



Volvo 164

LIKE YOUR luxury to arrive in a perfectly ordered Scandinavian style? Well-built body and dependability high on your list of sought after credentials?

Then get your winnings out, because the Volvo 164 will be right up your gata, as they say in Sweden. Nothing too ostentatious on offer with the 164, but a build quality that gives you plenty of value for your Krona –

especially if you consider that 2000 quid will buy you a minter in today's market. With an all up weight of over 3100lb that's an awful lot of metal for your money.

Roger Lanes has come along today in his well-used but much loved 1971 164 so we can try out the Scandinavian heavyweight. In true Swedish style it demonstrates a minimalistic approach to comfort. The

interior is the leather and wood combination we've seen in the majority of other cars gathered today, but this time it's more functional. It's not uncomfortable inside, just not as welcoming as some of the other lush contemporaries we've gathered.

The air of function and reliability over form and refinement continues when we go for a test drive. In typical Volvo fashion the straight six three-litre is capable of inter-stellar mileage. The engine may be over engineered but when it comes to buying an old car, that's a huge advantage.

The only problem is the weight penalty. This car doesn't have power steering, so you certainly notice how nose-heavy it is. If you didn't have big biceps when you bought one of these, you certainly would when you came to sell it.

That's if you ever did come to sell it, because as a family car the 164 has a lot going for it – Roger has owned his example for 29 years. There's plenty of room, it will lug all the paraphernalia a family carries in its large boot and, above all, it was one of the safest cars on the road in its day. From behind the wheel it feels like you could drive through walls without noticing.

Another plus for owning the Volvo is its ease of maintenance. You get the feeling you could service it with little more than a Swiss army knife and a can of oil. These early 164s have twin Strombergs rather than the later cars' Jetronic fuel-injection. Ignition is by points and condenser (although Roger's fitted a Lumention kit to this one) and access around the engine bay is excellent.

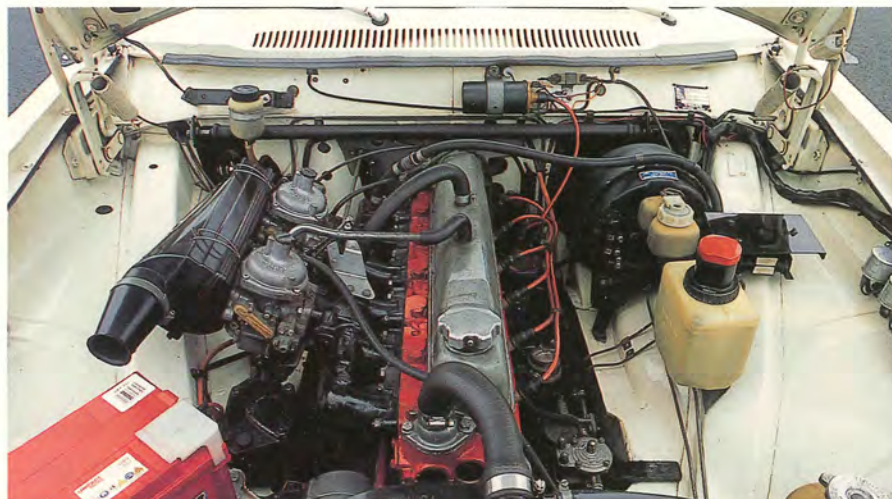
Roger's kids have grown up now but the car remains part of the family and is easily big enough to hold a family reunion.



Slim trim and plush seats not quite enough.



Tall grille says this is six-pot 164, not 144.



Roomy engine bay leaves little hidden from the tools of the DIYer. Pass the Haynes manual!