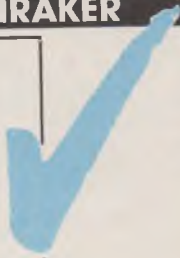


# SELECTION

## VW DEVON MOONRAKER

Reg. No: HNM 199Y  
 First Registered: April 1983  
 Mileage: 59,913  
 Asking Price: £7,495

For sale at:  
 Marina Motorhomes,  
 Watling Street, Towcester,  
 Northants, NN12 7HN



Summer's here (?) and the time is right for buying a holiday on wheels, although the sales of motorhomes are not quite as seasonal as perhaps you might expect.

Buying a caravanette is not a particularly easy task, for most car dealers don't (or won't) stock them. So, to find a specialist, and one who has a definite leaning towards Volkswagen, is an interesting item in itself.

Marina Motorhomes of Towcester is run by Alister Whitmore, who has spent some 16 years in the business (many of them actually building motor caravans) and enthuses about the usual VW virtues of long life, build quality etc.

His personal transport over the past few years has included a succession of high-mileage Golfs (petrol and diesel) and Audis, none of which have given any trouble. Small wonder, then, that some 25 per cent of the sea of mobile homes on the forecourt bear the famous roundel on their nose!

The ages vary from a good condition 1979 V-reg to a rather nice F-reg Kameo model. How-

ever, we sampled a 1983 Devon Moonraker as being somewhat more affordable to most folk.

Alister reckons that most motorhomes will clock up only around 5,000 miles a year, but VWs, with their inherent driver-friendliness and build quality, usually have double that amount of mileage. He affirms what enthusiasts already know: 100,000-miles-plus is no problem for a 'van that's looked after. As such, the 69,000 on the clock makes this model quite a low mileage example.

The colour is not the most striking we've seen, but the bodywork was in very good condition. Signs of rust were limited to a few patches on the surface around the tailgate lock, the sliding door runners and the oil filler lid. A brief inspection, prodding judiciously in the usual places, revealed no nasty surprises. The engine could be seen to be weeping oil slightly, but it didn't appear to be serious and a totally dry air-cooled engine is a rarity indeed.

Inside, the van was up to the usual Devon standards, featuring a cooker (two-burner plus grill),



### Used VW Test by Richard Watts

Electrolux fridge, sink with electric pump, and fold-away table. As can be seen, the Moonraker featured an elevating roof offering some extra, if limited, sleeping accommodation.

The interior trim, curtains and carpets were all in good condition, even allowing for seven years of excursions, and the signs of neglect so often found (holes in carpets, cigarette burns in cushion covers etc) were not present. Another place to check is the aluminium windows to the rear of the driver, which often become pitted and stained. In this case, they were almost as new.

Owner modifications were limited to a pair of spurious brand foglamps under the front bumper and a couple of Radio-mobile door speakers for the rather basic, standard-fit, Blaupunkt Hamburg radio/cassette deck.

The 1970cc air-cooled engine started first time on the key and idled quite happily and evenly, hot or cold. As you would expect from a 60,000-mile, cared-for VW, it drove as if it was just run-in. The gears selected easily and accurately and, never sparking, the performance was exactly as it should have been for such a vehicle.

The tyres were a curious mix, with the two fronts being new

Above: *The Devon sits at ease amongst younger, more expensive brothers. Bodywork looks good and is good. Elevating roof adds to appeal, sleeping accommodation and price. Foglamps are only owner exterior mods.*

Left: *Masses of storage space, with a large cupboard in front of the water bottle. Mattress over the engine rests on the 'odds and ends' box which holds a jack and two spare fan belts.*

Right: *Great Type 2 selling point is car-like driving position. Dash layout includes Blaupunkt Hamburg radio/cassette deck.*





*The Moonraker interior equipment and trim has worn surprisingly well and features fridge, cooker and sink.*

Vanguard Vikings and the rear offside being a well used Michelin X. The nearside right rear had no name at all and looked as if it had been severely scuffed. A point for negotiation here...

That apart, the Devon appeared to have been used but not abused, an impression borne out by the full service history. The

warranty for this particular vehicle was three months parts only, although the length and terms of available warranties vary with the specific vehicle, later models getting more cover.

Alister would be happy to take a car in part exchange and, on occasion, has traded the other way where a customer wanted to sell a 'van and revert to something smaller.

At around the time this 'van was built, Devon were changing to water-cooled models as the basis for their conversions. This is, therefore, one of the 'last of the many'.

The asking price may seem a lot, especially when compared with many cars, but bear in mind the high equipment specification and the low mileage (even by car standards) and it starts to make more sense. It couldn't have been far off the mark for, as we were leaving, Alister received a confirmatory phone call from a customer wanting to buy it...!

*Price of this model when new: £9,325.*



*Unprotected 'Tobo' towball needs grease and cover. Bracket for plugs shows signs of much use over the years: twin plugs suggest a small caravan.*



*A few rust bubbles around the tailgate lock, no real cause for concern.*



*The metal edges around the sliding door also display a little surface rust.*



*A pair of Radio-mobile door speakers are owner add-ons.*

