

DASHING DORETTI

THE 100-mile-an-hour Doretti sports car, powered with the Triumph TR2 engine, will soon be available in Australia.

Built in Walsall, England, by the well-known Swallow Coachbuilding Co., it will be sold here by Standard Motor Products, Ltd.

Fitted with twin carburettors, the 2-litre engine develops 90 b.h.p. The car weighs slightly over 18 cwt., and accelerates to 50 m.p.h. in 8½ seconds, according to British tests.

Main engine specifications are: bore 83 mm., stroke 92 mm., capacity 1991 c.c., compression ratio 8.5 to 1. Forward gear ratios are 3.7 to 1, 4.9 to 1, 7.4 to 1; reverse, 15.8 to 1.

The Doretti is most attractively designed and finished, as might be

expected from the firm which turned out the SS, one of the "lovelies" of the 1930's. Panelling is in aluminium over a very workmanlike steel framing, and a feature of the trim is the safety padding of sponge rubber around the body edges.

Weather protection comes from an easily erected hood covered with durable-looking, attractive plastic-covered cloth, having the rather unusual feature of a large rear window of fully flexible transparent plastic. The boot is filled mainly by the spare, but quite an amount of luggage space exists behind the seats, where its weight will not affect balance.

A brief drive of a practically brand-new car was enough to convince me that this is a true sports

car measuring up to my own private definition—something that makes you drive better than you thought you could.

Power-weight ratio is high enough for thoroughly stimulating results, and the handling qualities of the car on rough and loose gravel surfaces, as well as on bitumen, are first-rate.

Much of the reason for this becomes apparent from a worm's eye view of the car on the hoist. Chassis construction is of extreme rigidity, and has the great strength necessary in competition work. The body is equally substantial.

The straight side-rails of the frame are basically steel tubes, but a shallow channel section is welded along the full length, both top and bottom. This results in a structure combining the great torsional resistance of a tube with the resistance to vertical distortion of a box frame.

Front suspension is by coils and wishbones, the assemblies being carried on substantial brackets, which are triangulated back to the side members by tubular struts welded at both ends. Steering is by three-piece track-rod with idler arm; this

Chev Corvette in Australia

THE first plastic-bodied Chevrolet Corvette sports car has arrived in Australia and was shown in Melbourne recently by General Motors-Holden. It was imported for display purposes only; if dollar restrictions were removed, it would sell here for £3000 or more. Another first arrival in the country is the fabulous new 4½ litre Bentley Continental, on show at the Melbourne headquarters of Kellow-Falkiner Pty. Ltd.

by John Williams

assembly and steering-box are in front of the front cross-member, the latter being in front of the engine. This results in the engine being further back than is now usual.

Torque reaction at the rear axle is taken by radius rods, and these probably contribute materially to stability by resisting spring deformation and maintaining constant rear-axle position under heavy load. Rear dampers are mounted on really substantial brackets welded to the side-rails and braced by a tubular link which arches across from one to the other over the tailshaft. The rear springs are semi-elliptics with leaves tapered in thickness, and they are inclined downwards at the rear by eight degrees to give roll under-steer.

The whole design, as viewed from below, is clean and substantial, with nothing "hanging down" that would be likely to get one into trouble on trials courses, where clearance is a touch-and-go affair. The fuel tank is attached to the frame, not the body.

Outside appearance gives little clue to the very substantial pressed-steel construction of the body, which is aluminium-panelled over an elaborate pressed-steel structure that looks not unlike a monocoque construction, and is bolted down to the frame at many points. In addition, a substantial steel arch of rectangular section is bolted across the chassis at the bulkhead, which makes the body virtually uncrushable. There is no trace of body movement under road stresses.

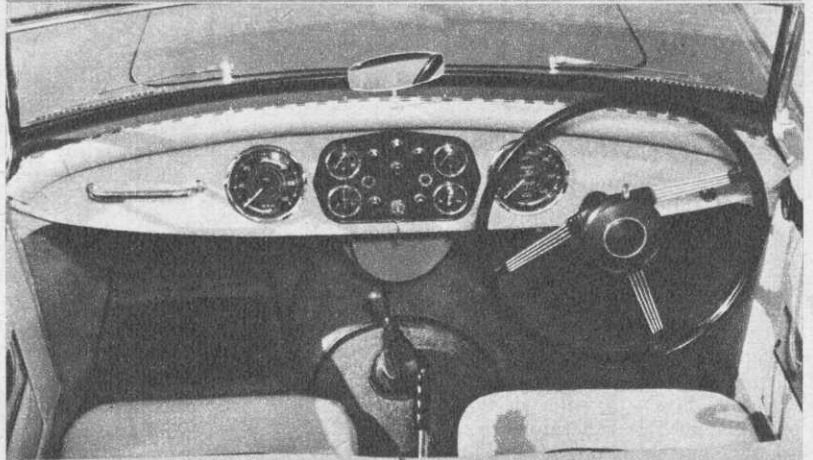
Apart from its competition potential, the Doretti is a very pleasing car, elegant and well appointed, with a suspension which is surprisingly comfortable for ordinary driving on indifferent roads. Accessibility appears good, both from the maintenance and trials viewpoints; this is especially true of the electric system, all terminals, cut-out and voltage regulator being easy to get at and in plain view.

Grease-points are kept down to a minimum by the use of rubber bushings—on the rear half-elliptic spring shackles, for example—and the practical outlook of the designers is shown by a number of details, such as the accessibility of the bleeder screws for the rear brake cylinders.

So far only two of the cars have arrived in Australia, and their selling price here has not yet been determined.



COCKPIT is well planned, beautifully upholstered, with padded leather protection round the edges, including top of dash. Rev counter is at left, gauges in centre, speedo at right. Stubby gear lever, between-seats handbrake fall readily to hand, and there's a grab-handle for the passenger.



ENGINE (below) is the 2-litre Triumph TR2 unit with twin carburetors. It gives 90 b.h.p., kicks the 18cwt. sports car along at 100 m.p.h. Doretti can hit 50 in 8½ seconds.

