

highland filings

Since its debut in November '87, Glasgow based Haldane Developments have enjoyed quiet success with their car. However, they are now poised to achieve the recognition they think they deserve with a new Ford based kit that is streets ahead of the Mk 1.



Where on earth would the UK kit car industry be without Ford? A company whose mechanical products have formed the foundations of specials and one off's for the world over through getting on for three generations. All those early E93A, 100E and 105E based cars that powered the sixties effort, then the glut of cars that scavenged the carcasses of expired Mk 1 and 2 Escorts throughout the seventies and indeed, that continue to do so, then the Cortina which rapidly established itself as the staple diet of the kit car industry in the eighties and now the Sierra that is bringing mechanical sophistication to today's models and which is taking the industry into the world of lead free fuel, catalytic converters and

engine management systems.

A switch from VW, Vauxhall or MGB mechanics to those yielded by a Ford has been the salvation of more than a few kit cars and just such a move is destined to greatly increase the profile and standing of the Haldane 100. Nor is this merely an exercise that replaces one set of mechanics with another; this is a total behind the scenes redesign which drastically updates and greatly improves the ability and sophistication of the car which will outwardly appear the same although with much improved quality.

The Mk 1 Haldane followed a

tried and tested route for an affordable kit form car and employed a four rail ladder frame chassis accepting Vauxhall Chevette mechanics. These comprised the front double wishbone suspension complete which attached to the chassis on the original crossmember. At the back, the Chevette torque tube was discarded and the live axle mounted on a fabricated five link system. Actually, these mechanics are very capable and have enjoyed popularity in the past as well as having the advantage of being available all over the world under various General Motors models but, where



the Vauxhall Viva and Chevette fall down in the total donor car stakes is in the engine department as there was a big gap between the standard 1256 cc unit and the 2.3 Firenza engine which was a rare find in a scrapyard. Thus the decision was taken to use Ford power and both the crossflow and OHC units have been installed as have Fiat and Toyota twin cams.

I would say that the resulting car has achieved its quiet success as much for its looks as for its dynamic ability but, make no mistake, the Mk 1 car was a safe and predictable handler with a chassis that was sufficiently rigid to cope with the power being put through it.

On my recent visit I drove the last of the Mk 1 cars fitted with



Ford's new fuel injected twin cam engine and though the weather was not conducive to enjoying such a car to the full, being minus the hood in the freezing cold never is, it certainly showed itself to be quick and able on the road.

It is spacious and comfortable even if the acres of cream leather are rather at odds with the image of the original cars. Even so, it has the looks to impress both from outside and within the cockpit.

The Ford twin cam produces in the region of 130 bhp and with a mere 800 kg to propel, that equates to a power to weight ratio of 125 bhp per ton which delivers a quoted 0 - 60 mph figure of 5.4 seconds. I didn't attempt to prove the figures on the greasy Glasgow roads but the car is certainly quick while top speed is claimed to be 125 mph!

The weight distribution of a dead 50/50 is a boon in the corners

which the car took well but I found it felt a little dead. It didn't have that crisp, taut feel that inspires such instant confidence in a Sylva or Westfield. The Vauxhall steering rack is good but tyre pressures and damper settings are critical to the car's ability. The gear change, being a Sierra 5 speed box, felt sloppy with a very wide gate and generally I had to concentrate on the controls rather than operate them with the automatic ease

one finds so enjoyable on a good cross country thrash.

That said, despite the weather, I took a very long route through the countryside and once accustomed to the car's feel, I found it to be sure footed and tenacious when pushed. The greasy road surface made it simple to lose the backend in the tight turns but it was easily caught while the front end tracked true to the dictates of the wheel.

Back at the ranch, Brian Harrison absorbed my comments but countered that, in view of the really pot holed and uneven surfaces of some of the surrounding thoroughfares, the suspension was set a little soft and the tyres kept a couple of pounds under pressure in order to protect the spines of potential customers! With the tyres pumped up and the dampers tweaked, it was a different story and I must admit it more than lived up to my recollection of the prototype driven back in June '88.

As an aside, the original demonstrator is currently for sale at Normid Motors in Stoke. Tel. 0782 777006.

However, it is all purely academic since the car will no longer be available in this form, the last production kit having just been delivered.

So what of the Mk 2?

As I said, this is a total redesign aimed at bringing the car's mechanical base bang up to date. The chassis is a tubular backbone spaceframe using 1 1/4" and 1" square 16 gauge tube. There is also a full perimeter and floor support frame to enhance rigidity and provide for side impact resistance and absorption. It is equipped with all the mounting

brackets for the roll and anti roll bars, seat belt fixings and mountings as well as the mechanical base. This has been done to comply with full TUV and other approval standards to which it is anticipated the car will be subjected.

At the front a new double fabricated, unequal length wishbone arrangement mates to Cortina uprights complete with brakes and hubs. We go back in time for the steering rack which comes courtesy of the Escort Mk2. (What on earth will we do when they run out?) The column is Sierra



In foul weather you have a choice between the soft top and side screens or the full hard top.



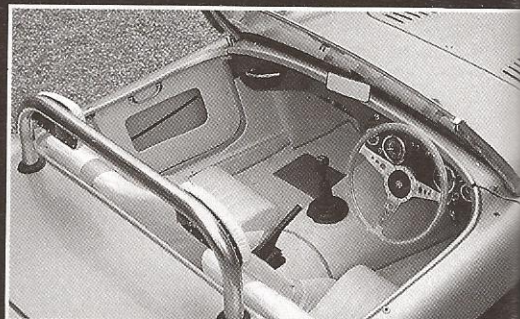
and is fitted complete with all the latest stalk controls. Hardly the bee's knees in terms of the authentic look but familiar to use on the move.

The pedals are from the Sierra and the wiper motor from a Mini. To connect it to the Ford loom, contact Jago Automotive for their latest connecting loom. (See Scene and Heard Feb '91.)

At the back, the Sierra diff unit is rubber mounted to the chassis, the drive shafts supplied with the kit connecting to fabricated uprights suspended on fabricated, unequal length wishbones.

On the suspension front, the geometry and spring and damper

rates have been computer calculated by Geoscan and the new car will be available with the option of a competition suspension for the racing minded.



The interior is spacious and comfortable and offers scope for authentic trimming.

In the engine bay, you have a choice of Ford four cylinder units which will comprise the OHC, CVH and the new twin cam as will be installed in the demonstrator, with either four or five speed transmissions.

In addition to being able to accept the engines, the new car can also accept the standard exhaust systems with modified down pipe complete with three way catalytic converters. The wiring loom will accommodate the fuel injection and engine management systems as well.

The Healey, both in 100 and 3000 forms, is one of those shapes that has stood the test of time and is as popular now as it was in its



This original 100/6 2+2 shows how close the Haldane looks. All the original brightwork is still available.

heyday. Previously, Haldane have only offered the 100, 2 seater shape but their new moulds will have the

facility to offer a choice between the 100 and 3000. The latter will have the longer bonnet, different grille, and 'bubble' boot of the rally cars to accept a horizontally mounted spare wheel which will be a 185/60 or 65 on a 15" rim. Not content with that, as well as offering the bodies in the customer's choice of coloured gel coat finish, Haldane will be able to offer a two tone gel coat finish!

For the purists and seekers of authenticity, you will have a job concealing Sierra stalk controls but Haldane offer two dashboards being a flat unit that can be crafted to reflect the three part original or a sculpted shape that was also featured on original cars. The demonstrator was fitted with Isspro electronically calibrated instruments with which Haldane were not greatly impressed even though reports from other sources have been favourable. That aside, they just look wrong but Triumph Dolomite ones are the cheapest alternative while the larger Smiths

style clocks are available from the various specialist spares companies.

As far as the differences between the brightwork fitted to the models is concerned, there is no problem since it is all still available, the body being supplied with the grille aperture uncut to allow the customer to exercise his choice. In addition, Haldane offer a full set of wet weather gear in addition to a full hard top which looks superb and is to be altered to incorporate the rear three quarter windows as per a solitary original car. This particular car, dubbed the Cape car, was recently discovered covered in crap in an Australian barn and some while later sold for £165,000!

This move makes the thing easier to live with as well as enhancing its visual appeal.

So where can you see the car? Currently, the intention is to display the completed Mk 2 at the Stafford show at Bingley Hall on 9th and 10th March. Thereafter, it

should be up and running following a good shakedown in time for Stoneleigh in May. In addition, the Stoneleigh display will feature the debut of the 3000 body.

Certainly this new car will have far greater attraction than the Mk 1. For the chap who just likes the shape, the great improvements in mould quality and detail finish will be very evident while the driving enthusiast will benefit from a far more sophisticated design that will outperform the Mk 1 in all areas.

Having mentioned at the beginning that the car was set to bring the company the recognition they think they deserve, after a day in their company, I can say that I think they will deserve it too. We will be back as soon as the Mk 2 is available for testing and can only hope that the spring weather is an improvement on my recent experience.

DATA SHEET - HALDANE MK 2.

Chassis.	Square tube backbone spaceframe with full perimeter and floor frame using 1 1/4" and 1" tube.	
Body.	Unstressed colour impregnated GRP with a choice of colour or two tone colours. Available in 100 or 3000 styles.	
Suspension, front.	Double fabricated, unequal length wishbones with Cortina uprights, discs and hubs. Adjustable coil spring damper and anti roll bar.	
Suspension, rear.	Sierra differential rubber mounted to the chassis. Supplied driveshafts to fabricated uprights on fabricated unequal length wishbones. Adjustable coil spring damper unit and anti roll bar.	
Steering.	Escort Mk 2 rack and pinion.	
Brakes.	Cortina front discs, Sierra rear drums. Servo assisted.	
Engine options.	Ford four cylinder OHC, CVH and twin cam with choice of four or five speed transmissions. Recommended 3.92:1 differential ratio for both boxes. Will accept full catalytic converter on standard exhaust with modified down pipe. Wiring loom will accept electronic fuel injection and engine management systems.	
Estimated performance.	Standard Ford twin cam with electronic fuel injection and engine management system but less emission equipment and catalytic converter. 5 speed box. 3.92:1 differential. 14" wheels with 185/70 tyres.	
	0 - 60 mph.	5.4 seconds.
	Max. speed.	125 mph.
Dimensions.	Overall length.	12 ft. 8 ins.
	Overall width.	5 ft. 1 ins.
	Overall height.	4 ft.
	Ground clearance.	5 ins.
	Weight.	1760 lbs.
Kit specs.	Complete chassis pack.	£1350.
	Complete body pack.	£1400.
	All prices plus vat.	



For full details of kit specifications, contents, extras, options and a full price list, contact:
Haldane Developments Ltd., 3, Rosendale Way, Blantyre, Glasgow G72 0NJ.
Tel. 0698 826950.

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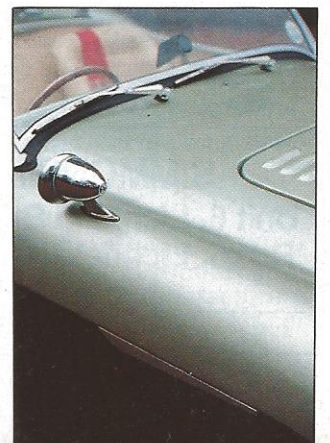
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