

# Test report on the Devon Eurovette

Wendy Hilder gives it a close inspection



● The cooker can either be used inside the van, or if you have an awning or just plain warm weather, it can be used outside.

The Devon Eurovette is a quality motor based on the Volkswagen 1600cc Kombi and produced by Devon Conversions Ltd of Sidmouth. It is probably the best equipped of the conversions brought out by this company, the most significant innovation being the Electrolux gas/12 volt refrigerator which is now available as an optional extra on the Eurovette only.

The model we tested had the elevating

roof which has been patented by Devon Conversions and allows full standing head-room plus two bunks, bringing the number of berths up to four. The roof has a heavy duty fibreglass top with two air vents and reinforced plastic sides. It is so designed as to minimise noise and condensation. It is very quick and simple to erect since this process is aided by spring loaded metal tubing fixed to the supports.

For daytime use and travelling, there is a single rear-facing seat backing onto the driver's seat and opposite this is a bench seat for two or three people across the width of the vehicle. The backrest of the single seat detaches and can be used as a stool for an extra person at the dining table.

The table itself is stored between the single seat and the side of the van in a narrow gap. This keeps it neatly out of the way. When you need to put the table up, you can find the legs clipped to the rear pillars of the vehicle, again well out of the way. These screw into the underside of the table and it is then slotted firmly into a fitting on the side of the van between the seats.

For use inside like this, the table needs one leg, but you can also take it outside, screw in four legs, and dine in the open air where you are obviously not so limited for space. The table, like the other surfaces in the rear of the van, has an easy-to-keep-clean melamine top which is both scratch and heat resistant.

## Sleeping

The sleeping accommodation consists of two full length bunks in the roof and a double bed 'downstairs'. The bunks are tapered towards the front of the vehicle so as to enable you to climb up and down when both bunks are in position. The space at the rear end between the two bunks is too narrow to do this. These bunks are long enough for two adults to sleep in 'fairly' comfortably, but children are a better size to use them.

The double bed is made up by converting the bench seat to lie flat, level with the section right at the back. The bed is extremely comfortable, being almost the whole width of the vehicle except for the amount of room taken up by the sink and refrigerator units. Again, the bed is very simple to set up with the leg supports unfolded from underneath the seat when it is pulled out.

As for the kitchen equipment in this model, apart from the 'fridge there is also a cooker, a sink, and a crockery storage basket. The stainless steel cooker consists of two burners, a grill with grill tray, a splash guard right round three sides, and a chrome plate rack which slots into the splash guard above the burners. Underneath the grill section is a storage cupboard.

The entire cooker unit can be swung through 90 degrees and fixed by a sliding bolt in the floor so that it can be used from outside the vehicle. This is possible because the cooker is situated just behind the passenger seat, facing backwards, and can therefore either be used inside or swung round through the sliding side door and used outside. Another advantage of this, apart from leaving more room inside, is that the cooker is at a more sensible height for cooking—you won't get backache just from making the tea.

The Electrolux 'fridge, an optional extra, was installed in the model we tested and

was situated opposite the cooker on the other side of the sliding door, underneath the sink. This would certainly be a boon when you take the vehicle on holiday and happen to be fortunate enough to have hot weather—it does, after all, eliminate the molten butter problem which seems to occur no matter how careful you are to keep the packets cool.

This 12 volt 'fridge is designed to run off the car battery while you are driving along, and can be switched over to a camping gas cylinder when the vehicle is stationary. Should the gas pilot light go out for some reason the gas will turn itself off so there is no safety hazard.

The sink is above the 'fridge and is stainless steel with a draining board. The faucet is on a virtually universal pivot so can be folded down into the unit when the lid is closed during transit. On the side of the sink unit is the button to start the electric pump. This pumps water into the faucet from the five gallon water container which is stored in the unit next to the sink under the crockery rack. Also in this unit is a one gallon reserve container. Both of these two units have smart orange hinged lids which are held up by a strap and press stud during use.

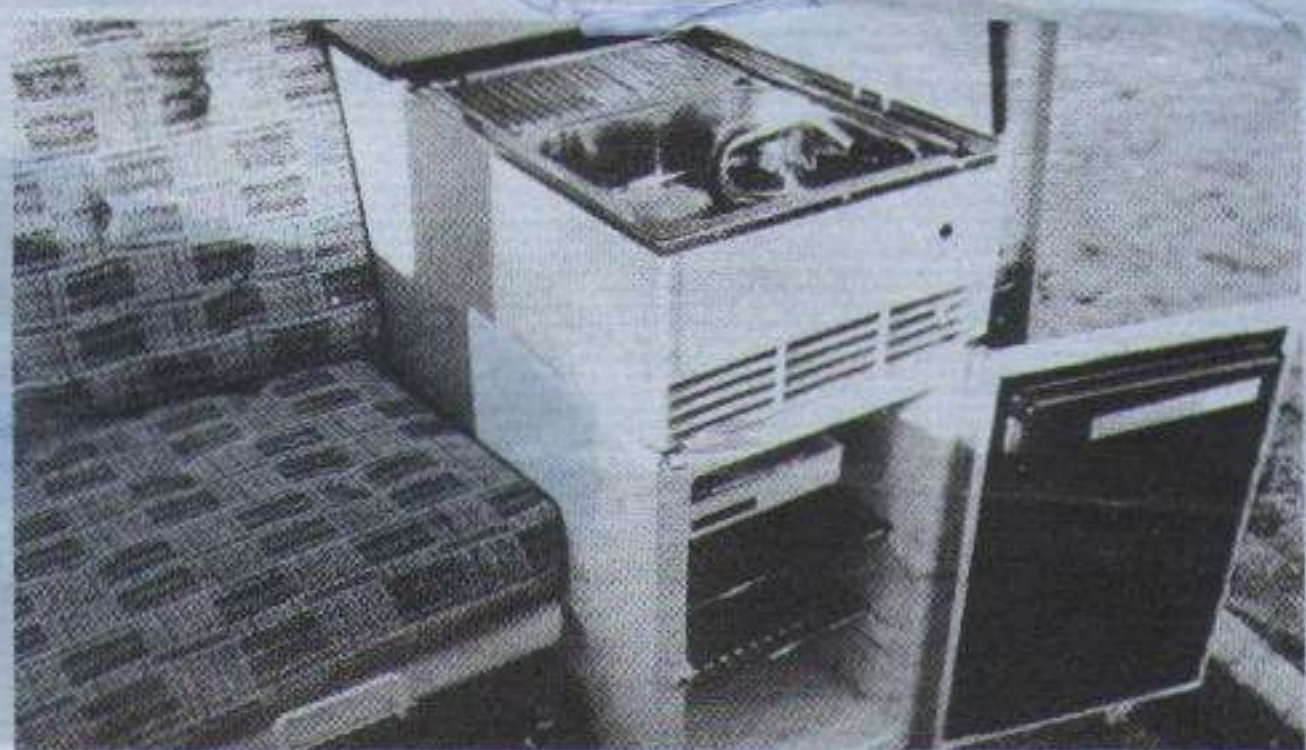
Storage space in this model exists under both the bench and single seat and there is also a locker at the back in the roof — this is not available in those models without the elevating room. A wardrobe is situated between the driver's seat and the rear-facing seat providing enough space for those items which need to be hung up. A food storage cupboard is under the cooker unit.

#### Good privacy

The curtains are held back during the day with press studs and draw all the way round the van at night affording complete privacy. They attach to each other with Velcro fastening so that no gaps need appear. The curtains in our model were made out of an orange patterned material to match the work surfaces and the seats were covered in a subtle beige material. Altogether a quiet yet good-looking colour scheme, a welcome change from some rather more gaudy combinations we have seen.

On the road, the vehicle generally handled well, and all the driving controls were easy to get used to. The indicator stalk on the left hand side of the steering column also operated the full headlights, while a corresponding stalk on the other side of the steering column operated the windscreen wipers at two speeds plus the windscreen washers. On the dashboard are the switch for the lights and the heater controls. The heater, incidentally, did not seem to be particularly effective, but, to be fair, we did test the vehicle over an extremely cold winter weekend so it is difficult to judge.

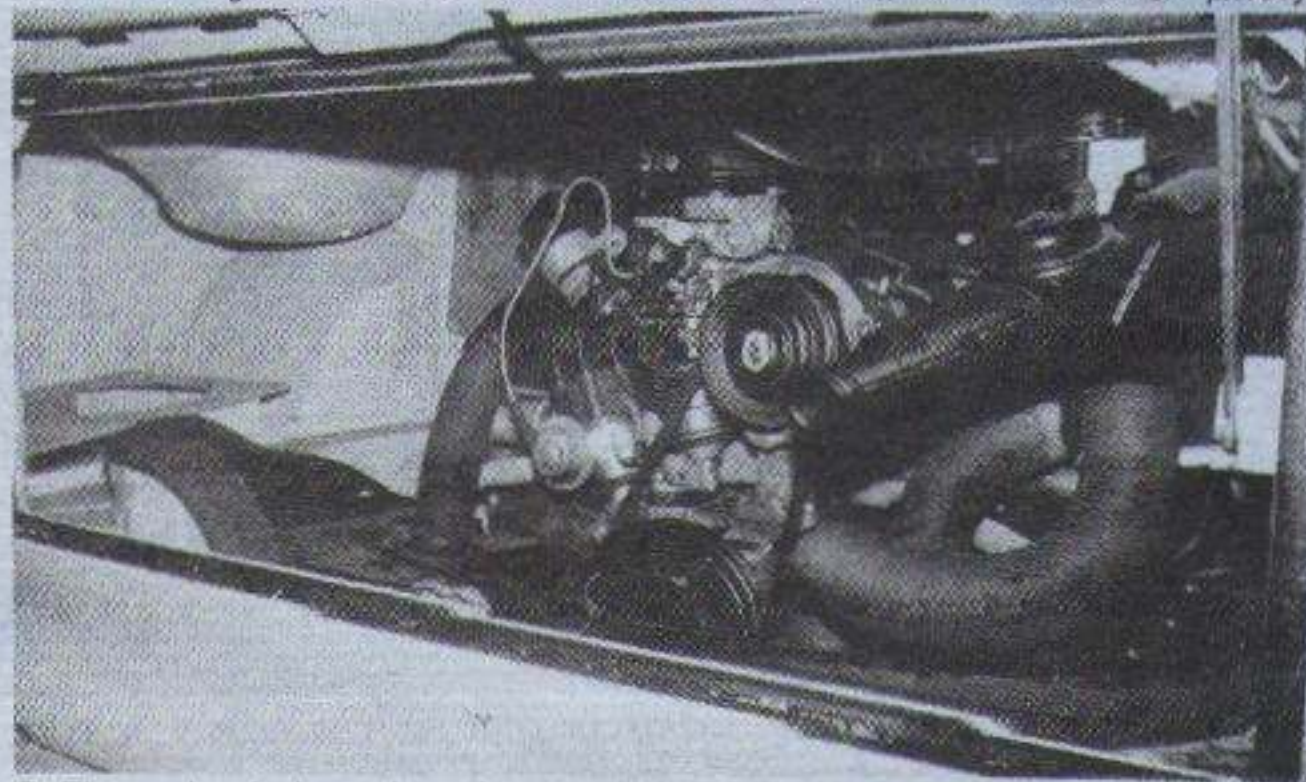
The driving seat position is adjustable



● The fridge which fits neatly under the sink is an optional extra, but if you are going to those hotter climates it can be very useful. The button on the sink side starts the pump



● The seat folds down to make a luxurious double bed. The attractively patterned curtains draw right round the van windows and attach with Velcro for privacy



● The engine is located at the rear of the motor-caravan. Picture also shows the specially designed storage space for the spare cylinder should you be taking one

The Devon Eurovette is marketed by Devon Conversions Ltd, Alexandria Works, Sidmouth, Devon.

forwards and backwards but there is no way that you can avoid sitting above the steering wheel in bush driver fashion. This, however, is surprisingly easy to get used to, and it has its advantages in that you get an excellent view of the road ahead. It is wise to use the side mirrors as well as the interior mirror for rear view as it is easier to judge just what is

seat belts but nothing else particularly unusual about the driver's compartment.

Considering the Volkswagen 1600 Kombi is a relatively small van for conversion purposes, we were most impressed by the amount of thought which has gone into the design and positioning of the fittings. There is the utmost economy of space whilst retaining a look of com-