

### **Do you remember the first time?**

Surely you must! **Everyone** remembers their first time! How could you possibly forget your first time out in your first TVR? That experience and excitement should last a lifetime.

Remember how you thrilled as you drove your prize possession off your drive, to the admiring glances of the neighbours, who were busily calling the Noise Abatement Society! Think back to how you drove like a mad thing, searching for that elusive bridge to shelter under as the heavens opened! Thrill again as you remember desperately trying to put the hood back up, single handed (which the manual - and the dealer you bought the car from - said was quite easy), whilst the rain ran down the back of your neck! Remember how you wondered all those things that at the time you didn't know the answers to, like, how fast would it really go, what was it like on wet bends, and would it really get you home without the aid of an AA break down truck!

Ah! Those were the days! Well, they were for me!

I had bought my S2 on a wet Saturday in May, and having parked it in the garage, watched as the skies continued to deposit bucket loads of H<sub>2</sub>O all over the countryside for the next 36 hours. I was just starting to think that every weekend would probably be wet for the rest of my life, when I realised I had one more chance before returning to work. It was the late Spring Bank Holiday weekend!

Monday dawned bright, with a big yellow thing in the sky, and hardly a cloud to be seen. Wonderful!

“We need to get out in the garden whilst we've got the chance,” declared my beloved, as she pulled on her wellies! When she does that, she means business!

“But...but...but...” I stammered, “I though we could go out in the Tiv, together.” (I'm quite happy driving it on my own, but sometimes you want to share the experience.)

My beloved looked at my sad, hang dog expression, that I have learnt over the years, whenever I want some sympathy. I learnt it from the many English Setters that have shared our home, our settees, and my dinner! And what's really clever is, it usually works, and she takes pity on me - as she did on this memorable Bank Holiday Monday.

“OK!”, she says, “Let's do some gardening first, then go out in the car.”

“Fair 'nough,” says I, and set about the mornings tasks with vigour and excitement.

By 1.30 the gardening was done, we were washed and changed, the car was out of the garage and the black clouds had appeared! Still, I was determined. We drove down the road, hood still up (it did look awfully black) and into the garage for some gas. Five

minutes later, as we pulled out from the forecourt, and therefore from the shelter of the canopy, the heavens opened and golf balls the size of hail stones appeared.

For a moment I had a great temptation to leap out of the car and throw myself across the newly resprayed bonnet, to protect it from the hammering sky rocks, but sense prevailed. Remaining quite calm and reasonable, I turned to my beloved and said, "I bet it'll blooming well hail for the rest of my life now I've bought this car!"

Fortunately, my beloved is much more sensible than me (catch her having two cars to clean - in fact, catch her cleaning her own - it doesn't happen that often!) She just mumbled something about not being so silly, at which point the hail stopped, and the sun reappeared!

We drove past Worcester and onto the A44 (Worcester to Leominster) road - a great road with some beautiful villages, plenty of green fields - and lots of fast bends! Anyone who lives or drives in the Midlands or North should try this area of the border between England and Wales - it really is great countryside. Of course, to most of our Southern (TVR) cousins it is North of Watford Gap, and therefore part of the dark and sooty industrial North - hey that's fine - more road for us to enjoy!

Once onto the A44, and with the sky becoming more blue than anything else, we stopped and dropped the hood. Great! At last! Open air motoring in my new (well - second hand - well - fifth hand actually) TVR. We motored easily to a little village just off the A44, called Eardisland - well recommended! It has often won Best Village type awards, and since the A44 was diverted to miss it, has become a quiet back water - just the place for a quiet afternoon tea stop (especially in a quiet (!) TVR).

As we drove along, beloved couldn't help but to mention the petrol smell. "Probably just because we've got the hood off," I said, assuming that there was nothing wrong. How could there be - the hood was off, the sun was shining, and we were sailing along in my gleaming "Beastie"!

We parked at the tea shop in the village and enjoyed a beverage before starting back (and I only nipped round to the car park to check the Tiv was OK 4 times - honest!)

As we got back in the car, the petrol smell was worse. After a couple of miles, I found a nice little layby - ideal for some pics. As I lined up for a low level shot I noticed this liquid under the car. Drip, drip, drip!

"Mm!" thinks I, "that doesn't look right!" (See! I'm quick really!) And it wasn't right. It was petrol! And it wasn't just dripping - it was fairly running out!

Why is it at moments like these, when panic sets in, my beloved wants a toilet?! Anyway, there is a Supermarket carpark on the outskirts of Leominster that may always have a petrol stain on the ground were my TVR sat for 5 minutes whilst beloved nipped inside!

We decided we should move it away from people and property, and called the AA. He was a very nice man.

“I had one of these,” he said, “it got nicked!”

“Oh!” I replied, comforted by the immobiliser that I had on the car, “But I’ve got an immobiliser” I confirmed, smiling broadly!

“Those are easy to get round!” he responded, “I’ll show you how, in case you ever lose the key!” And he did! And it is easy!

We eventually got the problem sorted, and drove home somewhat later, and somewhat quieter (us not talking very much - not the car!), than I had expected. Later, someone asked about our first trip. “Any problems?” they enquired. “No!” I replied, “it was great, wasn’t it dear?”

My wife looked at me, smiled, and pulled on her wellies. Neither of us will ever forget our first time!