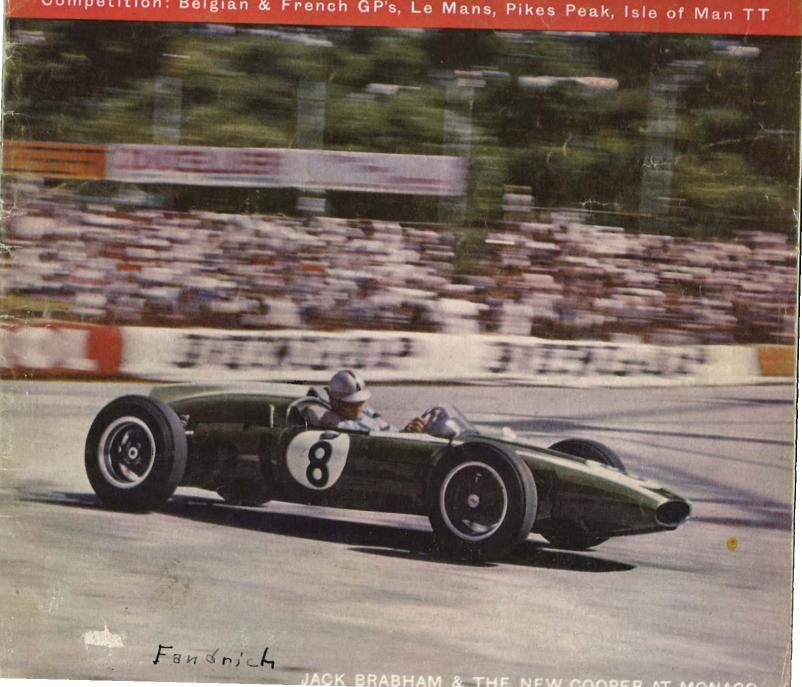
PONTIAC'S NEW 4-CYLINDER TEMPEST-DESCRIPTION & TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

# ROAD TRACK THE MOTOR ENTHUSIASTS' MAGAZINE

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Road Tests: Fiat-Abarth-Allemano 850, Simca Etoile, BMW 700 Competition: Belgian & French GP's, Le Mans, Pikes Peak, Isle of Man TT



tend to become more than a little upset. These two cars are functional, and thoroughly practical, as a family car and a sports car, respectively. But no one in his right mind would ever describe them as beautiful, in the aesthetic sense. On the other hand, if a group of Concours judges gave the best-of-show award to a Ford Falcon because they thought it truly beautiful, we would have no quarrel with them, even though we certainly would have cast a dissenting vote.

The other problem is over-restoration. Several clubs are now taking the stand that judges should not be influenced one iota by chrome-plated wire wheels (for instance) on a car such as an L-29 Cord, which never was available so finished. Here again, it's hard for a judge not to be impressed or swayed by an array of chrome-plated tools in a mahogany case. But these items do not affect the overall elegance created (or not created) by the original designer.

Car shows for elegance should be encouraged, but an owner who cannot spend all night swabbing underneath his car, or who cannot afford chromed acorn head nuts, should not be penalized.

#### Detroit Beat

AT THIS TIME OF YEAR the large manufacturers slow down and change gears, and with four new compact cars on the way it should be even more interesting than last year. Buick's car, the Special, is reported to be capable of doing 0 to 60 mph in under 13 sec, with stickshift transmission. Old's F-85 and Pontiac's Tempest won't be far behind. On

the Tempest, one report said a 6-cyl engine would also be available, in addition to the big 4 of about 125 bhp. That's pretty silly—where are they going to get the engine, from Chrysler maybe?

#### Prices & Sales

SEVERAL imports have announced large price reductions; Renault (the 4-CV) from \$1345 to \$1292, Fiat 1100 down \$85, Fiat 2100 down \$200, and Fiat-Osca 1500 down \$430. That last item looks very interesting to us, for the car is good and is now in a much more competitive position.

Volvo has announced that the PV-544 (the 2-door sedan) will be available in the U.S. with the single carburetor, 60-bhp engine. To be called the "Special," this will be the firm's price leader at \$1895, East Coast. The single carburetor 1600-cc engine is Volvo's most popular model in Europe and actually it makes a lot of sense; it is smoother, quieter, has better low speed torque and flexibility, and is more economical than the twin carburetor 85-bhp version. The above price is with 3-speed transmission. For \$100 more you can get the "Special Deluxe" which has fancier interiors and a 3-speed transmission with synchromesh 1st gear (as well as the usual synchro 2nd and high). Next there is the more familiar (to us) "Sports" model PV-544, with 85 bhp and 4-speed, all-synchro box. Price of this model has been reduced to \$2195. The Amazon is continued at a new lower price of \$2495 and the 1800 Sports coupe will soon be coming over at around \$3800.

Import sales still look good; as we predicted last fall, about the same as 1959. The big drop-off predicted by Detroit boosters and calamity howlers has failed to materialize. In our opinion there are several makes that almost seem to have given up and if these few would do a little hard selling the overall picture would be even better.

## Curtiss-Wright

Since we were almost alone in not getting excited over the Curtiss-Wright-NSU-Wankel engine let us quote the new C-W president, T. Roland Berner, and the *Wall Street Journal* for June 6, 1960, page 8:

"Publicity emanating from Curtiss-Wright in the future is going to stress quality rather than quantity, Mr. Berner emphasized. He said that until products had been fully developed and proved sound, they would not be publicized.

"In this context Mr. Berner said considerably more development work was needed on the company's rotary combustion engine, [the NSU-Wankel] although he stated several companies were interested in it."

#### The Kilowatt

WE UNDERSTAND that the Henney Motor Co. (builder of hearses) is building a small electric car, to be called the "Kilowatt" and based on the Renault Dauphine chassis and body. Unlike some of the publicity issued by certain other promoters of electric cars, the Henney people are extremely honest. For instance, the top speed is 35 mph and the

Here's that 4-seater you've been asking for; the new Ferrari.



Restyled and technically interesting 165-hp team



cruising range is 50 to 60 miles, at reduced speed. Power comes from 36 2-volt batteries and a 7.2 horsepower motor. The price, too, is realistic at \$3600, including battery chargers. Cost of operation should be very low, although the batteries will probably have to be replaced every two years.

For short-run shopping trips the Kilowatt looks ideal, especially when we remember that short trips are especially conducive to a high rate of engine wear in gasoline-powered vehicles. The Kilowatt motor, being electric of course, has no special wear problem and the Henney Co. says this unit will last for 30 years.

## Bigger Compacts

THE PRESIDENT of General Motors, referring to the compact cars, said recently that "you'll see these cars getting bigger and bigger. Americans don't want a small package in a car."

Past history shows that the first statement may prove to be correct. Previous "small" cars all tended to grow, examples being almost innumerable. But why did they grow? We doubt that they grew because of customer demand, but rather because the manufacturers felt that a larger car put them in a better competitive position.

Today, things are much different. The public is fed up with big cars with big appetites. The estimate of sales by the end of this year, of nearly two million cars with an overall length of under 190 in. and weighing less than 3000 lb, certainly is an indication that the compacts are here to stay. Already it is known that

the new B.O.P. compacts are really not compacts, because they will have a wheel-base of 112 in. As far as we are concerned, the reasons for a compact car are economy and convenience. Having watched Mr. Average trying (unsuccessfully) to judge just where he is on the highway, or trying to park, we think the era of the behemoth is definitely at an end. At least we hope so!

## What Shall I Buy?

WE GET QUITE A FEW LETTERS asking "What car shall I buy? Come on, tell me the truth." We consider this type of letter an insult because we make every effort to tell honestly both the good and the bad about a particular car in our road tests, and with no double talk or need for reading between the lines.

The combination of needs, personal preferences and tastes is peculiar to each case and a car that completely satisfies one individual may be a 100% anathema to another. Accordingly, we make no recommendations.

# Twin Rings

THE PERFECT CIRCLE CO. has just announced a new idea, which, simple as it may be, is of major significance. Called the "101 Twin-Ring," this new development merely combines the function of compression ring and an oil control ring into one groove. The resultant piston thus has only two ring grooves (instead of the usual 3 or even 4); a top compression ring and a second, wider ring, the "101."

This idea may have far reaching effects

on racing engines, to hot-rodders, and, of course, on passenger-car engines. To explain, in engine design the layout draftsman strives to make his engine as compact as possible, as a matter of course. This saves both weight and cost. A first class design, in my opinion, should not allow for future enlargement of bore or stroke, though this is often done.

Since the PC-101 ring combination saves 0.25 in. at the top of the piston, it follows that the cylinder block can be that much lower. While this may not seem like much, the designer fights for every fraction of an inch; to reduce size and weight in a racing engine, to save a few pennies in a high production unit.

## On Three Wheels

POR PUBLICITY PURPOSES a Chrysler was recently driven from Chicago to Detroit with the right front wheel removed. The trip was successful although the press releases barely mentioned the key fact that 2000 lb of extra weight went into the overhanging trunk space.

Back in 1924 that sharp publicist W. C. Durant beat Chrysler to the punch and he didn't need a ton of extra weight to do it. Of course, front suspensions in those days were mighty stiff, but Durant's stunt was designed to prove the stiffness of his patented "tubular backbone," as used in the Sheridan, Flint and Star cars, I believe. Actually, the tubular backbone was off to one side in the chassis—it looked about like a muffler that was welded in place, and no doubt it helped a little, though other cars of that era could do the same stunt.

Triumphs nearly won class at Le Mans.



Battery salesmen will approve new Henney Kilowatt.

