

VOLVO 164: If You

For 20 percent of the price of a Rolls-Royce, this Volvo gives you just a little less car

By JAN P. NORBYE / *PS Automotive Editor*

Of course you don't think of Volvo as being in the same class with Rolls-Royce. Rolls-Royce has a reputation for advanced engineering on a cost-no-object basis, unequaled luxury, and fail-safe construction. Volvo is known for being a bit behind the times technically, though above reproach in quality.

The Volvo 164, however, is a new kind of Volvo. It's a very powerful six, with a decidedly luxurious interior. It doesn't have the power, space, or luxury of a Rolls-Royce—but that's not the point. The point is that it approaches Rolls-Royce levels of performance, comfort, quietness, and refinement. If you think of the Volvo 144 (*PS*, Mar. '67) as the starting point, the 164 seems closer to a Rolls-Royce than to the other model made in the same factory.

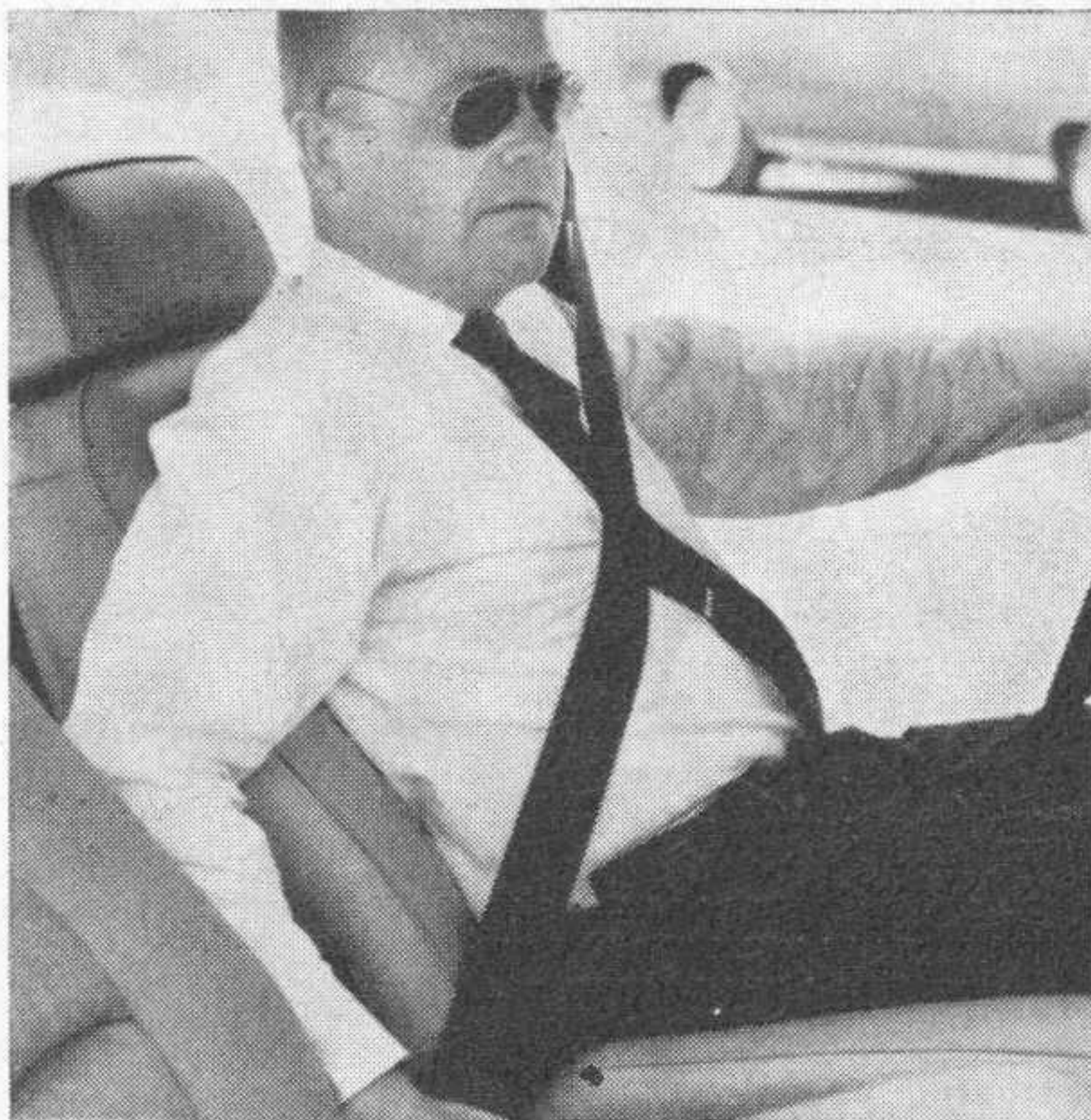
I put 2,500 miles on this Volvo within a week, twice staying at the wheel for 12 hours nonstop. It's a surprisingly untiring car to drive long distances.

Back-seat passengers were surprised at both the space and the finish of the interior. Personally, I was disappointed in the instrument panel, with its thin strip-type speedometer and idiot lights instead of gauges, but there's nothing cheap about the controls.

The hand brake (located by the door), shift stick, and steering wheel are purposeful-looking and pleasant to use. Not that you need to shift much—the engine has tremendous torque and accelerates from 25 in top gear (Borg-Warner three-speed automatic transmission is optional).

To find the limitations of the Volvo, you need a fast curvy road. It does not have all-independent suspension, and its handling cannot compare with Mercedes-Benz's, for instance. But the Volvo's ZF power steering (standard) is one of the best I've tried.

Brakes have always been a strong point at Volvo, and the 164 has the same four-wheel power-disk brake system as the 144, but with bigger disks. Its dual circuits are so connected that a leak at any one place in the system can't cause a loss of more than 20 percent braking efficiency. Brake lines are duplicated—no matter where the leak, you always have brakes



Both lap and shoulder straps are attached to the same buckle, easily fastened and released. When not in use, the buckle is hooked on side center post, out of the way.



Seating dimensions are ample, and altogether the interior of the 164 offers more than comfort—reclining seats that are orthopedically designed. There are handy pockets for rear-seat riders. Doors have safety locks.

Can't Buy a Rolls-Royce



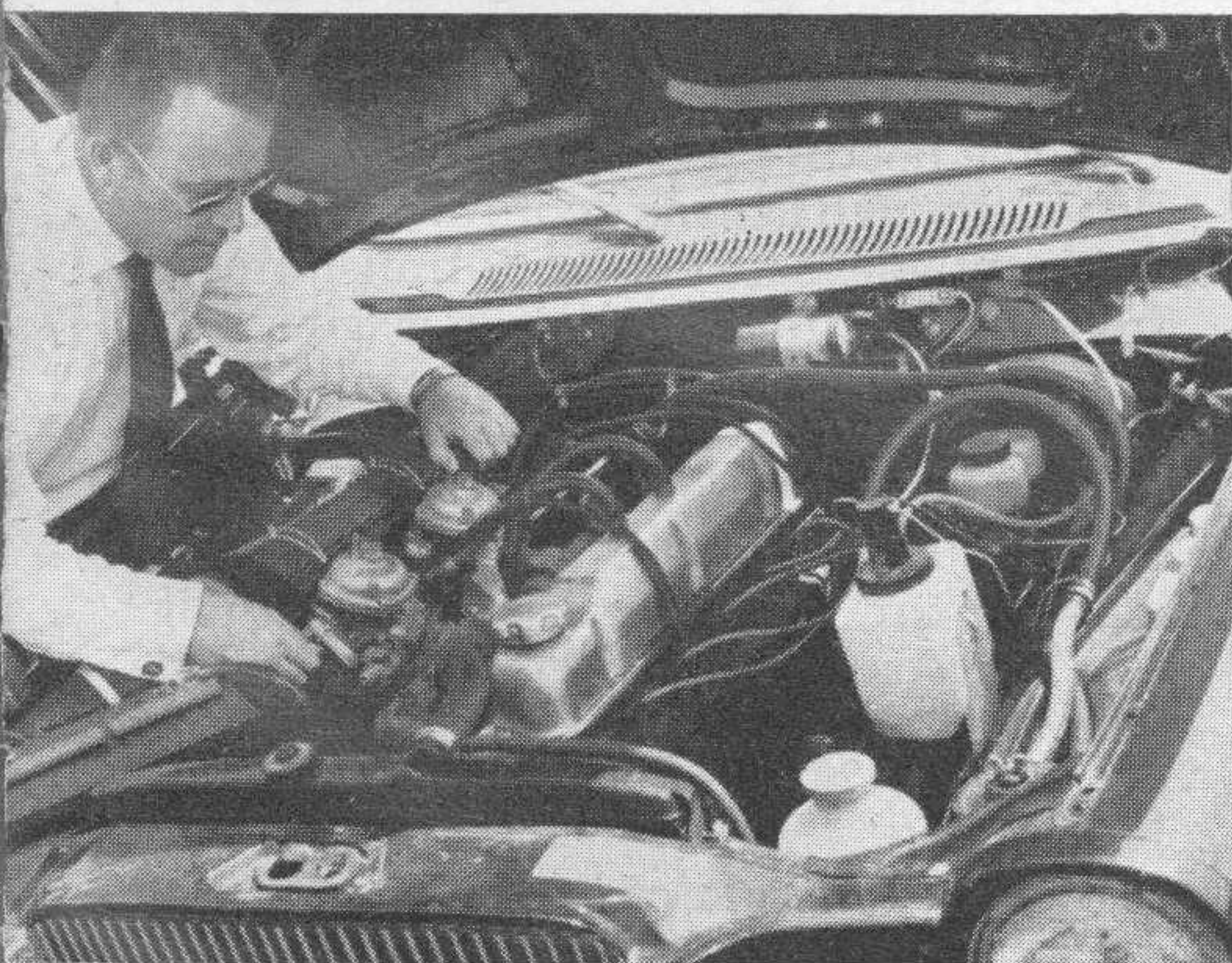
Overall dimensions are in the compact class, but the luxurious interior is full-size.

on both front wheels and at least one rear wheel.

Throughout the 164, you find evidence of Volvo's special concern with safety. The three-point harness is the best I have seen yet. The reclining front seats have inertia locks; doors, safety locks. The steering

column is articulated; will shear on impact.

As for technical reliability, the 164 has a sealed cooling system, silicone-rubber sealing for the ignition system (developed for Volvo marine engines), and (sort of to prove a point) a 999,999-mile odometer! Even Rolls-Royce doesn't have that.



Volvo's new six has twin Zenith-Stromberg carburetors and a two-level intake manifold containing the entire exhaust-emission control system, with its special preheating chamber.

FACTS ON THE VOLVO 164

Wheelbase	106.3 in.
Track, front and rear	53.1 in.
Length	185.6 in.
Width	68.3 in.
Height	56.7 in.
Curb weight	2,928 pounds
Engine type	OHV 6-in-line
Bore & stroke	3.50 x 3.15 in.
Displacement	182 cu. in.
Compression ratio	9.2:1
Carburetion	2 Zenith-Stromberg
Power @ r.p.m.	145 @ 5,500
Torque @ r.p.m.	163 @ 3,300
Axle ratio	3.73:1 (manual)
	3.31:1 (auto)
Tire size	6.85-15
Fuel tank	15.5 gal.
Turning diameter	31 ft. 6 in.
Turns, lock to lock	3.7
Price (P.O.E. East Coast)	\$3,995