

GORDON CHITTENDEN PHOTOS



PORSCHE 914/6

This one's a true Porsche, but at \$6000-plus it's hardly for the masses

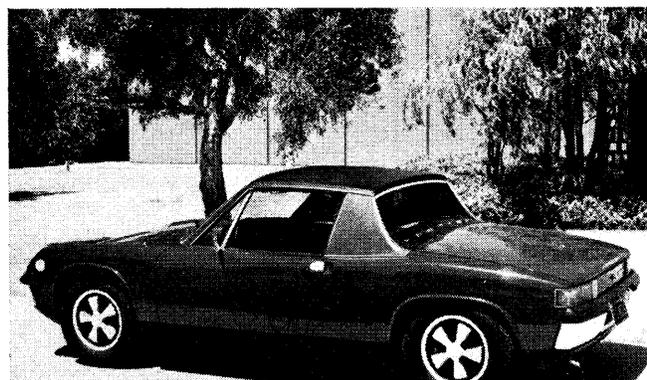
THIS IS THE FIFTH major article in eight months of *Road & Track* that has dealt with the Porsche 914 models. That being so, there is little new we can tell you about the basic layout of the car; in fact, most readers will probably turn to the data panel first for the performance figures of this 6-cylinder version. The main questions about the 914/6 will probably be: How much faster than the four is it? Is it as fast as the current 911T? Is it worth \$2500 more than the four? Is it worth within \$500 of the 911T? The answers, respectively, are: Much. Not quite. Yes. No. The last two answers are of course based on the opinions of our staff; different priorities for style, image, novelty, sophistication, accommodation and purpose will modify these conclusions for some readers.

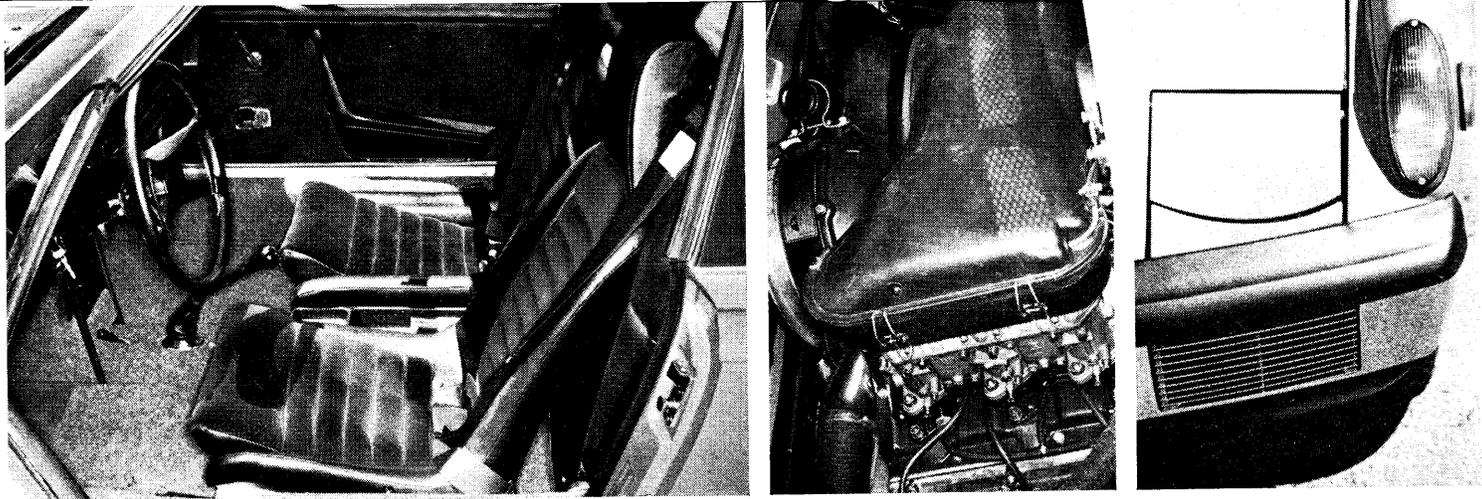
The 2-liter Weber-carbureted six (last year's 911T specification) is such a beautiful, strong engine that it transforms the 914 back into a real Porsche—say what you will about the chassis, the 4-cyl version still comes off as a VW. The sound alone makes the six a magnificent engine; there could hardly be a more satisfactory audible statement of power. Add to this a 16.3-sec quarter-mile time and a maximum of 123 mph and it's hard to make a case for more than 2

liters. Except that this kind of performance for the displacement costs a lot of elevated German marks and it's significant that the 914/6 costs only \$431 less than the cheapest 911T. With 2.2 liters the 911T maintains a performance edge (16.0 quarter, 129 mph) but it would be a sensitive driver indeed who could appreciate the difference.

Another conclusion we've made about Porsche performance is that five gears just aren't needed for 95% of the driving one does. The 911T has a satisfactorily balanced performance range with the 4-speed and it's curious that the 914s don't have that option; perhaps to keep down costly variations between the two 914 models a 5-speed was chosen for both because the 4-cyl car *does* need it. Yet even the 914 transmissions aren't identical, the 2nd and 5th speeds being different (5th is taller on the 4-cyl!). We found the gear-change of the 914/6 much better than the vague operation we experienced with the 4-cyl. There's a different engine layout to pass the linkage around as well as the fact that Porsche assembles the 914/6 (the whole car) while VW builds the four. There was still a minor shift problem on the 914/6, though; sometimes 1st gear was reluctant to disengage, making the 1-2 shift dodgy. Using sufficient force to get out of 1st was worrisome with reverse directly above.

Besides the engine and the significant elevation in performance, what else do you get in the 914/6 that the 4-cyl car lacks? Slightly larger, internally vented brakes, wider wheels and tires, deluxe trim as standard, 3-speed wipers with an electric washer, headlight flasher, dual-tone horn and a little more instrumentation. From an image standpoint, those who haven't heard the beautiful snarl of the engine or aren't close enough to read the tiny "6" on the rear deck will





PORSCHE 914/6

know which version they're in by the striking, ultralight 5-spoke 911S-type alloy wheels. Eye-catching as they are, we've never thought they were particularly attractive; they look a bit like fake wheel covers, which is too bad when they're the real McCoy and cost \$335 the set! We hoped the 914/6 would come with the handsome 10-spoke wheels fitted to our November 1969 cover car, but as yet we haven't seen these in the U.S.

In terms of ride, comfort, interior accommodation and luggage space the 914/6 has all the good qualities we've mentioned about the four. As we said in the sports car comparison test last month, the integral rollbar/lift-off roof just has to be the answer for all open 2-seaters henceforth. It's hard to imagine the serious designer of a future roadster going back to a ragtop when both insulation and safety argue for the integral rollbar arrangement. A removable rear window would be nice for the real fresh-air fiends but the Porsche flat pane, just behind the passengers, does offer excellent rear vision, reminding one of the cab of a pickup truck (that's meant as a compliment!). The interior is subdued but handsome and of course very roomy. The seats are an attractive, gripping combination of vinyl and corduroy. The 914/6 has an oil temperature gauge to protect its expensive engine, but aside from the tach, speedometer and fuel level gauge, everything else is left to the mercy of warning lights.

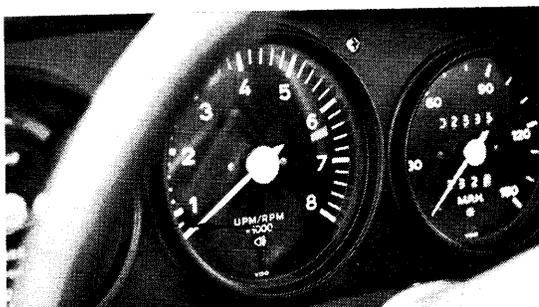
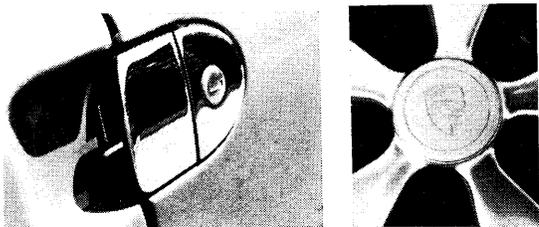
The 16.4-gal tank, which permits the economical four to go a phenomenal 500 miles under cruising conditions and over 400 between regular fillings, is adequate for the six, giving a normal range of 350 miles. It's just as well the range is that great, for filling the tank through the tiny underhood filler neck is a lengthy, potentially messy job which ought not be entrusted to the average gas station attendant. The speed-

ometer of our test car was ridiculously optimistic, reading 76 at an actual 70 mph; as we've said before, anyone buying so sophisticated a piece of machinery deserves to be trusted with straighter dope than that.

Still, one is tempted to drive at patently illegal speeds with such an eager engine and challenge-meeting chassis. The brakes, for instance, are very good. We didn't record the 1g deceleration we expected, but 87% isn't bad; in the six successive stops from 60 mph fade was nil. Handling is much better than on the 4-cyl car, thanks mainly to the inch-wider wheels; ours were 14 x 5½ Js fitted with Michelin XAS 185HR-14s. The additional cornering power they generated was obvious. We didn't actually take the 914/6 to the skid pad but we'd estimate that lateral acceleration to be on the order of 0.8g. In our test report on the four we said that the mid-engine layout's full handling potential was not yet realized. This is still true with the 914/6, despite its greater contact area. Porsche KG is developing a racing version with 220 bhp DIN which will call for a lot of suspension tuning to put all that power on the road; in time the results should be applied to production cars.

Engine accessibility is minimal. There won't be much a mechanic can do (or be willing to do) from above. The Webers aren't too far down but the spark plugs, recessed way inside the heads as they are, don't exactly fall readily to hand. So those owners who like to save a few dollars on minor attentions are in for some contortions.

As unpretty and as expensive as the 914/6 is, we'd probably pay the extra \$431 for a 4-speed 911T, with its handsomer body, better detailing, extra years of development, slightly higher performance and +2 seating. For those who insist on open-air driving, the 911T in Targa form is \$675 dearer or more than a grand above the 914/6. This differential, plus the visual and technical novelty of the mid-engine package, will assure the new car plenty of buyers. What we all hoped for was a true Porsche nearer to \$5000, but that's asking a lot.

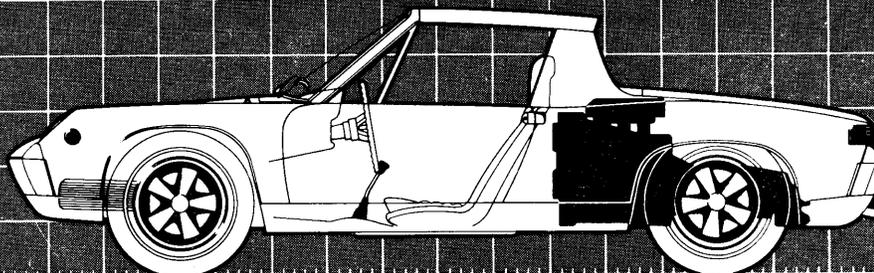


COMPARISON DATA

	Porsche 914/6	Lotus Elan S4 SE	Alfa Romeo 1750 Spider	Jaguar E-Type
List price	\$6099	\$5133	\$4333	\$5675
Curb weight, lb.	2195	1630	2346	3018
0-60 mph, sec.	8.7	9.4	9.9	8.0
Standing ¼-mi.	16.3	16.8	17.3	15.7
Speed at end	83	83	80	86
Panic stop from 80 mph, % g	87	87	90	84
Fade in 6 stops from 60 mph, %	nil	nil	nil	nil
R&T wear index	35	60	60	55
R&T steering index	0.90	0.79	1.26	1.04
Fuel economy, mpg	21.3	27.2	21.5	15.9



ROAD TEST PORSCHE 914/6



SCALE: 10" DIVISIONS

PRICE

List price, West coast..... \$6099
 Price as tested..... \$6729
 Price as tested includes local transportation & dealer prep (\$100), AM/FM radio (\$195 & instal.), 14 x 5½ J light alloy wheels & Michelin XAS 185HR-14 tires (\$335, available from Porsche-Audi Pacific).

IMPORTER

Porsche-Audi Div., VW of America
 600 Sylvan Ave., Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 07632

ENGINE

Type..... flat 6, ohc
 Bore x stroke, mm..... 80.0 x 66.0
 Equivalent in..... 3.15 x 2.60
 Displacement, cc/cu in. 1991/121.5
 Compression ratio..... 8.6:1
 Bhp @ rpm..... 125 @ 5800
 Equivalent mph..... 119
 Torque @ rpm..... 131 @ 4200
 Equivalent mph..... 87
 Carburetion..... two Weber 40 JDT3C (3V)
 Type fuel required..... premium
 Emission control..... engine mods

DRIVE TRAIN

Transmission..... 5-speed manual
 Gear ratios: 5th (0.758)..... 3.36:1
 4th (0.927)..... 4.11:1
 3rd (1.26)..... 5.58:1
 2nd (1.78)..... 7.88:1
 1st (3.09)..... 13.67:1
 Final drive ratio..... 4.43:1

CHASSIS & BODY

Layout..... midship engine, rear drive
 Body/frame..... unit steel
 Brake type..... disc; 11.1-in. dia vented front, 11.2-in. solid rear
 Swept area, sq in..... 477
 Wheels..... light alloy 14 x 5½ J
 Tires..... Michelin XAS 185HR-14
 Steering type..... rack & pinion
 Overall ratio..... 17.8:1
 Turns, lock-to-lock..... 2.5
 Turning circle, ft..... 36.1
 Front suspension: lower A-arms, MacPherson struts, torsion bars, tube shocks
 Rear suspension: semi-trailing arms, coil springs, tube shocks

ACCOMMODATION

Seating capacity, persons..... 2
 Seat width..... 2 x 20.5
 Head room..... 38.5
 Seat back adjustment, degrees..... 10
 Driver comfort rating (scale of 100):
 Driver 69 in. tall..... 85
 Driver 72 in. tall..... 65
 Driver 75 in. tall..... 60

INSTRUMENTATION

Instruments: 150-mph speedometer, 8000-rpm tach, oil temperature, fuel level
 Warning lights: oil pressure, alternator, handbrake, high beam, directionals, hazard flasher

MAINTENANCE

Service intervals, mi:
 Oil change..... 6000
 Filter change..... 6000
 Chassis lube..... none
 Tuneup..... 12,000
 Warranty, mo/mi..... 24/24,000

GENERAL

Curb weight, lb..... 2195
 Test weight..... 2540
 Weight distribution (with driver), front/rear, %..... 46/54
 Wheelbase, in..... 96.4
 Track, front/rear..... 53.6/54.4
 Overall length..... 156.9
 Width..... 65.0
 Height..... 48.0
 Ground clearance..... 5.1
 Overhang, front/rear..... 30.9/29.6
 Usable trunk space, cu ft..... 9.9
 Fuel tank capacity, U.S. gal..... 16.4

CALCULATED DATA

Lb/bhp (test weight)..... 20.3
 Mph/1000 rpm (5th gear)..... 21.1
 Engine revs/mi (60 mph)..... 2850
 Engine speed @ 70 mph..... 3350
 Piston travel, ft/mi..... 1235
 Cu ft/ton mi..... 79.0
 R&T wear index..... 35
 R&T steering index..... 0.90
 Brake swept area sq in/ton..... 434

ROAD TEST RESULTS

ACCELERATION

Time to distance, sec:
 0-100 ft..... 3.3
 0-250 ft..... 5.9
 0-500 ft..... 8.8
 0-750 ft..... 11.3
 0-1000 ft..... 13.6
 0-1320 ft (¼ mi)..... 16.3
 Speed at end of ¼ mi, mph..... 83
 Time to speed, sec:
 0-30 mph..... 3.0
 0-40 mph..... 4.8
 0-50 mph..... 6.3
 0-60 mph..... 8.7
 0-70 mph..... 11.4
 0-80 mph..... 15.0
 0-100 mph..... 26.4
 Passing exposure time, sec:
 To pass car going 50 mph..... 4.7

FUEL CONSUMPTION

Normal driving mpg..... 21.3
 Cruising range, mi..... 350

SPEEDS IN GEARS

5th gear (6000 rpm)..... 123
 4th (6200)..... 105
 3rd (6200)..... 82
 2nd (6200)..... 57
 1st (6200)..... 33

BRAKES

Panic stop from 80 mph:
 Deceleration rate, % g..... 87
 Stopping distance, ft..... 310
 Control..... very good
 Pedal effort for 50% g stop, lb. 40
 Fade test: percent increase in pedal effort to maintain 50% g deceleration rate in 6 stops from 60 mph..... nil
 Parking: Hold 30% grade?..... yes
 Overall brake rating..... very good

SPEEDOMETER ERROR

30 mph indicated is actually..... 26.0
 40 mph..... 35.6
 60 mph..... 54.8
 70 mph..... 64.5
 80 mph..... 74.0
 Odometer, 10.0 mi..... 9.6

ACCELERATION & COASTING

