

# SAFER MOTORING

FEBRUARY 1973 15p

The *INDEPENDENT* magazine that concentrates on the VW



- VW 'Lamborghini' ■ 200,000-mile Saab ■ Mazda RX-3 test
- Military Volkswagens manual (1939-45)

# VOLKSWAGEN



# 'LAMBORGHINI LOOK' VW

**T**he VW with the Lamborghini look — first reported in a letter, 'Two-day stay at Wolfsburg campsite' (Dec 1972 issue), from Roy H. Skuse of Bristol — was built in an old barn in West Norway by an Oslo student, Einar Stranden.

Einar, now 22, dreamed up his dream car when he was just 18, and it has taken him four years to turn the dream into a breathtaking reality.

One of his first decisions was to build the car on a secondhand Beetle chassis — it had already been proved in various other countries, including West Germany, to be a very suitable

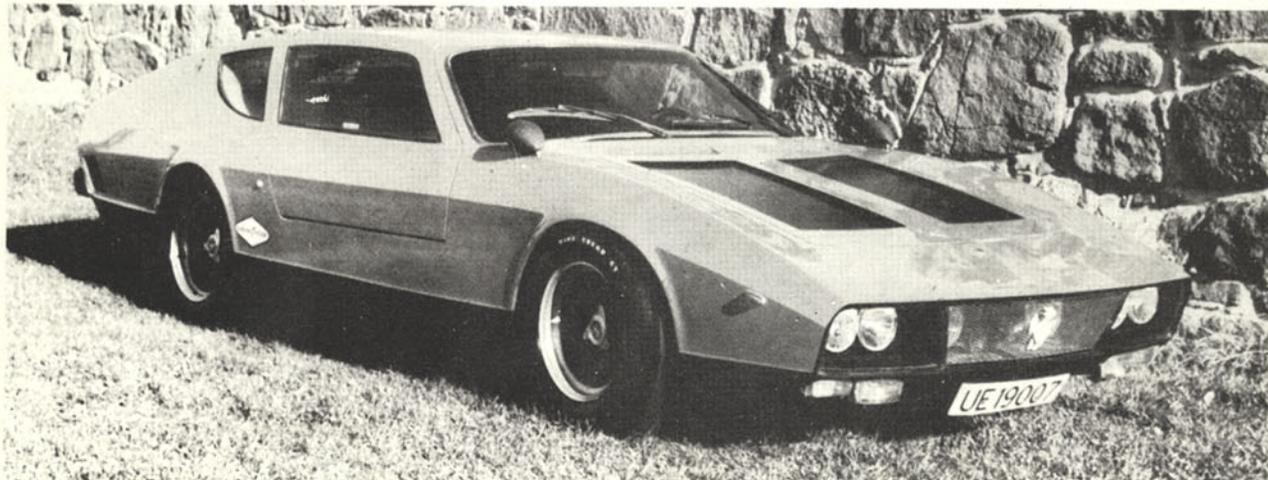
'working class' base for an otherwise exotic and apparently super-engined sports car in a class of its own. (An early example of this kind of special design-and-build-it-yourself technique was spotlighted in 'The loveliest VW in the world — 'The Silver Slipper on Wheels' picture feature published in the Dec 1962 issue of *Safer Motoring*).

Einar spent several months planning the car, doing all his own detailed drawings, and he became so engrossed in this preparatory work that his college report card stated that he was giving more time to his build-it-yourself car than to his academic studies!

The next stage was to make a scaled down model of the car from a combination of mainly wood, gypsum and paper. Then he made a full size skeleton of the actual body of the car, and painstakingly covered it with fibreglass and polyester which dried into a hard shell.

One of the most remarkable facts about this 'one-off' VW is that Einar Stranden used mainly only one tool in the construction of the car — an electric machine drill.

The VW that looks like a Lamborghini has two unusual features which are not immediately apparent — exceptional built-in



safety and a dazzling array of instruments and switches — no fewer than 47 electrical switches! The driver and passenger sit in what is virtually a safety cell, protected in the event of a crash by a reinforced steel rollover framework. In a violent impact the dashboard will break down away from the driver and passenger, and the steering wheel will collapse sideways.

And if the car crashes on its roof the seats, with the driver and passenger held tight by their automatic safety belts, will absorb the impact as safely as possible by bending through the car's floor. Another safety aspect is that in certain areas of the bodywork, especially on the sides, there are as many as 20 layers of fibreglass.

Several safety devices are automatic — a fire alarm warns the driver if the temperature in the engine compartment exceeds 70°C (a fire extinguisher is mounted between the seats), another alarm sounds if the oil pressure falls too low, and the car has a built-in foolproof anti-theft system.

The dashboard incorporates a dazzling array of instruments including rev counter, oil pressure and temperature gauges, ammeter, voltmeter, cam angle measurer, vacuum meter, and clock, with a variety of switches on either side of the dashboard.

More control switches, including one for the electrically operated gull wing type doors, are mounted in a panel at the driver's left side.

The wonder car — named the **Stranden Scorpione** — is also equipped with a radio (electrically operated aerial) and a stereo player, with loudspeakers concealed at the top of each seat.

An exceptional amount of time and thought has gone into developing the car to near perfection, and one good example of the attention to detail is provided by the bucket seats — after making a seat mould in styrophor Einar himself sat motionless in the mould for 12 hours to ensure that the contour would be 100% accurate!

Afterwards the seats were coated with fibreglass and finally covered with real leather.

*BELOW: The Stranden Scorpione is admired at Wolfsburg after installation of the Volkswagenwerk gift 1600 Beetle engine equipped with two twin-choke Weber carburetters. RIGHT: The latest claimant for the title of the most glamorous VW in the world 'spreads its wings' in splendid solitude.*



*Einar Stranden, now 22, proudly seated on the bonnet of his self-built low-slung VW super sports car (lefthand-drive) 8,000 working hours after he first dreamed it up.*

Incidentally, 400 metres of extra thick cable — about ten times the length normally used in a car — were needed to complete the complex wiring system.

Then the engine — when the car was completed Einar Stranden was invited to drive it to the Volkswagenwerk factory at Wolfsburg, where he was presented with a new 1600 Beetle engine fitted with two twin-choke Weber carburetters, to replace the original 1200 Beetle engine, and a new gearbox.

**Performance figures already achieved are 0-100 kilometres per hour (0-62½ mph) — approximately 12 seconds; maximum speed, 185-190 kph (about 115 mph).**

The car has since been fitted with a Girling brake servo system and gas-filled shock absorbers, and the engine's compression ratio is soon to be increased to 8.5:1.

Estimated cost of the car, apart from the Wolfsburg equipment, is £1,100—£1,200 — plus at least 8,000 dedicated working hours!

