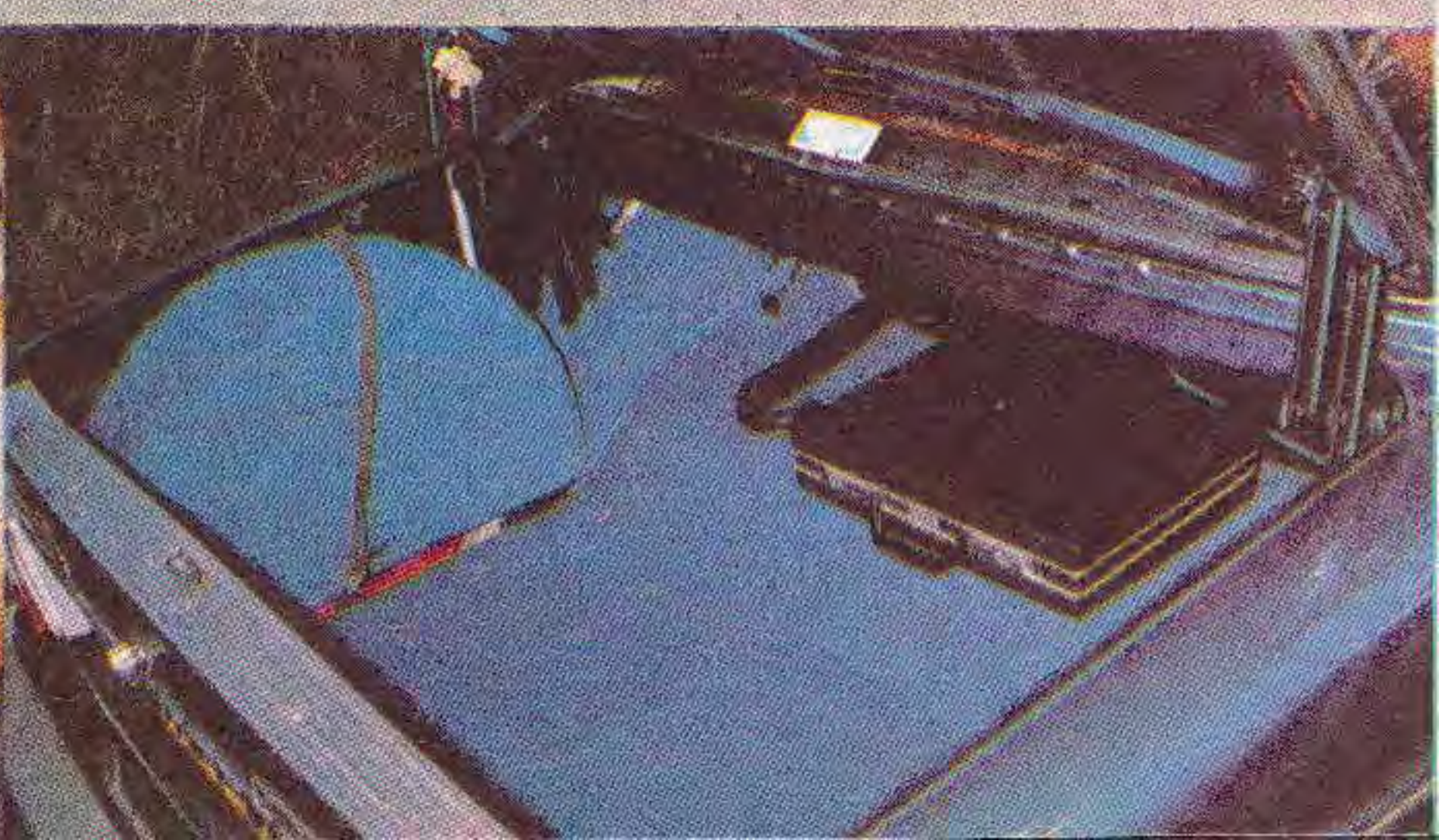


**FROM THAT WELL-KNOWN SWEDISH  
CAR AND TRUCK MANUFACTURER...**



**VOLVO 164 TE~**







*SAFE from all angles the big TE is agile and hangs onto the road with stubborn determination. Bodyroll is dramatic, but is solid evidence of the high adhesion levels. The interior of the top-notch Volvo is well fitted-out and smells lovely. Body styling is unchanged, but there's no doubt about the TE's executive status.*

**V**OLVO'S TE version of the six-cylinder 164 is aimed at the chauffeur-drive set and with its price-tag of \$9750 it's right up there with the Statesman Caprice and Ford LTD. With this in mind the Swedish company have concocted a very comfortable rear compartment and packed in a couple of gadgets aimed at making managing directors feel more at home.

But, the difference (between the TE and the regular 164) stops there — with the gadgets. The luxury (?) TE is just as noisy and harsh riding as the other versions, it gives moderate performance and it's relatively thirsty. However if you add up the extras and if you want a fairly exclusive Volvo then TE delivers the goods. We couldn't wait to try out the gooseneck reading lamps attached to the rear pillars and there's no doubt in our minds that it's much more fun riding in the back than tackling the driver's task.

Everytime we test a Volvo we must remind ourselves of the basic concept of the car, just to keep the test in proper perspective. The well-equipped 164 Volvos are NOT luxury cars — they have luxurious fittings, a certain dignity, they're well-built and very safe, but they are truly just basic utilitarian transport with trimmings — \$9750 worth of trimmings.

The initials TE could well stand for *top equipment* — because it's got a fantastic array of standard goodies. The list includes headlight wiper/washer system, four-speaker stereo cassette/radio, rear compartment reading lights and headrests, map pockets in the back of the front seats, air-conditioning, power aerial, extra (1 gall) petrol can, leather seats and fully-carpeted boot.

Obviously the real test of any car is the market place and Volvo couldn't have picked a more competitive sector. Things might be a bit different since the import duty increase, and the



# EXECUTIVE EXPRESS

UNDENIABLY SAFE, STRONG AND WELL BUILT THE VOLVO RANGE HAS AN APPEAL ALL OF ITS OWN AND CULTIVATES A VERY EXCLUSIVE MARKET OF FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS, BUT FOR US ON THE OUTSIDE UNDERSTANDING THE REAL APPEAL OF THESE SWISH SWEDES BECOMES A COMPLEX COMBINATION OF PRAISE AND CRITISICMS. THE TE — Top Echelon Volvo is a limited edition of the six-cylinder 164E, comes complete with lots more luxury fittings and lots more executive pose value, but after our road test we conclude that its real appeal will be its exclusivity.



# VOLVO 164 TE

modifications to the tax concessions allowed on company cars, but if past sales performance is any guide the Volvo will do alright. To date the Company's Australian operation doesn't seem to have put a foot wrong in the planning department and its dynamic MD Max Winkless deserves a generous pat on the back for his obviously sound management policies.

Such bouquets aside, we must return to our critical assessment of the 164 TE. On the good side it handles well, its seats are firm, but fairly comfortable, visibility is excellent and the car is a practical size. On the off-side, we've mentioned the noise, poor performance and economy, and while we say it handles well, this shouldn't be confused with its drive-ability. Quite frankly it drives like one of Volvo's luxury trucks.

There is considerable pitch in the very harsh ride, it skitters on broken surfaces and the steering is heavy and

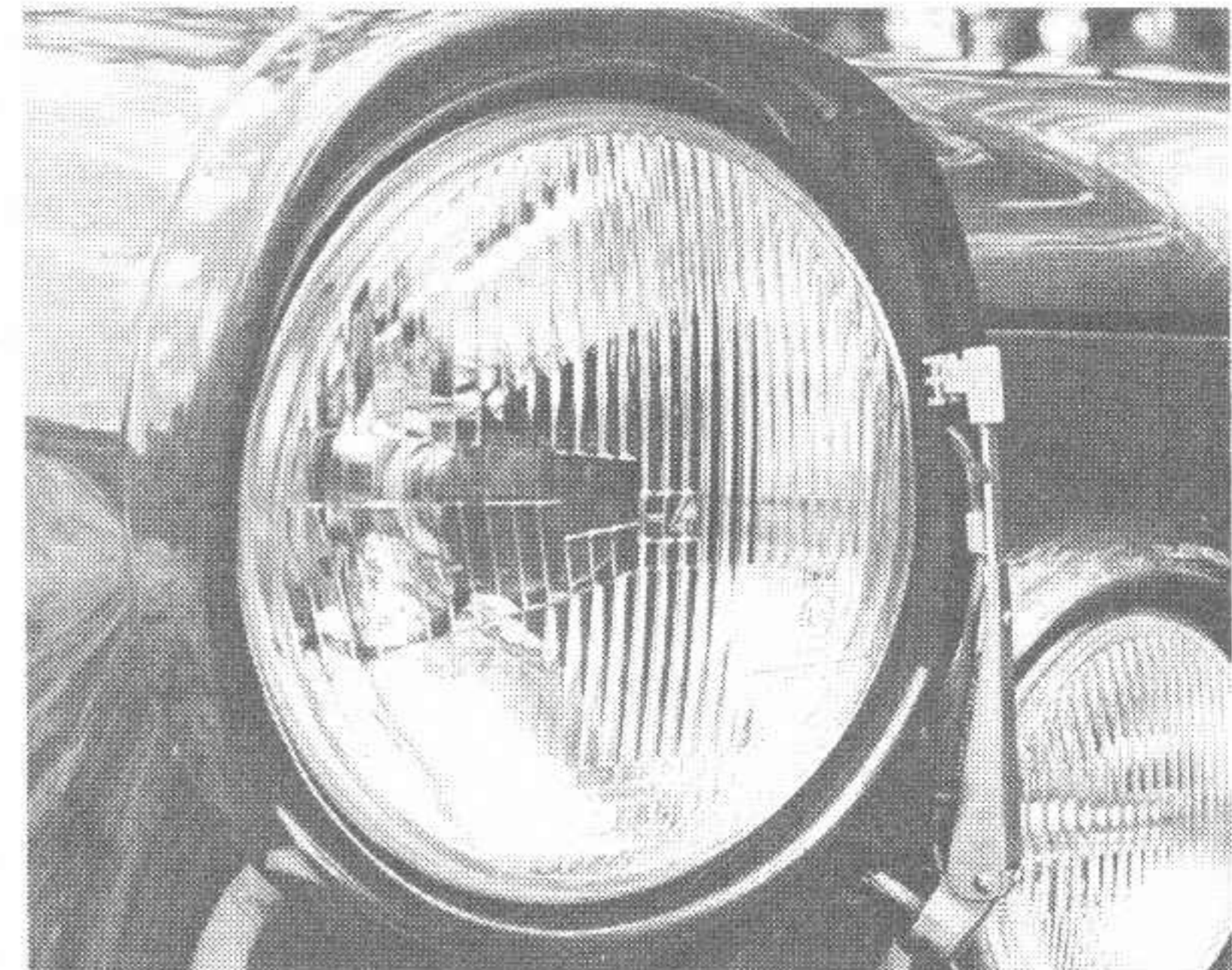
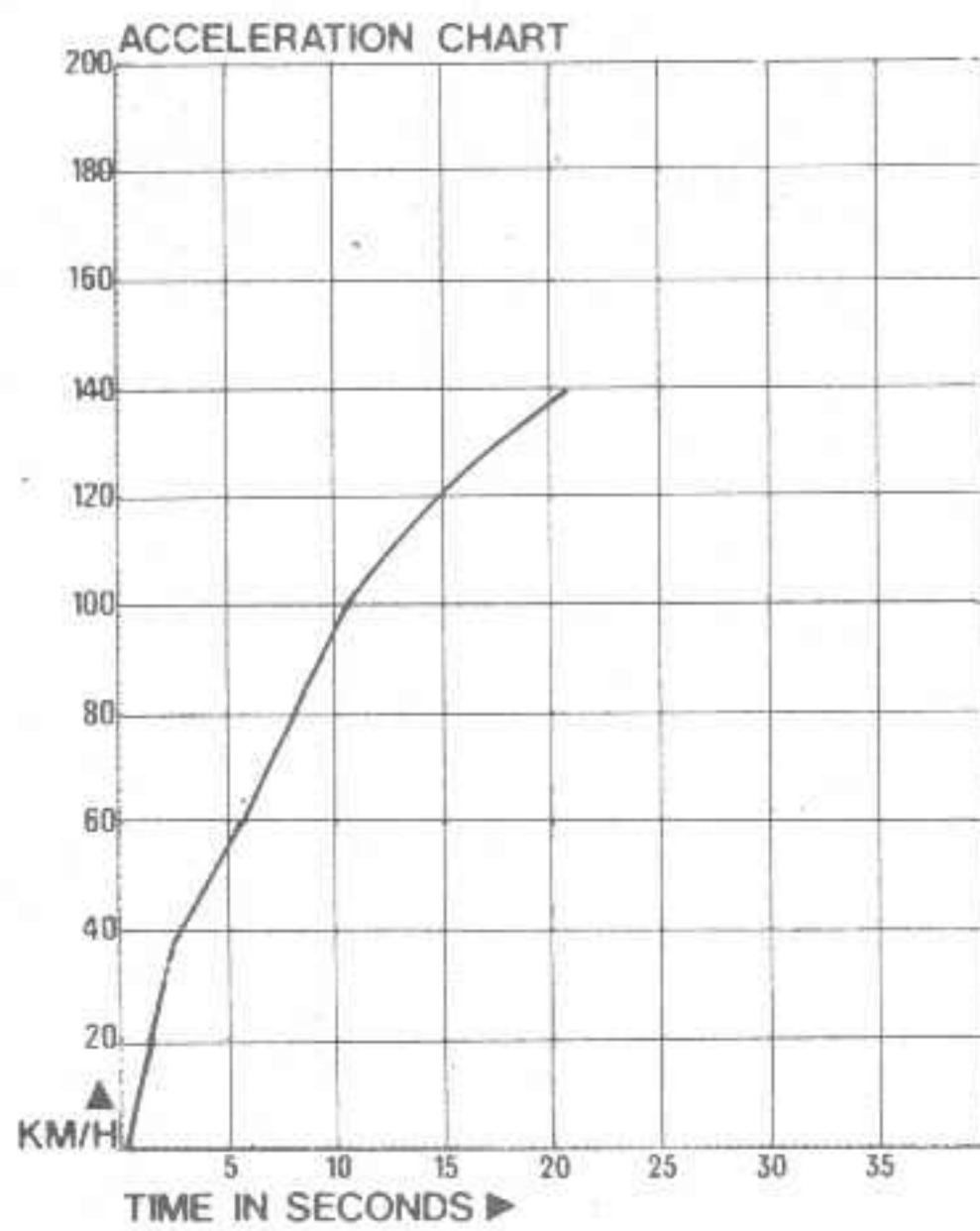
requires too much effort. The combination of vehicle weight and body roll makes you believe that hauling the beast around is harder than it actually is. It's a positive handler with good adhesion, but as most of our testing focussed more on ride than handling, we were left with bad impressions of the car, and we were quite ready to swap it for either its GM-H or Ford competitors in that department.

The noise factor is also completely inexcusable in a vehicle that has luxury-car pretensions. Certainly it's quieter than its fuel-injected four cylinder relatives, but it's still a very noisy car. The main offenders are engine noise, wind noise and transmission noise. To combat the intrusions from the aforementioned we found ourselves winding up the volume on the excellent Clarion radio/stereo. We reflected that it was good thinking to locate the front

speakers high up on the front doors — *you'd probably never hear them if they resided in the lower section.*

Performance-wise the TE doesn't go quite as well as the lighter, 'normal' 164E. The fuel-injected six seems to be powerful enough, but like all Volvo engines it is unbearably noisy in operation. The fuel-injection system on the test car worked well. The car was easy to start, idled smoothly and was smooth at all engine speeds. The TE has fairly good mid-range acceleration, but you can't help being a jerky driver because of the heavy, badly designed accelerator pedal.

The suspension is quiet in operation, but is too harsh. Added to the unyielding (although orthopaedically correct) seats, which you sit *on* rather than *in*, the ride results in a bounce up-n-down affair, and any sort of cornering has the occupants sliding across the seats. The truth of the matter is that the 164TE is to the 144



## ROAD TEST DATA & SPECIFICATIONS

Manufacturer: AB Volvo Car Division  
Gothenburg, Sweden  
Make/Model: 164TE  
Body type: 4-door sedan  
Test car supplied by: Volvo Australia, O'Riordan St.,  
Mascot (N.S.W.)

### ENGINE

Cylinders: Six in-line  
Bore x stroke: 88.9mm x 80mm  
Capacity: 2978cc  
Compression: 10.0 to 1  
Aspiration: Bosch electronic fuel injection  
Fuel pump: electric  
Fuel recommended: Maximum octane (90 plus)  
Valve gear: OHV  
Max. power (gross): 130.6kW @ 5800rpm  
Max. torque: 230.5Nm @ 2500rpm

### TRANSMISSION

Type/locations: BW35 Three-speed automatic, centre console shift  
Gear Direct Ratio  
1st 2.39  
2nd 1.45  
3rd 1.00  
Final drive: 3.54 to 1

### BODY AND SUSPENSION

Type: Integral  
Kerb weight: 1336kg  
Front suspension: Independent by wishbones and coil springs  
with anti-roll bar  
Rear suspension: Live axle, coil springs, radius rods and  
panhard rod  
Shock absorbers: Telescopic direct-acting  
Wheels: 5.5J x 15  
Tyres: 175SR x 15

### STEERING

Type: Re-circulating ball  
Ratio: 15.7 to 1  
Turns lock to lock: 3.7  
Wheel diameter: 38cm  
Turning circle: 10.34m

### BRAKES

Type: Four wheel discs with servo assistance  
Dimensions: 27.1cm front/29.4cm rear

### DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase: 272cm  
Track, front: 134.9cm  
rear: 134.9cm  
Overall length: 487cm  
width: 171cm  
height: 145cm  
Ground clearance: 18cm

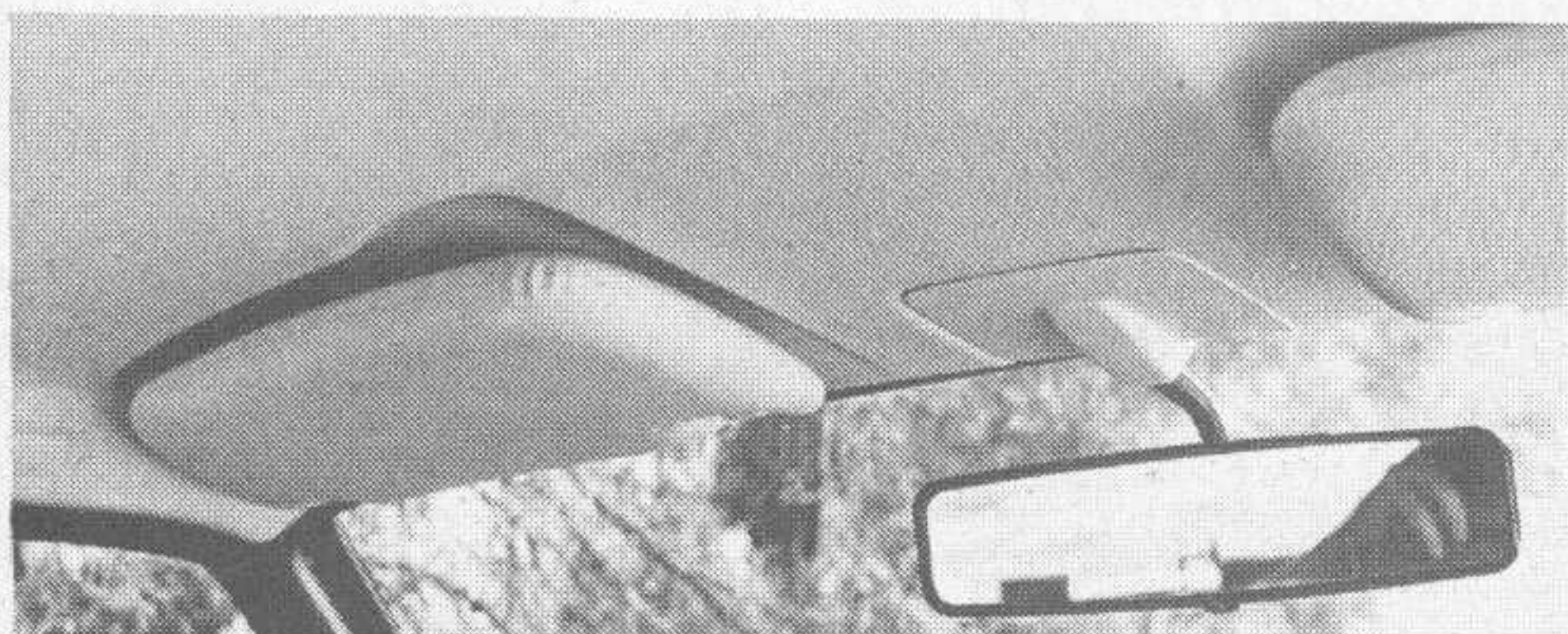
### EQUIPMENT

Battery: 12V 60 A/H  
Alternator: 55A  
Headlamps: Twin circular halogen

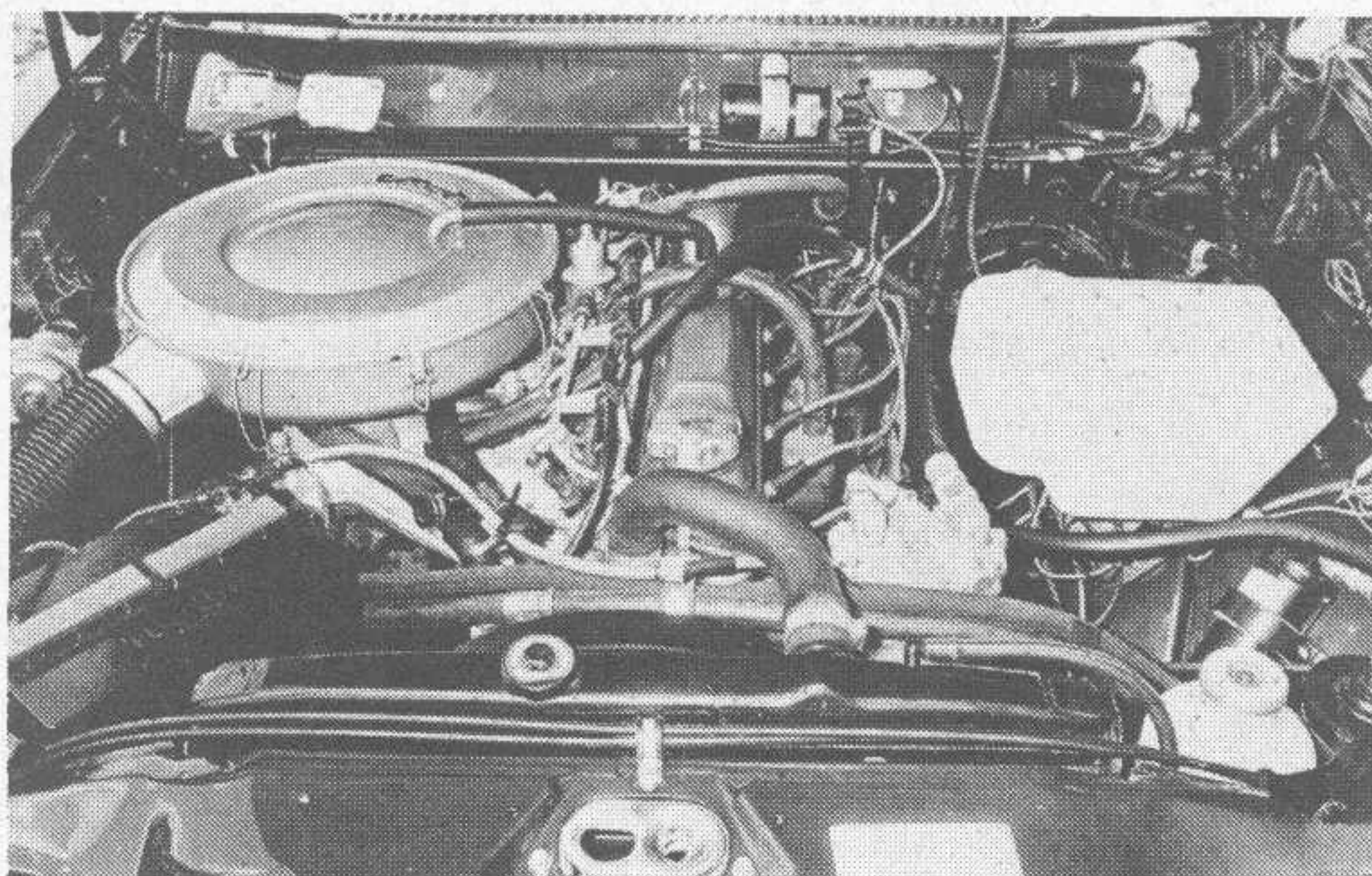




**LEFT:** All the comforts of home — this office on wheels. The TE version of the Volvo 164E boasts rear seat reading lamps and headrests. We tried the lights and they work well, we could even read the fine print in contracts.



**FAR LEFT:** Volvo equips the TE with this complete tool kit, plus an extra petrol container which is housed inside the spare wheel. **LEFT:** Some people may think headlight washers are a gimmick, but they have a lot of practical value. **RIGHT:** The TE headlining is made from moulded plastic and fits well. Note the recess for the sunvisor. **FAR RIGHT:** The engine bay looks like a mechanics nightmare — it's a mass of plumbing.



**CAPACITIES**

Fuel tank:	60litres
Engine sump:	.6litres
Final drive:	1.6litres
Gearbox:	6.2litres
Water system:	10litres

**PERFORMANCE**

<b>FUEL CONSUMPTION:</b>	<b>Litres/100km</b>	<b>(MPG)</b>
Average for test	14.3	19.7
Best recorded	13.4	21.0
City conditions	15.6	18.1
Country conditions	13.9	20.2

<b>ACCELERATION:</b>	<b>Drive</b>
0-40km/h	3.1
0-60km/h	5.6
0-80km/h	7.8
0-100km/h	11.7
0-110km/h	14.0
0-120km/h	15.6
0-140km/h	21.3

<b>SPEEDS IN GEARS:</b>	<b>Max. km/h</b>	
	<b>Drive</b>	<b>Held</b>
1st	49.5	82.5
2nd	97.5	130.0
3rd	190.0	—

<b>OVERTAKING TIMES (in Drive):</b>	
km/h	
30-60	3.9
50-80	5.3
60-100	8.0
80-120	8.5
100-130	8.6

<b>TOP SPEED:</b>	190km/h
<b>STANDING 400m:</b> average:	18.7
best run:	18.5

**BRAKING:**

<b>Three maximum stops from 50km/h</b>			
<b>Stop</b>	<b>G-force</b>	<b>Pedal (kg)</b>	<b>Distance (M)</b>
1	.75	14	10m
2	.80	12	10.2m
3	.80	12	10.2m

<b>Five maximum stops from 100km/h</b>			
<b>Stop</b>	<b>G-force</b>	<b>Pedal (kg)</b>	<b>Distance (M)</b>
1	.80	10.0	36.5
2	.87	10.1	41.4
3	.80	10.2	49.3
4	.80	10.0	45.7
5	.85	11.0	46.6

**SPEEDO CORRECTIONS:**

IND:	20	40	60	100	120	140
ACT:	16	36	55	95	115	116

**CALCULATED DATA:**

Power to weight:	10.23kg/kw
Piston speed at max. rpm:	960m/min

**ODOMETER:**

Start:	6818km
Finish:	7338km



# VOLVO 164 TE

range what the Holden Statesman is to the Holden Premier — the up-market model merely inherits all the good and bad points of the basic vehicle.

We remember the 144 as being particularly hard-riding and hoped that the additional 10cm in the 164's wheelbase would help reduce the pitch, but it doesn't. Obviously the "stretch job" only facilitates the fitting of the longer six-cylinder engine.

The brakes were very good around town, with light pressures and good progressive feel in the pedal. At higher speeds they load up quite significantly, but handled our five maximum stops without difficulty or drama. However under heavy braking there is a lot of forwards weight transfer which can be alarming. The handbrake is well-placed and held the car on a one in three grade.

Volvo's however, are full of nice touches and these, plus the rumoured improved ride in the new 200 Series, may open up a whole new market for the Swedish company. We like the infinite adjustment of the front seats. Height, fore'n'aft movement and rake adjustments mean any driver can be catered for — but why don't they make an accelerator pedal which will suit all drivers, instead of the present layout which only suits six-footers?

The dashboard is very well laid-out, instruments are clear, well-positioned and easy to read. All the switchgear is convenient, the rear view mirrors are excellent, T-bar auto shift is in the right place and easy to use.

The air-conditioning in the test car worked very well, but not sufficient cool air flows to the rear compartment — a major oversight in a car supposedly intended for a majority of chauffeur-driven 'heavies'. Also, the adjustment for temperature is not sensitive enough — you get either full cold or full hot. The interior door latches look and feel like they've been borrowed from a truck, but once open the doors give wide and easy access to both compartments. The rear reading lights work well and are very cute too — lots of one-upmanship there. The fully-carpeted boot can only be described as sumptuous and were it a little larger we could see it serving as an entertaining room for executives and executive secretaries. Remember, wives of Managing Directors, check the boot carpet for lipstick traces and discarded martini olives.

The 164E shares many panels with the 144 series. The extra wheelbase was squeezed in between the front wheel arch and the front doors — to accommodate the longer motor. Thus the doors, turret and rear panels are identical to the smaller model. This also applies to the amount of available interior space. Legroom, front and rear, is identical to the 144.

Volvo engineers and designers have



*DRIVING the big Volvo in a sporty fashion presented no problems, it is very controllable — under almost any circumstances. The engine revs well, but we weren't impressed by the transmission shudder in the lower gears.*

made good use of the available space and have provided ample leg, hip and shoulder room in both compartments. There is not leg stretching room in the rear, but certainly enough for a tall man to sit quite comfortably. The addition of the rear seat headrests in the TE makes the rear compartment even more habitable.

From all safety-oriented viewpoints the Volvo is a superb car. The company has proved conclusively that it can successfully mate impressive safety standards with mass production techniques. They have further capitalised on this 'super-safe' image in their marketing.

But, where once the Volvo range competed well against the opposition in the price area, this advantage will be eroded by devaluation, tariff changes, price rises and the like. With the introduction of the TE there is virtually no single and distinct reason why the prospective buyer of a \$9000-plus motor car would choose the TE, except if he were a safety-minded executive with an eye for quality.

There's a very good chance that the big, big luxury limousines may be a dying breed, so the TE's size might be just right. Volvo's executive express almost gets there, it definitely looks like it has got the luxury goods, but as our test proves — appearance isn't everything.

## COST SCHEDULE

Make/Model: . . . . . Volvo 164 TE  
Pricing (basic): . . . . . \$9700  
(as tested): . . . . . \$9700

Registration: . . . . . \$102.65  
Insurance: . . . . . Category 3

Rates quoted below are for drivers over 25 with 60 percent no-claim bonus and where the car is under hire-purchase. This is the minimum premium level — decreasing rates of experience and lower age groups may have varying excesses and possible premium loadings.

Non-tariff: . . . . . \$238.97  
Tariff: . . . . . \$261.00  
N.R.M.A. . . . . \$302.70

Warranty: 12 months/unlimited mileage

Service:  
Initial service is free. This covers the first 2500km and includes lubrication and maintenance.

Other Services:  
Lubrication and maintenance services every 10,000km. Parts and labour is chargeable.

Spare Parts:  
(recommended cost breakdown)  
Disc Pads: Front . . . . . \$18.06  
Rear . . . . . \$17.56  
Muffler (front) . . . . . \$33.91  
(rear) . . . . . \$26.63  
Windscreen . . . . . \$124.69  
Shock Absorbers: Front . . . . . \$14.89  
Rear . . . . . \$18.00  
Headlamp Assembly . . . . . \$43.40  
Taillamp Assembly . . . . . \$28.37  
Bumpers: front . . . . . \$64.06  
rear . . . . . \$64.06  
Front Guard: . . . . . \$87.02