

# VIA VOLVO

A photograph of Volvo's new international headquarters in Göteborg, Sweden. The image shows a modern building with large concrete pillars and a glass facade, set against a sunset sky. The building is situated on a grassy area with some landscaping.

Volvo's New  
International Headquarters  
Göteborg, Sweden

Summer 1985

*About the Cover*

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Jennifer Bartlett's sculpture finds a home at Volvo's new international headquarters...page 20. Photograph courtesy of *House and Garden*. ©1985 by Condé Nast Publications Inc.

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# Whatever Happened to that Volvo Wagon?



*by Warren Weith*

It's not often that I lose a car. As a matter of fact, it's only happened to me once, but it did make me feel a bit like the all-consuming, all-American consumer. A staunch member of the use-it-up, throw-it-away society.

It all started with a question.

Nattering on the 'phone with another Volvonaught, I was asked if I'd ever owned a station wagon. My quick answer was "No."

Then I thought, "Hey, wait a minute, whatever happened to my Sea Level Wagon? The one I used to haul my kayak around in?" No answer popped into my head, so I referred the question to the house answer lady.

"Jane, whatever happened to that station wagon? The one with the faded paint that you said was a Laura Ashley blue?"

"Did you look under the bed?"

Thirty years of marriage may have dimmed Jane's patience, but not—God help me—her pointed wit.

"Yes, I did. It's not there."

The only result of this exchange was to rev up my aging memory banks. Certainly I had owned a Volvo station wagon.



I had bought one after getting bored with the job of roof-topping the kayak on our number two Volvo sedan...the one with the bent front bumper that gave it a lovely, sneering look. This lifting, and unlifting of boat-shaped objects—for a jockey-sized man—is a chore best reserved for Mack Sennett-type comedy.

Having measured a Volvo wagon, while a bemused dealer looked on, I knew that the kyack—with its bow acting as a bundling board between driver and passenger—would just fit, even with the tailgate closed.

Armed with this information, I alerted my automotive purchasing agent. (At that point in time—1975—this was my son Chris who had a summer job on the Port Jefferson ferry. He loaded and unloaded hundreds of cars a week.)

I put my order in: a 1970 4-cylinder wagon, manual transmission, no air or music, any color except green, licensed and inspected for about \$500. Chris just laughed. I had faith in the luck of the Weith. About two weeks later, Chris called from the ferry dock in Bridgeport. “Meet the 2 o’clock boat at Port Jeff, and bring your money. I’ve got your wagon.”

If memory serves, the story went like this: the wagon was owned by a young seaman en route to JFK, via the ferry, for a plane to Texas and a berth on a tug working out of Galveston. What he didn’t need was a car sitting in an airport parking lot in New York. I suppose I could have held out for \$400, plus a ride to the airport. But I had planned to spend the afternoon on Conscious Bay in the kyack, so I went full sled for the whole \$500. Sometimes I get the feeling that little things like this are what separates me from the mythic American...the self-made millionaire.

But to return to my wagon, and my minor hobby of reading old Volvos like potsherds from an archaeological dig. This one seemed to be a young man’s car. A young man with a complete set of tools, and lots of energy. The front seats were replacements from a 6-cylinder sedan, from there on back it was all original wagon interior. The paint work was still putting up a good fight against sun and too many coats of silicone polish, but had faded to a lovely soft blue. The usual collection of dings and dents had been carefully sanded and painted with unfaded blue, which made them—if anything—more noticeable.

The odometer, which didn’t seem to

work, indicated 150 thousand miles, and the gas gauge relayed only two bits of information...“E” or “F”...anything in-between was left to your imagination.

The engine had been treated to the young car owner’s tuning regimen. This, as anybody who has been there knows, consists of heavy weight oil and hotter spark plugs. It’s amazing how long—my wagon must have clocked at least 200 thousand miles before arriving at Port Jefferson—a Volvo engine fed on this diet can be run past the point of serious repairs. Not that it ever let me down. It was just uncertain. When faced with a hill it was uncertain just what gear would be needed to get it and you to the top.

But horses for courses. It was to be a sea-level car. Meant to haul me and my kyack to some creek or bay, crouch unobtrusively on the muddy shore ready to do the necessary work road-bound part of the day. And this is what it did without any complaints for three summers. Then, being a man of sudden enthusiasms and even quicker disinterest, kyacking was replaced by model airplane building. Trips to the flying field—requiring ascent and descent of at least two hills—were best managed in one of the sedans, so the wagon was little used.

On moving it one spring, it proved a reluctant starter. This prompted me to drop it off at a local garage for clean plugs and points. And that’s the last time I remember seeing it.

Could I have forgotten to pick it up? It’s possible. Do I remember which garage? No. Could Christopher have picked it up and driven it back to school? He says no, and the number of hills between here and there makes this a plausible answer. I’m afraid the ultimate destination of that faded-blue wagon, like the Flying Dutchman, will always remain shrouded in mystery. Or what passes for mystery around my house...the Old Man’s memory.

It’s a memory that can’t reproduce yesterday’s luncheon menu but it can scroll up my encounter with the first Volvo wagons in this country. And in broadcast-quality brightness yet!

This long-range memory shift can go back quite a long way in time. Which is all to the good because Volvo and the station wagon go back a long way together. Some of the vehicles landed in this country almost 30 years ago were wagons. Of course, those early station wagons seemed to suffer a bit of a sea change. I know because I was sorta there. It went like this. A pioneer

Volvo Dealer called me, more years ago than I like to think about, to ask if I’d like to drive one of his newly arrived Volvos up to a sports car race in Beverly, Mass. Now this suited me right down to the ground. The big thing at that time, at least among car nuts, was to show up at the races in some rare and/or exotic machine. I should have sensed that there was a method to this dealer’s apparent madness when he said he’d have the vehicle in question washed, polished and delivered to my front door the morning prior to race day. That point in time arrived and a brand new 1934 Ford panel truck with side windows pulled up at my front door. It was filled to the gunwales with the Dealer’s flyers and brochures. It wasn’t until I got close enough to read the hood badge that I realized that this strange machine from the past was the latest Swedish interpretation of that American contribution to motoring, the “Station Wagon.” It was called the 210 wagon, and it was practical to the point of being painful.

I also realized that I was supposed to pass out all that printed propaganda to happy race goers as they streamed through the gates. Showing up in something that was one step removed from the Post Office Motor Pool, and handing out circulars to boot was one sure way of losing face with the sports car set. But I was young and my personal car was old, and Beverly, Mass, was a long way off, and I did want to see Carroll Shelby drive that big red Ferrari. So I went. And I did hand out the flyers, and I did see Shelby win, and I did enjoy myself...even though there wasn’t even a tailgate worthy of the name on that Volvo for the post-race pit party. But I’ve matured, and so has the Volvo station wagon. I’m not so concerned about what the “set” thinks of me anymore, and the latest wagon from those smart, blonde, blue-eyed folks from way up North has a performance equal to many of the cars that were racing on that day I thought I’d never live down. In fact, one of the new Volvo 700 Series Wagons would be a perfect answer to the question, “How should the jet set get to the airport?” After all, we wouldn’t want them to miss their flight, or not have enough room for that matched set of *Hermès* luggage, would we? ■

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# STYLE SCAND



For decades Scandinavia has been in the forefront of contemporary design.

Beginning in the late 1920s, such innovators as the Danish teacher/designer, Kaare Klint, and the Finnish architectural genius, Alvar Aalto, won international recognition for revolutionary concepts in furniture design.

Aalto's classic 1930 cantilever chair was a model of early functionalism, made entirely of plywood and laminated birch. And Klint's landmark proportion studies resulted in furniture with graceful, uncluttered lines. His painstaking woodcraft in fine oiled Danish teak was a hallmark of the Danish furniture industry.

The decade of the fifties gave Scandinavian design the most visibility it had ever enjoyed. Designers like Carl Malmsten, hailed as the father of modern Swedish furniture, achieved major international prominence. Malmsten's designs like those of another influential Swede, Bruno Mathsson, are interesting and praiseworthy for their timelessness.

In recent years, a new breed of Nordic artisan/designer has emerged: artists whose design principals, though rooted in modernism, still reflect changing cultural needs and new technology.



Alvar Aalto  
Cantilever chair, Finland



Alvar Aalto  
Lead crystal vase, Finland



Dansk porcelain, Denmark

**B**loomingdale's spring promotion, *Style Scandinavia* brought the best of this current design trend to the American audience. The trend setting, New York based department store and its 14 subsidiaries nationwide assembled an impressive range of home furnishings from Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, and Finland.

Every object in the promotion was carefully selected to illustrate the rich variety of Scandinavian design, from furniture, lamps, rugs, and stemware to practical household products such as table linens, textiles, and papergoods. There was even a line of imported food products for the delicious open-faced sandwiches and smorgasbords that the Scandinavians invented.

There was a collection of contemporary Stelton stainless steel tableware, Jensen silver, and elegant crystal from Iittala of Finland, a company which has been making apothecary and household glass for more than a century.

Bloomingdale's Iittala collection included reproductions of designs created by the versatile Aalto more than 35 years ago. In one of the "model" rooms where Scandinavian merchandise was adapted for the American lifestyle, there was a Dux of Sweden chrome bed by Bruno Mathsson whose designs are still in production today.

"Part of the reason these designs never change is because they're good—permanent," said Julian Tomchin, Bloomingdale's Vice President and Director of Home Furnishings. "The cost of them has for several years been exceptionally high. Now, with the U.S. dollar as strong as it is, there's an opportunity to bring classics like Stelton, Iittala, Rorstand, and other items of that genre, back into the marketplace."

It's been said that time hands down its own verdict: that which is good endures. That adage helps to explain the reason for the strong revival of interest in North America for things Scandinavian.

Certainly the Museum of Modern Art's recent retrospective of Aalto's furniture, glass, and lighting fixtures gave credence to the trend, as did a nostalgia for the 50's "look" brought on by a younger generation of buyers. This prompted the opening of specialty shops selling merchandise reminiscent of Scandinavian design. Bloomingdale's, not to be outdone by its competitors, began to investigate the new trend.

At first, "Bloomies" only sent a few buyers on an exploratory trip in search of a limited amount of merchandise. "What they brought back sold well," noted Furniture Fashion Director, Barbara Deichmann. "At the same time we noticed an upswing in our pre-existing business in Scandinavian items, so we went back for more."

Once the idea of *Style Scandinavian* took hold, a small army of Bloomingdale's representatives spent weeks in each of the countries, scooping up everything new and original and send-





Hans-Agne Jacobsson  
Tropicana table lamps, Sweden



Balans Variable chair, Norway



Scandinavian bed linens

ing it home as fast as their imagination and budgets would allow.

There are no generalizations to characterize Scandinavian design today. Within a common framework, each of the countries shows independent features in design and production. To be sure, the younger generation of Nordic designers hasn't abandoned the mellow use of natural wood—beech, teak, birch—only now, more laminates have been added, as have lacquered finishes. Above all, there has been an explosion of color.

The most innovative pieces are Memphis-inspired, a style whimsical in nature and enhanced by bold colors. It was formulated in 1981 by a radical Italian design group which broke all the rules about how furniture should look (the name is taken in part from Elvis Presley's hometown).

Since then, the style has toned down somewhat, but it has had a stimulating effect on designers worldwide. Yyö Kukkapuro's armchair from Finland

with its irregular shaped arms and white leather seats is a prime example.

Though it had been sold elsewhere, Bloomingdale's introduced the Balans Variable, which is probably the most radical and successful of Scandinavian chairs to appear in the past few years (40,000 were sold in 1983). Produced by Håg of Norway and based on posture studies, the design encourages the support of body weight on the knees instead of the spine as in ordinary chairs.

Other areas of design have been similarly updated. There's a freshness about the textiles from Marimekko in Finland and Id in Sweden. Bloomingdale's purchased fabrics from these manufacturers, in pastel and in clear, brilliant colors for bedroom ensembles and other accessories.

Scandinavia also has a grand tradition for clear, uncomplicated graphics, illustrations, and powerful artistic posters. Striking examples of this can be found in the promotion's paper-

goods—writing paper, posters, gift-wraps, notebooks, and much more.

*Style Scandinavia* was a unique opportunity to enhance American understanding and appreciation of Scandinavia, its people and their way of life.

A cultural exhibit concurrent with the promotion and sponsored by VOLVO was intended to show a cross-section of daily life in Scandinavia from the 19th-century to the present. Among the highlights were Scandinavian crafts, folk art, and a display of traditional costumes, a photo essay, "Dream of America" by Jacob Rüs and works by the noted Swedish illustrator, Carl Laarson. A half-sized replica in bronze of "The Little Mermaid" by the famous Dane sculptor, Edvard Erickson, was on view at the New York store. ■

Terri Lowen Finn writes about food and cultural events for the *The New York Times*.

You may find *Scandinavian Modern Design—1880-1980*, published by Harry N. Abrams, Inc., an invaluable resource for further information about 20th-century design influence.

# The 700 Series





# Station Wagons



However modest we may be in our day-to-day expectations, when it comes to our cars, we'd like to have it both ways. We all appreciate the elements associated with a fine automobile: reliable and sophisticated performance; the sort of durability and engineering that doesn't show, but can always be depended on. Of course, we also want sleekness and luxury of design, both inside and out: design that enfolds us in comfort while turning heads.





At the same time, however, we'd like to be able to turn our motorized chariots into Conestoga wagons at the drop of a hat, loading them up with a variety of heavy, bulky, or oddly-shaped objects; and driving them off without the slightest loss of the aforementioned pleasures.

The solution, of course, is the station wagon. Yet it's an answer that has always generated debate among car owners. The hope, it would seem, has always been for a machine that combines the stylistic, automotive and ergonomic qualities of a fine sedan with the flexible and convenient utility of a wagon.

It is a hope that, by and large, has gone unrealized. Until now, that is. Now making their debut in North America are Volvo's newest models: the 700 series station wagons.

Those familiar with Volvo's 700 series sedans will know the kind of overall quality they afford: the handling of a high-performance automobile combined with solid dependability; a sophistication and elegance of style, setting each model squarely in the

enduring pantheon of design tradition; safety features, offering protection both before and during a crash; and a level of ergonomic excellence unsurpassed by any other automobile on the road.

To this we have added enough extra space to handle a multitude of transportation needs. But space, we know, isn't enough; all the space in the world won't help if it's poorly designed and planned. We've sought to maximize the flexibility of the 700 wagons' extra footage. The rear seat, for example, can be folded down in sections, to permit greater cargo capacity while retaining a high degree of passenger comfort. Tie-down rings have been strategically placed throughout the primary cargo area, enabling you to better secure a variety of loads. A lockable storage compartment beneath the cargo area floor insures the safety of your valuables. And conveniently located rear seat releases mean that you won't have to climb all over your seats to make simple adjustments in the back.

Such substance and flexibility suggests a bay as big as a semi's; yet,

incredibly, the 700 series station wagons take up no more space than their sedan counterparts. Moreover, the similarity between the two is such that, were it not for all that extra room, you'd swear you were driving a sedan.

Having it both ways may, in some cases, be a bit of an indulgence. But when it comes to a station wagon, we think it's more of a necessity. With the series 700 wagons, we've given you more than just the finest combination of automotive elements on the road. We've also given you indulgence—guilt-free. ■

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The following 1985 700 Series wagons are currently available. They match their sedans in appointments as well as performance:

760 Turbo  
760 GLE Turbo Diesel  
740 Turbo  
740 GLE  
740 GLE Turbo Diesel

Stop by and take one out for a test drive. You just may decide to add another Volvo to your collection.

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by Anthony Assenza

Getting into a car with two strangers for eight days isn't the smartest or the most highly recommended way of seeing the country. The last time I tried something like that it turned into a cross-country version of *Lifeboat*. We took turns hanging outside the car just to avoid having to talk to each other. With that previous experience as the only thing to go by, it was with some trepidation that I accepted the offer of Bob Austin (a Volvo PR guy) to ride along with Wayne Baldwin and Dan Johnston in the One Lap of America. Wayne and Dan are both Volvo employees who had somehow managed to convince their employer that cutting loose a brand new 740 Turbo wagon for eight days was really a great idea.

For those who don't know, One Lap of America is an event that grew out of the much publicized and even movie-ized event known as the Cannonball Baker Sea to Shining Sea Memorial Trophy Dash. The Cannonball Run as it came to be known was one of the most blatantly illegal events ever held on the public roads. This time out, Brock Yates, the organizer, throttled back the event and transformed it into a legal TSD (Time/Speed/Distance) road rally. The rally route ran roughly the perimeter of the U.S. The goal was to average 55 mph (88 km/h) and hit various checkpoints along the route at specified times. Being too early at a checkpoint in a TSD event is just as bad as being too late. The idea is to hit the checkpoint dead on your second. Penalties are exacted at the rate of one point per second. Keeping up that kind of accuracy over roughly 8700 miles isn't quite like trying to hit Uranus with a slingshot, but it's close.

I met up with Wayne and Dan in Troy, Michigan. We were all on our best behaviour... for me, that's a significant accomplishment.

The next morning I got my first look at the car and was duly impressed. Wayne and Dan had done a great job of prepping the wagon for the

journey. In addition to a radar detector, CB, police/weather scanner and a cellular phone, we had a couple of spare wheels mounted with Pirelli tires, a cooler full of Swedish non-alcoholic apple wine, licorice twirls, trail mix, and a complete set of tools—just in case. The wagon was also equipped with an optional roof-mounted, fiberglass luggage carrier. I'd never seen one before but, boy, did it look spacey—kind of like a photon torpedo tube. We were definitely the best looking vehicle out of the 80 odd entries. With all the gear and us aboard, the wagon had gained some 850 pounds (385.5 kg).

The event started just behind Cobo Hall in Detroit. We were assigned car number 56. The cars left in one minute intervals with us leaving 56 minutes after car 00 left. I took the opportunity on the first leg from Detroit to our first checkpoint in Michigan's Upper Peninsula to familiar-

ize myself with the car, the stereo system (for me a critical feature of any car), the Hewlett-Packard HP 110 computer Dan brought along for doing calculations, and to gauge how much verbal nonsense Dan and Wayne could tolerate before they heaved me bodily out of the car. They passed the "famous lines from Bela Lugosi movies" test but failed the *Blade Runner* grilling. They'd only seen the movie once, roughly 56 fewer times than I'd seen it.

Since I was the least experienced rallyist of the three, I spend most of the drive in the back seat—a really roomy place, actually, considering I had to share it with all our winter jackets, food, briefcases, computer, and licorice twirls. Our 740 had a leather interior, a good thing, too. On that first leg I realized I had a drinking problem—whenever I popped open a bottle of apple "wine" I always managed to get at least some of it into my mouth.

We made our first checkpoint in Houghton, Michigan, exactly on time. But on the special time stage that followed, we made a wrong turn and headed off into unknown Sergeant Preston territory. We ended up in places that were blank on the map. "Magellan" Johnston managed to get us turned around the right way and we finally made it to the checkpoint but collected 1700 penalty points.

After Houghton, our next checkpoint was some 1000 miles away. We settled down for the long drone. Our route would take us through Minnesota and finally to someplace called Kalispell, Montana. A few miles before the Montana border, it began to snow. By the time we were in the Montana border town of Glendive, the temperature had dropped below the point where you start eating your sled dogs. The flurries had turned into a full scale blizzard. The local radio station informed us that I-94 was closed because of severe drifts and high winds. There were reports that Saber-Toothed tigers were preying on stranded motorists. The CB chatter informed us











that the entire One Lap was stopping in Glendive to call the organizers in Detroit to ask for instructions.

The instructions weren't exactly what we wanted to hear. They said to press on. The checkpoint would be open and it was up to us to make it there any way we could. About half the field gave up and decided to wait out the storm in a motel. Wayne, Dan, and I decided to press on. We not only had faith in the car but I'd also heard that the final stages of hypothermia are actually quite pleasant and that you just sort of nod off to sleep feeling great warmth and well-being. Fortunately, I missed my chance at a first person account of hypothermia. We headed north in an effort to outflank the worst of the blizzard which was heading south. The 740 muscled its way through one of the worst storms I'd ever seen. We drove roughly 270 miles (434.5 km) on a combination of glare ice, snow drifts, and zero visibility. We even climbed the 6000-plus-foot (1828.8 meter) Logan Pass through Glacier National Park. The Volvo was so good through all this that after I finished my driving shift and handed off to Wayne, I fell asleep in the back

seat. Wayne made terrific time through the blizzard, earning the CB handle of "Iceking."

We made the Three Forks checkpoint in Montana with a few minutes to spare. Since it was around 4 AM, we grabbed some coffee, got interviewed by the local newspaper, and waved to the frozen throngs that had assembled to watch us blow through town.

After Montana, the route through Portland, Oregon, Sears Point Raceway in California, and US 1 down the California coastline was a piece of cake. We'd been on the road non-stop for three days, so naturally we'd taken on the appearance of refugees—but we felt like heroes. By the time we got to the Portofino Inn in Los Angeles, we had started treating everyone not on the One Lap as mere mortals.

The Portofino was the only overnight stop on the route. For the first time in three and a half days we got to actually use our legs for something other than pressing our feet into throttle and brake pedals. We also ate food that hadn't been sitting under a tool box for 36 hours.

That night, I was determined to get seriously unwound. Since we weren't

scheduled to leave until after 1 PM, I had plenty of time to recuperate. My driving shift wouldn't come until after dark anyway.

Sort of refreshed and almost rested up we left sunny L.A. the next day and made tracks for Las Vegas. I usually avoid traveling through towns where the founding fathers carried machine guns in violin cases but since the route said we had to, we did. The checkpoint was the Imperial Hotel where the One Lap organizers laid out a terrific food feast.

After Vegas, the route instructions lead us through Phoenix, and down to Terlingua and Big Bend National Park in Texas. The ride was pleasant and uneventful. The weather was much too good. Wayne and Dan and I started hoping for severe storms, flash floods, maybe even another blizzard or some kind of firestorm to winnow out even more of the field and give the Volvo a better chance at a higher finishing position.

Once out of Big Bend, we followed the instructions to San Antonio and Houston. We arrived at Houston at the height of the morning rush hour. The one and only highway through was



clogged with traffic. We spotted one of those diamond lane bypasses which, we found out later, was only open to buses. In California and the Northeast diamond lanes are for car pools as well as buses. Since we had three in the Volvo we figured we qualified as a car pool and took the wide open diamond lane. Five miles later at the end of the lane we were stopped (natch) by a policeman. We pleaded insanity. The cop, who turned out to be a 20-year veteran of the NYC Police Department, spotted the New Jersey plates on the Volvo; must have felt some kind of Granfaloon kinship; and let us go.

After Texas, it was on to New Orleans (Nawlins in Louisiana-speak). The checkpoint in Nawlins was probably the most insidious on the entire route. They brought us into the downtown area at the peak of the afternoon rush hour. It was only by sheer determination, guts, and a loud horn that we clawed our way through traffic and made the checkpoint with only an eight-second penalty.

Waving goodbye to Nawlins, it was a clear shot to Jacksonville, Florida which we made at some ridiculous hour like 4 AM. We'd long abandoned any sort of conventional time keeping. There was no night or day to go by, just road miles yet to go, sleep shifts and the all too rare stops to visit a bathroom. We were on One Lap Standard Time measured by biological cycles of threshold bladder pain.

Once out of Jacksonville, we headed north to Virginia Beach, Virginia, where we had enough time to rent a motel room for an hour, take a shower and rearrange the mess in the cargo bay. The ice in the cooler had melted somewhere in Texas and by Virginia Beach the water had turned into primordial soup. We submitted samples to the Museum of Natural History. They're still trying to identify the life forms we brewed up in the back of the Volvo. Would you believe a Paramecium with Tungsten teeth?

The run up the East Coast to New York was dull, interrupted only by the occasional rain squall that never once got bad enough to deter the competition. Wayne took to sacrificing small bits of cheese and the uneaten end of a hot dog to the rain gods but it was a futile gesture. The weather remained despicably pleasant.

We rolled into New York City somewhere around midnight. Our brightly colored gypsy caravan of 80 decaded, sticked, and festively decorated vehicles, which had attracted considerable pedestrian attention everywhere else on the route was met with supreme indifference by New Yorkers. New York's

a tough house. Anything short of a nuclear attack doesn't even rate a second glance.

From NYC we rolled to the famous Lock, Stock and Barrell restaurant in Darien, Connecticut. From there it was a long and laborious drone up the triangle of New York State and the next checkpoint in Watkins Glen,



site of many a Grand Prix. Fortunately, we ran into snow and ice again in the higher elevations of Route 17. With Wayne asleep in the back and Johnston nodding off in the shotgun seat, I traversed some 60 or so miles (96.5 km) of black ice. Unfortunately, we didn't shake any of the competition. We'd been on the road so long and everybody was so punchy that all common sense was lost. Anybody in their right mind would have holed up in the nearest motel. But then again anybody in their right mind wouldn't have signed up for this torture in the first place.

With the rising of the sun, we rolled into Watkins Glen. The end was

almost in sight. After a Mach II breakfast at the Watkins Glen Motor Inn, we climbed back into our Volvo and headed west towards Ohio where a special stage awaited. After Ohio it was a straight shot to Detroit, the finish line.

The Volvo trio upheld the honor of our sponsor by nearly zeroing the Ohio special stage. We were all pretty proud of ourselves but too tired to really care.

We motored into the Renaissance Center in Detroit exactly on our minute and were met by the biggest crowd we'd seen on the entire route. There must have been at least 2000 people and some of them weren't even related to the competitors.

After eight days and nearly 9000 miles, the Volvo was hardly the worse for wear. It was filthy and the interior smelled like a locker room but the 740 had performed admirably. It had hauled like a freight train over some of the toughest terrain I'd ever seen and through some of the worst weather the snow belt had seen in years and it never once felt like it was working hard at all.

Oh, by the way, we finished a respectable 16 overall out of 78 competitors. We would have finished higher if we hadn't had a few lapses of common sense in Houghton, Michigan, where we picked up 1700 of a cumulative 2093 points. I'm ready to do it again next year in the same car but Johnston and Baldwin had better develop a taste for The Blasters, Neutron Flamingo, and Housewives in Hell because I'm playing those tapes no matter how light they say they sleep. 10-4. ■

Anthony Assenza is an Associate Editor of *Motor Trend*.







# The Making of a Volvo Commercial

by Marc Kristal

where in suburban America. "This is the elegant new Volvo 700 Series station wagon," explains the announcer, standing before the car. "It will hold 33 bags of groceries," the neatly arranged rows of overstuffed brown bags apparent in the bay; "a six-foot sofa," duly illustrated; "or eight very large dogs," which promptly pile in through the tailgate. All of this information is delivered in tones of pleasant reasonableness, which seems hardly surprising considering that many station wagons can boast of as much. Then comes the kicker. "But best of all," the announcer continues, "this Volvo is designed to be so strong, it will also hold... six Volvos." Cut to a startling—and quite unexpected—shot: seven Volvos stacked one on top of the next, rising some 80 feet (24.5 metres) into the air.

This arresting bit of advertising, 28 seconds in length, was created for Volvo by Scali, McCabe & Sloves, Inc., its New York based agency. And, though in concept and appearance it is simplicity incarnate, the spot generated difficulties ranging from a pack of monolingual Swedish dogs to the nuances of constructing a precarious tower of automotive steel.

The spot developed from Volvo's desire to repeat the stacking test, last accomplished in 1973, with the new Volvo 700 Series wagon—the company's first new station wagon in 18 years. Moreover, as the test would take place in Gothenburg at the parent company's corporate headquarters, Mex Films, a Swedish production company, was engaged to film a short documentary based on the event. Nothing quite so graphically demonstrates a car's durability under pressure as having six others piled on its head. "Thus," according to Gerry Dudzik, Volvo Cars of North America's National Advertising Manager, "the commercial itself was motivated by the need to prove we still build them the way we used to."

"One of the three top reasons people buy a Volvo is for safety," says Jerry Sherman, a senior vice-president at Scali. Such a spot, keyed to the market's interest fit Volvo's demands perfectly. "They look for advertising that addresses the marketing problems in an intellectual way," explains Richard Berke, the agency vice-president and senior producer who also directed the spot.

The commercial was produced in Sweden, due to the tight security Volvo demanded for the new 700 Series wagons. Ordinarily, rather than bringing the cast over from the U.S., producers will hire novices (usually from an

embassy or military base) who can read lines—provided production takes place outside zones controlled by the Screen Actors Guild. This time, however, Berke engaged Steven Berleigh, a New York actor.

A skid pad near Gothenburg, which is normally used for braking tests, served as the location. It was roughly the size of a football field. To give it a more casual look, it was thoroughly "dressed," necessitating the removal of 25 lamp posts and a small forest of trees. While the task was formidable, there were other, more pressing difficulties to confront. Foremost was Gothenburg's September weather. It was, recalls Berke, "rainy, rainy, and rainy," (a predictable phenomenon to any native of the area).

Other production problems related to the differences between North America and Sweden. For the shot featuring the groceries, it was necessary to import brown paper bags from New York, as they aren't used in Europe, where shoppers bring their own sacks with them to market. Intercontinental differences affected even the small army of Golden Retrievers recruited for the shoot. For their scene, New York actor, Steven Berleigh, was required to call the dogs. Then, as they piled into the back of the wagon, he was to deliver his line. On the first take he called, "Come!" as requested. Nothing happened. The dogs didn't understand English. Berleigh was forced to learn the Swedish equivalent of "Come" then switch to English as they sprang into action. The dogs were game but erratic. On certain takes, everything would go perfectly, except that a dog or two would remain behind the camera, placidly refusing to move.

The problems posed by a pack of canines, however, were nothing compared with the car-stacking considerations. One cannot simply pile Volvos on top of each other and expect them to stick together like so many toys. Fiberglass and plywood cradles were required to hold them in place, adding almost 3,000 pounds (1,360 kgs) to the weight of the pile. Moreover, three cranes were needed to position the cars: one for lifting, two for the deft and delicate job of balancing.

The Volvo engineers rose to the challenge. At 5 PM, the cars began going up, to catch the "golden time" so precious to cinematography. The rain stopped and the sun came out, illuminating a magnificently beclouded sky and lighting up the wet ground. The seventh car settled gingerly on its perch. The cranes rolled away. A take was completed; then another. The crew cheered. It was 1973 all over again. ■

The commercial begins simply, in a bucolic setting evocative of almost any-

*"It will hold 33 bags of groceries," the neatly arranged rows of overstuffed brown bags apparent in the bay; "a six-foot sofa," duly illustrated; "or eight very large dogs," which promptly pile in through the tailgate.*



# To Diesel Or Not

**The Volvo 740 Series** is fast becoming one of our most popular lines. The cars and wagons, as affordable as they are well-engineered, have found favor in numerous families and now adorn driveways across North America. Yet the turbodiesels, both sedans and wagons, remain special cases. These are reserved for that select group of drivers who seek the additional pleasures of fuel economy and extra durability. Yet it seems somehow unfair that the diesel engine, some seven decades after its birth, should still evince yawns—or indifference. This, perhaps, stems from a lack of knowledge among the uninitiated. The fact is, a well-made diesel performs as well as a top-quality gasoline engine. And there is none better (we modestly believe) than the TD 24 that we use in our models—once you understand what's behind it.\*

While most people know that diesels, like milk, are good for us, not everyone is aware of how they work their magic. In fact, they're relatively simple machines—simpler than their gas-powered brothers. Both employ a four-stroke cycle. The difference lies in the means of ignition. In a gasoline engine, a spark plug explodes a mixture of air and fuel. Diesels, conversely, draw air into the piston on the intake downstroke, then compress it, creating an extreme degree of heat. At the peak of compression, fuel is injected into the cylinder, and ignition is generated by the high temperature of the air. As a result, diesels have fewer components—no spark plugs, distributor, coil, condenser, or ignition wiring—which helps make them durable, economical, and easy to maintain.

Of course, there is a price to be paid for these benefits: the traditional complaints about diesels have included smoke, noise, difficulty starting when cold, sluggishness, and availability of fuel. Measures have been taken to counteract these complaints.

Special "swirl chambers" have been designed into the TD 24's cylinder heads, for a more thorough mixing of air and fuel—a circumstance that helps improve combustion efficiency as well as reducing unnecessary noise. Said *Diesel Motorist Magazine*: "Because

of fewer reciprocating parts, there is much less valve noise and hence, Volvo's claim to a new diesel quietness is true... It is smoother, quieter, quicker than any four, most fives and V-8 cylinder cars."

To guarantee the initial heat required for ignition, the TD 24 engine includes a special "pre-glow" system. The glow plugs need only a few seconds to reach ignition temperature; at that point, the system shuts off automatically, as does the indicator light on the instrument panel, signaling readiness. Pre-heating also helps reduce smoking, which in any case is limited for the most part to the few seconds after start-up.

As far as sluggishness is concerned, Volvo has been particularly successful in remedying this common diesel flaw, with a balance of rear axle and transmission components that help maximize performance. The addition of Volvo's turbocharger boosts performance even further, providing the requisite torque and response even at moderate driving speeds, where they're most needed. *Motor Trend* commented that the engine "will hurtle down a thousand-mile stretch of highways with the best diesels and turbodiesels made, because it is one of them." And *Road & Track* proclaimed it "the fastest diesel engine... we've ever tested."

The diesel's great advantage, apart from its long-term durability, can be found in the area of fuel economy. *Motor Trend* described the engine's mileage as "outstanding"; the 1985 740 TD sedan has been rated at 25 in the city, 30 on the highway (manual transmission).† Interestingly, our surveys have shown that turbodiesel owners are long-distance drivers, logging a mean annual mileage of 22,080, as opposed to 16,215 for other cars in the 700 series. Thus, they are reaping the full benefits of the diesel's economy—and its overall dependability as well.

Nor is this strictly speculation. Fully 100% of all the turbodiesel owners who responded to our survey indicated that they had looked into gas-powered models first; of these, 89% were "very satisfied/satisfied" with their choice. And, as the number of available diesel fuel pumps is up noticeably in the last few years, the last

\*The six-cylinder diesel engine used by Volvo was fabricated for Volvo by Volkswagenwerk AG. The turbocharger was developed and adapted for the diesel engine by Volvo.

†Your own mileage may vary depending upon options, driving conditions, your own driving habits, and the vehicle's operating condition. The results reported to EPA indicate that the majority of vehicles with these estimates will achieve between 20 and 28 mpg in the city and between 22 and 32 mpg on the highway. Ask your dealer for a free Gas Mileage Guide to compare the estimated mpg of other cars.



obstacle standing in the way of their increasing popularity has been removed.

By combining the advantages of the TD 24 engine with the 740's comfort and handling abilities, each 740 GLE Turbo Diesel model adds up to a remarkably appealing driving package—one that will be on the road, demonstrating its prowess, for many years to come. ■



# To Diesel



## A FEW LAST WORDS...

Thanks to the Revenue Provisions of the Deficit Reduction Act of 1984, United States owners of diesel-powered highway vehicles that are model-year 1979 or later and that weigh 10,000 pounds or less are entitled to a one-time credit of up to \$102 for a car and up to \$198 for a truck or van. The credit is designed to offset the higher tax on diesel fuel over the vehicle's life.





The Volvo commission begins with a shimmering view of the archipelagos at sunset, stippled onto Bartlett's signatory foot-square steel plates and located at the bottom of the stairway leading to the visitors' wing.

# Site Sensitivity

by Roberta Smith

Reprinted from *House & Garden*, May 1985. Copyright © 1985 by The Condé Nast Publications Inc.

Much of Jennifer Bartlett's best work is to be found in her public and private commissions, and not by chance. Regularly drawn to big, ambitious projects and unintimidated by new media, Bartlett has always excelled at making the most of predetermined situations. For a painter, she has an unusually site-sensitive, reactive temperament; the more she has to contend with, the more inventive and freewheeling her art becomes.

This is certainly the case with Bartlett's latest commission, now installed in Volvo's new international headquarters near Göteborg, Sweden. One of her most outstanding achievements to date, the Volvo commission is not so much a single work of art as a series of meditations on art vs. craft and nature vs. civilization. It unfolds along one wing of the low-lying granite building Romaldo Giurgola, of Mitchell/Giurgola Architects, has designed for Volvo—a structure that itself unfolds outward from a central arcade-lined courtyard to cover a rugged hilltop.

Bartlett's Volvo commission constitutes an unfolding in another sense as well. Precipitated by Pehr G. Gyllenhammar, Volvo's CEO and a Bartlett admirer, it started out in everyone's mind as "a painting or two in the executive dining room," a space on the ground floor facing directly out on the wildest portions of the building's sloping site. By the time she was finished, though, Bartlett found herself working directly in that landscape and also making three-dimensional objects for the first time in her career. She was inspired to incorporate into the work an array of local materials and techniques, involving so many people on the Giurgola and Volvo staffs that the term "communal collaboration" is not far-fetched. Yet Bartlett also produced a work completely consistent with her sensibility, and—as the contents of her Paris studio and her spring exhibitions at New York's Paula Cooper Gallery and Walker Art Center in Minneapolis should confirm—launched a new phase in the development of her art.

From the beginning, Pehr G. Gyllenhammar and Volvo had some very specific ideas. They wanted from Giurgola a structure that would depart radically from the bulky, vertical downtown HQ so frequent in corporate architecture; a building that would reflect the company's new character as a diversified international corporation; and a building that would keep the heads of Volvo's new divisions in contact with the company's "roots" and one another in a creative way. The site they chose, on the outskirts of Göteborg, overlooks one of Volvo's original automobile factories and a classic Swedish view of granite and heather, with archipelagos and sea visible in the distance. Giurgola responded to Volvo with an idiosyncratic, unusually intimate building that juxtaposes international forms with local treatments and leaves the landscape as untouched as possible. In effect, he improvised on the ground plan of a Roman villa, using the granite, teak, and copper so prevalent in Swedish buildings.





Much about Giurgola's building dovetailed with and influenced Bartlett's own sensibility: the unadulterated materials and assertive details, the careful attention to site, the discursive, implicitly "narrative" layout that will not reveal itself from any one viewpoint. Equally fortuitous was Giurgola's long-term practice of involving artists in his projects early on. Bartlett visited the site on four separate occasions—including one time before construction was under way—taking photographs to work from, noting unusual characteristics, absorbing atmosphere. Furthermore, at crucial points, Giurgola encouraged or discouraged certain of Bartlett's ideas, sometimes setting her off in new directions.

When, for example, Bartlett decided that the proposed dining room would only be "junked up" by the addition of paintings, Giurgola was receptive to her idea of placing objects in the landscape to be viewed from the dining room. (Bartlett had always considered

converting her most frequent motifs into three dimensions but says, "The idea never made sense before.") Giurgola also agreed to Bartlett's request that the commission be expanded to encompass the entire executive wing—which in her mind formed "one thing" and needed to be dealt with accordingly. But when Bartlett proposed large landscape paintings for both the lounge area preceding the dining room and the relaxation room following it, Giurgola objected: the rooms were too different in use and proportion for such symmetry; the art would be too dominant in the final chamber. This led Bartlett to a drastic revision and her strange and witty denouement: the idea that the last room would seem to contain no art at all but actually would offer a recapitulation, in a minor key, of the entire commission.

This commission, ending with a reprise of itself, is in a sense a reprise of the entire Volvo building project. It reiterates, in its own terms, Volvo's mandate and Giurgola's response,

mirroring aspects of the building and its functions as well as its natural and cultural environs. And it does this in the guise of an increasingly complex examination of the role of art, craft, and especially craftsmanship that is at once real and symbolic.

The piece proceeds in three big movements, or meditations. It starts, as Volvo and Giurgola did, with the land itself. In the lounge area the viewer encounters four big landscape images of the surrounding scenery—depictions, in Giurgola's words, of "things we were very aware of in that place." A painting on Bartlett's well-known foot-square enameled-steel plates shows the archipelagos in the pinks and greens of sunset; a densely detailed pastel represents sun-dappled birches by a rocky stream; an oil painting bodies forth an image of fjord and sea at once abstract and redolent with morning dampness. And in an alcove that affords the first view of the real outdoors, there is a rough, spirited fresco of white clouds against the blue sky.







The house and granite chairs sited near the building (right), reappear on a painted folding screen behind a yellow table and chairs (below). A third outdoor tableau (far right) consists of two clinker-built boats made in Cor-Ten steel, fastidiously detailed monuments to boating and boat building.







Having introduced the major elements of the uninhabited landscape inside the building—and also within the perimeters of painting's high-art tradition—the commission then proceeds to inhabit that same landscape with a series of three-dimensional tableaux that evoke all kinds of human activity.

The first visible outdoor elements are a table and a pair of chairs made, like the building itself, of two colors of granite; next, a wonderful white-slatted, copper-roofed house in indigenous summer-cabin style, which also contains another table and chairs, this trio in copper; and finally a pair of life-size clinker-built boats in Cor-Ten steel, which lie on the rocks as if pulled up for the winter. Together these three-dimensional symbols posit the domestic and everyday quite literally between office and factory. Combining elements of a typical Swedish country view, they evoke certain givens essential to both life and pleasure—the sea, shelter, and food—plus local traditions of design and craft. And, as usual with Bartlett, these sophisticated cross references are infused with a compelling innocence. For Bartlett's emblematic forms also have the purity and awkwardness of toys done large, conjuring up memories of childhood games and fantasies. Furthermore, part of their awkwardness comes from a

combination of impeccable craft and inappropriate materials, which is itself fantastic. Swedish summer cabins don't have copper roofs; real tables and chairs don't come in granite nor real boats in Cor-Ten steel. Such twists indicate the way Bartlett both uses and misuses the givens of a site, artificializing the real into art.

In its final "movement" the commission's various parts and levels of reality, artifice, and art are densely layered and humorously confounded. Two dimensions meet three, high art mingles with craft, real-life size with handheld, form with function—and the art of it all can be downplayed to the point of invisibility. Having surveyed high-art depictions of the landscape and the applied arts *in* the landscape, Bartlett moves indoor again for a series of decorative, rather light-hearted "finishing touches" in which her various motifs are disguised as furnishings or appointments—things that are, after all, the end stage of any building project.

On a wood screen is painted a depiction of the landscape just passed by, complete with Bartlett's additions to it: the table and chairs, house, and boats. In front of this is a final version of the table and chair—this time in wood painted a popular Swedish yellow. On the table rests a portfolio containing 24 unframed drawings to be browsed

through at the viewer's discretion, which review the surrounding landscape and its contents in more intimate detail. Also on the table are two echoes of the outdoor pieces, now truly toy-sized and exclusively pleasure-oriented: a white-enameled wood house whose roof flips open to divulge a deck of playing cards and a pack of cigarettes, and a delicate silver boat that doubles as an ashtray. With this *mélange* of forms and images to be used, contemplated, or ignored, Bartlett's Volvo commission casts a last look over its complicated progress and makes a quiet exit.

The Volvo piece constitutes Bartlett's most inspired and subtle handling of a site thus far, and succeeds, in part, by an unusual suspension of artistic ego. Yet, by giving in so completely to the indigenous possibilities offered her, Bartlett has found a new freedom for her art: moving into three dimensions has made her work less site-dependent. In her latest efforts, Bartlett continues to experiment with objects, and these scaled-down vernacular houses, boats, paths, and fences generate their own portable plein-air scenes for the artist to draw and paint. ■

Roberta Smith and editor Elizabeth Sverbeyeff  
Byron of *House & Garden*.

Volvo's new headquarters by Mitchell/Giurgola  
Architects.



# TIRES.

You remember. Those flexible black containers of compressed air holding up each corner of your Volvo. Not too long ago, tires—blown-out, worn-out, disintegrating, infuriating tires—were one of motoring's biggest headaches. But these days blowouts are a thing of the past; a good set of radials can last 40,000 miles or more. Tires have gotten so good, and have become such a benign part of the driving experience you probably never give them a second thought. But you should.

by Mike Knepper

Tires, you see, are critical to your car's proper performance and your safety and comfort. The most sophisticated suspension, steering, and braking systems in the world become nothing more than an expensive bunch of high-tech parts when there's something amiss with their link to the road. But before *The Proper Care and Feeding of Your Tires*, an overview...

Rubber, in case the question ever comes up in *Trivial Pursuit*®, is known to have been used by the Aztecs back in the sixth century but was apparently unknown in Europe until the sixteenth century. At some unrecorded point someone realized the advantages of facing a wooden wagon wheel with the springy stuff, and then in 1846 one R.W. Thompson, a Scotsman, took the idea a step further when he obtained a patent for the first pneumatic tire, which was instantly ignored. In 1888 Englishman William Dunlop "re-invented" the pneumatic tire in an effort to improve bicycles and early automobile manufacturers soon adopted it for their products. Those first tires were nothing more than rubberized canvass. The construction of today's tires—combinations of steel and fiberglass and synthetic cloth under a careful compounding of natural and synthetic rubbers—is a bit more complicated.

There are three methods of construction: Bias ply, bias belted, and radial. All three types are available today.

For years bias ply tires were the only tires available. They are constructed of two or more layers of fabric—the plies—with the cords in the fabric running in a diagonal, or bias, direction. In 1947 the industry made a giant leap forward with the introduction of the tubeless bias ply tire, and in 1966 the belted bias ply tire was introduced in the United States.

The belted bias ply tire uses the same bias ply construction but adds two or more belts of fabric circling the tire directly under the rubber tread, giving it extra strength and greater stability.

The radial tire, which had already been popular in Europe for several years, finally gained popularity in this country in the middle seventies. Today they are standard on almost all new cars. In a radial, the cords in the fabric run across the tire at a 90-degree angle or slightly less to the direction of travel,



with belt plies running around the circumference. This construction provides a flexible sidewall. This helps provide a comfortable ride despite the stiff belt which is needed for high-speed stability. Radials are the most expensive tires to produce, but they offer significant improvements in tread life, traction and handling.

A few years ago when everything was simpler—pre-1969 in this case—a tire's size was indicated by the simplest of methods. A 7.50-15 tire, for example, had an overall width of 7.5 inches and a hole in the middle for a 15-inch wheel. Then came the alpha-numeric system, as in FR78-14. The first letter designates the load/size relationship or the tire's ability to carry a load at a given inflation pressure. (Don't worry. There will not be a quiz.) The R stands for radial, the 78 means the section height or width profile is approximately 78 percent of the tire and the 14 is the rim size.

The latest system is called P-metric, as in P155/80R13. "P" means passenger car tire. The three-digit number is the section width in millimeters. The number after the slash is the height-to-width ratio, R means it's a radial and 13 is the rim size in inches. (A note of caution: P-rated tires do not have a high speed guarantee—and they are not legal in Europe.)

Volvo uses speed-rated tires as in 185SR14. "185" is the nominal width, "70" is the aspect ratio, "S" the speed rating, "R" indicates radial-ply, and "14" is the rim diameter. The speed ratings are as follows: "S" up to 112 mph (180 km/h), "H" up to 130 mph (210 km/h) and "V" over 130 mph.

All four size-designation systems are still in use—and that's just the beginning of our trip around Sidewall City!

It's also the law, to emboss on the sidewall of every tire sold in this country enough information to choke a tire engineer.

But if you want to get to know your tires, up close and personal, the sidewall is the place to go. First there's the name of the manufacturer and directly across from that the name of the tire. Then there's the method of construction—bias, bias belted, radial—and the type of cord and number of plies. A typical radial, for example, might indicate "tread: six plies rayon, sidewall: two plies rayon." There's a maximum

load rating, maximum inflation pressure, and whether the tire is tube-type or tubeless. Any combination of the letters M and S means the tire meets the qualifications for use in mud and snow. You can also find the grades assigned by the manufacturer under the Department of Transportation's uniform tire quality grading system, and there's even a DOT serial number. The DOT number, along with your name and address, are recorded at the time of sale so you can be notified of a recall.

Now to the care and feeding of your tires. The single most important thing an owner can do for his tires is to maintain the proper inflation pressures. Too much or too little adversely affects tread life, handling, and occupant comfort.

First, get a good quality pressure gauge. Don't trust any built-in gauges at the service station. Then look up the manufacturer's recommended inflation pressures for your car in the owner's manual or on the label typically posted in the glove box or on the edge of the door or sill. Always check the air pressure when the tires are cold; even a short drive will heat them, causing the air to expand and increase the pressure. Makes sense, but the air hose is down at the service station, and not in your garage. You have to drive to get there. What to do?

Check your cold tires and jot down which tire needs how much additional air. Drive to the service station, check the pressure again for a base mark and add the amount indicated by the cold check. Check your tires once a month and figure on automatically needing an adjustment with seasons. A drop of 10 degrees F will cause a corresponding drop of about one psi, and vice versa.

If you've forgotten to check your tires cold and later after driving for some distance discover an obviously low tire, you don't have to wait until morning and a cold tire. Not counting extremes—very high ambient temperatures and/or extended high-speed driving—a hot tire will indicate approximately four psi more than a driveway-cold tire. Take the hot pressure, subtract four psi. Consider that the cold pressure and adjust accordingly.

Speaking of cold temperatures brings up another subject: spin failures. Spin failures are more common on

ice and snow, but can occur on wet grass, sand or mud; anytime a tire spins at a high rate of speed. With just a touch on the gas pedal a free-spinning wheel can very quickly accelerate to 150 mph (241 km/h) or more and at that speed centrifugal force can literally tear the tire apart—sending tire fragments flying with deadly force. So don't spin a tire, especially if someone is pushing from behind. Try rocking the car free with the forward/reverse gear changing method.

Rotating tires allows for even wear on all four tires. Manufacturers typically recommend the traditional criss-cross rotating pattern for bias and bias belted tires, and a simple front-to-rear, rear-to-front on the same side for radials. If there is a front-wheel-drive car in your family, rotation is a must to insure all four tires wear evenly.

Uneven wear on the tread of the same tire, means something is not right, usually in suspension settings—*toe*, *camber*—or *balance*. Periodically check for wear on the inside or outside edge of the tread, or for cupping or scuffing.

Today's tires have "wear bars" built into the tread that appear when tread depth reaches 1/16th of an inch. When they appear, reach for your checkbook because it's new-tire time.

And finally, some do's and don'ts.

- Always replace with the same size designation, or get expert advice about going up in size. Never go smaller.

- Do not mix sizes on your car.

- Do not mix radials with bias or belted tires, but if for some reason you must, put like tires on the same axle with the radials on the rear.

- If buying only a pair of new tires, put them on the same axle. A single new tire should be paired with the tire having the most tread.

- To maximize tread life, in addition to maintaining proper inflation pressures, avoid all the fun stuff like fast cornering, jackrabbit starts and late, hard braking.

The tires may not be the thing you like most about your Volvo, but knowing something about them and how to take care of them is absolutely vital if you are to get out of your car all the good things that have been built into it. ■

Mike Knepper is the former Executive Editor of *Car and Driver* magazine.

# Letters to the Editor

I recently saw a Volvo commercial with a 760 sedan plunging off of what appeared to be the edge of a building. Can you tell me something about how that was done? How far did the car fall?

*Four early prototype 760 sedans were dropped off of a dry dock in Gothenburg for testing purposes. The cars were not specially prepared outside of having camera equipment and dummies placed inside. A 50-meter-long (164 feet) rail line was built up to the edge of the precipice. The cars were placed on the inside of the oiled rails, put in drive, and started with a switch on the back of each car. The windscreens remained intact, the steering wheels telescoped as they were designed to do on impact, and there was no damage at all within the passenger compartments. Of course, the cars were undriveable because their built-in crumple zones had, well, crumpled—which isn't surprising considering the fact that the cars had fallen 46 feet (14 meters).*

*Our legal counsel has advised us to advise you not to attempt a similar test in your Volvo—we cannot guarantee the results!*



I enjoy the articles and sophisticated design of *Via Volvo*. Can you tell me something about its production and the artwork that appears in it?

*We thought you'd never ask. The issue that you're are reading right now has been distributed to 370,000 owners in North America. For the last three years, John Casado, an award-winning designer from San Francisco, has designed our magazine as well as commissioned and supervised the artists whose work you have admired. Editorial is done in-house at Volvo Cars of North America in Rockleigh, NJ; most of the writers are East Coast freelancers who are commissioned for specific articles. Printing is also supervised in-house at Volvo; this issue was printed by Herbick & Held in Pittsburgh, PA.*

My family and I are planning a European vacation this Fall. Is there any real advantage to purchasing a Volvo overseas? If so, how can we make arrangements before we leave on our trip?

*You can save a modest amount of money on a Volvo—and you can save on car rental fees during your vacation—by ordering a car through our overseas delivery program (we call it our Tourist and Diplomat Sales Program or TDS). We do not have direct shipment, that is you can't just order one to be delivered to your hometown; but you can arrange to pick one up at any one of our 14 European delivery points. The fact is you can pick up a car anywhere in the world—but there are additional fees for that service. You may drive your Volvo in Europe for up to 12 months.*

*Any one of our North American dealers can make the arrangements for you. In addition, an information package is available through Volvo Cars of North America in Rockleigh, NJ, Tourist & Diplomat Sales Department, P.O. Box 939, Rockleigh, NJ 07647. We also have a toll-free number for your convenience: (800) 631-1667. Lead time varies by model and delivery point but it averages between 8 to 12 weeks. When we went to press, we were almost out of TDS cars—but 1986 models will be available this Fall.*





# Volvo in the News

*Comments from the fourth estate.*

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*The new 740 Turbo Wagon.*

*From Auto Week, March 11, 1985*

It drives exactly the same as the 740 Turbo sedan... This, most likely, is one of the reasons Volvo wagons are so popular—they don't act like wagons. Until you have something to haul.

*From Car and Driver, May, 1985*

0-60 mph (0-96 km/h) in 8 seconds.

*The personification of a decent family car.*

*From The Boston Globe, December 30, 1984*

Webster defines *decency* as fitness, orderliness, the quality of being decent or conformity to standards of taste, propriety or quality... decent... is further defined as well formed, handsome, modestly clothed... What brought to mind the various shadings of words... is a Volvo, specifically a Volvo DL wagon. It is not the powerful luxury whizbang that is the 760 Turbo but it is, we thought, the personification of a decent family car... nothing ostentatious, nothing exceptional—except that its overall comfort, performance, servicibility, usefulness and room make it exceptional these days...

*Brake-power buses.*

*From Popular Science, reprinted with permission, © 1985 Times Mirror Magazines, Inc., by David Scott*

Two new Swedish buses—using different systems—harness normally wasted braking energy for acceleration. Two Scandinavian cities are testing the fuel-saving buses... Lonegren, an Authority engineer, gave me a demonstration ride. "It can run on flywheel power alone for three-quarters of a mile, with three full stops"... The engine spins the flywheel from rest at the start of a day's run. At its maximum 10,000 revolutions per minute the flywheel packs the energy equivalent of 160 horsepower, so a 140-hp diesel is used instead of the usual 230-hp one... Flywheel braking can cut fuel consumption by 25 percent, Volvo says... Yet it sees even greater promise for buses using hydraulic pressure tubes, or accumulators, to store braking energy... The hydraulic system is cheaper and lighter than the flywheel... there's only a single conversion between mechanical and hydraulic drive... and the chassis of a standard mid-engine Volvo accepts the system without any drive-train alterations.

Best of all, the accumulator bus gives an even bigger fuel saving than the flywheel version—up to 35 percent over standard buses.

