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Vauxhall Classics No. 8 – Firenza HP ‘Droopsnoot’, 1973 – 75

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In this eighth article in our series of significant Vauxhall models to appear since the company's arrival in the early years of the last century, we focus on the short-lived, but utterly memorable Firenza HP 'Droopsnoot' of the 1970s.

[\(All information and photographs from Vauxhall\).](#)

A ground-breaker for Vauxhall in so many ways, this car became the flag-bearer for the company's motorsport aspirations during the Seventies, fulfilled with the help of two motorsport legends: Bill Blydenstein and Gerry Marshall.

In fact, the Vauxhall team tells us that they couldn't resist this rather rough-edged, but endearingly dated film showing what Gerry, in his Firenza-derived 'Baby Bertha', could

achieve:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfwsZq-uFd4>

(Their thanks, and ours, to Vauxpedia for the link).



VAUXHALL FIRENZA HP 'DROOPSNOOT'

This slideshow requires JavaScript.

In 1973, Vauxhall rationalised its Firenza range, and the HP (for 'High Performance') model was created. Based on the Magnum Coupe, the HP had additional aero treatment at the front, giving rise to its nickname: 'Droopsnoot'.



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And the Droopsnoot certainly had the brawn to go with its distinctive looks. This was the first Vauxhall with a five-speed gearbox, and its 2.3 litre slant-four engine had hand-finished combustion chambers, inlet tracts and valve throats to liberate an extra 21bhp. As a result, the Droopsnoot became the fastest-accelerating Vauxhall, with a 0-60 mph time of just 7.6 seconds.

The model's launch was well timed, too, heralding Vauxhall's triumphant return to motorsport in the guise of DTV (Dealer Team Vauxhall).



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But industrial disputes, a looming fuel crisis and the consequent sales fall-out from the performance car market signed an early death-knell for the Firenza HP. Despite a brave sales projection of 1,000 cars per year, only 204 cars were ever built.

Technical Data:

Body: 2-door fixed head coupé

Engine: 4 cylinders, in-line

Engine Capacity: 2279cc

Top Speed: 120 mph

0-60 mph: 7.6 seconds

Fuel Consumption: 22 mpg





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VAUXHALL MOTORS

They say:

Vauxhall Motors started making vehicles in the UK in 1903. Today, as the oldest and most familiar of Britain's automotive manufacturers, its philosophy is to build vehicles that are relevant to all. Vauxhall's two manufacturing plants in Ellesmere Port and Luton produced 206,000 cars and vans in 2018, and its sales accounted for nine per cent of the UK market.

Vauxhall has been a Groupe PSA brand since 2017. By 2024, each of its models will offer an electrified version, part of the company's **PACE!** plan to become sustainably profitable, global and electric. www.vauxhall.co.uk

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