

Another tale of woe

Here we go again with another picture that will make lovers of rare TVRs weep into their cornflakes.

This sad sight is another of the abandoned prototypes slowly rotting away in the factory back yard. It was affectionately known as the 'White Elephant' and was used for a while by Peter Wheeler as a rolling test bed for a 5 litre Holden engine which TVR were considering using in the late eighties. The project stumbled and stalled when it was realised that the Rover-based unit was a far more practical solution to the quest for maximum bhp per pound spent.



Selling like hot cakes

Have you noticed how rapidly the number of T350's you see on the streets, and at events, is growing, so soon after it went on sale? This has surely got to be TVR's biggest success story in recent years and I'm sure they are sighing a breath of relief that sales are so strong after a couple of lean years, and no doubt the dealers are delighted with the level of interest too.

Almost everyone I've spoken to loves the shape of the 350 and there's no doubt the factory got it right first time. I'm not sure what it is that hits the right buttons. The shape isn't as wacky as the Tuscan or Cerbera, but it works.. Lots of people have spotted the retro cues, taken, intentionally or not, from the Vixen/M era, and maybe that's what makes it a classic TVR shape.

I've just seen the first pictures of the targa version and I also hear the competition version is well on its way to completion. Really looking forward to seeing that one.



As you can see from the picture of it in better days, the shape still looks good today, with the exception perhaps of the prototype-looking headlight covers. It's a sort of widened and squashed Tasmin, and apparently it even had room for a third seat for Peter Wheeler's dog in the back. It would be super to see it restored to it's former glory.

I had almost given up hope of this ever happening, either to this car, or the Zante, or the original Speed Twelve, both of which we've featured on these pages previously. However, there is a little glimmer of hope.



A little birdie tells me that the forelorn looking Speed Twelve has been sold, and will be rebuilt to be used as a display piece by a TVR dealer. Good for them if it's true! I can fully understand why the factory won't consider selling such cars to private individuals, for product liability and safety reasons, but this is a welcome move in the right direction if it has actually happened. I'll keep you informed if I hear any more.

In the meantime, factory people, to stop my heart bleeding, how about tucking the White Elephant and the Zante away somewhere warm and dry to stop the rot?

