

The Motor Road Test No. 32/59

Make: Ford **Type:** Taunus 17M Four-door saloon
Makers: Ford-Werke AG, Cologne, West Germany

Concessionaires: Lincoln Cars Limited, Great West Road, Brentford, Middlesex

Test Data

The World Copyright of this article and illustrations is strictly reserved © Temple Press Limited, 1959

CONDITIONS: Weather: Cool and humid with light wind. (Temperature 42°-46°F., Barometer 29.75 in. Hg.). Surface: Dry tarred macadam and concrete. Fuel: Premium-grade pump petrol, approx. 96 Research Method Octane Rating.

INSTRUMENTS

Speedometer at 30 m.p.h. ... 7% fast
 Speedometer at 60 m.p.h. ... 8% fast
 Distance recorder ... 4% fast

WEIGHT

Kerb weight (unladen, but with oil, water and fuel for approx. 50 miles) ... 20½ cwt.
 Front/rear distribution of kerb weight ... 55/45
 Weight laden as tested ... 24 cwt

MAXIMUM SPEEDS

Mean lap speed around banked circuit ... 78.8 m.p.h.
 Best one-way ¼-mile on straight ... 81.1 m.p.h.
 "Maximile" Speed. (Timed quarter mile after one mile accelerating from rest)
 Mean of opposite runs ... 76.5 m.p.h.
 Best one-way time equals ... 77.6 m.p.h.

Speed in gears

Max. speed in 2nd gear ... 59 m.p.h.
 Max. speed in 1st gear ... 30 m.p.h.

FUEL CONSUMPTION

44.5 m.p.g. at constant 30 m.p.h. on level.
 40.0 m.p.g. at constant 40 m.p.h. on level.
 35.0 m.p.g. at constant 50 m.p.h. on level.
 29.5 m.p.g. at constant 60 m.p.h. on level.
 25.5 m.p.g. at constant 70 m.p.h. on level.

Overall Fuel Consumption for 934 miles, 33.1 gallons, equals 28.2 m.p.g. (10 litres/100 km.).

Touring Fuel Consumption (m.p.g. at steady speed midway between 30 m.p.h. and maximum, less 5% allowance for acceleration) ... 31 m.p.g.

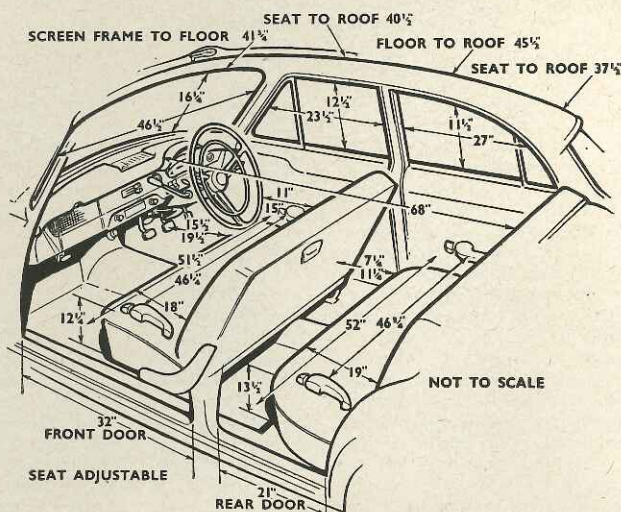
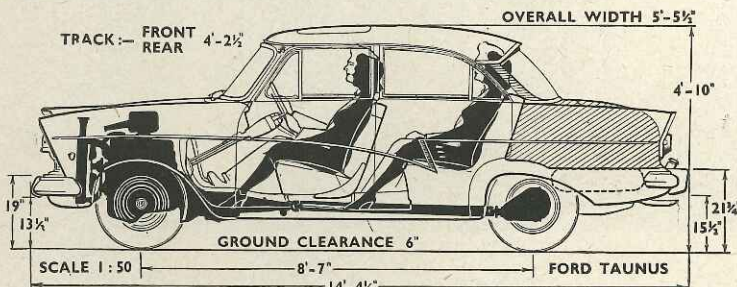
Fuel tank capacity (maker's figure) ... 10 gallons

STEERING

Turning circle between kerbs:
 Left ... 33½ feet
 Right ... 34½ feet
 Turns of steering wheel from lock to lock ... 3

HILL CLIMBING at sustained steady speeds

Max. gradient on top gear ... 1 in 10.8 (Tapley 205 lb./ton)
 Max. gradient on 2nd gear ... 1 in 5.9 (Tapley 375 lb./ton)



ACCELERATION TIMES from standstill

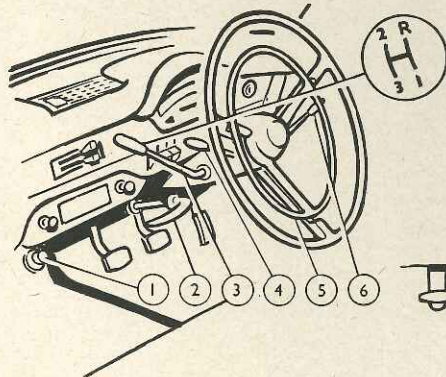
0-30 m.p.h.	5.7 sec.
0-40 m.p.h.	8.7 sec.
0-50 m.p.h.	13.4 sec.
0-60 m.p.h.	21.4 sec.
0-70 m.p.h.	36.5 sec.
Standing quarter mile	21.9 sec.

ACCELERATION TIMES on Upper Ratios

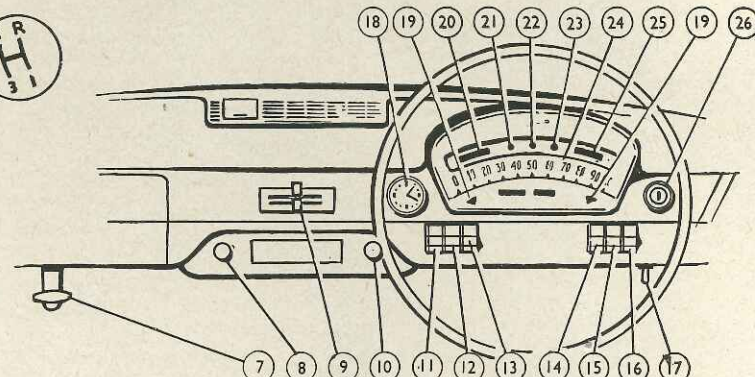
10-30 m.p.h.	8.7 sec.	Top gear	2nd gear
20-40 m.p.h.	10.5 sec.	12.1 sec.	6.4 sec.
30-50 m.p.h.	11.7 sec.	10.5 sec.	6.2 sec.
40-60 m.p.h.	15.3 sec.	11.7 sec.	7.9 sec.
50-70 m.p.h.	23.9 sec.	15.3 sec.	—
		23.9 sec.	—

BRAKES from 30 m.p.h.

0.94 g retardation (equivalent to 32 ft. stopping distance) with 75 lb. pedal pressure.
 0.56 g retardation (equivalent to 53½ ft. stopping distance) with 50 lb. pedal pressure.
 0.17 g retardation (equivalent to 177 ft. stopping distance) with 25 lb. pedal pressure.



1, Windscreen washer button. 2, Handbrake. 3, Gear lever. 4, Headlamp dip switch. 5, Horn ring. 6, Direction indicator switch. 7, Bonnet catch release. 8, Choke control. 9, Heater and demister controls. 10, Cigar lighter. 11, Spare



switch (for added accessories). 12, Heater fan switch. 13, Windscreen wipers switch. 14, Side-lights switch. 15, Headlights switch. 16, Panel light switch. 17, Trip resetting knob. 18, Clock. 19, Direction indicator warning light. 20, Fuel

contents gauge. 21, Dynamo charge warning lamp. 22, High beam indicator. 23, Oil pressure warning lamp. 24, Speedometer and distance recorder. 25, Water thermometer. 26, Ignition, starter and auxiliaries switch.

The Ford Taunus 17M

Four-door Saloon

A Well-finished
German 1.7-litre
Car with a
Sliding Roof

RATHER more ornate than the Consul, which is its British equivalent, the Taunus 17M is a solidly built car now being imported in right-hand drive form.



A RECENT addition to the range of cars offered to British motorists is the Taunus 17M, built in the Cologne factory of Ford-Werke AG. Right-hand drive cars are now being imported to Britain by Lincoln Cars Ltd., the three body styles offered being the four-door saloon which is the subject of this test report, a very similar two-door saloon, and a two-door estate car (priced intermediately between the two saloons) which has a lower axle ratio and large-section tyres.

Import duty which is included in the British price makes the four-cylinder Taunus 17M appear at first glance to be a rival for British six-cylinder cars of around 50% greater engine size, but it does in fact offer quite interesting value for money. The specification includes an extremely neat Golde all-steel sliding roof, operated by winding a folding handle inside the body, whereas to convert British cars to a sliding roof costs around £60. Interior heating and windscreen washers are also standardized items of equipment, and the "chassis" of the Taunus is almost completely devoid of the greasing points which

still abound in most cars. Whilst this is a quantity-produced steel saloon of medium size and conventional layout, it is obviously built to high standards of quality.

With foggy weather threatening, we subjected the Taunus 17M to our usual performance tests when its total distance recorder was registering rather less than 1,000 miles: although the "running in" instructions for this car suggest only a 50-m.p.h. limit on sustained speed during the first 300 miles, it cannot be doubted that further mileage would have improved the test car's already-creditable performance to some extent. Nevertheless, such figures as top-gear acceleration from 20 m.p.h. to 40 m.p.h. in 10.5 sec., through-the-gears acceleration from rest to 50 m.p.h. in 13.4 sec. and a timed mean speed of 78.8 m.p.h. are exceptionally good for a roomy 1.7-litre saloon. At the same time, this is an economical car to run, and we were pleasantly surprised to record a petrol consumption better than 30 m.p.g. for a substantial mileage during our test.

Much of the credit for this good performance must obviously be given to the designers who have kept the kerbside weight of a very roomy car down to scarcely more than 1 ton. There is not enough interior width for this car to be described as a genuine six-seat model, but it is only a very mild hardship to carry that number of people for moderate distances. As a four-seater with extremely generous elbow-room for everybody, this car makes big men comfortable in the front, and whilst legroom and headroom in the back are less generous they are fully adequate. There

is an extremely roomy luggage locker with a completely flat rubber-covered floor (a panel in which must be lifted if access to the spare wheel or tools is required) and the 10-gallon petrol tank gives quite a good non-stop range.

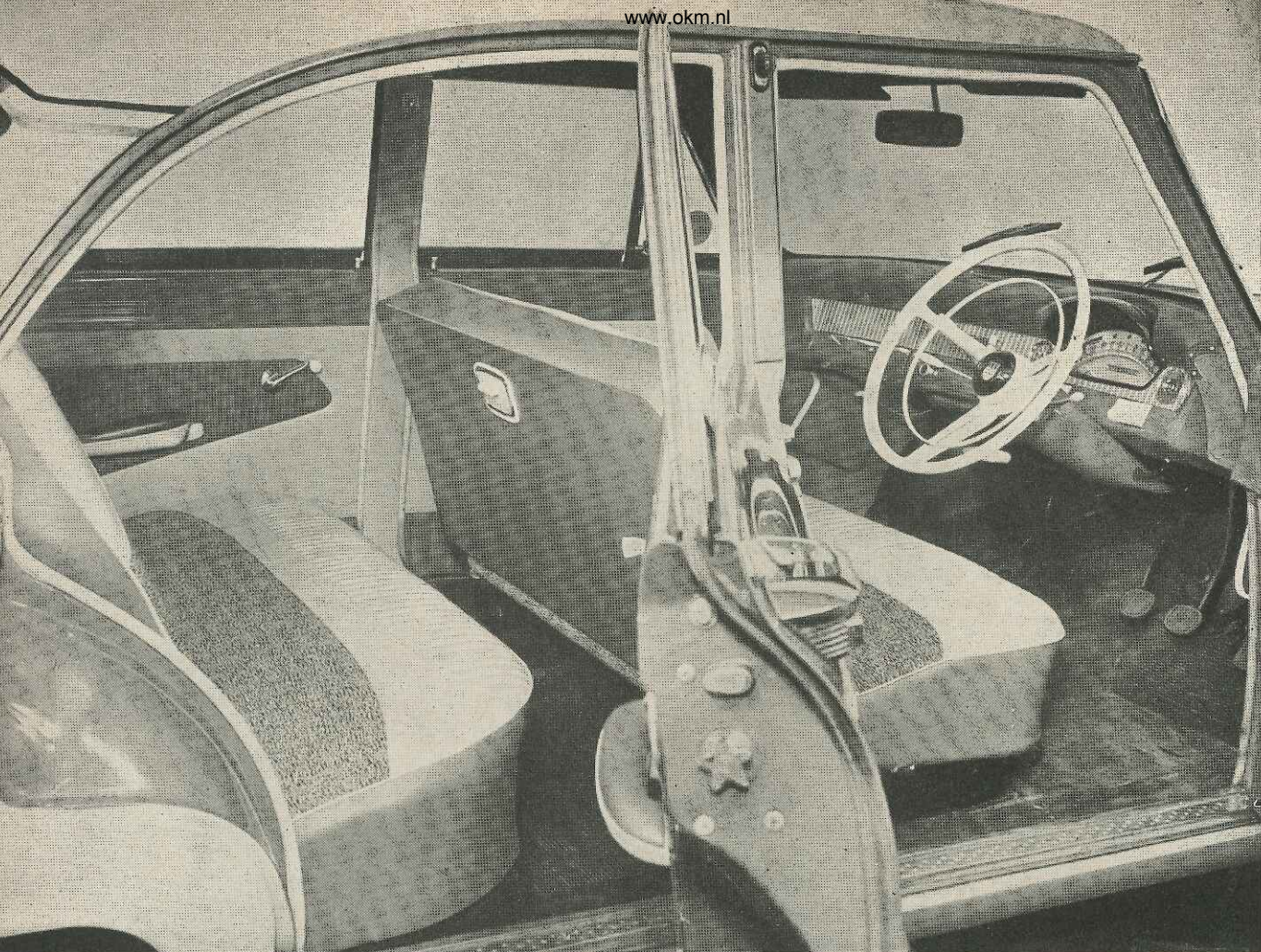
To drive, the Taunus 17M feels reasonably but not inconveniently large, the driver having a good all-round view with the backs of flashing turn indicators clearly visible as width indicators on top of the front wings. Geared at three turns from lock to lock, the steering lets this car be turned between kerbs approximately 34 ft. apart, and is at all times reasonably light.

It is on open road rather than around town that the Taunus is seen to best advantage, however, partly but by no means solely because it has quite high gear ratios. The 3.54/1 axle ratio and 5.90-13 tubeless tyres give nearly 20 m.p.h. per 1,000 r.p.m. engine speed, and the German catalogue refers to 125 kilometres per hour (78 m.p.h.) as being both the normal maximum and a permissible Autobahn cruising speed.

Although listed as having a compression ratio of only 7.1-7.2/1 the Taunus engine needed premium-grade petrol if it was to show its full performance without any knock or harshness. Our usual acceleration tests from 10 m.p.h. in top gear were made, but at such low speeds one is very conscious of being behind a four-cylinder engine, and hard pulling at less than 20 m.p.h. in top gear obviously represents mild abuse. Despite the high top-gear ratio (the 2,200 r.p.m. engine speed at which maximum torque is catalogued

In Brief

Price (including sliding roof, etc., as tested)	
£845 plus purchase tax £353 4s. 2d.	
equals £1,198 4s. 2d.	
Capacity	1,698 c.c.
Unladen kerb weight	20½ cwt.
Acceleration:	
20-40 m.p.h. in top gear	10.5 sec.
0-50 m.p.h. through gears	13.4 sec.
Maximum direct top gear gradient	1 in 10.8
Maximum speed	78.8 m.p.h.
"Maximile" speed	76.5 m.p.h.
Touring fuel consumption	31.0 m.p.g.
Gearing: 19.35 m.p.h. in top gear at 1,000 r.p.m.; 38.4 m.p.h. at 1,000 ft./min. piston speed.	



The Ford Taunus 17M

represents approximately 42 m.p.h.), this car has top-gear pulling power comparable with many much larger-engined models. With the gearbox used properly, this is one of the liveliest of medium-sized family saloons.

Although a four-speed gearbox is available in Germany as an optional extra, the design of this unit has not proved amenable to conversion to right-hand drive and cars sold in Britain have the normal three-speed gearbox with a very sturdy steering-column control. All the forward ratios have quiet helical gears, and their engagement is facilitated by synchromesh which is thoroughly effective yet does not impede fast changes of gear. With good synchromesh on first gear so that even a tyro need not be shy about using this ratio, second gear has been made reasonably high and is useful up to more than 50 m.p.h. when overtaking other traffic. First gear will restart a reasonably well-laden car on a 1-in-4 gradient, the engine idling regularly and the handbrake doing its job unprotestingly when the car is stopped on this exceptionally steep slope. The main hydraulic braking system gave good emergency stops with quite moderate pedal

pressures during our tests, but the brakes needed rather more pedal effort than is nowadays usual before commencing to take effect: hard brake applications at short intervals produced a hot smell from new brakes which had been given little chance of bedding in, but no fade.

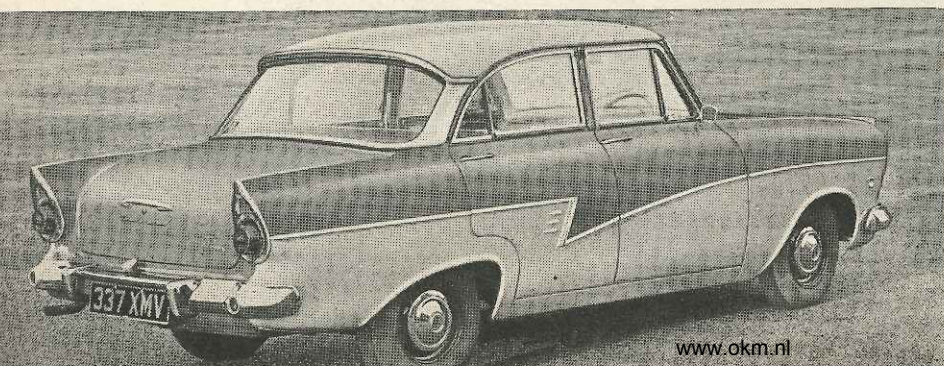
Instant starting from cold was provided by our test model after it had stood in the open air through nights of slight frost, extreme stiffness of the choke control being perhaps partly a sign of the car's newness. With partial use of the choke, it was possible to drive away at once, but it was several minutes before the engine would idle or open-up reliably without any help from the choke. An unusual refinement to be seen under the bonnet is a small water jacket on the carburettor adjacent to the throttle-edge slow-running mixture passages; water passes through this jacket on its way from the car interior heater to the engine and prevents the formation of ice inside the carburettor when the evaporation of petrol refrigerates damp winter air. On a cold morning, the heater took a couple of miles before it began to have much effect inside the car, but once working it did an extremely effective job of

warming the front compartment: conversion of a Continental car to right-hand drive has left two minor imperfections, in that both the quiet electrical windscreen wipers and the powerful de-misters cleared rather more glass on the left side of the windscreen than on the right.

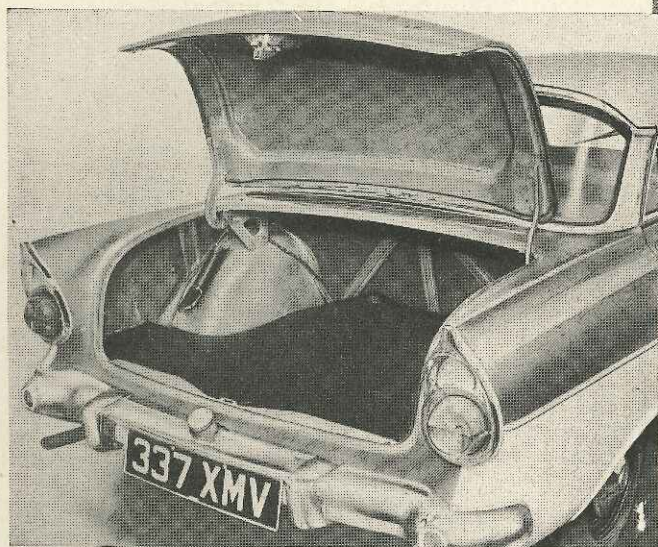
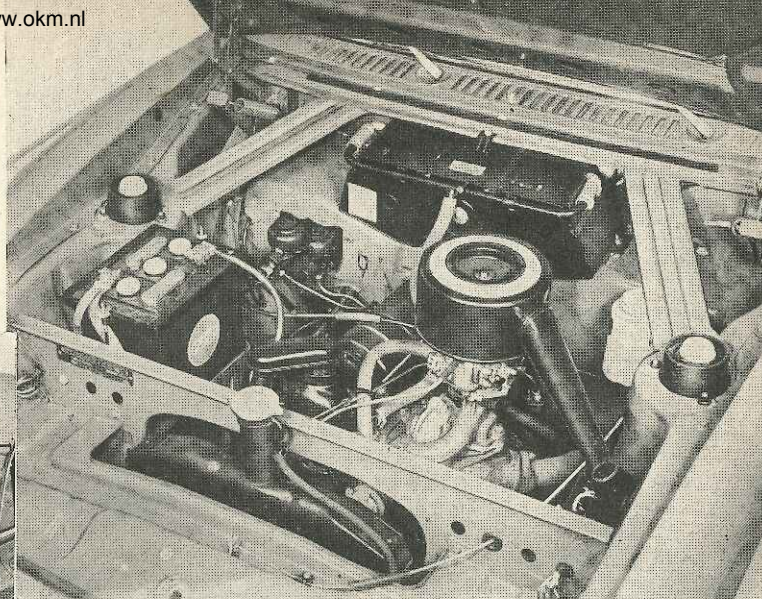
The Taunus suspension system uses a Macpherson strut layout of coil springs (not unlike that on British-built Ford cars) at the front, and semi-elliptic leaf springs with a rigid axle at the back. The details of this model's running gear have been worked out in terms of rubber bushes and non-oil bearings so that, apart from the gearchange linkage, only the suspension top bearings (readily accessible under the bonnet) need lubrication every 1,500 miles. The suspension is fairly soft, and whilst it does not "bottom" when the car is laden it does seem to give excellent comfort when the car is lightly laden, at the expense of allowing rather much up-and-down motion on wavy surfaces when a fairly full load of passengers and luggage is aboard. There is no great amount of body roll during cornering, but tyre squeal is easily provoked with the inflation pressures recommended, and we found that an extra few lb./sq. in. could be used to silence the tyres without the suspension feeling at all harsh.

Standardized on this model, the Golde sunshine roof has a metal outer panel, and when closed neither the roofline externally nor the interior lining are conspicuously broken. Turning a folding handle slides the panel back, however, to provide a useful open area which at touring speeds does not make the car interior unduly draughty. Waterproofing and drainage arrangements seem to be fully effective so long as the roof is not actually opened too soon after a

STOUT bumpers are wrapped around the front and rear of the flush-sided body.



FAMILIAR to British Ford owners are the braced mounting points for the Macpherson i.f.s. used on the Taunus, but these do not interfere with the accessibility of the o.h.v. engine. An unusual refinement is a water jacket around the slow-running section of the carburetter, to prevent icing.



shower whilst raindrops are still on it. The usual hinged ventilation panels on the front windows do not have rain-water traps, but they do have press-button locking catches. Provision of jacket hooks on the central body pillars emphasizes that the fresh-air heater (which has a very quiet fan) is really meant to be used, although passengers did not find the draught sealing around the rear doors altogether perfect. The bench-type front seat proved very comfortable, its high backrest being adjustable for rake by means of two abutment screws.

Giving an impression of rattle-free solidity which is surprising in relation to its moderate weight, the Taunus 17M is rather ornate externally with its heavily-hooded lamps and decorative body side flashes, but has a sensible and well-finished

interior of more sober design. Covered in leathercloth, the fascia has a locking glove-box of fair size, neat hooded instruments and an electric clock. Armrests on the front doors serve also as pulls, a trigger on each armrest opening the door. Minor controls take the form of two groups of three rocking-action switches, very neat and reasonably accessible despite being rather behind the steering wheel but their grouping involving some risk that a gloved finger may switch off the sidelamps accidentally when switching off the headlamps intentionally. Headlamp dipping is by a fingertip lever, on the opposite side of the steering column to an unusually good self-cancelling turn indicator switch—pushed forwards, this latter switch will turn on a single parking lamp on either side of the

car, and squeezed towards the steering wheel it should flash the headlamps as a motorway approach warning but on the test model the headlamp flasher was inoperative. A horn ring is fitted on the steering wheel, the heater controls are identified by arrows (pointing down or up for heat or de-mist) and colours (red for hot and blue for cold), whilst all the switches are labelled pictorially. A toe-operated windscreen washer is provided, but its jets were reluctant to reach very far up the big windscreen.

Whilst the engine is very audible if asked to "slog" hard at low r.p.m., this is a pleasantly quiet car at its natural cruising speeds. At its maximum a certain amount of "rumble" from the road is becoming more evident inside the steel body shell, but road noise is not normally conspicuous. As a model which adds exceptional quality of finish and detail design to the fundamental excellence of an orthodox modern steel saloon, the Taunus with its comfortable roominess, brisk performance and good economy of fuel seems assured of a useful market in Britain—elsewhere it is already a familiar favourite.

The World Copyright of this article and illustrations is strictly reserved © Temple Press Limited, 1959

Specification

Engine	
Cylinders	4
Bore	84 mm.
Stroke	76.7 mm.
Cubic capacity	1,698 c.c.
Piston area	34.4 sq. in.
Valves	Pushrod o.h.v.
Compression ratio	7.1/1
Carburetter Solex 32 PICB downdraught	
Fuel pump	Mechanical
Ignition timing control	Centrifugal
Oil filter	Optional full-flow
Max. power (gross)	67 b.h.p. (60 net)
at	4,400 r.p.m.
Piston speed at max. b.h.p.	2,210 ft./min.

Transmission

Clutch	Single dry plate with hydraulic operation
Top gear (s/m)	3.54
2nd gear (s/m)	5.99
1st gear (s/m)	11.6
Reverse	13.9
Propeller shaft	Single-piece open
Final drive	Hypoid bevel
Top gear m.p.h. at 1,000 r.p.m.	19.35
Top gear m.p.h. at 1,000 ft./min. piston speed	38.4

Chassis

Brakes	ATE-Ford hydraulic, two leading shoes at front
Brake drum internal diameter	9.05 in.
Friction lining area	137 sq. in.
Suspension:	
Front	Macpherson strut-type i.f.s. with coil springs and anti-roll torsion bar
Rear	Semi-elliptic leaf springs
Shock absorbers	Telescopic
Steering gear	Worm and roller
Tyres	5.90—13 tubeless Continental

Coachwork and Equipment

Starting handle	None
Battery mounting	On right of engine
Jack	Ratchet pillar type
Jacking points	External flanges under body sides

Standard tool kit: Jack and handle, screwdriver, three double-ended spanners, box spanner and tommy bar, wrench, tool bag.

Exterior lights: 2 headlamps with pilot bulbs, 2 stop/tail lamps, 1 number plate lamp, parking lamp/flasher on each side of body.

Number of electrical fuses 8

Direction indicators: Self-cancelling flashers, white front and red rear, with repeaters on body sides.

Windscreen wipers: Electrical two-blade, self-parking.

Windscreen washers: toe-operated pump

Sun visors 2, universally pivoted

Instruments: Speedometer with non-decimal trip and total distance recorders, fuel contents gauge, water thermometer, clock.

Warning lights: Dynamo charge, oil pressure, headlamp main beam, turn indicators.

Locks: with ignition key. Ignition/starter switch and either front door.

with other key: Luggage locker and glove box.

Glove lockers: One on fascia with lockable lid

Map pockets Two on sides of scuttle

Parcel shelves One behind rear seat

Ashtrays: One above fascia, one behind front seat

Cigar lighters: One on fascia

Interior lights: One above windscreen, with courtesy switch on driver's door.

Interior heater: Fresh air heater and screen de-mister.

Car radio Optional extra

Extras available Saxomat automatic clutch

Upholstery material Cloth and Vinyl

Floor covering Rubber mats

Exterior colours standardized: 14 two-tone combinations (single colours obtainable to special order).

Alternative body styles: 2-door saloon and estate car.

Maintenance

Sump 5½ pints, S.A.E. 20/20W

Gearbox 2½ pints, S.A.E. 80

Rear axle 2 pints, hypoid gear oil

Steering gear lubricant hypoid gear oil

Cooling system capacity (with heater): 14½ pints (2 drain taps).

Chassis lubrication: By grease gun every 1,500 miles to 1 point, every 4,500 miles to 2 further points.

Ignition timing T.D.C. static

Contact-breaker gap 0.016-0.019 in.

Spark plug type: Bosch M175T1 or Champion L85.

Spark plug gap 0.028-0.031 in.

Valve timing: Inlet opens 26° before T.D.C. and closes 72° after B.D.C. Exhaust opens 57°

before B.D.C. and closes 35° after T.D.C.

Tappet clearances (cold):

Inlet 0.011 in.

Exhaust 0.014 in.

Front wheel toe-in 0.080-0.120 in.

Camber angle 0° 50' to 1° 50'

Castor angle 0 to 40'

Steering swivel pin inclination 6° 10'

Tyre pressures: according to load

Front 20-22 lb.

Rear 19-24 lb.

Brake fluid ATE

Battery type and capacity: 6-volt, 84 amp. hr.

Miscellaneous: Clean and re-oil gauze in combined crankcase breather and filler cap every 1,500 miles.