

MOTORWEEK

Fiat 130 coupé for Britain

Fiat UK have begun importing rhd versions of the striking Pininfarina coachbuilt 130 Coupe. It will sell for £5257.

Powered by a 3.2-litre twin ohc V6 developing 165bhp (DIN) at 5600rpm, the car is equipped as standard with a three-speed automatic transmission and boasts a top speed of around 118mph. Manual, five-speed transmission is an optional extra.

The car rates as the most sumptuous Fiat to-date and features such as tinted glass, velvet covered seats, a fully adjustable driving position, electric windows and a radio and combined stereo tape deck should make it a comfortable form of long distance transport.

A brief drive of one of the first examples to reach Britain proved the car to be well insulated from road and engine noises. The engine revs freely up to 6000rpm and the change action of the automatic is unobtrusive.

A limited slip differential is standard equipment and the cornering abilities are of quite a high order. There is little apparent roll and the only discomfort when driven hard is the dive action which road dips induce on the long travel strut-type suspension.

This apart, the level of comfort rates highly for its class and in accommodation and sporting appeal the 130 will prove a worthy contestant for the big BMWs and Mercedes.

Tony Scott



Cortina heads car sales

The Ford Cortina has dislodged British Leyland's 1100/1300 range as Britain's top selling car and in turn the Escort has dislodged the Mini from 2nd place.

This is revealed in the first quarter registration results for 1972, published by the SMMT. The Cortina led with 47,877 and the Escort was 2nd with 32,597. BL's 1100/1300 range attracted only 29,963 buyers (compared with 37,391 in '71) and was placed 3rd. Fourth was the Marina with 29,761 and in 5th spot came the Mini (25,509 compared with 25,789 in '71). The Viva rated 6th with 23,284.

Volvos live the longest

Volvo cars top the list in a life expectancy chart produced by AB Svensk Bilprovning, the Swedish vehicle testing authority. Of a chart comprising 17 makes, British Leyland rate 15th with 10.2 years and Chrysler

8th with 11.3. Volvo, who top the list for the second year in succession, have a life expectancy of 14.2 years.

These figures are regarded as an accurate guide because in Sweden all cars undergo a stringent annual inspection from which the authorities can

determine the "drop-out" rate.

Second in the longevity stakes are Volkswagen — their cars last an average of 13.2 years. Mercedes are next with 12.4. Ford rate 9th with 11.2 and the distinction of 17th place rests with Simca. Their cars are said to last only 9.9 years.

British firm to develop rotary engine

A British engineering company has secured a development contract for the American Anidyne rotary engine. The engine will be developed by Associated Engineering Developments at Cawston House, Rugby, to the prototype/pre-production stage.

The engine is a rotary design which is said to differ from the Wankel engine in several important respects. Moreover, the designers claim major improvements in sealing performance, life, pollution characteristics and cost of manufacture.

Held over

Sorry, but the promised article dealing with Transpo '72 and the Washington ESV conference has had to be held over until next week.

