



Attractive 2 plus 2 with V8 engine

Before writing a road test report of the Stag, it is necessary to analyse exactly what sort of a car it is. It is certainly a GT, whatever that may mean, but probably not a sports car in the traditional sense of the term. It is far from being a sort of junior E-type Jaguar, for no attempt has been made to place an undue emphasis on performance, and it is altogether more luxurious than a TR6 or an MGB.

The Stag is propelled by a very over-square engine of extremely modern design which bears no relationship to any previous Triumph power unit. Of moderate overall length, this V8 packs 3-litres under the bonnet that is fashionably short and permits a body with really useful rear seats to be carried on a wheelbase of only 8 ft 4 ins. The result is a car that is just the size everybody wants and in appearance it is an absolute winner—I parked it and watched the reaction of passers-by. It is only sold with an open body, with hood or very attractive hard-top, and the problem of rigidity has been ingeniously solved with an upholstered roll-over bar that also extends forward to the centre of the windscreen. The independent rear suspension permits the rear seats to be carried low, which allows the roof line to sweep down attractively in a way which is usually denied to four-seaters.

The Stag, then, is a compact car of delightful appearance which is rather more than a 2 plus 2. It has a big enough engine to have an effortless performance but, although this is of advanced overhead-camshaft design, it is in relatively "soft" tune. Very great trouble has been taken to insulate the suspension from the body, with the object of

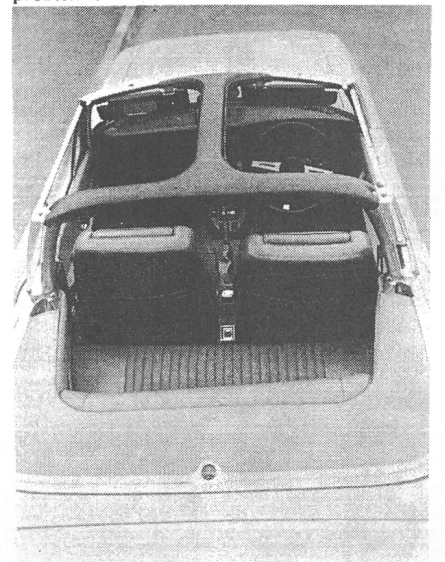
reducing road noise to a minimum, and a bridge-pipe between the two exhausts systems avoids "V8 beat," while a viscous fan drive cuts down noise from this source.

The car is of solid construction and not particularly light, which one can sense from the way the doors close. The steering can be instantly adjusted both for rake and length of column, without stopping the car if desired. The seats are very comfortable and there is ample leg room for tall drivers, the minor controls all being sensibly positioned, as in the other Triumph models. The engine starts instantly from cold, but the test car sometimes had to be spun for a few moments when hot.

Very quiet and smooth, the V8 engine seems equally happy at any speed in its considerable range up to the red line on the rev-counter dial at 6500 rpm. Though an overdrive is available, it is impossible to over-rev on the direct top gear of the manual transmission or of the Borg-Warner automatic. The latter option was fitted to the test car and suited the characteristics of the engine very well. In manual form the Stag is capable of about 118 mph, but in automatic form I timed it at 115.4 mph, while one loses about half a second from a standstill to 60 mph. The speedometer registered 124 mph at maximum speed. Obviously the choice of transmission is a personal matter, the automatic appealing more particularly when there is a lot of town and traffic work.

The Stag has power-assisted steering as standard, and this is in keeping with its luxurious rather than sporting character. The lightness of the steering may be a little disconcerting at first but one soon takes it

for granted, and I often forgot about it. The car is very stable at high speeds, requiring absolutely no "holding," even in gusty wind. This exceptional stability is bought at the expense of a fairly marked understeering characteristic, which can be reduced by the application of power but not entirely cancelled out. The tyres stick to the road very well, never bouncing over bumps, and in general *The upholstered roll bar solves the rigidity problems.*



one does not feel that the car has a relatively short wheelbase.

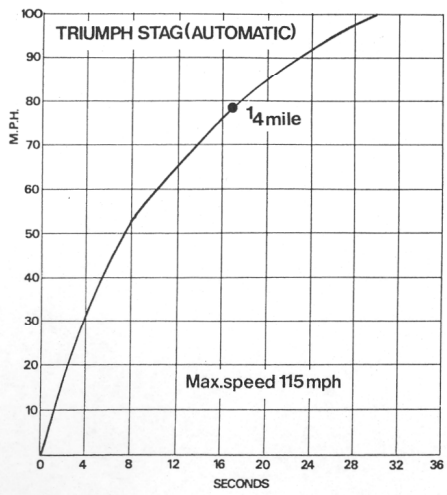
A very comfortable ride is achieved without any wallowing, and there is also less roll on corners than would be expected. Perhaps the most impressive feature is the insulation of road noise; in spite of using Michelin XAS steel-braced tyres, there is literally not a sound when one deliberately drives down a line of catseyes. Like all the other controls, the brakes are light to use and stand up to hard driving.

With the hood down and stowed beneath its decking and the windows raised—at the touch of a switch—the car is remarkably silent and most of the draughts are subdued. This is ideal motoring when the weather permits it. With the hood raised it is a different story, for the wind roar at speed makes conversation impossible, though the fabric does not actually flap. The hood is very neat but by no means easy to raise or lower—it would be best to fit the hard-top when winter comes. The hard-top looks very much a part of the car and at a casual inspection the Stag could be mistaken for a fixed-head coupé.

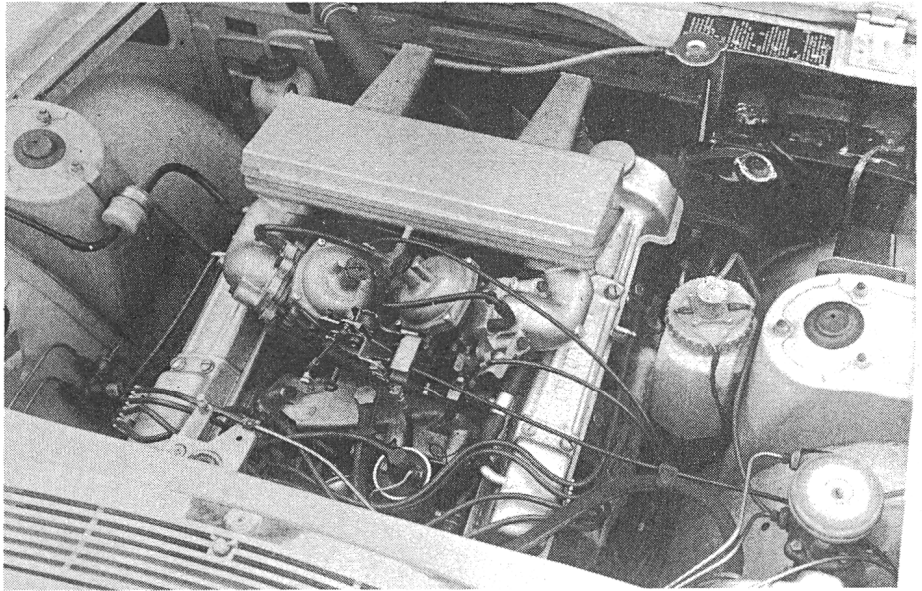
Much of the charm of this Triumph resides in the effortless performance of its engine. It has no preferred cruising speed, and there is a reserve of power that makes this an easy car to drive under all conditions and a splendid companion for long journeys. The four quartz-halogen headlamps let the miles or kilometres pass easily at night, and there is copious adjustable fresh air ventilation to stop the interior from becoming stuffy. The detail refinements are too numerous to mention, but this is a very well-equipped car.

At the start of this report, I said that it was necessary to analyse exactly what sort of a car the Stag is. Perhaps it is a revival of the "open touring car" of ancient times, or maybe it is something entirely new. It is certainly a very pleasant vehicle to use for getting around, and nobody minds being seen in really good looking cars. Above all, it is more than reasonably priced as such things are reckoned today, and the demand is bound to be enormous.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA
 Car tested: Triumph Stag open 2 plus 2, price £1996 including tax. Extra: Automatic transmission, £105.
 Engine: Eight cylinders, 86 mm x 64.5 mm, 2997 cc. Single chain-driven overhead camshaft per bank. Compression ratio 8.8 to 1. 145 bhp (net) at 5500 rpm. Twin horizontal Stromberg carburetors.
 Transmission: Borg-Warner Type 35 automatic transmission, ratio 1.0, 1.45 and 2.39 to 1, multiplied by torque converter reduction of 1.0-2.3 to 1 Hypoid final drive, ratio 3.7 to 1.
 Chassis: Combined steel body and chassis. Independent front suspension by MacPherson struts with lower wishbones and anti-roll bar power assisted rack and pinion steering. Independent rear suspension by semi-trailing arms and coil springs with telescopic dampers. Servo-assisted disc front and drum rear brakes. Bolt-on steel disc wheels fitted 185-14 radial ply tyres.
 Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting with alternator. Speedometer. Rev counter. Voltmeter. Water temperature and fuel gauges. Clock. Heating, demisting and ventilation system. 2-speed wipers and washers. Flashing direction indicators. Cigar lighter. Reversing lights. Electric window actuation. Radio (extra).
 Dimensions: Wheelbase 8 ft 4 in. Track (front) 4 ft 4½ in; (rear) 4 ft 4¾ in. Overall length 14 ft 5¾ in. Width 5 ft 3½ in. Weight 1 ton 5 cwt.
 Performance: Maximum speed 115 mph. Standing quarter-mile 16.9 s. Acceleration: 0-30 mph, 4.0 s. 0-50 mph, 7.2 s. 0-60 mph, 10.0 s. 0-80 mph, 18.8 s. 0-100 mph, 29.8 s.
 Fuel consumption: 18 to 24 mpg.



The Stag has clean lines and is attractive as either an open car or with the hard top.



The 3-litre V8 engine is very over square, being of extremely modern design (above). The interior is very comfortable and the controls sensibly positioned (below).

