FUGITIVE

The well reinforced open engine bay can accommodate a wide range of power unit options. Fully laden weight is approximately 540 kilos.

UVA, the company who manufacturers the sleek Montage sports car, have now introduced the Fugitive II — a visually intriguing open sports car in two forms, a single seat off road racer and a lighthearted two seater roadster version.

The original Fugitive was primarily designed for competitive use in off-road racing but as more and more Fugitive owners used their cars for both off and on highway use, UVA undertook a development programme to construct a full sporting road car. The off-road version and the sports two seater version share the same body panels and chassis but differ mainly in their suspension equipment.

The suspension components from the VW beetle have been utilised to make the Fugitive remarkably quick and easy to construct. The 1" and 1½" diameter tube space frame has proved highly reliable, strong and competitive in the racing of sand rail buggies and having already proved the remarkable off-road handling of the Fugitive racer, the sports roadster version started with quite an advantage, benefitting greatly from the knowledge gained over the past few years. UVA has also used their knowledge on chassis and suspension gained in developing the Montage to produce a roadster that handles exceptionally well in standard form and is guaranteed to produce envious glances from those you pass by. (Incidentally, the Fugitive's body style is said to be aerodynamically stable at 100 mph — even if a trifle windy!) A basic 1600cc Fugitive performs with the greatest of ease but for those of you who aspire to even greater performances, almost any engine size up to a Rover V8 can be accommodated together with specialist components and accessories from UVA's unrivalled stock.

The steel space frame comprises 5 pieces in GRP, while the 4 wings are designed to be trimmed according to whether the Fugitive will be used for on or off road use.

The Fugitive is not only for racing and the open air days of summer, for a full length windscreen and weather equipment are available as an extra making the Fugitive a fun car for all the year round driving. The cost of building the car is £1500 although, as mentioned, if you wish for a higher performance from your car, more of your hard-earned cash can be spent on additional components.

Incidentally, Dave Fisher of Kingfisher Kustoms, who manufacture the Kommando which is similar in style to the Fugitive, has got together with Alan Arnold of UVA and they are organising races under the title SCORR watch out for further details.

Suspension components and seating capacity are the primary differences between the two Fugitive derivatives.

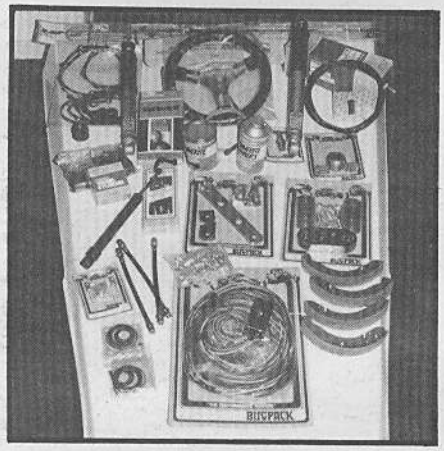
FAST, FRUGAL FUGITIVE:

PART ONE

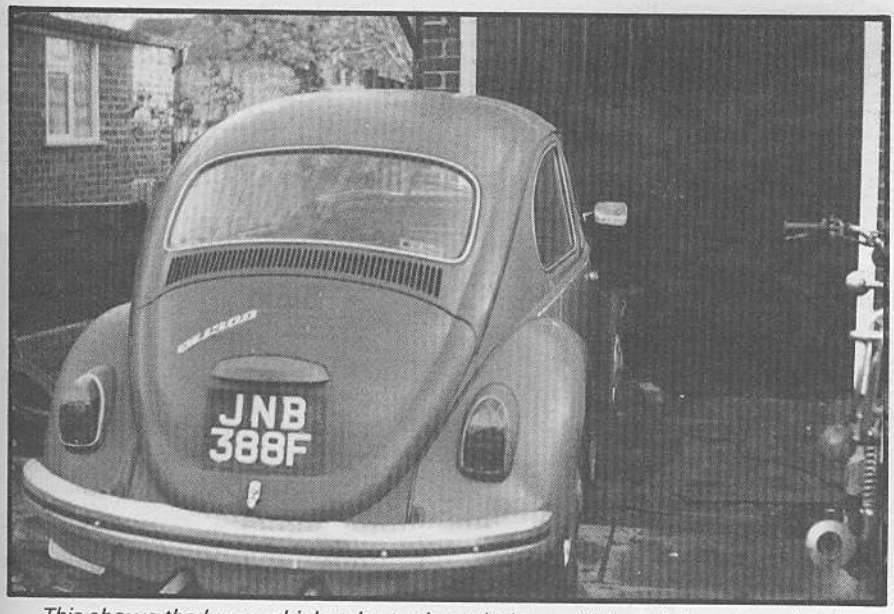
UVA's Fugitive 2 on/off road racer is enjoying a boom in popularity right now. The Californian sand rail has become widely accepted as an outrageous yet cheap form of motoring individuality. Starting this month *KIT CAR* magazine charts the progress of the build up of a demo car by UVA distributors Limited Edition Sportscars of Warrington.

The idea of this demo car is *not* to build an 'over the top' racer but to construct a perfectly useable vehicle with off road capability that will use as many base vehicle parts as possible. Bugpack parts will be used during the build but expensive items such as hydraulic pedal assemblies will not. At the end of the build up we will give you a complete breakdown of all the parts and costs incurred. At the same time we will also give you a full on/off roadtest of the vehicle.

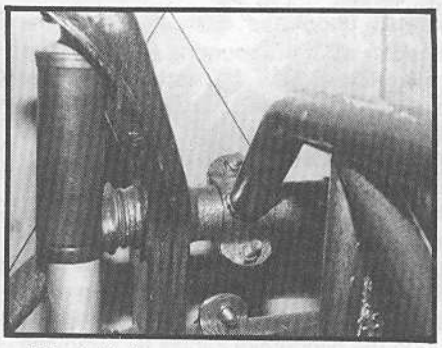
In the meantime all those with £248 plus VAT should take one pace forward and purchase the most basic form of the kit. This is the chassis in an unassembled form. This comes as two side frames and a lot of tubes which provide the rest of the framework. These can either be electrically or gas welded. Dave Heap at Limited Edition tacks them into place with an electric welder and then full gas welds each joint.



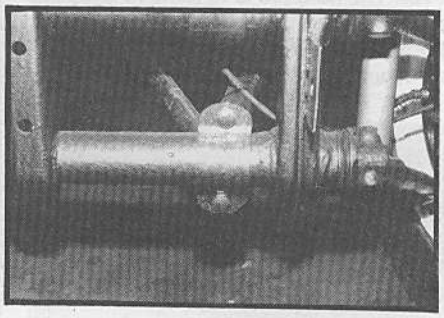
Some of the parts that will be used in the build up. These include oil seals, brake hoses, wheel bearings, brake shoes, hoses, steering column bearing, cable shortening kit, Urethane engine and gearbox mountings and a new wiring loom.



This shows the base vehicle prior to the stripdown. Although F registered, it is actually a 1974 1300cc twin port Beetle. The gearbox and engine are in fair condition although the floorpan is badly rusted. The price paid for this hulk was a mere £45.



The 4 U clamps secure the front axle to the chassis.



You can save yourself all this particular welding by purchasing the fully assembled chassis which costs an extra £122 plus VAT. However as cost is a major consideration in this build up Limited Edition have opted for the most basic form of chassis.

THE STRIPDOWN

Having driven the Beetle into the workshop the first thing to do is to disconnect the live lead from the battery to the starter motor. The battery is underneath the rear seat squab. Whilst you have the rear seat out you should undo the access plate to the gear rod linkage which is held in place by a wired grub-screw. Remove the voltage regulator from the side of the body near the battery. If you remove the cardboard panel from the bonnet area you will expose the fuel tank, this is held in place by four 8mm set screws. With these removed, you will now need to undo the jubilee clip to the filler neck. You can now lift the tank up and detatch the flexible fuel pipe. You will now have exposed the steering column clamp which you should loosen. Moving up the steering column you will find the collapsible section above which is a horseshoe clip, this should be removed. While under the bonnet you should remove all the relays, the speedo cable, the speedo itself and the master cylinder reservoir which is only secured with one self tapper.

Getting back inside the car you can now undo the two 8mm bolts which are

located under the dash and hold the steering column mounting bracket. The column can now be withdrawn after disconnecting the loom from the indicators and dipswitch. Switches can also be removed at this point. The gear-lever can now come out; this is removed by undoing the two 8mm bolts. The lever now lifts out. Round to the back of the car and disconnect the accelerator cable from the carb and the clutch cable from its operating lever by undoing the wingnut. Undo the handbrake cables by removing the two 6mm nuts from the top of the lever. The next job is to remove the pedal assembly. This is done by undoing the four 10mm bolts which are located either side of where the pedal shaft enters the tunnel. Two 8mm bolts are removed from the right hand side of the assembly which hold them to the floor. You can now remove the pedal assembly complete with cables. You can now get at the master cylinder which is held in place by two 8mm bolts on the interior of the bulkhead. Leave this in place until the torsion bars are removed.

Remove four body bolts from inside the car near the back seat. Then remove the two body bolts outside the car nearest to the rear jacking point.Place axle stands underneath the car and remove the wheels and you can now see the 10mm bolt which secures the rear body to the shock tower. These are usually heavily corroded and need copious amounts of penetrating oil before they will shift.

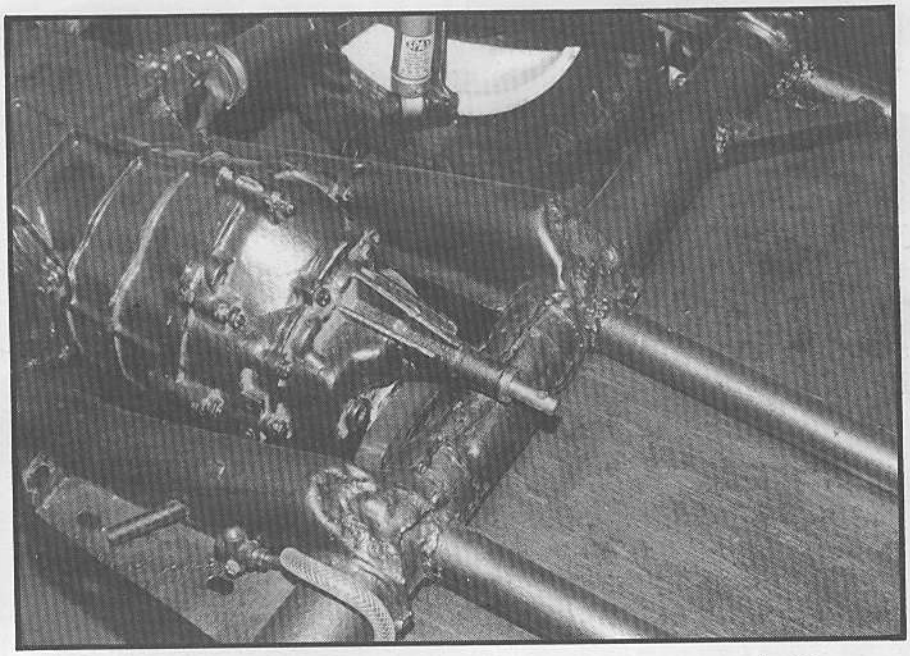
You are now ready to chisel off the complete rear suspension and engine/gearbox assembly. If you mark a straight line across the floor pan from behind the battery pan and chisel along this and up over the centre tunnel making sure that you have put a jack underneath the engine so that it does not hit the floor when your chisel cut is complete! You should now be able to remove the whole rear section of the car.

At this point you are ready to undo the bolts holding the front torsion bars on. These are gain prone to rust and copious applications of penetrating oil are needed although it doesn't matter too much if they shear off because the Fugitive does not use the same mountings.

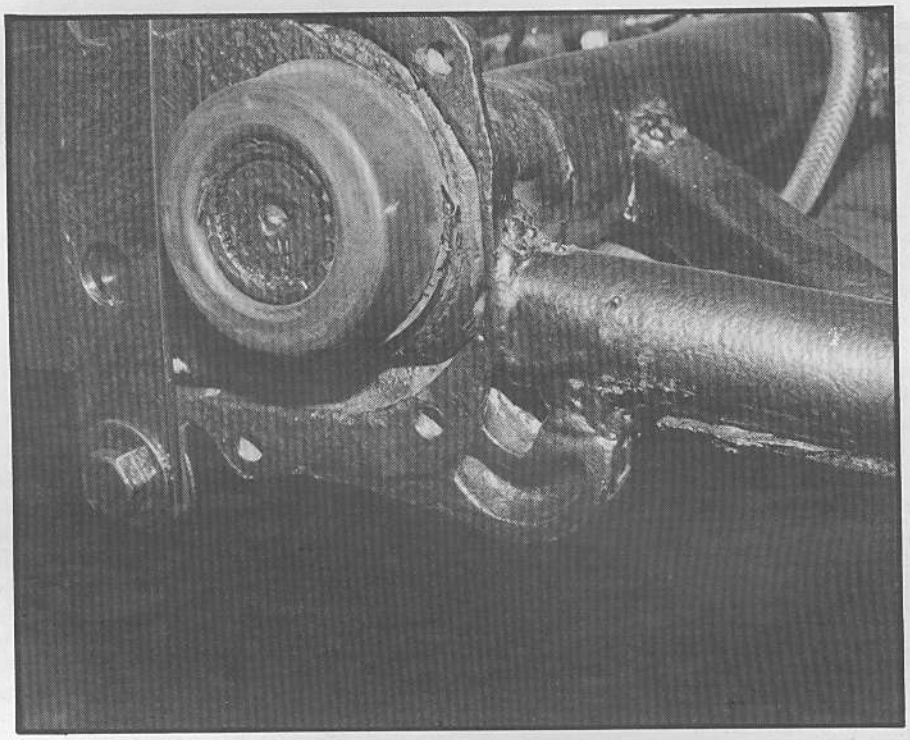
Before you can release the front suspension you will have to cut the brake flexibles and make sure that the main brake line has been disconnected at the master cylinder. The gear box remote change rod can be withdrawn through the access hole at the front of the floorpan. A tricky by rewarding job is chiselling out the spot welds which hold the clutch and accelerator conduits inside the centre tunnel. You will need these to guide the cables in your Fugitive as there is no centre tunnel, either that or you could fabricate a tunnel to suit.

You should now have a pile of bits and you can now dispose of the shell, a phone call to the local scrapyard should take care of that problem!

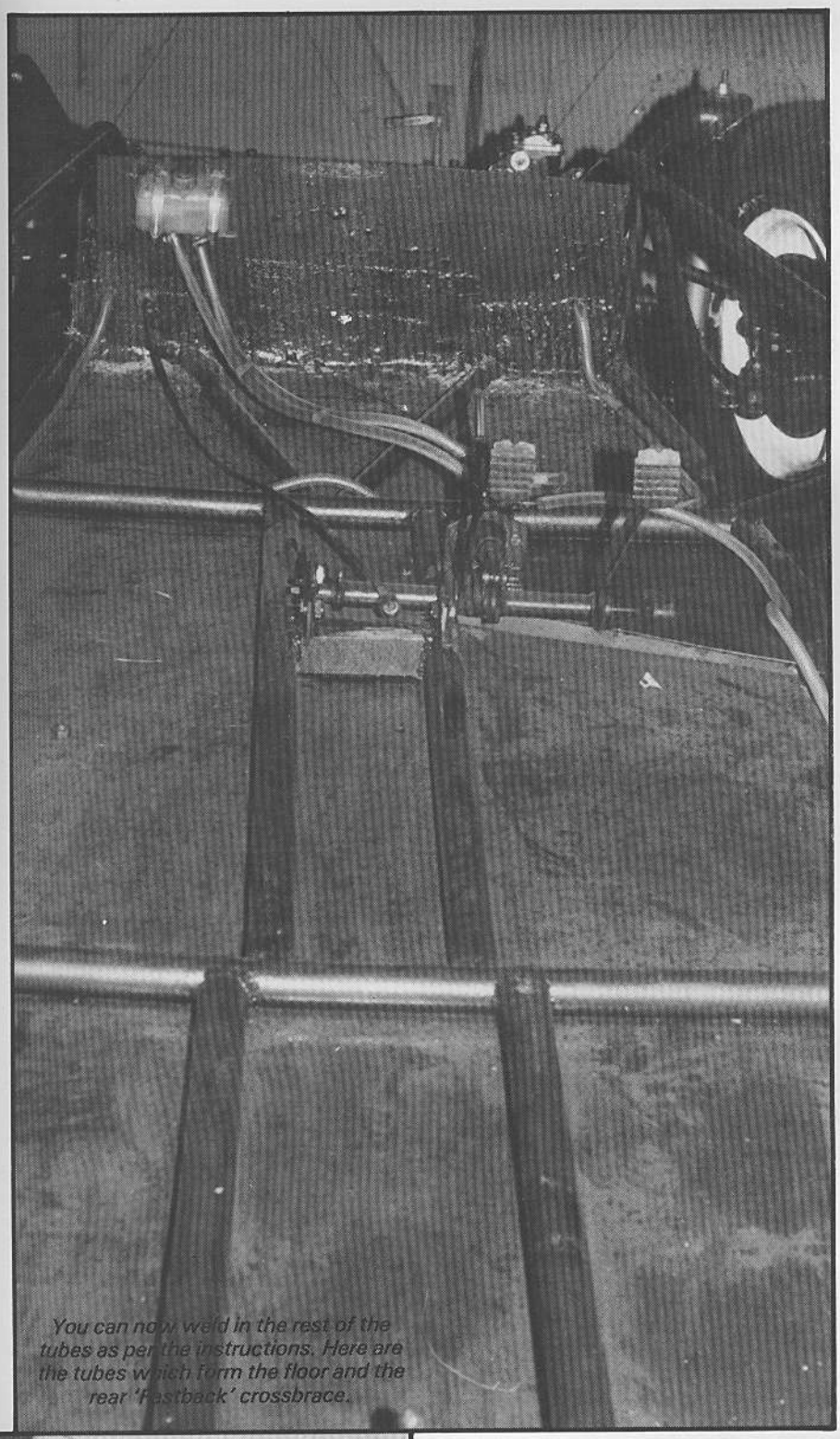
Having replaced the brakes, wheel bearings, oil seals, steering damper,



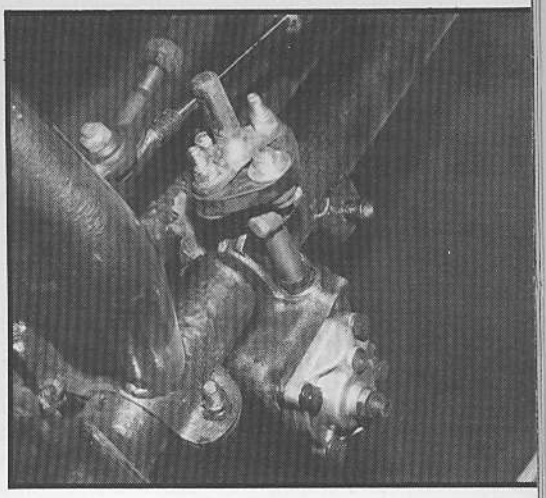
Set the rear torsion housing against the ends of the chassis bottom rails. Measure an eighth of an inch in from each torsion housing flange side. This should give you enough welding area between the tube and the edge of the housing. Tack weld the torsion housing to chassis side rails. Check that the chassis is square.



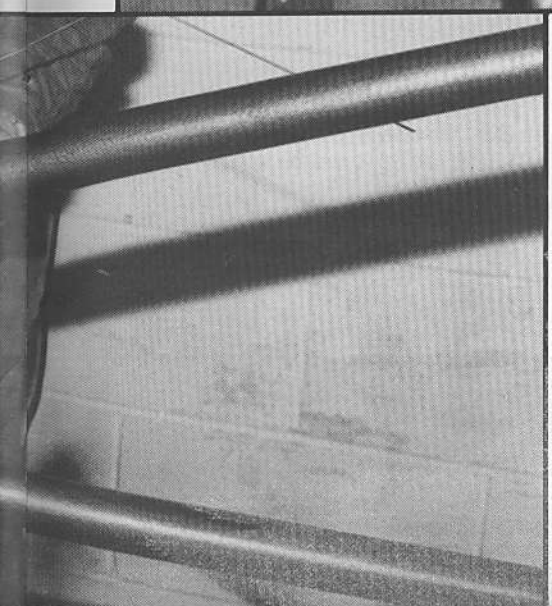
FAST, FRUGAL FUGITIVE

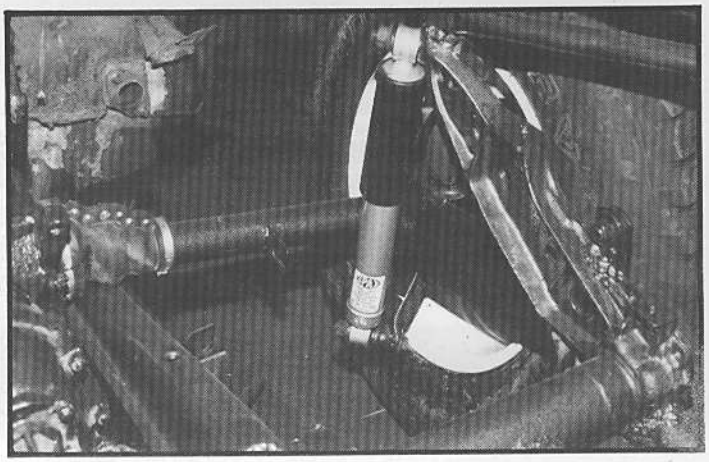


You can now weld in the rest of the tubes as per the instructions. Here are the tubes which form the floor and the rear 'Fastback' crossbrace.



New steering box in place atop the torsion housing.





Note replacement shocks and drive shaft boot repair kit.

FAST, FRUGAL FUGITIVE

steering box, track rod ends and ball joints the front suspension assembly is now ready to be fitted to the two frames supplied by UVA. Making sure that the surface on which you are working is flat, bolt up the front suspension to the side frames using the clamps provide. Measure 23 and five eighths inches between the clamps making sure that the chassis is central on the beam.

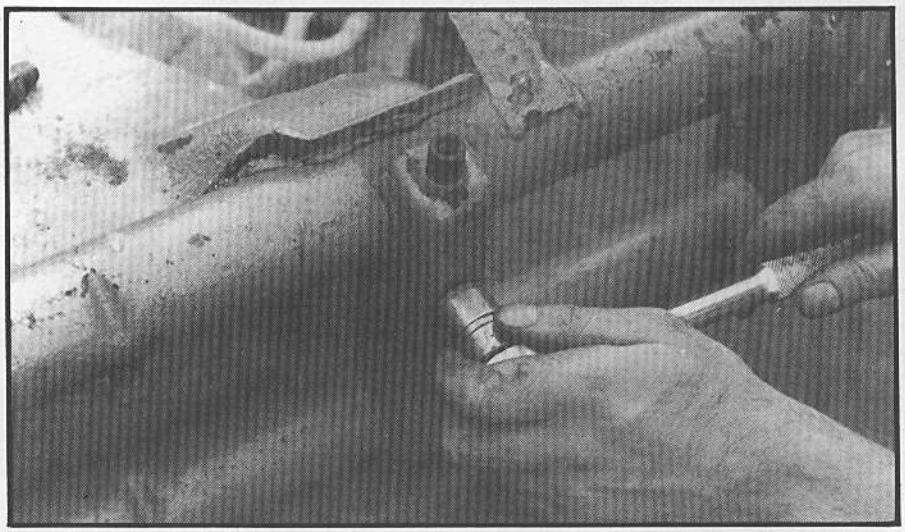
Once you have removed the engine and gearbox from the rear suspension forks you can chisel off the remnant of the floorpan. This should leave you with the main torsion tube and two sorts of clamps which look rather like question marks on their sides. These are attached to the floorpan and the ends of the torsion tube. Be careful not to damage these too much as they will have to be welded onto the rails of the chassis. You can now offer the rear torsion housing up to the chassis side rails. Once you have ascertained that the position is correct you should tack weld it to the rails. To confirm that your chassis is square you should measure diagonally from the torsion housing left to front end right and vice versa on the opposite side. Use the same datum points on both sides. This will allow you to get both measurements equal and your chassis will be square.

You can now weld in the tubes between the side rails. In the instructions supplied you will find a list of these tubes and their dimensions plus a reference as to whether the end of the tube is routered or plain. Some trimming of these tubes may be required.

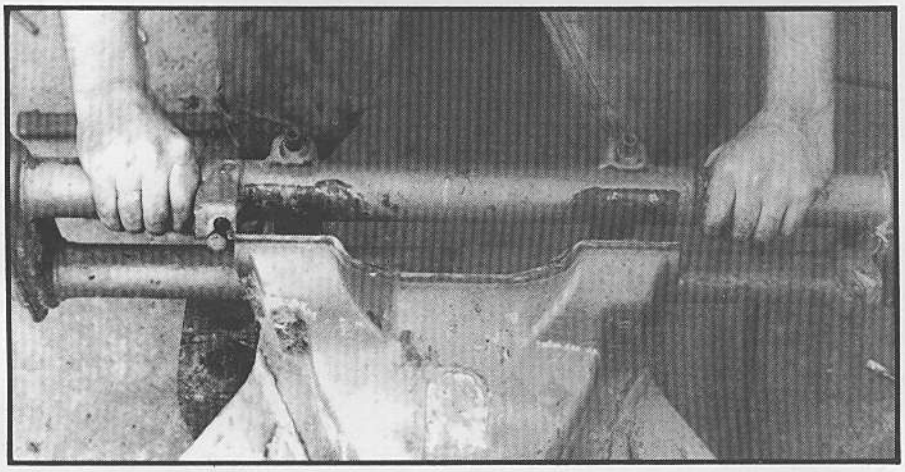
At this point all joints are now fully welded and the rear suspension can be refitted. Again brake shoes, oil seals, brake cylinders, brake pipes and shock absorbers are refitted, these being all proprietary parts which are available from your local VW parts shop or Limited Edition can supply them off the shelf.

This completes the rolling chassis.

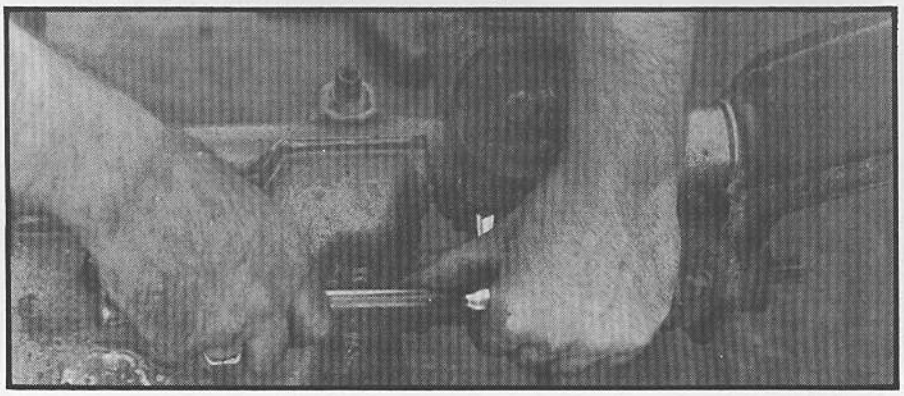
In a forthcoming issue we will show you how to position the pedals, master cylinder, steering column and controls, and also detail the engine rebuild.



The front torsion bar mounting bolts have to be removed from the base vehicle.



The torsion bars and complete front suspension can now be removed.



The steering box was found to be worn out. Releasing it is a matter of undoing the U clamp.

This is the chassis in its assembled form. The shaded areas indicate the two side frames which come ready assembled. All other tubes have to be welded in. Note U clamps at front for mounting to front torsion tubes.