

Often compared to a '41 Ford, the Volvo has a certain pleasing quality. Who knows, maybe the '41 Ford is coming back.

ROAD TEST VOLVO PV-444-L

ONLY A FEW MONTHS AGO, in April, we tested the 70-bhp Volvo. Now, along comes a real surprise, the same car with 85 bhp. Everyone remarks about the similarity of appearance between the Volvo and a 1941 Ford. Now we can add another Ford feature of that era, the 85 horsepower. Volvo called the 70-hp model the PV-444-K ; the new 85-hp model is officially the PV-444-L.

The new engine (with a larger bore) is designated as the B-16-B, and already some sources are casting strong doubts as to the accuracy of the advertised bhp. Simply on the basis of a displacement increase from 1414 cc to 1577 cc, the power should go up from 70 to 78. But the compression ratio has been raised from 7.8 to 8.2:1, and this will add further to the output. Also, the torque peak now occurs at 3500 rpm (formerly 3000) which would indicate a camshaft change. Accordingly, we see no reason to doubt the ability of this engine to produce as claimed.

As a matter of fact, we essayed a rather extensive series of Tapley meter tests, toward the end of determining the exact

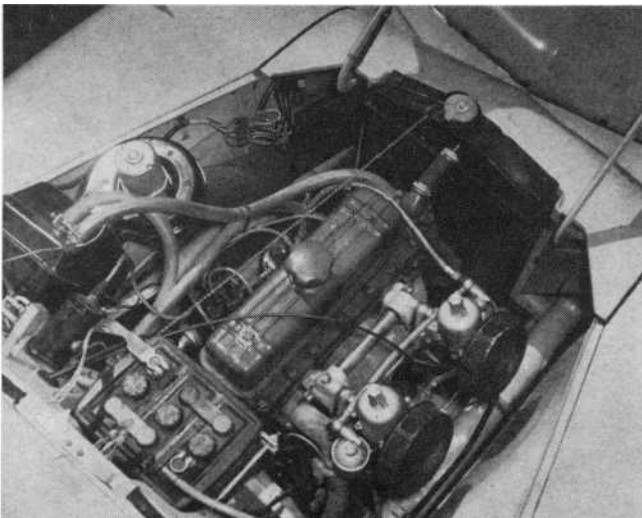
rear-wheel horsepower. We were hampered by a low-speed carburetion fault, and the results were inconclusive. This much we do know : the Tapley readings of pulling power indicated more than the claimed 14.5% increase in torque.

The carburetion fault was corrected by our supplier (Run Pearson, the invincible Volvo exponent) but even so, the cold figures show that the 0 to 30 and 0 to 40 times were not quite so good as before. This was hard to explain until we discovered that low gear has been altered slightly, from 3.23 to 3.13. The most impressive performance gain found is in high gear and above 60 mph. The improvement is shown graphically on the acceleration chart.

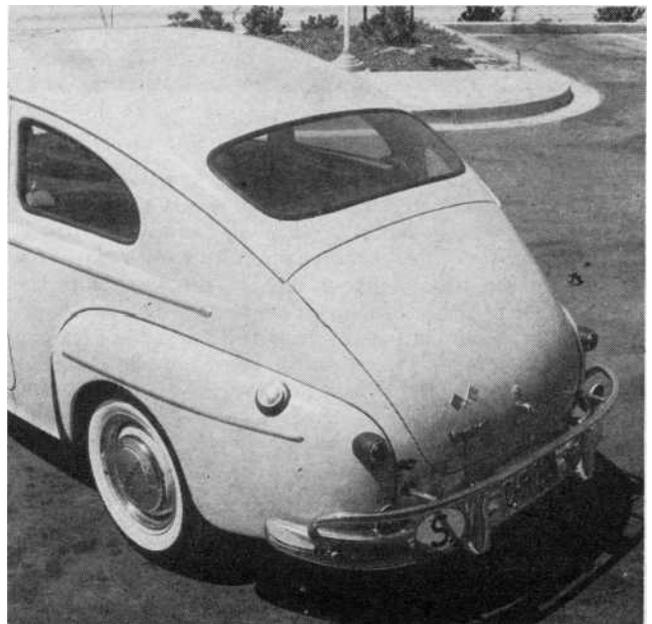
The average timed top speed proved to be 93.8 mph, or 3.8 mph more than in the earlier test. Such a speed is truly astonishing for a 1.6-liter sedan. A rough calculation shows that this increase in top speed would require 8 more bhp at the rear wheels. (Based on $cw = .5$ and $A = 22$ sq. ft.)

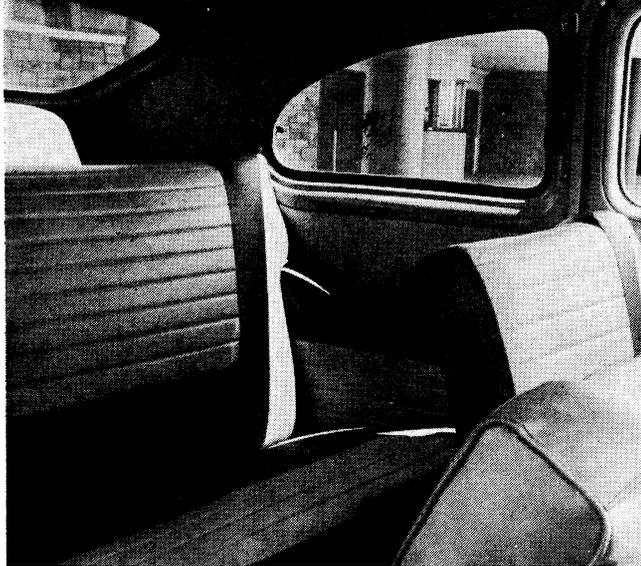
Putting all considerations of performance aside, the Volvo is still a tremendous automobile as a sturdy and practical

Chock full of machinery, the engine room shows no exterior change from the earlier 70-hp version.



Pleasing use of trim to compliment rather than to ornament the lines of the body . . .





Blue and cream plastic interior suggests a very expensive customizing job.

with 85 bhp, the sturdy Swede comes out swinging

utility sedan. When really thrashed the fuel consumption drops to 23 mpg, but normal 55/60-mph highway cruising will give 27 mpg as a best figure. It will cruise comfortably and easily at 75/80 mph, and under light throttle application the power unit is smooth and quiet. Unfortunately, the vigorous sports character of this unit becomes quite apparent when it is pushed hard. Under full throttle it seems to vibrate and becomes noticeably rough and noisy. With fond recollections of the 1931 PA Plymouth's smoothness, we fail to see why a small 4 should be quite so harsh as this one. Yet there is no question but that this is as tough a little engine as you will find anywhere, today.

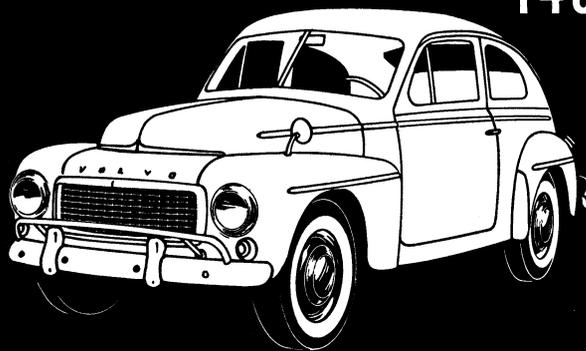
Chassis-wise, the new Volvo continues with its proven unit construction. Road-rumble has been well subdued. As a matter of fact, the Volvo is not a light car (this one had a radio and weighed 50 lb more than our 70-bhp test car) and it uses heavier than normal gauge steel in many body and structural parts. The solid rear axle is located by a long rubber-insulated trailing arm on each side and uses coil springs. This and an equally well insulated front suspension of conventional design are responsible for an excellent ride, moderate roll, and generally good handling qualities.

The steering, as before, requires 3.2 turns and is light in action, with moderate understeer. Cornered really hard, there is perhaps more roll and a shade more caster return than a sports car driver would like, but a family car man (or woman) will never complain about this. At over 80 mph the steering seems to get "light" and is a little vague, but not so sensitive as to be frightening. Freedom from road shock transmission to the steering wheel is excellent.

Clutch action is unobtrusive, with no sign of slip at any time. The brakes were used fairly hard on several occasions. They, too, are eminently satisfactory. The 85-hp car has more brake lining area than the other version.

Externally, the new model can be identified by the tubular bumper guards at both ends and a new trim around the grille. The interiors are substantially unchanged, except that two-tone plastic upholstery tends to brighten things up considerably. A heater and defroster are standard equipment, but there was no opportunity to try these.

We understand that plans for producing the sports roadster and a five-speed gearbox have been completely abandoned, but with a car like this—who needs a sports car?



VOLVO 85-HP SEDAN

SPECIFICATIONS

List price	\$2095
Wheelbase, in.	102.4
Tread, f/r	50.8/51.6
Tire size	5.90-15
Curb weight, lb	2170
distribution, %	53/47
Test weight	2490
Engine	4 cyl, ohv
Bore & stroke	3.125 x 3.15
Displacement, cu in.	96.2
cu cm.	1577
Compression ratio	8.20
Horsepower	85
peaking speed	5500
equivalent mph	91.8
Torque, lb-ft	87
peaking speed	3500
equivalent mph	58.5
Gear ratios, overall	
3rd (high)	4.55
2nd	7.38
1st	14.3

PERFORMANCE, Mph

Top speed, avg.	93.8
best run	95.2
2nd (6500)	67
1st (6600)	35
see chart for shift points	
Mileage range	23/29 mpg

ACCELERATION, Sec.

0-30 mph	4.3
0-40 mph	7.2
0-50 mph	10.3
0-60 mph	14.3
0-70 mph	21.0
0-80 mph	29.0
0-90 mph	44.5
Standing start 1/4 mile	19.5

TAPLEY DATA, Lb/ton

3rd	200 @ 52 mph
2nd	340 @ 44 mph
1st	540 @ 27 mph
Total drag at 60 mph, 117 lb	

SPEEDOMETER ERROR

Indicated	Actual
30 mph	28.6
40 mph	38.0
50 mph	47.9
60 mph	57.5
70 mph	67.0
80 mph	76.3
90 mph	85.5
103 mph	95.2

CALCULATED DATA

Lb/hp (test wt)	29.4
Cu ft/ton mile	80.4
Engine revs/mile	3590
Piston travel, ft/mile	1885
Mph @ 2500 ft/min.	79.5

