



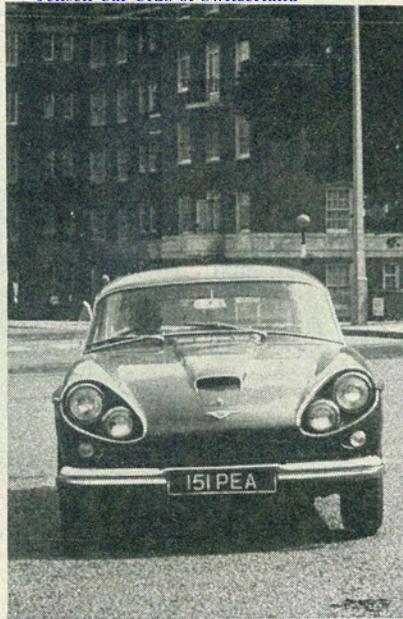
Jensen Car Club of Switzerland

THE Jensen C-V8 is a very unusual car. A compact two-door four-seater G.T. saloon, it is luxuriously appointed but is above all a sports car. In spite of its large American engine and automatic transmission, it feels a taut, almost fierce car to handle, with none of the "soft" characteristics of some expensive machines. Elaborately equipped and providing every comfort, it is nevertheless built to give pleasure to the driver, with a very high cruising speed and tremendous acceleration.

The main structure of the car is a twin-tube steel chassis, which carries a glassfibre body of really excellent finish. The suspension is entirely conventional, with wishbones, helical springs and an anti-roll bar in front, the rear axle being on semi-elliptic springs. The tyres are 6.70 x 15 ins. and ensure a comfortable ride and good roadholding. The steering is by rack and pinion and Dunlop disc brakes are fitted all round, with Servo assistance.

A remarkably fine piece of engineering is the 6,276 c.c. Chrysler V8 engine, of which the counterbalanced five-bearing crankshaft has a torsional vibration damper. It has a compression ratio of 10:1 and develops 330 b.h.p. at 4,800 r.p.m. The unit is surprisingly compact, and is installed with plenty of space around it for normal servicing tasks. The automatic transmission has a fluid torque converter and a three-speed epicyclic gear with quite close ratios, giving 48 m.p.h. in first speed and 82 m.p.h. in second, or considerably more if the manual change is used. An open propeller shaft conveys the drive to the hypoid rear axle, which has a limited slip differential. The large radiator contains a bottom section for the transmission oil and a top section for water, which is under the high pressure of 14 lbs. per sq. in. The two electrically driven fans have thermostatic control.

From the side and rear views, the Jensen is a handsome car, and though the front end, with its slant-eyed look, is somewhat unexpected, the general effect is of a purposeful but not too spectacular



JENSEN

C-V8

Road tested by

JOHN BOLSTER

Grand Touring machine. The seating is very comfortable, with adjustable reclining front squabs, and the two bucket seats at the rear give adequate leg room for long journeys. The body is beautifully made, though perhaps the scuttle is rather high for a short driver.

When one drives the Jensen, the first sensation is of almost unbelievable acceleration for so substantial a carriage. This acceleration occurs with very little sound and with no sign that the engine is doing any hard work. The automatic transmission gives a very smart getaway and really gets hold on the up changes, the resulting figures being quite phenomenal. Indeed, they could probably not be equalled with a manual box handled by an expert. This transmission tends to "creep", and it is best to manoeuvre at low speeds by easing the foot brake rather than by accelerating.

Even when covering a standing quarter-mile in 15.2 secs.—compare this with the figures for some potent sports cars—the engine remains smooth and silent, while the car simply gets up and goes. This unobtrusive progress is maintained right up to the maximum speed of 128.57

m.p.h. At this velocity, the unit has several hundred revs in hand, so higher speeds are possible under favourable conditions. On the motorway, if little Marples isn't looking, a cruising speed of 120 m.p.h. on the speedometer represents a genuine 116 m.p.h. I repeat that all this happens with remarkably little evidence that an engine is propelling the car. I allowed the automatic changes to take place normally during the acceleration tests.

When I first drove the Jensen, I thought that the steering was heavy and lacked precision. Increasing the tyre pressure to 30 lbs. all round, which is specified for motoring at over 110 m.p.h., transformed the handling, and it then became very satisfactory. The ride is still quite acceptable with the higher pressure, the Armstrong Selectaride dampers allowing a soft setting to be given for towns. A better sense of control is felt if a fairly hard setting is used at speed. The big machine can be placed to an inch on curves, a moderate understeer changing to oversteer when it is convenient to apply power. There is enough torque to flick the tail out on sharp bends. Remarkably little rolling is evident on corners, which increases the confidence of the passengers. There is considerable castor return action on the steering.

You cannot have an eight-cylinder engine of over six-litres capacity without using some petrol. Yet, the fuel consumption is more moderate than I had anticipated, ranging from 14 m.p.g. when driving hard on fast roads to 18 m.p.g. when keeping down to the speed of normal traffic. No doubt the high compression ratio helps here, and the shape of the body probably plays its part. The brakes require appreciable pedal pressure for emergency stops from high speeds, but they never smell hot or grab after repeated use.

It is pleasant to find a rev. counter, oil pressure gauge, and ammeter on such a car. The equipment is lavish indeed, seat belts being fitted as standard, for example, as well as rear window demist-





ing. A very complete and effective heating and ventilating system is installed. The controls are well placed, the proper central hand brake being quite powerful. Manual operation of the automatic gearbox can be employed when desired, both second and first speeds being available, and either can be held as long as required. A "kick-down" is installed on the accelerator, requiring quite heavy pressure, which avoids accidental selection of first speed on a slippery road.

The Jensen is a car of very high performance, as the figures prove. The sheer pleasure of handling it can only be realised after a personal trial, but the basic principle of having a large engine in a compact vehicle has produced many memorable cars in the past. When the large engine is both efficient and very refined, the results are likely to be particularly satisfactory. In this case, a really effortless car for high-speed long-distance journeys has been developed, much to the credit of both Jensen and Chrysler. The farther I drove it, the more I liked it.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car Tested: Jensen C-V8 two-door four-seater saloon, price £3,490 including P.T.

Engine: Eight-cylinder 108 mm. x 86 mm. (6,276 c.c.). Pushrod-operated overhead valves with hydraulic tappets. Compression ratio 10:1. 330 b.h.p. at 4,800 r.p.m. Carter four-barrel down-draught carburetter. Chrysler coil and distributor ignition.

Transmission: Three-speed automatic transmission with torque converter, ratios 3.07, 4.45, and 7.52 to 1. Open propeller shaft. Hypoid rear axle.

Chassis: Steel tubular frame with glassfibre body. Independent front suspension with helical springs, wishbones, and lever-type dampers. Anti-roll torsion bar. Rack and pinion steering. Semi-elliptic rear springs with Armstrong Selectaride telescopic dampers.

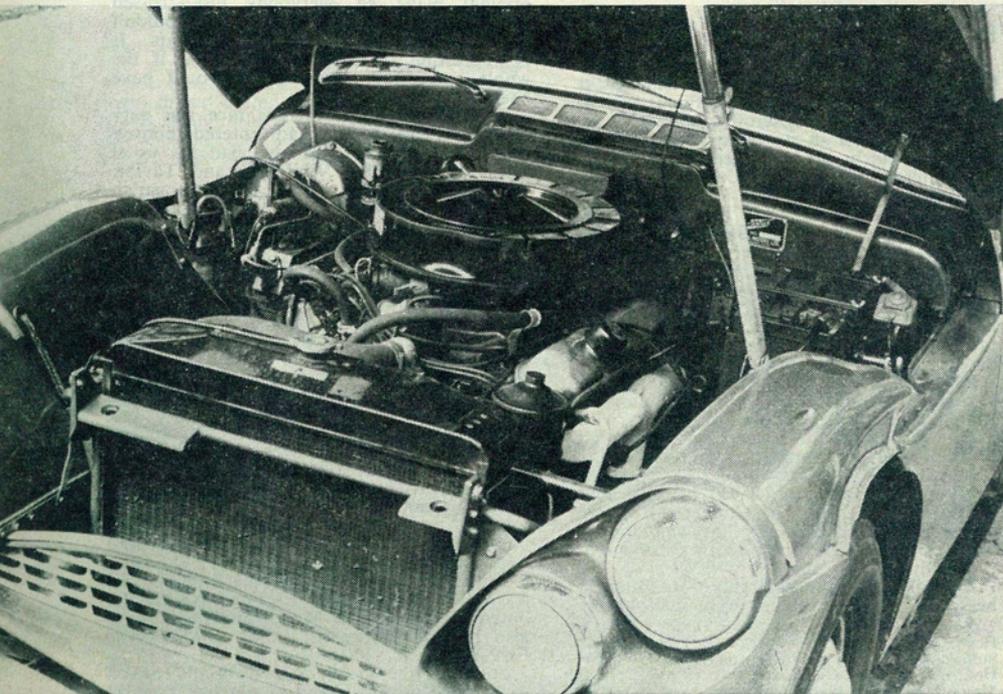
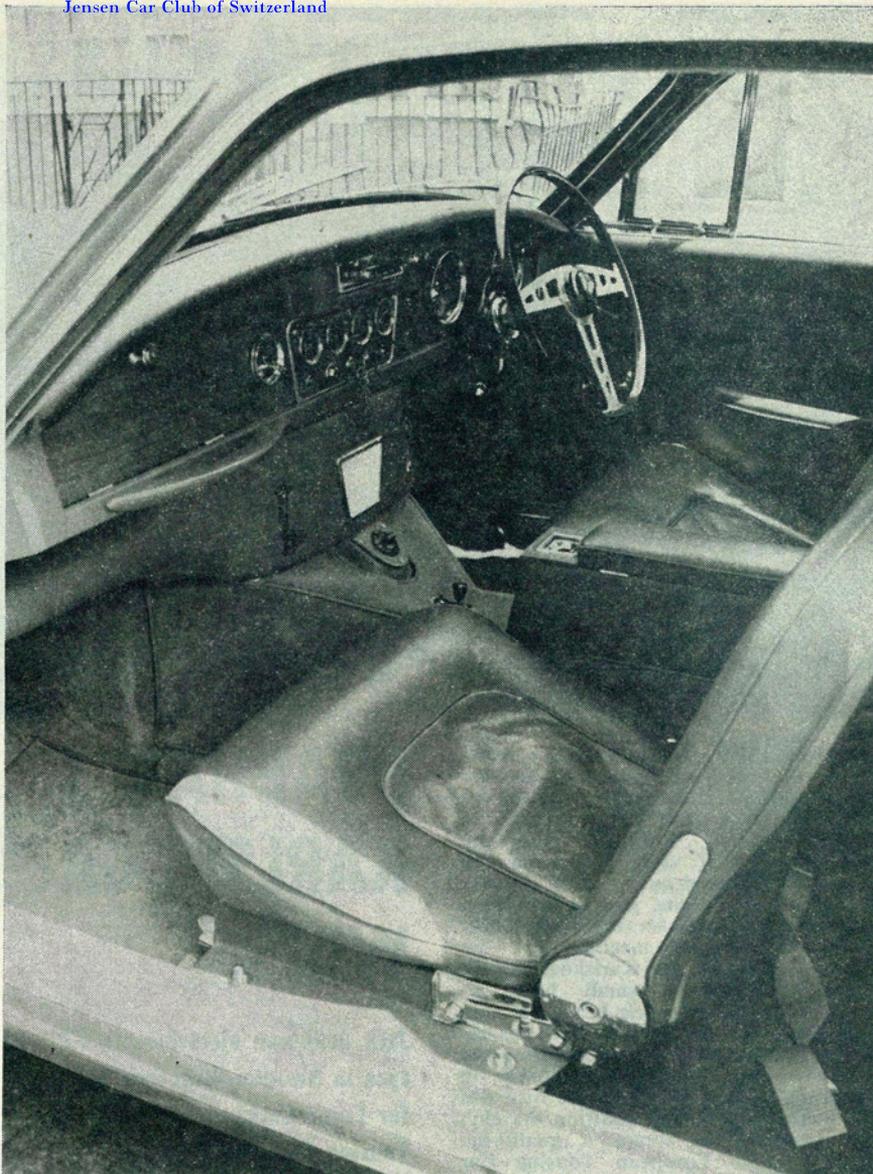
Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer, rev. counter, ammeter, oil pressure, water temperature, and fuel gauges. Clock. Two-speed windscreen wipers and washers. Heating and demisting, including rear window, with full ventilation system. Seat belts. Cigar lighter. Radio (extra).

Dimensions: Wheelbase, 8 ft. 9 ins.; track (front), 4 ft. 7 1/8 ins.; (rear), 4 ft. 8 1/2 ins.; overall length, 15 ft. 4 1/2 ins.; width, 5 ft. 7 1/2 ins.; turning circle, 38 ft.; weight, 1 ton 10 cwt.

Performance: Maximum speed, 128.57 m.p.h. Standing quarter-mile, 15.2 s. Acceleration: 0-30 m.p.h., 2.8 s.; 0-50 m.p.h., 5.6 s.; 0-60 m.p.h., 7.6 s.; 0-80 m.p.h., 13 s.; 0-100 m.p.h., 19.9 s.

Fuel consumption: 14 to 18 m.p.g

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ACCELERATION GRAPH

