



# EOININGS

By Eoin Young

## Rack-And-Pinion Rolls



No one would ever have said that the steering was a good feature of the Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow, but this poor aspect of an otherwise magnificent car is remedied at last.

Rolls-Royce has introduced a new series II version of the Silver Shadow, and a sister Bentley model, the T2. For the first time on any Rolls-Royce, the new model has rack and pinion steering. In conjunction with changes to the suspension, it is claimed to give much better control, especially in straight-ahead running. It has a power assistance ram at each end, and the takeoff to the steering arms is at the center instead of being offset. Rolls-Royce engineers say this is important for correct steering geometry.

Changes to the suspension include lowering the roll angle at the front, and a smaller diameter anti-roll bar is fitted at the rear. Body roll is reduced, so as well as cornering better, the Silver Shadow II should be easier on tire wear especially on the shoulders of the tires.

Perhaps the biggest surprise in the announcement from this most conservative of car manufacturers is to find the new model sporting a substantial air dam beneath the bumper, to reduce front end lift at speed and give improved aerodynamic stability. The bumpers themselves are heavily faced in rubber and mounted on energy-absorbing struts.

One of the most important changes is, as expected, the introduction of the superior air conditioning system first launched with the Camargue, to the new Series II Shadow. It enables the driver to "dial" any desired interior temperature for upper and lower level individually, and this is then maintained regardless of outside temperature.

The fascia panel has been completely redesigned, and now includes an instrument to show outside temperature, and there is an ice warning light. Other tell-tales warn of low level of screen washer contents or engine coolant, or high engine

temperature, and even failure to a stop lamp bulb.

Changes under the bonnet include the fitting of new twin SU HIF7 carburetors, which are highly developed for emission control and fuel economy, increase in size of the radiator, and a new plastic engine fan.

In keeping with the predicted trend towards more electronics in the cars of tomorrow, the new Rolls-Royce is the first car in production with an electronic speedometer—though here Aston Martin was the pioneer, with the new Lagonda. Elimination of the cable drive has been a Rolls-Royce ambition for some time, in the interests of avoiding a potential cause of noise transfer from the engine compartment. The distance recorder now reads to six figures and is said to be tamper-proof.

Now in its 12th year, the Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow has undergone a number of improvements over the years, but this major revision is the first time it has been accorded a change of series number. Over 20,000 Shadows have been built since the October 1965 introduction, and annual production has increased from 2000 to 3261. Further steady increase is planned through the early 1980s, and the car remains one of the soundest car investments it is possible to purchase.

### Going Dutch

The Dutch are in an angry mood. Heavy taxes on motoring, a drastic cutback in the road building program, oil crisis speed limits continued at the 60mph level, curtailed parking—these are all part of the general anti-motorist policies of the present Government. At the Amsterdam Show, held at the beginning of the month, Dutch motor traders and garages got together and ran a campaign with the theme "I'm glad I'm driving," to try to make the public more aware of what the

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## Lotus Esprit Goes Deep For New James Bond Film

MILLERTON, New York—The new Lotus Esprit has been converted into a submarine by Oceanographics in Miami.

The vehicle is used by James Bond in his escape from the bad guys in *The Spy Who Loved Me*, starring Roger Moore, scheduled for release in July '77. The specialized submarine was constructed for one of the most exciting chase scenes to reach the screen in many years, Bond or no Bond.

The Lotus Esprit is being introduced in the United States as the latest addition to a three model range of specialist luxury sports and GT cars. As the Lotus carries Bond through a series of treacherous bends and high speed curves, "the race breeding and roadholding capabilities are immediately apparent even on film and involve no special effects," according to the press release. But as Bond escapes the attacking helicopters and a villainous mobile-bomb launched from a motorcy-

been clocked at almost eight knots underwater. It is powered by two electric motors and four props that are used with the rudders to turn the craft as well as propell it on the dangerous 007 journey toward the underwater "hideout" of his nemesis.

The submarine version of the Esprit was designed and constructed by the Miami firm. Designer John Perry III commented that while the Esprit in road trim was very aerodynamic that his first try at the sea-going version indicated that the Esprit was not so hot hydrodynamically and that to fill the requirements of Producer Cubby Broccoli, a great many modifications were required.

Following the underwater filming, which took almost six weeks in Nassau, the Esprit Bond car was placed on display at the New York and Cleveland automobile shows. Following the Chicago show the 007 sub will journey to Iowa, Califor-



Available for sale only to registered spies: the Lotus in its 007 configuration, submerged, as compared with stock.

cle, he confidently plunges off a pier at high speed into the sea. Then the marvels of cinematography take over and the Esprit's wheels retract, rudders and fins appear in the rear, armor plating slides up over the windows, side fins pop out and a periscope appears from the roof.

With the trick photography completed the actual Lotus Esprit submarine goes into action for the real underwater shooting. The sub is fully functional and has

nia and finally back where it started as a real car—England and the World Premiere of *The Spy Who Loved Me*.

The Lotus Esprit submarine is equipped with typical 007 armaments; six rocket torpedos can be launched from the front; a dye ejection device in the rear enables Bond to escape the baddies like a giant squid and the incomparable Bond can also launch mini-sea mines from a special hatch on the underside of the car.

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## News Briefs

### Aston Martin sold to two British firms

In a surprising turn of events, it was reported at presstime that Aston Martin Lagonda, which last year tried unsuccessfully to purchase MG from Leyland, has been sold to two British firms—the Pace Petroleum Co. and C.H. Industries Ltd. The two companies reportedly acquired the shares in Aston Martin owned by American entrepreneur Peter Sprague and his British partners, Alan Curtis and Denis Flather. Sprague will continue to distribute Aston Martin cars in the U.S. More news to follow . . .

### New year, new prices from Detroit

General Motors and Ford Motor Co. greeted the new year with a new round of price hikes on some of their '81 models, while Chrysler Corp. decided to hold the line on prices for the time being, in an effort to pull out of its current financial tailspin.

GM's increase averaged \$149, or 1.5 percent, across the board, but the price boosts affect only its larger models. The corporation said stickers on its popular X-car compacts — Citation, Skylark, Phoenix and Omega — won't be bumped, while it has trimmed the Chevrolet Chevette, the top-selling car in the U.S., by \$100.

Ford said its latest price hike amounts to an average \$85, applicable again mostly on the bigger cars. Prices on the new Granada and Cougar models remain the same, and the base Escort stays at \$5,158. A companion Lynx model is now priced at \$5,199, while the sticker on the base Escort four-door has been knocked down by \$266.

Chrysler meanwhile is struggling to sell enough cars to keep cash trickling into the company's coffers, with rebates boosting sales of the K-cars and Omni/Horizon subcompacts slightly in January. No price hikes are planned by Chrysler in the immediate future, but the move to hold prices may have come too late to save the company.

### Toyota hikes '81 prices, too

You didn't think the Japanese were going to ignore the latest series of price hikes in Detroit, did you? Following the lead of GM and Ford, Toyota boosted its '81 models an average \$171, or 2.7 percent, in early January. The company's lowest-priced U.S. model, the front-drive Tercel two-door, jumped \$150, or 3.4 percent, and now carries a sticker of \$4,548. The top-of-the-line Cressida wagon climbed \$300, or 2.7 percent, to \$11,549. Other price hikes ranged from \$150 to \$300 on Toyota's U.S. lineup.

### Turbo Z-car rumored to be a screamer

Datsun's new turbocharged 280-ZX, which bows in the States in early spring, is rumored to be quite a performer. Zero-to-60 times are said to be in the "low sevens," and the car reportedly covers the quarter-mile in the 13-to-15-second range, with a terminal speed "in the 90s." And all this is with automatic transmission . . .

### Punting on the Thames with Aston

Never let an opportunity go by, they say in Newport Pagnell, home of the legendary Aston Martin marque. In one of the more unusual tie-ups we've encountered lately, Aston says it is joining forces with Ted Toleman's Cougar Marine of Southampton, England, in a bid to snare the European Powerboat Championship. Aston will provide Cougar with a fire-breathing version of its 5.4-liter alloy V-8 (the same one used in the Aston sports cars), complete with twin KKK turbochargers and four twin-choke Webers. How many horses will the engine crank out? "We have never entered the power game," sniffed an Aston official. "We leave the customer to decide if the power is sufficient, and we don't get many disappointed customers . . ."

### Long Beach racing art competition

OK, all you budding artists in Southern California, here's your chance for glory. The Long Beach Gallery has scheduled an open competition entitled "The Art of Racing" March 6-30, in conjunction with the Long Beach Grand Prix March 16. Entries must be hand-delivered to the gallery, 325 Golden Shore, Long Beach, between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 27. Entry fee is \$4 per piece, with cash awards of \$1,000 for first place, \$500 for second and \$250 for third. Call the gallery at 213-432-5931 ext. 247 for more information.

### Buchmann brothers to set up shop in U.S.?

Germany's Buchmann brothers, who run the B&B specialty-car shop outside Frankfurt, are said to be shopping for office space on the West Coast, where they reportedly plan to sell customized Rabbits, digital-electronic instrumentation and custom one-offs for well-heeled clients. The Buchmanns also are rumored to be preparing a handful of new show cars for the Frankfurt auto show this fall, including a stretched version of the Mercedes S-class sedan.



### Turbo Esprit for Agent 007

What kind of wheels are in fashion this season for the super sophisticated spy set? James Bond, secret agent 007 (alias Roger Moore), will slip into a new Lotus Turbo Esprit for his next adventure movie, "For Your Eyes Only," currently being filmed. Needless to say, Bond, whose most famous form of transportation probably was the custom-equipped Aston Martin DB-4, will have a few tricks built into the Turbo Esprit. Below, the film crew prepares the car for a scene in which the high-performance Goodyear tires explode during a jaunt at high speed.



### '83 Franco-American mini

Vive LeMinicar! A sharp-eyed photographer snapped these photos of a small four-door sedan which sources tell us is part of the new family of front-drive subcompacts Renault is developing for the U.S. The cars will be built by American Motors in Wisconsin, beginning in the fall of 1982. Body styles are said to include a coupe, sedan and wagon, with power supplied by four-cylinder gas and diesel engines (including a rumored turbo-diesel). Now, what about that "Empire" nameplate stuck on the rear end of the car?



Gente Motori