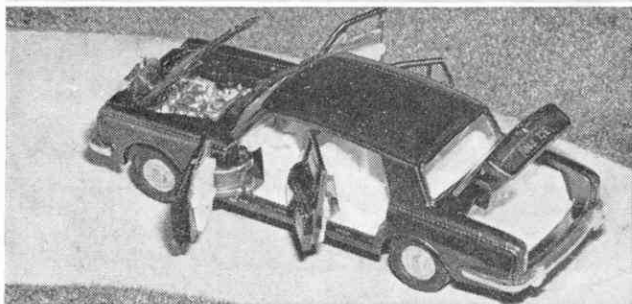


AN INTERNATIONAL TRIO

BY JOHN BREWER

Rolls-Royce, Fiat, Ford — the three latest Dinky Toys cover the whole spectrum of the motoring world. The 'Silver Shadow' looks swift and luxurious, the Ford GT aggressively fast, and the Fiat Station Wagon appears in an unusual guise as a camera car.



IN the May issue of M.M. I described a simple conversion based on the Dinky Toys' Ford Model 'T'. This month I am going to describe three brand new Dinkys, the first of which is also a Ford—but it bears no comparison with our friend the 'T'. It is, in fact, the Ford GT, one of the most startling racing machines in the 'Gran Turismo' category, and one which has built up an enviable reputation for itself in recent years. As the photograph shows, the Dinky model captures perfectly the look of the real machine—that low, wide, road-hugging look with downward-sloping nose and swept-up 'spoiler' at the rear. The windscreen is wide and very steeply raked, giving a good view of the red-upholstered interior. The engine-cover at the rear hinges upwards to reveal a very detailed integrally cast replica of the Ford's huge power-plant, a V8 based on the famous 'Galaxie' engine, with a capacity of—wait for it—seven litres! All the essential features of the engine can be clearly seen; eight carburettors (one for each pot) nestle between the twin valve-gear covers, and a four-branch exhaust manifold sprouts from each side of the engine. With the lid shut, the engine peeps provocatively through a glass panel.

The model is finished in metallic silver, with the now fashionable racing stripes and the legend 'Ford' below the door in red. Headlamp recesses are bright red, and the wheels, which have finely cast individual 'wire' spokes and dummy 'knock-off' hub-caps, are silver. As befits a racing machine, the model has 'solid' suspension—a good thing, when you consider that many of these cars will be destined to a very hard life racing on school playgrounds, and similar imaginary Daytonas and Sebrings!

As you can see in the photograph, the Ford GT is being 'filmed' by a Pathe News car. This is another new Dinky, and is, in fact, another version of the existing Fiat 2300 Station Wagon. A special roof platform is fitted, with a revolving table, upon which stands the camera and cameraman. The camera itself, moulded in plastic, revolves on its tripod and is quite a work of art in its own right. It represents a 35 mm. camera of the type used for television film work, and the details include the triple-lens turret at the front, film cassettes on top, and various knobs and buttons all around, the functions of which are best known to the cameraman! The latter gentleman is modelled in an operating stance, complete with ear-phones, and is attired in a rather striking pastel blue jacket and grey trousers. Both he and his camera stand on the turntable, and can be rotated through 360 degrees. The car itself includes opening bonnet and detailed engine, opening tailgate, 'jewelled' headlights, sprung suspension and Prestomatic steering. The whole vehicle is finished in gloss black, with 'Pathe News' along the sides in white letters, and very smart it looks.

Human nature being what it is, I have kept my favourite of this new trio until last. It is, in fact, no lesser vehicle than the Rolls Royce Silver Shadow and, in my opinion, one of the nicest Dinky passenger car

models ever made. The Silver Shadow itself is not an easy prototype to reproduce in model form—it's a rather plain, reserved looking car, with very subtle lines, and it would be all too easy, in die-cast miniature form, to reduce it to a mere 'slab'. However, Dinky Toys have not allowed this to happen to their Silver Shadow, and the model bears a quite uncanny likeness to the real thing, even reproducing, by some strange means, the stately and luxurious atmosphere of 'The Best Car in the World'. Weight has something to do with this exclusive atmosphere; the real Silver Shadow looks heavy, and is, at about two tons unladen, and its Dinky counterpart tips the scales at only a little under half a pound—quite a weight for a 4½ in. long model.

The next ingredient for the true R.R. atmosphere is the paint finish, which must, by tradition, be faultless, and the result of many coats and much laborious rubbing-down. The Dinky model is finished in a rich, slightly metallic red, with a really good high-gloss finish, which shows to advantage on the large, flat panel areas such as the bonnet, boot and roof, and contrasts beautifully with the white interior and reserved use of exterior 'chrome'.

All four doors open, to reveal the luxurious-looking interior which includes trim-panels on all doors, individual front seats, steering wheel, and dashboard with opening glove compartment! The door windows are modelled in the 'half-open' position, and rear-view mirror and windscreen wiper details are moulded on the windscreen. The boot door opens to reveal a 'carpeted' interior and the bonnet lid opens forwards disclosing a very full engine compartment. The big V8 engine that, via an automatic gearbox, provides silent power for the real Silver Shadow, shares the under-bonnet space with a great deal of ancillary equipment necessary for providing majestic motoring, including air-conditioning plant and the ingenious hydraulic apparatus which operates the Rolls Royce self-levelling suspension—no matter how heavily the vehicle is loaded, it does not sink low on its springs. This crowded under-bonnet effect is well represented on the Dinky model by a highly-detailed casting, on which several engine features such as carburettors, air-cleaner hose, rocker-covers, etc., are all clearly discernible.

At the front of the car stands the traditional R.R. radiator which, although it is now rather wider than it is high, and has, therefore, lost some of its former lofty grandeur, still gives the car a most impressive 'face', and is flanked by twin headlights. On top of the radiator stands the famous 'Spirit of Ecstasy' motif. The atmosphere of the model is completed by the disc type wheels, with 'R.R.' inscribed hub-caps (yes, you can actually read it!) and rather soft sprung suspension.

As you have probably gathered, I have a soft spot for R.R.'s (though not the hard cash necessary to indulge it!) but I can afford the Dinky version on which I can gaze with admiration. After all, anyone can dream! I must go now—the Rolls is waiting.