



# VOLVO

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RELEASE AT WILL

FAMILY SPORTS CAR DELIGHTED RACING DRIVER

British people are generally known as masters of understatement, tempering their enthusiasm about something with words of faint praise indeed.

That's why the Swedish craftsmen who make Volvo automobiles were pleasantly startled with superlatives the late Mike Hawthorn used when he road tested the 122S, four-door family sports sedan.

Hawthorn, World Champion Racing Driver in 1958, slipped into the seat with a throttlebuster's attitude.

"A Swedish car, I said to myself beforehand," Hawthorn wrote later. "Solid undoubtedly, worthy it is certain to be, and sturdily unpretentious. Nineteen seconds and a quarter of a mile later, I was trying to get my breath back."

Using the direct approach, Hawthorn started the engine, threw the car in gear, and stomped on the throttle.

(more)

"My takeoff was as fast and as vivid as a rocket burst," he said, "I accelerated from much bigger cars around me with the vigor of a man who discovers that the log he's sitting on has two bloodshot eyes and enormous teeth. I went on accelerating until I was doing more than 90 miles an hour."

Hawthorn found the Volvo "absolutely stable" at that speed and remarked that "it cornered happily and with no undue roll. The steering was light and reasonably positive."

"There can be precious few cars of its engine size made anywhere in the world with such performance," he continued. "The Volvo is a sensation of a car and about as typical of its background as a battleship called 'Buttercup'."

Using a ten-point maximum scale, Hawthorn's scorecard looks this way:

Engine, 9 points. "Impressive, but made a song about it."

Steering, 9. "As qualm free as a summer sea."

Acceleration, 9. "Watch that throttle pedal:"

Suspension, 9. "Not too hard for rich and fragile aunts."

Cornering, 10. "Almost impossible to overdo things."

Comfort, 9. "Perfect in the front."

Finish, 10. "As splending as the Midnight Sun."

Gear change, 8. "As stiff as the noblest upper lip."