

Firefly is fun in frugal package

Walking out to the driveway in the morning, one almost expects to see Pooh Bear sitting behind the wheel of Pontiac's jaunty little Firefly LE convertible - that's right, convertible.

The droptop is one of the two Firefly models which is not produced in Ingersoll at the CAMI plant, being a limited run vehicle made for Pontiac by Suzuki in Japan. Suggested retail is \$13,720.

The car is standard Firefly-Sprint throughout. It mates Suzuki's fuel-sipping 1.0-litre, three-cylinder driving the front wheels to a three-speed automatic. In this configuration it returns 6.3-litres of gas per 100 km. The engine is also robust for its size. I know several people with Sprint-Fireflies who hammer the car like we all used to hammer our VWs and the car never complains or fails.

I filled the tank when it got hit half full. All I could cram down the filler neck was \$8.53. When was the last time that happened to you?

And talk about cute!

Road Worthy

By JIM ROBINSON

The test car came in a soft yellow. The top has one central locking mechanism. You swivel the two plastic top covers at the side forward and then just drop the top by one hand to a storage area behind the seats. Snap in one more central cover piece and you have a very tidy package which still leaves a trunk big enough to take a set of golf clubs. There's no back seat, just a space behind the seats.

You've got to see for yourself just how big this micro car is on the inside specially with the top down. Instead of rumbling along shoulder to shoulder, you have wide seats which take big people like me with room to spare.

This car is simply a blast to drive. You put down the top and just motor down the street. People smile and 15-year-old kids yell, "cool car."

A toy, perhaps, but what a

fun toy!
The engine puts out about 70 hp and it's enough to get you well past the legal speed limit, even with the top down. Acceleration is leisurely particularly off the line. But, heck, if you want to go fast, you can buy a turbo Firefly. This is the ultimate in a four-wheeled scooter-commuter.

Like all Suzuki-based cars controls for the lights and wipers are placed around the rim of the instrument pod. You'll find a speedo dead centre plus gas and heat gauge. The rest is left to idiot lights and your senses of smell and hearing. Heater controls are simple to use and that little engine pumps out lots of heat so you can drive top down in October and still not get a chill.

There is one problem this time of year and that's the plastic rear window, it stays mist-covered for a long time. Luckily the car comes with two rear outside mirrors which provide an adequate rearward view until the build up of heat in the cabin



Cute as a teddy bear, the Pontiac Firefly convertible is available in limited numbers across Canada.

demists the window.

Parking is laughably simple. This car has outward dimensions so tiny, you swear you could roll it all up in a cardboard box. I've written about cars in which I couldn't see all four corners. In the Firefly convertible, you can almost touch all four corners from the driver's seat.

The one problem with the new Firefly convertible is getting one. Only 3,000 are coming to Canada this year and, if they haven't all been sold by now, they certainly will be by Christmas.

If you like your fun in a frugal package, Pontiac has got it in the form of the Firefly Convertible.

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