

The X Factor

Ian Lamming travels the distance with Vauxhall's new Mokka X

FOR the sake of a ruled line in the diary my driving day is lengthened by three hours and 150 miles; that will teach me to pay attention.

I've already made the round trip once in the day from the Lake District to North Yorkshire but I'm about to do it again for a night job.

Thing is, I've written the entry incorrectly in the diary so actually miss the event by 23 hours and 50 minutes.

Total mileage for the day? In excess of 310. Time at the wheel? Somewhere beyond six hours. Now that could be trying, annoying in fact, except, as I leave the ladies doing Zumba in the hall and walk towards the car for the return journey, I smile. Everything is just fine.

It's a lovely evening, with the sun setting in the west lighting my way home. The Vauxhall Mokka X, that has played chariot all day,

glistens gold in the light and the cossetting interior greets me with a friendly hug.

Fire up the 1.4 litre petrol turbo and it can hardly be heard. Slip into the supportive driver's seat and it's going to be a comfy drive back. Link my iPhone, and hence Spotify, to the car's infotainment centre by Bluetooth, choose my album of the moment (Sia, if you are interested at all) and head for the A66.

By Stainmoor, of course, the sun has been masked by storm clouds and by Kirkby Stephen it's raining. But Mokka X comes with decent tyres, 4x4 and inspiring grip a combination that hardly slows the journey along serpentine roads.

It's times like these that a good car shows its mettle. It's when you don't feel like driving but have to that a vehicle's prowess comes to the fore.

My boy loves it too as he takes over the iPhone to become DJ Bengy French before linking his various contraptions to the 4G wi-fi installed within the car.

The Vauxhall SUV performs admirably on straights and narrows, on bumpy and the smooth. There's enough power for the climbs, 41mpg to protect my wallet and fun dynamics to keep me interested.

At journey's end I'm no more tired than when I left, in fact, I might actually feel a little better as I have enjoyed a glorious drive on deserted roads in a car I thoroughly enjoyed.

So next time I look at my diary I will endeavour to take more care, if only for my professional reputation and the sake of the client, but not necessarily to avoid a long unnecessary drive.



Fact File

- Vauxhall Mokka X Elite
- Engine: 1.4 petrol turbo
- Power: 140PS
- 0-62mph: 9.9 secs
- Top speed: 118mph
- Combined MPG: 42.1
- Transmission: six speed manual
- CO2 g/km: 152