

AUTOSPORT

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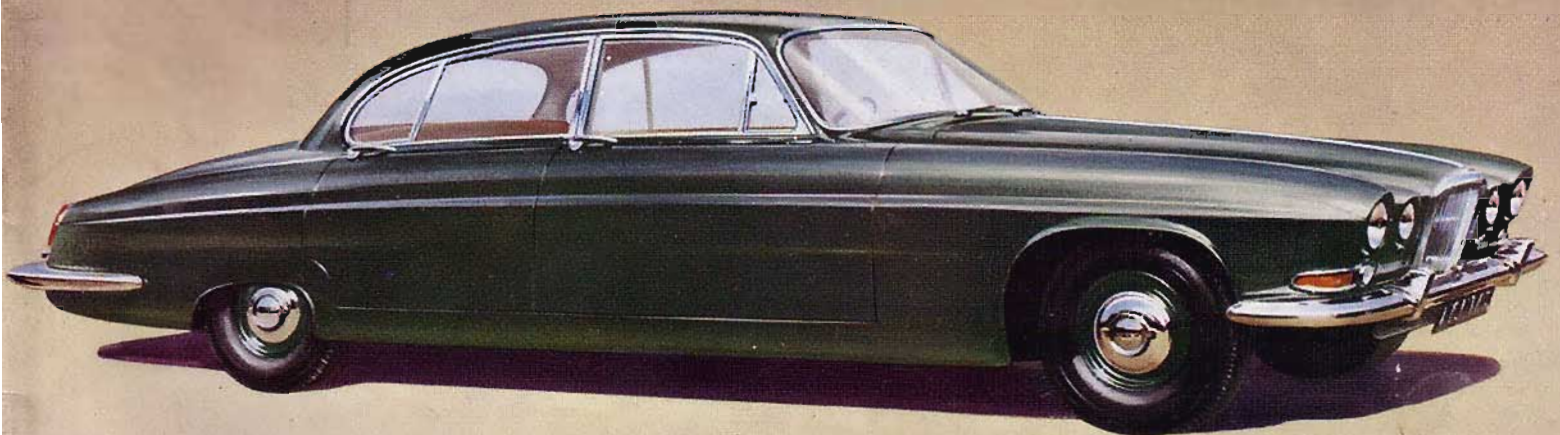
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THE FASCINATION OF A FERRARI

A Weekend With
a "2 plus 2"—
A Masterpiece from Maranello

BY GREGOR GRANT



CALL it a status symbol, prestige car or what you will, the Ferrari has that indefinable quality which makes it one of the most desirable of all motor-cars. Naturally it is costly, but one cannot obtain the kind of workmanship that goes into a Ferrari without parting with a good deal of folding money. For several years the marque was unashamedly a sports car, in keeping with Maranello's racing background. Gradually, however, there developed a demand for a real luxury version which, whilst retaining the wonderful performance for which the "Prancing Horse" machines are famed, would be much more refined altogether.

Italy's finest coachbuilders produced many really beautiful machines, but, in the main, they were true *gran turismo* cars, and were inclined to be somewhat noisy and intractable. With the introduction of Farina's "2 plus 2" came a Ferrari which has all the qualities of the great "prestige" vehicles of the past, allied to modern advanced automobile engineering. It has not the tremendous performance of the world-famous 250GT Berlinetta, but it is undoubtedly the fastest four-passenger car in the world. The V12 engine is as smooth as silk; the car will trickle along at about 10 m.p.h. in top gear; it has a superb all-synchromesh gearbox; Dunlop disc brakes are fitted on all wheels, and the road-holding is proof of the machine's racing heritage.

From the four exhaust pipes comes a pleasant burble, which never develops into a roar, but the sound could only be emitted from a Ferrari. Acceleration is breathtaking, and it is difficult to believe that the engine capacity is just 3 litres. The beautifully made power-unit is basically that of the 250GT, but smaller-choke triple Weber carburettors are employed. Power output is modestly stated as 240 b.h.p.—or 40 b.h.p. less than the Berlinetta. Whatever the en-

THE DRIVING POSITION is excellent, as one would expect in a race-bred car, although the gear-lever could, with advantage, be nearer the driver.

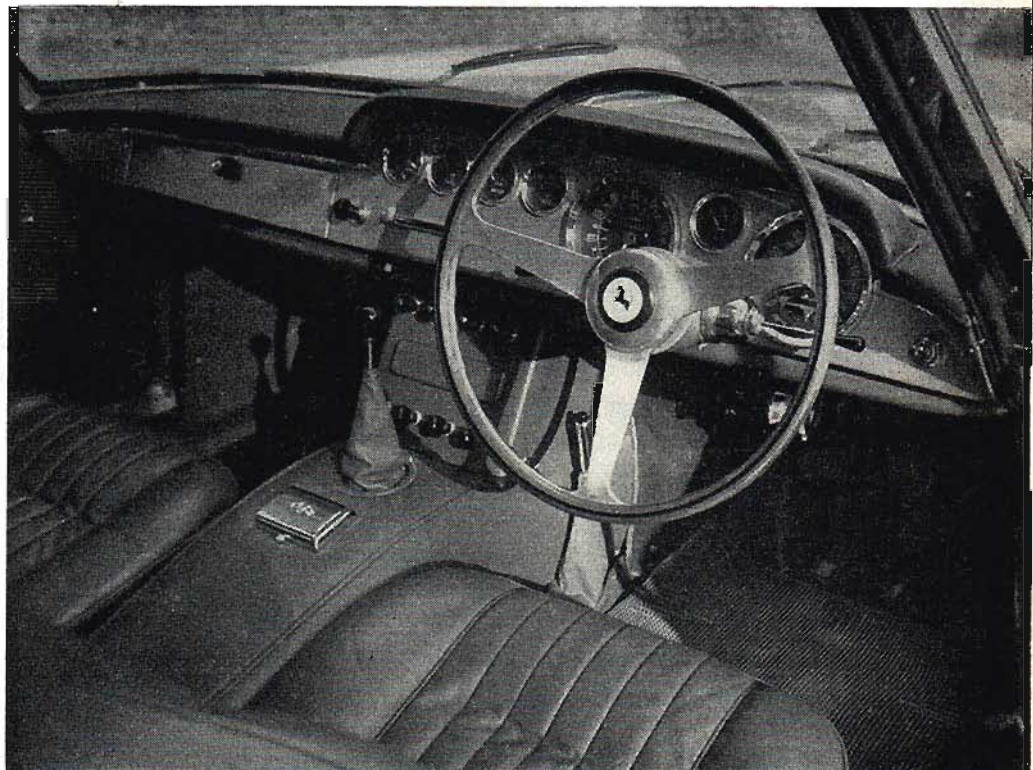
gine produces, it does so in an effortless manner. Torque is excellent, and top-gear acceleration, even in overdrive, is quite outstanding insofar as a high-revving V12 engine is concerned.

Naturally everyone will ask: "What'll she do?" The answer is a timed 138.6 m.p.h. in full standard trim, and using normal "Super" Shell fuel. On M1, the Ferrari cruises happily at over 110 m.p.h., and had a radio been fitted to the car, I am certain that it could have been clearly heard. In point of fact, there is a lack of wind-noise at high speeds which borders on the uncanny.

However, one touch on the electric window-operating switch, and one is nearly blown into the back of the car.

This window-operating device is extremely efficient, and even the far-side door-window can be controlled from the driver's seat. Instrumentation is simple in lay-out, but most attractive. After all, the object is to be able to read the various dials as easily as possible. Ferrari has scrupulously avoided the "juke-box" arrangement found in certain other vehicles.

It is described as the "2 plus 2", but
(Continued on page 537)



Ferrari—continued

the car is a genuine four-seater, with an immense amount of luggage space. Deep wells behind the front seats give plenty of leg-room for passengers, and there is comfort in plenty. Soft leather is used throughout, and repeated on the anti-crash lining of the scuttle. A typical, polished alloy steering wheel has a wooden rim, and the proud "Prancing Horse" embossed in the centre.

Road-holding must reach perfection where a rigid axle is concerned, and the slight suggestion of under-steer rather reflects the Ferrari's racing heritage. It is, however, extremely sensitive to tyre pressures, and for the sort of driving that this machine encourages, one would be well advised to err on the high side.

With such a thoroughbred, it is hard to find anything to criticize. However, I feel that the gear-lever is rather out of the way and could, with advantage, be brought back nearer to the driver's hand. The heater, although tremendously effective, has a very noisy blower. Also, I do believe that for such a rapid machine, the headlamps could be improved. Even with perfect focusing, they seemed to lack penetration and range.

The trouble with driving a Ferrari 2 plus 2 is that, with a few exceptions, other cars seem very second-rate. It is easy to understand the fascination of really sound engineering, and the construction of a car by people who fully understand these things. Quality is something that can be acquired only by concentrating on the highest possible standard, and Maranello certainly has achieved this.

Petrol consumption is surprisingly light for a 140 m.p.h. car. Driven moderately, *i.e.*, around 90 m.p.h., almost 20 m.p.g. can be obtained. The Laycock-de Normanville overdrive (on top gear only) contributes largely to this.

It is noticeable that, when accelerating up to and over 5,000 r.p.m., a flick into overdrive and the Ferrari still surges forward. One always has to keep a sharp eye on the r.p.m. counter, for that ghost-like V12 will shoot up the scale at an altogether alarming rate. Anyway, 6,500 r.p.m. is as much as anyone will want to use (the scale goes up to 8 thou!).

There was no time during "my ownership" to calibrate the speedometer, so acceleration figures were not taken. One or two standing quarter-mile runs were made in opposite directions, and the mean average worked out at precisely 16 secs.—without attempting anything in the nature of racing changes. Axle-tramp was conspicuous by its absence, and the clutch had as smooth a take-up as any I have ever experienced. This unit was inclined to be the Achilles Heel of earlier models, but that is all past—which means that the 2 plus 2 can be used as a town carriage without compunction.

Altogether it was an exciting weekend, which came to an end all too quickly, and the Ferrari was, in due course, handed back to Maranello Concessionaires.

PININFARINA has created a really beautiful body for the 2 plus 2 (right). This three-quarter rear view is the one most likely to be seen by other motorists!



WHAT ABOUT the kitchen sink? The Ferrari's boot will hold an immense amount of luggage as can be seen from this photograph.



THE REAR SEAT passengers are well provided for. Deep wells behind the front seats give plenty of room to passengers in the back.

