



CAR and DRIVER ROAD TEST

Jaguar 4.2 XK-E

Give it another year or two of loving attention and it's bound to make the Queen's list of birthday honors



All you Faithful Readers still holding your breath for the V-12 Jaguar XK-F may exhale. It simply isn't time yet. But while we wait, here comes the XK-E for review again, still reeking with class. And since we haven't said a word about the car for a couple of years, we may as well examine the old lady and see how they've been amusing themselves over there at the factory for all this time.

If the apparent complacency in Coventry tends to infuriate you, look at it this way. Time flies for everyone except the Jaguar people. For them it passes in stately review. In this evolutionary context, the years have merely served to give them time

to lovingly bring the XK-E to full bloom. A tasteful touch of refinement here, an unostentatious modification there. It's rather like breeding a Derby winner, or a Chelsea Flower Show champion rhododendron. As they undoubtedly say at Jaguar, "You simply can't rush these things, old boy. It takes time."

And then too, they probably talk about "not getting off a winning horse." Even if you're an automotive fire-in-the-guts, change for the sake of change, revolutionist you'll have to admit that that's what the Jaguar people have still got with the XK-E. They had one from the moment they unwrapped the first brakeless, over-heating,

Shelby Cobra-like, roughneck production model in 1962, and they've got one with the well-manicured, smooth operating, slicked down version we're talking about today.

On the other hand, look around in the market place to check on the XK-E's competition and you'll find yourself asking where it's all gone. Take \$6000 and go looking for a well-mannered, luxurious 2-seater that doesn't label you *nouveau riche* or *boy racer*, and there's precious little left to choose from.

It comes down in the end to one of three cars: the Lotus Elan SE4, the Porsche and the XK-E's oldest rival on the American market, the Corvette.

For the conservative buyer, and you know in your heart that the XK-E buyer is a conservative, the Lotus Elan, at \$4795, is something of a flier, even if Lotus has gone public. Porsche seems determined to price itself out of the market. And although the Corvette is backed by the General Motors Acceptance Corporation and is a fine and handsome machine, it's still the sort of car that one of these days Hugh Hefner is going to paint pink and give away to his Playmate of the Year. And if *that* doesn't affect your cultural taste, the Corvette, with the introduction of the aluminum 427 Chevy, has moved so far into the head-snapping, backside-booting performance world it has probably started to create yet another culture all of its own.

So, having selected and not settled for the E-type, in this case the 4.2 Roadster, let's see what you're getting for your money. Before launching into the list of "New Features of 1969" which, apart from a couple of major improvements, includes such innovating federal government inspired touches as a new license plate mounting assembly, new side marker reflectors and an unlegislated heavy duty alternator, it might be as well to review the basic and ancient formula for the XK-E.

Since the introduction of the 4.2 liter XK engine, which replaced the 3.8 in 1965, and the fully synchromesh 4-speed manual transmission (automatic is only available on the 2+2 model) introduced in the same year, the engine and drivetrain assembly

have gone basically unaltered.

The stressed steel monocoque body shell, with a tubular steel sub-frame assembly at the front and fabricated steel sub-frame assembly at the rear, also remains unaltered. It would be fairly tough to improve on this layout anyway. In the first place it provides extremely high torsional rigidity, responsible in large measure for the car's highly predictable and excellent handling characteristics. In the second place, it makes the car easy to mend, since both sub-frame assemblies are of the knock-off/bolt-on variety. Damage the monocoque tub and you're in a different kind of trouble.

Apart from the engine and transmission, the front sub-frame carries the suspension and the rack-and-pinion steering gear. The suspension, like a lot of other basic features, dates back to the Le Mans winning, super-heroic and faintly nostalgic D-Types. Two skinny wishbones are complemented by torsion bars mounted to extensions of the lower wishbones, with telescopic damper units and an anti-roll bar, also connecting the lower wishbones.

Dual coil springs are used at the rear with twin transverse links and trailing arms. The entire combination has that properly unfluffed feeling, whether you're pounding through the potholes on New York's Lower East Side or skimming up Highway 1 in a big rush for a weekend at Point Conception.

So, on the surface, nothing seems to have changed much in the past two years. But beneath that Dietrich exterior the Jaguar refinement artists have been busily at work.

The big problem they've had with the straight-six XK engine since 1948 is keeping it cool. Imagine having a doc, hemi-headed, 7-main bearing crank, 258 cu.in. kettle. Back in the days when consumers were called men and sports car buyers were known as enthusiasts, you just had to feed them a blast of cold air in the face, a sexy exhaust note and an open road and they'd sell as many cars for you as Coventry could make. When an XK120 owner saw his open road dissolve into a snarl of traffic he would light-heartedly whip off down a side road, or pull over and wait, rather than let his sleek-flanked thoroughbred boil itself dry surrounded by jeering 4-door conformists. Nowadays, with open roads as common as toad-in-the-hole, and enthusiasts only a wistful smile on Ken Purdy's lips, even sports cars must be silent and cool.

To this end Jaguar has gone overboard. The new cooling system is completely sealed with a catch tank to recirculate any water pressured out of the system. The air intake in the nose cowl has been enlarged by no less than 68%—which if anything enhances the E-type's looks—to get more cold air through the bees, crossflow radiator. A second thermostatically operated electric fan has been added. On air-conditioned models the fans work continuously; on standard models the fans come on as

soon as the water temperature reaches 80° C. There is a new metered feed system to the aluminum head, with much larger apertures on the water channels leading from the block to the back of the head than to the front. This obviously forces more cold water to the rear three cylinders, which are without the benefit of the additional and incidental air cooling being supplied to the front three. The water pump has an increased capacity of 25% and the pump's gear ratio, relative to engine speed, has been increased from one-to-one to one-to-1.25. And in case all this extra whirring and shooshing and pumping still doesn't do the trick, the risk of the aluminum head warping has been cut to a minimum by lengthening the head studs from four inches to 12.

Ironically, the onslaught on the cooling system comes at a time when Jaguar has actually been forced to detune the XK engine to meet with U.S. air pollution control standards. The 258 cu. in. displacement remains unchanged, but the power output has been dropped from 265 hp at 5400 rpm to 246 at 5000 rpm. In the interests of cleaner air, the traditional triple-HD-8 SU carburetor setup has given way to a pair of constant depression Zenith-Strombergs with a manual choke control, and an elaborate double manifold has been added between the inlet and exhaust manifold to assure compliance with the Clean Air Act. More by accident than design, this has also resulted in a loss of torque (283 ft/lbs at 4000 rpm on the '67 models to 263 ft/lbs at 3000 rpm on the '69s), but, conversely, performance up to U.S. speed limits is actually improved over the 1968 triple carburetor setup (quarter-mile times have been reduced from 15.6 seconds to 15.3 at 90 mph). In addition, the engine revisions have lowered the torque curve into a far more useable area, which means you can prowl away in top gear from 1500 rpm on up, with no sign of strain. This is the kind of freeway flexibility that keeps your mind off driving when there's no real driving to be done anyway.

In the stick shift Jaguar of yesterday this would have been a blessed relief, but on the new cars changing gears is actually fun to do. The Laycock diaphragm clutch is light, without making you wonder if you've just put your foot into an empty hole, and it's smooth and progressive. There's a good stubby shift lever crouching right next to that great wood-rimmed, Duncan Hamilton, aluminum-spoked-drilled-for-lightness, flexy steering wheel with a picture of The Cat in black, white and gold mounted in clear plastic in the center. You don't exactly flick through the gears like you would on a ZF box, but the throws are short, and it's pretty tough to grab the wrong gear even in a panic.

The brakes are a sheer delight. They really are. Jaguar has replaced the old Lockheed discs with Girling variety—out-

(Text continued on page 98; Specifications overleaf)

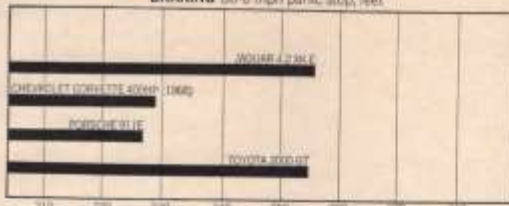
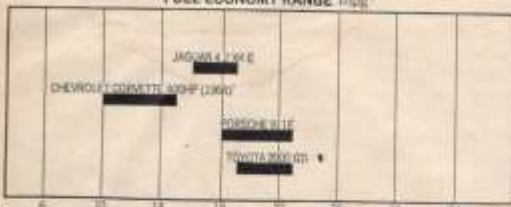


CAR and DRIVER

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ACCELERATION standing 1/4 mile, seconds

BRAKING 80-0 mph panic stop, feet

FUEL ECONOMY RANGE mpg

PRICE AS TESTED dollars x 1000

JAGUAR 4.2 XK-E

Importer: British Leyland Motors Inc.
600 Willow Tree Road
Leonia, N.J. 07605

Vehicle type: front engine, rear-wheel-drive, 2-passenger roadster.

Price as tested: \$5858.00

(Manufacturer's suggested retail price, including all options listed below, Federal excise tax, dealer preparation and delivery charges, does not include state and local taxes, license or freight charges)

Options on test car: Chrome wire wheels, \$132.00; white wall tires, \$27.00; AM/FM radio, \$165.00

ENGINE

Type: 6-in-line, water-cooled, cast iron block, aluminum head, 7 main bearings
Bore x stroke: 3.66 x 4.17 in., 93.1 x 105.8 mm
Displacement: 258 cu in., 4235 cc
Compression ratio: 9.0 to one
Carburetion: 2 x 1-bbl Zenith-Stromberg 175 CD2SE
Valve gear: Double overhead camshafts
Power (SAE): 246 bhp @ 5500 rpm
Torque (SAE): 263 lbs/ft @ 3000 rpm
Specific power output: 0.95 bhp/cu in., 58.3 bhp/liter
Max recommended engine speed: 5500 rpm

DRIVE TRAIN

Transmission: 4-speed, all-synchro
Final drive ratio: 3.54 to one
Gear Ratio/Mph/1000 rpm Max. test speed
I: 2.94 7.3 40 mph (5500 rpm)
II: 1.90 11.3 62 mph (5500 rpm)
III: 1.39 15.3 84 mph (5500 rpm)
IV: 1.00 21.5 119 mph (5500 rpm)

DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

Wheelbase: 96.0 in
Track, F/R: 50.0/50.0 in
Length: 175.5 in
Width: 65.2 in
Height: 46.5 in
Ground clearance: 5.0 in
Curb weight: 2750 lbs
Weight distribution, F/R: 48.8/51.2%
Battery capacity: 12 volts, 85 amp/hr
Alternator capacity: 720 watts
Fuel capacity: 16.5 gal
Oil capacity: 9.0 qts
Water capacity: 19.3 qts

SUSPENSION

F: Ind., unequal length control arms, torsion bars, anti-sway bar
R: Ind., lateral links and fixed length half-shafts, trailing arms, coil springs

STEERING

Type: rack and pinion
Turns lock-to-lock: 2.8
Turning circle curb-to-curb: 39.8 ft

BRAKES

F: 11.0-in disc, power assisted
R: 10.0-in disc, power assisted

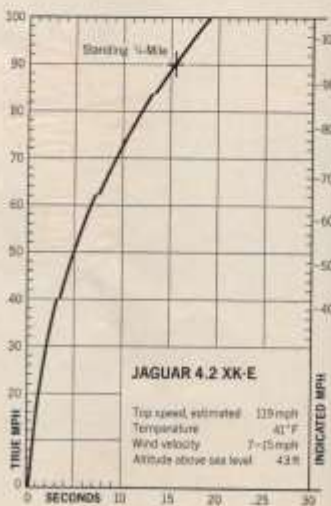
WHEELS AND TIRES

Wheel size: 15 x 5.5-in
Wheel type: wire spoke, chrome plated
Tire make and size: 185 VR 15 Dunlop SP
Tire type: Radial, tube type
Test inflation pressures, F/R: 32/32 psi
Tire load rating: 1450 lbs per tire @ 32 psi

PERFORMANCE

Zero to	Seconds
30 mph	2.0
40 mph	3.1
50 mph	4.6
60 mph	6.7
70 mph	9.2
80 mph	11.9
90 mph	16.3
100 mph	19.0

Standing 1/4-mile: 15.3 sec @ 90.0 mph
Top speed (estimated): 119 mph
80-0 mph: 2.56 sec (0.63 G)
Fuel mileage: 16-19 mpg on premium fuel
Cruising range: 269-319 mi



SUBARU 1000 SPORTS

(Continued from preceding page)

hairy ride for the first 50 or 60 miles of driving at anything approaching sustained speeds. The combination of ultra-quick steering and the roll stiffness at the rear makes the car darty and nervous, giving the distinct impression that it's either going to leap clear off the road or turn turtle at the very next moment of crisis. In fact it's not about to do either, and after you've realized this it comes as a relief to find that the handling characteristics are neutral and easily controllable. But don't get us wrong, it takes getting used to. As does the combination of quick throttle response and soft engine mounts which produces a leap-frogging tendency crawling along in stop-and-go traffic.

Apart from these idiosyncrasies the car is well thought out and easy to live with. The dashboard is fully instrumented, the steering wheel, pedals, emergency brake and turn signals are all well-placed and easy to operate. And, contrary to the tank sits supplied in most small cars, visibility is very good. The door handles, inside and out, are an ergonomic joy to operate. Under the hood the engine oil dipstick and oil filler are equally well located and easy to reach. The clutch free-play adjustment

doesn't require all kinds of tools or a trained mechanic on a Jeeps-Creepers. You simply lift the hood, remove the spare tire (ah yes, innovation is everywhere) and, apart from the clutch adjustment, all manner of minor service jobs can be quickly taken care of. The Japanese Bendix electric fuel pump hidden under the spare is something of a surprise, and the surprises don't end there. Inside, the Subaru is hardly a mini-brute. An average-sized American, whoever that is, will find the combination of cavernous legroom and reclining front seats make the car comfortable to take further than the station. And it's not like sitting on a cushion on the floor either. The seats are well dimensioned and well sprung.

The heating and cooling system does a very reasonable job, considering the price and class of the car, and also shows more original thought. Subaru engineers combined the cooling system for the engine with the heating system of the passenger compartment, saving a radiator and a fan in the process. Air drawn through the cooling radiator by the squirrel cage blower is ducted to the interior and, since the system is thermostatically controlled, the warm-up time is relatively short. Fresh air is avail-

able through a cowl-mounted intake.

Esthetically speaking, the Subaru is like most of the Japanese products in the automotive field. It suffers from a total lack of personality; it is neither attractive nor unattractive. It's slightly reminiscent of the Fiat 124, the Ford Model C and the Opel Kadett, all wrapped into one and stamped "Utility Model." The test car was styled in Japan for the Japanese market, which probably explains why it was so thin skinned. The sheet metal looks and feels about as solid as old rice paper or an acid-dipped Penske Camaro, but the general standard of finish is surprisingly good.

There you have it. If you ignore the "real automobile" aspects of the Subaru what's left is a cheap, hard-riding car with a lot of go-fu; not wholly unlike its antecedent, the bug-eyed Sprite. But the Japanese have managed to condense many "real automobile" features into the car to even get this far. What needs to be done now is to persuade Subaru to bury the 360, which is nothing short of a mechanized chamber pot, in a convenient watermelon patch and start importing the 1000 Sports to the USA. At the present time that looks like a remote possibility, what with emission regulations being what they are, but there is a Subaru 1000 sedan already on its way, so who can be certain. ●

JAGUAR 4-2 XK-E

(Continued from page 42)

board on the front, inboard on the rear. The new discs are specially damped, with two operating cylinders on the outside face and one on the inside. They don't even squeal any more. Jaguar overcame this problem with great ingenuity, by machining a 1/8-in. groove out of the circumference of the disc and filling it with a soft iron core. It's getting better all the time.

The car is as well instrumented as a 707. Ten toggle switches controlling the lights, wipers and windshield washers, stretch across the center. And, right in front of the driver, there's a giant and highly legible tachometer and speedometer. But it's that huge wood-rimmed steering wheel that predominates the cool leather interior,

When you put this kind of a package together over eight years or more, you should come up with a major and sophisticated automobile, and that's just what Jaguar has done.

Driving the XK-E grows on you in an impressive and unstoppable way. According to all the Jaguar ads you've ever read the car has a top speed of 150 mph, and with a 2.90-to-one rear axle ratio that may be perfectly true. But the standard final drive ratio on cars imported to the U.S. is 3.54-to-one which chops the top speed to near 110 mph at 5000 rpm.

To start with the car feels big and lazy. The long bulbous hood stretches away to infinity, and loafing along at the legal limit with the accelerator barely depressed is

a sensuous experience in itself. The throttle feels as stiff as a dead pedal, but keep squeezing and the car responds with unnerving reserves of power. Bend it into a series of turns and the E-type suddenly comes to life with a very satisfying, light but sure-footed feeling. The famous exhaust note crackles and rumbles, the servo-assisted brakes drag you down effortlessly and endlessly, and squatting on its haunches, the car tracks its way through corners with impeccable manners. The quicker you go the more the car seems to gather itself together. That long hood keeps pointing itself in precisely the direction you aim it.

There are drawbacks, but compared to the overall effect they become trifling. With all this going for you the wind noise at 80 is easily bearable. The angle of the leather seat backs is adjustable, but for tall people with big feet the pedals are too close together for almost anything except bare feet, and although even a monogoloid ape could straight-arm the steering wheel, his knees would be jammed up against the bottom of the wood rim. Adjust the rear view mirror once too often and it'll come off in your hand. The 2-speed triple wiper blades still manage to leave a large area of the curved windshield unswept, and the frame for the soft top is uncomfortably close to a tall driver's temple. But so what? The Jaguar XK-E is one hell of a lot of motorcum-snob-appeal for under \$6000. Give it another year or two and it'll even make the Queen's list of birthday honors, along with The Rolling Stones. ●

