

# Auto-Sleeper Talent

Plus points: Another quality camper from the Auto-Sleeper stable, versatile seating plan, a pleasure to drive, good residual values

Minus points: Storage space at a premium, check the cab seats

**T**alent was subjected to a couple of double tests — measuring up against its Auto-Sleeper stablemate Romero in December 1995's *MMM* and pitched directly against its main rival, Holdsworth's Vista, in the January 1996 edition of *Which Motorcaravan*.

It came out well in both cases. For anyone who thinks all Volkswagen conversions are the same, here is something to make you reconsider. Talent in standard format has sleeping accommodation for two, forward-facing seating for four, and typical facilities for a small, high-top camper — plus a Thetford Cassette toilet.

As ever the Volkswagen cab was praised for its "user-friendliness" and the point made that this is the most car-like of all the major motorcaravan base vehicles. All-independent

suspension, smooth gear change and power-assisted steering are among the VW's assets. The five-cylinder diesel engine option was praised for its smoothness, while performance is often considerably improved with over 10,000 miles under its belt. Economy around the 30mpg mark is not difficult to achieve, either.

VW's own cab seats are replaced by a design made for Auto-Sleepers which allows the



seating to be part of the bedding arrangements.

Some drivers felt lumbar support could be improved.

Auto-Sleepers came up with their usual high standard conversion work, although the point was made that it was the Holdsworth company which was first with the "VW with a loo" concept — and was enjoying considerable sales success prior to the launch of Talent.

Nevertheless, with the two tested side by side, the conclusion was that the Talent — which, at the time, cost around £500 more — was the better. Its more versatile seating arrangements includes two rear seats, with three-point belts, for travelling, and twin tables at meal times.

The interior work is unmistakably Auto-Sleeper — a blue velour upholstery, chintz curtains and furniture units for which the company has become renowned. There was also the type of detail work which no other motorcaravan manufacturer can match.

Making the beds involves pushing the cab seats as far forward as possible and reclining their backrests flat. A full double bed is optional, but the standard

set-up includes the facility to bridge the gap between the upper halves of the two singles. With cassette blinds and curtains provided with the appropriate press studs, the night-time black out provision won bonus points.

The toilet occupies the rear offside corner and slides out for easier use, although we wondered if the runners would pick up dirt with more extensive usage. A clever, sliding partition neatly creates a toilet room in this small camper. It's this toilet room which makes the Talent so different to the more usual Volkswagen conversions.

Kitchen facilities include separate sink and drainer, Electrolux fridge, two-ring hob and grill in easy to clean stainless steel. There is provision for two gas bottles, housed in the kitchen unit, although obviously this cuts down on general storage space. ●

Nick Harding

## Spec check Spec check Spec check

Make: Auto-Sleeper  
Model: Talent  
Type: High-top  
Payload: 484kg

### Base vehicle

Make: Volkswagen Transporter  
Type: Kombi for motorcaravan conversion  
Power unit: 2,370cc, five cylinder indirect injection diesel producing 78bhp @ 3,800rpm

### Conversion

Basic construction: Window van with additional GRP high-top  
Fresh water capacity: 72.5 litres  
Waste water capacity: 34 litres  
Gas storage capacity: Interior access locker takes one 4.5kg and one 7kg butane or one 3.9kg and one 6kg propane cylinders  
Water heating: Optional  
Space heating: Fitted with optional Propex blown air heater  
Refrigerator: Electrolux RM4207 with electronic ignition and two-star freezer operating on gas/240V AC/12V DC  
Cooking facilities: Spinflo two-ring hob and grill with flame-failure devices and spark ignition  
Toilet: Thetford Cassette with electric flush  
Electrical equipment: Mains input to RCD and single 240V socket. Zig control panel

plus fresh water tank gauge. Fitted with optional 66ah second battery and mains charger

Lighting: Twin-tube fluorescent units x five. Single 240V 8Watt twin-tube fluorescent unit, cab courtesy light

Standard equipment also includes: Twin swivelling cab seats, Biltons crockery and glasses for four, fire extinguisher, cab floor mats, twin island leg tables

Windows: Single-glazed glass all round. Roof windows top-hinged double-glazed acrylic units. All caravan windows plus tailgate with blinds and flyscreens  
Upholstery: Laguna blue velour  
Overall length: 4.67m (15ft 3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>in)  
Overall width: 1.94m (6ft 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>in) excluding mirrors

Overall height: 2.54m (8ft 5in)  
Bed sizes: Twin singles 1.91m x .61m (6ft 3in x 2ft 0in) nearside 1.91m x .75m (6ft 3in x 2ft 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>in maximum) offside; "semi-double is same length but 1.67m (5ft 6in) maximum width

Test dates: January 1996 (*Which Motorcaravan*), December 1995 (*MMM*)

Manufacturer: Auto-Sleepers Ltd, Orchard Works, Willersey, Nr Broadway, Worcestershire WR12 7QF, tel: 01386 853338.

www.vwT4camper.info - a useful website for owners and enthusiasts of VW T4 Transporter Campervans