



## Al fresco in style

Very comfortable and well appointed; excellent performance, ride and roadholding; lavish hood and heavy hardtop difficult to erect; very easy to handle but manners and brakes imperfect; wind noise high, boot space modest

Under the new code of permissiveness Triumph allow themselves to issue a discreet warning to Mercedes Benz and Alfa Romeo in their Stag advertisements. If they can produce the cars to back the threat, it's a warning that the opposition will not take lightly, even though it may be only image building. Although the new Triumph doesn't have quite the sporting spirit of the Alfa 1750 GTV, or perhaps the prestige of a Mercedes 280SL, it does have certain qualities—above all style and versatility—that no rival import can match at the price. It has no British counterpart, of course, so here at least it enjoys a monopoly in a sector of the market that has long been neglected. For this reason alone it can hardly fail to succeed.

Costs have risen so much in the past year or so that the Stag's £2000 price tag—more or less according to equipment—seems to us quite a modest outlay for such a striking, thoroughly modern V8 coupe that will exceed 120 mph, seat four adults—two of them in exceptional comfort—and successfully combine the roles of an *al fresco* fun car with that of a civilized town carriage.

In some respects—seating, ride, controls, finish, appointments and stability at speed, for instance—it exceeds expectations. In others it merely lives up to them: the acceleration, though good, is no better than you'd expect of a car which, by absolute

standards, has a modest power/weight ratio; and the roadholding is as tenacious as the fat tyres and all-independent suspension would suggest.

But there are also disappointments. Wind noise is high, even with the hardtop, and the engine is neither as quiet nor even as smooth as we hoped it might be—a relative observation for by no stretch of anyone's imagination could it be called rough and noisy. A tendency to twitch off course when changing gear and (for some drivers) feel-less power steering marred otherwise exemplary handling.

It could be argued that for a small sacrifice in versatility a fixed superstructure with detachable (and stowable) roof panels à la Porsche Targa, 914 and Corvette Sting Ray would have saved on cost, complication and weight. Thoughts along these lines—not shared by us all here—stemmed from the trouble we had in erecting (and removing) the Stag's two modes of headgear.

Despite some detail faults, though, we were certainly impressed by the Stag's concept and quality and completely hooked by its highly individualistic charm—at its greatest on these cars equipped (like ours) with soft and hardtop coverage, as well as the optional overdrive, equipment that raises the price to £2159. If that sounds a lot consider that the Mercedes 280SL coupe/convertible—the Stag's closest European rival in character and performance—costs over £4655, a Porsche Targa (left-hand drive only) even more. American V8 convertibles don't come much cheaper; nor will they do over 20 miles to the gallon like the Stag.

PRICE: hard and soft top model as tested, £1602 plus £491 15s. 10d. purchase tax equals £2093 15s. 10d. Overdrive (as fitted) £65 5s. 7d.

### Performance and economy

Triumph's completely new ohc V8 engine is in effect a doubled-up version of the PE104S "four" that helps make the Saab 99 such a good car. Both engines are likely to figure prominently in British Leyland's plans for the Seventies. Because the Triumph engine in the Saab feels so refined we had hoped the full V8, with twice as many power strokes to each revolution of the crankshaft, might set new standards in smoothness. It doesn't. Certainly it is very smooth, but no more so than some much larger American V8s. Despite the crossflow pipe linking the two exhausts just forward of the silencers, it has a rather throbby beat which you hear rather than feel—though there's also some vibration transmitted through the gearlever.

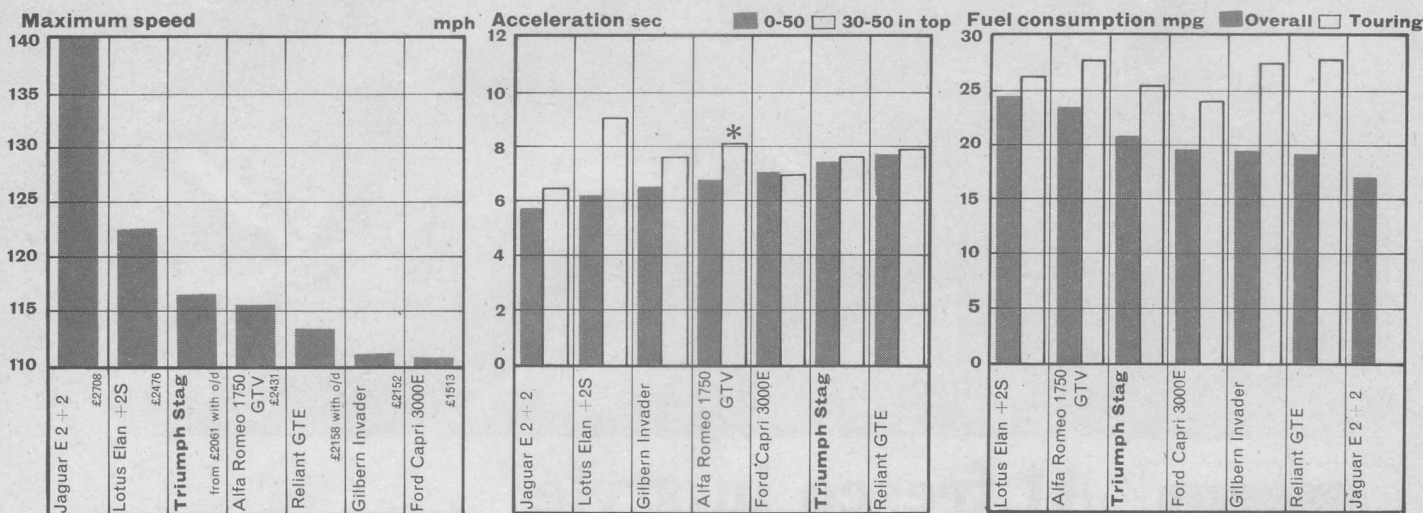
With 145 bhp (net) from 3 litres the engine is quite modestly rated when compared with, say, BMW's 2.8 "six" which develops 170 bhp. It also has quite a lot to do for the Stag is a heavy car—almost 26 cwt with the hardtop—so perhaps the

acceleration isn't quite so vicious as you'd expect from a sporting 3-litre coupe. To get the best from the car, our performance tests were done with the soft-top up, saving about a hundredweight without increasing the drag.

The engine was always an instant starter and completely without temperament during the warm-up period. As you'd expect for a torquy V8, its usable pulling range spans the entire rev band, from idling at 800 rpm to the red-lined maximum of 6500 rpm, which we used during performance testing but seldom, if ever, on the road. The orange sector starts at 5500 rpm which the handbook warns should not be exceeded for long periods. On Continental motorways this restriction would impose a maximum speed of 109 mph in direct top (19.8 mph per 1000 rpm with the Michelin XAS tyres on our car) so the optional overdrive (£65 extra) is really essential if the car is to be used as a long-distance express—a role for which certain qualities make it particularly well suited.

In overdrive (24.1 mph/1000) 5500 rpm corresponds to over

### PERFORMANCE



Performance tests carried out by Motor's staff at the Motor Industry Research Association proving ground, Lindley.

Test Data: World copyright reserved; no unauthorized reproduction in whole or in part.

#### Conditions

Weather: Warm, dry, windy  
 Temperature: 56-62°F  
 Barometer: 29.6 in. Hg.  
 Surface: Dry asphalt  
 Fuel: 97 octane(RM), 4 Star rating

#### Maximum Speeds

	mph	kph
Mean lap banked circuit (see text)	116.5	187.5
Best one-way 1/4-mile (see text)	123.2	198.5
o/d 3rd gear	112	180
3rd gear	92	148
2nd gear	60	97
1st gear	42	67
"Maximile" speed: (Timed quarter mile after 1 mile accelerating from rest)	109.8	
Best	112.5	

#### Acceleration Times

mph	sec	mph	sec
0-30	3.5	0-30	3.5
0-40	5.0	0-40	5.0
0-50	7.4	0-50	7.4
0-60	9.7	0-60	9.7
0-70	13.2	0-70	13.2
0-80	17.0	0-80	17.0
0-90	22.2	0-90	22.2
0-100	29.6	0-100	29.6
Standing quarter mile	17.3	Standing quarter mile	17.3
Standing kilometre	31.6	Standing kilometre	31.6
O/d		O/d	
Top	Top	Top	3rd
10-30	—	10-30	5.8
20-40	10.2	20-40	7.8
30-50	10.1	30-50	7.6
40-60	10.2	40-60	7.5
50-70	10.6	50-70	7.7
60-80	11.6	60-80	8.5

70-90	13.2	10.0	9.1
80-100	16.3	13.4	—

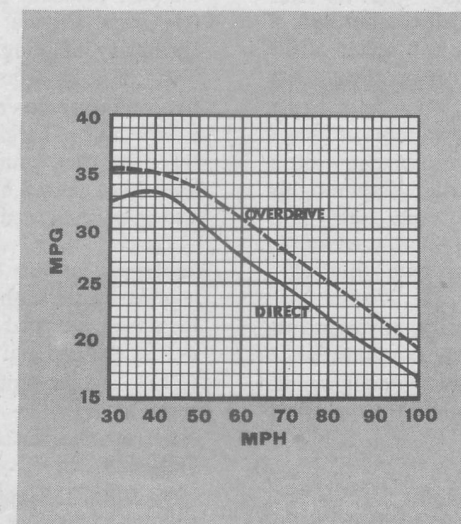
#### Fuel Consumption

Touring (consumption midway between 30 mph and maximum less 5 per cent allowance for acceleration)  
 Overall: 25.5 mpg  
 (= 13.5 litres/100km)  
 Total test distance: 1520 miles

#### Brakes

Pedal pressure, deceleration and equivalent stopping distance from 30 mph

lb.	g.	ft.
25	0.47	64
50	0.90	33
75	0.92	32½
Handbrake	0.38	79



#### Fade Test

20 stops at 1/3g deceleration at 1 min. intervals from a speed midway between 40 mph and maximum speed (=78 mph)

Pedal force at beginning	lb.
Pedal force at 10th stop	25
Pedal force at 20th stop	35
	40

#### Steering

Turning circle between kerbs: ft.  
 Left: 33  
 Right: 31  
 Turns of steering wheel from lock to lock: 2.75  
 Steering wheel deflection for 50ft. diameter circle: 0.95 turns

#### Clutch

Free pedal movement: 1/2 in.  
 Additional movement to disengage clutch completely: 3 1/2 in.  
 Maximum pedal load: 35 lb.

#### Speedometer

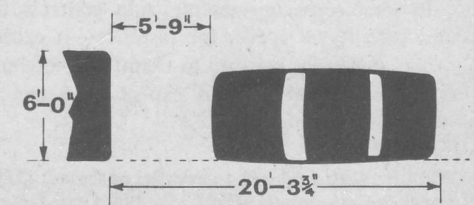
Indicated: 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100  
 True: 20 30 40 50 59 1/2 68 1/2 77 1/2 87 95 1/2  
 Distance recorder: 0.5% fast

#### Weight

Kerb weight (unladen with hardtop and fuel for approximately 50 miles): 25.9cwt  
 Front/rear distribution: 54/46  
 Weight laden as tested (without hardtop) approx.: 28.1cwt

#### Parkability

Gap needed to clear 6 ft. wide obstruction in front





**Performance and economy**

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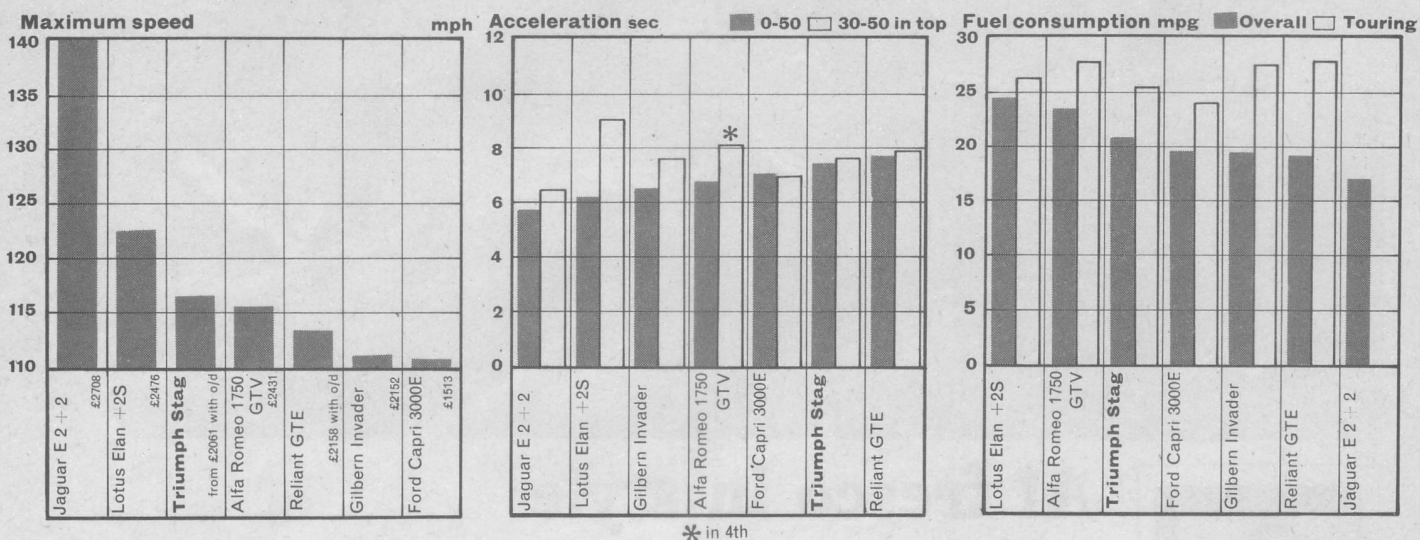
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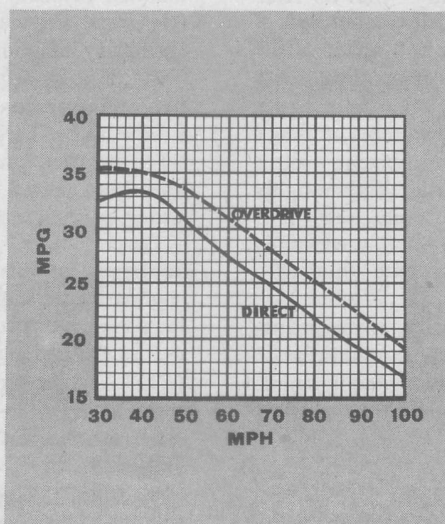
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**Steering**

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Steering wheel deflection for 50ft. diameter circle		0.95 turns

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Free pedal movement	= 1/2 in.
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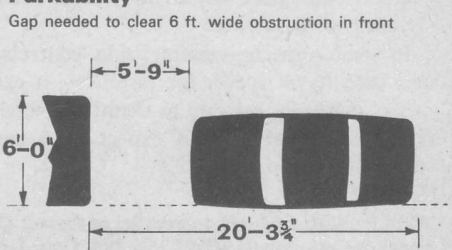
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Indicated	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
True	20	30	40	50	59 1/2	68 1/2	77 1/2	87	95 1/2
Distance recorder	0.5% fast								

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Front/rear distribution	54/46
Weight laden as tested (without hardtop) approx.	28.1cwt

**Parkability**



130 mph, a speed unattainable in normal conditions but we suspect possible under really favourable ones. The MIRA lap speed of 116.5 quoted in our tables is not a true maximum because at this speed the tyres are scrubbing away several mph on the banking. In any case our test driver confesses to lifting off momentarily for the turn at the end of the long wind-assisted straight. That the car was doing 125 mph here, still accelerating and feeling astonishingly stable, underlines its excellent high-speed cruising ability. Certainly the MIRA performance suggests a mean two-way maximum of well over 120 mph.

Despite its weight, the car surges away effortlessly and quite strongly in top gear from under 15 mph: 20-40 mph takes a smooth 8 sec., 50-70 mph no longer, indicating the consistency of the pull. Through the gears the acceleration is virtually identical to that of a Capri 3000GT: both cars reach 100 mph from rest in a fraction less than 30 sec.

More than with most cars, we suspect the Stag's performance must vary considerably according to its equipment. Taking

obvious extremes, the acceleration times of a hard-top automatic with Michelin tyres must be much poorer than those of a lighter soft-top manual with the alternative Goodyear covers that effectively lower the gearing by 1 mph/1000 in top.

For such a fast and heavy car, the consumption of 4-star fuel is quite reasonable—21-26 mpg according to how and where you drive. At an average 23 mpg, the 14-gallon tank gives a useful maximum range of 320 miles.

**Transmission**

The four-speed manual gearbox is a strengthened version of that in the 2000/2.5PI. It feels and sounds much the same, too. The gearlever moves in a precise and positive gate, but obstructive synchromesh makes the change notchy if you snatch at it. With easy, unhurried movements, though, it engages smoothly. Apart from baulking rushed changes, the synchromesh can sometimes be beaten. Gear whine is quite audible in the intermediates.

The clutch on our car was remarkably good—not only utterly



Above right: the front seats, adjustable for height, reach and rake, are superb; the rear bench, deeply troughed for thigh support, is passable, above. Five children, centre, is a squash but three will fit comfortably





smooth but also unusually progressive, so even indelicate footwork failed to jerk the car; ideal for learners. Our measurements show the pedal travel to be quite long (which we don't normally like) and the weight no better than average, but in use we were aware only of the smoothness of its action—more like a torque converter than a clutch.

The overdrive, operated by a handy switch in the gearlever knob (some drivers still prefer a column stalk), engaged with a gentle slurr, too, without help from the clutch; under light acceleration, disengagement was also smooth but on the overrun or hard power it was jerkier.

**Handling and brakes**

Fat radial-ply tyres on a car with respectable all independent suspension and a well balanced weight distribution is a recipe that can hardly fail to give high cornering powers and a good hold on indifferent roads. The Stag's bond with the road is certainly excellent and to break it in the dry you've got to explore g forces that are well beyond what most people would regard as



Lifting the hardtop, above, is a two-person—preferably a two-man—job. Once in place it is easy to secure. The substantial hood unfurls from a covered well, left, and is rather more difficult to latch down



By popular request, our old test boxes have been replaced by real suitcases. See page 48 for further details. These were the only two that would fit the Stag's boot—a number 1 and 3—though there was some space left for squashable bags

the limit. Unfortunately (and unusually) we had little opportunity of assessing wet road adhesion.

In some respects then handling is every bit as good as the grip. Very light and responsive steering, seats that hold you in place and minimal body roll—not to mention the good roadholding—make hard cornering very safe and easy. But the Stag has its faults. Changing gear after a burst of hard acceleration through a corner, sometimes even on the straight, can make the car twitch off course. We suspect the reason for this irritating rather than alarming behaviour is the driveshaft splines locking up under heavy torque so that they cannot adjust in length with changes in wheel camber—most pronounced under cornering. As something must 'give' the suspension and thus the wheel twists fractionally on the rubber bushes. When the torque is released in a gearchange the splines slide, the wheel straightens and the car twitches.

To be fair, we were a lot more conscious of this inherent fault (the 2.5 PI suffers from it too) at the beginning of our test than at the end, partly because experience showed it to be more of a bad habit than a vice, partly because we found ourselves automatically avoiding mid-corner changes. For different reasons, lifting the throttle in mid corner—as opposed to breaking the drive altogether—will make the car tuck in, to tighten its line. In moderation—and it is not over pronounced in the Stag—such behaviour is not a bad thing as the car helps itself round any corner, rather than plough straight on, if you misjudge your speed. In the extreme we found that lifting off when right on the limit was the most likely way to cause a tail slide, though even then breakaway is gentle and easily checked.

It is during such untoward antics, though, that you are most aware of the absence of feel on the featherweight steering. All messages come through the seat of your pants, not through your hands, as there is little informative self-aligning tug with which to gauge adhesion and understeer. Searching for it will make for untidy, even lurchy cornering. In short, the Stag's steering is over-assisted, like that of the Jaguar XJ6, for really spirited cornering. If you don't indulge in this sort of thing, though, we'd say that it's a very good set-up, especially when judged purely on the amount of effort and twiddling it demands.

The strong winds we had for some of our test were unwelcome when taking performance figures but underlined the car's exceptional stability in adverse condition at high speed. Nothing seemed to deviate it from the straight and narrow, even at maximum speed.

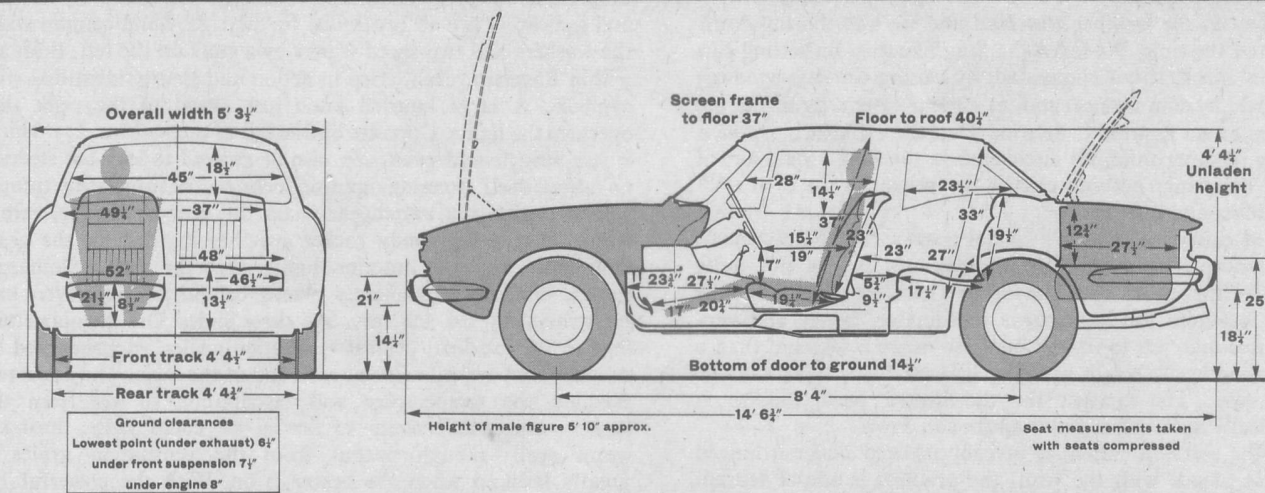
The brakes on our car were less satisfactory: they juddered when applied hard at speed; faded a bit under really hard usage (though they *did* just pass our 20-stop test); and, like the steering, were too heavily assisted for our liking. Feathering off a stop was also difficult because of a rather unprogressive release action. The handbrake held the car in both directions on the 1-in-3 hill.

**Comfort and control**

To say that the suspension feels quite firm, even a bit jolty on bad roads and a little jiggly on secondary ones, would be true but rather misleading. The overall impression is of great stability, of a very flat-controlled ride despite any underlying disturbances. There is little of the harshness often associated with a sports car, practically none of the wallowy float you get with a really soft saloon. The compromise felt to us exactly right. The stability of the ride is emphasized by the absence of exaggerated body roll on corners, by the rigidity of the structure (the overhead bracing certainly prevents scuttle shake and body tremors), and by well-muffled road noise; radial thump is particularly subdued.

In contrast wind noise is excessive. Detachable hardtops present special sealing problems and Triumph don't yet seem to have overcome those on the Stag. The top rail seal is the worst offender; that improvement is possible we demonstrated by reducing the hiss with a strip of masking tape. Even then, unpleasant wind rush dominates all other sounds above 60 mph and is getting pretty loud at 80, especially on a windy day. Almost inevitably, wind noise is even greater with the soft top: although the hood is taut, and free from draughts, the roar of the wind became almost unbearable during our maximum-speed

**SPECIFICATION**



**Engine**

Block material	Chromium iron
Head material	Aluminium alloy
Cylinders	8-90° Vee
Cooling system	water, no loss system, thermostatically controlled flow
Bore and stroke	86mm. (3.385in.) 64.5mm. (2.539in.)
Cubic capacity	2997 cc (182.9 cu. in.)
Main bearings	5-steel backed lead bronze with lead indium overlay
Valves	Overhead camshafts
Compression ratio	8.8:1
Carburettor(s)	2—Stromberg side draught—175 CDS
Fuel pump	SU electric, Diaphragm type, Inertia switch in engine bay
Oil Filter	AC Delco Full Flow—replaceable paper elements
Max. power (net)	145 bhp at 5,500 rpm
Max torque (net)	170 lb.ft. at 3,500 rpm

**Transmission**

Clutch	Laycock—single dry plate diaphragm spring type—9in dia. hydraulically operated
Internal gear box ratios	
Top gear	1.00
3rd gear	1.386
2nd gear	2.10
1st gear	2.995
overdrive top	0.82
overdrive third	1.135
Reverse	3.369
Synchromesh	All forward gears
Overdrive type	Laycock—electrically operated on top 2 gears
Final drive (type and ratio)	Hypoid bevel gears, 2 pinion differential—3.7:1
Mph at 1000 rpm in—	
O/d top gear	24.1
Top gear	19.8
O/d 3rd gear	17.4
3rd gear	14.3
2nd gear	9.45
1st gear	6.82

**Chassis and body**

Construction Integral construction—steel sub-frame at rear

**Brakes**

Type	Disc/drum, servo-assisted. Mechanically operated handbrake to rear wheels
Friction areas:	
Front	24 sq.in. of lining operating on 220 sq.in. of disc
Rear	78 sq.in. of lining operating on 127 sq.in. of drum

**Suspension and steering**

Front	Independent by coil springs and wishbones; anti-roll bar
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Rear . . . . . Independent by coil springs and semi-trailing arms.

**Shock absorbers:**  
Front and rear . . . . . Telescopic hydraulic dampers  
Steering type . . . . . Rack & pinion  
Tyres . . . . . Michelin 185 HR-14 radial ply tubeless

**Coachwork and equipment**

Wheels . . . . . Steel disc  
Rim size . . . . . 5J  
Starting handle . . . . . No  
Tool kit contents . . . . . Combination tool: plug spanner wheel nut spanner; w/trim removal tool; tool pouch  
Jack . . . . . Scissor type  
Jacking points . . . . . 4, under sills adjacent to each wheel  
Battery . . . . . 12 volt negative earth 56 amp hrs capacity @ 20 hr. rate.

Number of electrical fuses . . . . . 11  
Headlamps . . . . . 4 Quartz halogen  
Indicators . . . . . Front & rear & indicator repeaters in front wing side panels  
Reversing lamp . . . . . Yes  
Screen wipers . . . . . 2 speed.  
Screen washers . . . . . Twin nozzle electrically operated  
Sun visors . . . . . 2—vanity mirror in passenger side  
Locks:  
With ignition key . . . . . Ignition & steering column lock, side doors & petrol filler cap  
With other keys . . . . . Glove compartment & luggage compartment  
Interior heater . . . . . Smith's air/mix heater/demister  
Upholstery . . . . . PVC leathercloth with basket weave pattern on seat facings

Floor covering . . . . . Moulded pile carpet with felt underlay  
Alternative body styles . . . . . Available with soft top or hard top or both  
Maximum load . . . . . 943 lb (Difference between kerb & gross vehicle weight)  
Maximum roof rack load . . . . . 112 lb. (hard top only)  
Major extras available . . . . . Hard top, air conditioning unit, Laycock overdrive, Borg-Warner automatic transmission

**Maintenance**

Fuel tank capacity	14 galls
Sump	8 pints SAE 10W 20W/50
Gearbox	2 1/2 pints SAE 90EP
Rear axle	2 pints SAE 90EP
Steering gear	1 1/2 pints Type A (Power steering reservoir)
Coolant	18 1/2 pints (2 drain taps) including heater
Minimum service interval	6000 miles

Chassis lubrication	None
Ignition timing	14° btdc
Contact breaker gap	0.015in.
Spark plug gap	0.025in.
Spark plug type	Champion N-11Y
Tappet clearance (cold)	Inlet 0.008in. Exhaust 0.018in.
Valve timing:	
inlet opens	16° btdc
inlet closes	56° abdc
exhaust opens	56° bbdc
exhaust closes	16° atdc
Rear wheel toe-in	0-1/16"
Front wheel toe-in	1/16-1/8"
Camber angle	Front 1° Pos. ± 1° Rear 1 1/2° Pos. ± 1°
Castor angle	2° ± 1°
King pin inclination	10 1/2° ± 1°
Tyre pressures:	
Front	26 p.s.i.
Rear	30 p.s.i.

**Safety Check List**

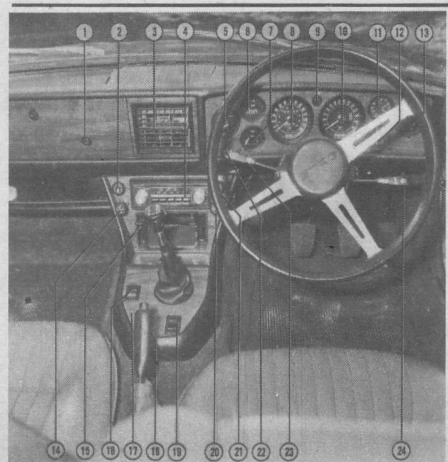
<b>Steering Assembly</b>	
Steering box position	Forward and above engine bearing
Steering column collapsible	No
Steering wheel boss padded	Yes
Steering wheel dished	Slightly
<b>Instrument Panel</b>	
Projecting switches	None seriously
Sharp cowls	No
Padding	Along top and bottom of facia

<b>Windscreen and Visibility</b>	
Screen type	Zebra zone toughened glass
Pillars padded	Slightly
Standard driving mirrors	One inside
Interior mirror framed	Yes
Interior mirror collapsible	Yes
Sun visors	Two

<b>Seats and Harness</b>	
Attachment to floor	By bolted slides
Do they tip forward?	Only after releasing side catch

Head rest attachment points	No
Back of front seats	Firmly padded
Safety Harness	Yes
Harness anchors at back	No

<b>Doors</b>	
Projecting handles	No
Anti-burst latches	Yes
Child-proof locks	No



1 map reading light. 2 fan. 3 ventilation grilles. 4 radio (extra). 5 warning lights. 6 battery condition. 7 temperature. 8 speedometer. 9 brake failure warning light. 10 rev counter. 11 clock. 12 fuel gauge. 13 fresh air vent. 14 choke. 15 heater controls. 16 interior lights. 17 and 19 windows. 18 handbrake. 20 rear window heater. 21 cigar lighter. 22 panel light rheostat. 23 washer/wiper. 24 indicators/horn/dip



runs—which also caused the Velcro seal above the passenger's window to come undone.

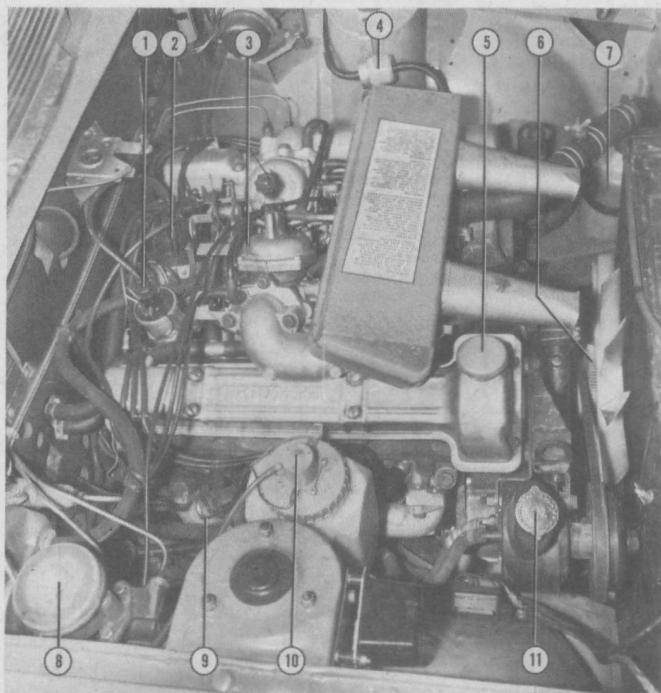
Fortunately, the weather was kind and we had the top down for much of the time. We loved the Stag like this. Buffeting can be kept in check, if not eliminated, by raising the side windows (rigidly held by slim frames) and, to a lesser extent, by tilting the sun visors to act as wind deflectors. With the exhaust burbling a discreetly sporting tune, we discovered in the Stag a new sort of open air motoring; nothing else at the price can do it in such style, comfort and luxury.

This, of course, is the car's special charm. But the excellence of the concept, of a versatile three-in-one car, is not quite matched by the means of achieving it. There are snags. The fully trimmed hardtop, for instance, is inordinately heavy and very much a two-man job to fit and remove—more a seasonal than a daily routine even though securing it, with five simple catches, is very easy. The contact for the heated back window is automatically made when you snap the top down.

With the soft top (which is invisibly stowed under a hinged cover that blends with the trim) the problem is one of tension rather than weight. Whichever way we arranged things the final task of securing the top rail catches proved a real strain—beyond the pull of most women—simply because there was not enough "give" in the frame initially to engage the pegs. The hood on our car was also invariably reluctant to hinge back again smoothly. It's a very substantial, elaborate and weatherproof piece of equipment—even partially trimmed on the inside—but it's by no means the easiest or quickest to erect and stow. Perhaps with further practice we'd have overcome the snags.

Open or closed it's hard to imagine anyone being uncomfortable in the front. The seats, deeply contoured for lateral, lumbar and side support, are adjustable for reach, rake and height. The steering wheel is also quickly adjustable in two planes. So except perhaps for very long legged drivers who might want an extra inch or so of rearward movement, everyone should be able to tailor themselves a perfect position.

The controls are particularly good. Within limits you can put the steering wheel where you want; and the pedals, though slightly offset to the right, are all arranged at the same comfortable height so they can easily be worked by pivoting your heel on the floor. The brake and throttle are reasonably placed for simultaneous heel and toe operation but the strong servo assistance makes the brake too flimsy a fulcrum unless you are braking hard. The handbrake is conveniently placed between the seats, the gearlever a hand's span away from the steering wheel.



1 coil. 2 distributor. 3 twin Stromberg carburetters. 4 fuel filter. 5 oil filler cap. 6 viscous coupled. 7 radiator overflow. 8 brake servo. 9 dip stick. 10 washer bottle. 11 power steering pump

The important minor controls are outstanding, a model example of how they should be arranged. The horn, dip, flasher and indicators are all controlled by the right-hand column stalk, the washers and two-speed wipers by a stalk on the left. Both are within fingertip reach, crisp in action and clearly identified with symbols. A large knurled knob just ahead of the right stalk operates the lights. Opposite on the left is the ignition key which, if you wriggle and twist, can also be enticed to lock the steering or release itself. Steering/ignition locks can be infuriating things.

The rest of the switchgear is on the central console, rather distant except for handy rocker switches in front of the gear-lever operating the interior lights and the rather lethargic electric windows. Awkwardly placed behind the gearlever, and surrounded by the ash tray, are three slides. One regulates airflow to the excellent central ventilation grilles, supplemented by conventional eyeball vents at each end of the fascia. The other two regulate the temperature and distribution of air from the heater—pretty effectively so far as we could judge during a warm spell—though output from the ventilation grilles is greatly reduced when the heater is on. With the powerful (but noisy) two-speed fan in operation, warm-up is quick and demisting efficient.

Good vision was obviously a design priority: the heated back window is a standard fitting and the driver's wiper has a parallelogram arm so that it sweeps with an efficient squeegee action right up to the pillar, leaving no murky wedges. With the hardtop in place you get a very good all-round view. With the soft top the side panels butting up to thick rear pillars can form an awkward blind spot. If you sit up, the back corners are just visible from the driver's seat and there's an excellent automatic reversing light. The headlights give an intense, uniform spread of light, free from spots and whirls: but their range was not particularly long on our car. Perhaps they needed raising a little.

Back seat accommodation is cramped though not impossible for six footers. Sensibly, the seat cushion is deeply troughed so that your thighs get some support even in the knees-up position forced on adults. With the front seats right back there is ample room for two or three small children.

### Fittings and furniture

As in the design of its switchgear so in décor and appointments, the Stag is a front runner. The clear and comprehensive instruments are set into an unpretentious matt walnut fascia, concave on the driver's side to minimize parallax error. A clock, rev counter, battery charge indicator and all-systems-go warning light cluster are standard. Rich leatherette trim luxuriously covers the doors, the seats are richly upholstered in non slip basket-weave, and well fitted carpets cover the floor. As we've observed before, Triumph are also setting the standard in seat belt design.

We liked some of the details too: red warning lights in the door edges; powerful reversing lights; anti-thief quarter light knobs; neat door release levers and locks. There was something amiss with the lockup arrangements of our car though since all the keywork—for doors, fascia locker, flush petrol filler and ignition—proved a fiddly and sometimes exasperating job. Smokers also complained about the inaccessibility of the central ash tray.

Stowage space inside is generous and well planned. Apart from the locker there's a shelf beneath the fascia, pouches on the doors and seat backs, and recesses in the rear sidewalls. By saloon standards, the boot is not very big—wide but rather shallow because of the spare wheel and fuel tank beneath.

### Servicing and accessibility

As you'd expect, there's nothing very demanding about the servicing schedule, done on a 6000-mile cycle. All the ancillaries needing regular attention are quite easy to get at under the wide, front-hinged bonnet, supported by a self-locking stay. There's a modest tool kit in the boot. ■

**MAKE:** Triumph. **MODEL:** Stag. **MAKERS:** British Leyland (Triumph) Ltd., Coventry, England