

IT IS JUST OVER four months since we took delivery of our new Jensen and during that time the car has completed 8,000 miles of varied motoring; the total being evenly divided between high-speed cruising and town work.

Naturally enough this has given us the opportunity of living with the car at close quarters, allowing us to do an extended road test and gain the knowledge of the car that only an owner-driver can achieve.

One thing is quite certain, however, that the "Topic Choice" was a good one, for the car has been remarkably free from teething troubles.

The running-in period for a thousand miles was quite painless, to keep the car below 2,500 revs with a road speed of 60 m.p.h. is no hardship. The first thousand-mile service was a perfectly standard affair; the only complaint being a faulty water temperature gauge which was quickly replaced.

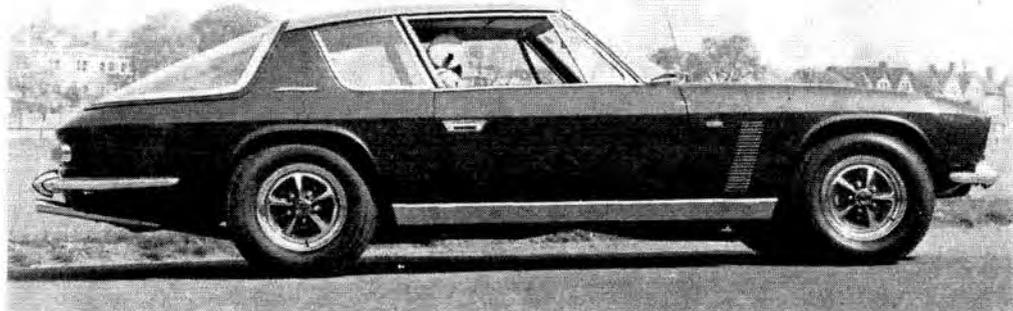
At 4,000 miles the car was given a complete check-over, a new electric clock, adjustments to the nearside door hinge and the car was ready for peak performance motoring.

The interior of our car is perfectly standard, but we did select headrests and power steering from the list of extras and, quite naturally, automatic transmission.

The beige-coloured upholstery is still unmarked and promises a long, tidy life. The front seats are full-length, hip-gripping buckets. The backs are fully-reclining and even the most awkwardly-shaped driver would find it impossible not to find a comfortable driving position. The only criticism I can make about the comfort of the vehicle is the need for a slightly more padded seat swab to give more support behind the knees; but then Jensen were fully aware of this and it has been done on the later models.

A further fault has also been rectified in the autumn specification for, although the instrumentation is very good, the tiny oil and water temperature gauge, which is sandwiched between the two main dials, is very difficult to see on our model, but this too has been re-shaped and restyled for 1969.

The instrument console which dominates the "cockpit" is possibly a little confusing until you



ROAD TESTING The *Topic* Jensen Interceptor

BY JOHN B. BALL

become familiar with it. Personally, I like it very much. I find the switches conveniently placed and easy to find, and who could say that it doesn't look impressive?

This new Jensen is a two-plus-two. With the front seats pushed fully back and the seats reclining at a convenient angle, there is only room for two children in the rear; but unless you are a particularly long-legged driver—the 6ft. 4ins. variety—it is no hardship to bring your seat forward one notch. With a similar adjustment to the seat angle there is adequate room for two grown-ups.

On the road the Jensen behaves immaculately. Its acceleration is really something to be experienced, not only from a standing start but also in the medium range. It makes overtaking a simple and rapid affair with full marks for safety, for a stamp-down change to speeds up to 60 m.p.h. will give you a kick in the back as it drops a gear and almost while you catch your breath it will increase your road speed by up to 30%.

When driving a car like the Interceptor, one realizes just how stupid and inadequate the Ministry of Transport's road speed limits are. Our Interceptor at 70 m.p.h. is only just ticking over at half of its power. In fact, on private tests it proved that it will go well over 140 m.p.h., but above all else it has a braking power to match its speed, for at 100 m.p.h. it will pull up in a shorter distance than a Mini at 50 m.p.h. As long as the driver is up to the machine it must be

one of the safest 'animals' on the road.

Fast cornering is no problem; the power-steering needs a little familiarization before you really start to push it, but after this the Interceptor goes round very quick bends at speeds of up to 80 m.p.h.

I do feel, however, that the Dunlop RS5 tyres that were fitted are not really up to the high standard of the car's engineering, for not only do they leave a little to be desired for wet weather motoring, our tyres are seven-eighths worn out in 8,000 miles! We shall experiment to find a better answer.

Many of the items normally described as luxury extras are standard fittings in the Jensen. The electric windows make a quiet purring sound as they rise and fall to a push-button and similarly the aerial. The radio is also a standard item, and very good it is too—speakers at front and rear and tuning betwixt the two!

One of the gimmicks of the *TOPIC* car is its slot stereo system we had built onto the console between the two front seats. To all that have heard it it is truly fabulous. The sound reproduction of tape from classics to pop music is almost unbelievable, and as one passenger remarked... "it is better than my five hundred quids' worth at home..."

The rear end of the line of the Jensen is quite spectacular, a very large window contains a heating element for demisting, and the boot is opened by hinging the whole unit upwards. This

reveals a large cavity and a considerable amount of boot space—which is pleasingly enough uncluttered by the spare wheel, which is placed beneath the platform.

At night the saloon interior is well-lit with a rheostat control brightness behind all of the instruments, whilst out front you have four powerful quartz iodine headlights which dip in tandem, giving a range of visibility comparable to the car's performance.

After 8,000 miles I think that this Jensen is the complete answer. It does live up to its claim as 'one of the most advanced cars of our time', and who could want more than to be sitting comfortably with your head in the head-rest, the engine purring away quietly at 4,000 revs, your road speed 100 m.p.h., no effort required for either the power steering or the automatic transmission, and to complete the whole thing, soft music flowing from either the radio or the tape according to choice? When we can beat this we will change our car.

SPECIFICATION:

ENGINE

Chrysler V8 6276 c.c.
Max. Power 325 b.h.p.

BODY

Length 15ft. 8ins.
Width 5ft. 9ins.
Turning Circle 38ft.

PERFORMANCE

Acceleration
0-60 in 7.2 secs.
0-100 in 16.3 secs.

Top Speed 142 m.p.h.

Petrol 14-16 m.p.g.

Price £25,067 inc. tax.