



Wheelin' around



by Charlie Moore

The time of year is fast approaching when the van freaks will be hitting the road again so this type of vehicle will be in especially heavy demand. Most prospective buyers will be looking for used examples so here is a short guide on what to look for.

The problem with most panel sided vans (vs. the window variety) is that nine times out of ten they were originally used as delivery trucks. This type of use is about the hardest that a car can go through and tends to wear out everything very quickly. As a rule, window vans have an easier life although this is not always the case. Another alternative is the panel truck which has largely faded from the truck scene in the past few years. These are bigger and less economical than the flat-fronted vans, but they are much easier to service and work on and they ride and handle much better than their snub-nosed cousins.

There are several types of vans panels available, so here is a list of the more popular ones in descending order of desirability:

Dodge/Fargo A100 — The early smaller Dodge vans were exceptionally good and have the added advantage of the Dodge slant six engine. A few were equipped with Vee-8s. The later ones are bigger and somewhat easier to work on because of improved engine access, but are less economical.

Ford Econoline — This has always been the best selling American van and is quite tough and dependable. The reason it rates second is that the Ford six is not nearly as good as the Dodge engine. The very latest models have a sliding side door which is a useful feature.

Chevy Van GMC Handivan — These are also good although not quite as tough and dependable as the Dodge and Ford offerings. The main problem is the GM six engine which is

clearly inferior to the Dodge although not much worse than the Ford. Chev was the first American van to offer a sliding door.

Volkswagen — The VW is the prime mover of the subculture and is indeed the most economical and dependable offering in the van field. However it is noisy, slow, bad handling and highly susceptible to cross-winds. Highway driving requires patience and quick reactions. They are put together rather well though, and if you can stand the noise and gutless acceleration this may be the one for you.

Thames/Commer/Bedford —

These are English vans and due to an English law which decrees that vans may move at a maximum speed of 45 miles-per-hour, their highway performance leaves something to be desired (!!!). They have about as much power and acceleration as a VW but are geared so low that anything over 50 mph is sheer torture.

The only American manufacturer of panel trucks nowadays is General Motors, but there a few older models around by all the Big Three manufacturers. Another alternative is specialty vehicles such as ambulances

and hearses, and the big truck style station wagons like the International Harvester Travellal and the Chevy Suburban.

As a rule of thumb, Vee-8s are better than sixes although there is a corresponding decrease in gas mileage to the increase in power. Remember that the conventional station wagon is cheaper, more comfortable, and more economical than any van and will still sleep two in comfort, and because of the great demand for vans, prices are highly inflated. Good luck and keep wheelin'.

Dal wins bonspiel

by Dave MacDougal and Lorraine Stevens

On March 9 and 10, the Dalhousie women's curling team successfully competed in the A.W.I.A.A. curling championship held in Moncton, N.B. After the first day of the bonspiel, the Dalhousie girls had accumulated a 3-1 win/loss record with convincing victories over U.N.B. (10-2), Université de Moncton (11-4), and Saint Mary's (9-5). Their only loss that day was to Mt. Allison (11-2). (Can't win 'em all.) The next day, the girls continued their winning streak by downing U.P.E.I. (13-1). The same round produced an upset victory by Acadia over Memorial University of

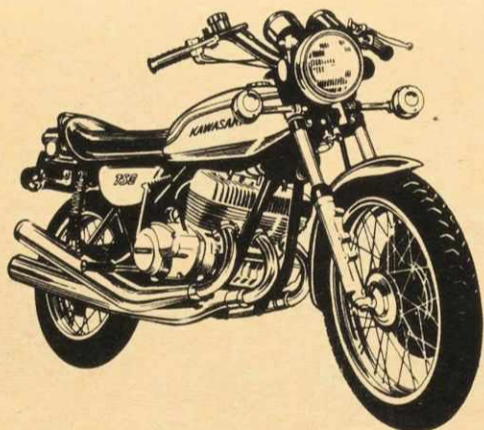
Newfoundland, resulting in a three way tie for first place between Dalhousie, Acadia, and M.U.N.

In the 6th round, Acadia met Dal head on with Dal coming out on top with an 8-6 score. M.U.N. set the stage for a final round clash for the title with Dal by defeating U.P.E.I. (11-4). In the championship match, Dal's skip Lorraine Stevens, who threw lead rocks, mate, Ruth Belanger, who threw skip rocks, second, Lorene Scrutton, and lead, Joanne Ritcey, coached by Dave MacDougal, curled their way to a decisive victory over M.U.N. with a score of 10-5.

Throughout the bonspiel, Dalhousie was classed as the underdog team, with M.U.N.

and Saint Mary's being the dual favorites. But, as the bonspiel progressed and Dal was winning their games by such great margins, the opinion of most people was that the conference title winner would be decided in the last two rounds. This proved true as Dal defeated Acadia and M.U.N. to capture the 4th Women's Intercollegiate title of the year.

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