

STEALTH CARS

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STEALTH HAZARD

PAGE 1 OF 3

By Colin Goodwin



B6 geared for 170mph, but McLaren F1-matching 200mph should be easily possible; the faster you go the better it feels - wing and venturis really work.

We're heads in turning Brecon today. More worryingly, we're averting eyes. The driver of the Peugeot 309 in front of us is looking in his rear view mirror at our car when he should be looking at the approaching roundabout and noticing that he's veering into the path of an oncoming Audi. Atrocious driving, but then if you saw the Stealth B6 in your rear view mirror I reckon you'd be in trouble too.

Le Mans is in France, not South Wales, so what's a Group C car doing on Welsh roads? Or on the road at all for that matter?

It's quite a complex tale, but I'd rather tell you why this is the most exciting machine I've driven in years. Think of the Lotus 340R: a minimalist road-legal sports car meant for the track. The Stealth B6 is from the same stock.

Like the little Lotus, the B6 is very basic with no comforts and barely enough space for its two occupants. The driver's door hinges forward, like any other Group C racer. To get in you slide your left leg in over the seat, sit on the sill, feed your other leg in and then slide down into the seat. To your right is a stubby gearshift that pivots on a rose joint and is connected to a Hewland five-speed racing transaxle at the back of the car. In front of you is an Astratech instrument binnacle that allows you to scroll through various functions, including a lap timer and counter.

To the left of the digital display there's an analogue tachometer that starts counting at 3000rpm. There are a few switches that operate things like lights, wipers and washers and a toggle switch which works the indicators just like on a Caterham.

To your right, above the sill, there's an ignition key. Twist it to the right and prepare yourself for a ride that will alter your perception of power, noise and the business of going fast. Behind your head,

sandwiched between the bulkhead and Hewland gearbox, sits 6.3 litres of Chevrolet small-block V8. That's 6.3 litres and 511bhp at 6500rpm. Better still, 480lb ft of torque at 5000rpm.

A couple of prods on the throttle pedal to squirt a jet of fuel from the Holley four-barrel carburettor down the intake manifold, and then twist that ignition key fully. Fury erupts behind you. The Chevy engine is mounted directly to the car's tubular spaceframe so you can feel the engine's torque reaction as you blip the throttle. The flywheel must be quite light because the revs rise and fall quickly. The engine exhales through a pair of large silencers, so outside it's quieter than a TVR.



Small-block V8 makes 511bhp; B6 is quieter outside than in; racing rack means quick and accurate steering; Sport badge states the obvious

[Roadtest Index](#) | [Front Cover](#) | [Page2](#) | [Page3](#)

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