



シングルシート

N 320 型

'62 coming at you!

JUNE 1987

ISSUE 4

Greetings again! Although the weather is still a bit cool, summer is nearly here and that means warm sunny days, yard work, and trips to the dump. That is just one function that the Datsun L-320 pickup truck can handle quite well. It is amazing how much garbage can be piled into the bed of these trucks.

In this issue, I have included the Motor Trend magazine road test from December 1961 on the Datsun sports car and sedan. This article is well written and very thorough in its details. These cars use nearly the identical running gear that the L-320 pickup trucks use except for the rear end being a higher gear ratio and the cars used smaller tires. But all in all it is interesting reading. Also there is more information on parts that I have recently dealt with.

Please send me any item of interest that I can include in here in the future. I need input from fellow owners out there!!!

PARTS FLASH!!!

I recently found out the front turn signal lenses for the 61, 62, 63, and 65 L-320 trucks are still available. I haven't looked into the availability of the odd shaped 1964 front turn lense however. I can honestly say that I have never seen a truck that does not need new lenses on the front turn signal lamps. I was thrilled to find out that San Diego Nissan even carries 2 in stock. These lense are great looking with the new clear plastic lense and the shiny metal ring around it. Part number is 26121-09401 and each one costs \$7.00. They are money well spent.

M T Road Test



DATSUN SPORTS CAR and SEDAN

by Wayne Thoms

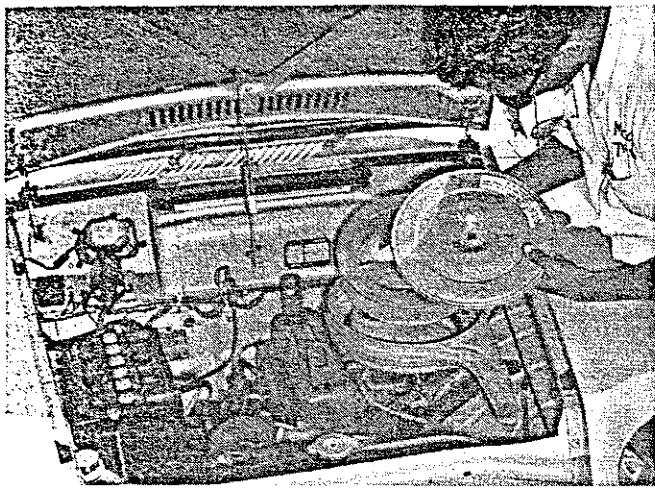
IT IS NOT SURPRISING that the Datsun is built with emphasis on quality and rugged reliability. Both these factors shone uppermost in our test Datsuns, the Bluebird four-door sedan and Fair Lady sports convertible, confirming the knowledge that Japanese technology is equal to the best in the world.

Comparing the economy-utility Bluebird with the Fair Lady sports car, as we have done, hardly seems fair, yet in this instance there are good reasons. It permits us to point out the basic similarities, of which there are several, while presenting independent conclusions on both cars, as well as reviewing Datsun's overall technique of engineering cars for the fiercely competitive U.S. market.

Utilizing the same engine gives the two cars distinctly similar

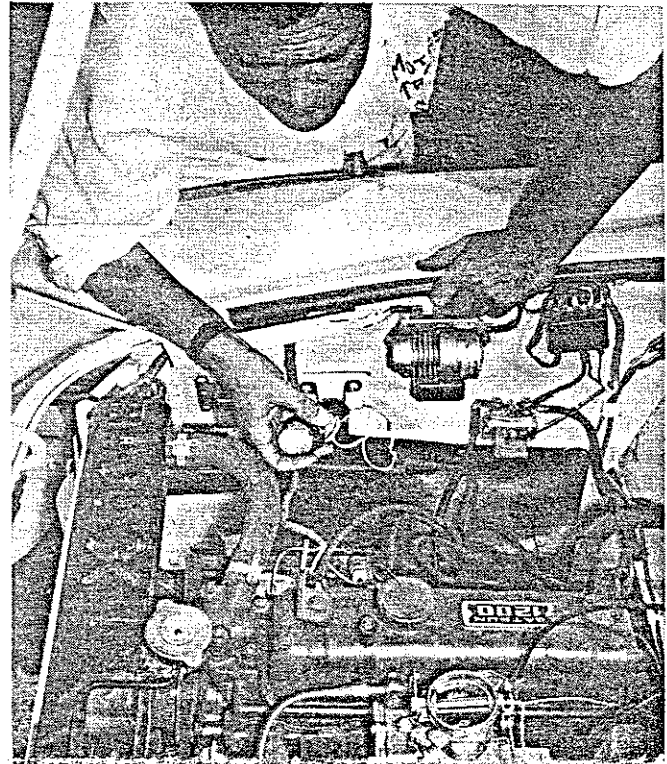
personalities. Strongly influenced by the BMC A-type, the four-cylinder mill develops its peak 60 hp at 5000 rpm, yet buzzes along willingly at the 6000 we used for shift points without notable protest. That the engine will hold together at high revs is indicated by a Fair Lady prepared for sports car racing. Its engine is regularly turned to 7500 rpm—and it has yet to come apart.

The two cars perform remarkably alike as far as speed is concerned. Both convertible and sedan have identical dry weights, the same rear axle ratio and, while they use different size wheels and tires, the loaded radius of the rear wheels is very close, giving near-identical mph/1000 rpm figures. Consequently, acceleration was almost equal. The slight difference came in the fact



Both of the test Datsuns were powered by the same 72.5-cubic-inch ohv Four. A four-speed transmission and streamline style accounted for Fair Lady's performance.

Built-in trouble light with long cord eases night repairs, although engine is so reliable it won't be used much.



that the sedan uses a three-speed transmission; the convertible a four-speed. Rated top speed of the sedan is 80 mph; because of better streamlining the convertible has an 82-mph top end.

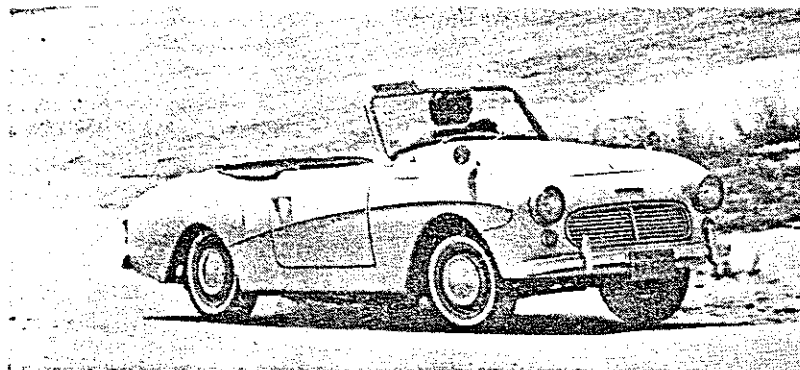
Differences began to assert themselves in the handling at higher-than-average speeds, largely because of front suspension differences. Not only is the Fair Lady more stiffly sprung, it carries a pair of longitudinal torsion bars up front where the Bluebird has conventional coils. Both cars can be cornered with considerable enthusiasm, the primary differences being more body lean on the part of the sedan. We found considerable understeer, with rear end breakaway signalling itself in plenty of time to be controllable.

Steering is fast — $2\frac{3}{4}$ turns, lock-to-lock — and moderately heavy, but the small 32-foot turning circle for both cars more than compensates. Parking, ducking into restricted traffic areas — handling generally can be performed with precision.

Gear boxes tended to be stiff but without extraneous motion. The convertible's floor-mounted standard H-pattern has short



FAIR LADY CONVERTIBLE IS ONE OF THE SHORT-WHEELBASE SPORTS CONVERTIBLES THAT HAVE A TRULY FUNCTIONAL REAR SEAT.



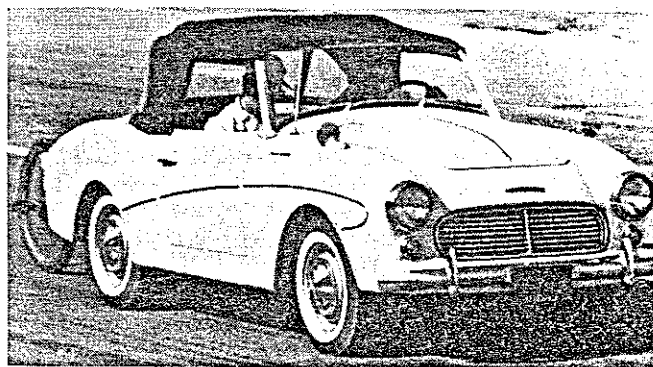
The sports version takes corners with more enthusiasm than its sedan counterpart, due to stiffer springing (torsion bars).

The top-up position still offers plenty of headroom for passengers, front and rear. Side curtains go up in bad weather.

throws and its position should suit most drivers. Even though the sedan's three-speed column-controlled transmission is all synchro, which was very satisfying in slow traffic, a four-speed box would make up for the between-gear gaps that go with a small engine pulling a three-speed transmission.

When one produces a car with a less-than-90-inch wheelbase and two-wheel independent suspension, the ride is predictable — much as we experienced in the Datsun. On the plus side, the Bluebird sedan has found the fine line that reduces choppiness to a minimum while retaining a stiff enough spring rate to keep the car controllable while recovering from sharp dips. It follows that the Fair Lady, with stiffer suspension, rode a little harder. We did not consider either uncomfortable.

But there are other factors which invariably influence one's opinion about ride, not the least of which is seating and its relative comfort. We liked the Fair Lady's simple bucket-type, foam-rubber-padded seats. Built on a fiberglass shell, 8½ inches off the floor at the front cushion edge, they measure 18 inches wide by 19 deep. The depth proved to be adequate for proper thigh support and the curved backrest did a good job of holding passengers in place. With a four-inch adjustment to the maximum of 47 inches from backrest to toeboard, there is plenty of leg- and kneeroom around the steering wheel — except possibly



for a driver built along the lines of a Wilt Chamberlain. In contrast, the Bluebird was judged not to have enough front seat room for real comfort for anyone in the neighborhood of five-ten. At maximum rearward seat travel, there is only 42 inches between backrest and toeboard. Compounding this is a steering wheel an inch closer to the seat than in the convertible. The result was an uncomfortable situation between knees and wheel for average-height drivers which would probably be very annoying for a lanky American.

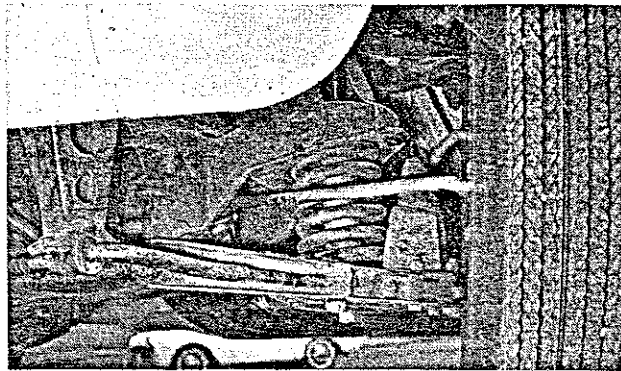
Those potential sports car buyers who have been clamoring



Taking down the Fair Lady's convertible top is a simple matter of snapping off the fabric. Tonneau cover is standard equipment. With this position there are quite a few wind currents in cockpit.

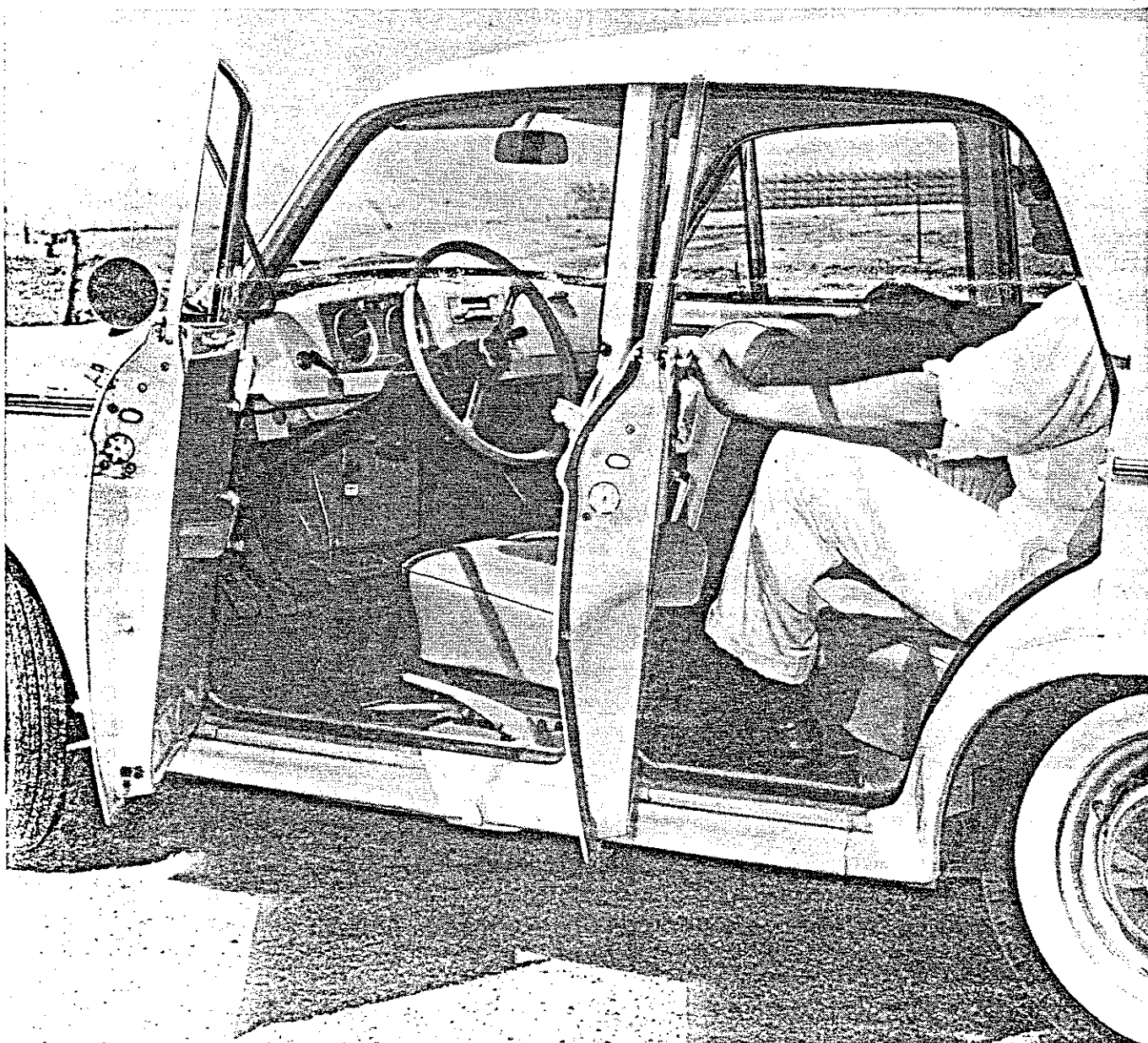


The sedan has a definite advantage over the sports car in the amount of luggage space. Usable area is 50 inches wide, 23 deep.



Front suspensions differ in the basic type of springing. Bluebird has conventional coils, while the Fair Lady has stiffer, longitudinal torsion bars.

LIKE THE TRUCK



FOR SOME LANKY AMERICANS THE LITTLE SEDAN WILL NOT BE TOO COMFORTABLE. THERE ARE 42 INCHES BETWEEN BACKREST AND TOEBOARD.

Hard cornering induced considerable lean, more noticeable to observers than to driver. Handling and control under these conditions were considered good.



Datsun Sports Car and Sedan

continued

for years for a true four-passenger sports car should take heart in the Fair Lady. The feat is accomplished. Unlike a number of current roadsters with areas called rear seats, the Fair Lady will carry two adults, offering in the process a 17- x 17-inch seat with a backrest the same height, full 36-inch headroom (an inch more than the front seats) and adequate kneeroom as long as the front seats are adjusted even slightly forward. Because the rear seats are only 10½ inches from the floor, knees tend to shoot upward, but it is better than any other current sports car rear seat.

Upholstery and interior finish are in keeping with the cars' budget-priced character—complete and simple, but not plush. Seats are covered in a soft vinyl with a sort of rubbery texture and an unusual "fresh plastic" odor. Frankly, we felt that the upholstery material could have been improved in quality without adding to price. Interior appointments are generally well thought out. The sedan has a roomy glove box, four armrests, two ash trays, easy-to-read white-on-black instruments and an excellent heat-vent-defrost system. The convertible is similarly equipped, except that it lacks armrests and its dash storage is an open tray. Luggage capacity is extremely limited in the Fair Lady. The Bluebird provides a good amount of space. Usable area measures approximately 50 inches wide, 17 high and 23 deep.

Both cars had an excellent transistor radio (\$65 extra) with

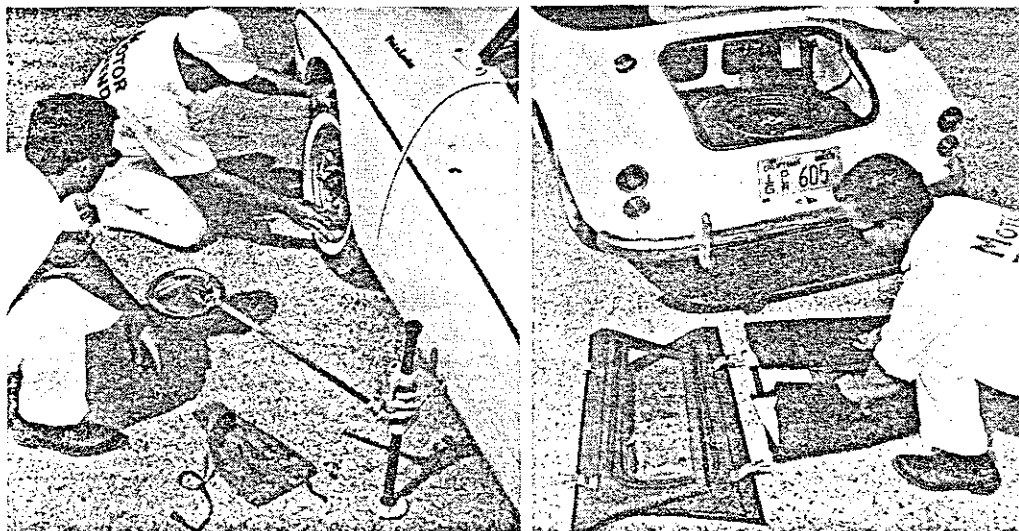
a unique system for locking the antenna flush with the body, keeping it wholly tamper-proof.

The convertible's top is a completely snap-off affair that affords good visibility via a three-piece wrap-around rear window despite the rear quarter areas being enclosed. A big vision aid is use of two fender mirrors, standard equipment. Simple side curtains efficiently kept out weather and wind. Without curtains and with top up we experienced a great deal of wind buffeting which added to a fairly high wind noise level. In fair weather, of course, most sports car owners leave tops down. Removing the Fair Lady's top and installing the tonneau cover (standard equipment) kicked up numerous wind currents into the cockpit. Perhaps the use of a curved windshield would be helpful; the flat glass didn't offer quite enough protection.

The sedan is quite another story when it comes to noise level. Although the engine buzzes away mightily at fast cruising, leaving no doubt that it's out front, the sound was not objectionable. Wind noise was quite low with windows closed, increasing very slightly with door vent panes opened for perfectly ample air circulation. As small sedans go, we found that Bluebird to be one of the quietest on the market.

The stopping distances recorded on our chart speak for themselves. Both cars stopped quickly under panic conditions. The Fair Lady stopped in shorter distances, as befits a sports car, because it has more brakes—bigger diameter, wider linings.

We seldom drive our test cars for maximum economy—even those classed as economy cars. We prefer to keep up with traffic, roll along highways at top legal speeds, driving insofar as possible as we feel most owners will drive. That is why our fuel



As befits a sports car, the Fair Lady has bigger bite at wheels—larger tires and more effective brakes.

Also typical of sports cars, Fair Lady's luggage compartment had room for little more than spare, folded top.