GMHA + TMCA = UAAI.

FORMULA FOR THE FUTURE

On May 9, Australia's largest automotive group came into being with the historic signing of agreements between General Motors Corporation and Toyota Motor Corporation.

The new joint venture company, United Australian Automotive Industries Ltd (UAAI), is owned equally by these two parent companies. It will co-ordinate the activities of General Motors-Holden's Automotive Ltd (GMHA) and Toyota Motor Corporation Australia (TMCA).

At present, UAAI has a 30% share in both companies, and these will become wholly-owned subsidiaries in mid-1989.

Holden's and Toyota, however, will continue to operate full-on as independent organisations, retaining their separate and specific identities and images. Their respective products will be marketed through quite separate and competitive dealer networks.

Both the General Motors and Toyota Corporations are firmly resolved to make the joint venture successful - to the mutual benefits of GMHA and TMCA as well as both dealer organisations - and at the expense of competitors.

UAAI will co-ordinate design, engineering and product-sharing strategies to ensure the most efficient use of the manufacturing facilities of Holden's and Toyota in Australia.

The combined resources of these companies create Australia's largest automotive group and form a strong volume base for improved cost effectiveness, higher quality and the use of the latest technology. Estimates are that combined production could top 160,000 vehicles annually, representing an Australian market share of 40%, and some analysts are predicting an even larger market share by mid 1990's. Both GMHA and TMCA are committed to the continued development and use of Australian design and engineering skills, and this will be reflected in their product ranges.

The joint venture is consistent with the broad objectives of the Australian Passenger Motor Vehicles Manufacturing Plan (the

Continued overleaf...
GMHA + TMCA = UAAI.

"Button Plan") and as such has the support and confidence of the Australian government.

Informing Holden dealers of the establishment of Stage 1 of the joint venture, Director of Marketing Rob McEnery said:

"Finally we can put the speculation behind us... GMHA and its dealers must get on with the tasks at hand. These, simply and specifically, are: (1) Improve our passenger car and overall market penetration month by month. (2) Prepare for the introduction of a very strong and competitively superior light commercial range due on the showroom floors very soon. (3) Prepare for the VN Commodore. (4) Improve our operating professionalism. (5) Build up dealer profitability. (6) Support each other in implementing marketing strategies that will place GMHA dealers in the strongest industry position and give us market leadership."

Executive Appointments

The Board of United Australian Automotive Industries Ltd has nine directors. Toyota Motor Corporation and General Motors Corporation each have nominated four, and an independent, non-executive Chairman of the Board will shortly be appointed.

General Motors nominations to the UAAI Board of Directors are:

Mr Barton Brown, Vice President, GMC, responsible for Asian, African and International Export Operations.

Mr J. G. (John) Bagshaw, Chief Executive Officer for the Australian and New Zealand operations of GMC and Managing Director, General Motors-Holden's Automotive Ltd.

Mr W. J. (Bill) Hamel, Deputy Managing Director, Holden's Motor Company. Mr C. E. (Charlie) Golden, Assistant Treasurer, GMC.

Toyota Motor Corporation nominations are:

The president, Mr N. (Norman) Itaya who was previously Managing Director of AMI Toyota Ltd.

Mr Tatsuro Toyoda, Senior Managing Director, TMCA.

Mr Ikuro Yaguchi, newly-appointed Managing Director of Toyota Motor Corporation Australia Ltd. (TMCA).

Mr T. (Tak) Yamamoto, Deputy Managing Director of TMCA.

Key executive appointments are:

Joint General Managers, Marketing and Sales

Mr R. J. (Rob) McEnery who will also continue in his position of Director of Marketing, GMHA.

Mr J. (John) Konomas who will also be Managing Director of Toyota Motor Sales Australia.

General Manager - Finance

Mr M. C. (Mark) Inagaki, formerly Assistant General Manager, Australian Office, for TMCA.

General Manager - General Affairs and Systems

Mr T. K. (Ken) Brackenbury, formerly Director of Finance, General Motors Overseas Corporation, Tokyo.

General Manager - Production

Mr T. (Tak) Yamamoto who will also act as Deputy Managing Director, TMCA.

General Manager, Engineering and Quality

Mr R. H. (Roger) Gibbs who will also continue in his position of Executive-in-Charge of planning at GMHA.

General Manager - Purchasing

Mr N. (Noboru) Yamada, formerly Manager, Overseas Parts Purchasing, TMCA.

General Manager, Personnel and Industrial Relations

Mr J. E. (John) Barlow who will also continue as Director, Personnel and Industrial Relations at GMHA.

General Manager, Parts & Accessories and Service

Mr N. L. (Norm) Chip who will continue at GMHA as Manager, Parts & Accessories Division.

A handshake precedes the formalities. At left, Norman Itaya (UAAI president) and fellow board members Barton Brown (GMC Vice President) and Holden's MD John Bagshaw.
HSV Builds Up Speed

Supplies of the much-praised, much-awaited Group A Commodore are now flowing out of HSV's Notting Hill headquarters in "very good quantities" says MD John Crennan.

"Quite understandably, because of the delays in the start-up of the Group A, dealers have not been as happy as we'd like them to be. What we've been seeking in our meetings with dealers is their understanding of the production difficulties that we've had. None of us ever dreamt that we would have the degree of difficulty we've experienced with suppliers and that's not an attempt to shift the blame. What seemed to be a relatively simple process, involving one supplier to do all the fibreglass work and one to handle the paintwork, turned out to be impossible because of the sheer enormity of the job. We discovered that if they went to the production levels we need, the suppliers just couldn't sustain the quality standards we require. Bear in mind that there are 21 separate fibreglass pieces involved here (the previous Group A used 6) and strict standards have to be met along the line.

"The complexity of the car is such that none of us probably truly appreciated the intensity of the work involved. At the moment we'd have the best part of 130 people in the supplier industry involved in this programme. There are 5 suppliers producing panels, and the paintwork is also being handled by 5 separate paint contractors. Our own staff level's up to 40, and two of those people are constantly on the road overseeing quality, checking every single fibreglass panel. Our dealers have been very understanding of us placing the quality of the car ahead of chasing volume numbers."

Homologation of the '88 VL SS Group A race car will be applied for in July, and the car will debut at Sandown on September 11. Tim Walkinshaw and Larry Perkins will form a two- car assault during the coming Endurance Series and expect the new car to run competitively with Ford Sierras and Nissan Skylines. After Sandown, major events to be contested by the Group A include Bathurst, Calder, a Grand Prix Preliminary in Adelaide and a Wellington event.

SV Team Dealers received further tangible proof that HSV production was moving smoothly into gear with the first deliveries, in late May, of the exclusive SV88 Commodore. At present, a total of 82 Holden dealers have opted for membership of the Special Vehicles Team, and John Crennan is well pleased with the response. "Initially, I estimated a ball-park figure of around 100, and I'm more than happy with these figures.

"In all the metropolitan areas it's been sensational. If we were seeking the ideal, I'd probably like a few more in some of the larger provincial centres, although we do have a very good geographical spread right now. These dealers have provided us with support right from the outset, and we're going to make sure that we provide them with a very sound return for the investment."

On the question of future HSV offerings, John would not be drawn on specifics, but did say that the HSV development area was full of interesting things pertaining to Astra. "I think it will be very important for dealers to have an attention-getting program on Astra during the excitement of VN to ensure this vital car line is not too far away from top of mind."

He finds that regular contact with dealers and attendance at Dealer Council meetings provides a useful sounding board for future models. "At the most recent meeting, one of the things the country delegates in particular were keen for us to do was to look at the light commercial side of the business with the aim of providing packs or kits that add a more robust, rugged appeal. We're currently reviewing all of our options in that regard . . . it's one of the many good ideas that the dealers have been able to put forward to us.

"We're very keen to maintain that quarterly overview, letting dealers know what we can provide in the way of additional marketing opportunities, having them tell us how we can improve our game. At the moment it seems to be working very well."

HSV TEAM DEALERS: WHERE THEY ARE

New South Wales Zone
Arncliffe Ashfield Balgowlah
Baulkham Hills Belconnen Blacktown
Bownral Campbelltown Canberra
(B&B) Cardiff Cessnock Chullora
Dee Why Gordon Homebush
Liverpool Miranda Newcastle
Padstow Parramatta Pennant Hills
Phillip Rockdale Ryde St. Marys
Waitara Wollongong

Victorian Zone
Albury Ballarat Bendigo Berwick
Bundoora Bunyong Caulfield
Cheltenham Dandenong Essendon
Fawkner Ferntree Gully Footscray
Frankston Geelong (B&B) Glenferrie
Waverley Hobart Kyneton Oakleigh
Ringwood Sale South Melbourne
Sunshine Traralgon Wagga

Queensland Zone
Aspley Cairns Mt. Gravatt
Morooka Southport Springfield
Toowoomba Townsville Windsor
Woolloongabba Windsor Wynnum

South Australian Zone
Adelaide (City) Adelaide (United)
Elizabeth Glenelg Reynella

Western Australian Zone
Albany Bunbury Cannington Fremantle Gosnells Melville Naval
Base Osborne Park Perth

Jeff Allam of TVR puts an '88 VL SS racer through its paces at the U.K. Donington circuit. Tom Walkinshaw is pleased with the Holden's development to date and reports that lap times are equal to those of the quickest Ford Sierras in Europe. He looks forward to racing the car in Australia later in the year.

More Special Vehicles on centre pages...
All well and good, except that council bottlenecks and other spanners in the works have caused delay after frustrating delay. "It's been going on like Blue Hills. When the whole lot's completed and the signage is up again, they'll probably tell us it's time to move out," says Tim. The new site will become the third Bathurst Motors has occupied during a life-span of almost 80 years, an appropriately long stint in a town which proudly traces its origins to 1815 as Australia's first inland settlement.

Tim's father Eric, "a hard man, but very fair and much respected for it," took on the General Motors franchise in 1933 and remained at the helm until his retirement in 1980 when Tim, who had begun as a motor mechanic in 1953 and worked through various areas, succeeded him as dealer principal.

Tim paid tribute to the sound business methods practised by his father which provided the business with a solid foundation and the ability to withstand lean times.

"He was also instrumental in setting up Australia's first automotive dealer council," said Tim. "He and four other dealers in the area formed the first Holden Country Dealer Council in the '60s and they went to bell for equalised discounts and price parity. He was also Chairman of the first Managing Directors' Advisory Council and had a pretty good reputation for getting the job done!"

Tim's no slouch, either. His Finest 50 record - three inclusions - speaks for itself. A past president of the NSW Country Dealer Council, he is currently NSW Country Delegate on the Australian Holden Dealer Council. "I've always had a pretty strong involvement. I feel that it's important because the needs of country dealers are often very different from metro. The market's so different... we have other pressures, other problems, and it's sometimes difficult to compare the two. My association with the Business Management groups also points this up; when we all sit down and compare figures, the differences are heightened."

"I'd like to think that the Dealer Council has made some worthwhile contributions so far this year, especially on issues such as the Toyota joint venture, the new dealer agreement... and the Holdenwise program."

Also a member of the original University of Automotive Management alumni, Tim appreciates the benefits gained from regular meetings with other Holden dealers. "You have the opportunity to talk to other dealers about the way they operate... to have them explain why they do things in a particular way. After I came back from the last Business Management meeting in Sydney, we all sat down and discussed figures, asked ourselves questions. For instance... why weren't our figures as good as others in some departments, and conversely, why were they better? It helps you to recognise your weaknesses, maximise your strengths."

On the subject of strengths, there's absolutely no doubt in Tim's mind that his long-serving staff constitute the dealership's major asset. "You don't win Finest 50 trips by yourself... it's a team performance all the way. Our staff have tremendous continuity on service, especially those on the management side. Mick McCormick celebrates 40 years with Bathurst Motors next year, our Service Manager Trevor McGill has been around for 26 or so years... the accountant, Trevor Rich, must be pushing close to 30 years, Sales Manager 20, Sales Consultant 28... and so it goes. You can't buy that kind of experience and the client contact that goes with it. Our policy has always been to promote from within. Anyone with ambition - and they're the ones you want - knows that he can get ahead inside the place, and I think that stabilises your business. Loyalty is a two-way street. It's relatively easy for staff to be loyal to the employer, but it's not often seen today. I guess, that the company is also loyal to the staff."

Just recently, one of that long serving, experienced bunch proved the maxim that you shouldn't judge a book by its cover. A particularly battered XD Falcon pulled up at the petrol pumps outside, while the tank was filling our man engaged the soiled, singletted, stubby-sucking driver in light conversation. Where was he headed? Lightning Ridge. Did he reckon the car could make it that far? Yeah, well, maybe he could do with a new one. A Commodore demo drive followed, and he drove it happily away that same afternoon, having counted out around $20,000 in fifties and twenties and transferred his belongings from the Falcon. This included several large preserving jars full of opals, rough-cut the same as was he.

And what of the Great Race? Does the heart of the man who lives in the shadow of Mount Panorama thurn to V8 thunder up yonder? Does he feel the earth move mightily on that one day in October? Does he sniff the Sunday battle with delight, anticipating sweet sales success come Monday? Well, yes and no. "Our association with motor racing goes back quite a while, largely because the old man was an ex-driver... a petrol sniffer from way back. Some of the stuff that went up in
the fire included photos, for instance, of the cars the dealership prepared and sponsored in the Redex Trials.

In the early days here, our involvement with the race was tremendous. The ARDC would come to us and we'd lend them the lot... all the fire extinguishers, tow trucks, half a dozen utes, jacks, courtesy cars. We used to throw our workshops open to the competitors every year - they'd come down on the Saturday night and use it for rebuilding the cars between practice and the race. This went on right up through the '70s. Actually, every bastard took us for granted... and we wouldn't have had it any other way! These days, that sort of thing has really wound down because of the sophistication of the whole thing. Now the competitors have to be self-sufficient; but we're still happy to make things available if they're needed.

Remarkably, both badly damaged cars could be driven from the wreckage.

"I think that Holden's participation is a great thing for product image... but I can tell you that no win has ever made a ripple on my sales chart... not once! I know that other dealers can directly attribute sales to a good result, but it doesn't happen here in Bathurst. It goes without saying, however, that the race is a wonderful thing for the town - the amount of money that pours in during race week is unbelievable - and we do benefit from that."

In common with many of his brethren, Tim regards the future with an optimism tinged with some trepidation over ramifications of the Toyota link-up.

"Lots of us who can remember the bad old days to two-dealer towns are looking for some positive direction. I'm naturally enthusiastic about the VN, having seen how good - and big - it looks, and look forward to getting my hands on some VN derivative light commercials and the Statesman. They have to be right. It's a market we haven't been in for a number of years and it's time we got our proper share back.

"I think that the current passenger range is excellent; all lines are spot on. Give us a top end model and VN commercials, plus a little more government business and we definitely see a reversal of the '87 position here, which had us finishing up on 22% and Ford with 27%. After all, we've been here for 60 or 70 years... I reckon the General would expect us to have a much better average than national.

"I'm out to regain market leadership. We've always looked on ourselves here as winners and we don't like being number two. Sure it's an ego thing - but just show me someone who doesn't like being recognised as a winner!"

GOODBYE PAPER, HELLO DCS

With the introduction in March of Holden's carefully planned Dealer Communications System, data interchange between dealers and the factory will never be quite the same again.

There'll be no more mailed paper (or 'hard copy' as they say in the business) and no Zone input. All information regarding Vehicle Orders, Vehicle Order Amendments, Warranty Claims, Retail Sales, etc. is now electronically communicated through the personal computer-based DCS or Videotex.

Developed in conjunction with Electronic Data Systems Australia, a General Motors affiliate, the new system replaces the Reynolds and Reynolds link which has been operational for 14 years. EDS is now responsible for collection of all Holden's factory data.

DCS Manager Kevin Clarke says that initial impetus for a new PC-based system came via the Dealer Council. "Larger dealerships in particular needed to more efficiently prepare factory systems data such as Warranty Claims," he said. "DCS offers major time-saving and economic benefits to all dealers and has been designed to handle planned data communications well into the future. All the feedback we've received has been extremely positive, and the successful implementation of this system into 50 dealerships to date has been due in no small part to the enthusiasm and cooperation of the three dealers involved in our pilot phase and to the thoroughly professional contribution from EDS. Their commitment to customer satisfaction has really set off this project."

Dealers involved in the pilot phase were Graeme Blanchard (Dandenong), Garry & Warren Smith (Oakleigh) and Suttons Motors (Chullora). No. 1 on the program was Graeme Blanchard Holden. DCS has been operating there since March, and Company Secretary Lyn Lemmo reports a virtually hassle-free run. Graeme Blanchard says that this is largely because of a helpful combined effort from Sue Coghill of EDS and Kevin Clarke. "Computerisation is obviously the way of the future," he said. "And I suggest that all dealers should look seriously at joining the program soon."

At Suttons Chullora, DP Denys Gillespie had purchased and installed all-new Commodore computer hardware as early as last November, so that key staff, headed by Bill Wilson, were 'au fait' with the equipment before the pilot program commenced.

"We took the jump and invested in this right from the start," he said. "The new technology is such that if you don't keep up with it and get the benefits of the equipment now you've missed out. All the Suttons Group showrooms are now on the same system, and the 6 or 7 other Sydney dealers who took up the invitation I issued at dealer meetings to come out and see how it operates have also purchased it.

"Apart from DCS, this will allow us to do a heap of other things in the dealership that we could never have done with Videotex."

According to Sales Planning Manager Allan Ingram, DCS is "selling itself."

"The whole thing is rapidly gaining momentum as more and more dealers discover its value. We've had some complaints in the past regarding rapidly obsolescent equipment, and I should emphasise that DCS is a fully integrated system compatible with all our business objectives and communication directions. I can say with some confidence that dealers will not be required to change systems within the next ten years.""Our association with Reynolds and Reynolds will continue. They have worked closely with us on the development of a special DCS hardware package which in the field will be backed by their expertise."

Kevin Clarke feels that dealers with any reservations about the system will be reassured once they appreciate how well the software has been designed. Any queries should be directed to him on (03) 647 2537.

DCS is running smoothly at Graeme Blanchard Holden (Dandenong, Vic) thanks to pilot program teamwork between Company Secretary Lyn Lemmo (left), Sue Coghill (EDS), DP Graeme Blanchard and Dealer Communications Manager Kevin Clarke.
EARLIER IN THE YEAR, Holden dealers, executives and design staff formed audiences for a series of lively and thought-provoking addresses by General Motors Corporation Design supremo Chuck Jordan. Excerpts from his presentations follow:

“Cars are the most emotional products on the face of the earth. I don’t know anybody who’s neutral about the design of his car. In a world marketplace where quality, performance and value are more or less taken for granted, it’s the design of a car that sets it apart. Love starts with a look.

“The emotional appeal that a designer injects into a car makes all the difference, but when I saw a good hard look at the state of design worldwide, at what’s on the road today, I see an awful lot of ‘vanilla’, cars so nearly identical that even designers have trouble telling them apart.

“Recently an Italian design magazine said ‘Technology has moved ahead, but design has fallen asleep. The automobile no longer stirs our emotions, the image is flat, the excitement is gone.’

“These are pretty harsh words for the design community, but I think they’re justified. Things are pretty dull out there design-wise, but I think things are about to change. They’ve got to change… in the fierce competitive battle, automobile manufacturers have got to wake up and respond… and they’ve got to respond quickly. The time it takes from the designer’s sketch to the showroom is too long, because time means everything in terms of giving the customer what he wants, when he wants it – before anybody else does.

“To reduce design time, we’re starting to use advanced computer systems in design work stations. Ask professional writers who use word processors, and they’ll tell you how much faster, better and more creatively they’re writing now, freed from the mechanical frustrations inherent in the typewriter. We foresee the day when our designers, freed from their own mechanical limitations, will sketch directly into the computer. They’ll be able to quickly see their ideas from any angle, in any scale, in any colour, under any light sources. We also believe that holography will eventually make it possible to go directly from concept to finished 3 dimensions without having to make a full-size clay model.

“No matter what technique or technology we use to put down the lines, however, the business of design is, ultimately, the look of the car, its distinct character and personality, the emotional appeal and excitement it conveys, its feeling of class and style. I think we’re just entering a new era of design individuality and excitement. There are signs that design is beginning to heat up all over the world, and it’s certainly happening at General Motors, believe me.

“At GM we’re not satisfied with cars that just meet the status quo; our goal is to lead by continually pushing the outer limits of creative design. We’re doing more than just talking about it… we’re putting cars out on the road that do the talking for us. Lately I’ve been driving a new Beretta. Now these cars are definitely not part of the pack, and they’re only the beginning. There are a lot more in the pipeline, spirited and aggressive cars created when you’re willing to use bold strokes and take some risks.

“Our thrust in all our design studios is to approach problems with imagination and to develop creative solutions that not only meet our marketing and functional goals, but have flair, excitement and originality.

“The pressures and time constraints of running a high-volume production design business could easily discourage really new creative answers in a focus of more proven and familiar solutions, but supported by our advanced engineering team, new concepts are nurtured and explored in an atmosphere where we’re not afraid of making mistakes. Sure we fill a lot of wastebaskets – but we also generate ideas that fuel totally new design directions.

“These design directions have a profound influence on what we do for production, and not just in Detroit. I’m talking about the GM design family worldwide. To stand out, the image of a car has to be bold and clear from a block away… and that takes a strong design statement. Outstanding design has always been a cornerstone of General Motors’ success… and outstanding design is what you’re going to get… you can count on it!”

GOOD FEEDBACK ON SALES TRAINING

The 1988 dealer personnel sales training programs completed thus far include 3-day Fundamentals of Automotive Selling seminars in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane and a one-day Professional Sales Consultants circuit around Australia.

One of the more interesting facets of these programs, according to Sales Training Manager Trevor Prosser, is that dealership management has the ability to assess the program content through post-conference exercises presented by attendees. A high number of returns from dealerships indicates acceptance of this approach as a means of providing feedback of knowledge gained, and Trevor stresses that adoption of the principles will give results.

He says “An example of this is the in-dealership exercise designed for the Round-Up and Round-Off seminar. Each participant is to send out 100 creative prospecting letters to ‘cold contacts’ in the following month, as discussed and designed during the seminar. A conservative estimate of just one sale that month shows that results can be generated through creative prospecting.

In fact, we predict that if adopted as a routine practice, such activity will have results far exceeding our conservative projections in ensuing months. The round-up must continue!”

Reactions from sales consultants to the teachings of sales trainer Tom Saunders have been most enthusiastic… “The best conference I’ve attended… Glad I was made to come… Well worthwhile, as I actually learnt things I can use… I’ve been shown what I’m not doing right… start out low and retain more gross…”

Tom’s total sales experience exceeds 24 years, including around 4 years with motor vehicles, and has been coupled with a successful association with the Dale Carnegie Organisation as a sales trainer. This month, he is instructing dealership sales managers in Team Leadership.

Sales trainer
Tom Saunders.
Motor Show a Success

Zone personnel report that the Holden stand did roaring good business at the recent Adelaide International Motor Show. In all, 22 vehicles were sold from the stand during the show and an additional 15 have been sold directly from dealer follow-up on leads from the show. In all, 222 prospect names were taken, and further sales are expected.

This result compares favourably with good figures from the Perth and Brisbane Motor Shows, and the commitment demonstrated by everyone involved is to be commended.

Sales Consultant Bill Kearney of Plaza Holden (Valley View) was the fortunate recipient of a portable colour TV prize in a 'lucky draw' incentive associated with the Motor Show.

All display vehicles were for sale and all were open and easily accessible. Those manning the attractively designed stand felt that this helped to bring in plenty of custom, and 6 cars were sold straight off the floor.

S.A. Zone dealers now look forward to improving on this success at the Royal Adelaide Show later in the year.

Golden Holden Oldies

Part One: The 48/215

GMH feasibility studies on the manufacture of an 'all Australian' car commenced as early as 1940 at the instigation of Managing Director Lawrence Hartnett. During World War Two, when GMH's technical and manufacturing expertise advanced through mobilisation (all but a small percentage of GMH production through these years was for the armed forces) both the Company and the Government saw the benefits of consolidating those advances.

GMH submitted proposals, and work on 'Project 320', as it was known here, began in earnest late in 1944. Engineering staff in Detroit, including several Australians, worked on the design and the project was transferred to Fishermans Bend in 1946.

Three American-built cars and later two Australian-built prototypes were subjected to testing under Australian conditions in 1947 while production facilities were being built. No Lang Lang proving ground then – the tests took place on public roads and one engine transmission test involved towing a Bedford bus uphill!

The first production schedule was available on April 5, 1948 and on November 29 the same year the first Holden officially rolled off the Fishermans Bend production line and into Australian history.

Its price? Around 733 pounds.

Technical Specifications
DIMENSIONS: Overall length 172 in., overall width 67 in., height 62 in., wheelbase 103 in., track front 53 in., rear 54 in. and weight 2250 lbs approx.
ENGINE: 132.5 cu. in. OHV six.
POWER OUTPUT: 60 bhp at 3800 rpm.
TORQUE: 100 ft. lbs. at 2000 rpm.
COMPRESSION RATIO: 6.5:1.
TRANSMISSION: Three speed with synchronesh on second and third. Column mounted shift lever.
BRAKES: Four wheel hydraulic, drums.
PETROL TANK: 9½ gallons.
WHEEL SIZE: 15 x 4.

The Case Of The Door Prize Winner

W.A. Zone District Manager Ted Ballantine (who is responsible for the punishing heading on this item) informs us that a Mr David Saw was the winner of the Holden Dealers' Door Prize at the recent Perth Motor Show. This was a suit-case, presented to him by City Motors Sales Manager Ray Mountney. "Nicely done," says Ted. "But wait, there's more!"

David Saw currently drives an HQ Holden first purchased at City Motors, and the vehicle has been serviced there ever since. David is very happy with his car which, incidentally, has done 600,000km and is still in exceptionally good condition. He puts this down to paying attention to regular servicing and also to the advice given by his Service Advisor, who just happened to be, from day one, a Mr Ray Mountney.

Ted goes on to say that the question 'on the tip of everyone's lips' is now that Ray has taken on the mantle of Sales Manager, will he advise David to change over vehicles? "I'm sure there will be no lack of buyers for David's well cared-for HQ," he concludes. "Come on Ray, sell him a car today. He listens to you, after all!"

G'day U.S.A.

A Commodore SS group A was among the 'exotics' on display at the Society of Automotive Engineers show in Detroit last February.

Holden's Engine Company executives showed their wares – which include the Group A's fuel-injected V8 powerplant and the successfully exported four-cylinder Family II engine – and report very high levels of interest.

GM engineers also had the chance to check out our 'winged warrior' at their Milford Proving Ground and it later proved a head-sweller on the streets when on loan to appreciative U.S. motoring scribes. Their superlative-spinkled report appears in the June issue of Wheels.

The touring tourer – preparing for take-off at Milford Proving Ground.
THE ULTIMATE V-CAR?

'A car in half a million'

That's the kind of language Holden Special Vehicles' chief John Crennan uses to describe the just-released SV88. If you think it's a touch extravagant (a) you haven't seen the car and (b) he can explain further. 

"It's been ten years since the release of the original Commodore, and since then we've sold over half a million of these V-cars have been sold. I think that our model, the SV88, represents a memorable finish to what has been a remarkable model line for that vehicle. If you were into collecting motor cars, I'd have to say that the SV88, as the last of that line, is the ultimate."

There are all manner of persuasive reasons why such a claim is justifiable, as the SV88 specification listing will more than adequately demonstrate.

"Truly a limited edition vehicle - only one hundred and fifty will be built - the elegant SV88 is currently being delivered to SV Team Holden dealers throughout Australia. Many will find them irresistible. As John Harvey was recently quoted, "We imagine a lot of these cars will be driven by dealer principals as their personal cars and may then be sold as pristine used vehicles."

New price of the SV88 sedan is $40,850. In 1978, the top-of-the-line V8 SL/E Commodore sold for $10,700.

More interesting comparisons, however, can be made with other vehicles currently on the market in the $40,000 plus category. Matching SV88 specification levels against the likes of the Audi 80 and 100CD ($49,500, $58,900), the BMW 320i and 525E ($54,700, $72,100), the base model Honda Legend ($52,900), the ditto Mercedes 190E ($70,000), SaabGLE Sedan and Hatchback ($40,150, $55,125) is an enlightening experience.

Value for money is of course only one of the SV88's several attractions, as those fortunate enough to find themselves behind the wheel will discover - and as these words from a recent Modern Motor article will attest: "The only executive comforts not included in the SV88 are a phone and FAX machine." But our feelings after a day behind the wheel were that those extra fittings would only have distracted from the driving enjoyment of what is a true sports sedan with the performance and handling one would expect. Based on a 4.9 litre Calais V8, the SV88 benefits from engine and suspension modifications in the HSV workshops as well as a very up-market interior re-trim, top of the range Eurovox sound system and subtle appearance modifications... Behind the wheel, that performance gain is immediately felt with very crisp acceleration from rest and impressive mid-range power on the road. But at the lights, the SV88 idles fuss-free... just the sort of performance car that buyers in this market segment desire..."

"Inside is where executive privilege really takes hold. Those professional types who buy an SV88 will not be lacking in creature comforts... the SV88 has all the ingredients needed to satisfy the demanding sports sedan driver."

"The optional hands-free Traveller Car Phone, which is Telecom sourced, and Carfax machine would bring the SV88 price to approximately $47,000. One may also order a compact disc player."
SV88 Specifications

Mechanical:
- 4.9 litre V8 engine OHV design with cross flow cylinder heads with SV modified extractor system and cold air intake system resulting in a 175% increase in power to 140Kw.
- 3 speed automatic transmission.
- Limited slip differential.
- Sports suspension including SV gas inserts and gas shock absorbers, linear rate front springs, revised spring and damper rates, increased stabiliser bar diameter. Revised progressive rate rear springs.
- 84 litre long range fuel tank.

Brakes:
- Heavy duty power assisted 4 wheel disc brake system, using ventilated front disc with finned alloy caliper.

Wheels:
- 16 x 7 alloy sports wheels finished in Jewell Midnight.

Tyres:
- 205 - 65VR 16 Bridgestone R71.

Interior:
- Complete SV interior re-trim in blue perforated Howe leather seat facings, head rests, glove box and door inserts with supporting velour, seating flanks, console cover and door trims, and co-ordinated piping.
- Front reclining sports seats with lumbar support.
- Blue leather mono steering wheel including HSV logo and hub.
- SV audio sound system with advanced liquid crystal multi-code matrix window, complete with built in security code and alarm system and separate programmable 7 band equaliser with front 150mm 2 way co-axial speakers and rear 200mm 3 way tri-axial speakers.

Exterior:
- Special deep metallic ‘Orion Blue’ upper body paint work with lower fascias in 2 coat metallic Jewell Midnight.
- Burgundy pin striping.
- Subtle front and rear spoiler in Jewell Midnight with re-rated supporting boot lid torque rods.
- Specific front grille in Jewell Midnight.
- SV88 rear decal and SV side panel.

Appointments:
- Air conditioning.
- Finger touch electric adjusting exterior mirrors.
- Power windows.
- Central door locking.
- Personal reading lamps.
- Electric alarm system and radio controller on keys.
- Power antenna.
- Electronic cruise control.

A CarFax ($3,300) is one of the few options available on the luxuriously equipped SV88. Interior appointments include reclining sports seats, Howe leather seat facings, power windows, central locking, leather MOMO steering wheel, electric alarm system and radio controller on keys, state of the art sound system.

HSV A Holden Exclusive

In light of the joint venture agreement between Holden’s and Toyota, it should be pointed out that all Holden Special Vehicles’ products are exclusive to Holden dealers. John Crennan says that the feedback from SV Team dealers on this aspect has been entirely (and understandably) positive.

“They know that one of the real competitive edges to be gained by their franchise in the face of the joint venture is a unique ability to tap the performance/specialty vehicle market in a more adequate manner than their Toyota dealer counterparts.

They really do see that as a value added aspect of the Holden franchise. It gives them cars with extra personality and, of course, higher gross.

“I’d have to say that going on the experience Holden’s have had in this side of the business, with the previous HDT arrangement and now HSV… it’s not something that anybody can easily get into. There’s a helluva start-up and familiarisation learning curve involved. If any one of our competitors tomorrow decided to do a similar thing, I could only wish them good luck for the first two years – there are a lot of traps for new players.”

The Special Vehicles ‘franchise within a franchise’ gets great exposure right on Nepean Highway at Balmoral Holden, Cheltenham, Vic.

On display at Balmoral Holden in stunning showroom surrounds … the dynamic HSV duo.
DEALER NEWS

Masterly Performances

A grand total of four highly professional Holden dealerships have qualified recently for the Service Development System's highest grade of recognition as Master Level Service Centres.

Congratulations on a big effort to:
Eagers Toowoomba (Old); Redding Motors, Atherton (Old); City Motors, Adelaide; Motors, Hobart.

At Redding Motors, Atherton, SDS Manager Roger Anderson (left) presented the commemorative bronze "World in Hand" sculpture that signifies Master Level status to dealer principal Gordon Redding, in company with Redding’s service manager Tom Lennon.

A Wreck Reborn

Gordon Herkt of Blenheim, New Zealand, owns a rare Holden indeed. His 1985 VK Commodore utility began life as a station wagon, written off by insurers after an accident crushed in the roof. Local Holden dealers WADSCO's tendered for the wreck and planned to create a utility out of it for dealership use. Word spread while work was in progress, and a number of customers expressed a desire to purchase the hybrid.

Appliances repairman Herkt proved the most persuasive and is well-pleased with his handsome workhorse.

Dealers principal Rex Scobie says that the only difficulty experienced throughout the project was making a tailgate, which was eventually fabricated out of panel steel over a boxed steel frame. The integration of a sedan sixth window made the cab slightly larger for tool storage.

According to Rex Scobie, vehicles right for conversion are few and far between. This constitutes a problem, because although WADSCO’s is situated in a small provincial town, interest in the ‘ute’ has been such that the dealership has confirmed buyers for any more that are made.

This Kiwi ute began life as a station wagon.

Super Service Winners

Our congratulations to Australia’s Top Ten Holden dealer technicians. These knowledgeable blokes topped their ’87 Super Service examinations and won, apart from honour and glory; a trip to South Australia.

They spent some time touring the Elizabeth Plant and lunching with service department personnel. Other stops on the work-related itinerary were Bridgestone and R.O.H.

This tireless group also visited Adelaide restaurants, tried their luck at the Casino and spent two days unwinding on the Murray River steamer Proud Mary.

25 in Quambatook

Gordon Noblet hopes to see out another twenty-five years with Holden’s… because he says he likes a challenge!

Quambatook Auto Services in northern Victoria has notched up 25 years’ solid service and in April District Manager Peter Hespworth (right) presented Gordon (left) and partner John Parker with a commemorative plaque for the dealership.

Dealer Changes

In Tasmania, following the purchase of the Motors Group by Vincent Keen, the operation has been divided into four dealerships and two authorised service outlets.

At Motors Hobart, the dealer/operator is Vincent Keen (formerly of United Motors, Adelaide); at Motors Launceston, Donald Walsh; at Motors Devonport, Philip Connelly; at Motors Burnie, Kym McInerney.

Motors authorised service outlets are at Ulverstone and Smithton.

In Ballina, NSW, the former Don Lake Holden is now re-named Quayside Motors, operated by Hank Buys.

In Midland, W.A., the dealer operator at Goldie Holden is now Brian Bartrop.

Penfold Put Their Reputation On The Lion

Zone Manager Hugh Bingham has reason to be pleased with the latest addition to the ranks of Melbourne Holden dealers.
Penfold Holden opened for business on busy Burwood Highway, Burwood, in late April, providing Holden’s with a major new presence in the eastern suburbs.

The dealership's name is already familiar to Melburnians, as the much-awarded Penfold Mazda operation headed by MD Alan Johnstone has been in business for 25 years and is nationally No. 1 in sales volume.
Newly appointed DP Bob Jenkins at Penfold Holden, Burwood. "Outstanding representation on a major arterial outlet."

"Penfold are very well regarded, particularly within the industry," said Hugh. "They have an outstanding reputation for customer service and we were naturally delighted when discussions with Alan Johnstone held last year proved fruitful. Penfold chose to relinquish a Nissan dealership in favour of Holden's, which was a most sensible thing to do."

"This new dealership facility provides Holden's with outstanding physical representation on a major arterial outlet and will provide us with vastly improved representation for both sales and service in this densely populated area."

MD Alan Johnstone is not entirely unfamiliar with Holden's, having worked (way back when) for both Patterson Cheney and Preston Motors.

Dealership principal Bob Jenkins has been associated with Penfold for 11 years and willingly took on the Fresh Challenge. "I'm a volume man, and one could see which was the right way to go," he said. "Holden's have proved most professional and helpful, and we've rapidly been made to feel very much a part of this franchise - one which we're extremely happy to represent. Our aim is to sell 100 new units a month and almost as many used. Having just seen the VN - my immediate impression being that it's one of the nicest cars I've seen in a long time - I can assure the General that we'll do our bit to keep up the sales rate."

Some of Penfold Holden's initial advertising budget was allocated to this novel 'moving billboard', shown here outside Fishermens Bend HQ. The truck-mounted poster was on the road for a month. Six days a week it gained exposure in prominent positions around Melbourne: travelling main roads and freeways, parked at weekend sporting venues such as the MCG and VFL Park, making appearances at major shopping centres. Not a bad idea at all.


Admission to the ranks of Guild membership is no simple achievement; on average, only one in six sales consultants will qualify for membership in any given year. Quite exceptional, therefore, are the five 'over achievers' who have qualified every single year. Honoured at presentation dinners held earlier in the year, they are Victorians Perc Farrell and Bruce Fawcett, Western Australian Jeff Coen and New South Walesmen John Mangold and Ron Pudig.

Special mention is also given to those who have qualified continuously for 10 years, and this year Brian Becker (WA) and Len Richards (NSW) received special commemorative gifts for their achievement.

National Guild membership, which totalled 440 in 1987, is divided into four categories: Master Sales Consultant (220 members), Sales Leader (69), Gold Sales Leader (10) and Sales Manager Chapter (120).

A noteworthy achievement for Port's City Motors - their entire sales team qualified in 1987 for HMSSG membership. The happy bunch of ten poses for posterity at the W.A. celebration.

W.A. Zone Master Sales Guild top performers meet another one in the form of a Group A Commodore, special guest at their presentation dinner. From right, Graham Warrington of Brian Gardner Holden took off top Guild honours for '87, followed by Jeff Coen of Metro Motors (also recognised for 20 years Guild membership) and Bruce Tschirpig of Shacks Holden.

Jane Brookshaw of Steinhouse Holden (Gawler) this year became the first woman in South Australia to qualify for membership of Holden's Master Sales Guild. She addressed her peers during S.A. Zone's HMSSG dinner at the new Adelaide Convention Centre, watched approvingly by Zone Manager Ross Emes.

Described as 'definitely born to be a salesman', Dean Corston amassed S.A. Zone's top points tally to take off the Master Sales Guild trophy. Dean, whose father worked at GMH Woodville for 27 years, had been a sports editor, bookmaker and publican (to name only a few former occupations) before joining John H. Elliot, Glenelg, in 1983.

During the NSW Zone's HMSSG dinner held at Sydney's Intercontinental Hotel, Holden's personnel and A.C. McGrath (Liverpool) colleagues congratulate Master Sales Guild perpetual trophy winner Malcolm Ible on an exceptional sales performance. L-R: John Leech (NSW Zone), Jamie Gigg, Des Frierelle, Malcolm Ible, Doug Askew, Ross McLennan (Holden's Marketing Manager), Sam Ferraro.

John Mangold (left) of J.N. Caldwell (Crows Nest) and Ron Pudig of Noble Holden (Gosford) have both racked up 20 years' continuous membership of Holden's Master Sales Guild. Well done, and keep on hanging in there!
You have excelled in your professionalism, and as a consequence, are in the best position to take advantage of the opportunities of the future.

Mr and Mrs John Bagshaw welcomed guests to the Finest 50 "evening of stars".

Kathy and Barry Smith (Dee Why, NSW) made a handsome team on the ballroom floor at the Regent.

Just a little less formal than a handshake... John Bagshaw congratulates Dorothy Hilliard (Tweed Heads, NSW) on securing a place among Holden's Finest 50 dealers.

Brian Williamson of Heathmere had the honour of being the first retail customer in Victoria to take delivery of a 1988 Group A Commodore SS. Brian (centre) placed his order in October through Reynolds Holden, Portland. DP Rod Heirze (right) was joined by Country Sales Manager Geoff Wilkins for the handover.

Sales Manager Max Loveridge of Manley Stanwell Holden in Albany, W.A., reports that his town hosted the Australian National Speedway Titles held over Easter.

A Saturday morning promotion with the No. 1 NSW car entered by the Lismore-based Fields race team attracted plenty of local interest. Max, pictured with the team, says the 1985 VK SL sedan still runs a highly modified 3.3 litre carburettor, 6 cylinder and asks: 'Who said the 'old 202' was a windbag?'

Robert Of Arabia?

Holden's ceiling-scraping Marketing Director Rob McEniry and wife Pemmy prepare to hunker down and feast Egyptian-style.

The belly dancer's having a ball, but Mike Cadden (Caulfield, Vic) isn't too sure.

Which way to the cuisines? Egyptian microbes did claim some Superdealer victims.

A cruise on the luxurious Nile President proved a tour highlight.

The key to this future is professionalism.

"We're moving into a very fast-paced age in the automotive industry and we've already felt the effects of the computer on the way we do business... In the future we'll feel these effects more and more. In our marketing of cars, in how we deal with the public. Our ability as a society to transmit information to one another increases every day, and every day the car-buying public becomes more and more aware. They want more information.

"In this changing society and this changing motor industry, the professional dealer is the one that will continue to grow and be financially successful. For that reason we'll be placing ever-increasing importance on our Finest Fifty programme.

"Next year, we'll call those dealers who qualify 'Masters Of The Art' and our awards will be presented at the Australian National Gallery, Canberra...

"Ladies and gentlemen, again let me congratulate you for being here tonight.
Sold On Singapore

As a reward for successful sales efforts on Astra, Camira and Barina, around 120 Holden sales consultants won six-day holidays in Singapore during April.

They and their partners were accommodated in plenty of style at the Singapore Hilton and enjoyed a colourful round of tours and activities. According to Holden host Doug Black, “Friendship and Foster’s flowed freely...the rock ’n roll evening, trishaw races, Lucky Plaza, Kusu Island and junk trips, to name but a few, will be long remembered.”

Because of the large number of travellers, groups went in two ‘waves’ and among the first was Trevor Wills of West City Holden, Blacktown. He subsequently penned a note to NSW Zone Sales Manager Barry Turner which would echo the sentiments of most participants:

“On behalf of my wife and myself I would just like to express our heartfelt thanks for putting on the Sell Four Singapore incentive campaign...it was one of the greatest experiences we have ever had and the memories will last a long time. The whole six days were planned to perfection with nothing left to ask for; Holden did it well. Right from the magnificent breakfasts, the terrific tours and the fantastic nights out, everything was enjoyed by all. It was a thrill to see fellow salespeople, some of whom had never even been on an aeroplane, having such a good time. The good thing about the competition was that everyone had a chance to win, not just the big fleet sellers, but the small country dealerships as well. Incentives offering overseas travel will always produce the best from people. Once again, thanks very much — and I hope to be on the next trip.”

Champagne Challenge

Who says low-key fun type promotions don’t work? Certainly not NSW Zone Manager Doug Hastie. He reports that a 30-day metro dealers’ incentive campaign called the Astra Champagne Challenge brought fantastic results. Prize for dealers who achieved a set target was a top-shelf magnum of Bollinger, and the incentive was run in conjunction with a special Astra SLX TV offer run by the Dealer Marketing Group.

Total sales for the 30 days were 180...a gratifying 100% up on average!

Doug congratulates Sydney dealers on a top effort and is already planning similar promotions for the very near future.

What Would You Say To A Stuffed FJ?

These delightfully rotund replicas are waiting for good homes. FJ fanciers can select their heart’s desire in hot pink, eucalyptus green, red and optional metallic gold with vinyl roof (!).

The cuddly cushions come in two sizes and are available at less than retail price: ($20 large, $10 small, $25 for vinyl roof option) from the Holden Sports & Social Club, Fishermens Bend. Phone (03) 647 1644 for further details.

A bit of fifties frippery for FJ fanciers.

Having a Ball?

Miranda (NSW) dealer Greg Ball is a multi-sport masochist...at least that’s what the sign on the triathlon finish line says. Greg (left) finished the April 10 Gold Coast event in 4 hours, 46 minutes, 52 seconds.

Total distance covered during the swim/cycle/run punisher was 97 kms, and there were 500 similarly masochistic entrants. Triathlon madness appears to afflict people from all walks (runs? cycles?) of life, and among those represented were accountants, waitresses, teachers, solicitors, students, firemen, cardiologists, signalers, anaesthetists, geophysicists and roof tilers.

Modest Greg, who finished 31st in his age category, contends that his effort “wasn’t bad for a Holden Dealer, if I may say so myself.”

He may, and if he attacks the business of shifting new cars with the same grim determination, sales figures should look equally healthy.

Erratum

In the Finest 50 listing last issue, four Queensland Zone dealers were inadvertently hidden amongst their NSW Zone counterparts. They were: Dorothy Hilliard, Tweed Motors Pty. Ltd., Tweed Heads; Ross Llewellyn, Zupps Holden Pty. Ltd., Mt Gravatt; Graham Rossington, Sexton & Greem (Sales & Service) Pty. Ltd., Tenterfield; Michael Turner, Turner Holden, Murwillumbah.
GM WORLD

HELP FOR NIGHT DRIVERS

A recent GM survey asked U.S. car owners to rank a ‘wish list’ of 30 electronic devices that could be installed on cars. These included audible warnings that tell when a car door is ajar, and an SOS system which would be activated in the event of a crash. What the majority wished for, however, was some kind of help in night driving.

Figures show that although about 28 per cent of all driving is done at night, 55 per cent of fatalities occur at night. Vehicle/animal collisions are numerous; in one U.S. state alone last year there were more than 34,000 car accidents.

GM is well into development of a vision enhancement system for vehicles which uses infrared technology to translate heat into images that appear on a cathode ray tube in the instrument panel of a vehicle.

Harvey Burley of GM’s Advanced Engineering staff explains that all objects emit some amount of heat. “The hotter the object, the more energy it emits. Living things – people and animals – are warmer than poles and fence posts and therefore stand out more clearly in the image display. Tests have shown that the maximum distance at which a darkly clad adult can be seen by a person with good vision driving on low beam is about 280 feet. In contrast, the vision enhancement system can pick up the image at 1,500 feet.”

The vision enhancement system is also effective under adverse conditions such as fog, heavy rain or snow, discerning road edges and objects in the path of the vehicle much better than the eye. In cases of glare, when an oncoming driver has lights on dazzling high beam, drivers using the night vision system simply glance at the screen and immediately find their place on the road, a movement no more distracting than looking at a rear-view mirror. Unfortunately, because of its current bulky size, it will be some time before the system appears on production vehicles. Its applications, for the present, are limited to military aircraft, field tanks and tracking systems.

Award Winners

U.S. Motor Trend magazine’s Car Of The Year for 1986 is the Pontiac Grand Prix. The most performance-oriented of the three GM 10 cars now on the market, it has a super-low drag co-efficient of 0.299.

The Chevrolet Beretta GT is one of Motor Trend’s top three cars of the year. It’s an aggressive and affordable sports car and an admitted favourite of GM Design chief Chuck Jordan.

Oldsmobile’s Cutlass Supreme, third of Motor Trend’s top choices, also offers advanced aerodynamics at a base price of US$12,845.

A special open-top version of the Cutlass Supreme served as pace car in the recent Indianapolis 500. This was Oldsmobile’s 8th appearance as pace car, and the Cutlass was powered by a 250-hp turbocharged version of Oldsmobile’s new Quad 4 engine. It also featured the technologically advanced ‘head up’ driver information display.

The 1986 Chevrolet Corsica, Chevy’s newest sedan, earned the title of ‘Family Car Of The Year’ from a field of 16 contenders in a recent competition conducted by Family Circle Magazine.

Thailand Our No. 2 Export Market

Thailand has become Holden’s second biggest export market after New Zealand. This year, around 800 2.0 litre Commodores and almost 1000 Camiras will be shipped in CKD form for assembly by Holden’s Thai distributor Phra Nakorn Automobiles.

According to Export Manager John Leigh, the popular and successful VL Commodore is the major choice of fleet buyers such as Thai International Airways and the Thai Police. “There was definite demand for more,” he said. “But due to the upcoming runout, allocations had already been made.” Holden’s began re-asserting its presence in Thailand with the VH Commodore in 1982 after a decade of tough competition from luxury European and Japanese manufacturers.

Thai sales are expected to increase at the rate of 6% annually as Holden’s develops an increasingly exported oriented marketing base. Sales increases are also planned for other Asia Pacific markets such as Singapore, Indonesia, New Zealand, Brunei and New Guinea.

1987 saw Holden’s vehicle exports rise to $170 million, an increase of $120 million on 1986. Holden’s Engine Company built a record 234,000 engines last year, generating export sales of $245 million.
Quickies

Bobby Allison's victory at the wheel of a Buick Regal in this year's Daytona 500 NASCAR Winston Cup race proved sweet indeed for Daytona Beach dealer Lloyd Buick Cadillacs. They sold six Buick Regals in just three days following the race.

Hertz have made their first major purchase of Commodores in around 6 years. $2,000,000 worth of Commodore Executives have been delivered to Hertz offices in Queensland, NSW and Western Australia.

For the third year in a row, General Motors has topped the Fortune 500 list of America's largest industrial corporations as ranked by sales. Ford were third-ranked and Chrysler was tenth.

Vauxhall Motors has announced a dramatic turnaround in earnings for 1987 after several years of losses. Their profit of $89 million compares to a $177 million loss in 1986. 1988 is expected to be another record year for British car makers, with Vauxhall sales already up 15% on 1987 levels. They're currently No. 2 on the UK market with a 15.7% passenger vehicle market share.

During a televised motorcade to celebrate the opening of Perth's new Redcliffe Bridge, Fremantle dealer Doug Kerr drove his well-kept black 48-215 in company with an even shinier black VL Calais to signify 40 years of Holden. Right behind was the Falcon contingent. Who do you think copped all the cheers and applause? "It did my soul good," says Doug.

New From HSCO

There are roof racks and Roof Racks - and it should be obvious to which category these belong.

Designed for vehicles with or without gutters, this high-quality universal 2-bar set can be fitted within 20 seconds.

Complete with ratchet and straps mechanism to adjust to and hold variable size equipment, it's adjustable from 1000 mm to 1230 mm to cater for most vehicle roof widths.

Also included are two protector pads for sailboard and ski equipment, etc. Holden Dealers recommended retail for this prestigious multi-purpose accessory is $225.00.

Any $$$$Suggestions?

There are more ways than one to pay off the mortgage... just ask Arif Khan, a leading hand and storeman at Holden's Engine Company.

He's a whiz at coming up with practical suggestions that earn him - and save the company - big dollars.

Just recently, he received the maximum award of $25,000 for his plan to return surplus stocks of oversized piston rings to the supplier and have them reworked to standard size. This allowed 305,660 surplus piston rings to be utilised and alleviated an impending shortage. Arif, originally from Pakistan and a university graduate, has made a total of 30 successful suggestions and collected a whopping $54,776 in reward money.

RUSSIAN BLUES

We all know that Holden owners are spoilt rotten by friendly and super-efficient Holden dealer service. Just how pampered they are is pointed out by this little item from the Moscow desk of the Financial Times:

"The modern facade of the sprawling Automo bil service centre on Moscow's Minsk Boulevard holds a promise of efficiency which, alas, is not fulfilled within.

"Inside, Yuri, owner of an eight year old Lada car, was waiting. Like the other motorists gathered there, he took the day off work to have his car repaired.

"First he queued for 45 minutes outside to tell a disgruntled mechanic the car needed a tune-up. He mentioned that he wanted his friend, the mechanic Vladimir in Bay 84, to work on his car. Request granted, Yuri waited another hour and drove into Vladimir's repair slot.

"If Yuri had been assigned another mechanic and not watched every move, he is convinced the engine and chassis would have been pillaged for serviceable parts. As it was, he knew Vladimir and, bending over the engine, advised him on every step of the operation.

"The visit to the service centre would take Yuri's entire day. When parts were required, Yuri, not the mechanic, had to go to the parts stockroom and queue up. First it was to ask for the part and get the price. Then under the time-honoured Soviet system, he queued a second time at the cash desk and paid for the item, after which he queued for a third time to pick it up.

"Yuri says he would love to buy a new Lada. The problem was less the money - 7400 roubles - than the waiting time. The Lada and Moskvich cars in a showroom on the outskirts of Moscow were not for sale. They could only be purchased through one's place of work and with the approval of the trade union. The more important one's job, the quicker one got delivery of the car. As a scientist, Yuri believed he had a good chance of getting a car in less than a year. Less privileged workers would have to wait many years."
'Little League' Hots Up

Production car racing may not receive anything like the same coverage as the big-league tours, but the competition sure is alive and kicking. All events held so far in this year's Yokohama Production Car Championship series have attracted big fields, with Commodore Turbo strongly represented. Last outing in Adelaide, Commodore filled 8 of the top 10 placings.

Although production cars have nowhere near the poke of Group A racers - they're closer to showroom specification with suspension and exhaust modifications - around $25,000 will get a competitor up and running. Compare that with 10 times the amount needed to mix it with Johnson, Perkins, Brock & Co. and the attractions for small budget operators out to make a name for themselves are obvious.

The stars of the future could well come from these ranks and those of the similarly inexpensive stock car equivalent AUSCAR, where Commodore is also to the fore.

Currently the Yokohama series is a battle between Mazda RX7 and Commodore Turbo, with Mazda competitors having the edge.

Front runners for Commodore are Michael Preston and Mark Gibbs, at present on 39 and 38 points respectively, while Mazda drivers Peter Fitzgerald (who also campaigns a Commodore) and Garry Waldon lead with 42 and 40 points.

More than 30 starters line up for each event, and with close racing the name of the game the series is building up to an exciting finale.

Further events are at Lakeside on July 24, Oran Park on August 28, Sandown on September 11 and Calder on October 9.

At Adelaide International Raceway Mark Gibbs leads fellow Commodore Turbo campaigner Mike Preston during the May 1 round of the Yokohama Production Car Championship.

After The Odd Spare Part?

Each day an average 200 tonnes of parts and accessories stock enters and leaves Holden's huge Service Parts Operations facility in Dandening.

This high-rise order picker is one of 70 lifting and carrying appliances that are used in the warehouses, which cover an area equivalent to 350 suburban house blocks.

Each day an average 8000 line items are despatched to customers nationwide and to export territories.

In stock at any one time are more than 88,000 individual parts. Average value of this stock is presently around $50 million, with almost the same amount again invested in orders with suppliers.