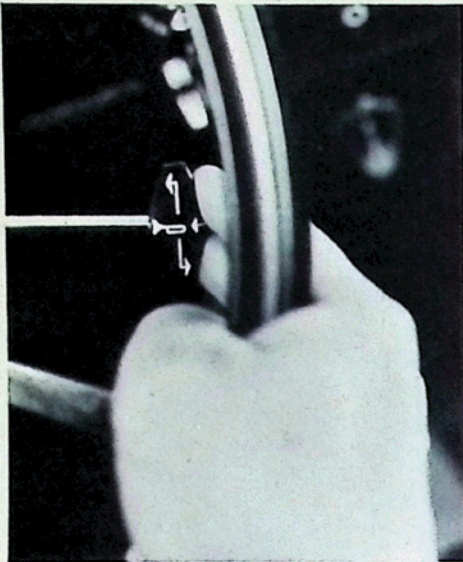
seat height, the knees get nowhere near the wheel and the good driving position is maintained. This, coupled with the feature of the adjustable wheel, makes the driving position suitable for all shapes and sizes.

On the subject of seats, the fore and aft adjustment is under the driver's knee at the front of the seat and the back angle adjustment control is between the seat and the transmission tunnel. A suitable combination of seat adjustment is therefore guaranteed to suit all individuals. A fine height adjustment is available and can be made by altering the distance pieces on which the seat runners are mounted.

Rover engineers obviously tried to make the interior of this car 100% convenient when it came to locating the primary and secondary controls. It is ROAD TEST's opinion that they have succeeded, without reservations.

The rectangular 120 mph speedometer is of the ribbon type and is easily readable. It has mph on the top of the horizontal scale and kph on the lower side for those who may wish to venture south of the border, no conversion charts required. The maximum speed figures in the gears with the automatic when shifting manually, are in yellow on the dial. The unit also contains the warning lights

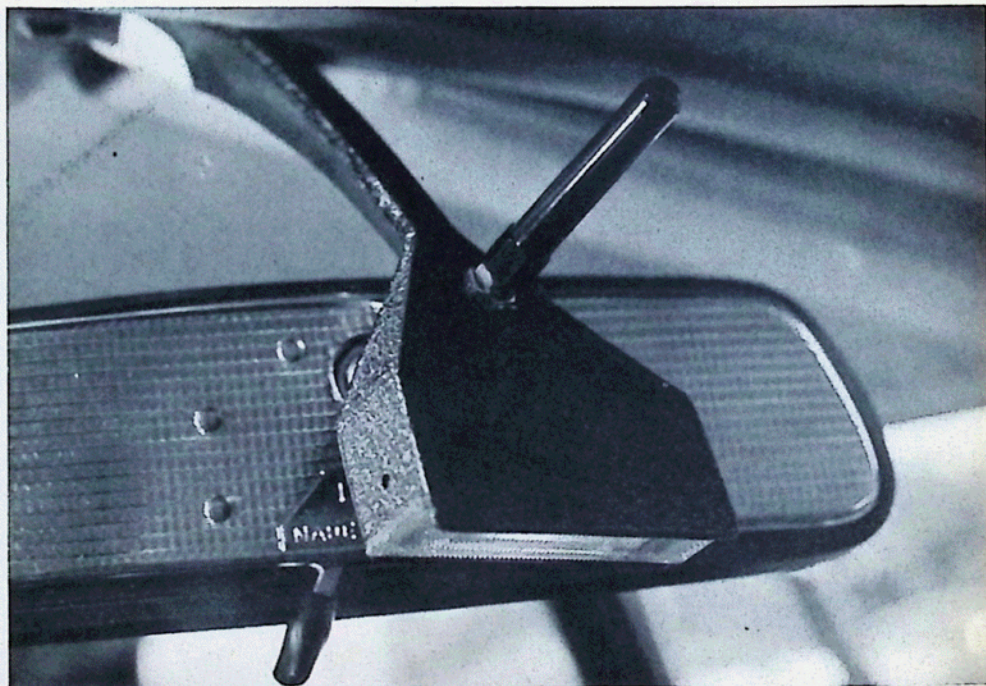
Driver and passenger are well over six feet. Shape of the Rover roof allows more than adequate headroom.



Clearly labeled turn indicator stalk and horn switch is on the right of the Rover steering column, takes only a short time to get used to.

with clearly marked windows indicating function. A closer look at these items shows again the attention to detail by the Rover engineers. The choke in use light is thermostatically controlled so that the light does not come on unless the engine is too warm to need choking. The flasher lights work as normal but should a front or rear indicator bulb fail, the remaining indicator will continue to flash, but the bulb failure is indicated by the rapid flashing of both arrow heads and the flasher unit cannot be heard.

The speedometer has a trip odometer with colored decimal and total mileage recorders. The two black knobs sticking out of the unit are for resetting the trip and controlling the rheostat illumination respectively. The fuel and temperature gauges bracket the speedometer and are clearly calibrated. The whole dial can be quickly and easily scanned by the driver and all the pertinent information he needs to know about his car's state of health is

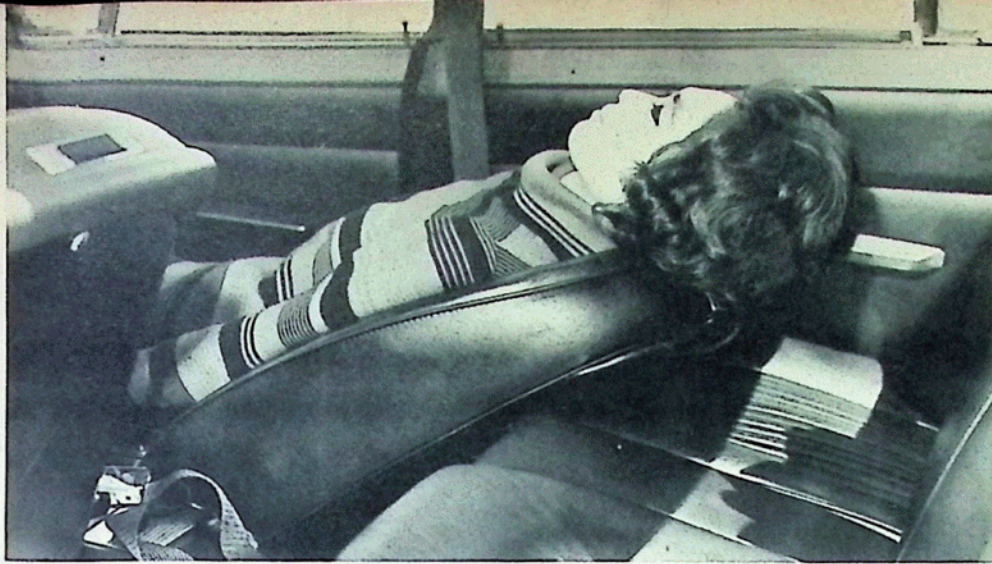


right there; a far cry from the hide and seek variety common to a large number of the domestic models.

The speedometer unit sits in a hooded black fascia that spans the width of the car. To the right of the dial is a clock (electric) that is noisy but it keeps accurate time. The back of this shelf is grained Formica which although not as luxurious as wood, is certainly more practical. The shelf itself is extremely useful for stowage of light items although they will tend to slide around if the car is thrown

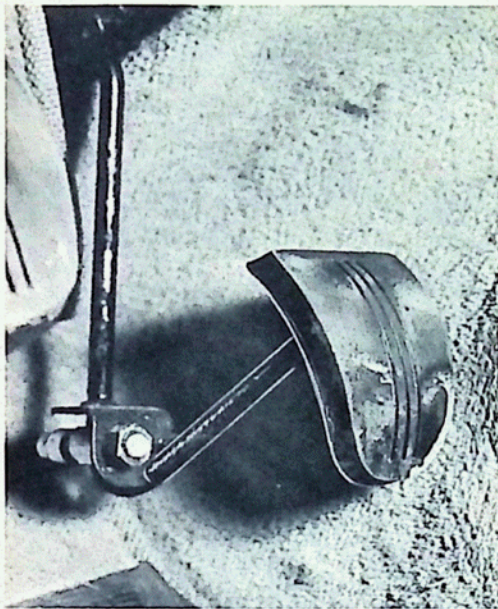
Interior illumination for the front seat serves as map light. The mirror bracket is an ingenious design with a rubber tipped steadying post.

about a bit. On the lower section of the dash, the tumbler switches are clearly marked (using international picture symbols), and can readily be identified, even in the dark by virtue of their different designs according to function. All of them are easily operated by the driver without having to perform any acrobatics to reach

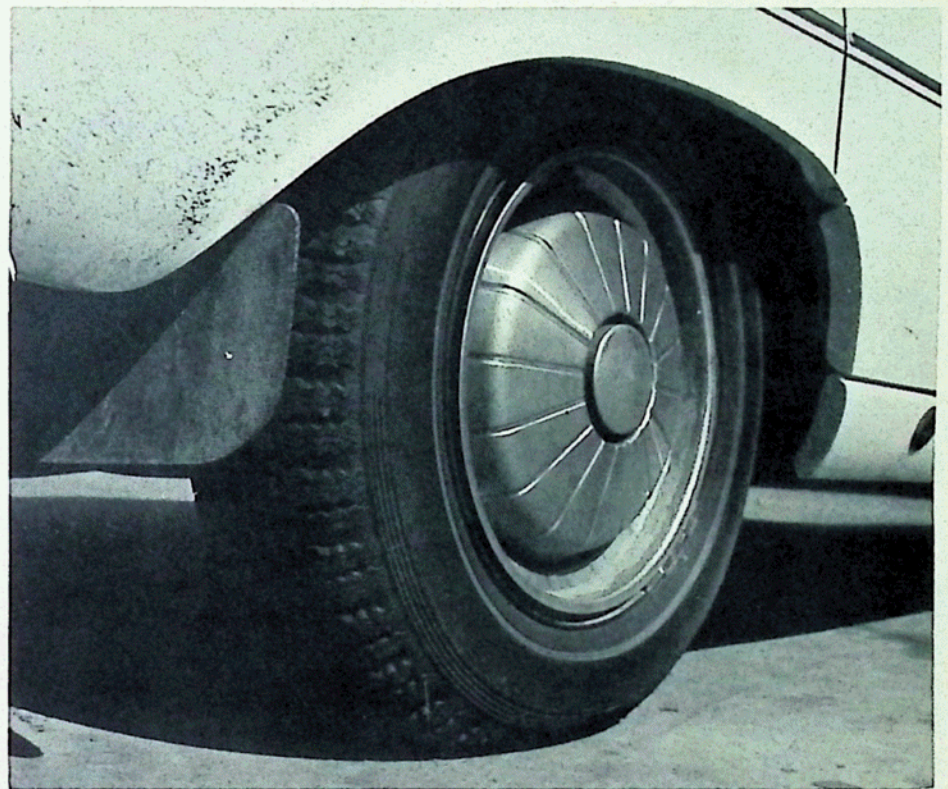


Reclining front seats allow passenger a comfortable rest on long trips or permit a driver off-road respite to avoid fatigue.

Rovers are fitted with radial ply tires as standard, either Dunlop or Pirelli. Sizes are 165 x 14 on five in. rims. Mud flaps at the rear are useful on well paved U.S. highways in preventing nicks from gravel and other road debris.



Cam and lever arrangement of Rover throttle is most unusual, gives positive action.



them. The lighting controls require a little study to ensure correct operation but this is soon mastered. The wipers have the combined washer control on the same switch and the speed of the wipers can be varied to suit the driver's personal taste for the weather conditions. The interior lighting switch has two positions, the first bringing on the light behind the mirror. This light is beamed directly down so that a map can be easily read at a convenient point to the driver without having to curl up close to a glove box mounted light. The second position brings on the rear dome light; both of these units will operate when the appropriate doors are opened.

Two curved handles lower down the console are, respectively, the gas

reserve and choke controls. The gas reserve control when pulled allows the driver the last 1 1/2 gallons of the total 14 gallons to be used. The driver must remember to push this back in when the tank is refilled otherwise the convenience of the control is wasted.

The Rover 2000 has truly commendable heating and fresh air ventilation arrangements. A vertical lever on the center quadrant, has three settings for fresh air. The first click on the way down allows fresh air to flow into the car, the second and third clicks operate the fan at low and high speeds respectively. The left hand levers control temperature and where it goes. The temperature knob

is colored red and blue. Move towards blue, cut off the heat, towards red, increase heat, the action being progressive between the two. Similarly, the white arrows, on the distribution control lever direct air either on the windshield or into the car, with the choice of either or both. In front of the driver and passenger are two small air vents with individual controls. These supply only cold air and this can be directed on the driver's face. It is an excellent idea and is extremely useful in preventing drowsiness on a long journey when the car may be overly warm. As there are quarter windows in the front doors and wing vents in the rear,

In a pouring rain the Rover exhibits the same braking characteristics found on dry pavement. Stops are arrow straight.

Deceleration of the Rover in the wet is 24 ft. per sec.² giving a stopping distance of 161.3 ft. from 60 mph. Proportioning valve prevents rear wheel lock up.



Cornering in the wet with the radial ply tires is nearly as sure footed as on dry pavement.

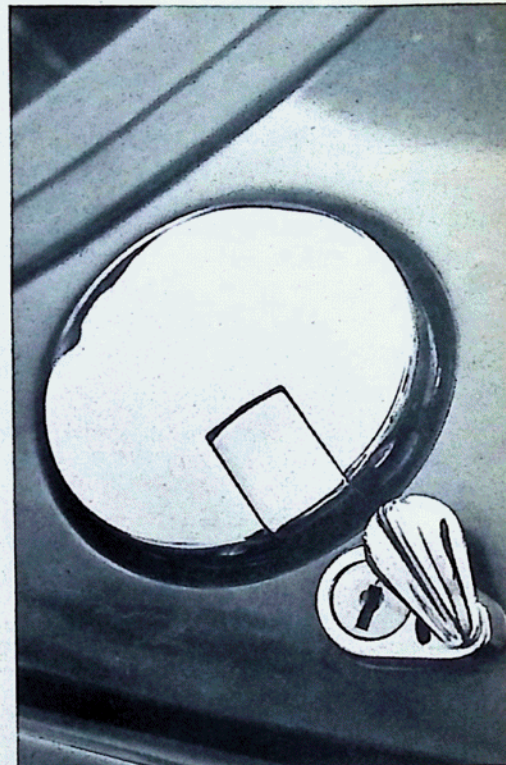
maximum flow through ventilation is easily controlled without resorting to opening the main windows.

The Rover pedals are at the same level and swift movement from gas to brake is possible without having to lift the foot. The dip switch is on the floor and is easily operated by the left foot without having to search around up under the dash. The handbrake pulls up from the center tunnel which is convenient to use although possibly a shade on the high side. Ahead and behind the brake lever on the center tunnel console are ash trays for all occupants.

The interior of the 2000 is definitely high quality. The pile carpets and mats are well fitted and

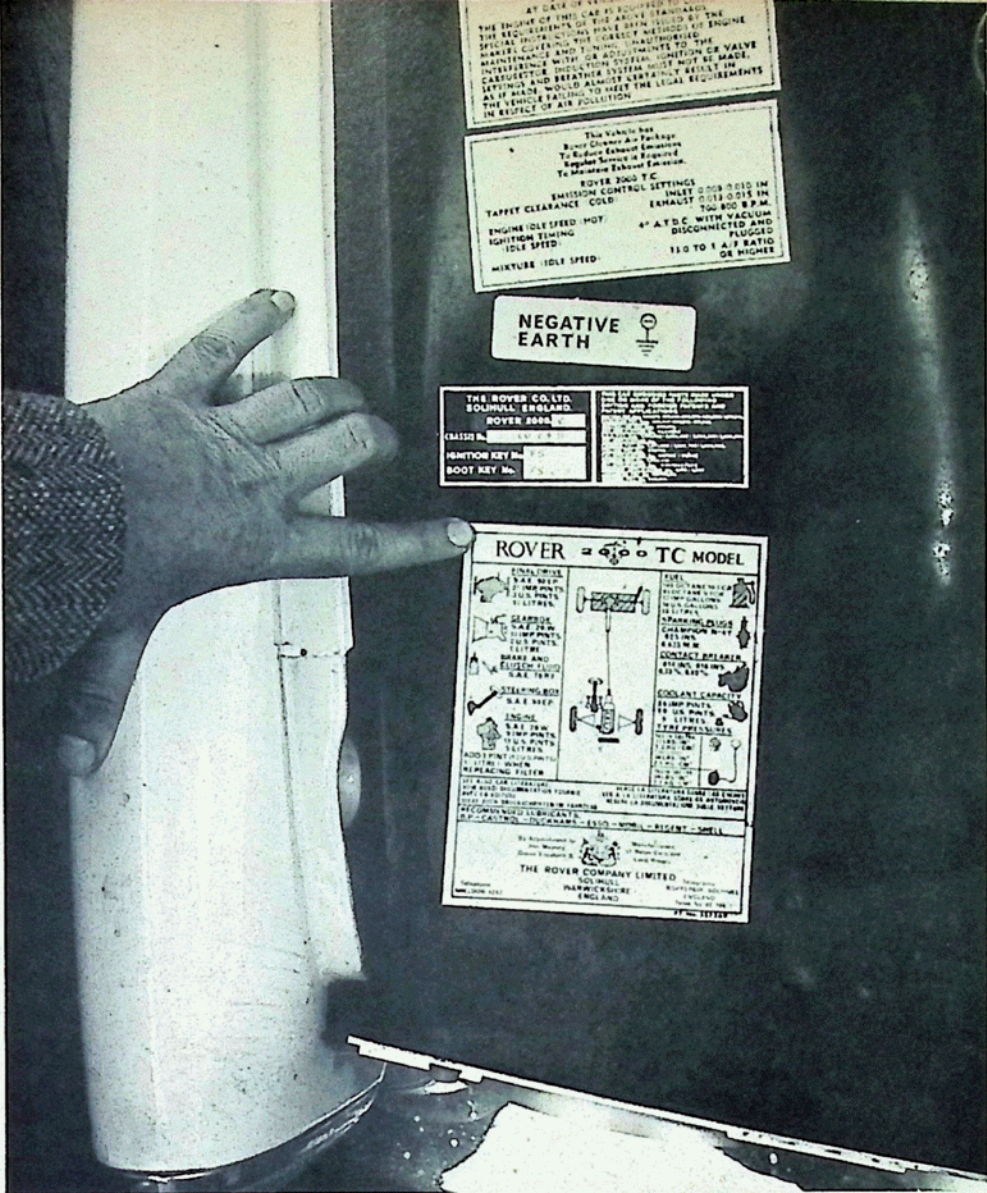
the side area by the passengers' heads is padded. The seats, front and rear are orthopedically designed and the car is strictly a four seater, the rear seats being individually contoured bucket style. They firmly locate the passengers and will give excellent lateral support should the driver get a bit boisterous on the corners. All seats are of leather and are superbly padded. Leg room in the back is good, even with the seat fully back but in this position, getting the feet out to exit from the car requires a little patience. Once seated however, there is adequate room.

Apart from the useful package shelf, there are two unique lockable pockets in front of the driver's and passenger's knees. They are operated by pushing a button on the dash and the 'bins' drop down revealing an incredible amount of stowage space. The driver's bin is partitioned to take



In Europe, gasoline costs more than twice as much as it does in the U.S. The locking gas cap, a thoughtful touch, is standard.

stowage of bottles and glasses (for 'soft' drinks of course). All sorts of sizeable items can be safely locked away. The bins also perform another function in the event of a collision. They will protect the knees as they are flung forward and will absorb the energy at a controlled rate. The whole fascia gets into the act at this stage and continues to absorb energy long before the body can come into contact with the forward bulkhead. The hood release is also inside the driver's glovebox.



Information found in the engine room is almost as complete as the owner's manual. No excuse for anxiety on the part of a mechanic.

The complete feeling of security imparted to the driver when first seated in the car is further enhanced by a casual glance at the door hinges and locks. The double adjustment available to ensure close fits is clearly evident and the two sets of weather stripping ensure a draft free car and waterproof interior. The doors will close with very little effort and there is that indefinable secure click that many buyers find so satisfying.

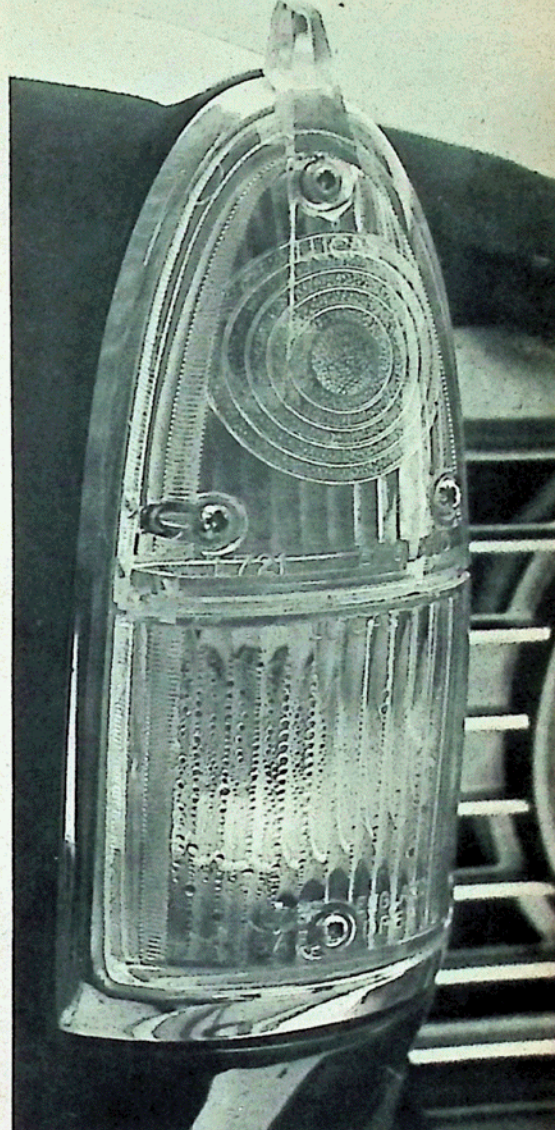
The visibility is very good, even with the fairly thick pillars and with the very low hood line. The same can be said to the rear. The roof line at the rear also extends far enough back to give the rear seat passengers some

shade effect from the sun, a small point but an important one on a long journey.

The outside of the car has not changed appreciably from the first time we tested the car. Like other European manufacturers, mud-flaps are standard. While the Rover is unlikely to encounter too much mud, the flaps offer protection against stone damage and melting tar on the underside of the car.

One item which is an extra and not needed in Southern California is the Ice-Alert indicator. We were able to test this in the mountains and it does work. It is designed to warn drivers when the temperature drops to a point where ice can be forming on the surface of the road and it must be rated as a boon for drivers in colder regions where such knowledge can prevent an accident.

That then is a review from the



Front lighting group is enhanced by reminder indicator. Nib above sidelight glows when headlights are on.

driver's seat. That Rover is continuing to market the car with very little change from the model as first introduced indicates that they were right on the button to begin with. Sales of the car continue to climb steadily proving again that they carefully judged the market and have built an enviable position of trust between themselves and their customers. They have also proved quite categorically that safety, coupled with quality, can sell automobiles. ♠



Rover is in good company at Tony Vanderploeg's West Los Angeles shop specializing in Rolls, Bentley and Jaguar as well as Rover.

THE MECHANIC LOOKS AT ROVER

If you treat it right it should last forever

Emergence of one make of car with such a high rating aroused such interest at ROAD TEST that we felt it important to seek a completely objective opinion on the mechanical merits of the machine. We therefore, through exhaustive inquiry, located an independent garage owner who specializes in Rolls Royce, Bentley, Jaguar and Rover. He is Mr. Anthony Van der Ploeg, whose establishment is located in West Los Angeles.

Mr. Van der Ploeg gave the following tape recorded interview to a member of the ROAD TEST staff.



Interior of the Vanderploeg shop is a candy store atmosphere to the fine car enthusiast. Rovers share service stalls with Rolls and Bentley.

R/T: Tony, here at your shop we see a great many exotic machines. Obviously you specialize, Tony tell us about your specialties.

VDP: We specialize in Rolls, Bentleys, Jaguars, Rovers and we do some Mercedes work.

R/T: So your work essentially deals with the more exotic and primarily British machinery.

VDP: That's right.

R/T: Tony, your accent shows a trace of the British influence but your name is certainly anything but British, V-a-n d-e-r P-l-o-e-g. Tell us a little bit about yourself and the name and your accent.

VDP: Well I came originally from Holland, came to Canada first about 15 years ago without being able to speak English, I learned my English from two Scotch boys over there, so I guess I may have picked up a trace of English and Scotch.

R/T: It's certainly anything but a Dutch accent and it's very charming. Your background in matters automotive; did you learn about cars in Europe or pick it up mostly in Canada?

VDP: No, I started working on cars when I was 15 years old. Right after the war stopped in Europe.

R/T: That was in Holland?

VDP: This was in Holland and I've been working on automobiles ever since.

R/T: How did it happen that you came to specialize in such as Rolls, Bentleys and Rovers?

VDP: Well, when I worked in Montreal the dealer I worked for took on Rolls-Royce and asked me if I would take a course in Rolls and do all the service work on Rolls over here. So that's how I got started in Rolls-Royce business which branched out into other different cars.

R/T: And essentially British makes. Now I see a few examples of the more expensive German cars, such as the big Mercedes. Is there that much difference in the cars?

VDP: Not really, there are certain little things that may be differently made on an English car as compared to a German car. The cars basically are the same, all over really.

R/T: ROAD TEST magazine, among several of the other automobile publications, has given a great deal of praise to the Rover, I see that you have several Rovers here in the shop. Let's talk for a minute about the Rover, and the alleged excellence of this particular car. I know it's in the \$4000.00 price range. Can you tell us something about the features of the car from the standpoint of a man who works on them? For example, what is the

average frequency of repairs made on the Rover?

VDP: The Rover carries a service handbook with it that specifies that the car should be serviced every 2500 miles. Then every 5000 miles there is what we call a big service which includes tuning engines, and things like that. We find that if you stick to this book you can avoid a lot of unnecessary repairs and you'll find that there is very little work to be done on this car.

R/T: So the Rover generally, if you take pretty good care of it seldom has anything go wrong.

VDP: That's right.

R/T: Now, among the things that inevitably must go wrong, because anything that has 10,000 parts in it, and a lot of those are movable parts, things must fail from time to time. What are the things that most often give trouble?

VDP: We have had trouble with the brakes. The disc brakes are known to be squeaking brakes and on the Rover in particular we've had plenty of problems with this. We have found some of them where the disc pads were sticking or the caliper was sticking inside, especially the earlier ones, this seemed to be quite a problem. They have corrected a lot of it now on the newer cars when they're coming through with softer brake pads and a better braking system so we have gotten rid of most of that problem.

R/T: This is more of an annoyance isn't it than a serious mechanical problem?

VDP: Well, occasionally it would make the car pull on the brakes or if you had to make a rapid stop it would pull the car either to the left or right.

R/T: One of the things that is highly praised by the magazines writing about the Rover is the superior braking ability of the car, when all is going right. Is it pretty much borne out by your experience with the car.

VDP: That's right, even with the squeaking brakes the brake action itself is just as good as it could be.

R/T: The Europeans have only recently come around to thinking in



Tony begins each day by scheduling the work among his mechanics. Most of his men come from England.

terms of automatic transmissions and I know Rover sells a car with the automatic unit, is it troublesome or up to now has it been relatively trouble free?

VDP: Up to now the only thing we've had to do in a Rover automatic transmission is an adjustment on the linkage. The downshifts may have been a little rough. I was absolutely amazed the first time I stepped into a Rover 2000 with automatic transmission and found it had as much power as it does. I've always said that a four cylinder engine shouldn't be used with an automatic. Rover has certainly proved me wrong on this point.

R/T: The ones that I have driven are a little down on power compared with the stickshift but it does seem to be an adequate unit.

VDP: I think that's true especially if you handle it properly, you can shift from low into the different gears, D-1 and D-2. Once you get to know the car you can drive it just like the stickshift.

R/T: Of other problems that Rover owners encounter, in the mechanical line, can you think of any additional

that might crop up now and then?

VDP: We had problems with the exhaust valves on the early ones. The metal used was too soft and consequently there were quite a few that burned. The factory came out with the heavier stellite valves which we are using now and that seems to have solved the problem.

R/T: One of the things the Rover people make a considerable advertising to-do about is the alleged safety of the car. As a specialist who has gone over them from top to bottom and from front to rear, what are the specific safety features built into the Rover?

VDP: One in particular is that in the event of a head-on collision the engine would go under the car rather than coming in with you. The front end is designed so that the engine will push itself down under rather than straight back. Also there is the shock absorbing construction, the metal at front and rear is designed to crumple up at a controlled rate. I'm not just sure how it works but it does. The protected location of the gas tank is another safety design.

R/T: Tony, it would appear that in your experience the Rover is a relatively trouble free car and as long as the maintenance schedules are adhered to it should be a pretty long lasting one. Is that right?

VDP: That is correct.

R/T: Anything else that you can think of, Tony, that might cause a

Rover owner problems?

VDP: One of the things that we advise all of our customers to do is to change the radiator hoses at least once a year. We find that the material the hoses are made of apparently can't stand our smoggy Los Angeles air. They kind of disintegrate after a while.

R/T: Is there a replacement American size that would solve the problem or are the sizes such that they have to be British parts?

VDP: We have to use the British parts because the hoses are all different sizes and many of them have one size on one end and a different size on the other.

R/T: So as long as the owner knows of the problem he can replace all the hoses as a matter of routine maintenance and avoid an inconvenient let down.

VDP: I would advise any Rover owner to carry a spare set before starting a long trip, a fan belt too.

R/T: Is that all you can think of so far as special problems?

VDP: Otherwise we don't seem to run into any major problems. Of course we occasionally have little problems like the alternators when they first came out but that's been ironed out. I can't think of any others that have occurred. Of course we've had cars that have been mistreated, engines run out of oil, transmissions shifted very badly, rear ends which weren't checked and consequently burned themselves out, that sort of thing. But these weren't faults with the car, just careless owners.

R/T: Then with sensible care, in your opinion, the Rover is a reasonably reliable machine?

VDP: I would go even farther than that. I believe it is one of the finest motor cars built.

R/T: Thank you very much Tony Van der Ploeg for giving us your time and your expert opinions on the Rover. ♠

ROVER ON THE ROAD

Driving impressions after 1500 hurried miles



In order to get an up to date driving impression of the Rover 2000 TC ROAD TEST Publisher Bill Quinn, and Director of Photography Benjamin Louie took an almost showroom fresh Rover on a slightly lengthened weekend trip from Los Angeles to Lake Tahoe and return.

Immediately upon their return, Managing Editor Jim Matthews conducted the following tape recorded interview.

R/T: Bill, you just took a lengthy trip in the Rover 2000 TC with the stick shift. First, tell us a little bit about your itinerary. Where did you go?

Quinn: Actually the car had 700 miles when we left Los Angeles, we put about 1500 miles on it in a little under three days. We left Los Angeles late at night, and went to Santa Clara, California and from there, after an overnight stop we went to San Francisco, from San Francisco

to Lake Tahoe, from Tahoe to Reno, Nevada and then from Reno back to San Francisco and from San Francisco back to Los Angeles. We recorded the mileage over-all. Our lowest mileage, under extremely hard use, was 22.5 mpg. Our best mileage was 28.5.

R/T: What section of the road did you get your best mileage, between what two points?

Quinn: Well, as I recall it would be on



With the ambient temperature below freezing, Rover's heater proved more than adequate to keep occupants comfortable.

the way from Bakersfield to Santa Clara and in the reverse direction coming back from San Francisco to Los Angeles. Prior to that time we were in the hills where it reduced our mileage slightly.

R/T: How about the Rover in the mountains around Lake Tahoe? Did you encounter any roads where you could really test the roadability of the Rover?

Quinn: On the road to Tahoe we did run into some narrow twisting highway because we went a short route which is a little more twisting but going back down the other side we took a freeway type road, the car handled very well. One good feature we noticed was on the way to Tahoe we had the Ice-alert activated, which is normal because it's always under testing conditions and we thought no more about it until about half way up to Tahoe the light came on frequently and intermittently and then stayed on constantly. I understand that it

comes on intermittently at about 36° and stays on when the temperature outside is about 32°. In this case it worked very well because it alerted us to possible icy conditions of the road. I think it is a very good feature, because we might not have even realized that we were running into slippery conditions, particularly with the very effective heater that the Rover is equipped with, we had very comfortable conditions and yet outside it was under 32°.

R/T: Bill, that's a long trip in a very, very short period of time. How many miles again did you say you covered?

Quinn: Well, it was over 1500, probably between 1500 and 1700 miles. It was a lot of miles in a very short period and yet both the photographer, Ben Louie, and myself experienced no fatigue at all, the seats adjust in such a variety of positions that you never have any problems with your back aching or things like that. It's a very easy car to drive, cross winds present no problem, irregular surfaces are just soaked up by the very advanced suspension, the brakes are superb and that's about all you can

say. There's no reason that you couldn't put 18 or 20 hours at a stretch in the car particularly with an off-duty driver being able to rest in the reclining type seats that the Rover is equipped with.

R/T: That was going to be my next question, on the braking ability of the car whether you had any traffic situations where you had an opportunity to put the Rover brakes to a severe test?

Quinn: Inadvertently we did. A truck in front of us had a flat tire, and swerved through two lanes of traffic to reach the shoulder and unfortunately swerved right in front of us, causing me to have to brake and turn at the same time. In a car not equipped with radial ply tires and 4 wheel disc brakes I'm sure that there would have been some slipping or skidding. In the case of the Rover it acted just like we were on dry pavement. Aside from a momentary speeding up of my heart action there were no problems.

R/T: That's a kind of situation that anyone is likely to encounter most unexpectedly on the highway and it certainly speaks very well for the



The Ice-alert proves its worth in the snow and ice conditions at Lake Tahoe. Despite the slippery roads the Rover 2000 TC behaved flawlessly.

combination of braking and tires on the Rover. On your trip you covered many, many different types of terrain, is there anything else that comes to mind that you might think of that would compare the Rover with any other particular make of car or just generally the roadability and handling features.

Quinn: Yes, the fact that in the Rover, you can maintain a high average speed practically regardless of the road surface conditions. If you encounter a rough section of highway you may just maintain your speed because the car has a very good adhesion to the road due to the independent suspension on front. It really isn't independent suspension on the rear, but it's a DeDion type which has very little unsprung weight causing very good traction both on cruising, acceleration and braking. The wheels just stay in contact with the road and this is half the battle when you're traveling fast on a rough road. In a typical car with a live rear axle you have to be careful applying your brakes and applying power because your wheels will bounce. In the

Rover they just stay on the ground where they belong.

R/T: Now this was a comparatively new car with less than 1000 miles when you started out. Many inquiries received ask about the reliability of the car and whether owners can expect any difficulties. With a new car you might expect some kind of problems along the way, now did you have any?

Quinn: The only problems we had were directly traceable to the fact that the car was new and there was a slight tendency of the engine to continue to run after the ignition switch was off. This is called pre-ignition and is usually caused by gasoline not being of high enough octane or a slightly high idle adjustment speed or a combination of both plus a tight engine. During the trip however, when I put many miles on it, the engine loosened up considerably. I can't even think of any problems we had. Our mileage as I say varied but as we put on more miles the mileage increased, oil consumption was nil. I'd say we had less problems than you can expect in the average new car.

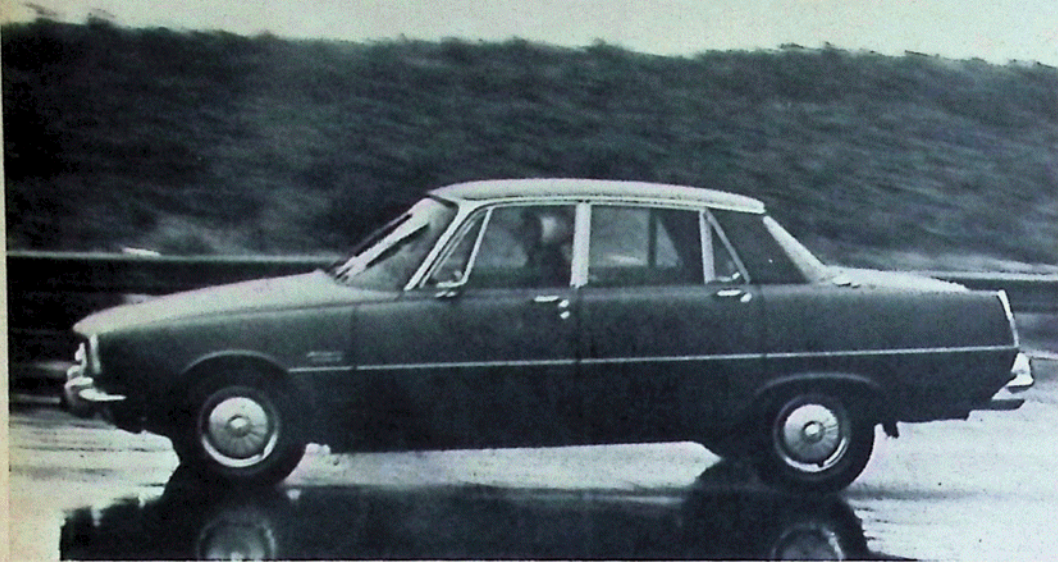
R/T: Well for those of us who live in the Southern California area, and this, of course, is the home of ROAD TEST, it's a great opportunity to get to test the car in the snow and icy conditions at Tahoe and once again you said that the heater was quite adequate for comfort even driving through the snow, right?

Quinn: Yes, it did present a unique opportunity because we have often been criticized in overlooking faults in cars that show up under cold conditions so in this case we did have a chance to drive the car in the very cold condition and it presented no problems. There was a little difficulty in starting it in the high altitudes since we were at 7100 feet and a readjustment of the carburetor would have corrected this problem.

R/T: Thank you Bill Quinn for your views on the Rover following a fast and enjoyable highway trip. ♠

THE ROVER OWNER SAYS

Owners give Rover highest rating of all cars in survey



“I WILL NEVER drive anything else but a Rover,” replies a Vancouver industrial arts instructor.

“Best car I ever owned. Built like a Rolls-Royce,” says a Wisconsin truck driver.

“This car commands my respect because of its engineering merit. I would buy another — at \$4000 it’s a steal!” states a Canadian electronics engineer/marketing manager.

“A great car,” answers a Bronx computer programmer-analyst.

The four quotes above are representative of the enthusiasm and pride felt by Rover owners responding to the Owner Survey. None of the other makes and models of automobiles can boast of such a devoted group of owners. They, the people who pay for the automobile and drive it daily, substantiate the results of our unbiased and exhausting Road Tests of the Rover — it is a great car.

But the Rover owners can speak for themselves. Almost to the last man they list *safety, comfort, handling and roadability* as the primary reasons for purchasing the Rover. A USAF instrument technician stated the Rover gives him “peace of mind,” while a New Jersey steamship company executive finds the Rover “very

secure and comfortable.” He echoes many of the replies which point out superb road handling and maneuverability, “it goes where I point the wheels,” says a 55-year old electronics engineer, of the Rover.

One computer programmer/analyst, who considered a Sunbeam Tiger and Corvette before trading his MGB in for a 2000TC, notes “superb brakes and excellent handling (very forgiving)” as his most liked features. He lists “safe design and construction with a fresh engineering approach” as his reasons for purchasing the Rover. Then, he adds: “Switching from an MGB I expected to sacrifice some agility and enjoyment in driving for the additional safety, comfort and space, but I find I have all the fun of the sports car (except for top-down driving) plus better cornering, acceleration and braking.”

Having covered 31,000 miles in 11 months, he goes on to praise the 2000TC as a car which “gives the most enjoyment driving on a twisting mountain road, as it always feels in complete control under any driving condition. It’s the kind of car you can drive in the rain, sharing a narrow two-lane road with trucks, without tensing up. The combination of ex-

cellent brakes and handling, radial tire stability, comfortable seating and suspension, and good ventilation make it possible to put in an 8-hour day driving at high average speed (without bending the limit much) and still arrive feeling rested and relaxed.”

He concludes, simply: “A great car.”

Another converted sports car driver who is a graduate student in microbiology looked at a BMW 1800TI and two Alfa Romeo models and then bought a 2000TC because he feels “it is the best combination of comfort, handling, stopping, economy and safety.”

Safety is perhaps the leading reason given for their purchase by many current Rover owners. One, who experienced the unfortunate act of totally demolishing his 2000TC, writes: “This controlled crumpling stuff is for the birds, or so my insurance company said, when they gave me a check for \$3450.” He walked away from the accident. Apparently insurance companies don’t like that very much, but Rover owners are obviously pleased with the sensible safety engineering of their car. A young physicist from California even reports he’s “continually asked about the Rover by strangers interested in safety, comfort and roadability.”

A sizeable percentage of respondents cite ROAD TEST’s comprehensive report as being the impetus to investigate the Rover as a possible purchase. Describing the R/T review with various adjectives (“glowing,” “rave report,” “frank”), they further add that they were able to make the same judgment after comparing the Rover with other makes. One owner says, “after checking other cars, nothing else would do except the Rover.” Another points out, “the car is honestly built and honestly advertised,” something which some other manufacturers apparently don’t feel is important.

ROAD TEST

Other owners report past experiences with Rover products as being the first reason for them considering the car as their personal transportation. An electronics engineer reports, "Three years using a Land Rover in Iran gave the impression of terrific quality and reliability." He now owns a '65 Rover 2000 and plans the purchase of a 2000TC as his next car.

A pilot for the Royal Canadian Air Force was sufficiently impressed with the Rover 75 he used to own that he is now the driver of a 2000TC. When the time comes for another car he plans the purchase of a third Rover.

This form of loyalty to a marque is common to Rover owners responding to the Survey. Nearly half have experiences with previous Rovers and, surprisingly, many of the reports are concerned with older models. One such is from the aforementioned Industrial Arts Instructor who drives a '59 Rover 105S "because the car suits my needs." His personal story reflects the type of pride found with satisfied Rover owners: "I bought the car from its second owner and had it completely rebuilt because of its mileage (80,000 miles). The cost for this was less than for a domestic car. I've had a Ford, Chevy and Stude before but constant body changes and only minor mechanical improvements made me sick. Now I have a car I'll drive for the next five years. Then I'll buy a new Rover 2000."

A traffic engineer from Utah reports his 1960 Rover 3-liter is one of only four in the state and, as a result, he finds obtaining parts a problem because they must be shipped from California. But, he says, "The Rover is a high quality car, comfortable and fun to drive. It took me three years to find a used one. It's the best car I ever owned."

A California newspaper reporter with a '67 Rover 2000 Automatic succinctly states his answer to Survey question #22, Probable choice next time, "Next time, I hope will be a long time from now, but I do not

think we could ever be happy with a different car."

Manufacturing integrity plays an important role in Rover owner happiness. A non-com in the U.S. Army puts it thus: "Why am I a Rover convert? My experience started in 1960 with my venerable '51 model '75.' It was hardly a spectacular car, but it showed the qualities which make for convinced owners. Quality design and construction clearly pointed out the attitude of the makers. Contact with Rover in the U.S. supported this feeling."

"My 2000 shows that, in addition to integrity, the Rover people have the ability to design and produce according to their own good sense, not copy everything else with complete slavery to cost-efficiency planning."

The serviceman continues: "Everytime I drive the car, I am reminded that I have not been short-changed by sloppy workmanship or shortcuts in design. I call that satisfaction."

But, as with every car in the Survey, not all owners have experienced trouble-free operation or find the Rover completely without fault. Perhaps one of the most frequent complaints is of the nit-picking school but, nonetheless, important to the drivers and safe driving, the outside left side mirror. It appears that Rover has not placed it where it does the most good. Several respondents moved the mirror further to the rear on the door. Others complain that it is useless when it is raining as the windshield wipers do not paint the lower left hand corner of the driver's side where, from the driver's point of vision, the mirror is located. One driver asked why ROAD TEST hadn't discovered this in our test. Simple: It seldom rains in California. Nevertheless, this appears to be a frequent complaint. (Changed on 68s.)

A few others are disappointed with the rear view mirror, pointing out that it is small or can't be adjusted when a heavy load is aboard.

A handful of Canadians complained about resonators and

mufflers quickly rusting out during snow seasons, but we think the amount of salt used on the roads up there during the snow season is contributory. All cars have the same problem in these areas and there's not

Those persons considering the purchase of an import in the \$4,000 range might be interested in comments from owners of the Jaguar 3.8, the Mercedes 220, the BMW 2000 and Citroen.

"My 1958 Mercedes is so completely rusted through that it will fall apart any day now. My 1958 Rover, on the other hand, is still completely solid and good for another 10 years." — Montreal, Canada.

"My 1968 Mercedes 220 is very weak in the passing range, needs at least 30 more horsepower." — Leavenworth, Kansas.

"The short interval between service as recommended by the factory means my dealer sees more of my Mercedes than I do. Parts are very expensive." — Tucson, Ariz.

"Controls are unmarked on my 1967 Citroen DS 21. There is no service available anywhere except near or in large cities." — Nashville, Tenn.

"The 1948 gearbox on my 1967 Jaguar is a source of constant annoyance. Engine still overheats in traffic." — Los Angeles, Calif.

"Electrical system, battery, automatic choke, heater and ventilation have all been troublesome on my 3.8 Jag. Dealer service is extremely expensive." — Madison, Wis.

"The original rear tires on my 3.8 Jaguar were bald at 18,000 miles. Impossible to keep wire wheels clean." — El Paso, Tex.

"Except for the one dealer, service for my BMW 2000 is almost impossible. Parts are very expensive, service is slow." — Albuquerque, N.M.

much to be done about it.

No complaints about the disc brakes according to Survey Answers other than the usual squeal associated with this type of device. Many Rover 2000 owners wish they had more engine power, but none of the 2000TC drivers express this view. They obviously are satisfied with the additional boost in performance afforded with the TC option.

Some answers indicate there have been major problems with the 2000 transmission. However, all owners indicate these were fully taken care of (up to and including complete replacement) by the Rover warranty. One owner reports that his transmission gave him minor trouble during the period of warranty but, after the warranty had expired, it became very serious. The Rover dealer in his area completely replaced the unit at no expense after the warranty had lapsed.

In line with the transmission troubles, there are minor reports indicating personal dislikes with the manual clutch, but they are relatively minor, i.e., pedal pressure high, etc.

A few owners would like more rear leg room, and one driver reveals that the front seat backs have been torn by rear seat passengers getting in and out.

Several claim discomfort with the hanging accelerator pedal and would much prefer less spring tension or,

better yet, 'an organ pedal' of larger size.

About one-third voice some form of dislike for the speedometer, either not working or being too noisy. This, of course, is one of the 'bought-out' components on the Rover and this particular type of problem is not uncommon with cars of English manufacture. The source of the trouble is with the instrument manufacturer and it is there that it will be solved.

The steering wheel is plastic (to bend in event of accident rather than splinter) but some owners in the colder climates find that it tends to become brittle and crack when the thermometer drops to 0°. As one disgruntled driver put it: "This shouldn't happen on a \$4000 car."

Yet the praises for the Rover far outweigh the problems. There are no major difficulties reported. There is, however, somewhat of a problem with dealers in the less populated areas. Sales volume and dealer organization is still rather limited in the United States and Canada. Because of this, many foreign car dealers handling other makes and models are serving as Rover agencies. And, as with many domestic and foreign car agencies, there are good ones and bad ones. These are quickly weeded out by just about every imported automobile manufacturer. So, many owners in the less populated areas are left with the closest dealer being 60 or

70 miles away. To combat this, many mechanically oriented owners are doing their own work. Some of them don't mind it at all, but others find it a bit of a problem as they feel competent for minor tune-up wrench tweaking, but little more. It is hoped Rover will make more vigorous efforts in this direction.

Apparently Rover owners consider maintenance problems as just part of owning a prestige automobile. None of the people reporting their problems have reached the point where they are so dissatisfied with the machine to never purchase another (as is the case with many of the other cars in our Survey).

Precisely the opposite is true. The Rover, above all others, scores the highest percentage for repeat buyers. Many owners are already on their second Rover, but those who aren't report they will buy another when the time comes. Of all the Rover owners responding, 87.6% will buy another! This, in itself, tells much about the owner's acceptance of this automobile. Far down the scale in second place is Corvette with 65% of the owners reporting that they will buy another. No other imported sedan or compact can come close to meeting the Rover's level of acceptability. It is in the best interests of the automotive art that they try. Taking a leaf from Rover's book might be a decent starting point. ♠

ROVER Owners like

- "Comfort, (seats, control, etc.) quality, size . . ."
- "Safety, handling, styling, rugged construction . . ."
- "Comfort and luxury combined with economy . . ."
- "Fine design, quality workmanship, compact size . . ."
- "Appeals to my personality, looks conservative . . ."
- "Sports car performance without the inconveniences . . ."
- "Trouble free high speed touring. No worries . . ."
- "Outstanding brakes, exceptional performance . . ."
- "Superb roadholding and maneuverability . . ."

ROVER Owners dislike

- "Directional lever on the wrong side . . ."
- "No center arm rest for driver . . ."
- "Would like more leg room in rear seat . . ."
- "Suspended accelerator pedal. Hard starting . . ."
- "Slight vibration from differential . . ."
- "Long reach to third gear . . ."
- "Outside mirrors too close, muffler rusted out . . ."
- "Paint blemishes, vinyl interior trim works loose . . ."
- "Burned exhaust valve, speedometer noisy . . ."

THE ROVER 2000...TWO YEARS LATER

By Gordon Newell

was hooked by that December, 1965 issue of ROAD TEST . . . the one that featured "Rover 2000; Does the World's Finest Car Cost Only \$4000?" As a result, I have just completed two years of Rover ownership, outrunning the factory warrantee by several thousand miles. In the process, I've become convinced that the 50c ROAD TEST and the \$4000 Rover were both well worth the price I paid for them.

The Rover story impressed me because I was in complete agreement with another article in that vintage issue of The Factual Automotive Guide . . . the one that summarized the Ford Mustang as "a sporty looking compact car which, by clever publicity, has trapped the typical face-conscious American into accepting a cheap status symbol in lieu of the real thing." Having fallen for Ford Motor Company's advance publicity on this revolutionary new American sports car, I had become the hopeful owner of one of the very first of them, back in the spring of 1964; long enough to have convinced me of the accuracy of ROAD TEST's generally unflattering evaluation.

When two transmissions fell out of my pony within the first month after the guarantee ran out, I had a third installed and drove gingerly the sixty miles to the nearest Rover dealer. So help me, I only intended to try out that little British four-banger, but after putting it through its paces on a section of hairpin boulevard turns and through downtown Seattle traffic, I found myself reaching for my check book. Abandoning the Mustang without so much as a farewell pat on the muzzle, I drove home in a Rover fresh off the showroom floor. That's one impulse purchase I haven't regretted.

Not that the Rover has proved to be without flaws. It's just turned out to be far and away the best all around automobile I have

ever owned or driven . . . including a gigantic custom-made Horche which I liberated from an SS field marshal during World War II.

Following a weekend of delighted test driving, I drove my brand new Rover proudly to the office and began bragging at the top of my voice. Most of my co-workers came out to the parking lot to view the Rover and observe that it was kind of small to cost four thousand dollars. I bragged louder than ever, while ridiculing their Detroit iron. At quitting time I seated myself on the prime English leather and turned the key. Nothing happened. I ended up calling for the Triple-A emergency service. It broke my colleagues up but good. The Lucas battery was a dud. Next day the dealer shipped a new one down. The replacement is still going strong.

At about five thousand miles the engine developed a slight clatter. It wasn't nearly as bad as say the normal valve racket of a Dodge V-8, but it was quite noticeable in that sweet-running, perfectly balanced little overhead cam four. I took it to the dealer and the mechanics looked grave. After a day or two of tinkering they called the distributor in San Francisco. After much consultation, they tore the engine down, rebored it and installed new pistons.

Trying to find out what had happened was like questioning a bunch of high-priced specialists in a busy hospital. There was a great air of mystery and I caught a couple of the mechanics giving me the sort of suspicious looks doctors might give a parent who has brought in a badly abused baby. Finally the service manager muttered something about "collapsed pistons." Just a few days ago I mentioned this strange circumstance to a Rover factory mechanic at an owner's service clinic. He fixed me with the same sort of accusing gaze. "But sir," he said

in a fine British accent, "the pistons couldn't possibly have collapsed unless you let the engine overheat."

Apparently the Rover Motor Car Company is as puzzled by the whole thing as I am, but I *know* I never let that engine overheat. In any event, the motor rebuild was on the house, right down to the replacement oil in the crank case, and that little added displacement seems to give the 2000 a bit more get-up-and-go.

At ten thousand miles the Rover had an opportunity to prove its much vaunted safety features. Upon one of the rare occasions when I permitted my wife to drive it she was clobbered by a Volkswagen being piloted diagonally across a shopping center parking lot by a teen-age dare-devil at about forty miles an hour. The Rover was just getting underway and the beetle hurled itself against the left front fender with sufficient impact to turn the car around a full 180 degrees. The Volks then caromed on for half a block or so, shedding vital parts. Aside from a punctured fender, bent bumper and slightly askew bonnet, the Rover was unscathed. I drove it for almost a month before having the sheet metal damage repaired and there wasn't so much as a rattle. The only way you could tell it had been in a fairly hairy collision was to get out and look.

At fifteen thousand miles the Rover suddenly lost power . . . just wouldn't accelerate or work up to over 70 miles an hour on the freeway. After two days of tinkering and fine tuning back at the dealer's, an enterprising mechanic found a section of Turkish towel neatly rolled up in the carburetor air intake. On this one I suspect sabotage.

And that just about sums up two years' problems with the Rover 2000, except that the paint (a now discontinued maroon) has

Continued on page 64



THE FIRST MILLION MILES

Significant excerpts from the Owner's Survey

Response to the ROAD TEST Owner's Survey has been in sufficient numbers that a meaningful cross section now can be drawn and a profile of the ROAD TEST car owner sketched.

He is a male, 38.87 years of age. He is married and has a high school diploma and 1.8 years of college, he earns between \$8000 and \$10,000 per year and there are 1.7 cars in his family. The cars are 1966½ models. There are 3.07 persons in his immediate family.

By income, those in the higher brackets are the most likely to own imports except those few who find it expedient for business purposes to drive a less noticeable vehicle.

Education appears to play a part in the choice of automobile as well. A definite correlation appears among those with college degrees and import ownership. This is most evident in replies indicating dual ownership. One car will be a domestic and the other almost inevitably an import, often a sports car.

It is not surprising that the largest number of automobiles reported are from General Motors, which, after all, makes more cars in a wider variety than any other single manufacturer.

Responses from Ford, Chrysler and American Motors owners are almost in direct proportion to reported sales.

An unexpected bonus was the number of responses from owners of specialty cars, classics and antiques.

All of the survey reports are now segregated by make, model and year and will be of tremendous value in our future tests in bringing evaluations from that most reliable of all sources, the actual owners of cars similar to those being tested.

Statistics and averages, while interesting, do not begin to tell the whole story of the ROAD TEST Owner's survey.

The youngest respondent was an 11 year old boy who filled out the form on his father's car, a 1966 Chevrolet Impala. We also had an answer from an 80 year old attorney who is quite happy with his 1967 Citroen.

There are a large number of responses from students who report their income as zero and an equally large number whose income exceeds \$25,000 per year. There are extremes in family size and numbers of cars owned. One family with seven members reports only one car, another with eight members in the immediate household owns five cars. An air force officer, a bachelor, has four cars, one of them a Ferrari. (Sorry girls, we can't give out names and addresses).

There is really no adequate way to describe owner's enthusiasm for the survey. Many readers took the trouble to hand-make copies of the survey form rather than damage a file copy of their magazines. Others had duplicator copies made for the same reason.

In some cases, owners reporting on more than one car, took the trouble to send typed sheets for each car, answering each question in detail.

It would be normal and quite expected that among the responses would be a few that would be, at best, frivolous and, at worst, obscene. But there have been none!

The replies to our questions numbers 12 "Most liked features" and 13 "Disliked features" have been extremely interesting. The comments on question 19 "If not dealer service, why not?" have been so vehement and explicit that a full length article will result which we hope will become required reading for every automobile dealership in the country.

There are surprises among the responses to question 22 "Probable choice next time." While there is a great deal of loyalty to the marque presently owned there is also a high

degree of interest shown in makes other than the present resident of the family garage. This is nowhere more evident than in those families now owning only one car and that a small economy model. These are the people who, for status or necessity expect either to add a car or move to a larger model.

No obvious trend of dissatisfaction with any one make or model of car has emerged but there is real and vocal displeasure over the quality of service rendered by dealerships both of domestic and imported cars. This is highly pronounced in the matter of warranty service.

Among those registering dissatisfaction are the VW owners who, for many years, had an advantage over owners of other makes. This advantage seems to have disappeared as the increased number of Volkswagens requiring service has led dealers to adopt domestic dealer abuses.

There is no distinct pattern among the other imports as to the quality of service. Much depends upon locale. However, owners in metropolitan areas are often no better off than those in smaller communities. The missing ingredient, where there is a problem, appears to be integrity — with far too many dealers more concerned with the fast buck than in customer satisfaction.

Service is a problem not limited to owners of foreign cars. Our domestic car owner's cite more cases of "poor" or "shocking" service from dealers than "excellent" or "good."

Our first report on the results of our Owner's Survey is a brief summarization of the consensus opinion of each car. They will be presented on the basis of retail price in an ascending scale. Owing to space limitations in this issue we are covering only the domestic cars. The balance of the imports will be discussed next month.

Rambler American

American Motors compact, according to the Owner's Survey gives no trouble in more than half as many cases as it causes problems. There is a fairly high degree of loyalty with 50% of present owners reporting it as their number one choice when next shopping for a car. Few non-owners, however, list it as a probable first.

Most of the items in the particularly liked column relate to

the American's compact nature with economy heading the list. While owners had different ways of expressing themselves the majority favor the small size, ease of handling, convenient parking and general practicality that goes with the genuine compact. Many owners comment favorably on the car's reliability and a number of others on its ease of service.

Compliments in the context of 'style' take on a different meaning when applied to the American. Most

owners using such terms as 'no nonsense' to describe the car's conservative appearance.

Among the dislikes the most frequently mentioned is the slow and heavy steering. The second largest annoyance is inadequate sealing of windows and trunk. The standard tires as fitted by the factory are felt by many owners to be too small.

Other complaints but low on the list are poor seating position, high wind and road noise, rear suspension and poor brakes.

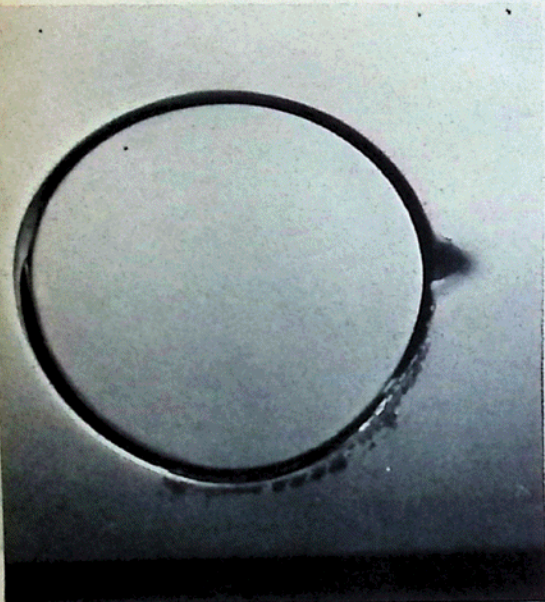
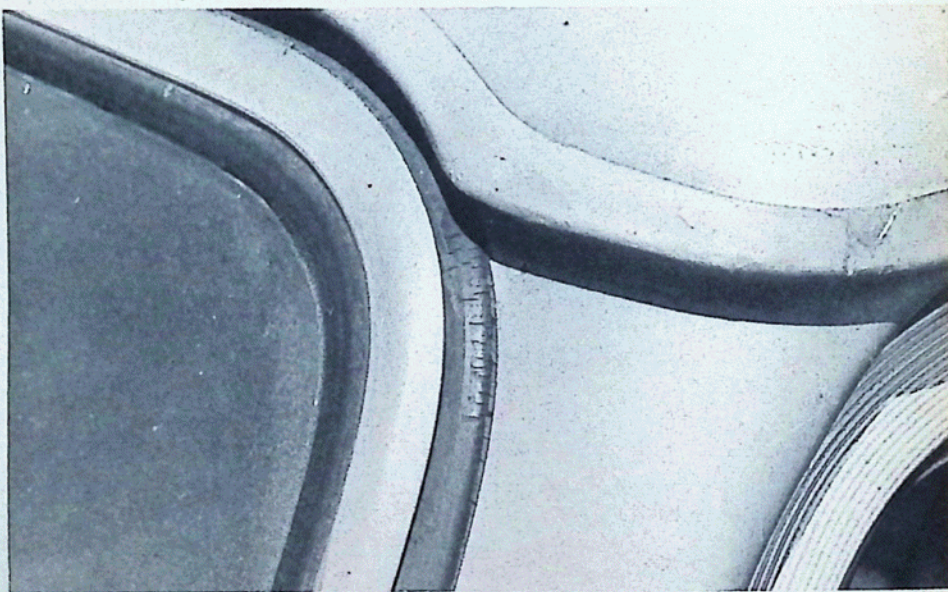
RAMBLER AMERICAN Owners like

- "Big six gives adequate pick-up brisk cruising . . ."
- "Good fuel economy, low initial price . . ."
- "I like conservative styling, wife doesn't! . . ."
- "Reliable, never refuses to start in winter . . ."
- "Style doesn't change radically . . ."
- "Right size for good handling . . ."

RAMBLER AMERICAN Owners dislike

- "Manual steering too slow for safety . . ."
- "Standard tires too small . . ."
- "Inadequate head room and leg room . . ."
- "Not weatherproof, leaks around windshield . . ."
- "Wind noise, vibration and rattles . . ."
- "Suspension too mushy, steering effort . . ."

Some Rambler owners complain of leaks around windshield.



Paint chips quickly around Corvair gas filler lid.

Corvair

Corvairs produced since 1965 have attracted an almost fanatic band of loyal enthusiasts. Fully three fifths of the survey report forms received, list

the Corvair as giving no trouble whatever and 50% say they will buy another as their next car.

The list of likes and dislikes also reflects the fierce devotion of adherents to the marque. Only in one area is there a balance, praise for the car's styling is offset by an equal number of complaints over quality control with shoddy workmanship cited.

The most liked feature of all is han-

dling. Next most favored is the firm suspension with economy close behind. Owners also find the car dependable and with sufficient power for their needs. Traction from the rear engine/rear wheel drive is also favored.

Aside from quality control, dislikes of the Corvair are few. Brakes, sensitivity to cross winds, the two speed automatic and wind noise the most frequent complaints.

CORVAIR
Owners like

- "Handling is excellent, to hell with Nader . . ."
- "Maneuverability, location of instruments . . ."
- "Mechanically trouble free . . ."
- "Handling is great, like styling . . ."
- "Good traction in winter in snow or wet . . ."
- "Air cooled engine easy to start in winter . . ."

CORVAIR

Owners dislike

- "Poor brakes, fade completely in wet . . ."
- "Cheap construction, oil leaks, smelly heater . . ."
- "No passing gear on powerglide . . ."
- "Small trunk, small rear seat . . ."
- "Factory paint ticky-tack, assembly poor . . ."
- "Wind noise, other strange sounds inside . . ."

Chevelle & Chevy II

Owners with V-8 power plants in both these cars tend to praise the unit while there is little praise for the 6 cylinder engine and much complaint. Styling draws more commendation than negative comment and those who find their cars comfortable are two to one over those who do not.

More than twice as many owners of Chevelle and Chevy II had com-

plaints about the steering of their cars as those who praised it. Suspension complaints were heard from exactly the same number of owners who praised the ride of their cars.

Styling is a long point again with far more favorable responses than complaints.

Owners with metallic brake linings on their cars had praise for their stopping ability while those with standard brakes were equally vocal in expressing dissatisfaction.

Economy seems to be a moot point, depending entirely on whether the V-8 or in-line six is fitted. Those owners with the six frequently mention fuel economy as a liked feature. Owners of the V-8 mention it only as a minus factor.

Of the Chevelle owners reporting, slightly fewer than 50% will purchase the same make the next time they buy. There is even less loyalty among owners of Chevy IIs. Not one lists it as his probable choice next time.

CHEVELLE
Owners like

- "Smoothness of engine, reasonable economy . . ."
- "Good economy, handsome appearance . . ."
- "Metallic brakes, reasonably good handling . . ."
- "Right size, neither too small nor too large . . ."
- "Power disc brakes, good acceleration . . ."
- "Heavy duty suspension, comfortable seats . . ."

CHEVY II
Owners like

- "Good pick up for 120 hp . . ."
- "Good handling, like the style . . ."
- "Mechanically dependable, right size . . ."
- "Comfortable, low initial cost . . ."
- "Just right for my kind of driving . . ."
- "75,000 miles and it's going strong . . ."

CHEVELLE
Owners dislike

- "Steering much too slow, dangerous . . ."
- "Paint chipping, body panels don't fit . . ."
- "Weight distribution poor, front too heavy . . ."
- "Dealer service unreliable, expensive . . ."
- "Gear ratios fit only for hot rodding . . ."
- "Shockingly bad quality throughout . . ."

CHEVY II
Owners dislike

- "Poor handling, underpowered, poor seats . . ."
- "Rides and handles poorly, transmission sticks . . ."
- "Throttle pedal at wrong angle, heater weak . . ."
- "Rattles everywhere, poor workmanship . . ."
- "Dealer overcharges for all services . . ."
- "Wind and road noise much too loud . . ."

Rambler Station Wagon

Of all the vehicles reported on in our Owner's Survey the only station wagon with adequate coverage to warrant a million mile report is the Rambler Classic.

A slightly larger number of owners report trouble with their Classics than do not, yet only 30% indicate they definitely will repeat on their next purchase. This is due, in part, to some uncertainty about future need

for a wagon of any kind. There is little interest expressed by non-owners in the future purchase of a Rambler, or any other station wagon.

The most frequently mentioned of liked items pertaining to the Rambler Classic are the reclining seats and the smooth engine. Also receiving favorable comment are the handling, economy, dependability and quiet of the Classic.

Also on the plus side are such things as size, rear door opening, vis-

ibility and comparatively long tire life.

The most frequently mentioned dislikes are inadequate brakes and faulty shock absorbers. Road noise transmitted to the interior as well as wind noise are also annoyances.

There is a scattering of other complaints, chief among them improper weather sealing, but this, like most of the others can be lumped under the heading of poor quality control and shoddy assembly line techniques.

RAMBLER STATION WAGON

Owners like

- "Small size, convenient in traffic . . ."
- "Reclining seats, good seat padding . . ."
- "Size, good brakes (disc) good handling . . ."
- "Comfortable seating, dependability, quiet . . ."
- "Trouble free economical operation . . ."
- "Light weight gives good tire mileage . . ."

RAMBLER STATION WAGON

Owners dislike

- "Water leaks around dash and windshield . . ."
- "Road noise transmits through body . . ."
- "You name it, I hate it. A lemon . . ."
- "Blind spot right rear . . ."
- "Poor workmanship at factory on many details . . ."
- "Dealer service unbelievably bad . . ."

Valiant

Slightly more than 50% of the Plymouth Valiant owners report having trouble with the car. There is, however, great loyalty to the marque since 62% say they will repeat and again buy Valiant. Among non-owners there is only a small trend toward the marque, relatively few making it first on the list of probable choices.

Owner likes and dislikes are along the lines that retain loyalty to the line.

The most frequently mentioned plus factors is the Valiant's reliability. Almost on a par is the handling of the car with economy the next most appreciated feature.

The comfort rating of the Valiant is high with many owners commenting on the car's roominess and trunk space. Styling, size and performance, while slightly down on the list of most liked features, still received favorable mention.

Among dislikes the areas covered by quality control are the most frequent offenders. Mentioned sep-

arately but probably in that category are complaints of poor weather-proofing.

Valiant is one of the few cars to elicit complaints about steering. Many owners commenting on the poor response or lack of precision. Brakes are considered equally poor. Valiant's manual transmission comes in for criticism as well as ignition and carburetion.

In the comments on Valiant we came upon our first group of adverse comments specifically mentioning mufflers.

VALIANT

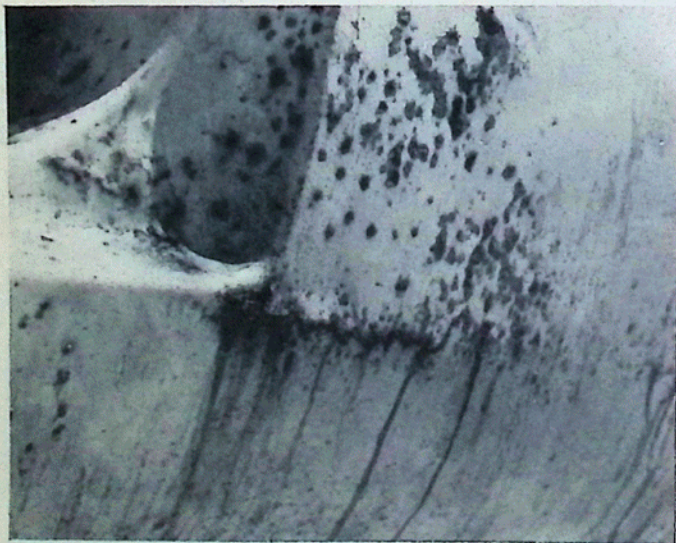
Owners like

- "Reliability, trouble free operation . . ."
- "Compact size, low initial cost and upkeep . . ."
- "Ease of handling in traffic and parking . . ."
- "Good interior space, large trunk . . ."
- "Tautness, agility, economy, reliability . . ."
- "Very little maintenance, good ride . . ."

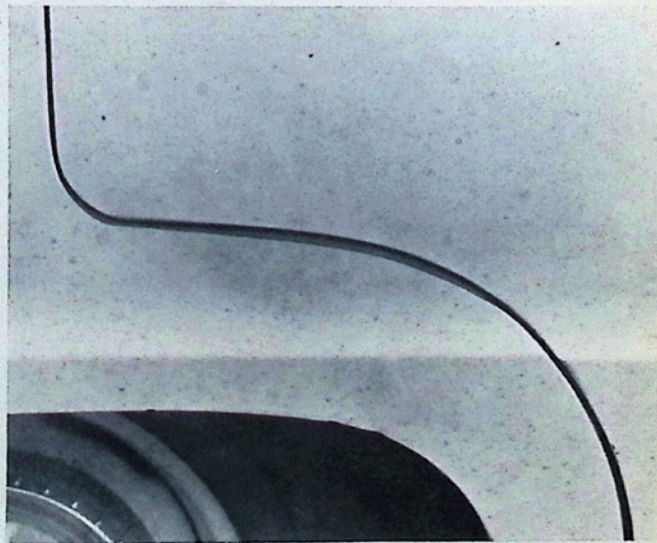
VALIANT

Owners dislike

- "The rattles, my God, the rattles . . ."
- "Left windshield post blocks vision . . ."
- "Unstable in side winds, harsh ride . . ."
- "Original paint, shocks, muffler poor . . ."
- "Hard starting when engine warm . . ."
- "Suspension too soft, sloppy handling . . ."



Improper sealing finds rust working through the paint on a Valiant.



Falcon's fitting of body sections not too accurate.

Falcon

Our survey reveals that fewer Falcon owners complain of the car giving trouble than those which do. Yet, only 25% of Falcon owners will make it their first choice next time they buy. An even smaller percentage of non-Ford owners list the Falcon as their first choice.

Highest rating among best-liked features goes to economy with dependability and handling following in that order.

In the disliked column, however, handling gets just as many votes as it did among the favorable comments. The same anomaly appears in the field of performance with the owners of V-8 engines praising the car's power while those with the basic six

feel the Falcon is under-powered.

Assembly line quality control is mentioned more often in the unfavorable column than in the favorable. Another source of annoyance is the small size of the standard tires.

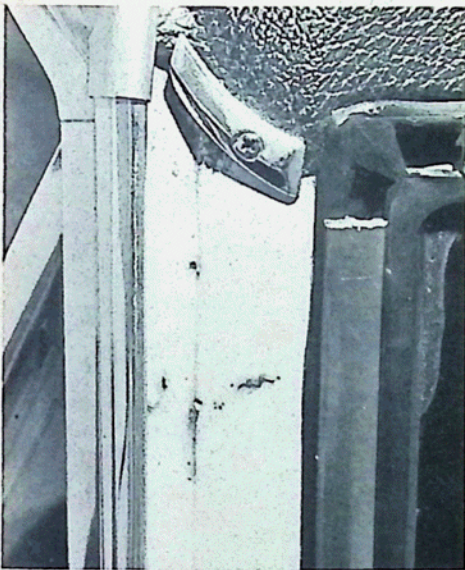
While handling is mentioned frequently as a plus factor, those who have complaints also cite poor handling as a problem.

FALCON Owners like

"Economical to operate and dependable . . ."
"Good power for a six, solidly built . . ."
"Much better styling than competitors . . ."
"Roomy interior, adequate performance . . ."
"Seating position, reliability, economy . . ."
"Always starts in cold weather . . ."

FALCON Owners dislike

"Small tires, rear end too light . . ."
"Rattles in body, not enough power . . ."
"Wheels too small makes handling poor . . ."
"Dealer so bad do service myself . . ."
"Hard to control in cross winds . . ."
"Terrible quality control, wind noise . . ."



Dart has rust build up, a common problem.

Dart

Owners of Dodge Dart files survey report forms indicating 55% have had no real trouble with their cars. There is a high degree of satisfaction registered also since 60% say they will repeat and buy Dart again next time. A lower percentage of non-Dodge owners say they will buy Dart than others in the line.

While the balance sheet shows more items in the liked than disliked column there is lacking the high enthusiasm for any one feature sometimes found in our analyses.

Most often mentioned favorably is the Dart's handling with interior roominess next on the list. The slant

six engine receives compliments with economy and reliability tied right behind. Seating is mentioned as a plus. Owners who have the automatic transmission find it to their liking.

Among the dislikes the most often mentioned is the interior with an assortment of complaints about the location of controls, instruments, pedals and visibility. A large number of owners have engine starting trouble when the weather is either very cold or very wet. Noise, both from wind and from loose body panels is a source of annoyance. The size of the 13 inch wheels finds few, if any, adherents.

With Dart the subject of quality control is moot. As many praised it as complained about it.

DART Owners like

"Good seating front and rear large trunk . . ."
"Best all around bread and butter car . . ."
"Convenience features, map, trunk light, etc. . ."
"Size and maneuverability, ease of handling . . ."
"Economy, low maintenance costs, dependability . . ."
"Good finish inside and out, great handling . . ."

DART Owners dislike

"Seats, suspension, tires too small . . ."
"Suspended accelerator pedal, close steering wheel . . ."
"Engine balky in wet or cold weather . . ."
"Not enough leg room . . ."
"13 in. wheels too small, tires too thin . . ."
"Very poor quality control on many items . . ."

Rogue & Rebel

Owner's Survey reports on the Rambler Rogue and Rebel are not sufficient for a million mile report.

The few owners who have reported thus far indicate a fair degree of satisfaction. A detailed analysis must await additional information, thus

we invite Rogue and Rebel owners to participate more fully by sending us completed Owner's Survey report forms.

Fairlane

Only a bare majority (55%) of Ford Fairlane owners report having no trouble with their cars. Almost 50% say it will be their first choice the next time a car purchase is indicated. Among non-Ford owners, relatively few name Fairlane as the car under primary consideration for purchase.

Problems appear in evaluating the

likes and dislikes of Fairlane owners since the highest rated favorable item, handling, is offset by exactly an equal number who find fault with the handling. Comfort, styling, and size are all mentioned favorably. Economy of operation is also cited in the most liked column.

Dislikes, other than suspension and handling, are widely divergent

but all are centered in the area of quality control.

A rather high percentage of Fairlane owners comment unfavorably on body rattles. Still others find fault with the standard tires as fitted by the factory.

The Fairlane is one of the few cars with owners reporting poor sealing from dust and the weather.

FAIRLANE Owners like

- "Well balanced, adequate power, good handling . . ."
- "Engine/transmission combination, good economy . . ."
- "Mechanically trouble free, good roadability . . ."
- "Size and comfort, low initial cost . . ."
- "Unitized construction feels solid . . ."
- "Compact size, maneuverability, easy parking . . ."

FAIRLANE Owners dislike

- "Poor quality original tires . . ."
- "Rattles, suspension too soft, unstable . . ."
- "Steering too heavy, seats too low . . ."
- "Poor quality control, dealer overcharges . . ."
- "All kinds of things have failed . . ."
- "Not weatherproof, windows and trunk leak . . ."

Pontiac Tempest

There have been too few responses from owners of the Pontiac Tempest Sprint with its OHC six to give a valid across the board summary of the car. In those cases reporting there appears, so far, general satisfaction with the car but a more detailed report will have to await additional reader response.

Sections of the Tempest lacking in togetherness.



Javelin

The Javelin is too newly marketed for adequate response. Those owners who have responded indicate no problems with the car. Complaints, to date, are those common to all the Pony cars such as limited trunk space.

Barracuda

Owners of the Plymouth Pony car are evenly divided among those who have had trouble with the car and those who did not. Yet only 45% have it at the top of their lists for a repeat purchase. There is moderate interest among non-owners when considering their next car.

Topping the list of things liked best are handling and performance far in front of all other features. Favored next among the Barracuda owners are appearance and styling. The fold down rear seat of the 1967 cars receives favorable comments as do the areas of reliability, comfort and economy. The full instrumentation of

the 'S' package is appreciated as well as disc brakes, when fitted.

Receiving the greatest number of adverse comments, quality control again looms as the largest single problem facing both automobile manufacturer and buyer. Some of the other sources of irritation to Barracuda owners are leaks around windows, excessive looseness in body panels and difficulties in the steering system. That styling is subjective is borne out by a number of respondents who have come to dislike the appearance of their cars. There are others who have complaints about wheel size and tire life. Several owners cite wind noise as a problem.

BARRACUDA
Owners like

"Rear storage area, instrumentation, smooth engine . . ."
"A joy to drive over hills and highways . . ."
"Styling, handling, performance . . ."
"Suspension, styling, disc brakes . . ."
"Reliability, trouble free operation . . ."
"Large luggage space, reasonable economy . . ."

BARRACUDA
Owners dislike

"Seat back at wrong angle, uncomfortable . . ."
"Rear window leaks in rain, panels rattle . . ."
"Typical sloppiness on assembly line . . ."
"Feel-less power steering, seating position . . ."
"Steering wheel too close for comfort . . ."
"13 in. wheels too small, poor cornering . . ."

Mustang

Mustang owners who have trouble with their cars are slightly more numerous than those who have not by a margin of only 5%. However, only a third of present owners plan to repeat and buy another Mustang as their next car. A fairly high percentage of the non-Mustang owners say it will be their first choice the next time they buy.

By far the most liked feature on the Dearborn horse is its handling, with appearance and styling close behind. The owners who have Mustangs with V-8 power are generally pleased. Disc brakes are rated very high by those with this option. Reliability and comfort are also frequently mentioned as plus items. Operating economy is listed as more than satisfactory by a majority of owners.

The most frequently disliked Mustang feature is its suspension,

with squeaks and rattles close behind. Drum brakes have not one favorable comment but numerous complaints.

Sloppy assembly line techniques account for a large number of adverse comments.

Comfort is even, with an equal number of owners having praise and complaints.

Mustang owners who ordered the three speed manual transmission say they made a mistake as do many who purchased unassisted steering.

MUSTANG
Owners like

"Size, styling, handling, reliability . . ."
"Good ride, easy on tires and brakes . . ."
"Resale price holds up, disc brakes . . ."
"Sharp styling, easy handling, trouble free . . ."
"Fun car, fairly economical . . ."
"Excellent performance from 289 engine . . ."

MUSTANG
Owners dislike

"Have had to have three valve jobs . . ."
"Seating is terrible, rattles in front suspension . . ."
"Dealer service shoddy, takes too long . . ."
"Suspension too soft, feels unsafe . . ."
"Rear wheel hop on acceleration . . ."
"Drum brakes inadequate, just not safe . . ."



Camaro

In comparison with other Chevrolet models, reports on the Camaro are relatively light. It is significant, however, that none of those reporting have had trouble with their cars. Only 50% however, say they will buy a Camaro as their next car. This is offset by a number of non-Camaro owners who list it as their probable next choice.

There is almost unanimous praise of the car's handling and most owners report that it has a solid feel on the road. Styling of the Camaro is another feature its owners like.

Owners of the Chevrolet Pony car with the V-8 engine praise the per-

Camaro is a victim of the mismatched body panel problem.

formance but at the same time complain about traction at the rear on both acceleration and deceleration.

The owners with the combination of six cylinder engine, four speed gearbox and heavy duty suspension seem most pleased with their Camaros but the majority have opted for the V-8.

Standard drum brakes receive considerable criticism as does the suspended throttle pedal. Standard tires are also felt to be inadequate.

Cougar

The Pony car of the Mercury line has attracted almost as many adherents as the full size machine. 60% report having had trouble with their cars. It is significant that the 40% who have not had trouble will repeat and make Cougar their number one choice when buying again.

There is a large segment of the non-Cougar owning public who give it

priority among cars considered when next they shop.

Features mentioned favorably outweigh the dislikes by more than two to one. Most often liked is the handling of the Cougar with performance and general quality next. Styling and appearance are spoken of frequently and highly as is the comfort to driver and passengers.

Most often mentioned as dislikes are interior inconveniences. For

example, small glove box, location of controls, unmarked or unlighted switches. Among mechanical problems the electrical system appears to give the most trouble.

Several owners speak of rattles from loose body panels. There is also criticism of the tires fitted as standard.

Among the domestics, Cougar is rated generally high in quality control.

CAMARO Owners like

- "Car has solid secure road feel . . ."
- "Good ride, handling, reliability, style . . ."
- "Styling, good performance, smooth engine . . ."
- "Very good workmanship, comfortable seats . . ."
- "Interior has luxury feel but price modest . . ."
- "Cool man, chicks dig it . . ."

CAMARO Owners dislike

- "Rear suspension hop on acceleration . . ."
- "Cheap tires from factory, poor suspension . . ."
- "Needs close ratio steering and disc brakes . . ."
- "Weight distribution is poor, car unstable . . ."
- "Automatic choke sticks even after repair . . ."
- "Heavy duty options should be standard . . ."

COUGAR Owners like

- "Styling, performance, luxurious finish . . ."
- "Ease of handling, interior decor . . ."
- "Big car luxury, small car performance . . ."
- "Excellent automatic transmission . . ."
- "Superior styling, comfortable, good handling . . ."
- "Instrument panel layout, convenience . . ."

COUGAR Owners dislike

- "Inadequate back support to seats . . ."
- "Power booster on brakes replaced twice . . ."
- "Body not weatherproof, leaks in winter . . ."
- "Position of windshield washer pedal . . ."
- "Original tires very poor . . ."
- "Service from dealer poor unless watched . . ."

Comet

While 60% of Mercury Comet owners responding to our survey indicate they have had trouble with their cars, only 10% say it will be their first choice when they go car shopping next time. However, a higher percentage of non-Comet owners list it as their probable first choice.

Features liked about the Comet outweigh dislikes with the most favored being the styling and appearance of the car. Owners with the V-8 engine are generally pleased in areas of power and performance while those having the six cylinder power plant feel their cars are underpowered.

Reliability, size, comfort and econ-

omy are also frequently mentioned as favorable features.

Most disliked features of the Comet center about quality control with many owners complaining about items overlooked or carelessly fitted during the assembly procedure.

As many owners complain about comfort and seating position as praise them.

COMET Owners like

- "Quiet, dependable, easy to work on . . ."
- "Sensible size good power to weight . . ."
- "Well designed, roomy and comfortable . . ."
- "Makes a good second car, economical . . ."
- "Interval selector windshield wipers . . ."
- "Maneuverable, reliable, good trunk space . . ."

COMET Owners dislikes

- "Steering wheel too close, uncomfortable . . ."
- "Poor mileage, poor transmission, noisy lifters . . ."
- "Brakes poor, lining wore out rapidly . . ."
- "Service at gas station better than dealer . . ."
- "Wind noise, poor seating position . . ."
- "Numerous mechanical problems . . ."

Oldsmobile 4-4-2

The 'muscle car' is the most popular Olds among ROAD TEST respondents to our Owner Survey. However, 75% of 4-4-2 owners report having trouble with the car. Only 20% indicate that they will repeat and make the 4-4-2 their first choice on their next car purchase. A high

percentage of non-Oldsmobile owners indicate that the 4-4-2 will be their next car.

Among best liked features the performance and handling of the car rate highly. Smoothness of operation is frequently mentioned as is comfort for the driver. When fitted, disc brakes are mentioned on the plus side. Styling is another aspect favored by 4-4-2 owners.

Among dislikes, the most criticized item is shoddy workmanship on the assembly line. Transmission troubles are frequent complaints and there is considerable distress over poor fuel economy. Several owners report troublesome loss of fluids in brake and transmission systems. Standard tires and in numerous cases the optional wide ovals are another source of trouble.

4-4-2 Owners like

- "Disc brakes, handling, road feel, performance . . ."
- "Interior comfort, rapid acceleration . . ."
- "Responsive engine, roadable, fun to drive . . ."
- "Good handling with heavy duty shocks . . ."
- "Reasonable economy for good performance . . ."
- "Handling, acceleration, good brakes (disc) . . ."

4-4-2 Owners dislike

- "Shoddy workmanship, poor materials, rattles . . ."
- "Not worth the money considering difficulties . . ."
- "Poor rear vision, original tires very poor . . ."
- "Quality of assembly lacking, paint cracking . . ."
- "Too front end heavy, brakes inadequate . . ."
- "Dealer will not make warranty repairs . . ."

GTO & Firebird

Responses from Firebird owners are insufficient to warrant a separate section at this time. Those we have, closely parallel comments on the GTO. A more detailed Firebird analysis will appear in a future issue.

30% more owners report no trouble with their cars than those who have problems. However, less than a third plan to repeat on their next car purchase. There is a higher

percentage of non-GTO and Firebird owners who will make one or the other their choice next time.

Pleasing characteristics far outweigh complaints among owners of GTOs and Firebirds. Most frequently mentioned as favorable are power, performance and handling. Many owners also speak highly of their car's ride in this connection. Style is another well liked feature.

Assembly line quality control is rated favorably on a two to one basis.

The item most frequently listed as

disliked is the two speed automatic transmission. Near the top of the list is Pontiac's air conditioning, which many owners find wanting. None of the Firebird/GTO owners reporting list economy as a favorable item, several, however, have operating expense listed among things most disliked.

Braking performance is pleasing to those who have discs or metallic linings, but is equally displeasing to those with cars having standard linings.

GTO & FIREBIRD Owners like

- "Quality of manufacture, power, performance . . ."
- "Status-styling, performance, comfort . . ."
- "Handling, power, looks good . . ."
- "Wide range of options offered . . ."
- "Sure footed cornering. Reliability . . ."
- "H.D. suspension, good heater, good passing . . ."

GTO & FIREBIRD Owners dislike

- "Excessive oil consumption, poor economy . . ."
- "High operating costs, gas, oil, tires . . ."
- "Rattles and squeaks, poor workmanship . . ."
- "Dealer ignores my problems . . ."
- "Not weatherproof, leaks in the rain . . ."
- "Power steering, easy to overcontrol . . ."

Ambassador

Too few responses have been received from owners of American Motors Ambassador for a million mile report. Those we have indicate satisfaction in general with few giving real troubles. Many plan to repeat with several indicating strong interest in the Javelin.

Buick Special & Station Wagon

There have been too few responses from owners of Buick Specials and Buick Station Wagons for a million

mile report on either car.

On the basis of a preliminary analysis most complaints center on poor quality control rather than any inherent faults. No pattern has emerged by which a flaw could be pinpointed.

Cutlass

Olds Cutlass owners responding to our survey have had trouble with the cars in 85% of cases and only 10% say it will be the car of choice on their next purchase. Among non-Oldsmobile owners few list it as their probable selection when next they buy.

Performance and power are the most frequently mentioned items in the areas liked. Styling meets with approval of most owners, as does creature comfort.

Opinion is about equally divided on the matter of handling. Those who praise the Cutlass suspension are balanced by those who criticize the same feature.

Most frequently mentioned among dislikes is poor quality control with a wide assortment of minor flaws being pointed out. Almost every report speaks of loose panels. Of the more serious defects the Cutlass transmission is the greatest offender. Brakes run a very close second, with owners finding the standard drum brakes inadequate.

CUTLASS Owners like

"Styling, power, performance, handling . . ."
"Good steering and cornering, powerful, quiet . . ."
"Good headrests and shoulder harness . . ."
"Power to weight ratio good, fine performance . . ."
"Engine responsive, powerful and quiet . . ."
"Seating position comfortable. Like style . . ."

CUTLASS Owners dislike

"Brakes, very poor. Excessive oil consumption . . ."
"Rattles, tappet noise from engine . . ."
"Poor suspension, bounces like a cork . . ."
"I am very unhappy with this piece of junk . . ."
"Poor workmanship in interior, poor suspension . . ."
"Much lateral vibration from frame . . ."

Plymouth

Owners of full size Plymouths represent another large segment of those responding to the Owner's Survey.

Almost twice as many owners report having no trouble with their cars as those who have, yet only 50% say they will make Plymouth their number one choice as their next car. A slightly higher percentage of non-Plymouth owners will seriously consider it when shopping next for an automobile.

As with all the cars with a great

many survey reports received, the list of likes and dislikes is lengthy.

Highest among those things mentioned favorably are Plymouth's power and performance as well as handling. Next, and each with an equally high rating, are appearance and styling, reliability, the Torqueflite automatic transmission and ease of servicing. Also receiving favorable mention are roominess, and comfort. Trunk space is adequate for most owners, as is visibility.

A number of owners comment favorably on their being able to use regular grade fuel in a V-8 engine.

On the minus side of the ledger the greatest number of complaints is in the field of quality control and assembly line mistakes.

Both wheel hop at the rear suspension and the transmittal of road surface noise to the interior are a source of annoyance to many owners. Wind noise is also mentioned.

Owners of cars fitted with disc brakes are generally pleased. Standard drum brake cars rate frequent complaints.

Owners of older Plymouths with push-button automatic transmissions find them troublesome.

PLYMOUTH Owners like

"Comfortable, dependable, trouble free . . ."
"Firm ride, rattle free, light, snappy . . ."
"Roomy, good handling, good performance . . ."
"Interior in good taste, good lines . . ."
"Takes a beating and comes back for more . . ."
"Strong engine, good quality control . . ."

PLYMOUTH Owners dislike

"Sloppy rear suspension, wheel hop . . ."
"Enormous vibration on hard braking . . ."
"Manual trans hard to engage . . ."
"Poor fuel economy, hard starting . . ."
"Dealer service poor, too costly . . ."
"Wind noise, idiot lights . . ."

Chevrolet

Owners reporting on the full size Chevrolet are exactly evenly divided among those who have had trouble with their cars and those who have not. However, slightly less than 50% of present owners say they will buy Chevrolets as their next car. Among all those contemplating purchase of

new cars, only 20% consider Chevrolet as their number one choice.

Among the most liked features of the Chevrolet the greatest number of owners list the engine as its outstanding feature. Favored next among Chevrolet owners is the styling of the car with comfort features running a close third.

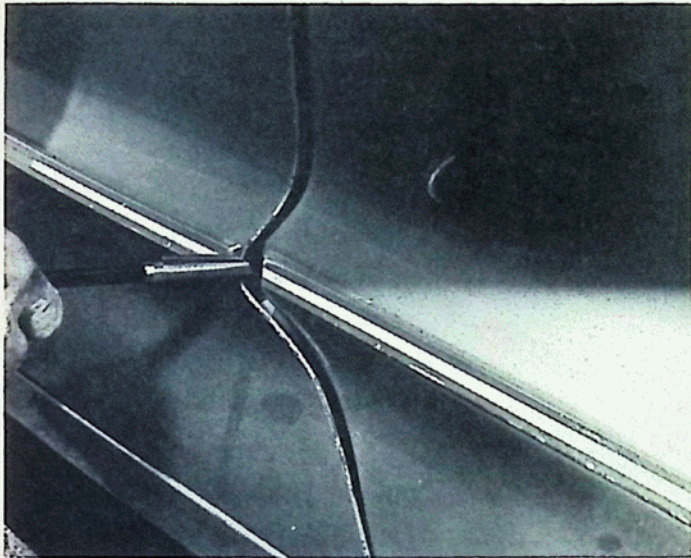
Reliability and size are tied for the next most favored features of the full size Chevrolets.

Favored but at the bottom of the list are such items as power steering, instrument panel and luggage space, in that order.

The two items tied for top spot among the disliked features of the full

size Chevrolets are the standard suspension and quality control. Many owners report sloppy work on the assembly line. Also disliked are: comfort, the two speed automatic transmission, steering, brakes and, in the case of the six cylinder engine, lack of power. Ride, economy, tires, heater and weight distribution also come in for criticism.

Exposed to the sun, paint on Chevrolet top deteriorates rapidly.



Chevrolet with gaps where there should be a close fit.



Chevrolet panels are mismatched.

**CHEVROLET
Owners like**

- "Comfort, low operating cost . . ."
- "Comfortable seats and ride . . ."
- "Power steering, roomy, radio, heater . . ."
- "Styling, roominess, instrument panel . . ."
- "Large size, lots of room . . ."
- "Smart interior styling, very easy handling . . ."

**CHEVROLET
Owners dislike**

- "Not directionally stable in the wind . . ."
- "Body work very poor, rusted quickly in spots . . ."
- "Side sway under hard acceleration . . ."
- "Poor visibility to the rear . . ."
- "Suspension too soft, poor handling . . ."
- "Poor original tires, expensive to maintain . . ."

Ford

While less than a third of the big Ford owners report having trouble with their cars only half plan to repeat on their next new car purchase. Of non-Ford owners the selection of the marque as their probable first choice is at the median line.

Ford owners are neither wildly enthusiastic in praise nor vehement in their complaints. Most com-

ments both pro and con are relatively conservative.

Evenly divided as most liked are the big Ford's comfort and its power. The next most frequently mentioned plus factor is the quiet operation of the vehicle both in engine noise and freedom from rattles.

Handling receives many favorable comments as does the dependability of the Ford.

There are several areas of am-

bivalence. A large number of owners report satisfaction with the economical operation of their Fords but a slightly larger number have complaints in this area.

Quality control is praised on the one hand and condemned on the other.

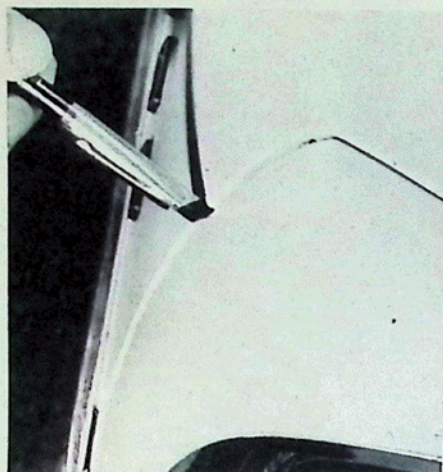
While there are some owners who report satisfaction with Ford brakes an even greater number find them wanting.

FORD
Owners like

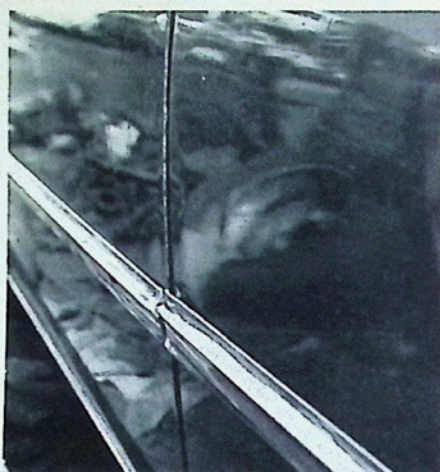
- "Roomy interior, convenience features . . ."
- "Sturdily built, quiet, power, performance . . ."
- "Stability, good ride, economical for V-8 . . ."
- "Roomy interior, trunk space good, comfortable . . ."
- "Good handling, feels secure cruising . . ."
- "Reliability, no troubles, economical . . ."

FORD
Owners dislike

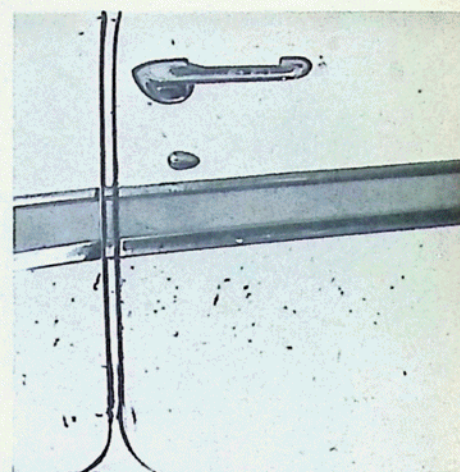
- "Brakes are inadequate, need discs . . ."
- "Seats too low and too soft, squeaks . . ."
- "Dealer needs all day for a lube job . . ."
- "Poor quality control, many flaws . . ."
- "Poor gas mileage, frequency of repairs . . ."
- "Fluid leaks, trans, brakes, etc . . ."



Shoddy workmanship on assembly lines at Ford.



Ford panel fitting leaves much to be desired.



Ill fitting body panels and rust are both evident on this Ford.

Dodge

Inasmuch as responses are essentially the same for full size Dodge, R/T and Charger we are grouping them together for purposes of this preliminary report.

Nearly twice as many Dodge owners report no trouble with their cars as have had major problems. There is a fairly high degree of loyalty to the marque with 60% naming it as their first choice when re-ordering.

The balance is tilted strongly toward the like column when reviewing owner comments. When fitted, the optional heavy duty suspension brings high praise for Dodge's handling. Next most often mentioned is performance, with solidity and high quality of workmanship right behind. Styling is a frequent plus factor. In descending order come comfort, dependability, size, visibility, and convenience, also mentioned favorably are economy of

operation and comfortable ride.

On the debit side of the ledger, the most common cause for criticism is wind and road noise closely followed by handling complaints in cars with standard suspension. Chrysler products, according to their owners, have more problems than others with weatherproofing. A large number complain of leaks. Rattles are also often mentioned. Lack of road feel through the power steering is another source of annoyance.

DODGE
Owners like

- "Braking very good with discs . . ."
- "Have H.D. suspension, good handling . . ."
- "Plenty of power, pleasant road car . . ."
- "Rugged and dependable, reasonable economy . . ."
- "Attractive styling, smart interior . . ."
- "Very good automatic transmission, smooth . . ."

DODGE
Owners dislike

- "Power steering too quick, no feel . . ."
- "Wind noise and road rumble . . ."
- "Car not weatherproof, rain leaks in . . ."
- "Poor suspension, should have ordered H.D. . . ."
- "Panels don't fit, many rattles . . ."
- "Original tires unsatisfactory . . ."

Mercury

There is a fifty-fifty split between owners of Mercurys which have had trouble and those who have not. Only a third, however, indicate that Mercury will again be their choice when

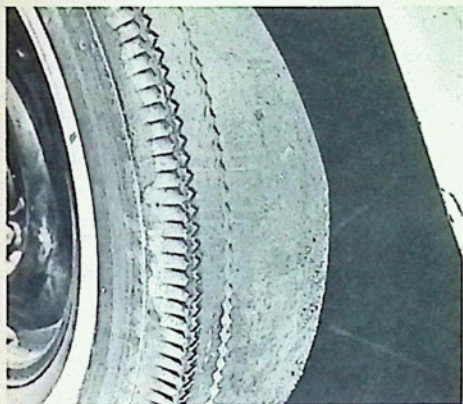
they buy their next car. A fairly high percentage of non-Mercury owners name it as their probable next purchase.

Features listed as most liked about the Mercury are reliability, at the top

of the list, with the retractable, reverse-slant back light of the '65 through '67 models running a close second. Also mentioned as best liked are power and performance, styling, and comfort.

Quality control is evenly matched between the pros and cons. The number of owners who have complaints about assembly line mistakes is matched by those who praise the quality of manufacture.

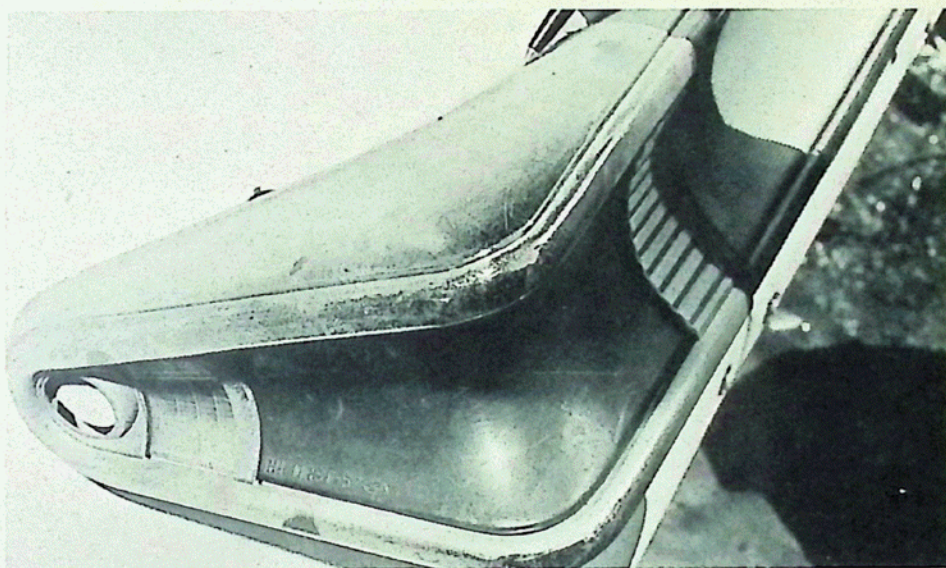
The most disliked Mercury feature is the car's seating. Next, in order, difficulty of repair, drum brakes and soft suspension.



Mercury owner had a right to complain about uneven tire wear.



Peeling paint is a frequently voiced complaint. A good example on a Mercury.



Rust is working its way through the chrome on the Mercury.

Oldsmobile

Owners of full size Oldsmobiles are evenly divided between those who have had trouble with their cars and those who have not. 33% plan to repeat, naming Olds as their first choice for their next car purchase.

Among non-owners there is not a strong trend toward the marque as a probable first to be considered when buying.

Virtually all Oldsmobile owners speak highly of the power and performance from the car's engine. Handling and comfort are also praised.

Oldsmobiles with disc brakes rate

high with their owners, cars with standard drum brakes are just as frequently criticized for poor stopping ability. One significant item is encountered for the first time in our analysis of Owner Reports on full size Oldsmobiles. 50% of respondents report frequency of high cost repairs as their major complaint.

MERCURY Owners like

- "Reverse slant rear window, plush interior . . ."
- "Trouble free, a pleasure to drive . . ."
- "A good tow car for trailer, secure feeling . . ."
- "Good power, strong engine . . ."
- "Fast, good looking, comfortable . . ."
- "Rear window slant great in winter . . ."

MERCURY Owners dislike

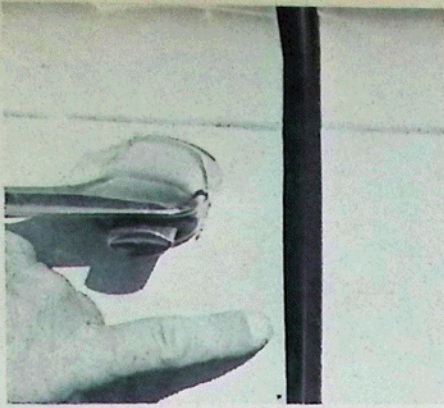
- "Handling qualities poor, rear vision poor . . ."
- "Resent their dropping breezeway rear window . . ."
- "Seating in front too low . . ."
- "Dealer service slow and expensive . . ."
- "Not easily serviced or repaired . . ."
- "Frequency of repair, repairs done poorly . . ."

OLDSMOBILE Owners like

- "Smooth ride, comfortable, good seating . . ."
- "Interior comfortable, very convenient . . ."
- "Ride, handling, engine/trans combination . . ."
- "Three speed automatic, engine performance . . ."
- "Good road holding, plenty of power . . ."
- "Disc brakes very good . . ."

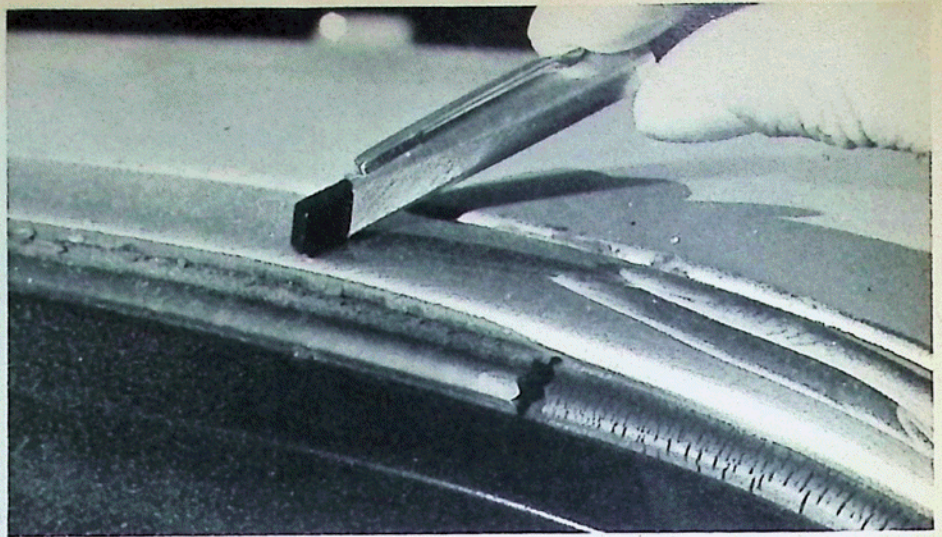
OLDSMOBILE Owners dislike

- "High cost of repairs, transmission trouble . . ."
- "Original paint very poor, had to repaint . . ."
- "Wind noise, instruments reflect at night . . ."
- "Poor workmanship, frequency of repairs . . ."
- "Body panels rattle, alignment difficult . . ."
- "Dealer repairs done poorly and expensive . . ."



Misfit body panels on an Oldsmobile.

Lack of weatherproofing. Olds windshield lets the rain in.



Buick

Among owners of General Motors cars, Buick is one of the most lightly represented in our Owner's Survey. There are, however, sufficient to qualify for our 'million mile' report.

Twice as many Buick owners report having trouble with their cars as

those having none. Less than 20% of Buick owners will repeat and make it their first choice when buying their next car. However, a much larger proportion of non-Buick owners list it as their probable first choice.

Among features most liked, comfort rates the highest among owners of full size Buicks. Styling and interior decor are also high on the list.

Power is also mentioned often as a plus item, as is handling.

Owners of Buicks are equally divided as to the quality of workmanship on the assembly line.

Owners complain about inadequate standard tires, and braking leaves much to be desired. A number of owners also report problems in keeping front end alignment correct.

BUICK Owners like

- "Exterior size, handling, power . . ."
- "Luxury and comfort, responsive . . ."
- "Superior handling to other luxury cars . . ."
- "Accessibility of engine for repairs . . ."
- "Hauls all the children, tows boat . . ."
- "Easy to drive in luxury and comfort . . ."

BUICK Owners dislike

- "I don't like any part of it . . ."
- "Worst quality control of any car . . ."
- "Noisy, rattles, poor workmanship . . ."
- "Poor finish and craftsmanship, noisy . . ."
- "Can't keep front end aligned, rattles . . ."
- "Poor tires, high cost of upkeep . . ."

Pontiac

While less than half of the full size Pontiac owners report having trouble with their cars only a third of them say they will again buy a Pontiac next time around. An equally small number of non-Pontiac owners consider it as their number one choice for their next purchase.

However, features liked about the cars far outweigh those disliked.

Most often mentioned on the plus side is comfort with style rating a close second. Third most often liked about the Pontiac are its power and performance.

Quality control is a toss up. An equal number of owners had good and bad things to say about the level of workmanship on the assembly line. The same is true in the areas of suspension and handling with opinion equally divided.

Owners of cars with disc brakes are

fullsome in their praise while those with drums report great dissatisfaction.

None of the Pontiac owners mention fuel economy on the plus side of the ledger while a sizeable segment refer to it among their complaints. Poor tire mileage is another source of owner dissatisfaction. There is some evidence of impulse buying among those owners who now complain about the overall size of the larger Pontiacs.

PONTIAC Owners like

- "Comfortable, good seats, good ride . . ."
- "Runs quietly, air conditioning excellent . . ."
- "Feels solid, is roomy, handles well . . ."
- "Excellent styling, good paint, good quality . . ."
- "Very reliable, trouble free, service good . . ."
- "Good braking with metallic linings, powerful . . ."

PONTIAC Owners dislike

- "Too long, hard to park . . ."
- "Fuel economy very poor even on trips . . ."
- "Dealer service appallingly bad, costly . . ."
- "Idiot lights awful, need gauges . . ."
- "Wind noise, engine balky when cold . . ."
- "Tappet noise, common on all Pontiacs . . ."

Chrysler

Owners of full size Chryslers, like the Buick and Cadillac are rather lightly represented among the responses to our Owner's Survey. It is interesting to note that 60% report having no trouble with their car and that same 60% say they will repeat and again buy Chrysler. Non-owners

planning to buy the marque are at the median line or about average.

In responding to the like and dislike questions Chrysler owners tend to be a conservative lot with neither overwhelming enthusiasm nor violent complaints.

Most often spoken of highly are the Chrysler's ride and handling with comfort close behind. Then, with an equal number of mentions each, we find power, the automatic transmis-

sion and general high quality. The steering of the car and its quiet are mentioned frequently as are reliability and roominess.

Among the dislikes there are two that stand out. Many owners complain of rattles and almost as many comment on poor brakes. Other dislikes mentioned, but not so often, are poor economy, unsatisfactory original tires, wind noise and poor visibility.

CHRYSLER Owners like

- "Combines good ride with good handling . . ."
- "Smooth power, good engine/transmission . . ."
- "Easy car to drive, power steering is good . . ."
- "Attention to manufacturing detail . . ."
- "Very comfortable car for long trips . . ."
- "Luxurious interior, good trunk space . . ."

CHRYSLER Owners dislike

- "Standard brakes completely inadequate . . ."
- "Tinted glass means poor night vision . . ."
- "Too big, not maneuverable . . ."
- "Nose dive and rear wheel lock up on braking . . ."
- "Rattles, wind noise, sloppy assembly . . ."
- "Original tires unsatisfactory . . ."

Corvette

More responses have been received from Corvette owners than from Chevelle and Chevy II combined which we suspect is due only to the enthusiasm found among sports car devotees. Less than half the Corvette owners report having trouble with their cars and more than half say their next car will also be a Corvette.

Even more non-Corvette owners say it will be the marque of their choice when next they buy.

Favorable comment far outweighs unfavorable. The most liked feature is the suspension and handling with performance, brakes (disc) and design sharing honors close behind. Other features that arouse favorable comment are the Corvette's comfort and reliability. An intangible but favorable aspect is listed as 'fun.'

The disliked features of the Corvette are few with the lack of luggage space listed most often. Quality control is also cited as found wanting. A number of owners complain about engine accessibility as well as the troublesome smog device.

Those Corvette owners with drum brakes complain even when the car is fitted with the metallic linings. The apparent difference here is one of comparison.

CORVETTE Owners like

- "Power, brakes, suspension handling . . ."
- "Roadability, fun to drive on open road . . ."
- "Comfortable ride for sports car . . ."
- "Styling and workmanship, complete instrumentation . . ."
- "Fiberglass body easy to repair, good handling . . ."
- "Total road performance! Speed with reliability . . ."

CORVETTE Owners dislike

- "Inaccessible luggage space and spark plugs . . ."
- "Generally poor production tolerances . . ."
- "Waves in fiberglass body, wind whistle . . ."
- "Factory tires and shocks, poor paint job . . ."
- "Smog control device gives trouble . . ."
- "Size bugs me now and then . . ."

Riviera

While most owners of the Buick Riviera report having trouble with the car, nearly 75% plan to make it their first choice the next time they buy. The Riviera also rates high among non-Buick owners as a prob-

able choice for their next purchase.

Riviera owners have more praise for their cars than other models in the Buick line with styling topping the list of favored features. Comfort is generally pleasing and dependability is mentioned frequently as a plus factor. Power and performance also get considerable praise.

Limited trunk space is most often mentioned as the most disliked feature along with poor quality control. Transmission trouble is a cause for disfavor among 15% of owners.

It is safe to say Riviera owners are more pleased than displeased with their purchase.

RIVIERA
Owners like

"Beauty, creature comforts, performance . . ."
"Styling, dependability, comfort . . ."
"Feels solid, quiet ride, engine smooth . . ."
"Snob appeal, looks like an import . . ."
"For size and weight gives reasonable economy . . ."
"Three speed automatic transmission . . ."

RIVIERA
Owners dislike

"Poor brakes, small trunk . . ."
"Poor bumper protection, soft suspension . . ."
"Can't keep engine in tune . . ."
"Dealer won't give warranty service . . ."
"Curved side windows, rough engine . . ."
"Poor paint, details overlooked on assembly . . ."

Thunderbird

Owners of the Ford Thunderbird are evenly divided among those who have had trouble with their cars and those who have not. They are also equally divided as to whether or not to buy another. 50% say they will buy another T-bird as their next car. A

comparatively small number of non-Thunderbird owners list it as their probable first choice.

Most T-bird owners find far more to praise about their cars than sources for complaint. Among the best liked features are power and performance with comfort and styling a very close second.

Owners also praise the instrument layout and other convenience features. Standard disc brakes rate high.

Most of the dislikes listed center about the soft suspension. Inadequate leg room for driver and passengers is mentioned by some owners.

THUNDERBIRD
Owners like

"Good power, excellent visibility . . ."
"Handles at 80 like others at 60 . . ."
"Comfort and convenience features . . ."
"Styling and luxury touches, yet economical . . ."
"Comfortable to drive, solid feel . . ."
"Interior appointments, exterior finish . . ."

THUNDERBIRD
Owners dislike

"Brakes too sensitive, front suspension light . . ."
"Not enough leg room for driver and passengers . . ."
"Suspension too soft, need H.D. options . . ."
"Handling is poor, especially in corners . . ."
"Dealer service slow and overpriced . . ."
"Too long for easy maneuverability or parking . . ."

Toronado

Owners of Olds Toronados are fiercely partisan. Less than 5% report having trouble with their cars and approximately 75% say they will again choose the marque as their next car. A fairly small number of non-Toronado owners, however, list

it as their probable choice when buying next.

Among the most liked features of the Toronado, handling is mentioned in every report as superior. Owners are highly impressed with the car's traction in the wet and on snow or ice. Engine smoothness and power are highly praised as is the air conditioning unit. Brakes receive

compliments when they are of the disc type.

While not specifically called out as a complaint, most Toronado owners have replaced their original tires with other wide tread radial-plys.

Complaints about quality control, a real problem with many other makes, are very rare among Toronado owners.

TORONADO
Owners like

"Fantastic handling in wet or snow . . ."
"Optional disc brakes & radial tires . . ."
"Head rests and shoulder harness comfortable . . ."
"Excellent handling, smooth quiet operation . . ."
"Front wheel drive gives terrific traction . . ."
"Most satisfying car in 20 years . . ."

TORONADO
Owners dislike

"Poor visibility to the rear . . ."
"Inadequate tires as original equipment . . ."
"Drum brakes completely inadequate, dangerous . . ."
"Vibration in front end at high speed . . ."
"Many details overlooked in assembly . . ."
"Poor fuel economy even on highway . . ."

Cadillac

It is not surprising that Cadillac is among the cars least likely to be owned by ROAD TEST readers. What is interesting is that as many reports have been received from Cadillac owners as from those owning full size Buicks.

Exactly twice as many owners report having no trouble with their cars as those reporting difficulties. However, only one third plan to repeat and buy a Cadillac as their next purchase.

Among non-owners, Cadillac rates very high as a probable choice for their next purchase.

Among the most liked features are Cadillac styling and the car's comfort features. Also mentioned frequently is the intangible, 'class.' Air conditioning is one of the plus features. Also mentioned is the smoothness and power of the Cadillac engine.

On the debit side of the ledger many owners complain that quality control is poor on what is considered

a luxury car. Low fuel mileage is a cause for complaint in 80% of responses. Owners also believe that at a luxury price, high speed tires and disc brakes should be standard equipment.

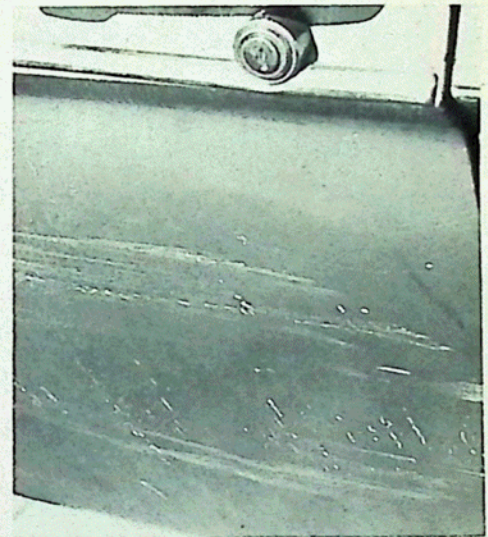
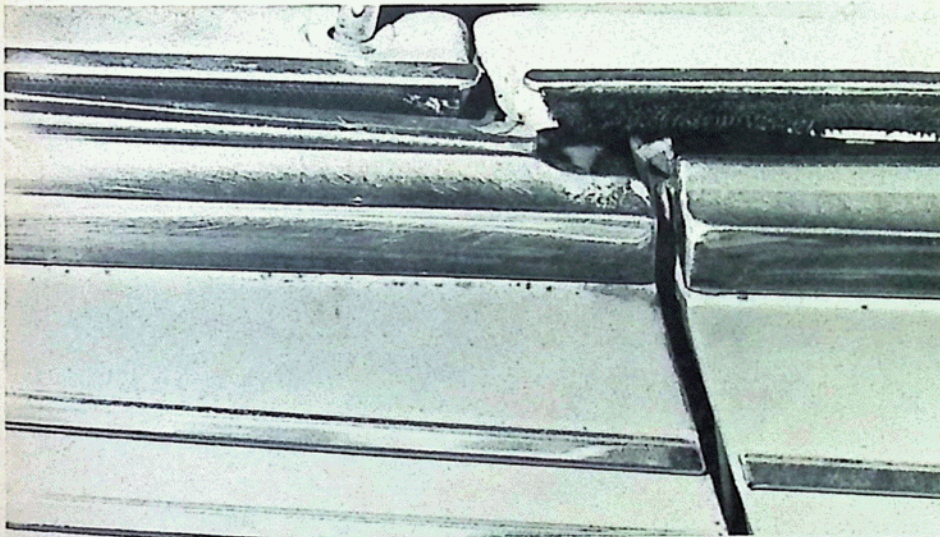
Owners of Cadillacs are about evenly divided on the subject of re-sale. A great number express shock at, to them, the car's rapid depreciation. An equal number mention the exact opposite, citing the high re-sale value of Cadillac as one of its virtues.

CADILLAC Owners like

"Car is in a class by itself . . ."
"Interior luxury, power conveniences . . ."
"Smooth engine power, styling, comfort . . ."
"Automatic transmission is superior . . ."
"Air conditioning the best. Styling, power . . ."
"Quiet, comfortable ride, status symbol . . ."

CADILLAC Owners dislike

"Rinky dink side view mirror . . ."
"High speed vibration, poor economy . . ."
"Center air conditioning outlet . . ."
"Frequency of repairs, overpriced . . ."
"At price, H.D. options should be standard . . ."
"Seating position uncomfortable, poor brakes . . ."



Lincoln

Responses from Lincoln owners have been too few to meet our million mile requirements.

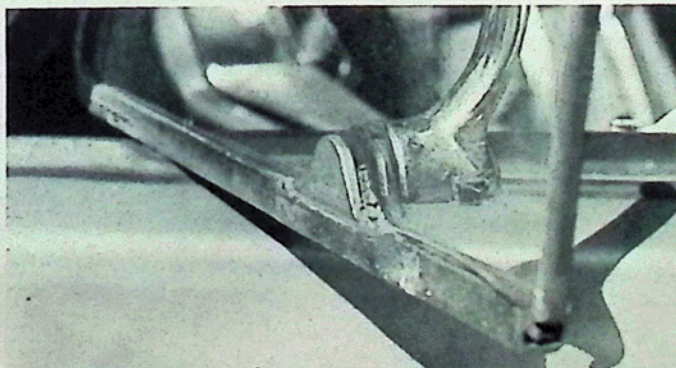
Owners who have submitted reports seem well satisfied and very few report having trouble with the car.

Compliments are primarily directed toward comfort and convenience features while the principal cause for complaint is poor fuel economy.

An in-depth report on the Lincoln will have to await a far greater sampling from owners. ♠

The Cadillac name is no assurance of quality control. Rust is a common problem.

Lack of side protection results in paint nicks on Rambler's flanks.



Thin chrome plating on Ford is subject to rust.

tended to fade more rapidly on the aluminum hood and trunk lids than on the steel body panels, giving the car a sort of involuntary two-tone effect. I don't think this happens to Rovers of other colors.

The plus factors are far more numerous. The Rover's riding qualities are indeed superb and mine is every bit as quiet, smooth and rattle-free as it was two years ago. The leather upholstery is in showroom condition and even "smells new." Things like the electric clock, cigar lighter and courtesy lights still work and I get 27 miles to the gallon in average usage.

Despite the modest hundred horses of the 2000, I frequently delight myself by running away from the purple-faced drivers of Toronados, GTO's and Super

Sports when the light turns green. The superb suspension and those Pirelli radials put all the horses there are on the road, while the Detroit monsters spin their wheels, fishtail and mark up the road with rubber.

Without a brake adjustment in two years, I can still make one finger on the wheel stops from 80 miles an hour in about four seconds without a trace of swerve or sway. And I know exactly what the Rover is going to do every time I touch a control.

So far I haven't become brave enough to even approach the limits of the car's cornering ability. The closest to an all-out test was given it by my sister, whom I was allowing to test drive it in the hopes of weaning her away from her Chevrolet Impala Super Sport.

Used to an automatic transmission, she had a little trouble with the Rover's controls and went through a right angle turn on a gravel road under the impression that she was braking. As a matter of fact she was accelerating all the way. The Rover threw quite a bit of gravel around, but the tires didn't even squeal.

My sister compromised. She's driving a Rover automatic now.

Most important of all, I have developed a real affection for this gallant little machine . . . an emotion I haven't felt for an automobile since high school days when I lived dangerously with an ex-dirt track racing car with a 1916 Auburn engine, Cadillac frame and three-foot wheels. I have no urge at all to go the trade-in route, for my 1966 Rover 2000 is literally just like new.

Maybe in seven or eight years I'll buy a new car.

A new Rover. ♠

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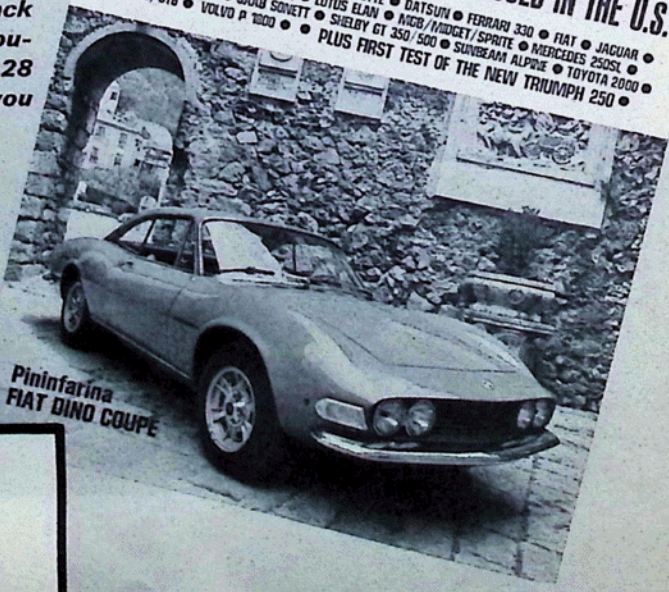
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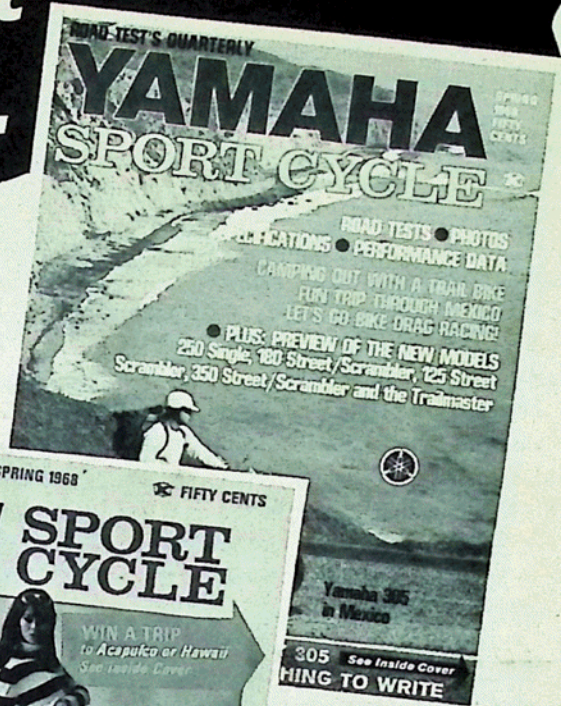
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ROAD SIGNS

Continued

In a rare display of candor Oldsmobile has sent us a press release which deals with development of methods for measuring evaporative hydrocarbon emissions. These are contributions to air pollution that come from such unsuspected areas as vinyl upholstery, floor mats, sealing compounds and even the vehicle's steering column.

To make these tests, cars are placed in a sealed enclosure measuring 20 by 10 by 7½ feet for a prolonged period. Air is then pumped out of the enclosure and hydrocarbons measured by means of a flame ionization analyzer.

It has been determined that new cars which have never had gasoline in them emit measurable amounts of hydrocarbons.

Not all the blame can be placed on cars though. Pine trees placed in the same enclosure emit even more.

* * *

The California Air Resources Board claims that smog control devices of the engine modification type increase engine efficiency and concurrently improve gasoline mileage.

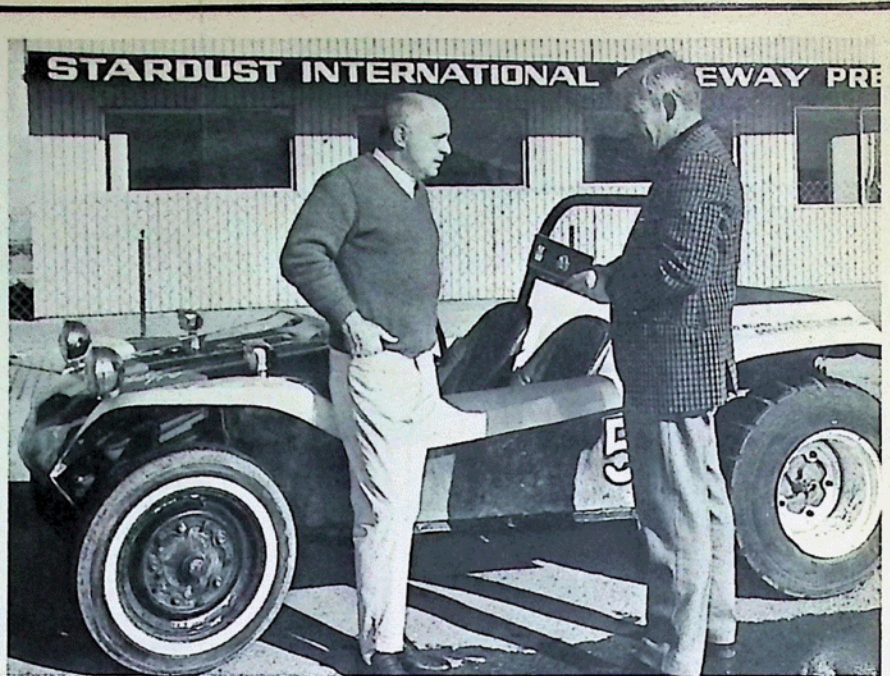
By inference this confirms our findings that cars equipped with air pumps and other M.M. plumbing approaches to the problem are operating less efficiently and consuming more gas.

We haven't been able to pin down the ARB as to what this gloomy state of affairs does to the total amount of garbage in the air but we most certainly question its statement that California's metropolitan areas will have relatively clean air by 1978.

* * *

Day and night, a number of tow trucks cruise the California highways just looking for people in trouble. The police call them roadrunners. The people they've rescued call them thieves.

One man, stalled on the Santa Ana Freeway, was towed 16 miles. The



Following the successful Tijuana to La Paz inaugural, NORRA, the National Off Road Racing Association will stage the \$25,000 Stardust 7-11 race over the rugged desert terrain surrounding Las Vegas.

The event, to be run June 11 through 13th, will be open to pas-

senger cars, light trucks, dune buggies, motorcycles, four-wheel drive and experimental vehicles.

Dick Smothers, who is becoming a threat in SCCA Formula "B" competition will serve as Grand Marshal.

bill was \$117. And it could have been worse; another driver paid \$205 for a three mile tow.

Incidents like these led Charles Arlington, a reporter for Group W station KFVB, in Los Angeles, to begin an investigation.

First he spoke to the victims. They told him that no roadrunner ever sets a price till the job is done. Then he wants cash. On the spot. Or he'll tow your car back to his lot and add a daily storage charge till he collects.

Next Arlington talked to the police. And heard about a man who had a heart attack in his car. An ambulance took him away, and a roadrunner, with nobody's permission, took the car. Three months later, the widow was told where it was and how much she'd have to pay in towing and storage charges to get it back. If she didn't pay, they would sell the car and keep the money.

The police couldn't do a thing.

They admit they have little control over the roadrunners. No laws in California regulate tow truck rates.

Arlington went on to interview in-

surance men, legitimate towing companies and auto club representatives. Each of whom added a new angle to his story.

Finally he had enough information to go on the air. In a special KFVB documentary he told the public about the roadrunners. He warned motorists how to avoid them. And told them what to do when they needed towing.

Arlington also called for action on the part of state and local legislators. He asked that maximum and minimum price regulations be set. And recommended establishment of a code of ethics.

Hopefully, the roadrunners will soon be run off the roads. Charles Arlington has gotten things started by creating awareness. Awareness that has already led to public indignation.

Awareness that we feel sure will lead to action.

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* * *

Walking isn't a lost art. How else would we get to the garage?



Government officials in Wisconsin speak with a fork-tongue. On one hand they like to boast about the great, "free" super highways they gave us in Wisconsin; on the other hand they have an army of traffic cops to stop us for "safety violations" on the highways to collect fines to support the stupid small towns located along the highways.

Since federal taxes are involved in the building of all major interstate highways, there ought to be a U.S. law against local politicians to prevent them from using the highways to shakedown motorists for revenue under the guise that such money is "traffic fines."

They are not traffic fines. They are a money-raising racket. The traffic fine racket got so bad in another state, Florida, that the Florida State Legislature had to take away the police power of several towns. Such protection is needed for motorists in Wisconsin and most other states.

Al Zigmundt
Madison, Wis.

Another case of 'law enforcement' being the master rather than the servant of an apathetic public.—Ed.

After reading your "under \$2,000" comparison test, I purchased a Renault R-10. I am very satisfied with the car. However, I am interested in accessories to improve the performance, and the already good handling.

If I had a Volkswagen, I could go to Empi—who do I go to for a Renault?

John De Lellis
Valhalla, New York

Most of the EMPI goodies go for necessary improvements on the VW. There is some hot rodding that can be done on your Renault but at the possible sacrifice of reliability. Cam, compression, carburetion and ignition are the basics of performance. Increasing compression ratio by milling

the cylinder head would probably be safest, but take it easy.—Ed.

Can you inform me as to where I might order a chrome molding that is formed to fit the side panel of a 1967 Mustang? I do not find this item advertised in your magazine, but hope that you can suggest a custom supply house that can furnish the item. Thank you.

Morris H. Fausett
Little Rock, Arkansas

Can anyone help Mr. Fausett? Let us know.—Ed.

What if it was out that some U.S. car, with the small 6, 4 speed, heavy duty suspension or other added options, is really a superior sort of car? Perhaps such a car handles well. At any rate we are never going to find out unless someone tests it. Perhaps the small engine in an American car would make the essential difference in weight distribution.

Arnold H. Bramson
Scarboro, Ontario

We'll be re-testing the Pontiac Tempest Sprint soon. In the meantime you might drive one.—Ed.

Priority of Needs and Likes:

1. Safety (impact, brakes, interior, etc.)
2. Handling (quick steering, stability, cornering)
3. \$3,000-\$4,000 Range (or more expensive alternates)
4. Suspension
5. Trunk space
6. Distinctive looks
7. Sliding roof
8. Acceleration
9. Reclining Seats

It's awful hard to decide, can you offer some advice?

A. E. Cote
Montreal, Canada

Sure, Rover, BMW 1600, Volvo, Peugeot in the \$4,000 down to \$3,000 range. Going up, try BMW 2000, Jaguar 420 and Mercedes.—Ed.

My 1963 Simca owner's manual is lost. Where can I get another one? Also, who is the agent for Simca cars in Canada?

Oscar H. Walker
Regina, Canada

No doubt your Canadian Distrib-

utor can supply you with a replacement owner's manual. Write to Simca-Rootes, P.O. Box 174, Postal Station H, Toronto, 13 Canada.—Ed.

May I give sincere compliments to you and your magazine. I would like more information on the Blank V.W. 1600 r/S shown on page 50 of your "Cars You Won't See In The U.S." issue.

If possible I would like knowledge of the engine, transmission, and etc.

Don Campbell
Midfield Volkswagen, Inc.
Midfield, Alabama

Until we have more word from Europe we'll have to assume this to be a 'one off' product of the customizer's art. EMPI can supply 1600 cc kits for beetles.—Ed.

I have recently acquired a 1953 Hudson Hornet and I would like to know if you can supply me with any information on this model car. It contains a Flathead six cylinder motor and I need to know its displacement and horsepower before I can proceed with a major motor overhaul.

If you can supply me with these facts from your files or from an early magazine it would be appreciated. Also, if you have any books or other information on this type of car or motor I would gladly purchase them.

If you cannot help but know someone who could, it would be a help. Oh yes, if you can give me any help on locating some parts dealers or anyone else that can help you would be doing me a great favor. Thanks very much for your help.

M. B. Abernathy, Jr.
Danville, Virginia

Perhaps the following will be of help. Bore, 313/16 in. Stroke 4.5 in. Displacement 308 cu. in. Compression ratio 7.2:1. Plugs, Champion H-11 with .032 gap.

Tappet clearance hot; Intake .008, exhaust .010. Point gap .017. Timing mark on the flywheel reads "UDC 1-6." Head bolts should be torqued to 70 ft. lb. Cylinder compression should read 100 psi. As to parts availability we cannot help. Perhaps someone else can.—Ed.

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