

# VOLVO 164



## A SENSUOUS SIX

IF YOU LIKE IT Swedish, smart, and safe—then the six cylinder Volvo 164 is the car for you.

That is providing you can meet the stiffish \$6299 price tag.

This new model follows the well known Volvo path of smooth styling, outstanding safety, and comfortable passenger accommodation but, at least in its automatic transmission version, the car is certainly no fireball.

However, lacking somewhat in performance when compared with other sixes, it makes up in almost every other department.

It has safety, comfort, excellent road manners—and for my money these are the prime requisites for a first class family car.

In common with most of the better quality vehicles the body incorporates progressive crumple front and rear end design which absorbs energy in the event of a collision and allows the actual passenger compartment to retain its shape. It has a two piece collapsible steering column and burst-proof door locks.

Four wheel disc brakes are fitted and these proved to be among the best I have encountered on any vehicle—they were smooth and light in operation, quiet, and stopped the car under repeated hard application with no sign of fade.

The dual braking system is unusual in that the failure of one circuit will still allow approximately 80 per cent braking effect accomplished by retaining brake usage on both front wheels and one rear; a relief valve is also incorporated in each of the circuits to prevent the rear wheels from locking up before the front wheels in the case of emergency braking.

This emphasis on safety, both pre and post-accident, is retained throughout the car's interior.

***This Swedish six cylinder offers exceptional comfort and safety but its price tag will put it out of range for most buyers.***

Fascia panel of 164 is identical to that used in the 144 except for wood-grain insert.

Instruments are recessed into an energy absorbing padded fascia panel, controls are topped with soft plastic, door handles are set into recessed panels and the rear vision mirror brakes away under impact.

But the safety aspect goes even further than this.

The front seat backrests are designed to collapse smoothly rearwards if the car is rammed from behind—so lowering the danger of whiplash neck injuries.

And the seats are comfortable—superbly so.

There is an infinite range of adjustments which can be carried out to provide front seat height, rake, and fore and aft location; you can even vary the seat from soft to firm as you require.

Rear seat legroom is excellent and the equal of anything else on the road—and that includes the Austin 1800 which is so far in front of most in this respect that it doesn't matter.

And if you're worried about luggage carrying capacity—forget it.

The boot is cavernous with the spare wheel mounted in a well on the right hand side — however a high rear lip makes for a high loading height.

On the road, the car is very much the "gentleman's carriage".

The three speed automatic is smooth in operation and responsive to variations in throttle and even when reaching lower gear limits engine noise does not become excessive—a nuisance very noticeable in the four cylinder models.

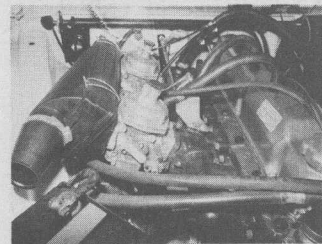
But as we said earlier, performance is certainly not staggering.

Possibly Volvo thinking runs along the lines that if you want something with both comfort and performance you buy a four speed manual gearchange model.

Using full automatic, rather than holding through the gears, the car clocked 43 mph in low, 70 in medium, and 97 in top. Manually held, these figures could be considerably improved upon but the buyer of this type of car is hardly likely to be concerned with driving in this manner.

Best time through the standing quarter mile was 19.4 seconds which again is an adequate figure rather than an outstanding one.

In short, the 164 is obviously aimed at a "middle class Rolls Royce" bracket and concedes little to those desirous of a "sporty" type vehicle.



The engine, with a capacity of 2.98 litres and a bore/stroke measurement of 88.9 mm x 80.0 mm, develops 145 bhp (SAE) at 5500 rpm and has a maximum torque figure of 163 lb. ft. at 3000 rpm.

Many components of the six cylinder model are identical to those of the four cylinder including pistons, connecting rods, bearings and valves—a heartening point as regards the availability of spare parts.

Handling is totally predictable.

Slight oversteer at speed on unsealed surfaces—slight understeer on bitumen. Pirelli radials, 165SR 15s, come as standard and although inclined to a degree of harshness at low speed are ideally suited to the car's capabilities.

The ride over all surfaces is excellent with the coils on all corners, and independent front end, soaking up all road irregularities. There was a tendency towards tail-end wander when the car was pushed hard over badly corrugated sections but it was nowhere near as severe as that usually encountered with one of the more popular Big Three models.

Cornering could be undertaken with a high degree of confidence and although body roll was quite pronounced (more noticeable to an onlooker than to the driver) the car stayed very firmly stuck to the road.

Steering is both light and accurate with only 4.8 turns required lock to lock (this figure is reduced to 3.7 with the optional power steering).

The turning circle is a marvellous 31 ft. 6 in. and in consequence the car is delightful for city driving and parking.

Instrumentation is identical to that of the 144 series with a strip type speedometer, trip meter, fuel gauge and water temperature gauge. The speedometer is fitted with a movable indicator as a speed limit reminder and warning lights operate for battery charging, oil pressure,

headlights on high, parking brake, and possible brake circuit failure.

The heating and ventilation system is excellent with air being fed to both front and rear compartments; a two speed fan can be used to boost efficiency and three defroster outlets act quickly on the windscreen.

At the rear is an electrically heated window with either 75 or 150 watt power clearing even the heaviest fogged glass within minutes.

Standard fittings of the 164, usually optional equipment with most manufacturers, include: three point safety belts in the front compartment and anchorages for two three point and one lap belt in the rear, laminated windscreen, safety padded sunvisors, anti-dazzle rear-view mirror, two speed 'screen wipers, steering wheel lock, grab handle and court-essy handle, towing fixtures front and rear, pockets on rear of front seat backrests, mudflaps, and a good tool-kit.

As can be easily seen from the report the 164 has a lot going for it—it's superbly comfortable, extremely well finished, quiet, and smooth. Performance, while never likely to make it a race-track winner, is very much in keeping with the conservative Volvo approach and 80 mph highway cruising can be accomplished in absolute comfort and safety.

What does go against the car is its price.

\$6299 is a lot of money for any car and while the Volvo name certainly has a strong following in Australia I feel that rightly or wrongly most buyers putting out that sort of cash will probably head for their local Mercedes dealer.

Were the 164 on the market at a figure of \$5500, or even \$6000, I think it would attract a lot of prospective purchasers but, good though it is, I think the price will prove to be its great drawback.

# MOTOR MANUAL ROAD TEST



## DRIVER COMMENTS

<b>ENGINE:</b>	
Starting .....	Fair
Response .....	Good
Vibration .....	Nil
Noise .....	Fair

<b>DRIVE TRAIN:</b> (Automatic)	
Shift linkage .....	NA
Synchro action .....	NA
Clutch action .....	NA
Noise .....	NA

<b>STEERING:</b>	
Effort .....	Low
Response .....	Good
Road feel .....	Good
Kickback .....	Nil

<b>SUSPENSION:</b>	
Ride comfort .....	Good
Roll resistance .....	Fair
Pitch control .....	Fair

<b>HANDLING:</b>	
Directional control .....	Good
Predictability .....	Good
Resistance to sidewind .....	Good

<b>BRAKES:</b>	
Pedal pressure .....	Low
Response .....	Excellent
Fade resistance .....	High
Directional stability .....	Excellent

<b>CONTROLS:</b>	
Wheel position .....	Good
Pedal position .....	Fair
Gearshift position .....	NA
Panel controls .....	Good

<b>INTERIOR:</b>	
Ease of entry/exit .....	Excellent
Noise level .....	Low
Front seat comfort .....	Excellent
Front leg room .....	Good
Front head room .....	Good
Rear seat comfort .....	Excellent
Rear leg room .....	Excellent
Rear head room .....	Good
Instrument comprehensiveness .....	Fair
Instrument legibility .....	Good

<b>VISION:</b>	
Forward .....	Good
Front quarter .....	Good
Side .....	Good
Rear quarter .....	Good
Rear .....	Good

<b>CONSTRUCTION QUALITY:</b>	
Sheet metal .....	Excellent
Paint .....	Excellent
Chrome .....	Good
Upholstery .....	Excellent
Trim .....	Excellent

<b>GENERAL:</b>	
Headlights-highbeam .....	Good
Headlights-lowbeam .....	Good
Parking/signal lights .....	Good
Wiper coverage .....	Good
Wiper at speed .....	Good
Maintenance accessibility .....	Good
Luggage space .....	Excellent

**CAR FROM:** Regent Motors, Sturt St., South Melbourne.

**PRICE AS TESTED:** \$6299 (Plus radio).

**OPTIONS FITTED:** Radio.

### ENGINE:

Type ..... 6 Cylinder OHV  
 Bore and Stroke 88.9 mm x 80 mm  
 Capacity ..... 2.98 litre  
 Compression ratio ..... 9.2:1  
 Power (gross) .... 145 bhp (SAE) at 5500 rpm  
 Torque .... 163 lb./ft. at 3000 rpm

### TRANSMISSION:

Three speed automatic — column selector.

### CHASSIS:

Wheelbase ..... 106.3 inches  
 Length ..... 185.2 inches  
 Track F ..... 53 inches  
 Track R ..... 53 inches  
 Width ..... 68.3 inches  
 Clearance (Minimum) 7.1 inches  
 Kerb weight ..... 2840 lbs.  
 Fuel capacity ..... 12½ gallons

### SUSPENSION:

Front: Independent with coil springs.  
 Rear: Rigid, carried in longitudinal rubber-mounted support arms and torque rods.

### BRAKES:

Dual circuit, power assisted.  
 Front: Disc.  
 Rear: Disc.

### STEERING:

Type: Cam and roller type.  
 Turning circle: 31 ft. 6 in.  
 Turns lock to lock: 4.8.

**WHEELS/TYRES:** Pressed steel fitted 165SR15 Pirelli radials.

### PERFORMANCE:

Zero to  
 30 mph ..... 4.7 seconds  
 40 mph ..... 6.9 seconds  
 50 mph ..... 9.7 seconds  
 60 mph ..... 13.1 seconds  
 70 mph ..... 17.0 seconds  
 80 mph ..... 24.8 seconds  
 90 mph ..... NA  
 100 mph ..... NA  
 Standing quarter mile 19.4 seconds.  
 Fuel consumption on test 20 mpg on S fuel.  
 Fuel consumption (expected) 24 mpg.  
 Cruising range 325 miles (approx.).

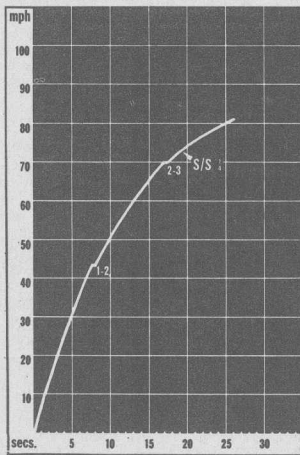
### SPEEDOMETER ERROR:

Indicated 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100  
 Actual 31 40 49 59 69 79 NA NA

### MAXIMUM SPEEDS IN GEARS:

1st ..... 43 mph  
 2nd ..... 70 mph  
 3rd ..... 97 mph

## VOLVO 164



## ACCELERATION