

ESTATE WAGON OR SPORTBRAKE

By Neville Barlow

In 2004, long before the XF Sportbrake, Jaguar introduced the X Type estate, the first in the company's history. The car was generally well received by the market but the purists could not accept the Mondeo based estate in Jaguar's line up. Over 355,000 X Types were produced and of these 27,022 were estate cars. (10,275 petrol and 16,707 diesels) One wonders if this was Jaguar's first Sportbrake.

Jeremy Clarkson devoted a large section of a Top Gear programme to prove how it blew away any vehicle from Audi and Mercedes. On black ice, which he could not stand up on, he could drive



Jaguar X Type Estate

the X Type estate at 80 kph without any siding or loss of control. This was one of a few vehicles that he could not say a negative thing about.

Before 2004, there had been other estate type cars constructed by various specialised coach builders using Jaguar components that looked as if Jaguar had made them. The most notable adaptation was made by Lynx Engineering. The XJS was Jaguar's grand tourer during the 1980's and 1990's. When a customer brought in a Jaguar XJS to be made into a convertible, that then became their mainstay, making such conversions every two weeks. However, Jaguar introduced their own XJS convertible in 1988 so Lynx changed to turning XJS into the Eventer Estates. This was a sleek V12 wagon, with



Lynx Eventer

4 seats and a large boot.

The Eventer was extremely well made and over 20 years Lynx made 67. Even now an original Eventer can fetch over \$100,000.

Another conversion to an estate car was first mooted by the famous Jaguar race car drivers, Duncan Hamilton and Mike Hawthorn. Advised by Ray Nockolds and to be built by coach builders the Jones brothers, a MK 2 3.8 was obtained. But after Hawthorn's untimely death the idea lost momentum. However, a single example was made. It was so good that Jaguar acquired it, calling it a County and used it for years as a service vehicle for many events such as The Tour de France. At one time it was thought to have been running a D Type engine!



Even as late as the early 80's Jaguar had refused to make a Sportbrake type vehicle, so it was left to coach builder Avon Warwick to produce their version called a Jaguar XJ6 Series 111 Ladbroke-Avon estate.

Launched at the British Motor Show in 1980 it won awards for its build quality and its generous luggage capacity. The conversion added nearly £7000 to the price. Avon planned on building 250 but the final tally is thought to be only around 20.



Perhaps the most famous XK150 conversion was built by Geoffrey Stevens from an XK150 DHC and the rear of a Morris Minor Traveller to accommodate his two Labrador dogs. This car has been dubbed the “The Foxbat”.



1959 Jaguar XK150 Foxbat

Another very unique so called Sportbrake was a Jaguar C Type. Its body was altered to include a solid roof and luggage compartment. Surely the only C Type that could be taken out in the rain!



Jaguar C Type Shooting Brake

A prototype estate version of the XJ6 was built for evaluation purposes. It was never proceeded with and very few photos exist of it. I believe it was eventually crushed.

Finally, in 2012, Jaguar debut the XF Sportbrake. Many people were surprised that it took 4½ years after the arrival of the XF saloon.

Fold down rear seats and a luggage compartment of 1675 litres, dwarfing the capacity of the saloon. Also, the longer roof line afforded back seat passengers with extra headroom. The tailgate provided a wider boot opening as well. Engines available were either 2.2 litre or 3 litre diesels. Fuel



2104 Jaguar XF Sportbrake

consumption of around 5 litres per 100kms and a low emission of 139gs. These cars were aimed at the Company car market and private buyers looking for economy.

Several years ago, an XF 2 litre diesel travelled 15,000 kms around Australia and used 3.81 litres per 100 kms. Paul Doherty, Secretary of our club and his wife Jill own an XF Sportbrake. They say it is a wonderful car, great to drive and to tow their caravan.



Jaguar XFR-S Sportbrake

The XFR-S Sportbrake is Jaguar's first high performance estate.

This vehicle has only one engine option, the 542 bhp supercharged 5.0 litre V8. Top speed 186 mph (300 kph) 0 – 100 kms in 4.5 seconds and torque of 502 ft lb. Price in England was nearly NZ \$200,000.

This vehicle was

introduced in 2014 and I believe it was only produced for 3 years or so.

It would seem that by and large the SUV's with the F Pace and E Pace has taken over this sector. Grayson at Duncan and Ebbett tells me the Sportbrake is still available but they have not seen or sold one for some time.

Neville