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FACTS & STORY

VW Country Buggy (Australia, 1967)

SPECIAL EDITIONS

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German Engineering for “Down Under”

In the early 1960s the Australian Army made an approach to VW-Australasia Ltd. about a cross-country, four-wheel drive vehicle for their vehicle fleet.

But at that time the German subsidiary was not able to offer the requested four-wheel drive. This enquiry brought the VW-employees Cyril Harcourt and Rudi Herzmer into the arena. Both were so enthusiastic about this idea, that they constructed a small and rugged vehicle in 1964 that was adapted to the conditions of the Australian continent. Towards the end of 1965 finally five prototypes in running condition were finished and shortly afterwards intensively tested over several thousand kilometers in all areas of Australia. The public first set eyes on the car at the Melbourne Motor Show in March 1967. On April 3rd in 1968 the first “Buggy” went on sale. But the edged Volkswagen had difficulties in winning hearts of the Australians. The sales figures of 1968 reached only a number of

842 vehicles. The Country buggy lagged far behind expectations and the allowed output figures of 1,800 units per year of the German parent company. Also in 1969 the demand didn't rise. The statistics stopped at only 542 sold cars. As in 1970 only 363 vehicles found buyers, production was ceased for the moment. In 1972 due to a last year's order from the Philippines of 228 cars the production was started again. But after that the production was ceased conclusively.

Totaled up 1,956 Country Buggies left the production facilities.

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