

into second at the usual spot, left-bottom of the H. Want hi-third now? Up and across the gate to the far right, back into hi (which disengages 4WD unless you hit the button) and then up to third.

Lo is right down in the cellar too. Hi-first feels downright racy after lo-fourth. It takes a little practice to master all this stirring about in proper order, never mind swipes at the differential lock toggles and 4WD button. Done right it will take you to impossible places. Ours hung up on more than one shift.

There can be few surfaces offering less bite than a carpet of felled two inch saplings covered with ice and snow. Nowhere did our tires have more than a tocnial hold. Yet the Cross Country clambered about that hillside, stopped in ditches and restarted with a wheel pawing air, all with disdain, provided that you played the right tune on its one lever and three vacuum controls.

The ability to use any combo in the all-synch box and ditto transfer case plus differentials without pausing is the key.

When you get really fancy—like Volvo's innocent-faced demon driver—you flick the front differential lock out for tight turns; merely saving



*A typical Swedish scene—a good reason for building a machine called the Cross Country.*

muscle since Swedish generals didn't think privates needed steering boost.

Any driver has a good, athletic climb to the cab of his 303 where two up from sit in firm, upright seats with a modicum of support while the passengers in back flop around on flat, fold-up roosts and benches. Ours was the handtop with roll bar holding up

its aluminum lid, but a canvas-top model is offered as well. There is also a pickup version with the back wall to its cab.

The wheel is truck-flat, the windshield split with the driver's side opening and separate wiper circuits with switches so you can wipe one,

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*Separate fan air system for passengers and a flip-on cover over engine allows work from inside on sub-zero days.*



*Accommodation is frondly stark. In present form the 303 is an all rig service car or pipeline cruiser, but it is fully adaptable.*