

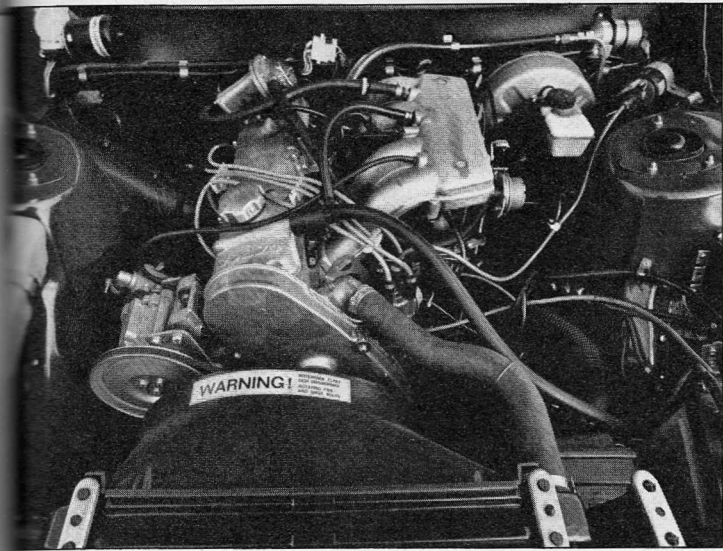
to the days of the 122S, but at least there is a little Viking blood back in the cars.

Next most important improvement is acceleration, the new car beating last year's 0-60 mph time of 14.2 sec with a clocking of 13.0 flat. The 1976 quarter-mile time undercuts the 1975 mark by 2.3 sec, with a 18.8-sec timing. Last year's car, by the way, had a final drive ratio of 4.30:1, while our new California car had a 3.91:1 gear combined with higher numerical gear ratios for 1st and 2nd in the gearbox. You'd expect that to show in the gas mileage figures and it does, the new engine getting 21.0 mpg versus 18.5 mpg in 1975.

Now, though, the engine seems to enjoy revving, able to go right to the 6000-rpm rev limit without sounding strained. The final form of the overhead valve engine was good for about 4000 rpm and then left the impression it was about to seize. What's more, you don't have to run this to the limit in each gear since the flexibility given the 821F by its broader torque curve allows you to pick a gear and stay and not be continually thrashing about in the gearbox.

Since the aluminum keeps the weight of the new, larger engine to about that of the older iron model, the handling hasn't changed appreciably since 1975, but that had been enough of an advance over the previous year; we aren't about to complain. The car still isn't a street racer and takes a slightly ambiguous set in a hard corner, thanks to the softer springing between 1974 and 1975. Yet, the improved ride over the Volvos of the early Seventies makes it worth it.

Besides, if you care to go beyond stock, Volvo has an interesting variety of semi- or full-competition options. The 240 sedans already have anti-roll bars front and rear so they would be easy to replace and a variety of shocks are available if the standard tubes are a bit soft for you. Our test car had two extra items: a smaller, leather-wrapped GT steering wheel and



the very complete replacement instrument panel. As little frivolity as there is in the standard dash, it is sparse on instruments and this option more than makes up for it, with speedometer, tach and oil pressure, voltmeter, fuel level and temperature gauges. Oddly enough, despite their very serious appearance, both the tach and speedo weren't particularly accurate.

That was our only possible complaint about this newest Volvo. It is pleasant to report that Gothenburg has finally managed to bring the Volvos out of the Sixties and the total car is now as advanced and complete as we expect from Volvo. That metamorphosis hasn't made the cars any cheaper, but it has kept them in the tradition of the "11-Year Car" and "Drive it like you hate it." That is what the public expects from Volvo and judging by the fact that 1975 was the best year Volvo has had in the U.S., the public is willing to pay for it. &

PRICE

List price, all POE \$6995
Price as tested \$7770

ROAD TEST RESULTS

GENERAL

Curb weight, lb 2915
Weight distribution (with driver),
• front/rear, % 51/49
Wheelbase, in. 104.0
Track, front/rear 55.9/53.1
Length 192.6
Width 67.1
Height 56.5
Fuel capacity, U.S. gal. 15.8

ACCELERATION

Time to distance, see:
0-100 ft 3.9
0-500 ft 10.3
0-1320 ft (% mi) 18.8
Speed at end of % mi, mph .. 71.5
Time to speed, sec:
0-30 mph 4.2
0-50 mph 9.5
0-60 mph 13.0
0-70 mph 17.8
0-80 mph 26.5

CHASSIS & BODY

Body/frame unit steel
Brake system .. 10.3-in. discs front,
11.0-in. discs rear, vac assist
Wheels steel disc, 14 x 5HJ
Tires Michelin X, 185SR-14
Steering type rack & pinion,
power assisted
Turns, lock-to-lock 3.5
Suspension, front/rear: MacPherson
struts, lower A-arms, coil springs,
tube shocks, anti-roll bar/live axle
on trailing arms & Panhard rod,
coil springs, tube shocks, a-r bar

SPEEDS IN GEARS

OD (4250 rpm) 98
4th (5100) 98
3rd (6000) 77
2nd (6000) 49
1st (6000) 28

FUEL ECONOMY

Normal driving, mpg 21.0

BRAKES

Minimum stopping distances, ft:
From 60 mph 180
From 80 mph 287
Control in panic stop ... very good
Pedal effort for 0.5g stop, lb...30
Fade: percent increase in pedal effort
to maintain 0.5g deceleration in
6 stops from 60 mph 27
Overall brake rating good

HANDLING

Speed on 100-ft radius, mph .. 31.7
Lateral acceleration, g 0.673
Speedthru 700-ft slalom, mph...53.0

INTERIOR NOISE

All noise readings in dBA:
Constant 30 mph 60
50 mph 65
70 mph 72

ENGINE & DRIVETRAIN

Type sohc inline 4
Bore x stroke, mm 92.0 x 80.0
Displacement, cc/cu in. .. 2127/130
Compression ratio 8.5:1
Bhp @ rpm, netL 99 @ 5200
Torque @ rpm, lb-ft..114 @ 2500
Transmission...4-sp manual with '00
Gear ratios: OD (0.80) 3.13:1
4th (1.00) 3.91:1
3rd (1.37) 5.36:1
2nd (2.16) 8.45:1
1st (3.71) 14.51:1
Final drive ratio 3.91:1

CALCULATED DATA

Lb/bhp (test weight) 32.8
Mph/1000 rpm (OD) 23.0
Engine revs/mi (60 mph)..... 2610
R&T steering index 1.13
Brake swept area, sq in./ton .. 258

SPEEDOMETER ERROR

30 mph indicated is actually...31.0
60 mph 60.0
70 mph 69.0

ACCELERATION

