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In this issue

LONGFORD ROAD RACES
THE MORRIS '850'
HOW SMALL CAN YOU GET?
THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH

HEPBURN HILL CLIMB
NEW FERRARI 250 G.T.
THE AUSPER-FORMULA JUNIOR
THOROUGHBREDS OF YESTERYEAR



FERRARI 250 G.T. COUPE— PININ FARINA

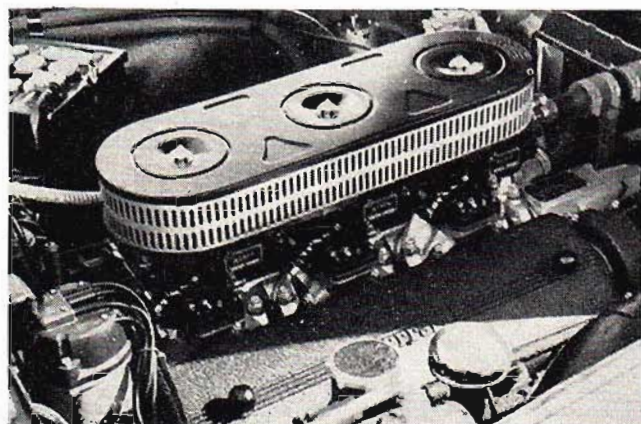
Story and Pictures L. J. Shaw

Should you be an enthusiast, and seriously contemplating the purchase of a new vehicle in the near future, may I recommend your attention to the latest Ferrari 250 G.T. coupe sampled recently through the courtesy of W. H. Lowe, Australian concessionaires for this magnificent marque. It was quite by chance that news of this latest arrival on the scene was even noticed—an acquaintance (or informer if you prefer) rang through to say that he'd seen what appeared to be a very new Ferrari. Dis-missing this as mistaken identity with the Maserati or Aston Martin currently featuring around Melbourne, the matter was forgotten until we thought, "what if it is a Ferrari." A fast phone call produced the news that it was indeed a recent import, only 3 days in Australia to be exact, so in quick time an appointment was made for "road impressions of performance car".

As the garage door was rolled back we beheld an olive green vehicle, spectacularly devoid of un-necessary chrome glitter and even in the static position, looking as though it were travelling at 100 m.p.h. plus. Having recently made a nodding acquaintance with Bib Stillwell's 3500 G.T. Maserati, I was not quite so awe inspired as that memorable first meeting with G.T. machinery—but, I was still inspired!

The car is the latest in the production programme of the renowned Ferrari 3 litre, 12 cylinder engine. This engine was first developed during 1947 and has since gone through its natural development in events such as Le Mans, Sebring, Mille Miglia, etc., until today it is a strong, flexible unit capable of propelling the 25 cwt. of aerodynamic structure at speeds to 154 m.p.h.

By this stage our enthusiast has received the idea that the 250 G.T. is a powerful brute designed for competition inclined drivers. When it is stated that the car can be dropped to 10 m.p.h. in top gear and then accelerated away again without the slightest protest, you will realise that even your eccentric auntie (if she has a sizeable bank balance) can pilot



Top and Right: From any angle the car has functional and pleasing lines devoid of chromium adornment.
Above: Overall aircleaner tops the 3 twin choke Webers.

this car with the same ease with which she regularly bends the fenders of her Morris Minor.

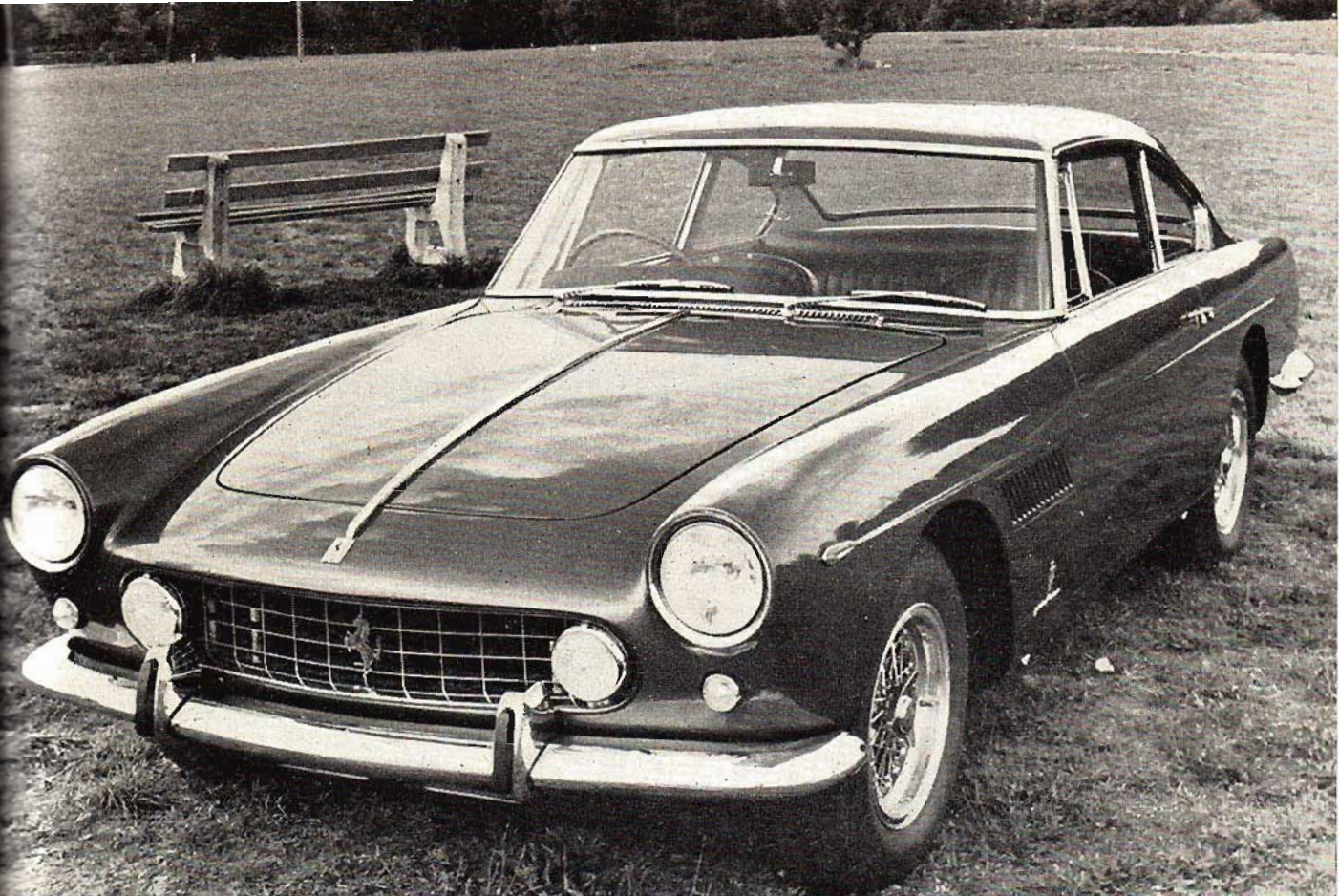
Basic measurements of the 250 G.T. give a wheelbase of 2,600 m.m., rear tread of 1,394 m.m. and front tread of 1,354 m.m. (if you would rather have that in inches 25.4 m.m. equals 1 inch—you work it out). Weight of the car is 2,816 lbs. less the weight of 25 gallons of fuel necessary for lengthy motoring.

The engine is the well tested V12 with bore and stroke figures of 73 x 58.8 m.m. Capacity is 2,953 c.c. and compression ratio is 9.3 : 1 to provide a maximum b.h.p. at 7,000 revs of 280. The crankshaft is 7 bearing with connecting rods coupled in parallel on thin wall bearings. Fuel is supplied via three Weber twin choke carburetors topped by an all enclosing air cleaner. Covers are all black crackle finished and the overall effect is one of tremendous power contained in a moderately small package.

The rear axle is of the rigid type with lateral rods, suspended with semi-elliptic leaf springs and heavy duty tele-shock absorbers. Front suspension is independent with helicoidal springs and tele-shock absorbers. Braking is by servo assisted discs with the hand brake operating very efficiently on the rear wheels.

The line and size of the car is extremely aerodynamic in true European styling and the front radiator shell reproduces the classic design of Ferrari surmounted by the famous prancing horse. Twin foglights peep coyly out from the grille with the small diameter but highly efficient head lights recessed into the body line.

Following is an extract from the Ferrari handbook, used because "the Firm" express their opinion of the car far better than I could hope to do—quote, "the smooth, plain hood, without air intake, tapers off towards the front of the car to increase the adherence on the road when running at



very high speed. The side, of exceedingly plain design, is without any chrome plated ornament and presents a simple and single longitudinal movement. The roof and rear are perhaps, from the aesthetic viewpoint, the most noteworthy features of the new car; in fact, the roof, thin, slender and endowed with almost complete luminosity, harmoniously blends with the tail, forming a single compound. The rear window is slightly embedded below the rear of the roof and constitutes an original and quite new motif in a car having a continuous line."

So much for exterior description, all completely true and if anything, an understatement of design beauty.

The fascia panel remains in keeping with the rest of the car with all instruments being easily read from the driving position and all necessary controls coming close to hand on the central console. Reading left to right are clock, fuel gauge, water and oil temp gauges, speedometer, oil pressure gauge and tachometer. On the console are interior light, fog light, panel light, parking and head light push pull buttons whilst below are controls for rear and front window demisting, electric fuel pump and wipers. The steering wheel is three spoke alloy with wooden rim, centred by the Ferrari emblem. The upper part of the panel is covered in black non reflective leather, well padded on the passenger's side. Glove boxes are located in both doors and a directed map light beams down from behind the rear view mirror.

All windows can be open if desired and the rear sections act as extractors of air from the interior. The seating compartment provides two comfortable front seats, separated from each other with the backs well shaped to hold driver and passenger in position during hard cornering. The rear seats, also separated from each other are provided with fixed central and outer arm rests.

Wheels are of course light alloy, centre locking fitted with

Pirelli high speed tyres.

Due to the low mileage of the car (only a little over 300), it was impossible to fully try out the very obvious potential. However, a very pleasant half hour was spent in trying the 250 G.T. over varying road surfaces at speeds to 80 m.p.h. Acceleration was nothing short of amazing and whilst all controls were light and easy, the accelerator pedal had to be treated with vast respect. So quiet and smooth was performance that 70 m.p.h. felt very much the same as 30 m.p.h. in any other car, except for the tachometer reading.

The four speed box was still tight but changes could be made effortlessly and very rapidly. Factory figures indicate a first gear maximum of 58 m.p.h.; second—82 m.p.h.; third—110 m.p.h. and top—135 m.p.h. A fifth automatic (overdrive) is also fitted for reasons as stated, "the latter being particularly required to get rational performance from the car on the modern highway". At maximum revs of 7,000, a top speed of 154 m.p.h. appears before the driver!

The ride was firm, yet soft and even over badly rutted surfaces there was no sign of bottoming or undue noise.

Under hard acceleration the exhaust note came into prominence with a deep throated growl that served to interest the general populace and arouse the envy of the sporting minded.

At the time of writing the car is still unsold having only been in Melbourne a few days. Whether it will travel to Sydney or remain in Melbourne is yet to be decided but for the sake of all enthusiasts, I sincerely hope it remains in Victoria where the interested may see it and meditate on why America still builds automobiles(?).

Having sampled both the Maserati and now the Ferrari, the private transport VW is now quite definitely becoming very non U and I'm starting a saving campaign to purchase a new Ferrari in the future (20 or 30 years) on present income.