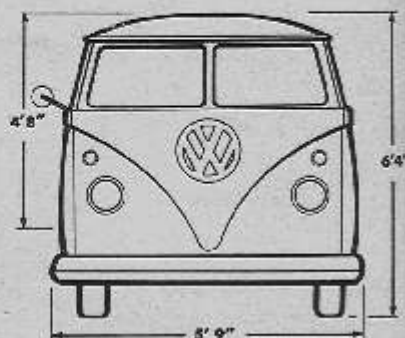


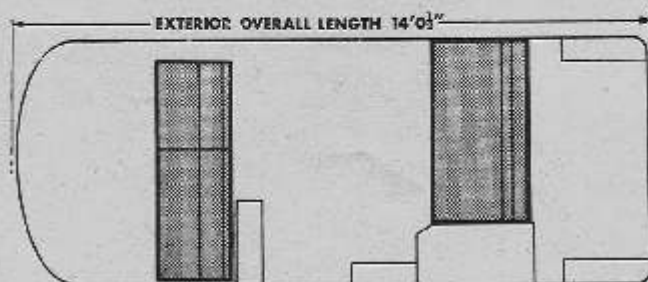
Devon Caravette with awning erected. Side curtains can be added to make an extra "room" for preparing meals.

Without the optional extending roof, the Volkswagen is very compact. Though interior headroom is a little restricted in practice this was not found to be a problem.

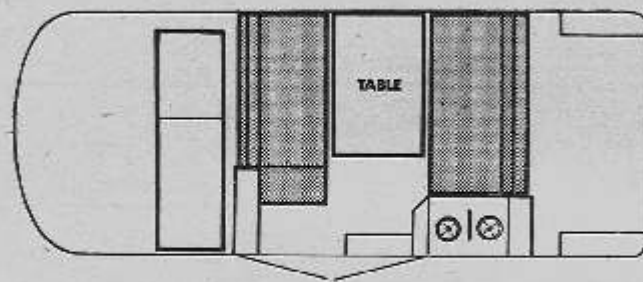


The Devon Caravette

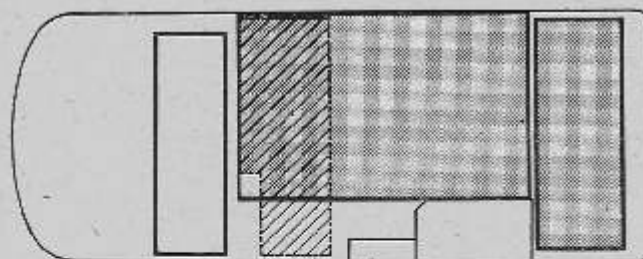
*"... a comfortable, long-legged
and economical family tourer ..."*



Driving The driver's seat is adjustable; there are places for four passengers facing forward.



Eating Four sit round the table. The cooker can be fitted on the right-hand side door.



Sleeping Two adults (in double bed) plus two children, one of whom sleeps in a bunk.

THE introduction last year of the bigger 1,500 c.c. Standard Micro Bus brought a new dimension to motor-caravanning. Without sacrificing its well-known driving comfort, quietness and economy, the Volkswagen now offers performance which is in the GI class by motor-caravan standards.

The Devon Caravette offers less interior space than most other motor-caravans, but it is an ideal choice for the man who wants a nimble family car for most of the year, and a caravan for spring and summer weekends and holidays, without the expense of two vehicles.

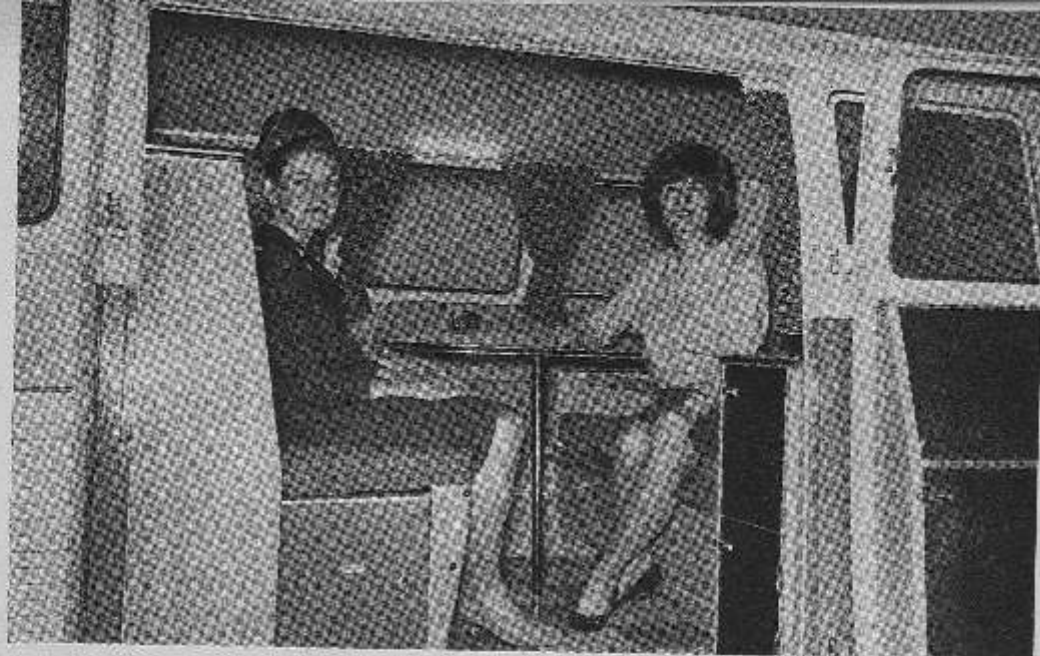
As a comfortable, long-legged and economic family tourer, the 1,500 c.c. Devon Caravette has few equals.

The Volkswagen Micro Bus

The Devon Caravette we tested was based on a standard Micro Bus. This machine is unusual among the vans on which motor-caravans are based in having independent suspension all round, a rear engine and synchromesh on all four gears. The 1½-litre engine was virtually inaudible except when accelerating hard, though there was a little transmission whine at higher cruising speeds. The driving position was relaxed and comfortable, but the floor-mounted gear lever and handbrake are a long reach away from tall people. All the controls are light and positive, though the steering at low speeds and over bad surfaces feels vague and spongy till you get used to it.

In heavy traffic and around country lanes the Micro Bus is as nimble as most family saloons, but it is on the open road that one discovers the value of the bigger engine. This motor-caravan really comes to life at speeds where most others are running out of breath or roadholding. Cruising speeds in the 70s can be held for mile after mile when traffic conditions allow. And this with none of the engine noise one usually associates with forward-control vans at speed. The choice of gear ratios plays a large part in keeping down engine speeds, with third gear a useful "town top" and fourth almost an overdrive.

This standard of performance emphasized one of the main criticisms of almost all caravan conversions—barely adequate braking. Though the brakes of the Volkswagen are as good as those of any van we have tested recently, those at the rear locked all too readily in emergency stops from high speeds. This van is also



Interior of the Devon Caravette is well finished and rugged. No rattles developed on the road, and seats, tables and beds were all easy to erect and dismantle.

very sensitive to gusty crosswinds when cruising at more than 60 m.p.h.

The overall fuel consumption of 26 m.p.g. reflects maximum use of the van's high cruising speed, plus a good deal of about-town driving. Most owners could expect to improve on this.

Ancillary equipment included electric wipers which left an awkward blind area in the centre of the two-piece windscreen, an excellent electric screenwasher (extra), and a none-too-powerful fresh air heater.

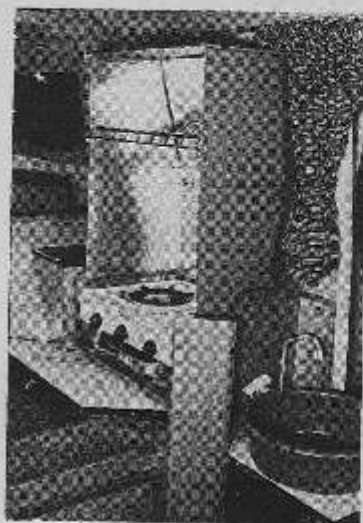
The Devon Caravette Conversion

The Volkswagen forward-control van is the most difficult machine of its type to convert into a motor-caravan, as the bulkhead behind the front seats and the bulge over the rear engine leaves comparatively little clear floor space. The Devon Caravette finds a satisfactory compromise by assuming that under most conditions owners will cook and wash under the awning at the side of the van. Side curtains are in fact available as extras to turn the space under the awning into a draughtproof living area. Beds for two adults and two children are provided in the body of the van.

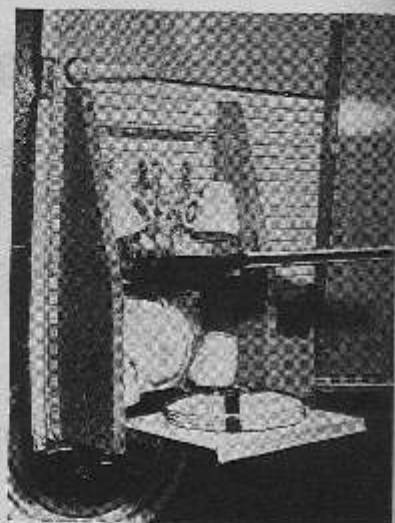
This type of conversion emphasizes the fact that the Volkswagen will appeal most to those who prefer a touring holiday. For an extra £136 a Martin Walter extending roof offers more headroom, two more full-size beds and a good deal more air space, but motor-caravanners who demand maximum in-the-van living space rather than performance and mobility must look elsewhere.

In practice the conversion is logical and well-executed. The beds are easy to make up and very comfortable, and meals in the van are no problem if the cooker (with grill and two burners) is moved to its optional position on the side door. For travelling there are four forward and two rear-facing passenger seats. Two tables are provided, the larger of which is for meals outside the van.

Great pains have been taken over sound and heat insulation, though the parcel shelf under the fascia is a bad condensation trap. The van we tested was also fitted with a useful spring-out step under the side doors, but the front doors did not hold open and no handles were provided to aid entry into the cab. There is not a great deal of storage space, but there is a wardrobe, a heated blanket compartment under the rear seat and a small cooler sufficient for day-to-day supplies of milk, butter, etc. All-round curtains are standard.



Cooker surround folds flat for travelling. Plastic basin is used for washing, fed by a fold-away pump-type tap.



Left hand side door carries well-fitted, rattle-free lockers for crockery and cutlery.

IN BRIEF

Price	£1,080	
Manufacturer	J. P. White (Sidmouth) Ltd.	
	U.K. Concessionaires: Lisburne Garage, Alexandria Works, Sidmouth, Devon.	
Capacity	Sleeping—4; Touring—7	
Dimensions (Overall)	Length	14 ft. 0½ in.
	Width	5 ft. 9 in.
	Height	6 ft. 4 in.
Engine	4 cylinder; 1,493 c.c.; 51 b.h.p.	at 4,000 r.p.m.
Fuel consumption	At steady	
	30 m.p.h.	46.5 m.p.g.
	40 m.p.h.	37.7 m.p.g.
	50 m.p.h.	32.2 m.p.g.
	Overall	26 m.p.g.
Acceleration	0-30 m.p.h.	8.2 sec.
	0-40 m.p.h.	15.5 sec.
	0-50 m.p.h.	22.5 sec.
Braking	Pedal pressure	Stopping distance from 30 m.p.h.
	25 lb.	131 ft.
	50 lb.	73 ft.
	75 lb.	48 ft.
	95 lb.	43 ft.

At higher pressures the rear wheels lock.