

Above: Junior Sprint GT Alfas can be recognized by their single headlamps and matt black grilles. The 1750 Veloce version has a paired headlamp system. Below: Big dials, clearly marked and turned to bring their business ends uppermost, are features of the GT Junior. Carpets are normally fitted on the floor. Inset: Twin cams and double-choke Weber carburettors look impressive under the bonnet



Autotest

Alfa Romeo

GT 1300

Junior (1,290 c.c.)

2233

AT-A-GLANCE: Economy coupé in expensive range now with improved suspension. Much more refined and quieter. Excellent handling and brakes. Good open-road performance from small engine, lacking bottom-end punch only.

MANUFACTURER

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UK CONCESSIONAIRES

Alfa Romeo (GB) Ltd., Edgware Road, London, N.W.2.

PRICES

Basic	£1,338	0s	0d
Purchase Tax	£411	10s	6d
Seat belts (approx)	£9	0s	0d
Total (in GB)	£1,758	10s	6d

PRICE AS TESTED £1,758 10s 6d

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Mean maximum speed	102 mph
Standing start ¼-mile	19.1 sec
0-60 mph	13.2 sec
30-70 mph through gears	14.5 sec
Typical fuel consumption	27 mpg
Miles per tankful	280

Introduced in September 1966, the 1300 GT Junior is the least expensive of the Alfa Romeo coupés. Externally, there is little to distinguish it from the 1750 GT Veloce, the main difference being two headlamps instead of the more expensive model's four. Less luxurious interior trimming is used and the central console is dispensed with.

M ECHANICALLY, apart from engine size, the two models are also very similar. Bore and stroke of the GT Junior are the same as were used in the Giulietta (74 by 75mm respectively, giving a capacity of 1,290 c.c.), whereas the dimensions of the 1750 are 80 by 88.5 mm, giving 1,779 c.c. The smaller engine requires lower gearing (4.55 to 1 axle ratio, that of the larger-engined car being 4.10 to 1).

The front brakes are slightly smaller than those of the 1750. Earlier models had no servo, but the standard specification now includes one. Introduced at the same time as the brake servo were hydraulic clutch operation, revised suspension with an anti-roll bar at the rear as well as the front, 165-14in. wheels and tyres (formerly 155-15in.) and a number of other detail refinements.

There is, however, a great deal of difference in the price. The GT Junior sells for £1,749,

whereas the price of the 1750 GT Veloce is £2,300. As the difference of £551 would buy a Fiat 600D (£543), it makes good sense to consider very carefully before choosing.

Performance

The Giulia coupé range started life with an engine capacity of 1,570 c.c. When we tested the 1750 GT Veloce last autumn, we found that the additional 209 c.c. made surprisingly little difference to the car's performance. In fact, the lower geared 1600 Sprint GT Veloce tested two years earlier had a slight edge so far as performance was concerned but was less economical.

Alfa Romeo claim a maximum of 103 bhp (gross) at 6,000 rpm for the GT Junior. This we estimate to be around 90 bhp net, compared with the 1600 Sprint GT Veloce's 109 bhp and the 1750 GT Veloce's 122 bhp.

The GT Junior returned a mean maximum speed of 102 mph, compared with 113 and 116 mph for the 1600 and 1750 equivalents. Its best one-way was 104 mph, at which the speedometer reads fractionally over 110 mph.

New to Alfa Romeo is a red sector on the tachometer which on the GT Junior starts at 6,000 rpm. We chose to exceed this for performance measurements, changing gear at an indicated 6,600 rpm—a true 6,200 rpm. From rest to 50 mph took only 9.3 sec, which for a solidly built, fully equipped car of this size is very creditable. However, the extra muscle of the 1600 and 1750 GTV models tells, their respective times being 7.8 and 7.9 sec. From rest to 60 mph—a useful yardstick—takes the GT Junior 13.2 sec. Equivalent times for the 1600 and 1750 GTV are 11.1 and 11.2 sec.

Present-day traffic conditions often require a car which has good instant-acceleration qualities—that Jekyll and Hyde personality which allows it to trickle along gently, but have brisk acceleration "on-tap" without having to re-course to a great deal of gear-changing. This is where the GT Junior falls short of its larger-engined stable-mates, as the in-the-gears acceleration times illustrate. From 50 to 70 mph in top (fifth) gear takes 18.1 sec, compared with the 13.0 and 12.9 sec taken by the 1600 and 1750. Using fourth gear, it takes 14.8 sec—still slower than the larger-engined models in fifth. One is only aware of these deficiencies in congested traffic, or when one is feeling lazy or tired. On the open road, the GT Junior is a real delight. The engine is incredibly smooth and the handling absolutely superb. Ideally spaced gearbox ratios and overall gearing which allows near flat-out cruising add to one's enjoyment. It really does feel every bit the thoroughbred it is.

As frequently happens, the use of a smaller engine does not result in significant gains in economy. The overall figure of 24.4 mpg, although good in relation to the car's performance and the way we drove it, is little better than the 23.9 mpg of the 1750 GT Veloce. The 1600 was rather thirstier, returning 21.9 mpg. Even the steady-speed figures tell the same story, generally falling somewhere between those of the 1600 and the more economical 1750. Oil consumption worked out at 500 miles per pint—much the same as on the larger-engined models.

Engine and Transmission

Unlike many previous Alfas, the GT Junior prefers the use of full choke, in conjunction with a whiff of throttle, for cold starting. Using the hand throttle, it immediately settles down to a smooth and quiet fast-idle. It pays to observe the handbook's recommendation to run the engine at 1,500 rpm for a short spell before driving off, as otherwise the gearbox is unpleasantly stiff. Apart from the initial start, very little choke is required and the engine is soon completely flexible. Carburation generally, in fact, seems unusually clean.

Although the gearbox soon warms up, the change never quite loses a slight trace of stickiness. It is very good, but not quite amongst the best. The gears are very quiet, but one can sometimes detect a trace of axle whine—presumably one of the penalties of really adequate location. Reverse, opposite fifth on the right of the gate, now has a spring loaded guard—a much more convenient arrangement than the previous one, which necessitated telescoping the knob.

Hydraulic operation of the clutch has greatly improved its feel, but effort and travel (48lb and 5.7in.) both leave scope for improvement. The clutch always behaves well and is capable of coping with a re-start on a 1-in-3 gradient without difficulty.

Ride and Handling

Although all the Giulia variants have been very pleasant to handle, the ultimate cornering power of earlier examples was not in any way exceptional. Such traits as body roll, steering fight, tyre squeal and wheelspin were also quite evident but, oddly enough, detracted little from the pleasure of driving them—all Alfas are very much driver's cars. The latest suspension changes (shared, incidentally by the Spider and other coupé models, as well as the Giulia Super) have eliminated these idiosyncrasies without in any way detracting from the typical Alfa character; Alfa enthusiasts will enjoy it even more. The GT Junior "hangs-on" remarkably well on slippery corners. The larger section tyres are loath to squeal—possibly the result of a higher synthetic rubber content than hitherto. The steering retains its precision and feel but has lost all traces of fight. It is still a shade on the heavy side at low speeds but represents an almost ideal compromise.

The ride, on the other hand, seems firmer than in the past, but is by no means uncomfortable. One is mainly aware of the suspension's comparative stiffness when driving slowly over "nobbly" surfaces. As the speed rises, the firmness disappears and a very good, level ride results.

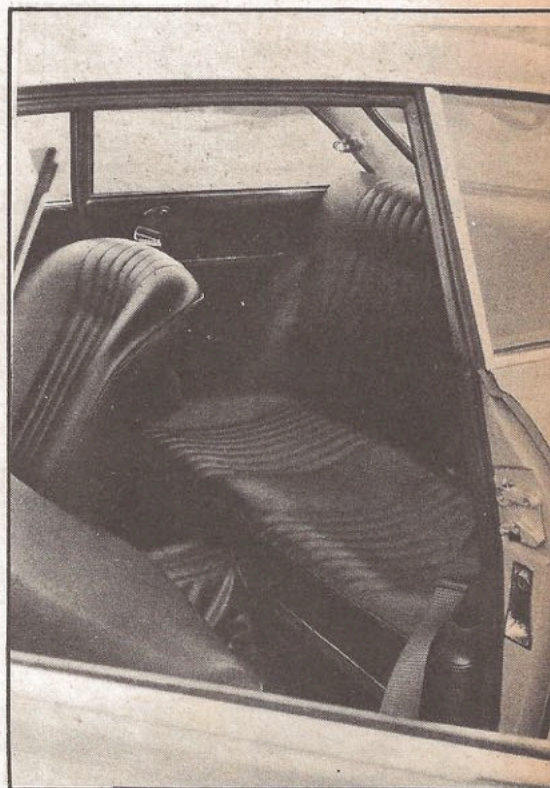
Brakes

The brakes always feel most reassuring and the pedal effort is quite low (0.8g requires only 60lb). In wet conditions, a best of 0.97g was obtained, using an effort of 80lb—a highly creditable performance.

Fade resistance is most impressive, the pedal effort remaining at 30lb throughout the test. This performance was borne out by their behaviour during hard driving, both on the road and on closed circuits. Only a thin film of pad



Above: Lamps are made by Carello and the front-end design is simple and effective

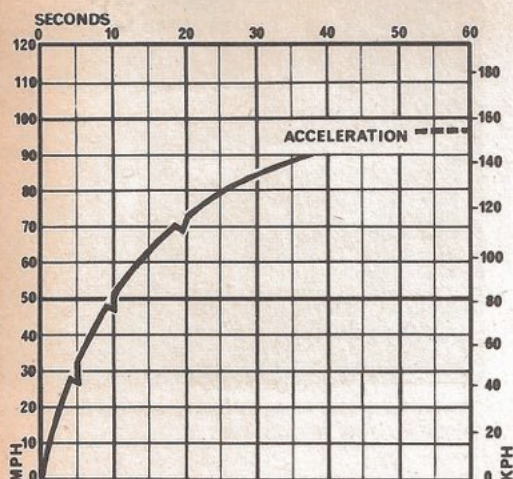


Above: The back seat is strictly for occasional use, or for kids. There is an acute shortage of legroom in the rear if those in the front take their full share of space

Below: Smaller wheels and fatter Cinturato tyres are features of the latest GT Junior



PERFORMANCE



MAXIMUM SPEEDS

Gear	mph	kph	rpm
Top (mean)	102	164	5,600
(best)	104	168	5,700
4th	97	156	6,200
3rd	71	114	6,200
2nd	49	79	6,200
1st	29	47	6,200

Standing 1/4-mile 19.1 sec 72 mph
Standing kilometre 35.7 sec 90 mph

MOTORWAY CRUISING

Indicated speed at 70 mph	74 mph
Engine (rpm at 70 mph)	4,000 rpm
(mean piston speed)	1,970 ft/min
Fuel (mpg at 70 mph)	27.4 mpg
Passing (50-70 mph)	9.5 sec
Noise (per cent silent at 70 mph)	70 per cent

TIME IN SECONDS 4.3 6.6 9.3 13.2 18.8 25.3 36.3

TRUE SPEED MPH	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
INDICATED SPEED	31	42	53	63	74	85	95	106

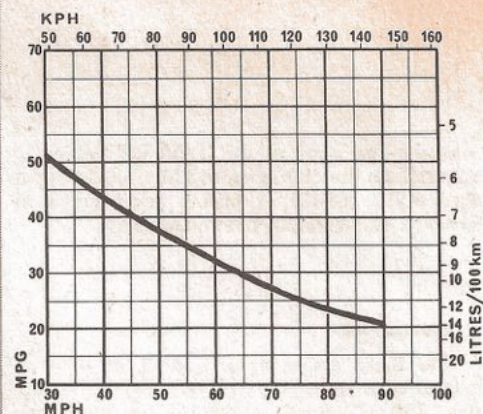
Test distance 1,483 miles.

Mileage recorder 1.7 per cent over-reading.

SPEED RANGE, GEAR RATIOS AND TIME IN SECONDS

mph	Top (3.91)	4th (4.55)	3rd (6.37)	2nd (9.05)	1st (15.0)
10-30	—	—	—	5.3	—
20-40	15.6	11.9	6.9	4.4	—
30-50	14.4	10.7	7.4	—	—
40-60	15.1	12.2	8.0	—	—
50-70	18.1	14.8	9.5	—	—
60-80	25.6	16.9	—	—	—
70-90	—	20.7	—	—	—

CONSUMPTION



FUEL

(At constant speeds—mpg)

30 mph	52.0
40 mph	44.0
50 mph	37.7
60 mph	32.2
70 mph	27.4
80 mph	23.6
90 mph	20.8

Typical mpg . . . 27.0 (10.5 litres/100km)

Calculated (DIN) mpg 24.9 (11.4 litres/100km)

Overall mpg . . . 24.4 (11.6 litres/100km)

Grade of fuel

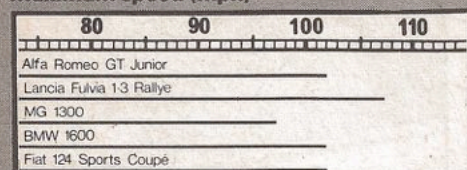
Super premium, 5-star (min 100RM)

OIL

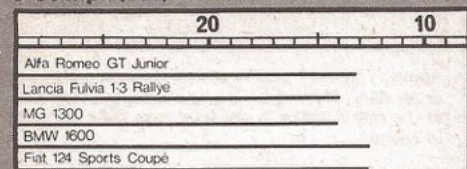
Miles per pint (SAE 20W/40) 500

HOW THE CAR COMPARES

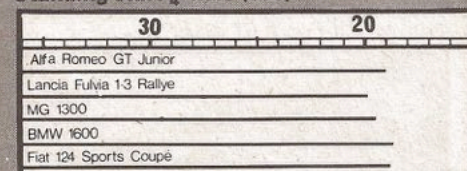
Maximum speed (mph)



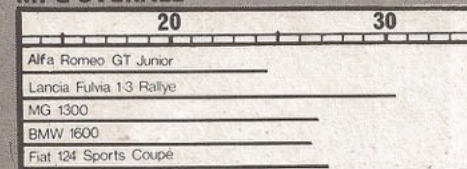
0-60 mph (sec)



Standing start 1/4-mile (sec)



MPG OVERALL



PRICES:

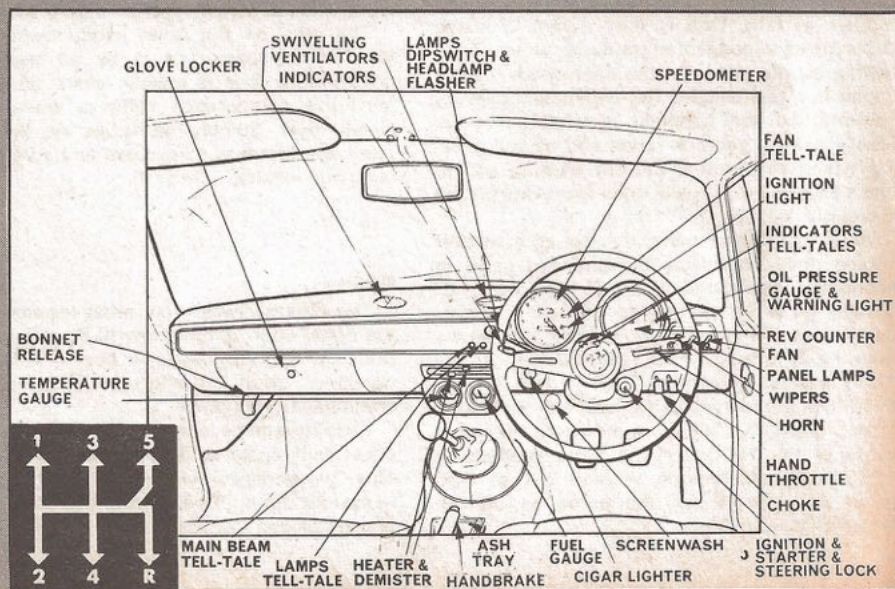
Alfa GT Junior	£1,749
Lancia 1.3 Rallye	£1,698
MG 1300	£931
BMW 1600	£1,399
Fiat 124 Sports	£1,438

TEST CONDITIONS Weather: Dry and cloudy. Wind: 5-15 mph. Temperature: 1 deg. C (34 deg. F). Barometer 29.80 in. Hg. Humidity: 90 per cent. Surfaces: Dry concrete and asphalt (wet for brake test).

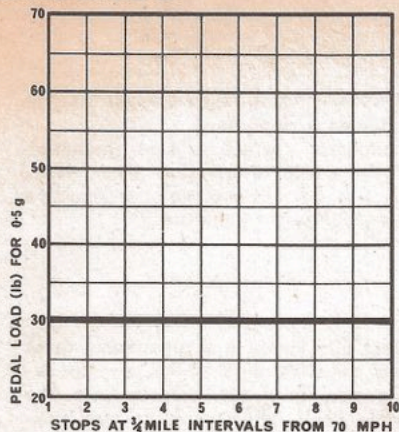
WEIGHT Kerb weight 19.9 cwt (2,224lb-1,015kg) (with oil, water and half full fuel tank). Distribution, per cent F. 56.0; R. 44.0. Laden as tested: 23.1 cwt (2,584lb-1,172kg).

TURNING CIRCLES Between kerbs L. 36ft 7in.; R. 34ft 4in. Between walls L. 37ft 11in.; R. 35ft 8in. steering wheel turns, lock to lock 3.6.

Figures taken at 4,000 miles by our own staff at the Motor Industry Research Association proving ground at Nuneaton.



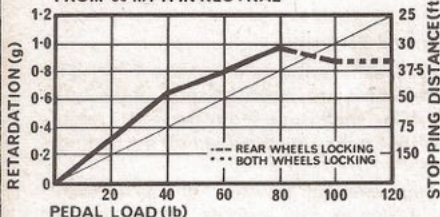
BRAKES



RESPONSE (from 30 mph in neutral)

Load	g	Distance
20lb	0.30	100ft
40lb	0.67	45ft
60lb	0.80	38ft
80lb	0.97	31ft
Handbrake	0.30	100ft
Max. Gradient	1 in 3	

FROM 30 MPH IN NEUTRAL



CLUTCH

Pedal 48lb and 5.7in.

SPECIFICATION

FRONT ENGINE, REAR WHEEL DRIVE

ENGINE

Cylinders	4 in line
Main bearings	5
Cooling system	Water; pump, fan and thermostat
Bore	74mm (2.91 in.)
Stroke	75mm (2.95 in.)
Displacement	1290 c.c. (78.6 cu. in.)
Valve gear	Twin overhead camshafts
Compression ratio	9.0-to-1 Min. octane rating: 100RM
Carburetors	Two Weber twin-choke
Fuel pump	Fispa mechanical
Oil filter	Fram full flow
Max. power	103 bhp (gross) at 6,000 rpm
Max. torque	101 lb. ft. (gross) at 3,200 rpm

TRANSMISSION

Clutch	Fichtel and Sachs single plate 8in. dia.
Gearbox	5-speed all synchromesh
Gear ratios	Top 0.86
	Fourth 1.0
	Third 1.36
	Second 1.99
	First 3.30
	Reverse 3.01
Final drive	Hypoid bevel 4.55-to-1

CHASSIS and BODY

Construction	Integral with steel body
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SUSPENSION

Front	Independent, coil springs, wishbones, anti-roll bar, telescopic dampers
Rear	Live axle, trailing arms, A-bracket, coil springs, telescopic dampers

STEERING

Type	Cam and peg
Wheel dia.	15.0 in.

BRAKES

Make and type	ATE discs front and rear
Servo	Vacuum
Dimensions	F. and R. 10.5 in. dia.
Swept area	F. 184.5 sq. in.; R. 166.9 sq. in. Total 352 sq. in. (305 sq. in./ton laden)

WHEELS

Type	Pressed steel disc, 4-stud fixing, 5.5 in. wide rim
Tyres—make	Pirelli
—type	Cinturato radial ply tubed
—size	165-14 in.

EQUIPMENT

Battery	12 Volt, 50 Ah
Generator or Alternator	Bosch 27.5-amp a.c.
Headlamps	Sealed beam 80/90-watt (total)
Reversing lamp	Standard
Electric fuses (number)	8
Screen wipers	Two-speed, self-parking
Screen washer	Standard, foot pedal
Interior heater	Standard, water-valve
Heated backlight	Not available
Safety belts	Extra
Interior trim	Elasticated leatherette seats, vinyl head-lining
Floor covering	Carpet
Jack	Screw pillar
Jacking points	2 each side, under sills
Windscreens	Zone-toughened
Underbody protection	Bitumastic on all surfaces exposed to road

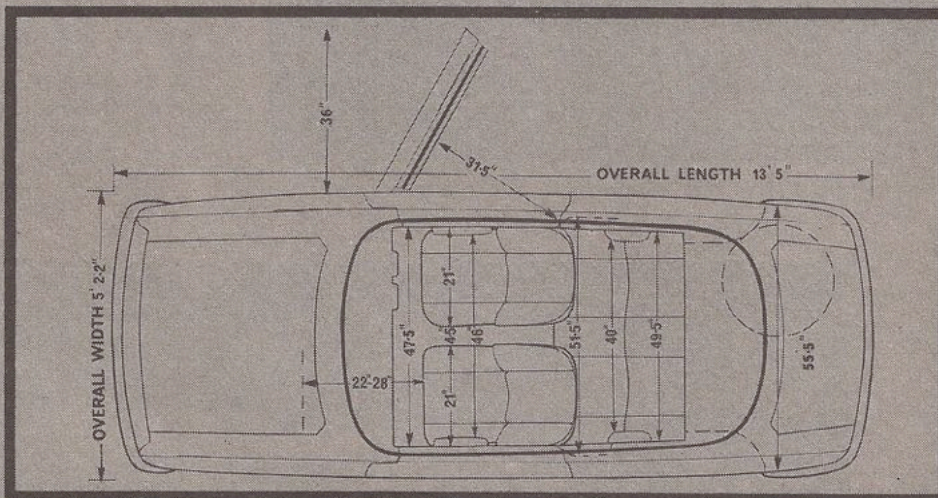
MAINTENANCE

Fuel tank	10.1 Imp. gallons (low level warning light) (46 litres)
Cooling system	13.3 pints (including heater)
Engine sump	11.5 pints (5.2 litres) SAE 20W/40. Change oil every 3,750 miles. Change filter element every 3,750 miles.
Gearbox and overdrive	3.2 pints SAE 90. Change oil every 11,250 miles.
Final drive	2.5 pints SAE 90EP Change oil every 11,250 miles.
Grease	3 points every 3,750 miles
Tyre pressures	F. 24; R. 26 psi (all conditions)
Max. payload	770 lb. (350 kg)

PERFORMANCE DATA

5th gear mph per 1,000 rpm	18.2
Mean piston speed at max. power	2,953 ft/min
Bhp per ton laden (gross)	89

STANDARD GARAGE 16ft x 8ft 6in.



SCALE 0.3in. to 1ft
Cushions uncompressed

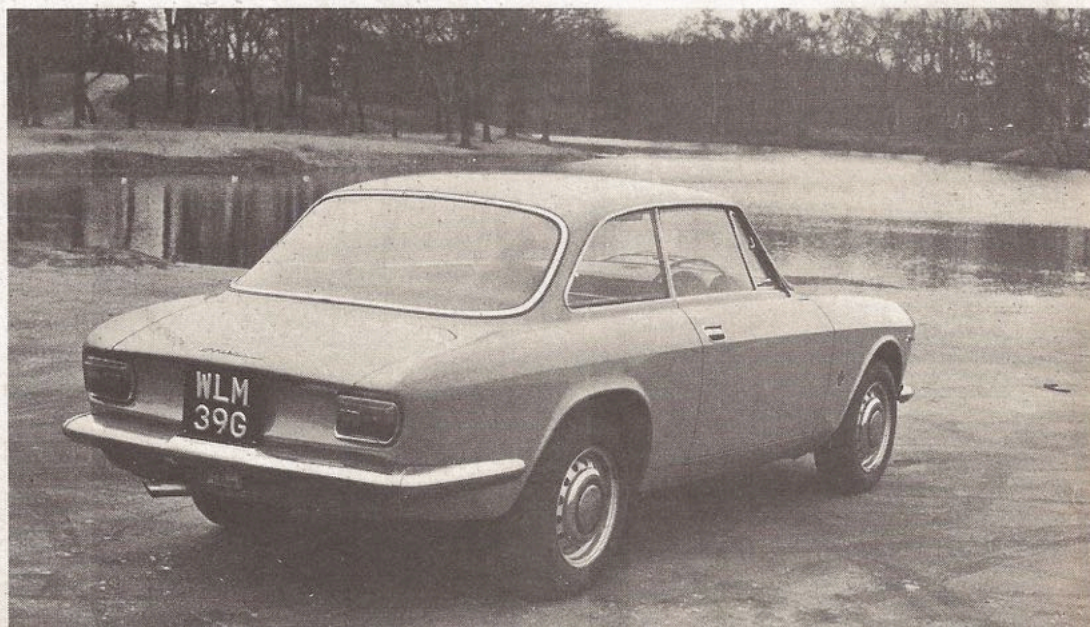
ALFA JUNIOR SPRINT GT...



Above: This wide-angle shot distorts the interior but shows the controls and finish well. Horn push bars are set within the wheel spokes

Right: Bertone's styling of the Alfa GT body is perfect from any angle. Rear quarter windows are hinged

Below: Although the boot opening is small, there is a deep compartment inside lined with rubber mats



dust on the front rims betrayed the fact that the brakes had been working hard.

The handbrake, which utilizes miniature drums in the naves of the rear discs, easily holds on a 1 in 3 and is capable of producing a 0.30g retardation on a dry surface.

Noise

The latest GT Junior is a remarkably quiet and refined car with none of the raucous exhaust boom periods of the earlier models. The exhaust note itself, although crisp and business-like, is in no way obtrusive either.

Tyre roar is well insulated but there is some bump thumping, which is accentuated by the generally quiet background.

Wind noise is only average. It is a pity that Alfa Romeo haven't provided air extraction and face-level ventilation—a car of this calibre should certainly be so equipped.

Furniture and Fittings

Although less luxurious than on the 1750 GT Veloce, the seats are nicely shaped. Rake adjustment is by means of eight-position cams, but no safety catches are provided for the folding backrests.

A higher seating position is used than hitherto. Although this affords the driver a commanding view along the bonnet, it accentuates the shortcomings of the wiper pattern. Extending the blades would improve the view upwards, but this would still leave quite large unwiped areas at the lower corners and outer edges of the screen.

The general fit and finish are very good. Door closure is no longer a problem and the whole car is completely free from rattles and squeaks. In fact, the body structure feels remarkably rigid.

The GT Junior lacks only the sheer performance of the 1750. Compared with lesser cars, it offers unusually rapid, satisfying and inherently safe transport at a realistic price. □