

# Auto-Sleeper Trident

Plus points: Versatility as a camper, people and load carrier

Minus points: Limited practicality of the roof rack. Cramped upper bed



**S**ome 900 miles of Trident motoring gave us the opportunity to know the machine well. It was a cold drive, included Yorkshire and Derbyshire and the test appeared in *Which Motorcaravan*, January 1992.

As with its popular T3-based predecessor it is a four-berth high-top with galley along the offside, a nicely contoured seat for the rear passengers and useful floor space for occasional load carrying.

We said then: "With T4, Auto-Sleeper have brought a new ambience



to the Trident concept with cassette-type flyscreens and three-position roof storage compartment."

The motor for this short wheelbase van was the two-litre, fuel-injected petrol engine, one of a new breed of motors introduced for the T4. Double wishbones at the front and trailing link for the rear represent the very best type of suspension for absorbing the bumps from any type of surface.

From the armrests built into the doors, to the head restraint which is close enough to rest the cranium against, this driver's workplace has been scientifically planned to cut the hassle.

While the heater controls are fiddly, the quality of ventilation and heating itself proved efficient whatever the temperature was doing outside. Visibility from door mirrors that adjusted lightly within their casings, was admirable.

Whether maximum speed or acceleration was concerned this VW motor handsomely topped the performance of the two-litre competition from other makes of light commercial used for camper conversion. 87mph was the speed maximum and 20 seconds the time for 0-60mph.

By following the angles of VW's body at front and rear, Auto-Sleeper have created a high-top roof that looks as though it were built at Wolfsburg, home of the Volkswagen.

The severe but unmistakable dark blue graphics of the Trident follow a pattern used throughout the Auto-Sleeper range to achieve a uniquely conservative image for the group.

Though the distance from dashboard to tailgate is actually shorter on this new Trident, the vehicle has some extra width, and of course the space to the rear where the



T3 motor used to live.

Auto-Sleepers have made full use of this and added a slide-out drawer beneath the rear seat. By simply sliding out the seat base, the conversion to double bed is made in seconds.

There are many reasons for the Trident effortlessly outselling other VW-based campers: not the least of these though has to be the consistently reliable way in which each component functions.

Safety features of particular reference to the galley are stainless steel surrounds for the hob unit, easily accessible gas isolating taps and flame failure devices for all the gas appliances.

Stowage for implements, utensils, crockery and non-perishable foods is better

than ample. Dining for two or three is practical but, remembering this is technically a four-berth, there is actually nowhere for the unfortunate fourth to sit.

No washroom, but the ubiquitous Porta Potti stows neatly in a floor level locker.

**The Which verdict:** This is a machine of superb controllability – the confidence it inspires and the good manners it seems to impart to its driver. Add that to the manufacturer's clever uprating of the Trident concept and the success of the vehicle needs no puzzling.

John Penner

Spec check Spec check Spec check

Make: Auto-Sleeper Model: Trident Test date: January, 1992

#### Performance data

Fuel consumption: 25mpg motorway driving  
Comfortable cruising speed: 60-65mph  
Maximum speed attained: 87mph  
Acceleration times: 0-60mph: 20 seconds 40-60mph: 12 seconds

#### Base vehicle

Make: Volkswagen  
Model: Transporter kombi  
Type: Panel van  
Power unit: Four-cylinder, two-litre, fuel injected petrol motor producing 84bhp @ 4,300rpm

#### Conversion

Type: High-top  
Overall length: 4.70m (15ft 5 1/4in)  
Overall width: 1.90m (6ft 3in)  
Overall height: 2.48m (8ft 2in)  
Basic construction: Steel body with glass fibre roof  
Gas storage capacity: Single 10lb butane cylinder. Single 6lb Camping Gaz cylinder  
Water heating: Optional Carver Cascade gas heater  
Space heating: Optional blown air (fitted)  
Refrigerator: Electrolux 2cu.ft model with electronic ignition  
Cooker: Two-burner hob and grill  
Toilet: Optional Porta Potti  
Bed sizes: 6ft 3in x 3ft 8in; 5ft 8 1/2in x 3ft 9in  
Electrical equipment: Mains connection to earth leakage switch. Control panel for 12V system  
Lighting: Three twin tube fluorescents overhead and one long 13 watt above the galley  
Windows: Single-glazed glass  
Manufacturers: Auto-Sleepers Ltd, Orchard Works, Willersey, Nr Broadway, Worcs WR12 7QF, tel: 0386 853338