

## **Bolwell Nagari Buying Tips**

### **Background**

Whilst a majority of Nagari vehicles were built to turn-key mode (full factory production), others were sent out in kit form. Combined with this, more were made-to-order vehicles. This made it easy for a particular vehicle to be personalised by its owner. Some were raced in production sports and hillclimb events due to their inbuilt power to weight ratio and balance set up. Others have been constantly updated with state-of-the-art items such as fuel injection systems.

### **Things to look for:**

#### **Body**

Any fibreglass vehicle driven in Australia would have a difficult time due to the country's extreme hot weather conditions. A condition called 'crazing' (small cracks resembling a spiders web), is usually prevalent around areas like door openings, square edges, all load bearing areas as well as hinge mounting points. Look for any star cracks within the paint work as this happens around where other parts are moulded to the bodywork like bonnet bulges and extended guards. Another problem could be stress cracking of the gelcoat. This is sometimes undetectable underneath paintwork unless the buyer wishes to take the paint back to the gelcoat.

Sagging doors are a worry. Weigh up what it's worth to you if parts are missing, even if the replacement items are being manufactured and are better than the originals.

#### **Interior**

The original Nagari had unique seats, steering wheel, gauges and other trim items that were important in defining its factory build status. Check for a cracked dash pad and poor trim repairs.

#### **Engine bay**

Because the original engines were usually two-barrel Ford 'crate' engines in stock tune, there is enormous scope for upgrades. Even if it has the meanest Cleveland 351 in town, how much of the original character has been lost? Check whether the vehicle you are appraising has a wild aftermarket engine that won't idle properly in traffic is what you really are looking for. Bolwell originally designed the Nagari as a tractable and relatively refined daily driver that relied on a sharp power to weight ratio, not a pig of an engine.

Short throw gearbox linkages varied from just acceptable to woeful. Clutch and gearbox repairs are not as simple as they are in modern vehicles. Make sure you can live with it and everything is present and correct.

Most vehicles will now have upgraded cooling systems and additional thermo fans as the car's cooling system was marginal when new but cooling under stop-start conditions is still a vital area to check. More importantly, make sure that if the engine has been upgraded, it has the correct Nagari chassis for the large engine and not an original Windsor chassis that has been butchered.

## **Chassis**

Look for cracks and fatigue to see if the vehicle has had a hard life, racing career or serious accident. Make sure it is the correct specification for the engine and that the exhaust and other components clear it by the specified margin to avoid harshness especially under load. If the suspension has been modified, is it too sharp for the road and passing too much shock into the body and chassis. Some Nagaris can feel very tired and amateurish with harshness and rattles. Competent owners can rectify these problems to where the vehicle can feel more refined than brand new. In these cases, upgraded springs, dampers, bushes, anti-roll bars are acceptable if done properly. Later upgrades to the rear suspension are acceptable, when slight wear in the original system allowed the rear axle to dance around.

## **Prices**

It will depend on what type of vehicle is being offered for sale and what type the buyer wishes to purchase. Market value is usually determined by what the buyer is willing to pay. As a general rule however, it is more likely that the more original the vehicle is the higher the price should be. Notwithstanding that, a vehicle's overall condition is also another contributing factor. A very good original Nagari coupe starts from around \$75,000.00 if you can find one with a clear history and factory pedigree. Several examples have been built from left over parts and were not original production models. The convertible or sports is in the same rarefied territory as a Falcon GT-HO Phase III. Is \$90,000.00 plus too much for one of the 18 sexiest roadsters ever built in Australia? But remember that there could be sports models out there that have been converted from a coupe, so a chassis number check is vital.

## **Summary**

Before shopping for a Nagari, decide on whether you want an improved vehicle or an original. In some cases, owners have turned their cars into thinly disguised hot rods or racers.

Prices for heavily modified examples depend on what like-minded buyers want to pay.

With only 118 models built it is more than likely that the vehicle you wish to purchase is known to the Bolwell Car Club. We recommend that you contact someone in your state with the vehicle's details, eg. chassis number, sellers name, registration number, or any other details you can gather.

Please note these details are current as of 2024.